NINETEENTH-CENTURY MAJOR LIVES AND LETTERS

ROYAL ROMANCES

Sex, Scandal, and Monarchy in Print, 1780-1821

KRISTIN FLIEGER SAMUELIAN

Nineteenth-Century Major Lives and Letters

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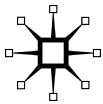

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For Nicholas and Maia, with love

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1. Print: *King Henry VIII* (Lewis Marks, 1820), ms page 237, all permissions; credit to The City of London, London Metropolitan Archives.

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Introduction

The Royal Character in the Public Imagination

In November 1815, Jane Austen visited Carlton House at the invitation of the Regent's librarian, James Stanier Clarke. A few days after the visit she wrote him a carefully worded note:

> Sir: I must take the liberty of asking You a question—Among the many flattering attentions which I recd from you at Carlton House on Monday last, was the Information of my being at liberty to dedicate any future work to HRH the P.R. without the necessity of any Solicitation on my part. Such at least, I beleived [sic] to be your words; but as I am very anxious to be quite certain of what was intended, I intreat you to have the goodness to inform me how such a Permission is to be understood, & whether it is incumbent on me to shew my sense of the Honour, by inscribing the Work now in the Press, to H. R. H.—I shd be equally concerned to appear either presumptuous or Ungrateful.

The work in press was *Emma*, which Austen had completed about six months earlier. Clarke's reply was also carefully worded, although his care was dictated not by the fear of giving offense but by the need to make an imperative look like a choice: "It is certainly not *incumbent* on you to dedicate your work now in the Press to His Royal Highness: but if you wish to do the Regent that honour either now or at any future period, I am happy to send you that permission which need not require any more trouble or solicitation on your Part" (*Letters* 296).

Austen had her answer. When *Emma* appeared in December 1815, the dedication page read:

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE REGENT,
THIS WORK IS,
BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S PERMISSION,
MOST RESPECTFULLY
DEDICATED,
BY HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS'S
DUTIFUL
AND OBEDIENT
HUMBLE SERVANT,
THE AUTHOR.

The correctness of the language highlights the irony of the dedication, which is not only that it was made under compulsion. *Emma* is an odd novel to dedicate to a monarch.[1] In its *Bildungsroman* plot, Austen criticizes the narcissism and decries the isolation of those who inherit rather than earn their status. Emma's "disadvantages" at the start of the novel include "the power of having rather too much her own way, and a disposition to think a little too well of herself" (*Emma* 55). The highest-ranking woman in her community, Emma has no natural peers and surrounds herself instead with sycophants whose "ignorance is hourly flattery" and whose "delightful inferiority" militates against self-improvement (80). This is political rhetoric anchored to domestic realism. Emma's narcissism is the same one that William Hazlitt describes in his 1817 indictment of monarchy, "On the Regal Character," and it carries the same dangers. Royal narcissism is the "glare of Majesty reflected from their own persons on the persons of those about them that fixes" the "attention" of monarchs and "makes them blind and insensible to all that lies beyond that narrow sphere" (Hazlitt 336). Emma is not only a monarch in this sense; she is a regent. Nominally deferring to an infirm and nearly imbecilic father, she settles all questions herself and to her own satisfaction. Emma is more "mistress" of her father's "house" than she would be of any husband's (117). She reigns alone, and the trajectory of the novel moves her from this position of unstable supremacy to one of married submission.

Why this critique—even implicit—of monarchy? Why should Austen write a novel of manners with a recognizably conservative bent (marry the heroine to her most vocal critic, swallow up her property in his, and in the process shore up the preeminence of the rural

gentry)[2] in the language of the opposition? Austen came from a family of Tories. The Regent had fixed the Tories as the party of the monarchy when he retained his father's government in 1811. Plenty of Tories disliked and disapproved of him, but they were comparing him unfavorably with the King, who, despite his dementia, was an icon of conservatism and national stability. Inasmuch as Austen's treatment of Emma anticipates Hazlitt's rhetoric, she lumps King and Prince together. For Hazlitt, the son's profligacy is part of the same malaise that produces the father's imbecility—both are inherent in the institution of monarchy. For Austen too, Emma's errors arise from a dangerous superiority—of mind, person, and position—compounded by a father's frailty. That it would make sense in 1815 to link the interests of domestic realism to the rhetoric of republicanism has to do with the place monarchy held in the imagination of the English public.

In *Royal Romances*, I look at representations of monarchs and monarchy in England at the time Austen was writing and the decades leading up to it. By representations I mean pamphlets and prints, newspapers and periodicals, fiction and poetry: the variety of literary and semi-literary modes through which the English populace learned about, responded to, and managed their public world. Representation also had a political valence during these pre-Reform Bill decades, especially as literary ephemera engaged calls for political reform. Self-identified reformers appear among the authors and engravers I examine, but for the most part the relationship between political and textual representation is attenuated; calls for reform are filtered through anxieties about the relationship between the monarchy and the nation.

The English national consciousness at this period—the entity that Robert Peel in 1820 described as a combination of "folly, weakness, prejudice, wrong feeling, right feeling, obstinacy, and newspaper paragraphs"—constructed itself in part through debates about the monarchy. Peel was writing at the end of the period I cover in *Royal Romances*, when King George IV's attempt to bar his wife from his coronation once again raised questions about the institutional legitimacy of the monarchy, and his anxiety about the political force of popular opinion is palpable. He worries that this unregulated cacophony will replace "the policy of the Government" in settling questions about kingship and queenship. This was a possibility—either frightening or exhilarating—for many at this time of intense domestic unrest following the end of the Napoleonic wars. But questions about the stability of the monarchy extend back to the first regency crisis of 1788, when the King's madness made the royal family available to

public speculation. The texts I explore, all published between 1780 and 1821, produce monarchy as a spectacle; challenge its right to dominion over representation; conscript it for republican aims; and reduce it to celebrity. They do all this as means of understanding and managing one of the last stages in monarchy's gradual shift in England from sovereignty to notoriety. These texts are part of the work of reframing the royal family, as monarchy moved from being an unambiguous sign of the body politic to the public spectacle coexisting uneasily with both the government and the nation that it had become by the reign of George IV.

Following the English Revolution of 1688, the collapse of the Stuart dynasty, and the 1701 Act of Settlement, English monarchs—first William and Mary and then the Hanoverian Kings—began rebuilding their credibility and authority. In the 1780s, the period at which my narrative takes up the story, the credibility of monarchy had suffered the setback of the American Revolution. Most regarded the American war either as one that the English should not have fought, or one at least that they should not have lost. The Revolution precipitated a sequence of events that included the resignation of the Prime Minister Lord North, the Fox-North coalition, and George III's dissolution of Parliament in 1783. Loyalists sought to restore monarchy's stability within the government through appeals to the public based on the personal values of George III. But two events disrupted these efforts. The first was the sexual and fiscal misconduct of the Prince of Wales, particularly in the 1780s and 1790s, and continuing into the nineteenth century. On the face of it, this set of circumstances should not have been destabilizing. The spendthrift prince who plagues the monarch and his other, more sober elders with worries about the succession is a staple of stories that aim to establish the stability of kingship. These accounts are grounded in the moment of transition when the prince throws off his loose behavior and becomes the sober ruler he has always intended to be. In this instance, however, the behavior of the madcap prince was bad politics. Coming on the heels of England's defeat by the Colonies, it confirmed the American perception of the monarchy. Later in the decade, scandals involving the Prince of Wales were complicated and reflected by the King's bouts of dementia, the first of which occurred without warning in 1788.

The King's inexplicable illness, and the regency crisis it precipitated, raised questions about representation. His various medical men's equivocal and cautious accounts of the royal malady occasioned debates about its origin and extent in both public and private discourse. In stories of the Prince's romantic exploits earlier in the

decade, ascertainable information—even documents—existed, however carefully guarded and difficult to access. In the case of the King's condition, however, information was slippery and amorphous, hence malleable. Representation was always at once suspect and potentially constitutive of reality. Saying something was so, depending on who said it and to whom, could either compromise the speaker or make it so. This unstable relationship between private events and their public representations also governed the investigations into the behavior of Princess Caroline in the first two decades of the nineteenth century. In this respect, the regency crisis initiates a shift in representations of the royal family.

Debates about the monarchy were conducted in Peel's newspaper paragraphs, in pamphlets, prints, and in royal romans à clef such as the "Florizel and Perdita" novels of the 1780s or the pseudo-memoirs of the early nineteenth century. But the place of monarchy in romantic-era culture was not only a subject for popular texts. The implications of royal scandals reverberated in texts that were not directly concerned with royalty as well. Authors of realistic fiction, a part of whose business was the readjustment of domesticity, conducted this business in the shadow of the public spectacle of royalty. Their novels reflect its influence in their structuring. In this book I take Austen's fiction as a case in point, looking at three of her novels, all published and two written during the Regency. If *Emma* registers preoccupations about regency and hereditary power, *Pride and Prejudice* reflects anxieties about paternal governance and domestic ideology on the eve of the Regency—the long-deferred moment of monarchy's transition from a stable, if ailing, king to a partying prince. Austen explores connections between domestic and political order again in *Mansfield Park*, written between *Pride and Prejudice* and *Emma*. In this, her first novel composed during the Regency,[3] the patriarch's temporary but extended absence leaves his estate under the (mis)management of an idle and spendthrift heir, whose de facto regency upends the household and licenses the exercise of destabilizing sexual impulses.[4]

In the first part of *Royal Romances* I look at two versions of errant royalty, which appeared in public accounts of both the King's madness and his son's waywardness, and of the moments when they intersect and begin to resemble and explain one another. The specter of succession, always implicit in these accounts, reflects a fear that the nation will be forced to trade the involuntary incompetence of one monarch for the willful incompetence of another. This unhappy alternative recalls the end of the Stuart monarchy, when the "openly displayed priapism" (Turner 106) of Charles II, the libertine king, his

bullying, and his many scuffles with Parliament made him a symbol for the irresponsible exercise of royal prerogative. Charles's failure to produce a legitimate heir meant that the nation was likely to revert to Catholicism when his brother, James II, succeeded to the throne. The end of his reign and the Revolution that followed three years later ushered in one hundred years of stable Protestant kings and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy in England. But his rhetorical force as the last of the absolute monarchs, presiding over a court that was, in Peter Stallybrass and Allon White's terms, "*both* classical and grotesque, both regal and foolish, high and low" (102), recurs in the British imagination and provides ready comparisons with both George III and his son.

The conventions of understanding and presenting monarchy used not only the historical but also the literary past. If the crises of a century ago haunted the contemporary moment, explicitly shaping the regency debates but implicit in political satire, the pre-Restoration past of Shakespeare's plays offered both the comfort and the irony of comparison. Commentators on the royal family drew often on the history of Shakespeare, which is to say that they made use of both the history within his plays and his historical status as an artifact of Englishness. As a literary icon, "Shakespeare" legitimated the authorship of texts in which his name or his words appeared. Shakespeare's royals—Hamlet, Prince Hal, Henry VIII, Florizel—provided models against which to set the present royal family, sometimes augmenting, sometimes diminishing their stature, but always belonging to a golden age of literature at a comfortable remove from the prehistory of contemporary debates. Even when the comparisons are invidious—as with Prince Hal or Henry VIII, Othello or Lady Macbeth—the frequent appearance of Shakespeare's characters in the writings and prints of this period demonstrates that one way royalty maintains its stature is by being Shakespearean.

References to Shakespeare's mad or madcap princes reflect anxieties about succession and appear often in the years surrounding the first regency crisis. By 1811, the immediate question of succession had been tabled; the Regent was, for all practical and most public purposes, monarch. His own disastrous marriage reintroduced the problem. His attempts to divorce his wife turned on the issue of her fidelity, which could potentially raise uncomfortable questions about their daughter's legitimacy. In the final two chapters of *Royal Romances,* I look at his two attempts to dissolve the royal marriage, in 1806 and again in 1820–1821. Contemporary reactions to the couple's increasingly public domestic disputes, and to the behavior of the

Princess of Wales, configured the problem of monarchy as one that resonated with issues of domesticity, the family, and the body. The questions raised by these royal squabbles recurred so regularly from as early as 1795 on that they can be understood as one event that, like the King's madness, was subject to periodic outbreaks.

Taken together, these events highlight a shift not so much in modes of representation as in what gets represented. Although subject to variants throughout the period, the modes remain largely the same. The focus of representation, however, shifts from events that were known—that is, acknowledged as public—through those that were unknown (but verifiable), to rest eventually in a teasing preoccupation with what is unknowable. The behavior of the Prince of Wales falls into the categories of what is known or at least knowable: the romantic exploits of "Florizel" and "Perdita"; the extravagances of Carlton House; and the Prince's enormous debts were public events. And while the factuality of his secret marriage to the Catholic widow Maria Fitzherbert was subject to debate, it was still presumably knowable: witnesses could lie; rumors could be deliberately stirred up or suppressed, but there was in theory an ascertainable event or nonevent behind the speculation.

The King's madness was a different matter. Doctors' reports, newspaper reports, gossip, and ephemera regularly represented his malady in 1788 and early 1789. But its origin, extent, and prognosis remained mysteries, endlessly debated but referential to no facts that could explain them and settle the crucial questions they raised. There was plenty of misrepresentation—information suppressed or shaded, rumors circulated, official stories offered and then undercut. But information and misinformation alike pointed back to no ascertainable facts. Was the King mad or simply ill? Was his condition permanent or an episode? Moreover, how was the dementia to be interpreted? Was it, in the language of contemporary medical discourse, the result of an overtaxed system—a stamp of kingship, perhaps, but to that extent treatable? Or was it rather hereditary lunacy, a family malady, equally significant of royalty but intractable? In either case, was it to be understood as transformative, occasioning an abrupt change of government during a period of increasing national and international upheaval? Or did it simply indicate a corrupt, vitiated, or defunct system—a diseased body politic?

The regency crisis was tabled when the King recovered almost as suddenly as he had fallen ill, and the episode remained resistant to definitive interpretation. When the dementia recurred in the first decade of the nineteenth century, it was understood and resolved

through the repetition of precedent, an implicit recognition of its inexplicability. As a public enactment of a domestic catastrophe whose consequences would shape ideology as well as policy, the first regency crisis was a precursor to the events that came to be known collectively as the Queen Caroline affair.[5] Like the King's madness, the behavior of Princes Caroline, through her husband's two attempts to divorce her, resisted proof and allowed multiple and conflicting representations. In part this was because the case depended on such malleable indicators as soiled bed linens and suborned testimony. Although the new King no doubt hoped, in 1820, that repetition would once again function as precedent, both iterations of the Queen Caroline affair proved that reputation was not evidence. If George III talked nonstop for twenty-four hours, sweated excessively, and was prone to sudden and violent attacks on members of his family, whatever this might mean medically, it meant that he was not fit to govern. If the Princess of Wales dressed revealingly, held raucous and unchaperoned parties, or bathed in the presence of her manservant, these behaviors were not, per se, indications that she was an unfaithful wife and therefore guilty of treason. There was no way to provide documentation of infidelity, short of illegitimate children, and these were not forthcoming. Discursively, however, reputation constituted, if not evidence, then imputation, and imputation could be appropriated and circulated. Reputation was the unknowable, construed as the already known, and was in this sense more useful than evidence because it rested on behaviors that were open to multiple interpretations.

How much an event could be known structured how it was represented. Caroline's sexuality existed only in various modes of literary and semi-literary representation: in ephemera and in fictionalized accounts. One of these was Thomas Ashe's 1811 *The Spirit of "the Book"; or, Memoirs of Caroline, Princess of Hasburgh: A Political and Amatory Romance in one Volumes*, which Ashe marketed as an epistolary roman à clef that would provide the "true" account of the royal marriage. The title comes from the report of the 1806 royal commission set up to investigate allegations of sexual misconduct by the Princess, and popularly known as the Book. Ashe's claim in the title is that the territory of the novel lies in essence rather than in form: his novel, he promises, renders the "spirit" behind the facts of the Book. This claim and its rambling structure distinguish Ashe's novel from the realistic fiction that Austen was beginning to publish. Yet Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, printed in the same month as the commission report, takes up the same questions of female sexual misbehavior and especially whether

and when misbehavior signals actual sex. *Pride and Prejudice* is not self-consciously allusive, but its preoccupations are historically local in a way that Ashe's are not, and it implicitly critiques both Ashe's representation of history and his presuppositions about the formal structure of the novel.

These three different books—the commission report, Ashe's novel, and Austen's—and the intersections among them, demonstrate that Caroline's reputation was constructed and managed through texts. And these texts were explicable through their relation to other texts. Woodcut engravings, which figured in public discourse throughout the period and dominated the later decades, depended for their meanings on mottoes derived from other sources—from ballads, poems, and other engravings. Later prints evoked or imitated earlier ones, as in Theodore Lane's reworking of Gillray's famous *Dido, in Despair!* Novelistic renderings such as Ashe's depended on generic expectations and on a system of allusion that both invoked and clouded representation. Events like the secret marriage, on the other hand, or the King's madness, established different representational strategies. These events were documentable, and documentation is a privileged form of representation. Because of this, they set up a contest between the "actual" or primary texts—letters, physicians' reports, registry records (documents that could of course always be shaded or falsified)—and the popular or fictionalized texts on which their public meanings depended. These events established a hierarchy in which private renderings are seen to have a more stable relationship to the truth than public renderings.

Popular writers and engravers rarely depicted the King's madness directly, although they often focused on the extraordinary interest with which his heir allegedly followed every step in the progression of his father's illness. And, of course, the Prince's various mistresses, his relationship with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his association with notorious Whigs like Charles James Fox were all fodder for pamphleteers and printmakers. These texts relied for their authenticity on competing claims of knowledge: was Fox lying when he declared in the House of Commons that Mrs. Fitzherbert was not the Prince's wife? Did he know himself whether he was lying? Unlike Ashe's book, which claims to get to the heart of disputed events, but which exists precisely because there is no getting to the heart of them, these texts presuppose that there is an accurate rendering of events, and position themselves relative to that account. They are to this extent doing—and claiming to do—the work of interpretation, not the work of representation.

History and Criticism

In recent years the figure of Caroline has been the focal point of discussions about monarchy in public discourse, which have concentrated on how her shifting representations reflect struggles among competing political interests. Caroline was equally available as an icon of decadent royalty and wronged womanhood, making her, at varying moments, a cause célèbre for radical anti-monarchists and the darling of loyalists and tory radicals alike. For some, Caroline was a loutish and louche foreigner, the poster child, or print child, for the unequal distribution of privilege (unlike the Prince of Wales, whose detractors accused him throughout his life of abusing his privilege, the anti-Caroline camp often saw her as someone who simply didn't deserve to be royal, or even English). For others—and at other times—she was a defrauded wife and mother, the idealized image of bourgeois femininity that cast into distasteful relief the excesses of her husband's court. Studies such as Thomas Laqueur's "The Queen Caroline Affair: Politics as Art in the Reign of George IV"; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall's *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850*, and Anna Clark's "Queen Caroline and the Sexual Politics of Popular Culture" identify in the latter understanding of Caroline the defining moment for an emerging class consciousness. In popular responses to the Queen Caroline affair, both the bourgeoisie and the working class came into their own as social and political forces by identifying with a domestic ideology defined both through and against monarchy.

The Queen Caroline affair framed Waterloo and Peterloo and dominated the 1810s. For this reason it is often seen to inaugurate the nineteenth century as the moment when, as Davidoff and Hall put it, "the domestic had been imprinted on the monarchical" (152), and thus to set the stage for the obsession with domestic monarchicalism that characterized the reign of Queen Victoria. But in 1806 and again in 1820, no one knew that the monarchy in Britain was going to stabilize middle-class domesticity, at least not in the sense that later scholars of the period knew it. Rather, as historians of British radicalism such as Iain McCalman (*Radical Underworld*), James Epstein (*Radical Expression*), and Marcus Wood (*Radical Satire and Print Culture*) have pointed out, the revolutionary possibilities in the Queen's cause were always a part of the public consciousness. Caroline returned from Europe to challenge her husband and claim her crown less than a year after the Peterloo massacre, and her supporters then ranged from nostalgic royalists to republicans.

Her subsequent arraignment produced a sentimentalist rhetoric more aligned with gendered domesticity than with radicalism, but that is only one of her political meanings, given greater teleological force by her death. The context through which Caroline, and the monarchy with which she is uneasily connected, is to be understood is larger than this historical moment. The King as ideal bourgeois husband and father provided one way to understand the spectacularly bad marriage of his son and daughter-in-law. The King as incapacitated through a variety of factors, of which dementia was both a metonym and the most visible instance—Shelley's "old, mad, blind, despised, and dying king"—was another. As Clark points out, scandals involving the royal family throughout the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries "were neither anachronistic nor trivial." They were constitutive of ideology inasmuch as they "turned on the relation of virtue to power" (47).

Anxiety about the relationship of virtue and power is central to questions about the stability and legitimacy of the monarchy during this period, although "virtue" takes on a different—and narrower—significance when the focus shifts from the King to the Prince to the Regent. Fear and criticism alike are based on the supposition that the power of the monarch stands in inverse ratio to his virtue. But when these fears were applied to the reign of George III, virtue was likely to signify capacity—fortitude, strength, soundness of mind, fitness to rule—reflecting its Latin root, *virtus*. When fears were applied to the Prince of Wales or to the Regent, virtue more often signified the absence of vices. In both instances, a monarch who ruled without virtue was an alarming prospect. A number of critical and historical discourses less local than Clark's or my own address this kind of anxiety. The work of Lynn Hunt on the relationship between the public display of sexuality and the construction of monarchy provides a framework for my discussions of the sexualized and sexualizing bodies of various members of the English royal family—not only Caroline's but the Prince's and the King's as well, although Hunt's focus is early modern and enlightenment France. She points out that "[T]he establishment of a legitimate government under the hereditary monarchical form of government depended on the erotic functioning of the king's body—and on the predictable functioning of the queen's body" (*Eroticism and the Body Politic* 1). Anxieties about both surfaced at particular moments throughout the Regency, fueled largely by the Prince's unstable hold on legitimate paternity. That these worries predate the Prince's marriage, however, is clear from the place the King's madness held in the imagination

of the British people. George III's ability to fulfill his monarchical duty by coupling only and often with his legitimate wife was never in question. Nonetheless, his dementia was available to a variety of constructions that suggested the ungovernable sexuality of his heir, an association that brought home the fragility of the monarchy and counteracted the safety promised by the King's famous monogamy.[6]

The King's madness and its variety of public and private meanings offer a critical instance of anxiety about the "Protean" character of madness and other relatively new pathologies that, as Roy Porter has shown, "were matters for continuous renegotiaton" throughout the eighteenth century (*Mind Forg'd Manacles* 16–17). George III's malady points to the special place that madness holds for scholars, needing to be treated "like heart-failure or buboes, as a physical fact" while at the same time understood "like witchcraft or possession, principally as a socially-constructed fact" (Porter 15). Porter suggests that the events of 1788 and following should be understood in the context of a growing perception that madness and other so-called nervous disorders were "on the increase" in England (160), a perception to which the regency crisis contributed, as did the two assassination attempts on the King, in 1786 and 1800. The history of the 1800 attempt in particular is an instance of the blurring of the physiological and the spiritual in understandings of madness and echoes the disputes about the King's dementia. The would-be assassin, James Hadfield, was apparently a religious maniac whose delusions, the defense argued, "cancelled *mens rea*" (Porter 116), the legal term for the state of mind appropriate to a given crime, in this case the intent to kill the King. But the insanity argument might not have sufficed to acquit him, had not the defense provided evidence of an earlier head wound and brain damage. Like the King's, his madness was a mark of his profession (a former soldier, Hadfield had contracted the wound while in the King's service), a sign of his place in the world, as well as a sign of his incapacity.

In *Royal Romances* I examine the nexus of these two categories: place in the world and capacity or incapacity to occupy that place. In each chapter I explore a different aspect of the evolving understandings of the monarch's place in the world during a time of repeated political readjustment, the post-revolutionary period no less than the revolutionary. Leo Braudy locates the genesis of the modern belief that a monarch may have a private life distinct from his public life in the end of the eighteenth century, with "the influence of a Protestant emphasis on the possibility of an individual relation to God without earthly intermediaries" (*The Frenzy of Renown* 392). The revolutionary period

produced, in France, England, and America, an increasing "audience for the actions of the famous" (393) at a time when interest in the actions of the famous begin first to merge with and then to replace reverence for monarchs. In *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture* Tom Mole suggests that George III was "arguably the first monarch to have also been a celebrity." His status as an object of "public fascination" was tied not just to "the spectacular performance of monarchical power" but also to "his existence as an embodied and all-too-fallible individual" (6–7). Kings and queens have always been famous. But in stable monarchies, or in the bullying absolutism of the Restoration court, the fame of the monarch is celebrity—the condition of being famous for being famous—disguised by and cooperating with power. As that power weakens, the monarch becomes simply a celebrity. His private life becomes public again as the subject of gossip, scandal, and as part of what Mole calls the hermeneutic of intimacy.[7] The texts I explore in the chapters that follow reflect a growing belief that the public has ownership of that private life, and the right to understand and make meaning of it through representation.

Chapter One

Chronicles of Florizel and Perdita

On December 3, 1779, members of the British royal family, including the King, Queen, and Prince of Wales, attended a command performance at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. The play was *Florizel and Perdita*, a 1756 adaptation by David Garrick of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. Mary Robinson played the title role.[1] The Prince sat in his own box, opposite his parents', and according to Robinson's *Memoirs*, spent most of the evening staring at her (Robinson *Memoirs* II. 38). He had probably seen Robinson before, but they both claim this evening marked the beginning of his infatuation.[2] He began to woo her "almost daily" (II. 46) in letters, addressing her as "Perdita" and signing himself "Florizel." Their romance lasted slightly less than one year. They became lovers in June 1780, after the Prince gave Robinson a promissory note for 20,000 pounds, to be paid when he came of age at twenty-one. They met frequently throughout the summer and early fall. Sometime in December 1780, the Prince ended the affair, possibly out of jealousy at Robinson's reputed liaison with his friend and go-between Lord Malden. It is more likely the affair ended because the Prince was already involved with another actress, Elizabeth Armistead (who later became the mistress and eventually wife of Charles James Fox). Robinson was by now heavily in debt, without means of support (she had resigned from Drury Lane in late May 1780). She threatened to publish the Prince's letters unless he agreed to assist her financially. She claimed her debts had been incurred as a result of their relationship—in the expectation of future support and from a need to match his lavish lifestyle.[3] Following lengthy and often

acrimonious negotiations—and an application by the King to Lord North—a settlement was reached in September 1781 after Robinson relinquished the letters in exchange for 5,000 pounds.

The courtship and subsequent settlement negotiations combined lasted longer than their sexual relationship and garnered at least as much public attention. The Florizel and Perdita affair (and its aftermath) was the subject of poems and engravings, newspaper articles, "Tête-à-tête" columns, and novels ranging from the sentimental to the pornographic. There are some verifiable facts mentioned in nearly all of these, but none accurately represents the affair, although most claim to. In the first part of this chapter, I examine texts that offer epistolarity as a guarantor of authenticity, beginning with two novels written nearly concurrent with the affair, or at least with its currency in the public imagination: *The Effusions of Love: Being the Amorous Correspondence between the Amiable Florizel and the Enchanting Perdita* (Anon. c. 1780), and *The Budget of Love, or, Letters between Florizel and Perdita* (Anon. 1781). The editors of both novels assert they are offering to the public the actual letters between the Prince and Robinson, even though the novels were probably written before Robinson had given the letters to Lord North, who promptly destroyed them. In any case, the published letters have little connection to the real ones beyond the names of the principal characters. They are epistolary *novels* structured by narrative convention and not collections of genuine letters from which a historical narrative can be inferred or on which it can be imposed. As novels, they narrate the course of the relationship, from courtship to consummation, and on to betrayal and dissolution. Set against these texts, often for the purposes of either contrast or comparison, was a collection of actual letters from the Prince's uncle, the Duke of Cumberland, to his married lover. The Cumberland letters are not narrative; they are testimony in a highly public divorce case. As public representations of a royal scandal, they structure authenticity as intimacy and intimacy as banality. They do not, as the Florizel and Perdita novels do, offer readers fictive identification with regal characters. Detailing a laughably mismanaged adulterous affair, the Cumberland letters offer instead derision and voyeuristic malice.

The published intimate correspondence of famous people is pornographic in the sense that it makes public what ought to be hidden. Pornography, in Sarah Toulalan's words, "requires an idea of the private so that it can be disrupted" (*Imagining Sex* 161). The letters between the Prince and Robinson, like the Cumberland letters, disrupt the privacy of royalty in exposing not their bedroom practices but their silliness and small-mindedness. Their secrets are political rather

than sexual. In the second part of the chapter I examine contemporary accounts of the Robinson affair that are structured as political satire. Satirical commentary on the royal family that appeared in the tête-à-tête columns and pamphlets like the *Poetic Epistle from Florizel to Perdita* focus on its strategies of mystification. Even before the regency crisis, questions about the fitness to govern of either the current or the future George rested in what the public did not know, but ought to know, about the monarchy. This satire appears also in the strictly pornographic texts that began to emerge around 1781. *Letters from Perdita to a Certain Israelite* (1781), the *Rambler's Magazine* (1783–88), and *Memoirs of Perdita* (1784) sexualize Robinson in order to discredit her political affiliations, particularly her association with Fox and the Fox-North coalition. Along with the *Poetic Epistle*, these texts satirize her complex involvement with what was known as the reversionary interest. Sometimes she is allied with the King and Government, sometimes with the opposition Whigs, who wait for control of the government to revert to them upon the death of the King and curry favor with his heir in the meantime.[4] Always she exploits her intimacy with the Prince in the interests of one or the other.

These texts attempt to contradict familiar allegations of discord between King and heir by suggesting lines of connection that are sometimes affective, sometimes political, and increasingly, as the decade advances, physiological. In the Florizel and Perdita novels and in *Poetic Epistle* love letters provide a vision of family and political harmony that can be either reassuring or satiric depending on how they are read. The pornographic satires, by contrast, do not offer this flexibility of interpretation. In their focus on the Prince of Wales's incapacity, the authors of these texts anticipate the discourse surrounding the two events that dominated the second half of the 1780s. The Prince's marriage to Maria Fitzherbert in 1785 and the apparent descent into insanity of his father three years later were secret catastrophes that, particularly in their relation to one another, put the succession and the constitution at risk. Representations of these events in the popular press follow the line of the pornographic satires of the early 1780s in suggesting that debility is the link between father and son and the ill-kept secret of monarchy.

Royal Correspondence: Epistolarity, Authenticity, Intimacy

Lynn Hunt suggests that the epistolary novels of the second half of the eighteenth century made possible "a heightened sense of

identification, as if the characters were real, not fictional" (*Inventing Human Rights* 42). The letters in the Florizel and Perdita novels reference a putative reality; their characters are fictions, not real. Neither "Mary Robinson" nor "the Prince of Wales" appears in these texts. They are the referents for the codes "Perdita" and "Florizel," but they are themselves simulacra. Neither they nor their pseudonymous correlatives are fictional characters in the way that Richardson's Pamela is. Hunt observes that epistolary characters like Pamela offer both fictive identification and detached observation, allowing a reader to become Pamela, "even while imagining him-/herself as a friend of hers and an outside observer" (45).[5] Florizel and Perdita, as the Prince and Robinson, occupy a position in the reader's imagination somewhere between the space occupied by Pamela or Clarissa and that occupied by the Duke of Cumberland, whose authentic love letters were published some ten years earlier. In 1769, the Duke of Cumberland began an affair with the married Lady Grosvenor. The two went to great lengths to arrange their meetings: they sometimes met at the home of a friend who was out of town; sometimes the Duke disguised himself as a farmer and appeared at inns where his lady happened to be staying. When they could not be together, they wrote each other long letters. Lord Grosvenor intercepted his wife's letters and kept copies, using the information to set a trap for the couple, whereupon he sued the Duke for criminal conversation, and asked for 100,000 pounds in damages. He was awarded 10,000 pounds, probably because of his own suspect conduct (five women testified they had been his mistresses; one said she had a child by him and received twenty pounds in compensation). Attorneys for Lord Grosvenor read aloud excerpts from the letters at the trial, and they were subsequently published, first in the *Middlesex Journal* and then in a pamphlet that included *The Genuine Copies of Letters which Passed between His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland and Lady Grosvenor* along with *A Clear and Circumstantial Account of the Trial in the Court of King's Bench* (London: 1770).

Rambling, ungrammatical, and badly spelt, these letters are more silly than titillating.[6] As narrative they are boring. There is some suspense, as the couple become increasingly worried about Lord Grosvenor's suspicions, but the reader knows the outcome before the first letter. The other possible narrative hook, the progress of a seduction, is entirely absent. There is no sex in these letters; the writers are already lovers when they begin their correspondence. The structure of the letters is accidental rather than formal. Moreover, the lovers are so coy in their references to encounters (despite the fact that they

often wrote in lemon juice or milk so as to be undetectable) that the counsel for the plaintiff resorted to charging that no one would "write in a manner *so simple and void of meaning*" unless he had something to hide—unless he were making his letters "answer the purpose of intrigue" (52). The letters' dullness is proof of their criminal subtext. Contemporary readers could not identify with the writers of such letters; at once sentimental and self-absorbed, they are testaments only to their authors' foolishness.[7] The perusal of them is nearly an act of voyeurism, rather than of the affective identification that functions in *Pamela*. Yet it is not quite voyeurism, because voyeurism entails a direct relationship between the voyeur and the person being watched; what the voyeur sees does not require authenticating. The Cumberland letters have been authenticated first by their legal context: they were copied, witnessed, and read aloud to the King's Bench. They were given another context upon publication after a judgment was rendered. This time, the editor authenticates them, first on the title page as "The Genuine Copies of Letters," and then in an advertisement claiming "Copies of the following Letters were some Time ago put into [his] Hands for the Purpose of conveying them to the Public."

The act of reading published correspondence, especially private correspondence, of another person is voyeurism at a remove. The reader is not invited to identify with the writers of the letters but rather with the publisher who testifies to their bona fides. Hunt writes that reading epistolary fiction is identificatory because it lacks that authorial presence: "In the epistolary novel, there is no one authorial point of view outside and above the action (as later in the nineteenth-century realist novel); the authorial point of view is the characters' perspectives as expressed in their letters" (Hunt 42). Both the legal and the print contexts for the Cumberland letters make the experience of hearing or reading them sadistic rather than intimate. The listeners/readers are either judging the writers or laughing at them, and sometimes both; the account of the trial notes that the plaintiff's counsel created "a great laugh" when he observed, in his closing remarks, "[t]hat however aggravating the circumstances were otherwise, they could not charge his R. H. with intriguing merely for the sake of intrigue, as the *incoherency* of his letters, plainly proved him to be really a lover" (66). In being reported, the laughter is multiplied: the readers not only laugh at the Duke; they laugh at his discomfiture caused by the laughter in the courtroom. The counsel who reads, the enterprising publisher who prints, and the consumer who buys the letters, share a laugh at the principals' expense. Because the audience already knows that Lady Grosvenor's husband already knows everything that

is written in the letters, to read them is to watch the lovers walk into a trap they are too stupid, or too self-absorbed, to recognize.

The Budget of Love and *Effusions of Love*, on the other hand, offer the possibility of a triple identification: with the letter writers Florizel and Perdita, with the editors of the letters, and with the Prince of Wales and Mary Robinson. Both texts claim to contain the actual letters that the Prince wrote to Robinson in 1780, arranged in chronological order to provide a coherent narrative of their affair. This is a much less plausible claim than the one made by the editor of the Cumberland letters, as these texts' coherency makes clear. The Cumberland letters' authenticity rested partly in their unreadableness; because as texts they were interesting to no one but their writers, they became interesting as artifacts. The Florizel and Perdita letters, partly because readers knew they began as courtship letters, offer the promise of a love story. The first task of their epistolarity is to tell the tale. Robinson's biographer, Paula Byrne, points out that the letters in *The Budget of Love* "are dated between March 31 and April 18, 1780, which is exactly the time when the Prince and Mary were in almost daily correspondence before their first private meeting" (139). "Almost daily" is Robinson's phrase, but she uses it early in her account of the affair, before she and the Prince have met. They probably did not correspond much after they became lovers and even less after the affair ended. Beyond the Prince's "cold and unkind" note ending the affair (Robinson *Memoirs* II. 72), two queries and one "furious letter" (Byrne 151) from Robinson to him, most of the breakup correspondence was handled by Lord Malden and the Prince's treasurer, Colonel Hotham. In Robinson's *Memoirs*, the apex and culmination of the courtship, and probably of the correspondence as well, was the Prince's written promise of 20,000 pounds, "to be paid at the period of his Royal Highness's coming of age" (II. 70). This offer convinced Robinson to quit her profession, leave her husband, and accept the Prince's promise of protection, and she kept this letter after returning all the others. In the *Memoirs* she describes receiving this bond, "[p]revious to my first interview with his Royal Highness" (II. 69), and within two pages "all the fairy visions which had filled my mind with dreams of happiness" have been "destroy[ed]" by his abrupt and unexplained desertion (II. 71).

In both *Effusions* and *Budget*, however, the narratives end with decisive farewell letters, which distribute the blame equally between the lovers. In *Effusions*, after a series of half-flirtatious accusations of infidelity on both sides, Perdita abruptly declares that her "suspicions" of Florizel's faithlessness "were but too well grounded" and

breaks off the affair, taking care to add, in a postscript, "I hope you will not forget your promises respecting the provision you were to make for me" (63). His reply addresses her as "FAITHLESS, Faithless Woman!" and claims that her accusations are only a "skreen" [sic] for "your own infidelities." He identifies the threat in her postscript, and assures her that she is "welcome" to publish his letters, "provided you do not mutilate them, and intentionally make nonsense of them" (64). This is a neat way of offering both an explanation and an advertisement for the novel. If we are reading the letters, they must be whole and coherent.[8] Like Robinson with her 20,000 pound bond, we have the Prince's word on it. In *The Budget of Love* Perdita informs Florizel that his last letter "fell into the hands of my Husband; but do not let that surprise you—he bears the *name* only" (83). Adding that she married him as a cover for indulging her sexuality, rather than out of love, she promises that her husband "is too well bred not to conform to the will of his wife" and that her lover "should think him no impediment; for he shall be none" (84). Florizel, who was apparently unaware that his inamorata was married, is "petrified" (85) at her licentiousness and immediately ends the relationship. In language that sounds more like the real-life father than the son, he declares:

> I am not a stranger to my state, and who I am;—I know that I am an object of example:—in such a situation am I fixt, that the weaker part of men will think it a sufficient precedent to imitate me even in wickedness. (87)[9]

The wickedness he does not wish to model is not keeping a mistress but "injuring an unfortunate man" (85). Criminal conversation, the crime for which his uncle had been fined 10,000 pounds ten years earlier, is the "abomination" (86, 87; he uses the term twice) that makes him "shudder" (87), although he comforts himself with the knowledge that "while I sinned, I did not know it was a sin" (88).

The Budget of Love is the more cautious of the two novels in its depiction of royalty. The editor is constrained here and elsewhere in the text to separate the madcap Prince from his Whig companions (including his uncle Cumberland) and associate him with his father. The Prince turned eighteen in August 1780, although he did not come of age for another three years. In recognition of the fact that his schoolroom days were over, the King granted him limited adulthood: a separate establishment, an allowance, and relaxed supervision. He was by this time notorious for evading governance and comparisons with Shakespeare's Prince Hal were common. Some of these

were overtly critical, depicting the Prince's excesses as a drain on the national resources.[10] Others, like this example in *Budget* and the later *Royal Legend: A Tale* (1808), reflect an expectation that the time has now come for him to throw off this loose behavior and become the prince, and then the king, that the nation needs. Florizel's rhetoric in this letter answers this expectation. His awareness of a public self and of his responsibility to the nation contrasts sharply with Perdita's frankly self-interested sexuality: "I no sooner lost the slavish name of Maid, than I found myself a Wife, and was determined from that moment to take the reigns of government into my hands, and keep my husband at a proper distance.—He never had my love; but I have found him convenient" (83–84). If the misspelling of reins is deliberate, then Perdita is the one whose sexuality puts the government of the nation at risk; Florizel the one who corrects the balance.

In both novels, the letters and the affair begin and end together. Epistolarity conveys both authenticity and intimacy. Of course, these are *not* the actual letters the Prince wrote to Robinson in 1780, which only a handful of people—the Prince, Robinson, and Lord North—read before they were destroyed. The Prince's letters were never produced in court; they were never lost or stolen, published by their writers, nor carelessly relinquished by someone who didn't know their value. Their editors' claims about them position them less as the documents in the case and more as fraudulent "found manuscripts" of the kind that Margaret Russett suggests contributed to the construction of romantic identity.[11] The putative editor of *Effusions of Love* uses the story of the Cumberland letters to authenticate his novel (and perhaps to force an association between the Prince and Cumberland): "The Reader may, perhaps, be sceptic enough to doubt the authenticity of the following Billets; and to question by what means the Editor could gain possession of them. But let him recollect how the Letters from a certain Relation of Florizel, to a Countess celebrated for her beauty, made their way into the world" (5). According to this logic, what happened to those letters explains why we are reading these.

Except that it doesn't: everyone knows how the Cumberland letters came to be in the world, but that knowledge does not explain the appearance of these letters. If readers finish the novel, they learn that Perdita published them on a dare—or with permission—from Florizel. But, because they know that Lady Grosvenor did not publish her letters from the Duke of Cumberland, one instance does not explain the other. The closest explanation is that the Cumberland case proves that letters are vulnerable and marketable, suggesting that the editor of these letters is a canny speculator but not revealing anything

more about how he came by them. In the sleight-of-hand introduction, the Cumberland letters do not account for the Florizel and Perdita letters, but rather substitute for them. "To remove any doubt in this respect," he invites his imagined reader to "satisfy himself with seeing some part of the Originals" of the "Letters alluded to"—that is, the Cumberland letters—"at the Publisher's." Their authenticity stands in for and deflects attention from the probity of "the following Billets." The mystification of this process gives the editor authority, partly because he is an editor—one of a group of print professionals who, as Andrew Piper has recently observed, were rising socially and financially throughout the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the romantic period, "not just authors, but also editors, translators, booksellers, printers, librarians, critics, and bibliographers all assumed an elevated professional status" (Piper 3). This editor's membership in a coterie of professionals gives him access to information and the power to regulate his readers' access to the same information; "[t]he reason why it would be imprudent to produce the other part" of the Cumberland letters on display at the publisher's (he does not mention which publisher) "must be obvious to every peruser." If you have to ask…

Insofar as *Effusions of Love* is an epistolary novel and not a collection of letters, however, its author-as-editor functions like the editors of other epistolary novels and fictive memoirs of the eighteenth century. This kind of editor supplanted the actual writer of the text, particularly of novels, like Gulliver's *Travels*, which were sold as memoirs:

> The editor's function was to affirm the ownership of the text by a particular individual (Gulliver, Werther, Cleveland) and to disaffirm the ownership by another individual, the author. The editor-function was an effective vehicle to combine the novel's dual claims to the suspension of referentiality (through its fictiveness) alongside its affirmation of referentiality through 'realist' narrative techniques. (Piper 109)

The editor convention also produces a secondary narrative: the story of how the memoirs/letters came into the hands of the person who offers them to the public. Often this is a story of affinity and verification in cooperation. The documents are entrusted to the editor who establishes their bona fides and his own by carefully examining them and submitting them to the judgment of colleagues whom he trusts (and vouches for). Richard Sympson, the putative editor of Gulliver's *Travels*, declares that his "antient and intimate friend" (v) Lemuel Gulliver "left the Custody of the following Papers in my Hands, with

liberty to dispose of them as I should think fit" (vi–vii). Having "carefully perused them three Times," determined that "there is an Air of Truth apparent through the Whole," and consulted "the Advice of several Worthy Persons" (vii), he is now ready "to send them into the World" (vii–viii). The editor of *Clarissa* also seeks the advice of "several judicious Friends" as to how best to arrange the letters, which he has been authorized to publish "in such a Way as he should think would be most acceptable to the Public" (v). The studied transparency of these processes is a fiction that, as Russett points out, "seeks to elicit the reader's sympathy with an unreal personality," making the novel "a text that lies *about its own origins*" (*Fictions and Fakes* 15).

The readers willingly accept the lie, however, knowing that they are reading fiction masquerading as factual documents. In contrast, the editors of the Florizel and Perdita novels either mystify the process of origination (as in *Effusions*), or they construct a narrative of fortuitous discovery. The preface to *The Budget of Love* acknowledges that "It may be a matter of some surprize, that the following Letters should have made their way to the public" but assures the reader that their discovery was "accidental" (v), Perdita having read the letters to "her favourite chamber-maid" (vi) in an indiscreet moment. The maid then showed them to her own lover, who convinced her to sell them to a publisher, "for the gratification of the public and her own emolument" (vi). The editor offers this transaction as "an instrumental caution to all those who place too great a share of confidence in a favourite servant" (v). Russett has shown that the fraudulent manuscripts of the later eighteenth century positioned their editors "as the rightful inheritors of the treasures they find—they are, in this sense . . . 'gifted' individuals" (29). Gifted, in this case, in being uniquely qualified to understand what they are reading, to know a goldmine when they see one, but they are also the recipients of a gift, the reception of which plays a central role in its value. In the preface to *The Budget of Love*, the line of inheritance begins with the chambermaid, frail and untrustworthy, but not an especially perceptive reader, beyond thinking them "the sweetest Letters in the world" (vi). Piqued after "some unfortunate contention with her mistress," she copies the letters and reads them to "her sweetheart." He, it turns out, is the rightful heir, the one "who had sense enough to know the value of so popular a matter" (vi) and to "dispose of them" in a way that will both gratify "the public" and enrich his lover (and himself). As with *Effusions of Love*, the actual editor of the volume is a minor, almost invisible figure. He does not tell the story of how he bought the letters from the couple, because the discovery is the real story.

A neutral professional, he is neither the brilliant but untutored finder of a rare manuscript, nor the savvy working man who knows how to profit at the expense of the upper class.[12] His middle-class professionalism authenticates the letters, but he is not the true inheritor.[13]

To what extent are the readers of this novel willing consumers of its fiction of origins? The Florizel and Perdita novels are not fabulae masquerading as fact as a way to confront "the problem of 'belief' that has dogged mimesis since Plato" (Russett 15). In this case masquerade is more than a literary convention, however much that convention might be epistemologically driven. The authors of these novels seem to want their readers to believe that they are reading actual letters written by real people. *Did* they believe they were reading anyone's actual letters? Probably not. The Cumberland letters were part of court record; they were extracted in the newspapers, and then published in book form. Their ubiquity makes it clear that, had the Prince's letters been at large, they would have appeared first in some medium other than a pamphlet with a flowery title. Whether they were purloined or just available in the undefined way the editor of *Effusions* suggests letters have of getting about, readers of these letters would already know a lot about them. They would not have believed that they were getting a privileged first look. Readers of the Florizel and Perdita novels might have embraced their pseudo-pastoralism as a familiar and pleasing convention, but they knew it was nothing more. They were not reading a pastoral romance; they were reading an urban romance about two well-known figures who were much more public than their correspondence was. The fiction of origins allowed readers to imagine a true account, without believing that they were reading *that* account. They could persuade themselves that they were experiencing reality through the filter of these books, whose claim of documentation becomes a claim of representation. These are not the real Florizel and Perdita, but they are close approximations of what the real Florizel and Perdita must be like.

The "real" Florizel and Perdita are personae, a point useful for those who wished to capitalize on the currency of their affair. Journalists and satirists regularly used code or initials when writing about members or associates of the royal family, more as a convention than as protection against prosecution for libel. Here were two soubriquets ready to hand, instantly recognizable, whose suggestive possibilities partly directed the tone of popular responses. On one hand, the names placed the principals neatly into the pastoral romance from which they were originally drawn. In his adaptation of *The Winter's Tale* Garrick focuses on the courtship of the prince

and the shepherdess, relegating Leontes's jealous rage and banishment of his wife to a back-story. The reclamation of his "lost" daughter becomes a family romance rather than a tale of redemption and reconciliation. The Prince's use of these names legitimizes and makes innocent his seduction of an actress from a middle-class mercantile and demiprofessional background. Rumors that Robinson was the illegitimate daughter of Lord Northington, which she tacitly confirmed, would have accorded with this version of the affair.[14]

This context would have led readers to expect letters that, for all they chronicled an illicit sexual liaison, were sentimental and effusive. They would be the letters of two relative innocents experiencing their first taste of true love.[15] They would balance innocence and carnality, as in this declaration from Florizel to Perdita in *The Budget of Love*: "They say, stolen fruit is always best; and so, perhaps, the opportunity that we have of Love, being stolen, may make it so delicious!—I never was in Love before; therefore, I cannot decide on the subject so well" (74–75). They would have to be such letters as might strike a chambermaid as the sweetest in the world without being so sweet as to prevent her wanting to profit from them. They would, in short, have to answer the expectations created by their public context, and particularly by the intertextual layering the Prince provided when he chose his mode of address. Paula Byrne's assessment over 200 years later that the letters in *Budget* "were written by someone with both a reasonable knowledge of the course of events and a good ear for the kind of language the Prince and the actress would have used in their letters" (139) suggests that their editors were successful in persuading readers that they were "just like the real thing."

In 1781 it was not difficult to have a reasonable knowledge of the course of events. Robinson was prone to talking about details, although her conversations may have increased strategically after the affair ended. She confided in friends and acquaintances information about the length of their assignations, or about how the Prince eluded his parents' vigilance by climbing—Romeo-like—over the garden wall to be with her (Byrne 122–23; quoting Steele, *Memoirs of Mrs. Elizabeth Baddely*, 1787). Newspapers scrutinized and reported her public behavior, chronicling when she began wearing his miniature around her neck, for instance, or when she began driving a new carriage with an ambiguous blazon that looked, from a distance, like a coronet. The affair with the Prince was first mentioned in the newspapers—and the couple was first referred to publicly as Florizel and Perdita—in July 1781 (Byrne 117). Both novels drop plenty of references to details and events the public was likely to recognize.

Effusions of Love records the gift of a "miniature picture," which Florizel promises to wear "ever" on his bosom, attached with a ribbon, "as it would be imprudent to fix it to my watch" (28). The phrasing here possibly alludes to Lady Craven's *The Miniature Picture*, in which Robinson played Sir Harry Revel, one of the "breeches" roles for which she became famous and which she was playing on her last night at Drury Lane before retiring from the theater. In her *Memoirs*, Robinson reports that the Prince once proposed that she meet him dressed as a boy, but that she refused because of "The indelicacy of such a step, as well as the danger of detection" (II. 50). *The Budget of Love* reverses the transaction: Florizel gives Perdita a diamond-framed miniature, and she assures him that "The setting is most excellent;—the brilliancy of the diamonds are [sic] surpassed by nothing but the celestial lustre that sparkles in the eyes of FLORIZEL!" (72).[16] She tells him she has decided to have her portrait painted, "presuming that my FLORIZEL may give it some indifferent place in his Cabinet," although she adds disingenuously, "perhaps it will not be proper to present, or be thought a gift worthy his reception" (78–79). This is most likely a reference to one of a pair of portraits of her by Romney. According to Robinson's biographer Paula Byrne, she began sitting for this picture two weeks after her breakup with the Prince, and it "was published as an engraving at the height of the letter negotiations on August 25, 1781" (Byrne 154).

The authors of both novels include details like these, which they can assume the public already knows, in order to establish the veracity of those they encounter in these stories. Theirs is a finely calculated management of the "hermeneutic of intimacy" that Tom Mole describes, in which direct personal engagement with a celebrated figure is "marketed as a commodity" and at the same time offered as "an escape from the standardised impersonality of commodity culture" (*Byron's Romantic Celebrity* 25). Mole and others locate the origins of modern celebrity culture at the end of the eighteenth century, when, as Eric Eisner puts it, the public "emerged not just as an abstraction but also as a spectatorial body; "a 'gazing [. . .] multitude"—produced by an accelerating set of technologies of publicity" (*Nineteenth-Century Poetry and Literary Celebrity* 21).[17] Eisner is quoting from a passage in Robinson's *Memoirs* in which she describes being "overwhelmed by the gazing of the multitude" at the height of the public's preoccupation with the affair (II. 67). This multitude, "massive, anonymous, socially diverse, geographically distributed" (Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity* 3), is not only the crowd that inconveniences Robinson at the shops or that, with "staring curiosity," gathers around her box

at Ranelagh pleasure gardens (*Memoirs* II. 68). It is also the print-consuming public, readers of the newspaper paragraphs and gossip columns whose production soared at this period. The goal of these publications was to make their audiences feel intimately connected with the people they read about, emphasizing, in Mole's phrasing, "not just the permeability of private and public, but their commercialised interpenetration" (*Byron's Romantic Celebrity* 5). In this new kind of intimacy literacy replaces rank; anyone who can read can have the same privileged access—can be in London and close enough to the Prince's and Robinson's boxes at the opera to see their flirtatious exchanges; can see the miniature pinned to her bosom and identify the Prince's likeness; and, of course, can recognize the lovers' pet names for each other, both part of public culture and the signals of a private in-joke that everybody gets. As Eisner puts it, "At once individual and collective, the feelings incited by celebrity are properly neither public nor private, but help organize through a sense of shared emotional experience a new kind of public space in which deeply private meanings find display" (7).

Celebrity, Satire, and Family Secrets

Robinson's description of the gazing multitude comes at the end of her narrative of her affair with the Prince, suggesting that the apex of this first stage of her celebrity coincided with, or even followed, the end of the relationship. Recent criticism of Robinson, however, suggests that she managed her public image and calculated the public's reception of her from at least the beginning of her acting career. Robinson was not only the Prince's first publicly acknowledged mistress; she was his first mistress who was a public figure before her association with him. She was an actress, and an actress in a town with only two licensed theaters and two acting companies, whose principals rotated through a series of roles and were consequently on view every night during the season. She had an audience who already felt that they knew her. In a letter printed in the *Morning Post* of November 22, 1779, "Bo-Peep" expresses and eroticizes this fantasy of intimacy by making "criticism" the natural companion of courtship:

> Criticism is a *cold* exercise of the mind: but as I feel an inexpressive glow, while my imagination takes your fair hand in mine, I think I may venture to court your acceptance of two or three remarks, which are conveyed in a temperament of blood somewhat differing from the chill, and the *acid* of the critique. (quoted in Byrne 90)

Mole points out that Robinson's acting career coincided with "a time when the apparatus of theatrical celebrity was rapidly taking shape," and "[a]ttention was increasingly focused on the star" ("Mary Robinson's Conflicted Celebrity" 187). Principals had minimal rehearsals with the rest of the company and experienced minimal directorial intervention. Thus they could establish direct links with audience members, who increasingly "tended to sit in silence, in a darkened auditorium, watching a star actor on a brightly lit stage" making spectatorship seem "like an interpersonal interaction between audience member and star" (*Byron's Romantic Celebrity* 19). When Robinson joined the Drury Lane company in 1776, Garrick was no longer manager, and his innovations, most of them designed to increase the distance between audience and actors, had been in place for over ten years.[18] But members of the quality and royalty still occupied boxes that allowed them to look almost directly over the stage and even into the wings. Robinson writes about being aware of the Prince's eye on her, and hearing him make "some flattering remarks" as she stood chatting with Lord Malden before going on stage (*Memoirs* II. 38). This intimacy between actors and audience, Mole suggests, was increased by "the rise of a distinct genre of thespian biography," which "fed the audience's interest in actors' private lives" ("Mary Robinson" 187). "A successful player," as Paula Byrne observes, "could only have a public private life" (89).

If star actors were one locus of this commercial interpenetration of public and private realms, courtesans, many of whom were also actresses, were another. Both Cindy McCreery and Laura Runge mark the 1780s as the period of greatest interest in courtesans as public figures (McCreery 100, Runge 567). The term courtesan, as McCreery points out, was in flux throughout the century. Although it "was theoretically interchangeable with 'prostitute'…in practice, prints, newspapers, and other commentaries increasingly drew distinctions between expensive, exclusive prostitutes and their cheaper, more numerous counterparts. A courtesan and a streetwalker were viewed as the two extremes of the spectrum of prostitution" (McCreery 81). Courtesans were often indistinguishable from "notorious noblewomen" (Runge 567) and were the subjects of popular biographies, gossip columns, and caricatures throughout the decade. As a star actress, however, Robinson would have been a practiced participant in the hermeneutic of intimacy even before she became either the "Perdita" of these early novels or "the Perdita" of the satiric and pornographic literature that followed. In *Romantic Theatricality: Gender, Poetry, and Spectatorship*, Judith Pascoe suggests that Robinson's own

account of her life is the narrative "of a female subject under constant surveillance." From her debut in London as a young and pretty bride, the object of rakish aristocratic gazes, through her theatrical career and "notorious liaison" with the Prince, her *Memoirs* "can be read as a record of increasing public exposure" (140). In "Mary Robinson's Conflicted Celebrity" Mole shows that Robinson was an adept manager of this exposure in an age when female celebrity was at odds with an emergent ideology of domesticity and separate spheres.[19] Throughout her career, both as an actress and as a writer, Robinson engaged in "a dialectic of revelation and concealment" (187), figured by the transparent veil she wore in her debut performance at Drury Lane as Juliet (*Memoirs* I. 191). Through strategies of partial concealment on and offstage, and a "rhetoric of physiognomy" in her poems, essays, and novels, Robinson appeared to be offering her audience a privileged access, including them, as Mole puts it, in "an asymmetrical relationship in which they could come to know her without being known themselves" (193).

Readers of the Florizel and Perdita novels did not need to be convinced that they contained "the genuine copies of letters which passed" between the lovers in order to believe that, through reading them, they could come to know the "real" Florizel and Perdita. What they could come to know, however, varied according to the projects of the books and the times of their publication. These early novels are similar in tone to the popular "Tête-à-tête" columns in *Town and Country Magazine*, which provided some of the earliest background information on celebrity courtesans like Robinson. The tête-à-têtes published accounts of illicit, often adulterous affairs, illustrated by a pair of miniatures depicting the parties, usually in profile and facing one another. *Town and Country* published two tête-à-têtes devoted to Robinson, one in May of 1780 and one in January of 1781. The first chronicles her affair with an unnamed peer.[20] The second, "Memoirs of the illustrious HEIR and the fair OPHELIA," provides a brief biography of Robinson, concentrating, as was typical for the tête-à-têtes, on her origins and progress as a courtesan. The article concludes with her affair with the Prince, who, the author alleges, fell in love after seeing her play Ophelia.[21] These articles, like the novels that followed them, at once sentimentalize and satirize their subject matter. They present the affairs as financial transactions between highborn males and a woman of lower or uncertain status, while at the same time idealizing both the relationships and the lovers. As Cindy McCreery has shown, the tête-à-tête articles had to accomplish a variety of tasks, reflecting the diversity of their readership and the

complexity of attitudes toward aristocracy and celebrity at the end of the eighteenth century. Aimed at bourgeois and aristocratic readers, and at women as well as men (although the identified reader was recognizably male), the tête-à-têtes worked as satire, puffery, and moral tales. While implicitly critical of privileged males' vice and "corruption of the lower orders," they "also appealed to middle-class readers' curiosity about an exotic sector of society very different from their own," encouraging "those outside elite London society to feel that they remained in touch with its progress" ("Keeping Up with the *Bon Ton*" 224, 228).

In the case of the Robinson articles, unlike the majority of tête-à-têtes, the authors devote as much attention to the woman's history as to the man's.[22] "Memoirs of the Doating Lover and the Dramatic Enchantress" presents Robinson sympathetically as a selective courtesan. She repeatedly disarms "suitors of the first rank and fortune," who assume she is available for sale to the highest bidder and treat her "with as little ceremony as if she had been a prostitute by profession." Judging their offers as "base and abject," she rejects them "with a proper contempt." The author's conclusion, "[t]hus we find the Dramatic Enchantress was not so easy a conquest as many imagined" (235), allows his readers to share in Robinson's intellectual triumph over the "many" who blunder because they lack the discrimination to recognize her worth. "Memoirs of the Illustrious Heir and the Fair Ophelia" is more conventional in its treatment of Robinson's sexuality, calling her "our too susceptible heroine" (10) and attributing her first fall to the disappointments occasioned by an early and hasty marriage. Once fallen, she is more pragmatic as a courtesan than as a bride, calculating on the beauty that had made her susceptible to a faithless husband "as the means . . . of raising her from her wretched condition and of literally clothing and feeding them both" (10–11). She uses her marriage to facilitate and cover her sexual commerce, which the author figures as entrapment: she employs "the shadow of a husband to conceal her designs" and allow her to "overpower unguarded hearts, before they were sensible of their danger" (10). This is a more calculating Robinson than the proud beauty who turned away ready money in the first article, but she is still not tainted by promiscuity. Although "courted by persons of the first distinction . . . her connexions were at least contained within a narrow circle, when our hero first beheld her" (11). This attempt to distinguish genteel concubinage from prostitution, as Laura Runge points out, was typical both of contemporary anti-adultery discourse and of Robinson's own self-representations. Throughout her career, Runge

points out, "Robinson resisted the label of 'whore' and 'prostitute,' and specifically narrated the development of her subjectivity in opposition to those categories" (564), aligning her "wage-earning labor with authorship and acting, but not with trade in sex" (575).

Both articles represent Robinson semi-sympathetically, while still providing the peep into the private compartments of a sexually engaged celebrity that texts such as the tête-à-têtes promised. Their resulting tonal instability reflects the ambivalence of voyeurism and of the voyeur's attitude toward the viewed object, at once objectification and covert identification, by turns masturbatory, reverential, and derisive. The voyeurism of these texts also shades their satire, which is both satire and not satire, depending on whether the reader identifies as a social critic or a celebrity watcher (McCreery points out that readers of the tête-à-têtes could be classed as both). This generic complexity is clearest in the novels, for which voyeurism is a larger part of their projects. The tête-à-têtes, despite their title, are not private, intimate accounts.[23] Through their rhetoric the authors position their heroes and heroines as objects, not subjects. They are exposés: their authors claim to publicize facts rather than confessions or correspondence. The tête-à-têtes are secondary sources, designed for those who are content to have their information distilled for them. Their satire, when it appears, is in the control of its author, who constructs it *as* satire, rather than allowing it to emerge from an ironic distance between letter writer and reader. "The Memoirs of the Illustrious Heir" opens with a discussion of royalty and succession that, in its evocation of Henry IV, is critical of the Prince, but only if not taken at face value. A royal heir, the writer argues, is a projection created by the "distempered fancy" of a populace that fondly hopes he will deliver it "from all those calamities and inconveniencies" blamed on the current monarch, and persuaded to believe "that he really possesses those excellencies" with which it invests him. When he "enters into office," however, "the heaven-born youth is found to be an erring man," and the fickle people "look back with regret to the once execrated times of his predecessor." This condemnation of the monarchical system anticipates Hazlitt's 1818 "On the Regal Character," except that the critique here is so widespread, comprehending both royalty and populace, it verges on political nihilism. The author's assurance that "[h]appily the many amiable qualities of the Heir, who is the subject of this memoir, afford great reason to conclude that no such disappointment can ensue in regard to him" (9) has already been upended by his detailed generalizations. He enacts the unrealistic hopes of the populace, and incorporates the

readers' expectations into the fantasy. It is still up to the reader to decide whether this is satire or unambiguous praise, but this decision depends more upon his discrimination than his information. If he is a careful reader, he will get the illogic in the author's introduction and recognize that the article offers at least the possibility that the Prince's virtues are as fantastic as the claim that the lovers, in January 1781, "continue to reciprocate the finest feelings of which human beings are susceptible" (11).

The irony of that last line reverts to a dependence on the information of the reader, who either knows or doesn't know that the affair is already over. Readers of the tête-à-têtes, in order to get their nuances, needed to be more educated consumers than readers of the novels, who were not being asked either to trust or to judge their editors' information to the same extent. Once these readers have decided on the letters' authenticity (or once they have willingly suspended their disbelief, and accepted the narratives of discovery offered by the editors), they are granted an access that appears nearly unmediated.[24] This fiction of direct engagement comes from what Russett describes as the "materiality of the recovered text . . . and its occultation of the author-function" (28). Because "the naked letter cannot be found, only fantasized" (Russett 27), however, readers are already both in possession and imagining the letters. This is particularly true of mass-produced texts like *Budget* and *Effusions* or the pamphlet containing the Cumberland letters. The latter articulates this contradiction on its title page. Are these indeed the "genuine copies" of the letters? The letters that were read aloud in court, after all, were copies made by Lord Grosvenor, who then relinquished the originals so that he could allow the affair to progress unimpeded for the time being. The letters we hold in our hands are not *those* "genuine copies," which were individual, hand-written documents, and not typeset over continuous pages, numbered, and bound together. Nor are they the "genuine" letters, which were written in a different hand, probably crossed (they were often interminably long), directed on the outside and presumably franked. The reader's fantasy of discovery (or recovery) requires a voluntary elision of the process of reproduction—personal, juridical, commercial—that is expressed in the pamphlet's oxymoronic title.[25] This elision becomes occultation in the case of the Florizel and Perdita letters, which originated as impostures, albeit of documents that existed in fact. The absence of an author's name means that their readers must either accept at face value every statement made by their putative writers, no matter how implausible, or understand as hypocrisy or stupidity what in another kind of text—say,

a tête-à-tête column—might be satire. Accepting the letters means accepting that they contain in epistolary form the affair between the Prince of Wales and Mary Robinson. Their construction as narrative must accord with the fact that, like the Cumberland letters, they are proof of sex.

Both novels date the beginning of the affair much earlier than it happened, making the sex concurrent with the correspondence, rather than its culmination. The letters are a way of registering the lovemaking. The author of *The Budget of Love* dates each one. The first letter, in which Florizel coyly identifies himself as the "one more charmed than all the rest, sitting on your left" (17) at the theater the night before, is dated March 31, 1780. The final letter is dated April 18. These letters fix the lovers' first assignation as April 8, and in a letter dated April 9, Florizel rhapsodizes, "what a night was last!" (47).[26] The letters in *Effusions of Love* are undated, but in them too the correspondence does not preface the affair as much as accompany it: the letters and the lovemaking together constitute the relationship. When the novel begins, they are already correspondents, and the first letter is Florizel's answer to an unquoted letter from Perdita. In letter ten, Perdita writes, "I must acknowledge, Florizel, that you have at length convinced me" (14), and by letter twelve she is lamenting that "The honey-moon is not yet over, and you have been absent three whole days—three whole nights—Not a billet from you in all that time" (15). In both novels, the letters are a means not only of expressing but of enacting desire and its culmination: a kind of epistolary sex. In *The Budget of Love*, when Perdita asks Florizel on April 3 to "fix on some time and place" when they can meet (25), he replies, "I wish I could fold myself up in this letter; and when you open it, tumble into your bosom" (27). In *Effusions* the culminating moment comes after Florizel writes a letter entirely in French and signs it in his own blood. The editor kindly provides a translation[27] and adds a footnote telling us, "FLORIZEL actually pricked a vein in his arm, to sign this Letter" (13). Perdita's reply indicates that she sees the gesture as a kind of anticipatory penetration, a bond in blood that both suggests and promises further—and more profitable—commingling to come:

> A letter with the signature of r– – blood, may flatter me, that, one day, some of that blood may flow in the veins of my posterity. I own to you, I am dazzled with ducal coronets, in my sons and grandsons.
>
> Alas! my vanity and ambition have surmounted all my ideas of virtue and chastity—and I must yield. (14)

The editor is making an implicit claim of intimacy with the main characters that, like the sleight of hand in his preliminary narrative, simultaneously invokes and obscures the process of authentication. How is he to know that this is the actual blood of the actual Prince of Wales, any more than the woman who is convinced by it to yield all her ideas of virtue and chastity? His groundless footnote makes the absence of proof the guarantor of authenticity: I know because I am privileged to know. I know because *I know*. In its instrumentality within the narrative frame of the novel, this letter reproduces the one containing the 20,000 pound bond, which convinced Robinson to agree to an assignation. The blood in this letter replaces the royal signature and seal, which are both affidavits and unmaskings. In them, according to Robinson's own narrative framing, the Prince dramatically takes off his Florizel mask and appears in his true character as royal (and sincere) lover. Except that he doesn't: inasmuch as the promise of a minor was at least voidable, he is using fraudulent means to dupe Robinson into becoming his mistress, with the promise of future wealth and a reminder that she would be sleeping with the next king.[28] The letter is not a forgery, but its stamps of authenticity are meaningless. Not so the letter in the novel, which is verified by a disinterested third party, one who either was there at the actual signing or has confirmation from someone who was. Or perhaps he just knows royal blood when he sees it. In any case, he is gifted in a way that his readers are not. If we can assume that the editor who footnotes the letters and translates them into English is the same editor who pens the preliminary "Address" to the reader, then it is by his hand and through his privileged knowledge of the writers that the letters become legible as narrative. The Prince's second, he guarantees that they have not been "mutilated," while also obscuring the process of their transformation from letters to novel.

Because these are collections of letters rather than lost manuscripts, their editors' claims of privileged possession depend on fantasies of verification and on an ability to imitate what their readers will identify as the voices of the central characters. Their intimacy with the royal family and its appendages can be traced through degrees of separation—Florizel to Perdita to chambermaid to lover to editor—or through mystified identification: royal blood is distinctive if one has the gift of distinction. Their ability to catch and replicate royal speech also registers intimacy, although this is another fiction with which their readers collude. The language of the letters is fantasized royal speech, constructed first by the royal romance of Garrick's Florizel and Perdita, into which the Prince and Robinson inserted

themselves, and which afforded such fertile opportunities for late eighteenth-century print culture. The letters attempt to replicate how readers might imagine a seventeen-year-old prince, already known for being a party boy, would express himself, and how a somewhat older actress, known for playing ingénues and for performing in drag, and who might be the illegitimate daughter of a nobleman, would answer. The novels offer their readers the opportunity to imagine the private lives of celebrated figures, to become individual consumers of a mass-produced intimacy. What they imagine, however, has already been constructed for them by the prior texts on which the stories depend.

In the foundational text, Garrick's adaptation of *The Winter's Tale*, the courtship is clandestine but not illicit, and the lovers marry in the end. In this Florizel and Perdita story, the shepherdess turns out to be a princess, whose marriage to the prince heals internecine wounds and unites two royal families. Presumably, Prince George was trading on the lure of this family romance when he used the names of Shakespeare's lovers in his seduction of Robinson. Anyone reading these novels recognizes an irony written into their conception: this shepherd and shepherdess are actually having sex, and if you read far enough into the novel you'll get the details of their affair. Sex is the reason for these novels, and it therefore informs the content of the letters that comprise them. Of course, sex was also the goal of the original letters between the Prince and Robinson, but it probably was not a big part of their content. Despite the novels' promise of mass-produced voyeurism, the actual letters, could they have been read by the public, probably would not have pulled back the bed curtains to show how royalty did it. According to Robinson's *Memoirs*, the Prince sent the first of the Florizel letters a few days after the command performance on December 3, 1779 (II. 40). They did not become lovers until early June. By the following December it was over. Probably the couple had been estranged since at least September, and Robinson's claim that she was taken by surprise by the Prince's dismissal note answers the needs of her own narrative of the affair. Based on this sequence, the bulk of the Florizel and Perdita letters almost certainly constitute the courtship, rather than chronicle the sex.

What made them valuable to the royal family as documents was probably not their erotic content; it was more likely their political content. The letters reputedly contained unpleasant comments by the Prince on members of his family. Horace Walpole claimed in his journal that the Prince wrote more like a selfish child than the effusive lover he is represented as in the novels, and one who was not overly particular about his language: "In his letters to Mrs. Robinson, his

mistress, he called his sister, the Princess Royal, a poor child, '*that bandy-legged b– –h*, my sister'" (Walpole II. 361). It is not clear how Walpole knew this. Robinson may well have talked about details of the Prince's letters.[29] Certainly the Prince's strained relationship with his father and resentment of parental strictness were known, and Walpole is not alone in believing that the letters are more interesting for what they reveal about George as a son and brother than as a lover. Those associated with the family who knew about the affair seem to have been particularly concerned that no internecine strife should show to the world at large, and that the letters posed a risk of this.[30] Given the Prince's growing alliance with the opposition Whig party, who hoped for a powerful ally in the Lords when he came of age, letters in which he spoke disparagingly about his family could be seen as valuable to a variety of interests. As demonstrations of filial impiety, they could exacerbate already uneasy domestic relations. And, if they tipped the muffled acrimony between Prince and King into public squabbling, the letters could force the opposition's hand years before they could expect any real benefit from the Prince's partiality. It was not to keep the affair a secret that the King sought money from Parliament to recover the letters. After promising to deliver his son, he wrote, "I do not doubt that the last evening papers, or those of tomorrow morning will have the whole business fully stated in it" (60), adding that "[n]othing you do can be long a secret" (61). The Prince's sayings, not his doings, need to be kept secret.

In the novels, however, this political valence is missing. In neither does Florizel write anything that suggests familial tensions. These letters are valuable—interesting, coveted, brought out with a flourish—for their imagined prurient content. Sex replaces filial impiety as the top selling point. In *Effusions of Love*, the Prince is a roustabout who parties with prominent Whigs, especially his uncle Cumberland, but the author seems to include this information, like the miniatures and carriages, as a local referent rather than as an airing of dirty linen. Referencing a known escapade at the home of Lord Chesterfield, Florizel writes, "I got damnably d– –, the night before last, with those bucks D– – t and C– – d, and my head has not been clear since.—I narrowly escaped being demolished by a bull-dog that was let loose in C– – 's yard, and have some marks of his claws upon me yet" (16).[31] Passages like this assure readers that this is the real Prince of Wales and offer them the added satisfaction of being able to identify the episode and the owners of all the initials. Petulant or snide confidences, such as the one Walpole describes, do not appear. If Robinson did repeat gossip, in her *Memoirs* she is predictably circumspect. She

writes of advising him against doing anything "that might incur the displeasure of his Royal Highness's family" (II. 47). This is first of all a warning to enter cautiously into an illicit affair, but it might also be a (whitewashed) response to unfamilial complaints her correspondent has made, especially given that she has much greater need of caution in the affair than he: "I entreated him to recollect that he was young, and led on by the impetuosity of passion" (47–48).

The Florizel in *Effusions*, though impetuous in love, is otherwise a pattern of correctness. Instead of making nasty remarks about his family and being gently rebuked by his older, wiser female correspondent, he appeals to her wisdom as a critic: "As I know you are a complete judge of acting, I should be glad to have your private opinion of Mrs. Siddons's performances." Here Perdita has the insider knowledge, and Florizel seeks the truth behind the public image. Relying on her ability to answer "these questions with your usual judgment," he asks, "[i]s she that Phoenix that the prints and the public voice in general pronounce her?" (30). After a perfunctory demurral, Perdita damns Siddons with faint praise and initiates Florizel into the theater cognoscenti: Although she has "a fine stage figure" and "a happy countenance for expressing the passions, and depicting the various emotions of the soul," she "substitutes stage trick" for real acting, "which is seen through by the connoisseurs" (who include Perdita, then Florizel, and now the readers), "though it astonishes the galleries, and extorts from them those shouts of ill-judged applause, which have stamped her character with the idea of perfection" (31).[32] This exchange offers an intimacy with the writers through the reification of taste rather than sex or family discord. Thanks to Perdita's measured judgment, Florizel and the readers are invited into her inner circle and flatteringly identified as those who can discriminate "stage trick" from the "fine pathos" of a real actress. We know nothing further about the Prince's feelings, but we don't need to know, because now we can think like him.

The royal family does appear in *The Budget of Love*, although in such flattering terms as once again to trouble a distinction between irony and sentiment. Florizel describes his father as "the pattern of a man," ideally balanced between "Religion" and "Mortality" (58). "Strictly good" rather than strict (58), this king is the source of his son's worldly knowledge. When Perdita expresses astonishment at how "one of your years, cooped up from the world, should be so conversant with its wiles" (55), Florizel explains that he has until recently "stood behind seeing and unseen," taking "as it were, a literary view" of the world, "aided by the best of monitors, and the first of fathers."

Now, however, "the curtain has been some time undrawn, and all the secrets long disclosed" (58). He does not make it clear whether it was by the King's hand that the curtain was withdrawn. Given that he has monitored his son's literary acquaintance with the world, however, we can assume that the King at least condones, if not orchestrates, the more direct congress he now enjoys. This is monarch as puppet master, a royal father whose omniscience amounts to omnipotence. This image of the King would be a hard sell to a public already familiar with his glaring failure at controlling his sons and brothers, the most notorious example of which was probably the 1772 Royal Marriages Act. Introduced in response to the Duke of Cumberland's marriage to a commoner, this law mandated that no descendant of George II under the age of twenty-five could marry without the consent of the King, and that members of the royal family over twenty-five who did not have the King's consent must give formal notice to the Privy Council and wait a year before marrying. The Act was widely seen as tyrannical and wrong-headed, so severely limiting the marital choices of the royal family as to threaten the succession. Such a very public (and, in the event, catastrophic[33]) gesture of restraint is at odds with the image of a king wisely and methodically introducing his eldest son to "the world."

Rather than being vehicles for the expression of domestic conflict, these letters raise familial love to the level of the erotic, evoking their own kind of family romance. Not only does sex substitute for filial impiety; filial and sexual "adulation" share space. After enumerating his father's virtues, Florizel goes on:

> You will say, my dear PERDITA! that I have got out of my *place* too;—that I am bestowing so much adulation on a Father that I shall have none left for the object of my Love.—Yes, my dearest creature! I have enough for both:—but, it being composed of different kinds, they will not interfere with one another. (59)

No one is out of place in this royal romance, which positions all the principal characters where they are best calculated to serve the country through guaranteeing a wise and seamless succession. Once again the reader has the choice whether to see this depiction of the royal father and son as satire or as new information. Either this text provokes laughter at the difference between what is known of these people and how they are presented, or it is a text that, like the Siddons discussion in *Effusions*, invites readers in on secrets that connect them with the royal family in ways no "public" text has been able to do.

The readers' choice rests on their decision whether to believe in the authenticity, and the privacy, of the letters.

These novels partake of what Ian Duncan calls "the ambiguous subjectivity of a work of fiction, which takes possession of the imagination while the reader goes on knowing that it is just a fiction" (*Scott's Shadow* 8). *Budget* and *Effusions* push this ambiguity further, persuading readers that what takes possession of their imaginations is a fictionalized representation of factual events: "real life" shaped into novels. Their satire is in inverse relation to their fictiveness. In the 1781 *Poetic Epistle from Florizel to Perdita: with Perdita's Answer* fictiveness is the source of satire, rather than its opposite. The author/editor of *Poetic Epistle* positions its letters as artifice rather than artifacts, at the same time claiming that their content is more political than amatory. He prefaces the two verse epistles, Florizel's to Perdita and her answer, with a *Preliminary Discourse upon the Education of Princes*, and the letters illustrate the prefatory arguments. He takes as a given that his readers are more interested in representation than in authentication. This editor mocks his own claim that the letters are real selections from among the ninety-seven he says the Prince wrote to Robinson, "one of which is as long as from London to the Land's end" (17). The Duke of Cumberland has been trying to recover these letters, because "with reason he apprehends they may be as well spelt as his own, which is exactly the case, for it cannot be expected that any great personage should be able to spell common words" (17).[34] Unaccountably, however, the editor has been successful where the Duke has not. The two letters he reproduces indicate that, not only can this great personage spell common words; he can shape them into heroic couplets. Like the editor of *Effusions* invoking the Cumberland letters, this editor asserts a literary ancestry that both legitimizes and merges with his letters, a transaction in which fantasized discourse replaces documentation:

> [T]he Poetical Lines here given to the Public . . . may be suffer'd to grace the same shelf with Ovid's Epistles. That those celebrated Epistles are fictitious has never yet been matter of complaint. It imports not whether they are genuine. The incidents alluded to should be true and so they are both in Florizel's Epistle and Perdita's Answer. (8)

Shifting from the indicative to the subjunctive mood and back again, the editor obliterates a distinction between what ought to be and what is. The celebrated epistles he refers to are probably those in Dryden's collected translations of Ovid's *Heroides* or *Epistolae Heroidium*, first published in 1680 as *Ovid's Epistles, Translated by Many Hands*

and republished frequently throughout the eighteenth century. The *Heroides* were imagined letters in verse from famous heroines to their faithless or otherwise absent lovers. The "incidents alluded to" include Sappho's suicide by drowning after her desertion by her lover Phaon, Dido's suicide after her desertion by Aeneas, and Medea's revenge on her husband Jason and his lover Creusa.[35] Because these and other stories of forsaken and revengeful women *should be* true, the stories contained in the letters between Florizel and Perdita *are*. This logic not only mixes moods; it also rests on different usages of the adjective "true." The stories in the original letters contain mythic "truths," universal and eternal verities, which explains the continuing relevance of these later translations. It follows, somehow, that the incidents in the two poetic epistles are accurate and verifiable, although the editor never claims that the original incidents *are* true, only that they should be. The hope that these stories contain verities guarantees the accuracy of the others.

What are the incidents alluded to in *Poetic Epistle*? The letters are an extension of the argument of the *Preliminary Discourse*, which prefaces them. Both the discourse and the letters anticipate the conservatism implicit in the traditional comic plot. *Poetic Epistle* suggests that the two young lovers, if left to their own devices, would happily conform to the wills of their elders and the government: "let the young folks act as they will, as long as the old folks are content and agreed" (20). In their account of the affair Florizel was first captivated by Perdita when he saw her cross-dressed as Viola. This desire was directed and whetted by "Lord Pandar," identifiable as Lord Malden. "Lord Pandar" is now trying to undermine the relationship, however, because Perdita has been giving her lover "admonitions" (18) designed to break his connection to the Whigs and cement a relationship with the King and Government. Perdita's "political system" is "intirely [sic] ministerial" (17), and "notwithstanding the manifest bias which she perceived in Florizel's mind to adopt the party of opposition, when he came to figure in public, yet under pain of his displeasure she continued steady to the ministerial cause" (18–19). In consequence, the Whigs, headed by Cumberland and Malden, are trying various means of parting the couple, including suggesting that Perdita has reunited with her husband, who had willingly prostituted her. Perdita, on the other hand, practices her politics with her body, refusing "to bestow a favor even in the way of her occupation upon a single member of the minority." As long as she continues in this practice, "she is sure of one powerful friend at least at court, and the world will continue to see a justification of the sentiment that

they have nothing to do with the affair" (20). The powerful friend at court is either the Queen who, along with Perdita's mother, promotes the affair or the King who deliberately looks the other way. In her "Answer," Perdita assures Florizel that his fears of her inconstancy are groundless; her desires—both erotic and pecuniary—guarantee her fidelity and accord with the best interests of "the nation":

> Our two mammas have courteously agreed,
> If we're content the nation need not heed.
> Your royal Father winks at all, no doubt,
>
> ....
>
> If then such honours to my lot have come,
> What cuckold spouse could make my house his home?
>
> ....
>
> Leave not the object of your choice to fall
> Promiscuous sacrifice to lustful call!
> The grave should sooner open to my arms
> Than wretches taste appropriated charms. (39)

The suggestion that the parents control the children, whose affair furthers, rather than impedes, their design, politicizes the voyeurism offered by the letters. Their secret is now neither sex nor filial impiety; it is the inner workings at the heart of government. More specifically, it is the absolute power of monarchy, which orchestrates even supposedly illicit behaviors. This text makes explicit the exchange of political secrets for sexual secrets that was implicit in the pseudo-discoveries of the earlier novels. Although the editor assures his readers, disingenuously, that the real truth about Florizel's love affairs "has not been discovered," he defends the people's "right to know every thing, more particularly the most secret actions of a Prince who is their future King" (11). The real secret actions in *Poetic Epistle*, however, are those of the current King. More Prospero than Leontes, this King is "not only sole contriver but sole minister, the source and spring of all we have seen and felt for these twenty years back; he is himself the man behind the curtain, the secret influence upon the cabinet, the Alpha and Omega of the last peace and the present war[36]" (16).

What begins as a flimsy justification for mass-marketing the secrets of the rich and famous as the public's right to transparency in government ends by declaring that we know least where we should know

best: "There is not a more mistaken character in the kingdom than that which ought to be the best-known" (11–12). Although the King "would rather take up with the character of an idiot than a tyrant" (14), we should not be deceived by this persona. We know nothing about him, while he knows everything about us. Mole's asymmetrical relationship between celebrities and celebrity watchers is reversed here. The monarch's celebrity—that is, his reputation for "establishing academies, collecting curiosities or fabricating nick-nackeries" (14)—is a front to disguise his absolute power. He is the one who comes to know without being known, although his knowledge is acquired through surveillance rather than voyeurism. The real transparency is not in the government but in the speech and actions of the people: "The tittle-tattle of every private family in the kingdom is at the tongue's end at St. James's" (13). It is the public who are not allowed to be private, the King whose omniscience is the best kept of state secrets.

The politics of the pamphlet draw from Bolingbroke's 1749 *Idea of a Patriot King*, suggesting that its author is an older style Tory rather than a radical, for whom the King has betrayed the principles of a constitutional monarch.[37] In a moment of Swiftian satire, he outlines by inversion the multiple evils occasioned by the present administration:

> Some vain theorists might rather have wished that the first and last idea of his education had been that of a Patriot King. Romantic nonsense. A monster, a chimaera in politics, what never did and never will exist. Such a character would produce so complete a revolution in government as would overturn the whole system of human affairs. Luxury would diminish with the loss of corruption, and with the loss of luxury would perish half the arts and manufactures of the country. Idleness unsupported by taxes upon others must be turned into industry. . . . Red coats would disappear at home, because a standing army would be no longer necessary. Even black coats would be much diminished; for besides the retrenchment of the idle dignitaries of the church, with a reform of the law the lawyers would all be ruined. Such would be some of the blessed mischiefs of a Patriot King, of which fortunately there is very little danger. . . . (14–15)

This King is "[d]etermined . . . that no dangerous innovations shall be admitted in this country, no reforms adopted, for no one knows where reforms will end." He has therefore ensured that no "hope shall be entertained" (22) of any of his offspring, particularly of his first and second sons.

The editor of *Poetic Epistle* reserves his harshest criticism for the King's combination of public ineffectuality and domestic tyranny, crystallized in the recent loss of the American colonies and in the Royal Marriages Act. He is a poor monarch and a worse parent to the same degree that he is an expert in "science"—or, rather, his science is despotism:

> No art, no science unversed in, unless it were that of governing; . . . Neither is that ignorance chargeable except in such distant concerns as those of the colonies; for the science of domestic government is perfectly conned at home. Resistance here is all in vain; and absolute power is within the Sovereign's reach without a cloak whenever he pleases to exert it. The same under a disguise is already exerted every day before our eyes. (13)

Meanwhile, "the legislature of great Britain" has become an arm of "the Sovereign," at whose "beck" they "have repealed the law of god from marriage to concubinage, and . . . stampt an honor upon intrigue beyond the preacher's power to remove" (23).

Evoking a government under the hidden command of a monarch whose power ought more properly to be checked than abetted and camouflaged by his ministers, *Poetic Epistle* echoes Bolingbroke in its sympathy for the separation of powers.[38] The notion that the royal family have secrets that they don't want the public to know and that affect both government and succession anticipates the paranoia surrounding the regency crisis of 1788, when the nature and extent of the King's malady was both an unsolvable mystery and a carefully guarded secret. The author of *Poetic Epistle* is not concerned about offering evidence for his claims about the royal family. He suggests instead that what is knowable, i.e., the facts about the Robinson affair, "has not been discovered." The rest of his pamphlet is filled with rumors of hidden plots whose very secrecy allows him to evade the question of proof. As with any conspiracy theory, less is more: the less there is that can be proven, the deeper and more extensive the plot. He has already discredited the testimony of the epistles themselves by calling attention to the artificiality of their form and content and by satirizing the discovery and authentication narratives of the epistolary convention. His allegations about the royal family invert the expectations contained in notions of monarchy as a performance by offering a king whose performed celebrity is a cover. The secret of the royal family is that there is no power behind the throne: the throne is the power behind the government.

Pornographic Satire and the Private Parts of Royalty

Poetic Epistle depends on the absence of verification for its political force. Its private letters, which are neither private nor letters, are not proof of anything except anxiety. By contrast, *Letters from Perdita to a certain Israelite, and His Answers to them*, also published in 1781, claim to be letters written by Robinson in 1773 to John King, a self-made banker and radical writer.[39] In them, King pieces together a narrative out of the emerging dialogue between Robinson's mercenary hypocrisy and his eloquent and high-minded credulity that is meant both to forecast and to disarm her public image in 1781. It is likely that some of these letters are genuine. Robinson's are denominated and signed with her initials; the name "Perdita" appears only in the title and references to the title, and the preface and introductory biography refer to the writer of the letters as "Mrs. R—." Paula Byrne points to references to the Robinsons' trips to Bristol and Wales in 1773 and observes that "details in the published letters are so specific that it is impossible to suppose that the volume was merely a malicious fabrication" (32). She points out that Robinson and Malden tried unsuccessfully to buy the originals back from King, which suggests an awareness of the continuing damage they could do, even after the publication of King's pamphlet (138). An article in January 1, 1811 number of *The Scourge* claims that the affair was genuine but that the letters were largely forged as part of a blackmail attempt.[40]

Based on their contemporary references, "Perdita's" letters may be Robinson's with little alteration, but the "Israelite's" letters have probably been heavily emended or written entirely for this volume. An 1800 pseudo-memoir purporting to be King's claims that his letters are fabrications, designed to enhance his image by a close, and specifically sexualized, association with Robinson and to spice up the publication, if the blackmail attempt should fail. *Authentic Memoirs, Memorandums, and Confessions. Taken from the Journal of His Predatory Majesty, the King of the Swindlers* is a mixture of first person memoir and third person narrative, presented as King's edited diary. The manuscript document was "left . . . on the seat of a hackney coach," found by "a lady," and then passed on to the putative editor (v), who published the entries, "arrange[d] . . . (for the sake of perspicuity) in a more connected order than they are presented in the manuscript" (vii). Casting his interventions as supplementary

narration for the purposes of clarification allows this editor to make the persuasive gestures that are his real aim:

> Many of the adventures, enterprizes and exploits that were recorded in *scattered hints*, and *memorandums* by the King, are therefore stated narratively: but he assures the reader that in such cases, he has neither presumed to indulge his fancy,—to deviate from the *obvious* meaning of the writer,—nor to paint him in livelier colours than he paints himself. (vi)

Having assured his readers that they can trust equally his editorial and his narrative integrity, he offers the two types of narrative as seamlessly connected. He quotes "the King's" story of having stumbled upon " 'this packet, containing my correspondence with the PERDITA' " while " 'rummaging my repository of old papers' " (106) and then follows this with his account of King's unsuccessful effort to blackmail Robinson with the letters, which were mostly "fictitious" although interspersed, "to give the credit of authenticity to his publication" with "*some*, which she had actually written to him on pecuniary business, *as her broker*" (110). The reason for the affair, which was never consummated, is given in "the King's" voice. The Prince offered to subsidize his ten-month liaison with Robinson, on King's promise that he would then pass her on, but " 'availed himself of the privilege of Royalty' " and seduced her first (107).

Authentic Memoirs, Memorandums, and Confessions is an anti-Semitic attack on a wealthy and influential Jewish radical, framed as a rogue confession, and sheds no light on the authenticity of the *Letters from Perdita*. The text gives no reason beyond implied ethnicity to believe that King's interspersals are any less valid than the editor's. Certainly, the replacement of King for Malden as pander to the Prince has no basis in fact, because King's association with Robinson predates the Florizel and Perdita affair by nearly a decade. King's renomination as "the King" both satirizes his overweening ambition (there is an actual Prince in the narrative, but he is the only King) and echoes the labeling of Robinson's transformation from "Perdita" to "the Perdita"—from heroine to courtesan. It is the pander, however, and not the prostitute, who is rendered "odious and despicable" by "endeavouring to convert her favours into an article of trade" (108); his greed and his sexual inadequacy are both features of his Jewishness.[41]

The editor and King both take liberties with their materials, justified in the interests of framing a coherent narrative of "true" events.

King's is the more compact—like the Florizel and Perdita novels, focused on a single episode.[42] The climax of this narrative, however, is not sexual culmination but refusal of a financial transaction and the reestablishment (or the adjustment) of virtue. In the narrative of Robinson's letters alone, she offers the promise of sex in exchange for a loan; King holds out for the sex without the loan, and loses. In the interchange between her letters and King's, his loss establishes his virtue, when her crass self-marketing contrasts with his superior sensibility and philosophy. Robinson's letters introduce money matters: She begins with a cautious generalization about true "Generosity," which consists in "bestowing [money] in proportion to the Merit and Condition of those who stand in need of our Assistance" (23). In case he chooses not to recognize the local relevance of these generalizations, she adds, "I shall depend on your Promise this Week, for I am really distressed" (23). His reply combines moralizing with prescient admonitions: Her "immoderate Propensity to acquire," he warns, "will lead you to Indiscretion, and expose you to the destructive Stratagems of some libidinous Profligate." He then slips into erotic fantasy, which suggests where her immoderate desires ought more properly to be directed, "How I pant to be at *Bristol*, to accompany you through the verdant Meads to the Side of some Silver Stream, slow wandering in Meanders down the Glade, or to the cool Recess of a shady Grove, where every Gale whispers Pleasure, Contentment and Love!" (25). Throughout their exchanges, Robinson is steadfast in linking the sexual nature of their relationship with the financial, King steadfast in maintaining their dissociation. In another letter, his declaration of love merges, once again, into erotic fantasy:

> [A]ll my Pleasures, all my Happiness concentre in you; entwined in those snowy Arms, reposed on thy panting Bosom, grateful to the Senses as Fragrance, and more fair than Parian Marble, thy every Look animates my Soul; every Action indicates the mystick Meaning of thy wanton Love, till my melting Senses are drowned in delicious Transports, and that Elisium is realized, which superstitious Mahometans but fancy. (33)

He ends this letter with a wish to "retire" with her "to some rural sequestered Spot," claiming that he would "prefer the jocund Hours of Love and Temperance, in an humble Cottage, to stately Mansions and unsalutary Dainties" (34). Sex and frugality are naturally linked, and avarice is the enemy of love. He follows this statement with a new paragraph, not quite a postscript, but separated by uncharacteristic

white space: "You little Prodigal, you have spent 200L in Six Weeks: I will not answer your Drafts" (34).

This insistence on separating their sexual relationship from the financial might be original to King's letters. Robinson's next letter contains another request for a loan, but the tone is distant enough to suggest both disappointment at his earlier refusal and resistance to his erotic overtures. It is also more wifely: "that stupid Thing, R—" whom, in an earlier letter she could not love (26) becomes "my dear Mr. R—" (35). But King's bewilderment at the "cold indifferent Style" (37) of her letter ("How have I offended?" he asks) is so disingenuous as to suggest contrivance. His inability to make sense of her behavior means it is not *he* who understands their affair as a financial transaction, while his naïve denials reveal the sordid and corrupting greed behind her pretended "youthful" ardor:

> Avidity of Wealth and Sordidness of Temper seldom infect the youthful Mind; they grow in the venal Souls of Age and Decripitude [sic]; and such is human Depravity, that we are more eager to acquire, as we are less swayed by Temptation. The avaricious Wretch, whose *Taste* is *vitiated*, hoards up the Wealth to rust in mouldy Coffers, which his niggard Soul cannot enjoy; but the *untainted Breast*, warm in Dissipation and Youth, cannot harbour such a *Selfish mercenary* Disposition: Why then this *inordinate* Desire of Money? Your letters are unremitting Series of Drafts on me; my Inability to satisfy them cannot be the Motive of *this Strange Transition*. (37–38)

While seeming careful to establish a contrast between Robinson's sexuality (the source of her desirability) and financial greed, King connects them. It is "seldom" that youthful sensuality (the "*untainted Breast*, warm in Dissipation") is aligned with "Depravity." It "cannot" be happening here. And yet only Robinson, whose letters "are unremitting Series of Drafts," can be the "Avaricious Wretch" in whom desire for wealth is her one remaining sin. The moral economy in the passage is consistent with the tone of King's letters, in privileging sexual pleasure as a kind of sentimental moral ideal: young lovers alone in a rural cottage. "Dissipation" is distinct from—is even opposed to—"Depravity." The one is warm and untainted, the other niggardly and vitiated. In associating sexual license with youthful innocence, King evokes the pastoral source of Robinson's courtesan identity, but only to expose its irony. Her professed sexuality is a cover for her greed. The wanton is really the avaricious wretch with vitiated taste; the money-lender is the true man of feeling. All this time, she has been faking it.

Part of King's goal in writing the pamphlet was to establish that Robinson was both an aspiring writer and not a very good one. He claims in his preface that she was responsible for the publication of *Poetic Epistle*, which he sees as un-ironic self-promotion: "being acquainted with both the prosaic and the poetic Stile of Mrs. R—, I discovered the Poem and Exordium to be her own Production, and that affectionate flattering Metre ascribed to the Prince, the vain Effusion of her own Imagination" (5–6).[43] He insists, however, that she could not have written it without help; it must have been "revised and bettered by some more correct and able Pen" (14), directly contradicting the first couplet of Perdita's reply to Florizel: "Think not, my Prince, the dictates of my pen/Owe their faint force to aid of letter'd men" (35). Robinson's letters to King give the lie to these lines by establishing her dependence on his superior writing skills: "Shall I ever write as well as you do?" she asks, adding, conveniently, "I am fond of Poetry, and you shall correct some Attempts in that Way, when I come to *London*" (26). He replies that he could only provide "some unimportant Alteration in the formal Mode of Grammar and Orthography." In "Sprightliness, Wit and Genius," he assures her, "I cannot keep pace with you" (27). He then goes on to demonstrate far more sprightliness, wit, genius, and volume, than she. His letters are longer, and increasingly more eloquent, sentimental, and philosophical than hers. His occupy roughly two-thirds of the twenty-five pages of correspondence; hers take up a little more than eight.

King's modest demurral notwithstanding, he makes it clear that Robinson is not the writer here; her literary aspirations are affectation. She has "amused herself," he writes in his introduction, "with composing Sonnets, Panegyricks, Acrosticks, and various other Compositions *in Favour of herself*" (13–14) and, presumably, *not* corrected by him. Their vanity, however, always outweighs their literary merit, which "never extended beyond a very humble Imitation of Shenstone's Poems" (14–15).[44] Prostitution, not poetry, is her real calling, and prostitution, rather than imposture, is the real crime his pamphlet uncovers. King maintains that his object in publishing the letters is to expose fraud. "The general Object of this Publication," he claims in the preface, "is the same as was the *original* Intent of the *Society for checking and prosecuting S– –*" (ii). He is probably referring to The Guardians, or the Society for the Protection of Trade against Swindlers and Sharpers. The Guardians was one of the earliest and best known trade protection societies that emerged in London in the later eighteenth century; it was founded in 1776 and continued, with various name changes, throughout the nineteenth century.[45]

Authentic Memoirs, Memorandums and Confessions is dedicated to The Guardians, and recommended to their attention, tactlessly, as "a work that has for its object, the development and exposure of the arts, devices, and manoeuvres, by which Swindlers elude your vigilance." Both King and the anonymous author of *Authentic Memoirs* suggest that the Society has already outlived its effectiveness, deviated from its "*original* Intent" to the point where swindlers "elude [its] influence." The job of exposing and protecting against fraud now properly belongs to the world of letters. The real police are the editors of hidden or suppressed documents, who establish their probity and their literary or editorial authority by pointing the finger at others.

The preface suggests that the letters will prove Robinson is a swindler, a nascent criminal category with which King hopes to shock his readers and to mark her as a member of a much lower class than the beautiful courtesan who is mistress of the Prince of Wales. He outlines a series of scams in which the Robinsons use the appearance of wealth and Mary's sexuality to lure and defraud their victims. The letters themselves, however, offer a simpler narrative of the exchange of sex for money. The fact that they mention cash rather than expensive gifts (diamond framed miniatures, say, or elaborate carriages) suggests that she is closer to a common prostitute than a courtesan. She does not imperiously reject the base cash offers of prospective protectors or their procurers. Instead, she is the first to introduce the subject of money, and is particular about cash amounts: "I am astonished that you should scruple to lend me such a Sum as 100L when it was the last I should borrow, and should have repaid it faithfully. Now you have an Opportunity of shewing your Love, or I shall see that you have all along deceived me" (40).[46]

King links erotic pleasure with avarice as a way to discredit Robinson and to license her mass-marketing as a consumable sexual object. His rhetoric notwithstanding, his letters offer a view of *both* the dissipated wanton *and* the vitiated miser. His readers get to share the moral high ground with him, while still enjoying the sexual frisson of picturing Robinson's "*inventive Enjoyments*" and "*magick Touch*" that causes "a *Delirium of Ecstasy*" (34). Perhaps she knows tricks other girls don't? We can only imagine. But we get to imagine because she has forfeited our good opinion by seeking payment like a common prostitute. Following his usual practice of conjoining her duplicity and her desirability, King encourages his readers to picture Robinson as he has seen her—to see her through him:

> I will not think you sincere, when you say you love; yet if you are not in earnest, you have given *too serious* a Testimony of it for one only

> *in Joke*; but it is almost Blasphemy to suspect one of such heavenly Form, so beautiful, such Symmetry of Features, such delicate welformed Limbs, such panting snowy Breasts, such—Oh! what *Raptures* ineffable seize my *delighted Imagination*, when I *recollect* the *delirious Transports* that throbbed to my very Soul, when that beauteous Form stood confessed in all the resistless Power of—*Nakedness.* I must stop till my *enraptured* Fancy returns from the *ecstatick* Thought. (28–29)

This passage threatens to disrupt the narrative trajectory of King's pamphlet with the alternate narrative of pornography. Just as he is arrested in his meditation on Robinson's sincerity by enraptured recollection of the encounter that ought to prove it, he invites his readers to stop following the story of how she swindled him and just enjoy the show.

Sarah Toulalan points out that this orchestrated voyeurism is "integral" to the experience of pornography: "Part of the frisson of pornography . . . is the pleasure and shock of seeing something that 'should' remain hidden and private." It is in the "disrupted space" between public and private "that pleasure emerges" (161). King's re-created strip-tease shows us first her face, then her limbs, then her breasts, until finally the tassels and g-string are cast aside, and we and he both pause again over the sight of her "in all the resistless Power of—*Nakedness.*" This methodical unveiling until there is nothing left to take off replicates the accretive organization of pornographic texts, in which each depicted encounter withholds a little less, is a little more graphic, or a little more kinky, to keep the reader engaged until the end. This is the structuring of the 1784 *Memoirs of Perdita*, which uses existing material on Robinson and the Prince as a scaffolding on which to build its titillating supertext. The anonymous author[47] lifts background text from the tête-à-têtes and *Effusions of Love*.[48] He supplements this with gradually amplifying amorous encounters: a blushing Perdita with her first lover, an interlude in a closed carriage; an especially implausible encounter with an army of ants and a strapping gardener; a threesome, and eventually the image of Perdita humping so vigorously that she almost suffocates the cuckolded voyeur under her bed.

McCreery and Runge both point out that the harshest depictions of Robinson, in prints, pamphlets, and pornographic and semi-pornographic volumes, proliferated after 1782. They probably reflected her support for Charles James Fox, who had been briefly her lover after the Prince, and the ill-fated Fox-North coalition: "The majority of satirical prints, and indeed the most stimulating ones,

appeared not when Robinson was most socially active, but when her male friends' political careers were most controversial" (McCreery, *Satirical Gaze* 101).[49] The year 1784, when *Memoirs of Perdita* was published, "was the year of the famous Westminster election, when Robinson campaigned with the Duchess of Devonshire and others for Fox, which would explain a good number of the satires (Runge 570n21). Like King's pamphlet, *Memoirs of Perdita* shades the figure of the courtesan into that of the prostitute, emphasizing Robinson's fondness for cash payments and "the all-persuasive arguments of a Bank note" (49). As Toulalan points out, however, pornographic satire is still pornography. Its sexual content is not simply a vehicle, to be cast aside in the search for the "real" aims of a piece. The sexual and the satiric share space.[50] Like King, this author links erotic and commercial motives, so that readers can feel free to desire and deride Robinson equally: "Love and avarice were so predominant in Perdita's bosom, that she could seldom resist an opportunity of gratifying either; but when both could be centered in one object, the impulse to gratification became irresistible indeed" (55–56). The irresistible impulse for gratification suggests the repetitive, autoerotic narrative of this text. For most of the novel, unlike the earlier novels, the fact of sex takes precedence over questions about who is having the sex. Robinson is the exception, of course, but then Robinson is the autoerotic vehicle, the porn star whose reliable ability to excite and gratify can be inserted into a variety of sexual situations.

Memoirs of Perdita is imaginative literature masquerading as fact, as are the earlier epistolary novels, although this masquerade is the more transparent as the satire is the more direct.[51] This time, however, rather than claiming privileged information about what happened and when, the editor assumes we know what was happening and that our knowledge licenses him to go one step further and *show* us. Robinson was a famous courtesan. This meant she had lots of expensive trinkets, a compelling public presence, and the protection of powerful men. It also meant that she had sex—probably a lot—and that she was, however high the price, for sale.[52] One goal of the pornographic texts was to damage her political credibility—and by extension the credibility of the men she campaigned for—by representing her as a whore.[53] An equally compelling goal, however, was to trade on her public identity as "the lost one" (already lost, take note, before her affair with the Prince) to license a peep show framed as voyeurism. In the earlier epistolary novels, readers are offered the opportunity to peer into the bedrooms of the rich and famous—or at least, if not into their bedrooms, then over their shoulders as they

write about what happened in their bedrooms. In the pornographic texts, we only pretend to be peering into Robinson's bedroom—or her garden, or her carriage, or the "convent" where she rents rooms for the night. In reality we're paying customers watching performed sex, which the whore herself has produced and arranged for our consumption and to enrich her coffers. Robinson here exchanges places with the chambermaid who sold her mistress's letters "for the gratification of the public and her own emolument." Both King and the author of *Memoirs of Perdita* suggest that it is now Robinson who is making money off the relics of her dalliances. Public exposure is all part of the plan. This whore is her own pimp, this peep show stripper her own patter man.[54]

Robinson's affair with the Prince occupies a relatively small space in *Memoirs of Perdita*. As with much of the background material in the novel, the author borrows this episode from another source, although he spices it up for the later text. The original source is a pair of letters that were printed in *The Rambler's Magazine* in 1783. The full title of this periodical, which ran from 1783 to 1788, is "*The Rambler's Magazine; or, the Annals of Gallantry, Glee, Pleasure, and the Bon Ton; Calculated for the Entertainment of The Polite World; and to Furnish The Man of Pleasure with a Most Delicious Banquet of Amorous, Bacchanalian, Whimsical, Humorous, Theatrical and Polite Entertainment*." Much of the first volume is devoted to satirical and semi-salacious anecdotes about Robinson and her circle, including the Prince, Tarleton, Fox, Elizabeth Armistead, and Grace Dalrymple Elliott, another royal mistress usually referred to as Dally the Tall. In its opening address, *The Rambler's* invites contributions from "such Gentlemen and Ladies as are able and willing to contribute," and in late 1783 printed two letters, supposedly from Florizel to Perdita, and submitted by "A Constant Reader." Constant Reader claims to have found a part of the first, undated letter "wrapped about some fresh butter, from a cheesemonger's," to have recognized "the *arms on the seal*," and sent his servant back for more dairy products in hopes of finding the rest of the letter, "in which I was lucky enough to succeed" (361). Harking back to *The Budget of Love*'s discovery narrative, he tells us that this letter "among other papers, had been sold by the maid servant of a *well-known Fair One*," although he does not explain how it came to be "sadly torn and greased" at the cheesemonger's instead of printed with the others (361). His story retains the standard elements of found manuscript narratives—a fragment of a "tattered collection" (493) that "caused me some difficulty to make it out" and that "seems to hint at some mysterious

or uncommon circumstance" (361), but turns these elements into parody. The obscurity of the document is caused by its demotion as an instrument of commercial exchange, from commodity to package, and from literary commodity to mundane grocer's packaging. The mystery of the circumstance is only mystery in that the writer uses such recognizable soft-core euphemisms that all his readers will immediately understand.

The letter and its companion, published in the supplement to volume 1, chronicle the first and second sexual encounters between Florizel and Perdita. In the first, Florizel bemoans his impotence when "having overcome all difficulties . . . nay all the loose and silken counterscarps that guard the sacred fort, and nothing left to stop my pursuit,—that then, by an over transport, I should fail fainting before the surrendering gates, unable to receive the yielding treasure" (361). In the second he celebrates his ability to finally consummate the affair and the "heaven of joy" he feels when her "wondrous love" "increase[s]" his "to that vast height" (493).[55] *Memoirs of Perdita* reproduces these letters almost verbatim, although the author sexes them up a bit with the addition of an unsuccessful hand-job in the first encounter, "not even the application of Perdita's soft hand could possibly rouse the languid godhead; his mad desires remained, but all inactive, as age or death itself; as feeble, and unfit for joy, as if his youthful fire had long been past" (99). In the *Rambler's* letters this spicy detail is missing, although the comparison of Florizel's impotence with the feebleness of age is still there, with only the pronouns changed: "*my* mad desires remained . . . as if *my* youthful fire had long been past" (361–62; italics added). He goes on, in *Rambler's* but not in *Memoirs*, "Curse on my youth!—give me, ye powers, old age; for that has some excuse, but youth has none:—'tis dulness [sic], stupid insensibility" (362).

The reason for the mysterious absence of these two letters from the otherwise complete collection in the published volumes is now clear; they were suppressed—by an unspecified agent whose relation to the earlier transactions involving the letters is obscure—because they depict a Prince of Wales who falls something below the ideal of manly royalty. This prince is one for two; on an off day he is closer to—even identifies with—an enfeebled old man than a virile teenager. Constant Reader introduces the second letter with an extended sexual joke, "With some difficulty I have made out a second letter, from the tattered collection I mentioned . . . and which seems relative to the *completion* of the business alluded to in the former.—You must make proper allowances for want of connection,

as the original was tattered, and soiled in many places" (493). The letters are a metonym for their writer, for whose inability to connect we must make proper allowances—after all, he was able to complete the business eventually. Tattered and soiled but still recognizable, they represent the shabby underside of monarchy. More alarmingly, the letters are a reminder that one of the risks of a royal libertine is impotence. The Prince's frequent bouts of ill health were already common knowledge, as was the belief that he induced or exacerbated them by excessive partying. Horace Walpole identified this family malady as originating with George III's mother, Princess Augusta, and claimed that the King was only able to contain the illness "by the most rigorous and systematical abstinence" but that the Prince's "habit of private drinking" made him particularly susceptible (*Last Journals* II. 349–50).

Walpole calls this illness a "scrofulous humour" (349) and points to the "blotches all over" the face of the Prince as evidence (350). His armchair diagnosis, however regal in its associations, is probably incorrect; scrofula typically presents on the neck of the patient rather than on the face.[56] His history is probably closer to the mark, however. Skin blotches are a common feature of chronic or cutaneous porphyria, and can also be present in patients with variegate porphyria. Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter first suggested, in their 1969 *George III and the Mad-business*, that the King's bouts of dementia were caused by porphyria, and that the illness extended backward as far as the Stuarts and forward to several of his children, including the Prince of Wales.[57] Porphyria is not syphilis or—a more immediate cause of impotence—gonorrhea, and there is no suggestion that Walpole took these blotches to be signs of the pox. Nonetheless, his analysis concentrates the twin evils of hereditary debility and a habit of irresponsible partying. Abstinence can mean foregoing other pleasures than those of the bottle. This is a worrying combination, especially given that the King had already suffered one episode of inexplicable ill health in 1765, shortly after assuming the throne. Libertinism in the royal heir highlighted the dangers of precarious health in the monarch. The Prince's bad habits can also be seen as the underside of his father's debility, presenting the risk that excess might leave one permanently spent.

Writing about Charles II, James Grantham Turner observes that "Royal libertinism could be interpreted both as an 'effeminate' slackness and as a masculine declaration of power and privilege, an implicit but unmistakable equation of sovereign authority with phallic vigor" ("Pepys and the Private Parts of Monarchy" 108). With his dozen

illegitimate children and no heir, Charles II represented the potential dangers of that equation. The Restoration king, he was also the king whose profligacy and untimely death plunged the nation back temporarily into Catholicism and precipitated the Glorious Revolution. His numerous skirmishes with Parliament and the "arbitrary mix of hedonism and repression" (Turner 104) that characterized his reign made him available as a symbol of irresponsible absolute monarchy. The atavistic force of that symbol is clear in the *Preliminary Discourse* to *Poetic Epistle*. Even a firmly Protestant monarch who reversed Charles' paternal record (over a dozen legitimate children and no illegitimate) could revive fears of pre-Revolutionary abuses of power. Moreover, as Turner points out, the "mingling of the personal and the political" in the Restoration monarchy "allowed any waning of erotic energy to be read as a weakening of authority" (108). King George's famously monogamous erotic energy produced fifteen children. Of the thirteen who survived childhood, only two were able to father legitimate children during his lifetime, and of those two granddaughters, only one lived long enough to produce heirs.[58] It was not possible in 1784 to predict this remarkable dwindling of the royal line, but satirists of the royal family need not look forward to worry about the stability of the monarchy. A prince who can only make it up to the gate in his first encounter with a famous beauty, who is suddenly less like Prince Hal and more like his dying father, suggests a less than robust royal family and can be seen as a symbol of fragility that extends back at least to the father who produced him.

King George experienced his first episode of the dementia that eventually incapacitated him four years after *Memoirs of Perdita* was published, but he first became seriously, even dangerously, ill in 1765—ill enough to propose establishing a regency in case of his death when his heir was only three years old. Macalpine and Hunter posit that the 1765 illness was an early manifestation of the porphyria that caused his dementia, although they stress that he showed no symptoms of madness. The danger in 1765 was generally supposed to be consumption; rumors that this was the King's first episode of insanity, and that his incapacity was hidden from the public, did not begin until after his death and appear to have no basis in fact (Macalpine and Hunter 176–82). 1788 was another matter: the King's dementia appeared out of the blue and remained for several months after his physical symptoms had abated, leading his practitioners to conclude that he was on the verge of becoming incurably insane. They were alternately cautious and incautious about reporting

their suspicions, however, selective in their confidants and remarkably stingy with official reports. The regency crisis made the question of what was really going on within the royal family of immediate and national importance. In the context of the Prince's secret marriage to a Catholic widow, the events of 1788 highlighted both the public relevance and the public representation of the private lives of royalty.

Chapter Two

Wandering Royals

. . . to define true madness,
What is't but to be nothing else but mad? —Hamlet 2. 2. 93–94

In "Mary Robinson and the Dramatic Art of the Comeback," Michael Gamer and Terry F. Robinson write about the calculated theatricality of Robinson's return to London society after her affair with the Prince ended. Suggesting that "Robinson's years as an actress constitute only part of her theatrical career" (220), they point to her staging of events such as her appearance at the theater (off rather than onstage) and her appearance in print with the carefully timed debut of her Della Cruscan poems (247–48). Of the former, they note that Robinson's box at the opera became its own "theatrical space" (226), set with floor-to-ceiling mirrors. Ostensibly designed to make the stage visible from every angle, the mirrors also make her the theater's "most prominent spectator, since the very mirrors that improved her own view of the stage also increased her own visibility to other audience members." "[J]ust as the stage was reflected and (in Robinson's French mirrors) amplified for the viewing pleasure of those in the box, so was the fashionable *Perdita* reflected, amplified, and multiplied for the viewing pleasure of actor and audience member" (228).

Robinson's stage management of her recovery from her relationship with the Prince of Wales invites speculation that its commencement might have been an equally managed affair. In the first instance, she seems to have had help from the Prince. Robinson's *Memoirs*, the only detailed firsthand account of their meeting, position the event as both a private command performance for the Prince and a drama

enacted between stage and box for the entertainment of spectators on and off stage. She reports that she felt "a strange degree of alarm" on learning that she was to perform before the royal family, despite having "frequently played the part" of Perdita (*Memoirs* II. 36). William Smith, who played Leontes on December 3, joked with her in the green room that she would "make a conquest of the Prince; for tonight you look handsomer than ever" (37). The Prince's box was on the left-hand side of the stage and was close enough to see into the wings (Byrne 98–99). He watched her chatting with Malden before going onstage and then with "fixed attention" throughout the first scene, which she "hurried through . . . not without much embarrassment" (*Memoirs* II. 38). He commented audibly on her beauty, which overwhelmed her with "confusion." The Prince's "particular attention was observed by every one" (38), and he bowed to her "with a very marked and low bow" (39–40) both as the curtain was going down and later as she crossed the stage to leave the theater. "I felt the compliment," she writes, "and blushed my gratitude" (39).

The common practice of elite men attending the theater to shop for mistresses becomes, in Robinson's narrative, a Cinderella tale about a prince's extraordinary courtship of a modest commoner. The observation (both visual and verbal) of those onstage and in the audience verifies the event. The evening reprises her debut at Drury Lane as Juliet in 1776. Then she was "nearly over-powered" by the "thundering applause" (*Memoirs* II. 1) and the "awfully impressive" sensation of being on stage with "all eyes . . . fixed upon" her (2), and she barely managed to get through the first scene. The echo of that night suggests that her appearance as Perdita is itself a performance: she is recreating the charming confusion of her debut—an ingénue playing an ingénue—for those, including the Prince, who missed it the first time. Both moments are watersheds that she "never shall forget" (2, 39). The Prince's power to make her a blushing girl again recollects her insistence that, despite her marriage, she was in essence a virgin when they began their affair, her heart "as free from any tender impression as it had been at the moment of my birth" (*Memoirs* I. 69).

Robinson probably revised the tale in the telling. Critics have noted the self-fashioning project of the *Memoirs*, and this includes her acquaintance with the Prince.[1] December 3, 1779 may not have been the first time they laid eyes on each other, and there was probably more calculation on both sides than her account suggests.[2] She is, however, not alone in romanticizing and sentimentalizing the beginning of their affair. As Judith Barbour points out, "It is now not

possible to decide which one of the Florizel and Perdita couple set the camp tone of their joint performance of sensibility" ("Garrick's Version" 130). The Prince had a habit of using romantic pseudonyms in the service of seduction. Just before his affair with Robinson, he had been pursuing his sisters' governess, Mary Hamilton. He wrote her a series of passionate letters, addressed to "Miranda" and signed "Palemon."[3] *The Winter's Tale*, particularly in Garrick's adaptation, provided him with an ideal pair of names and the chance to draw his lovers from the same story. The play in which Robinson appeared on December 3 was a revival of his 1756 *Florizel and Perdita: A Dramatic Pastoral*. Garrick had based his adaptation on Macnamara Morgan's 1754 afterpiece, titled *The Sheepshearing*, which omitted the first three acts of Shakespeare's play. Garrick's version was play-length, but both adaptations responded to what Lori Humphrey Newcomb calls "a revitalized taste for pastoral" (180) in the mid-eighteenth century. In almost eliminating the Leontes / Hermione tragicomedy, the plays "fetishize the royal shepherdess, her pastoral beauty, and her reversals of fortune" (Newcomb 185). All of these elements could be mined for romantic (or satiric) associations. Perdita's description of herself as a "poor lowly maid, / Most goddess-like prank'd up"[4] plays to Robinson's modest confusion at the Prince's attentions and hints at the family romance that legitimizes his desire and her capitulation. An actress (who might be the secret daughter of a nobleman) playing a shepherdess who is temporarily dressed above her station but who is really a princess (although she doesn't know it) captures the heart of a real-life prince. Both the actress's and the shepherdess's confusions are ironic, because both women, it turns out, are the proper choices for their royal lovers. When Robinson writes that she "blushed [her] gratitude" at the Prince's bow, she is implicitly endowing him with the same prescience that Camillo and Florizel display in *The Winter's Tale*. Her line echoes Perdita's "I'll blush you thanks" at their joint compliment that her "breeding" outstrips her birth (4. 4. 572, 568).

On the other hand, Florizel's boast that "one being dead, / I shall have more than you can dream of yet"[5] could resonate unpleasantly both with Prince George's less than filial relationship with his father and with his broken 20,000-pound bond to Robinson.[6] There is as much irony as romance or fantasy in the associations offered by the plays. One of the more potent examples is the miniature the Prince gave to Robinson, enclosed with a paper heart on which are written the words "*Unalterable to my Perdita through life*" (*Memoirs* II. 47). The line is a paraphrase from Perdita's final speech in *Florizel and Perdita*, in which she expresses in equal parts class humility and

romantic fidelity. She is "all shame / And ignorance itself, how to put on / This novel garment of gentility" (3. 4. 251–53), but her devotion is a sign that she has not undergone any real transformation, "but I feel /(Ah happy that I do) a love, an heart / Unalter'd to my prince, my *Florizel*" (3. 4. 257–59). Composed by Garrick for his version, the speech exemplifies the "quiescence" written into Perdita's character by both Garrick and Morgan, which "tacitly endorses social inequities, even though audience sympathy with her so clearly feeds fantasies of class intermingling" (Newcomb 185).[7] Love is the real stabilizer, and love does not recognize the boundaries of rank—except insofar as the lovers' desire coincides with the mandates of their class. The Prince takes over this transfer of stability from the region of status to romance when he, as Florizel, writes these words to his Perdita. As his status shifts "through life" from underage prince to Prince of Wales to King (or Regent), his unalterable devotion is a guarantee that he will remain unaltered.

It is not, of course. The Prince is more careful in constructing this promise than in devising the 20,000-pound bond. By using the famous pseudonym he both evokes the romance and nullifies the vow. Florizel has made a promise to Perdita, but the Prince has not promised to be always Florizel. When Robinson writes in her *Memoirs* that "This picture is now in my possession" (47)—unlike the bond, which she eventually relinquished—she signals the primacy of the pastoral romance over accounts of her as a famous courtesan for whom this affair was one among many. She is not "the Perdita" of *Memoirs of Perdita* or *The Rambler's Magazine* who trades sex for cash—or sex for secrets and then secrets for cash. She is "my Perdita": lost but not fallen, the beloved of a Prince whose devotion only looks changeable. "I most firmly believe," she writes in the present of the *Memoirs*, "that his Royal Highness meant what he professed: indeed, his soul was too ingenuous, his mind too liberal and his heart too susceptible, to deceive premeditatedly, or to harbour, even for a moment the idea of deliberate deception" (II. 48–49). Consciously adopting a position she must have known was implausibly naïve, Robinson is committing to one public identity over another, unaltered from the all-but maiden who blushed and curtseyed at the bowing of the royal head.

Garrick's Perdita is even more the ingénue than Shakespeare's. The heroine of a story that focuses on the restoration rather than the disintegration of a family, she is that much further removed than her original from a sexual context. Her debate with Polixines, when she calls crossbred plants "nature's bastards" (4. 4. 83), does not appear in *Florizel and Perdita*, perhaps because it no longer resonates with her

father's repeated convictions of her own bastardy.[8] When they foreground the pastoral romance, Garrick and Morgan avoid the original play's preoccupation with illicit sexuality.[9] The resulting bowdlerization not only makes the play more comfortable for consumption; it also shifts the focus away from questions of truth. Gone are Leontes's descriptions of Hermione as "a hobby horse" (1. 2. 278) and a "bedswerver" (2. 1. 95), because gone is the spontaneous jealousy that provokes them and that makes probity as central to the play as sexuality. Katharine Eisaman Maus points out that Shakespeare altered the story in Greene's *Pandosto* to foreground Leontes's suspicions in part because of the theatricality of sexual jealousy. In plays like *Othello* and *The Winter's Tale*, jealousy is spectatorship; "[t]he jealous onlooker participates vicariously in his own betrayal" ("Horns of Dilemma" 570), constituting both himself and the audience as sexually aroused watchers.

Satiric and pornographic reworkings of the Florizel and Perdita story that depict Robinson as a whore reinsert the sexuality that Garrick had excised. Engravings such as Gillray's 1782 *The Thunderer* (BM Satires 6116) offer the "ocular proof" of sex that Othello demands[10] and that Leontes believes he has found. The audience cannot endorse Leontes's conviction of Hermione's infidelity, not because proof does not exist, but because such proof is unperformable. Maus points out that, in their jealous voyeurism, Leontes and Othello replicate the role of the audience by desiring what cannot be represented on stage, where "the domain of the characters' sexual activity is taken for granted but inevitably eliminated from view. There are things the characters know that we do not" (575). We don't *know*, for instance, if Othello and Desdemona ever consummate their marriage, or if Gertrude was sleeping with Claudius before her husband's death, or if she continues after Hamlet confronts her. "What the audience actually sees" in Act 1 of *The Winter's Tale* "is Hermione in a flirtatious conversation with her husband's friend. If she were guilty we would not be shown much more" (Maus 575).

Gillray's engraving explodes this distinction by offering a Robinson both publicly and privately "known." Her two lovers, former and current, stand talking to one another in front of a tavern. In the character of Captain Bobadil from Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, Banastre Tarleton boasts of his military conquests to the Prince of Wales, whose head has been replaced with a crown of feathers. The tavern, "The Whirligig," promises "Alamode Beef—hot every Night." The sign of the house, above the door, is the figure of Robinson, breasts exposed, legs apart, impaled on a pole. She inclines her head

toward Tarleton, saying, "This is the Lad'll kiss most sweet. / Who'd not love a solder?" The whirligig, in addition to being a spinning toy, was also a punitive device designed to cause nausea, in which the victim was enclosed in a spinning cage. Anne Mellor points out the added relevance that whirligigs were often used to punish army prostitutes (234). Robinson's position "of fixed and absolute exhibition" (Pascoe, *Romantic Theatricality* 140) in the engraving parodies the spectacle of Hermione frozen and restored to life at the end of both plays. In this case, however, the two men look not at her but at each other (as far as the featherheaded Prince can be considered to look at anything). The spectacle is for our benefit, not theirs, and what is "preserved" (*The Winter's Tale* 5. 3. 128) for our view is not the image of the woman "as she lived peerless" (5. 3. 14) but ease of sexual access. The men's lack of interest and her exposure in combination prove her a whore.

Garrick's version of the play obviates the question of whether illicit sexuality can be proven. The audience does not need to decide whether to believe that Leontes sees what he thinks he sees, or that he interprets it correctly. Already the older generation, Leontes is of no concern. Questions of proof linger, but they are limited to the realm of comedy. Garrick retains most of the dialogue in Act 4 between the rustics and the ballad-seller, Autolycus. He cleans up the language a little, omitting references to dildos and to plackets where faces should be, but the central event, the cozening of the Clown and shepherdesses, remains as it was in the original play. Newcomb observes that the rustics' credulity highlights class anxieties about popular literature in the early modern period.[11] Street ballads were often marketed as popular forms of news; their apparent truth value was both a standard selling point and the basis of criticism.[12] "I love a ballad in print alife," declares the shepherdess Mopsa, "for then we are sure they are true" (4. 4. 251–52).[13] Newcomb points out that this line "literalize[s] and materialize[s] the central question of textual truth posed by the oracle of Apollo" who declares Hermione's innocence to an unbelieving Leontes in Act 3 (128). That an item is "in print" is no guarantor of truth for Leontes. Like Sophocles's Creon, he rejects the oracular words and reverses his position only upon the death of his son. Garrick removes this tragic context, and the ballad-selling scene becomes a comic set piece about credulous "simple folk" (Newcomb 122). Leontes's rejection of the oracle's testimony makes incredulity seem as irrational and ill considered as credulity; in Garrick's version, however, only credulity looks foolish. Believing is the same as being cozened. When Robinson claims to believe "firmly" that her prince

is incapable of "deliberate deception," she sentimentalizes this indictment and strips it of class inflection: her faith is charming innocence rather than clownish stupidity. It would be difficult, in 1801, to read Robinson's words without irony, although she clearly means for her readers to acquit her of conscious irony. That the Prince was more than capable of deceiving "premeditatedly" she must have known not only from her own experience of him but also, after 1788, from the events surrounding the regency crisis. When the King's madness threw the nation into a constitutional crisis, the Prince's capacity for deception became the equivalent of his father's mysterious illness—an event that everyone knew and speculated about but that no one talked about publicly. His secret marriage to Maria Fitzherbert was a deception that cut two ways. He was probably deceiving a woman who was functionally his mistress into believing that he would stand by a marriage that was both unconstitutional and illegal. He was certainly deceiving his Whig friends, particularly Fox, when he assured them and allowed them to assure others that the marriage had never taken place. For both of these parties, believing meant being cozened. By the end of 1788, however, not many people believed in either the King's sanity or his son's bachelorhood.

The King's Illness and the Crisis of Representation

On October 17, 1788, King George became ill. His original symptoms were severe pain in his abdomen and limbs, difficulty in breathing, rapid and irregular heartbeat, occasionally dark or discolored urine, and a skin rash. As the weeks progressed, he developed chronic insomnia and began to exhibit signs of mental derangement. He talked rapidly and without cessation for hours; he slept rarely; he was extremely agitated, sometimes violent, and he was increasingly delusional. He believed that London was under threat of a catastrophic flood and that he needed to retrieve a valuable manuscript from the coming deluge; he believed that he was married to the Queen's Lady of the Bedchamber, Lady Pembroke, and he attacked his eldest son (Macalpine and Hunter 14–25, 41, 79; Ayling 331–32, 334). By December, seven physicians attended the King, none of whom could satisfactorily explain the cause of his illness or offer a plausible prognosis.

The King's illness was baffling. The symptoms ranged all over his body, comprehending his pulmonary, circulatory, digestive, and nervous systems. His mental derangement seemed at first to accompany

his physical symptoms but continued and increased after most of those had improved, making it difficult to establish whether the King was ill or mad. For a century and a half after his death, most historians believed it was the latter. In the 1960s, however, two psychiatrists, Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter, posited that the King's diffuse set of symptoms might all be traced to the rare hereditary metabolic disorder known as porphyria. They suggested that the illness had come into the House of Hanover by way of the Stuarts, beginning with Mary, Queen of Scots, and that the King passed it to several of his offspring, including the Prince of Wales. Royal biographers embraced the theory, although the reactions of the medical community ranged between caution and skepticism. The diagnosis explained a great deal, but the data was partial and easily misinterpreted. More recently, however, John C. Röhl, Martin Warren, and David Hunt have argued that the evidence, while circumstantial, is still compelling, although they acknowledge that it must always remain a tentative diagnosis. Information taken from letters and diaries of the royal family and their physicians suggests not only that the King had an illness for which porphyria provided a remarkably comprehensive explanation but also that he passed on his condition to almost all of his thirteen surviving children, who suffered from symptoms that are traceable to variegate porphyria. These included "spasms, colic and cramps, sharp headaches, lameness and brachial weakness, pain in the chest, back and side, biliousness, vomiting and constipation, breathlessness, irregularity of the pulse, inflammation and fragility of the skin, mental disturbance and, in one or two cases, discoloured urine" (*Purple Secret* 103).[14] Porphyria was not identified as a metabolic disorder, however, until the 1930s.[15] Although some contemporaries (Walpole among them) traced at least a few of these common symptoms to a family malady, only the King appeared to suffer from derangement.[16]

A king who, at fifty, was mysteriously ill and then apparently mad posed problems not only of interpretation and diagnosis. His medical attendants knew that their reports would affect the Queen's and the nation's peace of mind, as well as the health of the economy. The King became ill in mid-October; by mid-November the stocks were falling (Macalpine and Hunter 34, Ayling 336), and the opposition Whigs began agitating for the establishment of a regency. Consequently, his doctors were more cautious in reporting on the King's illness than they were in treating it.[17] They knew that the Queen, the Prince of Wales, the ministers, and the nation were scrutinizing everything they wrote with competing interests. They were, moreover, "frightened by

and of their unmanageable sovereign and his unpredictable behaviour," and by the worry that he "was likely to see their reports in the papers—if not at the time then surely if he recovered." And "above all else loomed the remorseless fact that they did not . . . know what was the matter with their patient" (Macalpine and Hunter 38–39). The physicians issued no public bulletins about the King's health for the first month of his illness. When they appeared,[18] reports were brief and noncommittal, stating, for example, that His Majesty had had a "restless" night or that he continued to suffer from "fever," a catchall term for rapid pulse, agitation, or delirium.[19]

The Prince convened a meeting of cabinet ministers on November 27. The ministers took statements from the King's physicians, who then met with the Privy Council on December 3. When Parliament reassembled the next day each House established a committee to examine the doctors separately. By the time of the first examination by the Commons, the team of physicians included Dr. Francis Willis, the celebrated "mad-doctor," who was, from first to last, optimistic about the King's recovery. The doctors gradually formed two groups: those who thought the King's malady incurable—a case of insanity—and those who maintained his derangement was due to his physical illness and would subside when that did. In contemporary terms, the question was whether the King suffered from "consequential" or from "original" madness. And on this question the case for a regency hung: " 'Original Madness,' otherwise mania or insanity, was considered not amenable to art, spontaneous recovery from it was uncommon and its course was therefore prolonged; whereas 'Consequential Madness,' delirium and derangement, could be expected to subside with the underlying condition" (Macalpine and Hunter 57). Willis maintained that the King's madness was consequential. His chief opponent was Dr. Richard Warren, physician to the Prince of Wales, who, not surprisingly, took the position most favorable to the establishment of an unlimited regency. Although more cautious than Willis, Warren gave answers that were equivocal but could easily be interpreted as inclining toward a diagnosis of original madness. In private, he was more direct. As early as mid-November, he wrote in a letter to the staunchly Whig Lady Spencer, mother of the Duchess of Devonshire, "*Rex noster insanit*" (quoted in Ayling 333).

The regency crisis raised problems of representation. Information was fought over, corrected, and sometimes reversed before being released to the public.[20] One of the more memorable instances of public doublespeak was Fox's speech before the House of Commons

on December 10. His efforts to bring about a regency that he hoped would establish the primacy of his party led him to argue passionately for hereditary monarchy—the "express . . . right" of the "Heir Apparent" to "assume the reins of government, and exercise the power of sovereignty" (*History and Proceedings* 12–13). This was an odd position for a leader of the radical Whigs, a supporter of American independence and Catholic emancipation, and a lifelong opponent of monopolist monarchy. Fox had greeted with enthusiasm Dunning's famous motion before the same House, eight years earlier, that "The influence of the Crown has increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished" (Mitchell 33), and his short-lived coalition with Lord North in 1783–84 had been grounded on the principle that executive power and the royal prerogative should be checked and managed by the legislature. He was one of the least likely members to champion the inherent and inherited right of monarchs to govern, and Pitt and the other Tories made much political capital out of this backpedaling in the debates that followed. Fox had, of course, solid pragmatic reasons for saying what he said. If the Prince were made regent with the power to choose his ministers, the Whigs would be in power, and he was certain of a position in the new cabinet, most likely as Chancellor of the Exchequer.

For Fox, the advancement of his political interests meant depending on a patronage system he had spent his career fighting, while trying to obscure his about-face. It also meant defending the abilities of a Prince as unfit to govern as his ailing father. When Pitt declared on December 16 that "he was ready to acknowledge the greatest and best qualities in the present Heir Apparent" (*History and Proceedings* 48), he was making a statement similar to Fox's a week earlier that there was "a great prospect and a strong probability of [the King's] recovery" (14). Neither speaker was saying what he believed.[21] Behind public assertions of confidence in either the King or the Prince lay the fear that neither option was viable. Both the monarch in situ and the heir apparent were possibly incapacitated—the former by a mysterious illness that was looking increasingly like permanent insanity, the latter by a reputation for irresponsibility and insolvency that was, at age twenty-six, looking more like a permanent state than an extended adolescence.[22]

By the time of his father's illness, the Prince had been in mounting debt for all of his adult life.[23] His extravagance, heavy drinking, and multiple mistresses were common knowledge.[24] Of greater political concern was the possibility that he had secretly married a Catholic widow, in defiance of the Constitution and his father's mandate.

The 1701 Act of Settlement barred any Roman Catholic, or heir presumptive who married a Roman Catholic, from ascending the throne in England. Moreover, the Royal Marriages Act forbade any descendant of George II under the age of twenty-five from marrying without permission of the monarch. Nonetheless, on December 15, 1785, at the age of twenty-three, the Prince of Wales wed Mrs. Fitzherbert in a private ceremony at her home. It seems unlikely that he intended by this act to renounce his right to the throne. The ceremony was probably more a way of locking in a long sought-after mistress than an all-for-love act of defiance, especially because he kept the marriage a secret even from his close friends, and he must have known that the 1772 Act made it invalid.

The unconstitutionality of the marriage may have trumped its illegality, particularly in discussions regarding the need for a regency. On December 16, John Rolle, an independent Tory hostile to Fox, hedged his bets by avowing that "he was ready to admit that a Prince of Wales, of full age and capacity, was the properest person to be appointed the Regent, provided he had not by any illegal *or* unconstitutional act forfeited such pretensions" (*History and Proceedings* 62; italics added). A month later he was more explicit, declaring that he would agree to the Prince being made regent "only upon the ground that he was not married to Mrs. Fitzherbert either in law or equity" (296). He made it clear that he saw the marriage's unconstitutionality as more significant—and damning—than its illegality. If the Prince had married a Catholic, it did not matter whether the marriage was illegal upon other grounds; he could not inherit the crown, and Fox's earlier argument that the heir apparent had the clearest right "to assume the reins of government" would no longer hold. Rolle "had heard it to be the opinion of some of the first lawyers of this country, that nothing contained in" the Royal Marriages Act "altered or affected the Clause in the Act of William and Mary, which enacted and declared, that any Heir to the Crown, who married a Papist, forfeited his right to the Crown" (387). He reverted several times to Fox's "explicit disavowal of any such marriage" made on the House floor two years earlier (296). Fox had, in the late spring of 1786, denied that the marriage had taken place when the controversy surfaced during debates on a proposal that Parliament redress the Prince's once again enormous debt. Pitt first raised the question by alluding vaguely to "the knowledge he possessed of many circumstances relating to" the Prince's insolvency, which he would find "absolutely necessary to lay . . . before the public" if the House went forward with the proposal (*Speeches* 323). Pushing the issue further, Rolle then rose to

say that "the question involved matters, by which the constitution, both in church and state, might be essentially affected" (323). Fox's response was unequivocal, calling reports of the marriage "a tale in every particular so unfounded, for which there was not the shadow of any thing like reality" (326). When Rolle pressed him for a clarification, pointing out that, despite "certain laws and acts of parliament which forbade it and made it null and void . . . still it might have taken place," Fox obliged. "When he denied the calumny in question, he meant to deny it not merely with regard to the effect of certain existing laws, but to deny it *in toto*, in point of fact as well as law. The fact not only never could have happened legally, but never did happen in any way whatsoever" (327).

Both Fox's and the Prince's biographers maintain that he spoke rashly and in ignorance and that his sense of having been betrayed by the Prince permanently damaged their relationship.[25] Fox was not at the ceremony and may have believed, with others, that it had never taken place. When he learned his mistake, he was "in a most dangerous position. Even though the deception was the Prince's and not his, he had been the means of conveying the lie to the House" (Hibbert, *George IV* 67). Rolle may have been trying to catch Fox in that lie, to see if he could be brought to the same declaration again, two years later. Rolle insists, however, on a distinction between "fact" and "law" and pushes that distinction in both debates.[26] An illegal marriage is still a marriage in fact. If he has contracted such a marriage, the Prince must still be called to account for it. Rolle is forcing a contest between illegality and unconstitutionality and maneuvering Fox into that contest. Fox was popularly believed to have been at least in the know, if not instrumental, in the matter of the secret marriage. On March 27, 1786, a month before his decisive speech in the House, James Gillray published *Wife and no Wife—or—A Trip to the Continent* (BM Satires 6932), which depicts Fox giving Mrs. Fitzherbert away in a ceremony performed by Burke and attended by the Prince's friends Louis Weltje and George Hanger, a sleeping Lord North, and a choir of tonsured monks.[27] The monks, the subtitle, and the partially obscured crucifix above Burke's head suggest a continental betrayal of British Protestant interests and may also reference Fox's support for Catholic emancipation. Paintings on the wall behind the participants depict scenes of temptation and betrayal. Above the Prince's head is a framed picture of David watching Bathsheba bathe; the angle of David's head recapitulates the Prince's as he gazes at Mrs. Fitzherbert. Between the couple are depicted the temptation of St. Anthony and Eve's temptation of Adam, while above Fox's head,

and again oriented in the same direction, is the image of Judas kissing Christ. The title, "Wife *and* no Wife," evokes the conundrum of the Prince's double transgression. The Prince of Wales *is* married, and to a Catholic; his betrayal of the Act of Settlement means that the heir is no heir. The Prince is *not* married, because, as a prince of the realm, he cannot legally do so—and therefore, if he *is* married, he must not be a prince of the realm. Maria Fitzherbert is both his wife and his mistress, his not-wife. The either/or of Rolle's original query resolves into the oxymoronic both/and of the regency crisis. The Prince's condition of being both married and not married, heir and not-heir, replicates—and magnifies—the condition of the nation, with a throne that is both occupied and not occupied; a third estate that is both "whole and entire" and incomplete; a parliament that is not a parliament, and that, like the Parliament of 1688, must act as a body to reconstitute the executive branch without an executive to ratify their proceedings.

The regency debates turned on this question of whether there was currently a monarch in England. The Whigs, led by Fox and Burke, maintained that the King's incapacity left the legislature incomplete and paralyzed. Without a king, Parliament was not Parliament and could pass no laws until both Houses first resolved to supply the deficiency by appointing a regent. Pitt and the Tories held that the King was still king and that as long as he was alive and expected to recover, the Prince of Wales was, in the words of Sir John Scott, the Solicitor General (later Lord Eldon), "only a subject" (*History and Proceedings* 87). Much was riding on that second qualification, about which opinion was privately so divided. If the King was going to recover, then he could not be said to have left the throne. Both sides recalled the Glorious Revolution, when, after the enforced abdication of James II, Parliament named his daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange joint monarchs. The force of the contrast between that period and this, however, was belied by the possibility of comparison. A speech by Pitt on December 16 demonstrates the layers of qualification his distinction requires:

> It was then a century ago since any thing of equal importance had engaged the attention of the House. The circumstance that had then occurred was the Revolution, between which, however, and the present circumstance, there was a great and essential difference. At that time the two Houses had to provide for the filling up of a Throne that was vacant by the abdication of James the Second; at present they had to provide for the exercise of the Royal Authority, when his Majesty's political capacity was whole and entire, and the Throne consequently

> full, although in fact all the functions of the executive government were suspended, but which suspension they had every reason to expect would be but temporary. (*History and Proceedings* 40)

Conscious of the rhetorical force of a resemblance—two constitutional crises, two Parliaments forced to meet with the throne unoccupied, only one digit's difference in the dates—Pitt first makes his comparison and then allows it to emerge as a contrast. Despite the equal importance of the two events, things were very different "at that time" than they are "at present." This king is not gone like the other one; he is just unavailable to us at the present moment. But we have "every reason to expect" that he will return to us, and the throne will be literally—and not simply as a legal fiction—full. We are not a parliament without a king; we just look like one. The legislature, like the executive, is whole and entire.

The King's physicians reinforced this position by asserting that their patient was going to recover both his health and his sanity, albeit with varying degrees of confidence. In the statement that was read on December 10 all seven of the attending physicians "respectively declare[d] the King at present incapable of meeting his Parliament, or attending to public business, but express their hopes of his recovery, and ground their opinion of its probability on their experience, which has taught them that the majority of patients afflicted with the same disorder have recovered, although they cannot pronounce when the precise point of time will arrive at which his Majesty will be well" (*History and Proceedings* 9). This distillation of each doctor's testimony before the Privy Council obscures the fact that Warren needed some leading and prompting before he could be satisfactorily quoted to this effect. He was also probably edited. In the printed version of the Privy Council examination published in December 1788, Warren's testimony is the longest, occupying roughly three and a half pages. It is longer by only half a page than Willis's, however, and the transcript does not reflect the ninety minutes it reportedly took him to answer the question of whether he thought the King was likely to recover.[28] Nor does the transcript reflect that Warren's use of "disorder" to describe what was wrong with the King was probably a substitution for "insanity," his chosen term. Macalpine and Hunter quote from the diary of Lord Ailesbury, who records that Warren first used the word "insane; and when he was advised not to, and another expression was dictated to him, he answered it was the same thing" (quoted in Macalpine and Hunter 55). Without deviating from the opinions of his more optimistic colleagues, Warren's

testimony allowed readers—and listeners—to infer that the King was incurably insane.

An engraving by Thomas Rowlandson titled *Filial Piety* (BM Satires 7378) illustrates the uncertainty generated by equivocations like Warren's and stresses the political power of information. The only known depiction of the King during his illness (Baker 68), *Filial Piety* was published on November 25, 1788, about a week before the opening of the regency debates. The engraving shows the Prince of Wales, accompanied by Sheridan and Hanger, bursting into the royal bedchamber. The three of them look toward the ailing King, as the Prince says, "Damme, come along. I'll see if the Old Fellow's—or not." The King, looking ill but not insane, turns his face away from the door, one hand on his bowed head, the other stretched out toward the Prince and his companions, who, in their boisterousness, have knocked over a table, spilling a goblet, perhaps of communion wine. Between the bed and the door sits a cleric, who has been interrupted in his reading of a paper titled "A Prayer for the Restoration of Health." He seems appalled at the intrusion, although he faces directly out, looking at neither the King nor the Prince. Above his head is a painting of "The Prodigal Son." None of the three intruders stands upright: the Prince totters on one leg, either overset by the sudden giving way of the door or pushed from behind by his companions, who are capering. Sheridan is tipping his hat. Hanger holds a bottle and has a cudgel under one arm.[29] The Prince looks younger than his twenty-six years, stressing the gap between him and his companions, both a decade older than he.

The picture settles the question of the King's malady but leaves open the question of whether there is a monarch. This king, an object of sympathy, is clearly not mad; anxieties about his sanity are motivated by self-interest. The source of these anxieties in the picture, the Prince who interrupts his evening carouse to barge into his father's sickroom, is a disastrous choice to replace this dignified and pious monarch. Nor is he a worthy repository for the truth of the King's condition, despite, or because of, his eagerness to "see" for himself. Beneath the satire of its manifest unruliness, *Filial Piety* is an image of control. It is about containing, not disseminating information. In the picture, the figures of Sheridan, Hanger, and the Prince all look in the same direction as the King: they are staring at him; he is turning away from them. His modesty reinforces the outrage of their intrusion. The cleric alone looks out of the engraving toward us. The direction of his gaze reinforces not only our outrage but also our omniscience and our impotence. Our perspective allows us the same

ocular proof the Prince seeks, while our presumptive sobriety allows us a clearer vision. We don't see what he sees, distorted, perhaps, by alcohol and avarice, as Leontes's and Othello's vision is by jealousy. We see both what is really happening and that the Prince's vision is distorted. Outside the frame as we are, however, we cannot make use of the information, while the Prince and his friends can reinterpret and manipulate it as they like.

The intertextuality of the engraving is directed toward ironic commentary. Contemporary satires made use of comparisons between the Prince of Wales and Shakespeare's Prince Hal, often depicting Prince George under the spell of a Falstaffian Fox.[30] This picture echoes a scene from *2 Henry IV*, in which the Prince visits his dying father, asleep with the crown on a pillow next to his head. Believing the King is already dead, he takes the crown with him into another room, where he apostrophizes it as a metonym for the heavy weight of monarchy that will soon descend on him. When the King awakens to find both crown and heir gone, the Prince is able to redeem himself from the charge of unfilial ambition and parricidal greed by the evidence that he has been weeping.[31] Like the prince in the engraving, Shakespeare's prince has been partying with his "continual followers" (*2 Henry IV* 4. 3. 53) before returning to the quiet of the sick room. This prince, in contrast, does not leave the party behind, a presage of when he will, "in the perfectness of time / Cast off his followers" (*2 Henry IV* 4. 3. 74–75). Instead, he brings the party with him and rejoices, rather than grieving, at the prospect of his father's demise and his succession. Like the prodigal son pictured on the wall in the center of the engraving, the other principal intertext for the engraving, he has squandered his patrimony. Unlike the prodigal son, however, he is not repentant. The penitent in the picture faces toward the Prince. The mirroring in their imagined confrontation stresses their differences: one comes to, the other from a celebration; one is returning, the other intruding; one penitent, the other triumphant. "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found" (Luke 15: 24). In Rowlandson's reworking of this parable of contrition and forgiveness, both King and Prince are "found"—that is, discovered in their true characters. But, while the Prince is found out to be the unfilial profligate most people believed him to be, the King is discovered to be not "lost" after all. He does not wander; he is in his perfect mind; the illness is confined to his frame.[32]

The picture is a morality tale of the reversionary interest, contrasting the heir's loose behavior with his father's piety and sobriety. Inasmuch as the King's infirmity signals his martyr-like virtue, the

Prince's youth, good looks, and glowing health become standards for his profligacy. The one is in motion, his face animated; the other is motionless, with head and eyes cast down. Such an insistence on difference, however, belies the similarities between father and son, in particular the fact that both had already begun to show signs of the "humour to which [the] whole family is subject" (J. Crawford to Duchess of Devonshire, November 7, 1788. In *Georgiana* 138). If, as Walpole suggested, father and son took opposite approaches to controlling the family malady, the King's method was not working any better than the Prince's. The father's asceticism did not protect him from attacks. His son's partying invited them. What reason had Parliament to trust the monarchy to either?

The Prince's habits of excess had already forced an association with debility. The satires of the earlier part of the decade connected his heavy drinking with his sexuality in ways that both highlight and undercut differences between father and son. A case in point is the story of the drinking party at the home of Lord Chesterfield that took place sometime in the spring of 1781, and that appears both in *Effusions of Love* and in *Memoirs of Perdita*. Walpole writes about this escapade in his *Journals*, calling it "a scene that divulged all that till now had been only whispered." One evening, the Prince and some of his boon companions "went to Blackheath to sup with Lord Chesterfield, who, being married, would not consent to send for the company the Prince required." Despite or because of this deficiency, they "all got immediately drunk, and the Prince was forced to lie down on a bed for some time." When he recovered, he and his friends got into a fight with "a large fierce house-dog," in which one man tried "to tear out [the dog's] tongue" and two others were injured, one seriously. Sometime after this, they all fell asleep again, and the party broke up early the next day:

> At six in the morning, when the Prince was to return, Lord Chesterfield took up a candle to light him, but was so drunk that he fell down the steps into the area, and, it was thought, had fractured his skull. That accident spread the whole history of the debauch, and the King was so shocked that he fell ill on it, and told the Duke of Gloucester that he had not slept for ten nights, and that whenever he fretted the bile fell on his breast. As he was not ill on any of the disgraces of the war, he showed how little he had taken them to heart. (Walpole II. 361)

In *Effusions of Love*, the story appears in two segments, both of which explain Florizel's absences from Perdita, as if the two kinds

of licentiousness are interchangeable and make up the whole of his recreations: when he isn't whoring, he's drinking. When Perdita complains at not having seen him or received a letter from him in "three whole days—three whole nights" (15), he responds with the story of having gotten "damnably d – –" at Lord Chesterfield's (16). In another letter, he reveals "the secret" of why he has been absent "since Saturday": "We have had another *batch* with C – – d" (20). In this second escapade, it is the Prince who suffers the near-fatal fall down the stairs:

> As to my part, I own to you, I was d – – y cut, and made a mistake that had like to have proved fatal to me. I rose early in the morning, to get back to W – – r in time; and turning to the wrong stair-case, tumbled over the balustrades, but have escaped with no other detriment than that of tearing my coat. (20)

Memoirs of Perdita maintains this association of drinking and dalliance. After repeating the story from *Effusions*, collapsed once again into a single episode, the editor goes on, "Florizel jumped into his phaeton, and arrived in *statu quo* at B – – m [Buckingham] house before six o'clock; in the evening he went to his dulcinea, whom he entertained with a facetious account of the preceding night's merriment" (110).

In Walpole's account, none of the injuries resulting from the night's partying happens to the Prince, but his drinking is nonetheless a liability. His refusal to abstain imperils his own health. Is his inability to hold his liquor a function of his youth, the excessive amount he consumes, or some more intractable frailty? The Prince and "St. L – –" (Anthony St. Leger) both drink at least "a dozen bottles each," but St. Leger remains "as sober as a Methodist Preacher" (*Effusions* 20). Worse, the Prince's debauchery and the shocked reaction it produces bring on a recurrence of the family malady in his father. The King's ten nights of sleeplessness anticipate the chronic insomnia that plagued him throughout the autumn and winter of 1788 and 1789, when sleep was sometimes measured in quarter hours, and a good night was when he slept for two hours without waking (Macalpine and Hunter 63–64, 65). Even more suggestive is Walpole's assurance that "whenever he fretted the bile fell on his breast." The migration of bile upward engages in the same combined diagnosis, as a way to reconcile the coexistence of disparate symptoms that characterized accounts of the King's illness in 1788.[33] If father and son did suffer from porphyria, the son's attacks, which probably began at about this time, would

have been exacerbated by his drinking habits, private or otherwise.[34] Walpole may have been right that the King's "rigorous" system of abstinence helped to keep his malady in check,[35] but his gossipy disapproval also suggests that the son's overindulgence exacerbated not only his own but also his father's symptoms. Such a system of transmission by displacement, in which pathogens migrate from the mind to the liver and from one member of a family to another, explodes the distinction Walpole seems to be trying to draw between the prudent and virtuous King and his madcap son. If the two royal bodies are as permeable as this suggests, perhaps the real crisis, the real scandal that till now has only been whispered, is not how much but how little a regency will change the governance of the nation. The son is the apparent, not the presumptive, copy of the father. They are the same body, neither whole nor entire, at once king and not king. *Rex noster insanit*; long live the King.

An anonymous engraving published on April 1, 1786, and titled *The April Fool, or, The Follies of a Night* (BM Satires 6937) anticipates the constitutional crisis the marriage had the capacity to precipitate. The Prince dances with Mrs. Fitzherbert to the accompaniment of Burke, Hanger, and Louis Weltje on makeshift instruments (Weltje, the celebrated cook, plays on a warming-pan, Hanger his cudgel). Scattered on the floor are various texts that reference the secret or illicit nature of the relationship: copies of Susan Centilivre's *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* and Colman's *The Clandestine Marriage*, and a piece of paper that reads "I'll have a Wife of my own." In the background an open door reveals a curtained bed with what looks like a cross or crucifix above the headboard. Behind the dancers on the far wall are two engravings from *Hamlet* with speeches sketched in above the frames. In one, the Lord Chamberlain as Polonius addresses George III with the words, "I will be brief / your noble Son is Mad." In the other, Laertes, wearing an elaborately plumed hat, lectures an Ophelia who resembles Mrs. Fitzherbert, saying, "He may not as Inferior persons do / carve for himself for on his choice depends / the sanity and health of the whole state." The use of "sanity" instead of the more common "sanctity" may be designed to echo the reference to madness in the other picture. In the 1623 Folio *Hamlet*, the line reads, "the sanctity and health of the whole state" (1. 3. 21), and Pope's 1725 collected edition retains this wording. In the 1765 collected works, the line appears as "the sanity and health of the whole state" (1. 5. 24). Johnson's note quotes from William Warburton, who asks, "What has the *Sanctity* of the state to do with the prince's disproportioned marriage? We should read with the old quarto SAFETY" (*Plays* 151n3).[36]

What *has* the sanctity of the state to do with the prince's disproportioned marriage? Inasmuch as sanctity can mean inviolability—wholeness as well as holiness; the English word carries the same associations as the Latin—the answer is much.[37] A prince who marries according to the dictates of the monarch and who adheres to proportion and to the royal prerogative keeps the line of succession—and, by a reasonable extension, the state—inviolable.[38] This is true of the English Prince as well as the Dane. The latter is only "subject to his birth" (1. 3. 18).[39] The former is bound by specific Acts of Parliament that constitute him as both royal heir and "only a subject." In the engraving, however, the word is "sanity." "Sanity" appears less often in eighteenth-century editions of *Hamlet* than either "sanctity" or "safety," but the word meant soundness of body before it meant soundness of mind, and it carried this as a secondary meaning through the middle of the nineteenth century.[40] This rash marriage jeopardizes the wholeness, the impermeability of the body politic. A prince would have to be insane to render the state so unsound. This is the implicit, if satirical, conclusion of the engraving. Polonius's declaration "Your noble Son is Mad," like Warren's blunt "*Rex noster insanit*" three years later, is a statement whose attendant horror makes it unspeakable as soon as it has been uttered. The logical explanation for either the Prince's or the King's behavior is intolerable. Both diagnosticians must therefore qualify their conclusions out of all meaning. Warren may not say that the King is mad, but if he talks instead of his disorder he is saying "the same thing." It is the same thing because there is no definition of madness in the eighteenth century that will answer all questions about the King's malady. Neither delirium nor original madness, it is behavior that everyone recognizes as unfitting him for the duties and responsibilities of a king.[41] It defies both comprehension and management. "Mad call I it," says Polonius in his qualification, "for to define true madness, / What is't but to be nothing else but mad?" (2. 2. 93–94).

The engraver of *The April Fool* is not in fact depicting a mad prince, any more than *Filial Piety* depicts a mad king. Madness in the first picture is shorthand for excess, in this case an excess of selfishness. It is a way to measure behavior that is off the scale of reasonableness, a prince who wants what he wants and is willing to let the country go hang. Madness is childishness: behavior that needs to be watched carefully and corrected or even restrained.[42] It is defined by the responses of others: if the King throws tantrums and jumps up and down on his bed, he needs to be swaddled in bedclothes or confined in a straightjacket or a restraining chair. He needs to be disciplined

and coddled like a child: his sleeping and bowel movements anxiously recorded, his diet controlled. Madness is to be nothing else but mad. You must be mad to think you can get away with marrying a Catholic behind the King's back. You must be mad to think that London is under deluge, an oak tree is the King of Prussia,[43] a pillow your dead infant son. And you must be *nothing else*; your behavior must be explicable in no other terms than as madness. A king is not a child. If he behaves like a child, he cannot continue to be king. Someone must be appointed to take his place.

But what if the one in line to replace him also has a reputation for behaving like a child? Both *The April Fool* and the later regency debates stress the link between irresponsibility and madness. To behave as the Prince was believed to have done in 1785, as the King was rumored to have done in 1788, is to put the safety, sanctity, and sanity of the nation at risk. Health and sanity are homologous; from the perspective of the state they become indistinguishable. This was the argument the Foxites made in 1788 for an unlimited regency. *Filial Piety* and *The April Fool* make the same claim, only about the son, rather than the father. The argument for a regency is the same as the argument against it. The Prince's incapacity both contrasts with his father's and augments it—makes it terrifying.

The Royal Legend and the Condemnation of Memory

Shakespeare's royalty provided especially useful models for commentators on the royal family in the decades surrounding the turn of the nineteenth century. To begin with, characters like Hamlet and Prince Hal had malleable relationships to their own sources. The referents for these semi-fictional heirs apparent were either spread out among a variety of source texts or deep within what amounted to the prehistory of English royalty. Like the Leontes of *The Winter's Tale*, they entered the public imagination as intertexts, adaptations reshaped to fit altering cultural expectations—a melancholy-mad would-be avenger or a Machiavellian pseudo-profligate. Moreover, sources and adaptations had both been around long before the Revolution and the Act of Settlement, the two events that defined English monarchy in the post-Stuart era. Part of history but safely beyond local relevance, their use by contemporary writers is an example of what Clare Simmons has called "the interaction of the creative and the factual" (*Reversing the Conquest* 3) in the interpretation of history. Shakespeare's royals could be used to offer ironic contrasts: the rulers

of the present degraded age versus the nobility of their literary/historical forebears. Or they could provide sentimental or pathetic associations. *Filial Piety* does both: the ailing King is an image of the dying Henry IV, whose fears about the succession and the nation are realized in the riotous figure of his heir. Characters could be used selectively, as with the quotes from *Hamlet* in *The April Fool* or as in references to Prince Hal minus the calculated pragmatism with which Shakespeare invests his character.

Of course, Shakespeare is to some extent hemmed in by history. Historical context, as Simmons points out, "does not provide an escape into the imagination, but rather a constraint upon it. . . . Interpretations of actions, and particularly of characters, may vary, but the ultimate outcome . . . is preestablished" (9). Shakespeare's character does become king and does lead a successful campaign in France. Comparisons between Prince George and Prince Hal tended to ignore the planning behind the latter's assumed loose behavior, but there remains an element of hope to them. This prince didn't stay a demi-criminal all his days; things got better. The satire of the comparison is potentially tempered by its history. This hopeful subtext comes to the forefront in a text—part satire, part sentimental romance—written roughly twenty years after the regency crisis. *The Royal Legend: A Tale* (1808) employs the quasi-historical context of Shakespeare in order fantastically to recreate contemporary events. The anonymous author uses the first and second parts of *Henry IV* and a bit of *Henry V* sometimes as source material, sometimes as allusive epigraph, and sometimes as narrative content. Where the earlier satires froze Shakespeare's character as the madcap prince of the first play, a primary worry of the anti-regency camp in 1788, *The Royal Legend* offers a complete narrative of error and recovery.

The premise of this work, described variously as "legend" and as "private history" (8), is that the future Henry V wrote a memoir of his life. The manuscript was suppressed and only recently unearthed, some 400 years later. It chronicles the young Prince's misspent youth and later conversion, when, sickening of "depravity" (89) and his "dissolute companions" (94, 100), he withdraws from the world and devotes his time to "literary studies" (103). The remainder of the text is made up of two embedded "ancient manuscripts" that the Prince reads and that complete his reformation. These "had been the laborious employ of the fathers of Westminster Abbey" (104), although whether the fathers were employed in composing or transcribing is unclear. Contemporary readers would recognize the two tales as being about the current royal family. The first, called "The Loves

of Eliza and Rodolph," fictionalizes the story of Princess Sophia, one of George III's younger daughters, who was rumored to have had an affair with her father's equerry and to have given birth to an illegitimate child in 1800.[44] The second and longer tale, "The Chapel of St. Clothair," narrates the Prince of Wales's life from his marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert to the present moment, as the story of a "Cavalier" whose past misdeeds and present unhappiness all stem from an ill-considered and secret marriage to a scheming older woman. Prince Henry apparently recognizes the stories as well, particularly the latter—although the text is cagey as to whether he knows he is reading his own life or is merely stung to reformation by a painful resemblance.[45]

The Royal Legend is thus only partly about Prince Hal, as the memoir takes up only about half the narrative. It is all about Prince George, however. This is a conversion narrative, not an instance of calculated profligacy as novitiate monarchy. This prince is a sentimental hero rather than a Machiavellian exemplar. Responsibility for his vices belongs to a collection of unscrupulous advisors and wily seductresses, who use him as a pawn in their self-interested schemes. This prince is also a scholar. He draws conclusions and makes decisions concerning his own life (and therefore the life of the nation) from his perusal of books. The heir apparent to his father's antiquarianism, he redeems royal scholarship from the irrelevance of "collecting curiosities" that it had been in *Poetic Epistle*. In the earlier work, knowledge was the reverse of intellect and the companion to tyranny. Scholarship directed the monarch's attention away from the state—"no science unversed in, unless it were that of governing"—and deflected the nation's attention from the abuses of a monarch who "would rather take up with the character of an idiot than a tyrant." In *The Royal Legend* scholarship *is* kingship, because kingship depends on the self-exploration that leads to repentance and restoration.

Although structurally this is a tale within a tale, contemporary readers would have recognized the two stories—the memoir of the Prince and the legend of the Cavalier—as continuous and coterminous. The memoir contains the familiar scandals of the Prince's coming of age: the affair with Robinson; a later affair with an actress named "Eliza Willington" (Elizabeth Armistead); gambling debts, and parliamentary bailouts. The legend picks up where the memoir leaves off and continues the narrative virtually to the moment of reception, from the Fitzherbert marriage to the Prince's first attempt to divorce his legitimate wife in 1806.[46] There is even a brief reference to the regency crisis, although it is not much of a crisis here. Because

of a "dreadful distemper" that has rendered him temporarily "unable to hold the reins of government," the King is persuaded by "officious parasites" to believe that his son harbors "an evil design upon his crown and authority" (96–97). The difficulty is easily resolved when the Prince goes down on his knees, swears fidelity, and demands an inquiry into his conduct. The King forgives him and conveniently refuses to make the inquiry. Then, more like George III than Henry IV, he recovers his health and his government so that the tale can continue to be about a prince rather than a prince turned king.

It needs to be a tale about a prince, not only because its contemporary subject *was* a prince, but also because it is a tale of conversion. In Shakespeare the Prince's reformation is projected and predetermined: *when* I throw off my loose behavior, *when* I pay the debt I never promised, *then* I shall falsify men's hopes. *The Royal Legend* chronicles this reformation as a retrospective narrative that constitutes an alternative reality. The text ends with Prince Henry casting aside "The Chapel of St. Clothair" and exclaiming, "I shall read no more!" (193). His reformation is complete, but it depends on a deliberate dissociation that simultaneously declares the strangeness of the text he has been reading and its exact resemblance to his own life: "These monks, in the seclusion of their cells, frame instances of human depravity which have only existence in their distempered ideas: never could a man be so blind to the villainy of his interested advisers, as the cavalier is represented! at least, I will be of that opinion—FOR THE HONOUR OF HUMAN NATURE" (193–94). The text concludes with a paraphrase of Prince Hal's speech from Act 1, scene 2 of *1 Henry IV*, with the verb tenses changed from future to past, and with fears, instead of hopes, falsified:

> To conclude.—The prince, now no longer the dupe of his enemies, no longer blind to his own defects, falsified the fears of the people:—
> "And, like bright metals [sic] on a sullen ground,
> His reformation, glitt'ring o'er his fault,
> Did shew more goodly, and attract more eyes,
> Than that which hath no foil to set it off." (195)

In order to become the ideal monarch he was always meant (but did not always intend) to be, the Prince must enter fantastic space where he reads his own life in order to reform it.

The first collector of antiquities, however, is the modern reader, lucky enough to have a reproduction of this ancient manuscript, which was preserved in "a stone coffin beneath the ruins of Barham Abbey" (7). The editors speculate in the introduction that the unknown

Abbot buried in the coffin decided that this account of the Prince's "secret transactions" was "improper to be divulged, as he probably might, at that time, be the sovereign of England; and, therefore, determined that the knowledge of them should perish with him" (8). This is the discovery narrative of the Florizel and Perdita satires, with the gothicism purged of irony. Although these fragments too contain potentially sexy secrets, their tantalizing indecipherability is a function of age—and of the age—not of commerce. Archaic language and the "decayed state" of the manuscript—not a housemaid's avarice or a cheesemonger's necessity—have rendered its original meaning "obscure." In their effort to "supply the deficiency" (9) the "compilers" (3) have constructed a novel out of scraps of ancient parchment (or they have revealed the novel buried within). In the process they have elevated their own status above the common run of editors: "The reader will hardly be able to conceive the difficulty of arranging, for modern perusal, an almost unintelligible manuscript, the production of an era so far distant, and, consequently, abounding with many words and expressions now unknown: we have had the temerity, however, to attempt the gigantic task" (15–16).

The archaism of this text is thorough: the difficulty of the editors' job lies equally in its physical condition and in its language. They must supply text for sections that have been "entirely defaced," and they must seek the aid of "modern writers, in order to give strength to the author's ideas, as well as to embellish the work; which, though it descends, in some places, to the concise style of a novel, yet, in others, it abounds with the figurative expressions of romance" (16). This is a handy way of explaining the text's readability and marketability as a novel. *The Royal Legend* is a coherent narrative in modern (early nineteenth-century) English because that is the only way the editors could make it available to their readers.[47] Because their talents are for revision and emendation, these editors position themselves more as critics than as scholars. Their discernment lies in their ability to recognize not the historical value but the literary value of the found text. Proto-formalists, they illuminate the text's internal unity. This sets them apart from those critics who they imagine will review their book: "No doubt these pages will be severely handled by the critics," who, in their practice of tearing down a text, "discover the grains, atoms, and minutest particles, without even comprehending the whole, comparing the parts, or seeing all at once the harmony" (4).[48] Seeing the harmony between separate narratives, viewing frame and embedded texts not as minute parts but "all at once," is just what *The Royal Legend*'s editors—and through them the readers—do. More

nineteenth-century than eighteenth-century critics, in the mode of Hazlitt, they can see the text within—realistic novel, gothic romance, or both—and present it to their readers.

That is not as hard, the editors maintain, as readers might think. Although this text originated in an age when "faint, indeed . . . were the struggles to emerge from barbarity" (12–13), it is coherent to modern readers because of, and not in spite of, its gothicism. "Monks, in that age, were the principal writers" of literature (13), yet their tastes agreed with Protestant, nineteenth-century tastes. The author's emphasis on contrast ("in that age") echoes Henry Tilney's admonition in *Northanger Abbey*: "Remember the country and the age in which we live. Remember that we are English, that we are Christians" (194). Still, despite living in a time when "roads and newspapers lay every thing open" (195), "we" are inclined to see things rather as Catherine Morland sees them than as Tilney does. Contemporary readers are as immersed in and entranced by mystery as those early monks were. Not only do "many" of "their tales . . . still exist" (13), this one being a case in point, but more are being made all the time, "Many of our modern productions are of a nature which, in those times, would have been eagerly sought for, as abounding with all the extravagant, superstitious, and fabulous ideas that could be supposed to have been generated by long seclusion in a cloister" (14–15). The monks would have approved of novels like Lewis's *The Monk* (1796) and Edward Montague's *The Demon of Sicily* (1807), the two examples the author gives of contemporary productions (15). Writers don't need the cloister in order to produce the cloister's tales of wonder. In the case of *The Royal Legend*, however, because of history, they have both.

This similitude between the present and the past also accounts for the gothic narrative of the text's suppression and discovery: In "the superstitious taste of the times" (in this case, past times), "minds, which feasted on their luxurious wonders, could ill relish the insipidity of truth" (13–14). The narrator gives this as a reason for the manuscript's suppression for 400 years: "Perhaps to this cause, as much as to any other, may be assigned the concealment of the following pages" (14). In the middle ages, they liked things secret, obscure, hidden. In our enlightened age, with our roads and newspapers, we value truth—although not insipidity. That is why the manuscript was buried for so many centuries and also why we now have it to enjoy. And we enjoy it because of a kinship in tastes. In "tales" at least we too like things secret, obscure, hidden. Like our medieval ancestors, we prefer luxurious wonder. Can we, with Henry Tilney, enjoy

the frisson of these tales without losing sight of their removal from the real world of English education and laws? Or are we more like Catherine and Tilney's sister Eleanor, for whom literary and civil horrors are indistinguishable? As it turns out, we don't need to choose between these alternatives. We get to luxuriate in wonder, with the added pleasure of knowing that what we are reading about is *real*. Henry V was real; Perdita Robinson was real; Prince George is real; he really did marry his cousin and try to divorce her, and he really did have a secret relationship that was probably a marriage, with a woman who really was a Catholic.

The Florizel and Perdita satires were fiction marketed as factual documents. *The Royal Legend* offers its readers fact disguised as fiction masquerading as fact. In the first part of the book, what had been code reverts to primary nomination as a way to provide both fictiveness and immediate recognition. Prince Henry's first lover's actual name is Perdita, and the text preserves one of his letters, addressed to "Perdita" and signed "Henry." The heroine of one Shakespeare play is grafted onto another and then extracted from this now conveniently augmented source material. Where codes are not available, the author supplies them. The Prince's sycophantic companions are named Waldon, Bardolph, and Lupo. Malden and Fox are easy to guess from Waldon and Lupo. In case the reader does not immediately connect Bardolph with Sheridan, the manager of Drury Lane, the narrator mentions that he kept "a set of morality men, with whom he went about the country," adding in a footnote that "players were then so called" (45).

The text's complex and muddy historicizing imposes a compressed medievalism, in which historical connections are either exploited or forced to suggest a kind of literary/historical golden age of the later middle ages. *The Royal Legend* "was probably written about the time that Chaucer, the father of English poetry, flourished, which was two hundred years before Shakespeare" (12). The second of these two claims enforces useful literary connections (a line of succession?) between English poetry's father and its greatest practitioner and is more or less accurate. The first, which fuses literary and historical associations, is less so. Chaucer probably died about a year before Henry Bolingbroke deposed his patron Richard II to become Henry IV and some thirteen years before Henry V (who was about thirteen at the time of the poet's death) became King. But Chaucer is not only a useful name to drop when establishing one's literary credibility—like the medieval origins of the novel. He also accords with the location of the manuscript's hiding place, in so-called Barham Abbey.

There is no Barham Abbey, but there is a village of Barham, which has its own historical—and Chaucerian—associations. Located in Kent, near Canterbury, Barham was the home of Reginald Fitz Urse, one of the four knights who assassinated Thomas Becket in 1170. William Fitzstephen records in his 1190 biography of Becket that the knights stayed at Barham Court on their way to the cathedral. In this elaborately constructed background, cathedral, abbey, poets, and kings all merge into one encapsulated past, a prehistory in which literature *is* history.

The Royal Legend provides what Simmons calls "a historical corroboration" of the image its editors want to promote (5). If the present Prince is fat and expensive, exploiting the reversionary interest without any genuine political convictions, and perfectly willing to imperil the constitution to suit his own interests, his literary counterpart is "a man whom Nature seemed to have exhausted herself in endeavouring to render a prototype of human excellence" (22–23).[49] "An appeal to history, after all," as Simmons points out, "implies discontent with the present" (17). Encounters between the present and the past are ironic. They are designed to make both readers—the antiquarian Prince and the modern consumer—uncomfortably aware of how little we have advanced, or else they are meant to stress that this is *not* history: "When states and empires, in times far removed from the barbarity of the present," says the narrator of "The Chapel of St. Clothair," "come to the knowledge of these records;—if, indeed, they should not, like the hand which now traces them, be mouldered away;— how will they start when they hear of one which could permit such deeds" (147). The irony of this passage lies in the medieval scribe/narrator's naïve reliance on perfectibility (no prince in future advanced eras would ever keep a mistress at the expense of his people—would he?). But this contrast is displaced by readers' awareness that they are not reading about either a medieval prince or a cavalier.

Despite its gothicism, this is not a pseudo found manuscript like Chatterton's Rowley poems. The treasure it offers to its discerning editors, whose gift is in their ability not to unearth but to rewrite, is *not* its language but its content: the "truth" about one semi-historical prince. The narrator of *The Royal Legend* is omniscient. He can report both Prince and Cavalier's secret thoughts and intentions and declare the former's final reformation with confidence. He is also consistent, using the same voice, language, and degree of perception whether he is the Westminster Abbey friar who records the story of the Cavalier or the modern editor who makes a memoir readable as the novel it

really is. He can be coy when political satire demands it, as in this reference to Prince Henry's promise of future support for Perdita/Robinson—the 20,000 pound bond of history: "Whether or not the prince ever intended to fulfil the engagement he had thus voluntarily entered into . . . is unknown; if, indeed, we look at the more recent events of his life, we may have some reason to conclude he did not: however, let that be left for more accurate observers to determine" (58–59). There are no more accurate observers than that collective "we" that comprehends both the editors and the readers. Together we know perfectly well what recent events are—and that they *are* recent and not 400 years old.

The title page of *The Royal Legend* disarms its gothicism at the outset, by establishing that the text concerns the recent, not the ancient, past. The motto is a passage, in Latin, from *The Aeneid*: "*Quorum animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit.*" Below it appears a translation, "At which my memory with grief recoils." Both quote and translation appear in an article by Addison in *The Guardian*, volume 2 (July 1713). The newspaper was collected and in print throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. The author of *The Royal Legend* might have accessed it in the thirty-four-volume *British Classics* collection, which was published from 1804 to 1810 and includes both volumes of the short-lived periodical. The passages are the same in both *The Guardian* and *The Royal Legend*, although they are neither an exact quote nor an exact translation. The actual passage is in line twelve from Book Two and reads "*quamquam animus meminisse horret luctuque refugit / incipiam*" ("*incipiam*" begins line thirteen). The lines come from the beginning of Aeneas's narration of the fall of Troy and mean, roughly, "Although my mind shudders to remember and flees from the grief, I will begin." The alterations work more neatly with the satire of *The Royal Legend* than the original would have. The subordinating conjunction *quamquam* ("although" or "even if") is illogical out of context and would be particularly confusing in an epigraph, especially given the omission of the main verb *incipiam*, while the referent for *quorum* may be taken as the text itself. The translation also leaves out a word or two[50] and collapses *animus* ("mind") with *meminisse* ("to remember") into the single word "memory."

Thus discerning readers can learn, even before they begin this text, that memory, not history, is the vehicle for understanding its relevance. And memory is traumatic. Aeneas is recalling the collapse of a state, the end of a long and devastating struggle, and an event in which he was a principal actor. His speech to Dido emphasizes that

the act of remembering is both anticipatory and reflective: I am going to remember (*incipiam*), and when I do it will cause me grief. For him, recollection offers no possibility of recovery. Not so the Prince. The act of remembering recorded within the text of *The Royal Legend* is cathartic and exculpatory. When his life story is retold via a recovered text, the Prince is already halfway to reformation. He first recoils in horror at the errors he reads, and then resolves to remake himself. Such redemption is only possible, however, within the fabulous realm of the text's ahistorical past; it is only credible to minds glutted on luxurious wonders. The anonymous "I" of the translated motto (whose memory recoils? Aeneas's? Prince George's? The author's? The reader's?) makes telling or reading this tale an act of recollection without recovery. The speaker's anonymity also highlights the title's ambiguity as the referent for *quorum*, as *that* at which memory recoils. What is the royal legend? Is it a tale of royalty, and is the speaker who recoils a version of the Prince who starts at reading his own life in print? Or is royalty, or monarchy, the legend?[51] If readers recognize the passage's original context, the referent is a state—Troy—that has already fallen. And if they transfer that significance to the current text, the legend they are about to read, the anticipated memory from which both readers and writer shrink, is the tale of another state that has already collapsed, this time not as a result of a siege but under the weight of its rulers' incapacities. In the pseudo-antiquarian narrative of the text's discovery, the found artifact, the royal legend, has already been ravaged beyond recovery. The novel we read instead is a fantasy.

The Royal Legend is a latecomer among novelizations of the Prince of Wales's sexual life. It was written more than twenty-five years after the Florizel and Perdita novels, the King letters, or the *Memoirs of Perdita*, and twenty years after the last issue of *The Rambler's Magazine*. In the intervening decades, Robinson had become an acclaimed poet and novelist and died just before the publication of her *Memoirs*.[52] The King had suffered at least one more bout of his mysterious illness; the Prince had acquired numerous additional mistresses and had married and conceived a child with his cousin Caroline of Brunswick. He had been estranged from his wife for over ten years by 1808. His recent, clumsy attempt to divorce her by accusing her of having mothered an illegitimate child provoked public outrage and sympathy for the Princess that continued to erupt periodically throughout the next decade.

Some of that outrage and sympathy inform the structure of this novel. Like the eighteenth-century texts, *The Royal Legend* mixes its

political satire with other modes, not puffery or pornography this time but gothic and sentimental romance. This generic slipperiness is in part a scattershot marketing technique—offering something for everyone. The mixed modes also temper critique of monarchy with popular forms that trade on the royals' celebrity, and on the relationship between celebrities and fictional characters, a relationship that, as Tom Mole has pointed out, consists in their common familiarity to consumers of print. Like the famous courtesan readers feel they know because they have read her biography in a tête-à-tête, like the beautiful young damsel they feel they know because they have wept over her familiar letters, royal characters are household names. They are known not only as political figures whose actions—making war on America; firing a prime minister; promising a mistress 20,000 pounds; marrying a Catholic; talking to trees—affect the nation. They are also part of the hermeneutic of intimacy, the "commercialised interpenetration" (Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity* 5) of the public and private realms that characterized emerging celebrity culture in the romantic period. As "Henry, Prince of Wales," "the Cavalier," and "Carlina," or, later, in Thomas Ashe's representation, "The Marquis of Albion" and "Caroline," they are like "Byron": public figures whose real (that is, publicly traded private) selves we insist we know.

Chapter Three

The Novel, the Regency, and the Domestication of Royalty

In March 1813, Princess Caroline published the proceedings of the 1806 secret commission, known as the "delicate investigation," that examined the accusations of adultery made against her by her former friend Lady Douglas. Her goal was to embarrass her estranged husband and pressure him to give her greater access to their daughter, Princess Charlotte. The decision to publish the royal commission's report of the investigation, together with a letter addressed to the Regent from the Princess, was as much an attack by Whigs on their former supporter and his Tory allies as it was an airing of dirty royal linen. But as a publication of domestic affairs, it accomplished several mingled tasks. The report garnered sympathy for the wronged Princess, whose choices, although not always wise, had certainly been no worse than her husband's—and he had never treated her as the public believed he ought to have. The Prince and Princess were first cousins; they married in 1795 as part of an arrangement in which Parliament agreed to provide an allowance that would cover the Prince's substantial debts. They had never seen each other. The Prince brought to the marriage at least one current mistress and a secret wife, neither of whom he was willing to give up on marrying his cousin. The marriage produced one child, Princess Charlotte, but the couple separated shortly after she was born. By the time of the commission report, they had been living apart for a decade.

The report exonerated Caroline from the linchpin of the Prince's case against her: the accusation that she had adulterous affairs and that her adopted son, Willy Austin, was her illegitimate child.

The evidence strongly suggested that Lady Douglas's testimony, on which the accusation chiefly rested, had been fabricated.[1] The Princess's advisors, among them Lord Eldon and Spencer Perceval, concluded that Douglas could not be prosecuted for perjury, however, because the commission was not a court of law. "The Book," as the report of the "delicate investigation" was known, was printed in limited numbers in early 1807 but suppressed by then Chancellor of the Exchequer Perceval after the fall of Lord Grenville's ministry, before any copies had circulated publicly. Although not published until 1813, its contents were the subject of widespread rumor and speculation, most of it sympathetic to the Princess and critical of the commissioners' prosecutorial zeal. Rogue copies were said to be in the hands of booksellers, but none was ever made public.[2]

Though officially exonerating the Princess, the Book contained lurid testimony from members of the Princess's household and described a pattern of conduct inconsistent with the public perception of how a princess, or any lady, should behave. In July 1806 the commissioners concluded there was "no foundation" for a belief that Caroline had given birth to an illegitimate child, but they acknowledged that her "conduct" must "necessarily give rise to very unfavourable interpretations."[3] The Princess was reported to have entertained men without adequate chaperonage; she dressed revealingly, was "too familiar" (Perceval 9), especially with naval officers, and allowed herself to be laughed at and talked about by the servants (32). If she did not actually have sex with the men mentioned in the allegations (and she almost certainly did with at least some of them), clearly she had behaved badly. The commissioners could not convict her of adultery, but they could convict her, ex parte, of being an incorrigible—if unpolished—flirt.

The motivation behind the commissioners' conclusions was probably to provide the Prince with grounds for a legal separation, *a mensa et thoro*.[4] But the accusation of unladylike behavior had a class resonance as well. Although Lady Douglas's testimony, chiefly regarded the, ultimately disproved, accusation of illegitimate motherhood, it devoted substantial attention to the Princess's vulgarity and low behavior. Douglas describes the Princess as "a person without education or talents, and without any desire of improving herself" (Perceval 45); she accuses her of being slovenly in her dress, at times to the edge of indecency (45), at others inappropriately overdressed (60). She describes the Princess eating and drinking to excess, and especially drinking quantities of ale, which, in Douglas's testimony, Caroline mispronounces as "oil" (44). She implies, moreover, that

the Princess's irregular sexuality extends to her making unwanted advances to Lady Douglas herself—as if her chief crime is not her excesses but their indiscriminate quality:

> In a short time, the Princess became so extravagantly fond of me, that, however flattering it might be, it certainly was very troublesome. Leaving her attendants below, she would push past my servant, and run up stairs into my bed-chamber, kiss me, take me in her arms, and tell me I was beautiful, saying she had never loved any woman so much . . . and such high-flown compliments that women are never used to pay each other. (41–42)

The compound image here is of a large, undisciplined child, who follows "the impulse of the moment . . . without regard to consequences or appearances" (52), and an uncolonized exotic. The common denominator is an unwillingness, even incapacity, to control a variety of appetites. Perhaps most interesting for my purposes, however, are her descriptions of Montague House, the Princess's residence, following the supposed birth of her illegitimate child. These descriptions convey a class inflected distaste that gets at least some of its force from the implied (and heavily italicized) contrast between the elegant features of a royal residence and the domestic squalor superimposed by the Princess's illegitimate and uncouth maternity:

> . . . from this time the drawing-rooms at Montague House, were literally in the style of a common nursery. The tables were covered with spoons, plates, feeding-boats, and clothes round the fire; napkins [diapers] were hung to air, and the *marble hearths were strewed with napkins which were taken from the child*; for, very extraordinary to relate, *this* was a part of the ceremony *Her Royal Highness was particularly tenacious of always performing herself*; let the company be who they might. (62)

The profaning of the "marble hearths" with the dirty diapers of a supposed newborn converts the crime of adultery into a metonym for the royal marriage itself, when the disappointed Prince George represented himself as having been struck by what he described as his bride's "personal nastiness," meaning, apparently, her unwashed and smelly body (quoted in Fraser 56). In Caroline's distasteful and disreputable advent, for the Prince and his allies, foreignness stands in for uncouthness in an overdetermined layering of unpalatable attributes: she is vulgar, smelly, fat, and loud. The putative birth ten years later of her illegitimate child, the signifier of her uncontainable sexuality,

replicates and confounds her unsavory reputation. Later testimony refuted the allegations, proving that Willy Austin's mother was alive and well, and establishing that he was cared for by a nursemaid in a nursery that was, as was typical for the time, at the top of the house, far from the drawing rooms (Fraser 170). But this retroactive correction does not alter the initial rhetorical effect of the allegations' coloring and context. The implied conclusion of the commission's report is that flirting and "[c]onduct unbecoming" (Fraser 171) are adequate moral, social, and perhaps legal substitutes for adultery. Similarly, being unwashed, over or underdressed, excessively and inappropriately maternal, and drinking lots of "oil" can stand as determinants for being both sexually and socially outside the pale.

The composite portrait generated by the delicate investigation and the discussions surrounding it is of a ribald and slightly ridiculous figure, a woman who refuses to conform to contemporary expectations and who is at once an object of sympathy, contempt, and prurient fascination. Yet, despite the implications of its content, the publication of the commission report generated more support for Caroline than condemnation. In a letter dated February 1813, Austen articulated the prevailing view of the royal marriage, which cut across party lines in its identification of the Regent as the root cause of his wife's misconduct:

> I suppose all the World is sitting in Judgement upon the Princess of Wales's Letter. Poor woman, I shall support her as long as I can, because she *is* a Woman, & because I hate her Husband—but I can hardly forgive her for calling herself "attached & affectionate" to a Man whom she must detest—& the intimacy said to subsist between her & Lady Oxford is bad.—I do not know what to do about it;—but if I must give up the Princess, I am resolved at least always to think that she would have been respectable, if the Prince had behaved only tolerably by her at first. (Austen *Letters* 208)

The letter Austen refers to was officially from Caroline but was almost certainly written for her by her attorney Henry Brougham.[5] It served as a kind of introduction to the Book, prefaced by a "Narrative of Recent Events" that recounted her three attempts to deliver it to the Regent in January of the same year. The letter was delivered in a sealed envelope and returned unopened each time, although an unsealed copy was made available to the Prince's advisors. The narrative does not report that the whig-leaning *Morning Chronicle* published the letter on February 10, or that excerpts from "the Regent's Valentine," as it was called, were printed on commemorative china and widely

sold (Fraser 231). All the world might well sit in judgment on a document with such a public life.

Yet the letter itself is neither testimony nor evidence. Its relationship to the documents in the case is tangential. Its approach is extralegal; it is a salvo in a war of words that uses the now-tabled case against the Princess as leverage. Brougham's argument in the letter is that the separation of mother and daughter is a threefold evil. It is a source of unhappiness to both mother and daughter: "To see myself cut off from one of the few domestic enjoyments left me—certainly the only one upon which I set any value, the society of my child—involves me in such misery, as I well know your Royal Highness could never inflict upon me if you were aware of its bitterness" (xi–xii). Separation is deleterious to the daughter's development, causing "serious, and it soon may be . . . irreparable injury" (xii). The crux of Brougham's argument, however, is that the division between mother and daughter fosters a public image of Caroline that ought to have been set to rest by the conclusion of the commission report, six years earlier. Because "in the eyes of an observing and jealous world, this separation of a daughter from her mother, will only admit of one construction" (xii), it is the duty of the Regent, "the natural protector" (xi) of both mother and daughter, to

> reflect on the situation in which I am placed: without the shadow of a charge against me—without even an accuser —after an inquiry that led to my ample vindication—yet treated as if I were still more culpable than the perjuries of my suborned traducers represented me, and held up to the world as a mother who may not enjoy the society of her only child. (xii)

Brougham's letter sentimentalizes the judgment in Austen's. Both judgments are against the Prince. His refusal to accept his natural responsibility to protect his wife—from the observing and jealous world or from herself—is for both Brougham and Austen the origin of all subsequent evils.

The assumptions governing these letters appear in two novels published within two years of each other: Thomas Ashe's *The Spirit of "the Book"* (1811) and Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813). Ashe's novel promises a "true" account of the events leading up to and including the delicate investigation. Like *The Royal Legend*, *The Spirit of "the Book"* provides explanations for scandalous royal behavior that exonerates and sentimentalizes the principals. Heroines and heroes of romance, the central characters (particularly Caroline) offer readers

the same opportunity for intimate identification as Richardson's Pamela or *The Royal Legend*'s Prince Henry. Ashe's book, however, contains none of the satire of *The Royal Legend*. The sentimentality in his novel is continuous with the sentimentality of Brougham's letter; although often implausible, it is never ironic. In his depiction of the Princess, Ashe recognizes the political necessity behind the hypocrisy for which Austen can hardly forgive her. His Caroline is the Caroline of Brougham's letter: a robbed and doting mother, attached and affectionate to a husband who has never appreciated her manifest worth. *Pride and Prejudice* was published a month before the commission report and Austen's letter to her friend, Martha Lloyd. Its domestic realism is far removed from Ashe's sentimental roman à clef. Nonetheless, both novels reflect similar assumptions: responsibility for female bad behavior rests with husbands and fathers. This notion was part of the bourgeois reframing of monarchy that Davidoff and Hall identify in later responses to the Queen Caroline affair.[6]

Rendering the Spirit of Royalty: Caroline, Ashe, and the Satirist

Thomas Ashe, also known as Captain Ashe (1770–1835), was an Irish Army officer, newspaper writer, travel writer, and occasional blackmailer. He is probably best known for *The Spirit of "the Book"* and for his 1815 picaresque autobiography, *Memoirs and Confessions of Captain Ashe*. He wrote *The Spirit of "the Book"; or, Memoirs of Caroline Princess of Hasburgh, a Political and Amatory Romance in Three Volumes* as a series of letters from Caroline to her daughter Princess Charlotte. Ashe's book is part political tract, part novel of sentiment; it is not a satire on the royal family. Later supporters of Caroline used her cause as an argument for the abolition of the monarchy, often representing her husband as a bloated tyrant. Ashe, on the other hand, struggles to portray the Princess sympathetically while not offending any members of the royal family. He markets his book as a thinly disguised representation of actual events, a work not of fiction but of fact. The title promises to provide the essence—the "spirit"—of the story that Ashe claims is given in the commission report, the details changed just enough to satisfy legality without offsetting authenticity.

The Spirit of "the Book" offers itself as an adequate, and more engaging, substitute for the commission report. Its transparency is a part of its packaging. Like the authors/editors of the Florizel and Perdita novels, Ashe offers readers a novelization—not a fictionalization—of

the events they have been reading and hearing about for the past five years. The politics of such a project in 1811 are complex. The original commission was instituted under the auspices of the short-lived Ministry of All the Talents, in the interests and at the insistence of the Prince of Wales. During the years covered in the report, most of the Princess's companions were Tories; George Canning, who was to become an important figure in George IV's ministry, rising to Prime Minister, was rumored to be one of her lovers.[7] Perceval's suppression of the Book was thus an act of political expediency cooperating with chivalrousness. By 1811, however, the Prince of Wales, now Prince Regent, had abandoned his former companions, retained his father's government, and signaled his Tory allegiance. It was now the Princess who partied with the Whigs. Staunch defenders of her reputation, as Ashe styles himself, might reasonably expect to be aligned with the opposition. *The Spirit of "the Book"* ought therefore to be a whig publication. But the trajectory of the narrative seems intended to provide benign explanations for everything that appears suspect in the Princess's public identity, including her estrangement from the royal family, officially the occasion for the letters in the first place. Ashe's slender narrative (most of the book is a hodgepodge of sentimental fiction and free-ranging social commentary) concentrates on Caroline's imagined youth and the circumstances and early years of her marriage. In this narrative structuring, the Princess is both a heroine of sensibility and the reader's intimate friend. If the epistolary novels of the Florizel and Perdita era offered readers plausible reproductions of an actual correspondence, the epistolarity in Ashe's novel is discursive—favoring intimacy over authenticity, the spirit over the letter.

Ashe's Caroline is a serious young woman, reclusive, studious, and devoted to family. Her gentleness and noble features make up for her lack of conventional beauty. While still in Brunswick ("Hasburgh"), she falls in love with "Algernon," a young Irish soldier of infinite sensibility but no pretensions to birth.[8] Possibly she sleeps with him. Her father, who is both lovingly paternalistic and tyrannically self-interested, objects to the match. He forces her to marry the "Marquis of Albion," son and heir of the "Duke of Edinburgh" and a man at once dissipated and honorable.[9] When he learns that she has come to him with her heart if not her person already engaged, the Marquis nobly forgives her and offers her his friendship. But his former mistress, "the Countess" (identifiable as the Prince's lover, Lady Jersey), through a combination of scandal-mongering and deliberately bad sartorial advice, sullies her reputation and drives the pair apart just

when Caroline discovers that she is pregnant with their daughter. The couple nearly reconciles when the Marquis happens upon mother and daughter after a several years' absence and is overwhelmed with familial affection, but the machinations of the Countess again intervene and lead to the opening of the delicate investigation.

Upon the closing of the commission report the entire royal family is prepared to forgive Caroline, if she can account for the presence of a mysterious stranger in her neighborhood, a search of whose cottage reveals her miniature and a collection of poems written to her. The stranger turns out to be Algernon. He has taken up residence near Caroline, "to enjoy the melancholy bliss of sometimes seeing, at a reverential distance, the object of [his] early love" (362). His second goal is to put in her way Willy Austin and restore the family romance of his parentage. The child turns out to be the (legitimate) son not of Caroline but of her childhood friends Melina and "the brave Prince L – – s" (362), whose own star-crossed love ended with their early deaths. In the face of such conclusive proof of her innocence, the Marquis consents to a permanent, entirely amicable separation from Caroline, and the story ends—without ever explaining why Caroline must continue to write to a daughter with whom she has apparently been reunited.

Despite this and other irregularities, *The Spirit of "the Book"* was quite popular. It was published in three duodecimo volumes and sold for between fifteen and twenty-five shillings.[10] Ashe's novel went into three editions in the first year, enough to make Ashe, who sold the copyright for 250 pounds, regret having thrown away such a money maker (*Memoirs and Confessions* III. 128–29). A fourth English edition was published in 1812, as was a one-volume American edition, published in Philadelphia. It was translated into French and German the following year. Although *The Spirit of "the Book"* is listed among new publications in the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviews in autumn of 1811, the only full-length review appeared in *The Satirist, or Monthly Meteor* in October 1811.[11] The aim of this review is polemic. The reviewer is not interested in discussing the book's merits as a novel but in uncovering its flaws as an exposé, most of which originate in its author's fraudulence. The Satirist focuses on the sentimentality in Ashe's depiction of Caroline: the bereft and doting mother of Brougham's letter. Unlike Ashe, however, he divides sentimentality from radicalism. According to the Satirist, when Ashe connects Caroline's devotion to her daughter with her advocacy for what looks like free love, he infuses her story with a radicalism that discredits him as an author. His heroine's sexuality cancels out the domestic ideology

that, for Brougham and Caroline, anchored her defense. The true Princess could never contain both impulses; therefore, this must not be the true Princess. The Satirist's ad hominem attack against Ashe is his way of entering into debates on the royal marriage. The radicalism of his book, which must be inauthentic, is an import. It originates in Ashe's unscrupulousness, which comprehends his authorship as well as his business dealings.

According to the review, *The Spirit of "the Book"* is both fraudulent and libelous. It is fraudulent, first, because it contains no new information:

> We did think it probable that Mr. Ashe might have procured a sight of a few loose sheets of "The Book," through the assistance of a printer's devil or some similar agent; but having now read the whole of his three paltry volumes we take upon ourselves to assert that he has never seen *one line thereof*; for "The Spirit of the Book" does not contain a single fact that has not appeared long ago, in all the newspapers. ("Review of New Publications" 325)

If the facts are nothing new, the portions of the book not grounded in verifiable fact are equally inauthentic. They are either derivative or plagiarized. When he is inventing, Ashe writes "in language borrowed . . . from Mesdames Radcliffe, [Charlotte] Smith, [Sydney] Owenson, and other Romance writers and 'disfigured to make it pass for his own' " (323).[12] The reviewer is no kinder to Ashe's more direct interpolations. Ashe devotes two pages to a paraphrase from Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews* describing the dedication of Solomon's temple. The relevance of this digression is unclear. The occasion is a comparison to a public gathering of the royal family. Most likely it is filler, although it does support his image of Caroline as a serious-minded scholar. Ashe (or "Caroline") supplies the sources for this account: "Josephus tells us" (364–65) and, later, "or to tell it you in the more emphatical words of holy writ" (365). Nonetheless, the Satirist treats this as another instance of rogue borrowing, the more egregious because the sources are more elevated:

> Letter 51 is so truly ridiculous that we really felt amused at its contents; but it was that sort of amusement which we experience at beholding the finest characters of Shakespeare enacted by such a performer as Mr. Coates of stage and *cockadoodle* notoriety. It commences with a description of the court at Windsor, on a public thanksgiving day; then gives the Princess Charlotte an elaborate account of *King Solomon's* feast from *Josephus* and the *Bible*! (324)

The reviewer here draws a contrast between form and content that demonstrates the ineptitude of Ashe's chicanery, while still condemning him as a fraud. Robert, or "Romeo" or "Cockadoodle," Coates was famous partly for his appallingly bad acting and partly for his public display of wealth. He was known as "Cockadoodle" Coates because of his practice of driving around Bath in a curricle shaped like a kettledrum and emblazoned with the motto, "Whilst I live I'll crow." The nickname "Romeo" came from a performance as Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet*, in which he was laughed off the stage before the end of the play. Reading Ashe, the comparison suggests, is like watching a bad actor, in whose hands great characters look ridiculous, and tragedy descends into farce. Ashe's inability to do justice to the words of Josephus and the Old Testament suggests his inability to write, sympathetically or otherwise, about the royal family. As with Romeo Coates, the contrast between the practitioner and his subject matter is too great.

Both the intensity and focus of the *Satirist* attack suggest what Margaret Russett calls the "prosecutorial style of literary criticism" that developed throughout the later eighteenth century and into the romantic period. This "legalistic" approach to criticism (*Fictions and Fakes* 16) coincided with the rash of literary forgeries from Chatterton to Hogg.[13] *The Spirit of "the Book"* is not a forgery in the sense that Chatterton's Rowley poems or Ireland's Shakespeare forgeries are. It shares enough of the features of these literary fakes, however, to allow the Satirist to assume a juridical stance designed as much to elevate his status as reviewer as to discredit Ashe. Like Chatterton, Ireland, *Ossian*'s MacPherson, or Hogg, Ashe claims to have stumbled upon a manuscript whose rarity and value only he can adequately gauge. His discernment rewrites happenstance as privilege. "This information was not cast away upon me" (*Memoirs and Confessions* III. 83), as it might have been on a less discriminating and less enterprising reader. Prevented by the machinations of a corrupt government from publishing the information in its original form, he publishes its "spirit" instead.

Russett observes that "found manuscript" stories like Ashe's and others' "*fictionalized* literary production—turned writing in on itself—by making the interest of the text depend on how it came into being" (25). Ashe's discovery narrative differs from either the pseudo-antiquarianism of *The Royal Legend* or the satire of the Florizel and Perdita novels in making the discoverer/editor a central character. If he had carried out his threat to publish his alleged excerpts from the actual Book, he would have been closer to literary forgers like

Chatterton and Ireland than he was. His claim of access to the original document was flimsy, and he would have had to work, as they did, to produce a plausible reproduction of style and, in this case, substance (even more elusive). His decision to render instead the "spirit" of the original document makes him a different kind of impersonator. His claim of privileged possession depends on his ability to imitate not the style of the writer but the voice of the central character. His is not the ear that identifies the idiosyncratic style of Shakespeare or foundational English or Gaelic lyric; it is the ear into which a princess pours her confessions. The fantasy of identification is not a family romance of noble literary progenitors but an imagined intimacy with royalty.[14]

Ashe is not entitled to claim this intimacy, the Satirist suggests, because his clumsiness as an imitator of his own intertexts reiterates his social unfitness to the task of reproducing royalty. Like an amateur or a barnyard animal squawking Shakespeare, he utterly lacks the discrimination or the inside knowledge that would enable him to render the intimate thoughts of a princess. The reviewer's emphasis in the above passage deriding Ashe's plagiarisms—italics as well as punctuation—indicates his courtroom stance. With a flourish he will reveal the truth that Ashe's sleights of hand are intended to obscure. It does not matter that Ashe named both his sources. This reviewer often identifies as clumsy duplicity something that is more complicated. He meticulously provides the real names behind Ashe's slender disguises for characters and locations: "We cannot imagine why Mr. *Ashe* always dashes the names of all his English places and towns; even England is always printed E – – -d" (324). He declares in a parenthesis, "we purposely divest the characters of the borrowed names by which the author foolishly hopes to defend himself against the outraged laws of his country" (323). This claim is spurious, first because the reviewer follows the same transparent convention ("the P. of W –" [323]) that he lampoons in Ashe. Further, the cryptonyms Ashe gives his characters are most likely not intended to protect him from the outraged laws of his country, which wouldn't have been outraged in any case. False names, partial names (such as "Caroline" or "Charlotte"), or names with missing letters replaced by dashes provided no protection from prosecution for libel, if the writing itself was intentionally defamatory. The reviewer tries to suggest that Ashe's is by punning on the subtitle of the novel, listing it, in the heading of his review as *Memoirs of Caroline, Princess of Hasburgh; a Political and Amatory* (*q.* Defamatory) *Romance*. But it is a stretch to call *The Spirit of "the Book"* defamatory. Ashe is careful not to impugn the

character or fitness for office of any member of the royal family. His borrowed or partially elided names are transparent, and he assumes his readers will easily identify the real names behind the false ones. His aim is to give them the pleasant sense of being winked at, of being in the know. His book contains no facts not already printed in newspapers because he wants his readers' general and public knowledge to feel like particular and intimate knowledge.

The Satirist's aim is to show Ashe's unworthiness to trade on—and market—this intimacy. He is unsuited for the role, not only because of what he is *not* (in the know himself; a good writer; even an adequate imitator of other writers), but also because of what he *is*. Half of the *Satirist* article is devoted to exposing Ashe as a buffoon and petty criminal, in language that moves between exaggerated contempt and moral indignation. Like Coates, whose nicknames included "Diamond," for his habit of displaying the large collection of diamonds he inherited from his planter father, Ashe had a variety of soubriquets. Some of these were publishing pseudonyms used for periodical articles, in the same vein as "Cantab." and "A Briton," both among *The Satirist*'s collection of recurring disguises. But the reviewer makes no distinction between these and Ashe's less legitimate aliases, lumping them all together as signs of his disreputability. And—again the Coates reference is apt—disreputability consists in equal and overlapping parts of fraudulence and an absurdly inflated ego:

> In our last Number we only mentioned Mr. Ashe as having assumed *three titles*. Now a *three titled* author, like a *three tailed* bashaw, must be a very distinguished character; but as *three titles* are not, like three tails, indicative of the *most exalted* station which their bearer can acquire, we feel ourselves extremely culpable for having neglected to enumerate *all the honours* of the gentleman, whose conduct and whose book are now the objects of our examination. Be it therefore known to all whom it may concern (among whom every *tradesman* in the kingdom is included), that Thomas Ashe, *alias* Anvil, *alias* Anville, *alias* Sidney, in addition to his titles of Captain, Esquire, Author, and Envoy, has assumed and *exercised* the character of *Secretary of Legation to Lord Strangforth! Diamond merchant*! *Money smith* at St. Michael's, and editor of a Sunday newspaper in London. (319–20)

The titles, like the aliases, are blinds that, when listed cumulatively reveal rather than conceal the dishonor of the man. The Satirist claims that the new titles come by way of one of Ashe's "d – – d good-natured friends" (319), apparently offended at the first half of the review. This "friend" is meant to be taken by the Satirist's readers as

Ashe himself; more likely the reviewer supplied the titles, especially as they gave him an opportunity to provide several unsavory back-stories at once. The length of the list—the crescendo effect produced by the repetition ("alias . . . alias . . . alias") and the increasing italics and exclamation points—suggests an accumulation of misdeeds, a complex of lies and false identities.[15] The final title, "editor of a Sunday newspaper in London," is the only one Ashe legitimately held. Its placement at the end of this catalogue of vices has the effect of making it seem the most disreputable of all. This final crime unites and explains the others. What looks like a picaresque summary is a single story. The newspaper editor is Sidney; Sidney is Anville, and Anville is Ashe, the rogue who posed as Lord Strangford's secretary, and trafficked, equally unsuccessfully, in contraband diamonds, counterfeit bank notes, and information.

Ashe was a committed blackmailer, although not, it appears, a very good one. According to his own account, his goals in writing *The Spirit of "the Book"* were extortion and revenge. In August 1810, Ashe published a notice in *The Phoenix*, the Sunday newspaper mentioned in *The Satirist*, which he edited under the pseudonym "Sidney." The advertisement gave a history of the Book's printing and suppression, and claimed that the latter was in return for Perceval's elevation to Prime Minister. Perceval, Ashe said, had extorted from the royal family a promise of the ministry and "two of the richest sinecures in the kingdom" (quoted in Ashe *Memoirs and Confessions* III. 86), in return for destroying all remaining copies of a document that proved the Princess's innocence, her "accuser's" criminality, and filled the entire royal family with "horror, remorse, and dismay" (85). Ashe claimed to have acquired for *The Phoenix* one of the purloined copies of the Book, from which he promised to print excerpts in upcoming numbers, "and to investigate the spirit and principles of the proceeding in such a manner as must eventually bring the whole question before the public eye" (87). No sooner had the notice appeared than Perceval convinced the proprietor of the newspaper, a Mr. Swan, not to print the excerpts and to fire Ashe. Ashe then retired to Brighton and wrote *The Spirit of "the Book"* in six weeks, with the aim "of convincing Mr. Perceval how absurd it was to call himself an upright minister or an honest man, before he had burnt my evidence of his life, and put out the eyes of his judge" (88).[16]

The Satirist gives its own version of the blackmail story. The reviewer quotes from Ashe's notice in *The Phoenix*, with the story of Perceval's supposed machinations softened and condensed. He prefaces this with the story of "an officer" whom he says Ashe befriended in the

summer of 1810. Using the name "Mr. Anville," Ashe absconded with a copy of a memoir he hoped would prove damning to the government.[17] The officer, suspecting that Anville/Ashe intended "some sinister purpose" (327), scoured the newspapers until he came upon the advertisement in *The Phoenix*. The reviewer writes in a footnote that the advertisement is contained within a clumsy blackmail letter addressed to Lord Erskine (327n).[18] The letter in turn contains the responses of Lord Camden, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and his undersecretary Edward Cooke to Ashe's earlier attempts to blackmail them with the same document. Ashe offers their "publish and be damned" answers as evidence of the truth of his claims. In the same footnote the Satirist promises that, of the three suppressed documents Ashe threatened to publish, he had access only to the purloined memoir; the other two were bluffs.[19] Later footnotes refute the claims on which the Perceval scheme rests, calling the allegation of extortion "an impudent and infamous falsehood" (328n).[20] This is reviewer as investigative reporter, looking at both Ashe's conduct and his book and condemning them together: "Our object is merely to shew the character of the man, that the public may know what confidence to place in his imposter book" (321).[21] The author's predatory and clownish imposture becomes the best means of understanding his production; both are frauds,—equally dangerous and silly.

Part of the Satirist's strategy is the continual linking of absurdity and threat: what is frightening is foolish, and what is foolish is always also frightening. Ashe is a buffoon because he can't pass his work off as either the memoir of a royal princess or a Radcliffe romance. He is a predator because he nonetheless imposes on an unsuspecting public, duping his victims and readers into believing in, and paying for, something that has no real substance. Yet again he is a buffoon because, thanks to the Satirist, he can't get away with either scam for long. He is not who he claims to be. For instance, he is not the "Secretary of Legation to Lord Strangforth." The Satirist has done his background work and reports that "his Lordship, strange to tell, refused to confirm the appointment which Thomas Ashe, *alias* Anvil, *alias* Anville, *alias* Sidney, had conferred upon *himself*" (320). Lord Strangforth, actually Strangford, was a diplomat and occasional poet. He was at this time minister plenipotentiary to Portugal, and, like Ashe, an Irishman. According to his *Memoirs*, Ashe posed as his secretary to gain access to several Portuguese-owned diamond mines, as part of a scheme to smuggle contraband diamonds from Brazil. He succeeded for a time, but in the end the plan, like most of Ashe's schemes, was a complicated failure. He was forced to sell the handful

of diamonds he carried away with him, at cost, to cover a portion of his debts. So much for diplomatic secretary and diamond merchant: Ashe is not to be known by titles he has conferred on himself, although the Satirist is free to exploit the irony produced by Ashe's supposed hubris. "Money smith at St. Michael's" is a more obscure, even occult, title, but its vagueness allows the Satirist to tease it out into a universal symbol for the common imposture that is both author and book.

According to his *Memoirs*, Ashe stopped at St. Michael's, actually the island of São Miguel in the Azores, on his return to Europe after his diamond scheme collapsed. While there, he agreed to take on some freight in his return journey to Spain. He paid for a part of the freight in doubloons and in a bank note for seventy-five pounds, drawn on a bank in Liverpool, and endorsed by a Mr. Charles Harris. Presumably Ashe had contracted to pay for the rest of the freight after he sold it in Spain, but he lost it all when his ship was burned during the British retreat from Corunna. He does not explain what he intended to do about the lost freight and does not mention the transaction again until he is arrested in January 1811 on a fraud charge. He clears himself of this charge by demonstrating that he was a victim of circumstance rather than a deliberate swindler. But he is then charged with forgery when a witness named Charles Harris testifies that he never endorsed the seventy-five-pound note. Both forging bank notes and uttering (trading) forged notes were capital offenses (Byatt 43). A false endorsement was legally a forgery and hence punishable by death or transportation.[22] Ashe was accused of forging the signature of an endorser on what amounted to a discounted bill. He was acquitted when the prosecution was unable to prove that the Charles Harris who testified against him was the same Charles Harris whose name was on the note.

The Satirist slides over his acquittal as easily as he folds two different types of forgery into one. Ashe the counterfeiter is a more useful figure than Ashe the inept dupe of others, of circumstances, of his own ill-conceived schemes:

> Our readers are probably unacquainted with the nature of a *money smith's* profession, money being in England always coined by means of *a die*. But Mr. Ashe, *alias Anvil, alias* &c. &c. can inform them that this is not the case in *St. Michael's*, where it is sometimes, like horse shoes, *forged* by means of an *Anvil*. A curious illustration of this fact was exhibited in January last before the Lord Mayor; for a more particular account of which, vide *The London Packet* and some other newspapers of the 10th of that month. (320)

The Satirist does not provide the "more particular account," as he did in the case of Lord Strangford, most likely because it undercuts his case against Ashe. His real goal is that pun on forges and anvils, to emphasize which he deliberately misspells Ashe's "Anville" alias.[23] Ashe is a real forger—one who works with his hands and the tools of his trade to produce fakes and pass them off to an unsuspecting public. Never mind that forgery at this time almost always meant working with paper, forging (the metaphor already lost) watermarks and stamps on Bank of England notes. Ashe's putative crime is even less tactile than this, because he was accused not of altering the note but of impersonating the endorser's signature. The Satirist's insistence on the concrete (coining by means of a die, forging by means of an anvil) allows him to anchor Ashe's crime to an older monetary system. Ashe doesn't impersonate bank notes (which are impersonations); he impersonates real money. At a time when the banking crisis was at the forefront of the English consciousness, when bank notes were seen as both signifying nothing and vulnerable to forgery, Ashe's crime is a crime of modernity. His "imposter book" is one instance of a general imposture that replicates the instability of the English monetary system. Coins were worth what they weighed and were authenticated by the monarch's stamp. Ashe's book, like a bank note, only "promises" to pay. It is inauthentic because it lacks the true stamp of royalty. The Satirist's ability to spot forgeries of all kinds, and his zeal in rooting them out, recalls the policing gestures in King's *Letters from Perdita* and *Authentic Memoirs, Memorandums, and Confessions.* The writers of all three texts establish their literary credentials by exposing another writer's fraudulence, always at once literary and financial.

Ashe's account of both schemes varies between defensive or self-aggrandizing fantasy and rogue confession, linked by a strain of ironic self-awareness.[24] On his return to England after the failure of his diamond scheme, he "determined on the life of a political writer" (*Memoirs and Confessions* III. 40). He began writing as "Albion" for *Blagdon's Political Register*, where he claims to have earned a reputation as "the successor of Burke and the conqueror of Cobbett" (55).[25] Blagdon did not pay him what he felt he deserved, however, and he accepted the job at *The Phoenix*, which he calls "a demi-opposition paper" (62), briefly drawing salaries from both papers.[26] In Ashe's representation, *The Phoenix* is more than "demi" opposed to the Government. If "Albion" was the conqueror of Cobbett, "Sidney" is allied with "Sir Francis Burdett, Mr. Whitbread, Lord Folkstone, &c. &c." (75), that is, with radicals and with radical-leaning Whigs.[27] "Sidney" is also a more politically local pseudonym than "Albion,"

especially in conjunction with the name by which Caroline calls her lover in *The Spirit of "the Book."* The names together evoke Algernon Sidney, the seventeenth-century republican political theorist whose critique of absolutism and the royal prerogative, expressed in *Discourses concerning Government*, resulted in his arrest and execution in 1683. A constitutionalist, Sidney believed the monopolist monarchies of the Tudors and Stuarts were predicated on the undermining of feudalism and the "tripartite balance of king, lords, and commons." The "eclipse" of this system "unhinged the monarchy, rendering the prerogative erratic and untrustworthy" (Houston 258).[28] The significance of Ashe's pairing only emerges if a reader connects the *Phoenix* and *The Spirit of "the Book"* as cooperating with each other—newspaper and novel engaged in the common project of bringing down a corrupt and self-serving government. This strategic nomination looks like republicanism, but only if one doesn't look too closely. In Ashe's formulation government, in the figure of Perceval, is the enemy, not the ally, of the monarchy, which Ashe represents as a network of vulnerable and fragmented families rather than a political institution.

Ashe reports that his anger at Perceval began when Perceval stopped his salary at the *Political Register* upon learning that he was also writing for the opposition (in an effort to retain him, he says, Blagdon had got Perceval to stake his salary on the strength of his eloquent support of the Government). Personal animus now joins with self-interest to shift his politics to the left. "But no sooner had I an altercation with Mr. Perceval, than I felt myself at liberty to contemplate the condition of the country in another point of view" (III. 75).[29] In vanquishing Perceval, Ashe claims to be defending the Princess's reputation. In his construction of events, chivalry demands exposure, rather than suppression, of the "facts" of the case, and her former protector becomes her persecutor: Perceval is the gothic-style villain, who hides the evidence of her innocence and preys on the royal family's natural feelings of "horror, remorse, and dismay" to engineer his own rise. Ashe implies the royal family have been the dupes of the Princess's "accuser," although he remains cagey as to who that accuser is. Not so Perceval's villainy. Perceval is the real blackmailer, Ashe the honest defender of truth, and Whigs and Tories are united in a domestic melodrama of all the talents—victims of a common enemy whose actions are explained by personal hubris rather than party affiliation. Ashe and not Perceval, therefore, is the true author of a book whose generic classification lies in essence rather than form.

Ashe's promise—that his book will prove Caroline's innocence and discomfit the royal family—depends on its identification as a

roman à clef. Yet that identification must be incorrect. In order to feel the frisson of recognition, of complicity with the political blackmailer who has enemies, if not friends, in high places, his readers must be ignorant of the contents of Perceval's book. The Satirist notes this bind in a poem printed in the June 1813 number, four months after the actual Book was published. The poem, titled "The Literary Esquires' Last Farewell to the World," laments the fate of Ashe and others who attempted to capitalize on the rumors about the Book, now that their livelihoods have been taken from him.

> I of a Princess heard some tales,
> And also of the Prince of Wales;
> I swore the Book contain'd them all:
> The Book came out and work'd my fall. (" 'The Book' Gentry" 552)

The poem is prefaced with a letter from the author, "a Friend to the Miserable," which points out that "[T]he poor indefatigable literary Esquires, who formerly could get food, and sometimes even appear in the public streets, when out of jail, without shocking female delicacy by their nakedness, are now all at once thrown out of work" (549). The poem focuses on Ashe and John Agg, who published his pamphlet *The Book Itself; or, Secret Memoirs of an Illustrious Princess* in 1813. Agg's plot is even further removed from the story of the delicate investigation than Ashe's. It focuses as much on the Prince of Wales as on Caroline, and particularly on his Whig alliances in the 1790s. Agg's *Othello*-like story of conspiracy recalls *The Royal Legend*'s tale of the Cavalier. The "intrigues, deep and devilish" (Agg 18) of the Prince's companions drive the couple apart and send him back into the arms of "the fat, yet beauteous and fascinating, Fitzhar, known by the surname, 'the fat witch' " (5).[30]

The title page identifies *The Book Itself*, which is just over thirty pages and sells for one shilling, as "A Political, Amatory, and Fashionable Work, Concisely Abridged from Mr. Agg's New Work, 'THE BOOK DISCOVERED.' " "Political, Amatory, and Fashionable" is a nod to Ashe's subtitle, "A Political and Amatory Romance." I can find no record of *The Book Discovered*, but it probably did exist, as *The Book Itself* contains awkward transitions and gaps in information that suggest a hasty condensing. Agg may have rushed to get the pamphlet into print to recoup anticipated losses from a full-length novel that came out just too late. The original title references the history of the Book's suppression and, like Ashe's advertisement in *The Phoenix*, implies a "discovery" that privileges its author/editor. The word

suggests not just a lucky find but an unveiling, a dramatic lifting of the cover off the original document. Agg made the discovery, and he has dis-covered it for us, giving us the book "itself" that was hiding beneath. This is the same gesture Ashe makes when he titles his novel *The Spirit of "the Book*." Ashe and Agg don't have to get the letter right, as long as the actual Book remains hidden. It is the one source against which no one checks their writing. All they have to do is make their readers believe that they can render the essence. The essence, in turn, evokes the letter and legitimizes their imposture: the "spirit" of the Book is the Book "itself."[31]

Both Agg and Ashe are counting on their readers recognizing their books as repackaging: the Book did not "sell" in its original form, so the enterprising editor spruces it up with a new title and different advertising, puts it back on the market, and this time it does very well.[32] Ashe's version of the Book looks more like a novel than the original: its epistolarity draws attention to itself as a convention superimposed on an existing narrative. No logic determines when one letter ends and the next begins; sometimes a letter will be broken off because of the professed fatigue or emotional distress of the writer, but as often a letter will simply continue the thought introduced in the previous entry—rather as a new paragraph than a new epistle. The letters are numbered rather than dated, and, after the first, which is marked "Caroline to Charlotte," they contain no headings.

Ashe is attempting to provoke his readers into the kind of sympathetic identification with the Caroline of his novel that Lynn Hunt identifies in the epistolary fiction of the eighteenth century. This is sometimes a challenge, as Caroline can be inconsistent in her professions of virtue. Does she sleep with Algernon, for instance? Unclear, nor is it clear how Ashe intends for us to understand her fall, if fall she does. Is it a daring instance of Godwinian free love and a sentimental recuperation of the idea of virtue? Or is it an example of regrettable but understandable frailty, the inevitable result of parental neglect and bullying? The second accords with Brougham's and Austen's assessments, but Ashe offers both possibilities. In explaining her decision "to act in a manner, that will, no doubt, in the eyes of the world, be deemed indecorous and reprehensible," and declare her love outright, Caroline provides shifting explanations. Noting first that "[t]he world will exclaim against me for indelicacy and impatience; for not waiting till Algernon made a proposition, which was calculated to confirm the happiness of my life," she counters that "[t]he world knows nothing of Algernon, and appears equally ignorant of my sex" (138). The sentimental oppositions here—impatience

against calculation, heroine against "the world"—become more equivocal in the next paragraph, when sensibility becomes something that looks more like susceptibility:

> And as to myself, the world should understand that women, when in love, are perhaps more passionately, more delicately sensible to the soft influence than men.—At least I can answer for myself, that, while under this sweet influence, I paid no manner of attention to the arguments of reason or of judgment.—What arguments, in fact, could be urged to a heart replete with so tender a passion! (138)

In a gesture that recalls Ashe's generalizations about "political writers" to vindicate his own inconsistency, Caroline hesitates between the particular, "myself," and the general "women," in her argument about vulnerability to "influence." She settles for an individual claim that refuses universality and, presumably, exculpation: "At least I can answer for myself." The world no longer needs to understand anything about women that might justify Caroline's behavior. She is speaking for herself alone—at least in that introductory clause. Her rhetoric in the second half of the sentence returns to universals. Despite the personal "I," the "sweet influence" of her love for Algernon recalls the "soft influence" that works on the delicate sensibilities of all women. Both sensibility and influence are gendered feminine in opposition to the masculine "arguments of reason or of judgment," which are no match for a "heart replete with so tender a passion!"[33]

But susceptibility turns out to be a good thing. It rises above petty decorum and self-interest, and we are back in the language of sensibility: "Woe to the woman whose heart is so little susceptible as to consult the little decorums of her sex, and the representations of interest, when she should be occupied in facilitating engagements that never can be too closely formed!" (138). To be too "little" susceptible is to be implicated in the "littleness" of a world that turns women from their natural duties ("she should be occupied"). Still, the text is cagey. Just how close is this "too" closeness that can never be reached? If a couple cannot be too close, is there such a thing as going too far? Yes and no, apparently. The ambivalence and ambiguity continue into the crucial scene, where Ashe manages both to answer the "did she or didn't she" question and to evade it in a continual tease. Caroline calls her love for Algernon "a chaste, mutual, and disinterested love" (173), a "refined and virtuous passion" worthy of Rousseau: a "primitive love . . . an affection natural to honest minds" deserving "not condemnation, but applause" (172). But she also tells

her daughter, in language loaded with recognizable markers and even semi-steamy details, that she "made no shew of affected resistance" but "committed" herself to Algernon's "protection," flinging herself "upon his honorable, though heaving breast" (172). So what happened? We don't know, but we feel as if we do. The scene offers both the voyeurism of the roman à clef and the intimacy of the epistolary mode. Like Rowlandson and the authors of the Florizel and Perdita novels, Ashe gives his readers the thrilling sensation that they are peering around the bed curtains of royalty, while also inviting them to identify with the individual character-narrator.

The Spirit of "the Book" evokes form partly to exploit it and partly to call attention to form's slipperiness. When Ashe names the report's familiar title within his own, he draws on its identification as a material object that circulates and that has a narratable sequence: all familiar markers of a book. Yet the success of his project depends on the Book's failure to meet these criteria. The report is not narrative, although it is possible to infer a story, or several stories, from it. It is a collection of depositions that fail to prove the Princess's adultery but describe a mode of living in which adultery might be expected to flourish. It is a document with a legal meaning ("not proven"[34]), and it is also juicy reading. So juicy is it that the Book's salacious details override its legal meaning. In providing benign explanations for those details, and linking these explanations in a coherent sequence, Ashe connects narratability with legality: the Book's truth is now consistent with the pleasure it offers the reader.[35] And that pleasure is available to any reader with fifteen shillings or a library subscription. The Book, on the other hand, never circulated as any bestseller must. Printed privately and then suppressed, it was not even seen by the public. It was a name: a book that one holds in one's mind as a concept, not in one's hand as an object. Like money that has been taken out of circulation, or like a bank note without gold backing, it does not stand for anything except itself. Ashe offers to reintroduce, and maximize, the Book's value by printing one remaining copy. His plan to publish originates in a version of the "found manuscript" narrative. He makes a fortuitous discovery that demonstrates his discernment, claiming to have "obtained" from the printer "a sight of the rough sheets in succession as they were printed off" (*Memoirs and Confessions* III. 83). Even this is unlikely, but the advertisement in the *Phoenix* makes a bolder claim: that Ashe "has access to one of the extant copies" (quoted in *Memoirs and Confessions* III. 87). Whether this threat is directed at Perceval or Erskine, Ashe certainly expected to be bought off: having refused to pay him for his writing earlier, Perceval—or

someone—will now have to pay him *not* to publish. When this plan does not work, Ashe instead recirculates the content of the Book as its "spirit," simultaneously evoking the Book's essence and reiterating its materiality. Ashe's novel will supply—and unite—form and content and will restore the gold backing to the scraps of paper that make up the Book.

When The Satirist calls *The Spirit of "the Book"* "an imposter book" and suggests that only by knowing "the character of the man" can we know how to read it, he is arguing for an idea of fraud as something that cannot be contained within a single system. Ashe/Anvil is an imposter: an alias (i.e., a criminal), not an esquire (a gentleman), a plagiarist and trickster rather than an author. And, if he is not an author, then it follows that his book is not a book. People who regularly use aliases are imposters. Blackmailers who threaten to publish documents they do not have are imposters. Bank notes representing cash that does not exist, or representing transferable property of nonexistent payees, are imposters. And books that promise to provide the "true" story of events about which their authors know little are imposters.

But imposture, as Russett points out, is not opposed to authorship; linking forgery narrative to "the Shelleyan account of creativity as the recovery of a buried inspiration" (29), it is built into the process of romantic-era textual production. The Satirist insists on this connection with his reiteration of the root word. To impose meant not only to exploit credulity by making a false representation; it also meant to work in the production of printed documents. An imposer (or, earlier, impositor) laid the stereotype plates on the imposing stone of a press and secured them so that sheets could be printed in order. Both words are derived from the Latin *imponere*, to impose. To be an imposter is to be a producer of texts. Not just Ashe's, then, but all novels are imposter books. The novel engages "the reader's sympathy with an unreal personality" (Russett 15). In epistolary novels like Ashe's, that unreal person is the supposed writer of letters that were never meant for our eyes. If the "editor" is the privileged recipient of the documents, the readers are the privileged voyeurs. But epistolarity in Ashe's novel is a self-conscious convention. Unlike the "spirit," these letters are never intended to be taken as anything but fiction. They are only a means of rendering the spirit. And the spirit inheres in two elements of the text, the truth of which the Satirist contests.

On one hand, the spirit consists of the "facts" of the case: the story to be culled from the commission report. Here, as the Satirist points out, Ashe simply takes rumors and events that have already

been reported and fabricates plausible (in some cases barely) and vindicatory explanations for them. But the spirit consists also in the psychology behind the events; the emotion that generates, inspires, and provokes the letters and gives them their peculiar character. In allowing us to listen in on a mother's impassioned confession to her daughter, Ashe gives us a carefully delineated portrait of royalty. His likeness is as intimate as any of Rowlandson's or Gillray's. The difference is that, where their portraits offer intimacy as a means of diminishing the stature of their subjects, Ashe's is intended to elevate the stature of his readers. He offers them not just a likeness *of* but a likeness *to* royalty: She may be a princess, but she feels just as you do, and now you can know—and own—her innermost thoughts.

The Satirist aims to explode to the presumption behind this affectation of showmanship. Ashe is a self-aggrandizing fool, not a confidante of royalty. His failed attempts to inflate his own consequence (whether through blackmail or forms of imposture) reveal the impassable distance between him and the subjects he pretends to know. He cannot know the Princess, not only because he has never met her or read the document he claims to summarize, but also because the portrait he offers is obviously false. Ashe's Caroline is true to a fictive ideal, the heroine of sensibility. She is false, however, to the pattern of maternity that the Satirist assumes a princess must match. This is where the superimposition of Ashe's epistolarity becomes clear. It takes two to make a letter a letter. An epistolary novel need not tell as much about the recipient as about the writer of the letters, but it perforce implies something about the relationship between the two. Pamela's letters to her parents reveal her confidence in them, and that confidence exemplifies the bourgeois familial ideal that she will bring to a marriage with her social superior. Florizel writes to Perdita because he is hoping to bed her. Her responses are constrained by similar expectations. The erotic charge of the letters provokes readers to imagine the relationship to which they allude. If they write *such* things to each other, what must their actual encounters have been like?

If Caroline's letters reveal a relationship, it is one the Satirist repudiates on ideological grounds. She makes her daughter her confidante and shares details of erotic encounters with both her lover and her husband. This point alone discredits the entire production, because no mother worthy of the title—and certainly no princess of England—would write so to her daughter: "Reader, this requires no comment. Only recollect that the daughter to whom this ribaldry was addressed, was then scarcely *fourteen* years of age, and that it

is the Princess, whom this author affects to *defend*, that is made to utter it!!!" (323). The Satirist doesn't need to explain the imposture here; the letters can reveal no truths because the relationship they construct is a false one.

Ashe's letters reveal a forgetfulness of audience, despite the repeated "my Charlotte's" with which they are peppered. Caroline not only tells her daughter things that a fourteen-year-old girl perhaps ought not to know,[36] she also lectures her on topics, such as the constitution of her grandfather's government and of her own family, that a reader would expect a princess already to know. Charlotte's malleability, or invisibility, as an addressee is a function of the unapologetic awkwardness of Ashe's vehicle, one he assumes will not trouble his readers overmuch. Ashe needed a way to get his material in front of the public, and letters from a mother to a daughter had a solid generic lineage. They also derive verisimilitude from the public knowledge that Caroline and her daughter were living apart, despite her objections.[37]

In pretending to assume that Ashe meant us to believe the factuality of the letters, the Satirist shifts the terms of Ashe's offense against the royal family. His book is now an imposter because it reveals the Princess to be no true mother. And, if no mother, then no princess: "to such a letter he has had the villainy to affix the *forged* signature of the Princess of W!!!" (324). In the Satirist's analysis, Ashe wrongs the Princess, prostituting her for the purpose of "ribaldry" and slandering her by forging her signature on a document that cannot be hers. Squeezing one more laugh out of the forgery theme, the Satirist gets tangled up in his own metaphor, since these letters are not that kind of forgery. Caroline's signature, authentic or otherwise, is nowhere in *The Spirit of "the Book."* The book is typeset, and each letter ends with the Princess's name, but it is her name, not her signature, on the page. Even in found manuscript stories, the physical book one holds is not the collection of documents discovered by the editor. Those have been collected, copied, sometimes revised or emended, printed, and bound by someone else, and this process distinguishes the book's consumers from its discerning editor. But this is not the found manuscript story Ashe offers his readers: his letters are phantasms; the letter *is* the spirit.

Managing Propriety for the Regency: Jane Austen Reads the Book

The Satirist's conclusion reverts to the same domestic ideology that informs Jane Austen's assessment of Caroline's actual letter, published

two years after Ashe's novel. The Princess's overt sexuality—whether registered in bed sheets that have been too energetically romped upon or in lurid maternal confidences—is unpalatable: unroyal, because it is unwomanly. Readers must look beyond the evidence for an explanation of what they cannot accept. For the Satirist this means discrediting the source: Ashe cannot replicate royalty; one proof of this is his Princess says things no true princess would ever say. The Princess's authenticity is in her co-optation by an ideal of domesticity. For Austen, as for Ashe and for Caroline, looking beyond the evidence means understanding the Princess as a woman abandoned by the men who should have been looking after her. Ashe's Caroline makes this argument in her opening letter. She collapses the injustice of the inquiry, which represents her "as a wretched outcast from society, who merits the scoffs and the scorns of a merciless world," into its corrosive effect on the very "honor" that it aimed to impugn, and that she defends. One must look to the inquiry itself and not its putative grounds for an explanation of Caroline's deviations from propriety. It, she claims, "has set me adrift upon the tempestuous ocean of my own passions when they are most irritated and headstrong."

> It has cut me out from the moorings of these domestic obligations, by whose cable I might ride in safety from their turbulence. It has robbed me of the society of my husband and my daughter. It has deprived me of the powerful influence which arises from the sense of *Home*, from the sacred religion of the *Hearth*, in quelling the passions, in reclaiming the wanderings, in correcting the disorders of the human heart. (8)

Austen's reading of Caroline ought to set her apart from Ashe's target audience. Hers is a decision taken, not the passionate identification his sentimentalism and epistolary mode called for. "I suppose all the World is sitting in Judgement upon the Princess of Wales's Letter." The world that judges, quickly and without all the evidence, is different from the reader who, like Austen, "resolve[s]…to think that she would have been respectable" but for the Prince's behavior. Austen's explanation of how she arrived at this resolution reveals a complex interplay between detachment and identification: "I shall support her as long as I can, because she is a Woman, & because I hate her Husband—but I can hardly forgive her for calling herself 'attached & affectionate' to a Man whom she must detest." Austen identifies with Caroline—as a woman and a fellow hater of the Regent—but can "hardly" forgive her for the hypocrisy that

denies their common hatred. And even Austen cannot entirely eliminate rumor from the evidence she sifts through: "the intimacy said to subsist between her & Lady Oxford is bad." She is judging here; the qualification "said to subsist" hardly tempers the final damning monosyllable. In the end, however, resolution replaces judgment, the resolution to believe that Caroline would have been more like the kind of woman with whom Austen could identify unreservedly, "if the Prince had behaved only tolerably by her at first."

The assumption that women become unrespectable because the men in their lives fail to treat them "tolerably" (with kindness, correction, or both) as others have noted, is at the heart of Austen's conservative ideology in *Pride and Prejudice*.[38] The paradigmatic figure for identifying and controlling feminine impropriety is Darcy, the idealized private gentleman whose eventual union with the hybrid Elizabeth perfects and extends his ability to enact his will on, and so alter, the social landscape.[39] In the vindicatory letter to Elizabeth that follows his first proposal of marriage, Darcy reminds her of her own liminal social position (a liminality that constitutes her own redemptive capacity by the end of the novel). At the same time, he positions himself as the only consistent arbiter and standard of propriety in the novel's community. Darcy assures Elizabeth that, "The situation of your mother's family, though objectionable, was nothing in comparison of that total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by herself, by your three younger sisters, and occasionally even by your father" (218). "Want of propriety" covers not only Lydia Bennet's indiscriminate flirting with the members of the militia—of whom her eventual husband Wickham is one among many. Darcy's phrase also comprehends Elizabeth's mother's excesses. Talking and consuming are the most evident, but below these is Mrs. Bennet's implied sexuality, registered in her former prettiness and in a heedless interest in men nearly equal to Lydia's: "I liked a red-coat myself very well—and indeed so I do still at my heart" (67). Mother and daughter's behavior renders as "nothing" the social inferiority that had at first seemed Darcy's chief preoccupation.

Although Darcy's list appears to include Mr. Bennet ("occasionally even by your father") in the "uniform" impropriety, both his rhetoric and his ranking—at the end of his list and attenuated by the double qualifiers "even" and "occasionally"—remind Elizabeth what the narrator confirms a few chapters later: that Mr. Bennet's impropriety is both the result of and his response to an unequal marriage—an adjustment for his private happiness that disregards the public meaning of the family and so will need to be readjusted by Darcy and

Elizabeth. In an instance of the interplay between narrator and character typical of Austen's free indirect discourse, chapter nineteen of volume II begins with a summary of the Bennet marriage that shifts from justification to condemnation. The narration here fixes and authorizes Darcy's judgment insofar as it is endorsed, implicitly by the narrator and explicitly by Elizabeth, who "could not have formed a very pleasing picture of conjugal felicity or domestic comfort" if her "opinion" had "been drawn from her own family" (250).

The history that follows is the history of Mr. Bennet's mistake, when, "captivated by youth and beauty, and that appearance of good humour, which youth and beauty generally give," he married "a woman whose weak understanding and illiberal mind, had very early in their marriage put an end to all real affection for her." Deprived "for ever" of "respect, esteem, and confidence," and with "his views of domestic happiness . . . overthrown," he seeks the consolations of a rational man, rather than indulging in "those pleasures which too often console the unfortunate for their folly or their vice." "To his wife he was very little otherwise indebted, than as her ignorance and folly had contributed to his amusement. This is not the sort of happiness which a man would in general wish to owe to his wife; but where other powers of entertainment are wanting, the true philosopher will derive benefit from such as are given" (250).

The end of this history restores Elizabeth's point of view—"Elizabeth, however, had never been blind to the impropriety of her father's behavior as a husband" (250). The reassertion of Elizabeth's voice doubly ironizes the narrator's aphorism in the preceding paragraph. Like the truth universally acknowledged in the novel's famous opening, which means both itself and its inverse, the true philosopher's means of deriving entertainment are both psychologically justifiable and catastrophically wrong in the event. Elizabeth's clearness of vision replicates Darcy's as well as the narrator's.

Mrs. Bennet's folly, unlike her husband's, arises from nature and is apparently ineradicable. Darcy's ranking, in which the wife's impropriety trumps her husband's and her own low origins, betrays an unwillingness to discriminate between want of propriety and social inferiority. It is not so much that one is an easy way of recognizing the other as it is that one stands in for the other: flirtatiousness, heedlessness, excess of all kinds—eating, drinking, laughing, talking, shopping, even dancing too much—in Mrs. Bennet and Lydia both *mean* sexuality, and sexuality means lower-class identity. Lydia especially is a figure unassimilable to the linked gender and class categories that confront the other characters, and to which they adhere.

Her function as either a comic or a sinister inversion (depending on generic expectations) of Elizabeth's "liveliness" has been demonstrated by numerous Austen critics, most notably Mary Poovey and William Galperin.[40] Lydia's boisterous sexuality also has its contemporary counterpart in the figure of Caroline as she is represented in the commission report (but not in either her letter or Ashe's novel). Both Lydia and the Caroline of the report collapse the distinction between "want of propriety"—that is, behavior that merely suggests sexuality—and illicit sexuality itself. This collapse is crucial to the formation and character of social class categories with which *Pride and Prejudice* is directly concerned.[41]

Clara Tuite has demonstrated the narrative sleight of hand by which Austen champions Elizabeth's bourgeois values and demonstrates her single worthiness to appropriate and share the world Darcy inhabits. Elizabeth's "taste—her claim to imaginative possession," registered in the visit to Pemberley House, when she is both the invading bourgeois tourist and the privileged connoisseur, "is made to legitimate her upward movement into the class which has the prerogative of material possession" (139–40). "*Pride and Prejudice* offers the paradigmatic instantiation of this recommendation of bourgeois femininity to the aristocracy." Elizabeth "is recommended to the landed classes by virtue of nothing more (that is, neither breeding nor money) than her inherent taste and sense" (146).[42]

By virtue of her taste, Elizabeth is the informed and uniquely "delighted" observer of the "something" (259) that ownership of Pemberley both means and guarantees, as opposed to the "nothing" of her family's social inferiority. And Lydia, not the ostensibly unpresentable aunt and uncle from Cheapside, represents those features of the bourgeoisie that must be repudiated and excised in order for the deserving members of the family to move from the position of being, as Tuite puts it "on the verge" (140) to comfortably inhabiting, "making-over . . . the aristocratic estate in the image of bourgeois Romantic desire, domesticity and nostalgia" (146). Like Caroline in the commission report, Lydia is a woman composed entirely of appetite. She is a camp follower.[43] Her sexuality is so ubiquitous and insistent that it cannot be contained even by her lover-turned-husband. After her elopement with Wickham and enforced marriage, the narrator reports, "Lydia was Lydia still; untamed, unabashed, wild, noisy, and fearless" (321). That Lydia is unchanged after her putative sexual fall connects her folly structurally as well as psychologically with her mother's rather than with her father's—aligning her with those characters who cannot be educated or shamed out of their asocial

behavior. It signifies one of two possibilities, neither of which cancels out the other: Either the "fall" itself occurred long before her elopement with Wickham—may, indeed, not even have involved him—or her cohabitation with him is not regarded by her as a criminal or even an illicit act, in which case she would not register, in any narratively conventional way, a material change in consequence of taking the step. The first possibility is commensurate with a rhetorical slippage between flirtation and actual sex, where the first not merely causes or denotes the second but effectively replaces it: flirtation, what Flora Fraser calls conduct unbecoming, is constitutive of sex.[44]

This was the conclusion of the commissioners. Fraser posits that one of the likeliest explanations for why Caroline successfully sidestepped the allegation of adultery—aside from the satisfactory explanation of Willy Austin's parentage—was that she and her various lovers engaged in non-penetrative sex: "At all costs, a woman whose legitimate children would be in line to the throne had to avoid impregnation by a lover" (125). Of her possible affair with George Canning, Fraser suggests, "the likelihood is that they indulged in the prophylactic sport of heavy petting, as her contemporaries so often did" (124). Fraser's last clause probably alludes to a collection of widespread (if widely condemned) practices to prevent conception, including coitus interruptus, oral and anal penetration, and mutual masturbation.[45] It is unlikely, therefore, that the Princess's behavior would have been construed as a criminal act. Markers of illicit sexual behavior in women were few: essentially either proof of defloration or of pregnancy. Unless a co-respondent came forward (this was not likely in the Princess's case, as it was still a capital offense), the law rested on these malleable signifiers.[46] The possibility that the commissioners might have attempted to use such slippery, if evocative, evidence lies in the story of the Princess's mysterious bed stains.

In the 1806 report, Betty Townley, a sometime laundress for the Princess, deposed that she had occasionally been given sheets to wash that were particularly stained:

> I have had linen from the Princess's house the same as other ladies: I mean that there were such appearances on it as might arise from natural causes to which women are subject . . . I recollect one bundle of linen once coming, which I thought rather more marked than usual. They told me that the Princess had been bled with leaches, and it dirtied the linen more: the servants told me so, but I don't remember who the servants were that told me so. (Perceval 24)

In this testimony, the stains the laundress encounters are blood, and their intensity, greater than that arising "from natural causes to which women are subject, suggests she believes they are the result of a miscarriage. On another occasion, she is both more and less explicit about the nature of the stains:

> I recollect once, I came to town and left the linen with my daughter to wash; I looked at the clothes slowly before I went . . . I thought when I looked them over, that there might be something more than usual. My opinion was, that it was from * * * * * * The linen had the appearance of * * * * * *. I believed it at the time." (24)

Here her phrases have been replaced by asterisks identical to those used in the deposition of Frances Lloyd, whose quoting of Townley probably led to Townley being deposed: "a woman . . . of the name of Townley, told me that she had some linen to wash from the Princess's house. That the linen was marked with the appearance of * * * * * * * * *" (12). The asterisks, almost certainly inserted by the editors of the report, are probably designed to leave readers with the question of whether they replace the words "a delivery" or "a miscarriage," depending on whether they signify that the Princess gave birth to Willy Austin herself, or simply suggest the possibility of other sexual misconduct. The commission finally rests on the latter, a conclusion that leaves open yet another possible substitute for the elided phrase. If the Princess engaged in sexual hijinks but was deliberately avoiding pregnancy, then it is possible these are not bloodstains but semen stains, and their "something more than usual" is an indicator that they result from enthusiastic but non-vaginally penetrative sexual activity. The Princess's habit of being "too familiar" with men becomes the sexual crime it is generally believed only to give rise to.

This is the function of sexual misconduct as well in *Pride and Prejudice*, where Lydia's flirtatiousness is not the material cause but the substance of her sexual fall. In her unheeded warning to her father about Lydia's behavior and its probable consequences, Elizabeth makes it clear that flirtation comprehends illicit sexuality:

> If you, my dear father, will not take the trouble of checking her exuberant spirits, and of teaching her that her present pursuits are not to be the business of her life, she will soon be beyond the reach of amendment. Her character will be fixed, and she will, at sixteen, be the most determined flirt that ever made herself and her family ridiculous. A flirt too, in the worst and meanest degree of flirtation; without any attraction beyond youth and a tolerable person; and from the

> ignorance and emptiness of her mind, wholly unable to ward off any portion of that universal contempt which her rage for admiration will excite. (246)

Elizabeth's rhetoric suggests a continuum, along which the moment of actual crisis is impossible to determine. Although Lydia will "soon be beyond the reach of amendment," this does not mean that her pursuer is even now putting the finishing touches on his plan of seduction—the carriage ordered, the cloak and mask ready—but rather that her "character," already bad, will become "fixed." The language suggests a confirmation, a cementing of what is already in place: Lydia will be a "determined" flirt. That she will make flirtation "the business of her life" recollects the famous early description of her mother: "The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news" (45). It also connects flirtation with that other business, prostitution, an association reinforced by Elizabeth's classist rhetoric in phrases such as "the worst and meanest degree." Lydia is not in danger of falling; she has, for all practical purposes, already fallen. It remains for her father to "check" her before her vices become so ingrained as to become, like the Princess's, disastrously public, involving her family in the "disgrace."

The evidence of Lydia's sexuality is too palpable for this to be a narrative of seduction. Her story does not function like a conventional narrative, despite its careful, if complicated, rendering in the variety of letters that attempt to make sense of her flight. Her sexuality and her history both begin with the advent of the – – shire militia, and neither ends with her marriage, "in which," as Galperin points out, "Lydia will presumably have other officers at her disposal" (132). A telling instance of Lydia's sexuality occurs when she whiles away a carriage ride by narrating for her sisters a prank that implicates her in a variety of sexualized modes:

> "[W]hat do you think we did? We dressed up Chamberlayne in woman's clothes, on purpose to pass for a lady,—only think what fun! Not a soul knew of it but Col. and Mrs. Forster, and Kitty and me, except my aunt, for we were forced to borrow one of her gowns; and you cannot imagine how well he looked! When Denny, and Wickham, and Pratt, and two or three more of the men came in, they did not know him in the least. Lord! how I laughed! and so did Mrs. Forster. I thought I should have died. And *that* made the men suspect something, and then they soon found out what was the matter." (237)

Lydia's excesses in this scene cross both gender and class boundaries. That Chamberlayne is a manservant is indicated by his silence and passivity and by an implied contrast with the "lady" he is supposed to represent; historically, his name suggests servitude and intimacy with the family's most private regions. Familiar behavior with a social inferior links Lydia with her mother. Mrs. Bennet makes no attempt to exclude servants from knowledge of confidential family matters such as Lydia's elopement ("was there a servant belonging to [the household]," Elizabeth wonders, "who did not know the whole story before the end of the day?" [300]). Lydia's familiarity echoes her amusement at her sisters' "formality and discretion" in refusing to gossip in front of a waiter earlier in the same chapter (236). Her narrative indiscretion ("not a soul" knew of the prank, except everyone in the house at the time, a nearby aunt, eventually the five or six men who were being gulled, finally her sisters and possibly the coachman) prefigures the account she later gives of her marriage to Wickham, which, in its indiscriminate recitation of the events, exposes the secret of Darcy's involvement. Austen in this scene demonstrates Lydia's uncontainable sexuality. Instances of cross-dressing, in addition to necessitating a familiarity with details of feminine dress as well as with male and female bodies, are commonly associated with extraordinary access to the opposite sex: their chambers, their confidences, and their bodies.[47] Moreover, the sexual pun at the close of Lydia's recitation suggests that her pleasure is the most public aspect of this otherwise officially private affair: "I thought I should have died. And *that* made the men suspect something." Her sexual pleasure is apparently a sign all of the men are in the secret of how to interpret.

That the game involves cross-dressing connects it to other instances in the novel, including the one that frames this recitation, in which excessive concern and/or play with clothes mark Lydia's frivolity, heedlessness, and narcissism. In this scene, intending to treat her sisters to lunch, she has instead used up her money on an "ugly" bonnet, which she buys for no cognizable reason except that "I thought I might as well buy it as not," a folly that she intends to redeem only by more purchases of "some prettier-coloured satin to trim it with fresh" (235). Her satisfaction in the transaction arises chiefly from the inconvenience and discomfort it causes her sisters when she adds the bonnet to the luggage in the carriage: "How nicely we are crammed in!' cried Lydia. 'I am glad I bought my bonnet, if it is only for the fun of having another bandbox!' " (237).

On the morning of her wedding to Wickham she avoids hearing "above one word in ten" of a lecture from her aunt on her folly in

having lived with him for over two weeks before marriage, because she is thinking, "you may suppose, of my dear Wickham. I longed to know whether he would be married in his blue coat" (324). The close association in Lydia's mind and in her recitation of "dear Wickham" and his blue coat amounts to a metonymic substitution, one prepared for as early as her first interest in the militia, who are distinguishable as objects of desire solely by their red coats: "It was next to impossible that their cousin should come in a scarlet coat, and it was now some weeks since they had received pleasure from the society of a man in any other colour" (99). This is an infatuation she shares with her mother. For Mrs. Bennet and Lydia, interest in clothes substitutes for interest in human beings and emerges at inappropriate and inopportune moments. The mother's attention is focused, in her distress at Lydia's fall and in her delight at her subsequent marriage, on the arrangements for wedding clothes.

Both women illustrate a narcissism consistently condemned in Austen's early novels, where to disregard the impact of one's behavior or desires on one's family and community is to become, in Poovey's term, "anarchic" (183). Lydia's behavior, however, has a more specifically historical referent. Her sexuality, particularly in her unrepentance, links her to working-class sexual nonconformity in the latter half of the eighteenth century, in the decades following the passage of the 1753 Marriage Act. Her willingness to cohabit indefinitely with Wickham, her confidence that he will eventually marry her, signals not so much depravity or misplaced confidence as an assurance that cohabitation is not antithetical to marriage. "She was sure they should be married some time or other, and it did not much signify when" (327).[48] As John Gillis has pointed out, because the Hardwicke Act outlawed private weddings, it produced a distinction between those who considered themselves married and those who had been "churched." A growing number of couples, especially from the artisan and itinerant laboring classes, chose to ignore that distinction, cohabiting or performing private ceremonies designed to legitimize offspring, and often dissolving bonds just as casually, without apparent stigma attaching to either man or woman (Gillis 35–38). The collective zeal to ensure that Lydia and Wickham are married properly in a parish church and that Lydia remain with her aunt and uncle until the banns have been published (despite the risk that a pregnancy may become evident) cooperates with the need to settle enough money on the couple to make them relatively comfortable after the payment of their debts. The single motive is to bring them into at least temporary conformity with the evolving standards that

will guarantee the family's survival in the class into which Jane's and especially Elizabeth's eventual marriages move them.

Lydia's story—shapeless, motiveless, and without a crisis (the news of her elopement is Elizabeth's crisis)—is manifestly not narrative; it is not, indeed, *narrated* in any coherent way, even according to the epistolary conventions that govern its recitation. The story is told, or is rather made available, first through Jane's two letters to Elizabeth, in which any possibility of suspense, any resemblance to a typical elopement narrative or Gretna Green novel,[49] is deflected through their having been delivered together instead of two or more days apart, as they were written. A similar collapse of the elements of suspense occurs in the express that arrives, dramatically, at midnight and that is followed and contradicted a few hours later by the appearance of Colonel Forster. There is, moreover, the hearsay testimony of Colonel Denny, that Wickham does not intend to marry Lydia, and there is Lydia's own letter, in which the confession, "I am going to Gretna Green," is tempered by her laughter. "You will laugh when you know where I am gone, and I cannot help laughing myself." Indeed, she "can hardly write for laughing," and her laughter encloses her confession in such a way as to usurp it as the key component of the letter: "What a letter is this, to be written at such a moment," comments Elizabeth (300).

William Galperin has observed that "of the only Austen novels that could have been epistolary narratives at some point, *Pride and Prejudice* appears the more conducive by far to the epistolary mode" (134), primarily because it "maintains" the separation between sisters that is dropped in *Sense and Sensibility* (135). He suggests that "the epistolary version of *Pride and Prejudice*—to the degree that one might be extrapolated from the final version—was likely more didactic in explicitly measuring the liabilities of the character who became Elizabeth Bennet against the virtues of her forbearing sister, Jane, whose role is diminished in the version of the novel that has survived" (125). The inclusion of Lydia's story, especially its epistolarity, suggests the possibility of a tripartite structure, in which Elizabeth is effectively contrasted with two foils, the overly cautious and self-effacing sister in unfashionable London and at home, and the heedless flirt at a fashionable watering place. Yet Austen seems to have chosen not to exploit the didactic potential in the placing of the three sisters. The letters, with the exception of Darcy's to Elizabeth, are haphazard in composition, delayed or confused in their delivery, and, in consequence of both, they confound interpretation. But, to the extent that they do confound interpretation—and here I include

Darcy's letter—they invite it. These are letters to be mulled over and discussed rather than responded to. The letters are not dialogic in the way that letters must be in the kind of didactic epistolary fiction to which Galperin compares *Pride and Prejudice*.[50]

There is, however, a seduction story of sorts in the novel that, by inviting a comparison to Lydia's history, implicitly demonstrates its disruptive potential and refusal to conform to the narrative conventions that cooperate in the novel's gentrifying project. This is the story of Darcy's sister Georgiana and her own aborted elopement with Wickham. Here all the conventional elements of a seduction narrative are contained within Darcy's formal rendering:

> "My sister, who is more than ten years my junior, was left to the guardianship of my mother's nephew, Colonel Fitzwilliam, and myself. About a year ago, she was taken from school, and an establishment formed for her in London; and last summer she went with the lady who presided over it, to Ramsgate; and thither also went Mr. Wickham, undoubtedly by design; for there proved to have been a prior acquaintance between him and Mrs. Younge, in whose character we were most unhappily deceived; and by her connivance and aid, he so far recommended himself to Georgiana, whose affectionate heart retained a strong impression of his kindness to her as a child, that she was persuaded to believe herself in love, and to consent to an elopement. She was then but fifteen, which must be her excuse; and after stating her imprudence, I am happy to add, that I owed the knowledge of it to herself. I joined them unexpectedly a day or two before the intended elopement, and then Georgiana, unable to support the idea of grieving and offending a brother whom she almost looked up to as a father, acknowledged whole to me . . . Mr. Wickham's chief object was unquestionably my sister's fortune, which is thirty thousand pounds; but I cannot help supposing that the hope of revenging himself on me, was a strong inducement. His revenge would have been complete indeed." (221–22)

Darcy's version of Georgiana's story is Lydia's, reframed in narratively comprehensible terms. Fifteen-year-old girl goes to a watering place under dubious chaperonage, where she is pursued by a designing rake, whose motives comprehend both avarice and sexual revenge, and who, with the help of an accomplice, persuades her to temporarily abandon her allegiances and values—a lapse for which she pays by remaining nearly silent throughout the remainder of the novel. In contrast to Lydia's story, Darcy's rendition gives cogent reasons and ample evidence to account for Georgiana's temporary folly: she is more than ten years younger than her brother/guardian; she has

an "affectionate heart" that retains "strong impressions" and that is, neatly, the instrument of her reclamation, when she is "unable to support the idea of grieving and offending a brother whom she almost looked up to as a father." Wickham is much more the conventional villain in this narrative, the Lovelace who, "undoubtedly by design," engineered the entire plot, with the help of at least one accomplice (in contrast, in his elopement with Lydia, he is fleeing old acquaintances rather than seeking co-conspirators; his friend Denny will attest to nothing more than a conviction that he never intended to marry, and Mrs. Younge, rather than acting as procuress, merely hides the lovers after their flight). Darcy's recitation contains all the elements of conventional narrative: motive, suspense, crisis, even exposition and explanation of apparent gaps: "undoubtedly by design," "in whose character we were most unhappily deceived."

Darcy, and through him Elizabeth, attempt to impose this narrative on Lydia's story. The letters, as pieces of evidence, give a comprehensive picture of the events, but as narrative they are garbled, incomplete, in conflict with one another—an incoherent polyglot rather than a sustained story. In contrast, Darcy and Elizabeth construct Lydia's story as a kind of poor man's version of Georgiana's: Wickham's motive is no longer 30,000 pounds and revenge on an ancient enemy but ignominious avoidance of debt and easy sex. But he is still the unscrupulous villain who preys on an innocent young girl. Lydia's folly is compounded by the conspicuous absence of a controlling male, but she is no less a victim, no less, in Elizabeth's despairing assessment, "lost": "She has no money, no connections, nothing that can tempt him to—she is lost for ever" (287). Elizabeth has abandoned her picture of Lydia as a prostitute in the making and replaced it with one in which she and Darcy, as substitutes for Lydia's inadequate father, assume responsibility for her fall:

> "When I consider," she added, in a yet more agitated voice, "that *I* might have prevented it!—*I* who knew what he was . . . Had his character been known, this could not have happened. But it is all, all too late now!" (287)

The temptation that becomes the focus now is Wickham's, not Lydia's; his is the character that needed more attention paid to it. As with the story of Georgiana's near-ruin, emphasis here is on information that, if known, might have prevented the calamity, and that, now known, makes it narratively comprehensible. This is no longer the story of the inevitable fate of a determined flirt, in which gaps in information

signal, largely, lack of interest rather than mystery or hidden motive. It has become the story of a wolf in the fold, of an unscrupulous charmer, in whose character the citizens of Meryton and Brighton, synecdochically concentrated in the Longbourn family, were "most unhappily deceived." In this way, both Darcy and Elizabeth exercise the same logical negotiations Austen displayed in her letter to Martha Lloyd, in their efforts to reclaim Lydia's story, if not Lydia herself: Without knowing what else to do about it, they resolve to think that she would have been respectable if the men in her life had behaved tolerably by her at first.

The mass of depositions that make up the bulk of the commission report, like the set of letters that contain the information on Lydia's elopement, are inconclusive, full of conjecture and contradiction—incoherent in their very comprehensiveness. The rumors and gossip that constitute another part of public discourse about the royal marriage—of Caroline's friendship with the notorious Lady Oxford, for instance—are equally inconclusive in their very interestedness, as Austen's rhetoric demonstrates. Does the friendship itself corrupt? Is it proof of a corruption already existing? Austen's slippery terminology entertains both possibilities. Either the friendship, like the unhappy marriage itself, is "bad" for Caroline, or it is a manifestation, the mark and result of a badness whose source is still to be determined.[51] In this way Austen's epistolary response to Caroline's letter recapitulates the trajectory of her novel: first, like Mr. Bennet, she effectively throws up her hands: "I do not know what to do about it."[52] Then she recasts the story as a narrative of patriarchal responsibility gone bad. It now becomes a coherent, if incomplete, tale, with a known and familiar cause and a series of foreseeable effects. The novel endorses and replicates this change of both heart and focus, in its revolution in presenting not only Lydia's narrative but also Mr. Bennet's culpability.

In her despairing speech to Darcy, Elizabeth suggests the fictive and ideological meaning behind Lydia's elopement. The elision in her accounting of her sister's unfortunate position is psychologically telling: Lydia has "no money, no connections, nothing that can tempt [Wickham] to—." To what? Propriety does not prevent her from completing either that sentence or the thought it springs from. Unlike the ellipses in the commission report, which hide a number of unmentionable possibilities, Elizabeth trails off when she's about to speculate on the one possible respectable outcome to the story—marriage—replacing it instead with the melodramatic statement, "she is lost for ever," echoed a few lines later in "it is all, all too

late now!" Both statements turn out to be incorrect, and their inaccuracy—and narrative unreliability—is underscored when they are endorsed by the prosy Mary Bennet, " 'Unhappy as the event must be for Lydia, we may draw from it this useful lesson; that loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable—that one false step involves her in endless ruin'. . . . Elizabeth lifted up her eyes in amazement, but was too much oppressed to make any reply" (298).

Elizabeth's self-editing reveals not her foolishness but the erotic content of her conversation with Darcy, the extent to which the sexuality in both Georgiana's and Lydia's stories has been transferred to the one authorized romance of the three. Elizabeth trails off before introducing the subject of marriage because the subject has been reintroduced into her consciousness and her fantasies—and she hopes in Darcy's as well—by the visit to Pemberley. Both her increased modesty and her increased desire make it an impossible word to voice. At the same time, her use of "tempt," precisely because it is followed by no specific temptation, reinserts the language of desire into the conversation, reminding Darcy that his original desire for Elizabeth most often manifested itself as a temptation—a "danger" (88, 93)—against which he "struggled" (210) but was ultimately unable to resist. Elizabeth thus positions herself as tempting—the only woman of the three who is legitimately erotically desirable per se—just at the moment when the conversation hovers over the point of transition between desire and its legitimate culmination in marriage.

Darcy's relating of the Georgiana/Wickham story marks the first step in this renegotiation of the novel's sexual content. In his letter to Elizabeth, he begins his explanation with an acknowledgment of Wickham's erotic hold over her imagination, "Here again I shall give you pain—to what degree you only can tell. But whatever may be the sentiments which Mr. Wickham has created, a suspicion of their nature shall not prevent me from unfolding his real character. It adds even another motive" (220). In the narrative that follows Darcy begins by recasting Wickham, who hitherto has been simply an attractive, "agreeable" (110) young man, as the dashing and unscrupulous rake who seduces young girls. In the course of this transaction, he also makes Wickham over into the usurping brother, the Edmund to Darcy's Edgar (old Mr. Darcy died, significantly, just when both men reached their majority), who must be excised from the family and replaced by the equally agreeable Colonel Fitzwilliam.[53] The similitude, and consequently the rivalry, between Darcy and Wickham is underscored by Georgiana's transfer of innocent trust from the one to the other, a transfer that also inserts a suggestion of incestuous desire

into the story. Darcy then converts similitude into appropriation, first by demonstrating, in his assurances to Elizabeth about Wickham's motives, that he has access to his rival's thoughts, and then by effectively replacing him as brother/lover. At the same time he establishes his position as head of the household, manager of the estate, and putative father.

The story of feminine bad behavior disrupts existing narrative expectations that are fundamentally class based. Its recasting, in Austen's letter and the plot of her novel, as a story of "natural" weakness insufficiently corrected is crucial to the project of bourgeois achievement and consolidation, appropriation, and assimilation of aristocratic prerogative, in which both the novel and the culture are engaged. The use of the two seduction stories—the overlaying of the sentiment of one onto the incoherent farce of the other, as well as the arrogation of the erotic potential in both to serve the legitimate romance—illustrates that transaction whereby the energies of what is illicit are transferred to the domain of the licit. If the Georgiana story makes Darcy more interesting, the Lydia story, in its unruly disruption (Galperin's term is irruption [132]) of the courtship narrative, refocuses the lovers' attention away from the embarrassing gaffs that had seemed to impede the progress of their courtship. The plot of Austen's novel tracks and partially performs the cultural mode that dominated public reception of the royal family during the last years of George III's reign and the Regency. Interest in the marriage, behavior, sexuality, and potential criminality of the King's daughter-in-law, whether that interest came from conservatives or liberal/radicals, was part of a cultural management strategy. The illicit energies in the royal family could be consumed, appropriated, and retracked into culturally normative modes, particularly in the consolidation of bourgeois consciousness at the start of the nineteenth century. Caroline's behavior can be judged; pitied; classed as a mark of a gender that is judged and pitied; subsumed under that of a hateful husband; and, finally, traced to the ill-treatment by that husband, in a negotiation that both asserts and nostalgically longs for the tory patriarchalism of the husband's now permanently incapacitated father.

Caroline's tactic won her a temporary increase of access to her daughter, but this did not last long. She was not invited to the public drawing rooms to celebrate Charlotte's engagement (also temporary) to Prince William of Orange, and she soon after agreed to accept an annuity offered to her on the condition that she leave the country indefinitely. She did not return to England until the deaths of first Princess Charlotte and then the King once again raised the question

of the succession and her place within the royal family. In the intervening years, print's response to the royal family had shifted. One could still read pseudo memoirs offering sympathetic treatments of Caroline,[54] but the public was increasingly likely to get information about royal scandals from woodcut engravings, which were produced in greater numbers between 1810 and 1820. Engravings, as they had in the eighteenth century, offered immediate, aphoristic, and easily digestible assessments of contemporary events. Prints focused attention on the bodies of those depicted, usually, although not always, with damning effects. Their accompanying text, in the form of captions, mottoes, and verses, subverted this reductive simplicity with often-intertextual glosses that entered them into a wider discourse, crossing cultural and political lines. The prints of Caroline in 1820 and 1821 once again concentrated evolving domestic ideology in the bodies of royalty. Both pro- and anti-Caroline engravings also intersected with versions of that ideology as they were worked out in Byron's poetry, in Austen's fiction, and in the treatment of both in the periodical press.

Chapter Four

Body Doubles in the New Monarchy

At the height of the Queen Caroline affair, from late summer of 1820 to late summer of 1821, more reproductions of the Queen's image were available for sale than images of Mary Robinson were in the early 1780s.[1] The flood of prints was partly the result of technological innovations. In *Radical Satire and Print Culture*, Marcus Wood recounts that the practices of placarding and bill posting increased in the second decade of the nineteenth century, in part because of the introduction of "fat-face" and "Egyptian" typefaces—larger and heavier typefaces designed for use in ephemera such as advertising, pamphlets, and broadsheets (156). The radical press under the operations of entrepreneurs such as Cobbett and William Hone benefited from this new technology. Hone's 1820 pamphlet *The Queen's Matrimonial Ladder* is a case in point. Illustrated by Cruikshank and accompanied by a children's toy ladder, the pamphlet chronicled "with fourteen step-scenes" the royal marriage as a series of wrongs suffered by the Queen.[2] The penultimate rung of the ladder, labeled "CORONATION," has broken under the weight of the new King, who lies sprawled on the ground, overlooked by a triumphant Caroline, seated at the top of the ladder. A similar toy ladder depicting the progress of a "discordant marriage," which Hone apparently saw in a shop window, provided the inspiration for the pamphlet (Wood 174). Hone's use of another text for the purpose of parodic contrast illustrates the link between radical politics and bourgeois domestic ideology that Thomas Laqueur and others have suggested characterized public responses to the Queen Caroline affair.[3] Hone

presents Caroline as the victim of a corrupt monarchy, whose claim to a moral high ground rests more on her vulnerability than on her rectitude. By spring of 1821, satirical anti-Caroline engravings had begun to dominate, although the Queen's death in late summer produced a temporary resurgence of sympathetic ephemera. Whether sympathetic or satiric, however, the engravings of 1820 and 1821, like the written texts of the previous decade, concentrated public attention on Caroline's body as containing a range of political meanings.

The Unruly Queen in the Popular Press

In March 1820, Robert Peel, the Tory MP and later Prime Minister, wrote to John Wilson Croker, then Secretary of the Admiralty:

> Do you not think that the tone of England—of that great compound of folly, weakness, prejudice, wrong feeling, right feeling, obstinacy, and newspaper paragraphs, which is called public opinion—is more liberal—to use an odious but intelligible phrase—than the policy of the Government? (quoted in Fraser 365)

Although Peel's rhetoric opposes national character to government policy, his juxtaposition stresses their interdependence. He asserts that public opinion, an overdetermined phrase that comprehends—and collapses—the terms of psychology, moral philosophy, and print, in being "more liberal" than the policy of the Government, is best constituted to shape that policy. In this perspective, he anticipates both the power and the manipulation of public opinion that characterized the end of the Regency and the beginning of the reign of George IV, and in particular, the popular reception of the highly public "royal squabbles"[4] between the new King and his estranged wife.

In conjunction with his designation of "liberal" (by 1820, and certainly in Peel's usage, a code word for "Whig") as an "odious" phrase, the ordering of Peel's list emphasizes his conservative allegiance. Despite the insertion of "right feeling" as a rhetorical balance to "wrong feeling" the collection of "folly," "weakness," and "prejudice" evokes a public hardly capable of sound decisions, equally informed by wrong feeling as by right, and unable to distinguish between them. This public is, therefore, vulnerable to manipulation by "obstinacy, and newspaper paragraphs"; in other words, by radical journalists such as Cobbett, whose *Political Register* had been until the 1815 Stamp Act one of the most widely read newspapers in

circulation.[5] Hence "liberal" is both intelligible and odious to Peel and Croker, incorporating generosity of feeling and opposition to the established government—what Peel with deliberate vagueness calls "a feeling . . . in favour of some undefined change in the mode of governing the country" (Fraser 565). This connection between feeling and opposition determined public championship of the "injured" queen, whose cause anchored popular opinion during the formation of the new monarchy in ways that were both contradictory and constitutive of the complexity of party politics.

Davidoff and Hall have argued that the public's response to George IV's final attempt to divorce his wife concentrated and extended the rhetoric of bourgeois domesticity within the English public imagination. Criticism of the new King and sympathy for his estranged wife merged with condemnation of the notorious extra-marital sexuality of both parties (but especially of the King), helping to consolidate nineteenth-century bourgeois ideology. Much of the attention directed toward the Queen participated in a chivalrous discourse that saw her as an icon of wronged womanhood (*Family Fortunes* 151–52). In this understanding, Caroline was a tragic victim, who had been systematically excluded from participation not only in the public and national duties of a queen and consort but in the private and domestic duties of a wife and mother, and who had been forced to publicize her wrongs as the only recourse of an un-enfranchised and unprotected woman. In this and other ways her situation anticipated that of another Caroline, Caroline Norton, whose publicized marital difficulties some twenty years later marked the beginning of agitation for the Divorce and Matrimonial Causes Act.[6] Queen Caroline's slow and intensely public progress to London in June 1820, to contest her husband's erasure of her name from the liturgy and his intention to exclude her from the coronation, produced a kind of counter monarchy. Her progress threw into temporary relief, through its shabbiness and popular appeal, the ongoing institution of the new monarch and reconstitution of the state. On the other hand, representations of the Queen in the popular press evinced a preoccupation with her physical body as the locus of all that was extra-domestic, illicit, and un-English about her. Her increasing girth and penchant for revealing clothes became metonyms for a general, stubborn refusal to be controlled, registered in her rumored continental exploits and her precipitate return to claim her title. That these two contradictory understandings of Caroline—as disembodied signifier and as fleshly artifact—could coexist signaled the extent to which assumptions about gender and anxieties about the relationships among reproduction, domesticity,

and national identity were subject to new technologies of production and display.

The Prince of Wales' animus against his wife manifested itself in attempts to deprive her of a public identity. While his Ministers resisted his efforts to procure a divorce on grounds of adultery, they offered Caroline a substantial annuity to remain in Europe, assume a title other than Princess of Wales or Queen, and take no part in her husband's coronation. When George III died in January 1820, the new King had Caroline's name removed from that portion of the liturgy where prayers are offered for members of the royal family. Such measures, coupled with the stories, persisting for nearly two decades, of her sexual indiscretions, instituted Caroline's body as her only consistent standard of identity even before the pamphleteers and cartoonists began to exploit it. Her participation in the symbolic meanings traditionally assigned to a member of the royal family was slippery in any case, but her unruly eruptions into public view made her, in her physicality, a potent and malleable symbol for a variety of political interests ranging from radical to loyalist.[7] Public fascination with Caroline's body identified her as part of an emerging sexuality of modernity, both linked to display and disconnected from reproduction.

That none of Caroline's many rumored sexual liaisons ever appeared to result in pregnancy or illegitimate birth posed a problem for her husband and for those whose interests lay in furthering his. Because reliable proof of infidelity was absent, attention concentrated on her body as the site of misconduct, in ways atypical of contemporary discourse on adultery. The allegations in the "Delicate Investigation" had rested upon claims about bed stains and discussions of what constituted deep kissing. Stained bed linens and imprints of bodies on mattresses continued to figure in discussions in 1820 about the possibilities for a royal divorce, which the King was now attempting to obtain by an Act of Parliament. Public attention now, however, focused more on indiscretion as a kind of performed licentiousness, the familiar argument that to be known to be interested in or amused by matters of sex was proof of carnal knowledge. It was not the Queen's body as organ of royal succession but the Queen's body as signifier of her sexuality—improperly displayed, caressed or caressing, or merely too proximate to other forms of recognized indecency—that became the site of contestation.

Early in 1818, to obtain a divorce that would satisfy both himself and his Government, the Prince of Wales established a commission to collect evidence to prove that Caroline was having an affair with

her former servant, Bartolomeo Pergami, with whom she was currently living in a large house in northern Italy. The Milan commission, as it came to be called, was ultimately no more successful than the 1806 royal commission. Their investigations were from the first impossible to conduct impeccably and descended rapidly into farce, with dubious witnesses proliferating in response to rumors of large bribes. Nonetheless, the commission's collected testimony filled two green barristers' brief-bags, one for each House of Parliament. These were examined first by a secret committee in the Lords and then entered as evidence in the successive readings of the Bill of Pains and Penalties, debated in the Upper House through the summer and fall of 1820.

The evidence collected in the green bags was summarized in the preamble to the Bill, which was read in the Lords on July 5, and which claimed the Queen had since 1814 (the year she left England for Italy) behaved "with indecent and offensive familiarity and freedom, and carried on a licentious, disgraceful and adulterous intercourse" with Pergami, "a foreigner of low station" (*Hansard* 2.2, July 5, 1820). The testimony given in the weeks that followed, almost exclusively from former servants who had been brought to England by the Milan commissioners, ranged from the practical to the sensational. Verifiable evidence such as that of Pergami's successive and rapid promotions from servant to equerry to chamberlain to knighted gentleman; sleeping arrangements that located his and the Queen's bedrooms near each other and away from the rest of the household, and the construction of a tent for the couple to sleep together on shipboard during one journey, was matched with more salacious allegations that, while easier to dismiss, had commensurately more popular capital. Witnesses averred that the Queen on at least two occasions appeared in public on Pergami's arm, indecently dressed; that the couple were often seen embracing; that Pergami attended her while she bathed on shipboard; that they watched an obscene dancer together; that the Queen once lifted a fig leaf on a statue of Adam and laughed about it with Pergami; and that she had been seen through the window of a carriage by one servant, asleep, with her hand resting on Pergami's genitals (*Hansard* 2.2, August 23, August 30, September 4, 1820). Although most of this titillating evidence was refuted by the Queen's counsel upon cross-examination, it became a mainstay of popular cartoonists and caricaturists, in whose representations, despite or because of popular sympathy for the Queen, British xenophobia stressed Pergami's foreign manners and appearance.[8]

The prevailing opinion of Caroline was that she was, in one journalist's words "an injured wife" but a "depraved woman" (quoted in Fraser 445). Most of those loyal to her agreed with Austen's assessment that her ill treatment by her husband "at first" was largely responsible for her profligacy. Hence, her affair with Pergami, the truth of which few even of her supporters disputed, was seen as both the result and a concentrated image of her misfortunes. If she had not been virtually driven out of England by her husband (and away from her daughter, a particularly powerful detail manipulated both by sentimental radicals such as Cobbett and by the Queen's attorney, Henry Brougham), she would not have had to seek comfort from such an inappropriate and demeaning source. Pergami was thus classed with the numerous Italian witnesses for the Crown, who were vulnerable to British chauvinism: a group of them had been attacked and beaten by a pro-Caroline mob upon their arrival in Dover. Both the impression that they were herded through the process of testifying by anxious commissioners and their broken or nonexistent English were liberally lampooned in the press. Italians, and Pergami especially, became, like Caroline's much-displayed body, the repositories of a nationalist sentiment that located excess of all kinds outside of the English national character.

The proceedings of the House were published daily in the newspapers and collected in *Hansard*. The print-consuming public's regular and ready access to the testimony made them unofficial jurors in the "trial" against the Queen. The language and practice of the courtroom informed the debates, overshadowing procedural distinctions. The House was debating a Bill and examining testimony in support of that Bill, but the event was conducted more like a trial than a parliamentary debate. The Queen's attorneys raised objections to leading questions and cross-examined witnesses, and both sides referred to the proceedings as a trial. The confusion was further confounded, because adultery in the Queen was high treason. The Lords tried cases of high treason when the defendants were peers or their wives, although these cases were presided over by the Lord High Steward, not the Lord Chancellor. Nonetheless, the distinction between proving adultery against the Queen and debating a Bill whose passage depended on establishing her guilt was sometimes too fine. The Solicitor General, Sir John Singleton Copley claimed, in his summing up, "Her majesty is here upon her trial" (*Hansard* 2.2, September 7, 1820).[9]

Brougham, acting as her attorney general, pointed out with sarcasm that this practice of publishing testimony compromised it, but

he also used the occasion to remind the Lords that they had ceded to the people the right to decide, and the people had decided:

> Your lordships, not with a view to injure the Queen—your lordships, with a view to further the ends of justice, allowed the Evidence to be printed, which afforded to the witnesses if they wished it, means to mend and improve upon their evidence—Your lordships allowed this, solely with the intention of gaining for the Queen that unanimous verdict, which the country has pronounced in her favour, by looking at the Case against her—your lordships, however, allowed all the evidence against her to be published, from day to day. (*Hansard* 2.2, October 3, 1820)[10]

Using rhetorical devices he exploited in his reviews for the *Edinburgh Review*, Brougham projects onto the Lords intentions that are visible only through the public response to the printed evidence. Where the Lords allowed the evidence to be printed in order to guarantee their authority, Brougham tauntingly reconstructs that authority as surrendered, via a misguided noblesse oblige, to the "country," that is, the image of the people, reflected in the periodicals. Its "unanimous verdict" becomes a metonym for the justice that is in the purview of the Lords, yet now escapes their control.

In a series of anti-Caroline engravings published in 1821, the caricaturist Theodore Lane chronicled what was publicly known of the affair, drawn from these same newspaper reports. Lane's caricatures were published after Parliamentary debate on the Bill had been prorogued and the wave of pro-Caroline sentiment that produced Brougham's unanimous verdict had begun to subside.[11] Many of his engravings depict scenes described in the testimony before the Lords, and they function as a kind of summing up of the Crown's case. Their often complex and layered relationship of image to text interprets both testimony and rumor for a public who were already beginning to sour on Caroline. In *A Pas de Deux, or Love at First Sight*, a still-liveried Pergami dances with a corpulent and décolleté Caroline—the whip he cracks over her head working with the spurred boots and carriage in the background to remind viewers of his servant status, while at the same time implying his increasing control over her. The extreme difference in their respective heights reinforces this suggestion. The accompanying text quotes some of the lyrics from "Over the Hills and Far Away," a popular song from Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*: "How I'd love you all the day/Every Night we'd Kiss and Play/If with me you'd fondly stray/Over the Hills and far away."[12] *The Modern Genius*

of History at her Toilet alludes to allegations that Pergami chose the Princess's clothes and dressed her himself, and that her increasing indecency was a yardstick to measure his influence over her. The title suggests that this is the second of three successive costumes the Princess wore to a masquerade ball.[13] In *A Parting Hug at St. Omer*, she flings herself into Pergami's arms before boarding the packet for Dover, with Alderman Wood, radical Lord Mayor of London and supporter of the Queen, looking on approvingly. Brougham stands nearby, in military dress, holding a sack with "50,000" printed on it, a reference to the annuity he was deputized to offer the Princess, in exchange for her agreement to remain abroad and give up her title and right to be crowned. Although the Queen's legs in this picture (unlike in the first two) are modestly together, Pergami's waist-high grasp, one hand on her bottom, might evoke the evidence of a former cook, given just after debate on the Bill had been suspended in November. His testimony, that in 1816 he had surprised Pergami with his back to the door, his britches down, and one of the Princess's thighs in either arm, was the only one that claimed to show the lovers "in the very act" (quoted in Fraser 446). If this story could have been entered as evidence and withstood cross-examination, it would not only have provided proof of infidelity; it would have demonstrated the nature of the proof required to convict the Queen—the image of her body, sexually engaged—while also arguing, de facto, that her infidelity was not a threat to the succession.

The death of Princess Charlotte after giving birth to a stillborn son in November 1817 altered the meaning of Caroline's identity as consort, as it related to questions of royal succession, by eliminating all legitimate offspring of the future George IV. Not only was Caroline no longer mother of a queen- and grandmother of a king-to-be; she no longer, at fifty, had any role in either guaranteeing or threatening succession to the throne from her own body. This left open to the Prince the possibility of securing the succession himself by divorcing his current wife, remarrying, and starting a new line (he clearly hoped his daughter's death would give him an advantage in pressing his case for divorce before the Government). But it also erased the only legitimate way in which Caroline's body could have any reputable public meaning by foreclosing the political value of her maternity: she no longer had any opportunity to participate in the political life of the nation through reproduction. An 1820 etching by J. Lewis Marks captures the conflicting public understanding of Caroline and her body's signification at the time of the divorce proceedings (figure 4.1). Titled *King Henry VIII*, it pictures a suspiciously round Caroline as Catherine of Aragon

Figure 4.1 Lewis Mark's *King Henry VIII* (1820) depicts Queen Caroline as Catherine of Aragon addressing George IV as Henry VIII.

addressing George IV as Henry VIII, with a speech from Act 2, scene 4 of Shakespeare's play. With one hand cupped under her belly, as if to suggest advancing pregnancy, she pleads with the King not to abandon her:

> Sir, I desire you do me right and justice
> And to bestow your pity on me, for
> I am a most poor woman, and a stranger
> Born out of your dominions;
> . . . If, in the course
> And process of this time, you can report,
> And prove it too, against mine honour aught,
> My bond to wedlock or my Love and duty
> Against your Sacred Person; in God's name,
> Turn me away; . . . and so give me up
> To the sharpest kind of justice. (14–45; the ellipses indicate Marks's cuts)

While this print sentimentalizes Caroline's vulnerability as non-reproducing consort by comparing her with Catherine (the lines in which she claims to have got many children by the King in their twenty years of marriage have been elided in the engraving), her belly, her

hand, and the gaping cardinals allude to the familiar use of her body for public and rhetorical display. Like the overdisplayed legs, breasts, and arms of Lane's prints, her protruding abdomen announces her body's sexualizing potential. But the relative modesty of her dress itself—especially in the context of Lane's more fleshly depictions—her diminutive size in comparison with the grossly corpulent King, and his shifting and uncomfortable glance away (contrasting with the stares of the other men in the scene), pairs revealed maternity with vain supplication.[14] The picture evokes a gender politics more familiar to the discourse of sentiment and melodrama than to stories about the Queen's depravity.

Like Marks and Hone, Lane uses intertext to frame and resolve the political debate in which his engraving engages. Lane's appropriations, however, are drawn often from popular literature; sometimes they are even made up, so that associations intended to look accidental and fortuitous are deliberately fabricated. They offer a more complex and politically nuanced way of understanding his texts. *Installation of a Knight Companion of the Bath* references the allegation that Pergami visited Caroline while she bathed on shipboard. In the picture, a near-naked Pergami, straddling the edge of a bathtub in which Caroline sits, bathes her with water that splashes suggestively upward from his lower abdomen. Two figures peer from behind a half-open door in the background. The title refers to the Royal Order of the Bath, instituted by George I in 1725 and redefined by the Regent in 1815. The text, apparently composed by Lane, reads:

> While she received the copious shower,
> He got a step in Honour's Path,
> And grew, from that auspicious hour
> A Knight Companion of the Bath

The sexually shaded language ("received the copious shower" and "grew"—"copious" echoing "copulate") and the pun on "night companion" suggest once again the possibility of sexual activity without actual penetration that formed the subtext of speculation about Caroline's sexuality between 1806 and 1813. Showing voyeuristic peering figures was a common device used by Lane (they appear also in *The Genius of History*). The watchers here are most likely Caroline's maid, Louise Demont, and her manservant, Teodoro Majocchi, both of whom testified before the Milan commission and faced allegations of subornation. Their peeping references the fragility of claims that rest only on second-hand allegations

and reinforces the positioning of the print and of Caroline as objects for prurient display. They implicate the consumer of the engraving as well in the complex relationship among testimony, condemnation, and voyeuristic pleasure.

Tent-ation, which refers to the testimony that Caroline had a tent erected on ship-board for herself and Pergami, pictures the two of them half-reclining side-by-side. Pergami, handing a lit candle through an opening in the tent to a manservant outside, says, "It is the cause, it is the cause, my soul—/Put out the light, and then _____." The single attribution, "Othello," is presumably unnecessary, although its terseness reflects the expediency with which Lane has mixed and matched the lines. The casting implicit in the quote, in which Caroline is the innocent victim of a demonically foreign and usurping other, is more sympathetic than most of Lane's engravings and reflects the way in which xenophobic depictions of Pergami were typical of both pro- and anti-Caroline responses. Caroline is also dressed more modestly here than she is in most of Lane's engravings. Her long-sleeved night-dress closes with a ruffle just below her chin. Part Desdemona, part Othello, she appears to be the dupe of the two men, who grin conspiratorially.[15]

Travelling Tête à Tête, like the *Knight Companion*, combines this emphasis on nearly pornographic display with a multiplicity and indeterminacy of signification. In this print, an ogling horseman, like the servants in the previous print, licenses voyeuristic pleasure framed as prudish condemnation and includes the audience in both. The text registers xenophobia linguistically, while calling attention to the theatricality of a scene that simultaneously displays and confounds interpretation. The original testimony was from an equerry to the Princess who, in the course of one journey, claimed to have pulled aside the curtains to her carriage to reveal her inside, asleep, with her hand resting on Pergami's genitals. Brougham refuted this testimony before the Lords: the accusing equerry turned out not to have been accompanying the Princess on this particular journey and the carriage had blinds, not curtains (*Hansard* 2.2, October 3, 1820). But Lane obviates these contradictions by presenting Caroline and Pergami unrealistically framed in the carriage window, and representing the outrider as taken aback, his attention arrested by what he sees. His response, in broken and impossibly inflected English, once again calls attention to his—and the viewer's—voyeuristic pleasure in the scene, while at the same time making it impossible to determine its significance: "Ha Ha, by Gar, vat dat I see yonder/Dat look so tempting red and vite?"

The lines are a corruption of lyrics from Theodosius Forrest's 1759 "The Roast Beef of Old England: A Cantata," itself a reworking of Fielding's "The Roast Beef of Old England," which was written for his 1731 *Grub Street Opera* and subsequently used by Hogarth as a subtitle for his 1748 engraving *The Gate of Calais.* The lines in Forrest run:

> Ah ! sacre Dieu! vat do I see yonder,
> Dat looks so tempting red and vite?
> Begar I see it is de *Roast Beef* from Londre;
> Oh, grant to me von letel bite![16]

In these sources the object of the xenophobic ridicule is a starving Frenchman, reinforced in Lane by the insertion of "by Gar" for "sacre Dieu," possibly a reference to the buffoonish Frenchman Doctor Caius from Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, whose speeches are peppered with "by gars." But the outrider's speech is also reminiscent of the patter accompanying a peep show, an association reinforced by the framing of the window. His gaze is directed downward and toward the Princess, suggesting that "dat," which arrests his vision is a feature of her sexuality, not Pergami's—she, after all, and not he, is meant to be connected to the roast beef from London. But what tempts him? Her breasts, which are displayed above the frame of the window? Her own genitalia, accidentally displayed below it? The overdetermined quality of both the framed scene and his desire testifies not so much to the Princess's guilt as to the multiplicity of signification that images of her body enable in the discussion surrounding the dissolution of her marriage. Sometimes, as here, display substitutes for testimony in ways that simultaneously exploit and call attention to a similar exchange in the debates themselves.

The attorneys for the Crown had established a pattern of falling back on immodest behavior whenever more damning evidence was either unreliable or refuted by her counsel. Display was a favorite register of immodesty, and many of the discussions focused on Caroline's breasts: just how low-cut was a particular dress? How much of her bosom did a portrait reveal? How unfastened were her upper clothes when Pergami entered her dressing room? The answers to these questions were not always explicit enough for the prosecution's purposes, but, in the companion pieces *Dignity!* and *Modesty!* Lane provides enough fleshliness for both condemnation and titillation.

Dignity! depicts a décolleté Caroline sitting at a dining table with Pergami. Both look startled and affronted. Caroline's Grecian-style

dress falls off the shoulder and clings to her breasts, only partially covering them. Standing facing the couple is an officer, who addresses Caroline, although he gestures toward Pergami, saying, "I can recognize no power in you to enoble anyone—and I shall not degrade myself and the service by sitting at table with such a fellow as that." The accompanying motto is Milton's description of Eve, slightly misquoted, from Book VIII of *Paradise Lost*: "Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eyes/In all her actions dignity." The two lines in Milton read, "Grace was in all her steps, Heav'n in her eye/In every gesture dignity and love" (488–89). *Dignity!* references the testimony of Captain Pechell of the *Clorinde*, the Royal Navy frigate on which Caroline and her entourage traveled on one leg of her journey through Sicily into North Africa and Palestine in 1816. Having heard from another British captain about Caroline's habit of seating Pergami with her at dinner, Pechell sent her a message voicing his objections in the language used in the engraving. She deliberated for a day but in the end refused to remove Pergami from her table, choosing instead not to dine with the Captain. The Attorney General used the story as proof not so much of their liaison, per se, as of Caroline's general abandonment. The key to the episode is the implicitly un-English disregard of proper distinctions. Caroline's depravity has reached such proportions that she no longer tries to hide it, dining in public with a former servant, and immune to the honest English seaman's request that she "spare a British officer the disgrace and scandal of sitting at table with a person who had filled that menial situation" (*Hansard* 2.2, August 19, 1820). The suggestion that she has lost all sense of proportion implies her guilt.

Because Pechell never spoke directly to Caroline on the subject, the scene in the engraving is imagined. By transferring an epistolary exchange to a verbal one, the caricature can emphasize the signifying force of Caroline's excessive body as a correlative to her excessive but ultimately insubstantial "actions." Although the second half of his speech is an almost exact quote from his testimony and the Attorney General's summary,[17] the first half is a fabrication. The assertion, "I can recognize no power in you to ennoble anyone," refers to the various honors Pergami acquired in advancing from courier to equerry and beyond, most of which happened during this same journey. In the Sicilian province of Catania he was made a Knight of Malta. In the town of Augusta Caroline purchased a barony for him, apparently so that she could make him her chamberlain, a position only a noble could hold. Finally, in Jerusalem she made him a Grand Master of the order of St. Caroline, an order she instituted herself. Pechell's

challenge is a recognition of the transparent favoritism behind the honors and a reinforcement of the King's claim that Caroline is not royalty. Yet, it is also anachronistic, because Pergami had none of these titles at the time Pechell objected to being seated with him. By distorting the timing, the engraving shifts the implications of the scene. The question is no longer whether a British officer should be obliged to dine with someone who has stood behind his chair, but whether Caroline is Queen, a question implicitly answered by Pechell's blunt use of the personal pronoun. Caroline's habit of conferring honors willy-nilly on undeserving foreigners is de facto evidence of the adultery that un-queens her, making the honors invalid. The alterations in Milton's passage are now clear. Ennobling one's low-born lover, causing him to sit at table with his social superiors, are actions, not gestures. Pechell's response makes it evident that the Queen's behavior must be opposed—even by the semi-passive opposition of refusing to dine with her and her paramour. For all its assumed domesticity, Caroline's cohabitation with Pergami has nothing to do with the "nuptial sanctity and marriage rites" that for Milton constitute the "love" that is omitted from the passage in this print.

The familiar peering figures in this engraving hover not at a half-open door, as in the earlier pictures, but behind Pechell. One looks at Pechell, the other at Pergami; possibly they are waiting to see who will triumph. They are not in this case witnesses to adultery, and Caroline's body is the site of prurient, not evidentiary, interest. If they are voyeurs, their role is to endorse the audience's glee at her humiliation, in being told off by a morally superior social inferior. The print establishes a series of glances. In one sequence, the viewer watches a servant watching Pergami, who watches Pechell watching Caroline. Her startled look at being seen corresponds to her disheveled body, as if that body registers her centrality in the sequence of the public gaze. As knowing viewers, the audience can gaze at several levels, from the thrice mediated wonder of that servant to a direct gaze at Caroline's breasts, aligned with both the soup tureen on the table and Pechell's crotch, but visually overpowering both.

By contrast, Caroline's body *is* the site of evidentiary interest in *Modesty!* which again makes the Crown's case, this time by translating inference into fact. The engraving depicts a scene described in Louise Demont's testimony, in which Caroline, accompanied by Pergami and Demont, attended the theater St. Carlos in Naples and was beset by rowdy theatergoers. The Princess had by this time lost or dismissed all of her English attendants. The salient fact of the testimony is once again her refusal or inability to recognize proper social

distinctions in trying to pass off servants as attendants, as well as her inappropriate degree of comfort with foreigners. But the Solicitor General's leading questions, and Demont's eager answers, make display the locus of culpability.

Like most of the witnesses called before the Lords, Demont spoke no English, and her testimony was given through a translator. This extra step required occasional halts to the proceedings until a translation could be agreed upon, as when a German housemaid used a word to describe Caroline's bed sheets that could mean either "disordered" or "stained." In that instance, the maid finally made it clear that the sheets were stained, a much more satisfactory outcome for the prosecution, who were then able to establish not only that the maid was a married woman capable of identifying bed stains, but that these stains were "white" and "wet" (*Hansard* 2.2, August 26, 1820). A bed that might only have been slept in becomes, in the process of fixing a translation, one in which sex has taken place (although, as before, it is not clear what type of sex). In the case of Demont's testimony, however, no one makes any attempt to clarify her terminology. On a "gloomy" rainy night, Caroline, Demont, and Pergami went in a hired carriage to the theater, going first into the upper saloon, or lobby. Here is the testimony that follows, in its entirety:

> In what way was her royal highness dressed? Her royal highness was dressed in a red cloak; a very large cloak.
> In what way was Pergami dressed? As far as I can remember, he was dressed in a red domino.
> What had he on his head? A large hat.
> Of what description? Large.
> When you got into the saloon, what took place? Nothing happened to us.
> Did you afterwards go into any other part of the house? We descended into the pit.
> When you got into the pit, what happened? Many ugly masks surrounded us, and began to make a great noise and hissed us.
> Describe all which took place? Those masks surrounded us, and we had great difficulty to withdraw, at last we went into a small room.
> Was there any thing particular in the dress which her royal highness wore? Her dress was very ugly, monstrous. (*Hansard* 2.2, August 30, 1820)

The sequence of this testimony is as effective at implying guilt as it is absurd. By introducing dress as a key element early in the questioning, the Solicitor General, Sir John Singleton Copley, establishes

a connection between Caroline's appearance and the non-specific insult she receives in the pit. Presumably the large red cloak she wears into the theater is, like Pergami's domino and hat, for the purposes of incognito and is not the same as the "monstrous" dress she wears once inside. But the difference becomes immaterial. The sequence—from outlandish clothing to insult to even more outlandish clothing—is not so much illogical as a-logical. It is as likely that they were hissed because they were in the pit with the rabble as that Caroline's dress offends the masked figures. Copley wants to stress a connection to other testimony—including some earlier in the same day—in which irregularities in Croline's dress intimate her guilt.[18] For his purposes, Demont's adjective is perfect in its vagueness. The monstrosity of the dress transfers itself to its wearer in an inversion of the metonymical transaction Demont has used to describe the crowd in the pit. While the men become no more than their masks, Caroline's dress becomes Caroline.

But what makes the dress—and the Queen—monstrous? It is likely that Demont used the French word *monstreux*, although the substantive, *monstre*, literally, "monster," was also available. "Monstrous" and "monster" share the same complex etymology, derived both from the Latin *monere*, meaning "to warn" and *monstrare*, meaning "to show." The link, which Augustine first described, lies in an understanding of monsters as portents, signs of something out of order in nature.[19] But the derivation is awkward, and Virginia Jewiss argues that this awkwardness inheres in the concept of the monstrous: "By their very nature monsters escape classification, frustrate the possibility of linguistic precision" (180). "Monstrous" is precisely the term to suit Copley, however, because a monster is that which is seen. What is monstrous about Caroline's dress is that she is wearing it in public; it is display that shocks and horrifies first the masks in the pit and then the Lords in the chamber.

In Lane's rendering of the scene, Caroline and Pergami are seated in the box, with the crowd of men looking up at them, and Caroline's dress is not in itself outlandish. She is dressed the same as she is in *Dignity!,* unlike Pergami, whose livery is both more elaborate and more disheveled in *Modesty!* (Caroline's tassels are swaying in this picture, as if to suggest that she has been jostled; otherwise her clothes are not disordered). The only remarkable feature of the dress is how much it reveals of Caroline's neck, arms, and breasts: this disclosure makes the dress, and its wearer, monstrous. If a monster is by definition a thing looked at, its anatomy is the principal register of its monstrosity. In the early modern literature on monsters, both theological

and scientific, monsters tend to be hybrid creatures, composites of human and animal features or hermaphrodites.[20] An emphasis on sexuality is written into the discourse on even non-hermaphroditic monsters, because most were believed to be the products of human and animal couplings.[21] But monsters were also often those in which sexuality was revealed through body parts that were misplaced from one creature to another. Voltaire writes in his essay "Monstres" about seeing a woman at a fair who had four breasts and what looked like the tail of a cow hanging below them. For Voltaire her monstrosity consists in her display of them rather than in the fact of her multiple breasts: "She was a monster, certainly, when she let her bosom be seen, and a respectable enough woman when she did not."[22] Like Voltaire's four-breasted woman, Caroline is a monster in unusual or inappropriate exhibitions of her body and a respectable "enough" woman otherwise. Her penchant for low-cut dresses, or for any occasion that allows the display of breasts, forms a significant part of the testimony, and the prosecution's anxiety to establish just how much breast emphasizes the theatricality of the debates.[23]

In both *Dignity!* and *Modesty!* the mottoes illuminate the pictures through the irony of blunt contrast. *Modesty!* is accompanied by a couplet from Goldsmith's "The Deserted Village": "Her modest looks a Cottage might adorn/Sweet as the Primrose peeps beneath the thorn."[24] Both the prosecution and Lane are making the familiar case against Caroline: immodesty—or impropriety—is such a powerful marker of unchastity that it becomes unchastity. To be sexy is to be engaging in sex. To be knowing is to be known. Both quotes are snapshots of women whose subsequent falls cast into relief the unspoiled beauty they describe.[25] Their innocence is opposed to their later—and to Caroline's willfully carnal—knowledge.

Looking at/in the Prints: Byron, Lockhart, and Austen Again

In Lane's *A Parting Hug at St. Omer*, the gender disruption in casting Caroline as the departing soldier and Pergami as the distraught wife plays to fears of the effeminate Italian fop as well as of the Queen's too robust sexuality, instances of a dangerous fluidity of rank and gender. This masculinized Caroline recalls the preoccupations with excess that characterized the testimony to the first royal commission, where her overconsumption of food and drink, illiteracy, poor English, slatternliness, and sexual assertiveness marked her as un-feminine, un-English, and un-royal. The motto accompanying *A Parting Hug* comes from

two sources. One of these is Charles Dibdin's ballad, "The Soldier's Adieu," originally published in 1790. The first four lines, in Dibdin, read "Adieu, adieu, my only life,/ My honour calls me from thee;/ Remember thou'rt a soldier's wife,/ Those tears but ill become thee" (1–4).[26] In Lane's print the lines are "Adieu, Adieu, my dearest Love; *my People* call me from thee./Remember, thou'rt a Q___'s Gallant; these tears but ill become thee." The final line in Lane's engraving is taken not from Dibdin but from the first two lines of Byron's already notorious 1816 "Fare Thee Well!" Byron addressed this poem to his wife as one of a pair he wrote in response to the breakup of their marriage: "Fare thee well! and if for ever,/Still for ever, fare thee well." The inclusion of a reference to another messy and public marital upset is an obvious choice—perhaps the most fitting of any that Lane uses. Byron's friendships with both Prince and Princess at various times were well known (Austen instanced Caroline's association with his sometime lover Lady Oxford as evidence of her impropriety); both his absence from England and his Whig affiliation would tend to license the parodic use of him by the loyalist press.[27] Most relevant to my argument, his separation from Lady Byron—although accomplished much more quickly—was, like Caroline's, marked both by scandal and by public statements that were transactions in and performances of a deteriorating or already defunct relationship.

The intertextuality of *A Parting Hug* enters Lane's engraving into a complex web of discourses that includes Byron's poetic recasting of his marital crisis. Lane uses Byron's poem as ironic context for Caroline's return to England. His parting shot at the wife who left him becomes her parting hug, as she leaves her lover to return to England and force herself on the husband who has bribed her to keep away. Lane's inclusion of the line signals his recognition that discussions of royalty weave together fictive and public realms. Byron's sentimental address, initially printed privately but re-circulated widely, functioned as public testimony. In its positioning of the poet as the wronged but steadfast husband ("Even though unforgiving, never/'Gainst thee shall my heart rebel") cruelly separated from his infant daughter ("When our child's first accents flow—/ Wilt thou teach her to say 'Father!'/ Though his care she must forego?"), the poem echoes radical pro-Caroline sentiment and is part of the series of claims and counterclaims about who abandoned the marriage first that continues to engage biographers and critics of Byron.

Lane's use of Byron here echoes another text, less widely disseminated and designed for a more literate audience. John Gibson Lockhart's sixty-page pamphlet, "*Letter to the Right Hon. Lord Byron*

by John Bull," published, like Lane's prints, in the spring of 1821, expresses the intersection of public and private discourse in the ongoing institutionalization of Byron.[28] The pamphlet was written in response to Byron's *Letter to John Murray*, commenting on William Lisle Bowles' edition of Pope, and includes a satirical paean,[29] that displaces its raptures onto a series of implicitly discredited, and fictional, women:

> How melancholy you look in the prints! Oh! yes, this is the true cast of face. Now, tell me, Mrs. Goddard, now tell me, Miss Price, now tell me, dear Harriet Smith, and dear, dear Mrs. Elton, do tell me, is not this just the very look, that one would have fancied for Childe Harold? Oh! what eyes and eyebrows!—Oh! what a chin!—well, after all, who knows what may have happened. One can never know the truth of such stories. Perhaps her *Ladyship* was in the wrong after all. (Strout 80)

The imagined commentary of an imagined community reiterates the public meanings of the dissolution of Byron's marriage by deliberately confounding the private individual with those produced for public consumption. The fictional characters of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park* mark as "true" Byron's "melancholy . . . look in the prints" through its association with and revelation of the character of Childe Harold.[30] This pronouncement leads them to speculate on the "truth" behind the "stories" of the separation from Lady Byron. Lockhart is doing what Byron does in "Fare Thee Well!" (and what Lane's unattributed quotation of the poem emphasizes). He instances a poem, here *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, as both testimony and transaction. The poem verifies Byron publicly and is inserted—along with his "melancholy" cast of face—as evidence to be included in the debates about his marriage. The "truth" and justness of his appearance in the prints are verified by their correspondence to what one "fancies."

The same "one" who fantasizes Byron as Childe Harold then both temporizes and eroticizes judgment: "One can never know the truth of such stories"—a disingenuous claim, given that fancy has already been offered as an adequate replacement for verifiable knowledge. Presumably, one *can* know the truth of such stories in the same way that one can verify Byronic melancholy by reference to Childe Harold's. Following this formula, one has only to read "The Bride of Abydos" and "Parisina" to "know" these two poems as coded discussions of the poet's affair with his half-sister Augusta, speculation about which almost certainly constituted a part of "such stories."[31]

Lockhart's follow up—"Perhaps her *Ladyship* was in the wrong after all"—is doubly ironic. Her Ladyship cannot possibly be in the wrong according to the speakers, because she understands and represents Byron using their very formulations. As Jerome Christensen has argued, Lady Byron, who largely authorized the dissemination of the stories in her efforts to prove her husband's mental incapacity, becomes the iconic figure for the reader who understands the poet through his texts. Like the ladies of Lockhart's imagination, Lady Byron "epitomizes the identificatory procedures of naïve biographical criticism," in this case by "reading the incest of the text back onto Byron's life" (Christensen 81).

The evocation of the ladies who comment on Byron's appearance in "the prints" domesticates the voyeurism in Lane's pictures while highlighting its status as judgment. The peering figures in Lane's engravings have now become celebrity watchers, whose preoccupation with the public meaning of private events signals less salaciousness than their own circumscribed existence. Lockhart's choice of *Emma* and *Mansfield Park*, Austen's extended discussions of stifled and incestuous provincial communities, is well calibrated to his project of domesticating and trivializing Byromania: the discussion he imagines echoes one that appears early in *Emma*, in both its triviality and its metonymic identification of an attractive and elusive male with his own textual production:

> Mr. Frank Churchill was one of the boasts of Highbury, and a lively curiosity to see him prevailed, though the compliment was so little returned that he had never been there in his life. . . .
>
> Now, upon his father's marriage, it was very generally proposed . . . that the visit should take place. There was not a dissentient voice on the subject, either when Mrs. Perry drank tea with Mrs. and Miss Bates, or when Mrs. and Miss Bates returned the visit. Now was the time for Mr. Frank Churchill to come among them; and the hope strengthened when it was understood that he had written to his new mother on the occasion. For a few days every morning visit in Highbury included some mention of the handsome letter Mrs. Weston had received. "I suppose you have heard of the handsome letter Mr. Frank Churchill had written to Mrs. Weston? I understand it was a very handsome letter, indeed. Mr. Woodhouse told me of it. Mr. Woodhouse saw the letter, and he says he never saw such a handsome letter in his life."
>
> It was, indeed, a highly-prized letter. (*Emma* 64)

Like Lockhart's dialogue, these exchanges highlight the discrepancy between the fascinating absentee, more talked about than

known, at once native son and foreigner, and a community united equally in its approval of as in its speculation about him ("not a dissentient voice on the subject").[32] Interiority is a measure of intellectual acuity and social class in *Emma*. Hence, the group's capacity to prize without understanding or analysis unifies them and marks them off as second tier characters, from whom the heroine must relearn to distinguish herself. Her own tendency to fantasize about Frank Churchill contrasts with the sober assessments of the novel's moral and social arbiter, Mr. Knightley, who refuses to accept popular opinion of him "without proof" (159) and who, unlike Mr. Woodhouse, sees not the handsomeness of the letter but its effeminacy: "It is like a woman's writing" (268). Emma must abandon her fantasies in favor of Knightley's measured judgments and intellectual asceticism if she is to take her place as his consort by the end of the novel.[33]

Both Lockhart and Lane are preoccupied with the embodiment of ephemerality: the "melancholy" of Byron and the Byronic as well as the intangibility of unsubstantiated allegations. Like Lane's caricatures, like Caroline's 1813 letter, and like Caroline's body itself, *Childe Harold*, in Lockhart's representation, is a public document that both signifies a private individual and renders him available for appropriation and speculation by a domesticated, consuming public. That this public is drawn from Austen's fiction demonstrates his sense of the novel as a repository for the laws of manners. Novels like Austen's generalize notions of propriety relevant not only to the private domestic space of characters but to the public arrangement of governmental power. Lockhart's familiarity with her novels is suggested by the ease with which he navigates among major and minor characters as well as by his nomenclature: each character from *Emma* or *Mansfield Park* is addressed by the name most appropriately hers according to custom and law, and the one authorized both by the novel's trajectory and by the narrator's judgment—titles appended to the surnames of married characters or those admitted to gentry status.[34]

The relationship of the narrator to the imagined speakers shifts, in the course of the paragraph, from representation to direct identification and then back to an ironic representation that locates Byron as the imagining author of the dialogue: "How you laugh in your sleeve when you imagine to yourself (which you have done any one half-hour these seven years) such beautiful scenes as these:—they are the triumphs of humbug" (81). The passage begins unmistakably in the putative John Bull's voice: "But enough of Bowles. I say he is no

poet, and you are a great poet; and I go on with the entity, leaving the nonentity to those who do love it" (80). This praise is followed by a dismissal of Byronic melancholy as "humbug" (Lockhart's substitution for Byron's "cant," which, in the original *Letter* to John Murray, he had claimed was "the grand '*primum mobile*' of England"[35]). Initially locating belief and reverence for "the amazing misery of the black-haired, high-browed, blue-eyed, bare-throated, Lord Byron" in "every boarding-school in the empire" (80), he then settles it, and himself, in Austen's imagined community—or his imagined Austenian community.[36] The interlocutor of "Now, tell me" functions as a kind of showman—albeit a more genteel one than Lane's salacious outrider—first directing Byron's attention toward his own image ("How melancholy you look in the prints"), then shifting his audience to the ladies, whom he interrogates with theatrical hyperbole. He then becomes indistinguishable among the varied rhapsodies and speculations, a tactic that allows Lockhart to assign to Mrs. Elton the most sexually laden of the comments on Byron:

> Perhaps her *Ladyship* was in the wrong after all.—I am sure if I had married such a man, I would have borne with all his little eccentricities—a man so evidently unhappy.—Poor Lord Byron! who can say how much he may have been to be pitied? I am sure I would; I bear with all Mr. E.'s eccentricities, and I am sure any woman of real sense would have done so to Lord Byron's. (80–81)

It is unclear when Mrs. Elton takes up the dialogue, although this very uncertainty is an accurate distillation of her tendency to overwhelm a scene. Perhaps the speech becomes feminine at the exclamatory catalogue ("Oh! What eyes and eyebrows!—Oh! What a chin!"), or at the gossipy speculation about "what may have happened." Certainly the "I" of this passage is not the same "I" who declared that Bowles was no poet. Nor is it clear whether the dashes indicate a new speaker or pauses in the speech of the same person, although it is clearly Mrs. Elton who offers her own tolerance of her husband's "eccentricities" as evidence that "any woman of real sense" would have put up with Byron's. Her tolerance indicates both pragmatic self-interest and her own sexuality.[37] Presumably, the declaration is that any woman of real sense, that is, any woman who knew what was good for her, would put up with a certain amount of kinkiness in order to be comfortably settled. Mrs. Elton is the character who marries manifestly for the sake of an establishment and is chosen for her 10,000 pounds after

a perfunctory courtship. Certainly, if she is willing to put up with "Mr. E's" eccentricities, how much more ought to be borne by one married to Lord Byron?

How much indeed? To readers of Byron in 1821, Mrs. Elton's phrase "little eccentricities" might have meant anything from incest, to an interest in Continental boys, to a sophistical justification of either or both, to the confoundment, to borrow Christensen's term, of all of these possibilities in the act of marital sodomy. Christensen posits that Lady Byron used "confoundment" as a way to evade the taint of complicity in her allegations against her husband: unable to produce direct evidence of "brute Byron" she produces instead "the direct assertion of confoundment: confoundment in the act, confoundment in the telling, confoundment between the telling and the act" (85). The sexual economy of Mrs. Elton's speech once again highlights Lockhart as a reader who knows his Austen, and who can read her characters out of her fiction. This is the inversion of Lady Byron's tactic of confounding her husband and his poems.[38] But, by making Austen's characters live as naïve readers of Byron, Lockhart plays out the intertextual implications of commingling "life" and "art." The character in whom he chooses to locate this is Mrs. Elton's fictive antithesis, Fanny Price.

The shift from boarding school misses to sexualized women is registered in the ordering of the speaker's locatives. The series of "now tell me's" is directed first at Mrs. Goddard, headmistress of the local boarding school for girls, then at Fanny Price and Harriet Smith, both boarders of a sort, ending with the married Mrs. Elton. The speaker is relying on his audience's recognition of Fanny's fitness for this group—the only heroine on his list. Fanny's uncertain status throughout most of *Mansfield Park* and her commitment to a nearly unrealizable standard of feminine modesty would seem to mark her as belonging to this little community, carefully placed between the respectable widow and the desirable but homeless ingénue—and at a safe distance from the dashing married woman. Earnest and studious as well as virtuous, she is the closest in type to Annabella Milbanke, which ought to make her a better exemplar of the biographical reader even than Mrs. Elton. But, as Lady Byron knew, reading a text for evidence of an author's life can implicate reader as well as author. Fanny's presence in a review of *John Bull's Letter* that was published in the July 1821 number of *Blackwood's Magazine* registers this risk. The reviewer facetiously attributes authorship of the letter to Jeremy Bentham. Strout calls this claim a "smoke screen" designed to "mystify the public" and protect

Lockhart, who was genuinely worried about his authorship being discovered.[39] "Bentham's" inability to comment intelligently on Byron's poetry (a claim the reviewer tempers by acknowledging that, like him, "Bentham" recognizes *Don Juan* as his greatest work) is a feature of his age, which the reviewer repeatedly genders as female: "Every where we hear him called an old woman—as if old women were not a respectable portion of society—a driveller, a dotard, and other opprobrious expressions, which really is very unfair" (421). Attributing to a "defective memory" common to "very old men" a habit of repeating the same tropes until their effectiveness has been lost, the reviewer quotes the *Emma/Mansfield Park* dialogue, pointing out that "Bentham" is here using the same "silly mode of iteration of names" (425) he used in an earlier pamphlet:[40]

> He forgot that he had ever used the phraseology before, and the chime was still singing in his ears. But he is not to be pardoned, however, for making such a public use of people's names. Poor Miss Price is so much annoyed at being put down as a reader of Don Juan, that she has written us a long and rather ingenious letter on the subject, in which she complains bitterly of this conduct, and adds, that the other ladies are particularly vexed on the occasion. (495)

"Poor Miss Price" had been put down in the original pamphlet as a reader of *Childe Harold*, not *Don Juan*. Her inability to recognize the superiority of the later poem is part of what discredits her and her circle as readers of Byron. The shift from melancholic romance to racy satire is telling. The reviewer's suggestion of ill-usage (Fanny "complains bitterly of this conduct") underscores the association with Lady Byron implied in the original and stresses the identification of both as naïve biographical readers. Presumably, reading *Don Juan*, like the "public use of people's names," is vaguely sexualizing, threatening the same kind of taint by association that Christensen argues informed Lady Byron's accusations. Bentham/Lockhart's unpardonable use of her name, like his identification of Byron and Childe Harold, so commingles public and private identities as to stress that each is always its opposite. His use of Fanny Price drags into the limelight a character whose reputation for shyness has already been complicated by her public identity as a fictional character.

Yet Fanny has at least as much kinship with the moral relativism of *Don Juan* as with the melancholy of *Childe Harold*, given the novel of which she is heroine. *Mansfield Park* is a novel about the operations of relativism. Its heroine's role as a moral bulwark in a community

otherwise driven—and riven—by self-interest is a relative construction.[41] Fanny's judgments are vindicated by being directed toward the stability that novel aims for,[42] but they are only sound within the hothouse cultivation of Mansfield Park, and they are always framed by her desires. Austen's treatment of relativism, of the malleability of judgment by will, is comprehensive. There is in the end no one, including the narrator, who does not forego principle for interest.[43] Her novel demonstrates the same mechanisms of confoundment that Lady Byron offered in her defense of the separation. It bewilders by compromising the authority even of those characters designated as authoritative.

Austen plots the development of Fanny's "moral taste"[44] to demonstrate that the synchronicity between her judgment and her feelings is produced in part by chance and in part by careful cultivation. Her non-participation in the episode of the private theatricals appears to stress a distinction between her and her environment on which Austen has been insisting since the novel's opening:

> Fanny looked on and listened, not unamused to observe the selfishness which, more or less disguised, seemed to govern them all, and wondering how it would end. For her own gratification she could have wished that something might be acted, for she had never seen even half a play, but every thing of higher consequence was against it. (93)

Fanny's affinity with the narrator—observant and amused, able to see through all disguises, if not all the way to the end—suggests an authority that masks the constructedness of her observations, her quick stifling of a desire for "gratification" by the priggish (perhaps guilty?) reference to "every thing of higher consequence." Austen ranks characters according to their ability to detach from their companions and observe, distinguishing both Edmund and Mary Crawford by *their* ability to distinguish when Fanny is suffering. But the contrast between those who notice Fanny and the majority who neglect her does not constitute a moral economy. Sympathy is contingent, partial, and always circumscribed by personal will. All superiority is relative; there is no supremacy. Mary and Edmund are kinder than the other characters in the matter of the theatricals, but never to the point of sacrificing their own gratifications, more often in their service. Edmund looks at Fanny "kindly" when the others try to pressure her into joining the play, but is "unwilling to exasperate his brother" by any effectual intervention (103). In the next chapter, he manipulates Fanny into endorsing his decision to play

Anhalt to Mary's Amelia, covering with a reference to his father's dislike of outsiders his own jealousy of a potential rival.[45] Mary goes beyond looks, ostentatiously moving her chair closer to Fanny and talking to her in a "kind low whisper" (103), but the narrator qualifies her kindness as an expression of "the really good feelings by which she was almost purely governed." The first adverb is an intensifier, but the parallel construction pairs it with the "almost" that dilutes the purity of her motives. "Really" not only loses its intensifying power; it becomes ironic. Because her motives are not pure, her goodness is not real. And whether kindness shares space with or masks self-interest in the end makes no difference. Mary hedges her bets. Fanny's gratitude is a by-product of what she "really" wants: Edmund's notice and approval. "[T]he really good feelings by which she was almost purely governed, were rapidly restoring her to all the little she had lost in Edmund's favour" (104). Powers of observation and sympathy do not prevent characters from acting out of self-interest.[46]

Fanny's detachment in the above passage, however, suggests that she alone is not governed by the self-interest she remarks in "all" the others. Her reaction to the possibility of moving from observer to participant—when she is pressured to take a small part in the play—seems an instance of the perfect synchronicity of feeling and judgment. "It would be so horrible to her to act, that she was inclined to suspect the truth and purity of her own scruples" (107). Austen's indirect discourse connects Fanny with Mary in that both recognize the influence of desire on judgment, although Fanny seems to be subjecting herself to rigorous self-examination, where Mary is content to be epigrammatic. But Fanny's suspicions are unfounded, an instance of her habitual discrediting of her own powers of discrimination. Her horror of acting proves rather than disproves the purity of her scruples. She may doubt them, but the reader does not; her instinctive reaction is instinctively "right."[47] It is the inclination to suspect her own scrupulous horror that has been artificially induced, in this instance by the cruel importunities of her cousins and aunt, more broadly by her life of dependence at Mansfield Park.

Fanny's judgments are products of her masochism, which is the expression of her melancholy and the necessary ingredient in both her idealization of Mansfield and her love for Edmund. Her self-examination takes place in the schoolroom, a retreat (not a refuge) that concentrates the careful mingling of pain and pleasure that ties Fanny to Mansfield. Each of the items she looks at in her reverie

"was a friend, or bore her thoughts to a friend," and her association of things to people leads to an illustration of the abusive cycle that explains and shapes her judgments "though there had been sometimes much of suffering to her—though her motives had been often misunderstood, her feelings disregarded, and her comprehension under-valued, though she had known the pains of tyranny, of ridicule, and neglect, yet almost every recurrence of either had led to something consolatory." The most important agent of consolation is of course Edmund, whose presence, more than any other figure in the novel, regulates the ratio of pleasure to pain. Sometimes the "champion" or advocate who "supported her cause, or explained her meaning," Edmund is more useful as the comforter who reconciles her to pain, giving "charm" to "every former affliction" by telling her "not to cry" or giving her "some proof of affection which made her tears delightful" (106).[48]

Fanny's self-doubt is learned, not the truth and purity—the modesty—that make her recoil from the idea of performance. Yet horror in Fanny is never the consistent, instinctive response it appears here. Austen's layering of discourses implies a contrast between the calculated and the natural reactions that her novel never endorses. "Horror" turns out to be a frequently used word in the novel. Variants of it appear twenty-one times, and its instability makes it an unsafe register of moral authority.[49] Fanny reacts with "horror" at learning that she must begin the ball with Henry Crawford (189); her "scruples" against accepting a gift from her rival make her "start back at first with a look of horror" when Mary Crawford offers her a gold chain to wear with her brother William's cross (177). Both of these passages seem again to naturalize Fanny's horror as the inevitable companion of her modesty. Beginning a ball, after all, is a public display similar to acting, especially given the complex mechanisms of courtship and seduction that acting involves in this novel.[50] But the extremity of Fanny's reactions reminds us that her modesty is so overbred as to become crippling, even ridiculous. Embarrassment, discomfiture, yes, but horror? When Fanny reacts with similar horror at the prospect of a dinner with Henry Crawford, we know we are in the realm of the same hyperbole that allows Mary Crawford to call her brother "the most horrible flirt that can be imagined" (32) while the same word can be assigned by Julia Bertram to the tedious Mrs. Rushworth (72) and by Tom to the family billiard table (88).

The denouement of the novel recuperates horror for modesty, contrasting Fanny's and Mary's responses to the elopement of Henry

Crawford and Maria Bertram: "The horror of a mind like Fanny's, as it received the conviction of such guilt . . . can hardly be described. At first, it was a sort of stupefaction; but every moment was quickening her perception of the horrible evil" (299). The narrator's qualification "a mind like Fanny's" renders the horror intelligible. "Such guilt" might not horrify every mind. It does not horrify Mary's, to whom the elopement deserves "no harsher name than folly" and who feels "[N]o reluctance, no horror, no feminine—shall I say? no modest loathings!" (308) This is Edmund's comparison, however, not the narrator's. Fanny's reaction is in keeping with *his* equation of horror with modesty, an equation demanded by his own renunciation, the necessity for which is clearer to him than the motivation. He must give up all thought of Mary either because she is not the woman he thought she was—"How have I been deceived! Equally in brother and sister deceived!" (312). Or else, possibly, she could be that woman, had not her "nature" been ruined by her faulty upbringing: "Spoilt, spoilt!" (308).

Yet, if Mary's failure to be horrified signals (maybe) her "corrupt, vitiated mind" (310), Fanny's horror seems once again out of proportion to the event:

> Fanny seemed to herself never to have been shocked before. There was no possibility of rest. . . . She passed only from feelings of sickness to shudderings of horror; and from hot fits of fever to cold. The event was so shocking, that there were moments even when her heart revolted from it as impossible—when she thought it could not be. A woman married only six months ago, a man professing himself devoted, even *engaged* to another—that other her near relation—the whole family, both families connected as they were by tie upon tie, all friends, all intimate together!—it was too horrible a confusion of guilt, to gross a complication of evil, for human nature, not in a state of utter barbarism, to be capable of! (299)

D. A. Miller sees in Fanny's horror a kind of hysterical wishfulness, "morally exemplary" but "curiously blind to the sources of its own excitement" (57). Her "excessive disgust" is "inadequately served" by the moral language she uses to explain it (58). Closer than ever to fulfilling a desire she has spent the novel schooling herself to suppress and disown, Fanny "responds to the wish fulfillment hysterically to avoid facing it as such" (60). Of course, as Edmund's own sexual squeamishness later makes clear, Fanny's horror is precisely the response to attach him to her. Her excessive modesty allows her to luxuriate through "hysterical conversion" (Miller 59) in the multiple

excesses occasioning and occasioned by the elopement, while distancing her from one who is implicated in the event by her philosophical acceptance of it. Typically, Fanny responds with a neurotically meticulous examination of her own feelings, Mary with what looks like epigram.[51]

But the excess that horrifies Fanny is more than "the forbidden sexual act inferable from the elopement" (Miller 59). Not the guilt alone, but the "confusion of guilt" is "horrible." Recent critics of Austen have recognized that the "utter barbarism" Fanny imagines is specifically incestuous.[52] Her compilation of horrors—singularly free of main verbs, as if she has lost the ability to reason from the event and can only iterate its parts—begins with the betrayal of conjugal bonds: a "woman married," a man "devoted, even *engaged* to another." But the emotional energy of her list concentrates on the betrayal of familial bonds, "that other her near relation—the whole family, both families connected as they were by tie upon tie, all friends, all intimate together!" For Ruth Bernard Yeazell, the "origin" of Fanny's "sickness" is not the sexuality of Maria (or Henry) but "the discovery of people dangerously out of place, of accustomed categories blurred and confounded" (162). Fanny's emphasis on families "connected . . . by tie upon tie," however, evokes the confounding of relational categories that have formed the substance of her fantasies about Edmund, as cousin, brother, and lover/husband. Blurring categories is not the problem; blurred categories are the ideal that the elopement disrupts and betrays. Critics have recognized the importance of incest in the marriage plot of *Mansfield Park*, citing the exchangeability of Edmund with William and Edmund's identification of Fanny as "my only sister" as a prelude to marriage (302).[53] Maria's crime disrupts this authorized endogamy.[54] The elopement is quasi-incestuous if we accept that Edmund is poised to marry Mary and make Maria and Henry brother and sister, or if, following Mary Jean Corbett, we accept that the Crawfords have already become an extension of the Mansfield group.[55] But neither of these groupings piles "tie upon tie." Categories become blurred only after the elopement, yet in Fanny's anguished rehearsal the condition of being "all intimate together" is the beginning, not the end. Stability for her is the incestuous mingling of categories; instability is its betrayal.

Fanny's horror at the elopement reveals the extent to which she is implicated in it. Like Maria, she desires someone to whom she is already connected by tie upon tie.[56] Like Lady Byron, she is the recipient of confessions that force upon her a moral relativism from which

she retreats but cannot escape, first in Edmund's confidences to her about Mary Crawford and, more drastically, in Mary's communications with her after first Mary and then Fanny have left Mansfield. An extension of the intimacy that both Edmund and Sir Thomas have been self-servingly promoting, their correspondence is confounding in the same way that Christensen argues Byron's bedroom confessions were for his wife. Mary's letters (we never see Fanny's replies) occasion "unpleasant meditation" (268) first because they assume a knowingness that Fanny would rather not recognize in herself, a mutual knowingness, moreover—a kind of epistolary nudging and winking—that connects Fanny with one rival through its identification of another. By assuming that Fanny will be as interested as she is in Maria's reaction to Henry Crawford's declared love for Fanny, Mary locates her within a network of illicit desires that makes her modesty only a function of contrast: "Shall I tell you how Mrs. Rushworth looked when your name was mentioned?" (267). Mary's gossipy intimacy forces Fanny to acknowledge against her will first Henry's desire for her, then his former flirtation with her cousin, and finally the possibility that a married woman can continue to feel love and jealousy for another—a forecast of the feelings Fanny will bring to her own half of the double marriage if Mary, Henry, and Edmund have their way. Like Mary, Fanny becomes a mere "woman of character" (299), whose behavior is above reproach but whose moral reasoning is "corrupted."

The epistolary mode licenses this construction. We do not read Fanny's replies, but, were she to correct or protest against Mary's assumptions, the time lag written into correspondence would still allow Mary to have the last word on paper. In a later letter, Mary writes to inquire about the health of Tom Bertram, whose expected death she hopes will free Edmund to give up the church and marry her. After a few sentences of properly expressed yet insincere concern, she follows with an ironic commentary on her own platitudes that incorporates Fanny in her acknowledged hypocrisy: "Fanny, Fanny, I see you smile, and look cunning, but upon my honour, I never bribed a physician in my life" (294). Of course Mary doesn't *see* anything of the sort, but she also doesn't see Fanny frown and shake her head disapprovingly, as Henry does in an earlier scene.[57] In the relationship constructed by her letter, that response does not exist. Fanny is forced into conformity with her mind's eye, forced to become the kind of confidante Mary wants at the moment—her horror at role-playing temporarily forestalled.[58] Fanny doesn't have to act in this private theatrical; she has only to be the recipient of

Mary's letters to become the mirror for Mary's desires. This is a more revolutionary piece of casting than when Mary was typecast as the sexually forward Amelia in *Lover's Vows*. What she (and, in the fiction of the letter, Fanny) desires is nothing less than the death of one man and the apostasy of another. Like Byron in his wife's representation, Mary is asking Fanny to "smile" at "Vice."[59] Or, rather, she is constructing a Fanny who, like Mary with her fondness for puns, already smiles at vice.[60] Such a revolution is possible because conventional understandings and expressions of right and wrong are in the end nothing but conventions, easily reversible depending on circumstances. With characteristic fluidity of nomination, Mary closes her argument by assuring Fanny not only that they feel the same but that right is wrong, and wrong is right: "And now do not trouble yourself to be ashamed of either my feelings or your own. Believe me, they are not only natural, they are philanthropic and virtuous" (294–95).

Mary's self-interested colonization of language—selfishness is philanthropy; vice is virtue; shame and nature are divorced from one another—is a version of the same sophistry that Lady Byron claimed her husband exercised upon her. In a statement written thirty years after his death, she explained:

> He laboured to convince me that Right & Wrong were merely Conventional, & varying with Locality & other circumstances—he clothed these sentiments in the most seductive language—appealing both to the Heart and Imagination. I must have been bewildered had I not firmly & simply believed in one Immutable Standard.[61]

Christensen argues that she is turning bewilderment into a final proof of her husband's madness and of the marriage's invalidity, deciding that, despite what she claims, she *was* bewildered by her husband's sophistry. If her convictions had always been firm and simple, she would have to explain how she tolerated his "eccentricities" for as long as she did, and would have to account for her abandonment of the marriage as a change of taste—an approbation of his theory that principles vary with locality and other circumstances.[62] Instead, she offers confoundment as seduction; his opinions came clothed "in the most seductive language." Her justification begs another question, however, which is also central to anxiety about seduction in *Mansfield Park*. Is seduction the creation of a desire where there was none, or is it the cultivation of a desire that is incipient but either unregarded or unacknowledged? To the extent that it

bewilders, it must be the latter. One cannot be confounded except by the presence of conflicting desires or categories of desire: familial, connubial, incestuous, adulterous, heterosexual, homosexual. Mary Crawford is following this principle of seduction when she writes, "Fanny, Fanny, I see you smile, and look cunning," or when she calls Edmund back at the end of their final interview with "a saucy playful smile, seeming to invite, in order to subdue" (311). The subtext of both modes of address—barely subtext—is, "you know you want it."

In Edmund's case this is true. He wants to be subdued, and, in his account, he nearly is: "I resisted; it was the impulse of the moment to resist, and still walked on. I have since—sometimes—for a moment—regretted that I did not go back; but I know I was right" (311–12). His narrative inverts the expected exchange, in which the impulse of the moment would be to accept the invitation in Mary's smile. Resistance is impulsive, however, only in the moment of temptation. It becomes durable in recollection, when regret becomes the momentary impulse. Mary's seductive smile both crystallizes desire and forecloses the possibility of gratification, and Edmund must rewrite the scene to elide his own confoundment.[63] Until Maria's adultery forced him to give up the idea of marrying her, Edmund, like Fanny, had been able to mingle categories of desire, imagining a coexistence with both women, whose "perfect friendship" he has promoted as a way of fixing their roles as complementary halves of an essential whole. "I would not have the shadow of a coolness," he tells Fanny, "between the two dearest objects I have on earth" (181). That only one of these relationships is eroticized is a fiction designed to legitimize polygynous desire.[64] The invitation in Mary's smile offers this triangular relationship as a continuing possibility, but only if he accepts her definition of adultery as folly. If he agreed to her re-nomination, however, he would have to acknowledge that she is as much capable of adultery as his sister; "exposure" (309) is the only evil to be avoided.[65] His fantasy of coexistence is a dream of having Fanny (without having her) and sharing Mary. In relinquishing this dream he rewrites the moment of its greatest intensity. Like Lady Byron, he broods on the impulse until the impulse becomes naturalized and durable, and produces as absolute, "I know I was right," a decision he has already represented as relative.

Both Edmund and Lady Byron are partial readers, who claim that access to their subjects authorizes them to interpret, but for whom access becomes something terrifying from which they must escape. Both equivocate: "I have since—sometimes—for a moment—

regretted"; or raise the possibility of equivocation: "I must have been bewildered." But both retreat from or stifle equivocation with an affirmation of the pure and simple belief in one Immutable Standard of rightness. Only one, however, is a character in a novel, and therein lies the difference. As a novelist, Austen can introduce an equivocation that she then tames under the standard narrative conventions of courtship fiction. However much she may render these conventions ironic, they still remain hers to manipulate. She alone can "restore every body, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort" (312). Lady Byron's plot, on the other hand, has no such neat conclusion. Because her authority for the separation rests in what cannot be said, the answer she provides at once forecloses and perpetuates discussion. Her refusal to name her reasons either does name them, or it doesn't, depending upon whom one asks.[66] One may never know the truth of such stories, but, for some, knowing that there *are* stories is enough. In his *Letter*, Lockhart offers the gossiping readers as an instance of what Eric Eisner has called the "eagerness of both male and female readers, the *Letter*'s author included, to insist they know the real Byron" (41). Unlike his women, however, Lockhart is not willing to put up with any little eccentricities. Resembling more the wife who left than the adoring readers who wish themselves in her place, he dispenses unsolicited advice, adjuring Byron to "Stick to Don Juan: it is the only sincere thing you have ever written" (82),[67] and chastising him for publicizing his version of the separation narrative in the two poems, "Fare Thee Well!" and "A Sketch from Private Life." "Fare Thee Well!" as Paul Elledge and Eric Eisner have shown, is thoroughly equivocal.[68] But its shiftiness does not make it any the less, in Lockhart's estimation, an inexcusably public attempt to write the end of the story. In an inversion of Brougham's declaration to the Lords about the country's unanimous verdict on Queen Caroline, Lockhart admonishes Byron, "The world had nothing whatever to do with a quarrel between you and Lady Byron, and you were the last man that should have set about persuading the world that the world had or could have any thing to do with such a quarrel" (107).[69]

For Lockhart, Byron's complicity in the public positioning of his poem is an attempt both to impose an ending on a story that should have no end (a separation, unlike a divorce, does not conclude anything; it is like the ceasefire that allows the combatants to go home but perpetually defers the end of the war)[70] and an attempt to make "the world" complicit in his version of the story.[71] Lockhart glosses

over the point that he too passes judgment on the Byrons' marital disputes. Like Mrs. Elton, he supposes that Lady Byron was more likely to be "in the wrong" than her husband. He prefaces this statement, however, with so many disclaimers and qualifying clauses that the effect is to establish not Byron's rightness but Lockhart's caution and disinterestedness as a judge, in contrast with the gossiping world represented by the Austenian ladies:

> God knows, I am one of the last people in the world that would wish to set the example of interfering improperly in the private, and more particularly in the domestic affairs of any man. But, if I were to permit myself to hazard an opinion on a matter, with which, I confess, I have so very little to do, I should certainly say that I think it quite possible you were in the right in the quarrel with Lady Byron. . . . But this is nothing. (106–7)

His judgment on the marriage, however temperate and properly expressed, is "nothing" in comparison with his judgment on Byron's interference, not with the domestic affairs of men, but with their opinions. Lockhart is permitted to hazard an opinion (with many pompous cautions); Byron is not permitted to try to influence that opinion, at least not publicly or undisguised by the cleverness of *Don Juan*.[72] "Eric Eisner calls both "Fare Thee Well!" and *Don Juan* "public events . . . texts whose meaning depends on their public life" (24). This is the understanding of the text upon which Lane draws when he quotes from "Fare Thee Well!" in his engraving. Lane doesn't share Lockhart's professed scruples about interfering improperly in the private affairs of men (despite the timing of his pamphlet and the obvious parallels, Lockhart makes no mention of the royal marriage). His motto invokes the poem's status as a public event and once again calls upon "the world" to render judgment—although the judgment he is asking for turns out to be closer to the one Lockhart renders than the difference in medium and the broadness of Lane's satire might suggest. By summer of 1821, the world had mostly lost interest in the story of Caroline's victimization by a corrupt monarchy leagued with a corrupt aristocracy, and was absorbed in the spectacle of the upcoming coronation, which her presence might spoil. Her unruliness in this and other engravings is not just evidence of adultery but an unpleasant fact to be avoided for its own sake. She is messy; she will make a mess of things if she isn't contained.[73] By positioning his engraving in the context of Byron's public attempt to assert ownership over the story of his separation, Lane connects Caroline less with

Byron's little eccentricities than with his self-serving and ill-timed celebrity. Byron renounced influencing the opinions of English readers when he left for the Continent in April 1816, never returning to England. Lane attaches his poem to a depiction of Caroline's departure from Europe for England, suggesting that it would have been better if she, too, had never returned.

Conclusion

The Late Queen and the Progress of Royalty

On August 12, a little more than three weeks after George IV's coronation and five days after Caroline's death from a bowel obstruction, Lane published the last engraving in his series (figure C.1). This picture has no accompanying verse or dialogue, only a banner below the frame with the words "Honi. Soit. Qui. Mal. Y. Pense." ("Evil be to him who evil thinks"), the motto for the Order of the Garter and the royal coat of arms. In it, an audience of women and men gaze at a shop window plastered with engravings recognizable as earlier items in Lane's series, interspersed with some anti-Caroline engravings by Cruikshank.[1] "Honi. Soit." is a retrospective anthology; its marketing strategy is the grouping in one place of already familiar engravings. Like a songbook or garden of verse, its coherence lies in its collection rather than in the local relevance of its individual elements. As a collection, the print memorializes the Queen Caroline affair at a moment when neither Caroline's status nor the Crown's accusations matter any longer to the structure of the monarchy. They have become history.

Like Gillray's 1808 *Very Slippy-Weather*, on which it is modeled (BM Satires 11100), "Honi. Soit." depicts the outside of Humphrey's print shop at 27 St. James's Street.[2] The figures mimic the viewer by standing with backs to the frame. They gaze and point but also converse with one another. Their dialogue cooperates with the title of the print, which stresses the relativity and subjectivity of judgment.[3] The voyeuristic figures typical of Lane's earlier Caroline engravings have become those responsible for their production and distribution: Lane

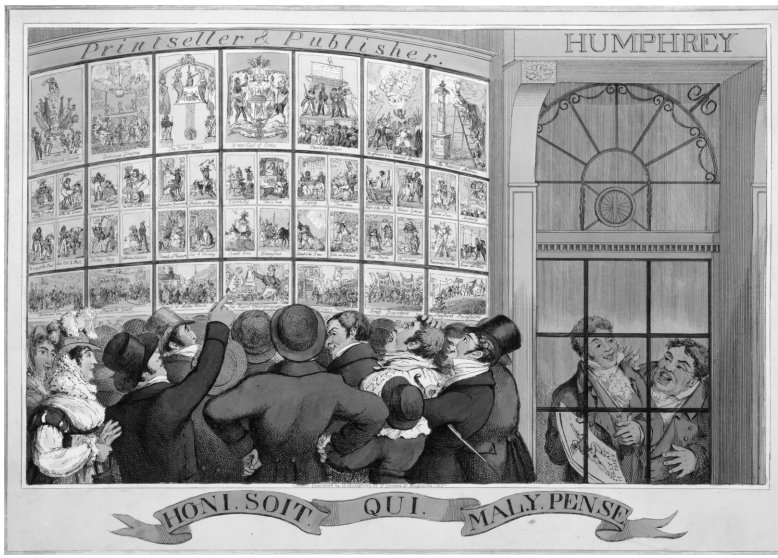

Figure C.1 In Theodore Lane's "Honi. Soit. Qui. Mal. Y. Pense." (1821), a crowd outside Humphrey's print shop looks at a collection of Caroline engravings.

and his publisher, George Humphrey. The glee on their faces highlights their profit-making motive, while identifying them as showmen. They stand in the wings looking at the audience watching.

This picture and the engravings in it were reproduced in a folio volume published by Humphrey, titled *The Attorney-General's Charges against the Late Queen*, and accompanied by a summary of the charges read in the Lords on August 19, 1820.[4] The organization of the printed volume imposes a narrative on the series of fifty engravings that is not present in the single print, in which the pictures in the window are arranged as if for sale. The pamphlet translates the print's static scene of commerce into a narrative of the Crown's case against the Queen. Following the summary of the charges, the first twenty engravings illustrate the Attorney General's speech, beginning with those that are either meant or can be used to reference the beginning of Caroline's affair with Pergami, followed by depictions of the specific charges.[5] After *A Parting Hug at St. Omer*, more than half the prints are devoted either to representations of Caroline's return to England or to horrified predictions of her possible ascendancy. The pamphlet ends with *A Coronation Stool, of Repentance*, printed on July 19, 1821, the date of the coronation.[6] In it, Caroline, alone and in profile, sits on an oversized crown, partly hiding her pained expression behind a fan.

Viewers of "Honi. Soit.," however, will not be able to see the Queen's expression. To be legible, the print's meaning requires the context of the pamphlet. In addition to being on the cover, "Honi. Soit." is reproduced within the pamphlet, the first print after the summary of the charges. It introduces and summarizes the prints that follow, its rough sketches designed for recognition rather than perusal. Viewers who look at this print without reference to the originals cannot discern their details. They must either know the prints already (like the gazers in picture), as separate images outside of this collection, and supply details missing from the rough outlines, or else understand the print as an index and flip through the pamphlet to find the originals.

This index has its own organizing principle. The prints depicted in "Honi. Soit." are established signifiers that exist either in the viewer's imagination or in the pages that follow (or both). Lane's engraving remaps these signifiers into a spatial organization, placed in accordance with the panes in the bow window of the print shop. The panes' uneven numbers—three rows with seven panes in each row—allow him to emphasize certain prints by placing them in the center of a row. The prints are also sized differently so that some prints occupy an entire pane, while other rows have two or four prints in a pane. Across the top row are seven large prints. All are emblematic rather than referencing a particular event, and the tone is of outraged loyalism. In the center row, engravings are grouped four to a pane. Viewed from left to right, the order resembles the trajectory of *The Attorney-General's Charges*, beginning with images of Caroline and Pergami, followed by references to the charges, and ending with images of Caroline in London. This narrative works if one takes this to be two rows of fourteen engravings each, the first dominated by Caroline and Pergami, and the second by Caroline and Matthew Wood, radical Alderman and former Lord Mayor of London, who supported the Queen's cause. Lane depicts Wood as a replacement for Pergami—another upstart who seduces the Queen for his own ends. Viewed this way, the two smaller rows trace the progress of two love affairs, one succeeding the other. In both, anti-Caroline sentiment registers equally in images of the Queen as the dupe of scheming men and in images of the Queen as a masculinized voluptuary, a female Charles II, whose sexuality puts a nation at risk.

The foursquare arrangement of the panes complicates the narrative of the left-to-right organization, offering instead a collection of themed groupings and highlighting the prints' intertextuality. Contiguity shapes meaning in this arrangement, sometimes in ways

that replicate or intensify the linear order, sometimes in ways the left-to-right arrangement does not anticipate. The first two groupings emphasize Caroline's vulnerability to Pergami and Wood by positioning her next to or between her lanky companions, even more absurdly foreshortened by contrast. In *A Pas de Deux, or, Love at First Sight* and *Bat, Cat, and Mat* immediately below it, Caroline and her partners dance while attendants wait uncertainly by an empty carriage. In the lower print, Caroline links arms with both Pergami and Wood. The pas de deux has become a pas de trois. Wood's capering step, the angle of his head, and the expression on his face echo Caroline in the first print. He looks back at her but gestures forward toward Calais with his doffed hat, while Pergami, the only one not in motion, clasps her other arm, looking anxious, and gestures back toward St. Omer. Caroline's knowing simper in the first print has been replaced by a fixed and vacant smile, directed at neither of the men. The text beneath the picture reads, "How happy could I be with either," but Wood's leer, Pergami's worried expression, and Caroline's vacancy all suggest that *her* happiness is no longer the point. She is even less an agent than in the first print. The later print gives a sinister cast to the earlier, making Caroline's easy availability a cause for concern: a queen swayed equally by up-and-coming radical politicians and shady gigolos. Her mindless contentment and lack of discrimination emblemize the folly, weakness, wrong feeling, and obstinacy that so worried Croker in his letter to Peel. Not just the agent of radicalism, Caroline is the sign of radicalism's dangerous hold over an unthinking people.

The theme of a woman choosing between two men echoes eighteenth-century images of Mary Robinson, like the anonymous *Paradise Regain'd* (1783, BM Satires 6319), which pictures Fox wooing Robinson while the Prince watches from behind a tree. In depicting transactions in which commodified women are exchanged between men, both engravings hint at prostitution.[7] But Robinson's demureness in the earlier print is assumed, a cover for her calculation. Her self-interest is evident in Fox's supplicating position[8] and in the Prince's half-sympathetic, half-gleeful comment, "Ha! Ha! Ha! Poor Charley." His satisfaction at having gotten rid of Robinson equals his voyeuristic pleasure in watching her take in his companion.[9] The woman's happiness *is* the point here—the only point, because the Prince's happiness depends on her success in capturing his friend. The paradise that Robinson has regained in the picture consists in being once again the mistress of a powerful man. If the Prince is relieved to be rid of her while Fox is eager to win her, their contrasted

feelings reflect the way in which the cost of maintenance translates to the value in maintaining her. She is available but is not easily won—like the Robinson of the tête-à-têtes, "not so easy a conquest as many imagined." Her power over the men lies in her being both a liability and an asset. Not so Caroline, whose precarious posture stresses her lack of agency; she totters on one leg, only held upright by the clasped arms of the rival men.

The engravings in the second group of four continue the theme of grotesque pairings, although the images are more ribald than in the first panel. *A Wooden Substitute, or Any Port in a Storm*, placed next to *A Parting Hug*, suggests both that Caroline has made her choice and that its expediency makes it not a real choice. She is more demurely dressed in this print than usual but still shows plenty of bosom. Two miniatures, one of Pergami and one of Wood, hang suggestively below her waist.[10] Animal imagery dominates the next two groupings. *The Como-cal Hobby* depicts Pergami astride a goat with Caroline's smiling face. Below this is *The Man of the Woods and the Cat-o'-mountain*, depicting a monkey with Wood's head reaching for the paw of a cat-shaped Caroline. Both sit before a fire in which a "kettle of fish" is cooking on the hob. Below and next to it are four chestnuts marked "Privileges"; "Rights"; "Liturgy," and "St. Catherine's."[11] The text reads:

> A Cat and Monkey tired of play
> Basking before the fire lay
> Pug in the fire a chestnut spied.
> Puss lend me your paw, he slyly cried!
> And we the Booty will divide!![12]

In both engravings, Caroline's sexuality is grotesque and bestial. The cat who shyly extends her paw is a more demure image than the goat who is ridden, but the second picture is glossed with the information that the two creatures are "tired of play" and "[b]asking before the fire," suggesting post-coital exhaustion.

Another pane groups *Tent-ation* in the top half with *Dido in Despair* immediately below. In the first, Caroline, in modest night-dress and cap, watches coyly from her pallet as Pergami passes a candle to a servant outside the tent flap. This is paired with an image of a later Caroline in daytime, night-dress in disarray, tearing at her hair and tottering on the edge of a rumpled bed as she gazes out a window to the left. As with the animal engravings, the lower picture glosses the one above, replacing the smiling, neatly buttoned up Caroline with

images suggestive of prostitution. Lane is here reimagining Gillray's 1801 engraving of Lady Hamilton sitting on the edge of a bed, while Lord Nelson's fleet is pictured sailing away in the open window (BM Satires 9752).

In the Hamilton print, Gillray references an earlier engraving of his, *The Whore's Last Shift* (1779, BM Satires 5604), in which a naked prostitute, her back to the open window, washes out a shift in a broken chamber pot. The woman in this picture bears no immediate resemblance to Lady Hamilton; she is absorbed in a mundane task of her profession and displays none of the hair-tearing dishabille and anguish evident in the later engravings by Gillray and Lane. Her nakedness is practical and unselfconscious, and her hair is elaborately coifed—making her lean figure look even more elongated. Nonetheless, she and Lady Hamilton are figures for each other. Her room is stark in comparison with the later engravings, but it is similarly arranged. The bed and window are in the same relation to each other, and to the central figure. In the window is tacked a broadside ballad titled "The comforts of Single Life," while on the wall behind her she has fixed a torn picture titled "*Ariadne Forsaken*." Gillray uses this intertextual gloss again in *Dido, in Despair!*"[13] where a book open on the window seat appears to reproduce a detail from Sebastiano Ricci's early eighteenth-century painting, *Bacchus and Ariadne* (NG 851). The book in Gillray's engraving is titled "*Studies of Academic Attitudes taken from the Life*," but the image on the facing page recalls Ricci's painting of Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus, lying naked, right arm extended, beneath billowing red drapery. Gillray's detail is of Ariadne only; he eliminates the facing image of Bacchus, but the fact that she was not forsaken for long before being discovered by another lover is suggested both in the sleeping figure of Sir William Hamilton in the bed behind his wife and in the title of the earlier engraving, preparing for her last "shift."[14]

Lane's parody, typically, inverts the gender expectations of Gillray's original: the book lying open at Caroline's feet is a "*Catalogue of Fancy Men*," suggesting she is the client rather than the whore,[15] an idea further stressed by the verses beneath each picture. Gillray's engraving adapts the first verse from the popular ballad, "The Blue Bells of Scotland," with the highland laddie replaced by a gallant sailor and with lines added and altered to fix the identifications of Nelson and Lady Hamilton:

> Ah, where, & ah where, is my gallant Sailor gone?
> He's gone to Fight the Frenchmen, for George upon the Throne,

> He's gone to Fight ye Frenchmen, t'loose t'other Arm & Eye,
> And left me with the old Antiques, to lay me down and cry.[16]

In Lane's engraving, the military references have disappeared. The gallant sailor has become a gallant courier, and Caroline is the abandoning, if remorseful, lover, whose query about where her paramour lies suggests an anxiety that he has found consolation for her absence:

> Ah! where, and ah where, does my gallant Courier lie?
> For me does he oft on his downy pillow sigh,
> I left him on the Continent, to claim my half-a-Crown
> And I wish to my heart, I could have him here in Town.

The final set of panes in Lane's print seems to contain two rows each of landscape-style engravings, although the bottom row is obscured by the heads of the crowd outside the print shop. All of the engravings show either processions or set pieces involving large crowds. At the center and appearing to fix most of the viewers' attention is Cruikshank's *The Royal Extinguisher, or the King of Brobdignag & the Liliputians.* Cruikshank's engraving is another reworking of an earlier image: a 1795 print by his father, Isaac Cruikshank, titled *The Royal Extinguisher or Gulliver Putting out the Patriots of Lilliput!!!* (BM Satires 8701).[17] This was a radical response to the Seditious Meetings and Treasonable Practices Acts of 1795 and pictured Pitt as Gulliver extinguishing a crowd of Whigs, including Fox and Sheridan. The later print inverts the politics of the earlier one, showing a triumphant George IV holding a paper cone, marked, "Speech from the Throne," over Caroline, Wood, and a crowd of Jacobins, who are scattering in a panic. The cone references the King's speech at the opening of Parliament in January 1821, announcing that a 50,000 pound annuity would be paid to Caroline if she would agree to have her name stricken from the liturgy. Caroline accepted the annuity in early March. She had refused this same deal when it was first offered, and her supporters took this about-face as a betrayal. Like the Parliamentary debates, the King's speech was printed in the newspapers and in *Hansard.* As Brougham had already pointed out, this was a strategic use of the print-consuming public as arbiters, and once again the public had decided, this time on the other side of the question. If earlier the Queen's guilt had been overshadowed by the shady means of establishing it, her ready abandonment of principle for self-interest now testified to and compounded that guilt.

Because the Queen was never actually "upon her trial," all the testimony collected throughout the fifteen years of the Queen Caroline affair is recursive. The goal of the depositions collected in the green bags and in the Book, the examinations and cross-examinations of witnesses, is to demonstrate either a guilt or innocence that the questioners have already accepted. At the same time both investigations were governed by the belief that information is only meaningful when understood temporally. The examiners were preoccupied with time, with the need to establish duration and order: How long after the Princess's bed sheets were stained did Willy Austin come to live with her? Was it before or after Pergami's promotion that she decided to sleep without attendants? How long after the Princess dismissed her English retinue did Pergami's family come to live with her? When was her bed made up, and when was it rumpled? How long did Pergami remain alone with the Princess while she bathed? While she changed her clothes? Humphrey's pamphlet reflects this desire to establish a chronology. There is no longer any need to ask the questions: all the events appear in their proper order. First Caroline and Pergami got out of a carriage and danced together; then they attended the theater; next he dressed her for a masked ball; after that they ate together on shipboard and shared a tent; then she knighted him; then they groped each other in another carriage; then she left him for England and Alderman Wood; then she became queen of the radicals; then she got too ambitious, and regretted it; then she was extinguished; then she was repentant and alone.

In the print this chronology is shaded and shaped, positioned in landscape-style arrangements that draw the eye to a triumphant point around which other events organize themselves, or grouped in thematic clusters that allow one event to control the meaning of another. In "Honi. Soit." Lane produces a visual narrative that, like the testimony, is recursive, reiterating but compressing a temporal sequence. The prints reproduced in his engraving move forward but also continually turn back on themselves. Repeating the sequences of 1813 and 1820, in which testimony overshadowed and supplanted judgment, their arrangement both makes available the damning evidence and suspends conclusion. Yet the title of the pamphlet reminds viewers that the conclusion is already history. Because the Queen is dead, the question of whether she is Queen has been tabled. In both print and pamphlet, Caroline is at once Queen and not-Queen. More particularly, she is *not* "the Queen"; she *is* "the late Queen." Her status no longer matters politically. The pamphlet establishes Caroline's guilt in the guise of first presenting and then illustrating the charges

against her. This sequence repeats the circularity of the testimony by obscuring a distinction between charges and evidence: illustration becomes demonstration. The effect of this wealth of illustration is to turn the Queen into a keepsake.

With its glossy presentation and colored engravings, *The Attorney-General's Charges against the Late Queen* is as much collector's item as it is narrative.[18] It is a souvenir all at once of the trial, the coronation, and, because of its timing, the death of the late Queen—a memorial of the events and their principal actor. As a collection it is reflective and retrospective in a way no individual print was. Engravings of the royal family, like all political satire, depended for their success on their currency.[19] Rowlandson's *Filial Piety* is dated November 25, 1788, two days before the Prince of Wales commissioned the first official inquiry into the state of the King's health. Gillray published *Wife and No Wife* on March 27, 1786, three months into the public speculation on the Prince's secret marriage and a month before Fox's decisive speech in Parliament. When prints referenced events from the past, as many of Lane's did, their focus was on those events as they had been made current by legal and parliamentary debates. If the topics are no longer news, their political meanings are. Even when engravings quote or parody earlier prints, their intertextuality stresses their currency. An old issue is made new by its repositioning.

In their original form, Lane's prints were active representations, meant to be discussed with the situations they depict, not gazed at and itemized like prints of Byron.[20] which, like the woodcuts that were sold with (but not in) early modern pornographic texts, could be "enjoyed separately from the text on their own terms" (Toulalan 240). The Byron prints pointed to interesting associations between his poems and his life on which readers could speculate, but they did not depict that life. In Toulalan's phrase, they were mnemonic devices rather than illustrations. By contrast the earlier "elegant Copper-plate" engraving of Mary Robinson (*Rambler's* 187), accompanying *The Discovery: A New Comedy Enacted in Hyde Park* in the *Rambler's Magazine* of May 1783, works as both illustration and index. The sketch purports to reproduce, with much sexual punning, an incident in which Robinson slipped from her horse while riding in Hyde Park, temporarily exposing her "sark" (a transparent metonym for genitalia). In the print, her audience is composed of Banastre Tarleton, aiming a magnifying glass, another man who holds her horse's bridle, and two others who look on from nearby, one also focusing a glass (*Rambler's* 186–87). Whether the incident of *The Discovery* happened, the racy comments of the men mark the event

as a performance, "enacted" for a public whose observation registers as dialogue. Like the crowd outside Humphrey's shop, the men both look and talk, and the sketch ends with the same motto, "*honi soit qui mal y pense*," set off in italics at the bottom of the page. Unlike the crowd in Lane's engraving, however, these men are only looking at, and talking about, one thing. Their pornographic gazes focus narrowly on the woman's genitalia, exposed by the activity of her tumbling but static, the sign of her sexuality and their desire. Their conversation is circular, always returning to the object at which they stare. Constructed by their collective enjoyment, Robinson becomes a "posture girl"—the term for a prostitute who assumed poses designed to exhibit her genitalia to paying customers.[21] Her ability to arouse interest and incite conversation lies in stasis rather than dynamism: the discovery that arrests all motion.

In the collection of prints, what began as illustration morphs into both commemoration and index. Lane's original prints were dynamic and current in the way of all political satire, but it is a short step from currency to obsolescence. Once the Queen has died, it no longer matters with whom she danced, or ate, or slept. *The Attorney-General's Charges* avoids obsolescence by anthologizing the prints, converting them into a memorial of the events and of their representation. This is a different kind of retrospection from the combined nostalgia and satire of *The Royal Legend*. In that text, the recent past was both re-imagined as history and invoked as memory. Its retrospection is tied to genre—to the fantastic as an element of both the gothic and satire. Restructuring memory as a form of redemptive antiquarianism, the anonymous author projects a fantasized alternative future. He redirects the progress of royalty, mixing memory with desire and correcting, in his scholar-prince, the narcissism that, in Hazlitt's formulation, renders kings imbecilic madmen.[22] For Hazlitt, the degeneration of monarchs is "but natural" (339), by which he means constructed, but inevitably so. Kings are the product of a structure in which "every thing forces them to concentrate their attention upon themselves, and to consider their rank and privileges in connexion with their private advantage, rather than with public good" (339). In *The Royal Legend*, the antiquarian Prince cures himself of these natural defects of monarchy by identifying them elsewhere, in the blindness of the Cavalier and in the "distempered" imaginations of cloistered monks. He wills his dissociation from "instances of human depravity" first by allowing them to move him and then by refusing to believe in them, "for the honour of human nature" (193–94). Both texts use "nature" to mean what is corrigible or malleable: the

regal character is constructed; nature can be redeemed and made honorable; opinions can be adopted by an act of will. But *The Royal Legend*'s wishfulness, like Hazlitt's nationalism, is satire. Correction is only possible within a past so overdetermined by literary and historical markers that it too becomes fantastic. In the text's afterlife fantasy subsumes satire: *The Royal Legend* is today catalogued in the OCLC under "juvenile fiction" and listed with two subject headings: "Henry V, King of England, 1387–1422" and "Gothic revival."

The Royal Legend's linking of political satire with nostalgic fantasy recalls *Poetic Epistle*'s evocation of Bolingbroke's patriot king—a golden age of English royalty that is chimerical but longed for. In Humphrey's memorial of the Queen Caroline affair, memory is fixed, disconnected from desire. The pamphlet is more pageant (even if anti-pageant) than tale, an ironic counterpoint to the spectacular pageantry of the coronation. Valerie Cumming has pointed out that, for his coronation, "the most extravagant in English history" and the most expensive (43), George IV stressed a particular notion of the historical. The decorations in Westminster Abbey and Westminster Hall "inclined heavily to the Gothic" (43), and attendants wore period dress under their ceremonial robes (44). The "most dramatic" of the "feudal offerings and services" was "the appearance of the King's Champion on horseback," for which "a trained and docile beast used to crowds was hired from Astley's circus" (43). Ian Duncan has suggested that the repetition of this staged historicism in the King's visit to Scotland the following year was "no deluded abolition of modernity for a regression to misty origins" (4). The King's penchant for pseudo-historical spectacle, aided in Scotland by Walter Scott's careful stage management, signaled not the historical continuity of British monarchy but its a-historical romanticism as a public enactment of manifestly "inauthentic" (7) gothic and historical fiction. The Scottish visit was "a gaudily up-to-date national spectacle that relied on the availability of sovereignty—its mystic link with the past decisively broken—as a sign among other things that gathered its meaning in public circulation and consumption" (4). The King's theatrical and incoherent antiquarianism is a repetition of the same canny marketing that produced *The Royal Legend*'s anti-generic mixture of romance and irony, novel, legend, and political satire. Marketing himself as the sign of a monarchic past with which he has no actual political connection—and which only exists in the literary historical imagination of romantic writers—the King is pure performance, a "spectacle of legitimacy . . . as a neoabsolutist politics" (Duncan 5) in post-Napoleonic Europe.

That such gaudy extravagance would be linked both to oriental despotism and to lack of substance is inevitable, and the coronations of first William IV in 1831 and then Victoria in 1838 were notable for their comparative austerity and for their conscious modernity; neither ceremony included a Champion.[23] This is not to say that both succeeding monarchs' rejection of ceremony was not its own form of public performance.[24] John Plunkett points out that Victoria's femininity and perceived political innocence set her off from "the excesses of her aged Hanoverian uncles" (18) and gave to the first two decades of her reign "the tangible freshness of a revivified royalism, comparable in the magnitude of its sentiment to that aroused by Queen Caroline in 1820" (19). He suggests that Victoria and Albert's "civic publicness" (14), enhanced and disseminated by "a burgeoning print and visual culture" (13),[25] came to define constitutional monarchy in post-reform England. "Coinciding with the aftermath of the Reform Bill turmoil and the changing balance of power between the Crown, the Lords, and the Commons, royal civic activities were invested with the discourse of popular constitutionalism. They were integral to the coterminous creation of Victoria as both a popular and a constitutional monarch" (14–15). If William and Victoria found new ways of representing royalty in the reform and post-reform eras, and exploited new technologies in doing so, they were the inheritors of strategies that emerged in the later Georgian period. The public was primed for this new mode of civic performance under the Regency and the reign of George III—whether in "veneration" (Plunkett 22) or ridicule of the public privacy of monarchy.

Notes

Introduction: The Royal Character in the Public Imagination

1. I use the words "royal" and "monarch" (and their variants, "royalty," "monarchy," "monarchical," etc.) interchangeably. By the late eighteenth century both terms in common usage referred equally to kings and to those who ruled (queens, regents). "Royal" also referred, and still does, to near relatives of the monarch, as in "royal family," and I use it in this sense also.
2. Austen's conservatism is famously unstable. Feminist critics especially have suggested that a feminist subtext undercuts or at least tempers the conservative trajectories of her novels. In *Equivocal Beings*, Claudia Johnson provides a comprehensive discussion of the conservative reading of *Emma* as well as its implicit feminist critique (192–96).
3. Unlike *Pride and Prejudice*, in which she was revising an earlier draft, Austen wrote *Mansfield Park*, *Emma*, and *Persuasion* after 1810. She began writing *Mansfield Park* in February 1811, the same month in which the Regency began (Sturrock 30; see also Tomalin 223–24).
4. Clara Tuite suggests that *Mansfield Park* can be read as "a provincial deflection of the wider national issues of responsible hereditary government" (*Romantic Austen* 132).
5. The phrase "Queen Caroline affair" historically refers to the events of 1820 and 1821, when the uncrowned King attempted to divorce his wife by Act of Parliament. Although Caroline was technically Queen, supporters of the new King used a variety of means, some political, some rhetorical, to contest her legitimacy. Similarities as well as an evident continuity between this episode and the Prince's first attempt to obtain a divorce, some fifteen years earlier, have often led scholars to refer to their marital disputes before, during, and after the Regency as the Queen Caroline affair.
6. There was no expectation that the King should remain chaste outside marriage. The legitimacy of succession depended on only the Queen's chastity, a fact that was always an anxious subtext of discussions about dissolving the Prince's marriage. Nonetheless, the King's celebrated monogamy made him a prototype, especially in the nostalgic imagination of the Regency, for an ideal bourgeois husband and father.

7. Mole uses this term in *Byron's Romantic Celebrity* to describe the transaction whereby intimate contact with celebrated figures is both mass marketed and offered as "an escape from the standardised impersonality of commodity culture" (25). Turner suggests that, during the Restoration, the King's sexuality "made it difficult to separate him into 'two bodies', and mingled the public realm of political authority with the private emotions aroused by illicit sexuality: jealousy, excitement, furtive identification, and shame" (106). In this case, however, Charles II's absolutism meant that the spectacle of his profligacy cooperated with and augmented, rather than substituting for, his political power.

1 CHRONICLES OF FLORIZEL AND PERDITA

1. As the title suggests, Garrick's liberal adaptation focuses on the young lovers, omitting the first three acts, and minimizing the importance of Leontes and Hermione to the action.
2. The Prince's letters to Robinson have been destroyed, but he wrote the next day to his sisters' governess, Mary Hamilton, that he had seen, the night before, "the most beautiful Woman, that I ever beheld. . . . Her name is Robinson" (quoted in Byrne 100–01).
3. Robinson insisted that she was not selling the letters to the Prince but was simply returning them in exchange for the settlement she was entitled to. When the Prince's representative refused to authorize more than 5,000 pounds, however, she made a veiled blackmail threat to Malden, claiming that the Prince's " 'ungenerous and illiberal' treatment was justification for 'any step my necessities may urge me to take' " (quoted in Byrne 153). Malden passed this threat on to Colonel Hotham, who was acting for the Prince, but he held firm on the 5,000 pounds.
4. In legal terms, reversionary interest refers to the ownership rights of an individual to whom a property will revert after the expiration of an intervening interest such as a trust or a life- interest. Eighteenth-century political writers commonly used the phrase to refer to a Prince of Wales's alliance with the political opposition, and their expectation of patronage when he succeeded his father to the throne—their reversionary interest in a government that was temporarily in the hands of the other party. In the Introduction to his edition of George III's letters to Lord Bute, Sedgwick explains the metaphor, which may have originated with Robert Walpole: "with an heir-apparent in opposition and bidding against the King, the influence of the Crown was divided against itself, and equalled on balance only the difference between the actuarial value of the King's life-interest and the successor's reversion. This difference automatically diminished as the value of the life-interest fell with the increasing

age of the reigning monarch, while the political promissory notes and post-obits of the heir-apparent, issued at a discount, redeemable on accession, and taken up for capital appreciation, correspondingly improved" (xi–xii).

5. *Pamela*, Hunt points out, is "[a] novel of many hundreds of pages" that "could bring out a character over time and do so, moreover, from the perspective of inside the self" (45). Citing correspondence quoted in Richardson's biography, Hunt points to the heightened emotional identification readers reported upon reading the letters of Pamela and Clarissa, which registered in fits of sleeplessness and passionate bursts of crying (45–46).
6. The affair itself was farcical. The Duke sometimes arrived at assignations not only disguised but pretending to be deranged, so that he became known as "the Fool" (*Genuine Copies* 51). The testimony at the trial includes an account of the discovery of the couple, partly undressed, sitting on the edge of a bed in an inn where they had been secretly meeting. Lady Grosvenor tried to escape into the next room, but tripped and fell. When a servant went to her assistance, leaving the front door unguarded, the Duke, who had, until this point stood "very much confused" in the middle of the room without speaking, ran out the door. He then called observers to witness that he was not in the room, although at least one witness pointed out that he had just seen him inside (52, 57).
7. A fair example of the absence of spelling, syntax, and sense is this from Lady Grosvenor to Cumberland: "indeed my dear soul you are very prudent in intending to go a little in publick before I came to town, it wou'd really look much too particular just to come out then & might cause remarks which possibly might be conveyed to my Ld & every thing of that sort might rouze him & make him more and more observant to prevent our Meetings, and the best thing we can possibly do now is to make him beleive [sic] all is over between us, and we have really I beleive blinded him for some time at least he has no proof about us, & I hope to God that by degrees his suspicions will be lull'd & then we may form some plans for our meeting happily we must not dispair but look forwards that is the only way to support ourselves under our present unhappy situation & there is probability of many things happening to mend the present, so we think like philosophers & believe every thing is for the best & hope we may enjoy better days soon, & indeed I think it very probable my dearest & dear Soul with this idea be happy . . . ." (34–35).
8. In contrast, *The Budget of Love* contains the following, doubly ironic, plea from Florizel: "Pray, my dearest PERDITA! keep a lock upon my letters, lest the world should get hold of them; and then they may transform them, as they did my Uncle's and Lady G – –'s, into nonsense, to render them ridiculous, and to make us the laughing-stock of fools" (53). The fact that we read this demonstrates Perdita's

inability to keep a lock upon his letters, but it is left to us to decide whether the world has transformed them or whether they were always nonsense and their writers laughing-stocks—or, indeed, whether what we are reading *is* nonsense or is coherent and eloquent, whether the novel's primary mode is satire or sentiment.

9. His language echoes the King's own attempts to rein in his wayward son at around this time. In August of 1780 the King had written, "you must acknowledge the truth of the position that every one in this world has his peculiar duties to perform, and that the good or bad example set by those in the higher stations must have some effect on the general conduct of those in inferior ones" (Aspinall, *Correspondence* 34). In December he elaborated on this point: "My inclination is to grant you all the rational amusement I can, and keep you out of what is improper, and so to steer you, that when arrived at the full stage of manhood, you may thank me for having made you escape evils that ill become a young man of rank, but in your exalted situation are criminal: for Princes must serve as examples to others, and though not perhaps always so much copied in their virtues as might be wished, yet if they deserve praise it will in some degree check the improper career of others" (37). The counsel for Lord Grosvenor made this same argument against the Duke of Cumberland ten years earlier, arguing in his opening statement that "no given sum could be punishment sufficient" for the Duke, "as the elevated rank and situation of life he sustained, should the more deter him from setting a bad example to the subordinate classes of society" (53).
10. Mellor gives as an example the 1784 engraving, *The Adventure of Prince Pretty-Man*, in which the Prince, awkwardly straddling a Falstaffian Fox, steals the Great Seal, while Robinson and Elizabeth Armistead look on (242–43).
11. Russett observes that, "by limning the generic rules of authorial paratexts and by exaggerating the fantasy investments of literary-historical narrative, forgery points toward the romantic understanding of literature as the continuous rediscovery of its own origins" (19). Stories about (re)discovering "lost" manuscripts, of which, she points out, there were many versions throughout the Romantic period, "can be seen as a transitional point on the way toward the Shelleyan account of creativity as the recovery of a buried inspiration" (29).
12. In the line of descent, all the principals in the story are ultimately this man's dupes. Florizel is foolish enough to write the letters in the first place; Perdita unaccountably keeps copies of both his letters and her answers, reads them to her maid and entrusts her with the originals, who, in turn, copies them and then gives them over to her lover. The "instrumental caution" of the story ought to be as much "never trust a lover" as "never trust a 'favourite servant.'" That the editor represents the broken bond as being between mistress and servant signals the potential for radicalism behind satires of the royal

family. His recovery of the story as a cautionary tale for his readers establishes a literate, middle-class community, from which the naive literacy of the maid and the unscrupulous literacy of her lover are equally excluded.

13. Pierce Egan rejuvenated the letters as found documents when he reprinted the *Effusions* letters in 1814 as *The Mistress of Royalty; Or, the Loves of Florizel and Perdita: Portrayed in the Amatory Epistles.* Egan concludes with an account of Robinson's life after the affair with the Prince and until her death, most of which has been lifted from her *Memoirs.* Like the editor of *Effusions*, he simultaneously evokes and obscures the process of recovery, this time through use of the passive voice: "That no *vacuum* may remain in the 'LOVER'S CABINET', the AMATORY EPISTLES of FLORIZEL and PERDITA have, for the information of the curious, been rescued from oblivion" (7).
14. Anne Mellor calls this the 'starcrossed' lovers account, in which "both Perdita and Florizel are deeply in love" and are driven apart by the machinations of family members opposed to the inequality of their union (244). Byrne discusses the Robinson/Northington connection in her biography of Robinson (15). Adriana Craciun calls the "precariousness" of Robinson's class position—somewhere between the bourgeois and the aristocratic and never quite either—a kind of "family romance." She suggests that this precariousness allowed Robinson a feminist perspective unique to her time, "from which she could find value in aristocratic femininity and all it represented" (83).
15. As Mellor points out, both lovers in this account are novices—he by virtue of age, she as the result of an unhappy marriage: "For Florizel, it is his first and most passionate love; for Perdita, it is her first true love (since she claimed never to have loved her husband)" (244). Robinson promoted this account in her *Memoirs*, partly through emphasizing her extreme youth when she married Robinson, "only three months" after she had stopped playing with dolls. "My heart, even when I knelt at the altar, was as free from any tender impression as it had been at the moment of my birth. I knew not the sensation of any sentiment beyond that of esteem; love was still a stranger to my bosom. I had never, then, seen the being who was destined to inspire a thought which might influence my fancy, or excite an interest in my mind" (I. 69). The qualification "then" is meant to suggest that she did later meet this "being"—not her husband (although whether he is the Prince or her longtime partner Banastre Tarleton she does not make clear). Alix Nathan points out that Robinson altered her birth date in her *Memoirs*, claiming to have been born in 1758 (the year of her baptism) rather than 1756, the actual year of her birth, to foster this image of the "innocent child-bride persuaded into marriage" (Nathan 141). She was sixteen and a half when she married Robinson, not between fourteen and fifteen, as she claimed.

16. In her *Memoirs* Robinson lists this gift from the Prince as the only one she did not return, "This picture is now in my possession. Within the case was a small heart cut in paper, which I also have; on one side was written, '*Je ne change qu'en mourant'*. On the other, '*Unalterable to my Perdita through life*' " (II. 47).
17. In his essay on Robinson in *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture, 1750–1850*, Mole points out that, as a writer (he reminds us that her stage career was "only an interlude in her twenty-five-year publishing career"), Robinson "inhabited a burgeoning print culture, in which advances in printing technology, increased literacy, improved distribution infrastructure and rapid urbanisation contributed to a sharp increase in the total amount of printed matter in circulation" (188–89). He quotes Robinson's 1800 declaration that "[t]here never were so many monthly and diurnal publications as at the present period; and to the perpetual novelty which issues from the press may in a great measure, be attributed the expansion of mind, which daily evinces itself among all classes of the people" ("Present State of the Manners, Society, Etc. Etc. Etc. of the Metropolis of England," *PMLA* 119.1 [2004] 118: quoted in Mole 189).
18. Beginning in 1762, Garrick introduced a number of innovations, most of which had either the intention or the effect of moving the watchers further away from the players. He shifted the audience off the stage to make more room for the newer style perspective scenery, and he replaced the traditional chandeliers with oil lamps, whose intensity could be increased by the use of reflectors, making the stage and actors more visible from farther away.
19. Both Chris Cullens and Craciun write about the rising discourse of sexual dimorphism in the later eighteenth century and its impact on representations of female celebrity and professionalism. Increasingly throughout the century, anxieties about the delicate balance between public and private were "grounded in women's bodies" (Craciun 55; see also Cullens 268). For Craciun the dialectic between bourgeois domesticity and sexualized public display in women crystallizes for Robinson in the figure of Marie Antoinette, whom Robinson met in 1782 and about whom she wrote in her *Monody to the Memory of the Late Queen of France* (1793) and in her *Memoirs.* In both texts, she suggests, Robinson celebrates equally the Queen's public sexuality and her (ostensibly) private bourgeois domesticity. "Robinson . . . identified with the Queen's position as a public female figure in an era when this position was sexually suspect, and increasingly defined as dangerous and unnatural" (83).
20. The full title of this article is "HISTORIES of the Tete-a-Tete annexed: or, Memoirs of the DOATING LOVER and the DRAMATIC ENCHANTRESS." The likeliest candidate for the doting lover, in May 1780, is Lord Malden, although the timing of the tête-à-têtes was sometimes off (the January 1781 tête-à-tête ends

with the assurance that the Prince and Robinson "continue to reciprocate the finest feelings of which human beings are susceptible" [11], several months after their relationship had ended). Claire Brock identifies the hero of the article as the Prince's friend Sir John Lade (84), who is mentioned anecdotally in the article, but references to "his lordship" would rule out a baronet. It's also possible that the "doating lover" is a fabrication. McCreery points out that the tête-à-têtes had a reputation for being inventions, and suggests that the editors may have occasionally "permitted wholly fictional *tête-à-têtes* to be inserted to maintain reader interest" ("Keeping Up with the *Bon Ton*" 211).

21. The choice of Ophelia reflects the tête-à-têtes' emphasis on sexuality. Ophelia is a much more sexualized Shakespearean heroine than Perdita, whose name in the play is ironic.
22. McCreery observes that most women appeared in tête-à-têtes as "a pretext to a discussion" of their "aristocratic lover's personal history" and were often "dismissed in the articles . . . without censure of their behaviour, but likewise without interest in their individual personality" (217). An exception to this rule was the case of "[m]ore famous, established women," whose "individual accomplishments" occasionally "overcame the handicap of their sex." Women like Catharine Macaulay "were treated as the primary characters in the histories" (220).
23. McCreery suggests that the phrase "tête-à-tête" was chosen as the title for the series because it both conveyed and replicated intimacy: "The series embodied both the literal and figurative definitions of the term '*tête-à-tête*'. The illustrations showed the man and woman literally 'head to head', and the articles described their intimate 'tête-à-tête' meetings" (208). Like the phrase "vis-à-vis," which both described a style of carriage in which passengers were "face-to-face" and conveyed the potential for sexual intimacy that such carriage rides implied, "tête-à-tête's" mirror construction literalizes the intimacy it conveys.
24. The letters in the novels are always mediated to the extent that we accept that they have been edited. The editor of *Effusions of Love* footnotes his letters and provides translations where he thinks his readers will need them. He also numbers them, and both editors order their letters and alternate between writer and recipient so that we can trace and understand their narrative. Accepting that the letters have been edited, however, means embracing the fiction of their authenticity. It means agreeing to believe that we are reading the actual words of the writers, and not reportage as in the tête-à-têtes.
25. Likewise, in *The Budget of Love*'s narrative of discovery, Perdita keeps copies of her own letters to Florizel and reads them to her maid, who then copies them yet again before reading them to her lover, who

persuades her to give them over to an editor to be typeset, bound, and published.

26. Happily, his error in defrauding an innocent man of his conjugal rights was of short duration: ten days from start to finish.
27. Florizel also writes letter 44 in French, and the editor translates this one also. The translations are provided for the reader (Perdita does not seem to have needed any help) and stress the cosmopolitan and continental éclat of the main characters.
28. Robinson held on to the bond after relinquishing the letters, and in 1783 Fox used it to negotiate an annuity of 500 pounds, half of which would continue to be paid to her daughter after her death. As with the letters, however, the bond's value was more likely in what it revealed about the Prince (in this instance, bad faith) than in its enforceability as a legal document.
29. Walpole knew other details of the Prince's life as well. He reported an escapade at the home of Lord Chesterfield that certainly happened (Walpole II. 361). The King makes this episode a subject of remonstrance in a letter to his son dated May 6, 1781, and it appears again in the 1784 *Memoirs of Perdita*.
30. The prince's equerry, Lieutenant-Colonel Gerard Lake, wrote to him in January of 1781, warning him against "becoming the dupe of those who have no other design than to make use of you for their own advantage." This is before Robinson had made her blackmail threat but during the time when Malden and Hotham were negotiating for the letters. Lake does not mention Robinson by name, but it is clear that he is thinking of potential damage to the royal family from the letters: "Recollect what a large family yours is and you will see how necessary it is for you *all* to live well together, & I am thoroughly convinc'd that it is for your own interest so to do, & that you will by that means not only enjoy more real comfort but that you will be more at your ease in every particular. I make no doubt of a most excellent & sensible speech of the Duke of Cumberland's having struck you as forcibly as it did me; it was, let our family stick by each other, we need not fear the world." The Duke had recently, and briefly, reconciled with his brother the King. The paragraph immediately following this begins with "one wish more, which is to beg that you will not write any more letters to a certain sort of ladies, & I should hope that what you have already suffer'd will be a sufficient warning. . . ." (Aspinall 45).
31. This is the episode Walpole describes in his journals. It shows up again in *Memoirs of Perdita*, as "a kind of princely frolic, when in his cups" that the editors "cannot forbear relating" (107). The author of *Effusions* uses this story to stand for two separate adventures. In the second iteration the Prince includes. "T—n" (probably Robinson's longtime lover, Banastre Tarleton, a friend of the Prince of Wales)

and Anthony St. Leger, whom Walpole identifies as having been at Lord Chesterfield's.

32. Siddons returned to Drury Lane in 1782 after touring in the provinces for several years. The reference to her as a phoenix rising from the ashes of her earlier efforts (she had been hired first in 1775 but fired because of poor reviews) may suggest a later dating for the novel. Michael Gamer and Terry F. Robinson point out that the debate over whether Siddons' "brilliance would prove lasting or ephemeral" (219) dominated the London newspapers during the 1782–83 season. The other possibility is that Florizel and Perdita are referring to her growing reputation in the provinces. Perdita's comparison of her with Mrs. Yates ("she wants the fine pathos of Mrs. Yates"), whom Siddons identified as a rival during her first stint at Drury Lane, suggests that this is not yet the Siddons who took the theatrical world by storm in the 1780s. Stone and Kahrl discuss Siddons' early years at Drury Lane in *David Garrick: A Critical Biography* (352).
33. Stanley Ayling starkly outlines the disastrous effects of the Marriage Act in his biography of George III: "Thus a law had been enacted whose paternalistic severity, coupled with the interpretation, long to be preserved, that Protestant royalty must wed none but Protestant royalty, was to make it impossible for George III's sons to marry the women of their choice (in effect to limit it to German princesses); to bastardise the children of Augustus, Duke of Sussex; to persuade the Prince of Wales into the most disastrous of marriages; intolerably to limit the marital field for the King's daughters, so that they were forced either into prolonged spinsterhood or into subterranean liaisons; and in general to exacerbate the quarrels and resentments that were in any case to be expected in so large and vulnerable a family" (214).
34. The editor upends the "lost manuscript" claims that introduce the earlier novels, by providing no explanation for how the letters came into his possession and by undercutting his own authority as editor. The volume opens with the following circular dedication: "To Himself. Being as good a judge of the subject, as any other man in the kingdom, this publication is dedicated, with the greatest respect and regard, by the Editor." Given the reference to the Duke of Cumberland's efforts to recover the letters, *Poetic Epistle* was probably written after the relationship had ended and Robinson and the Prince were negotiating for the letters. Cumberland did intercede on his nephew's behalf, as the Prince reports in a letter to his brother in April of 1781. The editor references these negotiations: "Hitherto all to no purpose; for Perdita knows, while she has these letters, she is sure of her Florizel, or is sure to be able to expose him if he chuses to desert her. She therefore carefully hoards them up, and while she does so the royal uncle . . . still wants that hold upon his nephew which otherwise would be complete, for probably the threat of publication

would then be repeated from another quarter. At present the greatest chance of the world arriving at any acquaintance with those valuable and numerous epistles is the possibility of a total break between the two lovers, which (let what will be said and whatever may have been either provocation or appearance) has not yet happened" (18).

35. The first poem in Dryden's volume is Sir Carr Scrope's translation of "Sapho to Phaon," while the 1712 edition and subsequent editions include a retranslation by Pope. Robinson's 1796 sonnet cycle *Sappho and Phaon* is not an imitation of these epistles, although Robinson contextualizes her poems in both the poetic epistle and sonnet cycle traditions by referencing the "many distinguished authors" who have become "panegyrists" for "[t]he unfortunate lovers, Heloise and Abeilard; and, the supposed platonic, Petrarch and Laura." Pope's poetic epistle *Eloisa to Abelard* was published in 1717. Tom Mole suggests that Robinson's interest in Sappho was in part an interest in a female poet who, unlike Robinson, was known only for her poetry and not as a celebrity ("Conflicted Celebrity" 196).
36. The "last peace" probably refers to the 1763 Treaty of Paris, which ended the Seven Years War. The "present war" is the American war for independence.
37. Bolingbroke was "generally seen," as Nicholas Phillipson observes, "as a Tory who appropriated an opposition Whig theory of the constitution" (232). Pocock points out that Bolingbroke's later writings, such as *The Idea of a Patriot King*, "are mere exhortations to the leaders of society, and finally to the Patriot King, to display heroic virtue and redeem a corrupt world" (*Machiavellian Moment* 484), although his use of the term "had to contend with a perception, as old as the Civil Wars, of the 'patriot' as one who loved his country more than he loved its government, or even its king" (575). He wrote *The Idea of a Patriot King* for Frederick, Prince of Wales in 1738 but did not publish it until 1749 after learning that Pope had printed and distributed copies without his permission.
38. Pocock points out that Bolingbroke argued for an independence among branches of government that comes close to the separation of powers. Although he claimed only to advocate against any one branch having undue influence over another, he "at times used terminology which seemed to suggest that king, lords, and commons performed separate political functions which could be distinguished as executive, judicial, and legislative, that the balance of the constitution consisted in the ability of any two of these to check the third, and that since it was vital to prevent any of them from establishing a permanent ascendancy over any other, the 'independence' of each of the three must at all costs be preserved" (480).
39. Often referred to as "Jew King," John King, originally Jacob Rey, was the father of the novelist Charlotte Dacre. He financed Jacobin and radical Whig publications and enterprises such as the print

campaign against the Duke of York in 1809, and he may also have "had a hand in fostering" the career of the radical MP, Sir Frances Burdett (McCalman 39). In 1773 he would have been about twenty and just at the beginning of his career. Assuming a birth date of 1756, Robinson would have been seventeen.

40. "With Mrs. Robinson, the poetess, so notorious a few years after under the name of Perdita, he was, if report says true, the first instrument of conjugal infidelity: and her pretended correspondence, which King vainly endeavoured to employ for the purposes of extortion from her then protector, Lord M. was afterwards published. As we believe that the letters are principally forgeries, we do not think it necessary to copy them" ("John King" 13).
41. King's denomination as "His Predatory Majesty, the King of the Swindlers," echoes the historically anti-Semitic title "King of the Jews" and forces an association of Jewishness with predation and swindling.
42. The youth of the central characters in these stories—only King and the later Robinson were even out of their teens—marks them as episodes in longer careers. This hindsight operates in *Authentic Memoirs* and in the *Scourge* article, which were written at the end of or after Robinson's career (the *Scourge* article was written in 1811, after the Prince had been married twice and was shortly to move from Prince of Wales to Prince Regent). King is clearly using the ten-year interval between his association with Robinson and hers with the Prince to stress the history of swindling he outlines in his preface and introduction. In the introduction to her Broadview edition of Robinson's poems, Judith Pascoe points to the singular failure of the picaresque in narratives of Robinson's life. Unlike the men she was involved with, Robinson was never able to dissociate herself from the notoriety of her early affair, which became the focalizing event of her life. Throughout her later life she attempted unsuccessfully to resist her "status as the poster girl for unfettered female passion" (42). Her *Memoirs* in particular are constrained to counter her courtesan image by insisting equally on her respectability and her artistry (48).
43. Pointing to the *Preliminary Discourse*, King argues that in it Robinson "arrogates too a Skill in Politicks, and declares that the P—is entirely guided by the Sentiments he has imbibed from her." "She announces to the World the Blessings we may expect from the Reign of a P—, tutored by such a Mistress, who, while she imparts Pleasure, gives Instruction" (15). I have trouble understanding how King could make this conclusion about a text that, title notwithstanding, is largely not about Robinson, and in which she occupies a political position the reverse of what was already known about her. He seems to see only the tête-à-tête-style courtesan biography and be led by this to misread the politics of the pamphlet.

44. King stresses the artificiality of Robinson's literary ambitions by mentioning them in the context of her theatrical career, where she "displayed some little Abilities" and "in this Situation . . . amused herself with composing" (13). The suggestion is that she dabbles in both professions, but that her association with play-acting marks her composition as nothing more than "humble Imitation" (14).
45. King claims that the Robinsons, together with their "dreadful Set of Colleagues," were "the chief Inventors of the Art of Swindling, which then was but in its Infancy" (9). In *Crime, Gender and Consumer Culture in Nineteenth-Century England*, Tammy Whitlock discusses the history of trade protection societies, which flourished in the end of the eighteenth and throughout the nineteenth century. The bulk of these organizations were centered in London and focused on "urban crimes like fraud, shoplifting, and especially credit fraud" (157).
46. In the narrative organizing of these letters, King points out that Robinson asks for a loan that will cover only half of what she has spent. Her implied desperation, coupled with his patronizing reprimand, emphasizes his superior age and gender: "You little Prodigal, you have spent 200L in Six Weeks; I will not answer your Drafts." Like a father or a husband, he has the purse strings and teases as he withholds.
47. *Memoirs of Perdita* was published in London by G. Lister, the publisher of *Effusions of Love* and *The Rambler's Magazine*. The author of *Memoirs* lists *Effusions* as the true source of the Florizel and Perdita letters and credits Lister with "many curious publications of the amorous class" (124). "Curious," as Toulalan points out, is code for sexually exciting (*Imagining Sex* 166).
48. The episode with the letter signed in blood and the Chesterfield debauch are reproduced almost verbatim (95–96; 107–10).
49. Robinson also campaigned for Tarleton in his first (unsuccessful) bid for a seat in Parliament in 1784.
50. "The erotic nature . . . of these texts is . . . lost in the rush to 'legitimize' them by ascribing a serious other purpose to them (religious or political criticism). But we should not forget that sex has been chosen as the text's content, so they serve not only as satire but also as pornography in the way they incite the reader to imagine the body, and sexual acts and to think about sex" (38).
51. In his introduction, the editor distinguishes his production from the other versions of Robinson's life, which have only been given "by piece-meal, and in detached morsels; while the following history may with propriety be said to be dictated *by herself*" (iii–iv). He follows this qualified claim with an explanation that both iterates and satirizes the standard authenticity claims of pseudo-memoirs: "Not that the Editor insinuates any *particular* intimacy with the lady: he only seriously assures the reader, that the circumstances of her life

were communicated by *one* who has for several years been her confidant, and to whose pen she has been indebted for much news-paper panegyric. After this assertion, the public must place what degree of credit they please in the authenticity of these memoirs" (iv). This editor's authority is not compromised by a sexual relationship with Robinson (although his disavowal is a bit weak). He cannot say the same, however, for her "confidant," who either wrote them himself or at her dictation. In other words, Robinson's twin predilections for sex and money produced this document. It is for the reader to decide whether this fact compromises or testifies to its authenticity.

52. By the time of the best known of the pornographic satires, both Robinson's initial "sale" of the Prince's letters for 500 pounds and Fox's later negotiations for her annuity were public knowledge.
53. *The Rambler's Magazine* for 1783 contains almost as many satirical discussions of the Fox-North coalition as salacious descriptions of famous courtesans like Robinson (see for examples *The Rambler's Magazine* I [1783]: April 152–53; May 198; August 305).
54. Peep shows—boxes fitted with one or more lenses through which viewers could see a variety of scenes printed on cards—flourished throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth. Eighteenth-century peep shows were manipulated by an itinerant "peep show man," who changed the cards, keeping up a running recitation or patter. Many offered views of exotic places or historical events, but some peep shows were erotic or even pornographic: depicting racier scenes from classical mythology or throwing the literary justification out and simply depicting images of bodies in sexually suggestive postures. Amy Ogata discusses the history of peep shows in "Viewing Souvenirs" (70). For a discussion of peep shows' erotic content and role in the privatization of sexual pleasure, see Toulalan 165.
55. Perdita's capacity for sexually intimidating her partner, which appears only in this episode, suggests a likeness between *Memoirs of Perdita* and popular whore biographies of the eighteenth century. Julie Peakman points out that by mid-century "whore biographies had been honed into pornographic novels," like Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* (1748–49). They tended to portray protagonists "in a positive, sympathetic light . . . not only depicted as radiantly beautiful or saucily attractive but as possessing forceful personalities, their suitors frequently finding them too willful to control" (x).
56. Scrofula, or tuberculosis of the lymph nodes, was commonly referred to as the "King's Evil" and was thought to be cured by the monarch's touch.
57. Macalpine and Hunter describe skin eruptions in James I and his descendents, including George IV (208).
58. When Prince George's daughter, Princess Charlotte, died giving birth to a stillborn son in late 1817, Edward, Duke of Kent, the King's

fourth son and next in line for the throne after the Regent, hastily married Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. Their daughter, Alexandrina Victoria, was born on May 24, 1819.

2 Wandering Royals

1. Critics often see the *Memoirs* as a deliberate act of recovery, Robinson's effort to reclaim her reputation from famous courtesan to beleaguered—but essentially virtuous—woman, intellectual, and artist. Laura Runge makes this point in "Mary Robinson's *Memoirs*," cited in the previous chapter (563–64). Anne Mellor suggests that the *Memoirs* oscillate between the "star-crossed lover" and the 'unprotected' and abused wife" (231) versions of her affair with the Prince. She points to the radical potential in this second version, which implicitly denounces "a monarchy or *ancien regime* that has abused its constitutionally limited powers" (244). Similarly, Runge observes that the memoir "repeatedly demonstrates the failure of gallant codes of behavior. They fail to protect women from unbridled male sexuality, and they fail as a behavioral substitute for male violence" (576). Elizabeth Fay notes the implicit feminism in Robinson's sentimental rendering of herself in the *Memoirs* as one whose romance was "deliberately unraveled . . . by the animosity that inhabits the corridors of sentimental realist fiction, thus exposing the female personage as a vulnerable body" ("Framing Romantic Dress: Mary Robinson, Princess Caroline and the Sex/Text"). Recently, Tom Mole, Michael Gamer, and Terry F. Robinson have suggested that Robinson's *Memoirs* are one part of an ongoing process of calculated self-marketing that incorporated her identities as actress, courtesan, and woman of letters (Mole, "Mary Robinson's Conflicted Celebrity"; Gamer and Robinson 220).
2. Paula Byrne points out that Robinson left the theater much later than she needed to, given that she was not performing in the afterpiece. She may have timed her walk across the stage to coincide with the Prince's exit (99). The Prince too seems to have known what he was doing more than it appears in this version. Particularly, he seems to have known Robinson. In a letter written the next morning to Mary Hamilton, whom he was throwing over for Robinson, he mentions that he had seen her "on or off the stage" and that his "passion" for her had "laid dormant . . . for some time" (quoted in Byrne 101).
3. Why Palemon and not Ferdinand, or, for that matter, why Miranda and not Emily? Apparently he liked to mix and match his heroes and heroines, or perhaps he just preferred the sounds of the names.
4. These lines appear both in the original and in Garrick's adaptation. In *The Winter's Tale*, she speaks them in 4. 4. 9–10. In *Florizel and Perdita* they appear in 2. 1. 9–10.
5. *The Winter's Tale* 4. 4. 373–74; *Florizel and Perdita* 2. 1. 398–99.

6. The motto on the title page of *The Budget of Love* stresses the theme of royalty in disguise, with a possible reference to the threat to succession that would become a theme of later satires: " 'Should I now see my Father,/He would not call me Son.' " The attribution reads, "WINTER'S TALE, A. iv. S. 2. Flo." Because these lines do not appear in *Florizel and Perdita*, the quote is most likely from one of the many collected editions printed throughout the century. The editors seem to have expected readers to call up both the pastoral romance and its longer, tragicomic context.
7. Newcomb notes that "Perdita's discussion of cross-breeding, Nature, and Art with Polixines, which might seem an ideal pastoral set-piece, is notably absent from both Morgan and Garrick" (184). The adaptations obscure the implicit criticism of Perdita's family romance in her refusal to allow that "a bark of a baser kind" might be conceived "By bud of nobler race" (4. 4. 94–95), opting instead for a "Perdita devoid of economic sense or class complaint" (Newcomb 186).
8. Leontes declares the infant, as yet unnamed, Perdita's illegitimacy ten times in Acts 2 and 3; he uses the word "bastard" in eight of those speeches (*The Winter's Tale* 2. 3. 74, 76, 140, 155, 161, 175; 3. 2. 81).
9. As Newcomb points out, even in the remaining acts, both Morgan and Garrick "sanitize" the rustics' dialogue and "invent cheerful new ballads for Autolycus, replacing his more salacious songs" (187).
10. "Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore./Be sure of it. Give me the ocular proof" (*Othello* 3. 3. 365–66).
11. Newcomb calls this scene "a double scene of consumption that stages both the buying of popular print commodities by a newly literate 'clown' and their eager consumption by an audience of female servants in husbandry" (117–18). Ballads, as a form of popular "mimetic narrative," are presented "as feeding fantastic desires and threatening social hierarchies" (118).
12. Natascha Wurzbach discusses *The Winter's Tale*'s participation in what she calls the "literary-sociological" (249) critique of street ballads. The ballad-seller scene "portrays the reaction of a ballad audience from the lowest social class who know and appreciate the entertainment value of this kind of literature: (apparent) factuality and news value, sensational excitement and merriment are expected" (*The Rise of the English Street Ballad* 247).
13. In Garrick's text, the line reads, "I love a ballad in print,/Or a life; for then we are sure they are true" (2. 1. 277–78). All editions following Pope's use this.
14. In the end, Röhl, Warren, and Hunt exclude only one of the King's offspring, his seventh son Adolphus. And even here they point out that "the medical information available to us on him is so thin that the absence of evidence should not be equated with absence of the illness" (103).

15. In the 1920s, Sir Archibald Garrod first identified a series of inherited metabolic defects that could cause damage to the nervous system. Of these, "the porphyrias"—so named because an overproduction of porphyrin can cause the urine to take on a dark red or purple color—are particularly rare but can be inherited by up to fifty percent of the offspring of an affected patient (Macalpine and Hunter 173). Röhl, Warren, and Hunt provide a more comprehensive history of porphyrin studies, from the mid-nineteenth through the late twentieth century (248–50).
16. Röhl, Warren, and Hunt have suggested that George IV, who suffered most of his life from bouts of ill health that closely resembled his father's, might also have experienced periods of derangement. They point to one particular attack in 1811, coincidentally during the second regency crisis, when observers worried briefly that both the King and his successor might be going mad (71).
17. The King had to endure what Stanley Ayling calls "the whole debilitating hit-or-miss routine of current medical practice" (330). He was bled and blistered, given emetics and purgatives, and put on restrictive diets, most of which treatments, Macalpine and Hunter point out, would have exacerbated his symptoms and possibly retarded recovery (174). His one recognized "mad-doctor," Francis Willis, used even harsher methods to treat the King's mind diseased, confining him in a straitjacket or bolting him into a specially made chair whenever he became delusional or recalcitrant (Ayling 339–40, 342). Of this "system of government of the King by intimidation, coercion and restraint," Macalpine and Hunter claim that, "[n]o account of the illness from this point on can disregard the King's treatment, and to what extent the turbulence he displayed was provoked by the repressive and punitive methods by which he was ruled" (54).
18. The first bulletin, issued on November 18, read, "His Majesty had a good night, but as yet is not perfectly free from fever" (quoted in Macalpine and Hunter 39).
19. "The term 'fever'... before the clinical thermometer came into general use in the nineteenth century, implied no more than malaise and a rapid pulse which, it is known today, occurs also in the absence of fever and in porphyria is indeed a leading symptom in attacks" (Macalpine and Hunter 199).
20. The doctors quarreled regularly about the wording of the bulletins, each wanting to frame them according to his prognosis. Moreover, the Queen, who suspected the doctors of reporting directly to the Prince of Wales, demanded to be shown drafts. On one occasion, she insisted that the phrase "much disturbed" be replaced with "less calm" (quoted in Macalpine and Hunter 68; see also *History and Proceedings of the Lords and Commons* 198–99).
21. Fox's biographer argues that his actions during the regency crisis were motivated, from first to last, by a conviction that the King would never recover (Mitchell 80).

22. David Craig points out that criticism of the Prince's profligacy reflects a belief that he was behaving more like an aristocrat than a future monarch and consequently that "the monarchy was part of the wider problems of aristocratic vice and 'old corruption'" ("The Crowned Republic?" 180).
23. Fox was Chancellor of the Exchequer in August of 1783 when George came of age. He successfully negotiated an annuity for the Prince of 50,000 pounds, plus revenues, half of which was earmarked to pay off his debts (Hibbert, *George IV* 32). The Prince soon outspent this allotment on lavish renovations to Carlton House and on the maintenance of Mrs. Fitzherbert.
24. Michael Gamer and Terry F. Robinson cite dialogue that accompanied an engraving in the inaugural issue of *The Rambler's* magazine, among three famous courtesans, "Perdita" Robinson, "Dally the Tall" (Grace Dalrymple Elliott), and "the Bird of Paradise" (Mrs. Gertrude Mahon). By January of 1783, Robinson and Elliott had been—and were no longer—mistresses of the Prince. A third royal ex-mistress, Mrs. Elizabeth Armistead ("the Armistead") appeared frequently in *The Rambler's* ("Mary Robinson" 223–25).
25. Mitchell points out that George had promised him, days before the wedding, that he had nothing to worry about. Consequently, "[e]ncouraged by the Prince, he had assured the House of Commons that truth was falsehood. Relations between the two men were never wholly repaired" (90).
26. Rolle proposed an amendment to the Regency Bill that would disqualify not only a regent who "shall at any time marry a Papist" but also one who "shall at any time be proved to be married, in fact or in law to a Papist" (*History and Proceedings* 384).
27. The Prince takes her right hand in his left, a possible reminder that he is marrying a commoner. Princess Caroline's biographer, Flora Fraser, quotes a 1798 letter from Princess Mary to her brother, by this time married to and already estranged from his cousin of Brunswick, in which she refers to Mrs. Fitzherbert as " 'your amiable left hand (as you call her).' In a morganatic, or unequal, marriage, in German—but not in English—law, where a person of exalted rank married a social inferior, the bridegroom gave the bride his left hand. Since his marriage to Princess Caroline, the Prince had apparently come to think of his marriage to Mrs. Fitzherbert as 'in this morganatic style'" (Fraser 118). In his pamphlet on the secret marriage, *A Letter to a Friend, on the Reported Marriage of his Royal Highness the Prince of Wales*, Horne Tooke makes much of "[t]his degrading notion" that a marriage between a royal and a commoner is improper and calls it "a ridiculous phantom imported into this land only with the House of Hanover" (10). Rolle cites Hooke's pamphlet as evidence that the marriage took place during debates in the House (*History and Proceedings* 296).

28. Lord Grenville wrote in a letter to his brother that "[a]n explanatory question was put to him which it took him about an hour and a half to settle; whether, as far as experiences enabled him to judge, he thought it more probable that the King would or would not recover" (*Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets of George the Third* II. 31). In the printed transcript, this is the second question asked, and Warren's answer is careful but relatively concise and not discouraging. If it took him ninety minutes to frame it, or to reach his conclusion, readers would never know it: "The Hopes of His Majesty's Recovery must depend on the Probability of Cure; and that can only be judged of by what has happened to others in similar Cases; and, as the Majority of others have recovered, there is a Probability that His Majesty may recover likewise" (*Report from the Committee Appointed to Examine the Physicians Who Have Attended His Majesty during his Illness* 3). When asked, "Has the greater Number of Persons recovered, whose Disorder has lasted, without Signs of Convalescence, as long as that of His Majesty has already done?" He answers, "Yes" (*Report* 6).
29. Hanger was often depicted holding a cudgel. In *The April Fool, or, the Follies of a Night* he uses it as an impromptu musical instrument in an imagined charivari for the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert.
30. John Boyne's 1784 *The Adventure of Prince Pretty Man* (BM Satires 6468), mentioned in the previous chapter, is an example, as is his 1783 *Falstaff and his Prince* (BM Satires 6231).
31. In the eight-volume collection of Shakespeare's plays published in 1757, this scene takes place toward the end of act 4 and corresponds to scene 2 of the folio version (*The Second Part of King Henry IV* 4, 252–62). In Gravelot's accompanying illustration, the dying King, still crowned, sits up in bed, discoursing to his son, who kneels beside him, hands outstretched toward a second crown that lies on the bed (180).
32. The stability of the King's mental state is reinforced by the orderliness of the bedclothes. In contemporary reports of the King's illness, bed is often the site of both violent disorder and violent management. The King jumps up and down in bed; he removes bedclothes and hides them, replaces his nightcap with a pillowcase, and imagines that a pillow is his infant son Octavius, dead for five years. In attempts to control him, his attendants swaddled him in bed linens and tied him to bedposts (Macalpine and Hunter 64, 42, 51, 68). In the engraving, however, the bed is relatively neat; the King lies calmly beneath the coverings, in dressing gown and nightcap. It is his interrupting son who oversets tables and spills wine.
33. Many of the treatments used at that time, particularly blistering, were founded on theories of humoral pathology, that is, that humans are composed of four humors—black bile, yellow bile, phlegm, and blood—and that disorders are caused by an overabundance of one humor or the irregular migration of a humor from its

proper seat. A letter written by Lord Grenville in late 1788 outlines both the pathology and the treatment through which physicians attempted to make sense of the King's illness: "The cause to which they all agree to ascribe it, is the force of a humour which was beginning to show itself in the legs, when the King's imprudence drove it from thence into the bowels; and the medicines which they were then obliged to use for the preservation of his life, have repelled it upon the brain." He then explains that "[t]he physicians are now endeavouring, by warm baths, and by great warmth of covering, to bring it down again into the legs, which nature had originally pointed out as the best mode of discharge" (*Memoirs of the Court and Cabinets* 6–7).

34. Hibbert notes that the Prince "fell seriously ill" in 1781, "and for two days his physician . . . felt much alarmed for him. . . . He was compelled to remain in his bedchamber for a fortnight, his face covered with red, eruptive blotches"—probably the "scrofulous humour" about which Walpole writes (Hibbert, *George IV* 24). Macalpine and Hunter posit that George IV's health throughout his life was much worse than was publicly known. Drawing from his correspondence, they conclude that "[f]rom the age of twenty he had attacks of spasms in the chest, abdominal colic, pain and weakness in his limbs, insomnia, fast pulse, lowness of spirits, states of excitement and 'shattered nerves', and was left languid, wasted and weak" (230–31).
35. "Excess alcohol consumption," Macalpine and Hunter point out, is a known precipitant, "and attacks may be prevented by avoiding" it (174). They suggest that the severity of the King's attacks, despite his asceticism, may indicate that he had "a particularly virulent form of the disease" (174).
36. Warburton brought out a collected edition in 1747; its copious footnotes are largely corrections or refutations of previous editors (*Shakespeare Domesticated* 24). Colin Franklin writes about the "ever-lengthening footnote game" (*Shakespeare Domesticated* 4) in the eighteenth-century reading editions of Shakespeare after Pope and adds that the debates carried out in footnotes "assumed the character of correspondence in a journal" (5). The 1604 Quarto *Hamlet* has "safty" [sic], and a 1768 edition that claims on its title page to be "From Mr. Pope's Edition" also uses "safety" but adds an article to make the line scan: "The safety and the health of the whole State" (1. 5). "Inferior" for "unvalued" seems to be the engraver's choice, as it does not appear in any edition of the play.
37. "holy, *n.*" *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. December 8, 2009. <http://dictionary.oed.com>. The OED gives inviolability as a second definition for sanctity and quotes Zempoalla from Dryden's 1665 *The Indian Queen* (III. i): princes are "sacred" only "whilst they are free; But Power once lost, farewel their Sanctity" ("sanctity, *n.*" *The Oxford*

English Dictionary. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. December 8 2009. <http://dictionary.oed.com>).

38. This makes it a telling choice for Laertes to use in his speech to Ophelia: her sanctity cannot withstand the larger imperative to keep the state whole.
39. This line appears on the Folio but not in the Quarto.
40. "sanity, *n*." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. December 8, 2009. <http://dictionary.oed.com>.
41. It must have been tempting for satirists of the regency crisis to quote once again from *The Winter's Tale*. In Act 4, a disguised Polixenes asks Florizel how he can have contracted so unequal an alliance without consulting his father: "Is not your father grown incapable/Of reasonable affairs? Is he not stupid/With age and altering rheums? Can he speak, hear,/Know man from man? Dispute his own estate?/Lies he not bed-rid, and again does nothing/But what he did being childish?" (*The Winter's Tale* 4. 4. 385–99). Only a father's madness would justify his son taking such a step without his knowledge or consent. If the King is not mad, the Prince must be. The catch is that Perdita's family romance, which is written on the face of this "queen of curds and cream" (4. 4. 161), redeems Florizel's choice from culpable—and pathological—rashness. She is not a "lowborn lass" (4. 4. 156) after all, nor a Catholic. The succession and the nation are safe. Perhaps it would have been better if the Prince had remained unalterable to his Perdita through life. She at least wasn't Catholic, and she might even have been a nobleman's daughter.
42. The contrast between the round-faced, youthful prince and his companions, who are all anywhere from ten (Hanger) to over thirty years (Burke) older than he, suggests that those who ought to be guarding him from himself are instead abetting his mad behavior.
43. This last delusion is probably a fabrication, although it is one of the most often repeated. Christopher Hibbert, in his biography of the King, lists it as one of the "ridiculous stories" that "spread about the town" (*George III* 266–67).
44. In her biography, *Princesses: The Six Daughters of George III*, Flora Fraser writes that the Prince of Wales started the rumor in retaliation for his sister's support of Princess Caroline during their marriage disputes. She adds, however, that the story "was almost certainly true" (190). An infant was baptized at Weymouth, where the royal family had been staying and where the Princess had been taken ill, in the late summer of 1800. Three years later the equerry, General Garth, adopted the little boy and renamed him Thomas Garth. Fraser mentions another rumor, possibly started by Caroline, that the father was Sophia's brother, the Duke of Cumberland, to whom she had complained in a letter to Garth, but concludes that Garth is "the commonsense and probable, if unromantic and not so scandalous,

answer" to the question of the child's paternity (193). The author of *The Royal Legend* appears to have Garth in mind, given that the love of Eliza and Rodolph is forbidden because of social difference, not consanguinity.

45. At the moment of the Cavalier's secret marriage to the wicked "Maria," the narrator (that the frame story is supposedly a memoir impinges not at all on its generic structuring) recounts that the Prince "started, sighed, and, for a few moments, was involved in painful ruminations. Whether it was that the scene he was now reading recalled to his mind some past acts of his youth, or that he pitied the cavalier for his inconsiderate conduct, is uncertain: he, however, closed the book, walked about his chamber, and smote his forehead" (139–40).
46. The investigation into the conduct of Princess Caroline took place in 1806 and was tabled in 1807. Readers in 1808 would have been familiar with the allegations, although the testimony in the case was not officially made public for another five years. The sentimental treatment of Caroline ("Carlina," as she is called) in *The Royal Legend* anticipates Thomas Ashe's 1811 *The Spirit of "the Book,"* which I will discuss in the next chapter.
47. In her forthcoming book on popular medievalism (Palgrave 2011), Clare Simmons offers a precedent to *The Royal Legend*'s construction of editorship in Thomas Percy's eighteenth-century edition of the romance "Sir Cawline." Just as the *Royal Legend* editors claim to have done, Percy added text to a document that was, in his own words, "in so very defective and mutilated a condition," in order to "connect and complete the story in the manner which appeared to him most interesting and affecting" (quoted in Simmons chapter 2). For Percy and the editors, authenticity is in the eye of the beholder and is determined by contemporary relevance. If *The Royal Legend* is fully realized only when it reads like a nineteenth-century novel, Percy inserts "chivalric values such as knightly conduct and respect for women and the social hierarchy" into a genuinely old text, in an effort "to be true to his imagined version of the Middle Ages" (Simmons chapter 2).
48. This is a paraphrase from the "Digression concerning Criticks" in *A Tale of a Tub*, in which Swift's famously slippery narrator characterizes critics as those who "travel thro' this vast World of Writings: to pursue and hunt those Monstrous Faults bred within them; to drag out the lurking Errors, like *Cacus* from his Den; to multiply them like *Hydra*'s Heads, and rake them together like *Augea*'s Dung" and concludes that a "*True Critick*…is a *Discoverer and Collector of Writer's Faults*" (78).
49. Like the novel, this prince fits equally in the nineteenth century as in the fourteenth, favoring "the Protestants equally with the Catholics" even though such a position is "incompatible with the policy of those times" (24–25). The actual Henry V was a bit more compatible with

his era: it was during his reign that Sir John Oldcastle was hanged in 1417 for his involvement in the Lollard movement.

50. Leaving untranslated the suffix *que* ("and") at the end of *luctu* provides a way to translate the ablative as "with" instead of "from." "Recoil" fuses both *horret* ("honet" is a misprint and occurs only in *The Royal Legend*) and *refugit*. I am grateful to Martin Winkler for his thoughtful help with this translation.
51. It is tempting to see the royal legend as possibly a person, a legendary royal—a legend either in his own time or after—but I cannot find any uses of the word applied this way as far back as 1808. The OED lists the first as occurring in 1918 ("legend, *n*." *The Oxford English Dictionary*. 2nd ed. 1989. *OED Online*. Oxford University Press. March 22, 2010. <http://dictionary.oed.com>).
52. Much of the text in *The Royal Legend* describing Perdita's early life, in which she appears as a gothic heroine of extraordinary sensibility, is borrowed from Robinson's *Memoirs*. The opening of "Part the Fourth" echoes the opening of Robinson's text (*The Royal Legend* 33–35; Robinson II. 1–4, 11–14).

3 THE NOVEL, THE REGENCY, AND THE DOMESTICATION OF ROYALTY

1. Caroline's biographer notes that Lady Douglas received an annual pension of 200 pounds from the Prince of Wales until the end of her life (Fraser 181).
2. Fraser reports that Perceval and the book's printer, Richard Edwards, had both "lent out copies." She adds that Francis Blagdon, the editor of the weekly newspaper the *Phoenix*, apparently had a copy and advertised its "forthcoming publication" in February 1808. Lord Eldon granted an injunction, and Blagdon "was given in compensation Treasury patronage for a new newspaper" (203).
3. Quoted in Fraser 172. The Princess (or her attorney) quotes this in her letter to the King that was included in the report when it was published in 1813 (86, 93).
4. Literally, "from board and bed"; this would be a separation, rather than a dissolution of the marriage, and would not affect the legitimacy of Princess Charlotte.
5. A prominent Whig attorney and one of the founders of the *Edinburgh Review*, Brougham was to become a leader of the Whigs, rising to Lord Chancellor under Lord Grey. He also acted on behalf of Lady Byron during her separation from Lord Byron in 1816, and he would be Caroline's attorney again during the 1820 debates on the Bill of Pains and Penalties.
6. Davidoff and Hall discuss the relationship between the royal marriage and the consolidation of middle-class virtue in *Family Fortunes* (150–55).

7. Rumors about his involvement with Caroline followed Canning throughout his political career. Stephen M. Lee points out that he offered to resign his position as president of the Board of Control at the start of the 1820 House of Lords debates on the Bill of Pains and Penalties. Although "Liverpool and George IV arranged a compromise whereby Canning would stay in office but take no part in the proceedings against the queen" (136), he eventually resigned in December 1820.
8. Caroline identifies this officer as "C****** B*****" but adds, "I prefer, however, to call him Algernon, and to introduce him, for the present, to you under that name" (*Spirit* 20).
9. There were rumors that Caroline was for a time in love with an Irish officer at her father's court and that she was forbidden to marry him (Fraser 26–27). But the coincidence of this affair with her betrothal to the Prince of Wales, and the idea that one was intended as a check upon the other, are the creatures of Ashe's imagination.
10. Both are probably the price for an unbound copy. The *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviews list the price as fifteen shillings. The first *Edinburgh* notice, in August of 1811, gives the subtitle as "or Memoirs of a Great Personage," and the second gives a price of twenty-five shillings (Garside, et al. 338). *The Satirist*, the only periodical to review the novel, lists the price as twenty-five shillings.
11. *The Satirist* was edited by George Manners, although this reviewer was probably Hewson Clarke, later editor of *The Scourge*, whose reputation for vitriolic satire Byron had noted in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. Mark Schoenfield discusses the exchange between Byron and Clarke in *British Periodicals and Romantic Identity: The "Literary Lower Empire"* (142–47).
12. The phrase is from Sheridan's *The Critic* (1781), act 1, scene 1. The entire line, spoken by Sir Fretful Plagiary, reads "Steal!—to be sure they may; and, egad, serve your best thoughts as gypsies do stolen children, disfigure them to make 'em pass for their own." The phrase was regularly quoted, adapted, paraphrased. The reviewer's careful use of quotation marks is probably intended to distinguish his legitimate incorporation of another's text from the gypsy borrowings of Ashe.
13. Russett points to the number of critics during this period who were lawyers (16); the *Edinburgh's* Francis Jeffrey is an example. Exploring the exchange between reviewers and P. B. Shelley, Kim Wheatley has detailed the "virtuperative rhetoric of the poet's hostile contemporary reviewers as a historically specific version of the 'paranoid style,' a heightened language of defensiveness and persecution" (1, quoting Richard Hofstader). As with the attacks on Caroline, persecution and prosecution were woven into a combined rhetoric that reviewers used across the political spectrum, and in which the Satirist reveled.

14. Russett outlines the "fantasy of descent" (30) in the cases of Chatterton and Ireland, both of whom manipulated shadowy origins and Christian names to enforce connections to their literary progenitors (23–32).
15. Gillian Russell identifies this same trope in contemporary reactions, over 30 years earlier, to Lady Kingston's trial for bigamy in the House of Lords, in which her names were strung together and punctuated by "alias" in an effort to suggest an association with criminals brought before the Old Bailey, particularly prostitutes (*Women, Sociability and Theatre in Georgian London* 157–58).
16. This does not accord with Fraser's account that it was Blagdon who promised to publish the excerpts in the *Phoenix*. Aspinall reports that Blagdon published both the *Phoenix* and its political rival (according to Ashe), the *Political Register* ("Statistical Accounts" 231–33).
17. This was a copy of the "Confessions" of Edward John Newell, an Irish double agent and informant during the rebellion of 1798. The supposed confessions record his sickbed change of heart and establish the innocence of all those against whom he informed. There is no record of Newell ever having recanted, nor is there any record of his death, although he is believed to have been killed by the United Irishmen. The Satirist alleges that the "Confessions" is a known forgery.
18. Erskine was Lord Chancellor from 1806 to 1807, the time of the printing and suppression of the Book. He succeeded and was succeeded by Lord Eldon, who was Lord Chancellor when *The Spirit of "the Book"* was published. If the letter is indeed addressed to Erskine and not to Eldon, it may be that Ashe is hoping to inculpate him as well as Perceval. Ashe does not mention a letter, although it is clear from his own account that his aim was blackmail against Perceval.
19. The third document, which Ashe refers to in his letter only as "the case of the Earl of Westmorland" (331), the Satirist identifies as "[T]he report made to the Earl of Westmorland on the subject of benevolent funds in Ireland," the contents of which Ashe "probably was equally ignorant" (327n). The Earl of Westmoreland was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland from 1789 to 1794.
20. Regarding Ashe's assurance that the Book had been put into his hands "by a distinguished personage who despises the reward" (328), the Satirist queries, "What 'distinguished personage' would thus employ a man so notoriously i––s [infamous] as Thomas Ashe? 'The varlet lies most nefariously' " (328n).
21. It is difficult to know which, if either, version of the story is definitive. Both Ashe and the Satirist quote extensively from the August 5 notice, but no copies of *The Phoenix* are extant. Both could be quoting from memory, without worrying overmuch about accuracy. At the same time, one or both could be embellishing or altering the original to suit particular rhetorical aims. Ashe makes no mention of the blackmail letter or the Newell or Westmoreland schemes. The Satirist

leaves out all mention of Perceval's involvement in the printing of the Book, although he includes an account of Perceval's "scheme" of advancement (328), which is slightly but not significantly divergent from Ashe's version. Moreover, he supplies no source for the story of the Irish soldier, on which so much of his ethical and rhetorical case against Ashe depends. He assumes, probably correctly, that his readers will accept the identity of this key witness and, using the same logic, will dismiss Ashe's "distinguished personage" as a fabrication.

22. Blackstone defines forgery, or *crimen falsi* as "the fraudulent making or alteration of a writing to the prejudice of another man's right" and points out that, although other penalties officially obtain, the use of the death penalty has become "general" (*Commentaries* IV. 245). Randall McGowen discusses the debate on forgery as a capital offense in "From Pillory to Gallows" (107–40).
23. Earlier he had listed both spellings ("Thomas Ashe, *alias* Anvil, *alias* Anville, *alias* Sidney"), dividing what he will later collapse to suggest a longer list of crimes. He accomplishes the same thing here with the offhanded condensation, "*alias* &c. &c."
24. During the diamond scheme section, after a rhapsodic description of the natural beauties of Brazil, he turns to his traveling companion, an outlaw and former prison buddy, with the following: " 'But amidst all the pleasant pursuits of this journey,' said I to my friend Smith, 'let the same exalted design, which first led me from home, still actuate us every hour with additional ardour. Let us even already experience a kind of foretaste of the great and splendid advantages, which reward the labour of those who bend the whole force of their talents towards some one magnificent point. The issue of our journey will be the source of all future good; a steady perseverance in our design, the fountain of eternal happiness' " (II. 259). The sentimental language both elevates and obscures the self-interest, but the irony lies in Ashe's cheerful disclosure elsewhere of the scheme's and its perpetrators' criminality.
25. Blagdon founded his conservative weekly in October 1809. The title is a deliberate echo of Cobbett's *Political Register* and is meant to indicate opposition to his radicalism. Kevin Gilmartin discusses the rash of anti-Cobbett weeklies in *Writing against Revolution: Literary Conservatism in Britain, 1790–1832* (101). The October 1811 issue of *The Satirist* that contains the review of *The Spirit of "the Book"* ends with a collection of critical notices on Blagdon's 1808–9 Annual, *The Flowers of Literature* (340).
26. Ashe does not reveal, although he must have known, that Blagdon was the publisher of both papers. He started *The Phoenix* around the same time as *The Political Register* but sold it in 1811 to James Swan. Both papers were by this time in trouble financially. *The Political Register* folded first, in 1811; *The Phoenix* carried on for another year (Aspinall 231–32).

27. Both Whitbread and Folkestone were members of the progressive branch of the Whigs, "distinguished from the rest of the Opposition primarily by its independent, aggressively activist support for economical and parliamentary reform and its willingness to associate on these issues with the followers of Sir Francis Burdett and the metropolitan radicals" (Rapp 35).
28. I am grateful to Clare Simmons for pointing out the reference in Ashe's pseudonyms.
29. Ashe is large-minded and philosophical on the subject of political writers and their fragile allegiances:

    > There is not a newspaper editor who would not change his principles to increase his means, nor any author who could not be employed in scourging and curbing the administration, or in exposing the opposition as the vilest characters that ever took rank in the society of man... In point of fact, political writers have the principles of men of the law; they advocate any party, any man, any measure for which they are paid; and I now venture to predict, that when George Manners is disgusted with Lord Sidmouth, he will gladly take the brief of Samuel Whitbread, and barter the Satirist for the Scourge. (III. 77–78)

30. The "conspirators" (21) manage to impose on the Prince without ever questioning the legitimacy of Princess Charlotte, which is doing Iago one better.
31. A year after the publication of *The Spirit of "the Book"* Ashe published a 40-page pamphlet called "The Spirit of the Spirit," the subtitle of which describes it as "a Concise ABRIDGMENT of that popular and interesting Work, The Spirit of the Book, comprising the PARTICULARS of the DELICATE ENQUIRY, and a Memoir of the Life of that most virtuous and ILLUSTRIOUS PRINCESS, respecting whom it concerns" (London, 1812). Ashe was probably trying to garner some of the profits from *The Spirit of "the Book"* after his sale of the copyright. But the relationship between condensing and illuminating in his title is the same one Agg is making with both "The Book Discovered" and "The Book Itself."
32. William St. Clair describes a similar practice with "new" editions of novels whose sales have flagged: "as a means of maintaining or renewing interest" (*Reading Nation* 180) publishers would sometimes bring out as new editions "unsold sheets of earlier printings... sometimes with nothing but the title page changed to a new date" (181).
33. G. J. Barker-Benfield outlines the eighteenth-century preoccupation with the sexual danger posed by acute sensibility in women: "The strength of women's wish for lovers sensitive to them made women easy marks for men who pretended sensibility in order to

seduce them. . . . Women of 'excessive sensibility' were by definition especially susceptible" (331).

34. The verdict "not proven," exists in Scots law but not in English. After 1728 it was increasingly taken to mean that a prisoner had been acquitted only because there was not sufficient evidence to convict (Fleming 540).
35. In his *Memoir*, Ashe claims to have altered the content of the Book only in the interest of "seiz[ing] and enchain[ing] the attention of the reader" (89), following the dictum that "a work, intended for general publicity," should offer a balance between "extreme simplicity" and the tedium of too much detail (88)—hence condensing the events outlined in the Book to "one capital change of fortune" (89).
36. She includes the legend of Charlotte's grandfather's clandestine marriage, while still Prince of Wales, to the "lovely quaker girl, for whom he had long entertained a passion" (278), apparently forgetting that such a marriage would arguably have bastardized her own husband and nullified the succession of the daughter to whom she is writing. The rumors that George III had in 1759 secretly (and bigamously, as she was already married) married Hannah Lightfoot first surfaced around 1770 but gained most attention after 1820. The allegations have been thoroughly repudiated and are not credited by any of George's biographers.
37. Ashe himself doesn't seem to have worried about the credibility of his vehicle. In the 1812 spin-off *The Spirit of the Spirit*, he cut his text down to 40 pages and one letter, "for the sake of room, and to give a Concise View of the whole of its contents" (3). Although *The Spirit of the Spirit* begins, "Letter from the Illustrious Princess Caroline to her Daughter Charlotte" and ends, "your unfortunate though affectionate mother, CAROLINE," it effectively abandons epistolarity for first-person narration.
38. Marilyn Butler makes this connection in *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (209–10); Poovey suggests that the conclusion of *Sense and Sensibility* demonstrates the reassertion of patriarchal control over the socially "anarchic" self-indulgence of female characters such as Marianne Dashwood (183–94) and then implicitly extends that argument to *Pride and Prejudice*, by outlining Elizabeth's education, through Darcy's tutelage, on "the pernicious effects of Lydia's passionate self-indulgence" (199). Susan Fraiman offers an explicit feminist critique of this dynamic in her chapter on "The Humiliation of Elizabeth Bennet" (*Unbecoming Women* 59–87).
39. In *Pride and Prejudice*, as in *Mansfield Park*, will is transformative. In the earlier text, however, the desire of the central characters is consistent with propriety, and both its consistency and its propriety are verified by the novel's harmonizing conclusion. In *Mansfield*

Park, as I shall demonstrate in the following chapter, the relationship between will and propriety is arbitrary.

40. Poovey 199–200. Galperin points out that Lydia's "function" in volume III "is to refer us by the sheer force of her existence to a less apparent, if still possible, alternative against which the Elizabeth-Darcy narrative remains a bulwark" (132). The section of the novel narrating her elopement "discloses all that is at stake in the hegemonic negotiation by which Darcy, a distinguished avatar of the old aristocratic order, is united with Elizabeth" (133).
41. Austen's consolidation of bourgeois supremacy by simultaneously condemning and appropriating aristocratic values is most evident, at least most dramatic, in *Pride and Prejudice*. Tuite among others has demonstrated, however, that it is central to all the completed novels: "Austen's fictions are clearly legible as anti-aristocratic. However, they are also probably more accurately described as part of that conflicted and vicarious bourgeois or middle-class project of seeking to appropriate the trappings of aristocratic authority, whilst making the aristocratic class over in the image of bourgeois virtue" (Tuite 143).
42. Galperin points out that Elizabeth's "merit . . . is inherent rather than inherited" (133).
43. For an exploration of the encampment of militias in England in the 1790s, and of contemporary perceptions about the concomitant corruption of local women, see Irvine, *Pride and Prejudice*, Appendix F 449–53.
44. My position here is in partial agreement and in partial contention with Richard A. Kaye's arguments in *The Flirt's Tragedy*. Although he suggests that "the female flirt denoted less female sexual misbehavior per se than the *potential* for misconduct in woman, a distinction that stymied ethical and legal categories" (53), for Kaye, flirtation in the realist novel is fundamentally opposed to closure: "coquetry always threatens to stall a plot that strives to move toward a resolution in marriage. At the same time, coquettish desire signifies an unmentionable female eroticism precisely because it would seem to defy narration" (51).
45. Angus McLaren discusses the associations between masturbation and other forms of sex in *Reproductive Rituals: The Perception of Fertility in England from the Sixteenth Century to the Nineteenth Century* (77–78).
46. The popular sex manual *Aristotle's Master-piece*, first published in 1690 although widely available throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century, contained a section on the trickiness of determining defloration, and a warning therefore to suspicious husbands not to jump to conclusions about their brides: "many inquisitive and yet ignorant persons, finding their wives defective herein, the first night of their marriage, have thereupon suspected their chastity. Now to undeceive such I do affirm, that such fractures happen

diverse accidental ways, as well as by copulation with men. . . . though certain it is, that it is broke in copulation rather than by any other means" (29).

47. In Théophile Gauthier's 1835 *Mademoiselle de Maupin* the cross-dressing Théodore reveals at the end of the novel her plan to use male garb to gain access to the otherwise closed off male realm and so win a lover: "With my disguise I could go everywhere without being remarked; there would be concealment before me, all reserve and constraint would be thrown aside" (234). In her study of transvestism, *Vested Interests*, Marjorie Garber suggests that cross-dressing from the early modern period on disrupted both gender and class categories, revealing the dependence of one upon the other: "Transvestism was located at the juncture of 'class' and 'gender', and increasingly through its agency gender and class were revealed to be commutable, if not equivalent" (32).
48. Lydia and Wickham live together in London, but Austen may have chosen Brighton as the setting for their elopement because of its association with the Regent's own irregular marriage. In 1786, when Prince of Wales, he moved there with Mrs. Fitzherbert, and the following year he began construction of what would become the Brighton Pavilion.
49. Lisa O'Connell discusses Gretna Green and its role in the shaping of contemporary fiction in "Dislocating Literature: The Novel and the Gretna Green Romance, 1770–1850."
50. Susan Fraiman points to a dialogism in Darcy's letter, inasmuch as it is the final word in a dialogue that has begun with his proposal and Elizabeth's angry response. In its authoritativeness, however, in Elizabeth's absolute inability to respond in kind, the letter forecloses all further discussion and effectively ends the debate (Fraiman 76–79).
51. In a slippage typical of Austen's irony, this is the same (in)conclusion reached by Mr. Collins, in his smarmy consolatory letter to Mr. Bennet:

    > . . . there is reason to suppose, as my dear Charlotte informs me, that this licentiousness of behaviour in your daughter, has proceeded from a faulty degree of indulgence, though, at the same time, for the consolation of yourself and Mrs. Bennet, I am inclined to think that her own disposition must be naturally bad, or she could not be guilty of such an enormity, at so early an age. (304)

52. Mr. Bennet's disclaimer of responsibility for Lydia's behavior lies chiefly in maintaining that the force of her desires is beyond his ability or his inclination to withstand: "Lydia will never be easy till she has exposed herself in some public place or other" (245). "We shall have no peace at Longbourn if Lydia does not go to Brighton" (246).

53. That Colonel Fitzwilliam is a replica for Wickham is suggested not only in similar descriptors (they both have good manners, look like gentlemen, and know how to make themselves agreeable) but also in their nearly identical relations to Elizabeth: both flirt with her before indicating that their financial situations compel them to make other marital choices (thus substantiating the claim made by Darcy and so dear to Elizabeth herself, that she is desirable inherently and not for what she possesses or represents, and softening the dire prognostications of spinsterhood made by her mother and Mr. Collins); both reveal what Elizabeth takes to be Darcy's perfidy, in spoken confidences that are either countered or tempered by Darcy's authoritative letter.
54. Two cases in point are *The Royal Wanderer, or the Exile of England, a Tale*, by "Algernon" (London, 1815; the pseudonym is more likely an attempt to replicate the popularity than the suggested politics of Ashe's book), and Edward Barron's *The Royal Wanderer, or Secret Memoirs of Caroline* and its continuation, *The Wrongs of Royalty*, which included an account of the House of Lords debates on the Bill of Pains and Penalties (London, 1820).

4 Body Doubles in the New Monarchy

1. Laura Runge points out that "between 1780 and 1788 Robinson is the subject of at least six satirical pamphlets, two 'Tete-à-Tete' columns in *Town and Country Magazine*, numerous newspaper paragraphs, and some 38 satirical prints" (569–70). The National Portrait Gallery in London lists eighty-nine portraits of Caroline, of which more than half are caricatures produced between 1817 and 1821.
2. Each rung of the ladder has its engraving with motto and accompanying doggerel verse. Both are staunchly pro-Caroline, anti-George, reflecting the nostalgic tory-radicalism typical of responses to Caroline in 1820. Beginning with "QUALIFICATION," which depicts a drunken and dissolute Prince of Wales before his marriage, "In love, and in drink, and o'ertoppled by debt," through "DECLARATION," "ACCEPTATION" (describing the marriage and lamenting Caroline's "husbandless bride-bed . . . wash'd with her tears"), "ALTERATION," "IMPUTATION" (on the delicate investigation), "EXCULPATION," "EMIGRATION," "REMIGRATION," "CONSTERNATION," "ACCUSATION," "PUBLICATION," "INDIGNATION," and "CORONATION." The pamphlet ends with "DEGRADATION," in which the King stands on trial, facing "The curses of hate and the hisses of scorn."
3. In "The Queen Caroline Affair: Politics as Art in the Reign of George IV," Laqueur suggests that the "radical parable" of the events of 1820 was eventually, and inevitably, recovered by and for conservatism: "deluged by royalist melodrama and romance—a

queen saved from the evil ministers of the king, a woman's honor restored. The underlying issue of monarchy's legitimacy was swept away in a tidal wave of gossip and bathos" (439). His reading has informed later treatments of the event, most notably Davidoff and Hall's *Family Fortunes*. In her 1991 article, "Morality and Monarchy in the Queen Caroline Affair," Tamara Hunt calls the agitation on behalf of Caroline in 1820 "the first wide-spread popular expression of the moral standards that have come to be labelled 'Victorian'" (698). Anna Clark refines upon this argument by suggesting that the political agitation on behalf of Caroline represented an uneasy joining of the older plebian radical modes of satire and melodrama to the claims of "Whigs interested in promoting parliamentary reform and embarrassing the government" ("Queen Caroline" 50). The resulting mixture was "the last spectacular eruption of transgressive, unruly plebeian radicalism, soon to be replaced by the new sobriety of working-class politics" (63).

4. The term is Lord Holland's. He wrote in 1820 to John Lambton, another prominent Whig, "For the life of me I can feel no interest and little curiosity about these royal squabbles, degrading no doubt to all concerned, and disgusting and tiresome I think to the bystanders" (quoted in Aspinall, *Lord Brougham and the Whig Party* 111).
5. Cobbett's decision to reissue the *Political* Register in1816 as a two-penny pamphlet rejuvenated circulation and fixed its position and influence as part of the radical press. Zachary Leader and Ian Hayward refer to Cobbett's "loophole" as "an ingenious new form of cheap publishing." "By printing only his leading article on an unfolded broadsheet . . . Cobbett could avoid the stamp tax and publish the slimmed-down *Political Register* for only 2d. . . . This 'two-penny trash', a term Cobbett adopted from his enemies, sold in huge numbers: Cobbett claimed 200,000 copies were sold in two months" (Introduction, *Romantic Period Writings* 7–8).
6. Mary Poovey discusses the relationship between the Caroline Norton case and the 1857 Act in *Uneven Developments* (62–88).
7. Clark points out that the classist rhetoric that depicted Caroline as the female victim of "a wicked aristocratic libertine" has its roots in a melodramatic mode more in key with loyalism than with "the rougher political tradition of republicanism, infidelism, and sexual freedom" from which satire is drawn (52).
8. Laqueur remarks on the "extraordinary waves of xenophobia" (453) that characterized both pro- and anti- (but most often pro-) Caroline sentiment: "Expressions of Englishness in 1820 and 1821 were far more prominent than expressions of class solidarity or republican virtues" (453).
9. Historians of the affair translate the rhetoric of such statements into fact. E. A. Smith titles his study *A Queen on Trial: The Affair of*

Queen Caroline, while Laqueur regularly refers to the proceedings as a trial ("The Queen Caroline Affair" 447, 448, 452).

10. Laqueur points out that "Caroline's cause became self-consciously the cause of 'outdoor politics', of 'public opinion' against the coterie politics of court and parliament" (430–31).
11. Parliament suspended debate on the Bill on November 10 after the third reading produced a majority of only nine. It was not taken up again when Parliament reconvened in 1821. As Fraser puts it, "The proceedings, which had so mesmerized the nation and beset the peers, were finally at an end. The Queen, though widely believed to be guilty, was 'acquitted' " (443).
12. The picture loosely echoes an anonymous 1783 engraving of Mary Robinson dancing a bacchanal with Fox (BM Satires 6320). The earlier print does not suggest control, however, so much as mutual abandon. Robinson and Fox look at one another with similar expressions and are of equal height, if not size (Fox's squat body and large head contrast with Robinson's graceful slenderness, as if to suggest that these are creatures of different types, Bacchus and a nymph).
13. According to testimony, she dressed first as a Neapolitan peasant, then as the genius of history, and finally as a Turkish peasant (*Hansard* 2.2, August 30, 1820).
14. Clark observes that this mix of sexualizing and sentimentalizing is typical of pro-Caroline literature: "Because the images and literature of Carolinite propaganda often conveyed their politics through allusion and metaphor, they could carry varied and even contradictory meanings—a useful quality in a controversy characterized by unlikely alliances across class, ideological, and cultural lines" (49).
15. Excerpts from Shakespeare were used liberally by both camps: the anonymous *Ghost as Seen in the* Hamlet *of St. Stephens Chapel* (BM Satires 13825) quotes both *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in order to depict Caroline as a horrified and belatedly repentant Gertrude/Lady Macbeth. Caroline as Lady Macbeth appears also in Lane's *The Whole Truth, or John Bull with His Eyes Opened* (De Vinck 10419).
16. The verse continues:

    But to my guts if you give no heeding,
    And cruel Fate dis boon denies,
    In kind compassion unto my pleading,
    Return, and let me feast mine eyes!

    The entire text is printed in J. Nichols, *Biographical Anecdotes of William Hogarth; With a Catalogue of His Works.* 2nd ed. 292–93 (London: 1782). Timothy Erwin writes on the relationship among all three works (Fielding's, Hogarth's, and Forest's) in "William Hogarth and the Aesthetics of Nationalism," as do David A. Brewer in "Making Hogarth Heritage" and Mary F. Klinger in "Music and Theater in Hogarth."

17. "The honourable officer who commanded the Clorinde, and who had previously seen Bergami [sic] in the low situation I have described, felt that it even would degrade the English service and himself, if after having witnessed that, he consented or permitted himself to sit at the table with her majesty in company with this person " (*Hansard* 2.2, August 19, 1820).
18. Sometimes the sartorial evidence seems designed only to give an added thrill—a semi-pornographic detail that convinces the audience without detracting from the more damning testimony, most of which has to do with access to the Princess's body itself. In discussing the incident that Lane depicts in *The Genius of History*, Copley dwells on the vulgarity and scantiness of Caroline's costume only after establishing that she was alone with Pergami while undressed, and that they were closeted together long enough to accomplish more than just the changing of the Princess's costume:

    > Did she change her dress entirely for that purpose? Yes.
    > Did you assist her in changing her dress? I did not.
    > Who assisted her in changing her dress? Pergami went into her dressing room;. . . .
    > How long did the princess remain in the dressing-room before she came out with her dress entirely changed? I do not remember precisely.
    > Can you tell about how long? About three quarters of an hour.
    > When she came out, did she come out alone, or did any person come with her? Pergami came out first, and her royal highness came out after.
    > How long before her royal highness came out did Pergami come out? A very little time.
    > When you say a very little time, was it one, two, three, or four, or five minutes, or what? Two or three minutes. (*Hansard 2.2*, August 30, 1820)

19. Laura Lunger Knoppers and Joan B. Landes offer this history in their Introduction to *Monstrous Bodies/Political Monstrosities* (3). Katherine A. Park and Lorraine T. Daston also discuss the medieval origins of early modern discussions of monsters and monstrosity in their essay "Unnatural Conceptions," as do Andrew Curran and Patrick Graille in "The Faces of Eighteenth-Century Monstrosity."
20. In "Foucault's Monsters, the Abnormal Individual and the Challenge of English Law" Andrew Sharpe cites Blackstone's as only the last in a history of legal definitions of monsters that stretches back to Roman law. Like his predecessors in the ancient and medieval worlds, Blackstone "understood the monster exclusively in terms of the visibility of human/animal hybridity" (395). Although Sharpe points out that "the hermaphrodite was never considered a monster within

English law" (389), "any degree of animality proved sufficient to label a human creature a legal monster" (396).

21. Sharpe suggests that "an assumption of bestiality as cause of monstrosity appears to underpin and typify English legal understandings of the monster category" (388).
22. This translation is offered by Knoppers and Landes in their Introduction. The original French reads, "Elle était monstre, sans difficulté, quand elle laissait voir sa gorge, et femme de mise quand elle la cachait" (Voltaire, "Monstres" 109).
23. Laqueur has written about the theatricality that dominated both the debates and popular responses: "the trial of the queen was an elaborate and all-absorbing theater in its own right" (457). Part melodrama, part farce the event "took on an aesthetic life of its own, overshadowing the substantial political issues" (448). Sometimes, as with the bed stains, the drama hinges on a single word. The day after the testimony just quoted, Demont testified about a portrait that the Princess sat for in the character of "a penitent Magdalen." After establishing that "the upper part of the person" of the Princess was "uncovered" in the picture, the Attorney General presses for clarification: "How was the breast, was that covered or uncovered?" "Uncovered." Here the testimony is interrupted so that the two interpreters can establish whether the term used refers to the actual breasts of the Princess. Caroline's interpreter objects that the word "*gorge*," used by the interpreter for the Crown, usually "means the neck rather than the bosom." Demont is then asked, "how low did the part that was uncovered extend?" and answers, "As far as here. [Passing her hand across her breasts.]" Hand gestures were a particular problem for the prosecution, both because of the difficulty rendering them in print and because not all of the Lords were positioned so that they could see, so the Attorney General makes one more try to get a satisfactory answer in words: "Were the breasts covered or uncovered?" "It was uncovered as far as here, about the middle of it" (*Hansard* 2.2, August 31, 1820; brackets in original). "*Gorge*" is the word Voltaire uses for the breasts of the cow-woman. Its use to denote the breast or bosom is not as rare as Caroline's interpreter suggests. The Crown interpreter must continue to use this word after the clarification, given that Demont's reply uses the singular pronoun despite the Attorney General's plural, "breasts."
24. Lane substitutes the indefinite article for the definite in the first line. Otherwise, the quote is exact.
25. Goldsmith's lines describe the "poor houseless shiv'ring female" displaced and ruined by the enclosure of her village, who "once, perhaps, in village plenty blest/Has wept at tales of innocence distrest" but who is "Now lost to all, her friends, her virtue fled" (326–31).
26. Dibdin (1745–1814) was a popular playwright, poet, and songwriter known for his songs depicting British military manliness.

"The Soldier's Adieu" was published in 1790 in the collection of songs called *The Wags*. A new edition was published in 1814, the year of his death.

27. The consistently anti-Caroline bent of Lane's 1821 engravings is not necessarily an indication of his own political leanings. Engravers often switched sides fluidly, or at least, like Ashe, did not scruple to go over temporarily to the opposition if the price was right. Cruikshank, as his biographer Robert Patten points out, was allied with the "moderate left" (Patten 152), yet he produced his own anti-Caroline engravings in 1820, including "The Radical Ladder," a parodic response to Hone's pamphlet, which Cruikshank had engraved (Patten 181–83).
28. Lockhart's responsibility for the pamphlet was disputed throughout the nineteenth century but was established by John Lang Strout in 1940. Strout discusses the authorship of the pamphlet in his Introduction to *John Bull's Letter to Lord Byron* (49–56).
29. The quasi-serious critical aim of the pamphlet was to urge Byron to hone his art toward the satire of *Don Juan* and away from the "humbug" of the oriental tales and epitomized by *Childe Harold*: "Stick to Don Juan: it is the only sincere thing you have ever written; and it will live many years after all your humbug Harolds have ceased to be, in your own words, 'A school-*girl's* tale—the wonder of an hour' (82; italics in original). Strout points out in a footnote that the original passage, from Canto II of *Childe Harold*, is "a schoolboy's tale" (Strout 82n52); Lockhart's switching of the genders is a part of the same discrediting mission that informs the ladies' dialogue that follows.
30. Eric Eisner calls this "an extraordinary mock-blazon of Byron's commodified body" (41).
31. Jerome Christensen discusses Byron's decision to change the hero and heroine of "The Bride of Abydos" from brother and sister to first cousins (115).
32. Lockhart may echo this passage toward the end of his vignette, when the ladies recall discussing a passage from *Childe Harold* "on Saturday evening at Miss Bates's" (81).
33. The section of *Emma* narrated most consistently from Knightley's point of view chronicles the development of his suspicions about Frank Churchill's "double dealing" (302). The proliferation of speculative language in this chapter (the word "suspect" appears three times and "suspicion" four times) is tempered so consistently by Knightley's self-cautioning against "excessive curiosity" (306) and "fruitless interference" (307) that the chapter reads like a didactic counter-piece to the rest of the novel, as if Austen had temporarily contemplated pairing Emma's flawed interiority with Knightley's impeccable internal judgments before abandoning dialogic monologism in favor of the internal *Bildung* she perfected in this novel. Knightley's speculations, however unerring, threaten to "irritate"

him into a "fever," which he can only subdue by returning, monk-like, to "the coolness and solitude of Donwell Abbey" (*Emma* 308).

34. This ranking appears undercut by the smarmy familiarity of the accumulating "dears" for Harriet Smith and Mrs. Elton. But the intimacy of address endorses social classification by replicating, in both type and intensity, those characters' liminality and destabilizing potential for the novel's community.
35. "The truth is, that in these days the grand '*primum mobile*' of England is *cant*; cant political, cant poetical, cant religious, cant moral; but always cant, multiplied through all the varieties of life" (*Letter to* ********** 16).
36. The wide sweep of John Bull's hyperbole ("every" school "in the empire") makes it unclear whether he refers to boys' boarding schools, or girls,' or both, although the presence of Harriet Smith, the parlor-boarder at Mrs. Goddard's "real, honest, old-fashioned Boarding-school" (68) suggests that he is more interested in Byron's impact on school-age girls than boys.
37. Austen registers Mrs. Elton's sexuality in a number of ways in the novel, most often in an inappropriate fondness for fine clothes and an excessive and cloying intimacy with other characters, male and female. She is also given to discussion/disclosure of the various ways in which a woman's life changes with marriage—plausibly a coded announcement of sexuality.
38. As Christensen points out, Lady Byron's biographical criticism originates in an impulse marking her as a naïve, "suggestible reader of her husband." In the course of the separation proceedings, however, naïve reading becomes both a strategy and a rhetoric—the companion to Lady Caroline Lamb's nascent Byronism (80).
39. Strout adds that the tactic was "typical of the *Blackwood* group! and may be added to their other numerous japes in these early years of *Maga*" (56). He attributes the review to John Wilson, along with Lockhart one of the principal editors of *Blackwood's* during its first years. In a letter to William Blackwood dated May 24, 1821, William Maginn, another frequent contributor to the magazine, wrote, "I cast my eye over John Bull, which is a mighty shabby performance. . . . I have a mind to review it quite seriously & attribute it to Jeremy Bentham or Alderman Wood" (quoted in Strout *Bibliography* 8). Blackwood's reply—"I wish to God you had time to fill up your sketch" (quoted in Strout 81n)—suggests that, whoever wrote the review, it was not Maginn. Blackwood may have passed his idea along to Wilson, although it's possible that Lockhart at least contributed to the review. The kind of smokescreen, collaborative or otherwise, that *Blackwood's* engaged in, as Mark Schoenfield has demonstrated, was crucial to the romantic-era periodical industry's construction of identity. "Poaching" (the term is Peter Murphy's) of

the kind Maginn proposes and Wilson/Lockhart practices "destabilizes the identity of the self—real or fictive—with itself" (*British Periodicals and Romantic Identity* 252n9).

40. "In his Church of Englandism, he had this sentence: 'Come forward, *Dean Kipling*—Come forward, *Dean Andrews*—Come forward, *Bishop Burgess*—Come forward, *Bishop Marsh*—Come forward, *Bishop Howly* [sic]—Come forward, *Archbishop Sutton*', etc." (425). The review is quoting from Bentham's 1818 *Church of Englandism and its Catechism examined*. The italics are in the original (the reviewer misspells Howley).
41. Fanny's temporizing tends to go unnoticed when contrasted with the more transparent selfishness that moves nearly every other character in the novel, hence her reputation as almost unnaturally upright and more than a little dull. In his essay on *Mansfield Park*, originally published as his introduction to the Penguin edition of the novel, Tony Tanner suggests that she "stands for the difficulty of delicate right thinking in a world of inadequate perception and subtly corrupted instincts" (157). Set against the "dangerous energies and selfish power-play" (172) particularly of the Crawfords, but more generally practiced by all of her relatives from Sir Thomas down, Fanny "is never, ever, wrong" (143). Most recent criticism, on the contrary, has tended to see Fanny's correctness as a construct, more contingent than steadfast. Mary Poovey observes that "the confederacy of principle and feeling" (*The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer* 219) she achieves by the end of the novel is hard won rather than innate, the product of her complex social and psychological position as dependent female: "Young Fanny is effectively pushed and pulled into becoming a textbook Proper Lady" (217). Ellen Pollak suggests that all moral choices in the novel are contingent, in the context of its participation in contemporary debates on miscegenation and incest. Austen is engaged in "exposing the inherently interested and thus contingent nature of all moral choices in a world where the presence of *outsiders within* has always already disturbed the possibility of domestic purity" (*Incest and the English Novel* 184).
42. Poovey suggests that the energy of the novel is directed toward assigning "moral authority and power" to Fanny's feelings (218) so that she can be positioned "to superintend the moral regeneration of Mansfield Park" (219).
43. The satisfactory outcome of Austen's courtship plot is a matter of exertion rather than morality: "Let other pens dwell on guilt and misery. I quit such odious subjects as soon as I can, impatient to restore every body, not greatly in fault themselves, to tolerable comfort, and to have done with all the rest" (312). The narrator's impatience to have done replicates the willfulness (laziness?) of her characters. Henry Crawford abandons one project—the courtship of Fanny—to resume

another unfinished project—the seduction of Maria Bertram. Had he "persevered" instead, "Fanny must have been his reward—and a reward very voluntarily bestowed—within a reasonable period from Edmund's marrying Mary" (317). His impatience allows the narrator to have done. Will, not principle, is causal in this novel, and the congruence between principle and will is always happenstance.

44. The phrase describes Henry Crawford, who, despite his profligacy, has "moral taste enough to value" Fanny's undisguised devotion to her brother and to "honour[] the warm hearted, blunt fondness of the young sailor" (161).
45. Mary Jean Corbett points out the inconsistency of Edmund's alarms about strangers in the house, when "Just a few chapters later . . . he extends the perimeter so as to include" the Crawfords, who, he tells Fanny, " 'seem to belong to us' " (*Family Likeness* 48).
46. Mary differs from Edmund in her ability to recognize and reflect on her motives with an irony that is usually the province of the narrator: "She had felt an early presentiment that she *should* like the eldest best. She knew it was her way" (35). The italics emphasize the double meaning of "should" as either the future subjunctive or an expression of obligation, echoing her idea that "[i]t is every body's duty to do as well for themselves as they can" (198). She can exercise this ability at will and sometimes chooses to put it aside, as when her desire for Edmund conflicts with this obligation: "There was a charm, perhaps, in his sincerity, his steadiness, his integrity, which Miss Crawford might be equal to feel, though not equal to discuss with herself" (47–48).
47. As D. A. Miller puts it, "Fanny's moral judgment effectively preserves her full response—paradoxically—by refusing to take it into account" (56).
48. Paula Marantz Cohen points out that this even exchange of pleasure for pain is a necessary condition for her allegiance to her adoptive family and home: "it is not pleasure alone, but pleasure as the consolation for pain that combines to produce the 'charm' that binds Fanny to Mansfield Park" (*The Daughter's Dilemma* 71). The narrative irony for which the schoolroom passage prepares us—this is the moment when Edmund fails to support her cause (he has already refused to explain her meaning); his proofs of affection no longer make her tears delightful—is not so much a betrayal of the pattern of neglect and consolation as it is that pattern writ large. Fanny's abandonment by Edmund and Sir Thomas is a necessary prelude to her final incorporation into Mansfield Park: "the dynamic in which Edmund makes Fanny suffer, then suffers guilt for her pain so that he can be free to make her suffer again . . . proves to be precisely the pattern calculated to attach Fanny to the family" (Cohen 70).

49. The closest second, not surprisingly, is *Northanger Abbey*, where variants of "horror," always either hyperbolical or ironic, appear twenty times.
50. The play the Bertrams and Crawfords nearly put on is Elizabeth Inchbald's 1798 translation of August von Kotzebue's *Lovers' Vows*. The subject of the play is both courtship and seduction, and characters in *Mansfield Park* use the occasion of its production as a means of both.
51. As usual, Edmund explains Mary's use of the inapt term "folly" as the fault of her surroundings: "She was speaking only, as she had been used to hear others speak" (309). For Miller, Mary's speech is guided by the "main principle of construction" of a preference for what looks like epigram but is rather "the perpetual promise and deferral of knowledge and right nomination" (27). "It is not exactly that Mary calls things by their wrong names (although this is how it must look when the novel's moral ideology is imposed). Simply, her talk doesn't recognize there being right names" (27).
52. Paula Marantz Cohen observes that "[t]he imagery Fanny uses to express her revulsion suggests that Maria has engaged in incest, precisely the 'crime' that Fanny will eventually commit with impunity. Although Maria's adultery seems the very opposite of incest—a turning away from the family rather than toward it—Fanny's reaction helps expose the link between them" (78).
53. Much of recent criticism on *Mansfield Park* focuses on the incest theme as a feature of the novel's modernity, locating it in the moment of shift from a "traditional" to a "nuclear" understanding of family (Cohen 78). Mary Jean Corbett suggests that the novel's celebration of endogamous over exogamous unions "invites us to privilege 'the family' over 'the marriage', the latter construed not as an end in itself but as a means to an end" (41). For Clara Tuite and Cohen, this distinction between marriage and family turns upon a modern understanding of both. Tuite observes that the novel chronicles "the transition of the aristocracy from patriarchy to domesticity, and the revision of the aristocratic marriage-plot from alliance and improvement (exogamy) to incorporation (endogamy)" (112). "The text naturalizes the dynastic strategy of cousin-marriage (a strategy of incorporation and retrenchment) precisely by staging it as the renunciation of dynastic aspirations" (127). Cohen sees the initial exchange of Fanny within rather than between families as an indicator of the novel's particularly modern investment in endogamous relationships: "Fanny's passage from her mother's house to her aunt's is historically significant and expresses that shift in the nature of family life actually occurring at the time Austen wrote. The Bertrams, Fanny's new family (though really an extension of her old one), are the kind of insular and inbred (nuclear) family fated to replace outer-directed families like the Prices" (64).

54. Corbett identifies the elopement as "an unexpected, illegitimate outcome of forming 'tie upon tie' with strangers." Even as it "illustrates the risk that outsiders pose to the Mansfield family as well as Mansfield's internal susceptibility to that risk," however, the elopement "also prevents any further injury from occurring by stopping the double marriage plot dead in its tracks, severing the ties between the Crawfords and the Bertrams" (49).
55. Corbett points out that Edmund excepts the Crawfords from the category of outsiders who have no "claim" to be admitted into the family circle, when he tells Fanny that "[t]hey seem to belong to us—they seem to be a part of ourselves" (135). Fanny's reaction to the elopement, "even if she does not want to think of either Mary or Henry as family . . . still betrays her internalization of the rhetorical constructions and institutionalized connections that have made these erstwhile strangers into something approaching kin" (48).
56. According to Pollak, "[T]hat the marriage of Edmund and Fanny that resolves *Mansfield Park*'s comic plot should posses the same ambiguous character as Maria's adultery, being predicated as it is on *going out* and *going in* at the same time (the family interloper having become acceptable as a conjugal partner for her cousin only because she has taken on the status of a sister), is one of the novel's brutal ironies" (183).
57. "Here Fanny . . . involuntarily shook her head, and Crawford was instantly by her side again, intreating to know her meaning." Crawford uses the possibility of clarification as an opportunity to push his suit further: "What had I been saying to displease you?—Did you think me speaking improperly?—lightly, irreverently on the subject? Only tell me if I was." And further: " 'Do I astonish you?'—said he. 'Do you wonder? Is there any thing in my present intreaty that you do not understand? I will explain to you instantly all that makes me urge you in this manner, all that gives me an interest in what you look and do' "(232).
58. Fanny initially responds to the pressure to join the theatricals by asserting (and repeating), "I cannot act." Her insistence that "[i]t would be absolutely impossible for me" (103) is often cited as an instance of the perfect conformity between feeling and expression. Unlike every other character in the novel, Fanny cannot deviate from her "true" self (Tanner 164). She cannot prevaricate—except, of course, with herself.
59. In her first full statement in support of the separation, Lady Byron claimed, "In his endeavours to corrupt my mind he has sought to make me smile first at Vice" (quoted in Elwin 349).
60. Perhaps even the same vice? "Of *Rears* and *Vices*, I saw enough. Now, do not be suspecting me of a pun, I entreat" (44). Jill Heydt-Stevenson

notes that Mary's "pun points directly to sodomy in the navy" (*Austen's Unbecoming Conjunctions* 138).

61. Doris Langley Moore quotes from this passage in an appendix to *Lord Byron: Accounts Rendered*. In a footnote she explains that it was part of "an uncompleted Preface to her projected autobiography, dated March 1854" (443n2).
62. "Indeed, it is fair to ask whether there really is any fundamental difference of opinion between Lady Byron and her husband, for there is an apparent symmetry between his thesis that all behavior is subject to convention and her recourse to a standard that, however single and immutable it is, is based only in her belief" (Christensen 79). Her naïve association of Byron with his poems, moreover, means that "to accept Byron's skeptical doctrine would be to abandon the very structure of identification" on which she has based her argument for the necessity of separation (81). Her "inspired strategy is to leave in darkness that 'ground of difference' she wants branded evil" (83).
63. Miller points out that Edmund's narrative of the scene is "charged with emotional revulsion and disgust, bespeaking by negation his attraction and desire." His "anxious fears of her powers of performance" convert Mary "into a vulgar Delilah, openly gesturing sexual solicitation. One must wonder whether such a perspective does not invite us—on the evidence of its own self-betraying bias—to imagine a different version of the scene, more ambiguous and less obvious than Edmund's" (86).
64. In this configuration Henry Crawford becomes the means of his fantasy fulfillment. By marrying Fanny, he will simply cement Edmund's access to her as now legally sister as well as cousin.
65. Her sophistry once again resembles Byron's, in his wife's representation: "He has said that a wife was only culpable towards her husband if her infidelity were practised openly—that the right or wrong consisted merely in its being known" (quoted in Elwin 349).
66. Lady Byron, as Christensen notes, steadfastly refused to make public "the real grounds of difference between Lord B. and myself," insisting that to do so "would be extremely improper" (quoted in Elwin 426). She and her family disclaimed any responsibility for the rumors—of either sodomy or incest or both—that the separation gave rise to.
67. In a letter to Byron shortly after she left him, Lady Byron cautioned him, "Don't give yourself up to the abominable trade of versifying—nor to brandy—nor to any thing or any body that is not *lawful & right*" (quoted in Elwin 351).
68. For Elledge, the poem is "a portrait of indecision" (43). As "a sort of commemoration of the signing," of the separation agreement, "it admits and enjoys the legal shelter of the fact" (44). Nonetheless, its "antithetical tensions" (43) make it a "bipolar" response to the

separation (48), one that "charts the depth and configurations of the poet's ambivalence both toward reconciliation with his wife and more broadly toward relationship itself" (43). Eisner offers both the poem and its reception as evidence that "scandalous celebrity is not lyric intimacy's opposite but rather its very ground" (24). He reads "Fare Thee Well!" as a gesture of intimacy between poet and reader, as much as between poetic speaker and auditor. As such, it "is split between performative action and commemoration: it wants both to *be* the separation and to memorialize the separation that gives rise to it" (28).

69. "The final stanza hints that Byron's own declaration of farewell is what disunites the couple: the poem insists that this is all Lady Byron's fault and at the same time arrogates to his own (disunited) words the power to make the separation" (Eisner 29–30). In *Byron and Romanticism*, Jerome McGann concentrates on the contingent meanings of the text: as a "*sentimental* poem" when it circulated privately and its meaning was under Byron's management, and as a "*hypocritical* poem" when it was published in the *Champion*, set opposite the much harsher "A Sketch" and accompanied by "a long editorial commentary denouncing Byron's character as well as his politics, and explicitly 'reading' the two poems as evidence of his wickedness" (84). McGann reads "Fare Thee Well!" in all its versions as "a kind of metapoem, a work which foregrounds Byron's ideas about what poetry actually is and how it works" (85).
70. This is presumably why Lockhart still refers to it, six years later, as a "quarrel."
71. Eisner points to the number of poetic responses generated after the publication of the poem in *The Champion* as evidence that "[r]eaders did more than denounce or defend Byron's character; they demonstrated not just idle curiosity but an emotional stake in the matter, taking sides by identifying with one or both parties" (31).
72. Lockhart condemns Byron's "beastliness" in introducing "her Ladyship" into *Don Juan*—"[I]ndeed, if I be not much mistaken, you have said things in that part of the poem, for which, were I her brother, I should be very well entitled to pull your nose" (108). But this ungentlemanly behavior is tempered by the quality of the poem. Calling it "out of all sight the best of your works; it is by far the most spirited, the most straightforward, the most interesting, and the most poetical" (82), he adds, "I had really no idea what a very clever fellow you were till I read Don Juan" (93).
73. This is the message of a late engraving by Lane, titled *The Grand Coronation of Her Most Graceless Majesty C-R-L-E Columbina the first Queen of all the Radicals &c &c &c July 19 1821* (BM Satires 14205), in which an especially corpulent Caroline, legs splayed, appears to be in danger of falling off her throne. In her hand she holds a scepter topped with a figurine of George IV, while on her head, precariously balanced, is an overflowing slop jar for a crown.

CONCLUSION: THE LATE QUEEN AND THE PROGRESS OF ROYALTY

1. Unless otherwise indicated, the prints have all been attributed to Lane. In the top row, moving from left to right, are *The Caroline Column* (BM Satires 14129); *Delicious Dreams* (BM Satires 14175); *The Time Piece* (Isaac Cruikshank, BM Satires 13738); *Design for a New Coat of Arms* (De Vinck 10432); *Caroline Fair* (BM Satires 14170); *The Effusions of a Troubled Brain* (BM Satires 14196), and Cruikshank's *The Radical Ladder* (BM Satires 13895.A). The center two rows are split horizontally and divided into fourteen panels. In row one of the center, moving left to right, are *Bergami's Little Darling* (BM Satires 14112); *A Pas de Deux, or, Love at First Sight* (BM Satires 14183); *The Choice of Hercules* (BM Satires 14184); *An Arm-Full of Love* (BM Satires 14176); *Winding up to a Pitch, or The Automaton Scaramouche* (BM Satires 14120); *The Como-cal Hobby* (BM Satires 14171); *A Gentle Jog into Jerusalem* (BM Satires Undescribed); *Travelling Tête à Tête!* (De Vinck 10449); *Dignity!* (BM Satires Undescribed); *Tent-ation* (De Vinck 10448); *A Knight Companion of the Bath* (BM Satires 14188); *The Modern Genius of History at her Toilet* (De Vinck 10435); *National Love!* (De Vinck 10440), and *Modesty!* (BM Satires 14190). In row two of the center, left to right, are, *The Long and the Short of the Tale, or, the Whole of the Concern* (BM Satires 14103); *Bat, Cat, and Mat* (De Vinck 10441); *A Parting Hug at St. Omer* (De Vinck 10438); *A Wooden Substitute, or, Any Port in a Storm* (BM Satires 14109); *Moments of Pleasure* (BM Satires 13989); *A Man of the Woods, or the Cat-o'-mountain* (BM Satires 14131); *The Q – -n's Ass in a Band-box* (BM Satires 14110); *An Old Friend with a New Face or the Baron in Disguise*" (BM Satires 14192); *Meditations at Brandyburgh, or an Address to the Sun* (BM Satires 14191); *Dido in Despair* (BM Satires 14144); *The Whole Truth* (De Vinck 10419); *A Going! A Going!* (G. Cruikshank, BM Satires 14147); *Returning Justice lifts aloft her Scale* (BM Satires 14189), and *Broom and Wood* (BM Satires 14146). In the bottom row, left to right, are *Grand Entrance to Bamboozl'Em* (BM Satires 14122); *Steward's Court of the Manor of Torre Devon* (BM Satires 14013); *A late Arrival at Mother Wood's* (BM Satires 13734); *The Royal Extinguisher* (Cruikshank, BM Satires 14145); *The King's Head versus Mother Red-Cap* (no catalogue number available); *Brass Founders* (BM Satires 14119), and *Lucifera's Procession* (BM Satires 14182). *An Arm-full of Love* and *The Choice of Hercules,* although attributed to Lane, may be by a different artist. The expressions on the faces of both figures are more broadly drawn and cartoonish than in Lane's typical engravings. Caroline is dressed differently, moreover, wearing lots of petticoats and boots, rather than the characteristic Regency-style décolletage and slippers of Lane's engravings. in *The Choice of*

Hercules, she is décolleté, but her breasts are grotesquely pendulous, rather than nearly globular, as they are in Lane's depictions.

2. The shop was originally owned by Hannah Humphrey, Gillray's exclusive publisher for most of his career. When she died in 1818, her nephew George Humphrey inherited the business.
3. Marcus Wood points out that concise mottoes or headlines like these reduced "complex issues to captions or even to single words" and led to "effects of stark condensation" (171).
4. The picture may have been commissioned for the pamphlet. There is none of the usual publication information at the bottom, and the date given in the Dorothy George catalogue is the same as the date of the pamphlet's publication (233–34).
5. Prints in this series include *The Modern Genius of History*, *Dignity!* and *Modesty!* as well as *Installation of a Knight Companion* and *Travelling Tête à Tête!*
6. Flora Fraser describes Caroline's "ill-fated attempt" to attend her husband's coronation: "Turned away from entrance after entrance, she uttered her poignant cry to the sentry at Westminster Hall, 'Let me pass; I am your Queen.' It was then that the pages slammed the door in her face—a resounding affront which, more than all the magnificent show devised by King George IV, gave his Coronation its place in history" (456).
7. "How happy could I be with either" recalls Robinson's "This is the Lad I'll kiss most sweet" in Gillray's *The Thunderer* in associating female desire with ease of access. Robinson's choice of Tarleton contrasts with Caroline's childlike inability to choose, giving her perhaps a degree more agency, despite the print's overt misogyny.
8. Fox clasps his hands together and looks earnestly at Robinson, one knee thrust forward as if about to kneel, and says, "Sweet Robenet your Eyes Jet your Teeth are lily White your Cheeks are Roses Lips are Poses and your Nose is Wonderous [sic] Bright."
9. The Prince's posture manages to suggest both autoeroticism and impotence. He clasps a dead tree trunk, with the other hand caressing one blasted limb that juts suggestively upward.
10. This same suggestive placing of the miniature is in *The Long and the Short of the Tale* in the first group of four prints. The length of the ribbon emphasizes Caroline's shortness (Pergami's miniature of her hangs only to his breast), although the fact that Pergami's face appears at crotch level draws attention to more than height.
11. The Wardenship of St. Catherine's (or St. Katherine's) hospital was in the gift of the Queen consort. The print suggests that Wood hoped to be made Warden of St. Catherine's in return for his support of the Queen.
12. The attribution "Gay" suggests that the verse is drawn from John Gay's *Fables*, but it was more likely written by Lane for the engraving.

It is in the style of Gay's verse, and cats and monkeys feature often in the *Fables*, but these four lines do not appear in Gay.

13. The punctuation appears in Gillray's title but not in Lane's.
14. She is washing out her "last shift" in the picture, but the title also suggests the kind of workaday changeover that might account for her weary stance.
15. Gillray reinforces the association of Lady Hamilton with prostitution with the relics at her feet. Presumably from her husband's collection of antiquities, they include statues of Priapus, Messalina, Venus, and a satyr.
16. The National Library of Scotland lists several different versions of "The Blue Bells of Scotland" throughout the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The one anthologized in the *Scots Musical Museum* in 1803 begins "O where and O where does your highland laddie dwell; / He dwells in merry Scotland where the blue bells sweetly smell." In other broadsides the second line is often some version of "He's gone to fight the French, for George upon the Throne" ("The Blue Bells of Scotland"). My thanks to Clare Simmons for pointing out the transmogrification of references in these prints, from laddie/soldier to sailor to courier.
17. Robert Patten briefly discusses the relationship between the two prints in his biography of Cruikshank (233–34).
18. It would have cost a good deal more to purchase than any of the individual prints, which could have been bought colored for as much as two shillings or uncolored for as little as sixpence (Tamara Hunt 698). A bound volume like this, on the other hand, would have been much more expensive. William St. Clair points out that "in 1812, a bound copy of [*Childe Harold*] in quarto cost about half the weekly income of a gentleman" (*The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* 195).
19. Tamara Hunt points out that the need for a print to be current often meant that production was rushed: "it was more important for a caricature to be timely rather than a production of high artistic quality" (699).
20. As Lockhart's sketch suggests, discussion of Byron's image focused on his face as an index, a "welcome adjunct to reading" his poetry (Mole, "Ways of Seeing Byron" 69): the true cast of Byronic melancholy. The pseudo-miniatures of the tête-à-têtes in the eighteenth century accomplished the same thing with Robinson's image.
21. Toulalan lists several references to posture girls in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century pornographic texts, suggesting that "the revealing of the genitals to excite a client seems to have been a standard practice" (186–87). Robinson reinforces this association in the sketch when she comments that Tarleton "has often been a mere spectator, as he is now, of such follies" (187).
22. "It is this overweening, aggravated, intolerable sense of swelling pride and ungovernable self-will, that so often drives them mad; as

it is their blind fatuity and insensibility to all beyond themselves, that, transmitted through successive generations and confirmed by regal intermarriages, in time makes them idiots" ("On the Regal Character" 340).

23. The entire cost of William's coronation was just over 30,000 pounds (Ziegler 193). Victoria's cost about 70,000 pounds (Hibbert, *Queen Victoria* 71), while George IV's cost over three times as much. Cumming lists the total expenditure for his coronation as just over 238,000 pounds, of which 100,000 pounds were paid by Parliament and the rest came from France under the peace treaty (42).
24. William's biographer Philip Ziegler cites the "at times almost frantic" (152) avoidance of ceremony that characterized his brief reign. He quotes the Duke of Wellington's observation that "This is not a new reign, it is a new dynasty" and adds that it would be "more accurate to say that it was not a new king, it was a new concept of monarchy" (154–55).
25. Plunkett points out that "[a]ttacks and commentary upon the nineteenth-century monarchy as an institution have to be continually set against the much larger number of column inches engendered by the Queen's engagements" (14).

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Index

NOTE: In this index, the name "Caroline," when not otherwise qualified, refers to Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales, Queen Caroline; "George," to George, Prince of Wales, Prince Regent, King George IV; and "Robinson" to Mary Robinson. (The full names or titles are used in cases of possible ambiguity.)