

UC San Diego

UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations

Title

Queer Deformities : : Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Women's Fiction---
Haywood, Scott, Burney

Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/7sq8k58m>

Author

Farr, Jason S.

Publication Date

2013

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO

Queer Deformities: Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Women's
Fiction—Haywood, Scott, Burney

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

in

Literature

by

Jason S. Farr

Committee in charge:

Professor George Haggerty, Co-Chair
Professor Kathryn Shevelow, Co-Chair
Professor Michael Davidson
Professor Margaret Loose
Professor Cynthia Truant

2013

Copyright

Jason S. Farr, 2013

All rights reserved

The Dissertation of Jason S. Farr is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

Co-Chair

Co-Chair

University of California, San Diego

2013

DEDICATION

For John

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Signature Page.....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Acknowledgements.....	vii
Vita.....	xi
Abstract of the Dissertation.....	xii
Introduction: Deformity, Queerness, and Women’s Writing.....	1
Chapter One: Deafness, Masculinity, and the Community of Senses in Eliza Haywood’s <i>A Spy on the Conjuror</i> (1724) and the Duncan Campbell Compendium.....	45
Chapter Two: Sapphism and Accessibility in Sarah Scott’s <i>Millenium Hall</i> (1762).....	103
Chapter Three: Attractive Deformity: Enabling the “Shocking Monster” from Sarah Scott’s <i>Agreeable Ugliness</i> (1754).....	139
Chapter Four: Sharp Minds / Twisted Bodies: Physical Disability, Female Education, and Widowhood in Frances Burney’s <i>Camilla</i> (1796).....	170
Conclusion: The Variable Body Made Legible; or, where to go from here?.....	222
Bibliography.....	228

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1: Hand gesture chart from John Bulwer’s <i>Chirologia</i>	57
Figure 1.2: Sign alphabet chart from Bond’s <i>History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell</i>	84
Figure 1.3: Frontispiece from John Bulwer’s <i>Philocophus</i>	95
Figure 3.1: Illustrations from <i>Nothing Irregular in Nature: or, Deformity, a Fancy</i>	150
Figure 4.1: Illustration from Frances Barlow’s <i>Life of Æsop</i>	178
Figure 4.2: Another illustration from Barlow’s <i>Life of Æsop</i>	186

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I give heartfelt thanks to my committee, especially my chairs, George Haggerty and Kathryn Shevelow. I thank George for reading every word of my writing over the past three years, giving me generous, timely feedback and counsel, meeting with me on countless occasions, and taking me on as a student even though he had no obligation to do so. I thank Kathryn for initially introducing me to the queer eighteenth century, teaching me so much about theatrical culture and women's writing, hosting me at her beautiful vacation rental home in Islington while I worked at the British Library, and being a great mentor and friend from my first quarter in the department onward. I would also like to thank Michael Davidson for his mentorship, for introducing me to the vibrant field of disability studies, and for helping me to polish and submit my article on Frances Burney to *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*. I thank Margaret Loose for teaching me how to read and teach poetry, and Cynthia Truant for her encouragement and support in both the qualifying and defense stages of my graduate career. Thanks also to Rosemary George, Lisa Lowe, and Meg Wesling for being terrific Directors of Graduate Studies, and to Jodi Blanco, Jaime Concha, Stephanie Jed, Dayna Kalleres, Lisa Lampert-Weissig, and Don Wayne for offering such thought-provoking seminars during my course-work years at UCSD. Also, I would like to thank Corrinne Harol, whose classes inspired me to want to become an eighteenth-century scholar while I was an undergraduate at the University of Utah. I also thank Gema Guevara, also from Utah, for teaching me theoretical approaches to literature that I still use today, and for encouraging me to think seriously about a graduate career at UCSD.

My completion of this dissertation is also due in large part to generous fellowships and awards I have been fortunate to receive. Thanks especially to the Literature Department at UCSD, which has given me four quarters of fellowship support and a number of awards. With the time freed up from teaching this past year-and-a-half, I have been able to carry this dissertation to completion. I am also grateful to Dean Seth Lerer for the Arts and Humanities Initiative Fellowship, which allowed me to spend two delightful, project-defining months at the British Library conducting archival research. I too am thankful to the kind staff at Chawton House Library in Hampshire, UK for giving me a gorgeous space in which to read early editions of Eliza Haywood and Sarah Scott novels and to revise my dissertation. Thanks, too, to the librarians at the Huntington Library for helping me to find archival materials on the Bluestockings, Sarah Scott, and deaf education. I would like to thank the Greater San Diego Business Association Charitable Foundation for being champions of education for local LGBT students. The GSDBA provided me with generous scholarships during my second and third years at UCSD.

I feel very fortunate to work in eighteenth-century studies, a field in which a number of brilliant, engaging scholars have helped me along the way. During my three years of attending the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Meetings, I have met many wonderful mentors and friends. I would give the warmest of thanks to Chris Mounsey of the University of Winchester for his mentorship, and for helping me to think through my chapters on Sarah Scott and Frances Burney over lunch breaks, happy hour pints of ale, and dinners while I conducted research at the British Library over the summer of 2011. I also thank Paul Kelleher of Emory

University for being a stalwart friend, mentor, and support to me, and for hosting a terrific panel on sex and disability in the eighteenth century in San Antonio in 2012. Many thanks to Ashley L. Cohen of the University of Pennsylvania, who I have had the immense pleasure to work with at both the Huntington and British Libraries, and who has helped me think through my own engagement with archival work and critical theory. I am grateful to Susan Lanser and Helen Deutsch for reading my writing and for giving me feedback and encouragement. Thanks also to John Beynon, Fiona Brideoake, Lisa Freeman, Emily Kugler, Derrick Miller, Madeline Sutherland-Meier, Kristina Straub, and Miriam L. Wallace for their friendship, encouragement, and support.

I would also express my gratitude for my fellow graduate students at UCSD. With the collegiality and intellect of Kedar Kulkarni, Ted Gideonse, Tania Jabour, Eun Park, Jodi Eisenberg, Yumi Pak, Joo Ok Kim, Caralyn Bialo, Chase Smith, Chien-ting Lin, Ashvin Kini, Mary Reid, Lauren Heintz, Soren Frolich, and Tom Waidzunas, I have been able to develop this project into what it is. Thanks also to my good friend, Larry Eberhard, for always being willing to host me at his home in Silverlake when I work at the Huntington Library.

I would thank my parents, Patricia and David Farr, for teaching me to learn to love reading, and for their constant support throughout my graduate career and life. My heart is especially full of gratitude and love for my partner, John Linkins, whose unwavering support has helped me get to this point. He has been with me from the very beginning of my graduate school journey. He was by my side when I received my hearing impairment diagnosis in 2009, and he has been instrumental in helping me to

learn to live contentedly and comfortably as a queer, disabled man. I dedicate this dissertation to him.

Chapter Three, in full, is a reprint of a chapter that will appear in the collection *The Idea of Disability in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Chris Mounsey, Bucknell University Press, 2014. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Part of Chapter Four will appear in a forthcoming edition of *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*, University of Pennsylvania Press, Spring 2014 (55.1). The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

VITA

- 2002 Bachelor of Arts in Spanish,
University of Utah
- 2003 Bachelor of Arts in English,
University of Utah
- 2005 BCLAD (Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic
Development) Certificate: California Secondary Teaching Credential,
San Diego State University College of Education
- 2007-2013 Teaching Assistant, Muir College Writing Program,
University of California, San Diego
- 2009-2011 Teaching Assistant, Literature Department
University of California San Diego
- 2010 Master of Arts in Literatures in English,
University of California, San Diego
- 2013 Doctor of Philosophy in Literature,
University of California, San Diego

Publications

- “Sharp Minds / Twisted Bodies: Intellect, Disability, and Female Education in Frances Burney’s *Camilla* (1796),” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 55.1 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press). *in press
- “Attractive Deformity: Enabling the ‘Shocking Monster’ from Sarah Scott’s *Agreeable Ugliness*,” *The Idea of Disability in the Eighteenth Century*, ed. Chris Mounsey (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press). *in press
- “Homosexuality,” *Encyclopedia of British Literature: 1660-1789*, eds. Gary Day and Jack Lynch (London: Wiley-Blackwell). *forthcoming

Fields of Study

Major Field: Literatures in English

Eighteenth-Century Studies
Professors George Haggerty and Kathryn Shevelov

Disability Studies
Professor Michael Davidson

Queer Studies
Professor George Haggerty

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Queer Deformities: Disability and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Women's
Fiction—Haywood, Scott, Burney

by

Jason S. Farr

Doctor of Philosophy in Literature

University of California, San Diego, 2013

George Haggerty, Co-Chair

Kathryn Shevelow, Co-Chair

In this study, I argue that certain novels and archival sources of the eighteenth century depict deafness, disfigurement, and other forms of physical disability in unexpectedly empowering ways, and I demonstrate how these representations intersect with, and are informed by, unauthorized—or *queer*—genders and sexualities. Moreover, I show that the fiction of Eliza Haywood, Sarah Scott, and Frances Burney challenge ahistorical assumptions that disabled people have only been thought of as powerless, uneducated, and asexual in previous eras. My contention that eighteenth-century physical disability is constructed along a parallel cultural continuum to that of queerness engages with, and intervenes in, contemporary debates in queer theory and disability studies.

The Introduction sets the theoretical terms of my project, exploring the etymology of commonly-used Georgian terms such as “deformity” and “defect,” which connote corporeal variability and represent a nascent codification of bodily difference. Chapter One reveals that deafness, one kind of eighteenth-century ‘defect,’ was not always thought of as freakish or marginal. On the contrary, Eliza Haywood’s *A Spy upon the Conjuror* (1724) portrays a deaf protagonist as strong, attractive, and sexual. In Chapter Two, I argue that Sarah Scott’s *Millenium Hall* (1764) poses same-sex desire and communal families of choice as solutions to the abuses of patriarchy. The novel’s alignment of disability with sexuality demonstrates that the British culture of spectacle impacts in violent ways women and the physically disabled. In Chapter Three, I argue that an earlier novel of Scott’s, *Agreeable Ugliness* (1754) problematizes the kinds of common assumptions about deformity that can be found in a previously-neglected archival source *The Ugly Club Manuscript* (1743-54). *Agreeable Ugliness* depicts a young woman’s coming-of-age and sexual agency in the context of her own deformity. In Chapter Four, I examine Frances Burney’s novel *Camilla* (1796) alongside widely-read eighteenth-century biographies about Æsop, the Classical fabulist. I argue that *Camilla* extends the “monster-as-genius” trope found in Æsop’s biographies to women through the heroine Camilla’s younger, disfigured sister, Eugenia. In the conclusion, I pose some research questions that may guide my future work on this project as I develop it into a book.

Introduction: Deformity, Queerness, and Early Women's Fiction

“Deformed persons are commonly even with nature, for as nature hath done ill by them, so do they by nature; being . . . void of natural affection; and so they have their revenge of nature” (500). In this quote, Sir Francis Bacon, writing in 1612, suggests that people with disfigured, crippled, or otherwise abnormal bodies have unnatural affections due to the visibly apparent ways that they have been wronged by nature. In other words, for Bacon corporeal difference guarantees social transgression: to be deviant in body is to be deviant in comportment. Bacon goes on to argue that this social liminality causes “deformed persons” to “rescue and deliver themselves” from the “scorn” of society (500). Since they have been subjected to ridicule, these individuals “watch and observe the weakness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay” for their various tribulations (500). However, for Bacon, ridicule and social marginalization are only part of the experience of deformity. Visibly physically disabled people also enjoy professional success because their peers do not take them seriously: “[deformity] layeth their competitors and emulators asleep; as never believing they should in possibility of advancement, till they see them in possession” (500). Thus deformity, a charged and remarkably varied experience, is both a mark of transgression or otherness *and* a perverse impetus for empowerment.

Bacon is by no means the only influential English historical figure to construe deformity as transgressive or exotic. In a letter written in 1753, Lady Mary Montagu counsels her daughter, the Countess of Bute, to teach her own daughter “to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness

or lameness: the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of her acquaintance” (162) Satirical though it may be, Lady Mary’s letter calls attention to the rigid social barriers imposed on women’s education, and it makes a compelling analogy between a young woman’s intelligence and her body. Just as bodily irregularities incur unwanted attention, she implies, a young woman who possesses and demonstrates intelligence is bound to invite hostility from her peers. In Lady Mary’s estimation, a young woman’s mind should function, and her body appear, in socially sanctioned ways if the “he and she fools” are to be kept at bay. In this social paradigm, possession of an ordinary body and mind is the means by which a young lady will navigate the demanding courtship rituals of polite society in order to successfully transition from role of dutiful daughter to that of happy wife.

“Crookedness,” “lameness,” or “the parade of” intelligence, on the other hand, would marginalize a young woman from her peers, potentially subjecting her to a solitary and impoverished life. From this perspective, the stakes are high for eighteenth-century women to regulate their bodies and minds. Furthermore, Lady Mary’s letter suggests that a woman’s ‘normal’ body and unremarkable mind are the pillars of normative desire. Falling outside of this rubric are those women who are unable to hide their “crookedness” or who “parade” their intelligence.

Of course, not all women would have been able to heed Montagu’s advice, and the consequences for them, if not ideally socially situated, could be potentially devastating. The pervasive, brutal depictions of physically-disfigured women which proliferated in eighteenth-century print culture underscore this point all too well.

William Wycherley (1706) shares this kind of disparaging perspective in a poem that he dedicates “To a Little, Crooked Woman, with a Good Face and Eyes, tho’ with a Bunch Before, and Behind.” Here, Wycherley portrays a woman’s hunchback as an indelible sign of her chastity:

Because your Crooked Back does lie so high,
That to your Belly there’s no coming nigh,
Which, as your Back’s more low, more high does lie;
You then all Breast, all Shoulders, and all Head,
To be Love’s Term or Limit may be said,
By which our Love-Proceedings are forbidden
You, because Saddled, will never be Ridden. (220)

The speaker ridicules the woman as a caricature made up solely of abnormal body parts. After mapping the woman’s body in relation to her irregularly-shaped back, he surmises that heterosexual penetration could never occur due to the discordant arrangement of the woman’s anterior and posterior parts. The speaker thus portrays the woman as “Love’s Term or Limit”—a visible marker of what might constitute the thinkable boundaries of sexuality. Tellingly, the speaker marks the terrain beyond this corporeal boundary as a “forbidden” zone, where procreative relations are impossible to carry forth. In this way, Wycherley and Montagu share the assumption that a woman’s ordinary appearance is a prerequisite to heterosexual relations, though, as we have seen, Montagu is not uncritical of this. For Wycherley, on the other hand, deformity converts a woman into an asexual being who is not just undesirable, but physically unable to copulate. Ultimately, the poem situates physically disabled women as marking and standing outside of the bounds of sexual normativity.

It is not just deformed women who are marginalized by this kind of mockery: hunchbacked or otherwise deformed men are likewise depicted as incapable of

engaging in heterosexual intercourse. Colly Cibber's highly public attack on Alexander Pope underscores this notion. In a pamphlet addressed to "Mr. Pope," Cibber famously skewers the poet for his various physical anomalies.¹ In this scathing piece, Cibber writes that he had previously accompanied Pope to a brothel, where a "young nobleman who had a great deal of wicked humour" planned to "slip his little Homer, as he call'd him" to a prostitute, "that he might see what sort of Figure a Man of his Size, Sobriety, and Vigour (in Verse) would make, when the *frail* Fit of Love had got into him" (24, emphasis mine). A "smirking Damsel" subsequently tempts Pope's "little-tiny Manhood," and the two go off to a room together. After some time passes, Cibber enters their chamber to find "this little hasty Hero, like a terrible Tom Tit, pertly perching upon the Mount of Love!" Cibber pulls Pope by his heels off of the woman to save him from contracting syphilis, "which his thin Body might never have been cured of" (24-25). Cibber thus converts Pope's attempted sexual conquest into an absurd proposition, with the undersized poet a hideous, ineffectual bird on the insurmountable "Mount of Life." Cibber, meanwhile, plays the part of the privileged, able-bodied voyeur whose obtrusive eye and hands convert the already-laughable sex scene into an even more absurd ménage à trois. The scene's climax is not Pope's orgasm, as a typical sexual encounter would be, but the moment at which Cibber pulls on the legs of the "little Homer," dislodging him from his source of danger. As Cibber's satire makes clear, a "frail" man is not lusty enough to engage in sexual relations: Pope's deformity is a ridiculous, medically-compromised roadblock to one

¹ Pope had tuberculosis of the spine and was therefore hunchbacked and short, standing at four-and-a-half feet tall.

of the great rakish pastimes, brothel debauchery. In calling out Pope's "tiny-little Manhood," Cibber emphasizes Pope's impotence while capitalizing on the public's propensity to laugh at the spectacle of deformity—especially in the context of sexual intercourse. Further, Cibber's insistence on Pope's impotence makes clear that deformity and masculinity are inherently at odds with one another.

While disabled men are sexually incompatible with able-bodied women, they are perfectly suitable companions for disabled women, as a cruel mid-eighteenth-century joke book makes clear:

Upon a Lame Man, Newly Married.

George Limpus is lame, yet has gotten a Bride;
He's lame, he can't walk; why then he may ride.

On a Deform'd Lady

When in the dark on thy soft hand I hung,
And heard the tempting syren in thy tongue,
What flames, what darts, what anguish I endur'd--
But when the candle enter'd—I was cured. (*The Merry Companion* 32)

The lame man's and the deformed woman's bodies are depicted as crooked and therefore complimentary. So, while George Limpus's lameness keeps him from walking, it does not stop him from performing a sex act with a deformed lady, a cruelly- and crudely-portrayed compensation for his ambulatory distress.² The second stanza depicts the speaker, presumably of ordinary parts, overwhelmed with lust for a deformed lady. The light of the candle "cures" him of his passion, though, preventing sexual relations between his regular body and her irregular one. This excerpt, Cibber's satire, and Wycherley's poem reveal a common eighteenth-century assumption that ordinary men should seduce and bed or marry ordinary women, while 'abnormal'

² Roger Lund discusses this poem, as well as Wycherley's poem, in the context of the culture of ridicule of deformity (92-93).

women and men limp, hobble, and “ride” in ways that transgress and simultaneously define corporeal and sexual codes. These portrayals offer embodied renderings of Bacon’s argument about deformed peoples’ lack of natural affections. However, they also reveal that people with deformities are unnatural not just because they are scorned (as they are in each of the poems), but because they are physically incapable of walking, moving, or copulating in standard or harmonious ways.

As Bacon, Montagu, and Wycherley convey, deformity is a cause for ridicule and social marginalization on the one hand, and an indication of abnormal sexuality on the other. While Montagu and Wycherley view deformity as barring a woman from normative sexuality or kinship, Bacon suggests that deformity is unnatural and potentially threatening to people without deformities. Thus, deformity for both men and women not only indicates their aberrant corporeality: it signals their necessarily different experience of sexuality and society. In situating deformity along a similar social continuum to that of unauthorized genders and sexualities—what I will refer to throughout this dissertation as *queerness*—Bacon, Montagu, and Wycherley insist that deformity causes one to stand on the periphery of the social order, in a liminal space where unmonitored, unmentionable, or merely mockable forms of courtship and sex abound.³ One discourse of deformity perpetuated by print culture, as we have seen thus far, consists of deformity-as-spectacle, and deformed people as asexual,

³ In my dissertation, I use “queer” to describe alternative forms of sexuality and kinship, including non-procreative, intimate relationships between men and women, alternative kinship structures to that of the nuclear family (including same-sex living arrangements), and gender identities which subvert or deviate from socially-mandated forms of masculinity and femininity. I will justify and further define my use of this term in the upcoming section titled, “The Queerness of Deformity.”

transgressive, and inane. This intersection of aberrant bodies and desires, as I will argue, is a defining feature of eighteenth-century English literary culture. In this dissertation, I will explore the kind of interconnectedness between disability and queerness that Robert McRuer has articulated in *Crip Theory*. In this groundbreaking work, McRuer has argued that in a modern, US context, the idea of disability is contingent upon a sense of “compulsory able-bodiedness” in the same way that queerness’s ostensible unnaturalness is constituted by the fiction of “compulsory heterosexuality” (2). In an eighteenth-century English context, McRuer’s analogy is not irrelevant in spite of a different historical context. Eighteenth-century deformity, as I have already shown, is often portrayed as incompatible with nature and normative sexuality. Hence, the deformed body in the Georgian period is queer. What I mean by that is, deformities are portrayed in a similar way to unauthorized genders and sexualities in eighteenth-century print culture. They are often depicted as unnatural, aberrant, and disruptive to procreation or futurity.

Deformity in the Eighteenth Century

Despite the theoretical consistency which I have pointed out—between disability and queerness in a modern context, and deformity and unnatural affections in the eighteenth century—the day-to-day reality of disabled individuals in the eighteenth century is very different from what it is today, and it is not my intention to mask this disjointedness. While “disability” is a modern category used to codify people with physical or intellectual impairments of one kind or another, it did not exist as an identity category in the eighteenth century. This is not to say that the word itself

did not exist: “disability” was occasionally used in a couple of contexts. For example, one could be disabled from passing on or inheriting an estate if accused of treason or a felony (Turner 17). “Disabled” could also be used to refer to military people who were injured in service, while “able-bodied” was a descriptor for men who were capable of performing manual labor or serving in the military (18-20). These very specific, gendered uses of the terms “disability” and “able-bodiedness” call attention to some of the theoretical and historical disconnects between our current vocabulary of disability and that of the past.

Because “disability” and “able-bodiedness” have different denotations in the Augustan era and were not commonly used, it is expedient to examine some of the more pervasive terms associated with irregular bodies. “Deformity” in the eighteenth century, for instance, refers to “the quality or condition of being marred or disfigured in appearance; disfigurement; unsightliness, ugliness” and “abnormal formation of the body or of some bodily member” (*OED*). In his 1754 tract *Deformity: An Essay*, William Hay addresses the topic of “Bodily Deformity,” which he notes “is visible to every Eye” (5). Thus for Hay, deformity denotes visible bodily impairment. Elsewhere, in *Crito; or, a Dialogue on Beauty* (1752), Joseph Spence discusses deformity as that which stands in opposition to beauty, but he also argues that vice is “the most odious of all Deformities” (59). Spence’s rendering of “deformity” exhibits the overlap between physical ugliness and sin, implying that the latter exacerbates the former. In this sense, Bacon’s term “deformed persons” grants subjectivity (albeit a negatively-tinged one) to physically disabled people, but it does not unify these people into a readily perceivable, medically-coherent identity category as “disability” does

today. These archival examples suggest that, in a Georgian context, the cultural and social rifts between those who are physically ‘normal’ and those who deviate from the norm in their physical appearance or bodily ability are vast. Further, this word offers linguistic evidence of the ways in which individuals with impairments were viewed as unsightly and deviant in the eighteenth century. In these usages, deformity occupies a negative place within the Georgian cultural imagination.

“Defect” and “monstrosity” are two other eighteenth-century labels used to define people whose appearance deviates from what is considered normal. According to the *OED*, defect is used in the eighteenth century to denote “the fact of being wanting or falling short; lack or absence of something essential to completeness.” Thus, defect is reliant upon a notion of wholeness. The term “monstrosity,” on the other hand, is suggestive of the extremities of otherness. It encompasses the ‘unnatural outer limits’ of a body’s appearance, and is supposed to be indicative of “prodigies or divine displeasure” (Turner 27). Hence, ‘monstrosity’ could be applied to people who are excessively large or who have additional limbs, such as giants or people with extra fingers or toes, or to those who are seen as being in some way deficient, like little people or those with missing limbs. As these definitions suggest, ‘deformity,’ ‘defect,’ and ‘monstrosity’ entail some significant denotative differences, but there is some common ground among them. Above all, these labels are suggestive of a conformist culture in which deviations from the standard are not looked upon kindly.

Despite these pervasive eighteenth-century views, I hope to show that deformity can be recuperated within this historical context to be rendered just, empowering, beautiful and above all, human. William Hay’s essay is a crucial text to

analyze for these very reasons. He is, to my knowledge, the first disabled English writer to defend and even revel in his disabilities. Much of Hay's essay is dedicated to repudiating Bacon's short essay which opens this introduction. He counters Bacon's argument about a deformed individual's boldness, but allows that Bacon might be right about their unnatural affections:

If by natural Affection is meant a partial Regard for Individuals; I believe the Remark is judicious, and founded in human Nature. Deformed Persons are despised, ridiculed, and ill-treated by others; are seldom Favourites, and commonly most neglected by Parents, Guardians, and Relations: and therefore, as they are not indebted for much Fondness, it is no wonder, if they repay but little. (41-42)

Hay justifies the unnaturalness of people such as himself due to the harm and ridicule that they face. While Bacon takes for granted the mocking of deformed individuals, Hay interrogates this ridicule, which, he claims, he faces in large crowds and among people of "inferior" rank. Though he reinforces the classist views often held by people of his particular social station, Hay also shreds prevailing attitudes toward people like him. He accepts some of the terms of Bacon's declaration but calls into question the social paradigm that condones ill treatment of people who are physically different.

Moreover, Hay could almost be said to celebrate deformity. His various physical deformities facilitate a healthier lifestyle than that of ordinary individuals: "Deformed Persons have a less Share of Strength than others, and therefore should naturally be more careful to preserve it: and as Temperance is the great Preservative of Health, it may incline them to be more temperate" (22). He also believes that, as a consequence of his lack of mobility, he preserves his health by not overexerting himself while finding more sedentary time for intellectual pursuits such as reading and

thinking: “On the whole I conclude, that Deformity is a Protection to a Man’s Health and Person; which (strange as it may appear) are better defended by Feebleness than Strength” (27-28). In his formulation of deformity, Hay perhaps unwittingly accepts the terms of Bacon’s argument that defect facilitates success. Unlike Bacon, however, who posits scorn and vengeance as impure motivations for a deformed person’s prosperity, Hay claims that physically disabled people may achieve salutary well-being through temperance and virtuous means. Hence, Hay’s argument strips deformity of its unnaturalness and replaces it with laudable and desirable traits, even if said traits are couched within terms that would be necessarily legible within polite society. Simultaneously, Hay attempts to redefine the terms of the culture of deformity. This dissertation will engage with Hay’s transformative essay and consider literary texts from that period which, like *Deformity: An Essay*, depict physical disability as something which facilitates intelligence, virtue, and attractiveness.

The eighteenth century figures prominently in the development of modern discourses of disability and is therefore a crucial period to consider within a disability studies framework. Lennard Davis argues that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, disability comes to be “relatively organized” as “a socially driven relation to the body” (3). For Davis, the later eighteenth century’s “remarkable” proliferation of disabled authors and characters—whose presence in the literary marketplace called social and cultural attention to hunchbacked men and women, pockmarked visages, and a host of other bodily characteristics—is symptomatic of this discursive shift.⁴

⁴ In *Enforcing Normalcy*, Davis discusses the emergence of statistics and norms in the nineteenth century as being integral to this discursive formation (23-49).

Davis argues that for eighteenth-century women, children, and the elderly, a disability may be a tribulation to overcome in order to develop spirituality or enhance virtue. Concomitant with this cultural phenomenon is that of disabled male antagonists, those undeserving “literary villains, limping, one-eyed, one-armed evil men” (62). Davis theorizes this contradiction as being symptomatic of the disabled body’s incorporation into the social order, which, as the nineteenth century progresses, consolidates with the emergence of the bell curve and the establishment of the concept of the norm.

The importance of Davis’s work for both eighteenth-century studies and disability studies can hardly be overstated, but I will challenge his arguments by examining positive examples of male protagonists—such as Duncan Campbell, an early eighteenth-century deaf soothsayer (who I examine in chapter one)—and male historical figures, such as William Hay (chapter three), who, as I have already mentioned, sees his various physical disabilities as facilitating a better lifestyle. In addition to enlarging the eighteenth-century role of disabled men, I will interrogate Davis’s claim about female characters—whose virtue, he claims, is heightened as a consequence of their impairments—to consider the role that disability plays in female education and other proto-feminist endeavors. In the cases of Sarah Scott’s *Agreeable Ugliness* and Frances Burney’s *Camilla*, I argue, women who successfully manage their physical impairments may develop intellectually even as their virtue is increased. In these cases, a young woman’s bodily irregularities contribute to a heightened awareness of her marginalized status within a patriarchal order which unduly values bodily regularity.

The Social Model of Disability and the Idea of Variability

Throughout my dissertation, I rely on the premise that disability is socially constituted. By this, I mean that distinctions should be made between a person's physical limitations ("impairments"), and the social exclusion of segments of a given population resulting from lack of access in certain locales and environments ("disability"). "Impairment," in other words, refers to one's physical variabilities (deafness, blindness, lameness, and so forth) while "disability" signifies those social barriers—lack of curb cuts for wheelchair users, for example—that impinge on one's ability to efficiently or successfully navigate a community. To perceive disability as a socially-driven concept is to begin the task of unmasking the cultural presuppositions which, since perceived as 'natural,' marginalize a large segment of humanity. Within this theoretical framework, disability "is structural and public," in contrast to impairment, which "is individual and private" (Shakespeare 198). The social model of disability enables a sense of collective identity, political focus vis-a-vis the identification of specific forms of social oppression, and a respite from self-pity (to be supplanted by a feeling of anger and pride) for disabled people.

The social model of disability will be one of the underlying assumptions of my argument. As a socially-constituted category, disability shifts in meaning from historical moment to historical moment, much like sexuality, race, and gender. As Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow argue, "Disability identity...is never simply a natural fact; it is, rather, made and remade in historical circumstances and by historical agents" (7). If, as McRuer and Mollow advocate, we cease to think of disability as an embodied experience that remains unchanged across historical and cultural contexts,

we may access new critical perspectives in order to unsettle and dismantle problematic norms surrounding the body. Once those norms are exposed for what they are—fictions which constitute and reconstitute power—we might then be capable of recognizing and celebrating the human body in all of its permutations. Chris Mounsey’s recent coining of the critical term *variability* affords just this kind of critical shift. Mounsey affixes ‘*varia-*’, emphasizing corporeal diversity (in lieu of the disparaging and depriving ‘*dis-*’) to ‘*ability*’ as a means of exploding binaries such as ‘*able-bodied/disabled.*’ Further, Mounsey’s use of *variability* advances the social, political, and historical expedient of recognizing and celebrating the inevitable differences in bodies as we bring them to bear on our readings of literary and historical texts.⁵ *Variability* thus enlarges our critical understanding of the body by doing away with the notion of corporeal normalcy and its attendant hierarchization of bodies.

Moreover, the idea of variability substantiates the social model of disability by calling attention to the binaries that place further limits on disabled people. In opposing the social model approach, Tom Shakespeare has argued that a focus on the cultural construction of disability does not adequately address the day-to-day difficulty of living with impairments. I would argue, however, that our familiarity with the concept of impairment-as-limitation is the more clearly understood part of our cultural narrative. The idea that disability has its own complex history and social framework grants a sense of pride and empowerment to those who experience the daily reality of

⁵ Chris Mounsey, “Queer Theory, Crip Theory, or Variability: Towards an Inclusive Discourse for Literary Analysis,” talk presented at ASECS, 2012, San Antonio as part of a panel, “Sexuality and Disability in the Eighteenth Century,” chaired by Paul Kelleher. “Variability” is a term which assumes that all bodies vary in appearance and function. This approach, for Mounsey, breaks binaries and empowers the disabled subject by operating upon a theoretical position of agency, rather than marginalization.

physical impairment. With this in mind, I make a conscious effort in my criticism to disentangle the cultural interconnectedness of disability and pity. In other words, I attempt to eradicate the unequal power transaction between pitying subject and pitiable object. In pity's place, I emphasize that people with disabilities have the agency and the power to effect change around them. By imbuing the social model of disability with the concept of variability, I employ a transformative critical shift that enables new understandings of the culture of deformity in the eighteenth century. At the same time, this synthesis of variability with the social model allows us—as teachers, students, activists, and citizens—to replace the concept of normalcy with the expansive vision that no two bodies are the same in form or function, and that communities must account for this inevitability through increased awareness, accessibility, and accommodation.

The aligning of the social model of disability with the concept of variability also enables a critical form of empowerment for people with disabilities. Throughout my dissertation, I will draw attention to an alternative history of disability that formulates a similar perspective. In an eighteenth-century context, the popular form of the emergent novel occasionally portrays disability in empowering ways, facilitating the possibility for critical revision. This re-framing of disability, while perhaps surprising to perceive in the Georgian period, should give us pause in assuming that disabilities have always been viewed as freakish or marginal.⁶ I argue that disability is not, and has not always been the embodied experience of 'the other,' but that it is part

⁶ Felicity Nussbaum argues that the long eighteenth century is a time period in which physical "anomaly" is an assured indicator of one's social marginality (*Limits of the Human* 1-2).

of the social, physical, and psychological experience of being human. Some writers and thinkers from previous centuries, as I will show, have understood this to be so.

Disability now, or deformity then, defies all self/other binaries. It impacts people of all racial, national, or sexual backgrounds. Everyone can and will become disabled at some point in their lives, whether temporarily or permanently. For these reasons, Lennard Davis regards research on disability an important task: “What is more representative of the human condition,” he asks, “than the body and its vicissitudes?” (*Disability Studies Reader* xv). From Davis’s theoretical perspective, an understanding of how able-bodied norms marginalize such a large percentage of the population on a daily basis is paramount. That upwards of 43 million Americans are currently experiencing some kind of impairment—and that many more will at some point in their lives have a physical or mental limitation—highlights the relevance and consequence of disability studies, a field that has theoretical implications which cut across race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, and class (xv).⁷ Since many of the publications in this field focus on the post-Civil Rights era, there is much literary-historical work that needs to be done to exhume the archives of a somewhat unknown crippled past. In 2011, 2012, and 2013, the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Conference held the first panels on disability for this particular organization. The talks and ensuing discussions at these meetings were thought-provoking and exciting, and now there is momentum among some eighteenth-

⁷ ---. xv.

century scholars to uncover literary and historical registers of disability.⁸ This dissertation owes much to the these panels. It is my hope that this project will stimulate further intellectual discussion by opening up a new theoretical and archival focus on the queer genders and sexualities that so often seem to surround and intersect with deformity.

The Queerness of Deformity

Throughout “Queer Deformities,” I will argue that the novels of Haywood, Scott, and Burney assume that the social and intellectual empowerment of extraordinary bodies is marked by queer desire. This alignment of queerness and disability speaks volumes about the emergence of modern disabled and queer subjectivities. As critical terms and modern identity categories, queerness and disability challenge Enlightenment thinking. While “queer” unsettles normative kinship and heterosexual desire, “disability” challenges the culture of regularity that is a trademark of the Enlightenment. Though queerness and disability have been jointly analyzed by critics of contemporary culture, their interdependence has yet to be examined in pre-modern eras.⁹ This oversight leaves unexamined problematic assumptions about disabled people; namely, that they do not have sexual desire, and that they are not able to forge sexual or emotional intimacies with others.

⁸ “Looking at Disability in the Eighteenth Century,” a two-part panel held at ASECS 2011, Vancouver, BC. Subsequently, there were two panels on disability at both the 2012 and 2013 meetings. There is a forthcoming anthology on disability, in which chapter three of this dissertation will appear (*Enabling: The Idea of Disability in the Eighteenth Century*), as well as a conference held in July, 2013, which focused exclusively on the History of Disability—*VariAbilit(ies)*, held at Emory University, June 4th-7th, 2013.

⁹ Michael Davidson, Robert McRuer, David Serlin, and Abby Wilkerson have all explored the intersection of sexuality and disability in their scholarship.

As this project's title indicates, the critical term "queer" will figure prominently throughout this dissertation. I would take a moment to lay out my justification for using this term in an eighteenth-century context. As Susan Lanser has shown, queerness denotes a "resistance to all categories" and "an attack on rational epistemologies and classificatory systems in favor of the disorder, or the different logic, of desire" (21). What is more, Lanser makes a compelling case for understanding "queer" as a pre-modern term, for the emerging sapphist—or, "women whose erotic desires are oriented primarily to women"—demonstrates "that the Enlightenment project of fixing sexual categories was from the start an unstable and self-contradicting enterprise" (22). Lanser describes Anne Lister's early nineteenth-century use of "queer" as a euphemism for vagina in her sexual encounters with other women, giving queer a sexually-charged connotation. George Haggerty likewise offers evidence of the sexual aspect of queerness in his analysis of Horace Walpole's use of the term. In a letter to Richard West, Walpole discusses the "queerness" of England in relation to Italy, where he is traveling at the time. In the letter, Walpole implies that English queerness "is predicated on the suggestion of Italian same-sex love" ("Queering Horace Walpole" 546). Hence, in addition to its theoretical scope, queer has linguistic and historical relevancy for the period. The label "queer" suits the aims of this project, which is to identify those cultural registers which align extraordinary bodies with same-sex or non-procreative erotic desire and alternative kinship structures. Eliza Haywood, Sarah Scott, and Frances Burney, in their own ways, establish queer intimacies locatable in and around the disabled body.

Queer desire in this historical context would have also been understood as “unnatural desire.” It must be noted that in this era, “unnatural affections” could be used in a variety of contexts. In *Characteristicks: An Inquiry Concerning Virtue and Merit* (1714), Shaftesbury regards “natural affections” as consisting of “love, complacency, good-will, and...a sympathy with the kind or species” (65). The man of natural affection, according to Shaftesbury, is one who seeks after friendship, conducts virtuous, selfless deeds, and continuously refines his education. In contrast to the man of natural affections, the man of unnatural affections is a “villain” or “a cruel enthusiast, or bigot, a persecutor, or murderer, a bravo, a pirate or any villain of less degree, who is false to the society of mankind in general” (81). Other types that Shaftesbury accuses of indulging in unnatural affections include tyrants who “delight in beholding the torments” of others, villains who revel in “malignity,” misanthropes, and foreigners of “barbarous countries” who take part in superstitious practices. At the end of this litany of unnatural practices, Shaftesbury refers to those who practice bestiality and sodomy: “There might be other Passions nam’d, such as unnatural lusts in foreign Kinds or Species, with other Perversions of the amorous Desire within our own” (166). The anonymously-penned treatise *Satan’s Harvest Home* (1748) discusses in much greater specificity the practice of sodomy in England in terms of its unnaturalness. Upon enumerating the growth of effeminacy due to a “soft” education, the author writes, “Thus, unfit to serve his King, his Country, or his Family, this Man of Clouds dwindles into nothing, and leaves a Race as effeminate as himself; who, unable to please the Women, chuse rather to run into unnatural Vices one with another, than to attempt what they are but to sensible they cannot perform” (50). The

offspring of a weak generation of men, it is implied, engage in sodomy, a most “unnatural” practice. Thus, to be unnatural in an eighteenth-century context is to stand outside of the law of fellowship, to actively participate in cruelty or barbarity, to worship in non-Anglican religions, or to engage in sodomitical or non-procreative sexual relations.

People with deformities, as Bacon argues, must be added to the list of those who transgress or flout social convention. In the same short essay from which I quoted to begin my introduction, Bacon argues that deformity is imbued with an exotic, anachronistic form of gender and sexuality when he discusses royalty’s habit of placing eunuchs in positions of authority. Shortly after discoursing upon deformed peoples’ unnatural affections, Bacon writes, “Kings in ancient times (and at this present in some countries) were wont to put great trust in eunuchs; because they that are envious towards all are obnoxious and officious, towards one. But yet their trust towards them, hath rather been as to good spials, and good whisperers, than good magistrates and officers” (500). While hardly a laudable description, this passage suggests that eunuchs are privy to certain royal privileges that might be unavailable to ordinary people. It is telling that Bacon chooses the eunuch as the quintessential example of deformity, for in early modern England, the eunuch is viewed as an asexual, “half-man” or “quasi-human” who “mocks both sexes” and embodies a unique, foreign, or antiquated gender/sex subjectivity (Taylor 149). On the other hand, Bacon suggests that eunuchs are empowered by their castration. In stark contrast to our modern, post-Freud conceptions of castration, Bacon posits the eunuch’s ‘loss’ as strength. The extraordinary contours of the eunuch’s body are directly responsible for

his extraordinary accumulation of political power, and this notion, though perhaps a foreign one today, would have been common in Bacon's time. In the Ottoman Empire, eunuchs played integral roles within the court, where they were entrusted with control over harems. Within a European, Christian context, eunuchs were exemplary members of the church fold, as their wounded anatomy carried currency within a religious system that values martyrs and those who undergo physical suffering.¹⁰ "For certain specialized purposes," writes Gary Taylor, "the eunuch was not a defective man but an improved one" (38).¹¹ While Bacon demonstrates that deformity may increase the amount of political or social power that an individual wields, his use of the eunuch as the epitome of physical difference imbues deformity with a transgressive exoticism that may be understood in our current moment as "queer." In the same way that the ostensibly coherent, 'natural' categories of heterosexuality and masculinity produce, and are challenged by, queer sexualities and genders, the fiction of corporeal wholeness simultaneously reinforces, and is threatened by, the idea of deformity.

Bacon's suggestion that deformity may provide one with an impetus to empowerment, and William Hay's insistence on seeing his own deformity as that which gives him certain advantages over those with ordinary bodies, provide a framework that I will explore in my critical responses to Haywood, Scott, and Burney.

¹⁰ Castrated males were esteemed as singers, as Farinelli and other Italian castrati would demonstrate with their wild popularity in England in the eighteenth century. As Kathryn Shevelov points out in *Charlotte*, they could also be desired as lovers (96).

¹¹ Stephen Orgel also discusses the various advantages to castration in Renaissance England: "good arguments could be produced in favor of castrating your son—the same good arguments as those involved in deciding he was going to have a career as a priest or a monk, or in sending your daughter into a convent. Such decisions guaranteed the child a good and, in the case of the castrati, often lucrative career; and celibacy, if you were serious about your religion, was a virtue" (55).

In order to do this, my project will acknowledge on the one hand, the queerness of deformity, and on the other, the normalization of deformity and queerness inherent in these novelists' writings. Haywood, Scott, and Burney demonstrate, to varying degrees, that deformity may promote well-being, intellect, and virtue. They each grapple with the assumption that deformity is unnatural, and yet they also demonstrate an ability to imagine it as something inherently natural. This tension between deformity-as-unnatural and deformity-as-natural will be prevalent throughout my dissertation. Rather than attempting to resolve this tension, though, I would like to highlight its prominence in order to point out the contradictions and complexities of the social construction of deformity.

The fact that this project is invested in the unnatural aspect of deformity does not mean that I will embrace a theoretical position of negation. In fact, I am most interested in the ways in which Haywood, Scott, and Burney naturalize the queer and the disabled, challenging Bacon's derogative understanding of deformity even while they uphold his view of it as potentially empowering. In these authors' novels, the physically anomalous and the queer co-habitate and co-exist in beautiful, harmonious ways, but I would also like to emphasize that each of these novelists goes to great lengths to naturalize the strange bodies and unusual desires which they imagine. Eliza Haywood, for instance, posits her novel's profoundly deaf hero, Duncan Campbell, as the epitome of masculinity, the moral center of the narrative, and the undisputed patriarch of his family and friends: he is married to a non-disabled woman, has children, and acts as a kind of father-figure to the female narrator and the other women with whom he interacts. Haywood hardly dwells upon Campbell's deafness, leaving

the reader with the sense that hearing impairment is no stumbling block to sexual fulfillment or happiness. Sarah Scott enacts a similar strategy in her novel *Agreeable Ugliness*, the subject of chapter three. The first-person female narrator in this novel is physically grotesque, a “shocking monster” who at one point considers eschewing marriage entirely in favor of domestic bliss with an older woman. Yet by novel’s end she becomes the center of feminine virtue and morality and is granted marriage to the novel’s hero. Frances Burney, likewise, converts her hunchbacked, pockmarked heroine, Eugenia Tyrold, into an intellectual young woman who pens a critique of patriarchy and marries the man of her dreams. In each of these literary examples, the queerness of the disabled character in question is brought to the center of the novel’s moral framework. In this normalizing of the abnormal, each of the novels upends Bacon’s assumption that “deformed persons” are “void of natural affection” while they uphold his view that deformity is ultimately empowering. In these novels, the empowerment of deformed characters is couched in terms of material, emotional, and sexual wellbeing. In one way or another, the novels of Haywood, Scott, and Burney resist dominant discourses about sexuality by amplifying the possibilities for disabled people to participate in loving relationships of varying “intensities” and “forms.”¹²

These novels’ creative, alternative kinship arrangements amplify the meaning of “home” in a Georgian context. As Nancy Armstrong has shown, domestic novels of

¹²Michel Foucault argues, “Imagining a sexual act that does not conform to the law or to nature, that’s not what upsets people. But that individuals might begin to love each other, that’s the problem. That goes against the grain of social institutions...The institutional regulations cannot approve such relations, with their multiple intensities, variable colorations, imperceptible movements, and changing forms—relations that produce a short circuit and introduce love where there ought to be law, regularity, and custom.” This is a quote which George Haggerty theorizes and explores at length in *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century*.

the later eighteenth century play a crucial discursive role in formulating the modern household. I will entertain the notion that the “modern household” is complex, layered, and ultimately performative. Judith Butler regards kinship as not always being reducible to Oedipal structures. Reflecting upon the work of anthropologists such as David Schneider, Carol Stack, and Kath Weston, Butler claims, “kinship is a kind of *doing*, one that does not reflect a prior structure, but that can only be understood as an enacted practice” (123). Butler further argues that by examining kinship as an enacted practice, we can “consider how modes of patterned and performative doing bring kinship categories into operation and become the means by which they undergo transformation and displacement” (123). While this theorization of kinship illuminates the ethnographic work done on contemporary U.S. queer and African-American communities and other minority communities, I will consider the ways in which Butler’s assertion is applicable to the English cultural imaginary in the eighteenth century. By examining the relationships and friendships portrayed by these novelists, it is possible to gain further insight into modes of domesticity and kinship that are not connected to blood relations or the conjugal couple, thereby demonstrating the performativity of the eighteenth-century institution of the family. The overlap between queerness and disability in these eighteenth-century novels, as I will show, is marked by a confluence of sexual desire, physical variability, and the drive for emotional interconnectedness. These novels all open themselves up to erotic possibilities among and around the disabled while expanding our contemporary understanding of the development of the modern nuclear family in the eighteenth century.¹³

¹³ Lawrence Stone discusses the development of the modern cultural phenomenon of the

To think about sexuality and disability together requires a re-framing of our preconceived notions about the ostensible asexuality of disability—a contemporary discourse which, as we have seen, is also identifiable in the early eighteenth century, when Wycherley, Montagu, and Cibber penned their satirical accounts about deformity. Robert McRuer probes the asexual assumptions associated with disability by asking some provocative, facilitative questions: “What if disability were sexy? And what if disabled people were understood to be both subjects and objects of a multiplicity of erotic desires and practices, both within and outside the parameters of heteronormative sexuality?” (“Disabling Sex” 107). Here, McRuer suggests that corporeal variability may be a locus of sexual desire, thereby recasting disability as attractive and troubling assumptions about able-bodiedness and sexuality. McRuer’s questions have critical implications for the Georgian period, too. If we keep in mind that this period is one in which modern genders and sexualities begin to take shape, and that it is an era in which a notion of the average body emerges, then McRuer’s questions are worth taking seriously.¹⁴ As the fiction of Haywood, Scott, and Burney demonstrate, deformed figures in this era may be both “subjects and objects” of desire, sometimes in a transgressive way, but often within the “parameters” of normative sexuality. The physically disabled characters in these novels exemplify the notion that desire is not strictly directed toward or felt by the able-bodied. These narratives challenge the assumption that deformity is merely asexual, or laughable, or both, and

nuclear family in his book, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*.

¹⁴ Michel Foucault, Michael McKeon, Nancy Armstrong, Lennard Davis, and a host of other scholars have made the argument that the eighteenth century is a time period in which our modern conceptions of these categories begin to come into being.

they draw our attention to the ways that deformity may be more clearly understood through a queer lens. Early English novels provide an ideal platform for this discursive genealogy. With their tendency to emphasize domesticity, sexuality, the family, the body, and the biography of individual characters, eighteenth-century prose fiction offers insight into the erotic contours of deformity.

Deformity, Women Writers, and the Early English Novel

One of the primary assumptions I make throughout this dissertation is that women writers are especially capable of portraying physical disability in fiction because in this period, members of “the fair sex” are still thought of as incomplete men. Aristotle’s contention that a woman is in form and function a “deformed male” held sway well into the Georgian period, and this gendered sense of deformity plays a remarkable role in women’s fiction of the era that I will be covering (Allen 97). Because women writers may have seen themselves as imperfect, unideal, or incomplete versions of men, I would suggest that they are able to imagine deformity in ways that sometimes defy conventional thought. I do not mean to imply that women’s writing is somehow essentially different to that of men, but I would argue that women writers occupy an especially suitable position within eighteenth-century culture to comment on deformity. In the words of Jane Spencer, “women writers are in a special position because of society’s attitude to their sex; and their work is likely to be affected by their response to that position... Women having been oppressed as women, it is not only reasonable but necessary to consider women as forming a group with significant interests in common” (ix). In the same way that disabled people

communicate what it means to be disabled in our modern context, I will argue that liminally-situated women writers offer profound insights into deformity in the Georgian period. With its emphasis on interiority and the experience of the individual, the novel form allows for a revealing, subjective rendering of deformity. Deformity is, after all, reliant on a sense of an individual's unique bodily experience, and it is this kind of uniqueness that the early novel aspires to capture.

This notion of a distinct, variable, and individual embodiment is a reflection of the genre of the English novel itself, which in its early stages was considered among eighteenth-century thinkers and writers as being especially popular due to its representation of real-life scenarios. In *The Progress of Romance* (1785), Clara Reeve writes that novels diverge from earlier prose romances in their representation of what is “probable” and quotidian:

The Romance is an heroic fable, which treats of fabulous persons and things. The Novel is a picture of real life and manners, and of the times in which it is written. The Romance in lofty and elevated language, describes what never happened nor is likely to happen. The Novel gives a familiar relation of such things, as pass every day before our eyes, such as may happen to our friend, or to ourselves; and the perfection of it, is to represent every scene, in so easy and natural a manner, and to make them appear so probable, as to deceive us into a persuasion (at least while we are reading) that all is real, until we are affected by the joys or distresses, or the persons in the story, as if they were our own.
(111)

For Reeve, readers feel an intense emotional connection with a novel's characters due to the narrative's realism. Unlike its archaic predecessor, the romance, the novel offers true-to-life plot complications which “deceive” readers into thinking that the story is true. The reader thus takes on the distresses of the main character. Whether the struggle depicted is a servant girl's tireless vigilance in maintaining her chastity, as is

the case for Pamela Andrews in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, or the economic and moral distresses of a bastard son, as Henry Fielding describes in *Tom Jones*, the novel resonates with readers due to its capacity to depict an individual character's difficulties within a demanding social order. That these narratives reflect a 'probable' life experience seems especially well-suited for deformity: just as a novel portrays deformity as the life experience of ordinary individuals, so too might the reader understand that he or she may, like Eugenia in *Camilla*, be taken ill with the smallpox, or perhaps become disfigured in permanent ways. Thus, early novels have the potential to portray deformity as an individual's struggle against an inaccessible society.

This notion of personal struggle is contingent upon a sense of individualism. In his groundbreaking study, *The Rise of the Novel*, Ian Watt argues that the novel's emergence is most clearly epitomized by the writings of male writers such as Daniel Defoe, Fielding, and Richardson. Watt maintains that novels flourish as the preeminent cultural form within a philosophical, economic, and religious context in which individualism and "originality" come to play increasingly prominent roles. Watt sounds remarkably like Clara Reeve when he argues that previous literary forms, such as the romance, "had reflected the general tendency of their cultures to make conformity to traditional practice the major test of truth," while the novel challenges this tradition in its emphasis on "individual experience which is always unique and therefore true" (13). Watt sees the naming of characters in novels as indicative of this shift. Unlike earlier prose fiction, in which characters' names reflect "particular qualities" or "which excluded any suggestion of real and contemporary life," novelists

“named their characters in such a way as to suggest that they were to be regarded as particular individuals in the contemporary social environment” (19). Thus, the generic shift that Watt identifies is underscored by the experience of the individual, whose life experience invariably differs from that of other members of society, but whose fictional biography is meant to be representative of a real-life scenario. This emphasis on the individual’s subjective experience is crucial to consider in relation to disability. The notion of the individual’s daily struggle (and the potential for this struggle to consist of the character’s variable body) has much to do with the emergence of a middle-class consciousness that proliferates due to the rise of print culture and the growth of a literate public.¹⁵

While Watt makes important and influential points about middle-class individualism in the early novel, he also makes some critical missteps which have been pointed out by subsequent scholarship. Michael McKeon, for example, contends that evidence of middle-class individualism may be found as far back as the thirteenth century, thereby troubling Watt’s claim that the notion of the individual is somehow ‘novel’ in the eighteenth century. McKeon also demonstrates the influence of the aristocracy in spite of the newfound strength of the bourgeoisie: he points out, for example, that Watt’s discussion of the middle-class is far too schematic in its failure to account for upwardly-mobile, bourgeois individuals who long to be embraced by the aristocracy. In addition to this, McKeon suggests that Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding do not, as Watt and Reeve claim, make a complete break from the genre of romance

¹⁵ For more on the topic of the growth of the public sphere in England and Western Europe, see Jurgen Habermas’s *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*.

because they incorporate “many of its stock situations and conventions” (2). In order to redress these issues, Watt relies on Marxist dialectics to argue that the novel is a result of competing ideologies which originate not in the eighteenth century, but in beginning of the seventeenth century. Even in his attempt to disentangle Watt’s thesis about the middle-class, however, McKeon’s argument that the novel internalizes the “concerns” and values of the bourgeoisie leaves room for considering the novel’s portrayal of a middle-class individual’s singular embodiment (22).

Another of Watt’s critics, Nancy Armstrong, expands upon *The Rise of the Novel* to take into account eighteenth and nineteenth-century writing for, about, and by women. Armstrong wonders “why women began to write respectable fiction near the end of the eighteenth century, became prominent novelists during the nineteenth century, and on this basis achieved the status of artists during the modern period” (7). She takes Watt to task for his inability to conceptualize the integral role of women writers in the early novel form. Watt, for example, merely mentions in passing the literary achievements of Jane Austen as a microcosm for the success of women novelists: “the feminine sensibility was in some ways better equipped to reveal the intricacies of personal relationships and was therefore at a real advantage in the realm of the novel.” Armstrong in turn interrogates Watt’s problematic assumptions in this particular quote: “Why the ‘female sensibility’? How ‘better equipped’? What ‘intricacies’? Whose ‘personal relationships’?...And, finally, how did all of this become commonplace?” (7). Armstrong’s critical questions drive her own study, in which she famously argues that woman is the first “modern individual,” and that novels became a kind of panoptical surveillance of gender relations and sexuality by

the turn-of-the-nineteenth century. For Armstrong, early English novels are a prescriptive form of cultural production which situate women in the domestic sphere and articulate “the notion of the household as a specifically feminine space (8).”

While Armstrong’s focus on heterosexual domesticity allows for an understanding of how women became domestic agents through the feminization of the domestic sphere, it does not account for the role of transgressive desire in early novels. Lisa Moore and George Haggerty, however, provide salient queer analyses of women’s novels. In her study *Dangerous Intimacies*, Moore interrogates the limitation of heteronormative desire and argues that the emergence of the term “sapphism” in the mid-to-late eighteenth century plays a crucial role in the history of the novel. Moore accounts for the novel’s depiction of women who refuse heteronormativity. In her analysis of novels such as Scott’s *Millenium Hall* and John Cleland’s *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, Moore pinpoints a tension between the presumed asexuality of eighteenth-century romantic friendships and the scholarly prohibition of “finding lesbians in the eighteenth century” so often associated with studies of sapphism. She uses this tension as the animating feature of her study, arguing that it is “a basic, if sometimes unstated cultural assumption—fundamental to the establishment of the bourgeois private and the bourgeois public spheres” (11). For his part, Haggerty views women’s fiction of this period as articulating a resistance to heteronormative desire. He argues that the form of women’s fiction conveys this resistance: “Women novelists seem to acknowledge that there is only one story to tell, but they nevertheless insist that there is more than one way to tell it” (9). These novels, then, challenge constructs of gender and sexuality and articulate “new areas by means of which female desire can

be articulated” (6). Thus, Moore and Haggerty identify the significance of non-normative desire and kinship in constituting the novel form. The scholarly imperative to explore novels of the later eighteenth century has been especially pressing considering that Watt, and most of the eighteenth-century scholars who worked before the last three decades, undervalue works from these years altogether.¹⁶

Not much has been written about disability in early novels. Lennard Davis has written an article on the subject, in which he lays out the difficulties of examining the novel through a modern identity politics-oriented lens without privileging one identity over another. He argues that scholars who examine modern identities such as race, gender, and sexuality adhere to and reinscribe the terms of liberal discourse by cordoning off their particular emphasis from other aspects of culture. In the process, he argues, these scholars retroactively “postulate a timeless category of identity, transferred from the present to the past, and then define origins by postulating that identity is anterior to the origin” (90). Davis thus calls into question identity politics before going on to reveal the limitations of ascribing disability, for example, to early novel studies. While Davis is right to suggest that there is a danger of applying modern identities onto the past, he fails to account for the extraordinary ability of scholars, such as Moore and Haggerty, to understand or reveal the nuanced differences between, for example, sexuality today, and how sex and gender were constituted in the past. There are a variety of important published works which trace in subtle and meaningful ways the genealogy of modern identity categories. Further, Davis neglects

¹⁶ Claudia Johnson makes this point in the Introduction of *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Sentimentality, and Gender in the 1790's—Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen*.

to account for the role of intersectionality in scholarship, which eradicates the privileging of certain identity categories over others. This dissertation will engage in such an intersectional form of criticism, drawing upon queer theory and disability studies to open up critical vistas on English literature and culture of the past, and to enlarge critical understanding of these categories in the present.

In addition to these problems, Davis's arguments about the role of disability in early English novels consist of some unsupportable generalizations that must be accounted for. He argues, for example, that novels spanning the years 1720-1870 all follow a general trajectory that he sets out:

Plot in the novel, then, is really a device to turn what is perceived as the average, ordinary milieu into an abnormal one. Plot functions in the novel, especially during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by temporarily deforming or disabling the fantasy of nation, social class, and gender behaviors that are constructed as norms. The telos of the plot aims to return the protagonists to the norm by the end of the novel. The end of the novel represents a cure, a repair of the disability, a nostalgic return to the normal time. (98-99)

Davis makes a seductive, but ultimately overly-simplistic argument here. As the novels of this dissertation suggest, for example, not all of the protagonists of eighteenth-century novels start off as normal. Duncan Campbell, for example, is already deaf when Haywood begins *A Spy upon the Conjuror*. Eugenia is already slight and susceptible to disease in the very opening chapter of *Camilla*. The heroine of Scott's *Agreeable Ugliness* is "born into native ugliness" and is a "shocking monster" from page one onward. These novels complicate Davis's boldly-stated framework. Secondly, eighteenth-century novel endings, as George Haggerty points out, are hardly always neat and tidy ("The Failure of Heteronormativity" 2). On the

contrary, they are sometimes hurried and disordered, and neglect to resolve the problems posed by the plot. Thus, *Camilla*'s resolution, in which Eugenia pens her critical autobiography and then is married off to a highly-emotional husband hardly renders Eugenia's twisted body invisible. She continues on, we presume, as a deformed, intellectual young woman whose body is left squarely in the foreground, along with her heroine-sister's overwrought sensibility. While Davis makes important critical points in his piece, his general thesis needs to be re-worked to account for other discourses of deformity in early novels.

The scholarship I have noted in this section provide much-needed insight into the roles of women, homoeroticism, deformity, individualism and unauthorized desire in early novels. In addition to these works, there are many important published scholarly works which consider the importance of women's writing in the eighteenth century.¹⁷ However, since the notion of irregular corporeality plays an important role in literary and print culture of the long eighteenth century, there is a need for the kind of concentrated study I will set forth here. In revealing the centrality of physical variability within the content of some early novels, this study will, I hope, redress this oversight. Irregular bodies, as I will show, populate the pages of these narratives, and it is my hope that the chapters that follow will go some way to deciphering these conceptualizations of deformity. In their supposedly realist depiction of the quotidian and their imagining of a proto-subjectivity for individuals with deformities, these novels play a significant role in shaping English consciousness about disability. The

¹⁷ See, for example, the work of Janet Todd, Betty Rizzo, Kristina Straub, and Claudia Johnson.

texts that I will analyze in this dissertation codify bodily irregularity as something that is an inevitable part of the human experience, and they do so in surprisingly edifying ways. This is a remarkable challenge to the culture of the new science, with its focus on regularity and the domination of man over nature.

Gender and the New Science

The writers that I examine in this dissertation all challenge to an extent the prevailing culture of deformity. In doing so, they also question the culture of the new science, with its emphasis on “regularity” and rationality. Natural philosophers who participated in the Royal Society (established in 1663) were invariably male, and women who sought to contribute in any way to scientific speculation in the Restoration or eighteenth century were not taken seriously. This is not to say that we should not take them seriously. On the contrary, an understanding of female natural philosophers from the period provide insightful addenda to the culture of experimentation. One of these women, Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle, often draws upon and challenges Sir Francis Bacon’s scientific framework, in which men exert a dominating relationship over nature. In *The Great Instauration*, Bacon proposes a disciplinary reorganization of the sciences in which he touts the potential of the human intellect to discover the ‘secrets’ of nature. Bacon argues, “[t]he intellect may be raised and exalted, and made capable of overcoming the difficulties and obscurities of nature” (21). According to Bacon, educated men have the ability to “command nature in action” through intellectual endeavor (21). This scientific approach is also evident in Bacon’s injunction to natural philosophers to account for

“all monsters and prodigious births of nature; of every thing, in short which is new, rare, and unusual in nature” (13).

Whereas Bacon envisions man as separate from and dominant over nature, as capable of discovering and categorizing the mysteries of the unknown (such as those represented by ‘monsters’ and deviant bodies), Cavendish envisions humans and the natural world as one. For Cavendish, nature is bizarre and usually unknowable, and the natural world is not to be regulated as it is in Bacon’s view. In *Blazing World*, for instance, Cavendish contests Bacon’s belief that men can discover all of the unknown workings of nature through scientific inquiry. Like Cavendish herself, the narrative’s heroine (who becomes empress of a strange utopian world that she accidentally discovers) is interested in, and critical of, scientific thought. The Empress’s subjects are half-human, half-animal creatures whose hybrid bodies symbolize the seamless integration of humanity and animality, indicating a harmonious view of humans and nature. In time, the empress organizes the scientific contingent of these hybrid creatures into learning societies, wherein various experiments are carried forth. Soon, however, disagreements arise among the disparate societies. Here, Cavendish parodies the discoveries and discord of the Royal Society (Bowerbank and Mendelson 33). For example, the bear-men are at odds with one another over whether the sun stands still, the earth is the center of the universe, or if both the sun and the earth move (184). After a number of similar disputes among the remainder of the societies, the Empress concludes, “Nature of her self cannot boast of any perfection, but God himself; because there are so many irregular motions in Nature, and ‘tis but a folly to think that Art should be able to regulate them” (190). By calling attention to the “folly” of

attempting to control or codify the “many irregular motions in Nature,” the Empress expresses a perspective that is remarkably common among disability activists and scholars: that irregularity is the rule and regularity the exception, and that the attempt to regulate or normalize ‘deformity’ should be critiqued and resisted. Further, it is worth noting that the animal-human hybrids of her utopia—what we might think of as representations of those “monsters and prodigious births of nature” that Bacon would dissect—are not irregular, but rather the standard bearers of her utopian world.

In my dissertation, I will contend that women writers such as Cavendish have a peculiar ability to imagine irregularity as a standard part of life. This alternative perspective is underscored by Cavendish’s critique of men’s unilateral relationship with nature. While Bacon assumes that men must dominate and expose the secrets of nature, Cavendish criticizes men for being domineering and cruel. In her poem, “The Hunting of the Hare,” Cavendish portrays the mindset of a hare as he flees a group of huntsmen and their dogs. Yet this poem is not only remarkable for its portrayal of the rabbit’s terror and flight: it may also be read as an indictment of the role that natural philosophers play in conducting cruel experiments on animals in order to expose the workings of nature. For Cavendish, all forms of nature are to be treated respectfully. Much could be said about “The Hunting of the Hare,” but for the sake of my argument I will focus on its concluding lines:

Yet Man doth think himselfe so gentle, mild,
 When he of Creatures is most cruell wild.
 And is so Proud, thinks onely he shall live,
 That God a God-like Nature did him give.
 And that all Creatures for his sake alone,
 Was made for him, to Tyrannize upon. (255)

Here, Cavendish employs the charged language of tyranny to describe the deleterious impact that man has on nature. In their mistaken view that they have been imbued with a “God-like Nature,” men feel that they may do whatever they like to the creatures beneath them. In fact, what is most extraordinary about this poem is the way that it converts what would typically be the object (the hare) into the poem’s subject. By portraying the hare’s perspective (“Into a great thick Wood he strait way gets, / Where underneath a broken Bough he sits. / At every Leafe that with the wind did shake, / Did bring such Terrour, made his heart to ake”), the speaker grants an inner-subjectivity to the hunted, making the hunters out to be brutes who “tyrannize” by “Making their Stomacks, Graves, which full they fill / With Murther’d Bodies, that in sport they kill” (255). This hunter-hunted scenario is a microcosm of the natural philosopher’s assumed relationship with nature, and hence this poem challenges the new science’s paradigmatic emphasis on infiltrating nature. Nature, in this sense, may be represented by the animals who inhabit the wild, the women who are subjected to men’s ownership, or the disabled figures who are themselves subjected to the culture of experimentation.

This hunter-hunted scenario plays out in a very strange case that Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum have identified in their co-authored introduction to *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*. In the late eighteenth century, an unusually large Irish man, Byrne, attracted the curiosity of John Hunter, an eighteenth-century surgeon. Hunter, who was on the lookout for “monstrous corpses” to put out on display at his museum, closely followed Byrne’s declining health with the intention of taking possession of Byrne’s corpse after his demise. Byrne was terrified at the

prospect of being dissected after his death, and so he left strict instructions that his body was to be buried at sea. However, once Byrne passed away, Hunter managed to bribe the undertaker's workers in exchange for Byrne's corpse. Hunter eventually boiled down Byrne's body and placed his skeleton on display. The lengths to which Hunter was willing to go says much about the public's insatiable curiosity for seeing difference. As Stephen Pender has argued, human exhibition—shows or displays which capitalized on the public's delight in viewing conjoined twins, humans who give birth to animals, and (as Byrne's case shows), monstrous men—remained constant from the early modern period through the eighteenth century (97). This culture of spectacle is central to the culture of deformity in the eighteenth century (Deutsch and Nussbaum 14-15). Sarah Scott and Frances Burney each have something to say about this culture and how it denigrates and demeans those individuals who would be exposed to it. Scott shows intense unease with this as she encloses giants, dwarves, and physically disabled characters in an estate run by women in her utopian novel *Millenium Hall* (1762). Frances Burney critiques the culture of spectacle through her creation of a diminutive, pockmarked, disabled heroine in *Camilla* (1796). Throughout "Queer Deformities," I am attuned to the category of gender and the ways in which it intersects with deformity and sexuality. In approaching the literary texts in this way, I hope to shed additional light on the eighteenth-century culture of deformity.

The women writers that I feature in my dissertation—Haywood, Scott, and Burney—are, in their own ways like Cavendish: conflicted, to be sure, as women precariously navigating a patriarchal public sphere with their literary publications.

Because of this, their fiction often capitulates to dominant discourses. But more importantly—at least as far as this project is concerned—their novels pose imaginative challenges to the culture of regularity. These novelists, I argue, all advocate that far from being irregular, physical disability is a natural part of life. As the most popular genre of the eighteenth century, the novel is one of the more important kinds of literary texts to consider as a purveyor of cultural values. For this reason, I have chosen to focus on the novel, though I do consider other forms of written texts, such as biography, life writing, epistolary correspondence, and other archival materials. While this dissertation considers portrayals of disability and gender in the novels of women writers, as Nussbaum's *The Limits of the Human* does, it is the first project to consider the novel form and its portrayal of deformity as queer. It is also the first scholarly project from a previous period to consider the ways in which queer desire and alternative kinship proliferate around people with disabilities.

Main Arguments / Chapter Overviews

I will be making a few major arguments throughout this dissertation: 1) I will posit that the novels I explore depict physical disability as empowering. In these literary texts, a character's disability may promote the growth of intellect, enable heightened intuition, or make one more sexually attractive; 2) I will demonstrate how these representations of empowered disability intersect with, and are informed by, queer desire; 3) in my analysis of writers such as Eliza Haywood, Sarah Scott, and Frances Burney, I claim that Georgian women have keen insight into contemporaneous social constructions of physical disability and alternative kinship

structures; and 4) these writers' novels challenge discourses about physical disability while imagining unauthorized, or queer, relationships. By exploring the previously uncharted intersection of disability and queer genders and sexuality in the eighteenth century, this dissertation will overturn assumptions that disabled people have always been thought of as powerless, marginal, and asexual. Ultimately, I hope to show that deformity is constructed along a similar cultural continuum as queer genders and sexualities.

Chapter One reveals that deafness, one kind of eighteenth-century defect, has not always been thought of as freakish or marginal. On the contrary, Eliza Haywood's *A Spy upon the Conjurer* (1724) portrays a deaf man as attractive and strong. This chapter explores a series of novels, poems, and pamphlets that were written between 1720 and 1733 about a profoundly deaf, London-based soothsayer, Duncan Campbell. Haywood's narrative portrays Campbell as the apotheosis of masculinity and the head of a family, hence normalizing deaf people's queerness. I explore this normalizing tendency in other works within the series, including William Bond's *The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell* (1720), which is the first popular print form to advocate deaf education. Bond's and Haywood's narratives apply seventeenth-century natural philosophy about the viability of deaf pedagogy, thus demonstrating that deafness is no impediment to participation in the social order. Moreover, these narratives consider deaf people as sexual beings who are capable of both procreative sex *and* queer desire.

In Chapter Two, I identify Sarah Scott's early novel *A Journey through Every Stage of Life* as a text that raise issues of disability, sapphic kinship arrangements, and

class that her later utopian novel *Millenium Hall* comments upon and attempts to resolve.¹⁸ I supplement my reading of Scott's novels with letters which she exchanged with her sister, Elizabeth Montagu, who is considered the leader of the Bluestockings.¹⁹ I argue that Scott's solution to the abuses of patriarchal authority and its ill treatment of women and disabled figures are conceptualized in terms of same-sex desire and involves configuring a communal family of choice, which is comprised of socially marginal individuals—including women who desire the companionship of other women and disabled characters. Scott's utopian novel critiques inhumane treatment of the disabled and encloses these figures in a sapphic community. Ultimately, *Millenium Hall* reveals that sapphists operate within a privileged socioeconomic system, and hence it is their responsibility to enhance accessibility for and practice charity towards disabled people of the lower classes. In this way, Scott's texts challenge contemporary codes of sexuality and disability.

In Chapter Three, I argue that Scott's *Agreeable Ugliness* portrays ugliness, and thus deformity, as a desirable, virtue-enhancing characteristic for women. I include some biographical details about Scott, who, after surviving a case of the smallpox was left with a pockmarked face and had to learn how to navigate a world in which women were often admired for—or judged by—their beauty or perceived lack thereof. Scott's novel, in turn, assumes that being disagreeable of visage compels a woman to be attractive in every other way, and its deployment of kinship advocates

¹⁸ "Sapphism" refers to eighteenth-century homoerotic relations between women. My use of "sapphism" and "sapphic" is based on the work of scholars such as Susan Lanser and Lisa Moore.

¹⁹ I have spent a good deal of time looking at the Montagu Collection, housed at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, and have tied the content of some of these letters to my analysis of Scott's novels.

the fulfillment of women's desire. Ultimately, Scott's novel—along with the work of William Hay—offers a mid-eighteenth-century cultural register of how being physically different enables virtue, intelligence, and the fulfillment of sexual desire. I discuss how these authors challenge extant discourses about deformity, especially as they are portrayed in a rare archival manuscript called *The Liverpool Ugly Club, 1743-54*. I contest the argument that some scholars have made that this novel is about a dutiful daughter's obedience to her father, and I argue instead that it advocates the fulfillment of female desire through the narrator's "shocking" body. Thus, deformity is a means to empowerment and the fulfillment of sexual desire.

And finally, in Chapter Four, I examine Frances Burney's third novel, *Camilla*, which I use alongside contemporary primary and secondary source materials to historicize sexuality and disability in the last decade of the eighteenth century. I claim that contemporary biographies about Æsop, the fabulist from antiquity, provide insight about the role that race and geography play in constituting the normal body, and I identify a cultural trope (typically gendered as male) which I refer to as "monster-as-genius." I use the insights from Æsop to inform my reading of Eugenia Tyrold, who embodies this kind of mind-body duality. I argue that Burney thus applies the "monster-as-genius" trope to women. Further, I examine the significance of the overlap between Eugenia Tyrold and Mrs. Arlbery, a fashionable widow who troubles the romance plot between the novel's heroine and hero in her seduction of Camilla. I argue that though the narrative makes repeated attempts to value Eugenia's mind and overlook her body, it ultimately fails in this endeavor, leaving Eugenia's variable body

squarely in the plot's foreground. Eugenia demonstrates that disabled young ladies may exercise power because—and not merely in spite of—their physical impairments.

By finishing on this note, I reinforce my argument that Burney and her predecessors, Haywood and Scott, portray deformity and queer desire in subversively positive ways. These writers' novels enlarge the history of disability in their insistence that, beyond simply connoting limitation, provoking pity, or symbolizing otherness, deformity is empowering, attractive, and typical of the human condition. Moreover, I contend that the history of the English novel must not only account for gender, sexuality, and race; it must also consider the enlightened, extraordinary figures that populate the pages of these novels and archival sources. By attending to the way that crippled, deaf, or otherwise extraordinary characters and people move, think, act, and love, I hope to fill in the blanks a rarely-remarked upon literary tradition. Along the way, it is my intention to demonstrate that deformity has not always been thought of as pitiable, unattractive or damning. Moreover, in examining deformity as queer, I hope to deepen our contemporary theoretical and historical understandings of sexuality and disability, to build a framework that challenges extant, problematic assumptions from and about the past, and to bring this framework to bear on our present conceptualizations of these categories.

Chapter One:

Deafness, Masculinity, and the Community of Senses in Eliza Haywood's *A Spy on the Conjuror* and the Duncan Campbell Compendium

During the first few decades of the eighteenth century, Duncan Campbell—a profoundly deaf seer—was a cultural sensation. Campbell supposedly had an uncanny ability to read people's fortunes and to cure maladies and disfigurements caused by witchcraft or other supernatural means. His celebrity was made manifest years before any extensive narratives (which first appear in 1720) were written about him. For example, in a 1712 letter to the *Spectator*, one of Campbell's clients attests to Campbell's foresight,

[h]e told me, after his manner, among several other things, that in a year and nine months I should fall ill of a new fever, be given over by my physicians, but should with much difficulty recover; that the first time I took the air afterwards, I should be addressed to by a young gentleman of a plentiful fortune, good sense, and a generous spirit. Mr. Spectator, he is the purest man in the world, for all he said is come to pass, and I am the happiest she in Kent. (11)

This letter is one of the first published accounts of Campbell, and it helps to enhance the legend of his "second sight," or the extrasensory means by which he is able to see his clients' future or cure their various ailments. Fashionable ladies such as this letter writer flocked to see Duncan Campbell to learn about their future.¹ While many

¹ A late eighteenth-century collection of letters from the *Spectator* adds as a footnote that this letter was likely "written by Steele's fellow collegian and friend, the Rev. Mr. Richard Parker," and that Campbell "announced himself to the public as a Scotch highlander, gifted with the second sight" but that he "pretended to be, deaf and dumb, and succeeded in making a fortune to himself, by practicing for some on years on the credulity of the vulgar in the ignominious character of a fortune-teller" (11). While I am not interested in whether or not

lauded Campbell's supernatural abilities, others derided him as an impostor who disguised himself as deaf to dupe clients into coughing up money in exchange for false fortunes. Some of these people claimed that Campbell had spies roaming London, in search of information about his clients that Campbell could then use in his interactions with them. The rumors, disagreements, and scandal surrounding Campbell proliferated in the early decades of the eighteenth century.

A Highlander by birth who reportedly came to London to make a living off of his second sight, Campbell attracted visits from some of the most fashionable Londoners. Separating the man from his legend is a difficult venture, but we do know that Richard Steele, Richard Savage, Susannah Centlivre, Martha Fowke, Aaron Hill, and Eliza Haywood were among his many regular guests (Nussbaum, *Limits of the Human* 39). Haywood immortalized Campbell's fame in her 1724 novel *A Spy on the Conjuror: Or, a Collection of Surprising Stories with Names, Places, and Particular Circumstances Relating to Mr. Duncan Campbell, Commonly Known by the Name of the Deaf and Dumb Man; and the Astonishing Penetration and Even of His Predictions*. In 1725, she would follow this up with a very short publication, *The Dumb Projector: Being a Surprising Account of a Trip to Holland Made by Mr. Duncan Campbell*. Though these two narratives are the only ones we know for certain that Haywood wrote about her friend, I think that it is important to consider them as part of a longer series of books about Campbell, beginning with *The History of the*

Campbell was a con-man, or whether he was or was not a deaf man, this commentary provides some insight into how he was perceived by intellectuals both during and after his life. Also, in *The Tatler No. 14*, published three years earlier in 1709, there is an excerpt dedicated to Campbell, described as a "dumb Fortune-teller" who receives "visitants...full of expectations, and pay his own rate for the interpretations they put upon his shrugs and nods" (148).

Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell, A Gentleman, who, tho' Deaf and Dumb, writes down any Stranger's Name at first Sight written by William Bond and perhaps Daniel Defoe (1720); and *Mr. Campbell's Packet, for the Entertainment of Gentleman and Ladies* (1720). Following on the heels of Haywood's publications were *The Friendly Daemon; or the Generous Apparition* (1726); and *Secret Memoirs of the Life of Duncan Campbell* (1732).² In this chapter, I favor to an extent Haywood's writings about Campbell, but I also bring in these other publications, particularly Bond's *History of the Life*, to illuminate a more comprehensive perspective about deafness in the early eighteenth century. Intertextuality plays a crucial role in Haywood's narrative, so to overlook these other publications is to miss out on important opportunities to historicize Campbell's deafness and ostensible supernatural capabilities. Unlike some other historians and literary critics, I am far less interested in discovering the "truth" behind Campbell's deafness—whether or not he feigned deafness, as many of his contemporaries believed, to make him stand out among the other fortunetellers that populated London—and far more attuned to how deafness is constituted in an early eighteenth-century context.³

This collection of books about Campbell, which I have taken to calling "The Duncan Campbell compendium" relies heavily on seventeenth-century tracts about deafness and gesture, in which assertions are made for deaf people's capacity to adapt to verbal social interactions, to reason, and to be educated. The first of the major

² It has been speculated that the memoirs may have been written by either Haywood or Defoe.

³ Lennard Davis, for example, calls Campbell a "fraud," Harlan Lane sees him as a deaf impostor, and Christopher Krentz speculates that Campbell may have been late-deafened. These are all views that would be impossible to defend one way or another, and in any case, I would argue, they do not offer further insight into deafness during the time.

Duncan Campbell texts, penned by William Bond (and, it has been argued and speculated, Daniel Defoe) in 1720, contains a remarkably in-depth proposal for how to educate deaf people based on some of these seventeenth-century treatises about gesture and deaf education. Eliza Haywood, on the other hand, takes for granted Campbell's hearing loss. Her blasé treatment of deafness is both a consequence of Bond's previous account of Campbell and an indication that deafness is not always constructed as a bizarre phenomenon in this era. The Duncan Campbell compendium did not simply appear out of nowhere as a counterdiscourse to established social constructions of deafness, as some scholars have suggested. On the contrary, the authors of the Duncan Campbell narratives rely on the findings of natural philosophers and virtuosos from the previous century. The Duncan Campbell compendium depicts one's hearing capacity as a variable characteristic, like brown hair or blue eyes. Deafness, in this literary context, enables individuals a different but equally valid sensory experience to that of hearing people.

Discourses of Deafness in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Centuries

There has been some work on deafness in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Lennard Davis focuses more on the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in his work. Davis has argued that in the eighteenth century, deafness was a topic of "cultural fascination and a compelling focus for philosophical reflection" due to the debates in philosophy from such thinkers as Rousseau and Locke over the nature of language and reason (55). For Davis, the rise of literacy and print culture contribute to Europe becoming "deaf." Christopher Krentz also examines literary and archival

materials (and Duncan Campbell, in particular) in an effort to understand how deafness is constituted in this era. For his part, Krentz argues that in the early-eighteenth century, deafness was equated with “madness, clairvoyance, illiteracy, savagery, and evil,” and he gives a number of literary and historical examples in support (40). Krentz makes many good points in his article, and I agree in particular with his take on the vast cultural significance of Duncan Campbell’s deafness—the books on him were popular and must have had quite an impact on cultural constructions of deafness. Krentz’s particular view of deaf discourse, however, is lacking in some respects. For one thing, there are not any literary texts from the time period, besides those about Duncan Campbell, which contain deaf figures for us to consider as discursive sources. As Heidi Brayman Hackel points out, there are no deaf characters on the Early Modern stage whatsoever. This holds true for the early eighteenth century, too. As the eighteenth century progresses, this begins to shift (there is one play, for example, *The Deaf Lover* in 1780), but in 1720’s England, and the time leading up to it, there is a lack of cultural production from which to draw conclusions about deafness. To his credit, Krentz does give a few archival examples of miracles associated with deaf-mute figures, such as the “Dumb Maid of Wapping” who “miraculously gained her speech and foretold her future” in 1697 and Dickory Cronke, another deaf-mute who, according to a 1719 pamphlet, began to speak shortly before his death and made prophecies of his own. These examples suggest that deafness may have been considered in supernatural terms. Krentz’s other historical and literary examples, however, are drawn from other categories of disability. He notes that there had been an early eighteenth-century German dwarf that “amazed

audiences with his predictions, musical performances, skills at penmanship, and accuracy with the pistol,” and blind characters from antiquity, such as Tiresias and, at the end of his life, Oedipus, whose sudden blindness directly follows the revelation that he has married his mother and killed his father (41). While these figures are compelling and may be useful to think about in relation to Duncan Campbell, they are not deaf, and therefore do not give us the kind of precise insight into cultural perceptions of deafness that would allow us to say with more certainty how deafness may have been constructed at this historical moment.

Secondly, Krentz’s view of deaf discourse fails to take into account some of the publications about deafness that came out in the seventeenth century. In fact, in the years leading up to and following the establishment of the Royal Society, there were a number of books about deafness and gesture (what we could call “sign language” today, and which was, prior to the late eighteenth century not standardized) which proliferated in the burgeoning print culture of mid-to-late seventeenth-century England. In considering some of these sources, I argue that early-eighteenth-century discourses of deafness are far more complex than Krentz allows.

To fully grasp this complexity, I turn first to the writings of some influential seventeenth-century natural philosophers. These figures’ intellectual inquiries range from teaching deaf people to speak, to making a case for gesture as a viable—even universal—mode of communication, to the natural capability of deaf people to read lips, and so on. These men do not always affirm the adult status of deaf people; in fact, they sometimes compare deaf adults to children who are in need of hearing folks’ guidance and instruction. They often advocate an oral approach to educating the deaf,

so that deaf people are taught to be assimilated through learning how to speak and read lips—a proven ineffective method for teaching deaf children.⁴ However, they also possess an optimistic perspective (especially for that era) about deaf peoples’ possession of reason. By looking at their views of deafness, I hope to demonstrate that Krentz is indeed right about the ways in which Duncan Campbell challenges certain assumptions about deaf people, but that the “dumb Oracle” is not the first to do so. While Campbell’s contribution to an awareness of deaf education is indeed significant, it is not unprecedented.

In fact, prior to Duncan Campbell’s time, several European thinkers had already considered deaf education as viable and important. The Iberian Peninsula seems to have been the first region in which an argument was made for educating the deaf. In 1550, Pedro Ponce de Leon, a Benedictine monk, decides that deaf people, who were at the time thought to be incapable of receiving salvation due to their inability to hear the word of god, should be taught to use their vision and touch to learn how to listen and speak. In de Leon’s estimation, these individuals may learn to speak by placing their fingers on a speaker’s throat, subsequently imitating the sounds that they feel reverberate on the skin of their interlocutor while watching the movement of his or her own mouth with a mirror. A few years later, a Castilian aristocrat, Pedro de Velasco, receives word of de Leon’s theory and applies it to the education of his two deaf sons, Pedro and Francisco. But instead of teaching them how to imitate voice first, as de Leon advocates, he teaches them first to read and write, and

⁴ For more on this topic, see Oliver Sacks’ *Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*, especially pages 24-30, where Sacks discusses the limitations that an oral education (rather than a written and signed one) impose on pre-lingual deaf children.

by his account is successful. By the end of his life in 1584, de Velasco has supposedly taught a number of aristocratic deaf people how to read, write, and speak, giving these souls an inroad to prayer and confession and a shot at salvation. In the early seventeenth century, another deaf child, Luis, is born into the de Velasco family, and is taught from such a young age that he is able to understand and speak clearly early on in his life. In fact, he eventually meets the Prince of Wales (later Charles I) in Madrid in 1623 and is so proficient in imitating the prince's speech that a member of Charles's court, Sir Kenelm Digby, pens an account of the child's abilities in 1644. Word of these Spanish aristocrats spread through Europe.⁵

A number of English natural philosophers, besides Digby, also wrote about deafness and gesture in the years leading up to and following the establishment of the Royal Society in 1663. In this period, there is a flurry of activity regarding the development of the English language, with philologists standardizing written English because it needed to not only attend to daily social interaction, as it had previously, but must also "satisfy the demands of philosophy and science" (Rée 70). One of the thinkers to stress deaf education within this linguistic framework is John Wilkins, a central figure in the foundation of the Royal Society. Wilkins argues that utterance is not needed to communicate and posits gesture as a viable form of language. In his 1641 publication *Mercury, or the secret and swift messenger: showing how a man may with privacy and speed communicate his thoughts to a friend at an distance*, Wilkins provides an alphabet that uses all of the same vowels and a few consonants (T, Y, and

⁵ An excellent overview of these historical events can be found in Jonathan Rée, *I See a Voice: Deafness, Language, and the Senses—A Philosophical History* (New York: Metropolitan Books, Henry Holt and Company, 1999) 97-101.

Z) that are used in the two-handed alphabet employed in Australia and England today (Branson and Miller 74-75). John Wallis, though, is even more influential as far as deaf education is concerned. His 1653 publication *De Loquela, sive Sonorum Formantione, tractatus Grammatico-Pyscius* (Treatise of Speech) posits that far from being some mystical process, speech is a “physical process through which language was expressed” (Branson and Miller 79). In his pedagogical approach to educating young, deaf aristocrats, Wallis emphasizes fingerspelling, reading, and writing--a method which would impact deaf education well into the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.⁶ William Bond’s 1720 publication about Duncan Campbell, *The History of the Life*, credits Wallis’s approach with instructing young Duncan to learn to read, write, and sign.

Another interesting figure to consider within this intellectual environment is John Bulwer, a London-based physician and natural philosopher who, in 1648, professes a vision to establish an academy for deaf gentlemen (Wollock 229). Unlike the other natural philosophers listed above, Bulwer was not directly involved in the establishment of the Royal Society. Bulwer wrote five books, three of which deal entirely with the topic of gesture, and he was interested in the relationship of the body and soul, particularly in “the visible body as a sign of the invisible soul” (Wollock 228). Bulwer shows a special interest in deafness, which may have resulted from his

⁶ Wallis was later involved in a major controversy with William Holder, himself a Royal Society member, over the education of Alexander Popham, a deaf boy that these two men took turns teaching. Holder claimed that Wallis did not give him credit for the work he had done with Popham, and that Wallis had falsely taken all of the credit for himself. This led to a controversial exchange between the two within the Royal Society, though Wallis is credited with having the more lasting effect on deaf education (Branson and Miller 83-84). The fallout from this controversy only serves to underscore the significance of educating deaf people in the time period preceding the early eighteenth century.

professional practice, as well as the possibility that he adopted a young, deaf girl. In his 1648 publication—*Philocophus; or, the deafe and dumbe man's friend*—Bulwer addresses his thoughts concerning these issues to one Sir Edward Goswicke, a deaf baronet of Wellington, and “his yongest Brother: and all other intelligent and ingenious Gentlemen, who as yet can neither heare nor speake.” “Intelligent” and “ingenious” are two descriptors which are not often associated with deaf people in this era, but Bulwer realizes that his work is going up against established perceptions of deaf people as defective. He acknowledges, “although those who understand not the mystery of your condition, looke upon you as misprisions in nature; yet to me who have studied your perfections, and well observed the strange recompences Nature affords you, I behold nothing in you but what may be a just object of admiration!” (A2). Bulwer advances the notion that deaf people make do with their keen eyesight, which enables them to be “good naturall Phisiognomers” (171). From the very beginning of the book, there are indications of Bulwer’s complimentary views of deaf genteel men he has met, most notably, it seems, the two brothers whom he addresses in the dedication. As further evidence of his innovative thinking in the preface, he claims to be attempting to “conceive the modell of a new Academie, which might be erected in favour of those who are...originally deafe and dumb” (A3). Since schools for the deaf are not officially established until the later eighteenth century, Bulwer demonstrates that he is well ahead of his time.

Bulwer has a number of examples to draw from to support his argument about educating deaf people. He asserts that some deaf people are adept at reading and writing—“a kinde of supplementall speech” which enables them to interact with

hearing people (86). In *Philocophus*, Bulwer offers several examples of deaf people's cognitive capabilities and literacy, and just as William Bond would do later on in his 1720 book about Duncan Campbell, enumerates the extraordinary intellect of certain deaf individuals he knows or has heard of through reputable sources. For example, he is aware of a gentleman grazer, Master Dallison, whose three sons have all been born deaf-mute. Dallison has raised his sons to be grazers, and they all have proven to excel in their obligations because of their literacy.

[t]hey proved the craftiest in their way, that the Country ever bred: for they were very expert at their pen, which they managed all their affaires, with singular readinesse, using it (as it is indeed) for a kinde of supplementall speech: I am informed by an accomplisht Gentleman that knew them, a learned Friend of mine, they were so accurate at the pen, that they could write the Creed in the compasse of a farthing, which he hath seene fairely so written by them. (86)

In this particular example, Bulwer makes a case for the ability of the brothers to use writing as a means of operating their enterprise successfully. Thus, in this instance, Bulwer views deafness not as an impairment to a successful life, or even as a barrier to social interaction, but as a kind of life situation that, if managed carefully through education, may bring about beneficial and productive ends. In the case of these grazers, the act of writing is a “message of intelligence” which corroborates the intellectual capacity of deaf, literate individuals (83).

While literacy is important, reading lips, for Bulwer, is also of primary importance if a deaf person is to be a productive member of society. He goes on to claim that “[f]or wanting the sense of Hearing, their Eie is more accurate, and apt to observation.” Through these keen observational skills, “they ingeniously frame out of their owne observation, many things Art could not with any certainty instruct them in:

so that the apparent motions of the lips, the formes of words seeme to have been distinguished by the observation of some deafe and dumbe men, without the help of a Teacher” (172). Bulwer’s description of lip reading here precludes the aid of any “Teacher”—a remarkable perspective about deaf folks’ natural ability to adapt to verbal social interactions.

In his first publication, *Chirologia: or the Naturall Language of the Hand. Composed of the Speaking Motions, and Discoursing Gestures thereof*, Bulwer discourses at length about the ability of all people—hearing and non-hearing—to communicate via gesture. For Bulwer, this form of communication is highly efficient, and he goes about illustrating the means by which people use gesture in common forms of communication: “For, the lineaments of the Body doe disclose the disposition and inclination of the minde in general; but the motions doe not only so, but doe further disclose the present humour and state of the minde and will; for as the Tongue speaketh to the Eare, so Gesture speaketh to the Eye” (preface). In the figure (1.0) on the following page, there is an example of one of the many charts that Bulwer employs for the gestures that he considers, in this case an “Alphabet of Action, or Table of Rhetoricall Indigitations” (94). In this, and in many parts of this text, Bulwer equates the ear to the eye, in effect substantiating his argument that a person can “listen” with their eyes as well as their ears, and that communication via gesture is natural. This chart also represents an effort to standardize sign language. Prior to the establishment of schools for the deaf in the later eighteenth century, deaf people usually learned to communicate with their family and loved ones through “home signs”—a system of gestures that the individual came up with on his or her own

through interaction with non-deaf peers.⁷ As we will see, in the first of the Duncan Campbell texts, William Bond makes similar comparisons between eyes and ears, arguing that they both effectively convey information to the mind.

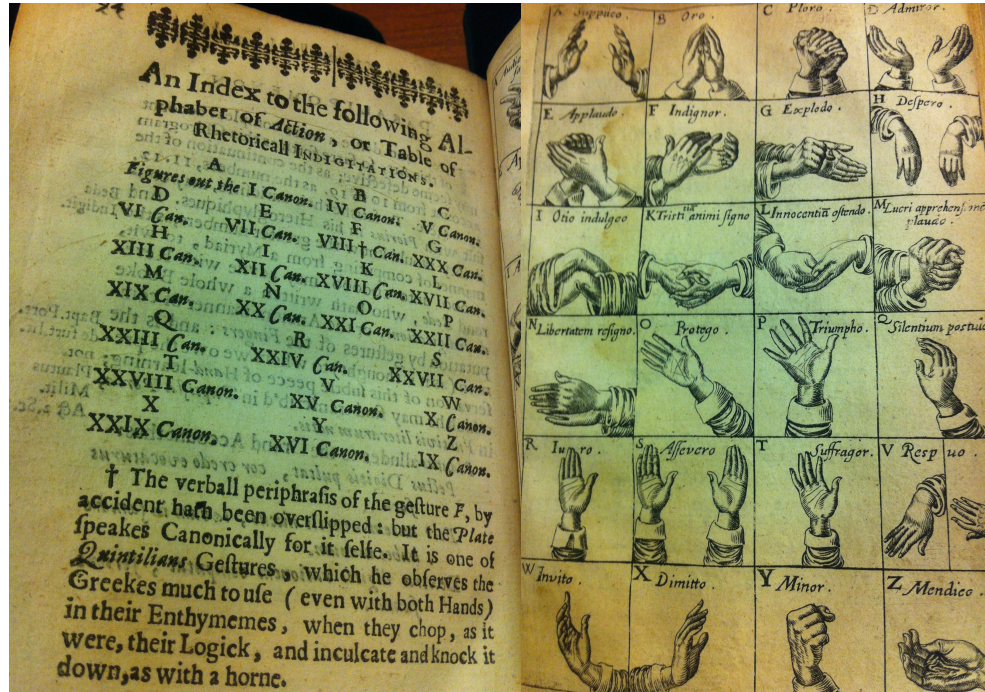


Figure 1.1: Pages from Bulwer’s *Chiroligia* (94-95), which indicate some of the gestures that Bulwer is attempting to identify and codify.

Bulwer assumes that deaf people must learn from the hearing population how to properly behave, but he also makes a strong case for their inherent ability to reason.

Gesture is the means by which this socialization may occur:

For by reason of their affinity as it were, and daily conversation with men, they get a tincture from us of our manners and fashions, and consequently enjoy a kinde of nurture and teaching discipline, and apprenticing by imitation, which does enable them to understand and

⁷ According to Christopher Stone and Bencie Woll, the first recorded instance of an English court case in which a court appointed an interpreter from one of the schools for the deaf. Prior to this, the court allowed the deaf accused’s loved ones to interpret the proceedings of the case for them. Stone and Woll speculate that this is part of a linguistic shift from the use of “home signs”—which were not passed down from generation to generation, nor shared by a large community—to a more standardized, modern version of British Sign Language (227-230).

expresse themselves in this language of gesture, teaching us by learning of us, that capable they be not onely of the inward discourse of Reason, but of the outward gift of utterance by gesture. (5-6)

Bulwer relies on the assumption that deaf people must perform a kind of apprenticeship from their hearing peers in order to properly navigate the different “manners and fashions” of the hearing population. While this assumption entails that people with hearing loss need to be directed by hearing people, it also implies that deaf people are worthy of educating. By making a case for the ability of deaf people to reason, he further justifies his support to form an academy for deaf students.

As a Royalist and Stuart supporter, Bulwer fell out of favor during the Interregnum and found it difficult to obtain patronage. This made it impossible for him to execute his plans to form a school for the deaf. Despite this, the writings of Bulwer, de Leon, de Velasco, Wilkins, Digby, Holder, and Wallis provide a current of favorable thought about deaf people flowing out of the 1600’s and into the early eighteenth century, thereby giving us license to re-evaluate the assumption that the only extant discourse surrounding deafness at the time of Duncan Campbell consisted of sheer negativity. In my examination of Bulwer’s and his predecessors’ contemporaries’ ideas regarding deaf people and their capacity to reason, communicate, understand speech, and actively participate in the social order, I have demonstrated that later seventeenth and early-eighteenth-century perceptions of deafness are more complex than what has been assumed. It also leaves us with the question: was deafness seen as so alien and transgressive in the early eighteenth century? Eliza Haywood’s *A Spy on the Conjuror* offers some insight into this question.

Deafness and Masculinity in *A Spy on the Conjuror*

The Early Modern accounts of deafness and gesture that I have examined above offer precedence for, and validate, the kinds of communication and intelligence which Duncan Campbell uses and possesses in the early eighteenth century. With Bulwer, Wallis, and their associates already having upheld the capabilities of deaf people to reason, the representation of Campbell's all-around astuteness and intellect does not seem as aberrant as Nussbaum and Krentz make it out to be. Eliza Haywood in particular seems unimpressed by Campbell's ability to communicate with his clients via the written word or sign language. The role of writing--epistolary correspondence, journal entries, and written notes--plays a crucial role in Haywood's *A Spy upon the Conjuror*. In this regard, Bulwer's thoughts about deaf literacy seems especially relevant:

but they who want their hearing, may have writing in stead of speech, and the notice of things accrues to them by sight, as to others by silent and audible writing, and writing is a visible and permanent speech, and withall so missive, that where the eare is absent, we can send our mind by writing to a friend; why not then when the faculty of hearing is wanting, as in deafe men, may we not send a message of intelligence to his eye in writing, since the eare and eye are knowne to exchange objects, without any robbery, in case of necessity, transferring their sensitive rights one unto another? (87)

Bulwer vindicates the act of writing for deaf people in terms that would be easily recognizable to the hearing population. Since epistolary correspondence was one of the most common forms of communication (among the literate part of the population, anyway) the act of writing by a deaf person becomes a common and normal form of interaction. In fact, Bulwer's validation and normalization of deaf communication, reason, and intellect are tendencies that can be found in the major texts within the

Duncan Campbell compendium. I am not trying to downplay the extraordinary impact that Duncan Campbell had on the reading public's perception of deafness, however. While the sixteenth and seventeenth-century texts I have examined are from natural philosophic writing, the Duncan Campbell collection may be the first popular form in English that deals so extensively with a deaf figure and his means of navigating a speaking and hearing world.

Though Campbell's deafness is of primary importance in this chapter, Haywood's account of Campbell is striking because *Justicia*, the novel's letter-writing narrator, rarely even remarks upon Campbell's deafness at all. In fact, she mostly just mentions it in passing, save for those few instances in the narrative where she reveals other characters' ignorance about deafness and deaf people. In these examples, *Justicia* describes a kind of learning experience for the uninformed who have not been around deaf people. At one point, for example, a lady arrives as a guest to the Campbell's house, and since Mr. Campbell is not home, she wonders aloud how Mrs. Campbell, who she sees as being "so fine a Woman," could be married to "a Monster." When Mr. Campbell finally arrives to the house, the guest refuses to believe that such a regular looking man could in fact be the "Seer" of whom she has heard so much: "it was not without a great deal of Difficulty she was persuaded it was he, imagining, as she afterwards confess'd, she should have seen something very deform'd, and miserable in his Aspect" (154). Though she is at first mired in disbelief that someone who is supposedly so different from herself might look like any ordinary gentleman, the lady quickly learns the error of her ways and assimilates to the specter of the 'the other'. In fact, the lady becomes "so diligent in learning the Art of talking on her Fingers, that in

a little Time she grew a perfect Mistress of it, and made use of it to invite Mr. Campbell to come to see her at her Lodgings by himself” (154-55). Mrs Campbell then has the pleasure to tell the lady: “How does your Ladyship like my Choice now?” (155). This short passage conveys in microcosm the process of familiarization that an early eighteenth-century reader of Haywood’s might undergo in reading about Campbell, who besides being a soothsayer, is also a deaf man with a wife, family and other conventional concerns. For her part, Justicia regards Campbell’s deafness as an unremarkable characteristic, something which might be commented upon in passing, but which is not worth dwelling upon. The uninitiated lady, meanwhile, whose initial perception that Campbell would be a “Monster”—perhaps an accurate portrayal of how some people would have perceived deaf people for the time—comes to learn that he is in fact someone who is pleasurable to be around; so much so, in fact, that she dedicates herself to learning his language. That Campbell has a wife, a lady of ordinary hearing capabilities, only adds to the normality that he represents in various respects.

The narrative also familiarizes the reader with Campbell’s ability to be happy and to host groups of eager, joyous people. A lady writes to Campbell in awe of the “Chearfulness” he exudes despite his deafness. She writes to him in a letter, “The Want of Hearing and Speaking would to another Person be an inconsolable Affliction; yet you, methinks, appear as gay and unconcerned as those who labour not under either of those Defects” (238). The lady then asks “by what Reasons you strengthen yourself to live with any Tranquility in a Condition I should think justly deplorable” (239). To juxtapose the lady’s letter with any of Justicia’s own commentary about

Campbell is to reveal the very different perspective that Justicia has of him: “Mr Campbell’s House, by reason of the vast Variety of Company that frequented it, and the many whimsical Adventures that happen’d among them, was as proper a Scene of Mirth as any I knew, and Business or not Business, I was generally a Guest there once or twice a Week” (60). The lady letter writer is shown to be ignorant in contrast to Justicia, who is well aware that Campbell possesses typical human emotion. She does not wonder or question, as the lady does, how it is possible that Duncan Campbell could be happy, or how he could bring together gatherings of people. She is not incredulous as to how he could host such “a Scene of Mirth.” By contrasting Justicia’s normalized understanding of deafness with the ignorance of tangential, insignificant characters, Haywood demonstrates that deafness should be viewed as a natural course of life.

Haywood also suggests that deafness is to a large extent performative. In so doing, Haywood further normalizes deafness as a characteristic that is variable in Mounsey’s use of the term. In one instance, Justicia alludes to Campbell’s language difference by setting him up in costume as a non-English speaking foreigner to confound a boastful gentleman, who claims to have physically beaten Campbell: “with this very Cane...I made him find both Tongue and Ears; nay, and beg Pardon like a School Boy” (4). In this passage, the narrator addresses questions of authenticity held by Londoners at large; many people regarded Campbell as a charlatan who merely feigned deafness in order to build more credibility and exposure as a soothsayer. Following the gentleman’s violent pronouncement, Mrs. Bulweir, the hostess of the party, writes to Campbell—who happens to be in the neighborhood—and asks him to

come disguised as an aristocratic foreigner.⁸ Campbell arrives dressed as a “Ruffian Man of Quality, who could not speak a Word of English, and added a thousand plausible Circumstances, which sufficiently engaged the Belief of all that heard him” (4). Mrs. Bulweir’s ruse proves successful, as the cane-wielding gentleman does not recognize Campbell and is therefore shown to be lying about having previously exerted violence against him. It is significant that Haywood’s novel begins on this note, with Campbell posing as a foreigner. In fact, his sly self-presentation as a non-English speaking foreigner is not far removed from his true identity as a Scotsman who uses non-standard means of communication and is, in some important respects, outside of standard forms of social intercourse. Despite this, Campbell’s “Dress and Behaviour...were agreeable enough to be taken for what he was represented” and he passes as someone else (4-5). Haywood’s portrayal of Campbell’s performance in this episode is indicative of the ways in which one’s national identity and language are performative and hence beholden to social mediation for meaning. Haywood starts the narrative off by acknowledging that a deaf individual performs just as other ladies and gentlemen in polite society do. Deaf folks, for Haywood, are not monstrous or unnatural.

Though Campbell’s identity as a deaf, Scottish fortune-teller might make him seem somewhat marginal, Haywood asserts Campbell’s masculinity by positioning him as the center of rational thought and heroic deeds throughout her narrative. One of the effects of Haywood’s writing is that she brings Campbell’s marginality to the

⁸ It may not be merely coincidental that Mrs. Bulweir’s surname is almost identical to that of John Bulwer.

nexus of the fashionable world of London, in effect normalizing a man whose circumstances might seem highly unusual by the standards of the time. When the narrator first visits Campbell's house, for example, she emphasizes Campbell's clientele, a "vast Number of Persons, who, by the Difference of their Garb, seem'd to be of all Conditions"—including an alderman's wife, a frightened young girl, and a four time widow, who soon reveals to the narrator that she has come to see Mr. Campbell for advice on marrying a fifth time. In fact, Haywood's descriptions of these women are far more remarkable since they take up more narrative space than the first mentions made of Campbell's two methods of communication. Campbell's use of sign language is mentioned in passing: "[Mrs. Bulweir] made Signs to him, that I was her Acquaintance," and shortly thereafter, "He made a Sign to his Servant; and immediately came up Wine and a Salver of Sweatmeats." Also, Campbell is an adept writer, using written English to convey his thoughts: "After this little Regale he writ to Mrs. Bulweir, designing to know her Commands" (8). Haywood neglects to expand upon these communication modes, emphasizing instead what is communicated, and only briefly, how it is communicated. In this way, Haywood gives the reader a sense of what will be the focus of her narrative: not the workings of the conjurer, necessarily, but the lives of the conjurer's clients. As a professional writer, Haywood would have been in tune with what would sell her writing to the public. As it turns out, what sells in a 1724 context is not the potential exoticism of a deaf Scotsman who possesses the second sight as much as it is the secret sex lives of characters ranging in social status from button-makers to servants to high ranking ladies.

The details of these scandals, and the lengths to which Justicia is willing to go to discover these details, make up the bulk of the narrative, but Justicia writes Campbell into the paternal center of the novel. He is, after all, the means by which Justicia comes to recognize her “extravagancies” as a woman. After spending a good deal of time avoiding Duncan Campbell over a letter whose contents reveal undesired information about the man she loves, Justicia comes to understand that she needs Campbell in her life, if only to provide her with more opportunities to play voyeur. She apologizes to Campbell for “the heat of [her] Resentment” once she reflects “on the Injustice” of her actions. Campbell responds to her apology, and in the process reaffirms himself as the admirable male part of the narrative: “but his perfect good Sense taught him to be above taking Notice of those little Extravagancies with the weakness of my Sex (made weaker yet by my resistless Passions) had render’d me guilty of; he only smil’d when I made my Apology” (80-81). Campbell plays a father figure role to Justicia, giving her a gentle reprimand for her insatiable curiosity. He is a paternal figure to her, and thus the reader comes to see him as a man with power, prestige, and responsibility. This is not to say that he does not provide the narrative with an exotic tinge, but the reader comes to see Campbell more as a masculine, paternal authority figure who guides women and reprimands them when necessary, and less as an “other” who excites spectacle. Instead, the sources of spectacle throughout the narrative are those sexual transgressors and curious clients, most of whom are women, that come to use his services.

Haywood’s readership would have been accustomed to her work to provide sexually-laden scenarios in her amatory fiction, especially in novels like *Love in*

Excess or The British Recluse. Kathryn King notes Justicia's insatiable curiosity for scandal functions "simply to move the narrative along" (59). In fact, for King, Justicia's drive to unearth the sex-laden specifics of Campbell's clients is indicative of the early novel's "generic tendency to peer through chink holes." Haywood's literary purpose, then, is to provide the reader with those "potentially scandalous bits" which Justicia's curiosity leads her to discover at every turn. Curiosity, in this instance, "is depicted as a force strong enough to impel a well-bred woman to engage with zest and without shame in acts of theft, voyeurism, and unsurpassed indecorousness, to cross lines established by good taste and good manners" (59). King's reading of Justicia's revelations about Campbell's clients is apt. I would only add that her determination is almost always directed at Campbell's clients and rarely at Campbell himself. This narrative focus gives us the sense that, for example, a letter written to Campbell by a gentlewoman who has fallen in love with her father's servant, or a missive from a kept mistress who is not receiving enough financial support from her clandestine lover, provide far more shocking and scandalous material for the reading public to consume than Campbell's deafness. Transgressive sexuality is more exotic and exciting than Campbell himself, even though he is clearly a compelling figure throughout the early eighteenth century. I argue that it is important to keep in mind that deafness is not as provocative or as worthy a subject of chink-hole spectating as sex is for Haywood, which is suggestive of the ways in which deafness is not noteworthy within the economy of this particular narrative.

Justicia's unceasing quest for sexually-charged secrets is not the only focus of the novel, however. A substantial part of the narrative is also dedicated to defining

what constitutes demonic supernatural activity in contrast with the righteousness of Campbell's supernatural abilities. Among those who come to him for help are bewitched individuals whose bodies reflect the contortions of the unnatural forms of witchcraft to which they have been exposed. With Campbell's help, these figures are able to return their bodily functions to normal, thus demonstrating the saintly function that Campbell himself plays in the novel. Before his visits to Campbell, a man named Richard Coats loses control of his body to the point that he is unrecognizable.

Haywood writes of this man,

he wou'd turn himself in a Moment, into as many different Posture-Masters, and fly upon those that endeavour'd to restrain him with a Strength, which visibly denoted he was agitated with Emotions, which might justly be call'd Supernatural. When he was out of these Fits, he look'd more like a Skeleton than any Thing that had Life, and was so weak that he could not go cross the Chamber without being supported by each Arm...Accordingly [Duncan Campbell] took him in Hand, and in five or six Weeks Time perfectly Restor'd him. (151)

This passage reveals the extraordinary powers that Campbell possesses. Campbell's own supernatural abilities are seen as honorable in contrast with the excessive and depleting "Magick" to which Coats has been subjected. Campbell cures this man of his "agitated" state to return him to a normalized existence. Indeed, Campbell's ability to cure supernaturally-induced sicknesses and to ameliorate bodily distress suggests that he is a potential means to sane, spiritual living rather than some kind of freak of nature who exists on the margins London society. The "mad" figures in this narrative are not deaf; instead, they are otherwise regularly-embodied individuals that have been subjected to spells of various kinds. That Campbell is able to restore these irregular bodies to a regular state of being suggests that he is more than just a man with the

second sight; he is in fact a healer that can remedy the ills and sicknesses of his clients, ridding society of evil. In this way, the narrative assures the reader that Campbell is not so marginal as to be “other” or “mad” because of his deafness, problematizing the assumed early eighteenth-century binaries of deaf/hearing and mad/sane.

Haywood further emphasizes Campbell’s sanity by juxtaposing him with those who are confined to Bedlam. When Campbell visits Bedlam (not as a patient, but “by Accident”) he encounters a woman who has been “taken suddenly with such strange Disorders.” Campbell quickly diagnoses her ailment and communicates “by Signs, that she was not mad, but bewitch’d; and that all those Methods they made use of, in the Curse of Frenzy, rather added than decreas’d her Misery.” Campbell performs the role of supernatural physician and healer once more. What makes Campbell so potent here and throughout the narrative is his ability to successfully straddle the threshold between “natural Magick” and polite, Christian society. It is his righteous, masculine, and decorous navigation of these two worlds which enables him to thrive as a trustworthy soothsayer. As in other parts of the narrative, he is the one to observe, announce, and cure the woman of her unnatural condition, promptly restoring her to health “in a very short Time, to the great Amazement of all who knew her” (152). This particular part of the narrative reinforces Campbell’s naturalness and demonstrates the rectifying role he plays, as he returns the woman to a state of spiritual and bodily regularity that enables her to leave Bedlam and to be re-assimilated into society.

Campbell's trustworthiness may also be attributed the honesty he displays to his clients. Justicia claims that he is different from the average fortune teller because of his integrity:

[other fortunetellers], to please the Fools, that put their Trust in them, always flatter them with Predictions of coming Happiness; but *He*...never deceives his Consulters with fictitious Hopes...But he tells them, that he fears something of a Misfortune attends them, and endeavours, by a thousand Arguments, drawn from Morality and Christianity, to arm them for the coming Woe. (113)

Campbell is not the stuff of typical, mercenary soothsayers because unlike them, he is incapable of deceit due to his "Morality and Christianity." By contrasting Campbell's Christianity with the money-grubbing, tattered principles of his rivals, Justicia centers Campbell as a bastion of morality and justifies his non-rational profession in an era in which reason and science-based rationality were coming to be increasingly important for public figures. Alex Sutherland argues that by the turn-of-the eighteenth century, the second sight replaces witchcraft "as the predominant idiom through which 'non-rational' or 'popular' beliefs are understood by 'elites' because it was a kind of 'private' or 'secret' strand of thought within an ostensibly rational Enlightenment culture" (91). That Campbell was a very public figure practicing this kind of private act may be part of the reason why he was such a controversial figure in his time.

Haywood also asserts Campbell's tact. For example, one young woman comes to see him for her fortune, and while he acknowledges that the woman's husband will be killed in a duel, he stops short of telling the girl that she will kill her child and commit suicide as a result of her ensuing destitution. Campbell tells Justicia that since it was "impossible to prevent, he would not afflict her" with this fortune (114).

As I have argued, Haywood asserts Campbell's heroism in the novel by emphasizing his masculinity, which he also demonstrates through his extraordinary fencing skills. Justicia writes,

At my first Acquaintance with him, he being then very young, he was learning to fence, and qualifying himself in all those exercises which became a Man design'd for the Army: I who knew he had no such Design, asked the Reason of it, he answer'd, that he foresaw the Difficulties he should meet with in the World, would furnish him with frequent Occasions of using that Skill he was endeavouring to acquire."
(143-44)

Having the training of an Army enlistee turns out to be of the utmost importance to Campbell as he is attacked with regularity. Justicia admires Campbell's physicality and ability to defend himself against his attackers. Felicity Nussbaum argues that in *History of the Life*, "Campbell seems to exceed being a mere man or woman, yet he participates in both sexes," but that in *A Spy on the Conjurer*, Campbell is "not emasculated" (*Limits of the Human* 49). I would even further to argue that he is the apotheosis of masculinity in this novel: he manages a household, plays father figure to Justicia, displays a kind of rakish misogyny, and in the case of his swordsmanship, defends himself against assailants even as he is ambushed in public spaces. In the latter of these cases, he disarms a swordsman despite only having the use of one arm. Campbell is "as nimble as [the assailant], and presently disarm'd him, then shortning his Sword, put the Point to his Breast, and shew'd him what he could do, and obliging him to beg his Life, generously threw away his Sword" (145-46). Later on, the "twenty or thirty Gentlemen of Rank" who had been present for this scene "speak of this...very much to Mr. Campbell's Honour" (146). Campbell's weapon-wielding and courage in the duel are only matched by his generosity in sparing the other man's life.

His “Honour” is that of a gentleman, and he is suitably admired by those gentlemen who have the privilege to observe him in action.

At times, Justicia posits Campbell’s masculinity as being larger than life when she implies that he has the aid of supernatural powers when fencing. At this juncture in the narrative, he must draw his sword on a band of ruffians who have falsely arrested him. He fights “with so much Fury, that the Ruffians flew the brandish’d Light’ning” (174). Outmanned by a group of men does not hinder Campbell from exhibiting his fury. One of the men who attempts to flee the scene falls “backward into the Cellar, and had certainly broke his Neck, but for a Basket of Fruit, which was something softer than the Pavement, on which otherwise he must have fallen” (174). There is a comic element to all of this, of course, but when the man says, “I have been in many Dangers, both by Land and by Water, but never knew what Fear was, till the Sight of that damn’d Conjuror’s great Sword gave it me. I am certain it has some Enchantment in the Blade, beyond whatever was in Steel or Iron” we are given the sense that Campbell is indeed aided by a righteous, supernatural source of power (174). Campbell’s is surely a force to be reckoned with; so much so that even world-traveled rogues attest to his otherworldly strength.

Often at stake in Haywood’s narrative is the question of Campbell’s authenticity. Some, for example, attack Campbell to see if he is merely pretending to be deaf and dumb. One particularly cruel lady slams his fingers in a door to see if he will cry out, which had the effect of making him “stamp, and utter a kind of inarticulate Noise” (146). The lady is sorry to have done this once she realizes he is indeed deaf and dumb, and his fingers are “bruise’d and mortified in a most dreadful

Manner” (146). A prominent surgeon, meanwhile, performs an unnecessary, painful operation on Campbell to see if he can make him sound out his pain, boasting that “he was going to make the Dumb to speak” (147). The surgeon is then sorry to have done so because Campbell cannot make any noise, despite his acute pain. In each of these instances, the narrative depicts Campbell as tortured and wronged, while it portrays the woman and the surgeon as being cruel and in need of enlightenment. While enlightenment about Campbell might be inaccessible to the surgeon and woman, Haywood implies that the reader may be enlightened reading the previous publication about Campbell, William Bond’s *The History of the Life and Adventures of the Famous Mr. Duncan Campbell* (1720).

Educating the Reading Public about Deafness: William Bond’s *The History of the Life and Adventures of the Famous Mr. Duncan Campbell*

To get a more comprehensive picture of the role that Campbell’s deafness plays in this historical and literary context, it is crucial to recall that *Spy on the Conjuror* (1724) is only the third major publication about Campbell to hit the presses, the two previous publications dating back to 1720. To consider Haywood’s writings as engaging in an ongoing literary and cultural conversation, I argue, gives us a stronger sense of how deafness is constructed in this particular historical moment. By looking at Haywood’s use of intertextuality, we can get a sense of what she assumes her reader would already have known about Campbell: his second sight, some of his miraculous deeds, and even how he manages his deafness. With these intertextual acknowledgements in mind, I would like to suggest that another possible explanation

for Haywood's nonchalance regarding Campbell's deafness may be attributable to the content of those previously-published accounts of Campbell. One of these publications is *Mr. Campbell's Packet for the Entertainment of Gentlemen and Ladies* (1720), which contains verses about Campbell written by Martha Fowke, as well as the story of an apparition that appeared when the plague swept through London in 1665 (the latter of which has nothing to do whatsoever with Campbell). The packet is only 34 pages in length and does not offer a great deal of information about the soothsayer, other than alluding to his deafness and inability to vocalize his thoughts and comparing him to Alexander Pope and John Milton.⁹ On the other hand, William Bond's *The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell*, also published in 1720, contains extraordinary amounts of information about Campbell's biography and deafness. For his part, Bond reveals unconventional—though as we have seen, not unprecedented—information about education and literacy for the deaf in England.

Like *A Spy on the Conjuror*, *The History of the Life* normalizes the experience of deafness. Jonathan Rée has called *The History of the Life* a “silly book” since it also posits Campbell's prophetic, hence implausible, capabilities and circumstances (91). I think that Bond's narrative, however, should be considered much more seriously than this because it was such a popular book for its time. *The History of the Life* can provide insight into how the reading public would have perceived deafness during this period. Unlike Haywood's novel, Bond dedicates considerable attention to the project

⁹ Considering Milton's blindness and Pope's various physical deformities, this is indeed an interesting comparison.

of educating the public about deaf peoples' ability to read, write, and sign, challenging in the process popular misperceptions about the supposed intellectual impairments of deaf Brits.¹⁰ Bond's considerable attention to deaf education, in turn, paves the way for Haywood's own astoundingly disinterested treatment of deafness.

But first, I would like to give a sense of how Haywood employs intertextuality in *A Spy on the Conjurer* to illustrate how her assumptions about her audience might explain her portrayal of Campbell's deafness. There are several moments in the narrative in which Haywood's narrator, Justicia, refers to *The History of the Life* and assumes that her letter's addressee (her unnamed Lordship), and by extension Haywood's readership, would have already read *The History of the Life*. Near the letter's beginning, Justicia first introduces the concept of Campbell's second sight, "that Art which bears the Name of Natural Magick" by which he "is able to gain so certain a Knowledge of Futurity" (17). Rather than delve into the details of how the second sight works, however, Justicia simply writes, "The Merchant spoken of in the Book, entitled, *The Life of the Famous Mr. Duncan Campbell*, is an example sufficient to prove the Truth of this Assertion. I could, indeed, bring many more; but I think need go no farther than what your Lordship is already sensible of" (17-18). The story of the merchant, about whom Campbell divines significant details in Bond's narrative, is already known, or supposed to be known, by the reader. Instead of bogging down her readership with previously-relayed information about natural magic, Haywood assumes a level of familiarity and knowledge about the subject and moves on to other,

¹⁰ This is an argument that has been made explored in some depth by Felicity Nussbaum and Christopher Krentz.

more intriguing, and, as we have seen, salacious details to whet the reader's appetite for the sexual.

Haywood later qualifies her assumption about her readers. In her letter to her lordship, Justicia stops short of describing certain "comical Transactions" between Campbell and his clients because of their already having been related in *The History of the Life*. She writes of Mrs. Saxon, one of Campbell's clients referred to in Bond's book, "I may spare my self the Pains of reciting it, since it is already done to my Hands...in that Book I have already quoted,----viz. *The Life of Mr. Campbell*, to which I refer you...Therefore I intreat, if you have not yet read that Book, that you will immediately send for it." Justicia then avows the book's portrayal of events, which, she claims, are "set down with the utmost Veracity" (60-61). Haywood declares that Bond's narrative must be read, and she attests to its truthfulness, in order to assure the reader that there is an ongoing context for her narrative, preceded as she was by other prominent literary figures such as Bond and Fowkes. Haywood refers to Bond's book on two other occasions. At one point, Justicia reads it while she waits her turn to meet with Campbell (111-12). Haywood includes one final mention of Bond's account on the last pages of the narrative. In this case, Haywood supposedly redacts a letter that a gentleman has written to Campbell, in which he wishes him "all Prosperity, for your Country's and your own just Honour and Interest, long, long live, and enjoy the same in superlative Degrees" (258-59). This intertextual moment comprises the last

thoughts of the novel, leaving the reader with yet another reference to the significance of reading and understanding Bond's narrative.¹¹

To overlook this intertextuality is to misunderstand the cultural context out of which these works emerged. While Haywood's intertextual references all refer to Campbell's second sight or his honor, we can also infer that she would have been aware of Bond's attention to deafness, which is of no minor significance in *The History of the Life*. What Haywood may be assuming is that since Bond had already written extensively about deafness, she could just glaze over the mechanics of Campbell's communication as she does in *A Spy on the Conjuror*. I acknowledge that this is impossible to prove textually (none of the intertextual moments in *A Spy on the Conjuror* refer to Bond's treatment of deafness). However, I am suggesting that Haywood keeps Bond's narrative in mind throughout her account, and thus would not want to belabor any points that he had already made. That said, what I would like to suggest is that Bond's narrative, being the first extended publication about Campbell, broaches and elaborates on the subject of education and literacy for deaf people. Those readers exposed to Bond's account would have already been familiarized, to a degree, with the idea of deafness as a variable human characteristic: something which is not

¹¹ *The Secret Memoirs of the Late Duncan Campbell* also employs intertextuality, further underscoring the importance of reading these texts as a collection or series rather than in isolation. For example, Campbell writes, "Timely care has sometimes given the Lye to the most terrible Portents, as in the Case of the Merchant, mentioned in the Book of my Life...various Instances of this kind are also related at full, in a Book intituled, *The Spy on the Conjuror*, which makes it needless to repeat them here" (21). Like Haywood, Campbell's memoirs (which may have actually been written by Haywood herself) is aware of that which has already been related about him and therefore finds it pointless to repeat previous publications.

necessarily an impairment, but which is the nexus of a language.¹² Therefore, Haywood's familiarity with Campbell's conversational style in 1724, four years after Bond's publication, may be a reflection of her readers' own familiarity: an acknowledgement that they already "get" Campbell's deafness. In any case, *A Spy on the Conjuror* would have given Haywood's readers the sense that deafness is not all that unusual, nor does it necessarily limit or even compromise one's ability to traverse oral-based social scenarios.

History of the Life, on the other hand, goes to great lengths to educate the reading public about deaf peoples' capabilities. Given that Bond's book is the first major one out about Campbell, Bond's attention to deafness is necessary since he is attempting to familiarize his audience with someone who would seem so alien—in terms of his nationality, disability, and employment—to his readership. In many parts of the narrative, Bond uses familiarization techniques to make a compelling case for the establishment and development of deaf education, which at this point in England did not exist in any kind of official manner. For one thing, he spends a great deal of time lauding Dr. Wallis, who, as we have seen, is a pioneer in deaf education for his teaching of gesture, reading, and writing to his deaf pupils.¹³ Bond describes how

¹² In "Constructions of Deafness," Harlan Lane discusses the ongoing modern debate between those who see deafness as a disability, and those DEAF WORLD (a term used by ASL speakers in reference to their minority) inhabitants (and others) who view deafness not as a disability, but as a linguistic minority. It is interesting (though ahistorical), to think of this conversation going on in the context of Duncan Campbell's meteoric rise to celebrity. It seems that Haywood's treatment of him represents a kind of linguistic minority approach to deafness. Even Bond seems to be saying this, though he must contend with those readers who see deaf people as intellectually impaired or mad.

¹³ This is not to say that sign language did not already exist; as Jonathan Rée points out, sign language has been around for thousands of years, dating at least as far back as Plato and Socrates, the latter of whom describes deaf folks using "signs with the hand and head and the

Wallis's influence touches the life of Duncan Campbell. With Wallis's particular pedagogical approach at his disposal, a doctor approaches four year-old Duncan's parents to ask them for the opportunity of educating their son, and Campbell proves up for the task. Bond describes Duncan's learning process in these terms: the "little Dumb Pupil, first, to know his Letters; then to name any Thing whatsoever...and to impart his Thoughts by his Fingers and his Pen, in a Manner as intelligible, and almost as swift thro' the Eyes, as that is of conveying our Ideas to one another by our Voices, thro' the Conduits and Port-holes of the Ears" (36-37). In this case, Bond relates deaf communication in terms that hearing people could comprehend. Bond equates Campbell's "Pen," "Fingers," and "Eyes" with hearing peoples' "Voices" and "Ears." Duncan's mode of communication, in this case, is every bit as efficient as that of a speaking, hearing person. By placing these modes of communication in familiar terms to the reader, Bond both normalizes deafness and celebrates Duncan Campbell's aptitude for learning. A quick study, Duncan is able to learn to learn and communicate through reading, writing, and Wallis's sign language.

This is not the only textual example in which Bond equates the sense of sound with that of sight. Upon first introducing the concept of deaf pedagogy, Bond writes,

How are Children first taught a Language that can hear? Are they not taught by Sounds? And what are those Sounds, but Tokens and Signs to the Ear, importing and signifying such and such a Thing? If then there

rest of the body" (Ree, "I see a voice in deafness..."). Sign Language would not have been standardized, however. As Woll and Stone point out, sign language previous to the later eighteenth century would have consisted of "home sign"—a series of gestures created by a deaf person to communicate with family and neighbors. The establishment of schools for the deaf in the later eighteenth century marked the beginning of the standardization of British Sign Language. It is also interesting to note that Dr. Wallis was Defoe's brother-in-law, which is part of the reason why scholars have attributed *The History of the Life* to Defoe; it's as if there is a case being made for people to consider Dr. Wallis's educational methodologies.

can be Signs made to the Eye, agreed by the Party teaching the Child, that they signify such and such a Thing; will not the Eye of the Child convey them to the Mind, *as well as* the Ear? They are indeed *different* Marks to different Senses; but *both* the one *and* the other do *equally* signify the same Things or Notions, according to the Will of the Teacher, and consequently, must have an *equal* Effect with the Person who is to be instructed: For tho' the Manners signifying are *different*, the Things signified are the *same*. (38-39, emphasis mine)

In the passage above, I have italicized Bond's use of words that denote difference and equality. It is telling that he employs "different" on only two occasions, both of which represent his acknowledgement of the fact that communicating via speech and finger talk are indeed discrete forms. However, the remainder of the passage is riddled with the phrase and words "as well as," "equally," "both...and," "equally," "equal," and "same." Bond's usage of words of similitude are more than triple in number than the words marking difference, thus compelling the reader to amplify his or her understanding of language: that it can be spoken *and* signed with *equal* efficiency. This remarkable passage justifies educating deaf children by equating those "Tokens and Signs to the Ear" with "Signs made to the Eye." Both the ear and the eye are "equally" efficient in their ability to "convey" meaning to the mind.¹⁴ It is up to the teacher, Bond implies, to both understand and capitalize on the potential of the eye to capture meaning. The teacher must know that it is every bit as possible for the hands and eye to coordinate meaning as it is for the voice and ear. Bond thus enlarges his readers' scope of what it means to engage in conversation, and consequently defends the uncommon but important project of educating deaf children. In this way, Bond's

¹⁴ As I have already shown, Bulwer makes this case convincingly in his treatises on gesture.

book challenges epistemology, enabling deaf people as a linguistically viable group of individuals capable of rational, even genius, thought.

This is the stuff of radical thought (for such a popular literary form as *The History of the Life*) in an early eighteenth-century context. Bond acknowledges the subversive scope of his vision when first describing Duncan Campbell's own ability to instruct deaf people to communicate:

[s]hould I...say, that there is now living a Deaf and Dumb Man, and born so, who could by dint of his own Genius teach all others Deaf and Dumb to Read, Write, and Converse with the Talking and Hearing Part of Mankind; some would, I warrant, very religiously conclude, that I was about to introduce some strange new Miracle-Monger and Impostor to the World; with a Design of setting up some new Sect of Antichristianism, as formidable as that of the Brahmans (6).

Bond uses a charged simile, bringing in an exotic religious group which was thought to be superstitious, idolatrous, and above all, powerful, to concede that what he is about to write is unconventional.¹⁵ At the same time, he hits upon the marginal status of deaf people in early eighteenth-century England. It is this marginality that Bond is attempting to eradicate by discussing deaf peoples' intellectual capabilities. They are not to be seen as exotic, as the Brahmans are, but to be viewed as capable and British: not as *them*, but as *us*. In fact, educating deaf people would have been such an

¹⁵ It is telling that Campbell is exoticized and racialized here. I have found some instances of deaf people being portrayed as their own tribe or nation in accounts from the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries. Bulwer (1648), for example, writes to his deaf patrons, "And the Grand Signiour, or Emperour of the Turks, would take it for no disparagement, to be called Great Master of the Deafe and Dumbe; with whom *fifty of your Tribe* are alwayes in Delitis." (1-2). Later on, Bulwer, writes, "He was borne Deafe and Dumbe. Great are the *Nation* of those (otherwise ingenious men) who have fallen under this unhappy accident" (76)." Stone and Woll hit upon a similar theme when they mention an 1815 account about the great deaf educator, Laurent Clerc, who, upon meeting a group of deaf children at the Braidwood School for the Deaf in London, became "as agitated as a traveller of sensibility would be on meeting all of a sudden in distant regions, a colony of his own countrymen" (qtd in Stone and Woll 229). I would like to explore these accounts in my future research on deafness.

unorthodox idea for the time, that it would appear to overturn deeply entrenched English assumptions (hence, the “antichristianism” reference) about deaf peoples’ supposed lack of intelligence. Taking into historical account that schools for the deaf would not be established until the end of the eighteenth century, Bond’s views of deafness are unusual ideas for which a reading public in 1720 would need to be primed. And yet Bond, with his normalizing techniques at his disposal, seems up to the task.

Bond uses Dr. Wallis’s educational theories to assert the capabilities of deaf people to learn. While introducing Dr. Wallis’s pedagogical approach to deaf instruction, the narrator asserts, “For I must join with the Learned Doctor Wallis, in asserting, (as to the present Case before us) that no Reason can be assigned why such a Deaf Person may not attain the understanding of a Language as perfectly as those that hear” (41). Once again, Bond sets up an egalitarian relationship between hearing and non-hearing segments of the British population. In fact, the narrator posits that by following Dr. Wallis’s approach, the details of which are articulated throughout a chapter in the narrative, “you may, (with Diligence, and due Application of Teacher and Learner,) in a Year’s Time, or thereabouts, perceive a greater Progress than you would expect, and a good Foundation laid for further Instruction in Matters of Religion, and other Knowledge which may be taught by Books” (51). In a year’s time, Bond argues, a deaf individual may learn important religious principles in addition to other forms of knowledge, thereby substantiating the effort that a teacher would exert in teaching the student in question. Here, we see evidence of that late-seventeenth-century optimism (which we have already observed) for teaching deaf people. As

Krentz points out, Bond's narrative, and the object of the biography himself, are watershed moments for deaf education. I agree with Krentz, mostly in consideration of the popularity of Campbell's literary legend at the time.

Bond does not stop at merely arguing that deaf folks are capable of rational thought; he goes so far as to assert the genius of deaf individuals that he has known or of whom he has heard, following in the intellectual footsteps of John Bulwer. In these cases, Bond implies, deafness is not necessarily an impairment so much as it is a life situation which must be handled with care. There is, according to Bond, Mr. Alexander Popham (John Wallis's pupil, as it turns out), brother-in-law to the Earl of Oxford and a "Masterly Genius." Also, the uncle of the Sardinian king writes "in Five or Six different Languages elegantly well" (53). And deaf women are bright, too. The daughter of one Mr. Loggin, a "Miracle of Wit and Good Nature," can read lips, and a lady in Genoa is able to understand her sister by placing her hand on her sister's mouth while she speaks. Capable of great intelligence and ingenuity, deaf people merit a fair shake in the realm of education, Bond asserts. All in all, Bond makes a strong case for educating the deaf, and by providing exact instructions as to how to educate them, and in listing the names of brilliant deaf men and women, he attempts to change popular perceptions about the potential intelligence of this segment of the population. Moreover, as Lennard Davis points out, the narrative's treatment of Campbell as "hyperbolically superior being, a godlike man of great intelligence, handsome looks,

and supernatural powers" serves to reinforce the extraordinary capabilities of some deaf people (57).¹⁶

Another of the remarkable aspects of Bond's book is that it includes an illustration of a signing alphabet, comprised of a chart that shows the sign for each letter in the alphabet—showing once again that Bond is very much invested in the intellectual standpoints of Bulwer, Wilkins, and Wallis. Bond includes this chart toward the end of the book, long after his chapters dedicated primarily to deaf education, which performs the function of returning the reader to the thought of deafness and communication long after it seems to be over (see figure on next page). There are squares with each letter of the alphabet, and the sign which accompanies it. At the bottom of the chart, there is a description: "A good Method to teach deaf & Dumb Persons to converse with one another, and with all who are willing to learn this Secret & Silent way of Conversation" (256). In effect, Bond is positing Dr. Wallis's method of communication as a means for the deaf to communicate with each other, but it also gives hearing readers the opportunity to learn to sign so that they, too, may communicate with deaf people. This in turn knocks down barriers between the hearing and deaf communities, providing a public opportunity for a linguistic minority to validate their humanity.

As I have shown, *The History of the Life* portrays signing as something which can be taught by hearing instructors to their hard-of-hearing pupils, but this narrative also stipulates (for the first time in the English language, to my knowledge) that deaf

¹⁶ On the other hand, Davis also calls Campbell a "fraud." Again, I find this to be beside the point on the topic of deafness in these texts.

individuals can teach their hearing friends--or may even instruct deaf students of their own--how to communicate via gesture. As a boy, Campbell shows his hearing playmates how to communicate with him in his own language: “Our Young Prophet,

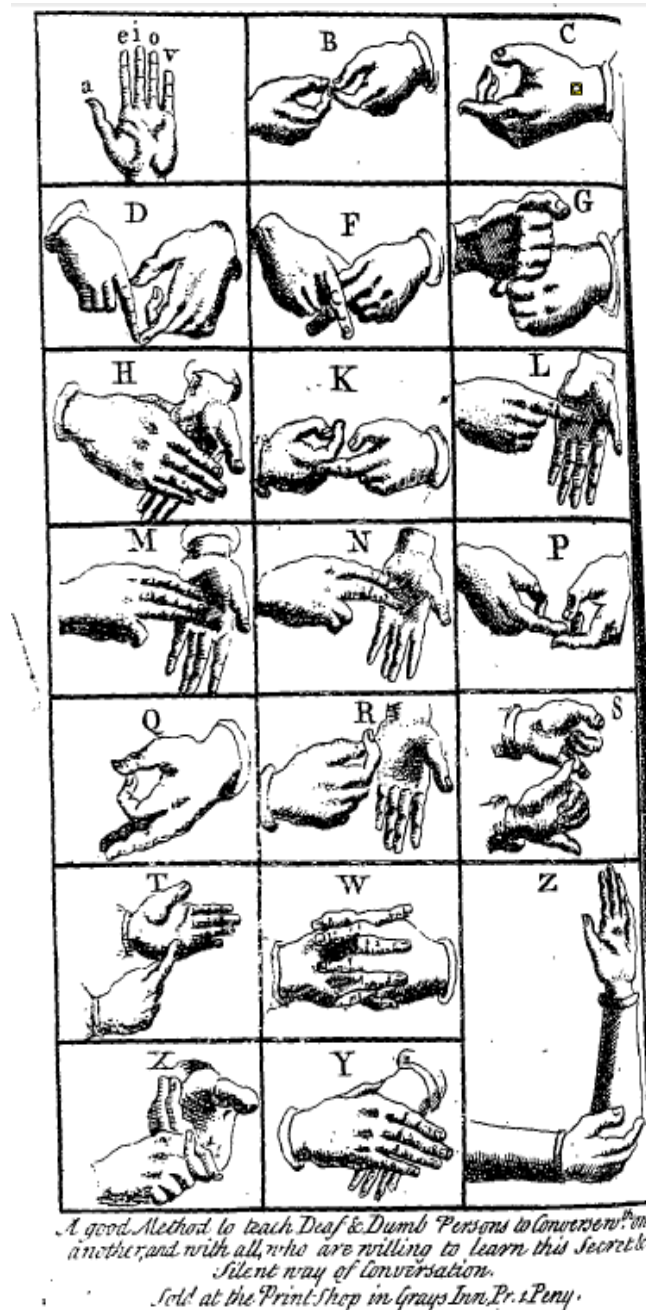


Figure 1.2: Taken from Bond's *History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell*. This signing alphabet chart demonstrates that Bond's narrative makes an explicit effort to educate the reading public about deaf culture.

who had taught most of his little Companions to converse with him by Finger, was the Head at every little Pastime and Game they play'd at" (6). By establishing Campbell as the leader and instructor of his group of friends, *The History of the Life* overturns Bulwer's, Wilkins', and Wallis's assumption that hearing folks should guide their deaf peers. Likewise, as an adult, Campbell instructs young deaf scholars to "Read, Write, and Converse with the Talking and Hearing Part of Mankind" (6). In particular, he has two scholars of his own who live in London and who have come to understand the English language via the written word and finger talk (54-55). Campbell is clearly a prodigy whose language skills surpass all expectations leading up to this point in history.

The Community of Senses and the Second Sight

Of course, what makes Campbell even more of a prodigy than his deafness and intellect is his possession of the second sight, which gives him a knowledge of the future and enables him to remedy the pernicious consequences of witchcraft. The relationship between Campbell's profession as a soothsayer and his deafness was often the subject of controversy during and after his life. The unnamed writer and narrator in the Appendix of the *Friendly Daemon: or, the Generous Apparition* (1726), defends the recently deceased Campbell from accusations that he had merely pretended to be deaf throughout his life in order to establish credibility as a seer among the public. The narrator asserts that Campbell's "being naturally Deaf and Dumb" was "a Misfortune which has been cruelly and falsly represented as an Imposition on the Publick" (228). Of course, it would be impossible to validate or discredit Campbell's deafness, though

scholars have assumed that he is everything from a deaf impostor, to a profoundly deaf man, to an individual who experienced moderate to severe hearing loss as an adult.¹⁷

Rather than grapple with the question of Campbell's hearing abilities, I intend to approach his sensory experience from a different angle. I think, for example, that his deafness and second sight intersect in ways that merit exploration.

Like the new science's interest in deafness, which I have already explored to some extent, scientists and writers such as Robert Boyle, Robert Kirk, Samuel Pepys, and John Fraser focused their intellectual attention on the second sight during the last two decades of the seventeenth century and first decades of the eighteenth century. As Alex Sutherland notes, this trend of scholarly inquiry is attributable to the intellectual and spiritual environment of that time, in which natural philosophers and virtuosos attempt to use scientific means to prove the existence of an afterlife. As Sutherland notes, "[i]f science could confirm that there were people gifted with prophetic powers as described in the Bible, this would, in turn, confirm the validity of the Good Book" (92). There are a number of publications from this era which scrutinize and attempt to codify supernatural phenomena. Given the new science's goal of penetrating the mysteries of nature, it is of little surprise that there would be an attempt to demystify or at least rationalize the unknown. In this cultural context, deafness and the second sight are kindred spirits: unnatural conundrums which the keen observational skills of the enlightened man can decipher. But this is not the only commonality which deafness and the second sight share. I argue that there are several textual examples from the Duncan Campbell series that assume or apply Bulwer's theory of "the

¹⁷ See Harlan Lane, Lennard Davis, and Christopher Krentz.

community of senses,” which states that nature compensates for hearing loss with a heightening of the other senses. In the case of Duncan Campbell, his auditory sensory deprivation enables his other senses to step in to allow him to manage a variety of tasks, from reading lips to tuning a violin. In the Duncan Campbell series, I argue that the second sight provides a discursive terrain in which to examine the community of senses in action. The series’ rendering of compensatory sensual experience situates deaf people as subjects who may successfully navigate a sound-and-hearing-based society. Ultimately, the Duncan Campbell series reveals that far from indicating some major impairment, deafness is a variable characteristic.

In only a few archival registers of the time are there instances of deaf or otherwise disabled Scots that have visionary access to other planes of existence. In John Frazer’s 1707 publication *Deuteroskopia or, a brief discourse concerning the second sight, commonly so called*, a Janet Dowglas is described in terms that should by now seem familiar. Frazer writes that Dowglas is at “first a Dumbie, yet spoke thereafter, who had given many Responses by Signs and Words, and foretold many future events” (24). Frazer also notes that Dowglas “declared freely that the answers of the questions proponed to her [by Mr. Gray, her interlocutor] were represented by a Vision in lively Images, representing the persons concerned and acting the thing, before her Eyes” (12-13). Dowglas, like Campbell, is deaf and endowed with the gift of prophecy. She is able to communicate with her interlocutor and in so doing reveals the insight which she receives into future events. Like Campbell, she participates in a social exchange, but for Frazer, her ability to do this is miraculous in and of itself.

Frazer also gives an account of an aging man whose “sight was much decayed,” and who receives visits from deceased friends that drink before him and “yet are not so civil to give [him] a tasting of it” (14). The author concludes it is work of “Fancy” and the man agrees: “for since I cannot see yourself (for only by your Voice I know you) how could I see them?” (14-15). The major senses, or lack thereof, are central to the experience of the second sight. In this particular instance, there is both an accounting for the man’s experience of the second sight and a scientific explanation provided for it, as in the following explanatory passage:

[b]ut when the Brain is filled with gross and flatuous Vapors, and the Spirits and Humours intraged, these Ideas are sometimes multiplied, as an Army by Mist; sometimes magnified; sometimes misplaced; sometimes confounded by other Species of different Objects: perhaps by half and half: so that the Fancy has two for one, one bigger than two of it self, and sometimes the half of one. (19)

Frazer uses medical discourse of his time to try to rationalize how a man with sight loss might receive visitations from ghosts. Vision, for one, is subject to magnification, multiplication, and other forms of distortions depending on one’s balance of humors and vapors. In this framework, Frazer demonstrates his engagement with the new science. According to Michael Hunter, Frazer’s description of an “Optick Experiment” that he conducted, and his “speaking the language of ‘matters of fact’” align him closely with his Royal Society forebears from the Restoration (27). Hunter also mentions that Fraser avers the ability of god, angels, and the devil to “manipulate nature” and thus, the senses (27). In this way, the senses are tied to the natural and preternatural worlds.

Frazer notes that these manipulations of vision may be connected to the miracles worked by God. For example, he accounts for Sir Kenelm Digby's register of Charles I's encounter with the deaf Castilian boy Luis de Velasco (which I introduced earlier on in this chapter). According to Frazer, Luis is

taught by a Monk to Speak, & understand what was spoken to him, only by observing the motion of his Lips that Spoke to him...This was more than ordinarie Sagacity and Docility: and it is found that many Dumb person foretell many things before hand: and it is hard measure to conclude all to be from evil Spirits. (38)

This passage contains a curious commingling of deaf communication and second sight. Everything leading up to the colon suggests that de Velasco is in fact a prodigy because—like Dowglas—he has the ability to speak and understand via lip reading. That which follows the colon, however, is a foray into the tendency of deaf people to tap into the spiritual world and then prophesy about what they see. In this passage, Frazer implies that deaf communication and the second sight are both miraculous. In fact, like many of his contemporaries, Frazer is attempting to differentiate between good and evil spirits: that which edifies and instructs, and that which corrodes and misleads. Frazer's account reveals that second sightedness is often experienced in the geographical margins—especially in Scotland—and by marginal individuals, such as the deaf and blind. His writings imply that though people with the second sight are not always deaf and dumb, there do seem to be an inordinately high number of those who “foretell.”

However, other than these few examples, there are not (to my knowledge) any other instances of deaf conjurers (besides that of Duncan Campbell). In fact, one's possession of the second sight seems to be far more dependent on whether one's

Scottishness than it is on deafness, blindness, or any other kind of ‘deformity’. In a 1702 publication, William Freke describes the second sight as "a kind of apparition" that is experienced by people who "live in Desarts, and Places and States forlorn" such as "the North of Scotland and Wales" (20). Five years later, Frazer would concur with Freke, and as is characteristic for Frazer, attempts to explain this phenomenon in terms that his educated, London-based audience could understand. Frazer claims that instances of the second sight occur more frequently in Scotland than in the south because people in London are not looking for it, and that the second sight has become so stigmatized in London that “those that see it conceal it” (37). He concludes that lack of education leaves ordinary people vulnerable to the manipulation of evil spirits: “Credulity and Ignorance give occasion to evil Spirits to juggle more frequently, than otherways they would have done” (37).

Other publications attest to the centrality of Scotland to the second sight. *A Surprising Conversation of a Highlander Who has the Second-Sight* also makes clear that the second sight is Scotland-based. According to this text, the narrator is a native of the Isle of Sky who claims to have inherited the second sight, as it is passed “from Father to Son” (1). When he initially settles in Edinburgh, he has a series of fits and convulsions which accompany his very public vision, and his onlookers think him mad. But with the passage of time, just as is the case with Duncan Campbell, he becomes a celebrity: “all flock’d to me with Admiration,” the Highlander reveals (2-3). In Daniel Defoe’s *The Highland Visions, or the Scots New Prophecy: Declaring in Twelve Visions what Strange Things shall come to Pass in the Year 1712*, the narrator claims to have already made many accurate predictions, and in this publication he

makes many more, usually of a political nature about prominent public figures' death or impending wars. In most of the registers I have examined, with the exception of Frazer's, there is a dearth of references to deaf seers. The second sight, like deafness, is considered exotic and strange, but it is available to just about any Scot who has inherited it or temporarily received it. And of course, the Duncan Campbell series relies on this marginality to attract readers.

And yet is Duncan Campbell so marginal? Do the texts from the series make him out to be such a miraculous man? As I have already shown, *The History of the Life* and *The Spy on the Conjuror* render his deafness and even his second sight as natural, providential gifts that are a benefit both to him and his clients. The same can be said of the other texts, such as *The Secret Memoirs of the Late Duncan Campbell* and *The Friendly Daemon*. The Duncan Campbell series as a whole relies on the "community of the senses" that John Bulwer had argued for in 1648. Bulwer theorizes that if one of the senses is lacking in any respect, the other senses will compensate in some way.¹⁸ In the case of deaf people, other senses—particularly that of sight—compensate for their hearing loss. For this reason, the deaf have extraordinary vision, which enables them to read lips and intuitively discern the characters and personalities of other people. Bulwer writes,

[s]o careful is Nature like a good mother, to make amends for a fault, that none should accuse her to be a stepmother: for what she taketh away in some of the senses, she allows, and recompenseth in the rest: insomuch as deafe and dumbe men, having a double defect, to wit of speaking and hearing, they usually have double recompense: this makes them good naturall Phisiognomers. (171)

¹⁸ Bulwer also refers to this as "translation of Senses" (A4).

Bulwer further describes the community of senses as “admirable” in that “the objects of one Sense may be known by another; and how one Sense will oftentimes supply the office and want of another: for light may be felt, odours may be tasted, the relish of meates may be smelt, magnitude and figure may be heard, and sounds may be seen, felt, or tasted” (64). Here, Bulwer demonstrates that there are a variety of permutations to how the senses perceive the material world. His theory suggests that deafness and blindness do not necessarily entail some kind of deformity since deaf and blind people can actively perceive sounds and sights through their other senses.

The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell, for one, relies on Bulwer’s notion of the community of the senses to describe deafness and the second sight. At one point, a young Duncan describes to the narrator how he receives a knowledge of that which will come to pass. A bell-carrying boy regularly appears to the seer, at times writing messages to him, but more often than not speaking “with his Fingers.” Duncan offers a curious, sensory-laden description of these visits:

[The boy] has a little Bell in his Hand, like that which my Mother makes me a Sign to shake, when she wants the Servants; with that he tickles my Brain strangely, and gives me an incredible Delight of Feeling in the Inside of my Head... ‘Tis sweeter to the Feeling, methinkins, than any Thing is to the Taste...I fancy, ‘tis what you call Hearing, which makes me mighty desirous I could hear in your way...It is more pleasant than to see the finest Colours in the World.---It is something like being tickled in the Nose with a Feather till one Sneezes, or like the feeling, after one strikes the Leg, when it has been numb or asleep; only with this difference, that those Two Ways give a Pain and the other a Pleasure. (72-73)

Duncan relies on his other senses—touch, sight, and taste—to process and explain how the second sight and sense of hearing works and feels. Later, he incorporates his only remaining sense—that of smell—to his description of the boy: “[w]hen he

breathes, it makes the Air more perfumed than my Mother's sweet Bags that she puts among the Linnen" (74). Campbell's description of his supernatural visitor assumes that one sound can indeed be perceived through the other senses, thus incorporating Bulwer's theory. Campbell, for example, relies on the sense of touch to describe his experience with the second sight, especially that which he feels when being tickled by a feather. He also compares sound to the sense of sight, which as we have seen is also pervasive in Bulwer's account. Lastly, Duncan refers to taste, the sweetness of which is no match for that which he imagines the sweetness of sound to be, though it eludes him. All five senses are accounted for in this passage. The remainder of the senses work together in compensatory ways to give Duncan a means of accounting for hearing.

This notion of compensation and sensual community are underlying assumptions that are repeated throughout the other major Duncan Campbell texts. Take for example the letter writer in *A Spy on the Conjuror*, who tells Duncan, "That supernatural Gift, called the second Sight, abundantly compensates for what is denied you by the Want of those more common Blessings" (239). In this instance, the second sight is constituted as a gift from god, replacing the "more common" sense of hearing. Campbell's blessings, on the other hand, are far from ordinary, and it is that which makes him so attractive. Justicia never discusses Campbell in this way, however, because for her his language and supernatural capabilities are hardly remarkable. Bulwer's theory is readily apparent in the later texts about Campbell. In the appendix to *The Friendly Daemon: or, the Generous Apparition*, the unnamed apologist defends the recently-deceased Campbell against charges that he had feigned deafness by

relying on seventeenth-century theories about compensation. The writer acknowledges, “there was some Things to be observed in him which might puzzle and ordinary Capacity, and render him liable to Suspicion without any mixture of Prejudice or Malice” (233). Campbell could, for example, understand spoken conversations that happened in his presence, and could also tune and play violins “with great Exactness” (233). The writer then refers to the community of senses, which I quote at length due to its relevance to Bulwer’s argument:

but when we consider how usual it is for the Almighty Disposer of Nature to make up in one Sense, what he thinks fit to deprive us of in another, nothing of this will appear strange: What Mr. Campbell wanted in the Organs of Speech and Hearing, was abundantly compensated for in those of his Sight and Touch; by the first, joined with an uncommon Quickness of Apprehension, he certainly had a wonderful Comprehension of what was said, if he fixed his Eyes on the Person who spoke, and observed the Motion of their Lips; and by the other he could distinguish Sounds, as was evident by putting the Neck of the Violin between his Teeth, and holding it there till he screwed the Pegs to what Pitch he thought fit: The same Method he likewise took to know when his Watch was down. There are Reasons both Chirurgical and Philosophical for the feeling of Sounds, as may be seen at large in several learned Treatises; and common Experience may inform us, that a deaf Person, when he sees an Instrument of Musick touched, will immediately clap the Drum of his Ear to one End of a Stick, and hold the other against a hollow Board, and this will enable him to beat Time with as just a Cadence, as if he had the Sense of Hearing in the utmost Perfection. (233-34)

The “several learned Treatises” most certainly refers to Bulwer’s work, and that of his contemporaries, too. Campbell had been able to navigate social scenarios by relying on sight and touch, which enable him to read lips and experience music as one who has full hearing would. In this way, deafness is something which can be circumvented, thereby enabling a person with hearing loss to fully experience the social order without impairment. In fact, the way that Campbell encounters sensory experience is

very much in line with the frontispiece from Bulwer’s *Philocophus* (figure on next page), where a deaf man places his mouth near the tuning pegs of a bass viol so that he can hear the music through the cello’s vibration. The deaf man relies on his teeth to hear through a process called bone conduction—the funneling of sound from an external source to the inner ear by way of the bones in the skull.¹⁹ Another figure, apparently blind, is able to hear the image of the woman in front of him, and can taste the scent of the incense that is perfuming the hall. These illustrated figures and Campbell can all experience outside world “in the utmost Perfection.” After all, as Bulwer notes, “sounds may be seen, felt, or tasted” (64).



Figure 1.3: Frontispiece from John Bulwer’s *Philocophus*, an illustration which shows the community of senses at work.

¹⁹ In fact, this is the same process which cochlear implant hearing aids employ today.

The appendix's defense also disrupts the link between the second sight and deafness in its proposing that there would have been no reason for Campbell to feign deafness in order to make his possession of the second sight appear viable. "As second sight," Campbell's defender writes, "therefore has not the last Relation to being Deaf and Dumb, how could it, in the least, advance either the Profit or Reputation of Mr. Campbel to be accounted so?" (228). This particular account troubles any clear connection between the second sight and deafness by suggesting that one's possession of the second sight is not reliant on that person's hearing capabilities. The incompatibility of deafness and the second sight, according to this defender of Campbell, proves that he is not feigning hearing loss, and this suggests that the truthfulness of Duncan Campbell's deafness proves to be of far more importance in this particular text than the subject of his second sight.

The community of senses also makes its way into Campbell's *Memoirs*, wherein Campbell describes his encounter with a blind man in a coffee shop. Here, he draws attention to how his sight compensates for his hearing loss, and how the blind compensate for their sight loss by relying on touch. In their meeting, the two men play cards, and the blind man, relying on touch, is able to guess the cards that Campbell calls for. As the blind man later reveals to Campbell, his assistant had "marked all the Cards with a small Pin, so as not to be perceived by the Eye, but easily distinguished by the Touch" (116). Campbell is highly amused by this bit of news. Later, Campbell, responding to bets placed among the bystanders, is able to communicate with the blind man by teaching him how to use finger talk. He guides the man's hands to the appropriate gesture and indicates what each of them stands for. The man proves to be

a quick study, and Campbell finally speaks to the blind man by “touching his Fingers instead of my own” (117). Campbell and his companion are delighted with each others’ company, and the meeting concludes with the man’s statement about compensation and the community of senses: “I see by Feeling, and you hear by your Eyes” (117). Their encounter is once again indicative of the central role which compensation plays in all of the Duncan Campbell texts. These narratives demonstrate that deafness is not a guarantee of one’s status as an outsider, but that it is a variable characteristic which can be managed appropriately.

Campbell’s Queerness

As I have argued, the Campbell compendium often represents Campbell as heroic, while at other times he comes across as an ordinary figure despite his profound deafness. Campbell is always able to engage in social interaction, compensating for his deafness through lip reading, finger talk, and the written word. These texts, as we have seen, assume the work of seventeenth-century philosophers such as Bulwer and Wallis, who argue for sensory compensation, the viability of gesture as a universal mode of communication, and the importance of teaching deaf people literacy skills. But while the texts’ depictions of Campbell’s deafness at times empower and often normalize him, there are a couple of instances in which Campbell’s queerness must be accounted for. There are occasions, for example, in which Campbell’s attractiveness to his mostly female clientele elicits highly-charged responses from them. In these fleeting textual moments, Campbell’s sexuality upsets established rules of

contemporary, compulsory heterosexuality by suggesting that female homosociability can be a charged site of sexual pleasure.

As I have argued, *A Spy on the Conjuror* portrays Campbell as a family man. He has a wife and children, servants, and a house that functions as the nexus of his business. For the most part, the narrative posits Campbell as a masculine hero who delights in playing the role of father figure to Justicia. And yet, Campbell's masculinity is somewhat called into question because he is not exactly the rake figure of the Restoration or early eighteenth century, either. Upon first meeting Justicia and reading her fortune, he is aware of the "Thoughts in her Blushes, and the Confusion that was visible enough in [her] Face" and flirts a bit with her. The narrative suggests that he can hardly resist her "Charms" (9). Campbell also acknowledges that he is "qualified much better for a Conjuror than a Lover" (9). Campbell's profession as a soothsayer in some ways precludes his having any kind of normative sexuality. However, for the remainder of the narrative, Campbell is depicted as a husband and father figure. Haywood, perhaps uncharacteristically, never really brings his sexuality to the fore.

History of the Life, meanwhile, provides the best example of Campbell's queerness. In one peculiar passage, the narrator paints a vivid visual description of Campbell's sexual impact on his beautiful, fawning, female attendants, who all seem happy to take turns fondling their "Oracle":

As soon as I enter'd the Room, I was surpriz'd to find myself encompass'd and surrounded by a Circle of the most beautiful Females that ever my Eyes beheld. In the Centre of this Angelick Tribe was seated a heavenly Youth, with the most winning comeliness of Aspect, that ever pleased the Sight of any Beholder of either Sex; his Face was divinely Fair, and ting'd only with such a sprightly Blush, as a Painter would use to Colour the Picture of Health with, and the Complexion

was varnish'd over by a Blooming, like that of a flourishing Fruit, which had not yet felt the first Nippings of an unkind and an uncivil Air; with this Beauty was join'd such a smiling draught of all the Features, as is the result of Plesantry and good Humour. His Eyes were large, full of Lustre, Majestick, well set, and the Soul shone so in them, as told the Spectators plainly, how great was the inward Vivacity of his Genius: The Hair of his Head was thick and reclin'd far below his Shoulders; it was of a fine Silver Colour, and hung down in Ringlets like the curling Tendrils of a copious Vine. He was by the Women entertain'd, according to the Claim, which so many Perfections joining in a Youth just ripening into Manhood, might lay to the benevolent Dispositions of the tender Sex. One was holding the Bason of Water, another washing a Hand, a Third with a Towel drying his Face, which another Fair had greedily snatch'd the Pleasure of washing before, while a Fourth was disposing into order his Silver Hairs with an Ivory Comb, in an Hand as White, and which a Monarch might have been proud to have had so employ'd in adjusting the Crown upon his Head; a Fifth was setting into Order his Cravat; a Sixth stole a Kiss, and blush'd at the innocent Pleasure, and mistook her own Thoughts as if she kiss'd the Angel and not the Man; and they all rather seem'd to adore than to love him, as if they had taken him not for a Person that enjoy'd the frequent Gift of the Second Sight, but as if he had been some little Prophet peculiarly inspired, and while they all thus admired and wonder'd they all consulted him as an Oracle. (128-29)

Bond's deification of Campbell relies on an all-female audience for signification.

Nussbaum's reading of this passage takes into account the ways in which Campbell stands as a kind of prophetic or Christ figure to his female devotees, and argues that he is "also feminized as a sexual object" in their physical attention to his idealized body (47). Nussbaum interprets this rendering of Campbell "as a royal prince with his English harem, in which the attending women are emboldened to kiss him" (47). I am more interested in the women's emboldened sexuality in the context of this mostly homosocial scenario. What strikes me most about this passage is the way in which the women express their sexual desire in each others' company. They work together to bathe, refresh, and please the body of their beloved. Rather than contend for his

attention, they join together in a harmonious expression of piety, love, and devotion. Their sexual desire for Campbell goes unchecked as one woman kisses him while her companions comb his hair and wash his body. Campbell's attendees look to their oracle as a man that they may not only consult for their fortune, but whom they can treat as an object of sexual desire and attention. This rendering of Campbell certainly troubles any coherent rendering of his masculinity, as Nussbaum points out, but it also enables a coalescing of female desire in ways that hardly seem ordinary for the time. This rendering of Campbell's "prelapsarian" perfection, as Nussbaum terms it, also idealizes a communal approach to sexuality and devotion for women, providing a momentary alternative to the conjugal relationships that are the typical and appropriate outlet for sexual expression. But even in this latter case, women would not be expected to derive any pleasure. As Bond's representation makes clear, however, women indeed have sexual desire, and their expression of this desire may occur in each others' company just as well as it might in the company of a man.

Conclusion

Far from being depicted as some kind of limiting impairment, deafness in the Duncan Campbell series is codified as a manageable life situation. Beyond that, Campbell does not merely cope with his deafness, he succeeds at his profession as an honorable, attractive, and heroic soothsayer who impacts in positive ways the lives of his clients. In fact, Campbell's other senses compensate for his deafness, giving him an entirely different perspective from hearing folks. The series celebrates his extraordinary way of hearing—through sight, taste, touch, and smell. In Bond's

account, deafness plays a central role. Bond's portrayal of Dr. Wallis's pedagogy for the deaf is a remarkable popular representation of how deaf people are capable of learning and should be incorporated into the social order. However, Bond is not the first to suggest that hard of hearing individuals are worth educating. There are several seventeenth-century treatises about deafness, including one by Wallis himself and many by John Bulwer, that advocate the ability of deaf people to compensate for their hearing loss by reading lips, gesturing, and learning literacy skills. Bond's narrative incorporates these assumptions into his account of Campbell's coming-of-age, paying particular attention to Wallis's pedagogy and Bulwer's theory of the community of senses. Bond's in-depth treatment of Campbell's hearing loss allows for Haywood's own representation of Campbell's deafness as unremarkable. Haywood's protonovel offers a textual register of hearing loss as an ordinary characteristic, giving us pause in assuming that deafness in this era was necessarily perceived as freakish or marginal.

Of course, this is not to say that Duncan Campbell is not unremarkable: he is portrayed as an extraordinary and keenly perceptive man, of course. His supposed possession of the second sight enables him to delve into the secret sex lives of his clients, providing provocative literary materials for the reading public to consume. Although Haywood often portrays Campbell as the apotheosis of masculinity, there are important moments in *A Spy on the Conjuror* and throughout the compendium in which Campbell's gender and sexuality diverge from the standards of the time. These deviations--especially that wonderful passage from Bond's account in which the young ladies gather around Campbell in a form of physical, communal adoration--provide glimpses into non-procreative forms of sexuality and eroticism for women.

Campbell's "English harem," especially, is a unique expression of female sexual desire that may easily be described as queer. In this telling narrative moment, Campbell brings together his female clients in homosocial displays of longing, desire, and communality. This representation of female sexuality relies on a sense of female homosocial pleasure and community that we will see more fully articulated in Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall*.

Chapter Two:

Sapphism and Accessibility in Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762)

In 1749, the soon-to-be novelist Sarah Robinson Scott met Lady Barbara Montagu in Tunbridge-Wells. The two became fast friends and, eventually, devoted domestic companions. Like any committed couple that sticks together for years, Scott and Montagu endured a series of difficulties, including Scott's ill-fated marriage to an older gentleman from whose presence she was forcibly removed by her brother and father.³⁹ After Sarah's separation from her husband, Sarah and Lady Barbara settled together in a home in Batheaston, a couple of miles from the hustle and bustle of the main streets of Bath. The letters exchanged between Scott and her sister, Elizabeth Montagu, reveal that Scott's family regarded Scott and Lady Barbara as a couple. For instance, Scott draws one letter to a close by writing, "Lady Bab desires her compliments; pray give my love to Mr Montagu" (24 October 1748). Here, Scott acknowledges that Mr. Montagu is Elizabeth's intimate, and underscores the notion that he matters more to Elizabeth than any other individual in her life. Elizabeth's letters to Sarah convey this same kind of familiarity and acknowledgement in regards to Lady Barbara. Elizabeth, for example, finishes her letter to Sarah with such statements as, "My best compliments to Lady Bab" or "I will now only add my best

³⁹ Sarah Robinson married Sir George Lewis Scott, a mathematician and subpreceptor to the Prince of Wales, and Merely one year after Sarah and George's marriage in 1751, Sarah's brothers and father removed her from her husband's home. As Rizzo and Caroline Gonda both note, the exact reason for the newlewed's separation is unknown—though Gonda surmises that it is likely due to some illicit behavior on George's part, and Rizzo speculates that he may have been a sodomite (Gonda 522-23, Rizzo 304).

respects to Lady Bab” (21 June 1748, 25 June 1748). Here, Montagu shares an understanding that this is the most important person in Sarah’s life, not merely a friend. Indeed, the implication is that Lady Barbara is Sarah’s most intimate companion, in a similar vein to what Mr. Montagu represents to Elizabeth. The question of whether or not Scott and Montagu’s relationship was of an erotic nature will likely never be known, but concrete evidence of physical intimacy is an insignificant point: we know from these letters and other historical documents that Sarah Scott and Lady Barbara Montagu desired to be with each other, that they co-habitated peacefully, and that they did not seek out the company of men.

This all raises the question: were they queer? Betty Rizzo argues that Scott and Montagu’s relationship is a form of “low-keyed bonding” based more on material need than on love or intimacy (295). Rizzo’s view, however, places undue restrictions on our understanding of the vibrant life shared between these two women, portraying them as asexual when in fact we have no idea whether this was the case or not. I would suggest that the relationship shared between these two women, who were entirely devoted to each other until the end of Lady Barbara’s life, might be characterized as anything but “low-keyed bonding.” On the contrary, the intimacy between Scott and Lady Barbara could be said to have been the catalyst behind their innovative reformist and creative endeavors. For instance, they employed physically disabled and deaf servants, set up a school for young, impoverished girls, and practiced the kinds of charitable reforms for which the Bluestockings were known generally. These principles would form the theoretical foundation for Scott’s utopian novel, *A Description of Millenium Hall and the Country Adjacent, Together with the*

Characters of the Inhabitants and such Historical Anecdotes and Reflections as May Excite in the Reader Proper Sentiments of Humanity, and Lead the Mind to the Love of Virtue (1762), the narrative for which Scott is most well-known.

As Rizzo's suggestion might attest, significant critical ink has been spilled over whether *Millenium Hall*, or Scott and Montagu, may be understood as queer. Susan Lanser has argued that scholarship on the Bluestockings typically registers a demarcation between the terms "bluestocking" and "lesbian." Rizzo and Sylvia Harcstark Myers, Lanser argues, go to great lengths to affirm that affective Bluestocking communities were devoid of any kind of erotic activity among its members, when in fact that evidence is lacking. Even Lisa Moore, a queer critic, has argued that *Millenium Hall* cannot be sapphic due to the female characters' "inability to exercise agency in the service of their own desires" (47). What I would like to suggest, however, is that sapphism is not contingent on proof of sexual intercourse. Historians of sexuality should not be, as Martha Vicinus laments, "obsessively concerned with knowing for sure" whether sexual contact did or did not occur between companions, as the pressure to obtain this kind of historical data creates a double bind for queer scholars. In the case of *Millenium Hall*, I will seek to identify the overarching desire of the characters in that novel. Lanser writes, "I want to ask that we broaden our sense of the erotic and hence also of what I call the sapphic, beyond explicit sexual acts or even overtly enunciated sexual wishes to encompass desires and penchants that give primacy—even momentary primacy—to same-sex bonds through words and practices amenable to an erotic rendering" (259-60). By examining the principles and practices behind the utopian experiments that apparent in Scott's

Millenium Hall, I will argue that this novel is in fact queer, or to properly historicize the term: *sapphic*. Sapphism, as Lanser has pointed out, is a term used with some regularity in the mid-to-late eighteenth century in reference to gentlewomen whose primary inclination is to be with other gentlewomen (“Befriending the Body” 184).⁴⁰

Scott’s imagined community does not merely consist of the sapphic women who come to reside and manage it, however. *Millenium Hall* also consists of anomalously-sized, deaf, blind, maimed, crippled, and otherwise disabled inhabitants and servants. Why are these figures aligned with the sapphic ladies who establish and manage the estate? Few scholars have addressed this point. For her part, Linda Dunne argues that the “monsters” of the estate represent “those aspects of the ladies that are most unacceptable, most deviant, most vulnerable, and most oppressed by the dominant male culture” (71). Though Dunne claims to be guarding “against assumptions that are more appropriate to our times than to the eighteenth century,” she in fact assumes that the ladies who run the estate are celibate, even though the text never comments specifically on the topic of physically-enacted sexuality (71). While Dunne’s premise that the ladies of the novel understand and thus empathize with the deformities of their charges is apt, her argument that physical disability is a mere reflection of women’s aberrant sexuality does not satisfactorily account for Scott’s longstanding interest in disability. Nor does Lisa Moore, who sees *Millenium Hall*’s main characters—the primary estate founders and mistresses—as being disfigured and isolated as the means by which they are able to escape violent heterosexuality in

⁴⁰ As Lanser has argued, sapphism is distinguishable from earlier homoerotic configurations and later lesbian ones in its gentry class specificity

general (35-36). Moore does not seem to account for the idea that disabled or disfigured women might be capable of experiencing sexuality on their own terms.

I would like to suggest then, that Scott's insistence on hiring disabled servants in her own home, as well as her decision to dedicate so many pages of *Millenium Hall* to the topic of physical disability, underscore an interest that can hardly be glossed over or taken for granted. In this chapter, I will argue that the disabled characters of this novel are portrayed as the queer offspring of sapphic desire. In other words, the intimacy, desire, political will, and class privilege of the mistresses of the estate enable them to act as guides and parents to the disabled. As *Millenium Hall* makes clear, a sapphist's ability to opt out of the dismal specter of heterosexual marriage is not to be wasted selfishly. *Millenium Hall* suggests that for sapphic desire to be sanctioned, women must create opportunities for the disabled. The best sapphist, this narrative reveals, is not just a lover of other women: she also has a mind for reform, especially in providing accessibility for the physically disabled.

Sapphic Desire in *A Journey through Every Stage of Life*

In order to better understand Scott's preoccupation with the question of female agency and sapphic desire, I turn first to her early novel, *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life* (1754), which, like *Millenium Hall*, critiques the constraints of patriarchy on women. This novel's structure consists of a series of inset narratives framed and related by a maid, Sabrina, to a young princess, Carinthia, who has been imprisoned by her power-hungry cousin. Sabrina "feels a Mother's fondness for her Royal Charge" and thus seeks to simultaneously comfort and educate Carinthia by relating to

her a series of stories, which often identify the pernicious effects of patriarchy on young girls. In his Introduction to the Broadview edition of *Millenium Hall*, Gary Kelly argues that the inset narratives related by Sabrina to Carinthia act as “a relief and as illustration of the vicissitudes of women’s lives under patriarchy” and that they contain “elements of explicit feminist protest” (22). Eve Tavor Bannet concurs, claiming that *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life* is every bit as “feminist” and “formally experimental” as *Millenium Hall*. Kelly and Bannet make salient points about the feminist nature of this text; however, they miss out on an opportunity to account for the novel’s queerness. Sexual transgression, for example, is especially apparent in the novel’s first inset narrative, “The History of Leonora and Louisa,” which portrays the relationship between a cross-dressing, somewhat masculine Leonora, who flees home with her beloved, feminine cousin and domestic-bound partner, Louisa, as a means of escaping an undesirable marriage. While Bannet concedes that the tale “explores what women might do after fleeing an unwanted marriage, if obliged to live outside conventional family structures,” she fails to analyze the intimacy, dynamics, and structure of Leonora and Louisa’s relationship (73). Bannet also neglects to account for the repeated expressions of sexual desire aimed at Leonora by the many women with whom she comes into contact while cross-dressed as a clergyman, painter, tutor, and school master. To account for these critical gaps, I will explore the contours of Leonora and Louisa’s intimacy and the expressions of longing and sexual desire aimed at Leonora by other women. Scott’s use of cross-dressing, I will suggest, is the means by which she is able to explore, in a creative outlet, the dynamics of a sapphic relationship.

“The History of Leonora and Louisa” is the most vibrant of all of the frame tales in *Journey Through Every Stage of Life*, and perhaps this is fitting, as it celebrates cross-dressing and sapphic households, while at the same time advocating women’s presence in the public sphere. This tale also identifies the transitory nature of youth and the deleterious effects of men’s fleeting passion for women: “Life at its full extent is short,” Sabrina tells Carinthia, “but the life of Woman is more curtailed by the Fancy and Caprice of Men, than by Age or Distempers” (6). In introducing the tale, Sabrina relates that men enact the most oppressive force on women, and she also celebrates Leonora’s tenacity: “she was the only Woman I have met with, who endeavoured to conquer the Disadvantages our Sex labour under, and who proved that Custom, not Nature, inflicts that Dependence in which we live, obliged to the Industry of Man for our Support, as well as to his Courage for our Defense” (7). Sabrina assures Carinthia that this narrative proves that women are not naturally inferior to men, and that women do not need men as a means of support. Further, Sabrina tells Carinthia that it is precisely this feminist objective that compels her to relate this story first, lending it an immediacy that trumps the subsequent, more conventional, shorter tales which follow it.

When dressed as a woman, Leonora is attractive, but when she dons male attire, she becomes so desirable that other women throw themselves at her. Besides this sexual excitement, there is a pragmatic side to Leonora’s sartorial gender bending. After all, her ability to pass as male in the resort town of Buxton and later, London, enables her and Louisa an independence that would otherwise be unattainable. More importantly, though, by depicting Leonora’s cross-dressing, Scott is able to depict

sapphic desire. Thus, cross-dressing in this period is not merely the means by which women pass as male in the public sphere: in this case, it is also the narrative screen upon which Scott portrays a same-sex family dynamic and explores the currents of same-sex desire.⁴¹ Leonora's successful performance of maleness is made possible by her upbringing. Born into a genteel family of loving parents, Leonora receives the education typical of a young gentleman, which serves her well when her loving mother dies and her malicious stepmother, Arabella, enters the household.⁴² Leonora responds to her stepmother's tyranny by fleeing her home, "where her happiness was threatened with such different means of Destruction" (22). Leonora and her fair companion, Laura, eventually make their way to the resort town of Buxton, where they find it necessary to assume disguises to escape notice and maintain a low profile. Instead of achieving that low profile, however, their disguises are so appealing that the entire town takes notice. In cross-dressing as a clergyman, Leonora must "lessen in some Degree the Effeminacy of her Countenance, which before made her not appear Man enough even for a Lady's Page" (18). Laura, meanwhile, assumes the role of clergyman's sister, but does not need to alter her gender in any way to do so (18). In response to Leonora's soft masculine performance, many of the young ladies of Buxton fall in love with her, though they also "grieved that so pretty a Fellow should be disgraced by an odious canonical Habit" (21). Such a pretty fellow, indeed: in fact,

⁴¹ Kathryn Shevelow explores eighteenth-century women's cross-dressing in her biography on the actress Charlotte Charke, *Charlotte*, especially in the chapter "The Female Husband" on pages 333-347.

⁴² This narrative previews in many ways Mrs. Morgan's history from *Millenium Hall*: Arabella seeks to marry off her stepdaughter in a hasty union, just as Mrs. Morgan's stepmother tries to arrange a scandal to force her to marry against her will. This theme of a young woman's agency in selecting companions plays a pivotal role both in both novels—as it does in *Agreeable Ugliness*.

Leonora is so convincing and attractive in her role as clergyman that she is offered a living in a nearby town. Thus, in addition to its proto-feminist scope, this particular frame tale turns out to contain gender bending and sapphic overtones. *Millenium Hall* would pose utopian solutions to the problems caused by a social structure in which women cannot comfortably maneuver the public sphere, but this frame tale is also curiously bold in its substitution of the virtues of a somewhat feminized masculinity for the hard edges of male prerogative.

Leonora is at her most attractive to the local women when she addresses a series of sermons to the local parishioners. Her execution of this bold enterprise turns out to engage and persuade the local churchgoers, particularly the young ladies who have already fallen in love with her. Leonora's sermons remedy many of the shortcomings of the unfeeling sermons typical of male clergymen. When she mounts the pulpit, she does so "with an Air so bashful and disconcerted" and announces her talk "with so faltering an Accent, and so many Blushes, that gentle Compassion sat on every Countenance" while "the Warmth of her Heart soon took off her Attention to her Audience, and left her only just Modesty enough to grace her Words, and give her the Air of Advice and Entreaty, rather than of commanding Injunctions" (26). Here, Scott illustrates typical gender norms of the woman of sensibility—her blushes, her faltering speech patterns, her gentle air—to act as foils to the assertiveness of "the bolder Sex." Consequently, Leonora's sermon proves more palatable, especially to the women in the audience. After the sermon, the fawning throng of young ladies are so moved that they announce in unison, "Truths divine came mended from her Tongue" (26). The confluence of female sensibility and eroticism in this passage is striking.

Leonora's blushing and speech patterns, "pretty face" and "effeminate delicacy" attract her female audience members. An older woman reveals to Leonora that though she has never before loved a man, she is now smitten and has designs to marry her. The sweetness and delicacy of Leonora's speech and person gently persuade her audience to comply with her message, and this underscores the tale's recurring concern with rectifying the public, professional errors typical of men. On the other hand, the erotic connotations invoked by Leonora's tongue and her admirers' latent homosexual desire suggest that "The History of Leonora and Louisa" is also exploring sapphic sexuality.

This curiosity is further underscored by Leonora's domestic fantasy, in which she imagines herself as the head of a household, with a wife and several children in tow. After her successful sermon, she is offered the living of a nearby town, and she also discovers that a prospective wife would be thrown into the bargain. She sees herself "settled in a small House, with more Sash window than Wall; a little Garden of Ever-greens before it, a Church shadowed with solemn Yews behind...and a cleanly mincing wife, with a multitude of Cherry-cheek'd Children with the House thus properly situated" (31). Here, Leonora imagines her temporary status as patriarch and breadwinner to be a potential long-term solution to her life on the run. Leonora's vision is fleeting, for she realizes that she cannot accept the living. Such instances of "female husbands" in this time period were documented and known, and Leonora participates in this cultural discourse, even if only momentarily.⁴³

⁴³ Perhaps the most famous of these can be found in Henry Fielding's 1746 publication, *The Female Husband: or, the surprising history of Mrs. Mary, alias Mr George Hamilton, who*

Leonora's gender performance is so attractive and graceful that she also manages to get into trouble with the rich and powerful women who want her. Not coincidentally, I would add, the most insistent of her suitors is an invalid, highlighting Sarah Scott's interest in disability. Lady Haines, an infirm and sickly aristocratic woman, becomes too attached to Leonora. Of Lady Haines, Scott writes, "If fine Weather tempted them abroad, Lady Haines would never let slip the Opportunity of leaning on Leonora's Arm to support her feeble Steps, for she was too delicate to be a good Walker" (52). At one point during the inset narrative, Lady Haines has Leonora attend her in her sick bed as she suffers from migraines. Lady Haines implores Leonora to read to her from Alexander Pope's *Abelard and Eloisa*, during which Lady Haines desires to "represent an Interview between" Abelard and Eloisa, "when Love approached her under Friendship's Name" (57). This role-play request on Lady Haines's part allows her occasion "to caress Leonora so fondly" that Leonora must put an end to it: "after having unsuccessfully thrown out some Reproofs for Eloisa's Forwardness, she found it necessary to resume her own Character, and to tell her Ladyship, that these Sort of Amusements were not prudent" (57-58). Lady Haines's romantic intentions toward Leonora are soon made even more explicit: subsequently Lady Haines desires to marry Leonora, but Leonora denies her proposal on the pretense that marriage is not consonant with her vocation as a clergyman. Upon hearing Leonora's refusal, Lady Haines "flew into a most violent Rage" announcing that she has "harboured a Papist, and had trusted her Son in fine Hands; to declare an

was convicted of having married a young woman of Wells and lived with her as her husband, which sensationalizes a real-life account of a female husband.

Adherence to their Doctrine in so strong a Point as Celibacy, was an Impudence few of the Emissaries of the Church of Rome were guilty of" (59). In this and other parts of the *History of Leonora and Louisa*, Leonora's cross-dressing goes beyond simply affording a young woman the opportunity to make money in a genteel profession and to elude her stepmother's duplicity: it offers Sarah Scott an opportunity to imagine sapphic eroticism in her novel. This intersection of sapphic desire with disability is something that Scott would later explore, albeit in much less erotic terms, in *Millenium Hall*.

Despite the sapphic subtext of *A Journey through Every Stage of Life*, Scott seems amenable to the possibility of different kinds of kinship arrangements. The one constant for Scott's fiction is its insistence on one's ability to choose. *A Journey through Every Stage of Life* demonstrates Judith Butler's claim that kinship is performative and as such is not contingent on bloodlines. After their hasty departure from Buxton, for example, Leonora, Laura, and their maid must assume different disguises, with Leonora returning to a female disguise while the Maid "metamorphosed Herself into a Man" in order to elude Leonora's stepmother and father, who almost discover them in an inn (67). This group's shifting of gender and professional identities marks them as a curious eighteenth-century literary example of malleable, performative kinship. These three go on to have more adventures in London, where Leonora takes on the disguise of a "delicate Beau" painter, and, after being forced to flee that neighborhood because of a scandal she causes when a fashionable lady falls in love with her, she becomes headmaster of a boys' school. In each of these professional adventures, Leonora fixes broken marriages, arranges and

rearranges heterosexual desire, and even longs momentarily for her ostensible love interest, Calidore, whom she ends up marrying by the end of the story. Throughout the tale, Leonora excels at each of her occupations and manages to remedy the shortcomings of the “Vice of Men” and the “Errors of Women” along the way. So, though Leonora is ultimately subsumed by the marriage plot, her performance of genteel male occupations, her comic encounters with passionate ladies and their jealous lovers, and her own temporary family of choice demonstrate the performativity of gender, sexuality, and kinship.

The heterosexual marriage at the end of this does little to restore any kind of normative kinship arrangement. In the last pages of this frame tale, Leonora finally marries Calidore, who is a peripheral character throughout the narrative. George Haggerty’s argument regarding early English gothic endings is every bit as applicable to this inset narrative, even if it is not in any sense gothic. Haggerty asserts that “the quasi-perfunctory endings of gothic fiction...can never succeed in reestablishing a heteronormative order” (“The Failure of Heteronormativity” 3). He goes on to state that these novels instead draw attention to “their own fictionality” thus making any kind of recovery of normalcy impossible. Haggerty’s perceptive reading of gothic endings proves instructive in reading “The History of Laura and Leonora,” which itself transgresses normative behavior on a number of levels: a cross-dressing woman outperforming men in their clerical and headmaster duties, several enunciations of sapphic desire, and performative kinship structures that constantly shape and re-shape themselves through subterfuge and disguise all serve to point out the “fictionality” or

performativity of the very institutions—familial, marital, and professional—that this tale flaunts.

Scott recognizes the incongruence of this tale’s feminist stance and its marital-patriarchal resolution. Sabrina’s closing commentary, which comes directly after the hasty union between Leonora and Calidore, provides an insightful and critical last word on the burden of marriage, and it demonstrates a feisty resignation to its inevitability:

And here...I shall drop her; a Novel would make but a bad Figure carried on beyond Marriage, and as I began Leonora’s History in order to shew, by an uncommon Example, how capable our Sex might be of preserving Independence, I could have no Excuse for continuing it after she had done so common a thing as marrying, and made herself dependent on one of the other Sex; she might rather serve as an Argument, that, let our Talents be equal or superior to them, our Spirits above Controul, still sooner or later we become their Dependents, perhaps their Slaves. (159-60)

Sabrina’s comparison of the marital state to enslavement draws a parallel between Carinthia’s imprisonment at the hands of her cousin Frederick and marriage. Her simultaneous critique and inability to think in lasting ways outside of the eventual “common thing” of marriage allows for early insight into Scott’s disruption of the marriage plot in *Millenium Hall*. So, while Leonora’s history is meant to stand out as an example to Carinthia of how women might overcome the limitations imposed by patriarchy, and indeed, that they can excel in spite of these limitations, this tale also allows men to have their way in the end. Scott would later challenge this assumption by creating a community in which women call the shots in *Millenium Hall*.

Maternal-Communal Kinship and a Queer “Heavenly Society”

Sarah Scott's most well-known novel, *Millenium Hall*, confronts some of the same themes from *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life*, and yet it manages to put forward more substantial, less ephemeral claims about the shortcomings of patriarchy and the possibility of solving said shortcomings through intimate female companionship. As a utopian account, *Millenium Hall* consists of both description and narration, which, I argue, establishes sapphic kinship as the platform upon which reform is imagined. A series of inset narratives disrupt the description of the male narrator, whose epistle to an unknown friend frames the novel, and, as Caroline Gonda has argued, offers an example of literary transvestism which in effect distances Scott from the potentially subversive elements of the novel and protects her narrative from "any possible accusations of separatism or man-hating" (113). This structure is central to the narrative's purpose: in the same way that the inset narratives disrupt the male narrator's description, the novel itself sidesteps the institution of marriage and announces that reform (for disabled people and women, especially) is the realm of the sapphist. The novel's inset narratives also posit sapphic kinship as an ideal form of connection. As the first of these inset narratives, "The History of Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel," suggests, this kinship model is based on maternal-communal relationships, which are at the heart of *Millenium Hall*'s founding. While this inset narrative demonstrates the vulnerability of genteel and upper-class women it also clearly underscores their potential to create a more just and efficiently-functioning society.

In the same spirit of the other inset narratives that follow it, Mrs. Maynard's depiction of Mrs. Morgan and Ms. Mancel's shared history depicts the importance of

women's shared intimacy in overcoming the tribulations imposed by patriarchy and predatory male heterosexuality. In Mrs. Maynard's narration, Miss Mancel is left an orphan at the age of ten by her deceased aunt and is adopted by Mr. Hintman, who matriculates her in a boarding school where she can be given the education befitting of a gentlewoman. While Mr. Hintman appears at first to be a generous man, he is eventually shown to be a libertine who delights in his pursuit of women, tiring of and leaving them after his conquest. The very young Miss Mancel, who at first treats Mr. Hintman to affection and the utmost fondness for his generosity, feels the inappropriateness of the nature of their interaction as she begins to mature into adolescence. At this point in the narrative, Miss Mancel meets Miss Melvyn (who later marries to become Mrs. Morgan), an older girl who has been left at the boarding school by her father at her stepmother's behest. Miss Melvyn comes from a more prominent family, but like her young friend also occupies a liminal space: her stepmother, Lady Melvyn, views her as competition to her father's and the surrounding community's attention. Lady Melvyn also represents one of many of the novel's problematic parental figures that in one way or another harm their children and set them up for failure, a failure that is overcome in the young women's finding of female community.

Miss Mancel and Miss Melvyn develop a mutually supportive, affectionate relationship with each other that transcends patriarchy and overcomes all of the male-related (and in the case, of Lady Melvyn, female-related) obstacles thrown their way. They delight in the time they spend with each other and benefit from the tutelage of an Italian gentleman, Mr. D'Avila, who teaches them Italian, and other subjects. The two

are eventually separated by Miss Melvyn's marriage to Mr. Morgan, which is orchestrated by the sinister machinations of Lady Melvyn. Miss Mancel, meanwhile, becomes the domestic companion to Lady Lambton, whose grandson Sir Edward returns from the Grand Tour and takes a shine to Miss Mancel. Despite her attachment to Miss Mancel, Lady Lambton disapproves of the match because Miss Mancel is of obscure birth and holds no monetary value. Miss Mancel dutifully denies Sir Edward's advances until he leaves for Germany to serve in the army, and then she removes herself from Lady Lambton's house and places herself in Mr. D'Avila's protection. Mr. D'Avila eventually finds a suitable arrangement for Miss Mancel in the companionship of the wealthy and well-situated Mrs. Thornby, who, in the spirit of the novel of sensibility, turns out to be Miss Mancel's long-estranged mother. Miss Mancel's financial vulnerability is taken care of, and after her worth is pronounced to Lady Lambton, the match between her and Sir Edward is approved.

In many novels of sensibility, the vindicated heroine marries the rich aristocrat, but in this case, word of Miss Mancel's newly-discovered status reaches Sir Edward just as he has been mortally wounded in combat after reckless behavior put him in harm's way, and his death eventually leads Miss Mancel back to her friendship with Mrs. Morgan. After word of Sir Edward's demise reaches Miss Mancel, she vows to never marry. Six years pass in domestic tranquility until the death of Mrs. Thornby leaves Miss Mancel a rich heiress of 40,000 pounds. Mrs. Morgan, meanwhile, endures her imprisonment to her self-absorbed husband, who eventually succumbs to a fit and is subjected to bed rest. Miss Mancel returns to be reunited with Mrs. Morgan, who is much more overjoyed by her reunion with her dear friend than she is upset by

her husband's fatal illness. Mr. Morgan finally dies, leaving Mrs. Morgan both widowed and content. Further, he leaves her the estate that comes to be known as Millenium Hall. So, with Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel left without husbands, the two are free to occupy Millenium Hall, where as reformers they promote the well-being and education of all who fall beneath them in status, including indigent gentlewomen and disabled servants and tenants.

In the beginning of their narrative, Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel's relationship is based on principles of maternal intimacy, and this forms the basis of Scott's version of kinship: "Miss Melvyn...found great pleasure in endeavouring to instruct her; and grew to feel for her the tenderness of a mother, while Miss Mancel began to receive consolation from experiencing an affection quite maternal" (88). Linda Dunne argues that *Millenium Hall* endorses the mother-daughter dynamic as "the ultimate model for a good society" (64). Dunne further suggests that the novel repeatedly offers examples of vulnerable girls who must find an adequate substitute mother to help guide them through the perils of a patriarchal society. And in cases where there is an absence of adequate motherly influences, such as is the case with Lady Mary Jones whose aunt Lady Sheerness is less of a mentor than a kind of co-conspiring friend, the perils are made evident. Dunne is right to argue that the mother-daughter relationship is central to this text, and her acknowledgement of the novel's insistence on substitute motherhood underscores that these affective forms of kinship are not based on blood, but are formed out of circumstances and choice. In the novel, Mrs. Morgan meets Miss Mancel and the two develop a companionate relationship that is modeled after the mother-daughter relationship, a form of kinship that

reinforces the notion that the concept of “family of choice” was not alien to socially marginalized individuals who lived in the eighteenth century.

The establishment of maternal love as the ideal form of non-nuclear family oriented kinship inverts the Oedipal structure and acts as an alternative to forms of love based on patriarchal structures, as George Haggerty points out. “By insisting on maternal desire,” Haggerty argues, “Mrs. Maynard highlights the effacement of women in eighteenth-century culture and challenges the conventional patriarchal structure of family relations” (*Unnatural Affections* 93) Haggerty further argues that though the eroticism between these characters is never made explicit, Mrs. Maynard’s description of Miss Mancel and Miss Melvyn’s relationship “hints at the incipient sexuality of the female bond” (94). Miss Mancel’s wariness and refusal of Mr. Hintman’s paternal love for her, and her acceptance of Mrs. Morgan’s maternal love, underscore the novel’s endorsement of mother-daughter relationships as the ideal form of kinship, but as Haggerty suggests, their relationship is suggestive of erotic desire. I would also add that though the novel does not go further than suggesting “caresses” between these two characters, it provides an entire social framework that privileges sapphic desire over and above anything approximating heterosexual desire. This is a sapphism based not on representations of physical sexuality, but steeped heavily in emotional, intellectual, and social desire for female-female companionship. Miss Mancel and Mrs. Morgan’s relationship bears this out: it is a marriage in every sense of the word. They share finances, hardships, and a home.

Scott goes on to imagine other examples of mother-daughter relationships, which demonstrate both the privileged place of mother-daughter affection and the

danger posed by its loss or absence. In each of the inset narratives, the heroines are beset by the absence or death of their mothers. In these examples, the mother either does not reveal her true identity to the daughter until just before her death (in the case of Miss Selvyn's mother, Lady Emilia, who leaves Miss Selvyn her inheritance) or late in her life (as is the case with Miss Mancel's mother, Mrs. Thornby, who leaves Miss Mancel her fortune). In the case of Mrs. Morgan, Lady Mary Jones, and Mrs. Trentham, the mothers die when each of these characters is of a young age—and it is imperative for these women to find substitute mothers. While each of these genteel or upper-class female characters receives an inheritance (in all cases but one, the inheritances come from the mother figure, not the father figure) and is situated in such a way that they can each contribute to Millenium Hall's communal estate, the absence of a mother figures prominently in each of their stories. The novel poses this as a problem, then, given that maternal love is endorsed as the ideal form of love.

As I have suggested, Scott endorses a woman's ability to choose her companions and to substitute these companions for one's blood relations. In Mrs. Maynard's narration of Miss Mancel and Miss Melvyn's history, she mentions that Miss Melvyn is left vulnerable at a young age due to her mother's death. Mr. Melvyn's love for his daughter is considered "a result of habit, and compliance with Lady Melvyn's behaviour, than a deep-rooted affection, of which his heart was not very susceptible" (83). Lady Melvyn's love for her daughter, on the other hand, "arose from the entire fondness which maternal love, and the most distinguishing reason could excite in the warmest and tenderest of hearts" (83). Mrs. Morgan's stepmother turns out to be a duplicitous, vain woman and is responsible for her unfortunate

marriage with Mr. Morgan. Scott recognizes the tenuousness of maternal love, but she also makes the case that in the absence of a mother, a young girl should seek out a maternal figure on whom she can rely. She makes the case, in other words, for a family of choice.

Even more central to the novel's depiction of kinship, however, is the communalism of the mistresses of the estate. While each of their formative relationships starts off as maternal, the ladies eventually become a communal cohort, one that is centered on shared property and wealth and that concerns itself with reform, and what the narrator terms "a refinement of charity" that is "entirely rational" (169). We can trace this trajectory of affective maternal kinship to communal relations in the inset narrative about Miss Melvyn and Miss Mancel. As their relationship develops, it moves from being characterized as a mother-daughter friendship into an egalitarian one, evidenced by the way in which the two begin to share finances (88). When Mr. Hintman offers Miss Mancel a generous allowance, Miss Mancel wishes to share her money with Miss Melvyn, and the novel clearly endorses the absolute sharing between the two: "The boundaries and barriers raised by those two watchful and suspicious enemies, Meum and Tuum ["mine" and "thine"], were in her opinion broke down by true friendship; and all property laid in one undistinguished common" (93). In this instance, the novel suggests that true friendship is based on an egalitarian ideal that is, of course, class-determined. This communalism turns out to be the enduring value that persists throughout the hardships that both Miss Mancel and Miss Melvyn undergo as they are separated at Miss Melvyn's forced marriage to Mr. Morgan, and when the two are finally reunited as Mr. Morgan's health fails him.

It is this collective mentality that acts as the founding principle of Millenium Hall—as each of the ladies inherits her portion, that money goes into the “common stock” of the estate (218). Lady Mary Jones, Mrs. Selvyn, and Mrs. Trentham eventually join their inheritances with those of Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel, and Mrs. Selvyn’s influx of money enables the establishment of the house for the indigent gentlewomen on the estate. Lanser explores the narratological tension that these inset narratives convey in terms of their gestures toward communalism and their insistence on individualism and Christianity. Mrs. Selvyn’s heterodiagetic narratives about each of the ladies of Millenium Hall, as Lanser points out, are individual histories, not communal ones, and Lanser considers this as a limitation to the novel’s endorsement of community. I argue that these same histories, individualized though they may be, are woven together to form the larger picture. The layering of individual biographies tells the whole story of Millenium Hall’s founding, and this layering represents the crucial roles that the ladies play in one another’s lives. In light of this formal attribute, the novel makes a strong case for communalism.

Lady Mary Jones’s history is an example of this layering of narrative. At a young age, Lady Mary is left an orphan to her young aunt Lady Sheerness who foolishly exposes her niece to a potential sexual scandal. At one point during Lady Mary’s stay in London, Lord Robert St. George begins to make sexual overtures to her, and as a result of her immaturity and lack of parental guidance, she flirts back. After an isolated and sexually suggestive conversation with Lord Robert at her aunt’s party, Lady Mary begins to reflect upon the freedom with which Lord Robert has addressed her. At this critical juncture, she meets “a lively, but amiable and modest

young lady” who offers counsel to Lady Mary to rebuff the advances of Lord Robert (183). This young confidante opines that “no man that was not an absolute fool, or at the time intoxicated, ever insulted a woman with improper behaviour or discourse; if he had not from some impropriety in her conduct seen reason to imagine it would not be ill received” (183). This doctrine—which today sounds very much like the violent decree that victims of rape or other forms of sexual violence “ask for it”—turns out to empower Lady Mary and enables her to reconsider her inappropriate conduct (184). This leads to her refutation of Lord Robert’s advances at another ball held at her Aunt Sheerness’s house. After her confrontation with Lord Robert, as Lady Mary begins to mingle with the crowd, “her young friend was there, and endeavoured to support her spirits, which were overcome by the efforts she had made” (186). Her young confidante turns out to be Mrs. Selvyn, the subject of the history that follows Lady Mary’s narrative. The companionate friendship between Lady Mary and Mrs. Selvyn, it turns out, makes all the difference for Lady Mary: her chastity is preserved, her good sense is awakened, and a lasting friendship develops that eventually leads to Lady Mary’s move to Millenium Hall. This is just one example of the way in which these inset narratives intertwine with each other. Later on in this same narrative, Lady Mary meets Mrs. Morgan and Miss Mancel at Tunbridge, and retires to Millenium Hall. In this case, Lady Mary’s history provides a mingling of the ladies’ lives, a gesture toward communalism.

Additional evidence of the estate’s social structure can be found in the other inset narratives of the novel, too. In Mrs. Selvyn’s history, Mrs. Selvyn eventually inherits a large fortune and joins it to the fortunes of Mrs. Morgan, Miss Mancel, and

Lady Mary. Mrs. Trentham eventually joins this communal arrangement, too. So, while the narratives are for the most part individual, they are in a sense communal: none of the novel's heroines would have made it to Millenium Hall without some kind of assistance from the other heroines, and Mrs. Maynard makes this point in each of the lady's histories. It is important to also consider the central role that Miss Mancel's and Mrs. Morgan's history plays in the novel: it is the first of the inset narratives, the longest, and the most instrumental in setting up the community itself, therefore we ought to consider that their shared 'biography' is what brings the estate into existence in the first place. Upon her husband's death, Mrs. Morgan inherits the estate that comes to be known as Millenium Hall, and though thereafter Mrs. Morgan and Ms. Mancel go to Tunbridge "for the recovery of [Mrs. Morgan's] health" they are subsequently "desirous of fixing in a way of life where all their satisfactions might be rational, and as conducive to eternal, as to temporal happiness" and retire to Millenium Hall where they subsequently "instituted schools for the young, and alms-houses for the old" (159). Lady Mary Jones initially decides to stay with the ladies for six months, but she eventually decides to not leave them and "joined her fortune to those the two friends" (160-61). The financial details and charitable works that Scott offers in her novel stand side-by-side with a thorough illustration of how the ladies come together at Millenium Hall, and this mixing of intimacy, shared finances, and reform projects signals that the ladies are of one mind and mission. Just as Leonora corrects and improves the male professions that she inhabits in the first inset narrative of *Journey through Every Stage of Life*, so too do the ladies of Millenium Hall remedy the ills of English society,

which they manage to do through their shared vision. What distinguishes *Millenium Hall* from *Journey* is its insistence on community.

The frame of the novel also conveys the ladies' communalism, as evidenced by the narrator's initial description of the ladies at Millenium Hall, which emphasizes their collective identity in his depiction of their outfits and demeanor. As the narrator and Lamont first enter Millenium Hall, they encounter all of the principal members of the society engaged in a variety of pursuits: Mrs. Mancel paints, Mrs. Trentham carves, Lady Mary is involved in some kind of engraving work, and Mrs. Morgan draws. While each of these characters is occupied in an individual artistic endeavor, there is also a uniformity about them: "The dress of the ladies was thus...uniform, the same neatness, the simplicity and cleanliness appeared in each, and they were all in lutestring night-gowns, though of different colors, nor was there anything unfashionable in their appearance, except that they were free from any trumpery ornaments" (61). Though the outfit of each of the ladies is of a different hue, they are all the same style and their cleanliness and lack of "trumpery ornaments"—their middle-class restraint—is emphasized. And though each of the ladies, as an individual, is granted her own artistic preference and her own personal history (with the exception of Miss Mancel and Miss Melvyn, whose history is shared), their shared community is emphasized over and above their individuality. In an era in which novels are often given titles based on the hero or heroine of the novel—*Moll Flanders*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pamela*, *Tom Jones*, *Clarissa*, *Evelina*, to name just a few—this particular novel is named after the utopian estate to which each of these ladies contributes.

The manner in which this novel affirms affective community is very much stratified along contemporary English class lines, however, in what Lanser has called “compensatory conservatism”:

Unmarried gentrywomen cohabiting with or openly pursuing other women did sometimes get suspected of sapphism or, at least, of "oddness" to the extent that they could not control their public images. I see as one response to this vulnerability a dynamic in which, through what I call a "compensatory conservatism," women whose erotic orientation might be seen as directed toward other women ("gentry sapphists") exploit the symbols of class status to strengthen the divide between the virtuous body and the immoral one. Rather than mere passive beneficiaries of a class-based bifurcation, in other words, these women were sometimes active agents cultivating their class status as a screen. (“Befriending the Body” 189)

Scott’s novels have often been noted for their reinforcement of the status quo, and as Lanser notes here, this could very likely be a means of Scott’s distancing herself and her community from being seen as social deviants. Lanser notes that in *Millenium Hall* as in other literary and historical registers there is a way in which gentry sapphists reserve the right as upper-class and genteel ladies to not marry, but that they often promote marriage among the lower classes, as Scott’s ladies do with the indigent women in *Millenium Hall*. “Gentry sapphists,” Lanser claims, go about building “their social capital through different versions of at least three shared strategies: the improvement of their property, an assiduous control of visits and visitors, and a kind of literary self-fashioning” (“Befriending the Body”189). All three of these strategies are readily apparent in Scott’s novel, but I would like to add that in this case there is an additional critical element that adds to Scott’s social capital: that of taking in disabled and deformed servants, little people, and giants as a means of exerting their benevolent charity. In this case, Scott’s “gentry sapphism” might be overlooked by the

narrator, Lamont, and perhaps the reader because of the beneficence of the ladies toward lower-class anomalous subjects.

Accessibility in *Millenium Hall*

Millenium Hall designates the close-knit, loving bonds among the mistresses of the estate as the foundation upon which reform may be established. These reform projects include the housing of indigent gentlewomen, the enclosure of and care for people exploited because of their physical anomalies, the employment of disabled servants and musicians, and the establishment of an alternative economy for estate members based on bodily ability. In considering Scott's own biography, as well as Lady Barbara's, Scott's concern with disability is not terribly surprising. Her assorted bouts with illnesses, including the smallpox she contracted in her teens which permanently scarred her face, and Lady Bab's heart failure, recurring headaches, and stomach pains were difficulties which were at least partially responsible for their removal from society to the slow-paced village of Batheaston, outside of Bath.⁴⁴ Given that Bath was a sort of wellness center for the infirm in the eighteenth century, it made sense for the couple to settle where they did. Because of their health and somewhat meager income, Scott and Lady Bab must have found Batheaston an agreeable place to live, to their salutary and pecuniary advantage. Moreover, these biographical details enable an understanding of why Scott should have focused so intently on the infirm and physically disabled in her fiction.

⁴⁴ The other major reason, according to Eve Tavor Bannet, was the scandal surrounding Sarah's removal from her husband's house, and the rumors which he spread about her at court.

Sarah Scott's letters to her sister, Elizabeth Montagu, underscore the interest which she had in people with disabilities. At times, these letters, as Eve Tavor Bannet points out, "used the language of chivalric romance...to comment satirically on their own and others' courtships" (63). In a 1743 letter which follows seems to follow this model, a young Sarah pokes fun at herself, as well as the old, physically-impaired men who were trying to court her in Bath:

One comes pinking with sore but generous eyes and tells me that nothing but the resplendency of my beauty can shine; another in the same condition excuses his running against every form and treading upon every ones toes by comparing me to the Sun which looking at dazzles the eyes so much that everything else appears too dark to be seen; another extolls the power of my charms which enabled him to limp up the room in so little a time as half an hour which nothing but me, St Paul or some other worker of miracles cou'd have perform'd; then comes a deaf friend, and after he has made me scream till I am hoarse finds out that the sweetness of my voice penetrates his ears better than the loudest drum or trumpet could do.

In spite of this satirical rendering of the old men of Bath, Sarah also relates to her sister that she is "well rewarded by their conversation, for they are very clever men" (14 November 1743). Thus, even at a young age, people with disabilities (in this case, *old* men with disabilities) managed to find her, and she them. It is telling that Sarah did not try to put them off, and talks about being "well rewarded" by her interactions with them, even if they are also a source of jest between her sister and her.

Upon settling in Batheaston with Lady Bab in her young adult years, as I have already mentioned, Scott employed intellectually and physically disabled domestic servants. In another letter to her sister, Sarah writes about her two maids, the first of whom is "a well meaning simpleton, who, was not her understanding still in its minority, I might call a Woman; & a more useful Domestic...to whom nature instead

of the sense of hearing has given numberless virtues, & indeed made almost a miracle for her station” (15 January 1752). This letter, a much more serious reflection of disability than the previous one I cited above (this time in the context of servitude), reflects Scott’s desire to surround herself with physically and mentally impaired servants.

The last epistolary excerpt that I would like to examine once again underscores Sarah’s propensity to surround herself with impaired people, specifically, deaf people.

In a 1778 letter, she writes:

It is really dreadful to see two people who can hear so little; no conversation can pass between them which will not sooner be heard by the whole house than by themselves, and their acquaintance have a hard task; their minds cannot supply the chasm of even one syllable in a sentence, therefore many repetitions are necessary before they catch one sentence entirely unmutated. They give some bodily exercise, too, for one has to walk from the ear of one to that of the other in order to keep up a tolerable appearance of conversation...A visit of several hours from persons in that condition was tolerably fatiguing, and more vexations for the censure one can not refuse passing oneself for being so tired...what to them is really so grievous a misfortune...it is great want of charity not to scream oneself hoarse with pleasure, but I find I have not enough to hold out above an hour or two under so laborious a trial. (31 August 1778)

This passage indicates that even later on her life, Sarah continued to spend time with deaf people. She considers it a “laborious trial” but she also seems up for “pleasure” of “screaming” herself “hoarse” for short periods of time. Scott may have been thinking about a prominent Bluestocking member, Elizabeth Vessey, who was thought of by friends as a kind of “sylph” because of her seeming otherworldliness, a consequence

of her inability to follow the conversations of her peers.⁴⁵ Regardless of the source of this tiring pleasure, Scott's letters indicate that she spent a significant amount of time with deaf and disabled people.

Scott's female subjectivity allies her in some ways with the disabled servants she employs. In Nussbaum's formulation, the Blues are already aligned with anomalous subjects, and this perhaps explains the way anomaly is treated in *Millenium Hall*. Felicity Nussbaum argues, "disability is a recommendation for a position at Millenium Hall...the culture's devaluation of deformity is reversed" and she further claims, "Even as those at Millenium Hall contest tyranny in favor of harmonious community, the women themselves engage in establishing domain over the disabled" (156). I would add that the ladies' "domain over the disabled" is heavily invested in the English class system, and that this must be considered in our formulation of the Blues, kinship, and disability. For her part, Scott imagines a society in which women from the upper classes protect various kinds of lower-class disabled people from a hostile society.

Millenium Hall resists the common cultural practice of setting bodily ideals as standards by which all are to be judged. In her discourse upon the harm done by this kind of thinking, Mrs. Mancel invokes the name of Procrustes—the bandit from Greek mythology who seeks to stretch people or cut off their limbs to make them fit a standard-sized bed. Mrs. Mancel combines the powerful image of Procrustes with that

⁴⁵ From the late 1760s to the mid-1780s, Vessey organized and hosted meetings for the Bluestockings, arranging the discussants in small groups so that she might benefit from the close proximity to her interlocutors, and thus, hear with more efficiency the words of her friends. Vessey also carried ear trumpets about her and was not shy about asking people to speak into them as she affixed them to her ear. Burney wrote about Vessey's deafness in her memoirs, calling it her "socialless infirmity" (Nussbaum, *Limits of the Human* 98-100).

of the politically potent signifier “tyrant” and accuses English society of enacting a kind of tyranny against those who are physically distinctive: “But is not almost every man a Procrustes? We have not the power of shewing our cruelty exactly in the same method, but actuated by the like spirit, we abridge of their liberty, and torment by scorn, all who either fall short, or exceed the usual standard, if they happen to have the additional misfortune of poverty” (72). Mrs. Mancel implies that while everyone has the capacity to be a tyrant, their mistreatment is particularly gruesome if it is directed toward the people from the lower classes, drawing attention to the deplorable state of poor, disabled people (73). The novel thus endorses a system in which upper-class ladies protect lower-class physically disabled people from the violent attitudes and actions of the outside world.

In spite of the difference in rank that subordinate the disabled characters to the ladies, there are indeed some crucial alignments between these two sets of characters that endow this novel with an overall feeling of community and asylum. Just as the estate is a respite for the ladies from the unfairness of patriarchy, as Linda Dunne suggests, the estate of Millenium Hall represents an “asylum” for the disabled and infirm. At one point in the novel, the narrator meets the housekeeper who, he discovers, has a maimed hand that she is unable to use. She reveals to the narrator that the other servants are also disabled in some way: a few have medical conditions such as asthma or kidney stones, while others are deaf, have only one eye, or are amputees. This, the housekeeper explains, does not keep this group of servants from doing superior work around the house: “and yet, perhaps, there is no family where the business is better done; for gratitude, and a conviction that this is the only house into

which we can be received, makes us exert ourselves to the utmost; and most people fail not from a deficiency of power, but of inclination” (169). Scott thus envisions disabled individuals as being able to be productive and efficient in the same way that able-bodied people are. Further, this passage reinforces the kind of community that Scott advocates in this novel. The disabled servants form among themselves and their mistresses a family, one in which gratitude for opportunities given and “conviction” that there is no other place for them in the world at large, drive them to work diligently in the carrying out of their duties. The Anglican ideals of industriousness and enduring patiently the trials and tribulations of life coincide to form the central principles that bind this queer cohort together. In spite of the stark class divide that separates the ladies from their domestic, disabled servants, there is a representation of respite, kinship, and love that brings these two sets of characters together.

Kristina Straub’s study on the relations between servants and masters demonstrates just how interconnected these two sets of characters are. Straub acknowledges the complexities of this fraught relationship. Her study, she writes, “is as much about love as about class conflict, as much about the need for one another as about the need to exploit the other for profit, and as much about a desire for connection as about the creation of modern class differences” (1). Straub goes on to confirm that these different classes of people “live, work with, and often care a great deal about each other” (1). By examining literature and a host of secondary materials, Straub reveals just how complex these relations can be, and concludes that if we ignore the role of class in examining gender and sexuality, we “miss much of the history behind our modern conceptions of identity, gender, and desire” (18).

Millenium Hall is, of course, a representation of this relationship. The narrative depicts the estate as a respite for all of those who are maligned or damaged in some way in the outside world. This rendering of utopia, as Hilary Brown affirms, is one that “stands in complete opposition to contemporary gentry capitalism,” but it is also a renouncement of cruelty to women, a treatise against the maltreatment of the disabled, and a proclamation of what constitutes a family—not blood, but choice and love (472-3). Though it is a family in which the disparate members know their place, it is also one that relies on choice, circumstance—what Gary Kelly calls “providential intervention”—and love for its very existence (178-79).

One of the most remarkable aspects of the novel is its modification of the notion of exchange within capitalism. *Millenium Hall* posits exchange as being based in part on bodily ability. When the narrator and Lamont meet one of the estate’s elderly, impoverished inhabitants, they learn about this system from her:

There are twelve of us that live here. We have every one a house of two rooms, as you may see, beside other conveniences, and each a little garden, but though we are separate, we agree as well, perhaps better, than if we lived together, and all help one another. Now, there is neighbour Susan, and neighbour Rachel; Susan is lame, so she spins cloaths for Rachel; and Rachel cleans Susan’s house, and does such things for her as she cannot do for herself. The ladies settled all these matters at first, and told us, that as they, to please God, assisted us, we must in order to please him serve others; and that to make us happy they would put us in a way, poor as we are, to do good to many. (66)

As the old woman indicates, ownership and property are taken as givens within the larger context of the estate, and yet the estate itself functions as a site of accessibility for disabled people. Susan and Rachel, though each impaired in their own ways, assist each other by completing tasks that the other would not be able to accomplish because

of their respective disabilities. This simple solution enables each member to actively participate in the estate's founding principle of industriousness. Thus, each of the estate members works toward the common good of caring for each other, which in turn keeps the estate prosperous. In this way, the estate is accessible to figures of varying abilities. So, while Scott's utopia may not upset class hierarchies, it does reconfigure the way labor and exchange function by assuming that all bodies are variable in form and function.

Scott's attention to disabled figures may also be in part a register of genteel beneficence to the disabled. The ladies' condescension and reinforcement of rank and status are significant limits to the novel's communal structure. The ladies act as benefactresses who share their common stock with each other and condescend to practice their charity on those who fall beneath them in status—from the vulnerable gentlewomen of the surrounding community to the disabled house servants and giants and little people of the enclosure. As I have shown, *Millenium Hall* contains numerous figures that suffer from indigence, disability, low status, or other deviations from the able-bodied, upper middle-class norms that are so often represented in eighteenth-century English fiction. The way that Scott divides these characters from one another is evidence of a kind of categorization. The poor gentlewomen, for example, live and work in a different house from the dwarves and giants, who are enclosed within the estate behind a high wall that blocks them from view, and only the ladies themselves have permission to enter and interact with these characters. In addition to the poor gentlewomen and the enclosed "monsters" there are a number of disabled servants and musicians who work in the ladies' house. *Millenium Hall* advocates that those who

deviate from the “common standard” should be codified according to kind. Those who are deaf, maimed, blind or otherwise physically impaired work as house servants or musicians, while the indigent gentlewomen occupy their own house, and the giants and little people have their own enclosure.

Conclusion

In 1767, Sarah and her much wealthier sister, Elizabeth Montagu, were presented with the opportunity to establish an all-female community based upon the principles of *Millenium Hall*. Elizabeth Montagu was at the point of purchasing Hitcham House in Berkshire. Elizabeth, Sarah, and other women from their cohort planned to convert the estate into a school for indigent girls, and they planned to carry forth other acts of charity (Bree 195). As Linda Bree points out, this project did not come to fruition for somewhat obscure reasons, though both have speculated that a woman who did not share Scott or Montagu’s organizational vision, a Mrs. Freind, tore the group apart with her attempt to put herself at the top of a hierarchical structure rather than establishing an egalitarian sisterhood among all of the members of the proposed community. Though the community itself was a failure, the fact that it was even attempted says something about the reformist vision of Sarah Scott, her sister, and their fellow Bluestockings. Sarah Scott’s biography and literary output, I have argued, demonstrate that the queer and the disabled should seek refuge in each others’ arms. More broadly, the Bluestockings of Bath themselves provide fascinating insight into the construction of an affective community in which the queer and the disabled become privileged subjects. When read through the amplifying queer lens that Susan

Lanser articulates, *Millenium Hall* aligns a creative, alternative form of kinship with physical disability to offer a utopian vision of gender and society. While this vision is ultimately bound by conservative notions of social status, it also upends patriarchal rule by putting women in charge. It is telling that these female characters, like Sarah Scott herself, are disfigured or marred in appearance. This theme of female physical disfigurement is one that Scott explores in an earlier, less-read novel, *Agreeable Ugliness* (1754).

Chapter Three:

Attractive Deformity: Enabling the “Shocking Monster” from Sarah Scott’s

Agreeable Ugliness (1754)

As I discussed in the Introduction, “deformity” in the Georgian period refers either to forms of physical abnormality, or to “moral disfigurement.” The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the former of these two usages (in an eighteenth-century context) as, “the quality or condition of being marred or disfigured in appearance; disfigurement; unsightliness, ugliness” and “abnormal formation of the body or of some bodily member.” According to these definitions, ‘deformity’ encompasses unattractiveness and what we think of today as physical disability. William Hay regards “Bodily Deformity,” as that which “is visible to every Eye” (5). This includes, of course, visible bodily impairment. Elsewhere, in *Crito; or, a Dialogue on Beauty* (1752), Joseph Spence mentions that deformity stands in opposition to beauty, so we might also consider ugliness as a kind of deformity in the eighteenth century. Spence’s narrative regards vice as “the most odious of all Deformities” (59). These archival examples would imply that, in the eighteenth century, there are yawning gaps between those who adhere physically to the “common standard” (as Sarah Scott terms it in *Millenium Hall*) and those who do not. These uses of “deformity” also indicate how these physical deviations would inspire ridicule and revulsion among individuals in the eighteenth-century.⁴⁶ These discourses of deformity, however, undergo important

⁴⁶ Felicity Nussbaum uses the term “anomaly” to signify “a variety of irregularities or deviations from that which is presumed to be the natural order of things.” Anomaly, in

transformations during the time period under consideration. As Lennard Davis argues, for example, the mid-to-late eighteenth century is a period in which deformity begins to be viewed less as an occasion for public spectacle and more as a kind of god-given tribulation which women can overcome in order to become more virtuous (62).

The shift that Davis has identified can be traced in part by examining the role of sensibility in shaping English consciousness. One of the important figures within this cultural paradigm is Edmund Burke, whose *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) considers the relationship between sympathy and human suffering, and in doing so illuminates eighteenth-century thought regarding an Englishman or woman's ability to relate to the 'other.' For Burke, sympathy enables us to "enter into the concerns of others; that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators of almost any thing which men can do or suffer" (21). Burke adds that sympathy is a kind of "substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in good measure as he is affected" (21). He later argues that because of the delight we take in observing "the real misfortunes and pains of others" we are unable to shun "scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer" (23, 25). Sympathy, in Burke's view, closes the gap between 'self' and 'other.' His philosophy illustrates how individuals of varying physical and mental abilities might elicit sympathy and, consequently, assistance from able-bodied individuals. In light of

Nussbaum's estimation, can encompass everything from a variety of disabilities--including deafness, blindness, and lameness—to "physical and mental oddities (for example, dark skin, pock-marked complexion, eunuchism, giantism)" and can also include ailments that occur naturally or by accident (*Limits of the Human* 1)

Burke's highly-influential writings, it is perhaps no coincidence that schools for the deaf and blind are first established in England during the late eighteenth century.⁴⁷

The writings of William Hay and Sarah Scott, however, go beyond merely procuring sympathy for the disabled: they attempt to reconfigure cultural perceptions about the body by extolling deformity as a most desirable physical condition.

Exceptionally small, hunchbacked, sight-impaired, and lame, Hay challenges longstanding assumptions about disfigurement in his landmark work *Deformity: An Essay* (1753). Hay's writing is groundbreaking due to his explicitly-stated intention to "write of deformity with beauty" (13). His essay, which is part memoir, part cultural critique, and part medical testimony, presents deformity as an opportunity for personal, intellectual, and moral growth.⁴⁸ Throughout the piece, Hay contends with deeply-embedded cultural presuppositions that deformity is at best laughable, and at worst, an indication of god's displeasure. At a couple of junctures in the essay, Hay accepts the notion that people are naturally repelled by physical difference, but I would argue that these parts of his essay have been given undue emphasis by scholars.⁴⁹ More often than not, I argue, Hay interrogates, questions and critiques

⁴⁷ The first school for the deaf in the Britain was established in 1760 in Edinburgh by Thomas Braidwood (who later moved his academy to Hackney, London, in 1783), while the first school for the blind was established in Liverpool in 1791 by Henry Dannett. My take on sensibility has been informed to a large extent by G.J. Barker-Benfield's *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*.

⁴⁸ I find Kathleen James-Cavan's reading of Hay to be the most generous and accurate available in published scholarship. See her "Introduction" to William Hay's *Deformity: An Essay*, published through the University of Victoria Press (page 10, especially, for her analysis of Hay's essay's generic complexity).

⁴⁹ At one point, Hay quotes Montaigne, who argues that "Deformity of Limbs" is more striking to observers than "ill features" or "ugliness" because it is the more "uncommon" kind of physical anomaly. Hay concludes, "As [Deformity of Limbs] is more uncommon, it is more remarkable: and that perhaps is the true reason, why it is more ridiculed" (36). This and a few

cultural assumptions about deformity, and in the process recasts it as a personally transformative experience. I discuss in my Introduction that Hay disputes the work of Sir Francis Bacon, who had argued in the early seventeenth century that people with deformities are “void of natural affection” due to the fact that those who “induce contempt, hath also a perpetual spur in himself, to rescue and deliver himself from scorn” (201). Hay responds by claiming that far from being a hindrance or a cause of unnatural behavior, deformity in fact facilitates a strengthening of character, intellect, and health: “On the whole I conclude, that Deformity is a Protection to a Man’s Health and Person; which (strange as it may appear) are better defended by Feebleness than Strength” (27-28). Hay argues that if one is incapacitated by physical limitations, that individual is likely to be more temperate, to cultivate a refined love of reading and study, and to not overexert oneself in exercise. In countering the common wisdom of the time, Hay expresses gratitude for his extraordinary body as it enables a healthier lifestyle and mindset than ‘ordinary’ individuals. Moreover, Hay is, to my knowledge, the first English thinker to explicitly codify deformity as encompassing a set variety of physical conditions, including sensory impairment, mobility impairment, and physical disfigurement.⁵⁰ Hay thus provides an early framework of what we think of today as physical disability. For his day, Hay’s essay is a unique and brave challenge to

similar passages have inspired Lennard Davis to argue that Hay reinforces stereotypes about people with disabilities. Roger Lund has concluded that Hay assumes ridicule of the physically disabled as inevitable. See Davis, “Dr. Johnson, Amelia, and the Discourse of Disability in the Eighteenth Century” and Lund, “Laughing at Cripples: Ridicule Deformity, and the Argument from Design,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 39.1 (2005): 95.

⁵⁰ At one point, Hay writes, “But it is not easy to say why one species of deformity should be more ridiculous than another, or why the mob should be more merry with a crooked man than one that is deaf, lame, squinting, or purblind.” Thus, for Hay, these different kinds of disabilities fall under the umbrella term “deformity.” Hay, *Deformity: An Essay*, 34-35.

entrenched scientific thought and common assumptions about the variable human body.

Like Hay, Sarah Scott understood well what it meant to be different, and would likely have sympathized with many of Hay's arguments. As I explore at some length in the preceding chapter, Scott often deals with the topic of deformity in her novels, such *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life* (1753), *Millenium Hall* (1762) and later on, *Sir George Ellison* (1766). Perhaps Scott's pockmarked face, a consequence of a case of smallpox she contracted during her teenage years, is what inspired her to write about deformity and to consider the physically disabled as being in need of her protection. Whatever the cause, Scott's second novel, *Agreeable Ugliness, or, the triumph of the graces. Exemplified in real life and fortunes of a young lady of some distinction* (1754), deals extensively with the themes of beauty and plainness in the context of a young woman's coming-of-age. Moreover, it portrays ugliness as a desirable, virtue-enhancing characteristic for women. Though this novel is a translation from a French novel, Pierre Antione de la Place's *La laideur aimable, et les dangers de la beauté*, it is significant that Scott chose to translate it. Like the novel's protagonist and narrator (who deliberately omits her first name), Scott was obligated to navigate a society in which women were often admired for, or judged by, their beauty or perceived lack thereof. Scott's novel, in turn, assumes that being disagreeable of visage compels a lady to be agreeable in every other way, and it advocates the fulfillment of women's desire through its celebration of corporeal difference. Along with the work of William Hay, *Agreeable Ugliness* offers a mid-eighteenth-century cultural register of physical difference-as-means to empowerment

and agency. Though Scott's novel is a conventional novel of sensibility in a number of ways, it is also, I argue, innovative for its portrayal of physical otherness and for the way that it challenges gendered social codes about the body that are readily apparent in eighteenth-century ugly clubs. *Agreeable Ugliness* portrays the inner-subjectivity of a "shocking monster" who uses her various talents, intellect, and charm to captivate suitors and superiors. More significantly, the novel's heroine employs her deformed body as a measured defense against patriarchal authority. Her subtle refusal of the law of the father becomes the catalyst for the eventual fulfillment of her emotional and sexual desire.

Ugly Clubbing in the Eighteenth Century

Ugly clubs provide some insight into the ways that deformity was commonly perceived and embodied in the eighteenth century. The values and principles behind the establishment of this gentlemen's club reveal a general bias toward, and mockery of, individuals who were considered unusual because of their physical aspect. The first two published accounts of ugly clubs' existence are from the year 1711.⁵¹ The most significant of these sources, Richard Steele's *Spectator No. 17*, goes into detail about the emergence of ugly clubs, where groups of gentlemen would gather to inure themselves to their "obliquity of aspect" (172). Steele reveals that these gatherings were intended to foster a sense of humor among anomalous gentlemen so that they might better assimilate themselves into the heart and goodwill of their better looking

⁵¹ The less significant of these two accounts is taken from a Daniel Defoe piece, who merely mentions the ugly club in passing. Daniel Defoe, *The secret history of the October Club: from its original to this time. By a member* (37-38).

peers and neighbors. In this entry, Steele manages to demonstrate some sympathy for people with physical abnormalities. He argues, in particular, that since we have no control over our physical attributes, it does no good to worry about how we appear in public: “we ought to be contented with our Countenance and Shape, so far, as never to give our selves an uneasie Reflection on that Subject.” He states that when folks appear either “Defective or Uncomely,” it is “an honest and laudable Fortitude to dare to be Ugly; at least to keep our selves from being abashed with a Consciousness of Imperfections which we cannot help, and in which there is no Guilt” (172-73). Steele admits his discontentedness with his own face, which he complains, “is not quite so long as it is broad,” and yet his injunction for people to take comfort in how they have been born extends only so far when he suggests that a deformed man should learn how “to jest upon Himself” so that those “Women and Children who were at first frighted at him, will afterwards be as much pleased with him” (172-73). Steele condemns ridiculing the ugly, but leaves it to the ugly to deride themselves. This proposed solution would supposedly allow ‘ordinary’ individuals to feel more comfortable while in the vicinity of deformity.

Steele concludes his entry by quoting at length a letter from one Alexander Carbuncle, who mentions the existence of an ugly club that has arisen in response to other gentlemen’s clubs such as the Punning Club, the Witty Club, and the Handsome Club.⁵² Carbuncle accounts for a group of ugly gentlemen who meet together under the rules and guidelines set forth by “The Act of Deformity,” which stipulates, among other things, that only those who have a “visible Quearity in his Aspect, or peculiar

⁵² Alexander Carbuncle’s last name is a tongue-in-cheek allusion to deformity.

Cast of Countenance” may join, and that those with big noses or other atypical physical characteristics will likewise be granted membership. The guidelines further stipulate that if there are “two or more Competitors for the same Vacancy...he that has the thickest Skin to have the Preference.” The admitted members meet regularly to break bread and drink to the health of their ugly female counterparts such as Mrs. Touchwood, who has had the misfortune of losing her front teeth, and Mrs. Vizard, whose face has been scarred by the smallpox. These same gentlemen praise Aesop, who, as I will argue in the following chapter, is often cited for his insightful fables and exoticized for being disfigured, ugly, and of African descent throughout the long eighteenth century.⁵³ This particular detail suggests that ugly club members are socially situated along a similar continuum to that of racialized foreigners. *Spectator* No. 17 had an enormous impact on the way physical beauty was constituted and embodied in the eighteenth century. With the success and availability of the *Spectator*, it is no wonder that many years later, at the tail end of the century, a play titled *The Ugly Club* (1798) would dramatize many of the ideas and principles that Steele had previously espoused.

Discovered in a private collection and subsequently archived in the Liverpool Library in 1901, *The Ugly Club Manuscript* (1743-1754) details the existence of a Liverpool-based ugly club, lending historical credence to eighteenth-century ugly

⁵³ See Jane Elizabeth Lewis’s *The English Fable: Aesop and Literary Culture, 1651-1740* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). Several incarnations of Aesop appear with the emergence of print culture in England. These renditions of Aesop’s life usually precede the fables themselves, and depict Aesop as having a speech impediment, a “swarthy” complexion, and a misshapen body. See for example *Aesop Unveil’d: or, the Beauties of Deformity* (London, 1731) or Samuel Croxall’s *The Fables of Aesop, With a Life of the Author*. (London, 1793). I will be exploring Aesop in some detail in the following chapter, which is on Burney’s *Camilla*.

clubs through its meticulous accounting ledger, meeting minutes, and names and physical characterizations of individual members. This manuscript further substantiates the impact that Steele had on the reading public. It contains a set of rules, which are much more extensive than the few included in Steele's entry, as well as an accounting ledger that details the club's expenditures over an eleven-year period. The first rule stipulates that to be admitted, one must be a bachelor and a "man of honor," or of certain ways and means to be able to afford the membership expenses. The fact that the club is for genteel men suggests that in terms of gender and class, this club is in line with other clubs of the era. However, the subsequent rules reveal the ugly club's extraordinary contours. In addition to being a gentleman, for example, one must have "something odd, remarkable, droll or out of the way in his face, as in the length, breath, narrowness, or in his complexion, the cast of his eyes, or make of his mouth, lips, chin, &c., of which the majority of the society are to judge, and the president to have the casting voice" (1). The physical abnormality of the figure in question is a must, and it is up to already-admitted club members to determine whether the candidate fits the bill. In particular, characteristics such as "a large mouth, thin jaws, blubber lips, little goggyling, or squinting eyes" are deemed desirable attributes for membership (1). Physical difference, however, is not enough for one to be admitted; the candidate in question must also have "a facetious disposition" as well as a "temper, humour, character and face" commensurate with the club's self-deprecatory outlook (1). The club met every Monday evening at a local coffee house, and rules regarding one's bachelorhood were strict. If a club member were to marry, he would have to forfeit his place in the club and donate money to its continued subsistence. The rules

reveal that though this club was meant to be facetious, its members took their participation seriously. They formed a tight-knit fraternity of eligible bachelors in the mid-eighteenth century.

Perhaps the most compelling aspect of this historical record is its brief depictions of the club members, all of whom are described in satirical terms as a means of justifying their membership in the group. For example, William Long of London is described as having a “Rugged Face. A very Prominent large Nose. An extraordinary wide Mouth. No upper Teeth. A large under Lip. A prodigious long Chin, meeting his Nose like a pair of Nutcrackers. An extraordinary Member” (16). Long’s singular appearance is what sets him apart from his peers, and the lengths to which the club goes to describe in detail his physical peculiarities is striking. Then there’s Matthew Strong, a merchant, who is described as having “A Tawny Complexion. A Sharp Nose. A Flock Mouth. Irregular bad Set of Teeth like those of an old worn-out Comb thoroughly begrim’d. A ghastly queer grin and Countenance, greatly set off by a long Carotty Beard” (16). This depiction dehumanizes Strong by animalizing his features, and it compares his teeth to a disgusting, dirty comb. Strong and Long are both satirized for their extraordinary physical features, and at the same time their otherness is domesticated and contained, diffused of any kind of threat or discomfort. These entries reveal an effort to desensitize the ugly club members to their various deformities. The descriptions also imply that if these gentlemen can learn to laugh at themselves as caricatures, society will learn to accept them. As Steele indicates, this is exactly the point: ugly clubs are meant to harden the group member to his own deformity, thereby converting him into a kind of clown who will play the fool

and ingratiate himself to his fellow club members, neighbors, and community.

The Ugly Club Manuscript also indicates that beauty is codified according to an English sense of selfhood which is constituted by religious and racial difference. Some of the members, for example, are given anti-Semitic depictions, such as John Brancker, whose “Jewish sallow phiz,” “prominent uneven nose” and “little hollow pig eyes” compliment his “rotten irregular set of teeth resembling an old broken saw (14).” The club also boasts of certain foreign-born gentlemen, too, and these individuals are racialized in no uncertain terms. William Tunball of Tortola, for example, is a merchant who has a “mohogany complexion, carved face, negro teeth” and “monkey chin” but is also considered to have “a fine grin” and is in “every way an excellent member” (18). John Kennion, Esquire, meanwhile, hails from Kingston and is described as having “A Jewish face and negro grin” which make him “well qualify’d for a Member” (20). These and other demeaning depictions make clear that, at this historical moment, English beauty is codified in accordance with a sense of Anglican, British identity that defines itself in opposition to stereotypes of people from colonial locales and of dissenting religions.⁵⁴ The fact that Tunball is a Creole, in this case a white man of West Indies origin, dictates the caricatured depiction of each

⁵⁴ Roxann Wheeler argues that in the eighteenth-century, religion and climate play integral roles in constituting English constructions of subjectivity and appearance. She claims, “Religion, in fact, was arguably the most important category of difference for Britons’ understanding of themselves at various time during the [eighteenth] century” and “The linchpin to understanding most eighteenth-century pronouncements about the body’s appearance is climate” (15,21). Wheeler’s arguments are largely supported by the content of the *Ugly Club Manuscript*, wherein parts of the body, especially the face, are exoticized and caricatured in the descriptions of individuals who are associated with foreign climes.



*It makes me laugh, when People grin
At my Nut-cracker Nose and Chin .*



*The Ladies like Men with long Noses,
Which always Lengthen here, supposes .*

Figure 3.1: These illustrations, from the 1734 publication *Nothing Irregular in Nature: or, Deformity, a Fancy*, indicate that physical caricatures such as the nutcracker nose and chin were pervasive in the English cultural imagination during this period. (illustrated by E. Hemskirk).

of his facial features. Kennion is likewise portrayed in outrageously exaggerated terms that are contingent on racial and religious difference. This free and indiscriminate mixing of derogatory images calls attention to the immense social importance placed on being recognizably English and Anglican in appearance. In addition to reflecting these ‘English’ values, the manuscript reinforces heterosexuality through homosocial exchange: the Ugly Club members rely on each other to understand their place within the social order so that they may eventually marry women who occupy likewise liminal positions. Women and men with deformities, this logic states, should be paired up.⁵⁵ Until said unions occur, ugly bachelors should fraternize with one another, creating bonds that reinforce binaries such as English/foreigner, Anglican/dissenter, and beautiful/ugly.⁵⁶

Hay and Scott disrupt these binaries by suggesting that deformity is an important component of Englishness. For his part, Hay gives a public voice to disfigured men who have been marginalized by the spectacle of ugly clubs. He argues that ugly clubs are problematic due to the fact that a gathering of ugly or physically disabled people “draws the Eyes of the World too much upon them, and theirs too much from the World” (14). According to Hay, attracting attention, or paying undue heed to the views of society in general, is bound to cause trouble for a deformed man or woman. He further stipulates that social pressure will increase when deformed persons appear together in public since “it doubles the Ridicule, because of the

⁵⁵ The Ugly Club MS reinforces the point that I make in the beginning of my Introduction, where I cite the Wycherley, Cibber, and the anonymous author of *Upon a Lame Man, Newly Married*.

⁵⁶ I am indebted to Chris Mounsey for his insight into the ways that *Agreeable Ugliness* disrupts these kinds of binaries.

Similitude” (14). Hay is adamantly opposed to the ugly club in a way that subverts Steele’s argument about self-deprecation, even if he shows some self-loathing in his inability to imagine himself in public with another physically disabled person. His argument that mocking oneself is not the way to garner self-respect or acceptance defies conventional wisdom surrounding deformity. Kathleen James-Cavan rightly argues that Hay “insists throughout on the social virtues of the marked, deformed body, thereby resisting the devaluation of the second term that plagues the binary distinction of ability and disability” (11). Hay’s challenge to the ugly club is another example of how he subverts established modes of thinking that were promoted by both the literary establishment, represented by Steele, and scientific thought, epitomized by Bacon.

The Curse of Beauty

Like Hay’s *Deformity: An Essay*, Scott’s *Agreeable Ugliness* imparts the message that deformity is in fact desirable. Though this novel confronts the question of female, not male, ugliness, its representation of the righteous deeds and right-mindedness of its plain narrator provides an experiential framework for physical anomaly which counters that of the ugly club. For one thing, the heroine is the center of the novel’s moral consciousness, while a beautiful woman, the narrator’s fatuous sister, becomes anathema to everyone around her. As the narrator comes of age, she becomes the quintessence of womanhood and domesticity, standing in direct contrast

to the ugly club members who are marginalized for their foreignness.⁵⁷ *Agreeable Ugliness* domesticates ugliness, converting it into a standard condition of Western European (female) selfhood.⁵⁸ Secondly, the *Ugly Club Manuscript* codifies the belief that men and women with deformities should marry each other, while *Agreeable Ugliness* pairs the ugly heroine off with handsome husbands. These contrasts aside, the novel's biggest challenge to established modes of corporeal normalcy consists of the narrator's coming-of-age, in which she successfully learns to traverse the social obstacles of being born into a genteel family in "native Ugliness" (13). As the novel reveals, the heroine's appearance becomes highly attractive to the handsome, well-situated men around her, while her fair sister proves to be toxic to the men who fall for her good looks.

Throughout *Agreeable Ugliness*, the narrator is fortunate to be a "shocking monster" in her mother's eyes, while her older sister, the Fair Villiers, is cursed to be the most beautiful woman in the novel. The Fair Villiers is vain, superficial, and selfish, while the narrator exhibits all of the traits and conduct that a heroine of a novel of sensibility typically possesses. The narrator reveals the reason behind her advanced moral and intellectual superiority: "As I had continually been told I was a Monster, I really believed it; and had employed my utmost Endeavors to cultivate some natural Talents, and acquire such Accomplishments, as might make me endured in Society"

⁵⁷ *Agreeable Ugliness* is originally a French novel and therefore takes place in a French setting, but due to the novel's translation and English readership, Englishness and Frenchness may be viewed as representative of a broader Western European perspective.

⁵⁸ In *Desire and Domestic Fiction*, Nancy Armstrong has famously argued, "the modern individual was first and foremost a woman" (8). The fiction of women writers such as Sarah Scott (and Eliza Haywood and Frances Burney, for that matter) had much to do with this gendered vision of eighteenth-century selfhood.

(57). Like Hay, Scott is interested in how physical anomaly facilitates social acceptance, wellbeing, and happiness. If a woman is told she is ugly, there will be an inclination to “cultivate” social graces, moral uprightness, and intellect, while attractive women, such as the Fair Villiers, are never compelled to develop these qualities because they effortlessly please society with their good looks (13). Without the struggle, the novel suggests, there is no incentive to develop moral and intellectual depth. As Robert W. Jones argues, “for Scott ugliness had an almost moral quality as the sign of virtuous femininity” (284). Jones makes an important point here, but beyond this, Scott’s representation of physical abnormality, like Hay’s essay, contends with Bacon’s assumption that deformed persons have unnatural desires. If the narrator reveals anything in her tale, it is that she is the embodiment of female virtue. Her obedience to her two fathers (her biological father, Mr. de Villiers, and her godfather and aristocratic benefactor, the old Count St. Furcy) throughout much of the novel make her anything but unnatural.

The narrator’s ugliness allows her to reap the social benefits of a masculine, genteel education. This has everything to do with the narrator’s emotional intimacy with her father, while her sister’s closeness with their conceited and vain mother brings about her ruin. As the beginning of the narrative makes clear, the sibling rivalry reflects a parental rift in which the narrator’s father and mother are at odds over just about everything, including how to raise their daughters. Mr. de Villiers takes charge of the narrator’s moral instruction, while Madame de Villiers coddles and enables the elder sister’s unseemly behavior. As Caroline Gonda argues, this sort of intimate father-daughter relationship is characteristic of other novels from the Age of

Sensibility, including Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749), Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple* (1744), and Scott's own *The History of Sir George Ellison* (1766). In the case of *Agreeable Ugliness*, the narrator benefits from her father's tutelage, which allows her to develop into a captivating young woman (Gonda 511-535). If the narrator is not physically attractive at the beginning of the novel, she makes up for this with her talents and disposition. Despite her "shocking" appearance, the heroine is eventually seen as an ideal wife and attractive woman by many men, including the middle-aged, wealthy gentleman, Mr. Dorigny, whom she marries at her father's behest; the young Count de St. Furcy, her true love whom she marries at the end of the novel; an artist who is commissioned to paint the narrator's portrait; and even the old Count St. Furcy, who for a time has designs on her himself. Throughout the course of the novel, men's responsiveness to the narrator is indicative of the many ways that the narrator is morally and intellectually superior to (and thus, more attractive than) her sister.

Scott's privileging of deformity over beauty may be countenanced by examining the absolute havoc wreaked by the Fair Villiers everywhere she goes. A significant amount of blame is to be placed squarely upon the shoulders of the girls' mother, the Madame de Villiers, whose mercenary drive to procure a favorable marriage for the Fair Villiers instigates a series of dramatic episodes among her daughter's suitors. When the Fair Villiers is received as a guest at Beaumont, the seat of the de Villiers' aristocratic benefactors, she is censured for her "Imperiousness of Manner" and her "Coquetry and Art" (23). Her "double Intrigue" with two young aristocratic suitors provokes a narrowly-avoided duel between them, and she is

subsequently sent home (30). Later on in the novel, when the Fair Villiers and her mother spend a season in Paris, similar coquettish games lead to a violent, public scene in which one of the daughter's suitors almost kidnaps her from a masquerade. The incident ends with the death of Dorigny, the narrator's first husband, who saves the Fair Villiers from her tormentor, but not from her loss of reputation. Again, the Fair Villiers and her mother are forced to leave--this time from Paris. Late in the novel, the Fair Villiers and her mother cause yet another dispute between an elderly gentleman and his nephew, each of whom seeks to undermine the other in his vying for her hand in marriage. In each of these instances, the Fair Villiers causes tension among her suitors, dividing them in tumultuous ways.⁵⁹

Unlike her older sister, whose beauty and cunning set men against each other, the narrator unifies her suitors due to her temperament and righteousness. After her sister is dismissed from Beaumont, the narrator is invited there as a guest and wastes no time in ingratiating herself to her aristocratic hosts and their friends. The heroine's charm, virtue, and submissiveness inspire the old Count St. Furcy to arrange a marriage between her and Mr. Dorigny. The narrator is not thrilled with the arrangement, but she submits to old St. Furcy's will. Shortly after the count introduces the narrator to Dorigny, she performs for a company of genteel and aristocratic guests by singing a duet with the young Count de St. Furcy, the man she secretly adores. Her voice is so moving and beautiful that Dorigny and the young Count de St. Furcy are overwhelmed with sensibility. Between fits of sobbing Dorigny says, "one must weep,

⁵⁹ The narrative reinforces the misogyny of the era in its contempt for the mother's ability to educate her daughter.

one must adore any one who sings with so much Expression” (66). Young St. Furcy agrees with this assessment: “Oh my dear Sir...let me embrace you, how exactly my Opinion agrees with yours!” (66). These two men’s esteem and love for one another continues even after Dorigny secures the narrator’s hand in marriage. Instead of causing division, jealousy, and violence between her suitors as her sister does among hers, the narrator’s virtue and talent bring her male suitors together in a tear-filled embrace, a remarkable eighteenth-century literary example of male suitors expressing affection toward each other in the presence of their shared object of affection.

The narrator also claims a physical advantage over her sister. In *Crito; or, a Dialogue on Beauty* (1752), Joseph Spence uses a frame narrative to attempt to define and codify female beauty. In particular, the narrator, Crito, remarks that a woman’s eyes must reflect her inner virtue. This resonates in *Agreeable Ugliness*, in which the heroine’s sister has “dark blue, large, and finely formed” eyes that are “without Fire or Expression...fine Eyes without Meaning,” while the narrator’s eyes are “a little too much sunk” and “tolerably large,” but are also “of very uncommon Vivacity, and seemed to indicate...sense” (19-20). This “uncommon vivacity” is crucial to Joseph Spence’s formulation of beauty because eyes are the “Seat of the Soul” (20). A virtuous and beautiful face, reflected primarily through a woman’s eyes, should convey the inner virtue of that woman. This is why, as Crito opines, “kind Passions add to Beauty; and all the cruel and unkind ones, add to Deformity” (22). Crito’s view of “expression” justifies the attractiveness of Scott’s heroine to all of the men in the novel, and explains why the Fair Villiers is not “fair”: her eyes reveal her vacuous inner-life and immorality. In this way, the Fair Villiers becomes the novel’s true

symbol of deformity, while the ugly heroine comes to embody both inner and outer beauty. One's attractiveness, the novel reveals, is not merely skin deep, but the discerning man will be able to decipher this in the eyes and expression of his prospective mate. The narrator's outward appearance is, in this sense, attractive, even if she regularly reminds the reader of her ugliness.

Agreeable Bodies, Agreeable Desires

Agreeable Ugliness is a somewhat conventional novel for its time. Its depiction of the high stakes of a young woman's conduct, the potential pitfalls inherent in courtship, and the values of bourgeois sentimentality align it with other popular novels from the mid-eighteenth century. Moreover, the novel's various plot developments might seem at first glance to do little to challenge marital norms or prevalent, adverse discourses of deformity. After a close reading of some passages from *Agreeable Ugliness*, *Millenium Hall* and *The History of Sir George Ellison*, Robert W. Jones claims that, in Scott's fiction, "ugliness is... a more attractive quality than beauty-- more attractive because, curiously, it is more regular and more obedient." "As such," he concludes, "Scott's representation of ugliness cannot be read as a redemptive or liberating ideal" (298). Jones suggests that Scott's use of ugliness is "no counterdiscourse" because it is too "implicated in the morality that causes feminine beauty to be repudiated" (298). Caroline Gonda has also argued that *Agreeable Ugliness* promotes a daughter's obedience to her father (531). I would point out, however, that though the narrator is submissive to her two fathers throughout much of the narrative, she plays her cards in just the right way to marry her true love, the young St. Furcy, even if her fathers do not initially approve of their union. Ultimately, the

heroine resists her fathers by insisting that the consequences of her submission to their will would be the death of her own “shocking” body, as well as that of her lover. The traditional elements of the narrative, which Jones and Gonda are right to point out, mask the narrator’s ultimate, corporeal resistance to patriarchal mandate and the denouement’s endorsement of female desire. *Agreeable Ugliness* thus celebrates a deformed woman’s ability to indulge that desire by selecting a partner for herself. Some of the events leading up to this conclusion likewise suggest that this novel is not entirely about a young woman’s submission to the law of the father.

While *Agreeable Ugliness*’s social commentary is not exactly a “counterdiscourse,” as Jones argues, Scott’s endorsement of female agency in this and her other novels is forward-thinking in a Georgian context. Scott’s novels regularly portray women’s agency as a critique of patriarchal standards, and this is evident in parts of *Agreeable Ugliness*. For example, when Mr. de Villiers approaches his daughter about the possibility of an arranged marriage with Dorigny, the heroine tells her father that she is content with her current companionship with the Mademoiselle de Beaumont, whom she loves “sincerely”:

What Husband could render me more happy than I am with her? In short, Sir, can the most amiable Women long preserve the Esteem of their Husbands? As for Love, I am formed neither to give it, nor to render it lasting; and how, without Love, can a Husband have for me those Attentions, which, when mutual, alone continue the Happiness of married Life? (62)

At this point in the novel, the narrator shows her resolve to opt out of the arranged marriage with Mr. Dorigny by continuing her present relationship with her

benefactress.⁶⁰ In the process of showing favor for homosocial companionship, the narrator simultaneously critiques marriage by questioning her capacity to love a man. She further substantiates this critique by observing that happiness between a man and a woman is not “lasting” due to the short-lived passion of a husband for his wife. Marriage without love is not the stuff of happiness, the narrator implies, and in any case, she feels that she is not “formed...to give it.” The remainder of the narrative emphasizes the importance of choice in marriage, but as Scott’s most well-known novel, *Millenium Hall*, and this passage indicate, choice also entails having the option to be partnered with someone of the same sex. In *Agreeable Ugliness*, the narrator’s desire for female companionship is short-lived, but on the other hand, she does not meekly acquiesce to the father figures in her life, as this passage indicates.

The novel’s opening pages likewise call into question the status quo. In her introductory remarks, the narrator sets up a contrast between the social values of beauty and deformity so that she can then undermine these ideas in her subsequent account. In the opening line of the novel, she writes, “A Handsome Woman is, by her Beauty, placed in a more distinguished, and more conspicuous Light in the World, than a Dutchess is at Court” (1). She then compares “a Lady of the first Fashion” who, is “watched, sought and followed” to her own humble upbringing. The narrator reveals that she “was born ugly” and has been raised at a modest estate far from the reaches of Paris and courtly life. In considering the stark difference between her own situation

⁶⁰ Companionship between young women of inferior rank and older, well-situated women is a fairly standard arrangement in eighteenth-century novels. See, for example, Maria Edgeworth’s *Belinda* (for its depiction of Belinda and Lady Delacour’s friendship) or, as I will examine in the following chapter, Frances Burney’s *Camilla* (for its portrayal of Camilla and Mrs. Arlbery’s companionship).

and that of the hypothetical lady, she wonders, “May we not reasonably conclude from this, that in order to interest Mankind in general, and to excite the Envy of every Particular of our own Sex, in short, that to deserve to be known, it is necessary we should be distinguished either by Beauty or a Title” (3). She denounces the attention paid to attractive women by lamenting the marginalizing effect this has on women like her: “Mediocrity keeps a worthy Mind in a State of Depression, and an ugly Face reduces a Woman into a kind of Non-existence” (3). With this commentary, the narrator sets herself up as an outsider in terms of her appearance, geographical location, and social station. The “non-existence” that she laments is exactly the point that she is to defy in the narrative which follows. By tracing the thoughts of the outsider-narrator in this way, *Agreeable Ugliness* grants subjectivity to women who have been overlooked by a society that is too moved by surface beauty and status. Thus, in bringing the peripheral to the center, *Agreeable Ugliness* employs a normalizing strategy which illuminates the novel’s imbrication of bourgeois values, gender, and deformity.⁶¹

In its movement from the first arranged marriage, to the happier, concluding companionate marriage, *Agreeable Ugliness*’s plot beautifully illustrates Ruth Perry’s argument that the eighteenth century registers a shift from an emphasis on the strictures of alliance marriage to that of companionate marriage. The narrator’s first

⁶¹ Along with other novels of its time, *Agreeable Ugliness* documents the inculcation of middle-class morality over aristocratic mandate. Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded* portrays the struggles of its eponymous heroine, a servant girl, who resists the predatory advances of her libertine master, Mr. B. Pamela manages to maintain her virtue, and her writing converts Mr. B to her virtuous, domestic values. As Nancy Armstrong argues, if a servant girl can resist Mr. B’s authority, so can any individual in the “modern form of exchange with the state” (118).

marriage to Mr. Dorigny, though not roundly condemned, is still a disappointment to the narrator, who yearns for the young St. Furcy. She views her arranged marriage to Dorigny as a kind of consolation: “Oh, Dorigny, how much shall I be indebted to thee, if thy Hand saves me from the Precipice, on whose Brink I am now placed” (74). The “precipice” in this passage is an allusion to her ardent, unfulfilled desire to be with the young St. Furcy, and his likely rejection of her due to her “plainness”. It is fitting that the metaphor she uses involves the threat of bodily danger as her body is supposed to have been the seat of all of her torment. She laments, “I could not drive the Idea of the young Count de St. Furcy from my thoughts...I looked on him as excelling every one I had ever seen...in Person, Understanding, and Disposition...I called to mind the Plainness of my Person...I appropriated to myself all the Mortifications which generally attend it” (73). As this passage conveys, the narrator’s resolution to marry Dorigny is at once an obedient gesture to her fathers’ commands and a conscious move to circumvent the heartache that would result from the young St. Furcy’s refusal of her. The narrator’s submission to her fathers is in part a consequence of her own self-preservation.

The arranged marriage between the narrator and Dorigny is far from a complete disaster. From this perspective, one might surmise that *Agreeable Ugliness* does not launch a full-fledged attack on a marital system in which a young woman’s desires are disregarded in favor of her father’s monetary and social interests. After all, the narrator learns to love Dorigny in her own way. After Dorigny is stabbed and killed by the Fair Villier’s attacker, the narrator reminisces on their relationship in the following terms: “I own I married Mr. Dorigny with Indifference; but Honor...should

have rendered him dear to me; and he could not but become more so by his Attentions, his Regard for me, his Indulgence, and the sincere Esteem he had for me, I will venture to add, by the Proofs of his Love” (158). Words such as “honor”, “regard”, and “esteem” all connote the narrator’s tepid response to her first husband, and yet she becomes convinced of his love and is treated with respect and kindness. Respect notwithstanding, if we compare the narrator’s rapport with Dorigny to that of her eventual husband, the young St. Furcy, we may observe that the novel is endorsing companionate marriage, and thus, a good deal more agency for women. Both Jones and Gonda omit this narrative detail in their respective readings of *Agreeable Ugliness*, but I argue that this is important to consider in the context of the novel’s stance on female desire. It is not that the novel stipulates that this desire does not matter, nor that it should be repressed entirely; it suggests, on the other hand, that a young woman must exercise a great deal of caution and subtlety in her expression and realization of said desire.

Agreeable Ugliness’s conclusion portrays the difficulty of this tightrope walk, but it also suggests that young women may successfully navigate their way to more egalitarian, loving relationships than those inherent in arranged marriages. In considering the fact that the narrator is by novel’s end widowed, her newfound agency, precariously situated as it is, makes a bit more sense. In order for the narrator to win the hand of young St. Furcy, she must first defy the wishes of her two fathers without being too forward. Her subtle defiance may be attributed in part to her widowhood, which allows for a certain amount of autonomy that would otherwise not be available to her as a young, unmarried woman. Indeed, wealthy widows (such as

the narrator, who has presumably inherited Dorigny's wealth) had a good deal of independence at the time that *Agreeable Ugliness* was published. Amy Froide uses the terms "ever-married" and "never-married" to distinguish between eighteenth-century women who had married and were left widowed, and "singlewomen" who did not marry, and she uses this distinction to argue that "widows had a public and independent place within the patriarchal society" that unmarried, or "never-married" women did not have (17). Froide goes on to show that a widow could head her own household "with another woman, and the majority chose to do so" (18). *Millenium Hall*'s central relationship is a great example of this point: after having survived her horrendous husband, Mrs. Morgan sets up a house with her long-term romantic friend, Ms. Mancel, at the estate she has inherited. This scenario would not have been thought strange, according to Froide's analysis. She argues that eighteenth-century widows were seen as having "earned [the] right to live outside a male-controlled household. And if more prosperous, widows could opt to establish their own households, where they could gather around them whichever children, servants, relatives, and friends they could accommodate" (18-19). The widow, having survived her husband, has an out from compulsory patriarchal mandates, and even compulsory heterosexuality, as *Millenium Hall* makes clear.

In the case of *Agreeable Ugliness*, the narrator's increased autonomy in widowhood means that she is capable of entertaining and pursuing (in her restrained way) a marriage with the young St. Furcy. She does this by separating the will and desire of her body, as well as the physical well-being of the young St. Furcy, from the designs of her two fathers. When Mr. de Villiers approaches his daughter about a

marriage to an eligible bachelor, Richecour, the narrator responds by articulating the dire physical consequences of her repressed desire:

I ask no Favor for myself, but do not suffer me to give Death to the Man who saved my Life, to the most worthy Man in the World, in short, to the Man I love. Alas, if I cannot excite your Compassion, if you will not relieve my Anxiety, consider that in destroying St. Furcy you at the same time destroy me; I would die sooner than disobey or even displease you; but my Obedience would kill me. (225)

Here, the narrator makes a bold declaration for the love that she feels for young St. Furcy, and she implies that an arranged marriage with Richecour will happen, quite literally, over their dead bodies. While the narrator does not completely disobey her father, she conveys that her own desire is at odds with that of her father's. Her body's desire, she also suggests, is not entirely her own. A few pages later, the heroine makes a strong claim for her lover, whom she addresses in a letter, "I will never marry Richecour...For you only I live. You alone I live, or ever can love" (229). The narrator's invocation of the life of her "shocking" body underscores the novel's movement from the beginning of the novel, in which the narrator's deformity is an unresolved social problem, to its climax and resolution, in which that same body has become the narrator's means of resisting patriarchal authority. Her body is no longer a deficiency, but a strength (even in its purported mortality) to be invoked as a line of defense against tyranny. In this way, the narrator insists that the greatest authority figure in her life is not her father, but her own self.

Moreover, the narrator's resistance also imparts the message that fulfillment of women's desire is necessary for the wellbeing of both women and men. The final plot complication consists of the old count St. Furcy's intention to make the heroine his

bride (as a high ranking aristocrat, he would have it in his power to do so). In her confrontation with the old count, the heroine invokes the fragile physical and emotional state of his son, who languishes on account of his unfulfilled love for the heroine:

It is the Affection you owe your Son, and that which I had for him, which have determined me. If he cannot lose all Hopes of me without Grief, it must still be less than he would suffer at being deprived of your Love...but since the depriving him of all Hope is necessary to your Tranquility, I readily consent to rob him of it for ever. There is my Hand, Sir. (251-52)

The narrator's acceptance of the old count's hand in this scene can hardly be viewed as an obedient gesture. More to the point, she goes beyond speaking of her own body to make a bold declaration for the salutary happiness and physical well-being of the old count's son. In fact, throughout the novel, the young count St. Furcy is incapacitated on account of his heightened sensibility. The narrator speaks of his compromised body as a way of directing the old count to his filial responsibilities. The young St. Furcy's inability to act on his overwhelming desire contrasts sharply with the heroine's own agency, which is amplified by her concerted effort to reject the old count without outright rejecting him.

The heroine is rewarded for her resolve, and for her subtle defiance of tyrannical authority. After the narrator speaks of the young count's fragile state, the old count reveals that he has merely been testing her: "Oh, Madam...what fortitude appears in you! I am neither worthy of such Virtue, nor of so great a Felicity as you offer me. Could you think that at my Age I would exact such a Sacrifice from you? No, I only wanted to try you thoroughly. Oh! you are my Daughter, and deserve to be

so” (252). Finally, the old count grants his soon-to-be daughter-in-law her desire by consenting to her marriage with his son. The narrator thus employs her body, once deemed unsightly and plain, and the body of her lover as forms of resistance to patriarchal authority and as means to the fulfillment of her desire. Her response to the old count allows her to pass what seems a cruel test, and the threat of incest which has been apparent throughout the novel is eradicated.⁶² For her successful balancing of desire and paternal obedience, the narrator is rewarded with “happiness,” “reward,” and “delight”, leaving the reader with the distinct impression that love is essential for marriage, and that a woman should be capable of taking an active part in the courtship process. Given the details of this ending, *Agreeable Ugliness* contests certain patriarchal and corporeal codes by imagining that the deformed, female body may be a locus of sexual desire and agency.

Conclusion: The Privilege of Deformity

Agreeable Ugliness emphasizes the heroine’s intellect, virtue, and talent, which combine to make her a highly attractive woman to the men who meet her. And yet these attributes also enable her to recognize and fulfill her sexual and emotional desires. Her marriages to Dorigny and St. Furcy overturn Steele’s assumption that men and women with deformities belong together. Since Dorigny and St. Furcy are handsome, socially distinctive, and wealthy, Scott suggests that people of differing social stations and physical embodiments may be joined in marriage so long as there is

⁶² “The threat of incest, which has been present, though unvoiced, in the exclusive intensity of the father-daughter relationship, finally emerges in another form: a proposal from the man who calls her “our dear Daughter,” and loves her ‘as my own Child’” (Gonda 516).

an egalitarian love between them. Scott's novel does not merely invoke sympathy for those with deformities: it reveals that physical difference may make women more virtuous, intelligent, and attractive than beautiful women. In a similar fashion, Hay rejects common notions about what deformity does to an individual. Deformity does not, as Hay claims, turn one against nature: it allows one to cultivate health and a keen intellect. Scott and Hay propose that far from being undesirable, deformity allows for the development of an acute sensibility, which in a mid-eighteenth-century context is one of most important characteristics that a genteel woman or man could possess.

Edmund Burke's take on the subjectiveness of beauty is, to an extent, consonant with what Scott and Hay propose. He claims, "I call beauty a social quality; for where women and men...inspire us with sentiments of tenderness and affection towards their persons; we like to have them near us, and we enter willingly into a kind of relation with them, unless we have strong reasons to the contrary" (18-19). Burke does not attempt to codify attraction, though he suggests that beauty is subjective and undefinable. Sentiments of "tenderness and affection" in the eighteenth century are not necessarily dependent upon a beautiful face, as Burke allows for here, and as we have seen in Hay's and Scott's writings. Attraction and its consequence, affection, are most likely to be garnered by one with a kind disposition, a refined moral framework, and a sharp intellect. Moreover, if we look to Hay and Scott, we find that, in this historical and literary context, people with deformities are the most capable of developing these attributes. While Steele urges his readership "to dare to be ugly," Scott insists that the ugly can and should dare to be attractive by using their mental acuity, virtue, and bodies--strengthened by deformity--to marry the man or woman whom they truly

desire (Steele 172). Hay likewise sees his deformity as something which has enriched his life in ways that able-bodied people could not personally understand. Thus, these writers imagine empowerment, and not sympathy, as the true objective for the likes of shocking monsters and lame, hunchbacked men. Since we can safely assume that deformity was such a common embodied experience in the Georgian period, we might imagine many eighteenth-century readers of *Agreeable Ugliness* and *Deformity: An Essay* identifying with these texts' central figures while feeling the privilege of their own deformities; or, for those ordinary readers, questioning for perhaps the first time their supposed superiority to the beautiful faces of deformity.

Chapter Three, in full, is a reprint of the material as it will appear in the forthcoming collection *The Idea of Disability in the Eighteenth Century*. Edited by Chris Mounsey, Bucknell University Press. The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Chapter Four:

Sharp Minds / Twisted Bodies: Physical Disability, Female Education, and

Widowhood in Frances Burney's *Camilla*

This, shortly, made Eugenia stared at still more than her peculiar appearance. The misses, in tittering, ran away from the learned lady; the beaux contemptuously sneering, rejoiced she was too ugly to take in any poor fellow to marry her. Some imagined her studies had stunted her growth; and all were convinced her education had made her such a fright. (*Camilla* 748)

But neither disease nor accident had power over her mind; there, in its purest proportions, moral beauty preserved its first energy. The equanimity of her temper made her seem, though a female, born to be a practical philosopher; her abilities and her sentiments were each of the highest class, uniting the best adorned intellects with the best principled virtues. (*Camilla* 50-51)

At first glance, Mrs. Arlbery and Eugenia—two secondary characters from Frances Burney's third novel *Camilla* (1796)—have little in common. Mrs. Arlbery, the worldly widow who counsels Camilla throughout the first three volumes of the novel, provides the narrative with what Margaret Doody describes as “liveliness” by regularly imparting witty comments and sensible critiques of men and society. She makes a vivid first impression on the reader upon her entrance to a ball, which also marks her initial appearance in the novel:

A lady, not young, but still handsome, with an air of fashion easy almost to insolence, with a complete but becoming undress, with a work-bag hanging on her arm, whence she was carelessly knotting, entered the ball-room alone...and took a general survey of the company, with a look that announced a decided superiority to all she saw, and a perfect indifference to what opinion she incurred in return.¹

¹ Frances Burney, *Camilla* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) 73. Further references to the novel will appear in parentheses.

From her first detached entrance into the novel and throughout the remainder of the narrative, Mrs. Arlbery enchants her listeners with her conversation, wit, and general demeanor. At the ball, she toys with the officers and gentlemen who attend to her, giving them each a “frivolous commission” which they all obediently and sedulously carry forth due to the fact that she is a “woman of some consequence” (73). As the general attention of the ballgoers is drawn to her, she speaks “in a laughing whisper...with that sort of deliberate ease which belongs to the most determined negligence of who heard, or who escaped hearing her, who were pleased, or who were offended” (74). In short, Mrs. Arlbery exercises a great deal of power—regardless of her sex—but especially for a woman in 1790’s England. Two of the ball’s attendees, Eugenia Tyrold and her sister, the novel’s eponymous heroine, are both “wholly engrossed by this new personage,” and who wouldn’t be? Mrs. Arlbery represents the height of fashion in the late eighteenth century. She has little to trouble her: as a widow and head of a wealthy estate, she has been there, done that, and she entertains her interlocutors, and by extension the novel’s readers, with her camp sensibility and sharp repartee. Her appeal and attractiveness to her onlookers is evident throughout the novel.

Eugenia, one of Mrs. Arlbery’s engrossed spectators, is in a very different set of circumstances. Lame, diminutive in size, and pockmarked of visage, inexperienced and cloistered from the world, Eugenia is at her first public ball when Mrs. Arlbery appears on the scene. While Mrs. Arlbery is completely aware of the admiration of all

of the genteel guests for her upon her arrival, Eugenia is unwittingly subjected to the scorn of these same people:

impertinent witticisms upon her face, person, and walk, though not uttered so audibly as to be distinctly heard, ran round the room in a confused murmur, and produced a disposition for sneering in the satirical, and for tittering in the giddy, that made her as valuable an acquisition to the company at large, who collect for any amusement, indifferent to its nature. (61)

Eugenia's unawareness of the ball attendees' mockery is attributed to her youth: "She was shielded...from all undeserved mortifications, by not suspecting any were meant for her, and by a mind delightedly pre-occupied with that sudden expansion of ideas, with which new scenery and new objects charm a youthful imagination" (61). Mrs. Arlbery holds an independence only occasionally experienced by women in the eighteenth century—the result of her being widow to a wealthy husband. Eugenia, meanwhile, holds the future of Cleves, her uncle's estate, in her possession, but since she is a girl of fifteen who is just making her entrance into the world, she is in precarious circumstances: a fortune hunter assails her unmercifully, passersby in the street mock her, and perhaps to top it off, she receives an education in the Classics—hardly a venture thought suitable for young women in the late eighteenth century. Eugenia and Mrs. Arlbery, it would seem, have little to say to each other, and in fact, they never actually *do* say anything to each other. They are both very close with Camilla, but the two never actually interact.

Mrs. Arlbery's appearance at the ball, and the narrative's subsequent contrasting of her situation so starkly with that of Eugenia, are key moments in this novel. This narrative sequence, in conjunction with the plot developments involving

either character that may be found throughout the novel, provide insightful commentaries on the histories of disability and sexuality. Claudia Johnson has identified the 1790's as a time period in which a "crisis of gender" results from the French Revolution and other historical circumstances that mark this era. This crisis, for Johnson, consists of a disruption of socially-sanctioned gender roles leaving women, in particular, "without a distinct gender site" due to the pleas of conservatives such as Edmund Burke, who touted sentimentalized masculinity as a national imperative in the face of fear that "ferocious anti-sentimental men" who were "unsusceptible to the emotions on which civil order depends" would turn England into a blood-hungry revolutionary country such as they thought France to be (6, 9). This disruption of gender codes in the Era of Revolution had a profound impact on the literature of the time period, as Johnson shows, particularly in the writings of Wollstonecraft, Ann Radcliffe, Burney, and Jane Austen.

Burney's third novel, *Camilla*, is indicative of this crisis, as Johnson attests, with Mrs. Arlbery's independence and Eugenia's vulnerability drawing attention to gender and the body. Mrs. Arlbery in particular has a great deal of autonomy, and yet she is never harshly condemned by Burney, who imbues Mrs. Arlbery with some of the most entertaining, insightful, and hilarious lines of the novel. Eugenia, meanwhile, lives this crisis of gender as a pockmarked, diminutive, humpbacked young woman with a masculine Classical education at her disposal. Burney's stance on each of these characters, as we shall see, is ambiguous—to say the least. While Mrs. Arlbery is the voice that regularly critiques the actions of the novel's unappealing hero, Edgar Mandlebert, Eugenia is the only other figure that questions patriarchy—especially in

terms of the way it constructs an intolerable set of circumstances for physically anomalous women. And yet Burney is also wary of the power that Mrs. Arlbery and Eugenia wield. Burney's fiction is often marked by ambivalence: does she merely capitulate to polite society's expectations, or does she critique the English social structure that she lived in? Claudia Johnson quite rightly calls her an "equivocal being" because of these ambiguities in her fiction and biography (1). Though this ambiguity makes Burney's fiction difficult to pin down politically, I argue that it is important to examine the only two characters in *Camilla* that ever really go against, or question, the patriarchal grain in order to examine the ways that patriarchy and the male gaze impact physically disabled women in the last decade of the 1700's. The "crisis of gender," as I will argue, impacts in profound ways the lives of physically disabled women.

In this chapter, I argue that *Camilla*'s persistent efforts to privilege Eugenia's brilliant mind over her crippled body are challenged by its conflicted ending, and I reinforce this point by demonstrating the significance of Eugenia's physical disfigurements for her academic formation. Such topics were pervasive in the later eighteenth century. For example, eighteenth-century biographies of Æsop (a fabulist from 600 B.C.E. who was widely translated, written about, and read throughout the long eighteenth century) attempt to impart a similar mind-over-body message to that of *Camilla* and are likewise problematized due to their implicit investment in mind-body interdependence. On the other hand, as I will show, both Æsop's biographies and *Camilla* assume that twisted bodies make for sharp minds. Moreover, I will examine *Camilla*'s ambivalence regarding Eugenia's brief stint as a widow near the novel's

ending, at which point Eugenia pens an autobiography that is highly critical of the male gaze and its dire consequences for physically deformed women. Burney's mixed feelings about widowed women is also identifiable in Mrs. Arlbery, who uses her wealth and independence to live outside of traditional domesticity and to persuade Camilla to follow in her footsteps, but whose highly comical and entertaining presence is eventually phased out in favor of the conventional romance plot. In the end, Mrs. Arlbery is unsuccessful in her seduction of Camilla, and it is Eugenia, not Camilla, who is widowed and manages to produce a written document that questions male desire and its marginalizing effects on physically disabled women. Mrs. Arlbery and Eugenia demonstrate that widowhood can lead to social empowerment, but Burney's discomfort regarding this social position is also evident in the way that the novel ends, with Eugenia getting married off to a sensible young man named Melmond. Widowhood and deformity, as I argue, entail very different lived realities, but within Burney's novel, they both provide opportunities for the women who experience these realities to interrogate cultural assumptions regarding gender and the body, paramount among which includes an indelible linking of the mind with the body in a late eighteenth-century context.

An "Ill look'd Vessel" and a "Godlike Mind": Eighteenth-Century Depictions of *Æsop*

In order to better understand the literary and cultural tradition out of which Eugenia emerges, I turn first to some eighteenth-century textual representations of *Æsop*, which are scattered chronologically across the eighteenth century. *Æsop*'s

moral fables appeared in print and spread through Europe with the advent of the printing press in the fifteenth century. His cultural impact on England, however, did not flourish until the Restoration and eighteenth century. During the long eighteenth century, Æsop's fables were very popular in England, with some of the versions of these tales including short biographies of the fabulist himself. Jayne Elizabeth Lewis argues that Æsop's animal-based fables serve as double-entendre for the English writers who recreate them—a convenience for those polemical thinkers wanting to convey controversial subject matter during the politically unstable times characteristic of the mid-seventeenth through the early-eighteenth centuries (11). In addition, I argue, eighteenth-century textual portrayals of Æsop both illuminate and impact contemporary cultural perceptions of physical defect, hence allowing for a better understanding of Eugenia's character in *Camilla*. Like Burney's Eugenia, Æsop is often portrayed as humpbacked and ugly, and his philosophical nature comes as a surprise to those with whom he comes into contact.

This interconnectedness of body and mind is indicative of a specific cultural context in which sensibility ensures this linkage. In *Loving Dr. Johnson*, Helen Deutsch identifies and explores the mind/body problem as it relates to Samuel Johnson, who, she argues, “was both a monument and a monster” (71). Known on the one hand for his tics, unusual physical appearance, and physical defects, and on the other for his brilliant conversation, influential writing style, and profound literary mind, Johnson exemplifies the monster/genius dichotomy in eighteenth-century England. His contemporaries considered him “as both Great Cham (tartar monarch) and Caliban of Literature” (71). This coupling of brilliance and defect, for Deutsch,

sheds light on a moment in English History in which the mind and body are tightly bound to each other “through the complex workings of sensibility” (72). Deutsch’s work on Alexander Pope, considered the greatest English poet of the age (and, like Johnson, a physical curiosity), further illustrates that this monster/genius trope is pervasive in the eighteenth-century literary imagination. Significantly, these writers occupy exalted places as the most prominent and influential men of letters from this era. Deutsch’s argument that their writings and literary style are informed in significant ways by their physical defects illuminates the enormous significance of the mind/body connection to literary culture in the eighteenth century.

I have chosen to focus on Æsop in large part because his importance to the culture of deformity in the eighteenth century cannot be overstated. In Steele’s essay on deformity, he mentions Æsop as an ironic source of inspiration to the ugly club members: “Every fresh Member, upon his first Night, is to entertain the Company with a Dish of Codfish, and a Speech in praise of *Æsop*; whose portraiture they have in full Proportion, or rather Disproportion, over the Chimney” (172). Going back even further, to 1697, John Vanbrugh wrote a play, *Æsop: A Comedy*, in which Æsop is portrayed as a grotesque figure whose role in the plot mirrors in some ways that of the Restoration fop. Aphra Behn and Samuel Richardson also wrote editions of Æsop’s Fables, and Jonathan Swift dedicates a passage to Æsop in his *Battle of the Books*. As these examples suggest, Æsop is as much a creation of the eighteenth-century imagination as he is a historical figure. He is often invoked as a prototypical man of deformity, and it is therefore crucial to have a critical understanding of the ways he is represented in the eighteenth century.

In the various representations of Æsop that I examine in this section, Æsop is portrayed as having an unusually-shaped body. In L'Estrange's 1714 version, for



Figure 4.1: Æsop illustrated as hunchbacked and deformed in Frances Barlow's 1687 *Life of Æsop*.
 example, the author describes him as "Flat-nos'd, Hunch-Back'd, Blobber Lipp'd; a long misshapen Head; his Body crooked all over, Big Belly'd, Baker-Legg'd, and his

Complexion so swarthy, that he took his very Name from't; for Æsop is the same with Æthiop." In L'Estrange's edition, Æsop has a twisted body and misshapen features to go along with his black skin and African origins—all indicators of his physical and racial otherness. In the earlier 1697 version, a short preface introduces Æsop to the reader: "As Nature fram'd Æsop like Puppet show Punch / With Paunch sticking out & a back in a Bunch / And gave his Wit shapes more fit for a Fool" (1). Æsop is compared here to Punch, the puppet-show sensation, who is hunchbacked and ugly, with a large chin and nose that almost meet. In each of these texts, the first thing the reader learns about is Æsop's contorted figure, and therefore it can be assumed that physical anomaly is of central importance. While Lewis argues that Æsop's body reveals the "the symbolic possibilities seventeenth-century linguists associated with instituted signs," my analysis relies on his body not as metaphor, but as indicator of bodily variability, of the ways in which English society perceived typical and atypical bodies in the eighteenth century (84). As Michael Davidson argues, representations of the disabled body in literature do not always have to stand for something else; they can be indicative of a "lived reality," hence making visible and legible the non-normative body (176). I follow Davidson's critical approach in my analysis of Æsop—and Eugenia, too, for that matter—with the intention of illuminating eighteenth-century cultural perceptions of deformity.

In the case of Æsop, the deformed body is a fraught, contested site in the eighteenth century. As Lewis points out in her study on Æsop, there are different versions of Æsop that emerge in the Restoration and early eighteenth century. The 1793 biography's portrayal of Æsop's corporeal otherness challenges Samuel

Croxall's early eighteenth-century perspective, which is that Æsop had been a white man with an ordinary body. Croxall had gone to some lengths to argue that Æsop was actually not as physically impaired as his contemporaries, such as Sir Roger L'Estrange—another influential Æsop biographer—make him out to be. In Croxall's view, Æsop could not have “been so monstrous and shocking to the Eyes, as...scarce fit to be admitted as a slave in any private family,” and that he was “rather Odd than Ugly” (qtd. in Lewis 91). Æsop, in other words, could not have been taken in by slave owners due to a physical appearance that the upper echelons of society would not have tolerated. This debate over Æsop's appearance led to different renderings of the fabulist's life. Perhaps Samuel Richardson put it best in his 1739 edition of “The Life of Æsop,” where he writes that the “Uncertainty” over the biography “at first inclined us to avoid entering into the Life of *Æsop*, which we find mingled with so many trifling Circumstances, and subject to so great Confusion” (*Early Works* 113). “Confusion” notwithstanding, Richardson also recognizes the market demand for including the biography since “those Editions had been most inquired after, which contained the Life of this excellent Person” (113). Richardson goes on to summarize L'Estrange's translation of the Life of Æsop, “omitting...Parts of it, as seem either trivial or improbable” (113). This interest in biography is very much an eighteenth-century phenomenon, a time in which biographies proliferated and had great market success.

The debate over the fabulist's appearance was far from resolved by the late eighteenth century. Though the 1793 biography I have been citing makes a point of aligning itself with L'Estrange's view, there is another 1793 collection about Æsop—

The Life of Esop—which sides with Croxall’s perspective in arguing that Planudes, an influential, early sixteenth-century translator of Æsop, confused an “oriental fabulist” called Lokman (sometimes spelled Lochman), who was himself a man of deformity, with Æsop, who actually had an ordinary body (xi). The narrator contends, “I should be more apt to think that Esop was of a handsome countenance and shape, than ugly and deformed” (xxiv). Regardless of which of the versions of Æsop’s biography is ‘true,’ there is an implied unwillingness in this latter version to accept an influential Western thinker as being so abnormal in appearance. This anonymous version instead insists on assigning the misshapen body in question to an Arabic fabulist, thereby situating the deformed body as non-white and non-European. The ongoing dispute over Æsop’s physical aspect demonstrates that this cultural anxiety over the visibly deformed body had implications for English/Western identity and its investment in Classical literature and philosophy throughout the century.

For the purposes of enlightening my analysis of deformity, I have chosen to focus on those publications in which Æsop is portrayed as monstrous. In these texts, Æsop must convince his interlocutors of the soundness of his mind despite his body’s appearance, and in this narrative detail it is important to note the ways in which these texts seem to disassociate the mind from the body. According to L’Estrange’s edition, Æsop is “tongue ty’d”—impaired by some kind of speech impediment—and unfit for any occupation. He overcomes his inability to speak, however, by helping a group of priests he encounters on the road, who in turn pray to the gods for his recovery (2). The gods respond by granting Æsop the power of speech, which he becomes very dexterous in using. He is passed from slave owner to slave owner until he finally gains

his manumission papers by counseling the war-bound Samians. When the Samians initially behold Æsop, they laugh at him and his owner, the philosopher Xanthus.

Æsop replies,

One wise Man values another for his Understanding, not for his Beauty; besides that the Deformity of my Person is no Incapacity at all as to your Business. Did you never taste delicious Drink out of an Ill look'd Vessel? Or did you never drink Wine that was vapid or eager, out of a Vessel of Gold? 'Tis sagacity and Strength of Reason that you have Occasion for, not the force of robust Limbs, nor the Delicacies of Colour and Proportion. Wherefore I must beseech you not to judge of my mind by my Body, nor to condemn me unheard. (32-33)

Here, in L'Estrange's version, Æsop defends his various physical anomalies by privileging a robust mind over "robust Limbs." He convinces the Samians that despite his "crooked body," he is indeed a man of "Understanding." By invoking an analogy about the quality of wine and the appearance of the wine container, Æsop demonstrates the narrative attempt to convey that one should not judge an individual by his or her physical appearance. In this way, Æsop disassociates the mind from the body and reveals that a crooked body can hold a sound mind.

This effort to disconnect the mind from the body also holds weight in the 1793 edition of Æsop's biography. In the 1793 biographical edition of Croxall's translation, many of the same narrative details are relayed, and a similar argument for the superiority of the mind over the body is made: "Ye citizens of Samos," Æsop announces, "ye should not only view the front of the house, but the tenant also; for frequently an upright and understanding soul dwells in a deformed and disordered body: and you know it is not the shape of the cask that men admire, but the wine concealed therein" (xlvi). Here, analogies to households and, as in L'Estrange's

version, wine make evident the same ideas that had been portrayed earlier in the century: the inside is what truly counts. In these, as in other versions of Æsop's biographies, there is an argument made for the superiority of intellect over body, a refutation of the notion that the body is a window to the soul and an assertion that to not agree with this is to not be a "wise Man."

And yet despite Æsop's corporeal and racial otherness, and despite his insistent plea to not be judged for what seems highly abnormal about his body, this narrative theme of mind over body collapses upon further scrutiny to ultimately reveal that Æsop's body and mind are actually inseparable, that Æsop's body is both facilitator and demonstrator of his genius. Take for example the 1731 version, in which the short preface states the following, "Yet all this Farce the Goddess play'd / The better to surprise" (37). The speaker of the poem makes clear that Æsop's "Grotesque" shape is meant to be Nature's way of surprising his interlocutors: "Tho' at first her Work was deem'd / Artless, and ill-design'd; / Yet thus disguis'd, within She clos'd / A glorious, Godlike Mind" (37). Æsop's "Godlike mind," it turns out, is one which "none could resist" and that "surpriz'd" everyone with whom he came into contact (37).² Thus, the purpose of Æsop's extraordinary body in this biography is to disguise the extraordinary mind contained therein, and to confound those people who would benefit from Æsop's sophisticated intellect. Meanwhile, in L'Estrange's version, Æsop's stutter is said to be the worst of his impairments: "This Imperfection is said, to

² *Aesop Unveil'd: or, the Beauties of Deformity. Being a Poetical Translation of Several Curious Fables out of Aesop and other Approv'd Mythologists; equally as Diverting and Beneficial to the English Reader, as his Comic Shape and Instructive Morals were to the Antients* (London: Printed by Isaac Jackson, 1731) 37.

have been the most sensible Part of his Misfortune; so the Excellency of his Mind might otherwise have aton'd in some Measure, for the uncouth Appearance of his Person" (7). Here, Æsop's incoherent speech—an obvious impediment to the demonstration of his sharp mind—makes his bodily ailments seem all-the-more monstrous. Æsop of course overcomes his stutter with the prayers of the priests, and the assumption here is that a great mind (reflected through speech, of course) trumps a deformed body. However, the fact that his strange body is initially seen as a reflection of an “uncouth” mind suggests that Æsop's corporeal struggles will have to be accounted for throughout the narrative as he seeks the trust of his masters, the respect of his peers, and eventually his manumission from slavery.

Some of Æsop's adventures prove that this tension continues throughout the narrative in spite of attempts to posit the mind over the body. Many of Æsop's encounters with his fellow slaves and slave owners emphasize the body, and these plot developments use illness or physical violence as the foregrounding tension to, and occasion for, Æsop's intelligence. Take for example a section in which Æsop is wrongly accused by some of his fellow-slaves of having eaten of their master's figs. Upon being condemned of having eaten the fruit, Æsop is unable to “answer readily in his defence” due to his speech impediment (Croxall 4). He is, however, able to prove to his master that he is not the culprit by swallowing a large amount of warm water and making himself vomit. When the liquid comes up clear—evidence that he had eaten nothing that day—the master recognizes Æsop's innocence and applies this test to the accusers, whose vomit reveals the content of the figs they had consumed. These other servants are then lashed for their misdeed (Croxall 5). In this case, Æsop

circumvents his speech impediment by using his body as evidence of his innocence. Though *Æsop*'s biography implores the reader to not judge one's mind by one's imperfect appearance, the story of the figs—along with several other inset narratives—illustrates the central importance of *Æsop*'s body, which he uses as a means of revealing his innocence. His abject bodily performance reveals the workings of his sharp intellect. In fact, the reader is frequently reminded that *Æsop* has an impaired body, but it is this body that confounds and educates his interlocutors when they discover his extraordinary mind.

The connection between mind and body is likewise asserted in Dodsley's 1793 version. In one narrative, *Æsop* and his fellow slaves are ordered to carry their owner's things on a journey into Asia. *Æsop* requests the lightest cargo since it is his first journey with this particular master, and consequently he picks up a basket of bread that is two times heavier than any of the other items to be carried. Considering the disproportionate burden that *Æsop* is carrying, in conjunction with his disproportionate body, the other slaves mock him (xvii). *Æsop* eventually gets the last laugh, though, as the burden disappears entirely after the first dinner and supper on the road, which consist of the loaves of bread that he has been carrying. *Æsop* is left with nothing to transport, and his crippled body is unburdened. Once again, *Æsop*'s intelligence is measured by the impact, and eventual removal, of the bread's weight on his body, and the slaves "who before had treated him with contempt" are left to



Figure 4.2: Aesop and the figs: another illustration from Barlow's *Life of Aesop* (1687).

“applaud his ingenuity” (xvii). Later on in this same narrative, as Æsop is treating the philosopher Xanthus’s friends to a dinner of tongues as a means of teaching them a lesson about the danger and consequence of speech (words, according to Æsop, have the potential to bring on the “ruin of empires, cities, and private connections...the conveyance of calumnies and forgeries...the grand disturber of civil society”) the scholars repudiate Æsop, claiming “that the deformity of his body was but the transcript of his distorted and irregular manners (xxxiv-xxxv). While the remainder of the biography tries to contest this point, it also reinforces it by demonstrating the ways in which Æsop’s bodily irregularities provide a foundation for his various lessons and insights. In this sense, the scholars are right: his unconventional body is meant to be a reflection of his unconventional wisdom and behavior.

John Vanbrugh’s late-Restoration play *Æsop: A Comedy* reveals this same problematic relationship, with the mind and body disconnected at critical junctures, but reconnected and reaffirmed by the last scene. While Æsop is portrayed throughout the play as sharp, witty and wise, his body is regarded as a stumbling block to sanctioned heterosexual romance. In the play, Learcus wishes for his daughter, Euphronia, to marry Æsop (portrayed as a magistrate) because it will raise her status, and by extension, Learcus might become a lord. Euphronia, however, is in love with Oronces and finds Æsop hideous. While Learcus tries to convince his daughter that “If his Body’s deform’d, his Soul is beautiful” and that “All Manly Beauty’s seated in the Soul: / And that of Æsop... / Out-shines whate’er the World has yet produc’d,” Euphronia’s maid, Doris, finds him unsightly and devious: “That ugly, old treacherous piece of Vermin: that Melancholy mixture of Impotence and Desire” (8-9, 20). Doris’s

physical revulsion to Æsop—an unnatural beast, in her estimation—marks him as a kind of asexual monster, meant to disgust the audience and act as a foil to the play’s hero, Oronces, who should and will win the hand of Euphronia in the end. Much of the plot’s tension is centered on whether or not Æsop’s potential union with the play’s heroine will occur after all.

These conflicting views of Æsop run throughout the comedy, but in the end Doris’s perspective is the one that the play endorses, suggesting that in a Restoration context, a deformed man can be socially useful and comical as long as he is not permitted any kind of sexual expression—a similarity in function to the stock character of the fop. The play’s cordoning off of heterosexual desire around ordinary bodies suggests that the physically disabled should not be granted the opportunity to marry or reproduce with ordinary people, aligning this play to an extent with the procreational logic behind the ugly clubs that I examined in the previous chapter, and the satires from Wycherley and Cibber which I cited in the very beginning of the introduction. Through Aesop, the play reveals that grotesque men are best off unattached and solitary. Instead of going forward with the marriage with Euphronia as Learcus hopes, Æsop advocates Euphronia’s marriage with Oronces. Once he is out of the marriage plot, Æsop can be universally loved and esteemed, even by those who had previously abhorred him. Doris, for one, has a “much better opinion of [Æsop] now than she had half an hour ago” and Æsop’s concurs with Doris’s previous chagrin: “She has reason: For my Soul appear’d then as deform’d as my Body. But I hope now one may so far mediate for t’other, that provided I don’t make Love, the Women won’t quarrel with me; for they are worse Enemies even than they are

Friends” (79). With one strike, Vanbrugh’s ending reinforces Restoration-era misogyny and implies that bodily deformity is monstrous and sexually transgressive, to be met with asexual circumspection by the disabled individual. That Æsop is played by Colly Cibber—the famous eighteenth-century actor and playwright known for his wildly popular portrayals of the fop—only reinforces this concept: by examining the physically variable body here as a kind of foppish and excessive incarnation of normalized masculinity and heterosexuality, it becomes apparent that Æsop cannot quite perform his gender or sexuality right. Æsop can be appreciated for his fables, and for his mind, but only if he is outside of the marriage plot. Learcus’s pleas to his daughter to ignore Æsop’s body and love him for his mind, to disconnect the one from the other, is eventually negated so that Euphronia can marry the handsome, able-bodied Oronces.

When we consider eighteenth-century depictions of Aesop in tandem with other men of the Georgian era, such as Alexander Pope and Samuel Johnson, we have a collection of culturally prominent men who adhered to the “monster/genius” trope. While this dyad is gendered as male, there are some eighteenth-century women writers who apply this cultural thematic to women of the era, too.

Sarah Scott’s and Jane Austen’s Gendering of Disability

The inability of Æsop’s biographers to get the reader to overlook Æsop’s corporeal strangeness in favor of his intellectual brilliance is reflected in Burney’s *Camilla*, published at the end of the eighteenth century. Due to *Camilla*’s grappling with the mind/body problem that eighteenth-century cultural representations of Æsop

attempt, but ultimately fail, to overturn, Burney joins a small sorority of eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century women writers who portray physically anomalous women as being especially capable of intuitive, virtuous, and intellectual personal development. Burney's application of the male-oriented disabled/genius theme to a young female character is significant, and in this way she follows Sarah Scott, who, as we have already seen, in her 1754 novel *Agreeable Ugliness* depicts a heroine whose plain looks enable the development of virtue and intellect. Scott's narrative endorses Hay's argument that an extraordinary appearance or weak constitution facilitates intelligence and a strong sense of morality. *Agreeable Ugliness* also reinforces a proto-feminist ethos by enabling the heroine to eventually marry the man whom she desires throughout the novel. Scott thus advocates the fulfilling of women's desire. The novel stipulates that female desire is to be explored and celebrated in relation to the narrator's "shocking" body, which, though initially an object of ridicule, finally becomes a key component of the narrator's subjectivity, housing a passion that is a force to be reckoned with by the end of the narrative.³

Jane Austen employs a similar depiction of bodily deformity and mental acuity in *Persuasion* (1816) through the figure of Mrs. Smith, Anne Elliot's former school companion. During Anne's visits to Mrs. Smith's humble lodgings in Bath, Anne learns that Mrs. Smith has undergone hard times since their school days as a consequence of a spendthrift husband who has left her widowed and in financial disarray. To compound matters, after her husband's death, Mrs. Smith contracts

³ *Agreeable Ugliness* ends with the narrator using her body as a defense against patriarchal mandate, much in the same way that Eugenia uses her body as a means of self-representation and critique against the male gaze in *Camilla*.

rheumatic fever, which impinges on her ability to walk. Though her financial and social status are precarious, and though she is confined to a modest living arrangement in Bath that she is unable to leave due to her crippled state, Mrs. Smith is credited with having an “elasticity of mind” and “that power of turning readily from evil to good.” (174-75). Moreover, Mrs. Smith’s intellectual and social intelligence allow her to play a key role in Anne’s epiphany regarding William Elliot, Anne’s would-be suitor, when she reveals to Anne that Mr. Elliot’s intentions to marry her are likely based on selfishness and not love. Mrs. Smith’s perceptiveness is the catalyst for Anne to make herself available to Frederic Wentworth, the novel’s hero and Anne’s eventual husband. *Persuasion*’s portrayal of Mrs. Smith as physically anomalous and intellectually and socially aware likens it to Scott’s *Agreeable Ugliness* and Burney’s *Camilla*. These women writers’ application of the brilliant mind/anomalous body dyad to female characters is suggestive of a widening understanding of how variably-embodied individuals may use their bodily imperfections to their intellectual advantage.

Enabling Eugenia Tyrold’s Mind

In a similar fashion to Scott and Austen, Burney creates a physically anomalous female character whose sharp intellect and moral compass enable her to come of age in praiseworthy fashion. While Eugenia Tyrold must confront her social reality as a public spectacle and, as Æsop must do, prove to those whom she encounters that she is not just a “little lame thing” to be mocked and denigrated, her intellectual development is often attributed to, or contingent upon, her variable body

(77). Where Eugenia also breaks relatively new ground—at least as far as the genre of the novel is concerned—is in her development into a Classical scholar and philosopher, highly unusual for a young woman for the time.⁴ Eugenia’s coming-of-age is based on the assumption that the crippled body and the philosophical mind are an ideal combination, and the fact that she is ultimately granted her sexual desire through her eventual marriage to Frederic Melmond underscores this novel’s endorsement of female desire in a late eighteenth-century context.

To offer a little background on Eugenia Tyrold’s remarkable character development within the novel, I would point out that Eugenia is a girl who comes of age in the novel along with her sister, the central heroine of the novel. *Camilla* is a literary manifestation of the kinds of fears that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu expresses in her letter to her daughter (which I cited in the introduction), directing attention to the gendered imperatives that women were forced to navigate in terms of their intellect and appearance.⁵ Like her sister, Eugenia has the misfortune of being under the care of

⁴ The Bluestockings, a group of genteel and aristocratic proto-feminist women from the mid to late-eighteenth century, are notable exceptions to this rule. Bluestocking intellectuals such as Elizabeth Montagu, the novelist Sarah Fielding, and especially the poet and translator Elizabeth Carter (who translated all of the works of Epictetus, the Stoic philosopher) among others, had profound understandings of the Classics and were apt translators of Greek texts to modern English. For more on the achievements of these remarkable women, see for example, Betty Rizzo’s *Companions Without Vows: Relationships Among Eighteenth-Century British Women* as well as Nussbaum’s *The Limits of the Human*, which in Part 1 explores the Bluestockings’ achievements, their intellectual coterie, and their fascinating views on disability. Burney herself learned some Greek language skills along with her close friend Hester Thrale from none other than Samuel Johnson. But Burney’s insecurities as a woman learning skills deemed appropriate for gentlemen caused her to regard a Classical education as something which she “would always dread to have known.” See Doody’s *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*, Chapter 7 (especially pages 240-43).

⁵ To cite this letter again, Montagu writes to her daughter to encourage her own daughter, “to conceal whatever learning she attains, with as much solicitude as she would hide crookedness or lameness: the parade of it can only serve to draw on her the envy, and consequently the

her neglectful and immature uncle, Sir Hugh, who is a baronet and the head of Cleves, a prominent country estate. The first pages of the novel provide a remarkable amount of foreshadowing for the remainder of the novel. It is also within the opening pages that Eugenia becomes permanently disfigured. When in his good humor Sir Hugh takes Eugenia and her siblings and cousins to a fair, where he exposes Eugenia to the smallpox virus. The illness merges shortly thereafter, when Sir Hugh drops Eugenia from the top of a teeter-toter and her grave injury gives way to a high fever. Her broken body subsequently becomes feverish and soon it is clear that smallpox is working its way through her undersized body.⁶ Eugenia endures a long, rough, and feverish bout with the disease before she recovers, at which point she is left with a scarred face and “one leg shorter than the other...her whole figure diminutive and deformed” (33). For Eugenia, as the aforementioned smallpox and teeter-toter incidents might attest, the primary obstacle to her maturation consists of learning how to navigate public spaces while her disfigurements are so visible to the spectating other. And yet the melancholia she feels when she becomes acutely aware of her body’s appearance is assuaged by the workings of her astute and highly educated mind. There are, for example, several moments in the novel in which Eugenia’s appearance inspires public ridicule or rejection from potential suitors, and yet Burney

most inveterate hatred, of all he and she fools, which will certainly be at least three parts in four of her acquaintance.”

⁶ Felicity Nussbaum cites extraordinary uses of the teeter-toter, or seesaw, at the turn-of-the-nineteenth century in England. “This now standard playground equipment,” Nussbaum writes, “was...sometimes curiously prescribed as treatment for patients to correct...deformity of the back.” Curiously, Nussbaum points out, Burney uses the seesaw as the means by which Eugenia’s back is disfigured in the first place. See Nussbaum’s *The Limits of the Human* (121-23).

describes Eugenia's Classical education as coming to her aid during these and other difficult moments.

Despite Eugenia's remarkable maturation, strengthened as it is by her infirmities, the novel implies that her physical disabilities may have been avoided if not for the carelessness of her uncle, Sir Hugh, whose negligence of Eugenia's health draws attention to the medical context out of which *Camilla* emerges. *Camilla*'s publication in 1796 registers the impending closure of a century of unprecedented growth for "popularized medicine," which benefits from Enlightenment's emphasis on circulating knowledge about the body, the rise of print culture, and the emergence of a consumer society (Porter 215-231). Increased awareness of foreign medical treatments also contributes to this trend in England. During her travels through Turkey in the 1720's, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu observed the widespread practice of smallpox inoculation, and her social influence brought about the establishment of this practice in England. Smallpox inoculation became commonplace in England throughout the remainder of the eighteenth century, especially in the countryside where mass treatments were more effective than in densely-populated cities and towns.⁷ In preparation for writing *Camilla*, Burney conducted extensive research on the contagious nature and disfiguring potential of the smallpox, which she uses as a plot device to mark Eugenia as a victim of Sir Hugh's neglect.⁸ At the beginning of the

⁷ In Georgian England, inoculation was extremely important because smallpox was such an enormous public health threat: excessively contagious, it could either cause death or leave a patient with permanent facial scarring (the latter of these scenarios, as we have seen, is the case for Eugenia). See, for example, Roy Porter, *Disease, Medicine and Society in England, 1550-1860* (41).

⁸ See Edward A. Bloom and Lilian D. Bloom's "Explanatory Notes" pertaining to page 22 from Oxford's 2009 edition of *Camilla* (931-932).

novel, Sir Hugh justifies his short-sighted decision to take the children to the fair despite young Eugenia's not having been inoculated: "she will be sure to have it when her time comes, whether she is moped up or no; and how did people do before these new modes of making themselves sick of their own accord?" (23). Sir Hugh's anachronistic perspective in this scene is startling given that inoculation was so widely considered an effective treatment at the time of this novel's publication. Hence, Eugenia's suffering is shown to be especially needless and the blame for her facial disfigurement can be placed squarely on the shoulders of her uncle, whose misunderstanding of such a prevalent practice underscores his naiveté and lack of education. Given the later eighteenth century's ever-increasing orientation toward these sorts of elite medical practices, and given the coalescence of Western Europe's investment in normalizing concepts such as 'wellness' and 'illness', Eugenia's physical appearance stands out as a glaring variation from the more conventional, 'healthy' bodies which surround her.⁹

Just as money and inheritance provide Eugenia with the paradoxical effects of agency and vulnerability, Eugenia's body causes her pain even as it is the catalyst for her intellectual achievement. Eugenia's facial and physical disfigurements, though the subject of spectacle in public spaces, prove to be vital for her development into a Classical scholar. And yet the extent to which Burney is making an explicit feminist

⁹ As Michel Foucault reminds us, "abnormality is still a form of regularity." Western Europe's medical discourse of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries firmly establishes the Enlightenment notion that the study of anomalous bodies offers insight into the workings of the natural world (*Birth of the Clinic* 35, 102).

political statement through Eugenia's education is certainly up for debate.¹⁰ Burney's gender politics, which vacillate between being feminist in the critical attention her fiction calls to the ill effects of patriarchy, and conservative in the reinforcement of the very social fabric that perpetuates these problems, may best be understood as moments of textual contradiction. Kristina Straub argues that, for Burney, "ideological gaps and contradictions...seem the result of simple honesty about her cultural circumstances as woman and writer rather than a deliberate attempt to subvert" (3).¹¹ In this same vein, Claudia Johnson labels Burney an "equivocal being" because of her public status as a woman writer in the 1790's, a time period in which British fiction is "bizarre and untidy" (1). Straub and Johnson both make important points about the ambiguity inherent in Burney's writing, a characteristic that is readily apparent in other women's fiction of this period, too. I would add, however, that it is viable to assess the ways in which Eugenia's story is, at the very least, able to reveal a great deal of anxiety about the ways that disabled women are treated, and at its most politically potent, capable of undermining assumptions about prescriptive gender roles and the ways in which they intersect with the lived reality of disabled women in the late eighteenth century. Despite these thematic concerns, the extent to which Burney is making an explicit feminist political statement in this novel is certainly up for

¹⁰ The fiction of Sarah Scott, as I have already suggested, also grants a fulfillment of desire for physically disabled women. See *Millenium Hall* (1764), which like *Agreeable Ugliness* explores female desire and deformity (though in less conventional ways, with female-female companionship considered a viable, pleasurable, and socially reformist alternative to heterosexual romance).

¹¹ Straub is less interested in creating a "coherent, consistent or political statement" about Burney and more concerned with "how literature makes and reflects cultural ideology" (3).

debate.¹² On this point, I would be remiss to not direct attention to the regularity with which Burney's fiction displays ideological contradictions of one kind or another--textual moments in which, for example, the narrative shifts from discomfort with cultural assumptions about gender and patriarchy to an upholding of these same values.

In *Camilla*, Eugenia's physical reality and its impact on her coming-of-age cannot be overstated. Her growth into a young woman consists of a series of corporeal mishaps and public mortifications in which she, like Æsop, attracts the contempt of ignorant, derisive spectators. The psychological torment that Eugenia experiences as a consequence of these encounters consists of a melancholy that is always associated in some way with her body. Burney's violent, comic approach to novel writing, a rarity among her contemporaries, allows for this mind/body connection to be imagined in the first place. As Margaret Doody notes, Burney employs elements of farce in her writing, with conventions such as violent horseplay and an exaggerated emphasis on the body making their way into her first novel, *Evelina*, while her subsequent novels *Cecilia*, *Camilla*, and *The Wanderer* also rely on these same tropes to varying degrees (48). As Doody remarks, Burney's fiction is "insistently physical," and *Camilla* is no exception to this rule (49). Eugenia is perhaps the best example of this: at the very beginning of the novel, she becomes the victim of her uncle's lack of circumspection—represented, true to farce, in comical terms—and bodily pain and

¹² The fiction of Sarah Scott, as I have already suggested, also grants a fulfillment of desire for women with anomalous bodies. See, for example, *Millenium Hall* (1764), which like *Agreeable Ugliness* explores female desire and deformity, though in less conventional ways, with female-female companionship considered a viable, pleasurable, and socially reformist alternative to heterosexual romance.

impairment are the immediate and long-term consequences for her. What is more, *Camilla*'s use of farce places Eugenia's disfigurement in the foreground of the novel's many plots and subplots, thereby making Eugenia, though just one character among many to populate Burney's sweeping domestic epic, an immensely important figure to scrutinize. Burney's unique writing style, with its emphasis on physicality and its allowance for interiority, allows for the development of Eugenia's keen intellect that eventually permits her to challenge longstanding assumptions about gender and the body.

In order to get to the crucial narrative moment in which she can make this critique, Eugenia must become educated as a philosopher, and it is her bodily impairments which make her the most capable of her numerous family members to take on the lessons in the Classics from the family tutor, Dr. Orkborne. In his hiring of Dr. Orkborne, Sir Hugh originally plans to make up for his stunted education by taking lessons alongside his nephew, Lionel, but his efforts fall short due to his own intellectual torpor and Lionel's insistent mockery of his uncle's fruitless attempts to retain the material that Dr. Orkborne teaches to them. After forfeiting his and Lionel's lessons, Sir Hugh sends Indiana, Eugenia's exceedingly fair cousin, to take lessons in their stead. However, Indiana's education never takes flight as a consequence of her fatuousness. With Sir Hugh, Lionel, and Indiana all having proven to be failures for a serious education due to their various ineptitudes, Eugenia's physical lassitude, along with her intellectual potential, define her as the ideal candidate for the lessons: "The little girl," Burney writes, "who was naturally of a thoughtful turn, and whose state of health deprived her of most childish amusements, was well contented with the

arrangement” (49). Here, Burney implies that Eugenia’s inability to partake in typical childhood activity designates her as the perfect student, since her mind was inherently of a “thoughtful turn” anyway. In this way, Eugenia learns to use her body for intellectual achievement, thereby making Eugenia a young woman with agency and not just a victim of her infirmities.

Eugenia’s education aids her decidedly difficult maturation process as she undergoes psychological agony due to others’ crude perceptions of her body’s irregularities. When Eugenia’s insipid cousin, Clermont Lynmere, rejects Sir Hugh’s arrangement for him to marry Eugenia, her education rescues her from melancholia: “This view of her unfortunate appearance cast her, at first, into a train of melancholy ideas, that would have fast led her to unhappiness...had not the natural philosophy of her mind come to her aid; or had her education been of a more worldly sort” (630). Eugenia’s serious and insular education, Burney implies, edifies Eugenia in the face of her cousin’s critique of her body. Eugenia later laments to her sister that Frederic Melmond, the young man whom she truly loves, is attracted to Indiana despite his discovery of Eugenia’s passionate feelings for him: “[i]s it possible I could ever--for a moment, for a single moment, suppose Melmond could willingly be mine! could see his exquisite susceptibility of every thing that is most perfect, yet persuade myself, he could take, by choice, the poor Eugenia for his wife! the mangled, deformed,--unfortunate Eugenia!” (722-23). Camilla calms Eugenia in this instance by reminding her of her “intrinsic worth,” and once again Eugenia has the intellectual perspective to pull herself out of her melancholia. Felicity Nussbaum remarks that Eugenia’s body allows her “opportunities to negotiate sexual difference” including her ability to

escape the “usual trivial feminalities” that beset women with ordinary bodies (*Limits of the Human* 125). Nussbaum’s analysis is apt because the narrative repeatedly draws the reader’s attention to Eugenia’s disfigurements, and yet the reader is also made aware of the ways in which her mind enables her to overcome the difficulties which result from the social stigma attached to those irregularities.

Eugenia’s education, it has been argued, is not without its drawbacks. As Claudia Johnson points out, Eugenia’s grounding in the Classics forms “the basis of [her] virtue and at the same time really does deform her” (152). Here, Johnson addresses some of the problems that would result from a young woman learning only the Classics. For one thing, since Eugenia has not been exposed to novels, a frivolous pursuit in Dr. Orkborne’s eyes, no doubt, she “cannot anticipate the machinations of fortune hunters” (152). Thus, Eugenia is not able to read between the ostensibly lovesick lines of Bellamy’s letters so that she can avoid subjecting herself to his dangerous advances. Perhaps, as Johnson suggests, if Eugenia were to have the chance to pursue the ‘feminine’ realm of novels, she would be able to correctly read Bellamy’s iterations of love for exactly what they are: the proclamations of an emotionally unstable and violent gold digger. But because Eugenia views everything in sweeping, epic terms—a product of her focus on the Classics—she cannot accurately perceive Bellamy’s avaricious pursuit of her. Her inability to read Bellamy’s letters and actions places Eugenia in an unstable position, and Bellamy takes advantage by sequestering her from a theatre and taking her up to Gretna Green where he forces marriage upon her. Because of her epic virtue, Eugenia refuses to

break her forced vows with Bellamy.¹³ And yet despite these shortcomings, Eugenia is, by the end of the novel, able to view her social abjection in relation to the epic narratives that she has read. Rather than view her education as problematic, I read it as that which, along with money, gives Eugenia a substantial amount of power.

Though Eugenia's body plays a significant role in her education, the narrative at times privileges mind over body. This is apparent, for example, when Eugenia's father, Mr. Tyrold, takes her and her sister on a guided field trip to show her a 'madwoman.' In this highly curious passage, Mr. Tyrold hopes to lift Eugenia's spirits by getting her to see her deformities as relatively moderate tribulations compared to what an intellectually impaired woman might endure. Upon arriving to the woman's front gate, all Eugenia enviously observes is that the woman is beautiful, at which point Mr. Tyrold starts his lesson to her about how beauty is short-lived: "[t]he happiness caused by personal attractions pays a dear after-price...To be wholly disregarded, after engaging every eye...to be unheard after monopolising every ear—can you, indeed, persuade yourself a change such as this demands but ordinary firmness?" (308). This initial lesson does not convince Eugenia, however, who responds, "I would purchase a better appearance at any price...the world could impose!" (308). It is not until Eugenia notices that the woman is intellectually impaired, as Johnson argues, that this lesson convinces her to not lament her state (154-55). After "turning round with a velocity that no machine could have exceeded," uttering frantically for a shilling, and "unresisting the scratches which tore her fine

¹³ As Doody points out, this is a "heroic view, but perhaps the wrong one" since Eugenia could have legally gotten out of the marriage (243).

skin” from a cat that she tries to “twine...round her neck with great fondling,” the madwoman makes sounds “that resembled nothing human” (310). Eugenia is finally convinced of her father’s “awful lesson”: the madwoman’s “shocking imbecility” convinces her to “submit, at least with calmness, to [her] lighter evils and milder fate” (310-11).¹⁴ George Haggerty argues that Mr. Tyrold gives Camilla “advice that works against her self-interest time and time again” and the same thing can be said about his counsel to Eugenia in this instance. Beyond being insensitive and unrealistic, Mr. Tyrold is unable to “understand, much less to feel, the torments of...female youth,” much less the torments of physically disabled female youth (*Unnatural Affections* 138). However ineffective Mr. Tyrold’s advice may be, Eugenia’s witnessing of the woman’s incoherent speech seems to make her see the relative ease of her own life, physical deformities and all. Here is an instance of the novel’s ostensible endorsement of a sound mind over a beautiful body.

This lesson, however, does not prove to stick with Eugenia, who by the end of the novel is still very cognizant of, and vocal about, her body. Her ability to articulate her abjection comes after Bellamy accidentally kills himself, which places Eugenia in a position of power as a widow. Mrs. Arlbery, a relatively young fashionable widow who acts as mentor to the heroine, Camilla, is for the majority of the novel the only character to critique the hero, Edgar Mandlebert, because he consistently misreads Camilla and holds her to impossible standards. By extension, Mrs. Arlbery’s critique

¹⁴ This scene has been the speculation of much criticism, but since this article confronts the question of physical disability, I am only considering the “madwoman” as she relates to Eugenia’s self-realization. For examples of readings that do consider this scene in depth, see Patrick McDonagh, *Idiocy: A Cultural History* (Liverpool, 2008), or Margaret Doody, *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*.

is aimed at the patriarchal structure which repeatedly impacts Camilla and Eugenia in such appalling ways. But Eugenia eventually becomes the other widowed social critic, and her education allows her to evaluate her various, terrible life experiences and to write her memoirs with such sensibility, insight, and persuasion:

‘Ye, too, O lords of the creation, mighty men! Impute not to native vanity the repining spirit with which I lament the loss of beauty; attribute not to the innate weakness of my sex, the concern I confess for my deformity; nor to feminine littleness of soul, a regret of which the true source is to be traced to your own bosoms, and springs from your own tastes: for the value you yourselves set upon external attractions, your own neglect has taught me to know; and the indifference with which you consider all else, your own duplicity has instructed me to feel.’ (905)

This passage contains allusions to the sufferings of Helen at the hands of Homer, demonstrating Eugenia’s personal and critical response to Helen’s supposed narcissism (Doody 240-43). Hence, Eugenia’s critique calls attention to the Classical reading that she has undertaken in her schooling. Eugenia’s message in this passage indicates her proto-feminist ethos, facilitated as it is by her education. In this sense, Eugenia uses her education as a means to self-empowerment through her trenchant critique of the male gaze to which she has been so harshly and unfairly subjected throughout the novel. Eugenia, at long last, recognizes that the burden of not fitting in, of being perceived as a “lame duck” in public, is not her fault. The source of the guilt, she proclaims, is the “value” which men place “upon external attractions,” another way of saying that she is not vain for being self-conscious, as Richard Steele or even her own father, for example, would argue.¹⁵ Since men have set the social terms by

¹⁵ Steele’s “Ugly Club” entry reinforces this point. See Steele, “On Personal Defects; Proposals for an Ugly Club.” Also, Mr. Tyrold tells Eugenia that “A too acute sensibility of

which women are to be evaluated, the blame for Eugenia's social and psychological abjection is to be directed at men. After all, Mr. Tyrold's lesson about beauty is not taken to heart, and his intention of making Eugenia overlook her deformities does not resonate with her.

Another aspect of this passage that I would like to emphasize is the manner in which Eugenia's formal and experiential forms of education have allowed her to express this powerful critique. Eugenia's sexual terror at the hands of Bellamy, her endurance of the taunts of strangers, and her cousin Clermont's rejection of his arranged marriage with her, are all traumatic life experiences for which her formal education never could prepare her. Eugenia's education does, however, enable her to pen her critique of her liminality. Eugenia is capable of discerning that the "duplicity" of men—whose overvaluing of female beauty and repudiation of extraordinary female bodies—is that which has "instructed" her to "lament" her situation. Her interrogation of this oppression reveals that the true culprit in all of this is men, whose sexualizing gaze has turned her into a spectacle in public places. The fact that Eugenia's portrait is to appear in her autobiography further underscores the connection between the workings of her mind and body. In this way, Eugenia, like Scott's agreeably ugly narrator, employs her body, which moves from being an object of scorn, ridicule, and sexual aggression to a subject that condemns men's marginalization of physically disabled women. Eugenia's ability to couch this critique is best understood through her position as a widow at this point in the narrative. *Camilla* demonstrates that the

personal defects, is one of the greatest weaknesses of self-love," though he mistakenly cites Addison, not Steele (302).

autonomy available for a widowed woman in the right social circumstances could be extraordinary, as is the case for Mrs. Arlbery.

Mrs. Arlbery's Merry Widowhood

Mrs. Mittin, who turns out to be the bane of Camilla's stay in Southampton and thereafter by pushing expensive clothes on her, thereby running her into debt and potential ruin, reveals a significant point about women's marital status—or lack thereof—in the eighteenth century. In her response to Miss Dannel's accusation that she “must be monstrous old,” Mrs. Mittin says, “Do you know for all I call myself Mrs., I'm single... The reason I'm called Mrs. is... because I'd a mind to be taken for a young widow, on account everybody likes a young widow; and if one is called Miss, people being so soon to think one is an old maid, that it's quite disagreeable” (469). Old maidishness means something else entirely from widowhood in Mrs. Mittin's estimation, that is “being a cripple, and blind, and deaf, and dumb, and slaving, and without a tooth” (468). Here, Mrs. Mittin uses the language of deformity and old age to illustrate the distinctions between a single woman—often assigned the pejorative terms “spinster” or “old maid”—and a widow; in the process, she shows a clear understanding of the social stigma aimed at unmarried women in this era. As girls grow into young women and become eligible for marriage, they can incur disgrace from their community for not smoothly traversing the often-fraught transition from ‘daughter’ to ‘wife’—an issue that Mr. Tyrold comments upon in his sermon to Camilla: “Woman... begins her career by being involved in all the worldly accidents of a parent; she continues it by being associated in all that may environ a husband... the

difficulties arising from this doubly appendant state are augmented by the next to impossibility, that the first dependance should pave the way for the ultimate” (356). Mr. Tyrold acknowledges the difficulty of making a fluid transition between these “doubly appendant states,” but he goes on to tell Camilla that it is her duty to exercise “good sense and delicacy” and to “struggle” against herself as she “would struggle against an enemy” in order to land herself in a propitious marriage (358). Mrs. Mittin—shrewd character that she is—recognizes that she has not passed this difficult social litmus test and therefore sees the usefulness of switching her title from the much-maligned “Miss” to the acceptable (and therefore profitable, no doubt) “Mrs,” thereby enabling her to pass as a young widow. Widows, as Mrs. Mittin knows, are granted a prominent place in their communities which single women could never achieve.

As we have already seen in Sarah Scott’s *Agreeable Ugliness*, widows indeed held a great deal of autonomy during the eighteenth century. The widow, having survived her husband, has an out from compulsory heterosexuality, and a possible way in to alternative modes of kinship. Freed from the strictures of heterosexual courtship and marriage, the widow may function independently, capable of forming affective bonds at will while holding the enormous advantage of being respected in the eyes of her community. This certainly is the case for Mrs. Arlbery, who is constantly surrounding herself with whomever she pleases, characters of either sex, from fawning military officers to the fop Sir Sedley Clerendel, and indeed to Camilla herself. Mrs. Arlbery is the uncontested ruler of her household, as Froide would label her, an “ever-married woman” who can do as she pleases. Additionally, “the splendor of her talents

equaled the singularity of her manners” making her above any kind of reproach (89). In juxtaposing Mrs. Arlbery’s characterization with the historical terms of widowhood described by Amy Froide, it is no wonder that Mrs. Arlbery is able to say so confidently to Camilla, “You are made a slave in a moment by the world, if you don’t begin life by defying it. Take your way, follow your own humour, and you and the world will both go on just as well, as if you ask its will and pleasure for everything you do, and want, and think” (246). Camilla might have something to say to this as a “never-married woman,” namely that such possibilities are unattainable for those who share her unmarried status. And yet Mrs. Arlbery, a confident, beautiful widow of fashion, reserves the right to flout the patriarchal norms that would restrict never-married women in order to build her own affective bonds. One of the relationships that she chooses to develop is her mentorship of Camilla Tyrold.

This mentorship—marked by Mrs. Arlbery’s persistent courtship of Camilla—is disruptive to the novel’s romance plot. Mrs. Arlbery, as I have demonstrated above, has a flawless reputation, and her power is described in vivid terms: “the commanding air of her countenance, and the easiness of her carriage, spoke a confirmed internal assurance, that her charms and her power were absolute, wherever she thought their exertion worth her trouble” (86). Clearly, Camilla is “worth her trouble” as the two immediately find each other appealing. Camilla is “wholly engrossed by” Mrs. Arlbery when she first enters the ball, while Mrs. Arlbery, upon laying eyes on Camilla for the first time the next morning, is described as holding “a glass to her eye, which she directed without scruple toward Camilla...[and] said, ‘who have you got there?’” to Sir Sedley (74, 87). Mrs. Arlbery subsequently pursues Camilla with the

ardent passion of a suitor and in the process builds a mentoring relationship with her that rivals Edgar's own paternalistic pursuit of Camilla. Claudia Johnson is discerning in her reading of Mrs. Arlbery's interaction with Camilla, which she argues, "has all the earmarks of seduction" (162). Johnson points out that there are a number of textual moments that reveal the physical intimacy shared between Mrs. Arlbery and Camilla. Johnson's examples certainly support her claim, but above all, I argue, Camilla is able to feel an edification of self when she is in Mrs. Arlbery's presence, a sensation that she rarely feels when Edgar is near, making evidence of physical exchange with Mrs. Arlbery less important than the dialogue they share and the pleasure the two feel in one another's company.

Mrs. Arlbery's ability to lift Camilla's spirits, however, is often limited or complicated by the melancholia and shame that Camilla feels because of Edgar's continual misreading of her actions, and when Mrs. Arlbery does manage to break through Camilla's gloom, it is often only to provide a momentary glimmer of light and laughter. Despite these impediments, Mrs. Arlbery continuously attempts to lead Camilla down the path to independence that she herself has trod, and the momentary glimpses of happiness that Camilla experiences in this seduction cast a certain amount of doubt on the heterosexual courtship between Camilla and Edgar. Take for example Camilla's delight in becoming Mrs. Arlbery's guest and friend, which is apparent during her first visit to the Grove. After her brother, Lionel forces her to break her promise to Edgar to not visit Mrs. Arlbery, which causes Camilla to feel a great deal of shame—as she usually does because of Edgar's limited understanding of her, Camilla is buoyed up in her stay at Mrs. Arlbery's household upon witnessing "the

ridiculous, yet playful willfulness with which she saw Mrs. Arlbery send every one upon her errands, yet object to every one performed” and observing the “whimsical gaiety” with which Mrs. Arlbery’s household is operated. As she embarks for Cleves after her short stay in Mrs. Arlbery’s household, Camilla’s “concern...was completely changed into pleasure...and she returned home at night with spirits all revived, and eloquent in praise of her new favourite” (257). To compare Camilla in this part of the text with just about any of her interactions with Edgar reveals the seductive quality that Johnson is so right to point out. Contrast the above passage detailing Camilla’s visit to the Grove with her taking leave of Edgar “mournfully” on page 342 or the mortification and “disappointment” she repeatedly feels in Tunbridge-Wells as Edgar observes her every word and deed to assure himself and his own mentor, the misogynistic Dr. Marchmont, of her worthiness (445). Camilla’s abjection is most apparent in her awkward, stumbling encounters with Edgar, while her relationship with Mrs. Arlbery gives her fleeting moments of pleasure.

Another textual instance in which Camilla experiences the momentary joy of being in Mrs. Arlbery’s presence occurs while the two spend six weeks in Tunbridge-Wells together. As Camilla’s guardian, Mrs. Arlbery takes it upon herself to show Camilla a bit of the world, “to restore her spirits” from the abjection she feels because of her frustrating predicament with Edgar (366). At one point during this sojourn, they pay a visit to Sir Sedley Clarendel’s lodgings, and Mrs. Arlbery and her dear friend, Sir Sedley, engage in a “discourse...so whimsical” that Camilla is finally “amused, and willing to encourage a sensation so natural to her, after a sadness till now, for so long a time unremitting, once more heard the sound of her own laughter” (407).

Camilla is not by nature such a sad young woman, she has been suffering at the hands of her tyrannical governess, Miss Margland, whose injunction to Camilla to no longer heed the attentions and advice of Edgar so that her cousin, Indiana, and Edgar might go forward with their nuptial plans, has troubled Camilla's relationship with Edgar. Add to that Edgar's continual observation and misreading of Camilla, and you have this "unremitting" "sadness" that is finally eradicated by Mrs. Arlbery's witty conversation. This pleasure, however, is short-lived, as Camilla's laughter is "strangely checked" by a "sigh, so deep that it might rather be called a groan, made its way through the wainscot of the next apartment" (407). The sigh, it turns out, comes from Edgar who, upon hearing Camilla's laughter, experiences a "depth of...concern" which "drew from him a sigh that was heard into the next apartment" and moves Mrs. Arlbery to later say, "Bless me, Mr. Mandlebert! Are you the ghost we heard sighing in that room yonder?" (409). Edgar's haunting 'sigh' which startles Mrs. Arlbery and bemuses Camilla is the threat of normative domesticity, a stark reminder to Camilla and the reader that she will not be able to escape the dramatic tension of the romance plot which inevitably reverts Camilla back to her abjection.

Edgar's concern for Camilla's worthiness brings about his disapprobation of Mrs. Arlbery and the alternative path for Camilla that her philosophy eventually represents. Beyond that, Edgar feels threatened by Mrs. Arlbery because she is his rival for Camilla. For instance, Camilla views her initial proposed visit to Mrs. Arlbery as an opportunity to have some much-needed space from her own family: "Again, therefore, she planned a visit to Mrs. Arlbery...she could think of no other place to which the whole party would not accompany her; and to avoid them and their

communications, for however short a space of time, was now her sole aim” (154). Edgar, however, puts a stop to her intention by showing up to Cleves just as she is ready to leave to give her the injunction to “postpone her visit” until he has learned more about Mrs. Arlbery, to confirm the spotlessness of her reputation and validate the connection (155). Edgar’s fear of losing control of Camilla is what is truly worrisome to him, and his wariness of Mrs. Arlbery’s “flightiness of manners” continues throughout Camilla’s visit to Tunbridge, where he follows her around and watches her every move. He is unable to obtain Mrs. Arlbery’s consent to join their party, and he and Mrs. Arlbery are described as being at odds with each other: “they had both too much penetration not to perceive how wide either was from being the favourite of the other” (481). Soon thereafter Edgar laments Camilla’s connection with Mrs. Arlbery and her charge, Sir Sedley: “Mrs Arlbery, which he had so early opposed, and which seemed eternally destined to lead her into measures and conduct most foreign to his approbation” (489). Edgar is opposed to Mrs. Arlbery because her influence on Camilla has the potential to disrupt his awkward pursuit of her.

Edgar’s glaring shortcomings demonstrate that Burney is interested in creating multi-faceted individuals that are more true-to-life than typical heroic figures. Margaret Doody refers to Burney’s use of free indirect discourse as “style indirect libre,” and she claims that Burney uses this literary technique for ironic purposes, but also to curry sympathy, so that “characters...become less heroic and more fallible” (257). Through this lens, Edgar is less of a traditional hero of the novel and more of a reflection of English men at the time that Burney wrote this. He is a “mixed character,” as are all of the other characters in *Camilla*. Edgar’s insistent interrogation

of Camilla's improper visitations to Sir Sedley's lodgings, for example, or his wariness of Mrs. Arlbery, whom he views a "chaperon so far from past her prime, so coquettish, so alluring, and still so pretty" makes him almost unlikeable as a character (408). The reader, however, also feels sympathy for Edgar's inability to understand the circumstances surrounding her visit to Sir Sedley.

Despite Edgar's prominent role in the novel, he is often overshadowed by Mrs Arlbery, and the two are often locked in a competitive battle for Camilla's attention. For her part, Mrs. Arlbery resents Edgar's incessant judging of Camilla and tries to counsel Camilla to ignore his punctilious observation and to consider that she might have other options: "Mandlebert is a creature whose whole composition is a pile of accumulated punctilios. He will spend his life in refining away his own happiness: but do not let him refine away yours" (484). Again, Mrs. Arlbery is concerned for Camilla's happiness, something that she understands to be difficult for a young woman in her unmarried predicament. It is Edgar's "accumulated punctilios" that threaten Camilla's ability to feel happiness and pleasure, to secure the kind of joy that Mrs. Arlbery evidently feels and conveys throughout the novel, that which she so evidently would like Camilla to feel for herself. Mrs. Arlbery is also convinced of Edgar's thorough dislike of herself: "you may assure yourself," she tells Camilla, "he hates me. There is a certain spring in our propensities to one another, that involuntarily opens and shuts in almost exact harmony, whether of approbation or antipathy" (368). Again, the language of happiness, hatred, and jealousy are apparent in Burney's juxtaposition of Edgar with Mrs. Arlbery. In lieu of another male suitor, Burney at least considers the possibility of Mrs. Arlbery's pathway to female independence. The

configuration of tripartite desire among Camilla, Mrs. Arlbery, and Edgar continues throughout the first three volumes of the novel. Even Sir Sedley's sudden entrance into the marriage plot at Tunbridge-Wells is orchestrated by Mrs. Arlbery: "The only sacrifice I demand from you," she tells Sir Sedley, "is a little attention; the only good I am at for her, is to open her eyes, which have now a film before them, and to let her see that Mandlebert has no other pre-eminence, than that of being the first young man with whom she became acquainted" (367). Burney's decision to juxtapose Mrs. Arlbery with Edgar sets them up as rivals for Camilla's attention.

Mrs. Arlbery is persistent in her courtship of Camilla and unflinching in her critique of Edgar. Perhaps Mrs. Arlbery's most accurate portrayal of Edgar comes when she pinpoints his behavior at Tunbridge, his tendency to keep to the shadows to observe Camilla's every move and word:

He is a watcher; and a watcher, restless and perturbed himself, infests all he pursues with uneasiness. He is without trust, and therefore without either courage or consistency. To-day he may be persuaded you will make all his happiness; to-morrow, he may fear you will give him nothing but misery. Yet it is not that he is jealous of any other; 'tis of the object of his choice he is jealous, lest she should not prove good enough to merit it. (482)

Edgar Mandlebert is assuredly "perturbed" by the misogynistic counsel he receives from Dr. Marchmont, who convinces Edgar to continually test Camilla to prove her worthiness for marriage. Tainted by his own failed marriages, Dr. Marchmont perturbs his charge, Edgar, who in turn makes Camilla's life miserable in his watching of her. Mrs. Arlbery provides the one word of counsel that goes against the grain of the novel's marriage plot, and though her strategy for Camilla is eventually trumped by Camilla's eventual union with Edgar at the novel's conclusion, Mrs. Arlbery is never

thoroughly condemned, either. As Doody points out, Mrs. Arlbery is an anagrammatic representation of Burney's maiden name, D'Arblay, and even Burney's sister recognized the sharp wit that Mrs. Arlbery's character takes from Burney herself. To consider the large canvas that Burney uses in this novel is also to discover a number of ways of being that might be consonant with normative domesticity. Mrs. Arlbery is one such option for Camilla and the reader to consider.

Mrs. Arlbery's pursuit of Camilla is made manifest in a number of ways, but by the end of her role in the novel, Burney makes explicit Mrs. Arlbery's desire to recreate Camilla in her own image. Upon revealing to Mrs. Arlbery that she has rejected Lord Valhurst, an older aristocrat who pursues her in earnest in Southampton, Mrs. Arlbery both reproaches Camilla and highlights her intention for Camilla to follow her in her path to affluent widowhood:

‘Tis such a little while that same love lasts, even when it is begun with, that you have but a few months to lose, to exactly upon a par with those who set out with all the quivers of Cupid, darting from heart to heart. He has still fortune enough left for a handsome settlement; you can't help outliving him, and then, think but how delectable would be your situation! Freedom, money at will, the choice of your own friends, and the enjoyment of your own humour. (779)

Mrs. Arlbery's exemption from heterosexuality is evident in this passage. Her desire for Camilla to follow her along this alternative path is marked by her disavowal of the passion that exists between ardent lovers, something which Camilla would have to forego were she to accept Lord Valhurst's proposal. Mrs. Arlbery shows an unremitting interest in Camilla, but it is her desire to mentor and bring Camilla along to independence and the "enjoyment of [her] own humour" that contests Edgar Mandlebert's ambivalent pursuit of Camilla. Though Camilla never really considers

Mrs. Arlbery's counsel here, she and the reader are both well aware of the "delectable" life that Mrs. Arlbery is able to lead because of her financial and legal freedom and her ability to create her own family. The life of the merry widow is laid out in no uncertain terms: freedom, wealth, friendships outside of the nuclear family, and the ability to pursue one's own whims. These are all aspects of life that would otherwise be unattainable to Camilla. The only way that Camilla could possibly obtain this life is through widowhood. Mrs. Arlbery's advice may be mercenary, but it is also evidence of women's limited possibilities and brings along with it uncertainty of the romance plot.

Mrs. Arlbery represents a cheerful vision of widowhood, to be sure, but this should not detract from an understanding of the ambivalence with which English society treated widows in the Georgian period. As Amanda Vickery affirms, "On the one hand, the poor widow was a fitting object of charity. It was in the treatment of widows, orphans and aliens that God gauged the moral fibre of his people. On the other, the merry widow represented a potent cocktail of sexual experience, financial independence and personal autonomy" (218). Mrs. Arlbery's fashionable place in society and refusal to share the spotlight with any of her family or friends mark her as the "merry widow" and not the "object of charity." Her sprightliness and independence are characteristics that she does not mean to see diminished by anyone, including her own niece, Ms. Dannel, for whom she agrees to host a breakfast to celebrate her retirement from boarding school. Initially, Mrs. Dannel requests a ball at her aunt's house, but Mrs. Arlbery refuses by declaring that "she never gave any entertainments in which she did not expect to play the principal part herself. It was

vastly well to see others shine superior, she said, elsewhere, but she could not be so accommodating under her own roof” (258-259). Here, there is further evidence of Mrs. Arlbery’s wit, but there is also recognition that she is the head of the household, not to be questioned or diminished by anyone. Here, Mrs. Arlbery exhibits the “personal autonomy” and independence to which Vickery refers, and she does so by claiming a place in the spotlight.

Mrs. Arlbery’s friendship with Sir Sedley Clerendel is further evidence of a widow’s affective possibilities, and their dialogue often conveys a camp sensibility that Johnson has identified as “an enjoyment of sentimental excess when it is not bounded by domesticity” (147). Mrs. Arlbery and Sir Sedley are portrayed as engaging in playful, exaggerated dialogue. Take for example their exchange at the public breakfast early on in the novel: “O! are you there?,” Mrs. Arlbery says to Sir Sedley, “What rural deity could break your rest so early?” Sir Sedley’s response is both excessive and comic: “None...I am invulnerably asleep at this very moment! In the very centre of the morphetic dominions. But how barbarously late you are! I should never have come to this vastly horrid place before my ride, if I had imagined you could be so excruciating” (86-87). Note Sir Sedley’s use of “vastly horrid” to describe the location of the breakfast, and “excruciating” to describe Mrs. Arlbery’s tardy appearance, both comments flouting polite speech. Camilla, listening in on their conversation, is “struck with a jargon of which she could not suspect two persons to be capable” (87). Camilla’s inability to comprehend their “jargon” is a consequence of her inexperience, and it is also evidence of the fact that she is firmly held in the grip of the romance plot that drives the narrative forward, while Mrs. Arlbery and Sir Sedley

orbit this main plot with their quirky, campy behavior which may mark people of fashion who are not subjected to the strictures of heterosexuality. Their friendship, in other words, exists outside of the romance plot and its insistence on normative domesticity and can therefore sustain a kind of language that is incomprehensible to Camilla, the novel's heroine and centerpiece.

Sir Sedley's own pursuit of Camilla disrupts his role as effeminate fop, but it only comes about when Mrs. Arlbery orders him to help Camilla forget about Edgar. In her own words: "You are just agreeable enough to annul her puerile fascination, yet not interesting enough to involve her in any new danger" (368). In considering this, Sir Sedley yields to Mrs. Arlbery's power over him: "My blood chills or boils at your command. Every sentence is a new climate. You waft me from extreme to extreme, with a rapidity absolutely dizzying. A balloon is a broad-wheeled wagon to you" (368). Again, more of Sir Sedley's exaggerated language reveals both humor and his ludicrous submission to Mrs. Arlbery. However, Sir Sedley eventually becomes a masculine suitor of Camilla when he rescues her from some startled horses who are running a phaeton in which she is trapped down a steep hill: "He received, indeed, from this adventure, almost every species of pleasure of which his mind was capable. His natural courage, which he had nearly annihilated, as well as forgotten, by the effeminate part he was systematically playing, seemed to rejoice again in being exercised" (404). This marks the beginning of his courtship of Camilla, which includes his lending her 200 pounds for the benefit of Lionel's debts. As George Haggerty argues, Sir Sedley follows the trajectory of Burney's fops from her previous novels, as he "turns from dispassionate fop to sexual aggressor" (*Unnatural Affections*

148). Eventually, of course, Camilla chooses to continue her awkward courtship of Edgar over Sir Sedley, and he is phased out of the narrative, but his place in the novel as Camilla's suitor is, as I see it, an extension of Mrs. Arlbery herself.

That Burney is ambivalent about these possibilities for women is also true, for in the end Mrs. Arlbery, like Sir Sedley, is phased out in favor of Camilla's eventual reunion with her nuclear family and subsequent marriage to Edgar. Mrs. Arlbery's worldly philosophy is eradicated in favor of the conventional romance plot. Camilla finally recognizes that her relationships with Mrs. Arlbery and Mrs. Berlinton are perhaps unsuitable for a young woman such as herself who has had limited life experience, and she admits to "the danger, for one so new in the world, of chusing friends distinct from those of her family; and voluntarily promised, during her present season of inexperience, to repose the future choice of her connections, where she could never be happy without their approvance" (903). Here, Burney's wariness of friendship outside of the nuclear family for young women is apparent, and Camilla's eventual marriage goes some way to restore normative domesticity. However, that Burney opens *Camilla's* plot up to so many possibilities—Mrs. Arlbery's charm, wit, power, and seduction of Camilla prominent among them—ensures that this resolution is by far a neat and tidy affirmation of heterosexuality. Further evidence of Burney's awareness and wariness of the powers of widowhood is demonstrated by Eugenia's rise to autobiographer at the end of the novel. As I have pointed out, it is Eugenia, not Camilla, who comes to understand the way in which widows can exercise power in the public sphere. Eugenia's various disabilities are in no way detractions from her noble,

philosophical way of life, in fact, quite the opposite is true: her disabilities facilitate her intellectual development.

Conclusion: Historicizing the Cultural Uncertainty over the Disfigured Body in the Late Eighteenth Century

To complicate the novel's concluding take on deformity and its relationship with the mind, Burney marries Eugenia off to Melmond as one of the novel's several happy marital endings. Burney subsequently describes Eugenia's various physical impairments as being invisible to her interlocutors, a description that flies in the face of Eugenia's writings. While Eugenia's marriage to Melmond appears a favorable one to her on a number of levels (Melmond is, after all, the young man whom she has desired throughout much of the novel) there is a sense in which the narrative abandons its criticism of the male gaze and the ways that it alienates women with physical defects. Burney writes of Eugenia on the penultimate page of the novel, "Where her countenance was looked at, her complexion was forgotten; while her voice was heard, her figure was unobserved; where her virtues were known, they seemed but to be enhanced by her personal misfortunes" (912). Here, Burney implies that it is up to visibly impaired individuals to overcome their tribulations through their development of virtue and intelligence, attributes which will supposedly help those with ordinary bodies to overlook unusual physical appearances. Burney also suggests that the male gaze is something that can be sidestepped, an idea which Eugenia's autobiography roundly dismisses. And yet again, the novel is making a concerted effort to disassociate the mind from the body, with Eugenia's voice and virtue overriding her various defects. The ending contradicts other parts of the novel (most notably

Eugenia's memoirs, quoted above) and this inconsistency leaves us to wonder at Eugenia's future happiness and place within aristocratic society. The fact that she is married off to Melmond, who is often "enfeebled...by a tender sensibility" just as Eugenia is "enfeebled" by her various physical defects, suggests that Burney may be discomfited leaving Eugenia as a young, wealthy widow, instead opting to marry her off to a highly sentimental young man (699). The novel's depiction of Mrs. Arlbery, after all, underscores the threat that widows pose to normative hetero-domesticity. Might the narrative's pairing of "enfeebled"—in Eugenia and Melmond—reveal that, for Burney, a possible solution to the crisis of gender in the 1790's—characterized by the lack of "a distinct gender site" for women—is both a return to sentimentalized masculinity and a movement toward a more advanced form of education for women?

Camilla's contradictory concluding take on Eugenia, however, muddles any coherent answer to this question because it registers uncertainty over the mind/body connection and the roles of gender and sensibility in the Age of Revolution. Though *Camilla* makes several attempts to value Eugenia's mind and disregard her body, the narrative is not so clear in its endorsement of this theme because it reveals at various points that Eugenia's mind and body in fact work in tandem—the disabled body, as it were, enabling the apt mind. Eugenia's writings demonstrate to the reader that she finally comes of age by calling attention to and critiquing a very real and harrowing social plight faced by women who were visibly physically impaired in one way or another at the time that Burney wrote this novel, and yet this critique is subsequently softened by Eugenia's marriage, and her "forgotten" and "unobserved" defects. After considering this and other textual inconsistencies from *Camilla* and *The Fables of*

Æsop, we might take note of the cultural uncertainty over physical disability in the late eighteenth century that is marked by, on the one hand, the attempt to celebrate the virtuous, intellectual, and philosophical mind while looking past the crippled body, and on the other hand an inability—for Frances Burney and *Æsop*'s biographers, anyway—to adequately satisfy this endeavor.

Part of Chapter Four is a reprint of an article as it will appear in the forthcoming peer reviewed journal *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation*. University of Pennsylvania Press, Spring, 2015 (55.1). The dissertation author was the primary investigator and author of this paper.

Conclusion: The Imperfect Body Made Legible; or, where to go from here?

Throughout my dissertation, I have attempted to draw connections between archival materials—Sarah Scott’s letters, *The Ugly Club Manuscript*, eighteenth-century biographies about Aesop, and natural philosophical texts about deafness, among other things—to a handful of female-authored novels from the Georgian period. It has been my objective to use some of my archival findings to assist in illuminating the underlying themes which these novels convey about physical disability, deafness, and creative, non-conformist kinds of friendship, kinship, and sexuality. I have hopefully demonstrated that, in their own ways, Eliza Haywood, Sarah Scott, and Frances Burney portray the deformed body not as an impediment, nor as an indelible indicator of asexuality or pity, but as an opportunity for feminist and intellectual endeavor, extraordinary feats, and moral depth. These authors all rely on the notion that nature compensates for impaired senses and limbs. This compensation may come in the form of superior spiritual and physical strength, as it does for Duncan Campbell; residence in a blissful, productive estate, as is the case for the disabled and physically anomalous in *Millenium Hall*; enhanced will-power and mental acuity in the face of patriarchal authority, as may be seen in *Agreeable Ugliness*; or scholarly excellence that ultimately manifests itself as feminist critique, as Eugenia’s character elucidates in *Camilla*. These literary personas all connect in powerful and meaningful ways with others, and they do so in ways that complicate the able-bodied expectations and assumptions of those writers—Wycherley, Montagu, Bacon, and Cibber—who I briefly survey in the Introduction. In contrast to those satires, Haywood, Scott, and

Burney propose that physical disability and sexual desire—even normative sexuality and gender—are not at odds with one another. The imperfect body, these novels reveal, is a sexually desirable, intellectually propitious inevitability.

More broadly, this project is part of relatively nascent form of eighteenth-century critical inquiry. Lennard Davis, Helen Deutsch, and Felicity Nussbaum have all made important contributions to the field of disability studies, and as my numerous citations to these thinkers should convey, their work has been facilitative for my own research and arguments. However, as this dissertation hopefully also makes clear, there is a great deal which remains to be done. “Queer Deformities” contributes to the field of disability studies by demonstrating some of the complex cultural imbrications of disability, queer genders and sexualities, and, to a smaller extent, race and empire in early English novels. It also provides something of a genealogical study for Robert McRuer’s work on disability and sex, which is rooted in contemporary U.S. culture. Moreover, “Queer Deformities” challenges existing scholarship on embodiment in the Georgian period by demonstrating that certain writers and thinkers regarded people with physical disabilities as culturally relevant, important figures, and not simply as monstrous freaks to be laughed at or put on display. By examining the interplay between queerness and disability, this dissertation will, I hope, contribute to current academic conversations within the literary histories of disability and sexuality.

Of course, this project is by no means complete. As I begin to survey the long road to book publication, I have some ideas about how I might proceed. I may begin, for example, by expanding the chronological scope of the project, either moving further back into the seventeenth century, or onward into the early nineteenth century.

Since my project is thus far a study in literary texts, I regard the early English novel form as one of the organizing principles of my work. The novelists from my study all influenced to varying degrees the literature of the iconic Jane Austen, who wrote her now famous novels during the first two decades after the turn-of-the nineteenth century during the Regency Period. This dissertation rarely remarks upon Austen, and perhaps for good reason: she has already been written about so extensively. On the other hand, it would be interesting to consider Austen's own contribution to the English history of deafness and disability: it seems she knew how to sign. Austen's second-oldest brother, George, had a number of intellectual and emotional impairments and was deaf.¹ Even though there is no existing correspondence between Jane and George and George was removed from the family to live with an uncle, she must have learned how to communicate with him, for in an 1808 letter, Austen mentions having talked "with my fingers" to a deaf stranger at a social gathering (Le Faye 347). Austen's ability to communicate via sign with someone previously unacquainted with her is historically significant because it gives context for the standardization of British Sign Language. As Stone and Woll argue, up until the establishment of schools for the deaf in 1760 and the standardization of sign language which occurred in the decades and century after that, deaf people learned to communicate with family, loved ones, and neighbors through a system that sign language historians call "home sign"—or gestures made up by and negotiated between

¹ Claire Tomalin speculates that George Austen may have suffered from cerebral palsy. I wonder, however, how much of his intellectual and physical impairments may be attributed to the fact that he was pre-lingually deaf. If pre-lingually deaf children are not engaged and educated in their early years, this has a significant impact on their ability to think abstractly and to be socialized. See, for example, Oliver Sacks' *Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*.

the deaf individual and his or her intimates (228). Jane Austen's ability to sign with a previously unknown man reveals that she may not have only understood how to communicate with her brother, George, but that she may have understood a form of sign language that was becoming standardized through the growth of schools for the deaf. I would argue that Austen's signing capability is yet another indicator of how the development of modern forms of disability, especially deafness, are so intimately tied to literary culture. As I argue in Chapter Four, Jane Austen creates a very sharp, intuitive cripple in the figure of Mrs. Smith. Undoubtedly, her interactions with disabled people such as her brother, George, had an impact on the way that she characterized Mrs. Smith in her novel. By including Austen in my book project, I could also more coherently consider the role of the institutionalization of deaf education on the history of deafness.

In addition to this chronological shift, my research may also benefit from considering deafness and disability in transnational contexts. Another important early English novelist, Daniel Defoe, depicts gesture as an international form of communication in *Robinson Crusoe*. For instance, Crusoe uses gesture as a means of conveying his need for food and other provisions to a tribe of Africans shortly after his maritime escape from slavery. Later on, Crusoe uses gestures to enslave Friday. The idea that gesture could be an international form of communication is conveyed by John Bulwer in 1644:

And being the onely speech that is naturall to Man, it may well be called the Tongue and generall language of Humane nature, which, without teaching, men in all regions of the habitable world doe at the first sight most easily understand. This is evident by that trade and commerce with those salvage Nations who have long enjoy'd the late

discovered principalities of the West, with whom (although their Language be strange and unknowne) our Merchants barter and exchange their Wares; driving a rich and silent Trade, by signes, whereby many a dumb bargaine without the crafty Brocage of the Tongue, is advantageously made. (3-4)

This quote is revealing for a couple of reasons. For one thing, the notion that gesture is the one “natural” and true “language of Humane nature” underscores the importance of communicating through sign language. It is an “easily” understood language, unlike any of the spoken languages that require so much diligence and learning to apprehend. Moreover, it is a universally-understood language, a means of communicating with the world at large, regardless of the country of origin of the interlocutor. This of course has implications for deaf people, who, up until this point (in England, anyway) had not been taught in any kind of formal manner. Bulwer’s elevation of gesture, as I argue in Chapter One, justifies educating the deaf (an endeavor he tackles more seriously in his second book, *Philocophus: Or, the Deafe and Dumbe Man’s Friend*).

Bulwer’s argument, Crusoe’s use of gesture for colonizing and mercantile purposes, and Austen’s knowledge of a common form of sign language offer more literary and archival materials to consider in relation to the development of modern forms of deafness. While my research to this point has concentrated primarily on England, I am eager to expand my scholarly horizons by shifting my focus to the literature and culture of transatlantic locales (including Colonial America) and Continental Europe in order to work toward a global outlook. The cross-cultural contact afforded by early modern travel, I have come to realize, is a catalyst for reform for deaf people in England. In his travels to Spain with the court of King Charles I, Sir Kenelm Digby (1644) records the remarkable abilities of a deaf, noble Spanish boy

who, among other things, is able to engage in an extended conversation with King Charles. In his account, Digby details the boy's family's approach to teaching their congenitally deaf children. Word of Digby's report consequently spread through Europe, challenging the pervasive misperception that deaf people are unable to learn or communicate. This travel account also stimulated new conversations about deaf pedagogy in England, inspiring important thinkers such as John Bulwer, William Holder, and John Wallis to devise methods for educating noble and genteel deaf students.

I hope the questions which follow might frame my future research. My first set of questions relate to the topics of deafness and disability. How might my increasing interest in deafness connect with what I have already written about physical disability? Does William Hay's take on the term "deformity"—which for him encompasses people with either sensory or mobility impairments—justify a book project that considers physical disability and deafness together? Or should I forge ahead with a project that considers deafness as the primary category of analysis? I am also grappling with whether I should continue to investigate women writers, or if I can consider opening myself up to writing on male writers, too. Margaret Cavendish, Jane Austen, and Mary Shelley are all writers whose work would be amenable to a study such as mine, but could I also take into consideration male novelists such as Daniel Defoe, Tobias Smollett, and Laurence Sterne? Finally, in what ways can I effectively bring in more eighteenth-century philosophy into my book? Questions such as these might animate my research over the course of the next several years, and I look forward to grappling with them in more depth

Bibliography

- Addison, Joseph. *The Spectator, Volume the Seventh*. London: printed by H. Baldwin, 1789.
- Addison, Joseph and Richard Steele. *The Tatler*. London: printed by Rivington, Marshall, and Bye; for Messrs. Rivington, Davis, Buckland, Longman, Dodsley [and 19 others in London], 1789.
- Allen, Prudence. *The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution 750 BC-AD 1250*. Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1997.
- Armstrong, Nancy. *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987.
- Austen, Jane. *Persuasion*. Toronto: Broadview Press, 1998.
- Bacon, Francis. *The Works of Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Alban, and Lord High Chancellor of England, in five volumes*. London: printed for A. Millar in the Strand, 1765.
- Bacon, Francis, *The New Atlantis and The Great Instauration*. Ed. Jerry Weinberger. London: Wiley-Blackwell, 1991.
- Bannet, Eve Tavor, "Lives, Letters, and Tales in Sarah Scott's *Journey Through Every Stage of Life*." *Masters of the Marketplace: British Women Novelists of the 1750s*. Ed. Susan Carlile. Bethlehem: Lehigh University Press, 2011.
- Barker-Benfield, G. J. *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- Bond, William. *The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell a gentleman, who, tho' deaf and dumb, writes down any stranger's name at first sight; with their future contingencies of fortune*. London: printed for E. Curll: and sold by W. Mears and T. Jauncy, W. Meadows, A. Bettesworth, W. Lewis, and W. Graves, 1720.
- Branson, Jan. *Damned for Their Difference: The Cultural Construction of Deaf People as "Disabled": A Sociological History*. Washington, D.C: Gallaudet University Press, 2002.
- Bree, Linda. *Sarah Fielding*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1996.
- Brown, Hilary. "Sarah Scott, Sophie von La Roche, and the Female Utopian

Tradition.” *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 100.4 (2001): 469–481.

Bulwer, John. *Chirologia: or, The natvral language of the hand. Composed of the speaking motions, and discoursing gestures thereof. Whereunto is added Chironomia: or, The art of manvall rhetoricke. Consisting of the naturall expressions, digested by art in the hand, as the chieftest instrument of eloquence: by historicall manifesto’s, exemplified out of the authentique registers of common life and civill conversation. With types, or chirograms: a long-wish’d forillustration of this argument.* London: Printed by T. H. and are to be sold by Fran. Tyton, 1648.

— — —. *Philocophus, or, The deafe and dumbe mans friend exhibiting the philosophicall verity of that subtile art, which may inable one with an observant eie, to heare what any man speaks by the moving of his lips: upon the same ground ... that a man borne deafe and dumbe, may be taught to heare the sound of wordswith his eie, & thence learne to speake with his tongue.* London: Printed for Humphrey Moseley, 1648.

Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. With an introductory discourse concerning taste; and several other additions.* London: printed for Vernor and Hood, F. and C. Rivington, T.N. Longman, Cadell and Davies, J. Cuthell, [and 4 others in London], 1798.

Butler, Judith. *Undoing Gender.* New York: Routledge, 2004.

Cavendish, Margaret. *Paper Bodies: A Margaret Cavendish Reader.* Ed. Bowerbank, Sylvia and Sara Mendelson. Toronto: Broadview Press, 2000.

Cibber, Colly. *A Letter from Mr. Cibber, to Mr. Pope, inquiring into the motives that might induce him in his satyirical works, to be so frequently fond of Mr. Cibber’s name.* London: publisher unknown, 1777.

Croxall, Samuel. *Fables of Aesop and others.* The second edition. London: printed: and sold by Tho. Astley, 1728.

Davidson, Michael. *Concerto for the Left Hand: Disability and the Defamiliar Body.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2008.

Davis, Lennard J. “Dr. Johnson, Amelia, and the Discourse of Disability in the Eighteenth Century.” *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*, Ed. Helen Deutch and Felicity Nussbaum. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 54–74.

— — —. “Introduction: Disability, Normality, and Power.” In *The Disability Studies*

- Reader*, Ed. Lennard Davis. New York: Routledge, 2006. 3-16
- — — *Enforcing Normalcy: Disability, Deafness, and the Body*. New York: Verso, 1995.
- — — . “Who Put the ‘The’ in ‘the Novel’?: Identity Politics and Disability in Novel Studies.” *Novel: A Forum on Fiction* 31.3 (1998): 317–334.
- Defoe, Daniel. *The Highland Visions; or the Scots New Prophecy: declaring in twelve visions what strange things shall come to pass in the year 1712*. London: printed for J. Baker, 1712.
- — — . *The Secret History of the October Club: from its original to this time*. London: printed for J. Baker, 1711.
- Deutsch, Helen. *Loving Dr. Johnson*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005.
- — — . *Resemblance & disgrace: Alexander Pope and the deformation of culture*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1996.
- Deutsch, Helen, and Felicity A. Nussbaum. “Introduction.” *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*. Ed. Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 1-28.
- Digby, Kenelm. *Private Memoirs of Sir Kenelm Digby*. London: Saunders & Otley, 1827.
- Dodsley, R. *Select Fables of Esop and other fabulists in three books*. London: printed for J. Dodsley, 1793.
- Doody, Margaret Anne. *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works*. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1988.
- Dunne, Linda. “Mothers and Monsters in Sarah Robinson Scott’s *Millenium Hall*.” *Utopian and Science Fiction by Women: Worlds of Difference*, Ed. Jane L. Donawerth and Carol A. Kolmerten. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1994.
- Edgeworth, Maria. *Belinda*. Edited by Kathryn J. Kirkpatrick. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Fielding, Henry. *The Female Husband: or, the surprising history of Mrs. Mary, alias Mr George Hamilton, who was convicted of having married a young woman of Wells and lived with her as her husband. Taken from her own mouth since her confinement*. London: printed for M. Cooper, 1746.

- Foucault, Michel. *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, 1995.
- — —. *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.
- — —. *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, 1990.
- Fowke, Martha. *Mr. Campbell's Packet, for the entertainment of gentlemen and ladies Containing, I. Verses to Mr. Campbell, occasioned by the history of his life and adventures*. London: printed for T. Bickerton, 1720.
- Frazer, John. *Deuteroskopia or, a brief discourse concerning the second sight, commonly so called*. Edinburgh: printed by Mr. Andrew Symson, 1707.
- Freke, William. *The General Idea of Allegorick Language: or the state of the divine and absolute kingdom and empire of Almighty God, demonstrated as most real and apparent*. London: publisher unknown, 1702.
- Froide, Amy M. *Never Married: Singlewomen in Early Modern England*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Gonda, Caroline. "Sarah Scott and 'The Sweet Excess of Paternal Love'." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 32.3 (1992): 511–535.
- Habermas, Jürgen. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989.
- Hackel, Heidi Brayman, conversation with author, June 20, 2012.
- Haggerty, George. "The Failure of Heteronormativity in the Gothic Novel," forthcoming for a collection on Heteronormativity.
- — —. *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.
- — —. "Queering Horace Walpole." *SEL Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 46.3 (2006): 543–561.
- — —. *Unnatural Affections: Women and Fiction in the Later 18th Century*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998.
- Hay, William. *Deformity: An Essay*. London: printed for R. Dodsley, 1754.

- Haywood, Eliza Fowler. *A spy on the conjurer: Or, a collection of surprising and diverting stories, with merry and ingenious letters. By way of memoirs of the famous Mr. Duncan Campbell*. London: printed for William Ellis, 1724.
- Hunter, Michael. "Introduction." *The Occult Laboratory: Magic, Science, and Second Sight in Late Seventeenth-Century Scotland*. Ed. Michael Hunter. Rochester, NY: The Boydell Press, 2001.
- James-Cavan, Kathleen. "Introduction." *Deformity: An Essay*. Ed. Kathleen James-Cavan., Victoria, B.C.: English Literary Studies, University of Victoria Press, 2004.
- Johnson, Claudia L. *Equivocal Beings: Politics, Gender, and Sentimentality in the 1790s—Wollstonecraft, Radcliffe, Burney, Austen*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Jones, Robert W. "Obedient Faces: The Virtue of Deformity in Sarah Scott's Fiction." *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*. Ed. Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 280–302.
- King, Kathryn R. "Spying upon the Conjurer: Haywood, Curiosity, and 'the Novel' in the 1720s." *Studies in the Novel* 30.2 (1998): 178–193.
- Krentz, Christopher. "Duncan Campbell and the Discourses of Deafness." *Prose Studies* 27.1-2 (2005): 39–52.
- Lane, Harlan. "Constructions of Deafness." In *The Disability Studies Reader*, edited by Lennard Davis, 153–171. New York, NY: Routledge, 1997.
- . *When the Mind Hears: A History of the Deaf*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.
- Lanser, Susan. "Sapphic Dialogics: Historical Narratology and the Sexuality of Form." *Postclassical Narratology. Approaches and Analyses*. Ed. Jan Alber and Monika Fludernik. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2010. 186–205.
- . "The Sapphic Body as Transgressive Text." In *Lewd and Notorious: Female Transgression in the 18th Century*, edited by Kittredge, Katharine. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003.
- . "Bluestocking Sapphism and the Economies of Desire." *Huntington Library Quarterly* 65.1/2 (2002): 257–275.
- . "Befriending the Body: Female Intimacies as Class Acts." *Eighteenth-*

- Century Studies* 32.2 (1998): 179–198.
- Le Faye, Deirdre. *Jane Austen: A Family Record*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Lewis, Jayne Elizabeth. *The English Fable: Aesop and Literary Culture, 1651-1740*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- McRuer, Robert. *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*. New York: New York University Press, 2006.
- . “Disabling Sex: Notes for a Crip Theory of Sexuality.” *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 17.1 (2011): 107–117.
- McRuer, Robert and Anna Mollow. “Introduction.” *Sex and Disability*. Ed. Robert McRuer and Anna Mollow. Durham: Duke University Press, 2012. 1-36.
- Montagu, Elizabeth. Letter to Elizabeth Sarah Scott. 21 June 1748. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.
- . Letter to Sarah Scott. 25 June 1748. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.
- Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley. *The Letters and Works of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, Volume 2*. Charleston, SC: Nabu Press, 2010.
- Moore, Lisa. *Dangerous Intimacies: Toward a Sapphic History of the British Novel*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1997.
- Mounsey, Chris. “Queer Theory, Crip Theory, or Variability: Towards an Inclusive Discourse for Literary Analysis.” American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Annual Meeting, San Antonio, Texas, 2012.
- Orgel, Stephen. *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare’s England*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Pender, Stephen, “In the Bodyshop: Human Exhibition in Early Modern England.” *Defects: Engendering the Modern Body*. Ed. Helen Deutsch and Felicity Nussbaum. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2000. 95–126
- Perry, Ruth. *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748-1818*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Porter, Roy. *Disease, Medicine, and Society in England, 1550-1860*. Cambridge; New

York: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

— — —. “Spreading Medical Enlightenment.” In *The Popularization of Medicine, 1650-1850*, edited by Roy Porter. London; New York: Routledge, 1992. 215–231.

Rée, Jonathan. *I See a Voice: Deafness, Language, and the Senses—A Philosophical History*. New York: Metropolitan Books, H. Holt and Co, 1999.

Reeve, Clara. *The Progress of Romance, through times, countries, and manners; with Remarks on the Good and Bad Effects of it, on them Respectively; in a course of evening conversations*. Dublin: printed for Messrs. Price, Exshaw, White, Cash Colbert, Marchbank and Porter, 1785.

Richardson, Samuel. *Early Works*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

— — —. *Pamela*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Rizzo, Betty. *Companions Without Vows: Relationships Among Eighteenth-Century British Women*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994.

Sacks, Oliver W. *Seeing Voices: A Journey into the World of the Deaf*. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

Scott, Sarah. *A Journey Through Every Stage of Life, described in a variety of interesting scenes, drawn from real characters. By a person of quality. In two volumes*. London: printed for A. Millar, 1754.

— — —. *Agreeable ugliness: or, the triumph of the graces. Exemplified in the real life and fortunes of a young lady of some distinction*. vols. London, 1754.

— — —. *Millenium Hall*. Ed. Gary Kelly. Toronto: Broadview Press, 1995.

— — —. Letter to Elizabeth Montagu. 14 November 1743. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

— — —. Letter to Elizabeth Montagu. 24 October 1748. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

— — —. Letter to Elizabeth Montagu. 15 January 1752. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

— — —. Letter to Elizabeth Montagu. 14 Nov. 1753. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.

- — —. Letter to Elizabeth Montagu. 31 August 1778. Montagu Collection. Huntington Library, San Marino, CA.
- Shaftesbury, Anthony, Earl of. *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*. Volume 2. Glasgow: printed by R. Urie, 1758.
- Shakespeare, Tom. "The Social Model of Disability." *The Disability Studies Reader*. Ed. Lennard Davis. New York: Routledge, 2006. 197-204.
- Shevelov, Kathryn. *Charlotte: Being a True Account of an Actress's Flamboyant Adventures in Eighteenth-Century London's Wild and Wicked Theatrical World*. New York: Macmillan, 2006.
- Spence, Joseph. *Crito: or, a dialogue on beauty*. London: printed for R. Dodsley, 1752.
- Spencer, Jane. *The Rise of the Woman Novelist: From Aphra Behn to Jane Austen*. New York, NY: B. Blackwell, 1986.
- Steele, Richard. *Selections from the Tatler, Spectator and Guardian*. Ed. Austin Dobson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885.
- Stone, Christopher and Bencie Woll. "Dumb O Jemmy and Others: Deaf People, Interpreters and the London Courts in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries." *Sign Language Studies* 8.3 (2008): 226–240.
- Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England, 1500-1800*. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.
- Straub, Kristina. *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy*. Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.
- — —. *Domestic Affairs: Intimacy, Eroticism, and Violence Between Servants and Masters in Eighteenth-Century Britain*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009.
- Sutherland, Alex. *The Brahan Seer: The Making of a Legend*. Bern; New York: Peter Lang, 2009.
- Taylor, Gary. *Castration: An Abbreviated History of Western Manhood*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2000.
- Tomalin, Claire. *Jane Austen: A Life*. London: Penguin, 2000.

- Turner, David M. *Disability in Eighteenth-Century England: Imagining Physical Impairment*. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Vanbrugh, John. *Æsop: A Comedy (as it is acted at the Theatre-Royal in Drury-Lane)*. London: printed for Thomas Bennet, 1697.
- Vickery, Amanda. *Behind Closed Doors: At Home in Georgian England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.
- Watt, Ian P. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001.
- Wheeler, Roxann. *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000.
- Wollock, Jeffrey. "Psychological Theory of John Bulwer." *Encyclopedia of the History of Psychological Theories*, Ed. Robert W. Rieber. New York; Heidelberg: Springer, 2012. 839-856.
- Wycherley, William. *Miscellany Poems: As satyrs, epistles, love-verses, songs, sonnets, &c.* London: printed for Jeffery Wale, 1706.
- A surprising conversation of a Highlander who has the second-sight, and some others, with an Indian Bramin, about Captain John Porteous*. Edinburgh?: publisher unknown, 1737.
- Æsop Naturaliz'd and expos'd to the publick view in his own shape and dress by way of essay on a hundred fables*. Cambridge: printed by John Hayes for Edward Hall, 1697.
- Æsop unveiled, or, The beauties of deformity: being a poetical translation of several curious fables out of Æsop and other approv'd mythologists equally as diverting and beneficial to the English reader as his comic shape and instructive morals were to the ancients*. London: printed and sold by J. Clarke, at the Golden-Ball, in Duck-Lane: H. Cooke, in Fleet-Street: T. Warner, at the Black-Boy, in Pater-Noster-Row, 1731.
- "defect, n.: *Oxford English Dictionary*," Online. Internet. 4 Jun. 2013.
- "deformity, n.: *Oxford English Dictionary*," Online. Internet. 4 Jun. 2013.
- Fables of Aesop and Other Eminent Mythologists: with morals and reflections*. 6th ed., corr. London: printed for R. Sare [etc.], 1714.
- Satan's Harvest Home: or the Present State of Whorecraft, Adultery, Fornication,*

*Procuring, Pimping, Sodomy, And the Game at Flatts, (illustrated by an Authentick and Entertaining Story) And other Satanic Works, daily propagated in this good Protestant Kingdom. Collected from the Memoirs of an intimate Comrade of the Hon. Jack S**n**r; and concern'd with him in many of his Adventures. To which is added, The Petit Maitre, a poem, By a Lady of Distinction.* London: printed for the editor, and sold at the Change, St. Paul's, Fleet Street, by Dod; Lewis; Exeter Change, and in the Court of Requests; Jackson, Jolliffe, Dodsley, Brindley, Steidel, Shropshire, Chappel, Hildyard, at York; Leak, at Bath; and at the snuff shop in Cecil Court, St. Martin's Lane, 1749.

The Friendly Dæmon or the Generous Apparition; being a true narrative of a miraculous cure, newly perform'd upon that famous deaf and dumb gentleman, Dr. Duncan Campbel, by a familiar spirit that appear'd to him. London: printed; and sold by J. Roberts, 1726.

The Merry Companion, or Humorous Miscellany. Containing comical characters, witty jests, humorous essays, smart epigrams. Excellent epitaphs, puzling [sic] rebus's. And a collection of celebrated new songs. Dublin: printed by A. M'Culloh, for J. Cotter, 1752.

“The Ugly Club Manuscript.” Liverpool Central Library, 1743-54.