



## 2.3 Prints and Customary Liberty

Old people praise the times past which they neglected to use when they might; young people look forward with anxious care to the time to come, neglecting the present; and almost all people, treat the present times, as some folk do their wives, - with indifference, because they may possess them.

George Alexander Stevens, *The Celebrated Lecture on Heads* (1765)<sup>1</sup>

To day we love what to morrow we hate; to day we seek what to morrow we shun; to day we desire what to morrow we fear, nay, even tremble at the apprehensions of.

Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719)<sup>2</sup>

### Reaction and Progress Considered

Captain James Cook's discoveries in the South Sea Islands proved a watershed in scientific, humanist and libertarian thought, his death in 1779 near Kealakekua Bay, Hawaii, stimulating an enduring hero culture. Commentaries on the discoveries of this man of humble origins, who problematised the moral legitimacy of the slave trade,<sup>3</sup> formed three observable strands with respect to Englishness and British superiority. The first viewed South Sea islanders as a pre-rational, pre-political "infant of our species";<sup>4</sup> somehow pathologically different from, or inferior to, Europeans.<sup>5</sup> As the influential German scientist Georg Forster wrote:

Such are the beginnings of arts and cultivation, such is the rise of civil societies; sooner or

1 Gerald Kahan, *George Alexander Stevens and The Lecture on Heads* (Athens, Georgia 1984), 80.

2 Daniel Defoe, *The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), ed. Angus Ross (Penguin, 1965), 164.

3 Hitherto discussed primarily in fictional genres. For recent debates see Thomas W. Krise 'Staging Slaves: Restoration Characterisations', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 31:2 (June 2008), 197-208; Marie Hockenhull Smith, "...You'll be made a slave in your turn; you'll be told also that it is right that you should be so, and we shall see what you think of this justice': Libido, Retribution and Moderation in *The Island of Slaves*", *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 31:2 (June 2008), 223-240.

4 James Burnet, Lord Monboddo, *Of the Origins and Progress of Language* (Edinburgh, 1773), i, 133.

5 Elizabeth Edwards unconvincingly (and Whiggishly) privileges this minority narrative of Pacific difference to frame Darwin's later differentiation between Europeans and South Americans; Elizabeth Edwards, 'Evolving Images: Photography, Race and Popular Darwinism', in Diana Donald and Jane Munro (ed.), *Endless forms: Charles Darwin, Natural Science and the Visual Arts* (Yale University Press, 2009), 169.

later they cause distinctions of rank, and the various degrees of power, influence and wealth [...] Nay, they often produce a material difference in the colour, habits and forms of the human species<sup>6</sup>

A second, more progressive outlook, saw the Pacific peoples as “mirrors” of our former selves and possessors of a natural, replicable and untraceable pre-historical liberty.<sup>7</sup> 'The history', James Dunbar wrote:

Of some of the South Sea isles, which the late voyages of discovery have tended to disclose, enables us to glance at society in some of its earlier forms.<sup>8</sup>

Conversely a third reading cast Pacific people as noble savages,<sup>9</sup> untouched, until the arrival of Europeans, by the civilising process. Recalling an incident in June 1773 when on returning to Dusky Bay he found men prostituting their wives Cook thus lamented:

Such are the consequences of a commerce with Europeans and what is still more to our Shame as civilised Christians, we debauch their Morals already too prone to vice and interduce among them wants and perhaps diseases which they never before knew and which serves only to disturb that happy tranquillity they and their fore Fathers had enjoy'd. If any one denies the truth of this assertion, let him tell me what the Natives of the whole extent of America have gained by the commerce they have had with Europeans.<sup>10</sup>

To Cook, civilisation has brought immorality, not civility (its etymological root), to human society;<sup>11</sup> and extended, as Joseph Banks' commentary of an incident in Matavia Bay during 1769 reveals, to European criminal punishment:

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6 J. R. Forster, *Observations Made During a Voyage Round the World* (1778), 418.

7 George Pearson, *Observations on some metallic arms* (c. 1790), cited in Wilson, 'Pacific Modernity', 89. Also David Hume, *History of England from the Invasion of Julius Caesar to the Revolution in 1688* (6 vols., London, 1802), 15; John Dalrymple, *Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland* (1790) i, 1-19.

8 James Dunbar, *Essay on the History of Mankind in Rude and Cultivated Ages* (1780), cited in Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks*, 73.

9 An expansion of an eighteenth century philosophical development whereby 'it became possible to think of Europe as only one among many civilisations, and not necessarily the Chosen or the best'; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (revised edition, London 1991), 69-70. See for example the simple virtues of Friday in Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, especially 212.

10 J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Journals of Captain Cook on his Voyage of Discovery* (4 vols., Cambridge, 1955), ii, 175.

11 A revelation so startling to Gulliver (Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 321-2) after his stay with the noble Houyhnhnms that he is unable to reintegrate with human society. Animals rationality could also best the civil European; Ingrid H. Tague, 'Dead Pets: Satire and Sentiment in British Elegies and Epitaphs', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, 41.3 (Spring 2008), esp. 298.

On our return we found that an Indian had snatched a sentrys musquet from him unawares and run off; the midshipman [...] imprudently ordered the marines to fire [...] and persueing the man who stole the musquet killd him dead [...] before night by his means we got together a few of them and explaining to them that the man who sufferd was guilty of a crime deserving death [...] we retird to the ship not well pleasd with the days expedition, guilty no doubt in some measure of the death of a man who the most severe laws of equity would not have condemnd to so severe a punishment.<sup>12</sup>

The same year Banks described a village in Motavia Bay as, in rhetoric not dissimilar to idealised radical political theory,<sup>13</sup> 'the truest picture of an arcadia of which we were going to be kings that the imagination can form';<sup>14</sup> an uncorrupted societal construct vastly dissimilar to a failed European social order.

These debates reverberated through the 1790s, challenging constructions of British identity, morality and liberty. Cook became a conflicting symbol of both sensibility and humanity;<sup>15</sup> an icon simultaneously of manliness and English (racial) superiority and the exposition of pan-European moral debauchery. Thus Hobsbawm's claim that historians should grant 'little attention' to doctrines of 'resistance to progress' as they obscure the array of liberal and progressive ideologies that swept Europe after the French Revolution appears unsustainable and crudely Whiggish.<sup>16</sup> The Hobsbawmian metanarrative of secularisation, radicalism and anti-establishmentism is an attractive template with which to understand notions of liberty, yet need not function in conflict with historiographical narratives of loyalism, royalism and conservatism. Indeed the problem of extant notions of liberty in

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12 J. C. Beaglehole (ed.), *The Endeavour Journal of Joseph Banks, 1768-1771* (2vols., Sydney, 1962), i, 257.

13 Notably the works of Thomas Spence and Charles Hall; see William Stafford, *Socialism, radicalism and nostalgia: Social criticism in Britain, 1775-1830* (1983).

14 Beaglehole, *Banks*, i, 252.

15 Fanny Burney, *The Early Diary of Frances Burney: 1768-1778* (London, 1908), 267, describes Cook as 'the most moderate, humane and gentle circumnavigator that ever went out upon discoveries'; starkly contrasting her chauvinist and brutish fictional males such as Captain Mirvan in *Evelina* (1778).

16 Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: Europe 1789-1848* (London, 1967), 297. Though of Marxist convictions, a present-faced Whig determinism dominates Hobsbawm's work. Recently this has been followed with enthusiasm in David Andress, *1789: The Threshold of the Modern Age* (London, 2008). One of Andress' most startling (and unconvincing) claims is that 1789 not only saw the dawn of the modern world, but in sharing our (liberal) attitudes to rights *is* the modern world; Frank McLynn has similar suspicions regarding his claims - see Frank McLynn, 'Review. 1789: The Threshold of the Modern Age, David Andress', *History Today*, 58:7 (July 2008), 62.



competition is itself a story worth telling and a vital theme of this thesis.

For H. T. Dickinson the 'appeal to the experience and evidence of the past' was a powerful framework of thought in eighteenth-century Britain.<sup>17</sup> A combination of fear of the unknown, the republican divorce of liberty from experience,<sup>18</sup> and an appreciation of existing liberties, ensured, for Dickinson, 'the development and articulation of a conservative ideology of considerable appeal, resilience and intellectual power' during the 1790s.<sup>19</sup> At such times of instability government relied on appeals to national liberty, fused in conservative rhetoric with what we now call 'national security', to defend their often anti-libertarian actions; what Haywood describes as a 'Burkean defense of national realpolitik [...] premised a logical contradiction: preserving a "constitution" which allowed the government to remove the very "liberties" it was supposedly protecting'.<sup>20</sup>

Nonetheless reformist opinion remained evident in Britain. Wealthy Britons flocked to and glorified republican Florence as they once had republican Rome,<sup>21</sup> yet simultaneously supported anti-Revolutionary activity in France. Charlotte Corday, murderer of Jean-Paul Marat, was heroised in the British press; *The Times* enthusiastically writing on August 16<sup>th</sup>:

The French nation ought to erect a monumental pyramid to the manes of CHARLOTTE CORDAY,  
with the inscription: "To the memory of CHARLOTTE CORDAY, who was greater than BRUTUS"<sup>22</sup>

Numerous engraved representations cast Corday as a defender of rights, yet were situated commercially alongside Thomas Paine's seminal and linguistically paradigmatic radical treatise *Rights of Man* (1791);<sup>23</sup> a regicidal defence of natural rights soon countered by Hannah More's *Cheap*

17 H. T. Dickinson, 'The Eighteenth Century Debate on the 'Glorious Revolution'', *History*, 61:201 (February, 1976), 28-9.

18 *ibid*, 44.

19 H. T. Dickinson, 'Popular Conservatism and Militant Loyalism, 1789-1813', in H. T. Dickinson (ed.), *Britain and the French Revolution, 1789-1815* (London, 1989), 104.

20 See Ian Haywood, 'The Transformation of Caricature: A Reading of Gillray's *The Liberty of the Subject*', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43:2 (Winter 2010), 224, 227.

21 It is useful to distinguish here between the classical republicanism of Florence, controlled by a ruling family, and the revolutionary republican examples of America and France. For the decline of the ancient Roman ideal in English society in favour of praising Anglo-modernity, see Rosemary Sweet, 'The Changing View of Rome in the Long Eighteenth Century', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 33.2 (June 2010), 145-164; Rosemary Sweet, 'British Perceptions of Florence in the long-Eighteenth Century', *The Historical Journal*, 50:4 (2007), 853.

22 *The Times*, Friday August 16<sup>th</sup> 1793. A quote from the Deputy of Mentz.

23 A sixpence tract hugely influential to 'hundreds of thousands of artisans and journeymen'; Michael Foot and Isaac Kramnick, 'The Life, Ideology and Legacy of Thomas Paine', Michael Foot and Isaac Kramnick (eds.), *Thomas Paine Reader* (London, 1987), 14.

*Repository Tracts*.<sup>24</sup> Yet this pamphlet war was not characterised entirely by polarity, for most radical works (Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin excepted) used the same idiomatic framework - protective of constitutional monarchy and commerce - as reactionary rhetoric;<sup>25</sup> the realities of British libertarian thought thus showing incompatibility with Hobsbawmian metanarratives of linear rhetorical progress.

### The Customary Ideal



2.3.1 Isaac Cruikshank, *A Dinner in a Tavern* (c. 1800) [K269]

Neither does Isaac Cruikshank's present an unannounced polemic advocating change or stasis, preferring instead to interrogate liberty through the unpredictable tensions exerted by daily life. Observing this world in the only surviving portrait of himself and his male family (2.3.1),<sup>26</sup> Isaac sits pensively arms and legs crossed, a hat obscuring his eyes. On the table rests a pistol and facemask,

24 For More as inciting anti-Paine violence and effigy burning see Sheila O'Connell, *Popular Print in England 1550-1850* (London, 1999), 141-3. 'Ironically', Ian Haywood, *The Revolution in Popular Literature: Print, Politics, and the People, 1790-1860* (Cambridge, 2004), 48, notes 'the methods of this literary counter-revolution were an admission of the high level of political intelligence among the masses, even though the aim of the propaganda was to deny this fact'.

25 Iain Hampsher-Monk, 'British radicalism and the anti-Jacobins', in Goldie and Wokler (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought* (2006), 683-7. Royalty, for example, were censored by both 'staunch supporters as well as critics of the status quo'; Philip Harling, 'The Duke of York Affair (1809) and the Complexities of War-Time Patriotism', *The Historical Journal*, 39:4 (1996), 966; chapter 3.1.

26 One of only two surviving images of Isaac, see Chapter 2.2.

the latter the theatrical symbol of tragedy.<sup>27</sup> Isaac Robert is to his left, with a girl, perhaps of ill repute, on his lap. A young George is next in line, elbows on the table in dejection. To the extreme left of the scene is an unnamed drinker, raising a toast, seemingly little handicapped by his wooden leg and missing eye. Hastily sketched on a bar ledger, the conflicts between humour and depression, drunken isolation and sexual freedom offer a startling glimpse into the realities of metropolitan family life. Unlike Francis Wheatley's *Cries of London*,<sup>28</sup> Isaac and his peers dealt with more realistic ideal and contrasts, taking inspiration from the lives they actually led, rather than the urban life they thought (or hoped) existed around them.



2.3.2 Isaac Cruikshank, *The Dame School* (c. 1790s)  
[K232]. 178 x 232.

Broadly speaking this realist interpretation of city life problematised the tensions between a natural Arcadian (rural) innocence and urban sociability/civility.<sup>29</sup> This post-Cook discourse offered warm,

27 Typically accompanied by a dagger this symbolism (A2.3.1) is traceable to the 1770s; Aileen Riberio, 'Costuming the Part: A Discourse of Fashion and Fiction in the Image of the Actress, 1776-1812' in Robyn Asleson (ed.), *Notorious Muse: The Actress in British Art and Culture 1776-1812* (Yale University Press, 2003), 112-6.

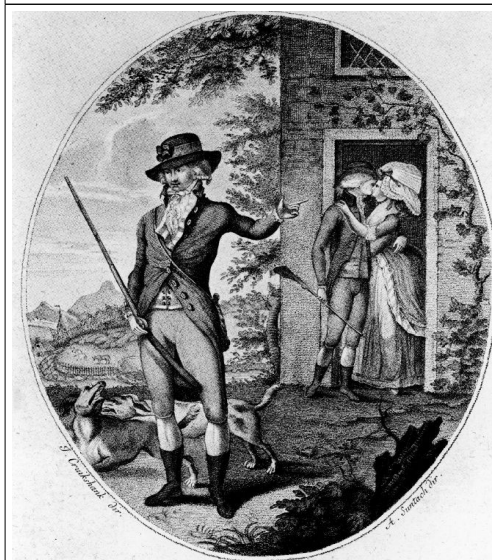
28 'Saccharine works [...] sentimentalised in extremis'; Mark Bills, *The Art of Satire: London in Caricature* (London, 2006), 78-9. First engraved in 1793, new plates were commissioned in 1812 to meet demand; Sean Shesgreen, *Images of the Outcast: The Urban Poor in the Cries of London* (Manchester, 2002), 131-6.

29 For rural as natural see Defoe (*Robinson Crusoe*, 139) 'I was removed from all the wickedness of the world here. I had neither *the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life*'; Ann Radcliffe, *Romance of the Forest* (1791), ed. Chloe Chard (Oxford University Press 1986), 358) 'the splendid gaities that courted them at Paris were very inferior to the sweet domestic pleasures and refined society which Leloucourt would afford'.

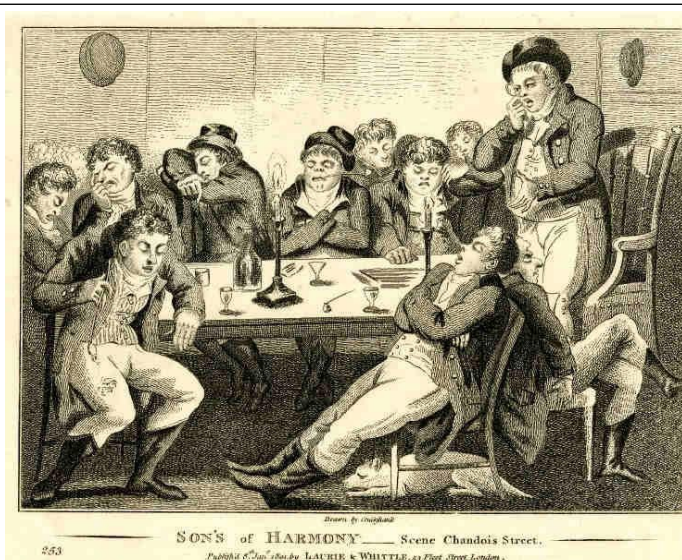
affectionate inter-generational vistas (2.3.2),<sup>30</sup> alongside Hogarthian visions of the destructive moral impact of prosthetic and lewd fashions on urban youth (2.3.3);<sup>31</sup> and simple, rural love, freedom and stability (2.3.4), alongside representations of urban debauchery and vainglory (2.3.5).



2.3.3 (above) Isaac Cruikshank, *Frailties of Fashion* (1 May 1793, S W Fores) [K392; BM8388]. 299 x 518.



2.3.4 (left) Isaac Cruikshank, *The Sportsmen's Departure* (30 March 1810, S W Fores) [K1142]. 168 x 136.



2.3.5 (right) Isaac Cruikshank, *Son's of Harmony – Scene Chandois Street* (8 January 1801, Laurie and Whittle) [BM9835]. 200 x 248.

30 Inscribed 'Drawn by my father, Isaac Cruikshank. Gck', see Edward Bell Krumbhaar, *Isaac Cruikshank: a catalogue raisonne with a sketch of his life and work* (Philadelphia, 1966), 54.

31 A2.3.2; 'Here mere children, corrupted by city life, ape the vices of the fashionable adults at places like White's', Sean Shesgreen (ed.), *Engravings by Hogarth* (New York, 1973), plate 31.



Yet it would be an error to read these social satires as containing stern critique. Rather than vilification, fun is poked at fashionable men and women for the distance between their actions and the (neither wholly realistic nor uniformly desired) ideals Cruikshank presented. Such moral gulfs appalled Francis Place, who despite sobriety and industry lost trade when his fashionable clientèle discovered the 'bookish' self-improving ways fostered at the London Corresponding Society.<sup>32</sup> These 'superiors', principally clubmen socialites, were like the aspirational Place loyal to state and commerce, yet expressed their attachment in wholly different language; their expectation being, he claimed, that 'I sotted in the public house' and:

Should have been a "fellow" beneath them, and they would have patronized me; but, to accumulate books and to be supposed to know something of their contents, to seek friends, too, among literary and scientific men, was putting myself on an equality with themselves, if not indeed assuming a superiority; was an abominable offence in a tailor<sup>33</sup>

Isaac's ideal interrogated these conflicting notions of British identity, presenting ordinary Londoners whether himself, his publishers, the aspirant or the leisured as principal actors. Simple messages prevailed, mirroring children's books by moralising in realist settings, largely free from abstraction.<sup>34</sup> Realism did not however prevent embellishment. Fakery and myth remained as believably real as real-life itself,<sup>35</sup> drawn from the rich tradition of social stereotyping in English popular prints and oral visual cultures of riots, rough music, folk tales and the stage.<sup>36</sup>

The most extraordinary manifestation of this culture was *A Lecture on Heads*, written and performed in London by George Alexander Stevens from 1767 until his death in 1783 (and Ireland, Scotland and the United States in his honour for many years after); the repeated plagiarism of the concept (much

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32 Francis Place, *The Autobiography of Francis Place, 1775-1854*, ed. Mary Thale (Cambridge, 1972), 222; though his *Autobiography* is characterised by retrospective self-aggrandizing.

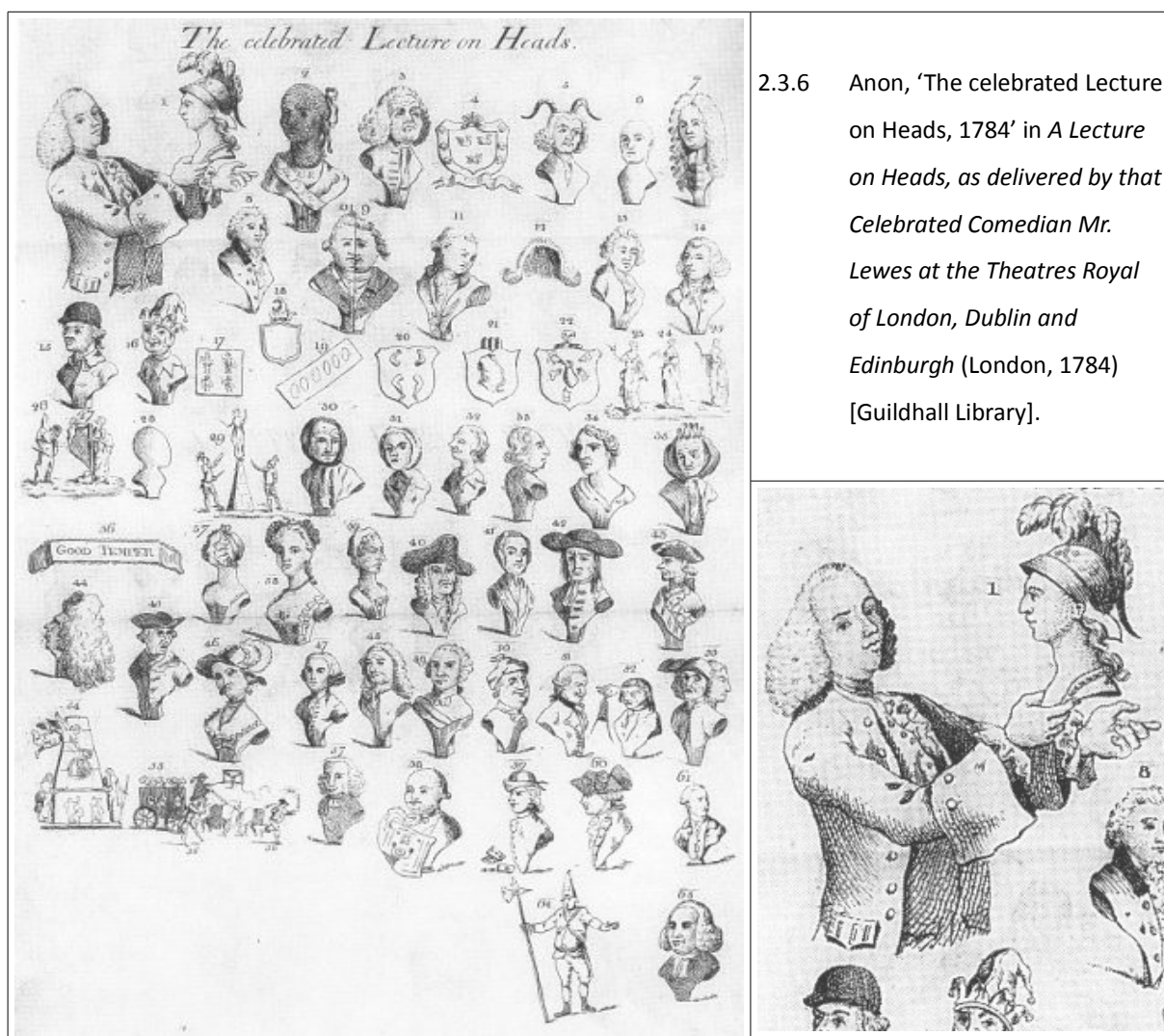
33 *ibid*, 223.

34 Penny Brown, 'Capturing (and Captivating) Childhood: The Role of Illustrations in Eighteenth-Century Children's Books in Britain and France', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 31.3 (September, 2008).

35 Shesgreen, *Outcast*, 12, 136-146.

36 For the rhetorical connections between the theatregoers and 'newspapers, magazines, pamphlets, and coffee-house talk'; L. W. Conolly, 'Personal Satire on the English Eighteenth-Century Stage', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 9.4 (Summer, 1976), 600. John Gay's *The Beggars Opera* (1728) is a vital example of this process; for the social penetration of the characters such as Captain Macheath and Jenny Diver see SL, and Frederick A. Pottle (ed.), *Boswell's London Journal 1762 – 1763* (Yale, 1950), 246, 257.

to Stevens' dismay) reaffirming the discursive vitality of stock social satire.<sup>37</sup> Here Stevens, a hard-working and little regarded actor until the invention of his lecture,<sup>38</sup> wittily and passionately mimicked such figures as the cit, the quack, the cuckold and the old bachelor with the aid of *papier mache* heads.<sup>39</sup>



2.3.6 Anon, 'The celebrated Lecture on Heads, 1784' in *A Lecture on Heads, as delivered by that Celebrated Comedian Mr. Lewes at the Theatres Royal of London, Dublin and Edinburgh* (London, 1784) [Guildhall Library].

A timeless mechanism of human communication and psychology this exploration of behaviour through stock figures, for Lippmann, allows humans to rationalise their world. 'The system of stereotypes', he argues, may be not only 'the core of our personal tradition, the defenses of our

37 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (Yale, 1996), 11.

38 Kahan, *Stevens*.

39 Given the improvisational nature of Stevens's performances we must be cautious when drawing conclusions from his surviving scripts; David Worrall, *Theatric revolution: drama, censorship and Romantic period subcultures, 1773-1832* (Oxford, 2006), 240-1.

position in society', but, he continues 'the fortress of our [collective] tradition' behind whose boundaries 'we can continue to feel safe in the position we occupy'.<sup>40</sup> Satirical prints negotiating behavioural ideals are therefore an appropriate place to begin in understanding what print consumers conceived as the boundaries of liberty. The negative typologies with which satires principally engage are ideal for helping us identify where behavioural reality intersected with behavioural ideals;<sup>41</sup> they help us understand what it was to be, in a socio-cultural sense, that symbol of British liberty - the 'Free Born Englishman'.

At an underlying level all these themes and prints interacted with custom, a concept central to British libertarian identity and understood in this thesis as not universally 'popular' but rather containing individual, localised and overlapping meanings.<sup>42</sup> And although primarily an extra-legal discourse, customs also informed 'habitual usages' of legal apparatus.<sup>43</sup> Indeed 'with', as Nancy Johnson notes, 'legal discourse spilling over the borders of the courtroom' in the wake of the 1794 treason trials, custom had the potential to assume great power.<sup>44</sup> The defence of customary interpretations of the law, for example, was a common cause of tumult during this period, creating what Thompson calls the 'characteristic paradox of the [eighteenth] century [...] a *rebellious* traditional culture'.<sup>45</sup> Cruikshank explored this moral discourse primarily through women and professionals, groups which made up a considerable proportion of his output, appealing in his satires to desires to shape the boundaries of approved behaviour - to restrict, outside of the jurisdiction of the law, personal freedoms.

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40 Walter Lippmann, *Public Opinion* (New York, 1922), 63-4; chapter 3.2.

41 I have avoided the phrase 'negative stereotype' throughout this thesis because, as Lippmann suggests, stereotypes rely on prejudice and therefore cannot be positive (logically speaking a 'positive stereotype' is an ideal); Lippmann, 53-100, esp 69.

42 Hence statute law was occasionally 'arbitrary, and hardly under any other rule than the common sense of mankind'; Louis Simond, *An American in Regency England: The Journal of a Tour in 1810-11*, ed. Christopher Hibbert (London, 1968), 54.

43 E P Thompson, *Customs in Common* (London, 1991), 4.

44 Johnson, Nancy E., 'Fashioning the Legal Subject Narratives from the London Treason Trials of 1794', *Eighteenth Century Fiction* 21.3 (Spring 2009), 414-5.

45 Thompson, *Customs*, 9.

## Beyond Custom

But before discussing these groups, we must pause for reflection. What these discussions show is the insufficiency of building a thesis on the notion of British liberty purely in relation to the prevailing political and (inter)national polarities of the age. As Benedict Anderson and more recently Peter Mandler have reminded us, understanding identities requires engagement with wider communities of communication and a rejection of binary definitions.<sup>46</sup> Nonetheless the period 1783 to 1811 can hardly be examined without reference to the military and philosophical debates, held in both domestic and international arenas, shaping metropolitan discourses.

In 1789, the centenary year of the Glorious Revolution, Richard Price famously outlined the liberties he believed the revolutionary settlement had secured for British subjects:

First, the right to liberty of conscience in religious matters.

Secondly, the right to resist power when abused. And,

Thirdly, the right to chuse our own governors, to cashier

them for misconduct, and to frame a government for ourselves.<sup>47</sup>

Although these liberties, notably limited religious toleration, were unusual within Europe,<sup>48</sup> Price's words, in alluding to the deposition of James II as a precedent available for repetition should Britons expose abuses in their present governors, carry insurrectionary overtones. Yet considering the historiographical attention paid to radicals,<sup>49</sup> few contemporary Britons and still fewer publications sought Hanoverian removal. As Dickinson argues, late-eighteenth century Britain was essentially an ideologically conservative nation.<sup>50</sup> The changing aims of liberals and the difficulties of appealing for

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46 Anderson, *Communities*; Peter Mandler, 'What is "National Identity"? Definitions and Applications in Modern British Historiography', *Modern Intellectual History*, 3, (2006), 271-97.

47 From 'A Discourse on the Love of Our Country' delivered Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> 1789; in D. O Thomas (ed.), *Richard Price: Political Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 189-90. A rhetoric found earlier in Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*, 241.

48 Legal toleration did not of course universally extend to customary toleration; Jan Albers, 'Religious identities in Lancashire', in John Walsh, Colin Haydon and Stephen Taylor (eds), *The Church of England c. 1689 – c. 1833: From Toleration to Tractarianism* (Cambridge, 1993), 317.

49 Thompson, *Making*; Stafford, *Socialism*; Steve Poole (ed.), *John Thelwall: Radical Romantic and Acquitted Felon* (Pickering & Chatto, 2009).

50 H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London, 1977).



even moderate reform based on 'rational liberty' after the French revolution ensured that conservatism,<sup>51</sup> which offered proven crisis management, underpinned prevailing political opinion.<sup>52</sup> For followers of this conservative idiom state intervention, repression and *Habeus Corpus* suspensions were preferable means of protecting liberty to (reform inspired) change. With Britain, a 'fiscal-military State',<sup>53</sup> cast as the last bastion of European liberty,<sup>54</sup> the agriculturalist George Culley wrote:

These taxes will bear heavy, but we ought to pay them cheerfully and much more, to keep the tyrant and scourge of mankind [Napoleon] from us [...] It seems as though we must *stand* or fall by ourselves [...] if he should overpower this little Island (which heaven avert) he may then tyrannise over all the world.<sup>55</sup>

This liberty, protected by the law, was considered available to all men and deemed essential to their contentment:

In our Courts of Justice all are equal: high and low, rich and poor, all are alike under the care of our laws [...] and those [laws] established here are confessed by all Nations to be the best adapted to give Security, Comfort, and Happiness.<sup>56</sup>

Moreover this law had its roots in ancient England; a natural system of justice passed through generations with unerring success:

The excellence of trial by jury was felt and appreciated in England, even before its inhabitants possessed the art of conveying their knowledge to their posterity by writing or sculpture<sup>57</sup>

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51 Christopher Wyvill, *Political Papers* (6 vols., York, 1794-1804), v, 262.

52 Irrespective of challenges to King, Lords and Commons the tripod remained an enduring symbol of the constitution, aesthetically 'counterbalancing and at the same time reinforcing each other producing a system of optimal stability and endurance'; Diana Donald, 'Introduction: Concepts of Order in the Eighteenth Century – Their Scope and Their Frailties', in Diane Donald and Frank O'Gorman (eds.), *Ordering the World in the Eighteenth Century* (Basingstoke, 2006), 1.

53 John Brewer, *The Sinews of Power: War, Money and the English State 1688-1783* (London, 1989). For a recent critique see Stephen Conway, *The British Isles and the War of American Independence* (OUP, 2000).

54 For the *Evening Mail* (30 May 1798) 'the sheet-anchor [preventing] the weather-beaten vessel of the political system of civilised nations from being destroyed by the revolutionary storm'.

55 A letter to his brother Matthew 16 June 16 1803, in Anne Orde (ed.), *Publications of the Surtees Society v. 210 - Matthew and George Culley: Farming Letters 1798-1804* (2006), 481-2.

56 'A Charge Delivered...by William Mainwaring' (1792), *Charges to the Grand Jury*, ed. Georges Lamoire (London, 1992), 452.

57 James Peller Malcolm, *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London from the Roman Invasion to the Year 1700, 2nd edition*, 3 vols. (London, 1811), i, 8.

Yet the boundaries of conservative liberty remained flexible. Radical literature was a concern to many loyalists, Clerkenwell JP William Mainwaring describing it as 'the most mischievous and destructive Engine that can be put into the Hands of the wicked and ill-designed'. He nonetheless echoed a widely held loyalist position by simultaneously eulogising the liberty of the press as 'one of the glorious Privileges of English men [...] essential to the Liberty of the Subject, to the Existence of a free state',<sup>58</sup> which, he continued, allowed the subject to:

Examine our Constitution – the Principles on which it is founded – [we] may point out  
Inconveniences – may suggest Improvements – may examine the Conduct of Ministers of  
the Government – all these, GENTLEMEN, are Privileges which every British Subject enjoys.

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How then could the repressive measures brought against publishers, writers and sellers of radical literature by Pitt be justified if the liberty of the press enshrined British liberty? Blackstone argued that abandoning the system of pre-publication censorship for literature in 1695 had restored the liberty of expression to every Englishman.<sup>60</sup> This did not preclude however censorship *after* publication as:

The Will of the Individuals is still left free; the Abuse only of that free Will is the Object of  
Legal Punishment. Neither is there any Restraint hereby laid on Freedom of Thought or  
Inquiry; Liberty of private Sentiment is still left; the dissemination, or making public of bad  
Sentiments, destructive of the Ends of Society, is the Crime which Society corrects. A man  
(says a fine Writer on this Subject) may be allowed to keep Poison in his Closet, but not  
publicly to vend them as Cordials.<sup>61</sup>

These arguments were thus recycled in a number of *Charges* delivered to Grand Juries across the

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58 Mainwaring, *Charges*, 452. Freedom of speech/press was of course a constructed and unnatural liberty, and hence assumptions of its naturality are pertinent; McKeon 69-70.

59 Mainwaring, *Charges*, 453.

60 Only London plays continued to be subject to pre-publication censorship in this period under the licensing act of 1737. See Worrall, *Theatric*; Jeffrey N. Cox, 'Ideology and Genre in the British Antirevolutionary Drama of the 1790s', *ELH*, 58.3 (Autumn, 1991), 579-610.

61 Cited by John Lord Chedworth in 'A Charge Delivered to the Grand Jury at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the County of Suffolk, Holden, by Adjournment, at Ipswich on Friday, January 18, 1793. By John Lord Chedworth', *Charges*, 493. Although considered a reformer, it is clear Howe's ideologies were expressed within a conservative framework.

country in the 1790s,<sup>62</sup> reinterpreting censorship to protect the state whilst retaining liberty of the press - the Post Office, for example, remained (largely) politically impartial, circulating, even during the 1790s, both reactionary and radical newspapers.<sup>63</sup> As Dickinson concludes the tensions radicals placed on liberty ensured that the country remained a 'modestly liberal state' even if it retained 'deeply conservative foundations';<sup>64</sup> 'their political radicalism and their preoccupation with the rights of man', he continues 'prevented the conservative reaction of the 1790s from utterly destroying the liberty of the subject'.<sup>65</sup>

This critical conservative discourse, although politically grounded, fed into socio-cultural and customary notions of liberty,<sup>66</sup> protecting, for example, liberty of conscience in law, whilst simultaneously not precluding the legal restriction of dissenters. By strengthening the value of Anglican affiliation Britain's governors were politicising custom, a nationalist process which allowed post-1789 reactionaries to reaffirm the values of the 'free-born Englishman' as:

Essentially populist, monarchist, anti-aristocratic, anti-foreign, anti-republican, wedded to the myth of the Norman Yoke and of an egalitarian social compact in the halcyon pre-Norman days of King Alfred, framed on a dualistic social theory putting 'People' against tyrannical usurpers.<sup>67</sup>

Frenchness, re-framed yet remarkably contradictory after 1789, remained an important barometer; 'the reverse of the English [...] its ideological foil'.<sup>68</sup> However these debates were also internalised; the 'free-born Englishman' could be defined against his peers. Indeed its visual motif, a standing male

62 [Rudolf Ackermann], *The Microcosm of London or London in Miniature* (Ackermann: London, 1809), ii, 1-12, rejects press liberties as inalienable based on the low popular eloquence compared to parliamentary legal commentators. John Milton's, *Areopagitica* (London, 1644) had been seemingly forgotten.

63 Kenneth Ellis, *The Post Office in the Eighteenth Century: A Study in Administrative History* (Oxford University Press, 1958), 56.

64 Dickinson, *Liberty and Property*, 317.

65 *ibid*, 318.

66 For Douglas Hay ('The State and the Market in 1800: Lord Kenyon and Mr Waddington', *Past & Present*, 162 (February 1999), 107) tensions between law and custom were an 'organizing principle'.

67 Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism: A Cultural History 1740-1830* (New York, 1997), 229. For Boswell (*London Journal*, 92) the 'True-born Old Englishman' was an eccentric, freedom loving, selfish beefeater. *London und Paris* rejected narratives that free Englishmen were padlocked or muzzled as Peter Pindar claimed; Diana Donald and Christine Banerji (eds.), *Gillray Observed: the earliest account of his caricatures in London und Paris* (Cambridge, 1999), 110. These activities are of course pre-nationalist if we follow the chronology of Anderson, *Communities*.

68 Newman, *Nationalism*, 231; see chapter 3.2.

with hands and feet bound and a padlock through his lips, whether appearing in the light government satire of William Dent,<sup>69</sup> the tokens distributed by the radical Thomas Spence during 1795-6,<sup>70</sup> or in George Cruikshank's early vitriolic works,<sup>71</sup> is shackled by Englishmen - himself, his peers (public opinions) and/or his governors.

For the reformation of manners movement promoted by middle class 'people of sensibility', which, Gatrell tells us, was 'in effect rejecting aristocratic mores as energetically as they rejected plebeian mores',<sup>72</sup> his restraint was required. Yet for some conservative intellectuals, this drive for moral and ideological austerity proved irksome. Lady Holland, a figurehead of Whig society, recorded for example her frustration at the treatment of philosophy and free discussion, and alarm at the rise of:

An anti-conspiracy to that which the philosophers are accused [...] one that, if pursued with the ardour I see many enter into it with, will inevitably be the ruin of all taste, literature, and civil liberty.<sup>73</sup>

Joseph Banks, a key enlightenment figure, concurred. Although when the French 'showd themselves in their Real Colors [as] a people who Prefer the Pleasures of Anarchy & Confusion to all other Delights in this life',<sup>74</sup> his allegiance to reason as an effective bulwark of the established state wavered, he saw post-terror France as a land of liberty of thought, art and science. Britain's simultaneous rejection of science and philosophy thus provoked in Banks grave concern.<sup>75</sup>

Ultimately, preserving liberty required a delicate balance between backward and forward facing instincts. Lord Auckland, fearful of a counter-revolutionary backlash, stated:

Salutary check[s] to the dangerous spirit of innovation, may not hereafter prove favourable to abuses of power, by creating a timidity in the just cause of liberty<sup>76</sup>

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69 A2.3.3.

70 See David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution* (London, 1989), 200-202

71 A2.3.4.

72 V. A. C. Gatrell, *City of laughter: sex and satire in eighteenth-century London* (London, 2006), 437.

73 Quoted in Newman, *Nationalism*, 237.

74 Cited in John Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks and the English Enlightenment: Useful Knowledge and Polite Culture* (Cambridge, 1994), 239.

75 See Donald, 'Concepts' for further discussion.

76 William Eden, 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Auckland, *Some remarks on the apparent circumstances of the war in the fourth week of October 1795* (1795), 23.

That 'timidity' invokes human emotion, and Britons ability to actively sustain liberty through their behaviour and their regulation of the behaviours of others. At stake then in satires on female fashionistas and weak willed or overbearing husbands is the state of the national character, the policing of that national character, and how that national character betrayed or overburdened the central tenets of British liberty. With discourses on society and the cosmos in flux, so too were notions of self, identity, nation, custom and liberty. Some ideas however formed the core of those values - the belief in a reasoned system of government, protective of all under one set of laws,<sup>77</sup> open to improvement when conditions were stable enough to do so;<sup>78</sup> the assurance of the natural evolution of an ancient constitution, hierarchical and protective of all men and their possessions;<sup>79</sup> and a freedom of conscience or right to act as one pleased within the rule of law and established societal customs, without overbearing censure from others.

Liberty was hardly restricted to these principles alone, yet how Britons negotiated these pseudo-legal constructions alongside extra legal (customary) discourses, provides an insightful means of explaining notions of liberty.<sup>80</sup> The multifarious and conflicting discourses the print trade produced on the subject show that not only national character, rendered through appearance, was protean, but that the freedom of conscience of free-born Englishman was under scrutiny.

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77 For the *Microcosm of London*, i, the perfection of English governance rested not only on doctrines that 'man [and governors] should persue his own happiness without injury to the happiness of others' (156-7) but also on 'the intercourse between communities that meet upon an equal footing' (159).

78 Joseph Banks, for example, warned against systemic change at times of uncertainty; Gascoigne, *Joseph Banks*, 249.

79 See James Peller Malcom, *Anecdotes of the Manners and Customs of London from the Roman Invasion to the Year 1700* (London, 1811), 11: 'That which was raised or made by a man was his own, even according to the most irrational ideas of the human race'. Appeals for Irish reforms were made on the basis of a lack of universality of British property law it exposed; William Henry Curran, *The Life of the Right Honourable John Philpot Curran, late Master of the Rolls in Ireland* (2 vols., London, 1819), i, 261-2, 336.

80 Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650-1850* (Oxford, 2000), 268.

## Women

### Marital Bliss

As a quasi-legal custom of daily impact to Londoners, Cruikshankian satires on the subject of marriage provide through the lens of women a compelling snapshot of shifting notions of behaviour, morality, gender, custom and, ultimately, liberty.<sup>81</sup> They also reveal, if we consider the family as an allegory of state, a fundamental concern for social disorder. With the decline in church court influence,<sup>82</sup> customs relating to marriage, a religious and legal institution, were increasingly discussed during the eighteenth-century. Rural England, Thompson notes, railed against:

Marriages held by the community to be in some sense ill-assorted, grotesque, founded upon avarice, displaying a great disparity in ages, or even sizes or in which at least one party to the marriage had a lively pre-marital sexual reputation.<sup>83</sup>

Of these, age-disparity was seemingly of greatest concern in the metropolitan milieu.<sup>84</sup> Hester Thrale for example fell from respectable hostess to social outcast after marrying her daughter's piano tutor.<sup>85</sup> The artisanal Coachmakers Hall society advertised in the *Morning Chronicle* 21 November 1781 the debate:

Would it not be for the benefit of both sexes, if the law were made to prohibit marriage, where a

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81 Framed by the question, following Joan Scott, 'how does gender work in human social relationships?'; Joan W. Scott, 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis', *The American Historical Review* 91:5 (Dec, 1986), 1053-75, quote 1055. Though I accept the cultural constructedness of the terms 'male' and 'female', I use them here despite their methodological complexities (1063-6). Despite this enforced ideological naivety, I seek to fulfil Scott's desire for historians 'to disrupt the notion of fixity, to discover the nature of the debate or repression that leads to the appearance of timeless permanence in binary gender representation' (1068).

82 See Paul Hair (ed.), *Before the Bawdy Court: Selections from church court and other records relating to the correction of moral offences in England, Scotland and New England, 1300-1800* (London, 1972). Although a highly selective collection, it contains a noticeable lack punishment for moral offences after 1740. This power vacuum is somewhat taken for granted in modern historiography. The campaign for moral reform was eventually taken up by Methodists, Evangelicals and of course William Wilberforce. Thompson (*Customs*, 482) argues that rough music filled the rural moral vacuum. For assertions of Anglican influence see Albers.

83 Thompson, *Customs*, 493.

84 See the narrative between Manfred and Isabella in Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), ed. E. J. Clery (OUP, 1996), especially 51.

85 Marianna D'Ezio, 'The Advantages of 'Demi-Naturalization': Mutual Perceptions of Britain and Italy in Hester Lynch Piozzi's *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy and Germany*', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33.2 (June 2010), 165.

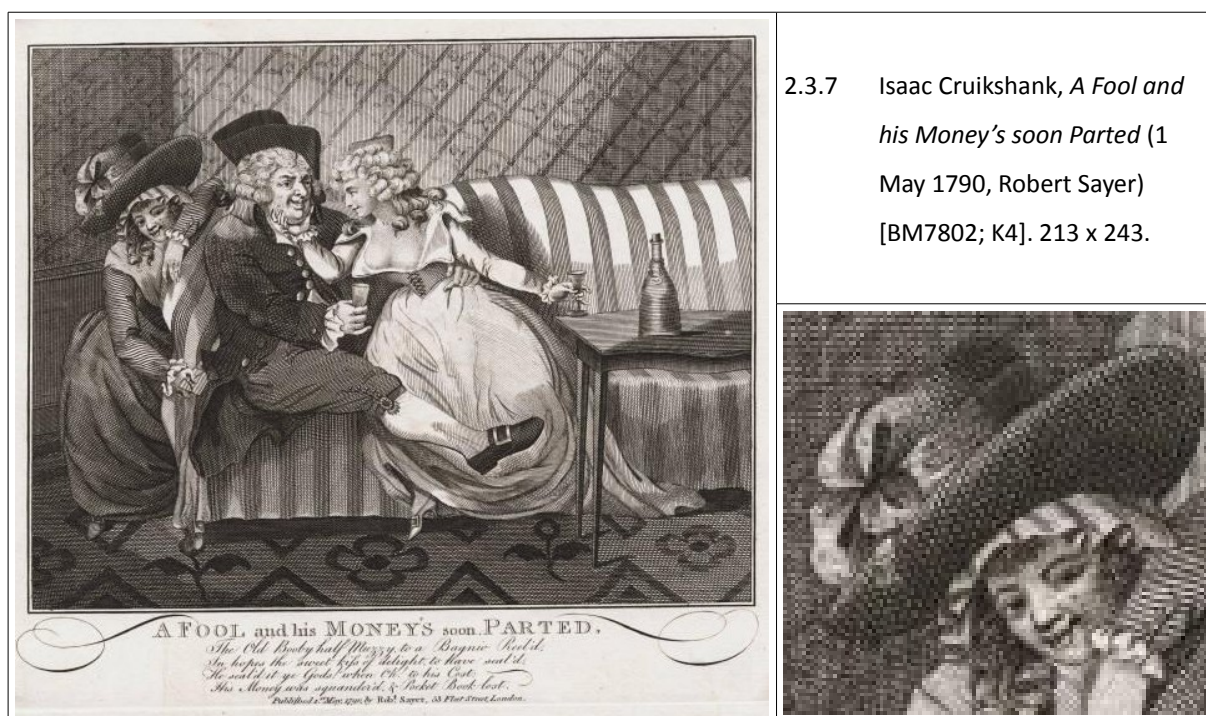
great disproportion of years subsists?<sup>86</sup>

Similarly the progressive Mitre Tavern Society for Free Debate discussed 21 September 1786:

Whether a great disproportion of years, or a total contrariety of disposition, ought to be most avoided [in marriage]?

Those in attendance found the former to be most avoided.<sup>87</sup>

Cruikshank responded to this discourse in four drolls published by Robert Sayer 1 May 1790, which although not explicitly a coherent narrative, seem intended (by their order in Laurie & Whittle's 1795 catalogue) as a morality tale. In the first, *A Fool and His Money's Soon Parted* (2.3.7), a drunken man smitten by the affections of two prostitutes fails to notice the female to his right, knowingly engaging the viewer, picking his pocket.



Next (2.3.8) a young bare-chested female playfully teases her husband, diverting attention from her fleeing, barely clothed lover. She resembles the aforementioned thieving prostitute (2.3.7), indicating

86 *Morning Chronicle*, 21 November 1781. For metropolitan debate see Donna T. Andrew (ed.), *London Debating Societies, 1776-1799*, London Record Society XXX (London, 1994).

87 *General Advertiser*, 28 September 1786. Five years later the aspirational City Debates discussed a near identical question; *Daily Advertiser*, 13 March 1790.

the husband had unwittingly married a woman of ill repute, bewitched, in his self-indulgent vanity, by her youthful looks.<sup>88</sup> The third print, *None But the Brave Deserves the Fair* (2.3.9), offers a regression in the tale, illustrating the fervoured attempts of elderly men, the leering lotharios of Stevens' routine,<sup>89</sup> to impress younger women. Both men, drunk and hunched over, prepare to fight for their courtesan prize. She however exhibits calm control, dictating movement and financial transaction with her outstretched arms; her posture, Freedy notes, the symbol of sin, and 'a clear reference to Satan, Sin, and Death from Milton's *Paradise Lost*'.<sup>90</sup>



2.3.8 Isaac Cruikshank, *Folly of an Old Man Marrying a Young Wife* (1 May 1790, Robert Sayer) [BM8407; K5]. 187 x 225

The final print, *The Husband Highly Delighted with His Supposed Fruits* (2.3.10), concludes the older man's deluded flirtation with sin/prostitution. Bonding with his 'supposed fruits', both his wife and her lover (a man accepted into the family home) mock the doting father; the former gesturing towards a deer's head, which, placed directly above the husband, signifies him as a cuckold.<sup>91</sup> Female

<sup>88</sup> A common narrative cause of ill-suited marriages within traditional discourse; see Boswell, *London Journal*, 72.

<sup>89</sup> Kahan, 82.

<sup>90</sup> Danna Freedy, '6. None But the Brave Deserves the Fair', in Edward J. Nygren (ed.), *Isaac Cruikshank and the Politics of Parody: Watercolors in the Huntington Collection* (California, 1994), 26; Jenny Uglow, *Words and Pictures: Writers, Artists and a Peculiarly British Tradition* (London, 2008), 28-32; David Bindman, 'Hogarth's 'Satan, Sin and Death' and Its Influence', *The Burlington Magazine*, 112.804 (March, 1970), 153-9; A2.3.5 - 6.

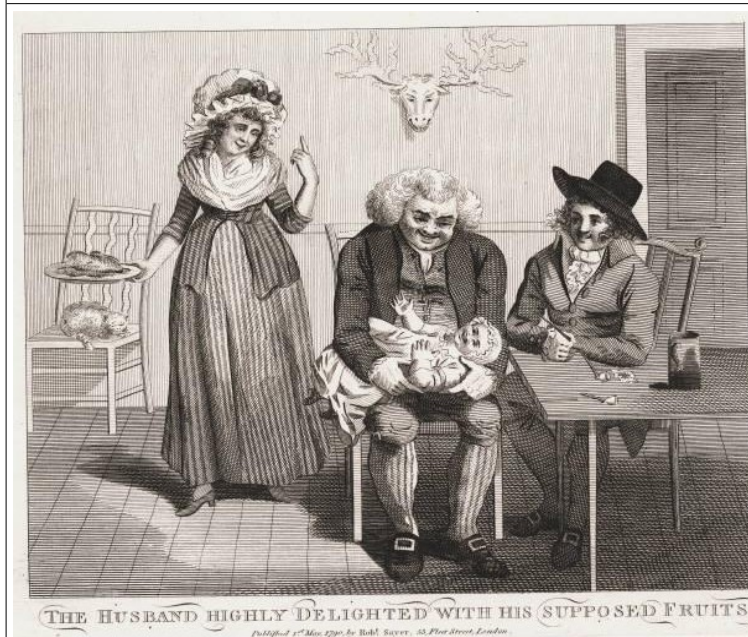
<sup>91</sup> A2.3.7 - 8.



immorality and masculine lust have brought about social disgrace - a father ignorant of his child's true bastard parentage.<sup>92</sup>



2.3.9 Isaac Cruikshank, *None but the Brave Deserve the fair* (1 May 1790, Robert Sayer) [BM7803; K6]. 198 x 248.



2.3.10 Isaac Cruikshank, *The Husband highly Delighted with his Supposed Fruits* (1 May 1790, Robert Sayer) [BM7804; K7]. 199 x 247.

The cuckold, either submissive to a violent nagging wife or tricked by a younger manipulative belle, was a staple of satire; the problematisation of these gender roles in Cruikshankian satire reflected in literature and public debates. La Belle Assemblée, an exclusive female debating society established in

<sup>92</sup> For Thomas Bewick male culpability in female immorality was accountable for there being only 'four good women to one good man' in the metropolis; Thomas Bewick, *A Memoir of Thomas Bewick* (London, 1892), 96-8.

1780, rarely discussed anything other than marriage.<sup>93</sup> A 6d Robin Hood club meeting in Butcher Row, Temple Bar in 1778, debated the question 'Whether any degree of ill-treatment from a husband to a wife, can justify the latter in defiling the marriage-bed'. The matter was adjourned unresolved.<sup>94</sup> On January 5<sup>th</sup> 1786 the Mitre Tavern Society for Free Debate asked the question 'Can that Wife be truly said to love a Husband, who frequently disobey him'; the *General Advertiser* reported 'it was at length determined by a small majority, that a wife might disobey her husband and still love him'.<sup>95</sup> This renegotiation of attitudes to marriage and gender norms were prompted, Margarette Lincoln argues, by turbulent wartime conditions which 'permitted women to set cautious precedents for taking a greater part in public life'.<sup>96</sup> Rebukes of female encounters with intellectual life confirm this reality; one agitated commentator writing of the La Belle Assemblée:

I am really, Sir, ashamed. I blush at seeing the lovely, tender, timid Sex, appear in a Light so very disadvantageous [...] Is there a Man on Earth who from such a Set of Women would choose a Wife?<sup>97</sup>

Thus although Cruikshank overtly critiques this subversion of patriarchy,<sup>98</sup> his work also hints at broader, more nuanced questions. Cruikshankian women were expected to remain faithful, exercise frugality and rear children, but only in exchange for men providing loving, nurturing environments.<sup>99</sup>

In *A Bone to Pick* (2.3.11) Cruikshank depicts a dinnertime scene in a respectable home where an oafish male gorges on various meats whilst his children only receive meagre portions. His wife, a natural, maternal provider whose plate is clean save a solitary bone asks 'I'll thank you for a bit more

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93 Notably Rev. Mr. Madan's advocacy of polygamy and the adoption of Salique Law (which would remove female inheritance rights); Andrew, 75.

94 *Morning Chronicle*, 16 November 1778.

95 *General Advertiser*, 4 January 1786. The Court of Arches increasingly accepted the customary legality of long-standing cohabitation (with or without the production of children) and clandestine marriage; Junko Akamatsu, 'Gender, Power and Sensibility: Marital Breakdown and Separation in the Court of Arches, 1600-1800' (Royal Holloway PhD thesis, forthcoming???)

96 Margarette Lincoln, 'The Impact of Nelson and Naval Warfare on Women in Britain, 1795-1805', in Margarette Lincoln (ed.), *Nelson & Napoleon* (London, 2005), 173-8; Colley, *Britons*, 237-281.

97 *St James Chronicle*, 11 May 1780

98 In the kaleidoscopic sense; Sheila Rowbotham, 'The Trouble with Patriarchy' in *Dreams and Dilemmas: Collected Writings* (London, 1983), 207-14. For its importance in social structures; Katie E Barclay, 'I rest your loving obedient wife: marital relationships in Scotland 1650-1850' (University of Glasgow PhD thesis, 2008).

99 For the dilemma between physical and social oppression see Theodore and Isabella's cave encounter in Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*, 75-7.

meat', to which the husband replies 'No I think you've had enough, but there's a Bone to Pick that's got Flesh contented'.



2.3.11 Isaac Cruikshank, *A Bone to Pick* (1 Feb 1798, Laurie & Whittle) [N74]. 170 x 230.

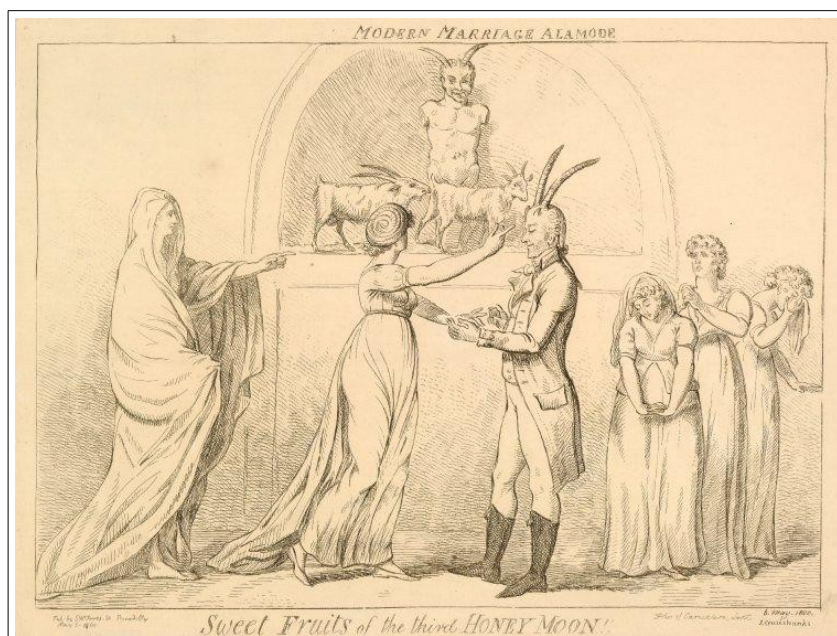
The wife's reposte is the graphic climax. Disillusioned she states 'very well as this is always the case, I'll give you a Bone to Pick that's got Flesh on it. There's four Children at the Table, only one of them is Yours, now pick that one out and be contented'. The shocked husband chokes on his bone, contrasting sharply with the confidence of his handsome wife. For seated for the benefit of the viewer under a picture of a Horn Fair, he realises he is a cuckold.<sup>100</sup>

Female empowerment and the (self)subversion of male authority reappear in *Modern Marriage a la Mode, or Sweet Fruits of the third Honey Moon!!* (2.3.12). 'Evidently', according to George, 'a satire on the third marriage of Lord Abercorn, 3 Apr. 1800, to Lady Anne Hatton',<sup>101</sup> the latter, wearing a fashionably close fitted dress, addresses (where one might expect to find a clergyman) two goats and a limbless satyr.<sup>102</sup>

100 For horn fairs; Thompson, *Customs*, 483-4.

101 Mary Dorothy George (ed.), *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires preserved in the department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum* (1942), vii, 640.

102 Satyrs were symbolically associated with 'lascivious and predatory sexuality'; Gill Perry, 'Ambiguity and Desire: Metaphors of Sexuality in Late Eighteenth-Century Representations of the Actress', in Asleson (ed.), *Notorious Muse*, 70.



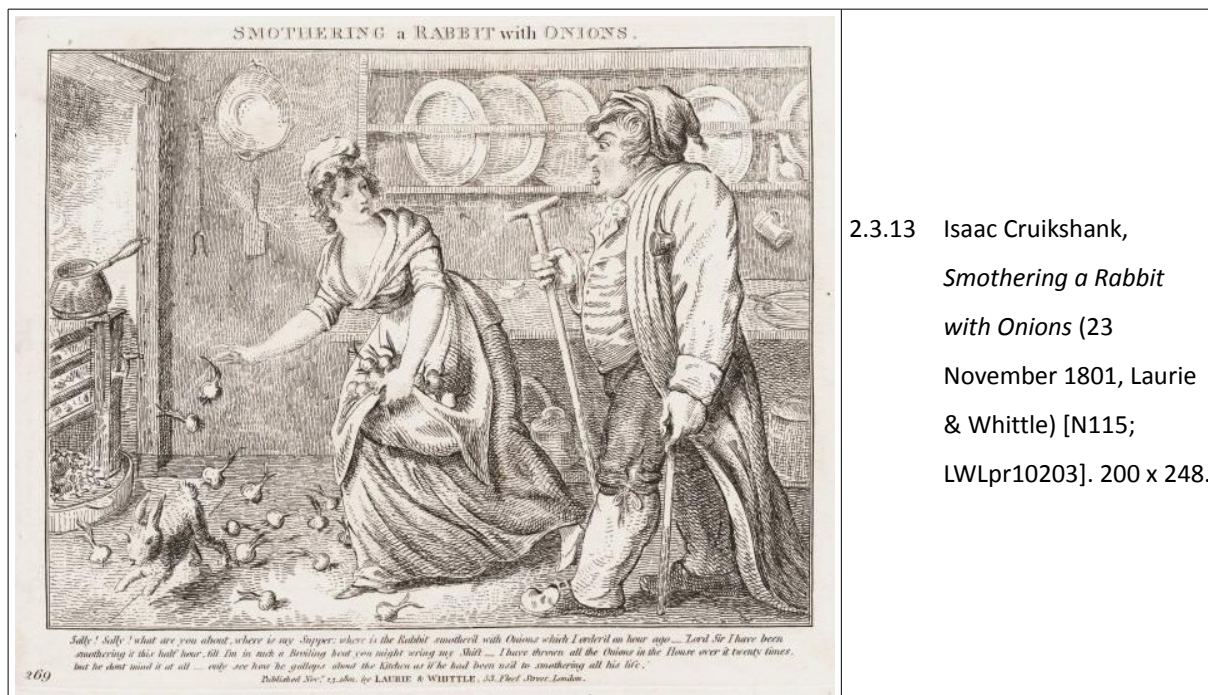
2.3.12 Isaac Cruikshank,  
*Modern Marriage a la  
Mode Sweet Fruits of  
the Third Honey Moon*  
(6 May 1800, S W  
Fores) [BM9576]. 311 x  
418.

Flanking the couple are (right) Abercorn's daughters, and his veiled tragedian first wife (left). At a personal level, under the title *Sweet Fruits of the third Honey Moon!!*, Cruikshank mocks Abercorn's string of failed marriages, Hatton's unsuitability as his spouse, and his second wife's elopement with his brother-in-law (represented by his fully grown rear horns). However as a de-contextualised social satire under the Hogarthian title *Modern Marriage a la Mode*, the print inserts a layer of social subversion - that modern marriage among the fashionable elites no longer carried with it either the promise of female fidelity or male expectation of female fidelity.<sup>103</sup> Hatton points at Abercorn's forehead, specifically at the fresh horns. She, wedded before an altar of sin, has plans which will aid their growth; the assumption being that many other modern marriages will take the same course. Yet once again this is no simple vilification of women. Instead Cruikshankian prints on marriage problematise a palpable transference of power and freedom to women, a change in custom and hence notions of liberty caused not only by female charm, sexualisation or dissipation, but masculine lust, a stubborn clinging to antiquated (hypermasculine) notions of patriarchy, and (conversely) a sanctioning of female independence.

<sup>103</sup> For the marriage market as mercenary; Michael McKeon, *The secret history of domesticity : public, private, and the division of knowledge* (Baltimore, 2005), 194.



## Fashion



2.3.13 Isaac Cruikshank,  
*Smothering a Rabbit with Onions* (23  
November 1801, Laurie  
& Whittle) [N115;  
LWLpr10203]. 200 x 248.

These discourses of (perceived) circumstantial changes and male failings are repeated in broader satires on women. In *Smothering a Rabbit with Onions* (2.3.13) a stout, imposing and ugly male, drunkenly bellows instructions towards a female cook scattering onions around a kitchen floor, vaguely in the direction of a rabbit. This simple minded cook, whose utensils lie discarded or hang unused, is incapable of preparing a meal, a graphic comedy reinforced by textual narrative:

Sally, Sally, what are you about, where is my Supper; where is the Rabbit smothering with Onions which I order's an hour ago – Lord Sir I have been smothering it this half hour, till I'm sure a Boiling heat you might wring my Shirt. I have thrown all the onions in the House over twenty times, and he don't mind it at all – only see how he gallops about the kitchen as if he had been used to smothering all his life.

Sally, young, porcelain skinned and lewdly dressed, was not hired for her abilities in the kitchen and is the ultimate victim of the scene, the sexual plaything of her master.<sup>104</sup>

104 For Scott ('Gender', 1058) objectification is a process of subordination. Servant and prostitute were regularly conflated; McKeon, 194; Kristina Straub, *Domestic Affairs: Intimacy, Eroticism, and Violence Between Servants and Masters in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Baltimore, 2009), 32-3.

Yet more commonly graphic satire mocked, in a tradition which stretched to the mid-century,<sup>105</sup> how female sexualisation, power and vanity compromised the moral ideal of metropolitan living. In Henry Angelo's description of *The Inconvenience of Dress* (2.3.14) this even threatened their humanity:

A lady, dressed *à la mode*, with a false bosom, and false *derrière*, is seated at table, eating soup.

The projecting bosom renders it difficult to guide the spoon to her delicate lips; and to complete the burlesque, her chair is deprived of its stuffed back to provide an aperture sufficiently capacious for the admission of her *artificial seat*.<sup>106</sup>



2.3.14 (left) Anon, *The Inconvenience of Dress* (19 May 1786, S W Fores) [BM7111]. 231 x 173.

2.3.15 (below) Isaac Cruikshank, *Telling Fortunes in Coffee Grounds* (c.1790) [N3]. 177 x 221.



Such concern with the immorality of women should not be confused with the prim eulogising of eighteenth century conduct literature. Graphic satires were not interested, in the style of popular non-fiction titles such as the devotional manual *The Whole Duty of Man*,<sup>107</sup> Samuel Richardson's *Familiar Letters* (1741), or Chesterfield's posthumously published *Letters to his Son* (1774) in providing guides to social behaviour.<sup>108</sup> Instead prints such as *Telling Fortunes in Coffee Grounds*

105 Thus suggesting that satirical narratives of novelty were more a perception than reality; A2.3.9.

106 Henry Angelo, *Reminiscences of Henry Angelo* (London, 1830), i, 327-8.

107 Twenty-five editions of which were published between 1653 and 1797, including the *New Whole Duty of Man*.

108 Lance Bertelsen, 'Popular entertainment and instruction, literary and dramatic: chapbooks, advice books,

(2.3.15) mock, without offering behavioural alternatives, excessive feminine love, sentimentality and superstition. *Raising Evil Spirits* (2.3.16) depicts a frightened female imagining a clerk transformed into a wizard, his pen into a wand conjuring demons and ghouls.<sup>109</sup> Yet wonderment cuts through her fear, recalling Adeline's emotion at first sight of the ruined abbey in *The Romance of the Forest* (1791) - despite the horror of the scene before Radcliffe's heroine 'a kind of pleasing dread thrilled her bosom'.<sup>110</sup> Isaac thus ponders the ill-suitedness of the Gothic novel, a fictional genre characterised by 'extravagant dramatisation of various forms of excess and transgression',<sup>111</sup> to the typologically fragile and over emotional female mind.<sup>112</sup>



2.3.16 Isaac Cruikshank, *Raising Evil Spirits* (20 November 1795, Laurie & Whittle) [BM8777]. 203 x 252.

Over-refinement however proved more problematic. *Frailties of Fashion* (2.3.3) problematises the confused societal structures of female dominated arenas where young and old, titled and untitled, vie for partners; princes, mistresses and prostitutes for social space.<sup>113</sup> An elite institution 'open to

almanacs, ballads, farces, pantomimes, prints and shows', in John Richetti (ed.), *The Cambridge History of English Literature 1660-1780* (Cambridge, 2005), 69-70.

109 In the original sketch, the male companion is replaced with an equally frightened female; A2.3.10.

110 Radcliffe. *Romance of the Forest*, 18, 108-10.

111 Chard, 'Introduction', in *Romance of the Forest*, x.

112 The first edition preface to pioneering Gothic work Walpole's, *Castle of Otranto*, stated such fiction could 'enslave a hundred vulgar minds' (5), yet (ironically) states the appeal of Gothic themes saying 'miracles, visions, necromancy, dreams, and other prenatural events, are exploded now even from romantics' (6).

113 In the 1770s fashionable levelling between theatrical leading ladies and female elites caused a sensation; Gill Perry, 'Women of fashion': Dressing the Actress on and off Stage', Stephanie Pickford (ed.), *Behind the Scenes: The Hidden Life of Georgian Theatre, 1737-1784* (London, 2007), 27-36. These narratives were conducted in the 'literary' public spheres (as opposed to 'political' public spheres) to which women enjoyed greatest access; McKeon, 73.



commercialisation and other kinds of public infiltration' such as pleasure grounds had, Mandler continues, 'as a result [...] a very ambiguous 'civic' character'.<sup>114</sup> Thus the central character glances knowing towards the viewer, acknowledging their enquiries regarding the relative rank, wealth and pregnancy of the lewd and bizarrely dressed female attendees.<sup>115</sup>



2.3.17 Anon after John Collet, *The Feather'd Fair in a Fright* (11 June 1779, Carrington Bowles) [BM5621]. 520 x 375.

This exploration of hierarchical disarray through the unnatural absurdity of female fashion, recalls earlier prints such as *The Feather'd Fair in a Fright* (2.3.17) where the exaggerated headdresses of

114 Peter Mandler, 'Art in a Cool Climate: The Cultural Policy of the British State in European Context, c. 1780 to c. 1850', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 134 (2006), 102. For pleasure gardens as fluid public spaces see John Corry, *A Satirical View of London; or, a descriptive sketch of the English metropolis: with strictures on men and manners* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition. London, 1804), 39; Benjamin Heller, 'Leisure and pleasure in London society, 1760-1820: an agent-centred approach' (University of Oxford DPhil thesis, 2009), 75, 81-3, passim.

115 Although the fashion for bare breasts in particular was exaggerated by moralists, contemporaries justified the volume of satirical response by the extravagance of the perceived transgression (Gatrell, *City*, 167); Thomas James Matthias, *The Pursuits of Literature* (Thirteenth edition: London, 1805), 148; A2.3.11. The lack of sense among the *beau monde* is satirised by Corry who states 'they wage war like the ancient Gauls, exposing themselves, almost naked, to the rigour of a wintery atmosphere; John Corry, *A Satirical View of London: Or A Descriptive Sketch of the English Metropolis, with Strictures on Men and Manners* (Third edition: London, 1804), 211. The thin, tightly fitted fabric of fashionable females was also satirised; A2.3.12 - 15; Corry, 70, 72-3. Despite complaints of foreign influence, this neo-classical style of dress was an English invention; Donald, *Age*, 138.



two female fashionistas are challenged by two Ostriches seeking to 'restore the borrowed Plumes'.<sup>116</sup> Far from fashion leading to greater decorum,<sup>117</sup> it is an affront to nature (and natural order) and a cause of a raucous and potentially violent scene.<sup>118</sup> As the attached text concludes:

Let them squeak, scamper, scream, squabble, scramble, or fight

You may laugh at their figures, for they're in a fright

The 'them' that 'squeak' and 'scamper' could be any of Collet's actors, but as the only figures 'in a fright' are human, the viewer is encouraged to 'laugh at' them for, despite their graces, they 'squeak, scamper, scream, squabble [and], scramble' like animals.



2.3.18 Isaac and George Cruikshank, *Tabies & Tom Cat. Or old maids examining an unique male Tortoise shell subject* (15 February 1808, S W Fores) [BM11126]. 228 x 334.

This problematisation of female choice and empowerment is further critiqued in *Tabies & Tom Cat*.

<sup>116</sup> A fashion started by the Duchess of Devonshire who in 1777 'successfully demanded that society adopt hairpieces composed of ostrich feathers several feet long'; Leslie Mitchell, *The Whig World: 1760-1837* (London, 2005), 43.

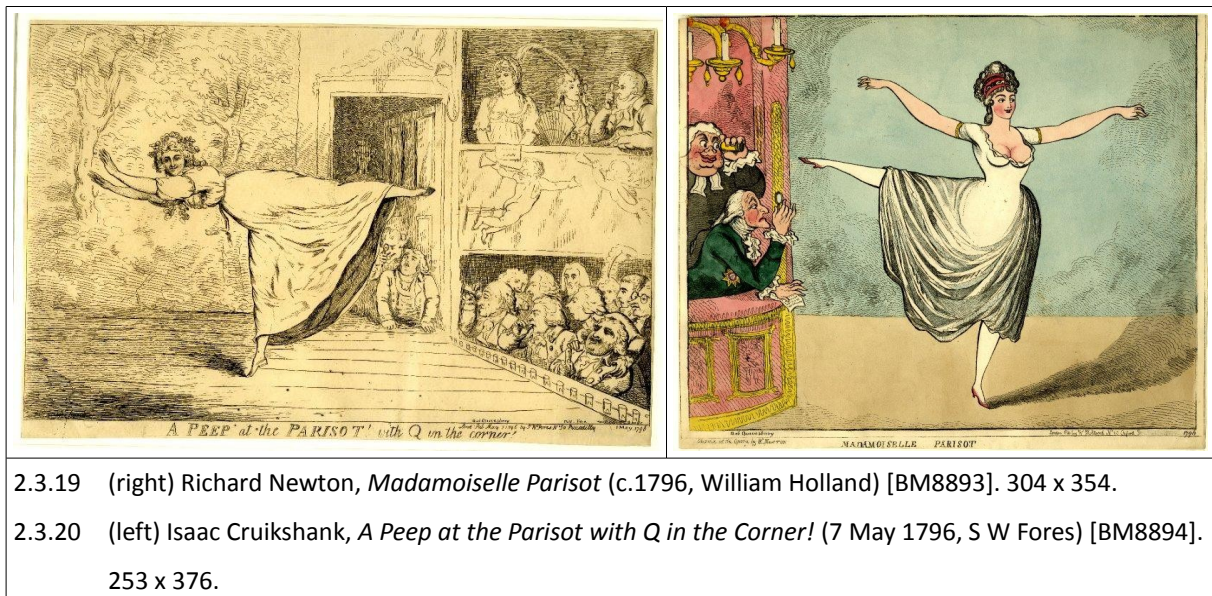
<sup>117</sup> The charge of insincerity against exhibitionist displays of fashionable politeness is explored in Paul Langford, 'The uses of Eighteenth-century politeness', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 311-31.

<sup>118</sup> For traditional biological hierarchies see Humphrey Primatt, *A Dissertation on the Duty of Mercy and Sin or Cruelty to Brute Animals* (London, 1776), esp. 4-6.

*Or Old Maids Examining an Unique Male Tortoise Shell Subject* (2.3.18), where grossly caricatured ladies fight for a prize auction lot - a tortoise-shell cat. They fawn over the creature and inspect his genitals; one remarking 'I would give any money for him'. Behind them hangs a picture depicting a horrified John Bull trying to escape Cupid's arrow; a metaphor for the power of these faddish 'old maids' willing to buy themselves young, attractive spouses.<sup>119</sup> Independent of men they clamour for social standing through fashion, whilst their bodies, in contrast, are the ugly and angular figurations of Corry's 'grey-haired matrons':

Decorated with such a profusion of ornaments, that they attract the eye; as the foliage of the trees in Autumn exhibit a more gaudy variety of tints than even the fresh beauties of Spring.<sup>120</sup>

#### Courting and Courtesans



These prints link late-eighteenth century female freedom with a pursuit of pointless, banal and unnatural fashions in the nineteenth century.<sup>121</sup> Yet once again women alone were not at fault. Not

119 A luxurious pursuit contemporaries perceived as 'the result of imaginative failure'; Roger D. Lund, 'From Dulness to Luxury: 'Estimate' Brown, Warburton and the *Dunciad*', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 31:4 (2008), 566. Also Boswell, *London Journal*, 195.

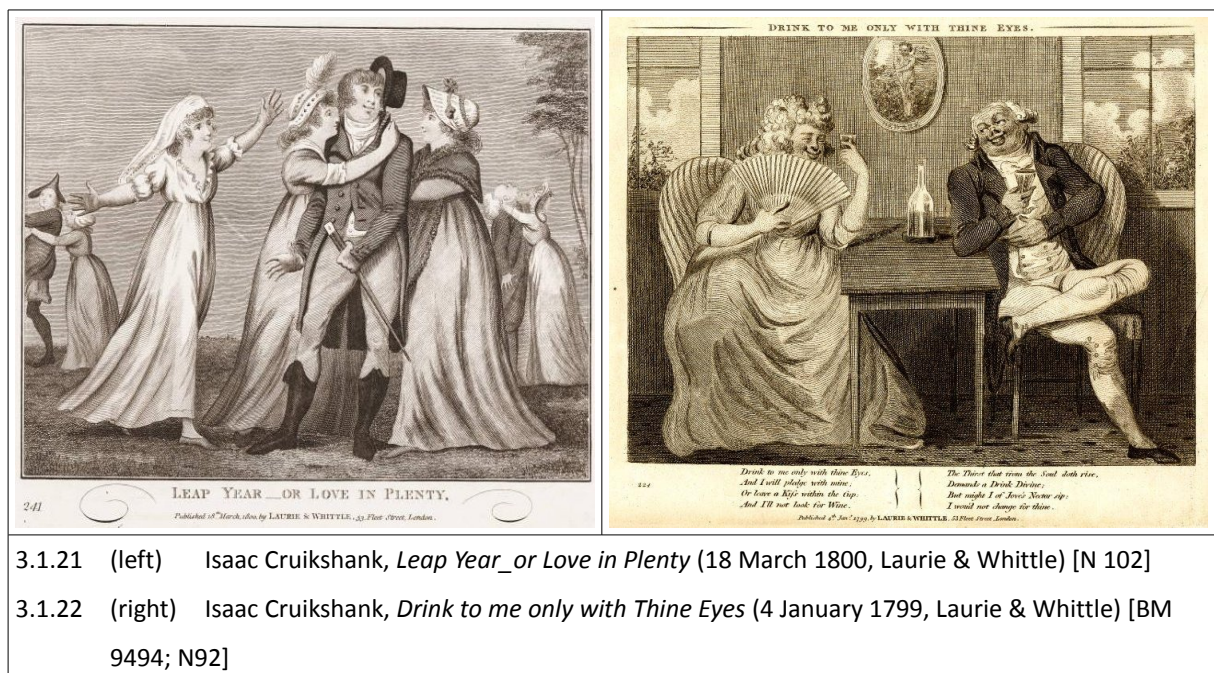
120 Corry, 62.

121 A period during which 'a historic and extraordinary transformation took place that paralleled the great male renunciation of lace, silk and colour'; Gatrell, *City*, 364.



only were fashion, show and spectacle an intricate part of courting, flirting and chasing,<sup>122</sup> but female excess in this arena was met with male inertia; sexual captivation overcame rationality. In prints marking the London début of Mademoiselle Parisot the nearly all male crowd of Cruikshank (2.3.19) and Newton's (2.3.20) theatres are only interested in the revealing views her pioneering pirouette allowed.

Equally in *Leap Year* (2.3.21), depicting February 29<sup>th</sup> 1800 (a day of inverted sexual politics), Isaac demonstrates social anarchy through this folly of male vanity and unchecked female emotion.<sup>123</sup> Similar themes reappear in *Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes* (2.3.22),<sup>124</sup> a satirical re-imagining of Ben Jonson's (1572-1637) popular romantic song:



Drink to me only with thine Eyes,

And I will pledge with mine;

Or leave a Kiss within the Cup;

122 And rather more fun than marriage; A2.3.16 - 18.

123 Humorous explorations of familial reactions to the independent passions of young men and women was a staple of eighteenth century fiction. See the love triangle between Theodore, Isabella and Matilda in Walpole, *Castle of Otranto*, esp. 92-3.

124 Richard Newton produced a similar print of the same title in 1797; A2.3.19.

And I'll not look for Wine  
 The Thirst that from the Soul doth rise,  
 Demands a Drink Divine;  
 But might I of Jove's Nectar sip;  
 I would not change for thine.

Counterbalancing this charming and innocent refrain is graphic parody. The fashionably dressed but far from handsome male may regale his partner with promises of sobriety in exchange for her affections, but his motives are revealed by the painting on the wall between them where, above the words 'BEWARE', cupid points an arrow at the female. The suggestion is that she may be smitten by his act, but that words alone do not guarantee his marital suitability.<sup>125</sup>



2.3.23 Isaac Cruikshank, *Leading Apes in Hell* (c. 1795)  
 [N59]. 177 x 232.

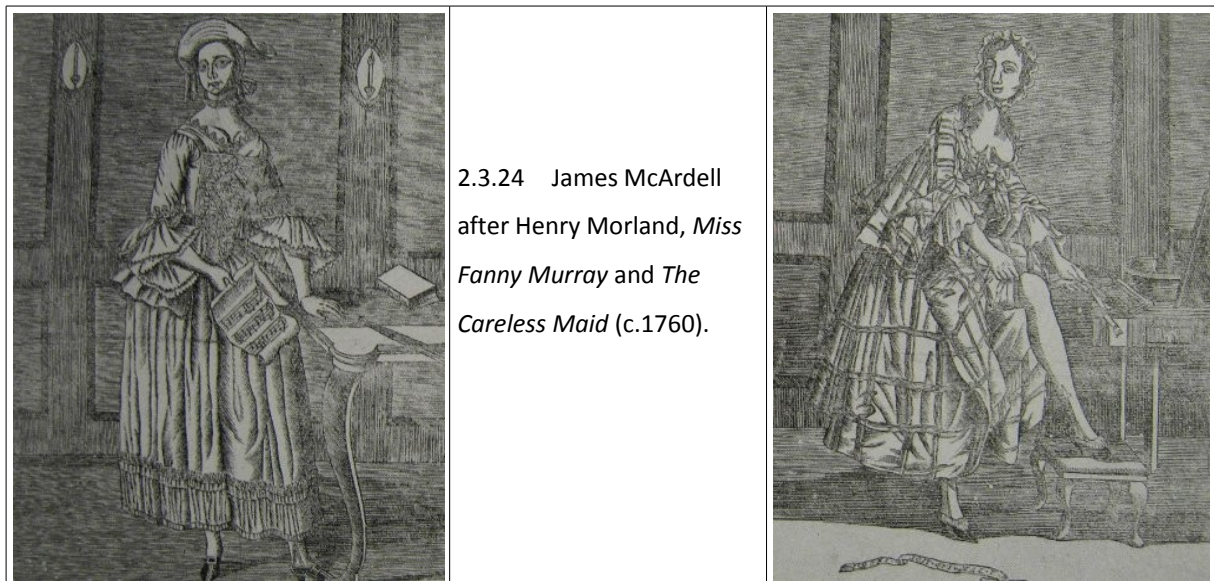
These discourses on gender, marriage, fashion and courting converged ideologically onto the prostitute; a powerful and familiar linguistic device synonymous with urban space,<sup>126</sup> as the success of Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) attests.<sup>127</sup> And like Defoe, printmakers regularly used prostitution to

125 Therefore placing the print alongside those patriarchal 'constructions of femininity [which] both reflected women's social situation and sought to shape it proactively'; Alan Robinson, *Imagining London, 1770-1900* (London, 2004), 20.

126 One of the first sights Bewick mentions seeing in London were of 'women engaged in the wretched business of "street-walking"'; Bewick, *Memoir*, 97.

127 Use of 'moll' to denote a prostitute appears both before and after 1722 (see *OED*), therefore entry of the word into popular parlance does not signify the novel's success (indeed it is omitted from Johnson,

critique fashionable ladies. Representationally argues Carter 'the distinction between the woman of virtue and the woman of pleasure was, at best, a rather slippery one'.<sup>128</sup> Indeed in two mid-century companion prints (2.3.24) a common prostitute exposes 'the charms of the garter'. Yet her 'fair' and 'innocent' counterpart is in fact a notorious courtesan,<sup>129</sup> linking the well dressed and morally bankrupt prostitute with London's similarly attired society ladies.



This conflation was later explored in a playful passage from Stevens' lecture:

This is the hood in high taste at the lower end of town: and while this is worn by lady Mary, lady Betty, lady Susan, and women of great distinction; this is wore by plain Moll, and Bess and Sue, and women without any distinction at all! [...] And there is not more difference between the head dress of these ladies than in their mode of conversation; for while these fine ladies are continually

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*Dictionary*). The novel was nonetheless hugely successful, funding in part a £1000 ninety-nine year lease on a fertile plot of land outside Colchester; Paula R. Backscheider, 'Daniel Defoe (1660? – 1731)', *ODNB*. Eighteenth century literature was thereafter fascinated with prostitution; Laura J. Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce: Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture* (Cornell University, 2006). For an engaging critique of Rosenthal's thesis see James Gratham Turner, 'Understanding Whores', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 33:1 (Winter 2009), 97-106.

128 Sophie Carter, *Purchasing Power: Representing Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century English Popular Culture* (Aldershot, 2004), 162. This fluidity was exacerbated, as aforementioned, by dissolving class boundaries at fashionable destinations. A similar fine line was observed between prostitution and the marriage market; Robinson, *London*, xvi, 35.

129 Interestingly the design is based on the portrait (published by John Bowles in the 1750s) of Kitty Fisher, another notorious metropolitan courtesan. Neighbour for many years to Samuel Johnson in fashionable Gough Square, Fisher blurred the social distinctions boundaries between lady and courtesan.





2.3.25 Isaac Cruikshank, *Dividing the Spoil!!!* (20 May 1796, S W Fores) [BM8880]. 390 x 271.

making inroads upon their mother tongue, and clipping polysyllables into monosyllables; as, when they tell us they caant and they shaant, and they maant; these coarse ladies make ample amends

for their deficiency, by the addition of supernumary syllables, when they talk of breakfasts, tosteses, and running their fisteses against the posteses.<sup>130</sup>

And Corry echoed such sentiment with typical brutality:

Modern refinement has spread rapidly through this vast community; insomuch that gentility is affected by every class of our fellow citizens [...] The word *woman* is obsolete, and would be considered as a term of reproach even by an oyster-wench! Every individual of the fair sex is either a *female* or a *lady*. Instead of that broad sonorous word w..., we use the more elegant Gallicism *prostitute*.<sup>131</sup>

In a similar vein, the Westminster Forum asked its members on 27 March 1797 'Which is the greatest plague to her Husband, and disgrace of her Sex, the untamed Scold of St. Giles, or the fashionable Gamester of St. James's'.<sup>132</sup> Isaac Cruikshank's *Dividing the Spoil!!* (2.3.25) offers an intertextual parallel with such concerns, exploring the moral similarities between a group of Faro Ladies, from fashionable 'St James's', and four thieving prostitutes, from the city district of 'St Giles's'. Clothing, posture and spoil are repeated between panels, problematising the freedoms granted to fashionable ladies who are shown not only debasing themselves but levelling social distinctions in the process.<sup>133</sup> Given the influence which these freedoms afforded by society to unsuited couples, fashion and the moral bankruptcy of female elites were perceived to have had on innocence, it is of little surprise that the West End artist/publisher/consumer nexus chose to negotiate these concerns. The second half of the eighteenth century had seen a sexualisation of women in popular art - bosoms were thrust higher, cheeks made rosier, ankles more exposed.<sup>134</sup> Yet with society's moral fabric at stake titillation in Cruikshankian satire rarely came without moral reprisals, a reminder for men of their role in social decline; a Hogarthian motif regenerated in the shocking depravity of a young society prostitute in Gillray's *The Whore's Last Shift* (2.3.26).<sup>135</sup>

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130 Kahan, 79.

131 Corry, 214.

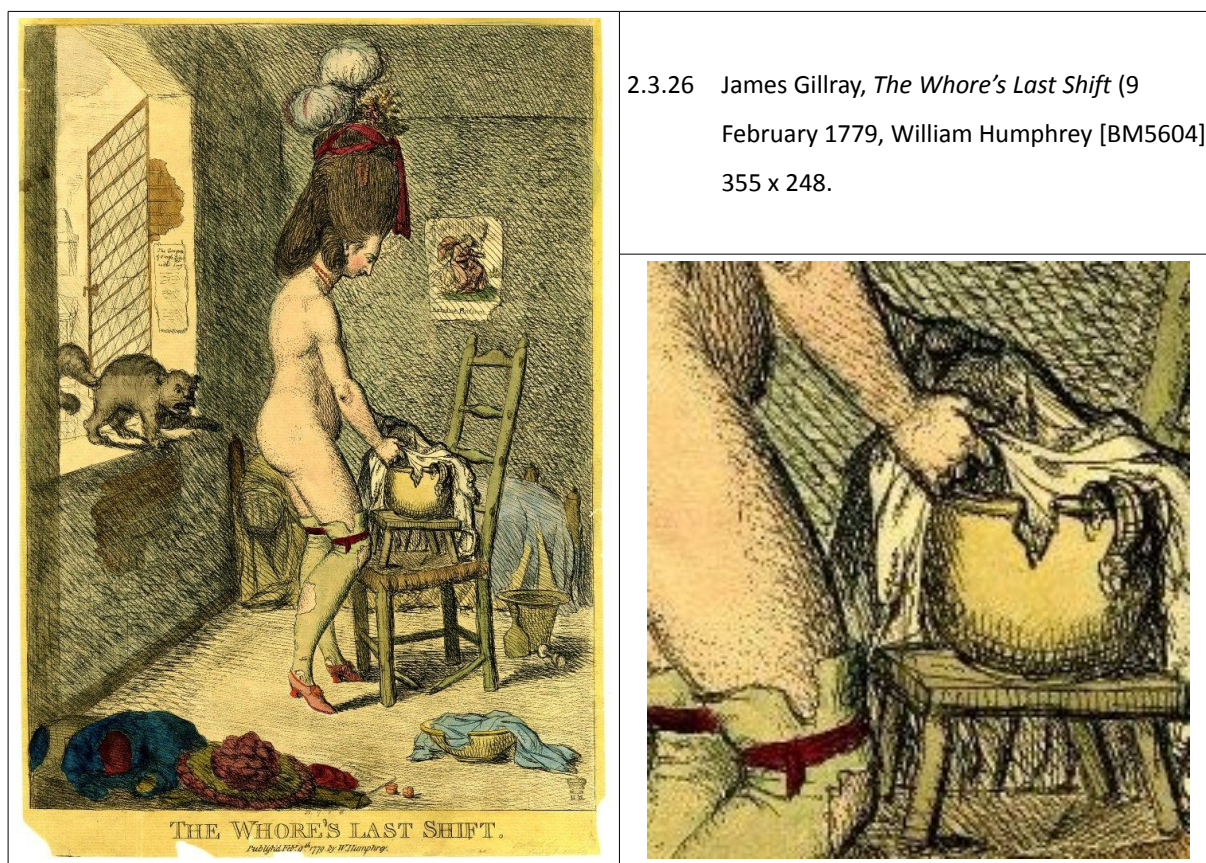
132 Andrew, 357; Mary Thale, 'London Debating Societies in the 1790s', *The Historical Journal*, 31.1 (March, 1989), 70. No evidence exists to link the debate directly to Cruikshank's satire, yet the question is much narrower than most on female morality, appearing in a year where the majority of debates related to France; Thale, 60 & 77.

133 McKeon, 196.

134 See Shesgreen, *Outcast*, 178-186; A2.3.20 - 21.

135 A2.3.22.





For Isaac the sins of the metropolis were equally pressing - young women mutate into prostitutes, made up to secure a higher fee from their (older) male clients;<sup>136</sup> innocent girls return to the country overcome by emotion and fashionable folly;<sup>137</sup> ugly and bloated brides-to-be thrust themselves upon men, unashamed of the failed marriage their unchecked girth will cause.<sup>138</sup> Collectively his prints communicate a disillusionment with the concept of personal freedom when applied to fashionable metropolitan women, they show concern with the potential devastating effects such unchecked personal freedoms had on urban society, and they problematise types of behaviour seemingly legitimated by both changing and unreformed gender relations.<sup>139</sup>

136 A2.3.23. A male betrayal of their own ideals of female conduct noted in Bewick, *Memoir*, 97.

137 A2.3.24.

138 A2.3.25.

139 Scott, 'Gender', 1070. Cruikshankian satire essentially shows that the female consumer 'assumed to be generic, driven by leisured conspicuous consumption, female vanity, and fashion' (Berg, 234-5), was not (or at least perceived not to be) the mirage Maxine Berg, *Luxury and pleasure in eighteenth-century Britain* (Oxford, 2005), contends it was.



## Hypocrisy

Bubbling under the surface of these representations of gender relations are narratives of duplicity and hypocrisy. *Frailties of Fashion* (2.3.3) explores the knowingly subverted exclusivity of elite urban space - not only are the invited prostitutes 'acting up', but the behaviour of society ladies in 'acting down' justifies their presence. Enclosed ostensibly to protect the innocent youth from the base common folk of London's streets, fashionable sensibility has betrayed Cruikshanks's idealised vision of rural behaviour. Indeed enclosure, more broadly speaking, was for Thompson more important to rural communities than the continental wars of the eighteenth-century, placing custom and law in clear tension.<sup>140</sup> 'Between 1750 and 1820', Neeson writes, '20.9 per cent of England was enclosed by Act of Parliament, or some 6.8 million acres [...] No other attack on common right succeeded as well as enclosure'.<sup>141</sup> Similar debates over land use rights also appeared in urban settings.

London's parks, for example, survived only by the assertion of customary rights.<sup>142</sup> Thus when enclosing common land to form 'New Richmond Park' in 1637,<sup>143</sup> Charles I, mindful of local routes between Richmond and Wimbledon, allowed:

The people [...] their rights of way across the park [...] gates and ladder-stiles were placed to allow access, at least for those on foot, from each of the surrounding communities.<sup>144</sup>

Custom reined until first Sir Robert Walpole and second, in 1751, Princess Amelia took rangership of the park. After the main gate on Richmond Hill was locked and guarded, with entry only allowed upon the presentation of tickets issued by the Princess, a print appeared 'representing the inhabitants of Richmond asserting their right to a passage through the breach with a clergyman in canonicals at their head'.<sup>145</sup> With Amelia an easier target than Walpole, John Lewis (a Richmond brewer) 'suffered

140 Thompson, *Customs*, 184

141 J. M. Neeson, *Commoners: common right, enclosure and social change in England, 1700-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 329. The freedom of speech and freedom of movement were also linked in libertarian rhetoric, Katrina Navickas, *Loyalism and Radicalism in Lancashire, 1798-1815* (OUP, 2009).

142 Culminating in the creation of the Commons Preservation Society in 1866.

143 A narrative detailed in Thompson, *Customs*, 111-4.

144 John Cloake, *Palaces and Parks of Richmond and Kew. Volume 1: The Palaces of Shene and Richmond* (Chichester, 1995), 203; traditional rights of grazing and gaming were prohibited.

145 *A History of Richmond New Park, with a map illustrating the encroachments, and other maps. Being a*

the door to be shut on him and brought his action'.<sup>146</sup> Lewis successfully asserted as precedent the rights granted by Charles I, winning the right of admission by stepladder at the Surrey Lent Assizes of 1758. Defeated and unpopular, Princess Amelia sold the rangership of the park to George III in 1761, who aside from restricting the right to take firewood from the park during wartime,<sup>147</sup> resisted encroaching on the common right of pedestrians' entry. John Lewis remained a local symbol of the power of customary right over wealth beyond his death aged 79 in 1792. Indeed a print published soon after his death in Oxford Street, and sold at Richmond booksellers, carried a pertinent inscription from Rev Thomas Wakefield:

Be it remembered, That by the steady Perseverance of John Lewis, Brewer, at Richmond Surry, the Right of a Free Passage through Richmond Park was recovered and established by the laws of his Country.<sup>148</sup>

Two aspects of this case are of particular importance to our understanding of notions of liberty. First, that popular enthusiasm for the preservation of public spaces had not diminished in Richmond despite the declining importance of agriculture to the local economy.<sup>149</sup> Second, John Lewis' action was seen to have 'recovered' customary rights of the people and instituted them within the law. Neeson describes the 'sense of *robbery*' caused by the enclosure of common rural land,<sup>150</sup> and in London and its environs such land was equally prized. Indeed when asked by Queen Caroline the cost of enclosing St. James' Park, Sir Robert Walpole famously replied 'Only a *crown*, Madam'.<sup>151</sup> Isaac's fashionistas (2.3.3) are thus framed within this discourse of exclusivity. For subverting custom they are denied liberty of expression through virtual mockery of their clothing and social mores; like Princess Amelia they too are hypocrites.

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*second and revised edition of "A Ramble Through Richmond Park". By a Resident* (London, 1877), 8; this print appears not to have survived.

146 Gilbert Wakefield, *Memoirs of the Life of Gilbert Wakefield* (2 vols., 1804), i, 260.

147 *A History of Richmond New Park...By a Resident*, 42-3, 55.

148 R. Field, after T. Stewart, *John Lewis* (1792) [Richmond Museum]. Thomas was brother of Gilbert Wakefield and vicar at St Mary Magdalene's, Richmond.

149 Richmond remained a village in the 1750s, but was increasingly benefiting economically from its proximity to London and the fashionable status of the area.

150 Neeson, 291.

151 Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George the Second* (1847), ii, 221.

In an age where the outward body was conceived as an expression of the inward soul this rejection of hypocrisy was central to British values.<sup>152</sup> Society, proclaims Kate Hardcastle in Oliver Goldsmith's farce *She Stoops to Conquer*, was gripped by 'this hypocritical age' where 'there are few that do not condemn in public what they practise in private, and think they pay every debt to virtue when they praise it'.<sup>153</sup> *Frailties of Fashion* (2.3.3), read as an exploration of artifice, traces (beyond narratives of exclusivity) the false stomachs of ageing ladies as symbols of false virility. Outward appearances trick (innocent) society into equating the height of fashion with the height of grace; a sinful deception, symbolised by fashion and uncontrolled by law and politics, that such prints express a desire to eradicate.<sup>154</sup>

## Professionals

Feminised fashion and social politics were not the only arenas where Cruikshankian satire explored sinful exteriority and hypocrisy. Attracted by London's unprecedented economic potential, all manner of skilled professionals and unskilled pretenders flocked to the metropolis throughout its history. Marking their arrival in burgeoning public platforms such as newspapers and journals, many if not most supplied the wants of the 'large, luxury-loving population',<sup>155</sup> but those few that impacted directly on the cycle of life exercised great power over Londoners. Consequently their shortcomings and insincerities, when revealed, fuelled satirical venom. 'The higher the standard', writes Corfield, 'the greater the risk of default, and the sterner the criticism of failure'.<sup>156</sup>

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152 Radcliffe, *Romance of the Forest*, esp. 150; Henry Fielding, *Tom Jones* (London, 1749). For Gatrell, *City*, and Ben Wilson, *Decency and Disorder: the age of Cant, 1789-1837* (London, 2007) 'cant', a later target of Byron, was the principle object of antipathy.

153 Oliver Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer* (1771), act i, scene ii.

154 Equating a healthy society with one free from affectation and fakery was a notion of Johnsonian origins; Jack Lynch, *Deception and Detection in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Ashgate, 2008).

155 M. Dorothy George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1925), 162. Also Boyd Hilton, *A Mad, Bad, and Dangerous People? England, 1783-1846* (Oxford, 2006). 141-156.

156 Penelope J. Corfield, *Power and the Professions in Britain 1700-1850* (London, 1995), 52.

## Doctors

Of all professionals, Cruikshank most keenly satirised doctors.<sup>157</sup> Visible within metropolitan life, doctors were necessitated by a woeful attitude to cleanliness.<sup>158</sup> and with medical advances failing to respond to the pressures imposed on inhabitants by unparalleled metropolitan growth,<sup>159</sup> diseases such as typhoid were particularly dangerous:

When the fever has depopulated a building by death and terror, poverty and ignorance bring new inhabitants who sicken and die or linger and relapse, and after being carried to the workhouse or the grave, leave the same pestilential apartment to their ill-fated successors. From these pest-houses concentrated contagion pour into the adjacent courts and alleys [...] Through a medium of pawnbrokers, old-clothes men, rag-shops, and by contact in a variety of ways, the poison is communicated where least suspected.<sup>160</sup>

Mortality rates in the mid-eighteenth century were little better than two centuries earlier. Infant mortality in London, although declining by 5% a decade as a percentage of overall deaths between 1730 and 1809, still remained very high. 51.5% of all recorded deceased between 1770 and 1789 were below 6 years of age, improving only to 41.3% for the years 1790 to 1809.<sup>161</sup> Children were of course more susceptible to disease, but the spread of contagion provoked broad concern from the likes of Francis Place to the eponymous heroine of *Evelina* (1778), the later of whom noting having returned from London to the country that ‘every body I see takes notice of my being altered, and looking pale and ill’.<sup>162</sup>

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157 A long standing and international satiric tradition; see Molière's farce *L'Amour médecin* (1665). Across the trade as a whole, clergymen were the most common professional target; M. Dorothy George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: Social Change in Graphic Satire* (London, 1967), 85.

158 George, *London*, 64.

159 The Thames, even before the mass industrialisation of the mid-nineteenth century, was particularly dirty; Peter Ackroyd, *Thames: Sacred River* (London, 2007), 270.

160 M. D. Stranger, *Remarks on the Necessity and Means of suppressing Contagious Fever in the Metropolis* (London, 1802), 19.

161 T. R. Edwards, ‘On the Morality of Infants in England’, *Lancet* (1835-6), i, 692, cited in George, *London*, 399. For the impact of infection on infant mortality rates see also Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century. Revised edition* (London, 1990), 13.

162 Mary Thale (ed.), *The Autobiography of Francis Place, 1771-1854* (Cambridge, 1972). Burney, *Evelina*, 258.



2.3.27 Sutton Nicholls, *The Quack-Doctor Outwitted* (c.1710, Sutton Nicholls) [BM1558]. 322 x 220.

Moreover the proximity of doctors to life and death rendered their professional faults inexcusable.<sup>163</sup>

*The Quack-Doctor Outwitted* (2.3.27), published circa 1710, describes in verse and image how a quack doctor (centre), puffing universal cures, is tricked by the devil into hell. Later such irrationality became equated directly with death, as illustrated by a delightful passage from *Gulliver's Travels* (1726):

I was complaining of a small fit of the colic, upon which my conductor led me into a room where a great physician resided, who was famous for curing that disease, by contrary operations from the same instrument. He had a large pair of bellows, with a long slender muzzle of ivory: this he conveyed eight inches up the anus, and drawing in the wind, he affirmed he could make the guts as lank as a dried bladder. But when the disease was more stubborn and violent, he let in the muzzle while the bellows were full of wind, which he discharged into the body of the patient; then withdrew the instrument to replenish it, clapping his thumb strongly against the orifice of the fundament; and this being repeated three or four times, the adventitious wind would rush out, bringing the noxious along with it, (like water put into a pump), and the patient recovered. I saw him try both experiments upon a dog, but could not discern any effect from the former. After the latter the animal was ready to burst, and made so violent a discharge as was very offensive to me and my companion. The dog died on the spot, and we left the doctor endeavouring to recover

<sup>163</sup> Roy Porter, *Bodies Politic: disease, death and doctors, 1650-1900* (London, 2003), 124-8.

him, by the same operation.<sup>164</sup>

Derived from the onomatopoeic sound of a duck, 'quack' was synonymous with false proclamations: 'To chatter boastingly; to brag loudly; to talk ostentatiously'.<sup>165</sup> But it also carried sinister implications; the word 'quackle', used in the east of England during the fourteenth century, meaning to 'choke, or suffer', a colloquial patter reminiscent of death which still echoed four centuries later.<sup>166</sup> Thus as the medical quack rose in prominence, deathly symbolism was grafted onto the discursive trope of all medics.<sup>167</sup> Hogarth's *The Company of Undertakers* (2.3.28) made visible these latent connections between 'imposition, or the medical art' which Corry later wrote 'are generally speaking synonymous terms'.<sup>168</sup> Subtitled 'Quacks in Consultation' Hogarth problematises the boundaries between moral and immoral medical practitioners, doctor and quack. Framed by cross-bones and the motto "Et Plurima mortis imago", the puzzled and unintelligent company sniff at their disinfectant soaked canes.<sup>169</sup> Above them are three known metropolitan characters - from left to right, John Taylor, an oculist; Sarah Mapp, a bone setter; and Joshua Ward, one time physician to George II, self-aggrandising experimental chemist, and inventor of the 'Pill' and 'Drop' treatment.<sup>170</sup> Ward was popularly considered a doctor, and Mapp a practitioner of some repute, treating fashionistas from her premises in Epsom.<sup>171</sup> Regularly reprinted,<sup>172</sup> the latest financed by William Heath in 1822 when the memories of Taylor, Mapp and Ward were unlikely to have survived,<sup>173</sup> Hogarth's synonymy of quack and

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164 From Part III where Gulliver visits the Grand Academy of Lagado, a coded attack on the Royal Academy illustrating Swift's characteristically Tory suspicion of scientific quackery; Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, 198-9.

165 Johnson, *Dictionary*; his secondary description of 'quack' is as 'a vain boastful pretender to physick'.

166 James Orchard Halliwell, *A Dictionary of Archaic and Provincial Words: Obsolete Phrases, Proverbs, and Ancient Customs from the Fourteenth Century* (London, 1889), 654; *OED*.

167 A2.3.26.

168 Corry, 121.

169 Which, according to the *Microcosm of London*, gave 'a self proclaimed superiority of intellect' (135).

170 'The composition of these and other nostrums, such as sweating drops and paste for fistula, varied greatly over the years, but essentially the pills contained antimony and a vegetable substance - dragon's blood - mixed with wine, whereas the drops comprised a fearsome brew of nitric acid, ammonium chloride, and mercury. Those taking such remedies, in an age when cupping and blistering were regular treatments, thought that the resulting heavy perspiration, vomiting, or purging had beneficial effects'; T. A. B. Corley, 'Ward, Joshua (1684/5-1761)', *ODNB*.

171 Porter, *Bodies*, 194-5.

172 A2.3.27.

173 Though a self-congratulatory allegorical painting of Ward by Thomas Bardwell was held in the Royal College of Surgeons from 1749 and statue by Agostini Carlini presented by the Society of Arts in 1793; Fiona Haslam, *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Liverpool, 1996), 61-4

doctor clearly resonated.<sup>174</sup> His close friend Henry Fielding explored such themes in *The Mock Doctor*, which played at Goodman's Fields throughout the 1740-41 season;<sup>175</sup> and in 1797 William Godwin remarked 'the regular and the quack have each their several schemes of imposition, and they differ in nothing so much as in name'.<sup>176</sup>



2.3.28 William Hogarth, *The Company of Undertakers* (3 March 1736)  
[BM2299; H40]. 216 x 178.

Cruikshank explored this medical incompetence in droll satires such as *Doctors Differ and Their Patients Die* (2.3.29).<sup>177</sup> In an era where intellectuals were aware of their own physiological

174 Narratives found in more oblique form in Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*, pl. 5 (1732) and *Marriage A-la-Mode*, pl. 3 (1745); Porter, *Bodies*, 15-17.

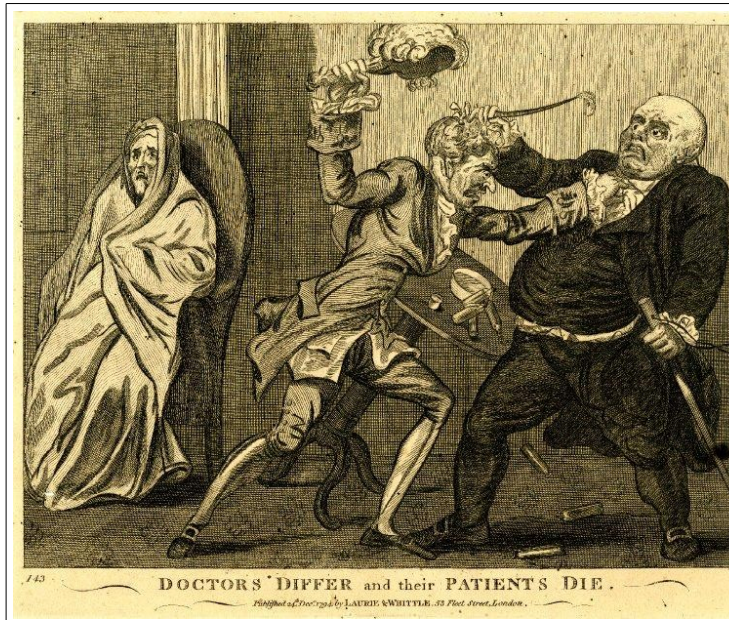
175 Marcus Risdell, 'The Young Davy Garrick; Rise of a Superstar', in Pickford (ed.), *Behind the Scenes*, 16.

176 William Godwin, 'Of trades and professions', *The Enquirer: reflections on education, manners and literature* (London, 1797), 227.

177 A play on Alexander Pope's famous line 'who shall decide when doctors disagree'; *Moral Essays 3 - Epistle to Bathurst* (1733). The motif reappears as late as 28 March 1868 in 'Paddy Bad Tooth of Doctors Differ' and 1 June 1878 in 'DOCTORS DIFFER', *Punch* satires on the quarrelling between Gladstone and Disraeli; A2.3.28 - 29.



ignorance,<sup>178</sup> with 'nervous disorders' considered as severe as physical,<sup>179</sup> disputes between doctors were common. Here sparring physicians topple a table laden with nostrums,<sup>180</sup> whilst their patient expires in the midst of this contest to assert methodological hierarchy.<sup>181</sup>



2.3.29 Isaac Cruikshank, *Doctors Differ and their Patients Die* (24 December 1794, Laurie & Whittle) [BM8590]. 195 x 237.

Although Cruikshank foregrounds here public concerns over medical truth, in reality the panacea usually ensured commercial success; 'this was', as Hilton notes, 'the Golden Age of patent medicine',<sup>182</sup> where Southey could not perambulate the metropolis without having a hyperbolic 'quack doctor's notice of some never-failing pills' thrust into his hand.<sup>183</sup> One such puff for *Ching's Patent Worm*

178 Porter (*Bodies*, especially chapters 5, 7 and 8) argues that instead, and despite the existence of scientifically progressive doctors, the profession was characterised by a showy exterior. For the dearth of empirical practitioners, see Kate Arnold-Foster and Nigel Tallis (eds.), *The Bruising Apothecary: Images of Pharmacy and Medicine in Caricature. Prints and Drawings in the Collection of the Museum of the Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain* (London, 1989), 7-8.

179 The distinguished radical physician Thomas Beddoes was as likely to attribute political events as the root of illness as any physical misfortune; Michael Neve, 'Beddoes, Thomas (1760–1808)', *ODNB*; Roy Porter, *Doctor of Society: Thomas Beddoes and the sick trade in late-enlightenment England* (London, 1992).

180 Symbolising the various quack nostrums peddled in newspapers; John Strachan, *Advertising and Satirical Culture in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge, 2007), 72-116.

181 A white shawl signified innocence and/or illness in various sources; Cervantes, *Don Quixote* (1605-1615; Wordsworth, 1993 edition), 301; Hogarth, *A Harlot's Progress*, pl. 5 (1732); Boswell, *London Journal*, 280; O'Connell, *London*, 182.

182 Hilton, *Mad*, 150. The conflation of quack and doctor was further confused by market economics collapsing legal and professional distinctions within medical practice. Internal controversies may have been bitterly fought (A2.3.30) but as Porter (*Bodies*, 171) argues that historical paradigm of 'a rigid hierarchical profession, with elite physicians [...] at the apex, and surgeons and apothecaries on lower levels', in fact 'corresponded only tangentially with reality'. For a counter-source see Radcliffe, *Romance of the Forest*, 184-205.

183 Robert Southey, *Letters from England: by Don Manuel Alvarez Espriella*, ed. Jack Simmons (London, 1951),



*Lozenges* claimed with delightful vagueness to cure:

Fits, Head-achs, Pains in the Stomach and Bowels, Pains in the Side, Swellings in the Body, a disagreeable Smell of the Breath, Startings in the Sleep, Grinding the Teeth, and various other complaints in Men and Women, and Children.<sup>184</sup>

Ching's ingredients were later found to contain dangerous quantities of mercury and jalap, hardly appropriate for a myriad of physical and psychological disorders.<sup>185</sup> Yet cathartic medicines were *en vogue*. The period's most successful, *Dr. Solomon's Cordial Balm of Gilead*,<sup>186</sup> was, at 10s 6d for a bottle of less than half a pint, staggeringly expensive, yet enjoyed enormous success. Solomon turned over £40,000 alone in 1807,<sup>187</sup> likely thanks to his products unashamed claims to universality:

The CORDIAL BALM OF GILEAD [...] is recommended to all persons labouring under those cruel maladies which break out in a variety of symptoms, such as weakness, debility, lowness of spirits, loss of appetite, relaxation, indigestion, sickness, vomiting, gouty spasms of the stomach, hysterical and hypochondriacal or nervous affections, dimness of sight, confused thoughts, cares, wanderings of the mind &c.<sup>188</sup>

Its recipe, discovered in the 1810s, reveals Solomon as the purest of quacks - the confidence trickster. It contained, writes Wilson, 'half a pint of brandy infused with cardamom seeds, lemon peel, tincture of cantharides [...] perfumed with Sicilian oregano'.<sup>189</sup> This phenomenally successful medical wonder was little more than liquor.<sup>190</sup>

With these quacks and genuine doctors fighting for the same column inches,<sup>191</sup> and treating the same

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54.

184 *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 15 February 1800; A2.3.31. The pioneer of branded mass-market medicines was Dr Robert James, who in 1746 patented *Dr James's Fever Powder*, an antimony preparation famously prescribed to George III in 1788. Production of the poisonous remedy only ceased in 1907 (personal correspondence, Royal Pharmaceutical Society). For its marketing see O'Connell, *London*, 93-4.

185 John S. Haller, 'A short history of the quack's material medica', *New York State Journal of Medicine* (September, 1989), 522.

186 Corry, 123.

187 T. A. B. Corley, 'Solomon, Samuel (1768/9-1819)', *ODNB*.

188 *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 15 February 1800. Such puffing is mocked by Corry (118) as the work of 'those wonder working men who profess the power of healing the sick, however inveterate the disease'.

189 Wilson, *Decency*, 49.

190 For *London und Paris*, part of 'the true British character' was a 'good-natured gullibility for all that is shouted in the market-place, for all miracle cures' (Donald, *Gillray*, 128, 133).

191 With advertising increasingly synonymous with quackery by the end of the eighteenth century the flirtation of 'regulars' with the methods of 'irregulars' exacerbated the perception of their similarities; Porter, *Bodies*, 207; Strachan, *Advertising*, 112-6. Vigorous medical advertising was a symptom of a market driven society; Peter Isaac, 'Pills and Print', in Robert Myers and Michael Harris (eds.), *Medicine, Mortality and the Book*

patients, their behaviour in Cruikshankian prints was indistinguishable.<sup>192</sup> *The Doctor Snatching at The Guinea After His Patient is Dead* (2.3.30) explores this monetisation of mortality. Restrained by two servants, a doctor lunges for a coin held out by his dead patient. Various nostrums litter the scene, suggesting alongside the saw, enema syringe and pair of scissors in the doctor's pocket, that treatment had continued to the last. Text here acts as a dramatic prequel, reading:

Oh let me die in peace! Eumenes cried

To a hard Creditor at his bed-side:

How! Die! Roar'd Gripus, and thus your Debts evade:

By God, Sure you shan't die till I am paid!

The aesthetic narrative then plays out on four levels. First, despite the bleak situation, Cruikshank recalls traditional 'doctor kills patient' jokes seen, for example, in Boswell's pseudo-realistic dialogues from Child's coffee shop:

1 CITIZEN. Why, here is the bill of mortality. Is it right, Doctor?

PHYSICIAN. Why, I don't know.

1 CITIZEN. I'm sure it is not. Sixteen only died of cholics! I dare say you have killed as many yourself.

2 CITIZEN. Ay and hanged but three! O Lord, ha! ha! ha!<sup>193</sup>

Second, at a basic moral level, Cruikshank contrasts a professional fixation with money (note where the doctor's eyes lead), with the pleading male servant; morality juxtaposes immorality, revealing a breach of acceptable customary standards. Third, the textual narrative references classical legend to deepen its aesthetic characterisations. The dying man is Eumenes of Cardia, the fourth century BC Greek general, a tragic figure whose pursuit of righteous action saw him betrayed by both his enemies and his own people. The doctor is Gripus, slave to the violent, self-serving Daemones in Plautus' *Rudens* (c. 211 BC). Thus the focus of the narrative shifts to a lament on the death of a man killed by the duplicitous profiteering doctor he entrusted, a fellow Englishman.<sup>194</sup> Finally, the

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*Trade* (St. Paul's Bibliographies, 1998), 25-47.

192 Corry, 204-5. The quack doctors coat-of-arms and carnivalesque cry of 'QUACK, QUACK, QUACK' were indiscriminately applied in satire to both regular and irregular physicians; A2.3.32; Kahan, 71.

193 Boswell, *London Journal*, 110.

194 In *A Fortnights Ramble* the fictional quack 'takes care to aggravate the disorder, until he brings his patient to deaths door, and then fleeces him of all he can raise amongst his friends, before he means to effect a

alternative title of the print, *The Last Fee*, recalls the motto 'a patient cur'd is a customer lost' in Richard Cumberland's play *False Impressions: a comedy* (1797).<sup>195</sup> Again the narrative shifts, this time into the mind of the doctor, his fervent eyes a reflection of the fear that his fortunes will now falter with the death of a long-standing patient.



2.3.30 Isaac Cruikshank, *The Doctor Snatching at the Guinea after his Patient is Dead* (6 March 1798, Laurie & Whittle) [N77; LWLpr09202]. 202 x 250.

This observation that money, not public health, motivated physicians was as far as Cruikshank's Laurie & Whittle published drolls, designed for wide consumption, pushed the theme of hypocrisy in the medical profession;<sup>196</sup> often ambiguously mocking the response of both physicians and patients to hypochondria,<sup>197</sup> the great disorder of the age which took Joshua Reynolds on February 23rd 1792.<sup>198</sup> Yet in Cruikshank/Fores prints this greed also becomes sinister deceit, a hypocrisy which amounted to

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restoration', [John Deverell], *A Fortnights Ramble Through London, or A Complete Display of All the Cheats and Frauds Practized in That Great Metropolis, with the Best Methods for Eluding Them.: Being a Pleasing Narrative of the Adventures of a Farmer's Son Published at His Request for the Benefit of His Country.* (London: J. Roach., 1795), 33.

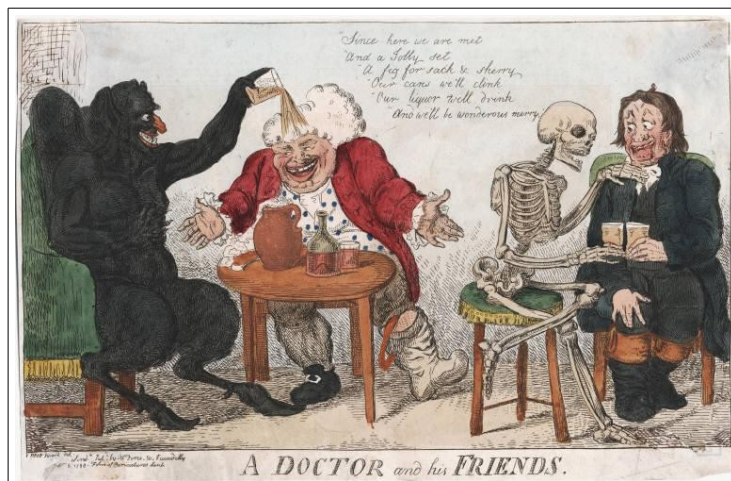
<sup>195</sup> Cited in Corfield, 59.

<sup>196</sup> Thus retaining the jovial air characteristic of their publishers (see chapter 2.2); A2.3.33, A2.3.34.

<sup>197</sup> A2.3.35.

<sup>198</sup> The loss of his left eye (and thus livelihood and passion) in 1789 was diagnosed as causing a deep seated hypochondria which ultimately led to Reynolds' decline; Martin Postle, 'Sir Joshua Reynolds' in McEnroe and Simon (eds.), *The Tyranny of Treatment*, 30-8. Urban hypochondria was a noted phenomenon; Wilson, *Decency*, 19-50. Boswell's column "The Hypochondriac" ran in *The London Magazine* between 1777 and 1783.

metaphoric social cannibalism.<sup>199</sup> In *A Doctor and his Friends* (2.3.31) Cruikshank's greedy doctor is first symbolic of (sinful) men cannibalising men, what Malchow calls the econo-aesthetic 'cannibalism of the imperialist and the capitalist'.<sup>200</sup> And second, by entering the cycle of sin and pleasure himself, he in effect self-cannibalises, destroying his own body for later consumption by another member of his profession.



2.3.31 Isaac Cruikshank after George Woodward, *A Doctor and his Friends* (6 October 1798, S W Fores) [K279; LWLpr09316]. 178 x 240.

Within this climate where 'the medical profession', argues Porter, was 'widely regarded as a double agent, sleeping with the enemy',<sup>201</sup> such satire blossomed. In *Taking Physic* (2.3.32) and *Taking an Emetic* (2.3.33), for example, the ugly and elderly are exploited by generic dispensers of medicines. As the man contorts his face with disgust, perhaps still smarting from using the 'tractors' lying on the table,<sup>202</sup> so his female counterpart vomits, all in the name of health; both are consumed by the very drugs purported to cure them by the professionals who dispensed them. Yet if such social injustice remained virtual, based on anecdotal evidence and hearsay, then the vaccination controversy of 1807-8 provided foci for debates on medical responsibility.

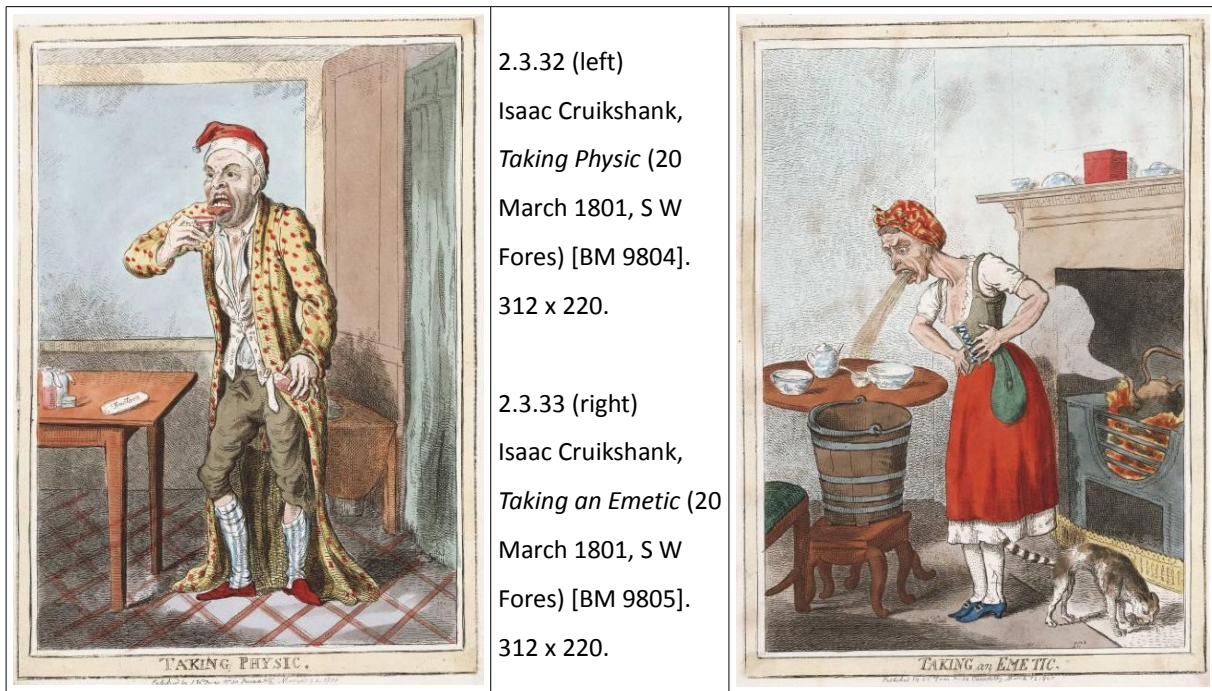
199 Cannibalistic fervour, although appearing in Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe* (esp. 171), reached its discursive zenith in the 1840s. Nonetheless during the 1790s, stimulated by associations with revolutionary France, Britons began rendering it as symbolic of social disorder; H. L. Malchow, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford, 1996), 61-96; A2.3.36 - 38.

200 Malchow, 76.

201 Porter, *Bodies*, 22.

202 Metallic Tractors, patented by Benjamin Perkins in 1796, claimed to cure tumours, burns, gout *et al* by applying the device through the nostrils. Bizarrely Perkins worked alongside Gillray to produce a slew of prints ridiculing his invention in order to ensure their public exposure; George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank*, 96; Donald, *Gillray*, 126. See Corry (127) for literary commentary.





Established 10 April 1807, the Vaccine Institute, supported by the government and Royal College of Physicians, targeted smallpox for eradication. The cramped, unsanitary conditions of London allowed smallpox to spread with devastating speed, particularly through her ever expanding immigrant population (carriers who survived the pox could not contract the disease a second time). However some doctors resisted the vaccination agenda, and *Vaccination against small pox, or mercenary & merciless spreaders of death & devastation driven out of society* (2.3.34) speculates why - what is good for public health is bad for business. Edward Jenner, immunologist and pioneer of smallpox vaccination, stands alongside two colleagues holding a vaccination knife inscribed 'Milk of human Kindness'. He is juxtaposed against three fleeing doctors, their knives inscribed 'The curse of human kind' dripping with blood. Dead and dying children litter the scene, their bodies covered with pox. Although one commentator noted Jenner's work 'like all the other great improvements, has been opposed by the prejudices of indolence, vanity, and envy',<sup>203</sup> Cruikshank's Jenner is a garlanded victor, a progressive saviour of humanity. But despite his efforts the false doctors remain visible, reminding the viewer that self-serving, self-employed 'merciless spreaders of death & devastation' still dominated the medical marketplace.<sup>204</sup> 'Curse on these Vaccinators we shall all be starved' says one:

<sup>203</sup> *Microcosm*, i, 150-1.

<sup>204</sup> Porter, *Bodies*, 172. In A2.3.39 one doctor presenting 'An Address of Thanks to Mr Influenzy' states 'I humbly hope when our worthy Friend takes his departure, he will leave some few of his relics behind, for

Why Brother I have matter enough here to Kill 50,; And those would communicate it to 500 more;  
Aye – Aye. I always order them to be constantly out in the air, in order to spread the contagion.



2.3.34 Isaac Cruikshank, *Vaccination against small pox, or mercenary & merciless spreaders of death & devastation driven out of society* (20 June 1808, S W Fores) [BM11093]. 255 x 369.

This presentation of Jenner suggests a potential re-evaluation of the medical professional. With insufficient regulars (at affordable prices) to see to the needs of the populace, the prevalence of quacks in satire merely reflects their majority on the streets. The duplicitous profiteering type remained, but towards the end of Cruikshank's career it appears that professional influence, irrespective of their minority presence, had filtered into wider consciousness.<sup>205</sup> Thus having spent much of the eighteenth century problematising the parliamentary right of quacks 'to practise use and minister [...] according to their cunning experience and knowledge' instituted by the so called 'Quacks' Charter' of 1542,<sup>206</sup> early nineteenth century discourse, armed with positive exemplars,

future Benefit'.

205 A2.3.40 - 41.

206 The Herbalist Charter 34 & 35 Henry VIII, C.8; Haslam, *Hogarth to Rowlandson*, 16.



reasserted that with their legal status came social responsibility.<sup>207</sup> The gap between quack and doctor became visible, from which the hypocrites on both sides emerged.

### Clergymen

Customary interpretations of liberty also framed problematisations of clerical behaviour. Eschewing spiritual and dogmatic controversies,<sup>208</sup> the trade primarily explored the impact of modernity on clerical duties in social and political arenas.<sup>209</sup> Traditionally, as observable in Mercutio's description of Queen Mab in Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, clergymen were satirised for their greed:

Sometimes comes she with a tithe-pig's tail

Tickling a parson's nose as a' lies asleep,

Then dreams, he of another benefice.<sup>210</sup>

These profiteering tithe pigs were imaginatively rural. Thus Richard Savage's poem 'The Progress of a Divine', takes inspiration from society clergymen,<sup>211</sup> but sounds distinctly rural:

He feeds, and feeds, swills Soop, and sucks up Marrow;

Swills, sucks and feeds, 'till leach'rous Sparrow.<sup>212</sup>

Equally *The Tythe Pig* (2.3.35), printed in London circa 1750, retains a rural backdrop. Here taxation is subverted as an amused couple offer the well-fed parson a child, by implication his son.<sup>213</sup> The family can well afford their tithes, but the parson's expression suggests he will not collect from them to avoid local 'gossips' spreading rumours of his sexual adventures.<sup>214</sup>

207 Corry (125, 150-1) critiqued existing legislation.

208 Given the debates surrounding religious dissent in the 1780s and 1790s, this absence is surprising. Isaac Cruikshank had personal reasons to avoid demonising dissent as Mary was a devout Presbyterian, not that personal motivations typically influenced his work; see chapter 2.2. Wider causes can only be speculated on. On one hand complex themes such as dogma do not suit satiric compositions. Perhaps more convincingly we might suggest that wary printshop owners chose not to approach the topic in a society where private dissent, especially among the consumer class, was rife.

209 John Miller, *Religion in the Popular Prints, 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986), 14.

210 William Shakespeare, *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1591), act I, scene iv; used by Johnson 'Dictionary' in the entry for 'parson'; A2.3.42.

211 Richard Holmes, *Dr Johnson and Mr Savage* (London, 1993), 161.

212 Richard Savage, 'The Progress of a Divine' (1735).

213 Erotic narratives dominated traditional anticlerical rhetoric; McKeon, 542; Peter Wagner, 'Anticatholic Erotica in Eighteenth-century England', in Peter Wagner (ed.), *Erotica and the Enlightenment* (Frankfurt, 1990), 167-8.

214 Pottery figures produced in the 1770s (A2.3.43) further illustrate the tale's popular currency. An extended



2.3.35 John Bowles, *The Tythe Pig* (c. 1750, Carrington Bowles) [BM3794]. 342 x 235.

2.3.36 Isaac Cruikshank, *A Good Joke: A Groggy Parson* (11 January 1799, Laurie & Whittle) [N91]. 162 x 228,



By the end of the eighteenth century, the satiric parson had succumbed entirely to modern (urban) temptations. But despite the irrelevance of tithes in urban contexts, the frequency with which clergymen were represented within this rural parson aesthetic is indicative of the myth-making associated with stereotypical constructions. Indeed to Isaac Cruikshank, the 'Tythe Pig' was more an evolving phantom with strong associational meaning than a social reality;<sup>215</sup> a Gombrichian 'personification' of econo-moralistic tensions between church and people.<sup>216</sup> In the jovial *A Good Joke: A Groggy Parson* (2.3.36) a parson, his sense of orientation severely diminished, has returned from town drunk, a victim of his fellow drinkers who 'resolved to play him a trick which was Accomplished by Mounting him with his face to the Horses Tail'. Yet in his stupor and confusion he proclaims comically to his concerned wife 'Nothing grieves me but that the Plaguy Rogues should

version printed on a crude creamware pot produced during the 1790s suggests it was part of oral tradition; Bernard Rackham, *Catalogue of The Glashier Collection of Pottery and Porcelain in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge* (Cambridge, 1935), i, 101, n. 735.

215 Recent re-evaluations of tithes suggest that the tensions they created were economic and customary rather than anticlerical in tone, and less significant than previously assumed; Nigel Aston and Matthew Cragoe (eds.), *Anticlericalism in Britain c. 1500-1914* (Sutton, 2000). Visual and literary culture in the period 1700 to 1840 thus exaggerated the extent of clerical opulence, corruption and vice; Peter Virgin, *The Church in an Age of Negligence: Ecclesiastical Structure and Problems of Church Reform 1700-1840* (Cambridge, 1989), especially 91-3; David Hempton, 'Changes to keep', *Times Literary Supplement*, 5543 (June 26, 2009), 28.

216 Ernst Gombrich, 'The Cartoonist's Armoury' (1962) in Ernst Gombrich, *Meditations on a hobby horse: and other essays on the theory of art* (London, 1971), 127-130; A2.3.44.

have cut my Horses Head off'; the impossibility of a headless horse taking him home seemingly having escaped him. Cruikshank's parson recalls Stevens' song 'The Vicar and Moses' (c. 1782), which tells of a vicar and his clerk who drunkenly perform a farcical burial on a recently deceased child.<sup>217</sup> Despite concluding 'Tis the Vice of the Times | To relish those rhymes | Where the Ridicule runs on a Parson',<sup>218</sup> the humour is carried by highlighting the incongruities between clerical 'vice' - here drinking - and behaviour. Many illustrated editions of the song were published in the 1780s, of which Isaac was clearly well aware, framing a political print published in 1792 within the 'Vicar and Moses' narrative.<sup>219</sup>

*Parsonic Piety* (2.3.37) indulges imaginative fantasies of the 'company' these drunken parsons enjoyed, in so doing explicitly outlining the pressures urbanisation placed on faith.<sup>220</sup> The plate divides the two aspects of a parson's life, one subtitled 'do as I say' the second 'not as I do'.<sup>221</sup> In the latter, our parson exits a house of impropriety, on his arm an indelicately dressed female. A disarray of clothing suggests a recent sexual encounter; her profession, as a stereotypical thieving prostitute, confirmed by the watch she hands to her madam. In the contrasting church scene, the duplicitous parson,<sup>222</sup> addressing his congregation, exudes innocence and piety, yet his audience are disengaged with his preaching. A bespectacled man in the foreground gazes towards the debauched parson, mirroring the attentions of the viewer. Like Hogarth's Tom Idle, his dreams and those of his fellow parishioners are filled with tales of promiscuous acts committed by the typographical 'hypocrite parson';<sup>223</sup> they attend church as a token gesture towards Christianity in the same way that the Parson takes a book of prayer to the whorehouse or gambling den.

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217 George Alexander Stevens, *Songs, Comic, and Satyrical* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition, London, 1782), 1-5.

218 *ibid*, 5.

219 Dorothy George suggests that it 'was almost a folk-print' (*Hogarth to Cruikshank*, 86) thanks to two editions published by Hannah Humphrey in the 1780s; A2.3.45 - 46. Isaac's only direct use of the song appears in *the ANTIQUITIES of Malmsbury* (A2.3.47)

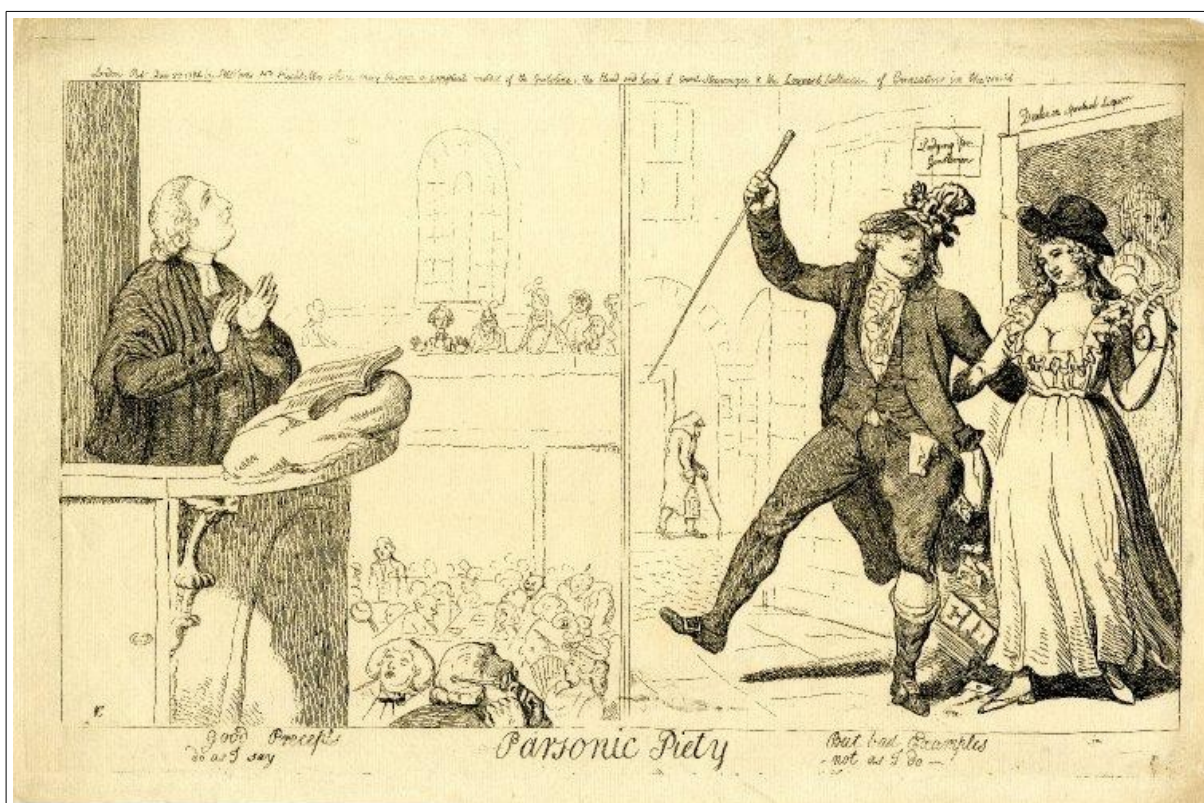
220 A2.3.48.

221 Fitting rhetorically alongside prints criticising preachers (usually Methodist) for being both too expressive and too dull; A2.3.49 - 50.

222 See also 3.2.13.

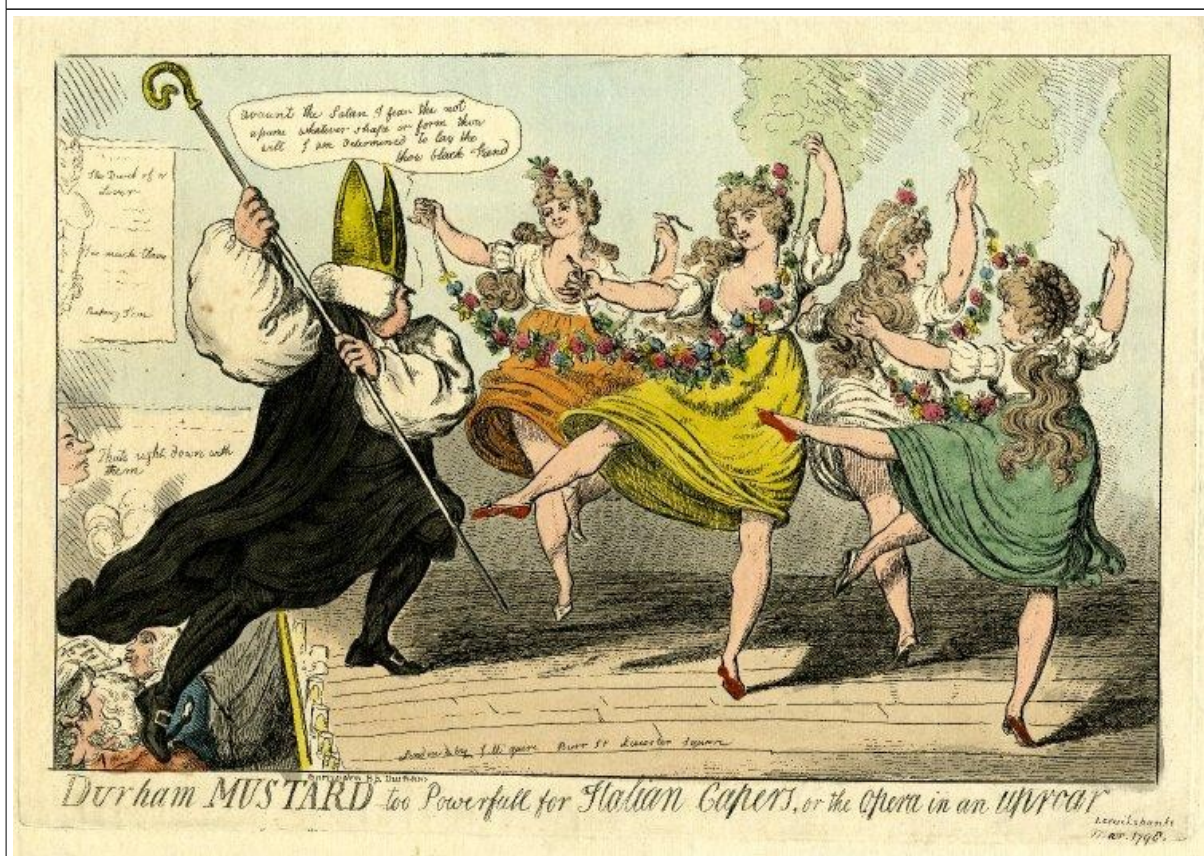
223 A2.3.51 - 52.





2.3.37 (above) Isaac Cruikshank, *Parsonic Piety* (20 January 1794, S W Fores) [BM8524]. 248 x 377.

2.3.38 (below) Isaac Cruikshank, *Durham Mustard too Powerfull for Italian Capers, or the Opera in an Uproar* (19 March 1798, J. McQuire) [BM9300]. 245 x 354.



Ironically, given that these prints censure clergymen for not suppressing vice, and indeed engaging in the same sexually charged corrupt hypocrisy stereotypically associated with the Catholic Church,<sup>224</sup> clergymen were also criticised for overzealous policing of pleasures. Cruikshank's *Durham Mustard too Powerfull for Italian Capers, or the Opera in an Uproar* (2.3.38), for example, problematises religiously inspired policing and polemical scaremongering. The Bishop of Durham, known for his pious zeal,<sup>225</sup> strides onto the stage, poised to attack four pirouetting Italian dancers who he assumes, in his fervour for female chastity,<sup>226</sup> are the Antichrist incarnate. 'Avaunt the Satan', he says, 'I fear thee not assume whatever shape or form thou wilt I am determined to lay the thou black Fiend'. Yet although Cruikshank mocked extreme interpretations of clerical liberty, his underlying targets were corrupt clergymen. In *The Old Dog's Legacy* (2.3.39) a trivial and absurd scene is played out between a vicar and a bereaved dog owner:

Vicar – How could you be so profane as to Inter your Dog in the Church Yard. You are liable to be punished in the Spiritual Court.

Farmer – Why aye Doctor, but when you consider what a sensible Creature he was, you will not be so severe, the day before he died he made his Will and left you a Legacy

Vicar – a Legacy

Farmer – Yes he left you 6 Guineas, & I've come to give it you

Vicar – Oho if that's the case why did you not mention it before, & he might have laid inside the Church

Despite the humorous air, the alternative title, 'Fee for Burying a Dog in the Ch. Yard', raises fears that the vicar may corruptly discriminate between *people's* place of rest. Moreover by juxtaposing the 'Spiritual Court' with bribery Cruikshank points to a gap between what is preached and what is practised, recalling the themes of *Parsonic Piety* (2.3.37).<sup>227</sup> By monetising piety, these clergymen have abused the freedoms afforded them during this age of urban commercialism and mutated from a tithe pigs into an outright hypocrites.<sup>228</sup>

224 Claire Haynes, 'A Trial for the Patience of Reason?' Grand Tourists and Anti-Catholicism after 1745, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33.2 (June 2010), 200-201.

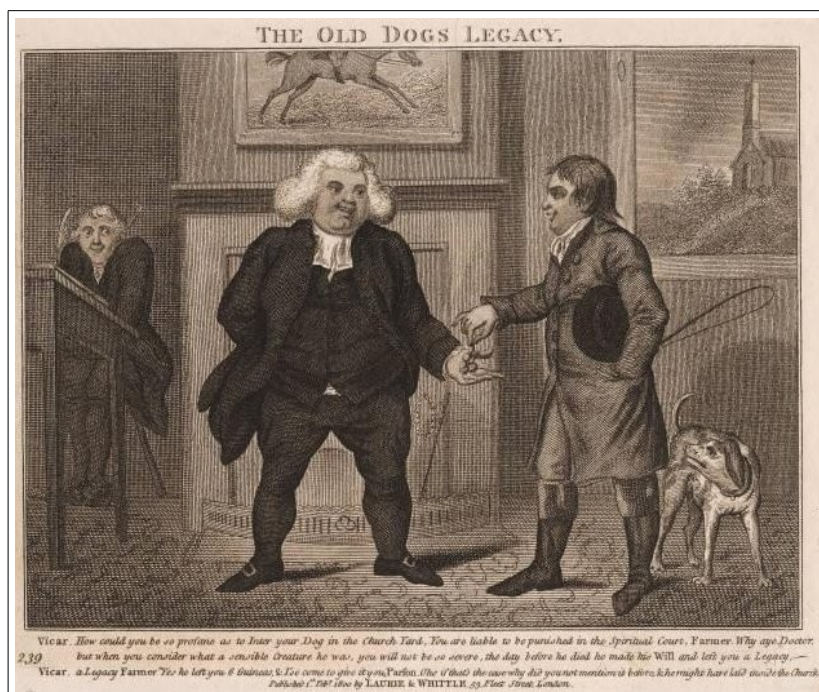
225 E. A. Varley, 'Barrington, Shute (1734–1826)', *ODNB*.

226 A2.3.53.

227 Boswell, *London Journal*, 97; Bewick, *Memoir*, 100.

228 A2.3.54.





2.3.39 Isaac Cruikshank, *The Old Dog's Legacy* (1 February 1800, Laurie & Whittle) [N101; LWLpr09762]. 182 x 232.

These narratives should not however be confused with the 'guarded and coded republicanism' of anticlericalism.<sup>229</sup> Religious stereotypes may have formed, as Jan Albers argues, 'the rhetorical foundations of Georgian discourse',<sup>230</sup> but they were just that, foundations; the prevailing satiric messages communicated discourses of greater social relevance. Combined, the greed, vice, social policing and corruption presented by Cruikshank reveal a perceived divergence of clergymen from the pious ideal, a loss of touch with their ultimate responsibility - to serve ordinary people.<sup>231</sup> It is well documented that by the beginning of the nineteenth century the urban clergy, Wilson writes, 'ceased to have [the] day-to-day and face-to-face influence over large swathes of the lower orders' that they once had.<sup>232</sup> Indeed in 1808 'there were 1,220,000 people in the diocese of London', estimates Virgin, 'with church-room for only 336,500 (28%)';<sup>233</sup> prompting the rise first of the Proclamation Society and later the Society for the Suppression of Vice, groups formed by puritanical zealots keen to fill the moral void the church had left and liberty refused to occupy. However unlike such bodies, the satirical

229 Grayson Ditchfield, 'The Changing Nature of English Anticlericalism, c. 1750 – c. 1800', in Nigel Aston and Matthew Cragoe (eds.), *Anticlericalism in Britain c. 1500-1914* (Sutton, 2000), 104. Neither does the contemporary synonym 'priestcraft', with the exception of a Gillray print from 1789 (A2.3.54), appear in graphic satire until the 1820s.

230 Albers, 317.

231 A2.3.55 - 56.

232 Wilson, *Decency*, 69. A situation exacerbated by the increasingly 'farcical' size of metropolitan diocese; Virgin, *Negligence*, 34.

233 Virgin, *Negligence*, 5.



print trade, although keen to expose the same preoccupations with 'wordliness and rapacity' which dominated Whig and dissenting stereotypes of Tory High Churchmen,<sup>234</sup> was not in the business of social coercion. Hypocrisy may have been satirised, but to interfere directly, rather than through a communicative interpretation of customary standards, would have been to subvert the very freedoms print consumers desired to protect.

## Law

The English have a dread of a strict constabulary, and prefer to be robbed rather than see sentries and pickets all around and live in town as though it were a camp.

Nikolai Karamzin, *Letters of a Russian Traveller 1789-1790*.<sup>235</sup>

Given Karamzin's observations, it is surprising that satiric discourse on personal freedoms rarely interacted with the law directly. Sub-narratives of the petty crimes of prostitutes or children often adorned graphic backdrops, but legal professionals scarcely featured.<sup>236</sup> Perhaps in these turbulent wartime years, little appetite existed for satires cutting at the heart of the English legal system. Nonetheless in *The Deaf Justice* (2.3.40), one of Isaac's few surviving generalised character deconstructions of a legal professional,<sup>237</sup> a gouty JP converses with an irate farmer. Shielding his face with a hat (right), a fellow farmer becomes the aesthetic embodiment of the viewer, both observing and enjoying the farcical scene which reads:

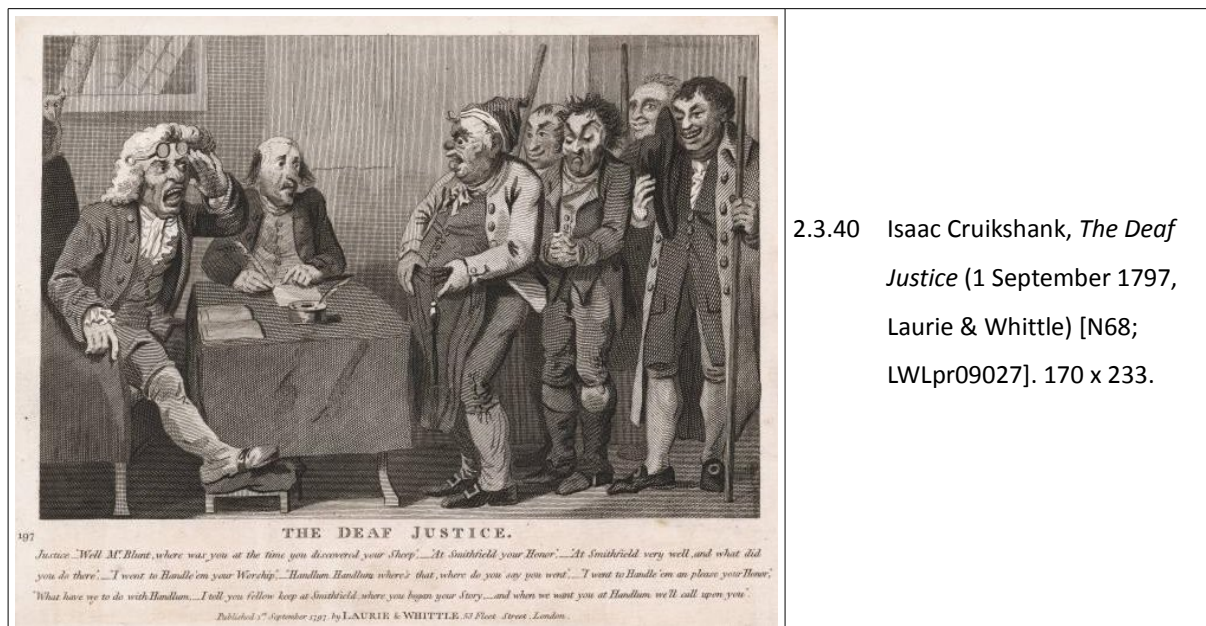
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234 Albers, 321.

235 Florence Jones (translated & abridged), *Letters of a Russian Traveller 1789-1790. An Account of a Young Russian Gentleman's Tour through Germany, Switzerland, France, and England by N. M. Karamzin* (London, 1957), 305. Irrespective of the recent Gordon Riots, a deepseated distaste for policing existed in London; Lois G. Schworer, *No Standing Armies!: the anti-army ideology in seventeenth century England* (Baltimore, 1974); Steven Conway, *The British Isles and the American War of Independence* (OUP, 2000). In Stevens soldiers are not 'pillars' but 'catter-pillars' of the nation (Kahan, 88).

236 A thematic distribution evident in J. A. Sharpe, *Crime and the Law in English satirical prints, 1600-1832* (Cambridge, 1986).

237 Here defined as a person appointed by the state to uphold the law or administer justice. Lawyers are therefore omitted from this discussion as, on one hand, their satiric narratives mirror those of doctors, and, on the other hand, they are dominated in this period by associations with radical politics and treason trials.



Justice – Well Mr. Blunt, where was you at the time you discovered your Sheep – At Smithfield  
 your Honor – At Smithfield: very well, and what did you do there – I went to Handle'em your  
 Worship – Handlum, Handlum where's that, where do you say you went – I went to Handle'em an  
 please your Honor – What have we to do with Handlum? I tell you keep at Smithfield, where you  
 began your Story, and when we want you at Handlum we'll call upon you

The graphic-verbal narrative reveals the JP as not only hard of hearing but lacking intelligence. He comprehensively misunderstands the situation, and hence the owl (left), a symbol of wisdom, 'winks at the viewer', states Wright, 'as if laughing about the absence of both wisdom and justice in that courtroom'.<sup>238</sup>

Cruikshank seemed more interested however in the interaction of legal professionals with more pressing societal concerns. Indeed if we accept Roy Porter's contention that during the eighteenth-century 'about two thirds of a working family's income would go on food and drink',<sup>239</sup> and that the staple of the lower orders remained bread,<sup>240</sup> then historians should not ignore the impact of surging wheat and bread prices on London's swelling population. Provoked by a resource heavy war, poor

<sup>238</sup> Nygren, 97.

<sup>239</sup> Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, revised edition (Penguin, 1990), 215

<sup>240</sup> Clive Emsley, *Britain and the French Revolution* (Harlow, 2000), 65-6. Indeed it was the basic diet all Londoners relied on; James Boswell (*London Journal*) resorted to bread and cheese in January 1763 as he sought to reduce his outgoings.

harvests and a self-protectionist American export policy, bread prices in England rose (depending on estimates) from 6.6d per 4lb loaf in the period 1790-4 to 11.7d between 1800 and 1804, reaching a peak of 14.6d in 1810-14.<sup>241</sup> In London bread prices per quarter loaf were said to have reached above 17d in 1800 as harvests failed and military defeat appeared likely.<sup>242</sup> By 1796, as Hilton reminds us, this culminated in prices 'reaching crisis levels of 80s. per quarter',<sup>243</sup> only to be exacerbated by the failed harvests of 1799 and 1800.

Therefore with the budgets of working families severely tested, fears arose that the customary belief (enshrined in law for much of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) that 'markets in food were a service for the common good, not an opportunity for enrichment' was being undermined.<sup>244</sup> During 1795, 'a year of European famine' according to Thompson,<sup>245</sup> violence erupted in Newcastle, Cornwall, Witney, West Riding, Burford, and Birmingham as people, out of desperation, accused suppliers of withholding grain to increase prices (forestalling) or tampering with the quality of the product (regrating).<sup>246</sup> London was not exempt from disturbance. 1791 saw the Albion Flour Mills,<sup>247</sup> the pioneering steam powered mill designed and built near Blackfriars Bridge by Matthew Boulton and James Watt, burnt to the ground as popularly 'the technical innovation was being blamed for the increase in the price of flour'.<sup>248</sup> The event, immortalised in Augustus Charles Fugin's *The Albion Flour Mills, London, burning down in March 1791*,<sup>249</sup> was also marked by cheap pamphlets whose texts confirms popular fears of conspiracy:

And now the folks begin to chat

How the owners they did this, and that

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241 A rise experienced but not matched in other market goods sectors, Peter Mathias, *The First Industrial Nation: An Economic History of Britain* (London, 1969), 454-5, 474.

242 David Hughson, *London being an accurate History and Description of the British Metropolis; and its Neighbourhood to Thirty Miles extent. From an actual preambulation. 2 vols.* (London, 1805), 269-70. Hughson's estimates for London prices (taken from the Town Clerk's Office, Guildhall) are higher than national estimates throughout his period of analysis, 1783-1805.

243 Hilton, *Mad*, 68.

244 David Andress, *1789: The Threshold of the Modern Age* (London, 2008), 163.

245 Thompson, *Making*, 70.

246 *ibid*, 71-72. The kind of 'Golden Farmer' protests whose seventeenth century discursive origin Thomas Dibdin tapped into in his heavily censored 1800 play *Two Farmers*; Worrall, *Theatric*, 168-95 (esp. 177-8).

247 A2.3.57.

248 Stuart Bennett, *A History of Control Engineering, 1800-1930* (London, 1986), 12.

249 A2.3.58.

But very few did sorrow show

That Albion Mills were burnt so low.<sup>250</sup>

Again in 1811 Albion Mills burned; Southey observing, in a particularly witty passage of his *Letters from England*, that the people were 'willing spectators' whose 'ballads of rejoicing were printed and sung upon the spot'.<sup>251</sup>

In *A Legal Method of Thrashing out Grain or Forestallers & Regraters reaping the Fruits of their Harvest* (2.3.41), Cruikshank engaged these concerns through Chief Justice Kenyon. A colossal Kenyon dominates the Guildhall scene; chaos ensues all around as numerous men flee, trip, fall and plead in their haste to appease the justice. The majority vomit grain, the product considered most commonly monopolised, whilst four men regurgitate cattle and cheeses. Cruikshank thus suggests that the application of legal pressure, as Kenyon had successfully done against traders in London and Kent during 1800,<sup>252</sup> would rehabilitate food supplies. However Kenyon's actions were not strictly legal. Laws against forestalling, that practice famously compared to witchcraft by Adam Smith,<sup>253</sup> were in fact repealed in 1772 in a parliamentary action led by Edmund Burke.<sup>254</sup> Kenyon justified his prosecutions on the basis that the practice remained illegal under common law. As Thompson notes, popular action against forestalling was 'legitimized by the old paternalist economy' and centuries of legislation ensured that belief in its illegality 'endured with undiminished vigour, both in popular tradition and in the minds of some Tory paternalists'.<sup>255</sup> The speaker to the right of the scene thus sympathises with this 'paternalist' position, saying:

Thank God there is an Upright Judge on Earth who will plead the cause of the Poor, and prevent  
rich Villians from feeding Luxuriously at the expense of the Lives of the industrious Poor.

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<sup>250</sup> Robinson, *London*, 11; A2.3.59.

<sup>251</sup> Southey, 409.

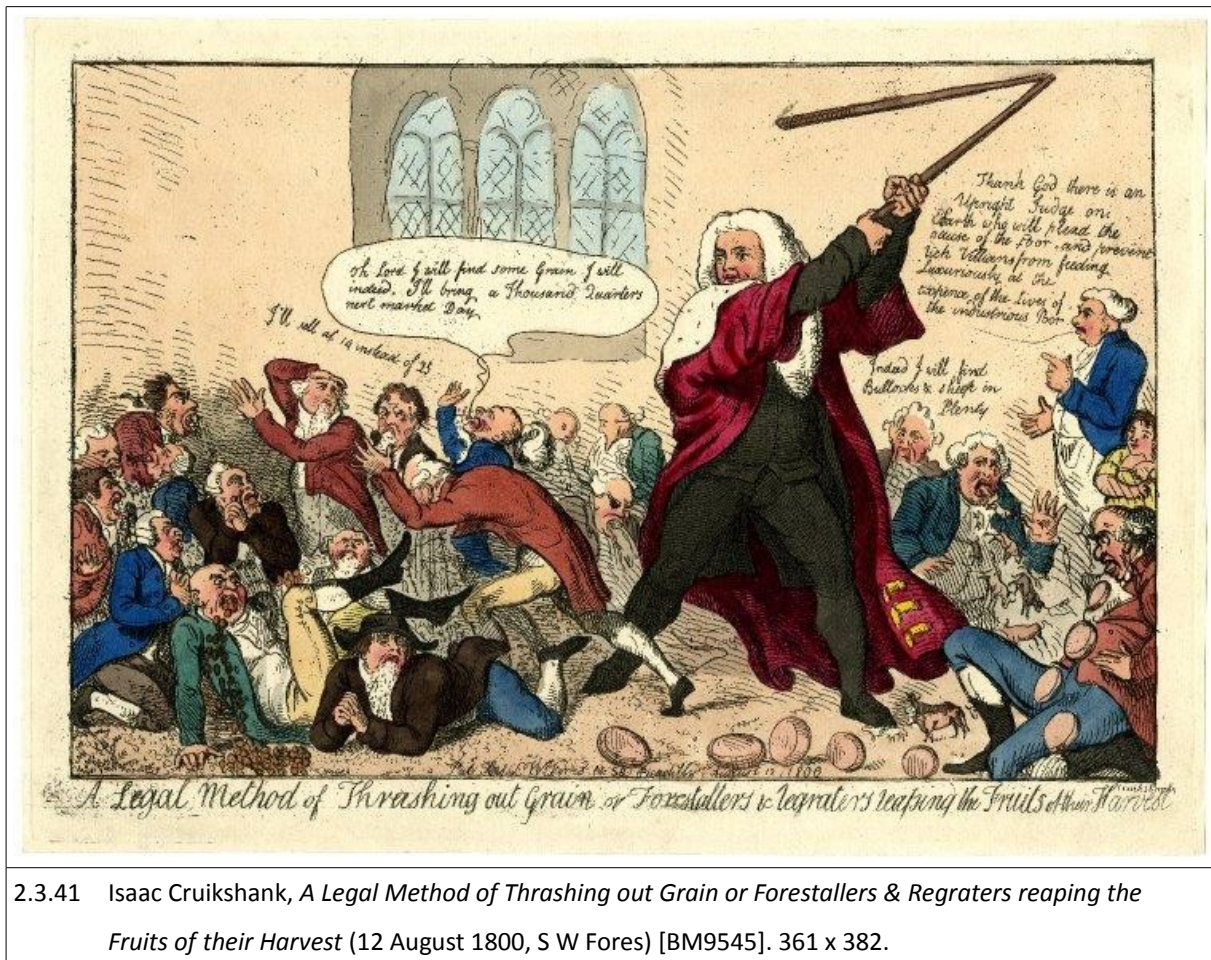
<sup>252</sup> Douglas Hay, 'Kenyon, Lord, first Baron Kenyon (1732-1802)', *ODNB*.

<sup>253</sup> Andrew S. Skinner (ed.), *Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations Books IV-V* (London, 1999; first published 1776), 113-4.

<sup>254</sup> Practices erroneously seen as illegal in Worrall, *Theatric*, 184.

<sup>255</sup> Thompson, *Making*, 72.





Nine days later Cruikshank's sequel to *Thrashing out Grain* appeared in Hixon's shop on the Strand. If the former glorified the virtual triumph of custom, *Hints to Foresters, or a Sure Way to reduce the Price of Grain!!* (2.3.42) shows it in action. The brutal scene depicts countrymen dragging by the neck an accused forestaller. Alluding to the gallows ('Pull him up. D—n him') the savage delight of the crowd is haunting; and the farmer is forced to exchange a reduction in price for his life:

Oh! pray let me go, & I'll let you have it, at a Guinea – oh! Eighteen shillings, do have mercy on me! Oh! I'll let you have it at, Fourteen shillings

Cruikshank's earlier commentary on Kenyon's support for customary law is thus problematised, linking the lawlessness of legal professionals with that of the people. If Kenyon did not respect the law, a hungry populace could not be expected to either.







2.3.43 Isaac Cruikshank, *A Magisterial Visit* (17 November 1795, S W Fores) [BM8686]. 345 x 249.



of dissent,<sup>260</sup> yet the satirical print trade unflinchingly held its nerve.<sup>261</sup> Two Cruikshank/Fores prints published on succeeding days in November 1795 are representative of satirists' contempt for those empowered to control movement. In the first, *a Magisterial Visit* (2.3.43), three respectable males, drinking and smoking while discussing the news, look on in horror as a magistrate takes their punch bowl to his lips. In his defence he exclaims 'By virtue of my authority. I am come to taste whether there is any sedition in the punch Bowl!!!'. The use of punch as a metaphor is particularly profound, casting the magistrate as literally drunk on power over property and freedom (he stamps on the 'Bill of Rights'), gorging on the opportunity to rid the nation of the immorality he had a typological distaste for,<sup>262</sup> and stealing from the hamstrung Free-Born Englishman (note the muzzled John Bull).

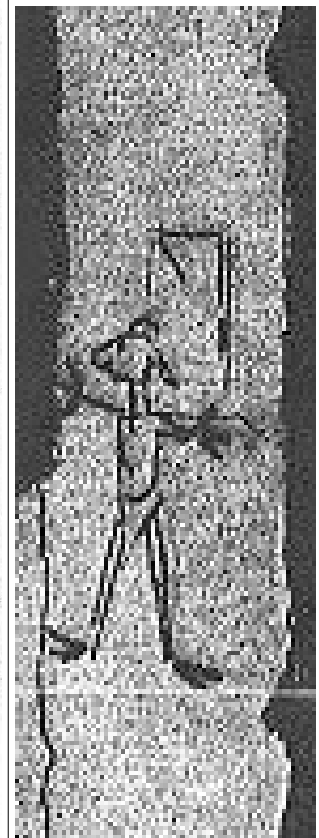
260 Roy Porter, 'The 1790s: 'Visions of Unsullied Bliss'', in Asa Briggs and Daniel Snowman (eds.), *Fins de Siècle: How Centuries End, 1400-2000* (Yale, 1996), 137.

261 The exception being the radical publisher William Holland who in 1792-3 seemingly toned down the political content of Richard Newton's satires under governmental pressure, and subsequently avoided political satire upon his release from imprisonment in 1794 for selling radical literature; David Alexander, *Richard Newton and English caricature in the 1790s* (Manchester, 1998), 34-41.

262 Magistrates, clergy and petty officials formed the majority of the 'rank and file' support for reforming movements such as the Proclamation Society; Joanna Innes, 'Politics and Morals: The Reformation of Manner Movement in later Eighteenth-Century England', in Eckhart Hellmuth (ed.), *The Transformation of Political Culture: England and Germany in the late Eighteenth Century* (OUP, 1990), 105-7.



2.3.44 Isaac Cruikshank, *A Spy!!! or the Blessings of a Convention Bill* (18 November 1795, S W Fores) [BM8688]. 332 x 225.



However the bane of the interfering magistrate was surpassed by an even more detestable legal figure - the official spy.<sup>263</sup> With the outbreak of continental war, the Alien Office was established under the control of the home secretary. 'Its ostensible function was counter-espionage', notes Boyd Hilton, 'but', he continues, 'it quickly spread its surveillance from foreign spies to suspected rebels at home'.<sup>264</sup> This latter role is mocked in *a Spy!!! or the Blessings of a Convention Bill*. (2.3.44) where an

<sup>263</sup> Nancy Johnson, 'Fashioning', 435-6.

<sup>264</sup> Hilton, *Mad*, 68. Running counter to Hilton is the account in Elizabeth Sparrow, 'The Alien Office, 1792-1806', *The Historical Journal* 33.2 (1990), 361-384. For Sparrow, the Alien Office spawned out of the Post Office and Westminster Police Bill (1792) to form an 'embryonic secret service' focusing on spying activities abroad rather than at home.



elderly JP spies upon a child and elderly women in a open fronted latrine. The scene is riddled with satirical flourishes. The smells and sounds the magistrate identifies as treason and sedition - 'I am sure I smell Treason. And by Virtue of my office I have a right to peep everywhere, Mercy on us! – what a Seditious Grumbling' - are in fact the product of the child's excremental straining. Indeed if the magistrate assessed the scene plainly, rather than from his obscured position, he would quickly ascertain this innocent truth - a metaphor for the lack of perception of the Convention Bill framers. Furthermore, from his vantage point the crude silhouette of Pitt on the gallows scratched into the front panel of the latrine is obscured, a representation perhaps, when combined with the inscription of the toilet paper the elderly lady holds - 'The Last Speech or Dying words of Liberty' - that although the simplistic communications of the multitude may be revolutionary in their symbolism, the reality is their dejection at the loss of basic liberties. As Boyd Hilton concludes, Pitt's 'panoply of Home Office spies, informers, and agents provocateurs [...] offended against a long-held belief that English liberties were safe because there were no *lettres de cachet* or knocks on the door at night'.<sup>265</sup> In Cruikshankian satire appearances may suggest 'the people' want Pitt dead, but that is only because the last dying speech of liberty has already been given, killed by the Convention Bill, and replaced by the curse of a spy at every door, suspicious of even old ladies and children.

## Conclusion

This is satire, and in satire there are no individuals, only types.

John Mullen.<sup>266</sup>

These two prints broadly summarise how hypocrisy and corruption were problematised in Cruikshankian satires on professionals; suggestive that the artist/publisher/consumer nexus was not opposed to authority *per se*, and understood the requirement for enforcement of order. What they

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<sup>265</sup> Hilton, *Mad*, 74.

<sup>266</sup> John Mullen, *Gaurdian Review* (26 June 2010), 5.

were vehemently opposed to however were persons in authority who broke the moral compass, those who used not only fakery and corruption to undermine moral order, but their hold over people, legally or illegally, to suppress fundamental rights - here taking property, or spying upon the innocent and vulnerable, elsewhere taking money from the dying or denying the poor a place of eternal rest.<sup>267</sup>

Few of these themes are new to historians of the eighteenth-century satire.<sup>268</sup> Where this narrative does present a break from traditional historiographical assumptions is that in a period so commonly associated with political and moral polarity,<sup>269</sup> the artist/publisher/consumer nexus conceived liberty and personal freedom as threatened from both extremes of debate. A *laissez-faire* political attitude to economics and society,<sup>270</sup> as valued within customary frameworks,<sup>271</sup> had to be met with stern critique of quacks, profiteers and hypocrites, the very people a breakdown of regulation had created.

<sup>272</sup> The perfection of English liberty demanded equal measures of customary freedom for those having fun or getting ahead *as well as* restraint for those taking those freedoms too far; it demanded that the faults of both sides were exposed, thereby rendering any overarching ideological resolutions fragile and unresolved.<sup>273</sup>

Turning to their composition, the Cruikshankian social satires explored in this chapter are products of mid-eighteenth century aesthetic subversions of the idealisation evident in European tropes.<sup>274</sup>

Prompted by Paul Sandby a move took place in British art, states Shesgreen, away from a 'sublimation of social life to form [...] prettification of its subject to the exclusion of naturalistic interest in lifelike

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267 Themes of professional misconduct were explored in the contemporary rhyme 'The Kennel Runner'; John Wardroper, *Lovers, Rakes and Rogues: Amatory, Merry and Bawdy Verse from 1580 to 1830* (London, 1995), 278-9.

268 Uglow, 49-83.

269 See for example Innes, 'Politics and Morals', in which during her discussion on Wilberforce *et al* she conceives their actions as framed by the 'left' and the 'right' (terms used with acknowledgement of their anachronistic character; Hilton, *Mad*, 68), and uses the (atypical) example of the polarising electoral choice Middlesex voters faced in the 1802 general election (their choice being between William Mainwaring and Francis Burdett) in support of her thesis. Despite attempts at synthesis, this language of polarity is also evident throughout Roy Porter, *English Society*, especially 47.

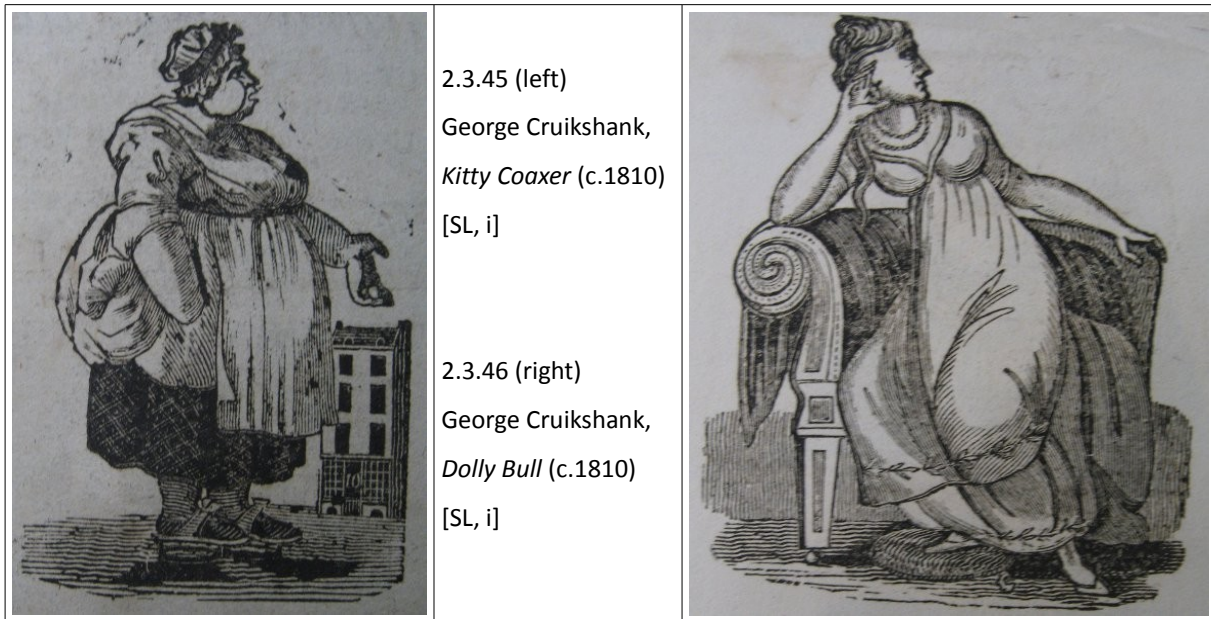
270 Porter, 'Visions', 141.

271 For James Boswell the perfection of liberty came at an (acceptable) cost of extending freedom of expression to all; Boswell, *London Journal*, esp. 75, 79, 129.

272 For the breakdown of regulations and distinctions relating to physicians see Porter, *Bodies*, 171-208. Hypocrites were often conflated across professional boundaries; A2.3.61.

273 A analytical theme explored in Haywood, 'Transformation'.

274 Notably seventeenth century Dutch genre painting.



detail’;<sup>275</sup> in other words towards real life subjects/themes within art, and a distancing from and shrinking of idealisation within the urban aesthetic - a shift palpable in the period between Hogarth and Dickens.<sup>276</sup> The heyday of graphic satire covered this period, and the emergence of art repositories such as Ackermann’s, allowed wider access to previously elite types and forms which penetrated, via satire, the lower echelons of society.<sup>277</sup> Indeed the work of the Cruikshankian household in the field of puffs allowed types formed on the streets to permeate stereotypical constructions in higher visual medium. The continued use into the nineteenth century of satirical types such as the courtesan Kitty Coaxer (2.3.45) (itself indebted to the memory of Kitty Fisher) and the penniless philanthropist Dolly Bull (2.3.46),<sup>278</sup> may be attributed in part to their earlier visibility in low puffery.<sup>279</sup> These changes in the distribution of artistic symbols, combined with the attention of satirical prints on topics of social relevance such as forestalling, fashions and metropolitan quackery,

<sup>275</sup> Shesgreen, *Outcast*, 131.

<sup>276</sup> Sambudha Sen, ‘Hogarth, Egan, Dickens, and the Making of an Urban Aesthetic’, *Representations*, 103 (Summer, 2008), 84-106; Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot, 1989), 59. The notable exception to this narrative is Francis Wheatley.

<sup>277</sup> For example female fashions in theatric spaces could potentially make the typological leap into portraiture; Perry, ‘Women of Fashion’.

<sup>278</sup> The mother of the nation, this puff tells us, buys her ticket for the good of others: ‘This Lass, whose plump bosom seems form’d to invite, | Whose hand a small tribute extends, | Prepares the round table, well star’d on Twelfth-Night’ | And yearly regales all her friends: | The Lottery’s rich wheel gives the wealth she displays, | But now the advantage proves double, - | The State with the City your fortune must raise, | And make you all rich without trouble’.

<sup>279</sup> See *The State Lotteries of Great Britain*, 2 vols., (1775-1876).

forced the aesthetic 'prettifications' of types aside. In their place graphic satire developed a neo-Hogarthian language of realist stereotypical exaggeration, both crass and subtle in its problematisation through anonymous types of personal freedoms and (urban) societal ideals.

Liberty was central to this exercise, and Isaac Cruikshank's exploration of personal freedoms suggests an artist/publisher/consumer nexus both responsive to and erecting its own extra-legal boundaries upon behavioural extremes. As Bate astutely observes, Isaac Cruikshank 'is as alert to the dangers of absolutism as he is to those of democracy'.<sup>280</sup> Indeed this chapter has shown it is no longer sufficient to observe, as Porter has, that for the print trade 'law, liberty and the constitution were all to be praised and protected'.<sup>281</sup> At stake was the ideal of urban living, the customary heart of which was under assault from both progressive and exploitative abuses of freedom, created by the selfish and corrupt European morality Cook identified and that Swift's Gulliver found so dehumanised.<sup>282</sup> There is thus in graphic satire a civic character, resembling (in lieu of traditional evidential corroboration) Hilton's narrative of upper-middle class moral arbitration,<sup>283</sup> an urban bourgeois rhetoric which collectively negotiated, as Barry notes, 'between self-control and obedience to others, between competition and cooperation, between restraint and liberality'; between the language of precedence and the language of freedom.<sup>284</sup> It is thus a central task of this thesis to test through specific contexts and cases this interpretation of Cruikshankian social satire as possessing a bourgeois, civic, and Cookian conception of liberty.

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280 Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (Oxford, 1989), 96.

281 Roy Porter, 'Review Article: Seeing the Past', *Past & Present* 118 (February, 1988), 195.

282 See Jonathan Lamb, 'Gulliver and the Lives of Animals', in Frank Palmeri (ed.) *Humans and other animals in eighteenth-century British culture* (Ashgate, 2006), 169-177.

283 Hilton, *Mad*, especially 151.

284 Barry, Jonathan, 'Bourgeois Collectivism? Urban Association and the Middling Sort', in Jonathan Barry and Christopher Brooks (eds.), *The Middling Sort of People: culture, society and politics in England, 1550-1800* (London, 1994), 101-2.