

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

**Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600**

UMI[®]



Université d'Ottawa • University of Ottawa

**Women's Magazines and the Representation of Death in
Eighteenth - Century England**

**Patricia A. Whiting
Department of English**

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research of the University of Ottawa in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Doctor of Philosophy



National Library
of Canada

Acquisitions and
Bibliographic Services

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Acquisitions et
services bibliographiques

395, rue Wellington
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4
Canada

Your file Votre référence

Our file Notre référence

The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-52281-4

Canada

ABSTRACT

Women's Magazines and the Representation of Death in Eighteenth-Century England

This thesis argues that women's magazines in eighteenth-century England were not, as some recent scholarship has maintained, primarily instruments of gender construction. Rather, for the first seventy years of the century, periodicals directed at a mainly female readership represented a significant attempt to configure women's roles more actively within the emergent social order. Taking death as a subject, the thesis investigates the representation of death in the magazines, in order to show the ways in which they articulated and participated in the major discourses of the period, sometimes from a female perspective, and to show the ways in which the interests of women readers intersected with those of men in ways that were not always inflected by gender.

The first part of the thesis is a summary account of print culture in the eighteenth century, especially with regard to the relationships between the new periodical press and the desire of eighteenth-century readers for improvement. Particular emphasis is given to this relationship in terms of women readers. The second, longer part of the thesis is an investigation into the representation of death in eighteenth-century women's magazines. This part relies extensively on primary material from the magazines and examines death in terms of changing attitudes and practices, in terms of the ways it was experienced in eighteenth-century life and reported in the magazines, and in terms of the suicide debate, a major eighteenth-century discourse that was intricately bound up with other issues of concern to the emergent middle classes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In its early phases, this project was partially funded by Ontario Graduate Scholarships. It is to April London, however, that the finished product primarily owes its existence. Throughout the project, Professor London's supervision has been intelligent, sensitive, and attentive, and her own work in eighteenth-century studies has served as a constant model and inspiration. Others, too, have provided friendship and support. I am grateful to my colleagues Linda Hauch, Sydney Stoyan, and Mary Brett for their empathy and encouragement. Robin Sully, Norma White, and Jane O'Leary have been supportive over the long haul. I thank Nancy Whiting for her generosity and thoughtfulness. And I especially thank Trish Cashin, not only for her friendship, but also for her practical assistance with the manuscript. Finally, I am grateful to my sons, Will, Lucas, Anders, and Jesse. Without them, this thesis would have been done more expeditiously, but doing it wouldn't have been half as much fun.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	i
CHAPTER ONE: Print, Readers, and Upward Mobility	1
CHAPTER TWO: The Periodical Press	32
CHAPTER THREE: Death in Eighteenth-Century Women's Magazines	78
1) Good Deaths and Bad Deaths Redefined	81
2) Shifts in Customs and Practices	87
3) Commemoration and Commodification	98
4) Mourning Behaviour in <i>The Female Tatler</i>	109
CHAPTER FOUR: Women's Magazines and Death as Experience	128
1) Illness	131
2) Accident	142
3) Murder	154
4) Execution	165
5) Infanticide	181
CHAPTER FIVE: Women's Magazines and the Discourse of Suicide	206
1) The Discourse of Suicide	212
2) Suicide in Practice	227
3) Suicide and Eighteenth - Century Women's Magazines	230
CONCLUSION	253
BIBLIOGRAPHY	258

INTRODUCTION

The British print establishment of the eighteenth century was in many ways a paradigmatic capitalist enterprise, though not in the sense that it was the beginning of British capitalism, whose origins lie in the mercantile and commercial interests of earlier periods.¹ But while the licit and illicit book trade of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century England might be said to contain the seeds of capitalism, it should not be confused with the fully developed capitalist press of the nineteenth century. The antecedents for such a press lie in the transformation of the print establishment from a quasi-medieval trade at the end of the seventeenth century to an early capitalist enterprise at the end of the eighteenth, as the terms for the survival of the trade changed dramatically to accommodate the demands of an emerging free market whose mechanisms were, initially, neither fully understood, predictable, or manipulable with any degree of assurance.

Neil McKendrick argues that a long period of incubation and preparation is necessary before great historical developments are actually registered. He maintains that the consumer revolution, in which the commercial press played a major and many-faceted role, is a "multi-causal phenomenon," with most of the causes originating in the seventeenth century.² Building on McKendrick's endorsement of the "long view," Chapter One of my thesis provides a summary account of the emergence and development of British print culture, attempting to identify the features that help to define it, in terms of economic and political conditions and in terms of the literacy and upward mobility of readers.

For much of this initial phase of my argument, it is possible to conflate temporarily genres and readerships that will need subsequently to be distinguished from each other. For the first half of the eighteenth century, there were no significant variations in the fortunes of newspapers and magazines or periodicals.³ Both were new forms (the periodical was a couple of decades younger), and both were subject to the same economic imperatives and the same outside pressures from government. Both enjoyed the advantage of the seemingly limitless appetite of a growing and enthusiastic reading public. Chapter Two considers the development of the periodical press, with regard to form, content, editorship, and readership, in an attempt to distinguish what was new and innovative (relative to the emergent print

culture) from what was "in the air" more generally. Furthermore, it attempts to identify the ways in which print innovations interacted with broad social and cultural developments to result in a stable industry underwritten by an established readership in just over 100 years. My analysis relies on the materialist assumption that texts, their producers, and their readers form an interdependent, indissoluble trilogy in which relations between the components are always reciprocal, though shifts in the balance of those relations are inevitable.

For purposes of clarity, I have divided the period under consideration into three phases.⁴ The first phase, from 1695 until approximately 1750, marks the development of periodicals. During this formative era, the content of periodicals was reader-determined, and the function of the writer/editor/publisher was not to manipulate readership, but to "read" it.⁵ Moreover, the ability of an editor to read the audience for a magazine determined not only its content but its very existence. The second phase, 1750 - 1770, slightly less definite in its parameters than the first, was a period of stabilization. During these years the discrete and overlapping influences of readers and writer/editors were roughly in balance: the new periodical press became more sure of itself as an entity and more conscious of its own potential. Readers, increasingly aware of themselves as consumers and contributors, became more comfortable and confident about their habit in reading and reserved a place for periodicals in their reading agendas. The years 1770 - 1800 constitute the third period, in which the balance of power shifted from the reader to the periodical writer/editors. Readers gradually disappeared in their capacity as frequently contributing writers and came to be increasingly identified as consumers of goods, including the magazines themselves.

These readers, drawn from many different socio-economic groups, were bound together by a common desire for upward mobility. They sought in the popular press an image of themselves, not, perhaps, as they actually were, but as they wished to see themselves in terms of a new social order. This image, I argue, was not the invention of writers and editors, nor was it either monolithic or consistent in its representation. Rather, it reflected the collective desires of the readers themselves: the part of editors was initially to ascertain these desires and give them shape. The readers were also of different sexes, and from the beginning women readers were acknowledged by the writers and publishers of periodicals. Although this gendered readership later had significant implications, the combined strength of a male and

female reading audience was initially more important than were their differences. In the first seventy years of the popular press, distinctions of genre and gender were of limited consequence to the emergence of print as a commodity to be exploited, not only for political, religious, or social purposes, but for commercial ends as well.

This was as true for magazines directed at a primarily female audience as for magazines generally. Some recent feminist critics have denied that women's magazines existed before 1770, and others have claimed that such efforts could not properly be so designated because most of them explicitly addressed a mixed audience or did not confine their content to "female" interests. Contrarily, I argue that women's magazines existed from the 1690s, that their initial courting of a mixed readership was no more than a convention shared with most magazines of the period, and, most importantly, that their refusal to confine content to women's interests tells us something significant about eighteenth-century women readers and their interests. Throughout this study, I use the term "women's magazine" to mean those publications that were aimed primarily at a female audience. While this is quantifiably unprovable, some attempt needs to be made to account for so many magazines that were, like *The Female Tatler*, *The Female Spectator*, and *The Ladies Magazine*, designated "female." After all, in these cases, there already existed a *Tatler*, a *Spectator* and a *Gentleman's Magazine*, and those magazines explicitly solicited female readers and included subjects that were of interest to and/or concerning women (though there was a vast difference between the way Addison and Steele approached the issue and Edward Cave's approach). Furthermore, many of them, including Steele in his *Ladies Library*, adopted a female eidolon, though she continued to be vintage Steele in substance if not in name.

A *de facto* approach seems the most reliable -- the more readers a magazine could entice, the better its prospects for success, particularly since, unlike the newspapers, periodicals did not initially attract sufficient advertising to support sustained production. Logically, the explanation for the emergence of a separate genre seems to be that magazines designated "female" reflected both a substantial, lucrative market and a dissatisfaction among readers with the ways they were accommodated to the content of existing magazines. Furthermore, basic psychology suggests that, while many readers no doubt read whatever came to hand, given a choice between reading *The Spectator* or *The Female Spectator*, most men probably chose the former and most women the latter. Many magazines in the first half of the century explicitly

addressed male and female readers, but women's magazines were different in their assumption that women would be their primary, though not their only, readers. Additionally, some of these magazines were written and produced by women. Like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (whose *Nonsense of Common-Sense* is not included here, both because of its political nature and its uniqueness as a not-for-profit magazine), Eliza Haywood, Charlotte Lennox, and Frances Brooke all wrote and produced their own magazines, and others, like Susannah Centlivre, are thought to have been collaborators and contributors. While not all of these writers' magazines were designated "female" (Haywood's *The Parrot*, for instance), their efforts are important to the studies of print culture as a whole and to our assessment of female agency during the eighteenth century.

As I read through the magazines, I became more convinced of the truth, not only of the existence of women's magazines, but also of their importance. To date, we have tended to read eighteenth-century women's magazines for their ideological implications, particularly with regard to gender construction, a focus which seems unnecessarily limited and limiting. In my study, I have attempted to situate women's magazines in the context of the British print establishment as a whole and in the context of women readers who had particular reasons for reading the magazines. Subject to the same fiercely competitive conditions of the marketplace, women's magazines had to fight as hard as any others to appeal to readers, a struggle that involved not, as has been suggested, the salability of what was on the minds of editors, but the ability of editors to determine and deliver what readers wanted to read. The magazine itself was a product of its times, a new commercial venture feeling its way with a newly literate, upwardly mobile reading public that had not yet acquired the reading habit. Upwardly mobile women readers seem to have had considerably more awareness of their particular place in the new social order than is generally thought, and women's magazines before 1770, and to a lesser extent after that, clearly articulated a very different version of women's role than that pronounced by Addison and Steele. An examination of the magazines reveals that the interests of women readers were as diverse as those of men, that women were reading for the same reasons -- instruction, entertainment, and, most importantly, improvement -- as men, and that women were as self-conscious about their part in the new social order as men. Women's magazines, in short, actively participated in the emergent magazine industry, in terms of both the marketplace and development

of the genre. They considered subjects that were of interest to women specifically, but also subjects that were of interest generally, sometimes and sometimes not presenting them from a female perspective.

Furthermore, if we do not limit our readings of women's magazines to what they can tell us about gender construction, and read them instead with an eye to what they can tell us about life -- and death -- in the eighteenth century, they become treasure troves of information and insight, in terms of both literary history and social history. Representations of death seemed an especially interesting test of the diverse claims I have made for women's magazines. However, I was unprepared for the extent to which death appears in the magazines and for the range of narrative, generic, didactic, and entertainment ends to which death as a subject is employed. But, while death's ubiquitousness and the variety of ways in which it is considered in the periodicals may seem initially surprising, the situation is historically logical. First, of course, death is truly universal, and evidence of death is unavoidably woven into the cultural fabric of every society. Anthropologists have concluded that, across periods and cultures, death seems to confront "human beings with an awareness of their own transience, to which they react with attempts to salvage out of this disturbing experience some residue to which permanence can be attributed."⁶ In addition, death was a much more ordinary and visible event in eighteenth-century London than it is today. No respecter of status, age, or sex, death formed a part of the daily experience of the entire population. Even children were familiar with death and dead bodies, since people of all ages generally died at home among their families and executions were public spectacles.⁷ The ways in which people died in, or as a result of, accidents and the places where outbreaks of communicable diseases occurred were matters of great concern. Under what circumstances people were murdered, how capitally convicted criminals behaved at their public executions, and what became of their remains served dual purposes, voyeuristic and didactic.⁸ Accounts of the conduct and fate of widows and orphans, real and fictional, provided important instruction as well as entertainment. Debates about the nature of death and the afterlife, in part the legacy of the religious and political crises of the seventeenth century, flourished throughout the century. Moreover, death operates implicitly in much of the perennial discourse on the transfer of property. The ways in which death figured in eighteenth-century women's magazines, therefore, is the subject of the last three chapters of my thesis.

Chapter Three considers eighteenth-century changes in attitudes toward death and in the practices associated with death, as represented and reflected in women's magazines. A shift in attitudes toward death began slowly at the time of the Reformation, accelerated more rapidly during the seventeenth century, and was mostly accomplished by 1800. Rituals and practices associated with death altered in conjunction with changing attitudes. Clare Gittings argues convincingly that all of these shifts relate to reconceptualizing selfhood in accordance with interrelated religious, economic, political, and social transformations. Increased anxiety about death, Gittings claims, was a by-product of this early modern complex of transformations, and this anxiety was expressed in ways that emphasized the centrality of the sensible, functioning individual in the emergent social order.⁹ One major change was the shift in focus from the spiritual state of the dying person and the fate of his or her soul, to the grief and loss experienced by survivors.¹⁰ A second shift concerned the privatization of death as it became less an event that involved an extended community and more one that primarily concerned the immediate family. A third shift was the commodification of death, as the practices, customs, and accoutrements of death became available for a price. These are all interrelated and consistent with other phenomena that attended the establishment of the middle class over the course of the century.

Though women's magazines did not often focus on death as a particular subject of investigation, its representation there reflected changes in attitudes and practices associated with death, and a survey of these representations allows us to form a picture of the various ways death was perceived and experienced in eighteenth-century life.¹¹ For, if death was already a highly visible fact of existence, the print media substantially increased its visibility. The publication of the fortnightly bills of mortality in many serial publications (including for a time *The Ladies Magazine*) suggests the extent of readers' interest in and concern about the subject.

Chapter Four considers the ways in which women's magazines represented the deaths of individuals and groups of individuals, real and fictional, focusing on death resulting from illness and accident, murder and execution, and infanticide. Recollection of the plague and awareness that indiscriminate epidemics could strike again were widespread in eighteenth-century London,¹² and consequently, outbreaks of plague or fever in foreign countries were deemed as newsworthy as details of

the fatal illnesses of Londoners. Deaths resulting from accidents and the complications that arose from them are described in detail, permitting us to draw a rather alarming picture of the precariousness of the daily lives led by ordinary people. Violent death was a recurrent topic in literature throughout the century, and my study will examine the ways in which murder and execution were considered in women's magazines. Infanticide, a species of murder associated primarily with women, will be given particular attention.

Such an investigation is not, of course, untouched by ideological concerns, because few causes of death were entirely free of class -- and sometimes gender -- implications. Infectious and contagious diseases might strike any socio-economic level, but people who lived in close quarters, in conditions that were unhygienic or even squalid, suffered infection and contagion at greater rates. Accidental traffic death might befall the gentleman horseman, the liveried carriage driver, the poor carter, or the elderly pedestrian or street urchin run down by any of them, but accidental death resulting from occupational hazards obviously occurred most frequently among the laboring classes. Anyone might die by violent means, but murders and executions were largely confined to those of the lower orders, though they prompted more publicity when they involved the upper or middle classes. Men committed murder far more often than women, in ways that sometimes had gender implications. Contrarily, gender was almost always a factor when women committed murder. Likewise, infanticide might occur at any socio-economic level, but was typically committed by women without means or working-class women, often servants whose situations depended on their reputations.

Class and gender, then, must necessarily be a part of my investigation, but the primary objective in this chapter is to survey the magazines for their representations of death as a feature of eighteenth-century life -- death as event, not as abstraction. This will allow us to appreciate more keenly the experience of eighteenth-century life, when death was commonplace and highly visible. Not only major illness and catastrophe caused death, but the most minor ailment or the slightest accident was potentially fatal, a fact of which we are reminded by the almost incidental notice in *The Ladies Magazine*, of a man who died of "a Mortification, occasioned by the cutting of a Corn."¹³ In Chapter Four, I draw most extensively on *The Ladies Magazine*, because it is the most "news-based." In addition, assuming that the contents included in women's magazines were deemed to be

of interest to readers, this analysis allows us to speculate on what those interests were and what they tell us about the readers themselves, as well as to make conjectures about the influence and importance of women's magazines in the popular culture of the eighteenth century.

Chapter Five concludes my study by situating the representation of suicide in women's magazines within the context of the discourse on suicide, which, in England, spanned the entire eighteenth century. In many cases, writings on suicide were responsive to, and in turn nurtured, the widely held belief that self-murder was a national British epidemic. In other cases, the subject of suicide provided a theatre for other, larger, Enlightenment debates, such as that between religion and philosophy, or served as a vehicle through which conservative and progressive voices might articulate their claims for a social and political outlook that favoured their interests, especially with regard to privileging either society or the individual.¹⁴ Regardless of the bias of a given writer, extended considerations of suicide were almost inevitably bound up with the legal status of self-murder as a capital crime in which harsh punishment was meted out to an insensible corpse and innocent survivors.

Not surprisingly, the discourse on suicide contained a substantial moral dimension. The appearance of Addison's immensely popular *Cato* in 1713 put the spectacle of heroic suicide in the public eye, fueling the Augustan fascination with neo-classicism and rendering self-murder noble through its presentation of the republican Cato who killed himself rather than submit to the rule of Caesar. In its suggestion that some things were worth more than life itself, the story of Cato, like that of Lucretia, who committed suicide after Tarquin's rape robbed her of her honour, was implicated in the overlapping discourses of suicide and honour. Conversely, opponents of suicide consistently linked the immorality of suicide with the immorality of dueling and gambling, sometimes citing the latter as causes of the former.

The discourse of suicide was considered by philosophers and ministers of the church, by poets and journalists, by the century's literary lions and by anonymous contributors to the periodical press. Print considerations of suicide took the form of essays, poems, tracts, news accounts, letters, and narratives, all of which circulated among the reading public throughout the century. My study examines some of the most influential of these considerations, in order not only to isolate the major

attitudes toward suicide and explanations for it, but also to explore with some specificity how such attitudes and explanations were articulated in women's magazines. In their overview of suicide in early modern England, Michael MacDonald and Terrence Murphy suggest that no forum was more effective in keeping the terms of the debate alive and in the public eye than the periodical press: however, even though gender is a key issue, in relation to questions of both genre and audience, these authors fail to allude to a single women's periodical in what is an otherwise comprehensive study.

I propose to rectify that omission here, not only in the interests of thoroughness, but also, and more to the purpose, to demonstrate, through a more fully contextualized analysis, that women's periodicals did in fact address issues of significance to both men and women, did assume in their primarily female target audience a knowledge of the terms of public debates from which their voices were frequently excluded, and did implicitly invite and encourage intellectual and philosophical engagement with complex issues in ways that sometimes did -- but often did not -- have gender implications. Although suicide, like the subject of death generally, was not a primary focus in the magazines, women's periodicals nevertheless touched on every major aspect of the discourse, expressing a variety of attitudes toward suicide, contributing actively to the suicide debate (at times, from a self-consciously female perspective), reporting suicides in accounts that might be either neutral or didactic, and, on occasion, exploiting the sensationalism of particularly gruesome details.

NOTES TO THE INTRODUCTION

- ¹ See Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost* (London: Methuen and Company, 1965), p. 18; Neil McKendrick et al (eds.), *The Birth of a Consumer Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982), pp. 3-5.
- ² Neil McKendrick, "The Consumer Revolution of Eighteenth-Century England," in *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, Neil McKendrick et al (eds.), p. 13.
- ³ The definitions of newspapers, magazines, and periodicals vary from writer to writer, some using content as determinative, others using frequency of publication or format. Even the long definition formulated by Richmond P. Bond in the introduction of his early and still influential book *Studies in the Early English Periodical* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957) ultimately leaves room for considerable overlap between the terms: "The periodical is usually a series of numbered and dated issues produced under a continuing title on a definite frequency for an indefinite period. It differs from a collection of related pamphlets or allied books in its very periodicity, and from its older, often mercurial, brother-in-print the newspaper in that the latter is more concerned with momentary matters and proceeds on a less leisurely course. The periodical is a publishing enterprise with editorial problems of contents and methods and deadlines, with business problems of production and circulation and solvency. Every issue of a periodical is a unit in serialization subject to the limitations and challenges of date, length, format, audience, purpose, material, techniques, editorship, authorship, and temper of the time; each number is a part of a whole " (p. 3). It is somewhat reassuring to recall that there was confusion between the terms from the beginning. Michael Harris observes that inadequate definition between forms of print hampered enforcement of the Stamp Acts of 1712 and 1725 (*London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* [Rutherford, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1987], p. 26).
- ⁴ The periodization is not arbitrary. J.H. Plumb notes that the function of print after 1750 was to stimulate an ever-widening market in the pursuit of leisure as a commodity ("The Commercialization of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England" in McKendrick et al (eds.), *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 268). Likewise, Edward Copeland observes that, beginning in 1770, the new *Lady's Magazine* subordinated fictional offerings to its "operative language" of fashion: a reader's initial "trip through the magazine becoming itself a kind of shopping expedition with no expectation to buy, window-shopping of the most guileless sort among the ideas and images of the *Lady's*" (*Women Writing about Money* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995], p. 117). Or, as Joyce Appleby has more generally put it, "The idea of man as a consuming animal with boundless appetites, capable of driving the economy to new levels of prosperity, arrived with the economic literature of the 1690s, but the idea presented too many political as well as moral threats to gain immediate widespread acceptance. Not until the 1770s did the idea of the increased propensity to consume assume its rightful place in models of economic growth which recognized the vital contribution of the elasticity of demand" (Quoted in McKendrick et al, p. 15).
- ⁵ During the period under consideration, these functions were often not clearly distinguishable from each other, and in many cases, one person performed all three.
- ⁶ S.C. Humphreys and Helen King (eds.) *Mortality and Immortality: the anthropology and archeology of death* (London: Academic Press, 1981), p 5.
- ⁷ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex, and Marriage in England 1500 - 1800* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 207.
- ⁸ For a comprehensive discussion of the reader as voyeur, see Lennard Davis, *Factual Fictions* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 59-66 and pp. 122-37.
- ⁹ Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London: Croom Helm, 1984). According to Gittings, this anxiety was manifested in a variety of ways. "One was a growing desire to separate the living from the dead, for example, by prohibiting burials in churches and by reserving graveyards for interments. This was coupled with an intellectual stance which tended to emphasise the difference, rather than the continuum, between the soul and the body and between the two states of life and death. An unease at the prospect of physical decomposition led to the widespread confining of bodies, and encouraged the craft of the embalmer. A mounting desire for worldly remembrance stimulated such practices as the preaching of funeral sermons and

the erection of tombs, in large numbers. All these factors combined with a more compartmentalised and materialistic outlook to assist in the establishment of the undertaking profession" (pp. 13-14).

¹⁰ However, I shall not argue, as has Lawrence Stone, that the focus "shifted from the behaviour of the dying to the response of the living, for whom death was now no more than a meaningless personal bereavement, the extinction of a loved one" (p. 247). Stone claims here to be following the thinking of Philippe Ariès, but Stone is overstating the latter's point to the point of distortion. Furthermore, no source consulted for this study -- primary or secondary -- indicated the widespread self-absorption or absence of fellow-feeling suggested by Stone's generalization.

¹¹ Occasionally, death was considered as a discrete subject. For example, *The Female Mentor* printed a long "Conversation," *On the Fear of Death*, in which the observations of classical and contemporary writers are cited and anecdotal and anthropological evidence is presented in a kind of extended, literary *memento mori* that reminds readers of the inevitability of death, encourages Christian preparedness, and gives assurance of the rewards of the hereafter (*The Female Mentor*, Vol. III, Conversation 31 [1796] pp. 9 - 30).

¹² Peter Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660 - 1730* (London: Methuen, 1989), p. 302.

¹³ *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxi (August 22 - September 16, 1752), p. 336.

¹⁴ As in the cases of both infanticide and suicide, rising professional interests like the emergent medical establishment sometimes laid claim to particular areas of expertise through the conjunction of topical social issues and legal process. For example, medical testimony in infanticide cases was increasingly (through methods that were highly inaccurate) used to determine whether a baby had been born alive or dead. Likewise, although medical discourse entered into the suicide debate in the attribution of self-killing to medical causes, these were fairly undeveloped in the eighteenth century. Melancholy, spleen, and vapours continued to be named as medical causes of suicide for much of the century (Michael MacDonald and Terence R. Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990], p. 237). The late-century medical enquiry into the nature of madness seems not to have been brought significantly to bear in the decisions of coroners' juries, notwithstanding the widespread use of the lunacy verdict in suicide cases (p. 140).

CHAPTER ONE

PRINT, READERS, AND UPWARD MOBILITY

The eighteenth century was an age of commercial advancement in all directions, and bookselling did not lag behind. The leading members of "the trade" became men of importance, wealthy and influential...So had they prospered, and authors went naturally with them...The reading public was at once the child and parent of authorship, brought into being by the existence of books, and then, by mere act of volition as it were, causing books to be multiplied and again multiplied. To speak of the increasing prosperity of booksellers and the improving prospects of authors is to describe the effects of a great cause, the growth of the public.

A.S. Collins (1957)

It is a commonplace that the growth of capitalism meant the growth of the bourgeoisie. It is not so commonly accepted -- at least, not stated -- that the press was itself a bourgeois commodity created and supported by the economic system of financial capitalism... Assisted to some degree by the novelists, the press...contributed towards the creation and maintenance of a reading public.

Simon Varey (1993)

The printing press had been in England for two hundred years before the lapsing of the Licensing Act in 1695 removed restrictions applied to its use. The potential -- and ambivalent -- power of the printed word to affect events had been immediately recognized: while Thomas Cromwell used the new technology to gain support for Henry VIII's break with Rome, Henry, aware of its potential to challenge his authority and new religious policies, was also the first English king to restrict the press, imposing formidable penalties on those who used it for purposes deemed dangerous.¹ Under Mary I in 1557, the Stationers' Company became the government's agent for controlling the press until the Long Parliament abolished prerogative courts in 1641, unintentionally removing licensing decrees and creating, for the first time in England, a press unrestricted by royal control.²

Between 1640 and 1660, an unprecedented diversity of printed matter reached a public eager to consume it: "the yearly average ran just under 700 titles, compared with the yearly average of 200 titles between 1576 and 1640. This material debated political and religious issues, usually in expressly critical terms, as had never before happened. Precisely who read this material or listened to it being read will

never be known, but certainly it reached downward to lower-middle and lower classes in London and spread far beyond the city."³ However, while unharnessing the press from royal control had radical implications for both writers and readers, a "free press" as we know it had not yet evolved, either in theory or in practice. The revolutionary government imposed its own restrictions and at no point identified freedom of the press as a specific or even desirable right or objective. In his *Areopagitica*, Milton (who served as licenser for the Rump Parliament) argued that only certain views could be sanctioned for print and that the views of some groups should not be printed at all.⁴ Coming from so staunch and liberal a republican as Milton, these views reveal that in the mid-seventeenth century, for those in positions of power, the press was still far from being perceived as a commodity suitable for an undifferentiated public.

The Restoration of the monarchy in 1660 resulted in new restrictions on the press, this time desired by both Parliament and the Crown. In 1662, the Licensing Act took effect, subjecting books to the censorship of the licenser and reducing the 59 extant printers to the King's printers, the two university printers, and 20 master printers of the Stationers' Company. The Act limited the number of presses, as well as the number of apprentices allotted to each printer, thereby attempting to control the future as well as the present state of printing, by controlling the most fundamental details of production.⁵ Charles II appointed the ruthless monarchist Roger L'Estrange to the position of surveyor of printing presses and licenser of the press, granting him broad powers to search and destroy not only illicit printed matter but also the presses that produced it.⁶ L'Estrange was assiduous in his efforts, proposing, among other things, that printers rendered redundant by the new Act should serve as spies against those who persisted in illegally printing and distributing seditious documents. According to L'Estrange, such criminals as the latter should be subject to serious penalties, including "fines, mutilation, banishment, prison, and death."⁷ Following James' abdication, Prince William of Orange inherited the Licensing Act (the pro-Stuart L'Estrange, however, was now disgraced, and was imprisoned on several occasions), and William used the press extensively as a propaganda instrument for the monarchy.⁸ By the end of the seventeenth century, the press's ability to manipulate the British public with regard to political and religious affairs was widely recognized. Its ambivalent power to endorse as well as to subvert had been well tested, and this ambivalence continued to inhere in the new popular print genres that evolved during the first half of the new century.

The pivotal event that freed and transformed the press was the lapsing of the Licensing Act in 1695. A great deal of scholarly attention has recently been paid to the implications and effects of this event, which is now generally understood to have been inadvertent rather than deliberate on the part of the government. By 1695, there was widespread agreement among all parties that the existing Act was inadequate to contain the large amount of unlicensed material in circulation.⁹ Quite simply, no agreement over modifications or revisions was reached by the expiration date, and the Act lapsed as a matter of course. The lapsing of the Act meant an end to its protection of authors and printers from piracy, but it also meant that anyone with the equipment might set up a print shop.¹⁰ The effect was immediate. "The collapse of prepublication censorship in 1695, which accompanied the almost absent-minded lapse of the Licensing Act, was followed by a striking rise in the volume of output. London offered a market of unique scale and coherence, and the printers, freed from official restraint, began at once to exploit the considerable demand for news and related forms of cheap reading matter. By 1712 about twenty single-leaf papers were regularly published in the capital each week. Partly through the efforts of London-trained printers squeezed out by increasing competition, newspapers also began to appear in the English provinces and in Ireland, based directly on the pattern of their London counterparts."¹¹ And by 1712, some of the most influential of the new magazines and periodicals catering to the divergent tastes of the emergent British reading public had already appeared.¹²

The absence of prepublication censorship was not equivalent to freedom from harassment or from real and attempted controls. Predictably, the rapid expansion of the press provoked conflicts among those whose interests were -- or were not -- being served by the new openness. Neither the government nor groups of booksellers desired a completely unfettered press, and the government persisted in its attempts at control, which included checks on content, production, and distribution.¹³ Libel laws, particularly those concerning seditious libel, comprised the government's most effective and sustained means of control, not only because of serious penalties that could be imposed, but also because the law applied to all individuals and involved every aspect of the production of documents deemed politically objectionable. "By limiting the range of political comment and effectively preventing the appearance of material that could be described as extremist, [the law of libel] fixed the boundaries of political debate. At the same time, application of the law ensured that only those [publications] with sound financial backing, whether provided by booksellers

or politicians, could survive. The legal process bore heavily on a wide range of committed and uncommitted newspaper personnel, providing a continuous check on the level of political conformity. In this way the law and the political system helped to reinforce the process by which the booksellers were consolidating ownership of the newspaper press in their own hands."¹⁴ Both the scope of the laws and the due process involved with implementing them were formidable.¹⁵ In fact, the laws themselves served as an effective deterrent more often than actual prosecutions and convictions, which were relatively rare.¹⁶

In 1712, the first of several Stamp Acts was introduced by Lord Bolingbroke, and, like those that followed in 1725 and 1757, was effective in causing the failure of a number of newspapers and magazines. The Stamp Acts imposed on publishers a duty based on the size of paper a publication used, as well as on the number of advertisements it contained. Some individual enterprising publishers found means of circumventing the tax, either by reducing the size of print, increasing the size of the page, or making use of multiple columns.¹⁷ However, the most effective resistance to government interference in the burgeoning print trade was not individual but collective, posed by the associations of booksellers known as "congers."¹⁸ But restrictions imposed by the government were not the only or even the most pressing problem with which print entrepreneurs had to contend. From 1695 until the end of the eighteenth century, fierce competition between publications was a defining feature of the establishment and development of the press, as print entrepreneurs sought to gain a foothold in the promising industry. Those who made the attempt were hampered not only by competition but by the unknown variables associated with the newness of the industry itself. On the one hand, a magazine's popular success was dependent on the energy and ingenuity of its editor.¹⁹ On the other hand, commercial success was dependent on the ability to secure and maintain financial backing, advertising, adequate readership, and the support of booksellers' associations.²⁰ A publisher who could balance both imperatives, however, could expect results, as is demonstrated by the fact that the number of papers sold in Britain in 1750 -- almost 7,500,000 -- nearly doubled by 1780.²¹ But, as Neil McKendrick has pointed out, "the prospect of profit attracts the feckless, the inadequate, the over-confident and the unlucky, just as it attracts the bold, the gifted and the fortunate."²² During this period, when there was a generally high rate of bankruptcy, print entrepreneurs were as vulnerable as anyone else. "The tradesmen and printers who set up and ran local papers had the same preoccupations and anxieties as their readers. They were middlemen

and retailers themselves, not merely purveying news but also selling stationery, pamphlets and patent medicines to their readers. Like every other eighteenth-century tradesman, they extended credit to their customers...Printers had more than their share of tradesmen's misfortunes, many of them going bankrupt or spending time in debtor's prison."²³

The years between the lapsing of the Licensing Act and the middle of the eighteenth century were essentially lawless in terms of capitalist enterprise. There were no fixed rules or even general guidelines for the print entrepreneur, no known or secure readership, and little knowledge or conceptualizing of market forces or marketing strategies.²⁴ The early years of the commercial print establishment were carried out on a level playing field such as is unimaginable today, a field made possible by the absence of historical precedent and by the stability of print technology.²⁵ The laws of supply and demand and of survival of the fittest, laws that were as yet unarticulated, prevailed. But if these early years of the press were "dog-eat-dog" in the event, they were also formative in the result, contributing in a major way to what was rapidly becoming a free-market economy in Britain.²⁶

As the print trade became more established as a commercial endeavour, the efficiency of its systems of production and distribution improved -- and became more predictable and dependable-- as a result. Increasingly, these systems were most attractive and responsive to individuals or groups with the largest amounts of investment capital. By 1725, standard sizes and formats were for the most part established.²⁷ By the end of the century, the British press was an accepted fact of life. A free press had come to be recognized by all as a national necessity, required by a two-party system and envied by Europeans.²⁸ It made an important contribution to British nationalism in its commitment to reporting and recording the details of British trading, investment, and speculation.²⁹ On the eve of the Industrial Revolution, the commercial press was in an optimum position to profit from advertising the enormous proliferation of consumer goods, a situation that drastically influenced relations between magazines and their readers. Alert to the profit-making potential of emergent industrialism, successful writers, editors, and publishers of magazines continued to be astute in their assessments of what was "in the air." With time, the tone of periodicals mellowed; the coarseness and bawdiness (as well as much of the intellectual edge and the spirit of enquiry) apparent in some early publications disappeared from "respectable"

literature.³⁰ At the end of the eighteenth century, British culture had changed dramatically, and the nature and function of magazines changed with it.

Neil McKendrick has remarked that studies of the period have been generally slow to see the eighteenth century in terms of entrepreneurial enterprise.³¹ Indeed, the role of entrepreneurship has been under-examined in literature-based assessments of eighteenth-century print culture. While studies of the British print establishment have, since 1950, increasingly focused on abstract economic, political, and social considerations in contrast to the earlier emphasis on biographical or literary matters or on demographic concerns such as circulation, distribution, and copyright, it is still rare for a scholar to state outright that early print entrepreneurs were "in it for the money."³² And yet, how could it be otherwise? By the end of the seventeenth century, with the exception of the lowest classes, the always-existing dilemma of how to make a living was complicated by the aspiration toward an improved standard of living. The republicanism of the seventeenth century had nurtured a spirit of individualism along with its challenge to aristocratic privilege and hegemony, individualism that issued pragmatically in the impulse toward upward mobility. The print trade represented an area of economic development that was both old and new, familiar and full of promise. It seems likely that for many if not most print entrepreneurs, the prospect of upward mobility -- social and/or economic -- was at least as motivating a force as the desire to participate in public life.

The development of the press was a significant part of the general modernization of Britain. At the end of the seventeenth century, Britain "stood at the threshold of changes in every aspect of life such as no other country, economy, or society had ever experienced before. A comprehensive and definitive settlement purporting to embody fixed and immutable principles would soon have become obsolete, whereas a series of pragmatic changes (even though often belated and partial) allowed governmental institutions and mentalities to adapt as the relentless processes of modernization transformed Britain."³³ The press developed in accordance with just such a "series of pragmatic changes," responding to the needs, tastes, and interests of the reading public as these were anticipated or demanded, responding to attempts at government control in inventive and effective ways, and responding and adapting to the impersonal emerging market through methods that were gradually directed less toward mere survival and more toward greater profitability. The eighteenth-century magazine was a product of its time, subject both

to historical conditions outside the control of the print entrepreneurs who were willing to speculate on and map out the territory, and to the individual ability of those same entrepreneurs to negotiate the unknown terrain.

Literacy, Readers, and Upward Mobility

A proximate reconstruction of an eighteenth-century readership requires first of all that we relinquish our notion of the passive reader manipulated by a predatory press. This reader is a product of mature mass-communications capitalism that has little in common with the conditions under which early periodicals were produced. The publishers and editors of newspapers and periodicals were working under economic conditions that were fundamentally different from those with which we are familiar, and editors had to be responsive not only to the demands of advertisers, but also to the demands of readers: "To appreciate the press and the problems of editorial selection in the period it is necessary to dispense with the idea that closely argued, reasoned discussions of political theory or sophisticated examples of literary analysis represent the goal that newspapers pursued, or should have done....The newspapers were not written for the benefit of political theorists or literary scholars. The editors of the period had an extremely difficult task to fulfil, without the support that their descendants have enjoyed."³⁴ Except in the case of the explicitly partisan, politically sponsored newspapers and periodicals, the key to any accurate reading of the situation is the recognition that until the 1770s at the earliest, the editors of periodicals were, almost to a person, business entrepreneurs who were not in a position to "inflict" their own views upon an unsuspecting public, unless those views happened to coincide with the public's.³⁵ There was, therefore, a direct relationship between an editor's ability to read a magazine's potential on the one hand, and circulation, survival, and profitability on the other.³⁶

As Robert Mayo has observed, the readership of eighteenth-century magazines was not monolithic, and to some extent, it defies analysis.³⁷ Nevertheless, it seems necessary at this juncture to try to make some generalizations about readers, an endeavour that is hampered, as always, by a dearth of hard evidence. The most valuable clue to readers lies in the content of the magazines, which will be discussed in more detail in the following section. But the accurate interpretation of content requires that it be set within a more general context, as close to that which eighteenth-century readers experienced as is possible

to reconstruct. Content had a direct relationship to the purpose of reading, which was not in the early years of the popular press primarily for enjoyment (at least not overt enjoyment) or for the cultivation of imagination or an aesthetic sense, but to encourage morality and enlarge worldly knowledge.³⁸ Eighteenth-century magazines were very much in step with this purpose, and even when reading later came to be sanctioned as a means of pleasure and diversion, moral, intellectual, and social enlightenment continued to be a governing principle of periodical content. The origins of this purpose lay at least in part in the earlier association of reading with the religious and political agendas of the Reformed tradition. But even more fundamental is the matter of literacy itself and its origins as a mass phenomenon in the seventeenth century.

Historians and literary critics are sharply divided over the actual rates of literacy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as over the relative merits of the methods that might determine such rates.³⁹ Fortunately, precise statistics and demographics are not required to support the *de facto* argument that by the end of the seventeenth century, literacy was sufficiently high and widespread to sustain a brisk business in newspapers, chapbooks and fascicles, to enable the steady development of the popular press, to engender constant debate over the advantages and disadvantages of literacy among the lower classes, and to provoke the astonishment of foreign ambassadors over the political savvy of the watermen who rowed them along the Thames.⁴⁰ In this light, precise rates seem less significant than the dramatic effects of increasing literacy on a growing section of the population of seventeenth-century England. "[The] high ratio of publication to audience reveals a population not only reading and writing, in the functional way the populations of modern developing nations learn to do, but reading and writing with enthusiasm in an atmosphere of ideas and debate. Many learned to read solely so they could have a first-hand experience with the holy writ while others learned in order to further their economic ambitions. This was a society in which literacy was connected with the most stimulating agents of human development -- religion and gain."⁴¹

Wiles argues that the rise of literacy in the eighteenth century can be accounted for empirically.⁴² Ian Watt presents one such empirical argument, concluding that the widespread late-century urban practice of identifying shops by names rather than signs, "surely implies that it was being increasingly assumed that written communications would be understood by a large enough proportion even of the denizens of

Gin Lane to be worth addressing to them."⁴³ As commerce and trade expanded, the demand for literate clerks and artisans rose accordingly. Moreover, the reading habit was spreading to the provinces, and the new availability of affordable print matter, made possible by newly efficient postal services, served as further motivation to learn to read. In any event, no one disputes the fact that by 1800, while literacy was far from universal, reading was a fact of life in Britain, and "the expectation that a child, whatever its gender, parentage, economic aspirations, or social pretensions, would learn to read and write was firmly set; not all children did yet learn to read, and illiteracy was still a national concern, but reading was a regular feature of English life."⁴⁴

The enthusiasm for literacy in the eighteenth century, then, seems to have arisen from diverse quarters. Both the general desire for news and information and the private, individual pursuit of religion acted as stimuli, and J. Paul Hunter detects a nationalist agenda embedded in the push for literacy.⁴⁵ The economic imperative was surely significant, since, although the majority of the working population remained agricultural throughout the eighteenth century, increasing practices of business and commerce required higher levels of education than previously. The widespread call for better education of women, as well as the need for proper diversions to fill leisure hours, encouraged the spread of literacy among girls and women of different classes. Dissenting academies placed considerable emphasis on practical skills and scientific studies, preparing children for the world of experience and endeavour rather than the world of contemplation and retirement promoted by a traditional classical curriculum.⁴⁶ From the seventeenth century onward, readers "were increasingly concerned to obtain books of practical guidance and information. With the simultaneous spread of a new economy, which required a degree of knowledge unnecessary under the old feudal system, and of a humanism which brought vast new areas of worldly interest to men's attention, books became instruments of utility. Through them, men could learn the things they needed to know as businessmen and functionaries in civil government and could share in the humane learning of the Renaissance. Reading was inextricably associated with 'improvement,' with cultivation of the prudential virtues and the more easily acquired amenities of conduct."⁴⁷ However, while the spirit of literacy was ubiquitous, it prompted ongoing concern about the relationship of literacy and reading practices to issues of class.

During the Tudor period, education for men had been fostered by charities for scholars from no particular socio-economic background, based on the medieval belief that all men were one society under God, no matter what their earthly station. In the seventeenth century, Puritan initiatives extended education downwards to tradesmen and artisans and to women, and the Dissenting Academies, though typically small and short-lived, continued to be influential throughout the eighteenth century. However, while the wresting away of education from the upper classes represented a democratization that challenged existing social hierarchies, the danger that social hierarchies might be done away with altogether came to be perceived as the more serious threat. Throughout the eighteenth century, the fear that the lower classes would forget their proper place produced anxiety that was manifested in persistent misgivings about teaching the poor to read. James Raven has succinctly remarked that "the history of reading [in England] is not self-evidently a history of the spur to improvement and enlightenment, of progress from lesser to greater literacy, from ignorance and barbarism to democracy, humanitarianism and virtue. Rather, from the contradiction between market promotion and market alarm, reading was carefully presented as a privileged activity, to be guarded by protectors and modulated by codes of conduct. The connection between reading and democracy underpinned the response, more than the impulse, to reading."⁴⁸

It would be cynical to suggest that there were no genuinely positive sentiments concerning the education of the poor; hundreds of charity schools were set up in London and in the provinces "to educate the children of the poor in reading, writing, and Christian obedience."⁴⁹ Groups like the Society for Promoting Knowledge, Methodists, and Evangelicals not only established schools but also made religious reading matter available at no cost to the working poor.⁵⁰ Early public support for efforts to educate the poor can be seen in the response to a proposed newspaper tax in 1701: "the said newspapers have been always a whole sheet and a half, and sold for one half-penny to the poorer sort of people, who are purchasers of it by reason of its cheapness, to divert themselves, and also to allure herewith their young children, and entice them to reading; and should a duty of three-halfpence be laid upon these newspapers...it would utterly extinguish and suppress [sic] the same'.⁵¹ However, if it would be cynical to suggest that no one really believed in the education of the poor, it would be outright inaccuracy to ignore the class dimensions of much of the "progressive" reform in this area. Much of the literature about educating the poor reveals extreme anxiety about the matter: would educated labourers continue to be

content with their social station? And, more pragmatically, if everyone aspired to upward mobility, who would perform the cheap labour necessary to the economic boom?⁵² The charity schools were never intended to democratize either education or society; they were set up to educate the poor in order that they would absolutely know their place.⁵³ Notwithstanding that there were undoubtedly many who derived great benefit from such innovations as charity schools, reform was, like the new forms of benevolism and paternalism, designed to refashion traditional social hierarchies in the image of the ideals of the new middle classes. Furthermore, in a society that viewed class distinctions as the basis of social order, pursuits such as reading were thought to be proper only for the leisure classes, and "this outlook was strongly reinforced by the economic theory of the day which opposed anything which might keep the labouring classes away from their tasks."⁵⁴ In the final analysis, however, even hundreds of charity schools could not serve the hundreds of thousands of labouring poor, and while undoubtedly some and perhaps many of the labouring poor could read, as long as what they read did not evoke aspirations beyond their station, fears of social anarchy were contained at the level of intellectual debate.⁵⁵

Anxiety about the literacy of the lower classes intensified during the years of the French Revolution, when the labouring poor took on a decidedly more sinister colouring and the dark powers of the press re-emerged in public consciousness and in debates about the education of the lower classes.⁵⁶ The propertied classes regarded the ability of the poor to read and write as a powerful and dangerous threat, notwithstanding that "overwhelmingly it was middle class radicals and the upper ranks of the working class who seized upon the revolutionary...uses of print."⁵⁷ During this period, the Rev. John Trusler claimed that the press had given rise "to all the evils which the World has experienced...I am bold to say that the more untaught the labouring part of mankind are, the more humble are they and modest and the better servants they make." He was terrified by the proliferation of books "on all subjects and so cheap as to be within the reach of almost every man."⁵⁸ There were widespread fears that seditious and atheistic propaganda was being made available to the labouring classes, and legal measures were taken to suppress "the inflammatory alien doctrine of 'natural rights'" through the arrest, fining, and jailing of radical booksellers.⁵⁹ But, as Altick points out, such measures were negative at best and had the effect of advertising the very material they were attempting to eradicate. "The heart of the crisis lay not in the

circulation of radical propaganda, which could be, and was, effectively suppressed, but in the existence of crowds of readers, who after all could be deprived of their literacy by no device short of extermination."⁶⁰

For most of the eighteenth century, however, the debate about educating the poor to read served as mere background noise to the uninhibited rise in literacy among the group that stood to benefit most from the ability to read and the availability of affordable reading matter, that problematic group commonly and contentiously known as the middle class, or the middling classes.⁶¹ J. Paul Hunter has set out a demographic profile of the late seventeenth-century reader as primarily urban, ambitious, mobile, and young, and this profile is useful in its inclusion of a wide range of diverse groups with divergent interests.⁶² His formulation excludes the destitute and many, if not most, of the labouring poor, and though it would not necessarily exclude the landed gentry and the downwardly mobile aristocracy, it focuses on a number of groups, with a wide range of means, incomes, education, and prospects. These were the people who stood to gain from literacy and who comprised the bulk of eighteenth-century readers.⁶³ It was to this large and extremely diverse group that the popular press was directed and to whose interests and demands editors and publishers had to be attuned. At the lower end of this group were clerks, servants, skilled labourers, shopkeepers, small farmers, and very possibly their wives.⁶⁴ Merchants, artisans, tradesmen, and their wives comprised a second layer, and professionals and clergy and their wives were among those at the upper end. I am not suggesting that this group was in any way homogeneous or that those belonging to different levels recognized each other as equals. On the contrary, within this middle range, territoriality and antagonism were sometimes ferocious, and class lines were rigorously demarcated and defended. But, as an undifferentiated group, all members had some level of access to upward social mobility, for which literacy was a prerequisite and for which improvement -- educational, financial, behavioural, and social -- was both a means and an end.⁶⁵

After 1688, there existed between the indigent and the aristocracy, a large and diverse group of people who for the first time in English history could have "prospects" beyond those that were associated with their station at birth. Eighteenth-century catchwords such as "improvement" and "worth" were particularly well-suited for describing the preoccupations of the upwardly mobile middle classes, not only in their ability to embody both the material and the moral, but also in their seemingly universal and limitless capacity to signify individual achievement. Obviously, upward mobility had many starting

points, and prospects for individuals were rarely completely open-ended. Nevertheless, there was a kind of democracy about the dynamic itself, which presupposed in this diverse group some common characteristics. These, while deployed in different ways to different ends, contributed to the social and economic transformation that took place over the course of the eighteenth century. Much of this transformation is indivisible from the evolution of the new British Protestantism, which also issued in the secular morality so ubiquitous in the writing of the eighteenth century. English Protestantism was by definition and necessity adaptable to a range of discourses. Following the revolutionary settlement, it was increasingly called upon to underwrite the importance of the individual and of individual effort and achievement. In much the same way that important aspects of republican thought remained embedded in political thinking after 1660, helping to shape the England that was to come, important aspects of Puritan thought were retained in the religious thinking that followed the Revolution, contributing to that critical mass of support necessary to the emergence of a new economic order, affecting not only matters of religion, but of economic, civic, and social life as well.

Rejecting Catholicism and wishing to purify Anglicanism of popish accretions, the groups that formed the Puritans called for a religion that was more visible in daily life and that relied on a relationship to God that was unmediated either by a rigidly hierarchical clergy or by a hereditary head of state.⁶⁶ Less ceremony, greater clarity of language, and increased participation by laymen also characterized the disparate groups that were subsumed under the heading of Puritan. Certain doctrines, like the Calvinist doctrine of predestination of the elect, had served the revolutionary effort well, helping to justify the seizure of power from the Crown in order to place it in the hands of God's chosen. Following the persecution and the dispersion of the groups that comprised the Puritans during the reign of Charles II, the doctrine of the elect predictably lost political ground, giving way to the more congenial doctrine of vocation or calling, in which individuals were called upon to serve God through the conscientious performance of duties required by one's earthly occupation, and in which the material products of this performance were seen as signs of God's favour. It was this aspect of Puritan doctrine that was adapted by the influential splinter group of low-church Anglicans known as the latitude men, who, following the Revolution, sustained the contribution of Puritanism to mainstream religious thought.

The latitudinarians sought, through methods that included comprehension of the Dissenting sects and the religious application of the Newtonian laws of mechanical philosophy, "to support a political world where private interest would enhance the stability of the public weal and Anglican hegemony would rest secure."⁶⁷ For them, Newtonianism underwrote their new, more utilitarian, religion: "it allowed them to imagine that nature was on their side; they could have laws of motion and keep God; spiritual forces could work in the universe; matter could be controlled and dominated by God and by men. Stability was possible without constant divine intervention; the spiritual order could be maintained; the church was necessary and essential; yet at the same time men could pursue their worldly interests."⁶⁸ In theory, latitudinarian preachers wanted to reform the established church (which had reverted to some disturbing Laudian habits), to guard against threats from radicals, enthusiasts, and atheists, and to establish a liberal Protestantism that would advocate peaceful relations between the church and the sects.⁶⁹ In practice, however, latitudinarianism sought to bring religion into line with social and economic reality, to justify and to "Christianize" a capitalism it perceived to be already in place.⁷⁰ According to Margaret Jacob, "the most historically significant contribution of the latitudinarians lies in their ability to synthesize the operations of a market society and the workings of nature in such a way as to render the market society natural. The latitudinarians grafted the new philosophy onto their social ideology, integrating both into English thought precisely at a time when modern and capitalistic forms of economic life and social relations were gaining ascendancy. Their synthesis survived without serious questioning...because it gratified the beneficiaries of that new order."⁷¹

At the same time, the latitudinarians reinforced Puritan beliefs in a lived rather than a devotional religion. The latitudinarians "addressed themselves primarily to the public actions of the Christian; they seldom discussed the nature of inner spirituality or private communications with the creator. Public piety interested the latitudinarians, particularly as it influenced the decisions taken by the prosperous in their pursuit of virtue and interest."⁷² Private interest for the public good, then, reconciled the moral world and the material world. While earlier Puritan thought had insisted on the separation of economic activity from state control, it generally reaffirmed earlier Christian views that individual enterprise, particularly for personal economic gain, was morally condemnable, and "mainstream Puritan writings before 1640 generally and explicitly express[ed] opposition to social mobility, usury, monopolies, and unrestrained

profit-seeking."⁷³ After 1680, such actions, if carried out within a certain moral framework, were not merely acceptable to the church; they were sanctioned by it.⁷⁴

The elimination of the doctrine of predestination of the elect had a two-fold effect; on the one hand, it made human endeavour a primarily human matter, relegating God to the status of an "approver" who helped those who helped themselves. On the other hand, it dramatically increased the number of those who might expect to find favour with God. No longer confined to a predetermined elect, grace, both spiritual and material, was available to all those who, obeying the laws of God and man, strove hard enough and long enough. Grace was also made available to a wide, but not limitless, cross-section of the public by way of the retained Calvinist doctrine of vocation, or calling.⁷⁵ Not only could the material rewards of faithful duty to one's calling be used to signify moral and spiritual worth, but the definition of vocation also spanned a broad spectrum of earthly endeavours. The moral requirements of Christian enterprise were accommodating: it need only to be useful to one's self or the community, to be harmless to others, and to be pleasing to God.⁷⁶ Such doctrine must have been attractive indeed to those at the lower end of the spectrum, for it imparted respectability and moral virtue to duty and opened the way to economic improvement, even as it reinforced relatively subordinate social status for most.

Like Puritan thought before it, latitudinarian thought did not really challenge existing social hierarchies.⁷⁷ "Basing social status and economic inequality on the work ethic, the latitudinarians with their characteristic realism recognized and indeed encouraged social inequality. At times the latitudinarians justified it simply by reference to the work ethic, yet more commonly they lapsed into thinking that inequality was in the natural order of society."⁷⁸ The poor might be held directly responsible for their condition if their poverty was the result of laziness.⁷⁹ The labouring poor and those whose poverty could not be attributable to their own fault "bore witness to God's providence because they provide[d] an occasion for the practice of charity by the rich."⁸⁰ The providential order of things still sanctioned exclusions, not from grace but from material well-being; the deserving in this world were not determined by God, but by the market-place. The religion of the latitudinarians "was intended to suit the needs of the prosperous, or to be more precise, the strivings of those who would seek profit and remain virtuous."⁸¹

The reconciliation of morality and materialism was essential to the new Protestantism, and this reconciliation, too, had its origins in Reformed thought. "The real moral objection is to relaxation in the

security of possession, the enjoyment of wealth with the consequence of idleness and temptations of the flesh, above all of distraction from the pursuit of a righteous life. In fact, it is only because possession involves this danger of relaxation that it is objectionable at all. For the saints' everlasting rest is in the next world; on earth man must, to be certain of his state of grace, 'do the works of him who sent him, as long as it is yet day'. Not leisure and enjoyment, but only activity serves to increase the glory of God, according to the definite manifestations of His will....Waste of time is thus the first and in principle the deadliest of sins. The span of human life is infinitely short and precious to make sure of one's own election. Loss of time through sociability, idle talk, luxury, even more sleep than is necessary for health, six to at most eight hours, is worthy of absolute moral condemnation."⁸² The logical corollary of this doctrine is that acquisition and possession are not bad if they do not produce the kind of slothful life that religion condemns.

The religious concept of industry had obvious usefulness in the Reformed attack on Catholicism and in the critique of aristocratic decadence. But its usefulness as an offensive strategy was ultimately less significant than its deployment as a justification for individual enterprise. In retrospect, the combination of the Reformed doctrines of industry, asceticism, and self-discipline, and the doctrines that attributed social and individual virtue to a life based on these principles seem ideally suited to the economic and social conditions that subsequently prevailed. There were obstacles to assimilation of such views, however. One problem was the residual feeling that industry was intended to support the material life of a family, and by extension the community, and that excess in material goods, as in religion, was sinful. This problem was addressed through the belief that worldly success and worldly goods were indicative of God's favour, and, so long as the display of wealth was not ostentatious or the wealth put to the wrong ends, materialism might not in itself be inconsistent with other Puritan beliefs.⁸³ Moreover, if opportunity presented itself within the context of a calling, not to take advantage of it was an affront to God. The Presbyterian divine Richard Baxter wrote, "If God show you a way in which you may lawfully get more than in another way (without wrong to your soul or to any other), if you refuse this, and choose the less gainful way, you cross one of the ends of your calling, and you refuse to be God's steward, and to accept His gifts and use them for Him when He requireth it: you may labour to be rich for God, though not for the flesh and sin."⁸⁴ Furthermore, as cultural definitions of charity as a guard against self-interest gave way to the rule

of the marketplace, basic needs ceased to be the measure for acquisition, and by 1700, "the role of necessity as a limit on accumulation...had fallen by the wayside."⁸⁵

In later latitudinarian thought, the doctrine of vocation was modified to emphasize the achievements of the prosperous and their contribution to the public good. In the latitudinarian formulation, "men will be diligent in their calling, indeed they will be impelled by religion to pursue their interests and presumably to attain them. So probable is the success of the virtuous that their prosperity is an even higher sign of God's providence than is the order inherent in nature."⁸⁶ The justification of industry by virtue goes a long way to explain the explosion of conduct books in the latter part of the seventeenth century, as well as the obsessive attention paid to virtuous conduct in the eighteenth. The works of the latitudinarians continued to be widely read in the first half of the eighteenth century, and in the great religious movements of Methodism and Evangelical Anglicanism, the justification of industry by virtue was an accepted tenet.⁸⁷ Both movements retained the Reformed critique of idle pleasures and emphasized the importance of religion in a daily life that was both social and active.

Yet the alliance of morality and materialism remained an uneasy one, and the secularizing affect of industry and accumulated wealth on spiritual health troubled writers like John Wesley:

I fear, wherever riches have increased, the essence of religion has decreased in the same proportion. Therefore I do not see how it is possible, in the nature of things, for any revival of true religion to continue long. For religion must necessarily produce both industry and frugality, and these cannot but produce riches. But as riches increase, so will pride, anger, and love of the world in all its branches. How then is it possible that Methodism, that is, a religion of the heart, though it flourishes now as a green bay tree, should continue in this state? For the Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in anger, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away. Is there no way to prevent this -- this continual decay of pure religion? We ought not to prevent people from being diligent and frugal; we must exhort all Christians to gain all they can, and to save all they can; that is, in effect, to grow rich.⁸⁸

Wesley's apprehensions are confirmed by the critique of religious life Evangelical Anglicanism offered in the last decades of the eighteenth century. To this group, religion appeared the handmaid of civic and social life, and not the other way around. Evangelical Anglicans believed that England "was suffering from moral degeneracy. Events in France were a warning of what was to come if individuals did not inspire a revolution in the 'manners and morals' of the nation, a transformation which must begin with

individual salvation."⁸⁹ Evangelicals like William Wilberforce and Hannah More were engaged in a kind of damage control, seeking -- through the Cheap Repository Tracts distributed to the poor at one end of the social spectrum and the placement of Evangelical clergy in traditional positions of power within the established church at the other -- to re-establish meaningful organized religion in British life. Both Methodism and Evangelical Anglicanism indemnified, rather than questioned, the association of religion and industry.

By the second half of the eighteenth century, a "specifically bourgeois economic ethic had grown up. With the consciousness of standing in the fullness of God's grace and being visibly blessed by Him, the bourgeois businessman, as long as he remained within the bounds of formal correctness, as long as his moral conduct was spotless and the use to which he put his wealth was not objectionable, could follow his pecuniary interests as he would and feel that he was fulfilling a duty in doing so. The power of religious asceticism provided him in addition with sober, conscientious, and usually industrious workmen, who clung to their work as to a life purpose willed by God."⁹⁰ The religious reconciliation of morality and materialism morally licensed the development of a society that was increasingly preoccupied with accumulated wealth. Such a reconciliation was not merely convenient, but "a necessary part of the thought processes of men whose protestant training made secular pursuits possible only if entered into with the right motive."⁹¹ That the same reconciliation continued to be necessary is evident in the content of all eighteenth-century texts --from conduct books, to poetry, to novels, to periodicals -- that emphasized proper moral conduct. While it is possible to consider the economic development of the period without reference to morality, such an approach ignores the extreme self-consciousness with which individuals and groups adapted themselves to changing economic conditions. Had proper moral conduct not been an intense and genuine preoccupation of eighteenth-century English society, what self-image would have accrued to the emergent economic man? to the emergent economic nation? If formal religion were diminishing in importance as a structuring principle of individual and national existence, the need for a moral centre was not. The market-place was an irresistible force, but so was the need for salvation in a society that was still deeply Christian by force of habit, not yet caught up enough in the life of this world to be able to ignore the existence of the next.⁹²

Pragmatically, the Protestant understanding of labour as a social duty -- to one's family and one's country -- underwrote both in its acknowledgment that material needs must be satisfied and that familial and civic obligations must be met through work. In the changing economy, material needs quickly became consumer demands, and to rationalize this leap, it was necessary to bring to the fore and to naturalize the notion of private vice as tending to public gain. For most of the seventeenth century, the notion of necessity was closely tied to individual economic endeavour, and the possibility that people at all levels of society might develop new wants and acquire the means of attaining them was for the most part unthinkable.⁹³ The idea of an acquisitive population whose desires tended to the national good made its appearance in the 1690s, but the notion was not widely accepted or condoned.⁹⁴ Reluctance to accept this new self-image was related both to residual religious associations of labour as the means to provide the necessities of life and to anxieties about the leveling effects a consumer society might have on existing social hierarchies. "The unleashing of the acquisitive instincts of all classes still [in the first part of the eighteenth century] posed too great a threat: 'the idea of self-improvement through spending implied genuine social mobility. The assertion that "the meaner sort" could and should emulate their betters suggested that class distinctions were based on little more than purchasing power. The moral implications of growth through popular spending were even more suspect. Unlike the work ethic which called upon powerful longings for self-discipline and purposeful activity, the ethic of consumption...offered nothing more than a calculating hedonism'."⁹⁵ Nevertheless, the consumer society was well on its way to becoming a reality. "As the expansion of [market] activity generated wants and wealth whose existence had not been known before, proponents of the monied interest learned not just to accept but to acclaim the 'imaginary' foundation of the market in human appetite. The elasticity of demand began to appear unlimited and absolute: value was nothing more than the imaginative power of individual producers and consumers."⁹⁶

Early in the eighteenth century, Bernard Mandeville claimed that personal acquisitiveness and love of luxury, not subsistence, were central to a healthy society. According to Mandeville, the creation of "unreal" wants generated the need for specialized tradesmen to fulfil them, and these more specialized tradesmen were in turn rendered more dependent on the labour of others. The result was a thriving economy and a healthy nation. Therefore, it was in the interest of governments to promote not the

sacrifice of citizens but the self-indulgence of individuals, for "to encourage self-interest is at once to foster the growth of the aggregate wealth of the nation, and to enable the creation of a nation so complex and interdependent that it must develop an indissoluble economic, and therefore also political, unity."⁹⁷

Mandeville's political theory (or perhaps his bluntness) was not very popular in 1714, as upwardly mobile consumers clung to the idea that self-interest was only acceptable insofar as it resulted in benefits to others. More congenial to the self-image of this group than the idea of themselves as grasping, acquisitive predators was the notion that they were caught in the teeth of a dilemma, in whose maw there was at least some semblance of moral safety. J.H. Plumb has remarked on the acuity of Addison and Steele in identifying the appeal of this situation that paradoxically insists on upward mobility and yet refuses to relinquish either class distinctions or the moral high road: "Addison and Steele discovered the new and growing middle-class audience, an audience which longed to be modish, to be aware of the fashion yet wary of its excess, to participate in the world of the great yet be free from its anxieties, to feel smug and superior to provincial rusticity and old world manners, above all to be deeply respectful of the world of commerce."⁹⁸

The efforts of Addison and Steele and other eighteenth-century periodical writers and editors presupposed in their readerships a certain amount of leisure and affluence, which was, of course, relative. However, just as there was nothing relative about anxiety over the linking of social status to consumption, there was nothing ambiguous about anxiety over the possible democratization of leisure. The Puritan critique of idleness, of both the decadent aristocracy and the indolent poor, was reflected in emergent notions of middle-class charity and in the didactic writing of the period.⁹⁹ But leisure is not idleness, and the critique of leisure had more to do with who was entitled to have it than with a moral valuation of its ability to signify upward mobility. Leisure, according to Thorstein Veblen, "does not connote indolence or quiescence. What it connotes is non-productive consumption of time. Time is consumed non-productively (1) from a sense of the unworthiness of productive work, and (2) as an evidence of pecuniary ability to afford a life of idleness."¹⁰⁰ Here was a conundrum, for, from a moral perspective, these qualities were neither honourable nor admirable. Yet the appeal of leisure as a signifier of upward mobility was, and continued to be, irresistible, and for much of the eighteenth century, ambivalence about leisure

revolved around the definition of the new gentleman. Richard Steele formulated one influential definition in an early number of the *Tatler*:

It is generally thought, That Warmth of Imagination, quick Relish of Pleasure, and a Manner becoming it, are the most essential Qualities for forming this Sort of Man. But any one that is much in Company will observe, That the Height of good Breeding is shown rather in never giving Offense, than in doing obliging Things. Thus, he that never shocks you, tho' he is seldom entertaining, is more likely to keep your Favour, than he who often entertains, and sometimes displeases you. The most necessary Talent therefore in a Man of Conversation...is a good Judgment.¹⁰¹

While seemingly democratic in its insistence on qualities that are non-material in nature and in its failure to name wealth as a necessary prerequisite, Steele's definition describes a life made possible by leisure -- to study, to reflect, to be endlessly good-humoured -- rather than a life characterized by commerce or industry in a competitive world.¹⁰² But Steele's readership was in large measure the coffee-house men.¹⁰³ Few of these were wholly free from the constraints of some sort of money-earning occupation, but all had enough free time and enough money to frequent the coffee-houses. His definition, then, must be read as an ideal, to which very few eighteenth-century Englishmen could realistically aspire. What Steele offered was what his readers wanted -- an image of themselves as men of means who were on the way up, and as members of a new leisure class such as that popularized in the novels and magazines of the period. The advantage of such an illusion is that it allowed upwardly mobile men across a broad economic spectrum to have a foot in both worlds, not only to be engaged in the profitable public world of commerce and trade, but also to have limited access to a major symbolic signifier of material wealth. If during the first half of the eighteenth century, goods came to have an imaginary value, so did the people who bought them.

Veblen has written that the temperament of the leisure class is that of "the conservative class...The office of the leisure class in social evolution is to retard the movement and to conserve what is obsolescent."¹⁰⁴ While Veblen's model describes the nineteenth century, it is also characteristic of the upwardly mobile middle classes in the eighteenth century. A conservative undercurrent marked even the most progressive social initiatives, an undercurrent that was expressed in the determined retention of social hierarchies.¹⁰⁵ The embrace of leisure as a widely available signifier of upward mobility was only an embrace if one were on the social ladder looking up. For those lower down on the ladder, leisure was a dangerous vice, next-door neighbour to idleness. However, there was a common denominator between

those for whom the ability to read represented the ability to transcend subsistence living and those for whom it signified the status of the leisure class, and that common denominator was upward mobility itself.

While sociological frameworks such as Veblen's contribute to our understanding of the cultural contexts in which eighteenth-century magazines operated, there are methodological difficulties in too narrow a focus. Jeremy Black, for instance, has remarked on the limited concern of eighteenth-century magazines for the situation of poor women, despite considerable coverage of matters concerning women and the obvious courtship of female readers.¹⁰⁶ His statement reveals the same kind of literalness that is usually applied to Steele's definition of the gentleman. Eighteenth-century women's magazines, like those directed at men or at mixed readerships, were not vehicles of social reform or gender construction: they were the means by which a large, growing, and diverse reading public that sought to improve itself could do so, whether they had ready money and considerable leisure, or a limited amount of either. If upward mobility were a way of life for the consuming public, it was a state of mind for the reading public. Like the coffee-houses, the periodicals presented a large number of people with a way to see themselves differently, even if in actual fact they remained basically the same.

It is true that we cannot know precisely who and how many read eighteenth-century periodicals. We can know that they existed in sufficient numbers to allow for the gradual development of a periodical press that has survived to the present day. We can also know that those who read magazines (as opposed to or in addition to other forms of popular reading, such as novels or newspapers) were interested in what they contained. And this matter of content could only be determined by the interest of readers themselves. It is foolish to suggest that readers in a consumer culture that was still in its infancy would seek in popular literature opinions, ideas, or advice that were antithetical to their own notions of the ways of the world (or the ways they wanted it to be) or that the editors of such publications could afford to deviate from these notions. Until the last decades of the eighteenth century, when the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution began to make consumer goods more available and the makers of those goods wielded enough power to co-opt periodical content, it was the readers of magazines who determined what those magazines would say.

NOTES TO CHAPTER ONE

- ¹ Later, Charles II's licenser, Roger L'Estrange, was more precise in the reasons for his own alarm: he believed that reading the papers "makes the multitude too familiar with the actions and counsel of their superiors, too pragmatical and censorious, and gives them not only a wish but a kind of colourable right and licence to the meddling with the government" (Peter Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* [London: Temple Smith, 1978], p. 270). The inherent ability of the press to serve more than one master continued to render it potentially destabilizing, challenging, and even subversive, even after the widespread acceptance of the press made it a permanent, recognizable feature of British political and social life (Richmond P. Bond, pp.8-9). See also G.C. Gibbs, "Press and Public Opinion," in J.R. Jones (ed.) *Liberty Secured?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 264; Michael Harris, *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole* (Rutherford, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1987), p. 196.
- ² G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1962), p. 1.
- ³ Lois Schwoerer, "Liberty of the Press and Public Opinion: 1660-1695" in *Liberty Secured?* J.R. Jones (ed.) (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 202.
- ⁴ John Milton, *Complete Poems and Major Prose*, Merritt Y. Hughes (ed.) (Indianapolis: Odyssey Press, 1957), p. 747.
- ⁵ G.A. Cranfield, *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper 1700-1762* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1962), p. 2.
- ⁶ Schwoerer, p. 201.
- ⁷ Schwoerer, p. 206
- ⁸ In addition to producing a number of publications -- a favourable history of his family in Holland, an advance draft manifesto justifying his intended invasion of England, and broadsides addressed to the English army and fleet -- William took a printing press with him as part of his invasion equipment (Schwoerer, pp. 222 - 223).
- ⁹ Some authors stress the degree to which an illegal press was already flourishing in the years following the Restoration, which may suggest that poor prospects for the enforcement of any new law were also a prohibitive factor in formulating new legislation. Lois Schwoerer claims that, in the years following the implementation of the Licensing Act, members of the book trade "were intransigent in their determination to produce and market unlicensed material. The number of printers in London who had set up their presses in defiance of the law was four in 1668 and ten in 1675, according to contemporary records, and there may have been, of course, more than that. They practiced all manner of subterfuge, hiding their presses in secret places -- behind a bed, 'run up on wheels,' in an attic to which the entrance was through a trap door, 'in a shed in a garden, through an alley 'twixt Long Lane and Charterhouse Lane.' They used false names and code language in their correspondence. Books were surreptitiously imported and circulated in 'Dry-Fatts, Bales, Packs, Maunds, or other Fardells'" (p. 212). According to Simon Varey, "[t]he lapse of the Licensing Act only confirmed what was already the case: that newspapers were outside the reach of the act's ineffective provisions, and so for Parliament to renew the legislation would have been futile, at best a merely sentimental gesture of control" ("The Growth of Capitalism and the Rise of the Press in the Age of Walpole" in Gordon J. Schochet (ed.) *Politics, Politeness, and Patriotism* [Washington, D.C.: The Folger Institute, 1993], p. 247). Jeremy Black has added that another impediment to agreement was presented by William's wish that his ministries be composed of representatives of both parties (*The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* [Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1987], pp. 8-9).

-
- 10 A. S. Collins. *Authorship in the Days of Johnson* (Clifton, New Jersey: Augustus M. Kelley, 1973), p. 7.
- 11 Harris, p. 19.
- 12 These included John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury* (1691) and *Ladies' Mercury* (1693), Peter Motteux's *Gentleman's Journal* (1692), John Tipper's *Ladies' Almanac* (1704), Steele's *Tatler* (1709 - 1711), Defoe's *Review* (1704 - 1713), and Thomas Baker's *Female Tatler* (1710-11).
- 13 Harris, p. 151.
- 14 Harris, pp. 153.
- 15 "The law of seditious libel did not regard truth as a defense: it was concerned with injurious facts, true or false, not with the imputation of false facts. Moreover, it was for the judge to decide whether the act was done with criminal intent, and whether the writing was seditious. The role of the jury was to determine the fact of publication, and whether the expressions, or innuendoes, or literary and historical allusions, in which contemporary pamphlet literature critical of government abounded, referred to the persons or institutions in question. The theory ran that an independent and impartial judiciary, such as had been established as a consequence of the Revolution, could be trusted to determine all questions of law" (Gibbs, p. 246).
- 16 Gibbs has aptly described this use of the libel laws as "legal terrorism" of the publishing and print trades. However, prosecutions for seditious libel did not always produce the desired effect, even when they were successful. Huge crowds, including gentlemen and noblemen, attended the trial of the *Craftsman* in 1730, and following the paper's conviction, its circulation increased; thereafter, being prosecuted for seditious libel was sometimes considered to be good for business (p. 248).
- 17 Harris, pp. 23-25. Another form of tax evasion involved misrepresenting the content of a publication, such as was practiced by the publisher William Raynor, who conveyed current events in a weekly entitled the *Lady's Curiosity, or Weekly Apollo* (1738), which appeared "covered with a Wrapper" (Harris, pp. 94-95).
- 18 Partnerships that could ameliorate and redistribute the costs of getting broadsides, papers, and books into the hands of the public existed from the very beginnings of the trade. Congers, first established in the 1680s, differed from earlier partnerships in the more permanent, less *ad hoc*, nature of the associations whose purpose was originally to protect the copyrights of individual members through control of most of the wholesale print trade. In addition, the conger system promoted the agreement to standardize and maintain the retail costs of publications, a practice that for the most part continued until the 1780s, when James Lackington drastically reduced his profit margin on new books and relied instead on an increased volume of sales to make up or exceed the difference. In general, the conger system proved so satisfactory to its members that it dominated the book trade for the first half of the eighteenth century. The term "bookseller" itself requires some clarification, being a catch-all term for publishers or partners in publishing establishments, as well as for those who retailed printed material. In addition, anyone who involved in the trade might be known as a "stationer" (Gaskell, p. 180 - 81). Early efforts to protect the trade and its members gradually took a toll on minor players, which included both printers and authors. For a time, individual printers were able to maintain a degree of independence, even when subsumed into systems of group ownership. The congers retained final control, however, and over time, independent printers were "squeezed out" of newspaper production (Harris, p. 98).
- 19 Editors had to consider factors such as "reputation of editors and staff writers, the undercutting of the price of rival magazines, the adoption of a format designed to please readers, the use of illustrations, the inclusion of installment features of high quality or wide appeal, printing earlier and distributing more widely than the competition, encouraging submissions from correspondents and offering prizes, touching upon topical scandals in public and private lives, and an expedient expropriation of the best material published elsewhere" (E.W. Pitcher, "Problems with Eighteenth-Century Periodicals" *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 80 [1986], pp. 233-34).

-
- 20 Economic forces were not the only reasons some publications succeeded and others failed. As E. W. Pitcher has pointed out, a run of 4 or more years was considered to be long, and in the period 1780 - 1800, there were 12 short-lived efforts for every long-run one. Pitcher claims that by mid-century, some publishers intentionally discontinued publication because "marketing a series of short-run magazines was a profitable way to appeal to their readers' need for novelty" (p. 233). In addition to a magazine's failure to achieve sufficient circulation, Jeremy Black identifies personal and local reasons for failure: the death or retirement of a printer, internal feuds, dirty-dealing, such as the appropriation of the title of an existing paper by a new one, or just plain exhaustion, due to political harassment (pp. 15-16). Simon Varey claims that "boredom on the editor's part and insufficient advertising" were among the reasons papers were discontinued. (p. 248). Donald Greene suggests that the strain of too much writing to deadline may have been a reason for the early demise of some periodical publications (Donald Green, "Samuel Johnson, Journalist" in Donovan Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod (eds.) *Newsletters to Newspapers* [Morgantown, West Virginia: School of Journalism, 1977], p. 92).
- 21 Black, p. 290. According to Calhoun Winton, there were ten times as many periodicals in London at the end as at the beginning of the eighteenth century (Calhoun Winton, "Richard Steele, Journalist," in Bond and McLeod (eds.), p. 22).
- 22 Neil McKendrick. "The Consumer Revolution of Eighteenth-Century England," in Neil McKendrick et al (eds.) *The Birth of a Consumer Society*: (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 32.
- 23 John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics" in Neil McKendrick et al, p. 216.
- 24 There was an analogue to this lawlessness in the development of the provincial press, though Cranfield uses it to explain not the originality or innovation of provincial papers, but the lack of it (pp. 257-58).
- 25 The technology of print remained basically unchanged from the invention of the printing press in the fifteenth century to the application of steam power to various print processes in the nineteenth. Not having to invest in continual "upgrading" was an obvious financial advantage to a printer/publisher. As Richmond Bond has observed, "The periodic press grew because the amount of printing activity grew with and for it, not because the procedures of operation improved in the printshop" (p. 13).
- 26 "By 1750 the London newspapers formed part of a spectrum of periodical output competing for readers within a national market and opening up new social and geographical areas that could offer mutual commercial benefits" (Harris, p. 189).
- 27 Black, p. 278.
- 28 The term "free press" as applied to the early 18th century must be qualified: "Most agreed that liberty of the press was not an unregulated liberty but something called an ordered, regulated, legal liberty, a liberty within and under the law, interpreted by an independent judiciary and brought to its conclusion with the aid of a jury" (Gibbs, p. 242).
- 29 Gibbs, p. 260.
- 30 In the last decade of the century, for example, women's magazines largely ceased to address themselves to mixed readerships and were increasingly concerned with matters coming to be identified as "female."
- 31 "If there is, then, some evidence of the tide beginning to turn in favour of a willingness to accept the extension of the market in the eighteenth century, there is still too little appreciation of the richness of the commercial response, the fertility and ingenuity of entrepreneurial ideas, the extent to which society accepted consumer attitudes" (McKendrick, p. 31).

-
- 32 Simon Varey is an exception to this trend, stating that from 1695 to the 1720s, "Newspaper proprietors concerned themselves with money and profit before the expression of ideology" (p. 247).
- 33 J.R. Jones (ed.), *Liberty Secured? Britain Before and After 1688* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 9.
- 34 Black, p. 47.
- 35 Among women's magazines, the most notable exception to this statement is Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's *The Nonsense of Common-Sense* (1737-38), which sold for the cost of printing. When asked by her printer how she expected to make money from it if she only charged twopence, she replied that she did not expect to make money from it, "Upon which he turned from [her] with the Air of compassionate Contempt, with which good-natured People look upon those they suppose *Non compos mentis*" (v, 1738). Nevertheless, the caption repeated in each issue was "To be continued as long as the Author thinks fit, and the Public likes it." Thus, while Montagu disowns any profit-making motives, she links, at least rhetorically, the life of her paper to the wishes of the reading public.
- 36 "It is not that publishers and writers have always provided the right answers to readers' questions and satisfied their desires, but they have been very good...at sensing areas of interest and concern...in the record of patterns of publication are reliable indicators of issues and concerns on the minds of readers at specific cultural moments" (J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels* [New York: W.W. Norton, 1990], p. 61 - 62).
- 37 Robert Mayo, *The English Novel in the Magazines 1740 - 1815* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1962), p. 3. Mayo argues that, while the number of actual magazine readers in the eighteenth century is "highly speculative," it "must have included nearly everyone who could read" (p. 2). I would concur with this only if a distinction is made between regular and occasional readers. While it must have been difficult to avoid the presence of magazines, given their popularity, it cannot really be claimed that everyone who encountered them became an avid reader.
- 38 Richard D. Altick, *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), pp. 43-44.
- 39 For example, Cranfield asserts that although no precise information is available on literacy in the seventeenth century, "it is certain that the level of illiteracy was extremely high" (Cranfield, p. 4). By contrast, Margaret Spufford argues that the world of the yeoman in the seventeenth century was literate and that reading was an accepted skill (Margaret Spufford, "First steps in literacy" *Social History* 4 [1979], pp. 430-31). Assessments of early modern history are also hampered by the inconclusiveness inherent in some methodologies. For example, it is fairly common practice to use the ability to sign -- the marriage register of the Church of England after 1754, or court depositions, or wills -- as evidence of literacy. While such studies are interesting, they do not take into account the likelihood that many who could not sign their names were in fact able to read, or that some people who could neither read nor write might find it useful to learn to sign their names. In light of the fundamental impossibility of this approach, *de facto* arguments appear to be not only more persuasive, but likely more accurate.
- 40 Schwoerer, pp. 210-211.
- 41 Robert Pattison, *On Literacy: The Politics of the Word from Homer to the Age of Rock* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), p. 140. Pattison notes that: "At the end of the seventeenth century, a London bookseller collected 23,000 books and pamphlets published between 1641 and 1662, the period of revolution. If the population of England at this time was around five and a half million, and if the rate of readers and writers was about 35 percent of the male population, then at least for these twenty years one book was published for every forty-two readers."
- 42 R.M. Wiles, "Middle-Class Literacy in Eighteenth-Century England: Fresh Evidence," in R.F. Brissenden (ed.) *Studies in the Eighteenth Century*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968, pp. 49-65.

-
- 43 Ian Watt, *The Rise of the Novel* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 38.
- 44 Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. 65.
- 45 "The argument is a subtle one and usually lies just beneath the surface of the rhetoric, but one can hear, in the chorus of exhortations to read, a growing spirit of national pride and a sense of competition with other nations and with more backward domestic traditions. Intensifying arguments for literacy coincide more than incidentally with the growing imperialist aggressiveness about trade and with the developing consciousness of the need to develop a nationalistic literary tradition" (*Before Novels*, p. 84).
- 46 Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 235.
- 47 Altick, p. 26.
- 48 James Raven, "From promotion to proscription: arrangements for reading and eighteenth-century libraries." in James Raven et al (eds.) *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 181.
- 49 Cranfield, p. 9.
- 50 Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture: 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), pp. 30-34.
- 51 Quoted in Cranfield, p. 189. That such sentiments ignored the practical disincentives for the labouring classes to learn to read seems to have been beside the point. Watt names lack of incentive, of disposable income to buy reading matter, of time, of privacy, and of light as examples of such disincentives (pp. 39 - 47).
- 52 Altick, p. 31. English ambivalence about educating the poor can also be contextualized within general European anxiety over the issue. Peter Burke has remarked that in Europe, the general rise in popular literacy between 1650 and 1800 made many "secular-minded reformers" uneasy: "They distrusted much of traditional oral culture...but they also feared that education might make the poor discontented with their station in life and thought that the majority of children should not be taught to read and write at all: others...thought they should learn only basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills" (p. 252).
- 53 Altick, p. 32.
- 54 Watt, p. 46.
- 55 David Vincent argues that in pre-industrial society, "there may well have been as many labourers as tradesmen and shopkeepers who were capable of entertaining and instructing themselves through the medium of the printed word" (*Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750 - 1914* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], p. 12).
- 56 Again, responses to this matter were not uniformly negative. For example, the educator Sarah Trimmer, wrote that in light of the events in France, "no less than the safety of the nation probably depends upon the education of those children who are now growing up to maturity" (Quoted in Vincent, p. 6).
- 57 Harvey Graff, *The Labyrinths of Literacy: Reflections on Literacy Past and Present* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995), pp. 49-50.
- 58 Quoted in Raven, pp. 192-93. April London, remarking on Trusler's finely tuned ability to gauge market demand, has noted the dramatic shift from a favourable attitude toward female agency and enterprise in his fiction of the 1780s, to his more misogynistic representation of women in the fiction of the 1790s (*Women and Property in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], pp. 128 - 35). Trusler's extreme conservatism with regard to both women and the lower classes in the 1790s may indicate his own sentiments, or may reflect his continuing ability to measure his public in ways most profitable to himself.
- 59 Altick p. 72.
- 60 Altick, pp. 72-73.

-
- 61 No class existed in the eighteenth century that was comparable to what we term the middle class in the twentieth century, of course, but the term is still useful in a non-Marxist sense as shorthand to stand for all who could aspire to some level of upward mobility.
- 62 Hunter. *Before Novels*, pp. 76-79. While it may seem to some that his profile is more remarkable for what it leaves out - gender - than for what it includes, it seems to me altogether accurate. This omission, however, is of central importance to my thesis and will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Two.
- 63 At mid-century, the readers of newspapers and magazines were drawn largely from the middle classes, although substantial numbers of readers also came from the upper classes, the provinces, and the lower classes, as the rate of literacy rose. See Harris, pp. 191, 194; Cranfield, p. 187; Altick, p. 41.
- 64 Jan Fergus reminds us that the term "servant" is itself problematic, in the eighteenth century referring to "a very wide range of occupations...clerks, journeymen, apprentices, secretaries, tutors, footmen, chambermaids, servants in husbandry and so on, with very different duties and wages. In addition, servitude could be simply a state in the life cycle of those of 'the middling sort'" ("Provincial servants' reading in the late eighteenth century." in James Raven et al (eds.), p. 204).
- 65 "The role of class and group-specific demands for literacy's skills, the impact of motivation, and the growing perceptions of its values and benefits are among the major factors that explain the historical contours of changing rates of popular literacy. Any complete understanding and appreciation of literacy's history must incorporate the large...role of demand (in dialectical relationship to supply) and the very real benefits that literacy may bring" (Graff, p. 23).
- 66 Geoffrey Nuttall insists on the common spiritual ground between the diverse religious groups who made up the broad category of Puritan. "Some of the Episcopalians within the Established Church, all the Presbyterians and Independents in it before 1662, most of the Separatist and sectarian leaders outside it, and the founders of Nonconformity after 1662, are...spiritually nearer to one another than is any of them to the Roman Catholic Church or to the Laudian party within the Church of England. They have their own internal differences, some of them sharp...but in a large sense they have much in common, and for this faith and experience which they share...there is no other name than Puritan" (*The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992], pp. 9-10).
- 67 Jacob, p. 22.
- 68 Jacob, p.18.
- 69 Jacob, p. 25.
- 70 Jacob, p. 54.
- 71 Jacob, p. 51.
- 72 Jacob, p. 50.
- 73 McKeon, p. 190.
- 74 "According to [latitudinarian] preachers, the prosperous benefited because they worked, and success in this world as well as in the next rested not on any imagined predestination but on an act of individual will. The latitudinarians...would have nothing of Calvin's doctrine [of the elect] because it eliminated the necessity of striving and undermined the virtue of self-help. Their belief that man must win salvation from a just and providential deity who would never ruthlessly close the contest before it had begun complemented their view of work as the prerequisite of prosperity, or, if one were unlucky, for the privilege of receiving charity" (Jacob, pp. 51-52).
- 75 McKeon defines calling in terms that evoke its adaptability to secular purposes: "'a strenuous and exacting enterprise' in discipline--moral discipline, self-discipline, labour discipline--whose purpose is the glorification of God and the sanctification of the world...Discipline in the calling made of the private sinner a public saint" (pp. 191-92).
- 76 The Puritan divines Dod and Cleaver were unequivocal about the moral basis of labour: "They that apply themselves to labour for their livings do eat their own bread, and are profitable to others: whereas those stately idle persons are driven to put their feet under other men's tables, and their

hands into other men's dishes....Turning of recreation into a vocation...is not allowable by God's word...Every man, of every degree, as well rich as poor, as well mighty as mean, as well noble as base, must know that he is born for some employment to the good of his brethren, if he will acknowledge himself to be a member, and not an ulcer, in the body of mankind" (Quoted in Christopher Hill, *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* [New York: Schocken Books, 1964], p. 140). More recently, Charles Taylor has observed that in Puritan reckoning, "the meanest employment was a calling...provided it was useful to mankind and imputed to use by God. In this sense, all callings were equal, whatever their place in the social hierarchy, or in what we think of as the hierarchy of human capacities" (*Sources of the Self* [Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989], p. 223).

77 Some radical Puritan thought did, of course, challenge existing hierarchies. Following the Restoration, radicals and radical thought were regarded by the latitudinarians as threats, but were in fact sufficiently marginalized to be harmless. The radical sects that survived did so because they accepted the inequalities of society. According to Hill, "the sects' acceptance of responsibility for their own poor compelled them to impose labour discipline on their members; and they would do this far more effectively than an external Presbyterian disciplinary system could have done....However laudable the provision of social insurance by the sects, it involved a total acceptance of the unequal world....The radicals no longer hoped to turn the world upside down: they competed desperately as they adapted themselves to it. The sects became sectarian" (Hill, *The World Turned Upside-Down*, [London: Temple Smith, 1972], pp. 304-305).

78 Jacob, p. 52. Such a sentiment was easily justified by the fact that, in three of the four gospels, Christ himself had said that the poor would always be with us (Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:2; John 12:8).

79 Christopher Hill has argued that the association of religion and economic endeavour was always latent in the Puritan critique of idleness. In the medieval view, labour was not honourable because it was the consequence of sin. In Puritan thought, labour became both a social and an individual duty. But in either case, the critique of idleness, holding individuals responsible and accountable for the way in which they conducted their individual lives, was rigorously deployed to draw a sharp distinction between the elect and the damned (*Society and Puritanism*, p. 129).

80 Jacob, p. 55.

81 Jacob, p. 55. Or, as Edward Dowden has put it, "Christian doctrine must justify itself as consonant with man's moral nature, and as tending to promote his welfare. Christianity must appear as the religion of good sense" (*Puritan and Anglican* [Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1967], p. 324).

82 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Talcott Parsons (trans.) (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958), pp. 157-58.

83 This obviously also required a significant redefinition of the concept of excess. Whereas in earlier Christian formulations, excess was what was over and above subsistence, it increasingly came to be defined in terms of ostentation, decadence, and taste.

84 Quoted in Weber, p. 162. Not surprisingly, the parable of the ten talents was a popular one with Puritan divines.

85 McKeon, p. 197. As Christopher Hill has observed, "The preachers attempted to spiritualize what men were doing anyway, by telling them to do it for the right reasons. One may suspect that their congregations paid more attention to the general permission than to the careful qualifications with which it was hedged around" (*Change and Continuity in 17th-Century England* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974], p. 96).

86 Jacob, p. 56.

87 Among the most enduring of latitudinarian works were the sermons of John Tillotson, who had grown up in a Puritan household and later became Archbishop of Canterbury and whom Addison regarded as the period's most distinguished and useful authority. Edward Dowden argues that Tillotson's influence "is not to be explained by any extraordinary power of individual genius, unless it be genius to have caught the better spirit of the time and to have given it expression. It was his part to exhibit the duties of religion as a reasonable service, to set forth the

harmony of natural and revealed religion, to show that piety is a branch of wise living, making, as it does, for happiness and peace both in this life and the life that is to come, to exemplify in his own person the temper of moderation and good sense" (Dowden, pp. 334-35). More recently, Frans De Bruyn has observed that "[t]he widespread use of Tillotson, whose plain, lucid, moralizing sermons were a best-seller throughout the eighteenth century, is in itself an indication of the widespread triumph of latitudinarianism" ("Latitudinarianism and Its Importance as a Precursor of Sensibility," *JEGP* 80 (1981), p. 362).

88 Quoted in Weber, p. 175. The italics are Weber's.

89 Davidoff and Hall, p. 82.

90 Weber, pp. 176 - 77.

91 Hill, *Change and Continuity*, p. 97.

92 This anxiety may partially explain the ubiquitousness of death as a subject, usually indirect, in eighteenth-century periodicals, a point to which I shall return in Part Two.

93 McKendrick, p. 14.

94 McKendrick, p. 15.

95 McKendrick, p. 16.

96 McKeon, p. 204 - 205. McKeon also notes the problems that arose from the introduction of the imaginary and the subjective into commerce: "With the validation of the profit motive came the necessary acknowledgment that all profit-making rested upon the psychological assessment of subjective motive: thus the imaginative significance of financial terms like 'trust' and 'credit,' which convey the secularized mechanism of a bond that alludes not to a higher spiritual power but to its own, materialistic suasion....Although tied to the monied interest by their profound appreciation of the market's protean capacity to reward industrious virtue, proponents of progressive ideology were likely to feel uneasy with the insubstantiality of its subjective foundation" (p. 205).

97 John Barrell, *English Literature in History 1730-80: An Equal, Wide Survey* (London: Hutchinson, 1983), pp. 22 - 23.

98 Plumb, p. 269.

99 According to J. Paul Hunter, of the four issues that governed the discourse of didacticism, two were concerned with idleness: "warnings about idleness as a threat to both individual self-realization and the integrity of the social fabric [and] concern about the ethical dangers in contemporary patterns of leisure, recreation, and play" (*Before Novels*, p. 273-74).

100 Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class [1899]* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), p. 43.

101 *The Tatler*, Vol. I, xxi (May 26 - 28, 1709).

102 "If the gentleman is described as a man of no determinate occupation, it must seem that any degree of participation on his part in the affairs of society must compromise him, must oblige him to descend from the elevated viewpoint his status and leisure define for him; and particularly from the perspective which understood the proliferation of occupations as evidence of the corruption of the state by luxury and interest, for the gentleman to do anything would be for him to participate in that corruption. But if he does nothing, he can learn nothing...Steele, Defoe, and Mandeville put him to work, therefore, to study 'the polite arts and sciences' -- but not to practise them: he can work to develop his potential to understand the world, but he cannot put that understanding to work" (Barrell, p. 38 - 39).

103 Steele was also, of course, writing for women. Calhoun Winton estimates that half of the *Tatler's* readers were female (p. 43).

104 Veblen, p. 198.

105 Not all social hierarchies were hierarchies of class. If marriage had been forever changed by the Puritan belief that men and women were equal in the sight of God, there was no move -- from men *or* women of the middling classes -- to change hierarchical relations within the family, a point examined in more detail in Chapter Two.

106 Black. p. 263.

CHAPTER TWO

The Periodical Press

"...we should not presume without evidence that women (or men) mindlessly absorb a particular didactic lesson like so many pieces of blotting paper."

Amanda Vickery
"Golden Age to Separate Spheres?"

Over time, the popular press experienced a generic differentiation, with distinct forms, content, and readerships.¹ During the years of the Civil War and the Interregnum, the newspaper seems to have evolved in response to readers' desire to be kept current about political events and affairs. The appearance of the periodical is more difficult to account for, since it had nothing of the obvious logic of the appearance of the newspaper, and since nothing quite like it existed previously. One might look to earlier print matter such as broadsides, chapbooks, newsheets, and pamphlets to find relationships between these forms and periodicals, but such relationships are at best oblique and indirect, and earlier seventeenth-century publications cannot, finally, adequately explain the appearance of the periodical in the 1690s. Neither can the periodical (or its later cousin, the magazine) be seen as the natural outgrowth of the newspaper, although they had much in common.² Pragmatically, the emergence of periodicals might be attributed to the intense competition among newspapers, which may have caused some publishers to explore new and original areas of interest. Like newspapers, periodicals were a response to and product of a new social order still in the process of formation, and they shared with newspapers the same conditions of development described in the previous chapter.³ Like newspapers, periodicals satisfied the widespread desire for information, novelty and news, presented in ways that had the appearance of truth, whether true or not. And like newspapers, periodicals appealed to tastes that varied between high and low. Yet, from their beginning in the 1690s, periodicals differed from newspapers, in appealing to more eclectic interests, in assuming a more diverse and more sophisticated range of tones and genres, and in considering a wider spectrum of British social and cultural life.⁴

Newspapers tended to concentrate on matters of immediate interest and to convey them in a more abbreviated, less reflective manner, privileging currency and directness as best suited to frequent publication and distribution. Newspapers were intimately concerned with the public world of politics and trade. Periodicals and magazines, by contrast, focused on the everyday experience and the interests of their middle-class readers. "Given to trade, diligence, thrift, moral rectitude, Godliness, sentiment, humanitarianism, curiosity, the glorious principles of the Revolution, social and cultural ambitions, and a belief in the useful and material, the citizen of the middle class had the ability first to buy and then to read the papers which informed him of what he wished or needed to know and the journals which could promote his several aspirations. The lower class had insufficient resources, financial and literate, to sustain a large periodical press, and the upper class was too small. The middle class found a journalism to serve its interest whether physical or mental or emotional or spiritual [and] this strong group inevitably strengthened the development of the press, which in turn gave the benefits of public expression."⁵ The popular press developed because print entrepreneurs such as John Dunton, Richard Steele, and Eliza Haywood saw that there was money to be made from the expression of the specific interests of the upwardly mobile. The periodical, and later the magazine, catered to and nurtured new public desires and expectations: to be current and to be informed, to participate in the larger debates that preoccupied the nation, and to "move up" in the material world, through self-improvements brought about in part by reading. The products of the popular press were a sign of the times in the most literal way: simultaneously, as public mouthpiece, they promoted new British ideals; as repository, they acted as a barometer of their success; and as enterprise, they served as an embodiment of the ideals they promoted.

Arguably, the interrelated problems of readership and competition posed the greatest difficulty for the infant magazine industry. Early periodicals like *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* relied less on advertising than did newspapers, increasing the importance of circulation and sales revenue, which in turn increased the need to acquire a substantial and faithful readership. The writer and editor of a periodical was often the same person, especially in the early years of the industry, so it was frequently incumbent upon a single individual to determine where the potential market lay, to anticipate the demands of that market, and to satisfy it in print. One need only think of Eliza Haywood and her successive attempts at periodical publication to apprehend the probable range of difficulties associated with the

endeavour." Periodicals and magazines were substantially produced by a printer whose name always appeared on the title page of the magazine. Therefore, a primary financial risk was necessitated, either by the writer-editor or by an individual or collective financial backer. Of these financial arrangements, almost nothing is known.⁷ The vast majority of "papers" disappeared, usually without a trace, after only a number or two, and most probably disappeared because of either money problems or editorial misstep. However, assuming that periodicals and magazines surviving for more than a few numbers were the most successful and the most widely read, we can extrapolate from them what "worked" at a time when both readers and the products of the popular press were themselves imprecisely defined. In a fiercely competitive market, new modes of distribution and circulation ensured that each publication was read by the maximum number of readers. Editors counted readers through strategies that ranged from the adoption of fictitious editorial points of view to early exercises in creative marketing. All-important content was comprised of a broad spectrum of subject matter, deployed in a range of generic forms.

The accessibility of popular print media was a key factor in its development and success. In the early days of newspapers, periodicals, and magazines, consumers were not necessarily subscribers, purchasers, or even readers.⁸ This broad exposure rapidly habituated the British public to the notion of discourse as text, effectively enacting the transition from a primarily oral culture to a written one, though not unproblematically.⁹ For the literate, however, there were basically four ways to experience the products of the popular press: through purchase from a bookseller or through subscription (or being in the employ of someone who obtained reading matter in this way); through the coffee house; through circulating libraries; and through the dynamics of social intercourse. This wide variety of means, which were themselves frequently related to commercial enterprise, meant that individual copies typically had more than one reader, at once stimulating demand and competition. But the variety of ways in which periodicals, magazines, and newspapers were disseminated tended to neutralize or at least obscure class distinctions within the reading public, a tendency that was positive in a commercial sense, but problematic in its implicit threat to the hierarchical structure of society.

At the end of the seventeenth century and in the first half of the eighteenth, books were expensive commodities, but much cheaper newspapers, periodicals, and magazines made reading available to a wider public in London and beyond.¹⁰ Moreover, by 1700, "there were newsrooms where newspapers

could be read for a fee or borrowed for an hour by depositing the full price."¹¹ Of course, the affordability of popular print media had only a limited relationship to the numbers of people who read them. The numbers and identities of those who read periodicals and magazines at the coffee house or within a single household can never be known precisely, and the same inexactitude characterizes the nature and extent of borrowing practices between households. But we can be fairly certain that the number who read periodicals and magazines significantly exceeded the number who purchased them.

From the beginning of the popular press, the free availability of print matter, through both private and public social channels, was of primary importance. First among the public channels were the coffee-houses, which kept copies of newspapers, and later, periodicals, for their customers to read. The attractions of the coffee-houses were clear: they "offered material comforts at a time when...housing conditions were generally poor: they provided pleasant surrounding in which gentlemen could meet to transact business and exchange news and gossip: but one of their greatest attractions was undoubtedly the fact that they supplied newspapers."¹² The very conditions that made coffee-houses so influential in the rise of the popular press, however, gave cause for concern in other quarters. Restrictions on the press in the 1660s were directed in part at the "'coffee-house men', thus noticing that the new coffee houses in London played a role in exciting interest in public affairs and in dispersing allegedly seditious matter." In 1676, Charles II closed the coffee houses but his proclamation was withdrawn after ten days because "people were simply not going to obey it. Coffee houses were allowed to reopen, but the keepers had to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy and to promised to ban all 'scandalous Papers, Books, or Libells' critical of the government and its people. This stratagem did not work either."¹³ Later, Walpole's attempts to regulate the press by restricting distribution included a plan "to withhold the licenses of [coffee] houses displaying papers under prosecution" for libel, but these plans were not followed up.¹⁴ Such paranoia on the part of the government was not unfounded. There were 2000 coffee houses in London in the reign of Queen Anne, and these were notable for their ability "to bridge a variety of social levels of discourse (with at least as much influence from below as above) and to blur the distinction between oral and written discourse."¹⁵ Furthermore, coffee houses and the papers they encouraged their patrons to peruse offered not only affordable pleasure, but furthered opportunities for commerce as well as self-improvement.

Circulating libraries developed from the lending services of booksellers and were first established in the 1740s. In 1760, London contained twenty such libraries, and by 1800, there were more than 200 nationwide.¹⁶ Most circulating libraries carried all types of literature, including periodicals and magazines, and while the difference between a circulating library's modest subscription or borrowing fee and the cost of periodical literature was less than the difference between those fees and the cost of novels, an avid reader who could not afford to purchase books, periodicals, and magazines as individual items might well be able to afford the membership fees of a circulating library that provided access to a considerable range and volume of print matter. Predictably, the implications of the downward extension of such availability augmented the argument against educating the lower classes. Circulating libraries refocused tensions about reading, provoking "the greatest volume of contemporary comment about the spread of reading to the lower orders."¹⁷ James Raven has shown that the libraries themselves served contradictorily as signifiers of commercial enterprise and bourgeois respectability. The general alarm over the spread of literacy and reading and the increasing circulation of print matter "required defensive emphasis on the exclusiveness and significance of reading. From the outset, circulating libraries claimed to be both fashionable and selective...This tension between promotion and guardedness, between commercialization and exclusivity was a recurrent theme in statements, architectural as well as literary, about the use of books. The central concern was arbitrary or irresponsible reading attributable to the uneducated and ruder classes, impressionable and ill-informed."¹⁸

The availability of print matter in coffee houses and circulating libraries probably both reinforced and was reinforced by the social nature of reading itself in the early years of the print culture. Paula McDowell has written of the seventeenth-century importance of "oral public discourse to the London political scene...If one could conceivably avoid sermons, one could scarcely avoid the conversations, arguments, and oral advertising of the coffee-house, market-place or street, and for the illiterate majority, these models of association were the only regular source of news."¹⁹ During the transition from a primarily oral culture to a print culture, this fundamental relationship of sociability to news, religion, and politics continued to inhere in the act of reading: "The individual exchange of the smoking, drinking, talking, reading assembly--a school for news and views--was the best alliance between the social habit and the periodic press; but there is also a sociality in the private reading of journals being read by many

other people, a kind of consociation in receiving printed words, perhaps preparatory to spoken analysis the next evening or an argumentative retort the next encounter."²⁰

Social reading had a place in private as well as public life, taking the form of communal reading and reading aloud in the home, whether in the formal domestic library of a family of means or in the more modest surroundings of a shopkeeper's home. The texts that were read aloud were from a range of genres, and were often read "in combination with -- or while doing -- other things."²¹ The library of a well-to-do upwardly mobile Englishman served as a signifier of not only his wealth but of his taste, urbanity, and vision. It also served less ideologically as a meeting place for family and friends.²² In the more modest homes of tradesmen like Samuel Richardson and shopkeepers like Thomas Turner, domestic reading practices were "connected not to idleness, listlessness or frivolity but to a routine of work and of religious discipline...reading was a private experience in the sense that it was done in the home, but it was often a sociable rather than a solitary experience and this was especially manifested in the regular habit of reading aloud."²³ While it can be argued that the known reading practices in two eighteenth-century households need not be exemplary of those governing all printers and shopkeepers, the domestic reading habits of the Richardsons and the Turners were unlikely to have been unique. Given the extent of literacy, which was considerable even if not precisely defined, the availability of print matter, even for those who could not afford to buy books, and especially the association of reading with moral and social improvement, the Turners and the Richardsons stand as representatives of a large segment of the population for whom reading served a range of purposes.²⁴

For publishers of periodicals and magazines, the general assurance of a growing readership was only the precondition for enterprise, not a guarantee of success. A multitude of variables, beginning with the appeal to the largest possible cross-section of readers, had to be assessed and balanced by the new print entrepreneurs.²⁵ Early writer editors sought to accomplish this by varying subject matter, modes of address, and editorial strategies. In the absence of economic and marketing guidelines, the knowledge of a publication's readership in the first half of the eighteenth century had to be ascertained by the incisive and discriminating intelligence of an editor, who relied almost exclusively on a trial-and-error approach. From 1691 to 1697, John Dunton published what is generally considered to be the first English periodical, the *Athenian Mercury*, and his efforts and ingenuity serve as an example of early

entrepreneurial spirit. His involvement in the publishing trade went on for years and was both influential and formative, his innovations anticipating many of the features that came to characterize periodicals: the question-and-answer format; the appeal to a wide range of readers' interests, particularly in the areas of self-improvement and intellectual curiosity; the use of an editorial board formulated as a Society; semi-weekly distribution; and the inclusion of poetry and history. The *Athenian Mercury*, "although obviously intended for less learned readers...was fundamentally serious, being [intended] to satisfy the miscellaneous inquiries of an audience eager for learning, instruction, and practical advice."²⁶

The question and answer form continued to be popular throughout the century. In it, questions posed either by the editor or submitted by readers covered a wide spectrum of reader interests, from the serious to the frivolous. Later, Steele solicited letters from his readers, restricting the subject matter only to any "occurrences you meet with relating to your amours, or any other subject within the rules by which I have proposed to walk."²⁷ Many periodicals and magazines in the first three-quarters of the century solicited or accepted written submissions from readers, who were asked to contribute questions and letters to be answered by the editor or a learned proxy or occasionally other readers. Periodicals and magazines sometimes printed an exchange of letters between readers over several issues, and not infrequently the letter format was employed to raise sensitive issues or to voice unpopular or dissenting opinions. Readers also submitted poetry and fiction, and such contributions had the double effect of being free copy for the publisher and of serving as a kind of self-advertising by turning readers into writers, who, as participants, had an investment in the process. While some critics cite this phenomenon as an important step in the evolution of female writing, they sometimes underemphasize its consumer consequences: this editorial strategy created a desire to see oneself, or other readers like oneself, in print, and so acted as a powerful incentive to buy the magazines. Using a variation on this strategy, and perhaps following Dunton's lead,²⁸ Steele maintained that different kinds of subject matter were written from specific popular coffee-houses: for example, "Accounts of gallantry, pleasure, and entertainment" were dated from White's Chocolate-House, and poetry from Will's Coffee-House.²⁹ The dating of *The Tatler* from popular coffee-houses may well have created the illusion among readers that the magazine was arising from their very midst.

Editorial tinkering with the truth was a widespread practice that was manifested on a number of levels.³⁰ "When effort and innovation seemed to be profitless, some struggling magazines indulged in subterfuge and marketplace subversion...concocted letters to the editor, invented contributors, translations presented as original work of ingenious staff writers, the adoption of titles closely echoing or identical to those of competitors, misleading dating of issues or features within issues, the publishing of false sales figures, false charges of plagiarism against those from whom the magazine most frequently plagiarized, the disguised reprinting of something old as something new, the disclosure of scandal in the lives of persons invented to permit scandal to be disclosed, and promises of wonderful things to appear which never would or were intended to appear."³¹ Some of the letters, advertisements, "true histories," dying speeches, and criminal biographies that appear in the periodicals are blatantly false, and many others highly suspect. Hunter suggests that it was important for short journalistic narratives to "claim factuality, for whether they were literally and completely true, based upon facts but liberally embroidered, or made up out of whole cloth, the narratives achieved much of their appeal through their claim to represent what the present-day world was like, what kinds of amazement and surprise and horror were available to those whose lives were drab, uneventful, and apparently trivial, increasingly buried in the routine impersonality of modern life."³² However, the reasons for editors to engage in such methods extend beyond the wish of readers to alleviate boredom. The designation that reading matter was true, whether it was or not, negated illicit pleasures in the act of reading itself, and whether or not readers were fooled, or were ever intended to be fooled, by editorial confusion of fact and fiction was not the point.³³

"Truth" was often conveyed through the authority of an editorial persona who was overtly fictitious and distinct from the author's true identity, which sometimes appeared on the title page. Early periodicals frequently employed the framing device of the eidolon, who was either a member of and spokesperson for a larger editorial collective or an individual who spoke only for himself or herself. The difference between the single eidolon and the society was one of both number and identity. While the members of an editorial collective were identified primarily by subject position, which rendered them representative, idolons were individualized, often bearing assumed or eponymous names. *The Tailor's* Isaac Bickerstaff was the first eidolon of consequence; his female counterpart, Mrs. Phoebe

Crackenthorpe of *The Female Tatler*, was a worthy rival who presented real competition in terms of sales and advertising and is credited by Walter Graham with having stimulated Steele "to his greatest editorial ingenuity."³⁴ By time of *Mr. Spectator*, "editors realized fully that the framing device was a source of popular appeal in its own right, a fiction with its own reality."³⁵ The authority of an eidolon relied on his or her particular appeal to readers. For example, Kathryn Shevelov and Shawn Lisa Maurer have respectively claimed that Isaac Bickerstaff's discursive mode of address to *The Tatler's* readers was based on prevalent father-daughter and father-son models.³⁶

Although the Athenian Society that produced John Dunton's *Athenian Mercury* was composed of real people who were paid to contribute copy, many subsequent editorial collectives were invented.³⁷ *Mr. Spectator* and his club were followed by the fictitious Society of Ladies who produced the second phase of *The Female Tatler*. Likewise, the group of women credited by Eliza Haywood with the material for *The Female Spectator* was an invention of the author.³⁸ The rationale behind collective editorship is various, but its basis lies in the authority traditionally and contemporaneously associated with societies. Societies were associated with the dialogues of classical literature and with long-standing prestigious groups like the Royal Society, but in eighteenth-century London there were societies for every class, from the aristocratic Mohocks to societies for merchants and farmers.³⁹ Societies formed for the purpose of improving society were commonplace, and the Society for the Reformation of Manners, the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, the Society for the Propagation of Christian Knowledge, and the Society for the Suppression of Vice were only four of the twenty London societies dedicated to the promotion of public virtue and the extermination of private vice. How effective they were is hard to measure, but it is certain that their presence was felt, positively or negatively, by a significant segment of the population, and likely that those reading the new periodicals were sensitive to the aims of such groups. Finally, there is implied authority in numbers, and consensual support of a periodical's agenda potentially carried more weight than an individual opinion: the very "idea of the club is that its members collectively will have a far wider experience of contemporary English society than could be represented in a periodical imagined as the record of the experience of one man only."⁴⁰ This would seem to be the logic behind the Athenian Society's decision to keep its composition secret, the hope that readers would believe the society larger than it actually was and the members more learned than they actually were.⁴¹

Furthermore, if the "society" debated an issue in print and reached consensus based on the self-conscious consideration of all sides of a question, their conclusion carried great moral weight. The values of intellectual inquiry and judicious deliberation inherent in such a strategy were central to the self-image of the rising middle class.⁴²

J. Paul Hunter has observed that many of the tastes of mid-eighteenth-century novel readers were anticipated by late seventeenth-century readers of "journalism, didactic works, biography, and travel, history, and literature."⁴³ All these interests were reflected in the pages of newspapers and early periodicals, but while the content of newspapers was largely determined by events, the selection of magazine content was more arbitrary and more crucial.⁴⁴ A number of conditions had to be met: there had to be variety in subject matter and in the ways it was presented; contents must both instruct (to some degree) and amuse (to some degree); news and information must be up-to-date and comprehensive; above all, content must be of interest to and in the interest of the middle classes who comprised the readership of magazines. A major editorial concern was to satisfy a dual desire for novelty and for news.⁴⁵ One of the most visible and enduring features of the commercial press was a universal feeling that its purpose was both to instruct and to delight, an injunction that went hand-in-hand, if sometimes uncomfortably, with the news/novelty matrix. The reading public was no longer content with the unremitting polemic of the seventeenth-century religious and political press, but this same public took a dim view of entertainment for its own sake. Keenly interested in notions of self-improvement, it required that what amused should simultaneously instruct. Print entrepreneurs who took up the challenge usually privileged one requirement over the other, though most at least tried to accommodate both. Nevertheless, it was sometimes hard to distinguish which desire was being served at a particular moment.

The desire for information had several facets, including knowledge of current events in England and abroad, of historical events, of the natural world and the new science (the desire for this knowledge also obviously overlapped the desire for the innovative and original), and, most important, of the cultural and social norms that would govern thought and behaviour in the new social order. In the seventeenth century, new public awareness of the activities of the Crown and Parliament had served to forge a unique spirit of solidarity among disparate groups of people, solidarity that enabled large-scale political

action. In the eighteenth century, awareness of both sides of issues, though in one sense divisive, contributed to a sense of nationhood as it fostered a sense of general political participation, which, if it was not full participatory democracy, at least anticipated it in important ways. From the beginning, the commercial press exploited growing British nationalism, and until mid-century, news of British trade and financial dealings were widely published in a variety of newspapers and magazines. Advertisements kept the public up-to-date on the availability of consumer goods and services. Foreign news took on new importance in terms of general interest and its utility for actual and potential investors.¹⁶ "The newspaper...served not only as a business seismograph, informing merchants, middlemen and traders of tremors that could lead to a financial earthquake, but also taught precisely those virtues and values which were necessary for survival in an economically expansive though debt-ridden society."¹⁷ Moreover, foreign news was safe from accusations of sedition or libel, since news borrowed and translated from foreign papers could not be considered libelous. More generally, news of earthquakes in Lisbon, reports of the plague in Constantinople, and accounts of Indian massacres in Nova Scotia were typical of sensational foreign events followed closely by the press.

Interest in local affairs also increased as readers' knowledge and awareness of London expanded beyond their immediate neighbourhoods.¹⁸ Domestic news often appeared in the form of lists,¹⁹ which had the advantage of conveying a large amount of information in an accessible, economical way.²⁰ The interest in local events reflected a growing interest in the everyday world,²¹ but local news often had ideological implications as well. In some magazines, accounts that were identified first by location, whether neighbourhood, region, province or country, often had the effect of imparting moral value related to the collective economic, political, or religious status of a particular place. For example, the well-publicized Tring witch-hunt and subsequent murder trial were always referred to by location. As a rural, have-not parish, Tring acted as a signifier for the association of lower-class existence with ignorance, superstition, derelict behaviour, and mob violence. Although a few individuals involved in the incident were named, they were not important as individuals.²² Scottish rebels who were executed as traitors were, in accounts of their executions, identified first by nationality, and a disproportionate number of those capitally convicted according to Old Bailey reports were Irish Catholics. By contrast, accounts of the widely publicized trial and execution of Mary Blandy for the murder of her father

focused on the aberrant behaviour of a genteel individual whose geographical origins were unimportant.⁵³

A widespread late seventeenth-century interest in history that resulted in "a deeper sense of the difference between the past and the present" was an important aspect of the general desire for knowledge.⁵⁴ In a predominantly oral culture, knowledge of history is fragmentary at best. Print entrepreneurs quickly identified history, particularly British history, as a source of interest that could be turned not only to educational but also moral ends: historical heroes and villains, saints and demons might serve as authoritative models to emulate or avoid. History provided political lessons as well: narratives of the rise and fall of rulers and nations were of particular interest in the wake of the events of the seventeenth century and in the revolutionary decades of the eighteenth. Science and scientific rationalism were also subjects of widespread interest among both women and men.⁵⁵ According to G.S. Rousseau, natural history was an intellectual staple of early eighteenth-century coffee-house life, and public discussions of science there and in public lectures had far-reaching implications for the advancement of science in general.⁵⁶ Science articles frequently appeared in the commercial press, beginning with questions about science in the *Athenian Mercury* and continuing throughout the century. These articles reflected a wide range of scientific interests, from the pathology and cure of disease, to anatomization of the human body, to plant biology. Conveniently, the interest in science could also implicitly be used to justify a prurient interest in natural disasters like earthquakes and lightning storms. Mathematics, too, seemed to be of general interest, and particularly in the periodicals of the first quarter of the eighteenth century, mathematical problems and puzzles were a fairly common feature.

The feature of the commercial press that most clearly differentiated it from other print genres except novels and conduct books was its preoccupation with the manners and morals of British society. That there should be a demand for public discussion of such topics as courtship and marriage, relations between children and parents, the evils of libertinism and other lingering reminders of decadent aristocracy, and the redefinition of the gentleman is not really surprising. Sweeping transformations in the economic and political realms could hardly fail to have a major impact on the lives of individuals and their relations to and with each other, particularly with regard to social categories: if birth no longer equaled worth, what was required in order to be worthy? The historical combination of revolutionary

upheaval in the mid-seventeenth century and Restoration excess had eliminated any possibility that traditional society based on feudal norms would be re-established. Fundamental social categories of class and gender were thoroughly destabilized, and a period of social reconstruction was unavoidable, necessitated and driven by economic imperative.⁵⁷ The discourse of social morality in periodicals had a great deal to do with religion, especially in relation to its gradual marginalization in favour of a more secular morality, and the ways in which religious belief was experienced in the lives of individuals were also key to the redefining of social mores. The unraveling of the strands of the discourse of class in eighteenth-century Britain is complicated, maddening, and completely compelling. At the centre of the knot is the perennial uncertainty of relationship between the upwardly mobile middle classes and the classes on either side. The subject of leisure appears in the periodical press, as an index of these ambivalences, since it signified, on the one hand, aristocratic immorality and decadence, and on the other, a leisured status that was wholly desirable. Social norms were frequently discussed in the periodical press, with the subjects of courtship and marriage indivisible from matters of property and class.⁵⁸ Even more particular were considerations of dress and deportment, which sometimes took the form of scathing satirical anecdotes about social climbers.⁵⁹ High on the list of social misdemeanors was anything that smacked of decadent aristocratic preferences, particularly if these were also "foreign," such as the taste for Italian operas. Ostentatious styles of dress and hair, showy livery, and a preference for continental food were also censurable.⁶⁰ The proper outward behaviour for virtually every member of the middle class was, in fact, subject to scrutiny in the press.

When social issues of wider significance were addressed, these, too, included a class dimension. Gambling and dueling were condemned as being aristocratic as well as unchristian vices. While the morality of war was not itself an issue, it was sometimes the context for the censure of traditional aristocratic forms of male honour.⁶¹ Calls for better education for women were common in periodicals and magazines directed at all readerships, and were often contextualized in criticism of contemporary practices that educated young women for lives of leisure rather than purpose.⁶² Particular issues of social importance, such as the need to eradicate rabies, were sometimes taken up by the magazines. However, in general, the press tended to be "[s]ympathetic to popular distress but opposed to popular action."⁶³ Middle-class readers could thus have the satisfaction of awareness without the obligation to

act. The magazines' ability to reach a wide public was applauded by some: for example, William Temple and Jonathan Swift thought that the Athenian Society had made a significant contribution to English society: "They had popularized knowledge and made it accessible to the mass of readers, without poring over of duty books. They had invented a short-cut to general education, an easy and pleasant means of satisfying the intellectual curiosity of the day."⁴ But while the kind of information and advice available in periodicals and magazines had at least the potential of raising the general level of public intelligence, it did little to threaten the security of the emergent hegemony of the middle-class.⁵

Because of their social content, periodicals (particularly the early efforts of Addison and Steele and their subsequent imitators), are often considered to have been instruments of popular reform. But reform in this case must not be confused with progressive social reform that redresses social ills and aims truly to democratize society.⁶ If they were reformist in the broad sense of reconstructing society in middle-class terms, periodicals were also deeply conservative: if traditional hierarchies were not to be duplicated, the generic idea of hierarchies was not to be replaced.⁷ The poor, for example, were to be manipulated and perhaps educated, but poverty was not to be eliminated. "It could be suggested that the limited amount of social radicalism advocated in the press and the tendency for social criticism to adopt a conservative stance reflected a society in which shared assumptions bound landed society and urban opinion together, particularly in the face of external threat. It was not a society based on tolerance towards or understanding of the problems of those who only inadequately shared in its benefits."⁸ Periodicals that advocated moral improvement did not have a reformist agenda, but served as mouthpieces for an emergent middle class that was constructing itself for its own benefit. The vices condemned by the magazines, as well as by the high-profile "reform" societies that existed in London at the turn of the century, were not the vices of the middle classes. They were the vices associated with the libertinism of the decadent aristocracy and with the depravities of the idle poor.

Moreover, the pity and terror aroused by accounts of natural disasters and the fates of criminals were not intended to move tasteful readers to a greater sense of fellow-feeling and humanity, but to provide "relief, complacency, and a sense of safety [at being] adequately remote from a pain on which [the readers' pleasure] depended for 'secret comparison.'"⁹ Proper tastes, like proper manners and proper response, were invested with a moral value that could contribute significantly to individual virtue.

the linchpin of secular morality whose achievement was the common aim of all human endeavour in the new society. And the strategy worked. Those groups, like the Dissenting Academies, who most disapproved of secular literature were approving of *The Spectator* and *The Tatler*.⁷⁰

The association of periodicals like *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* with concepts like reform, moral improvement, education, taste, and virtue obscures the economic nature and the internal contradictions of the endeavour.⁷¹ Addison and Steele may have had a mission, but the means by which they chose to carry it out were firmly grounded in the entrepreneurial spirit of the age.⁷² While they condemned love of consumer goods, they produced and sold them for profit. They sought to establish a new social order based on manners and good taste, but the code of conduct they advocated required the consumption of costly material goods. They advised readers to be distanced from the sinful attractions of the material world, but to be distanced from the world required money and leisure, which, unless one already had it, could only be obtained legally through marriage, speculation and investment, or enterprise.⁷³ And if they sought to reassure readers that comfort, relief, and safety were to be found in cultivating a spectatorial response to the sufferings of the lower classes, exposure to such suffering also served to remind upwardly mobile readers that there was another direction in which to go, thereby emphasizing and perpetuating a need for the magazines. *The Tatler's* and *The Spectator's* attacks on consumer pleasures are completely compromised by their being instances of them. These periodicals, like those that succeeded them, did not so much construct their readers, as exploit the prevailing cultural desires and attitudes of their day, cashing in on the "commercialization of leisure" they condemned.⁷⁴

No discussion of the eighteenth-century press would be complete without reference to the appearance of writers or journalists as a separate category of print entrepreneurs and of authorship as a profession.⁷⁵ The patronage system for writers was at best an unreliable means of support by 1700, and the new commercial press offered an alternative for established writers and for ambitious amateurs. Richmond Bond notes that "the status of the professional writer and the monetary advantages of editing and contributing to periodicals had ascended to the point where a talented man of letters could without

great loss of dignity: sell his sentences to a serial publication. The diversion of creative writers into party service can be in part explained by political conviction and in larger part by economic conditions, these men being mortal and wishing so to remain. And the amateur writer could gain a bright renown in the periodical press. The ideas and the skill of the accomplished author, with or without price, gave a fame and a worth essential to the literary, learned development of the press, which in its expansion was able to attract his cooperation--a correlative good fortune."⁷⁶ Financially, however, this correlative good fortune was dubious for many if not most writers.

Critical opinion is mixed as to whether or not magazine writers enjoyed financial success and security over the course of the century."⁷⁷ Those who did not "make it" have disappeared utterly, and many who wrote for money did so anonymously, so that there is no telling what kind of living these nameless early journalists made. We can probably safely ascribe a measure of truth to the legends of impoverished, starving Grub Street writers. But some writers must have been successful during this period, since journalism did develop into a profession capable of sustaining its practitioners. Journalism at least gave some writers the chance to earn a modest living and occasionally to acquire a degree of fame, notwithstanding the fact that professional writers were particularly subject and vulnerable to the vagaries of the commercial press in its first fifty years.

From the beginning, the commercial press built into its publications certain limitations for the professional writer: for example, contributions of poetry and fiction were typically unpaid.⁷⁸ Another constraint on aspiring writers was the necessity to write what was required by editors and booksellers, who were guided by the interests, expectations, and demands of readers, possibly at the expense of the writer's own inclinations. Although many writers lived better under the aegis of the censors than they had under the patronage system, most complained bitterly about this circumscription of their writing and of writing in general. According to Ian Watt, "what Pope and his friends were really alarmed about was the subjection of literature to the economic laws of *laissez faire*, a subjection which meant that the booksellers, whatever their own tastes, were forced to be... 'Curbs by Profession': they had to procure from Grub Street Dunces whatever the public might wish to buy."⁷⁹ The necessity to write for an anonymous but demanding undifferentiated public rather than for patrons with cultivated tastes had

practical outcomes as well, including the need to be understandable to less-educated readers and to write copiously at considerable speed.⁸⁰

By mid-century, writing had acquired a degree of respectability, but conflicting attitudes toward class and the professional writer continued throughout the century to be articulated mostly by writers themselves. Fielding complained that "the whole world of letters was becoming 'a democracy, or rather a downright anarchy."⁸¹ But Samuel Johnson wrote, "A journalist, above most other men, ought to be acquainted with the lower orders of mankind, that he may be able to judge what will be plain and what will be obscure: what will require a comment, and what will be apprehended without explanation. He is to consider himself not as writing to students or statesmen alone, but to women, shopkeepers, and artisans, who have little time to bestow upon mental attainments, but desire, upon easy terms, to know how the world goes: who rises, and who falls: who triumphs and who is defeated."⁸² A few years later, in 1761, Oliver Goldsmith grumbled that "[t]he effort is now made to please the multitude, since they may be properly considered as the dispensers of rewards."⁸³ Notwithstanding the desire of some writers that "pure" literature generated by artists should govern the commercial press, the enterprise had its own inherent rules: "'Journalism' is a real form of writing, and, however much an author may wish to escape from the implications of that term, its disciplines and techniques are built into the serial structure of the newspaper."⁸⁴ Heated debates over the moral or aesthetic merits of some forms of writing as opposed to others raged throughout the eighteenth century. But, as Hunter reminds us, there was a close relationship between "ephemera and serious literature" at mid-century, and writers were often required to move "back and forth in their commitments and accomplishments in a very confusing way," so that what was high art and what was low art was not altogether distinguishable even to them.⁸⁵ In retrospect, the now-canonical authors who were also journalists, including Defoe, Steele, Haywood, Fielding, Smart, Johnson, Lennox, Goldsmith, and Smollett, comprise a formidable group. Significantly, they were aspiring entrepreneurs, and like the printer-novelist Samuel Richardson, they were writing to earn or to supplement their incomes. The shared social aspirations of these writers and their readers must not be underestimated. Not only were they "in very direct contact with the new interests and capabilities of the reading public...they themselves were wholly representative of the new center of gravity of that public."⁸⁶

It seems clear that the single most important factor in a publication's success was financial success, which depended on a faithful readership. By extension it seems equally clear that the single most important factor in achieving success lay in an editor's ability to "read" his or her readership and to anticipate and fulfill its expectations and desires. The readers of periodicals and magazines were initially a substantial but unwieldy group, whose literary tastes were completely bound up with what they wanted to be, which was more than what they were and, in many cases, more than what they could be. The popular press was the dream of upward mobility made legible, and that dream found its way into print by way of an entrepreneurial impulse that was itself an intrinsic part of the dream. For the first seventy years of the eighteenth century, it was a dream only secondarily inflected by gender.

Women's Magazines

In 1693, John Dunton published a second version of his successful *Athenian Mercury*. The short-lived *Ladies Mercury* signaled the birth of a specialized industry that has not abated for over 300 years -- the publication of publications addressed to a primarily female audience. Throughout the eighteenth century, periodicals and magazines whose primary audience was women appeared and disappeared, in numbers less numerous than their counterparts addressed to male or general readerships, but as consistently. Women's periodicals and magazines were subject to the same constraints and conditions that affected the print establishment generally. Most importantly, like their counterparts, they were an accessible means to engage a range of readers with the formation of the new social order. The real conditions of women's lives dictated that their engagement would be in some ways different from men's, and such differences probably underlay the identification of a separate readership. But in other ways, engagement with the process was the same. The content of women's periodicals and magazines provides important insights into what these differences and similarities were and indicates the extent to which women -- and women's magazines-- participated in the broad social changes that took place during the eighteenth century.

Recent attention to the conjunction of women and eighteenth-century magazines and periodicals, most notably Kathryn Shevelov's *Women and Print Culture*, has focused on the ideological effects of

such publications.⁸⁷ Shevelow argues that, from the beginning, the eighteenth-century periodical acted "as an agent of ideology formation, situating itself within a discourse about women which would become the dominant one. [and] appropriated and reformulated components of the early feminist social critique to construct a new, limiting feminine norm."⁸⁸ While Shevelow's analysis is perceptive within the ideological feminist framework she has set herself, *Women and Print Culture* tends to reduce the embryonic magazine industry to just one more instrument of patriarchal power, a self-limiting proposition that leaves out more than it accounts for and has unintended negative consequences for scholarship on the subject and for the history of women generally.

First, the primary purpose of periodical and magazine publication was not to rewrite gender but to turn a profit for those hardy enough to take a financial risk. For the entrepreneurs in the dog-eat-dog world of commercial publishing, readers represented not so much a captive audience for major gender construction and reform, as a new market whose tastes and demands must necessarily be ascertained and taken into account. Second, much recent research has questioned the inviolability and historicity of the public-private split, a phenomenon Shevelow seems to accept as given.⁸⁹ But while British women were increasingly "domesticated" over the course of the eighteenth century, they were clearly not excluded from or uninterested in the public sphere.⁹⁰ Moreover, insofar as women's periodicals and magazines did comment on the domestic aspect of women's lives, they did so in ways consistent with women's traditional ties to home and family, ties that women from the middle stations did not question. Finally, in formulations such as Shevelow's, the eighteenth-century female reader is construed as the all-too-familiar passive recipient of restrictive and self-interested patriarchal structures.⁹¹

Christopher Hill has remarked that "[h]istorians are interested in ideas not only because they influence societies, but because they reveal the societies which give rise to them."⁹² Readings that consistently focus exclusively on gender as an index to the history of women tend to ignore the complexity of the interactions between individuals, especially the voluntary complicity of consumers in the marketplace. In doing so, they diminish the power that women as readers and consumers exercised in the development of the publications directed at them, and trivialize the efforts of women writers who participated as entrepreneurs or contributors in the emergent industry. An exclusively gender-oriented viewpoint that ignores or undervalues the socio-economic historical contexts of women's existence can,

paradoxically, end up re-endorsing the very erasure of female agency from history that it set out to challenge.

Women's periodicals and magazines form a key component in assessing the relations between female readers, writers, and texts in the period. Richmond Bond's comment that "early newspapers and periodicals [offer] a truly comprehensive spectacle of British civilization during one of its most influential eras" clearly indicates both the genre's social specificity and its potential as a site for investigation across a range of disciplines, points that have largely gone unheeded.⁹³ My study argues that women's periodicals and magazines provide important insights into the history of women in the eighteenth century, in terms of our understanding of the world in which they lived and in terms of their understanding of their place in that world. Recent scholarship has documented the substantial participation of seventeenth-century women in the public world of print, and Paula McDowell has shown the extent to which women's involvement in the production and distribution phases of publishing in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century contributed to the development of the political press in Britain. My argument builds on such findings, attempting to define eighteenth-century female readership not in terms restricted to gender, but in terms of the emergent publishing industry and the emergent social order. I shall argue additionally that popular publications directed at women and women print entrepreneurs participated actively in the print establishment in terms of both marketplace and formation, often moderating or serving as correctives to the paternalism in the print discourse concerning women.

While precise figures for female literacy are no more ascertainable than those for men, it is generally agreed that rates of literacy among both women and men increased from the seventeenth century onwards. Recently, however, some historians investigating literacy in the lower classes have made observations that add to our specific knowledge of female literacy. For example, from her examination of the seventeenth-century autobiographies of two literate yeomen, Margaret Spufford concludes that their world was one "in which the ability to read was assumed without question. The very unself-consciousness of the incidental remarks that give away the manner in which literate skills were used in everyday living, amongst wives and daughters as well as friends, are revealing of the way in which literacy was an accepted skill."⁹⁴ Spufford cites two other facts that indicate the fairly widespread existence and acceptance of female literacy: an instance in which four of five parish

schoolteachers were women, the wives of day labourers and small craftsmen, and the observation that well into the eighteenth century, a considerable number of children of varying social ranks were taught to read by their mothers.⁹⁵ Peter Earle has remarked that, among paid female employees, the spectrum ranged from totally illiterate silk-winders to totally literate schoolteachers.⁹⁶ Naomi Tadmor has shown the interconnections between the eighteenth-century practice of reading aloud in the home (and the dual private/public nature of this practice) and the material exchange of printed texts through existing social networks.⁹⁷

That the publisher of the very first periodical recognized the potential to profit by addressing female as well as male readers argues powerfully for the existence of a considerable female readership. Such a readership was, moreover, an accepted fact among contemporaries. Though *The Ladies Mercury* lasted only four issues, Dunton apparently felt that the publication of a distinctly female version of *The Athenian Mercury* was a risk worth taking. A few years later, the Company of Stationers accepted Tipper's *Ladies Diary, or Woman's Almanack* (hardly short-lived, running from 1704 and throughout the eighteenth century); it was a best seller, even though Tipper sold it at half again the price of other almanacs.⁹⁸ The feminized imitators of *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, as well as other less overtly mimetic efforts in the first half of the century, formed a steady stream of publications directed primarily at female readers.⁹⁹ They also represent genuine participation in the industry: imitation was after all the name of the game as print entrepreneurs "borrowed" successful editorial strategies as freely and frequently as they "borrowed" actual copy.¹⁰⁰ The eventual emergence of magazines targeting women exclusively evidences a large and growing market that relied on widespread female literacy.¹⁰¹

Of course, even more detailed knowledge of literacy rates could not reveal who were the readers of women's periodicals and magazines. The profile of this group must rely on other indicators.¹⁰² Jan Fergus has undertaken one of the most extensive studies in this area, examining the records of eighteenth-century booksellers for patterns of provincial servants' reading. Fergus has determined that servants not only read but also purchased books and magazines, and that their motives mirrored those of the ranks above them: "those in the lower ranks were as interested as their 'betters' in making the best use of their literacy. The classic motives for reading in the period were delight and instruction, and

servants' choices certainly indicate both intellectual curiosity and a desire for self-improvement."¹⁰³ Fergus' study also shows that from the 1770s, "tradesmen, farmers, artisans and their wives were increasingly interested in magazines and other inexpensive forms of literature."¹⁰⁴ In a related study, Fergus found that of the over 1000 magazine subscribers in the records examined, 110 were women.¹⁰⁵ While this represents only a little over 10% of subscribers, Fergus reminds us that there is no way to distinguish magazines that were ordered in the name of the husband but were intended for the female readers in the household.¹⁰⁶ However, the number of magazine subscriptions by women outnumbered women's novel subscriptions by almost two to one, a trend that was likely present in urban areas as well.¹⁰⁷

Other factors help define the eighteenth-century reader of popular publications directed at women. For example, the tradesmen's wives and daughters who subscribed to magazines did so because of the lower cost, but also because their reading time was circumscribed by other duties, and the magazines' format was more accommodating to interruptions.¹⁰⁸ Circulating libraries made magazines even more widely available, and a frequently cited complaint in *The Lady's Magazine* -- that, because women often read while they were having their hair dressed, library books were full of hair powder!¹⁰⁹ -- suggests that women of greater leisure were also readers of the magazines. James Raven has commented that "reading was carefully presented as a privileged activity, to be guarded by protectors and modulated by codes of conduct."¹¹⁰ The magazine generally and women's magazines in particular owed much of their success to this very notion of reading as a privileged activity.¹¹¹ Affordable, available, and attractive to a wide social spectrum of female readers, women's magazines represented commodified privilege, irresistible in the status-conscious, upwardly mobile eighteenth century. In the context of women's magazines, entertainment and self-improvement were not antagonistic, but complementary. Entertainment implies not only momentary amusement, but also the leisure, real or imagined, to experience it. Self-improvement in eighteenth-century terms is a complex notion, referring at once to improvement in education (and female education was a substantial concern of diverse groups throughout the century), improvement in status (which might be signified explicitly through overt imitation of the manners, dress, and taste of one's betters or implicitly through the enactment of leisured activities such as reading), and moral improvement (a condition that might conveniently ameliorate the

notion of entertainment). On the one hand, women's magazines, like novels, represented the leisured life, or (in most cases) at least sufficient leisure to amuse oneself during respites from other duties.¹¹² On the other hand, while aspects of female self-improvement have been extensively discussed separately as female education, status-climbing, or didactic moral instruction, these are rarely considered in tandem, and examined for the ways in which they reinforce each other. Yet, it seems that the diversity and flexibility of the term "improvement" is precisely what canny editors identified as the principle underlying the primary desire of female readers.¹¹³ Reading the magazines allowed women of diverse social stations to improve themselves socially through simultaneously "aping their betters" by the very fact of leisure to read (and to gain knowledge of what their "betters" were doing): to improve themselves intellectually through the magazines' extensive and wide-ranging offerings on history, travel, current events, natural history, poetry, and even math; and to improve themselves morally through the magazines' continual commentary on proper female conduct and secular morality.

The complementarity of amusement and improvement and the complex workings of female self-improvement resulted in the unintentional complicity of women in their own "domestication," a development with unforeseen and unfortunate results for future female agency in the public sphere.¹¹⁴ For, while notions of female improvement (like those for men) were linked to middle-class interests of moral, social, and economic advancement, in the case of women, they were also tied to women's traditional position in the family order, ties that were unchallenged by the women most likely to be reading the magazines. The work of recent scholars has indicated not only the extent to which the late-seventeenth-century family was hierarchically arranged, but also the extent to which women in those families generally accepted and worked within those arrangements, which simply mirrored similar arrangements in other institutions of church and state.¹¹⁵ Over time, however, "[c]hanging economic conditions gave rise to new ideological notions about women and 'women's work,' and the idea that a prosperous tradesman 'kept' his wife eventually prevailed. Middle-class women's separation from paid economic activity...was increasingly made to appear natural (that is, arising out of women's essential nature). Narrowing notions of acceptable female behaviour heightened the challenges already faced by those women who attempted to enter or carry on small businesses in the [print] trade."¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, even as women were marginalized economically, women of the working and middling classes were, in

fact, commonly expected to contribute financially to the family income.¹¹⁷ According to Margaret Hunt, most eighteenth-century families needed the incomes of both husbands and wives, and "few women, even in the middling classes, were entirely economically dependent upon their husbands."¹¹⁸ Moreover, many women without husbands were themselves heads of households and were required to support their families single-handedly. Of these, most maintained themselves and their families modestly or poorly.¹¹⁹ If, as is probable, these working wives and single, respectable women were among the readers of women's magazines, it is clear that, like the coffee-house men with large aspirations, many readers of women's magazines were not the leisured ladies who inhabited the magazines' pages. To working women, single or married, the leisured lady represented both a social ideal and social as well as material improvement. Jeremy Black has observed with apparent surprise that, "[r]elatively little concern was shown for poor women despite the extensive magazine-type literature devoted to women and social manners, and the growth in the number of women readers of the press."¹²⁰ I suggest that poor women were not in the magazines because the publishers of women's magazines were responding to the desires and demands of a readership interested primarily in itself.¹²¹

Of course, as discussed earlier, the whole notion of leisure was contradictorily figured in the eighteenth century, tending both to define positively the true gentleman (and by extension the true gentlewoman) and to condemn the decadent aristocracy, serving equivocally as a powerful marker of both worldly success and disinterestedness.¹²² But the moral imperatives were superseded by social ones: leisure was appropriate only for certain classes, and this attitude was "strongly reinforced by the economic theory of the day which opposed anything which might keep the labouring classes away from their tasks."¹²³ Magazines were to some extent able to reconcile these contradictory views of leisure. They incorporated both the ideal of the leisured life (and substantial evidence of the leisure of the reader) and substantive information that defined the moral and intellectual self-improvement of readers whose success in the material world was to derive not from leisure but from activity. If for women this activity took place in the responsibilities of the home, there is no evidence to suggest that women objected to or resisted this development.¹²⁴ On the contrary, at the end of the century, women as politically different as Hannah More and Mary Wollstonecraft, two of the most articulate and intellectually alive women of the period, actively endorsed it. For them, there was no shame or inferiority attached to the domestic

realm: the shame was attached to the misuse of women's leisure time, and to misogynist attitudes toward women's intellectual capabilities. For More at least, inferiority was altogether a matter of class.

There is ample evidence of eighteenth-century women's pro-active desire for intellectual self-improvement, not least of which is the existence and content of the magazines themselves.¹²⁵ Examination of a cross-section of the magazines reveals that they engaged their readers at a fairly high level, assuming full literacy, intellectual curiosity, and an interest in the world in which they lived.¹²⁶ "The early journalists were...quick to realize that many readers were interested in topics other than current events and that these popular interests constituted a market which could be profitably exploited through periodical publication."¹²⁷ According to G.S. Rousseau, women readers of the early eighteenth century were not content merely to read more books, but wanted to read books about "male subjects," especially science, which they read not in the original but simplified and popularized versions for lay readers, such as frequently appeared in the magazines.¹²⁸ In addition, the magazines sometimes printed translations of classical poetry, and the frequency of classical allusions and extended discussions of life and thought in the ancient world represented an attempt to rectify women's exclusion from formal classical learning.¹²⁹ As well, the presence throughout the century of accounts of female worthies presented eighteenth-century readers with a sense of women's active role in history (and later, literary history) and provided models for female achievement.¹³⁰

Women served not only as consumers of the periodicals and magazines addressed to them, but they were also sometimes their editors and publishers and even more often were contributors. Even in the seventeenth century, despite the claim that "writing for publication was not a socially approved activity, women both wrote and tried to justify themselves."¹³¹ These women were not slavish conformists to convention, but found ways to use their customary subordinate positions as women to their advantage, a point taken up most recently and elegantly by Paula McDowell. Women who ventured into print were well aware of their trespass into "male" territory and responded in a variety of ways that continued to be used by their successors: some co-opted the male viewpoint and used it as an apology for their own work; others were publicly anxious about their femininity. Some women writers restricted themselves to writing exclusively to women, while others wrote only on "appropriate" subjects. A few, mainly religious writers from dissenting sects, wrote and published without any regard or reference to

gender at all.¹³² Only a small proportion of seventeenth-century women writers were openly critical of sexual norms that put them at a disadvantage. Yet, according to McDowell, non-élite women writers, even the most outspoken, did not consider gender to be their first category of identity. "Though by the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, some aristocratic and genteel women were already beginning to perceive the self in recognizably modern ways as gendered, autonomous, and unique, middling and underclass women [those most likely to read women's magazines] still tended to envision the self in more traditional ways as social, collective, and essentially unsexed."¹³³ In the eighteenth century, with the exception of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, women writers and editors of women's periodicals and magazines came from this group and shared this sense of identity.¹³⁴ I would argue that a key aspect of this social and collective view -- the concern to improve (with all the confusing contradictions of that term) the lot of women in the emergent social order -- provides a common thread in publications otherwise very different from each other. Furthermore, the success of publications designated female seems to reflect women readers' rejection of the models offered by moralists like Addison and Steele. The continuing success of women's magazines as a genre, if not as individual magazines, suggests that we might question critics' unexamined acceptance of the fact that women readers embraced the passive feminine ideal forwarded in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. Since women's periodicals and magazines prior to 1770 seem universally to have addressed their audience with respect for readers' intelligence and interests, it is likely that many readers regarded them as offering a palatable alternative view of women's role in the new social order. To be sure, that role was usually primarily domestic in publications directed primarily at women, but it did lack the mindless deference and obedience to male authority prescribed by Addison and Steele.¹³⁵ It is entirely reasonable to suppose that many intelligent, status-conscious readers had little patience with the prescriptive, circumscribed femininity of Addison and Steele. The writers and editors of women's magazines consequently addressed their readers not as inferiors but as participants in the new social order, as women whose roles were still domestic but whose interests extended beyond the domestic realm in ways that often bypassed gender altogether, a statement that is supported by my findings on the representation of death in women's magazines.

At this point, an overview of representative women's magazines may help to support and clarify some of the generalizations I am making, to demonstrate the magazines' various (if not original) approaches and techniques, and also to contextualize the remainder of this study.

The Female Tatler, which ran from 8 July 1709 to 31 March 1710, was printed on a double-sided sheet three times a week, on days that alternated with the appearance of *The Tatler*. *The Female Tatler* was attributed to "Mrs. Phoebe Crackenthorpe," who was probably the lawyer Thomas Baker.¹³⁶ In November 1709, attribution switched from "Mrs. Crackenthorpe" to "A Society of Ladies." The true identities of the "Ladies" are also a matter of speculation, although Baker, as well as Susanna Centlivre and Bernard Mandeville, were likely contributors.¹³⁷ Though a "scandal sheet" by reputation and admission, *The Female Tatler* did not confine itself to gossip. Satiric accounts of the behaviours of men and women of all classes and commentary on certain contemporary issues appear alongside serious and intelligent assessments and critiques of the London female of 1709 - 1710. Not a feminist publication in the modern sense, *The Female Tatler's* treatment of its subject was ambivalent.¹³⁸ The popular myth of the superiority and enviability of British womanhood in relation to its European counterparts, for instance, had no place in *The Female Tatler*.¹³⁹ Rather, British wives compare unfavourably with continental wives, and scathing attacks on the British female's preoccupation with fashionableness and worldliness are levied against women of all classes, although class boundaries are meticulously endorsed and maintained. Nevertheless, *The Female Tatler* insists on recognition of the contribution and potential of women. The periodical champions female friendship, explores the causes contributing to the erasure of women from received history, and resoundingly defends the right of women to a place in public and intellectual male preserves, implicitly including the London print establishment. In fact, the periodical "assumes...or at least argues that, women and men inhabit the same world and talk together," and, like its counterpart, included both sexes in its target audience.¹⁴⁰ Like many early periodicals, *The Female Tatler* directed its social commentary at a wide readership and satirized its own appeal to an "aping" merchant or tradesman class as often as it satirized the vanity of the fashionable upper classes. Subjects

were not often broached in complex intellectual terms, but *The Female Tatler* did engage matters of public debate in specifically female terms, as in its contributions on honour and mourning behaviour.¹⁴¹ Kathryn Shevelov dismisses the suggestion that *The Female Tatler* constitutes a "genuine" women's magazine because it does not include "content specifically designed to attract women readers."¹⁴² Shevelov's formulation seemingly refers to the lack of domestic content in *The Female Tatler*, and implies an acceptance of Addison and Steele's version of the female role as normative. She is correct that *The Female Tatler* eschews female domesticity. Mrs. Crackenthorpe and the Society of Ladies "do not...object to women as authors: they are not obsessed with promoting women's chastity or modesty: they profess virtually no interest in the sanctified role of wife, and are, in fact, somewhat reluctant to enter that state: they never refer to their needlework."¹⁴³ By its refusal to confine women to the domestic sphere, the magazine in fact endorses a more comprehensive understanding of women's roles. In this sense it is a women's magazine: one that situates women in a world inhabited by both sexes and that encourages women (like its female idolons) to voice opinions. While this in no way questions the customary gender arrangements of the period, it does challenge limits to female agency within those arrangements. If this challenge does not endure as an aspect of later eighteenth-century women's periodicals, its existence in *The Female Tatler* is all the more important as a point of departure for the industry.

Thirty years later, Eliza Haywood's *The Female Spectator* (1744 - 46) is more explicitly addressed to a female audience, one that inhabits a world more consistently domestic than that of *The Female Tatler*.¹⁴⁴ Nevertheless, *The Female Spectator*'s moral essays and short fiction do not encourage female passivity. In fact, they are sometimes sexually explicit, advocate marriage not in sentimental or romantic terms, but in terms of friendship and love, and emphasize the importance of experience and rational judgment for women as well as men. An unnamed Female Spectator serves as idolon of her own magazine and is assisted by an editorial "club" (two of whom become the inspirations for two of Haywood's later publishing efforts) comprised of a happily married wife, a widow of quality, and the unmarried daughter of a wealthy merchant.¹⁴⁵ Haywood's use of the only available subject positions for respectable women here is not necessarily an indication of her endorsement of the limitations they seemingly imply.¹⁴⁶ Rather, they are a direct reflection of what was

most appealing to the audience targeted by Haywood, the ideal of domestic leisure.¹⁴⁷ Like her *Female Spectator*, whose authority is based on the experience of her misspent youth and whose aim is "to be as universally read as possible." Eliza Haywood was no stranger to the real world and in particular the real world of print.¹⁴⁸ Her insight and intelligence in measuring her audience were the products of her association with the book trade, which was already of long duration by the time of *The Female Spectator*.¹⁴⁹ Catherine Ingrassia has recently examined Eliza Haywood from the standpoint of the intersecting demands of audience and commerce: "Enabled by the mechanisms of print capitalism, Haywood tirelessly produced innovative and popular texts for a growing reading public and, in the process, destabilized the constructed hierarchies that previously would have limited her success....As a professional writer in a competitive market, she had to produce salable commodities at a consistently rapid pace to sustain her relationship with booksellers. As an author of fictional texts for women, she had to engage and increase her community of readers with her narratives depicting women circulating within patriarchal society."¹⁵⁰ As the publisher of a periodical publication, she operated under the same constraints as her counterparts: when the French romance style and explicit female sexuality of *Love in Excess* ceased to be marketable to female audiences at mid-century, she successfully adapted to the altered conditions within the marketplace.¹⁵¹

In her exploitation of the domestic ideal espoused by her readers, Haywood did more than simply reproduce it uncritically. Her women "are neither plastic nor passive, but intelligent creatures who, accepting the fact that they have been born into a world they cannot control, seek acceptable models for survival."¹⁵² Haywood consistently rejects the romantic excesses associated with sensibility (female *and* male), emphasizing instead the importance of sound rational judgment based on intelligence and experience. *The Female Spectator* promoted "not only modesty but also independence of mind and self-respect based on that independence. Of course women's thought must be sound as well as independent. In [Haywood's] own case, the soundness of her thoughts is the consequence of her experience."¹⁵³ Moreover, Haywood "made a serious effort to enlarge the restricted province of her readers' interests, by including serious discussions of subjects like English policy on the continent and the education of women."¹⁵⁴

Jasper Goodwill's *The Ladies Magazine: or, the Universal Entertainer* (1749 - 52) represented an obvious departure from both *The Female Tatler* and *The Female Spectator*, in form and content more like Edward Cave's highly successful *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1731- 1914).¹⁵⁵ *The Ladies' Magazine* was a compendium of current events, the Bills of Mortality, articles on travel, science, anthropology, and history, short fiction, poetry, criminal biography, trial and execution accounts, letters, essays, and drama reviews, as well as excerpts from recent novels. In its first issue, the magazine claimed that "[i]t will be a most agreeable Amusement, either in the Parlour, the Shop, or the Compting-House, and a delightful Companion in Retirement: as it will contain an agreeable Variety of Subjects in the Circle of Wit, Gallantry, Love, History, Trade, Science and News: And will be a most innocent, diverting, and profitable Entertainment for young Masters and Misses, by giving them an early View of the polite and busy World."¹⁵⁶ Indeed, *The Ladies Magazine* did aspire to a universal audience, male and female -- those who sought to broaden their educations, those who wanted news of the fashionable world, and those who wished to be kept up to date on both domestic and foreign news, topical or economic -- whose views and interests were often the same and often intersected. Obviously, the magazine targeted a very wide range of people, from literate servants, to tradesmen, to clerks, to women and men of leisure, and to the daughters and sons of all of these groups. The relatively long life of *The Ladies Magazine* (which ended with the alleged death of Jasper Goodwill) suggests that the magazine's formula was a successful one.

Charlotte Lennox's *The Lady's Museum* (1760 - 61) did not aim for universality of audience, but courted an exclusively female readership.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, it followed Jasper Goodwill's example in not exhibiting a continuous authorial presence and in initially including a wide range of generic forms and diverse subjects, excluding current events and the statistical information that appeared in *The Ladies Magazine*.¹⁵⁸ One regular feature of *The Lady's Museum* was a series of essays printed under the heading "The Trifler."¹⁵⁹ The "Trifler" essays, like much of *The Lady's Museum's* content, had a distinctly feminine bias, whether the subject was the history of the Duchess of Beaufort or female education. However, the magazine was wide-ranging in the areas of interest it anticipated in its readers and throughout its existence *The Lady's Museum* printed essays on philosophy, natural science, and geography.

After 1770, women's magazines diverged into two distinct types, one commercial and addressed to an exclusively female audience, and the other didactic and occasionally addressed to a mixed audience. *The Lady's Magazine* (1770 - 1832) had one of the highest circulations of any magazine in late eighteenth-century Britain, not only for urban upper-middle-class women, but for females in the families of tradesmen and farmers in the provinces.¹⁶⁰ Its editor, George Robinson, Sr., was a businessman "eager to make a profit and willing to offer the public what it wanted," which seems to have been an affordable magazine that focused on topics of relevance to the material lives of its readers and on their active participation as contributing writers.¹⁶¹ *The Lady's Magazine* incorporated distinctly "feminine" features, such as plates of the latest fashions, musical notation for songs, cooking recipes, and embroidery patterns. These additions obviously represent an increased emphasis on consumer goods and on domestic past-times and appeal to different desires on the part of individual readers than had the earlier magazines. In its first years, the magazine actively (perhaps aggressively, in market terms) solicited contributions of fiction from its readers. While this was not particularly innovative, *The Lady's Magazine* raised the participation of readers from occasional to central, claiming that at least a third of the fiction it published was submitted by readers who received no payment.¹⁶² However, according to Jan Fergus, this solicitation (which partly manifested itself in the "To Our Correspondents" section that constituted an actual dialogue between the magazine and reader-contributors) was also a form of exploitation that worked "in part by flattering [readers] with the assumption that they all could write, in part by encouraging them to seem themselves as a writing and reading community."¹⁶³ This exploitation in the guise of dialogue may indeed (as Fergus suggests) have been key to the magazine's success. But it also may have been instrumental in shifting the power relations between readers and women's magazines. If *The Lady's Magazine* gave eighteenth-century female readers a sense of themselves as readers, it also simultaneously created a need to be seen in print that was primarily a consumer need. *The Lady's Magazine* version of women's magazines, which was to become the template for the industry, was designed to appeal to a different species of readers: not more domestic, because women had always been domestic, but domestic in ways increasingly defined by passivity and consumption. They were not less desirous of improvement, but more inclined to improve in commodified ways. The solicitation of readers' participation appears, in retrospect, to have been a marketing ploy that worked but

whose usefulness was limited: *The Lady's Magazine's* use of readers' contributions, diminishing in the early 1780s, virtually ceased by the 1790s. Editorial policies combined with the social conservatism brought on by the revolutionary decade and the Evangelical movement, with the result that traditional female duties and roles were reinscribed more rigidly than ever, apparently with the approval of the overwhelming majority of magazine-reading women.¹⁶⁴

Alongside the commercial successes, a new species of didactic magazine grew up, even more conservative than their commercial counterparts. These universally short-lived efforts were frankly monitory, and they are important more for their occurrence at a particular time than for any contribution they made to the development of women's magazines. The editor of *The Pharos* (1786 - 87) claimed that "[t]he writer of a periodical paper is officially a censor of public manners, and as such, is frequently more the object of dread than of love: he is considered as incessantly purveying for his work, sagacious in discovering and industrious in noting obliquities of character, and when once known, is shunned as a spy and informer."¹⁶⁵ The *Pharos* (which is defined as a lighthouse) is willing to risk such personal calumny, however, because "[i]n life, a friendly monitor of this kind is...useful: few, who compare the world to a sea, feign it a pacific ocean: it is by its best friends acknowledged not only exposed to storms, but likewise to every danger of the deep: whirlpools, quicksands, promontories, and shallows perpetually oppose the voyager's way, and miserable indeed if he is deprived of light."¹⁶⁶ The imperilled voyager is only masculine by virtue of the generic "he," however, for *The Pharos* is "chiefly designed for the perusal of the ladies: but as many fathers, husbands, and brothers are fond of testifying their regard."¹⁶⁷ Such magazines appeared in conjunction with collections of essays and fugitive pieces that utilized the magazine format, even if their contents did not appear serially. *The Lady's Miscellany: or, Pleasing Essays, Poems, Stories and Examples* (1793) includes material taken from the magazines and was intended by the author George Wright, Esq. "to regulate [young ladies'] conduct, improve their understandings, and entertain their leisure moments, whether in the single or married State."¹⁶⁸ Several such collections assume a parental stance in relation to their readers. *The Female Guardian, Designed to Correct some of the Foibles Incident to Girls, and Supply them with Innocent Amusement for their Hours of Leisure* is written "by a Lady" who claims that she "blushes to assume the Title of *Female Guardian* in Public," and who claimed to be assisting mothers "in that important work, of forming the

dispositions of their children."¹⁶⁹ *The Female Mentor* (1793) is a compilation of "Conversations" by the daughter of an exemplary mother whose pupils met fortnightly as "an improving and rational society."¹⁷⁰ The aim of Elizabeth Bonhote's *Parental Monitor* (1796) is "[t]o guard youth from error, and by so doing, shield old age from many of its most agonizing sorrows: to caution the thoughtless, humble the vain, and endeavour to reform the vicious, is surely neither an unnecessary or [sic] reprehensible undertaking, in an age too prone to err."¹⁷¹

This "age too prone to err" sounds suspiciously like the one Addison and Steele set about to reform in the early years of the eighteenth century. The attitude and tone taken by the writers of these late-century efforts are also dismayingly familiar. Addison and Steele's model of society with its feminine ideal, while influential, was not able to carry the day with women's magazines, whose content for sixty years implicitly and explicitly defied the vision of cloistered womanhood advocated by *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*. For sixty years in England, one significant aspect of the popular press catered to a readership whose demands suggested a world in which the interests of women and men intersected and where the contributions of both, even if different, were valuable and necessary. The late-century echoes of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, this time accepted by women in "their" magazines, perhaps suggest that, in terms of women, Addison and Steele were not so much men of their times as men whose time had not yet arrived.

NOTES TO CHAPTER TWO

¹ Although newspapers and periodicals were always distinct genres in some ways, their readerships continued to some extent to overlap throughout the century, and ultimately, the distinction between newspapers and periodicals seems to be of more interest to historians than it was to the commentators of the age, who often referred to all serial publications generically as "the papers." According to Alison Adburgham, the term "magazine" became differentiated from periodical when Edward Cave used it in *The Gentleman's Magazine* in 1737 (*Women in Print* [London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972], p. 79).

² "It is conceivable that the magazine of literature and entertainment might have developed from the newspaper -- an evolution from the occasional features used to attract readers or to fill up space. But such does not seem to have been the case. On the contrary, a study of the early newspaper press makes it clearly evident that the journal of news has always borrowed its features from the serials of literature and entertainment" (Walter Graham, *The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals: A Study of Periodical Literature 1665 - 1715*. [New York: Octagon, Farrar Strauss and Giroux, 1972], p. 59). Graham's conjecture about the derivative nature of periodicals seems dubious, his statement that early newspapers "always borrowed [their] features from the serials of literature and entertainment" seems frankly inaccurate.

³ Louis Milic observes that in publishing, the *Tatler*, Steele recognized that "a new society was arising with a new set of values to which he could give a voice in an appropriate tone, which would itself function to assert the significance of these values" ("Tone in Steele's *Tatler*," in Donovan H. Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod (eds.) *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism*. [Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977], p. 44).

⁴ According to Harris, although "the range of supplementary items that they carried was increasing, [newspapers'] content was predominantly routine and businesslike" (Harris, p. 188). Periodicals gradually reduced the amount and nature of the news they printed, perhaps in response to competition from the newspapers. Graham suggests that the *Tatler* decreased news coverage in part because newspapers were better able to come up with "fresh and timely" news (p. 68). News virtually disappeared from women's magazines after the 1760s.

⁵ Richmond Bond, pp. 11 - 12.

⁶ Haywood's authorship of *The Female Spectator* is widely acknowledged. Less critical attention has been paid to her shorter-lived efforts, including *The Parrot*, *The Tea-Table*, *The Invisible Spy*, and *The Young Lady*.

⁷ However, Calhoun Winton has speculated on the extent of Steele's risk with *The Tatler*: "All those involved in the process of the paper's initial appearance -- author, editor, printer, publisher, and hawkers: the publishing chain, as it were -- no doubt awaited early commercial results with interest. Steele had to this point presumably footed the bill himself, as was often the arrangement with authors who dealt with trade publishers. Payment, in the modern jargon, up front. If the paper sold reasonably well at a penny, eight days into its existence, everyone stood to make some money" ("*The Tatler: From Half-Sheet to Book*" *Prose Studies* 16 [1993], p. 24). Winton adds that *The Tatler's* "runaway success must have been a surprise to everyone concerned."

⁸ For a time, at least, it is probable that like newspapers, magazines "were not closed to the illiterate, who, as contemporaries noted, listened to readings in the streets. If illiteracy did not necessarily prevent access to the contents of newspapers, neither did price. Some hawkers rented out newspapers" (G.C. Gibbs, "Press and Public Opinion: Prospective" in J. R. Jones (ed.) *Liberty Secured? Britain Before and After 1688* [Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992], p. 258).

⁹ The integration of "inherited bodies of thought and ways of thinking with the limitless possibilities of intellectual exploration proffered by the printed word" presented a threat to cultural coherence; the solitariness of reading and writing affected the sense of community in ambivalent ways; and, because print was "a species of private property," the altered discursive relations

between communicator and audience had the potential to alter the power relations as well (Vincent, pp. 18-20).

10 For example, the cost of a newspaper was 1p. until 1712, 3p. after 1776. Steele's *Tatler* cost 1p., and Haywood's *The Tea Table* (1724) cost 2p. An annual subscription to Jasper Goodwill's fortnightly *Ladies Magazine* (1749-1752) cost 4s.6p (Cranfield, p. 116). Circulation was also increased through the penny post, which allowed the exportation of cheap reading matter to the provinces.

11 Plumb, pp. 269-70.

12 Cranfield, p. 11.

13 Schwoerer, pp. 210 - 11.

14 Harris, p. 151.

15 J. Paul Hunter, "'News and new Things': Contemporaneity and the Early English Novel" *Critical Inquiry* 14 (1988), p. 501.

16 Raven, p. 175.

17 Watt, p. 43.

18 Raven, p. 177-79.

19 Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Gender, Press, and Politics in the London Literary Marketplace, 1688 - 1730*, unpublished PhD thesis, Stanford University, 1991, p. 79.

20 Richmond Bond, p. 12.

21 Tadmor, p. 166.

22 Library settings reflected the practices of shared reading and reading aloud: "[C]ertain domestic library arrangements reflected the demands of performance, and the library and parlour as arenas for communal, performative reading appeared in various late eighteenth-century magazines articles and essays about reading....The passion for play readings in the family circle also contributed to the popularity of play book publication in the late eighteenth century, and popular periodical publications, and many others, included items suitable in length and variety for reading in turn in a group" (Raven, p. 199).

23 Tadmor, p. 165.

24 Over the course of the century, reading and writing came to be seen and experienced as increasingly solitary practices, a view that also had its class dimensions. "The more intense exploitation of the printed word in English popular culture during the late eighteenth century generated a new level of individual self-awareness which was most strikingly manifested in the emergence of a fertile genre of working-class autobiography. The capacity to distance personality from communal structures and to pay articulate attention to interior developments made possible the emergence of a more objective conception of change. Again the prospects were ambiguous. In one direction lay a heightened consciousness or collective identity and historical purpose, in another the withdrawal of the reader from collective traditions and practices" (Vincent, p. 19).

25 In the second half of the century, as publishers became more confident about their readerships and themselves, a counter-tendency toward specialization occurred. "As literary audiences expanded, many book merchants and those engaged in the wider book-related industry attempted to forge more intimate links between readers and producers by defining more precisely their intended readership and even intended reading environments. They did so from both ambition and defensiveness. Emphasis upon discrimination and responsibility avoided the otherwise head-on conflict between encouragement for a print boom and fears both of a devaluation of literature and of education the poor beyond their station" (Raven, p. 200-201).

26 Mayo, p. 17

27 Quoted in Calhoun Winton, "Richard Steele, Journalist--and Journalism," in Bond and McLeod (eds.) *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism* (Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977), p. 23.

28 Dunton requested readers to send their questions about love to the Latin Coffee-House (Graham, p. 25).

-
- 29 Graham, p. 63.
- 30 In the provincial press, readers' desire for the inside story and the latest news led editors and printers to rely on "highly unofficial and unreliable private sources of information, upon tavern-rumour and coffee-house gossip, hearsay and the eyewitness accounts of soldiers and sailors returning from abroad," which were not verified before they appeared in print, and "some newspaper printers were not above deliberately inventing exciting news items." (Cranfield, p. 10) While editors in the litigious atmosphere of London had to be more careful about unreliable sources, they were certainly the equals of their provincial counterparts in inventiveness.
- 31 Pitcher, p. 234.
- 32 Hunter, "News and new Things," p. 510. Lennard Davis has also written extensively of the eighteenth-century tendency for novelists deliberately to confuse journalistic or historical truth and novelistic fiction in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983).
- 33 In light of the seemingly widespread acknowledgment of the disjunction between truth and fiction in the periodicals at the time, I find curious Jon Klancher's remark that correspondence in the magazines "invited as much reader skepticism as participation, since readers wished to know if editors were not really fictionalizing the letters to create the effect of an enjoined public discourse" (Jon P. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790 - 1832* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987], p. 21).
- 34 Graham, p. 74.
- 35 Winton, "Richard Steele," pp. 28 - 29.
- 36 Kathryn Shevelov, "Fathers and Daughters: Women as Readers of the *Tatler*," in *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*, eds. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocínio P. Schweickart (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986) 107 - 123; Shawn Lisa Maurer, "As Sacred as Friendship, as Pleasurable as Love": Father - Son Relations in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*" in *History, Gender and Eighteenth-Century Literature* ed. Beth Fowles Tobin. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994, pp. 14 - 38. Both authors are concerned with the construction of gender and present their arguments in an ideological context. However, looked at from a material perspective, Bickerstaff may have had a more salutary effect than Shevelov and Maurer suggest. Bickerstaff's oft-cited condescension and paternalism toward women may in fact have encouraged female readers resentful of and unsatisfied with such attitudes to turn to periodicals like *The Female Tatler*, thereby aiding in the development of a periodical press directed primarily at women readers. Certainly, Robert Benjamin White's finding that advertisers were almost as likely to patronize *The Female Tatler* as *The Spectator* is significant in this context (Robert Benjamin White, Jr. *A Study of the Female Tatler (1709 - 1710)* unpublished PhD thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill [1996], p. 61).
- 37 The members included Samuel Wesley, father of Charles, who, along with a mathematics teacher, were paid £10 a week for contributing a regular amount of material to the journal (Graham, p. 17), suggesting a substantial overhead that could only have been subsidized by consistent sales of the magazine.
- 38 Although the societies of *The Female Tatler* and *The Female Spectator* were fictitious, that of the former was probably comprised of a number of regular men and women contributors, and that of the latter were probably Haywood's inventions.
- 39 John Brewer, "Commercialization and Politics" in Neil McKendrick et al (eds.) *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982), p. 217. Brewer remarks that such societies, or clubs, were not only convivial in nature, but "also performed important social functions as a protection against adversity and as an elaborate system of reciprocal obligation" (p. 218).
- 40 John Barrell, p. 19
- 41 Graham, p. 17. Hunter, *Before Novels*, pp. 13-14.
- 42 In her 1992 study of the ethical foundations of the ways in which we conduct life in the late twentieth century, Jane Jacobs utilizes the dialogue of a similar society, a collection of people

brought together to investigate the disappearance of honesty from working life. This society does not consist of one dominant teacher who instructs the rest of the group, but is a collection of "equals, struggling together to make moral sense of working life." In her Preface, Jacobs explains her choice of the dialogue technique: "I am convinced we need continual but informal democratic explorations on the part of people who must thread their ways through governmental, business, or volunteer and grass-roots policies, or must wrestle with the moral conflicts and ethical puzzles that sprout up unbidden in all manner of occupations. Former Marxist societies, as they seek to reconstitute themselves, desperately need to clarify right and wrong in business and politics. But so do we. I hope that what my characters work out will help provide useful and suggestive guidelines." (Jane Jacobs, *Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics* [New York: Random House, 1992], p. xiii). Jacobs' historical rationale for using the society/dialogue technique is structurally similar to those that underlay its use in eighteenth-century periodicals.

43 Hunter, "News and new Things," p. 503.

44 R.M. Wiles argues against the notion that the diversity of contents found in early newspapers and periodicals reflected a simple need to fill up space. The *belles-lettres* were a feature of the popular press "obviously because readers wished to have not only news and discussions of political matters but installments of recent novels, geography, history biography, translations of Italian *novelle*, essays on embalming, on tar water, on turning to the East during the saying of the Creed, and on a thousand other subjects. There were times when news was scarce and other materials had to be used to fill space, but one is not justified in assuming that entertaining prose and verse were used only when there was a 'Dearth of News'" (p. 62-63).

45 Of John Dunton's frequent quotation that "News and new Things do the whole World bewitch," J. Paul Hunter has commented that such a sentiment blurs "a distinction between intellectual curiosity and the desire to be *au courant*, the fundamental motivations, respectively, for readers of science and journalism. But the blur represents a shrewd perception of connection between acute awareness of the latest events and the desire for innovation and originality" (Hunter, "News and new Things," p. 493). Both Hunter and Lennard Davis, in *Factual Fictions*, explore the connection between these twin desires and the emergence and evolution of the novel.

46 "The newspapers themselves constantly referred to the demand for foreign news, often drawing attention to the excellence of foreign intelligence they provided...News about the movements of ships and about conditions in the countries with which Britain traded concerned merchants, bankers, investors, and speculators" (Gibbs, p. 259). In addition to the effect such news might have on businessmen and investors, it carried a patriotic appeal conducive to the new British nationalism (Brewer, p. 215).

47 Brewer, p. 217.

48 Jeremy Black notes the importance of this development in the provincial press, suggesting that "the growth of local material, both news and opinion, in the provincial press, which is a characteristic feature of the second half of the century, provided an opportunity for, and may have reflected, growing local expression of instructive views" (p. 247).

49 Among the items that might be found in lists were imports and exports and their prices, bankruptcies and stock prices, and the weekly London Bill of Mortality, a comprehensive and detailed account of all the births and deaths in the city, all the "weird" causes of death and the numbers of deaths that resulted from them (Cranfield, p. 95).

50 Black, p. 296.

51 Hunter, "News and new Things," p. 507.

52 Even Thomas Colley, who was convicted and executed for the murders, continued throughout accounts of his trial and execution to be less important as an individual than as a symbol initially of rural superstition and ignorance.

53 These events are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four.

54 Watt, p. 24.

55 "...the Enlightenment promulgated a strong emphasis on rational processes, tolerance, universality, progress, scientific search, individual freedom, and practical enterprise. These attitudes and procedures quickened the philosophical, scientific, economic, social, religious, and political issues of Britain during the years between the accession of Anne and the death of the second George" (Richmond Bond, p. 6). These attitudes were, of course, also the hallmarks of the upwardly mobile middle classes.

56 G.S. Rousseau, "Science books and their readers in the eighteenth century," in I. Rivers (ed.) *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* (Leicester, 1982), p. 209.

57 Michael McKeon provides a detailed account of this process (pp. 150- 212).

58 It is interesting that after 1750, these subjects were increasingly confined to women's magazines and were presented less frequently in terms of property and class relations and more often in sentimental and domestic contexts.

59 This relationship of social climbing and fashion was made explicit by N. Forster in *An Enquiry into the Present High Price of Possessions*: (1767). "In England the several ranks of men slide into each other almost imperceptibly, and a spirit of equality runs through every part of their constitution. Hence arises a strong emulation in all the several stations and conditions to vie with each other, and the perpetual restless ambition in each of the inferior ranks to raise themselves to the level of those immediately above them. In such a state as this fashion must have uncontrolled sway. And a fashionable luxury must spread through it like a contagion" (Quoted in McKendrick, p. 11).

60 Black, p. 266.

61 For example, the value of traditional male honour is debated over four issues of *The Female Tatler*: Number 77 (December 30, 1709 - January 3, 1710); Number 78 (January 2-4, 1710); Number 80 (January 6 - 9, 1710); and Number 81 (January 9 - 11, 1710). Carried out in three opening dialogues that weigh the relative merits of honour in the case of the one surviving son whose brothers have been killed in battle, the debate appears first as letters from the man's parents (who hold opposite views), then as a dialogue between the two nieces to whom the letters have been sent, each of whom takes the side of one parent. It is decided that the debate will be resolved by an exchange between a military officer and an Oxford gentleman appointed as arbitrators. The outcome is incidentally revealed in a subsequent issue. The diversity of the representative types who engage in the debate obviously allows for a very wide range of expression of opinion.

62 According to J. Paul Hunter, the call for better female education came from philosophers, reformers and protofeminists: "Voices deploring the poor education of women were everywhere: even reactionary social critics and Tory satirists were, for their own reasons, bitterly critical of what society expected of women and of the waste of female talents" (*Before Novels*, p. 269).

63 Black, p. 272.

64 Quoted in Graham, p. 20. Graham disparages speculation that such praise was meant satirically, and I concur.

65 "The didactic tone of instructive items was in keeping with the tone adopted for political reflections....Most pieces displayed a certainty that reflected an attitude that the reader would share the suppositions and intentions of the author. Preceptive rather than persuasive, instructive items were directed not at rival views requiring intellectual challenge but at like-minded readers" (Black, p. 246).

66 It should be noted that the word "reform" had itself changed meaning over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: whereas it had once suggested "renewal, restoration to some original form or state," over time, it came to mean "improvement, change for the better; indeed, radical change for the better." Walzer suggests that the early Puritans intended reform in the earlier sense, with regard to the early Christian church. (Michael Walzer, *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* [New York: Atheneum, 1968], p. 11). J. Paul Hunter maintains that writers like Addison and Steele actually did sense a danger in the ways society was changing. "Whether or not their fear was justified, most moralists did see cultural deterioration as imminent. They thought their evidence was empirical, and observers of the harsh realities of

everyday life repeatedly cited physical violence, crimes of property, street gangs, public drunkenness and disorderliness, and loose sexual behavior as indicators that the social fabric had broken down and moral standards had been lost" (*Before Novels*, p. 243). This is, of course, a classic conservative view of society.

67 Louis Milic makes clear the distinction between reform and reconstruction, though he does not use the second term: "Steele and Addison were monitors or censors, in a minor and playful sense of the term. Unlike true satirists, they were not, despite their occasional claims, eager to reform manners. They wished to make explicit a certain set of values by means of a certain tone. In a sense this may be thought to be reform, since it implies changing existing modes, but this is not the real spring of their motive. It seems more likely that they (and Steele in particular) wished to articulate the values that they felt or perceived were extant, or were about to come into favour. It is this impulse that gave their huge success its birth--this conjunction of a need with its expression and realization in tangible form" (Milic, p. 42). As well, Harris notes the pervasiveness of this impulse: "Through the press the frontiers of cultural participation were pushed back, although the tone never wavered and, even in the cheap press, the values of the establishment were never challenged" (p. 188).

68 Black, p. 273.

69 G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p. 63.

70 Watt, p. 51.

71 Most accounts of *The Tatler* emphasize its literary and moral influence as the natural heir to Steele's 1701 treatise, *The Christian Hero*. *The Tatler*, which appeared after its author had already done a great deal of literary work of various kinds, was also a business venture, and, as Walter Graham remarks Steele "seems to have made his venture chiefly in hope of financial gain," hoping to make the periodical "a coffee-house and tavern oracle" (p. 62). Steele's publishing strategy was also geared to pragmatic concerns of circulation, and he gave away the first four numbers of *Tatler*: "after that anyone with a penny could buy a copy, or without a penny could read someone else's copy at the coffeehouse." In addition, in the seventh number of *The Tatler*, Steele began to solicit letters from readers, involving them even more intimately in the processes of publication (Winton, "Richard Steele," p. 23).

72 Milic notes the disjunction between the moral message and the actions of Steele, whose "impulsiveness and indiscipline led him to a duel, perhaps habitual drunkenness, a lack of thrift startling even for the time, and political indiscretions which cost him his post as *Gazetteer*, his seat in the House of Commons, and ultimately his friendship with Addison" (p. 43). It is probably worth adding that Steele married not one but two heiresses, the first a widow twice his age and the second a young woman he met at the funeral of his first wife.

73 As Plumb laconically observes, "Leisure is commonly purposeful and usually it requires the expenditure of money as well as time" (p. 265).

74 This phrase is used by J.H. Plumb in the title of his essay "The Commercialization of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England" in McKendrick et al.

75 Although a moral distinction was often made in the eighteenth century, I am not going to distinguish between those who wrote for money and those who wrote for the love of it. Rather, I am using the terms journalist and professional writer to stand for any writer who published in a periodical and was paid for it.

76 Richmond Bond, p. 10.

77 Terry Belanger feels that it is unlikely that many writers even at the end of the century earned a good living from periodical writing ("Publishers and writers in eighteenth-century England," in I. Rivers (ed.) *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 22). A.S. Collins concurs that at the end of the eighteenth century, the prospects were not very good for writers without "independent means, powerful patronage, or a fair social standing" (28).

78 Belanger, p. 22. Belanger notes that the "real" money for authors did not come from the periodical press but from writing books, popular histories in particular. Although royalties were

-
- not the standard form of payment for writers until the nineteenth century, the mechanisms for such transaction were in place by the 1770s, ensuring the existence and status of the professional writer.
- 79 Watt, p. 54.
- 80 Watt, p. 56.
- 81 In Watt, p. 58. Throughout his life, Fielding himself was forced by financial circumstances to write for the commercial press. Michael Harris has described the tension between Fielding's desire to write "pure" literature and the need to sell his paper. *The Champion* ("Literature and Commerce in Eighteenth-century London: The Making of *The Champion*" *Prose Studies* 16 [1993], pp. 94-115).
- 82 Samuel Johnson, *Prefaces and Dedications*, Vol. I Allen T. Hazen (ed.) (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937) p. 212.
- 83 *Public Ledger*, 11 August 1761. Quoted in Black, p. 47.
- 84 Harris, "Literature and Commerce," p. 110.
- 85 Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. 194. Ian Watt notes that this generic indistinction was apparent as early as *The Tatler*, maintaining that the "compromise, between the wits and the less educated, between the belles-lettres and religious instruction, is perhaps the most important trend in eighteenth-century literature" (Watt, p. 50).
- 86 Watt, p. 59. Although Watt is speaking here of Defoe and Richardson specifically, his comments include the other writers named.
- 87 Shawn Lisa Maurer argues that the magazines' interest in women and construction of feminine norms "served simultaneously to construct a masculine role or identity for the sentimental husband and father of the emerging middle classes" (*Proposing Men* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998] p. 5).
- 88 Kathryn Shevelov, *Women and Print Culture* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 17.
- 89 Amanda Vickery questions the notion that the confined domestic woman was a widespread reality in "Golden Age to Separate Spheres?" *Historical Journal* 36 (1993), pp. 383 - 414. For discussions of women's participation in various public employments, see Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678 - 1730* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Peter Earle, "The female labour market in the late 17th and 18th centuries," *Economic History Review* 42 (1989), pp. 328 - 53; and Bridget Hill, *Women, work and sexual politics in eighteenth-century England* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).
- 90 Paula McDowell rightly points out the curiousness of this term, since women had always been primarily responsible for domestic labour (*The Women of Grub Street*, p. 115).
- 91 The view of the passive, constructed reader is, of course, not necessarily gendered. Jon Klancher, for example, argues that "readers are *made*, created as a public through a network of circulatory channels and the writer who consciously directs the readers' habitual energy of reasoning" (p. 33).
- 92 Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down*, p. 15.
- 93 Richmond Bond, p. 45. Paula McDowell is among those scholars who have picked up the challenge: "Despite inroads made by new historicism, we still need to work harder to examine the full range of texts in our period, rather than clinging to the most easily assimilated genres and to an anachronistic notion of the 'literary'" (*The Women of Grub Street*, pp. 297-98). To date, women's magazines, especially taken as a century-long phenomenon, are still mostly excluded from eighteenth-century studies and are often totally ignored even by studies that concern the press or women writers.
- 94 Margaret Spufford, "First steps in literacy," *Social History* 4 (1979), pp. 430 - 31.
- 95 Spufford, p. 435. Spufford also points out the likelihood that many schoolteachers who taught reading were not themselves able to write (p. 43-4), a fact that calls into question the findings of historians like David Cressy who based literacy figures on the ability to sign depositions, and who estimated that in the first half of the seventeenth century, "most" London women were illiterate

("Literacy in Seventeenth-Century England: More Evidence." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 8:1 [1977], p. 146).

96 Peter Earle. "The female labour market." p. 344. Earle notes that the range of literacy reflects the status hierarchy of women's occupations, though not necessarily their rate of pay, and attributes the high literacy rate of those in the needle trade to needlework's status as respectable employment, attracting those young women most likely to be literate. As a consequence, however, the trade was overcrowded and the pay very low.

97 Tadmor. "'In the even my wife read to me.'" pp. 166 - 68.

98 Bertha Monica Stearns. "Early English Periodicals for Ladies (1700 - 1760)." *PMLA* 48 (1933), p. 38. Even Kathryn Shevelov has alluded to the obvious commercial potential of female readers, though she quickly returns to more ideological concerns: "Steele joined an increasingly large group of his contemporaries who recognized the significance of women to literary culture -- as a power within the marketplace" ("Fathers and Daughters," p. 121).

99 Richard Altick ignores the presence of women's magazines when he comments that "[d]own to almost the middle of the century...there was comparatively little for the literate but uneducated woman to read" (p. 45).

100 "...imitation was a possible and widely approved mode of literary expression, which most of these [magazine] writers tacitly accepted. A completely new or individual literary manner was the last wish of the authors of essay-serials. If they were not *Tatlers*, *Spectators*, and *Guardians*, they were nothing at all" (Mayo, p.73).

101 This point was also made by Jean E. Hunter. "The 18-Century Englishwoman: According to the *Gentleman's Magazine*" in Paul Fritz and Richard Morton (eds.) *Women in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays* (Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd. 1976), p. 75. That literacy was required is underwritten by the fact that until the 1770s, magazines relied almost exclusively on the printed word. For accounts of pictorial representation in magazines, see Patricia Anderson, *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture: 1790-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), and Edward Copeland, *Women Writing about Money - Women's Fiction in England, 1790 - 1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 117 - 58.

102 Jean E. Hunter has dismissed the contribution that a study of eighteenth-century women's magazines might make to women's history, commenting that "periodicals were in their infancy, and were both fewer in number and harder [for the historian] to use, as they did not necessarily reflect anything except the prejudices of their editors" (*The 18-Century Englishwoman*, p. 74). I am obviously arguing that this "editorial prejudice" did not represent unilateral or individual bias, but was determined to a large extent by reader demands, precisely *because* the magazines were in their infancy.

103 Jan Fergus. "Provincial servants' reading in the late eighteenth century," in James Raven et al (eds.) *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 224-25.

104 Fergus. "Provincial servants," p. 225. The dating of this finding is interesting in its correspondence to the appearance of the innovative, more consumer-oriented *Lady's Magazine*.

105 Jan Fergus. "Women, Class, and the Growth of Magazine Readership in the Provinces 1746 - 1780." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 16 (1986), p. 41.

106 Fergus. "Women, Class, and the Growth of Magazine Readership," p. 44.

107 As Barbara Benedict comments, "The demand for a consumable literary culture was stimulated by rising literacy, particularly among urban women, working classes and lower middle-classes within the cities of London, Edinburgh and Newcastle, where cheap commodities allowed the servant and middle classes to emulate the tastes and fashions of the gentry" ("Literary Miscellanies: The Cultural Mediation of Fragmented Feeling," *English Literary History* 57 [1990], p. 407). Benedict, who refers here to the evolution of the ladies' miscellany in the last decades of the century, remarks that these collections of "fine literature" at affordable cost had particular appeal to those who fifty years earlier had read chapbooks, religious tracts, and periodicals.

- 108 Benedict makes the same point in relation to miscellanies: "The forms in which this newly accessible literature appeared...are vital to their appeal. By including many short pieces, miscellanies can be read by those whose attention span is limited, for some reason: servants, children, the partially educated or literate" (p. 411).
- 109 Raven. "From promotion to proscription," p. 180.
- 110 Raven. "From promotion to proscription," p. 181.
- 111 This, of course, is in direct contradiction to the point made by Ros Ballaster, that "[t]he magazine for women only becomes possible with the emergence of a consensus, which we locate in the late seventeenth to early eighteenth century, that gender difference, rather than distinction of status or wealth, is the primary arbiter of social power for women" (Ros Ballaster, Margaret Beetham, Elizabeth Frazer, and Sandra Hebron (eds.), *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* [London: Macmillan, 1991], pp. 33 - 34). Although Ballaster alludes to the "potential for cross-class readership of the same magazine, as well as availability through libraries" (45), her analysis does not develop the implications of either, but concentrates on the constructed woman reader.
- 112 The figure of the leisured female reader, usually the novel reader, was commonly accompanied by negative connotations in the eighteenth century and has been extensively examined in our own time, with the result that she has tended to define the eighteenth-century female reader. However, the work of the scholars like Paula McDowell, Jan Fergus, and Naomi Tadmor have begun to reveal important omissions, and Naomi Tadmor has warned that "we should be cautious before re-inscribing as history the eighteenth-century fantasy of supine femininity induced by reading" (p. 174).
- 113 Much of what I am suggesting for women readers is equally true for male readers of magazines as well.
- 114 Thorstein Veblen has theorized the consequences of this complicity, observing that, once the leisured life for women has become the norm among the well-to-do classes, "the observance of ceremonial futility" mitigates against the impulse to self-direction and self-improvement (p. 359).
- 115 See, for example, Margaret Hunt, "Wife Beating, Domesticity and Women's Independence in Eighteenth-Century London," *Gender and History* 4 (1992), pp. 10 - 33. The more egalitarian Puritan view of marriage complicated these arrangements, though Puritan divines went to considerable lengths to make clear that theoretical equality was not to disturb traditional lived arrangements. For an account of the Pauline theology that underpinned the continued insistence on female inferiority, see Margaret Thickstun, *Fictions of the Feminine: Puritan Doctrine and the Representation of Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 1 - 36. Perhaps women's acquiescence in the arrangements is attributable less to simple piety than to the Puritan belief that marriage was also aimed at what Dod and Cleaver (in *A Godly Form of Household Government* [1621]) called "healthful pleasures and profitable commodities" (Quoted in Walzer, p. 193).
- 116 McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street*, pp. 115 - 16.
- 117 Women who worked alongside their successful husbands later in the century were increasingly exceptional and increasingly invisible, as were female editors of magazines. Paula McDowell points out the example of James Lackington's wife, who was instrumental to the success of his bookselling business. Whereas Lackington's memoirs make clear that Dorcas Lackington's involvement was not typical for women of her station at the end of the eighteenth century, a hundred years before, her contribution would have been taken for granted (*The Women of Grub Street*, p. 117). Janet Todd notes the horror expressed by men who disapproved of Isabella Griffiths contributions to her husband's *Monthly Review* (*The Sign of Angelica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660 - 1800* [London: Virago, 1989], p. 133). The conflict between the non-working ideal and the actual working woman may help explain the fact that virtually every female magazine editor in the second half of the century prefaced her publication with some sort of disclaimer that distanced her from involvement in the public sphere.
- 118 Hunt, p. 26.

-
- 119 Peter Earle has found that 10 to 20 % of London households "were headed by widows, while many spinsters lived independently as well" (*The Making of the English Middle Class*, p. 167).
- 120 Black, p. 263.
- 121 There are occasional exceptions to this. *The Ladies Magazine* not infrequently included information that this or that woman was poor, or alluded to the living conditions of the poor. A more extended consideration of poor women appeared *The Student* following a proposal for to raise funds that might sustain the surviving families of deceased inferior clergy (*The Student*, Vol. I, iv [April 30, 1750], p. 133) with a supposedly true account of a widow and daughter left destitute in such a case (*The Student*, Vol. I, vii [July 30, 1750], p. 255).
- 122 Ros Ballaster's claim that the magazines "were instrumental in the development of a bourgeois industry habitually represented as 'feminine'" is misleading (*Women's Worlds*, p. 50). While coding leisure "feminine" may have increased its negative connotation, leisure was primarily an issue of class rather than gender. As Vickery suggests, "languishing ladies" were no more idle than their husbands: "Ladies, like gentlemen, had a working knowledge of the processes under their supervision, but instructed their inferiors to carry out the necessary manual labour" (Vickery, p. 410).
- 123 Watt, p. 46.
- 124 In *The Women of Grub Street*, Paula McDowell has conclusively demonstrated the extent to which seventeenth-century women who worked alongside their husbands in the print trade, or supported them, balancing the demands of family and business without questioning the gender arrangements in the family. There is no reason to think that McDowell's findings are unique to the print trade. Furthermore, as Susan Amussen has shown, the notion of order was at a premium, in both civic and family life (*An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* [Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988], p. 96). Moreover, the internal health and order of families were widely considered prerequisites for a healthy nation (Donna Andrew, *Philanthropy and Police* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989], p. 31). Though many women no doubt resented the sexual double standard, there is no indication that their resentment was directed at or focused on women's duties in the domestic realm, at least among non-elite women. Moreover, as Susan Dwyer Amussen has observed, families, as institutions, are "essentially conservative...[and] adapt slowly to social change...change is absorbed only slowly into the family's conception of itself" (*An Ordered Society*, p. 183). The slowness of the family to reflect and to implement changes in attitudes regarding itself is critical to understanding many women's attitude toward domesticity in the eighteenth-century press.
- 125 Calls for better education for women were not only made by women. Many men, from Mandeville to Godwin, championed the cause. As Jean E. Hunter has pointed out, Edward Cave's long-lived *Gentleman's Magazine* demonstrated considerable sympathy for the problems faced by women in the eighteenth century, including their lack of educational opportunities, their lack of career choices apart from marriage, the inequalities endemic in marriage itself, and the sexual double standard ("The 18th-Century Englishwoman: According to *The Gentleman's Magazine*, in Paul Fritz and Richard Morton (eds.) *Women in the Eighteenth Century* [Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd., 1976], pp. 80 - 81).
- 126 Peter John Miller, "Eighteenth-Century Periodicals for Women," *History of Education Quarterly* 11 (1971), p. 281. Miller notes that this is particularly true before 1770. Mirabel Cecil makes the same point that women's magazines had a high estimation of their readers' intelligence, though this disappeared later in the century (*Heroines in Love 1750 - 1974*, [London: Michael Joseph, 1974], p. 24).
- 127 White, p. 1.
- 128 Rousseau, pp. 213-14.
- 129 As Penelope Wilson remarks, however, the prevailing assumption that exclusion from the classics was based on sex and class were in the main taken for granted, though, challenges to this assumption were more frequent than might be expected ("Classical poetry and the eighteenth-century reader," in I. Rivers (ed.) *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England*, pp. 71 - 72).

- 130 Paula McDowell. "Consuming Women." *Genre* 26 (1993), p. 226. McDowell notes that such accounts also served to set boundaries to women's achievement and capacities, a fact that was given increasing priority as the century progressed.
- 131 Patricia Crawford. "Women's published writings 1600 - 1700." in Mary Prior (ed.) *Women in English Society 1500 - 1800* (London: Methuen, 1985), p. 211. According to Elaine Hobby, "Women writing for publication in the period exposed themselves to adverse judgment, and their writings therefore commonly included justification for their unfeminine boldness" ("Discourse so unsavoury": Women's published writings of the 1650s" in Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (eds.) *Women, Writing, History: 1640 - 1740* [Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992], p. 17).
- 132 Crawford, pp. 219 - 22.
- 133 McDowell. *The Women of Grub Street*, p. 19. McDowell subsequently warns of the dangers of quoting these women's "few scattered protofeminist remarks out of context," since the overwhelming majority of their writings "is in fact silent on the issue of sexual hierarchies and sex-based inequalities of power" (p. 184). Until the second half of the century, overtly feminist writing was confined to women of the upper classes, such as Mary Astell and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, and these tended to argue "by discrediting the stereotypes of women" (Ruth Perry (ed.) Introduction to George Ballard's *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* [Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985], p. 34).
- 134 Janet Todd has pointed out the enormous importance of the women's magazines for women writers, "pulling them into a community of shared culture and allowing them outlets for their work" (*Sign of Angellica*, p. 133).
- 135 Again, the difference is a matter of point of view rather than gender. Other early magazines explicitly included women among their readers. Unlike *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, however, Ambrose Phillips' *The Free-Thinker* (1718 - 19) is far less inclined than its predecessors to consider women solely in their domestic capacity. *The Free-Thinker* implicitly and explicitly affirms the intellectual capabilities of women and advocates women's intellectual growth and development. Shevelow has observed, "On the one hand, the *Free-thinker* offered one of the more sustained defenses of women's capacity to use reason found in the early periodical, but on the other hand, both its style and its vision of what constitutes women's intellectual life were contextualized by its assumption of a natural feminine place in the world which differentiated women from men" (*Women and Print Culture*, p. 154). Though not in twentieth-century ideological terms, women in Phillips' time were differentiated from men by virtue of their sex.
- 136 Phoebe Crackenthorpe is significant as the first of many female idols who serve as the controlling voice of women's magazines.
- 137 Some writers have suggested that Delariviere Manley was a co-editor of *The Female Tatler*, but Robert Benjamin White, Jr. argues convincingly that Manley's anti-Whig bias does not square with the Whiggish *Female Tatler*. As well, no biographical accounts of Manley, including her own autobiography, mention the periodical (p. 126-29).
- 138 This ambivalence in terms of the ideal of the domestic woman has been commented on by Gillian Teiman, who observes that both *The Female Tatler* and *The Female Spectator* both resisted and accommodated this ideal (Gillian Teiman, "The Female Ideal and the Female Voice," p. iv).
- 139 Fifty years after *The Female Tatler*, Charlotte Lennox reiterated this commonplace: "It has been observed, that there is no country in the world where women enjoy so much liberty as in England, and none where their sway is so little acknowledged" (*The Lady's Museum*, Vol. I, ii, p. 82).
- 140 Teiman, p. 233.
- 141 A more detailed examination of *The Female Tatler's* overall assessment of female mourning behaviours is presented in Chapter Three.
- 142 Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture*, p. 149.
- 143 Teiman, p. 159.

- 144 One must now add the qualifier "in English" to the commonplace that *The Female Spectator* was the first periodical to address a female audience, as Maria Pallares-Burke has revealed the existence of an earlier feminized *Spectator* in France ("An Androgynous Observer in the Eighteenth Century Press: *La Spectatrice*, 1728 - 29," *Women's History Review* 3 [1994], pp. 411 - 434).
- 145 That fact that Euphrosine (the unmarried lady) becomes the eidolon of *The Young Lady* (1756), while Mira (the married lady) becomes the eidolon of *The Wife* (1756), suggests that the club was purely fictitious, created not only in imitation of the *Spectator's* similar arrangement, but also in order to allow Haywood authoritatively to assume female perspectives not shared by her more worldly and experienced eidolon.
- 146 For example, Shevelov has remarked that, "[a]s a persona, the Female Spectator graphically represents the process of inclusion and restriction which has concerned [Shevelov's study], for her authority to assume entire control of the production of the periodical and to declare herself the female successor to Mr Spectator is predicated upon her methodological reinforcement of the notion of women's fundamental difference from men in both their natures and their social roles" (p. 167).
- 147 As Robert Mayo has remarked, Haywood "wrote for a female audience whose measure she took with shrewdness and intelligence. Her bias was strictly upper-middle-class (though whether all of her readers were from the same level of society is very doubtful)" (p. 90).
- 148 Shevelov has commented on the authority of the eidolon in ways that seem unnecessarily self-limiting, claiming that the Female Spectator bases her authority not on the experience of past mistakes, but "upon her own culpability" (*Women and Print Culture*, p. 170). Shevelov's remark is particularly misleading in light of Haywood's ongoing advocacy of experience as the great teacher. The quotation is taken from *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I. i. p. 3.
- 149 Not only did Haywood write plays and novels, but her first foray into the periodical market seems to have taken place over twenty years before *The Female Spectator*. *The Tea-Table* ran from February to June, 1724, a self-proclaimed scandal sheet that claimed to "keep nobody's Secrets but our own," but her commentary also offers valuable insights into the position of the writer in the age of Walpole.
- 150 Ingrassia, p. 78. Shawn Lisa Maurer has taken a different view of Haywood's pragmatic approach, commenting that *The Female Spectator's* narratives reveal that "women's education and reformation occur most often at the hands of men or in relation to them. Women's fundamental submission to male authority within the domestic sphere means that women can provide warning before the fact, or sympathy after it, but are virtually powerless in terms of effecting any kind of decisive change" (*Proposing Men*, p. 215). I suggest that the conditions Maurer describes were true for most British and North American women born before the middle of the twentieth century and continue to be true for many born after. She seems to be criticizing Haywood for understanding her own time (including its limitations) exceptionally well, rather than acknowledging Haywood's ability to turn it to her own advantage.
- 151 "Haywood thrived in the open market and her rapid rate of composition suited the immediacy and topicality of her texts. She occupied a precarious professional position that relied on her ability to accommodate public taste, to create and respond to the desires of consumers, and to compete actively within print culture" (Ingrassia, p. 81). The conditions Ingrassia is describing here, of course, pertain to both women and men. James Hodges has observed that Haywood's practice of lacing instruction with "sufficiently racy illustrative examples" is another mark of her editorial and business acuity ("The Female Spectator, A Courtesy Periodical," in Richmond Bond (ed.) *Studies in the Early English Periodical*), p. 155.
- 152 Helene Koon, "Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 42 (1978), p. 46.
- 153 Teiman, p. 273.
- 154 Mayo, p. 91.

- 155 Variousy spelled. *The Ladies Magazine* was the title of at least four separate magazines for women in the eighteenth century: Jasper Goodwill's version: *The Lady's Magazine; or Polite Companion for the Fair Sex* (1759 - 1766), edited by Oliver Goldsmith under the pseudonym of Mrs. Stanhope; *The Lady's Magazine; or Entertaining Companion for the Fair Sex* (1770 - 1832), published by businessman George Robinson, Sr.; and *The Lady's Magazine; and Repository of Entertaining Knowledge* (1792 - 93). In one place (*Women and Print Culture*, p. 150) Kathryn Shevelov alludes to two earlier *Ladies' Magazines* (1733| 1738 - 39), but I could not locate either copies of them or other references to them.) In my thesis, I have focused on Jasper Goodwill's magazine because of its placement at mid-century and its unique approach to addressing a primarily female audience.
- 156 *The Ladies Magazine* I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 1.
- 157 *The Lady's Museum* ran for eleven issues, which was not an unusually small number at the time. Nevertheless, Ros Ballaster has used this short run to comment that Lennox's magazine was "a solemn attempt doomed to failure" (*Women's Worlds*, p. 65). Her comment is in the context of a similar charge levied against Goldsmith's *The Lady's Magazine*, for disregarding fiction in favour of "history, biography, natural science and news reporting." The comment provides a clue to the restrictions Ballaster imposes on the construction of gender.
- 158 Some forms, such as poetry and musical notation, disappeared after the first issue of *The Lady's Museum*.
- 159 Dustin Griffin feels that "The Trifler" essays were written by Lennox herself and that the feature possibly existed to allow Lennox "to patronize herself" (*Literary Patronage in England, 1650 - 1800*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], p. 215).
- 160 Jean E. Hunter, "The Lady's Magazine and the Study of Englishwomen in the Eighteenth Century," in Bond and McLeod (eds.) *Newsletters to Newspapers*, p. 105; Fergus, "Women, Class, and the Growth of Magazine Readership," p. 46.
- 161 Jean E. Hunter, "The Lady's Magazine," p.104. Hunter's comment seems to imply that earlier editors were not guided by profit motives and a "willingness to offer the public what it wanted," a notion for which I can find no evidence.
- 162 Ballaster, *Women's Worlds*, p. 68.
- 163 Fergus, "Women, Class, and the Growth of Magazine Readership," p. 50.
- 164 "Like so much that was good and hopeful in English society, the movement to improve the lot and status of women was dashed on the rock of counter-revolutionary sentiment, and the new tone of *The Lady's Magazine* is just one more indication of the social conservatism... The Robinsons, ever mindful of their profits and faced with new competition like the *Lady's Monthly Museum*, trimmed their sails and moved with the times. That they moved with their audience is clear from the continued success of their journal which survived until 1832" (Jean Hunter, "The Lady's Magazine," p. 113).
- 165 *The Pharos*, Vol. I, i (November 7, 1786), p. 1 - 2.
- 166 *The Pharos*, Vol. I, i (November 7, 1786), p. 5.
- 167 *The Pharos*, Vol. I, iii (November 14, 1786), p. 23.
- 168 *The Lady's Miscellany* (1793).
- 169 *The Female Guardian* (1787).
- 170 *The Female Mentor*, I (1793), p. ix.
- 171 *The Parental Monitor*, I (1796), p. iv - v.

CHAPTER THREE

Death in Eighteenth-Century Women's Magazines

It is an obvious ethnocentric mistake to assume that the behaviour evoked by death is to be seen solely as a reaction to the disruptions of social and emotional equilibrium caused by a particular decease. Death provides occasions and materials for a symbolic discourse on life -- through the different treatments accorded to those whose lives have ended in different ways and in different stages of development, through theories about what happens in the after-life, through the symbols used in funerary rites or eschatology to express the contrast between life and death

S.C. Humphreys
Mortality and Immortality

Over the course of the eighteenth century, women's magazines touched on a myriad of subjects that reflected the diverse interests of readers. One such subject was death, which, in addition to being universal and at least initially ungendered, has the additional characteristic of being almost always simultaneously a comment on some aspect of life. While it cannot be claimed that readers were obsessed with death as a particular topic, its ubiquity in the magazines indicates contemporary anxieties about the diminishment of religion and community as constitutive elements of daily experience. The representations of death in the magazines are additionally significant in that they accord with larger shifts in the social attitudes and practices that occurred over the course of the century.

In his study of the visual culture of death from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century, Nigel Llewellyn makes a distinction between the natural (or biological) body and the social body in death.¹ The distinction is an important one. Although the biological death of the natural body never changes, attitudes and practices can and do change dramatically over time and from culture to culture.² Such changes take place with regard to attitudes toward dying and toward the dying, the dead, and the dead body, practices of commemorating and memorializing the dead, attitudes toward bereavement, and practices associated with burial and mourning. Although in one sense death can be

experienced only by the individual, it is never experienced outside a cultural context that extends far beyond that formed by the family and acquaintances of the deceased.

Philippe Ariès argues that, for a thousand years, peoples and cultures maintained a single attitude toward death, "an attitude that expressed a naive and spontaneous acceptance of destiny and nature. This attitude toward death had its counterpart in one toward the dead that expressed the same unconcerned familiarity with the places and artifacts of burial."³ Before the Middle Ages, death was part of the collective destiny of the species and not an individual concern: in the eleventh century, according to Ariès, a relationship developed between "the death of each individual and his awareness of being an individual."⁴ In the collective mentality of England, death remained inextricably bound up with the processes of life, from the Middle Ages until the seventeenth century. According to Llewellyn, "[l]ife was a phase of experience stretching back in time to birth; death was a future point when the termination of life could be objectively determined. The space between the two was the period of 'dying', potentially a time of social and personal instability, which encouraged a complex ritual in which visual artifacts were deployed to sustain the culture and help resist the havoc which death might wreak."⁵ An example of such an artifact is the 1560 double portrait entitled *The Judd Marriage*. In the painting, the newlyweds stand on either side of a skull. Each has a hand resting on the skull, but the hands do not touch. Painted just below the picture of the couple is a full-length prone male corpse, naked except for a suggestively draped winding sheet. According to Llewellyn, this Post-Reformation painting is "intended to present life and death as part of a single cultural process, not as opposing values in a crude binary model of the human condition."⁶ At the same time that the painting affirms time's passage in the continuity of life and death, however, it also stops time in its memorialization of the Judds' marriage: the inscription on the frame reads, "When we are dead...by this shall we remembered be." Marriage is a powerful symbol of not only fertility and new life but also union and community, and the very obvious presence of death in a commemoration of marriage indicates the extent of the Judds' confidence (unfortunately mistaken) that viewers of the portrait would in perpetuity recognize in it the message that did not, for them, present a contradiction: that every human action, including the most life-affirming and celebratory, occurs within a continuum of life and death that must not be forgotten.

In addition to being self-consciously linked with attitudes toward life, attitudes toward death were bound to Christian notions of the afterlife, which altered radically after the Protestant Reformation, affecting not only configurations of the afterlife, but also some of the practices associated with death. For example, the rejection of the notion of Purgatory rendered meaningless the traditional funeral service and burial service: if the fate of the soul was determined at the moment of death, the service itself was no longer of any benefit to it, nor could the prayers of the living assist the dead.⁷ In the seventeenth century, other aspects of Protestantism modified long-standing attitudes toward death. The Calvinist doctrine of predestination rendered the specific fate of the soul a function of election, prior even to the moment of birth and therefore unaffected by death. Moreover, Puritan disdain for ritual combined with a new disdain for the body: whereas the body had traditionally been regarded as the temple of God and the dead body treated with respect, some Puritans regarded the dead body as completely divorced from the soul that had formerly inhabited it. The corpse now appeared loathsome, horrible, and deserving of decay and corruption.⁸ Puritans felt that no ceremony should attend the burial of the deceased, that the primary emotions experienced by those in attendance should be fear of God and hatred of sin, and that no money should be spent on traditional trappings or rituals of the funeral and burial.⁹ However, most people continued to observe the folk tradition of re-establishing relationships with the living by eating and drinking together after a burial. This practice continued when pre-Civil War burial rites were officially reinstated following the Restoration and was only gradually abandoned in the eighteenth century, as urbanization and increased privatization of death within the family curtailed the extended sociability of traditional funeral customs.

Changes in both attitudes toward death and the practices associated with it are registered in the women's magazines of the eighteenth century. In a few instances, death or aspects of it are treated as isolated subjects. For example, an essay on grief in *The Ladies Magazine* treats the subject on both the practical and moral levels. The author advises readers of the most appropriate behaviour to express toward the bereaved, behaviour that carefully balances the bereaved's need for sympathy and the need to be guided back to the world of the living. On the moral level, the author distinguishes between "Grief that is necessary and unthought, and Grief that has Wilfulness and

Humour in it: and I would endeavour to cure the first by Kindness, Compliance, and Commiseration: and to shame or frighten away the other by Contempt and Sneer."¹⁰ In the *Index to Mankind* appended to Volume Four of *The Midwife*, the emphasis of an essay on death is on spiritual matters, advising readers, in the context of human sinfulness and life's transient vanities, to reflect often on their own mortality.¹¹ An essay on condolences in *The Pharos* includes a monitory anecdote about Melissa, whose bereavement and healing are unnecessarily prolonged by the inappropriately expressed sympathy of friends.¹² But, in the main, death appears in women's magazines in ways that are either strictly factual or that are subordinate to other contexts. An examination of attitudes toward and practices associated with death as these are reflected in the magazines not only contributes to our understanding of death in the period but also indicates ways in which women's magazines were involved in one eighteenth-century discourse that sometimes was and sometimes was not inflected by gender

Good Deaths and Bad Deaths Redefined

How a person meets death (meaning not the cause of death, but the attitude with which a dying person passes from this life to the next) is a matter of great cultural significance. In seventeenth-century England, the "good death" was something to which most Christians aspired.¹³ A distinction was made, however, between a natural death, which merely meant that death was inevitable and no one was responsible, and a good death, which "encompassed the duties of all present in the death chamber regarding the quality of the event itself."¹⁴ Two interrelated components comprise the good death. The first is a brave, patient, resigned dying person who gives evidence, usually verbal, of his or her "peaceful conclusion to all social relationships" and makes the appropriate religious observances.¹⁵ The second is family, friends, and often clergy, who are present throughout the dying process to administer specific social and religious tasks. The good death in seventeenth-century England was bound up with the notion of Stoic heroism, an association probably reinforced by the militancy of Puritanism. "The ideal pattern set out in the thanatography of the period was one of patience in the face of trial, arduous but ultimately successful struggle with fleshly pains and spiritual temptations, and final quiet sleep with the Lord."¹⁶ The dying person, if

conscious and coherent. was highly aware of his or her impending death and self-consciously strove to be prepared to meet God. was passive in his or her resignation. but active in heroic endurance and in communicating a special kind of wisdom to those present. "Death-bed speeches performed the dual functions of educating and comforting survivors and establishing the heroism of the dying individual....The ideal seventeenth-century death was deliberate. incorporating regard both for the next world and the world left behind. It was a skill which could be learned by the academic pursuits of reading and listening to sermons or in the more practical forum of a succession of death-chambers. It could be the crowning triumph of a virtuous life."¹⁷

The good death was obviously a social rather than a private affair. entailing the presence of family and friends for whom attendance constituted a religious and social duty: to pray for and with the dying person: to help with practical services like drawing up the will: to provide nursing care or perform household tasks: to be company for and provide support to the sufferer: and to become accustomed to death and to receive comfort through the act of giving it.¹⁸ Apart from clergy. attendants on the dying were most often women. who had traditionally been centrally involved in the care of the sick and the dying and in the washing and laying out of the corpse.¹⁹ Women were well-suited to these tasks. as every woman in her lifetime "attended a veritable university course on the proper manner of dying."²⁰ However. as is well known. these traditionally female duties were in the eighteenth century gradually usurped by male professionals in the medical and undertaking trades.²¹

The corollary of the "good death" is. of course. the "bad death." which did not necessarily refer to the moral state of the victim (although the deaths of immoral people were considered "bad"). but rather to his or her unpreparedness for death: "The absence of preparation could result in spiritual and social condemnation and...'bad' deaths were to be avoided at all costs."²² Sometimes bad deaths were associated with the diseases that caused them: it was not possible to die a good death from the plague or from syphilis. for example. and witnesses of syphilitic deaths were sometimes bribed to report the cause of death as something else.²³ Good deaths and bad deaths were not as inalterable as might appear. however. the impression left by a bad death might be mitigated by a good funeral. and a good death could smooth the memories of a bad life.²⁴

The decline of Puritanism as a social and religious force resulted in fundamental changes in attitudes toward death.²⁵ Calvinist doctrines of predestination and damnation no longer suited the times: the powerlessness and complete submission required by such doctrines did not square with the spirit of an age increasingly attracted to individual agency and initiative. In addition, belief in death as a consequence of Providential order began to be eroded by the idea that scientific and civil measures might have an effect on how, why, and when people died.²⁶ Moreover, "in view of the collapse of literal belief in eternal hellfire, much greater confidence came to be expressed in the assurance of a blissful future. Death ceased to be the ultimate enemy, requiring heroic acts of will, faith, purgation, and transition to a more blessed state, a natural metamorphosis to be accepted, even welcomed."²⁷ In fact, death was ceasing to be thought of in solely religious terms. "Secular and Classical practices edged in where Christianity had once had a monopoly. Plenty of Christians still saw the grave as the gateway to salvation, but others faced dying in new ways."²⁸ Attitudes toward death became increasingly sentimental, particularly with regard to deaths within the immediate family, and greater attention was focused on the grief and loss experienced by the bereaved.²⁹ These changes in attitude were reflected in changes to practices associated with death, particularly in the case of funerals, mourning behaviours, and funerary artefacts, notably gravestones and monuments. For example, earlier symbols of death, such as skulls and skeletons, were replaced by cherubs on eighteenth-century funerary monuments.³⁰ Decorations on memorial jewelry underwent a similar transformation. Classical images, "such as urns, weeping willows, [and] sorrowing ladies" also began to appear on tombs and jewelry.³¹

However, despite so many and such fundamental changes, residual attitudes toward death persisted. For example, the frequency with which Addison's death is cited in the literature of the period suggests that the notion of the good death retained significance, even while the focus was shifting from the dying person to the bereaved. As well, the high visibility of the corollary notion of the "bad" death, illustrated by the enormous attention given to the final words and behaviour of criminals (far more than was given to their victims) and, to a lesser degree, to the last moments of suicides, indicates that these moments were still important. However, the focus and significance of dying gradually shifted away from the dying person and onto those left behind, whether known or

unknown to the deceased. No longer primarily a spiritual journey for the dying, death became a moral tale for the living.³²

In women's magazines, examples of the good death and the bad death are surprisingly widespread, but, clearly, the emphasis has shifted (for the most part) to their impact on the living. Sometimes the advice of a dying person is straightforward and conventional, like that of the dying Lord President of Scotland, who advised adherence to the precepts of religion and its practice.³³ But, typically, other, more subtle implications attend descriptions of the dying. Women's magazines frequently used historical figures to endorse contemporary values; for example, the dying moments of Louis XIV are described in a 1715 letter written by Madam de Maintenon, who spent the night of his death at his bedside, talking with him of spiritual concerns. The account is a text-book example of the way the good death had been represented for centuries. The King makes provision for the education of his children, bids farewell to the dauphin, offering him moral and political advice, and thanks Madam de Maintenon for her part in his spiritual conversion, assuring her that they will be reunited after death.³⁴ However, Madam de Maintenon appears to have edited the event significantly. The death chamber of a king is unlikely to be a private, intimate place, but Madam de Maintenon scarcely acknowledges any activity not involving the immediate family. Furthermore, she ends her letter by describing the difficulty of not weeping for the first several days and by expressing concern for her children. Although the letter was dated over thirty years before its appearance in *The Ladies Magazine*, its sentimental focus makes it especially appealing in the context of the emergent culture of sentiment.

By the end of the century, the good death had metamorphosed almost completely. A striking example of this later period appears in a Conversation on the death of Amanda, for whom *The Female Mentor* was named.³⁵ Amanda's death had been unexpected, and the account describes the subsequent gathering of the group she had mentored. "It will easily be imagined that every individual was greatly affected at the loss of Amanda: more than half of the members had been educated under her direction, improved by her instructions, and cherished by her affection" (224). The members are described as being "apprehensive of giving way to their feelings" and try to avoid the subject of her death. Nevertheless, when one member translates a verse from Petrarch, the

younger members cry, and Eubulus attempts to console them: "I cannot condemn you, my dear young friends,' he said, 'for dropping the tear of affection on the grave of our valuable friend. I join with you in recollecting her excellencies, and in dwelling upon them with particular delight: and I can never cease to cherish her character, till I cease to cherish the remembrance of departed virtue'" (pp. 226 - 27). Eubulus makes a long digression condemning the Stoics for affecting "a wisdom superior even to the feelings of humanity" (p. 227). He delivers an encomium on the passions "so nicely interwoven together, and so necessary either for our preservation or our happiness, that we cannot eradicate any particular feeling, without weakening and discomposing the others. If therefore we are able so far to controul ourselves as to bear the loss of our departed friends without emotion, we should be sensible also that this same composure would take away all the nicer feelings, and blunt the edge of our keenest satisfactions. The indulgence of melancholy, and what is called the 'luxury of grief,' are infinitely pleasing. A man of sensibility, cannot attempt to weigh his tears in the balance of rigid judgment: the moderation therefore of our grief depends upon the healing hand of time, which never fails to compose our afflictions, and to lull the senses into an oblivion of our cares" (pp. 228 - 29).

Eubulus' statement reveals how far attitudes of death have moved away from those predominant a century earlier. Only after he validates the grief of the company does his attention turn to the late Amanda and certain aspects of her life, especially her virtues as a wife and mother, her feminine piety and religious practice, and her Christian virtues of endurance and patience. Then he turns his attention again to the grieving survivors: "...we cannot fail therefore to feel the loss of such a character; yet at the same time, while we allow ourselves to lament, let us also draw all possible consolations to our aid: let us endeavour to imitate Amanda, who not being above the tender feelings of humanity, did not give way too much to unavailing sorrow. She supported herself under various afflictions with Christian and uniform patience, and like gold purified in the fire, she has risen from the trial brighter than ever" (pp. 229 - 30). Here, Amanda's endurance is configured as passive: she does not earn her reward through active engagement of her suffering; she is acted upon by it. Nor is the narrative constructed in terms that allow her to impart dying wisdom with her own voice.

Eubulus' appropriation of her dying words signifies a fundamental structural shift in the narrative of the good death.

Eubulus comments that it was well that Amanda died before her faculties were impaired by age and asks the company, "How much more would you then have lamented the loss of her faculties, than you now do the loss of her life?" (pp. 230 - 31). Another long passage teaches the company what they should learn from Amanda's death. The Conversation concludes with references to the passivity of Amanda's dying moments: "We know also that Amanda considered death, not only as the inevitable, but the desirable end of life: the sure refuge from the troubles of this world, and the goal that leads to everlasting happiness. With the firmness of a Christian she yielded her latest breath, in full confidence that she was under the protection of the great Disposer of events. Let us also acquiesce in the dispensations of Providence, and console ourselves by the reflection, that Amanda, whose heart ever expanded for the love of mankind, and whose actions corresponded with the dictates of her heart, will receive the reward of her virtue, and enjoy a happy immortality." All the components of the good death are here, but the presence of the dying person has been rendered almost superfluous. Though the Conversation is entitled "Death of Amanda," it is clearly about and for the benefit of her survivors, and, by extension, for the benefit of readers, who are invited not only to share in the didactic lessons of the Conversation, but also to participate vicariously in the sympathetic expression of grief.

Examples of bad deaths, which inevitably carried great negative moral weight, also appear in the magazines, most frequently taking the form of descriptions of the dying moments of capitally convicted criminals (discussed in more detail in Chapter Four), but also considered in terms other than execution. Interestingly, like good deaths, bad deaths may be experienced by both women and men. The unfortunate Fanny Braddock, whose story was retold throughout the eighteenth century, provides one example of a bad death through suicide (though her story is presented in somewhat equivocal terms). Another example is articulated in a letter from a dying Libertine to his friend:³⁶ "It is impossible for me to express the present Disposition of my Soul, the vast Uncertainty I am struggling with; no Words can paint the Force and Vivacity of my Apprehensions: every Doubt wears the Face of Horror, and would presently overwhelm me, but for some faint Beams of Hope.

which dart across the tremendous Gloom."³⁷ The Libertine recounts his life of dissipation and describes, with heavy irony, his own death-bed scene:

I have a splendid Passage to the Grave: I die in State and languish under a gilded Canopy: I am expiring on soft and downy Pillows, and am respectfully attended by my Servants and Physicians: My Dependents sigh, my Sisters weep, my Featherbed beareth a Load of Years and Grief: my endearing Wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward Anguish...the Love and Gratitude of my Friends may perchance honour my Remains with a stately Monument, inscribed with, *Here lies the Great*, _____.
But, could the pale Corpse speak, it would soon reply,

_____ False Marble, where?
Nothing but poor and sordid Dust lies here.
COWLEY³⁸

While the libertine's awareness of his probable damnation is evident, this letter is more than the death-bed confession of a sinner. It derives its strength from the extended comparison of the writer's spiritual bankruptcy with his material wealth, both before and after his death. The vanity of vanities theme is, of course, familiar in the eighteenth century, but it is significant that the letter comes from a libertine, and not, for example, from a miser or one of the other "types" who learn too late that money can't buy eternal happiness.³⁹ Not simply a warning against libertinism and its consequences, the narrative reinforces the middle-class critique of aristocratic decadence. Moreover, unlike the covetousness of a miser, the lust of a libertine is inherently sexual. Here, the consequences of libertinism are visited with equal injustice upon female family members who are mentioned and invisible victims of seduction who are only implied.

Shifts in Practices and Customs

Alterations in the practices and customs associated with death attended shifting attitudes toward the dead and dying. Some traditional customs, such as eating and drinking together to re-establish human relationships following a burial, were retained, as was the practice of giving gifts to those present at the funeral.⁴⁰ Giving a funeral dole to the poor, which served the dual function of enlarging the crowd at the funeral and attributing to the deceased a final act of charity, was another custom that persisted.⁴¹ The tradition of "watching," which had in earlier times had usually been

done by people unrelated to the deceased and which had served a variety of purposes, none of which were sentimental, gradually became a singular gesture of love on the part of the family.⁴² However, other aspects of funerals and burials changed dramatically in both form and content. According to Gittings, "[a]s the religious elements [of funerals] dwindled, so the social aspects of the ritual took on greater importance, to meet the needs of a more secular society."⁴³ Like rituals of dying, the funeral service became primarily "a vehicle of instruction for the living."⁴⁴ The funeral sermon, still strongly tied to religious belief, dwelt on the past life of the deceased, gave assurance of his or her life in the hereafter, and consoled survivors. The funeral sermon became the most important feature of the service, and were, in fact, sufficiently popular as not to be confined to funerals, but were in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century printed and sold to the public.⁴⁵

Representations of funerals and burials are not often found in women's magazines, except insofar as they are parts of stories that are newsworthy for other reasons.⁴⁶ In some cases, newsworthiness was determined by sheer novelty, as in the funeral of 99-year-old fisherman John Chambers, whose body was carried by six great-grandsons and the pall supported by as many great-grand-daughters. Seventy-two direct descendants followed the corpse. The funeral was well-attended, and all mourners were given gloves, or, if they were children, apples. It was thought notable that Chambers had retained his senses to the end.⁴⁷ Sometimes, however, accounts of funerals or burials underscored the main point of a story, such as the perfidy of criminals or the victimization of the innocent. For example, an account of the execution in 1750 of John Collington, an exceptionally brutal man convicted of hiring two men to set fire to the barn and hay ricks of a churchwarden, includes his request that he be buried in the church-yard of the parish where his father had been rector. Collington's request specifies that "he might be buried in Linen, and that as soon as the Execution was over, he might be put into his Coffin, and carried away directly in a Hearse, and buried that Evening between Seven and Eight o'Clock."⁴⁸ The notorious parricide Mary Blandy was reported executed and subsequently buried, presumably at her own request, between her mother and the father she had murdered.⁴⁹ And in another instance, *The Ladies Magazine* describes the re-interment of Fledderus, who had been wrongfully convicted, executed, and ignominiously buried. He was, however, re-interred in style, "his Corpse having been

accompanied to the Grave by the Prince's Commissaries and the new Magistrates in their Formalities. And the Note of Infamy, attached to Fledderus's Memory in Consequence of the death he suffer'd, has been taken off by waving a Pair of Colours over his Coffin." Fledderus's estate, however, was to "remain irrecoverably confiscated."⁵⁰ In the first case, Collington's discriminating wishes for his dead body emphasize his brutality toward his wife and children and vindictiveness toward his neighbour. The contrast between Mary Blandy's remorseless murder of her father and her seeming choice to spend eternity beside him highlights the filial duty she has denied him in life. And the State's ostentatious gesture of reparation to the insensible body of Fledderus, in contrast to the continuing unjust punishment of his survivors, focuses attention on the State's essential lack of repentance and apparent hypocrisy.

The funerals and burials of people of rank, especially royalty, are often elaborately described. For example, the death in 1751, of Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, prompted the magazine to print an account of "the last Instance of the Kind in this Kingdom." The account of the death in 1612, of 18-year-old Henry, Prince of Wales, son of James I, begins with the autopsy to discover the cause of death, details the places where his body lay in state (and for how long and with what accouterments), and ends with the description of his effigy being conveyed through the city streets in a funeral chariot drawn by eight black horses, so the public might pay its respects. This account is immediately followed by one concerning the death of 45-year-old Frederick. Because the funeral had not yet taken place, this account (which also opens with the enquiry into the cause of death and briefly recounts the Prince's life and genealogy) focuses most particularly on an extended description of proper mourning behaviour and the dates of official mourning for the court. The financial arrangements made for his widow and children are followed by a description of Frederick's coffin.⁵¹

The details of funerals and mourning are also sometimes given in the case of deceased foreign royalty. The particulars of the death of the Queen of Denmark, who died near the end of her pregnancy with her third child, is described over two consecutive numbers of *The Ladies Magazine*. The first account focuses on her bed of state, beside which lay the coffin containing the body of the baby who died with her. The scene is magnificent and sombre and appropriately lit: "The whole is to be ornamented with Fringe and Lace, and illuminated with sixteen Wax Flambeaux."⁵² The second

account describes her illness, the operation that was performed, and the death of the Queen: "...the Princess died on the 19th. N.S. about Four o'Clock in the Morning, after having edified, by her Sentiments of Piety, all those who were Witnesses of the Loss of a Princess so worthy to be regretted. She was near the End of the Time of her Pregnancy. Every Thing possible was done to save the Child, which was a Prince: but all to no Purpose. The Evening before the Queen's Death, she took Leave of the King with much Tenderness, and also of the Prince Royal and Princesses, her Children."⁵³ The contrast between the accounts of the two royal deaths is striking and reflects the magazine's attempt to report what it deemed to be of particular interest to its female readers. The death of Frederick, Prince of Wales is rendered as a "news" account, written to convey specific information and instructions. The death of the Queen of Denmark is rendered as a story, one that is not only far more sympathetic and sentimental, but, significantly, one that also conveys the good death experienced by the Queen, information that, like family relations (apart from financial arrangements), is omitted from the account of Frederick's death.

The details of royal deaths were assumed to be of importance to readers and can be presumed to be conveyed accurately and straightforwardly, but *The Ladies Magazine's* comments on the funeral arrangements of less noble personages are more ambiguous. For example, one wonders in what spirit the magazine commented on the wishes of Dr. Thomas Crowe, "eminent Surgeon and a Vice-President of St. Luke's Hospital for Lunaticks": "It is very remarkable, that he desir'd in his Will to be brought to Town, and lay a Week, and to be dress'd in a white Fustian Frock, white Waistcoat, white Breeches and Shoes, and a new Holland Shirt trimm'd on Purpose."⁵⁴ In another case, the expression of exceptional wishes is less ambiguous. Mr. Francis Bancroft was a London draper and the founder of a charity for youth and old age, who had also specified his own funeral and burial arrangements. However, *The Ladies Magazine's* publication of the post-script to his will seems to be an attempt to contradict public criticism of his wishes, rather than a criticism of those wishes:

My Body I desire may be embalm'd within *six Days* after my Death, and my *Entrails* to be put in a leaden Box, and included in my Coffin, or placed in my Vault next the same, as shall be most convenient: and that my Coffin be made of *Oak*, lined with Lead, and that the Top or Lid thereof be hung with strong *Hinges*, neither to be *nail'd*, *screw'd*, *locked down*, or *fastened any othey* [sic] way, but to *open freely*, and

without Trouble like to the Top of a *Trunk*.-- And I desire to be buried in a Vault, which I have made and purchas'd for that Purpose under my Tomb in the Parish Church of *St. Helen's, London*, within *ten Days* after my Decease, between the Hours of *Nine* and *Ten o'Clock* at Night.-- And whereas I have been at considerable Expence in purchasing a Piece of Ground, making a Vault, and erecting a Tomb in the Church of *St. Helen's* aforesaid: I do hereby give and appoint the Sum of *Two Pounds* per *An.* forever, and more, whensoever needful, for the cleansing, taking Care of, preserving and repairing my said Vault and Tomb aforesaid: it being my Intention and express Desire to have the same kept up in good Order and Repair for ever, whether the Church be standing or not, and to that End, I hereby subject and charge all my said Estate in *London* and *Middlesex* with the Payment and Support thereof before any [of] the Charities herein before mention'd.

The Ladies Magazine comments:

I have been the more Particular in reciting these several Clauses of *Mr. Bancroft's* Will, because they have been greatly misrepresented: and to set those Right who have been deceived by flying Reports about this Gentleman's Place and Manner of Burial, and of his Notion of a Future State.⁵⁵

The Ladies Magazine seems to distinguish here between excusable and inexcusable vanity, as it elsewhere distinguishes between self-inflicted poverty and poverty that results from conditions beyond individual control. But for *The Midwife*, there can be no excuse for vanity: "How deplorable is the Blindness of human Pride! which must have their dead Bodies laid in State, pompous Funerals, superb Monuments: which fills Men in a manner with their own Emptiness: which turns the saddest Warnings God gives them, in order to humble them, into the most dangerous Illusions: which endeavours to fix upon Marble or Brass a transitory Grandeur, that passes away with so much Rapidity; which endeavours to secure itself a Portion of a worldly Life, in the very Empire of Death itself!"⁵⁶

What we can extrapolate from even these two examples is not only the extent of changing attitudes toward death at mid-century, but also the ambivalence with which these changes were regarded. Such ambivalence was present from the beginning of the century and reflects a fundamental discomfort with the relationship between death, status, and material wealth. As the foregoing passages indicate, the most dramatic changes to funeral and burial practices had to do with their increasing commercialization, which was linked to the commodification of death, a development that occurred initially in London. Many of these changes were associated with one of the most visible transformations of all, the shift of the management of death from the church, the family, and the community to professional undertakers. Undertakers had existed in the seventeenth century, but,

as the "managed" funeral became a signifier of status and respectability, undertakers' visibility and the perceived necessity of their involvement increased.

Paul Fritz sees the development of professional undertaking as an outgrowth of trades long associated with the heraldic funerals of the aristocracy, which had been overseen by the College of Arms since the time of Henry VII.⁵⁷ "With the increasing growth of the middle class...funerals became an indicator not of rank but of wealth....Because distinctions of rank could no longer be maintained through visible displays, the undertaker assumed the dual role of manager and supplier and charged for his displays what the market would sustain."⁵⁸ According to Gittings, however, the undertakers were only partly responsible for the commodification of death:

...the profession of undertaking could not initially have come into being if the premise on which it rested, that death was a fit candidate for commercialisation, had not been acceptable to its potential customers. The obvious convenience of the trade to the busy executor no doubt assisted its establishment, as did an increasing revulsion at performing the more intimate preparations to the corpse. Other factors aided undertakers in their task. The individualistic, competitive element in society was already present in funeral practices, as was a love of display and conspicuous show: undertakers merely served to increase these tendencies, making them, at first, desirable, and then essential, for all social ranks. The broader bonds of communal solidarity had already come under attack from the increasing emphasis on the individual and the immediate family, while in cities, urban life weakened group ties. Undertakers only had to step into a pre-existing gap. Snobbery on an individual, family and class level was a well-established force on which they readily drew. A feeling that the living and the dead should be firmly separated, both on grounds of public health and propriety, further played into the undertakers' hands. The whole process was gradual and insidious. Undertakers, precisely because they reflected so closely the already existing *mentalité*, did not meet with great opposition. The profession of undertaking was both a product of, and instrument in reinforcing, the values of the society in which it flourished.⁵⁹

Nevertheless, in spite of its complicity, the middle-class simultaneously engaged in (and published) critiques of undertaking that were neither favourable nor welcoming. At times, the attack on undertakers was pragmatic, as in R. Campbell's 1747 *The London Tradesman*:

Their Business is to watch Death, and to furnish out the Funeral Solemnity, with as much Pomp and feigned Sorrow, as the Heirs or Successor of the Deceased chuse to purchase: They are a hard-hearted Generation, and require more Money than Brains to conduct their business: I know of no one Qualification peculiarly necessary to them, except it is a steady, demure and melancholy Countenance at Command: I do not know that they take Apprentices in their Capacity as Undertakers, for they are general Carpenters, or Herald-Painters besides: and they only employ as Journeymen, a Set of Men whom they have picked up possessed of a sober Countenance, and a solemn melancholly [sic] Face, whom they pay at so much a Jobb.⁶⁰

In the periodicals, references to undertakers and other instances of commercialized death are almost always satirical. The letter below, from "an eminent Undertaker in Town, to an eminent Physician in the Country," targets two rising professions to whom death was of primary importance:

Dear Sir,

MY Heart is almost broke. ___The Papers of the Day, are enough to distract me. ___Decreased in the Burials this Week, forty-two; and this has been the Trade, ever since you have been out of Town; for God's sake, dear Doctor, consider, tho' you have filled your own Coffers, your poor old Friend is a starving. All Tradesmen must live, and we cannot live unless other People dye; and unassisted Nature will never employ a thousandth Part of our Business. Besides, People have got a knack of remaining above Ground after their Death. "Mrs. Keith's Corpse was removed from her Husband's House, in *May-Fair*, the Middle of *October*, 1749, to an Apothecary's, in *South Audlery-Street*, where she lies in a Room hung with Mourning, and is to continue there, till Mr. Keith can attend her Funeral." ___Zounds, if this become a Fashion, we shall shortly have a POSTHUMOUS WORLD. The Coffin-Makers, the Feather-shops, [...]the Plumpers, and the Embalmers, the Gravediggers, etc. etc. etc. --are all on the Point of breaking. 'Tis true, the Apothecaries stand us in some stead, those honest Fellows throw us in an odd Hetacomb of Carcases [sic] every now and then, but they can't go on with half the Vigour as they did when they were aided by your efficacious Prescriptions; those Prescriptions which finish'd Affairs at a Blow, and were infallible Mitimus's to the Realms of Silence and Tranquillity [sic]. I have just now had one of my *Mutes* with me, who has made such a damn'd *Noise* for his Money, that I expect to hear nothing distinctly for this Twelve Month, and to mend Matters, in comes the Excise-Man (would to God, Doctor, he was under your Hands) and brings a Bill a Yard long, on Account of the Tax upon Coaches and Hearses. He's a good likely Fellow, and would make a charming Corpse, and I heartily wish I had the Burying of him, and all his Fraternity. ___You see, Sir, the Necessity of your restoring yourself to the Publick, since Business so stagnates without you; neither will the Intemperance of the Times, the Sedulity of the Apothecaries, War, Pestilence, and Famine, suffice for our Purpose, if you continue in the Country.

Yours Affectionately,

CHARLES COFFIN

Dick Deathwatch, my Partner, and *Harry Hatchment*, the Herald Painter, desire their Respects.⁶¹

Anxiety over the commodification of death, expressed differently in these examples, is implicated in a separate critique of the rising professions, especially law and medicine, a critique that was given considerable attention in the magazines. Roy Porter argues against a widespread view of doctors as quasi-murderers: "Doctors certainly did change what Hogarth called 'the face of death', but they did so, not by substantially reducing its ravages or by increasing longevity, but by playing their part in a shift in common attitudes towards death and in forging new ways of coping with it."⁶²

Considering the comfortable social position the professions enjoyed in the nineteenth century, it seems unlikely that the critique of professionals in the press reflected general acceptance of the unscrupulous corruption of emergent professions. Rather, the critique may be symptomatic of anxiety over (and reflect a healthy cynicism toward) the extent and rapidity of social and economic changes during the eighteenth century. In the case of undertakers, it may also reflect anxiety about the removal of death from its traditional religious and community contexts.

Two other phenomena associated with burial, graverobbing and premature burial, were also of concern in the eighteenth century. Ruth Richardson observes that the rise in graverobbing paralleled the rise in the undertaking profession.⁶³ Clare Gittings more precisely argues that graverobbing was an unintentional consequence of the Murder Act of 1752.⁶⁴ More fundamentally, however, events suggest that most people were simply not ready to conceive of the human body as a mere commodity or the site of scientific investigation. In 1725 Bernard Mandeville argued that reverence for corpses amounted to superstition and the aversion to dissection to an impediment of science.⁶⁵ However, the increased demand of surgeons and surgeons-in-training for corpses as part of their medical studies substantially preceded attitudes that viewed the desecration of the dead body with similar professional detachment.⁶⁶ Although no doubt some measure of Puritan detestation of the dead body was residual in parts of society, for many, the body retained significance as the image of God. Furthermore, many people felt that graverobbing and anatomization might have an effect on the deceased's physical resurrection on Judgment Day.⁶⁷ Consequently, Christian burial was deemed to be a necessary end to a Christian life. The extent to which the notion of the inviolability of the human corpse persisted, with or without reference to religion, may be inferred from one letter-writer's suggestion that more extensive use of the punishment set out in the Murder Act might act as a deterrent to crime. In his letter, PLAIN TRUTH advocates that capital punishment be supplemented by the preventive clean-up of places of vice that breed even worse crimes:

However, if terrifying Methods must be tried, I would humbly propose...that all the Bodies of executed Criminals be given to the Surgeons: because the Generality of Mankind have a very great Aversion to being anatomiz'd: nay, to many it is more terrible than Death. By this Means Surgeons Hall would be always well supplied without any Need of robbing Church-Yards: and Wretches who lived in a State of War with the Society of which they were Members, would be made serviceable to the Community after their Death.

Your humble Servant.

PLAIN TRUTH⁶⁸

The dearth of bodies referred to by Plain Truth was a fact. Surgeons had only one legal source of corpses: the unclaimed bodies of executed malefactors. However, the supply did not meet the demand, and graverobbers (or bodysnatchers or resurrectionists, as they were also termed) would for a fee exhume a recently buried body. In the eighteenth century, public fears regarding graverobbing were sometimes expressed through violence. Graverobbing was legally a misdemeanor if the robbers took only the body (it was a felony if they took the shroud).⁶⁹ However, if caught, bodysnatchers were often beaten, occasionally to death.⁷⁰ Attempts to carry off the bodies of executed criminals at Tyburn were met with resistance or even riots.⁷¹ But anxiety was also addressed in less violent ways: railings around grave sites, coffins that locked, bands that secured corpses in their coffins, huge cages (mortsafes) erected over graves, coffins stored in stone "dead houses," massive stones laid over graves, and staffed watch-houses.⁷²

Accounts of graverobbing reported in the magazines, though infrequent, nevertheless registered outrage over bodysnatching. *The Ladies Magazine* reports the instance of a poor widow whose husband's corpse was stolen from his grave.⁷³ This widow obtained a search warrant and proper assistance, went to the house of the surgeon she suspected of the deed, and finally found her husband's head and part of his body at the bottom of a furnace full of boiling water. The surgeon was arrested, and the magazine comments that "it is to be hoped, [he] will be brought to Justice for so notorious an Offence."⁷⁴ Graverobbing might also be treated with irony or with gallows humour. *The Ladies Magazine* reports that Custom House Officers stopped a man "coming from Stepney with a Shell of a Coffin on his Back, pretending to belong to an Undertaker in the Minories." When asked whether he was carrying the body to the Surgeons, "he answered that he did not know of anything in it, but if there was, they were welcome to it, and so laid his Burden down and made off. On opening it, to their great Astonishment, but greater Disappointment they found the Corpse of a Woman, whom it is supposed had been stolen for the Benefit of the Surgeons. The Officers went off disappointed of their Prize, not thinking it a

Commodity fit for Sale at the Custom-House."⁷⁵ Another comic reference combines sexual innuendo with criticism of surgeons, who were themselves sometimes graverobbers:

*On stealing the Body of a young Woman to be anatomised,
from St. Peter's Church-yard, Oxford.*

FOR Shame! For Shame! Oxonians all,
And blush to find it said:
Not pleas'd to steal the Girls alive,
But must ye steal them dead?

2.

Insatiate Nature thus directs,
Nor is it strange I own:
That those who love to taste the Flesh,
Should like---to pick the Bone.⁷⁶

Premature burial was also a cause of anxiety in the eighteenth century. The fear of premature burial was not new, but it gained new prominence at the time through association with the medical phenomenon of "apparent death," which attained the status of a separate discourse in France.⁷⁷ According to French physician Jacques-Bénigne Winslow of the *Faculté de médecine* in Paris, the only irrefutable evidence of absolute death was putrefaction, a pronouncement that led to the organization of humane societies to retrieve the apparently dead, the use of death certificates, delays in burial, and an interest in the art of resuscitation.⁷⁸ Winslow played on existing fears of premature burial by emphasizing the horrible consequences that accompanied it and claiming that premature burial was on the rise as traditional burial practices were replaced by more individualized ones. He also played on class interests by arguing that a plague victim who awoke in a common grave had a better chance of survival than an aristocratic lady interred in a family vault, who was likely beyond help by the time her cries were heard and she was disinterred.⁷⁹ However, though resuscitation societies were eventually formed in London and Lancashire, apparent death as a subject did not often find its way into women's magazines. An exception occurs in *The Ladies Magazine's* account of premature burial, which intersected with the seemingly opposite concern of graverobbing: "Thursday last was buried at Cork in Ireland Mr. Francis Taylor, the next morning was found sitting up in his grave, his coffin broke, his cap and shroud torn to pieces, one of his shoulders mangled, his hands

full of clay, and blood streaming from his eyes: A shocking instance of the fatal consequence of too precipitate interment. It is imagined some surgeons had attempted to carry away the body."⁸⁰

Readers' fascination with and horror of graverobbing and premature burial can be seen as expressions of legitimate fear and outrage provoked by specific actual occurrences, but it can also be seen as fascination with the macabre and the grotesque, which many writers on the gothic relate to the Enlightenment critique of imagination. The macabre found its way into the magazines in a third context that was less grounded in actual events, despite claims to "truth." Ghost stories and treatises on other supernatural manifestations of the dead amount to a veritable sub-genre in the magazines, occurring in a surprising range of periodicals, from *The Ladies Magazine*, to *The Female Spectator*, *The Midwife*, *The Lady's Curiosity*, *The Lady's Miscellany*, and *The Parental Monitor*.⁸¹ Often, the ghost stories appear as "true" anecdotes: for example, one unembellished account in the Chronological Diary of Domestic and Foreign Affairs feature of *The Ladies Magazine* concerns three lads who go together to a Holborn undertaker's and "ludicrously" order three coffins. Almost immediately, one drowns and two die of fever, so that, within 48 hours, all three are laid in the coffins they ordered.⁸² Ghost stories are sometimes framed as investigations into the nature of the afterlife. One *Female Spectator* letter contains an anecdote of two friends who agree that whichever dies first will return and reveal to the survivor the secrets of life after death. When she is not visited by the ghost of her dead friend, the survivor eventually denies belief in futurity, but, when the ghost appears to tell the survivor that her own death is imminent, the survivor's belief in futurity is restored only hours before she dies.⁸³ Here, the ghost acts contradictorily as a harbinger of doom and an agent of eternal life. Sometimes, anticipating Ann Radcliffe's strategy of explaining away the supernatural, ghost stories are resolved by logical explanation. For example, in the same issue, *The Female Spectator* relates the anecdote of a group of gentlemen who, discussing the existence of ghosts, make a bet that the skeptic among them cannot enter a royal vault recently opened to permit another interment. While in the vault alone, the unbeliever inadvertently sticks his own knife through his coat, pinning him to the floor. Believing himself held by spirits, he faints and is converted.⁸⁴ Other times, the existence of supernatural phenomena is the subject of lengthy and serious investigation. One essay in *The Ladies Magazine* relates the "true" history of vampires.

"bodies of deceased persons animated by evil spirits, which come out of the graves in the night time, suck the blood of many of the living, and thereby destroy them." In this case, *The Ladies Magazine* does not question the existence of supernatural beings, instead citing scriptural references to prove that God at times "may make wicked spirits his instruments of punishment here."⁸⁵ More typically, such essays deny the existence of ghosts or other spirits that walk after death, and in one instance, the ignorant belief in ghosts is given class connotations: "Ghosts are, even in this enlightened age, the bugbear and terror of thousands, particularly amongst the lower ranks of people."⁸⁶

Anxiety about death, then, was expressed in various ways, as were attempts to respond to it. Direct attacks on surgeons and graverobbers constitute active response. Attempts to reconfigure the afterlife imaginatively through ghost stories are more oblique. Insofar as the commodification of death and the practices surrounding it can also be seen as a response to anxiety about death, it was characterized by ambivalence, as emergent middle-class desires intersected and came into conflict with traditional attitudes.

Commemoration and Commodification

The commodification of the dead body by undertakers and surgeons, in conjunction with the commodification of the accoutrements of death and burial, resulted in a range of funeral trappings geared to the economic status of the family of the deceased. Virtually all aspects of the funeral and burial were subject to discrimination of the purse. But most of these commercialized services, customs, and paraphernalia originated in traditional customs and practices, rather than being innovations. Printed funeral invitations had been in use since the late seventeenth century, but advanced technology allowed them to be decorated with a range of designs and affordably printed.⁸⁷ Coffins, too, "were designed to satisfy a greater range of tastes and to suit a wider range of socio-economic levels."⁸⁸ Because they preserved the memory of the deceased beyond the lifetimes of immediate survivors, funerary monuments became increasingly popular.⁸⁹ According to Nigel Llewellyn, "[c]ommemorative art played a central role in combating fragmentation,"⁹⁰ and the wealthy and the aristocratic had long employed this means of preserving family memory and identity.

The increasing use of commemorative monuments by the middle classes might be attributed to the desire to imitate the upper classes and their ability to indicate status of the deceased, though people found the status-blindness of death increasingly disturbing: "The implication of such even-handed treatment was profoundly damaging to the social fabric. The ritual thus demanded that social bodies after death had to be differentiated one from another, a task which was mainly the responsibility of the monumental body."⁹¹ Less obviously, the increasing use of funerary monuments was influenced by rising rates of literacy. Houlbrooke claims that rising literacy "prompted a long-term shift from pictorial representation to the epitaph, which could say more, and say it more eloquently, than all the very best and most expensive engraving or sculpture."⁹² While the last part of this statement is debatable, the appeal of written inscriptions is clear: in print the deceased could be memorialized and individualized at the same time.⁹³ Earlier epitaphs of the rich had often listed the offices held by the deceased or provided a semi-permanent genealogy, while the headstones of the middling classes bore only the name and dates and perhaps occupation of the deceased. By contrast, eighteenth-century epitaphs for the middle classes tended to be more elaborate and more particular, often emphasizing the virtues of the deceased or articulating the sentiments of survivors. "Domestic virtues were gradually given more prominence: this was of course particularly true of women. Wives were praised for their chastity, fidelity, and affection, mothers for their tenderness and solicitude. Epitaphs upon married couples often emphasized their mutual love, the union of their remains in one grave, and their hope that their souls would be reunited in heaven."⁹⁴

In the magazines, descriptions of the physical monuments are sometimes included as part of an account of the death, funeral, and burial of some historical personage. For example, as part of its "Celebrated British Ladies" series, *The Lady's Monthly Museum* published this description of the tomb of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby:

She was buried in [her son's] chapel, and had a beautiful monument to her memory, and adorned with gilded brass arms, and an epitaph round the verge, drawn by Erasmus, at the request of Bishop Fisher, for which he had twenty shilling given him by the university of Cambridge. Upon this altar-tomb, which is enclosed with a grate, is placed the statue of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, in her robes, all of solid brass, with two pillars on each side her, and a Latin inscription, of which the following is a translation.

To Margaret Richmond, the mother of Henry VII., and grandmother of Henry VIII.; who founded salaries for three Monks in this convent, for a grammar-school at

Wynbourn, and a preacher of God's word throughout England; as also for two Divinity Lecturers; the one at Oxford, and the other at Cambridge; in which last place she likewise built two Colleges in honour of Christ and his disciple St. John. She died in the year of our Lord 1509, June the 29th.⁹⁵

Descriptions of the monuments of less illustrious citizens were typically confined to recording their epitaphs (there were exceptions to this, such as the incidental description below that follows the epitaph of the Robinson children). These epitaphs were frequently published in women's magazines, sometimes as didactic or sentimental poetry, sometimes as gallows humour.⁹⁶ Joshua Scodel observes that during this period, "epitaphs sought to assert the enduring social roles of the deceased. They did so in various and often opposing ways, however, for writers enlisted the dead in competing social, religious, and political visions. Epitaphs differentiated and evaluated the dead according to age, religion, and personal achievements. They posited widely differing links -- spiritual, ethical, and emotional -- between the dead and the living. Thus, the epitaph engaged in the central conflicts of English collective life."⁹⁷ Scodel demonstrates the tremendous generic shift from the seventeenth-century epitaph, a straightforward commemoration of the dead, to its eighteenth-century version, which sought to accommodate the changes that were affecting attitudes toward death generally: commodification, sentimentalization, and the growing importance of the individual.⁹⁸ Like other commentators, Scodel demonstrates that epitaphs registered the increasing separation of the living and the dead that marks eighteenth-century attitudes toward death, as society reconfigured social relations in terms oriented more toward the individual: "At least insofar as it manifests itself in epitaphic rhetoric, the new emphasis reveals not so much the increase of feeling within the family, as a new relationship between feelings for intimates, both inside and outside the family, and the public domain. With continuing disagreement over 'objective' social criteria for assessing the worth of the dead, intimate grief increasingly seemed the most, and perhaps the only, authentic testimony to the enduring value of the deceased. Expressions of deep personal sorrow thus came to fill the vacuum in authoritative public utterance."⁹⁹

Scodel emphasizes the growing importance of the reader of the epitaph and the concomitant co-option of feeling by the epitaph writer, whether or not the writer actually knew the deceased, indeed whether or not there was an actual deceased subject. This development intersects with the

frequent appearance of epitaphs in the magazines, where epitaphs reflect the entire range of generic developments described by Scodel. There, epitaphs sometimes commemorate the socially "worthy," like Brigadier General Hill or sixteenth-century Elizabeth Lucar.¹⁰⁰ Both of these epitaphs emphasize the virtues and achievements of the deceased and commemorate the social and civic accomplishments of each, Hill's masculine virtue in terms of his military service, patriotism, and gentlemanliness, and Lucar's feminine virtue in terms of her exemplary intellectual and domestic capabilities within the accepted female sphere. However, many epitaphs printed by the magazines emphasize family relations, and a number commemorate the deaths of children.

The following EPITAPH contains such natural, moral, and pathetic Sentiments, expressing so strong a parental Affection, and at the same Time, such a pious Resignation to the Will of Heaven, under one of the most affecting of all human Calamities, the Loss of dear Children, that we doubt not but it will be acceptable to our Readers.

EPITAPH on a Monument in Willesden Church-yard, near the Harrow Road, in the County of Middlesex.

William Robinson, aged 2,
 And
 Sally Robinson, aged 4,
 Children of
 William Robinson, of the Inner-Temple,
 London, Gt.
 and Anne his Wife,
 Anno Dom. 1750.
 Fled from Scenes of Guilt and Misery,
 Without partaking of them;
 And their Bodies sleep in this Monument,
 United by mutual Tenderness.
 Their sympathizing Souls, impatient of Separation,
 And eager to rejoin their kindred Angels,
 With a Smile took Leave of their weeping Parents here,
 And together ascended to their immortal
 Sire above,
 To sit at his Right Hand,
 To be cherish'd in his paternal Bosom,
 To enjoy ineffable Happiness,
 And part no more!
 These Reflections, inspired by Heaven,
 Have taught their, otherwise inconsolable,
 Parents to dry up their Tears,
 And yield a perfect Resignation to the
 Divine Will,
 Insomuch that they congratulate the dear deceas'd
 On their timely Departure,
 And mourn only for the Living!

In the middle of the uppermost Part of the Tombstone is placed an Urn. with a Flame ascending: on the Side whereof. the Boy stands. with a Scroll in one Hand. containing this Motto. *In Caelo Quies*: on the other. the Girl. with a like Scroll. with this Motto. *Angeli sumus*: both habited like Angels. with Wings at their Backs.¹⁰¹

The emphasis here is on unity rather than loss -- the unity of the brother and sister who remain together in death and their unity with the angels. the unity of the mother and father joined in life. and the unity of all with God. The insistence on unity serves to neutralize. or at least ameliorate. the separation at the heart of the poem -- that of the dead from the living. However. epitaphs for children do not always mention parents or their grief at all. but may commemorate the child himself in more traditional epitaphic terms:

*To the MEMORY of Master****. who died of a lingering Illness. aged Eleven.*

HENCEFORTH be every tender Tear suppress.
Or let us weep for Joy. that he is blest:
From Grief to Bliss. from Earth to Heav'n remov'd.
His Mem'ry honour'd. as his Life belov'd.

That Heart o'er which no Evil e'er had Pow'r!
That Disposition. Sickness could not sour!
That Sense. so oft to riper Years deny'd!
That Patience. Hero's might have own'd with Pride!
His painful Race undauntedly he ran.
And on the Eleventh Winter died a MAN.¹⁰²

Scodel remarks on the ways in which the eighteenth-century cult of feeling toward the poor found expression in epitaphs commemorating their deaths. but in very different ways from those commemorating the socially notable. As epitaphs for the latter "increasingly consisted of personal laments for irreplaceable individuals and extended pleas for the sympathetic response of strangers. [epitaphs for the poor] redeployed brief. impersonal panegyric rhetoric in order to commemorate the simple. generic virtues of the lowly. The humble thus became vehicles for affirming supposedly common. uncontested social values. Because of the crucial ideological function. epitaphs upon the lowly were widely published and quickly became highly conventional."¹⁰³ The epitaphic commemoration of the poor in women's magazines was sometimes so stylized that the deceased was not even named. which might indicate either the fictionality of the epitaph or the depersonalization of the individual poor described by Scodel. In other cases. however. epitaphs recall an ordinary life that was remarkable in some way. as was the case of Henry Jenkins:

An EPITAPH on Henry Jenkins on a Monument erected for him, by Subscription, at Bolton, on the River Swale, Yorkshire, who, in the last Century of his Life, was a Fisherman, but towards the latter End of his Days he begged. He had sworn to 140 Years Memory at York Assizes, and frequently swam Rivers after he was 100.

Blush not MARBLE!
To rescue from Oblivion the Memory of
HENRY JENKINS:
A person obscure in Birth:
But of a Life truly memorable:
For, he was enriched with the Goods of Nature,
If not of Fortune:
And happy in the Duration.
If not Variety of his Enjoyments:
And, tho' the partial World
Despised and disregarded his low and humble State,
The equal Eye of Providence beheld and blessed it
With a Patriarch's Health, and Length of Days:
To each mistaken Man, these Blessings
Were entail'd on Temperance,
A Life of Labour, and a Mind at Ease.
He liv'd to the amazing Age of 169,
Was interr'd here *December 6, 1670*:
And had this Justice done to his Memory 1743.¹⁰⁴

Here, the attribution of socially valuable virtues -- temperance, labour, contentment -- combines with the critique of worldly wealth that was traditionally associated with death.¹⁰⁵ While Jenkins' epitaph illustrates Scodel's point that the poor became the repository for traditional values that were being sidestepped by a progressive, ambitious middle-class, in this case, the epitaph is also particularized because Jenkins is not, finally, remembered for his virtues, but for his extreme old age. The paternalism that frames the epitaph is nevertheless apparent in such phrases as "rescued from oblivion" and "justice done to his memory," as well as in the fact that of those instrumental in erecting the monument few could have known Jenkins personally. Significantly, in other instances, epitaphs commemorating the lowly reinscribe their social inferiority and propensity to vice in conventional ways:

EPITAPH *on a GIN-DRINKER.*

HALF burnt alive, beneath this Dunghill lies

A Wretch, whose Memory the Sage despise.
 Her Brain all Tumult; ragged her Attire:
 The Sport of Boys when wallowing in the Mire.
 Life did, to her, as a wild Tempest seem:
 And Death, as sinking to a horrid Dream.
 Hence learn, ye Brutes, who reel in human Shape,
 To you, superior is the grinning Ape:
 For Nature's wise Impulses he'll pursue.
 Whilst each dread Start of Frenzy govern you.¹⁰⁶

Scodel comments that, during the eighteenth century, those who wrote epitaphs for loved ones drew on the formulaic epitaphs that appeared in print, and that this imitation had a "naturalizing" effect on ways of expressing sentiments toward the dead.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, at times, published epitaphs seemed to be so self-consciously literary as to preclude commemoration of any actual person:

EPITAPH on a young Gentleman who died for Love.

FREE from this Dream of Life, this Maze of Care,
 Here rests the Lover and the Friend sincere.
 Alive respected, lov'd by all but one,
 To him the same as tho' belov'd by none.
 This dearer one by cruel Slander strove
 To wrong his Fame, as she had wrong'd his Love.
 From her, unkind Reproaches wounded more
 Than all the giddy Turns of Chance before.
 Those Arrows piercing in a well-known Part,
 Fresh Wounds inflicted on a breaking Heart.
 Death saw what Love, his faithful Slave, had done.
 And kindly finish'd what the Boy begun.¹⁰⁸

The commemorative nature of this epitaph is limited by the narrative mode that encourages the response of the reader. Indeed, none of the "players" in this "story" are significant except as sentimental stereotypes whose conventional actions provoke conventional response: censure for the hard-hearted young woman and sympathy for the broken-hearted young man.¹⁰⁹

Occasionally, epitaphs were not only commemorative of individuals, but also expressive of their, or others', political opinions:

*An Inscription on the Tomb-stone of one MARGARET SCOTT, who died at Dalkeith,
 Feb. 9, 1738.*

STOP, passenger, until my life you've read,
 The living may get knowledge by the dead:
 Five times five years I liv'd a virgin life,
 Ten times five years I was a virtuous wife,
 Ten times five years I liv'd a widow chaste,
 Now tired of this mortal world I rest:
 I from my cradle to my grave have seen

Eight mighty Kings of Scotland and a Queen.
 Four times five wars the Commonwealth I saw.
 Four times the subjects rose against the law.
 Twice did I see old prelacy pull'd down.
 And twice the cloak was humbled by the gown.
 An end of Stuart's race I saw, no more!
 I saw my country sold for English ore.
 Such desolations in my time have been.
 I have an end of all perfection seen.¹¹⁰

Epitaphs that were satirical or humorous might serve a variety of purposes. A satirical epitaph attributed to Alexander Pope and Dr. Arbuthnot excoriates Colonel Francis Charteris, capitally convicted of raping his servant maid but pardoned by the King.¹¹¹ The Colonel, "being possessed of 10,000 Pounds a Year" and "having done, every Day of his Life, Something worthy of a Gibbet," was nevertheless of some use to humanity as a negative example:

Thing [sic] not, indignant Reader,
 His Life useless to Mankind.
 PROVIDENCE
 Favoured, or rather connived at,
 His execrable Designs,
 That he might remain,
 To this and future Ages,
 A conspicuous Proof and Example
 Of how small Estimation
Exorbitant Wealth is held in the Sight
 Of the ALMIGHTY,
 By his bestowing it on
 The most unworthy
 Of all the Descendants
 Of *Adam*.¹¹²

The deaths of misers, unscrupulous lawyers, mismatched married couples, and women were favourite subjects of humorous epitaphs. Some were relatively harmless:

An EPITAPH on an old Pye-wife near DURHAM.

HERE into Dust
 The mould'ring Crust
 Of old *Nell Dickeson's* shoven:
 She knew well the Arts
 Of Pyes, Custards and Tarts,
 And all the Skill of the Oven.

 When she'd liv'd long enough,
 She made her last Puff:
 A Puff by her Husband much prais'd.
 Now, here she doth lye

To make a Dirt Pye.
In hopes that her Crust may be rais'd.¹¹³

But others invoked and perpetuated traditional misogynist notions of female changeability and sexuality, as illustrated by the two epitaphs below:

An EPITAPH.

THE Body which within this Earth is laid,
Twice six Weeks knew a Wife, a Saint, a Maid,
Fair Maid, chaste Wife, pure Saint; yet 'tis not strange,
She was a Woman, therefore pleas'd to change:
And now she's dead, some Woman doth remain,
For still she hopes once to be chang'd again.¹¹⁴

EPITAPH on an OLD MAID.

HERE lies the Body of Martha Dias,
Always noisy, and not very pious:
Who liv'd to the Age of threescore Years and ten:
And then gave to the Worms what she refus'd to Men.¹¹⁵

Epitaphs on animals also appear in women's magazines. Scodel suggests that epitaphs on animals in the last half of the eighteenth century were an expression of the same fellow feeling that led people of means to direct sentimental and sympathetic attention toward the deceased poor. He also suggests that the epitaphs and monuments that gentlemen produced for their dogs were indicators of status: "Erecting elegant monuments to their dogs on their estates, gentlemen could simultaneously display their wealth and their sensitive, if often self-consciously and comically exaggerated, appreciation of lowly creatures."¹¹⁶ Yet, such epitaphs must have held some other appeal for readers of the magazines, for there, epitaphs to animals occur outside a specific social context. In the women's magazines, epitaphs to animals are frequently humorous, often involving word play, as in the epitaph on Thomas Peacock, who, at the end of a lengthy commemoration, turns out to be a peacock in fact and not in name only.¹¹⁷ Interestingly, Thomas Peacock's mid-century epitaph is a mock-didactic effort that commemorates the deceased's exceptional beauty, which seems not, in the end, to render him either memorable or lamentable. In a similar epitaph on a

bird, which appears at the very end of the century, mock-sentimentality is incongruously combined with the rhetoric of rights and freedoms:

EPITAPH ON A BIRD.

Here lieth,
aged three months and four days,
the body of
RICHARD ACANTHUS,
a young person of unblemished character.
He was taken, in his callow infancy, from the wing
of a tender parent,
by the rough and pitiless hand of a two-legged animal
without feathers.
Though born with the most aspiring disposition and unbounded
love of freedom,
he was closely confined in a grated prison,
and scarcely permitted to view those fields,
to the possession of which he had an undoubted charter.
Deeply sensible of this infringement of
his natural and unalienable rights,
he was often heard to petition for redress,
not with rude and violent clamours,
but in the most plaintive notes of harmonious sorrow!
At length, tired with fruitless efforts to escape,
his indignant soul
burst the prison which his body could not,
and left a lifeless heap of beautiful feathers.
Reader!
if suffering innocence can hope for retribution,
deny not to the shade of this
unfortunate captive,
the humble, though uncertain, hope of animating
some happier form:
or, trying his new-fledged pinions
in some happy elysium, beyond the reach of
MAN,
the tyrant of this lower world!¹¹⁸

While epitaphs on animals in the magazines might be observed to have class connotations, it is interesting that they are often associated with young girls, and these often appear not to be ironic but sincere in their commemoration. Whether the epitaph concerns a young girl's pet, or a young girl (allegedly) writes the epitaph, and whether the epitaph is serious or humorous in tone, status

implications are subordinate to expressions of sentiment toward the animals. The "EPITAPH on Miss Barlow's Dog," for example, seems to reflect some of the qualities of his mistress:

HEre *Tyger* lies, whose fruitless Name express'd,
Fell rage and savage Fierceness in his Breast:
But whose polite Behaviour, Figure small,
And Temper always sweet, delighted all.¹¹⁹

On the other hand, the *EPITAPH on a Lady's Lap-Dog* is ironic, contradictorily satirizing and commemorating traditional views of women, both favourable and unfavourable.

Reader, if thou cans't read at all, thou'lt find,
Here lies the fairest of the speechless kind:
Descended from an antient noble race,
Of ladies lap-dogs in their ladies grace.
Miss *Abigail*, (that was the lady's name)
From nature's hand receiv'd a comely frame:
Long ears, bright eyes, a short and dimpled nose,
A robe of ermin, spotted silken hose,
With all that beauty on a dog bestows,
Her acting principle think what you please on,
At least 'twas next to, ----if it was not---reason,
Whether her soul belong'd to man or beast,
Let others with Pythagoras contest:
This I'll affirm: were all brutes like her,
To most that talk, the silent I'd prefer.
Was she, because she never spoke, a brute?
How many wou'd appear less such, if mute!
Brute as she was: her actions yet were such,
As to most men must be a warm reproach,
No trust she e're betray'd, no friend forgot:
Nor fawn'd on persons when she lik'd 'em not,
Choice made her live twelve moons twice told, a maid:
Obedience made her change her state and wed,
Then *Phoenix* - like she yields her latest breath,
To make way for her second self by death,
Who but must weep the loss of *Abigail*,
That for her species-sake thus greatly fell?¹²⁰

Whether or not the epitaphs published in the magazines existed on actual tombstones, their identification as epitaphs inevitably recalls death. The epitaphs in women's magazines are generically consistent and serve a range of conventional functions. However, apart from their literary value, the occurrence of epitaphs in the popular press also reinforces the association between print and permanence. Their frequent appearance may also be an attempt to address anxiety about death through the new popular print media, ameliorating the inevitability of death through the didactic, sentimental, humourous, and ironic modes available.

Mourning Behaviour in *The Female Tatler*

Another aspect of death that altered significantly in the eighteenth century concerns the public response to death, particularly in terms of mourning behaviour. All societies that believe in an afterlife develop formal or semi-formal rites of mourning as "a way of signalling the assumption of a role which required correlative behaviour from others in the process of restructuring social roles made necessary by death."¹²¹ In seventeenth-century England, such signals were subdued: prolonged or excessive expressions of grief were frowned upon, because it was believed that the dead had gone to a better place. Moreover, Anne Laurence suggests, the relative absence of grief for dead spouses or children in the autobiographical writing of the period might be attributed to "the conviction that any expression of missing them was to desire something that now properly belonged to God."¹²² Resignation and lingering affection, not distraction or bitterness, were appropriate expressions of grief.¹²³ Excessive grief could also be dangerous in itself, as grief was regarded as potentially fatal and was officially recognized in parish registers as a cause of death: it was also widely believed that prolonged grief could lead to madness.¹²⁴ Moreover, if feeling grief was suspect in the seventeenth century, public displays of grief were censurable. "The whole idea of mourning dress was anathema to those of more Puritanical belief and a lively debate was waged on the subject. One principle line of argument was the insincerity of wearing mourning," because mourning dress might hide a heart more glad than sorrowful or provoke the living to even greater grief.¹²⁵

Designated periods of mourning with fixed rules of dress had long been associated with aristocratic funerals, where the College of Arms oversaw the implementation of formal bereavement. In the eighteenth century, the observance of a period of mourning gradually gained widespread acceptance throughout society, as did the observance of a period of second mourning, the interim space between full mourning and the resumption of ordinary dress.¹²⁶ The downward spread of formal mourning, as well as the adoption by the middle classes of formal public mourning dress for monarchs, were matters for disparagement by those in the upper ranks, and were often satirized.

"Such complaints were, however, ineffectual and by the end of the eighteenth century the middle class seems to have adopted modes of mourning previously restricted to the aristocracy. This was not only a consequence of pressure on social mores, but also a reflection of changing patterns of trade and new technology."¹²⁷

For the middle classes themselves, the spread of mourning behaviours had implications that extended beyond mere aping of the rich.¹²⁸ Mourning behaviours and dress might serve particularly to signify a family's status and wealth, but more generally they also might signify the changing relationship between individuals and society and the privatization of the family with regard to the dead:

The use of mourning at a funeral served to single out visually the wearers from the rest of the guests, giving an indication of who were considered to be the most important participants in the ritual. The emphasis placed on the immediate kin of the deceased, through the wearing of mourning, was a reflection of the growing importance attached to close blood relations, to the exclusion of the wider social group. It was an acknowledgment that their grief was different from and by implication unsharable by the other guests. It can be seen as the initial stage of a process which was to lead eventually to the nuclear family carrying the full weight of bereavement alone, with little or no support from the surrounding community who may, indeed, positively and actively shun them.¹²⁹

In this formulation, the deceased is clearly of secondary importance.

In the magazines, mourning dress for the upper classes was carefully delineated. When Frederick Lewis, Prince of Wales, died suddenly of a ruptured lung, *The Ladies Magazine* printed explicit directions for correct mourning dress for both men and women of the court, and for both deep and second mourning, whose lengths were specified.¹³⁰ A reminder that the period of second mourning was to begin was reprinted at the appropriate time, with a reminder of appropriate dress.¹³¹ However, the magazines' treatment of mourning and mourning behaviours for middle-class women was less direct and less categorical.¹³² Analysis of mourning behaviours for widows in *The Female Tatler* (1709 - 10) reveals the subtleties, complexities, and dangers that mourning presented to middle-class women, and the part that women's magazines could play in helping readers find their way through the maze.

In its biological absoluteness and inevitability, death appears an analogue to culturally prescribed and stringently enforced codes of female conduct. Only an intricate and comprehensive

understanding of the double standard as it was encoded in the gendered concept of honour could ensure that a woman might take advantage of what freedoms were available to her. Likewise, while death itself was non-negotiable, the rules governing the practices and attitudes surrounding death could be learned and, once learned, manipulated to a woman's private ends. Only a thorough knowledge of the legal and social consequences of widowhood, for instance, made it possible for a widow to avoid pitfalls and to reap benefits that ignorance or partial knowledge of the state would make inaccessible. Through its manipulation of the subject in various satirical, monitory, and factual modes, *The Female Tatler* thus maps out not the territory of death, but of life for women of the early eighteenth century. The ambivalence that characterizes the discourse indicates not the magazine's lack of focus or direction, but its commitment to the effective education of its female readers. However, as a guide to female mourning behaviour, *The Female Tatler* is neither direct nor categorical. Rather, it presents a view of female mourning that, while contradictory and confusing in certain regards, offers guidelines that might help women readers negotiate the terrain of mourning.

In several anecdotes, the death of a husband operates narratively to signal great change in the lives of surviving women. A woman may react to widowhood with a new sense of freedom and independence or, conversely, with grief, either feigned or genuine. At fifteen, the lovely Clarissa is married off to the wealthy septuagenarian Senioro, notwithstanding her pre-existing secret engagement to Cynthio. After years of keeping her a virtual prisoner in the house, the jealous Senioro wrongly suspects Clarissa of infidelity, but before he can carry out his plan to murder her for her "crime," he himself dies. "But tho' she had been so intolerably us'd and abus'd, yet such was her Discretion, and she so tender of her Reputation, that she was seen all in Tears at his Funeral, and accompany'd the Corps to the Grave with as much Solemnity, as if he had been the most loving Creature in the World."¹³³ Despite her exemplary early behaviour as a widow, however, Clarissa does not reward the faithful Cynthio with her hand. Instead, perhaps as a result of her unaccustomed independence, she banishes him with a declaration of her intent to remain single, a move that she immediately regrets. The final communication she receives from him is an apparent suicide note. Her regret for Cynthio notwithstanding, soon after the period of mourning for Senioro has expired, she marries a debauched rake who humiliates her sexually and ruins her financially.

Abandoned by friends and relations whose counsel she has rejected, Clarissa is left wiser, poorer, thoroughly miserable, and very obviously the mistress of her own misfortune.

Clarissa's widowhood is first portrayed in the positive light of release from an enforced marriage, escape from her own unwarranted murder, and opportunity to marry the man she really loves. Clarissa's mismanagement of widowhood's positive possibilities is clearly the result of her own folly. Although her folly may be reasonably attributed to her extreme youth and an education that did not emphasize the importance of making thoughtfully considered judgments, *The Female Tatler* focuses not on these ameliorating circumstances that are outside Clarissa's control, but on her failure to manage properly her new independence.

A more lighthearted variation on the representation of death as the event that frees a woman from the confines of wifehood and leads to the independence of widowhood is reflected in *The Female Tatler's* announcement on behalf of Lady Butterfield who, "having recently bury'd her Husband, and being apprehensive that this Winter may prove as sharp as the last, does now Challenge any Man 20 Years Younger, but not a Day Older, to be her Bed-fellow in an honourable way. *Note.* This is at her own Request."¹³⁴ Like Clarissa's initial propriety, the authority of Lady Butterfield's rank and wealth is negated by the implication that independence does not necessarily lead to wisdom, but that, left to her own devices, the widow is very likely to make choices that are either wrong or ridiculous.

A comparison of these anecdotes reveals the didactic and generic subtlety with which *The Female Tatler* operates. Clarissa has been privately contracted to Seniors by her parents and is thereby deprived of the experience of making early choices, inexperience that frames for her a widowhood that ends in her ruin. Her story seems to speak directly as a monitory narrative to the mothers and daughters among *The Female Tatler's* readers. On the other hand, "Lady Butterfield" is a concupiscent wealthy older widow at whose representation in a satiric false advertisement readers are encouraged to laugh. Such representations not only obviously suggest what is and is not permissible behaviour for widows, but also tacitly grant Clarissa and Lady Butterfield very different degrees of sexual power. Widows' abuse of such power is an object of scorn when, in over-acting their grief, they "lull their Sorrows in a new Lover's Bosom, and Marry e're the Tomb be finish'd:

that is to witness the Virtues of the Deceas'd, and how he Loved, and how he was belov'd by his Mourning Pious Relict, who liv'd Ten Weeks a Widow, even in the Bloom of Fifty: strange Proof of Coldness, or of Self-denial." This disdainful speaker continues:

Peace to the hollow'd Ashes of the Dead: 'tis time they Rest, when the Living outvie their Claim to Infamy: surely the worst Dress a Bride can appear in is a Weed, and tho' she may lay aside the Habit, she cannot so easily quit that Formality she has assum'd in her Manners, to render it of a piece with her Appearance. To Sigh at Musick, and Groan inwardly when any ask a Question relating to the Deceas'd: to shake her Head at Scandal, as if it was dislik'd, when she is ready to Swoon for want of Opportunity to express her Sentiments on so proper and belov'd an Occasson [sic]: yet shou'd the new Lord of all her wishes Die, she wou'd suffer this and as much more over again, for the next Man wou'd lift her to a Sight of the Chair.¹³⁵

The behaviour of widows is monitored, then, not only through the medium of sexual behaviour, but through various correct and incorrect observations of mourning and demonstrations of grief.

In a third story, the lives of a woman and her daughters have been impoverished by her husband, an unscrupulous apothecary so miserly he chose to languish in prison for years and finally die there, rather than pay his debts. The account leaves no room for the reader's regret at the apothecary's passing, but once again, the positive possibilities for his widow are negated by her lack of judgment. Her error lies neither in aggressive sexuality nor in inexperience, as in the previously cited instances, but in a transgression of taste, a desire to flaunt her newly acquired wealth through a lavish equipage. *The Female Tatler* remarks, "'tis true the baffl'd World may rail a little, but the rattling [sic] of the Charriot wheels drowns the disagreeable Noise, and those that keep Coaches despise the petty Reflections of Creatures that walk a foot."¹³⁶ As a rich widow, the woman becomes emblematic of ostentatious town affluence: a suitor is received at her home "with all the Ceremony of City Affectation."¹³⁷ Whether the "baffl'd World" is railing at the widow's obvious lack of grief or even the pretense of grief, or at her middling-class "aping" of upper-class affluence, or at her plain bad taste, *The Female Tatler* strikes a double blow in this story -- against the ability of a woman to manage her new independence with dignity and taste, and against the transgression of class boundaries, one of the magazine's favourite targets.

Public demonstrations of grief are relative. The widow who remarks her widowhood by a show of material wealth is censured for the absence of visible grief, for her ostentatious taste, for her

disregard of class boundaries, and, ultimately, for being too public. But widows were also closely observed for their personal behaviour. In one of Mrs. Crackenthorpe's¹³⁸ drawing room discussions, a woman whose sad story is interrupted by her own outburst of tears is likened to a widow as she "[s]at, pull'd out her Handkerchief, and wept and sobb'd like a cunning Widow at the Grave of her Husband, whom she had wish'd there Seven Years before."¹³⁹ Here, as in Clarissa's story, public demonstration of grief serves a specific formal, almost ritual, social function, one that is governed and judged by appearance before sincerity. Clarissa's concern for her reputation overrides her justifiable wish to express public relief at her release from an abusive marriage, and the widow characterized in Mrs. Crackenthorpe's parlor is "cunning" in concealing in the present instance a wish that she has formerly made public. If such insincere behaviour smacks of personal hypocrisy, it is by no means confined to it. The account of Montelion and Nigrella confirms that the code of behaviour for grieving widows is anything but arbitrary.

Though not married, Montelion and Nigrella are betrothed lovers whom public sentiment unanimously declares to be ideally suited for each other. They are separated when Montelion goes off to war. When her lover is reported slain in battle, Nigrella receives the news with unusual composure and without any outward expression of her grief. Instead, presenting to the world a Stoic appearance that in a man would be commendable, she conducts her life as if nothing has happened. Her seeming indifference causes an immediate scandal, but a more serious consequence of her behaviour occurs when the report proves false and Montelion returns alive and well. When he receives exaggerated accounts of Nigrella's indifference to his reported death, he refuses to see her. Taken by itself, the story might raise questions about Montelion's stubborn and ongoing refusal to see Nigrella, a decision that at once renders communication impossible and condemns her without a hearing. However, the cautionary poem that follows the anecdote confirms Nigrella's culpability and the absolute need for bereaved women to exhibit their grief in very public ways:

Had but the Fair *Nigrella* Wept,
 As all the *Fair* can do,
 And something of *Decorum* kept,
 Or *Mourn'd* but though in *Shew*,
 She of *Montelion's* Charms possess'd,
 Her Charms might now employ,
 In heaving of a Peaceful Breast,
 To show her *real* Joy.

But she that has no Sorrow shewn.
For so much Virtue Slain:
'Stead of his Loss now mourns her *own*.
With *Tears* no Nymph can Feign.

Ah! Fairest, had those Tears been shed.
That you could him *Survive*.
That Heart of Yours had never bled.
Or Wept for him *alive*.¹⁴⁰

From the point of view of society, Nigrella would have done better to feign a grief she did not feel, than to keep private her real grief over the loss of Montelion. However, the necessity for the appearance of grief does not exempt such demonstrations from ridicule or moral criticism. In a later number of *The Female Tatler*, a young woman's encomiums on the extraordinary virtue of Portia are interrupted by "a Masculine Lady, who...said, never trust to Widows or the Grief they shew for their Husband's Death, for when they are in the greatest earnest, their Tears are not over Virtuous: you don't know what they cry for, *Madam*, you are a Maid, I am Married to my Fifth Husband, and know what belongs to them."¹⁴¹ Whether the antecedent of "them" is Tears or Husbands, the speaker's suggestion that there is a discrepancy between appearance and reality seems to apply to widows universally.

The trope of the relieved widow is balanced by the trope of the virtuous widow, represented by one of the company in the drawing room. "...a Lady in deep Mourning, who having wiped off some Tears, told us.... that the Affection due an Husband, never could be shewn in every Respect as long as both were Alive, if I designed to give any Patterns of so bright a Virtue, I ought to look for them among the Widows."¹⁴² The most extreme example of the virtuous widow appears in an anecdote of a loving wife whose husband dies while on a visit to her relatives. Unaware of his death, her fond anticipation of his return is revealed in her preparations for his homecoming: she attires herself in her wedding dress and organizes a dinner for their neighbours. This behaviour is rendered macabre when her husband's body arrives in a hearse surrounded by her mourning relatives -- whereupon the wife shrieks and drops dead. All efforts to revive her fail, and the two are buried together in one coffin.¹⁴³ This ultimate expression of grief marks a transition point in

historical understandings of bereavement, at once drawing on the seventeenth-century belief that grief could cause death, and anticipating later eighteenth-century representations of death as the result of excessive sensibility. Instant death is, co-incidentally, the only proof of grief that *The Female Tatler* seems to consider to be irrefutable or beyond comment.

Widowhood and mourning in *The Female Tatler* also become vehicles by whose means the "aping" of the upper classes by the lower and middling classes is achieved. "There was a widespread recognition that the social mobility which seemed such a feature of eighteenth-century England had to do with a consuming desire to imitate one's betters. 'Vanity', as a critical commentator [in *London Magazine*] put it, 'has possessed itself of all ranks of people; their schemes of life are not to be really happy, free from want, poverty and oppression; but how to mingle every man with the class that is superior to him, and how to support a gay and splendid appearance, utterly inconsistent with their station and circumstances.'"144 If mourning carried to extremes among the upper classes is ridiculous, as indicated by Mrs. Crackenthorpe's reference to a lady who refuses to receive company, "having lately buried her Squirrel,"145 when observed in the lower classes, it is appalling:

...what seems most preposterous is, that when any *Foreigner of Note, Count Potoski, or Count Wisnowiski Dies, every Sue Frowzy in Gutter-Lane, Blow-bladder Street, and Panniers Alley, is new [sic] pressing her black Cloth, hemming her Head, and making herself compleatly dismal, when her Husband has n't Sense enough to tell her, whether the Person deceased lived in Europe, Asia, Africa, or America. These Creatures give just Provocation for their Husbands to Quarrel with them; for what can be more Monstrous than to hear Mercers and Lace Men lament a Prospect of Mourning, when their Wives hurry into it the first Sunday with the Court; the Noise of which spreading it self [sic] through the Country, Mrs. Cecily and Mrs. Winifred Glebe, that never read a Gazette, must have their Norwich Stuffs too, and their Shammy Gloves, tho' it be only to black their Faces with them; nay, I expect in time to see the Sailor's Wives at Wapping in their Penitentials, as well as the Orange Women at the Play-house, so that Trade dies for a Twelvemonth, thro' the Fantastick Pride of the Middle sort of People, who by aiming at Things so infinitely above 'em, breed Misfortunes that crush 'em into Oblivion, like Younger Brothers that live upon the Principal, flutter about Town for a Twelvemonth, and are never heard of more. 'Tis from the difference of Habit, that we guess at the several Orders and Degrees of Mankind, and till Conversation acquaints us with their Understandings, we respect 'em according to their Garb, and I take Mourning for Foreign Kings, to be a Habit as peculiar to the Court, as Robes are to those in Publick Professions, and what inferior Classes ought not to vie with....But these Matters are become so great a Jest, that but last Week a certain fine Lady, having the Misfortune to be depriv'd of Belinda, one of her favourite Lap-Dogs, made a Mock-Funeral, and the other Five were put into a sort of Mourning her.146*

The association of mourning customs with class and commerce is repeated by a gentlewoman who laments the effect of prolonged periods of mourning on her habits of dress: "She fetch'd a deep sigh, and told us, it was a burning shame, that such a handsome wear should be so suddenly altogether neglected: then complaining, that those everlasting Mournings spoil'd all manner of Trades, she said, no body now a days minded the Poor: most of the Ribbond Weavers were out of Employ, and Thousands of them ready to Starve."¹⁴⁷ Managing at once to satirize mourning behaviour and the fashionable world, as well as the middling classes (whom it intended to instruct about the folly of impropriety), *The Female Tatler* reveals that the public practices surrounding death had already been commodified as well as stylized.

Predictably, the periodical paid scant attention to the disadvantaged widow, though Bridget Hill suggests that financial constraint, often serious, was the norm for women whose husbands died. Widows who were left comfortable enough to enjoy the social and financial independence represented by *The Female Tatler* were very much in the minority, according to Hill.¹⁴⁸ The financial obstacles facing widows were compounded by increasing restrictions on opportunities for female employment as male professionals gained ascendance in traditional female preserves.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, some businesses and trades were successfully taken over by widows, as illustrated in a recurring advertisement in *The Female Tatler*, placed by "Margaret Searle, Wife to the late Sam Searl [sic], Famous for Relieving and Curing Deafness." The advertisement, which begins and ends with the death of her husband, states that she or her daughter will apply the secret therapy and draws not only on the authority of the dead husband, but also, through the use of the term "Survivors" to describe herself and her daughter, on the sympathy due to widows and orphans.

By 1710, the widow had long been represented as an unenviable conflation of the sexual predator stalking younger men, the independent woman impervious to traditional male authority, and the fool vain enough to relinquish control of her jointure. While *The Female Tatler* does little to challenge such representation, it does complicate it through the trope of the widow as a private/public figure, defined by but released from the control of patriarchal structures. Freed from the control of patriarchal structures, the widow possesses opportunities denied to other women. Defined by the

same structures. she must consider carefully what she will do with her independence. The freedom is real. but so are the consequences of availing herself of it.

On this issue, *The Female Tatler* is not ambiguous. Though throughout its existence, the periodical uncompromisingly insists on the equal value of female and male experience, intelligence, and morality, readers did not find in its pages the slightest suggestion that the widow should assume her legally sanctioned independence. Aimed at young to middle-aged female readers and liberal-minded male readers, *The Female Tatler* is dedicated to maintaining the status quo. According to *The Female Tatler*, the choices a widow makes *must* place her, in fact and in spirit, well within codes of gender and class behaviour that already exist.

Yet, *The Female Tatler's* complex treatment of the grieving widow precludes any simple reading of the periodical as a conduct book or a scandal sheet or as an uncomplicated endorsement of prevailing stereotypes. Perhaps it should be regarded as a survival manual, which, if properly read, might enable readers to negotiate a world that was for women - and widows - hostile and contradictory. *The Female Tatler's* ambivalence regarding widows suggests that they may neither grieve in certain ways if they feel grief nor fail to grieve if they do not. In their public expressions of grief, widows must walk a fine line between signaling grief and displaying it in histrionic ways that are self-advertising. And in their widowhood, they are subjected to continual scrutiny and judged by an indeterminate and shifting set of standards that may call down ridicule or censure - or both - upon the heads of the wary and unwary alike. Content with neither the description of proper mourning behaviour nor the exposure of its too-often superficial enactment, *The Female Tatler* conveys to its readers the treacherous nature of the territory. Such knowledge, the periodical suggests, is in itself useful.

NOTES TO CHAPTER THREE

- 1 Nigel Llewellyn. *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual c. 1500 - c. 1800* (London: Reaktion Books, 1991), p. 9.
- 2 Although the biological processes of death never change, perceptions of those processes are culturally determined and historically specific. The discourse of apparent death arose in part because the biological process of death was in the eighteenth century incompletely and inadequately understood. See Sean Quinlan, "Apparent Death in Eighteenth-Century France and England," *French History* 9 (1995), p. 27.
- 3 Philippe Ariès. *The Hour of Our Death*, trans. Helen Weaver (New York: Vintage-Random House, 1981), p. 29.
- 4 Philippe Ariès. *Western Attitudes toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present*, trans. Patricia M. Ranum (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974), p. 51. Ariès has categorized attitudes toward death as *et moriemur* (and we shall all die) before the Middle Ages; *la mort de soi* (one's own death) from the Middle Ages to the seventeenth century; *la mort de toi* (death of the other) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; and death denied in the twentieth century (pp. 55-56). While there are some difficulties with details of his historicization, these categories are useful as a general guide. Ariès' reference to individual awareness of death in the Middle Ages is not to be confused with Gittings' argument that changes in eighteenth-century attitudes toward death were bound up with the rise of the individual, a statement that is primarily contextualized within coterminous social, political, and economic events.
- 5 Llewellyn, p. 16.
- 6 Llewellyn, p. 10.
- 7 Clare Gittings. *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London: Croom Helm, 1984), pp. 39-40. However, survivors could ensure the dead were remembered: "To balance the traumatic effect of the loss of Purgatory the Protestant churches gradually developed the theory of *memoria*, which stressed the didactic potential of the lives and deaths of the virtuous. To illustrate this didactic theme images were produced about exemplary 'good' deaths: the innocence or good scholarship of a dead child, the pathos of a dead soldier, the heroism of a death met in a great cause, the sacrifice of a martyr, the tranquillity of an old man dying, the virtue of a good wife dying. In some cases the moment of death itself was thought worth showing" (Llewellyn, p. 28).
- 8 Gittings, p. 46 - 47. Gittings sees this cursory attitude toward the corpse and burial as evidence of increased individualism.
- 9 Gittings, pp. 48-50. Interestingly, Gittings notes that the money spent on the funerals of Puritans with means did not decrease after the Civil War, and in some cases, it increased. She suggests that the considerable polemical writing on the subject had more to do with Puritan rhetoric than Puritan practice (pp. 50-53).
- 10 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvii (June 27 - July 11, 1752), p. 261.
- 11 *The Midwife*, Vol. IV, p. 62 - 64.
- 12 *The Pharos*, Vol. I, viii (December 2, 1786), pp. 74 - 81.
- 13 Both Catholics and Protestants advocated stoicism in the face of death and celebrated "the glories of the good death" (Lucinda McCray Beier, "The Good Death in Seventeenth-Century England" in Ralph Houlbrooke (ed.) *Death, Ritual, and Bereavement*, [London: Routledge, 1989], p. 47).
- 14 Beier, p. 45.
- 15 S.C. Humphreys. "Death and Time" in Humphreys and King (eds.), *Mortality and Immortality*, p. 264.
- 16 Ralph Houlbrooke. "Death, Church, and Family in England Between the Late Fifteenth and the Early Eighteenth Centuries" in Houlbrooke (ed.), p. 27. Houlbrooke raises questions as to whether the notion of the death-bed as the "supreme test of Christian fortitude" was not, as with the Puritan disdain for expenditure of money and ritual for funerals and burials, more a matter of rhetoric than practice. Additionally, Houlbrooke feels that, for the majority of people, "the

weakening or removal of inherited elements of formality in the death-bed scene probably helped to prepare the way for the ultimate triumph of the ideal of the easy death" (p. 40). The easy death, what mid- to late-eighteenth-century doctors hoped to help patients attain, obviously renders the dying person passive; the doctor is the active agent.

17 Beier, p. 51-52.

18 Beier, p. 56.

19 Women were also traditionally associated with death in less complimentary ways. Beth Ann Bassien lists three traditional configurations of women as *memento mori*: sexual experience with women was thought to sap male strength, each occurrence shortening a man's life by one day; women represented lust and temptation to men and were therefore responsible for the damnation of men's souls; and the female body was characterized as rotting putrefaction clothed in an attractive exterior, capable of polluting men's bodies (*Women and Death: Linkages in Western Thought and Literature* [Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984], p. 37).

20 Beier, p. 46.

21 Tony Walter has characterized this process as the "de-feminisation of the power to define and control the management of death, while leaving women with much of the dirty work" ("British sociology and death" in David Clark (ed.) *The Sociology of Death* [Oxford: Blackwell, 1993], p. 277). The undertaking profession is discussed below. The medical profession is considered in Chapter Four.

22 Llewellyn, p. 28. Llewellyn describes how cases of accidental deaths in which the bodies were never recovered were represented by Rowlandson in two late-eighteenth-century watercolours: "In one the artist has concentrated on death by ship-wreck and starvation. The skeleton, stripped of its flesh but not yet of all its ragged costume, suffers the final indignity of losing its brains to the beaks of a flock of scavenging birds -- an allegory of Reason subjected to Nature. In the other, the unfortunate victim is shown against a threatening sky being dragged on his back by one stirrup after an accident in a hill-top gallop. Other bad deaths included suicides--such as Reynold's mock-heroic Dido...deaths in duels or by assassination...or, worst of all, the death of the unbeliever, as imagined by Blake" (p. 35).

23 Beier, p. 57.

24 Beier, p. 60.

25 Roy Porter has summarized this change succinctly: "Back in the seventeenth-century, dying well meant total vigilance, being at every instant prepared to meet your Maker. Death was fearful, courage was essential, and Victory was the prize. Increasingly, such a vision of Death's torments seemed incompatible with a loving and even with a just God, and with humanity towards the dying themselves. Under a benevolent Deity, surely death was not to be feared; it was, after all, only like a sleep. And if like a sleep, surely it could be encountered with all of sleep's serenity" ("Death and the Doctors in Georgian England" in Houlbrooke (ed.), p. 94).

26 However, if people no longer attributed every slight occurrence to the will of God, in the magazines, notions of Providential order continued to be closely associated with death, particularly in the consolatory poetry that was common throughout the century.

27 Porter, "Death and the Doctors" in Houlbrooke, p. 84-85.

28 Roy Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Penguin, 1982), p. 298.

29 An example of this is seen in Addison's account of his childhood reaction to his father's death: The first Sense of Sorrow I ever knew was upon the Death of my Father, at which time I was not quite Five Years of Age; but was rather amazed at what all the House meant, than possessed with a real Understanding why no body was willing to play with me. I remember I went into the Room where his Body lay, and my Mother sat weeping alone by it. I had my Battledore in my Hand and fell abeating the Coffin, and calling Papa; for, I know not how, I had some slight Idea that he was locked up there. My Mother caught me in her Arms, and, transported beyond all Patience of the silent Grief she was before in, she almost smother'd me in her Embrace and told me in a Flood of Tears, Papa could not hear me, and would play with me no more.

for they were going to put him under Ground. whence he could never come to us again. She was a very beautiful Woman, of a noble Spirit. (*The Tatler*, Vol. IV, clxxxi. [June 3 - 6, 1710]).

- 30 Philip Rahtz. "Artefacts of Christian Death" in Humphreys and King (eds.), p.126.
- 31 Gittings, p. 149. Gittings' continuation of this thought has interesting generic implications: "What is perhaps most surprising about this shift towards classicism is the swiftness with which the older, more direct representation of death was completely ousted by the gentler, more sentimental images. This change in style was not simply an alteration in fashion. It also reflected a rapidly growing unease at the whole process of physical decay, and a desire to swathe the reality of decomposition in a romantic aura, masking and denying the actuality of death. Additionally, it meant that on those occasions when, from the later eighteenth century onwards, skeletal imagery was used, for instance in 'gothic' novels, it was intended to arouse shock, disgust and fear, the stock reactions to 'horror' today. This increase in apprehension about bodily death permeated many of the different aspects of the funeral rituals of early modern England; the tombstones of that era bear witness to a major shift in attitudes, which even now continues to shape our response to death." In another place, Gittings discusses the eroticising of death and the dead body, which she cites as another aspect of the gothic and additional evidence to "the failure of eighteenth-century rationalism to tackle successfully the problem of death and render it truly a thing of indifference" (pp. 212-13). Eroticized death is rarely detectable in the magazines.
- 32 "How a man departed this life was a matter of public example" (Porter, *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 170).
- 33 *The Student, or The Oxford and Cambridge Monthly Miscellany*, Vol. II, pp. 85-88.
- 34 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol IV, v (March 3, 1753), p. 69 - 71. The reference in this letter is just one of many examples of allusions to reunion of loved ones after death, a phenomenon Ariès mistakenly locates at the end of the eighteenth century. I found many such references, especially between husbands and wives, in the magazines throughout the century.
- 35 *The Female Mentor*, Vol. III, Conversation 43 (1796), p. 232.
- 36 Formally, the letter is more like a moral apostrophe than a letter, perhaps implying its fictionality.
- 37 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxii (August 25 - September 8, 1750), p. 344.
- 38 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxii (August 25 - September 8, 1750), p. 344.
- 39 Though not expressed in anecdotal form, the vanity and futility of temporal wealth is also criticized in *The Midwife's* essay, "Of Death." "The Time is near, when the Great and the Rich must leave his Land, and his well-built House; and of all the Trees of his Orchards and Woods, nothing shall attend him to his Grave, but Oak for his Coffin and Cypress for his Funeral" (*The Midwife*, Vol. IV [1751], p. 63).
- 40 Such gifts (along with their value) tended to be reported in the magazines when something seemed out of the ordinary. For example, one man left "a considerable Sum in ready Money" to his widow, daughter, and grandchildren, but had left his son £40 "only for Mourning" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 347). In another case, the corpse of a miserly butcher was reported buried in a mahogany coffin. He left his son-in-law over £15,000, and had inscribed on his headstone: *I've often scratch'd where it did not itch./ To live poor for to die rich* (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, x [March 21 - April 4, 1752], p. 160).
- 41 Gittings reminds us that the "powerful healing effects of these acts should not be underestimated: the sharing of food, the presence of certain groups at the funeral and the giving of gifts, all helped to mitigate the consequences of a death within the community. Since more time and money was devoted to these rituals than to the actual burial service, it is reasonable to assert that early modern funerals were rather for the living than for the dead...The communal rituals, although gradually being eroded, helped to diminish the impact of the acute problem posed by death, engendered by the individualistic philosophy which was steadily gaining ground throughout the period" (p. 164).

- 42 Originally, watchers made sure that the bodies of those who had died suddenly or suspiciously were not tampered with before they could be seen by the coroner's jury. They were also on hand in case a corpse suddenly revived, a not infrequent occurrence. More superstitiously, watchers often sat with murder victims, as it was believed that the corpse would bleed in the presence or at the touch of its murderer (Gittings, pp. 108-9).
- 43 Gittings, p. 57.
- 44 Houlbrooke, p. 34.
- 45 Few sermons appeared in eighteenth-century women's magazines, but advertisements for them sometimes did.
- 46 *The Female Mentor* includes a *Conversation On Funeral Rites*, a lengthy anthropological account describing the funeral customs of the ancients, East Indians, and Roman Catholics. The account ends with an encomium on the funeral service of the Church of England and a poem on "The Graves in Glamorganshire" (Vol. III, Conversation 41, 1796), pp. 181 - 211). Though the politics of death are seldom discussed, in one case, *The Lady's Curiosity* was responsible for exposing parish corruption in charging burial and other fees that were contrary to church law (*The Lady's Curiosity, or Weekly Apollo*, No. vii (1752), pp. 109 - 110; No. viii, pp. 124 - 26).
- 47 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, i (November 16 - 30, 1751), p. 15.
- 48 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvi (June 2 - 16, 1750), p. 242.
- 49 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - 18, 1752), p. 175.
- 50 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xx (July 28 - August 11, 1750), p. 316.
- 51 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xi (March 23 - April 6, 1751), pp. 173-75.
- 52 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, iv (December 28 - January 11, 1752), p. 63.
- 53 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol., III, v (January 11 - 25, 1752), p. 66.
- 54 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol II, xxi (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 332.
- 55 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xx (August 8 - 22, 1752), p. 309.
- 56 *The Midwife*, Vol. IV, p. 63 - 64.
- 57 Paul Fritz, "The Undertaking Trade in England: Its Origins and Early Development, 1660 - 1830" *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28:2 (1994-1995), p. 242.
- 58 Fritz, p. 247.
- 59 Gittings, p. 100. The undertaking profession was responsive to the middle class in another way, by satisfying the demand for funeral paraphernalia at a range of costs, which is discussed in more detail in the following section.
- 60 Quoted in Fritz, p. 247.
- 61 *The Midwife*, Vol. I, ii, pp. 49 - 51.
- 62 Porter, "Death and the Doctors," p. 79.
- 63 Richardson's claim seems limited to the fact that the two "professions" were historically coterminous and involved the commodification of the incipient death industry (Ruth Richardson, "Why Was Death So Big in Victorian Britain?" in Houlbrooke, p. 111).
- 64 Gittings, p. 74.
- 65 In Gittings, p. 75.
- 66 "The formalized customs of bereavement, depending as they often did upon the integrity of the corpse and the respect shown to it, were brutally violated by the practice of dissection" (Peter Linebaugh, "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons" in Douglas Hay et al (eds.), p. 117).
- 67 Richardson, *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), p. 93.
- 68 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, i (November 3 - 17, 1750), p. 6.
- 69 Gittings, p. 76.
- 70 Richardson, "Why Was Death," p. 108.

- 71 For a detailed account of the resistance at Tyburn, see Peter Linebaugh. "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons" in Douglas Hay et al (eds.), pp. 65 - 117. An comprehensive account of bodysnatching can be found in Richardson. *Death, Dissection and the Desititute* . Chapters Two and Three.
- 72 Richardson, "Why Was Death." p. 110.
- 73 The poor were particularly vulnerable to graverobbing, because their coffins were cheaply constructed and because they were often buried in common graves (Richardson, "Why Was Death." p. 110).
- 74 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xv (May 19 - June 2, 1750), p. 238.
- 75 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xx (July 27 - August 10, 1751), p. 315. This anecdote may refer to an earlier, similarly comic one in which a hearse and four horses were seized on suspicion of carrying concealed goods. The driver, who was dressed like an undertaker's man, insisted that the coffin held a corpse being taken to London to lie in state. The officers, finding it filled with the contraband they suspected, "conducted it safe to the Custom-house at Shoreham, there to lie in State will they can safely convey it to London" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, viii [February 9 - 23, 1750], p. 126).
- 76 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 12
- 77 According to Sean Quinlan, the discourse of apparent death was not only itself a product of eighteenth-century anxiety about death, but also an expression of how such anxiety might be used in aid of professional interests. The discourse relied on variations of familiar Enlightenment arguments, claiming that the apparently dead were deserving of charity and that the burial of the apparently dead was a senseless waste of life ("Apparent Death in Eighteenth-Century France and England" *French History* 9 [1995], p. 28 - 29).
- 78 Quinlan, pp. 27 - 28.
- 79 Quinlan, pp. 31 - 33.
- 80 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, x (May 12, 1753), p. 160.
- 81 Michael McKeon suggests that in the Restoration, "apparition narratives" asserted the continuing presence of the spiritual in an increasingly materialistic age (pp. 84 - 85). This may also underlie the frequent appearance of ghost stories in the magazines.
- 82 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xx (July 28 - August 11, 1750), p. 317. .
- 83 *The Female Spectator* Vol. II, Book ii, p. 222.
- 84 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. II, ii, pp. 247 - 52.
- 85 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xii (June 9, 1753), pp. 184-85.
- 86 *The Parental Monitor*, Vol. II (1796), p. 131.
- 87 Llewellyn, p. 75.
- 88 Llewellyn, p. 57.
- 89 Beginning in the seventeenth century, ordinary people had markers for graves, but with time the markers became more elaborate (Gittings, p. 144).
- 90 Llewellyn, p. 104.
- 91 Llewellyn, p. 59.
- 92 Houlbrooke, p. 39.
- 93 Nigel Llewellyn has effectively demonstrated that visual representations continued to be important in funerary monuments in the eighteenth century, becoming increasingly sentimental in nature. For example, some engravings depicted the "tragic deaths of wives and mothers in childbed" (121).
- 94 Houlbrooke, p. 40.
- 95 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol III (August 1799), p. 116.
- 96 Although an in-depth analysis of the considerable presence of death-poetry in the magazines lies outside the scope of the present study, it should be noted that poetry was included in most women's magazines of the eighteenth century, and, indeed, whole magazines, such as *The Lady's*

Poetical Magazine, or Beauties of British Poetry (1781 - 82), were devoted to it. Death-poetry ranged in style from classical translations to the most obviously amateur efforts. The appearance of death poetry (including the epitaphs) certainly reflects the period's interest in "grave-yard poetry," but it may also suggest that women poets were active in what has usually been considered an all-male tradition.

97 Joshua Scodel. *The English Poetic Epitaph: Commemoration and Conflict from Jonson to Wordsworth* (Ithaca: Cornell, 1991), p. 4.

98 Scodel credits Pope with effecting changes in epitaphs, as he tried to incorporate conflicting generic functions into the epitaphic form: "Rather than dramatizing the movement from personal grief to public praise, Pope seeks to validate his epitaphic patrons. Though he tries to use his own fame and status as a moral arbiter to link his personal feelings to public values, Pope decisively shifts attention away from the 'social being' of the dead to the feelings of the individual mourner" (p. 9).

99 Scodel, pp. 313 - 14.

100 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xix (Saturday, September 15, 1753), p. 300; *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (November 1799), pp. 382 - 83.

101 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xx (July 28 - August 11, 1750), p. 310 - 11.

102 *The Midwife*, Vol. III, iv, p. 146 - 47.

103 Scodel, p. 353. However, Scodel adds that this ideological function worked two ways: at the same time it commemorated and validated the deceased poor, it also contributed to the literary devaluation of the epitaph as a genre.

104 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. 1, iii (December 2 - 16, 1749), p. 46.

105 Apparently the message of the epitaph was felt to be worth repeating; it appeared again (with slight alterations) in *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iii (December 1 - 15, 1750), p. 42.

106 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, viii (February 9 - 23, 1751), p. 123.

107 Scodel, p. 330.

108 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. 1, xxiv (September 22 - October 6, 1750), p. 379.

109 This stylized dynamic is repeated in a trio of epitaphs for young women that concludes *The Lady's Miscellany*. It seems unlikely that any of these epitaphs (or the one cited above) actually appeared on tombstones, though they may have referred to actual deaths. Rather, the three epitaphs in *The Lady's Miscellany* function together for the benefit of readers. While they may be read as a cumulative *memento mori*, the reader is not so much called upon to meditate her own death as to experience sentimental sympathy with survivors of "someone" close to the reader in age and condition, an association that is implied even if it is not accurate. The afterlife operates almost as an afterthought as readers vicariously share in a husband's or a parent's grief. Even the didactic middle epitaph encourages identification between reader and subject and operates on a sentimental level, more an encomium on female virtue than the commemoration of a dead woman (*The Lady's Miscellany*, (1793), p. 238 - 40).

110 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, viii (Saturday, April 14, 1753), p. 124. This epitaph is also interesting because it illustrates Scodel's point that readers were interpellated through such hailing devices as "stranger," "passenger," and "friend," familiar forms of address that intimated the capability of the reader's sympathetic response (Scodel, p. 316).

111 I have been unable to verify that this epitaph can actually be attributed to Pope; Scodel does not mention it, and it is not included in John Butt's Twickenham edition. Furthermore, it is inconsistent with Scodel's extensive analysis of Pope's epitaphs.

112 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - 18, 1752), p. 168.

113 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, iv (December 28 - January 11, 1752), p. 59.

114 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, vi (January 13 - 25, 1750), p. 94.

115 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvii (November 2 - 16, 1751), p. 424.

116 Scodel, p. 374 - 75.

117 An EPITAPH

Here lieth the Body, and *better Part* of THOMAS PEACOCK:
One, than whom, perhaps, no Mortal was ever endued with
A more rare Beauty and Comliness [sic] of Body:
Of a most admirable Gracefulness in his Appearance.

And Majesty in his Department:
And of so singularly happy and advantageous a Form.
That even Pride itself (so odious in others)
Was so far from being blameworthy in him
That all do allow, it served but to render him
Still more lovely.

And more the Delight of *Mankind*..
Yet, as all Excellencies are seldom found to meet
in the same Person: but such who become
conspicuous by the Possession of one
Perfection, are often as remarkably
wanting in another:

So He
Who could boast such surprising Gracefulness of Form.
Was yet of so very weak Intellects.
That there were few *Men* living, who did not
Greatly surpass him in Understanding:
His whole Measure of Excellency being made up to him
In that single Quality of
Beauty and outward Form:

So that altho' he lived, indeed, greatly admired,
Yet was he but little esteemed or beloved.
And at the last died, hardly at all lamented.

Learn then, O fair Reader,
From this notable Example.
Of how small a Value is the greatest exterior Beauty.
When unaccompanied with inward Worth:
And if indulgent Nature has allotted thee the former,
Do thou industriously strive to adorn it with the latter,
(Which alone can render it and thee truly lovely)
Otherwise be assured thou shalt never gain
The true Love and Esteem of *Men* :

In whose Mouths it shall become a standing Reproach unto thee.

That thou art thyself no better
(As he of whom this is written,
Was in *very Truth* no other) than

A GAUDY PEACOCK. (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I. xvi (June 2 - 16, 1750), p. 252)

118 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. II (February 1799), p. 140.j

119 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I. xxv (October 6 - 20, 1750), p. 395.

120 *The Lady's Curiosity; or, Weekly Apollo*, vii (1752), p. 112.

121 Humphreys, "Death and Time," p. 273.

122 Laurence, "Godly Grief: Individual Responses to Death in Seventeenth-Century Britain," in
Ralph Houlbrooke (ed.) *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 66.

123 Laurence, p. 74-75.

124 Laurence, p. 75 - 76.

125 Gittings, p. 121.

126 Gittings, p. 119.

- 127 Llewellyn, p. 91. Llewellyn is referring here to the greater availability of cheaper fabric for mourning attire, particularly what was known as "funeral crepe." English law, largely unenforceable, mandated that mourning dress was to be made, like shrouds, from English wool. Although funeral crepe may have made mourning habit more affordable for the middle classes, the poor probably continued to wear ordinary clothing to funerals and burials (Gittings, p. 119).
- 128 Even insofar as middle-class mourning did mimic the rich, the significance of mourning dress was different in each case. Aristocratic mourning dress, like other aspects of the aristocratic death ritual, set the family of the deceased apart and stressed their role as symbols of the family's ongoing lineage. When mourning dress was worn by the middle classes, it served simply to distinguish the family from the rest of the community.
- 129 Gittings, p. 120-21.
- 130 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xi (March 23 - April 6, 1751), p. 174. Such information, of course, was of interest to those in the middling classes, and was perhaps printed for their benefit, since the court would have been informed by other means.
- 131 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xvii (June 15 - 29, 1751), p. 267.
- 132 By contrast, the message to widows in Steele's *The Ladies Library* is predictably categorical and prescriptive, focusing on the respect a widow should pay to her husband's body, memory, and children, the attention she should pay to her own behaviour and piety, and the hesitation with which she should regard remarriage. The long essay concludes with a section entitled "Rules" (*The Ladies Library*, Vol. II [1714], pp. 217 - 234).
- 133 *The Female Tatler*, 14 (August 5-8, 1709).
- 134 *The Female Tatler*, 44 (October 14-17, 1709).
- 135 *The Female Tatler*, 104 (March 10-13, 1710).
- 136 *The Female Tatler*, 28 (September 7-9, 1709).
- 137 *The Female Tatler*, 28 (September 7-9, 1709).
- 138 Phoebe Crackenthorpe is *The Female Tatler's* eidolon: the conversations in the magazine take place in her drawing room.
- 139 *The Female Tatler*, 79 (January 4-6, 1710).
- 140 *The Female Tatler*, 31 (September 14-September 16).
- 141 *The Female Tatler*, 86 (January 20-23, 1710).
- 142 *The Female Tatler*, 68 (December 9-12, 1709).
- 143 *The Female Tatler*, 79 (January 4-6, 1710).
- 144 Peter Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People. England: 1727 - 1783*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p. 600.
- 145 *The Female Tatler*, 11 (July 29-August 1, 1709).
- 146 *The Female Tatler*, 69 (December 12-14, 1709).
- 147 *The Female Tatler*, 74 (December 23-26, 1709).
- 148 "[T]he number of widows who could exercise [their legal] rights was strictly limited. Many who could failed to do so. Most widows enjoyed no security. Whether from the terms of their husbands' wills, or from their habit of relinquishing what they had to their children, the majority possessed little status and no independence. Often they were dependent on the continued tolerance of their children for a home and support. Among the labouring class, widowhood was almost always a struggle for survival. As women alone, all widows were vulnerable" (Bridget Hill, pp. 257-58).
- 149 Undertakers and doctors were not the only threat to female agency and productivity. The ways in which single women had traditionally supported themselves were being almost universally threatened by male competition. "Milliners, mantua-makers, staymakers, embroiderers, seamstresses, all were exposed to male competition. Hairdressing and peruke-making were coming to be dominated by men" (Langford, p.111). Furthermore, as Susan Staves has pointed out, the status of even a well-off and careful wife was no proof against an impoverished widowhood, as "agreements in marriage settlements to jointure did not necessarily mean that the

bride, should she become a widow, enjoyed the jointure so settled upon her" (*Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* [(Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990], p. 96).

CHAPTER FOUR

WOMEN'S MAGAZINES AND DEATH AS EXPERIENCE

[The] diagnosis of London as diseased, parasitic, and contagious, echoed down the century, with its connotations of sterility and death. For London tainted all it touched, sucking in the healthy from the countryside, and -- as the Bills of Mortality proved -- devouring far more than it bred.

Roy Porter
"Cleaning Up the Great Wen"

Shortly before the marriage of Elmira and Leolin, Elmira's father fell off his horse and broke his leg, "which turning into a mortification, was obliged to be cut off. Either want of skill in the surgeon, or his own obstinacy in not suffering the amputation to be above the knee, proved fatal to him, and he died in twenty-four hours after the operation."¹ The marriage was postponed, and when the period of mourning was over, Leolin renewed his addresses. However, before the couple could marry, Leolin's father "was suddenly taken ill: his indisposition terminated in a violent fever, which in a very few days took him from the world."² Unexpectedly disenfranchised and embittered, Leolin eventually spurned Elmira and joined the army, where "he fell among many other gallant men at the battle of Dettingen."³

What is remarkable about this otherwise conventional story is the number of different ways people die in a relatively short narrative space. Elmira's father dies either as a consequence of his riding accident or as a consequence of the "professional" treatment he receives for his broken leg. Leolin's father dies suddenly and unexpectedly of an indeterminate illness identified only as "fever," and Leolin himself dies in battle. The multiple and variously caused deaths were not in the days of *The Female Spectator* the stuff of fiction that they seem to late twentieth-century readers. Rather, death appears in this story in ways that reflect both the omnipresence of death and the diversity of forms death might take in eighteenth-century life.

As historians from Dorothy George to Roy Porter have observed, despite its glittering attractions, eighteenth-century London was a "death trap" for great numbers of its resident and migrant populations.⁴ Writers of the period recognized the urban dangers to life and health, and readers of the popular press were also well aware of the high mortality rates, which outstripped baptismal rates, for most of the

century. Environmental conditions and social conditions presented general and particular hazards to Londoners. The Thames was both the main source of drinking water and the main repository for domestic waste (including raw sewage) and industrial waste, a situation that led to epidemics of fever and industrial poisoning.⁵ The streets themselves were dumping grounds, and appalling sanitary conditions were the norm in many parishes.⁶ In some places, industrial waste caused pollution that had been recognized as a health hazard from the Middle Ages.⁷ Much of the city's building stock was decayed or substandard to the extent that injury or death from collapsing buildings was not uncommon.

Social conditions also contributed to this general unhealthiness. The poor were crowded into London's most dangerous districts, but, as Dorothy George has observed, even artisans and tradespeople generally lived in crowded dwellings that often served as both home and workshop.⁸ Crowding, general filth, and lack of sanitation provided a breeding ground for disease. In demographic terms, the large metropolitan population acted as "perennial reservoirs of infection," large enough and dense enough to retain pathogens, and existing in environmental conditions optimal for the spread of disease: "People born into such a population suffered high mortality in childhood but acquired a corresponding level of immunological resistance if they survived to adult life, so that at any one time the pool of susceptibles to a given infection was largely restricted to children and recent immigrants. In these circumstances, death rates would be high, especially at the younger ages, but also fairly stable since the scope for epidemics was so restricted."⁹ Social behaviour also contributed to the death rate. For example, Dorothy George names the widespread and excessive consumption of cheap and potent gin as the single most important cause of the high death rate between 1720 and 1750.¹⁰ Deaths were attributable not only to the direct consumption of gin, but also to its indirect effects on children, who died from neglect, abandonment, infanticide, or placement with nurses or in institutions supposedly dedicated to their care.

The medical establishment of the eighteenth century was unequal to the task of ministering to the various consequences of these hazardous and unhealthy situations. In the first place, the nature of disease was not understood in terms that could be effectively addressed. Throughout the century, disease was thought to be a consequence of some deviation from normal life: "No one entertained the idea that every case of any given disease could be due to one specific cause."¹¹ Disease was also attributed to sin, the devil, and witchcraft, and many doctors (and more patients) relied on astrology and magic to effect

cures.¹² The use of bloodletting and leeches was still common, and the favoured medications of the day -- calomel (which contained mercury), emetic tartar (antimony), and arsenic -- were all potentially lethal, especially when applied as "heroic therapies," those medical techniques believed to be effective only if they themselves brought the patient to the point of death.¹³ Furthermore, those who treated the sick were possessed of dubious qualifications, if any. Drugs were sold by peddlers and grocers; blacksmiths and farriers pulled teeth and set broken bones for both humans and animals.¹⁴ While many of the best eighteenth-century physicians in London were Dissenters who had been trained abroad, surgeons only formally separated from barbers in 1745.¹⁵ Apothecaries also varied widely in their training and abilities. Medical advances were not significant in the eighteenth century, and care of the sick remained, as in the seventeenth century, primarily in family and domestic hands.

Extended medical services existed, but were often inadequate and frequently fatal in themselves. The two hospitals that had existed in London since the Middle Ages were augmented by others established primarily to serve the poor, but these were not effective in the treatment of the century's greatest killer, fever epidemics.¹⁶ And the new charity hospitals had problems of their own. Lying-in hospitals were intended to give poor women a few days' rest from overcrowded conditions and the demands of large families, but they had the unintended effect of spreading fatal infections, a consequence of physicians-in-training moving from woman to woman and baby to baby without washing their hands in between.¹⁷ There were, however, some improvements in attitudes and practices regarding public health in the second half of the eighteenth century, for reasons that had little direct relationship to the advancement of medical science or practice. Porter argues that the two most significant were the establishment of dispensaries aimed at providing the London poor with free medical advice, treatment, and medicine, and the attention increasingly paid to prevention, particularly in the areas of inoculation and health education.¹⁸ Enlightenment attitudes regarded sickness and health, as Ludmilla Jordanova points out, as an accumulation of environmental variables "which acted upon organisms and were responsible for many of their characteristics."¹⁹ Disease, from this point of view, was configured as something that could be overcome by human initiative; however, the scientific advances in medicine and medical treatments that would allow major strides to be taken mostly still lay ahead in the next century.

Illness

According to Thomas Forbes' study of the births and deaths listed in the parish records of St. Giles without Cripplegate between 1654 - 1693 and 1729 - 1743, the main causes of death were, in order of frequency, consumption, convulsion, and fever.²⁰ These broad categories reveal the extent to which eighteenth-century medicine was unable to distinguish between particular diseases with similar symptoms. Consumption, for example, was a catch-all term for respiratory and wasting diseases and was not confined to tuberculosis.²¹ Convulsions, which usually occurred in children under two, were sometimes used to conceal infanticide.²² They were most frequently reported as a cause of death between 1728 and 1757, when contemporary writers associated the disorder with their caregivers' consumption of gin: "In and about London...a prodigious number of children are cruelly murdered by those infernals called nurses. These infernal monsters throw a spoonful of gin, spirits of wine or Hungary water down a child's throat, which instantly strangles the babe. When the searchers come to inspect the body, and inquire what distemper caused the death, it is answered, 'convulsions.'"²³ Fever included a wide range of airborne and infectious diseases, including typhus, dysentery, and anything else that manifested fever as a symptom.²⁴ Smallpox, a relatively mild disease at the beginning of the seventeenth century, grew more virulent, becoming a greater childhood killer than anything except perhaps infantile diarrhoea.²⁵ The frequency and virulence of measles epidemics also increased during the eighteenth century, and unusually severe outbreaks in 1718 and 1733 "coincided with a time of excessive gin-drinking, which has sometimes been held to blame."²⁶ During measles epidemics, people died not from the disease itself but from complications.

Notably absent from Forbes' list, and from any other discussion of illness I surveyed, is death from hydrophobia (never referred to as rabies), the disease given the greatest attention by *The Ladies Magazine*.²⁷ Half accident, half disease, hydrophobia seems to have been of great concern to the readers of the magazine, and with good reason. The bite of any cat or dog was potentially fatal, and the most popular treatment, the salt-water cure, "worked" only if the victim had not contracted rabies. Although the Bills of Mortality do not reveal hydrophobia as a major killer, the number of deaths reported and cures proposed in *The Ladies Magazine* might encourage readers in beliefs to the contrary.²⁸ Sometimes the

disease was described without being named, as in the instance of a 10-year-old boy bitten by his kitten. The boy's father killed the kitten, and the boy later died, having manifested symptoms of sore throat, inability to swallow, and convulsions. At other times, reports are more precise, as in the case of a man dead as a result of a bite on the lip from a spaniel he had been given as a gift. *The Ladies Magazine* reports, "Mr. Wilson was prevailed on to bath in the sea water, which he did; but notwithstanding that, and several other means, he died last week, with all the dreadful symptoms of that terrible disorder. He has left a wife and four children behind him."²⁹

That *The Ladies Magazine* had undertaken a crusade to raise public awareness about rabies is evident not only from the numerous reports of deaths from the disease and almost as numerous treatments and cures, but also from the rhetorical and informational biases of the reports themselves. For example, in commenting on a mad cat that had bitten two women, a horse, and other animals, the magazine observes, "As it is found by Experience, this Malady (which is much more terrible in the Human Species than Death itself) begins mostly in Dogs," dog owners should be taxed and forced to "worm" their dogs, which meant cutting a sinew in the dog's mouth to prevent its biting anyone.³⁰ Another report tells of a mad dog that bit no humans but several other dogs in a crowded St. James park. The magazine comments that it hopes the owners will destroy the dogs who have been bitten and continues, "Cautions have been often given by all the papers against this dreadful evil, which, it is hoped, will at last so affect the legislature as to find some remedy to destroy the vagrants, at least, of this specie, which are to be found in number all over London, in a miserable mangey condition, which, in all probability may first occasion their madness."³¹ This report implicitly reveals the extent to which the disease was not understood, apart from its transmission, but in other cases, reports convey important information about the disease, as in the case of a waterman who died from a bite received a year earlier.³² The report describes the symptoms so as to make diagnosis unmistakable, and though the concept of an incubation period for disease had not yet evolved, the fact that the onset of rabies could take place anywhere from four days to more than a year from the time of the bite became a matter of public knowledge. In another instance, *The Ladies Magazine* reports the death of a pregnant wife of a blacksmith, bitten on the thumb by a mad cat. She had undergone the salt-water treatment, but developed the disease six weeks later:

[The infection] then began to appear by a pricking in the Thumb, Pain in her Arm, and Restlessness. She continued to grow worse and worse till the Time of her Death, though she retained her Senses to the last, and desired every one to keep out of her Way; nor would she suffer any one to wipe the Foam from her Mouth, lest it might infect them. She was brought to-bed a Fortnight ago and the Child continues well. What is very remarkable, she had many Times told of dreaming before she was married she should die mad, and continued in her Illness to mention her Dream.³³

The magazine's rhetorical strategy here is a complicated one. Framed within the formal structure of an obituary, the article at once conveys information about the disease, promotes sympathy for the victim, and raises questions about the supernatural through its reference to the woman's dream

The search for a cure was another aspect of *The Ladies Magazine*'s crusade against hydrophobia. One "infallible" cure for the bite of a mad dog (a mixture of real and synthetic cinnebar, musk, and tea) appears early in the magazine's existence.³⁴ In another place, a reader calls for what amounts to a "public inquiry" in print, to assess the relative merits and success of available treatments.³⁵ Despite the apparent confusion surrounding the treatment of hydrophobia, the magazine continued to present readers with suggested, though improbable, cures, like the distillation of the youngest shoots and bark of an elder tree, an old family recipe, a half pint of which was to be given twice a day to humans and a whole pint to cattle.³⁶ In yet another article on the subject, a Bath doctor offers an etiological analysis, using as a case study a 22-year-old servant who had apparently recovered from hydrophobia. Dr. Nugent concludes that the disease "operates not by circulating with the blood or animal spirits, but by producing spasms upon nerves, which are communicated by degrees from fibre to fibre without apparent injury, till the nerves that govern some eminent viscera begin to be affected." Dr. Nugent concludes that hydrophobia is probably "a species of mania, attended with certain alienations of mind and disorders of body peculiar to itself, all proceeding from irregular spasms, and spasmodic constrictions, of some particular parts of the nervous system."³⁷ Though Dr. Nugent's example of recovery from the disease is extremely unlikely, he was at least partially correct in his observation of the disease's effect on the central nervous system, and, in the case of the servant girl, also probably correct in his association of hydrophobia and hysterics, which some women who had attended her had initially identified as her disorder, rather than rabies.³⁸

The Ladies Magazine's reporting of other fatal diseases often occurred routinely in obituaries or in the regular feature, "Chronological Diary of Foreign and Domestic Affairs." People are reported to die from fever, but such accounts are only elaborated in the attention given to gaol fever or gaol distemper,

particularly in response to the 1750 outbreak at the Old Bailey (the "Black Sessions"), which killed around forty criminals, lawyers, jury members and a sheriff. Because the disease was not understood, attempts were made to account for the infection. Shortly after the Black Sessions, the magazine lists the people who supposedly caught an infection from the stench of the prisoners in the court-room. By way of explanation, the magazine quotes Dr. Mead on the "Black Assizes" at Oxford in 1577, which killed 300 judges and onlookers. Dr. Mead supposes that outbreak to be the result "a Pestilent Saviour, whether rising from the noisome Smell of the Prisoners, or from the Damp of the Ground." The article also names another instance of a courtroom outbreak, one that killed the Chief Justice himself, as having occurred in Dorsetshire in 1730.³⁹ Almost three years later, *The Ladies Magazine* ran a follow-up on the Black Sessions, claiming that a recent study by the "ingenious" Dr. Pringle explained the event. According to Dr. Pringle, on the day of the Black Sessions, the courtroom had been unusually crowded and therefore stuffy, a significant factor whether the distemper originated with already-infected prisoners or as a result of general uncleanness. Dr. Pringle notes that almost all the cases occurred on the left side of the courtroom, and attributes this to an open window through which air had blown in that direction. "This indeed must be granted, that all septic particles passing into the blood, become more active and fatal, if the infected person catches cold, or by any accident suffers a stoppage of perspiration; for a free perspiration is the chief means by which the blood is freed from any morbifick matter of that kind."⁴⁰ Dr. Pringle's formulation reflects the prevalent medical views of the period, but though he and others recognized the link between gaol fever and unsanitary conditions and though efforts were made to clean up conditions in Newgate following the Black Sessions, the link between deadly epidemic typhus and the common louse had yet to be identified.

Unaccountable diseases that appeared to be "in the air" seem to have had a continuing fascination for readers.⁴¹ Among the many accounts of death by smallpox, the most unusual is the report from Bristol of a gravedigger who opened the grave of a man who had died of smallpox 30 years earlier. When the gravedigger pierced the lid of the well-preserved oak coffin with his spade, "there came forth such a Stench, that he never smelt the like before. It being a Person of Credit that was to be buried in the Grave, the whole Village attended the Funeral." A few days later, fourteen people came down with smallpox, a prelude to a general epidemic that swept the village of Chelwood, affecting every resident

who had not already had the disease.⁴² Smallpox is frequently mentioned in *The Ladies Magazine*, but never in relation to its disfiguring effects.⁴³ Rather, the focus is on its virulent contagiousness, as in the case of a London family ravaged by the disease, which had already killed the parents and affected two of their children.⁴⁴ Reports of outbreaks in distant places are also frequent, like that in Vienna in 1753.⁴⁵ In 1752, the magazine reports that a smallpox epidemic in Boston had prompted the inoculation of 1000 people, many of whom had subsequently contracted the disease and died.⁴⁶

An obvious pattern in *The Ladies Magazine's* coverage of death by disease suggests what most concerned readers, communicable diseases, especially those that might attain epidemic status. The origin of such anxiety is easy to identify. No major outbreaks of the plague occurred in England in the eighteenth century, but the Great Plague of 1664-65 was still within living memory and was given additional prominence by the publication in 1722 of Defoe's *A Journal of the Plague Year*, which recounts in graphic detail the horrors of the disease, the terrors it produced in the population of London, and the widespread social and economic consequences it engendered. The first mention of the plague in *The Ladies Magazine* occurs in 1750, to assure readers that rumours of its appearance in Bristol are groundless. (The deaths are actually due to "Extravagance, Gaming, and an immoderate Pursuit of Pleasures, inconsistent with [the deceaseds'] Fortunes, and improper for their Professions.")⁴⁷ All other references, except unelaborated historical references included in the "History of England" feature, involve the progress of the plague that raged in Constantinople from late summer to the end of 1751. The first mention of that devastating epidemic appears in *The Ladies Magazine* early in September.⁴⁸ Early in November, the magazine reports that in the late summer months, Constantinople had been de-populated by two-thirds, between those who had died and those who had fled to the country, and that all business in the city had stopped.⁴⁹ In the next issue, the magazine reports that the plague had begun to abate, but it was estimated that a third of the city was dead, more than 20,000 people dying per week during the worst period.⁵⁰ The magazine's coverage of the Constantinople plague ends early in 1752, with the news that over 150,000 mechanics and artisans had been brought from the provinces to re-populate the city.⁵¹ Such reporting and updating must have served as both a reminder of the Great Plague and a reassurance that the ravages of the current plague were at a great distance. Interestingly, no reference is made to the Constantinople plague being an act of God, as was the case with the Lisbon earthquake.

Venereal disease, on the other hand, was not a distant memory, but an ongoing public health concern in the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, its representation in the magazines is infrequent.⁵² When they do occur, references to syphilis do not treat the condition as a physical but a moral illness to which both men and women are vulnerable. In *The Ladies Magazine*, a letter from B____, a respectable lawyer whose former life as a rake has caught up with him, deplors his earlier excesses of sex and alcohol and warns "other unthinking youths" against repeating his mistakes: "My Body, in almost every Vessel of it, daily reproaches me, and every Alteration of the Air adds severity to my Pains."⁵³ *The Lady's Miscellany*, a compendium of essays, poems, and fragments, includes one entitled "The Soliloquy of a Woman of Pleasure (Falsely So Called)." The fragment describes twenty-year-old Almeria, whose beauty and youth ensure that she is profitable in her profession. While she finds her situation "disagreeable" and has tried to extricate herself, her love of money always draws her back. The soliloquy is uttered just after her most recent lover has paid and left:

What a disagreeable situation is this to a reflecting mind! What an unhappy circle to move in, for a *thinking* person! -- To be the sink of mankind! -- To court alike the beastly drunkard, and the nauseating rake -- dissimulating distaste for enjoyment! No balmy ease, no innocent comfort; but nocturnal incontinence and debauch. What must the end of such variegated concupiscence! -- INFECTION!⁵⁴

The narrator of the fragment comments that Almeria's "pathetic exclamation...shows a proper sensibility of her condition," but this seeming recognition of the young woman's humanity is negated by the *nota bene* at the end of the fragment: *Vicious pleasures always end in vice.*

A narrative poem in *The Lady's Monthly Museum* tells the story of "Blue-Eyed Mary," a young village woman seduced by the Squire.⁵⁵ Taken to town as the Squire's mistress, Mary is soon abandoned. She cannot obtain service without a character, and after pawning all she owns, Mary "is forc'd on the town," where the moral degradation of her life in a brothel has predictable physical consequences:

Compell'd, tho' disgusted, to wheedle and feign,
With an aspect all smiles, and a bosom all pain.
Now caress'd, now insulted, now flatter'd, now scorn'd,
And by ruffians and drunkards oft wantonly spurn'd.

This worst of all mis'ry she's doom'd to endure,
For the poor Blue-eyed Mary is now an Impure.

Whilst thus the barb'd arrow sinks deep in her soul,
She flies for relief to that traitor, the bowl;
Grows stupid, and bloated, and lost to all shame,
Whilst a dreadful disease is pervading her frame.
Now with eyes dim and languid, the once blooming maid,
In a garret, on straw, faint and helpless is laid:--
Oh, mark her pale cheek! — see, she scarce draws her breath,
And lo! her blue eyes are now seal'd up in death!

In each case, venereal disease is seen as the consequence of moral failings that have fatal consequences. While it is difficult to make generalizations on the basis of so few representations, it is interesting that the women in the last two examples are rendered so as to permit pity as well as censure on the part of readers. By her own account and the narrator's, Almeria is a sensitive and intelligent person, able to recognize the stupidity of her situation though seemingly powerless against her desire for money. At her death, Blue-eyed Mary is "faint" and "helpless," innocuous adjectives that invite sympathy. Such renderings obviously configure the women as passive victims of passion or fate, rather than active agents of their own destruction, and are consistent with the passive femininity increasingly apparent at the end of the century.

Deaths that were related to childbirth were, of course, common among women of a certain age group and among newborns. Forbes' study lists 874 maternal deaths related to childbed, and 1,571 stillborn births.⁵⁶ As is always the case with early statistics, there is a large margin for error. A woman who died of childbed fever, for example, might be listed under either childbed or fever (9,113 are listed as dead from fever), depending, perhaps, on how long after the birth she actually died. And the deaths of unbaptised babies who died immediately from complications of birth were not listed in the parish records. *The Ladies Magazine* might be expected to consider childbirth-related death to be of particular concern to a large number of its readers, but this is not the case. Although the brief obituaries do occasionally name childbed as the cause of death of the wives of noteworthy men (or in the case of the Queen of Denmark, a noteworthy woman), this cause of death was apparently not deemed to be of particular interest. It may be tempting to attribute this absence to respect for the modesty of readers, but pregnant women are not uncommon in other contexts, and mention of unusual and multiple births appear frequently. It would seem, then, particularly in light of the pattern of anxiety over illnesses that might attain epidemic status or

that were, like hydrophobia, so terrifyingly random, that death from childbirth-related causes was simply understood as a fact of life for a certain number of women. Like death from abscessed teeth (which is never mentioned as a cause of death in the magazines but which accounts for nearly 6,000 deaths in Forbes' study), death as a consequence of childbirth was always a possibility, a condition of being human and born female.

The Ladies Magazine mentions other fatal diseases, including gout, apoplexy, gallstones, and breast cancer. Consumption, a leading killer of the period, is described without any trace of the romanticism that coloured nineteenth-century accounts of the disease.⁵⁷ In an example from *The Female Mentor*, consumption appears in a Conversation on dissipation, in which a virtuous young woman overly fond of fashionable amusements is described as dying of the disease at age 36 in Bath. The employment of consumption here seems related to the lingering death associated with the disease, which gives Clara time to contemplate the vanity of her past life and to repent.⁵⁸ In a poem written at Bath by a lady dying of consumption, the disease is incidental, mentioned only in the title to convey the seriousness of the message of wifely virtue and conjugal love. The slow and painful lingering of death by consumption is used rhetorically to console the grieving husband: "Thou know'st a painful Pilgrimage I've past,/ And should'st thou mourn that Death has come at last?"⁵⁹ However, the most interesting mention of consumption is the announcement of the death by consumption of *The Ladies Magazine's* editor, Jasper Goodwill, in 1753. In the bound version of the magazine, the following announcement appears immediately after the title page of Volume Four:

The Publisher desires to acquaint the Publick, that *Jasper Goodwill, Esq;* Author of the Work, having for some Time been afflicted with a lingering Consumption, he gave up the ghost last Monday: So that, this Number concludes VOLUME IV. and all his Lucubrations under the Name of *The Ladies Magazine*.

This notice is, of course, suspect as part of a long history in the periodicals of fictitious editors and their fictitious deaths, notably that of Isaac Bickerstaff, and no corresponding notice appears in the last issue of the magazine. However, it is a fact that *The Ladies Magazine* ceases to exist with its last number on November, 1753, and that mentions of and meditations on death increase markedly in the magazine's last year of publication.⁶⁰

Occasionally, *The Ladies Magazine* includes accounts of illnesses and deaths that are unusual and totally inexplicable. In one account, a young woman in hospital in Hyde Park "is afflicted with a very strange and almost incomprehensible Disorder: Her Belly is swelled up to an enormous Size, in which she feels no Manner of Pain; but whenever it is touched it makes a kind of croaking Noise, to be heard at upwards of 20 Yards Distance: This Girl is no Impostor, for she has very often been watched carefully; and it is plain she does not produce that Noise by Artifice. Some have given it as their Opinion, that there is a living Animal of some sort or another in her Belly."⁶¹ In another instance, death occurs from a mysterious illness with mysterious posthumous manifestations, when the mistress of an alehouse is seized with a sleeping fit and carried to bed, to sleep from Monday to Friday, when she suddenly opened her eyes "and after repeating *Lord help me* twice, she expired; but what added greater Astonishment, her body, in less than half an hour after her Disease, turn'd as Yellow as Saffron, though, when living, of a very fair complexion. Her Body was ordered to [be] open'd, in order to find out the cause of this uncommon Change."⁶² One wonders at the rationale for such strange descriptions, which call attention to the inability of medical knowledge even to hazard guesses at some causes of death. Such descriptions lie well outside the magazine's pattern of reporting primarily on infectious or contagious diseases of concern to everyone, and perhaps their peculiarity is justification enough.

This investigation would be remiss if it did not address the links between death and sensibility in the magazines, given the association between sensibility and its physical manifestations.⁶³ Interestingly, the association of death and sensibility is conveyed negatively in fictional accounts, and positively in accounts presented as factual. When the immediate cause of a fictional death is a broken heart from disappointed expectations or melancholy resulting from overindulgence of emotions, the death is usually linked to female folly, and the account takes on an unmistakable moral and didactic dimension. For example, in one monitory anecdote, a father dies of grief after his daughter, impersonating a young man at a play, is fatally wounded by an attacker. The story's moral, written by the girl's friend and accomplice in the prank, attacks both female folly (the impersonation) and male folly (the unthinking recourse to violence as a solution to minor altercations); the fatality in the epigram refers to both the father and his daughter: "Since Men's wild Sallies do such Ills Create,/ 'Tis Fatal ev'n the Sex to personate."⁶⁴ In another story, a young woman apparently dies of a broken heart after she has been seduced and

betrayed by the man who marries her sister a few days later. Again, a double fatality results when the betrayer deserts his wife and the sisters' mother is grief-stricken and expected to die. Though the magazine's censure focuses on the seducer/betrayer/deserter, the doubly fatal consequences of one sister's yielding to temptation and the other's lack of judgment configure female folly as a serious matter.⁶⁵ In another story of orphaned sisters who have been left their own mistresses at eighteen, Sylvia (badly married to a philanderer) dies of a broken heart, and her impoverished sister, having spurned the suitor who encouraged her to squander her fortune, is dying of consumption, entirely dependent on the charity of an old servant of their late mother. While the explicitly stated moral of the story is the necessity for women to seek husbands of the same rank as themselves, the implicit message also marks as potentially fatal the decisions and judgments of independent, inexperienced young women.⁶⁶ In a final example, the beautiful, privileged, well-married, young Arabella Worthy dies from the irrational worry that she will lose all her advantages and happiness. The writer of this story concludes that, in addition to being a violation of religion and good sense, such imaginary dread and consequent real melancholy proceed "from a restlessness of Disposition, which we ought by no means to indulge." The account concludes with Sir Richard Blackmore's poem on the virtues of contentment.⁶⁷

By contrast, women who are reported to die of grief in actual fact are guilty of neither folly nor self-indulgence. In every case, the woman is reported to have been confronted with a sudden loss that brings about shock causing death that is entirely blameless and plausible.⁶⁸ Grief as a cause of death is satirized in some cases, such as the death of bad King John, who died "through Grief for having lost his rich Baggage."⁶⁹ But the moral legitimacy of the death of Elizabeth Goodchild is not questioned: "Her Death was occasioned through Grief for the Loss of her Husband, who was found drowned in the New River a few Days since."⁷⁰ Another case is similarly treated sympathetically in *The Midwife's* anecdote of a shopkeeper who loses so much through bad debts, he is unable to pay his creditors on time. He is jailed, and when the creditor comes to his house to seize his goods, his recently delivered wife "fell into such Fits...that they were obliged to tie her Hands behind her; and on the *Friday* following, died stark raving mad," leaving seven children.⁷¹ The most elaborated example of death through grief is given in the story of a young woman engaged to marry a rebel executed for his part in the '45 Rebellion, which appears as a post-script to a letter describing the execution.

I will not prolong the Narrative by any Repetition of what she suffered on Sentence being past upon him; none, excepting those utterly incapable of feeling any soft or generous emotions, but may easily conceive her Agonies, beside, the sad Catastrophe will be sufficient to convince you of their Sincerity.

NOT all the Perswasions of her Kindred could prevent her from going to the Place of Execution; ---she was determined to see the last of a Person so dear to her, and accordingly followed the Sledges in a Hackney Coach, accompanied by a Gentleman nearly related to her, and one Female Friend.---She got near enough to see the Fire kindled, which was to consume that Heart she knew so much devoted to her, and all the other dreadful Preparations for his Fate, without being guilty of any of those Extravagancies her Friends had apprehended; but, when all was over, and that she found he was no more, she drew her Head back into the Coach, and crying out,---*My Dear, I follow thee, ---I follow thee,---and Sweet Jesus receive both our souls together,* fell on the Neck of her Companion, and expired in the very Moment she was speaking.

THAT Excess of Grief, which the Force of her Resolution had kept smothered within her Breast, it is thought, put a Stop to the vital Motion, and suffocated, at once, all the animal Spirits; but I leave the Physicians to account for that.⁷²

Here, the writer attempts to identify a physiological consequence that would justify death from grief without the moral censure of overindulgence of emotion. The rhetorical efforts to this end are considerable. First, "bandwagon" logic is employed to compel the reader to take the sympathetic position of the writer. Second, the young woman's love is established by her willingness to endure emotional torture in order to be near the beloved to the end; her modesty is demonstrated by the appropriateness of her companions; her courage is revealed through her silent endurance; and her piety is confirmed by her dying words. The overt narrative direction away from emotionalism and sensibility and toward physiological explanations for her death render the young woman a fit object of sympathy that might be denied because of her alliance with a Scottish rebel. The final attempt to explain death by grief in elementary scientific terms also removes the young woman's death from the censure that attends death for romantic reasons elsewhere in Haywood's writings.

Death through illness, then, was deemed to be of considerable interest to its readers, and, considering the long life of the magazine (four years under Goodwill's editorship), this assessment seems to have been correct. At a time when illness was so misunderstood and treatments so inadequate (as contemporaries realized), *The Ladies Magazine* served as a clearinghouse for information about fatal illnesses, information that could act as warning, reassurance, or preventative. This phenomenon of widespread, public "factual" information about disease and health was new, made possible only with the advent of the popular press. The cumulative weight of opinion that resulted from this common body of

knowledge may have encouraged public support for the advancement of medical science that began in England in the last half of the century.

Accident⁷³

In Forbes' study, accidental death appears to be a relatively rare occurrence: 206 deaths from accidents, compared, for example, with 11,463 deaths from consumption and 9,113 from fever. Such statistics are, again, misleading, not because accidental deaths were not recorded, but because they were so likely to have been recorded in another category. Complications of accidents might lead to death from a seemingly unrelated cause; as in the case of Elmira's father, there is no necessary relationship between a broken leg, the direct consequence of the riding accident, and the fever, probably a symptom of massive infection, that ultimately caused his death. It is not unlikely that in the parish register, such a death would be attributed to fever, and its original accidental cause statistically and historically obscured. In an actual example, the report of a 90-year-old man dead in Newark-upon-Trent reads: "About a Week before, the Wall of his Apartment [sic] was blown down by a violent Storm of Wind, Part of which fell into the Bed where he lay, and broke his Thigh, which occasioned his death."⁷⁴ Likely, the man died of infection from either the broken bone or the amputation of his leg, and while his death is caused by the collapsed wall, the primary cause might be either high winds or the instability or decay of the building where he lay, both of which occasioned many deaths in the period. Furthermore, some forms of death, like an unwitnessed drowning, might be attributed to accident, murder, or suicide, with no way to verify or disprove the coroner's ruling.

Statistics, then, cannot be relied on to present an accurate picture of how people died accidentally in the eighteenth century. Detailed accounts of accidents, however, do allow us to approximate the danger posed by accidental death. *The Ladies Magazine* was assiduous in its attention to the accidents that befell people, reporting over 150 accounts of accidental death. A survey of these presents a grim picture of the hazards inherent in ordinary life. Accidents occurred on the streets and in people's homes; they might involve family members or strangers. Accidental death was sometimes clearly preventable, but in some instances it was so random that no precautions could possibly be taken. Many of the

accidental deaths reported in *The Ladies Magazines* befell children, sometimes babies, but often children of intermediate age, too young to be apprenticed but old enough to be abroad unsupervised by adults. Certain occupations were fraught with dangers; workmen might fall off ladders, for example, and watermen, as well as officials on the waterways, might drown. Additionally, it is excruciatingly clear that accidents did not themselves have to be very serious in order to be fatal; any fracture or bruise might result in death from infection, blood-poisoning or internal hemorrhage.

The most common causes of accidental death reported in *The Ladies Magazine* were street accidents (involving riders, drivers, or pedestrians), drowning, occupational hazards, accidental falls, fires, and natural disasters, such as storms and earthquakes. But the magazine also frequently reported deaths that were the result of accidental shootings, poisonings, scaldings, falling buildings or trees, and animal attacks (other than those from rabid animals). A few, such as those described below, defy classification. Reports of accidental death are often recounted with graphic detail, and some carry an implicit or explicit didactic message. And yet, the pattern suggested by the magazine's representation of accidental death does not so much reveal an interest in sensational reporting as a concern to inform readers of one dark side of the world they inhabited. An analysis of this representation serves not only to inform our own understanding of eighteenth-century life, but also to indicate some of the period's own anxieties about that life.

Riding accidents, occurring when horses threw or kicked their riders, were very common and frequently fatal. Sometimes these accidents occurred because the rider was drunk, sometimes because the horse was unruly.⁷⁵ A horse might stumble and the rider fall, or it might startle and throw its rider, as in the case of a rider who was adjusting his stirrup and off-balance: this young man, who had recently inherited a fortune, "received no visible Hurt, but went mad immediately, and died in terrible agonies two Days after."⁷⁶ In another typical account, a boy slipped off the horse he was riding, but his foot remained in the stirrup, and he was dragged "about two Hundred Yards before the Horse was stopt, by which his Skull was fractur'd in several Places: He was immediately carried to a House in the Neighbourhood, and a Surgeon sent for, but died in a few Hours."⁷⁷ However, one did not have to be a rider to be in danger from horses and the carts and carriages they pulled. London streets, often narrow, crowded, and rutted or muddy, presented a constant danger to pedestrians.⁷⁸ Children were frequently

the victims of street accidents.⁷⁹ For example, one child was killed instantly when he was knocked down by a Drayman's horse and run over by the wheel of the dray.⁸⁰ Children playing in the street were also at risk; in one case a coach ran over the neck of a boy boxing with another in the Strand, and in another, a boy inadvertently pushed his playmate into the path of an oncoming cart, whose wheel ran over his head.⁸¹ Sometimes people fell or jumped from carts or carriages and broke their legs or were run over and died from complications; in other cases, pedestrians were run down in the streets. Old women seemed to be particularly vulnerable, perhaps because they could not move fast enough, but sometimes because they were hard of hearing. In one case, a woman was run down by a gentleman "riding full Speed through Deptford." Though the old woman was not expected to survive the cut in her head, the magazine reports that the gentleman "immediately stopt, and ordered all possible Care to be take of her at his Expence."⁸² In another case, two men riding fast called out to an old woman who was crossing the road, but "she being thick of hearing, turned the wrong Way, and was rode over and killed on the Spot."⁸³ Crashes and collisions were also common. One boy was killed when he was thrown against a post after two gardeners boys collided their carts, and a butcher's servant was suffocated when the cart full of dung he was driving hit a tree.⁸⁴ Street accidents are occasionally turned to didactic ends, as in the Good Samaritan account of a poor labourer whose collar-bone was broken when he was run over by a coach. No one assisted him because "though he lived in the Parish, he was not a Parishioner." He lay injured for over an hour until a Jewish merchant sent for a chair at his own expense, "and went in the Height of the Rain with him to the London Infirmary, where by the Surgeon's particular Care, he is in a fair Way of doing well."⁸⁵

Buildings and construction presented a constant threat.⁸⁶ Margaret George has observed the sorry state of some of the old buildings in London: "In different stages of decay they were patched together and let as tenement houses, common lodging-houses or brothels, or were left empty and derelict, inhabited 'only by such as paid no rent,' vagrants, beggars, runaway apprentices."⁸⁷ Not infrequently, houses that collapsed or were knocked over killed people in the process. And in a way that corresponds to its print crusade to raise public awareness of rabies, *The Ladies Magazine* was explicitly concerned with the problem of decaying buildings and the dangers they presented to the public. In the case of one house that collapsed when no one was home, the magazine comments, "If this Accident had happened in

the Dead of Night, probably not one of the Inhabitants would have been saved; and if old Houses are not better taken Care of, it will be dangerous walking in many of the Streets of this great Metropolis."⁸⁸ Often some disturbance caused a building to collapse, as in the case of an accident in Westminster: "As the Workmen were removing some Rubbish near where the old Plantation Office stood, a Stack of Chimnies fell, by which Accident, one Man was killed on the Spot, and two were terribly hurt, their Legs being broke, and so much bruised, that their Lives are despaired of."⁸⁹ In another case, a drayman ran his cart against the corner of a house, "by which Accident the House fell down, and the Drayman was kill'd upon the Spot, but providentially the House was not inhabited."⁹⁰ In yet another case, a man digging too near the foundation of an old house near St. Giles' Church was killed instantly when a wall and other rubbish fell on him.⁹¹ But the magazine's coverage of the collapse of two houses in Brewer's Yard-Shoe-Lane, in which seven people were killed, indicates the living conditions of some of London's poor and also effectively demonstrates that the magazine's motivation was more public education than sensationalism. However, the magazine's impatience with the recalcitrance of these particular poor is equally clear:

A Stack of Chimneys which stood between the Houses, first gave Way; and with an irresistible Force drove through one of the Houses from the Top to the Bottom; and all the People in that House, to the Number of Ten, fell in with it. [The residents of next house escaped when a ladder was brought, although one woman's arm was broken by falling debris.] In the first House which was entirely forced through, was a Woman who begg'd to sit up, to avoid the furious Resentment of her intoxicated Husband, and had the good Fortune to fall upon the Surface of the Rubbish and found Means to crawl out with the Loss of some Blood from a Cut in her Arm. A Number of the Neighbours immediately set to Work, in order to save, if possible, the People who were buried in the Ruins. Two Men and five Women were dug out dead; two Men and one Woman were taken out alive; a Leg of one of the Men was broke, and the other was very much bruised. These unhappy People, notwithstanding they were forewarned to get out the Friday preceding, (a prodigious Noise being heard, when the House first opened by a Crack) yet they were so stupid and infatuated as to stay; and by their thoughtless Behaviour and Expressions, seem'd to brave their untimely Fate.

The afore-mentioned seven unfortunate Perscns, who were killed, were interr'd in one Grave at St. Andrew's Holborn.⁹²

The conditions described here are obviously even more vulnerable to the threat of fire than the rest of London, which was vulnerable enough. However, the magazine does not deplore the living conditions of the poor in its coverage of fires. In fact, what appears to be a public-interest bias on the part of *The Ladies Magazine* elsewhere is at times compromised by its coverage of fires, and it is exceedingly curious, as well as unique in the magazine's coverage of fatal misfortunes, that in the case of

fire, reports of injury or death are almost always subordinated to the loss of property. For example, the magazine reports a fire at Capt. Maxwell's in Ireland, "which consumed the House and all his Furniture; as also his eldest Daughter, Mrs. Jane Maxwell, who was burnt to Ashes."⁹³ Reports of great fires in faraway places also give priority to loss of property over loss of life, even when the latter is substantial. The account of a fire in Elbingerode is typical of many such reports of uncontrollable fires that result in great losses:

A Fire broke out the Day before Yesterday in the Town of Elbingerode, which burnt down 250 Houses, the Church, the Mine-House of the Regency of Hanover, and the Bailliage and Town-House, and many Persons perished in the Flames.⁹⁴

When fires occur in London and result in the deaths of women or children, however, the situation is somewhat different. For example, *The Ladies Magazine* emphasizes the courageous rescue of a woman in the early stages of labour, when a nurse wraps her in a blanket and carries her to the orchard.⁹⁵ In another account, an "ancient woman" is found burned to death in her room, probably caused when her clothes caught fire as she tried to warm hot chocolate.⁹⁶ The daughter of an innkeeper was fatally burned when her linen gown ignited as she slept beside the kitchen fire.⁹⁷ Child neglect is implicit in the account of a three-year-old girl, fatally burned when her clothes caught fire after her mother went out, locking the door and leaving the child alone.⁹⁸ In an accident that occurs away from home, a young boy is burned to death when, in order to retrieve his hat he returned to a bonfire he had made with his friends; "the next day his body was found, with all the flesh eat off the bones, except his face and feet, to the ancles, which were miserably burnt; his hair, shoes, and the stockings to the ancles, were not consumed by the fire; the bones were not pulled to pieces, but the flesh pick'd clean off them by the dogs."⁹⁹ Whether the detail here is meant as sensationalism or didacticism, or as a goad to readers to ask why it took so long for the boy to be missed and discovered, the account suggests, again, that a London childhood was fraught with peril.

As is becoming clear, children were particularly susceptible to death not only from disease, but also from accidents, whether in the home, on the street, or in the workplace, where the victims of "industrial" accidents were not always workers. Two horrific cases involve children. In one case, the son of a Bristol brewer is reported as one of three people standing on a plank over a furnace "in which

were about two Feet of boiling Liquor." When the plank broke, all three fell into the vat, and the son and one man were scalded. The son soon fell "into a violent Fever, [and] lived till Monday, when he expired to the inexpressible Grief of his disconsolate Parents, he being an only Child."¹⁰⁰ In a visually evocative account, a young girl presumably intending to roast peas on a lime kiln "was suffocated, and fell on it; she being found there two hours after, so consumed, that on being touch'd, she fell quite to ashes."¹⁰¹

Fatal domestic accidents were all too common, involving a whole spectrum of painful and often unnecessary deaths. The hint of negligence that attends reports of children who come to harm in their parents' absence is made explicit in some accounts of children who fall to their deaths, often out of windows, though their mothers are nearby. For example, in one notice, a child falls and fractures its skull when the mother leaves it on a windowsill. The magazine admonishes: *This we publish to warn others who are intrusted with the Care of young Children.*¹⁰² Despite the magazine's warning, within a few months another account appears: "On Saturday last a melancholly [sic] Accident happened in Reeve's Mews near Grosvenor-Square; the Wife of a Coachman there set her Child up in a Window where were Iron Bars, while she went up Stairs to hang up some Linnen, and before she came down the Child had got his Head through the Bars, and (as it is thought) endeavouring to get it back, his Feet slipt, and he was strangled."¹⁰³ Older children, too, were susceptible to death from falling. In one case a boy who had been watching repairs being made to a church inadvertently got locked inside when the workmen went home. The boy, "observing a Tackle, which was erected to lower the Timbers, reaching down to the Street ...got on it in Hopes to slide down." Rope-burn caused him to let go while still some distance from the ground, and he fell, "by which he was so miserably bruised that his Life is despaired of."¹⁰⁴

Death from scalding seems to have been fairly common. In one case, a tradesman's wife fell with a pot of broth, scalding to death a child in a cradle and injuring another child and herself.¹⁰⁵ In another, the child of a poor woman pulled a pan of hot water off a table and onto itself, "by which Accident the Child was scalded in so miserable a Manner that it died the same Night."¹⁰⁶ As well, accidental poisoning constituted a danger to children. In one case, a four-year-old boy and his five-year-old sister inadvertently ate Ratsbane that their parents kept hidden to kill rats, and both children died, "to the great Grief of their Parents."¹⁰⁷ Here, the details of the children's deaths, which must have been horrible, are disregarded in favour of implying the blamelessness of the parents. In another account, a thirteen-year-

old boarding-school "Lady of Fortune" died when she mixed up two sets of eyedrops prescribed for an inflammation and took internally drops that were meant only for external use. Her subsequent death is described in detail: "it immediately flung her into violent Convulsions which held her for two Hours, when she expired in the most dreadful Agonies, to the great Grief of her inconsolable Parents, and every one who knew her."¹⁰⁸ Children playing with guns sometimes resulted in accidental shootings, and accounts of these occurrences (which also illustrate the extent to which guns were present in ordinary life) may contain an implicit or explicit monitory message. A nine-year-old boy in the kitchen accidentally shot his mother, mortally wounding her, when he picked up a loaded pistol to play with.¹⁰⁹ Another Glasgow child, playing alone in a house, picked up a gun, and thinking it not loaded, pointed it out a window and fired, shooting an eight-year-old boy in the street.¹¹⁰ In yet another case, a boy accidentally shot and killed his brother with a loaded pistol left on the table by a servant.¹¹¹

As might be imagined, children were frequently the victims of drowning, and, interestingly, all the children reported drowned in *The Ladies Magazine* are boys. Children who were fishing, playing, or working by or on the river often drowned in sight of people who tried unsuccessfully to save them, as was the case of a boy who, while wading, stepped in a hole and was carried away by the current.¹¹² But children might drown in places other than the river. One boy was feared drowned in a clay pit when his clothes were found nearby (his body was later recovered).¹¹³ An Irish child, left by itself in a room, fell into a tub of suds and drowned.¹¹⁴ A less common and even more horrifying form of death for children calls attention to their size and relative defenselessness, rather than to their ignorance, innocence, or inexperience. This type of accidental death is caused by animals, either kept within the city bounds or in the proximate rural areas. *The Ladies Magazine's* many accounts of death or injury due to animal attacks, apart from those made by rabid dogs and cats, indicate that such attacks were not uncommon. In one case, some men riding near Hedworth Fell Gate heard the noise of geese. Upon investigation, they found a three-year-old boy whose ear had been nearly eaten off and who was so badly bitten on his face and other parts of his body that he was not expected to recover.¹¹⁵ In the following issue, the magazine reported that a young boy stroking an unruly horse had been fatally kicked in the head.¹¹⁶ Two issues later, there appeared a report that an Irish woman who had left her newborn twins with the door "carelessly" left open when she went to visit neighbours returned to find that an old boar had gone into

the cottage and "devoured one of the Children, and was tearing the other to Pieces."¹¹⁷ In another, not fatal, attack on infants, a swarm of rats "got through the Ceiling of a Gardener's old Cottage" and gnawed the arms and legs of two babies in bed. The father and another son were awakened by the babies' cries, and with the help of neighbours, "in Half an Hour destroyed upwards of a Hundred" rats.¹¹⁸ Sometimes it is not possible to determine if an animal attack is the result of madness or viciousness, because death results directly from the attack. In one case, a mother was dressing her six-month-old son when "a Cat that belonged to a Lodger in the same House, flew at the Child with such Violence, that Part of one of its Cheeks was very much tore, and it was thrown into a Fit, so that it died in a few Minutes."¹¹⁹ An Irish child was playing with a dog that flew at his throat and fatally bit him near the windpipe. The boy's father immediately took the dog off and shot it.¹²⁰ Some animal-related deaths, however, came in the course of a child's ordinary day, as in the case of a ten-year-old Scottish boy who, sent to fetch home two calves, tethered them around his middle. When they bolted, he was dragged to death.¹²¹

Accounts of the accidental deaths of children, which are by implication preventable, warned parents of the dangers inherent in everyday existence. Before the popular press made incidents like these widely known, knowledge of the kinds of accidents that presented a constant danger to children was confined to those intimately involved with such events. Such individual experience, however, could not easily be marshaled as a form of public opinion that might affect general social attitudes and enable preventative measures. Though there is no reason to think that accidents were more or less common after 1700, the more concentrated awareness of them as a result of coverage in the periodical press may have had, over time, an effect on the way in which parents regarded the upbringing of children. It seems likely that this greater awareness, which reinforced a more general shift in the focus of parental responsibility from primarily spiritual to primarily emotional and behavioural, also reinforced the changing attitudes toward children, childrearing, and childhood that accompanied the gradual sentimentalization of the family.

Accidental death was not, of course, confined to children. All Londoners were susceptible to some of the same environmental conditions of life in the city, although they did not experience these equally. My survey seems to confirm the obvious, that the poor were more susceptible to certain kinds of

accidents, like being killed by collapsing buildings or fire, while tradesmen often were victims of accidents that resulted from the conditions or dangers of their jobs. Men were far more likely to die from accidental causes than women, because men often worked at more dangerous jobs under more perilous conditions, and were more likely to handle firearms, go swimming or riding, or take the kind of risks that would occasion a fatal fall. Women did die from accidents in significant numbers, however, particularly as pedestrians, as passengers in boating accidents, or as the victims of fire, accidental poisoning, and animal attack.

By far, the most frequently reported accidental death is by drowning, often involving some kind of watercraft; both pleasure-boaters and those who made their living on the water were susceptible to falling overboard or being in a boat that upset. Whether from a boat or from shore, drownings were often attended by ambiguity, particularly when no one had witnessed the event.¹²² Witnesses, or the lack of them, were always important in accounts of drowning, both to authenticate the accidental nature of a drowning or to report that attempts at rescue or resuscitation had been made.¹²³ Typical is the account of an intoxicated bricklayer who drowned while bathing with a co-worker: "They [spectators and companion] attempted to bleed him but without success for there was no Appearance of Life. He has left behind him a Wife and Several Children."¹²⁴ The moral implications that are suggested here by the conjunction of drunkenness and abdication of family responsibility are not uncommon. Most accounts, however, are morally neutral and mainly indicate the high rate of drowning that claimed the lives of those who lived and worked by and on the river. Interestingly, unlike reports of suicide by drowning, which involve equal numbers of men and women, nearly all the reports of accidental drowning involve men and boys; only three women are reported as having accidentally drowned, one who slipped on the stairs and fell as she boarded a ship, one who, with her husband, drowned when their boat overturned, and the last, more ambiguously, a poor woman pulled from the river.¹²⁵

Watermen frequently drowned in the course of their work, often as a result of collisions. For example, one waterman drowned when his boat struck against the sterlings and upset, and two watermen drowned when their boat collided with a gentleman's barge.¹²⁶ But many other occupations were attended by dangers, some obvious and others unsuspected. Bricklayers seem to have been particularly at risk from falling bricks or collapsing walls.¹²⁷ Those whose work involved climbing

ladders or scaffolding were always at risk of falling. In some cases, industrial machinery was a direct cause of death, as in the case of a distiller's servant who was fatally burned when he was unable to prevent the still-head from flying off a piece of equipment.¹²⁸ Servants were often the victims of occupational accidents; another brewer's servant was scalded to death by boiling liquid, and a butcher's servant who hit a tree with a cartload of dung was suffocated when it overturned on top of him.¹²⁹

Almost all the dangers of daily life that were present for children were present for adults as well, though accounts of accidents fatal to adults tended to emphasize their unusual or spectacular rather than their monitory aspects. The more unusual the accident, the more details are included in the account, even when the account is brief. In one case, a man trying to see an eagle in a wooden cage climbed to the top of the Monument and was killed instantly when he fell to the street.¹³⁰ Elsewhere, a sleepwalking soldier fell to his death out a third-story window, and a waiter running up a flight of stairs fell on the knife he was carrying and died later of the wound.¹³¹ No blame is attached to such reports, but each accident is rendered mildly grotesque by the inclusion of small details. Even in the case of accidental shootings of adults, by definition preventable, reports are generally not explicitly didactic, though their inclusion and the accumulation of detail may render them implicitly cautionary. For example, one report of an ostler who accidentally shot and mortally wounded a young man includes the information that the ostler did not think the pistol was loaded.¹³² A maid is reported killed when a man cleaning a gun beside her accidentally caught the sleeve of his coat on the trigger and the gun fired.¹³³ However, other reports of accidental shootings include information that implicates those who fire guns irresponsibly. For example, in one account, soldiers participating in a public exhibition of a mock attack put pebbles and buttons into their guns and several soldiers are killed when the "battle" escalates out of control.¹³⁴ In a report from Strasbourg, an innocent bystander is shot and killed by a policeman firing at an escaping soldier, and in Ireland, a father, fearing that his son is among a group of disorderly men being persuaded by soldiers, is shot by a soldier when he opens his door to investigate.¹³⁵ Irresponsible shooting by a civilian of means is obviously a cause for censure. A report from Paris tells of a servant, taking shelter from the rain in a gateway, who is shot by the owner of the house. When he becomes aware of his mistake, the owner sends for a surgeon, who amputates the leg, but the servant dies. The owner of the house is ordered to pay all charges and to provide an annual pension to the servant's widow and children.¹³⁶

Accidental poisoning seems to have been common among adults. In one sad case, a farmer, making cakes to poison rats, accidentally dropped one out a window, where it "was taken up by a poor Woman, who carried it home, and gave Part of it to her Husband and five Children, who eat it, and the rest she eat herself: The Children are all since dead, and the Husband and Wife are in a very dangerous Condition."¹³⁷ The report of a man poisoned when a phial of poison was inadvertently substituted for his medicine appears spatially close to one of the magazine's many reports on Mary Blandy's intentional murder of her father by the same means.¹³⁸ Unusual poisonings were no doubt intended to bemuse the reader, such as the story of a farmer's maid who found a dead toad in the farmer's supper and wanted to discard the food. A man in the house insisted that it would do no harm, but the farmer grew violently ill and died in agony a few hours later, "in spight of the remedies applied to his relief. It is supposed the toad was taken up with the water out of the well undiscovered."¹³⁹ However, at times, moral lessons seem implicit in accounts of poisoning that are associated with drinking. A Shipmaster in a pub at Newcastle asked the landlady to put a bottle of beer by his bedside, but the maid inadvertently removed it, and the sailor, groping in the dark, picked up another bottle, which poisoned him. A surgeon was sent for "and every thing proper given to cause him to vomit them up, but to no purpose: His body swelled to such a degree, that the blood bursted from his mouth, nose and ears, and he expired next morning with the most racking pains."¹⁴⁰ In another case, a labourer who drank three pints of Geneva "in a few minutes" fell down and died immediately, probably of acute alcohol poisoning.¹⁴¹ An excise man in Perth seized -- and drank from -- bottles he confiscated from a ship's crew and died on the spot.¹⁴² Such reports seem to convey a warning about injudicious drinking, but they may have only been part of a more general message concerning accidental poisoning. The magazine's notice of an imperial ordinance intended to address the problem of accidental poisoning in Vienna seems to support this suggestion.¹⁴³

Adults were also subject to attacks by animals, often cows and bulls. One sixty-nine-year-old man, known locally as "the walking Frenchman," is reported attacked in the fields near Hampstead, where a cow pushed him into a ditch with her horns, causing bruises from which he later died.¹⁴⁴ In another instance a washerwoman crossing a field narrowly escaped death when attacked by a bull, "who tore her Face from her Right Temple quite across, and likewise tore her Cloaths off, and bruised her in a terrible Manner."¹⁴⁵ A less dramatic but equally fatal animal attack occurred when a Barnstable woman

opened a drawer to take out some linen and was attacked by a mouse that jumped out and fastened itself on her lip. "which frightened her to that Degree, that she fell down in a Fit and expired directly."¹⁴⁶ These domestic encounters are sometimes complemented by accounts of animal attack in foreign parts, where the animals are more exotic and their attacks even more savage. For example, a report from Warsaw tells of a Lithuanian prince who kept bears in the palace, in order to use them as horses. Playing with one in his bedchamber, "the Bear fell upon his Highness with great Fury, and would have devoured him, if a Servant had not come and rescued him, which he performed with the Loss of his own Life; for the Bear seizing him, tore him in such a Manner, that he died instantly."¹⁴⁷

The quality of the macabre is attached to reports of deaths that are the result of pranks gone wrong. For example, a Chester man who made his living imitating bird songs in his throat wagered his drinking companions "a Quart of Ale that he would hang by the Neck for three Minutes, and it should do him no Harm." He did so, but then made an even more daring bet for another quart; "he hang'd five Minutes; but when he was let down he was quite dead, which very much frightened and surprized all the Company."¹⁴⁸ A similar, more sinister, instance occurs in Gloucestershire, where a group of customers in a pub teased a beggar that hanging beggars was a local custom. He told them he was not fit to die, but they hanged him anyway, and when they cut him down, he seemed dead. They took him outside and laid him under a hayrake to avoid suspicion being drawn to themselves. However, the beggar revived and his dying groans were heard by a passing woman, to whom he was able to make clear the circumstances of the accident.¹⁴⁹ Children at play were sometimes implicated as the cause of accidental deaths, as in the case of a mother carrying her nine-month-old baby past boys who were throwing bricks at each other. One brick struck the baby in the temple, killing it instantly.¹⁵⁰ In another instance, some boys rubbed a rat with tar and set it afire, but the rat ran under the petticoats of a pregnant woman, which caused her to faint and threatened to cause a miscarriage.¹⁵¹ Occasionally, pranks concerning death could take a comic turn, as in the story of a parson who came upon the body of a man "cover'd with a white Cloth, with a Plate of Salt set on his Belly," next to an old woman begging money for his burial. She claimed some brutish People had given her husband so much gin, it killed him. The parson, perceiving that the hand of the corpse was still warm, ran a pin under the corpse's thumbnail, "which so quicken'd his Spirit that

he instantly jump'd up, made a Spring over the Parson's Head, and made clear off." The magazine comments that he was "a merry drunken Cobler[sic]," who was given to such pranks.¹⁵²

Another ever-present and frequent cause of death was the natural world. Lightning storms that killed humans and animals seem to have been fairly common.¹⁵³ Windstorms, too, were responsible for causing houses and chimneys to collapse. Flooding from sudden rain and/or melting snow sometimes caused deaths, as in the report of such an occurrence in Yorkshire, in which houses, bridges, and livestock were washed away and several people were killed.¹⁵⁴ Elsewhere, waterspouts carried off whole villages.¹⁵⁵ Snow caused houses to collapse on their occupants, and in one poignant notice from Dumbartonshire, a man and his wife and child, gone in search of their master's cattle, are reported found "all dead in a Wreath of Snow."¹⁵⁶ Deaths that were reported in distant parts were often in the context of great disasters that claimed many lives. Shipwrecks often killed whole crews. In the Hague, a bridge filled with late afternoon traffic collapsed and sank, killing five instantly and seriously injuring several more.¹⁵⁷ An opera house collapsed in Milan, killing 200.¹⁵⁸ An infestation of wolves is reported in a very gruesomely detailed letter by a French priest, who claims that several people were attacked and about thirty killed and eaten.¹⁵⁹ A rainstorm in St. Petersburg killed more than a thousand people.¹⁶⁰ The eruption of a volcano in Cuba was reported to have killed 2,000,000.¹⁶¹ But no natural disaster was so well-reported as earthquakes, which seem to have held a degree of fascination for readers comparable to the fascination with sea voyages and shipwrecks. Earthquakes are reported in Peru, Naples, Lisbon and Turkey, and these, particularly the Lisbon earthquake, become a focus for religious debate, one side claiming that such events are a visitation from God to punish residents for their sins, and the other side claiming that the good and the wicked do not meet with justice in this world but the next.¹⁶²

Murder¹⁶³

The streets of London were dangerous for reasons other than traffic. Crime, both petty and serious, was endemic, and commentators like Henry Fielding were quick to point out its frequency and to speculate on its causes. Much criminal activity was either violent or had the potential to turn violent, and, as J. M. Beattie has observed, judicial violence "was at the heart of the system of criminal justice.

Hangings and burnings and floggings were witnessed by thousands, of all ages, all over England."¹⁶⁴ Nor was home the "haven in a heartless world" that Christopher Lasch has wistfully if erroneously claimed for our own century. Domestic violence was as widespread and serious as street violence, if not more so. Organized hierarchically, the family infrastructure throughout the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth centuries was often maintained through violent means, in which superiors physically abused subordinates, a situation that was accepted and tolerated, within limits that were generally understood.¹⁶⁵ These limits were exceeded, however, when domestic violence took the form of murder, for murder was not to be tolerated under any circumstances short of self-defense.¹⁶⁶ Not surprisingly, however, murders reported in *The Ladies Magazine* often involved the killing of spouses.

J.M. Beattie has shown that, according to judicial records in Sussex and Surrey, women committed a wide variety of crimes at a rate far lower than men; between 1662 and 1802, men were responsible for slightly over 75% of major property offenses and for slightly over 80% of crimes against person, though women participated in the same range of crimes.¹⁶⁷ He has also shown that when women committed murder, they did not always do so in ways that reflected their "feminine" nature, characterized by passivity and physical weakness, and that (unlike male murderers) they almost always knew their victims.¹⁶⁸ Furthermore, many female criminals who committed violent crimes and who appear in court records are the wives of men of some substance.¹⁶⁹ This fact might reflect either the greater chance that the system had of apprehending such women or the greater interest it had in making them examples. All of Beattie's observations are borne out by my study of murder in *The Ladies Magazine*, perhaps suggesting that if we in the twentieth century have tended to see eighteenth-century women as passive and victimized, this can hardly have been the view of the magazine's readers.

Murder had long been the fare of readers of the popular press, individual accounts of murders appearing in the weekly papers by the 1670s.¹⁷⁰ By mid-century, accounts of murders and executions had developed into a special and elaborate journalism, and *The Ladies Magazine* utilized the range of available forms. Some murder narratives, like that concerning Mary Blandy, are reported in detail and span several issues of the magazine in forms that include criminal biography, letters, explanations, eyewitness accounts of her trial and execution, and editorial commentary on the crime and her guilt.¹⁷¹ In other instances, however, notices are limited to the information that the corpse of an unidentified victim

of foul play has been found in a particular location. Analysis of all the murders that appear in *The Ladies Magazine* reveal some patterns, which, though misleading in terms of actual occurrence, are interesting in terms of their inclusion in a magazine whose readers were primarily female. If one were to judge from the magazine's pages, women are almost as likely to kill their husbands as husbands to kill their wives: seven wives murder their husbands, and eleven husbands murder their wives. The magazine bears out Beattie's finding that women are more likely to know their victims: four women murdered family members, while only two men are reported as doing so. However, while only two women are reported as murdering acquaintances, fourteen men are cited. While only one woman seems to have killed a stranger, men are reported as having killed eleven. *The Ladies Magazine* also gives the impression that parents did not often murder their children outright: in only one case is a woman reported to have cut the throat of one of her three children, and later confessed to the Justice of the Peace, that "her Intent was to have murdered them all."¹⁷² Furthermore, analysis of murders in the magazines shows that the murder weapon of choice for women was poison (five cases), a fact that Beattie explains not in terms of female physical weakness or deviousness, but in terms of opportunity: women had many chances to tamper with food and drink. Moreover, poisoning might have offered relative safety from the possible violence of husbands.¹⁷³ In addition, the high visibility of the Blandy murder may have prompted the magazine to report this form of female murder more often. Poisoning was closely followed, however, by women's physical attacks with objects ranging from a candlestick to a brickbat to a shoe. In two cases of murder by women, one a seeming case of self-defense, knives were the murder weapon. Stabbing, however, was overwhelmingly the most frequent murder weapon for men who killed; beatings, guns, and strangling were distant followers. Only one case each of poisoning and defenestration were reported as means of murders committed by males.

One of the most poignant cases of wives who murder their husbands is found in the first issue of *The Ladies Magazine*, in an account describing the execution (by being burned alive) of seventeen-year-old Amy Hutchinson, literate, of respectable family, who had contracted an undesirable correspondence and relationship with a man of whom her parents disapproved. She had subsequently married another suitor, whom she poisoned after a few months, seemingly at the instigation of the first lover. Amy Hutchinson's story tells of threats on her life by the first suitor, the initial suspicions of her own mother,

which eventually lead to indictment, and her rape by a fellow-prisoner while in custody.

Notwithstanding her youth, her confession, her repentance, and her protestations of innocence of other reports of lewdness, Amy dies a traitor's death.¹⁷⁴ Murdering a wife was a felony, but murdering a husband was petty treason. Most accounts of the murders of husbands do not specify indictment, conviction or execution, but of all the executions of women in *The Ladies Magazine*, Amy Hutchinson is the only woman who dies by this horrific means.¹⁷⁵

Mary Blandy's murder of her father became a national scandal in 1751, when an allegedly privileged young heiress was found guilty of and executed for murdering her father by poisoning his water gruel with arsenic.¹⁷⁶ The first notice, lacking any specific details, appears in *The Ladies Magazine* in August, 1751. In this account, because a "near Relation" and "an eminent Attorney" had refused an Irish gentleman as a suitor for a lady, the lady poisoned the relation's gruel, but the "odd" taste made him drink only half of it. A maid drank what was left, and a short time later, both were discovered poisoned. An apothecary sent an antidote, but the lady poisoned this too; the man subsequently died, and it was not known if the maid would live.¹⁷⁷ Later in the month, there is a notice that Miss Blandy has been put in irons following a rumour that a rescue is planned.¹⁷⁸ The details of the actual murder -- as well as commentary on the murder, on Miss Blandy's guilt or innocence, and on the fitness of her sentence -- emerge over the next year, but the bulk of detail is contained in her trial testimony in "The Conclusion of the horrid Patricide of Mr. Blandy," in October, 1751, where it is (mistakenly) reported that the maid who drank the rest of the gruel had died, and that Miss Blandy's father had spent £1500 on her education.¹⁷⁹ In November, 1751, the story of Mary Blandy's trial includes additional details, as do other accounts in March and early April, 1752. At the end of April, the magazine carries the account of her execution. Her biography begins in the first May issue and continues until mid-June.¹⁸⁰ *The Ladies Magazine* intersperses its coverage of the murder, trial and execution with historical details, such as the Roman and Egyptian treatment of parricides.¹⁸¹

The notoriety of the Blandy case seemingly allowed it to serve as a model for the repetition of similar murders. When an "eminent" farmer asks his wife of less than a year to go the Apothecary for his "Physick," she also gets two ounces of mercury, mixes them together, and gives the mixture to her husband, who dies within a few hours. Not only does the method of murder correspond with the

circumstances of the Blandy case, but further similarities encourage a didactic reading that depends on the particular abhorrence of the two murders. First is the evidence of premeditation. The farmer's wife is thought to have planned the murder from the beginning of their marriage, recalling Mary Blandy's extensive correspondence with her lover about the potion to be given Francis Blandy. Second is the young wife's lack of remorse: after her apprehension, she "would not give any Cause she had to commit so cruel an Action."¹⁸² As well, in both cases, apparent mercy provides the occasion for destruction, and restoration to health the means of death: the seemingly natural attributes of female character and duty are thus betrayed. The double association makes the crimes of these women, perpetrated upon male family members, doubly reprehensible.

However, while the case of the farmer's wife is neither explicit nor elaborated, the extensive coverage of Mary Blandy is monitory on a number of levels, emphasizing women's inability to choose their husbands judiciously and the twin perils of parental overindulgence and filial ingratitude. The story is also sensational, and the magazine's persistence in following it indicates readers' interest, not only in the murder, but in the story of the putative heiress who "threw it all away." To a great extent, the gap between Miss Blandy's status, education, and supposed fortune and her unacceptable conduct may have rendered her story fascinating in terms of sheer incomprehensibility as much as voyeurism.

More typical of *The Ladies Magazine* coverage of murder by women, though no less didactic, is the account of an identified workman whose swollen corpse leads authorities to suspect his poison and murder by his wife, "as she has disappeared ever since his Death, and had no great Reputation for Chastity during his Life."¹⁸³ In another non-specific account of a murder in Hammersmith, a lodger who seduced his landlady helped her to beat her husband during a quarrel, although she subsequently claimed that he "died suddenly."¹⁸⁴ The coroner's verdict of Wilful Murder in these cases suggests that Susan Amussen is mistaken in her claim that the eighteenth century "abandoned the obsession with violent wives," which had been a subject of considerable debate in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹⁸⁵ While the precise reasons for abusing and killing these husbands is unclear, jealousy is clearly the motive in the case of a woman who suspected her husband of infidelity, took a knife to bed and cut off her husband's genitals while he slept, causing him to bleed to death. The magazine comments, "The Punishment for this Crime is burning, for a Woman's killing her Husband is looked upon as petty

Treason in Law; and as these two late Instances serve to shew the dismal Consequences of being plunged into the fiery Lake of Jealousy, so they ought to warn every one against admitting the first Advances of so dangerous a Passion, and having their Hearts torn to Pieces by that devouring Vulture."¹⁸⁶ The other "late Instance" referred to appears in the immediately preceding account on the same page, and concerns a young husband who murdered his wife by repeated stabbing and "cutting her Throat in such a Manner as almost to sever her Head from her Body." though they had been married less than a week. He appeared before Justice Fielding "greatly affected, and full of Contrition....He is a young Fellow, just turned of 17 Years of Age, born only with one Arm, of a comely and modest Countenance, and his Behaviour, with the extreme Horrors with which he appeared to be possest, drew some Pity from the Crowd who were present, notwithstanding he confessed that he was near a Quarter of an Hour in the Commission of the Murder." In light of the magazine's comment on the fatal dangers of jealousy, this comment on the crowd's misplaced pity must be seen as either ironic or censorious.

Unspecified passion resulted in the death of Sarah Poole's husband when the brickbat she threw at his head struck and killed him. However, there is considerable ambiguity in the magazine's comment: "When the Prisoner was before the Justice, she appeared entirely indifferent, as if conscious of no Crime, and the Witnesses against her, by their Behaviour, (tho' they swore positively to the Fact) seemed to be of the same Opinion."¹⁸⁷ The comment seems to imply that witnesses testified that, while she threw the brickbat that killed her husband, the killing was not a criminal act. Coupled with Sarah Poole's indifference, this may indicate a general knowledge of her husband's previous ill treatment of her, which in the eighteenth century might or might not affect the court's decision regarding a wife's conviction and punishment.¹⁸⁸ The notice records only that Sarah Poole was committed to Newgate, and there is no follow-up in later issues, which may suggest her acquittal or pardon.

At least according to *The Ladies Magazine*, women murdered relatives other than spouses at a rate twice that of men, an observation that may reflect less a situation that was true generally than the fact that such a crime was considered in women to be more reprehensible. The magazine's extensive coverage of Mary Blandy certainly supports such a supposition. Having in one instance observed that Mary Blandy passed her time not preparing herself for death but "in an indolent and thoughtless manner," the magazine then abandons its narrative account in order to moralize: "We shall here leave her to the Reproaches of

her own Conscience; a Monster who will sooner or later set her Actions in their proper Light before her."¹⁸⁹ The magazine censures abuse of parental authority, but declares that such had not been Miss Blandy's experience, and throughout its coverage, emphasis is placed on the virtue of the father in order to worsen the guilt of the daughter. In its account of Mary Blandy's trial, the doctor testifies that he had asked Mr. Blandy who he thought had given him poison, and Blandy "replied with Tears in his Eyes, though with a forced Smile, *A poor Love-sick Girl, but I forgive her.*"¹⁹⁰ Even testimony that Mary Blandy had behaved in an exemplary manner during her father's illness was qualified by other testimony that was incriminating, both morally and legally. A servant described Miss Blandy's kneeling before her father, praying that he will not curse her, and his reply: *"I curse thee, no Child, I bless thee, and hope God will bless thee, and I pray thou may'st live to repent and amend. -- Leave me, least thou should'st say something to thy Prejudice."*¹⁹¹ Another servant testified that Mary Blandy spoke disrespectfully of her father to the lover for whom she had allegedly poisoned him, and another witness claimed to have heard Mary Blandy say good-humouredly, *"Who would not send an old Father to Hell for Ten Thousand Pounds?"*¹⁹² Even after her execution, the magazine continues to debate the matter in terms of moral, not legal, justice. The criminal biography that commences serialization a month after her execution, written as an unidentified first-person narrative, suggests that, while Mr. Blandy had been an indulgent parent, he had been intolerant of suitors and had refused his daughter a good dowry.¹⁹³ The next issue emphasizes Mary Blandy's behaviour at her trial, in terms that make her filial culpability unmistakable: In the thirteen hours of her trial, "she never once changed her Countenance, nor shed a Tear...and during the whole Time she behaved with great Composure. After the Evidence for the Crown were all examined, she made a Speech to the Court, wherein she complained greatly of the Treatment she had received, in being fetter'd, [etc], and when the Verdict was given in, she seemed to smile, and returned their Lordships Thanks for the Tenderness and Impartiality in her Trial, and begged to be indulged with a longer Time to settle her Affairs than is usually given. When she went from the Bar to return to Prison, after receiving Sentence, she stepped into the Coach with as little Concern, as if she was going to a Ball..."¹⁹⁴ When *The Ladies Magazine* is finished with Mary Blandy's story, there can be little doubt of her guilt, but whether the guilt is greater for being a murderer or an ungrateful daughter is far from clear.

The end of the account claims to have presented all possible and authentic evidence in the clearest possible light and concealed nothing in its attempt to "elucidate the Truth." Nevertheless, the magazine's conclusion is in direct opposition to all the evidence it has painstakingly produced of her guilt and earlier lack of remorse: "...when we reflect on the Excellence of her natural Qualities and Endowments, improv'd by the best Education; when we consider her firm and intrepid Behaviour at her Trial; her steady and uniform Seriousness (except in a few Instances) during her Confinement; and her persisting in Vindication of her Innocence even to her latest Breath at the fatal Tree, all plead strongly in her Favour; and whether really guilty or not, must be left only to her supreme Judge. To conclude, she was either the most *wicked*, or the most *unfortunate* of Women; but Pity and Christian Charity would incline one to believe the latter." The account really ends with a false promise whose irony may extend to the magazine's suspicious charity toward Mary Blandy:

**** The great Length the above Account has run, having displeas'd some of our Subscribers, the Publisher promises not to burden them with any Thing of so tedious a Nature for the future.*

Elizabeth Jeffreyes was another female homicide, who with the help of two male accomplices murdered her uncle in order to get his money. In another instance, Amelia Leedum killed her mother-in-law with a candlestick, when the latter interfered in a quarrel between Amelia and her husband of three months. While the consistence of Mary Blandy's cold and unfeeling behaviour during and after the murder was emphasized in *The Ladies Magazine*, in the case of Amelia, the terms of passion govern both her untimely action and her response to it: "When she was first brought into Goal [sic], she appeared as one entirely out of her Mind, and has continued so ever since."¹⁹⁵ In another, unelaborated, account, "Rachel Stephens, charged with wilfully murdering Hannah Stephens her mother, was proved lunatick."¹⁹⁶

The magazine reports on only a few other murders committed by women: a servant who murdered a male fellow-servant "by striking him upon the Head with a Pint Pot"; a woman who stabbed a man with whom she had previously co-habited (the man is reported to have been abusing and assaulting her, suggesting that this murder is one of self-defense); and an unidentified woman who killed an unidentified man by throwing a shoe at him after he refused to give her money to have it mended.¹⁹⁷ The lack of

detail in the last account may suggest that the point of the story is ironic rather than either informative or didactic.

When women murdered, the crime of homicide was always a violation of conventional norms of female behaviour, in addition to being a violation of human morality. However, the same was not true when men murdered.¹⁹⁸ In part, women's homicide was "gendered" because women generally knew their victims, while men quite often killed in the "routine" commission of crimes like assault and robbery, in which the victims were strangers. Though a street attack on a woman might be seen as deliberately undertaken because of her supposed vulnerability, the sex of victims of crimes committed by men was often a matter of chance. In some murders by men, however, gender must be factored into the event; the murder of a wife by her husband, for example, can obviously never be considered a random attack, though it might or might not be premeditated. John Juckers (alias Vicars) killed his second wife when he "placed the Knife under her left Ear, the back Part upward, and struck it downward as they do Sheep."¹⁹⁹ In another case, a man returning home drunk, "put a Poker into the Fire till it was red-hot, and his Wife, who had been sitting up for him, being asleep, he ran the Poker several Inches into her Body."²⁰⁰ In another horrific case, John Davy murdered his wife immediately after they had agreed to a reconciliation of their estrangement, when he "seized her by the Throat, then kneeling upon her Breast, held her in that Manner until she expired."²⁰¹ While the magazine uniformly condemns such actions, their brutality is typically not given the gendered didactic bias implied in its discussion of female murderers.

In one of the most elaborate accounts of a woman murdered by a man, the murderer and his victim seem not to be acquainted, though they live in the same village. Nevertheless, the murder is anything but random. Thomas Colley was eventually convicted and executed for the murder of elderly Ruth Osborne, but the only reference to gender here is an oblique one that associates women with witchcraft; Ruth Osborne was suspected of being a witch (as was her husband, who was also beaten). The magazine's extensive coverage of this murder, the result of mob violence in the village of Tring, is interesting when compared to that of Mary Blandy's story. Like the Blandy story, the coverage of the Tring murder begins with a general account: an unnamed elderly man and woman were accused of being witches and causing the cattle in the village to die. The townspeople hunted them down, bound the old woman, beat her "in a barbarous and cruel Manner," then threw her into a pond, where she perished.

The old man survived the same treatment but died later. Several persons were taken into custody "for so inhuman a Proceeding."²⁰² Two issues later, a more detailed account appears. The parish officers protecting the Osbornes were themselves threatened with murder and arson by the mob. The Osbornes were subsequently dragged two miles, stripped naked, and, their thumbs tied to their toes, thrown into a muddy stream. "After much Ducking and ill Usage, the poor old Woman was thrown quite naked on the Bank, almost choaked with Mud, and expired in a few Minutes, being kick'd and beat with Sticks, even after she was dead; and the poor Man lies dangerously ill of the Bruises he received. To add to their Barbarity, they put the dead Witch (as they called her) in Bed with her Husband, and ty'd them together."²⁰³ Several persons had been apprehended for wilful murder.²⁰⁴

Significantly, this story is followed by a letter concerning another woman accused of witchcraft, who subsequently inherited a fortune and became a respected citizen, a tale that allows the writer of the letter to comment obliquely on the events at Tring: "[I]t is impossible for a Woman to pass for a Witch, unless she is very Poor, Aged, and lives in a Neighbourhood where the People are void of common Sense."²⁰⁵ Another letter in the next issue corrects slight inaccuracies in the earlier Tring account and relays the information that one person has been committed for the crime.²⁰⁶ Another letter published a few issues later uses the events at Tring to discuss the recent repeal of the Statue of James I against witchcraft, and relates the sixteenth-century case of the Earl of Derby, to demonstrate to readers the extent to which public opinion concerning witchcraft had changed in 100 years.²⁰⁷ Two issues later, the magazine reports that Thomas Colley has been sentenced to death for the murder of Ruth Osborne. This account gives additional details of events leading up to the murder, including the first mention of a "Mob" of 10,000 people, who sought the Osbornes at the workhouse and pulled part of it down when they found the Osbornes missing. Other information includes the depth of the pond where the suffocation took place - three feet -- and the age of Ruth Osborne -- seventy.²⁰⁸ More people are reported indicted, but no other cases are followed by the magazine. Instead, the magazine's focus on the question of the existence of witches is pursued; even the report of Colley's execution refers to the debate.²⁰⁹ Colley is reported to have taken the Sacrament and "signed a solemn Declaration of his Faith relating to Witchcraft; which he desired might be carried to the Place of Execution, and was there publicly read, by his earnest Request, just before he was turn'd off." However, the villagers of Tring were apparently unconvinced

by Colley's declaration: "The Infatuation of the greatest Part of the People in that Part of the Country was so great, that they would not be seen near the Place of Execution, insisting, that it was a hard Case to hang a Man for destroying an old wicked Woman that had done so much Damage by her Witchcraft."²¹⁰

Most accounts of murder by men are reported less elaborately, and while Richard Brown's drunken murder of his daughter might add to the general knowledge of domestic violence, and reports such as that of the accidental discovery of a young woman's body in a field and the equally accidental discovery of the murderer might alert readers to the dangers of women being abroad on their own, many reported murders simply cannot be seen in a light that reflects a gender bias.²¹¹ It is interesting to speculate on why these might be of interest to women readers. In some cases, sensational appeal is obvious, as in the case of an elderly man killed by three Irishmen, who "beat him most unmercifully with their Sticks, and when he was almost dead, they dispatched him, by striking a Reaping-Hook into his Neck, under his Ear, and cutting him to the Windpipe," after which they robbed him and threw his body in a ditch.²¹² In other cases, the appeal is ironic, such as the instance of a Devonshire farmer who entered an alehouse kitchen and behaved so abusively, that he was turned out. The farmer left, declaring that he would kill the first person who came out of the house. This person was a man not at all involved in the quarrel, but the farmer stabbed him three times, killing him instantly.²¹³ No particular bias or rationale is evident in other cases, for example, in the notices that Justice Fielding had committed to Newgate a man who had shot and killed another; that a man stabbed in a dispute over a shuffleboard game was expected to die; and that a sailor had mortally stabbed another man in a brothel.²¹⁴ While these murders might refer obliquely to practices and dispositions that were not socially condoned, the lack of elaboration and detail in some accounts minimizes their potential didacticism.

This mix of reporting intended to reach a primarily female audience suggests the obvious: that the women readers of *The Ladies Magazine* were interested in a range of topics comparable to the interests of the public at large. In appealing to both a primarily female audience at some points and to an audience not necessarily characterized by gender at others, the magazine reveals something important about its women readers: the extent to which female readers were sometimes undifferentiated from male readers, a fact the magazine recognized and readers obviously accepted. This claim is supported by the two other contexts in which murder is discussed in the magazine, history and national affairs. The "History of England"

feature not infrequently includes accounts of the murder of such historical personages as King Edward II (a particularly gruesome account), the young Princes, Thomas Becket, and Rosamond, the favourite mistress of Henry II, murdered by the order of Eleanor of Aquitaine.²¹⁵ The magazine also presents a running commentary on Indian massacres taking place in Nova Scotia. These explicitly detailed accounts, along with accounts of violence committed by slaves and transported criminals, may have served to reinforce readers' association of murder with savagery, depravity, and inhumanity, which, over against the unacceptability of such violence in a more civil and polite society, may have had the effect of reinforcing growing intolerance toward violence, in general, not only gendered, terms. Taken as a whole, the representations of murder in *The Ladies Magazine* cannot be confined to simple categories that neatly accommodate any particular literary theory. Rather, the range and diversity of the murders reported, as well as of the ways they are reported, suggest that *The Ladies Magazine* was neither a scandal sheet, nor a conduct book, nor a thoughtless imitation of *The Gentleman's Magazine*. The relatively long life of *The Ladies Magazine* seems to indicate that Jasper Goodwill's reading of the diverse interests of his female audience was an accurate one. An analysis of representations of execution in the magazines reinforces the assessment that the current exclusionary emphasis on gender issues in discussions of eighteenth-century women's magazines is unnecessarily limiting.

Execution

In the eighteenth century, public execution was increasingly a matter of debate, but in the first half of the century it remained primarily an event.

Death by hanging, like most kinds of death in the eighteenth century, was public. Not isolated from the community or concealed as an embarrassment to it, the execution of the death sentence was made known to every part of the metropolis and the surrounding villages. On the morning of a hanging day the bells of the churches of London were rung buffeted. The cries of hawkers selling ballads and 'Last Dying Speeches' filled the streets. The last preparations for death in the chapel at Newgate were open to those able to pay the gaoler his fee. The malefactor's chains were struck off in the press yard in front of friends and relations, the curious, the gaping and onlookers at the prison gate. The route of the hanging procession crossed the busiest axis of the town at Smithfield, passed through one of the most heavily populated districts...and followed the most-trafficked road, Tyburn Road, to the gallows. There the assembled people on foot, upon horseback, in coaches, crowding near-by houses, filling the adjoining roads, climbing ladders, sitting on the wall enclosing Hyde Park and standing in its contiguous cow pastures gathered to witness the

hanging. By the eighteenth century this crowd had become so unruly that the 'hanging match' became well known to foreign visitors and English alike as both a principal attraction of the town and a periodic occasion of disturbance.²¹⁶

While capital punishment provoked little debate in the eighteenth century, the carnival nature of public hangings -- in terms of both the voyeurism of spectators and the potential for these gatherings to turn violent themselves -- was a matter of concern. These developments were incompatible with the function and long-standing rationalization of public hanging as a deterrent to crime. John Beattie has observed that in the late seventeenth century, public punishments were intended to expose the immorality of the individual (and representative) criminal while they validated the morality of the community. Both criminal and spectators were integral to the teaching process. The crowd was "engaged in a renewal of community values by their recognition and disapproval of the deviant act committed by the offender on display. His exposure and punishment were intended to discourage him and others from committing other offenses. And beyond that, public punishment performed the wider function of affirming the moral boundaries of the society. The crowds that came to watch the 'hanging matches'...confirmed and reestablished the acceptable by participating in the condemning of the unacceptable."²¹⁷ In the eighteenth century, however, the participation of the crowd sometimes reflected less the affirmation of community boundaries than sympathy for the criminal. Demonstrations of sympathy might take the form of passive sentimental responses like crying or more overt forms of audible grumbling or even riot. Surprisingly, it seems likely that this change, too, was quite closely related to the greater rate of literacy: criminal biographies, confessions, and last words were sold cheaply to the crowds at hangings and were also printed in a range of newspapers and magazines, along with detailed accounts of trials. Although those hanged at Tyburn were strangers to most people in the crowds, intimate knowledge of the "facts" of criminals' lives and deaths must have made them seem like acquaintances, and as such, fit objects for pity and sympathy.²¹⁸ In addition, although hanging did occasionally rid society of a truly dangerous and incorrigible criminal, most of those executed were convicted not of violent crimes but of theft, often of trivial items, and this fact was increasingly a matter of public disapproval.²¹⁹ Moreover, Peter Linebaugh has identified riots against surgeons trying to make off with the bodies of executed criminals

as expressions both of fellow-feeling for the criminals and of opposition to the ignominy imposed by law.²²⁰

In the final analysis, however, "the value of public hangings...was the reminder of what eventually lay in store for those who strayed from the paths of duty and obedience. That required not hundreds of victims -- for that could only have confused the message -- but a few only, and a number that could be varied depending on the state of crime and the present danger to the social order."²²¹ By mid-century, many people felt that public execution as a deterrent was not working. Conservatives like Henry Fielding sought to strengthen the effectiveness of execution as deterrent, not dilute it with sympathy or fellow-feeling or, most especially, enjoyment. According to Fielding, severity was a greater virtue in magistrates than leniency, terror was the only effective deterrent, and terror could be markedly increased in the population if executions took place immediately upon sentencing, were solemn, not celebratory, and occurred in private, leaving the details to public imagination.²²² However, when Parliament acted to enhance the effectiveness of public execution as a deterrent, it did so by increasing the terror factor through the Murder Act of 1752, which specified that the bodies of those executed as murderers would, without exception, be turned over to the Surgeon's Company for dissection.²²³ *The Ladies Magazine* felt that the Act (which co-incidentally granted execution narratives an additional dimension of horror) significant enough not only to give general notice of the Act's passage, but also to print a comprehensive abstract of it in a subsequent issue.²²⁴

Reform of public execution was slow and gradual, but it was underpinned by increasing intolerance for all forms of violence, as well as by direct measures to restrict public participation in executions. By the 1770s, there was increasing concern about the lesson that was being taught at executions: "The concern with the moral consequences of attending an execution formed a part of a growing discomfort with all forms of violence. In part this movement reflected a heightened demand for order as well as an increased fear for personal safety....Violence could no longer be treated as an isolated act. It was a symptom of an internal state....In a civilized society, feeling and morality supported each other in governing human relations. Civilized individuals demonstrated their higher valuation of human life in a refined sensitivity to suffering. Violence, in whatever form, severed this link and rendered one insensitive to others."²²⁵ The gallows were removed from Tyburn to Newgate in 1783, and the long

procession of the criminals was abolished. In 1780, Edmund Burke successfully advocated a policy of "[p]ostponement, mercy, and the dispersal of the locations of hangings. The effect of dispersal was to restrict public knowledge and publicity: as a result, crowds were smaller, and the holiday atmosphere disappeared. The cheap print matter that formerly conveyed to the public the lives, confessions, and last words of convicted criminals also disappeared or was altered and diminished in the information it relayed."²²⁶ This restriction of communication may have been as effective in creating an emotional and psychological distance between the crowd and the prisoner as any attempt to impose a physical barrier. The denial of the direct experience of watching a prisoner die and of the "authoritative" knowledge of intimate details of a prisoner's life and death renders collective public response greatly diluted if not impossible.

For most of the eighteenth century, those who did not attend public executions could experience them vicariously, since they were widely reported in the popular press. Interestingly, detailed accounts of executions appeared in a much wider range of women's magazines than did accounts of murder, which were largely confined to *The Ladies Magazine*, whose coverage of executions was also the most extensive. An overview of accounts of executions as they appeared in these magazines again suggests that such accounts were not only didactic or voyeuristic, but intended as informational, and in some cases, as contributory to discourses of contemporary significance.

In *The Parrot's* coverage of the executions of several Scottish rebels, Eliza Haywood characteristically mixes the interests of women's lives with the affairs of the greater world.²²⁷ In the first issue, three noblemen have been brought to trial and some of the rebels executed. The rebels "suffered the Death of Traitors, their Hearts and Bowels burnt by the common Hangman, and I hear their Heads are to be set up as a *Memento* on the *Gates of London, Manchester, and Carlisle*."²²⁸ Appended to the notice is the story of a young lady engaged to one of the executed rebels, mentioned in Chapter Three. The young woman attended the execution against the advice of her family, "determined to see the last of a Person so dear to her." Accompanied by a male relative and a female friend, she "got near enough to see the Fire kindled, which was to consume that Heart she knew so much devoted to her, and all the other dreadful Preparations for his Fate," without expressing excessive grief. When the execution was completed in all its horror, "she drew her Head back into the Coach, and crying out, -- *My dear, I follow*

*thee, -- I follow thee, -- and Sweet Jesus receive both our souls together, fell on the Neck of her Companion, and expired in the very Moment she was speaking." The Parrot's abandonment of its objective stance and its assumption of the viewpoint of this particular spectator rhetorically overrides the punitive and monitory intent of the execution, attempting to neutralize or divert the reader's support for the government and predispose her/him to the magazine's sympathy for the rebels. A subsequent issue contains the information that the King has pardoned one of the Scottish lords and that the rebel officers have received a three-week reprieve. According to *The Parrot*, people, "shocked" at this clemency, accuse the King of "false Mercy" and of committing "a kind of Sin against Justice and moral Prudence."²²⁹ The distance the magazine places between itself and "people" is, however, obscured by the wording of the post-script to the account: "SEVERAL of my Friends have taken Places to see the Execution of the Lords next Monday, so as I shall have an exact Account of all that happens in that melancholy Scene, my next shall bring you the Particulars." But before the magazine presents its account of the execution, it digresses: "POOR Poll" (the eidolon of *The Parrot* is a bird) is "very melancholy" because of the executions, commenting that, for a nation "justly famous" for "Bravery" and "Good Sense," as well as for "Compassion" and "Benevolence," England seems (to the Parrot) to be "deficient in the latter."²³⁰ Ignoring its earlier promise of detailed information gleaned from the testimonies of its voyeuristic friends, the Parrot asks why people turn out at such "spectacles of Horror":*

IT is not so much to be wondered at, that low People run to make a Holiday on these mournful Occasions, because better cannot be expected from their Education and way of Life; but for those who boast a superior knowledge of Things, ---are no Strangers to the Value of Life and Death, and the tremendous Consequences which must inevitably attend the latter:---These, me-thinks should avoid giving any Suspicion that they take Pleasure in such dreadful Sight, because it would shew a Taste miserably depraved, and that they either did not think at all, or thought to very bad Purpose.

Poll argues with imaginary opponents that it would be "more conformable to the Principles and Duties of that Religion you profess and seem so zealous in preserving, to have shut yourselves up in your Closets, and passed those Hours in Prayers for [the rebels'] immortal Welfare, which were taken up in gaping at their Fate." The Parrot then appeals to fellow and family feeling: "How then can you behold a Man,---a Man, once esteemed among you, dragged to the most ignominious Death, without reflecting on the Agonies of those dear Persons he has left behind?---And will not such Reflections raise Emotions

within you to destroy all the Satisfaction of gratifying a foolish and unjustifiable Curiosity?" According to Poll, the King's clemency should provoke admiration from his subjects, and accuses "Hackneys for the Publishers of News-Papers" of guiding the lower classes to a condemnation of the King's act.

Poll is not to be accused of treason, however, and professes to be less concerned for "the Fate of the Guilty, but the Humour of such who testify an Impatience and kind of Fondness for being Eye witnesses of it." Poll does not defend rebels but protests that "at present they engross the Attention of the Town, and Places were advertised to be let out to such as were desirous of beholding the Execution, and were actually hired for that Purpose, by some Persons whom it would better have become to have employed their Time and Money in a different Manner." Poll concludes, "It is not, therefore, *this Person*, nor *that Crime*, be the *one* never so *dangerous*, nor the *other* never so *detestable*, that, according to my way of thinking, can excuse beholding the Punishment with any sort of *Pleasure*, or even with Indifference." The voyeurism and curiosity evident at executions "denotes such Selfishness, such an Unconcern for every Body, in whose Life or Honour you have no immediate Interest, as you ought, methinks, be ashamed of testifying."

Poll then cleverly changes the subject to tell an anecdote of a poor boy who, through intelligence, luck, and industry, becomes a leading pewterer and marries well. His only fault is his penchant for watching executions. Deciding to go see his father, he and his wife set out, and within a few miles are attracted by a crowd gathering to see a sheep-stealer hanged. The young man goes to the gallows alone, and discovers that the sheep-stealer is his father, whose poverty has driven him to steal in order to provide for family. The old man is hanged, and the son falls into "violent Convulsion Fits" and is carried to an Inn, where his wife is frightened "into Agonies little inferior to his." They return to London, but "the sad Success of his Journey had such an Effect upon him, that it turned his Brain, and he died soon after in a Mad-House, leaving a Wife and three Children, in Circumstances very much impaired by the Expences this Misfortune had rendered unavoidable."

The story of the execution of the Scottish lords appears in a later section of the same issue and is presented in conventional terms: The noblemen had been beheaded on the previous Monday on Tower-Hill, "before the greatest Concourse of People that were ever seen together on such Occasion,---The former of these Lords seemed fearful and irresolute, on the Approach of Death, and got up three or four

Times from the Block, in order to delay the fatal Stroke; but the other behaved as he did ever since his Sentence, with the greatest Intrepidity and Chearfulness; and after reading a Paper he took out of his Pocket to the People, plucked his Cloathes off himself, and put on a Plaid Night-Cap, saying, He died a *Scotchman*; then laid down his Head, and immediately bade the Executioner do his Office, whose Hand I am told trembled in such a Manner, that it was not without three Blows the Head of that unhappy Lord was severed from his Body.---" The account concludes with the information that nearly a hundred people, twenty of them women, were to be tried for High-Treason, and that three more officers taken at Culloden had been hanged, while the others were given respite.

Haywood's combination of rhetorical strategies here is admirable and effective. While forestalling any suspicion of treason that might be levied against her magazine (and herself), she presents a point of view that is sympathetic to the Scottish rebels. For example, she praises the actions of the King but criticizes the policies of his government. And, simultaneously distancing herself as a parrot and including herself as a friend of spectators, she achieves an authoritative balance that allows her to condemn a popular social practice on moral grounds without indulging in preachy didacticism that might deter readers. Haywood's treatment of the executions reveals her political awareness as much as her political opinions, and also her willingness to participate in major discourses of her time.

The first issue of *The Ladies Magazine* only two years later also deals with an execution for treason, but in this case for petty treason, the murder of a husband by his wife. The account of Amy Hutchinson, discussed earlier, duly details the young woman's confession and last words, which include a warning to "all young Persons to acquaint their Friends when any Addresses are made to them; and above all, if any *base* and *lewd* Persons dare to assault them with any Thing shocking to modest and chaste Ears. And that they should never leave a Person they are ingaged to in a Pet, to wed another to whom they are indifferent; for if they come together without Affection, the smallest matter may foment Jealousies and Quarrels between two who should be one."²³¹ These didactic comments, however, do not end Amy's story. Three issues later, a detailed account of her execution appears, along with that of John Vickers, convicted of killing his wife by stabbing her in the neck "as a Butcher does a Sheep." At their execution, Vickers, who at his trial had shown no remorse over the murder of his wife but declared he would do it again, was dressed in his shroud and stood proudly in the cart that bore him, joining with

enthusiasm in the singing of his chosen Psalm, after which he spoke to those nearby, shook hands, and bowed. In contrast to the flamboyant Vicars, Amy Hutchinson was drawn in a Sledge, dressed "in a Garment daubed with *Pitch*, and her Arms and Face were besmear'd with *Tar*." When the 53rd Psalm selected by Amy Hutchinson was sung, Vicars enthusiastically joined in again.

This done, she was drawn to the Stake, where after a short Prayer, which she seem'd to ejaculate, the Executioner strangled her; and in about 20 minutes after the Pile was kindled. The whole Affair of her Execution was conducted with the utmost Decency. After she had been in the Flames about Half an Hour, the Minister of Death return'd to *Vicars*, (who had desir'd to see the last of her) in order to tie *his* fatal Knot: who appearing quite unpractic'd in this shocking Art, *Vicars* shewed him how to execute his Work in the most advantageous Manner: And having fixed the Cord to his own Desire, he immediately threw himself off, and expired in a few Moments. The Execution lasted very near three Hours.²³²

The magazine's post-mortem commentary is perhaps the most interesting part of the account: it seems that no one could reconcile Vicars' low birth with the "style" in which he died, but "[a]s for the Woman, she seemed either entirely resigned to her approaching *Dissolution*, or subject to a Degree of *Stupidity*, hardly to be expected on so solemn and tremendous an Occasion....It was observed, that Multitudes, of the *Tender Sex* especially, shed Tears for him on his being turned off, but few or none for the Woman, though the Nature and Rarity of her Execution, one would reasonably think, should have excited the most shocking Ideas." The writer of the letter in which this account is contained thinks Vicars' confession was true, but is appalled at his failure to repent before the Judge or at his execution. For him, Vicars' lack of repentance appears criminal in its denial of a moral by which the crowd's voyeurism and sadism can be rationalized. The tearless response of "the Tender Sex" toward one of its own, however, reinforces the crowd's primary appreciation of a showman and underscores the response of critics (like Poll Parrot) to the complicity and low-mindedness of the crowds, who appreciate a moral less than they do Vicars' bravado.

Executions appear in *The Ladies Magazine* in three ways: as part of the Old Bailey feature, in which names, ages, backgrounds, crimes and punishments are listed without elaboration; in short notices that frequently give more details of the criminal's background; and long elaborated accounts that often include details of the crime, the trial, the prisoner's life, and the execution. The executions reported are typically those of men, and when women are executed, they usually die for having

committed crimes of property, such as theft or forgery. While the majority of the executed men about whom the magazine reports are young and Irish, those whose accounts are elaborated tend to be from respectable backgrounds. Those who are truly penitent or truly depraved and unrepentant also merit longer accounts. An example of the first is the account of the twenty-year-old robber Thomas Good, seduced into a life of crime by more hardened criminals. For a month prior to his execution, he lay in his cell, "unable to move himself, having lost the Use of his Limbs, and being otherwise so sore, and maciated [sic], that from one of the most likely young Fellows, that might be seen, he was become the most miserable and wretched Object before he was executed. The afflicting Hand of God thus being upon him, he became sensibly affected with his Unworthiness, and earnestly besought the Lord to have Mercy upon him, and pardon his manifold Transgressions, for the Sake of Jesus. He acknowledg'd himself greatly deserving the Wrath of God, only having been so grievously afflicted, he had Hope towards God, that his Punishment might end with his Life, and that the Lord would be gracious unto him, and receive him to Mercy."²³³ By contrast, the execution at Perth of Alexander MacCowan for the "horrid Murder" of his pregnant wife and one of their children makes clear that MacCowan reaped the just rewards of his actions: "He was mounted on a high Scaffold, where his Right Hand was chopped off with an Axe; when the Cart drove from under him, his Weight broke the Rope, but he was again hoisted up by a Pulley, and after he was dead, he was hung up in Chains, and his Right Hand nailed to the Top of the Gallows. The Fellow himself confessed, that he was driven to perpetrate the barbarous Action for which he suffered, in order to carry on his filthy Intrigue more easily with another Woman whom he had debauched; and that he had gone through a long Track of unclean Practices, both at Home and Abroad."²³⁴

Sometimes, the size of the crowd or the severity of the punishment merited a longer account.²³⁵ For example, the murderer John Ogelby was hanged at the place the murder where he had committed the crime, and according to the magazine, several thousand people witnessed the hanging, the taking down, and the re-hanging in chains, which was the standard treatment for the corpse of a murderer before the Murder Act of 1752.²³⁶ In some cases, the exemplary behaviour of a criminal all but absolved him of his guilt, as in the case of the military execution of Mr. Anderson at Shrewsbury for an

unspecified crime. First, he took a purse of money out of pocket and put it on his coffin, "as a token of his respect and forgiveness":

After that he took off his hat and wig, and laid them on his coffin, (which with the shroud, lay close to him) then put on a white cap (tied with a black ribband) and drew it over his face; he then took a handkerchief, and held up his hand, and after praying privately, for about five minutes, dropp'd the handkerchief as a signal for the soldiers to fire, which three of them immediately did...One bullet went quite through his left breast, and the other thro' his right breast; but life still being perceived in him, a fourth person shot him through the head, which entirely dispatched him. [The soldiers marched around him, and a pair of gloves and black neck ribband was given each according to Anderson's request.] This being done, he was undressed, his body put into the coffin, and then into the hearse, which carried it to St. Martin's church-yard, where it was interred.--A vast concourse of people attended his execution; and it is not to be conceived with what courage and resolution he behaved to the very last moment,--dying as became a christian, [sic] a gentleman, and a soldier, agreeable to the expressions of most of the gentlemen who were present at his execution.²³⁷

In this account, the correspondence in status of the hanged man and the crowd combine to make this execution an entirely different kind of event.

The longest execution narratives, extending over several issues of the magazine, tend to focus on horrible people from respectable families. The account of fifty-three-year-old John Collington, for example, is comparable in length and detail to that of Mary Blandy. The official cause of execution was his hiring of a pair of arsonists to burn down a neighbour's barn. But in the moral terms invoked by the magazine, this was the least of his crimes. The son of a rector, Collington had been bad from the beginning, malicious and vengeful even as a schoolboy and an apprentice. Set up in business by his father, he was so unpleasant that customers shunned his business. He had been twice married (and was commonly thought to have been the cause of his first wife's death) and mistreated both wives. He had physically abused his living children, especially his eldest son and heir, whom Collington had tried to starve in a Saw-pit. The dead ones he had buried unbaptised in his own orchard "to save Charges." Inheriting a "considerable Fortune" from his father, Collington moved his family to his new estate, laughed at his neighbours when they prosecuted him for hunting, and was a notorious poacher, though he shot at poachers on his own property. The account concludes with Collington's arrest.²³⁸ The next issue continues the story with Collington's bad behaviour in jail, his begging for pardon at his sentencing, and, failing that, for more time to settle his affairs.²³⁹ Collington's trial spans several more issues, and then the magazine focuses on his execution. Until the day of his execution, Collington

behaved as if he would get a reprieve, and the detail of his final hours stresses his attention to worldly matters. He wished to be taken to Tyburn in a coach to escape the public eye, and requested burial in the church-yard of the parish where he had been born and his father had been rector. "He then settled his Burial as follows: That he might be buried in Linen, and that as soon as the Execution was over, he might be put into his Coffin, and carried away directly in a Hearse, and buried that Evening between Seven and Eight o'Clock."²⁴⁰ The next issue describes Collington's behaviour at his execution, to which he had indeed ridden in a Mourning Coach. He ignored the minister's prayers, refused to remove his hat, and would not say that he forgave his enemies or died in charity with the world, the standard phrases criminals uttered before they were dispatched. Instead, he "seemed full of Revenge, by biting his Lips," and refused the Sacrament, saying he wasn't prepared for it. A letter denying his reprieve instead of granting it arrived just before he was hanged, but Collington remained unrepentant and unforgiving. When he was cut down, he was put "into the Sheet which his Wife had made for him, and then into a Coffin." He was carried away in a hearse drawn by four horses and buried as he had requested. *The Ladies Magazine* concludes that Collington's preference was consistently for malice and revenge over Christian duty.²⁴¹

The hortatory tone the magazine adopts in its treatment of Collington is not pursued in the account of Mary Blandy's execution. In her case, a curious ambiguity can be registered. Besides her dress, details include her taking the Sacrament, signing a declaration of denial that she knew the powders were poisonous, and making a confession of her faith. In fact, respectability (as opposed to Collington's pride) characterizes her execution (though not its aftermath), and her execution behaviour seems to go a long way toward ameliorating her crime in the magazine's opinion. "Her Behaviour at the Gallows was becoming a Person in her unhappy Circumstances and drew not only great Compassion, but Tears from most of the Spectators." Halfway up ladder, she said, "'Gentlemen, I beg you will not hang me high, for the Sake of Decency.'" Two steps later she said she was afraid she would fall. In her speech to the public, she claimed to be innocently guilty of father's death and uninvolved in the death of her mother. "And then, desiring all present to pray for her, she pulled a white Handkerchief, which was tied round her Head for that Purpose, over her Eyes, which not being low enough, a Person standing by stepp'd up the Ladder and pull'd it farther down; then giving the

Signal, by holding out a little Book which she had in her Hand, she was turned off....The same Afternoon her Body being put into a Coffin lined with white Sattin, was carried to Henley; and about One on Tuesday Morning, according to her own Desire, was deposited in the Church there, between her Father and Mother. On the Plate of her Coffin was only, M. BLANDY, 1752. Notwithstanding the Hour, there was the greatest Concourse of People ever seen on such an Occasion"²⁴² A few issues later, however, further details complicate the account. Miss Blandy's behaviour in confinement and on the scaffold continue to be represented as respectable, but the response of the crowd is slightly elaborated in the second account:²⁴³ "There was not a large Concourse of People at the Execution, but the most thinking Part of them were so affected with her Behaviour, and deplorable Circumstances, that they were in Tears." The most significant departure from the first account appears in her post mortem treatment, when

for Want of some Person to take Care of her Body, this melancholy Scene became still more shocking to human Nature: There was neither Coffin to put her Body in, nor Hearse to carry it away; nor was it taken back into the Castle, which was only a few Yards; but, upon being cut down, was carried through the Crowd upon the Shoulders of one of the Sheriff's Men, in the most beastly Manner, with her Legs exposed very indecently for several hundred Yards, and then deposited in the Sheriff's Man's House, 'till about half an Hour past Five o'Clock, when the Body was put in a Hearse, and carried to *Henly* (sic)...²⁴⁴

One wonders whether, like the corpse who was said to bleed in the presence of its murderer, Mary Blandy's corpse here is meant to signify her hypocrisy and guilt, qualities that were abundantly elucidated in the trial accounts, but obscured in the execution account. In any case, Mary Blandy's respectable burial would not have been possible a year later.

There is, in fact, no gap between the last issue to mention Mary Blandy and the first to describe the first instance of the Murder Act's implementation, on the body of seventeen-year-old Thomas Wilford, convicted of murdering his wife. The magazine reports that after he was hanged, "his Body (pursuant to the late Act of Parliament to prevent Murder) was deliver'd by the Sheriff to the Surgeons Company at their Theatre in the Old Baily [sic], and there anatomiz'd, in order to be formed into a Skeleton. He seem'd extremely penitent, cried very much, and acknowledg'd the Justice of his Sentence."²⁴⁵ *The Ladies Magazine*, which has not commented on the Murder Act, here reinforces the sense of the criminal's horror at the additional punishment by placing the description of his living

behaviour after the description of what was in store for his dead body. The account of another execution seems to indicate that the public did not altogether approve of the Act's imposition of additional punishment when the crime itself seemed justifiable in light of the circumstances that caused it. The account of a youth who was executed and anatomized includes the information that he seemed penitent in jail, "but at the Gallows his Behaviour, in endeavouring to throw the Executioner from the Ladder, was unbecoming one just on the Brink of Eternity; however, as it was generally and justly believed, that he was grossly irritated to the Perpetration of the Crime for which he suffer'd, his unhappy End was pitied by every one."²⁴⁶

While much of *The Ladies Magazine's* coverage of executions seems conventional in its exploitation of the sensational and didactic, the magazine dealt with another aspect of execution that is perhaps more unusual.²⁴⁷ Examples of wrongful execution appear often enough to lead one to suspect that *The Ladies Magazine's* occasional implied criticism of the justice system was more than accidental. The first issue, for example, gives a detailed account of the controversial conviction of twenty-three-year-old Bosavern Penlez, executed for his part in a riot in which an attempt was made to pull down a bawdy house in the Strand. Although Penlez, the son of a clergyman, was well-considered and well-liked, and no premeditation or ill intent could be proven, he was one of a handful (of four hundred rioters) indicted and the only one executed for his part in the disturbance. *The Ladies Magazine* cautions the law about its reliance on circumstantial evidence and concludes with the wish that Penlez might meet with mercy in the next world "which was deny'd him in this!"²⁴⁸ The magazine also prints a monumental inscription intended for Penlez:

To the Memory of the unfortunate BOSAVERN PENLEZ,
Who finish'd a Life generally well-reported of,
By a violent ignominious Death.

...

What was denied to his Person, was paid to his Ashes,
By the Inhabitants of St. *Clement Danes*,
Who order'd him to be inter'd among their Brethren,
Defray'd the Charges of his Funeral,
And thought no Mark of *Pity* or *Respect* too much
For this unhappy Youth,
Whose Death was occasion'd by no other Fault
But too warm an Indignation for their Sufferings.
By this sad Example, Reader, be admonished
Of the many ill Consequences that attend an intemperate Zeal.

Learn hence to respect the Laws---even the most oppressive:
And think thyself happy under that Government
That doth *truly* and *indifferently* administer Justice
To the Punishment of *Wickedness* and *Vice*,
And to the Maintenance of GOD's true *Religion* and *Virtue*.²⁴⁹

Another example of wrongful execution involves a woman and her two sons, who were executed for the murder of a gentleman, William Harrison, a deed that was at the time described as "being one of the most reprehensible Occurrences which hath happened in the Memory of Man." The case, in which one brother accused his mother and brother, was complicated by the rumour that the mother was a witch who had bewitched her sons so that they could not confess while she lived; consequently, she was the first to be executed. Subsequently, both brothers also died though they maintained their innocence. The magazine prints but does not comment on the information that three years after the executions, William Harrison returned home in good health, having escaped after being sold into slavery in Turkey.²⁵⁰ In fact, in its focus on Mr. Harrison's adventures and his return to England, the magazine does not express any regret for the execution of the wrongly convicted family.

The wrongful execution of Richard Coleman for the rape and suspected murder of Sarah Green, however, gives rise to a strange twist: the magazine that prints execution narratives with such apparent attention to detail becomes the vehicle for criticism of that very practice, criticism that is wholly consistent with *The Ladies Magazine's* moral bias and civic-mindedness. The magazine publishes Coleman's "*solemn Declaration*," in which he maintains his innocence, declares his desire to leave "this very wicked World," expresses his concern for his wife and two children, and makes the proper Christian declarations.²⁵¹ The next issue contains a report of the execution of the men who actually committed the rape. This report appears with the "*Approbation and Consent*" of the Rev. Leonard Howard, the minister who attended their last moments, who immediately following the report attacks press coverage of the executions of criminals. Howard refuses to recount the dying speeches of the recently executed criminals because, he claims, the practice lays "a Sort of Tax upon the World, by acquainting them with the wicked and filthy Transactions of poor profligate Wretches, whose Punishments are a sufficient Example to avoid them, and which to publish in their genuine and vulgar Deformity may be detrimental." A firm believer in capital punishment for the "Safety of the Community," Howard likewise invokes public safety to explain his belief in the harmful consequences

that can proceed from such reporting. For his part, he declares, "I shall perform my Office to such Malefactors whilst they live, to the best of my poor Capacity; but I am persuaded the Press will seldom set by my Order for any of their *Accounts, Speeches, Births, Parentages, or Education.*" Nevertheless, Rev. Howard immediately becomes the exception to his own rule by printing the confession of one of the rapists, because, he claims, the case is so extraordinary and the public wants satisfaction as to the guilt or innocence of Richard Coleman.²⁵² Several months later, the magazine reports that the man who had perjured himself and caused Coleman's conviction had been pilloried and that mud, stones, and sticks were thrown at him "so it was imagined he would not get off alive."²⁵³ This information, coming more than half a year after Coleman's execution, would seem to indicate that the public's memory of injustice was long indeed.²⁵⁴

In dealing with questions of law and justice, *The Ladies Magazine* at times reported on foreign events that obliquely pertained to matters of interest in England. For example, there is one account of possible mob violence at Crema over the imprisonment of three syndics who complained on the people's behalf to the Podesta, regarding the price of corn. In response, the Podesta had the syndics hanged and condemned several rioters to the Galleys.²⁵⁵ In another case, the Queen of Sweden's "private execution" of her Master of Horse in seventeenth-century France is related by a letter-writer who requests that the magazine determine "whether that execution was just and legal."²⁵⁶ In the story, though witnesses plead for his life, Queen Christina accuses the Master of Horse of being a traitor and has him killed on the spot. Two issues later, the magazine replies categorically and legalistically that "the execution of the marquis *Monaldeschi* in the manner related, was not legal, but that it was *down right murder.*" *The Ladies Magazine* supports its verdict in explicit legal terms that draw on British jurisprudence: first, the Queen was not then a Queen, having resigned her dominions to her cousin; second, even a sovereign cannot put men to death without a trial, so that the occurrence was more properly an assassination than an execution; and third, the Queen, a convert to Catholicism, was condemnable for thinking she could buy her redemption with the 400 livres she had sent the convent where the marquis was buried; 100 livres equaled £8, "a sum hardly sufficient to provide a coffin for a body, [and not enough] to pray him out of purgatory."²⁵⁷

Ten years later, Charlotte Lennox's *The Lady's Museum* (1760 - 61) printed three different accounts of three different kinds of executions. One involves the live-burial punishment for Vestal Virgins who violated their vow of chastity in ancient Rome, and another an account of Joan of Arc, in which her death at the stake is barely mentioned. In a third, a letter to the magazine contains a lengthy account of the trial and execution of Lord Ferrers, for the cold-blooded, premeditated murder of a long-time family servant. In the 1790s, women's magazines and essay collections offered accounts of the executions of Mary, Queen of Scots, Anne Boleyn, and Lady Jane Grey, accounts that were clearly related to the execution of Marie Antoinette, whom many regarded as a heroine. *The Lady's Miscellany* (1793), included "An Exact Description of the Dress and Execution of Mary, Late Queen of Scots." The smallest details of her clothes, headdress, religious paraphernalia, actions and speech are documented, with special attention paid to Catholic practices likely to be foreign to many of the magazine's readers. The account emphasizes the Queen's dignity and piety, but this seems to be subverted by the grotesque conclusion, which describes the two strokes it took to sever her head, "and yet left a gristle behind. At which time she made a very small noise...The executioner, who cut off her head, lifted it up, and said, 'God save the Queen.' Then her dressing of lawn fell from her head, which appeared as if she had been *seventy* years old, her face being so much altered from the form which she had when she was alive: Few could remember her by her dead face. Her lips stirred up and down almost a quarter of an hour after her head was cut off."²⁵⁸ *The Female Mentor's* account of Anne Boleyn focuses particularly on her serenity in the face of death. Though she insisted on her innocence of the charges against her and recommended her daughter to the care of King Henry VIII, she was otherwise composed throughout her execution, seemingly welcoming her death to the extent that the lieutenant of the tower commented on it. Her final speech, with its magnanimous forgiveness of her husband, is reprinted, presumably to underline the indignity of her end: "her body was negligently thrown into a common chest, made to hold arrows, and was buried in the Tower."²⁵⁹ *The Lady's Monthly Museum's* "Memoirs of Lady Jane Grey" also emphasizes female fortitude. Not surprisingly, this account, which relates the historical particulars of her reluctant claim to the throne, focuses on Lady Jane's correspondence with her husband before their executions. In particular, her refusal to comply with her husband's request that they meet to take leave of each other is minutely examined as an indication of her thoughtful womanliness. On the scaffold, she was

perfectly composed, addressing spectators "in a plain and short speech; after which, kneeling down, she repeated the *Miserere* in English." Like Mary, Queen of Scots, Lady Jane modestly refused to let the executioner help her disrobe and was helped by her serving women. "Upon this, the handkerchief being bound close over her eyes, she began to feel for the block, to which she was guided by one of the spectators. When she felt it, she stretched herself forward, and said -- 'Lord, unto thy hands I commend my spirit;' and immediately her head was separated at one stroke."²⁶⁰

As in the case of murder, the magazines' reporting of public executions defies simple and categorical analysis. Clearly, at times, reports are couched in terms critical of the government, the law, and the judicial system, though criticism is often obscured in order to avoid charges being laid against the magazines or their publishers or editors. While all accounts of executions pander to the demand for entertainment and instruction, it seems equally clear that these are very often not the real point. Rather, women's magazines, like those intended primarily for men, sought to participate in major debates regarding the law, the government, and public execution, even publicizing the culpability of the press itself in "teaching" violence to those fascinated by the spectacle of judicial violence. Though indirect, such participation may have functioned obliquely as social and political criticism welcome to readers whose goal in reading the magazines was not limited by Horatian constraints.

Infanticide²⁶¹

One form of murder particularly associated with women is infanticide, and of all the women hanged at Tyburn in the eighteenth century, twelve per cent were hanged for killing their new-born babies.²⁶² However, the numbers of women indicted for infanticide decreased sharply during this period, mostly because prosecutions for infanticide were carried out under a statute enacted in 1624, whose strictures were increasingly inconsistent with attitudes toward notions of justice and toward unmarried mothers and women in general. Because of the Statute of 1624, there in fact existed two different legal means for addressing and punishing infanticide in the eighteenth century (though both were capital offenses), one for married and the other for unmarried mothers.²⁶³ Married women suspected of intentionally killing their babies were charged with murder, and the onus was on the prosecution to

provide evidence of a live birth and intent and action on the part of the accused. However, a single woman indicted under the Statute of 1624 was charged not with murder but with concealment of the baby's death, and the onus was on her to provide at least one witness to testify that the baby had been born dead; in other words, there was a presumption of guilt.²⁶⁴ Considering the circumstances of most of the women charged under this Statute, guilt might be difficult or impossible to disprove.

In the seventeenth century, an unmarried woman who became pregnant had few choices. Abortion was illegal, but, probably more persuasively, it was also often unsuccessful or extremely dangerous, and for many women it must have seemed safer to have the baby secretly than to risk an abortion.²⁶⁵ In the seventeenth century (as in the eighteenth), women who followed this course of action were arguably most often servants, single women who could not afford, for reasons of financial support or reputation, to keep a child.²⁶⁶ After the birth, her only alternatives were murder or abandonment. Abandonment was difficult because it required not only that the birth be kept secret, but also that the baby be kept alive until it could be "dropped" somewhere for subsequent discovery and rescue.²⁶⁷ For many women, bearing a child in secret and disposing of it immediately after birth must have seemed the best of a painfully small number of unappealing options.²⁶⁸

Prior to the Statute of 1624, the focus of common law dealing with illegitimate births was economic rather than moral; mothers (and fathers, if known) responsible for babies requiring parish support (chargeable bastards) were subject to confinement.²⁶⁹ This situation obviously had the effect of implicitly condoning concealment of pregnancy and birth and perhaps the disposal of the infant as well.²⁷⁰ In applying only to bastard births, the Statute of 1624, which made concealment of a baby's death a capital offense, implicitly incorporated the economic basis of earlier laws, though the language of the statute is primarily moral, characterizing the mothers of bastards as immoral and "lewd." As Mark Jackson notes, "To some extent, the higher conviction rate for the mothers of bastards [after 1624] was a product of the statute's construction: once the child had been identified as a bastard, proof of murder was facilitated by the statutory presumption. However, it can also be attributed to the persistent local and legislative hostility directed against single women who threatened to burden parishes with chargeable bastards. Significantly, while the 1624 statute clearly reflected contemporary anxieties about the financial burden of bastardy and about the need to deter women from burdening parishes in the future, it also reinforced those anxieties and

gave credence to suspicions of murder by selectively facilitating the prosecution of unmarried women."²⁷¹ The fourfold increase in prosecutions for infanticide following the implementation of the Statute of 1624 resulted in an increase of convictions that, Jackson argues, were clearly monitory.²⁷²

In practice, however, the severity of the law was short-lived. As in the case of the law against suicide (which is discussed in Chapter Five), the law against concealment of a death began to be enforced far less rigorously in the eighteenth century; after 1700, juries increasingly accepted evidence that led to acquittal in infanticide cases.²⁷³ By the 1720s, if the defendant could produce evidence that she had prepared linen for the baby's birth (which indicated her intention to keep the baby), she could expect to be acquitted.²⁷⁴ By the second half of the century, in fact, most women prosecuted for infanticide were effectively tried for murder rather than concealment.²⁷⁵

Changing attitudes toward women can be seen in these altered attitudes and practices concerning infanticide. Women who were the subject of the 1624 statute were characterized as immoral, unnatural and "lewd," but in 1712, Mandeville is suggesting that the more modest the young women who is deceived by a seducer, the more likely she is to be desperate enough to kill herself or her child:

It is commonly imagined, that she who can destroy her Child, her own Flesh and Blood, must have a vast stock of Barbarity, and be a Savage Monster, different from other Women; but this is likewise a mistake, which we commit for want of understanding Nature and the force of Passions. The same Woman that Murders her Bastard in the most execrable manner, if she is Married afterwards, may take care of, cherish and feel all the tenderness for her Infant that the fondest Mother can be capable of. All Mothers naturally love their Children: but as this is a Passion, and all Passions center in Self-Love, so it may be subdued by any Superior Passion, to sooth that same Self-Love, which if nothing had interven'd, would have bid her fondle her Offspring. Common Whores, whom all the World knows to be such, hardly ever destroy their Children; nay even those who assist in Robberies and Murders seldom are guilty of this Crime; not because they are less Cruel or more Virtuous, but because they have lost their Modesty to a greater degree, and the fear of Shame makes hardly any Impression upon them.²⁷⁶

Throughout the century, sympathy for the plight of the unmarried mother increased, and consequently, "[i]n many later eighteenth-century discussions of new-born child murder, accused women were no longer portrayed as cruel and barbaric murderers, but as modest and virtuous victims of circumstances beyond their control."²⁷⁷ The establishment of charity hospitals for the confinement of poor maternity cases and for the care of unwanted children is further evidence that earlier, traditional views of women as immoral and sexually culpable were moderating significantly, if unevenly.

Such moderation was not without an economic foundation, however. The establishment of charity hospitals for women and children also reflected the needs of a growing economy that required an expanding population for a continuous supply of soldiers and sailors, for increasing numbers of workers in England, and for migrating colonists who could act as consumers of British goods.²⁷⁸ The problem of abandoned and murdered babies was given as the reason for the establishment of The Foundling Hospital in 1741, but in reality the hospital was of limited use either to infants or their mothers. According to Mark Jackson, unmarried mothers had as much to gain from its establishment as the children it aimed to help.²⁷⁹ However, its early years were marked by a policy of exclusion that turned away large numbers of children, and the already high death rate increased when the Parliament ordered the hospital to open its doors indiscriminately to all abandoned children.²⁸⁰ Furthermore, whether the children admitted were illegitimate or legitimate continued to be a point of contention, as many felt it was not the business of charities either to condone vice or weaken the ties of the family by encouraging abandonment on the grounds of financial constraint.²⁸¹ These same conflicting issues of public morality and national interest, not the plight of unintentionally pregnant women or the welfare of children, governed the coverage of infanticide and related subjects in the women's magazines.²⁸²

Recent studies on infanticide in pre-modern England have proceeded from an almost exclusively legal, and hence, inherently limited, perspective. Discussions in the popular press offer the possibility of fuller comprehension of infanticide than that provided by the findings recorded in court documents, as these pertain only to actual indictments and cannot register attitudes toward infanticide more generally. While the subject of infanticide, featured as actual or fictional event, occurs infrequently in women's magazines, its limited appearances are, nevertheless, revealing.

Curiously, evidence of the pervasiveness of infanticide appears most clearly in fictional narratives, in allusions to the disposal of unwanted babies. Such allusions occur in two separate *Female Spectator* stories. In the first, Martesia, who is cuckolding her faithful husband, becomes pregnant by her lover. It is impossible to claim that her husband is the father, so, after several unsuccessful abortion attempts, Martesia conceals her pregnancy with loose clothing and pretends illness until the time of delivery. At that point, she goes to the house of a female confidante, where a midwife is waiting, and is "safely delivered of a daughter, who expired almost as soon as born."²⁸³ Ultimately, Martesia loses husband, lover, and

reputation, however, and leaves England, "by one inadvertent step undone, and lost to every thing the world holds dear, and only the more conspicuously wretched, by having been conspicuously amiable."²⁸⁴ In the second story, the orphaned Jemima is tricked into a sham marriage by a wealthy seducer, who abandons her when she is pregnant. Jemima's landlords arrange for her to lie-in and "if she thought fit, for a sum of money, [to] leave [the baby] behind her, to be disposed of as never to be troublesome to her." Jemima refuses their second offer, "shocked to her soul, to think there could be women in the world capable of such a barbarity to their children, as to leave them to the mercy of those mercenary creatures."²⁸⁵ She is eventually turned out, penniless, with her twin sons, resolving to die with the babies rather than break her promise to reveal her marriage. In the end, Jemima and the babies are reunited with the seducer, who, on his deathbed, leaves Jemima a virtuous widow. Two years later, *The Ladies Magazine* published "The History of Violetta."²⁸⁶ When Violetta becomes pregnant by the footman, her father abandons her with a hundred guineas in the middle of the woods, though he has claimed to be taking her to a place where she might lie in. Violetta subsequently gives birth to "a dead child" and returns to London, where she eventually marries happily and is reconciled with her repentant father.²⁸⁷ The baby in Violetta's story is more incidental, since the primary injustice is the betrayal by the father. But in each of *The Female Spectator* stories, babies function as indicators of the mother's virtue, and hence her fate. It is possible, of course, that the two babies die naturally, but, considering the impediment they present to the heroine's future, and the overt offer of infanticide in Jemima's story, accidental death seems unlikely. In the broader context of infanticide in the society at large, it is probable that readers recognized the muted references to infanticide much more readily than modern audiences.

Infanticide as actual practice appears, logically enough, mostly in *The Ladies Magazine*, which does report cases of infanticide, but does not consider infanticide as a "problem" in the same way it considers rabies, decayed houses, and wrongful execution social problems that should be addressed in print. In an early issue, a notice from Exeter reports that at the latest Assizes held there, "no less than seven Women were tried for the murder of their Bastard Children, two of whom received Sentence of death, and five were acquitted."²⁸⁸ No follow-up accounts of the women's executions appear, which may indicate either that their sentences were commuted or, more simply, that there was no follow-up notice from Exeter. *The Ladies Magazine* does consider

one indictment for infanticide in detail, however, that of Anne Smith, Spinster, "indicted for wilfully and cruelly murdering an Infant born of her Body, in the Parish of Speldhurst, in the County of Kent."²⁸⁹ The man who found the mutilated body under the straw gave grisly testimony at the trial: the corpse "was black all round the Neck, which, he supposed, might be done in Strangling of it; that underneath one Side, lay one of the Child's Hands, which appeared to him to have been cut off; and by the Side was one of the Arms, which was off at the Shoulder Blade, and appeared either to be pull'd off or eat off."

A neighbour conjectured that the baby belonged to Anne Smith "and that she had murder'd it; for that the Prisoner had been very big about the Waist, and was strongly reported to have been with Child a little before; that accordingly they took the Prisoner up, but she denied having had a Child." But Anne Smith was suspected of having borne "two or three Bastards before, and had made away with them," and when neighbours accused her of being pregnant again, they warned her against murdering this child. A supposed history of illegitimate births and accusations by neighbours constituted persuasive evidence against the defendant, but the testimony of a midwife who had examined Anne Smith in jail was conclusive: the fresh milk in her breasts indicated that she had given birth within the past two weeks. Even more incriminating was the crude attempt at dismemberment. Though Anne Smith persisted in her denial of having been pregnant, she was unable to produce witnesses who could attest to her character as "a modest, sober Woman," and the jury found her guilty and condemned her to death.

As suggested by the fictional accounts, not all infanticide was actually carried out by the mother. A report from Bristol tells of a male infant found in the river with a rock tied to his arm. The public viewing of the body, routine in cases of unidentified drowning, led someone to recall a pregnant woman who had been evasive when asked about her pregnancy. Eventually, three women were accused of the murder and committed to prison. One gave testimony that the other two had drowned the baby while she was away buying snuff, and that "on her Return she asking for the Child, they replied, they had sent it Home, for it would be Troublesome in Company. She swore a Mark in the Child's Face, which prov'd to be true; and said that it must be drowned while she was buying the Snuff."²⁹⁰ Two women, one of them the mother, were indicted for wilful

murder and committed to Newgate, while the third remained in Bridewell to give evidence at their trials.

Not all infanticides were successful, however, and in some cases abandonment seems to have been the intention, notwithstanding that an undiscovered newborn could not survive for any great length of time. In one case, a chairman in Hanover Square noticed that the door of his chair was open and assumed it had been robbed, "but on Examination, to his great Surprize, found a Male Child, which was judged by the Spectators to have been about two Hours old."²⁹¹ In another case, the baby was just plain lucky. When accused, a female servant had denied being pregnant, but subsequently gave birth in the "Necessary-House" and dropped the baby down the hole of an adjoining privy. Because it fell on iron cross bars and not into the soil, its cries were heard and it was rescued.²⁹² But, considering the conditions of both rural and urban life, it is likely that abandonment often effectively constituted infanticide, as in the case of a genteely dressed Irish woman who was seen putting a baby on a dunghill. The boys who saw her ran for assistance, but "the Woman...made off, and the poor Infant was torn to Pieces by the Dogs."²⁹³

Even if it was widely known as a solution to illegitimate pregnancy, infanticide could not be officially or publicly rendered, as was death in childbirth, a "normal" or "inevitable" --if regrettable -- occurrence in eighteenth-century female experience. The cases of infanticide actually reported indicate that *The Ladies Magazine* was certainly not squeamish or reticent about the subject; infanticide accounts are conveyed in the same language and tone as other murders. Nor does it seem likely that *The Ladies Magazine* would let slip the chance to moralize at least occasionally on a social problem it considered to be widespread, worrisome, or subject to correction. It would be foolhardy to make categorical statements on so little evidence, but the paucity of the evidence itself is suggestive. Perhaps the reason there were so few indictments and so little public debate on the subject is that, despite the certainty that it did exist and despite Thomas Coram's claim that he established the Foundling Hospital because he was shocked at the numbers of babies turning up on dunghills, infanticide in England was either not considered a serious problem, or was tolerated as an inevitable consequence of some pregnancies, or was registered not as a crime against an infant but as a sign of the mother's moral turpitude.

Evidence for the feasibility of these suggestions is partially confirmed by social historians. It is not necessary to subscribe to the claim by Lawrence Stone and others that early modern parents did not care much about their young children, to recognize that the high rate of infant mortality before the age of two did make attachment even to the most wanted children tenuous. All parents, and society at large, must have lived to some extent in a state of semi-expectation of the deaths of babies. And though individual babies might be dearly loved, childhood had not yet been romanticized as the state of innocence and purity as it was in the nineteenth century. An epitaph that appeared in *The Student* indicates this complete lack of sentimentality, as well as the possible/impossible attachment a single mother might feel for her child:

EPITAPH

On a bastard-child murder'd by its mother.

LOVE, spite of HONOUR'S dictates, gave thee breath:
HONOUR, in spite of LOVE, pronounced thy death.²⁹⁴

The death of babies, even more than death in childbirth, was an accepted fact of life and, much as it was often a traumatic event in the lives of individuals, infant death was not in itself an unusual or shocking occurrence generally. Coupled with the widespread disinclination of parish officials and ratepayers to support the unwanted children of unmarried mothers, infanticide seems not to have been a major social issue. Public attempts to deal with abandoned children were marked by ambivalence that might reflect society's greater inclination to turn a blind eye to a social solution that, while morally reprehensible, was effective.

Institutional solutions to the problem of London's abandoned and destitute children were generally fatal to the majority of children who received the benefit of their services.²⁹⁵ Moreover, the shocking statistics of infant mortality in the Foundling Hospital suggest that the survival of unwanted babies was not a matter of great concern.²⁹⁶ One open letter from a midwife to the Governors of the Foundling Hospital names the reasons she declines to become a Governor herself: the hospital, she says, is a "Misnomer" because it is advertised as "an Hospital for exposed and deserted Children, when exposed and deserted Children are absolutely excluded by the Laws of your House, and the Whole of the Business is entirely left to fortune." She declares that the hospital has sacrificed Christian charity to "Ostentation, Nonsense, Noise, and something yet worse than all of them."²⁹⁷ This something was no doubt a reference to some

of the questionable practices of the hospital, such as its experiment in raising children by hand rather than finding wet nurses, which resulted in the deaths of 56 of 136 children in the first year.²⁹⁸ Another mid-century argument urging support of the Foundling Hospital, however, treads a middle road, sidestepping the issue of illegitimacy in order to garner a more sympathetic response. Frances Brooke's *The Old Maid* echoes Mandeville in arguing that no motive but "fear of shame, or the extremity of want, can operate so powerfully upon a mother, as to counterwork the force of nature."²⁹⁹ She suggests that people should "turn their thoughts to the infinite variety of sudden and unforeseen distresses, in this vast metropolis, by which the parents of a legitimate offspring, at least the more tender and helpless Parent, by the death or unavoidable absence of the other, may be reduced to an incapacity of supporting a new-born infant. and they will perceive at once the extreme charity and usefulness of such a Foundation as this, without supposing it is intended besides, for the reception of such unhappy babies as owe their birth, to their parents [sic] guilt and folly."³⁰⁰ The writer's apparent sympathy for poor "legitimate" parents is somewhat compromised, however, by an allusion that expresses less sympathy for dead babies than censure for their depraved murderers who are often unmarried mothers. *The Old Maid* deplores the babies "daily found, exposed in the streets and the greater number who are destroyed almost before they see the light: one cannot think without the extremest horror, on those whose bodies, that were found putrefied in the river about a year since, and who I am afraid were not all destroyed by parish nurses, though that is too often the fate, of such as escape the hands of their mothers."³⁰¹ *The Old Maid's* primary focus is more immediate, however. Like others, she is concerned with the inefficient and counter-productive methods of the Foundling Hospital, whose practice of turning away three out of four children is already known to parents, thereby discouraging them from attempting to place children there and leading them to dispose of children by other means.³⁰²

The state did not intervene directly in the health of children until the Act of 1767, which specified that parish children under six were to be sent to nurses outside the metropolis, and that nurses who successfully reared babies were to be monetarily rewarded. However, as J.C. Chambers comments, this act of social conscience "also had the effect of providing a source of child labour to the cotton mills in the second half of the century and to that extent made a direct contribution to the recruitment of the labour force for the Industrial Revolution."³⁰³ Not until late in the century, in an appeal for ladies of substance to

make regular visits to inspect conditions at the workhouses, is the well-being of infants considered: "It is a fact too well attested to need further evidence, that the lives of thousands of infants have been lost in poor-houses, from neglect, severity, and mismanagement."³⁰⁴ These developments suggest a certain widespread shift in attitude was necessary in order that the welfare of children could become a matter of public interest: first, the state had to see parish children as financial assets rather than liabilities; second, the interest in science and medicine had to extend and combine with issues of public health; and third, middle-class attitudes toward charity and benevolence had to be resolved in ways that were consistent with the maintenance of the status quo. Only then could infanticide become the murder of a child as well as the immoral action of a mother or nurse.

In its focus on representations of the deaths of individuals, this chapter has unavoidably highlighted the violence that was a part of eighteenth-century life. Murder, execution, infanticide, and, to some extent, accidental death attest to an unacceptably high level of violence. Yet this level did not remain consistently high. John Beattie has suggested that the seeming decline in violence of all kinds, including judicial violence, is related to a period shift in attitudes toward tolerance, and that in all kinds of circumstances, people grew less inclined to act impetuously and immoderately and more inclined to settle disputes in other ways. "This supposes a developing civility, expressed perhaps in a more highly developed politeness of manner and a concern not to offend or to take offense, and an enlarged sensitivity toward some forms of cruelty and pain. Such an explanation would further suppose that these changing sentiments were experienced well beyond a narrow band of upper-class society, or even among the commercial and professional middle class -- that they had a substantial effect on the outlook and the behavior of at least the broad ranks of the artisans, tradesmen, and shopkeepers."³⁰⁵ Insofar as these developments are related to broad social movements to reform manners and reorganize society around a central middle class, the part played by the periodical press cannot be underestimated. The magazines, including women's magazines, aided in this process not only by their didacticism, but also by the range of subjects and events -- be these the control of rabies, or the extent of violent crime (graphically described) --

that they conveyed to their steadily growing audience. In other words, I am suggesting that while the sensationalism in the periodicals appealed to the prurience of readers, it also had the more laudable effect of unifying public opinion about certain issues like violence, by making the consequences of violence -- moral, legal, and actual -- known to a wide segment of the population. Working hand in hand with the periodicals' endorsement of a new, more civilized, social order, this dissemination of information served to galvanize the diverse groups described by Beattie, in a process that far from excluding women or their opinions, in fact most often represented them as agents of the process they describe.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FOUR

- 1 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, iii. (1775 ed.), p. 136.
- 2 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, iii. (1775 ed.), p. 137.
- 3 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, iii. (1775 ed.), p. 143.
- 4 Roy Porter, "Cleaning up the Great Wen: Public Health in Eighteenth-Century London," in *Living and Dying in London*, W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter (eds.) *Medical History*, Supplement 11 (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1991), p. 74.
- 5 Porter, "Cleaning up the Great Wen," p. 63.
- 6 These conditions included sewers or drains that were inadequate or nonexistent, stagnant open drains and pools, undrained marsh land, accumulation of refuse in open urban spaces, slaughter houses, burial grounds, and the practice of housing hogs with people (Dorothy M. George, *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* [New York: Harper and Row, 1964], pp. 106-107).
- 7 Rosemary Weinstein, "New Urban Demands in Early Modern London," in Bynum and Porter, p. 32.
- 8 Dorothy George, pp. 81-96.
- 9 John Landers, *Death and the metropolis: Studies in the demographic history of London 1670 - 1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 29. Landers observes that a reverse situation existed in outlying areas: 'Hinterland' populations...would be too thinly distributed for serious epidemic infections to persist. Hence they would have lower secular mortality levels, but also a reduced immunological resistance which would make them vulnerable to recurrent epidemics of 'metropolitan' infections."
- 10 Dorothy George, p. 27.
- 11 Codell K. Carter and Barbara R. Carter, *Childbed Fever: A Scientific Biography of Ignaz Semmelweis*, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994), pp. 4-5.
- 12 Earle, *The Making of the English Middle Class*, p. 306.
- 13 Carter and Carter, p. 8. Porter makes a point oblique to this one, that the increasing and unskilled use of opiates by physicians, which sometimes caused death and sometimes caused extreme stupefaction, were linked to the late eighteenth-century fear of premature burial (Porter, "Death and the Doctors in Georgian England," p. 93).
- 14 Roy Porter, *Disease Medicine and Society in England 1550 - 1860* (London: Macmillan, 1987), p. 21.
- 15 Porter, *Disease, Medicine and Society*, p. 33. Porter wryly observes that this separation established surgery as a distinct craft, "a cut above mere hairdressing."
- 16 Porter, "Cleaning up the Great Wen," p. 72. Fever was often reported as a cause of death in the magazines, usually as a result of complications from some other disorder or accident. However, fever epidemics in foreign countries were also reported in the magazines, as in the case of "a burning fever" that killed or debilitated the crew of the British ship *Centurion* at Madeira, originally reported in Anson's memoirs (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i [November 18, 1749], p. 6).
- 17 Porter, *Disease, Medicine and Society*, p. 36. Porter notes that mortality for both mothers and babies was higher in the hospitals than for babies delivered at home. Interestingly, the biographers of the Viennese doctor Ignaz Semmelweis, who pioneered research into the causes and prevention of childbed fever, note English resistance to the acceptance of his theories well into the nineteenth century (Carter and Carter, p. 71). English doctors held to their own theories, such as that of a British obstetrician who claimed that childbed fever was caused by the tightness of stays and petticoat bindings, which compressed the intestines and caused the body to reabsorb its own wastes (Carter and Carter, p. 34).
- 18 Porter, "Cleaning up the Great Wen," p. 73.
- 19 J.L. Jordanova, "Natural facts: a historical perspective on science and sexuality," in Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern (eds.), *Nature, culture and gender* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p.46.

-
- 20 Thomas R. Forbes, "Births and Deaths in a London Parish" *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 55 (1981), p. 377.
- 21 Landers, p. 97. Forbes notes that these respiratory disorders included tussick, king's evil, and many fevers (p. 379).
- 22 Forbes, p. 379.
- 23 Quoted in Dorothy George, p. 56.
- 24 Landers, p. 97.
- 25 Frederick Cartwright, *Disease and History* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972), p. 121. Cartwright notes that in London 80% of deaths from small-pox were children under five. Roy Porter observes that smallpox inoculation, introduced into England by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in the 1720s, became a profitable medical specialty for some enterprising physicians (*Disease, Medicine and Society*, p. 41).
- 26 Cartwright, p. 132.
- 27 The subject of rabies is not common in the literature of the period, though it implicitly features in Goldsmith's comic-moral poem, "An Elegy on the Death of a Mad Dog."
- 28 That rabies held a particular horror in the public imagination is evident from one suggestion for making the death penalty a more effective deterrent by making death itself more horrible than mere hanging afforded. Other suggestions included torture and castration, but one man thought that "death brought on by the bite of a mad dog would both act as a deterrent and have the additional social value of offering valuable data for medical research" (Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 526).
- 29 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, v (March 3, 1753), p. 80.
- 30 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvii (June 27 - July 11, 1752), p. 272.
- 31 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vii (March 31, 1753), p. 111.
- 32 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, x (March 21 - April 4, 1752), p. 158.
- 33 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xviii (September 1, 1753), p. 285.
- 34 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, ix (February 24 - March 10, 1750), p. 140.
- 35 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxiii (September 8 - 22, 1750), p. 356 - 57.
- 36 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxiii (September 30 - October 14, 1752), p. 362.
- 37 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xx (September 29, 1753), pp. 313 - 14.
- 38 According to *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary*, 18th Edition (Philadelphia: F.A. Davis Company, 1997), only three known cases of recovery had been recorded, once symptoms of rabies had appeared. These well-documented cases presumably involved advanced medical intervention unavailable in 1753.
- 39 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xv (May 19 - June 2, 1750), p. 237.
- 40 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, iv (February 17, 1753), p. 54.
- 41 The same sense of mystery about airborne death attends the account of a multiple death in Dresden. In that case, a man who had composted a parcel of dung in a ditch in the bottom of his garden tried to move it after several years. When he punctured it with a fork, however, "the Steam, which broke out, killed him upon the Spot." Seeing his father fall, his son ran to his side and died instantly. A servant following the son escaped only because someone pulled him away from the spot with a rake (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xvii (June 15 - 29, 1750, p. 265). In another account from *The Lady's Curiosity*, a sailor, opening a cask filled with sea water "which had been imprudently close stopped, is immediately struck down stiff and dead, by a vapour issuing from it." Six others nearby are thrown into convulsions but recover upon removal to fresh air. "But the corps of the first was greatly swelled and black, and the blood issued from the mouth, nose, and ears, and was already so putrefied that it was not possible to open him" (*The Lady's Curiosity*, No. XX, 1752, p. 305).
- 42 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxi (August 22 - September 16, 1752), p. 334. The space for graveyards being limited, graves were often re-used after a suitable period of time. Overuse of graveyards caused serious aesthetic and public health problems in London, where in 1720 two

- were shut up by King and Council as "offensive." In both urban and rural areas, the poor were customarily buried in the scandalous "Poor's holes," large open pits that were dug for the parish poor and which were not covered over until they were full (Dorothy George, p. 343, n. 124).
- 43 One thinks here of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's poem, "Saturday: The Small-Pox: Flavia," from *Six Town Eclogues*, in which the speaker's concern is only with her ruined appearance, to the complete exclusion of public-health concerns.
- 44 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vii (March 31, 1753), p. 112. An interesting exception to the focus on the communicability of the disease occurs in an account of a woman brought before Justice Fielding. She was charged with having used witchcraft to kill two children with smallpox, the evidence being the woman's statement to the children's mother that they would not live a month. The magazine only comments laconically that "the Witch was a little mistaken in Time, seven Weeks having elapsed before the Death of the second Child" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv [May 30 - June 13, 1752], p. 239).
- 45 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, v (March 3, 1753), p. 77.
- 46 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 238. The death of Queen Mary from smallpox in 1694 is related in *The Ladies Magazine* regular feature, "History of England, Questions and Answers." While the emphasis is on the Queen's "good death" (and its effect on the nation), the death of a queen from smallpox does inevitably remind readers of the indiscriminate nature of some diseases and the leveling effects of death (Vol. II, xx [July 27 - August 10, 1751], p. 303). At the end of the century, *The Female Mentor's* account of the Queen's "good death" barely mentions the disease (Vol. II, Conversation 27 [1793], pp. 218 - 19).
- 47 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, vi (January 13 - 27, 1750), p. 88. Paul Slack has noted the importance of early eighteenth-century newspapers in raising public awareness "of the danger of imported infection...Forewarned by newspaper reports of plague in foreign towns, local officials in Channel ports turned away vessels coming from the Mediterranean" (Paul Slack, "The response to plague in early modern England," in John Walter and Roger Schofield (eds.) *Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], p. 186).
- 48 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 49 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvi (October 19 - November 2, 1751), p. 409.
- 50 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvii (November 2 - 16, 1751), p. 425.
- 51 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vi (January 25 - February 8, 1752), p. 93.
- 52 April London has noted a similar absence in the novels of the period. See "Avoiding the Subject: The Presence and Absence of Venereal Disease in the Eighteenth-Century Novel," in Linda E. Merians (ed.), *The Secret Malady: Venereal Disease in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), pp. 213 - 27.
- 53 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, vi (January 12 - 26, 1751), p. 91.
- 54 *The Lady's Miscellany*, (1793), p. 45.
- 55 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (August 1799), pp. 161 - 62.
- 56 Forbes, p. 377.
- 57 Roy Porter notes that "consumption" was used to identify all wasting diseases, "exhibiting symptoms including general malaise, weight loss, flacid flesh, poor skin tone, ulcers that refused to heal, and a general 'rotteness' of health" ("Consumption: disease of the consumer society?" in John Brewer and Roy Porter (eds.), *Consumption and the World of Goods* [London: Routledge, 1993], p. 62). Porter observes that, in addition to being a disease of the starving poor or working poor, consumption was also a disease of the consuming classes whose habits of dress and indoor inactivity made them susceptible (p. 66 - 67). While Porter maintains that consumption came to be associated with sensibility and grew increasingly fashionable, I found no evidence of this connotation in the magazines.
- 58 *The Female Mentor*, Vol. II, Conversation 29, (1793), pp. 235 - 37.

- 59 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxiv (September 22 - October 6, 1750), p. 379. The poem is written by an unnamed lady identified only by her male connections, daughter of Dr. Wellwood and wife of Captain Molesworth.
- 60 Interestingly, another magazine, which borrows heavily from *The Ladies Magazine* (including the poem by the wife dying of consumption), *The Lady's Curiosity* ends at the same time, perhaps suggesting that Goodwill and *The Lady's Curiosity's* editor Nestor Druid were the same person.
- 61 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiii (September 7 - 21, 1751), p. 363.
- 62 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xiv (July 7, 1753), p. 222 - 23.
- 63 According to Ludmilla Jordanova, the medical notion of sensibility "was a physiological property which, although present in all parts of the body, was most clearly expressed through the state of the nervous system. The nervous system was taken by many to be that physiological system which, because it brought together physical and mental dimensions of human beings, expressed most precisely the total state of the individual, especially with respect to the impact of social changes.... Women, it is said, are highly *sensible* (in the sense of sensitive, or even sensitized) like children, and more passionate than men" (p. 48).
- 64 *The Mirrour*, x (April 9, 1719).
- 65 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ii (January 20, 1753), p. 24. The explicit moral of the story, however, has nothing to do with gender:
- Death only puts us out of fortune's pow'r:
Call no man happy till he is no more.
The stage of life so often shifts its scene;
No certain bliss on this side heav'n is seen.
- 66 *The Old Maid*, vii (December 27, 1755), pp. 40 - 42.
- 67 *The Mirrour*, iii (February 19, 1719).
- 68 The exception that proves this rule appears in the notice of the death of a bricklayer's wife: "This Woman, who was remarkable for her Pride, and Passion for Dress as much above her Rank, broke her Heart on Account of her Husband having lately been disgracefully punished for Theft" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, i (November 16 - 30, 1751), p. 16.) The initial information about this woman's folly and vanity (and transgression of class boundaries) precludes any sympathy for her demise.
- 69 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol., I, xv (May 19 - June 2, 1750), p. 224.
- 70 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xix (July 13 - 27, 1751), p. 301.
- 71 *The Midwife*, Vol. I (1751), pp. 12 - 15. This anecdote appears in the context of a letter from a reader requesting that the magazine remind the public of the inhumanity of starving a debtor's family by putting him in jail.
- 72 *The Parrot*, i, 1746.
- 73 I am defining accidental death as one that was not initially pathological in nature or the result of intentional violence (as in murder or manslaughter). I have taken a broad view of accidents to include not only those that befell individuals, but also those that were the result of fires and such natural occurrences as storms and earthquakes.
- 74 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, x (March 9 - 23, 1750-1 [sic]), p. 160.
- 75 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xii (June 9, 1753), p. 191; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xv (July 21, 1753), p. 240.
- 76 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xvii (August 18, 1753), p. 270.
- 77 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xx (July 27 - August 10, 1751), p. 314.
- 78 P.E. H. Hair conducted a survey similar to mine, for the period between 1780 - 84 ("Deaths from Violence in Britain: A Tentative Secular Survey," *Population Studies* 25 [1971], pp. 5 - 24). His conclusions about the frequency and prevalence of certain kinds of accidents, drawn mostly from examination of court documents and *The Gentleman's Magazine*, correspond closely to what I found in *The Ladies Magazine*.

-
- 79 Peter Hoffer and N.E. Hull suggest that in the early part of the eighteenth century, only the worst offenders in cases of infant traffic deaths were prosecuted. Eventually, however, "vehicular homicide" of children "became the most numerous nonparental cause" of child murder. (*Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England 1558 - 1803* [New York: New York University Press, 1981], pp. 71 - 72).
- 80 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 15
- 81 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xiii (May 2 - 16, 1752), p. 207; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xvi (August 4, 1753), p. 256.
- 82 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxi (August 22 - September 16 [sic], 1752), p. 336. At the time, the gentleman's offer indicated genuine magnanimity, as his responsibility, if the woman died, was not commonly indictable as either manslaughter or carelessness (J.M. Beattie, *Crime and the Courts in England 1660 - 1800* [Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986], p. 86).
- 83 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xv (July 21, 1753), p. 240.
- 84 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xii (June 9, 1753), p. 192; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xix (September 15, 1753), p. 303.
- 85 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv (September 21 - October 5, 1751), p. 379.
- 86 Although *The Ladies Magazine* carried on an information campaign about the dangers of decaying houses, it also sometimes reported on the hazards of construction. For example, it gave notice of a maid servant who, while carrying a child, fractured her skull when she fell into a hole dug for the foundation of a house. The child was unhurt, but the maid servant died (Vol. IV, xxi (October 13, 1753), p. 335).
- 87 George, p. 73. George also comments that newspapers usually reported the cause of collapsed buildings as defective bricks (p. 74), but I did not find this attribution common in *The Ladies Magazine*.
- 88 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xiv (May 16 - 30, 1752), p. 222.
- 89 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxvi (October 20 - November 3, 1750), p. 413.
- 90 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxv (October 28 - November 11, 1752), p. 400.
- 91 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vi (March 3, 1753), p. 95.
- 92 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xx (July 27 - August 10, 1751), p. 314.
- 93 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vi (January 25 - February 8, 1752), p. 95.
- 94 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xiii (June 23, 1753), p. 205. This account is followed by one of a great fire in Grodno, Lithuania, which had almost entirely destroyed the town. A very detailed list of the buildings consumed is followed by the information that the fire probably began accidentally in the "House of a Jew Merchant," but casualties are not mentioned at all.
- 95 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xviii (June 29 - July 13., 1751), p. 283.
- 96 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ii (January 20, 1753), p. 31.
- 97 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xx (September 29., 1753), p. 319.
- 98 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, iii (February 3, 1753), p. 47.
- 99 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, iv (February 17, 1753), p. 62.
- 100 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiii (September 7 - 21, 1751), pp. 362 - 63.
- 101 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ii (January 20, 1753), p. 30.
- 102 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 15.
- 103 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvi (June 2 - 16, 1750), p. 253. Occasionally, such accounts have happy endings, as in the case of a child who jumps out of a woman's arms while she is standing by a window. The woman shrieks, and a man walking below looks up and catches the child in his arms (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv [September 21 - October 5], 1751), p. 377).
- 104 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 331.
- 105 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. Vol. III, xiii (May 2 - 16, 1752), p. 206.
- 106 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol, III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 238.

- 107 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xvii (August 18, 1753), p. 272.
- 108 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxvi (October 20 - November 3, 1750), p. 413.
- 109 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, iii (December 2 - 16, 1749), p. 45.
- 110 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xx i (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 330.
- 111 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, iii (February 3, 1753), p. 47.
- 112 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvi (June 13 - 27, 1752), p. 254; Vol. IV, vii (March 31, 1753), p. 111; Vol. IV, xv (July 21, 1753), p. 240; Vol. IV, xvi (August 4, 1753), p. 255, p. 256; Vol. IV, xvii (August 18, 1753), p. 271.
- 113 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 240.
- 114 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv (September 21 - October 5, 1751), p. 377.
- 115 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xi (March 24 - April 7, 1750), p. 176.
- 116 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xii (April 7 - 21, 1750), p. 191. Children being kicked by horses under very ordinary circumstances was reported as being responsible for a number of deaths.
- 117 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xiv (May 5 - 19, 1750), p. 221.
- 118 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xviii (July 11 - July 25, 1752), p. 288.
- 119 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xiv (May 4 - 18, 1751), p. 219.
- 120 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvi (June 13 - 27, 1751), p. 254.
- 121 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxv (October 28 - November 11, 1752), p. 398.
- 122 For example, the magazine could only speculate on a partially decomposed body retrieved from an excavation pit: "By the Blackness about his Breast and face, it was suspected he had been much bruised, and perhaps murdered before he was thrown into the Pond" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv [May 30 - June 13, 1752], p. 240). Suicide by drowning will be discussed separately in the last chapter.
- 123 This trope of drowning with witnesses functions differently in a sentimentalized account of a young man's accidental drowning, supposedly written by his father. In this "Fragment," witnesses serve not to testify to the authenticity of the accident, but to prefigure the powerlessness of the victim's poor and elderly parents to reconcile themselves to their loss, which is the primary focus of the narrative (*The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. II [February 1799], pp. 105 - 6).
- 124 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 331.
- 125 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, viii (February 22 - March 7, 1752), p. 127; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxiv (October 14 - 28, 1752), p. 382; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xxii (October 27, 1753), p. 352. The absence of details in the last account may imply suicide, as women killed themselves by drowning as frequently as men, and the poor far more often than the genteel.
- 126 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vi (March 17, 1753), p. 95; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vii (March 30, 1753), p. 111.
- 127 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xii (April 18 - May 2, 1752), p. 190; Vol. III, xviii (July 11 - July 25, 1752), p. 287.
- 128 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, x (March 21 - April 4, 1752), p. 157.
- 129 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xxi (October 13, 1753), p. 336; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xix (September 15, 1753), p. 303.
- 130 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvii (June 16 - June 30, 1750), p. 269.
- 131 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, viii (April 14, 1753), p. 127; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xxi (October 13, 1753), p. 335.
- 132 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 133 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ii (January 20, 1753), p. 31.
- 134 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxii (September 16 - 30, 1752), p. 351.
- 135 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxiv (October 14 - 28, 1752), p. 383; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xvii (August 18, 1753), p. 269.

-
- 136 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xx (August 8 - 22, 1752), pp. 317-18.
- 137 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xix (July 14 - 28, 1750), p. 301.
- 138 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv (September 21 - October 5, 1751), p. 378.
- 139 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV v (March 3, 1753), p. 79. A similar story is reported from Paris, where, after drinking from a bottle of wine, two men die within half an hour. During the investigation, the landlord drinks from the same bottle, in order to prove his innocence of the deaths, and he, too, dies within minutes. The officers subsequently find a seven-pound toad in the bottom of the cask from which the wine was drawn (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxv [October 6 - 20, 1750], p. 397)
- 140 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vi (March 17, 1753), p. 95.
- 141 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, vii (March 31, 1753), p. 111.
- 142 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ix (April 28, 1753), p. 141.
- 143 The Ordinance specified that "Apothecaries and Druggists are enjoined to be very circumspect for the future, in the Sale of Arsenick, and other poisonous Drugs, and to dispose of none to any Body whatsoever, but to those who shall sign in Writing, intimating the Use that is proposed to be made of such Drugs" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxiv (October 14 - October 28, 1752), p. 381). This notice might also refer to the Blandy poisoning, which was covered extensively by the magazine. The Blandy murder is discussed later in this chapter.
- 144 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, vii (January 26 - February 9, 1751), p. 112.
- 145 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xv (May 18 - June 1, 1751), p. 237. The woman was rescued by ferrymen before she was killed.
- 146 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xx (September 29, 1753), p. 319.
- 147 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xviii (June 29 - July 13, 1751), p. 281.
- 148 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvi (October 19 - November 2, 1751), pp. 409-10.
- 149 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, i (November 16 - November 30, 1751), pp. 13-14.
- 150 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ii (January 20, 1753), p. 31.
- 151 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, viii (June 29 - July 13, 1751), pp. 281 - 82.
- 152 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xvi (August 4, 1753), p. 254.
- 153 The most bizarre of lightning deaths occurred in Vienna, where three people ringing the church bells in order to dispel the storm, were killed with the steeple was struck: "What is very remarkable though their Bodies were in a Manner consumed, their cloaths received very little Damage" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV xvi [August 4, 1753], p. 253).
- 154 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, v (March 3, 1753), p. 77.
- 155 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - August 24, 1751), p. 330.
- 156 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vii (February 8 - February 22, 1752), p. 110.
- 157 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, v (January 11 - January 25, 1752), p. 77.
- 158 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, iii (December 2 - December 16, 1749), p. 47.
- 159 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vii (February 8 - February 22, 1752), p. 107.
- 160 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxviii (December 9 - December 23, 1752), p. 445.
- 161 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, ix (March 7 - March 21, 1752), p. 141.
- 162 Although *The Ladies Magazine* reported the occurrence of earthquakes most extensively, the debate was carried out in other magazines as well. Frances Brooke's *The Old Maid*, for example, responded to a letter enquiring about the earthquake, by taking a stand against the allegedly more popular Providential view, and taking the more moderate view. The account all but accuses of Catholicism those who judge earthquakes to be God's vengeance, "with an air of more than papal infallibility." (*The Old Maid*, v, December 13, 1755, pp. 25- 27). Eliza Haywood's last periodical effort, *The Young Lady*, used the subject for a slightly different religious purpose, the desirability of being prepared for sudden death, as well as an reason to deplore the loss of fellow feeling in the hearts of the fashionable. The relative horrors of death in an earthquake are also debated here, one side claiming that a soul prepared to meet God was indifferent to the manner of

- death, and the other side claiming that "death certainly must come arm'd with double horror when we behold promontories falling,-- rocks cleaving, -- seas bursting upon us with tremendous roar, -- all the elements conspiring our destruction, as if nature were about to be dissolv'd, and the last dreadful day were nigh at hand" (*The Young Lady*, Vol. V, February 3, 1756, pp. 26 - 29)
- 163 While recognizing the legal distinction between the terms murder and manslaughter, I have used murder more broadly here to mean the violent killing of one person by another. In actuality, murder was defined as killing that was premeditated and malicious, but manslaughter that was committed in the course of another felonious offense was also a capital crime. I have not distinguished the very few cases of killing done in self-defense, since these occurred in the context of circumstances that were violent and not incidental or accidental.
- 164 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 75. Susan Dwyer Amussen has observed that, in a culture that tolerated a high level of violence, violence in the name of public correction was its most acceptable form. ("Being Stirred to Much Unquietness": Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England," *Journal of Women's History* 6 [1994], p. 73)
- 165 Margaret Hunt, "Wife Beating, Domesticity and Women's Independence in Eighteenth-Century London" *Gender and History* 4 (1992), p. 15. This topic is also discussed by Susan Amussen in "Being Stirred to Much Unquietness."
- 166 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 77.
- 167 J.M. Beattie, "The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of Social History* 8 (1975), p. 80 - 81. Beattie states that even though fewer women than men committed violent crimes, the proportion of total criminals who were convicted of willful murder was the same in each case, about a fifth of those accused (Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 97).
- 168 Beattie, "Criminality of Women," p. 83.
- 169 Beattie, "Criminality of Women," p. 102.
- 170 J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels*, p. 181.
- 171 For an in-depth examination of the legal and literary narratives that were employed to tell Mary Blandy's story, see Susan Sage Heinzelman, "Guilty in Law, Implausible in Fiction," in Susan Sage Heinzelman and Zipporah Batshaw Wiseman (eds.), *Representing Women: Law, Literature, and Feminism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 309 - 36.
- 172 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, viii (February 22 - March 7, 1752), p. 125. In some cases, parents inadvertently kill their children, as in the instance of a son who attempts to intervene in a quarrel between his parents and is fatally stabbed by his father (*The Ladies Magazine*, I, x, p. 237).
- 173 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 101.
- 174 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), pp. 13 - 15.
- 175 Though the case is not followed by the magazine, another woman is reported convicted of petty treason for killing her husband was presumably also executed in this way.
- 176 In fact, Mary Blandy did not have the wealth she claimed. Her rumoured £10,000 dowry was a fiction perpetrated by her father, perhaps to offset Mary's physical unattractiveness, caused by smallpox. According to Susan Heinzelman, Francis Blandy hoped that the prospect of a fortune would attract the "right" sort of man. Interestingly, the Crown attorney at Mary Blandy's trial characterized Blandy's fiction as a "pious fraud" (Heinzelman, p. 311).
- 177 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 331.
- 178 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvi (October 19 - November 2, 1751), p. 410.
- 179 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv (September 21 - October 5, 1751), pp. 373 - 74.
- 180 In 1752, a rival journal of Fielding's *Covent-Garden Journal* also covered the Blandy incident extensively. *Have At You All: or, The Drury Lane Journal*, Vols. VII, VIII, and XII, contains accounts of the trial or commentary on some aspect of the murder. In addition, *Have At You All* published a long poem, "An Elegy on the Power of Love, occasion'd by Miss Blandy's Death," which includes a reference to Elizabeth Jeffreyes' murder of her uncle for similar reasons of greed and love (Vol. XIII [April 9, 1752], pp. 266 - 69).

- 181 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, ix (March 7 - 21, 1752), p. 137. Mary Blandy's execution, as well as Amy Hutchinson's, is discussed in the next section.
- 182 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvii (November 2 - 16, 1751), p. 426 - 27.
- 183 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xix (July 13 - 27), p. 300.
- 184 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, viii (February 22 - March 7, 1752), p. 126.
- 185 Amussen, "Being Stirred to Much Unquietness," p. 84.
- 186 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xiv (May 16 - 30, 1752), p. 223.
- 187 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxvii (November 25 - December 9, 1752), p. 432.
- 188 Both Margaret Hunt and Susan Amussen have argued that domestic violence against women in early modern England was a much more public matter than it became later in a more privatized, society. Both agree as well that, within limits, domestic violence was not regarded as deviant or particularly unusual, but that, beyond these limits, community intervention was common, provided the wife conformed to norms of female behaviour and presented themselves as passive victims (Hunt, pp. 23 - 24; Amussen, "Being Stirred to Much Unquietness," p. 82).
- 189 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiv (September 21 - October 5, 1751), p. 374.
- 190 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, ix (March 7 - 21, 1752), p. 139.
- 191 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, x (March 21 - April 4, 1752), p. 153.
- 192 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - 18, 1752), p. 165.
- 193 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xiii (May 2 - 16, 1752), p. 196.
- 194 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 231.
- 195 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vii (February 8 - 22, 1752), p. 111.
- 196 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ix (April 28, 1753), p. 142.
- 197 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 15; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, iii (December 14 - 28, 1751), p. 46; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, x (March 21 - April 4, 1752), p. 159.
- 198 One might, however, extrapolate from the work of writers such as Daniel Stott that male violence was gendered, in the sense that aggression and violence were as intrinsic to accepted norms of male behaviour as they were foreign to accepted female norms. Stott suggests that the patterns of street violence and rakish behaviour that was so much discussed -- and exaggerated -- in the early part of the century might be attributed to patterns of militarism and libertinism inherited from an earlier aristocratic culture, "a perverse expression of a more general patriarchal culture that condoned a measure of violence" ("The Case of the Mohocks: rake violence in Augustan London," *Social History* 20 [1995] pp. 198 - 99). However, even if these male norms of violent behaviour extended to the men of the labouring and lower classes, who tended to be the men who committed murder, this norm was not acknowledged -- either positively or negatively -- by *The Ladies Magazine* in the same way its coverage of murder by women assumed that being female would form an important part of the murder story.
- 199 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, ii (November 18 - December 2, 1750), p. 23.
- 200 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, viii (February 22 - March 7, 1752), p. 125.
- 201 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - 18, 1752), p. 173.
- 202 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xiii (April 20 - May 4, 1751), p. 204.
- 203 The number of times *The Ladies Magazine* reports someone dead who turns up alive in a subsequent account suggests the general unreliability of journalistic sources during this period. The fact that the magazine never acknowledges or apologizes such errors may indicate that accuracy was considered subordinate to narrative interest by both the magazine and its readers.
- 204 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xv (May 18 - June 1, 1751), p. 230.
- 205 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xv (May 18 - June 1, 1751), pp. 232.
- 206 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xvi (June 1 - 15, 1751), p. 245.
- 207 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xviii (June 29 - July 13, 1751), p. 275 - 77.
- 208 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xx (July 27 - August 10, 1751), p. 315.

- 209 A subsequent account giving more details of Colley's involvement in the murder returns to the subject of witchcraft; when asked at his trial whether or not a real witch might not have cast a spell over her persecutors, Colley seemed "staggered" and began to believe he might have been wrong in his beliefs (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiii [September 7 - 21, 1751], p. 351).
- 210 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 211 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 345; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xiii (April 21 - May 5, 1750), pp. 205 - 6
- 212 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxii (August 25 - September 8, 1750), p. 349.
- 213 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, viii (February 9 - 23, 1751), p. 126. Interestingly, though several reports of murders can be seen as in some way ironic, murder is never treated with humour. The closest the magazine comes to gallows humour is in the case of a Barber whose wife died of injuries after he had beaten her with a stick. When the judge asked "what could instigate him to commit so horrid a Crime; he could give no other Reason, but that he was drunk; and the Judge told him he must therefore be hanged when he was sober" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xix, p.303).
- 214 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xi (March 24 - April 7, 1750), p. 176; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, viii (February 22 - March 7, 1752), p. 127; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - April 18, 1752), p. 174.
- 215 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xii (April 7 - 21, 1750), p. 179.
- 216 Peter Linebaugh, "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons," in Douglas Hay et al (eds.), p. 67.
- 217 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, pp. 468 - 69. However, Susan Amussen has shown that even in the seventeenth century, popular response to execution varied with the crowd and the location, indicating, she suggests, a crowd's ability to interpret each case individually ("Being Stirred to Much Unquietness," p. 74).
- 218 The establishment of this kind of relationship is particularly significant since most of those hanged at Tyburn were not from London and were without "the close and persisting relationships that still characterized much of English society." Douglas Hay uses this fact to suggest that the lack of social cohesion made Londoners less deferential to instruments of state authority than their provincial counterparts ("Property, Authority and the Criminal Law," in Douglas Hay et al (eds.), *Albion's Fatal Tree* [London: Allen Lane, 1975], p. 55). However, the impulse to fellow-feeling might also be seen as an expression of communal response that was still residual and habitual in a society in transition.
- 219 John Beattie, "The Pattern of Crime in England 1660 - 1800 " *Past and Present* 62 (1974), p. 58.
- 220 Linebaugh, "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons," p. 117.
- 221 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 423.
- 222 Henry Fielding, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the late Increase of Robbers* (January 1750), pp. 166 - 171.
- 223 Although the Act was allegedly partially intended to satisfy the current dearth of bodies available for medical training, as Ruth Richardson points out, "From its wording, those who framed the Act appear to have been concerned to a much greater extent with the infliction of punishment, than with incidental benefit to science" (*Death, Dissection and the Destitute*, p. 36).
- 224 In February, the magazine commented, "We hear that all Criminals that are found guilty of the horrid Crime of Murder, will for the future be hanged up the day after Conviction, and their Bodies sent to Surgeon's Hall" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vii [February 8 - 22, 1752], p. 110). In June, the abstract ran under the title, *An Abstract of the Late ACT of PARLIAMENT, for the better preventing the horrid Crime of MURDER*, and included punishments for those who attempted to obstruct implementation of the Act: anyone who attempted to rescue a murderer was guilty of a felony punishable by death without Benefit of Clergy, and anyone who attempted to rescue a body from the surgeons was liable to a seven-year transportation (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvi [June 13 - 27, 1752], pp. 249 - 50).

- 225 Randall McGowen, "Civilizing Punishment: The End of the Public Execution in England," *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994), pp. 260 - 61.
- 226 Peter Linebaugh, *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 363.
- 227 Although in her examination of Haywood's relationship to the literary marketplace, Catherine Ingrassia does not elaborate on any of Haywood's minor print efforts, she does remark, in one fairly brief discussion of politics and popular culture in *The Parrot*, that, in Haywood's concern to achieve the broadest consumer appeal, "she attempts to respond to multiple strains of discourse and thus disparate and potentially new readers....Regardless of the generic categorization. political writing...was commercially desirable and, in the case of Haywood, the 'authenticity' of her political voice is really not the salient issue. Her narrative technique and multivalent voice locate the text within the consumer culture and highlight the connection between politics and commerce, and the commercialization of political discourse" (*Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England*, [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], p. 125).
- 228 *The Parrot*, i (August 2, 1746).
- 229 *The Parrot*, iii (August 16, 1746).
- 230 *The Parrot*, iv (August 23, 1746).
- 231 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 16.
- 232 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, iv (December 16 - 30, 1749), p. 59.
- 233 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, x (March 10 - 24, 1750), p. 152.
- 234 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvii (June 16 - 30, 1750), p. 268.
- 235 In another example, a man whipped for stealing a goose, a ploughhammer and two iron hooks got five lines, whereas a capitally convicted highwaymen merited a whole column.
- 236 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxii (August 25 - September 8, 1750), pp. 349 - 50.
- 237 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxviii (December 9 - 23, 1752), p. 446.
- 238 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xii (April 7 - 21, 1750), pp. 185 - 87.
- 239 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xiii (April 21 - May 5, 1750), p. 197 - 99.
- 240 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvi (June 2 - 16, 1750), p. 242. There were diverse implications to being buried in linen. According to folk belief, a linen shroud was lucky, and many wished to emulate Christ, who was buried in a linen shroud. However, British law imposed a fine on anyone who contravened the specification that burial garments be made of British wool, a fine that only the well-off could afford (Richardson, *Death, Dissection and the Destitute*, p. 21).
- 241 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xvii (June 16 - 30, 1750), p. 260 - 61.
- 242 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xi (April 4 - 18, 1752), p. 175.
- 243 Interestingly, the description of Mary Blandy's dress is completely different in the second account. While in the earlier account, she is wearing "the same black Petelair as she was tried in," in the second account, she "went out of the Castle about Nine "Clock, attended by the Rev. Mr. Swinton, dress'd in a black Crape Sack, with her Arms and Hands ty'd with black Paduasoy Ribbons, and her whole Dress extremely neat; her Countenance solemn, and her Behaviour well-suited to her deplorable Circumstances; but she bore up under her Misfortunes with amazing Fortitude." In other words, she is much more suitably attired in the retelling.
- 244 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvi (June 13 - 27, 1752), pp. 243 - 44.
- 245 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xvii (June 27 - July 11, 1752), p. 271.
- 246 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxiii (September 30 - October 14, 1752), p. 366.
- 247 The theme of wrongful execution is anticipated by an anecdote in *The Parrot*, in which a female servant is wrongfully accused, tried, and capitally convicted of stealing jewels from a former master. When the master discovers a parrot is the thief, he wrings the bird's neck and runs to Newgate, "proclaiming all the Way the strange Accident and the sad Mistake he had been guilty of, and vowing to make the Maid all the Reparation in his Power, for he knew not that Sentence had been executed upon her; but when he was informed it was over, and that his Accusation had

been a kind of Murder, he fell instantly distracted, and, as I was informed, never after recovered his Senses" (*The Parrot*, ix, 1746).

248 The magazine in this case is consistent with widespread public opinion about this case.

Penlez was convicted on the testimony of highly disreputable and self-interested witnesses, and, unlike the other accused, was denied the King's pardon. According to Martin Batestin, the case caused Henry Fielding considerable distress for years after the event (*Henry Fielding A Life* [London: Routledge, 1989], pp. 472 - 76, 483, 488 - 91).

249 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, i (November 18, 1749), p. 9. Interestingly, the magazine does not likewise champion the case of Thomas Colley, the only one of Ruth Osborne's murderers to be executed, though he, too, served as an "example" of what might happen to rioters. The distinction is likely partly due to different attitudes toward crimes against property and crimes against person.

250 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iv (December 15 - 29, 1750), p. 55.

251 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 347.

252 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxiii (September 7 - 21, 1751), p. 358 - 59.

253 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xii (April 18 - May 2, 1752), p. 191.

254 A number of historians have commented on the fallacy of the complete mindlessness of the spontaneous actions of large crowds during this period. John Beattie remarks that such action depended on, among other factors, a critical mass of public opinion among the ordinary men and women who made up the crowds (*Crime and the Courts*, p. 133). It is tempting to suggest that the ability of crowds to act in relatively spontaneous and purposeful ways lies in part in a residual sense of community that existed alongside the rising sense of the individual. Even at the end of the century, no one was more than a generation or two away from a society defined by the ties of kinship and religion, in which community values took precedence over individual rights. A critical mass of opinion on particular issues suggests both the endurance of this habit of community and the ability of the press to confirm it by making information public property.

255 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - August 24, 1751), p. 329.

256 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxvi (November 11 - 25, 1752), p. 407.

257 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxviii (December 9 - 23, 1752), p. 441 - 42.

258 *The Lady's Miscellany* (1793), p. 37.

259 *The Female Mentor*, Vol. II (1793), p. 95.

260 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (December 1799), pp. 472 - 73.

261 The term "infanticide" obviously has a range of applications, but most commonly refers to the killing of a newborn infant. For the sake of convenience, I will use the term here, although Mark Jackson has pointed out that this usage did not appear until the nineteenth century (Mark Jackson. *New-Born Child Murder* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996], p. 6).

262 Linebaugh, *The London Hanged*, p. 148. Infanticide was almost always committed by the mother of a new-born, although occasionally, a female relative (typically the baby's grandmother) or the baby's father was responsible for the actual murder. Nurses and parish authorities were widely believed to murder bastard children. For example, the nineteenth-century demographer John Rickman felt that a third of the deaths that took place in London in the first half of the eighteenth century were never recorded, and that, of those unrecorded deaths, many were "the direct or indirect result of human agency. Exposure in the streets, desertion by parents, and a deliberate destruction of infant life by parish authorities were everyday occurrences in London" (Quoted in J.D. Chambers, *Population, Economy, and Society in Pre-Industrial England*, [London: Oxford University Press, 1972], p. 78).

263 As R.W. Malcolmson has pointed out, infanticide was often difficult to prove in the case of married women, as "domestic privacy gave some assurance against witnesses, collusion was possible between husband and wife and convincing motives were less easily established than in the case of bastard births" (R.W. Malcolmson, "Infanticide in the Eighteenth Century," in J.S. Cockburn (ed.) *Crime in England 1550 - 1800* [London: Methuen, 1977], p. 206).

264 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p.113.

-
- 265 Hoffer and Hull, p.155; Malcolmson, p. 187.
- 266 Laura Gowing, "Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 156 (1997), pp. 88. The necessity for secrecy was complicated by the conditions of a servant's existence, which were such that she was most vulnerable to rumour and detection (p. 92).
- 267 Because the difficulty of keeping a living child a secret was greater in the country, abandonment was more common in urban areas, particularly London (Malcolmson, p. 188).
- 268 It is self-evident that the extent of the practice of infanticide for any period can never be precisely determined, because the only actual record is contained in court records of indictments, which, of course, cannot measure infanticide that went undetected or unreported, which must often have been the case.
- 269 Jackson, pp. 30 - 31.
- 270 Hoffer and Hull, pp. 15 - 17.
- 271 Jackson, p. 36.
- 272 Jackson, p. 46. Susan Amussen observes that even when juries were lenient, a prosecution for infanticide could serve as a reminder of the power of the law, while an acquittal served as a reminder of the mercy of the state (*An Ordered Society*, p. 115).
- 273 Although a long-term, sophisticated, and public debate developed regarding the law against suicide, no similar debate developed in England with respect to the 1624 statute and the issue of infanticide. A debate over infanticide and the law, similar to that over the suicide law in England, did develop in eighteenth-century Germany. For an account of this phenomenon, see Hamilton Beck, "Of Two Minds About the Death Penalty: Hippel's Account of a Case of Infanticide," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 18 (1988), pp. 123 - 40.
- 274 Hoffer and Hull, p. 69. Other defenses also became more acceptable, such as the mental incapacity of the mother, or death due to an accident, for example, if the mother fell shortly before or during labor (p.70).
- 275 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 120. This development gave rise to another, related, development, the introduction and increasing importance of medical evidence to prove or disprove live birth, though the evidence itself was often unreliable (pp. 120 - 21). For a detailed discussion of medical evidence in infanticide cases, see Jackson, pp. 84 - 104.
- 276 Mandeville, Bernard, *The Fable of the Bees*, Vol. I, F.B. Kaye (ed). (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), pp. 74-75.
- 277 Jackson, p. 110.
- 278 Andrew, p. 104. The anxiety over population growth was no doubt aided by the still-predominant death rate revealed in the bills of mortality.
- 279 "By offering such women the opportunity to escape from their predicament, the Foundling Hospital challenged the view that these women were necessarily profligate and vicious. The Hospital's policies were based upon an assumption that the mothers of bastards were in fact virtuous victims who would respond better to being relieved of their burden than to being exposed to further shame and punishment." Jackson, p. 114. John Beattie concurs, claiming that "the real significance" of such hospitals "was the change in attitude they proclaimed toward the unmarried mother" (*Crime and the Courts*, p. 123).
- 280 During the nearly four years of wholesale admission, "14,934 children were taken in of whom only 4400 lived to be apprenticed" (Dorothy George, p. 45).
- 281 Andrew, pp. 100 - 101.
- 282 The same non-humanitarian bias is apparent in a related context. *The Ladies Magazine* ran a three-part series on the establishment of the Foundling Hospital (Vol. III, vi, January 25 - February 8, 1752). The account is a glowing endorsement of the institution but, in light of known statistics, is most remarkable for what it leaves out. Although appearing scandalized that early plans had been delayed because of "some ill grounded Prejudices, which weak People had conceived that such an Undertaking might seem to encourage Persons in Vice, by making too easy

- Provision for their illegitimate Children" (p. 86), the magazine nevertheless is clear that the Foundling Hospital building was constructed so "that it should be commodious, plain, and substantial, without any costly Decorations" (p. 88). The better part of the last installment is comprised of the contributions donated by artists and sculptors, "Monuments of their Charity, and Abilities in their several Arts." As for the children, the account omits entirely any mention of the death rate, or any mention of infants, focusing instead on the useful employment of the older children there, right down to gender-appropriate training: little boys are thought to be too effeminately employed in the manufacture of silk, so they are instead put to the task of making twine of flax and hemp. (Vol. III, vii [February 8 - 22, 1752], p. 101). A detailed account of the selective lottery system whereby children are admitted is also given, making the Hospital sound discriminating. Clearly the focus of the series is on the benevolence of the Hospital's benefactors and its social usefulness as a pre-training institution for young apprentices. Humanitarian interest in abandoned babies is limited to Captain Coram's comment.
- 283 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, i, p. 16.
- 284 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, i, p. 17.
- 285 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. IV, xxii, p. 181. The story is entitled "The Triumph of Fortitude and Patience, over Barbarity and Deceit: A True History."
- 286 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xix (February 24 - March 10, 1750), pp. 134 - 35.
- 287 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxi (August 11 - August 25, 1750), p. 329.
- 288 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xi (March 24 - April 7, 1750), p. 175.
- 289 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xii (April 6 - 20, 1751), p. 182.
- 290 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxi (August 10 - 24, 1751), p. 331.
- 291 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 292 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, ix (March 7 - 21, 1752), p. 142.
- 293 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, xxi (October 13, 1753), p. 333.
- 294 *The Student, or the Oxford Monthly Miscellany*, No. III (March 31, 1750), p. 118.
- 295 Dorothy George, p. 43.
- 296 As Mark Jackson observes, "apart from rare efforts to ensure that an abandoned bastard was baptized before it expired, little attention was paid to the fate of supposedly murdered children" (p. 46).
- 297 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xv (May 18 - June 1, 1751), p. 229.
- 298 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, vi (January 25 - February 8, 1752), p. 87.
- 299 *The Old Maid*, xiii (February 7, 1756), p. 74.
- 300 *The Old Maid*, xiii (February 7, 1756), p. 75.
- 301 *The Old Maid*, xiii (February 7, 1756), p. 75.
- 302 *The Old Maid* calls on Parliament to provide a fund to allow the Foundling Hospital to fulfill its purpose: "I am a woman, and politics are not my province, nor does it become me to dictate to my superiors, but I hope wiser heads will think further on so interesting a subject; and pardon a hint which comes from a heart warm with the love of that country, which of all others, deserves best to be loved and melting with pity for these abandoned helpless objects of our compassion" (p. 76).
- 303 Chambers, p. 79.
- 304 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (July 1798), p. 35.
- 305 Beattie, *Crime and the Courts*, p. 112.

CHAPTER FIVE

WOMEN'S MAGAZINES AND THE DISCOURSE OF SUICIDE

[The periodical press] carried news of suicides to a vast audience of readers and enabled them to form their own judgements about them. The rituals of judgement and burial were eclipsed as the chief means by which people learned of suicides and assessed their significance. Moreover, the style and tone of newspaper stories about suicides promoted an increasingly secular and sympathetic attitude to self-killing.

Michael MacDonald and Terrence Murphy
Sleepless Souls

In their comprehensive overview of suicide in the early modern period, MacDonald and Murphy observe that suicide notes were rarely left before 1700.¹ However, the increasing discovery of actual suicide notes written by self-murderers from every social class and their increasing visibility in the periodical press (sometimes invented by writers and editors), eventually rendered suicide notes a veritable sub-genre in the discourse of suicide, one that was possible only within the context of fairly widespread literacy. According to Janet Todd, the "suicide note is the most personal, intimate, spontaneous and...least fictional of documents, and yet it turns out to be as constrained by genre, gender and precedent as any novel or romance."² The findings of MacDonald and Murphy suggest that the first part of Todd's statement is inaccurate and the second part predictable. According to them, suicide notes rendered those who killed themselves "not simply the passive subjects of the journalists' artistry: they were active participants in the hermeneutics of suicide....Suicide had become a performance, mounted before a mixed crowd of intimates and unknowns, and suicides could choose which part of the house they played to. Suicide became a means of self-expression....Men and women who were about to kill themselves borrowed the forms and language for their own suicide notes from the examples, genuine and fictional, that they read in the newspapers."³ Suicide notes served a variety of functions that corresponded to what was being expressed in them. Some suicide notes were meant to be read only by intimate survivors, and some were meant to be published in the papers and read by a large audience of total strangers. Some notes addressed specific grievances, and some dwelt on philosophical or religious matters. Suicide notes acted as an adjunct to a will, detailing what was to be done with property or the

corpse. In other cases, the notes were intended as a form of revenge on survivors, though they were more often consolatory. However, most suicide notes were alike in their configuration of their authors "as innocent victims of circumstances or penitent sinners, and they deployed all the rhetorical powers that they possessed to arouse the pity and sorrow of their readers."⁴

This assessment raises two important and related points regarding historical attitudes toward and the semantics of suicide. First, the notion of performance, of self-consciousness, in writing suicide notes is consistent with more general observations about writing and its accessibility to a wider eighteenth-century public. What is of particular interest is the corollary notion of suicide as self-expression, which is a thoroughly modern idea contingent upon the privileging of individual over collective experience. Elisabeth Bronfen blurs this historical distinction with regard to suicide in her study of women and death. Considering the deaths of women characters in texts by Samuel Richardson, Tennyson, and Flaubert, Bronfen writes, "Dying is a move beyond communication yet also functions as these women's one effective communicative act, in a cultural or kinship situation otherwise disinclined towards feminine authorship. It involves self-reflexivity in so far as death is chosen and performed by the woman herself, in an act that makes her both object and subject of dying and of representation....Suicide...is both the literal attainment of alterity through death and the performance of an autobiographical desire. For suicide implies an authorship with one's own life, a form of writing the self and writing death that is ambivalently poised between self-construction and self-destruction: a confirmation that is also an annihilation of the self, and as such another kind of attempt to know the self as radically different and other from the consciously known self during life."⁵ The notion of "writing the self" was very much in the process of formation in the eighteenth century, and "writing death," in the self-reflexive terms described by Bronfen, was likewise only becoming possible.

In our own time, suicide is commonly considered to be a cry for help. It is important to recognize that it was not interpreted in these terms before the end of the eighteenth century, at the earliest. In the sixteenth century and early seventeenth century, suicide was thought to be the result of a supernatural power that existed outside individuals. Those who committed suicide might be responsible for allowing themselves to be tempted by the devil or to become his agents, but they were not responsible for the act itself, which was a form of evil. After the mid-seventeenth century, attitudes toward suicide moderated.

as the devil was relegated to the realm of superstition by Protestant and Enlightenment thinkers, leading to an increasing disinclination to regard suicide as sinful. However, suicide was still not considered to be a cry for help. Even as it became decreasingly sinful, suicide remained a socially shameful act, shameful for both the agent and for survivors, and throughout the century, commentators on both sides of the debate called for potential suicides to be mindful of the act's material *and* social consequences for those they left behind. The formulation of suicide as a cry for help relies on the assumption that the suicide will receive a sympathetic hearing from survivors, and such was not the case when possible impoverishment and certain shame was the result for the suicide's family.⁶ As well, suicide as a cry for help indicates an assumption by the person contemplating the act that the suicide is due to circumstances that are reparable, that *can* be helped. But even attempted suicide brought disgrace, and a ruined reputation was widely known to be beyond repair in eighteenth-century England. Finally, all the evidence points to the fact that people who attempted to kill themselves intended that the attempt should be successful. Suicide could only be considered a cry for help after a number of changes, especially the general acceptance, if not the approval, of suicide as an act of self-expression. This occurred only when the importance of the individual took precedence over any larger social unit.

Furthermore, Bronfen maintains that women are in a particular "bind" in cultural representations of death, in that "her position in the symbolic or cultural order is that of feminine *body*, so that undoing her body, because it is the site of paralysis, because desires connected with it can not be realised, also means subverting the position cultural laws have ascribed to her. By undoing her body, she undoes the gender construction which places her in an inferior position, even as cancelling the 'illusion' of gender lets death emerge."⁷ Apart from the fact that the assumptions in this formulation were unthinkable in the eighteenth century, Bronfen's focus on textual women -- either characters in books or, presumably, living women whose ability to "write the body" rendered them texts -- bears little relation to those real women most likely to commit suicide -- who were nameless and already invisible -- or even to female characters in texts, whose feminine construction was still being worked out. As will be shown, insofar as female suicides whose stories appeared in the magazines functioned as signs, they were signifiers within a complex discourse that was not limited to, or even primarily concerned with, gender. Even Fanny Braddock's 1731 suicide, which was narrated throughout the century, was not separated (or

separable) from the discursive fabric that interwove suicide with gambling, lost love, financial ruin, and heroic death, none of which were gender-specific (though all could be turned to ends that were).

Second, and closely related to the notion of suicide as self-expression, is the notion of romantic suicide, a term employed by MacDonald and Murphy to mark a major shift in eighteenth-century attitudes toward self-killing. According to MacDonald and Murphy, what they have termed "romantic suicide" partially displaced Stoic suicide in the second half of the century, as passionate engagement of the emotions and imagination came to be more valued than Stoic endurance.⁸ Their use of the term romantic here is problematic in its seeming failure to distinguish between the eighteenth-century culture of sensibility, which developed over the course of the century and intersected with a range of social and political issues, and nineteenth-century romanticism. Furthermore, MacDonald and Murphy's formulation ignores the obvious affinities between Stoic attitudes toward suicide and more sentimental attitudes increasingly brought to bear on moral issues generally. As early as 1717, for example, Pope's "Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady" combined sympathetic response for human frailty with approval for Stoic heroism in the context of suicide:

...tell,
Is it, in heav'n, a crime to love too well?
To bear too tender, or too firm a heart,
To act a Lover's or a *Roman's* part?
Is there no bright reversion in the sky
For those who greatly think, or bravely die?⁹

Furthermore, for most of the eighteenth century, the word "romantic" was typically used pejoratively in its generic context. For example, in a mid-century *Female Spectator* narrative, Eliza Haywood condemns a suicide as romantic, but her use of the word derives its strength from the period's generic disapproval of romance, although it may inadvertently anticipate the self-consciousness of nineteenth-century romanticism in its reference to performance heroics. In this story, a gentleman loves one sister (who does not love him) and is loved by the other, for which the gentleman feels gratitude but no returning love. When the boat in which all three are sailing is wrecked during a pleasure cruise, the gentleman holds onto both sisters until his strength gives out and he has to let go of one to save the other. Out of gratitude, he saves the one who loves him, but when he sees his own beloved drown, he throws himself into the sea, leaving the second sister to swoon on the shore. *The Female Spectator* comments that the

gentleman's action is "too romantic to be recommended as an example for imitation...[and] as rather proceeding from a vain desire of doing something to be talked of after death, than the effects of any real virtue, or greatness of mind."¹⁰ "Romantic" here is associated with the imprudent and self-regarding indulgence of emotion and passion that ran counter to notions of the individual's assumed and prior responsibility to the social groups within which he functioned. The term conveys severe censure of the person or act to whom it is applied.

It is also important to distinguish here between "romantic suicide" and suicide for love, which dates back at least as far as Dido and was an important part of the courtly love tradition.¹¹ Motives of the heart, or some variation thereof, were often cited as a cause of eighteenth-century suicides. However, if by romantic suicide is meant self-killing that foregrounds and approves the self-sacrifice of a life for the sake of individual passion that is accepted as worthy of such a sacrifice, few romantic suicides occurred in the eighteenth century.¹² Those that were said to occur, in life and in print, were not all, like Werther's, committed for the sake of love. Furthermore, these were not generally sanctioned but censured, as connotations conveyed by the word "romantic" continued to be negative. Thomas Warton's "The Suicide" describes the way in which "treacherous magic" lured a lonely young poet away from his Muse and down the path of melancholy that involved brooding on his poverty and his doomed and hopeless love. Warton's poem re-enacts both the religious and sentimental views of suicide, with the religious view having, emphatically, the last word. In the end, the poem condemns equally the fallibility of the poet-suicide and the sentimentalization of the melancholy disposition; these are not weaknesses to be yielded to, but trials to be overcome through the grace of God.

Thomas Chatterton's suicide can serve as an actual case in point. Now usually characterized as "romantic," Chatterton's suicide was actually so designated several years after its occurrence by Wordsworth and Keats, who were instrumental in Chatterton's posthumous characterization as a romantic cult hero. In the eighteenth century, his suicide was widely considered to have resulted from despair and poverty, not from overindulgence in illicit emotion. Moral commentators took pains to distance Chatterton's suicide from fictional ones. Richard Mant, Thomas Warton's early nineteenth-century editor, claimed to have it on authority that "The Suicide" was not about Chatterton, as was rumoured.¹³ And Charles Moore, the late-century Anglican rector who wrote at length about suicide and

argued against more lenient attitudes toward it, viewed Chatterton's suicide as distinctly different from a romantic suicide such as Werther's. According to Moore, Chatterton's suicidal despair stemmed from the failure of his poetry to be recognized and the poverty from which he apparently felt powerless to escape. While Werther voluntarily gave way to his illicit passion, Chatterton "was as involuntarily and unavoidably sinking under a truly complicated load of real distresses: such as chagrin and disappointment, penury and rags, cold and hunger."¹⁴

Finally, romantic suicide does not show up at all in women's magazines, and this failure is suggestive. First, it allows us to question whether historians like MacDonald and Murphy are premature in their identification of romantic suicide as a significant eighteenth-century phenomenon. Its near-absence from eighteenth-century fiction and women's magazines, where it might be expected to appear at least on monitory terms, does not support their thesis of an increasing preoccupation with the subject.¹⁵ The tradition of tragic love-suicide existed in literature long before the emergence of romanticism, and throughout the eighteenth century, stories linking suicide and lost or unrequited love were recounted outside the context of the self-conscious veneration of passion associated with romanticism, although they were frequently presented from a sympathetic point of view. Second, "romantic suicide" may have acquired a topicality disproportionate to its actual occurrence because it was a useful focus for moralists (like Charles Moore and Warton's editor) who were anxious about the perils of imagination and romantic sensibility generally. While the revelation of Mary Wollstonecraft's suicide attempts provoked an outraged response, criticism of them was often not as spirited as criticisms of Godwin's views of marriage and religion, which were also contained (and ascribed to Wollstonecraft) in the *Memoirs*.

I suggest that romantic suicide was a theoretical cause of concern in some quarters (where it was usually linked to *Werther* and embodied residual associations with intemperate and injudicious indulgence in passion and imagination), but was neither a general preoccupation nor a widespread phenomenon in the eighteenth century, when the conditions that authorized romantic sensibility were emergent, but not yet in place. Notable among these conditions were the recognition of emotional and imaginative experience as a basis for action and the recognition of the individual as of more consequence than the collectivity. According to this formulation, romantic suicide, like the more fully developed gender

ideologies of Victorianism, belongs more properly to the nineteenth century than the eighteenth, and, consequently, I have avoided the use of the term.

The Discourse of Suicide

In the eighteenth-century discourse of death, the subject of suicide had a place of its own. Although the violence of city life, the causes and cures of disease, the complicated fascination with executions and murderers' bodies, and anxiety over the precariousness of life in general were extensively recorded in print, none of these were considered from so many different standpoints and with so sustained an interest as suicide. The continuing attention given suicide was in no small part due to the widespread perception in England and abroad that the English were particularly prone to self-murder.¹⁶ Indeed, the country was known to be so receptive to self-killing that some foreign gentlemen traveled to England for the express purpose of committing suicide.¹⁷ The English had diverse explanations for the phenomenon, but no one at the time seemed to question the putative fact that the alarming number of self-murders constituted a national epidemic. In 1705, William Fleetwood maintained that suicide was an offense to reason and religion, and "not a little dishonour is also cast upon our Nation hereby, as furnishing more Examples of this sort of Violence, than any other, though much larger."¹⁸ In *Night Thoughts*, Edward Young referred to the suicide rate as "Britannia's shame":

O Britain, infamous for suicide!
An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd
From the whole world of rationals beside!
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head.
Wash the dire stain, nor shock the Continent.¹⁹

And in his prison speech, Goldsmith's Dr. Primrose laments the "thousands who by suicide shew us they have nothing left to hope."²⁰ However, at the end of the century, in an exhaustive two-volume dissertation that considered virtually every aspect of suicide, Anglican rector Charles Moore asserted that the suicide epidemic in France was as severe as that in England, a fact historians have subsequently substantiated.²¹ The French offered a number of explanations for the prevalence of English suicide, from the abolition of the confessional, to the consumption of rare beef, to the use of coal fires. In 1779, a French cleric, Dominican P re Laliman held the English -- who were "excessively jealous of their liberty,

resentful of authority, and prone to irreligious speculations" -- responsible for the increase in French suicides in the second half of the century. In a version of cultural exchange that might have surprised English critics of the London vogue for French worldliness, Père Laliman maintained that the suicide wave "had swept into France because Frenchmen had been foolishly enamoured of the fashions of the English and had absorbed their ideas from books and theatrical performances."²²

In the first half of the century, the number of reported suicides was indeed increasing, and, perhaps increasing at a rate higher than was apparent from the bills of mortality: it was often impossible to distinguish between suicide and other forms of death (drowning, for example, could be the result of accident, homicide, or suicide).²³ According to Dorothy George, even at the time, residents were aware that burials in London considerably outnumbered baptisms and that "this excess of burials represented a drain on the nation."²⁴ In this context, any increase in a particular cause of death was likely to appear more serious than was statistically warranted. In fact, Thomas Forbes' study of births and deaths in St. Giles without Cripplegate has concluded that the suicide rate was really not very high in relation to other causes of death. Forbes shows that deaths from overlaying (accidental suffocation of infants by their mothers' bodies), accident, suicide, execution and murder *combined* [my emphasis] accounted for only 0.9% of all fatalities.²⁵ But it was not primarily actual occurrence that brought suicide to the notice of the public. As MacDonald and Murphy have documented, print culture was deeply implicated: "[t]he rise of the periodical press, which reprinted the bills of mortality and reported sensational news with uninhibited gusto, was the main reason for the impression that the English were more suicidal than the inhabitants of other nations."²⁶ Written accounts of the suicides of prominent people tended to make everyone more aware of the phenomenon, because "[i]n an age obsessed by rank and in which the middle class was striving to adopt the manners and tastes of their betters, the deaths of the nobility and of celebrities made a far greater impression than ordinary suicides."²⁷

MacDonald and Murphy argue that increasingly secular attitudes toward suicide in early modern England reflect the decline of religious thinking and the concomitant rise of Enlightenment rationalism. Suicide in the sixteenth and early seventeenth century was unambiguously attributed to the influence of the devil, and, unless the result of madness, invariably resulted in damnation. In the eighteenth century, the reasons for suicide were almost never associated with supernatural causes, but located in individuals

and in societal factors, although these were often attributed in inconsistent and sometimes contradictory ways. For example, individual acts of suicide might be deemed the result of either a lack of religion or religious enthusiasm, and those who killed themselves might suffer from an excess of passion or imagination or from the depressing effects of melancholy. The same act of suicide might be configured variously as the end-product of lunacy, impetuosity, or cool, rational decision. In more general terms, responsibility for the alleged suicide epidemic was attributed variously to diet, climate, alcohol consumption, lack of exercise, heredity, and the gloomy English national character, the last being traceable, for example, to Robert Burton's late-Renaissance *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and carrying the weight and authority of history.²⁸ At the end of the century, the causes for suicide were still a matter of debate and conjecture. Charles Moore considered the English to be predisposed to melancholy, though he found no virtue in this inclination. For Moore, English melancholy was self-indulgent, and it went hand-in-hand with other less-than-commendable English traits such as resistance to change and perpetual malcontentedness.²⁹ Interestingly, Moore alone names London itself as a cause of suicide, because it served as a breeding ground for all the vices to which he attributed suicide generally: disappointed passions, dissipation that led to poverty and distress, gambling, and "a defiance of all that is serious and virtuous, from an overturning all awe and reverence for the Deity, and all dread future prospects."³⁰

However, the discourse on suicide was only partially concerned with the rate of suicide or its causes. Overwhelmingly, discussions of suicide focused on its moral implications, which were framed either by abstract arguments of religion or philosophy or by the complicated and sometimes contradictory bourgeois terms of property, humanitarian reform, and embryonic notions of individual rights. On the intellectual level, religious opponents of suicide clashed with those who defended the right to suicide on philosophical, usually Stoic, principles. However, the philosophy/religion distinction was not clear-cut when it came to formulating arguments. One of the period's most influential defenses of suicide was John Donne's religious defense in *Biathanatos*, a 1611 tract unpublished in Donne's lifetime but widely cited in eighteenth century arguments.³¹ Another native defense was Hume's 1755 essay "On Suicide," which was published anonymously in France in 1770 and posthumously in England in 1777. In it, Hume appropriates the language and doctrine of his opponents to argue contrarily that, if everything happens according to providential law, then a decision to commit suicide cannot, perforce, lie outside that

law. Hume also co-opts the doctrine of obedience when he charges Christian opponents of suicide with blasphemy and pride: "It is a kind of blasphemy to imagine, that any created being can disturb the order of the world, or invade the business of providence. It supposes, that that being possesses powers and faculties, which it received not from its creator, and which are not subordinate to his government and authority."³² For their part, religious adherents opposed suicide by arguing (primarily though not exclusively) in the terms set by the philosophers, often pointing out that Greek and Roman law did not permit suicide and that Stoic defenses did not amount to unlimited license. As Charles Moore enumerated, "[f]irst and principally, that the better Stoics never seem to have allowed suicide to be a proper refuge from vice and its just punishment, or to be practiced as an evasion of the laws of one's country; but chiefly as a deliverance from evil or trouble in the extremity, which extremity they interpreted to be the signal of God for quitting life. Secondly; that they differed much among themselves on the 'extent' of these signals."³³ Such signals did not acquit Stoic suicides, who were excused only exceptionally by religious writers on the grounds of their being unenlightened pagans. Nevertheless, versions of these "permissible" suicides were often used by religious writers to distinguish the heroic actions of Christian martyrs from the cowardly actions of willful suicides.³⁴ For example, in formulating an argument that would allow for Christian sacrifice and remain distinct from suicide, John Adams steps gingerly, suggesting that man has "a Right to *hazard Life*: but this being never to be exerted, but when Life is *certainly* in Danger, it amounts to no more than a *Right of preserving it*: which is a *Duty* rather than a *Privilege*, and therefore cannot be supposed to infer, of all things in the World, *any Power or Liberty to destroy it*."³⁵ But Adams, like all religious writers who wished to discredit self-murder as a legitimate response to life's difficulties, was vulnerable on this point, because, as Donne outlined in *Biathanatos*, it was possible to configure the martyrdom of Christ as a species of suicide. Equally inconclusive were the endless and ingenious arguments over whether or not the Sixth Commandment included an injunction against self-killing. In fact, a major difficulty of the debate (and perhaps a reason for its longevity) was the overlap between the qualities that were common to, and admirable in, Stoic, Christian, and Enlightenment thinking -- self-control, moderation, dutifulness, courage, endurance, and discernment -- which ensured that all philosophical and religious arguments contained the seeds of their

own contradiction, a fact that rendered them ultimately unresolvable, and therefore, perhaps, irresistible.³⁶

Addison's 1713 *Cato* and its reception illustrate other ways in which the terms of the debate quickly became entangled. Although the play was extremely popular, a backlash against its seeming advocacy of suicide arose almost immediately and was apparently still going strong when, over twenty years later, Addison's cousin filled his pockets with stones and jumped into the Thames, leaving behind his famous suicide note: "What Cato did, and Addison approv'd/ Cannot be wrong."³⁷ The classical figure of Cato, and of his female counterpart Lucretia, embodied another aspect of the discourse of suicide, one that was coterminous with the eighteenth-century debate over the definition of honour. On the one hand, Cato was, for the Augustans as he had been for the Romans, a republican and personal hero, whose rejection of the shame of life under Caesar made him a synecdoche for political and individual liberty. In Stoic as in Enlightenment terms, he was an exemplar of rational judgment, rational choice, and moral courage. But, on the other hand, there had long been opposition to Cato's suicide on religious grounds. Saint Augustine represented it as an act of cowardice and weakness rather than courage and strength, intimating that Cato had been motivated by love of glory, honour, and power, rather than by love of virtue.³⁸ John Adams takes up this line of thinking in his examination of Stoic suicide (and Cato's in particular), arguing that it is neither "*lawful nor becoming a Man of Courage to bend under his Destiny and not embrace whatever happens undauntedly; but run poorly away from it.*"³⁹ William Fleetwood is more succinct in his appraisal of those who considered Stoic suicide noble and courageous: it comes as no surprise to Fleetwood "that Men of loose Principles should have false notions of Liberty, and Honour, and great Courage, and should accordingly commend such Practice as is conformable to such loose Principles."⁴⁰ For Samuel Johnson, suicide might be an individual weakness, but the decision to commit suicide is attended by a moral vacuum with dangerous social implications. Johnson felt that "after a man has taken the resolution to kill himself, it is not courage in him to do any thing, however desperate, because he has nothing to fear.... Suppose a man, either from fear, or pride, or conscience, or whatever motive, has resolved to kill himself: when once the resolution is taken, he has nothing to fear. He may then go and take the King of Prussia by the nose, at the head of his army. He cannot fear the rack, when he is resolved to kill himself."⁴¹ Johnson's sentiment was shared by Anglican

Francis Ayscough, who wrote that "the Moment a Man has thrown off all Regard to his *own* Life, he is Master of the Life of whomsoever he has a mind to destroy." ⁴²

Most commentators not writing for the popular press ignored the subject of female suicide.⁴³ Those who addressed it often referred to Lucretia, who was, of course, not a symbol of liberty or rational judgment but of female chastity, preferring to die than to live with the shame of having been raped by Tarquin. The story of the Milesian virgins, whose unaccountable suicides in great numbers had been halted by a law stipulating that their naked bodies (with the cords they used to hang themselves still about their necks) be carried to their burials, was also frequently cited. In both cases, female chastity is elided with notions of honour and shame, classical motives for suicide. Augustine had argued in the case of Lucretia that chastity was not a treasure that could be taken away, or a possession in the ordinary sense at all: purity was a matter of the will, not the body, and therefore, the body of an unwilling victim could not be polluted by the act of another.⁴⁴ However, this seeming leniency toward a strictly sexual interpretation of female honour was not, in the eighteenth century, incorporated into religious arguments against suicide, and, on a popular level, Lucretia's suicide continued to be widely approved as a model of female virtue.⁴⁵ For instance, Charles Moore, in his reference to early Christian virgin/martyrs, typifies the reluctance to undervalue female chastity. Acknowledging Augustine's distinction between the body and the will, he argues that "whatever is endured involuntarily and of necessity, tends not to the pollution of inward or real purity. But though every one is liable to suffer without fault or blame, whatever superior strength and power chooses to impose, yet in regard to the violation of chastity, female sensibility is so delicate and exquisite, as to apply a sense of shame to itself, in what is ever so involuntarily endured. Now who can choose...but pity such virgins, as have voluntarily destroyed themselves to avoid this seeming shame?"⁴⁶ It was Moore's opinion that by her suicide Lucretia punished her own innocence.⁴⁷ By contrast, in a statement that brings him uncomfortably close to Augustine in its suggestion that female chastity, like male courage, is equivalent to vanity, Bernard Mandeville was entirely ready to condemn Lucretia's suicide on charges of abject pride: "*Lucretia* held out bravely against all the Attacks of the Ravisher, even when he threatened her Life: which shews that she valu'd her Virtue beyond it: But when he threaten'd her Reputation with eternal Infamy, she fairly surrender'd, and then slew herself: a certain sign that she valued her Virtue less than her Glory, and her

Life less than either. The fear of Death did not make her yield, for she resolv'd to die before she did it, and her Compliance must only be consider'd as a Bribe to make *Tarquin* forbear sullyng her Reputation: so that Life had neither first nor second place in the Esteem of *Lucretia*. The Courage then which is only useful to the Body Politick, and what is generally call'd true Valour, is artificial, and consists in a *Superlative Horror against Shame, by Flattery infused into Men [or women] of exalted Pride.*"⁴⁸

Horror against shame provided the rationale for the Milesian virgins' cessation of their epidemic of self-murder. The story, which had been around for some time, seems to have entered into eighteenth-century arguments in one of Fleetwood's sermons, published in 1705, although Adams' unelaborated allusion to the fable in his 1700 essay suggests that the story was widely known.⁴⁹ According to Fleetwood, "the sense of this dishonour, had, by good fortune, the intended effect, for the rest were so mov'd at the shameful Spectacle, that they fell into their old Sobriety and Order again, and made no more attempts of that kind: And yet, *Gellius* says from *Plutarch*, that these poor Creatures were under the power of a Distemper, but the fear of such an infamous Burial, brought them to their Senses again: And so we may observe, I think, that in most of these light Distractions, the reason is not so entirely lost, but that the Parties are capable of some sort of Arguments, and restrain'd by some particular Considerations, and Motives, of Love, or Fear, or Shame or Honour."⁵⁰ Just a few years later, the story is repeated in *The Female Tatler*, where different emphasis makes breach of modesty, not ignominious burial, the source of shame.

Both male and female suicides, then, were closely implicated in unresolved eighteenth-century definitions of honour. Insofar as honour was associated with a decadent male aristocracy and its attendant culture of violence, it could serve as no defense for suicide. But insofar as honour implied self-sacrifice for a culturally sanctioned ideal or upheld conventional notions of female morality and behaviour, the conclusions drawn were more ambivalent. Classical and Christian definitions of honour and virtue had too much in common for the debate on either ground to be unproblematic: "both cultures equate the highest heroism with the idea of death; where they differ is in their estimation of the circumstances in which death may be warranted, and the motives from which it should spring."⁵¹ Regardless of the admonitions of Augustine or Mandeville, notions of female honour remained closely tied to sexual innocence and purity, and this aspect of female suicide seems to have been tacitly condoned

by most writers who addressed the subject. The Enlightenment argument that came increasingly to rely on the right to rational, individual choice in all matters of one's own life did not, by and large, extend to women, for whom suicide as a matter of honour continued to seem to expiate in a way that no other action could approach.

The debate was also complicated by the overlap between Christian, heroic, and Enlightenment notions of duty. John McManners observes that Enlightenment writers "affirmed the rights of the individual, yet at the same time they reaffirmed, with a new vigour and original arguments, the duty of the individual to the community."⁵² As a consequence, questions of duty, individual responsibility, and social obligation were closely allied to discussions of honour in the suicide debate. Aristotle had declared suicide to be an offense against God, a crime against the state and a violation of civic duty.⁵³ John Adams agreed that suicide, in addition to being an offense against God and one's self, was also an offense against civil society, because it violated the basic rule of "do unto others" and destroyed the effectiveness of human law, whose greatest punishment was death.⁵⁴ Charles Moore describes suicide as "a great breach of duty to God, our neighbour, and ourselves."⁵⁵ William Godwin agrees:

...the power of terminating our own lives is one of the faculties with which we are endowed: and therefore, like every other faculty, is a subject of moral discipline. In common with every branch of morality, it is a topic of calculation, as to the balance of good and evil to result from its employment in any individual instance. We should however be scrupulously upon our guard against the deceptions that melancholy and impatience are so well calculated to impose. We should consider that, though the pain to be suffered by ourselves is by no means to be overlooked, we are but one, and the persons nearly or remotely interested in our possible usefulness innumerable. Each man is but the part of a great system, and all that he has is so much wealth to be put to the account of the general stock.⁵⁶

Godwin argues against Lycurgus' rationalization that if a man's death rendered him more useful to society, suicide was an act of social benevolence: if such a man "were instigated by reasons purely benevolent, it is impossible not to applaud his intention, even if he were mistaken in the application. The difficulty is to decide whether in any instance the recourse to a voluntary death can overbalance the usefulness to be displayed, in twenty years of additional life."⁵⁷

However, Hume confuted both Stoic and Christian thinking on this point. In what amounts to a configuration of suicide as duty, he contextualizes his argument within the prior argument that nothing

can occur outside Providence, co-incidentally providing the only concrete definition in the suicide debate of what constitutes a sign from God: "...neither does my death, however voluntary, happen without it's [sic] consent: and whenever pain and sorrow so far overcome my patience as to make me tired of life, I may conclude, that I am recalled from my station, in the clearest and most express terms."⁵⁸ He also argues that suicide is no real dereliction of social duty: "A man who retires from life, does no harm to society. He only ceases to do good: which, if it be an injury, is of the lowest kind."⁵⁹ In a suicide note contained within a short fictional narrative, Thomas Chatterton seems equally convinced that the social implications of suicide are innocuous, maintaining that "when our being becomes dissocial, when we neither assist or are assisted by society, we do not injure it by laying down our load of life."⁶⁰

The philosophical defense of suicide did not draw only on Stoic philosophy and classical models, however. In the seventeenth century, Hobbes had implicitly included the right to commit suicide in his definition of the natural right of self-preservation.⁶¹ This position was obviously not congenial to opponents of suicide, who were no friends to Hobbes in the first place. At the beginning of the century, John Adams argued, against Hobbes, that man had no such natural right. According to Adams, life in and of itself is an indifferent matter; the ends to which life is used determine its value; and a man who values life is ready to endure suffering and not to take the easy way out, thereby making the additional anti-philosophical point that suicide is not heroic but cowardly.⁶² But in the discussion of suicide and the Stoics that Adam Smith added to the revised sixth edition of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (probably in response to the publication of Hume's essay), Smith relied on Hobbes' natural law, to mediate positively between his admiration of Stoic philosophy and his reluctance to condone the practice of suicide: "The principle of suicide, the principle which would teach us, upon some occasions, to consider that violent action as an object of applause and approbation, seems to be altogether a refinement of philosophy. Nature, in her sound and healthful state, seems never to prompt us to suicide."⁶³

However, not all arguments in the suicide debate were philosophical or religious in nature; it is not, finally, either a philosophical or a religious strategy that lies at the heart of John Adams' essay, but the persuasive eighteenth-century rhetoric of property. Because Man did not make himself, Adams argues, he has the right of use but never the "Right of *absolute Propriety* or *Dominion*." A man's life does not belong to himself, but to God, and life can be said to be man's only insofar as he uses it to the

ends for which it was created: "THE FOLLOWING OF REASON BY VIRTUE." Suicide is unlawful precisely because "by this Act, Man *positively renounces that End, and destroys irrevocably the means of obtaining it.*"⁶⁴ In other words, suicide is a species of theft, the theft of the prerogative that belongs to God as sole proprietor of man. Adams' use of a legal argument here and elsewhere in his sermon anticipates what is perhaps most curious and seemingly contradictory in Christian arguments against suicide, the century-long insistence on what amounted to a refusal of mercy: most religious writers argued that the full severity of the law against suicide should be levied against those who as a consequence of deliberate choice took their own lives.

In fact, every argument brought forward in the suicide debate relied on the law in some way. Opponents of suicide argued that self-murder had been illegal according to both Greek and Roman law; scriptural arguments centered on interpretations of the Sixth Commandment; and natural law was at the heart of Enlightenment arguments. Arguments for and against suicide were also legalistic in a more immediate way. Nearly all discussions eventually addressed the way in which the English law against suicide was either being enforced or, more typically, ignored by eighteenth-century coroners' juries, whose increasing tendency to bring in verdicts of lunacy reflected growing opposition to earlier, harsher attitudes toward suicide.⁶⁵ MacDonald and Murphy have meticulously traced the legal consequences of suicide, from its thirteenth-century juridical definition as a criminal act, to its eventual repeal in 1870. The criminal law against suicide determined that those judged *felo de se* were culpable and subject to punishment, which was forfeiture of all or part of the suicide's moveables.⁶⁶ Those judged *non compos mentis* were exempt. Verdicts of *felo de se* were rare before 1500, but, for the next century and a half, the law against suicide was "rigorously enforced."⁶⁷ Hand-in-hand with criminal law went the 1662 Church edict that replaced an earlier canon law denying the rites of Christian burial to suicides. As a consequence of this edict, suicides were buried according to folk custom as they had been for centuries, without ceremony or clergy, in a pit dug in a crossroads, and with a stake driven through their bodies.⁶⁸ However, as MacDonald and Murphy demonstrate, after the English Revolution, coroners' juries, which held the key to what became of a suicide's body (and so, to some extent, his or her "official" soul), became increasingly reluctant to bring in verdicts of *felo de se*, and clergymen became increasingly reluctant to refuse the rites of Christian burial.

Coroners, typically landowners who were elected or selected locally, were men of some education, aware of the legal rules and procedures governing the adjudication of suicide cases. They wielded considerable authority over the jury members, whose knowledge of the legal implications of suicide was learned from the coroners themselves, from the sermons they heard in church, and from forms of popular literature such as periodicals. MacDonald and Murphy argue convincingly that, although the failure to find suicides *felo de se* began as a means to thwart what was widely thought to be an unjust forfeiture law that inflicted punishment on the innocent, lunacy verdicts "eventually came to embody a profound change in beliefs about suicide itself. Used more and more frequently, it was the tangible expression of the secularization of suicide, of the opinion that self-destruction was in itself an act of insanity, an end more to be pitied than to be scorned."⁶⁹

Opponents of suicide opposed this leniency on two counts. First, they argued that the law as it stood, including denial of Christian burial and, in most cases, forfeiture, *could* act as a deterrent to suicide, but only if it was enforced all or at least some of the time. Second, they maintained that, while all suicides were indisputably lunatics, they were not necessarily so when they decided to kill themselves.⁷⁰ John Adams argued that, insofar as the suicide himself was beyond punishment, the law was a sham, punishing the innocent survivors, often children. At the same time, it is Adams' opinion that, if the laws were put "*duty and constantly in Execution*," they might act as an effective deterrent. "The Consideration of *shame* alone did this heretofore in the Case of the *Milesians*...Our Laws then may do this more effectually; which allowing but the same Burial which other Felons have, and requiring the *Forfeiture of the Personal Estate*, have not only the Natural tye of *shame*, but a much stronger, that of *tenderness* to their *Posterity*, to restrain such Rash and Melancholy Creatures by."⁷¹ Adams also argues against the widespread use of *non compos mentis* verdicts and charges coroners' juries, all the way up to Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, to do their duty as it was set out by the law, adding that those who out of the best of motives committed perjury to save a family were themselves damned.⁷² Fleetwood, too, called for enforcement of both the civil and ecclesiastical laws concerning suicide, asking "whether they who will always shew *Mercy*, when *Justice* is due, do not encourage those Misfortunes, by their Pity, and make Men easier to destroy themselves, because they see, it will have no worse Consequence to their Relations, than if they died a Natural Death?"⁷³ Fleetwood reminds his readers of

the civil and ecclesiastical laws regarding the burial of suicides and laments that despite the specificity and clarity of the law, which was intended to serve as a disgraceful and dishonourable deterrent to potential self-murderers. "they are now buried, as other good Christians are: because they are brought in *Distracted*."⁷⁴ The conclusion that a person is truly a lunatic just because he has acted like a mad-man in violating all the laws of God and man, Fleetwood argues, "is not a right way of concluding," and he, too, admonishes coroners' juries to consider whether or not the certainty, or at least the possibility, that the consequences of suicide will be visited upon a self-murderer's family might not act as a deterrent.⁷⁵ For Fleetwood, however, rigorous, uniform enforcement of the strict letter of the law is not necessary: "an Instance or two or such severity" might serve.⁷⁶

In *Night Thoughts*, Edward Young also denounced the failure of coroners' juries to enforce the law. Naming earthly indulgence and irreverent impetuosity as the causes of suicide, Young admonishes,

Such, Britons! is the cause, to you unknown,
Or worse, o'erlook'd; o'erlook'd by magistrates
Thus criminals themselves. I grant the deed
Is madness, but the madness of the heart.
And what is that? Our utmost bound of guilt.⁷⁷

At about the same time, Ayscough argued that the law of forfeiture should be enforced impartially, as it was in Scotland where suicide was rare.⁷⁸ Ayscough claims that the compassion of coroners' juries is "false and criminal. Men have nothing to do with Pity, when they are bound by Oath, to search into Truth, and to execute Justice. Such compassion is Tenderness to the Dead, and Cruelty to the Living: who, if the Law was duly and impartially executed, and Examples of it visibly set before them, might, perhaps, be more effectually deterred from the Crime, than by any thing that can be urged to them, either from Reason or Religion."⁷⁹ Ayscough suggests that coroners' juries were commonly bribed and forsworn, and that suicides whose families could pay were deemed lunatics, while those who could not were judged *felo de se*.⁸⁰ Finally, an outraged and agitated Ayscough argues that the civic irresponsibility of those who show false mercy to suicides and their families made hypocrites of ministers like himself and that such an action could not, in any case, avail the guilty suicide: "The doubting Clergy may, and must, after such a Verdict, obey the Law, and administer Christian Burial to the Wretch who has made a most unchristian End: -- *in vain*, shamefully *in vain*, will it be said, (as in our Office) that God has taken to himself the Soul of our departed Brother, that Soul, which, without his Permission, has rushed,

overwhelmed with Sin and Pollution, into his Presence -- is trembling with Horror, and doomed to everlasting Punishment with the Devil: at whose...*Instigation*, this, as well as all other Sorts of Murder, is, by our Law, justly presumed to be committed."⁸¹

At the end of the century, Charles Moore had only mellowed somewhat with regard to his predecessors' assessments of the law against suicide. Moore believed that if forfeiture were not imposed on the innocent survivors, "it would be an important point gained: because it might give more frequent opportunities of executing the other part of the self-murder's sentence, which though 'he' cannot personally feel, might act in terrorem to 'others.'"⁸² As if in recompense for the partial retraction of the law against property, Moore advocated punishment that recalled the dynamic encoded in the story of the Milesian virgins, greater degradation of the suicide's body:

It might not only be refused all rites of burial, but be exposed naked to public view, be dragged on an hurdle in the most ignominious posture, and undergo every disgraceful mark of shame, contempt and abhorrence. The populace on these occasions might be harangued with energy on the foulness of the crime, and then the carcass be delivered over (like that of a common murderer) for the purposes of public dissection: so that he, who had voluntarily withdrawn himself from being further useful to society in his life, might become so in his death. The name also might be registered in some disgraceful manner, as is the custom in France [where suicides were registered in red ink]. This treatment might be apt to excite an horror in the breast of all beholders, and might be capable of producing some good, provided it was done indiscriminately and without respect of persons or sexes. At least when thus much had been done to show a marked abhorrence of the crime, and to punish it as much as possible on the reputation of its perpetrator, without involving the innocent family (who seem for obvious reasons more particularly entitled to our compassion in this than in many other cases) the legislature would have performed to the extent of its influence.⁸³

As for the lunacy verdict, Moore felt that a sharp distinction must be drawn between involuntary insanity and the moral madness implicit in all suicides: the latter was "a moral madness; a madness...of the heart not of the head; a derangement of conduct arising from the misapplication and perversion of reason, not from its debility or total failure."⁸⁴

But other writers voiced opinions that were more consistent with those increasingly indicated by coroners' juries. Adam Smith, for example, did not condone the act of suicide.⁸⁵ Nevertheless, his writing on the subject reflects this more tolerant attitude, and his sympathy extends to the suicide's family, who bore the legal and emotional consequences of the act: "The unfortunate persons who perish in this miserable manner, are the proper objects, not of censure, but of commiseration. To attempt to

punish them, when they are beyond the reach of all human punishment, is not more absurd than it is unjust. That punishment can fall only on their surviving friends and relations, who are always perfectly innocent, and to whom the loss of their friend, in this disgraceful manner, must always be alone a very heavy calamity.⁸⁶ Significantly, Thomas Chatterton, the sole contributor to the debate who actually committed suicide, is seemingly the only writer who considered the madness associated with suicide to be noble in itself. In Chatterton's 1770 fictional narrative, "The Unfortunate Fathers," a suicide note is left behind by a young man whose father's selfish machinations have resulted in the son's loss of both his beloved and his reputation. In the note addressed to his father, the son attempts to vindicate the suicide he is about to commit:

There is a principle in man, (a shadow of the divinity) which constitutes him the image of God; you may call it conscience, grace, inspiration, the spirit, or whatever name your education gives it. If a man acts according to this regulator, he is right; if contrary to it, he is wrong. It is an approved truth, that this principle varies in every rational being. As I can reconcile suicide to this principle, with me it is consequently no crime. Suicide is sometimes a noble insanity of the soul: and often the result of a mature and deliberate approbation of the soul.⁸⁷

Chatterton was not, however, oblivious to the importance of the coroner's jury in determining public reception of a suicide. In a mock-will written a few months before he killed himself, Chatterton considered with humour and irony his own fate at the hands of the coroner's jury and suggested different epitaphs that might be appropriate to different verdicts.⁸⁸

In last 30 years of the eighteenth century, over 97% of those accused of self-murder were judged lunatic. (The remainder who were judged *felo de se* and set up as examples for the community were in every case guilty of some crime antecedent to suicide.) In a climate of continuing observance of the proprieties of status and reputation, and in light of increasingly sentimental attitudes toward families, the abject poor, and death in general, the leniency shown by coroners' juries was consistent with the middle class's perception of itself as sympathetic and discriminating. According to MacDonald and Murphy, the lunacy verdict was for much of the eighteenth century "an instrument of discretionary justice, wielded by men of the middling classes. Acting as members of the ruling groups of their villages and neighbourhoods, coroners' juries dispensed savagery and sympathy in ways that reinforced the values that contemporaries meant when they used the word 'respectable', one of the weightiest terms in the

lexicon of social life. It implied probity, thrift, orderliness, and cordiality--all the qualities that made a man or woman a good neighbour, a valued member of his or her community."⁸⁹ The lunacy verdict thus became less a judgment of suicide than a way to reinforce emergent social norms and to endorse social values, including the notion of justice itself:

'Justice' was an evocative word in the eighteenth century, and with good reason. The constitutional struggles of the seventeenth had helped to establish the principles of the rule of law: that offences should be fixed, not indeterminate; that rules of evidence should be carefully observed; that the law should be administered by a bench that was both learned and honest. These achievements were essential for the protection of the gentry from royal greed and royal tyranny, and for the regulation, in the civil side of the courts, of the details of conveyancing, entailing, contracting, devising, suing and releasing. Since the same judges administered the criminal law at its highest levels, on the same principles, even the poorest man was guaranteed justice in the high courts.⁹⁰

Nor was justice solely a matter for the courts; it extended to a God no longer wrathful but merciful. Suicides who left notes behind often testified to their belief in a God who would judge them fairly for the way they had lived their lives or for their inability to support their misery, and not on the basis of their suicides alone. Such was the case with the impoverished bookbinder Richard Smith and his wife Bridget, who in 1732, shot their two-year-old daughter in the head and then hanged themselves side by side. They denied the sinfulness of suicide and expressed their trust in God's benevolence to sympathize with the fate that had precipitated their action.⁹¹ Chatterton, too, seems to have believed, in one mood at least, in a just and merciful God. One of the epitaphs that he specified in his mock-will actually appeared on his monument in Redcliff churchyard: "To the Memory of Thomas Chatterton. Reader -- Judge not: if you art a Christian, believe that he shall be Judged by a Superior Power: to that Power only is he now answerable."⁹²

The eighteenth-century discourse of suicide, then, was widespread, contradictory, and, finally, unresolved. The almost universal failure of coroners' juries to apply the law of suicide by the end of the century indicates, however, that popular attitudes toward suicide had shifted away from the intolerant views of the two previous centuries. This alteration reflects and is consistent with broader attitudes toward death and bereavement, which diminished the importance of the actual moment or circumstance of death and instead focused on the past life of the deceased and the present and future of survivors, attitudes that were symptomatic of an outlook at once more sentimental, more secular, and more

individualistic. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that greater sympathy for those who committed suicide and their families did not amount to either popular or legal approval of the act of suicide.

Acknowledging the right to suicide, which the leniency verdicts tacitly did, is not the same as recommending it as a course of action. Legally, suicide remained a capital crime until 1870, and religious punishments for suicide were not abolished until 1823. Attempted suicide, which had not been a crime in the eighteenth century, became grounds for arrest in London in 1830, and was made a criminal act in 1850, sporadically enforced throughout the country by 1900.⁹³

Suicide in Practice

The periodical press transmitted the substance, if not the actual words, of the most important points of the suicide debate as conducted by philosophers and clergymen. However, the periodical press also parlayed an aspect of suicide rarely explored in more formal disquisitions.⁹⁴ The real face of suicide was far less often the noble act of a rational being who was dispirited than it was the hopeless act of a soul in despair, the unthinking response to some (at least momentarily) uncontrollable passion, or a premeditated attempt to inflict injury on the living. Furthermore, suicides did not fall tidily into consistent categories of gender, age, and class. If the suicides of prominent people attracted public attention to the subject and if the formal suicide debate was articulated in philosophical or religious terms that implied a fairly elite and educated group of self-murderers, the overwhelming majority of suicide cases did not occur among the highly educated upper classes. Moreover, the patterns of occurrence that emerged were not abstract but disturbingly concrete. For example, the high rate of suicides among young people was recognized as a dangerous social trend and was a cause of anxiety.⁹⁵ After all, there was a high death rate among the young generally. Children and adolescents had the highest mortality rate of any age group, capitally convicted criminals were overwhelmingly from the ranks of young adults, and, according to Murphy's study, over half of those who committed suicide were under the age of 30.⁹⁶ The fact that so many of the dead were of prime child-bearing age cannot have escaped the notice of those who were continually reminded by the bills of mortality of the difference between the number of burials and the number of baptisms. In the last part of the century, when burial rates were actually declining, the

attack on so-called romantic suicide, which was theoretically committed by the young, may have been fueled by the collective memory of these conditions.⁹⁷

In the more formal debate, the causes of suicide tended to be hypothetical and sometimes far-fetched. But considerations of suicide that were intended for more popular consumption named causes that were more immediate, grounded in the material, social, or psychological conditions of human existence. Popularly, suicides were attributed to various causes, often having to do with an individual's relationships with family or society at large. These included family breakdown, financial distress, illness, despondency, the wish to escape punishment, and the fear of loss of reputation. Motives of revenge and difficulties in love relationships were often cited, as was serious illness or extreme pain. For women, illicit pregnancy or the birth of an illegitimate child sometimes resulted in suicide.⁹⁸ Some commentators felt that poverty and its hardships were underlying causes for suicide, and this suspicion might, finally, explain why no debtors were judged *felo de se* in the reign of King George III.⁹⁹ Many of the causes cited reflect the power differential between superiors and subordinates, between the authorized and the powerless, or between the propertied and the disenfranchised. In his study of adolescent suicide, for example, Murphy suggests that suicide among the young was generally attributed to "fear of, and the impulsive attempt to escape from, parental or magisterial correction."¹⁰⁰ However, the conditions of life for many young people -- either as working dependents at home or as apprentices or servants in the homes of others -- and their low status within these hierarchical structures likely resulted in feelings of loneliness, helplessness, and hopelessness. Murphy acknowledges that most suicides among the young were impulsively enacted in response to some immediate, relatively minor matter, but suggests that they were likely connected with the adolescent's ongoing sense of his or her inability to alter or escape the situation. In addition, suicide has real consequences for survivors, and this potential for effective agency might have made self-murder a particularly attractive option to those with few choices in life.¹⁰¹ While Murphy's study concentrates on the actual suicides of young people who were from the middling or lower ranks, it should be noted that both Pope, in his "Elegy on the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady," and Chatterton, in his "Elegy on Mr. Wm. Smith," acknowledged the power differential inherent in all families. Both elegies lay the blame for the suicide of the young person on relatives.¹⁰²

The method of committing suicide was, to a limited extent, the most gender-specific aspect of the act. Men tended to commit suicide by more violent means, and MacDonald and Murphy suggest that the imbalance in the numbers of male and female suicides was partially attributable to the more lethal methods employed by men, which seems to imply that, though women may have tried to kill themselves as often as men, they failed in their attempts more often than men.¹⁰³ However, unless previous suicide attempts were brought before a coroner's jury as evidence of lunacy or recorded in a newspaper account or other print medium, they left no trace in history. Consequently, there is not, and never can be, an accurate or even approximate record of suicide attempts.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, in Forbes' study, the overwhelming majority of suicides, male and female, killed themselves by hanging.¹⁰⁵ For locations near water, the most common method for men and women was typically by drowning. Violent behaviour was more intrinsic to male than to female culture in the eighteenth century, but, while this explains why implements of violence might more easily have come into the hands of men than women, it does not really explain the gender imbalance in rates of suicide generally, nor is an attempt at such an explanation within the scope of my enquiry. It seems likely that in many cases, the method of suicide, once the act was determined on, was a matter of convenience or even indifference (except, perhaps, with reference to the relative painlessness of various methods). Such, at least, were the sentiments expressed in Chatterton's 1770 poem, "Sentiment":

SINCE we can die but once what matters it
 If Rope or Garter Poison Pistol Sword
 Slow wasting Sickness or the sudden burst
 Of Valve Arterial in the noble Parts
 Curtail the Miserys of human life
 Tho' varied is the Cause the Effect's the same
 All to one common Dissolution tends.¹⁰⁶

What can be known about the actual practice of suicide in the eighteenth century is entirely limited to the primary sources available, but these vary tremendously with regard to approach and form. The suicide debate undertaken by the intellectual elite did not often consider the matter in other than abstract terms. These terms also prevailed in eighteenth-century poetry, while the fiction of the period is surprisingly silent on the matter. Suicide statistics are useful, but, finally, unreliable. The richest and

most dependable source is the one that MacDonald and Murphy have argued was responsible for the increasing leniency in the verdicts of coroners' juries, the periodical press.¹⁰⁷

Suicide and Eighteenth-Century Women's Magazines

As I have argued throughout my study, virtually every topic of interest to eighteenth-century London appeared in the magazines directed primarily at women readers. Suicide was one such topic, first appearing in 1693, in *The Ladies Mercury*, where, in a parodic account of Stoic honour, a man kills himself with his sword to avoid the shame of having his sexual impotence exposed by his mother-in-law.¹⁰⁸ Responsive to both the intellectual and sensational aspects of the subject, the periodicals' representations of self-murder varied widely in their attempts to recognize, address, and exploit the "national epidemic" of self-destruction.¹⁰⁹ Both the arguments central to the discourse of suicide and accounts of actual suicides and suicide attempts appear in the magazines in diverse forms that reflect the ways in which the subject was considered throughout the century. For example, *The Ladies Magazine's* short, factual accounts present an interesting picture of the "real" face of suicide. Sometimes letters, essays, poems, and editorials focus directly on suicide, but more often, suicide is discussed as an aspect of some other subject. Moreover, the violent and sensational nature of suicide, in combination with its potential for moral instruction, was exploited to different ideological ends at different times, making suicide a useful barometer by which to gauge eighteenth-century attitudes not only toward death and religion, but also toward women.

In the women's magazines I surveyed, there were more than 60 mentions of suicide (including suicide, the contemplation of suicide, and attempted suicide), over half of these referring to actual self-murders or attempts. Most such factual accounts -- that is, accounts that were reported in the news section, rather than accounts that claimed to be factual, included elsewhere in narratives, letters, and essays -- appeared in *The Ladies Magazine* and reminded readers of suicide's reality as a practice. No more than snippets of information, these accounts were specific about methods and motives, simultaneously appealing to readers' voyeuristic desires and to their fellow-feeling. Because of their brevity and uniformity of presentation, it is possible to analyze them with respect to gender, motive, and

method. Of the 40 reported accounts of suicide or attempted suicide (several first attempts failed, but in most cases a second attempt was successful), half were men and half were women.¹¹⁰ The preferred methods were by hanging and by drowning, which accounted for 11 suicides each. Seven suicides cut their own throats, five poisoned themselves, and one each shot himself, stabbed himself, fell on his sword, and jumped out a second-story window. Except for the last four suicides (which were committed by men), men and women in pretty equal numbers killed themselves by each of these means. While no reason was given for ten of the suicides, five were judged to be the result of lunacy.¹¹¹ Four people committed suicide rather than be punished for crimes they had committed. Three killed themselves as a result of poverty, three of jilted love, and three of discontent of mind. Two committed suicide as acts of revenge, and there was one suicide for each of the following reasons: a wife's unfaithfulness, the birth of a bastard child, jealousy, the fear of having contracted the pox, a lost law suit, anger at a husband, abuse by a bigamous husband's other wife, and anger over a husband's rebuke.

The accounts are rarely more than two or three sentences long, and yet these sentences often convey far more than demographic information. Sometimes there are implicit class connotations: for example, a reward offered for a missing person or awarded to someone who had foiled a suicide attempt indicates the social position of a suicide. Respectable status is also conveyed by naming a suicide's occupation (most of these suicides were tradesmen or wives of tradesmen), describing the contents of a man's pockets, or commenting on the neatness of a woman's dress. In one case, a coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of Lunacy on the unclaimed body of a young woman taken out of the canal. This slightly longer-than-usual account reads, "She was remarkable well-dressed, and all her Cloaths were put on with great Taste and Elegance: She had very striking Features, and a Symmetry that spoke she had been a Beauty: She was very tall, and every Part of her Body had a due Proportion. It is Pity it cannot be known what disastrous Cause is owing the terrible Fall of a Person who had all the Appearance of one accustomed to move in a Sphere much above the Vulgar."¹¹² The unlikely combination of sympathy, voyeurism, and moral censure here works rhetorically to trigger reader response on a number of contradictory levels. These contradictions are neutralized, and the young woman is redeemed, through the information that she was interred in a local burial ground, treatment that might not have been accorded a derelict from Gin Lane.

In citing financial distress as a cause for suicide, the magazines distinguished between temporary circumstantial poverty, poverty caused by irresponsible behaviour, and abject poverty, though such distinctions usually went unremarked. A young woman who attempted suicide because she did not have 18p. carriage-charge to reclaim a box of clothes is distinguished from a man who attempted to hang himself because his children were starving, or another man who hanged himself because he could not pay his rent.¹¹³ An account in the slightly earlier *Lady's Weekly Magazine* (1747) is exceptional among women's magazines in its specific reference to the ritual burial of a *felonia de se* and its direct reference to enforcement of the suicide law. This account describes a suspected suicide, a poor woman who died in her lodgings, and her burial "in a cross-way, with a stake driven through her body, to the seeming satisfaction of a numerous Mob."¹¹⁴ *The Lady's Weekly* takes a strong position that the woman had as likely died as a result of her poverty than as a result of suicide and censures the judge who forwent the charity and equity required by law.

If the magazines distinguished between types of financial distress, they expended very little sympathy on the suicides of those who committed prior criminal acts, although they might comment obliquely on the criminality of the offense. For example, *The Ladies Magazine* prints twice in the same issue the account of a servant who was caught "embezzling" six-pence for two pints of beer and who hanged himself "to avoid the [threatened] Punishment" of being sent to Bridewell.¹¹⁵ While the account is clearly monitory, the magazine's stance on the disparity between the offense and the punishment is ambiguous. In another place in the same issue, the magazine twice repeats the news that a man drowned himself in the Thames after learning that a warrant was issued for his sexual assaults on two children, the eldest 7 years old.¹¹⁶ Here, the additional detail of the victims' ages underscores the depravity of the crime. In another case, the eleventh-hour suicide of a convicted forger who denies his guilt despite overwhelming evidence is considered in terms that invite contemplation of the man's audacity and of the meaning of his suicide. At his execution, the man "behaved with the most amazing unconcernedness. At the gallows he took off his hat, wig, and handkerchief, unbuttoned his shirt, then turned about, opened the noose of the rope, kiss'd it, and put [it] under his chin, and would have thrown it over his head, if his being pinioned had not with held him. When the executioner had put the rope about his neck he fixed the

knot under his left ear: and when the cart was drawing away, threw himself off with the greatest resolution."¹¹⁷

Love gone wrong, particularly when accompanied by jealousy or anger, is often cited as a motive for suicide. For example, when the woman he loved married someone else, a gaoler first tried to shoot her, and, missing his mark, went into a barber shop and shot himself. The boy from the shop "found him dead, the Ball having gone into his right Ear, and out at the Top of his Head."¹¹⁸ In another instance, a secret marriage has been revealed to a father whose response is still forthcoming. In this stressful situation, the husband rebukes his wife for being late to dinner, provoking her to drink glass of liquid laudanum and exclaim to her husband "with these Words, *viz* Duty! and Obedience! And this shall end all Disputes!"¹¹⁹ She died a short time later. In these short accounts, lurid and graphic details of the suicide acts accentuate the folly and wrong-headedness of their agents. Conversely, when the magazine seems to sympathize with a suicide, the account lacks such details, as in the case of a young girl who drowned herself, having suffered a long while from melancholy over the conduct of her sweetheart.¹²⁰ Occasionally, love-suicides are treated with humour, as in the account from Chichester in which "an unhappy married Woman there, had lately, in a violent Fit of Jealousy, cut her Throat so effectually to cure her of that outrageous Passion."¹²¹ Such a formulation was clearly designed to entertain, but also managed to convey condemnation of inappropriate and excessive female passion. A masculine version of this lesson is apparent in the immediately following account, in which an old man reportedly hanged himself in a cellar because he fell in love with a young girl fruitseller "who it seems used him with Contempt, which so irritated him, that he thought proper to dispatch himself."¹²²

Such news accounts considered suicide briefly and directly, but the magazines more typically considered suicide indirectly, in relation to some other subject. Two of the exceptions to this norm of unelaborated representation occur in *The Ladies Magazine*. Published a year apart, both condemn suicide, but in very different tones. A letter from "M.S." is passionate and uncompromising, declaring that a criminal executed at Tyburn has a greater hope for eternal Felicity than does a suicide. It is M.S.'s opinion that every minister should preach one sermon a year against self-murder, that known suicides "should be hanged in Chains in some conspicuous Place at the four Corners of the City: and that their Crime may be known to all that pass by, they should hang with their Heads downward: and none, High

or Low. Rich or Poor, should be exempted from this Punishment. Thus this unnatural Crime would meet with just Vengeance from God and Man!"¹²³

More typical is the tone of an essay called *Reflections on the Crime of Self-Murder*, in which the author DRACO laments the rash of suicides being reported in the papers. Draco's condemnation of suicide is more circumspect than that of M.S. and articulates the milder arguments of religious writers like John Adams. Draco acknowledges that there are great stresses in life, but declares that "however one may be excited to wish himself stript of a Being that's miserable, it by no means follows, that he has a right to lay down a life he did not give himself, and which he is commanded to bear till the Author of his nature calls for it." Draco argues that we are sent here for a purpose, "to act a part suitable to the Sphere assigned us by the ruler of human affairs": that the suicide faces God with the worst of his sins unrepented and must therefore be damned; and that suicide is cowardly.¹²⁴ "We ought," he writes, "all to look upon life as a journey, which we must travel; and though thorny paths and inconvenient inns are to be met with in the way, yet they must be suffered, as they fall out in the nature of things, and are unavoidable in that road which leads to the haven of rest."¹²⁵ Their consistency with the views expressed by religious writers might be cited as evidence that the views of Draco and M.S. were conventional and probably tended to confirm rather than challenge the views of *Ladies Magazine* readers.¹²⁶ Nevertheless, their appearance in *The Ladies Magazine* illustrates with particular clarity the ways in which the specific arguments of major discourses made their way into the popular press, reworked for popular rather than elite consumption.

Not infrequently, suicide is tacitly condoned in the magazines, and though the definition of a legitimate sign from God is not articulated, the assumption that permissible suicides exist is implicit. *The Ladies Magazine*, which was inclined to print a wide variety of news and stories relating to sea travel, ships, storms at sea, and shipwrecks, printed in one case *A Wonderful and Tragical Relation of a Voyage from the Indies; where by extraordinary Hardships and Extremeties, several of the Seamen, and others, miserably perished; and, for Want of Provision, cast Lots for their Lives, and were forced to eat one another; and how a Dutch Merchant eat Part of his two Children; and then murdered himself, because he would not kill his Wife. In a Letter from Plymouth*.¹²⁷ In this account, once all the dead have been eaten, surviving crew members decide to draw lots to determine who will next die and who will be the

executioner. The draw results in the merchant's wife being designated next to die and in the merchant being appointed her executioner. "Miserable was the Lamentation of the Husband and Wife, that so fatal a Mischance should for ever part them; yet Tears and Intreaties were ineffectual so that nothing but submission was left."¹²⁸ Seeing that opposition would not be effective against so many, the husband resolves to take on a dual role: "Honest Friends...you have seen the Hardship of my Fate: and, since it is drove to this Point, I am resolved never to be her Executioner, who hath been so loving and just a Wife to me: but in her Stead am resolved myself to be the Sacrifice: and therefore what I have to say to you is: that you stand Friends to her when I am dead'...Which after he had said, and they with Tears had heard, being about to answer him, he drew a Pistol from his Pocket, which he so unexpectedly discharged that they had not Time to prevent it, and shot himself in the Head, of which Wound he died."¹²⁹ His wife is not present for this, and when she discovers the suicide, she "almost died with Grief, and begged to be her own Executioner," but her servant intervenes. Refusing to feed on "that dear Corpse she had so often cherished," she barely stays alive by eating rats, but when lots are drawn again, she "drew a second Time her own Sentence, which she welcomed more than a Bridal-day."¹³⁰ After more tribulations, she survives the ordeal, and the story ends with her promise, when the period of mourning is over, to marry "the stout English seaman" who has saved her.¹³¹

In a similar story of conjugal self-sacrifice, contained in a brief 1799 essay ostensibly deploring the high rate of divorces, Sybilla, Duchess of Normandy and daughter-in-law of William the Conqueror, is held up as a model wife for doing the only thing that can save her husband from dying from a wound inflicted by a poisoned arrow. Robert, eldest son of William the Conqueror, "was told by the physicians that his recovery was impossible, unless the venom were sucked out. The Prince was too amiable to suffer any one to make an experiment which must prove fatal to the person who should effect his cure. But Sybilla...during the time her husband slept, applied her lips to the poisoned wound, and had the happiness of preserving his life at the expence of her own."¹³²

In an Eastern tale that appears in *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, the question of permissible suicide is neatly sidestepped in the story of a Christian nun who refuses to violate her vows and accept a proposal of marriage from the Arabian general who has occupied her convent. Since she cannot in good faith think of doing away with herself directly, she devises a plan. Referring to the numerous

conspiracies against his life, she tells the general that she has an unguent that will make him invulnerable against the assaults of his enemies. The general suspects that the nun might be an enemy herself, so, to prove her good intentions, the nun offers to demonstrate the effectiveness of the potion. She rubs it around her neck and bids him strike. "He obeyed, and instantly severed her head from her body." Stricken with her pious heroism, the General secretly becomes a Christian convert, and the nun becomes a Christian virgin/martyr.¹³³

The previous examples of suicide are rendered most obviously permissible by their containment within the contexts of Christian self-sacrifice and (in the first two) ideal conjugal behaviour; however, they cannot be completely separated from the overlapping context of classical attitudes that revolved around notions of honour and duty that were central to the suicide debate. Early in the century, *The Female Tatler* assumed familiarity with both classical and religious terms of the debate and directed attention to matters that were of more relevance to readers. The discussion of whether sexual dishonour or death by suicide is preferable for women occurs in the context of a debate between the members of the fictional Society of Ladies that serves as the magazine's collective eidolon. The matter is first discussed in the fable of the Milesian virgins. William Fleetwood used the tale to show how the Virgins' horror at the shame of an ignominious burial could be incorporated into a law that would act as a deterrent to suicide. In *The Female Tatler*, the fable is used to underline the importance of modesty in the catalogue of eighteenth-century female virtues. Here, the consequences of the Virgins' transgression are distanced by the history and quaintness of the fable. However, the context for *The Female Tatler's* discussion of female honour is typically more violent, more persuasive, and more in keeping with a serious aspect of London life that was familiar to the Society of Ladies and female readers -- rape.

Agreeing that the greatest virtue for maids, wives, and widows is chastity, the Society debates the relative merits of Lucretia, who killed herself after she was raped by Tarquin, and Susanna, "the Virtuous Marchioness of Oizzi," who killed herself before she was raped. The Society eventually reaches consensus when it agrees with the lines allegedly engraved on a Paduan monument:

The Fam'd *Lucretia* dar'd, undone,
Die for her Honour when 'twas gone:
But chaster *Susan* did much more,
Who dar'd, to Save it, Die before.¹³⁴

The Society's debate, which is more about female chastity than about suicide, nevertheless contains an intellectual assessment of Stoic and Christian attitudes toward self-murder, in a discussion that presumed its readers' knowledge of both sides of the argument. In the classical interpretation of the story, Lucretia's possession by Tarquin resulted in the loss of another possession, her honour, which was implicitly considered to be worth dying for. Lucretia's violence against herself canceled out the violence of Tarquin, acting as a quasi-religious sacrifice that seemed "to cleanse the effects of pollution, and to restore lost purity and innocence."¹³⁵ The later Christian view condemned Lucretia's suicide because, in Augustine's view, purity is essentially a matter of the will, not the body, and chastity is not a possession and therefore cannot be stolen. The focus of Augustine's condemnation is the error in Lucretia's thinking. But in *The Female Tatler*, there is nothing wrong with Lucretia's thinking, which, along with her suicide, is unambiguously approved.¹³⁶ Self-murder in the defense of virtue is an acceptable notion: the willingness to commit suicide is the yardstick by which all forms of virtue and honour, female and male, are measured: "...the highest Degrees of virtues are all the same. When we so firmly adhere to any one as to chuse Death rather than forfeit it, we are advanc'd to the top of it, and our Virtue is Heroick. She that is kill'd in Defence of her Chastity, is as Brave as he that Dies in fighting for his Country..."¹³⁷

Female chastity, then, is considered to be a matter of life and death, a cause as desperate as any for which a loyal soldier goes to battle.¹³⁸ No one argued against the morality of a soldier going into battle to defend his country, just as, *The Female Tatler* suggests, no one can argue against the morality of a woman defending her chastity or reclaiming her virtue through suicide. By manipulating the terms of the larger suicide debate, *The Female Tatler* removes female chastity from any association with pride and associates it rather with self-sacrifice in a just cause, which, in a society in which reputation was all, was not altogether spurious.¹³⁹ The choice of death over the real or anticipated loss of chastity was not an empty gesture but one that reflected the insupportable situation of a "ruined" woman of the period.

Predictably, *The Female Tatler* is taken to task for promoting suicide instead of virtue and morality and for "flying in the Face of Religion, and subverting the Laws of all Christian Countries."¹⁴⁰ *The Female Tatler* replies that it is not the magazine's business to "meddle with Religious Matters," and as to suicide, the issue must be reckoned differently for Christians and the pagan exemplars, "that far from being bless'd with any reveal'd Knowledge of the Sinfulness of it, were encourag'd to and taught

it, both by the Precepts and Examples of their most Venerable *Philosophers*."¹⁴¹ And, indeed, *The Female Tatler* continues, the courage of these women surpasses the courage of men on the battlefield, who are too distracted by the noise, confusion, and action on the field to think consciously about death. Women who commit suicide in the grip of passion and impulse are comparable to war heroes, but women who are familiar with death, who "entertain it, taste and relish it with presence of mind and serenity" show "an entire Victory over every thing dreadful in it, and require at least the utmost stretch of Strength that Humane Nature can be capable of."¹⁴² The magazine's defense of suicide that is the result of cool, rational deliberation is quintessentially Stoic -- action that is contemplated and carried out without passion or emotion of any sort. But in deference to its critic, *The Female Tatler's* closing discussion on the subject avoids the topic of suicide -- narrowly -- by presenting as exemplars a series of women who, variously, murder their would-be ravishers, die of grief over having been ravished, and die in the field with their husbands rather than be killed by them out of jealousy in the case of ravishing Turks.¹⁴³ The discussion ends when an old gentleman writes to the magazine to declare that what citizens want are not exemplars but good housewives and mothers, who obey their husbands and are discreet.¹⁴⁴ This conclusion is doubly effective, because it articulates conventional male expectations of women's roles in a self-parodying manner and because it calls attention to the conditions of women's lives that underlie the foregoing very serious discussion of female chastity.

In *The Female Tatler*, male and female honour are discussed in the context of the meaning of honour generally. Honour and its relation to suicide is also a factor in a story in Eliza Haywood's *The Parrot*.¹⁴⁵ Set within a discussion of female obstinacy, the anecdote concerns Amarantha, the widow of a young man made miserable by her tendency to flirt. Amarantha is eventually betrothed to Honorius, who, as keeper of a state secret, must often visit the house of a beautiful woman. A rival for Amarantha's affections plays on her jealousy so she will persuade Honorius to disclose the state secret to her. Amarantha inadvertently betrays the secret to a detractor of Honorius, who, disgraced, resolves to commit suicide, taking his leave of Amarantha by letter. Haywood's story pits public interests against private ones, with the shame of having betrayed a state secret presented as an unquestioningly honourable motive for suicide. Honorius' noble action is set against Amarantha's seemingly incurable lack of judgment and prudence. (When the suitors resume following the suicide, Amarantha forgets both

Honorius and her own culpability in his death, and eventually marries, choosing ambiguously and arbitrarily from among her suitors.) The alliance of suicide not only with noble action but also public interest reflects how closely the suicide debate was bound up with questions of duty. The anecdote also underscores Haywood's injunction to women readers, apparent in all her work, to be mindful of their connection with a world beyond female vanity.

In a *Lady's Monthly Museum* story, "The Fatal Effects of Curiosity," an overly inquisitive young wife who habitually opens her husband's letters opens one delivered by mistake and subsequently (and wrongly) accuses him of a secret "amour." "Oppressed by the most excruciating mental agony, the ill-fated Fitzallen, in a paroxysm of phrenzy, formed the *dreadful* and *impious* resolution of abridging the term of his existence, and effected his terrific purpose almost instantaneously. [sic] The report of a pistol brought the unfortunate wife to witness the voluntary dissolution of her husband!"¹⁴⁶ Here, the suicide of the husband is configured as almost murder by the wife, whose misinformation regarding Fitzallen's honour comes as a result of her own willful breach of honour in opening his letters. Here, again, virtue -- or the lack of it -- allies ideal conjugal relations with classical notions of honour. However, the story's emphasis, as demonstrated by its title, is on the wife's indulgence of her curiosity. Her lack of temperance and self-restraint, and only secondarily suicide, are the causes of death.

Horror against shame, then, remains a justifiable motive for suicide, whatever the nature of the shame. However, as is evident from these instances in the magazines, even if the suicide is committed by a man, the impact of the incident is usually of importance primarily to women, and some degree of shame usually belongs to them. The shame is retained (though occasionally shared with a seducer) when women commit suicide (or contemplate it) for explicitly sexual reasons ranging from rape, to seduction and abandonment, to the birth of a bastard child. Sixteen-year-old Ermina is abducted and raped when she mistakes a stranger for her brother at a masquerade. Her ravisher refuses to kill her, despite her pleas, and she is set down, blindfolded and alone, near the waterside, where, as in *Pamela*, "the sight of the water...tempted her more than once...to throw herself into it."¹⁴⁷ Like Pamela, she is restrained from self-murder by the "precepts of religion." Though her former lover wishes to marry her, she refuses (anticipating Clarissa) ever to marry.¹⁴⁸ Like Pamela's, the young woman's rejection of suicide signifies the retention of her virtue, and her resolution to remain single suggests, as in *Clarissa*, that, even though

the rape was not her fault, the loss of her chastity is beyond repair within the framework of normal expectations for a woman.

But later in the century, horror against shame as a motive for suicide -- one that implies an active response to an insupportable situation -- is increasingly subordinated to more passive and sentimental motivations, with the result that the link between suicide and honour is attenuated and suicide as a didactic focus is drained of much of its moral impact. Though female suicide is frequently linked to seduction, the focus is either on the folly of yielding to temptation or on the attitude society should take toward a "ruined" woman while she is still alive, rather than on challenging the association of suicide and seduction. The opposing views in the following two anecdotes show that the same conflict between leniency and prescriptive enforcement inherent in the suicide debate occurs in the context of attitudes toward conventional norms of female behaviour. A 1787 essay in *The Pharos* asks "How far ought we to be kind to the vicious?"¹⁴⁹ Noting that it is "remarkable that the loudest clamors are ever excited by kindness shewn to such wretched females as have forfeited their character of chastity,"¹⁵⁰ *The Pharos* suggests that contamination is subject to a double standard based on wealth and gender, and that an innocent and well-meaning friend shows public sympathy at her peril. *The Pharos* questions not the logic but the ethics of this double condemnation. "That this strictness is proper and necessary, I readily admit--much of the happiness of society depends on the virtue and reputation of the female part of it: but I cannot think it ought to supersede the duty of charity, nor that it is in any degree justifiable to oblige our wives and daughters to act in direct opposition to our Saviour's doctrines, which always inculcate the discharge of out [sic] duty towards God and our neighbor, without regard to the censure of the world."¹⁵¹ This statement is followed by an anecdote of Clara, whose favourite servant has become pregnant, "the dupe of specious promises and illicit love." The servant is sincerely repentant, and Clara is sympathetic, wanting to help by sending the servant to her aunt for her confinement. But Aunt Penelope, whose control over Clara's conduct derives from Clara's obedience to the "injunction of a dying parent," opposes Clara's scheme to shelter the servant or even to assist her with money. Clara hands the situation over to Aunt Penelope, who turns the servant, penniless, out of doors. But Clara soon regrets her action, "for, in the ensuing day, the object of her pity and compelled severity, after declaring in indelible characters that the unexpected cruelty of her mistress had sunk her to despondency, finished her temporal

miseries by poison."¹⁵² Here, it is not the shame of pregnancy but despair resulting from the perceived betrayal of her mistress that is given as a motive for suicide: the shame is Clara's, and the moral of the story is subtle. Contained within the censure of Clara's behaviour is an implicit challenge to another facet of female experience, obedience. We might assume that Clara's uncritical obedience to her Aunt, reinforced by obedience to her dead parents, would be applauded by the conservative *Pharos*. Instead, the magazine implicitly and explicitly advocates a more discriminating response to individual objects of compassion (as well as obedience to a higher law) even in a domestic context.

A similar situation provokes much harsher treatment in a letter regarding seduction, written to *The Lady's Monthly Museum* in 1799. Here, the doctrine of loving thy neighbour gives place to the inflexible Pauline doctrine that "the wages of sin is death."¹⁵³ The writer of the letter tells the story of a young village woman who has been seduced and abandoned: "She... wandered from parish to parish in search of [the seducer]; without home, without friends, and without money; insulted by some, and unfeelingly turned away by others: till, at last, oppressed with want, and her heart broken with misfortune, she sought a refuge from trouble, by a crime at which human nature shudders -- *suicide!*"¹⁵⁴ Predictably, the story's moral is the evil of sexual temptation and transgression, and it concludes with an unsurprising apostrophe to female virtue, but the writer's emphasis on the culpability of the young woman, rather than on the seducer or "unfeeling" others, is surprisingly harsh: "Such an instance as this ought not to go unimproved: it should teach us to be on our guard against the first inducement to evil: knowing that one imprudent step will cost us a life of misery, and force us to drink of the cup of gall, till Death dashes it from our lips."¹⁵⁵ The motive for suicide is, again, seemingly not shame but despondency over the betrayal and abandonment, of the seducer and also of friends and family and society at large. In matters of shame, the emphasis on the individual experience of the transgressor, here and elsewhere, is pitted squarely against punishment meted out impartially against all offenders. Thus, female shame is associated not only with death, but with the social alienation that results from sexual transgression.

Suicide seems also to be considered an appropriate conclusion to the life of the libertine in the next number of *The Lady's Monthly Museum*. In "The Suicide: or, Traits of Modern Life," Henry Davenant seduces and betrays the virtuous Mariette, his father's ward and the woman Henry actually loves, though

he has been tricked into marrying another.¹⁵⁶ In an extended suicide note entitled "Memoir of Henry Davenant," he recalls finding Mariette on her deathbed. "The premature birth of an infant, that might have called me father, took her from a world that could to her have afforded nothing but misery."¹⁵⁷ He concludes that he is damned -- "the just punishment of the guilty libertine!!" -- but the cause of damnation is ambiguous, being attributable to either the seduction and betrayal or the suicide. In this instance, the act of suicide is almost incidental, configured as the just desserts of seducers. Sexual transgression is the capital offense (Mariette dies in childbirth): suicide is not a moral or philosophical dilemma, but the occasion for the seducer to document and underwrite the recognition of his guilt and fruitless repentance. While stories of seduction and betrayal may implicitly interrogate the double sexual standard, the logic of considering suicide as an appropriate response to sexual transgression is unchallenged. Davenant's story, apart from the sentimental reference to the paternity of his unborn child, is the stuff of pure (censurable) romance fiction, and there is far too much moral justice in the young man's suicide for his self-murder to be considered anything but inevitable. The unquestioned fates of the two women, however basely seduced and abandoned, reinforce the notion that, even when classical notions of honour are no longer invoked, the loss of female chastity can only be expiated by death.

A final examination of another *Lady's Monthly Museum* story reveals even more clearly the ways that attitudes toward the narrative effect of suicide have shifted. "The Fatal Effects of Gaming; or, The History of Miss Braddock" is based on the actual suicide of nineteen-year-old heiress Fanny Braddock in 1731, which was retold several times in diverse forms throughout the century.¹⁵⁸ The *Museum* story is largely based on Oliver Goldsmith's version, included in *The Life of Richard Nash* (1762). Fanny Braddock was an orphan whose late father had been a respected general. According to the *Museum*, she had the usual advantages of wit, beauty, good-nature, and wealth, but she was imprudent. First, she developed an affection for an undeserving young man (a late addition to the story) whose own imprudence caused him to be jailed for unpaid debts. Miss Braddock's fortune was substantially reduced when she paid off his debts (he was later reimprisoned and died in debtors prison), and the rest was lost in gambling at Bath. Without arousing any particular suspicion, Fanny Braddock began to enquire as to the easiest and least painful means of suicide.

Fanny Braddock lived for some time with the family of Bath architect John Wood and was left with the younger children while the rest of the family went to London. Here, she meditated "over her past misconduct, and her approaching misery: she saw that even affluence gave her no real happiness, and from indigence she thought nothing could be hoped but lingering calamity. She at length conceived the fatal resolution of leaving a life, in which she could see no corner for comfort, and terminating a scene of imprudence in suicide."¹⁵⁹ With "cool intrepidity," she wrote this verse on the dining room window:

O death! thou pleasing end of human woe!
Thou cure for life! Thou greatest good below!
Still may'st thou fly the coward and the knave,
And thy soft slumbers only bless the brave.

Later, she ate alone in the library and there "she spent the remaining hours, preceding bed time, in dandling two of Mr. Wood's children on her knees. In retiring from thence to her chamber, she went into the nursery, to take her leave of another child, as it lay sleeping in the cradle. Struck with the innocence of the little babe's looks, and the consciousness of her meditated guilt, she could not avoid bursting into tears, and hugging it in her arms: she then bid her servant good night, for the first time she had ever done so, and went to bed as usual."¹⁶⁰

Miss Braddock did not, however, go to sleep. Instead she made preparations for suicide: "She dressed herself in clean linen, and white garments of every kind, like a bride-maid. Her gown was pinned over her breast, just as a nurse pins the swaddling clothes of an infant. A pink silk girdle was the instrument with which she resolved to terminate her misery, and this was lengthened by another made of gold thread. The end of the former was tied with a noose, and the latter with three knots, at a small distance from one another."¹⁶¹ Her first attempt failed when the girdle broke, but a second attempt was successful. Miss Braddock's body was discovered the next day, the coroner's jury was impaneled, and a verdict of Lunacy brought in. She was buried, at the expense of a female companion, in her father's grave. A post-script to the account relates details from Wood's account: "she was kept just suspended, till the natural struggles for life tortured her to death: and, in dying, made her bite her own tongue through in several places. He adds, that when life had left her body, it stretched to such a degree, that her ankle bones touched the floor of the room: and her hand was so strongly clinched about the key of the door, that the strength of her arm must have operated against her neck during the whole time of her dying."¹⁶²

Unlike earlier accounts, emphasis on the association of gambling and suicide is played down: a verse responsive to Miss Braddock's, which had been printed in earlier accounts, is in *The Museum* relegated to a footnote at the bottom of the page.¹⁶³ Moreover, details that in Goldsmith's account mitigate against a sympathetic reading of Miss Braddock's character are omitted, leaving her uncompromised as an object of sympathy. The "cool intrepidity" with which she writes the verse on the window suggests her courage, and her "good-nights" to Wood's children recall her own disappointed hopes for marriage. As well, the care she takes to dress herself for death, and the clothes she chooses recollect the bride, wife, and mother she will never be. She is also dressed as for a sacrifice, not only to her lost hopes, but in expiation of her past transgressions. Miss Braddock's perseverance in the face of her failed attempt renders her one of the brave to which she refers in her verse, and her burial with her father restores her to her family.

Like the condemnation of gambling foregrounded in earlier accounts, condemnation of suicide and the didactic association of suicide and gambling are subordinated to the narrative properties of Fanny Braddock's story. Likewise, the link between honour and suicide is tenuous at best, since, despite classical references sprinkled through the story, the motive for suicide is despair. In earlier versions, the motive was more explicitly loss of reputation, a particularly eighteenth-century kind of horror against shame. But such horror and action do not square with this sentimentalized Fanny Braddock, who, while capable of grotesque attention to the details of her suicide, is a heroine who anticipates later versions of passive femininity with exceptional accuracy.

NOTES TO CHAPTER FIVE

- 1 Michael MacDonald and Terence R. Murphy, *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), p. 228.
- 2 Janet Todd, *Gender, Art and Death* (New York: Continuum, 1993), p. 103.
- 3 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 325.
- 4 MacDonald and Murphy, pp. 327 - 29.
- 5 Elisabeth Bronfen, *Over Her Dead Body* (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 141-42.
- 6 That the shame of suicide was a stain on survivors is illustrated by a 1739 letter from Aaron Hill to Samuel Richardson. Hill describes the suicide of a relation who, during the several days it took him to die from his wounds, made his deathbed companions promise to keep the suicide a secret. The companions seem to have kept the promise, and the newspapers reported the death as accidental. Hill learned the truth from one of the companions who became apprehensive that he might somehow be implicated in the death (Samuel Richardson, *Correspondence*, Vol. I, [New York: AMS Press, 1966], pp. 24-26).
- 7 Bronfen, p. 143.
- 8 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 190.
- 9 Alexander Pope, *Collected Poems*, p. 262. The Unfortunate Lady of this poem has been denied a Christian burial, but Pope pronounces a benediction over the unconsecrated grave, deeming it sanctified by her remains. His sentiments earned him the scorn of an early editor of Thomas Warton's poems, who, in his footnote to "The Suicide," referred to "The Elegy" as Pope's "charming and pathetic though highly immoral apology for Suicide" (Thomas Warton, *Poetical Works* Vol. One, Richard Mant (ed.), [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1802], p. 151.
- 10 *The Female Spectator* Vol. II, vii (1746), pp. 28-29.
- 11 MacDonald and Murphy, pp. 99-100.
- 12 Goethe's Werther was the prototypical embodiment of romantic suicide, of course, and the influence of this fictional character could hardly have been greater -- and according to many, less harmful -- than that of a real person.
- 13 "I am well informed in an opinion, which has prevailed of this Ode having been occasioned by the death of Chatterton, is not founded on fact. Chatterton destroyed himself by swallowing arsenic in water. Not indeed that this circumstance would be decisive against his being the subject of it: but I know from indisputable authority that he was not" (Warton, p.146).
- 14 Charles Moore, *A full inquiry into the subject of suicide*, Vol. II (London, 1790), pp. 141-42. Moore's attack on Werther's romantic sensibility is scathing and uncompromising. Interestingly, Moore distinguishes Chatterton's suicide from Werther's on the grounds of the Protestant ethic: Chatterton was an unfortunate who was at least trying to be productive.
- 15 The one eighteenth-century novel concerned with suicide is Herbert Croft's *Love and Madness* (1780), which has been referred to as the English *Werther*. In it, Croft fictionalizes the actual love-suicide of Reverend James Hackman, who murdered his lover Martha Ray and then killed himself, which can hardly be termed a romantic suicide. The novel also includes a sympathetic account of Chatterton's suicide (Jean Hagstrum, *Sex and Sensibility* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980], pp. 262-63).
- 16 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 149.
- 17 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 277.
- 18 William Fleetwood, *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants*, p. 440.
- 19 Edward Young, *Night Thoughts* (New York: Appleton and Company, 1854), p. 108.
- 20 Oliver Goldsmith, *The Vicar of Wakefield*, p. 161.
- 21 Moore, Vol. I, p. 342; MacDonald and Murphy, p. 309. John McManners has noted that the reverse situation occurred when two Englishmen decided to kill themselves in Paris, "where they

-
- would be encouraged in their resolution by the numerous examples France afforded" (*Death and the Enlightenment* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981], p. 432).
- 22 McManners, pp. 429 - 33.
- 23 Other factors preclude an accurate assessment, such as lost or inadequately or improperly kept records, unexplained gaps in record-keeping, or vagaries in definition or methods of classification. As well, records of burials did not show those who were buried outside the churchyard, such as unbaptised babies, stillborns, and suicides.
- 24 Dorothy George, p. 22.
- 25 Forbes, pp. 384 - 86.
- 26 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 309.
- 27 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 309. According to these authors, at least 21 Members of Parliament committed suicide in the 1700s, "which may partly reflect the uncertainties of political life and the psychological consequences of disgrace and ruin. The game of high politics was a blood sport" (p. 281).
- 28 Burton held strong and, for his time, conventional opinions on suicide, arguing, "He that stabbs another can kill his body; but he that stabbs him selfe, killes his owne Soule" (*The Anatomy of Melancholy*, p. 437).
- 29 Moore, Vol. I, pp. 360 - 66. Moore ends the first volume of his study on suicide with a list of its causes, a compendium of eighteenth-century thought on the subject that addresses environmental, physiological, psychological, or temperamental conditions that may lead to suicide. At the end of the second volume, Moore lists twelve precautions that readers can take against the temptation to self-murder; the second list speaks to none of the environmental causes appearing earlier, but only to moral and spiritual matters.
- 30 Moore, Vol. I, pp. 357 - 58.
- 31 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 151.
- 32 David Hume, "Of Suicide," pp. 577 - 589, p. 586. Though Providence was used extensively throughout the century to explain the loss of loved ones to grieving survivors (it is ubiquitous in the consolatory poetry of the periodicals), it was not often mentioned in religious arguments against suicide.
- 33 Moore, Vol. I, p. 204. Like most writers, Adam Smith, who admired Stoic philosophy but did not approve suicide, was vague about what, precisely, constituted this point of permission: "Notwithstanding [the] gaiety and even levity of expression, however, the alternative of leaving life, or of remaining in it, was, according to the Stoics, a matter of the most serious and important deliberation. We ought never to leave it till we were distinctly called upon to do so by that superintending Power which had originally placed us in it. But we were to consider ourselves as called upon to do so, not merely at the appointed and unavoidable term of human life. Whenever the providence of that superintending Power had rendered our condition in life upon the whole the proper object rather of rejection than of choice; the great rule which he had given us for the direction of our conduct, then required us to leave it. We might then be said to hear the awful and benevolent voice of that divine Being distinctly calling upon us to do so" (*Theory of Moral Sentiments*, pp. 280- 81). Samuel Johnson was similarly circumspect in a discussion with Goldsmith, who asked if a man has a moral right to expose himself to persecution because he is convinced of the truth of his cause. Johnson replied, "Sir, if a man is in doubt whether it would be better for him to expose himself to martyrdom or not, he should not do it. He must be convinced that he has a delegation from heaven" (James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, p. 539).
- 34 Charles Moore was at some pains to excuse the self-killing of Samson, who was not a Christian but still a religious hero. He concluded that Samson's death was not a suicide, but "an accidental circumstance connected with his point of view" that the Philistines must be destroyed (Vol. I, p. 89).
- 35 John Adams, *An Essay Concerning Self-Murder* (London: 1700), p. 10. William Godwin felt that martyrdom was by definition a heroic action and was also suicide: "We must assume that it was possible for [martyrs] to avoid this fate, before we can draw any conclusion from it in favour

- of the cause they espoused. They were determined to die, rather than reflect dishonour on that cause" (*Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, p. 178). This seeming allowance for suicide is somewhat at odds with the critique of suicide that immediately precedes this passage.
- 36 John McManners feels that the whole Enlightenment defense of suicide was by and large theoretical rather than practical. "The Enlightenment's defense of suicide was set in a literary and philosophical context. The thinkers of the Enlightenment were too much in love with life to applaud the unhappy souls who, in a frenzy, or with cold-blooded and pathological calm, exercised their theoretical right to call an end to the drama" (p. 435).
- 37 Ian Donaldson, *The Rapes of Lucretia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), p. 154 - 55.
- 38 Saint Augustine, *The City of God*, Book 1, ch 23, pp. 143 - 44.
- 39 Adams, pp. 223 - 24. Of those who kill themselves to prevent their enemies' power over them and to disappoint their enemies' malice, Adams comments that "this I am sure is no *Masculine Reason*..." (253).
- 40 Fleetwood, pp. 421 - 22.
- 41 Boswell, p. 522.
- 42 Francis Ayscough, D.D., *A discourse against self-murder* (London, 1755), p. 3.
- 43 The notable exception to this is Charles Moore, who commented on virtually every aspect of suicide. Moore maintained that, while male suicides might be guilty of weakness, lack of fortitude, impulsiveness, or terribly misguided reasoning, women suicides were unproblematically overemotional and irrational, and their motives for committing suicide were invariably gender-specific: "The female flies to it, as her sure refuge from shame and infidelity, in the disappointments and jealousies of love, and lays the guilt of her death at the door of perjured man" (Vol. I, p. 5).
- 44 St. Augustine, *The City of God*, Book 1, ch 19, p. 141. Although John Adams does not discuss Lucretia, he used Augustine's distinction between body and will to argue that no mortal suffering can be seen as a sign from God to underwrite suicide, concluding that "no Evil which oppresses the Body can be destructive (while Reason remains) to the Liberty of the Soul: That no Sickness or Pain whatsoever can be any sign that God gives to the Sufferer *Liberty* to destroy himself: That he who does so to obtain *Liberty* or *Ease* from any such Evils, shall fall into a state of greater *Slavery*: and therefore that *Liberty*, in what sense soever, is an *unreasonable pretence for Self-Murther*"(317-18).
- 45 If Edmund Burke did not have Lucretia specifically in mind, he was relying on the conjunction of Stoic nobility, female honour, and female chastity in his encomium on Marie Antoinette in the *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: "I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well) and that she bears all the succeeding days...and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage: that like her she has lofty sentiments: that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace, and that if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand" (p. 169).
- 46 Moore, Vol. I, p. 295.
- 47 Moore, Vol. I, p. 297.
- 48 Bernard Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees* Vol. I, pp. 209 - 10.
- 49 Adams, p. 116. It was, for example, referred to in Burton's discussion of suicide in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.
- 50 Fleetwood, p. 480.
- 51 Donaldson, p. 167.
- 52 McManners, p. 435.
- 53 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 153.
- 54 Adams, pp. 23 - 30.
- 55 Moore, Vol. I, p. 7.

-
- 56 Godwin. pp. 177 - 78.
- 57 Godwin. p. 178.
- 58 Hume. p. 585.
- 59 Hume. p. 586.
- 60 Thomas Chatterton. *Complete Works*, Vol. I. p. 444.
- 61 Hobbes defined this right as "the liberty each man hath. to use his own power. as he will himself. for the preservation of his own nature: that is to say. his own life: and consequently. of doing anything which. in his own judgment. and reason. he shall conceive to be the aptest means thereunto" (Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. (Part I. chapter 14). p. 86.
- 62 Adams. pp. 32 - 37. Adams could not anticipate how close he would come on the first point to agreeing with Hume's position that "the life of man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster" (Hume. p. 583).
- 63 Smith. p. 287. Hobbes defined natural right as that "by which man is forbidden to do. that. which is destructive of his life. or taketh away the means of preserving the same: and to omit. that. by which he thinketh it may be best preserved" (p. 86).
- 64 Adams. pp. 5 - 19.
- 65 MacDonald and Murphy. p. 114.
- 66 Unlike most commentators who opposed the law solely on moral grounds (even Blackstone defined the crime of suicide as "usurping the prerogative of God and depriving the king of one of his subjects" (Gittings. p. 72). Jeremy Bentham opposed it on the grounds that punishments consistent and logical in point of variability might not be applied justly in point of equality: "By the English law. there are several offences which are punished by a total forfeiture of moveables. not extending to immoveables. This is the case with suicide...In some cases. this is the principal punishment: in others. even the only one. The consequence is. that if a man's fortune happens to consist in moveables. he is ruined: if in immoveables. he suffers nothing" (*Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. p. 191. n.1). Elsewhere. however. Bentham lists suicide as third among self-regarding offences against one's person (after offences of abstinence and those of willful excess) (246. n.2). and as an offence against the population (288. n.1).
- 67 MacDonald and Murphy. p. 16.
- 68 Clare Gittings notes that this form of burial was not without logic: "Crossroads were chosen in order to diffuse the evil influence of the body in several different directions. thus rendering it less harmful: the stake was to prevent the ghost from walking" (p. 73).
- 69 MacDonald and Murphy. p. 114.
- 70 Samuel Johnson felt that those who commit suicide are "often not universally disordered in their intellects. but one passion presses so upon them. that they yield to it. and commit suicide. as a passionate man will stab another" (Boswell. p.521 - 22).
- 71 Adams. p. 117.
- 72 Adams. pp. 129 - 30.
- 73 Fleetwood. p. 479.
- 74 Fleetwood. p. 482.
- 75 Fleetwood. p. 473.
- 76 Fleetwood. p. 487.
- 77 Young. p. 109.
- 78 Ayscough. p. 13.
- 79 Ayscough. p. 14.
- 80 Ayscough. pp. 13-14. Whether or not corrupt juries were the norm. the widespread perception that verdicts were linked to status and wealth was not unfounded. "The most likely candidate for a *non compos mentis* verdict was...a man of some property and good reputation who was the head of a household. Testimony about the mental state of the deceased was likewise most persuasive when it was given by witnesses whose status or character commanded the jury's respect." On the

-
- other hand, "*felones de se* were often marginal members of the community in which they died: criminals, people in disgrace, servants, apprentices, abject paupers, or strangers. Men and women who tried to escape punishment for crimes by killing themselves were invariably convicted as self-murderers throughout the century" (MacDonald and Murphy, p. 129).
- 81 Ayscough, pp. 14-15.
- 82 Moore, Vol. I, p. 339.
- 83 Moore, Vol. I, pp. 339 - 40.
- 84 Moore, Vol. I, p. 331. One wonders whether the well-read Moore was conscious of lifting his phrase from Young.
- 85 "Nature, in her sound and healthful state, prompts us to avoid distress upon all occasions: upon many occasions to defend ourselves against it, though at the hazard, or even with the certainty of perishing in that defence. But, when we have neither been able to defend ourselves from it, nor have perished in that defence, no natural principle, no regard to the approbation of the supposed impartial spectator, to the judgment of the man within the breast, seems to call upon us to escape from it by destroying ourselves. It is only the consciousness of our own weakness, of our own incapacity to support the calamity with proper manhood and firmness, which can drive us to this resolution" (Smith, p. 287).
- 86 Smith, p. 287.
- 87 Chatterton, Vol. I, p. 444.
- 88 Chatterton, Vol. I, pp. 503-5.
- 89 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 133.
- 90 Hay, p. 32.
- 91 MacDonald and Murphy, pp. 157 - 58. Charles Moore commented on this incident in his denouncement of suicide in 1790, predictably with no sympathy for the Smiths' arguments (Vol. II, pp. 164 - 66).
- 92 Chatterton, Vol. II, p. 1061.
- 93 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 350.
- 94 Typically, religious and philosophical disquisitions considered suicide in theoretical terms and suggested hypothetical causes that were rarely grounded in the material conditions of most people's lives. Among religious writers who considered suicide, only Fleetwood explicitly mentioned poverty, both as a cause (especially when the result of indulgence and folly) and as an inadequate excuse for suicide in any case. Fleetwood maintains that "the misery [the poor] endure, will end in Death, at least, and it may be it will come quickly; and that the Sins that brought them to that misery will be forgiven upon Repentance, be they never so great and many; whereas the course they pitch upon to relieve themselves, is a Sin that admits of no Repentance, and consigns them to Pains and Sorrows, that will have no End" (p. 453).
- 95 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 252.
- 96 Terence Murphy, "Woeful Childe of Parents Rage: Suicide of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern England, 1507 - 1710," *The Sixteenth-Century Journal* 17 (1986), p. 264.
- 97 At least one anonymous poet in 1775 was more concerned with youth's military responsibility to the nation than to the national health. The poet asks why "with desp'rate hand, shall fev'rish Youth: Point to his coward heart the murd'ring steel?" when "The lazy drops, now loit'ring in thy veins, [Could] flow with honor in a Country's cause" (*Suicide, An Elegy*).
- 98 When an attempted abortion resulted in the death of the mother, she was technically a *feloma de se* (MacDonald and Murphy, p. 287, n. 113).
- 99 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 131. The authors claim that this leniency demonstrates "that juries discriminated among the dead not merely according to their rank and fortune, but also according to the circumstances that had brought about their desperate act."
- 100 Murphy, p. 265.
- 101 In the case of adolescents, such consequences include the deprivation of the services of the young person, the implied public accusation of the survivors and its attendant disgrace, loss, grief.

- and/or guilt, and the belief that the ghost of the suicide might have the power to enact revenge against superiors (Murphy, pp. 269 - 70).
- 102 This point was noted by Donald Taylor in Chatterton's *Complete Works*, Vol. II, p. 992.
- 103 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 247.
- 104 There is enough evidence of their occurrence, however, to show that Hume was mistaken in his assertion that the horror of death was such that one failed or foiled suicide attempt seldom resulted in another (Hume, p. 580).
- 105 Forbes, p. 386 - 87. This fact was partially recognized by Moore, who said that the most common method for rural suicides was by hanging. However, Moore also claimed that men in the city preferred the more gentlemanly methods of sword or pistol, a statement that seems not to take into account that most urban suicides were not committed by gentlefolk (Moore, Vol. I, p. 356).
- 106 Chatterton, Vol. I, p. 446. Not all who killed themselves were indifferent to subsequent reactions to or perceptions of their suicide, however. Horace Walpole wrote of Lord Mountford's suicide for reasons of financial ruin: "If he had despised money, he could not have shot himself with more deliberate resolution. The only points he seems to have considered in so mean an action, were, not to be thought mad, and which would be the easiest method of dispatching himself. It is strange that the passage from life to death should be an object, when one is unhappy enough to be determined to change one for 'other!'" (Horace Walpole, *Correspondence*, Vol. XX, p. 461).
- 107 MacDonald and Murphy, p. 143. These authors have drawn extensively on the eighteenth-century periodical press, but have not included those publications directed at a primarily female audience. My focus is almost exclusively on the magazines MacDonald and Murphy left out.
- 108 *The Ladies Mercury*, Vol. I, i (February 28, 1693), p. 2. Though a parody, the letter includes the information that the suicide left a considerable fortune, all of which was seized as a result of his being judged *felo de se*.
- 109 This observation was not absent from the magazines themselves. In one essay, a writer laments the rash of suicides reported in the newspapers. "I know not how to account for the great increase of Self-Murders amongst us. Is it that there is more calamity in our nation than formerly? Are the means of comfort more difficult to be arrived at? Are men become less merciful to the indigent of their species; or are our passions become less governable than they were?" (*The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxv (October 28 - November 11, 1752), p. 388).
- 110 This proportion is interesting in light of the fact that, statistically, men were twice as likely to commit suicide as women.
- 111 The naming of lunacy in these cases seems to refer to actual insanity as a cause, rather than the verdict of a coroner's jury, since most of the cases mentioned would receive a lunacy verdict, regardless of the cause.
- 112 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, i (November 16 - 30, 1751), p. 14.
- 113 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xvi (June 1 - 15, 1751), pp. 252 - 53; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, xxii (August 25 - September 8, 1750), p. 345; *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, ix (April 28, 1753), p. 143.
- 114 *The Lady's Weekly Magazine* (1747).
- 115 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 239.
- 116 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xv (May 30 - June 13, 1752), p. 240.
- 117 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. IV, x (May 12, 1753).
- 118 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. I, iii (December 2 - 16, 1749), p. 45.
- 119 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxv (October 5 - 19, 1751), p. 395.
- 120 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, ix (March 7 - 21, 1752), p. 141.
- 121 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 122 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxii (August 24 - September 7, 1751), p. 346.
- 123 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, xxvii (November 2 - 16, 1751), p. 420.
- 124 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxv (October 28 - November 11, 1752), p. 388.

-
- 125 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. III, xxv (October 28 - November 11, 1752), p. 389.
- 126 This observation seems to be confirmed by the appearance of a 1796 essay on suicide in *The Parental Monitor*. The essay, which condemns suicide on rational, religious, and moral grounds, is addressed to young people who might contemplate suicide, calling on them to "reflect one moment on the danger and guilt of your design!" (*The Parental Monitor*, Vol. IV [1796], p. 228). The essay repeats many of the arguments of Draco and earlier religious writers, contrasting the dubious gain of a cowardly early release from temporary pain with the certainty of damnation. Draco's journey metaphor is repeated, but, significantly, the call for endurance contained in Draco's straightforward Providential reasoning is replaced here by a periphrastic call for readers to remember that God will judge their actions and that they should act accordingly.
- 127 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iii (December 1 - 15, 1750), pp. 39 - 40.
- 128 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iii (December 1 - 15, 1750), p. 40.
- 129 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iii (December 1 - 15, 1750), pp. 39 - 40.
- 130 *The Ladies Magazine*, Vol. II, iii (December 1 - 15, 1750), p. 40.
- 131 To some extent, this story illustrates Shawn Lisa Maurer's claim that the construction of "sentimental masculinity" was integral to the project of the periodicals. However, insofar as such gender construction was for most of the century a fairly unintentional by-product of the magazines' desire to affirm readers' configuration of themselves as moral beings in changing economic and social conditions, the overdetermined moral basis for the merchant's action here can as easily reflect virtue that is ungendered.
- 132 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (July 1799), p. 47.
- 133 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (December 1799), p. 450. In this and the previous instances, conventional norms of conjugal behaviour and virtue are not challenged. They are, however, presented in extreme violent contexts -- in two examples, armed aggression serves as a backdrop, and in the Eastern tale, the threat of rape provides the motive for indirect suicide. These contexts not only implicitly authorize extreme action, but also appease the seemingly ongoing demand by the magazines' readers for sensationalism.
- 134 *The Female Tatler*, 86 (January 20-23, 1710).
- 135 Donaldson, p. 25. The description of the economics of suicide following rape is Donaldson's. Its application to Lucretia is mine.
- 136 *The Female Tatler* is not content that chastity should be celebrated as the only female virtue. Throughout the issues attributed to the Society of Ladies, an ongoing discussion focuses on the establishment of the Table of Fame for Women, which consists of seating at an imaginary table historical examples of female fortitude, virtue, ingenuity, and courage. Although the ultimate expression of chastity is repeatedly represented as the choice of suicide over dishonour, there are dissenters who would eschew a strictly sexual reading of virtue and seat at the Table women who have demonstrated "Consummate Wisdom, Fortitude, and Clemency [sic]," such as Queen Elizabeth. One member of the Society defends female virtues such as patience, chastity, and conjugal love on different grounds, comparing them with masculine virtues such as magnanimity and courage and finds that, though different, masculine and feminine virtues are of equal value.
- 137 *The Female Tatler*, 88 (January 25-27, 1710).
- 138 The comparison is not accidental. In answering Goldsmith's question about the moral right of a soldier to hazard his life in battle, Johnson replied that the just defense of one's country was "the universal opinion of mankind" (Boswell, p. 539).
- 139 Not spurious, but curious, perhaps, in light of the opinion of Mandeville, thought by many to be a contributor to the magazine, who condemned Lucretia for her pride.
- 140 *The Female Tatler*, 90 (February 3-6, 1710).
- 141 *The Female Tatler*, 90 (February 3-6, 1710).
- 142 *The Female Tatler*, 90 (February 3-6, 1710).
- 143 *The Female Tatler*, 92 (February 8-10, 1710).
- 144 *The Female Tatler*, 95 (February 17-20, 1710).

-
- 145 *The Parrot*, vii (1746).
- 146 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (October, 1798), p. 304.
- 147 *The Female Spectator*, Vol. I, i, p. 41. Many of *The Female Spectator's* readers would have also read *Pamela*, published in 1740 - 41. *Pamela's* contemplation of suicide is, of course, far more elaborate and more precisely reflects the terms of the suicide debate.
- 148 Interestingly, the reasoning of Ermina's suitor closely echoes Augustine's pronouncement on Lucretia's suicide: "...as his love for Ermina was chiefly founded on her virtue, an act of force could not be esteemed any breach of it..." (p. 45).
- 149 *The Pharos*, Vol. II, xxix (February 13, 1787), p. 38.
- 150 *The Pharos*, Vol. II, xxix (February 13, 1787), p. 42.
- 151 *The Pharos*, Vol. II, xxix (February 13, 1787), pp. 42-43.
- 152 *The Pharos*, Vol. II, xxix (February 13, 1787), p. 46.
- 153 Romans 6:23.
- 154 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (November 1799), p. 307.
- 155 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (November 1799), p. 307.
- 156 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (December, 1799), pp. 443 - 49. This story actually has a double moral. In the frame story, those who witness the drowning are charged with avarice and insensibility in their failure to respond properly, and the suicide note condemns seduction and libertinism.
- 157 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. III (December 1799), p. 448 - 49.
- 158 An analysis of the story's retelling provides a fascinating glimpse of the ways in which "true" stories were turned to different ends in the eighteenth century.
- 159 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (July 1798), p. 15.
- 160 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (July 1798), p. 16.
- 161 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (July 1798), p. 16.
- 162 *The Lady's Monthly Museum*, Vol. I (July 1798), p. 17.
- 163 O dice! ye false diverters of our woe!
 Ye waste of life, ye greatest curse below!
 May ne'er good sense again become your slave:
 Nor your false charms allure and cheat the brave! - C.D.
- By downplaying the association between suicide and gambling, the magazine effectively nullifies the moral that the wages of sin are death.

CONCLUSION

Set within the context of the emergent print establishment of eighteenth-century England, women's magazines contribute significantly to research in diverse areas of the period. The present study on death in women's magazines demonstrates their energetic engagement with and participation in the life of their times. It provides a starting point for study of the magazines in relation to other, not necessarily gendered, discourses relevant to the upwardly mobile middle classes, particularly those related to issues of class and class boundaries. It raises questions about the alleged passivity and unimportance (or restricted importance) of middle-class women in the emergent social order, and it challenges the fixed notion of the female reader as consistently more interested in imaginative than lived experience. Finally, the study's historical scope enables the apprehension of an important shift from the widespread early eighteenth-century acknowledgment of women as potential participants in the new social order to their subsequent configuration as passive, "domesticated" onlookers at the end of the century.

The summary account in the first two chapters clearly demonstrates that women's magazines cannot be considered outside the context of the emergent print establishment. Like other publications intended for popular consumption, women's magazines were business enterprises whose primary objective was profit, and like other publications, women's magazines had to compete for a share of the available market by appealing to a largely unknown but growing reading public. The appeal of virtually all early magazines to a mixed readership and the very existence of women's magazines testify to the importance of women readers as consumers in the emergent industry. Because all magazines and periodicals were dependent on circulation rather than advertising, they had to anticipate and deliver subject matter that reflected the interests and desires of their readers. Consequently, it was not editors and writers but readers who determined the content of the magazines, thus rendering the magazines uniquely reliable indicators of readers'

interests. This is a crucial point in the case of women's magazines because it undermines a reading of the magazines as primarily dedicated to the purposes of gender construction and directly challenges the notion of the passive, intellectually apathetic, and uncritical eighteenth-century female reader.

Women's magazines, like their counterparts intended for a predominantly male or mixed readership, were fundamentally a creation of and for the emergent middle classes. As business enterprises, they enabled and forwarded the entrepreneurship of individuals and groups of individuals in the increasingly capitalistic economic climate, fostering the growth not only of popular literature intended for mass consumption, but also contributing substantially to the emergence of writing as a profession. The magazines also served as vehicles whereby the concerns of the middle classes might be publicly expressed and widely disseminated, offering an efficient, available, and accessible means of unifying disparate groups whose common identifying feature was upward mobility. By no means limited to their important function as popular entertainment, periodicals and magazines appealed to readers' desire for concrete news and information about the world in which they lived (news that was also seldom entirely free from class connotations), and to readers' intelligence, assuming both high levels of literacy and knowledge of the major issues of the period. Above all, they appealed to the desire for improvement -- with all its complicated meanings -- through consumption of the magazines themselves.

From this perspective, women's magazines of the eighteenth century are important for their ability to reveal the engagement of women in the establishment of the emergent social order, an engagement that was not primarily inflected by gender, but by class concerns. The content of women's magazines reveals that their readers were interested in the cultural, intellectual, and actual life of their times. As obsessed with improvement and upward mobility as their male counterparts, women readers were interested in a world demarcated by class boundaries that could be as conveniently flexible in the case of readers on the way up as they were conveniently fixed to limit

the aspirations of those from the lower stations. The representation of death in the magazines provides a particularly suitable site for examination of these claims.

Death is a subject that is universal and, at least initially, gender-neutral. The subject provides a unique context in which to show the breadth of women's magazines' participation in the life of their times; by extension it demonstrates that the readers of those magazines ventured far beyond concerns with gender construction, and pursued instead their genuine interest in the cultural, social, and intellectual world around them. A century-wide survey of the representation of death in the magazines reflects its intersections with an exceptionally broad spectrum of eighteenth-century life and thought. Furthermore, death operated within the culture in important ways that were consistent with other epistemological shifts attendant on the establishment of middle-class hegemony. First, while death was not completely disconnected from its religious significance, religion itself had lost ground in terms of authority and centrality, giving rise to widespread anxiety about death and the afterlife. Second, the gradual rise in the importance of individual over collective experience tended to privatize death, depriving the experiences of death and dying of their capacity for mutual comfort, consolation, and support, transactions that reaffirmed the relationship between life and death and between the living and the dying. Third, the rapid development of the free-market economy was bound up with the increasing importance and availability of material goods and services necessary to the emergent consumer society, a trend reflected in the commodification of death. While these religious, social, and economic shifts had significant gender implications, all were primarily and fundamentally related to class. The examination of death's representation in women's magazines throughout the century not only permits a view of these shifts within a particularly revealing and wide-ranging context, but also enables a view of gender -- when it appears -- within a context whose parameters are not self-limited.

The representation of death over the course of the century reveals, sometimes directly and sometimes obliquely, the subtle and dramatic shifts in contemporary attitudes toward death, dying, and the dead. The gradual redefinition of the good death, as examined in the relation of the dying

to the living, reveals how long-held notions of the continuity of life and death (and the central place of religion in maintaining that continuity) alter over the course of the century. In the status-conscious eighteenth century, this epistemological shift was also registered in more material ways involving both goods and behaviours. The commodification of death can be seen not only in the increasing use of undertakers to manage funeral and burial arrangements, but also in the magazines' reporting of the deaths and funerals of the great, offered up for public consumption and emulation. In a society in which death is no longer seen as a part of life itself, strategies of commemoration and memorialization become ways of ameliorating the loss of the dead, and of registering the status of the living. Mourning ceases to be a personal matter and involves instead formal public display inextricably linked to class interests.

These interests had first of all to do with the emergent social order, particularly with regard to class boundaries, but they also, often, have gender implications that are secondary, tertiary, or marginal. Both class and gender implications are evident in the diverse representations of death in eighteenth-century women's magazines, and an examination of these representations permits the simultaneous demonstration of the claims I am making for the interests of women readers, and also for the claims I am making about their engagement with the emergent social order. The different approaches of the last three chapters work together to present not only a more comprehensive view of the representation of death in the magazines, but also to demonstrate the diversity of the complex social and intellectual terrain offered by women's magazines, a diversity that attests to the intelligence, curiosity, and ambition of the magazines' readers. Through letters, commentary, periodical essays, poetry, and fiction, the magazines speak to a wide range of subjects concerning death and convey specific information about attitudes, behaviours, and practices that readers might appropriate as status signifiers of their own. Publications like *The Ladies Magazine* not only entertained and enlightened but also kept readers informed of the dangerous and violent city in which they lived, information that permitted the consolidation of a critical mass of opinion -- including the opinions of women -- that eventually enabled social change. Finally, the chapter on suicide reveals readers' high level of engagement with one important philosophical and religious

discourse of the period. Together, the different approaches of the last three chapters argue not for a monolithic view of the eighteenth-century female magazine reader concerned only with matters relating to gender, but, on the contrary, for a complicated, aspiring social being capable of diverse and sophisticated interests that were often remarkably similar to those we have tended to ascribe only to men.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Adams, John. *An Essay Concerning Self-Murder* London, 1700.
- Anon. *Suicide, An Elegy* London, 1775.
- Ayscough, Francis, D.D. *A discourse against self-murder* London, 1755.
- Ballard, George. *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (1752) ed. Ruth Perry. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1985.
- Bonhote, Elizabeth. *The Parental Monitor* Two Vols. London, 1796.
- Boswell, James. *Life of Johnson* (1753) ed. R.W. Chapman. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Brooke, Frances. *The Old Maid* by Mary Singleton, Spinster. London, 1755 - 56.
- Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) ed. Conor Cruise O'Brien . London: Penguin, 1986.
- Chatterton, Thomas. *The Complete Works* Two Vols. ed. Donald S Taylor. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
- Druid, Nestor. *The Lady's Curiosity: or, Weekly Apollo* London, 1752.
- Dunton, John. *The Ladies Mercury* London, 1693.
- Fielding, Henry. *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers*, (1751) ed. Malvin R. Zirker. Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1988.
- Fleetwood, William. *The Relative Duties of Parents and Children, Husbands and Wives, Masters and Servants* (1705) New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1985.
- Cave, Edward. *The Gentleman's Magazine* London, 1731 - 1907.
- Female Mentor, The* London, 1793.
- Female Tatler, The* London, 1709 - 10.
- Goodwill, Jasper. *The Ladies Magazine; or, The Universal Entertainer* Four Vols. London, 1749 - 52.
- Godwin, William. *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice and Its Influence on Modern Morals and Happiness* (1793) ed. Isaac Kramnick. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976.
- Goldsmith, Oliver. *The Life of Richard Nash* in *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith* ed. Arthur Friedman. Vol. II. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966, pp. 286 - 398.

- *The Vicar of Wakefield*, (1766), (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974).
- Goodwill, Jasper. *The Ladies Magazine London*, 1749 - 53.
- (Grainger, Lydia), *Modern amours; or, a secret history of the adventures of some persons of the first rank* London, 1733.
- Haywood, Eliza. *The Female Spectator* London, 1744 - 46.
- *The Parrot* London, 1746.
- *The Tea-Table* London, 1724.
- *The Young Lady* by Euphrosine. London, 1756.
- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan* ed. J.C.A. Gaskin. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Hume, David. "Of Suicide", in *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary* ed. Eugene F. Miller. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1985, pp. 577 - 589.
- Johnson, Samuel, *Prefaces and Dedications* Vol. ed. Allen T. Hazen. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937.
- *Sermons* Vol. XIV. eds. Jean Hagstrum and James Gray. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1978.
- Lady's Monthly Museum, or Polite Repository of Amusement and Instruction* London, 1798 -
- Lady's Weekly Magazine* London, 1747.
- Lennox, Charlotte. *The Lady's Museum* London, 1760 - 61.
- Mandeville, Bernard. *Fable of the Bees* Two Vols. (1714, 1723) ed. F.B. Kaye. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924.
- Mirroure, The* London, 1719.
- Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley. *The Nonsense of Common-Sense* (1737-1738) ed. Robert Halsband. New York: AMS Press, 1947.
- Moore, Charles, *A full inquiry into the subject of suicide* Two Vols. London, 1790.
- Pharos, The* Two Vols. London, 1786 - 87.
- Phillips, Ambrose. *The Free-Thinker, or, Essays on Ignorance, Superstition, Bigotry, Enthusiasm, Craft, etc.* Three Vols. London, 1718 - 19.
- Pope, Alexander. *Poems* ed. John Butt. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963.
- Richardson, Samuel. *Correspondence* Vol. I. New York: AMS Press, 1966.
- Saint Augustine. *The City of God* Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1952, pp. 129 - 618.
- Smart, Christopher. *The Midwife; or, The Old Woman's Magazine* by Mary Midnight. Three Vols. London, 1750 - 52.

- *The Student, or The Oxford Monthly Miscellany* Four Vols. London, 1750.
- Smith, Adam. *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* eds. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982.
- Steele, Richard. *The Ladies Library* London, 1714.
- *The Tatler* London, 1709 - 11.
- Thomton, Bonnell. *Have At You All: or, The Drury-Lane Journal* by Roxana Termagant London, 1752.
- Walpole, Horace. *Correspondence* ed. Lewis, W.S. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.
- Warton, Thomas. *The Poetical Works* Two Vols. ed. Richard Mant. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1802.
- Wood, John. *A Description of Bath* (1765) Bath: Kingsmead Reprints, 1969.
- Wright, George, Esq. *The Lady's Miscellany; or, Pleasing Essays, Poems, Stories, and Examples* London, 1793.
- Young, Edward *Night Thoughts* (1742, 1744) New York: Appleton and Company, 1854.

SECONDARY SOURCES

- Adburgham, Alison. *Women in Print: Writing Women and Women's Magazines From the Restoration to the Accession of Victoria* London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1972.
- Altick, Richard D. *The English Common Reader: A Social History of the Mass Reading Public 1800-1900* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957.
- Amussen, Susan Dwyer. "Being Stirred to Much Unquietness': Violence and Domestic Violence in Early Modern England," *Journal of Women's History* 6 (1994), pp. 70 - 89.
- *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988.
- Anderson, Patricia. *The Printed Image and the Transformation of Popular Culture: 1790 - 1860* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Andrew, Donna. *Philanthropy and Police* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989.
- Ariès, Philippe. *The Hour of Our Death* trans. Helen Weaver. New York: Vintage - Random House, 1981.
- *Western Attitudes Toward Death: From the Middle Ages to the Present* trans. Patricia M. Ranum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974.

- Ballaster, Ros and Margaret Beetham, Elizabeth Frazer, Sandra Hebron (eds.). *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* London: Macmillan, 1991.
- Barker-Benfield, G.J. *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Barrell, John. *English Literature in History, 1730-80: An Equal, Wide Survey.* London: Hutchinson, 1983.
- Bassein, Beth Ann. *Women and Death: Linkages in Western Thought and Literature* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1984.
- Battestin, Martin C. with Ruthe R. Battestin. *Henry Fielding: A Life* London: Routledge, 1989.
- Beattie, J.M. *Crime and the Courts in England 1660 - 1800* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.
- "The Criminality of Women in Eighteenth-Century England," *Journal of Social History* 8 (1975), pp. 80 - 116.
- "The Pattern of Crime in England 1660 - 1800," *Past and Present* 62 (1974), pp. 47 - 95.
- Beck, Hamilton. "Of Two Minds About the Death Penalty: Hippel's Account of a Case of Infanticide," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 18 (1988), pp. 123 - 140.
- Beier, Lucinda McCray. "The Good Death in Seventeenth-Century England" in *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* ed. Ralph Houlbrooke. London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 43 - 61.
- Belanger, Terry. "Publishers and writers in eighteenth-century England" in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* ed. Isobel Rivers. New York and London: St. Martin's Press; Leicester University Press, 1982, pp. 5 - 25.
- Benedict, Barbara. "Literary Miscellanies: The Cultural Mediation of Fragmented Feeling," *English Literary History* 57 (1990), pp. 407 - 30.
- Black, Jeremy. *The English Press in the Eighteenth Century* Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 1987.
- Blanchard, Rae, "Richard Steele and the Status of Women," *Studies in Philology* 26 (1929), pp. 325-355.
- Bond, Richmond P. (ed.). *Studies in the Early English Periodical.* Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1957.
- Brewer, John. "Commercialization and Politics" in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* eds. Neil McKendrick, John, Brewer, and J. H. Plumb. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp. 197-262.
- Bronfen, Elisabeth. *Over Her Dead Body: Death, femininity and the aesthetic* New York: Routledge, 1992.
- Burke, Peter. *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* London: Temple Smith, 1978.

- Bynum, W.F., and Roy Porter (eds.). "Living and Dying in London," *Medical History Supplement* 11. London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1991.
- Carter, K. Codell, and Barbara R. Carter. "Childbed Fever: A Scientific Biography of Ignaz Semmelweis", *Contributions in Medical Studies* 39. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1994.
- Cartwright, Frederick. *Disease and History* New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1972.
- Cecil, Mirabel. *Heroines in Love 1750 - 1974* London: Michael Joseph, 1974.
- Chambers, J.D. *Population, Economy, and Society in Pre-Industrial England* London: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- Cockburn, J.S. (ed.). *Crime in England 1550 - 1800* London: Methuen, 1977.
- Collins, A.S. *Authorship in the Days of Johnson* Clifton, New Jersey: Augustus M. Kelley, 1973.
- Copeland, Edward. *Women Writing about Money - Women's Fiction in England 1790 - 1820* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- Cranfield, G.A. *The Development of the Provincial Newspaper 1700-1762* Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1962.
- Crawford, Patricia . "Women's published writings 1600 - 1700" in *Women in English Society 1500 - 1800* ed. Mary Prior. London: Methuen, 1985, pp. 211 - 82.
- Cressy, David. "Literacy in Seventeenth-Century England: More Evidence," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 8:1 (1977), pp 141-150.
- Davidoff, Leonore and Catherine Hall. *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780 - 1850* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987.
- Davis, Lennard *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* New York: Columbia University Press, 1983.
- De Bruyn, Frans. "Latitudinarianism and Its Importance as a Precursor of Sensibility," *JEGP* 80 (1981), pp. 349 - 68.
- Dowden, Edward. *Puritan and Anglican* Freeport, New York: Books for Libraries Press, 1967.
- Earle, Peter. "The female labour market in the late 17th and 18th centuries," *Economic History Review* 42 (1989), pp 328 - 353.
- *The Making of the English Middle Class: Business, Society and Family Life in London, 1660-1730* London: Methuen, 1989.
- Fergus, Jan. "Provincial servants' reading in the late eighteenth century" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* eds. James Raven, Helen Small, and Naomi Tadmor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 202 - 225.
- "Women, Class, and the Growth of Magazine Readership in the Provinces, 1746 - 1780," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 16 (1986), pp. 41-56.

- Forbes, Thomas R. "Births and Deaths in a London Parish: The Record from the Registers, 1654 -1693 and 1729 -1743," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 55, (1981), pp. 371 - 391.
- Fritz, Paul S. "The Undertaking Trade in England: Its Origins and Early Development, 1660 - 1830," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 28:2, (1994 - 95), pp. 241 - 253.
- Gaskell, Philip. *A New Introduction to Bibliography* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972.
- George, M. Dorothy. *London Life in the Eighteenth Century* (1925) New York: Harper & Row, 1964.
- George, Margaret. "From 'Goodwife' to 'Mistress': The Transformation of the Female in Bourgeois Culture," *Science and Society* 37 (1973), pp. 152 - 77.
- Gibbs, G.C. "Press and Public Opinion: Prospective" in *Liberty Secured? Britain Before and After 1688* ed. J. R. Jones. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992. pp. 199 - 230.
- Gittings, Clare. *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* London: Croom Helm, 1984.
- Gowing, Laura. "Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 156 (1997), pp. 87 - 115.
- Graff, Harvey J. *The Labyrinths of Literacy: Reflections on Literacy Past and Present* Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1995.
- Graham, Walter. *The Beginnings of English Literary Periodicals: A Study of Periodical Literature 1665 - 1715* New York: Octagon, Farrar Strauss and Giroux, 1972.
- Greene, Donald. "Samuel Johnson, Journalist," in *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism* eds. Donovan H. Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod. Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977, pp. 87 - 101.
- Griffin, Dustin. *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Gowing, Laura. "Secret Births and Infanticide in Seventeenth-Century England," *Past and Present* 156 (1997).
- Hagstrum, Jean. *Sex and Sensibility: Ideal and Erotic Love from Milton to Mozart* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Hair, P.E.H. "Deaths from Violence in Britain: A Tentative Secular Survey," *Population Studies* 25 (1971), pp. 5 - 24.
- Halsband, Robert. "Women and Literature in 18th Century England" in *Women in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays*. eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton. Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd, 1976, pp. 55 - 71.
- Harris, Michael. "Literature and Commerce in Eighteenth-century London: The Making of *The Champion*," *Prose Studies* 16 (1993), pp. 94 - 115.

- *London Newspapers in the Age of Walpole: A Study of the Origins of the Modern English Press* Rutherford, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1987.
- Hay, Douglas. "Property, Authority and the Criminal Law" in *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* eds. Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, John G. Rule, E.P. Thompson, and Cal Winslow. London: Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 1975, pp. 17 - 63.
- Heinzelman, Susan Sage. "Guilty in Law, Implausible in Fiction" in *Representing Women: Law, Literature, and Feminism* eds. Susan Sage Heinzelman and Zipporah Batshaw Wiseman. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994, pp. 309 - 336.
- Hill, Bridget. *Women, Work, and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-century England* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989.
- Hill, Christopher. *Change and Continuity in 17th-Century England* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.
- *Society and Puritanism in Pre-Revolutionary England* New York: Schocken Books, 1964.
- *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas during the English Revolution* London: Temple Smith, 1972.
- Hobby, Elaine. "'Discourse so unsavoury': Women's published writings of the 1650s" in *Women, Writing, History 1640 - 1740* eds. Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1992, pp. 16 - 32.
- Hodges, James. "The *Female Spectator*, A Courtesy Periodical" in *Studies in the Early English Periodical* ed. Richmond P. Bond. Chapel Hill : University of North Carolina Press, 1957, pp 151 - 182.
- Hoffer, Peter C. and N. E. Hull. *Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England 1558 - 1803* Linden Studies in Anglo-American Legal History. New York: New York University Press, 1981.
- Houlbrooke, Ralph. "Death, Church, and Family in England Between the Late Fifteenth and the Early Eighteenth Centuries" in *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* ed. Ralph Houlbrooke. London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 25 - 42.
- Humphreys, S.C. and King, Helen (eds.). *Mortality and Immortality: the anthropology and archaeology of death* Proceedings of the Research Seminar in Archaeology and Related Subjects held at the Institute of Archaeology, London University, June 1980. London: Academic Press, 1981.
- Humphreys, S.C. "Death and Time" in *Mortality and Immortality: the anthropology and archaeology of death* eds. S.C. Humphreys and Helen King. London: Academic Press, 1981, pp. 261 - 283.
- Hunt, Margaret. "Wife Beating, Domesticity and Women's Independence in Eighteenth-Century London," *Gender and History* 4 (1992), pp. 10 - 33.
- Hunter, J. Paul. *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*. New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1990.

- "'News and new Things': Contemporaneity and the Early English Novel," *Critical Inquiry* 14 (1988), pp. 493 - 515.
- Hunter, Jean E. "The 18-Century Englishwoman: According to the Gentleman's Magazine", in *Women in the Eighteenth Century and Other Essays* eds. Paul Fritz and Richard Morton. Toronto: A.M. Hakkert Ltd, 1976, pp. 73 - 88.
- "The Lady's Magazine and The Study of Englishwomen in the Eighteenth Century" in *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism* eds. Donovan H. Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod. Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977, pp. 103 - 117.
- Ingrassia, Catherine. *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Jackson, Mark. *New-Born Child Murder: Women, illegitimacy and the courts in eighteenth-century England* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.
- Jacob, Margaret C. *The Newtonians and the English Revolution 1689 - 1720* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976.
- Jacobs, Jane. *Systems of Survival: A Dialogue on the Moral Foundations of Commerce and Politics*, New York: Random House, 1920.
- Jones, J. R. (ed.). *Liberty Secured? Briain Before and After 1688*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992.
- Jordanova, J.L. "Natural facts: a historical perspective on science and sexuality" in *Nature, culture and gender* eds. Carol MacCormack and Marilyn Strathern. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, pp. 42 - 69.
- Klancher, Jon P. *The Making of English Reading Audiences, 1790 - 1832* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987.
- Koon, Helene. "Eliza Haywood and the *Female Spectator*," *Huntington Library Quarterly* 42 (1978), pp. 43 - 55.
- Landers, John. *Death and the metropolis: Studies in the demographic history of London 1670 - 1830* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Langford, Peter. *A Polite and Commercial People, England: 1727 - 1783* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Laslett, Peter. *The World We Have Lost*, (London: Methuen and Company, 1965).
- Laurence, Anne. "Godly Grief: Individual Responses to Death in Seventeenth-Century Britain" in *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* ed. Ralph Houlbrooke. London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 62 - 76.
- Linebaugh, Peter. *The London Hanged: Crime and Civil Society in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

- "The Tyburn Riot Against the Surgeons" in *Albion's Fatal Tree: Crime and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* eds. Douglas Hay, Peter Linebaugh, John G. Rule, E.P. Thompson, and Cal Winslow. London: Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 1975), pp. 65 - 117.
- Llewellyn, Nigel. *The Art of Death: Visual Culture in the English Death Ritual c.1500 - c.1800* London: Reaktion Books, 1991.
- London, April. "Avoiding the Subject: The Presence and Absence of Venereal Disease in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel" in *The Secret Malady: Venereal Disease in Eighteenth-Century Britain and France* ed. Linda E. Merians. Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1996, pp. 213 - 227.
- *Women and Property in the Eighteenth-Century English Novel* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- MacDonald, Michael and Terence R. Murphy. *Sleepless Souls: Suicide in Early Modern England* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990.
- MacFarlane, Alan. "Death and the Demographic Transition: a note of English evidence on death 1500 - 1750" in *Mortality and Immortality* eds. S.C. Humphreys and Helen King. London: Academic Press, 1981, pp. 249 - 259.
- Malcolmson, R.W. "Infanticide in the Eighteenth Century" in *Crime in England 1550 - 1800* ed. J.S. Cockburn. London: Methuen, 1977, pp. 187 - 209.
- Maurer, Shawn Lisa. "'As Sacred as Friendship, as Pleasurable as Love': Father - Son Relations in the *Tatler* and *Spectator*" in *History, Gender and Eighteenth-Century Literature* ed. Beth Fowkes Tobin. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994, pp. 14 - 38.
- *Proposing Men: Dialectics of Gender and Class in the Eighteenth-Century Periodical* Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1998.
- Mayo, Robert. *The English Novel in the Magazines 1740 - 1815* Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1962.
- McDowell, Paula. "Consuming Women: The Life of the 'Literary Lady' as Popular Culture in Eighteenth-Century England," *Genre* 26 (1993), pp. 219 - 52.
- *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678 - 1730* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998.
- *The Women of Grub Street: Gender, Press, and Politics in the London Literary Marketplace, 1688 - 1730* (Unpublished dissertation: Stanford University, 1991).
- McGowen, Randall. "Civilizing Punishment: The End of the Public Execution in England." *Journal of British Studies* 33 (1994), pp. 257 - 282.
- McKendrick, Neil. "The Consumer Revolution of Eighteenth-Century England" in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth - Century England* eds. Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp. 9 - 33.
- McKeon, Michael. *The Origins of the Novel 1600 - 1740* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987.

- McManners, John. *Death and the Enlightenment: Changing Attitudes to Death among Christians and Unbelievers in Eighteenth-century France* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981.
- Milic, Louis T. "Tone in Steele's 'Tatler'" in *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism* eds. Donovan H. Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod. Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977, pp. 33 - 45.
- Miller, Peter John. "Eighteenth-Century Periodicals for Women," *History of Education Quarterly* 11 (1971), pp. 279 - 86.
- Murphy, Terence R. "'Woeful Childe of Parents Rage': Suicide of Children and Adolescents in Early Modern England, 1507-1710," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 17 (1986), pp. 257 - 270.
- Nuttall, Geoffrey F. *The Holy Spirit in Puritan Faith and Experience* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Pallares-Burke, Maria Lúcién G. "An Androgynous Observer in the Eighteenth Century Press: *La Spectatrice*, 1728 - 29," *Women's History Review* 3 (1994), pp. 411 - 434.
- Pattison, Robert. *On Literacy: The Politics of the Word from Homer to the Age of Rock* New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Pitcher, E. W. "Problems with Eighteenth-Century Periodicals: The Monthly Miscellany," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 80 (1986), pp. 233 - 237.
- Plumb, J. H. "The Commercialization of Leisure in Eighteenth-Century England" in *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth - Century England* eds. Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1982, pp. 265 - 85.
- Porter, Roy. "Cleaning up the Great Wen: Public Health in Eighteenth-Century London" in *Living and Dying in London* eds. W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter. *Medical History Supplement* 11 (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1991), pp. 61 - 75.
- "Consumption: disease of the consumer society?" in *Consumption and the World of Goods* eds. John Brewer and Roy Porter. London: Routledge, 1993, pp. 58 - 81.
- "Death and the Doctors in Georgian England" in *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* ed. Ralph Houlbrooke. London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 77 - 94.
- *Disease, Medicine and Society 1550 - 1860* London: Macmillan, 1987.
- *English Society in the Eighteenth Century* London: Penguin, 1982.
- *London: A Social History* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Quinlan, Sean M. "Apparent Death in Eighteenth-Century France and England," *French History* 9 (1995), pp. 27 - 47.
- Rahtz, Philip "Artefacts of Christian Death" in *Mortality and Immortality* eds. S.C. Humphreys and Helen King. London: Academic Press, 1981, pp. 117 - 136.

- Raven, James. "From promotion to proscription: arrangements for reading and eighteenth-century libraries" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* eds. James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 175 - 201.
- Richardson, Ruth. *Death, Dissection and the Destitute* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987.
- "Why Was Death So Big in Victorian Britain?" in *Death, Ritual and Bereavement* ed. Ralph Houlbrooke. London: Routledge, 1989, pp. 105 - 117.
- Rousseau, G.S., "Science books and their readers in the eighteenth century." in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* ed. Isobel Rivers. New York and London: St. Martin's Press; Leicester University Press, 1982), pp. 197 - 255.
- Schwoerer, Lois G. "Liberty of the Press and Public Opinion: 1660-1695" in *Liberty Secured? Britain Before and After 1688* ed. J. R. Jones. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 1992, pp. 199 - 230.
- Scodel, Joshua. *The English Poetic Epitaph: Commemoration and Conflict from Jonson to Wordsworth* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991.
- Shevelov, Kathryn. "Fathers and Daughters: Women as Readers of the *Tatler*" in *Gender and Reading: Essays on Readers, Texts, and Contexts*. eds. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocínio P. Schweickart. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986, pp. 107 - 123.
- *Women and Print Culture: The construction of femininity in the early periodical* London: Routledge, 1989.
- Slack, Paul. "The response to plague in early modern England: public policies and their consequences" in *Famine, disease and the social order in early modern society* eds. John Walter and Roger Schofield. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 167 - 187.
- Spufford, Margaret. "First steps in literacy: the reading and writing experiences of the humblest seventeenth-century spiritual autobiographers," *Social History* 4 (1979), pp. 407 - 435.
- Staves, Susan. *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1990.
- Stearns, Bertha Monica. "Early English Periodicals for Ladies (1700-1760)," *PMLA* 48 (1933), pp. 38 - 60.
- Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500 - 1800* New York: Harper and Row, 1977.
- Stott, Daniel. "The Case of the Mohocks: rake violence in Augustan London," *Social History* 20 (1995), pp. 179 - 199.
- Tadmor, Naomi. "'In the even my wife read to me': women, reading, and household life in the eighteenth century" in *The Practice and Representation of Reading in England* eds. James Raven, Helen Small and Naomi Tadmor. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp. 162 - 174.

- Taylor, Charles. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- Teiman, Gillian. *The Female Ideal and the Female Voice: Ideology, Resistance, and Accommodation in the Tatler and Spectator, the Female Tatler, and the Female Spectator* (Unpublished dissertation: York University, 1992).
- Thickstun, Margaret. *Fictions of the Feminine: Puritan Doctrine and the Representation of Women* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Todd, Janet. *Gender, Art and Death* New York: Continuum, 1993.
- *The Sign of Angelica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660 - 1800* London: Virago, 1989.
- Varey, Simon. "The Growth of Capitalism and the Rise of the Press in the Age of Walpole" in *Politics, Politeness, and Patriotism* ed. Gordon J. Schochet. Washington, D.C.: The Folger Institute, 1993, pp 245 - 262.
- Veblen, Thorstein. *The Theory of the Lesiure Class* (1899) (New York: Macmillan, 1965).
- Vickery, Amanda. "Golden Age to Separate Spheres?: A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women's History," *Historical Journal* 36 (1993), pp. 383 - 414.
- Vincent, David. *Literacy and Popular Culture: England 1750 - 1914* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.
- Walzer, Michael. *The Revolution of the Saints: A Study in the Origins of Radical Politics* New York: Atheneum, 1968.
- Walter, Tony. "British sociology and death" in *The Sociology of Death* ed. David Clark. Oxford: Blackwell, 1993, pp. 264 - 295.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel, Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967.
- Wear, Andrew. "Caring for the Sick Poor in St Bartholomew's Exchange: 1580 - 1676" in *Living and Dying in London* eds. W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter. *Medical History Supplement* 11 (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1991), pp. 41 - 60.
- Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* trans. Talcott Parsons. (1904 - 5) New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.
- Weinstein, Rosemary. "New Urban Demands in Early Modern London" in *Living and Dying in London* eds. W.F. Bynum and Roy Porter. *Medical History, Supplement* 11 (London: Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, 1991), pp. 29 - 40.
- White, Robert Benjamin, Jr. *A Study of the Female Tatler (1709 - 1710)* (Unpublished dissertation: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1966).
- Wiles, R.M. "Middle-Class Literacy in Eighteenth-Century England: Fresh Evidence" in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century* ed. R.F. Brissenden. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1968, pp 49 - 65.

- Wilson, Penelope. "Classical poetry and the eighteenth-century reader" in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England* ed. Isobel Rivers. New York and London: St. Martin's Press; Leicester University Press, 1982, pp. 69 - 96.
- Winton, Calhoun. "Richard Steele, Journalist--and Journalism" in *Newsletters to Newspapers: Eighteenth-Century Journalism* eds. Donovan H. Bond and W. Reynolds McLeod. Morgantown, West Virginia: The School of Journalism, 1977, pp. 21 - 31.
- "The Tatler: From Half-sheet to Book," *Prose Studies* 16 (1993), pp. 23 - 33.