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Literary Forms of Caricature
in the Early-Nineteenth-Century Novel

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Declaration of Authorship

This is to certify that the work contained within has been composed by me and is entirely my own work. No part of this thesis has been submitted for any other degree.

Olivia Ferguson

June 2018

Abstract

This thesis examines the status of caricature in the literary culture of early-nineteenth-century Britain, with a focus on the novel. It shows how the early-nineteenth-century novel developed a variety of literary forms that negotiated and remade caricature for the bourgeois literary sphere. Case studies are drawn primarily from the published writings and manuscript drafts of Thomas Love Peacock, Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, and Walter Scott.

The first chapter elucidates the various meanings and uses of ‘caricature’ in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when the term was more ambiguous and broadly applied than literary criticism and print history have acknowledged. I counter the assumption that the single-sheet satirical print was central to conceptions and practices of caricature in this period, giving examples of the textual, dramatic, and real-life ‘caricatures’ that were more often under discussion.

The second and third chapters consider the unstable distinction between textual caricature and satirical characterisation in early-nineteenth-century literary culture. They explain how the literary construction of textual caricature developed from two sources: Augustan rulings against publishing satires on individuals, and caricature portraits as a pastime beloved of genteel British society. I argue that Peacock and Austen adapted forms of ‘caricaturistic writing’ that were conscious of the satirical literary work’s relation to caricature.

Subsequent chapters turn to the thematic uses of caricature in the early-nineteenth-century novel. In the fourth chapter, I uncover the significance of caricature to deformity in Mary Shelley’s fiction, presenting evidence that her monsters’ disproportion was inherited from the ‘real-life’ caricatures diagnosed in

philosophical and medical texts of the eighteenth century. The final chapter traces ideas about caricature through the writings of Walter Scott, and finds that Scott conceived of exemplary graphic and textual caricatures as artefacts of antiquarian interest.

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This work is dedicated to my family in Calgary, Bristol, and Lanark; and to the memory of my grandfather, Andrew Froid Ferguson.

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Abbreviations

BM	British Museum
BMC	<i>Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum (1870-1954)</i>
EEWN	Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels (2000-12)
NGS	National Galleries of Scotland
NPG	National Portrait Gallery, London
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OED	Oxford English Dictionary
PW	<i>The Prose Works of William Wordsworth (1974)</i>
SOPCE	<i>A Series of Original Portraits and Caricature Etchings by John Kay, Miniature Painter, Edinburgh; with Biographical Sketches and Illustrative Anecdotes (1836)</i>
SWF	<i>S. T. Coleridge: Shorter Works and Fragments (1995)</i>

1 The Literary Meaning of Caricature

The term caricature ... is used at present in a very extensive sense; and not always with propriety, as there are many cases where a subject may be treated satirically without descending to Caricature.

James Peller Malcolm, *Historical Sketch of the Art of Caricaturing* (1813)

Caricature was a word of many uses in eighteenth and early-nineteenth-century Britain. Its primary meaning was an exaggerated characterisation of a human being, usually a ‘particular’ or personal satire that was seen to risk damaging the reputation of a real individual. The word ‘caricature’ could describe a drawing, a painting, a sculpture, a satirical print, a theatrical performance, a prose work, or a literary review. Perhaps surprisingly, the word was used appreciatively, to recognise the comedic value, stylistic verve, or historical authenticity of a literary or artistic work; as when Walter Scott praises Tobias Smollett as ‘a caricaturist of skill and spirit’ (xx). Approaching the ‘verge’ or ‘border’ with caricature was a talent attributed to artists of such reputations as Michelangelo, Rubens, and William Hogarth.¹ In his essay ‘On the Elgin Marbles’ (1816), William Hazlitt used caricature as a metaphor for the insufficiency of art, declaring that ‘Art is ... at once a miniature and

¹ See for example Hazlitt’s notion that the ideal is not ‘the *middle point*, but ‘is to be found in the *extremes*’, and ‘[t]he only fear is to o’erstep the modesty of nature’, and run into caricature. This must be avoided; but the artist is only to stop short of this’ (18: 158). Hogarth’s faces, according to Hazlitt, ‘go to the very verge of caricature, and yet never (we believe in any single instance) go beyond it’ (10: 79). Francis Grose drew another border between the caricature portrait and the horror portrait, exhorting ‘[c]aricaturists ... [to] be careful not to overcharge the peculiarities of their subjects, as they would thereby become hideous instead of ridiculous, and instead of laughter excite horror. It is therefore always best to keep within the bounds of probability’ (*Rules for Drawing Caricaturas* 5). See also Walter Scott’s idea of the border with caricature, pp. 238 n.53, 235, 234.

caricature of nature' (260).² Grotesque portraits by Leonardo da Vinci and other Old Masters were designated 'caricature figures' or 'caricature heads'.³ In Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), there is both 'a caricature rudely sketched' and 'the discriminating outline of caricature' (166, 49). 'Caricature' was also used in a figurative sense, to describe the development, alteration, or presentation of an original; as when Mrs Morland sees Catherine, on her return from Northanger Abbey, as 'a caricature of herself' (Austen 249).⁴ The reporting of an event, the textual editing of a document, the deformation of a child:⁵ for all these situations 'caricature' furnished a useful figure of speech.

'Caricature' was of course frequently used pejoratively to disparage art or artifice deemed unsuccessful in its imitation of an original. Even J. P. Malcolm's *Historical Sketch*, which takes grotesque art and graphic caricature as its main subjects, assumes caricature to be a lower form to which lesser artists stoop. When in 1869 the Contessa Guiccioli wished to criticise William Edward West's painting of

² Hazlitt illustrates his point with a panorama of Edinburgh: 'We defy any landscape-painter to invent out of his own head, and by jumbling together all the different forms of hills he ever saw, by adding a bit to one, and taking a bit from another, any thing equal to Arthur's Seat, with the appendage of Salisbury Crags, that overlooks Edinburgh. ... We grant that a tolerable sketch of Arthur's seat, and the adjoining view, is better than Primrose Hill itself (our favourite Primrose Hill!), but no pencil can transform or dandle Primrose Hill into a thing of equal character and sublimity with Arthur's seat... [Charles] Martin might make Arthur's Seat sublime, if he chose to take the thing as he is; but he would be for ... clapping another Arthur's Seat on top of it, to make the Calton Hill stare!' (18: 155-6).

³ See for example Thomas Wright, *Catalogue Raisonné* (1828), p. 57. An essay in *Bell's Court and Fashionable Magazine* (1 October 1815) notes that 'It is to no less persons than to those eminent restorers of the art of painting, Michael Angelo, and Leonardi di Vinci, that we are indebted for some of the first caricatures which have ever appeared in modern times (189).

⁴ See discussion of the figurative usage of the word 'caricature' in Austen's novels, pp. 108-9.

⁵ On caricature as a figure for acquired deformity in Lavater and Shelley, see pp. 176-9.

her lover Lord Byron,⁶ she called it ‘a frightful caricature, which his friends or family ought to destroy’ (67). The word was not only used to disparage how portraits represented their subjects, but also to disparage how people themselves looked and behaved. The Countess of Blessington recalls in her memoirs (1838) how Byron described the second-class socialites of English society:

‘I feel with an Italian woman as if she was a full-grown child, possessing the buoyancy and playfulness of infancy with the deep feeling of womanhood; none of that conventional maniérisme that one meets with from the first patrician circles in England, justly styled the marble age, so cold and polished, to the second and third coteries, where a coarse caricature is given of the unpenetrated and impenetrable mysteries of the first.’ (53)

This pejorative usage of ‘caricature’ judges an instance of art or artifice badly executed; and the word is often used, as in the examples given above, with an intensifying adjective such as ‘coarse’, ‘crude’, ‘mean’, ‘gross’, or ‘monstrous’.

Used in this way, ‘caricature’ does not describe an object so much as dismiss it and disqualify it from analysis.

Caricature has recently been studied mainly as a print-history phenomenon, with critics focusing on the political satirical print and other printed forms of graphic satire available in Europe.⁷ Caricature, unlike the sublime, the beautiful, and the picturesque, has not been investigated as a historical term of criticism. The

⁶ National Galleries of Scotland PG 1561.

⁷ Examples of scholarship on graphic caricature and visual satirical print culture beyond Europe include Ritu Gairola Khanduri, *Caricaturing Culture in India: Cartoons and History in the Modern World* (Cambridge University Press, 2014); John A. Lent and Xu Ying, *Comics Art in China* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2017); and Lent’s bibliography *Comic Art in Africa, Asia, Australia, and Latin America through 2000* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2004).

picturesque and the sublime have been made canonical to literary history, pinned down among the large numbers of contemporary texts devoted to discussing them. They can be observed evolving into the terms of art they became in the eighteenth century, from the classical treatise on the rhetorical sublime attributed to Longinus, through Edmund Burke's *Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), William Gilpin's *Essay on Prints* (1768), Uvedale Price's *Essay on the Picturesque, as Compared with the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1794), and Richard Payne Knight's *Analytical Enquiry into the Principles of Taste* (1805).⁸ No such extensive theoretical intellectual debate exists for caricature: none of the works dealing with caricature, nor any of the references to it in art criticism and literary criticism, can have been as conducive to formalising definitions of caricature as the writings of Gilpin, Price, and Knight were to conceptions of picturesque. The relative lack of contemporary literature on caricature is at least partly accounted for by the fact that caricature, unlike the sublime or the picturesque, was already by the mid-eighteenth century a familiar artistic idiom that would not have seemed to need a theoretical introduction, and 'caricature' was an increasingly familiar word that was not confined to the criticism of visual art, and that would not have seemed to need an explanation. 'Caricature' was in the early nineteenth century a far richer and more ambivalent term than it is now. It has more of a literary history than modern criticism, with its many disparagements of caricature, has yet recognised. In fact, caricature – the illegitimate sibling of character – runs alongside the history of character in the literature and criticism of the period, where it

⁸ Kant's *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764) was not translated fully into English until 1799.

contributes to the very definition of literature. To investigate the literary construction of caricature in the early nineteenth century it is necessary first to understand how concepts of caricature, and especially the distinction between satire and libel, developed in the eighteenth century. It is also crucial to read carefully the contexts where caricature appears or is discussed in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts – without assuming that the term ‘caricature’ must be pejorative, that it accords with modern usage, or that it suggests a comparison with a particular artistic form.

1.1 The changed meaning of ‘caricature’

While the idea of the caricature as a debased imitation was only one of the various ways in which the word was understood in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain, this is its primary meaning in modern literary criticism. ‘Caricature’ has consistently been used in twentieth- and twenty-first-century criticism as a label for written works and aspects of written works that are judged to be poor imitations, or which otherwise offend literary or intellectual standards. To take a representative example, in *The Mirror and the Lamp* (1953) M.H. Abrams refers to books that profess to teach the art of writing as ‘gross caricatures of the complex and subtly rationalized neo-classic ideals of literary craftsmanship’ (16).⁹ Here, the word

⁹ I have chosen to cite examples from two classic works of criticism on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature, and include here a small selection of examples from recently published scholarship, where ‘caricature’ signifies inaccuracy and crudeness of conception: ‘*Fraser’s [Magazine]*, founded in 1830, has been caricatured by Terry Eagleton as “an insulting rag”, but was arguably the best and most vibrant magazine of the 1830s’ (David Higgins, *Romantic Genius and the Literary Magazine*, 2005, p. 28); ‘the prevalent caricature of “the poet” today is of someone impractical, bohemian, otherworldly, visionary, and young, that is, a “Romantic”’ (Michael Ferber, *Cambridge Introduction to British Romantic Poetry*, 2012, p. 1); ‘a manifest caricature of an age in which all the major poets ... executed epic poems’ (Stuart Curran, *Cambridge Companion to Romanticism*, 2010, p. 209);

‘caricature’ functions in much the same way that it functions in Byron’s judgement of English aristocratic womanhood, comparing the original with a debased copy. However, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the word was not necessarily associated with inaccuracy and simplicity, as it is in Abrams’s usage. Indeed, a characterisation that was too precise, or which included an excess of information, could amount to a caricature, as when the ‘too accurate’ artist Archibald Skirving drew a ‘caricatura’ that ‘faithfully laid ... down in longitude and latitude’ the small-pox scars of the subject (*Scott Journal* 118). Many portraits were so idealised that caricature portraits could actually be better likenesses, as when in 1830 the *Dublin Literary Gazette* compared ‘highly finished prints’ of the Duke of Wellington to the ‘caricatures [that] give much more accurate resemblances’ (238).¹⁰ Nor was ‘caricature’ typically used, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to denote a characterisation that was simplified or inaccurate in accordance with political or ideological bias.¹¹ In her 1988 study of the political valences of Jane Austen’s

‘a bad caricature of Hegel’s philosophy of history’ (Peter Thorslev, *Cambridge Companion to Romanticism*, 2010, p. 92; ‘the widespread misconceptions and caricatures concerning the nature of early German Romanticism’ (Manfred Frank, *Early German Romanticism*, 2004, p. 1).

¹⁰ The quotation reads: ‘Those who judge of the Duke of Wellington’s countenance by the highly finished prints sold in the shops, judge erroneously; the caricatures give much more accurate resemblances, and some of them possess an exactness of similitude to the original ... one forgets that it is a caricature, and feels as if one were actually looking at the Duke’ (238).

¹¹ Maria Edgeworth was ahead of her time in suggesting that caricature could play a role in biased and widespread conceptions of racial character. The protagonist of *Harrington* (1817) notices that, in the fiction he reads, ‘whenever Jews are introduced I find that they are invariably represented as being of a mean, avaricious, unprincipled character. Even the peculiarities of their persons, the errors of their foreign dialect and pronunciation, were mimicked and caricatured as if to render them objects of perpetual derision and detestation’ (83). This passage analyses the components and relationships that the modern usage of the words ‘stereotype’ and ‘caricature’ typically assumes.

novels, Claudia Johnson describes the ‘female philosopher’ character type as ‘[a] sop thrown to gullible readers, ... the feminist principles of the 1790s in a ridiculously caricatured form’ (19). Austen, as we will see, never used ‘caricature’ in this way, to attribute prejudice and intellectual conservatism. This is another way in which modern literary criticism applies ‘caricature’, to mean something like ‘stereotype’.

Critics tend to avoid referring to caricature as a component of a literary work because the word almost always implies that a representation is crude, lazy, simplistic, or bigoted. In current usage, ‘caricature’ is roughly synonymous with ‘stereotype’, where both words define a simplistic conception or representation that is conspicuously negatively prejudiced against a social class or racial group, as in the phrases ‘antisemitic caricature’ and ‘a caricature of Islam’.¹² Both ‘caricature’ and ‘stereotype’ can now denote a thing that need hardly be artistic, that is generalised, of limited epistemological value, and infinitely repeatable and durable. Whereas ‘caricature’ entered the English language as early as the seventeenth century,¹³ ‘stereotype’ was coined in the late eighteenth century by Firmin Didot to describe the printing method of mass-producing text from solid plates cast from formes of moveable type – also known as *cliché*. Both ‘stereotype’ and ‘cliché’ gained their figurative meanings in the mid to late nineteenth century, meaning something hackneyed or ‘continued or constantly repeated without change’. It was not until the

¹² I include a small selection of examples from twentieth- and twenty-first-century writing on race and class: ‘a typical nineteenth-century anti-Semitic caricature’ (Gary Rosenshield, *The Ridiculous Jew*, 2008, p. 165); ‘dehumanizing caricature’ (Madhu Dubey and Elizabeth Swanson Goldberg in *The Cambridge History of African American Literature*, 2011, p. 580); ‘novelty songs ... freely mixed the hillbilly caricature with well-known parodies of other ethnic groups’ (Anthony Harkins, *Hillbilly*, 2004, p. 87); ‘Internet sites such as “ChavScum” brim with venom directed at the chav caricature’ (Owen Jones, *Chavs*, 2012, p. 2).

¹³ See pp. 175-6.

twentieth century that the now familiar definition of ‘stereotype’ diverged from ‘cliché’, when the former took on strong associations with negative bias, ignorance, and complacency. The Oxford English Dictionary gives this new figurative definition of the stereotype with emphasis not on repetitive reproductions from an original, but on the absence or relegation of the original: a ‘preconceived and oversimplified idea of the characteristics which typify a person, situation, etc.; an attitude based on such a preconception. Also a person who appears to conform closely to the idea of a type’ (a.n.3.b). Note that now the type is not based on an original, as in the first figurative definition of ‘stereotype’, but only supposedly based on an original. The new definition specifies further removes from reality: stereotype is merely an ‘idea of the characteristics which typify’ and ‘the idea of a type’.

The new definition of stereotype reverses and undermines the chronological and causal relationship – original > type > stereotype – that connects the literal usage of stereotype with the figurative meaning. In the new definition, the original is displaced by the type. To stereotype is to be unobservant and unresponsive to the objective facts; hence the associations with ignorance, complacency, and unreason. None of the writers whose work is analysed in the following case studies could have anticipated this changed meaning of ‘caricature’. With the twentieth- and twenty-first-century conflation of caricature and stereotype in mind, it is telling how Scott, in *Rob Roy* (1817), describes the face of a Highlander:

The other mountaineer was a very tall, strong man, with a quantity of reddish hair, freckled face, high cheek-bones, and long chin—a sort of caricature of the national features of Scotland. (271)

We should resist the temptation to gloss Scott's phrase 'a sort of caricature' as 'a stereotype', or to think, in the absence of further textual evidence, that the phrase 'a sort of caricature' suggests the prejudice of Scott's narrator, Frank Osbaldistone.¹⁴ 'Caricature' is not simply an old-fashioned way of saying 'stereotype': in most eighteenth and nineteenth-century contexts, 'caricature' did not have any of the pejorative associations that 'stereotype' has had since the last decades of the twentieth century. There was not the assumption that a caricature could not contain a great deal of empirical information.¹⁵ Caricatures were presumably drawn from actually existing originals, who were observed and analysed by the caricaturist;¹⁶ and there was not the assumption, as there is now with stereotype, that a caricature was epistemologically unsound. Now the common usage of 'caricature' implies that an artist is guilty of bias, ignorance, and complacency – meanings which, until recently, the word did not intrinsically possess.¹⁷

The case studies of this dissertation explore the history of caricature both as a satirical form and as a theme of novels written in the early nineteenth century. My central thesis is that the construction of 'caricature' in the literary sphere shaped the

¹⁴Cf. descriptions of Scottish faces in Mary Brunton's *Discipline* (1814): Henry Graham, alias Mr Maitland, has 'a certain *bony* squareness of countenance, which we on the south side of the Tweed are accustomed to account a national deformity' (55-6); Mrs St Clare's 'figure might have served to illustrate all the doctrines of the acute angle', while her countenance 'was an apt epitome of the face of her native land;—rough with deep furrow and uncouth prominence, and grim with one dusky uniformity of hue' (253); and Cecil's face is 'disfigured by its national latitude of cheek' (263). See also p. 247.

¹⁵ See pp. 176-9 on the place of caricature in the physiognomic theory of Johann Caspar Lavater, and see Chapter Four on caricature's retention of historical peculiarity in the novels of Walter Scott.

¹⁶ On John Kay's practice of drawing from life, see pp. 233-4.

¹⁷ This is not to say that few 'caricatures' were biased or ignorant – quite the opposite – but that to describe something as a caricature did not declare it to be biased or ignorant.

development of literary styles and compositional techniques in approximation of, but crucially distinct from, the aristocratic tradition of private caricature that stimulated the market for satirical prints from the 1780s onwards. Novelists in particular were interested in developing literary forms and expressions of caricature that were distinct from the caricature found in the satirical prints and in other forms of graphic caricature. Literary caricature had to be reworked in two directions: away from the particular satire condemned as libel; and away from caricature as a frivolous aristocratic entertainment turned to the use of the satirical print culture fostered by the political elite.¹⁸ The publicity of caricature, and the longevity of caricature, were both cause for concern: caricature had to be made both proper for the bourgeois literary sphere, and legible to posterity. The resulting literary forms of caricature – exemplified in the novels of Peacock, Brunton, Austen, Edgeworth, and Scott – might be termed ‘caricaturistic writing’: writing that reflects on its own (unstable) status in relation to caricature, which thematises caricature in some way, and which incorporates caricature-approximate elements of style. Caricaturistic writing, always published or intended for publication, is writing that circumvents, draws back from, or otherwise guards against accusations of personal satire; and in some cases, the author has developed this writing out of a private performance or confidential manuscript in which the satire of real individuals featured more prominently. Novel readers were able to enjoy a literary version of the intimacy inherent in the long tradition of confidential caricature portraiture, reconfigured for an anonymous bourgeois audience. Caricature also made significant thematic appearances in the

¹⁸ In *Vanity Fair* the master social climber Becky Sharp endears herself to Lord Steyne by orally ‘caricaturing Lady Jane and her ways’ (576), and by sketching ‘a caricature of Sir Pitt Crawley’ (576-7).

early-nineteenth-century novel, including warnings against the publication, reading, and speaking of caricatures; moments of seeing with ‘caricature-vision’; tragical dramatisations of the real-life caricature of human beings; and caricatures as a virtual memory for otherwise fugitive historical characters.

This chapter uncovers lost meanings of ‘caricature’, elucidating its various applications in the seventeenth, eighteenth, and early nineteenth centuries. I counter the assumption that the single-sheet satirical print was ever central to the conception, practice, and criticism of caricature, giving examples of the textual, dramatic, and real-life ‘caricatures’ that were more often under discussion. The second chapter, ‘Horsewhips and Omelettes’, and the third chapter, ‘Apposed to Caricature’, consider the unstable distinction between textual caricature as libel and satirical characterisation in eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century literary culture. These chapters explain how the literary construction of caricature developed from two sources: eighteenth-century debates on the publication of particular satires, and the caricature portrait as a pastime beloved of the British aristocracy. I argue that Thomas Love Peacock and Jane Austen, among others, adapted forms of ‘caricaturistic writing’ that were conscious of caricature’s relation to satirical characterisation in a literary work. Subsequent chapters turn to the thematic uses of caricature in the early-nineteenth-century novel. In the fourth chapter, ‘Parents of Caricature’, I examine the significance of caricature to deformity in Mary Shelley’s fiction, presenting evidence that her monsters’ disproportion was inherited not only from political satire but from the real-life ‘caricatures’ diagnosed in philosophical and medical texts of the eighteenth century. The final chapter, ‘Caricature and the Lapse of Time’, traces ideas about caricature through the writings of Walter Scott,

and shows that Scott conceived of exemplary graphic and textual caricatures as artefacts of antiquarian interest.

After caricature was remodelled for bourgeois readers in novels of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, printed graphic caricature diversified in the mid-nineteenth century to capitalise on the appetites of a large and prosperous middle-class readership for entertainment suited to their tastes and interests.¹⁹

Graphic caricature was a prominent feature of comic annuals and magazines in the Victorian period, most notably Cruikshank's *Comic Almanack* (1835-1853) and *Punch* (est. 1841). George Cruikshank, Robert Seymour, and Hablot Knight Browne ('Phiz') provided illustrations palpably influenced by the caricature techniques of the satirical prints for the serial novels of Charles Dickens. Caricaturists were no longer reliant on the patronage of the political elite, and by the mid-nineteenth century graphic caricature too was transplanted from the political culture and exclusive society that had fostered the genre of the satirical print, and made good for consumption by middle-class families.

The literary construction of caricature into forms acceptable to the middle-classes is the other side of the story Deidre Lynch tells in *The Economy of Character* (1998). Literary character in the novel, Lynch argued, has been a powerful vehicle for the expression and inculcation of middle-class values, and a focus of class aspiration for both writers and readers of novels. The perceived uncertainty and

¹⁹ Thomas Rowlandson pioneered this development as one of the first graphic satirists to illustrate a long prose narrative, issuing his *Picturesque Beauties of Boswell* in 1786. He went on to furnish designs for Tobias Smollett's novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771) in 1793, and for William Combe's *The Schoolmaster's Tour* in 1809 (reissued in 1812 as *The Tour of Doctor Syntax in Search of the Picturesque*).

improvability of the individual's place in society has made the individualised character an object of special interest, then and now. From the mid-twentieth century, critical teleologies of the novel have selected their representative examples guided by the notion that the best fictional characters are those whose textual presence can convince readers of their individual psychology. Lynch observed that the literary-historical accounts of the modern novel written in the Cold War era, most notably Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* (1957), enlist the English-language novel in a triumphal Anglo-American chronicle of progress towards freedom, democracy, and individualism:

Characterization progresses, ... as soon as novels come to be full participants in the history of freedom and democratic revolutions, and overarching story of progress that sees the state ultimately acknowledge the claims, worth, and singularity of the individual. ... The excess that makes a character more than the sum of its parts is in this context valued as a proof of the novel form's liberal veneration for freedom. (124)

Lynch traces this 'expanded life of the literary character' back to the first decades of the nineteenth century, where, she argues, it emerges as 'an artefact of a new form of culture and as the mechanism of a new mode of class awareness' (126). Literary characters who are imaginable as individuals, with lives somehow beyond the page, are thought to present readers with opportunity for interminable rereadings and reinterpretations. Conceiving of fictional characters in this way allows the aspiring middle-class subject, in Lynch's analysis, 'a pretext for endless moral invigilation and self-revision' and 'the games of distinction that establish an "aristocracy of culture"' as they make cultural capital something more than mere money can buy'

(133). The possibility of a realistically individual novelistic character was ancillary to the middle classes' claims to a new hegemony in which the professional individual, their accumulated financial and social capital, would be at the centre of modern life.

Caricature – previously an idiom of aristocratic patronage and credentials, as we will see below – was not rejected wholesale from this variant of the modern romance, but was eventually remodelled as a constituent part of nineteenth-century 'realism' in which no real individuals, but only fictionalisations of character, should be represented.²⁰ Caricature was crucial to the concept of character that was, according to Marilyn Butler, in decline by 1900 (13);²¹ and Jane Stabler has proposed that 'Our notion of realistic characterization needs to include caricature, not exclude it' (15).²² The development of literary caricature described in this thesis was not merely complementary, but crucial to the nineteenth-century inauguration of novelistic character as a source of cultural capital for the middle classes.

1.2 Decentring the satirical print

What has most limited our understanding of caricature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is the persistent association between caricature and the single-sheet satirical print of the late-Georgian period, such that the designs of artists such

²⁰ Catherine Gallagher has argued that nineteenth-century British realism 'contains a tension between reference (to types of extradiegetic persons) and realization (which is aligned with the fictionality of novelistic characters' (61). See 'George Eliot: Immanent Victorian', *Representations* 90 (Spring 2005): 61-74.

²¹ See Butler's review of J. F. Burrows's *Computation into Criticism* (1987), discussed on pp. 123-4.

²² See Stabler, 'Jane Austen and Caricature', *Nineteenth-Century Studies* 21 (2008): 1-18.

as Thomas Rowlandson and James Gillray are representative ‘caricatures’; and such that semblances of caricature in literary texts invite comparisons with satirical prints. Such comparisons are often gestures towards the idea of a late-Georgian ‘golden age’ of graphic satire, presumed to have diffused an innovating influence on writers.²³ The word ‘caricature’ has been very frequently used by scholars to refer only to published graphic satire that employs the techniques of caricature portraiture, and especially the single-sheet satirical print of late-Georgian Britain. A number of recent titles demonstrate the prevailing tendency among scholars of eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century print culture to use ‘caricature’ as a metonym for the single-sheet print.²⁴ We are currently in a moment of increased scholarly interest in the graphic satire of the Georgian period. Satirical prints have risen in the general consciousness of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century studies through their use as illustrations and

²³ See for example, Michael O’Neill in *A Companion to Romantic Poetry* (2011): ‘Great Romantic short lyrics have something in common with the caricaturist’s eye for the telling detail (this is the age of Gillray, after all)’ (20). Donald Greene prompted that ‘One needs to remember that [Austen] grew up in the great age of English caricature, when Hogarth’s engravings were on every wall, and Gillray, Rowlandson, and the Cruikshanks were producing their twisted, grotesque distortions of the human frame’ (276). Bucking the trend of positioning the late-Georgian period as the acme of caricature, Alexander Bove claims that Dickens lived ‘in a period when the visual arts had first discovered the powerfully subversive potential of distortion in caricature (especially the caricature boom in France of the 1830s and 40s, with Charles Philipon, Grandville, Daumier, Charles Traviès, and others)’ (677).

²⁴ Examples dealing primarily, and indeed almost exclusively, with the single-sheet satirical print include David Kerr’s *Caricature and French Political Culture, 1830-1848* (2000), a collection of essays edited by Todd Porterfield, *The Efflorescence of Caricature, 1759-1838* (2011), Ian Haywood’s *Romanticism and Caricature* (2014), and David Taylor’s *The Politics of Parody: A Literary History of Caricature, 1760-1830* (forthcoming 2018). Brian Maidment’s *Comedy, Caricature, and the Social Order, 1820-50* (2013) explores how the comic images of the Regency and the early Victorian period develop the visual ‘caricature tradition’ of the late-Georgian period. Exceptionally, Temi Odumosu’s *Africans in English Caricature, 1769-1819* (2017) uses the term ‘caricature’ to refer to satirical characterisations in plays, novels, and periodicals as well as satirical prints and other graphic genres.

cover images for monographs, conference proceedings, websites, and other academic ventures. In 2015, there were two major bicentennial exhibitions of satirical prints: at the British Museum, ‘Bonaparte and the British: Prints and Propaganda in the Age of Napoleon’ to mark the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo, and at the Ashmolean, ‘Love Bites: Caricatures by James Gillray’ to mark the 200th anniversary of Gillray’s death. Satirical prints have for some decades now been analysed as literary or quasi-literary objects, and as intertexts with contemporary art objects and literature. The matter of the satirical print’s literariness remains an open question, and it seems to have escaped most commentators on the subject that caricature and the single-sheet satirical print never were equivalent, or conceived as such. David Taylor has called for caricature to be thought of in ‘more rigorously intermedial terms’, and has asked whether “‘the golden age of caricature’” often seen to span 1770 to 1820 were to become a way of thinking about a moment in literary history as much as in art history?’ (6).²⁵

The writers whose works feature in this thesis did, of course, live during the years that have come to be known as the ‘golden age’ of graphic caricature in Britain (1780-1830),²⁶ but it does not follow that they had the single-sheet satirical print at the centre of their conceptions of caricature.²⁷ In fact, the evidence suggests that by

²⁵ David Taylor, ‘The practice of caricature in 18th-century Britain’, *Literature Compass* (2017): <https://doi.org/10.1111/lic3.12383>.

²⁶ The reasons for the commercial rise and decline of the satirical print – an object typically 250 x 350 mm in size, printed from a copper plate onto high-quality rag paper – are discussed in James Baker’s recent book *The Business of Satirical Prints in Late-Georgian England* (2017).

²⁷ The only instance I have found of ‘caricature’ meaning ‘single-sheet satirical print’ in a novel of the period is Lady Geraldine’s exclamation that her cousin Craiglethorpe is “‘the caricature of ‘*the English fire-side*’ outdone!” (209) in Edgeworth’s *Ennui* (1809). This is *English Fire-side*, published by J. Le Petit in Dublin, which depicts a gouty man asleep in a chair and two fashionably dressed

the 1790s ‘caricature’ was being used to describe and criticise all kinds of things, from a letter to the editor to a child’s body; and while the proliferation of the satirical print may have contributed to stimulating interest in caricature more generally, it could equally be seen as a symptom of British interest in caricature. The satirical print did not, for the writers whose work is investigated in this study, redefine how the term ‘caricature’ was conceived, or significantly intervene in the history of caricature as a literary phenomenon. The conflation of ‘caricature’ with ‘caricature print’ or ‘satirical print’ was not common in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when ‘caricature’ or ‘caricatura’ in fact only seldom referred to a single-sheet print. ‘Caricature’ was conceived as a thing independent of the satirical print genre, such that a letter to the *Morning Post* could declare, ‘The well known satyrical print of his Lordship at the feet of Mingotti was not a *caricature*’ (4). The most obvious way to apply this insight to the literary history of caricature is that when the word occurs in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century texts, especially when it used in an analogical or abstract sense, we cannot assume in the absence of evidence that a writer intended a reference to or comparison with the satirical prints.²⁸ James Baker has pointed out

men standing in front of the fire. One lounges across the mantelpiece as he peruses the *Racing Calendar*. Paintings on the walls show a boxing match and a cock-fighting pit, as well as a portrait of Chesterfield. Aside from *The Unwelcome Guest* (1799) (see pp. 228-9), Edgeworth’s ‘*English fire-side*’ is the only reference to a particular print that I have found in a literary text. See discussion of Haywood’s claim that Mary Shelley would have seen George Cruikshank’s print *The Modern Prometheus*, pp. 209-11.

²⁸ Scholars have seized upon the word ‘caricature’ as a sign of the satirical print, sometimes in spite of its context. Diana Donald misrepresents a passage in *The Spectator* (qtd. on pp. 49-50) as an attack on political graphic satirists; and she assumes the ‘sketchers’ in Richard Payne Knight’s skewering of ‘Pindars, Pasquins, sketchers and reviewers’ are graphic satirists (*The Age of Caricature* 23). ‘Sketch’ was often used to describe a textual portrait, as in Eavesdrop’s ‘sketching off’ Folliott in *Crotchet Castle*. A piece describing ‘Eminent Members of the National

that while we now recognise the late-Georgian period as a commercial and artistic high point in the development of satirical print culture, contemporary observers may have been concerned with ‘caricature’ more generally, and did not necessarily think of the single-sheet satirical print as the pre-eminent example of caricature (5).²⁹ This makes sense when we consider that the artistic technique of physiognomic caricature did not become a distinctive feature of printed political satire until the late eighteenth-century, and that only then did ‘caricature’ become associated with printed graphic satire. People writing and talking about caricature in the 1780s and onwards were already acquainted with many examples of caricature that had nothing to do with published political graphic satire.

References to caricature in the London newspapers and periodicals of the time show that, even in the metropolis where most satirical prints were produced and sold, ‘caricature’ signified something much broader than it has been generally allowed to mean in modern literary criticism and print history. In 1796, a commentator for London’s *Morning Chronicle* newspaper frets about the public’s taste for caricature without mentioning a single example from visual art, let alone satirical prints:

The taste of the day leans entirely to caricature: We have lost our relish for the simple beauties of nature. The caricature in acting, in novel-writing, in preaching, in parliamentary eloquence is entirely in rage. We are no longer

Assembly of France’ begins, ‘The following Sketch ... is, perhaps, rather a Caricature than a Likeness’ (*Oracle Bell’s New World* [29 October 1789]), p. 3.

²⁹ See Baker on Marc Baer’s misuse of evidence in which “‘caricature’ as printed satire was not the medium under discussion’ (*Business of Satirical Print* 5).

satisfied with propriety and neatness; we must have something grotesque and disproportioned, cumbrous with ornament and gigantic in its dimensions. (7)

Between 1780 and 1830, while there are numerous mentions of ‘caricature prints’ – usually in synopses of satirical prints that had recently been published – there are probably at least as many references to other artistic forms of caricature, most notably comic theatrical performances, comic writing, and critical writing. In 1798, the *Morning Post* advertised ‘a new Dramatick Caricature, in one act, called THE UGLY CLUB’, to be performed at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane (1).³⁰ A farcical prose work published in the *Morning Star* is titled ‘The Brain Sucker. Or, the Distress of Authorship. A Serio-Comic Caricature’ (4). A letter to the *Morning Post* in 1775 grumbled that ‘it is the office of a Critic to discover the *beauties* as well as the *defects* of a work. Our modern reviewers present us with nothing but *caricature*’ (1). In 1807, a writer to Cobbett’s *Weekly Political Register* complained of seeing his previous letter to the editor ‘chequered, caricatured in Italics, and pared away, as it there appeared, ad libitum, for to suit your own purpose’ (18). In 1818, the *Chester Chronicle* suggests that ‘[a] characteristic bon mot, is a kind of oral caricature, copies of which, are multiplied by every tongue that utters it; and it is much less injurious, or mortifying, to be the object of a satirical poem’ (4). Such references to dramatic, textual, editorial, and oral ‘caricatures’ might even outnumber, in a quantitative analysis, allusions to the contents of ‘caricature prints’. The publication

³⁰ A review in the *Morning Post* praised an actor in 1814 performance of John Burgoyne’s *The Lord of the Manor* (1780) for ‘all that pleasantry of caricature which made the character so important when the Opera was first revived at [Convent Garden] Theatre’ (3). The *Caledonian Mercury* reported in November 1816 that the Duke of Cambridge was ‘greatly diverted’ by ‘[t]he acting of Brunet and Potier, and the grotesque caricature’ at the Théâtre des Variétés (2).

dates of many of the passages quoted above (1780, 1796, 1798, 1807, 1816) are significant because they indicate that the ‘golden age’ of graphic satire did not radically alter the ways in which people conceived and wrote about caricature.

1.3 Caricature and Romanticism

The literary credentials of the satirical print have been advanced under the aegis of ‘Romanticism’, with scholars echoing Bakhtin’s idea that Romanticism has its own variety of the grotesque,³¹ ‘a reaction against the elements of classicism which characterized the self-importance of the Enlightenment’ (39).³² E. H. Gombrich was the first to claim, in 1963, that the prints of the late-Georgian period were a manifestation or by-product of Romanticism, citing the Romantic era as a ‘congenial climate’ for the transition from emblematic political satire to the caricatural idiom of Gillray, Rowlandson, the Cruikshanks, and others. Gombrich suggested that Romanticism inculcated a taste for ‘the weirdest combinations of symbols, the most grotesque conglomerations of images, ... phantoms, nightmares, and apparitions’ (123).³³ Robert Patten wrote that the caricature of the late-Georgian satirical print

³¹ Thus ‘romantic caricature’ has been spoken of in conjunction with the *grotesque*, an earlier introduction to English vocabulary that did not have particular associations with personal satire in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In modern criticism, it is generally understood that caricature and the grotesque are prone to coexist in art objects; and they can be usefully distinguished, as they are in Mikhail Bakhtin’s *Rabelais and His World* (1984),³¹ on the grounds that the grotesque is not satirical. The grotesque, says Bakhtin, is fantastic, imaginative, and provokes fear. Caricature is satirical, observational, and provokes laughter and humiliation (306).

³² See Frances S. Connelly, *The Grotesque in Western Art and Culture: The Image at Play* (2012), pp. 82-114.

³³ Ernst Kris and E. H. Gombrich were art historians who developed an interest in the new science of cognitive psychology. Forced by the *Anschluss* to emigrate to Britain, they joined the war effort as analysts of Nazi radio propaganda. Their psychological explanation of caricature, which focuses on graphic caricature as a form of public critique, drew its energies from the antifascist culture of the 1830s, and from Freud’s

was ‘another manifestation of the Romantic movement’, in the sense of ‘the exploration of individuality and difference which confuted Augustan assumptions about universal norms’ (331). In *Caricature and Romanticism* (2014), Ian Haywood reprised the idea of late-Georgian graphic satire as a Romantic idiom – noting that the caricature of the satirical prints ‘evokes a parallel with Romantic aesthetics, though the relationship is characteristically unstable’, and suggesting that ‘[t]o the extent that it showcases a distorting application of the inspirational imagination, we can regard caricature as renegade Romanticism’ (6). Such arguments make important observations about certain aesthetic and formal literary qualities of the satirical prints, but do not explain the relation of the satirical print to the literary sphere, or how caricature more generally featured in literary works and literary discourse.

Graphic satirists certainly did not have the degree of intellectual independence associated with literary authorship, and poets and novelists could not reasonably have seen them as fellow writers. Haywood’s view of late-Georgian graphic satirists as ‘renegade Romantics’, for example, invites the assumption that graphic satirists were, in some key respects, like literary authors – an assumption not borne out by the evidence surveyed here. Satirical prints are certainly both art objects and texts: most of them bristling with captions, labels, quotations, citations, and speech bubbles; many of them demanding careful interpretation. If the satirical prints had any single coherent artistic methodology, it is likely not to have been a matter of

Der Witz und seine Beziehung zum Unbewußten (1905). See Louis Rose, *Psychology, Art, Antifascism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 3-10. In their book *Caricature* (1940), Kris and Gombrich described the portrait caricaturist as ‘a dangerous fellow; his work is still somewhat akin to black magic’ (*Caricature* 13), caricature as ‘a psychological mechanism rather than a form of art’ (‘Principles of Caricature’ 338).

transforming primary material, but rather of working with the suggestions of political insiders who were so often the driving force behind the prints.³⁴ Very few graphic satirists worked anonymously; and many made a point of signing their prints according to whether they had composed (*invenit, designavit*) or only executed (*fecit, pinxit*) the work, so that personal satirical animus could be explicitly disclaimed. Graphic satirists did not possess political integrity, and graphic caricature depended, even more than literary productions, on what publishers and book-sellers thought they could sell to their customers. Timing was everything. In 1830, Marsh and Miller of Oxford Street published the latest version of Coleridge and Southey's much-revised poem 'The Devil's Thoughts' as a pamphlet with ultra-tory illustrations in which the Duke of Wellington, vilified for his part in the passage of the Roman Catholic Relief Act of 1829, was the devil. Wellington's popularity was at an all-time low, and the pamphlet, like the large number of satirical prints on Wellington's involvement in the Relief Act, was a successful attempt to cash in.³⁵ This was not simply a matter of identifying a market for a particular genre or trend in subject matter, but of matching caricature images to specific events of the moment.

Finally, it was exceptional for a graphic satirist to be greatly concerned with the originality and artistic qualities of his work; and moreover, critics and consumers of graphic caricature did not expect them to be. In 1819, when Scott wrote to his son to thank him for sending a present of some satirical prints, he recalled the incomparable designs of Gillray:

³⁴ See p. 24-26.

³⁵ See Ferguson, 'Wellington's Rats in the Illustrated *Devil's Walk*.' *Notes and Queries* 61.1 (2014): 54-56.

All concernd are pleased with your kind tokens of remembrance. Mama and I like the caricatures very much. I think however scarce any shews the fancy and talent of old Gilray [sic]. He became insane—I suppose by racking his brain in search of extravagant ideas—and was supported in his helpless condition by the woman [Hannah Humphreys] who keeps the great print shop in St. James Street who had the generosity to remember that she had made thousands by his labour. (V: 460)

Even Gillray's designs, remarkable as they were, were products designed to make thousands by appealing to the relatively small number of consumers who could justify spending three or more shillings on a single print. Unlike the world of literary publishing, graphic caricature did not imagine itself as anything other than a product of limited yet profitable appeal.

1.4 The market for satirical prints

The defining factor of the satirical print as a unique manifestation of portrait caricature consists in the market for the prints. The fact that the comic strips, newspaper cartoons, and graphic novels of later centuries have seldom been accorded literary status should not mislead us into believing that satirical prints of the late Georgian period were populist or 'vulgar'.³⁶ . Single-sheet satirical prints were not a form of popular mass media comparable with modern tabloid newspapers, television, or social media, and they were not easily accessed or understood by the common

³⁶ See for example Mark Hallett's suggestion that Gillray's was 'an art that belonged to the street *and* to the connoisseur's study' (25).

reader. The West End,³⁷ paid members' clubs, select coffee-houses (which charged an entrance fee), and the private rooms of genteel families: these were the places in which caricature prints were typically bought, displayed, and perused.³⁸ In 1996, Eirwen E.C. Nicholson contradicted the myth that the prints addressed a large public and could appeal ““even” or “especially to the illiterate”” (6) with key pieces of evidence that define the consumers of single-sheet prints in late-Georgian Britain.³⁹ It is known, for example, that even to peruse satirical prints without purchasing them could be prohibitively expensive, as members of the public were charged a shilling for entrance to a semi-permanent exhibition of prints; and to hire a folio of prints cost up to 2s. 6d. per day with a £1 deposit.⁴⁰ Shops selling satirical prints were typically located in the upmarket West End of London, on St James's Street and Bond Street.⁴¹ Until 1760, customers would have paid between sixpence and a

³⁷ In the 1790s, 95 per cent of the House of Lords and 90 per cent of the House of Commons lived in the West End during the parliamentary season. See Barrell in Chandler, ed. *The Cambridge History of English Literature: The Romantic Period*, 2006, p. 137.

³⁸ In 1772 a French visitor to Westminster Hall was struck by ‘a prodigious number of little shops ... every day lined with prints, in which the chief persons, both in the ministry and in parliament, are handled without mercy, by emblematical representations’ (Grosley *Tour to London* I: 57).

³⁹ James Baker has recently revived Nicholson's argument, noting that while scholars such as Diana Donald ‘broadened the public appetite for late-Georgian caricature’, they have created ‘a false sense that Georgian graphic satire was somehow “popular”’ (5). See also Todd Porterfield's rebuttal of commonplaces about satirical prints in the introduction to *The Efflorescence of Caricature*.

⁴⁰ See Baker, *The Business of Late-Georgian Satirical Prints*, pp. 138-42.

⁴¹ Baker has shown that, with the possible exception of Hannah Humphreys's shop on St James's Street, ‘print shops’ dedicated mainly to the display and sale of satirical prints actually did not exist. Publishers made satirical prints ‘one component of a flexible business portfolio’ (191). Critics have recently begun to caution against ‘those over-cited and self-authorising print shop pavement scenes’, which depict crowds lower-class people looking at satirical prints through shop windows, as accurate representations of print-shops as levellers and loci for carnivalesque street life (Haywood 7). These prints would be better interpreted as advertisements for the shop's wares, and as artistic exercises in drawing a variety of figures, than as

shilling for a single plain print, and at least one shilling for a coloured print. After that date, the standard price rose to one shilling for a plain print, and two to three shillings. Where small numbers of pirated versions of satirical prints survive, we should not assume that these were targeted to a plebeian or ‘working-class’ readers; the surviving prints from Scott’s collection include a number of pirated versions, printed in Dublin, of designs by Gillray and George Cruikshank.⁴² The satirical prints were intended to be purchased by a genteel readership, and the prices charged ensured that small print runs, of between 500 and 1500 impressions, were still profitable.

From the beginning, there was significant overlap between the elite social settings in which amateur caricatures circulated, and in which satirical prints were consumed. The first single-sheet caricature prints were created by George Marquess Townshend (1724-1807), a talented amateur caricaturist who worked up some of his drawings for professional engraving by the Darlys. The earliest version of the published caricature print thus originated in the genteel tradition of amateur caricaturing, and then remained deeply embedded in elite metropolitan society. The caricature print became a commercial and professionalised genre in the 1780s, when

authentic views of the market for caricature prints. In Brunton’s *Self-control* (1811), print-shop owners are on the lookout for a wealthy lady wanting ‘to make some addition to her cabinet’ (I: 137-8); and in Mr Wilkins’s print-shop, Laura reencounters ‘the elegant, the accomplished, Colonel Hargrave’, a man of ‘the highest polish’ (13-4), ‘one of the best bred men in the kingdom’ (28). He does not notice her at first because he is ‘busied in examining a book of caricatures’, and Laura ‘hope[s] that the caricatures would not long continue so very interesting’ (II: 7). A touching scene follows in the parlour adjoining the shop. For a detailed study of the late-Georgian print-shop, and the ‘polite classes’ as their ‘core consumer[s]’ see Baker, pp. 149-67.

⁴² See for example *Dandies Dressing and Reflection. To be, or not to be!!*, in [Portfolio of caricatures, coloured]. Abbotsford collection, Advocates Library.

men such as James Sayers, Richard Newton, Thomas Rowlandson, David Allan, John Kay,⁴³ and Isaac Cruikshank began to make money with new kinds of *rittrati carichi* that would interest well-connected upper-class readers. The typical consumer would have had intimate knowledge, through personal acquaintance or the second-hand knowledge of their social circles and coteries, of statesmen, diplomats, members of elected office, members of the nobility, society ladies, and their associates. They would have had the opportunity to meet many of these people and to know intimately their histories, physiognomies, and mannerisms such as speech tics. Amelia Rauser has written that ‘Precisely because of [graphic] caricature’s association with the sophistication, elitism, intimacy, and insiderness of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Rome, it failed to satisfy the limiting conditions of ideal publicness in eighteenth-century London’ (18). The association with insiderness presumably would have been part of the appeal for genteel consumers. The satirical print was very much a genre of the upper classes, and for them an object of considerable cultural and social capital. The assumed audience was an educated one, for the prints were not only prohibitively expensive, but also prohibitively sophisticated in their literary allusiveness. Prints of the late-Georgian period teem with references to Shakespeare, Milton, Ben Jonson, Dryden, Addison, Swift, Samuel Johnson, and the authors of classical antiquity.⁴⁴ Many include phrases in

⁴³ The works of David Allan and John Kay were markedly different from those of the others, with most of Kay’s etchings retaining the focus and formal characteristics of portraits rather than being the satirical tableaux typical of the London prints. Both Kay’s and Allan’s *ouvres* include artworks of documentary bent, such as Allan’s gently exaggerated figures, in *A Rousing Bellman in Parliament Square* (ca. 1785; NGS D 390) and *The City Guards* (D 3309.1)

⁴⁴ David Taylor’s forthcoming book *The Politics of Parody* (2018) analyses parodies of the works of Shakespeare, Milton, Swift, and others in the single-sheet satirical prints of the late Georgian period.

French and Latin. There are bathetic imitations of fashionably controversial fine art, such as the numerous parodies of Fuseli's 1781 painting *The Nightmare*.⁴⁵ To be a reader and collector of caricature prints implied connoisseurship, as well as political erudition.

Satirical prints were not only consumed by an elite readership, but were also in part produced by an elite readership. They were in effect an extension of the elite practice of amateur caricaturing. Many prints were addressed by members of the political classes and the aristocracy to their peers, regularly supplying graphic satirists, sometimes through their publishers' contacts, with sketches and ideas by politicians who wished to have their opponents caricatured or their views insinuated.⁴⁶ The most successful artists, such as Gillray and George Cruikshank, received bribes and pensions from ministers.⁴⁷ The surviving evidence suggests that

⁴⁵ See for example Thomas Rowlandson, *The Covent Garden Night Mare* (1784) and *Dutch Night-Mare or the Fraternal Hug Returned with a Dutch Squeeze* (1813); George Cruikshank, *The Night Mare* (1816).

⁴⁶ See Gillray's correspondence in British Library Add MS 27337. The letters show that Gillray corresponded with a number of men of politics, including George Canning, John Hookham Frere, Sir John Dalrymple, Nathaniel Sneyd, and Lord Bateman, with whom Gillray stayed and from whom he received presents of a 'hare & Brace of Partridges' (37). Many of the letters are anonymous, and most are hints for satirical subjects. One note in an envelope signed 'Geo. Canning' suggests that Gillray could be kept on a tight leash: 'It is particularly wished that the Print of Mr. Sheridan No.5 of the French Habits, which Mr. Gillray was so good as to send for inspection to-day, may not be published. If Mr. G. can call to-morrow, the reason will be explained to him' (92-3). Frere proposed a royal quarto edition of the poetry published in the *Anti-Jacobin*, illustrated with forty plates by Gillray, and to be sold for a guinea and a half. The work was never published, but a prospectus was produced and 550 subscribers canvassed.

⁴⁷ See James Baker, 'Locating Gulliver: Unstable Loyalism in James Gillray's *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*', *Image & Narrative* 14.1 (2013), p. 134. The Royal Archives record the £2600 George IV spent bribing caricaturists between 1819 and 1822. One receipt records that on 19 June 1820, £100 was paid to George Cruikshank and £70 to Robert Cruikshank 'in consideration of a pledge not to caricature His Majesty in any immoral situation' (Royal Archives 51382 (a)/21, qtd.

many satirical prints were motivated by a political in-crowd personally and socially invested in Westminster goings-on, as Nicholson explains:

Print publication was to a considerable extent oriented to the sitting of parliament. In content the prints make few concessions in the way of broad contextual explanations, and presuppose and up-to-date knowledge of affairs which would have required familiarity with the written political journalism of the day. If few prints were entirely ‘Drawn and etch’d by some of the most eminent Parties interested therein’, the extent to which many prints were the result of a collaboration between patron, draughtsman, and print-seller – whether by the professional engraving/etching of an amateur sketch or by the ‘hints’ with which artists such as Gillray worked⁴⁸ – ensured that the content and satirical slant of prints was often determined by political insiders. Indeed, there is a sense in which politics as encoded in the prints becomes increasingly internalized and self-sufficient over the course of the century, with issues addressed by reference to personalities and factions, an ad hominem approach which was compounded by the adoption of portrait caricature in the last quarter of the century. (14)

In most cases, the satire of the prints did not ‘punch up’;⁴⁹ rather, it punched across.

This was peer-to-peer satire, mainly about government and licensed, funded, and

in Patten, *Cruikshank’s Life*, I: 176. The brothers were summoned again two months later.

⁴⁸ Gillray’s masterpiece *The Apotheosis of Hoche* (1798) was suggested to him by John Hookham Frere, then a Member of Parliament and a contributor to Canning’s *Anti-Jacobin*.

⁴⁹ A phrase describing satire or comedy that directs its animus at those in positions of authority and privilege, as opposed to ‘punching down’ at minority or disadvantaged groups. See for example Ben Schwartz, ‘Knock Yourselves Out: “Punching Up” in American comedy’, *The Baffler* 31 (2016): 134-46.

enjoyed by the government itself. H.T. Dickinson has observed that ‘most political prints assumed a high level of political intelligence and knowledge’ (15); and it is far from clear that, when this was the kind of political knowledge conceivably acquired from newspapers and discussion with others who read newspapers, the common reader would be personally invested enough to acquire it. Perhaps the most compelling evidence against the popularity or populism of the single-sheet prints is that they were never subject to the stamp duty imposed on newspapers and pamphlets, a strong suggestion that the market for satirical prints was already limited such that successive government administrations never thought to economically censor the genre, and that the satirical prints were rarely perceived to be seditious in the way newspapers and pamphlets could be, with their much larger and more diverse readerships. In general, and particularly when wider social or diplomatic concerns were addressed, the prints assumed socially conservative, politically reactionary, and royalist attitudes in their readers. A satire on Pitt was by no means a call to revolution.⁵⁰ Though artists and publishers sought to show with self-promoting prints that graphic satire could have universal appeal (enjoyed by dukes and butchers’ boys alike),⁵¹ their prints were primarily intended for and bought by a

⁵⁰ George III was frequently depicted as a celestial object irradiated by light. See for example George Cruikshank, *Boney’s Meditations on the Island of St Helena, or, The Devil Addressing the Sun* (1815); William Dent, *Invocation* (1788); James Gillray, *An Angel gliding on a Sun-beam into Paradise* (1791).

⁵¹ The most well-known example is Gillray’s *VERY SLIPPY-WEATHER* (1808). Prints that show well-dressed ladies and gentlemen inside and outside print-shops, which are probably more accurate, include George Cruikshank’s illustration to Thomas Wilson’s *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Select Collection of Engravers of an Amateur* (1828; BM Satires 15614), which depicts top-hatted connoisseurs examining prints inside the shop, while a dustman and two boys look in through the door (see Fig. 1). Eighteenth-century prints depict fashionable men and women enjoying prints in print-shop windows, for example John Raphael Smith’s *Spectators at a Print-Shop in St. Paul’s Church Yard* (1774; BM Satires 3758), *Miss Macaroni*

genteel readership who, if not actually part of London's affluent floating population, were oriented to the metropolis. Prints were purchased during visits to the capital, were bought by individual mail order, and were dispatched by individuals in London to relatives and friends.

Walter Scott was one such avid consumer who collected prints in this way, requesting and receiving prints from London via close friends and his son Walter. Highly educated, well-to-do, politically engaged, and belonging to social circles familiar with amateur caricature, Scott was in many ways a representative consumer of satirical prints. He built up a folio collection,⁵² and also used satirical prints as decorative items in his home. In the midst of an expensive decorating project in 1824, Scott decided to wallpaper his bathrooms with 'old caricatures'. He wrote to his friend Daniel Terry in London:

I wish you would secure a parcel of old caricatures which can be bought cheap, for the purpose of papering two *cabinets à l'eau*. John Ballantyne used to make great hauls in this way. The Tory side of the question would of course be most acceptable; but I don't care about this, so the prints have some spirit. (XIII: 214)

Scott wrote to John Gibson Lockhart two months later with the same request: 'I wish you would pick me up a few good caricatures as far as a guinea or two will go. I design them for the chamber of retirement.... (XIII: 273). At 21 shillings to the guinea, Scott could have presumably have afforded more than just 'a few' old

and her Gallant at a Print-Shop (1773; BM Satires 5220); and Edward Topham's *A Macaroni Print Shop* (1772; BM Satires 4701).

⁵² Described in the Cochrane catalogue as 'Portfolio of caricatures, coloured', the surviving part of Scott's collection is held by the Faculty of Advocates Library, Edinburgh.

caricatures; and his stated intention of using the prints as wallpaper indicates that he was buying a considerable number. Collectors also used prints to cover the folding screens used in their homes. One anecdote of this practice recounts that ‘When Lady Conyngham, George IV’s last mistress, was an ancient dame and feeling the cold, her hostess brought out a screen – and saw too late that it displayed her in her days of notoriety’ (Wardroper 7). Diana Donald has suggested that caricature prints were displayed prominently, and even permanently, on the walls of aristocratic and genteel houses across Britain, of which the caricature print room on the ground floor of Calke Abbey, Derbyshire, is the sole surviving example (21). Those who amassed hundreds of satirical prints were wealthy individuals, such as Sarah Sophia Banks (1744-1818), whose large collection is held in the British Museum. Sir William Augustus Fraser (1826-1898) bequeathed his collection of eleven morocco-bound folios, including an original drawing by Gillray, to the House of Lords Library. George III and IV were the most famous collectors of caricature prints, and many of Gillray’s portraits and satirical prints are preserved in the Royal Collection.

Maria Edgeworth’s society novels corroborate the evidence that between the 1780s and the 1830s there was a very select audience for satirical prints, and that the genre continued to have aristocratic associations. Concerned with the purity of the social and domestic sphere, Edgeworth describes satirical prints as a vicious entertainment of aristocratic society, at once effeminate (for men) and unladylike (for women). In *Belinda* (1801), Lady Delacour’s rivalry with Mrs Luttridge spurs her to take up political canvassing in the style of the Duchess of Devonshire, whose alleged trading of favours for opposition votes in the general election of 1784 was gleefully satirised in the prints. On election day, Delacour distributes ribbons and cockades

from “two enormous panniers”, and when Luttridge attempts to one-up her by sending for “a pair of panniers twice as large”, Delacour draws a caricature titled *The Ass and Her Panniers* and passes it around their social circle (54).⁵³ Luttridge challenges Delacour to a duel with pistols, and Delacour is wounded when her own gun, appropriately ‘overcharged’, recoils on her (57-8). Later in the novel, Delacour worries that Luttridge will seek further revenge for the caricature, and that she will herself “become the subject of witticisms, epigrams, caricatures without end. ... We should have ‘Lord and Lady D—, or the Domestic Tête-à-tête,’ or ‘The Reformed Amazon’, stuck up in a print-shop window!” (293).⁵⁴ It is telling of the exclusive market for satirical prints that Delacour only worries about being ridiculed by people she knows, and that her caricature of Luttridge does not need to be etched and printed to be circulated in society.⁵⁵ The text does not register significant difference between the caricature Delacour draws with a pencil, and the ones she imagines for sale in London. The print-shop window, in Bond Street or St James’s, is not a separate realm that exposes her in a new and more offensively public way; it is a natural extension of her social world. Satirical prints such as the ones drawn by ‘Lady Delacour’, commissioned by Sir John Dalrymple, suggested by John Hookham Frere, patronised by George Canning, perused by ‘Colonel Hargrave’, and

⁵³ See Cindy McCreery on the sketching of caricatures by elite women such as Lady Craven, Lady Burlington, Lavinia, Countess Spencer, and Lady Diana Beauclerk, *The Satirical Gaze: Prints of Women* (2004), p. 23. These were however usually in the tradition of amateur caricature portraiture, and not publically disseminated. See for example Countess Spencer’s *Gallant and Gay Lothario* (Tate T10114).

⁵⁴ Lady Delacour’s lament echoes Marlow’s speech in *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773): ‘I shall be stuck up in *caricature* in all the print-shops. The *Dullissimo Macaroni*’ (IV: I: 200-5).

⁵⁵ Taylor’s article on the ‘gendering of caricature’ in *Belinda* does not deal with the question of the publicity of Delacour’s print, noting only that it is ‘widely distributed’ (594).

collected by Walter Scott, were a commercial manifestation of the caricature portrait, an artistic form with a much longer history.

1.5 The historical origins of caricature

Caricature had a distinct historical point of origin in sixteenth-century Italy, and the word ‘caricature’ a historical point of migration from the Continent into Britain and into the English language. The original Italian, *caricatura*, could be rendered in English as *carricatura* or *caracatura*, and was sometimes shortened to ‘Carrick’. One of the earliest occurrences of the word in an English-language text is in Sir Thomas Browne’s *Letter to a Friend* (1690), where the transformations of rigor mortis are described as the ‘Caricatura Draughts Death makes’ (5). By the end of the eighteenth century, the anglicised ‘caricature’ was more common. It is often noted that the word derives from the Italian verb *caricare*: to overload, or in the figurative sense, to exaggerate. We might also wonder if, since the painter Annibale Carracci was said to have invented the word *caricatura* along with the techniques of graphic caricature, the word additionally plays on the family name. In 1582, the brothers Annibale, Agostino, and Ludovico Carracci founded a school for artists in Bologna, the *Accademia degli Incamminati* (Academy of those who are Making Progress). The artistic reform movement of the *Incamminati* has been credited with ousting the dominant artistic style of Mannerism, which was critiqued as being an unnaturally and exaggeratedly elegant development of High Renaissance Art.⁵⁶ The Carracci

⁵⁶ See Clare Robertson, *The Invention of Annibale Carracci* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2008); and Claude Douglas Dickerson, *Raw Painting: The Butcher’s Shop by Annibale Carracci* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010).

advocated a kind of naturalism, flouting the doctrine of the Church by allowing artists to draw nudes from live models.

How was it that this Baroque academy also gave birth to the modern form of grotesque portraiture known as ‘caricature’? Donald Posner observes that literature, specifically verse, seems to have played an important role in the development of the caricature portrait. In Italy, satirical verse portraits predated graphic ones: it may be that the very first caricature portraits were illustrations of these short satirical poems; and that, as Posner speculates, Annibale and Agostino flipped the conventional text-image relation by writing poems to accompany their graphic caricatures. Only a few examples of caricature portraits by Annibale and Agostino survive, but the literature describing their practice mentions drawings of people depicted variously as dwarfed and hunchbacked, with animalistic physiognomies, or made to resemble inanimate objects. It has been argued that the Carracci’s caricature drawings supposed a new theory of art as representation:

[E. H.] Gombrich has stated that the ‘invention of portrait caricature presupposes the theoretical discovery of the difference between likeness and equivalence’. This formulation immediately clarifies the relationship between caricature and the Carracci’s pictorial guessing games, both of which are extreme cases of the representation of an object by means not of a replica, but of a surrogate configuration of visual clues to identity. (Posner 69)

The Academia degli Incamminati was a highly intellectual artistic milieu self-consciously concerned with making new kinds of art. Anne Summerscale comments in her translation of Malvasia’s *Life of the Carracci* that the brothers conceived of their invention of caricature portraiture as something broader and nobler than mere

‘comic distortion’; rather, it was a kind of perverse realism (278 n.83). The Carraccis’ caricatures were neither publicly displayed, nor made available for purchase, nor reproduced as prints.

The next phase in the development of the tradition of caricature portraits was the adoption of graphic caricature, in the seventeenth century, as a private entertainment of the Italian aristocracy. As painters of altarpieces and frescoes in Bologna and Rome, including several rooms in the Palazzo Farnese, the Carracci were patronised by Italy’s most elite families, and this probably accounts for their appropriation of Annibale’s invention. Roman socialites amused each other with exaggerated portraits of themselves, their friends, families, and associates that attempted to catch what Annibale Carracci had called the *perfetta deformità*, the distinctive aberrant feature that was supposed to contain the essence of a person’s physical, usually physiognomic, likeness (Summerscale 123). These personal caricatures, known as *ritratti carichi* (loaded portraits), circulated confidentially within exclusive social networks. Some were commissioned portraits executed by professional artists, but many were amateur artworks. Amelia Rauser explains how the early caricatures, circulating mainly in Rome, were intensely social objects that called for insider knowledge:

Caricatures ... by their very codes of meaning were material traces of the tight circles of patronage and artistic exchange that typified seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Rome, where they first emerged as private artifacts. They made visible the lack of distance between the subject caricatured, the artist caricaturing, and the viewer admiring the caricature. (17)

This kind of caricature encodes expectations for its interpretation within a particular social circle or coterie, and documents intimate relationships within a social class. While some amateur artists did have their drawings engraved and printed to give them the gloss of a professional finish, nevertheless these caricatures remained part of an art culture dominated by manuscript and the condition of confidentiality among peers. A caricature passed from hand to hand within a group of people who already had intimate knowledge of the artist and the subject, if not personally acquainted with them.

Professional *ritratti carichi* were introduced to British social elites in the eighteenth century when art connoisseurs returned from their Grand Tours with caricature group portraits of themselves and their travelling companions. These works were desirable souvenirs, especially if executed by an acclaimed caricature portraitist such as Pier Leone Ghezzi, or the Italian-trained Englishman Thomas Patch.⁵⁷ The British aristocracy then adopted the Continental practice of drawing amateur caricature portraits. Amateur draughtsmen and women caricatured members of their families, social acquaintances, figures they glimpsed at social events and in public settings, and celebrated figures with whom they came into contact, such as Edward Gibbon (1737-94) and the soprano Fanny Tacchinardi Persiani (1812-67).⁵⁸ This new entertainment was subsequently advertised to a genteel readership by lessons and books promising to teach the scientific art of the overloaded portrait: the print-seller and drawing instructor Mary Darly's *A Book of Carricaturas* (1762) and

⁵⁷ See for example Ghezzi's portrait of the Jacobite Lord Southesk in exile in Rome (NGS PG.2452).

⁵⁸ See the caricature portraits of Edward Gibbon by Lavinia, Countess Spencer (BM Binyon 1898-1907 4) and Lady Diana Beauclerk (BM Binyon 1898-1907 1); Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, *Caricature of Fanny Persiani, Italian Soprano* (NGS D.2381).

the antiquarian Francis Grose's *Rules for Drawing Caricaturas* (1788). Darly's preface draws attention to caricature's aristocratic and Continental credentials, while giving patriotic emphasis to the British fondness for satirical portraits (see Fig. 2):

Carricatura is the burlesque of Character, or an exaggeration of nature, when not very pleasing its a manner of drawing that has & still is held in great esteem both by the Italiens & French, some of our Nobility & Gentry at this time do equal, if not excel any thing of the kind that ever has been done in any other country, tis the most diverting species of designing & will certainly keep those that practise it out of the hippo [hypochondria], or Vapours & that it may have such an effect on her friends is the wish of M^y Darly. (2)

The formulae offered by these instructions is a long way from the surreal inventiveness of the Carraccis' first experiments. Darly recommends the would-be caricaturist begin each portrait by observing the subject's head shape and sorting it into one of four categories:

Observe what sort of line forms the Phiz or Carrick, you want to describe wither its straight lind, externaly circular [convex], internaly circular [concave], or Ogee'd [with an S-shaped curve], when you have found out the line, then take notice of the parts as to their situation, projection & sinking, then by comparing your observations with the samples in the book delineate your Carrick giving it the proper touches till finish'd. (3)⁵⁹

⁵⁹ Grose explains this process as an aid to taking impressions of faces briefly glimpsed: 'when a caricaturist wishes to delineate any face he may see in a place where it would be improper or impossible to draw it, he may commit it to his memory, by parsing it in his mind (as school-boys term it) by naming the contour and different species of features of which it is constructed, as school-boys point out the different parts of speech in a Latin sentence' (10).

Such ‘Carricks’, like the portraits of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Rome, were never commercially reproduced and distributed. They were for private consumption only, and usually represented individuals only to those with whom they were already personally acquainted.⁶⁰ Most were works of the moment, drawn from life in pen or pencil (see Fig. 3).

The popularity of caricature as an amateur pursuit for the entertainment of friends and family continued into the nineteenth century, when it was practised by men and women. In Walter Scott’s circle, John Gibson Lockhart and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe were both noted for drawing exaggerated portraits of their private acquaintance.⁶¹ Writing to Lord Montagu in 1826, Scott asked, ‘Did you get Lockhart set to drawing Caricatures—he has a pretty talent that way’ (IX:463). Jonathan Henry Christie recalled how, in their Balliol days, Lockhart ‘was an incessant caricaturist’:

[H]is papers, his books, and the walls of his rooms were crowded with portraiture of his friends and himself—so like as to be unmistakable, with an exaggeration of any peculiarity so droll and so provoking as to make the picture anything but flattering to the self-love of its subject. This propensity

⁶⁰ See for example Francis Grose, [*Caricature of Gluttons at Table*] (NGS D 5057.69.A); George Clerk, [*Caricature of a Hedgehog Dressed as a Woman*] (D 5057.79.A), [*Woman Wearing a Fancy Bonnet*] (D 5057.94.A); Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, *The Music Room, Oxford, 1802* (D 4800.H). See also photographer John Muir Wood’s calotype of an unattributed caricature drawing, *The Professor* (NGS PGP.W.113). Caricature portraits were often sketched in groups, in the manner of Leonardo Da Vinci’s sheets of grotesque heads, usually untitled and sometimes on scrap paper as in George Clerk’s [*Heads of Two Men*], drawn on a printed legal document (D 5057.92 B).

⁶¹ Whereas Lockhart gave up the practice in later life, Sharpe developed his talent for grotesque figures in his illustrations for Bannatyne Club publications, and published a volume of his etchings as *Portraits of an Amateur* (1833).

was so strong in him that I was surprised when in after-life he repressed it at once and forever. In the last thirty years of his life I do not think he ever drew a caricature. (447)

Amateur and confidential caricature is mentioned in Taylor's survey of the field only as 'an elite and behind-closed-doors practice' (3). But this tradition of caricature portraiture, which was confidential, social, amateur, and disconnected from political life, long predated the single-sheet satirical prints and continued to entertain families and social circles into the Victorian period.⁶²

The 'caricature prints' of the late-Georgian period effectively introduced the practices of confidential caricature portraiture to a very limited market and select readership, which retained many formal features of caricature as an artistic practice that was privately or confidentially produced and circulated. It follows that the single-sheet satirical print was one of the less offensive forms of public caricature in production in late-Georgian Britain. The discovery that one had been graphically caricatured in a satirical print was not necessarily an experience of shock and humiliation. In a series of letters, Robert Southey encourages his family and friends

⁶² See for example the watercolour caricatures of Jemima Blackburn (née Wedderburn) (1823-1909): *Thomas Carliles Lectures* (NGS PG.3029); *Unio, rowed by Lady Katherine Douglas & Jane Wedderburn. The Earl of Selkirk in bow, Mr Peter Blackburn in stern. The Countess of Selkirk, Lady Isabella Douglas, Mrs Wedderburn & Jemima on pier* (D.5359.39); *Spring candle flew up. The Earl of Selkirk at drawing room table* (D.5359.24). See also the drawings of Ella Taylor (1827-1914): *Four caricatures of Dr Quin's adventures on his way to Cambridge Cottage* (1860; RCIN 918820); *A celebrated noble Lord in sporting dress* (1859; DM 5288); *Sketches made at the Opening of Parliament* (1861; RCIN 918824). Taylor evidently moved in high society, and one of her drawings depicts her presentation to Queen Victoria by Princess Mary (1869; RCIN 918861). She sketched quick caricature portraits of Isidore Bresseur, French teacher to the Prince of Wales and Princess Mary (DM 5263); Count B. Chotek, Secretary to the Austrian Embassy in London (DM 5262); and Count Kielmansegge, Hanoverian Envoy Extraordinary at the Court of St James's (DM 5266).

to seek out the inaugural publication of the *Anti-Jacobin*, in which he and others of a radical stamp are caricatured by Gillray:

Do you know that I have been caricatured in the Anti-Jacobine Magazine together with Lloyd, Lamb, the Duke of Bedford—Fox &c &c &c? the fellow has not however libelled my likeness, because he did not know it—so he has clapt an Asse’s head on my shoulders. (II:345)

If you have not already seen your acquaintance caricatured, pray send for the first number of the Anti-Jacobine Magazine. the caricature is worth two shillings, & you will not be amused the less for not recognizing the likeness. (II: 356)

Concluding a letter to his acquaintance George Dyer, Southey could not resist slipping in, ‘you have I suppose seen my asinine honours in the Anti Jacobine Magazine’ (II:348). To have one’s letter to the editor traduced by strangers in a mass-distributed newspaper (as in the issue of Cobbett’s *Weekly Political Register* quoted above); to appear as a comic figure in a novel purchased by circulating libraries; or to be insultingly portrayed in a review of one’s biography (as James Hogg was in *Blackwood’s Magazine*): to be verbally caricatured in these ways before an inclusive public of readers was a more troubling, and far more likely prospect, than making a recognisable appearance in the satirical prints.⁶³ For anonymous

⁶³ Aside from these letters of Southey’s, I have not yet found any record of writers’ experiences of being caricatured in the satirical prints. Walter Scott was probably the most frequently caricatured writer, featuring in prints by Charles Williams, *The Genius of the Times* (1812; BM Satires 11941); *Rival Candidates for the Vacant Bays* (1813; BM Satires 12982); Thomas Hood, *The Progress of Cant* (1815; BM Satires 14815); Robert Cruikshank, *The Great Unknown Lately Discovered in Ireland* (1825; BM Satires 14825) and *The Great Unknown and the Great Captain Cutting Up Napoleon the Great* (1827; BM Satires 15417); Henry Thomas Aiken, *Calves’ Heads and Brains or a Phrenological Lecture* (1826; BM Satires 15158);

writers such as Thomas Love Peacock, Walter Scott, and Jane Austen, being perceived as personal satirists themselves was an even more disturbing possibility.

This thesis demonstrates that graphic caricature, and printed political graphic satire in particular, cannot be the primary and unquestioned frame of reference for discussions about the roles played by caricature in British literary culture, and that the place of caricature in literary works should be analysed without reference to the assumed formal influence of satirical prints. Caricature should neither be viewed as a single historical artefact belonging to a single form, such as the late-Georgian satirical print, nor as a universal artistic mode or concept easily abstracted from its forms and genres, but as a tradition of modern grotesque portraiture that was deployed in and adapted for different media and different genres at different times and places. Early-nineteenth-century texts that thematise caricature, such as Edgeworth's *Belinda* (1801) and *Helen* (1834), Brunton's *Discipline* (1814), Scott's *Rob Roy* (1817), and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818), are far from presenting a united front against caricature in any form. Rather, they are conscious of different forms of caricature: graphic, textual, literary, and real; political, satirical, observational, philosophical. I show that our modern notion of the stereotype was not

John Doyle, *The Balance of Public Favor* (1827; BM Satires 15440). Numerous prints refer to Byron's works or contain his name, and he is depicted alongside Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and Matthew Lewis in Williams's *The Genius of the Times* and *Rival Candidaes for the Vacant Bays*, as well as in George Cruikshank's *Management, or Butts & Hogsheads* (1812; BM Satires 11940). In 1816 Byron's separation from his wife and departure from England made him an object of particular interest, which the Cruikshank brothers cashed in on – George with *Fare Thee Well* (1816; BM Satires 12827) and Robert with *The Separation, A Sketch from the Private Life of Lord Iron* (1816; BM Satires 12828), *Lobby Loungers* (1816; BM Satires 12826), and *Fashionables of 1816 Taking the Air in Hyde Park!* (1816; BM Satires 12825). On the image of Byron in the satirical prints, see Tom Mole, *Byron's Romantic Celebrity*, pp. 89-93.

generally relevant to conceptions of caricature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Finally, the approach to caricature presented in this thesis advocates ways of historicising and engaging more fully with aspects of characterisation in literary works that are frequently bracketed and problematized in modern criticism as ‘stereotypes’ and ‘crude caricatures’, allowing us to understand their construction as literary forms of caricature in relation to the various other forms of caricature recognised at the time.

2 Horsewhips and Omelettes

The heroine of Mary Brunton's novel *Discipline* (1814) falls under the influence of the unscrupulous Lady St Edmunds, who stocks her boudoir with 'novels enriched with slanderous tales or caricatures of living characters' (I: 51). Along with 'fashionable sonnets, guarded to the ear of decency, but deadly to her spirit',¹ these books are suited not to educate or to delight but merely 'to kill time'. The presence of personal caricatures in a novel condemns it to Lady St Edmunds's 'temple of effeminacy', a 'retreat of luxury' where Ellen Percy spends time with her lover Lord Frederick, led by Lady St Edmunds 'to the utmost limits of discretion' (50-1).² Lady St Edmunds herself might write a book of caricatures – as Lady Clarinda Bossnowl in Thomas Love Peacock's *Crotchet Castle* (1831) has 'been reading several fashionable novels, the fashionable this, and the fashionable that', and has decided to write one herself,³ which will be recommended in the newspapers 'as the work of a lady of quality, who had made very free with the characters of her acquaintance'

¹ The sonnets presumably contain innuendoes and perhaps references to individuals redacted by dashes or asterisks. See pp. 48-50 on innuendo and the satirical uses of punctuation.

² Ellen has already displayed a taste(lessness) for caricature, teasing her guardian Elizabeth Mortimer by 'hid[ing] her prayer-book ... and past[ing] caricatures on the inside of her pew in church' (1: 49-50). Brunton also undermines any notion of the caricaturist as a figure of moral authority when she describes Ellen's satirical drawing of bidders at an auction: 'As the sale proceeded, a hundred useless toys were exposed, and called forth a hundred vain and unlovely emotions. ... I took out my pencil to caricature a group, in which a spare dame, whose face combined no common contrast of projection and concavity, was darting from her sea-green eyes sidelong flames upon a china jar, which was surveyed with complacent smiles by its round and rosy purchaser. But my labours were interrupted, and from an amused spectator of the scene, I was converted into a keen actor, when the auctioneer exposed a tortoise-shell dressing-box, magnificently inlaid with gold' (174-5).

³ Lady Clarinda's frivolous motive for authorship is to 'get a little finery by it: trinkets and fal-lals, which I cannot get from papa' (50).

(50). Brunton and Peacock thus distinguish their own literary work from idle gossip in print form, destructive to reputations and instructive to spite, calculated to find buyers who value a book's topicality more than its literary value. Caricatures are not inimical to the self-consciously literary novel because they are characterisations of poor quality, but because they publicly make free with the characters of identifiably real individuals.

We might assume that 'caricature' must always be a pejorative term in literary culture because it can denote writing that is unsophisticated, lazy and unoriginal in its reliance on real characters, or otherwise of low literary quality. This is true of modern literary criticism, where 'caricature' often refers to a fictional character or representation deemed simplistic and heavy-handed. But in the first decades of the nineteenth century, as the 'fashionable novels' self-reflexively criticised in *Discipline* and *Crotchet Castle* suggest, men and women of letters were instead anxious about caricature's publicity. Textual caricatures of real people published in books and periodicals were most worrying to the men and women who made the bourgeois reading public their business. Brunton and Peacock were not, they imagined, addressing themselves to frivolous society ladies like St Edmunds and Bossnowl, but to a respectable class of reader, who aspired to new standards of gentility and high-mindedness championed by a better class of novel. In addition to this class-inflected moral concern about literature's reflection and inculcation of middle-class mores, writers were more practically concerned with their own anonymity and the anonymity of their acquaintances. Most of the novelists discussed in this thesis did not publish under their names. To include identifiable individuals in their writing would give readers the opportunity to trace the author's social circle,

discover the author's identity, and expose them as a caricaturist. A published textual caricature was especially open to criticism because, unlike a privately circulated caricature portrait, a caricature in a newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, or novel was highly likely to reach people who had no personal knowledge of the subject, and could not judge its accuracy for themselves.

Publicity was the most immediately worrying thing about caricature for writers who came of age in the 1780s and 90s, and who published their literary works between 1800 and the 1830s. From Britain's 'Augustan' writers,⁴ they inherited a self-regulating literary sphere that continually sought to distinguish satire from libel. As periodicals of the eighteenth century had sought to establish the middle classes as arbiters of culture, so novelists of the early nineteenth century self-consciously addressed themselves to middle-class literary society whose battles of reputation were fought in public, rather than to the aristocratic coterie of readers who passed caricature portraits amongst themselves in relative security. 'Particular satires' or 'personalities' that humiliated an individual with reference to their physiognomies, speech, and mannerisms were described in the strongest terms, as though such caricatures caused the victim physical pain; and in the Regency period,

⁴ The Augustan period of literature, which included the works of Virgil, Ovid, Horace, and Propertius, coincided with the reign of the emperor Augustus (27 BCE – 14 CE). In the history of English literature, the term 'Augustan' applies to writers such as John Dryden, Pope, and Swift who self-consciously emulated the forms of Latin literature, especially the verse epistle and satirical verse. Ashley Marshall has argued that '[a]ny attempt to formulate an ex post facto "Augustan" theory of satire ... is necessarily doomed to failure', and urges acceptance of 'radical diversity' in eighteenth-century theories and practices of satire (*The Practice of Satire in England* 69). I do not use the term 'Augustan' to imply homogeneity of these writers' works or the general coherence of their ideas about literature in general, but to highlight their investment in eighteenth-century debate over how the classical genre of satire should be constituted in a modern era.

caricature became closely associated with the horsewhips, sticks, and cudgels that could requite the pain it caused. Caricature was also, in a time of an expanding market for periodicals and novels, seen as a mercenary resort of writers and publishers seeking to cater to readers as ethically disengaged consumers. Writers who wished to write satirically, and to create emphatic portraits of recent and contemporary historical relevance, were obliged to disarm, dignify, and appropriate caricature; to manage carefully the publicity of their satire and distinguish their literary caricatures from the caricature portraits and ‘personalities’ that appeared in periodicals such as the *Anti-Jacobin* and *Blackwood’s Magazine*, and in *romans à clef* such as Lady Caroline Lamb’s reputation-ruining *Glenarvon* (1816)⁵ and the gossiping *Six Weeks at Long’s* (1817). This chapter explains the impetus for writers to fashion a literary form of caricature that could present individualised characters and topical situations while inoculating their texts against the charge of ‘personality’ – as told through the variety of metaphors used in literary circles both to describe the pain caused by personal satire, from horsewhips to omelettes. The attacks on Leigh Hunt, James Hogg, and other literary figures published in *Blackwood’s Magazine*,

⁵ Lamb portrayed her former lover Lord Byron as the rake Lord Ruthven, who ruins the recently-married Lady Calantha. Byron referred to *Glenarvon* as a ‘--- and publish account’ of his affair with Lamb (*Letters* V: 85). Lamb was ostracised by her social circle of aristocratic liberals, many of whom were themselves satirised in the novel.

An early practitioner of the modern *roman à clef* was the controversial figure Madeleine de Scudéry (1607-1701), who veiled her depictions of Madame de Rambouillet’s literary salon with exotic settings and historical characters (her ten-volume *Artamène, ou le Grand Cyrus* [1649-53] was set in ancient Assyria, and included Scudéry herself as ‘Sappho’). Scudéry had replaced Rambouillet as the leading light of Paris’s literary circles with her Société du Samedi. The phrase *roman à clef* originated from the practice of publishing a key identifying the novel’s characters with their real originals, sometimes with medial letters of their names redacted. Other writers used other ‘technique[s] of matching’, such as epigraphs and the naming of characters and places (Chen 5).

and the conversation novels of Thomas Love Peacock, furnish interesting cases of how early nineteenth-century strictures against caricature worked in practice.

2.1 'Th' eternal ulcer': rules against personal satire

When I but frown'd in my Lucilius⁶ Brow,
Each conscious Cheek grew Red, and a cold trembling
Freez'd the chill Soul; while every guilty Breast
Stood fearful of Dissection, as afraid
To be anatomiz'd by that skilful Hand;
And have each Artery, Nerve, and Vein of Sin
By it laid open to the publick Scorn.
I have untrussed the proudest; greatest Tyrants
Have quak'd below my powerful Whip, half dead
With Expectation of the smarting Jerk,
Whose Wound no Salve can cure: each blow doth leave
A lasting Scar, that with a Poyson eats
Into the Marrow of their Fames and Lives;
Th' eternal Ulcer to their Memories!

Speech made by Satyre in *The Muses Looking Glass* (1706), Thomas Randolph

Personal satire was seen as a violent exposure of private matters when it appeared in literary and artistic works that were oriented to wider audiences, especially publics of strangers. The caricature of individuals could not easily coexist with the terms of publicity idealised by the arbiters of eighteenth-century periodical print culture.

Habermas's account of the literary public sphere describes how the 'moral weeklies',⁷ especially Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's *The Tatler* (est. 1709)

⁶ Gaius Lucilius, an early Roman satirist acclaimed by Cicero, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, and Quintilian. Fragments of his satirical verses survive. See Erich S. Gruen, 'Lucilius and the Contemporary Scene', *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 272-317.

⁷ In fact the *Spectator* was published daily in its first series of 555 numbers, and thrice-weekly in its shorter second series (nos. 556-635). The *Tatler* was published three times a week, in a series of 271 numbers. Whereas numbers of the *Tatler* contained several pieces of writing, the *Spectator* usually consisted of single and more substantial essays.

and *The Spectator* (est. 1711), were interwoven with the bourgeois intellectual life of the coffee houses, participating in ‘the experiential complex of audience-oriented privacy’ (51).⁸ Michael Warner has stressed that the Habermasian publics called into being by periodicals like the *Spectator* were virtual, consisting of ‘stranger-relationality in its purest form’ (75).⁹ Caricature had the potential to interfere with stranger-relationality, by providing readers with exaggerated renderings of private individuals.

The proliferation of printed material that made it possible for virtual publics of readers to emerge in eighteenth-century Britain was partly due to the lapse, in 1695, of the Licensing Act.¹⁰ Consequently texts did not need to be licensed before publication, and without the censorship of the Stationers’ Company, libel laws were more frequently enforced. Authors and publishers took advantage of the situation by redacting satirical works to stand up to legal prosecution. Anne Toner has written that the licensing lapse partly accounts for the increased use in the eighteenth century of ‘asterisks, dashes and blank spaces to obliterate the names of individuals and more

⁸ See Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, transl. Thomas Burger (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), pp. 42-3, 59.

⁹ Both *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* involved their readership by answering readers’ letters, some of them undoubtedly written by Steele or Addison, and printing reader’s contributions. Angus Ross has pointed out that these methods of engaging with readers were already well-established in newspapers and periodicals (pp. 22, 25).

¹⁰ Until Commons refused to renew the act in 1694, the Stationers’ Company had sole authorisation to grant licences to print, and to censor print material. Their wardens were empowered to destroy offending publications and imprison those responsible for printing them. Writers such as Milton and Locke criticised the system and advocated for the free exchange of ideas and information. The lapse of the Licensing Act allowed for provincial printing enterprises as well as creating a market in Britain for books printed abroad. The traditional press controls of the Stationers’ Company were replaced in 1710 by the Statute of Anne, or ‘Copyright Act’, which invested ownership rights with authors but did not re-establish a system of censorship. See William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 87-8.

substantive parts of the text’, such that redaction ‘became a conventional part of the reading experience’ (58). Newspapers and pamphlets substituted initial letters followed by punctuation for the names of individuals; ‘The seeming absurdity of this convention’,¹¹ Toner explains, ‘originates from the loophole in libel laws that innuendo however blatant would not be permitted to constitute a libel’ (59). C. R. Kropf has argued that the leniency towards innuendo ‘did much to encourage satire which thrives on oblique attack’ (168). The author of *Satire Made Easy; or Instructions in the Art of Polite Censure* (1815) warned tongue-in-cheek that lawyers could ‘measure a dash with mathematical precision, and expound an enigmatical libel by the aid of asterisks, or stars, with the astrological exactness of that renowned conjuror Francis Moore himself in his *vox stellarum*! Great caution is therefore requisite in the use of these significant constellations’ (15).

Elliptical asterisks and dashes later made their way into works of fiction where it gave characters ‘a veneer of authenticity *and* mystery’ (Toner 58). Novelists also used punctuation to suggest dates or the name of a real place or institution redacted: 17— in *Frankenstein* and A. D. — in *Jane Eyre* (1847); the —shire regiment in *Pride and Prejudice* and the –th regiment in *Vanity Fair* (1837). *Jane Eyre* contains a remarkable number of examples (the —shire *Herald*, – Street, and so on) likely due to the scandal that could arise if the narrative were linked with possible originals for characters such as Bertha Mason and places such as Lowood Orphan Asylum (‘A. D. —’ refers to the date of the orphanage’s construction).

¹¹ Addison criticised elliptical asterisks and dashes in two *Spectator* essays in 1714. He described how the satirist Tom Brown ‘guttled a Proper Name of all its intermediate Vowels’. See Toner, *Ellipsis in English Literature: Signs of Omission* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 58-9.

Reasons for redaction, or the pretence of redaction, included the propriety of impersonality, the desire to avoid charges of inaccurate representation of particular places and things, and to foster the general applicability of the novel's representations or moral messages. So an overt disclaimer at the beginning of Anthony Trollope's *The Warden* (1855) sets the scene in 'the cathedral town of —; let us call it Barchester. Were we to name Wells or Salisbury, Exeter, Hereford or Gloucester, it might be presumed that something personal was intended; and as this tale will refer mainly to the cathedral dignities of the town in question, we are anxious that no personality¹² may be suspected' (1).

Addison's critique of elliptical dashes and asterisks was auxiliary to the code of conduct for satire he articulated in the twenty-third issue of *The Spectator* (1711). The moral rectitude of satire hinges on the importance of individual privacy to rational public debate; Addison ruled that satire should respectfully toe the line between public and private, and not indulge through the exposition (or invention) of private matters. He likened libels to furtive acts of violence:

There is nothing that more betrays a base, ungenerous Spirit, than the giving of Secret Stabs to a Man's Reputation.¹³ Lampoons and Satyrs, that are written with Wit and Spirit, are like poison'd Darts, which not only inflict a Wound, but make it incurable.... There cannot be a greater Gratification to a barbarous and inhuman Wit, than to stir up Sorrow in the Heart of a private Person, to raise Uneasiness among near Relations, and to expose whole

¹² On the meaning of 'personality' in the nineteenth century, see p. 54.

¹³ See also Addison's warning that 'False Humour' is 'incapable of anything but Mock-Representations; his Ridicule is always Personal, and aimed at the Vicious Man, or the Writer; not at the Vice, or at the Writing' (*Spectator* 35 [10 April 1711]).

Families to Derision, at the same time that he remains unseen and undiscovered.... It is impossible to enumerate the Evils which arise from these Arrows that fly in the dark.... (1)

The violence of particular satire was twofold: it could be seen, in the terminology of the eighteenth-century jurist William Blackstone, not only as civil libel, a wrongful act committed against the reputation of an individual,¹⁴ and but also as criminal libel, a wrongful act committed against the polity (IV:150).¹⁵ On the other hand, particular satire was thought too specific to be truly effective,¹⁶ because it targeted a single person, denominated or otherwise identified with telling details, rather than criticising a moral defect so as to prompt self-consciousness in the reader.

Essays in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* participated in a larger debate about the place of personal and private traits in satire. Ashley Marshall's broad survey of

¹⁴ Blackstone defines *libelli famosi* as 'malicious defamations of any person, and especially a magistrate, made public by either printing, writing, signs, or pictures, in order to provoke him to wrath, or expose him to public hatred, contempt, and ridicule' (IV: 150).

¹⁵ Blackstone parallels Britain's libel laws with those of the Augustan age: 'By the law of the twelve tables at Rome, libels, which affected the reputation of another, were made a capital offence: but, before the reign of Augustus, the punishment became corporal only. ... Our law, in this and many other respects, corresponds rather with the middle age of Roman jurisprudence, when liberty, learning, and humanity, were in their full vigour, than with the cruel edicts that were established in the dark and tyrannical ages of the ancient *decemviri*' (IV: 151).

¹⁶ 'It is great Vanity', says Steele, 'to think anyone will attend a Thing because it is your Quarrel. You must make your Satyr a concern of Society in general, if you would have it regarded' (*Tatler* 242 [24-6 October 1710]). Eighteenth-century commentators evinced arguments against personal satire on the grounds of efficacy as well as morality. See for example John Dennis's *Essay upon the Publick Spirit* (1711): 'general Satyr is preferable to what is particular ... because there is greater probability of its attaining the End to which it directs its Aim, which is the Reformation of the Reader: For the Pleasure which we find that the Generality of Mankind takes in particular Satyr, is a certain Sign that the Publick reaps little Benefit from it; for few are willing to apply those faults to themselves' (27). See also Swift, p. 50 n. 20.

eighteenth-century views on satire has shown that '[f]ew writers specify what they understand satire to be, but a fair number do assert what satire is *not*' (42). Libellous characterisations, it was generally maintained, excluded a work from the prestigious category of satire. *The Law Corrupted* (1706), for example, rules that 'Invectives are not to be allow'd the Title of *Satire* (preface), Ned Ward that 'real Names turn Satyr to abuse' (9).¹⁷ Dryden's 'Discourse Concerning Satire' refers to Augustus Caesar's enactment of libel laws (312). It is surprising that these eighteenth-century views are not especially concerned with the use of particular satire in service of fallacious argument: *argumentum ad hominem* was less an issue than 'Stabs to a Man's Reputation' per se.

The newly fashionable yet still suspiciously Italian *caricatura* provided a useful analogy for textual satire that was inappropriately personal. In 1712, the 537th number of *The Spectator* took the form of a letter¹⁸ in which the drawn caricature portrait represents the general depreciation of human dignity:

Politicians can resolve the most shining actions among men into artifice and design; others, who are soured by discontent, repulses, or ill usage, are apt to mistake their spleen for philosophy; men of profligate lives, and such as find

¹⁷ See also John Dennis on 'Libels which have pass'd for Satires ... every where full of Flattery and Slander, and a just Satire admits of neither', in *The Characters and Conduct of Sir John Edgar* (1720); and William Webster, *Tracts Consisting of Sermons, Discourses, and Letters* (1745): satire is 'pointed at the *Vice* more than at the *Man*' (299).

¹⁸ The letter-writer was the poet John Hughes (1677-1720), a friend of Addison and Steele and a regular contributor to *The Spectator* and other periodicals. Hughes became known for his 1713 translation of the *Letters of Abelard and Heloise*. The 537th number of *The Spectator* concluded with an advertisement for Hughes's forthcoming poem: 'I question not but my Reader will be very much pleased to hear that the Gentleman who has obliged the World with the foregoing Letter ... will soon publish a noble poem, Intituled, *An Ode to the Creator of the World*' (5).

themselves incapable of rising to any distinction among their fellow-creatures, are for pulling down all appearances of merit, which seem to upbraid them: and satirists describe nothing but deformity. From all these hands we have such draughts of mankind as are represented in those burlesk pictures, which the *Italians* call *Caricatura*'s; where the art consists in preserving, amidst distorted proportions and aggravated features, some distinguishing likeness of the person, but in such a manner as to transform the most agreeable beauty into the most odious monster. (*The Spectator*, no. 537, Saturday November 15, 1712, p.1)

This was a third charge against particular satires or textual 'caricatures', that by debasing an individual they debased human nature, which was the work of God.¹⁹

As the rulings against personal satire were reiterated by other influential commentators in the eighteenth century, the injured body of the satirised victim became less figurative. Fielding, Swift, and Hogarth all extended the condemnation of personal satire to include satire of the individual's physical aspects, whether described textually or delineated graphically. The body was simultaneously the most improper object of satire, the place where the pain occasioned by satire was felt, and the place where moral faults were thought to reside. Captioning his painting *Midnight Modern Conversation* in 1732, Hogarth advises, 'Think not to find one meant resemblance there / We lash the vices but the persons spare'. In a digressive passage in *Joseph Andrews* (1742), Fielding distinguishes the satirist, whose work takes effect in private, from the libeller who inflicts criticisms in the public eye. He

¹⁹ On the satire of individuals as blasphemous, see Marshall, *The Practice of Satire*, p. 61.

claims to eschew personal satire because he does not want ‘to mimick some little obscure Fellow’ or ‘to expose one pitiful Wretch, to the small and contemptible Circle of his Acquaintance, but to hold the Glass to thousands in their Closets,²⁰ that they may contemplate their Deformity, and endeavour to reduce it, and thus, by suffering private Mortification may avoid public Shame’ (164). The satirist, he explains, is ‘like a parent’, the libeller ‘like an executioner’ (165).²¹ Of all the formulation and rephrasings of Addison’s ruling, perhaps the most famous occurs in Swift’s obituary for himself, ‘On the Death of Dr. Swift’:

He lash’d the vice, but spared the name;
No individual could resent,
Where thousands equally were meant;
His satire points at no defect,
But what all mortals may correct;
For he abhorred that senseless tribe
Who call it humour when they gibe:

²⁰ The private mirror was a favourite trope of satirists wishing to emphasise the moral rectitude and instructive value of their writing, whether readers could see themselves reflected or not. Swift defined satire as ‘*a sort of Glass, wherein Beholders do generally discover every body’s Face but their Own*’ (‘The Battle of the Books’ 227). The antiquarian Jean-Baptiste Lucotte Du Tillot mused in his *Mémoire pour servir à l’histoire de la fête des fous* (1741) that ‘Le monde est plein de Foux, et qui n’en veut pas voir / Doit se tenir tout seul et casser son miroir’ (Plate No. 2). The lines were derived from Louis Petit’s *Discours satyriques et moraux* (1686), and were chosen by Peacock as the epigraph for the title page of his novel *Crotchet Castle* (1831).

²¹ The wording of Fielding’s parallels between the satirist and the parent, the libeller and the executioner, recalls Steele’s verdict in the 92nd *Tatler*, that though satire and libel have been ‘promiscuously joined together in the Notions of the Vulgar, the Satyrst and the Libeller differ as much as the Magistrate and the Murder’. The author of the *Ars Punica* (1721), conscientiously signing himself ‘Philalethes’ (truth-lover) made a similar distinction: ‘*Satire* never attacks the Character of Reputation of any Man’ (6d).

He spared a hump, or crooked nose,

Whose owners set up not for beaux. (38)

Thus the formulation of the genre of satire was refined to specify inappropriate subject matter: an individual's moral and physical deformities, and other details of physique, speech, and manners that could make individuals identifiable. The peculiarities of the individual, and not merely the individual's name, defined satire as exclusive of libel and shaped the ideal publicity of the British bourgeois literary sphere in the nineteenth century.

2.2 Hunt and Hogg: exceptions to the rule

Some eighteenth-century commentators on the impropriety of particular satire made special reference to the lampooning of men, especially literary men, of fame and great achievement. Thus the author of *Raillerie a la mode considered* (1763)²² described the libeller of literary celebrity:

a kind of *Camelion*, that lives upon the worst sort of Air; at first bred up and suckled with sour Sustenance from the lank and flaggy Dugs of his lean and meager Mother *Envy*, he afterwards feeds on Fame; ... with *venomous* breath endeavouring to *blast* the best and fragrant Flowers of Mens *Writings*, that they may *wither* in the *minds* and *memories* of the World. (51-2)

In the early nineteenth century, men of letters continued to regulate the literary sphere with strongly-worded condemnations against personal satire. Yet in the literary periodical scene some writers found adequate means of justifying their

²² The descriptive title continues, '*Raillerie a la mode consider'd, or, The supercilious detractor a joco-serious discourse, shewing the open impertinence and degenerosity of publishing private pecques and controversies to the world*'.

textual caricature, while others returned blow for blow – both with volleys of published satire, and with physical violence. This ‘eye for an eye’ mentality was not simple hypocrisy or violation of principle, but a logical consequence of the sense that the harm done by personal satire was akin to physical injury, ‘hard to flesh and blood’, as Walter Scott put it (*Letters* XII: 446). While many turned to libel suits,²³ those with the right intelligence and resources could take retributive justice into their own hands, returning the injury either with a published defamation or a public assault. Addison, Fielding, Swift, Randolph and others had used lashings and public executions to imagine the humiliating violence and pain suffered by victims of personal satire. These metaphors would have engaged readers’ imaginations partly because humiliating public physical punishments remained relatively common, with the whipping post and the pillory not formally abolished in England and Wales until 1837. In the early nineteenth century, the violence associated with personal satire ceased to be only metaphorical. A satirical review in a literary periodical could provoke its victim to such an extent that he was prepared to seek out and publicly assault the parties he assumed responsible. Acts of humiliating violence continued to be the preferred metaphors for personal satire in early-nineteenth-century Britain, because these metaphors served both as intensifying descriptions of the emotional pain inflicted, and as justifications of the real violence that could erupt when writers caricatured each other in print.

Exceptions to the rule against ‘personality’ that did occur in this period, such as the notorious *Blackwood’s* reviews of work by James Hogg and Leigh Hunt,

²³ See Kropf on eighteenth-century legal interpretations of defamation, libel, and slander, p. 155.

tested the limits of the rule. Exceptional crossings and re-crossings of the line between satire and libel, and the violence (both meditated and perpetrated) of those implicated, both prove the strength of the satire/libel distinction and reveal the numerous points on which the iniquity of personal satire could be contested: that the victim had already caricatured the perpetrator; that the victim was guilty of the more serious charges of seditious and blasphemous libel; that he had given up his rights to privacy by publicising his own life to promote his writings; that he had invited personal attack by courted controversy; and that his social class did not entitle him to enter the literary scene on an equal footing.

The term ‘personality’ meant something very particular on the urban literary scene consisting of periodicals such as *The Edinburgh Review* (est. 1802), *The Athenaeum* (1807), *The Examiner* (1808), and the *Quarterly Review* (1809). This influential quarter of the literary sphere used ‘personality’ in a special sense, explained by the OED as ‘a statement or remark referring to or aimed at a particular person, and usually disparaging or offensive in nature’ (n.6b). Tom Mole has argued that the term was used ‘to condemn a culture overrun by public references to private individuals’ and to address ‘a specific debate about the place of “personalities” in public discourse, and especially in periodical writing’ (89). Mere reference to an individual was not enough to constitute a personality. As it currently stands the OED’s definition leaves out two conditions that would presumably have been self-evident at the time: first, that a disparaging personal remark is not a ‘personality’ if it is made in person or in private, but only in print that addressed a public of peers and strangers; second, that some level of personal acquaintance usually existed for the writer to have knowledge of peculiar mannerisms, physical features, and character

traits. Writers for these periodicals knew that their commentaries and reviews should avoid critiquing tangible personal traits such as speech, dress, physical build, and physiognomy; aspects of private life such as family and friendships; and individual character traits such as self-importance and irritability. They were to review writers' works, not the writers themselves.²⁴

The first number of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* seemed to flout the conditions of entry to the literary sphere, announcing a penchant for exceptionally personal literary criticism that included satires on poets as particularised individuals. In 1817, William Blackwood (1776-1834) recruited two Oxford-educated Scots, John Wilson (1785-1854) and John Gibson Lockhart (1794-1854),²⁵ and set to work recreating his *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* as *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, a publication determined to grab the attention of the literary scene. The first number of October 1817 included three incendiary essays, all unattributed to their writers: Wilson's 'Some Observations on the "Biographia Literaria" of S. T. Coleridge, Esq.', Lockhart's first essay on the 'Cockney School of Poetry', and 'A Translation from an Ancient Chaldee Manuscript', a lampoon of literary Edinburgh written in pseudo-Biblical prose.²⁶ The characterisations in the Chaldee Manuscript provoked

²⁴ David Higgins has argued that it was fitting that early-nineteenth-century writers and readers were more interested in the private lives of public men, in a time when 'literary texts were increasingly seen as expressions of the inner selves of their creators', and there was an 'inevitable ... upsurge in biographical writing on writers' (*Romantic Genius and the Literary Magazine* 46). The literary periodicals, as well as literary critics such as Thomas Love Peacock, pushed back against this trend towards literary (auto)biography.

²⁵ Blackwood had previously advanced Lockhart money for a translation of Friedrich Schlegel's *Geschichte der alten und neueren Literatur* (1815), which Blackwood published as *Lectures on the History of Literature, Ancient and Modern* in 1818.

²⁶ Conceived by James Hogg and written collaboratively with Wilson and Lockhart, the 'Chaldee Manuscript' gave an account of the rivalry between Blackwood and Archibald Constable, publisher of the Whiggish *Edinburgh Review*. The verses refer

the injured parties to take out libel and slander suits, with the superadded charge of blasphemy, against Blackwell. So Blackwell stopped the presses and reissued the first number, with a statement of apology, the Chaldee manuscript removed, and the first ‘Cockney School’ essay heavily revised. Fang has argued that the Chaldee manuscript ‘defined *Blackwood’s* for its first readers’ as a uniquely vitriolic publication, while the ‘Cockney School’ essays have defined the magazine in Romantic scholarship (81). Scholarship dealing with *Blackwood’s Magazine* has often emphasised the extremity of its personal attacks on writers and other periodicals, as Nicholas Mason has noted.²⁷ The idea of October 1817 as the definitive number of *Blackwood’s* is borne out by the fact that Blackwood prepared for future law suits by establishing a fund to cover legal costs, seeming to accept the acrimony generated by Maga’s too-personal satire as the cost of doing business in the *Blackwood’s* way, and to enshrine personal criticism as the magazine’s modus operandi.

to figures of literary Edinburgh by means of ciphers: the ‘boar’ for Hogg, ‘the man whose name is as ebony’ for Blackwood. Lockhart and Wilson added a ‘venomous strain of ad hominem caricature’ (Fang 79-80) with portraits such as the one of naturalist John Graham Dalyell as a ‘beast of burden’, a man ‘[with] the face of an ape’ and with ‘nether parts ... uncomely’ (3: 36). Hogg’s manuscript *The Key to the Chaldee Manuscript* (NLS RB.s.2280) notes that Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe ‘has a very peculiar voice, over which he has no control, for at times he speaks perfectly well, and in a few minutes it changes to the most discordant squeaking, “even like the unclean bird”’ (15).

²⁷ Mason observes that scholars’ disparagement of *Blackwood’s* has been invigorated by loyalty to the poets criticised in its pages: ‘In one corner, we find critics who associate *Blackwood’s* with the worst forms of early-nineteenth-century partisan spleen and gutter journalism. Scholars of Keats, Hazlitt, and other members of the “Cockney School” have tended to be particularly dismissive of *Blackwood’s* and its principal contributors’ (I: xi). Mason quotes Stanley Jones’s summary of the magazine’s modus operandi: ‘The cruder the satire, the coarser the naming of physical peculiarities or disabilities, the greater the recognisability of the characters and the greater the impact’ (*Hazlitt* 289).

Nevertheless, Blackwood's reissue of the first number retracted some more personal elements of Lockhart's invective against the 'Cockney' Leigh Hunt. References to Hunt's private character, and especially his physical mannerisms, were scrupulously removed, redirecting the harshest criticisms from the man himself to his writings (Mole 91-2). At least in this case, Blackwood's thought it proper to soften the blow. 'Z' (John Gibson Lockhart) stood firm in his critique of Hunt's moral character however, and in July 1818 *Blackwood's* published his third essay on the 'Cockney School of Poetry' – another personal attack on Hunt.²⁸ Proposing to dismantle the satire/libel distinction that had dominated literary standards for so long, Z justified the magazine's combatively personal reviews of Hunt's work as a recognition of the idea that a poet's moral character is manifest in what he writes:

There can be no radical distinction allowed between the private and public character of a poet. If a poet sympathizes with and justifies wickedness in his poetry, he is a wicked man. It matters not that his private life may be free from wicked actions. Corrupt his moral principles must be, —and if his conduct has not been flagrantly immoral, the cause must be looked for in constitution, &c. but not in conscience. It is therefore of little or no importance, whether Leigh Hunt be or be not a bad private character. ... The

²⁸ This was not Hunt's last brush with caricature. Readers of *Bleak House* recognised Harold Skimpole as a satirical portrait of Hunt, who was a friend of Dickens. Skimpole was all the more defamatory because Dickens 'was not able to resist the temptation to attribute to Skimpole attributes quite foreign to Hunt' (Brewer 7). Several of Dickens's subsequent letters to Hunt allude to the unfortunate incident, while Dickens appears to have burned the letters Hunt wrote to him. After Hunt's death, Dickens published a lengthy article in *All the Year Round* (24 December 1859), 'Leigh Hunt. A Remonstrance' – purportedly a review of the new edition of Leigh Hunt's autobiography, but actually an apology and explanation for the characterisation. See Luther A. Brewer, *Leigh Hunt and Charles Dickens: The Skimpole Caricature* (Cedar Rapids, IA: privately printed), 1930.

world is not fond of ingenious distinctions between the theory and the practice of morals. The public are justified in refusing to hear a man plead in favour of his character, when they hold in their hands a work of his in which all respect to character is forgotten. (454)

This passage could be read not only as a manifesto for *Blackwood's* eccentric approach to reviewing, but as a theory of how biography should operate in literary criticism. Work and character are made synonymous in the crucible of 'the public': since a critique of an author's work is, by Z's reasoning, a critique of the author (and vice versa), there is no reason to forbid personal criticisms of the author, whether they are couched against him directly, or indirectly as attributes of his muse. Wilson conveniently leaves aside the moral character and authority of the anonymous reviewer.

But it would be a stretch to characterise Z's argument here as a general statement on how literary publications should treat all writers. The passage is expedient to explaining *Blackwood's* series of attacks on Leigh Hunt specifically. Hunt could be unfavourably judged against most of the criteria required to justify personal satire: he had himself penned literary criticism involving writers' personalities with their works;²⁹ he had seditiously libelled the Prince Regent;³⁰ he had committed blasphemy in *The Story of Rimini*; and he was a plebeian who had attempted to rise above his class by dint of literary effort – as Lockhart put it, in the

²⁹ As editor of *The Examiner* (est. 1808) and *The Reflector* (1810), Hunt had written combative reviews and satires of literary works and their authors, notably *The Feast of Poets* (1811).

³⁰ In 1813, Hunt was prosecuted for a libel on the Prince Regent and confined to Surrey County Gaol for two years. For the publicisation of the libel trial brought against Leigh and John Hunt, see James Mulvihill, *Notorious Facts* (Newark, NJ: University of Delaware Press, 2011), pp. 34-8.

first ‘Cockney School’ essay, ‘a vulgar man ... perpetually labouring to be genteel’, as his poetry is ‘always on the stretch to be grand’ (39).

Lockhart’s third essay on the ‘Cockney School’ calls attention to all these elements of Hunt’s character and career, saving special ire for *The Story of Rimini* (1816), a sympathetic treatment of Francesca da Rimini, a historical figure contemporary with Dante Alighieri. According to legend, Francesca’s husband Giovanni Malatesta discovered her in bed with his younger brother Paolo, and murdered them both. The fifth canto of the *Inferno* consigns Francesca and Paolo to the second circle of Hell. Hunt dedicated the poem to Byron, who had visited Hunt during his own confinement, supplied him with material for the poem, and organised publication with John Murray. Byron formed yet more personal associations with Francesca’s story of illicit love in 1818, when he met the teenaged Teresa Guiccioli three days after her marriage to the Count of Guiccioli, a man forty years her senior; and in 1820, he attempted a literal translation of Francesca’s speech in the *Inferno*. Other readers were far less disposed to admire *The Story of Rimini*, which they could easily interpret as an atheistic endorsement of incest, adultery, and lust.³¹ Hunt’s Francesca, a vindicated adulteress, is made the figure of his corrupt literary inspiration in a passage ringing with amplified echoes of Burke’s *Reflections*:

[O]ur hatred and contempt of Leigh Hunt, we say, is not so much owing to these and other causes, as to the odious and unnatural harlotry of his polluted muse. We were the first to brand with a burning iron the false face of this kept-mistress of a demoralizing incendiary. We tore off her gaudy veil and

³¹ See Michael Eberle-Sinatra’s account of *Rimini*’s reception in *Leigh Hunt and the London Literary Scene*, pp. 74-91.

transparent drapery, and exhibited the painted cheeks and writhing limbs of the prostitute. We denounced to the execration of the people of England, the man who had dared to write in the solitude of a cell, whose walls ought to have heard only the sighs of contrition and repentance, a lewd tale ... in which the violation of Nature herself was wept over, palliated, justified, and held up to imitation, and the violators themselves worshipped as holy martyrs. (453)

Dressed *à la grecque*, Hunt's muse is a sexualised embodiment of political radicalism. Diaphanous gowns of silk gauze and sheer muslin had been all the rage in late eighteenth-century France, and in 1783 Elisabeth Vigée le Brun painted Marie Antoinette wearing a dress consisting of many layers of white muslin, with an orange sash for a belt. Controversy stoked the garment's popularity, since it closely resembled the *chemise*, a woman's undergarment. The *chemise à la reine* and other imitations of classical drapery became associated with the figure of Liberty via the paintings of Jacques-Louis David. By the 1790s, more transparent fabric was used, and dress *à la grecque* was 'a particularly exhibitionist and immoral fashion choice, and one moreover that leveled the differences between women in troubling ways' (Grigsby 323). When Z puts the 'radical' in 'no radical distinction allowed between the private and public character of a poet', there is an allusion to Hunt's political radicalism, and an implication that praise for his literary works would be complicit in that radicalism. This is another black mark against Hunt's right to privacy in the literary sphere. It is not every poet, says Z, whose actions dissolve the separation between his private and public character; it is the radical poet, the bilious poet, the seditious and blasphemous poet, the plebeian poet, who must lose that privilege of men of letters.

Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine has become famous for its nastiness, and the vicious essays on 'the Cockney School of Poetry' canonised as a monument in the reception of Romanticism (see above). Yet *Blackwood's* did not perpetuate ad hominem literary criticism indiscriminately: Hunt, Hogg and others were relished as exceptional cases, assailable because they had themselves violated the terms of entry to respectable literary society; and the reviews included strenuous justifications of the satire being perpetrated. As Mole has argued, *Blackwood's* did not 'abandon the borderline between the individual and the work, but ... invent[ed] sophisticated and sometimes sophistic ways of arguing that it has never really been crossed' (V: xvi). For instance, *Blackwood's* hypocritically justified its own controversy-courting attacks by referring to Leigh Hunt's appetite for controversy, an 'irritable temper which keeps the unhappy man ... in a perpetual fret with himself and all the world beside, and that shews itself equally in his deadly enmities and capricious friendships' (453).³² To show just cause for the magazine's attacks on Hunt, it was felt necessary to catalogue his transgressions at length: with repeated references to Hunt's attested contempt for the British monarchy, Z piles up moral high ground. It is evident that Lockhart could justify making an exception for Hunt, while it is also evident *Blackwood's* actually shared in the consensus that reviews in general should critique literary works, not literary lives.

³² Remarks of this kind, which call attention not just to the morality of Hunt's writing but also to his personal conduct and character, are crucial to the special offensiveness of textual caricature. Keats understood this in his letter to Benjamin Bailey on 3 November 1817: 'There has been a flaming attack upon Hunt in the Endinburgh [sic] Magazine—I never read anything so virulent—accusing him of the greatest Crimes—dep[r]eciating his Wife his Poetry—his Habits—his company, his Conversation' (Keats 1958: I, 179-80).

The stakes were high when publishing attacks on an individual's private character, especially when the anonymity of a magazine's contributors was not absolute. 'Z' might have been unnamed, but victims of *Maga's* satire were prepared to hound its publisher William Blackwood as a substitute for whoever had penned the caricature. Blackwood risked his personal safety whenever he published a remark that could be interpreted as insultingly personal, since it was widely known that he could often be found in his shop in Princes Street, Edinburgh. If a writer wanted to avenge a harsh review in the magazine, they had only to seek him out. Mary Wilson Gordon, sister of John Wilson, wrote about an incident that took place in the spring of 1818, when John Douglas of the *Glasgow Chronicle* assaulted Blackwood in the street:

The city of late has been in a state of pleasing commotion owing to a fracas which took place last week between Blackwood and a Mr. Douglas from Glasgow, a disgusting, vulgar, conceited writer, whose name was mentioned in one of Nicol Jarvie's letters in the Magazine, which gave the gentleman such high offence, that after mature deliberation he determined on coming to Edinburgh, and horsewhipping Mr. Blackwood. Accordingly ... one day as the worthy bookseller was entering his shop, Mr D. followed him, and laid his whip across his shoulder; and before Mr. B had time to recover from his surprise, Mr D. walked off without leaving his address. Mr. B immediately went out and bought a stick; and, accompanied by Mr. Hogg,³³ went in search of Mr. D., whom at last they detected just about to step into a coach on his

³³ On the consequences of Hogg's involvement, see Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, pp. 150-1.

return to Glasgow. Mr. B. immediately attacked him, and beat him as hard as he could.... (200-1)³⁴

Leigh Hunt and his brother may have had a similar plan of action in mind when their calls in *The Examiner* for Z to disclose his identity only generated more invective from *Blackwood's*, and they pressured Blackwood's agents in London to surrender the name of the essays' author.³⁵ Beating another man, and especially beating him with a stick or horsewhip, was a humiliating act of violence that refused to recognise him as a social equal and a gentleman. The assailant usually took the victim unawares and unarmed. Blackwood wasted no time in procuring a stick and going after Douglas because if a victim of a beating wanted to redress his grievance, the immediate course of action was to reverse the roles and cast himself as assailant.

In a duel, on the other hand, the two parties were admitted to the process on equal terms and agreed to abide by the rules of duelling.³⁶ Duelling was the gentlemanly method of obtaining restitution and settling a quarrel between equals; and duels normally took place in secluded areas without audiences, whereas beatings took place publicly, as if to create a real version of the public humiliations imagined in the eighteenth-century distinction between satire and libel. In the absence of any governing body or actual rulebook, they were organised such that Richard Cronin has described the duel as 'like the Italian sonnet ... a genre. Its practitioners secure

³⁴ Scott recounted in a letter to the Duke of Buccleuch that Douglas 'surprize[d] Ebony alias Blackwood at his door with half a dozen slaps with his horsewhip instead of an order for as many copies of his new magazine' (V: 154).

³⁵ See Mason, *Blackwood's Magazine, 1817-25*, I: xvii. Leigh and John Hunt also publicly challenged 'Z' three times in *The Examiner* to reveal his identity. See Eberle-Sinatra, p. 82.

³⁶ The practice of duelling declined in the eighteenth century in favour of civil tort actions; see Sir William Holdsworth, *A History of English Law* (1837), VIII: 353.

prestige by their obedience to a demanding system of rules' (16). The prestige of duelling was masculine: 'petticoat duels' between women were not unheard of, the most famous being the duel with pistols and swords that took place in 1792 between Lady Almeria Braddock and a Mrs Elphinstone, who had spoken of Lady Braddock's beauty in the past tense – but as a rule duelling was 'an assertion of manhood', with 'entry to the field of honour ... restricted to men' (Cronin 203). Finally, whereas the duel was supposed to finalise the conflict, beatings and whippings could initiate a theoretically unending sequence of assaults, with the victim and assailant switching roles each time. Lives were likely never at stake, though the injuries were physically and psychologically painful.

Public 'beatings' also took the form of published counterattacks that indicate the strength of feeling about the sanctity of writers' private lives and *Blackwood's* audacity in transgressing it. The 'Cockney School' essays provoked John Scott's condemnations in the *London Magazine*, accusing the *Blackwood's* writers of 'the most licentious personal abuse'.³⁷ According to Walter Scott, John Douglas 'underwent [Blackwood's] retaliative discipline with great patience', but then went after Hogg in the pages of his *Chronicle*, likening him to a shop-porter; Hogg responded with a haughty letter published in *Blackwood's*, claiming he was

³⁷ See 'Blackwood's Magazine' in *London Magazine* for November 1820, pp. 509-21; 'The Mohock Magazine' in December 1820, pp. 666-85; and 'The Mohocks' in January 1821, pp. 76-7. Scott's campaign culminated in a fatal duel with Lockhart's friend John Christie, at Chalk Farm in February 1821. Scott had initially refused Lockhart's challenge on the grounds that Lockhart's financial interest in the sale of *Blackwood's* disqualified him from a duel between gentlemen. Yet more public quarrelling took place, in statements published by Lockhart and Scott, before Lockhart's accusation of cowardice goaded Scott into challenging Christie to a duel with pistols. Scott took a bullet to the hip in the second exchange, and died in the Chalk Farm Tavern some days later. See Cronin, *Paper Pellets*, 1-6.

‘admitted to society where the said D. would not be suffered to attend as a waiter’ (Scott V: 155).³⁸ Macvey Napier brought out an unsigned pamphlet titled *Hypocrisy Unveiled and Calumny Detected in a Review of Blackwood’s Magazine* (1818), in which he accused Maga of ‘hold[ing] up personal defects, peculiarities, and misfortunes, to ridicule and scorn’ (47), and of creating an environment where writers lived in fear of exposure: ‘All the privacies of life are ransacked—all the sanctuaries of our nature explored and violated, for the purposes of feeding an insatiate and depraved appetite for scandal and detraction’ (8). The pamphlet ends with an assurance that the writer is prepared to give *Blackwood’s* a taste of its own medicine:

At no distant period ... we pledge ourselves to resume our examination, and we farther pledge ourselves it shall THEN be prosecuted with much less reserve, and with more personal effect than it has been in the present instance. ... We know them well,—all and each of them,—their names, characters, and schemes... (53-4)

David Higgins has pointed to the hypocrisy of this threatening pamphlet, ‘meant to be an attack on “personality”, but ... simply repeating the exaggerated rhetoric of personal vilification to be found in *Blackwood’s*’ (58). But the victims and their defenders understood the difficulty of rising above invective when the reviewer had, instead of presenting a reasoned and gentlemanly critique of a literary work, humiliated the author with the perceived flaws of his work as a reflection of flawed

³⁸ Hogg’s response ‘brought the Shepherd from being a second to be a principal in the affair’, and when the police were unable to arrest the ‘two Glasgow gentlemen’ who had come to Edinburgh to provoke him to a duel, he retreated to Altrive Farm (V: 155-6).

character, even down to the details of his personal appearance and habits of speech. To answer with reasoned argument would be to pretend a duel between equals; returning the attack in kind was the best means of address.³⁹

There is perhaps no better example of the pain caused by personal satire in a nineteenth-century literary context than James Hogg's treatment by the *Blackwood's* circle. Hogg's complexly acrimonious relationship with *Blackwood's* has been much analysed, and Ian Duncan, Mark L. Schoenfield, and most recently Kelly E. Battles have all discussed how John Wilson's reviews perpetrate personal satire by describing and foregrounding Hogg's body.⁴⁰ I am concerned here with the moment in 1821 when the cracks in Hogg's deteriorating relationship with the *Blackwood's* circle first became visible: when he found himself contemplating serious physical assault against Blackwood, the very man he had helped to pursue and attack John Douglas in 1818. Hogg had ventured to bring details of his personal history into the public eye, appending 'a Memoir of the Author's Life, written by Himself' to the third edition of his poetry collection *The Mountain Bard*. The memoir tells how

³⁹ Byron's *English Bards, and Scotch Reviewers* (1808) falls partly into the same category as Macvey's pamphlet. The poem castigates Francis Jeffrey whom Byron believed (incorrectly) to have authored Henry Brougham's scathing review of *Hours of Idleness* (1807) in the *Edinburgh Review*. As in the *Blackwood's* review of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* (see pp. 72-3), Brougham emphasises how *Hours of Idleness* self-promotingly parades Byron's youth and privilege, 'allud[ing] frequently to his family and ancestors—sometimes in poetry, sometimes in notes' (285)

⁴⁰ Ian Duncan, 'Hogg's Body', *Scott's Shadow: The Novel in Romantic Edinburgh* (Princeton University Press, 2007), pp. 173-82; Mark L. Schoenfield, 'Butchering James Hogg', in *At the Limits of Romanticism*, eds. Mary Favret and Nicola Watson (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1994); Kelly E. Battles, 'Bad Taste, Gothic Bodies, and Subversive Aesthetics in Hogg's *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner*', *Essays in Romanticism*, 19.5 (2012), pp. 49-64.

Hogg, ruined by risky investments in farmland, and his reputation as a shepherd tarnished by his literary pursuits, was unable to find work near home:

Having appeared as a poet, and a speculative farmer beside, no one would now employ me as a shepherd. I even applied to some of my old masters, but they refused me, and for a whole winter I found myself without employment, and without money, in my native country; therefore, in February 1810, in utter desperation, I took my plaid about my shoulders, and marched away to Edinburgh, determined, since no better could be, to push my fortune as a literary man... On going to Edinburgh, I found that my poetical talents were rated nearly as low there as my shepherd qualities were in Ettrick. (xxx)

Brandishing his lack of social standing as a mark of authenticity to interest the reader, Hogg professes that both he and his literary work lacked urbanity: his poems had been written ‘to please the circles about the fire-sides in the country’, he ‘had never been once in any polished society’, and at the age of 38 he ‘knew no more of human life or manners’ than he had as a boy (xxxi). Candidly yet calculatedly self-deprecating, Hogg’s memoir also advertises his acquaintance with important figures in Edinburgh’s literary scene, chief among them Byron,⁴¹ Scott,⁴² and of course John Wilson of *Blackwood’s Magazine*. Hogg was ‘exceedingly anxious to meet’ Wilson, whom he heard was ‘a man from the mountains in Wales, or the West of England,

⁴¹ In a letter to George Boyd, Hogg anticipated ‘a fair sale’ and planned ‘a long introduction and a dedication to Lord Byron’ (II.66). In the end, the book was more appropriately dedicated to Scott as ‘Sheriff of Ettrick Forest, and Minstrel of the Scottish Border’.

⁴² Hogg established a professional relationship with Scott many years prior to his arrival in Edinburgh: he provided ballads for Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3) and his letters to Scott from the Highlands were published in the *Scots Magazine*.

with hair like eagles' feathers, and nails like birds' claws; a red beard, and an uncommon degree of wildness in his looks' (xlv-vi). The memoir tells how he became personally acquainted with Wilson after *Blackwood's* published a mocking review of Hogg's poem *The Field of Waterloo*. The poet responded with an abusive letter, which 'proved only a source of amusement to Wilson', who sent back 'a letter of explanation and apology, which knit my heart closer to him than ever' (lxxiii), according to Hogg.

Hogg's effort to associate himself like this with Wilson and *Blackwood's*, publicly and in print, backfired horribly. The memoir irritated Wilson – whether it was Hogg's description of his wild looks, Hogg's presumption that his book would be reviewed favourably in *Blackwood's* because of the personal connection, Hogg's attempted romanticising of his career as a shepherd, or perhaps for all three reasons. The expectation of a good review in *Blackwood's* would have been all the more offensive to the magazine's editor, given that Blackwood had been surprised to hear *The Mountain Bard* was being published by Oliver and Boyd, and offended that Hogg refused to consult him on the publication. He repeatedly tried to remonstrate with Hogg,⁴³ but Hogg did not see that Blackwood had any rights in the matter:

If it is a maxim with the trade to monopolise every authors whole works whom they once befriend or publish a book for, and that no other man must take a share on any conditions they ought all to be damned to hell. If you do not remember the transaction of refusing to take *the mountain bard* into the

⁴³ See NLS, MS 30,002 folios 14-17 for Blackwood's letters to Hogg on the publication of *The Mountain Bard* by Oliver and Boyd.

proposals for the small edition of my works I do, which is quite sufficient for my purpose. (II:59)

Hogg went on to goad Blackwood by supposing that Oliver and Boyd would sell more copies of the new book in one year than Blackwood would sell of Hogg's long poem *The Queen's Wake* (1819) in seven years (II:60). Whatever their reasons, Wilson and Blackwood did not let their friendship with Hogg get in the way of publishing an outrageous review of the memoir appended to his new *Mountain Bard*. The review makes an ironic contribution to Hogg's project of underlining the simplicity of his provincial origins:

Well, then—this prodigy tires of the shepherd's life, and comes jogging into Edinburgh; he offers his ballads and balderdash, at sundry times and in divers manners, to all the booksellers in Edinburgh, high and low, rich and poor, but they are all as shy as trouts during thunder—not one will bite. No wonder. Only picture to yourself a stout country lout, with a bushel of hair on his shoulders that had not been raked for months, enveloped in a coarse plaid impregnated with tobacco, with a prodigious mouthful of immeasurable tusks, and with a dialect that set all conjecture at defiance, lumbering suddenly in upon the elegant retirement of Mr Miller's back-shop.... (44)

The 'Ettrick shepherd' appears not as the next Burns, formed for literature by pastoral life, but as escaped cattle. Blackwood had been beaten in Princes Street for less.

Hogg wrote to Blackwood in the strongest language, calling him 'the worst assassin out of hell'. He stressed that the review had wounded his wife as well as to himself: on her 'the blows that you inflict wound deeper and smart with more

poignancy, nor can any palliatives that I can use heal them'. Finally, Hogg requested that Blackwood 'instantly send me the name and address of your correspondent' (II:109), so that he could return the blows under which he smarted. Receiving no response, he wrote to Scott seeking advice and sympathy:

I am assailed by letters from every quarter urging me to do something in my own defence which I am very willing to do if I wist what to do but I am so apt to run wrong that I dare not trust myself without asking your advice. Shall I answer him in print? pursue him at law to which it will soon come if I answer him? or knock out his brains? I must do something for I am told there never was a man as ill used in Britain and truly I do not think there ever was.
(II: 116)

Scott's reply was a lengthy attempt to pacify Hogg and caution him against attempting to assault any members of the *Blackwood's* circle. As Scott foresaw, an assault on Blackwood would only perpetuate a cycle of violence; yet he understood Hogg's instinctive desire to return the blow with the strength of the press, the law, or his own fist:

I am very sorry to observe from the tenor of your letter that you permitted the caricature in Blackwoods magazine to sit so near your feelings... Amends or if you please revenge is the natural wish of human nature when it receives these sort of provocations but in general it cannot be gratified without entailing much worse consequences than could possibly flow from the first injury. ... To answer such an article seriously would be fighting with a

shadow and throwing stones at moonshine.⁴⁴ If a man says that I am guilty of some particular fact I would vindicate myself if I could but if he caricatures my person and depreciates my talents I would content myself with thinking that the world will judge of my exterior and of my powers of composition by the evidence of their own eyes and of my works. I cannot as a lawyer and a friend advise you to go to law.... As to knocking out of brains that is talking no how.... I know the advice to sit quiet under injury is hard to flesh and blood. (XII: 446)

Like Hogg, and like so many others before him, Scott selects phrases that emphasise the pain of being caricatured as though personal satire were an act of physical violence, an ‘injury ... hard to flesh and blood’.

These letters between Hogg and Scott, in which a textual caricature is discussed at length and with intensity, make a telling contrast with Southey’s letters about the graphic caricature of himself in the *Anti-Jacobin*. Southey was writing in 1798, a time when a reputation as a jacobin was surely something to be feared, but Gillray’s caricature does not seem to have worried him at all; on the contrary, he reasonably assumed that no one in his circle would see the caricature unless he called their attention to it.⁴⁵ As these examples show, textual caricatures were far more

⁴⁴ Scott goes on to liken literary quarrels over reputation to ‘boxing in the street’. Hogg’s background did not entitle him to the satisfaction of a gentleman in a duel, and indeed Scott had been amused by the thought of Hogg fighting one: ‘Our poor friend Hogg has had an *affair of honour* or something tending that way which is too whimsical to express & yet I am vexd at it while I cannot help laughing for the soul of me’ (*Letters* V: 154). On ‘the ethics of duelling’ as ‘inseparable from questions of class’, see Cronin, *Paper Pellets*, pp. 123-53. Bare-knuckle boxing, on the other hand, was a sport of relatively few rules, with the London Prize Ring Rules that outlawed scratching, biting, and other ignominious tactics, not introduced until 1838.

⁴⁵ See pp. 36-7. The harmlessness of Gillray’s caricature of Southey suggests how some printed forms of caricature maintained the insiderness of the commissioned and

likely than graphic caricatures to injure men and women of letters. The literary sphere was not contiguous with that of the Westminster conservatory of satirical prints such that Gillray knew enough about Southey to source his likeness and caricature him properly. The resulting caricature had very little power to damage his reputation either in the eyes of his literary peers, or before a larger reading public.⁴⁶ Hogg, by contrast, was intimately involved with the literary scene in which *Blackwood's* circulated its caricatures. That Southey in 1798 was amused by a caricature, whereas Hogg in 1821 wanted to knock out the brains of the perpetrator, makes it clear that caricature's offensiveness, its potential to cause pain to the individual and damage to his or her reputation, was constituted and limited by the type of publication, its market, and the peers it addressed.

As in 1817 Wilson had justified the personality in his review of Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria* by accusing Coleridge of displaying his private life before the public, so in 1821 he accused Hogg of 'self-exposure' (43). The review of *The Mountain Bard* memoir satirises Hogg's self-promotion with a culinary metaphor in which Hogg is the cook, the waiter, and the dish served: 'I take the liberty of sending

amateur caricature portraits that circulated in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

⁴⁶ Founded by George Canning when Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the *Anti-Jacobin* (1797-99) was a patriotic conservative magazine endorsed by Pitt, supported by the Treasury, and aimed at a propertied upper-class readership. Key contributors included Canning's friends George Ellis (diplomat, antiquarian, and Member of Parliament for Seaford between 1796 and 1802) and John Hookham Frere (diplomat, classicist, and Member of Parliament for West Looe between 1796 and 1802). By its own reckoning, the *Anti-Jacobin* had approximately 2,500 regular subscribers. In the last number, of July 1799, the writers congratulated themselves on an approximate weekly readership of 50,000. They suggested multiplying the 2,500 by seven (seven being 'a number of which every one's family may be reasonably supposed to consist'), then adding 17,500 to account for subscribers 'lending our Papers to their poorer Neighbours' (II:621). See Wendy Hinde, *George Canning* (1989), pp. 58-71.

back Hogg, which has disgusted me more severely than anything I have attempted to swallow since Macvey's Bacon' (43). Wilson's review, which left *Blackwood's* open to the charges of bad taste and impropriety in serving Hogg up for the entertainment of their readers, holds Hogg accountable for bad taste and impropriety in marketing himself as a literary product, coming to Edinburgh to 'push [his] fortune as a literary man' (42).⁴⁷ The image of the author as so much meat on a plate may have gained inspiration from Blackwood's displeasure at Hogg's mercenary decision to publish his memoir with Oliver and Boyd. The way Wilson's review of the new *Mountain Bard* justifies its vitriol by reference to Hogg's self-promotion can be seen as a version of the justification for Wilson's review of *Biographia Literaria* back in 1817. The critic frames his review as properly personal, a just retort to an improperly personal biography that 'lays open, not unfrequently, the character of the Man as well as of the Author' (5), and a disciplinary exercise in deflating the ego that led Coleridge to offer up such details. Coleridge has not understood that it is the job of critics such as Wilson and Lockhart to extol literary writers:⁴⁸ he extols himself, 'scatter[ing] his Sibylline Leaves around him, with as majestic an air as if a crowd of enthusiastic admirers were rushing forward to grasp the divine promulgations, instead of their being, as in fact they are, coldly received by the accidental passenger, like a lying lottery puff or a quack advertisement' (6). Like Hogg's memoir for *The*

⁴⁷ The reviews in which Wilson and Lockhart remark on the contentious tempers and pecuniary cannot, of course, acknowledge *Blackwood's* commercial motivation for controversy: vitriolic reviews drove up circulation like nothing else.

⁴⁸ Wilson contrasts Coleridge's 'absurd elevation' with the 'dignified deportment' of Walter Scott, a 'great living Poet'. 'Throughout all the works of Scott', he notes, 'scarcely a single allusion is made to himself; and then it is with a truly delightful simplicity, as if he were not aware of his immeasurable superiority to the ordinary run of mankind' (6).

Mountain Bard, the *Biographia Literaria* must be maligned as an individual's publicising of themselves as an individual, in an attempt to add lustre to their literary works.

Thus in the cases of Coleridge, Hunt, and Hogg, Blackwood and Wilson were able to justify an extreme version of the bold idea that – as the first of the *Noctes Ambrosianae* put it in 1822 – '[W]ho can review books, without first reviewing those that wrote them?' (362).⁴⁹ Wilson and Lockhart could argue that Coleridge, Hunt, and Hogg had already submitted themselves to public exposure in their published writings; and the *Biographia Literaria*, *The Story of Rimini*, and the 1821 *Mountain Bard* were published with their authors' names displayed prominently on the title pages. It was probably just as important to *Blackwood's* more particular satires of Hunt and Hogg that both were men of no social rank. Alongside all the criticism of morals and manners, the fact of their hereditary and intrinsic vulgarity served as a crucial justification for making Hunt and Hogg exceptions to the rule against personal satire.⁵⁰ The *Blackwood's* staff were at once highly conscious that the magazine's caricatures of Hunt and Hogg had crossed a line, and perpetrated these caricatures in the belief that these writers, vulgar upstarts, were not properly part of the bourgeois literary sphere and could, in the right circumstances, be denied its privileges.

⁴⁹ The *Noctes Ambrosianae* gave *Blackwood's* readers entry to an exclusive coterie in which matters of culture were decided upon: offering an appealing alternative to the Whiggish ideal of the public sphere, while profiting from a large readership's desire for membership in a virtual public of readers.

⁵⁰ David Higgins has observed that 'one of the extraordinary things about *Blackwood's* is that even while it attacked Keats and Leigh Hunt as lower-class interlopers and "Cockney" radicals, it claimed it was free of the political bias of the quarterly Reviews and that it supported literary genius regardless of its social origins or political affiliations' (*Romantic Genius and the Literary Magazine* 17).

2.3 'A sort of caricature': Peacock's protocol

At present I am writing a comic romance with the title of *Nightmare Abbey* and amusing myself with the darkness and misanthropy of modern literature from the lantern jaws of which ~~death's head~~ I shall endeavour to elicit a laugh.

Thomas Love Peacock to James Hogg, April 1818 (I:123)

The author of this work, and of several similar productions, is, we understand, a Mr. Peacock. It would be difficult to say what his books are, for they are neither romances, novels, tales nor treatises, but a mixture of all these combined. They display a sort of caricature of modern characters and incidents; executed with greater licence than nature, and with more humour than wit.

Review of *Nightmare Abbey* in *The Literary Gazette*, December 1818 (787-8)

Since the works of Thomas Love Peacock were first read, his critics have struggled to summarise the way his satire relates to the world it describes. The phrase suggested by the *Literary Gazette* to summarise Peacock's satirical technique, 'a sort of caricature', is as good a phrase as any (787). Peacock practised a satire that was recognisably 'caricature' in its comic mode of exaggeration, its topicality, and its concern with character. The restraint of his satire has sometimes been phrased as a matter of degree: thus Raymond Wright suggests that 'By Regency standards, Peacock's satire on his contemporaries was by no means harsh' (16). Yet Peacock's satirical method was strictly restrained by the same protocol that required *Blackwood's* to justify its caricatures of Hunt and Hogg. Peacock was committed to satirising the literary and intellectual fashions of the Regency period – and equally committed to the ideal that men of letters and intellectuals were not appropriate subject material for satire. That novels such as *Melincourt* (1817) and *Nightmare Abbey* (1818) seem to be populated with recognisable historical characters has often

concealed Peacock's protocol of satire from his readers. While it might be impossible to satirise literature without satirising literary figures by association, Peacock aimed to satirise literary people only as they publicised themselves in print. The result was 'a sort of caricature': satirical dialogues that invited the public to recognise aspects of public literary personae, creating a version of caricature's intimacy and insidership without actually invading the privacy of real individuals. We might call it 'caricaturistic' writing in recognition of the fact that such characterisations provided nineteenth-century readers with the pleasure of enjoying satirical portraits almost as though they were of real people: a caricature not in fact, but in stylistic quality. Peacock's conversation novels clarify the status quo on caricature in the early nineteenth century so effectively because they occupy the contested border between actuality and fiction while insisting that they represent the real without ever trespassing upon it.

The scholarly literature on Peacock has been dominated by articles, theses, and books that interpret his conversation novel as a kind of *roman à clef* and hunt for references to historical individuals. While there is nothing essentially wrong with arguing that Peacock's characters are associated with real individuals, 'identifications' run the risk of eliding the formal distinctiveness of Peacock's novels and putting his satire in the same category with the attacks on Hunt and Hogg in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which did, if with a great deal of self-defensive manoeuvring, cross the line between criticism of a work and criticism of its author. A few years after Northrop Frye's appreciation of Peacock as a 'Menippean satirist',⁵¹

⁵¹ Frye places Peacock's novels in the same genre as the *Noctes Ambrosianae*: the satirical anatomy, a saturnalian 'piling up' of erudition in which the targets of the satire are 'overwhelm[ed ...] with an avalanche of their own jargon' (XXII:291-2).

Marilyn Butler unsettled the established view of Peacock's characters as portraits with *Peacock Displayed: A Satirist in his Context* (1979). Butler's book, the first study to conduct research into Peacock's own views on satirical composition, reveals the uniqueness of Peacock's novels by comparison with contemporary works of satire:

[T]here is no sound evidence that Peacock drew what can fairly be called portraits of real-life individuals. In fact, the best testimony, Peacock's own, is directly to the contrary. In the Preface he wrote for *Melincourt* when it was reprinted in 1856 he specifically denies any attempt to represent anyone's 'private' character: 'Of the disputants whose opinions and public characters (for I never trespassed on private life) were shadowed in some of the persons of the story, almost all have passed from the diurnal scene.' Peacock's careful phrasing concedes that in some of his novels the name of a minor character is deliberately meant to bring a real-life thinker or public figure to mind.⁵² (16-17)

Critics had perhaps previously been wary of 'taking Peacock's word for it', but as Butler points out, there have been other more substantial obstacles to appreciating the extent of Peacock's satirical protocol. His characters were intended primarily to

⁵² In this Peacock's conversation novels fall somewhere between the two categories he distinguished in his essay on 'French Comic Romances': 'In respect of presenting or embodying opinion, there are two very distinct classes of comic fictions: one in which the characters are abstractions or embodied classifications, and the implied or embodied opinions the main matter of the work; another, in which the characters are individuals, and the events and the action those of actual life—the opinions, however prominent they may be made, being merely incidental' (IX: 258). Opinions clearly are not incidental in Peacock's conversation novels, but they are ascribed to individualised figures who can be identified with actual individuals.

present ideas as they circulate publicly, and especially in print; but Peacock's satires look just enough like novels that we expect them to contain novelistic characters:

While he is offering ideas, he appears to deal with character, and for this modern readers have elaborate training, and expectations. Like the Victorians, we have a set of assumptions derived from novel-reading and, supported by the professional expertise of the psychiatrist, we have what is in a sense an even more developed interest in personality. By the standards of either the novelist or the psychiatrist, Peacock's characters are disappointing. In fact, his dislike of his period's taste for personality is maintained in his work, and he does not deal in character at all. Of all his unorthodoxies, his humorous gestures of intellectual sabotage, it has been perhaps the most uncomfortable, the hardest to forgive. (19)

Butler thus diagnoses character as the critical crux of Peacock's novels for modern readers, and Peacock's characters 'the real reason why he became, and has remained, so profound a puzzle'. The uniqueness of his approach – a literary and next to impersonal form of topical satire – along with the fact that his novels are modern in content while classical in form, has made his novels challenging to appreciate.

It clarifies Butler's view of Peacock's characters as 'public' characters to understand that Peacock's satirical dialogue did not make use of personal conversations that would have been presumed confidential, and that in many cases he improved his satirical dialogue on opinions and phrases that had already appeared publicly in print. Peacock had never met Coleridge when he conceived the character of 'Moley Mystic' for *Melincourt*, or 'Ferdinando Flosky' for *Nightmare Abbey*: everything Coleridgean in those novels Peacock derives from Coleridge's published

writings.⁵³ James Mulvihill has demonstrated that while Peacock's first conversation novel (or 'novel of talk'), *Melincourt*, contains an idealised public sphere in which voices discourse rationally, the novels from *Nightmare Abbey* onwards present intellectual discourse as overdetermined by the market for print:

[T]he Peacockian novel of talk posits a popular culture in which intellectual exchange has been processed for mass consumption. The typically irresolute nature of its debates may thus reflect Peacock's sense that the positions taken in these debates have already been co-opted by pre-conceived popular categories and that a rationally deduced outcome one way or the other is beside the point. (568)

The novels' dialogue include phrases and even whole sentences from published works, and Peacock uses footnotes to attribute some of these intertextual references to their sources in treatises and periodicals (Dyer 108). A passage in a letter from Peacock to Shelley in May 1818, concerning the composition of *Nightmare Abbey*, exemplifies the textual emphasis of Peacock's satire:

I think it necessary to 'make a stand' against the 'encroachments' of black bile. The fourth canto of Childe Harold is really too bad. I cannot consent to be auditor tantum of this systematical 'poisoning' of the 'mind' of the 'Reading Public'. (I: 123)

⁵³ On Peacock's renderings of Coleridge, Shelley, and Southey as 'not so much malicious personal portraits as criticisms of the public figure' (31), see James Mulvihill, *Thomas Love Peacock* (Boston, MA: G. K. Hall & Co., 1987), pp. 30-1, 37, 39, 59, etc. As Mulvihill notes, the love triangle in *Northanger Abbey* is a remarkable exception to Peacock's protocol, with its irresistible parallels between Marionetta and Harriet Shelley, and Celinda Toobad and Mary Godwin (61, 63-4).

In this passage of ironised points of view, Peacock's first-person pronoun implies a personal commitment while inverted commas mark out the phrases he is quoting and suggest that it is some other person who 'think[s] it necessary to "make a stand"'. Peacock ventriloquises *Melincourt's* Mr Killthedeath, a character based on the published writings of John Wilson Croker; then he slides into the words of Coleridge's *Statesman's Manual*, a key inspiration for the characters of Mystic and Flosky. The equivocality of the satire, with both the black bile and the anti-bile contingent made objects of critique and ridicule, is typical of Peacock. The inverted commas entangle his 'I' in the texts through which he speaks, and anchor the satire in its published sources.

The revised view of Peacock's characters as publicly and textually oriented, has been further substantiated by Gary Dyer, whose book *British Satire and the Politics of Style, 1789-1832* sets Peacock's satire in the context of the satirical Regency novel (now largely forgotten, but once a ubiquitous genre). The typical satirical novel of the Regency period (the kind kept in Lady St Edmunds's boudoir) features a series of lightly fictionalised caricature portraits of well-known aristocrats and other celebrities. Dyer reads the fifth chapter of Peacock's novel *Crotchet Castle* (1831) as a critique of this kind of satire:⁵⁴

⁵⁴ A reviewer for the *Monthly Magazine* had noticed the difference between such novels and Peacock's: 'The author of *Melincourt* finishes his portraits like Hogarth, while the portraits in [*Six Weeks at Long's* and *Three Weeks at Fladong's*] are mere sign-posts or coarse caricatures' (453).

A comparison with Hogarth was the ultimate compliment since Hogarth's works were treated with deference that no graphic satirist, not even Gillray, could have dreamt of; and were often cited as 'comic paintings' that proved the inferiority of mere caricature. John Barrell notes in a recent essay that the adjective 'Hogarthian' appeared in print during Hogarth's lifetime (*LRB* 8). Comparing *Melincourt* and *Nightmare Abbey* with Hogarthian satire suggested that Peacock had succeeded in satirical characterisations that were entertainingly contemporary without

Lady Clarinda Bossnowl briefly describes for Captain Fitzchrome each of the eighteen people dining at Mr. Crotchet's table, explaining that after 'reading several fashionable novels, the fashionable this, and the fashionable that,' she is writing one herself. The name and promotional methods of Lady Clarinda's publisher, 'Mr. Puffall' ... identify him as Henry Colburn, who won wealth and notoriety in the 1820s publishing the tales of elite life by Ward, Bulwer, Disraeli, and others. Fittingly, a Puffall author, Mr. Eavesdrop, who 'coins all his acquaintance in reminiscences and sketches of character,' is among the diners at Crotchet's table. (56-7)

While Clarinda's disclosure that Eavesdrop 'coins' his friends might be read simply to mean that he makes money from his caricatures (which is certainly the case), the word also bears connotations of forgery and falsity. In Richard Brinsley Sheridan's play *The School for Scandal* (1777), Sir Peter Teazle disparages Lady Sneerwell's circle of gossips as 'utterers of forged tales, coiners of scandal, and clippers of reputation' (225). In Canto III of *Childe Harold* (1816), the speaker prides himself that 'I have not ... coin'd my cheek to smiles' (*CPW* II: 1.1050-52). As a coiner of characters, Eavesdrop stands accused of accumulating profits by altering and depreciating people's reputations. Butler has suggested that the character of Eavesdrop is partly a reflection on Leigh Hunt's reputation for profiting by satirical

compromising ethical integrity, artistic quality, or the dignity of real individuals. The claim that one did not satirise individuals, articulated in different ways by Hogarth and Peacock, was certainly crucial to the best possible outcome of a satirical characterisation that, while being formally and stylistically a caricature, could prove the inferiority of other lesser caricatures.

portraits of his literary acquaintance, and especially his unflattering memoir *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries* (1828).⁵⁵ The book was badly received – Byron being by this point a national hero – and effectively ended Hunt’s literary career.

It might seem pointless to include such a quiet character in a novel made up of conversations. Eavesdrop speaks only a few words in the whole novel. But his lack of speech (and presumed lack of ideas) fits with the fact that he has come to the castle not to participate in conversations but to profit from them. His ‘speaking name’ underlines his status as a listener, not a talker. Eavesdrop practises the kind of journalistic caricature Peacock abhorred. Described by Clarinda as ‘a sort of bookseller’s tool’ (43), later in the novel he is expelled from Mr Crotchet’s social circle: ‘Mr. Eavesdrop, having printed in a magazine some of the after-dinner conversations of the castle, had had sentence of exclusion passed upon him, on the motion of the Reverend Doctor Folliot, as a flagitious violator of the confidences of private life’ (132). Folliot, who has been identified by critics as the closest thing the novel has to a stand-in for Peacock himself,⁵⁶ is a learned clergyman expert in talking and drinking. Eavesdrop has published unflattering descriptions of Folliot’s physical appearance, and has reported private conversations which – we must assume – were conducted under the influence of alcohol. Folliot confronts Eavesdrop in a

⁵⁵ For the reception of Hunt’s *Lord Byron* in *Blackwood’s*, *The Quarterly Review*, *The Times*, *The Literary Magnet*, *The Literary Chronicle*, *The Monthly Review*, and *The North American Review*, see Michael Eberle-Sinatra, *Leigh Hunt and the London Literary Scene* (New York; London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 120-4.

⁵⁶ Johnstone and Bevis have observed that given Peacock’s tendency ‘to satirize not this or that opinion, but the very need to have an opinion (or to stick to it), it is curious that so many critics of *Crotchet Castle* should have felt the urge to deduce the author’s opinions from his work’ (lxxvii).

dialogue that rehearses the two chief complaints about textual caricatures published in literary contexts: first, that caricature committed an affront that could only be redressed with physical violence; second, that it turned private matters into products for public consumption.

The confrontation takes place after dinner, and ‘over the bottle’ (172).

Typically of Menippean satire, the social setting of the novel provides a pretext for the digressiveness of the philosophical discussion, as well as for the intermixing of prose with verse in the form of songs performed by the characters to entertain their fellow guests. Foremost among Peacock’s classical models for the satirical dinner scenes in his novels would have been the *cena Trimalchionis*,⁵⁷ the centrepiece of Petronius’s prose satire *Satyricon*.⁵⁸ In Peacock’s dinner scene, the women have

⁵⁷ Johnston and Bevis have noted that Peacock owned five editions of the *Satyricon*, and his letters contain many appreciative references to it. See *Catalogue of the Library of the Late Thos. Love Peacock*, I: 490-2 and 659-60; see *Letters* I: 80; II: 311, 316, 329, 332, 334, 461. On the *Satyricon* as a model for *Crotchet Castle*, see Johnston and Bevis, pp. ci-ii. Peacock would have presumably known that Petronius’s text made veiled references to real individuals, through works such as Charles de Saint-Evrémonde’s key to the *Satyricon* in *Works of Petronius Arbiter* (1714), pp. xi-xxi. Saint-Evrémonde described Trimalchio as a kind of overloaded portrait: ‘the Author purposely made this *Hero* ridiculous, and extremely loaded his Picture, that he might the more resemble *Nero*’ (xi-iii). Saint-Evrémond was one of the first scholars to suggest that Petronius ‘gave himself the liberty of representing *Nero* under different Characters, all ridiculous, and under different names’ (xx).

⁵⁸ Written in the first century AD and set in the contemporary Neronian milieu, the *Satyricon* is one of the earliest written works classifiable as a novel, and the dinner episode is part of a longer narrative that combines satire with a sentimental romance plot. While highly influential on modern comic novelists such as Smollett and Peacock, *Don Quixote* and *Gil Blas* were more often cited as antecedents because the *Satyricon* deals so frankly with topics such as homosexuality, promiscuity, sexual torture, incontinence, and historical cannibalism. William Cowper condemns Petronius as a corrupter of youth in *The Progress of Error* (1782). Petronius was known as the *elegantiae arbiter* of Nero’s court, and his surviving work contrasts with that of the classical verse satirists Horace and Juvenal in being concerned with standards of taste and manners rather than with moral standards (see J.P. Sullivan’s introduction to the 1986 Penguin edition, pp. 18-26).

withdrawn, and the men are waggishly debating how an unspecified sum of money should best be used to improve society. Mr Mac Quedy proposes ‘lecture rooms and schools for all’, Mr Trillo to ‘[r]evive the Athenian theatre’, Mr Toogood (in reference to Robert Owen’s New Lanark) to ‘[b]uild a grand co-operative parallelogram, with a steam-engine in the middle for a maid of all work’ (175). More medically-minded speakers suggest draining duck-ponds to cure malaria, and inoculating a college of ‘anti-contagionists’ with all known diseases to observe the results. The toxicologist Mr Henbane, who has already killed the Crotchets’ cat, proposes a college more in line with his own line in experimentation on live animals:

MR. HENBANE.

Found a toxicological institution for trying all poisons and antidotes. I myself have killed a frog twelve times, and brought him to life eleven; but the twelfth time he died. I have a phial of the drug which killed him in my pocket, and shall not rest till I have discovered its antidote. (57)

On learning that Mr Henbane possesses a lethal drug with no remedy, Folliot proposes that the dangerous substance be confiscated, and disposed of by feeding to a lower life form. Eavesdrop, the organism in question, breaks his silence:

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

I move that the last speaker be dispossessed of his phial, and that it be forthwith thrown into the Thames.

MR. HENBANE.

On the question of Petronius as a Menippean satirist see Howard D. Weinbrot, *Menippean Satire Reconsidered: From Antiquity to the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. 40-3, 45-6.

How, sir? my invaluable, and in the present state of human knowledge,
infallible poison?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Let the frogs have all the advantage of it.

MR. CROTCHET.

Consider, doctor, the fish might participate. Think of the salmon.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Then let the owner's right-hand neighbour swallow it.

MR. EAVESDROP.

Me, sir! What have I done, sir, that I am to be poisoned, sir?

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have published a character of your facetious friend, the Reverend
Doctor F., wherein you have sketched off me; me, sir, even to my nose and
wig. What business have the public with my nose and wig? (58)

Francis Grose's *Rules for Drawing Caricaturas* (1788) pays particular attention to
noses, which 'may be divided into the angular; the aquiline or Roman; the parrot's
beak; the straight or Grecian; the bulbous or bottled; the turned up or snub; and the
mixed or broken' (7). But given what we know of Folliott's drinking habits, we can
assume that Eavesdrop's textual 'sketch' draws attention to the colour and texture of

Folliott's nose, rather than its shape. Multiple entries in Grose's comic dictionary of slang and wit, *The Vulgar Tongue* (first edition published 1785) indicate that a red and pimpled nose was a sign of drunkenness. The entry for 'Malmsey nose' (Malmsey or Malvasia being a variety of grape used for Madeira wine) describes 'a red pimpled snout, rich in carbuncles and rubes', while a 'grog-blossom' is a 'carbuncle, or pimple in the face, caused by drinking' (Grose n. pag.). Peacock confirms the suggestion by having Folliott explain the nature of Eavesdrop's crime with reference to the oracular Holy Bottle consulted by Panurge for marriage advice in *Gargantua and Pantagruel* – the only advice uttered by Rabelais's 'Dive Bouteille' is the instruction, 'Drink! Drink!'

MR. EAVESDROP.

Sir, it is all good humoured: all in *bonhomie*: all friendly and complimentary.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, the bottle, *la Dive Bouteille*, is a recondite oracle, which makes an Eleusinian temple of the circle in which it moves. He who reveals its mysteries must die. Therefore, let the dose be administered. *Fiat experimentum in animâ vili.* (58)⁵⁹

⁵⁹ 'Let the experiment be done on a worthless life': a maxim, often given as *fiat experimentum in corpore vili*, commonly used to advocate scientific experimentation on animals rather than humans, and on animals, such as frogs and rats, thought to be lower in the *scala naturae*. Presumably, given Folliott's Dionysian associations, Peacock also intended an allusion to the famous scene in Aristophanes's play *The Frogs* where Dionysus is aggravated by the frogs' persistent chorus of 'Brekekekèk-koàx-koàx'. On Folliott's quotation of *The Birds* (139), see Johnston and Bevis, pp. cvi-ii.

Because Eavesdrop's attack on Folliot's reputation is, like Addison's 'poison'd Dart', cowardly and dishonourable, Folliot feels justified in proposing the dishonourable method of poisoning for seeking redress. Clarinda's suitor Captain Fitzchrome has already likened Eavesdrop the author to Henbane the poisoner, both 'dangerous fellows': 'Let us hope' he says, 'that Eavesdrop will sketch off Henbane, and that Henbane will poison him for his trouble' (43).

Eavesdrop, a man of no social rank, cannot prove himself worthy of a duel. He repeatedly addresses Folliot as 'sir', presumably hoping to mollify the reverend by emphatically acknowledging his status as a gentleman. But Folliot brandishes his bamboo cane,⁶⁰ and for every 'sir' of Eavesdrop's, Folliot fires back another 'sir' in insistently sarcastic parallel:

MR. EAVESDROP.

Sir, you are very facetious at my expense.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, you have been very unfacetious, very infecete⁶¹ at mine. You have dished me up, like a savory omelette, to gratify the appetite of the reading rabble for gossip. The next time, sir, I will respond with the *argumentum baculinum*.

Print that, sir; put it on record as a promise of the Reverend Doctor F., which shall be most faithfully kept, with an exemplary bamboo.

⁶⁰ See also how Eavesdrop's caricature interrupts Folliot's 'reverie': 'Presently the image of Mr. Eavesdrop, with a printed sketch of the Reverend Doctor F., presented itself before him, and he began mechanically to flourish his bamboo' (75).

⁶¹ *Inficete* or *infacete*: 'unfacetious'; crude, unmannerly, not witty. Eavesdrop has probably used 'facetious' in the more modern sense of ill-mannered or ill-timed witticism; Folliot, displaying his classical learning, stresses the word's original connotations of elegance, refinement, and amiability in wit.

MR. EAVESDROP.

Your cloth protects you, sir.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

My bamboo shall protect me, sir.

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor, doctor, you are growing too polemical.

THE REV. DR. FOLLIOTT.

Sir, my blood boils. What business have the public with my nose and wig?

MR. CROTCHET.

Doctor! Doctor! (58-9)

By this point, ‘polemical’ is surely a euphemism for ‘pugilistic’, and we can picture Mr Crotchet restraining Folliott as he reminds him that he is a Doctor of Divinity. In true Regency style, Folliott threatens to beat Eavesdrop: an *argumentum baculinum*, he suggests, in recompense for the *argumentum ad hominem*.

Of course Eavesdrop is not actually concerned with winning or losing an intellectual argument, but with satire for the sake of entertainment and financial gain. Peacock, seeing himself as a satirist who caricatures fashionable ideas and the ways in which those ideas are expressed and critiqued in writing, seeks to distance himself from satirists such as Eavesdrop, who caricature wigs and noses for reader-

consumers. The offensiveness of Eavesdrop's caricature rests not on relative differences – such as its being more 'ill-natured', 'harsh', or 'personal' satire – but on material facts that determine the publicity of the caricature, in this case the individual's peculiar body, the individual's real name, and the individual's exposure through the circulation of commercial print. Folliott objects strongly to Eavesdrop's representation of his nose and wig, the use of a recognisable form of his real name ('the Reverend Doctor F.' [58]), and the distribution of the caricature to a public of readers. The image of the 'savory omelette' figures the victim of caricature as an object of consumption, entertainment, and taste, in a move reminiscent of *Blackwood's Magazine's* culinary metaphor for the mercenary 'serving up' of personal information as literature. Since eggs had to be beaten to make an omelette, as instructed in Elizabeth Raffald's *Experienced English Housekeeper*,⁶² Folliott's phrase may also be a way of saying that the man he wants to strike has already, in a sense, thoroughly beaten him.

Mr Eavesdrop is an aspect of *Crotchet Castle* easily overlooked, since he says very little, sings no songs, and plays no role in the vague drift of the novel's plot. He is however significant in that the inclusion (and subsequent expulsion) of Eavesdrop in *Crotchet Castle* can be seen as part of Peacock's effort, in the 1830s, to speak out against writers who made free with the lives of other writers.⁶³ He was especially contemptuous of the posthumous biographies that made free with details of Byron's private life, such as Hunt's 1828 biography and Thomas Moore's *Letters*

⁶² First published in 1769, Elizabeth Raffald's *Experienced English Housekeeper* includes a recipe for a savoury omelette of eggs and boiled ham, cooked in butter and seasoned with parsley, nutmeg, salt, and pepper.

⁶³ On 'anti-biographical discourse' in the early nineteenth century, see Higgins, *Romantic Genius and the Literary Magazine*, pp. 46-59.

and Journals of Lord Byron (1830) (IX: 69-139). As *Crotchet Castle* draws to a close, Eavesdrop has been expelled from Mr Crotchet's home; Folliott is free from the worry that his excesses will be reported in the books and periodicals sold by Mr Puffall, and falls into a peaceful drunken sleep, snoring 'over the empty punch-bowl' (150). It is a small fantasy, buoyed by the wishful thought that men and women whose works and deeds are of public interest and significance might lead private lives, and that their lives might remain private after death.

Introducing a selected edition of his novels in 1837, Peacock pointed out that his works were all originally published without prefaces, reasoning that 'I might very fitly preserve my own impersonality, having never intruded on the personality of others, nor taken any liberties but with public conduct and public opinions'. He echoes Folliott's censure of Eavesdrop as 'a flagitious violator of the confidences of private life' (242), noting that (since *Crotchet Castle* was published) 'Literary violators of the confidences of private life still gain a disreputable livelihood and an unenviable notoriety' (I:2.2). Peacock's own *Memoirs of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, the first part of which appeared in *Fraser's Magazine* in 1858,⁶⁴ open with a statement on the ethical responsibility of the biographer writing in an age with an appetite for gossip:

No man is bound to write the life of another. No man who does so is bound to tell the public all he knows. On the contrary, he is bound to keep to himself whatever may injure the interests or hurt the feelings of the living.... Neither if there be in the life of the subject of the biography any event which he

⁶⁴ Part I was a review of Charles S. Middleton's *Shelley and his Writings* (1856), Trelawny's *Recollections of the Last Days of Shelley and Byron* (1858), and Hogg's *The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1858).

himself would willingly have blotted from the tablet of his own memory, can it possibly be the duty of a survivor to drag it into daylight. If such an event be the cardinal point of a life; if to conceal it or to misrepresent it would be to render the whole narrative incomplete, incoherent, unsatisfactory alike to the honour of the dead and the feelings of the living; then, as there is no moral compulsion to speak of the matter at all, it is better to let the whole story slumber in silence. (643)⁶⁵

Peacock was writing reluctantly, with the aim of correcting the errors of previous writers rather than producing a substantive biography. He even regretted that discussion of Shelley as a historical figure is deemed necessary at all, and ‘could have wished that, like Wordsworth’s Cuckoo, he had been allowed to remain a voice and mystery: that, like his own Skylark, he had been left unseen in his congenial region’ (644).

Eavesdrop, and Folliott’s reaction to him, are something of a weathervane to how the environment shaping the reception of Peacock’s satirical novels began to change in the years between the publication of *Melincourt* and the writing of *Crotchet Castle*. A rash of scandalous *romans à clef* lowered the tone of novelistic satire in the years after Waterloo; then came the ‘silver fork’ novels; and as revealing memoirs of Byron, Shelley, Wordsworth, and Coleridge began to appear in the 1820s, it became clear that many of Peacock’s characters could not continue to drift unmoored from historical figures. Peacock lived to see the publication of Hazlitt’s 1823 essay ‘My First Acquaintance with Poets’, John Gibson Lockhart’s *Memoirs of*

⁶⁵ Peacock refers to Rousseau’s confessed dread of ‘literary visitors, feeling sure that they would print something about him’ (643).

the Life of Sir Walter Scott (1837), Benjamin Disraeli's novel *Venetia* (1837), the Countess of Blessington's *Conversations of Lord Byron*, and Trelawny's *Recollections* (1858). The emerging market for Romantic biography lent special interest to characters in Peacock's novels that could be identified with Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, and Scott. The fact of Peacock's protocol regarding personal satire has not kept readers from the sense that his novels allow special access to the Romantics as historical figures. We see Peacock's characters through the Romantic poets' great cult of personality, in which Peacock's novels themselves have played an inadvertent role. Biographies of Shelley, Byron, Coleridge, and Wordsworth by their contemporaries can loom so large in the study and teaching of Romanticism that *Nightmare Abbey* is prized more for biographical qualities than for its criticism of taste. Romantic biography, one of the main sources of readers' attraction to Peacock's novels, has no doubt helped stimulate critics' interest in identifying his characters with historical individuals.

2.4 Caricature and the literary sphere

Almost everything written on caricature refers to Ernst Kris's supposition that the emergence of personal caricature as a modern art form in Europe came only at the end of the sixteenth century due to waning belief in 'image magic': caricature 'is a play with the magic power of the image, and for such a play to be licit or institutionalized the belief in the real efficacy of the spell must be firmly under control. Wherever it is not considered a joke but rather a dangerous practice to distort a man's features, even on paper, caricature *as an art* cannot develop' (201). Caricature was not however considered a fine art in eighteenth- and nineteenth-

century Britain, but as a feature that called the artistic or literary credentials of an object into question. The ‘late emergence of caricature’, as discussed by scholars such as Robert C. Elliott in *The Power of Satire* (see p. 88), cannot be explained by the decline of image magic once we see that caricature was published in this period only in spite of its denigration as a form of violence against the ‘flesh and blood’ of an individual. Early nineteenth-century writers and critics took up the project of an ideal self-regulating bourgeois public sphere, in which personal satire was a painful and humiliating violation of individual privacy. Acts of public violence such as horsewhipping and beating were preferred both as metaphors for the violence of caricature, and acted out literally as victims’ most appropriate means of redress. As the production of paper was mechanised and became more affordable in peacetime, as the market for periodicals and novels expanded,⁶⁶ and as memoirs and biographies of recently deceased individuals were introduced to the market, the inclusion of identifiable personal lives in a work of fiction was readily seen as a mercenary calculation based on the unscrupulous appetites of the reading public. When a named individual was personally ridiculed in a self-consciously literary context, as in the case of the caricatures of Leigh Hunt and James Hogg in *Blackwood’s Magazine*, it had to be justified as an exceptional case.

In October 1821, *Blackwood’s* made a show of wondering at the offence caused by its reviews, suggesting that ‘[i]f the magazine was sometimes guilty of “personalities” they were far milder than those perpetrated in the eighteenth century, and yet they were more fiercely resented’ (Cronin 77). *Blackwood’s* attributed the

⁶⁶ On the falling price of paper and the ascendancy of prose, see Lee Erickson, *The Economy of Literary Form* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 20-48.

difference not to the qualities of its personal satires, but to the greater publicity of satire in their own era:

But in the days of King William and Queen Anne, the circulation of satire and libel was comparatively very circumscribed, and the taste of the age in such things was much grosser than that of the present. Besides, the reciprocities of social intercourse were much less strictly confined to particular classes, and families;⁶⁷ so that the abuse of satire was then, in fact, less mischievous. But now, when commerce has broken down the fences of the privilege classes, and mingled all orders and professions into one general multitude, the peace of society is much more endangered by the additional chance of conflicting interests and individuals coming into contact with each other. (315)

If eighteenth-century taste had been grosser, personal satire must be more offensive in the nineteenth century not because it was more extreme, but because it had moved from the upper classes to the growing middle classes, from the coterie to the reading public. The new publicity of literary culture entrenched the eighteenth-century satire/libel distinction of satire, ushering in a period where some cashed in on readers' appetites for both literary biography and personal satire, while others clung to the dignity of anonymity and closed ranks against the sometimes prurient and often trivial interest of the public.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ For an instance of the circumscribed circulation of satire in the early eighteenth century, see Pat Rogers, 'Family Plots in *The Rape of the Lock*', *Documenting Eighteenth Century Satire: Pope, Swift, Gay, and Arbuthnot in Historical Context* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2012), pp. 23-44.

⁶⁸ Recently, interest in the identity of Elena Ferrante has reopened the discussion on the writer's privilege of anonymity. Alexandra Schwartz observes that '[n]ow there

Writers were highly invested in the integrity of a literary-intellectual sphere separate from the lives they lived privately, with many voluntarily publishing their works unsigned to protect their private lives and social circles. Peacock's novels, which represent a number of historical figures by caricatures of their published writings, demonstrate a strong commitment to write satirically as though caricaturing the peculiarities of a real person, without actually exposing private lives in print. Peacock's literary ambitions for the novel form were unique in the period, and perhaps no other writer published novels as closely and densely indexed to contemporaneity as *Melincourt*, *Nightmare Abbey*, or *Crotchet Castle*. Nevertheless, Peacock's satirical protocol serves as a relatively straightforward illustration of the place of personal satire in the literary sphere of the early nineteenth century, and proves the necessity of disclaiming the metonymy of real individuals to appropriate 'caricature' to the literary sphere.

is enormous pressure for writers *not* to be anonymous or to disguise themselves with pseudonyms' (*New Yorker*, 3 October 2016).

3 Apposed to Caricature

In the lively and spirited caricatures of Evelina and Cecilia, we may see the style of portrait-painting relished by our fathers. Turning from them to the soberly coloured and faithful likenesses of Jane Austen, we may behold that approved by ourselves.

The Retrospective Review, 1823, VII: 131

Commenting in 1823 on how literature had been renovated in the first decades of the nineteenth century, *The Retrospective Review* puts forward the novels of Fanny Burney and Jane Austen, ‘two female writers . . ., each the favourite of her generation’ as illustrations of ‘the opposite tastes of two successive ages’ (131).¹ The reviewer calls our attention particularly to how fictional characters – Burney’s ‘spirited caricatures’ and Austen’s ‘faithful likenesses’ – distinguish the old from the new literary taste. Burney’s ‘faults of bad taste’ include ‘[t]he exaggeration of nature’ and ‘the everlasting sameness of character’ (132).² Austen, the reviewer assumes, ‘has not been at the trouble to look out for subjects for her pencil of a peculiar and eccentric cast, nor cared to outstep the modesty of nature’ (133). Anne Elliot, the protagonist of *Persuasion* (1817), is held up as the best example of characters into which Austen ‘seems to have transfused the very essence of life’.

¹ Such criticisms of Burney had in fact been voiced decades earlier. Horace Walpole noticed an irritating tendency in *Camilla* to make a character’s every speech heavy with idiosyncrasy: ‘the authoress . . . never lets them say a syllable but what is to mark their character, which is very unnatural’ (*Letters* XII: 339).

² In her time Burney was commended as a satirist, with one reviewer praising her emphatic portrayals of moral failure (see the *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine*, 3 July 1783, p. 28). *The Retrospective Review* does not trouble either to consider how the style and purposes of Burney’s satire differ meaningfully from Austen’s, or to acknowledge Austen’s debt to Burney’s novels. For an account of Burney’s ‘pessimistic’ satire, see Julian Fung, ‘Frances Burney as Satirist’, *The Modern Language Review* 106.4 (October 2011): 937-53. Fung connects ‘grotesquely caricatured’ figures of vice such as Mr Harrel and Mr Devile with *Cecilia*’s being ‘more overly and heavy-handedly satiric than its predecessor’ (944).

Austen's characters certainly struck many early-nineteenth readers as extremely well-executed, and often as something newly life-like in fiction. The first unsigned review of *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), published in February 1812 in the *Critical Review*, compliments the author on characters 'naturally drawn, and judiciously supported' (149). Subsequent reviews of *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) followed suit with very similar phrasing: Austen's characters are 'happily delineated and admirably sustained' in the *British Critic* for May 1812 (527), and 'remarkably well drawn and supported' in the same publication for February 1813 (189). Another reviewer, in the *Critical Review* for March 1813, observes that in *Pride and Prejudice* there is not a single character 'which appears flat, or obtrudes itself upon the reader with troublesome impertinence' (324). A review of *Emma* (1815) in the *Quarterly Review* published March 1816 praises the author's mastery of 'the art of copying from nature as she really exists in the common walks of life' (189)³; and Richard Whately's review of *Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion* for the same publication in 1821 reprises the theme of verisimilitude in fiction, commending the 'Flemish painting' or the 'accurate and unexaggerated delineation of events and characters' (353). Katie Halsey has observed that verisimilitude 'would become the cornerstone of discussions and defences of her art in the nineteenth century and beyond' (96).⁴ But this is not to say that Austen's first

³ The proprietor of the *Quarterly Review* was John Murray, who had published *Emma*. Murray wrote to Scott in December 1815 asking him to review the novel, so the review (dated October 1815, but actually published in spring 2016, is presumably his. George Henry Lewes's 1859 essay on Austen's novels in *Blackwood's* refers to 'reviews in the *Quarterly*, No. 27, by SCOTT, and No. 48, by Dr WHATELY' (99).

⁴ Barbara Hardy's commentary on Austen's minor characters offers a representative example of defending Austen's satirically rendered characters from the charge of caricature: 'Her groups are never shaped by the simple conflicts or convergences of humours as they are in Richardson and Fanny Burney, and the comic drama of the

readers and reviewers were comparatively uninterested in the comically peculiar characters and the satirically exaggerated dialogues that many since have so crucial to the enjoyment of the novels, and to their adaptation for stage and screen – quite the contrary.

In fact, Austen's contemporaries did not see her characterisations as the direct opposite of caricature – as entirely natural, truthful, and restrained. For one thing, when the reviews quoted above stress Austen's fidelity to nature, they are predominantly concerned with her plots and subject matter, rather than with her style of characterisation. In the *Quarterly Review* essay on *Emma*, for example, the contrast is between the romantic excitements of 'incidents new, striking and wonderful beyond the course of ordinary life' and Austen's 'correct and striking representation of that which is daily taking place' around the reader (193). This kind of realism does not preclude satirical characterisation that focuses on human peculiarities, and indeed the review goes on to notice that some of Austen's characters might be construed as satirical portraits of real people:

A friend of ours, whom the author never saw or heard of, was at once recognized by his own family as the original Mr. Bennet, and we do not know if he has yet got rid of the nickname. A Mr. Collins, too, a formal, conceited,

eighteenth and seventeenth centuries. ... Some of Jane Austen's characters are only vital in groups, like the simplified, almost caricatured figures of Mr and Mrs John Dashwood, Mr and Mrs Elton, Mrs Norris and Miss Bates. We should hesitate to call these caricatures or humours. They are characterized by some kind of inner life and do not simply answer to Ben Jonson's formula of 'some one peculiar quality' which distorts and simplifies the whole affective life. ... These creatures of comedy or satire are a little more than caricatures, and the surplus life makes a vast difference' (33-4). See *A Reading of Jane Austen* (London: Athlone, 1979).

yet servile young sprig of divinity, is drawn with the same force and precision. (194)⁵

The words ‘force’ and ‘precision’ suggest, without saying that Mr Collins is an exaggerated character, that Austen’s satirical characterisations demonstrate emphasis and particularity. As in the *Monthly Magazine*’s review of Peacock’s novels discussed in the last chapter, the reviewer manages to suggest that there is something caricature-like in Austen’s novels, while securing her literary reputation against the word ‘caricature’. The reception of Austen’s published work has often engaged in this balancing act – an act which, as we will see, becomes trickier to sustain when it has to deal with Austen’s final unfinished work, the manuscript known as *Sanditon*. This chapter investigates the ways in which Austen’s satirically rendered characters have been understood in relation to ‘caricature’ by successive generations of readers and critics, before examining how Austen developed her satirical method over her lifetime. I suggest that the definition of the literary work in apposition or approximation to caricature, rather than in opposition to caricature,⁶ has not only been a definitive feature of Austen studies from the earliest reception of the published novels, but was also have been definitive of Austen’s process of composition, which exemplifies the remaking of caricature into a product suitable for the bourgeois literary sphere.

⁵ See p. 135 n. 26 for Chapman’s view of such remarks as tributes to Austen’s verisimilitude.

⁶ ‘Apposition’ is the application of one thing to another, or the approximation of things (*OED* n. 2: 1, 3). In grammar it refers to syntactic parallelism (*OED* n. 2: 6). Something ‘apposite’ is a thing applied, placed beside, or approximated; something appropriate or suitable (*OED* adj. 2, 4).

3.1 Austen's 'caricatures'

When Austen collected and transcribed her friends' and relatives' opinions of her novels,⁷ their judgements included similar phrasing to that which the writers for the *British Critic* and the *Quarterly Review* use to approve her characters – phrases such as 'excellent delineation' and 'drawn to the Life'. Unlike some of the published reviews, however, the unpublished 'Opinions' preserve evidence of readers taking great pleasure in Austen's satirically rendered characters. Friends and family seize on Mrs Elton and Miss Bates as comic highlights in *Emma*: 'Delighted with Miss Bates, but thought Mrs Elton the best-drawn Character in the Book'; 'Miss Bates is incomparable'; 'Miss Bates excellent, but rather too much of her'. Anna Lefroy thought that the characters in *Emma* are 'perhaps rather less strongly marked than some, but only the more natural for that reason—Mr Knightley Mrs Elton & Miss Bates her favourites'. Austen's mother notes that the latest novel is 'not so interesting as P. & P.', with '[N]o characters in it equal to Ly Catherine & Mr Collins'. Mrs Guiton 'thought [Emma] too natural to be interesting'. An unsigned notice for *Emma*, published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* in September 1816, also betrayed disappointment that it 'has not the highly-drawn characters' of *Pride and Prejudice*. Giving their opinions on *Mansfield Park*, Austen's friends and relatives dwelled on Mrs Norris, who evidently polarised readers. Some hated her, others loved to hate her: 'Aunt Norris is a great favourite of mine'; 'Delighted with Mrs Norris'; 'Hated Mrs Norris'; 'Enjoyed Mrs Norris'; 'hating Mrs Norris for teasing

⁷ Add MS 41253, known by titles such as 'Opinions by various people of Jane Austen's work', is held in the British Library. A facsimile is available in the digital edition of *Jane Austen's Fiction Manuscripts*, edited by Kathryn Sutherland: www.janeausten.ac.uk/manuscripts/blopinions/index.html.

[Fanny]'; 'admired it very much – particularly Mrs Norris', 'Mrs Norris amused me particularly'.⁸ It is remarkable how often the unpublished opinions refer to, and record preference for, characters such as Mr Collins, Miss Bates, and Mrs Norris; and Austen's closest acquaintances could not have been the only ones with a taste for the 'highly drawn' and 'strongly marked'. In his diary for January 1819, Henry Crabb Robinson recorded his gleeful enjoyment in 'Mrs. Bennet, the foolish mother ... capitally drawn' and 'a thick-headed servile parson, also a masterly sketch' (I: 227). Recommending *Pride and Prejudice* in a letter to a friend, Robinson singles out these two characters for special praise: 'Mrs. Bennet is a very jewel' and 'Mr. Collins too, the sneaking and servile parson, is quite a masterpiece' (III: 851). When readers who were not self-consciously engaged in literary criticism expressed their enjoyment of Austen's novels, satirical characterisation was one of the most important themes.⁹ We should bear in mind that the eight-page manuscript represents

⁸ The Opinions of Austen's family and friends express two modes of appreciating fictional characters. Some respond to the characters as though they were real people whose actions have real impact: Benjamin Lefroy was '[h]ighly pleased with Fanny Price ... Angry with Edmund for not being in love with her, & hating Mrs Norris for teasing her'. But many others respond to characterisation rather than character: presumably, the many people who confess love for 'Mrs Norris' and judge Miss Bates 'incomparable' are referring not to these characters as notionally existing people, but to Austen's skill in characterising such people.

⁹ When modern literary criticism seeks to position Austen's oeuvre as an exceptional and/or prophetic moment in the history of the novel, it is often at the expense of attention to her satirically rendered minor characters. In *The Way of the World: The Bildungsroman in European Culture* (1987), Franco Moretti contrasts the 'heteroglossic' masterpieces of Fielding, Smollett, Sterne, Dickens, and Scott with the 'dialogic' novels of Austen and Eliot, 'the only two novelists in whose work the taxonomic project is largely overcome by the attention devoted to social mobility, 'improvement', 'reform', and the reciprocal coming to terms of different individuals, social classes, and cultures'. Moretti is thinking of the 'great English comic characters' such as Uncle Toby, Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine, and Mr Micawber, 'always terribly deaf and impressibly talkative', who 'do not speak, but rather ... *secrete* language' (194-5). See pp. 120-4 on characteristic dialogue in Austen's novels.

not only the opinions of Austen's friends and relatives, but also what Austen thought worth recording in the opinions of her friends and relatives. The opinions may not be free from irony, and cannot be free from editorial decisions: some may be quotations copied directly from letters, while others, shorter and more colloquial in phrasing, are likely recollected or summarised from conversation.¹⁰ But it seems fair to assume that a significant number of Austen's readers, as well as the author herself, were invested in satirical characters as a source of readers' enjoyment. Phrases such as 'strongly marked', 'highly drawn', and 'drawn with ... force and precision' register appreciation for the satirically rendered characters without implying that Austen had stooped to caricature.¹¹

There were of course a number of reasons why the word 'caricature' might have been avoided. Often it was a pejorative term that denoted something of low artistic quality. As a term of appreciation it was more suited to farcical comedies than to the comedy of manners. Most importantly, however, the word could be used to mean a satire directed at a particular individual. For this reason, if not for any other, was vitally important for Austen and her family that the word 'caricature' did not become attached to any of her characters. Henry Austen's 1817 memoir claimed, 'She drew from nature; but, whatever may have been surmised to the contrary, never from individuals' (150). James Edward Austen-Leigh's 1871 memoir, keen to stress

¹⁰ Katie Halsey has argued that the opinions are records of reading as a family activity, 'communal opinions, arrived at after discussion' (189). For a fuller account of the trends in the Opinions MS, see Halsey, *Jane Austen and her Readers, 1786-1945* (London: Anthem, 2012), pp. 95-100.

¹¹ These phrases indicate that the *ut pictura poesis* analogy used to describe the verisimilitude of Austen's novels ('soberly coloured and faithful likenesses', 'naturally drawn', 'subjects for her pencil', 'Flemish painting') could be easily adapted to appreciate less naturalistic characterisations.

that Austen was civil, neighbourly, and feminine despite her participation in the business of literature, categorically denied that she had a satirical character:

With all her neighbours in the village she was on friendly, though not intimate, terms. She took a kindly interest in all their proceedings, and liked to hear about them. They often served for her amusement; but it was her own nonsense that gave zest to the gossip. She was as far as possible from being censorious or satirical. She never abused them or *quizzed* them.... (73)

Likewise, Austen-Leigh denies that Austen's novels included satirical characterisations whose peculiarities were derived from real people, even troubling to answer the merest suggestion, in the *Quarterly Review*, that Mr Bennet had a real original:

She did not copy individuals, but she invested her own creations with individuality of character. A reviewer in the 'Quarterly' speaks of an acquaintance who, ever since the publication of 'Pride and Prejudice,' had been called by his friends Mr. Bennet, but the author did not know him. Her own relations never recognised any individual in her characters; and I can call to mind several of her acquaintance whose peculiarities were very tempting and easy to be caricatured of whom there are no traces in her pages. She herself, when questioned on the subject by a friend, expressed a dread of what she called such an 'invasion of social proprieties.' She said that she thought it fair to note peculiarities and weaknesses, but that it was her desire to create, not to reproduce; 'besides,' she added, 'I am too proud of my gentlemen to admit that they were only Mr. A. or Colonel B.' (118)

The passage defends Austen's characterisation on both ethical and artistic grounds. At the same time, it claims for some of Austen's characters the distinction of being a very special literary kind of caricature, one for which there is no pre-existing original.¹²

Using 'caricature' to mean the satirical representation of real people, as Austen-Leigh does in the above passage, was very common. In fact, more capacious usage of the term to denote exaggeration or sensationalism without reference to original persons and objects, while it crops up in literary periodicals, seems to have been innovative. The *Edinburgh Magazine's* review of *Frankenstein*, for example, begins 'Here is one of the productions of the modern school in its highest style of caricature and exaggeration', without identifying any particular historical individual as the target of caricature (249). Thus for the critics, 'caricature' and its associated terms could be applied more abstractly to the style or manner of a work, while 'caricature' was more generally used to denote a satire with a precise human referent. This prevalent usage of 'caricature' among the general reading public probably explains why the term never appears in the Austen's record of her family and friends' opinions. Because the word was so strongly associated with violation and indiscretion, the 'Opinions' use phrases like 'strongly marked' and 'highly-drawn' to circumnavigate 'caricature' as a problematic term, while recognising that some of

¹² As well as stressing the originality of Austen's characters, Austen-Leigh stood witness to 'the fidelity with which [her novels] represent the opinions and manners of the class of society in which the author lived early in this century'. He compared her methods of characterisation to photography as a representation of life as it was: 'These writings are like photographs, in which no feature is softened; no ideal expression is introduced, all is the unadorned reflection of the natural object; and the value of such a faithful likeness must increase as time gradually works more and more changes in the face of society itself' (116). On caricature as a faithful document, and for a comparison of caricature with photography, see pp. 214-7.

Austen's most memorable characters could be described in approximation to caricature in a stylistic sense. Of course, we can imagine many other reasons why the 'Opinions' and the early published reviews of Austen's novels might have avoided the word 'caricature'. The term was sometimes used to designate physical comedy or a farcical performance. 'Caricature' was also sometimes used to describe comic emphasis in the depiction of regional and 'vulgar' characters, particularly in literary imitations of dialect and sociolect. However, the common usage of 'caricature', in the sense of offensively making public an individual's peculiarities, would surely have been particularly important given the fact that Austen's novels were recognised to be full of seemingly real people and incidents, such as one might actually meet with in the course of everyday life. To diagnose 'caricature' in *Emma* or in *Mansfield Park* would have been to implicate the author in some readers' unflattering recognitions of people they knew in characters such as Mrs. Elton and Miss Bates. It would have been crucial for the family's social life that Austen was acknowledged as a satirist of resemblances, not of identities.

Since Austen-Leigh's memoir, many critics have held that Austen's characters are 'lifelike', not taken 'directly from life'. Brian Southam reiterates Chapman's idea that 'the assumption that her characters had real prototypes goes back to her own time, and was then a tribute, though a clumsy one, to her verisimilitude' (Chapman 126).¹³ But as we have seen, such tributes indicate the risky proximity of Austen's style of characterisation to caricature; and the possibility remains that Austen's relatives emphasised the originality of her characters precisely

¹³ Southam, 'Mrs. Leavis and Miss Austen: The 'Critical Theory' Reconsidered', *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* 17.1 (June 1962): 21-32.

because they were inspired in part by real ‘originals’. The first drafts for Austen’s published novels may have been partially based on real local characters and incidents, most of which are (by design) irrecoverable for us now. In *Jane Austen: The Banker’s Sister* (2017), E. J. Clery has shown that versions of Austen’s brother Henry figure in her novels, nowhere more clearly than in the unpublished fragment known as *Sanditon*. Tom Parker displays Henry’s penchant for speculation and his enthusiastic entrepreneurial temperament, and the opening scene of the novel derives from a favourite family anecdote about Henry’s impatience (Clery 295). Cassandra’s grotesque portraits for Austen’s *History of England* (1791) provide a graphic parallel for such literary ‘caricatures’.¹⁴

Critics have usually taken it for granted that Austen’s novels do not include satirical representations of real individuals. Whereas for Austen’s early readers, the primary distinction from caricature was to do with publicity and propriety, for modern readers it has been a question of the quality of style and characterisation. Critics have sought to dissociate Austen from caricature as a low-status category appropriate neither to the quality of her writing nor to her literary standing. E.M. Forster, in his discussion of ‘flat’ and ‘round’ characters in *Aspects of the Novel* (1927),¹⁵ writes that all of Austen’s characters are ‘round, or capable of rotundity’ (102). Following Forster’s logic – which depends on the idea that caricature resides in particular fictional characters rather than in the style of characterisation – there is

¹⁴ See Annette Upfal, ed. *Jane Austen’s The History of England & Cassandra’s Portraits* (Sydney: Juvenilia Press, 2009).

¹⁵ *Aspects of the Novel* was revised from a series of lectures Forster gave at Trinity College, Cambridge, in spring 1927. His distinction between ‘flat’ and ‘round’ characters has entered common usage, where it is most often used to refer to denote the relative complexity of a character, especially the question of whether a character ‘develops’ or remains static in the course of a narrative.

no caricature in Austen's writing because all of the characters who might in a particular moment, or even most of the time, appear like caricatures, are eventually remodelled in some way into the desired 'rotundity'. As Deidre Lynch has identified, critics of the nineteenth-century novel often champion the kind of 'full' and 'deep' characterisation that lends itself to close reading of the characters, such that textual details discover facts about character that are not immediately apparent. Explaining how Lady Bertram becomes a round character over the course of the novel *Mansfield Park*, Forster singles out a syntactically complex sentence – 'the crucial sentence' in which he identifies 'a most artful decrescendo by means of negatives', which reveals how Lady Bertram had been jolted out of her predictable formula of behaviour (104). By implication, it is in part the reader's responsibility to engage with the text in such a way as to construe Austen's relatively 'flat' or caricature-like characters as round ones. But such readings also hint that caricature is, in Lynch's phrase, 'a contingent stage into which character passes, and vice versa' (2). Thus the reception of Austen's satirical characters has often defined them against caricature, but in apposition rather than in exclusive opposition.

The idea of a character sometimes appearing like a caricature, and sometimes not, was probably something that Austen herself considered, if her use of the word in her novels is anything to go by. Austen used the word 'caricature' only twice in her published oeuvre, to describe John Dashwood's wife in the opening chapter of *Sense and Sensibility*, and in *Northanger Abbey* to describe Catherine Morland's behaviour on her return home. In both cases, the word has moral freight, and is used analogically to denote a comparative extreme of undesirable behaviour. John

Dashwood gains a wife who possesses his own moral weakness in an exaggerated form:

He was not an ill-disposed young man, unless to be rather cold hearted, and rather selfish, is to be ill-disposed: but he was, in general, well respected; for he conducted himself with the propriety in the discharge of his ordinary duties. Had he married a more amiable woman, he might have been made still more respectable than he was:—he might even have been made amiable himself; for he was very young when he married, and very fond of his wife. But Mrs John Dashwood was a strong caricature of himself:—more narrow-minded and selfish. (5-6)¹⁶

The ‘caricature’ here consists in the exponential relation between the husband’s relatively ordinary selfishness and the wife’s extraordinary selfishness. It is implied that John Dashwood, with his impulse to self-interest encouraged by his wife’s advice, and justified by the idea of his duty to his spouse and children, might also become ‘a strong caricature of himself’ (6). The selfishness of Mr and Mrs John Dashwood is of course the inciting action to the plot of *Sense and Sensibility*, which forces the disinherited branch of the Dashwood family to seek financial security and a responsible patriarch elsewhere.

When the word ‘caricature’ is applied to Catherine Morland in *Northanger Abbey*, the associations are also with self-indulgence, unmoderated gratification of individual inclinations, and neglect of duty to other members of the family. Mrs

¹⁶ All page numbers for Austen’s published novels refer to the new Cambridge editions (General Editor Janet Todd).

Morland notices her daughter's strange behaviour on her return from Northanger, and looks at it with 'caricature-vision':

Catherine's disposition was not naturally sedentary, nor had her habits been ever very industrious; but whatever might hitherto have been her defects of that sort, her mother could not but perceive them now to be greatly increased. She could neither sit still nor employ herself for ten minutes together, walking around the garden and orchard again and again, as if nothing but motion was voluntary; and it seemed as if she could even walk about the house rather than remain fixed for any time in the parlour. Her loss of spirits was a yet greater alteration. In her rambling and her idleness she might only be a caricature of herself; but in her silence and sadness she was the very reverse of all that she had been before. (249)

Catherine's despondency might be the 'greater alteration', but exaggerated idleness is the problem Mrs Morland feels able to address directly. She reminds Catherine that "there is ... a time for work" and "now you must try to be useful". As a thematisation of caricature, this is very different from Edgeworth's politicking aristocrats in *Belinda*,¹⁷ or Peacock's journalistic Eavesdrop in *Crotchet Castle*.¹⁸ Neither of Austen's explicit comparisons with caricature seems intended to evoke caricature in a specific material or generic form, such as a single-sheet satirical print, or a textual caricature published in a newspaper. Thus the problem of caricature's publicity is avoided. When Austen uses the word 'caricature' in her novels, she does not do so to evoke a public world of print, but to describe a critical and comparative

¹⁷ See p. 29-30.

¹⁸ See p. 80-9.

mode of analysing character and how specific behaviours might be seen both to deviate from and to write large the natural character of a person.¹⁹ We are encouraged to think of caricature neither as a wholly private and exclusive form that seeks merely to entertain, nor as a public form that is politically motivated, but in the metaphorical terms of caricature-vision in the domestic sphere.²⁰ In the novel of free indirect style, caricature becomes psychological.

3.2 Graphic satire in Austen studies

In light of the status of different forms of caricature portraiture discussed in Chapter One, it could make sense to think of Austen's satirical characters as a literary adaptation of the tradition of amateur caricature portraits, with the creation of intimacy and insidership made independent from reference to actual individuals and simultaneously made accessible to a broader public of polite middle-class readers.

But when critics have applied the word 'caricature' in a non-pejorative sense to

¹⁹ Austen's thematisation of caricature in *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility* suggests a compatibility between caricature and close observation of human behaviour and psychology, a compatibility seldom allowed by modern critics of the novels. See for example Barbara Hardy: 'The so-called caricatures are analysed and dramatized so as to suggest a potentially full emotional life which has been distorted and restricted. At the beginning of *Persuasion*, for example, the sharp, clear-outlined caricature of Sir Walter Elliot makes it very plain that we have before us a perversion of feeling, the channelling of various emotions in one too narrow but powerfully flowing current' (42).

²⁰ Brunton adopts a similar usage of caricature in *Self-control* (1811) to criticise the behaviour of Julia Dawkins: 'Having no character of her own, Julia was always ... the heroine whom the last read novel inclined her to personate. But as those who forsake the guidance of nature are in imminent danger of absurdity, her copies were always caricatures' (I: 129-30). Julia exaggeratedly impersonates the protagonists of *Evelina*, *Camilla*, *A Gossip's Story* (1797), and most dangerously *La nouvelle Héloïse*, which returns her 'with renewed impetus to the sentimental'. In her attempts to curb Julia, Laura finds herself 'combating a sort of Hydra, from which, if she succeeded in one excrescence, another was instantly read to sprout' (130).

Austen's novels, they have tended to liken her techniques of satirical characterisation to types of published graphic satire. D.W. Harding is one of few literary critics who have applied the word 'caricature' in an appreciative sense to Austen's novels. His 1939 lecture 'Regulated Hatred' and his essay 'Character and Caricature' together constitute the most sustained critical attention given to the idea of caricature as an important element in Austen's writing. Unlike Forster, Harding does not make the modulation of caricature-like elements into 'deeper' or 'rounder' characterisations conditional to the literary quality of the novels: for Harding, there simply are caricatures in Austen's writing, which in themselves are of literary value.²¹

Harding's conception of caricature, however, is evidently drawn from a particular form of published graphic satire, rather than being in accord with notions of caricature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Harding seems not to have been aware that Austen's contemporaries understood caricature to imply a pointed attack on an individual, and in the words of Austen-Leigh apparently quoting Austen, 'an "invasion of social proprieties"'; he writes that Austen's caricatures relied on 'one of the most useful peculiarities of her society ... its willingness to remain blind to the implications of caricature' (171). He suggests that Austen's art of caricature was her way of smuggling satire into her novels, of 'offer[ing] her readers every excuse for regarding as rather exaggerated figures of fun people whom she herself detests and fears'. The art of caricature, as he understands it, is a 'loud' but 'innocuous form' (169), 'a means not of admonition but of self-preservation' (171). In 'Character and Caricature', as in 'Regulated Hatred', caricature is understood to

²¹ Barbara M. Hardy has paraphrased Harding's argument as 'Jane Austen joins caricature and character' (25), comparing Austen's 'less grotesque' minor characters with those of Burney in *Evelina*, *Cecilia*, and *Camilla* (25, 32-4).

regulate the target for satire rather than attacking him. Harding likens the caricature to a person made socially inferior through substance addiction or illness:

There is in fact a close relation between the handling of a fictional figure as a caricature and the clinical attitude that we adopt in real life towards someone who is drunk, very ignorant, irritable with tiredness, or in some other way less than an equal companion. We have to pull our punches. Our forbearance, justifiable though it may be, reduces his interpersonal status; his actions are no longer allowed full social relevance, we belittle him by humouring him.

(91)

Analogies between pictorial and verbal caricature gain limited purchase on Austen's oeuvre when they fail to consider the difference publicity made to caricature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Harding's relatively relaxed attitude towards caricature fits better with propagandistic British political cartoons of foreign nations and statesmen, than with the caricatures that occasioned such anxiety in Austen's lifetime.

Wendy Lee's 2010 reappraisal of 'Regulated Hatred', resituating Harding's Austen criticism alongside his work on war psychology, offers hints to the fact that, for Harding, the most visible form of caricature would have been domestic British cartoons of foreign dictators, their armies, and their allies. These cartoons, I suggest, may have played a role in framing Harding's conception of 'innocuous caricature'. Lee discusses how Marvin Mudrick's *Irony as Defense and Discovery* (1952) applies Harding's arguments not to sociability but to sexuality: Mudrick's Austen, 'brilliant but vicious, effective but stunted – [is] a mutant version of Harding's regulated hater' (998). Mudrick's Austen survives in D.A. Miller's *Secret of Style* (2003), where she

is glamorously ‘Unheterosexual’ rather than a mere frustrated spinster. Lee reorients the reception of ‘Regulated Hatred’ away from its longstanding focus on the most personal facets of Austen’s biography, reading Harding’s ‘regulated hater’ as a kind of stateswoman, able to negotiate a variety of demands and to assess the risks of different courses of action with remarkable realism: ‘Unlike romances – or novels like *Jane Eyre* and *David Copperfield* – where enemies just die, Austen’s fiction accepts the social necessity of living with one’s adversaries’ (Lee 1004). Turning finally to Harding’s first book on psychology, *The Impulse to Dominate*, published in 1941, Lee reminds us that Harding was bitterly cognisant of the last resort of statesmanship: confrontation with the irredeemably offensive person or nation. Aunt Norris, of all Austen’s characters, must be excluded from the family circle to suffer in a foreign purgatory with the fallen Maria, so that more deserving people can enjoy happiness. If we read ‘Regulated Hatred’ through Harding’s ideas about war psychology, we can recognise in Mrs. Norris the ‘neurotically dominative government’ he analysed in *The Impulse to Dominate*. And so, Lee suggests, Harding’s arguments about character in Austen are filtered through his understanding of current political events, including successive British governments’ appeasement of the Deutsches Reich in the 1930. Regulated haters can practise caricature defensively against their enemy, but must recognise when conciliation is impossible. The irredeemable egoist must be ostracised or otherwise engaged in hostilities.

Harding’s implied comparison between Austen’s exaggerated portraits and twentieth-century political cartoons emerges more strongly in his essay ‘Character and Caricature’. Singling out the importance of the peculiar feature to caricature-approximate forms of literary characterisation, Harding refers directly to the modern

political ‘cartoon’ rather than to Hogarth or to Gillray. ‘It may be the preliminary description’, he observes, ‘which assures us that some trait of personality is being as sharply and mockingly emphasized as the nose or eyebrows of a politician in a cartoon’ (81). Parallels with his psychological theories and with current events surface again when Harding’s alludes to appeasement, observing that caricature ‘allows Jane Austen to express ... astonishment at the way the most outrageously deformed personalities are allowed an effective part in society, because society attends seriously to lip service and rationalization’ (101). Harding’s essay demonstrates his awareness of racialised caricature; referring to the way that ‘national stereotypes partly dissolve when we come to know a foreigner as a real person’ (102), he suggests a world beyond the small, relatively homogenous, and mono-national society depicted in Austen’s novels. When Harding wrote of caricature in Austen, and compared her exaggerated portraits with graphic caricatures, he seems to have had the political cartoons of his own historical moment in mind. The political cartoons produced in Britain during World War II by David Low, Victor Weisz, Stephen Roth and others constituted a kind of psychological self-defence against foreign enemies. If Aunt Norris in exile had put Austen and her contemporaries in mind of any particular egomaniacal head of state, it would of course not have been Adolf Hitler, but Napoleon Bonaparte, who was banished to Elba a month before the publication of *Mansfield Park*.

This is not to say that a convincing analogy can be made between Austen’s ‘caricatures’ and the satirical prints of her day. Such an analogy runs into a multitude of problems, including the specificity of the genre of the satirical print, the diversity of artists such as William Hogarth and George Cruikshank, and the fact that graphic

caricature necessarily differs from textual caricature in its kinds of satirical emphasis. The untenability of this concept of transmedial caricature is apparent when Donald Greene makes a general comparison between Austen's satirical techniques with the contemporary graphic satire of the late-Georgian period:

One needs to remember that she grew up in the great age of English caricature, when Hogarth's engravings were on every wall, and Gillray, Rowlandson, and the Cruikshanks were producing their twisted, grotesque distortions of the human frame. (276)

The 'golden age' trope justifies the parallel, but if anything, Greene's descriptions of Austen's satirically rendered characters as 'human freaks' (267), 'grotesque forms' (264), and a 'nightmarish ... zoo of distortions' actually highlight some of the crucial differences between Austen's literary mode of caricaturing and the graphic techniques of caricature practised by Gillray, Rowlandson, and the Cruikshanks. Most importantly, Austen's satirical depiction of human beings is not primarily the satire of physical peculiarities and defects, and descriptive emphasis on what is odd, repulsive, or ridiculous about a character's body is unusual in her oeuvre.²² Recent screen adaptations have of course added physical dimensions to the satirical rendering of Austen's characters that do not appear in the novels. Mr Collins, in being introduced as 'a tall, heavy looking young man of five and twenty' (72),

²² The subject matter of the *Sanditon* manuscript calls for more satirical attention to the body and to body-occupied neuroticism. John Wiltshire has argued that *Sanditon*'s exceptional attention to 'the amazing behaviour of the hypochondriacal body' should not be seen to subvert 'the realistic patterns that have determined the shape of Austen's mature fiction'; rather, *Sanditon* demonstrates a crucial element of hypochondria, that '[n]othing is too amazing to be true about a person's relation to their body ... an infinitely labile and plastic medium for the living through an projection of desires and symptoms and ideas' (214).

receives a more thorough physical description from Austen than most of the men in her narratives. Collins is two years younger than Charlotte Lucas, who is by the standards of the time rapidly ageing out of the marriage market. The phrase ‘heavy looking’ might suggest that Collins is overweight, or that he gives an impression of being intellectual dense and dull-witted – but in any case, we are meant to imagine Collins as a relatively large and imposing man in his prime of life. Screen adaptations of *Pride and Prejudice* in recent years have cast more middle-aged actors to play Collins, and have supplied the character with physical traits to underline his supposed undesirability as a husband for one of the Bennet sisters or for Charlotte Lucas. Tom Bamber stoops and slouches his way through the 1995 BBC TV series, giving a physical presence to Collins’s grovelling sycophancy and denying him the privilege of the tall and youthful appearance he has in the book. The 2005 film, directed by Joe Wright, deliberately make the actor playing Collins appear particularly diminutive in stature. There was a two-inch difference in height between Tom Hollander and Keira Knightly, but the difference is accentuated by the camera angles used in scenes featuring Collins. In some scenes, Hollander as Collins appears to be about two feet shorter than the other characters: a far cry from Austen’s ‘tall, heavy looking young man of about five and twenty’.

Indeed, critics have been quick to note that Austen’s novels tend to de-emphasise the visual and the physical, even when it comes to her most peculiarly idiosyncratic characters. George Henry Lewes, in an unsigned article in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* for July 1859, even speculates that Austen may have suffered from myopia, so pronounced is her tendency to avoid particularising physical descriptions of characters:

She no more thinks of describing the physical appearance of her people than the dramatist does who knows that his persons are to be represented by living actors. ... As far as any direct information can be derived from the authoress, we might imagine that this was a purblind world, wherein nobody saw anybody, except in a dim vagueness which obscured all peculiarities. (430)

Lewes considers the lack of physical description not as an asset, but as ‘a defect and mistake in art’, reasoning that without the particular physical presence of the characters, the reader is ‘missing many of the subtle connections between physical and mental organisation’. He regrets that Mr Collins was never given a ridiculous physical dimension: ‘It is impossible that Mr. Collins should not have been endowed by nature with an appearance in some way heralding the delicious folly of the inward man’. Yet even Lewes, rare among Austen critics in his wish for characters of more pronounced physicality, follows up with a critique of writing that too closely approximates caricature more generally. His remarks against ‘caricature and exaggeration of all kinds – inflated diction and daubing delineation ... a certain breadth and massiveness of effect’ should remind us that nineteenth-century readers did not necessarily associate caricature exclusively with the representation of physical properties. Continual references to ‘drawing’ and ‘delineation’ in the early reviews and opinions of Austen’s work are not an acknowledgement that her writing had graphic properties, but a commonplace manifestation of the broad analogy between literature and the graphic arts (of which the word ‘caricature’ as applied to texts was of course a part).

3.3 Characteristic voices

While the analogy between literature and the graphic artists is evident in words such as ‘drawn’ and ‘delineation’, there is another less obvious analogy between literature and dramatic performance in phrases such as ‘well supported’, ‘well sustained’, and ‘remarkably well kept up’ that recur in the earliest reviews of Austen’s writing. The words ‘supported’, ‘sustained’, and their variants were often used, at the turn of the nineteenth century and on into the Victorian period, to refer specifically to a convincing and consistent dramatic role (*OED*, v.11). In 1799, *The True Briton* reviewed a play called *The Jealous Wife*, in which ‘Mrs. MATTOCKS played *Mrs. Oakley* with her wonted spirit and truth, and the other Characters were in general well supported’ (6). In the same year, *The Sun*’s review of ‘a new Operatic Farce’ called *The Turnpike-Gate* judges that ‘The Farce was very well supported by INCLEDON, MUNDEN, FAWCETT, and KNIGHT’ (4). Reviews that refer to Austen’s talent for ‘supporting’ or ‘keeping up’ her characters, if formulaic and rather cursory, give us another point of departure for critically appraising Austen’s powers of characterisation. They invite us to imagine Austen not only as a silent and punctilious observer, working away at her ‘little bit ... of ivory’ to be displayed, once finished, for admiration, but also as a performer capable of imitating a cast of characters, making them speak as individual characters.

Characteristic voices, not characteristic bodies, are prevalent in Austen’s novels. Emma’s vocal impersonation of Miss Bates, mimicking both her topics of conversation and her style of talking, gives an example of the technique. In conversation with Mrs Weston, Emma imagines how Miss Bates would talk at Mr Knightley if he married Jane Fairfax:

‘How could he bear to have Miss Bates belonging to him?—To have her haunting the Abbey, and thanking him all day long for his great kindness in marrying Jane?—“So very kind and obliging!—But he had always been such a very kind neighbour!” And then fly off, through half a sentence, to her mother’s old petticoat. “Not that it was such a very old petticoat either—for still it would last a great while—and, indeed, she must thankfully say their petticoats were all very strong.”’

‘For shame, Emma! Do not mimic her. You divert me against my conscience...’ (243)

Miss Bates’s fitful, repetitive, and incessant mode of conversation is imitated in the mode of free indirect speech, never using the first person (‘she must thankfully say their petticoats were all very strong’), and narrating in past tenses (‘But he always had been such a very kind neighbour’, ‘Not that it was such a very old petticoat’). It is unclear whether these grammatical indicators of free indirect speech should be attributed to Emma or to the narrator of the novel as the recorder of Emma’s speech. Along with the third-person narrator’s pithy analyses of character, reported language – in its various forms of dialogic conversation, the monologue, the epistle, and free indirect discourse – is a central element in Austen’s satirical characterisation.

Harding calls attention to Austen’s ‘technique of self-exhibition in lengthy, uninterrupted speeches’ by chattering characters such as Mrs Bennet, Miss Bates, and Mrs Elton (84). According to Harding, these speeches make the characters ‘literally egregious’ (86), removing them from the textual markers of social interchange that occur in a dialogue between characters, and signalling to the reader that they should regard the character as something of an untouchable. Relatively long

monologues thus not only do the work of satirical characterisation in Austen's novels, but also alert readers to the fact that satire is taking place. Austen's caricature may function through rather standard techniques such as exaggeration, simplification, and repetition, writes Harding, but the unarticulated conventions of exaggeration are just as important as the technique itself. He observes that it would be difficult to read Jane Bennet as a caricature, 'even though her wish to think well of everybody is heightened to the point of becoming a joke' (81), and that Fanny Price's 'priggishness' (as he calls it) is plainly 'not the result of deliberate caricature' (82). Caricature can only take place, says Harding, when there is 'a tacit understanding between author and reader as to which technique of presentation is being adopted'. A long and uninterrupted speech, one aid to the reader's understanding that caricature is taking place, might include other markers, such as the long dashes that punctuate Miss Bates's sentences, the repetitive speech patterns of Mr Woodhouse ("Poor Miss Taylor! ... the poor horses ... poor James ... poor Miss Taylor" [6-7]), or with a favourite topic, such as Mrs Bennet's obsession with getting her daughters safely married.

In moments of free indirect discourse, the authorial voice coexists with the characteristic voice, one being filtered or focalised through the other. The origins of Austen's literary reconfiguration of caricature might be seen in the eighteenth century's wide variety of polylogic epistolary novels – *Pamela*, *Clarissa*, Frances Brooke's *The History of Emily Montague* (1769), *Humphry Clinker*, and *Les Liaisons dangereuses* (1782) – in which first-person narratives exhibit particular and limited perspectives. Austen combined these novels' techniques of multiple perspective with a cohesive third-person narration sitting in judgement over them all.

Free indirect discourse adds a third narrative medium, with the narrator temporarily impersonating a character, though not so closely as to lose the smooth confidence of Austen's third-person narration. Austen was among the first of the modern writers to adopt free indirect discourse as a consistent and conspicuous feature of her narrative style; famously, one of the key challenges and pleasures of reading Austen's novels is the continual task of identifying the moments, long and short, when omniscient narration dips into a more limited personal consciousness.

J. F. Burrows' 1987 book *Computation into Criticism* proposes to measure Austen's capacity for characteristic impersonation by ascertaining the range of vocal styles in her novels, and to compare the results with the variety of vocal style in the works of other writers. Burrows' study works from quantitative analyses of the most common words in Austen's oeuvre: verb forms, prepositions, conjunctions, personal pronouns, and articles. His computational study has found evidence that Austen's characters display a greater range of speech patterns than the characters of Henry James, E. M. Forster, and Virginia Woolf. Burrows' study includes free indirect discourse (which he calls 'character narrative') alongside direct dialogue and third-person narration (which he calls 'pure narrative'). Plotting Austen's characters on a line graph according to their respective vocabularies, and comparing them with the vocabulary of Austen's 'pure narrative', Burrows makes it possible for us to read from left to right 'a gradual transformation from garrulousness and intellectual indiscipline, and through a middle area of civil and articulate speech habits, to formality and dignity, and onward to pomposity' (132). Burrows concludes that his graphs show a marked divergence in the speech patterns of individual characters,

suggesting Austen's conscious attention to idiolect – and, to some extent, to sociolect.

For Marilyn Butler, commenting on the study in the *London Review of Books*, the missing piece of Burrow's research is the development of literary character in the works of Austen's contemporary writers. To compare Austen's characters with those of James, Forster, and Woolf – rather than the peculiar characters created by contemporaries such as Fanny Burney and Maria Edgeworth – is to risk overemphasizing the 'individualism' of Austen's approach to characterisation.²³ Nor can Burrows' work in *Computation into Criticism* help us to ascertain the extent to which Austen was an innovator in characters' speech patterns. Butler suspects that she was not, pointing out that unlike many of her contemporaries Austen did not introduce phonetically rendered dialect into her novels. If Burrows' research illustrates any broader trend in the history of literary character, she argues, it is the late nineteenth-century shift to less granular and distinctive literary representations of individual character and idiolect.

When does strongly individualised character, expressed in dialogue, become a distinguishing feature of the novel? Minor characters become more vivacious, eccentric, linguistically distinctive as the 18th century wears on. ... Novelists go on portraying the social panorama through minor characters' diversity until this dispersed, atomistic emphasis is superseded by a

²³ Frances Ferguson's formalised reading of character in *Emma* argues that 'the novel of free indirect style has characters and society speaking the same language' (170), where the 'psycho-narration' (in Dorrit Cohn's phrase) makes characters transparent. Contrastingly, the drama and the epistolary novel insist on the conceit of self-expression and on 'an unfolding plot that motivates individual characters to present their views' (167). See Ferguson, 'Jane Austen, *Emma*, and the Impact of Form', *Modern Language Quarterly* 61.1 (March 2000): 157-80.

generalizing one. The sociological or biological or psychological essentialisms of Marx, Darwin and Freud belong to the same era as the gradual toning-down of ‘character’. ... Burrows’ demonstrations that [Austen’s] characters are more distinctive than those of James or Woolf may merely confirm that by 1900 the concept of character is generally in decline.

(13)

Butler implies that while Austen’s characters may be more distinctive than those of late nineteenth-century writers, compared with the characters of her contemporaries they are less vivacious, less eccentric, less linguistically distinctive. Mary Lascelles argued in *Jane Austen and her Art* (1939) that the vocal idiosyncrasies of Austen’s characters are picked out in ‘low relief’. Every character’s speech achieves clarity of subject and grammar even when it gives an impression of confusion; and rather than using social variants of vocabulary to convey a character’s excessive formality or vulgarity, Austen often contrives that characteristic differences play out in syntax or phrasing (Lascelles 94-6).²⁴ Vocabulary does tend to be a more dominant feature of the characteristic voice when pretension, to social and intellectual superiority, is at issue: Mrs. Elton takes pains to stress the value of her ‘resources’;²⁵ Henry Tilney gives Catherine ‘a lecture on the picturesque’; and in the *Sanditon* manuscript, Sir

²⁴ A key difference of satirical characterisation between Austen and Edgeworth is that whereas the latter’s Irish novels appeal to an English readership for whom the outlandish Irish figures belong to another world, Austen’s satirically rendered characters are native to the English social settings that are normative in her novels. On the ‘proper English’ of Austen’s novels, see Janet Sorenson, *The Grammar of Empire in Eighteenth-Century British Writing* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 198-200, 208, 210-13.

²⁵ It is not always clear whether these resources are intellectual or material, as in the passage where Mrs Elton professes herself ‘blessed with so many resources within myself’ and remarks that ‘my resources made me quite independent’ (298).

Edward glides from one cliché to the next in his defence of Robert Burns: ‘It were hyper-criticism, it were pseudo-philosophy to expect from the soul of high-toned genius the grovellings of a common mind’ (b2-33).²⁶

Lascelles’s and Butler’s arguments substantiate the conventional wisdom on Austen’s representation of class differences: that she generally steered clear of non-standard dialects, and that those who might be presumed to speak very differently from her genteel heroines (the gypsies in *Emma*, the servants in all the novels) are never given voices at all. The servant Rebecca, who waits ineptly on the Price household in *Mansfield Park*, never speaks in any form of dialogue. Rebecca features not as a source of speech, but as a source of disturbance and noise: we are told only of ‘a squabble’ between her and one of the Price children (390), and that when it comes to speaking in self-defence, she is ‘loudest’ (393). The gypsies too are ‘clamorous’, ‘loud and insolent’ (*Emma* 361). Austen chooses not to individualise these lowly characters with dialogue, with free indirect discourse, with character background, or with any literary device that could give insight into their sensations, thoughts, and histories. Rebecca, like the gypsies, appears to act mechanically; Austen never invites us to consider why they do the things they do. The genteel characters of Austen’s juvenilia are often automatised by the demands of narrative parody, in which characterisation is reductive and subordinate to plot conventions. The gypsies in *Emma* are automatised as merely an object of fear and hatred, ‘dragged in for the plot’ (Pittock 274).²⁷ Meanwhile Rebecca and the other servants

²⁶ Page numbers for the *Sanditon* manuscript refer to the online digital edition *Jane Austen’s Fiction Manuscripts*, edited by Kathryn Sutherland.

²⁷ As many critics have noted, though both the gypsies and ‘the poor’ of Highbury are mentioned in *Emma* – ‘the only representatives of a threatening underclass in the

seem to have been automatised by accident, simply because Austen was not thinking about them. Or at least, she was not thinking of them as people whose minds it would be possible for her to inhabit and imitate. Robert Martin, the tenant farmer who finally wins the hand of Harriet Smith in *Emma*, might be included in this group of silent social inferiors whose speech is never reported directly. Yet Martin's letter to Harriet exceeds even Emma's expectations. 'There were not merely no grammatical errors, but as a composition it would not have disgraced a gentleman; the language, though plain, was strong and unaffected' (53). Robert Martin has style. Why then does he never speak, so that he might display this language for himself? Why are there no direct quotations from his letter? Perhaps Austen did not think herself equal to impersonating a plain yet respectable young farmer – but it is also very believable that Emma and her like would avoid direct communication with a tenant farmer, or that their lives would be separate enough so as to make conversation unlikely. Mr. Knightley, in the capacity of landowner and agricultural innovator, is the only one who converses properly with Robert Martin; and Emma teases Knightley, on more than one occasion, over his intimacy with his bailiff, William Larkins (another character with no direct dialogue). Moreover, Austen's decision to have Mr. Knightley inform Emma of Harriet's impending marriage obviously has narrative purposes beyond the avoidance of reporting dialogue between Emma, Harriet, and Robert Martin.

Whichever way we choose to justify the silences of Austen's socially inferior characters, the same rationalisation probably will not serve for characters as various

whole of Jane Austen's fiction' (Pittock 274) – they are not given individual characters.

as Rebecca, Robert Martin, the gypsies who accost Harriet Smith, and the ‘brother loungeur’ whose chats with Fanny’s father go unreported. It is still possible, however, to make the general observation that while Austen often fails to individualise characters who cannot or will not aspire to gentility, she does not stoop to caricaturing those who are poor or uneducated. If Austen never uses non-standard dialects or particularly marked sociolects, she never makes a character ridiculous through their use of geographically or class-inflected speech. Edgeworth’s Thady, the comic narrator of *Castle Rackrent*, and Caleb Balderstone, the hopelessly loyal retainer in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, are often condemned out of their own mouths. In the Portsmouth episode in *Mansfield Park*, where Austen runs the greatest risk of ridiculing a large family lacking in servants and manners, she sensitively handles class differences. Austen focalises her descriptive treatment of the Prices through Fanny, who commiserates with their difficulties even as she criticizes them. Then, quite independently of Fanny’s sympathetic narration, even Mr. Price is somewhat redeemed. The narrator shows him to be capable of moderating his coarse masculinity once he is in good male company:

[H]er father was a very different man, a very different Mr. Price in his behaviour to this most highly respected stranger, from what he was in his own family at home. His manners now, though not polished, were more than passable: they were grateful, animated, manly; his expressions were those of an attached father, and a sensible man; his loud tones did very well in the open air, and there was not a single oath to be heard. Such as his instinctive compliment to the good manners of Mr. Crawford.... (467)

A complete description of satirical characterization in Austen's novels must recognize both the limits she placed on her satire, particularly in the case of characters like the Misses Bates and the Price family whom her heroines have power to help, and the relative homogeneity of Austen's characteristic voices.

3.4 The chronology of Austen's 'caricatures'

Parody is Austen's preferred mode of satire in the juvenilia, where she gives brilliantly exaggerated and reductive imitations of the epistolary form, marriage plots, sentimental fiction, and gothic fiction. Meanwhile, the characters in the juvenilia are in themselves unmemorable automatons: hyperconventional for the purpose of the parody. Mary Waldron traces the automatic characters of the juvenilia back to their origins in 'the pomposities of conduct-literature' and in the 'fashionable fictional stereotypes' of 'fashionable progressive ideas' (16). In the concluding passage of 'Edgar & Emma', the irrepressible emotions of the sensitive heroine are hyperbolically exaggerated:

It was with difficulty that Emma could refrain from tears on hearing of the absence of Edgar; she remained however tolerably composed till the Wilmot's [sic] were gone when having no check to the overflowings of her greif [sic], she gave full vent to them, & retiring to her own room, continued in tears the remainder of her Life. (36-7)

Given full rein as it is in the juvenilia, the heavily exaggerated plot convention actually precludes any possibility of 'strongly marked' satirical characters. In fact, this extremity of parody seems to confine characters to mere functions of the plot, impeding any kind of intensive characterisation. Like many characters in the juvenilia, 'Emma' conforms to Forster's idea of the 'two-dimensional' character,

which are ‘very useful ... since they never need reintroducing, never run away, have not to be watched for development, and provide their own atmosphere—little luminous disks of a pre-arranged size, pushed hither and thither like counters across the void or between the stars; most satisfactory’ (95). At the conclusion of ‘Edgar & Emma’, the target of Austen’s satire is not a grieving woman, or indeed any specimen of humanity at all; her target, the subject of her exaggeration, is the fictional convention that female heroines suffer much and suffer long by their sensibility. We do not consider whether this ‘Emma’ is right or wrong in her actions, which are subject to the machinery of the parody.

There is a corridor between parody, or burlesque, and its kindred mode of satirical characterisation, sometimes called ‘caricature’. Both parody and caricature preserve highly recognisable likenesses of their objects while performing a satirical commentary on them. Austen’s parodies of language and literary convention in the juvenilia suggest a point of origin for the speech-focused satirical characterisation in her later published works, where overt parodies of conventional phrases, trendy vocabulary, and sententious maxims give way to individualised portraits. In these portraits, characterisation often hinges upon a particular style of speech or writing. Analysing the character of Lady Bertram, and her elevation from caricature, Forster calls attention to the moment when she ‘did not think deeply, but, guided by Sir Bertram, she thought justly on all important points’ (462). But there is a passage earlier in the novel where Austen presents Lady Bertram’s style of expressing her thoughts as a sign of her being jolted out of her habitual complacent negligence. When her son Tom first falls ill, she writes to Fanny ‘again and again [...] in the

same diffuse style' she adopted as a young married woman (495). Then, witnessing Tom's condition first-hand forces a profound difference of style in her writing:

It was a sort of playing at being frightened. The sufferings which Lady Bertram did not see had little power over her fancy; and she wrote very comfortably about agitation, and anxiety, and poor invalids, till Tom was actually conveyed to Mansfield, and her own eyes had beheld his altered appearance. Then a letter which she had been previously preparing for Fanny was finished in a different style, in the language of real feeling and alarm; then she wrote as she might have spoken. 'He is just come, my dear Fanny, and is taken upstairs; and I am so shocked to see him, that I do not know what to do. I am sure he has been very ill. Poor Tom!' (495)

Gone are the routine patterns of the conventionally well-written letter and the cold insincerity of Lady Bertram's 'very creditable, common-place, amplifying style' (493). As in the passages in *Northanger Abbey* and *Sense and Sensibility* where Austen designates characters as 'caricatures of themselves', this episode presents the caricature version of Lady Bertram as something internal to the fictional world of the novel, built up through self-indulgence and susceptible to refashioning back to the self that is apposed to caricature. In Lady Bertram's letters, the 'poor invalids' become "'Poor Tom!'", the contrast in language conferring on the writer the distinction of character.

The link between caricature and the parody of conventional language is plainest in *Northanger Abbey*, where Catherine's experience teaches her not only to doubt the veracity of Gothic narratives, but also to question the insincere and self-aggrandising language of the Thorpes. Initially, because 'she had not been brought

up to understand the propensities of a rattle' (62), she reacts with fear to John Thorpe's flippantly colourful description of her brother's gig, which is one moment "a little tittuppy thing" and the next moment "safe enough" (61, 62). Isabella Thorpe, writing to Catherine after she has been abandoned by Frederick Tilney, papers over her misadventure with a conventional appeal to the depth of her feeling for Catherine. 'Thank God! we leave this vile place tomorrow. Since you went away, I have had no pleasure in it—the dust is beyond anything; and every body one cares for is gone' (222). The friend is substituted for the lover, leaving a fault-line between the lie and the truth visible even to Catherine. Austen never associates her characters' manners of expressing themselves so blatantly with conventional character types as in *Northanger Abbey*, where the actual names of character types are applied to the appropriate character: John Thorpe likes to "walk about and quiz people" (54), Isabella accuses him of being "such a rattle" (124), and Catherine will finally exclaim at the height of *éclaircissement*, "So much for Isabella ... and for all our intimacy! ... She is a vain coquette' (224).²⁸ However, Austen's other more sophisticated ways of distinguishing characters by impersonating their distinctive voices – through the epistolary form, the monologue, and free indirect discourse – are all present in *Northanger Abbey*.

The element of parody persists in *Sense and Sensibility*, where Marianne has assimilated the fashionable values of sensibility as Catherine has imbibed the conventions of the Gothic. Austen stages a collapse of the opposite categories embodied by the Dashwood sisters, adopting a tolerant irony towards Marianne as

²⁸ See Miranda J. Burgess on General Tilney as a 'caricature' borrowed from 'Burney's anti-commercial burlesques': *British Fiction and the Production of the Social Order, 1740-1830* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 163.

contrasted with the satirical rendering of the novel's most irredeemably self-serving characters, Mr and Mrs John Dashwood and Lucy Steele. As in *Northanger Abbey*, letters, monologues, and free indirect discourse work to exhibit character.

Marianne's notes to Willoughby, which combine sense with feeling, do much to complicate her role as a vehicle for the parody of sensibility. Affected speech signifies grievous character defects in *Mansfield Park*, where Mrs Norris is both devoid of moral principle and offensively sanctimonious:

Three or four Prices might have been swept away, any or all except Fanny and William, and Lady Bertram would have thought little about it; or perhaps might have caught from Mrs Norris's lips the cant of its being a very happy thing and a great blessing to their poor dear sister Price to have them so well provided for. (496)

In Austen's published writing, overly conventional and jargonistic speech is rarely in itself a sufficient object of satire, but rather serves to characterise insincerity of feeling, vacuity of mind, and selfishness. The prominence of the parody of conventional and contagious language in Austen's development as a writer suggests why, both in the published novels and in Austen's last unfinished work, characteristic voices are the mainstay of satirical technique.

3.5 The *Sanditon* manuscript

Austen began her last writing project when she was severely ill, and left the manuscript unfinished at her desk. The manuscript fragment commonly known as *Sanditon* has often struck readers as an oddity, a failure, and the piece of work in Austen's oeuvre most susceptible to the label of caricature. Many critics have set

Sanditon's preposterous characters and preponderance of satirical material aside from Austen's published novels, and have noted contrasts particularly with the 'mature' later novels.²⁹ A. Walton Litz described it as 'a private composition', a 'defense against illness and depression' (164-5). R. W. Chapman points out 'a certain roughness and harshness of satire ... which at its worst amounts to caricature', and assumed that in further revisions Austen would have 'smoothed these coarse strokes, so strikingly different from the mellow pencillings of *Persuasion*' (208). B.C. Southam asks whether the manuscript was 'the product of an imagination stimulated in ill-health' (135), and observes that Austen's revisions to the fragment 'show us that in so far as [she] was changing the presentation of the characters, she was not toning down but heightening their traits and eccentricities' (130). Kathryn Sutherland describes how in this final manuscript, the eccentricity of Austen's characters 'threatened to upstage the workaday elements of plot and probable characterisation' (184). Of those critics who have not viewed the *Sanditon* fragment as an out-and-out disappointment, some have celebrated *Sanditon* either as an example of late style, an experimental coda to Austen's oeuvre; others, such as Donald Greene, have viewed it as text characteristic of Austen's writing in that it

²⁹ Barbara Z. Thaden has offered an original analysis of *Emma* as the novel in which Austen 'attempt[ed] to broaden the sphere of her characterization', by taking for her titular character a rich young snob whose shortcomings she would otherwise have 'painted with the bold, harsh, and spare strokes of the caricaturist'. Austen, Thaden suggests, 'perhaps realized by this time that her unsympathetic characters were mere caricatures, entertaining but unconvincing' (56). By giving so much of the novel from Emma's perspective, 'the quality of all other caricatures is softened ... they must be painted with a softer brush because they are the heroine's friends' (58). Emma is apposed to caricature via Mrs Elton, who is introduced in such a way as to echo Emma's introduction in the first lines of the novel. See 'Figure and Ground: The Receding Heroine in Jane Austen's *Emma*, *South Atlantic Review* 55.1 (January 1990): 47-62.

resurrects certain features of the juvenilia. Greene views *Sanditon* as capable of destabilising dominant critical narratives about the chronological development of Austen's satire:

There is a legend that Jane Austen 'mellowed' as she grew older; and it is perhaps true that if we tried to trace a curve showing the incidence of 'monstrosity' in her writing, beginning with *Love and Friendship* ... it would on the whole be a descending one.... But this thesis is at once demolished by a glance at the twelve completed chapters of her last novel, [...which] contains the largest quantity of freaks, all depicted with her most mature skill. (272-3).

Greene thus regards the caricature in *Sanditon* as a triumphant resurgence of 'monstrosity' in Austen's writing, based on the assumption that the manuscript contains chapters in an essentially completed state. The draft status of the *Sanditon* manuscript is crucial to the debate over its place within Austen's oeuvre.

Sutherland, like Southam, cautions the reader to treat the manuscript as an equivocal document of Austen's work in its early stages. Published versions of the fragmentary manuscript, beginning with the first publication in 1925, are edited to resemble printed text based on a final authorial version, often collected together with juvenilia such as *Lady Susan* and *The Watsons*, similarly edited to spare the reader the brackets and strikethroughs of diplomatic transcription. But these versions, which transform the materiality of the holograph into the apparent fixity of print, should not mislead us into believing that the finished and published *Sanditon* is before us.

In closing the distance between the fragment's status as authentic trace – the immediate site of composition/the imprint of a peculiar imagination – and the public articulations of the finished novels – in particular, in naïvely celebrating its fragmentariness as experiment or new departure – we risk mistaking composition for the more painful but no less revelatory labour of decomposition. What seems and is new in *Sanditon* may be the vivid emergence of imagination and perception from the decay of form, which is, if we think about it, an odd cause for celebration. (197)

Sanditon is certainly a work in progress, and some of its features may be, at least in part, symptomatic of Austen's illness.

The biographical facts are indeed crucial to how we read *Sanditon* and relate it to other texts in Austen's oeuvre. In 1816 Austen began to suffer from the symptoms that would cut short the writing of her last novel, and end her life: muscle weakness, fatigue, nausea, diarrhoea, and increased pigmentation of the skin. She may have contracted cancer of the stomach or bowels, Addison's disease, or tuberculosis (Butler, ODNB). While it seems fair to speculate that the illness that forced Austen to stop writing altogether could have adversely influenced her writing process, without more comprehensive documentation of how Austen's published novels were composed, it is impossible to know whether the *Sanditon* manuscript represents a more troubled composition process, or a simply a draft in need of editing. Sutherland reasonably postulates that Austen, in the final months of her life, no longer had the 'effort of planning' and 'stamina' in execution required to bring her satirically rendered characters into line, and to assign their ostentatious displays of peculiarity an appropriately limited place in the narrative. The property speculator

Mr Parker talks unchecked for page after page, and Austen devotes considerable space to exhibiting the self-indulgent Parker siblings, who are improbably and ludicrously neurotic. Alex Woloch has noted the narrative asymmetry of Austen's published novels in regard to the relative importance of the more peculiar and satirical 'minor' characters; in *Pride and Prejudice*, for example, the opening chapters are dominated by characters such as Mrs Bennet and Mr Collins, who are to some degree pushed aside in subsequent chapters to make room for the 'privileged and singular space of the protagonist' (76). In contrast, large swathes of the *Sanditon* manuscript deal almost exclusively with ridiculous figures: there is a distinct lack of concision in the character analyses of the Parkers, their acquaintances, and their collaborators; and their self-exhibiting speeches are longer than in any of the published novels, suggesting either lack of decision or lack of editing on Austen's part. This one might perhaps expect from an early draft; but again, without the corroborating evidence of another substantial early draft to compare with a published novel, it is impossible to know what was characteristic of Austen's drafts at an early stage of composition. Nor is it possible to know, since Austen never produced a late-stage draft or fair copy of the manuscript, how *Sanditon* would have looked in a more finished form. We can only compare the manuscript with finished versions of Austen's other novels, and to some extent with other surviving draft material that was never finished for publication, such as the juvenilia, the cancelled chapters of *Persuasion*, and the short satirical piece 'Plan for a Novel', which Austen wrote in 1816.

With these caveats in mind, proper recognition of the *Sanditon* manuscript as a document of Austen's writing process – compromised as that process may have

been by illness – creates an opportunity to re-examine Austen’s oeuvre in light of *Sanditon*’s seeming strangeness. Michelle Levy’s comparative textual analysis of *Sanditon* with Austen’s other fiction manuscripts suggests that to quarantine *Sanditon* apart from the rest of Austen’s oeuvre as ‘uncharacteristic’ is to make an untenable distinction between Austen’s published and unpublished writing. Levy proposes that the unfinished novel exemplifies an early stage of Austen’s routine process of composition: where, in confidential manuscript, more flagrantly satirical and topical writing both entertained Austen’s immediate familial and social circle, and provide the unpublishable germ for a publishable novel. She draws on Woloch’s account of narrative asymmetry, proposing that at the early stage of composition on show in the *Sanditon* manuscript, the process of relegating the satirically rendered characters to the status of minor characters simply has not happened.

The process Woloch observes at work within the early chapters of *Pride and Prejudice* ... may also describe Austen’s process of composition more generally, insofar as her fiction may have begun with satirical renderings of eccentric minor figures, and commentaries on a wide range of contemporary issues which are softened or removed through extensive revision. By enlarging the presence of her main characters, particularly the heroine, and removing most traces of the fiction’s topicality, Austen arrived at the print version of her novels. (1026)

Of course, with so few of Austen’s fiction manuscripts surviving it cannot be proved to a certainty whether the methods of characterisation demonstrated in *Sanditon* are consistent with Austen’s routine method of drafting a novel, or whether the manuscript more generally is typical of an early stage of composition. However, it

can be shown that there are compelling continuities in the rendering of satirical characters, as well as in the kinds of peculiarity exhibited, between the *Sanditon* manuscript and published novels such as *Pride and Prejudice* and *Persuasion*. There are numerous points of comparison between the rendering of characters such as Mrs Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*, Sir Walter Elliott and Mrs Musgrove in *Persuasion*, and the characterisation of Tom Parker and Arthur Parker in *Sanditon*. The final section of this chapter will explore some of the continuities and comparable passages between *Sanditon* and the published novels, both in support of Levy's thesis, and in the interest of showing that apposition to caricature, not opposition to caricature, was a motivating ideal in Austen's writing process.

The *Sanditon* manuscript includes a number of monomaniacal characters, whose social attractions are limited by their obsessive interest in subjects of that are of limited interest to other more rational people. Some of the most memorable are the Parker siblings Arthur, Diana, and Susan. The two women are neurotically preoccupied with their health, claiming to suffer '<a variety of very serious> Disorders' (b2:10), including Diana's 'old grievance, Spasmodic Bile', which renders her '<hardly able to crawl from my Bed to the Sofa' (b2:12), while remaining active and energetic.³⁰ Diana and Susan busy themselves in 'the ~~disease~~ of <a spirit> of <restless> activity, & the glory of doing more than anybody else, had their share in every exertion of ~~Health~~ <Benevolence>' (b3: 11). At the same time, they pride themselves on eating very little: "'Susan never eats – <I grant you → & just at present, I shall want nothing; I never eat for about a week after a Journey'"

³⁰ Wiltshire has described Diana's characterisation as a 'combination of specificity and the wildly improbable' (210): she has three teeth pulled, and rubs a coachman's ankle for six hours.

(b3:9). It is, as Charlotte observes, ‘an extraordinary state of health’ (b3:10). Arthur Parker’s self-indulgent invalidism takes a different form, in making himself as comfortable as possible and avoiding physical exertion: he is ‘determined on having no Disorders but such as called for warm rooms & good Nourishment’ (b3:21). Although Arthur prefers the sensual gratifications of eating and drinking to the more ‘spiritualized’ pleasures of restricted diet and frenzied overzealous activity assumed by Diana and Susan, as Charlotte perceives, all three siblings are pursuing ‘enjoyments in Invalidism’ (b3:21).

The neurotic behaviour of the Parkers is so irrational that it might be seen as a ludicrously caricatured portrait of valetudinarianism, compared with the figure of Mr Woodhouse. However, while Mr Woodhouse might be allotted less room to speak and less narrative importance in *Emma* than the Parker siblings in the *Sanditon* manuscript, Woodhouse’s valetudinarian neuroticism – his fear of everything ‘unwholesome’ and neurotic anxiety to dictate the hours and eating habits of his neighbours whenever possible – is no less extreme than the Parkers’.³¹ Speaking out

³¹ Jill Heydt-Stevenson has pointed out that the riddle Mr Woodhouse can remember is one about venereal disease, and argues that ‘[t]hrough a series of covert associations, Austen raises the ludicrous and hilarious possibility that the clearly asexual Mr. Woodhouse might have been a libertine in his youth and now suffers from tertiary syphilis’. For example, ‘one of the reputed cures for venereal disease was a light diet, mostly consisting of a thin gruel – Mr. Woodhouse’s favourite meal’ (320). See “Slipping into the Ha-Ha”: Bawdy Humor and Body Politics in Jane Austen’s Novels’, *Nineteenth-Century Literature* 55.3 (December 2000), pp. 316-320. On Mr Woodhouse’s eating habits more generally, see Gwen Hyman, *Making a Man: Gentlemanly Appetites in the Nineteenth-Century British Novel* (Athens, OH: Ohio University Press, 2009), pp. 17-53.

More generally, Wiltshire’s study of the physical body in Austen’s novels discovers the continuity of the health theme between *Emma* and the *Sanditon* manuscript, showing how *Emma* is ‘littered with para-medical paraphernalia and talk’, and arguing that Mr Woodhouse’s doctor Mr Perry is ‘a key reference in the distinctive sociolect of Highbury’, which ‘is much concerned with discussion of and

against the fashionable cure of sea bathing, Mr Woodhouse cautions his family, “I have been long perfectly convinced ... that the sea is very rarely of use to any body. I am sure it almost killed me once’ (108). In a similarly grandiose allusion to the likeliness of extreme injury, Arthur Parker believes that green tea ““<acts on me like poison and> w^d. entirely take away the use of my right side, before I had swallowed it 5 minutes”” (b3:22). The Parkers’ mania can also be measured against that of Sir Walter Elliott, the patriarch of *Persuasion*, who is defined by his ‘vanity of person and of situation’ (4). His narcissism often diverts into offensive interest in the appearances of other people, bemoaning ‘the wreck of the good looks of everybody else’ (6). In addition to filling his own dressing-room with large looking-glasses (138), Sir Walter encourages Mrs Clay to try remedies for her freckles (158), wishes that Lady Russell would wear rouge (234), and criticises the navy on the grounds that it ““bring[s] persons of obscure birth into undue distinction”” and ““cuts up a man’s youth and vigour most horribly””, leaving him tanned and weathered (21). Sir Walter is concerned with personal appearance and peerage to the exclusion of all else: the merit of the naval profession’s national service in the war effort counts for nothing with him.³² He verbally sketches a physical caricature of an experienced admiral: ““the most deplorable-looking personage you can imagine; his face the colour of mahogany, rough and rugged to the last degree; all lines and wrinkles, nine grey hairs of a side, and nothing but a dab of powder at top”” (22). Sir Walter is

enquiries about sickness and health. ... Economic relations and social determinants are ... displaced or partly concealed by their redefinition as matters of health’ (112).
³² On Austen’s representations of the navy, see B. C. Southam, *Jane Austen and the Navy* (London: National Maritime Museum Publishing, 2005). On Austen’s sentimental depiction of the navy in *Persuasion*, see Pittock, ‘Jane Austen and her Critics’, pp. 256-8.

shocked to discover that the man is only forty years old. Like Mr Woodhouse, and like Arthur, Diana, and Susan Parker, he is an anxious custodian of the body. The crucial difference between the irrational obsessions of Sir Walter and Mr Woodhouse and those of the Parker siblings is not of degree or quality but of quantity: though both Sir Walter and Mr Woodhouse are important to the plots of *Emma* and *Persuasion* respectively, Austen allots relatively little space to their speeches and to descriptions of their activities compared with the textual prominence of the Parkers in the *Sanditon* manuscript.

The physical prominence of certain satirically rendered characters, in a notable departure from Austen's usual practice of avoiding much physical delineation, features in *Persuasion* as well as in the *Sanditon* manuscript. Austen could not have objected to the ridicule of personal appearance on principle, and in the passages describing Mrs Musgrove and Arthur Parker, the body's size and physical prominence is made relevant to the satirical treatment of other personal qualities. In *Persuasion*, Mary Elliott complains to Anne that her new in-laws, the Musgroves, “are both so very large, and take up so much room” in a shared carriage (42). Mrs Musgrove is described by the narrator as a being ‘of a comfortable, substantial size’ (73). The relevance of Mrs Musgrove's size is not yet made clear. When Arthur Parker is introduced, Charlotte's interior monologue immediately begins to load his personal appearance with satirical significance. Having heard of his poor health, Charlotte has ‘fancied <him> a very puny, delicate-looking young Man’, but she finds him ‘quite as tall as his Brother & a great deal Stouter—Broad made & Lusty’ (b3:13). His passion for cocoa and toast, spread with ‘a great dab’ of butter, amuses Charlotte so much that she ‘c^d. hardly contain himself

<herself>' (b3:21). Arthur's self-indulgent attention to his own comfort and appetites, and his physically obtrusive body, soon become socially obtrusive. While Charlotte's conversation with Arthur does create a narrative that seems to link his size with his eating habits and indolence, it is more important that Arthur's overlarge body metonymises the ways in which his body figures obtrusively in all his doings. To Charlotte's disgust, Arthur's body is not off-limits as a topic for conversation with a young woman:

“Walking up that Hill, in the middle of the day, would throw me into such a Perspiration!—You would see me all in a Bath, by the time I got there!—I am very subject to Perspiration. ~~Which~~ and there cannot be a surer sign of Nervousness.—” They were now advancing so deep in Physics, that Charlotte ~~th~~ viewed the entrance of the Servant with the Tea things, as a very fortunate Interruption. (b3:18)

Arthur's solicitude for his body so wholly occupies his thoughts that he pursues them regardless of whether other people's interest in his bodily functions. When the tea things are brought in, they occupy Arthur so thoroughly that his conversation with Charlotte comes to a halt, as he has entirely forgotten her:

The young Man's attentions were instantly lost. He took his own Cocoa ~~Pot~~ from the Tray, [...] and turning completely to the Fire, sat coddling and cooking it to his own satisfaction.... and till it was all done, she heard nothing of his voice but ~~in a faint murmur, &~~ the murmuring of a few broken sentences of <self-> approbation ~~of his own Doings & prosperity~~ <& success>. (b3:18-19)

When Arthur returns to Charlotte and invites her to cocoa and toast, he finds her ‘already helped to Tea—which surprised him—so totally self-engrossed had he been’.³³ Seated before a hot fire, Charlotte finds that Arthur’s bulk comes in useful as a fire screen, and she ‘drew back her Chair to have all the advantage of ~~him for~~ <his Person as> a screen’ (b3:13). That Arthur’s neurotic attention to the gratification of his bodily appetites constitute a barrier to social intercourse is figured by Charlotte’s impression of his body as more like the surface of an object than the surface of a person.

Austen had already figured the overlarge body as socially obtrusive in *Persuasion*. The narrator calls our attention to how Mrs Musgrove physically gets in the way of the developing understanding between Anne and Captain Wentworth:

They were actually on the same sofa, for Mrs Musgrove had most readily made room for him; they were divided only by Mrs Musgrove. It was no insignificant barrier, indeed. Mrs Musgrove was of a comfortable, substantial size, infinitely more fitted by nature to express good cheer and humour, than

³³ A bachelor lacking sexual appetite, Arthur Parker fits the pattern Michael Parrish Lee observes, that ‘the upper- and middle- characters in Austen who show interest in or concern with food ... are all figures of pre-, post-, failed, or refused reproductive genital sexuality – a sexuality that is the telos of the novelistic marriage plot and the privileged site of mature subjectivity’ (375). When the youngest Dashwood sister Margaret regrets missing her dinner, her ‘un-blunted appetite signals a social immaturity that contrasts with the deeply sympathetic feelings of the older Dashwoods’ (369). On the pervasive construction of sexuality against appetite in Austen’s published novels (Lee does not include *Sanditon* in his account), see ‘The Nothing in the Novel: Jane Austen and the Food Plot’, *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 45.3 (Fall 2012): 368-88; on appetite more generally, as associated with fatness, garrulity, and sexual desire, see Joseph Litvak, *Strange Gourmets: Sophistication, Theory, and the Novel* (Durham University Press, 1997), p. 23; on preoccupation with food as a moral defect in Austen’s novels, see Maggie Lee, *Jane Austen and Food* (London: Hambledon, 1995), p. 78; Barbara M. Benedict, ‘The Trouble with Things: Objects and the Commodification of Sociability’, *A Companion to Jane Austen*, eds. Claudia L. Johnson and Clara Tuite (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), pp. 352-3.

tenderness and sentiment; and while the agitations of Anne's slender form, and pensive face, may be considered as very completely screened, Captain Wentworth should be allowed some credit for the self-command with which he attended to her large fat sighings over the destiny of a son, whom alive nobody had cared for. (73)

Austen's descriptions of Mrs Musgrove as a 'barrier' big enough to act as a 'screen' between people make her sound more like a misplaced item of furniture than in an active participant in the social gathering. Like Frankenstein's monster, she faces society's irrational, perhaps inexorable, distaste for sensibility expressed with an unheroic body. The narrator delivers a wry meditation on the 'unbecoming conjunction' of fat with feeling:

Personal size and mental sorrow certainly have no necessary proportions. A large bulky figure has as good a right to be in deep affliction, as the most graceful set of limbs in the world. But, fair or not fair, there are unbecoming conjunctions, which reason will patronize in vain, —which taste cannot tolerate, —which ridicule will seize. (73-4)³⁴

Some critics have found in this passage an acid antidote to the image of an innocuously pleasant 'Aunt Jane',³⁵ while others have proposed that this passage ventriloquizes the intolerant taste of conventional opinion, of which Austen's

³⁴ On these sentences as a parody of the Johnsonian rhetorical triad, see Claude Rawson, *Satire and Sentiment* (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 290-1.

³⁵ Mudrick points out that the sense of humour displayed in Austen's mockery of Mrs. Musgrove's mourning is displayed also in her letters (213). See for example the letter of 17 May 1799 in which she remarks on a 'Dr Hall in such very deep mourning that either his mother, his wife, or himself must be dead', and describes a Mrs Bromley as 'a fat woman in mourning' (*Letters* 41, 42).

narrator actually disapproves.³⁶ The passage seems to balance the purely rational proposition, that ‘Personal size and mental sorrow have certainly no necessary proportions’, with an acknowledgement that reason cannot obviate the irrational demands of taste, which apprehend the fat body as ridiculous. The narrator does not present herself as being either for or against Mrs Musgrove; she is for reason, and for taste.

More central than the ‘unbecoming conjunctions’ passage to the satirical treatment of Mrs Musgrove is the way in which Austen makes her body metonymic for her outsized grief. The Musgroves’ ‘fat sighings’ are juxtaposed with the muscular sensibility of the naval men. The late Richard Musgrove served six months as a midshipman under Captain Wentworth, who shares the narrator’s clear-eyed perspective on his shortcomings as a son:

He had, in fact, though his sisters were now doing all they could for him, by calling him ‘poor Richard,’ been nothing better than a thick-headed, unfeeling, unprofitable Dick Musgrove, who had never done any thing to entitle himself to more than the abbreviation of his name, living or dead.

(54)³⁷

Dick Musgrove was a man deserving of Wentworth’s concern, but not his respect.

We learn that Wentworth induced Musgrove to write ‘the only two letters which his father and mother had ever received from him during the whole of his absence; that

³⁶ See for example Claudia Johnson, *Jane Austen: Women, Politics, and the Novel*, p. 150.

³⁷ Mudrick has called this passage a ‘savage caricature’, which ‘serves as a pretext for abusing Mrs. Musgrove’ (212). Pittock likewise declares that ‘the animus displayed towards Mary and Miss Steele pales into comparative insignificance beside the wanton heartlessness of Jane Austen’s allusion to the dead Dick Musgrove and her mockery of his mother’s grief at his remembered death’ (261).

is to say, the only two disinterested letters; all the rest had been mere applications for money' (55). The narrator disapproves of Mrs Musgrove's unreasoning self-inculcation of grief, disproportionate to the loss of such a son. The fat body is certainly made an object of ridicule in *Persuasion*, but the primary target of Austen's satirical rendering of Mrs Musgrove is not the fat woman of feeling, but the woman of fat feeling, whose grief exceeds the proper portion allotted to its object. The phrases 'necessary proportions' and 'unbecoming conjunctions', which most immediately refer to the propriety of the relation between Mrs Musgrove's physique and her sensibility, can retrospectively be applied to the propriety of the relation between Dick Musgrove and 'poor Richard', who becomes more precious in death than he was in life. The mother's 'large fat sighings' figure the fat body as a physical instantiation of an unnecessary and obtrusive grief. Austen plainly was not above touches of physical satire, and it is evident from passages in *Persuasion* and the *Sanditon* manuscript that she found it germane to associate the fat body with self-indulgence, obtrusive behaviour, and deficiency in the sense of proportion. Neither the extreme neuroticism of the satirically rendered characters in the *Sanditon* manuscript, nor the satirical attention paid to their bodies, can be understood as a radical departure from the published novels.

Cant is an important feature of the characteristic voices in *Sanditon*, where it dominates conversation and correspondence more than in the published novels. Each canting idiolect has its fashionable terms. Sir Edward rhapsodises vacuously about the poetry of Scott and Burns using phrases like 'the fire of poetry' (b2:44), amazing Charlotte with 'the number of his Quotations & the bewilderment of some of his sentences' (b2:31), being 'very much addicted to all the newest-fashioned hard

words' (b2:34). Arthur and Diana refer continually to their 'nerves'.³⁸ Tom Parker's puffing advertisements for the new health resort claim 'anti-pulmonary' effect. In a passage laden with jargon, malapropism, misinformation, logical fallacy, and promotional fantasy – reminiscent of the eccentric enthusiasts in Peacock's conversation novels – Austen gives Tom Parker's high opinion of sea air and sea bathing:

The Sea Air & Sea Bathing together were ~~almost~~ <nearly> infallible, ~~in every disorder~~ One or the other being a match for every Disorder, ~~In cases of the Stomach, the Lungs or the Blood; they were equally sovereign; They were~~ <They were> anti-spasmodic, anti-pulmonary, anti-sceptic [sic], anti-bilious and anti-rheumatic. Nobody could catch cold by the Sea, Nobody wanted appetite by the Sea, ~~nor e^d. the most obstinate Cougher retain a cough there 4 & 20 hours.~~—<Nobody wanted spirits, Nobody wanted Strength> – They were healing, softening, relaxing – fortifying & bracing – seemingly just as was wanted – sometimes one, sometimes the other. – If the Sea breeze failed, the Sea-bath was the certain corrective; – and where Bathing disagreed, the Sea Breeze alone was ~~palpably~~ evidently designed by Nature for the cure.

(b1:21-22)

Obvious gaffes in Tom's use of technical terms ('anti-sceptic' instead of 'anti-septic', for example) betray that he lacks even a basic understanding of the scientific basis for the popularity of sea-water cures, having learned the language used to

³⁸ On the prevalence of the nervous disorder diagnosis in this period, see John Wiltshire, *Jane Austen and the Body: 'The Picture of Health'* (Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 117. Wiltshire compares the hypochondria of Mary Musgrove in *Persuasion* to that of the Parkers in *Sanditon* (197-8).

champion sea-water without any understanding of the diversity of treatments recommended for different complaints. Tom's neurotic relations are much better acquainted with medical terminology and practice. In fact, they have stopped consulting the 'Medical Tribe', preferring to rely on 'our own knowledge of our own wretched Constitutions' and to argue their diagnoses amongst themselves (b2:13).

Austen may have imagined Tom Parker as an emulator of Dr Richard Russell, who set up a medical practice in Brighton.³⁹ Much of the language that Austen uses to express Tom's absurd concept that the sea is a universal remedy can be traced back to Russell's influential medical treatise, originally written in Latin and published in English as *A Dissertation on the Use of Sea Water in the Affections of the Glands* (1752). According to Russell, sea water is anti-bilious, and 'Sailors by Sea Water, are freed from the returning fits of bilious Colics' (127). It is also anti-rheumatic: 'Daily Experience has taught me how far Sea Water will contribute to the Cure of the Rheumatism, especially that of the scorbutic Kind.'⁴⁰ It was frequently used in *Diseases of the Joints by the Ancients*' (1769 ed. 166). Sea water, like spa water, became a fashionable cure for all manner of diseases and nervous complaints, largely thanks to Russell's popularisation of sea-water therapies. Bottled sea water was even sold in London. As his reputation grew and his practice increased in popularity, Russell bought tenements and had a large house built to accommodate himself and his patients. Parker, 'convinced that the advantage of a medical Man at hand w^d. very materially promote the rise & prosperity of [Sanditon], w^d in fact tend

³⁹ Southam pointed to another likely inspiration, Thomas Skinner Skurr's satirical novel *The Magic of Wealth* (1815), where "'a new and rising water-place [is] created, as it were, by magic, out of a few fishing huts, by the power and wealth of a rich banker'" ('A Source for Sanditon?' 122-3).

⁴⁰ I.e. related to scurvy.

to bring a ~~great~~<prodigious> influx' (b1: 19), must be aware that Brighton's success as a seaside resort grew from the demand for Dr Russell and his fashionable sea-water therapies. Austen's interest in the exhibition of cant as an element of the satirically characteristic voice, the hinge in her transition from literary parody to social caricature, remains active in the *Sanditon* manuscript.

As already mentioned, the relative quantity and incisiveness of the character writing are the crucial differences between satirically rendered characters in the *Sanditon* manuscript and in Austen's published novels. Far more space is given over to the Parkers' talk and to the narrator's discussions of their peculiarities in *Sanditon*, than to the more eccentric members of the Bennet family. The opening chapter of *Pride and Prejudice* is remarkably compressed: Mr and Mrs Bennet are introduced, their characters displayed, the class to which they belong established, and the inciting incident of the plot explained, all within the first several hundred words of the novel. The *Sanditon* manuscript takes two chapters and almost four thousand words to introduce some of the Parkers and to reach the point of Charlotte's removal to Sanditon. *Northanger Abbey* uses a very similar inciting incident, Catherine's removal to Bath, which is managed by the end of the first chapter and within one thousand and four hundred words. The relative lack of narrative compression in the opening chapters of *Sanditon*, largely due to lengthy analysis of Tom Parker's character, suggests that Austen's drafts had to undergo a great deal of editing and rearrangement before they could successfully manage plot and character concisely and simultaneously. A closer reading of passages in *Pride and Prejudice*, side by side with analogous passages in the *Sanditon* manuscript, reveals how a more

concise and disciplined mode of character writing might have emerged in later drafts of *Sanditon*.

Austen relies on dialogue to characterise the Bennet family in the opening pages of *Pride and Prejudice*, with most of the first chapter a conversation between Mr and Mrs Bennet. The dialogue displays the contrary positions the Bennets adopt in their dealings with one another, and satirises conversational commonplaces, with Mrs Bennet tendering significant remarks and leading questions, and Mr Bennet refusing to give the conventional responses she would like. The dialogue also establishes the premise of the novel's plot and introduces Elizabeth Bennet, who with “something more of quickness than her sisters” (5) already appears to the reader as a likely protagonist, and she is clearly distinguished as such by the fourth chapter. In contrast, the *Sanditon* manuscript introduces the Parker family not through revealing dialogue, but through an explanation of how Tom Parker's talk reveals his character:

All that he understood of himself, he readily told, ~~was he was~~ <for he was ~~being~~> very openhearted;—& where he might be himself in the dark, ~~he~~ <his conversation> was still giving information ~~unconsciously~~, to such of the Heywoods as could observe. (b1: 17)

Rather than being presented with conversation revealing of Tom Parker, we are simply told that his conversation is revealing. Similarly, rather than giving us dialogue to evidence the incompatibility of Mr. and Mrs. Parker, the manuscript simply tells us what should be evident:

Upon the whole, M^r. P. was evidently an amiable, family-man.... And M^{rs}. P. was as evidently a gentle, amiable sweet tempered woman, the properest wife

in the World for a Man of strong Understanding, but not of capacity to supply the cooler reflection which her husband sometimes needed.... (b1: 20)⁴¹

‘Conversation’, ‘information’, and the repeated word ‘evidently’ stick out as placeholders for a passage of dialogue that has not yet taken its place alongside the third-person narration that dominates the opening chapters of the manuscript. We might even interpret ‘evidently’ as the writer’s implicit memorandum that in a later draft the third-person description of Tom Parker’s character should be corroborated by proximate dialogue to display his enthusiasms in a suitably ludicrous way. In this respect, Austen’s characterisation of the Parker couple looks like a plan for a scene in which a mismatched couple display their characters through dialogue, as in *Pride and Prejudice*. In the analogous passage in *Pride and Prejudice*, where Mr and Mrs Bennet are introduced there is no need for the narrator to tell us that Mrs Bennet ‘evidently’ has a particular character trait. In the *Sanditon* manuscript, character writing refers to what is evident precisely because the evidence is not yet satisfactorily assembled.

Finally, while the *Sanditon* manuscript features third-person ‘character analyses’ of some of its satirically rendered characters, which one can imagine becoming briefer and more decisive, in a later draft. Having once recorded that Parker is ‘~~in~~ on the subject of Sanditon, a complete Enthusiast’ (b1: 17), Austen tries out a great many ways of expressing Parker’s monomania:

⁴¹ The narrator’s remark that Mrs Parker cannot ‘supply the cooler reflection which her husband sometimes needed’ recalls the passage in *Sense and Sensibility* where the narrator explains how John Dashwood’s poor choice of wife has led him to become ‘a strong caricature of himself’: another expression of the idea that real-life caricatures are created when foibles are overindulged.

Sanditon was a second wife & 4 Children to him—hardly less Dear—& certainly more engrossing. —He could talk of it for ever. —It had indeed the highest claims; — <not only those of> Birth place, Property, <and> Home, — it was ~~also~~ his Mine, his Lottery, his Speculation, <&> his Hobby Horse; <his Occupation> his Hope & his Futurity. (b1: 20-21)

Austen accumulates this list of descriptive terms, which she then sets in juxtaposition another, more sympathetic, summary of Tom Parker's character:

Upon the whole, M^r. P. was evidently an amiable, family-man, fond of Wife, Childⁿ, Brothers & Sisters— & generally kind-hearted;— Liberal, gentlemanlike, easy to please;— of a sanguine turn of mind; with more Imagination than Judgement. (b1: 20)

The idea of Sanditon being 'a second wife & 4 Children' to Mr. Parker makes an ironic commentary on his being a 'family-man'; perhaps, in a later draft, Austen would have transformed this apparent contradiction into an incisive character analysis.

Providing a pre-emptive character analysis is one of Austen's techniques for marking her satirically rendered characters; and just as Austen's repetition of the adverb 'evidently' projects a later draft that makes more efficacious and compressed use of characteristic dialogue, so her third-person character analysis of Tom Parker includes an instruction or hint for subsequent drafts. The lengthy and accumulative passage of character writing opens with a statement that echoes the narrator's judgement of Mrs Bennet, that '*Her* mind was less difficult to develop' (5). We are told that 'M^r. Parker's Character & History were soon ~~made known~~ <unfolded>' (b1:17). Since 'unfold' is a synonym for 'develop', that Austen cancelled 'made known' and

superposed ‘unfolded’ suggests that she may even have had in mind, while exploring ways to describe Tom Parker’s enthusiasm, her satirical anatomy of Mrs Bennet as ‘less difficult to develop’. Whereas the *Sanditon* manuscript contradicts itself by devoting pages of exploratory character writing to a man ‘soon unfolded’, in *Pride and Prejudice* the narrator immediately fulfils her promise that Mrs Bennet is easily developed, with a pithy character analysis ordered in three stylish sentences, short and taut with parallelism: ‘She was a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper. When she was discontented, she fancied herself nervous. The business of her life was to get her daughters married; its solace was visiting and news’ (5). The words ‘unfold’ and ‘develop’ associate the third-person character analyses with writing paper, and particularly with the manuscript of correspondence – which, having been enveloped by the sender to keep the contents private, must be developed for the recipient to read it. Here, to characterise is not, as one modern sense of the word ‘develop’ would have it, to refine, complicate, or broaden the character; nor does the ‘development’ entail a narrative in which the fictional character progresses and changes, for example in acquiring greater sophistication, maturity, or knowledge. Rather, to ‘develop’ Mrs Bennet is to discover her all at once, to pre-empt readers’ observations about her with a stylishly concise summary of her most salient traits. Given the promise of ‘Character & History ... soon ~~made known~~ <unfolded>’, we can only assume that Austen, at least momentarily, formed an idea of a later draft that would aspire to the concision of her published novels, and would carry out the implicit plan of unfolding Tom Parker’s character concisely and decisively.

Levy's idea that Austen may typically have included expansive portraits of satirically rendered characters in early-stage drafts, and that these portraits were foundational to the construction of Austen's mature writing, gains credibility from the fact that satirically rendered characters often play important roles in the opening chapters of the published novels. The marriage of Mr John Dashwood to 'a strong caricature of himself' sets the plot of *Sense and Sensibility* in motion; *Pride and Prejudice* begins with the 'truth universally acknowledged' that is Mrs Bennet's *idée fixe*; it is a nasty letter from Mrs Norris that causes the breach between the Bertrams and the Prices in *Mansfield Park*;⁴² Sir Walter Elliot looks over the book of peers in the first chapter of *Persuasion*. Protagonists often find themselves in the care of, under the authority of, or otherwise beholden to satirically rendered characters: Catherine to the Thorpes, Eleanor and Marianne to Mr and Mrs John Dashwood, Elizabeth to Mrs Bennet, the Bennets to Mr Collins, Fanny to Mrs Norris, and so on until Austen's last protagonist, Charlotte, who is whisked away to Sanditon by Mr and Mrs Tom Parker. The *Sanditon* manuscript further corroborates the idea that Austen's first impulse was to individualise her more peculiar characters, and thus create difficult and diverting social environments in which her heroines would be able to distinguish themselves.

⁴² On the importance of 'shrew' characters in Austen's novels, and Mrs Norris's centrality to the plot of *Mansfield Park*, see Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-century Literary Imagination* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 169-75. Gilbert and Gubar pick out the fairy-tale elements of the story, comparing Mrs Norris to Snow White's stepmother and the Queen of the Night in *Die Zauberflöte*.

3.6 Publishable simulacra of confidential caricature

The label of ‘caricaturistic writing’ fits Austen’s oeuvre in that she was evidently self-conscious about the status of her satirically rendered characters in relation to eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century concepts of caricature. She may have developed her novels out of confidential manuscript drafts in which topical satire and the satire of real individuals entertained her immediate familial and social circle. The confidential caricature portraiture of Austen’s confidential writing would have been, like Edgeworth’s private performances of *Thady*, a textual iteration of the long tradition of confidential caricature portraiture often practised by amateurs.

Confidential caricature had to be reconfigured into a literary product suitable for an anonymous bourgeois audience: morally sound, but still capable of providing readers with the pleasures of satire and a literary version of the intimacy inherent in caricature portraits. Austen’s novels thematise caricature not as an idiom of the public sphere, but as a critical and comparative mode of observation. This thematisation of caricature can be understood to describe the ideal version, if not the total reality, of caricature in Austen’s published novels: a literary and intellectual version of caricature that accomplishes a moral critique and entertains readers while harming no reputations; in effect, a publishable simulacrum of confidential caricature. This is at least a more accurate description of Austen’s work than an analogy with caricature in the form of graphic satirical prints, or with twentieth-century political cartoons.

While it might seem that the reception of Austen’s novels has usually called attention to the ‘naturalness’ of her characters, much of the criticism in the first hundred and fifty years of the novels’ reception has set Austen’s writing in

apposition to caricature, either by using alternative terms to describe the emphasis of her satirical characterisation while avoiding accusations of personal satire, or by highlighting how characters are modulated into ‘deeper’, more rational, more natural versions of themselves. What is odd in the *Sanditon* manuscript is not the characters themselves: they are not more exaggerated or more satirical than numerous characters in Austen’s published novels. Rather, the relative quantitative distribution of writing about satirical characters, or their relative insubordination to characters who behave more rationally or naturally, makes the *Sanditon* manuscript somewhat uncharacteristic of Austen. The satirical characters are not radically different in *Sanditon*, but the difference gains importance from the fact that the reception of Austen’s novels, instead of acknowledging a form of caricature as a component necessary in itself to Austen’s characterisation, has established a pattern of defining her work in apposition to caricature. This chapter has argued that a literary reconfiguration of caricature was in fact crucial to Austen’s composition process.

4 Parents of Caricature

I was their plaything and their idol, and something better—their child...

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1831)

‘*Frankenstein* is a birth myth’, Ellen Moers was the first to declare in 1974 (92).¹ Moers’ essay argues that the novel represents ‘the trauma of the afterbirth’ through ‘the motif of revulsion against newborn life’, and that the ‘[f]ear and guilt, depression and anxiety’ that Victor Frankenstein experiences ‘are common reactions to the birth of a baby’ (93). This was the first reading of *Frankenstein* that assigned special significance to Mary Shelley’s personal sufferings as the daughter of a mother who died of puerperal fever, and as a mother who in February 1815 gave birth prematurely to a baby girl, which ‘evidently [sic] died of convulsions’ only weeks later (*Letters* I: 11). The notion that *Frankenstein*, ostensibly dealing with the masculine ambition and relationships between men,² explores and sensationalises the parent-child relationship as experienced by a young woman, ushered in a new wave of criticism seeking to emphasise female experience as a historical dimension of the novel.

¹ Moers’ essay was first published on 21 March 1974 in *The New York Review of Books* as ‘Female Gothic: The Monster’s Mother’, and then as a chapter of her ground-breaking book *Literary Women: The Great Writers* (New York: Doubleday, 1976), to which the in-text citations here refer. The essay was reprinted in *The Endurance of ‘Frankenstein’: Essays on Mary Shelley’s Novel*, ed. George Levine and U. C. Knoepfelmacher (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London: University of California Press, 1979), pp. 77-87.

² The novel’s focus on homosocial relations consists in Victor’s friendship with Clerval; his short-lived yet intense relationship with Walton, the first-order narrator of the story; the education he receives from his father and from his tutors at university; and of course the father-son relationship between Victor and his markedly male (and heterosexual) offspring.

Such readings, while sympathising with the trauma of motherhood, have encouraged a tendency in criticism to vilify Victor as the unloving, neglectful, and even abusive male parent, thus vindicating his offspring as a product of adverse circumstances. It is now customary to refer to ‘the monster’ (the most common appellation in the novel) as ‘the Creature’. One strand of the criticism has assumed that motherhood, diegetically absented from both the creation and the parenting of the monster, could provide the natural birth and loving guardianship that would result in a less damaged individual. As Anne K. Mellor put it, ‘From a feminist viewpoint, *Frankenstein* is a book about what happens when a man tries to have a baby without a woman’ (40). Victor appears as a Godwinian male parent, authoritarian and emotionally distant, bent on the Promethean creation of a new and better species. Yet Victor has also been viewed as ‘a monstrous mother’, whose attempt to bypass the natural means of procreation ironically results in a labour of ‘nine months alone in his womblike laboratory’ (Marilyn Francus 43).

Biographical readings of *Frankenstein* cannot explain the development in Shelley’s³ interest in the tragic narrative potential of a *living* child as the ultimate disruption to the bourgeois family represented by the Frankensteins. As Shelley’s personal traumas and anxieties revolved around the deaths of mothers and children – death, not birth, as the tragic event – it required much more than personal experience to depict the birth of live and vigorous offspring as a calamity, and to construct a novel on the idea that some children would be better left unborn, or to perish, and could provoke a parent’s impulse to infanticide. No doubt the prevalent trope of the

³ I refer to Mary Shelley as ‘Shelley’ throughout. In passages where both Mary and Percy Shelley are discussed, I refer to both by their first names.

‘monstrous birth’ of revolutionary France supplied a significant part of Shelley’s inspiration, as this chapter will discuss. But, as Lee Sterrenburg has argued, the imagery of political melodrama Shelley imbibed from Burke and from Augustin Barruel was channelled into *Frankenstein*’s tragedy of individual psychology, political symbolism ‘scale[d] down to domestic size’ (145). While many aspects of the monster’s narrative have political import, his key physical characteristics of proportion and disproportion are best understood in the context of eighteenth-century thought on how parental mistreatment could permanently deform children.

Frankenstein, for all its politicism, reflects an idea of ‘caricature’ taken not from the political satirical prints of the day,⁴ but from unnerving warnings given to parents in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries – warnings still reverberating in Shelley’s later short story ‘Transformation’. These works of fiction illustrate the idea that to parent a child badly was to ‘caricature’ the natural forms of its body and mind, and to make the human monstrous.

It has gone unremarked by critics that the monster is well-proportioned when he is created, then grows disproportioned as the narrative unfolds. The textual history of the novel, first laid bare in 2006 by Charles E. Robinson’s weighty two-volume diplomatic edition of *The Frankenstein Notebooks*,⁵ reveals how Mary and Percy Shelley collaboratively revised the text to distort the creature’s proportions. The

⁴ I am not concerned here with the later political uses of Frankenstein’s monster investigated in Chris Baldick, *In Frankenstein’s Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987).

⁵ Robinson facilitated side-by-side reading of the different versions in *The Original Frankenstein*, published in 2008 by the Bodleian Library, where the manuscripts are held in the Abinger collection. The online Shelley-Godwin Archive (www.shelleygodwinarchive.org) now provides digital facsimiles of MS. Abinger c.56-8.

Shelleys clearly intended the monster to undergo a physical transformation. On the night of his creation, the monster is ugly and gigantic, but his parts are aligned in a coherent whole: '[h]is limbs were in proportion' (39).⁶ Victor succeeds in his plan of making the monster 'eight feet in height' and every part of him 'proportionably large' (37). While Mary Shelley's first description of the monster's body as originally well-formed and with 'limbs ... in proportion' remained unchanged between the draft notebooks of 1816-17 and publication in 1818 (MS. Abinger c. 56: 21r), Walton's last letter describes the monster's final appearance as 'a form which I cannot find words to describe—gigantic in stature, yet uncouth and distorted in its proportions' (MS. Abinger c.58, 25r; 166).⁷ The changes wrought in the monster's body are not a matter of perception: his physical deformity is incontrovertible: the monster has only to look at himself to be 'fully convinced that I was in reality the monster that I am' (85). In their revisions and additions to the text, the Shelleys acted out the role of insensible and imprudent parents, disfiguring the child as it grows into intellectual maturity.⁸ *Frankenstein* thus sensationalises the admonitions of eighteenth-century expertise on the rearing and education of children, which generally made parents fully responsible for the child's physique and temperament. Shelley hinges her tragedy of the bourgeois family on the horrific distortion of the ideal human form, incarnating 'caricature' as a figure for the shaping of monstrosity

⁶ Unless otherwise stated, citations to *Frankenstein* refer to the 1818 edition in Nora Crook, ed., *The Novels and Selected Works of Mary Shelley* (London: Pickering, 1996), vol. I.

⁷ The phrase 'uncouth and distorted in its proportions' is present in Shelley's fair copy, and in both the 1818 and 1831 versions of the novel.

⁸ See pp. 182-7 for an analysis of the Shelleys' revisions and additions to descriptions of the monster's appearance.

in the very genteel domestic settings that should be the ideal environment for the succession of bourgeois values.

4.1 Parents as caricaturists

Such was our domestic circle, from which care and pain seemed for ever banished.

Frankenstein (1818), p. 28

Shelley makes very clear at the beginning of Victor's narrative that the Frankenstein family are a successful and 'distinguished' bourgeois family (21), what Habermas has called 'the patriarchal conjugal family' (43). Alphonse Frankenstein, whose 'ancestors had been for many years counsellors and syndics', has 'filled several public situations with honour and reputation' (21); he marries Caroline Beaufort, the daughter of a merchant, with the intention of 'bestowing on the state sons who might carry his virtues and his name down to posterity'.⁹ Alphonse employs servants, has funds sufficient to send a son to university, and has 'devoted himself to the education of his children'. Not merely representative of the middle classes, the Frankenstein family – materially successful, industrious, virtuous and loving – embodies the Romantic conception of the ideal family. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and the legion of texts palpably influenced by his philosophy of education, encouraged a sense of anxious

⁹ Kate Ellis reads *Frankenstein* as a critique of the bourgeois family, pointing out 'the insufficiency of a family structure in which the relation between the sexes is as uneven as the relationship between parents and children' (125) in 'Monsters in the Garden: Mary Shelley and the Bourgeois Family', *The Endurance of 'Frankenstein': Essays on Mary Shelley's Novel*, eds. George Levine and U. C. Knoepfelmacher (University of California Press, 1979), pp. 123-42. The Frankenstein family, however, manage a remarkably non-hierarchical version of the bourgeois family. Victor claims that no member of the family 'possessed the slightest pre-eminence over the other; the voice of command was never heard amongst us; but mutual affection engaged us all to comply with and obey the slightest desire of each other' (28).

responsibility in the bourgeois parent who aspired to form children in his own image, who would perpetuate his tastes and values.

By the time Shelley wrote *Frankenstein*, the ‘deformity’ and ‘monstrosity’ occasioned by misguided or neglectful parenting had long been a conventional trope in discourse on the supervision and education of genteel children. Throughout the long eighteenth century, a range of texts assigned responsibility to parents, guardians, and nurses for the fostering of ‘moral and corporeal beauty’¹⁰ in their offspring. The Scottish physician William Buchan, who devoted lengthy sections of his works to infant health and childcare, set the pattern for advice concerning the physical care of children.¹¹ Buchan’s commercially successful and influential work *Domestic Medicine: or, a Treatise on the Prevention and Cure of Diseases by Regimen and Simple Medicines* (1769), the first edition of which sold for six shillings,¹² attributes bodily deformities and deforming diseases to a number of

¹⁰ ‘Moral and Corporeal Beauty’ is the title of chapter 21 in Johann Caspar Lavater’s *Essays on Physiognomy*, originally published in 1775-8 in German and translated into English in 1789-98.

¹¹ The contemporary literature on child-rearing in domestic settings is extensive. Books were aimed at parents and educators rather than fellow physicians. See also Nicholas Andry’s *Orthopédie* (1741), translated into English in 1743 under the title *Orthopaedia: or, the art of correcting and preventing deformities in children: by such means, as may easily be put in practice by parents themselves, and all such as are employed in educating children*; William Cadogan, *An Essay upon Nursing and the Management of Children in the Early Period of their Lives* (1750); James Nelson, *Essay on the Government of Children, under Three General Heads: viz. Health, Manners and Education* (1753); John Cooke, *A Plain Account of the Diseases Incident to Children* (1769); Thomas Beddoes, *A Guide for Self-Preservation and Parental Affection, or Plain Directions for Enabling People to keep themselves and their Children free from Common Disorders* (1790); William Moss, *An Essay on the Management, Nursing and Diseases of Children, from Birth* (1800); Christian August Struve, *A Familiar View of the Domestic Education of Children* (1802).

¹² See Peter M. Dunn, ‘Perinatal lessons from the past: Dr William Buchan (1729-1805) and his *Domestic Medicine*’, *Archives of Disease in Childhood: Fetal and Neonatal Edition*, 83.1 (2000): F71-3.

parental mistakes, including the failure to inoculate children against small-pox, and the ‘indolence and sedentary employments’ that could prevent parents ‘from either taking sufficient exercise themselves, or giving it to their children’ (21-2), who are deformed and made ill by their ‘[c]lose and early confinement’ (27).

Buchan is especially stern on the bracing of infants with rollers,¹³ use of swaddling clothes, and the dressing of children in too-tight clothing (12), attributing ‘[n]ine tenths, at least, of the deformity of mankind’ to these causes. His illustration of the child constricted by clothing, or ‘squeezed out of shape by the application of stays and bandages’, makes a caricature of the ideal human form:

Pressure, by obstructing the circulation, likewise prevents the equal distribution of nourishment to the different parts of the body, by which means the growth becomes unequal. One part grows too large, while another remains too small; and thus in time the whole frame becomes disproportioned and misshapen.¹⁴ To this we must add, that when a child is cramped in its clothes, it naturally shrinks from the part that is hurt; and, by putting its body into unnatural postures, it becomes deformed by habit. (12)

¹³ Buchan explains that the infant is most vulnerable because its body is ‘as a bundle of soft pipes, replenished with fluids in continual motion... Nature, in order to make way for the growth of children, has formed their bodies soft and inflexible; and lest they should receive any injury from pressure in the womb, has surrounded the *foetus* every where with fluids. This shews the care which Nature takes to prevent all unequal pressure on the bodies of infants, and to defend them against every thing that might in the least cramp or confine their motions’ (11).

¹⁴ Buchan paraphrases John Locke’s comments on the disproportion caused by restrictive clothes in *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693): ‘Narrow Breasts, short and stinking Breath, ill Lungs, and Crookedness, are the Natural and almost constant Effects of *hard Bodice*, and *Cloths that pinch*. ... Nor can there indeed but be disproportion in the Parts, when the nourishment prepared in the several Offices of the Body, cannot be distributed as Nature designs; and therefore what wonder is it, if it being laid where it can on some part not so *braced*, it often makes a Shoulder or a Hip higher or bigger than its just proportion’ (11).

The child's body does not become deformed all at once, notes Buchan, but gradually over a period of time. So the monster in *Frankenstein* acquires bodily deformity as the narrative progresses. At first, Victor recognises that his monster is 'in proportion', since he has designed him in imitation of the ideal human body; he is later described by Victor as having 'distorted proportions' (158) and a 'ghastly and distorted shape' (155), and by Walton as 'uncouth and distorted in his proportions' (166). Victor disowns and continually rejects the monster throughout the novel, but the monster also comes into contact with a series of potential guardians and siblings who fail to act out the affectionate and solicitous familial roles prescribed by eighteenth-century guides. Mistreatment loads the deformity of disproportion onto a body already rendered unfit, by its ugliness and strangeness, for incorporation into the bourgeois family.

The monster in *Frankenstein* struggles to secure adoption by a suitable father figure, and can only observe the benefits of female influence enjoyed by others. The child's lack of maternity would have been a grievous contributing factor to the risk of developing physical and mental deformities, according to the wisdom of the time. Books offering advice to anxious parents did imply that uneducated nurses were partly to blame for the improper dressing of infants, and for the insufficient care and education of young children – yet they also emphasised that ultimate responsibility for the care of children did not lie with nurses or servants, but with parents and guardians acting *in loco parentis*, and especially with the mother. As David Turner has shown, '[e]ighteenth century prescriptive writing was saturated with notions of

parental guilt and blame, which began even before conception itself' (794).¹⁵ Walter Harris's *A Full Account of the Diseases Incident to Children* (1742) correlates a higher risk of rickets with the mother's having 'indulg[ed] herself in Indolence while with child' or 'an intemperate use of Venery, during the Time of Pregnancy' (197). Buchan's *Advice to Mothers, on the Subject of Their Own Health; and on the Means of Promoting the Health, Strength, and Beauty of their Offspring* (1804) gave the most extreme version of this idea, instructing that 'In all cases of dwarfishness and deformity, ninety-nine out of a hundred are owing to the folly, misconduct, and neglect of mothers' (249-50).¹⁶ Advice to fathers and mothers was often either implicitly or explicitly concerned with the inculcation of values desirable in the bourgeois home: virtue, industry, activity, sensibility, affection, domestic happiness, the appearance of beauty in a natural form, and of course the collaborative education of children by a male and a female parent.

Buchan openly acknowledged the influence of Jean-Jacques Rousseau's recently published philosophy of education on *Domestic Medicine*, quoting from *Émile* (1762; published in English as *Emilius; or, an Essay on Education* in 1763).¹⁷ Rousseau's opening sentence declares that 'Everything is perfect, coming from the hands of the Creator; every thing degenerates in the hands of man' (I: 1).¹⁸ Building

¹⁵ For an account of medical, philanthropic and pedagogical interventions in the rearing of children in this period, see David M. Turner, 'Impaired Children in Eighteenth-century England', *Social History of Medicine* 30.4 (1 November 2017): 788-806.

¹⁶ Citation refers to the 1811 edition.

¹⁷ *Domestic Medicine* refers to Rousseau as '[a]n ingenious writer [who] observes, that on the constitution of mothers depends originally that of their offspring' (7), and '[a] modern author [who] observes, that temperance and exercise are the two best physicians in the world' (94).

¹⁸ Citations refer to the 1763 London edition, translated into English by Thomas Nugent.

on his account of ‘natural man’ in *Du contrat social* (1762), Rousseau expounds his philosophy of education through the story of the child Émile, who is raised to be the perfect citizen. The process begins with breast milk,¹⁹ according to Rousseau a vital part of the mother’s time-intensive and affectionate care. Conscientious readers aspiring to cultivate nobility of character in their young families were now asked to consider whether their practices of child-rearing and education allowed children to mature naturally, not only by philosophers but also by physicians.²⁰ Many of Buchan’s admonitions concern the ‘unnatural’ features of lifestyle criticised by Rousseau, such as constrictive clothes,²¹ lack of exercise, indoor confinement, too-delicate or cosseted upbringing and the failure of mothers to nurse their own children with breast milk (*Advice to Mothers* 361) – habits adopted, he points out, by civilised nations:

We shall find that mankind are stunted and distorted in proportion to their degree of civilization;—that people who go almost naked from their birth, and live in a state of nature, are well-shaped, strong, and healthy;—and that among others who boast of higher refinements, the greater attention is paid to

¹⁹ Rousseau gives a detailed guide on this subject: how to choose a wet nurse; the various consistencies of breastmilk at different stages after childbirth; the benefits of a vegetarian diet to the production of milk; that curdled milk is not dangerous to children.

²⁰ The first readers of *Frankenstein* would not have needed to read *Émile* to understand the novel’s ideas about deformity visited on children by their parents, since by the early nineteenth century medical advice had thoroughly assimilated these initially radical ideas.

²¹ Rousseau quotes Buffon’s *Histoire Naturelle* on the dangers of rollers and ‘stay-bands’ (I: 12-13), and refers to the idea confining of a child’s limbs would restrict their circulation and lead to deformity: ‘In places where these extravagant precautions are not used, the men are all large, strong, and well-proportioned. The countries where children are tied up in swaddling cloths, swarm with distorted persons...’ (13).

dress, the nearer are the approaches to the stature and to the weakness of pygmies. (261-2)

Advocating the physical care of infants by their mothers, both to raise healthier children and to build a stronger relationship between mother and child, Rousseau appealed to an eighteenth-century vogue for sensibility and a 'return to nature', renewing middle- and upper-class women's interest in breastfeeding.

Shelley read Rousseau's *Confessions*, *Émile* and *La Nouvelle Héloïse* in 1815, the year before beginning to write *Frankenstein*, and the year of the death of her first child.²² Rousseau as a philosopher of the parent-child relationship manifests ambiguously in *Frankenstein*'s portrait of a child who receives a better education from books than from his father. Shelley spread a multitude of such references to Rousseau throughout *Frankenstein*,²³ and the influence of his writings is evident in Victor's parental relationship with the monster. Shelley admired Rousseau and absorbed his ideas despite the fact of Rousseau's notorious abandonment of his own

²² See Paula R. Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, eds., *The Journals of Mary Shelley* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987). Shelley's journal entries and reading lists do not indicate whether she was rereading these texts or perusing them for the first time.

²³ David Marshall notes that *Frankenstein* 'was conceived and begun in Switzerland, where Mary Shelley was immersed in both the literal and the literary landscapes of Rousseau's life and work' (182). Like Rousseau, Victor is a native of eighteenth-century Geneva, and francophone; the monster also learns French from the peasant family he encounters in the forest near Ingolstadt. Rousseau, like Napoleon, was often identified with Prometheus, providing Shelley with the novel's subtitle, '*The Modern Prometheus*'. For discussion of these points and other instances of Rousseau's influence on the novel, see Marshall, '*Frankenstein*, or Rousseau's Monster: Sympathy and Speculative Eyes', chapter 6 in *The Surprising Effects of Sympathy: Marivaux, Diderot, Rousseau, and Mary Shelley* (University of Chicago Press, 1998), pp. 178-227; and Lawrence Lipking, '*Frankenstein*, the True Story: or Rousseau Judges Jean-Jacques' in *Frankenstein*, ed. J. Paul Hunter (New York: Norton, 1996), pp. 416-34.

children, which his posthumous *Confessions* had publicised across Europe.²⁴

Rousseau's partner Thérèse Levasseur bore five children, whom he took one after the other to the Enfants-Trouvés foundling home in Paris. In his unfinished book *Les Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*, he protests his reputation as a 'unnatural father' by reasoning that Thérèse's family 'would have made them monsters' (II: 279).²⁵ As David Marshall has argued, 'Mary Shelley has Rousseau in mind as she tells the story of a parent who made his offspring a monster – precisely by abandoning him' (187). Shelley's biography of Rousseau in her *Eminent Literary and Scientific Men of France* (1839) criticises him both for having married a 'vulgar-minded' young woman, 'ignorant and illiterate ... whom he despised too much to allow her at first even to share his home' (II: 130), and for regarding the offspring of his union with Thérèse merely as 'inconveniences' to be disposed of 'on the easiest possible terms' (131). Shelley imagines the children, like Victor's monster, 'brutified by their situation, and depressed by the burden, ever weighing at the heart, that they have not inherited the commonest right of humanity, a parent's care' (131). As a mother bereaved of children, who devoted herself to the education of her one surviving son, it was impossible for Shelley to see Rousseau's desertion as anything but an act of inhuman cruelty.

The estrangement of Rousseau and Levasseur's children from both mother and father was in direct contradiction of Rousseau's claim in *Émile* that the child

²⁴ Described in the seventh and eighth books of Rousseau's *Confessions*, which was completed in 1769 but not published until four years after Rousseau died in 1778.

²⁵ Citation refers to the 1783 English edition of the *Confessions* together with *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*.

should be brought up by a loving mother, and in the protection of the nuclear family home:

In the present constitution of things, man abandoned from his birth to his own guidance among the rest of society, would be a most monstrous animal. ...

Nature would be to him like a plant or shrub, that shoots up spontaneously in the highway, but is soon trodden down and destroyed by travellers.

To thee do I therefore address my discourse, O fond and careful mother, whose sense has led thee out of the common tract... Be sure to water the young sprig before it dies; it will one day yield such fruit, as must afford thee infinite delight. Take care to erect an early inclosure around the infant's mind; others may mark out the circumference, but to thee alone it belongs to fix the barrier. (I: 2-3)

In Rousseau's treatise on education, as in many eighteenth-century texts advising bourgeois families on the arrangement of their households, the absence of female ministrations was most fatal to the children's upbringing, since without mothers 'the whole moral order is changed; the sentiments of nature are extinguished in every breast' (I: 18). Rousseau set the female firmly in the caring role, responsible for doing what is now called 'emotional labour' for the welfare of children and husband. The child requires a mother; the husband also requires her.

Rousseau provides his pupil Émile with a young woman to court: the fifteen-year-old Sophie, whose natural gifts, unostentatious beauty and education in arts such as needlework, music, dressmaking, and housekeeping make her the ideal wife for Rousseau's schema of familial virtue. It is crucial that, as man and woman, Émile and Sophie are not equals, and their minds not alike: Sophie is ignorant of many

subjects in which Émile has the opportunity to educate her; and she must be ready to obey her husband, who will be both partner and master to her. Rousseau decides their suitability for each other on the grounds of their individual merit, on the complementary relation of their abilities, and on the love they feel for one another – rather than on wealth, rank, or the political alignment of their families. Rousseau finds this bourgeois ideal of two unequal partners joined in a rational, affectionate, and procreative union on the principles of sexual difference, heterosexuality and monogamy as ‘primitive’ and natural to human existence.²⁶ In *Frankenstein*, Shelley has the monster plead for Victor to construct a female partner, ““with whom I can live in the interchange of those sympathies necessary for my being”” (108). The monster must remember his reading of *Paradise Lost*, in which a benevolent God creates a female suited to love and serve Adam as her master;²⁷ and Shelley’s agreement with Rousseau’s insistence on the necessity of heterosexual partnership is also abundantly clear in a late episode of the Frankensteins’ domestic tragedy. Victor, expecting that ‘one of the first results of those sympathies for which the daemon thirsted would be children’ (128), destroys the female monster he is in process of constructing (129). The monster, who witnesses his partner torn to pieces, revenges himself on Victor by strangling Elizabeth on the night of their marriage

²⁶ Asking the reader to ‘consider the human species in its primitive simplicity’, Rousseau explains ‘it is obvious, from the limited ability of the male, and the moderation of his desires, that it was the design of nature he should be contented with a single female’ (II: 33). Sexual jealousy in humans, he says, ‘is founded rather in the social passions, than in the original instinct’.

²⁷ On *Frankenstein*’s subversion of *Paradise Lost*, see Gilbert and Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic*, pp. 222-3. Gilbert and Gubar show that Shelley does not straightforwardly redistribute the roles of God, Satan, Eve, and Adam among her characters.

(150). Victor and his monster each destroy the other's opportunity of a family founded on a complementary relationship between male and female.

Frankenstein also meets head on Rousseau's argument that good taste and corporeal beauty are essential to the familial bond. Because the monster is ugly, because his appearance is 'unnatural', he cannot be incorporated into the Frankensteins' tasteful bourgeois family: his looks exclude him from the parent-child relationship and indeed from all human companionship, except when he has the brief opportunity to converse with the gentle patriarch of the De Lacey family: "I am blind, and cannot judge of your countenance" (100). Disproportion seals his unsuitability; for, as Rousseau emphasises, proportion is the crux of classical beauty. *Émile* looks to the ancients not only for its ideal of bourgeois femininity, but also for the concomitant ideals of male and female beauty. In the ancient world, as Rousseau understood it, women were confined to the home, dressed so as to honour the body's proportions well-formed by nature, and thus primed to bear well-proportioned children:

As soon as these young [Greek] maidens were married, they ceased to appear in public: they shut themselves up, and confined their whole care to domestic economy...

It is well known, that the easy dress of both sexes contributed greatly to those beautiful proportions, which we still admire in their statues, and which serve as a model to the artists, when nature has degenerated in her real productions. They had none of those Gothic fetters, none of those numerous ligatures, which check the circulation, and confine the different limbs. ... In

England, where this abuse has been carried to a very great excess, I wonder it has not caused the species to degenerate... (II: 19)

Emulating the principles of clothing Rousseau imagined prevailing in ancient Greece, Sophie wears clothes of ‘elegant simplicity’ and ‘becoming neatness’ (II: 243); her disdain for modern (and especially British) fashions in clothing and adornment that would ruin the natural appearance of her body is held out as a mark of superior womanhood. Where eighteenth-century medical texts warned against the negative consequences of confining stays and corsets for girls’ health and physical proportions,²⁸ Rousseau criticized fashionable clothing on the grounds that to trammel and conceal the natural proportions of the body was both in bad taste, and would result in similarly deformed children.

Mary Wollstonecraft saw that Rousseau’s philosophy of education, in calling for a return to the ‘natural’ differences between the sexes as the proper foundation of bourgeois family and society, contributed to perpetuating intellectual inequality between men and women. The *Vindication* does however accord somewhat with Rousseau’s view of modern femininity in its description of a woman deformed by fashion and indolence.²⁹ Wollstonecraft saw the artificially limited scope of female ambition as an inducement to inertia and triviality:

Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman’s sceptre, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming around its gilt cage, only seeks to adore its

²⁸ See for example Buchan, who observes that due to ‘the tightness of their dress, and to the artificial moulding or pretended improvement of their shape when young’, most women in London are ‘of a diminutive stature’, and some ‘distorted either in body or limbs’ (*Advice to Mothers* 262-3).

²⁹ Shelley read her mother’s *Vindication*, probably not for the first time, in 1816 (see Feldman and Diana Scott-Kilvert, *The Journals of Mary Shelley*).

prison. Men have various employments and pursuits which engage their attention, and give a character to the opening mind; but women, confined to one, and having their thoughts constantly directed to the most insignificant part of themselves, seldom extend their views beyond the triumph of the hour. (44)

The *Vindication* addresses Rousseau's claims in *Émile* that men and women should receive different educations, and that the primary goal of women's education should be to produce wives capable of pleasing their husbands. According to Wollstonecraft, the systems of education then afforded to middle- and upper-class women tended to create 'irrational monster[s]' rather than sensible and active women who could raise their children rationally (44). She imagines women pursuing the study of business, medicine, and politics: educated along the same lines as men, she argues, women would make better mothers and wives. The *Vindication's* proposed 'revolution in female manners' would have profound consequences for the human species, Wollstonecraft declares, since in the present state of affairs '[t]he weakness of the mother will be visited on the children!' (177). As in *Émile*, woman is made the guardian of virtue, health and beauty both in her family specifically and in the nation at large. The best defence against the moral and physical degeneracy of human society is the feminised and well-managed bourgeois family. Wollstonecraft also develops a metaphor around the eighteenth-century realisation of the risks of dressing developing children in restrictive clothes, lamenting that '[t]o preserve personal beauty, woman's glory! the limbs and faculties are cramped with worse than Chinese bands' (41), referring to the bandages used in the foot-binding customs

practised (with variations across China's different regions and cultures) from the tenth century until the mid-twentieth century.³⁰

Shelley would have gained an appreciation of the irreversible and repercussive damage that parents could visit on their offspring, not only from her personal experience of inadequate parenting,³¹ and not only from her reading Rousseau and Wollstonecraft's pronouncements on the rearing and education of children, but also from Johann Caspar Lavater's *Physiognomische Fragmente* (1775-8), which was translated into English by Thomas Holcroft as *Essays on Physiognomy* and published in four volumes between 1789 and 1798. As many critics have noted, *Frankenstein* endorses elements of the physiognomic theories that were revived in eighteenth-century Europe.³² Franz Josef Gall's craniological theory held that the uneven surface of the human head could reveal the various faculties supposedly caused by the pressure exerted by different areas of the brain lying beneath the skull; Lavater's *Essays on Physiognomy* were concerned with how the features of the face, as well as the skull,³³ could indicate behavioural tendencies and personality traits –

³⁰ Wollstonecraft would have come across John Locke's reference to the practice. See *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, eds. John W. Yolton and Jean S. Yolton (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), p. 91.

³¹ At least initially Godwin had good intentions for his role as a father, but he was often selfish and austere. See Katherine C. Hill-Miller, *'My hideous progeny': Mary Shelley, William Godwin, and the father-daughter relationship* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1995).

³² Shelley herself was the subject of physiognomic and phrenological analysis as a baby (see William Nicholson's letter to Godwin on 18 September 1797, MS. Abinger c.3, fol. 914 and 92v). For Shelley's familiarity with Gall's system of analysing the skull, see Frederick L. Jones, ed., *Mary Shelley's Journal* (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1947), p. 15; Marion Kingston Stocking, ed., *The Journals of Claire Clairmont 1814-1827* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1968), pp. 44.

³³ Unlike Gall, Lavater promoted the association of skull size and shape with innate intelligence. See Richard T. Gray, *About Face: German Physiognomic Thought from Lavater to Auschwitz* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2004), p. 46.

with physical features deemed ‘beautiful’ or ‘noble’ signifying a virtuous character and superior talents. The idea that physical features, and not just the fleeting expressions, could signify character was hugely influential on novelists such as William Godwin, Walter Scott, Charlotte Brontë, and of course Mary Shelley, many of whose physical descriptions of characters were loaded with meaning.³⁴ Most of these ideas about the links between moral and corporeal forms were not new, but in repopularising this ancient study³⁵ for a middle- and upper-class nineteenth century readership, Lavater incorporated Rousseau’s innovative idea that parents were responsible for their children acquiring deformity.

The interest in the amateur drawing of caricature portraits for private amusement, which persisted throughout the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth, may have helped stimulate enthusiasm in Britain for the new ‘science’ of physiognomy, with the publisher Carington Bowles’s *Polite Recreation in Drawing* (1799) being a reworking of material from Book II of Giovanni Battista della Porta’s *De Humana Physiognomia* (1586).³⁶ Lavater himself reached for the word ‘caricature’ to explain how individual and familial physiognomies could degenerate over time. Lavater’s theory of physiognomy does not only account for the coupling of the monster’s physical deformity with his moral depravity in *Frankenstein*; it also

³⁴ In *Falkner* (1837) for example, Shelley describes the protagonist’s forehead as ‘high and expansive, though somewhat distorted by various lines that spoke more of passion than thought ... his mouth, rather too large in its proportions, yet grew into beauty when he smiled—indeed, the remarkable trait of his physiognomy was its great variation’ (37).

³⁵ Principles of physiognomy are attested in a number of ancient cultures (India, China, Babylonia), and the earliest known surviving physiognomic treatise is the *Physiognomonica*, written circa 300 BCE and attributed to the school of Aristotle.

³⁶ Della Porta was also one of Lavater’s main sources for the *Physiognomische Fragmente*, along with Thomas Browne’s *Religio Medici* (1643; translated into German 1748).

argues that mind and body can be progressively distorted, until the next generation becomes a ‘caricature’ of human nature and physique:

Let us suppose men of the most beautiful and noblest form, and that they, and their children, become morally degenerate; abandon themselves to their passions, and, progressively, become more and more vicious. How will these men, or their countenances at least, be, from generation to generation, deformed! What bloated, depressed, turgid, stupid, disfigured, and haggard features! What variety of more or less gross, vulgar, caricatures, will rise in succession, from father to son! Deformity will increase! How deep in degeneracy, how distant, is man, from that perfect beauty with which, by thy fatherly mercy, oh God! he was first endowed! How is thy image deformed by sin, and changed even to fiend-like ugliness; ugliness which afflicted benevolence scarcely dares contemplate!³⁷ Licentiousness, sensuality, gluttony, avarice, debauchery, malignity, passions, vices, what deformities do you present to my sight! How have you disfigured my brother! (198-9)³⁸

The monster in *Frankenstein*, like the figures Lavater here imagines ‘changed even to fiend-like ugliness’, is a caricature substitute for the ideally human – a being deformed, yet a being whose persistent resemblance to humanity cannot be denied.

His body, as the monster describes it himself, combines imitation with deviation:

“my form is a filthy type of your’s, more horrid even from the very resemblance”

(97).

³⁷ Holcroft’s phrase intensifies the original ‘daß der Menschenfreund nicht aufsehen darf vor Wehmuth’ (melancholy) (I: 199).

³⁸ Citations refer to the first English edition the first volume (published in 1789), unless otherwise stated.

Lavater's word 'caricature', though prefaced with two associated terms, 'coarse and vulgar',³⁹ was not an unreflecting choice of phrase. The first translator of the *Physiognomische Fragmente* into English, Thomas Holcroft, notes that Lavater repeatedly uses 'die Karikatur' in opposition to 'das Ideal'.⁴⁰ Holcroft assumed there was some significance to the recurrence of these words, and scrupled to vary Lavater's usage with synonyms: 'These words occur so frequently that they must inevitably be often retained in the translation' (107n).⁴¹ He suggested that 'By *Caricature*, the Author appears to mean nothing more than an imperfect drawing', but in instances such as the passage above Lavater evidently intends 'caricature' to serve as an analogy for 'the human form once natural and beautiful made unnatural and deformed'. This was not the word's first appearance in a medical or scientific context, and Lavater may have been inspired to use 'caricature' as an analogy by Sir Thomas Browne's description of the *facies hippocratica* in his *Letter to a Friend, Upon Occasion of the Death of his Intimate Friend* (1690).⁴² First described in

³⁹ Lavater wrote 'Welche tausendfältige gröbere, und weniger grobe, pöbelhafte Carricaturen nach und nach entstehen!' (I: 198-9). Holcroft translated this 'What variety of more or less gross, vulgar, caricatures, will rise in succession' (I: 198).

⁴⁰ Lavater continually uses 'die Carrikatur' (e.g. I: 65) and the more germanised 'die Karrikatur' (e.g. I: 107) as an analogy for bodies and faces that do not meet the standards of the ideal human form: 'Each profile which consists but of one kind of lines, as for example, of concave, or convex; straight or crooked, is caricature, or monstrous' (II: 120).

⁴¹ Holcroft did however remove some of Lavater's usages of 'Carrikatur'. For example, he translates Lavater's observation on the deformity of 'der Pöbel' (the rabble, the mob) as follows: 'I constantly find that the vulgar, collectively, whether of nation, town, or village, are the most distorted'. Lavater wrote 'Carrikaturen aller Arten treff' ich an. — Die Bemerkung entgeht mir nie, daß der Pöbel zusammengenommen ordentlich die gröbste Carrikatur des National:Stadt:Dorf:characters ist' (I: 192).

⁴² Browne's *Religio Medici* was one of the main sources for the *Physiognomische Fragmente*, and Lavater may have consulted other passages in Browne's writing relevant to physiognomic study.

Hippocrates's *Prognostics*, the 'Hippocratic face' appears shrunken, its concavities and prominences exaggerated by long and severe illness. With its 'hollow eyes, the temples collapsed, the ears cold and contracted, the lobes inverted, the skin about the forehead hard, tense, and dry, with the whole face of a palish green, black, livid, or leaden hue' (3),⁴³ the Hippocratic physiognomy presaged death:

Upon my first Visit I was bold to tell them who had not let fall all hopes of his Recovery, that in my sad Opinion he was not like to behold a Grasshopper, much less to pluck another Fig... Some are so curious as to observe the depth of the Throat-pit, how the proportion varieth of the Small of the Legs unto the Calf, or the compass of the Neck unto the Circumference of the Head: but all these, with many more, were so drowned in a mortal Visage and last Face of *Hippocrates*, that a weak Physiognomist might say at first eye, This was a face of Earth, and that Morta had set her Hard-Seal upon his Temples, easily perceiving what *Caricatura* Draughts Death makes upon pined faces... (3-5)

This is an early instance, perhaps the first, of a reference to caricature in an English-language text. It is not possible to trace a direct line of influence from Hippocrates or from Browne's *Letter to a Friend* to Shelley's *Frankenstein*. Nonetheless, Victor – who as a European student of science would surely have been acquainted both with Hippocrates and Browne – describes the beautifully featured and proportioned monster with skin 'shriveled' and lips blackened (40) to resemble Hippocrates's depiction of rigor mortis. And the diagnosis of a caricature-like appearance

⁴³ Citation refers to John Moffat's annotated translation of *The Prognostics and Prorrhethics of Hippocrates* (1788).

resurfaces in Shelley's novel, where it serves to hold parents accountable for the child's deformity.

Comparisons between parental education and caricature, parents and caricaturists, must have seemed apropos in a culture where parents were principally responsible for the moral and corporeal beauty of their children. J.P. Malcolm, in *An Historical Sketch of the Art of Caricaturing* (1813), asserts that the mother's emotions might disturb the natural work of gestation and cause the child to become a caricature.⁴⁴ He reasons that the Quakers are 'well-made people, placid and handsome' because their religion encourages them to suppress agitating emotion, and because their women are not given to 'mixing in the usual amusements of the world, are not liable to those accidents which would cause caricatured lineaments in their offspring' (2). After birth, '[m]others and nurses', says Malcolm, 'often implant an expression of terror'. To humour the child's fits of emotion is to risk deforming its physiognomy:

It is also a common remark, that children alter greatly in the course of their growth; many who are really beautiful in their infancy, becoming very monsters in expression before they are adults. In these unhappy cases, neither Nature nor accident has interfered: it is the passions that caricature, and friends that direct their slow but certain effects.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ Malcolm refers the reader to the wisdom of eighteenth-century physicians, assigning responsibility for congenital deformity to the mother: 'Nature ... being interrupted, makes a forehead too high or too low... The causes of the interruptions alluded to cannot be inquired into at present: they more properly belong to the Surgeon; but they may safely, in most cases, be attributed to the want of due care and circumspection in the mothers of those persons whose features or limbs are thus distorted' (1).

⁴⁵ Malcolm assumes the reader's knowledge of the physiognomic principle that grimaces and other contortions of the face, if habitually assumed, will leave their

...A child may be ushered into the world a complete Caricature, without a consciousness of imprudence on the part of the mother; but, on the other hand, we are certain that children who are not born in that state may be preserved in a great degree from becoming the ridicule and abhorrence of the rest of mankind. ... Can there be more convincing proof that parents and guardians are too frequently Caricaturists? (2-3)

As the monster's originally well-proportioned body is distorted, so the originally beautiful features of his face are 'caricatured' by the anger Victor cannot bring himself to mollify: 'A fiendish rage animated him ... his face was wrinkled into contortions too horrible for human eyes to behold' (108). Rousseau underlines the danger of losing the child's 'natural' original form in *Émile*: 'Are you then willing he should preserve his original form? Be careful to preserve it for him, from the very moment he comes into the world. As soon as he is born, seize him; and never let go your hold till he is a man; there is no other way to succeed' (23). The mutually destructive relationship between Frankenstein and his monster dramatises the idea common in romantic eighteenth-century theories of child rearing and education that insufficiently loving and sensible parents were apt to deform and distort their offspring, both physically and mentally.

signs upon the countenance. He gives the example of 'the caricature of Vexation', represented by 'an urchin disappointed in some inexplicable whim', which will 'fix its jaws as far asunder as the muscles will permit, close its eyes, and bellow with the lungs of a young Hercules till they are exhausted of air; then, the blood stagnating, the eyes glare, and the face becomes black, the body convulsed' (2).

4.2 Revising deformity in *Frankenstein* and ‘Transformation’

Frankenstein's theme of the fearful process of ‘caricaturing’ the child manifests also in the textual variants of the novel’s manuscript drafts, where Mary and Percy Shelley can be observed acting out the role of parents as caricaturists. In the 1816-17 draft notebooks, and in subsequent revisions in the fair copy, the couple collaboratively introduced words and phrases to emphasise that the originally well-proportioned monster becomes disproportioned in the course of the narrative. That the acquired bodily disproportion of the monster has been overlooked is perhaps explained by the fact that the most illuminating critical interpretations of the monster’s appearance have focused on the colouring of his face and on his facial physiognomy.⁴⁶ The novel never gives any indication that the monster’s skin and facial ugliness ever change or worsen. Created, or rather composited, out of dead body matter recovered from charnel houses and dissecting rooms, his skin resembles the mummified flesh unwrapped by European scientists in the late eighteenth century (57, 221). In the first moments of life he has a ‘dull yellow eye’ and ‘yellow skin’ stretched across his frame so that it ‘scarcely covers the work of muscles and arteries beneath’ (56). Victor curses the nasty results of his experiment: ‘A mummy again endued with animation could not be so hideous as that wretch’ (67). Near the end of the novel Walton describes his skin as being ‘in colour and apparent texture like that

⁴⁶ See H.L. Machow, ‘Frankenstein’s Monster and Images of Race in Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Past and Present* 139 (1993): 90-130; Thomas Dutoit, ‘Re-Specting the Face as the Moral (of) Fiction in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*’, *Modern Language Notes* 109.5 (1994): 847-71; Scott J. Jungel, ‘Face, Figure, Physiognomics: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* and the Moving Image’, *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 33.3 (2000): 353-76; and Denise Gigante, ‘Facing the Ugly: The Case of *Frankenstein*’, *English Literary History* 67.2 (2000): 565-87. See pp. 184-5 for a consideration of Gigante’s argument.

of a mummy' (211), and we learn that we learn that the monster's originally 'shrivelled complexion' (56) has neither rotted nor ever recovered the supple and sanguine appearance of healthy living tissue. Walton's amazement at his mummified appearance tallies with Victor's comparison of the monster to a mummy roughly seven years earlier. We could assume that his physique had not changed in that time, if we judged from his skin alone.

With regard to bodily proportion, however, descriptions of the monster's body in later chapters differ significantly from Victor's first impressions. When he encounters the monster in Plainpalais, Switzerland – the place where the monster murdered William Frankenstein – Victor perceives a horrible difference in the body of his creation. Whereas his first description of the monster acknowledges the humanity of his appearance, and that his features and proportions are well-shaped despite his ugliness in other respects, in this subsequent description Victor denies that the monster possesses 'human shape':

A flash of lightning illumined the object, and discovered its shape plainly to me; its gigantic stature, and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me that it was the wretch, the filthy daemon to whom I had given life. What did he there? Could he be (I shuddered at the conception) the murderer of my brother? ... The figure passed quickly, and I lost it in the gloom. Nothing in human shape could have destroyed that fair child. (73)

That monster's ugliness, once confined to the surface of his body, now extends to the shape of it as well, becomes clearer when Victor sees the monster in the arctic

landscape: 'I distinguished a sledge, and the distorted proportions of a well-known form within' (158).⁴⁷

The Shelleys developed the Plainpalais description of the monster as it appeared in the published 1818 text through a succession of drafts. The 1816-17 notebooks contain the following shorter description, in Mary's hand: 'A flash of lightning illumined the object, and discovered to me its gigantic stature, its deformity more hideous than belongs to humanity instantly informed me who it was' (MS. Abinger c. 56, 38v). Additions and emendations by Percy, overwriting Mary's hand in the 1816-17 draft, revise the text as follows:

A flash of lightning illumined the object and discovered to me its gigantic stature; and the deformity of its aspect, more hideous than belongs to humanity, instantly informed me who it was. Nothing in human shape could have destroyed that fair child. (MS. Abinger c. 56, 38v-r).

Percy's use of the word 'shape', in a description where the monster's skin is not made visible, adds the suggestion that his most evident and hideous deformity might now consist in a misshapen body. Percy links the lack of 'human shape' to the monster's crime of murder, juxtaposing Victor's distorted offspring with the beloved William, a 'fair child'. Finally, the separation of clauses, with a semi-colon and with the conjunction 'and', parses Mary's run-on sentence so that the monster's 'gigantic stature' is separated from the more troubling 'deformity of its aspect'. The lack of human shape Victor could not discern before in his creation, now confirms that the

⁴⁷ The phrase appears in both the 1818 and 1831 editions; Shelley's drafts and fair copy of this section of the text does not survive.

briefly illuminated figure is the monster that has become yet more repulsive to him by its actions.

Variants between Victor's sight of the monster in Plainpalais in the published text of 1818 and drafts of the passage in the earlier manuscript versions indicate the collaborators' careful attention to the monster's physical appearance. The Plainpalais description implies that the monster's 'deformity of ... aspect' includes the outline or shape of its body, an interpretation confirmed by Percy and Mary's further additions and emendation to the manuscripts. In the 1816-17 draft notebooks, Mary's phrase 'hideous form' is substituted with Percy's 'distorted proportions' (MS. Abinger c.57, 83r). The monster is described in the 1816-17 draft as 'uncouth and distorted', which is changed in Mary's fair copy to 'uncouth and distorted in his proportions' (MS. Abinger c.58, 25r). These changes, more plainly than the suggestion of an unhuman shape in the Plainpalais passage, show a concerted effort on the part of both Shelleys to represent the monster as a once well-proportioned body distorted out of proportion. Mellor argues that 'Percy Shelley on several occasions actually distorted the meaning of the text', noting that Percy 'tended to see the creature as more monstrous and less human than did Mary' (63).⁴⁸ While this holds true in some cases, the manuscript revisions pertaining to the monster's progressive physical disproportion demonstrate Mary and Percy working collaboratively to deform the monster's original appearance, without altering Mary's basic conceptions of the creature's physique. Percy revised the draft notebooks in sections as Mary composed them, so that later sections were written with the opportunity to consider Percy's

⁴⁸ For a critique of the dominant narratives about the Shelleys' relationship and literary collaboration, see Nora Crook, 'Pecksie and the Elf: Did the Shelleys Couple Romantically?' *Romanticism on the Net* 18 (May 2000).

previous suggestions: one reason to assume that his influence reaches beyond the substitutions and additions actually recorded in his hand. Yet as Mellor has noted, Mary was willing to reinstate her phrases when she felt that Percy's revisions did not do justice to her intention (64). Percy suggested a significant alteration to Victor's description of the monster's face, changing 'his face expressed the utmost extent of malice and barbarity' to 'his countenance *appeared* to express the utmost extent of malice and barbarity' (MS. Abinger c.57, 52v., my italics). The published 1818 text reads 'his countenance expressed the utmost extent of malice and treachery' (129), accepting Percy's substitution of 'countenance' for 'face' – but rejecting the pivotal word 'appeared' and thus keeping intact the novel's equivalence of facial physiognomy with character, of corporeal with moral beauty.

Mary's original account of the monster's being 'in proportion' was left untouched in successive drafts of the manuscript. Percy may have sought to emphasise the contrast in Mary's descriptions of the monster's original and subsequent physical appearance by returning to the word 'proportion' in specifying the monster's 'hideous form' (MS. Abinger c.57, 83r). Percy also suggested delineating the monster's body as 'his ghastly and distorted shape' (MS. Abinger c.57, 80r), and added the monster's acknowledgement that his body is 'more horrid from its very resemblance' to a typical anthropoid form (97). The novel's last reference to the monster's disproportion, which occurs in Walton's observation that the monster is 'uncouth and distorted in his proportions' is an addition attributable to Mary. The phrase appears in Mary's fair copy, and is there in the 1818 and 1831 editions. While Percy certainly contributed to the monster's appearance of disproportion, the existing evidence suggests that he did so in a way that Mary

condoned, to which she added and in accordance with her original notion of the monster as an ugly being, made progressively worse by the cruel treatment he receives and the cruelty to which he resorts in turn.

The Shelleys' attention to the monster's proportions throughout the composition process helps to explain the novel's repeated use of the word 'deformity' and 'deformed', which might otherwise appear indiscriminate. Denise Gigante has remarked that *Frankenstein's* depiction of the monster's physique suffers from a confusion of terms, referring to Edmund Burke's conception of deformity, in *Our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful*, as 'opposite to proportion'. By this metric, Gigante argues, Victor's ugly offspring is not actually deformed – even though often described in the novel as such – because he is well-proportioned:

Certainly, the Creature is not 'opposite to proportion.' ... As Burke explains, it is not ugliness but 'deformity' that is opposed to proportion: '*deformity* is opposed ... to the *complete, common* form' (*E*, 102; emphasis in the original). One must keep in mind that Burke is working from an aesthetic tradition that he feels has been unsystematic in its use of terms and inexact in mapping the terrain of the non-beautiful. Even the Creature refers to the 'deformity of [his] figure,' despite the fact that, though large, he is not technically deformed (*F*, 142). When he sees himself in a transparent pool for the first time, he laments 'the fatal effects of this miserable deformity' (*F*, 142). Yet as his creator seems to know better than himself, deformity is a distinct category not to be confused ... with the ugly. (574)

Gigante's view of the monster as an incarnation of ugliness,⁴⁹ not deformity, rests on her reading that the monster is consistently well-proportioned throughout the novel; and that the monster is the only character who persistently refers to the 'deformity' of his body.

The novel's reliance on the term 'deformity' will not seem so inaccurate if we accept that the originally well-proportioned monster is far from well-proportioned once he experiences wrongful treatment and to commit greater wrongs of his own. Victor, who should know better than anyone else that his creation was originally well-proportioned, refers to the monster's 'deformity' several times, first noting the 'deformity of its aspect' when he sees him in Plainpalais. The monster first recognises his own 'miserable deformity' reflected in a pool of water (85), when he has already undergone trials sufficient to implant misanthropy and to estrange him from human society and family life. In addition to Victor's abandonment, the Swiss villagers have run from him and bruised him with 'stones and many other kinds of missile weapons' (79): learning from 'the barbarity of man' he hides from everyone he sees, and does not dare to enter the 'cottage of a neat and pleasant appearance'. He takes refuge instead in 'a low hovel, quite bare, and making a wretched appearance', which he calls 'my kennel' (80). Thus by the time the monster recognises his 'deformity', he has already been exposed to treatment likely to inculcate deformity, both moral and corporeal. Crucially, his separation from the De

⁴⁹ While much of the critical debate on *Frankenstein* has looked to the discourse of political monstrosity to explore what makes the monster physically repellent, Gigante takes an original approach in examining the ugliness that 'precedes and predetermines [his] monstrosity' (128). Gigante finds a gap where conceptions of ugliness might be in eighteenth-century aesthetic theory, arguing that Shelley's monster represents an 'aesthetic impossibility: the positive manifestation of ugliness'.

Lacey family next door forces him into a space too small for his body: the draughty hovel is ‘so low that I could with difficulty sit upright in it’ (79). He spends months hunched over in the lean-to, prevented by fear from joining the family he knows would reject him. Orphaned, abused, isolated, underfed and physically confined for a lengthy period: by the logic of Buchan’s *Domestic Medicine* and other eighteenth-century texts on the rearing and education of children, it would be a miracle if the monster did not become both mentally and physically deformed; and indeed, the monster does acquire ‘distorted proportions’ and a ‘distorted shape’ (158, 155). In the timescale of the novel, every instance in the novel of the words ‘deformity’ and ‘deformed’ occurs months after the monster is first created ‘in proportion’ and ‘proportionably large’, and conceivably refers to a hideous appearance that includes deformity in Burke’s sense of ‘opposite to proportion’.

Frankenstein does in fact follow Burke’s prescription that bodily deformity resides not in the body’s being too large or too small, but in the relative size of the body’s parts. Descriptions of the monster, from the earliest surviving draft to the published texts, carefully distinguish stature from proportion. Walton, for example, sees the monster as ‘a form gigantic in stature, *yet* uncouth and distorted in its proportions (166, my italics). While the phrase ‘in its proportions’ entered the text in the fair-copy stage of composition, the word ‘yet’ already clarifies that the deformity is not a matter of gigantism but of proportion. Walton sets the monster’s high stature in opposition to his ‘uncouth and distorted’ shape, suggesting that the heroic grandeur of gigantism is marred by disproportion. Shelley’s decision to give the monster gigantic stature may have drawn on the passage in *Émile* where Rousseau asks the reader to imagine ‘an infant ... full size at his birth’, a being ‘formed all of a

sudden' (47). But the distinctions between size and proportion – both in Walton's description of the monster at Victor's deathbed, and in Victor's description on the night of the monster's creation – indicate that Shelley was familiar with the technical meaning of deformity prescribed by Burke. Disproportion, not size, is crucial to deformity.

In the year before she prepared the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*,⁵⁰ Shelley returned to the theme of acquired physical deformity. In 'Transformation', a short story published in *The Keepsake* for 1831,⁵¹ a handsome young Italian aristocrat is persuaded to exchange bodies with a mysterious 'misshapen dwarf' (27). In return, the dwarf promises to help him win back the woman he has lost through his own violence, arrogance, and profligacy.⁵² Predictably, Guido soon discovers he has been tricked: the dwarf has no plans to return the "comely face and well-made limbs" to their original owner (30). The dwarf is not diminutive in every respect: he has 'two

⁵⁰ This was not the second edition, as Godwin had arranged a two-volume edition in 1823, which served as Shelley's copy-text in 1831.

⁵¹ Since *The Keepsake* was a literary annual intended for the Christmas market, the volume for 1831 was actually published in 1830.

⁵² The narrative of 'Transformation' echoes *Faust*, the first part of which was published in 1808. Faust exchanges his soul for Mephistopheles's help murdering a mother to seduce her daughter. The plot resembles the violation of the family in Matthew G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), where Ambrosio secures demonic assistance to rape Antonia, his sister. Byron recalled that in 1816 Lewis had 'translated Goethe's *Faust* to me by word of Mouth' (see letter to Samuel Rogers, 4 April 1817, in vol. 5 of *Byron's Letters and Journals*), a performance that considerably influenced Byron's closet dramas *Manfred* (1817), *Cain* (1821), and *The Deformed Transformed* (1824). Shelley made a fair copy of the latter for Byron in 1822-3 and greatly admired it. *The Deformed Transformed*, in which the hunchbacked Arnold exchanges his deformed body for a beautiful one, is the closest literary antecedent for 'Transformation'. See Paul A. Cantor, 'Mary Shelley and the Taming of the Byronic Hero: "Transformation" and *The Deformed Transformed*', *The Other Mary Shelley: Beyond Frankenstein*, eds. Audrey A. Fisch, Anne K. Mellor, Esther H. Schor (Oxford University Press, 1993), 89-106; A. A. Markley, "'Laughing That I May Not Weep": Mary Shelley's Short Fiction and Her Novels'. *Keats-Shelley Journal* 46 (1997): 97-124.

long lank arms, that looked like spider's claws' (28), thus conforming to Burke's notion that only disproportioned dwarfs are truly objectionable:

There is a dwarfish size of men and women, which is almost constantly so gross and massive in comparison of their height, that they present us with a very disagreeable image. But should a man be found not above two or three feet high, supposing such a person to have all the parts of his body of a delicacy suitable to such a size, ... I am pretty well convinced that a person of such a stature might be considered as beautiful;⁵³ might be the object of love; might give us very pleasing ideas on viewing him... (304-5)

The disproportioned body, which manages to be at once dwarfish and gigantic, floats between categories in Burke's *Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757). This 'very disagreeable image' is denied the sublimity of the well-proportioned giant,⁵⁴ and denied the beauty of the delicate dwarf. The dwarf in 'Transformation' combines smallness with massiveness, like other dwarfs in early nineteenth-century literature abiding by Burke's principle that deformity must be a matter of disproportion. The eponymous figure of Scott's novel *The Black Dwarf* (1816) is so misshapen that '[i]t seemed as if nature had originally intended the separate parts of his body to be the members of a giant, but had afterwards capriciously assigned them to the person of a dwarf' (29). Quilp in *The Old Curiosity*

⁵³ Burke may have had in mind celebrated court dwarfs such as Nicholas Ferry (1741-64) and Józef Boruwlaski (1739-1837) as examples of the beautiful dwarf who 'might be the object of love'. Boruwlaski, who at the age of twenty-five was thirty-five inches or nearly three feet tall, toured the courts of Europe and was admired for his delicate appearance. The 'little Count' was said to be 'perfectly straight, upright, well formed and proportioned' (Mathews 231), a perfect human body in miniature.

⁵⁴ Burke holds that giganticism is 'very compatible with the sublime... When we let our imagination loose in romance, the ideas we naturally annex to that size are those of tyranny, cruelty, justice, and everything horrid and abominable' (242).

Shop (1840-41) is ‘so low in stature as to be quite a dwarf, though his head and face were large enough for the body of a giant’ (Dickens 85): another ‘gigantic dwarf’. We might see the monster in *Frankenstein* as a ‘dwarfish giant’, assuming that he has been unevenly stunted by his experience.

Disproportion is a common element in graphic caricature, where bodies and faces are analysed into features and parts, some of which are then assigned disproportionate significance in the characterisation of the individual.⁵⁵ Lynch has summarised graphic caricature’s emphasis on the particular as ‘the metamorphosis that ensues when the part is released from the whole’ (58). Particular body parts even came to signify for individuals, as Robert Patten points out: ‘Pitt’s beanpole torso, the Prince Regent’s paunch, Sir William Curtis’s gherkin-pickle nose, Wellington’s hooked bridge, and the swelling globes of Lady Hertford’s breasts ... developed a life of their own as they shuttlecocked from one caricature to another’ (336). But the ‘caricatures’ in Shelley’s fiction cannot straightforwardly be compared to the exaggerations of the portraits contained in satirical prints. This monstrous disproportion might be compared to the emphasis of a satirical portrait, but the ‘caricatures’ in texts such as *Frankenstein* and ‘Transformation’ have quite different implications. As in Browne’s *Letter to a Friend*, as in Lavater’s *Physionomische Fragmente*, and as in the introduction to Malcolm’s *Historical Sketch*, caricature provides an analogy for the horrible distortion of the human form, of a kind that Burke’s *Inquiry* had failed to provide a category for.

⁵⁵ See Rudolf Arnheim, ‘The Rationale of Deformation’, *Art Journal* 43.4 (1983): 319-24.

Like *Frankenstein*, 'Transformation' explores the moral and corporeal causes, as well as the psychological effects, of being physically estranged from humanity.⁵⁶ Unable to accept his hideously transformed figure, dwarf-Guido stabs himself and then his handsome rival. This action restores Guido to his own body, and Juliet tends to his wounds. Shelley's tale concludes with Guido happily married, yet afflicted like Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* by the compulsion to tell his monstrous history. He fills his house with mirrors offering comforting reflections of his reformed appearance, managing the psychological burden of knowing that 'the monstrous dwarf ... was my very self' (38). Indeed, Guido has behaved monstrously toward Juliet and her family. Concerned that Guido's profligacy makes him an improper husband, Juliet's father Torella retracts the promise of their marriage. When Guido attempts to abduct Juliet, he is banished from the family and the city, and is wandering alone in exile when he meets the dwarf. Guido's hideous transformation into a corporeal form fitting his moral degeneracy is foreshadowed by the experiences and actions of his early years. He tells the reader that when he was still a child, he became fanatically convinced of his right to Juliet's hand in marriage, and that he was ready to murder a rival to protect that right.⁵⁷ Driven to violence, the

⁵⁶ Dwarf-Guido's justified fear of being seen recalls the monster's experience in *Frankenstein*: 'I desired to avoid all the hamlets strewed here and there on the sea-beach, for I was unwilling to make a display of my hideousness. I was not quite sure that, if seen, the mere boys would not stone me to death as I passed, for a monster' ('Transformation' 33). To listen to human conversation, he is obliged to find shadows 'dark enough to veil my excessive frightfulness' (34).

⁵⁷ Guido's behaviour is a horrific exaggeration of Victor's entitlement to his bride in *Frankenstein*. When in the 1831 edition Caroline presents Elizabeth as "'a pretty present for my Victor'" (22), he takes this to mean that the girl is his possession: 'I with childish seriousness, interpreted her words literally and looked upon Elizabeth as mine ... till death she was to be mine only.'" Guido goes further, coercing Juliet and 'profan[ing] her child's lips with an oath, that she would be mine, and mine only' (20).

boy exchanges his appearance of innocence for one of violent fury, the first instance of his features transforming to match his character:

When I was eleven and Juliet eight years of age, a cousin of mine, much older than either – he seemed to us a man – took great notice of my playmate; he called her his bride, and asked her to marry him. She refused, and he insisted, drawing her unwillingly towards him. With the countenance and emotions of a maniac I threw myself on him – I strove to draw his sword – I clung to his neck with the ferocious resolve to strangle him... (19-20)

Shelley creates an echo of the formative incident in Guido's attack on the man he can no longer call 'the dwarf', since he himself has assumed that stunted and disproportioned body. Once again, Guido seizes his rival by the neck: 'I neither heard nor saw – I *felt* only mine enemy, whose throat I grasped' (37). The 'soul-subduing humiliation' of which Guido speaks in the story's opening lines turns out to be the revelation that his character is best visually represented by 'a misshapen dwarf, with squinting eyes ... a horror to behold' (27).⁵⁸ The transformation both deforms Guido and returns him to the dwarfish stature of his childhood, a sign that he has failed to move beyond the pride and brutality of his eleven-year-old self.

Shelley recurs in 'Transformation' to the plight of the offspring deformed by its education and early experiences. Guido acknowledges that he became 'the *enfant gâté*' (23) long before the transformation spoiled his physical appearance. Guido's tyrannical father enforced his obedience, but neglected to tame his 'rebel heart' or to

⁵⁸ In the conclusion to the story, in case we have failed to understand the moral causes for Guido's transformation, Guido's confessor offers him the interpretation that the dwarf was 'a good rather than an evil spirit, sent by my guardian angel, to show me the folly and misery of pride' (39).

instil a sense of right and wrong. Absorbing no moral principles, no discipline, and no respect for authority, Guido sought only to be ‘a man, free, independent; or, in better words, insolent and domineering’ (19). When his father died, Guido disposed of his family’s land and property with impulsive speed. Unconcerned with the affairs of family and state in which his rank, education, and inheritance qualify and oblige him to participate, his Grand Tour of Europe was not an education in cultured gentility, but a pretext for parties:

I desired to see the world, and I was indulged. ... My character still followed me. I was arrogant and self-willed; I loved display, and above all, I threw all control far from me. Who could control me in Paris? My young friends were eager to foster passions which furnished them with pleasures. ... I grew a favourite with all: my presumption and arrogance was pardoned in one so young: I became a spoiled child. Who could control me? not the letters and advice of Torella – only strong necessity visiting me in the abhorred shape of an empty purse. But there were means to refill this void. Acre after acre, estate after estate, I sold. My dress, my jewels, my horses and their caparisons, were almost unrivalled in gorgeous Paris, while the lands of my inheritance passed into possession of others. (20-21).

Guido formed his own character into one of dissipation and landless irresponsibility, proud not of his nobility or of accomplishments, but of his ‘dainty person’ and “‘well-proportioned body’” adorned with fine clothes and jewels (22, 29). Shelley presents Guido, a fifteenth-century ‘cavalier richly dressed’ who is ‘master of every knightly accomplishment’ (36, 21), as a caution that those gentility, talent, and property should be placed in the service of family and nation. The deformed child, as

in *Frankenstein*, emerges as the ultimate threat to the safety and purity of the genteel family, which in ‘Transformation’ is small but perfectly formed, consisting of the wise patriarch Torella, and his beautiful and gentle daughter Juliet.

4.3 The family beautiful: *Frankenstein* and *The Keepsake*

One of many literary annuals marketed to the British middle classes, *The Keepsake* (1828-57) was interlaced with plate illustrations that bore the unmistakable silvery sheen of steel engraving.⁵⁹ The literary annuals of the 1820s were not ‘illustrated books’ in the conventional sense of the phrase, with images commissioned to illustrate an already existing text: instead, it was common practice to first select artworks for engraving and printing, and then to commission poems and stories to accompany the plates.⁶⁰ ‘In practical terms’, notes Gregory O’Dea, ‘the *Keepsake* writer’s assignment is to produce an interesting, compact narrative that provides some degree of intersection with the subject of the engraving’ (65). In the case of Shelley’s story ‘Transformation’, the engraving was *Juliet*, produced from a drawing by the miniature and watercolour painter Louisa Sharpe (1798-1843). The image depicts a moonlit bedroom where Shakespeare’s Juliet, fashionably but modestly

⁵⁹ The mass printing technology of steel engraving was originally developed to print long runs of identical banknotes more finely engraved, and so more difficult to forge, than was possible with the softer copper plates. Nor was copper engraving an ideal method for mass produced book illustration, since the plates would begin to lose definition and produce faded prints after only a few hundred impressions. In the 1820s, newly established literary annuals such as *The Keepsake*, the *Forget-Me-Not*, *The Literary Souvenir* and *Friendship’s Offering* took advantage of steel engraving to produce mass-market books with unprecedented numbers of illustrations.

⁶⁰ Men of letters were contemptuous of the illustrated gift books for which they wrote, with Southey dismissing them as ‘picture books-for grown children... good things for the artists and engravers’ (339). Letter to Allan Cunningham, 21 December 1828, *The Life and Correspondence of the late Robert Southey*, ed. Charles Cuthbert Southey (London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans, 1850), V: 338-40.

dressed for early nineteenth-century taste,⁶¹ sits gazing from her balcony (see Fig. 4). Pictured not as the thirteen-year-old of Shakespeare's play, but as a young woman of marriageable age, Sharpe's Juliet stands in for the young female reader, imagined absorbing the benefits of the literary annual in a private domestic setting as she waits to assume her mature role in family and society. The open window through which she gazes into clouded darkness portends the threat of invasion into that domestic space, and we might recall that the monster 'forced its way through the window-shutters' into Victor's bedroom (40), that he spies upon the De Laceys through 'a small and almost imperceptible chink' left in a boarded-up window (80), that he appears 'at the open window a figure ... most hideous' (150), and that his final exit from the scene '[h]e sprang from the cabin-window' to be 'lost in darkness and distance' (170). Like *Frankenstein*, 'Transformation' presents a tale of the genteel family under threat; and though the piece for *The Keepsake* ends in marriage rather than in murder and suicide, the window remains open to a darkness containing monsters. *The Keepsake* might seem an uncongenial environment for a reincarnation of Frankenstein's monster, but a closer look reveals that the *Keepsake*'s publication of 'Transformation' repackages the Frankenstein family drama in ways that highlight the monster's incontrovertible physical deformity as the crux of the narrative. Both *Frankenstein* and 'Transformation', with their message that physical beauty must reflect nobility of character, fit remarkably well with *The Keepsake*'s raison d'être.

Literary annuals were visual tokens of refined feminine taste and social ambition, marketed to middle-class readers aspiring to join an aristocracy of taste.

⁶¹ Juliet's neck and shoulders are 'unveiled as far as delicacy will allow', which according to the *Mirror of Graces; or the English Lady's Costume* (1811) was permissible in the evening.

Robert Southey observed that, besides commissioning pieces from professional writers, the annuals encouraged contributions from ‘young men of rank and fashion’ who were ‘paid ... somewhat dearly for the use of their names’ (339). Aristocratic editors such as Lady Emmeline Wortley (who edited *The Keepsake* for 1837 and 1840) and the Countess of Blessington (*Heath’s Book of Beauty*, *The Keepsake*) did their best to obtain contributions from other persons of title. Illustrations included portraits of the English nobility, stately homes and exotic holiday locations, ‘all in an effort to enhance their snob-appeal for the upwardly aspiring middle classes’ (Mellor 111). Intended for a readership of middle-class women seeking to emulate the luxuries and refinements – real or imagined – of the social elites, literary annuals promised to imbue the rooms in which they were kept and read with an aristocratic sheen. As these books were not only for reading but for gift-giving and display, the materials of which they were made were also important to their allure. Sending poems to *The Gem*, Charles Lamb mockingly described the ostentation of the annuals’ material features, as well as their aristocratic associations: ‘I hate the paper, the type, the gloss, the dandy plates, the names of contributors poked up into your eyes in 1st page...’ (343).⁶² Rather than being issued between plain boards for later binding by the consumer, as was usual, literary annuals were sold ready bound in sumptuous materials: watered silk, velvet, morocco, sometimes protected by a slipcase.⁶³ Known as ‘gift books’ because they were usually purchased by men as

⁶² Lamb called the literary annuals ‘pompous masquerades without masks (naked names or faces)’ (344). Letter to Bernard Barton, 11 October 1828, *The Letters of Charles Lamb, with a Sketch of his Life*, 2nd edn., ed. Thomas Noon Talfourd (London: Moxon, 1849), 342-44.

⁶³ Southey remarked with amazement in a letter to Cunningham that ‘Heath has sold 15,000 of the Keepsake, and has bespoken 4000 yards of silk for binding the next

presents for women, they included presentation plates for the gift-giver to inscribe with the recipient's name.⁶⁴ Sonia Hofkosh argues that the annuals 'functioned as signs ... of that excess which delineates the very sphere of the private' and that '[p]urchasing a piece of that excess, the middle-class reader bought the privileges of ownership, a bourgeoisie semblance of aristocratic (self-)possession' (206). 'Transformation' moralises on the loss of aristocratic (self-)possession as Guido cashes in his family's property, gives up his claim to Juliet and finally trades his beautiful figure for the dwarf's 'distorted limbs' (33). The engraving focuses the reader's attention on Juliet as the reader's surrogate in the text: a young woman who must possess the very assets Guido has jeopardised.

In writing 'Transformation' for *The Keepsake*, Shelley retrod the gender politics of *Frankenstein*: both narratives concern the actions of men, but are addressed to a female reader conscripted in the formulation of the ideal bourgeois family as a site of beauty, affection, and education (alongside the assumed foundations of sexual difference, heterosexuality and monogamy). In *Frankenstein*, Walton directs his letters to his sister, Margaret Saville née Walton, a married woman whose initials echo 'Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley'. On his adventure in search of the Northwest Passage, Walton feels the lack of feminine companionship, desiring the substitute of a male friend 'who could sympathise with me, whose eyes would reply to mine', and who would have 'affection enough for me to endeavour to regulate my mind' (13). In the 1831 edition, Shelley adds emphasis to her portrayal

volume!!!' (323). 24 February 1828, *Life and Correspondence*, 321-3. Only one volume of Cunningham's annual, *The Anniversary*, was published.

⁶⁴ For a fuller history of the literary annuals of the 1820s, see Janette Currie in *Contributions to Annuals and Giftbooks*, vol. 17 of *The Collected Works of James Hogg* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006), pp. xiii-xix.

of Walton as an ideally feminised male, conscious of the value of female influence in childhood, who acknowledges to his sister that ‘my best years spent under your gentle and feminine fosterage, ha[ve] so refined the groundwork of my character that I cannot overcome an intense distaste to the usual brutality exercised on board ship’ (8). Victor incites his affection with displays of gentleness, wisdom, eloquence, sensibility to nature, and with ‘lustrous eyes [that] dwell on me with all their melancholy sweetness’ (1831, 18); sweetness being attributed also to Juliet in ‘Transformation’ and to Victor’s intended Elizabeth. It is however not Elizabeth but Henry Clerval who temporarily restores Victor to happiness: with ‘gentleness and affection’ he ‘called forth the better feelings of my heart; he again taught me to love the aspect of nature, and the cheerful faces of children’ (49). While female characters do not play major parts in either tale, Shelley’s fiction continually recurs to the attractions and elevating influence of femininity, the desirability of feminine qualities in men, and the necessary feminisation of the ideal child-rearing family.

Shelley’s beautifully irradiated beings (Victor’s ‘lustrous eyes’ and Juliet’s ‘holy light’) may seem to us rather silly. But while Shelley’s consecrating descriptions of physical beauty may be clumsy, she was not alone in believing that beauty was essential to the depiction of the human ideal. This assumed equivalence of the face with the soul was convenient to *The Keepsake*’s project of presenting women with an ideal that positioned material allure as the mirror of virtue and respectability. The first volume, published in 1827, opens with a poem addressed to the book’s presumed female reader. ‘To ——’ argues in its concluding lines for mutually constitutive relationships between illustration and text, face and character, corporeal and moral beauty:

Unto the beautiful is beauty due;
For thee the graver's art has multiplied
The forms the painter's touch reveals to view,
Array'd in warm imagination's pride
Of loveliness (in this to thee allied).
And well with these accord poetic lays
(Two several streams from the same urn supplied);
Each to the other lends a winning grace,
As features speak the soul—the soul informs the face. (iii-iv)

As Mellor argues in *Romanticism and Gender* (1993), best-selling literary annuals such as *The Keepsake* 'systematically constructed through word and picture the hegemonic ideal of feminine beauty' (111). This ideal, in which both 'Transformation' and *Frankenstein* participate, attaches moral and even religious weight to physical features such as the colours of the face and the proportions of the body.

We should not underestimate the solidity of Shelley's conviction that moral and corporeal beauty were one. It is anachronistic to suppose that Shelley could not have been taken in by theories of physiognomy that we now recognise as mere 'pseudo-science', when there is no evidence of her cynicism, and when Godwin's novel *Caleb Williams* (1794) set an example of lurid physiognomic description.⁶⁵ In

⁶⁵ Godwin paints the complexion of the unhappy Falkland with 'a dun and tarnished red, the colour uniform through every region of the face, and suggested the idea of its being burnt and parched by the eternal fire that burned within him' (280). Of the criminal Gines, we are told that 'habit had written the character of malignant cunning and dauntless effrontery in every line of his face' (165). A monstrous woman has arms 'uncommonly vigorous and muscular', 'her whole figure suggest[ing] an idea of unmitigable energy and an appetite gorged in malevolence' (214).

all her fiction, Shelley takes care to delineate the beauty of virtuous characters, and the suspicious marks on the faces of those given to dangerous passions. In *Matilda*,⁶⁶ the poet Woodville is raised above common men by ‘his surpassing beauty, the dazzling fire of his eyes’ (Crook II: 47). The transformation of physical appearance is also a mainstay of physiognomic description in Shelley’s fiction after *Frankenstein*, perhaps best exemplified by her description of Clorinda in *Lodore* (1835). The Italian has a smile ‘deficient in sweetness’, gestures ‘quick and wanting in grace’ (185), and a face ‘too pantomimely expressive ... not to impress disagreeably one accustomed to the composure of the English’ (186). All these are signs that ‘[t]he lava torrent of Neapolitan blood flowed in her veins’, which breaks forth ‘with volcanic violence’ in a convulsive jealous rage (193). Clorinda’s beauty is ‘vanished, changed, melted away and awfully transformed into actual ugliness’, and she jumps at her husband with a knife. Shelley makes all that is good beautiful, and the most good and beautiful are the young characters aspiring to deserve the love of other good and beautiful young characters.

It is normal for a novel to feature beautiful young people, and in a gothic novel youth and beauty are all the better for amplifying the outrages of abduction, seduction, and premature death. Shelley raises the theme of corporeal and moral beauty to a high pitch of intensity in *Frankenstein* and ‘Transformation’, where the ‘filthy mass’ of the monster (110) and the ‘body deformed’ of the dwarf (27) make a drastic contrast with the physical perfection of characters such as Victor, Elizabeth and Juliet. Moral and corporeal beauty combine irresistibly in Juliet, who appears to

⁶⁶ Shelley wrote *Matilda* between 1819 and 1820, but it was set aside as unpublishable owing at least in part to Godwin’s revulsion at the subject of a widower in love with his daughter.

Guido as manifestation of divine grace: ‘The chamber became hallowed by a holy light as she entered. Hers was that cherub look, those large, soft eyes, full dimpled cheeks, and mouth of infantine sweetness...’ (23). The De Lacey family is poor but beautiful, with ‘perfect forms’ and ‘delicate complexions’ (85). We are told of Elizabeth Lavenza that ‘Her person was the image of her mind’ (23). In the 1831 edition, Shelley altered and elaborated Elizabeth’s history:⁶⁷ when Victor’s mother Caroline retrieves the orphan Elizabeth from the family of Italian peasants who adopted her as an infant, her lineaments and colouring instantly reveal the nobility of her character and her qualifications to be the feminine element in the bourgeois family:

She appeared of a different stock. The four others were dark-eyed, hardy little vagrants; this child was thin and very fair. Her hair was the brightest living gold, and despite the poverty of her clothing, seemed to set a crown of distinction on her head. Her brow was clear and ample, her blue eyes cloudless, and the lips and the moulding of her face so expressive of sensibility and sweetness that none could behold her without looking on her as of a distinct species, a being heaven-sent, and bearing a celestial stamp in all her features. (1831, 21).

⁶⁷ In the 1818 edition Elizabeth is Victor’s cousin. Her Italian father, a martyr for Italian liberation, writes to Geneva, ‘requesting my father to take charge of the infant Elizabeth, the only child of his deceased sister’ (23). See Nora Crook, ‘In Defence of the 1831 *Frankenstein*’, *Mary Shelley’s Fictions: From Frankenstein to Falkner*, ed. Michael Eberle-Sinatra (London: Macmillan, 2000), 3-21. Crook observes that the change from cousin to orphan in the 1831 edition was far more probably intended as a commentary on Italian patriotism, rather than removing an ‘incestuous’ relationship that would not in the early nineteenth century have been seen as such (5).

With words such as ‘stock’, ‘distinct species’ and ‘crown of distinction’, the 1831 edition emphasises the link between physical beauty and the nobility of character required in the ideal bourgeois family. Beauty is as essential to love and family in Shelley’s fiction as in Burke’s *Inquiry*, where he muses that a well-proportioned dwarf ‘might be considered as beautiful; might be the object of love’ (305). Conversely, as eighteenth-century philosophy of parenting warns, one cannot continue beautiful without being the object of love. Elizabeth, despite being sent away (in the 1818 edition) and orphaned (in the 1831 edition) succeeds in finding a loving family because she is a beautiful child. Despite the sympathy Shelley alternately encourages us to feel for and withdraw from the monster, we are left in no doubt that to be beautiful is to be good, and vice versa. Born to parents who cannot love it because it offends the sensibility that appreciates beauty as an emanation of divine good, the ugly and unappealing child will only worsen into a caricature of humanity. While offspring thus ‘brutified’ – the word Shelley uses in *Eminent Men* to describe Rousseau’s orphaned children – can be objects of pity, it is assumed in *Frankenstein* (as in *Émile*, Buchan et cetera) that the individual made monstrous in this way is permanently estranged from society. His manifest deformities will always come in the way of the sympathy he might receive on other grounds.

Frankenstein’s family tragedy of deformity is embedded with references that give the monster a political-historical dimension. The monster’s birth place is Ingolstadt, notoriously the home of the secretive Illuminati order supposed to have ‘engendered that disastrous monster called *Jacobin*, raging uncontroled, and almost

unopposed, in these days of horror and devastation' (III: 414).⁶⁸ Shelley was no doubt struck by images of political monstrosity in her reading of Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790),⁶⁹ in Tom Paine's *Rights of Man* (1791)⁷⁰ and in Godwin's *Enquiry Concerning Political Justice* (1793).⁷¹ In turn, the conservative reaction against Godwin characterised him as monstrous.⁷² The full spectrum of political discourse of the revolutionary decades was charged with images of monstrosity.⁷³ Yet as Sterrenburg has argued, *Frankenstein* – written in 'a postrevolutionary era when collective political movements no longer appear viable' –

⁶⁸ Abbé Augustin Barruel's conspiracy theory *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinism* (1797-8) was a favourite book of Percy Shelley's, and was read by Mary in 1814. Citation refers to the second English edition of 1798, translated by Robert Clifford.

⁶⁹ Scholars have pointed to Burke's figure of the new French government as parricidal monster: '*The nature of things requires, that the army should never act but as an instrument. The moment that, erecting itself into a deliberative body, it shall act according to its own resolutions, the government, be what it may, will immediately degenerate into a military democracy; a species of political monster, which has always ended by devouring those who have produced it*' (306). Burke's *Reflections* provoked strong objections and alternative accounts of political monstrosity from reformers and radicals.

⁷⁰ Answering Burke in his *Rights of Man*, Paine applied the image of a monstrous body to the hierarchical systems of monarchy and 'the monster aristocracy' (73): 'It is by distortedly exalting some men, that others are distortedly debased, till the whole is out of nature' (37).

⁷¹ Godwin argued that governments produced monstrous results because they are too ruled by individuals who cannot act for the good of the whole society: 'They are fettered by the prejudices, the humours, the weaknesses, and vices of those with whom they act; and, after a thousand sacrifices to these contemptible interests, their project comes out at last, distorted in every joint, abortive and monstrous' (II: 217).

⁷² For references to Godwin as monstrous, see Lee Sterrenburg, 'Mary Shelley's Monster: Politics and Psyche in *Frankenstein*', *The Endurance of 'Frankenstein': Essays on Mary Shelley's Novel*, eds. George Levine and U. C. Knoepfelmacher (University of California Press, 1979), pp. 143-71. The description of Godwin as 'Pure Defecated Atheism, the brood of that putrid carcass [sic] the French Revolution', often attributed to Burke, has no source. Sterrenburg cites Ford K. Brown's *Life of William Godwin* (p. 155), which refers the reader to Gilfillan's *Literary Portraits* (p. 16), where there is no trace of the quotation.

⁷³ See Chris Baldick, 'The Politics of Monstrosity', *In Frankenstein's Shadow: Myth, Monstrosity, and Nineteenth-Century Writing* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), pp. 11-29.

internalises and domesticizes the political debates of the 1790s (Sterrenburg 145).⁷⁴ In appropriating ‘standard anti-Jacobin motifs’, Shelley ‘gives them a “new form” which partially subverts their original political import’. Sterrenburg understands the monster’s psychological struggle in *Frankenstein* as an allegory for the revolutionary sullied by lurid images of counter-revolutionary prejudice: Shelley ‘moves inside the mind of the Monster and asks what it is like to be labeled, defined, and even physically distorted by a political stereotype’ (165).

Sterrenburg’s view of the novel’s psychological dimension as a struggle against political stereotype does not accord with the dependability of physiognomic theory in Shelley’s fiction. Certainly the monster suffers as a result of his physical defects, but his appearance is never presented to us as a mere image or cliché. Shelley was conversant – if only through her reading of Rousseau – with eighteenth-century ideas about mistreated children becoming physiologically and physiognomically deformed. Such deformities were not, of course, partisan images or stereotypes substituted for the child’s essential qualities: they were direct consequences of upbringing, and, though unnatural, integral to the child’s being. We are never given good reason to suspect that Victor or Walton exaggerates or hallucinates the monster’s appearance: excepting Victor’s first description of his creation as well-proportioned, all three narratives concur in their accounts of the creature’s deformity.⁷⁵ We should recall that Shelley rejected Percy’s suggested

⁷⁴ He compares *Frankenstein* with later works such as James Hogg’s *Private Memoirs and Confessions of a Justified Sinner* (1824) and Thomas Carlyle’s *Sartor Resartus* (1836), which present the reader with ‘the confessional of isolated protagonists who are, at least symbolically, reenacting heroic and messianic quests from a previous revolutionary age’ (145).

⁷⁵ *Frankenstein*’s frame narratives have drawn much critical attention, but there it is doubtful that Shelley intended the frames to position either Victor or Walton as an

phrase, ‘his countenance *appeared* to express ... malice and barbarity’, restoring her own phrase of ‘his countenance expressed’, and leaving no chink in the novel’s confidence in physiognomic supposition. Physical appearance continues to be a reliable guide to moral beauty throughout Shelley’s later writing, from *Matilda* to *Falkner*. It is clear that Shelley’s fiction does not mobilise monstrous physiology as a ‘caricature’ in the sense of a satirical representation that might be malicious, unjust, or misleading.⁷⁶

Caricature features as misrepresentation in Percy’s satirical closet drama *Oedipus Tyrannus; or, Swellfoot the Tyrant* (1820),⁷⁷ which depicts government ministers plotting to smear Queen Caroline. The litigious ‘green bag’ supposed to contain evidence of her guilt actually contains a ‘fatal liquor’ that will deform her appearance regardless of her conduct:

‘...thy contents, on whomsoever poured,
‘Turn innocence to guilt, and gentlest looks
‘To savage, foul, and fierce deformity.

‘unreliable narrator’. The monster’s narrative gives us a genuinely different and personal view of his experience, despite its being related via Victor and Walton.
⁷⁶ A few years after the Revolution, the supposed popular impact of political satirical prints had become cause for concern on both sides of the Channel. Boyer de Nîmes, in his *Histoire des Caricatures de la Revolte des Français* (1792), claimed that political prints had always been a powerful mode of symbolic representation: ‘les caricatures ont été dans tous les temps un des grands moyens qu’on a mis en usage pour faire entendre au peuple les choses qui ne l’auraient pas frappe si elles eussent été simplement écrites ... ses effets sont prompts et terribles’. A correspondent to John Reeves’s Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers gave a similar opinion in January 1793: ‘Such prints make stronger Impressions on the minds of Comon [sic] people than many times reading accounts of the subject’. Both sources qtd. in Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 142.
⁷⁷ Published anonymously in December 1820, *Swellfoot* was suppressed by the Society for the Suppression of Vice before more than seven copies could be sold. Mary prepared it for republication in the second edition of her *Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1839).

‘Let all baptized by thy infernal dew

‘Be called adulterer, drunkard, liar, wretch!

...

‘Wither they to a ghastly caricature

‘Of what was human! (1.1.362-75)⁷⁸

The populace, represented as a swinish multitude, trust that the green bag’s concoction will perform ‘a true test of guilt or innocence’ (393). Percy was cynical both about attempts to demonise the Queen and to apotheosise her, writing to Peacock in July 1820 that ‘Nothing ... shows the generous gullibility of the English nation more than their having adopted her Sacred Majesty as the heroine of the day’ (*CW X*: 576). In *Swellfoot*, the Leader of the House of Lords tells the Pigs that, should the Queen be innocent, the contents of the bag will turn her to an angel who will fly above their heads and rain down ‘blessings in the shape of comfits’ (2.1.87). ‘This’, he exults, ‘is just the sort of thing / Swine will believe’ (1.1.400-1). Mary does not raise the possibility that the people who shrink from the monster and dwarf-Guido do so because they are gullible, or incapable of discerning character separately from physiology. Whereas in *Swellfoot* the caricaturing power of the green bag is to substitute a propagandistic image for the more ambiguous reality, the ‘caricatures’ in *Frankenstein* and ‘Transformation’ are corporeal manifestations of character transformed by misconduct of the parent-child relationship.

Frankenstein, like *Swellfoot*, happens to reflect ideas and images found in the political satirical prints of the day. However, these are unlikely either to be direct

⁷⁸ Citations refer to vol. II of *The Collected Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley* (1927), edited by Roger Ingpen and Walter E. Peck.

borrowings or sources with unique influence when the Shelleys had so many other textual sources available on political subjects. The prints themselves were often derivative, so that it would be difficult to establish their direct influence on a writer without evidence from journals and correspondence. When *Frankenstein* does resonate with satirical prints of the revolutionary period, this is likely because artists such as Gillray and Cruikshank were themselves drawing on a common stream of political discourse, appropriating ideas and images that originated in textual sources such as Burke's *Reflections*, Barruel's *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du Jacobinisme* and the satirical pamphlet *Le Grand Homme* (1800),⁷⁹ supposed to be the work of Count Starhemberg, Austrian ambassador to Britain in the years 1793-1807. Haywood has proposed that Shelley would have seen George Cruikshank's *The Modern Prometheus, or Downfall of Tyranny* (1814),⁸⁰ arguing that the subtitle of *Frankenstein* was almost certainly borrowed from this print' (86). Pamela Clemit has suggested that one possible inspiration for the subtitle was the fraudulent *Manuscrit venu de Sainte-Hélène d'une manière inconnue* (1817), which Percy acquired for the

⁷⁹ Gillray's print *German-Nonchalance, or the Vexation of little-Boney* (1803) depicts an undersized Napoleon consumed with futile rage on the steps of the Palais de Tuileries as Starhemberg speeds by in a post-chaise. Dwarfism subsequently became Napoleon's primary identifying physical feature in the British satirical prints. This was not physical caricature in the sense of exaggerating a characteristic feature of an individual, since Napoleon at five feet six inches tall was above the average height for the period.

⁸⁰ The print in question was one of Cruikshank's many marketing efforts on behalf of the lotteries, and is inscribed '*This Print Presented gratis to every Purchaser of a Ticket or Share at Martins Lottery Office 8 Cornhill*'. The free print was advertised in *The Morning Post* for 28 April 1814. It is not impossible that Shelley saw the print, though in later life she was no apologist for lotteries. Her *Rambles in Germany and Italy* refer to the 'demoralising gambling' of 'state lotteries all over Italy', which she judged 'to the destruction of the savings of the poor' (II: 235-6).

Shelley household in the year of its publication.⁸¹ However, Prometheus was of course a well-known figure of classical mythology, and the phrase ‘modern Prometheus’ appeared in print many decades before it was applied to Napoleon, often used ironically to cast aspersions on men of science and medicine, especially those suspected of being quacks. Shaftesbury, in *The Moralists* (1709), wrote of ‘our modern PROMETHEUS’S, *the Mountebanks*, who perform’d such Wonders of many kinds... Shou’d we dare to make such *Empiricks* of the Gods, and such a *Patient* of poor Nature?’ (24). An ‘Ode, On the Success of His Majesty’s Arms’ sent to the *London Evening Post* in December 1777, depicts the British-American patriot Benjamin Franklin ascending to heaven, ‘in chains of wire, / To perish by his stolen fire, / Ty’d to a paper-kite’. The newspaper glossed the lines on Franklin, ‘It is clear beyond a possibility of doubt, that this arch patriot, philosopher, modern Prometheus, and rebel, is an old offender’ (14).⁸² In 1805, Ralph Griffiths’s *Monthly Review* used the phrase to mock physician Benjamin Moseley’s alarmist depreciation of the smallpox vaccine: ‘This modern Prometheus hesitates at receiving the proffered gift on account of its bestial origin, and makes many amusing though indelicate allusions

⁸¹ To this hoax purporting to be Napoleon’s biography written in exile, Clemit attributes a description of Napoleon as the ‘new Prometheus ... nailed to the rock to be gnawed by a vulture. Yes, I have stolen the fire of Heaven and made a gift of it to France’ (n. pag.). Clemit cites Melvin Jonah Lasky’s book *Utopia & Revolution* (1976), which does not provide a reference for the quotation, and does not mention *Manuscrit venu de Sainte-Hélène*. The quotation does not in fact appear in either the original French or in the English edition, *Manuscript Transmitted from St. Helena, by an Unknown Channel* (1817). The comparison of Napoleon with Prometheus does, however, seem to have been in the air at the time; for example, he is ‘the modern Prometheus’ pecked by ‘the Vulture (his own reflections)’ in *The Morning Post* for 12 December 1815, 2.

⁸² Frederick II of Prussia had referred admiringly to Franklin as ‘the modern Prometheus’; see for example the report of Franklin’s leaving for Prussia in London’s *General Evening Post*. See the issue for 20 September 1777, 2.

to the probable “mutations” which may be produced on the human character, by “quadrupedan sympathy” (428-9). But ‘the modern Prometheus’ was an especially apt tag for ‘electricians’ like Franklin, whose control of the vivifying electric spark was likened to Promethean fire.⁸³ When the phrase was in common usage, and in the absence of evidence that Shelley was interested in satirical prints, it makes little sense to assume that the novel’s subtitle was inspired by Cruikshank’s ‘Modern Prometheus’.

Caricature entered *Frankenstein* not via an impression of political satirical prints as prone to misrepresentation, but as an analogy for a particular process of deformation. While the political imagery of the 1790s was undoubtedly a factor in Shelley’s conceptions of monstrosity, the monster’s acquired physical properties of ‘deformity’, ‘distortion’, and ‘disproportion’ betray the scientific influence on the sensibility of parents from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. In the scientific discourse of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century, caricature was an apt metaphor for the results of insufficient parental care, and the mental and physical degeneration of humanity that was assumed to follow. Passages in texts such as Rousseau’s *Émile*, Buchan’s *Domestic Medicine*, and Lavater’s *Physiognomic Essays* were directed at families aspiring to the nobility of character assumed to be concomitant with perfection of the physical form. They warned genteel parents against caricaturing their offspring, and delineated an ideal family composed of two

⁸³ The phrase was also applied to James Graham (1745-94), famous in London for the electro-magnetic therapies carried out in his ‘Temple of Health’. A letter in the *Morning Herald* for 26 January 1781 refers to ‘*Dr. Graham himself*, the High Priest of the Temple of Health, the modern Prometheus, by whom the electrical, ethereal animating influences, the lambent vivifying tide of life is transfused into bodies frigid and almost inanimate...’ (2).

affectionate parents; their children free from physiological deformity, the domestic scene suffused with beauty and placidity.⁸⁴ Mary and Percy Shelley together acted out the role of parents as caricaturists, editing successive versions of the *Frankenstein* manuscripts so as to emphasise the monster's increasing physical deformity and – in Mary's case – to secure the association between the physiological and moral qualities of the family beautiful.

Critics have claimed that the 1831 edition of the novel takes a fatalist attitude to the collapse of the Frankenstein dynasty not present in the 1818 publication.⁸⁵ Perhaps the most crucial event is Victor's youthful plunge into arcane scientific pursuits, '[t]he raising of ghosts or devils ... a promise liberally accorded by my favourite authors' (26). In the 1818 edition, Victor regrets that his father had not 'taken the pains, to explain to me, that the principles of Agrippa had been entirely exploded, and that a modern system of science had been introduced' (25). Mellor argues that the 1831 edition gives an altered account of Victor's early education in science, in which Shelley changes the implication of neglect to the acknowledgement that Victor's father has not had a scientific education, and simply lacks the knowledge to enlighten his son on this matter: 'My father was not scientific, and I was left to struggle with a child's blindness' (27). By this change, according to Mellor, the novel admits 'that even the most devoted parental care cannot prevent pedagogical mistakes' (175). In fact, Mary had already set the parent's guiding hand

⁸⁴ See also Joanne Bailey, 'The Emotional and Feeling Parent', *Parenting in England 1760-1830: Emotion, Identity & Generation* (Oxford University Press, 2012), 22-47.

⁸⁵ See Mary Poovey, *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley and Jane Austen* (University of Chicago Press, 1984), 133-42; and 'Revising *Frankenstein*' in Mellor's *Mary Shelley: Her Life, Her Fiction, Her Monsters* (1988).

against the hand of fate in the 1818 edition, where Victor tell us, ‘our family was not scientific, and I had not attended any of the lectures given at the schools of Geneva’ (26).⁸⁶ The fatalist dimension of the 1831 *Frankenstein*, at least as far as Shelley’s views of parental responsibility are concerned, was not a revision to the text of 1818, but an underscoring of risk as an important factor complicating the task of well-intentioned bourgeois parents like the Frankensteins.⁸⁷ Indeed, one of the novel’s most remarkable features is the way it accumulates significant factors presented as essential contributions to the tragic course of events, and it is perhaps this embarrassment of meaningful detail that allows diverse readings of the novel to pile up without refuting each other.

For all the new edition’s emphasis on the potency of destiny, Shelley did not remove any of the narrative’s commentary on the importance of children’s early care and education, and even added a passage elaborating on her characterisation of the Frankensteins as an ideal romantic family who hold themselves accountable for the loving instruction of children:

I was their plaything and their idol, and something better—their child, the innocent and helpless creature bestowed on them by Heaven, whom to bring up to good, and whose future lot it was in their hands to direct to happiness or misery, according as they fulfilled their duties towards me. With this deep consciousness of what they owed towards the being to which they had given

⁸⁶ The 1818 edition also acknowledges the intractability of the child’s innate capacities and weaknesses. Victor’s younger brother Ernest is ‘afflicted with ill health from his infancy’, and ‘incapable of any severe application’ (28).

⁸⁷ Crook questions the scholarly preference for the 1818 edition, particularly regarding the settled notion that the 1831 edition is more politically conservative, and shows that many differences between the two versions have often been overstated by critics and editors. See ‘In Defence of the 1831 *Frankenstein*’.

life, added to the active spirit of tenderness that animated both, it may be imagined that while during every hour of my infant life I received a lesson of patience, of charity, and of self-control, I was so guided by a silken cord, that all seemed but one train of enjoyment to me. (20-1)

Shelley's additions to the 1831 edition thus insist on the way *Frankenstein* sets fatalism alongside the idealism and profound personal responsibility of bourgeois parents, a contradiction impossible to resolve into a straightforward prescription for family life. The romantic view of the parent-child relationship seemed to make possible a perfect system of education infallibly producing perfect results; the melodrama of *Frankenstein* acts out the disappointment of that idealism without ever loosening its grip on the theme of parental responsibility for the beauties and deformities. Destiny may direct the course of an individual's life without absolving parents and guardians of their sacred duty.

'Transformation', written some months before the publication of the 1831 edition of *Frankenstein*, re-traverses the novel's ideas about physical deformity as a threat to the sanctity of the civilised and civilising bourgeois family. The short story converts *Frankenstein's* tragedy of the child deformed into a morality tale where the right action at the right time can magically undo the work of years.⁸⁸ As in Shelley's other fiction, 'Transformation' equates the physical perfection of the face and body with the moral perfection of the soul. Shelley's optimistic resolution of the deformed-child plot fits neatly within *The Keepsake*, which promoted the notion of the soul's being equivalent to the body, and which positioned itself as a beautiful

⁸⁸ The transition to comedy parallels Shelley's manipulation of the *Juliet* engraving into an illustration of a tale where Juliet, contrary to Shakespeare's tragic plot, heals and lives happily with the wounded Romeo figure.

material object capable of conferring nobility and taste on the possessor. That a story reiterating the deformed-child plot of *Frankenstein* could be placed so felicitously in *The Keepsake*, should alert the reader of Shelley's fiction that even her monsters – real-life 'caricatures' – have more to do with bourgeois aspiration than might first appear. The disproportion of the monsters in *Frankenstein* and 'Transformation', is best explained with recourse to the romantic element in eighteenth-century theories of child development and education. The historical meaning of 'caricature' in Shelley's fiction derives not from images of monstrosity in the political rhetoric and satirical prints of the 1790s, but from the scientific understanding of the distortion of children by parents and guardians.

5 Caricature and the Lapse of Time

Returning to his native Britain after years abroad in the Netherlands and India, the hero of Walter Scott's *Guy Mannering* (1815) encounters a landscape both novel and familiar. At the age of five Henry Bertram, alias Vanbeest Brown, was kidnapped by smugglers and conveyed from Scotland to Holland.¹ Though Bertram cannot clearly recall views of Scotland from his infancy, the Scottish hills reassure him that he was born there – because he has a distinct childhood memory of experiencing the famously flat² topography of the Netherlands as a 'blank', a significantly empty space conspicuously lacking in features such as lochs and mountains. Bertram writes to his Swiss friend Delaserre, assuming that his addressee, a native of alpine country, will commiserate his affection for the hilly landscape:

‘Of the Scottish hills, though born among them, as I have always been assured, I have but an indistinct recollection. Indeed, my memory rather

¹ Holland, Spain, and Italy suffered under Emperor Napoleon's 'Continental Blockade', intended to stifle markets for British goods and deprive Britain of naval stores, wheat, and other essential supplies. The British navy responded by protecting smugglers and issuing false certificates to encourage illicit trade with continental Europe. In the case of Holland, they found a willing collaborator in Napoleon's brother Louis Napoléon Bonaparte (born Luigi Buonaparte), whom he had installed as king in 1806. Louis fled to Austria when Napoleon annexed part of Holland in 1810. Scott acknowledged in the 'Additional Note' to the Magnum Opus edition of *Guy Mannering* that his smuggler Dirk Hatteraick, who speaks a number of languages including Dutch, was based on 'a Dutch skipper called Yawkins ... well known on the coast of Galloway and Drumfriesshire' (I: 127).

² Scott would not see the Dutch landscape for himself until his trip to Waterloo in August, but even if he did not previously know the lie of the land, contemporary accounts of the Walcheren campaign (see n.3 below) had included descriptions of the landscape. For example, *Letters from Flushing* (London: Richard Phillips, 1809) relates that 'The general face of the island is flat; but there are some elevations which the people are pleased to call hills. I must confess, however, that the island has a very near resemblance to a billard-table; so level, that a ball rolled from one side, would pass without impediment to the other' (39).

dwells on the blank which my youthful mind experienced in gazing on the levels of the isle of Zeeland,³ than on anything which preceded that feeling; but I am confident, from that sensation as well as from the recollections which preceded it, that hills and rocks have been familiar to me at an early period, and that, though now only remembered by contrast, and by the blank which I felt while gazing around for them in vain, they must have made an indelible impression on my infant imagination. (114)⁴

Bertram's original Scotland, indelible but irretrievable, both an image and a blank, precedes and generates the complementary 'blank' he perceives in the Netherlands. As an adult, he tries to compensate for the lost memory with an artistic impression of the hills of Westmorland.⁵ With this effort of Bertram's to possess and to secure a mental command of the landscape, Scott figures the way *Guy Mannering* reinscribes the denativised and disenfranchised 'Vanbeest Brown' within the British landscape and as a member of the British establishment.⁶

Bertram, however, is not satisfied with the artistic record of his impressions, especially when he compares them with the work of his friend Dudley, a young professional artist based in London:

³ British troops had invaded Walcheren, then an island in the province of Zeeland, in July 1809. Their aim was to establish another front in Austria's war with France. During their occupation of the island, 4000 died of malaria and other infections (dubbed 'Walcheren fever'), and the government was forced to abandon the costly campaign. See also Martin Howard, *Walcheren 1809: The Scandalous Destruction of a British Army* (Barnsley: Pen & Sword Military, 2012); Thomas Wright, *History of the Walcheren remittent [fever]* (London, 1811).

⁴ All citations refer to the new Edinburgh edition of the Waverley novels.

⁵ The county of north west England through which Bertram travels on his way to Ellangowan, his estate in Galloway.

⁶ Writing in 1814, Scott devised this story of a man restored to his family's estate during the early months of the Bourbon restoration, when it became possible for exiled royalists to return to France.

‘Some drawings I have attempted, but I succeed vilely—Dudley, on the contrary, draws delightfully, with a rapid touch that seems like magic, while I labour and botch, and make this too heavy, and that too light, and produce at last a base caricature. I must stick to the flageolet, for music is the only one of the fine arts which deigns to acknowledge me.’ (114)

Bertram attributes his failure – or rather, his “succeed[ing] vilely”, which is not the same thing – to lack of skill in graphic art.⁷ But while Londoner Dudley may draw the hills more correctly, Bertram’s ‘base caricature’ is created under the pressure of his desire to recreate that first ‘indelible impression’ of his early years in Scotland, and reveals more of his history than a more accurate rendering would. The Zealandish ‘blank’ looming wide in his memory, he is sensitive to the contrast with British topography, which seems piled high with particularity, and for which he feels intensely. Bertram has also been primed to emphasise the peculiarities of Britain’s more wild and picturesque scenes⁸ by the more sublime landscapes he has traversed in the course of his military life: Delasserre’s Switzerland, as well as “that celebrated pass in Mysore country”⁹ they both saw while serving in India. Indeed, he may have

⁷ J. P. Malcolm suggests in his *Historical Sketch of the Art of Caricaturing* (1813) that tendency to caricature is a sign of the artist’s inexperience and immaturity: ‘He that draws the human face divine for the first time is a caricaturist *per force*: he views the lines of the original, and, attempting to imitate them, produces a monster; and it is only by patience and perseverance he conquers his propensity to distortion: indeed, some industrious individuals are disappointed in all their endeavours, and caricature to the end of the chapter’ (3).

⁸ William F. Hall understands caricature as an artistic technique crucial to the picturesque in ‘Henry James and the Picturesque Mode’, *English Studies in Canada* 1 (Fall 1975): 326-43. For caricature as a critique of the picturesque, see Jonathan Bate, *The Song of the Earth* (London: Picador, 2000), pp. 133-6. See p. 238 n. 51 for a discussion of picturesque and caricature in Nassau Senior’s review of Scott.

⁹ Perhaps the Pedanaikdurgum Pass, strategically important in the Anglo-Mysore Wars (1767-99)

contracted some of Delaserre's "Swiss fanaticism for mountains and torrents" (115), his drawing of Westmorland taking inspiration from the Southern Uplands via the Alps. Scott presents us with caricature as an interestingly compromised artistic product that preserves a material trace of the artist's orientation to his subject. He has us understand that Bertram's drawing is all the more informative an artefact from its being a caricature: its exaggerations evoke the exile's fascinated unfamiliarity with Scotland, and the chronology of cognate landscapes through which he has travelled. The resulting picturesque is simultaneously peculiar to a specific location and derivative of other places.¹⁰ Its veracity consists in its value as both as a repository of memory and as a record of the process of memory retrieval – not of Westmorland, where Bertram has only just arrived for the first time, but of the many places through which he has passed. The caricature speaks eloquently of the lapse of time.

Bertram's drawing, the first reference to caricature in Scott's published writings, is an early indication that Scott had a broad and rather original conception of caricature. He did not use the word in a straightforwardly pejorative sense, nor to refer only to carelessly inaccurate or maliciously unjust representations.¹¹ In *Guy*

¹⁰ For picturesque convention in Scott's novels, see Alexander M. Ross, *The Imprint of the Picturesque on Nineteenth-century British Fiction* (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986), pp. 46-72; James Reed, *Sir Walter Scott: Landscape and Locality* (London: Bloomsbury, 1980). See also Rosemary Mitchell, *Picturing the Past: English History in Text and Image, 1830-1870* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), pp. 87-9 on Scott and the historical picturesque; and P. D. Garside on picturesque human figures, 'Picturesque figure and landscape: Meg Merrilies and the gypsies', *The Politics of the Picturesque: Literature, Landscape and Aesthetics Since 1770*, ed. Stephen Copley and P. D. Garside (Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 145-74.

¹¹ While Scott's characters do occasionally use caricature to mean something like 'insulting personal attack' or 'defective version' (see below), none of Scott's novels stage cautionary tales against particular forms of personal caricature, as Edgeworth warns against graphic satire in *Belinda* and verbal caricature in *Ennui*; Austen against verbal mimicry of social inferiors in *Emma*; and Peacock against journalistic caricature in *Crotchet Castle*.

Mannerings for example, the reader is encouraged to look beyond Bertram's artistic ineptitude, and to see Scott's multi-layered depiction of the heir to Ellangowan in his distortion of British landscape. Compared with the other authors considered in this thesis, Scott's interest in different forms of caricature was extensive and varied. His writings contain multiple entry points for an analysis of his attitudes towards caricature,¹² and much has been left out and glossed over in this chapter. First, the Waverley novels contain a fair number of brief references to caricature, many of which are pejorative in some sense. Some of these usages are at least superficially accusations of insult, while others are more analogical. In *The Black Dwarf* (1816), for example, Sir Edward Mauley describes his physical appearance as "more odious, by bearing that distorted resemblance to humanity which we observe in the animal tribes¹³ that are more hateful to man because they seem his caricature" (104). In *Rob*

¹² The numerous satirical prints that represent Scott and his literary works between 1818 and 1827, and George Cruikshank's illustrations of Scott's novels, suggest other promising areas of study. For discussion of the graphic illustration of Scott's and Smollett's novels by Thomas Rowlandson and George Cruikshank, see Lynch, *Economy of Character*, p. 110; Richard A. Vogler, ed., *Graphic Works of George Cruikshank* (New York: Dover, 1979), pp. 54, 143, 146; Robert L. Patten, *George Cruikshank: A Reevaluation* (Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 116.

¹³ Presumably simian species such as the orangutan, an animal that had attracted fascination since Carolus Linnaeus's classification of the orangutan with humans in the *Systema naturae* (1758), a controversy reignited by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's and James Burnett (Lord Monboddo)'s accounts of the orangutan as a model of 'natural man'. Both the comic and the horrific potential of the idea made its way into the fiction of the nineteenth century. See for example the beastly humanity of 'Sir Oran Haut-Ton' in Peacock's *Melincourt* (1817), Sir Robert's violent jackanape in *Redgauntlet* (1824), and the murdering orangutan in Poe's *Murders in Rue Morgue* (1841). Jean-Baptiste Lamarck (1744-1829) was the first naturalist to propose a direct line of descent between ape and human. When Charles Darwin observed the behaviour of orangutans in the gardens of the Zoological Society, after returning to London from the voyage of the *Beagle*, he filed the notes under 'Man'. See also 'Mirror Scene: The Orangutan, the Ancients, and the Cult of Sensibility' in Laura Brown, *Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2010), pp. 27-64.

Roy (1818), Rashleigh Osbaldistone¹⁴ and Andrew Fairservice are both accused of caricaturing, while Frank sees in the features of a red-haired Highlander ‘a sort of caricature of the national features of Scotland (230). The opening pages of *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* (1818) refer to John Kay’s etchings of the military characters seen on Edinburgh’s streets in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the narrative framing *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819), Dick Tinto first displays artistic talent by drawing caricatures of his father’s customers (5), and when Tinto later provides Peter Pattieson with material on which to base his tale of the Lammermoors, the notes prove to be ‘a parcel of loose scraps’ where Tinto’s ‘written memoranda’ are jostled by sketches and ‘outlines of caricatures’ (14).¹⁵ A festive burlesque of Catholic vestments appears in *The Abbot* (1820) as ‘a caricatura, or practical parody, on the costume ... of the real Superior’ (106). In *Redgauntlet* (1824), Darsie Lattimoor’s law-school notebook is “‘filled with caricatures of the professors and my fellow-students’” (3), and he accuses his friend Alan of portraits “‘scandalously caricatured’” in his letters (15). Second, there are mentions of caricature in Scott’s introductory and postscript chapters, such as the final chapter of *Waverley* (1814) and the introduction to the 1830 Magnum edition of *Ivanhoe* (1820). Third, there are great many references to caricature in Scott’s letters and his

¹⁴ See pp. 241-6 for Rashleigh’s caricature of Scottish patriotism compared with descriptions of same in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*.

¹⁵ See James Chandler’s analysis of Tinto’s argument in favour of ‘representation by caption’ in *England in 1819* (Chicago University Press, 1998), pp. 322-30. Chandler explains the ‘dialectical relation governing conversation and caption in Scott’s text’ with reference to the captions of the political satirical prints (328).

journal of 1825-32. Some of these pertain specifically to striking dramatic performances,¹⁶ others to unpublished caricature portraits and satirical prints.¹⁷

This chapter investigates Scott's thoughts on caricature mainly as they relate to the place of comic and satirically rendered characters in the historical romance, with some reference to examples of caricature portraiture that Scott considered valuable to posterity. I trace ideas about caricature chronologically through Scott's published writing: from *Guy Mannering* to *Rob Roy* to *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, then to the two versions of his 1821 essay on Smollett for Ballantyne's Novelists' Library, and finally to the character-focused portion of the 'ground-work' added in the Magnum Opus edition.¹⁸ Passages in these sources suggest that over his career as

¹⁶ Of particular relevance to Scott's attitude towards national caricature are multiple passages in his letters about Charles Mackay's turn as Baillie Nicol Jarvie in 1821. For example, Scott writes in a letter to Joanna Baillie, 'I never saw a part better sustained certainly and I pray you to collect a party of Scotch friends to see it. I have written to Sotheby to the same purpose but I doubt whether the exhibition will prove as satisfactory to those who do not know the original from which the resemblance is taken. I observe the English demand (as is natural) broad caricature in the depicting of national peculiarities' (VI: 465). See also Scott's letters to Samuel Rodgers (VI: 469) and Lord Montagu (VI: 462).

¹⁷ While Scott's regard for satirical prints is outside the scope of this study, a few facts are worthy of mention here. The Scott family were in the habit of sending each other satirical prints: in April 1807, Scott wrote to his wife that he would send her 'two political caricature prints' by a Mr Hunter, bookseller (XII: 209); and in August 1819, he thanked his son Walter for sending prints from London: 'Mama and I like the caricatures very much' (V: 460). The Faculty of Advocates Library holds a folio collecting a surviving part of Scott's collection of graphic satire together with other print material; the catalogue promises 'a collection of hand-coloured caricatures, by Gillray, Cruikshank and others', though a number of the prints are in fact pirated versions of Gillray and Cruikshank designs carried out by Dublin publishers Le Petit and McCleary. The folio also contains a monochromatic lithographic drawing of an urban street scene, with the double border characteristic of published satirical prints, signed 'Sir Walter Scott' – suggesting that Scott at least once attempted to follow through on the desire he expressed to Byron, of 'once wishing much to be a caricaturist' (VII: 198). See pp. 35-6 for Scott's acquaintance with amateur caricaturists.

¹⁸ My approach to Scott as a critic (as well as a writer) of historical caricature follows John Lauber's observation that although Scott was 'anything but a

a novelist Scott developed an idea of caricature's relation to the lapse of time, and the consequent benefits and difficulties that caricature presented to antiquarian interest. The particularities and peculiarities of caricature seemed to offer an antidote to the categorisation of fictional figures into trans-historical human types or 'humours'. Scott's conception of caricature as an aid to the depiction of historical character was not entirely original, but was partly derived from his appreciation of John Kay's portraits as an exemplary kind of caricature that functioned as a virtual memory for the preservation of textures, details, and differences that would otherwise be historically fugitive. Caricature emerges through Scott's writing as an idiom enmeshed in the Enlightenment's construction of 'character' (national, professional, individual) as a product of distinctive material and economic factors.¹⁹

systematic or theoretical critic, ... the principles underlying his criticism can be pieced together from comments, judgments and brief discussions scattered through his work' (546). See 'Scott on the Art of Fiction', *Studies in English Literature*, 3.4 (1963): 543-54.

¹⁹ 'Character', as a rhetorical figure and epistemological locus of Enlightenment history, has recently become a focus of scholarly research on the long eighteenth century. Lynch's *Economy of Character* (1998), which reconstructs eighteenth-century debates circling the privileged and contentious term 'character', argues that the Romantic reconfiguration of character became involved in middle-class acquisition of cultural capital (see p. 13). Scott's writing does not figure much in Lynch's account, but is central to *England in 1819* (1998), where James Chandler engages Scott's fictional characters as 'cases' of the historical peculiarity of their culture, placing the Waverley novels at the centre of his analysis of the ways in which 'Romantic historicism' draws on a Scottish-Enlightenment schema of history (pp. 127-36, 212). See also David Daiches, 'Sir Walter Scott and History', *Etudes Anglaises* 24 (1971): 458-77; P. D. Garside, 'Scott and the "Philosophical" Historians', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (1975): 497-512.

'Character' has since been recognised as an important term, and a term under pressure, in various forms of eighteenth-century historiography. For example, Silva Sebastiani has demonstrated that the products of the 'new laboratory of Scottish histories' – philosophical histories, narrative histories, histories of manners and science, travelogues, sermons, and biographies – generally take 'characters' as their main subjects (193). Sebastiani suggests that the Scottish Enlightenment's influential emphasis on historical character was motivated and justified by character's rhetorical gift of combining the universal law with the specific instance: 'to be attractive,

By the late 1820s, increasingly concerned with the reception of his novels by future generations of readers, Scott showed signs of anxiety about how his historically-minded ‘caricatures’ might suffer in the ever-lengthening lapse of time between the writing and the reading. Scott foresaw that the peculiar characterisations of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would present the belated reader with a hermeneutic challenge that might be alleviated by scholarly annotation and ‘illustration’.

5.1 ‘Kay’s caricatures’

Scott expresses the idea that some forms of caricature retain historical peculiarity in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, where he figures the characters of Edinburgh’s civic militia²⁰ as an integral part of the eighteenth-century cityscape he aims to capture in the novel. A durable institution originally formed in 1513 as a response to the violent unrest that followed the Battle of Flodden, the city guard was eventually rendered unnecessary by the passage of the 1805 Edinburgh Police Act and the formation of a new city police force; but it was not disbanded until 1817, when the medieval

history need[ed] to be philosophical in scope but also to communicate through the dense particularity of images’ (193-4). Considering lived experiences through the writings of the eighteenth century, Dror Wahrman’s *The Making of the Modern Self* (2004) relies largely on terms anachronistic to the period, ‘self’ and ‘identity’, to trace a prehistory of modern notions of ‘selfhood’.

²⁰ See Victoria Henshaw, *Scotland and the British Army, 1700-1750: Defending the Union* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), pp. 138-9.

Tolbooth was demolished.²¹ Giving background to the Porteous riots²² in the opening chapters, Scott describes the peculiar appearance of the militia men still employed in the later decades of the eighteenth century to keep order in Edinburgh's streets, many of them Highlanders. He does so in the knowledge that these men will pass out of living memory all the more quickly now that the institution of the Edinburgh city guard has dissolved. Ina Ferris identifies the guardsmen as 'remnants', which (unlike 'traces, vestiges, relics, ruins, remains') are 'entities dwell[ing] in the present ... still alive, existing in and as themselves, albeit in greatly diminished form' (477, 478). Anachronistic remnants, because they are '[n]ot simply stand-ins for an aspect of the past ..., [they] tend to block the abstracting moves through which bridging narratives and categories recuperate and consolidate what has been left behind' (478-9).²³

²¹ The 'Old Tolbooth', which served as the city's jail, was established in the fourteenth century. Public hangings took place there from 1785. For an account of the Tolbooth's demolition as a metaphor for the progress of modernity, see Richard J. Hill, 'Reconstructing the Tolbooth: Alexander Nasmyth and *The Heart of Midlothian*', *Picturing Scotland through the Waverley Novels* (London: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 135-40.

Hugo Arnot's 1779 *History of Edinburgh* describes the 'slovenly condition' of the Tolbooth, and the neglect suffered by the prisoners there (297-302). Arnot, tall and slim-bodied, was one of the caricaturist John Kay's favourite subjects: he is depicted in *Lord Kames*, *M^r Hugo Arnot*, *Lord Monboddo* (c. 1783-1813), *Hugo Arnot and Gingerbread Jock* (1784), *Two Shadows in Conversation* (1788), and *Exchange of Heads* (1788).

²² John Porteous was captain of Edinburgh's city guard in 1736, when the smuggler Andrew Wilson was hanged. The execution attracted a crowd due to Wilson's popularity; and when the people began to riot, the city guard fired on them. Some were killed, and many wounded. Porteous stood accused of giving orders to fire on the crowd, and later that year was sentenced to death. When Porteous was granted a royal reprieve, a group of local men broke into the Tolbooth, seized him, and hanged him in the street.

²³ Ferris distinguishes remnants as uniquely disruptive 'bits of the past' via Reinhart Koselleck's concept *die Gleichzeitigkeit der Ungleichzeitigen*, which she translates as 'the contemporaneity of the noncontemporaneous' (Ferris 376). (*Gleichzeitigkeit* can also be translated as 'synchrony' or 'simultaneity'.) Ferris argues that whereas 'nostalgic-elegiac tales activate[s] a temporal gap between past and present to make loss the time of history (thereby giving it narrative form), remnant tales turn on the

In the case of the city guardsmen, Scott considers the longevity of the remnant and how it might be reanimated by particular artefacts in the years to come. *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* itself will be one artefact, and so will the numerous caricature portraits of the guardsmen by Edinburgh's most famous caricaturist, John Kay (1742-1826). Scott's narrator, Jebediah Cleishbotham, imagines that the unflattering peculiarity of Kay's etchings will bolster his text's memorial of the city guard by preserving the guardsmen's physical features and demeanours as in a visual and emotionally responsive memory:²⁴

On all occasions when a holiday licensed some riot and irregularity, a skirmish with these veterans was a favourite recreation with the rabble of Edinburgh. These pages may perhaps see the light when may have in fresh recollection such onsets as we allude to. ... But the fate of manuscripts bequeathed to friends and executors is so uncertain, that the narrative containing these frail memorials of the old Town Guard, who, with their grim and valiant corporal, John Dhu²⁵ (the fiercest-looking fellow I ever saw),

more amorphous modality of the time lag, wherein the past uncomfortably inhabits the present instead of remaining on the other side of it (thereby estranging the present itself)' (480).

²⁴ Less exaggerated representations of the Guard did exist, such as numerous prints by David Allan.

²⁵ Scott probably saw a number of Kay's prints of the Edinburgh city guard. The officer John Dhu appears in at least three, *Three Edin' Bucks* (1784), *The old City Guard of Edinburgh* (1786), and *Shon Dow* (1784). See Fig. 5.

Scott certainly owned at least one print relevant to the passage in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*: Kay's 1796 etching *James McKean at the Bar Edin'* (NPG D31984; Paton II: 368), where the accused is guarded by two soldiers with smart uniforms and grim faces, holding swords sharpened to fine points.

Isaac Cruikshank also produced an etching of John Dhu, *John Dow Soldier of the City-Guard Edinburgh*, published in the same year as Kay's *Shon Dow*. Robert Patten suggests that Cruikshank senior, who had no formal artistic training, studied with Kay in Edinburgh before leaving for London (ODNB).

were, in my boyhood, the alternate terror and derision of the petulant brood of the High School, may, perhaps, only come to light when all memory of the institution has faded away, and then serve as an illustration of Kay's caricatures, who has preserved the features of some of their heroes. (28)

The passage hazards a future where Scott's novel and Kay's prints will punctuate modernity with their corroborating memories of peculiar characters of the previous century. When Cleishbotham predicts that the text will 'serve as an illustration of Kay's caricatures', Scott is evidently using 'illustration' to mean the explanation or elucidation of an object by means of textual material such as historical and critical notes.²⁶ Caricature is construed as a witness to the past that preserves memory but which, Scott assumes, requires textual illustration. Like Bertram's caricature landscape drawing, Kay's caricatures are richly compromised artistic products, whose ways of preserving the past we cannot immediately understand. In the lapse of time, the caricature might show us an implausibly outlandish figure: but once we have read the accompanying text, we will understand the historical origins of the characteristics that now seem strange. We will understand that the guardsmen continued to carry ferocious Lochaber axes²⁷ because their municipal duties had once required them to defend the city against the Jacobite menace and to face armed civilians in doing so; and we may be able to see for ourselves in the pictorial

²⁶ The word was not primarily associated with pictorial embellishment until the middle of the nineteenth century, as Tom Mole explains in his account of Victorian book illustration. Until 1813, 'illustration' was only used to mean textual notes giving explanative examples, such as John Cam Hobhouse's *Historical Illustrations to the Fourth Canto of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* (1818) and Scott's 1808 edition of Dryden, 'illustrated with notes, historical, critical, and explanatory' (48-9).

²⁷ The type of halberd carried by the spectral guardsman is mentioned over a dozen times in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, usually as a favoured weapon of the rioters.

representation the features that occasioned both the fear and the satire of the Edinburgh schoolboys.²⁸ By the time Scott revisited the text of the Waverley novels for the Magnum Opus editions, he would be conscious that some of his own more peculiar historical characters were in need of illustration to contextualise and corroborate their seeming absurdities.

Hugh Paton's mammoth collection of Kay's prints, published in 1837-8, effectively carried out Scott's suggestion of using the passage in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* to corroborate the caricature portrait of John Dhu. The notes in Paton's *Series of Original Portraits and Caricature Etchings* recalls the description of the corporal in the novel, though the writer cannot place the passage: 'The author of Waverley speaks of [Dhu] somewhere, as one of the fiercest-looking fellows he had ever seen' (6). Paton was conscious that the opportunity to illustrate Kay's caricatures with historical notes was disappearing, in the 1830s, along with the last generation of locals who had first-hand memories of Kay's subjects: 'a few old citizens, whose memories – uninterested in the daily occurrences around them –

²⁸ Ferris argues that the guardsmen are disconnected from 'the energy of historical process', and 'inhabit a quotidian temporality deprived of glamour or resonance, and in this everydayness lies their significance' (376). This description of the guardsmen's irrelevance to larger-scale history leaves out the novel's appreciation of these as uncanny figures haunting the modern Hanoverian city: 'A spectre may ... here and there be seen, of an old grey-headed and grey-bearded Highlander, with war-worn features', and one 'phantom of former days still creeps, I have been informed, round the statue of Charles the Second, in the Parliament Square, as if the image of a Stuart were the last refuge for any memorial of our ancient manners; and one or two others are supposed to glide around the door of the guardhouse assigned to them in the Luckenbooths' (27-8). As Cleishbotham notes, the civic militia was deemed necessary by magistrates '[i]n the preceding generation, when there was a perpetual alarm for the plots and activity of the Jacobites' (28). The guardsmen's 'skirmish[es] ... with the rabble of Edinburgh' (27) re-enact the violence witnessed by the city in the eighteenth century, 'for the mob of Edinburgh were at that time jacobitically disposed' (194). Their insubstantiality and insignificance underwrite the demise of Jacobitism.

cling tenaciously to the past' (iv). The composition of the biographical notes for the portraits seems to have been an extended, collaborative, and research-intensive process, for which Paton, the administrator of the project, cannot receive full credit. Paton owned the plates that formed the basis of the edition, but according to James Paterson (1805-76), freelance writer-researchers were employed to do most of the work.²⁹ Paton's introductory notices to *SOPCE* neatly elide this paid labour,³⁰ emphasising instead the 'disinterested' voluntary contributions he received from Edinburgh's literati. The writer-researchers, while not necessarily themselves well-connected, would have had access to anecdotal sources on late eighteenth-century Edinburgh through the men of letters involved with the project, such as James Maidment (1793-1879) and Mark Napier (1798-1879), both lawyers with antiquarian interests. This team of amateur antiquaries, unacknowledged contributors, and writer-researchers worked unpaid and underpaid for Paton between 1836 and 1839.

Paton was among the first to distinguish Kay's caricature portraits for their authenticity and 'general accuracy', and to stress their importance as artefacts: they 'illustrate', he says, 'an interesting epoch in the history of the Scottish capital'; they are 'a record ... in after times' (iii). Kay was a barber who never pursued a formal artistic education, though thirty years in the trade of face-shaving, hair-cutting, and

²⁹ Paterson identifies himself on the title page of his memoir as the 'principal writer of the memoirs of "Kay's Portraits"'. Paton initially paid Paterson 14 of 15 shillings a week, which eventually increased to 25 shillings a week. Paterson, having been apprenticed to a printer at the office of the *Kilmarnock Mirror*, and having employed his own staff as the printer of the *Kilmarnock Chronicle* (1831-2), was keenly aware that Paton was paying him 'no more than the journeyman wage of a compositor'. See Paterson, *Autobiographical Reminiscences* (Ogle, 1871), pp. 147-57.

³⁰ Paton also neglects to admit the importance of the manuscript catalogue produced by Margaret Scott Kay, whom he mentions in the introductory notices only as the widow who sold Kay's plates.

wig-styling was probably no bad apprenticeship to the art of taking a likeness. Kay's black-and-white etchings of Edinburgh characters and worthies pay painstaking attention to their physiognomies, stature, posture, clothing, and of course their wigs. His 1790 print *The Author of the Wealth of Nations* (NPG D16843), one of the few authentic likenesses of Adam Smith, picks out individual curls in the philosopher's wig and subtly gradates the slope of his paunch. Kay depicted 'almost every notable Scotsman of his time, with the exception of Burns' (Dixon ODNB), as well as famous visitors to Edinburgh, such as Vincent Lunardi, Francis Grose, Józef Boruwlaski, and James Bruce. Kay also depicted those whose obsessive eccentric behaviours made them local celebrities, such as James Robertson of Kincairnie, continually thwarted in his ambition to be hanged as a martyr to the Stuart cause; and Jamie Duff, who made a habit of attending all funeral processions taking place in the city. Kay portrayed military men and volunteers, politicians, gentlemen and ladies, medical doctors, ministers, lawyers,³¹ actors, university professors, merchants, ship-brokers, shopkeepers, and criminals; as well as various retainers and others of low status who were nonetheless noted 'characters' in their day: Geordie Syme, official Piper of Dalkeith; John Steele, a Perthshire beggar; John Tait, a broom-maker; Margaret Suttie, a salt hawker; Isobel Alice, a shoemaker's widow; and William Wilson, 'Mortar Willie', a chemist's assistant who lived to be over a hundred years old.

Compared with the most talented and prolific London-based caricaturists of the period, Kay has been little studied. This is perhaps partly due to his estrangement from the print trade of London, on which scholarship has focused; but surely also

³¹ Kay represented Scott as one of *Twelve Advocates* (1811). See Paton, II: 156.

due to his artistic differences from Rowlandson, Gillray, and Cruikshank. While he did execute a number of designs categorisable as ‘satirical prints’, the majority of his work can be seen both as an adaptation of the longstanding tradition of caricature portraiture into something new: a documentary art that aimed to capture specific aspects of metropolitan street life. Kay was patently less cynical and less satirical than his London contemporaries;³² he had less interest in the fantastical and the pornographic, and indeed his prints may seem staid to twenty-first-century tastes. But Kay’s oeuvre is due for a reevaluation,³³ as a strangely idiosyncratic mode of portraiture that sheds light on less acknowledged conceptions of caricature in the period. Uniquely among the artists dubbed ‘caricaturists’ in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, Kay was fortunate to have his print shop subsidised by an aristocratic patron, Sir William Nisbet of Dirleton, who left him an annuity of £20. This financial security may explain some of the trends in Kay’s portraits, such as his many depictions of the evangelical preachers active in Edinburgh, suggesting that he had more freedom than other caricaturists to express personal interests and partialities in his work, and less inclination to follow the guidelines of commissions.

³² Iain Gordon Brown has described Kay’s work as free from ‘[m]alice and venom’, his ‘achievement ... to record in a gentle, direct and personal way the foibles and oddities of real people’ (107). See ‘Caricature: The Individual Contribution of John Kay’, *The Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland*, eds. Stephen W. Brown and Warren McDougall (University of Edinburgh Press, 2012), vol. 2, pp. 107-10.

³³ Hilary and Mary Evans’s 1973 biography remains the only modern critical work on Kay. Other publications, such as Albert Morris’s *Kay’s Capital Characters* (1996) and Sheila Szatkowski’s *Capital Characters* (2007), are selections of Kay’s prints contextualised with information taken from Paton’s edition and from the 1973 biography. It is to be hoped that the 2007 Birlinn facsimile reprint of Paton’s edition will stimulate further scholarship on Kay and his network.

Kay garnered more appreciation in his lifetime than other caricaturists, and he seems to have been a source of some local pride.³⁴

Kay was known to draw most of his portraits from life,³⁵ and many were likenesses taken opportunistically rather than commissioned by a subject sitting (and paying) for a portrait. Paton's testimony, that people rarely posed for Kay to draw them, might help explain why so many of Kay's etchings show people in profile in the street, paused in conversation or passing by:

The intuitive facility of the Artist's pencil ... must appear incredible, when it is known that, with few exceptions, [the portraits] were executed from casual observation – the impression probably of a passing glance. Indeed, in many instances, they could not have been otherwise obtained. (iii)

Before photography, caricature portraits seemed to hold out the possibility of artistic objects authentically textured with real faces:³⁶ independent of the subject's

³⁴ See for example the unsigned poem *The Unwelcome Guest* (1799), where Kay is described admiringly as 'the leish o' Enbro' city' (p. 7). The poem ends with accolades to a local artist: 'But thou art weel established / In the pourtraying, unco trade; / Thy matchless fame is widely spread: / Wha's like John Kay! / E'en Lonon! ne'er thy equal bred; / Thou'lt live for ay' (7).

³⁵ A notable exception is his 1794 portrait of Thomas Paine, which according to Paton's edition was 'taken from a miniature', possibly sent to Kay by a relative living in America.

³⁶ The caricature portrait might find a place in Nancy Armstrong's 'prehistory of realism'. See *Fiction in the Age of Photography: The Legacy of British Realism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999). Armstrong argues that the picturesque eventually 'efface[d] the distinction between image and object that Gilpin had so carefully maintained', and that as a result 'the picturesque could not be construed as either real or ideal in nineteenth-century terms' (66). Caricature portraits present a variation on this problem, with their claims to both distortion and accuracy. Alternatively, the silhouette portrait might be seen as an un-automatic photography, complying with Roland Barthes's definition of photographic authenticity: 'I can never deny that *the thing has been there*' (*Camera Lucida* 76). In Lavater's words, 'The Silhouette ... is of all portraits the feeblest and least finished; but, on the other hand, it is the justest and the most faithful' (*Physiognomy* II: 176). See Sibylle Erle, *Blake, Lavater and Physiognomy* (Legenda, 2010), p. 63.

patronage and, rather than flattering them, approximating how they appeared to those who actually saw them. *The Unwelcome Guest* (1799) praises Kay as ‘Thou wonderfu true visage taker’ (6).³⁷ Caricatures like Kay’s could be imagined as material traces preserving the actual living qualities of the dead, in contrast to paintings, silhouettes, statues, and other memorials that paid tribute to an idealised version of the individual as part of a genealogy, family, institution, or nation.³⁸

Concerns about the unflattering accuracy of ‘true visages’ were not confined to the work of professional ‘caricaturists’: portrait painters with a knack for the not characteristic detail could also be judged guilty of caricature.³⁹ One such painter of whom Scott was aware was Archibald Skirving (1749-1819), now best known for his portrait of Burns (PG 745), an engraving of which Blackie’s of Glasgow used as a

³⁷ The poem may be the work of George Galloway (b. 1755), whose name is written in pencil on the first page of Scott’s copy of the pamphlet.

³⁸ This is not to say that the physiognomic or otherwise prosopographic ‘accuracy’ of Kay’s caricatures did not sometimes cause offence. As Hilary and Mary Evans recount in their 1973 biography of Kay, many of the artist’s prints were apparently acquired by subjects who bought them only to destroy them. In 1792, he was prosecuted for a print depicting a pedestrian match, and on at least one occasion he was cudgelled by the subject of one of his drawings (Evans and Evans 21). In his 1796 print *A scene in the Caricature Ware Room*, Kay defies an outraged victim who threatens to give the ‘damn’d Caricature painter ... a damn’d threshing’. Kay has drawn himself steadfast, hands on hips: ‘Do it if you dare Sir Silly Infant!’ The print functions partly as an advertisement for the caricaturist and his wares, since the scene is evidently Kay’s own shop at 10 Parliament Close (a street mainly occupied by booksellers and silversmiths, burned down in November 1824), with a corner of St Giles’s Cathedral visible through one of the windows.

³⁹ Gillray himself had failed to succeed as a portrait painter at least partly for this reason. In 1789 he attempted several portraits of William Pitt the Younger in $\frac{3}{4}$ profile, each time capturing a fixed stare, a pointed nose, pursed lips, and double chin. Thomas Gainsborough submitted a more idealised portrait, drawing Pitt at an angle that minimised the size of his nose and prevented the eyes from appearing close-set, with every expression softened, every feature regularised, and leaving out most of the chin. The differences between Gillray’s Pitt and Gainsborough’s demonstrate, according to Banerji and Donald, ‘Gillray’s inaptitude for the requirements of successful “high” art practice’ (*Gillray Observed* 31).

frontispiece for their 1844 edition of Burns's poetry. 'Illustrating' the engraving, the publisher emphasises that Skirving's likeness was not based merely on Burns's sitting for a portrait, but on the painter's intimate acquaintance with Burns. He judges Skirving's work superior to Nasmyth's because it displays 'that massiveness of feature which his friends and biographers have always described as particularly characteristic of his visage'. He cites Scott on the deficiency of Nasmyth's portrait:

Sir Walter Scott, in speaking of Burns from a recollection of forty years, says, 'His features are represented in Mr. Nasmyth's picture, but to me it conveys the idea that they are diminished, as if seen in perspective. I think his countenance was more massive than it looks in any of the portraits.' (n. pag.)

Skirving's portrait of Burns was thus touted as preserving the man's characteristic and unideal features where other portraits had appeared to minimise or regularise them. Skirving was more generally known for his love of the unflattering and 'too accurate' detail.⁴⁰ On one occasion Skirving sketched Scott's drawing master, a bankrupt artist named Walker, whose pock-marked face was, according to Scott, 'one of the ugliest countenances ... enough as we say to spean weans'. Scott recollected the incident in his journal entry for 1 March 1826:

Skirving made an admirable likeness of poor Walker; not a single scar or mark of the small-pox which seamd his countenance but the too accurate brother of the brush had faithfully laid it down in longitude and latitude. Poor

⁴⁰ Thomas Carlyle remembered Skirving as a misanthrope, arrogant and solitary, rendered more irritable by a long sentence of imprisonment in France, after men in Napoleon's army mistook him for a spy on his journey home from studying art in Italy (*Two Reminiscences* 132-3).

Walker destroyed it (being in crayons) rather than let the caricature of his ugliness appear at the sale of his effects. (101)

Scott's use of the term 'caricature' here, to designate a likeness he describes as 'admirable', 'faithful', and only 'too accurate', disputes the assumption that caricature's offensiveness derives from tendentious misrepresentation or distortion. The injury done by Skirving's caricature is bound up with its claims to authenticity. Scott, having recognised Kay's portraits as exemplary caricatures capable of preserving remnants of the past in 1818, by 1826 was leaning away from the notion of caricature as a necessarily spurious version of reality, and moving toward the possibility that 'caricature' could encompass empirically sound documents of particularity.

It is no coincidence that Scott's interest in the authenticity and antiquarian appeal of caricature develops in the years 1815-33. *Guy Mannering*, the adventures of a military man restored to his estate after years engaged in combat abroad, was written in the first months of peacetime. In *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, Scott lights on Kay's caricatures of the civic militia, redundant by the early years of the nineteenth century.⁴¹ And in 1821, appreciating Smollett's literary caricatures, Scott focuses on his depictions of historical naval character and the lieutenant Lismahago. Military figures – so prominent in Britain during the years of Hanoverian-Stuart conflict, the Seven Years' War, the American War of Independence, the Anglo-French war, the

⁴¹ Kay depicted scores of the military men seen in the capital and beyond during the late eighteenth century. See for example his 1796 portrait of Major-General Alexander Mackay, carrying a parasol (II: 18); of the corpulent General James Grant of Ballindalloch (II: 22), Francis William Grant of Grant at the head of the Inverness-shire militia (II: 433); citations refer to page number's in Paton's 1837-8 edition.

Irish Rebellion of 1798, and the Napoleonic Wars⁴² – were no longer part of everyday life, their military camps a source of fascination and their doings abroad reported in newspapers. The Congress of Vienna, and then the Battle of Waterloo, marked a new era of peacetime. Against this backdrop of a Britain divesting its military character, Scott considered ‘war-worn’ veterans of the eighteenth century such as Edinburgh’s distinctively Highland civic militia, Scottish pioneers in North America, and the British navy.⁴³ Such men were prime targets for caricature as a mode of preserving the historical peculiarity both of their manners and costume, and of Britain itself.⁴⁴

⁴² Between the American War of Independence and the outbreak of war with republican France, the defeated British army lost its pride and discipline. During the Revolutionary Wars however, the army expanded, from approximately 40,000 men in 1793 to 250,000 in 1813. Owing to the large numbers of casualties, twenty per cent of the British Army was made up of Europeans (including French loyalists) by 1813. David Dundas’s *Principles of Military Movements* provided the pattern for standardising the manoeuvres and renovating the tactical system of British land forces in the 1790s. See David Gates on the recruitment and training of the British army in this period: ‘The Transformation of the Army 1783-1815’, *The Oxford History of the British Army*, eds. Ian Beckett and David G. Chandler (Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 132-60.

⁴³ Having had ‘a chronic image problem during the course of the eighteenth century’, the navy was professionalised and made a source of national pride, growing in the 1790s from 110,000 seamen and marines to 140,000 personnel manning a thousand vessels. By the 1820s, the renovations in naval clothing prompted mockery of the new ‘dandy midshipman’; see for example Charles Joseph Hullmandel’s print comparing the naval uniforms of different eras, *Things as they were. 1783 / and Things as they are. 1823* (PAF3721 / PW3721). See also Amy Miller, *Dressed to Kill: British Naval Uniform, Masculinity and Contemporary Fashions 1748-1857* (National Maritime Museum, 2008). For a discussion of post-Waterloo naval identity in *Persuasion* (1818), see Robert P. Irvine, *Jane Austen* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2005), pp. 30, 34, 82, 137.

⁴⁴ Such a motivation may have contributed to the comic detail of William Makepeace Thackeray’s depictions of military characters in *Vanity Fair* (1837-8) and other novels. On Thackeray and the military novelists, see Jim Shanahan, ‘Paddythackeray: Thackeray and the Timeless Space of the Irish Military Novel’, *Thackeray in Time: History, Memory, and Modernity*, eds. Alice Crossley and Richard Salmon (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), pp. 86-100. See also John

5.2 Smollett's caricatures

Scott expanded on the notion of caricature as an authentic document in the unsigned essay he wrote to preface the 1821 Ballantyne edition of Smollett's novels.⁴⁵ In contrast to the reference in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* to 'Kay's caricatures', the 1821 essay deals with caricature more broadly as an artistic and potentially literary idiom concerned with emphasis on the peculiar. While Scott claims to distinguish the sailors in *Peregrine Pickle* (1751) who 'border upon caricature' (Trunnion, Pipes, and Hatchway) from those in *Roderick Random* (1748) who 'are truth and nature itself' (Lieutenant Bowling, Jack Rattlin), in summary he considers them together as repositories of the historical peculiarities of a professional character, particularised into portraits of fictional individuals:

Smollett's sea characters have been deservedly considered as inimitable; and the power with which he has diversified them ... we have noticed as his chief advantage over Fielding. Bowling, Trunnion, Hatchway, Pipes, and Crowe, and all men of the same class, habits, and tone of thinking, yet so completely differenced⁴⁶ by their separate and individual characters, that we at once

Peck, 'Thackeray and the Culture of War', *War, the Army and Victorian Literature* (London: Palgrave, 1998), pp. 49-70.

⁴⁵ The essay had a significant afterlife in the periodical press. *Blackwood's* reviewed Ballantyne's *Novelist's Library* in 1824, identifying Scott as the author of the prefatory essays and quoting them at length. In 1825, Galignani of Paris published the essays separately as *Lives of the Novelists*, prompting the *Quarterly Review* to reappraise the essays in 1826. *Blackwood's* evidently kept a copy of Scott's essay on Smollett to hand, since one of their reviewers was still able to quote from it verbatim in 1862.

⁴⁶ An obsolete transitive usage roughly synonymous with 'differentiate' or 'distinguish' (v. 3-4 in OED), but also a heraldic term referring to the practice of distinguishing individual members or branches of the family by altering or adding to their coat of arms (v. 2. b).

acknowledge them as distinct persons, while we see and allow that every one of them belongs to the old English navy. These striking portraits have now the merit which is cherished by antiquaries – they preserve the memory of the school of Benbow⁴⁷ and Boscawen,⁴⁸ whose manners are now banished from the quarterdeck to the fore-castle. (xl-li)

Like Kay's caricatures, which Scott understood to 'preserve the features' of Edinburgh's old Town Guard, Smollett's literary caricatures compensate for the old English navy's passing out of living memory. Far from being compromised, their verisimilitude depends on their proximity to the 'border upon caricature'.

In the decades leading up to Scott's 1821 appraisal of Smollett, the consensus was that Smollett's novels contained the wrong kinds of caricatures – overdone, absurd, and unnatural.⁴⁹ The sea characters were a particular focus for critics'

⁴⁷ Robert Louis Stevenson's inspiration for the 'Admiral Benbow' tavern in *Treasure Island* (1881-2), officer John Benbow (1653-1702) served during the Nine Years' War (1688-97) and the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-14). He was lionised as 'Brave Benbow' after he was badly wounded in the legs in 1702 in the West Indies: 'Brave Benbow lost his legs by chainshot / Brave Benbow lost his legs, and on his stumps he begs, / Fight on my English lads, 'tis our lot, 'tis our lot' in *One Hundred English Folksongs*, ed. Cecil Sharp (Boston: Oliver Ditson, 1916), vol. II, pp. 642, 678.

⁴⁸ Admiral Edward Boscawen (1711-61), nicknamed 'Old Dreadnought' and 'Wry-necked Dick', fought in the War of Jenkins's Ear, the War of the Austrian Succession, and the Seven Years' War.

⁴⁹ In 1831, *The North American Review* posed the question, 'what rank will Scott take among our novelists, when time has set its seal upon the reputation of his works?' *The North American Review* ranks Scott above Smollett in the depiction of his native land, proceeding from the incorrect assumption that Smollett never described Scottish settings or characters in his fiction: 'Of Smollett, we should hardly speak ..., except to express our delight that he did not carry into effect a purpose he had formed of, of making his native land the scene of some of his fictitious stories. He would certainly have peopled it with strange inhabitants, and would have extracted sufficient amusement from the subject; but it would have been like Sir Roger de Coverley, in the hands of Steele; the fine simplicity which Scott and Burns have identified with the Scotch dialect and character, would certainly have vanished under the coarse caricature of his pencil; and by thus forestalling the field,

accusations of caricature. Anna Letitia Barbauld's *British Novelists* (1810) objected to Trunnion as 'scarcely like anything human ... the Caliban of Smollet [sic]', and Trunnion's wife 'still more overcharged' (XXX: vii). John Dunlop's 1816 *History of Fiction* admitted that the sea characters in *Peregrine Pickle* were 'a little caricatured' (III: 468). In 1831, the officer-turned-novelist William Nugent Glascock described Smollett's renderings of naval men as vague, extravagant, and *outré*; 'his humour, generally speaking, ... not so much that of a painter of real life as of a caricaturist' (370).⁵⁰ An essay on Daniel Defoe's historical novel *Memoirs of a Cavalier* (1720), published in *The Retrospective Review*⁵¹ in 1821, used Smollett's sea characters as a counterpoint to Defoe's 'matter-of-fact personages' and 'air of truth and reality' (359, 360). Whereas Scott admires Smollett's sea characters as a record of individualistically real men and manners, the *Retrospective* holds that Smollett produced an 'abstract' of naval type, emphasising the 'extraordinary', 'imaginary', and comic elements of his characters. Smollett's sailor is so over-peculiar as to be absurd, and so typical of the navy that he fails to give an impression of a fictional individual:

he might have prevented Scott, in a later day, from spreading over it a mantle of venerable and pleasing associations' (404-5). (Vignettes of eighteenth-century life featuring the comical Tory squire 'Sir Roger de Coverley' were a major feature of *The Spectator*. De Coverley is at once a figure of some ridicule and himself a humourist commentating on the society around him.)

⁵⁰ Glascock's 'Naval Novels' first appeared in *The Metropolitan*, and was reprinted as 'Strictures on Smollett' in his *Naval Sketch Book* (1834).

⁵¹ *The Retrospective Review* (1820-8) was a literary magazine with an antiquarian bent; in the words of its editors Henry Southern and Charles Barker, 'an attempt to recal [sic] the public from an exclusive attention to new books, by making the merit of old ones the subject of critical discussion' (viii). The first volume included a review on a manuscript volume of Sir Thomas Browne's letters to his son, as well as essays on Browne's discourse on urn burial, the plays of John Dryden and Ben Jonson, and D'blossiers Tovey's *Anglia Judaica* (1738).

Defoe's sailor is of the ordinary description of men, one out of a thousand, with nothing very striking or characteristic about him; the sailor in Smollett is altogether an extraordinary being, whose every action is uncouth, and every expression ludicrous. The one has all the usual marks of a sailor, but has everything else in common with the rest of mankind; the other seems to belong to a different species; and a creature formed and bred at sea, having a set of ideas, and modes of speaking and acting perfectly distinct from those possessed by the men who live on shore. The one has merely the technical phrase and vices, the homeliness and simplicity, peculiar to his profession; the other is not so much an individual character, as an abstract of the humour of the whole British navy. The one is an every-day kind of person, whom we have seen a hundred times; the other is a most amusing and imaginary being, whom we have never met with but in the inimitable pages of his creator.

(362)

The *Retrospective's* tone is admiring despite its reservations about the verisimilitude of Smollett characters, but the writer grants a special authenticity to Defoe's characters, which 'are not to be distinguished from the substantial forms and realities of life' (357). Smollett, by contrast, joins Fielding in the ranks of 'more highly gifted authors' whose talents 'have enabled their possessors to excite every emotion in their readers ... but at the same time unfitted them to be the humble copyists of nature, and the faithful historians of human life' (360-1).

Scott thus went against the tide of opinion on Smollett by placing his sea characters on the right side of the border with caricature. Looking to Smollett for a model of a form of literary caricature that would enable the writer to include the

rude, the grotesque, and the amusing among the diverse forms of life depicted in the modern novel,⁵² he found an analogue for Smollett's novels in the paintings of Rubens:⁵³

His pictures are often deficient in grace; sometimes coarse, and even vulgar in conception; deficient too in keeping, and in the due subordination of parts to each other; and intimating too much carelessness on the part of the artist.

But these faults are redeemed by such richness and brilliancy of colours; ...

now bodying forth the grand and terrible – now the natural, the easy, and the

⁵² Scott's essay on Smollett was presented to the readers of Ballantyne's *Novelist's Library* in the same year that the *Quarterly Review* published an unsigned critical survey of the novels Scott had written since 1817, from *Rob Roy* to *Kenilworth*. For this reviewer (identified by John O. Hayden as the lawyer Nassau William Senior), Scott's peculiar comic characters are blemishes on the novels. He dislikes what he sees as 'artificial effort after the contrasts of tragi-comedy; to have the broadest and most extravagant caricature continually dragged into studied opposition to the tragic characters and incidents' (124). Senior likens the artifice of Scott's caricatures to the gardens of William Kent (1685-1748), who was accused by critics of landscape gardening in the 1790s to have planted dead trees in an effort to create more picturesque scenery: 'It is the old mistake of the first landscape gardeners, who, in their rage to imitate nature, used to plant dead trees, and build ant-hills, close to a house' (123-4). Among Scott's 'fools and bores ... from Monk Barns down to the Euphuist', Caleb Balderstone is singled out as 'the most pertinacious, the most intrusive' (123). It seems unlikely that Scott's appreciation of Smollett was intended as a direct response to the *Quarterly Review Essay* – but, given the timing of Scott's essay, when Scott would have already been aware of some readers' objections to characters such as Piercie Shafton and Caleb Balderstone, Scott's remarks on Smollett's often comic literary caricatures can be read as a defence of moments in which his own characterisations tread close to caricature.

⁵³ Hazlitt suggested that Rubens's 'licentious fancy' consisted in 'a certain grossness of expression bordering on caricature' (10: 72). He judged the tendency to exaggeration in Michelangelo's human anatomy less favourably, proposing that Michelangelo 'enforced and expanded ... a preconceived idea [of form], till he sometimes seems to tread on the verge of caricature. His forms ... are not *middle*, but *extreme* forms, massy, gigantic, supernatural. ... Every muscle is swollen and turgid. This tendency to exaggeration would have been avoided if Michael Angelo had recurred more constantly to nature, and had proceeded less on a scientific knowledge of the structure of the human body; for science gives only the positive form of the different parts, which imagination may afterwards magnify as it pleases, but it is nature alone which combines them with perfect truth and delicacy' (188: 114-5).

ludicrous; there is so much of life, action, and bustle, in every group he has painted;⁵⁴ so much force and individuality of character,⁵⁵ that we readily grant to Smollett an equal rank with his great rival Fielding. (xlii)

The ‘pictures’ of Smollett and Rubens merge together in this passage, the identity of the artist ambiguous until Scott’s final clause orients the description towards the novelist. Three decades later, Leigh Hunt’s *Table Talk* would agree with Scott in allowing Smollett to have been ‘a masterly observer’ as well as ‘the finest of caricaturists’, whose ‘caricatures are always substantially true: it is only the complexional vehemence of his gusto that leads him to toss them up as he does, and tumble them on our plates’ (41). The veracity of caricature runs together with its insistence on the strangeness, ugliness, and risibility of human forms – the peculiarity of the ordinary.

Of all Smollett’s military characters, Lismahago is perhaps the most conspicuously caricatured. From his first appearance in *Humphry Clinker* (1771), Lismahago is presented as a remnant of the French and Indian War of 1754-63. The veteran wears an officer’s coat, ‘the cloth of which had once been scarlet, trimmed with Brandenburgs, now completely deprived of their metal’ (188).⁵⁶ Physically, he

⁵⁴ For Hogarth’s influence on Smollett’s ‘visual imagination’, see Jerry C. Beasley, *Tobias Smollett: Novelist* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1998), pp. 22-4; Murray Roston, *Changing Perspectives in Literature and the Visual Arts, 1650-1820* (Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 171-2.

⁵⁵ See pp. 100-5 on how terms such as ‘force’ were used to describe caricature-approximate characterisation in Austen.

⁵⁶ For discussions of Smollett’s basis for Lismahago in the adventures of Captain Robert Stobo (1727-70, see George M. Kahrl, ‘Captain Robert Stobo’, *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 49 (1941), pp. 254-68, Louis L. Martz, *The Later Career of Tobias Smollett* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1942), pp. 175-6, and Lewis M. Knapp, *Tobias Smollett: Doctor of Men and Manners* (Princeton University Press, 1949), pp. 274-5. Stobo volunteered to be held as a hostage at Fort Duquesne, where he gathered intelligence for the British. He was arrested as a spy in

is a *cadaver exquis* of odd body parts: a variegated skull, scalped by members of the Miami nation, ‘patched and plastered’; added to this a face ‘half a yard in length, brown and shrivelled’; added to this a figure ‘very narrow’ in places and ‘very thick’ in others. On numerous occasions, Lismahago takes centre stage in a farcical situation, as when he climbs out of a window in his nightshirt, ‘long lank limbs and posteriors ... illumined by the links and torches which the servants held up’, prompting Sir Thomas Bullford to laugh, “‘O, what a subject! – O, what *caricatura!*’” (300). If any of Smollett’s characterisations could be labelled ‘a caricature’, it is surely Lismahago: a ‘high flavoured dish’ (191), the veteran’s heightened peculiarity makes him a source of wonder and entertainment for Smollett’s letter-writers, who continually frame him as a ‘character’, a ‘curiosity’, and an ‘original’. Yet when Scott turns to Lismahago in the 1821 essay, he defends Smollett against the charge of outright caricature:

Captain Lismahago was probably no violent caricature, allowing for the manners of the time. We can remember a good and gallant officer who was said to have been his prototype, but believe the opinion was only entertained from the striking resemblance which he bore in externals to the doughty captain. (xxx)

Québec, and after a commuted sentence and several escape attempts over three years, he travelled by canoe up the St Lawrence and east to Nova Scotia. Stobo continued his military career in the Caribbean theatre of the Seven Years’ War, returning to Britain in 1768. Depressed by the tedium of peacetime garrison life, he suffered from alcoholism and shot himself in 1770. Stobo’s recollections were published as *Memoirs of Major Robert Stobo of the Virginia Regiment*, ed. Neville B. Craig (Pittsburg: Davidson, 1854).

Like Smollett's sea characters, and like Kay's portraits of the Edinburgh Town Guard, Lismahago is a historically local character whose behaviours must be made recognisable as remnants of particular military histories. The impression that he is unnatural or exaggerated can be compensated for, by relativising and illustrating his seeming oddities with contextual material. When even Lismahago's physical abnormalities can be authenticated by comparison with a real individual, Scott seems to imply that there is no aspect of Lismahago's character that could not be given historical substance. He proves himself a reader able to discern Lismahago as, in Hunt's phrase, a 'caricature ... substantially true'.

One of the most important aspects of Lismahago's character is his vehement patriotism, as Jeremy Melford observes in a letter recounting how his family have been 'feed[ing] upon' the entertainment of Lismahago's quirks:

The lieutenant was, by this time, become so polemical, that every time he opened his mouth flew out a paradox, which he maintained with all the enthusiasm of altercation; but all his paradoxes savoured strongly of a partiality for his own country. He undertook to prove that poverty was a blessing to a nation; that *oatmeal* was preferable to *wheat-flour*... (201)

Scott would have recognised Smollett's comic rendering of national partiality as 'no violent caricature' of an eighteenth-century Scotsman. This is despite the fact that in *Rob Roy* Scott places a corresponding 'caricature' of Scottish patriotism in the mouth of Rashleigh, the novel's villain. As Smollett gives Lismahago's patriotism a military character – his paradoxes flying out with force, his arguments energised by a spirit of 'altercation' – so Rashleigh likens Scottish partiality to a military fortification. Explaining to Frank that "the man Cawmill—Colville—Campbell"

had to be persuaded to give evidence, Rashleigh satirically delimits the sympathetic capacity of Rob Roy and his countrymen:

‘[A] narrow spirited, but yet ardent patriotism, which forms as it were the outmost of the concentric bulwarks with which a Scotchman fortifies himself against all the attacks of a generous philanthropic principle. Surmount this mound, you find an inner and yet dearer barrier – the love of his province, his village, or, most probably, of his clan; storm this second obstacle, you have a third – his attachment to his own family, his father, mother, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins, to the ninth generation. It is only within these circles that a Scotchman’s social affection expands itself, never reaching those which are outermost, till all means of discharging itself in the interior circles have been exhausted. It is within these circles that his heart throbs, each pulsation beating fainter and fainter, till, beyond the widest boundary, it is almost unfelt. And what is worst of all, could you surmount these concentric outworks, you have an inner citadel, deeper, higher, and more efficient than them all – a Scotchman’s love for himself.’ (87)

Scott disposes the reader to be suspicious of Rashleigh’s talk: Frank has protested against the melodic fluency of Rashleigh’s conversation (90-1), and Diana objects to his caricature of Scottish sympathy, “it is *not* true” (87). Nothing *Rob Roy* suggests that Rashleigh’s citadel analogy is anything other than a maliciously biased representation – like his verbal portrait of William Osbaldistone, which Frank denounces as “a *caricatura*” (95).

But Scott went on to implicate Rashleigh’s caricature in his depiction of the Scottish national character in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*. That novel takes up

Rashleigh's premise and shifts it into a more palatably affirmative expression of the premise that Scottish sympathy is distinctively insular. On the one hand, Scott historicises Rashleigh's caricature, calling on the explanative power of stadial history and the case study of Britain as an 'unevenly developed' nation.⁵⁷ On the other hand, Rashleigh's terms of blockade ('bulwarks', 'barrier', 'obstacle', 'boundary') is overtaken in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* by terms of relationship, communication, and sentiment ('connections', 'bonds', 'associations', 'influence'). Scott converts negatives into positives to rearrange Rashleigh's self-centred Scotland into a nation of feeling. I present below some exemplary quotations from *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, for comparison with Rashleigh's caricature. The premise of Scottish insularity remains, scrambled and dispersed in the vocabularies of Enlightenment history and Humean sympathy.⁵⁸ Scott mitigates the narrowness of Scottish sympathy with the 'wideness' of its activity across the boundaries of rank: 'exclusive' becomes 'extensive'. As the context of each quotation (given below in italics) makes plain, the rearrangement of Rashleigh's caricature revolves around

⁵⁷ On the periodisation of history in the Scottish Enlightenment and the stadial phenomenon that has come to be known as 'uneven development' in Scott's novels, see David Daiches, 'Sir Walter Scott and History', *Etudes Anglaises* 24 (1971): 458-77; P. D. Garside, 'Scott and the "Philosophical" Historians', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 36 (1975): 497-512; Chandler, *England in 1819*, pp. 128-47; Duncan, *Scott's Shadow*, pp. 101-2.

⁵⁸ See, for example, Hume's argument about common and national characters: that the nation is like 'a club or knot of companions' in which 'like passions and inclinations ... run, as it were, by contagion' (I.XXI.9). On sympathy, national identity, and ethnicity, see Evan Gottlieb, *Feeling British: Sympathy and National Identity in Scottish and English Writing, 1707-1832* (Cranbury, NJ: Rosemont; Associated University Presses, 2007), pp. 30-42. See also Gottlieb, 'Fools of Prejudice: Sympathy and National Identity in the Scottish Enlightenment and *Humphry Clinker*', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 18 (2005): 81-106.

Scott's formulation of the heroine Jeanie as an amiable and virtuous exemplar of distinctive national character.

It is well known, that much, both of what is good and bad in the Scottish national character, arises out of the intimacy of their family connections. . . . The worth and respectability of one member of a peasant's family is always accounted by themselves and others, not only a matter of honest pride, but a guarantee for the good conduct of the whole. (101)

The narrator explains why Jeanie feels her sister's disgrace as her own.

Perhaps one ought to be actually a Scotsman to conceive how ardently, under all distinctions of rank and situation, they feel their mutual connection with each other as natives of the same country. There are, I believe, more associations common to the inhabitants of a rude and wild, than of a well-cultivated and fertile country; their ancestors have more seldom changed their place of residence; their mutual recollection of remarkable objects is more accurate; the high and the low are more interested in each other's welfare; the feelings of kindred and relationship are more widely extended, and in a word, the bonds of patriotic affection, always honourable even when a little too exclusively strained, have more influence on men's feelings and actions.

(346-7)

The narrator explains Jeanie's rapport with the Duke of Argyll.

The hostess, as we have said, was her countrywoman, and the eagerness with which Scottish people meet, communicate, and, to the extent of their power,

assist each other, although it is often objected to us, as a prejudice and narrowness of sentiment, seems, on the contrary, to arise from a most justifiable and honourable feeling of patriotism, combined with a conviction, which, if undeserved, would long since have been confuted by experience, that the habits and principles of the nation are a sort of guarantee for the character of the individual.⁵⁹ At any rate, if the extensive influence of this national partiality be considered as an additional tie, binding man to man, and calling forth the good offices of such as can render them to the countryman who happens to need them, we think it must be found to exceed, as an active and efficient motive to generosity, that more impartial and wider principle of general benevolence, which we have sometimes seen pleaded as an excuse for assisting no individual whatever. (253)

The narrator explains why the Scottish innkeeper presses Jeanie to accept her hospitality.

These passages in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* are in many ways paraphrastic of Rashleigh's view of Scottish patriotism, and they act as a kind of gloss on the caricature in *Rob Roy* – the essential premise of which, far from being debunked, is reinscribed ever more forcefully with the supporting evidence of Scotland's stage in history. Scott's justifications of and for Scottish patriotism in *The Heart of Mid-*

⁵⁹ The density of the commas in this passage is probably the work of Scott's publisher and compositors attempting to parse a long sentence by spelling it out and adding punctuation where breaths might fall, rather than to divide syntactic units. Scott expected Ballantyne and the compositors to add punctuation at various stages of the printing process (see Hewitt, 'General Introduction' in *Waverley*, pp. xi-iii). Cf. the rhythmical punctuation described by Kathryn Sutherland as an 'aural trace' of 'conversational and counter-grammatical rhythms' in her textual analysis of *Mansfield Park* (226).

Lothian seem consciously ‘keyed’ to Rashleigh’s caricature of the same in *Rob Roy*, a supposition lent weight by David Hewitt’s finding that only after Scott had already ‘planned, conceptualised, and imagined’ *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* did he finish writing *Rob Roy*, which ‘almost became a distraction from what Scott proclaimed to be his *chef d’oeuvre*’ (356). Though *Rob Roy* invites us to perceive Rashleigh’s impostures, Scott does not reveal his satirical depiction of Scottish character to be a spurious imposition on the reader. Rashleigh’s caricature cannot be, for Scott, easily dismissed by Diana’s emphatic “‘not true’”; rather, the caricature can be shown to contain a national truth once contextualised in theories of sympathy and stadialism, which the passages in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* provide. Rashleigh retorts to Diana that his caricature “‘is true, ... because you cannot deny that I know the country and people intimately, and the character is drawn from deep and accurate consideration’” (87), an appeal to the authority of empiricism that echoes Scott’s more diplomatic claims of familiarity with his Scottish subjects in the Postscript to *Waverley*.⁶⁰

Self-consciousness about national character, as well as national partiality, became an established feature of criticism of Scottishness in the period. In *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, Scott describes a ‘guarantee’ existing between the individual Scot and the larger Scottish groups to which he or she belongs (101, 253), asking the reader to imagine that the self-consciousness of the Scot is bound within a concentric series of analogies between herself and her family, herself and her village, her country, and her nation. Hazlitt picks up on consciousness of national character as an

⁶⁰ ‘It has been my object,’ says Scott, ‘to describe these persons, not by a caricatured and exaggerated use of the national dialect, but by their habits, manners, and feelings; so as, in some distant degree, to emulate the admirable Irish portraits drawn by Miss Edgeworth’ (364).

element of Scottishness in his gleefully exergasic satire, ‘Essay on the Scotch Character. (*A Fragment.*)’. In the passage below, Hazlitt improvises on a range of popular ideas and images to do with Scotland’s national character, including Smollett’s famous Scotch lieutenant:

The Scotch nation are a body-corporate. They hang together like a swarm of bees. I do not know how it may be among themselves, but with us they are all united as one man. They are not stragling individuals, but embodied, formidable abstractions – determined personifications of the land they come from. A Scotchman gets on in the world, because he is not one, but many.⁶¹ He moves in himself a host, drawn up in battle-array, and armed at all points against impugners. His is a double existence – he stands for himself and his country. Every Scotchman is bond and surety for every other Scotchman... Lismahago in Smollett is a striking and laughable picture of this national propensity. He maintained with good discretion and method that oat-cakes were better than wheaten-bread, and that the air of the old town of Edinburgh was sweet and salubrious. ... In general his countrymen only plod on with the national character fastened behind them, looking around with wary eye and warning voice to those who would pick out a single article of their precious charge... (367-8)

Hazlitt’s image of the ‘Scottish host ... armed at all points’ echoes Rashleigh’s caricature of Scottish sympathies as military fortifications; the ‘swarm of bees’

⁶¹ An allusion to the phenomenon of Scottish placemen, and more generally the patronage and networking of Scots with other Scots in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

revisits the popular satirical trope of incomers as plagues of locusts;⁶² and the ‘guarantee’ binding Jeanie to her compatriots in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* becomes in Hazlitt’s essay a legalistic ‘bond and surety’. Hazlitt insinuates that his satire is blameless, the Scots having already made themselves into a national type by insisting on their national distinctiveness. Scott himself features in Hazlitt’s litany of Scottish irritants, ‘talk[ing] of the Scotch novels in all companies; and by waving the title of the author, is at liberty to repeat the subject *ad infinitum*’ (368).

In *Ivanhoe* (1820), Scott’s willingness to compromise Jewish character with anti-Semitic caricature anticipates Hazlitt’s idea that some groups are despicable because they have themselves taken on a despicable group character. Scott speculates that the Jewish populations of medieval Europe responded to prejudice and persecution by ‘adopt[ing] a national character, in which there was much, to say the least, mean and unamiable’ (47). Scott’s narrative of twelfth-century England, seeking to create exculpating historical explanations for the hatred directed at Isaac of York, makes a jarring contrast with Edgeworth’s *Harrington* (1817), which – compelled by the arguments of Edgeworth’s American correspondent Rachel Mordecai, accuses the caricatures printed in books of ‘confirming ... childish prejudice against Jewish citizens (82-3). In *Harrington*, the Jewish patriarch

⁶² See Gordon Pentland’s analysis of the prints, pamphlets, satirical travellers’ accounts, and published letters that, at key moments of Anglo-Scottish tension in the eighteenth century, imagined Scots as insectile swarms and as bringers of plagues from Egypt: “‘We Speak for the Ready’: Images of Scots in Political Prints, 1707-1832”, *The Scottish Historical Review* 90.1 (2011), p. 78. Scott ironically reverses the Egyptian plague trope in *Rob Roy*, where Andrew Fairservice complains about excisemen. He refers Frank to the ‘spoiling of Egypt’ in Exodus 12:36, where the Israelites plunder gold, silver, and clothing from the Egyptians after the ten plagues: “‘It’s a mere spoiling o’ the Egyptians ... puir auld Scotland suffers aneugh by thae blackguard lowns o’ excisemen and gaugers, that hae come down on her like locusts since the sad and sorrowfu’ Union”” (151).

Montenero purchases and destroys a history painting, *The Dentition of the Jew*, to stop this “record of cruelty and intolerance” from being engraved and thus “seen and sold in every print-shop in London” (190-1). The painting depicts the climax of the much-chronicled story of King John’s torture of a Jewish merchant, named Abraham of Bristol in some accounts. In 1210, King John extorted money from England’s wealthy Jewish families by imprisoning and demanding massive ransoms. Abraham was held in Bristol Castle, where he was tortured and one of his molars removed on each of the seven days he refused to pay the ten thousand marks demanded by the King. *Ivanhoe* frames the story of the Dentition of the Jew with an account of the Jews’ ‘passive courage’ in medieval England, making the chronicle work simultaneously as a record of the Jews’ persecution and as an illustration of the greed supposedly endemic to their racial character. Scott suggests that Europe’s Jewish populations were complicit in the prejudice against them: not only that ‘Jewish obstinacy and avarice ... seemed to increase in proportion to the persecution with which they were visited’, but also that avarice emboldened the Jews to risk further persecution ‘in consideration of the immense profits which they were enabled to realize in a country naturally so wealthy as England’ (62).⁶³ Scott’s implication is that Abraham of Bristol’s capacity to withstand torture and mutilation proved the depth of his avarice. The earnest racism of the passage is worse than anything in Hazlitt’s ludic ‘Essay on the Scotch Character’, which is patently not intended as the authoritative and instructive philosophically essay that its title suggests.

⁶³ See Judith W. Page, *Imperfect Sympathies* (2004), for a comparative analysis of the medieval anti-Semitism in *Ivanhoe* with early nineteenth-century suspicions about ‘wandering commercial Jews’ expressed in Scott’s personal writings (11-14).

The study of Scottish patriotism between *Rob Roy* and *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* confuses, if it does not entirely collapse, distinctions between character and caricature on the basis of the validity of observation and analysis. At least where professional and national characters were concerned, Scott understood caricature to have a claim on character. Thus he tolerated the propagandistic figures of the French, the Scots, and the Irish in Smollett's 1757 farce *The Reprisal: or, the Tars of Old England*.⁶⁴ Commenting on *The Reprisal* in the 1821 essay on Smollett, Scott thinks that '[t]he Scotchman and Irishman are hit off with the touch of a caricaturist of skill and spirit' (xx). An exiled Highlander turned ensign in the French service, the Latin-spouting Jacobite 'Maclaymore' is obsessed with his family connections. The Englishman Heartly and his clever servant Brush play on Maclaymore's nationally partial sympathy to secure his assistance against the French.⁶⁵ Smollett's prologue imagines the play as an 'enchanted [sic] pot'⁶⁶ in which he combines 'a variety of flavours: / A stout Hibernian, and ferocious Scot' in a 'fumet' or 'porridge' best seasoned with 'some acid juice of English tar': a recipe for British military and

⁶⁴ Written during the Seven Years' War, a period when navy grew from approximately 17,000 to 75,000 personnel, *The Reprisal* represented sailors as staunch nationalists. The play's patriotism was a timely antidote to the court-martialling of Admiral John Byng after his failure at Minorca in July 1756. For an account of sailors on the eighteenth-century stage, including David Garrick's play *Harlequin's Invasion* (1759), see Daniel James Ennis, *Enter the Press-Gang: Naval Impressment in Eighteenth-century British Literature* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002).

⁶⁵ 'I won his heart', says Brush, 'with some transient encomiums on his country. I affected to admire his plaid, as an improvement on the Roman toga... and in order to clinch my remonstrance, told him that my master's great grandmother's aunt was a Scotchwoman of the name of Mackintosh, and that Mr. Heartly piqued himself on the Highland blood that ran in his veins' (188-9).

⁶⁶ In the original text of the play, the prologue and the stage directions are printed in italics.

imperial supremacy (175).⁶⁷ Some scenes anticipate the anti-Gallic tableaux of satirical prints during the Napoleonic era, one stage direction calling for ‘plunder, in the midst of which is an English buttock of beef carried on the shoulders of four meagre Frenchmen’. Scott of course recognised this as wartime propaganda, and made the connection between *The Reprisal* and the later anti-Gallic graphic and lyric satire of the 1790s onwards:

[T]he farce or comedy of *The Reprisals* [sic], or *the Tars of Old England*, was written and acted, to animate the people against the French with whom we were then at war. In pursuance of this plan, every species of national prejudice is called up and appealed to, and the Frenchman is represented as the living representative and original of all the caricature prints and ballads against the eaters of *soupe maigre* and wearers of wooden shoes. (xx)

Scott identifies Smollett’s caricatures of the French as deliberately prejudiced and derivative even in the same paragraph where he ranks Maclaymore as a character ‘hit off with the touch of a caricaturist of skill’. Of course, we can reasonably assume that Scott would have had lowered expectations for characters in a farce, and an openly nationalist one at that. But placed alongside the passages on Scottish patriotism in Scott’s novels of 1818 (the revising of Rashleigh’s caricature in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*), Scott’s admiration for Smollett’s rendering of Maclaymore and Oclabber further suggests a tendency to compromise, rather than enforce, the distinction between caricature and character. Caricature emerges as a mode – exemplified by Kay’s caricatures, Smollett’s sea characters, and Rashleigh’s valid

⁶⁷ The prologue concludes with three lines guaranteed to rouse the cheers of the audience: ‘Her ancient splendour England shall maintain, / O’er distant realms extend her genial reign, / And rise – th’ unrival’d empress of the main’ (176).

satire of Scottish patriotism – that can be drawn even into the earnest rational accounting for historical character of the sort that accompanies Jeanie’s narrative in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*, and that so unsympathetically justifies anti-Semitic prejudice in *Ivanhoe*.

In the 1820s, Scott seems to have become increasingly committed to contextualising peculiarities of character with additional critical and historical material, frequently referring readers to the chroniclers or eyewitnesses whose memories could corroborate what might seem absurd, exaggerated, or tendentious. He revised his essay on Smollett to this end in 1827, adding a final sentence to the paragraph on Smollett’s sea characters for the essay’s republication in the third volume of Cadell’s *Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott*.⁶⁸

The naval officers of the present day, the splendour of whose actions has thrown into shadow the exploits of a thousand years, do not now affect the manners of foremast-men, and have ~~shewn~~ <shown> how admirably well their duty can be discharged without any particular attachment to tobacco or flip, or the decided preference of a check shirt over a linen one. <But these, when memory carries them back thirty or forty years, must remember many a weather-beaten veteran, whose appearance, language, and sentiments free Smollett from the charge of extravagance in his characteristic sketches of British seamen of the last century.> (201)

The ‘weather-beaten veteran’ recalls Scott’s description of the ‘war-worn’ city guard, written almost ten years ago to set the scene of eighteenth-century Edinburgh

⁶⁸ Angled brackets indicate the substitutions and additions made in the 1827 republication.

for *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*. In this sentence added to Scott's essay on Smollett in 1827, we can see his impulse to rehabilitate characters of military and imperial significance such as Lismahago and Smollett's mariners, whose peculiarities were being superseded by new forms of military exercise, dress, and manners. Scott's wish in 1827 to 'free Smollett from the charge of extravagance' may seem a trivial remark when considered on its own, but it gains significance in the context of the accretive revisions Scott made to the text of his novels for the Magnum Opus edition of the Waverley novels published between 1829 and 1833. Drawing on J. H. Alexander's edition of the Magnum Opus,⁶⁹ the final pages of this chapter analyse some of the material Scott interleaved in his novels to illustrate and corroborate his conspicuously peculiar historical characters, seeking to shed light on Scott's anxiety about the longevity of caricature in the lapse of time.

5.3 Illustrating caricature in the Magnum Opus

Illustration, in the sense of textual elucidation, contextualisation, and exemplification, was the foremost among the non-financial motivations for collecting and reissuing the Waverley novels. Scott's publisher Constable first suggested a new collected edition in March 1823.⁷⁰ He wrote to Scott suggesting that authorial illustrations to the bestselling Waverley novels could and should pre-empt the opportunistic efforts of other annotators:

⁶⁹ In the interest of keeping separate the versions of Scott's novels published at different stages of his career, the EEWN publishes the material from the Interleaved Set separately and in full as Volume XXV (Hewitt, 'General Introduction', xvi).

⁷⁰ The complex publication history of the Magnum Opus, in which Scott's publishers and trustees played important roles, is documented and analysed in Jane Millgate's *Scott's Last Edition: A Study in Publishing History* (1987).

[T]here will be attempts at illustrations and notes of all sorts, kinds and designations, full of absurdities and blunders – and in my opinion it is the Author only who could do anything at all acceptable in the way of genuine illustration – the Characters Incidents and descriptions in which all of them so fully abound have either originated in what may be termed reality or are drawn from sources but little known. (VII: 353)

Constable's emphasis on 'genuine illustration' suggests that he was aware of the nineteen-year-old Robert Chambers's publication, *Illustrations of the Author of Waverley* (1822), which Jane Millgate cites as the most notable of the volumes of annotations on Scott's novels that had already gone to press (119, n. 6).⁷¹ Scott began annotating an interleaved *Waverley* in 1825, but left off when the financial crisis of January 1826 triggered dispute over the ownership of the novels' copyrights (Millgate 5). With the copyrights secured by Scott's trustees and Robert Cadell,⁷² a partner in Constable's firm, Scott recommenced work on the interleaved set at the beginning of 1828. He developed what Millgate has called a 'symbiotic relationship between textual revision and editorial commentary' (82). The commentary was copious. Writing to Cadell on 9 November 1828, Scott justified one hundred and thirty pages of preliminary anecdotes on the history of Rob Roy MacGregor and his family: 'the subject is curious and we will meet with volumes to which it would be

⁷¹ While Chambers does not claim that Scott has personally endorsed any of his *Illustrations*, his title's prepositional phrase 'of the Author of Waverley' makes a sidelong pretence to the book's authorisation. March 1825 saw a second edition, timed to coincide with the publication in that year of Chambers's multi-volume *Traditions of Edinburgh*, advertised as 'containing Sketches of the MOST REMARKABLE PUBLIC AND ECCENTRIC CHARACTERS who flourished in Edinburgh during the last Century' (iv).

⁷² Millgate details what the Scott-Cadell scheme owed to Constable's original proposal of 1823 in *Scott's Last Edition*, pp. 3-5.

difficult to find illustrations' (*Letters* XI: 36). Scott worked through illness and a series of strokes in 1830-1, and his last contribution to the edition was the introduction to *Castle Dangerous*, which he sent from Naples in February 1832.

The provision of editorial commentary on historically peculiar and usually eccentric or comic characters is one of the most discernible trends in Scott's interleaved material for the Magnum. Millgate observes that while Scott 'implicitly restrict[ed] the rights of an editor', being 'reluctant to re-enter his fictions to change the action, [or to] modify the characterisation' (73), he did make a large number of accretive or amplifying revisions to particular characterisations. Most of Scott's revisions to characterisation for the new editions of *Waverley* and *Guy Mannering*, for example, 'concern the comic figures or eccentrics to whose portrayal Scott had paid such loving attention during the original composition of his novels' (78), such as the Baron of Bradwardine, Dominie Sampson, Paulus Pleydell, and Dandie Dinmont. Scott made numerous adjustments to these characters' idiolects, with attention to their technical vocabularies and to the ways in which orthography can suggest the phonemes and intonations of spoken language. Such revisions to characterisation, however, are relatively few compared with the added characterological material in Scott's introductions to the Magnum volumes. J. H. Alexander notes the Magnum introductions' emphasis on illustrating the early Scottish novels' 'most memorable ... most striking characters, ... marked by ... eccentricity' (I: lii-iii), and on positioning these characters as inceptive to the novels themselves:

A cursory look at what Scott acknowledges as origins in the Magnum Introductions to the first six of his novels reveals that frequently the 'ground-

work' of a novel is located in the image of a character. ... In the novels of the 1820s these [marginal or eccentric characters] are replaced by characters at the top of their society whose lives dominate the plot, for instance Richard I in *Ivanhoe*, Queen Elizabeth in *Kenilworth* (1821), and Louis XI of France in *Quentin Durward* (1823). (liii-viii)

The Magnum Introduction to *The Monastery* (1820) indicates that the positioning of central characters as incentives and foundations to composition was not Scott's only motivation for annotating eccentric characters. Scott gives over a large part of *The Monastery's* Magnum Introduction, written in 1830, to discussing the knight Sir Piercie Shafton, a relatively minor comic character who is imprisoned under suspicion of killing Halbert Glendinning. Shafton is eventually discovered to be the bastard offspring of "wild Shafton of Wilverton" by a tailor's daughter, Moll Cross-stitch (349-50); and at the end of the novel, he marries a miller's daughter, his rescuer "the fair Mysinda" (338), and departs for the Netherlands.

The Monastery was not a failure, but coming on the heels of *Ivanhoe's* critical and commercial success, its reception was disappointing. Scott's Magnum Introduction of 1830, presenting an apology for *The Monastery*, settles on Sir Piercie as one of the principal reasons for the novel's lack of popularity. He is one of the 'fools and bores' disparaged in Nassau Senior's critical survey of 1821, and in 1837 Lockhart would recall that while the supernatural figure the White Lady of Avenel was 'generally criticised as the primary blot', Sir Piercie with his 'grotesque absurdity' was 'loudly, though not quite so generally, condemned' (343). Sir Piercie was conspicuously a caricature for decades of Victorian and Edwardian readers, many of whom would encounter the character through Scott's defensive Magnum

Introduction – such that Scott came to be seen as responsible for widespread misuse of the term ‘Euphuism’.⁷³ George Lillie Craik’s *Pictorial History of England* (1841) calls Sir Piercie ‘rather a caricature than a fair sample of Euphuism’ (835). In a widely given lecture first delivered in 1870, Trollope named Scott’s comic character as the most prominent representative of Euphuism for modern readers: ‘We know it best in the caricature of Sir Piercie Shafton, “the Euphuist”’ (236).⁷⁴ The Oxford English Dictionary’s first-edition entry for *euphuism* include a prescriptive note on ‘loose uses’ of the word and its variants, as distinguished from ‘the proper sense’ of the literary diction and style derived from John Lyly’s *Euphues* (1578):

The sense in which (exc[ept] in books on literary history) the word is now commonly used, is chiefly suggested by the absurd bombast which Scott puts into the mouth of Sir Piercie Shafton (who is described as a ‘Euphuist’) in *The Monastery*: this caricature, however, bears very little resemblance to the genuine ‘euphuism’. (n. 1. a)⁷⁵

⁷³ A mannered style of speech and writing in imitation of Lyly’s *Euphues* (1580), which flourished in English court society in the late sixteenth century. Originally characterised by literary devices, rhetorical figures, classical allusions, and the impression of witty or elegant speech, ‘euphuism’ is now more loosely and pejoratively applied to affected or florid language.

⁷⁴ Trollope wrote his lecture ‘On English Prose Fiction as a Rational Amusement’ for delivery in Edinburgh. He gave it on five other occasions in Britain that year, and on several further occasions in Australia during his visit of 1871-2 (Shrimpton 323).

⁷⁵ The note currently remains in the OED Online’s entry for *euphuism*, which has not been fully updated for the third edition at time of writing.

The OED’s methods of quotation collection have resulted in Scott being its third most cited source (after Shakespeare and numerous versions of the Bible), with 17,134 excerpts from Scott comprising around 0.48% of all the quotations in the OED. Of these, 444 quotations provide first evidence of a word, and 2104 provide first evidence of a particular meaning. The most quoted novel is *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* (1010 quotations), followed by *The Fair Maid of Perth* (937), and *The Antiquary* (891). See ‘Walter Scott: Oxford English Dictionary’; Charlotte Brewer, ‘The Use of Literary Quotations in the *Oxford English Dictionary*’, *The Review of English Studies* 61.248 (2010): 93-125.

When John Dover Wilson came to write a critical biography of Lyly in 1905, he felt that Scott had been ‘sufficiently called to account’ for his ‘caricature of Lyly ... a historical *faux pas*’ (11).

Scott’s defensive tone in the passage on Sir Piercie is consistent with the rest of his Magnum Introduction to *The Monastery*, which Alexander describes as ‘an elaborate performance, mainly concerned to make the best case for a work that had been unfavourably received’ (36). He identifies a trend of ‘stressing ... typical qualities’: Sir Piercie, he argues, as well as the imaginary editor Captain Clutterbuck and the White Lady herself, are ‘justified as typical’. In the case of Clutterbuck, Scott does not want the peculiar voice of his narrator to be mistaken for a metonymic or indexical caricature⁷⁶ of a real person. He takes Robert Chambers’s *Illustrations* to task for making an ‘erroneous identification’ (46) between Clutterbuck and a Mr. O-----n of Melrose (Chambers 201), a neighbour and friend of Scott’s. The White Lady is justified both as an imitation of literary examples and as representative of local superstitions in the novel’s setting in the Scottish Borders. The character of Sir Piercie, on the other hand, requires a justification of much greater length and detail, suggesting that Scott felt he represented a less tractable, or more engrossing problem, whose peculiarities wanted the assistance of an editor.⁷⁷

When Scott turns to his Elizabethan ‘cavaliero’, he is at pains to stress that the character’s extravagance lies not in his characterisation of euphuism, but with

⁷⁶ Elsewhere in this thesis, this kind of caricature is called ‘personal’ or ‘indexical’.

⁷⁷ See Penny Fielding for Scott’s textual revisions to Sir Piercie’s dialogue and to passages dealing with his euphuism (381-2). Scott evidently decided to justify Sir Piercie’s absurdity in the Introduction to the exclusion of toning it down in the text: Fielding notes that Scott’s revisions to Sir Piercie, like his other additions to *The Monastery*, are generally ‘designed to elaborate rather than alter the sense’ (382).

euphuism himself. Lyly was ‘a clever but conceited author’, and his *Euphues* ‘a pedantic book’ (49). Scott reuses variations of the terms ‘affection’, ‘fashion’, ‘extremity’, ‘peculiarity’, ‘absurdity’, and ‘extravagance’ throughout his description of euphuism (49-52). Sir Piercie’s absurdities are ascribed to the peculiar and extravagant fashions of a bygone era, rather than to implausible characterisation on Scott’s part.⁷⁸

The author had the vanity to think that a character, whose peculiarities should turn on extravagances which were once universally fashionable, might be read in a fictitious story with a good chance of affording amusement to the existing generation, who, fond as they are of looking back on the actions and manners of their ancestors, may be also supposed to be sensible of their absurdities. He must fairly acknowledge that he was disappointed, and that the Euphuist, far from being accounted a well drawn and humorous character of the period, was condemned as unnatural and absurd. (50)

Scott had expected his readers to interpret Sir Piercie along two divergent lines: to find him absurd, instinctively and according to the standards of their own time; and at the same time to understand that the characteristics of his euphuism were not absurd in his own time. But many of Scott’s readers did not see, the way Scott did, that a caricature might hold a comic and satirically emphasised portrait in tension with a historically faithful one.

⁷⁸ This section of the Introduction is long and recursive, so I reproduce two key passages here.

Admitting the pitfalls of such historically peculiar comic figures in 1830, Scott admits that it might have been unwise for him to expect the non-antiquarian reader to divine the accuracy of a historical caricature.

The extravagances of coxcombry in manners and apparel are indeed the legitimate, and often the successful objects of satire, during the time when they exist. ... But when that folly keeps the wing no longer, it is reckoned but waste of powder to pour a discharge on what has no longer an existence; and the pieces in which such forgotten absurdities are made the subject of ridicule, fall quietly into oblivion with the follies which gave them fashion, or only continue on the scene, because they contain upon the whole a more permanent interest than that which connects them with manners and follies of a temporary character.

This, perhaps, affords a reason why the comedies of Ben Jonson, founded upon system, on what the age termed humours, ... do not now afford general pleasure, but are confined to the closet of the antiquary, whose studies have assured him that the personages of the dramatist were once, though they are now no longer, portraits of an existing nature. (51-2)

In this palpably reluctant capitulation to the non-antiquarian reader, Scott casts himself as a foolish figure, a gunman shooting at nothing. Significantly, he recognises the humours schema as a system capable only of representing typical characters that are particular to a historical span. The author cannot guarantee that his characters, no matter how 'typical' of human nature, will remain legible across centuries of cultural change. Their meanings are always temporary, and temporarily

maintained or revived by the moments in which they are read, not by any ‘universal’, ‘timeless’, or ‘human’ qualities they may be said to contain.

Scott’s meditations on caricature thus lead him to a theory of the radical relativism of character and characterisation. If the Magnum Introduction to *The Monastery* can be said to stress, as Alexander puts it, the ‘typicality’ of Sir Piercie, it puts more emphasis on his limitations as a figure local to a faraway province in history. Sir Piercie does not fail as a comic character because he is insufficiently typical of universal human nature, but rather because he is, as Scott puts it, ‘a temporary character’. Referring to the plays of Jonson⁷⁹ and to certain of Shakespeare’s characters, Scott makes the point that even the peculiar characterisation whose metonymy extends beyond a real historical individual has a hermeneutic half-life. Even the works of Shakespeare, who ‘drew his portraits for all ages’, contain characters like Sir Piercie, who are too far estranged from their original contexts to provoke recognising laughter:

With the whole sum of idolatry which affects us at [Shakespeare’s] name, the mass of readers peruse, without amusement, the characters formed on the extravagances of temporary fashion; and the Euphuist Don Armado, the pedant Holofernes, even Nym and Pistol, are read with little pleasure by the mass of the public, as portraits of which we cannot recognise the humour, because the originals no longer exist. In like manner, while the distress of Romeo and Juliet continue to interest every bosom, Mercutio, drawn as an

⁷⁹ The Magnum’s lengthy footnote explaining ‘FOPPERY OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY’, gives a lengthy excerpt from *Every Man out of his Humour*, ‘insert[ed] in evidence that the foppery of our ancestors was not inferior to that of our own time’ (II: 62).

accurate representation of the finished fine gentleman of the period, and as such received by the unanimous approbation of contemporaries, has so little to interest the present age, that, stripped of all his puns and quirks of verbal wit, he only retains his place in the scene, in virtue of his fine and fanciful speech upon dreaming, which belongs to no particular age, and as a personage whose presence is indispensable to the plot. (52)

Scott had suggested in *The Heart of Midlothian* and in his 1821 essay on Smollett that exemplary caricatures could help to preserve the human ‘remnants’ of militarised Britain. But in his 1827 revision to the essay on Smollett, and in the 1830 introduction to *The Monastery*, he is equally worried about the possibility of caricatures themselves becoming remnants, and being themselves in need of preservation. Shakespeare’s Mercutio, as a satirical depiction of a sixteenth-century gentleman, contains more historical information than the characters of Romeo and Juliet; in the lapse of time, adrift from his contemporaneity, he conveys less and less.

Scott was acquainted not only with the English comedy of humours, but also with *commedia dell’arte*, the popular theatrical form that originated in sixteenth-century Italy. His 1819 ‘Essay on the Drama’, first published as a supplement to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, describes similarities between the *commedia* and ‘the comedy of Menander ... whose characters are never varied, and some of whom are supposed to be directly descended from the ancient *Mimi* of the *Atellanian* fables’⁸⁰ (VI: 342). Yet Scott does not emphasise the universal typicality of the comic character types used by Menander, Plautus, and Terence, which Northrop Frye

⁸⁰ Comic dramas performed in ancient Greece and Rome, which have not survived in textual form.

claimed have remained ‘practically unchanged for twenty-five centuries’ (271). Scott qualifies the notion of ‘unchanging’ character types with a consideration of how the *commedia* types, arguably descended in essence from the Roman New Comedy,⁸¹ were not timelessly typical of their classes and professions. Rather, they were made particular to the regions of sixteenth-century Italy, most conspicuously by the patavinity⁸² of their speech. Scott cites the Irish antiquarian Joseph Cooper Walker on the multiregional *dramatis personae* of the *commedia*:⁸³

‘Each of these [characters],’ says Mr Walker, ‘was originally intended as a kind of characteristic representation of some particular Italian district or town. Thus *Pantalone* was a Venetian merchant; *Dottore*, a Bolognese physician; *Spaviento*, a Neapolitan braggadocio; Pullicinella, a wag of Apulia; *Giangurgolo* and *Coviello*, two clowns of Calabria; *Gelsomino*, a Roman beau; *Beltrame*, a Milanese simpleton; *Brighella*, a Ferrarese pimp; and *Arlecchino*, a blundering servant of Bergamo. Each of these personages was clad in a peculiar dress; each had his peculiar mask; and each spoke the dialect of the place he represented.’ (344-5)

⁸¹ The tradition of Greek comedy is canonically divided into three periods. ‘Old Comedy’ typically refers to the plays of Aristophanes, Hermippus, and Eupolis, written in the late fifth century BCE; ‘Middle Comedy’, to the fragments surviving of plays by Alexis, Anaxandrides, Antiphanes, Eubulus, and Timocles; and ‘New Comedy’ to the plays by Menander, Philemon, and Diphilus. The ‘Roman New Comedy’ of Plautus and Terence was heavily influenced by studying and adapting Menander.

⁸² ‘Patavinity’ is the use of local dialect terms, or more generally a ‘provincial style’ (*OED* n.). The term itself puts emphasis on the local, originally a humorous coinage referring to the linguistic provincialism of the historian Titus Livius Patavinus, a native of Padua. It is not clear whether Livy’s contemporaries referred to his pronunciation, or to his writing style. See G. L. Hendrickson, ‘A Witticism of Asinius Pollio’, *The American Journal of Philology* 36.1 (1915): 70-5.

⁸³ See Walker, *Essay on the Revival of the Drama in Italy* (Edinburgh: Mundell and Son; London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1805), p. 249.

Scott's appreciation here of historically and regionally specific caricature as an important aspect of characterisation is of course borne out by his novels.

All of his characters that can be classified as species of the pedant type, for example, are time- and place-specific.⁸⁴ These 'descendants' of *il Dottore*, whether schoolmasterly or lawyerly, participate in the tradition related by Richard Andrews, of using dialect to amplify comic character:

The old fathers in *commedia dell'arte* were characterized in the first instance simply by their strong, heavily caricatured regional dialects: Venetian in the case of Pantalone, Bolognese interlarded with Latin and outright garbled nonsense for the Dottore. These [dialects] provided a linguistic mismatch which undermined and satirized opinions and emotion which, if delivered in a more high-status language, might have been worthy of respect. (xxix)

As Andrews notes, *il Dottore*'s pedantry paid tribute to the fact that 'Bologna was the university city by definition for Italians' (xxiii). An author's choice of languages and dialects for the pedant type depended on the time and place.⁸⁵ The New-Comedy

⁸⁴ The 'Characters' of Theophrastus, which represent nine of the twenty-six vices described by Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (six 'deficiencies' and three 'excesses'), are located specifically in late-fourth-century Athens. See James Diggle, transl. and ed., *Theophrastus: Characters* (Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 8.

⁸⁵ Fashionable intellectual issues, as in Peacock's 'conversation novels', and assumptions about what constituted science or literature, also lent historicity to comic characters. That Scott was more broadly aware of the historical specificity of comic behaviour is suggested in *Guy Mannering* by Abel Sampson's bibliophilia. When the idiosyncratic dominie sets to cataloguing and archiving the book collection of a deceased bishop, we are left uncertain of the fate of the 'belles lettres, poems, plays, or memoirs', which Sampson 'tossed indignantly aside, with the implied censure of "psha," or "frivolous"' (109). Sampson's marked preference for sermons, biblical commentaries, and the classics is not peculiar to him as an individual: he is representative of an old-fashioned approach to literary scholarship, and probably will not read Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* when they come out in 1785.

intellectual could hardly have impressed his fellow citizens with Latin *per se*. And when British writers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth-century chose Scottish personages and Scottish dialects for their pedantic Latin-quoting characters (Smollett's Maclaymore, Scott's Cleishbotham, Peacock's Mr Mac Quedy), they were working with contemporary readers' perception that, in the wake of the Scottish Enlightenment, socially obtrusive learning and specious reasoning often had a Scottish accent and even a distinctively Scots physiognomy. Coleridge included 'presumptuous sciolism' in his list of vices that '*caledonianize* the human face' (*SWF* I: 336). Wordsworth judged Adam Smith 'the worst critic, David Hume excepted, that Scotland, a soil favourable to that species of weed, ever produced' (*PW* III: 71). Some sixty years earlier, Smollett's *Reprisal* had Oclabber tell Maclaymore, 'you're a man of learning Honey ... I am always happy when you are spaiking, whether I'm asleep or awake' (8). The Scottish Enlightenment produced for Britain a new *Dottore* quite different from the original Bolognese in his political and national signification. The Magnum Introduction to *The Monastery* reveals Scott's worry that caricatures, being of such limited longevity while containing information that extends the afterlives of remnants, are destined to be the preserve of historians. If nineteenth-century readers cannot relish Sir Piercie because he is too peculiarly Elizabethan, then posterity might not enjoy Scott's too peculiarly eighteenth-century characters: 'we cannot recognise the humour' when 'originals no longer exist'. More often than not, the reader encountering an old caricature is faced with a research project rather than with something self-evidently funny. In practical terms, this means that caricatures of all kinds require some scholarly apparatus to be

appreciated by readers.⁸⁶ Caricature, in opposition to the comic type, belies the notion of laughter echoing down the centuries.

Scott felt himself on firmer ground with the Magnum's 'illustrations' when he could substantiate a caricature with an anecdote from recent history. His footnote to 115.8 in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, titled 'RAID OF CALEB BALDERSTONE', notes that Caleb's unorthodox method of providing dinner for Ravenswood and his guests 'has been universally considered on the southern side of the Tweed as grotesquely and absurdly extravagant'.⁸⁷ While Scott did, according to Lockhart, agree with reviewers that with Caleb 'he might have sprinkled rather too much parsley over his chicken' (VI: 88), in the Magnum he justifies Caleb's eccentricity by reference to a distinguished source, specific though unspecified by Scott:

The author can only say, that a similar anecdote was communicated to him, with date and names of the parties, by a noble Earl lately deceased, whose remembrances of former days, both in Scotland and England, while they were

⁸⁶ One need only look to the British Museum's catalogue of satirical prints, which has been foundational to the study of British graphic satire, for an impression of the immense labour that has been involved in the process of reading caricature. Running to twelve volumes in total, the catalogue describes, explains, and cross-referencing the satirical prints. M. D. George edited the last seven volumes, covering prints produced between 1771 and 1821, in continuation of the project begun by F. G. Stephens in 1870. Stephens edited the first five volumes under the supervision of George William Reid, then Keeper of the Prints and Drawings. Reid himself produced a three-volume *Descriptive Catalogues of the Works of George Cruikshank* (1871), which has lent metadata to the Museum's digital catalogue of its satirical print holdings.

⁸⁷ Forster uses Caleb as an example of '[t]he really flat character' (93), since his characterisation does not extend beyond instances of his compulsion to hide Ravenswood's poverty: 'It is not his *idée fixe*, because there is nothing in him into which the idea can be fixed. He is the idea, and such life as he possesses radiates from its edges and from the scintillations it strikes when other elements in the novel impinge' (94).

given with a felicity and power of humour never to be forgotten ... were especially valuable from their extreme accuracy. (I: 344)

Similar illustrative anecdotes occur throughout the *Magnum* when a comic situation might reasonably invite the charge of extravagant satire.⁸⁸ In the case of the anecdote that justifies Caleb's raid on the cooper's kitchen, 'dates and names' unmentioned suggest how indexical caricature of real individuals (caricature of identities) may feed directly into writing more broadly metonymic of historical character.

5.4 Old caricatures

While Scott's critical apparatus of textual illustrations for his literary caricatures can be seen to anticipate projects like *SOPCE*, and the *BMC*, the stakes were obviously different for Scott. The non-literary forms of the satirical prints catalogued by Paton, Stephens, and George makes it straightforward to consider many (though far from all) of them as caricatures of identities. Scott's Interleaved Set judiciously frames a caricature of resemblances, which assures the reader that real identities existed, yet refuses to identify characterisations with their originals. In the wake of upstart publications – Robert Chambers's *Illustrations* claiming to reveal that some of Scott's characters were portraits of his acquaintances – it was especially important for Scott to exercise what authority he could over the reception of his characters, and

⁸⁸ See for example the scene in *Waverley* where the Chieftain of Glennaquoich intervenes in the Highlanders' dispute over a gold watch they have plundered, and which they 'took for a living animal' (243). The *Magnum* footnote offers the scene as a fictionalisation of authentic anecdotes, '[s]everal instances of Highland simplicity ... told as having happened during the insurrection' (I: 85). The *Magnum* Introduction to *Guy Mannering* promises that there is an 'exact prototype of the worthy Dominie [Sampson], ... which, for certain particular reasons, must be expressed very generally' (I: 114).

when necessary to substitute historical resemblances for historical identities. In the Magnum Introduction to *The Monastery*, Sir Piercie provided Scott with an opportunity to contemplate what it means for a literary caricature to become an old caricature. The danger is that a satirically rendered minor character, instead of being seen as a canny exaggeration of a substantially true historical character, will be received as badly written and absurd, an unnatural representation of humanity. Would the conscientious illustration of peculiarities be enough to imbricate caricature with the characters they particularised?

Ann Rigney has shown how posthumous nineteenth-century celebrations of Scott's work became increasingly suspicious of the 'immortality' of his novels, and sought to quantify and qualify claims of Scott's perpetuity (200-1). There was a growing sense for Victorian readers that the popularity of Scott's multiple bestsellers, though immense, was fleeting. Thomas Carlyle predicted in 1838 that Scott would lose his appeal as the times his novels depicted grew ever more distant:

The phraseology, fashion of arms, of dress and life, belonging to one age, is brought suddenly, with singular vividness, before the eyes of another. A great effect this; yet by the very nature of it, an altogether temporary one. Consider, brethren, shall not we too, one day be antiques, and grow to have as quaint a costume as the rest? ... What then is the result of these Waverley romances? Are they to amuse one generation only? One or more. As many generations as they can, but not all generations: ah no, when our swallow-tail has become fantastic as trunk-hose, they will cease to amuse! (336-7)⁸⁹

⁸⁹ Carlyle's review of the first six volumes of Lockhart's *Life of Sir Walter Scott* was published unsigned in the *London and Westminster Review* 28 (January 1838): 293-345.

Carlyle assumes that a great deal of Scott's appeal derives from what Lukács would later call 'a decorative caricature of historical faithfulness' (60): details of antiquated speech, manners, and dress. The sartorial metaphor captures Carlyle's impression that Scott's poetry and novels had become dependent on changing cultural tastes – rather than, as they had been, hugely influential in creating tastes and topics of interest. But Scott's novels do not simply present historical textures as self-evidently peculiar (in Carlyle's language, 'quaint' and 'fantastic'). They also contain a self-reflexive trace of Scott's positioning of caricature as a valid literary form of historical character; and in the *Magnum*, his anxiety that old caricatures would encumber the reception of his novels.

6 Conclusion

The sculptors of ancient Greece seem to have diligently observed the forms and proportions constituting the European ideas of beauty; and upon them to have formed their statues. These measures are to be met with in many drawing-books; a slight deviation from them, by the predominancy of any feature, constitutes what is called *Character*, and serves to discriminate the owner thereof, and to fix the idea of identity. This deviation or peculiarity, aggravated, forms *Caricatura*.

Francis Grose, *Rules for Drawing Caricaturas* (1788)

The best portraits are those in which there is a slight mixture of caricature; and we are not aware that the best histories are not those in which a little of the exaggeration of fictitious narrative is judiciously employed. Something is lost in accuracy; but much is gained in effect. The fainter lines are neglected: but the great characteristic features are imprinted on the mind for ever.

Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Essay on Machiavelli' (1827)

A fuller account of caricature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would give proper attention to the satirical verse of Byron, Percy Shelley, Coleridge, Southey, and Crabbe. It would touch on the impersonations of Samuel Foote (1720-77), on manifestations of caricature in *Punch*, and on caricature in the book illustrations of George Cruikshank, H. K. Browne, William Makepeace Thackeray, and John Tenniel. It would consider unpublished squibs such as William Blake's *An Island in the Moon* (1784-5). It would investigate the practice of sending hints and plans for caricature prints to professional artists. It would trace the history of amateur caricature portraiture on to Edward Lear's self-portraits, Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell's juvenile magazine *Hyde Park Gate News*, and the work of unknown artists such as Jemima Blackburn.

The research presented here came to focus on the early-nineteenth-century novel, because I found this was a form in which particular or personal caricature was unacceptable, but which self-consciously found ways to harness the stylistic, formal,

and thematic possibilities of caricature. Clumsy as phrases such as ‘caricaturistic’ and ‘caricature-approximate’ may be, I have found them useful in naming forms of caricature in the literary practice and criticism of the period. The novel was also a form adept in the depiction of other art forms for its own purposes, and so a good point of departure for a trans-medial study of caricature phenomena.

Deidre Lynch has written that literary character developed in a ‘transmedia context’, because ‘the public’s experience of the characters in their novels has been experience garnered not only in the seclusion of solitary reading but also at print-shop windows, at waxwork displays, and in shops that sell china figurines’ (11). Caricature too can be read across media, but it was not allowed to make a straightforward trans-medial move into the literary sphere. The humiliating pain and guilty pleasure of published caricatures had either to be transmuted into literary forms that repackaged the intimacy of a private aristocratic amusement into respectable entertainment for a bourgeois readership – or justified à la *Blackwood’s* as the crossing of a border already violated. Such transgressions insisted on their moral rectitude and class loyalty, claiming to patrol the limits of the literary sphere against sedition, blasphemy, egotism, self-promotion, and vulgarity.

Caricature has been appreciated in modern literary criticism as a thing incidental to the dignified forms of satire and parody. More often the term has been used as though it self-evidently referred to a conception or representation offensive in its simplicity and bias. But all this misses the fact that caricatures per se were enjoyed and deplored in equal measure by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century readers, playgoers, and art connoisseurs. Commentators at the time recognised the appeal of tendencies to caricature in fine art, and the proximity of character to

caricature. The texts surveyed here shaped a literary sphere in which writers and readers could both reaffirm the impropriety of caricature and indulge their taste for it.

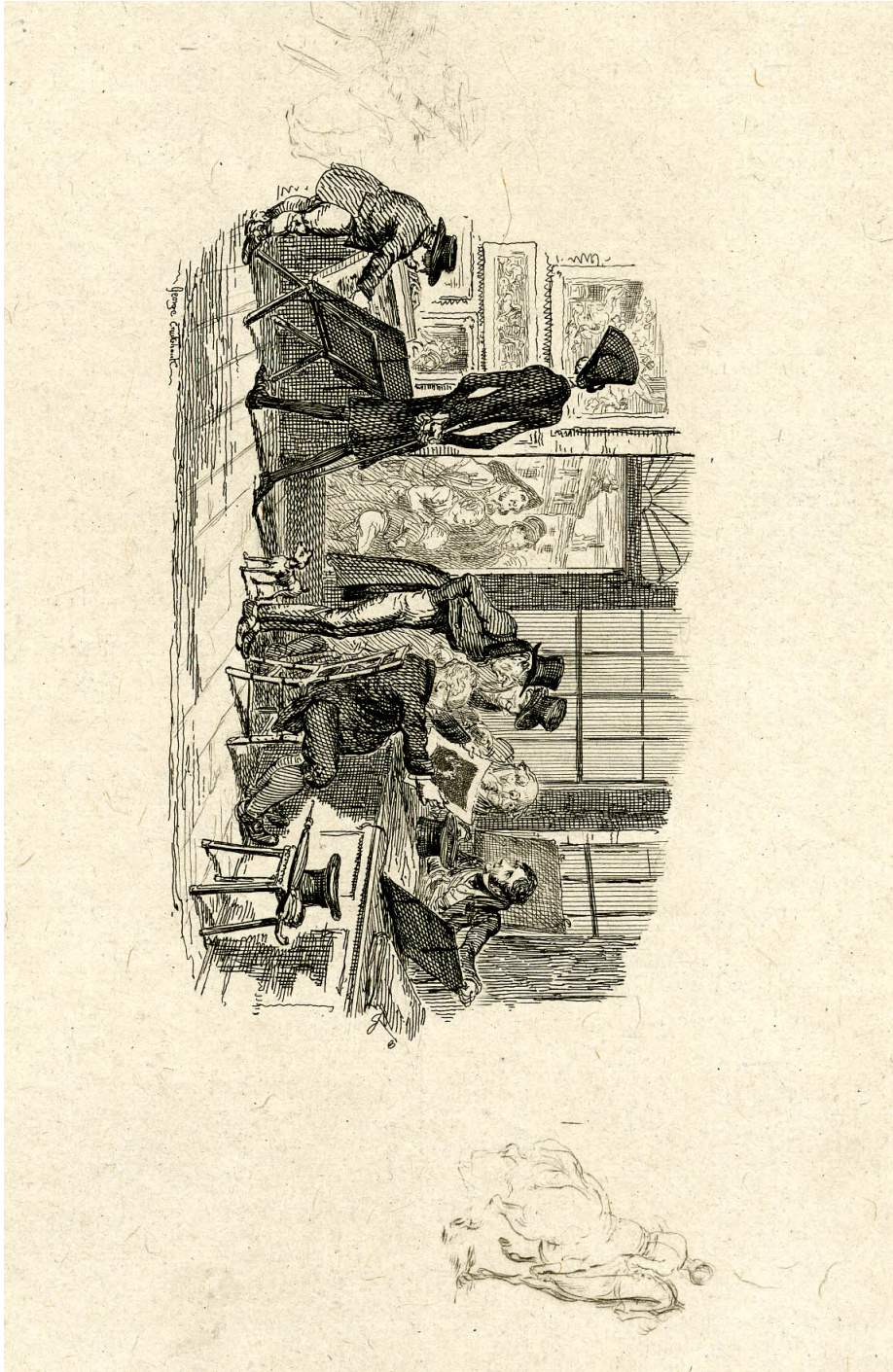


Figure 1. George Cruikshank, *Proof of Connoisseurs in a Print Shop* (1828). BM Satires 15614. © British Museum.

Chapter tail-piece in Thomas Wilson's *A Catalogue Raisonné of the Select Collection of Engravers of an Amateur* (1828), p. 264.

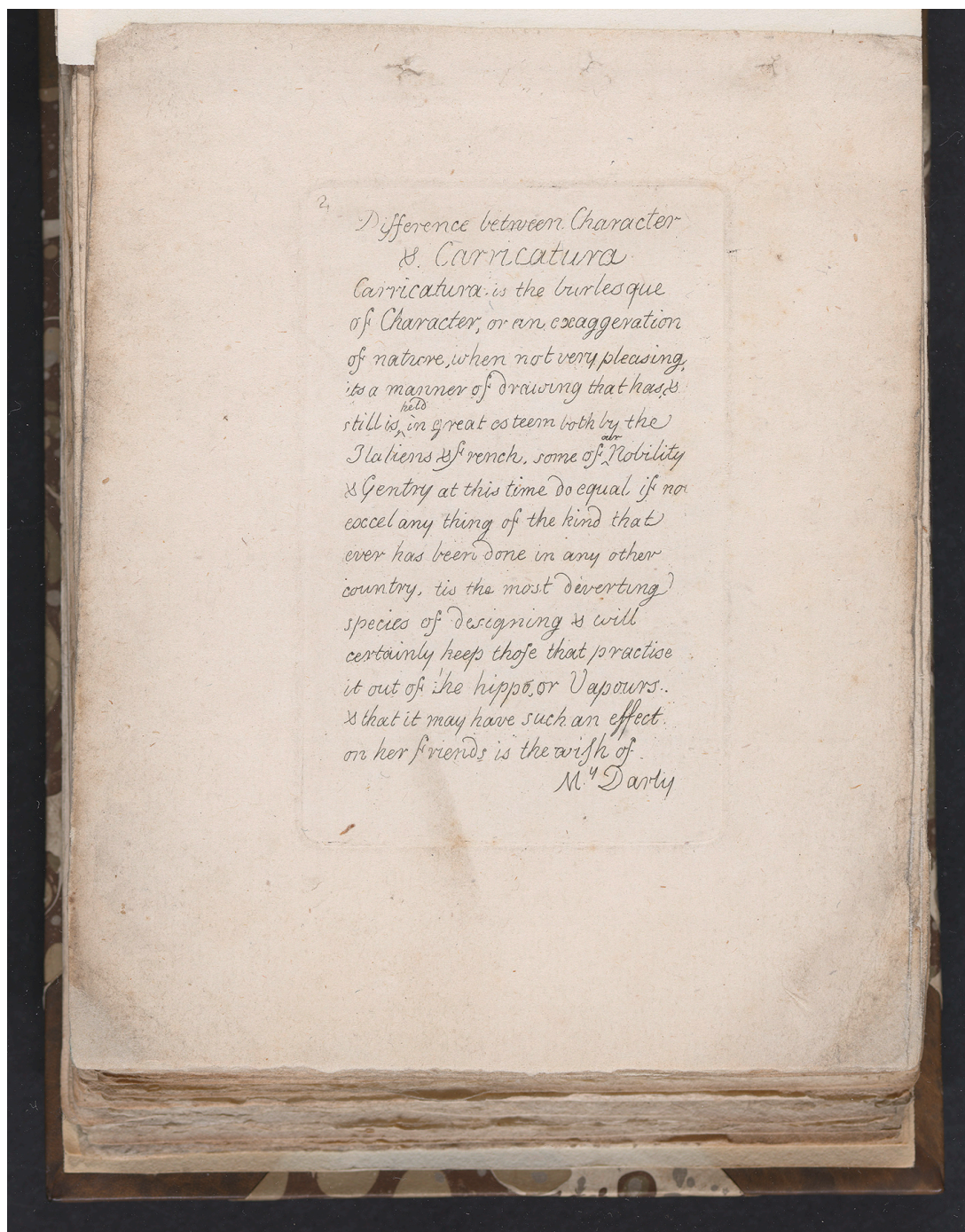


Figure 2. Mary Darly, 'Difference between character & caricatura' from *A Book of Caricaturas* (1762). © Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

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Figure 3. George Clerk, [*Caricature of a Man in a Wig – Francis Grose* (?)]. NGS D 5057.73 A. © National Galleries of Scotland.

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Figure 4. Louisa Sharpe, Juliet (1830). Illustration in *The Keepsake for 1831*.

Text below image reads 'Painted by Miss Sharpe' and 'Engraved by J. C. Edwards'.
Digitised by *Google Books*.



Figure 5. John Kay, *Shon Dow* (1784). NPG D16881. © National Portrait Gallery, London.

Note: Titled 'John Dhu (Dow, MacDonald)' in NPG catalogue.

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Acknowledgements of digital resources

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