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Shame and Masculinity in the Eighteenth Century: Politeness, Creativity, Affect

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SUMMARY

This thesis is concerned with how shame contributes to the development of hegemonic masculinities in eighteenth-century British culture. It examines a range of contemporary literature in order to understand how feelings of shame, as well as practices of shaming others, became a key, if often unspoken, aspect of attempts to define and maintain which forms of masculinity were acceptable, and which were not, in a rapidly changing cultural context. The thesis explores the effect on men of the newly commercial 'public sphere' that came to prominence at the beginning of the century, and tries to track its affective trajectory through to the end of the period. Following work on affect by Silvan Tomkins, the American psychologist, and its interpretation by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick in particular, I view shame as a social emotion which simultaneously isolates men from, and connects them to the society they inhabit. A crucial part of polite socialisation, I contend that shame is therefore a catalyst for creativity and productivity in several forms as well as failure and inertia.

The thesis is divided into two sections. The first, containing the chapters on *The Spectator*, writing about fops, and Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, is concerned with how shame helps to form the consensus around polite masculine qualities and actions. The second section, containing the chapters on Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, James Boswell's *London Journal*, and Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*, examines how this consensus is engaged with and critiqued in lived experience and its literary representations.

The contribution this thesis makes is to highlight the importance of shame and other ambivalent affects in the construction of a set of hegemonic gender identities that are less usually associated with these same affects.

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

This thesis is concerned with eighteenth-century masculinity, and feelings of shame. More explicitly, it considers, and attempts to make a case for, the integral role of feelings of shame in the construction of polite masculinity which came to be viewed as the ideal expression of masculinity during the period. To make this case, I will use affect theory to illuminate the ways in which the supposedly private nature of feeling, and the public functions performed by polite masculinity, are interdependent. In other words, polite masculinity is both formulated and consolidated by feelings of shame experienced both on the individual and collective level, and is expressed through literary texts. In the six chapters that make up the rest of the thesis, I take a different eighteenth-century text or group of texts and consider the ways in which it engages, consciously or otherwise, with shame and its attendant feelings. Some, such as *The Spectator*, help to set up idealised notions of masculine conduct that both draw on, and threaten, the power of shame in order to consolidate the value of polite masculinity. Others, such as *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, consider the importance of self-governance and the relationship of the self to other, a relationship fraught, as I will demonstrate, with necessary feelings of shame. Still others consider the various and surprising ways in which shame can motivate and limit the masculine individual in his negotiations with both society and the idealised self, as we see in the final three chapters.

The thesis is intended to make an intervention in the field of gender studies within scholarship of the eighteenth century, and in particular to consider how issues of gender relate to the history of emotions. I will say more about gender below, but first let's consider the work on emotion. There is already a rich array of critical work which attends to feeling in eighteenth-century culture. This ranges from the work of G.J. Barker-Benfield in *The Culture of Sensibility* (1992), to Markman Ellis's (1996) work on sentiment and the manifold ways in which it permeated eighteenth-century society. In *Sentiment and Sociability* (1988), John Mullan connects feeling and its expression through language and writing in the socialisation of subjects. Others include works by Patricia Meyer Spacks (1976, 2003) and Felicity Nussbaum (1989), whose close attention to reading practices and their relationship to feeling has been invaluable in shaping some of the readings in this thesis. These works have aided our understanding of how feeling was a powerful critical tool for thinking about and defining not just the self, but also society. Despite this, there is relatively little consideration in them of the significance of particular emotions and their roles in structuring sociability.

A more recent turn to emotion and the body as understood by eighteenth-century writers and thinkers has begun to consider feeling more experientially. These works have begun to consider the ways in which sentiment and feeling are embodied and shared amongst individuals. Mary Fairclough's recent book, *The Romantic Crowd* (2013), considers late-century representations of groups and how emotion could be transmitted through the bodies that are contained within them, acting as a catalyst for group action. Alex Wetmore's book *Men of Feeling in Eighteenth-Century Literature: Touching Fiction* (2013) usefully links the moral and social insights of the Scottish Enlightenment to the male-centred sentimental novels by Sterne, Smollett, Henry Brooke and Henry Mackenzie, arguing that bodies and material objects become a self-referential literary technique which destabilises literary conventions and forms. Ildiko Csengei's *Sympathy, Sensibility and the Literature of Feeling in the Eighteenth Century* (2012) is invested in the importance of other bodies and 'other-regarding passions', which underlines the ways in which emotions are never *merely* solipsistic, but always felt in regard to, and under the constant imagined presence of, other people. Her reading of sympathy in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* indeed imagines solipsism as the foundation of the sympathy Smith suggests we feel for others. 'Many puzzling instances of fellow-feeling in the period testify that the ethical foundations of sensibility were based on concepts and theories that were curiously Janus-faced' (30), Csengei informs us.

Csengei's conceptualisation of how sympathy worked in the period is made with reference to philosophical and scientific theories of causation; the two disciplines, mostly separate today, were often contiguous during the eighteenth century. Francis Hutcheson, for example, compares 'universal benevolence' to the 'principle of gravitation', which he reminds us is strongest 'when the bodys [sic] come to touch each other' (1725, cited in Csengei, 2012: 37). Touch, of course, is crucial to recent work in affect, as we see in Eve Sedgwick's *Touching Feeling* among several others. Similarly, David Hume (1740) furthers the idea of communication as key to the experience of affect, stating that the individual experiences their own emotions 'more from communication' than from their 'own natural temper and disposition'. As Csengei paraphrases: 'a person's emotions have an instant effect on the observer due to the mechanical operations of sympathetic transfusion' (41). These ideas are later developed by Adam Smith, as I explore in chapter 3. Critics like Wetmore, Csengei and Fairclough have usefully and rightly begun to emphasise the role of materiality in eighteenth-century feeling, but the body of critical work largely leaves us with feeling mediated through discourses of aesthetics or natural philosophy. This means that as critics we can still be

seduced by texts into reading them as conceptually coherent. Foregrounding affect means we can start to uncover the ways in which emotions power them as much as discourses.

It becomes clear from the above snippets of Enlightenment thinking about sociability that an interest in what we would now call affect was in fact crucial to the epistemological project of the eighteenth century. In ideas of touch, as we see with Hutcheson above, and communication, in Hume's words, it is as if the eighteenth-century philosophers and modern day affect theorists are in fact working beside each other, despite being separated as they are by a gulf of time. This investment in mapping the importance and omnipresence of feeling provides someone like myself, with an interest in understanding the eighteenth century through the lens of affect, with an intriguing starting point. While there is a wealth of excellent and useful work existing in critical studies of the eighteenth century concentrating on sentiment and sensibility as aesthetic and, latterly, material discourses, there is now a need for affect theory's prescient observations to be brought to bear on eighteenth-century texts in order to take account of powerful private and shameful feelings.

To what extent, however, can we make the claim that affect can be understood as private in a period in which affect was so often externalised? What do I mean when I use the term 'private'? Increasingly, men and women expressed emotional responses in ways that will be familiar to anyone reading sentimental literature: the fear and anxiety of Pamela; the irrepressible joys of picaresque heroes; the tears and melancholy of Harley; all are expressions of affect that are highly externalised, almost performative. I think it is here, in the idea of performance, that we can make the distinction that is necessary to be made. Performance suggests both ritualisation and idealisation. As examined by critics such as Julie Ellison (1999), the act of weeping, particularly by men, is linked to 'sympathy extended downward on the social scale and outward to imperial venues' (12), especially in sentimental literature such as *The Man of Feeling*. Here, masculinity's public significance is integral to the performance of emotion; men's tears are shed in response to, and part of an action plan to deal with, the inequalities suffered by those of lower social status than themselves. It is, in particular, a bourgeois male performance of emotion inextricably tied to the public sphere, perhaps even to the empire. Unlike sorrow, shame is a less ritualised affect. Performances of shame are few and far between in any era. Shame is not an affect that is taken on willingly; often it is rejected or referred on. Shame often remains powerfully hidden.

Weeping bourgeois men bring us to the subject of gender. The long eighteenth century was a period of great change in the conceptualisation of gender. This change was multivalent,

from changes in theories of the body to the developing capitalism and imperial power that saw great changes in social structure. In their introduction to *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, Tim Hitchcock and Michele Cohen contend that the older 'one-body' theory, which saw gender as more of a spectrum or continuum, was being replaced by a more solid sense of male and female as intrinsically separate genders (1999: 6-7). This obviously had implications for the ways in which individuals and society ideated their gender identities. As Hitchcock and Cohen observe: 'man had to be constructed in difference not just from woman but from the effeminate' (8).

There is an interesting body of work on eighteenth-century masculinity and its relationship to effeminacy, as E.J. Clery notes in her introduction to *The Feminisation Debate in Eighteenth-Century England* (2004). Clery observes that while Randolph Trumbach's work on the sodomite and molly has allowed for a more substantial place in history for the queer male, his aligning of effeminacy with homosexuality is a problematic one, eliding as it does the very different conceptualisation of effeminacy which prevailed at the time (8-9). The work of Philip Carter has gone some way to redressing this, and his analysis has informed my own work in chapter two. Carolyn Williams sums up eighteenth-century concepts of effeminacy as potentially describing: 'a man who resembles women, or who desires women. It may mean both at once: the use of *effeminacy* to denote both deficient masculinity and excessive heterosexual activity fosters a tendency to connect these phenomena' (cited in Clery: 9). With these definitions in mind, effeminacy is therefore a much more mobile concept than it is today, and can attach itself to potentially any man who fails to scrutinise himself closely enough. The ways in which the effeminate male managed to influence the concept of masculinity, and the self-perception of individual men, especially through the threat and experience of shame, is explored in chapter two. Here, it is enough to say that the idea of the undesirable masculine was at least as powerful in hegemonic gender formation as more positive ideals such as independence and reason. Hitchcock and Cohen even go on to suggest that from the evidence of rising birth rates and extramarital penetrative sex in the second half of the eighteenth century, it is possible to theorise that men were engaging in these activities 'as a way of demonstrating a "normal", and increasingly problematic, masculinity' (11). An atmosphere of social obligation based in an increased perception of innate gender separation can be traced in some of the texts analysed in this thesis, such as Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, and especially Boswell's *London Journal*.

Independence and action, along with the ritualised performance of affect, become key to the reformulation of masculinity at this time. The notion of independence carried with it political and nationalistic connotations well before the American War of Independence in the

middle decades of the century. As Matthew McCormack (2005) explains: 'Personal "independence" concerned not just freedom *per se*, but a consciousness of liberty, a libertarianism that was supposedly inherent in all true Englishmen' (2). He goes on to observe that 'personal freedom was a prominent aspect of a Georgian man's sense of his gender – as well as his social and political being – and this was commonly articulated in terms of "manly independence"' (2). Independence meant having the financial and political security to be immune from influence by others. It was promoted over and against the perceived cronyism of France in particular. Articulated this way, it became an important part of the consolidation of a sense of national character which prepared the ground for the sort of imperial masculinities that dominated the later eighteenth, nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It became increasingly important, therefore, for individual men to buy into it, for fear of being perceived, or perceiving themselves to be, undermining the national good. The independent man, as an individual, could be extrapolated out to the society in which he lived, and this goes some way to demonstrating how porous the line between the public sphere and the private individual was at this time.

Another key, and linked, facet of the developing masculine hegemony was the special place reserved for the notion of action. Although this was nothing new – the active male has been a feature of ideal masculinities since classical civilizations – the concept became especially fecund in this period because it was much more compromised by lived experience than ever before. A capitalist society required relatively few warriors, and with aristocratic influences now conflicting with an increasingly powerful bourgeoisie, men were presented with a dilemma: how to reinvent the idea of action so as to maintain its place in the locus of masculine definition. Much handwringing is carried out through the writing of the period which attests the ways in which the question of action remained a thorny issue, as we see in a letter from William Temple to his friend James Boswell:

> The constitution of human nature plainly proves that we were born to do something more than speculate, and that a state of pure reflection is unnatural to man. It is not therefore he who thinks most, but he who is most active for the good of his country and of mankind, that merits the glorious character of a man of virtue. (Quoted in Jeremy Gregory, 1999: 96)

This passage displays the effects of ideology about the ideal man in this period in microcosm. Temple uses natural philosophy to prove a 'right-ness' or fitness to the ideal of the active male. The man of action is also tied to patriotic and moral ideals, finally giving him the 'glorious character' of the 'man of virtue'. Temple and Boswell, of course, as a glance at the latter's journals or the letters they sent each other will indicate, could not easily give themselves this

title. Boswell in particular is given to melancholy and navel-gazing, and is a man of feeling rather than one of virtue or action. His long and quixotic quest to join the military is viewed by all around him as unsuitable. Boswell is a product of his time, keenly infatuated with hegemonic ideals, temperamentally unsuited to achieving them.

These hegemonic ideals derived from polite culture. Politeness, and its formation in and of the public sphere, was developed alongside and in response to the developing commercial and capitalist culture that emerged in the late seventeenth century in Western Europe. J.G.A. Pocock explains that the emergence of commercial capitalism, through the Financial Revolution, had quite sudden impacts on social structures. Tory commentators, alarmed at what was seen as a domination of politics by a new class of money men, attempted to devalue the contributions of such men by exalting the idea of the landed, impartial patriot (1985, 108-9). 'The ideal of the patriot or citizen entailed the image of a personality free and virtuous because unspecialised' (109) Pocock tells us.

The man of commerce needed representation, as did the systems he was created by, and which he engendered and represented. These included the stock market, practices such as material consumption, and groups such as the burgeoning middle classes able to gain wealth through these previously unavailable means. Through these increased resources, the man of commerce found a language and the means to express himself. What followed is succinctly summed up by Lawrence Klein: 'in the eighteenth century, those without formal political power found new institutions and media through which to exert themselves; they also found a new legitimacy in their exertions. This is what Jurgen Habermas means by the appearance of a public sphere in the eighteenth century' (1994: 13-14). Through Habermas and others, we see that early capitalism allowed for the expansion of what came to be called the middle classes, and the rise in prestige of the labour these middle classes carried out, namely trade and the professions. Not only their labour, however, but their opinions, also came to be valued highly: Habermas calls this the 'people's public use of their reason' (1989: 27).

This increase in public expression of individual reason was facilitated by the flourishing of cultural arenas such as coffee houses, and the expansion of print media consumption. These venues allowed for the discussion and formulation of politeness, as we see with the work of Addison and Steele, along with other periodical writers. Politeness was mobilised by Whig commentators in order to rebut the accusations of Tory supporters that the man of commerce had no place in a virtuous society. It also attempted to describe the relationship between public reason and private virtue, allowing as it did for the pursuit of private interest allied to

virtuous action. Within this dichotomy, one should naturally inform the other. Where this thesis makes its intervention is in this hesitant zone, in this incessant dialogue between what is external and what is internal. Shame, as explored more thoroughly below, is both internal and external – we feel shame when the outside gets in, and when the inside gets out, as it were. Shame, then, is about the unintentional shifting of affect to a place where it is visible, where it can be felt by one individual, a group or a whole nation.

The public sphere encouraged the contradictory modes of public sentiment and private, independent masculinity that help to define politeness in men of the period. This also helped to create a sense of compromised selfhood, as Michael Warner suggests in his essay 'The Mass Public and the Mass Subject': 'One reason why virtue was spoken about with such ardor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was that the discursive conventions of the public sphere had already made virtuous self-unity archaic. In the bourgeois public sphere, talk of a citizen's virtue was already partly wishful' (1992: 378). This wishful thinking – and the ways in which the adoption of a self-consciously virtuous character functioned as a form of wish fulfilment – creates a gap between public and private selves: 'what I ought to be' (public) and 'what I see myself to really be' (private). Any disconnection (or disunity) between these two positions allows for shameful feelings, which might be experienced thus:

This is what I ought to be, *but* this is what I perceive myself to be

This is how the world sees me, *but* this is how I see me

This is who they think I am, *but* this is who I am

As we see above, the first half of each phrase denotes the external perception of others, with the second half representing the internal self-perception. The linking connective '*but*' not only highlights the contradiction between these two positions, but also the fact that they are linked to and co-dependent on one another. Note that any of the three phrases above could be re-read as defiant, proud assertions of selfhood in spite of the apparently opposing view of the world. This is the clever trick that shame plays; it allows us the choice of feeling negatively or positively. The public sphere as described above also allows for choice; with the increase in resources for self-fashioning comes an increase in self-responsibility. For many bourgeois men in the eighteenth century, life now offered more choice, and more anxieties about making the correct choices, than would probably have been available to their forefathers. Capitalism offers us choices (while, of course, simultaneously closing down other forms of choice) that feudalism, for example, does not. With choice comes responsibility, and with responsibility, shame. Shame, then, has a peculiar affinity to capitalism.

There has been some focus in recent years on capitalism and its relationship to affect, particularly in the work of Lauren Berlant among many others. Nigel Thrift (2010) comments on the ways in which economies (especially capitalist ones) 'must be engaging: they must generate or scoop up affects and then aggregate and simplify them in order to produce value, and that must involve producing various mechanisms of fascination.' (290). These fascinations are hugely powerful, especially as the range of affects they engender can be both compulsive and highly contradictory. Sianne Ngai (2012) analyses various 'minor' affects such as zaniness, cuteness, and the 'merely' interesting in terms of their cultural, and capitalist, capital. Her reading of cuteness can stand as an example of this almost pathological tendency of affect to fracture: 'an aesthetic disclosing the surprisingly wide spectrum of feelings, ranging from tenderness to aggression, that we harbor toward ostensibly subordinate and unthreatening commodities' (1). In a historical culture which increasingly privileged the affects as part of its power, shame worked to both keep men within capital's gravitational pull, and encouraged them to believe in its liberating potential.

Affect and its relationship to socialisation prompts me to make a few salient points about my critical approach. My use of affect theory largely derives from the American psychologist Silvan Tomkins and the use of his work by Eve Sedgwick in particular to connect individuals and society through affect. As Moira Gatens suggests, we are led by affect to 'question commonsense [sic] notions of the privacy or "integrity" of bodies through exposing the breaches in the borders between self and other evidenced by the contagiousness of "collective" affects' (cited in Probyn, 2010: 76). Masculinity in the eighteenth century, as I argue throughout this thesis, is deeply invested in the power offered by the illusion of privacy and, by extension, independence. The private, unknowable body and emotionality of the polite male is repeatedly employed by the likes of Mr. Spectator, a character who sets the tone for much idealised masculinity which comes after; we see James Boswell struggling with his attempts to master it fifty years later. What affect theory allows us to do, then, is to interrogate the nature of polite masculinity by questioning its basic premise, that masculine bodies are safely sealed units exchanging messages with each other through polite and sanctified forms of communication. Affect, as many of its students insist, is messy – it refuses to see the divisions set up by juridical, social or capitalist conventions aimed at limiting the transfer of affect between bodies which, as Deleuze reminds us, are radically porous and 'always already wholly implicated in [their] milieu' (Gatens, cited in Probyn, 2010: 76).

Affect studies may be a relatively recent arrival, but affect itself is as old as humanity. For that reason, it is malleable enough to receive the impressions of a whole range of

disciplinary probings, while at the same time, compromising the solidity of these disciplines and moulding them into something less familiar. As Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth (2010) point out, in their long and fairly comprehensive list of fields in which affect theory can or has made some ingress:

> The seventh [field in their list] appears in critical discourses of the emotions (and histories of the emotions) that have progressively left behind the interiorized self or subjectivity (thus, following from the third item, how to think or feel in an era "post"-cogito?) to unfold regimes of expressivity that are tied much more to resonant worldings and diffusions of feeling/passions – often including atmospheres of sociality, crowd behaviors, contagions of feeling, matters of belonging…and a range of postcolonial, hybridized and migrant voices that forcefully question the privilege and stability of individualized actants possessing self-derived agency and solely private emotions within a scene or environment. How might emotion – taking on then decidedly affectual qualities – be reconsidered without requiring place-positions for subject and object as the first condition? (8)

This provides a space for thinking about affect in a historically-informed way, understanding affect as inherent in bodies and their interrelations with one another, and how these charged 'between' spaces come to define the functioning of the larger societal body. Affect is the deprivatisation of emotion; as a result, we can use it to undermine the notion of the masculine individual, often prevalent in eighteenth-century thought as private and independent, opening himself up to affective transference only when advantageous to do so. Affect theory also focuses attention on the powerful influence and necessary presence of the supposed 'free radical' – the effeminate or foppish man, as well as the failed commercial man, or the non-European - as the quotation above suggests in its references to 'hybridized, and migrant voices'.

My primary interest is, of course, masculinity in its relationship to shame. In defining shame, I am using Tomkins's theory of affect, based on the idea of nine 'innate' affects, two positive (enjoyment-joy and interest-excitement), one neutral (surprise-startle) and six negative (distress-anguish, anger-rage, fear-terror, shame-humiliation, disgust and 'dissmell' (contempt)). Several of these affects appear in pairs, indicating the weaker (first) level of the affect, and the more acute (second) level. The final three negative affects listed above appear later in an individual's development than the others (although not much later, especially in the case of shame), and are conceived to be learned through social interaction. This renders shame a fundamentally social affect, which is of course crucial given the strong emphasis on sanctioned social interaction men were expected to participate in during the period covered by this thesis.

Silvan Tomkins's definitions of shame are nuanced and expansive; for that reason I quote him at length here:

> If distress is the affect of suffering, shame is the affect of indignity, of defeat, of transgression, and of alienation. Though terror speaks to life and death and distress makes of the world a vale of tears, yet shame strikes deepest into the heart of man. While terror and distress hurt, they are wounds inflicted from outside which penetrate the smooth surface of the ego; but shame is felt as an inner torment, a sickness of the soul. It does not matter whether the humiliated one has been shamed by derisive laughter or whether he mocks himself. In either event he feels himself naked, defeated, alienated, lacking in dignity or worth. (Tomkins, in Sedgwick & Frank, eds, 1995: 133)

In this introduction to his theory of shame, Tomkins implies that it is one of the most persistently powerful of the affects. This is in part due to its many causes and its many forms of expression, but also because of its disturbing our very deepest places, what Tomkins calls 'sickness of the soul'. He goes on to demonstrate how shame is implicated in a range of feelings:

> Shyness, shame and guilt are not distinguished from each other at the level of affect, in our view. They are one and the same affect… The conscious awareness of each of these experiences is quite distinct. Yet the affect that we term shame-humiliation, which is a component of each of these total experiences, is one and the same affect. It is the differences in the other components which accompany shame in the central assembly or, in other words, which are experienced together with shame, which make the three experiences different… the total field in which shame is embedded in the central assembly of components of the nervous system at the moment will give quite different flavors to shame depending upon its intensity and upon the objects which appear to activate it and the objects which appear to reduce it. (133-4)

So even when we are not experiencing shame, feelings like guilt and even shyness can be traced back to what is nonetheless, in the hardwired affect system, an aspect of shame-humiliation. This has far-reaching consequences: 'the failure to grasp the underlying biological identity of the various phenotypes of shame has retarded our understanding of these consequences as well as the magnitude and nature of the general role of shame in human functioning' (134). This has clear implications for a study of shame's role in helping to construct the hegemonic ideal of a gender identity. Following Tomkins's lead here, my use of 'shame' as a term indicates a polymorphous affect experienced in a variety of ways that encompasses feelings which could also be termed guilt and shyness. This is not to muddy the waters but rather to indicate that these feelings are traceable back to a sense of failure of the self.

If we have been slow to understand shame's role in human functioning, then, we might ask, what are we missing by not placing shame at the centre of our thinking about

human sociability? What can we gain by considering the ways in which shame pervades and motivates the social body; what desires and ideals are given impetus and stamina by the pulsations of shame? We are used, perhaps, to considering shame in the formation and operation of female subjectivity, of non-white experience, of queerness. If we want to understand shame's reach, it is also imperative that we consider its role in the formation of that most hegemonic of identity formations, the white, heterosexual, bourgeois man.

It was through the work of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick that I first discovered Tomkins, and even then, it was what Sedgwick *did* with Tomkins's work that excited me about shame. Sedgwick saw the value of applying affect to her studies of literary texts, among other critical objects such as the body and its illnesses, spirituality, and activism. One of the most sustained examples of her use of affect as a critical tool for what she called 'nondualistic thought' is the monograph *Touching Feeling* (2003). It is Sedgwick who reminds us of Tomkins's assertion that the affects are distinct from Freudian drives; the latter have constraints imposed both by time and aim; affects, while weaker, are more promiscuous in their objects and therefore live longer. One can live, side by side, with shame for an entire lifetime. Hunger, on the other hand, is satisfied by the next meal. 'Thus, one can be excited by anger, disgusted by shame, or surprised by joy', Sedgwick points out, helping us to see that affects have no problem plugging into other affects. I could extend this, as I'm sure Sedgwick wants us to, by saying it is also possible to be excited, angered, surprised or joyful over shame, just as one could be ashamed by any of these affects too. She also points out that affects can help direct the courses our lives follow: 'my pleasure in hearing a piece of music can make me want to hear it repeatedly, listen to other music, or study to become a composer myself' (19). This leads me to state another strand of my argument in this thesis: that shame, rather than being simply isolating or stultifying, can actually be a catalyst for flourishing. We see this in the repeated social and self-reflexive labours of James Boswell and Olaudah Equiano.

It may be useful at this juncture to consider the ways in which shame, as I have outlined it above, can be seen to act in dialogue with gender in a polite text from the period. For this, I have chosen the works of Anthony Ashley Cooper, third earl of Shaftesbury. His philosophy is key to the crystallisation of the polite ideal which I interrogate throughout the thesis, something that Lawrence Klein's work has done so much to highlight. Shaftesbury's collected works, *Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times*, along with *The Spectator*, helped to theorise and consolidate ideas which proved to have huge influence on social intercourse and ideas of the self. Through a brief analysis of his work here, I hope to set up some of the debates I will carry out over the chapters that follow.

Shaftesbury: the unbearable politeness of being

Towards the end of *The Moralists*, his philosophical dialogue published as part of his collected *Characteristics* (1711), the third earl of Shaftesbury has his philosopher Theocles say the following:

> Is manly liberty, generosity, magnanimity not a good? May we not esteem as happiness that self-enjoyment which arises from a consistency of life and manners, a harmony of affections, a freedom from the reproach of shame or guilt and a consciousness of worth and merit with all mankind, our society, country and friends, all which is founded in virtue only? A mind subordinate to reason, a temper humanized and fitted to all natural affections, an exercise of friendship uninterrupted, a thorough candour, benignity and good nature, with constant security, tranquillity, equanimity, if I may use such philosophical terms – are not these ever and at all seasons good? … Or, to say more yet, can these ever be taken from us or can we ever be hindered in the enjoyment of them unless by ourselves? (334-5)

Packaged within this series of rhetorical questions are several aspects of a moral and ethical position that, Shaftesbury seems to be suggesting, must be countenanced by the eighteenth-century subject in order to live a 'good' life. I use the basic word 'good' here, because most of its synonyms – true, virtuous, moral, ethical – carry much greater semantic loads, and in the eighteenth century, this is especially the case. The passage from Shaftesbury above is littered with these loaded terms: 'consistency', 'harmony', 'worth', 'merit', 'reason' and, crucially, 'natural' are but a few. These terms, each representing qualities and ideals linked to, but occupying different adjacencies with, the word 'good' are fundamental building blocks of politeness, that mode of living in and interacting with the world that both enabled and reflected an early capitalist society such as Shaftesbury's.

As has been acknowledged by critics such as Lawrence Klein (1994), Shaftesbury himself acts as 'the philosopher of politeness' (2). Much theorising about society in the eighteenth century engages with similar ideals as those set out by Shaftesbury above. A good life, therefore is a polite one, and as the opening phrase of this quotation suggests, the building blocks of that good life were gendered. Shame makes an appearance in Shaftesbury's declaration, defined here as something that the truly happy (and polite) man eradicates from his experience. Lack of shame is presented as 'freedom'; the link here to independence, perhaps of the kind Matthew McCormack and others are referring to, is strongly implied. Shame, then, belongs to the weak, the dependent, the man who is unable to attain the kind of freedom and esteem Theocles rhapsodises over here. By concluding that the positive attributes and experiences he has listed cannot be taken by others but can only be given away

by ourselves, Shaftesbury's warning is clear: if you allow yourself to be degraded, you only have yourself to blame. To allow oneself to fail is to know shame.

Shaftesbury was sensitive to the problem posed by lived experience in his writings about politeness. Often in the *Characteristics*, he makes reference to virtue and morality being in dialogue with the society within which the individual exists:

> We have found that, to deserve the name of good or virtuous, a creature must have all his inclinations and affections, his dispositions of mind and temper, suitable and agreeing with the good of his kind or of that system in which he is included and of which he constitutes a part. To stand thus well affected and to have one's own affections right and entire not only in respect of oneself but of society and the public: this is rectitude, integrity or virtue. And to be wanting in any of these, or to have their contraries, is depravity, corruption or vice. (192)

This extract is from the early text, *Inquiry Concerning Virtue or Merit*, first published in 1699. Although it differs sharply in its formally philosophical style from the later, more politely conversational works in *Characteristics* such as *The Moralists* or the *Soliloquy*, the *Inquiry* still has virtue and its link to sociability at the heart of its concerns. Written as a rebuttal of the pessimistic conceptualisation of humanity espoused by Hobbes and those post-Civil War thinkers who could only conceive of man as 'aggressive loner, *homo lupo lupus*' in Roy Porter's summation (2003, 132), the *Inquiry* tries to posit man as inherently gregarious. For Shaftesbury, man could not survive alone; dependent on others for his understanding of himself as human, it was only right that interpersonal relations be carried out in a way that furthered the virtuous potential of both the individual and society. Ultimately, the way to ensure this potential was realised was for the individual to work on himself – the macro depended on the micro. Throughout the *Inquiry*, Shaftesbury uses vocabulary familiar to anyone reading Addison or, later, the moral philosophy of Smith:

> It will be acknowledged that a creature such as man, who from several degrees of reflection has risen to that capacity which we call reason and understanding, must in the very use of this his reasoning faculty be forced to receive reflections back into his mind of what passes in itself as well as in the affections or will – in short, of whatsoever relates to his character, conduct or behaviour amid his fellow creatures and in society. (1999, 208)

This capacity to reflect on the self is key to politeness. After all, a man who cannot conceive of himself in relation to those around him can never be truly sociable. It is through improvement of the self, ultimately, that society as a whole is improved. Shame is present in self-reflection: steering the individual away from unsociable action; encouraging the individual to behave in accordance with social values; punishing him for his previous transgressions or poor shows of

character. Shame, although not acknowledged openly by Shaftesbury here, is a key factor in the improvement of society.

We see this hinted at in *The Moralists*, when Theocles expounds on men of particular types, one man 'affecting the hero', while another is 'indefatigable in advancing himself to the character of a man of business'. Yet another 'would always be in a debauch', while another still 'looks upon all expense to be madness and thinks only wealth itself to be good'. The extensive list covers all manner of types, from the wit to the court sycophant to the country bumpkin (333). Theocles concludes that the net effect of valuing one type of thing highly above all others is 'to be a slave and consequently miserable' (334). The right way, he tells Philocles, is to follow nature:

> But finding you so sensible, as I do, of this unhappy state and its inward sores (whatever may be its outward looks), how is it possible but you must find the happiness of that other contrary state? Can you not call to mind what we resolved concerning nature? Can anything be more desirable than to follow her? Or is it not by this freedom from our passions and low interests that we are reconciled to the goodly order of the universe, that we harmonize with nature and live in friendship both with God and man?

Lack of particularity is commended as 'natural', in other words, the state of being that nature intended us to inhabit. To Shaftesbury, and commentators following Shaftesbury, much of human identification with particular causes or interests were the result of poor socialisation, of fad and fashion and the desire for admiration. The true achievement of the polite gentleman was to spurn the allure of fashion, and instead to follow nature. This must be done through an almost ascetic process of rejecting 'passions and low interests', in order that man can be 'reconciled', not only to the natural order but also God and wider society. No wonder the ideal of polite masculinity caused such a deal of difficulty and humiliation for men in the eighteenth century. Aware that they must ceaselessly examine themselves, they also knew that to become too concerned with the particularities of the self was in itself a form of indulgent exhibitionism. Polite masculinity works best, perhaps, when even the signification of naming was called into question – witness Shaftesbury's habit, and not his alone, of referring to those he admires using epithets rather than their given names. For example, Socrates becomes 'the philosophical hero' (87), while Xenophon, 'another noble disciple, whose genius was towards action and who proved afterward the greatest hero of his time' (114). The emphasis on action here, rather than what the individual thought of himself or what cause or interest he attached himself to, is a common feature of Shaftesburian politeness.

Shaftesbury's pronouncements on politeness, however, were not as self-assured as they seemed. They were the result, in fact, of intense self-reflection and personal struggle. In 1698, Shaftesbury, then an MP, withdrew from parliament and retired from public life, moving to the Netherlands for a period of the kind of self-reflection he later advocated in his writings. His unpublished notebooks, explored and discussed by Lawrence Klein (1994), give us a fascinating understanding of the ways in which shame, guilt, and negative affect in general lay at the very heart of the project of politeness: 'Wch is most shamefull [sic]? to think of Providence as those who do count themselves Naturalists; or thinking of Providence as thou dost, to be no otherwise affected as thou art?' Questions like this are frequent in the notebooks, and they are not merely rhetorical. They are, instead, evidence of a direct and serious soliloquy engaged in by Shaftesbury in order to reconcile his beliefs with the realities of his existence. 'Wch of the two is most absurd?' he continues, 'to have the faith of Epicurus and beleive in Atomes; or, being Conscious of Deity, to be no otherwise mov'd by his presence, than if He were not, or had no Inspection of our Thought or Action?' (71). Caught between faith and philosophy, Shaftesbury finds that, in Klein's words 'his life was not proving as tractable as the argumentation in the *Inquiry*…[the notebooks are] a dramatic encounter between those views and the existential reality of an individual' (71). This is one of the major battlegrounds of the self for the polite man – the intellectual ideal versus the lived reality. It provides some of the major impetus to this study of shame, as the texts discussed in the subsequent chapters are all, in one way or another, dealing with the shame of trying and failing to live the ideal.

Particularly troubling for Shaftesbury is the conundrum of sociability, that facet of politeness so key to *The Moralists* as well as *The Soliloquy*. The internal conflicts he attempts to resolve, here in messy privacy, and subsequently in seemingly reconciled public prose, are both the unslayable chimeras and the necessary engines of polite masculinity. These conflicts repeatedly prevent individual men from attaining their social ideal as well as compel them towards it. It should come as no surprise, then, that the writings of the men covered in this thesis resort repeatedly to ghostly regulatory male figures such as Mr Spectator and Shaftesbury's own Theocles. These figures, external to the self, nonetheless speak directly to the self. Smith, in *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, moves this figure into the body and mind, transferring the dialogue inside. Shaftesbury's notebooks, along with those of figures such as Boswell, transcribe this internal dialogue, inevitably dramatising and narrativising it.

As Klein points out, Shaftesbury attempted to use the notebooks as 'a sphere of control, in which the shaping influences of the outside world could be stilled, examined and

appraised' (83). 'How long is it that thou will continue thus to act two different parts, & be two different Persons?' Shaftesbury demands in the notebooks: 'Call to mind what thou art…recollect thy Self wholly within thy Self. be One intire & self same man: and wander not abroad, so as to loose sight of *the End*, but keep that constantly in view' (quoted in Klein, 83). The notebooks, then, demonstrate the incessant work involved in polite masculinity. They also indicate how central shame was to polite masculinity. Many of Shaftesbury's word choices here are telling, from the performative paranoia of 'act two different parts', to the emphasis on singularity and integrity of the phrases 'recollect thy Self wholly within thy Self', and 'intire & self same man'. The tone itself is one of shame, the shame of not being up to the task. The polite man, then, is engaged in a project of unity, but also a ruthless battle to eradicate those parts of himself which do not fit the schema. This hollow, monolithic ideal of masculine selfhood is a key concern of chapter 3, whilst its opposite, the radically porous body, is a focus of both chapter 2 and chapter 4. Both, ultimately, are kept in balance by shame; the shame of being too much of one, and not enough of the other.

Shame features prominently in a moment of climax towards the end of *The Moralists*. The narrator, Philocles, restages his philosophical conversations with his friend, Theocles, which take place during various walks in pastoral landscapes. During their final walk, Philocles, who is being inducted into polite thinking by his friend, asks how to completely convince himself of the truth of what Theocles has been so seductively outlining. Theocles responds that the key is courage in one's own tenacity and manly integrity. 'It is cowardice alone betrays us', he says. Closely linked to cowardice is shame:

> For whence can false shame be except from cowardice? To be ashamed of what one is sure can never be shameful must needs be from the want of resolution. We seek the right and wrong in things; we examine what is honourable, what shameful; and, having at last determined, we dare not stand to our own judgment and are ashamed to own that there really is a shameful and an honourable. (327)

In other words, Theocles seems to be suggesting that as long as one has the strength to see through the implications of one's reflective practices, then one has nothing to fear from the changing world of opinion. Opinion, Shaftesbury suggests through the words of Theocles, does not have 'any rule beside mere chance, which varies it as custom varies and makes now this, now that, to be thought worthy, according to the reign of fashion and the ascendant power of education' (328). In short, the polite man must be prepared to broach the negative regard of fashionable opinion and understand that any shame he may experience as a result can be dismissed as 'false shame'. Opinion will suggest that nothing can be shameful or ridiculous as

these are mere constructs, rather than springing from self-evident truths. Having denounced men of fashion for their changefulness, Theocles then considers shame and its power:

> How then shall we apply the notion [that there is indeed a shameful and a ridiculous]? For this being wrong applied cannot itself but be ridiculous. Or will he who cries shame refuse to acknowledge any in his turn? Does he not blush nor seem discountenanced on any occasion? If he does, the case is very distinct from mere grief or fear. The disorder he feels is from a sense of what is shameful and odious in itself, not of what is hurtful or dangerous in its consequences. For the greatest danger in the world can never breed shame, nor can the opinion of all the world compel us to it, where our own opinion is not a party. (328)

For Shaftesbury, shame can only truly derive from the betrayal of self. He suggests that it is possible – in fact necessary – to reject shame externally applied by the fashionable opinion of others. To accept this shame is to internalise the caprices of opinion, and thereby morally compromise the masculine self, which must, as we have seen, remain ultimately impregnable to attack and largely unknowable to others.

Each of the six chapters which make up this thesis focuses on a different text or set of texts. My intention in the thesis is to consider the role affect played in gender and subject formation. I am also keen to contribute to the study of hegemonic masculinity more generally, if for no other reason than that neglecting to bring it to the fore allows it to slink behind the mask of universalism. Enlightenment gender ideals contributed greatly to our modern notions of masculinity, and in my deliberate attempts to particularise hegemonic Western masculinity, I am trying to remind readers that there is nothing universal about what is, in the end, a highly specific gender formation that is simply well placed to present itself as the standard in relation to which all others must be conceived.

With this in mind, Part One of the thesis, containing chapters one to three, considers ideas of the masculine and shame's role in developing them. Chapter One focuses on *The Spectator* and the work done by the text to theorise a polite masculinity through a popular format, the periodical. I explore how and where shame is mentioned and where it lurks in the context of what Addison, Steele or one of their contributors is saying. I also examine the figure of Mr. Spectator, the spectral embodiment of polite masculinity, whose voice erases the particularities of each of the periodical's writers, although not completely successfully. I suggest that he is used by Addison and Steele as both a prosthesis and a shield, to carry out the work of enacting politeness at a safe remove from their own vulnerable bodies. Chapter Two looks at what happens when polite masculinity supposedly fails. I use the figure of the fop, and literature written about him, as a case study. Through works like Abel Boyer's *English Theophrastus*, Etherege's play *The Man of Mode*, and other texts, I discuss how shame and

anxiety experienced by so-called polite men is displaced onto the fop. I also point out how these texts cannot help but betray their own anxieties, and how the fop is set up as a sort of bogeyman, always with the potential to disseminate negative affect and effeminacy through a kind of contagion. The third chapter is a reconsideration of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, extending the idea of affect as contagion, and considering what this means for social cohesion. I also identify the figure of the impartial spectator as a necessary shame figure, linking him back to Mr. Spectator, through ideas of surveillance.

The second section, chapters four to six, turns to more particular ideas of masculinity and their affective make-up. I explore three texts which narrativise the experiences of one man as he interacts with the world around him. One, Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling*, is a novel, while the other two, Olaudah Equiano's *Interesting Narrative*, and James Boswell's *London Journal* relate the authors' lived experiences, albeit via literary formats. The aim of the section as a whole is to highlight the ways in which men grappled with the consequences of hegemonic masculinity, and how shame is a central component in their experiences. Harley, the hero of Mackenzie's novel, is the focus of Chapter Four, in which I examine how his responses to those he meets mark him out as a man who fails to live in the world, instead turning away from it towards his own annihilation. This makes him a romantic but unsuitable role model for a polite man, as making his way into life is the one thing he must do. I analyse a significant reader-response to *The Man of Feeling* – Robert Burns's – in order to demonstrate the ways in which this makes Harley a figure around whom shame coalesces. I trace in Mackenzie's relationship to his novel, and in his later career as a periodical editor, a swerve away from Harley's shameful example toward a more self-preserving politeness.

In the fifth chapter, I discuss Boswell's *London Journal*, a text so filled with shame that it is sometimes hard to know where to start. I have focused my discussion principally in areas of deep shame for Boswell; his Scottish heritage, and as an extension of that, his fractious relationship with his father. Here we see Boswell making direct comparisons between himself and his father, and through them, the painful ways in which nationality and selfhood, the public and private, are dealt with through feelings of shame. Like Harley, Boswell displays a deep romanticism for a lost past which prevents him from making his way in the world. The relationship of shame to masculinity is brought to the foreground by Equiano in unexpected ways, as I suggest in Chapter Six. Equiano's ability to learn the tenets of Enlightenment society – and its gender norms – brings into focus the performative and constructed nature of polite masculinity. It is the polite masculinity he demonstrates in his *Narrative*, both in what it describes and in the quality of its writing and structure, which enables him to present himself

as an equal to his white reader, giving the reader the gift of shame. This gift of shame, I argue, is the recognition of the white man's failure to see Equiano (and perhaps through him, other slaves) as the equal of himself. Equiano's *Narrative* was written not just as support to the abolitionist movement but also as an unambiguous statement of selfhood, and in that sense is unique among the texts I discuss here.

Throughout the thesis, I keep a number of questions in mind. What roles does shame have to play in the consolidation of polite masculinity in the eighteenth century? In what ways does it threaten or undermine this consolidation? How can affect theory enable us to particularise hegemonic masculinity and question its position at the centre of both public and private power relations? I hope to demonstrate that shame offers vital new ways of describing and assessing polite masculinity in eighteenth-century British literature and culture.

PART ONE

Chapter One:

Mr. Spectator: Shame, Politeness and the Disappearing Man

On Wednesday, 11th July 1711, Richard Steele published an issue of *The Spectator* with the motto *Paupertatis pudor et fuga*: 'the shame and dread of being poor'. In this issue, he describes – through the eyes of Mr. Spectator, his fictional protagonist – a social gathering peopled by well-to-do men. It is a lively, warm and open-hearted affair for all except one man in whom Mr. Spectator takes a particular interest: 'Among others I observed a Person of a tolerable good Aspect, who seemed to be more greedy of Liquor than any of the Company, and yet, methought, he did not taste it with Delight' (no. 114). His enquiries about the man lead him to discover that he is one who lives extravagantly in order to keep up appearances, but is in actual fact far sunk in debt. Mr. Spectator observes that those who wear borrowed robes can never wear them well: 'Thus he endures the Torment of Poverty, to avoid the Name of being less rich. If you go to his House you see great Plenty; but served in a Manner that shews it is all unnatural, and that the Master's Mind is not at home' (no. 114).

Should we take it that home here represents the house full of unnatural Plenty, or does it in fact mean the Master's Mind has wandered from its proper place – the confines of his body, or indeed the warmth and security of privacy, a privacy that can only be found within his own walls, although it is not reliant on them, nor protected by them? The more we wrestle with the phrase, the more we begin to realise that while the meanings are multitudinous, the message is univocal. The man who does not live as he should, is not living at all – his wine gives him no delight, his displays of wealth are merely displays, and his 'true' self is condemned forever to walk outside the walls – to be 'not at home'.

Mr. Spectator grows to his point by moving from the anecdotal to the general: 'Yet if we look round us in any County of *Great-Britain*, we shall see many in this fatal Errour, if that may be call'd by so soft a Name, which proceeds from a false Shame of appearing what they really are…' (no.114). The phrase suggests to us a shame that does not need to be felt, a shame that is bound up with misplaced social aspiration and with a performance, an

appearance, of politeness, rather than a sincere belief in it. The Master of whom Steele writes should certainly feel shame, but not for his true identity. The 'fatal Errour' of which Steele speaks is brought about by the Master's choice to adopt a persona, rather than be himself. Shame here is not to be found in veracity, but deception. Not only does Steele – through the voice of Mr. Spectator – make it clear that appearances are lethally deceptive, but also that shame can be equally mercurial – if there is a false shame, there must also be a true shame, and if so, what do these complex emotions do to men as individuals, and how do they work across society?

In my study of shame in *The Spectator*, I will employ two approaches. One will be to explore specific instances and mentions of shame in *The Spectator* in an attempt to piece together what shame meant and what it does in this period. In doing this, I of course assume that *The Spectator* is a useful and important document to help with this task. J.G.A. Pocock's work, which I explore below, has helped cement the status of this periodical and its sister journals as shapers and indicators of polite values, as I explore below. I also want to see in what ways shame in the early eighteenth century corresponds to, and differs from, the understanding of shame we receive from Silvan Tomkins and from the writings of Eve Sedgwick. The other approach I will use is more subtle. By examining the voice of Mr. Spectator himself, and how the periodical form is used to refine the voice, I hope to establish the ways in which shame comes to be vital to the wider ideologies of politeness. In this way, I will also link Addison and Steele's project to evolving concepts of masculinity – what does the polite gentleman look like, how does he think and importantly, how does he *feel*? Working out how an eighteenth-century polite man might have felt about the world can be harder than one might imagine. With the concept of writing becoming increasingly public through print culture and dissemination through arenas such as the coffee house, writing could not be relied upon to remain private and neither could it always be imagined to be private in the first place, as I shall explore in later chapters. The periodical form is always intended as public, of course, but that does not mean that it is not consumed in private, whether that be at a man's breakfast table, or within his own mind whilst hearing it read out at his coffee house or club.

The closest we can get to his thoughts here is with the aid of both empathetic critical thinking and help from work done on identity and conceptions of the self at this time carried out by Dror Wahrman. Wahrman's point, that the self was a perpetually shifting concept in the eighteenth century, and that identity was not considered the core of selfhood it later became, is helpful with this. Shifting implies doubt, in that any moveable or changeable concept must

retain space for doubt over its authenticity in order for it to develop or alter further. Shame, then, becomes a space in which doubts about the nature of the self find a home. As in this chapter's opening example from *The Spectator*, the self was prone to delusions thrust upon it from both the inside and outside, and like the gap between Mr. Spectator and his creators, there existed a space within oneself that allowed some room for manoeuvre. These doubts, sometimes felt as shameful feelings of incompetence or failure, cause the self to rattle and reshape within this crucial space. More sustained attention to the idea of shame as a spatial and embodied concept is paid in my considerations of Adam Smith in chapter 3. Here, I consider what Wahrman, quoting Sarah Knott, calls 'the socially turned self' – the idea that a person's identity was malleable and could be 'turned' to attune itself to society (Wahrman, 2004: 168), so here primarily directional as well as spatial. To return to the example with which I opened this chapter, we see Steele's awareness of the 'socially turned self'. In presenting us with a man whose shame lies both in his adoption of a false character, and in his inability to see the danger of this for himself and others, Steele asserts that one can turn too far, disintegrating entirely any sense of stability, of morality, and hence of sociability. That it is through shame that Steele makes us understand this highlights the importance of this affect to the project of making men polite.

 The Spectator is an obvious starting point for discussions of sociability in the period, and it would be tempting to treat it as just that – a prologue or introduction. One can read it as the pre-eminent guardian of politeness, an exercise in ordering the Babel of voices in the new commercial society 'devoted to demonstrating the pitfalls and possibilities of discourse in the modern Town…Within that polyphony, politeness as a norm and also goal of discourse promised order and direction in a way that cultural institutions might once have sought to do' (Klein, 12). Klein's analysis of *The Spectator* as a normalising and normative agent in early-eighteenth century society helps to demonstrate how gender norms came to be conceived and developed. The status of politeness as a goal of discourse also indicates its elusiveness; although the text itself may have been readily available through both its wide distribution and the accessibility of its style and language, the ideals it espouses were difficult to attain nonetheless. I argue that a text which both encourages and disappoints its readers shames them through their inability to embody its values.

 Klein is not the only critic to think of *The Spectator* as a dynamic world-making sourcebook. For J.G.A. Pocock (1985), *The Spectator* arrived during a period of intense social and economic upheaval, and performed a specific task. Pocock says of the contemporary

response to the "monied interest": 'This was a momentous intellectual event: there had been a sudden and traumatic discovery of capital in the form of government stock and a sudden and traumatic discovery of historical transformation as something brought about by the advent of public credit' (108). Pocock's usage of 'traumatic' should give some indication of the affective repercussions of change on such a scale. Trauma can be understood as a disordering of the senses, a feeling of the world put out of line. To counteract this sense of disorder, a new type of order needed to be formulated. Pocock observes that in *The Spectator*, 'politeness becomes an active civilizing agent' (236). Addison and Steele's project, then, performed a necessary social and political task, that of rationalising and tempering the emergent economic man. As Pocock points out, the man of commerce had not yet acquired the hyper-masculine qualities of the nineteenth-century captain of industry. Instead, he was 'seen as on the whole a feminised, even an effeminate being, still wrestling with his own passions and hysterias and with interior and exterior forces let loose by his fantasies and appetites…' (114). This unease about the effeminate man, always teetering on the verge of failure, will be picked up in chapter 2, as well as later in this chapter, where I consider one of Addison's pieces imagining the body of the fop. Suffice to say now that *The Spectator* had an important role to play in setting the bounds for acceptable polite masculinity. Despite his recognition of the anxiety inherent in social uncertainty, however, Pocock's concern with historicising the role of virtue in shaping commerce means that affective issues are generally an aside. This leaves the way clear for a closer inspection of shame and its role in the construction of polite masculinity.

Famously, for Jurgen Habermas, Addison and Steele's text is the seminal work of the bourgeois public sphere; in reading and discussing *The Spectator*, 'the public held up a mirror to itself' (1989, 43). Habermas defines the public sphere as 'private people coming together as public' in order to 'engage…in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labor' (27). He outlines how those invested in the public sphere, especially through the medium of print, connected values and theories from the 'collapsing' old order of the aristocratic and royal courts, with the mores of the bourgeoisie (30). *The Spectator* had an important role to play in this, and as Habermas suggests above, this included mirroring the society for which it was helping to set the terms. Habermas sees texts like *The Spectator* as more complicated than this in terms of the self: in his words, 'the public…did not yet come to a self-understanding through the detour of a reflection on works of philosophy and literature, art and science, but through entering itself into "literature" as an object'(43). Habermas suggests here that the eighteenth-century public attempted to understand itself via a process of fictionalisation. By creating

fictional versions of themselves, individuals were able to place these eidolons in imagined situations in order to try out different possibilities. Mr. Spectator is the prime example of this process, and we can perhaps understand *The Spectator* as a collection of experiments on the eighteenth-century self, carried out through the mode of periodical writing. Habermas highlights here the importance of putting the self centre-stage, in order to understand and critique it. This is developed, as he goes on to say, in the domestic novel later in the century, and amongst the forms of writing which are examined in the second half of this thesis such as the journal and autobiography. The self becomes a literary object in the eighteenth century, in a way which enables more strictly reflexive contemplations of the self to be carried out through the 'detours' that Habermas refers to above. Considerations of selfhood in regards to the public sphere will form a crucial part of my consideration of shame's role in constructing polite masculinity.

Dror Wahrman's influential work on eighteenth-century selfhood, *The Making of the Modern Self* (2004), puts forward the thesis that concepts of the self in this period were formulated in response to both the retreat of religion and the advance of commercialism. Growth of cities, trades and the middle classes allowed people to 'don and doff identities with impunity' (203). He suggests that it would be inaccurate to think that distinctions in social organisation disappeared, but that developments were felt, on a societal and individual level, as 'undermining the integrity and reliability of familiar categories of social distinction – a danger that was compounded by a rising sense of jitteriness' (205). What is clear from Wahrman's assessment here is that these changes caused a sense of anxiety. It is important, therefore, that we consider the vital importance of affect in shaping a perception of the lived reality of the times.

This sense of anxiety and unease transposes onto conceptions of the self. Quoting Pocock, Wahrman explains: "'Once property" – and with it everything else – "was seen to have a symbolic value, expressed in coin or credit, the foundations of personality themselves appeared imaginary or at best consensual: the individual could exist, even in his own sight, only at the fluctuating value imposed upon him by his fellows"' (208). It is this idea which is one of the most central to my thesis. The anxiety of having the value of oneself imposed by external others, incapable of knowing one fully and thereby being judged only on what was available to external assessment, is a truly overwhelming affective experience. We see this in *Spectator* 114, cited at the beginning of this chapter, in the anxiety and shame experienced by the man living beyond his means in order to maintain a false impression of himself in the sight

of others. It was these anxieties that *The Spectator* addressed. Shame, when used as a tool for shaping, delimiting and valuing, is valuable in such a project, and it is this use that shame is put to in *The Spectator*.

Klein, Pocock and Habermas all offer keen historicist readings of *The Spectator*'s role in formulating politeness, but to leave it there is to do a disservice to a dynamic example of early eighteenth-century literature. Approaching the periodical from a different critical angle reveals a challenging and idiosyncratic text. It is easy to underestimate the ways in which *The Spectator* relies upon, and uses, affect in order to carry out the regulatory role critics such as those referred to above have demonstrated it plays. Wahrman's analysis of selfhood helps us to see that shame in particular is essential to this role. For Addison and Steele, shame provides both a warning to those who might stray from the safe ground of politeness, and a path back to restoration for those who already have. It reinforces the structures necessary to an emerging commercial society by limiting ambition and discouraging idleness, almost like a series of checks and balances. It encourages a man to be reflective and mindful of morality, and it keeps him constantly linked to his peers through the bonds of empathy. I intend to demonstrate how Addison and Steele go about this in the remainder of this chapter.

Mr Spectator, shame and the male authorial voice

In the opening issue of *The Spectator*, Addison introduces us to Mr. Spectator, from the very outset speaking through him. Mr. Spectator gives us an account of his background and past, as 'I have observed, that a Reader seldom peruses a Book with Pleasure 'till he knows whether the Writer of it be a black or a fair Man, of a mild or choleric Disposition, Married or a Batchelor, with other Particulars of the like nature' (no.1, I: 1). In the very opening line, Addison hints at the trick he and Steele are playing. Acknowledging that human curiosity is always piqued with regards to identity, he has constructed a knowingly false history in order to satisfy his readers. The very fact that the history is false, however, hints at contradictions within the project of politeness. The true histories of Addison and Steele lie behind the fiction of identity that is the constructed narrative of Mr. Spectator's life, while through him they constantly reiterate the vital importance of being one's true self. This is illustrated in the example I gave from Steele at the beginning of this chapter, where he warns readers against 'a false Shame of appearing what they really are'. How, then, do we reconcile these contradictions without resorting to a charge of hypocrisy aimed at the authors? Addison and Steele's retreat behind the figure of Mr. Spectator, covering themselves with him like a

blanket, is structurally similar to shame in that the instinctive response to shameful feelings is to cover the face, hiding oneself from surveillance. Politeness, then, involves fictions of identity that require a covering of the self, or at least those aspects of the self deemed inappropriate to polite interactions with others. It seems that the false shame identified by Steele in the opening anecdote is at times also a necessary shame – hiding your 'true' self can invoke and be motivated by different experiences of shame.

For Anthony Pollock, Mr. Spectator's reluctance to involve himself in the toil of the world sets an example to readers. His spectatorial mode becomes the ideal; it in fact becomes a form of politeness in praxis. Pollock states: 'As readers' surrogate participants in the disorderly public sphere, Addison and Steele's personae characteristically do not intervene, they withdraw. Mr. Spectator repeatedly removes himself from urban scenes that threaten to overwhelm him' (2007: 708). Fears of being overwhelmed, of being smothered and invaded against one's will, is the ultimate experience of loss of sovereignty. Withdrawal, then, helps to maintain the integrity of the self. This is underscored for us from the beginning, where Mr. Spectator asserts: 'I live in the World, rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species…' (no.1, I: 4). Mr. Spectator's presentation of himself as an alien, rather 'than as one of the Species' both sets himself apart from his readers and allows for his ascent as an exemplary man of politeness. His status as exemplar lends a certain cache to his creators, whilst simultaneously protecting them from being overwhelmed. He is a shield against shame, because if one cannot be seen, one cannot be shamed. It is for this reason that the body's instinctive response to feelings of shame is to cover or shield the face, to prevent any further contact with the world whence the shame has arrived. Of course, this is not effective, as the ultimate spectator lies within, as I explore particularly in Chapter 3. However, leaving aside the many ways in which it can be consumed and internalised privately, we can say that the periodical essay, of which *The Spectator* is largely composed, addresses itself to the public sphere and so it is with external surveillance that Addison and Steele are largely concerned with regards their own authorship.

Print culture, and the periodical essay form, enables the writer to 'speak' uninterrupted and unchallenged. For Addison and Steele, then, print provides the ideal environment in which to both discuss and enact politeness. It is a space of withdrawal, from where one can be engaged with but not implicated in (and therefore overwhelmed by) the hurly-burly. It also usefully lionises the growing and still young technology of mass print culture. Scott Black observes that the essay form which composes the majority of entries in

The Spectator 'assumes a relationship between reader and writer structured by an *ethos* of friendship, but this does not necessarily require the *event* of friendship. Politeness is an abstraction of the dynamic of friendship, a way to treat strangers as friends...' (1999, 30). Here, again, we find abstraction, this time from friendship as opposed to the authors' vulnerable bodies. If we understand friendships as affective relationships between bodies, however, then the two abstractions can be placed beside each other to enable us to see the difficulties politeness was intended to overcome. Where bodies and affective relations are messy and unpredictable, politeness posited a method of social engagement that did not rely too heavily on the volatile dynamics of empathetic entanglement with one's fellow man. Politeness, then, is a method of sanitising affect, ensuring it remains useful but attempting to redirect its considerable power into regulating social relations. It is also a further abstraction from immediate affective involvement, meaning that the very act of being polite mitigates against exposure to affect and its traumas, including shame. Conducting oneself in a social context via the consensual rules and sanctioned behaviours of that context reduces the chances of experiencing affect, and if one does, then it at least provides a method of regulating its impact and lessening its visibility to anyone watching. This social regulation also serves to facilitate capitalist activities such as trade and business more generally – not, I would suggest, a by-product of this process but in fact vital to commercialism's success, as the work of Adam Smith demonstrates.

If Addison and Steele are so intent on covering their own bodies, then what should we make of the body of Mr. Spectator? His is a body that is clearly 'present' in his world – he is named, given friends and a personal history, albeit one framed around his own non-participation. However, readers of *The Spectator* cannot see him or touch him, neither can we hear him, and he alludes frequently to his silence in company and his disinclination to be looked at by strangers, as though in some vital way he is, or wishes to be, untouchable even in the world in which he does exist. Manushag N. Powell (2012) suggests that this is a strategic decision on the part of his creators: '[this] might appear as a move toward neutral passivity, but it was also a power play, for Mr. Spectator refuses the reciprocity of the gaze with his readers...' (257). The mechanisms of print allow Mr. Spectator to communicate without being a subject of his own practices of observation. Powell claims that: 'this avoidance is presented as a choice made by a sensible, physically normal individual...' (258). She conceives of gazing in the terms of the eighteenth-century periodical as both synesthetic and penetrative: 'to be heard is to make vibrate; to be seen reciprocally is to be touched, penetrated...or even...cannibalized' (Powell, 2012: 260). Pointing us to an issue of *The Spectator* in which

Addison discusses sight, Powell notes that: 'his brand of "neutral" spectation is a position that brings its own rewards, and even intimacies' (260). The issue in question, no 411 (21st June 1712), considers sight as 'a more delicate and diffusive Kind of Touch, that spreads it self over an infinite Multitude of Bodies' (III: 435-6). There is something languid and even sensual about Addison's conception of sight here that suggests the act of gazing is fraught with desire, spreading itself over and overwhelming 'Multitudes' of bodies promiscuously. The invocation of a form of touch that we cannot feel is redolent of both unwanted invasion and excited curiosity. No wonder the gaze was a threat to the sovereignty Addison and Steele attempt to shore up by using Mr. Spectator; no wonder Mr. Spectator himself is so unwilling to be looked at.

Gazing is an act of possession and domination, a form of desiring, and desire walks hand-in-hand with shame. Think of the common reaction to being gazed upon; we feel acutely self-conscious and wonder what about our particularity has drawn the spectatorial gaze of another. Are we being judged, desired, loathed? Time and again we are reminded that in being seen, in the many different ways in which that can occur, we open ourselves up to doubt and to shame. To avoid becoming an object, and therefore prone to the shame of being seen, the authors of *The Spectator* choose to retreat behind the gauzy cover of an eidolon – a spirit-image of a person. Powell refers to *Spectator* 12, where the eidolon watches young women reading ghost stories aloud: 'He longs to be a ghost, but only a friendly, even a holy one. To be not-quite-alive is, for him, to engage positively with "Society"' (2012: 261). The ghost is inviolable as he cannot be seen or shamed. This reveals in turn the contemporary male reader's own susceptibility to being shamed, as his body is undeniably material. Mr. Spectator performs an act that the man reading his missives – the contemporary reader of *The Spectator* - cannot follow, and in disappearing he points to the melancholy truth of politeness: that it is only truly attainable if one can write oneself out of existence, much like Harley, the hero of *The Man of Feeling*, and a focus of Chapter Four.

Engaging positively using a negative, or non-corporeal, body is what makes the project of politeness as enacted in *The Spectator* so effective. Two men with bodies retreat behind an eidolon which has no material body in the world of his creators. These actions set them at several degrees of removal from their readers, meaning that when the voice in *The Spectator* speaks, it appears to come from everywhere and nowhere. It is this non-directional origin that makes the male authorial voice of Addison/Steele/Mr. Spectator authoritative. The sound which fills all space without emanating from a locatable source is an aspect of hegemony. By

the time *The Spectator* completed its run, it had helped to consolidate and even make hegemonic a set of behavioural and identity practices that provided both a framework and a site of struggle for men across the eighteenth century.

If Mr. Spectator is a prophylaxis against shame for his creators, then what is his function for his contemporary readers? The repercussions of this text can be measured when you consider what came after in terms of how eighteenth-century literature attempted to construct ideas of the self. Mr. Spectator – an observer and commentator – functions for Addison and Steele as what both Powell and Pollock have referred to as an eidolon. The eidolon is a figure from Greek mythology that can be thought of as a double or spirit, often closely resembling a mortal, living or dead. It is an idealised form often used to promote or embody particular values; in Mr. Spectator's case, this is politeness. For Powell, the periodical eidolon as he appears in texts such as *The Spectator* foreshadows the 'middle class authorial "I"' of the eighteenth-century novel. What is really helpful is her insistence on the eidolon's spectatorial powers, and in the idea that spectatorship is never merely visual but thoroughly embodied:

> …to observe empirically, even to do so from the position of a satirizing authorial spectator, involves some acknowledgment of the human body's chaotic multisensory experience, and the need to acknowledge the body as materially gendered. Periodical writing can inscribe empirical observation as a peculiarly sensual affair. (255-6)

This reminds us that our acts of observation draw upon and affect our whole range of experiences, and inescapably draw attention to our own particularity, for instance our gender. If we understand shame as an emotion which responds physically to spectatorship (and surely the blush is an example of this), then it becomes clear why this particular affect is so well-suited to spectatorial writing. The spectre is a spectator, and in situating Mr. Spectator at the intersection of public and private, Addison and Steele make him an eidolon uniquely able to remain untouchable whilst simultaneously touching his readers to the quick.

Making use of this idea of Mr Spectator as an eidolon it is possible to trace the idiosyncrasies in his character that I believe draw attention to the constructed nature of the authorial 'I' he represents, and ultimately make the link to the ways in which shame and politeness operate within the text itself.

The Spectator is a voluble and loquacious work, but it is also, of course, a silence. Whilst the men behind Mr. Spectator speak through him, there is also a gap, a space through

which their voices must pass in order to do this. In travelling across that space, the voices mutate; they lose some of the markers that designate them as Addison's or Steele's, the hints that these words originated in the gendered bodies of men of flesh and blood. The distorting space is not a by-product of the periodical style, however. It is both deliberate and essential to the success of the project, and is a trick used to great effect. The gap is, crucially, where shame lives. The space between writer and speaker is one that allows Powell's (male) authorial 'I' to form and develop; this voice is a powerful weapon and its tones and accents become familiar to its audience as a schoolmaster's. The male authorial 'I' is the voice which cinches together the authorial and authoritative and the voice is at once male and genderless; male insofar as maleness is read as synonymous with patriarchy and genderless in that patriarchy and, as a corollary, maleness, is read so often as universal. In fact, it is easy to read *The Spectator* as universal, and entirely overlook that it is written by men, using a male eidolon as its protagonist. The body, however, is inescapably gendered, and where it is prone to desire and decay, the authorial voice is seemingly impervious to both, because it is abstracted from the body.

In successfully employing the male authorial voice, however, Addison and Steele inevitably tie up their own tongues, sacrificing the timbre and texture of their particularised male voices for the abstracted authority of 'the universal voice'. While an evacuation of particularity gives this voice an indefinability which renders it less easy to question (this is, of course, exactly how privilege works), it should also be noted that this very same move towards universalism cannot be made without sacrifices. What we learn from this is that the male (read: universal) authorial voice, like patriarchy, can erase subjectivity as it imbues the voice with power. As I have already suggested, avoiding the particular is a strategy that can help avoid shame, but this carries the risk of lessening shame's beneficial impact; the ability to empathise and reform one's character are key aspects of a successfully polite man, but in order to feel empathy one needs a recourse to painful affect, including shame. It seems of great importance, then, to retain elements of particularity in order to be truly polite, and for that, one cannot in practice enact the forms of retirement that we see in both Mr. Spectator and his creators.

The invention of Mr. Spectator is a key element of the project: as an eidolon, he at once removes the egoistic link to his creators, while also allowing the readers a body in which to invest and interact. Mr. Spectator's body allows the voices of Addison and Steele to become abstracted. It allows a polite form of liberty, a liberal distancing or stepping-back, what

Michael Warner (1992), borrowing from Lauren Berlant, calls a 'prosthetic character' (381). Warner argues that without the anonymity made possible by a prosthesis, appearing in the medium of print, *The Spectator* would not have been conceivable, and the power it came to wield would have been decidedly weaker. 'The ambiguous relation between Spectator and writer, Steele says, liberates him' (380-1), Warner observes. This concept is similar to that of Powell and Pollock's eidolon, but while the eidolon image emphasises the erasure of masculine particularity, here the term borrowed from Berlant highlights the utility of Mr. Spectator. To talk about *The Spectator* is to constantly talk about two men – the character and his author – speaking and writing and spectating in tandem with each other. It is to try to describe and understand a relationship that is formed of two bodies conjoined in print, one corporeal, and the other constructed, with the former using the prosthesis as a shield from shame.

In 'The Mass Public and the Mass Subject', Michael Warner describes a moment in which we, as individuals, 'adopt the attitude of the public subject, marking to ourselves its nonidentity with ourselves' (1992: 377). Simultaneously, we are both subjective individuals as well as the subjective public. Adopting the attitude of the public subject involves an affective shift. We are, in this moment, absorbed into an imagined body known as 'the public' we are thus in intimate contact with unidentifiable, indefinably numerous others. The community of consumption that mass print culture allowed for meant that even if one spent the majority of one's time behind a shield of one's own making – as of course Mr. Spectator does – one was still strongly aware of the ideas and opinions of others. This was a virtual community with very real effects on its members. It became increasingly important to individuals at this time what those they had never met thought and felt about given topics.

According to Eve Sedgwick, this contact between bodies allows for the transmission of affect: as she describes it, 'shame is both peculiarly contagious and peculiarly individuating' (2003: 36). This contact is a breeding ground for shame, because when individuals *touch* in some way affect negotiates the notional divides of separate subjectivities. As we have already seen, Addison at least was keenly aware of the close relationship between touch and the spectatorial gaze. Warner identifies this awareness as coming via 'an understanding of print' (379). Addison and Steele developed a 'structuring metalanguage' (380) as Warner calls it, which encouraged private individuals to recognise themselves as public subjects, as members of *the public* via their involvement in print culture.

Print, then, enables us to traverse the gaps between public and private. It is no wonder that shame becomes so crucial to the refinement of politeness. Hiding as it does in the liminal spaces between self and other, shame helps to both define identity and to deconstruct it; it is as Sedgwick says both 'contagious' and 'individuating'. In exploiting this, the writers made their voices both authorial and authoritative. The results of this abstraction can be seen in the figure of Mr. Spectator. As Steele states through his prosthesis: 'It is much more difficult to converse with the World in a real than a personated Character. That might pass for Humour, in the *Spectator*, which would look like Arrogance in a Writer who sets his Name to his Work' (no. 555, IV: 491). As Warner observes, the very invention of Mr. Spectator means that the author and the speaker are 'no longer self-identical' (381). This allows for 'an identification with a disembodied public subject that he [the reader] can imagine as parallel to his private person' (381). As Warner says of Steele: 'it allows him to think of his public discourse as a routine form of self-abstraction…' (Warner, 1992: 381). This self-abstraction enables Addison and Steele to say things they could never say were they communicating with their own individual, nameable bodies.

It is with the threat of the authors' bodies becoming visible that we return to shame. The rhetoric of the public relies on the fallacy that all have equal stake in it, but as Michael Warner reminds us: 'the subject who could master this rhetoric in the bourgeois public sphere was implicitly, even explicitly, white, male, literate and propertied' (382). This unspoken truth becomes undeniable when one considers the exclusionary practices that exist in *The Spectator* despite its apparent inclusivity. The poor are barely considered, let alone addressed, and while women do merit instances of direct address, they are more often spoken about rather than to. Therefore, Addison and Steele, marked as white, male, literate and propertied bodies, are jarring reminders of this double standard. Meanwhile, the shadow of the feminine is considerable in much male-authored literature of the period, especially given the criticism levelled by detractors of politeness, who considered the process of making a man polite almost synonymous with making him effeminate, as I shall consider in the next chapter.

The privilege of *The Spectator*'s male authorial voice is its abstraction from a gendered – and therefore marked – body. As with any privilege, it is jealously protected, and as Warner says, 'to acknowledge their own positivity would be to surrender their privilege, as for example to acknowledge the objectivity of the male body would be feminizing' (384). The very creation of Mr. Spectator is an attempt not just to distance bodies from voices, but also to cover up the shame this act implies. Warner states that 'Self-abstraction from male bodies confirms

masculinity' (383). However, he also points out that these same privileged subjects thence '…found themselves in a relation of bad faith to their own positivity' (384). This is the ultimate trap of universalising identity, and one peculiarly suited to the privileged male subject; in giving up so much of his own positivity, he remains permanently cut off from it. Mr. Spectator seems to reassert the symbolic significance of the universal, the male authorial "I" in polite culture, and yet because of his ghostliness, he cannot help but confirm the loss. It is in this sense that we can see Mr Spectator as representative of the simultaneous success and failure of polite masculinity.

Shame in Practice: Addison and Steele's uses of affect in The Spectator

What are the ways in which shame acts explicitly in *The Spectator*, however? How do Addison and Steele go about defining and using it in the project of politeness? A starting point is an early issue of the periodical that highlights both the values of the polite gentleman and what the consequences are for those who stray. *The Spectator* of Thursday, 23rd August 1711 is one written by Steele. It takes as its subject Men of Wit and Pleasure. The piece is a meditation on the affective consequences of 'Wenching, Liveliness and Vice'. Steele's argument is made not from a censorious angle of emotional correction carried out by others, but from a nuanced and intuitive analysis of personal, private shame. Starting with general comments on how Men of Wit and Pleasure both shock reason and tickle the imagination, and how these men are 'in every Body's Mouth that spends any Time in Conversation' (no. 151, II: 93), his writing then takes a different turn:

> Pleasure, when it is a Man's chief Purpose, disappoints it self; and the constant Application to it palls the Faculty of enjoying it, tho' it leaves the Sense of our Inability for that we wish, with a Disrelish of every thing else. Thus the intermediate Seasons of the Man of Pleasure are more heavy than one would impose upon the vilest Criminal. (94)

What is instantly striking about this passage is the level of empathy. Far from condemning the Man of Pleasure, Steele uses the self-proclaimed non-partisan voice of Mr. Spectator to place his reader adjacent to the suffering coxcomb. This sensation of walking side-by-side with a man one is supposed to condemn is heightened as we are presented with the sight of him at his darkest:

> Take him when he is awaked too soon after a Debauch, or disappointed in following a worthless Woman without Truth, and there is no Man living whose Being is such a

Weight or Vexation as his is. He is an utter Stranger to the pleasing Reflections in the Evening of a well-spent Day, or the Gladness of Heart or Quickness of Spirit in the Morning after profound Sleep or indolent Slumbers. He is not to be at Ease any longer than he can keep Reason and good Sense without his Curtains; otherwise he will be haunted with the Reflection, that he could not believe such a one the Woman that upon Trial he found her. What has he got by his Conquest, but to think meanly of her for whom a Day or two before he had the highest Honour? and of himself for, perhaps, wronging the Man whom of all Men living he himself would least willingly have injured? (94)

The affective proximity we feel here to the man supposedly being decried is striking. We are with him at his most vulnerable moment, when he awakes beleaguered by a hangover and regretting last night's behaviour. Steele seems to be appealing here to the experiences of his contemporary readers, urban men of polite society. Steele's prose leaves open the possibility that his reader may well see himself in the description, and feel shame as he begins to wonder whether or not the piece condemns him.

It is here that we see the transmission of affect occurring within the virtual community of print culture; the moment at which Michael Warner's public subject comes sharply into view. The reader is invited to identify with the text, and in doing so is brought within touching distance of him, via whichever channel the individual reader can best access. As with almost all prose in *The Spectator*, the phrasing here allows space for readers to orientate themselves along a multitude of axes; never telling its reader what to think, nor condemning in any crude or simplistic way. We are not given the opportunity to feel superior to the Man of Pleasure. The chosen method is to place the reader close enough to touch him, ensuring we cannot become too prurient, nor imagine ourselves to be above reproach. This textual affective contact facilitates the transmission of a very private shame that nonetheless makes us feel connected with others. In fact, the effect is very much that of novelistic fiction. Mr. Spectator, in his capacity as eidolon and authorial prosthesis, is a forerunner of the subjective, first person narratives that would come to dominate published creative works as the century wore on. Steele, through Mr. Spectator, appeals here directly via affect. From shame and its interaction with social expectations, a social identity is born: that of the polite man, as I outlined above.

Of course, there is also mocking humour in the passage above. This is especially notable in the echo we hear of the Man of Pleasure's voice in the line '…he could not believe such a one the Woman that upon Trial he found her'. Steele underscores this comedy, however, by reiterating the tone of pathos; drawing attention back to the self-harm the Man

has inflicted when he meditates on how he has '…wrong[ed] the Man whom of all living he himself would least willingly have injured'. Comedy and pathos are subsequently joined by allegory, when Steele introduces the figure of Pleasure as a seductive and malignant female, 'He looks at Pleasure as she approaches, and comes to him with the Recommendation of warm Wishes, gay Looks, and graceful Motion; but he does not observe how she leaves his Presence with Disorder, Impotence, down-cast Shame, and conscious Imperfection' (94). The implication of a sexual relationship between the Man of Pleasure, and Pleasure herself, is implied by the gap left between her coming and going. Endeavouring to keep his writing polite, Steele omits details of the debaucheries he refers obliquely to earlier on. This gap is a crucial technique, allowing the reader space to fill it with his own imagination – and potentially feel shame at his having done so. However, in this brotherhood of shame lies the means to restore oneself to politeness. The characterization of the most libertine member of The Spectator Club, Will Honeycomb, shows that the Man of Pleasure is not an outcast or unwelcome member of society; indeed, Honeycomb's eventual rehabilitation is proof that all one needs to do is reflect on one's failings and experience shame at the thought of them, in order to start the process of becoming truly polite. Shame can in fact be the very beginning of politeness. This rehabilitation is the overarching project of *The Spectator*.

As I have suggested, however, this does not mean that the voice of Mr. Spectator is consistent throughout. When we turn to Addison, his method of censuring the Man of Pleasure involves satire rather than empathy. The purpose of this is not to evoke shame as a consequence of ill-planned action, but rather the inevitable results of a lack of shame – shamelessness. On Tuesday, 15th January 1712, he produced an issue in which Mr. Spectator recounts a dream, during which he observes the dissection of a beau's head. Dreams and allegory are vital to Addison in particular; although common in the Augustan literary period, they become of particular use to Addison here because they are yet another distancing tactic. This example relies on the suggestion that dreams are not controlled by their dreamer, but instead reveal the incontrovertible truth of a matter otherwise complicated by custom or habit in the waking world. Mr. Spectator finds himself gazing upon a brain 'stuffed with invisible Billetdoux, Love-Letters, pricked Dances and other Trumpery of the same Nature' (no. 275, II: 571). The organ is filled entirely with the symbols of excess, including snuff and sonnets. The parts of the beau's brain are partly composed of liquids such as quicksilver for venereal disease, orange water as scent and 'Froth'. In abundance, however, we find fabric and textiles, including 'Ribbons, Lace and Embroidery, wrought together in a most curious Piece of

Network' (571). A spongy substance meanwhile, is discovered to be composed of 'Nonsense' (572).

Addison's piece is fascinating for several reasons. Firstly, its appropriation of the language of science brings into sharp relief the inadequacies of the beau. Mr. Spectator and his fellows are men of science; they inspect, probe and discover truth. Meanwhile the beau is not just led astray by excess; by nightmarish mutation, he is composed of it. Becoming an object of inspection and invasion by other men denaturalizes – or even unmans - him even further; he is displayed, sliced open, poked at, sniffed at and preserved by a team of men who clearly believe themselves to be his moral superiors. This is highlighted by Addison's reference to the unused 'Elevator' muscle, apparently needed to 'turn the Eye towards Heaven' (572-3).

The piece is also interesting because of the sense of touch, of contact, implied in Steele's piece and made literal in Addison's, which engages the reader. Here we see the kind of thinking that allows Silvan Tomkins, over two hundred years later, to link emotion to the material body through the concept of affect. For Steele, the suggestion of being adjacent to the Man of Pleasure allows us to empathise and learn by his example. Addison takes proximity to disturbing extremes – we are not just touching the Man of Pleasure, we are inside him. The shame of this is immediately apparent. The male body, which is so vehemently denied by the abstracted male authorial voice, returns here to haunt the reader, to haunt Mr. Spectator, and to haunt Addison himself. Addison's choice of satire to describe this dream cannot elide entirely its nightmarish qualities. Most unsettling of all is the assertion that at first glance, the head 'appeared like the Head of another Man' (570) – one cannot always tell the Man of Pleasure from the Man of Sense. It is only on closer inspection that Mr. Spectator observes clues to outward signs of the beau's dearth of politeness:

> The Skins of the Forehead were extremely tough and thick, and, what very much surprized us, had not in them any single Blood-Vessel that we were able to discover, either with or without our Glasses; from whence we concluded, that the Party when alive must have been entirely deprived of the Faculty of Blushing. (572)

Here we come to the heart of the problem for Addison. The skin covering the face, deprived as it is of blood supply, is a dead mask. The beau cannot expect to become polite because he does not have the capacity. Blushing was a key indicator of morality for eighteenth-century

writers[1]. The ability to blush – for men and women – was almost synonymous with the capability of reflecting on one's moral conduct and acknowledging it. Blushing was the emblem of shame fuelled by modesty, written across the face where others could see it and approve of it. For Addison's beau, this is a biological impossibility. He is shameless, and therefore cannot be expected to enter polite society with a true understanding of what the polite gentleman does. Whether the abnormalities of the beau's anatomy are supposed to be innate or acquired, Addison does not tell us. Ultimately, that is of little importance. His main weapon here is the threat of unforgivable impoliteness.

By depicting a man whose shamelessness and lack of humanity has changed him irreparably, Addison insinuates that it is possible to be damned in and by society. The beau's inability to feel shame makes him in some way inhuman; therefore he cannot be said to have any agency or identity: truly a horror story to any subject, but especially for an eighteenth-century man, as I explore in the next chapter. While Steele uses shame as a carrot, Addison turns the consequences of shamelessness into a stick. This should not be taken to mean, however, that Addison does not believe in the redemptive powers of politeness. On the contrary, his satires and allegories are more often than not warnings, attempts to save wayward men before they go beyond the capacity for redemption. As he states elsewhere: 'A Man who lives in a State of Vice and *Impenitence*, can have no Title to that Evenness and Tranquillity of Mind which is the Health of the Soul, and the natural effect of Virtue and Innocence' (no. 381, III: 431, my emphasis).

There is no doubt that both Addison and Steele perceive shame to be a social corrective, even if they do approach the theme somewhat differently. In a collaborative piece between Steele and the Irish poet Thomas Parnell, Steele makes use of the latter's allegorical poem 'The Palace of Vanity' to attempt to alert those who would be polite to their own failings. 'Our Defects and Follies are too often unknown to us; nay, they are so far from being known to us that they pass for Demonstrations of our Worth' (no. 460, IV: 121), he states as he introduces the 'Vision' which follows. In Parnell's allegory, the speaker arrives on a hill, 'green, flowery, and of an easy Ascent' to discover 'squint-ey'd *Errour* and popular *Opinion* with many Heads' (121). Opinion in particular is able to fill up the heart with not just pride but longing: 'She seem'd to have a Tongue for every one; every one thought he heard of something that

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[1] *The Spectator* references blushing in relation to modesty fairly frequently, with a useful discussion of it in issue 45 (vol I, pp. 193-4). The practice of using the blush to gain attention was decried by Addison in issue 377 (vol III, p. 418) and by Steele in issue 66 (vol I, p. 282).

was valuable in himself, and expected a Paradise which she promis'd as the Reward of his Merit' (121). When they arrive at the Palace of Vanity, they meet other allegorical figures chief of whom is Vanity herself, enthroned and 'deck'd in the Peacock's Feathers' (122). Having driven away Plain Dealing, the throne room and its inhabitants are then attacked by 'a numerous Train of Harpies crowding in upon us'

> *Folly* and *Broken Credit* were seen in the House before they enter'd, *Trouble, Shame, Infamy, Scorn* and *Poverty* brought up the Rear. *Vanity*, with her *Cupid* and *Graces*, disappear'd; her Subjects ran into Holes and Corners; but many of them were found and carry'd off…either to Prisons or Cellars, Solitude or little Company, the mean Arts or the viler Crafts of Life. (123-4)

Whilst the 'Shame' referred to here is more than likely shamed reputation, that is, the result of the spectatorial gaze of society, shame must be internalized as affect in order to have any effect. The figuring of Shame as a harpy alludes to its role as not just a punisher but also a key affect in reform. From the list of harpies in the quotation above, we can note that shame is the only affect mentioned; all the others are worldly consequences of a lack of plain dealing. Even scorn is not included by Silvan Tomkins in his schema of affects; scorn operates outside of the self in public words and actions, and so cannot be called an affect. It is shame alone which can be used both to great effect as a way of castigating the self or others, and in setting an example for those already on the wrong path.

In leaving the Palace, the speaker overtakes wrongdoers who 'were now terrified to good purpose by the Example of others' (124). A last obstacle stands in their way – the Palace hangs above the ground and they are trapped. Once again, shame comes to the rescue, this time not figured allegorically as a harpy, but simply shame from within:

> But as they began to sink lower in their own Minds, methought the Palace sunk along with us, till they were arriv'd at the due Point of *Esteem* which they ought to have for themselves; then the Part of the Building in which they stood touched the Earth, and we departing out, it retir'd from our Eyes (124).

Shame here acts as the great leveller, bringing people quite literally down to earth, restoring social order and affirming the hierarchies that keep society from toppling. As the visitors to the Palace of Vanity 'sink lower in their own Minds', their negative affect returns them to earth and to themselves. It cannot be ignored here that the message of the vision seems to enforce the idea of hierarchy as natural. Whether or not we take this to mean a hierarchy based on birth, or one of meritocracy – the two were never entirely inextricable even in the most liberal

of early eighteenth-century thought – there is a sense of the 'fitness' of things; shame helps us not only to restore that order but understand ourselves as fitting into that hierarchy.

The mention of Esteem in Steele and Parnell's piece stands in for modesty, another marker of politeness for writers like Addison and Steele. In discourses of politeness, modesty and shame go hand in hand, as in Addison's contribution to *The Spectator* of Saturday, 24th November 1711. Here Addison has Mr. Spectator think deeply about the nature of modesty, saying it has 'so great an influence over our Actions, and is in many cases so impregnable a fence to Vertue' However, it can be undermined by 'that Politeness which reigns among the unthinking part of Mankind, and treats as unfashionable the most ingenuous part of our Behaviour; which recommends Impudence as Good-Breeding, and keeps a Man always in Countenance, not because he is Innocent, but because he is Shameless' (no. 231, II: 400). Addison's acknowledgement that there is more than one species of politeness – true and false – highlights the moral imperative behind the *Spectator* project. As Lawrence Klein (1994) points out in *Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness*, 'Politeness concerned sociability but was not identical with it: while human sociability was a primal and original stuff requiring work, "politeness" was a refined sociability, bringing aesthetic concerns into close contiguity with ethical ones' (1994: 3).

The Spectator's emphasis on the self ensured that politeness became private and public simultaneously. It ensured a perception of identity as being necessarily a work in progress, a project that needed constant altering and subtle improvement in order to remain fit for purpose. As we have seen, shame had an important role to play in this, helping readers to insert themselves into its anecdotes and moral musings like protagonists, enabling them to feel the presence of unknown others even when apparently alone. Men, as public subjects, needed to be aware of this to an even greater extent than women, for whom roles in public were still relatively symbolic. Through a multiplicity of strategies, Addison and Steele were able to use affect to refine and direct the progress of politeness, pointing the way for their fellow men of sense. To shield themselves from their own gaze being reflected back at them, they interposed a body formed from labour and productivity – the eidolon, Mr. Spectator. Ghostly and distorting, his presence acted as a gauze curtain behind which Addison and Steele continue to flit about, barely discernible. He is the embodiment – if that word can be used here as more than merely a standard referent – of the shelter true politeness offered its adherents. Protected against the busy world they wrote about, Addison and Steele are left enclosed and intimate with their own shame – the shame of being seen, of becoming visible,

definable marked bodies. The male authorial voice, as embodied in Mr. Spectator, actually represents an escape from the body – from the inevitable shame that clothes the corporeal and cannot be unseen when gazing upon the gendered form. The very fact that Addison and Steele felt that they needed to escape their bodies – and in this they were by no means alone – says much about the shame inherent in appearing before the spectatorial gaze of public discourse as one's own particularized self. In the next chapter, I will explore the fop as the highly visible shameful body that warned against, and ultimately symbolized, the failure of politeness.

Chapter Two

"His Pretty Self": Bodies, shame and the fop

This chapter will explore the ways in which shame could manifest itself for eighteenth-century men through the marginalisation of other men. As its focal point, it will engage with the figure of the fop. I will argue here that the fop is the pre-eminent shame carrier for eighteenth-century discourses around masculinity. His hypervisibility and corporeality are both problematic and convenient for other men, those who consider themselves 'men of sense'. I will deal mainly with how the fop is 'othered' through writing, in particular periodical literature and popular theatre. Fop literature, the profusion of printed discourse that decried foppery, conceived of the flamboyance and display associated with fops as a threat to masculinity. But masculinity is a nebulous concept at this (and arguably any) point in history, and whilst the fop was threatening, he also offered something convenient for the polite man to define himself against.

This chapter will concentrate mainly on early-century considerations of the fop, some preceding *The Spectator*, some a little later. Through this, I hope to demonstrate the ways in which shame could be bound up with ideas around masculine corporeality and acceptable social practices for men. Crucial to this exposure will be my belief that the fop operates at this time as a necessary cultural myth, a sort of bogeyman of politeness. The corollary of any mythic construction, of course, is doubt over its actual existence. I argue that in order for the cautionary force of fop literature to retain its impact, it is in fact vital for the fop to constantly evade capture and quarantine. He must remain a sort of pathogen waiting to invade the otherwise stoical and abstracted bodies of men of sense, the kind exemplified by *The Spectator*, as we saw in the last chapter.

In an echo of Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's homosexual panic in *Epistemology of the Closet*, I propose a culture of effeminacy panic, for which the fop is the target, and in which the most thorough discourse is found in fop literature. I am using the term 'effeminacy' in its eighteenth-century sense, which because of its expansive capacity for shades of meaning - and from a modern perspective, its apparent contradictory implications - allows for a more pliable and sensitive discussion of the concerns over masculinity I tease out. Michèle Cohen (1996) defines contemporary ideas regarding effeminacy thus: 'The term effeminate could refer either to a man who resembled women, or one who desired women. Effeminacy encompassed what appears to us now at the same time a blurring of gender boundaries and an affirmation of sexual difference' (7). It is this shifting nature of effeminacy which interests me, because it

can therefore become instrumental in articulating a variety of social concerns and paranoias. Cohen indicates this when she says: 'Often either conflated with luxury or held to be its inevitable consequence, the effects of effeminacy, like those of luxury, ranged from the individual to the nation, from "an index of human sinfulness" to "sapping a nation's economic and military strength"' (5). For this reason, I do not consider it hyperbole to name my concept a 'panic', as the term helpfully articulates the intensity of negative affect expressed through writing concerning fops. These affects include disgust, contempt, fear, anger and, of course, shame. At their most intense, these texts have a note of hysteria, especially where they do not mediate their panic through the stylization of generic modes like satire, but instead take the form of straightforward observational critique as exemplified by Abel Boyer, as I discuss below.

It is useful to contextualise critical work on the fop in recent decades. Randolph Trumbach, in his essay 'The Birth of the Queen' (1989), claimed that the fop became closely associated in the eighteenth-century mind with the 'emerging role of the exclusive adult male sodomite – known in the ordinary language of his day as a *molly*, and later as a *queen*.' (134). Trumbach locates this association from the end of the seventeenth century (135). More recently, Philip Carter (1997, 2001) has challenged this thesis by emphasising instead the greater wealth of evidence to suggest that effeminacy in the eighteenth-century imagination was more closely linked to a failure to enact masculine norms due to an over-investment in luxury and polite culture. This, he argues, threatens not just the integrity of individual manhood but of the nation state: 'attachment to the fashionable world denoted an unacceptable dependence in individual men who collectively as citizens sacrificed their nation's political independence to absolutism' (1997: 433). For me, Carter's thesis better explains the vehemence of fop literature as it makes a strong case for the critical interplay between individual, collective and national masculinities.

Miles Ogborn's essay 'Locating the Macaroni' (1997) focuses on a later eighteenth-century manifestation of the effeminate male, the macaroni, and uses a similar lens through which to analyse the antipathy towards the figure: 'Through the codes of cultural nationalism and the polemical debates over luxury they were presented as unpatriotic, undemocratic and un-English; offering a dangerous relationship between masculinity, empire and global commodity consumption' (450). These historical analyses are invaluable as a guide to my own thinking, but I am more concerned with the linguistic construction of the fop and how his presentation in literature of the period may suggest something less systematic, and in fact more personally destabilising for the polite man of sense. Carter himself points to this when he says: 'Keeping men on the correct side of excess demanded the setting up of boundaries,

beyond which deviant behaviour was located…it was the insincere, delicate and tiresome fop which indicated this point to the careful reader' (1997: 437). Of course, these boundaries were worryingly permeable, and the fear of contagion powers much fop literature.

My emphasis on contagion comes in part from the close alignment I perceive, described in the course of this chapter, between the fop and shame. Eve Sedgwick provides the link here between shame and contagion. In her book *Touching Feeling* (2003), she details the forces that make shame contagious:

> Shame interests me politically, then, because it generates and legitimates the place of identity – the question of identity – at the origin of the impulse to the performative, but does so without giving that identity space the standing of an essence. It constitutes it as to-be-constituted, which is also to say, as already there for the (necessary, productive) misconstrual and misrecognition. Shame – living, as it does, on and in the muscles and capillaries of the face – seems to be uniquely contagious from one person to another. And the contagiousness of shame is only facilitated by its anamorphic, protean susceptibility to new expressive grammars. (64)

Shame denies access to identity as essence, meaning that in this case, eighteenth-century concepts of polite masculinity are never not threatened by the potential for subversion that shame offers. The 'to-be-constituted' of polite masculinity is what allows it to be productively misrecognised, ostensibly by the fop but more importantly (and more accurately) by the putative man of sense. Whether or not critics of foppery are aware of this, they are strikingly alert to the ability of foppery to make 'new expressive grammars' out of the materials of politeness. In order to fight against this, they turn their attentions (and faces) towards the fop, and begin passing on the shame they find there, and this is what I mean by effeminacy panic.

This effeminacy panic is exemplified perfectly by Richard Steele, writing as Mr. Spectator in issue 38 of *The Spectator*, Friday April 13th, 1711: 'When you see a Man of Sense look about for Applause, and discover an itching Inclination to be commended…Who is safe against this Weakness? or who knows whether he is guilty of it or not?' (vol. 1, no. 38: 161). My argument is expressed in Steele's words. The act of watching someone (specifically, a man of sense) temporarily forget himself in the pursuit of praise evokes humiliation and shame. Being seen, as we discussed in the previous chapter, leaves one open to judgement by others, and forgetting oneself is a ready conduit for this judgement. The pursuit of praise leaves a man restless, 'itching' to be 'commended', as though he has contracted a disease which makes the skin crawl. 'Who is safe against this Weakness?' Steele asks rhetorically, a hint of disquiet in his tone. For 'safe', we could substitute 'immune', thereby allowing us to see in greater detail the

most unsettling thing about the forgetting of one's polite self – that it is contagious, that it may have infected you before you know it, that you may in fact already be infected.

Steele's question brings together two different, though closely related discourses: the medical (itching) and the judicial (guilty). Moral culpability and its relationship to the material is a concern of this thesis in its entirety, but here in contemporary discussions of the fop, this connection is particularly vivid. It seems that Steele cannot decide whether the failing he points to – that of the mania for self-display – is a bodily or moral one. In this chapter, I argue, through examination of *The Spectator*, Abel Boyer's *The English Theophrastus* (1702) and the earlier Restoration comedy, George Etherege's *The Man of Mode* (1676) that the difficulty to name and effectively shame the fop throughout the early eighteenth century results in a persistent effeminacy panic that both contributes to and destabilises an emerging discourse of (hegemonic) polite masculinity. In addition, I will attempt to elucidate how developing ideas around spectatorship, discussed in the last chapter, were brought to bear on the problem of effeminacy panic. Ideas of spectatorial mastery, and the positioning of the spectator as the privileged point of power in the visual field, were used to some success in the allaying of fears around the fop's contagious transgressive potential. If one could observe and criticise a fop, one could also close oneself off from him by constructing a space of separation similar to that created by Addison and Steele in their practice of mediating thoughts through an eidolon, Mr. Spectator. Whereas Mr. Spectator was intended to maintain the illusion of abstraction, fop literature instead aimed to separate the polite man from the fop. However, the spectatorial gaze cannot hold off the effects – and affects – of foppery entirely. Fop literature itself is tellingly explicit about the permeability of politeness, and how it could become poisoned by understandable desires such as a quest for approval, or otherwise commendable ones such as ambition.

The very idea of the subject, and not the object, as the privileged point in the visual field was a relatively new concept at this time, as Thomas A. King (2002) shows. Prior to this period, early modern visual theory had privileged the object, or as King calls it, the 'spectacular body' figured as bodies that held power, the monarch and aristocrat in particular (27). This was due to the still extant system of patronage that began to lose its efficacy as the bourgeoisie gained prominence. However, work by thinkers such as George Berkeley re-theorised vision from being an expansive, sensory process (one which left bodies endlessly open to sensory contact with other bodies), to one that is rooted in the eye and the attendant cognitive processes in the brain: 'Ocular sensations were made meaningful by the mediation of the mind as it existed in society; the mind…learned to coordinate essentially different sets of

information to generate complex image-concepts' (34). This, King goes on to argue, 'points to the loss of anxiety about the male body open to other male and female bodies; this loss of anxiety was itself enabled by the redescription of "natural" male sensation as private and subjective' (34).

I am suggesting here that this loss of one anxiety inevitably enforces another entirely new one – how to maintain this privacy and subjectivity? The linking of the privileged (male) gaze to the 'rational' mind and its cognitive processes means that in order for the privilege to be maintained, the mind must remain rational. 'To proliferate a satisfactorily sensate body was permissible, even desirable,' King tells us, 'so long as the foreclosure of residual masculinities such as foppishness (their displacement beyond the pursuit and fulfilment of pleasures) could be maintained' (34). Residue which cannot be assimilated must be rejected and displaced in a 'beyond' that was to be conceived of as out of reach. King suggests that this displacement is achieved by 'the redescription of ocular sensation as a linguistic phenomenon enabling the display and exchange of privatized consciousness among the members of a public sphere' (34).

In Chapter One, we saw this occurring in *The Spectator* whereby spectatorship is a way of circulating ideas and information amongst readers via a linguistically-constructed eidolon. King's analysis describes this move as largely democratic, at least for those in the emerging bourgeoisie. He is aware, however, that 'to see was to appear to others, to gaze was to make oneself transparent' (40). Inevitably, this complicates the struggle to regulate how much can be seen by the spectatorial gaze. This struggle is hedged by shame – the shame of failing to maintain privilege and instead dissolving one's subjectivity in affect. Shame, an affect, is co-opted to foreclose attacks from both the affective and the shadow of the past, represented by the spectacular body and its orbit of other open, desiring bodies. This past, insofar as it is associated with aristocratic display and effeminacy, is just one of the many fears and antipathies shifted to the fop under the regime of effeminacy panic. King alludes to this in his reading of *The Spectator*, where he notes:

> The *Spectator*'s incessant vigilance of men and women who failed to enact this reciprocity of affect within the domestic space (the virago and the effeminate, the coquette and the fribble) worked not so much to mandate specific gender performances as to provide a limit to the normative oscillation within gendered reciprocity. (37)

The Spectator attempts to establish a form of normativity in terms of gender and its functioning within both private and, especially, public spaces. Whilst recognising and welcoming the changes Habermas and others have described occurring at this time (social and

psychological, as well as economic and political), *The Spectator* also tries to prevent chaos, deciding that the virago and the effeminate take the liberal public sphere too far. Going too far is a sign of either wilfulness or blindness; both are destructive of sociability and must therefore be controlled and manipulated via discursive prohibitions placed upon them. It is the very politeness of Addison and Steele's prose that makes their work so effective at doing this; the transgressive (or potentially transgressive) reader is made to *feel* the force of their wrongdoing, and via the subsequent feelings of shame, reverse their course.

To see how this happens, let us consider the fop more closely. Samuel Johnson defined the fop in 1755 as 'a man of small understanding and much ostentation' (quoted in Carter, 1996: 41). Johnson's definition highlights the spatial aberration the fop represents, as he is empty on the inside, and too full on the outside. As is hinted by the quotation from Steele at the beginning of this chapter, this ostentation and small understanding includes his interactions with others; his need for attention and praise are conceived of as evidence of weakness. The historian Philip Carter expands on both descriptions by saying that the fop was also 'renowned for spending a large amount of time decorating his unimpressive physique with colourful and fashionable dress, an elaborate and meticulously groomed wig, cosmetics and perfumes' (Carter, 1996: 41). The fop's interior is constantly figured as a dangerously vacuous space in early-eighteenth century fop literature, and this is frequently contrasted with his fulsome and opulent exterior, as my exploration of Abel Boyer's writing suggests below. The fop's body became a site of shame just as it seemed to embody a kind of shamelessness. Fop literature constantly seems to suggest a fear of contagion in that even to *look* upon a fop could be enough to infect one with foppishness. To ensure that any unconscious desire for, or interest in him is averted, fop literature resorts to a disgusted ritual of shaming the fop.

A crucial point to bear in mind throughout this exploration of the fop is that the shame with which he is so inextricably linked is not his own – it belongs to those who observe and disapprove of him, as I have already suggested through the notion of effeminacy panic. We can see this by examining an example of fop literature which ultimately fails to hide its own anxieties whilst attempting to shame the fop.

Clothes make the man? Abel Boyer and the Spectator

For the writer Abel Boyer, refinement was desirable but had to be carefully judged. The fop, or beau, was a useful example of what happened when one became too seduced by

it, and he devotes several pages of *The English Theophrastus*, his observational work on English society of 1702, to vociferous denigration of the type[2]:

> A Beau is a Creature who under the appearance of a Man, has all the Folly, Vanity and Levity of a Woman; he has more Learning in his Heels than his Head, which is better cover'd than fill'd; nay he knows not what a Man's Head is good for, but to hang his Hat or his Perriwig on; and if it were put to his Choice, he would as soon lose that, as any other Part about him: He thinks the chief end of Man is to Dress well, and that Death it self is not so ghastly as a Dishabille… (51)

Boyer outlines all that the man of sense might find unsettling about his foppish counterpart. Much of it focuses around his lack of interiority – his use of his head as merely an object upon which to hang a hat or periwig indicates that learning and reason is unimportant to him. The fop is presented as a person who is careless with the most important part of his body – in fact, the only part of the male anatomy that is truly significant to the man of sense. Instead, he has 'more Learning in his Heels than his Head'. The fop inverts what is right – rather than privileging reason he is an expert on vanity. Boyer's choice of 'heels' to pair with 'head' is more than simply alliterative. The heel is the back of the foot; whilst the toes at least point forward and suggest progress, the heel is good for little but dancing and clicking together. Placed as they are at the lowest part of the back of the body, the heels are posterior, the ultimate antipodean body part. To be learned in the heels is to be both perverse and subversive.

With its links to dancing and gaiety, the heel also links back to Boyer's comment equating the fop with the 'Folly, Vanity and Levity' of women. Prior to this comment, Boyer has tried to pre-empt any undue criticism of women with a passage praising the utility of women in the process of making a man polite (50). However, as Michèle Cohen has pointed out: 'women, in polishing men out of rude nature, did not necessarily make them more *manly*' (Cohen, 1996: 4). In fact, for the fop it has done something much more destabilising. It has left his masculinity entirely in doubt, as can be seen in Boyer's phrase 'under the Appearance of a Man'. It is as though the fop has crossed the gender boundary to construct some transgressive third sex.

We see this anxiety over the gender ambiguities of the fop in an issue of *The Spectator*. In an issue authored by Richard Steele, but containing a letter attributed to another

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[2] Boyer was a prolific writer of French birth; *The English Theophrastus* is one of his less well-known works and has received little critical attention. He was better known for his French-English *Royal Dictionary* (1699), as well as various annals which recorded the political transactions of Queen Anne's reign.

hand, the subject of female masculinity is discussed. This masculinity is theorised as a wilful act of trickery on the part of the woman, as it involves her cloaking her gendered body in mannish apparel. The letter is fascinating as an almost unconscious reveal concerning contemporary notions of gender transitivity, and as with much fop literature (for example Boyer's description of a fop dressing, discussed below) relies on a sort of uneasy scopophilic contact with the object.

The male narrator describes seeing a party of horsemen whilst out walking, 'my whole attention was fix'd on a very fair Youth who rode in the Midst of them, and seemed to have been dress'd by some description in a Romance. His Features, Complexion, and Habit had a remarkable Effeminacy, and a certain languishing Vanity appear'd in his Air' (*Spectator*, vol. 1, no. 104: 434). The object's proximity to a mythic or supernatural being are clearly emphasised here. The echoes of traditional storytelling on the subject of fairy processions (and the implied seductive brand of danger they posed to the viewer) can be felt here, as can the suggestion of a sort of cruel beauty evident in the words 'languishing Vanity'. Even the jarring note struck by the word 'Effeminacy' – jarring not just because of its clearly negative connotations but also because of its contemporary feel – is not quite enough to dispel the erotic texture of this sentence. The eroticism here is of a firmly *homo*erotic nature; the (male) viewer is confident at this point that the object he contemplates is also male.

After an exhaustive description of clothing, the viewer states that,

As I was pitying the Luxury of this young Person, who appear'd to me to have been educated only as an Object of Sight, I perceiv'd on my nearer Approach, and I turned my Eyes downward, a Part of the Equipage I had not observ'd before, which was a Petticoat of the same with the Coat and Waistcoat. After this Discovery, I look'd again on the Face of the fair Amazon who had thus deceiv'd me, and thought those Features which had before offended me by their Softness, were now strengthen'd into as improper a Boldness; and tho' her Eyes, Nose and Mouth seem'd to be form'd with perfect Symmetry, I am not certain whether she, who in Appearance was a very handsome Youth, may not be in Reality a very indifferent Woman. (vol. 1, no. 104: 434-5)

The moment of discovery, as it were, provides the fulcrum of this text. The fair Youth's transformation into a fair Amazon reads like a parody of the Cinderella myth; here, however, the transformed object proves disturbing for the viewer. The viewer initially professes pity for what he takes to be a foppish youth, and his words imply that this damage has somehow been done to him: 'educated only as an Object of Sight'. Who is to blame for this damage is left unsaid; it may be that the viewer regards an effeminate 'Society' to be the perpetrator. Philip Carter (2001) reminds us that 'It was a common argument in civic assessments that the

refinements required for modern polite society were incompatible with, and indeed destructive of, established male values' (130). Steele suggests here that the 'youth' has not only acquired these doubtful refinements celebrated by a misguided society, but that in doing so, his male values, and indeed his value as a male, have been put in extreme jeopardy.

The viewer's eyes then follow the body of the youth down in an almost comically formulaic interpretation of the erotic reveal, and where he expects to find a penis he finds instead a vagina. Of course, this information is deduced from fabrics alone – there is no clear evidence in the text that this is not in fact a man in a dress. Still, it is enough to induce the feeling of deception, and the viewer blames this on the woman, the 'fair Amazon' who has apparently set out to trick him. Pity is reserved for the misguided youth, anger for the wilfully deceptive girl – a tale of misogynistic panic too often rehearsed to need exposition here. However, even pity is hastily reconstructed here as contempt; the viewer would like us to understand that the youth's features had 'offended me by their Softness'. Up until this point (after the discovery of his susceptibility to being fooled), the viewer has said nothing that is openly derogatory about the youth; despite his noted effeminacy, there is no evidence of effeminacy panic here. It is not until the masculine woman inserts herself into this narrative of homoerotic scopophilia that the viewer is alerted to the potentially sodomitical thrust (as it were) of his text. Whatever the uncomfortable realisation, the final swipe is reserved for the Amazon, who is dismissed as 'a very indifferent Woman'.

My point here, however, is not just to highlight the ways in which women's gender transitivity was a target of criticism for (usually male) commentators. It is to demonstrate the unresolved tension between desire and disgust that centres on the androgynous pull of a foppish male body. On more than one occasion, as will become clear, language in fop literature is itself made vague and unwieldy when trying to crystallise the profoundly complex notions of masculinity and politeness that exist in troubled relation with the fop. It is this intolerable burden placed on the discourse of masculine politeness that is productive of shame – a shame composed of the failure to control and dominate these renegade desires. It is not *just* that the fop's effeminate appearance complicates heterosexual desire, but also that this complexity puts pressure on the discourse of polite masculinity to abstract itself from physicality and particularity. The fop threatens to reveal that men are as particularised by their sexed bodies as women.

So why is the fop transgressive? Contemporary writings about him constantly link him to the feminine, whether as a passing male, potentially female transvestite, as above, or more

commonly as effeminate: a feminised (and hence overly refined) cis male, as we will see in the examples which follow. In order to defend their own evolving polite masculinity from becoming fragmented, the men of sense must distance themselves from the fop and quarantine him in another space. For Boyer above, this includes framing the fop as a failed gender performance. As Judith Butler reminds us, normative gender conceptions assume that 'one is one's gender to the extent that one is not the other gender, a formulation that presupposes and enforces the restriction of gender within that binary pair' (2006: 30).

Boyer claims to see through the fop's gender performance because he seems sure of the essential nature of his own. Or is he? His comments on refinement come very close to an admission that gender is a construction – his agreement with the commonly held idea that the process of becoming polite is a cross-gendered one indicates that polite masculinity is not innate and must be performed in order to be effective. It not only owes its accurate performance to virtues learned from the opposite sex, but also to careful and assiduous practice. As we saw in the last chapter, writers could construct this ideal of polite masculinity through writing, and readers could ingest and repeat these lessons through the acts of reading and discussion. 'In this sense', says Butler, 'gender is always a doing, though not a doing by a subject who might be said to pre-exist the deed' (34).

The fop, then, is a subject who does the deed wrong, at least by the standards of conservative commentators like Boyer. What he may do, in actual fact, is to perform in a way that successfully exposes polite masculinity itself as a performance. The flamboyant, self-regarding body and empty platitudes he excels in are ways of marking out the supposedly unmarked: the universal, abstracted nature of masculinity, even if only as the obverse. In doing so, he turns the public gaze not just upon himself but also back upon the men who gaze upon him. The gaze, and spectatorial conduct in general, has been recognised by many critics as being crucial to the formulation of ideas of the self in the eighteenth century, as I explore below and in the next chapter on Adam Smith's moral philosophy. In the artificiality and surface sheen of the fop, then, it is possible that the man of sense sees the fragility of his own construction of self. He sees, in fact, the irony of positing polite masculinity as natural when it is clearly anything but. The fop is, then, a gender traitor; his performance deftly highlights the construction of masculinity in an age where so much that pertains to gender normativity is in flux.

Surface, both as it pertains to the superficial and to the outer shell of material objects, constitutes the fop in his entirety. His predilection for fine and opulent fabrics is said to rule

him far more than common sense or reason. As Boyer says of his fop, Sir John Foppington: 'his Valet, his Taylor, his Barber, and his Sempstress, are his Cabinet Council, to whom he is more beholden for what he is, than to his Maker' (51-2). This idea of the foppish body being literally constructed by the hands of tradespeople links back to Addison's satirical take on the beau's head, and consolidates the idea of the fop as a creature born of the times. It also implies a hollowness; a luxurious casing unfilled by any useful object; a jewelled and gaudy scabbard that holds no sword. He travels in pursuit not of knowledge but fashion: '[he] is one that has Travel'd to see Fashions, and brought over with him the nicest cut Suit, and the prettiest Fancied Ribbands for Sword-Knots' (52). Essentially, Boyer conceives the fop to be wholly unnatural – not just in his effeminacy but also in his very being. He does not just wear the fancied ribbands, but as synecdoche, they come to stand for him, more significant perhaps in their aesthetic power than the brain's functionality. The fact that he owes more of his being to those who make his clothes than to God suggests not only that he is an aberration, but also that he is born of refinement and fashion. The fop truly is a child of the contemporary explosion of commercial potential. In the previous chapter where Addison describes the dissection of a beau's head, we find the ultimate form of 'othering' – underlining the fop's essential difference from men of sense by asserting a biological dissimilarity between the two.

It is through the gaze that this difference is ultimately expressed. As ever, *The Spectator* provides a useful introduction to Enlightenment concepts of the gaze. In his series of pieces on the pleasures of the imagination, Addison uses Mr. Spectator to express ideas about the importance of the visual in creating the cerebral. His initial ruminations, as already discussed in the previous chapter, are highly affective in tone: 'Our Sight…may be considered as a more delicate and diffusive kind of Touch, that spreads it self over an infinite Multitude of Bodies, comprehends the largest Figures, and brings into our reach some of the most remote Parts of the Universe' (vol. 3, no. 411: 536). The sense of sight as a form of bodily contact immediately highlights the connection between looking and shame – if the gaze can be imagined as a form of cutaneous contact, and a way of bringing distant objects closer to oneself, as implied by the phrase 'brings into our reach', then the contagious nature of affect in general, and shame in particular, becomes clear.

To gaze upon the fop is to touch him, and touch troubles the concept of separation. One cannot be entirely separated from something one has touched, and affective touch is arguably more intimate than cutaneous contact. Sight communicates information and feeling directly to the brain, to the *inside* of the body, bypassing the skin's shield and penetrating instead to the delicate interior. It is here, in the closely-guarded interiority of the man of sense,

that affective contact with the fop does its damage. In a later issue regarding imagination, Addison extrapolates on Cartesian ideas of memory with regards to sense (here meant to mean something akin to affect) and the imagination. He argues that pleasurable sights create 'Pleasure Traces' in the mind, which connect them with past experiences and consequently heighten them:

> …when, therefore, any one of these Ideas arises in the Imagination, and consequently dispatches a flow of Animal Spirits to its proper Trace, these Spirits, in the violence of their Motion, run not only into the Trace, to which they were more particularly directed, but into several of those that lie about it: By this means they awaken other Ideas of the same Sett, which immediately determine a new Dispatch of Spirits, that in the same manner open other Neighbouring Traces, till at last the whole Sett of them is blown up, and the whole Prospect or Garden flourishes in the Imagination. (*Spectator*, vol. 3, no. 417: 563)

Whilst the final outcome of this process is apparently felicitous, the latent imagery in Addison's description of this process is that of exquisite pain. The pleasure traces seem to behave much like veins, blood vessels overloaded with clots of sensation that ultimately expand and swell until blockage forces the torrent into other neighbouring pathways. The animal spirits raging around these traces disregard propriety and spill out from their 'proper Trace'.

If pleasurable emotion can wrack its host body with such disregard, then what about other affects given access through the eyes? Addison, apparently following Descartes, sees disagreeable traces as more liable to being shut down through lack of use: 'they were quickly stopt up, and rendered incapable of receiving any Animal Spirits, and consequently of exciting any unpleasant ideas in the memory' (563).[3] If the agreeable is unruly, then, why is the disagreeable so content to be banished to dusty byways, rarely if ever to be recalled? Could the fop, then, be representative of a sight that repeatedly troubles the gaze, and prevents the disagreeable traces from being shut down, a sort of recurring pathogen circulating within the body of its host? This would support the notion of effeminacy panic as a reading of fop literature.

The control of this panic was linked closely to control of the object of the gaze, and here the concept of the spectator as master of all he surveys is crucial. Addison states that: 'A

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[3] Donald F. Bond, the editor of *The Spectator*, suggests that these ideas came from Descartes's *The Passions of the Soul* (n.2, pp. 562-3). In his text, Descartes states that imaginings 'arise simply from the fact that the spirits, being agitated in various different ways and coming upon the traces of various impressions which have preceded them in the brain, make their way by chance through certain pores rather than others. Such are the illusions of our dreams and also the day-dreams we often have when we are awake and our mind wanders idly without applying itself to anything of its own accord' (*The Philosophical Writings of Descartes*, vol. 1 trans. John Cottingham *et al*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, p. 336).

Man of a Polite Imagination, is let into a great many Pleasures that the Vulgar are not capable of receiving…It gives him, indeed, a kind of Property in everything he sees, and makes the most rude uncultivated Parts of Nature administer to his Pleasures' (*Spectator*, vol. 3, no. 411: 538). As Kristina Straub explains in her exploration of eighteenth-century theatre: 'the spectacle…is what the spectator is not; "effeminate" stage entertainments, ropedancing, puppet shows, the sexually ambiguous castrati singers all serve as visible foils for the rational, critical and all-but-invisible observer' (1992: 3). The observer as described by Straub here fits closely the description of the man of sense, imagined as the central figure in the production of eighteenth-century cultural hegemony. Boyer's description of the fop is intensely visual, as is Addison's, implying that spectatorship is a right belonging to men who position themselves as influential through their writing.

In describing a day in the life of Sir John Foppington, for example, Boyer begins with his morning routine. This is a long passage full of detail: close-ups on certain crucial parts of the body such as the lips, cheeks and the 'lovely Eyebrow'. Also of note is the abundance of verbs describing effeminate actions: 'he…plays the Narcissus with his own Shadow, and makes his Court with a thousand Grimaces to his pretty Self' (52). This is then followed by such actions as licking the lips, 'counterfeiting' the aforementioned lovely eyebrow, 'careening' his wig and 'tiffing' the curls. 'How Comical it is to see this Fop strutting up and down his Chamber, Surveying himself from Head to Foot, first turning one Shoulder, then t'other' (53) laughs Boyer. As Straub observes: 'this awareness of a power relationship between observer and observed implicitly informs the split between self and other; the self-love of the spectator creates pity for others' misfortunes or in the case of viewing ridiculous or contemptible things, a self-congratulatory sense of personal exemption from the cause of ridicule' (6).

However, there is more going on here than just the laughter of contempt. Contempt is detached, cold and self-assured: as Straub suggests, we feel contempt for those who pose no threat towards us. To see this, we need only compare Boyer's next target in *The English Theophrastus*, the country squire. Here, Boyer utilises the growing indifference to heredity and stereotypes of the aristocratic country bumpkin to paint the squire as a fool:

> …[he] has such a contemptible Notion of his past Education, that he thinks the Roman Poets good for nothing but for Boys to Cap Verses. These Prudent Sentiments being fix'd in his Mind, his Conversation for some Years succeeding, is wholly taken up by his Horses, Dogs, and Hawks, and the more senseless Animals that tend 'em. (59)

Boyer emphasises the lack of politeness in evidence in the conduct of a country squire – not only is he fixated upon lesser beasts as a topic of conversation; the topic is both incessant and

conspicuous in its being the only topic the squire has any extensive knowledge of. There is no sense here of a figure which poses a threat to polite masculinity. The section on the squire opens with the comment: 'A Country Squire is one whose Ancestors have been Wise and Provident, and raised an Estate by their Ingenuity and Industry, and given their Posterity after 'em Means and leasure to be Fools' (58). Boyer evokes an outdated form of transmission in order to satirize it effectively. His comment about the senselessness of the country servant as being greater than that of the animals they attend is witty, dry and observant. There is a critical distance here maintained by contempt – Boyer (as representative of polite masculinity) has nothing to fear from the increasingly inconsequential squire, who 'shews Wisdom best by his Silence, and serves his Country most in his Absence' (60).

Fop literature, however, gains its force from a fear of becoming what one seeks to denounce. Whilst the squire is becoming an insignificant representative of a dying old order, the fop, constructed as he is by fashion, consumption and commercialism, has a futurity which means he is far harder to evade – even possessing a form of attractiveness in his urgent relevancy. Paranoia over the consequences of refinement finds a point around which to coalesce. Once coalesced, it can transform into something more specific: disgust. Disgust is the affective mode through which Boyer communicates in the passage describing the fop, allowing him to seize hold of his readers' fears. As Sianne Ngai eloquently expresses it: 'there is a sense in which it [disgust] seeks to include or draw others *into* its exclusion of its object, enabling a strange kind of sociability' (2005: 335-6). Boyer's affectively-charged tirade against fops is an attempt to create something communal; a collective disgust for and rejection of the fop would ensure the cementing of desirable masculinity, that of the polite man or man of sense.

The shrillness of the attack gives Boyer away, however. As already observed, the language of fop literature has a tendency to unbalance itself when its affective weight cannot be sustained by the artfulness of style and form. The polite writing style is a guarded mode of self-effacement which hides some of the uncertainty which lies behind this linguistic shield. The fop exposes the presence of style and therefore threatens to derail both polite masculinity and its style. Unlike Addison, whose own criticism of fops examined in the last chapter is moderated through literary technique (satire and mock-scientific vocabulary), Boyer's is a less guarded endeavour. The obsessive detail, particularly over sensual bodily parts like the fop's licked lips and lovely eyebrows, creates an uncomfortably erotic tone. Ngai notes that 'the disgusting seems to say, "You want me," imposing itself on the subject as something to be mingled with and perhaps even enjoyed…Disgust both includes and attacks the very opposition between itself and desire…' (335).

The very strength of Boyer's disgust seems bound up with the fop's corporeality. It is his visibility that encourages disgust, just as it is his visibility that draws the eye in the first place. Boyer may use adjectives such as 'lovely' and 'pretty' facetiously, but he does not deny that they are the appropriate adjectives. The fop is at least apparently male, and his appropriation of 'feminine' ideals of physical display only serves to emphasise the sexual potential of the male body. His effeminate, strutting, colourful form reminds men that despite their ideal of abstraction, they are still rooted ultimately in their gendered bodies, just as women are. The fop's message is what Addison and Steele try to escape in creating the eidolon Mr. Spectator. With his unavoidable corporeality as a reminder, the fop shows abstraction to be an illusion, and shames his observer for putting such faith in an illusion. Resistance to illusion was a mark of the polite man, so to realise the central paradox of polite masculinity should therefore open up the supposedly immune man to shame.

We can think further about Boyer's presentation of the fop through the abject. Julia Kristeva, in *Powers of Horror*, conceives of disgust as an expression of rejection of the abject. 'When I am beset by abjection,' she notes, 'the twisted braid of affects and thoughts I call by such a name does not have, properly speaking, a definable *object*…The abject has only one quality of the object – that of being opposed to *I*' (1982: 1). The fop is an object of disgust, but he himself is not abject. Abjection is found in the ideas the fop points to, in the apparent inability of men to recognize the male body as their body. He is an embodiment of commercial society and therefore forces men of sense to see their own understanding of their world as flawed, personal and temporal. In some ways a cipher of progress, the fop must instead be read as an angel of decay in order for his observers to shift the stench of the corpse (which is to say, the abject) from themselves (to whom it truly belongs) to this readily definable, quantifiable space represented by the body of the fop. As Kristeva says, '…refuse and corpses show me what I permanently thrust aside in order to live' (3).

The material body of the fop becomes usefully visible as a way of attempting to locate and confine the abject – it is in this way that the fop can be both a dangerously contagious instigator of shameful feelings and a convenient site of quarantine for those very same shameful feelings *at the same time*. His constant state of decay – wig shedding powder, snuff staining his clothes, endless changes in fashions and his very gestures, which in their flamboyancy give away his body to the gaze of others, are agents of contamination and must be guarded against. Without his outer skin of clothing and make-up he is figured as empty and signifies nothing – a corpse in the Kristevan sense. However, the project of othering and guarding against contagion (and therefore shame, as contagion is a method of transmitting

shame) is doomed to fail. This is because it depends on the mythic properties of the fop I have just discussed, and he does not exist in the way he is imagined to. He is not an identity self-appropriated, unlike the 'desirable' persona of the man of sense. Instead, his is an identity shaped for him and projected onto him by other men. He says everything about his detractors but nothing of himself. It is here that Boyer's affectively-charged diatribe against the fop is most easy to understand, and to deconstruct: 'The writer is a phobic who succeeds in metaphorizing in order to keep from being frightened to death…' says Kristeva, 'Nevertheless, does not fear hide an aggression, a violence that returns to its source, its sign having been inverted?' (38). Boyer's weak attempts at comedy hide very little of the fear he feels at encountering his own sense of abjection. The will to do violence to this truth revealed by his own sense of disgust is merely another tactic to 'permanently thrust aside' his own abjection. Ultimately, what Boyer is trying to deny is his own complicity in the myth of polite masculinity – a complicity which, if acknowledged, must produce shame at one's foolish investment in an illusory selfhood.

What are the specific ways in which shame pertains to foppery? As I have already stated, although shame is located in the fop, the fop himself does not own that shame, he does not feel it as his. For both Boyer and, as we shall see, Dorimant in *The Man of Mode*, disgust levelled at the proximity and corporeality of the fop is constantly productive of shame within the viewer's own body. That shame is then projected onto the fop, at least nominally allowing the viewer to believe that it has ceased to exist within his own body. The displacement of this shame is rationalised by assertions that the fop is unnatural, and he lacks the interiority of the man of sense. In Boyer's words: 'These superficial Gentlemen wear their Understandings like their Cloaths, always set and formal, and would no more *Talk* than *Dress* out of Fashion' (Boyer, 1702: 58). So-called 'men of sense' use the new technology of mass publication to criticise those who are unable to form their own characters and instead merely reproduce a false facsimile of fashionable ideals. Through this technology, these criticisms reach a wide audience, enabling a kind of polarising of opinion against the fop; transforming him from a mild annoyance into a threatening presence, a contagion able to infect the masculine, polite body.

Whilst this may well be thought of as shaming the fop, the project is hindered by its inability to stick. As critics such as Robert B. Heilman have shown, the term fop was a catch-all

term for fool from the Middle Ages[4]. It is only from the Restoration period onwards that the term begins to take on the more specific meaning. It seems unlikely any man would have adopted the term to describe himself, and so while the fop is posited as a very real threat to the man of sense, he is in actual fact a somewhat nebulous, linguistically-constructed being. It is rare for any historical individual to be named as a fop in fop literature, although gossip abounded about personalities such as the effeminate Lord Hervey. Instead, many sources refer, as does Addison, to '*the* fop' or '*the* beau', whilst others like Boyer invent names in the manner of Restoration theatre, such as Sir John Foppington. We never hear the voice of a self-proclaimed fop, and if we understand the term to have always been an insult, why would we? I turn now to a text which exemplifies this, and can reveal much about the ways in which the fop figures as both a threat to and a consolidating factor in concepts of polite masculinity.

Fop as other: The Man of Mode

The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter was one of the most popular and successful comedies of the Restoration period, mainly for its title character. Flutter, the archetypal fop, is such a richly drawn character that he outshines his opposite number Dorimant, the putative 'hero' of George Etherege's play. *The Man of Mode* is a problematic play in terms of its examination of masculinity because rather than assert male authority by fixing its gaze firmly upon the bodies of its female characters, the dialogue continually invites us to gaze upon the bodies of men.[5] It features its hero, Dorimant, in states of undress twice, and discussions often centre on male characters' clothing and what shape it gives to their bodies. The play must therefore perform a delicate balancing act, attempting to maintain some male bodies as authoritative, and others as effeminate. This, as we have begun to see, is a strategy of protection against the fop; by presenting foppish masculinity as unappealing, fop literature shames both the fop and the man of sense out of becoming a fop. Etherege presents us with a binary of men: on the one hand Dorimant, who is not just physically attractive but also

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[4] Heilman's essay 'Some Fops and Some Versions of Foppery' appears in ELH, vol. 49, no. 2 (Summer 1982), pp. 363-95. In it, he asserts that 'virtually anybody…could be called fop or coxcomb' (364). However, he then goes on to assert that it was the Restoration court of Charles II that ensured the term came to refer mostly to 'the new foppery of hyperbolic stylishness' (366).

[5] Critical work on gender and its representation in *The Man of Mode* includes Paul C. Davies, 'The State of Nature and the State of War: A Reconsideration of *The Man of Mode*' in *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 39, (1969): 53-62, and Derek Hughes, 'Play and Passion in *The Man of Mode*' in *Comparative Drama*, 15 (1981): 231-57. Two essays that think lucidly about the gender presentation of Dorimant include John Barnard's 'Point of View in *The Man of Mode*' in *Essays in Criticism*, 34 (1984): 285-308, which examines how the play aligns its audience with Dorimant; also interesting is Harold Weber's 'Charles II, George Pines and Mr. Dorimant: The Politics of Sexual Power in Restoration England' in *Criticism* 32.2 (Spring 1990): 193-219, which sets the play within the context of contemporary concerns around Charles II's foppishness and promiscuity.

possesses wit and a reasoning mind, and on the other hand Sir Fopling Flutter, a man given to display but who has no interiority.

Dorimant appears on stage at the very beginning of *The Man of Mode*, dressed in his nightclothes and carrying a letter he has just written to his occasional mistress, Mrs. Loveit. Meanwhile, he is reciting verses. His reception of the orange-woman, his gossipmonger, and then his friend Medley shows that he is not afraid to appear in what Sir Fopling later refers to as 'dishabille', a state not just of undress but also of unpreparedness for scrutiny. His carelessness is a sign of libertinism perhaps, but not of foppery – he may be undressed but he is not unmanned, as his control of the situation, the conversations and action he engages in, is never in doubt. His Machiavellian manipulations of Mrs. Loveit, and the verbal wit he displays in conversation, are signs of a sharp mind. Fops, by contrast, were assumed to have a mind almost empty of any wit or intelligence.

Dorimant's actions in the play, in particular his treatment of women such as Mrs. Loveit and another mistress, Bellinda, are somewhat unpalatable to modern audiences, suggesting as they do a form of misogyny. Sir Fopling, by contrast, maintains a far less threatening relationship with women, as exemplified by his bumbling compliments delivered to Emilia, whom he has overlooked in order to embrace Dorimant when Sir Fopling first appears onstage in Act III, Scene ii:

> SIR F: A thousand pardons, madam. Some civility's due of course upon the meeting a long absent friend. The *éclat* of so much beauty, I confess, ought to have charmed me sooner.
>
> EMILIA: The *brillant* of so much good language, sir, has much more power than the little beauty I can boast.
>
> SIR F: I never saw anything prettier than this high work on your *point d'Espaigne*. (ll. 162-8)

Sir Fopling's overuse of French *bons mots*, here subtly mocked by Emilia, and his squeamishness in discussing Emilia's physical beauty marks him out instantly as a fop. Many in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century Britain saw France as a source of effeminacy and delicacy, in contrast to an enduring self-perception by the British of themselves as educated but stoical and governed by reason. As Michèle Cohen (1996) reminds us: 'the fear was that such "intimacy" with French would debilitate and "enervate" the masculine English tongue...' (7). In other words, the British gentleman should preserve the body but prize the mind and Sir Fopling's greatest mistake is to be all body, and a debilitated one at that.

Unlike Dorimant, however, whose gaze rests almost exclusively on women – Mrs. Loveit, Bellinda, Harriet – Sir Fopling's gaze is turned repeatedly on himself, drawing attention to his own body. Soon after his compliments directed at Emilia's clothing, he directs conversation towards his own: 'A slight suit I made to appear in at my first arrival – not worthy your consideration, ladies.' (ll. 190-1). Sir Fopling's transparent demand for attention – highlighted here by his use of the verb 'appear', which underlines the spectatorial nature of this scene – is indulged by the others, with comments paying particular homage to the effect of the clothing on his physical form:

> DORIMANT: The pantaloon is very well mounted.
>
> SIR FOPLING: The tassels are new and pretty.
>
> MEDLEY: I never saw a coat better cut.
>
> SIR FOPLING: It makes me show long-waisted, and I think slender.
>
> DORIMANT: That's the shape our ladies dote on.
>
> MEDLEY: Your breech, though, is a handful too high, in my eye, Sir Fopling.
>
> SIR FOPLING: Peace, Medley, I have wished it lower a thousand times; but a pox on't, 'twill not be! (ll. 192-200)

The compliments in this exchange revolve around Sir Fopling's body, with the clothes being 'well mounted' and well cut. Sir Fopling is concerned to appear 'long-waisted' and 'slender', to which Dorimant responds with a phrase which marks out the ambiguity of the fop's gender presentation: 'That's the shape our ladies dote on'. He leaves it unclear whether he means that they dote on this shape where it appears in men, or that they desire to have this shape themselves. Sir Fopling's vanity induces him to see only the first meaning, while Medley seems to pick up on the second, suggesting Sir Fopling is displaying himself too much: 'Your breech…is a handful too high'. The fop's excuse, that he has 'wished it lower a thousand times' underscores not just his vanity but also his reliance on his clothing for a sense of self; 'wishing' suggesting that, like his gendered body, he has very little power over it. After his departure, Dorimant and Medley highlight his faults, labelling him 'a fine-mettled coxcomb', 'brisk and insipid', and 'pert and dull' (ll. 242-3). These comments highlight the mixed response to the fop, that he is both colourful and colourless at the same time suggests the capacity of the fop to trouble linguistic certainties, rendering the masculine control of the gaze uncertain.

This shaming of Sir Fopling occurs not to his face, but after his performance is over; at no point in the play, in fact, is the fop shamed in a way that would allow him to defend himself.

This is because, of course, the satire of *The Man of Mode* relies on the fop's ignorance of his foppishness. Throughout Restoration and early eighteenth-century literature, there is little indication of a self-aware fop. It seems that foppery is an identity placed upon a transgressive male body, rather than one adopted by the body itself, as in the case of the libertine or dandy. These latter men are identifiable most clearly through their love of display and can be labelled as effeminate, but they also convey a sense of interiority through their adherence to an aesthetic praxis. Fops, meanwhile, only exist through ignorance, through an absence of a self-defining identity. Caught up in the manic novelty of fashion, they become visible only through a series of embarrassing performances that rely on exteriors – their bodies and the ways in which they clothe and perform with them, as discussed above, are sites of spectatorial consensus-building between 'men of sense'. Sir Fopling's conversation with Mrs. Loveit in the Mall in Act III, Scene iii, both aligns him with her own flawed, wanton femininity and severs him from the men he thinks are his equals, for example Dorimant.

Whilst Dorimant succeeds in *The Man of Mode* by reading minds and anticipating people's motivations, Sir Fopling can only read surfaces and so his talk is all of bodies and exteriors. He cannot recognize, therefore, when he is being mocked, and neither can he see the shame which resides in his own body. Mostly, as I have already suggested, that is because the shame does not belong to him – it is placed there by others, by almost all in fact who gaze upon him in *The Man of Mode*. Sir Fopling, in other words, does not exist as a desiring agent in the way that Dorimant or even Mrs. Loveit do. Instead, he becomes a useful site for projecting shame from more self-conscious bodies. Dorimant in particular others Sir Fopling, constructing in the foppish body a displaced and therefore contained image of his own shame. This becomes clearer only in flashes – for example, when Emilia points out in Act III, Scene ii that: 'However you despise him, gentlemen, I'll lay my life he passes for a wit with many' (ll. 245-6). Dorimant seems to deflect this challenge to his othering of Sir Fopling fairly easily, retorting, 'That may very well be. Nature has her cheats, stums a brain, and puts sophisticate dullness often on the tasteless multitude for true wit and good humor. – Medley, come' (ll. 247-9). However, in responding like this, Dorimant's usual verbal wit breaks down into a parroting of conventional moralizing on the dangers of the fop, and his sudden urge to leave, 'Medley, come', gives further indication of his frustration at having Sir Fopling suddenly brought closer to him by being labelled – however ironically – a wit.

This comes back with a vengeance in the scene at the Mall, where Dorimant's plot to shame Mrs. Loveit by making her the object of Sir Fopling's advances backfires because Mrs. Loveit anticipates him and pretends to enjoy the fop's company, shutting Dorimant out

entirely. For the first and only time in the play, Dorimant finds himself without the upper hand, and can only resort to angry denial: 'I know she hates Fopling and only makes use of him in hope to work me on again. Had it not been for some powerful considerations which will be removed tomorrow morning, I had made her pluck off this mask and show the passion that lies panting under' (ll. 306-10). The violent and emotional imagery of Dorimant's assertion mark an affective shift; the fact that Dorimant is in fact right about Mrs. Loveit's motivations is not important at this moment. Sir Fopling has operated as pawn in both their games, and to one participant at least, appears to have inadvertently gained the upper hand. He has, in other words, suddenly become horrifyingly visible to Dorimant in a way the latter never imagined he could be. This is a moment of abjection, in the sense in which Julia Kristeva uses it in *Powers of Horror*: 'one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside, ejected beyond the scope of the possible, the tolerable, the thinkable. It lies there quite close, but it cannot be assimilated' (1983: 1). In other words, the great gulf between Dorimant and Sir Fopling may not be that great after all. The scene in the Mall is a humiliation – an acute shaming – of Dorimant's feeling of security as a man of sense.

In a text from a later period, particularly from the later eighteenth century, this experience of the abject would initiate a moral reformation in Dorimant. The experience of loss of control, of embarrassment, is an opportunity for reflection and development: in other words, it marks the entry point of shame, an identity-forming affect if ever there was one. If Dorimant can be replaced, however strategically, by Sir Fopling, then the differences between them are not absolute. If Sir Fopling can pass for a wit with some, then perhaps Dorimant can pass for a fop with others.[6] The realisation of this, which Dorimant goes to great lengths to disavow, would bring him back to his awareness of his own particularity, making him self-conscious. To be conscious of the self is to be conscious of the body, as the blushing and averting of the face that accompanies feelings of shame remind us.

The body knows that we can be gazed upon as well as gaze, and this eruption of the body is a significant challenge to polite masculinity, which seeks to cloak the male body in universality, as the previous chapter explored. As Kristeva says: 'a vortex of summons and repulsion places the one haunted by it literally beside himself' (1983: 1). This displacement of self occurs for Dorimant at this very moment in the Mall, but as it is a Restoration comedy, the

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[6] Like Richard Steele, who described Dorimant as being 'a direct Knave in his Designs, and a Clown in his Language' (278-9) and 'more of a Coxcomb than that of *Foplin*' [sic] (280). *Spectator*, vol 1 no. 68.

experience of abjection must be immediately rehabilitated. This occurs through the ritualized humiliation in return of those who transgress, and we are presented with a series of set pieces in which Sir Fopling is reinstated as the object of shame. This should come as no surprise considering Restoration comedy, with its targeting of new-fangled beings such as fops, is fundamentally conservative at heart. We see this process happening notably at Lady Townley's gathering, during which the fop arrives with his retinue of French retainers, all equipped in masquerade. The very purpose of masquerade, of course, is to obscure the identity of the participants, but this is not the case for Sir Fopling. Instantly recognized by the other partygoers, he marks himself out as a notorious body:

MEDLEY: Make him own himself; a fool is very troublesome when he presumes he is incognito. (ll. 179-80)

Sir Fopling's misrecognition of his own body – believing it to be more malleable in its visibility than it is – marks out once again his inability to understand the implicit rules of politeness. No one else at the gathering is in masquerade dress; in fact the whole evening was meant to be a private affair and Sir Fopling has not been invited. The body of the fop causes trouble in the form of embarrassment not just because of its inappropriate attire but also because of its presence. It becomes clear at this point, if it hasn't been clear all the way through, that there has in fact been no point in the play at which Sir Fopling has been welcome – he is tolerated only to receive the shame of others who gaze upon him. In the laughter we direct towards him as an audience, we hear the uncertain note of shame, as he becomes the body upon which we project our insecurities about a whole range of issues, from appearance to gender performance.

Effeminacy in the modern age is often referred to by a similar related term, camp. Susan Sontag states that 'the soundest starting point [for a history of camp] seems to be the late seventeenth and early-eighteenth centuries, because of that period's extraordinary feeling for artifice, for surface, for symmetry' (1999: 57). *The Man of Mode* is concerned with all of these issues, and offers its audience few moral platitudes with which to identify our heroes and our villains. Despite the obvious duplicity which abounds in the treatment of Sir Fopling by his fellows, the audience is not moved to sympathy for him. This is because he functions merely as a site of ridicule, of manipulation, of discomfort, for all those around him. Like many of the play's female characters, the audience is seduced by Dorimant's creativity and resourcefulness, whatever his moral inconsistency. Therefore it is easier to side with him over Sir Fopling, because the latter clearly has nothing more to offer than his effeminate corporeality. His body reveals nothing of its interior, it is instead mere surface. The audience

looks *to* Dorimant for action and agency; it looks *at* Sir Fopling to see all that is wrong with an effeminate culture. For this reason, Sir Fopling cannot be labelled camp, with all of the satisfyingly knowing artifice that offers. He is a product instead of the terrors of his times: an increasingly prosperous commercial nation unbridled by traditional hierarchies, where gender performance is increasingly in flux and participation in material culture is becoming more widely available. As a fop, Sir Fopling performs all of these paranoias in one body. He carries the shame of polite culture, so that his more polite peers can feel that they do not. It is unsurprising that *The Man of Mode* remained popular well into the middle of the eighteenth century, allowing audiences to laugh again and again at their own embodied fears.

Concerns about foppery did not entirely die off as the eighteenth century progressed; as Philip Carter has shown, there were concerns about effeminacy in the military in the middle of the century, proof if any was needed that foppery had poisoned every corner of the British social milieu (2001: 130-1). However, the fact remains that fops were incredibly popular as sources and subjects of gossip, and in literature as characters that provided humour and diversion. Susan Staves goes further, however, and makes the case for fops as 'the avant-garde of sex role change' (1982: 420). 'The so-called effeminacy of these old fops was an early if imperfect attempt at the refinement, civility and sensitivity most of us would now say are desirable masculine virtues', she suggests (428). Fops are more than just a dry run for late-century sentimentality of the *Man of Feeling* sort, however. In their decorated, effeminised bodies, they hold the key to unlocking – and deconstructing – what was rapidly becoming a hegemonic form of gender coding: polite masculinity.

Fops called attention to the material benefits of commerce through their clothing, cosmetics and possessions, thereby highlighting the banality of commercial production. They were slaves to fashion, emphasising the weakness and susceptibility of society to empty passions. Their ceremonious performances in society exposed the artificially constructed nature of politeness itself. Perhaps most unsettlingly of all, their conscious displays of their own inescapably gendered forms reminded men that they were as corporeal as women; that none of them could imitate Mr. Spectator and disappear. Even more than this, as Brian Glover points out, the disapproval of '"Action, Show and Dress"' encountered in works like *The Spectator* 'speaks for a widely-remarked tendency in the eighteenth century to devalue object in favour of subject' (2002: 529). The fop's ultimate achievement is to renounce this devaluation, to allow the object in some way to talk back through performance and display. Men of sense tried to use disgust to alienate these performing bodies from their own, to purge them and make them abject: to turn them into Kristevan corpses. Like the living dead,

however, the fop continued to rise and walk again, a constant reminder to his detractors that the shame they aimed outwards would always return undiminished.

Chapter Three

'This great inmate': Shame as the Impartial Spectator in Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*

The first two chapters have outlined shame as a technique through which to circumscribe masculine identity via a sometimes sophisticated, sometimes less so, discursive technique of externalisation. Addison and Steele's eidolon Mr Spectator, and the fop figure created by effeminacy panic, are different, but both fulfil a need for deflection; a bouncing-away of gendered markers that allow the abstract ideal of polite masculinity to remain intact.

In this chapter, by contrast, I use Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759) to propose a different conceptualisation of shame, that of the necessary internalisation of affect and the moral imperatives which demand this. Whereas the masculine internal has appeared to be a space haunted by phobias of contagion and penetration in the texts I have discussed thus far, I now intend to trace how Smith's investigations into morality, and his invocation of the impartial spectator, instead re-imagine the development of the masculine internal space as fundamental and fruitful for polite masculinity. In doing so, I will engage with eighteenth-century conceptualisations of vision and touch, and the ways in which they connect with bodily affect. I will reach the conclusion that Smith's theory of morality is also intended to be practice, through its basis in corporeal reality.

Smith, like Addison and Steele, creates a sort of eidolon, an idealised figure which embodies his sense of the moral. The critic and editor of Smith's works, D.D. Raphael, defines Smith's eidolon thus: 'The "supposed impartial spectator", as Smith often called him, is not the actual bystander who may express approval or disapproval of my conduct. He is a creation of my imagination. He is indeed myself, though in the character of an imagined spectator, not in the character of an agent' (Raphael, 2007: 35). Smith's impartial spectator, the man within the breast, is a figure for the self to identify with in order to become a fully socialised individual in polite society. I argue here that we can enrich understandings of Smith's ideas about social morality by examining his thesis through the lens of affect theory, and in particular by privileging the role of shame within the process by which the impartial spectator develops. Shame helps create the impartial spectator and as a result remains vital in preventing transgressions; the socialised self fears transgression's consequences because these include being returned to feelings of shame.

The body of critical work in general on *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is vast. One strand of the debates around Smith's moral philosophy – considerations of the impartial

spectator – is helpful to briefly look at in order to set my own argument in relation to those of others. The philosopher Eugene Heath (1995) observes that 'Smith's theory offers a complex and intriguing account of how norms can emerge through a process of social interaction', seeing this as mirroring 'the features of what are now called "invisible hand" explanations' (449). He summarises the impartial spectator via T.D. Campbell as: '"an average standard which emerges from the interplay of the reactions of ordinary spectators and agents; he personifies the results of a process of interaction whereby an agreed set of moral principles are evolved"' (450). Here Heath is highlighting the discursive construction of the model of sociability that Smith outlines. His question is whether this can then explain 'whether or how a uniform set of normative judgments…could emerge out of individual interaction' (451).

In her discussion of the impartial spectator, Ildiko Csengei (2012) sees this as the wrong question to ask: 'Rather, the question arises whether Smith's other-regarding principle, even when it does emerge, can ever be more than self-regarding, and whether sympathy is not, as it were, an "uncanny" concept, with a meaning riven by internal contradictions' (53). Csengei's argument, which looks at the inherent solipsism in sympathy and sentiment, invokes the way in which shame isolates an individual from sociability at the same time as binding them to society in ways which are difficult to parse, because feelings of shame always bring external experience back upon the self in ways that reinforce the primacy of the self. Although her thesis is more interested in eighteenth-century notions of how sympathy operated, and less interested in affect as I discuss it here, I find this questioning of the efficacy of 'other-regarding feelings' in creating social consensus and order intriguing.

It is my argument in this chapter that shame, with its oscillating movements between spectator and spectacle, can go some way towards resolving the difficulties alluded to by Csengei and Heath. It is Csengei's contention, for example, that sympathy has 'limit-cases', situations in which 'our fellow-feeling has indeed no legitimate source in the other'. One of her examples here is blushing at the impropriety of another's behaviour, a scene of shame that I explore below (58). She writes that this illegitimate fellow-feeling 'arises from an impossible situation created from the point of view of a split subject, who is at once spectator and object of viewing' (59). In order to reconcile this split, a movement is necessary whereby the other is 'drawn into the core of the self', and for Csengei, this is the impartial spectator. 'In order to sympathise', she writes, 'we empty out the other's emotions and fill the empty space with our own narratives and feelings' (61). This emptying out and refilling process I discuss below in relation to Hogarth's concepts of spectation and the object in art.

Another analytical angle is offered by David Marshall (1986), who examines the theatricality of Smith's theory, emphasising the uncomfortably mirrored experience of both spectator and object. At the heart of Marshall's reading of Smith is the insurmountable problem of distance implied in theatricality: 'the actor and spectator into which one divides oneself can never completely identify with each other or be made identical. Identity is itself undermined by the theatrical model which pictures the self as an actor who stands beside himself and represents the characters of both spectator and spectacle' (176). He points out that in order for Smith's theory to work effectively, a 'certain instability of self' is assumed. The self must be eradicable enough for an individual to leave 'oneself behind and [try] to take someone else's part' (177). Marshall suggests that *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* 'must describe what it is like to want to believe in the fiction of sympathy, and what it is like to live in a world where sympathy is perhaps impossible' (181). This becomes pertinent in my fourth chapter, on *The Man of Feeling*, but it is interesting that a similar wistfulness can be traced in Smith.

Repeatedly, Marshall observes that the 'spectre' haunting Smith's text is the spectator who refuses sympathy (182, 191). It seems clear to me that this frightening apparition is a prime motivator in the endeavour to get sociability 'right'; the refusal of sympathy would be evidence not only of getting social connection 'wrong', but of somehow being 'wrong' in one's own self. This feeling is a key symptom of shame; far from severing us from others, however, these very same feelings compel us to return time and again to the scene of shame in order to address or rectify where and how we became 'wrong'. The requirement for stoical (and typically, masculine) self-reflection is a central conceit of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, and it is by considering shame's role within this that we can gain a more profound understanding of this text. Shame simultaneously draws distinctions between the self and others, and yet leaves one permanently open to invasion, contagion and intercourse, both pleasurable and painful, with the outside world. If this sounds much like the impartial spectator, that should be no surprise; shame is the impartial spectator's active ingredient.

How to get inside: Hogarth's shell-like object

This idea of the permeable body was not alien to contemporary eighteenth-century thought. Smith himself, in one of his early essays, characterises sight and touch as linked and

co-dependant. In fact, Smith seems to suggest that man must possess both in order to have a fully synthesised understanding of reality: 'that of seeing could never alone suggest to him the idea of Solidity, or enable him to form any notion of the external and resisting substance…the objects of Sight and those of Touch constitute two worlds, which, though they have a most important correspondence and connection with one another, bear no sort of resemblance to one another' (Smith, 'Of the External Senses', 1980: 150). Those two worlds, different as they may be, are crucial in allowing a solid grasp of the phenomena around one, which is otherwise, as Smith says of visible objects, 'mere shadows or pictures, which seem to float, as it were, before the organs of Sight' (152). It requires a convergence of sight and touch in order to ascertain distance and situation: 'Upon the knowledge of this distance and situation depends the whole conduct of human life, in the most trifling as well as in the most important transactions' (Smith, 1980: 156). Distance has featured prominently in my previous chapters as a way of distancing oneself from a source of shame. Fop literature, I argued, was a way of placing effeminate masculinities at greater than arm's length. I also pointed out, however, that this distancing project was one doomed to failure, because of the complex shame bonds which resulted in a painful intercourse between self and other. Sight and touch, I demonstrated there, are external senses but their impact is felt internally through affective responses to being touched and gazed upon, as well as in the varying forms of feedback the spectator or agent receives from looking at or touching the object. Hence, sight and touch make the body permeable.

One of the breakthrough moments in researching this chapter came with my reading William Hogarth's introduction to his 1753 treatise on art, *The Analysis of Beauty*. Written just a few years before Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* was published, I place the two texts side by side as examples of a crucial element in eighteenth-century thought. This is the importance of the body, and ultimately bodily affect, to contemporary understandings of morality. Hogarth's metaphor for the observed object deserves unpacking, and so I quote at length here:

> …let every object under our consideration, be imagined to have its inward contents scoop'd out so nicely, as to have nothing of it left but a thin shell, exactly corresponding both in its inner and outer surface, to the shape of the object itself: and let us likewise suppose this thin shell to be made up of very fine threads, closely connected together, and equally perceptible whether the eye is supposed to observe from without or within; and we shall find the ideas of the two surfaces of this shell will naturally coincide. The very word, shell, makes us seem to see both surfaces alike.
>
> The use of this great conceit…will be seen to be very great, in the process of this work: and the oftner we think of objects in this shell-like manner, we shall facilitate and

strengthen our conception of any particular part of the surface of an object we are viewing, by acquiring thereby a more perfect knowledge of the whole, to which it belongs: because the imagination will naturally enter into the vacant space within this shell, and there at once, as from a center, view the whole form within, and mark the opposite corresponding parts so strongly, as to retain the idea of the whole, and make us masters of the meaning of every view of the object, as we walk round it, and view it from without. (Hogarth, 1753: 31-2)

The materiality of Hogarth's concept is clear. While the object referred to here could be anything, it is reasonable to think that Hogarth, with his endless fascination for the human condition (and human form), would be thinking primarily of a body. An object initially dense and fleshy is disembowelled to reveal a casing which has both the brittle qualities of the shell and the dense tactility of the threads, which imply textiles. Hogarth's glossing over of the multimedia composition of his viewed object is refreshing, allowing as it does a body to be composed of one material that also happens to be another material *at the same time*. Here he is not only rejecting an Addisonian language of precision, clarity and plainness, but also tapping into a burgeoning discourse within the field of natural philosophy.

As Hisao Ishizuka explains, natural philosophy had begun to move during the late seventeenth-century from a humour-based understanding of the human body toward one which hypothesised the thread, or fibre, as the root of the body's composition and mechanisms. One prosthetic device which allowed this to occur was the microscope, the use of which grew in popularity throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century. The use of an ocular prosthesis which increased the reach (and, ergo, the touch capabilities) of human vision resulted in the discovery of a fibrous body, one composed of threads that, according to George Cheyne in 1733, '…are probably platted and twisted together…to make the larger sensible *Fibres*: and these again are either united in Bundles to form the *Muscles*, *Tendons*, *Ligaments* &c. or woven into a fine *Web*, like Cloth, to make the *Membranes*, the Coats of the Vessels, &c.' (quoted in Ishizuka, 2006: 75). Hogarth's odd conception of the observed object becomes much more conventional in this context.

What of the act of climbing inside the object one has just 'scoop'd out so nicely', however? The artist must sit inside in order to truly understand the object under observation. Once inside, he can see the reality of the object which, when viewed from without only, can always be suspected of hiding something. Indeed, Hogarth's use of the phrase 'masters of the meaning of every view of the object' (evoking the Addison of 'Pleasures of the Imagination') strikes both a patriarchal and imperial note akin to the most vociferous of fop literature. It is certainly worth pausing here to consider the gendered implications of the term 'masters'. As I

will show in relation to Smith, Hogarth's seemingly general use of the term here invokes a masculine universal, as seen in the use of the masculine pronoun to stand in for the hypothetical individual or humanity at large. However, this also attaches the qualities alluded to in the act of adept observation to those readers and practitioners of art who present as biologically male.

The paranoia of masterful spectatorship, of course, is that the gaze can also be turned on the self. Men gazing on other men is the central anxiety that I explored in both chapters one and two, and I outlined the differing ways – disappearing and deflecting – that 'masterful' men attempted to avoid this fate. One cannot help but wonder – although I am sure one is not supposed to – what happened to the substance which has been removed. What innards have been scooped out; what fleshy pulp has been disembowelled so thoroughly as to allow the object to become a vehicle for the artist? Given the absence of pulp from Hogarth's text, one could understand that the innards are void of meaning. Certainly the emptying out of masculine particularity that we observed at work in Addison and Steele lends credence to the idea of pulp (the particular) being anathema to the project of polite or masterful masculinity. The absence of pulp merely allows for the enlightened eye of the painter to 'enter into' – a phrase crucial to Smith in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* – the object which up until now has kept true mastery at bay.

Hogarth's point, however, is that to be a great artist one must supplement the world of the visible by 'imagining' oneself into a private interior. The imagination is crucial to cultural and moral politeness, as is made clear in Addison's issues of *The Spectator* and most consistently in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. It is Smith, of course, who imagines the impartial spectator as 'the man within the breast', a Hogarthian figure looking around at one's internal threads and fibres and seeing more clearly and masterfully than one can oneself. The idea of the little man inside was surprisingly widespread in Enlightenment theoretical writing, as Ishizuka highlights: 'According to this theory of fibre psychology, each fibre connected a part of the body with a corresponding part of the brain. The aggregate of the corresponding fibres in the brain was even imagined to be a "Man in Miniature"' (2006: 84). The naturalist Charles Bonnet believed that the body's fibres were replicated in a man's morality: 'If all our ideas depend on fibres appropriated to them, prejudices must also have their fibres' (quoted in Ishizuka, 2006: 84). Morality is imagined to be as malleable and textural as the body itself.

It should be clear that materiality and corporeality will be as crucial to this reading of shame as it has been to my readings in previous chapters. Visuality, too, will form a crucial

fulcrum on which my argument will swing. As Peter de Bolla comments: 'one might say that vision figures Enlightenment thought' (de Bolla, 1996: 65). De Bolla relates this visuality explicitly to spatial issues: 'Consequently, visuality is both literally a topic under investigation during the Enlightenment and the name we might give to a figurative spacing that opens up, controls, or legislates the terrain upon which a large number of concepts are articulated' (de Bolla, 1996: 65). In de Bolla's very useful essay, 'The Visibility of Visuality', he considers what he describes as the eighteenth-century 'society of spectacle' (74) as a primary method of producing sympathy and self-reflexivity itself. He explores *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* as a prominent contemporary rationalisation of this 'spectator sport' (74). Key to this, for de Bolla, is the role of the impartial spectator: 'this idealized position, the spectator who is never locatable within a specific individual, within a real person[7], represents the best-case scenario: the spectator as the projection of every individual who aspires to the condition of the ethically sound'. He goes on to point out that a process of internalizing the impartial spectator is a crucial part of the process of moralising the subject: 'this idealized person must be internalized within the breast of every man who would be judged according to the precepts he holds dear' (76).

De Bolla's analysis of Smith's text, however, does not consider the role of shame in either the society of spectacle or the process of internalizing idealized morals. This is strange considering one of his key critical angles on visuality comes via Lacan's *Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis*, from which comes this rumination, quoted by de Bolla and which I also quote for reference:

> A gaze surprises him in the function of the voyeur, disturbs him, overwhelms him and reduces him to a feeling of shame. The gaze in question is certainly the presence of others as such. But does this mean that originally it is in the relation of subject to subject, in the function of the existence of others as looking at me, that we apprehend what the gaze really is? Is it not clear that the gaze intervenes here only in as much as it is not the annihilating subject, correlative of the world of objectivity, who feels himself surprised, but the subject sustaining himself in a function of desire? (Lacan, quoted in de Bolla: 67)[8]

What Lacan is drawing our attention to here is the affective dimension of vision; its capacity for entangling body and mind, desires and fears within the fraying threads of subjectivity and

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[7] It is worth noting here that this 'idealization' of the impartial spectator – in other words, that he is in a sense a necessary fiction – should be compared to my arguments in chapter 2 regarding the fop. He, too, is an idealization, albeit a negative one, in that he is a fictive construct used to shame men and keep them within 'polite' boundaries.

[8] This quotation comes from pages 84-85 of the translation by Alan Sheridan, published by Penguin in 1977.

objectivity. This becomes clearer when you pick out vocabulary. Whilst bearing in mind that I am reading Lacan in translation here, I am still struck by how central the concept of surprise is to the arrival of shame; our subject is surprised by a gaze, but in fact Lacan stresses that the affect surprise is more crucial in this visual field than the gaze itself: 'Is it not clear that the gaze intervenes here *only in as much as* it is not the annihilating subject…who feels himself surprised, but the subject sustaining himself in a function of desire?' It is this struggling subject who experiences surprise in response to the gaze, and this surprise which 'reduces him to a feeling of shame'.

The reason I am pulling out these single words is because of their significance in the work of Silvan Tomkins. As Tomkins repeatedly points out in his work, all affects can interact with, intensify or reduce any other. In Lacan's formulation, surprise reduces a person to shame when they become aware of the vulnerability of their subjectivity. For Tomkins, shame itself is often the great reducer; it essentially reduces the capacity to experience and present all the other affects. One can be ashamed of literally anything: of an interest in someone or something; of one's angry feelings; of being surprised by a realisation. For Tomkins, shame's most powerful legacy is in its relationship to interest: how, as Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank explain it, shame can help define 'so basic a function as the ability to be interested in the world' (Sedgwick & Frank, 1995: 5). Tomkins himself clarifies:

> The innate activator of shame is the incomplete reduction of interest or joy…Such a barrier might be because one is suddenly looked at by one who is strange, or because one wishes to look at or commune with another person but suddenly cannot because he is strange, or one expected him to be familiar but he suddenly appears unfamiliar, or one started to smile but found one was smiling at a stranger. (Tomkins, 1995: 135)

Here we find again the problematic gaze and the sense of surprise we found in Lacan's rumination, as well as the compromised self unable to sustain its illusion of autonomy. Both Tomkins and Lacan seem keenly aware, at least in these texts, of the interplay between visuality and affect. To bring this back to de Bolla's work on eighteenth-century visuality and moral development, we can see in the quotation from Tomkins echoes of de Bolla's understanding of moral improvement in the eighteenth century as involving hope; the impartial spectator is 'the projection of every individual who aspires to the condition of the ethically sound'. Aspiration is of course a form of interest, a yearning for a goal or state of being. An incomplete reduction in one's aspirations is, as we so often learn, a source of shame. And what does shame have to do with Hogarth? By now, it should hopefully be clear how the disembowelled object may be feeling once its pulp has been scoop'd out so nicely, and its interiority so ruthlessly mastered.

How to get inside: Smith's impartial spectator

We come to Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* with a set of tools which allows us to understand this philosophical treatise as an investigation into the connections between self and other when refracted through the prism of shame. On the opening page, Smith presents us with his understanding of sympathy, which is rooted in 'some principles in [man's] nature, which interest him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it but the pleasure of seeing it' (Smith, 2009: 13). Interest, the very first affect mentioned in a text which fizzes with them, is cited here as fundamental to the existence of society. Crucial here is the necessity of seeing the happiness of others, and the enjoyment we gain from doing so. Here we have Tomkins's positive affects, interest and enjoyment, made possible through a culture of visuality, the spectator sport of gazing upon others that de Bolla suggests is so crucial to eighteenth-century polite society.

Smith then goes on to explain that most sympathy is achieved, not by actually feeling or experiencing what the other feels or experiences, but by using the imagination: 'by the imagination we place ourselves in his situation, we conceive ourselves enduring all the same torments, we *enter* as it were *into his body*, and become in some measure the same person with him' (13-14, my emphasis). The imaginative faculties of man allow him to travel into the body of another, much in the way that Hogarth's painterly imagination travels inside the observed object. This culture of surveillance is here rendered not imperial but nurturing to a strengthening of the common bonds between men, and crucial to this is the imaginative exploration of the body of one's fellow sufferer. It seems that the anxiety around spectatorship between men is here given another remedy, one more positive than those offered by Mr. Spectator or fop literature. Smith's imaginative exploration of other bodies is a homosocial move aimed at dissipating rivalry (a refusal to sympathise expressed through highly theatrical methods such as duelling) and instead improving social cohesion.

In Smith's initial example, as with so many of the examples in the early pages of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, sympathy is elicited for a man whose suffering is less philosophical and more physical. Smith refers to our response to witnessing 'our brother…upon the rack' and comments that 'our senses will never inform us of what he suffers…it is by the imagination only that we can form any conception of what are his sensations' (13). Entering into the body of another through the ocular and creative capacities of the eyes and brain is therefore the feat we must perform repeatedly in order to vouchsafe the stability of civilised society. Our brother on the rack becomes the Hogarthian object we

must lovingly disembowel and climb inside in order to maintain and reproduce systems of affect necessary to our flourishing. We should pause here and consider why it is that so often in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* imaginative sympathy is evoked through physical suffering. I have discussed earlier in this thesis my sense that a polite society necessarily reduces and devalues the need for, and prestige of, physical violence and suffering. By using theatrical set pieces such as the 'brother on the rack', and elsewhere the man who stoically endures the loss of his leg in cannon fire, Smith captures in language the physical performance of masculinity and dramatizes it further in his philosophical reasoning. At the same time, of course, its rendering in language valorises particular modes of physical suffering in a way that moves it out of the experience of the polite citizen, thereby reinforcing the almost wistful high regard that the suffering male body has been traditionally imbued with.

Peter de Bolla notes that crucially, this imaginative communion has another side effect which is of particular importance to me in my current reading of Smith's text:

> Smith makes it clear that the spectator will never quite manage to reproduce at the same intensity those feelings of the other since sympathetic sentiment is, in the last analysis, "imaginary". However, this difference leads the spectator to notice a tension within himself between the feelings he experiences in his own right and those he experiences through this imaginative projection onto the observed. It is this tension that leads the spectator to ponder not only what it might be like to be the afflicted person but also what it might be like to be spectated upon...In this sense subjectivity is precisely not positioned in the eye of the beholder but, rather, in the exchanges that occur in the phantasmic projection of what it might feel like to be constituted as a subject by looking on the onlookers of our selves. (de Bolla, 1996: 75)

What de Bolla identifies here as a tension between what a person experiences 'in his own right' and what he experiences 'through...imaginative projection' is a tension between internal and external. In other words, where do my experiences end and those of others begin? Or to put it more simply, where do I end, and where does he/she/they begin? It is through observation of others that we begin to learn things about ourselves, and in this hiatus, an internal suspended temporality develops which allows identity to take on solidity.

In Part III of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Smith ruminates on what it is that prevents us from putting our own interests ahead of those of others, even where the results of our self-interest would benefit us more than it would hurt our fellow man. Smith avoids relying on benevolence or concepts of fraternal goodwill to explain this phenomenon:

> It is reason, principle, conscience, the inhabitant of the breast, the man within, the great judge and arbiter of our conduct. It is he who, whenever we are about to act so as to affect the happiness of others, calls to us, with a voice capable of astonishing the

most presumptuous of our passions, that we are but one of the multitude, in no respect better than any other in it; and that when we prefer ourselves so shamefully and so blindly to others, we become the proper objects of resentment, abhorrence, and execration. (159)

Smith embodies the abstract concepts of reason, principle and conscience in a second man that dwells within each of us. Specifically, Smith locates him within the breast, where the heart is found, in the seat of the soul. What Smith does with his man within both builds on contemporary ideas of spectatorship and stretches the boundaries of the self. The body for Smith is a permeable membrane, a shell composed of threads that enables flow between the public and the private. The man within the breast, or the impartial spectator as he is often known, is the Hogarthian artist, disembowelling, climbing inside and gaining mastery over the object he surveys, in this case: you.

The impartial spectator does more than merely survey, however. He is a man of action, and his characteristic repeated action is one of intervention. Smith conceives of this action being made vocally, 'with a voice capable of astonishing the most presumptuous of our passions'. The intervention of the impartial spectator is intended to induce a hesitation in the agent, and the hesitation, if utilised correctly, induces a helpful liminal pause, the moment between pre-action and action. When the impartial spectator acts, he acts so that we, as agents, may be prevented from acting at least temporarily. In this moment of non-action, the gap is filled by affect. It is this window, this liminal pause, which should provide the moment of entry for the kinds of affects which place us within the threads and fibres of interrelation. What affect is better suited for the placing of an agent within the matrix of consequence than shame? It is shame, rushing in as it does at the critical moment, which reminds us, as Smith says, 'that we are but one of the multitude'. In other words, shame returns us to a sense of ourselves, of our bodies caught mid-action, and of our place nestled into the fabric of society. We begin to understand the damage we may be about to inflict on this fabric.

Shame returns us not just to our correct place[9], but our correct shape and size. By denying shame, we become, as Smith remarks, 'the proper objects of resentment, abhorrence, and execration', in other words, objects that do not fit. Society moves to bind us ever tighter with threads of resentment, abhorrence and execration, in order to defend itself. These terms

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[9] We see this occurring in *The Spectator*, as I discussed in chapter 1. The allegory 'The Palace of Vanity', which appeared in no. 460, depicts the formerly vain visitors to the palace, which hangs in the air, being unable to return to ground level and escape until they have reached their 'due point of Esteem which they ought to have for themselves' (vol. 4, 124). Shame in eighteenth century texts often fulfils a conservative social function, suggesting that despite social upheaval and the rise of a nominally meritocratic society, everyone ultimately had their limits.

describe a process, and various tools within that process, to make an offender feel ashamed. Smith seems to say that it is far better to be shamed internally, by the impartial spectator, than externally, by other spectators. This buys in to the prevailing assumption implicit in influential texts like *The Spectator*, that a public shaming is an unbearable catastrophe. Better by far to be shamed by the man within, than the men without. The sign of a truly socialised man is that he can shame himself without society's intervention.

The ultimate relationship between agent and his man within should eventually be almost symbiotic, as demonstrated when Smith says: 'The view of the impartial spectator becomes so perfectly habitual to him, that, without any effort, without any exertion, he never thinks of surveying his misfortune in any other view' (Smith, 2009: 171). It should be noted here that in addition to vocabulary which utilises visual concepts (view, surveying), Smith also conceives of the affective gap narrowing, needing less space and less temporal drag, for the agent to reach the ideal moral conclusion. The agent in constant dialogue with his impartial spectator has attained the kind of mastery Hogarth predicts through a closely-related imaginative practice.

Smith suggests that our emotional development is ongoing, much like the maintenance of polite masculinity. Smith gives the example of a weak man, a man of 'a little more firmness' and a man of 'real constancy and firmness' all in the same situation. Caught in a moment of intense personal distress, the test is how they respond to a visit from another. The weak man will be unable to conceal his distress, even from a stranger, for long. The man of more firmness will perform better, but may eventually give way. It is important to note that this is where Smith places the greater part of society, and that he does not necessarily condemn imperfection. The ideal state is that of the man of 'real constancy and firmness', a man who is in ceaseless communion with his inner guardian:

> He has never dared to forget for one moment the judgment which the impartial spectator would pass upon his sentiments and conduct. He has never dared to suffer the man within the breast to be absent one minute from his attention. With the eyes of this great inmate he has always been accustomed to regard whatever relates to himself. This habit has become perfectly familiar to him. He has been in the constant practice, and, indeed, under the constant necessity, of modelling, of endeavouring to model, not only his outward conduct and behaviour, but, as much as he can, even his inward sentiments and feelings, according to those of this awful and respectable judge. He does not merely affect the sentiments of the impartial spectator. He really adopts them. He almost identifies himself with, he almost becomes himself that impartial spectator, and scarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel. (169)

The ideal affective state is one of external stoicism, and internal communion with one's impartial spectator.

The range of names Smith gives to the impartial spectator underlines his importance to Smith's thesis. The phrase 'impartial spectator' is itself used three times in the paragraph above, alongside 'man within the breast', 'this great inmate', 'this awful and respectable judge' and 'that great arbiter of his conduct'. Such a proliferation of titles gives the impartial spectator added clout. This is Smith briefly abandoning his usually even style for something more urgent. The breathless tone is enhanced by the false start in sentence structure evident in the last sentence, 'He almost identifies himself with, he almost becomes himself that impartial spectator, and scarce even feels but as that great arbiter of his conduct directs him to feel'. This syntactical glitch insists that the reader hesitate over the phrase, much like the spectator himself insists the agent hesitate so as to allow for self-reflection via shame.

And what of shame? Of all the affects, this is one Smith has strikingly little to say about explicitly, although he seemingly has much to say about the problems created by its absence. Shamelessness is a fault identified early in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and described in terms of its effect on others:

> We sometimes feel for another, a passion of which he himself seems to be altogether incapable; because, when we put ourselves in his case, that passion arises in our breast from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality. We blush for the impudence and rudeness of another, though he himself appears to have no sense of the impropriety of his own behaviour; because we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered, had we behaved in so absurd a manner. (16)

Putting ourselves in his case, in this case, involves climbing into his case – the breast where Smith places his idealized conscience figure. What we have observed places us unnervingly within a body that is behaving absurdly, and yet showing no sign of recognising this. We are trapped, if only momentarily, in a vehicle we are not in control of. This causes us to blush, one of the external markers of shame, as identified by Silvan Tomkins: 'Blushing of the face in shame is a consequence of, as well as a further cause for, heightened self- and face-consciousness' (1995: 136).

What of our reactions to our own shameless behaviour, then? I want to discuss remorse in greater depth later, but for now a few words can be said on visibility and personal feelings of shame and humiliation. In a section on our own ill-advised behaviour, Smith discusses ideas of orientation and visuality to elucidate our relationship to our own

reprehensible actions. Smith casts our perceptions of self as a cumulative process: 'The opinion which we entertain of our own character depends entirely on our judgment concerning our past conduct' (182). Smith reminds us here that, much like the relationship with the man within the breast, our relationships with ourselves are ongoing projects of learning; a kind of fragile auto-pedagogy. We approach ourselves with exquisite care and more than a hint of apprehension: 'He is a bold surgeon, they say, whose hand does not tremble when he performs an operation upon his own person; and he is often equally bold who does not hesitate to pull off the mysterious veil of self-delusion, which covers from his view the deformities of his own conduct' (182). Both the surgeon and the truth-seeker are described as bold; their boldness is demonstrated through action and these actions have equally grotesque, though necessary, elements. Both also involve penetrating membranes which keep the individual protected from the invasion of the threatening external. The more socially-conditioned reaction is described by Smith thus: 'It is so disagreeable to think ill of ourselves, that we often purposely turn away our view from those circumstances which might render that judgment unfavourable' (182). This false orientation of our gazes results in perpetuating previous immoralities and persevering 'in injustice, merely because we once were unjust, and because we are ashamed and afraid to see that we were so' (182).

Partiality to our own actions leaves us blind to their propriety, so that ultimately we are left unable to view them 'in the light in which any indifferent spectator would consider it'. A man more endowed with 'a particular power of perception' is able to pierce the mysterious veil, however, and distinguish 'the beauty or deformity of passions and affections; as their own passions would be more immediately exposed to the view of this faculty, it would judge with more accuracy concerning them, than concerning those of other men, of which it had only a more distant prospect' (182). The underlying metaphor here is one of landscape aesthetics. The 'distant prospect' of other people's morality should be viewed as a composite and wild landscape, but not something one can entirely master, unlike Hogarth's hollow object. Accuracy here relies on close-ups both visual and tactile, and mastery. Concentrating too much on the bigger picture means we lose sight of what happens beneath our noses. 'This self-deceit,' says Smith, 'this fatal weakness of mankind, is the source of half the disorders of human life. If we saw ourselves in the light in which others see us, or in which they would see us if they knew all, a reformation would generally be unavoidable. We could not otherwise endure the sight' (182). The sombre note struck here is due in part to the fear inherent in self-deception. Smith adds fuel to the fire by insinuating that the average indifferent spectator may not, in fact, view our conduct particularly indifferently after all. The shame of this realisation,

he emphasises, would have such force as to bring about a 'reformation' in ourselves almost involuntarily. Otherwise we could not 'endure the sight', a powerful phrase bringing our attention back to the maddeningly visual potentialities of shame: the body out of control, the wagging tongue, the jealous, hateful or filthy mind, the blushing flesh.

The blush is usually manifest in the face, the site of communication between self and others. It is confirmation of shame as one of the most actively corporeal of affects, and as one of the hardest to control. Try as we might, shame evades control and our bodies have developed ways to betray us into unwanted displays of vulnerability. Smith acknowledges this in the last line of the quotation above: 'we cannot help feeling with what confusion we ourselves should be covered, had we behaved in so absurd a manner'. Smith interestingly substitutes 'confusion' here for the more logical 'shame', and in doing so merges shame with surprise – an affect closely allied to confusion and one we have already identified via Lacan as being an initiator for others. Furthermore, Smith's choice of the adjective 'covered' to describe his shame/confusion is interesting both in its corporeal and verbal connotations. The root word for shame translates as 'to cover' and evokes the ways in which one can both hide in and be marked out by shame. Shame and clothing are inextricably linked, as we saw in the chapter on foppery. Surprise and confusion at the behaviour of others can lead to the experience of wearing vicarious shame on the skin, something that Smith suggests is painful but necessary.

There is companionship in such visible affect, as Smith comments: 'Man…conscious of his own weakness, and of the need which he has for the assistance of others, rejoices whenever he observes that they adopt his own passions, because he is then assured of that assistance' (2009: 18-19). Even visible shame, when contracted through the shamelessness of others, can provide mutuality in a social setting, whether it be the shamelessness of a friend or of a national leader. The necessity of this vicarious shame is summarised by Silvan Tomkins thus:

> The vicarious experience of shame, together with the vicarious experience of distress, is at once a measure of civilization and a condition of civilization. Shame enlarges the spectrum of objects outside of himself which can engage man and concern him. After having experienced shame through sudden empathy, the individual will never again be able to be entirely unconcerned with the other. But if empathy is a necessary condition for the development of personality and civilization alike, it is also a necessary condition for the experience of shame. If there is insufficient interest in the other, shame through empathy is improbable. How much shame can be felt at remediable conditions is one critical measure of the stage of development of any civilization. (Tomkins, 1995: 162)

Here, Tomkins's voice chimes in almost perfectly with that of Smith. Smith's opening remarks on sympathy seem to lean more towards what we might now describe as empathy, for example: 'As we have no immediate experience of what other men feel, we can form no idea of the manner in which they are affected, but by conceiving what we ourselves should feel in the like situation' (2009: 13). We might now argue that while sympathy is the mirroring of emotion displayed externally, empathy is the internalisation of another's emotion by reminding ourselves how we have felt in similar situations. This deliberate conjuring up of memory and affect allows the self to move closer to the other, and form a bond. It is this that both Tomkins and Smith suggest forms a civilised society. The potential for empathic connection, as Tomkins makes clear, is hard to break once made, and can be fairly readily transferred from one body and situation to another.

Smith's example, in its excruciating unwelcome-ness, is proof of the ways in which 'the individual will never again be able to be entirely unconcerned with the other'. It is entirely possible, of course, for these communities of the shamed to inhibit the social project of politeness, dragging society into a vortex of shared shame which stalls productivity and encourages us to turn away from one another. The vulnerability of individuals to their own sense of wrongdoing must therefore be mitigated by a discursive project which decides what forms of wrongdoing are truly shameful and must be punished publicly, and which are not. Composite emotions such as remorse, which can occur for Smith in particular in response to those behaviours defined on a societal level as dangerous and shameful, will be discussed in depth below.

Tomkins's pairing of empathy with shame is a truly remarkable insight here, and one that sheds light on Smith's text. 'If there is insufficient interest in the other, shame through empathy is improbable', Tomkins reminds us. Without interest, there can be no shame or empathy, only contempt. Contempt, as I discussed in the last chapter, is only possible when the disconnection between subject and object is extreme enough to both render the object barely human in the eyes of the subject, and when the distance between subject and object is considered stable enough for the latter to pose no threat to the former. Shame and empathy, on the other hand, ensure that distances between subject and object are infinitely malleable, can be lengthened and shortened unexpectedly; they maintain that contact between these two bodies is possible in surprising ways. Contempt cannot lead to a civilisation developed enough to function for the full benefit of its members if contempt and self-regard are the primary motivations in interactions between citizens. Instead, Smith asserts later in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*:

> …hence it is, that to feel much for others and little for ourselves, that to restrain our selfish, and to indulge our benevolent affections, constitutes the perfection of human nature; and can alone produce among mankind that harmony of sentiments and passions in which consists their whole grace and propriety. (31)

It is this that Smith believes is the ultimate goal of communion with the impartial spectator. The man within helps us to understand that, far from rewarding selfishness, society ultimately operates most efficiently when our actions improve the lot of the many, rather than the few.

The impartial spectator in action: shame and remorse

Propriety, of both thought and behaviour, is a key concern of Smith's and relates to both empathy and shame. In a chapter entitled 'Of the sense of Justice, of Remorse, and of the consciousness of Merit', in a section on reward and punishment, Smith asserts that 'though it may be true…that every individual, in his own breast, naturally prefers himself to all mankind, he dares not look mankind in the face, and avow that he acts according to this principle' (100). The conflict between internal and external is palpable here. Smith accepts that self-regard is only natural, that 'every man is…by nature, first and principally recommended to his own care; and as he is fitter to take care of himself than of any other person, it is fit and right that it should be so' (100). No matter how fit and right it may be, however, this knowledge must be kept internally, like a secret. We must instead cultivate an illusion of ignorance towards the existence of this knowledge, in order for society (and ultimately, of course, our individual selves) to benefit. By acknowledging one's selfishness openly, one exposes not only the illusion but also oneself as lacking in empathy and shame. For it is shame that keeps the illusion going; as Smith notes, the individual 'dares not look mankind in the face, and avow that he acts according to this principle'.

Acknowledgment of the knowledge of self-interest is an exposure, a laying bare of oneself as materialistic, manipulative and all too human. It is a result of disconnection from the man within, as Smith comments in a later section: 'The propriety of our moral sentiments is never so apt to be corrupted, as when the indulgent and partial spectator is at hand, while the indifferent and impartial one is at a great distance' (178). The internal and external in Smith's assertion are figured by different parts of the body – the internal by the breast, the external by the face of mankind which the individual man 'dare not' speak to. This is a love that dare not speak its name par excellence, one could say. And why 'dare not'? What is daring defined by? Daring to do something may be defined by the quality of courage; here, for Smith, it is instead defined by a shameless preference of the self above others. The act of daring here is addressing the face, the part of the body that most clearly places itself in the view of society.

Avowing one's self-regard is to turn face-to-face, to look one's interlocutor in the eye, and read the effect of one's confession fed back to one in the muscles of the face and the quality of the gaze. Daring here is not the admirable quality found in the phrase, 'a daring enterprise' or the remark, 'That was very daring of you!' Instead, it is the kind of misplaced daring protested against in the phrase 'how dare you!', which could quite easily be replaced or followed by the rhetorical question, 'have you no shame?' or the exclamation 'shame on you!' Daring in this sense is a deliberate contravention of social rules, of placing one's own satisfaction before that of the greater good.

Contravention can and should result in remorse, an emotion Smith explicitly links with shame:

> The violator of the more sacred laws of justice can never reflect on the sentiments which mankind must entertain with regard to him, without feeling all the agonies of shame, and horror, and consternation. When his passion is gratified, and he begins coolly to reflect on his past conduct, he can enter into none of the motives which influenced it. They appear now as detestable to him as they always did to other people. (102)

Remorse, for Smith a compound of affective elements, is felt bodily ('agonies of shame'). This agony presumably follows a period of frenzied, almost orgiastic self-gratification. The leisurely period of repentance is imagined in gruesomely minute detail by Smith in the remainder of this long paragraph:

> By sympathizing with the hatred and abhorrence which other men must entertain for him, he becomes in some measure the object of his own hatred and abhorrence. The situation of the person who suffered by his injustice, now calls upon his pity. He is grieved at the thought of it; regrets the unhappy effects of his own conduct, and feels at the same time that they have rendered him the proper object of the resentment and indignation of mankind, and of what is the natural consequence of resentment, vengeance and punishment. (102)

This repentance allows for a form of self-surveillance whereby the self falls under the harsh glare of mankind as imagined by the shamed man himself. He becomes 'the object of his own hatred and abhorrence', views himself as if from outside, and with eyes borrowed from other men.

The shame he thus feels turns him into an object removed from himself but still too much himself to be jettisoned. He feels a sense of disgust with himself. Negative affect that cannot be jettisoned can only poison the subject. The remorseful, shame-ridden man Smith describes in such detail feels himself to be 'the proper object of the resentment and indignation of mankind', and ultimately 'vengeance and punishment'. The man who dares to

contravene the most sacred laws must ultimately offer himself as a form of sacrificial scapegoat:

> The thought of this perpetually haunts him, and fills him with terror and amazement. He dares no longer look society in the face, but imagines himself as it were rejected, and thrown out from the affections of all mankind…Every thing seems hostile, and he would be glad to fly to some inhospitable desert, where he might never more behold the face of a human creature, nor read in the countenance of mankind the condemnation of his crimes. (102)

Again, the face is offered as a synecdoche for society, here because it begins to mirror the shame he feels. Ultimately, there is no escape in solitude or society from the feelings of wrongdoing, and he devolves into a pariah, whose 'own thoughts can present him with nothing but what is black, unfortunate and disastrous' (102). He is 'drive[n]… back into society…astonished to appear before [mankind], loaded with shame and distracted with fear, in order to supplicate some little protection from the countenance of those judges, who he knows have already all unanimously condemned him' (102-3). Smith sums up by defining remorse 'of all the sentiments which can enter the human breast the most dreadful. It is made up of shame from the sense of the impropriety of past conduct; of grief for the effects of it; of pity for those who suffer by it; and of the dread and terror of punishment from the consciousness of the justly-provoked resentment of all rational creatures' (103). Here, Smith links shame back to his comments on propriety earlier on.

This is a particularly dark section of Smith's book, which otherwise takes an optimistic, even romantic, view of the human condition. Here, however, shame, impropriety and resentment crowd the pages and we are treated to a highly descriptive, proto-Gothic example of the man who dares to behave shamelessly in the face of society. It is, in fact, one of the rare moments of high drama in an otherwise resolutely stoical text. In this section, we see how transgression, as I suggested at the beginning of this chapter, returns the socialised self to feelings of shame. The return of the criminal to society as described by Smith, in order to face the music as it were, mirrors the return to the self, because shame always draws the outside in. For David Marshall (1986), this drama seems to come from the dilemma that the example poses to Smith's theory: 'Smith can enter into his feelings and vividly imagine and represent his point of view. It is not that Smith feels any sympathy with the man's crime; it is the man's predicament after the murder that moves Smith's fellow-feeling' (182). Sympathy makes one take the part of the outcasts of humanity; in itself, this provides the spectator with a moment in which he must grapple with the shame of 'entering into', in the Hogarthian sense, the shell

of a man whose touch would send shivers down one's spine. Ultimately, no one is entirely free from the shame of the transgressor.

Smith's message seems clear – shame helps society remain coherent and beneficial for its citizens; for those that seek to destroy the balance, shame will teach them a lesson. This duality of shame, which could be reductively described as 'good shame' and 'bad shame' in the same vein as the term 'good cop, bad cop', is also a matter of external and internal. Internal shame, in Smith's philosophy at least, is shame that has been learned and rationalised by a subject. It is the kind of self-awareness and interest in others that Smith advocates throughout *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. External shame, on the other hand, is the shame one must be taught as a consequence of behaviour witnessed and condemned by others; this shame has not yet been processed by the subject and cannot be put to use with the same finesse as internal shame. External shame is the lesson one must learn the hard way. The ideal outcome of this is that one's internal shame becomes further refined, that the man within the breast grows more vigilant against selfishness, and more desirous to help and support others. The man within the breast is the apotheosis of internal shame.

This is all meaningless unless the identification with the impartial spectator leads to virtuous action, however. Smith states that: 'Man was made for action, and to promote by the exertion of his faculties such changes in the external circumstances both of himself and others, as may seem most favourable to the happiness of all'. He goes on to say, 'He must not be satisfied with indolent benevolence, nor fancy himself the friend of mankind, because in his heart he wishes well to the prosperity of the world' (127). Smith makes the distinction between internal and external – although to truly understand someone, one must be capable of entering into the breast of that person, this is not enough. Ultimately, one must *behave* in a way that is mindful of virtue but is also productive and useful to society. Here, Smith stands in contrast to Addison and Steele's Mr. Spectator, whose immunity from shame seems to come from his inactivity. Mr. Spectator's ghostly, abstracted presence ensures that he never participates enough in the world to be dirtied by it. Similarly, the fop, although more corporeal than Mr. Spectator, offers equally as little because his presence is merely decorative at best, or offensive at worst. Smith advocates action which is mindful of affect as the ideal state:

> The man who has performed no single action of importance, but whose whole conversation and deportment express the justest, the noblest, and most generous sentiments, can be entitled to demand no very high reward, even though his inutility should be owing to nothing but the want of an opportunity to serve. We can still refuse it him without blame. We can still ask him, What have you done? What actual

service can you produce, to entitle you to so great a recompense? We esteem you, and love you; but we owe you nothing. (127)

Smith reiterates the virtues of productivity and utility often promoted as part of his philosophy, but it would be short-sighted to ignore the acknowledgment of affect here. Smith recognises the propensity of humanity to be attracted to men of wit and perception, and does not dismiss it. He feels compelled to assert that we can question the standing of these men 'without blame'. Unlike many of the anti-fop writers, for instance, he does not regard the man of wit with outright suspicion. However, he does remind us that ultimately, virtue is in action, not thought, and in a commercial society, actions are measured in productivity and innovation. As E. J. Hundert observes, 'The primary object of his theory of morals is to show how self-interest, *mitigated* by sympathy and self-command, can result in prudent and sometimes beneficent actions, even…in the inescapably utility-maximizing exchange relationships of contemporary commercial societies' (Hundert, 1994: 225).

Smith's philosophy, then, is at all times informed by affect, and the complex interpersonal systems that affect initiates. What of the internal, however? How does shame work within Smith's conception of the personal? A helpful section in the middle of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is part three, entitled, 'Of the foundation of our judgments concerning our own sentiments and conduct, and of the sense of duty'. Smith suggests that one can only achieve the ideal of moral rectitude if one is able to extract one's internal self from one's external self, take on the perspective of an unnamed impartial other, and then reinsert oneself back into the hollowed-out shell that is the external self. 'Whatever judgment we can form concerning [our sentiments and motives], accordingly, must always bear some secret reference, either to what are, or to what, upon a certain condition, would be, or to what, we imagine, ought to be the judgment of others' (Smith, 2009: 133). Smith's circuitous sentence, reflecting as it does the complexity of the process it describes, also highlights the uncertainty of relations between bodies and their affects. The use of qualifiers such as 'would be' or 'ought to be' highlights Smith's recognition that being self-aware is a gymnastic feat which hinges on hypotheses and leaps of faith made with regards to the universal nature of individual experiences of reality. However, Smith asserts the necessity of other people to the making of the self:

> Were it possible that a human creature could grow up to manhood in some solitary place, without any communication with his own species, he could no more think of his own character, of the propriety or demerit of his own sentiments and conduct, of the beauty or deformity of his own mind, than of the beauty or deformity of his own face. (133-4)

It is society, then, according to Smith, which gives us our understandings of ourselves. In order to reach what Smith sees as the ideal moral state – that of the self-regulating citizen – we must integrate the public into the private. 'Bring him into society', Smith says of his feral man, 'and he is immediately provided with the mirror which he wanted before' (134). Like Hogarth's shell, which has been 'scoop'd out so nicely', we find that we must empty ourselves of our own motivations and affective imperatives, and climb back inside as a different person, as the impartial spectator. This is, as I have already argued, internalised shame. Our relationship to ourselves is a relationship whose terms have been defined by shame. Smith is keenly aware of the social nature of the formation of the individual subject; *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is framed around this understanding. The use of affect theory as a critical tool with which to engage with Smith's text allows us to see that shame, in its many shifting manifestations, is the mechanism that both creates the environment in which this process can occur, and remains the crucial motivator for maintaining the socially-turned self.

Smith's impartial spectator – the man who can

Finally, a note on how Smith's concept of the impartial spectator relates to contemporary masculinity. Much of Smith's text generalises about humanity, and the observations and recommendations to be found within it can mostly be applied to both men and women. This remains the case for a casual reading, or one which concerns itself more with the purely philosophical in its broadest sense. My task is, however, to be more alert to the gender dynamics in play, and with that in mind, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* reads, perhaps unsurprisingly, as predominantly addressed to male readers. David Marshall (1986) defines the impartial spectator as male, an assumption he does not interrogate (167). He goes on later, however, to interrogate the problems of sympathy in terms of gender:

> The moral of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* is that one should not display one's sentiments unless one is sure of eliciting sympathy; indeed, it would be best not to display oneself at all, given the small likelihood of attaining fellow-feeling. This ethic of self-command (one might say self-concealment) helps explain the almost total absence of women from the world of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. One might expect Smith to have more to say about women in a treatise on moral sentiments written in an age that closely associated both sympathy and sentiment with "feminine" sensibilities. However, it is precisely these qualities that appear to exclude women from the book. (184)

Marshall's reading highlights both the homosociality of the text and its preoccupation with the preservation of 'masculine' virtues such as stoicism and resolve. Pertaining to those values is

the practice of hiding in plain sight, the very trick performed by Mr. Spectator. While Smith's universalised theory of moral and social development is based around a recognition of affect, it is still unable to move beyond the shame of the particular that haunts Addison and Steele, and the literary construction of politeness in general. It is only, I would contend, with the development of literary sentimentalism that we see that partially destabilised. Marshall suggests that in some ways, Smith in fact furthers the process of depersonalising the masculine beyond even politeness's earliest proponents: 'Unlike Shaftesbury, Smith rarely uses the first-person singular: his almost constant use of the first-person plural both screens himself and practically assumes that the reader shares his sentiments and point of view' (188-9). Marshall invokes both language and spectatorship here to clarify the ways in which Smith obscures the male individual; for the purposes of this discussion, 'point of view' should remind us of Hogarth's project to make the spectator 'master of the meaning' of any given object. Assumption of accordance with one's view point is, of course, mastery in action.

The effectiveness of Smith's message is that it appeals in part to concerns around masculine productivity, and the man of action. In a sense, Smith's project moves to reassure men concerned about their masculine integrity, by placing an emphasis on feeling that avoids effeminacy because it is always the prelude to polite action. As explored in previous chapters, as commercial society developed and became ever more polite, fears of effeminacy became more widespread. Traditionally active occupations such as hunting and fighting were simultaneously becoming more specialised and professionalised, but even here fears of effeminacy in the army, for example, were much discussed[10]. Smith acknowledges these fears when he says: 'the coxcomb…is rewarded with a double share of contempt for his folly and presumption. Why should the man, whom nobody thinks it worth while to look at, be very anxious about the manner in which he holds up his head, or disposes of his arms while he walks through a room?' (Smith, 2009: 68). These references are few and far between, however, and Smith generally conceives of his reader as being one to whom integrity and propriety are important.

By casting moral rectitude as an ongoing fight against temptation and the mores of a wayward society, Smith allowed men to feel less insecure about the loss of the warrior status previously potentially available to all men in a more feudal society. 'Virtue is excellence,' says Smith in part I of *Moral Sentiments*, 'something uncommonly great and beautiful, which rises

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[10] See, for example, Philip Carter's discussion of contemporary concerns over effeminacy in the military in *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain 1660-1800*, Harlow: Pearson Education, 2001: 130-1.

far above what is vulgar and ordinary' (Smith, 2009: 32). The man who wins the fight against moral corruption is elevated to a class of his own; hierarchy reasserts itself not through birth but through accomplishment, and for Smith's purposes, the ultimate accomplishment here is one of virtuous action. There is no question that Smith prizes action above internal rectitude. We see this in his constant reference to what we do as being worthy of judgement, not what we think. As explored above, the man who thinks in the right way but does not act at all cannot be said to be as worthy of respect as a man who acts in the world, who gets his hands dirty, and yet still manages to retain his close links to the man within. The private man, so notable in the personage of Mr. Spectator in Addison and Steele's work, makes few appearances in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Smith's text claims to be fully and entirely of the world, even while it often discusses the self.

The importance of the man of action to Smith's text is highlighted in several of the examples he gives to illustrate his points. It has been observed already how corporeal many of Smith's analogies are. From the beggar whose putrefying flesh is the harbinger of contagious affective communion, we see how explicitly Smith links bodily suffering to affect (14). The male body undergoes repeated assaults in order that Smith can make his points about morality, from torture on the rack (13-14) to imprisonment (174) to the memorable instance where Smith compares affect in in a man who has cut his finger to a man whose leg has been blown off by a cannon. Here Smith observes that: 'The man who has lost his leg by a cannon shot, and who, the moment after, speaks and acts with his usual coolness and tranquillity, as he exerts a much higher degree of self-command, so he naturally feels a much higher degree of self-approbation' (169). Smith admits that most men 'could attend to nothing, but their own pain and their own fear' (169), but the high standard has already been set.

The decimated male body, which nonetheless is overridden by the clear mind and displays a lack of demonstrative affect, fulfils Smith's point about the strong admiration we feel for stoicism in the face of extreme danger. However, it also satisfies a longing in the male reader to imagine themselves into the resilient body of the warrior, an experience largely untasted for many. All who read it would naturally like to see themselves as the man of constancy and firmness, able to bear even horrific injury with stoicism. Still, Smith observes that 'in such paroxysms of distress...the wisest and firmest man, in order to preserve his equanimity, is obliged, I imagine, to make a considerable, and even a painful exertion' (170). Here the control of affect is imagined as being almost as painful as the injury itself. Again, this heightens the sense of affect control as active, as being a fight which is equivalent to that

conducted on the battlefield. Smith himself presents us with a battlefield of the mind when he writes:

> His sense of honour, his regard to his own dignity, directs him to fix his attention upon the one view. His natural, his untaught and undisciplined feelings, are continually calling it off to the other. He does not, in this case, perfectly identify himself with the ideal man within the breast, he does not become himself the impartial spectator of his own conduct. The different views of both characters exist in his mind separate and distinct from one another, and each directing him to a behaviour different from that to which the other directs him. (170).

The sense of the battlefield, of two opposing sides warring over the afflicted man, can only be resolved, of course, by the intervention and decision of the man himself. By choosing honour and dignity, Smith suggests that 'he enjoys his own complete self-approbation, and the applause of every candid and impartial spectator' (170).

It is worth noting here, too, that Smith's writing in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* originated in lectures given at the University of Glasgow where he worked teaching Moral Philosophy. It is likely that many of his students were in their mid-teens, which indicates the reason behind the scholastic tones of the resultant work. To some extent, what became *Moral Sentiments* started life as an explicit programme of education for future men of politeness. When Smith charts the progress of the individual's moral and affective development from childhood onwards, he is tracking the lives of his students so far, as well as indicating paths they could potentially take as they grow older. The 'man of real constancy and firmness' discussed above is the ideal; he is the specimen of commercial masculinity Smith is attempting to steer his students towards. Implicit in this steering, however, are the limitations of such a project. Smith always keeps in mind that the relationship between the man without and the man within is a dialogue between two intimately connected figures; it is not one that can be determined entirely (or even principally) by outside forces, least of all in the artificial setting of the classroom. Instead, the world is the classroom and each budding man of politeness must be his own teacher. This is a pedagogical mantra that persists largely intact into the period of British imperial masculinity: to know oneself, one must act in the world. Being a man acting in the world brought with it challenges implicit, but not fully realised, in *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. The fiction and autobiographical writing of the eighteenth century imagined and described these difficulties vividly, however, and it is to these forms that I turn my attention in the second half of this thesis.

PART TWO

Chapter Four

The Man of Feeling: **Shame, sentiment and futile masculinity**

The second half of the thesis is made up of three chapters on three very different writers and their works – Henry Mackenzie's *The Man of Feeling* (1771), Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative* (1789) and James Boswell's *London Journal* (1762-3). Separated as they are by form, style and subject, and by the inherent differences of their authors, all three texts engage with the problem that faced would-be polite men in the latter part of the eighteenth century: how to live up to the ideal constructed by writers examined in Part One, among others. I argue that while the sentimental masculinity that Mackenzie's novel depicts encounters moral uncertainties, which leads to a melancholy account of contemporary manhood, Equiano uses his status as outsider to both comment on and circumvent these same pitfalls. Mackenzie, with an investment in and access to the mores of politeness, writes a novel in which his hero struggles to negotiate the demands of the modern world, choosing ultimately to turn his back on it. Equiano, starting from a position of abjection, provides a startling counterpoint to Mackenzie – and many of the other writers encountered in this study – in demonstrating a confident takeover of polite masculine virtues, in doing so undermining the exclusivity of them. For Boswell, a Scot caught between his overbearing provincial father and the pleasures of the English metropolis, the puzzle to be solved is where he belongs. Conflicted about his Scottish identity, and his identity as a polite man, Boswell's meditations are evidence of the intensely spectatorial and reflective experiences outlined theoretically by Smith and *The Spectator*.

My focus in this chapter, however, is Henry Mackenzie's 1771 bestseller, *The Man of Feeling*. In it, I argue that the imperatives of politeness and moral sentiment in a commercial society can create feelings of shame and melancholy when they are felt as intolerable pressures. This leads to a refusal of progress and an abandonment of the world, embodied in Harley. It can also put strain on the ability of literature to explain the social and moral implications of polite commercial society, as we see with *The Man of Feeling*. I examine how others relate to the novel: its readers, and its author, Henry Mackenzie himself. Both are ambivalent about the text, both drawn to its vision of an affect-driven form of masculinity and unnerved by the self-sabotage which is its natural consequence. My argument in this chapter, then, is that these hesitancies and uncertainties are expressive of the compromises and complexities of polite masculinity that I outlined in the first half of this thesis. But *The Man of*

Feeling itself is not just a humiliating and humiliated text, but one that explores shame in ways that enable more fragile forms of masculinity to be imagined, if not lived. This includes ways of being a man that question the ideal of mastery that we saw described in the previous chapters, via *The Spectator*, and *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. It makes a space, perhaps unwittingly, for the man who fails to be successful in the terms laid out by early capitalism; it even valorizes those who turn away from the future in favour of the past and its imagined communities.

It is important to note here that, of the three remaining chapters, the text discussed in this one is most obviously mediated through its relationship to genre. Although I consider genre in the works of both Equiano and Boswell, it is Mackenzie whose work is most facilitated and undermined by its genre. Sentimental literature's generic complexity has come under scrutiny from many critics. Its huge contemporary popularity has been helpfully elucidated by John Mullan (1988) and Markman Ellis (1996), and discussions of Mackenzie's work appear in many critical accounts. Part of the fascination that sentimental literature provides for those who study it can be found in its resistance to clarification, as Markman Ellis observes: 'The recognition that sensibility is both "a fashion" and "was fashionable", testifies to its cultural centrality, but also establishes it as essentially unstable' (35). This instability is a result of sentiment's uncanny mixture of 'indefinable' feeling and often formulaic deployment of generic features. It is also due to the intense pressure placed upon the sentimental mode to define and explain social relations. This ambiguity surrounding what feeling actually constitutes extends to those contemporaries who advocated the benefits of sentimentality, as Ellis outlines: 'In the words of contemporaries, the sentimental is consistently defined negatively as the space between more extreme constructions, as a variety of weak thought that will not bear analysis, that escapes or evades discussion, that is not to be analysed by reason or rational debate' (7).

As we will see with Boswell, and here with the figure of Harley, there is a lack of worldliness, or even an otherworldliness, about the sentimental which gives it a weak power due to the very fact that it does not need to be defined or rationalized in terms accountable to reason. As John Mullan accurately observes: '"Reason" becomes wholly commanding of only limited and specialized projects such as those of mathematics; a description of a social and moral world must be a description of the movements of passions' (24). In Mackenzie in particular, Mullan finds that the world is 'impervious', 'the cause of every misery' and 'imagined as non-society' (122). I will explore how this notion in *The Man of Feeling* is redolent of shame and a sort of queer 'backwardness' later in this chapter, but for now it is worth

noting the ways in which sentiment seeks to describe the social world whilst refusing to be entirely of it. In figures like Harley, sentimental virtue is 'utterly stylized, specialized beyond the possibility of application' (Mullan 120).

Modern critics usually position Mackenzie's first novel as a prime example of the sentimental literature that became popular in the latter half of the eighteenth century. There has been some discussion over whether or not *The Man of Feeling* should be read as uncritically sentimental. Earlier critics such as Brian Vickers and R.F. Brissenden seem to, but in Barbara Benedict's view, this is not necessarily the case (1994 232-3). The debate over how to read the novel of sentiment is ongoing. Undoubtedly, *The Man of Feeling* in particular is a text that is baffling. A modern reader might be baffled by its structural instability, by its set-piece narrative, and most often by its highly 'performed' emotion. Even with the twenty-first century reader's supposedly sophisticated understanding of gender 'fluidity' and emotional expression, we can still find Harley and his narrative both frustrating and embarrassing. It could even be said that for us, both man and manuscript are shameful. As Ildiko Csengei (2012) reminds us, although the novel is much-studied by academics interested in sentiment, it is not widely read by the general reader (139). Laid before us, over and over, is a series of spectacles of sentiment. We are invited to gaze upon it; indeed we are compelled to do so by the text's erasure of almost any other narrative events, and in doing so we become entangled with it. As we saw numerous times in the opening chapters, gazing upon the actions and emotions of others is a risky strategy. Far from placing the subject in the position of master, the gaze more often implicates the subject in whatever deed he gazes upon.

Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, a text published twelve years prior to Mackenzie's novel, demonstrates the capacity of the gaze to create communities of affect. These communities are often organized spectatorially, whether directly, as Smith demonstrates, or via the gazes found in texts, as my discussion of Maureen Harkin's work on sentimental fiction indicates below. Smith, in various examples, places suffering bodies (often implicitly or explicitly male) in positions that allow us to see this suffering clearly. Beggars with sores, a 'brother on the rack', a friend afflicted by grief; all these suffering bodies reveal themselves to our gaze, and invite us to 'enter into', in Smith's words, their predicaments (2009 13-14, 169). Smith suggests that polite society is predicated on near-stoical control of one's emotions, but also the ability to have 'sympathy' with the feelings of others. Eve Sedgwick (2003), writing 250 years later, implies something similar when she gives the example of 'an unwashed and half-insane man' wandering into a lecture theatre – we (the

audience) feel embarrassment at his disruption of a formal situation, and we contract his own shame through looking at him (37). But even if we turn away our gaze, we are still spectators; we are unable to look away entirely. For Sedgwick, this identification is almost inevitable; we are 'unable to stanch the hemorrhage of painful identification' we feel with the suffering we witness, even when that suffering humiliates all present. The important point to note here is that even when sympathy involves taking on bad or painful feelings, we still feel compelled to relate. The gaze ensnares us in communities of affect. Smith's example of the beggar covered in sores, and the spectator's uncontrollable urge to 'enter into' his suffering, is yet another demonstration of this phenomenon. No wonder, then, that the reader of *The Man of Feeling* may react to Harley's futile displays of emotion with embarrassment.

Mackenzie's novel participates in the discourse of moral sentiment. Here, Harley enacts Smith's imagined journeys through metropolitan streets, the dark recesses of Bedlam, and the dank garrets of fallen women, to experience and respond to all the shades of human suffering. In doing so, he gazes upon various bodies in crisis, and in response, his own body mirrors their suffering, usually through weeping. The notorious 'index to tears', which first appeared in the 1886 edition of the novel, highlights the frequency with which tears (usually Harley's) are shed. The eyes that gaze are also the eyes that weep. Harley has no choice but to weep – his tears seem reflexive, indicating a high level of Smithian sympathy with the plight of others. Let us not forget, however, that Harley is not the only spectator in *The Man of Feeling*. The very title of the text, which names him under a sobriquet, indicates that Harley is the subject of intense spectatorial consideration. As true as this is with any novel featuring a prominent protagonist, in Mackenzie's novel more than just the reader and his author gaze upon Harley. His tale reaches us through a manuscript written by a friend ('The Ghost'), whose description of Harley's exploits is told in close-up. The manuscript itself is nearly destroyed, only to be saved by an unnamed reader, who in reading Harley's story gazes not just at the paper but also at Harley himself. Finally, this fictional reader allows us, as 'real life' readers to gaze at Harley through him. Harley is an object framed and mediated by a series of framing structures which present him as an object to gaze upon.

Ildiko Csengei makes much of the importance of *The Man of Feeling* to sentimental reading practices at the time of, and after, its publication. 'The novel demonstrates a belief in the ability of sentimental fiction intensively to form and reform the reading public; self-consciously acting out how such an education in feeling is brought about' (123), she argues. Csengei advocates for a reading of Mackenzie's novel that envisions it as ideology-forming

(123); it helps to form ideas of morality through an individual's emotional responses to a fictional text. Csengei's contention is that, despite appearances, the text is less concerned with Harley than it is with bringing about 'a shift in focus, turning both narrator and reader into men of feeling' (123). Harley's mind, in fact, serves as a mirror, which 'turns us into a better person when we look into it'. She goes on to write: 'Thus, the mirror of society is formative of the affective, moral self that it simultaneously inhabits' (128). If the mirror helps us to (literally) reflect on ourselves, however, then this can just as logically lead to bad feeling (anxiety, paranoia, jealousy, guilt, *shame*) as it can the more socially productive improvement in morals. How much of this bad feeling can be put to use in the production of a morally 'good' self, and how much remains unincorporated? Is the man of feeling (whether Harley, his readers, or the phantasmatic idealized figure created by the interaction between reader and text) a product of socially-sanctioned morality, simultaneously strengthening this same morality in a feedback loop enabled by sentimental literary conventions? Or is the man of feeling something far less socially useful – is he, in fact, a vortex of bad feeling pulling both narrative and social cohesion apart; a kind of shadow figure to the accepted, Addisonian formation of the masculine social subject?

I want to pause here, as many points have now been made that may seem disparate; I want to draw them together. I have discussed, in previous chapters, the theorization of polite masculinity in writers such as Addison and Smith as a balanced mixture of stoicism and sensitivity, outward-facing and sociable, whilst simultaneously erasing particularity of selfhood and privileging the universal. The man of politeness is also the man of commerce; he is self-engineered for the expanding world of capital of the eighteenth century. In this chapter I have so far described the ways in which the sentimental novel presents a world that is in some ways opposed to this: a world of shifting feeling that resists identification, a world of bodies that (unlike Hogarth's object or Smith's agent) refuse to open themselves to scrutiny, in which moral lessons taught through affective experience refuse to end with the sanctioned moral and so spill over. 'Weak power' is a useful concept which can describe the ways in which sentiment operates in defiance of pure reason. The rise of sentiment, which is difficult to pinpoint, but undoubtedly gained in popularity with Richardson's novels, demonstrates the power such weakness had. I want to be more specific, however, in order to identify exactly what I believe to be going on in a text like *The Man of Feeling.*

When presenting on this novel at a conference on shame at the University of Warwick in 2014, I was asked a question afterwards by the poet Denise Riley, who was in the audience.

In the course of asking her question, she used the term 'weak sexualisation' to account for what she had understood of my arguments about Harley. The term has haunted me ever since (as has my inability to give her an answer that sounded as good as the question – much to my own shame). What this chapter is an account of, then, is weak sexualisation: a style of masculinity embodied by Harley that turns away from the positivist narrative of polite masculinity towards something less readable by the terms of success as envisioned by a writer like Addison. This 'turn' is one that favours the past rather than the future; that allows the masculine body to fall apart and fragment; that attempts to be productive and fails. Harley's masculinity is a form of weak sexualisation because while it fails to achieve what it sets out to do (that is, make a fortune and cross over from the reliquary of aristocracy into the new world of commercial masculinity), it opens up instead a space for futility as a sentimental marker of selfhood. As the critic James Lilley (2007) has observed: 'there is a constitutive queerness to this sensing self, a peculiarity that patterns all economies of sentimental desire' (650). The peculiar, or the particular, aligns the man of feeling with the feminine, that which is unbearably full of meaning, and swerves away from the Addisonian man of politeness, as exemplified by Mr. Spectator, an eidolon evacuated of meaning in order to represent the universal. Men like Harley suffer and die, then, because they are too good for this world. An exemplar of sentimental virtue he may be, but he is also a threat to the 'useful' forms of affect advocated by the likes of Addison, because his feeling is ultimately self-disabling.

The idea of a 'turn away' or a 'swerve' is key to my description of what Harley does and represents, evoking as it does a rejection of a gathering or established consensus that we always find in narratives of progress. I like these terms, 'turn' and 'swerve', because they both have queer origins, and as I began to hint with the Lilley quotation above, I find that there is something queer about Harley. My usage of 'turn' originates in the work of Heather Love, specifically in her book *Feeling backward: loss and the politics of queer history* (2007), an exploration of largely Modernist accounts of often explicitly queer desire or identity. What Love does here is to consider the ongoing importance of negative affect to queer history and experience. It is her focus on what it is to look backward or even to *be* backward, in the sense of being unwilling or unable to accept progress that I find enabling here. 'For those marked as temporally backward, the stakes of being identified as modern or non-modern were extremely high' (6) Love suggests. We see this in Harley most clearly in his discussion with Ben Silton, on his melancholy return journey to Scotland after he abandons his commercial endeavours in London. But we also see it in his sympathy with older men, shared by Mackenzie, exemplifying as they do a lost time that is sanctified by sadness and wisdom. We see it, too, in his refusal to

resolve the heterosexual marriage plot between himself and Miss Walton, voicing his desire only at the point of no return. It comes as no surprise to us that his lands are described as 'melancholy' and having a 'languid stillness' (2009: 3), nor that his story, seemingly written by a man known as The Ghost, is disappearing, consumed as wadding by that most phallic of objects, the gun. Harley's turn, then, is a turning away from a world that he is unable to find space in; a world that abuses and rejects him as much as he rejects it.

'Swerve', and its specific application in this chapter, derives from Eve Sedgwick. In her essay 'A Poem Is Being Written' (1994) Sedgwick explores self-fashioning through a consideration of queerness and shame, and literary genre, in her case lyric and narrative poetry. She writes:

> How far can or will an already gendered and physically very localized desire swerve, how radically will it misrecognize itself, in its need to join a preexisting current of discourse through which to become manifest, to be fulfilled, manipulated or even frankly repressed – to become, in short, meaningful? The answer is: quite far indeed. Almost far enough. But not without cost; nor perhaps without leaving a trace of its own particular itinerary; nor without the potential for changing, for better and worse, however minimally along with its own direction that of the discourse it joins. (206)

I find that *The Man of Feeling*, as a sentimental novel, encourages a swerve in those who read it, and in Mackenzie himself. By looking at the reception of the novel, through a reading of reviews and one private reader-response, and also by examining Mackenzie's own swerve away from the novel toward the more securely universal (read: masculine) periodical form, I will draw out some of the concerns highlighted by Sedgwick here. The responses I discuss in this chapter are marked by anxieties about identity, especially gender identity, that hint at the shame of having deviated from a sanctified path of masculine progress. That is to say, *The Man of Feeling* acts as a formative but ultimately insupportable text as far as polite, commercial masculine identities are concerned.

This is demonstrated by a response which first acknowledges its feminine allure (it is emotive, tear-jerking, giddy) whilst subsequently denigrating it for lacking in qualities which can be designated masculine (it is not instructive, it is not securely structured, it is imitative). Mackenzie's *Lounger* essay on novel writing, written over a decade after he published *The Man of Feeling*, seems to reflect back on the genre of sentimental novels in order to assert the same conclusions. The reader responses I describe are drawn toward Harley, before *swerving* back to join the world of commerce he abandons. The difference I wish to point to between these

terms 'turn' and 'swerve', is their directionality. 'Turn', as Love suggests, is one-directional, a turn towards history, and a rejection of progress: it is essentially although not literally a death wish. 'Swerve', however, is less final. I use it to evoke a dalliance with the anti-polite, an experience one must return from in order to live, although not, as Eve Sedgwick's words suggest, without bringing something marked with you.

Why is this deviation from commercial polite masculinity so dangerous? As cultural historians such as Matthew McCormack (2005) have pointed out, the ability of a man to 'make' himself was crucial if he wished to evade the shame of being perceived as dependent: 'Independence connoted not just autonomy, but the condition in which self-mastery, conscience and individual responsibility could be exercised' (2). While Harley clearly has a conscience, the active virtues of self-mastery and individual responsibility are harder to credit him with. Self-mastery, as the second half of this thesis will demonstrate, is easily theorized, but much harder to put into practice. We are reminded, perhaps, of the exhortations of William Hogarth (1753) to be 'masters of the meaning of every view of the object' (32). This mastery is here referenced in the context of art, but readily applicable to, and symptomatic of, the binary gender discourses growing in popularity in the period.[11] A culture which enabled the permeation of such coded references to gender expectations was on a collision course with the lived realities of individual lives. This includes the futile masculinity that Harley represents. As moving as it was, there were (and had to be, in the terms of polite masculinity) limits to the acceptability of the man of feeling. Even Adam Smith, who might otherwise approve of Harley's observations of and attempts to enter into the problems of others, would criticize his inability to look after his own affairs. It is Smith (2009), after all, who insists that despite our duty to always think of how 'we naturally appear to others', it is nonetheless true that every man 'is fitter to take care of himself than of any other person, it is fit and right that it should be so' (100). In short, is Harley's masculinity shameful because it swerves away from the path of politeness?

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[11] See Michele Cohen's *Fashioning Masculinity: National Identity and Language in the Eighteenth Century* London & New York: Routledge, 1996, especially pages 1-9, and also Michele Cohen and Tim Hitchcock, eds. *English Masculinities 1660-1800*, London & New York: Longman, 1999, especially the Introduction pages 1-22. Also of general help is Michael McKeon's essay 'Historicizing Patriarchy: The Emergence of Gender Difference in England, 1660-1760' in *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 28:3 Spring 1995, pages 295-322.

The swerve: Harley's readers

The novel was an instant success, and was read avidly by both men and women. It became fashionable to have a particular emotional response to the text, as demonstrated by Lady Louisa Stuart, who later recalled in a letter to Walter Scott that: "I remember so well its first publication, my mother and sisters crying over it, dwelling upon it with rapture! And when I read it, as I was a girl of fourteen not yet versed in sentiment, I had a secret dread I should not cry enough to gain the credit of proper sensibility" (quoted in Maureen Harkin: 319). The example given here is an entirely female one, but I intend to examine the response to the text from a male perspective, that of the poet Robert Burns. Burns's identification with *The Man of Feeling* swerves from almost total to something more cautious, and the swerve indicates a desire to correct both the text and himself in order to conform to a more politely appropriate ideal. In his letters, he refers several times to the text, as well as writing directly to Mackenzie.

In January 1783, Burns wrote to John Murdoch, his former schoolmaster, about his own character:

> …as a man of the world, I am most miserably deficient. – One would have thought that, bred as I have been under a father who has figured pretty well as *un homme des affaires*, I might have been, what the world calls, a pushing, active fellow; but to tell you the truth, Sir, there is hardly anything more the reverse. – I seem to be one sent into the world, to see and observe; and I very easily compound with the knave who tricks me of my money, if there be any thing original about him which shews me human nature in a different light from any thing I have seen before. (vol. 1, 1985: 16-17)

Burns paints himself here as a Harley figure, unable to concentrate on matters of business and committed instead to the observation of and interaction with others, even to the point of being duped by them. The reference to the 'knave' who tricks him of his money seems to be a direct reference to the episodes in *The Man of Feeling* where this very fate befalls Harley. This connection becomes more explicit when Burns states in the same letter:

> My favourite authors are of the sentim [sic] kind, such as Shenstone, particularly his Elegies, Thomson, Man of Feeling, a book I prize next to the Bible, Man of the World, Sterne, especially his Sentimental Journey, Macpherson's Ossian &c. these are the glorious models after which I endeavour to form my conduct. (17)

The list gives a good idea of Burns's taste at this point in his life; he is twenty-three years old here, and clearly considers himself to need shaping as a man in the world. His choices are all of the sentimental kind; elegies, sentimental novels and a faux-ancient nationalist text all hint at a sensitivity Burns seems to want to celebrate, but also feels he must qualify, especially when

expressing himself under the gaze of another, older and, from Burns's perspective, more 'formed' man. The sequel to *The Man of Feeling*, 1773's *The Man of the World*, also makes the list, indicating a fondness for Mackenzie's writing beyond the initial bestseller. The qualification of his attachment to the sentimental comes a few lines later:

> I forget that I am a poor, insignifant [sic] devil, unoticed [sic] and unknown, stalking up and down fairs and markets when I happen to be in them, reading a page or two of mankind…whilst the men of business jostle me on every side, as an idle encumbrance in the way. (18)

Here Burns differentiates between himself and the men around him, a silent body crowded by busy ones. These men are productive, they are 'men of business', and by implication seem to have found their place in the world. They are undifferentiated, indistinguishable from one another, while Burns, for all his self-describing as insignificant, is the one separated from the herd and able to 'read' them. We find in Burns's self-assessment the same paradox offered by Harley himself; he is both precious and useless at the same time. There is just enough of a sense of the latter here, I think, to suggest an anxious feeling of disconnect from the world Burns feels he should be a part of; his references to his father and the men at the markets and fairs as men of business, as well as his frank admission to being readily cheated, attest to this.

Burns's admiration for Mackenzie is exemplified in a letter written to the author himself in May of 1787, in which he enthuses that: 'whatever is good about my heart is much indebted to Mr. Harley' (111). This is then followed by an anecdote about how Burns convinces a philandering friend of his to be loyal to a woman he has impregnated, by giving him a copy of *The Man of the World* to read. Mackenzie's own note attached to the letter reads: 'Remarkable Anecdote to shew the good Effects of *Moral Reading*' (emphasis original). Burns's letter, and Mackenzie's gratified note, demonstrate that both men are engaged in the idea of reading as a morally developmental activity. It highlights, however, Burns's dependence on a literary creation in order to define himself – even if this assertion to Mackenzie is hyperbolic, it is still significant as an internalizing of an imagined other. Burns portrays Harley here as a version of Smith's impartial spectator; the figurative man in the breast that one should endeavour not just to imitate but become. In situating Harley's goodness in his heart, Burns suggests to Mackenzie that the process of identification is complete. The highly moral anecdote which follows is the proof of this.

Ultimately, however, the man in the breast – or in this case, the man in the book – cannot function in lived experience. This is because both Smith's and Mackenzie's creations are imaginative, and live best in the imagination. While Smith's work acknowledges this problem by admitting that the man in the breast is an ideal, it seems that Harley's origin in a sentimental novel makes him attractive in an ultimately defeating way. Smith's text is philosophical, one reads it with one's academic head on, as it were. But *The Man of Feeling* is designed to speak straight to the heart; Mackenzie himself observes to his cousin in 1769, narrative 'interest[s] both the Memory & the Affection deeper, than mere Argument, or moral Reasoning' (1967:16). The dangers of this come to be acknowledged by Burns in 1790, in a letter to Mrs Dunlop in which he discusses *The Man of Feeling*:

> From what book, moral or even Pious, will the susceptible young mind receive impressions more congenial to Humanity and Kindness, Generosity and Benevolence, in short, all that ennobles the Soul to herself, or endears her to others, than from the simple affecting tale of poor Harley? Still, with all my admiration of Mckenzie's [sic] writings, I do not know if they are the fittest reading for a young Man who is about to set out…to make his way into life…[T]here may be purity, a tenderness, a dignity…which are of no use, nay in some degree, [are] absolutely disqualifying, for the truly important business of making a man's way into life'. (vol. 2: 25)

Burns articulates the central – and it seems to me, specifically masculine – conundrum that Harley presents to the young male mind. Identifying with Harley, as we have already seen Burns emphatically did as a young man, awakens tender feelings, but these feelings are 'absolutely disqualifying' for becoming a man of business, which Burns acknowledges to be 'truly important'. This weak sexualisation, which cannot prepare the young man for survival in the commercial society he is expected to succeed in, is *even still* a thing to be cherished, because it allows for humaneness and 'ennobles the Soul to herself'. Burns genders the soul female here, in a sort of allegorical tradition, but what he refers to can be read as equivalent to what Smith terms the (masculine) impartial spectator.

Fully internalizing the message of Mackenzie's fiction, then, leads one to the ideal state where one can be fully integrated with the self; in the process this 'endears one to others'. We can see here how the socially-constructed self of *Theory of Moral Sentiments* reappears in sentimental fiction, and in the imaginative identifications of the lived experience of men like Burns. Crucially, though, the full identification with Harley, were it really possible if one wished to survive in the world, would mean freedom from shame because one would act and think so correctly that one would have nothing to feel ashamed of. The reality is that this is impossible; it is quite literally unlivable, as Burns acknowledges here, and as Mackenzie's

novel dramatizes. If 'making one's way into life' has become the dominant narrative of men's life trajectories, as Burns's comment suggests it has, then not making one's way into life can be a source of shame. No matter how much one might identify with Harley, actually behaving like him would make one a failure; his example is therefore unlivable. The threat of the shame of failure ensures that Harley must remain the man in the book, and that to survive, his admirers must swerve back into the rat-race.

The reading above of Burns's relationship to *The Man of Feeling* and Mackenzie's other sentimental works raises the issue of readership and community. Maureen Harkin (1994) notes that it is common for the sentimental novel to be convicted of failing to create sustainable community, citing John Mullan's critique of Mackenzie. Against this, she insists that this is a short-sighted way of understanding these works:

> In Mackenzie's hands, the failure of shared sentiment to effect the production of community is not a product of some historical miscalculation, but a problem central to the enterprise of writing fiction. In its elaboration of the limits of sympathy to reinforce communality, and its testimony to sympathy's tendency to produce an aesthetic pleasure rather than an ethical practice, Mackenzie's novel furnishes a complex valediction to sentimental fiction and a coda to the discourse on the power of novelists to intervene in the social sphere. This self-consciousness of certain limits to the social usefulness of a sentimental sympathy is quite distinct from failure. (319)

Harkin puts two critical terms in dialogue here, 'failure', and 'self-consciousness'. Both imply the presence of shame; shame as an inevitable consequence of failure, but also shame as a necessary factor in forming a sense of self-awareness as I described in the chapter on Adam Smith. These are two different experiences of shame, of course. Shame after failure is shame after the fact, whereas shame as a part of self-consciousness is shame that helps the fact never become one. What Harkin is suggesting here is that Mackenzie's writing has a sense of its own limits; it is acculturated enough to know what would lead to shame after the fact, and thus circumscribes its own ambition. This is borne out by a less earnest reading of *The Man of Feeling*; a reading in which one could be alert to the ironies of the text. For example, despite being known as the man of feeling, and primarily remembered for weeping profusely, there are times in the novel when one would expect Harley to cry but he seems unconcerned. His initial leave-taking before his journey to London is an example of this; the faithful old servant Peter is 'choked with the thought' of London being a 'sad place', while Harley shakes him by the hand 'smiling, as if he had said, "I will not weep"' (15).

Mackenzie's relationship to the novel he created, and to reading and writing in general, is described in his letter to his cousin, Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock. The pair often corresponded about their reading (Rose kept a reading diary) and Mackenzie's ideas about literature are presented in a letter from January 1771, three months before the publication of *The Man of Feeling*. In it, Mackenzie describes reading aloud a poem by the painter Allan Ramsay:

> It is what any one might have written; but the Idea is good enough, and the Versification polish'd into a laudable Smoothness. I have read it, only leaving out one or Two Lines rather outré, to several People, who said gravely, that it was very well, but that some of the Epithets were not quite so proper as they should be. (68-69)

The passage highlights a fundamental seriousness at the heart of Mackenzie's engagement with literature, and a finely-tuned sense of what does and does not constitute 'proper' writing. This suggests the self-consciousness with regards to writing that Harkin argues is a feature of Mackenzie's work. Despite this, Mackenzie often describes his own work on *The Man of Feeling*, which commences in 1769, as casual, written when he has the leisure to do so. Other comments, however, suggest a grander intention:

> I would have it as different from the Entanglement of a Novel as can be. Yet I would not be understood to undervalue that Species of Writing; on the contrary I take it to be much more important and indeed more difficult than I believe is generally imagin'd by the Authors; which is perhaps the Reason why We have so many Novels, & so few good ones. It is a Sort of Composition which I observe the Scottish Genius is remarkably deficient in…yet these Performances are the most current of any I know, and need little more than a Jumble of Incidents to please the common-Place Beings you mention. (1967: 18)

Mackenzie's comments here emphasise his feelings about the novel form. His conception of the novel as an 'Entanglement' and a 'Jumble of Incidents' indicates a desire to strip away the generic excesses in order to get to what is valuable. He acknowledges the saturation of the market, and also the dearth of good Scottish novels, which he may wish to correct. It is possible to infer from this, then, that his intentions ultimately lie not only in publication, but in making an intervention into the form that would improve it as a whole.

The novel was immediately popular on its publication, anonymously, in April 1771. As its author mentions to Elizabeth Rose, in a letter from June of that year, the editions in Edinburgh and London were in need of a new print run already. This letter is revealing, however, for the fact that after this assertion of its popularity, Mackenzie admits: 'I am

told…that they [the reviewers] have treated it very roughly: I am a little surprised at this; because I confess I have been, for some Time past, of a different Opinion from the Bulk of People on that Subject, in thinking them oftner erroneously mild than unjustly severe' (1967: 89-90). The hurt in Mackenzie's tone here is palpable, and it is clear that although he appreciates the novel's popularity, it is critical approval he seeks, and has failed to achieve. This seems to be the case given his previous discussions with his cousin on the critical appraisal he and respected 'grave' people gave Ramsay's poem, and indeed his echoed reference to general novel readers as 'common-Place beings'. For a man as invested in criticism as he seems to be, it is unsurprising that Mackenzie's failure with critics cannot be overcome by *The Man of Feeling*'s popularity with the general public.

We could take as an example of the criticism Mackenzie is saddened by the reception it got from *The Monthly Review* of May 1771:

> This performance is written after the manner of Sterne; but it follows at a prodigious distance the steps of that ingenious and sentimental writer. It is not however totally destitute of merit; and the Reader, who weeps not over some of the scenes it describes, has no sensibility of mind. But it is to be observed, that the knowledge of men it contains, appears to be rather gathered from books than from experience; and that with regard to composition, it is careless, and abounds in provincial and Scottish idioms. It is probably a first work; and from the specimen it affords of the talent of its Author, we should not be disposed to think that he will ever attain to any great eminence in literature. He may amuse himself at the foot of Parnassus; but to ascend the steps of the mountain must be the talk of those on whom their benignant stars have bestowed the rare gifts of true genius. (vol. 44: 418)

The purpose of the review seems almost entirely to be to shame the author. The second half of the review, in particular, directs criticism against the author himself, by implying he is both a beginner and short of ability. It attempts to confine him, to put him in his place. By suggesting Mackenzie knows little of the world, the review aligns him with Harley himself, a fate which was to be Mackenzie's for the rest of his life. It compares him unfavourably to Laurence Sterne, and accuses him of mimicry. Sterne wrote sentimental fiction, but did so with an obvious humour that ironises and distances the author and the text from its mode. This critic seems to be suggesting Mackenzie has tried too hard, that his effort is too earnest. There is much here to be ashamed of, if the target of the criticism is open to being shamed. The public space of the criticism, a popular magazine with a good circulation, adds to the potential for shame, with only the anonymous publication of the novel acting as a fig leaf to cover

Mackenzie's dignity. A man less invested in critical appreciation may have shrugged off such harsh censure, but as we have already seen, Mackenzie places faith in qualified judgment.

It seems key here that Mackenzie's recorded response to this critique, as quoted above, is registered in the key of surprise; 'I am a little surprised at this'. Surprise is one of the Tomkinsian affects; it is in fact the only one Silvan Tomkins defines as 'neutral'. This evokes the momentary pang that surprise creates, the registering of an unexpected occurrence in one's vicinity that one must then contextualize and comprehend by choosing an emotional response. After all, we talk of 'good' surprises and 'bad' surprises. This surprise, the surprise of being misread or misrecognized, was unsettling for Mackenzie because – presumably – he believed his novel's intervention was clear: to display and exhibit masculine moral sentiment. It is possible that the surprise of misrecognition could have led him to question the result of his work. We actually know very little of his thoughts about the novel's unexpected reception; even in his letters to his cousin, he remains mostly (significantly?) silent on his thoughts. We only have one reference to a later review which: 'made up for the Harshness of the *Monthly*; it is odd to say that I am obliged to your father for his Anger' (93). Mackenzie's remarks here *suggest* a personal relationship with his novel, and a need to feel proud of his – and its – achievements. What can be stated with some confidence is that this experience would have been eye-opening for him, and may have been in his thoughts when he came to write his famous critique of the novel form several years later.

This essay, one of the most famous from his periodical *The Lounger* (1785-7), tackles the subject of the novel form. In it, he develops the argument that novel writing has become the preserve of those who are not equipped enough, technically or morally, to produce good novels. This echoes, of course, the sentiments he had expressed in private letters to Elizabeth Rose and others even before he became a novelist himself. He opens his essay with the line: 'No species of composition is more generally read by one class of readers, or more undervalued by another, than that of the novel' (2009: 100). The classes to which he refers here are, respectively, the 'young and the indolent' and the 'more respectable class of literary men'. Mackenzie suggests here that the novel (and the sentimental novel in particular) is caught between conflicting estimates of its value: read voraciously by the wrong sort, but unfairly dismissed by the right sort. After these opening comments about the critical capacities of readers, however, most of the essay is devoted to a sustained critique of the practitioners of the form, novelists themselves. Stephen Bending and Stephen Bygrave see this critique as an extension of the debates around sickly sentiment and 'the "degradation" of the sentimental

novel' (99). They state that: 'the paradox of Mackenzie, fourteen years on, attacking that which had established his own reputation is more apparent than actual' (99-100). This may well be true, but we should also take into consideration the swerve that Mackenzie's career has taken by this point.

After writing two more sentimental novels, *The Man of the World* (1773) and *Julia de Roubigné* (1777), Mackenzie switched in 1779 to his first periodical, *The Mirror*, followed by *The Lounger* in 1785. After 1779, there were no more novels. This change in course is not explained in the essay on novels – in fact, Mackenzie's former life as a novelist is not mentioned at all. I am interested in this marked change, however. The novel form, as Mackenzie describes it in *The Lounger*, is degraded by the changes he claims to have occurred: 'the effects of this have been felt…in its perversion from a moral or instructive purpose to one directly the reverse. Ignorance and dulness are seldom long inoffensive, but generally support their own native insignificance by an alliance with voluptuousness and vice' (100-1). Mackenzie is vague about the timeline of this degradation, however. Has this occurred in the years since he stopped writing novels? Or was this occurring simultaneously? The *Monthly Review* assessment of *The Man of Feeling* suggests Mackenzie's own writing could be seen at the time as an example of the very mimicry and self-indulgence he criticizes in *The Lounger*.

I have described my usage of the term 'swerve', leaning on Sedgwick, as a move away from a divergent discourse toward a more accepted one. As evidenced by the popularity and enduring respect of the periodical form, especially the example of Joseph Addison, we can understand the polite simplicity and directness of periodicals, over and against the excesses of sentimental writing, as representing the 'accepted' discourse. In chapter one I explored the ways in which Addison and Steele's choice to ventriloquise through an eidolon allowed them to universalize their style, tone and message. This emptying out of the particular, aligned with a civic humanism, helped to set the standard for polite masculinity which followed. Mackenzie's swerve toward periodical writing away from the sentimental novel suggests a decision to join the accepted masculine discourse and an evacuation of the cluttered, almost immoral scene of the divergent one.

The turn: Harley's futile feelings

James Lilley (2007) reads the relationship between the self and the outside world in sentimental fiction as an opening up of the self's interior to the gaze of others:

> To be human is to be a self that exercises feeling. Thinkers as diverse as Rousseau, Laurence Sterne, and Adam Smith all agree on this fundamental precept of sentimentality, on this definitive structure of sentimental selfhood. And yet, as the pages of sentimental romance demonstrate, there is a constitutive queerness to this sensing self, a peculiarity that patterns all economies of sentimental desire. For it is never enough for this self to emote and to feel in isolation: in order to register its essential humanity, this self must disclose itself, must direct its interiority outward, must cry public tears that somehow materialize and bear witness to its private core. Such a self can know itself only insofar as it is a self *for another*, only through the act of transforming its absolute privacy into a communal sentimental spectacle. The radically private self-for-itself never participates in the pages of romance or the lyrics of longing. (649-50)

This should be clear to anyone who reads *The Man of Feeling*. All readers look on as Harley weeps and reveals to the spectatorial gaze the sensitivity which ultimately renders him unfit for the unfeeling commercial world of London.

The idea that this transforms individual privacy into communal experience is not without its critics. John Mullan (1988) argues that:

> …in no type of text is it unproblematic to resort to passions and sentiments as the stuff of social understanding. Any description, for instance, of how, in the novel of sentiment, sympathy and the articulacy of feeling hold the promise of unfettered communication must refer also to how this prospect, for Richardson and Mackenzie, is often remote, oppositional, and even despairing. (25)

These terms, 'remote', 'oppositional', 'despairing', are key I think to understanding the melancholy power of Harley's story. So too is Lilley's use of 'queer', with its suggestion of the 'peculiar' turning of the self inside-out in order to express its humanity. There is a sense here of both distance and orientation, in spite of the differing conclusions of the critics. Harley's queer relationship to his own sensibility, his painful and ultimately futile feelings, induces a 'turn' away from the world he enters in London, back towards his origins, toward the past, and away from progress. His decision to return to the barren lands from which he had to venture forth in order to 'make his way in the world' is a self-defeating one; it ends with his premature death.

This turn is the aspect that makes the novel so haunting; it is an abandonment of a happy ending. Yet, the turn has in some ways already occurred before Harley gives up on commercial success. Harley's orientation toward futile feelings seems to have been there already; he is drawn, as if constitutionally, toward the lost and the damaged people he meets,

and falls under the spell of those who wish harm to him so that it seems as though he wishes actively to become lost himself. Considering Harley is our protagonist, a sympathetic reading of Harley's behavior would be suggestive of the kind of affective community that the sympathetic reader may understand himself to be a part of. This community includes both The Ghost and the reader who rescues Harley's history from destruction; ultimately, the novel puts pressure on the 'real' reader to imagine himself as part of this community as well. But as Robert Burns noted, identification with this community separates one from the discourse of progress and politeness, and for male readers, undermines their ability to participate in and take advantage of the norms of polite masculinity. If Harley is the role model, then he ultimately represents a turn away from society and sociability, and towards obsolescence and death.

This is demonstrated in Harley's encounter with the beggar on his journey to London. Taken in by this expert in manipulating affect, Harley begins the process of fragmentation which accelerates when he arrives in the city. Rather like Mackenzie's novel, the beggar's story omits detail where necessary and dwells instead on affect. He asserts that, after many tribulations which left him out of work, he was 'seized with a jail-fever' (typhus) at the very moment the assizes happened to be in his district. This jail-fever is a result of a yearning for a kind of communion, as the beggar describes it: 'I was always curious to get acquainted with the felons, because they were commonly fellows of much mirth and little thought, qualities I had ever an esteem for' (17). Like Harley, the beggar positions himself as a man of feeling, in search of communion with other like-minded 'fellows'. He experiences esteem for the fellows of much mirth, but does not go so far as to say that he is one, carefully retaining the affinity for fine feeling, the hypochondriac bond with Harley. As Ildiko Csengei (2012) points out: 'The beggar's way to earn his payment is often to assume the role of the double with whom the benefactor can easily identify' (129).

It is in the midst of this fever that the very house he is in catches fire, and he must be rescued. Here, the sick, yearning body transfers his internal fire to his surroundings, creating a tableau of transferable affect that sets his world literally alight. Spectating upon this conjured image, Harley can barely control himself, and ends up giving away an unwise sum of money:

> Harley had drawn a shilling from his pocket; but virtue bade him consider on whom he was going to bestow it. – Virtue held back his arm: - but a milder form, a younger sister of virtue's, not so severe as virtue, nor so serious as pity, smiled upon him: His fingers lost their compression; - nor did virtue offer to catch the money as it fell. It had no

> sooner reached the ground than the watchful cur (a trick he had been taught) snapped it up; and, contrary to the most approved method of stewardship, delivered it immediately into the hands of his master. (18)

The above passage, with its speckling of hyphens, colons and semicolons, is charged with almost erotic hesitation for the reader. The shilling, here closely associated with Harley's virtue, is spent carelessly, and it is at this point that it becomes clear the exploitation in the transaction is not of the beggar whose labour produces the story, but of the consumer who 'buys' it. Were he a woman, the message here would be clear. As a man, however, the symbolism of the misspent coin is more complex. The shilling falling to the earth could be interpreted in a Christian framework as an onanistic failure. But this is also commercial onanism. Rather than being put to use in the legitimate economic sector, Harley has given (twice) to its illegitimate twin. His body literally fails to keep hold of what belongs to it; it allows fragments to fall and be taken away by others. It is the beginning of a depletion of Harley that ends finally with his death. The beggar, by contrast, does not even move in order to take possession of Harley's money. Instead, his living prosthesis, his dog, does it for him. Whilst Harley's body fragments in this scene, the beggar's expands.

It should be noted here that what makes this passage troubling is that a story of suffering is transformed – in the most literal way possible – into a transaction. Harley has paid for a (prefabricated) melancholy history. Barbara Benedict (2016) sees in *The Man of Feeling* echoes of the older form of miscellany, the seventeenth-century collections of character types not unlike *The English Theophrastus*, Abel Boyer's collection of observations examined in chapter two. Benedict identifies the virtuoso, or collector, as one figure who comes in for satirical critique in these works, and identifies Harley as a relic of this style. Collecting, a practice Harley participates in throughout the text, removes objects from circulation and could therefore be seen as anti-commercial. These collectors were men who, Benedict states, were portrayed as 'ignorant, credulous, self-absorbed'; men who should rightly be ashamed of themselves. In Mackenzie's novel, however, this portrayal is complicated by the representation of Harley as 'misguided and insightful, foolish and perceptive' (477), qualities we see on display here. Whilst Harley is a consumer, then, he is the wrong sort to succeed under the terms of the commercial world he moves in. He may have more money than the beggar, but the latter seems far more likely to survive than the former, even at this point in the novel.

The episode ends with this theft-by-proxy. We are not given access to Harley's reaction or his thoughts. Instead, we are left with a passive body being plundered. What I want to

emphasise here, however, are the ways in which Harley's need to connect with the beggar on an emotional level leaves him open to the experience of shame. In the hesitation which precedes the inevitable dropping of the coin, we see Harley's conflicted feelings about his failure to keep himself and his affairs in order: 'virtue bade him consider on whom he was going to bestow it' suggests a failed intervention from the impartial spectator, an experience he seems compelled to repeat. What I mean, more particularly, is that Harley finds, in the act of emotional connection, in the depletion of his masculine integrity, in the subsequent shame, a stimulating sensation, which motivates him to repeat the experience. This could be labelled charity, but when it becomes so utterly detrimental to Harley's financial, emotional and physical wellbeing, it is clearly something more complex. The rest of the novel is largely made up of repetitions of this same scene, played out with different partners. Harley is given something by a suffering or scheming body, and then must surrender something in return, tears, money, or both. Some of these exchanges threaten Harley's sense of self, as we see in a later episode.

This is the episode in which Harley visits Bedlam. He detaches himself from his group to watch a series of men engaged in various activities, one a mathematician driven mad by theories of comets, another a former businessman and 'stock-jobber' who lost everything in a crash, a third a former schoolmaster unhinged by language, and a fourth a man with delusions of grandeur (24-5). The section is brief and at first glance simply a catalogue of lunatic 'types'. However, together they provide a microcosm of male middle class shame. The failures of these men to cope with their respective professions land them in Bedlam, where they are treated as curiosities, *to be looked at*. While others have hurried ahead to view the female inmates (the more natural and alluring objects of the gaze), these men snag Harley's attention, almost as though he feels a kinship with them.

Unlike other suffering bodies in *The Man of Feeling*, these men do not speak directly to Harley, nor do they themselves tell him their stories. Instead, their histories are related in précis form by the final madman, who reveals himself at last as 'the Chan of Tartary'. There is a lack of affective contact here because, despite Harley's intense stare, the gaze is not returned in the first three cases. The mathematician, the stock-jobber and the schoolmaster are all absorbed in their own professional worlds, and seem unable to accept that they no longer inhabit them. For them, the tools of their trades, the makeshift pendulum and the chalkboard, represent these worlds physically. Implicit here is a criticism of men who live too much in their heads and not enough in the world, echoing the criticism in miscellanies of character types

described by Barbara Benedict above. These men are all collectors of sorts, their fascination with their collections esoteric and unproductive in commercial terms. The objects upon which they gaze are both a kind of key and a fetish. Repeatedly handled, revealing nothing but false information, the pendulum, the chalkboard and the Homeric verses provide the connection to shadowy otherworlds. They have turned away from progress toward self-immolating obsession. Harley's gazing upon them sets up a community in which he is not, at first, aware that he is a part, believing himself and his guide to be merely observing. It is only in the flinch of realization that his guide is in fact 'one of them', that he seems to realise that his distance from these 'turned' men is not that great. In fact, they foreshadow his own future as a man unable to make his way. Like the scene with the beggar, the damage inflicted on Harley renders him mute: here, he merely bows before rejoining the rest of his party. These men echo, in fact, the very book in which their stories are briefly told. *The Man of Feeling* connects us as readers to the shadowy otherworld of Harley's ghostly presence, only to remind us that Harley's way is not, as Robert Burns pointed out, 'the way into life'.

Even still, the very fact that female suffering, in the shape of the abandoned young woman Harley weeps for, must be used to provide the narrative climax of the chapter is telling. It is not just that this is the more familiar scene of sentimental spectatorship, but also that the exclusively male coterie of mad professionals speaks uncomfortably to the dark heart of contemporary conditions of manhood. It seems that there is something too horrifying about the shame of failed masculinity for the text to name, and Harley himself is rendered speechless in the face of it (25). Ildiko Csengei (2012) reads Harley's stunned reaction as evidence of differentiation: 'The moment otherness is revealed, it is instantly rejected by the man of feeling, whose fantasy it has been to see a world of feeling' (137). It seems just as likely, however, that Harley's shying, flinching, away from these mad men is a moment of recognition, of shame-filled connection akin to the imagined encounter with the 'half-insane man' described by Eve Sedgwick, again a scene of the supposedly sane in close contact with the mad. The entirely conventional tableau with the abandoned woman fills the resounding silence left by Harley's recognition of madness in the men.

One passage in which Harley is certainly not speechless is the philosophical exchange that occurs between Harley and the elderly Ben Silton during the course of a coach trip north from London. This discussion appears late in the novel, after Harley has quit the city. By this point, he has failed to make his fortune in the metropolis and has decided to retreat. James Lilley (2007) observes that:

> Never at home with the luxury and commerce of the city (he is thoroughly tricked and taken advantage of during his brief visit to London), Harley instead outlines a spectral, other-worldly economy, a system of affective values that appear only to the extent that they have already been lost, already antiqued and consigned to pastoral prehistory or anticipated in the afterlife. (653)

We see in this section of the novel Harley embracing his position as someone 'turned away' from the world in which he lives. The resultant reflective state means that the conversation between Harley and his elderly interlocutor is wide ranging but focuses on mourning perceived changes in society. In a letter to Elizabeth Rose, Mackenzie explained that: 'I somehow affix to Age the united Ideas of Tenderness & Dignity…' (Mackenzie, 1967: 36), and the older characters in the novel, Silton, Old Edwards, and Harley's aunt, are the most convincingly drawn. Lilley notes that: 'Sentimental space thus occupies queer territory outside of the heteronormative emplotments of society—a space in which tearful orphans divulge their hearts to their same-sex friends' (657). The dialogue between the two men is not a homosocial space because it does not support the progressive narrative of their present; rather, the chapter in which Harley and Silton share a coach which is turning back from the scene of commercial futurity, back toward the barren lands of Harley's past, reveals a queer space in the terms that Heather Love uses, whereby queerness is bound up with loss, rejection and becoming outmoded.

The discussion starts with Harley producing a notebook in which he has copied the poetic scraps scrawled on windows in coaching inns, as he describes them: 'humble poets, who trust their fame to the brittle tenure of windows and drinking-glasses' (2009: 60). Temporality and materiality are both cast as fragile and untrustworthy here, with fame being a gift inevitably lost, if ever gained at all. Harley's notebook collects the ephemeral, but these are also evidence of the need for anonymous voices and hands to leave traces of themselves behind. The notebook is a collection of failed poetry, failed as it has never been published or publicly admired, and serves as a miniature version of *The Man of Feeling* itself: fragmented, assessed as derivative at least by its earliest critics, but still articulating the experience of the lost. Silton's response to it is interesting in the context of this discussion of Mackenzie's authorship:

> 'From our inns,' returned the gentleman, 'a stranger might imagine that we were a nation of poets; machines at least containing poetry, which the notion of a journey emptied of their contents: is it from the vanity of being thought geniuses, or a mere

mechanical imitation of the custom of others, that we are tempted to scrawl rhime upon such places?' (60)

Harley's conversation with Silton could be cast as conservative nostalgia, rejecting as it does the materialist progressivism embodied by the couple they share their carriage with in favour of an imagined past; there are also some very contemporary ideas and beliefs running throughout, albeit in the service of a backward-looking melancholia.

The image of the 'machines…containing poetry' picks up on the eighteenth-century fascination with the automaton, and fibre theory that was then emerging in studies of human anatomy. Philosophy had adopted ideas of bodies filled with other bodies (one example being Adam Smith's internal impartial spectator from *Theory of Moral Sentiments*), as had art theory, as Hogarth's *Analysis of Beauty* shows. The idea of a machine stuffed with words, with poetry, that is merely waiting for the opportune moment – such as a journey north in a coach – to spill forth and scrawl itself on brittle surfaces, is not entirely ridiculous even to the retiring and weary minds of our protagonists. With the machine idea, however, come negative connotations also. What can machines do but copy and imitate real humans? When *The Monthly Review* chose to criticize Mackenzie for his imitation of Sterne, was the reviewer making a machine of him? It is not just presumption to greatness that provokes this critique of Mackenzie, it was also his machine-like lack of originality.

Speaking of presumption to greatness, poetic vanity forms another strand of Harley's discussion with Silton. Harley pronounces vanity to be 'immemorially the charter of poets'. Warming to his theme, he continues:

> In this, the ancients were more honest than we are…ours, in their dedications and prefatory discourses, employ much eloquence to praise their patrons, and much seeming modesty to condemn themselves…but this, in my opinion, is the more assuming manner of the two; for of all the garbs I ever saw pride put on, that of her humility is to me the most disgusting. (60)

Disgust is an affect closely linked to shame, and here Harley aims it at the cloaked vanity of modern writers. False modesty is identified as being a symptom of the modern age, where one's self-love is veiled under a gauze of polite words. Harley is complaining about those who do not speak plainly, who do not say what they mean. This is unsurprising given Harley's failure to read the meaning behind the words of the beggar, for example. Instead, truth is hidden under false clothing, and any hidden truth may well be a shameful one, for example the

indolence the beggar alludes to but does not name. It is no wonder that the root word of shame means 'to cover'. Are these writers, then, writing with such false modesty to cover their shame? If so, what is this shame? Silton suggests it is the very egotism lying behind the creative drive, the egotism which is, 'always the parent of vanity'.

Where does this accusation leave Mackenzie himself? Is Harley and Silton's creator the victim of the egotism he has his characters complain about? John Mullan's assessment of Mackenzie would have us believe not; Mackenzie was a man of the world and looked down on those writers who considered themselves a class apart (1988:118). When Harley and Silton criticize those who 'fix their residence, amidst groves and plains, and the scenes of pastoral retirement', they are talking of those who do not live their lives in the real world, and are consequently incapable of writing anything true to life. How ironic that Harley himself returns to a ruined rural idyll and turns his back on life. How even more ironic that Mackenzie's very first reviewers level this exact charge at him, suggesting the scenes in *The Man of Feeling* have more of book learning than life experience about them. In fact, the critic in *The Monthly Review* may well have been targeting his critique with a knowing wink to this very section of the book, as when Silton suggests poetic inclination is an incentive to philanthropy, saying: 'many who are not able to reach the Parnassian heights, may yet approach so near as to be bettered by the air of the climate' (61), the reviewer rejoins with: 'He [meaning Mackenzie] may amuse himself at the foot of Parnassus, but to ascend the steeps of the mountain must be the talk of those on whom their benignant stars have bestowed the rare gifts of true genius' (*Monthly Review*, May 1771: 418). In other words, what may be thought of as bettering oneself is in fact merely distracting oneself from the truth.

It becomes clear from the conversation between Silton and Harley that they look backwards, rather than forwards, to find a time and place where the values they hold dear can flourish. As with many regressive narratives, this time and place are carefully vague – exactly when these values were enacted, and by whom, is not specified. It may well be that Harley and Silton attach it to the dying system of aristocratic patronage, where virtue was inherited and merit was innate. This penniless but prestigious upper class is represented by Harley, whose economic inactivity and commercial irrelevance is underscored by his failures in London. The grocer and his wife who travel with them represent modernity, and are perceived as smug, self-satisfied and lacking in respect as a result. Maureen Harkin argues that: 'Harley's hostility to social change places him in an older conservative-reactionary tradition', over and against the Scottish Enlightenment writers' investment in the moral value of commercial society (325).

The 'romantic turn' Harley speaks of in the above passage seems ultimately one based on loss, a susceptibility to fine feeling, and what James Boswell had often referred to as 'hypochondria', the masculine excess of sensibility. It is a turning away from the future towards an imagined past, a turning away of the self in shame at one's failure to be *of* the world.

Whatever it is, wherever and whenever it is located, the lost value system that Harley and Silton seem to cling to mark them out as lost, a dying breed. Heather Love (2007) describes the mechanics of progress thus:

> The idea of modernity – with its suggestions of progress, rationality, and technological advance – is intimately bound up with backwardness. The association of progress and regress is a function not only of the failure of so many of modernity's key projects but also of the reliance of the concept of modernity on excluded, denigrated, or superseded others. (5)

While *The Man of Feeling* does not entirely denigrate its backward characters, it certainly feels ambivalent about them. There is no suggestion that Harley should be considered a hero in the same mould as a Tom Jones or even a Tristram Shandy. Instead, he works as a figure of doubt, a nodal point for fear, loss, melancholy and shame. Although Heather Love's book focuses on queer characters in Modernist writings, her model of backwardness proves useful for Harley too. If queer means 'feeling backward', as Love suggests it does, then Harley is also queer.

Queerness brings me back, not inevitably but perhaps fittingly, to shame. If, as I am suggesting, Harley is queer it is not particularly to do with the direction of his desire. Harley's desire for connection is omnivorous; he desires communion with anyone he perceives worthy enough. His choices – inmates of Bedlam, fallen women and so on – are typical denizens of the sentimental moral tale, but what is queer about his attempts to connect with them is the self-annihilating perversity of his methods, as well as his insistence on keeping company with the casualties of early capitalism. Harley's fragmentation is so thorough he eventually wastes away to nothing, made pale and consumptive by his hunger for affective communion, by his inability to feel *forwards*.

This process is not inevitable. Had he operated more shrewdly and calculatingly, he may have made 'his' money and claimed 'his' woman. Harley's death, then, is a result of a surrender to the winds of human desire. Tugged apart by melancholy, empathy, hypochondria,

Harley is immobilized by his own shame. Shame for Harley is the inability to connect, to make a difference in the way he wants to achieve. He is ashamed of the world for caring so little for its vulnerable, and admiring instead the frivolity and excess of luxury. It seems towards the end that he offers himself willingly as a sacrifice, refusing to stand on his own two feet. He turns away from the demands of commercial masculinity, refusing independence and stoicism in favour of oblivion. He recasts his willingness to die as a rarefied, almost mystical, form of masculinity: 'To meet death as becomes a man, is a privilege bestowed on few' (96). It may seem strange to speak of Harley in such active terms, and indeed for most of the novel, he is often passive. However at the very last he begins to stand in, symbolically, for a turn away from polite manliness that may well have been representative of a period in the eighteenth century where ideas established earlier in the era were beginning to buckle under pressure. Published just five years before America gained independence, the political landscape in Britain was already beginning to grow divided over the issue.[12] As Claudia Johnson (1995) says of the sentimental novels of the 1790s: 'we encounter plots strained to the breaking point precisely because characters have learned that their feeling is a matter of national security' (3). Could Harley be symptomatic, then, of a less confident Britain and a less stoical masculinity?

As for his creator, Mackenzie is an enigma. In his letters to Elizabeth Rose he gives little away, keeping his comments on his published works brief. His remarks in *The Lounger* suggest (but do not give definite proof of) a man whose creative past troubles him. His adoption of the periodical is a swerve towards the safer form of discourse, perhaps even a survival strategy in the face of falling sales and critical indifference. To some extent, the strategy worked, and Mackenzie gained respect for his essays, earning the sobriquet 'Our Scottish Addison' from Walter Scott. Mackenzie swerves to survive, while Harley turns away fully, and chooses death.

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[12] See McCormack, 2005: 92-100 for a good account of the nature of debates around American independence and their gendered character.

Chapter Five

'A manly resolution to improve': shame as catalyst in James Boswell's *London Journal*

In James Boswell's *London Journal 1762-3*, discovered in the twentieth century and published in 1950, we find a male subject aiming to attain for himself a particular ideal of polite manhood. Written when he was in his early twenties, and providing an account of a year in the capital, much of the focus of the journal is on the constant improvement of the self, with its small triumphs and frequent setbacks. Several critics, as explored below, have theorised the *London Journal* as being concerned with multiple masculinities, of the trying on of different male 'types', such as the rake, the *retenu*, the highwayman, the man of letters, and so on. Some have also noted the struggle Boswell has with many of the male figures around him, especially his strained relationship with his father, and the admiration he has for Samuel Johnson. Erin Mackie (2008) summarises this well when she writes: 'To historians of gender and ideology, Boswell's self-reporting lays tantalizingly open the uneven psyche of a young man struggling to find himself within and against familial expectations and socio-cultural conventions' (353). In this chapter, I explore the journal's significance as a document that Boswell uses in his attempt to turn himself into the resolute man of politeness he perceives others to be. My exploration highlights the ways in which journal writing makes this goal freighted with difficulty because rather than being a tool for resolving Boswell's disparate and contradictory personality, it instead helps to entrench and elaborate it. All self-writing is self-construction, as several critics discussed below have noted. Boswell's shame, then, comes in part from his inability to become *retenu* through writing.

This 'self-reporting' gives me the opportunity to consider the impact on an historical individual of the polite masculine ideal constructed by the kinds of writing I explored in part one of this thesis. I want to show in this chapter that Boswell's record of his experiences demonstrates that shame enables (or perhaps demands) that individual men change. Shame marks out the gap between the ideal and reality. Leaving aside whether or not the results or motivations look positive from a modern perspective, it seems clear to me that the shame I find in Boswell's journal – shame of his Scottishness, of his difference from his father, of his behaviour in company – pushes him to continue the journey toward becoming an accomplished, polite and *retenu* gentleman. In this way, shame can be seen acting in concert with polite imperatives to help mould the individual man and maintain the integral role polite masculinity plays in a commercialised society.

This does not mean that I read shame here as being an innocuous tool for self-help. Shame can prompt us to fit in so that we may survive and flourish on some level, but at what cost? Critics like Lauren Berlant have shown that a commercialised society offers us a form of optimism (the promise of the good life) which ultimately only serves to crush us[13]. For Boswell, this is demonstrated in his anxiety over becoming the sort of man who can make his way into life, meaning the capitalistic, polite world he locates in London. This is the very issue around which Robert Burns situated his critique of *The Man of Feeling* and it structures the emotional concerns of Boswell's journal. Boswell's entries in the *Journal* are full of emotion, despite his constant reminders to himself to 'be *retenu*'. Ironically, it is shame over his excess of emotion, his lack of focus and cultural identity (his Scottishness, his 'ridiculous' gregariousness) that drives this need to become *retenu*. As one of his editors, Ralph S. Walker, summarised: 'His Journal often depicts him as volatile and inconstant, and we come to think of him as alternating between shame at his own lack of steadfastness and delight at seeing himself in the character of a bright, attractive butterfly' (1966: ix). It is no surprise that Mr. Spectator, embodying as he does a masculine universal that is both unreadable and able to read all, is so sacred a figure for the young Boswell. The journal itself is an account of the struggle of an historical individual to live up to the example of a constructed ideal represented by a fictional character.

Shame is the right term to apply to Boswell's struggle because shame attaches to one's sense of self, to what one 'is'. 'Being', inhabiting and becoming a particular identity, is everywhere in Boswell's journal – take his repeated mantra, 'be *retenu*'[14]. Becoming, rather than performing, that which you aspire to be, is the highest and most authentic form of identity, and is a key part of Adam Smith's argument about the impartial spectator: 'he almost identifies himself with, he almost becomes himself that impartial spectator' (2009: 169). Smith, however, was far more circumspect about how liveable this position could be; Boswell's curse is to see *retenu* perfection as vital to his flourishing. Critical attention has been paid in recent decades to the ways in which *The London Journal* in fact explores a host of different types of masculinity. These types reflect Boswell's fears and aspirations and are drawn from cultural constructs including literature, politics and nationhood. Gordon Turnbull defines the *retenu* as

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[13] 'A relation of cruel optimism exists when something you desire is actually an obstacle to your flourishing. It might involve food, or a kind of love; it might be a fantasy of the good life, or a political project…These kinds of optimism are not inherently cruel. They become cruel only when the object that draws your attachment actively impedes the aim that brought you to it initially'. *Cruel Optimism*, 2011: 3.
[14] Boswell's spellings of this key word are numerous: *retenu*, *retenue* and *retenué* are used relatively interchangeably. Turnbull, the editor of the Penguin Classics edition, uses the first spelling, and I have followed him in this, except where directly quoting from Boswell.

meaning 'self-disciplined and restrained', commenting that: 'Boswell aspires to revise himself into the values of mid-eighteenth-century English bourgeois Anglican masculinity: self-discipline, regularity in habits, lack of flightiness or self-display, with the conversational properties of urbanity, understatement, moderation, politeness and gentility' (2010: xxxix). Boswell himself uses the term repeatedly throughout the journal, with variant spellings, often instructing himself in his memoranda to 'preserve *retenue*' (30), 'be *retenué*' (65), and 'learn *retenue* above all things' (73), to name just three of many mentions.

His desire to explore and discover himself through the variety of the metropolis is reflected in the range of characters he portrays throughout his journal, however. David M. Weed (1997/8) sees this exploration of types in Boswell's diary as representative of mid-century bourgeois manhood:

> …this intractable division between the *retenu* and the Cavalier man of pleasure bespeaks not only the "radical instability" of Boswell's self, which he perceives as "impossibly divided" in the *London Journal*, but also demonstrates, through Boswell, the mid-eighteenth century class and national conflicts between men's passions and their status as men. (216)

For Weed, Boswell is representative because he exists 'at the nexus of several kinds of masculine identity'; his anxieties over identity can therefore be parsed as a way of understanding the 'broader cultural tensions' at work in the conception of masculinity at this point in time. As I will examine in part of this chapter, the complex social, political and psychological recalibrations of the Act of Union – half a century old by the time Boswell arrives in London – are still posing difficulties, especially for a young Scot in the English metropolis.

My discussion of Boswell's national identity suggests that Scottishness presents Boswell with a problem. This is because he understands polite masculinity - a state to which he aspires - to be an English form of masculine expression. In other words, for Boswell, the attainment of politeness is synonymous with the attainment of Englishness, and therefore to be Scottish was necessarily to be culturally marked in a way that precluded entry into polite masculine universalism. The Scottish accent, language, customs and social conduct Boswell describes with embarrassment, interspersed occasionally with moments of violent identification with certain (often lost or fictional) forms of Scottish identity. This cleaving to and renouncing of kinship with a particular idea of self induces feelings of shame, because shame is often the fraught relationship to aspects of oneself that one cannot entirely make peace with. For Boswell, then, his Scottish origins are not something he can deny (his voice gives him away, for a start) but he never wants to entirely deny them anyway. This is a concern that is expressed – albeit differently - in Olaudah Equiano's writings two decades later. It is the

shame of the colonial subject having to split off parts of his inheritance in order to understand the master.

Erin Mackie's work on masculine identity in the *London Journal* alerts us to the highly literary construction of some of Boswell's types. She explores two fictional characters she believes are equally influential on Boswell's sense of self: John Gay's highwayman Macheath from *The Beggar's Opera*, and Mr. Spectator, the latter closely mapping on to the idealised *retenu* character. Mackie sees Boswell's journal as providing 'the first sustained documentation of this [self-] invention and the integral role of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* in it' (2008: 354). 'It is in the provision of such a literary-cultural site…that Mr. Spectator supplies Boswell with the most profound relief from the guilty anxieties of either recording or omitting his "robberies on the highway"', Mackie suggests, referring here to the euphemism his friend Erskine uses to name the many impulsive acts Boswell commits. Weed recognises the guiding influence of Mr. Spectator, too: 'Boswell's repeated mention of his admiration for Addison's *Spectator* appears not only in his journal's examinations of London life…but also – and more importantly – in his performative, spectatorial attitude toward himself' (1997/8: 218).

In contrast to Weed, however, Mackie sees the masculine types she describes as being 'more or less simultaneously available in Boswell's psyche' (355). This goes some way to naming the problem that Boswell's changeable behaviour presents us with: 'There is the effect of fragmentation of identity as he cursorily adopts and casts off role after role', Mackie suggests, indicating that Boswell is constantly tugged in opposing directions by a range of masculine types that are either anti-authoritarian or dignified in their deployment of polite qualities. Self-spectatorship, the cornerstone of both Addison's and Adam Smith's philosophies of polite sociability, is a practice difficult to enact in lived experience, as Boswell's journal amply demonstrates, and from this develops shame at the failure to live up to the ideal. Boswell is swayed by all sorts of things that Smith, Addison and Shaftesbury before them do not always fully account for: national identity, economic circumstances, sexual consequences, individual personality; these are all limiting factors that the individual must negotiate in varying combinations that polite theory cannot always accommodate.

For Patricia Meyer Spacks, both Boswell in particular, and eighteenth-century self-biographers in general, use the literary mode to not only reflect on their own development, but also to engineer it. In *Imagining a Self* (1976), for example, Spacks observes that: 'Boswell finds, during the year he reports, a more viable identity than that he possesses at the beginning, but his finding is also a making, of life as well as literature' (230). This concept of a literary 'making'

of self pre-empts Felicity Nussbaum's formulation of the eighteenth-century text as a 'technology of the self'. For Nussbaum, texts such as the *London Journal* are interesting for their non-canonical status; not published during his lifetime, Boswell's journals 'stretch to "represent" new kinds of consciousness and experience'. This allows the modern critic to explore 'ideological crises…more easily discerned in newly emergent genres because the familiarity of entrenched conventions has not fully glossed over the fissures' (1989: xiii). What more explicit crisis could there be, then, than a young man feeling he has to choose between varying restrictive modes of masculinity, all the while ashamed at the indecision which keeps him held in limbo? For Nussbaum, Boswell's ideological crisis is one which can be understood in terms of both gender and class. Although her emphasis is more on the emergence of a self-defining feminine voice, as with any point at which women's subjectivity comes to the fore, this very event must needs also generate questions about the nature of masculine identity. 'In short, autobiographical writing,' Nussbaum reminds us, 'published and private, serves as a location where residual and emergent notions of gender and class clash to replicate and challenge reigning notions of identity' (xiv). We see this in the *London Journal* in Boswell's repeated attempts to 'seek sufficiently "manly" self-representation in an attempt to triumph in the newly intensified contest against women for narrative authority over the minute particulars of private experience' (xx). Boswell is simultaneously attempting something relatively new – the making of self through conscious autobiographical writing, already conceived, as Nussbaum suggests, as somewhat feminine – and clinging to a notion of masculine superiority which stifles expressiveness at the same time as making the power of the universal masculine available to him. With both modes of identity looking shaky, Boswell feels shame at his inability to make it all work.

Each chapter of this thesis has addressed texts of a different form – the periodical, the play, the social commentary, the philosophical treatise, the novel and the autobiography. By examining a journal, I am turning to a form highly likely to record and express feelings of shame, as well as revealing shame less consciously expressed. A journal could be considered a private document, a sealed container meant to keep private the innermost thoughts and confessions of its writer. Of course, any journal leaks its contents, whether through direct spectatorship by others, or the imagined spectatorship conjured by the paranoid owner. Boswell's discovery that his packets to Johnston are being opened by his father participates in both of these forms of exposure. The latter form of viewing a journal's contents is, of course, what lends a journal its strong symbolic power, for both the writer of the journal and the potential reader who is forbidden to access its contents. As Patricia Meyer Spacks (2003)

observes, 'secrets invite unraveling; privacy stimulates encroachment' (141). Encroachment, the invasion of space reserved as private, is terrifying for the man attempting to create and maintain a fragile identity construct, as we saw with anti-fop writing. This is because the plundering of the journal, the unravelling of secrets held within the private text, involves an exposure of the necessary scaffolding around which the illusion of ideal masculinity is wrapped.

The critics we have discussed conceive of Boswell's journal as an internal, identity-forming dialogue committed to paper. Boswell's journal is a fascinating variant of the typical journal form, however. It seems that the young Scot aspires to create himself through writing about his own thoughts and actions, and not purely for his own benefit. The journal, unusually, has an intended reader, his friend in Scotland, John Johnston, to whom the journal is sent in parcels for safekeeping, and who is permitted to read them. Boswell also mentions showing the journal to one or two others, and experiments with different styles of writing his entries on their advice (*London Journal*: 130). This document, although not a public one in the general sense, is still shot through with the spectatorship of others. This makes it a journal in which public and private cannot be held entirely separate, and where the nature of spectatorship plays a crucial role. This leads us back to the works of Addison, Steele, and Smith and demonstrates the ways in which their theories of self-knowledge through spectatorial mastery are played out – with predictable difficulty – in the life of one eighteenth-century man, for whom national identity and fraught relationships with other men find no ready answers in the books he reads.

Throughout, I am suggesting that shame is the driving force for Boswell's improvement, drawing on Eve Sedgwick to suggest that shame is a catalyst for change, not just an isolating or stultifying phenomenon. As naïve as Boswell's efforts to 'make' himself are, he never seems to entertain the idea that polite masculinity is simply not worth the effort. By the end of the *London Journal*, Boswell at least feels more resolute in following a clear path to polite manhood. In her book *Touching Feeling* (2003), Sedgwick explores the ways in which shame affects us. She makes clear, through a reading of psychological work on shame, that the capacity to experience it starts early in life, with the perceived rejection of the infant when 'the circuit of mirroring expressions between the child's face and the caregiver's recognized face' is broken (36). This is when the 'eyes down, face averted' posture typical to those experiencing a flush of shame develops. Shame, ironically, 'in interrupting identification…makes identity' (36). This can be seen in our inability to stop ourselves identifying with those we do not wish to – Sedgwick gives the example of a disturbed man

publicly exposing himself. 'Shame both derives from and aims toward sociability', she tells us (37).

Quoting Michael Franz Basch, we see how this process leads us directly back to Boswell and his relationships with others, especially his father:

> The shame-humiliation reaction in infancy of hanging the head and averting the eyes does not mean the child is conscious of rejection, but indicates that effective contact with another person has been broken…Therefore, shame-humiliation throughout life can be thought of as an inability to effectively arouse the other person's positive reactions to one's communications. The exquisite painfulness of that reaction in later life harks back to the earliest period when such a condition is not simply uncomfortable but threatens life itself. (in Sedgwick: 37-8)

It is useful to consider the implications here of the phrase 'such a condition is not simply uncomfortable but threatens life itself' in terms of gender construction. Boswell can easily be positioned as an extreme case – his father may have been unusually strict, Boswell unusually soft – but the very emphasis Boswell places on uniting his disparate ideas of desirable masculinities, and on satisfying the demands of his father whilst also sharply distinguishing himself from what he perceives his father's vision for him to be, seems to follow what Sedgwick calls the 'double movement shame makes: toward painful individuation, toward uncontrollable relationality' (37). It is this 'toward' which indicates the way in which shame drives us and refuses to allow us to be paralysed. Boswell was a sociable person, to the point of describing his outgoing behaviour as 'ridiculous' (2010: 78). His desire to please others is obvious from almost every entry in the journal. It follows, then, that his contact with others, as well as giving him pleasure, also exposes him to shame: 'This is what I ought most to guard against. People in company applaud a man for it, very much; But behind his back, hold him very cheap' (78).

This sociable shame is most clearly examined in this chapter through the section on Boswell's interpersonal relationships with other men. However, it can be seen also in his relationship as a Scot to the English. As I demonstrate, Boswell's journal reveals a desire to have his behaviour and character approved of by the metropolitan English, and his attempts to disavow his Scottish origins and acquaintances are (sometimes comically) painful. This is not without its complexity, however, for Boswell's feelings towards the English are not without resentment, as a particularly charged experience at the theatre, discussed below, reveals. His shame over his Scottish origins and his oscillating ideas about how to construct his gender pushes himself to attain more; to be more like his carefully-considered role models: to be more *retenu*.

The case of Boswell also highlights a central problem of eighteenth-century gender identity theory: it considers masculinity as a project that can and must be completed successfully, as suggested by fictional representations in *The Spectator*[15]. Felicity Nussbaum (1989) asserts that a technology of the self 'rests on the assumption that its truth can be told' (xv). Whilst I am sceptical about the value of a term like 'truth' (as is Nussbaum), ultimately the truth of the *London Journal* is an emotional one: that the project of eighteenth-century masculinity is one that is painful because of the illusion that it will be fulfilled. We sense this in Boswell's anxiety about getting a commission in the Guards, in his fractured relationship with his (equally anxious) father, in his uneasy relationships with the men around him, and in his liaisons with women. Through committing his struggles to paper, Boswell underlines the urgency of his need to 'become' a specific sort of man. This man combines characteristics that his father could respect, but that Boswell himself can also feel proud of. The journal is a record as well as an instrument for measuring Boswell's progress. It also acts as a guarantor; its status as record shaming Boswell into improving because what is put in writing has the power of a promise: 'knowing that I am to record my transactions will make me more carefull to do well. Or if I should go wrong, it will assist me in resolutions of doing better' (3). It is in this way that Nussbaum's evocation of truth comes back – not as externally quantifiable veracity, but as imaginatively constructed, narrativised selfhood. As Nussbaum says of autobiographical texts in general: 'They also offer a private space for experimentation, revision and resistance to prevailing notions of identity… In other words, public and private self-writing, for men and for women, is part of the conquest over meaning and the contest over the power to name the real' (xxi).

Boswell's *London Journal*, then, is an attempt to name what is real, that is, his lived experience both in dialogue with, and sometimes over and against, the polite masculine ideal. It is also an experimental document because it tries to overwrite the Boswell that exists in the eyes of others. Repeatedly in the journal, the younger Boswell refers to how he is perceived by his father, and of how he is characterised as 'dissipated' by his friends, who often understand him differently from how he understands himself. The journal, then, is an imaginative space, a space in which he can create himself in the image he wishes to behold. His deference to 'the truth', that is, the externally ratified truth, means that he records all his failings, and the criticisms of others. It is one of the reasons Boswell is so liable to feeling shame. He imagines

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[15] I am thinking more of the secondary characters here than Mr. Spectator, who remains largely impervious to change, of course. Will Honeycomb, the reformed libertine, is a perfect example, especially for Boswell. The journey from rake to willingly polite and domesticated gentleman echoes the very same journey Boswell is trying to make, albeit on a much compressed timescale for the latter.

'many People' reading certain sections of his journal, and concluding they would 'hold me in great contempt, as a very trifling fellow' (84), suggesting he is afraid of the shame which follows exposure. Still, there is a palpable sense in the journal that his continued investment in using this 'technology of the self' will enable him to conquer what his peers, role models and the multitude have signified 'James Boswell' to mean, and instead 'to name the real'.

This concept of the 'real' is hard to put to work, however. Nussbaum herself writes of eighteenth-century 'self-biography' as, 'a matrix of conflicting discourses and practices that produce, reflect, contain, and transform class and gender identities' (xiii). Through the writing of the journal, Boswell reflects on himself and his development as if he were a character in a novel. From this vantage point, he believes he is able to rationalise his actions, understand his faults, and begin to improve. Reflection, therefore, requires a sense of shame in order to identify character flaws. The journal is a technique of enlightenment, and in that sense perfect for its time. Boswell is explicit about using the journal for this very purpose. 'A man cannot know himself better than by attending to the feelings of his heart and to his external Actions from which he may with tolerable certainty judge "what manner of person he is".' He goes on to say: 'I have therefore determined to keep a dayly journal in which I shall set down my various sentiments and my various conduct which will be not only usefull; but very agreable.' (3) Here, Boswell sets out his understanding of the purpose of his journal (and perhaps journal-keeping as a practice) by defining it as both 'usefull' and 'agreable'; there is both pleasure and utility in this writing project. He also links the internal feelings of the heart, to the 'external Actions', meaning that Boswell understands the fundamental bond between the two. Here we have echoes of Adam Smith, in that action and virtue are understood as non-divisible, each from the other. Through reflection, then, Boswell also hopes to produce a form of masculinity that he can recognise as being 'whole'. The journal is a crucible for the production of identity, as much as a way of recording thoughts and actions and reflecting on their merits.

'Plain hamely fife': Boswell's national masculinity

I want to look closely at Boswell's relationship to his national identity in order to highlight a key way in which shame contributes towards the self-construction we see in the journal. His attempts to distance himself from fellow Scots when in London provide some fertile examples. The arrival of Lady Betty Macfarlane and her family not long after Boswell himself has arrived (and crucially, before he has been able to establish himself amongst the English) is our first taste of Boswell's revulsion at his compatriots:

> To tell the plain truth, I was vexed at their coming [,] for to see just the plain *hamely* fife family hurt my grand ideas of London. Besides I was now upon a plan of studying polite reserved behaviour which is the only way to keep up dignity of character. And as I have a good share of Pride which I think is very proper and even noble, I am hurt with the taunts of ridicule & am unsatisfied if I do not feel myself something of a superior animal. This has allways been my favourite idea, in my best moments. (22)

This passage is typical of the sentiments Boswell expresses over his fellow Scots. The descriptive terms 'plain hamely fife' underscore what it is that is wrong with them, in his view: their lack of refinement, their regional accents (signified by the word 'fife') and their parochialism. The word *hamely*, italicised as it is in the Gordon Turnbull edition of the journal, is a dialect word, here used mockingly to other the Macfarlane set. As Turnbull defines it, *hamely* carries connotations of familiar and ordinary, 'shading slightly over into "rough, coarse, blunt"' (n.16, 351). Their presence inflicts shame on Boswell, who admits he has 'a good share of Pride'. Andrew Erskine, who was with the Macfarlane party, noted this sense of injury when writing to John Johnston three and a half years later: 'instead of recieving [sic] me with that warmth with that Cordiality which I expected he look'd upon me with a degree of horror…' (n.15, 351). This pride, however, Boswell insists is entirely appropriate for a man in his position. The 'taunts of ridicule' he mentions here are unattributed, so it is left unclear whether these are real taunts from the Macfarlanes over his feigned Englishness, or the imagined ridicule he expects from any English acquaintances who may identify him with such company.

Later in the journal, Boswell comments on the inability of the Macfarlane set to appreciate the English capital as he does, telling them: '…I want to be among english People & to acquire the language. They laughed at that. I declaimed on the felicity of London. But they were cold & could not understand me. They reasoned plainly like People in the common road of life; and I like a man of fancy & whim. Indeed it will not bear reasoning' (79). As a result of an explicit middle-class cultural project, morality and virtue were no longer the preserve of the aristocracy, meaning men like Boswell had to find their place between the virtuous and the dissipated. Feeling superior, therefore, gives the unanchored Boswell something to define himself against, and to protect himself from feelings which do not 'bear reasoning'.

The English provide him with a different kind of difficulty. His initial attempts to be more 'English' are linked, as David M. Weed points out, to his gender construction. Some of these attempts are incredibly clumsy. For example, on Wednesday 15th December, Boswell announces that: 'The Ennemies of the People of England who would have them considered in the worst light, represent them as selfish, - Beef-eaters, - and cruel.' In response to this idea,

Boswell resolves 'to be a true-born old-Englishman', which involves visiting a steakhouse where he 'swallowed my dinner, by my self to fullfill the charge of selfishness' (46). He follows this with a visit to a cockfight, though he admits he finds this spectacle upsetting. This boorish form of Englishness he rarely participates in, however, and generally prefers to name only refined activities and even feelings as 'English'. The following day's entry, for example, muses on the English propensity toward melancholy, as opposed to the flippancy of the French: 'You never hear of madness or self-murder among them. Heat of fancy evaporates in a fine brisk clear vapour with them, but amongst the English often falls heavily upon the Brain [.]' (48). The Scots are not mentioned here at all, and as a sufferer of 'hypochondria', Boswell clearly implies here that he may have Scottish blood, but an English temperament. There is, he insists, nothing *hamely* about Boswell; this is one of the key points that remains crucial to his self-construction throughout the journal, although he remains concerned that it may be a fallacy.[16]

In terms such as *hamely*, Boswell locates the provincial, the backward, and the irrelevant. Whichever way he tries to sever himself from it, however, Boswell knows that by virtue of his provincial background and his relationship to the Macfarlanes, among others, he is linked to it. It is in this way – in its very inescapability – that the *hamely* is a source of shame. By threatening to claim Boswell for its own, the *hamely* indicates to him the constant potential for humiliation he must face whilst in London. Silvan Tomkins reminds us that humiliation is a high-intensity version of shame; it is the explosion of white noise to shame's long-term background hum. It is enough for Boswell only to *see* the Macfarlanes in order to experience this pang of humiliation. The *hamely* is more than just a personal source of discomfort for Boswell, however. It feeds into wider and more complex issues around Scotland and its role in relation to English urbanity and political superiority. The term suggests a native characteristic (home-ly) and is therefore also an identity marker. Being marked out as provincial threatens one's ability to attain the masculine universal ideal, especially in London's metropolitan

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[16] In his book *Madness and Civilization* (2001), Michel Foucault identifies 'unreason', or socially unacceptable behaviour as shameful, suggesting it needed to be confined in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to avoid shaming of wider society (63). It is interesting that Boswell's 'treatment' for gonorrhoea is to be confined to his rooms, symbolically removing his hat and his sword (2010: 114). His confinement prevents not just the disease but the shame of his unreason from permeating society. Melancholia is characterised by Foucault as being something especially applicable to men (113). A vague disorder, with a range of symptoms from feelings of misery to excessive apathy, headaches to weak stomachs, hypochondria came to be seen by some men as a mark of their fine feeling, perhaps because the symptoms were so closely-related to the female disorder hysteria. This seems yet another unintended consequence of the period's emphasis on men conversing with the opposite sex; rather than being shamed by a feminised disorder, some polite men actively sought to diagnose themselves under its name. Boswell is gratified to discover, for example, that Johnson also suffers from melancholy, stating: 'I felt that strange satisfaction which human Nature feels at the idea of participating distress with others, and the greater person our fellow sufferer is so much the more good does it do us' (287-8).

culture. Boswell's clumsy attempts at being English reveal a man who is still painfully conscious of his status as a body laden down with meaning.

Boswell's ideas of Englishness become more qualified by experience as time goes on, but his ideas of the Scottish remain troubling to him. They humiliate him by their very proximity; on Saturday 9th July, a visit to Green Park is ruined when: 'we gathered many more Scotsmen, and the conversation grew familiar to a detestable degree. I therefore left them; happy to be rid of their rude want of distinction, and to retreat to my calm retirement in the Temple' (266). Even at this late stage of his time spent in London, Boswell still seems to be unable to shake off his ability to draw in embarrassing Scots as though he were some kind of perpetually humiliated magnet. His unwillingness to occupy even an open space with his countrymen is suggestive of Boswell's fear of contagion; like the anti-fop writers earlier in the century, he seems to feel that even the slightest of brushes against their *hamely* bodies might be enough to contract an apparent disease that, of course, he already has. Furthermore, their conversation is equally discomfiting for Boswell, as the sound of their Scottish accents, as well as the 'familiar' content of their chatter, marks them – and by extension, him – off from the rest of the genteel denizens of Green Park, the fashionable and refined English citizens who are not directly mentioned in this passage but whose presence is felt like silent witnesses. Boswell's humiliation here is redolent of the shame of being *seen* to be part of a group he wishes to be far removed from. Spectatorship, as we discovered in the discussion of *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, occurs in various ways, along multiple real and imagined sightlines. The example of Boswell highlights why the Scots (Adam Smith being another case in point) might have been particularly sensitive to the self-compromising nature of spectatorial issues.

In one earlier entry, for the 16th January, Boswell makes it clear what is threatened by these issues: 'I had not been at Lady Betty's since Thursday se'nnight as I wanted to have nothing but english ideas, and to be as manly as I possibly could' (98). Proximity, even to other members of the Scots aristocracy, will disrupt his plan of study of 'polite reserved behaviour' and deform the fragile construct of his gender identity. His strict regime of 'nothing but english ideas' is designed to purge him of the particularity of Scots 'want of distinction'. The phrase 'to be as manly as I possibly could' signals not only the depth of conviction Boswell assigns to his plan of study, but also the shadow of doubt over whether he is strong enough to carry it through. Let's not forget Boswell's plan to have elocution lessons to rid his voice of its Scottish inflections, as mentioned in the memorandum for 25th March (181). Fear of his own dissipative proclivities, and shame over their habit of returning with full force, keeps Boswell pushing

forward, straining to break the leash his nationality supposedly places him under. Here we see that shame, rather than paralysing the sufferer, compels him to constant action.

Englishness, embodied in the *retenu* character, is about losing the kind of particularity that can be read under the sign of the *hamely*. Scottish bodies are marked, for Boswell, by these embarrassing indicators. They are full of signification which limits their ability to travel within (English) metropolitan space. Boswell is a constant generator of this perception, remarking on the particularities of eating habits, accents, clothing choices and conversation topics which he finds distasteful, inappropriate or humiliating in other Scots in London. By contrast, English figures rarely come in for as much vivid description, and the impression we get of them is more conveyed through effusive remarks about their general demeanour and sense of propriety, as we see, at least initially, in the case of the Northumberlands.[17] This comparative lack of signification means that, unlike the Scots, the English – and English men in particular – are presented as not just finer but also less marked by meaning. The English figures Boswell admires, and indeed, the *retenu* figure he wishes to become, are emptied out of particularity.

We see this in his choice of wording in the Green Park passage; he is 'happy to be rid' of the unwanted connection with the Scots crowd, and is relieved to 'retreat to my calm retirement in the Temple'. Being rid, retreating, retiring, all are routes to absence, all are ways of disengaging from the embarrassment of signification. The Temple is of course a geographical area of London, but its connection with the Inns of Court, and of course its Classical associations with Greek learning, are doubtless intended by Boswell. Temples are sites of emptiness – that which is contemplated and worshipped within their walls does not exist in any material form. As we saw in the opening chapter, investment in a disembodied, disinterested conception of virtue is advocated by Addison and Steele via their ghostly creation, Mr. Spectator, famous for his absence-in-presence, always observing, never participating. Boswell echoes this investment in absence himself in a memorandum for 7th December, when he reminds himself, 'Resolve preserve retenue & as you began. Dont see one of them [Macfarlanes] today it is very vulgar. Be absent some days; & then you can be more on guard – speak little & stand laugh' (30). Although the absence suggested here is literal absence, rather than the present absence which is so crucial to the observational commentary of Mr. Spectator, it is linked via the semicolon to the idea of being 'on guard' – as though

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[17] Boswell relates, verbatim, a conversation between himself and the Duchess of Northumberland, in order to 'enrich my Journal' (86-9). The conversational ability of the English upper classes serves to make a contrast with the 'familiar' talk of his fellow Scots, but also helps Boswell practice being English.

absence of participation can be equally represented by both total absence and *retenu* presence.

Boswell's fixation with *The Spectator* extends beyond this one reference. Early on in his journal, he describes feeling 'strong dispositions to be a Mr. Addison'. This desire seems to be linked to a sense of English propriety. 'Mr. Addison's character in Sentiment mixed with a little of the gayety of Sir Richard Steele, & the manners of Mr. Digges [West Digges, the actor, whom Boswell knew personally] were the ideas I aimed to realize' (23), he goes on to say, linking the two authors of *The Spectator* with the contemporary actor famous for his manners and deportment. The need to take on aspects of the characters of older men deemed exemplary is a point I will return to later, but for now it seems important to underline the ways in which Boswell situates his aspirations geographically in English bodies and an English city. Boswell is not alone in doing this. His close friend John Johnston of Grange, the man to whom the journal was sent for safekeeping, is reported within its pages as remarking to Boswell after his return from his initial, abortive stay in London two years earlier, that 'he thought I would resemble Mr. Addison' (22). Boswell and his like-minded Scottish peers thought that immersing oneself in the culture of English commercial politeness would produce in the expatriate Scot a particular and much sought-after form of polite masculinity. This seems exemplified by a kind of pristine, untouchable emptiness, such as that of Mr. Spectator or, equally, the Temple as I discussed above. By contrast, Boswell's journal is voluble, contradictory, and emotional because it is a space in which the labour of self-fashioning is being carried out.

Perhaps one reason, then, that Boswell struggles with his Scottish national identity is due to his ambivalence over the role of Scotland in the Union. Keenly aware of his presence in London as a representative of society north of the border, he swings between rejecting the burden and wholeheartedly, if momentarily, embracing it. He repeatedly decries the degrading effect of being in proximity to other Scots in London, but there are moments in the journal where he defines himself in opposition to the English. On Wednesday 8th December, he records the following when attending a comic opera:

> Just before the Ouverture began to be played two highland officers came in. The mob in the upper gallery roared out No Scots. No Scots. Out with them, hist & pelted them with Apples. My heart warmed to my countrymen [,] my Scotch blood boiled with indignation. I jumpt up on the benches, roared out damn you you Rascals, hist & was in the greatest rage. I am very sure at that time, I should have been the most distinguished of Heroes. I hated the English, I wished from my Soul that the Union was broke & that we might give them another battle of Bannockburn. I went close to the officers, & asked them of what Regiment. They were of; They told me Lord John

> Murray's & that they were just come from the Havannah. And this said they is the thanks that we get, to be hist when we come home. If it was french what could they do worse. But said one if I had a *grup o yin or twa o the tamd rascals I sud let them ken what they're about*. The rudeness of the English vulgar is terrible. This indeed is the liberty which they have: the liberty of bullying & being abusive with their blackguard tongues. (32-2)

The recollection of the event rehearses the rage of the moment, with Boswell's syntax faltering in the middle line, and his punctuation scattered and fragmented. The unbridled outpouring of fury expressed here is unusual for the journal, wherein Boswell consciously attempted to write in a *retenu* manner. The excess of language in this passage mimics the Scottish excessiveness of expression and familiarity Boswell explicitly reminds himself to guard against elsewhere. Here, however, he allows this frenzied writing to stand. It is one of the very few times Boswell identifies uncompromisingly as Scottish.

However, there are reasons why Boswell may have let this entry remain unedited. As he makes clear, it is 'the English vulgar' whom he is explicitly attacking – the 'mob' confined to the upper gallery. Even in one of the most explicitly angry passages in the *London Journal*, Boswell shifts the focus of his ire from a nation, to a class within that nation. The Addisons of English society are beyond reproach; it is the vulgar who are the deserving target of revenge. That being said, Boswell's wish to break the Union and 'give them another battle of Bannockburn' is a far more general expression of dislike. This revenge fantasy wishes to replay the medieval Scottish victory over the English, but it also wishes to smash a political union which even an Anglophile like Boswell seems to see is not an equal one. As the previous actions of the Scottish officers are unassailable in their active virtue, Boswell is able to overlook the many ways in which these men, with their Scots dialect, are examples of the *hamely* in its most striking incarnation, rooted as the concept is in the Scottish variations on spoken English.

Anger is characterised here as productive; Boswell's name calling and 'histing' are recast as righteous rebukes toward an unsophisticated rabble, reasserting a superior moral order. He also allies himself with the two Highland officers, whose masculinity is presented as unimpeachable. The threat of violence uttered by one, couched in rough Highland dialect, plays directly into a conception of the Highlands, and by extrapolation, Scotland as a whole, as a land of warriors motivated by pre-commercial honour codes. Boswell's aligning himself with these men, whose occupations and origins are clearly very different from his own, reveals a vulnerability linking both his gender and national identities. English abuse of the Scottish provides a rare opportunity for Boswell to confront these frustrations in a way that

ameliorates the keenly-felt shame of his provincial masculinity. While in other parts of the journal, Boswell reads Scottish ebullience as humiliating excess, as undermining the *retenu* demeanour and character he wishes to cultivate, here instead he identifies with his nationality because it allows him to assert a form of masculinity that he believes the English do not possess, namely an honest, uncomplicated warrior identity. 'My heart warmed to my countrymen', he says, claiming a kinship and fraternity with a pair of men with whom he shares only one concrete similarity – the always problematic fact of their Scottishness.

'The opinion of the World': Boswell under the influence of other men

I want to take the opportunity to consider more broadly how relationships with other men help to define Boswell's identity, and what role shame has to play within that. The letters and the journal are intended primarily for the eyes of one man, Boswell's close friend, John Johnston. They form one of the few spaces where Boswell allows his pursuit of the *retenu* character to be visible as a deliberate quest for a constructed selfhood. The journal and letters, Christopher F. Loar believes, are an entirely private Scottish space, a refuge from a public projection of stability which is defined as English: 'Grange [Johnston's seat was at Grange], with his sympathetic melancholy Scottishness, belonged firmly in Boswell's private life. On the other hand, [Samuel] Johnson, no matter how close Boswell eventually became to him, always represented a stentorian English public life' (2004: 612). Exploring these particular connections with other men further illuminates the ways in which shame works to help construct Boswell's sense of self.

In order to do this effectively, it seems necessary to me to group Boswell's major homosocial relations under two headings – the paternal and the fraternal. Whilst at first glance this approach to analysing Boswell's connections with other men may seem reductive, I would make clear that the terms I am using are fairly wide-ranging in their signification, and are not entirely divorced from each other. In fact, they are crucially interdependent, as the case of John Johnston shows. For the purposes of this discussion, I am defining the term *paternal* as referring both to older men in Boswell's life who have a demonstrable influence on his sense of self, as well a more nebulous concept invoking the spirit of 'completed' masculine development. In many ways, the paternal as represented in Boswell's *London Journal* and other juvenile writings represents the finished state of manhood he hopes to attain. This is not to say that this 'finished' state is entirely desirable for the young man: as we will see in our exploration of his relationship with his father, he sees faults in those he otherwise wishes to

emulate. The point is that those faults often emanate from a stability or stoicism that Boswell hopes to grow into. Individuals that could come under the category of the paternal include Lord Auchinleck (Boswell's father) and Samuel Johnson. At twenty-two, Boswell is still dependent financially on his father and his eventual decision to study law at Utrecht is one made in part to please his notoriously severe parent. Johnson begins to have a profound effect on Boswell towards the end of the *London Journal*, and this is particularly notable for the ways in which Boswell's notion of the paternal is ameliorated through this friendship.

The fraternal, unsurprisingly, has more of a suggestion of relationships between equals. Most of the figures who could be grouped under this category are of similar – but not necessarily exactly similar – age to Boswell himself. These include young Scots like Andrew Erskine and George Dempster, as well as the Englishman William Temple. Ralph S. Walker sums up some of Boswell's key fraternal relations by referring to Boswell's 'conflicting selves': 'the one so deeply attached to the past, to Johnston, and to home; the other reaching out to Temple and aspiring to some higher and larger self-realization' (1966: xviii). By embedding his differing ideals in different people's bodies, Boswell amplifies the drama of his fraternal relationships; by making others stand in for aspects of himself, he ensures he is constantly comparing himself to others, and that way lies shame. Eleven years older than Boswell, and possessed of a less flighty temperament, Johnston still shared much in common with Boswell, as the above section on Scotland demonstrates. In his letters to Johnston, and the *London Journal* itself, Boswell frequently reveals the open-hearted side of his nature that often appeals to modern readers. His great need to be guided and advised is revealed through his often plaintive notes to Johnston when he becomes uncertain of the latter's regard for him: 'You know very well that between friends the slightest neglect cannot fail to hurt' (1966: 55). It is also through these less guarded discussions with his fraternal associates that the challenges of masculine maturation in eighteenth-century bourgeois society can be helpfully traced. Whilst the 'finished' state of the paternal remains a frustrating mystery for Boswell, these charged fraternal relationships provide a window onto how the mechanisms of masculinity work on an individual level in this era.

Boswell finds himself caught between relating to both his paternal and fraternal influences, whilst also feeling himself to be cut off from them. Loving his friends but knowing them to be inadequate role models; resenting his father whilst also wishing to attain both his respect and the status of *retenu* man that he associates him with: these add to Boswell's feelings of being in flux, of having no stable identity. The shame he feels, then, comes from his perception that he is not, and perhaps may never be, the kind of *retenu* man he clearly longs

to be. A poem enclosed with a packet of the *London Journal* gives an insight into these fears: 'Tell me good Johnston when you view / This portrait most exactly true / What think you of poor Boswell's mind / Can you ought there of reason find / Or don't you with himself agree / That from it's influence he is free' (1966: 27). He has compared himself to the discursively-constructed ideal and found himself wanting. He is not good enough. If there is a sense that these feelings abate somewhat towards the end, it is perhaps because Samuel Johnson's encouragement and *retenu* perspective enable Boswell to see that the formation of identity is a process, and that his shame is 'the space wherein a sense of self will develop' (Sedgwick & Frank, 2003: 98).

Some of the most valuable sources we have for examining how the themes of this chapter, masculinity, nationality, and friendship, converge to help construct Boswell's identity through shame are the covering letters sent to John Johnston in the packages containing instalments of what, two centuries later, would become *The London Journal*. Loar (2004) has highlighted the ways in which they participate in a different positioning of gender and nationhood from the fractured relationship we have examined in the journal itself. Loar sees the letters as using a mythological Scottish past to create space for homosocial intimacy, predicated on 'the absence of this past and an acknowledgment of its unavailability' (596). Through imagining a misty past in which Scottish men in particular participated in a form of sociality which was both spontaneous in its expression, and uncomplicated in its experience, Boswell attempts to absent himself from the complexities of modernity. It seems that the journal, with its emphasis on self-reflection and improvement, is a document that must remain free of the melancholic romanticism that is natural to Boswell, but which he confines to the letters. The letters, ironically, are therefore more private in tone and intent than the journal.

Boswell and Johnston combine this lost world with their own hypochondria to create a representation of themselves as feeling backward, in a way strikingly similar to Harley and Silton: 'We are both Antiquarians which is not the most agreable sort of feeling' (1966: 14), Boswell tells Johnston on 13th September 1762. The problem of having more of an affinity with a bygone era than today's world is transformed into a bond via the exclusion of others who do not share their melancholy, 'the dull Sons of Equality', or equanimity (14). A homosocial connection is made through a form of suffering which serves to prove the fine nature and superior understanding of men like Boswell and Johnston. Antiquity, much like the word 'old', comes to stand in as code for a form of fine melancholy, as Boswell demonstrates on 20th November: 'You must write to me a great deal write freely and easily and if you are old it will releive you to open your heart' (23). As much of a relief as it could be, it was never a cure.

Walker (1966) observes that: 'the incidence of a tendency to "spleen" among the intelligent and cultivated in the middle of the eighteenth century seems to have been so high that it is fair to conclude that something in the mental climate of that age of uneasy social transition and metaphysical deadlock was peculiarly conducive to it' (xxvi). The mystic ingredient, the 'something' of Walker's musing is, I am arguing, shame: the shame of being inert in a fast-moving era.

Harley and Silton's attachment to the mythological past as morally purer than the present, and their investment in expressions of suffering as a mark of superiority are echoed here. Similar values are prized: honour, passion, simplicity and directness are placed in higher regard than the modern qualities of calculatingly polite sociability, commercialism and false modesty. The privileging of specific blood ties (family, tribe) over the impersonally generalised discourse of 'society' and the public sphere are also features of both discourses. Both Harley and Silton's dialogue, and Boswell and Johnston's letters, are melancholy articulations of loss and failure. These are men who struggle to find their place in the world, and so construct lost worlds to pine for. Boswell's feeling backward is all the more painful because of his concurrent investment in modernity; his sense of shame is heightened to find the world he wishes to succeed in laughing at him behind his back.[18] To my mind, this discourse also works to resolve – if only superficially – the discomfort Boswell feels about his own national identity. Loar writes:

> Scotland's marginal status thus became a resource, for its very isolation, it was imagined, preserved it from the ravages of effeminacy and duplicity. Scotland could be read, in a way that urbanizing England could not, as a site where the nobly primitive, the pastoral, and the heroic had not been entirely extinguished. Scotland's people and history were understood by many Britons – most pertinently, by many Lowland Scots – to embody certain masculine virtues that could be imagined as remedies for the potentially destabilizing, isolating, and feminizing processes that threatened "authentic" masculinity in the eighteenth century.' (600).

For Lowland Scots like Boswell, this heroic masculinity is particularly resonant because he is so close, and yet so far, from being able to claim it as his own. Instead, he is a member of a diluted breed of Scots, a North Briton who has sold his independence for commercial participation.

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[18] It is not just the likes of Erskine and Dempster he suspects of humiliating him – he also imagines English figures he previously respected, such as the Duchess of Northumberland, of being duplicitous: 'O these great People! They are a sad set of Beings. This Woman who seemed so cordialy my friend, and promised me her good offices so strongly, is I fear a fallacious Hussey' (196).

As Nicholas Phillipson (1981) shows, this anxiety is not peculiar to Boswell: '[Hugh] Blair and Ossian showed how modern provincials, whose fortunes lay on the side of progress, could alleviate any guilt they might feel at making a virtue of adaptability by celebrating the past with nostalgia and sentiment and in song' (34). The Ossian works, to which Boswell refers critically in the journal, are a fascinating site of convergence for desire and commercialism, which I do not have room to discuss here. The salient point Phillipson makes, however, is that men like Boswell turned eagerly to a melancholy fantasy of a lost masculinity, one that, because it predates the anxious, self-reflective state of Enlightenment manhood, is perceived to be natural, but irrevocably dispersed. I would like to push Phillipson's description of guilt and claim it as shame. Whilst not wanting to draw deceptively hard lines between shame and guilt, it does seem to me that any feelings attached to what one is and what one can never hope to be, seem highly suggestive of shame, because, as Eve Sedgwick suggests: 'one *is something* in experiencing shame, though one may or may not have secure hypotheses about what' (2003: 37). It seems fairly clear, then, that shame is the unnamed element in this powerful cocktail of ambivalence and loss. For men like Boswell, born into a Scotland stripped of political independence, it must have been an emasculating experience, made all the more pungent by the very fact of it having been a situation chosen by his predecessors, not forced upon them on a battlefield. The Lowland Scots could not even inhabit the character of savagely oppressed victims of invasion; many of them were actually prospering under the Union.

The shame of being irrevocably drawn forward, whilst also looking wistfully back, populates the letters to Johnston. In them, Boswell shares with his friend a vision of Scotland as a country whose glory lies in the mists of time. In reading Robertson's *History*, a Jacobite account of the Scottish past, he finds it has 'carried me back in Imagination to the ancient days of Scottish Grandeur; has filled my mind with generous ideas of the valour of our Ancestors' (1966: 15). This emphasises the fantastic nature of the mythos Boswell shares with Johnston, and its roots in a literary trope of melancholic loss. Historical figures, such as the doomed lovers Mary, Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley, become folk heroes for Boswell as they symbolise the disingenuous attraction that made Scotland stand, at least in his frustrated imagination, for the private as public. The *shameless* passion that drove them to their fates was also an extroversion of affect that, for the polite (*shame-filled*) eighteenth-century, was untenable. Boswell's pursuit of a construction of selfhood built on self-restraint and being *retenu* left little room for uninhibited self-expression. Politeness, then, leaves little room for affects like anger, destructive but also self-affirming, and instead demands that affect be turned inward in order to facilitate sociability. The regulation of affect means that those

affects that remain hidden – shame being the preeminent example – can flourish under this regime, and Boswell's journal provides us with evidence: the obsessive self-reflection politeness encourages also encourages feelings of shame. Therefore, expulsive desires must be relocated to a different time and place – a fantasy Scotland – in order to provide succour rather than reproach.

Boswell's father, unlike Boswell, has a more pragmatic outlook on both national and personal identity. Much of the conflict between the pair was generated by James's inability to submit himself to the necessary grind of a public profession. In an entry of the *Journal* for 25th January, Boswell relates a conversation with Eglinton in which he describes his former visit to London being cut short by his father's interference: 'My Father then came up & I was hurried down to Scotland, confined to live in my Father's family & pressed to study law; so that my situation was very unhappy' (117-18). Boswell often describes his father in terms of restriction; 'confined' and 'pressed', delivered as they are in the midst of his passionately describing injustices done to him, link Lord Auchinleck to the concept of parsimony and narrowness that is implied elsewhere (240).

The letters to his friend John Johnston are even more revealing. Realising that his father has likely been opening the packets containing the *London Journal* intended for redirection to Johnston, Boswell complains:

> It was doing what no Parent has a right to do, In the case of a Son who is a Man, and therefore an independent Individual. It is equaly unjust to steal his secrets as his money; especialy when we consider that secrets cannot be restored…But from many circumstances, you must see my friend, how very terrible a situation I should be in were I to live as young Laird in my Father's Family. (1966: 59-60)

Constraint and narrowness are again the defining features of Lord Auchinleck's paternal influence. Here that is augmented by the realisation of unwanted spectatorship. The journal, supposedly hidden from all eyes other than Johnston's, has been exposed to the juridical eyes of his father. Boswell's 'secrets' have been stolen. Lord Auchinleck represents a more public world than the intimate correspondence of Boswell and Johnston; the patriarch's reading of the journal's confessions has exposed them. Exposure is always a shameful experience; Boswell's assertion of his manhood ('a Son who is a Man') cannot entirely erase the sense here of a boy caught making mischief by the father. If this was fiction, Auchinleck's profession would be the most overwrought metaphor: the father as judge is the father who actually *is* a judge. There could be no more exemplary paternal figure for shaming the son.

Auchinleck certainly delivered, from on high, judgements of his son's conduct that James found excruciating, especially when he feared they might be accurate: 'I received this day a letter from my Father…', he writes to Johnston in the plaintive letter questioning the strength of Johnston's affection for him, 'You will observe how severe he is upon me. How he treats my scheme of keeping a Journal and sending it down and in what light he considers you…Now, Sir, consider how very galling it must be to me, that at the very time when I received this letter I should have a fresh proof of your neglect' (55-6). Auchinleck's letter has not survived, but this is immaterial. What is important is Boswell's reaction; the letter to Johnston shows the two sides of Boswell, embodied in Auchinleck and Johnston, colliding in the most painful and shaming of ways. The romantic and the *retenu* meet and are found to be humiliatingly at odds. We also cannot dismiss the possibility that this letter is indirectly addressed to Auchinleck too, given the likelihood of him seeing it, in which case Boswell was clearly not averse to exposing his pain and shame even to his most formidable judge. Shame works as a catalyst to improvement here by inducing the young man to expose himself to his most important spectators. Perhaps he felt that the less he hid his failings, the better would be his resolve to change – although this was not a consistent path of action, given his frequent attempts to avoid exposing himself to his father.

Even when not directly involved, Boswell's father could be used to shame his son. Euphemia, Boswell's mother, wrote to him in March 1763, accusing her eldest son of being irresponsible: 'I know no young Gentelman of this Country that lives ther [London] in that way your poor Father is stil in great distress about you your showing A dislike at this Country is a thing very disagreabl to him…' (1966: n.7, 61). Euphemia picks up on the differing understandings of provincial identity which drives a wedge between father and son; the father secure in his Scottishness, the son far more ambivalent. She also seems to suggest that her son's behaviour is unbecoming to his Scottish roots. Caught by both the romanticism of long-dead Scottish feudal lairdship, and, as Chauncey Tinker (in Martin, 1999: 27) suggests, the anticipation of Romantic ideals, Boswell appeared to vacillate constantly, while his father stood conspicuously firm. Boswell himself summarised the difference between them thus: 'He is oak. I am finer but softer wood' (25). This invocation of difference combines both pride and shame; Boswell's insistence that he is made of more delicate stuff communicates both the superior, elegant qualities he has acquired through his cultural experiences and his hypochondria, and also a tacit confession of his being, in the eyes of the commercial world, the weaker of the two.

We only have to look at the *London Journal* to see how much Boswell has internalised this understanding of himself as finer but softer wood. The memoranda that accompany the last few journal entries before Boswell departs London for study in Utrecht make frequent reference to his father, in an attempt to regulate his own behaviour. On Thursday 4 August, he writes:

> Set out for Harwich like Father grave & comfortable. Be alert all along, yet composed. Speak little – make no intimates. Be in earnest to improve. It is not you alone concerned – but your worthy father. Be reserved in Grief; You'll be so, in Joy. Go abroad with a manly resolution to improve, & corespond with Johnson. Be gratefull to him. See to attain a fixed & consistent character to have dignity. Never despair. (2010: 300).

This is a charged set of 'notes to self', packed with imperatives intended to motivate. It is one of the clearest examples from the *Journal* of shame acting as a stimulant for self-improvement. He invokes the personality and example of his father, and something of the latter's ever-watching eye. Also present are the watchwords of polite masculinity: 'reserved', 'manly resolution', 'dignity'. Most evocative of shame are phrases such as 'Be in earnest to improve', 'Be reserved in Grief…' and 'Be gratefull to him'. These urgent commands suggest that Boswell still feels he must 'be' something other than what he is, that is, 'fixed' and 'consistent', terms which echo the eternal unchanging nature of such masculine ideals as Mr. Spectator and even the Temple space Boswell wishes to retire to. He is aiming for an impermeable self, as opposed to the extremely permeable nature of the journal and the man we find there. Poised, as he seems all too aware, at the start of a new chapter of his life, Boswell seems intent on finally making the transition from soft wood to hard that he has been trying and failing to make for most of the text. He perceives the solid dignity of his father as being made up of differing yet seamlessly fused constituent parts; gravity and comfort, alertness and calm – these are not oxymoronic but instead the necessary multiplicities that a man must discover how to merge through practice at clear thought and honest action.

Boswell merges the figure of the *retenu* with qualities he also assigns to his father, as though admitting that the two figures, in their 'complete' state, are one and the same. It is instructive that Boswell's thinking around polite masculinity links internal thought and external behaviour so inextricably: 'Be reserved in Grief; You'll be so, in Joy'. Improvement of the self is a dominant theme of the journal as a whole, but that is made explicit in this passage: 'Be in earnest to improve'; 'Go abroad with a manly resolution to improve…'. It should also be noted the slight intention to recede from view here: 'Be alert all along, yet composed. Speak little – make no intimates' he reminds himself, echoing the critical distance maintained by Mr.

Spectator in order to move unsullied through society. The rejection of intimates seems implicitly to signal both a frustration and suspicion of fraternal relations, and a belief that the transition to a state of manly resolution requires one to jettison external connections, especially those fraternities (Dempster and Erskine in particular, but to some extent perhaps John Johnston too) where affect problematizes decisive action. The journal has a key role to play in this, moving intimacy to some extent from interpersonal relations to the literary space. Faith must be put in paternal figures who, due to their seemingly having resolved the disparate parts of their identities into one whole, are distant enough from Boswell's own immediate experience of self to act as lighthouses in the night.

It is not by accident, therefore, that Johnson is also mentioned in such close proximity to Lord Auchinleck. The two men were very different, and famously argued bitterly when they met, but this does not mean they cannot signify in similar ways for Boswell. With increasing integration of self, it would seem, comes increasing impenetrability – the young Boswell, so shamefully open to being read and labelled, emphasises by the end of the journal, that he must become more *retenu* in order to participate in the fiction of polite masculinity. Johnson's key role here is to give answers to Boswell's questions; unlike Lord Auchinleck, who stays powerfully (though unhelpfully) silent, Johnson explains to Boswell the ways of being a polite man:

> 'Sir…I am a Man of the World. I live in the World, and I take in some measure, the colour of the world, as it moves along. But your Father is a Judge in a remote part of the country, and all his notions are taken from the Old World. Besides, there must allways be a Struggle between Father and Son, while the one aims at power, and the other at Independency' (269).

Does Boswell feel ashamed that he is not like his father, or like Johnson for that matter? It is, as always, not as simple as that. For Boswell, shame works through his profusion of character, what he understands as his unformed self. His goal is to unify these warring parts – the man of wit, the passionate Scot, the aspiring Englishman, the man of learning, the man of economy, and so on, into one dignified, governable whole. For him, Lord Auchinleck and Johnson represent wholeness, whereas he is fractured into parts. These parts are continually identified by others, and he often reports on others' assessments of him at various points in the journal, underscoring its value in transitioning from an undesirable to an ideal form of masculinity.

The frustration for Boswell is to find that people continually magnify these parts of himself and subsume him under these categories. An early entry from November 1762 gives us but one example of many:

> Lord Eglintoune & I talked a little privately. He imagined me much in the stile that I was three years ago; raw curious volatile credulous. He little knew the experience I had got & the notions & the composure that I had obtained by reflection. My Lord said I [,] I am now a little wiser. Not so much as you think said he: For, as a Boy who has just learned the Alphabet, when he begins to make out words, thinks himself a great master of reading; so the little advance you have made in prudence, appears very great as it is so much before what you was formerly. (13)

Eglinton is one of many to qualify and sometimes belittle Boswell's ideas of his development. His observations, however, are carefully noted down by Boswell, allowing us as readers to glean more of an understanding of the external perception of Boswell by others; and perhaps revealing Boswell's own anxieties about the reliability of his own self-perception. In May, Eglinton tells Boswell that: '…it was very difficult to make me go on right. "Jamie (said he) You have a light head, - but a damn'd heavy A- [,] and to be sure such a Man will run easily down hill; but it would be severe work to get him up."' Boswell's own comment on this withering description is instructive, 'This illustration is very fine: For I do take lively projects into my head; but as to the execution, there I am tardy.' (214). Boswell's arse weighs him down; it is symbolic of the shameful tardiness which prevents Boswell from acting and progressing in the world. It recalls, for me, Abel Boyer's swipe at the fop, 'he has more learning in his heels than his head', explored in chapter 2. Both parts of the body are posterior; both, as I suggested about the fop's heels, refuse commercial and polite progress by representing something entirely self-indulgent: for the foppish heels, dancing and luxury, for the Boswellian backside, laziness and even perhaps sensual overindulgence (Boswell was always easy prey for affairs of the flesh, of course).

Boswell's candid habit of including direct criticism of his character in the journal underlines the purpose of writing it in the first place, to provide a written record and evidence of both his external and internal self in order to later survey his developing personality with a critical distance. As he highlights in his introduction to the journal, writing the account will: 'give me a habit of application and improve me in expression and knowing that I am to record my transactions will make me carefull to do well. Or if I should go wrong, it will assist me in resolutions of doing better' (3). In other words, the journal becomes a form of internal surveillance, a textual impartial spectator along the lines of Adam Smith's. Boswell uses the men around him, meanwhile, as external surveillance, and his ability to recreate conversations and scenes, remarked upon by critics such as Patricia Meyer Spacks (2003: 146) as being literary in their moral intensity, adds to the sense of the *London Journal* as a self-conscious project, a narrative, even, with the aim of resolving Boswell's fragmented personality. Boswell's candid recording of unflattering comments or humiliating situations is a ritual of self-

shaming, contained safely within the pages of the journal. By limiting its external audience almost entirely to one other pair of eyes (John Johnston's), Boswell attempts to experiment with shame in a controlled environment, all the while being reminded of the porous nature of even the most private writing. As resolved as his tone is towards the end, there is no real sense for the reader that he has in fact united his disparities; in fact, writing may perhaps have entrenched these differences further.

In June, Johnston urges his friend to 'Steadily adhere to this plan [studying in Utrecht], otherwise never embrace it.' Johnston then sets out the consequences of failing to stay firm, 'If you should fail, it is deceiving your father, and undoubtedly must Confirm the World of your unsteadiness and want of Resolution; The opinion of the World must not be despised. Whenever one Sinks in it's esteem, he must be unhappy, and rendered useless to his Country and friends...' (80). The leap Johnston makes here, from deception of the father to failing one's entire nation, serves to emphasise the stakes for masculine self-construction in the period. It is clear to see why, for Boswell, integrity and solidity were such important and essential goals. A man who could not be resolute enough to see through plans agreed with his father could never be trusted to serve his country with the requisite responsibility. Respect and loyalty to other men was, then, synonymous with that paid to the state, and Johnston reminds Boswell here of the ways in which individual men and a nation state were interchangeable. The term 'World' provides a rhetorical link for Johnston between *pater familias* and father land; 'World' as used here is a bulging term containing all that society could and did demand of a young man such as Boswell.

One of the arguments I have been making during this thesis is that far from being paralysing, shame can act as a catalyst for action. Boswell's journal provides evidence for this argument, as his resolution to follow his father's wishes and to become *retenu* is a consequence of the influence of shame. His experiences of dissipation, and his disappointment in fulfilling his shallow dream of being in the Guards, show him the meaninglessness of living purely for pleasure. He dislikes the ease with which he is persuaded to act with impropriety. Instead, meaningful relationships with other men who possess what he understands to be integrity allow him to understand himself in a more positive light. The Boswell who is of interest to the great Samuel Johnson, for example, is a Boswell whom Boswell himself can enjoy being. Although there are moments of pride scattered throughout the journal – and almost all referring to how well he has behaved himself in social situations, especially in the presence of men of integrity – they begin to gather frequency towards the end of the journal. This is not to say that the journal's final few entries do not have a melancholy and, in places,

even anxious feel at the thought of leaving a city that, despite its disappointments, he still finds stimulating, but that the narrative voice used by Boswell seems to accrue confidence as firm plans for study abroad, and regular contact with Johnson, provide not only clear focus but also narrative structure to both Boswell's lived experience, and the way in which he represents it in the journal.

The journal, then, demonstrates that Boswell used homosocial networks to both compel himself into action and provide him with succour for his failures. The shame of falling short of his masculine ideal propels him forward, and in friendships with paternal and fraternal figures, he finds the inspiration to power his self-development towards this very same masculine ideal. The writing of the journal itself, moreover, gives the reader some insight into Boswell's relationship with his own gender construction, and the role shame plays in this.

Chapter Six

"To call me after his name": Olaudah Equiano's gift of shame

In my final chapter, I want to turn to a writer for whom claiming the status of man of politeness was a significant political act. The former slave and abolitionist Olaudah Equiano lived through a period of British imperial expansion which saw a capitalist society become increasingly reliant on slave labour. Challenging the inhumanity of using racial others in this way meant advancing affective and moral arguments against economic (as well as racist) ones. There is much scholarship which has enabled us to appreciate the role of the heart in arguments over slavery during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Equiano's autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by Himself* (1789), is a crucial text in understanding these arguments. What is often overlooked in the abundance of critical attention the *Interesting Narrative* has been awarded in recent years is the significance of polite masculinity in the portrait Equiano paints of himself. It will be the business of this chapter to demonstrate that in writing his autobiography, Equiano uses politeness and idealised masculinity in order to position himself as a man of politeness, one whose oppression at the hands of his intellectual and moral equals (for so he sees white men to be) is an outrage for which the only appropriate response is shame.

However, the *Interesting Narrative* is no diatribe. Equiano intends to use his life story to bring black and white together. This is to say that he wishes to use his literary self-construction to make himself recognisable to a white readership as a man of politeness. He demonstrates the ways in which he shares polite values such as practicality, moral compass, stoicism and virtuous action, in addition to being learned and highly literate. He does this through the *Interesting Narrative* itself, which combines different genres and styles to create a sophisticated account of himself and his experiences which works for the political ends of the abolition movement *for the very reason that* Equiano comes through as a complex and reflective man of politeness in a similar way to James Boswell in the *London Journal.* Both of these texts are technologies of the self, to borrow a term from Felicity Nussbaum, because they use language, form and narrative to help define and articulate the individual self.

If the *London Journal* is a mostly private document, *The Interesting Narrative* is anything but. Written with the intention of addressing a public, at least partly in order to influence the abolition debate, the *Interesting Narrative* uses the particularised experience of a

strongly culturally-marked man to claim membership of an abstract idealised identity position – the man of politeness. Whilst Boswell's markers – his Scottish nationality, his fragmented personality and voracious sexual appetite – must be resolved and subsumed in private through the writing of the journal, Equiano's particularities instead become part of his public arsenal. He marks himself as the other in the title, calling himself 'the African', *in order* to underline the false premise this otherness is dependent on. I am arguing in this chapter that Equiano's account of his life does not make a claim to polite masculinity in spite of his African heritage; it claims admittance to this hegemony because Equiano embodies the spirit of the age. He provides evidence of entrepreneurism, an independent mind and a vigorous morality. Without going as far as to say 'I am just like you' – which would have struck Equiano as disingenuous, no doubt – he secures the white reader's interest and infuses this reader with shame for the outrages committed against him by both individuals and the institution of slavery.

This shame Equiano gives to his white readers via his narrative could usefully be called a gift. In order for Equiano's text to have had its full impact on a contemporary audience (and, perhaps, a modern one for that matter), the white reader, directly or indirectly complicit in the oppression of black people, must realise shame, not only for the atrocities committed against blacks en masse, but in particular for the treatment of one black man who has demonstrated himself to be the equal of his white reader. Derrida describes giving the gift as analogous to giving a blow (*donner un coup*), as though receiving the gift is to be the recipient of an act of violence. For Derrida, the gift is annulled 'each time there is restitution or countergift' (1992: 12). There can be no restitution for the gift of shame over the failure to recognise Equiano as an equal; abolition, emancipation, even full-blown legal equality, cannot act as a countergift as they are not commensurate with the terrain of affective experience that the *Interesting Narrative* powerfully details. Being made legally free cannot ever erase the traces of having been bound, and giving legal freedom cannot absolve oneself of the shame of belonging to the oppressive group.

In recognising all this, of course, the gift of shame is no longer a gift in the Derridean sense, as recognition 'annul[s] the gift even before recognition becomes gratitude' (14). The moment when the gift is received, the moment the blow is given, is *given* (gifted) time, an interval in which surprise opens up the recipient to allow shame in. What might be said in such a moment? Perhaps something like: 'I don't deserve this gift – I don't want to receive it, although I must – It compels me to see me as that which I do not want to be'. In short, the *Interesting Narrative* allows its white readers to see that the institution of slavery is a betrayal of polite values; they have failed their own test – and they must learn this through the giving

of the gift of shame from the hands of one of those they have betrayed most: a man of equal talent, virtue and understanding. It is like the teacher being taught a lesson by apparently the most hopeless child in the class: deeply humiliating, humbling and potentially unifying.

For me to argue that Equiano, a former slave, was in a position to give such a gift to those readers may at first seem overstating my case. I should emphasise here that I am suggesting Equiano's gift is an affective one, and therefore works within the polymorphous space of affect. In the realms of politics, economics, society, and culture (especially, in this case, literary culture) Equiano's peripheral and unstable status does not allow for his being understood as a donor. Affect, as we have noted several times in this thesis, can circumvent the discursively-constructed barriers produced by consensus, tradition, or political and economic expediencies, as much as it can work to entrench them. This was understood well enough by anti-fop writers concerned that their targets could destabilise an ideal masculine identity on which so much public ideology rested. Although clearly not a fop, Equiano's status as symbol for the enslaved is made possible by the same massive material culture that enabled the rise of the fop. Were it not for the Western dependency on slave labour to produce materials in quantities sufficient to allow for sustained economic and political expansion, then Africans would never have been enslaved, and it would not have been possible for an individual such as Equiano to occupy the position of gift-giver in this powerful way.

It is no great insight for me to suggest that the very same culture that enslaved and oppressed Equiano also gave him the materials, skills and opportunities to participate in it; Equiano often attests to this himself. What this chapter advances as its central claim is that Equiano achieves both a persuasive argument for abolition and an affirmation of his status as equal in every way to his European counterparts through offering the gift of shame to his readers. His emphasis on his own actions, thoughts, and experiences participates directly in a tradition of self-making in eighteenth-century writing, as explored with Boswell in the last chapter through critics such as Nussbaum and Patricia Meyer Spacks. Ultimately, it seems to me, Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* was so powerful because it spoke to the eighteenth century's interest in the self, more than pity or altruism for the other.

Shame and interest are the key affects for my reading of the *Interesting Narrative*. Interest appears in the *Narrative*'s very title, and pervades its pages in a notable way: for example, in Equiano's curiosity about the new 'white' world, in the details of his 'old' life, in his relationships to both people and commodities. It also stands for the relationship of its readers to the text; interested in this life story, they are further primed to accept other affects in

response to it. A note on the subject of interest may be helpful here. Interest is defined by Silvan Tomkins as one of the nine affects, and is closely tied to all the others. It finds a particularly fertile partnership with shame. Tomkins (1995) describes several of his affects in terms of their weakest and strongest manifestations. Interest, for example, is the weaker sibling of excitement, while a more acute experience of shame is labelled humiliation (73-4). The weaker versions of the affects are the ones we can persist to inhabit, across a lifetime in some cases. The interest that Equiano retains in his adoptive Western culture is not only lifelong, it also leads to a practice of reparative reading and writing which attempts to enable connection between white and black. Equiano paints a picture of himself participating in commercial society, developing his inherent moral qualities into the polite ones of his adoptive culture. This interests the reader in not just his exploits, but in Equiano himself. In my introduction, I referred to affect as 'inherent in bodies and their interrelations with one another, and how these charged 'between' spaces come to define the functioning of the larger societal body'. Interest is an affect which inhabits these 'between spaces', helping other affects to travel through individual bodies to affect society's emotional structures. It is the reader's interest in Equiano as a 'self' which allows him to bridge the gap imposed by racism in order to make the connection necessary to shame us.

Shame, as ever, is less easily quantifiable. I do not necessarily want to make an argument predicated entirely on race and its relationship to shame, although inevitably that will arise. For Equiano, race (his own racial identity that is) is not inherently shameful; there are very few passages in the *Narrative* that suggest Equiano feels shame over his black skin, aside from the crucial and oft-quoted passage about washing his face as a child, which I shall turn to later. His interest in white culture is not due to shame over his black skin. Instead, I want to pursue the ways that shame works to bring Equiano, as a black man of politeness, and his readers, as almost universally represented by whites, together in a common humanity.[19] I mean this in a polymorphic, affective sense, as opposed to the legal or juridical forms of togetherness sanctioned and policed by such concepts as 'freedom' or 'citizenship'; in short, I am talking about interpersonal intimacy. Shame can be divisive, but it also has the potential to draw people together. So while I will argue that there is the shame of both alienation and

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[19] Whilst the majority of subscribers to Equiano's *Interesting Narrative* were white Britons, there are some notable exceptions, including Equiano's contemporary Ottobah Cugoano, listed in subscribers to the first edition. See *The Interesting Narrative*, ed. Vincent Carretta, London: Penguin Classics, 2003: 318. Carretta's scholarly biography, *Equiano the African* (2005), points out that Cugoano's name is removed from the list of the subscribers from the fifth and later editions, because he had by this point advocated open resistance by slaves (353). This, along with Equiano's increasing inclusion of prefatory letters and testimony to his good character from white acquaintances in later editions of the *Interesting Narrative*, suggests to me that he imagined his addresses to be made to a predominantly white readership.

assimilation to be found in *The Interesting Narrative*, the (white) reader cannot remain immune to shame if the text is to do its work. As the critic Marion Rust (1996) observes: 'To consider one's disquisition implicated in another's silence should be upsetting for anyone who does more than listen' (22). For the white man, whose voice is so often and so readily heard, hearing the subaltern speak should be a shame-filled experience if it is heard properly. It is thus that Equiano's text works (or hopes to work) to achieve communion through shame. Marion Rust again:

> By placing the African and the European on a continuum and offering the British a view of themselves as children, Equiano accomplishes one of his most extraordinary rhetorical feats, one perhaps even more effective than the appeal to mercy or greed, in that it brings the problem closer to home, turning the slave from a "he" or an "it" into an "I" for the European reader, asking Europeans to take care of themselves, rather than some distant other. (28)

Here Rust characterises the Enlightenment view of non-white races as more 'child-like' or primitive than their white European counterparts as potentially instilling a moment of recognition of black not as white's other, but as a different manifestation of the same self. She suggests that Equiano's rhetorical feat is to store the catalytic energy needed to bring this moment into being within his writing.

This becomes plain to see in the sympathetic reviews of the *Narrative* upon its publication, such as that from the *General Magazine* of July 1789, which described those involved in the slave trade as: 'those savage dealers in a traffic disgraceful to humanity…which has fixed a stain on the legislature of Great Britain' (in *IN*, ed. Carretta, 2003: 13). Focusing on the experience of the reader, the review then goes on to say: 'the reader…will find his humanity often severely wounded by the shameless barbarity practised towards the author's hapless countrymen in all our colonies: if he feels, as he ought, the oppressed and the oppressors will equally excite his pity and indignation'(14). Here we have a clear alignment between the text and its reader, an alignment forged through affect, nominally pity and indignity but also shame, as alluded to in the phrase 'his humanity often severely wounded', in this case by the apparent absence of shame in one's peers. This is Adam Smith's moral transference in action; in observing – through the medium of Equiano's account - one's fellow Westerners behave in a manner 'disgraceful to humanity', the reader takes on the shame shirked by the slave traders. It is this shame, then, and the communion with 'the author's hapless countrymen', that induces a movement toward political action: 'That so unjust, so iniquitous a commerce may be abolished, is our ardent wish, and we heartily join in our

author's prayer' (14). The review aligns itself expressly with an abolitionist cause, and cites the affective power of Equiano's account as the key to this political allegiance.

Most commonly categorised as an autobiography, the *Interesting Narrative* is more properly a synthesis of several forms and styles familiar and accessible to a contemporary audience: the colonial romance, the spiritual confession, the picaresque, the entrepreneur's life history. Its compositional style, then, suggests not only a sophisticated writer, but one whose 'reading' of his potential audience is subtle enough to induce him to smooth over difficulties in racial and cultural difference by stylising his experiences in such a way as to be comprehensible to his readers. Srinivas Aravamudan writes in *Tropicopolitans* (1999) of the way that expansion of the culture of print in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries needs to be read by 'a scholarship that reimagines its communities of readers rather than one that takes those communities to be already imagined' (10). By this, Aravamudan means that critics must resist the urge to play back into 'colonialist assumptions' (23) by failing to challenge 'structural aspects of the relationship between the Eurocentric self and its other' (21). My own reading seeks to correct the fault Aravamudan describes by underscoring the ways in which Equiano uses his narrative to shame the Eurocentric reader into understanding the black individual not as other but as self.

Aravamudan argues that a tropicopolitan, a colonial subject who both resists and utilises the imperatives of colonisation on the self, must be understood as a synthesis of conflicting pressures. 'Responding to the inherited trauma of colonialism,' he writes, 'tropicopolitans revise their "memory-traces" and the colonial archive in a manner that reanimates the past and gives it the psychical and material rationale, and effectiveness, of agency' (11). Equiano revises the colonial archive by redeploying the sentimental genre to his own purposes, for example the trope of the noble savage which runs through the opening chapter set in Africa. 'Though some critics would have us choose between hybridity and authenticity, or collaboration and opposition, the messy legacies of empire do not always afford such clear cut choices' (14) Aravamudan remarks. These 'messy legacies' are found in Equiano's tale of abjection, emancipation and collaboration. Aravamudan's criticism of the ways in which Equiano's text has been subsumed into triumphalist critical narratives has helped to nudge my own reading toward something that acknowledges the importance of colonialist readings of *The Interesting Narrative*, but that recognises their limitations. Reading it rather as an account of affective transference allows me to examine the interpersonal ways in which Equiano's political agenda works most effectively. As quoted above, Marion Rust's

sense of Equiano's rhetoric interesting white readers so as to imagine themselves as inseparable from blacks is at the heart of my understanding of how this text works.

For Equiano the stance taken in the *Interesting Narrative* is a movement *toward* reconciliation rather than a movement *from* abjection. Equiano's life story is more interested in the point of connection than the point of departure. His narrative, as with his character, is a meeting place of influences textual, cultural, and experiential, but contact truly takes place in the affective communion imagined by the reading and writing practices he employs. The *Interesting Narrative* is just that, *interesting*. It tracks its hero from birth to a triumphal maturity where he has become master of himself, despite all the odds. It is the kind of narrative both eighteenth-century and modern readers find satisfying. Indeed, it is because it deploys the enduring tricks of storytelling so well that a reader is readily able to accept the gift of shame that the text offers. It is touching in the sense that his words touch, as will become clear when I analyse passages such as those describing his friendship with Richard Baker, or his attempting to wash himself white. From this touch, we are moved both affectively and politically, as we saw in the *General Magazine* review. One of the ways in which the *Narrative* is most radical is in its opposition to, and critique of, Enlightenment categorisations of race, promoted by Linnaeus and Hume among others, which posited that white and black were separated by a cultural and intellectual gulf. *The Interesting Narrative* pushes us as readers toward communion, and out of our separate social and ethnic categories.

Equiano is not often discussed in terms of his specific gender construction, but rather in relation to his status as a resistant figure, or as a universalised figurehead in the struggle against slavery. I contend that his gender construction, as detailed in *The Interesting Narrative*, is in fact key to his project. Through his relations with white men, he challenges as well as reinforces contemporary ideals of masculinity. I consider his close friendship with Richard Baker, the avuncular tutelary connection with Daniel Queen, and the fraught interactions between Equiano and his master, Captain Pascal. The simultaneity of these relationships – both Baker and Queen serve with Equiano on Pascal's ship – help to underline Equiano's broad conception of masculine performative possibilities. His experiences do not just induct him into the rituals of European imperialism, but also the mysteries of white masculinity. Positioning himself as embodying these performances of masculinity, Equiano invites us to make comparisons between the manifestations of white imperial manhood as exemplified in Baker, Queen and Pascal.

His early readers learn, as Equiano does, about the different 'types' of man to be found in commercial (and, specifically, maritime) society and inevitably, as members of the same society, benefiting from the work these men perform, they are invited to decide for themselves where on this spectrum they might be located. Baker, as motivated by fraternal care and devotion, is privileged as universally good, and Equiano, through his close and benevolent relationship with him, is therefore designated as good also. Pascal, at the other end of the spectrum, is motivated by commercial and material imperatives, causing him to lose sight of the humanity of those he commands, behave in irrational ways, and compromise his morality through deception and manipulation. Pascal comes to demonstrate how polite masculinity is destroyed by an over-investment in the material. It is through these affective relations with white men that Equiano is able to lay claim to polite masculinity, thereby strengthening his position in gifting shame to his white readers.

Whilst aligning himself with whites may strike a modern reader as problematic, this is to overlook both the limitations of choice open to a free black, but also crucially the goal that Equiano is aiming at here. For him, the shame his readers should accept as a gift is not just for the brutal suppression and denial of black autonomy through slavery, but the failure to recognise the *relationship* between them as being that of men and brothers. One could sum this up neatly by saying that unlike many of his 'wiser' white counterparts, who focused on abolition rather than emancipation, Equiano's narrative tries to make both inevitable. He has *read* European society; he knows how it imagines itself; he writes himself into this imaginarium. Through his alignment with his white colleagues, Equiano makes emancipation a fact-before-the-fact. That Equiano is able to write as he does suggests that on the level of the individual (of this individual at any rate) emancipation *has already happened*.

In order to understand how Equiano offers shame to his readers, we must look at the way in which he combines a genuine love for his adopted culture with a dignified refusal to have his 'otherness' either erased or demonised. The title page of the 1794 edition gives the full title of the book, 'The Interesting Narrative of the life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African. Written by himself.' We are straight away caught by the alternative name, Gustavus Vassa, originally the name of the Swedish king who liberated the Swedes from the Danes, and given to Equiano as a slave name by one of his many owners. Gustavus Vassa was in fact the name Equiano was generally known by, and so its inclusion on the title page acts as a nod to the white colonial culture he lives in. However, his African name, Olaudah Equiano, though rarely used in his lifetime, appears first, indicating to his readership that this is the name which fits him more closely. It is both an anchor to his African heritage, and a blockage

against complete assimilation into the world he now moves in. In keeping with his emphasis on his own individual significance, he translates 'Olaudah' as meaning: 'vicissitude, or fortunate also; one favoured, and having a loud voice and well spoken', a reference perhaps to his communicative ability in the *Interesting Narrative* (41). The ethnic appellation, 'the African' works on similar lines. It allows a buying public interested in the abolitionist movement, or indeed those merely seduced by the exotic, to know that they are buying a book which tells the story of a non-European. It also, however, reaffirms Equiano's placing of himself within the black diaspora. The final, fragmentary sentence 'Written by himself' may seem tacked-on, coming as it does after the grandiloquent flourish of the sentence before. However, along with the two names, it is italicised, linking the three lines together and impressing upon the reader the autonomy that this text represents.

In his resistance to being merely a figurehead for a social cause, abolition, which is inevitably funded and played out by white men, Srinivas Aravamudan (1999) is able to claim Equiano as a tropicopolitan. Equiano, and his *Narrative*, forms a key case study for Aravamudan. Those, like Equiano, who merit the name tropicopolitan are those who, in Aravamudan's words: 'are projections as well as beings leaving stubborn material traces even as they are discursively deconstructed' (6). Equiano's brilliance lies partly in the way in which his book refuses to be assimilated even today. Those wishing to make him an icon of anti-colonial writing are forced into awkward manoeuvring around his repeated tendency to collude with the dominant culture. Those who wished to set him up as a 'founding father' of West African writing in English must contend with evidence indicating that, despite the rich and detailed accounts Equiano gives of his childhood in Africa, it is more than likely that he was actually born in South Carolina.[20] These stubborn traces merely add to the picture of a skilful writer, and even more than that, an instinctual reader; a man who saw British society in panorama because of his position on the periphery. He was a man who understood his moment as well as any native British man of business, and created a version of himself accordingly. Aravamudan assesses him thus:

> From a position that implied a trenchant critique of slavery, Equiano turned the opposition of British master and African slave into its dialectical synthesis of manumitted black British entrepreneur, or in his case, adviser, lobbying for investment

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[20] Vincent Carretta comments that 'Reasonable doubt raised by the recent biographical discoveries inclines me to believe that the accounts of Africa and the Middle Passage in *The Interesting Narrative* were constructed – and carefully so – rather than actually experienced and that the author probably invented an African identity…The burden of proof…is now on those who believe that *The Interesting Narrative* is a historically accurate piece of nonfiction' (2005: xiv-xv).

in the continent of his origin and occasionally collaborating with the slave trade itself. (237)

The black British entrepreneur characterised here spends much of his *Interesting Narrative* detailing the ways in which his curiosity and interest in the world around him set him apart not just from other Africans but also from much of white society. Interest, or curiosity is a feature of the ideal Enlightenment masculine character, demonstrated by the expansion of print media and the development of institutions such as the Royal Academy. Given his insatiable appetite for epistemological accretion, it is not impossible that the interest of the title is Equiano's own self-examination. If we are unclear on exactly who Equiano is, then perhaps this is because his narrative is a document recording his own attempts to crack the very same enigma.

Black bodies, white faces

Let us proceed, then, with bodies. Enlightenment interest in black bodies – and especially faces – creates a difference that Equiano's (admittedly scarce) reflections on his own body seek to question. Critics such as Silvia Sebastiani (2013) have observed that 'scientific classification, based on "objective" procedures of observation, such as skin color, measurements of skull size, and facial angle, would contribute decisively to the development of theories about racial inferiority' (12). We can see this in Linnaeus' definition of the fifth division of humanity in *The System of Nature* (1735): 'Black, phlegmatic, relaxed. *Hair* black, frizzled; *skin* silky; *nose* flat; *lips* tumid; crafty, indolent, negligent. *Anoints* himself with grease. *Governed* by caprice' (in Eze, 1997: 13. Emphasis original). The project of classification evidenced here helped Enlightenment thinkers and imperialists to understand the world according to secular scientific values. However, classification also allowed slave-owning societies to divide themselves off from the slaves they owned, relieving the shame attendant on an often more spiritually-based conception of the unity of all mankind.

Frantz Fanon articulated the physicality of blackness faced by whiteness thus:

And then the occasion arose when I had to meet the white man's eyes. An unfamiliar weight burdened me. The real word challenged my claims [of equality]. In the white world the man of color encounters difficulties in the development of his bodily schema. Consciousness of the body is solely a negating activity. It is a third-person consciousness. (1985: 110)

This powerful expression of otherness has echoes in Equiano's 'first contact' accounts. He describes his growing awareness of the ways in which Africans and Europeans differ. In his *Narrative* he recasts what must have been deeply unsettling and disturbing experiences as evidence of his innate interest and curiosity. He recalls: 'I was astonished at the wisdom of the white people in all things I saw; but was amazed at their not sacrificing, or making any offerings, and eating with unwashed hands, and touching the dead' (68). His wonder veers from the customs of white people to their fleshly habits, in particular a fascination with the touching, fondling and consuming of dead flesh. Equiano makes the connection several times between white bodies and dirt and decay, inverting a prevalent association of pale skin with cleanliness. He finds white men's hair too long, their faces too red and assumes they wish to eat him (55). White women are too thin and 'not so modest and shamefaced as the African women' (68). Here we find shame rationalised as desirable when found in the feminine face. Modesty, as highly valued as it is by Western men in their own women, is more commonly found among African women, Equiano seems to be saying. This is a barely noticeable but nevertheless effective riposte to the idea that Western women, as Silvia Sebastiani (2013) summarises, '[being] the only ones capable of blushing…gave the measure of civilization' (16).

It is perhaps the blush, an indicator of the kind of shame which demonstrates understanding of one's place among socialised others, which Equiano has in mind when he describes an instance of embodied difference that he discovers as a child. In a famous passage, Equiano describes how he notices the difference in skin colour between himself and a white child of similar age:

> I had often observed, that when her mother washed her face it looked very rosy; but when she washed mine it did not look so; I therefore tried oftentimes myself if I could not by washing make my face of the same colour as my little play-mate (Mary), but it was all in vain; and I now began to be mortified at the difference in our complexions. (69)

Difference here is inscribed on the skin, with indelible ink. It is one of Equiano's remarkably few concessions in the *Narrative* to that Enlightenment obsession, the physicality of racial difference, and it seems to play on the proverbial act of futility, 'washing the blackamoor white', which Aravamudan reads with such perception in *Tropicopolitans* (1999: 1-4): 'the tropological blackamoor becomes the sign of *failed whitening* or *unachievable whiteness*' (4) Its place in the early chapters suggests that the author's concern with this 'failure' remains located in his childhood, and that experience has taught him there is little to profit in

protracted reflection upon it. A careful reader of the *Narrative* should follow its author's lead and focus instead on Equiano's spiritual and commercial journey.

However, its inclusion does point to a necessary move on Equiano's part: the addressing of racial divisions made on corporeal terms, and their subsequent affective consequences. It is one of the most touching moments in the *Narrative*, partly because of its fleeting duration, but also because of its universal appeal; we all have bodies, and we can all be made to feel ashamed of them. Much was, and continued to be, made of the black male body, as we see in Wedgwood's famous image of the fettered slave begging for emancipation. Equiano's moment of mortification described above works to undermine this idea of the black male body as lesser, and brings it instead into the scope of common human experience.

Rather than make this moment of recognised difference the key to his narrative, however, Equiano leaves his remark here as just that: a passing remark. He rarely makes his physical appearance the site of difference from the white man. In a telling moment, Equiano recalls being embraced as though he were a brother by another black child, who claims kinship based on the fact of their shared blackness: 'I not knowing what he was about, turned a little out of his way at first, but to no purpose; he had soon come close to me, and caught hold of me in his arms as though I had been his brother, though we had never seen each other before' (85). The initial turning away demonstrates, as Vincent Carretta points out: 'how quickly he has been acculturated into his new self and at the same time readily defined by others as still African' (xix). To make the black body too significant would be to lessen the connection between black author and white reader. Equiano's *Narrative* is notable for this very trick; planting seeds of thought via moments of recognition such as the one just quoted, and then pressing on ahead without sentimentalising too much. It is left to us to return, through our troubled consciences, to these moments and construct of the headlong rush of events a fragile and touching tale of common humanity. The more one examines these individual moments in the *Narrative*, the more one realises Equiano is constantly playing into European ideals whilst simultaneously refuting them, using himself as evidence.

So how can we understand Equiano's significance within this world in which he loses the power to signify? His own account of his worth is, despite the obvious social death which slavery entails upon a person, consistent in its emphasis on Equiano's own individual high value. Vincent Carretta observes that: 'The African boy was father to the author Equiano in that both were exceptional individuals ideally located emotionally, intellectually, and socially to observe and judge the societies in which they found themselves' (2005: 10). Equiano

emphasises his importance to his family, especially his mother: 'As I was the youngest of the sons, I became, of course, the greatest favourite with my mother, and was always with her; and she used to take particular pains to form my mind' (46). Perhaps more auspiciously, he relates a memory of how a poisonous snake passed between his feet 'without offering to touch me, to the great surprise of many who saw it; and these incidents were accounted by the wise men, and likewise by my mother and the rest of the people, as remarkable omens in my favour' (43).

Even Equiano's enslavement cannot entirely erase his individual import, as he becomes both a valuable commodity and is absorbed into a homosocial community when he begins to work on a series of ships. Paul Gilroy (1993), in *The Black Atlantic*, mentions that: 'Ships…were mobile elements that stood for the shifting spaces in between the fixed places that they connected'. He goes on to suggest that: 'Accordingly, they need to be thought of as cultural and political units rather than abstract embodiments of the triangular [slave] trade. They were something more – a means to conduct political dissent and possibly a distinct mode of cultural production' (16-17). What Equiano presents us with in his account of a seafaring childhood and adolescence is both dissent and cultural production embodied in himself. His close affective relations with Richard Baker and Daniel Queen, as I discuss below, work both to undermine the idea of the slave as 'social nonperson' and to bring into being the possibility of homosocial connection between black and white men. This nudges the reader toward the logical step of realising the natural bond between humans of all shades. In basing the argument for abolition on his own singular significance, however, Equiano seems to be engaged in an act of 'writing the self' more than promoting a political agenda – although claiming significance for yourself in these circumstances is inescapably a political move.

For Equiano, these vessels form floating communities based on homosocial systems of affect. His intelligence and curiosity make him valuable to the captains of these vessels, who, because of their seniority, fulfil a patriarchal role. Repeatedly, Equiano's relationship to these paternal figures is fraught but close, closer than many of his white compatriots. From childhood, he occupies a space adjacent to the nucleus of power, and becomes not just an exception to the norm, but a modulator of the affective current in these commercial maritime families. He is seen simultaneously as both commodity and comrade by those on board.

His close friendship with a white boy of similar age, Richard Baker, is testament to this. 'Soon after I went on board,' Equiano tells us, 'he shewed me a great deal of partiality and attention, and in return I grew extremely fond of him. We at length became inseparable; and

for the space of two years, he was of very great use to me, and was my constant companion and instructor' (65). A fraternal bond forms between them, broken by Baker's early death at sea in 1759, described by Equiano as:

> …an event I have never ceased to regret, as I lost at once a kind interpreter, an agreeable companion, and a faithful friend; who, at the age of fifteen, discovered [proved to have] a mind superior to prejudice; and who was not ashamed to notice, to associate with, and to be the friend and instructor of one who was ignorant, a stranger, of a different complexion, and a slave! (65)

Baker plays the role here not just of a companion but also a bridge allowing Equiano to enter into white society. Unlike his paternal superiors, men like Captains Pascal and Doran, Baker shows no signs of seeing Equiano as signifying commercial or imperial value. The 'purity' of this relationship shows the potential for equality between white and black, and by infusing his description of it with sentimental pathos, Equiano advances his cause whilst acknowledging his debt to figures like Baker in shaping his Westernised development. It is this knowledge and experience learned at the side of the white man, and his explicit naming of this process as a pedagogical one (he calls Baker an 'instructor') that allows Equiano to both chime in with, and subtly undermine, racist discourses around the capabilities of blacks. However, as Equiano shows through his description of the bond with Richard Baker, it is not slavery but the experience of interracial friendship which allows this transformation to occur. He also demonstrates, as I will suggest below, a common experience of fear of the patriarchal white man shared by himself and Baker as a unifying factor.

Another example, this time a more avuncular figure, is the able seaman Daniel Queen, or Quin, whom Equiano describes as being 'about forty years of age, a man very well educated…he…dressed and attended the captain' (91-2). This older man, who fulfils a similar subordinate but adjacent role to the paternal figure of the captain – in this case Captain Pascal – is able to provide Equiano with several practical as well as spiritual skills, teaching Equiano to shave and 'dress hair a little', as well as reading and explaining passages from the Bible to him. Equiano's closeness to him means that the crew begin to see him as synonymous: 'In short he was like a father to me; and some even used to call me after his name; they also styled me the black Christian' (92). The transforming of Equiano into a European is not just in his own mind, he seems to be suggesting; white Europeans recognised it too, and from an early age.

The outcomes of the relationship with Queen foreshadow the later directions of Equiano's life, as both practical entrepreneur and devout Christian. 'I was wonderfully surprised,' comments Equiano, referring to these early Bible discussions, 'to see the laws and rules of my own country written almost exactly here; a circumstance which I believe tended to

impress our manners and customs more deeply on my memory' (92). It is crucial to note that learning more about Western religious and moral codes serves to further impress upon Equiano the universality of human thought and affect. It is even more interesting to see, as an undercurrent to this, the way that this universal human code works to reaffirm his 'native' moral systems for the young Equiano. Rather than casting off his African heritage, sustained engagement with and adoption of Western inheritances works to further entrench them. Equiano compares the two systems in order to underscore his point about being morally equal to Europeans. As Carl Plasa notes,

> The collective work of exegesis performed here by adept and protégé has a significance which extends beyond the boundaries of the text they read: Equiano's emergence as "black Christian" hybridizes and conflates identities that...should properly remain discrete. The enslaved African body reveals itself as fully able to accommodate the very spirit which supposedly "distinguish[es] white people" from black. (Plasa, 2000: 23)

Equiano's ability to conduct these reciprocal relationships with white compatriots is due in part to his Enlightenment personality – his intellectual curiosity, his practical sense, his sentiment and moral compass. However, as Plasa indicates, and as Equiano stresses, these characteristics are not exclusive to white British natives, but are equally located within non-white bodies, in the bodies of what Aravamudan calls 'tropicopolitans'. Equiano's apparent gratitude to the white 'civilizing mission' is subtly recast as a critique of Enlightenment philosophical conceptions of racial difference. Equiano prevents his success being claimed entirely by the West; his claims of personal significance in Africa and his insistence on Igbo values being morally comparable – if not superior – to European ones ensures this.

In contrast to the fraternal and avuncular relations described above, Equiano's experiences of paternal figures such as Captain Pascal and Captain Doran, two of his most significant masters, are less mutually beneficial, although still marked by homosociality. Pascal, for instance, repeatedly jokes about eating the child Equiano when supplies begin to wear thin on their voyage across the Atlantic to Britain: 'Sometimes he would say to me – the black people were not good to eat, and would ask me if we did not eat people in my country' (Equiano, 2003: 65). The nightmarish image of being consumed by the father here is recast in racial, rather than psychological or mythic terms[21]. Pascal's question concerning cannibalism in

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[21] The trope of black people as edible is a widespread phenomenon, used for various purposes, especially constructing ideas of white nationalism and superiority. Kyla Wazana Tompkins's book *Racial Indigestion: Eating Bodies in the Nineteenth Century* (NYU Press, 2012) deals with this topic in a slightly later American context.

Equiano's native land others the African child, but it also claims an imagined kinship. Pascal's feigned desire to eat the black body gestures toward an ironic bond with his slave, imagining them both desiring to consume the other. The homosociality of this gesture is furthered by Pascal's suggestion that as 'black people were not good to eat', he would instead kill and eat Equiano's white companion Richard Baker, followed by Equiano himself. The threat is heightened by the feared destruction of the bond between the two boys: 'I was alarmed for Dick,' Equiano recalls, 'and whenever he was called I used to be very much afraid that he was to be killed; and I would peep and watch to see if they were going to kill him: nor was I free from this consternation till we made the land' (66). Equiano uses this incident to cast white patriarchal colonialism as the enemy of true virtue here, allying his fearful childhood self with a similarly vulnerable white counterpart whose whiteness, for a European audience at least, emphasises the purity of the pair, who together stand for a brotherly bond that is, in its transracial makeup, innocent of the self-serving nature of the nakedly commercial Pascal.

Carl Plasa reads this imagining of the white man as cannibal as a deliberate 'reversal of contemporary historical accounts…of the African as cannibal…In this way, colonizer and colonized…exchange places with one another, as the former become endowed with the qualities which they themselves attribute to the latter' (Plasa, 2000: 19). This reminds us, of course, of Equiano's first sight of white men, in which both consumption and reversal are prominent features:

> When I was carried on board I was immediately handled, and tossed up, to see if I were sound, by some of the crew; and I was now persuaded that I had got into a world of bad spirits, and that they were going to kill me. Their complexions too differing so much from ours, their long hair, and the language they spoke, which was very different from any I had ever heard, united to confirm me in this belief. I asked them [black slavers] if we were not to be eaten by those white men with horrible looks, red faces and long hair? (55)

Equiano appears here – as he does repeatedly during his life as a slave – literally as a commodity. He is 'carried' aboard the slave ship, 'handled' and 'tossed up' to check his value. Like fragile goods, he is examined to ascertain whether or not he is 'sound'. His physical state is taken to represent the whole of him, because as a slave, his value is located here. Whilst his black body is deemed acceptable (he is, after all, not thrown overboard), he deems the white bodies who evaluate him unsound. Their 'horrible looks, red faces and long hair' are too different to be assimilated in the child Equiano's schema of humanity, leading him to read them as 'bad spirits'. In a strong invocation of Linnaean categorisation through division, Equiano synthesises the different ways in which the white man is repellent into one mortifying whole: complexion, hair, and language 'united to confirm me in this belief'. This is one of the

clearest points in the *Narrative* at which Equiano 'others' his reader, ultimately using this reversal of othering to bring the white man closer to the experience of the black through enabling them to see themselves as the ghoulish other. This shames white readers because it enables them to know first-hand the dehumanising experience of Enlightenment racism, and the diminishing of self that follows this.

As we see from the above passage, Equiano's primary relationship with his white masters is that of commodification. Repeatedly, Equiano is bought and sold on the merits of his displaying desirable characteristics. This conforms to the idea of slave-owning as prestige marker, as identified by Orlando Patterson: 'the honor of the master was enhanced by the subjection of his slave' (1982:79). How much more prestigious is it, then, to subjugate one who is intelligent and talented? Equiano is spotted by Pascal while working on a Virginia plantation: 'While he was at my master's house it happened that he saw me, and liked me so well that he made a purchase of me. I think I have often heard him say he gave thirty or forty pounds sterling for me…' (63-4). Equiano's pleasing appearance makes him of repeated value. Significant though is Equiano's emphasis on his monetary value at this time. As Vincent Carretta notes: 'This would have been a rather high price for a young, untrained boy' (Carretta, 2003: 252). Equiano seems to wish to convey his *inherent* high value.

His desirability as a commodity is something he appears to be proud of, but it also seems to get him into trouble with his owner/patriarchs on occasion. When Pascal unexpectedly sells him when he is a young adult to Captain Doran, for instance, Equiano attempts to resist, invoking British legal precedent in the form of overheard conversations between Pascal and a lawyer among others which indicate – to Equiano at least – that Pascal is not in a position to sell him:[22]

> They both then said that those people who told me so were not my friends: but I replied – It was very extraordinary that other people did not know the law as well as they. Upon this Captain Doran said I talked too much English; and if I did not behave myself well, and be quiet, he had a method on board to make me. (Equiano, 2003: 94)

It is Equiano's mastery of the English language which condemns him here, just as it is this same mastery that enables him to rise above the rank of the average plantation slave, and to

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[22] Equiano may be referring here to precedents such as the 1706 court case which ruled, in light of *habeas corpus*, that 'as soon as a Negro comes into England, he becomes free. One may be a villein in England, but not a slave' (quoted in V.C.D. Mutabani, 'African Slaves and English Law' (1983: 72). The celebrated Somersett case of 1772 would not have happened yet, although would have been familiar to Equiano's readers by the time the first edition of *Interesting Narrative* was published in 1789.

become the man of politeness he wishes to present himself as in the *Narrative*. For Equiano, language is always a double-edged sword. In the example above, his superior understanding of its technicalities as enshrined in law induce the white man, represented by Captain Doran, to revert to the language of the savage, threatening to beat Equiano for his politer masculinity.

Putting on the white world: Equiano and language

Equiano's claims to independence and polite masculinity are intimately bound up with his mastery of language, specifically his ability to write himself through the text. There are several texts which work to facilitate Equiano's transition from 'unlettered African' to black Enlightenment man. One of these is, of course, his manumission document; another is the Bible, which becomes increasingly important towards the end of the *Narrative*. Before examining these texts, however, it is helpful to consider Equiano's relationship to books and the printed word in general. His initial experience with this Western device is described in mystical tones, and has been the subject of much scrutiny by critics such as Aravamudan and Plasa. Equiano describes witnessing the act of reading in Pascal and Richard Baker, his paternal and fraternal figures, thus:

> I had often seen my master and Dick employed in reading; and I had a great curiosity to talk to the books, as I thought they did; and so to learn how all things had a beginning: for that purpose I have often taken up a book, and have talked to it, and then put my ear to it, when alone, in hopes it would answer me; and I have been very much concerned when I found it remained silent. (68)

The act of reading, as witnessed by Equiano, is mystical because of its silence and its physical communion with a printed and bound body containing unknowable messages. Equiano instantly recognises the privacy of such an act; waiting until he is alone to attempt it himself. The privacy of reading is an idea we are all acculturated to; we cannot read what another is reading unless he or she reads it aloud, at which point the act of reading has ceased to be just that. Alternatively, we can read over the reader's shoulder, an act filled with self-consciousness and not a little shame, as we are aware that this constitutes epistemological theft. Reading over someone's shoulder instigates a feeling not unlike the uncomfortable interest one is filled with when in the presence of two people enjoying physical intimacy. Reading *is* intimacy, and for these reasons it should be no surprise that Eve Sedgwick and Adam Frank draw comparisons between the posture we adopt when reading and the physical drawing-inward that we experience when flushed with shame (1995: 20-1). To be wrapped up in reading is to be interested, and as I have already suggested, to be interested in something is to be a deeply-drawn breath away from being ashamed.

For Equiano, his initial understanding of reading in the passage above is to see it as a form of conversation, implying as it does an origin in African oral traditions. It occurs to me, then, that Equiano's subsequent appropriation of the book in order to write *The Interesting Narrative* subtly alters the way in which the book works as a technology of the self. Nussbaum defines self-writing as 'a technology of the *middle class* self' (1989: xi, my emphasis). Equiano's usage of the form demonstrates not only his high level of competence with regards to speaking in the master's voice, but it also redefines the boundaries of such a form. Equiano's bursting into language is a political act in both personal and social senses: it articulates the experiences of the slave in language comprehensible to the master. It should not, however, be understood as a transformational *fait accompli.* Carl Plasa reads Equiano's initial contact with the book detailed in the aforementioned passage as playing into two very different paradigms:

> If the motif of the "Talking Book" is the sign of a self-consciously intertextual relation to an emergent body of black writing – "The literature of the slave" in [Henry Louis] Gates's phrase – it points, in the same gesture, in an alternative direction: the "books" over which Equiano's master and friend labour are, of course, white texts and can be read as a synecdoche for the Enlightenment discourse of race which comes to be elaborated and consolidated during the mid to late eighteenth century period spanned by Equiano's narrative. (Plasa, 2000: 11)

It should come as no surprise, then, that in the quotation from Equiano I am discussing, there is a notable shift from past to present tense, from 'I had' to 'I have', which occurs mid-sentence. There is no 'before' and 'after' for Equiano. The journey from 'unlettered African' to ideal Enlightenment man has never ended, and the experience of being 'very much concerned' at being met with silence will continue. This is because Equiano's eloquence is either an affront to the white man, or induces a recognition of the failure of the white man to value the humanity of the black, which is felt as shame. As Frantz Fanon observes: 'Nothing is more astonishing than to hear a black man express himself properly, for then in truth he is putting on the white world' (1985: 36).

One of the first texts Equiano uses to put on the white world is his manumission document, which he receives from Robert King in Monserrat on 11th July 1766, when he is around 21 years old. He presents the document in full, embedded into the larger narrative like a guarantee, detailing that he paid seventy pounds for his manumission (Equiano, 2003: 137). For Equiano, finally being able to possess the self is the greatest joy, indicated in the wild punctuation and fiery imagery of the passage. Equiano claims the language written by a white man in the document for himself, announcing his agency to the world through an affective experience originating in language that a white man can never experience.

It is not long, however, before Equiano learns the contingent nature of writing even as official as a manumission document. He is frequently mistaken for a slave, and is more often assaulted by white men after his manumission than before. When he resolves to go to England, it is with a sense of disgust at his treatment in the Americas (161). He lays great stress on the dangerously liminal position of the black free man, especially in the colonies, explaining that the slave benefits from protection under property laws of his master.[23] As a free man, Equiano is also a man cut adrift. It is to England, then, that he turns for true emancipation.

It is here that Equiano's final transformative experience with language occurs. Although nominally a Christian from early in the *Narrative*, Equiano's evangelising occurs in London. After this, Equiano finds life as a sailor increasingly difficult to make contiguous with his devout faith, as the blaspheming common on board ships begins to unsettle him: 'I feared greatly lest I should catch the horrible infection' (188). This leads to a sort of religious fever which finds him at last in a state of holy terror: 'The Scriptures became an unsealed book…I saw the Lord Jesus Christ in his humiliation, loaded and bearing my reproach, sin, and shame. I then clearly perceived, that by the deed of the law no flesh living could be justified' (190). The unsealed book is an overwhelming experience for Equiano – it symbolises his final access into the language of the white man, as he comes to know the bind that the Christian faith places the man of politeness within.

It is at this point that Equiano's project, to discover and possess the self, reaches its greatest impasse. It is in this impasse, however, that he finds resolution. 'Self was obnoxious,' he says, 'and good works he had none; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do' (190). The resultant joy at realising, at last, his place in God's plan strikes a note that seems somewhat incongruous to a twenty-first century readership. We have, by this point, followed Equiano on numerous criss-crossings of the Atlantic, through entrepreneurial toils and an inspiring 'coming to language', to be presented with someone who now seems to reject this very concept of self. Indeed, critics are often muted on this part of the *Narrative*, not entirely sure how to assimilate it into any discourse they may have brought to bear on it. Carl Plasa reads it as an identification with the suffering Christ figure: 'the phrase he applies to himself at the same time perfectly characterizes the one who is…paradigmatically, a "being that is in the body yet not of it"' (Plasa, 2000: 25). It is through his strong identification with Christ that

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[23] The dangerously vulnerable position of freed blacks, especially in the Caribbean, is well attested to in critical work such as Orlando Patterson's *Slavery and Social Death*: 'freedman status was not an end to the process of marginalization, but merely the end of the beginning…As a marginal person the freedman continued to be viewed as something of an anomaly and, like all persons in transitional states, was regarded as potentially dangerous' (1982: 249).

Equiano reminds the white reader of his ultimate difference – as a man who has known the suffering of the 'social nonperson' in Orlando Patterson's phrase, Equiano is closer to God than the white man, the apparent arbiter of Christian virtue. He is not the only former slave to inhabit or be placed in this role, but as a strategic move in this particular narrative, it has a unique ability to shame because of how close Equiano has brought his reader to his experience.

However, it is on a worldly note, not a spiritual one that Equiano's narrative draws to a close. Equiano makes the case for an independent black state in Africa (Equiano, of course, was involved in the failed Sierra Leone repatriation project) along economic lines, offering arguments as to why this would be a more profitable venture than continued slavery. At the last, Equiano sets aside his tale of self-realisation in order to talk money. In doing so, he proves that he knows how to speak in the master's voice:

> Population, the bowels and surfaces of Africa, abound in valuable and useful returns; the hidden treasures of centuries will be brought to light and into circulation. Industry, enterprize, and mining, will have their full scope, proportionably as they civilize. In a word, it lays open an endless field of commerce to the British manufacturers and merchant adventurers. The manufacturing interest and the general interests are synonimous. The abolition of slavery would be in reality an universal good. (234)

While these religious and entrepreneurial versions of Equiano seem odd bedfellows, it is the very essence of what the eighteenth century saw the ideal man as embodying. As Srinivas Aravamudan comments, 'Displaying his complicated difference alongside the achievement of his Anglophone identity, Equiano participates in a religious and political commingling – of differences and identities – that makes him meritorious in the eyes of his readers' (Aravamudan, 1999: 236). It is not, then, his blackness, nor his metaphorical whiteness, that makes Equiano such a powerful voice in his era. It is instead, his ability to mix the two, to provide a bridge between European and African cultures and experiences that makes him an ideal Enlightenment man.

From the perspective of narrative, however, this final argument seems to me the most difficult section of the text to assimilate into my own reading. Why, after such an intricate and acute blending of critique and praise for Western (and specifically, British) culture, does Equiano resort to making such a flat plea for emancipation grounded purely in base commerce? It reads as though the text – and by extension, Equiano himself – loses confidence in the power the narrative holds. Despite the text being a patchwork of styles and genres, this final brief section bears a sense of paranoia, as if Equiano suddenly doubts whether or not his transcultural narrative does its job. His positioning of Africa as the next stage in commercial

and imperial expansion is made in the following terms: 'A commercial intercourse with Africa opens an inexhaustible source of wealth to the manufacturing interests of Great Britain, and to all which the slave-trade is an objection' (234). The language here shifts expertly to the discourse of imperial domination, at once both dispassionately economic ('commercial', 'source of wealth', 'manufacturing interests') and the figuratively sexual ('commercial intercourse').

Of course, one cannot perform such a radical altering of a continent – transforming it from one's own motherland to stockpile for one's oppressors – without some form of humiliation. It is this that I read in the language of the last pages of *The Interesting Narrative*. Throughout, Equiano has *shown* that blacks like himself are the equal of whites. At the end, however, he resorts to *telling*, via assertion. See, for instance: 'Query. – How many millions doth Africa contain? Supposing the Africans, collectively and individually, to expend 5 £ a head in raiment and furniture yearly when civilized, &c. an immensity beyond the reach of imagination! This I conceive to be a theory founded upon facts, and therefore an infallible one' (234-5). The didacticism of this passage – especially in its taking the instantly recognisable form of a mathematical word problem – stands in stark contrast to much of the preceding pages. Equiano appears not to be merely speaking with the master's voice, but thinking with the master's brain. It is a step too far, and the shaky assertion of the last line, 'This *I conceive* to be a theory *founded on facts*…' is none too convincing. Which facts? From whom? Equiano, of all people, surely knows better than to trust too entirely in the Enlightenment and its close links to capital.

It seems here as though the text becomes ashamed of itself – shuddering at the final moment at its inability to resist parroting white economic arguments for the abolition of the slave trade: 'If the blacks were permitted to remain in their own country, they would double themselves every fifteen years. In proportion to such increase will be the demand for manufactures' (235). Equiano brings us to a close with two hurried paragraphs, the penultimate detailing almost as a footnote his interracial marriage to Susanna Cullen.

As a freed slave, Equiano's acceptance by the society that had enslaved him was always contingent rather than guaranteed. It is an achievement that he was in a position to write the *Interesting Narrative* at all, let alone that it take the complex form that it ultimately did. Synthesising forms and genres familiar to a British and American readership in order to tell an unfamiliar tale, Equiano does much more with the text than just argue for abolition of the slave trade. Even his bold proposals for emancipation, repatriation and the opening of trade

links between the West and Africa are not, ultimately, the *Narrative*'s most daring achievements. Instead, as I have been arguing, what is at the core of this text is Equiano himself; it is the life story of a man who has mastered the values of politeness. He is learned, articulate, pragmatic, philosophical and independent. Even his collaborative tendencies are further proof of his polite masculinity, he would no doubt argue; unlike Cugoano, he resisted the temptation to promote insurgency in order to articulate his case within the paradigms of Western cultural hegemonies.

Ultimately, Equiano's calls for respect for his fellow slaves serve to highlight the very special nature of the author himself. I have been arguing here that whilst assisting the struggle for abolition is an intended outcome of the decision to publish the *Interesting Narrative*, it is more properly driven, as a text, toward making the self visible to others. It is Equiano's testament to his own polite masculinity, and it should be no surprise to find that he kept the rights to it and revised it constantly, editing for both accuracy and in order to manage his public image. Equiano understood, much like James Boswell did, much like Joseph Addison, and Adam Smith, and the anti-fop writers, and even poor Harley did, that being a man of politeness meant acting the part. He was an accomplished performer, more convincing than Boswell, Harley and the fops certainly. Counterintuitively, this may have been due to his alien status, so marked by the colour of his skin that he could not – unlike Boswell – even try to labour to be something he was not. Instead, the most radically particularised individual that this thesis has considered perhaps embodies politeness most thoroughly. The greatest achievement of the *Interesting Narrative* is that it presents a man of politeness whose commensurate otherness serves to shame his white peers for ever assuming that their virtues were theirs alone. I have been calling this shame a *gift* because there can be no restitution for Equiano's erased agency; instead all the donee can do is to allow themselves to be bound by the bonds of shame and interest.

Conclusion

This thesis has sought to explore the impact of a particular affect on the formation of a particular cluster of gender identity positions at a particular time in British cultural history. Perhaps inevitably, it has become more than that. Shame, nominally the star of the show, has found itself sharing the stage with a host of other affects, particularly disgust, contempt, anxiety and interest. Polite masculinity, the aforementioned gender identity position, has in turn revealed its mercurial nature; less a monolithic hegemony, and more a fragile, elusive aspiration.

However, in focusing my study on a particular historical period, my intention has not been to provide a history of male shame per se. Instead, this project has aimed to make space within literary critical studies of the eighteenth century for the important role of shame in the construction of hegemonic masculine experience. As has been noted especially in the first half of the thesis, this hegemony was constructed to a greater extent by the printed word than at any prior time in British cultural history. It is the culture of the eighteenth century – I am referring to that which Habermas calls the bourgeois public sphere – that has made this period so pertinent to this study. The explosion of print culture and a discursive public rhetoric exemplified by the success of *The Spectator* meant that ideals, and the acceptable limits of those ideals, could be constantly discussed and developed. This meant that polite masculinity had to be reiterated, performed and altered in order to survive. At the level of individual experience, as we see most acutely in James Boswell's journals, this meant that this ideal was a constant source of anxiety and shame at perceived failings to attain the gold standard.

The example of Olaudah Equiano, as discussed in the final chapter, indicates just how discursive the basis for polite masculinity could be. Equiano convincingly presented himself as a man of politeness, embodying the values of the time in a body marked by otherness. The very fact that he seems to perform polite masculinity in a way apparently free of the crises that beset Boswell indicates that there was nothing racially innate about politeness. Of course, there is no indication that the eighteenth century saw politeness as innate anyway, very much the opposite. Society as a whole acknowledged that the self was a work in progress. This does little to allay the private shame of men like Boswell, or his fictional near-counterpart Harley, however. It is striking how these two men, one historical and the other supposedly a prime fictional example of virtuous sensibility, experienced their worlds in such similar ways. Both abandoning Scotland for the English metropolis in order, in Robert Burns's useful phrase, to

'make [their] way into life'; both finding themselves perpetual outsiders; both coming to grief through their inability to swerve away from self-injurious over-investment in affect: they are case studies in the damage done to men who try to live in a world that appears increasingly hostile to dreamers. Indeed, as John Mullan says of Harley's creator Mackenzie: 'he sets feeling simply against an impervious "world" which is the cause of every misery...The world is not society: indeed, with respect to the attempts by philosophers and essayists in the eighteenth century to describe social relations, it is imagined as "non-society"' (1988: 122). Shame is a relation of the self to the world in which the individual finds himself deficient in those qualities the world demands he possess. For Harley, this results in a turning away from the world back to the fantasy of an imagined past where his sensitivity is not a barrier to his flourishing. We see this most clearly in the conversation he has with Ben Silton discussed here in the fourth chapter. In his letters to John Johnston, James Boswell displays a similar (although often temporary) wish to turn away from a world in which success is continually out of his reach.

I have demonstrated that the shifting boundaries of politeness make polite masculinity a difficult identity position to enact and live with. The anxiety and shame attached to imagining oneself on the wrong side of such a fickle boundary is a powerful regulatory set of affects, as Boswell's journal entries make clear. It would be tempting to position Boswell as an extreme case, partly because he is so keen to imagine himself as a hypochondriac. While Boswell is unusual in his candidness, all the texts examined here betray evidence of the same battles; whether it be Shaftesbury's urgent self-questioning in his diaries, later transformed into polite conversation between characters such as Theocles and Philocles, or Adam Smith's various characters locked in eternal discourse with their own men within the breast; all are subject to similar pressures. This is partly to do with the illusion that all ideals were democratically condoned through egalitarian discourse. My emphasis on shame has thrown light on the struggles of polite masculinity because I have demonstrated that privileged interlocutors such as Mr. Spectator on one side, and threatening peripheral figures such as the fop on the other, in reality work to pin the aspirational man of politeness between Scylla and Charybdis.

These texts, *The Spectator* and the loose body of writing I have called fop literature, were examined in the first half of this thesis along with Smith and Shaftesbury in order to establish the climate within which shame circulated. They are disparate works, written between the late seventeenth and mid eighteenth century, but what they have in common is a tendency to describe the society which made them. They measure the social currents swirling around gender identities and their relationship to politeness. Highly conscious of having a potentially sizeable public audience, these writers aim their writing toward a general, relatively

diverse readership; in doing so they both establish new norms and acknowledge pre-existing ones. Their writing is concerned with society, sometimes specifically British society, as in Boyer's differentiations between English stoicism and French foppery. More often than not, especially in Smith, there is an attempt to universalise polite gender expression under the heading of 'mankind', albeit a recognisably western European one. Either way, polite masculinity is established in these texts as a universal good.

However, these writers also engage in imaginative exercises about the nature of individual experience. In chapter one, I explored in depth Richard Steele's vivid account of the shame felt by a man of pleasure on the morning after. Abel Boyer's account of Sir John Foppington is bitter mockery; nevertheless his description of the fop relies on some speculation about the feelings of his target. Adam Smith is the most prolific – and perhaps the least caricaturist – writer in terms of accounting for lived experience. His exhortation to imagine ourselves into the lives and situations of others is modelled by his own repeated use of this technique to exemplify his theories. On occasion, this practice is developed enough to be almost literary; recall the long and powerful description of the man who experiences shame as remorse. It is for this reason that Smith forms the gateway into Part Two.

The second half of the thesis has concentrated on the lived experience of men in the climate of polite masculinity. It has posed the question: What toll did polite masculinity take on men who felt compelled to live up to its demanding standards? It may have seemed counterintuitive to answer that question by beginning with a novel; after all, it is a stretch (not to mention poor critical practice) to conflate the experiences of a fictional character with 'lived experience' in the historical sense. However, as I argued in Chapter Four, Harley as a man of feeling provided an example followed by historical individuals. This tends to overshadow somewhat the ultimately unsatisfying way Mackenzie's novel resonated with the aspirations of polite men. My account of a reader response, in the form of Robert Burns's letters, instead highlights that Harley was only useful as a wistful fantasy figure; he is an embodiment of a lost or entirely mythical masculinity that privileges spontaneous affect and self-sacrifice. As Harley gains symbolic pathos via his self-immolating turn from society, so those historical individuals like Burns and Mackenzie that followed or created him must swerve from his example toward a compromise with the impervious world.

Fantasy forms a key part of the experience of all three male figures discussed in the second half. Boswell's fantasy of a Scottish masculinity free from the taint of the compromises and constraints of politeness have already been commented upon here; this fantasy co-exists

with his equally deep investment in the polite masculinity he characterises as English and which obsesses him in the pages of his journal. Harley's fantasy of a past time in which he could have been successful is shared with Ben Silton, an older character who embodies what Mackenzie referred to as 'the united Ideas of Tenderness and Dignity' (1967: 36). Age, with its legacy of the past, is an evocative phenomenon for Mackenzie and for Boswell (for whom it becomes a code word in letters to Johnston for melancholy) because it situates feelings of shame at being misplaced in their own time in a sense of being both too fine and too wise for the grubby modern world of capital. Equiano, by striking contrast, remains young almost throughout his *Interesting Narrative*, emphasising his vitality, resourcefulness and attractiveness to others. His fantasy is not one of a return to a lost world (although out of any writer examined here, he surely has the greatest claim to this). Equiano's fantasy is one of progress: of connection between the black man and the white. For him, shame is located in the failure of others to grant him an equal stake in a common humanity. His *Narrative* vividly articulates the shortcomings of European ideologies about race and mankind in a way that only a highly personal account of lived experience could do.

It is in this sense that the second half of the thesis has examined creativity as much as personal experiences of affect. All three texts, though written at different times and in different forms, exploit the opportunities offered them by literary conventions developing and crystallising in the eighteenth century. They are texts that are of their time, but also remain evocative for modern readers. *The Man of Feeling* has lost some of its impact in the intervening period largely because of changing ideas about the expression and representation of feeling. However, for the modern critic, Mackenzie's novel is a fascinating object of study because of its ambivalence – both that of its presentation of contemporary masculinity and in its reception by its readers. For Burns, it was both 'a book I prize next to the Bible' and 'absolutely disqualifying' for young men wanting make their way in the world. I examined Mackenzie's creative process, suggesting that the swerve away from the ambivalent sentimental novel towards a more apparently resolute form of literary expression in the periodical indicates that the novel had ceased to be a viable method of clear communication of intent. The novel itself, refusing to express with clarity and vigour those 'proper' sentiments Mackenzie seems anxious to espouse, becomes a form that generates shame and anxiety.

Anxiety is evident in Boswell's style too. Whilst his faith in the journal form remains mostly unshaken, the style he employs is subjected to several attempts to render it more 'polite' and therefore more 'masculine'. In this, we see reflected Boswell's own shame about his marked nature: namely that he is too provincial, indiscreet, loquacious, and informal. His

aspiration to incorporate elements of Joseph Addison into his own character indicates a desire to do this partly through writing; the *London Journal*, as I discussed in Chapter Five, is nothing if not an attempt at self-construction. It is in his self-perceived inability to write himself into politeness that Boswell's shame lies, just as it lies in his inability to reconcile the various features of his fulsome character. By contrast, Equiano's self-construction deftly employs a variety of recognisable genres, from the noble savage narrative of the opening chapter, which recalls *Oroonoko* or *Rasselas*, to the tales of adventure such as his trip to the Arctic. Most of all, however, *The Interesting Narrative* draws on the apologia which seek to explain the lives and characters of various figures in eighteenth-century culture. It serves to highlight the many ways in which Equiano participates in British polite society at a level comparable to the idealised view of masculinity presented to us by Mr. Spectator *et al*. His understanding of cultivated, polite writing; his knowledge of both classical and contemporary culture; his business acumen: all these are evidence of a polite masculinity. It is perhaps best exemplified, however, in the distance Equiano maintains from his reader: like *The Spectator*, we get to know very little about Equiano beyond that which is advantageous for him to reveal. *The Interesting Narrative* exploits affect expertly, but nearly always that of his reader, whether that be pity for his suffering, or shame at the discrimination he encounters and that his white readers were (are) complicit in. Here we come full circle: from *The Interesting Narrative* back to *The Spectator*, we are in the presence once again of a writer hiding himself behind a text.

This thesis set out with the aim of making an intervention in the study of gender construction and gendered experience in the eighteenth century. My key concern has been to utilise the insights of affect theory to underline the importance of shame in the formation of the eighteenth century's hegemonic male identity, polite masculinity. This emphasis on shame in relation to hegemony has implications for future research. Shame's powerful presence in queer gender identities has been ably explored by theorists including Heather Love, Eve Sedgwick and Jack Halberstam among others.[24] Elspeth Probyn's work in cultural studies has examined shame felt by those in particular professions (writers) and with certain national identities (Australia's National Sorry Day).[25] There is ample evidence for shame's extraordinary influence in arenas from the individual's self-reflective space to the national and international

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[24] I am thinking particularly here of Heather Love's *Feeling Backward*, and Eve Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet*, *Tendencies*, and *Touching Feeling* in particular, all of which have been discussed or referred to in the course of this thesis. Jack Halberstam's oeuvre includes *In a Queer Time and Place* (2005), and *The Queer Art of Failure* (2011) are both texts that engage with the pain and shame of queerness while also considering ways in which these feelings might open up new ways of engaging with and thinking about the world.

[25] See Probyn's *Blush: Faces of Shame* (2005), especially chapters 4 and 5, pp. 107-62.

debates around collective responsibility, trauma and community relations. I have engaged with both the individual and society in this thesis. Further research into the various ways in which shame and polite masculinity influenced the eighteenth-century Western world would be instructive in understanding its politics, its economics and its burgeoning imperialism. In what ways, for example, could we build on Matthew McCormack's work on masculine independence and eighteenth-century British politics if we introduced shame and its related affects into the mix? Can we subject Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* to the kind of examination his earlier book received here? What implication does that have for capitalist economics and venture capitalism of the period?

There are numerous ways in which the central themes of this thesis speak to topics outside of its disciplinary and temporal boundaries. There has been for the last thirty years or so a growing body of work which interrogates hegemonic masculinity in cultural studies and the social sciences, much of it indebted to the lucid work of Raewyn Connell in works such as *Masculinities* (2005) in particular. Connell's empirical observations and sensitive writing have contextualised modern gender hegemonies and led to a greater awareness of the ways in which social factors and contradictions impinge on the discursive construction and individual experiences of men. In recent years, organisations like CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) among others have focused their efforts on alleviating the damage done by men's understanding of themselves as incapable of attaining or maintaining hegemonic traits. With that in mind, one of the interventions that this thesis makes is to deconstruct and undermine a hegemonic form of gender identity which, allied as it was with a bourgeois and commercial public sphere, still has echoes today.

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