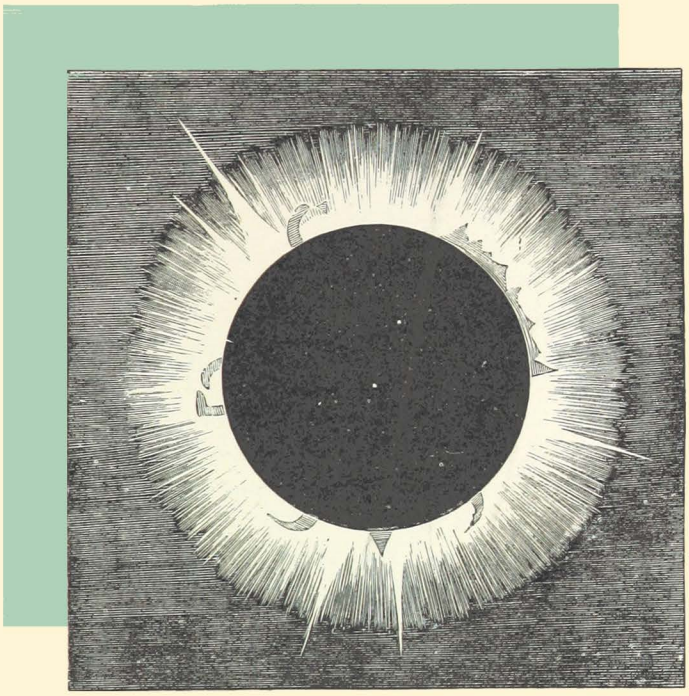

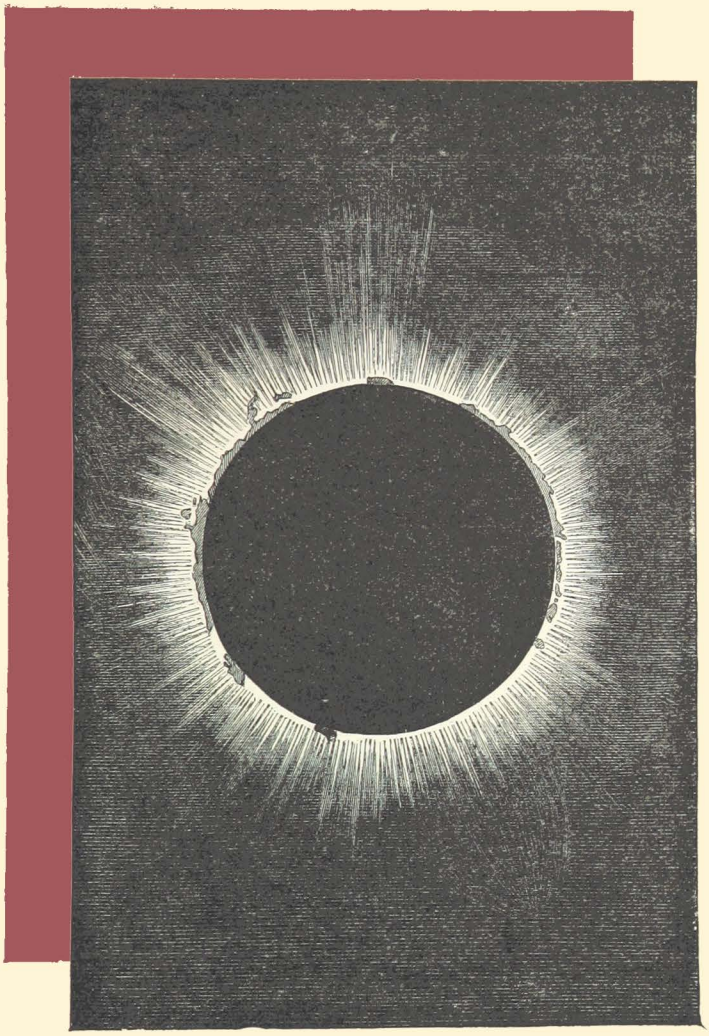

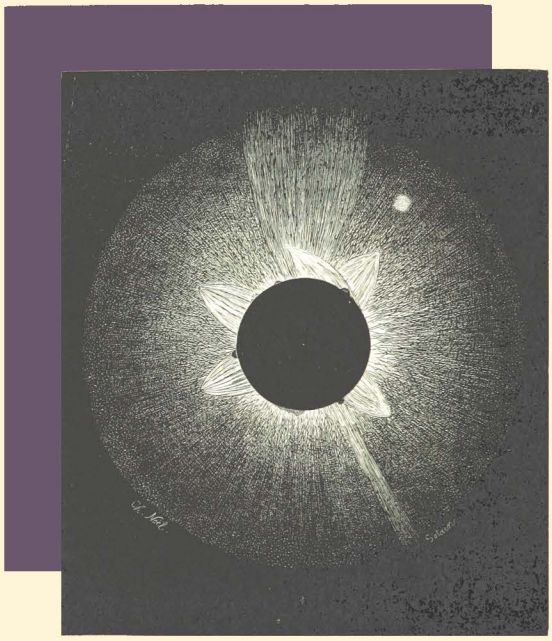

THE PLEASURES SOUGHT BY OTHERS YOU DESPISE

Vice and Virtue in Eighteenth-Century English Poetry

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Both Virtue and Vice

Introduction

Nicky Didicher, Simon Fraser University

This twenty-eight-poem anthology is the product of a third-year university course in English literature of the long eighteenth century at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby BC, Canada, located on the traditional and unceded lands of Coast Salish peoples of the Səl̓ilw̓ətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam) Nations. As the instructor, I wanted to provide a group of English majors and minors an authentic learning experience incorporating tasks and skills they could use in their professional futures. I also wanted them to take their work beyond the handed-in-for-marking stage and become familiar with getting a piece of writing to adhere more strictly to Canadian (settler) academic grammar conventions and MLA formatting.

The core assessment of English 320 in the Spring term of 2022 was this publishing project, broken up into scaffolded smaller assessments involving research, peer review, copyediting, and proofreading to produce their final piece: a headnote on a poet, an edited poem, and footnotes for that poem. For many students these were new skills, or ones under significant development during this project.

Although I determined the parameters of the anthology project, most of the specifics are student-driven. The students chose which Creative Commons license to use, for example. I chose the *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive* (*ECPA*) as our immediate source for poems, but it was the students who chose the focus for the anthology—vice and virtue in eighteenth-century English poetry, which gave us a broad range of interesting poems—and its title. We used a Word template that Digital Publishing SFU library provided, but it was the students who set up our editing guidelines in several long, sometimes heated, discussions of how many and what sorts of changes to make to our copytexts, what would be both practical and aesthetically pleasing for footnote formatting, and so on. The sheer number of decisions to make gave them, I hope, a small taste of what it is like to be an academic publisher. I also gave them grammar lessons, formatting lessons, and mini-lectures on relevant socio-historical contexts.

Each student chose a poem from *ECPA* that fit with our theme. Students then used published anthologies as models for writing headnotes and footnotes,

and to check whether the poems and poets they had chosen appeared in print already. Our aim was to share lesser-known poets and unknown poems with a general academic audience. I granted one student permission to use a poem that had previously been anthologized, Anna Laetitia Barbauld's "The Mouse's Petition." The students and I put in many hours of both in-class and out-of-class work on research and writing.

Vice and virtue proved to be an interesting thematic focus. It allowed us to get to know more about class structure, gender, courtship activities, religious divisions and beliefs, and professions in the long eighteenth century in Europe in general and Britain in particular. We discovered how central moral ideology and religion was to society and how nuanced/varied people's assumptions could be, as well as ways our own cultures' ideologies compare. We talked about criminality (e.g., poems about pirates), corruption and hypocrisy (e.g., poems about sin), and what your clothes say about your morality (e.g., poems about fashion, and I wore my historical outfits to class). Students practiced both analysing and reciting metrical poetry, and even got lessons in body language and English country dance.

We learned at least three important things about publishing poetry in Great Britain in the long eighteenth century: 1) your first collection should always have the title *Poems upon Several Occasions*, 2) publishing by subscription (your friends and sponsors pay in advance to cover printing costs and get their names listed in the book) was tricky and did not always produce a profit, and 3) Robert Dodsley was the go-to person for getting your name known. And we learned some things about Digital Humanities projects: in particular, what a gift to users it is for *ECPA* to include facsimile images. We thank the designers and maintainers of the *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive* very much!

I would also like to thank publicly those experts who gave of their time to speak to the class and to provide some insight into possible careers for people with degrees in English: Kate Shuttleworth in Digital Publishing at SFU, Jennifer Zerkee in SFU's Copyright Office, and independent editor Karyn Huenemann. I thank Burghley House's curator Jon Culverhouse for permission to reproduce the image for Casey Gareau's poem.

I would also like to thank all the undergraduate students in English 320 who worked so hard on the project, with a special note of appreciation for Cullen Hughes, who did the cover design. It shows three nineteenth-century drawings of eclipses (sourced free from the British Library), and Cullen's intent is to reflect the title's emphasis on perspective: sometimes we condemn others' pleasures but

hypocritically make exceptions for our own, and we allow our own vices to obscure the sun of our virtues.

The title phrase of this anthology, "The Pleasures Sought by Others You Despise," is a good emblem for the ambiguity we found in this collection of poems. Is it a critique or validation of others' pleasures? And are those pleasures virtuous or sinful? In fact, the phrase comes from Vincent Wong's chosen poem, "To the Rt. Hon. Charlotte Lady Conway, on her Resolving to Leave Bath" by Mary Barber, where it applauds Lady Conway for fleeing from the temptations to wickedness a tourist town provides. However, not all the poems in this anthology condemn vices: for example, Sharon Liu's choice, William Shenstone's "Ode to Indolence," celebrates what is traditionally one of the Seven Deadly Sins, Sloth.

The poems included in this anthology range in their publication date from 1696 to 1782. They include hymns, satires, verse epistles, occasional poems, odes, and fables. Ten are by female-identifying and seventeen by male-identifying poets. Of the twenty poets, five come from Dissenting or non-conformist denominations of Christianity rather than the Church of England. Three are physicians, and four are priests. Within the anthology, the poems are divided into those their student editors felt to be focused more on vice, more on virtue, or equally on both. Within each section, the poets are in alphabetical order by family name.

We sincerely hope that you will enjoy reading this collection of English poetry.

Editorial Principles

We have reproduced the poems using *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*'s facsimiles and e-texts as our copytexts, indicating in footnotes a few significant variations in other editions. We have reproduced indentation patterns, stanza structures, and triplet markings exactly as in the copytexts. We have kept original spelling, punctuation, and capitalization patterns except where this would hamper a twenty-first-century reader (and in the MLA-formatted titles). This means that poems from earlier in the long eighteenth century have more noun capitalization than those from later in the period.

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William Cowper

Celina Bismel, Simon Fraser University

William Cowper (pronounced "Cooper," 1731-1800) was born in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire in England. Cowper was known best for his poetry and was one of the most popular poets of the eighteenth century. His more famous poems are *The Task*, "The Castaway," and his works in *Olney Hymns*. Many of his poems are autobiographical reflections of his life and experiences.

His father, John Cowper, was a rector,[1] and his aunt, Judith Madan, was a poet, both of which influenced his later religious and writing practices. Cowper studied law for three years and was offered an administrative position at the House of Lords. This position, however, became extremely stressful for him due to the examination process, and it was the beginning of Cowper's descent into severe mental illness. In 1763 he had his first period of insanity. Over his lifetime, he tried to commit suicide multiple times because of stress and self-doubt.

After being admitted into an asylum under the care of Nathaniel Cotton,[2] Cowper began to find solace in Evangelical religion. Once he recovered, Cowper settled down in Olney, Buckinghamshire with his close friends Morley and Mary Unwin. There he met Rev. John Newton (author of the hymn "Amazing Grace"), who encouraged him to pursue poetry, and together they published *Olney Hymns* in 1779. Cowper's other religious teachers of Evangelicalism were strict on him, and he soon became religiously despondent. Cowper's religious journey and his mental illness were connected because his constant self-doubt led him to believe that he was not worthy of God's love and damned. He lived out the rest of his life with Mary Unwin after Morley had passed away, in the quiet countryside where she encouraged him to write poetry and took care of him. When she passed away in 1796, Cowper became distraught and once again he fell into the grasp of mental illness. He passed away from dropsy[3] in 1800.

His poem "The Love of the World Reproved: Or, Hypocrisy Detected" was published in a book titled *Poems: by William Cowper, Of the Inner Temple, Esq.* in

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[1] *Rector* a minor member of the clergy of the Church of England, in charge of a parish
[2] *Nathaniel Cotton* was both a physician and another English poet of the 18th century; for more information, see Max D'Ambrosio's headnote to "The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow: A Fable"
[3] *Dropsy* "A morbid condition characterized by the accumulation of watery fluid in the serous cavities or the connective tissue of the body" (*OED*), known today as edema

1782. The poem is in iambic tetrameter couplets and describes satirically a supposed ambiguity in the Islamic teachings about not eating pork. During the eighteenth century, Muslims were a very small minority in Great Britain compared to Christians, and Cowper would not have been well-versed in Islamic teachings. Cowper's target audience for his poems was Christian and would have mocked Muslims in the same way the poem does, but Cowper turns the tables on his readers and accuses them also of hypocrisy.

Further Reading

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The Love of the World Reproved: Or, Hypocrisy Detected[4]

THUS says the prophet of the Turk,[5]
Good mussulman[6] abstain from pork;
There is a part in ev'ry swine,
No friend or follower of mine
May taste, whate'er his inclination,
On pain of excommunication.[7]
Such Mahomet's[8] mysterious charge,[9]
And thus he left the point at large.
Had he the sinful part express'd
They might with safety eat the rest;
But for one piece they thought it hard
From the whole hog[10] to be debarr'd,[11]
And set their wit at work to find
What joint[12] the prophet had in mind.
Much controversy strait arose,
These chuse the back, the belly those;
By some 'tis confidently said
He meant not to forbid the head,

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[4] *Poems: by William Cowper, Of the Inner Temple Esq.* 1782, pp. 320–322; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[5] *Turk* people from Turkey, Muslims
[6] *Mussulman* Muslim person
[7] *Excommunication* "the exclusion of an offending member from [a] religious community" (*OED*)
[8] *Mahomet's* Muhammed, the main prophet of Islam
[9] *Charge* a mandate or order
[10] *The whole hog* the phrase "to go the whole hog" may originate from Cowper's poem and it means "to do something completely, thoroughly, or fully" (*OED*)
[11] *Debarr'd* to exclude or prohibit
[12] *Joint* a portion of meat (e.g., the leg or shoulder) (*OED*)

While others at that doctrine rail,[13]
And piously prefer the tail.
Thus, conscience freed from ev'ry clog,
Mahometans[14] eat up the hog.
    You laugh — 'tis well — the tale apply'd
May make you laugh on t'other side.
Renounce the world,[15] the preacher cries —
We do — a multitude replies.
While one as innocent regards
A snug and friendly game at cards;
And one, whatever you may say,
Can see no evil in a play;[16]
Some love a concert or a race,[17]
And others, shooting and the chase.[18]
Revil'd[19] and lov'd, renounc'd and follow'd,
Thus bit by bit the world is swallow'd;
Each thinks his neighbour makes too free,
Yet likes a slice as well as he,
With sophistry[20] their sauce they sweeten,
'Till quite from tail to snout 'tis eaten.

---

[13] *Rail* "to complain persistently or vehemently" (*OED*)
[14] *Mahometans* followers of Prophet Muhammed, Muslims
[15] *Renounce the world* "to withdraw from the secular world in order to lead a spiritual life" (*OED*)
[16] *Play* a theatrical performance
[17] *Race* horse race
[18] *Shooting and the chase* hunting
[19] *Revil'd* to reject something or treat it with contempt
[20] *Sophistry* "employment of arguments which are intentionally deceptive" (*OED*)

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John Ellis

Mason Rowan, Simon Fraser University

John Ellis was born in London, England in 1698. After receiving a basic education, Ellis became an apprentice scrivener within London's Threadneedle banking district. Here, he would hone his writing abilities and eventually settle into the lifelong occupation of money scrivening. As a money scrivener, Ellis spent much of his time writing out and arranging the allocation of deeds and loans to others. In addition to scrivening, he also worked as a literary writer throughout his career. After having learned Latin during his apprenticeship, Ellis occupied himself by translating several texts. In 1739, for example, he anonymously published an English version of *The Surprize: or, The Gentleman Turn'd Apothecary*, from a Latin copy of a French comic story. In 1758, Robert Dodsley published three of Ellis's poems in volume six of his *Collection of Poems in Six Volumes* (1758-1765), one of the most publicly recognized poetry collections of the eighteenth century.

As a result of his prowess in written literature, Ellis was well-respected by many literary professionals and contemporaries. In fact, Dr. William King of Oxford was allegedly so impressed by Ellis's translations of Ovid's *Epistles* that he regarded the work as something that seemed "not [to have been produced by] Ellis, but Ovid himself" (quoted by Reed 4).

Despite his critical acclaim, Ellis struggled both financially and emotionally during his lifetime. Indeed, after entrusting money to at least one individual who went bankrupt, Ellis worried during his final years that he would not have the funds to sustain himself until his passing. Eventually, Ellis's peers took notice of his dire situation and opted to take care of his financial needs until his death in 1791. Ellis's unpublished works, including his manuscript translations of Ovid's *Epistles*, were entrusted to close peers and colleagues within the literary industry. An obituary by Isaac Reed was dedicated to Ellis in the twenty-first volume of *The European Magazine*, which was published in 1792.

"The Cheat's Apology" is one of the three poems that Ellis contributed to Robert Dodsley's *Collection of Poems in Six Volumes*. It is written in anapestic tetrameter with a sestain (six-line) stanzaic structure and features an ABABCC rhyme scheme. The satirical poem was at least once set to music, sung, and performed publicly in Vauxhall, London. During this performance, the poem

allegedly received much applause from the crowd. Throughout the poem, Ellis highlights the corrupt nature of many recognized eighteenth-century occupations, as well as the vices that drive this corruption: most notably, vicious obsessions with money and power. Ellis acknowledges corruption within eighteenth-century state politics, the legal system, the Church of England, and the pharmaceutical industry. As a scrivener who worked in each of these fields, Ellis might have felt inspired to write "The Cheat's Apology" based on personal experiences with the corrupt tendencies of his own clientele. Ellis concludes the poem by lamenting his own poverty in the occupation of writing. By bringing to light the pervasiveness of corruption within many fundamental eighteenth-century industries, Ellis's "The Cheat's Apology" encourages modern readers to analyze tendencies of corruption throughout their own contemporary societal industries — many of which remain starkly similar in the context of the twenty-first century.

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The Cheat's Apology [21]

'Tis my vocation, Hal! Shakespeare.[22]

LOOK round the wide world each profession, you'll find,
Hath something dishonest, which myst'ry[23] they call;
Each knave[24] points[25] another, at home is stark blind,
Except but his own, there's a cheat in them all:[26]
When tax'd[27] with imposture[28] the charge he'll evade,
And like Falstaff[29] pretend he but lives by his trade.

The hero ambitious (like Philip's great son,
Who wept when he found no more mischief to do)[30]
Ne'er scruples a neighbouring realm to o'er-run,
While slaughters and carnage his sabre imbrue.[31]
Of rapine[32] and murder the charge he'll evade,
For conquest is glorious, and fighting his trade.

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[21] *A Collection of Poems in 6 Volumes. By Several Hands,* edited by Robert Dodsley, Vol. 6, printed J. Hughs, 1763, pp. 268–70; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*

[22] *'Tis my vocation, Hal!* from Act I, Scene II of William Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 1*, in which John Falstaff claims that thievery is his vocation: his occupation and way of life

[23] *Myst'ry* commonly known as "trade secrets"

[24] *Knave* a dishonest and immoral man

[25] *Points* short for "appoints," meaning nominates

[26] *Except but his own, there's a cheat in them all* each man believes that all professions are dishonest except his own

[27] *Tax'd* to be reproved or accused of wrongdoing

[28] *Imposture* deception or fraudulence

[29] *Falstaff* a fictional character who appears in several of William Shakespeare's works (see footnote 2 above)

[30] *Phillip's great son* Alexander the Great, son of Phillip II of Macedon, who allegedly wept upon learning there were no more worlds to conquer

[31] *Imbrue* to stain something, usually a weapon or hands, with blood

[32] *Rapine* the act of plundering or pillaging; possible an allusion to Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, in which Chiron and Demetrius disguise themselves as Rapine and Murder respectively

The statesman, who steers by wise Machiavel's rules,[33]
Is ne'er to be known by his tongue or his face;
They're traps by him us'd to catch credulous fools,
And breach of his promise he counts no disgrace;
But policy calls it, reproach to evade,
For flatt'ry's his province, cajoling[34] his trade.

The priest will instruct you this world to despise,
With all its vain pomp, for a kingdom on high;
While earthly preferments[35] are chiefly his prize,
And all his pursuits give his doctrine the lie;[36]
He'll plead you the gospel, your charge to evade:
The lab'rer's entitled[37] to live by his trade.

The lawyer, as oft on the wrong side as right,
Who tortures for fee the true sense of the laws,
While black he by sophistry[38] proves to be white,
And falshood and perjury lists in his cause;
With steady assurance all crime will evade:
His client's his care, and he follows his trade.

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[33] *Machiavel's rules* Niccolò Machiavelli, an Italian diplomat and author, best known for his political treatise *The Prince;* his proposed methods for achieving power are through cunning and manipulation

[34] *Cajoling* to persuade or win over through deception, strategized flattery, or other such dishonest methods

[35] *Preferment* a promotion or appointment that brings social/financial advantage

[36] *Give his doctrine the lie* spelled *"lye"* in copytext 1763 edition; to *give* something *the lie* is to prove its falsity/inaccuracy

[37] *Entitled* misspelled as "entititled" in copytext 1763 edition

[38] *Sophistry* the strategic employment of fallacious language and arguments to deceive listeners

The sons of Machaon,[39] who thirsty for gold
    The patient past cure visit thrice in a day,
Write largely the Pharmacop league[40] to uphold,
    While poverty's left to diseases a prey;
Are held in repute for their glitt'ring parade:
Their practice is great, and they shine in their trade.

Since then in all stations imposture is found,
    No one of another can justly complain;
The coin he receives will pass current[41] around,
    And where he is cousen'd[42] he cousens again:
But I, who for cheats this apology[43] made,
Cheat myself by my rhyming, and starve by my trade.

[39] *Machaon* in Greek mythology, the son of Asclepius (god of medicine); in Homer's *Iliad,* an early recorded practitioner of organized surgical care
[40] *Pharmacop league* the people involved in producing and distributing prescription drugs; derived from the modern Latin word *pharmacopoeia*, which translates to "the art of making drugs"
[41] *Current* like a river's current, a flow (hence coins as "currency"); not meant to denote the present
[42] *Cousen* spelt "*cozen*" in modern English; to deceive, defraud, or dupe someone
[43] *Apology* justification or self-defense

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Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea

Emeralde O'Donnell, Simon Fraser University

The earliest evidence of Finch's writing dates to her time at the English court where she served as a maid of honor to Mary of Modena, wife of James II, between 1683 and 1688. Here, Finch met and married Heneage Finch, a gentleman of the bedchamber to James. After James and Mary were exiled in 1688, both Anne and Heneage remained loyal to the Stuarts and were forced to leave the court, unable to support the new rule. The two eventually settled with Heneage's nephew, the Earl of Winchilsea, in 1691, and Finch began publishing her poetry anonymously in various collections. In 1712, Heneage's nephew died and Heneage and Anne inherited the titles of Earl and Countess of Winchilsea. A year after gaining her title, Finch published *Miscellany: Poems for Several Occasions*, one of the first poetry collections published by a woman in England. The collection was initially credited to "A Lady" until 1714 when the publisher added credits to "the right Hon[ora]ble Anne" against her wishes (Kennedy 23).

Finch was well respected among her peers, maintaining close friendships with Elizabeth Rowe (see "The Reflection," in this anthology), Alexander Pope, and Jonathan Swift. Her poems lost popularity shortly after her death but saw a brief revival in the early nineteenth century after praise from William Wordsworth. Finch's work found a sustained revival following a critique published by Edmund Gosse in 1891 and a complete collection of poems published by Myra Reynolds in 1903. Finch is now considered one of the best woman poets of the eighteenth century, garnering praise from Virginia Woolf and increased critical attention from scholars after the mid-twentieth century.

Finch wrote across several genres and themes, but is most known for her poetry on nature, female friendships, and happy marriage. Taking care to moderate her expressed political views, Finch left her more personal and political poems unpublished. Of her published poems, many of the most political are found within a large body of adapted fables. The natural playfulness of fables provided a medium for Finch to publicly express her more private views on society. Many of these fables deal with themes of morality and power such as the

position of women in society and include violent elements (as we see in the conclusion of "The Prevalence of Custom" where the wife threatens to hang her husband). Finch's fables also include her few works that depict unhappy marriages. In a marriage herself that was very happy for the time period, Finch is better known for the affectionate poems she wrote about Heneage and their relationship.

Written in mock-heroic iambic tetrameter couplets with feminine rhymes, "The Prevalence of Custom" falls within Finch's body of fables and is adapted and translated from La Fontaine's fable "L'Ivrogne et sa Femme" ("The Drunkard and his Wife"). The poem follows the same narrative as La Fontaine's but differs in its focus on the wife rather than the husband. Finch also finishes her poem with the wife threatening to hang the husband, while La Fontaine finishes with the husband asking for a drink. Finch honours the original by referencing the Fury Tisiphone, reminiscent of La Fontaine's wife character being dressed in "robes like those the Furies wear." "The Prevalence of Custom" was only published within her *Miscellany* while Finch was alive and can be found in few collections published since.

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The Prevalence of Custom[44]

A Female, to a Drunkard marry'd,
When all her other Arts miscarry'd,[45]
Had yet one Stratagem to prove him,
And from good Fellowship[46] remove him;
Finding him overcome with Tipple,[47]
And weak, as Infant at the Nipple,
She to a Vault transports the Lumber,[48]
And *there expects* his breaking Slumber.
A Table she with Meat provided,
And rob'd in Black, stood just beside it;
Seen only, by one glim'ring Taper,[49]
That blewly burnt thro' misty Vapor.
At length he wakes, his Wine digested,
And of her Phantomship requested,
To learn the Name of that close Dwelling,
And what offends his Sight and Smelling;
And of what Land she was the Creature,
With outspread Hair, and ghastly Feature?
Mortal, quoth she, (to Darkness hurry'd)
Know, that thou art both Dead and Bury'd;
Convey'd, last Night, from noisie Tavern,
To this thy still, and dreary Cavern.

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[44] *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions: Written by the Right Honble Anne, Countess of Winchilsea*, Benj. Tooke, William Taylor, and James Round, 1713, pp. 22-24; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[45] *Miscarry'd* the failing of a plan
[46] *Good Fellowship* carousing
[47] *Tipple* slang for strong alcohol
[48] *Lumber* figurative phrase identifying "useless or cumbrous material" (*OED*)
[49] *Taper* a wax candle; sometimes associated with penance

What strikes thy Nose, springs from the Shatters
Of Bodies kill'd with Cordial Waters,[50]
Stronger than other Scents and quicker,
As urg'd by more spirituous Liquor.
My self attend on the Deceas'd,
When all their Earthly Train's[51] releas'd;
And in this Place of endless Quiet,
My Bus'ness is, to find them Diet;
To shew[52] all sorts of Meats, and Salades,
Till I'm acquainted with their Palates;[53]
But that once known, then less suffices.
Quoth he[54] (and on his Crupper[55] rises)
Thou Guardian of these lower Regions,
Thou Providor for countless Legions,
Thou dark, but charitable Crony,[56]
Far kinder than my *Tisiphony,*[57]
Who of our Victuals thus art Thinking,[58]
If thou hast Care too of our Drinking,
A *Bumper*[59] fetch: Quoth she, a *Halter,*[60]
Since nothing less thy Tone can alter,
Or break this Habit thou'st been getting,

---

[50] *Cordial* alcoholic medicine, often drink, that was used recreationally; now, liqueur
[51] *Train* servants
[52] *Shew* to serve food
[53] *Palates* the "seat of taste" (*OED*); relates to the appreciation for specific flavours
[54] *Quoth he* signals the end of the wife's dialogue and introduces the husband's response
[55] *Crupper* a man's buttocks, often used humorously; also used to describe horses' rears
[56] *Crony* a close associate; also a pun on crone
[57] *Tisiphony* Tisiphone, a Fury of vengeance in Greco-Roman mythology; here, the husband uses it to refer to his wife with insult
[58] *Of our… Thinking* attending to his food needs
[59] *Bumper* a cup brim-full with alcohol
[60] *Halter* a noose meant for hanging; also used to describe leads for horses

To keep thy Throat in constant wetting.

Anne Finch

Sonya Johal, Simon Fraser University

Anne Finch was born in 1661 in Hampshire, England, and passed away in 1720. She was known as the Countess of Winchilsea and a poet. Finch began writing in the 1680s and published some of her poetry in the 1690s–1700s. Although she had already circulated some of her poems, 1713 was the year Finch published a whole collection of her poetry. This was a year after her husband passed away and also a year after she gained the title Countess. The collection was named *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions. Written By a Lady*. By adding "Written By a Lady" to the title of her collection Finch claimed status as a rare female poet but also kept herself anonymous. A lot of her poetry was about nature or gender politics.

Finch appreciated and enjoyed when people she personally knew read her work, but she was uneasy when her number of readers grew. In *The Poetry of Anne Finch*: *An Essay in Interpretation*, Charles Hinnant writes, based on the "Introduction" in her collection, that Finch believed the audience for her poetry collection "to be largely masculine and largely hostile" (21). The poem "Reformation" addresses that assumed audience by speaking about a noisy and controlling woman. Though she mentions the gentleman in the poem to be "wretched in his Lot," she does not elaborate or focus on how wretched that man is. In this case, she removed any attention that she could have placed on men's characters, instead choosing to place the focus on how men perceive women.

In "Critics and Criticism in the Poetry of Anne Finch," Michael Gavin writes that "Finch advocates a model of reading that steps outside of critical dispute to value pleasure and merit for their own sakes. […] Finch hopes to remove controversy as the guiding mode of interpretation and replace it with something like disinterested judgment" (651). We do not see, however, this way of presenting and interpreting in "Reformation." Finch presents a story and information without seeming to expect a discussion, but the attitude that the speaker takes on, especially through the adjectives they use, automatically pushes readers to make judgments. "Reformation" is from *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions. Written By a Lad*y, and is in heroic couplets, a popular verse form Finch used often. Though this poem, specifically, does not express her "disinterested judgement," she appears to be writing as someone who understands the male

perspective. Readers may choose for themselves whether to see this as a straightforward affirmation of patriarchal stereotyping of women or as a subversive exaggeration of it.

Further Reading

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Reformation[61]

A Gentleman, most wretched in his Lot,
A wrangling[62] and reproving[63] *Wife* had got,
Who, tho' she curb'd[64] his Pleasures, and his Food,
Call'd him *My Dear,* and did it for his Good,
Ills[65] to prevent; She of all Ills the worst,
So wisely Froward[66], and so kindly Curst.
The Servants too experiment her Lungs,[67]
And find they've Breath to serve a thousand Tongues.
Nothing went on; for her eternal Clack[68]
Still rectifying, set all Matters back;[69]
Nor Town, nor Neighbours, nor the Court cou'd please,
But furnish'd Matter for her sharp Disease.
To distant Plains at length he gets her down,[70]
With no Affairs[71] to manage of her own;
Hoping from that unactive State to find
A calmer Habit, grown upon her Mind:
But soon return'd he hears her at his Door,
As noisy and tempestuous as before;

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[61] *Miscellany Poems, on Several Occasions: Written by the Right Honble Anne, Countess of Winchilsea*, J.B., 1713, pp. 227–229; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[62] *Wrangling* arguing or debating
[63] *Reproving* blaming or scolding
[64] *Curb'd* restrained and controlled
[65] *Ills* misfortunes, errors, struggles
[66] *Froward* someone who does not listen or is difficult to interact with *(OED)*
[67] *Experiment her lungs* provoke her to yell often
[68] *Clack* to speak a lot, quickly
[69] *Set all Matters back* the servants do not have enough time to do everything because she is constantly yelling and ordering them to do things
[70] *To distant Plains at length he gets her down* she moves from London to the country with her husband
[71] *Affairs* household duties

Yet mildly ask'd, How she her Days had spent
Amidst the Quiet of a sweet Content,
Where Shepherds 'tend their Flocks, and Maids their Pails,[72]
And no harsh Mistress domineers, or rails?[73]
Not rail! she cries — Why, I that had no share
In their Concerns, cou'd not the Trollops[74] spare;
But told 'em, they were Sluts[75] — And for the Swains,[76]
My Name a Terror to them still remains;
So often I reprov'd their slothful[77] Faults,
And with such Freedom told 'em all my Thoughts,
That I no more amongst them cou'd reside.
Has then, alas! the Gentleman reply'd,
One single Month so much their Patience try'd?
Where you by Day, and but at Seasons due,
Cou'd with your Clamours[78] their Defects pursue;
How had they shrunk, and justly been afraid,
Had they with me one Curtain-Lecture[79] heard!
Yet enter *Madam,* and resume your Sway;

[72] *Maids their Pails* milkmaids with pails of milk
[73] *Rails* protests or complains
[74] *Trollops* women who are "negligent or lazy with regard to personal appearance or household cleanliness" (*OED*)
[75] *Sluts* "an untidy, dirty, or slovenly woman; a woman who is habitually careless, lazy, or negligent with regard to appearance, household cleanliness" (*OED*)
[76] *Swains* shepherds
[77] *Slothful* something done without any effort
[78] *Clamours* a lot of noise
[79] *Curtain-Lecture* when a woman would scold her husband while they were in bed (*OED*)

Who can't Command, must silently Obey.
In secret here let endless Faults be found,
Till, like Reformers who in States abound,
You all to Ruin bring, and ev'ry Part confound.

John Hoadly

Nathan Fu, Simon Fraser University

John Hoadly was born in Broad Street, London in 1711. He was the youngest son of the Right Reverend Benjamin Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester, and Sarah Curtis, a portrait painter. John Hoadly was educated at Dr Newcome's school where he grew to love theater and writing. He grew up as the youngest with two older brothers. Being the son of a bishop, Hoadly was raised as a devout Christian and became a clergyman in 1735. His roots as a poet and playwright began after assisting his older brother, Benjamin Hoadly, in writing *The Contrast, or, A Tragical Comic Rehearsal of Two Modern Plays*. The play saw moderate success, being performed several times at the Lincoln's Inn Fields theatre, before being discontinued at the request of his father. The play drew the attention of many critics due to its ridicule of living authors. This satiric style of writing would persist through his career as a playwright and poet.

The poem below, titled "The Indolent," was written in 1758. Indolence, or to be an indolent person, refers to a person's "disposition, action, etc.: averse to toil or exertion; slothful, lazy, idle" (*OED*). Not much is known of the public's perception of the poem as it is one of Hoadly's lesser-known works. The poem is in two verse paragraphs of heroic couplets, and, as the title suggests, it discusses the life and mindset of an indolent man. The first verse paragraph ridicules indolence, while the second delves into the mind of the indolent man. During the eighteenth century, ideal men were to value honour, family, and class, and to shun indolence. Because Hoadly was known as a satirist, readers would likely have seen this as a simple satire of a lazy and sloth-filled life that implicitly reinforced their ideals of what it meant to be a man.

Hoadly was a successful upper-class man known for his charity. According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Hoadly made bequests in his will to apprentice the poorer children of his diocese. He was known as a loyal, humorous, and modest man.

Further Reading

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The Indolent[80]

WHAT self-sufficiency and false content[81]
Benumb[82] the senses of the indolent!
Dead to all purposes of good, or ill,
Alive alone in an unactive will.
His only vice in no good action lies,
And his sole virtue is his want of vice.
Business[83] he deems[84] too hard, trifles[85] too easy,
And doing nothing finds himself too busy.
Silence he cannot bear, noise is distraction,
Noise kills with bustle,[86] silence with reflection;
No want he feels, — what has he to pursue?
To him 'tis less to suffer, than to do.
The busy world's a fool, the learn'd a sot,[87]
And his sole hope to be by all forgot:
Wealth is procur'd[88] with toil, and kept with fear,
Knowledge by labour purchas'd costs too dear;
Friendship's a clog,[89] and family a jest,

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[80] First published in 1758; version used is Robert Dodsley's *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes by Several Hands,* vol. 6, 1763; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[81] *Content* to be in a state of satisfaction or happiness
[82] *Benumb* "To render (the mental powers, the will, or the feelings) senseless or inert; to stupefy, deaden" (*OED*)
[83] *Business* busyness
[84] *Deems* thinks or judges
[85] *Trifles* ways of spending time idly or frivolously
[86] *Bustle* excited and/or audible movement
[87] *Sot* a foolish or stupid person
[88] *Procur'd* the act of acquiring or obtaining
[89] *Clog* a heavy object, typically wood, tied to something to impede movement, anything that impedes action or progress

A wife but a bad bargain at the best;
Honour a bubble,[90] subject to a breath,
And all engagements[91] vain since null'd by death;
Thus all the wise esteem,[92] he can despise,
And caring not, 'tis he alone is wise:
Yet, all his wish possessing, finds no rest,
And only lives to know, he never can be blest.

[90] *Bubble* a soap bubble, but also "a protected or fortunate situation which is isolated from reality or unlikely to last" (*OED*)
[91] *Engagements* not only agreements to marry, but other financial and legal matters
[92] *All the wise esteem* everything that wise people admire

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Soame Jenyns

Paris Jonchier-Litwack, Simon Fraser University

Soame Jenyns (1704–1787) was born in Great Ormond Street, London, to parents Sir Roger Jenyns and Lady Elizabeth Jenyns, on the fallacious date of January 1, 1704. Fallacious, since, uncertain of his actual date of birth (but oddly convinced of the precise hour at which he was delivered: twelve o'clock at night), Jenyns decided that his birthday of choice would align with New Year's Day because of its existing affiliations with abundance and festivity. Such a decision would have come as no surprise to those who knew him well, for they often described Jenyns in jovial terms: e.g., "Mr. Jenyns is a man of a lively fancy and pleasant turn of wit: very sparkling in conversation and full of merry conceits and agreeable drollery" (William Cole, 1714–1782).[93]

Jenyns spent the first seventeen years of his life at Bottisham Hall, on his family's estate in Cambridgeshire, where he was raised and privately educated. His upbringing enabled him to gain admittance to St John's College, Cambridge, as a fellow-commoner (an affluent aristocratic student) in 1722. A year after his matriculation, Jenyns left the university without a degree and promptly married his first cousin, Mary Soame, when he was twenty-two years of age. This marriage, having been orchestrated by Jenyns's father, was one, like so many unions of the eighteenth century, of necessity and convenience. It is unsurprising, then, that Soame and Mary's relationship was lacking in general affection and that, shortly after the death of Sir Roger Jenyns (1740), it informally ended when Mary eloped with William Levyns in 1742 (the same year that Jenyns became Cambridgeshire's MP). Shortly after his and Mary's affair-induced separation, Jenyns anonymously published a satirical poem titled "The Modern Fine Gentleman" (1746). Given its title, it would be appropriate to assume that "The Modern Fine Lady" (despite having been written five years later) was intended as a sister poem of sorts or, at the very least, was written in a way that drew inspiration from the creative work that preceded it. The poems are stylistically comparable and, though their subject

[93] this account of Jenyns comes from one of several manuscript volumes entrusted to the British Museum by Cole himself: *Collections for an Athenae Cantabrigienses* (MSS. 5873), quotation printed in *Admissions to the College of St. John the Evangelist in the University of Cambridge: July 1715–November 1767 Part III*, p. 355 (see Further Reading)

matters are fundamentally different, both are interested in the ways in which certain types of upper-class people respond to the societal burdens and expectations of the eighteenth century.

Another notable poetic work by Jenyns is the 1727 publication of "The Art of Dancing" (a mock-heroic piece in three cantos). Though his poems were generally well-received, Jenyns's political, theological, and literary voice was best expressed through the medium of prose. His "superior talents in controversial writing" (Charles Nalson Cole, 1790) hence served to affirm his reputation as an essayist. Much of Jenyns's written work, be it in the form of poetry or prose, has a certain wit and ironic rhetoric, so much so that those familiar with the writer's satiric tendencies were, upon the publication of certain works,[94] skeptical of Jenyns's sincerity when it came to declaring his stance on social matters: "He is undoubtedly a fine writer but whether he is a Christian, Deist, or Atheist, I cannot tell" (John Wesley, 1776).

Not only did Jenyns's writing cause its readers to doubt the very intentions of its author, but it also served to spark criticism and what might be described as puerile writerly antagonism. The essay *Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil* (1756) was criticized in a *Literary Magazine* review by Samuel Johnson (1757) for its simplicity and reductive inclination, as it highlighted Jenyns's failure to acknowledge the nuances of morality. Displeased by Johnson's words, Jenyns got his own back (after the critic's passing, in 1784) when he wrote the sarcastic "Epitaph on Dr. Samuel Johnson":

> Here lies Sam Johnson: – Reader, have a care,
> Tread lightly, lest you wake a sleeping Bear:
> Religious, moral, generous, and humane
> He was; but self-sufficient, proud, and vain,
> Fond of, and overbearing in dispute,
> A Christian, and a Scholar – but a Brute. [95]

Jenyns published "The Modern Fine Lady" in 1751, two years before the death of his estranged wife and three years before marrying Elizabeth Gray (another first cousin). Written in iambic pentameter, the six-stanza poem is made up of heroic couplets and features four triplets. Its epigraph takes lines from Horace's "To Pyrrha" (Ode 1.5) – a stylistic decision reminiscent of "The Modern

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[94] namely, *View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion* (1776)

[95] printed in *The Works of Soame Jenyns ...: including several pieces never before published; to which are prefixed, short sketches of the history of the author's family, and also of his life* (1790) p. 222

Fine Gentleman," whose epigraph takes lines from another of Horace's Odes (1.22). Jenyns's satiric poem is interested in the notion of appearances and observes the facade upheld by upper-class women in eighteenth-century England.

Further Reading

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The Modern Fine Lady[96]

— — — — — — *Miseri quibus*
Intentata nites. Hor.[97]

SKILL'D in each art, that can adorn the fair,
The spritely dance, the soft Italian air,
The toss of quality, and high-bred fleer,[98]
Now Lady Harriot[99] reach'd her fifteenth year.
Wing'd with diversions all her moments flew,
Each, as it pass'd, presenting something new;
Breakfasts and auctions wear the morn away,
Each evening gives an opera, or a play;
Then *Brag*'s[100] eternal joys all night remain,
And kindly usher in the morn again.
For love no time has she, or inclination,
Yet must coquet[101] it for the sake of fashion;
For this she listens to each fop[102] that's near,
Th' embroider'd colonel flatters with a sneer,
And the crop'd[103] ensign nuzzles in her ear.
But with most warmth her dress and airs inspire
Th' ambitious bosom of the landed 'squire,

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[96] Original 1751, reprinted in London for Robert Dodsley's *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes by Several Hands, Vol. III.*, pp. 171–175; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[97] Horace, Ode 1.5: "To Pyrrha," ll. 12–13
[98] *Fleer* wry look or reaction
[99] *Lady Harriot* typical name for a well-bred young lady
[100] *Brag* popular card game
[101] *Coquet* flirt with, especially in a way that is playful or insincere
[102] *Fop* narcissistic fool
[103] *Crop'd* appears as 'cropt' in *Miscellaneous Pieces, in Two Volumes* (1761) and *Miscellaneous Pieces, in Verse and Prose* (1770); could refer to a short haircut

Who fain[104] would quit plump Dolly's[105] softer charms,
For wither'd lean *right honourable*[106] arms;
He bows with reverence at her sacred shrine,
And treats her as if sprung from race divine,
Which she returns with insolence and scorn,
Nor deigns to smile on a plebeian[107] born.
Ere long by friends, by cards, and lovers cross'd,
Her fortune, health, and reputation lost;
Her money gone, yet not a tradesman paid,
Her fame, yet she still damn'd to be a maid,
Her spirits sink, her nerves are so unstrung,
She weeps, if but a handsome thief[108] is hung:
By mercers, lacemen, mantua-makers[109] press'd,
But most for ready cash for play distress'd,
Where can she turn? — the 'squire must all repair,
She condescends to listen to his pray'r,
And marries him at length in mere despair.
But soon th' endearments of a husband cloy,
Her soul, her frame incapable of joy:
She feels no transports in the bridal bed,
Of which so oft sh' has heard, so much has read;
Then vex'd, that she should be condemn'd alone

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[104] *Fain* gladly
[105] *Dolly* typical name for a lower-class woman, likely a servant
[106] *Right honourable* title given to those of high ranking or status
[107] *Plebeian* commoner
[108] *Handsome Thief* reference to Maclean, a thief "condemned for a robbery on the highway" (as per *Miscellaneous Pieces, in Verse and Prose* edition, p. 56)
[109] *Mercers, lacemen, mantua-makers* clothiers

To seek in vain this philosophick stone,[110]
To abler tutors she resolves t'apply,
A prostitute from curiosity:
Hence men of ev'ry sort, and ev'ry size,
Impatient for heav'n's cordial drop,[111] she tries;
The fribbling[112] beau,[113] the rough unwieldy clown,[114]
The ruddy templar[115] newly on the town,
Th' Hibernian[116] captain of gigantic make,
The brimful parson, and th' exhausted rake.[117]
But still malignant Fate her wish denies,
Cards yield superior joys, to cards she flies;
All night from rout[118] to rout her chairmen[119] run,
Again she plays, and is again undone.
Behold her now in Ruin's[120] frightful jaws!
Bonds, judgments, executions, ope their paws;
Seize jewels, furniture, and plate,[121] nor spare
The gilded chariot, or the tossel'd chair,

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110 *Philosophick stone* philosophers' stone, mythic substance capable of turning base metals into gold or silver
111 *Heav'n's cordial drop* reference to John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester's *A Letter from Artemisia in the Town to Chloe in the Country* (1679); "That cordial drop heaven in our cup has thrown / To make the nauseous draught of life go down" (p. 44–45)
112 *Fribbling* aimless, frivolous
113 *Beau* "man who gives particular, or excessive, attention to dress, mien, and social etiquette; an exquisite, a fop, a dandy" (*OED*)
114 *Clown* countryman, peasant
115 *Templar* barrister who occupies chambers in the Inner or Middle Temple in London
116 *Hibernian* Irish
117 *Rake* fashionable man with a debauched lifestyle
118 *Rout* crowded party
119 *Chairmen* those responsible for carrying and transporting people in sedan chairs
120 *Ruin* bankruptcy, but could also imply the "dishonour of a woman caused by her seduction and subsequent abandonment; degradation resulting from this" (*OED*)
121 *Plate* gold or silver dishes/utensils

For lonely seat[122] she's forc'd to quit the town,
And *Tubbs*[123] conveys the wretched exile down.
Now rumbling o'er the stones of *Tyburn-road*,[124]
Ne'er press'd with a more griev'd or guilty load,
She bids adieu to all the well-known streets,
And envies ev'ry cinder-wench[125] she meets:
And now the dreaded country first appears,
With sighs unfeign'd the dying noise she hears
Of distant coaches fainter by degrees,
Then starts and trembles at the sight of trees.
Silent and sullen, like some captive queen,
She's drawn along, unwilling to be seen,
Until at length appears the ruin'd *hall*
Within the grass-green moat, and ivy'd wall,
The doleful prison where for ever she,
But not, alas! her griefs, must bury'd be.
Her coach the curate[126] and the tradesmen meet,
Great-coated tenants her arrival greet,
And boys with stubble bonfires light the street,
While bells her ears with tongues discordant grate,
Types[127] of the nuptial[128] tyes they celebrate:
But no rejoicings can unbend her brow,
Nor deigns she to return one awkward bow,

[122] *Seat* country house
[123] *Tubbs* someone well-known for supplying people of quality with hired equipages/vehicles (as per *Miscellaneous Pieces, in Verse and Prose* edition, p. 57)
[124] *Tyburn-road* road in London associated with public executions
[125] *Cinder-wench* "female who rakes cinders from among ashes" (*OED*)
[126] *Curate* lowly member of the clergy
[127] *Types* perfect examples
[128] *Nuptial* relating to marriage or weddings

But bounces in,[129] disdaining once to speak,
And wipes the trickling tear from off her cheek.
    Now see her in the sad decline of life,
A peevish mistress, and a sulky wife;
Her nerves unbrac'd, her faded cheek grown pale
With many a real, many a fancy'd ail;
Of cards, admirers, equipage[130] bereft;
Her insolence, and title only left;
Severely humbled to her one-horse chair,[131]
And the low pastimes of a country fair:
Too wretched to endure one lonely day,
Too proud one friendly visit to repay,
Too indolent to read, too criminal to pray.
At length half dead, half mad, and quite confin'd,
Shunning, and shunn'd by all of human kind,
Ev'n robb'd of the last comfort of her life,
Insulting the poor curate's callous wife,
Pride, disappointed pride, now stops her breath,
And with true scorpion rage she stings herself to death.

[129] *Bounces in* chimes in, blurts out, or talks loudly
[130] *Equipage* vehicles
[131] *One-horse chair* small carriage drawn by a single horse

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Mary Leapor

Ryann Farnworth, Simon Fraser University

Mary Leapor was born in 1772 and raised in Brackley, Northamptonshire. At an early age, Leapor joined the workforce as a kitchen maid to Susanna Jennens: a fellow poet who allowed Leapor to use her library and became the first of Leapor's mentors. Leapor wrote extensively even while working, and the daily events and struggles of the working class inspire much of her writing. During this period, people thought it improper for working-class people and women to write, and because of this Leapor's peers often disregarded her work. Nevertheless, Leapor longed for a successful career as a professional writer and began distributing her handwritten work. Through the circulation of her poems, Leapor gained the interest of Bridget Freemantle, a woman of higher status and influence who became Leapor's second mentor. Leapor began collaborating with Freemantle, who through her influence helped Leapor develop a following. During her career, Leapor wrote over a hundred poems as well as a play that was ultimately rejected by critics. By her early twenties, Leapor's desire for success transformed into the need to support her aging father, and she died of measles in 1746, aged twenty-four.

Because Leapor died having never seen the publication of her work, Freemantle created her posthumous career and marketed Leapor as a working-class, downtrodden female author. Freemantle emphasized tragedy to appeal to an audience who did not see the value in women's writing and suggested that Leapor's interest in writing came solely from her need to support her father, rather than her interest in the craft and self-expression. Freemantle's publication of Leapor's work has since been recognized as controversial because it aimed to appeal to the conventions of gender roles during the era, ultimately undermining Leapor's true character (Goulding 85.)

In terms of style, Leapor is recognized for her satire and blend of genres, which she developed by studying the work of Alexander Pope, biblical literature, and gentlemen's magazines. Leapor's subject matter focuses on the politics of gender and class systems to which she was privy. Leapor often wrote in heroic couplets, which are featured here in "Dorinda at her Glass," as a nod to Pope and other popular poets of the Restoration and early eighteenth century. "Dorinda at her Glass" is in iambic pentameter and is the opening poem of Leapor's

posthumous *Poems Upon Several Occasions*, acting as an enlightening introduction to Leapor's literary voice. Throughout the poem, the titular upper-class Dorinda frets over her fleeting youth all the while reminiscing about the vices that youth allowed her to indulge in. Dorinda, although initially threatened by her aging, eventually realizes this to be a reflection of the vices and pleasures she enjoyed throughout her youth. Dorinda finds comfort in her old age and warns her female peers to appreciate the physical consequences of their vices, to accept their aging, and to enter the final stages of their lives with virtue. "Dorinda at her Glass" showcases how Leapor has now become an essential voice in English feminist literary studies. By exploring concepts of beauty and gendered politics from the perspective of a working-class woman during the eighteenth century, Leapor's "Dorinda at her Glass" contributes to a currently resonant conversation.

Further Reading

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Dorinda at Her Glass[132]

DORINDA,[133] once the fairest of the Train,[134]
Toast of the Town, and Triumph of the Plain;[135]
Whose shining Eyes a thousand Hearts alarm'd,[136]
Whose Wit inspired, and whose Follies charm'd:
Who, with Invention, rack'd her careful Breast
To find new Graces to insult the rest,
Now sees her Temples take a swarthy[137] Hue,
And the dark Veins resign their beauteous Blue;
While on her Cheeks the fading Roses die,
And the last Sparkles tremble in her Eye.

Bright Sol had drove the sable[138] Clouds away,
And chear'd the Heavens with a Stream of Day,
The woodland Choir[139] their little Throats prepare,
To chant new Carols to the Morning Air:
In Silence wrap'd, and curtain'd[140] from the Day,
On her sad Pillow lost *Dorinda* lay;
To Mirth a Stranger, and the like to Ease,
No Pleasures charm her, nor no Slumbers please.
For if to close her weary Lids she tries,
Detested Wrinkles swim before her Eyes;

---

[132] *Poems Upon Several Occasions,* printed J. Roberts, 1748, pp. 1–8; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[133] *Dorinda* name meaning "gift of beauty" ("doron" Gr., "linda" Sp.)
[134] *Train* those who attend on the royal court/high society
[135] *Plain* countryside
[136] *Alarm'd* caused excitement
[137] *Swarthy* dark in colour
[138] *Sable* black in colour
[139] *The Woodland Choir* a group of singing birds
[140] *Curtain'd* drawn curtains that encircle a bed

At length the Mourner rais'd her aking[141] Head,
And discontented left her hated Bed.
But sighing shun'd [142]the Relicks[143] of her Pride,
And left the Toilet[144] for the Chimney Side:
Her careless Locks upon her Shoulders lay
Uncurl'd, alas! because they half were Gray;
No magick Baths employ her skilful Hand,
But useless Phials[145] on her Table, stand:

She slights her form, no more by Youth inspir'd,
And loaths that Idol[146] which she once admir'd.
At length all trembling, of herself afraid,
To her lov'd Glass[147] repair'd the weeping Maid,
And with a Sigh addressed the alter'd Shade.[148]
Say, what art thou, that wear'st a gloomy Form,
With low'ring[149] Forehead, like a northern Storm;
Cheeks pale and hollow, as the Face of Woe,
And Lips that with no gay Vermilion[150] glow?
Where is that Form which this false Mirror told
Bloom'd like the Morn, and shou'd for Ages hold;
But now a Spectre in its room appears,
All scar'd with Furrows, and defac'd with Tears;

---

[141] *Aking* aching
[142] *Shun'd* shunned
[143] *Relicks* "something kept as a remembrance, souvenir, or memorial: a historical object relating to a particular person, place, or thing; a memento" (*OED*)
[144] *Toilet* dressing room or area where women groom themselves
[145] *Phials* small glass jars to hold liquids
[146] *Idol* Dorinda's reflection in her dressing room mirror
[147] *Glass* a mirror
[148] *Shade* ghost or a shadow implying death
[149] *Low'ring* a look implying misery or anger
[150] *Vermillion* red or deep orange hue

Say, com'st thou from the Regions of Despair,
To shake my Senses with a meagre Stare?
Some stragg'ling[151] Horror may thy Phantom be,
But surely not the mimick Shape of me.
Ah! yes — the Shade its mourning Visage[152] rears,
Pants when I sigh, and answers to my Tears:
Now who shall bow before this wither'd Shrine,
This Mortal Image, that was late Divine?
What Victim now will praise these faded Eyes,
Once the gay basis for a thousand Lyes?

Deceitful Beauty–false as thou art gay,
And is it thus thy Vot'ries[153] find their Pay;
This the Reward of many careful Years,
Of Morning Labours, and of Noon-day Fears,
The Gloves anointed,[154] and the bathing Hour,
And soft Cosmetick's more prevailing Pow'r;
Yet to thy Worship still the fair Ones run,
And hail thy Temples with the rising Sun;
Still the brown Damsels to thy Altars pay
Sweet-scented Unguents,[155] and the Dews of *May;*
Sempronia[156] smooths her wrinkled Brows with Care,
And *Isabella* curls her grisled Hair:

---

[151] *Stragg'ling* "of hair, plants, a hedge, etc.: Growing irregularly or dispersedly: shooting or spreading too far" (*OED*)
[152] *Visage* the face
[153] *Vot'ries* votaries, people who have dedicated their lives to a religious or spiritual system
[154] *Anointed* to moisturize or to layer with ointment
[155] *Unguents* ointments or lubricants
[156] *Sempronia* a type name for an upper-class female meaning "always the same" ("semper" Lat.)

See poor *Augusta*[157] of her Glass afraid,
Who even trembles at the Name of Maid,[158]
Spreads the fine *Mechlin*[159] on her shaking Head,
While her thin Cheeks disown the mimick Red.
Soft *Silvia*, who no Lover's Breast alarms,
Yet simpers out the Ev'ning of her Charms,
And tho' her cheeks can boast no rosy Dye,
Her gay Brocades[160] allure the gazing Eye.

But hear, my Sisters-—Hear an ancient Maid,
Too long by Folly, and her Arts betray'd;
From these light Trifles turn your partial[161] Eyes,
'Tis sad *Dorinda* prays you to be wise;
And thou C*elinda*,[162] thou must shortly feel
The sad Effect of Time's revolving Wheel;
Thy Spring is past, thy Summer Sun declin'd,
See Autumn next, and Winter stalks behind:
But let not Reason with thy Beauties fly,
Nor place thy Merit in a brilliant Eye;
Tis thine to charm us by sublimer ways,
And make thy Temper, like thy Features, please:
And thou, *Sempronia,* trudge to Morning Pray'r,
Nor trim thy Eye-brows with so nice a Care;

---

[157] *Augusta* a type name meaning "great" or "bold" ("Augustus" Lat.)
[158] *Maid* an older, unmarried woman
[159] *Mechlin* a type of fine lace usually decorated with floral motifs, a popular addition to women's clothing during the period
[160] *Brocades* a type of textile characterized by raised embellishments usually with metallic coloured detailing
[161] *Partial* biased
[162] *Celinda* a type name meaning "heavenly" ("caelum" Lat.) "beauty" ("linda" Sp.)

Dear Nymph[163] believe —'tis true, as you're alive,
Those Temples show the Marks of Fifty-five.[164]
Let *Isabel* unload her aking Head
Of twisted Papers,[165] and of binding Lead;
Let sage *Augusta* now, without a Frown,
Strip those gay Ribbands[166] from her aged Crown;
Change the lac'd[167] Slipper of delicious Hue
For a warm Stocking, and an easy Shoe;
Guard her swell'd Ancles from Rheumatick[168] Pain,
and from her Cheek expunge the guilty Stain.

Wou'd smiling *Silvia*[169] lay that Hoop[170] aside,
'Twou'd show her Prudence,[171] not betray her Pride:
She, like the rest, had once her flagrant[172] Day,
But now she twinkles in a fainter Ray.
Those youthful Airs set off their Mistress now,
Just as the Patch[173] adorns her Autumn Brow:
In vain her Feet in sparkling Laces glow,
Since none regard her Forehead, nor her Toe.
Who would not burst with Laughter, or with Spleen,[174]

---

[163] *Nymph* originating from nymphs of Greek mythology, meaning a beautiful, young female
[164] *Marks of Fifty-Five* fifty-five years in age
[165] *Twisted Papers* paper used to twist hair around worn by women while they slept to curl their hair
[166] *Ribbands* hair ribbons
[167] *Lac'd* laces on slippers were used to add decoration which signaled higher status
[168] *Rheumatick* as in rheumatism or auto-immunity which causes pain in joints
[169] *Sylvia* type name from pastoral poetry meaning "of the woods" (Lat.)
[170] *Hoop* stiffening to hold skirts fashionably wide
[171] *Prudence* wisdom in decision making
[172] *Flagrant* burning with passion
[173] *Patch* a small piece of material used to cover up scars and blemishes: sometimes used as an accessory during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
[174] *Spleen* "violent ill-nature or ill-humour; irritable or peevish temper" (*OED*)

At *Prudo,*[175] once a Beauty, as I ween?[176]
But now her Features wear a dusky Hue,
The little Loves have bid her Eyes adieu :
Yet she pursues the Pleasures of her Prime,
And vain Desires, not subdu'd by Time;
Thrusts in amongst the Frolick and the Gay,
But shuts her Daughter from the Beams of Day:
The Child, she says, is indolent[177] and grave,
And tells the World *Ophelia* can't behave:
But while *Ophelia* is forbid the Room,
Her Mother hobbles in a Rigadoon;[178]
Or to the Sound of melting Musick dies,
And in their Sockets rolls her blinking Eyes;
Or stuns the Audience with her hideous Squal,[179]
While Scorn and Satire whisper through the Hall.

Hear this, ye fair Ones, that survive your Charms,
Nor reach at Folly with your aged Arms;
Thus *Pope*[180] has sung, thus let *Dorinda* sing;
"Virtue, brave Boys,– 'tis Virtue makes a King:"
Why not a Queen? fair Virtue is the same
In the rough Hero, and the smiling Dame:
Dorinda's Soul her Beauties shall pursue,
Tho' late I see her, and embrace her too:

---

[175] *Prudo* a type name meaning prudent or prude
[176] *Ween* expect
[177] *Indolent* an individual who is lazy
[178] *Rigadoon* a dance that was popular in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
[179] *Squal* as in squall, a short-lived burst of sound
[180] *Pope* Alexander Pope, particularly *Essay on Man*, Epistle II

Come, ye blest Graces, that are sure to please,
The Smile of Friendship, and the careless Ease;
The Breast of Candour,[181] the relenting Ear,
The Hand of Bounty, and the Heart sincere:
May these the Twilight of my Days attend,
And may that Ev'ning never want a Friend
To smooth my Passage to the silent Gloom,
And give a Tear to grace the mournful Tomb.

[181]*Candour* "freedom from malice, favourable disposition, kindliness: 'sweetness of temper, kindness'" (*OED*)

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James Merrick

Kerr Pili, Simon Fraser University

An English poet and scholar, James Merrick was born in Reading, Berkshire in 1720. Attending Trinity College Oxford, he obtained his MA in 1742. Lord North, who would become prime minister of Great Britain in 1770, was one of his pupils. Merrick was ordained by the Church of England, and, although he occasionally preached between 1747 and 1749, health issues prevented him from fulfilling any parochial[182] duties. Due to his weak constitution, Merrick "retired in weak health to Reading, where he devoted himself to scholarship and to an ambitious campaign for the compiling of indexes to Greek authors" (McNamee). Merrick is most well-known for translating various Greek works, but he also converted Hebrew psalms to English verse and wrote poetry. Merrick's scholarly and religious background became influential in his various works, including "The Bears and Bees: A Fable," but he deliberately wrote in such a way that made his work more accessible to the masses. Merrick died in 1769 and was buried on the grounds of Caversham Church, Oxfordshire, alongside other members of his family.

"The Bears and Bees: A Fable" is a poetic fable that teaches a moral lesson in which greed leads to conflict and retaliation. It is commonplace in fables to use animals as a stand-in for people, and during Merrick's life fables were commonly exemplary tales in which positive portrayals taught moral lessons. In contrast, "The Bears and Bees: A Fable" is a cautionary tale used to warn of the consequences that come from failing to uphold moral values. This poem is written in simple iambic tetrameter couplets, making it accessible to the majority of readers.

Further Reading

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[182] *Parochial* those of ordained members of the church such as ministers, priests, and bishops

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The Bears and Bees: A Fable[183]

AS two young Bears in wanton[184] mood,
Forth-issuing from a neighbouring wood,
Came where th' industrious Bees had stor'd
In artful cells their luscious hoard;
O'erjoy'd they seiz'd with eager haste
Luxurious on the rich repast.[185]
Alarm'd at this the little crew
About their ears vindictive flew.
The beasts unable to sustain
Th' unequal combat, quit the plain;
Half blind with rage, and mad with pain;
Their native shelter they regain;
There sit, and now discreeter grown,
Too late their rashness they bemoan;[186]
And this by dear experience gain,
That pleasure's ever bought with pain.
So when the gilded[187] baits of vice
Are plac'd before our longing eyes,
With greedy haste we snatch our fill,
And swallow down the latent ill;
But when experience opes[188] our eyes,

[183] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes. By Several Hands.* Vol. 5, R. Dodsley, 1763, p. 221; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*.
[184] *Wanton* undisciplined, ungoverned; unmanageable, rebellious
[185] *Repast* a quantity of food and drink forming or intended for a meal or feast
[186] *Bemoan* to moan, lament, or weep for
[187] *Gilded* something decorated with a thin layer of gold
[188] *Opes* opens

Away the fancy'd pleasure flies.
It flies, but oh! too late we find
It leaves a real sting behind.

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William Shenstone

Sharon Liu, Simon Fraser University

William Shenstone was born in 1714 on the Leasowes, his family estate in the West Midlands. He pursued his education at the Solihull Grammar School near Birmingham and Pembroke College from 1732 to 1736. While he did not graduate with a degree, he anonymously published his first collection, *Poems upon Various Occasions: Written for the Entertainment of the Author, and Printed for the Amusement of a Few Friends, Prejudiced in His Favour*, in 1737, including a short early version of his most renowned poem "The Schoolmistress." As the title of the book suggests, his intended audience was only his family and friends; however, the collection gained some public attention. He also anonymously released *The Judgement of Hercules* in 1741 and a revised version of "The Schoolmistress" in 1742. The latter was inspired by his first educational experience at a dame school (a small private school run by women for young children who could not work yet) and his teacher there, Sarah Lloyd.

In 1745, Shenstone returned to the Leasowes to take up permanent residence. Because his father had left him a fortune, he was able to experiment with landscape gardening and became one of the first practitioners in the field as he developed his own estate. We see Shenstone's attraction toward nature throughout his poems, drawings, and landscape gardening projects. In 1748, the extended version of "The Schoolmistress" was featured in the first volume of the second edition of Robert Dodsley's *Collection of Poems*. He later became Dodsley's collaborator in choosing poems for collections.

Shenstone died at the age of forty-nine in 1763. In 1764, Dodsley edited and published Shenstone's various elegies, odes, songs, ballads, and a considerable amount of poetry and prose in two volumes called *The Works in Verse and Prose*. Shenstone's reputation has diminished since the nineteenth century, so information about him and his works is harder to obtain today.

This poem, "Ode to Indolence," is written in quatrains of iambic tetrameter rhymed ABAB, making it appear to be a hymn that unexpectedly supports the notion of vice because the speaker endorses laziness. Aware of potential condemnation from his community, the speaker personifies and asks one of the Seven Deadly Sins, Sloth, to give him "peace." The legendary bird of paradise, that must keep flying because it has no feet, might be admirable in its hard work

to the speaker's community. However, the speaker feels sympathy for the bird by describing it as "poor" from its "ceaseless fatigues" and unable to "find the resting place [it] loves." We can see Shenstone's desire to retreat from the world and perhaps also his interest in landscape gardening in the speaker's longing for a "rural bow'r."

Further Reading

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Ode to Indolence[189]

AH! why for ever on the wing[190]
Persists my weary'd soul to roam?
Why, ever cheated, strives to bring
Or[191] pleasure or contentment home?

Thus the poor bird,[192] that draws his name
From paradise's honour'd groves,
Ceaseless fatigues his little frame;
Nor finds the resting place he loves.

Lo! on the rural mossy bed
My limbs with careless ease reclin'd;
Ah, gentle Sloth![193] indulgent spread
The same soft bandage o'er my mind.

For why should lingering thought invade,
Yet every worldly prospect cloy?[194]
Lend me, soft Sloth, thy friendly aid,
And give me peace, debarr'd of joy.[195]

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[189] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes. By Several Hands,* Vol. V, ed. R. and J. Dodsley, 1763, pp. 19-20; *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*
[190] *On the wing* flying
[191] *Or* instead of using "either… or," the common practice was to use "or… or"
[192] *Bird* the bird of paradise, it legendarily "had no feet and lived only in the air" (*OED*)
[193] *Sloth* laziness, one of the Deadly Sins
[194] *Cloy* causing disgust through abundance
[195] *Give me peace, debarr'd of joy* the speaker asks Sloth to give him peace since he is unable to be happy

Lov'st thou[196] yon[197] calm and silent flood,
That never ebbs, that never flows;
Protected by the circling[198] wood
From each tempestuous wind that blows?

An altar on its bank shall rise,
Where oft[199] thy votary[200] shall be found;
What time[201] pale Autumn lulls[202] the skies,
And sickening verdure[203] fades around.

Ye busy race, ye factious[204] train,[205]
That haunt Ambition's guilty shrine;
No more perplex the world in vain,
But offer here your vows with mine.

And thou, puissant[206] Queen! be kind:
If e'er I shar'd thy balmy[207] pow'r;
If e'er I sway'd my active mind,
To weave for Thee the rural bow'r;

Dissolve in sleep each anxious care;

---

196 *Lov'st thou* do you love?
197 *Yon* yonder, over there
198 *Circling* surrounding
199 *Oft* often
200 *Votary* devoted follower
201 *What time* whenever
202 *Lull* put to sleep
203 *Verdure* vegetation
204 *Factious* dissenting
205 *Train* group of followers
206 *Puissant* powerful and influential
207 *Balmy* soothing

Each unavailing sigh remove;
And only let me wake to share
The sweets of Friendship and of Love.

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Richard Shepherd

Judy Tran, Simon Fraser University

Richard Shepherd was born to Henry and Suzanna Shepherd and was baptized in 1732. Shepherd was well educated as he obtained both a Bachelor's and Master's of Arts, as well as a Bachelor's and Doctorate of Divinity. At one point, he had considered joining the army but ultimately decided to join the church. After becoming ordained, Shepherd was a chaplain to Bishop Thomas Thurlow, and it may have been in this period he wrote "Ode on Envy." Shepherd became a fellow of the Royal Society in May of 1781 and later became a lecturer at Oxford in 1788.

Shepherd published some poetic works separately and in a collection with others' work printed by G. Pearch before collecting them in *Miscellanies in Two Volumes* (1775). Considered "not unsuccessful" (Courtney & Major), he continued to work within the Church of England while publishing theology until his passing in 1809. Due to his mild popularity during his life, Shepherd is now an obscure poet.

"Ode on Envy" was originally published in 1770 in the second edition of *A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes by Several Hands*, volume one. In 1776, Shepherd published *Miscellanies* which includes a revised version of the poem, with changes in lines 29 to 33. A Pindaric ode, "Ode on Envy" contains a mix of iambic trimeter, tetrameter, and pentameter lines and has an irregular rhyme scheme. Shepherd would have studied Envy as one of the Seven Deadly Sins while in divinity college, and classical history and mythology as part of his university training. The poem makes references to mythological figures associated with envy such as Medusa, as well as real-life people including Francis Bacon, Edward Hyde, and Thomas Osborne, each of whom had been the victim of envy during his life.

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Reference

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Ode On Envy[208]

I.

BENEATH yon chain of barren rocks,
Where niggard[209] Nature ne'er unlocks
One hoard of chearful green;
The brown yew[210] forms a gloomy shade,
The blasted oak[211] erects its head,
A dreary wasteful scene.
O haste, O fly th' accursed[212] cell,
Where Envy's fiendly faction[213] dwell!
Else shall her glance, malignant[214] cast,
The fairest shoots[215] of Merit blast:
He risks his ease, who ventures nigh
The baleful[216] witchcraft of her eye.

II.

Ev'n[217] now from her infernal dark abyss,
At Merit's name she lifts her head,
At Merit's name prepar'd to shed

---

[208] first published in 1770 by G. Pearch in the second edition, volume one, *of A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes by Several Hands*, pp. 292–294; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[209] *Niggard* miserly
[210] *Yew* tree associated with churchyards and the dead
[211] *Blasted oak* oaks were symbolic of strength and fertility, so one hit by lightning has an opposite connotation
[212] *Accursed* cursed
[213] *Faction* small group, can be a political group
[214] *Malignant* dark, almost vengeful
[215] *Shoots* young plants
[216] *Baleful* malicious
[217] *Ev'n* even

Their influence all her snaky tresses[218] hiss.
Ev'n now the languid[219] mind opprest,
Droops under horrors damp and chill,
Whilst heaves the sigh from the distended breast,
Slow winds the tide of life along each azure[220] rill.
Arise, my Muse, the chorded shell[221] prepare,
Awake the drowsy string;
For thou canst lull the gathering storms of Care,
Thou canst disarm dire Envy of her sting,
And smooth the haggard brow of fell Despair.

III.

Ah strange reverse of honest joys!
The pale-ey'd fiend elate
Smiles, if Adversity annoys
Her neighbour's hapless state.[222]
Yet Spleen oppressive marrs her chear,
And signs the bitter day:
For Envy drops the scalding tear,
When all the world is gay.
The tenant of some narrow mind,
She bids Suspicion launch the dart;
Whilst all her secret powers combin'd

[218] *Snaky tresses* locks of hair, reference to Medusa
[219] *Languid* weak, almost fading
[220] *Azure* blue
[221] *Chorded Shell* lyre, a stringed instrument associated with poetry
[222] *State* in the 1775 edition, lines 29–33 read:"Or lowly cot, of dome of state. / The cloud withdrawn, if fortune chear / The house of woe with kindlier ray; / Malignant Envy drops the tear, / To see the scene so gay."

Excite the poignant smart.[223]
Slow halts Ill-nature in the rear,
That poisons as she probes the wound,
And Rumour's noisome[224] breath is near,
To waft the poison round.

I . 1.[225]

Say, Theron,[226] yet shall torpid[227] Fear
Obstruct thy virtue's high career,
Shall Envy's menace wrest
Thy merit's well-directed aim,
And quench the noble thirst of fame
That warms thy youthful breast?
O no! pursue the glorious road
A Bacon, Hide, and Osborne[228] trod:
Her snaky head tho' Envy rear,
Fame's eagle wing thy name shall bear
O'er[229] black Oblivion's frozen sea,
Rank'd with great chiefs of old in immortality.

---

[223] *Poignant Smart* sharp pain
[224] *Noisome* offensive, obnoxious
[225] Not IV, as we might expect
[226] *Theron* possibly Theron of Acragas, a Greek historical tyrant
[227] *Torpid* weak and fatigued
[228] *Bacon, Hide, and Osborne* Francis Bacon, Edward Hyde, and Thomas Osborne
[229] *O'er* over

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Christopher Smart

Jamethiel Tentchoff, Simon Fraser University

Christopher Smart grew up sickly, having been born prematurely in 1722. His weak constitution turned him towards poetry and literature instead of sports. When Smart was eleven, his father died, forcing his mother to sell the main estate. Afterwards, Smart's main monetary benefactor became Henrietta, the Duchess of Cleveland, who funded his education. While attending university, Smart accrued quite a bit of debt. Eventually his debt, habit of praying in public, propensity towards illness, poor mental health, and dislike of clean underwear landed him in a private mental asylum.

While imprisoned, Smart kept a daily poetry log titled *Jubilate Agno* (or *Rejoice in the Lamb.*) The entries cover topics from Smart's daily life to his view of the Christian concept of the Divine. *Jubilate Agno* can be split into two opposing but complementary segments: the parts that begin with "Let," and the parts that begin with "For." The "Let" verses often correlate to the "For" verses; however, parts of the manuscript are missing. The most famous segment of *Jubilate Agno* — and of Christopher Smart's works in general — is an unpaired "For" piece about his cat, Jeoffry.

"My Cat Jeoffry," as the segment is frequently called, is exactly what it sounds like. The poem is about the heavenly virtues of his cat, entwining Smart's love of animals with his adoration of God. Each line showcases the poet's reverence for both his feline companion and the God in which he believed. While the fragment can feel context-less without the larger scope of the original journal, it endures as his most renowned poem.

Conversely, Smart's "Ode Against Ill-Nature" is perhaps one of the least known of his works. It pre-dates Smart's time in the asylum and is part of a pair, sharing this feature with the overall form of *Jubilate Agno,* demonstrating Smart's love of structure and organization. Originally published in 1752 in Smart's *Poems on Several Occasions,* "Ode Against Ill-Nature" is placed after its opposite, the "Ode on Good-Nature." Both works also sometimes lose the ode part of their title. While the latter poem is kept in simple verses of four lines with a standard rhyme scheme of AABB, the former is completely irregular, with a malleable rhyme scheme and alternating number of lines per verse. As the names suggest, the content within the two poems tackles the same theme from opposing sides; since

the Horatian "Ode on Good-Nature" focuses on what Smart found heavenly and virtuous, the Pindaric "Ode Against Ill-Nature" deals with the vices of humanity, especially in regard to sexuality. Both poems do delve into their opposing subjects, but their subjects are mostly separate.

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Ode Against Ill-Nature[230]

I.

OFFSPRING of Folly[231] and of Pride,[232]
To all that's odious, all that's base allied;
Nurs'd up[233] by Vice, by Pravity[234] misled,
By pedant[235] Affectation[236] taught and bred:
Away, thou hideous hell-born spright,[237]
Go, with thy looks of dark design,
Sullen, sour, and saturnine;[238]
Fly to some gloomy shade, nor blot the goodly light.
Thy planet was remote[239] when I was born;
'Twas Mercury that rul'd my natal morn,
What time the sun exerts his genial ray,
And ripens for enjoyment every growing day;
When to exist is but to love and sing,
And sprightly Aries[240] smiles upon the spring.

II.

There in yon[241] lonesome heath,[242]

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230 *Poems on Several Occasions,* 1752, pp. 4–6; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
231 *Folly* foolishness
232 *Pride* Folly, Pride, Vice, and other personified concepts are only capitalized in *A Collection of Poems by Several Hands, ed. G. Pearch from 1775, and I have added those capitals here*
233 *Nur'sd up* breastfed, raised
234 *Pravity* depravity
235 *Pedant* a person obsessively concerned with details
236 *Affectation* a constructed, artificial way of speech or manner
237 *Spright* sprite, a type of fairy or elf
238 *Saturnine* gloomy, dark
239 *Thy planet was remote* Saturn
240 *Aries* Western Zodiac sign for April, represented by the ram; sheep bear young in the spring
241 *Yon* yonder, over there
242 *Heath* flat land with acidic, infertile soil and low-growing plant life

Which Flora, or Sylvanus[243] never knew,
  Where never vegetable drank the dew,
Or beast, or fowl attempts to breathe;
  Where Nature's pencil has no colours laid;
But all is blank, and universal shade;
  Contrast to figure, motion, life and light,
There may'st thou vent thy spight,[244]
  For ever cursing, and for ever curs'd,
Of all th' infernal crew the worst;
  The worst in genius, measure[245]and degree;
For envy, hatred, malice, are but parts of thee.

III.

Or would'st thou change the scene, and quit thy den,
  Behold the heaven-deserted fen,[246]
Where spleen,[247] by vapours dense begot and bred,
  Hardness of heart, and heaviness of head,
Have rais'd their darksome walls, and plac'd their thorny bed;
  There may'st thou all thy bitterness unload,
There may'st thou croak, in concert with the toad,
  With thee the hollow howling winds shall join,[248]
Nor shall the bittern her base throat deny,
  The querulous frogs shall mix their dirge[249] with thine,
Th' ear piercing hern,[250] and plover screaming high,

---

[243] *Flora and Sylvanus* Roman deities of nature and the Spring
[244] *Spight* spite
[245] *Measure* amount or intensity
[246] *Fen* bio-diverse, peat-laden wetlands
[247] *Spleen* an organ associated with melancholy, one of the four humours
[248] *Join* pronounced as "jine," rhyming with "thine"
[249] *Dirge* a mournful lament, often sung
[250] *Hern* heron

While million humming gnats fit oestrum[251] shall supply.

IV.

Away — away — behold an hideous band,
An herd of all thy minions are at hand:
Suspicion first with jealous caution stalks,
And ever looks around her as she walks,
With bibulous[252] ear imperfect sounds to catch,
And prompt to listen at her neighbour's latch.
Next Scandal's meagre shade,
Foe to the virgins, and the Poet's fame,
A wither'd, time-deflower'd[253] old maid,
That ne'er enjoy'd Love's ever sacred flame.
Hypocrisy succeeds with saint-like look,
And elevates her hands, and plods upon her book.
Next comes illiberal scrambling[254] Avarice,
Then Vanity and Affectation nice —
See, she salutes her shadow with a bow,
As in short Gallic[255] trips she minces[256] by,
Starting Antipathy[257] is in her eye,
And squeamishly she knits her scornful brow.
To thee, Ill-nature, all the numerous group
With lowly reverence stoop —
They wait thy call, and mourn thy long delay,

---

[251] *Oestrum* a period of heat, or sexual readiness, in mammals
[252] *Bibulous* thirsty, drinking
[253] *Deflower'd* having lost one's virginity
[254] *Scrambling* to attempt to move upwards by accumulating goods
[255] *Gallic* of Gaul, here, to dance or move in a French style
[256] *Minces* to walk in small, short steps
[257] *Antipathy* a strong feeling of dislike

Away — thou art infectious — haste away.

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William Whitehead

Cullen Hughes, Simon Fraser University

William Whitehead was an English poet and playwright born in Cambridge, England in 1715. Whitehead's literary talents were first discovered at the age of fourteen when he began attending Winchester College. In 1733, Charles Mordaunt, Earl of Peterborough inspected the college and offered ten prizes for verses composed on a topic chosen by popular poet Alexander Pope. The topic Pope picked was "Peterborough," and Whitehead was awarded one of the prizes.

In 1735, Whitehead was granted admission to Clare Hall at Cambridge University. Despite being admitted with a scholarship, Whitehead enrolled with the lowly status of a sizar (a term originally used to describe students who paid for their schooling by serving wealthier students). Although there is no evidence that Whitehead was required to serve his more affluent peers, he did spend his time developing relationships with those of a superior social rank.

While attending Cambridge, Whitehead's poems began to circulate beyond his immediate group of acquaintances. His poems were mildly satirical, modest in tone, limited in scope, and were written primarily in heroic couplets. Many were also significantly influenced by the work of Alexander Pope.

As Whitehead continued to gain attention for his plays and poems, a vacancy occurred for the Poet Laureate position with the passing of Colley Cibber in 1757. After his contemporary Thomas Gray quickly declined the offer and expressed significant contempt towards the role, Whitehead was offered the position and accepted it. Although the position does not entail specific duties, the Poet Laureate is expected to write verses for significant occasions such as royal birthdays.

Earlier laureates had often produced poetry that served as a mouthpiece for the ascendant party and extolled the king's virtues; however, Whitehead's works had always shown loyalty to the country rather than persons. Unfortunately, Whitehead's verse reflects few of the significant social changes that were happening around him, despite serving during mid-eighteenth-century turbulence (a time that saw the Seven Years' War, the American Revolution, and the reign of the controversial kings George II and George III). As a result, his poems as Laureate made an inconsequential impression on English literary history. Nevertheless, Whitehead was a man of courtliness and modesty and knew well

that he was no genius. Instead, he developed capable and sensible poetry, which, for his time, made him the ideal Poet Laureate.

Whitehead's "The Youth and the Philosopher," a fable written in iambic tetrameter, showcases the effects of vice on a Grecian youth. Despite being a promising student of the renowned philosopher Plato, the youth chooses to abandon his teachings to pursue a career in chariot racing. The poem may be interpreted as the youth pursuing his dreams; however, when seen through his teacher's eyes, his vice of racing has caused him to squander his academic talents, which could have led him to longer-lasting and more worthwhile fame.

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The Youth and the Philosopher[258]

A Grecian Youth,[259] of talents rare,
Whom Plato's philosophick[260] care
Had form'd for virtue's nobler view,
By precept[261] and example too,
Wou'd often boast his matchless skill,
To curb the steed[262] and guide the wheel.
And as he pass'd the gazing throng,[263]
With graceful ease, and smack'd the thong,[264]
The ideot[265] wonder they express'd
Was praise and transport[266] to his breast.
At length quite vain, he needs would shew[267]
His master what his art could do;
And bade[268] his slaves the chariot lead
To Academus'[269] sacred shade.
The trembling grove confess'd its fright,

---

[258] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes. By Several Hands.* Vol. II, Dodsley, 1763, pp. 259–260; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*

[259] *Grecian Youth* a young man born in Greece during the Ancient, or Archaic, period (700–480 B.C.)

[260] *Philosophick* characteristic of or resembling a philosopher; wise, calm, stoical

[261] *Precept* a general rule intended to regulate behavior or thought

[262] *Curb the steed* to restrain or keep a horse in check

[263] *Throng* a large, densely packed crowd of people or animals

[264] *Thong* rein

[265] *Ideot* idiotic

[266] *Transport* ecstasy

[267] *Needs would shew* had to show

[268] *Bade* to command someone to do something

[269] *Academus* a school founded by Plato in Athens, c. 387 BC, source of the word "academic"

The wood-nymphs[270] startled at the sight,
The Muses[271] drop the learned lyre,[272]
And to their inmost shades retire!
Howe'er, the youth with forward air,
Bows to the sage,[273] and mounts the car,[274]
The lash resounds, the coursers[275] spring,
The chariot marks the rolling ring,[276]
And gath'ring crowds with eager eyes,
And shouts, pursue him as he flies.
Triumphant to the goal return'd,
With nobler thirst his bosom burn'd;
And now along th' indented plain,
The self-same[277] track he marks again,
Pursues with care the nice design,
Nor ever deviates from the line.
Amazement seiz'd the circling crowd;
The youths with emulation[278] glow'd;
Ev'n bearded sages hail'd the boy,
And all, but Plato, gaz'd with joy.
For he, deep-judging sage, beheld
With pain the triumphs of the field:

---

[270] *Wood-nymphs* minor female forest deities in ancient Greek folklore
[271] *Muses* the nine daughters of Mnemosyne and Zeus who each preside over an art or science
[272] *Lyre* a stringed instrument known for its use in ancient Greece
[273] *Sage* a person with profound wisdom
[274] *Car* chariot
[275] *Coursers* swift or spirited horses
[276] *Marks the rolling ring* inscribes wheel tracks in the dirt around the track
[277] *Self-same* identical: the second circuit's wheel tracks are exactly on top of the first's
[278] *Emulation* an effort to match or exceed a previously accomplished ambition or endeavor

And when the charioteer[279] drew nigh,[280]
And, flush'd with hope, had caught his eye,
Alas! unhappy youth, he cry'd,
Expect no praise from me, (and sigh'd)
With indignation[281] I survey
Such skill and judgment thrown away.
The time profusely squander'd[282] there,
On vulgar[283] arts beneath thy care,
If well employ'd, at less expence,
Had taught thee honour, virtue, sense,
And rais'd thee from a coachman's fate
To govern men, and guide the state.

[279] *Charioteer* the driver of a chariot
[280] *Nigh* near
[281] *Indignation* anger or annoyance evoked from unfair treatment
[282] *Squandered* wasted in a reckless or foolish manner
[283] *Vulgar* lacking sophistication or good taste, unrefined, low in class

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Constantine Barber

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Constantine Barber was born in 1713 in Dublin and died in 1783. He was the eldest son of the poet Mary Barber and the somewhat absent Jonathan Barber. Mary took care of the family and was able to support her children Constantine, Rupert, Myra, and Lucius financially through composing poetry.

Constantine Barber was not a renowned poet in the eighteenth century, unlike his mother. He focused on an academic career and became a physician and professor. For this reason, there is a lack of critical study of Barber's work. The five poems he published all come from his mother's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1736): "A Letter Sent to Mrs. Barber, at Tunbridge-Wells," "To Mrs. Frances-Arabella Kelly, with a Present of Fruit," "Verses Ty'd about a Fawn's Neck, which was Presented to a Very Young Lady, Call'd by her Friends the Ivory Maid," "To Mrs. Barber. New-Year's-Day, 1733," and the poem below, "To the Right Honourable the Lady Elizabeth Boyle, Daughter to the Right Honourable John Earl of Orrery, on her Birth-Day, May 7, 1733."

This is in iambic pentameter heroic couplets and dedicates itself to the two-year-old Elizabeth Boyle on her birthday. At the time of the poem, Henrietta Boyle, the Countess of Orrery, had passed away almost a year before, and the Earl would still be grieving the death of his wife. Barber's speaker wishes for the child to mature like her mother, find an eligible gentleman in time, and have a longer marriage than her parents. Barber's mother Mary Barber dedicated the book in which this poem is published to John Boyle, Earl of Orrery, so it is appropriate for her son to offer Boyle indirect praise through a poem to his baby daughter.

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To the Right Honourable the Lady Elizabeth Boyle, Daughter to the Right Honourable John Earl of Orrery, on her Birth-Day, May 7, 1733[284]

May each new Year some new Perfection give,[285]
Till all the Mother in the Daughter[286] live!
May'st Thou her Virtues to the World restore!
And be what Henrietta[287] was before!
And when revolving Years[288] mature thy Charms,[289]
When Pride of Conquest[290] thy fair Bosom warms,
May some great Youth,[291] for ev'ry Grace renown'd,[9]
With Taste and Science[10] bless'd, by Virtue crown'd;
By Virtue guarded from Ambition's Wiles,[11]
Superior both to Fortune's Frowns and Smiles;[12]
Who wears the Honours of a glorious Name,
Yet to Distinction bears a nobler Claim;

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[284] Mary Barber, *Poems on Several Occasions*, C. Rivington, 1734, pp. 250–251; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[285] *May each new Year some new Perfection give* may you increase in merit and virtue every year as you mature
[286] *Mother in the Daughter* embodying the virtues of the mother
[287] *Henrietta* Countess of Orrery, mother of Lady Elizabeth Boyle and first wife of John Boyle, 5th Earl of Cork and Orrery, died in 1732
[288] *revolving Years* cycling seasons
[289] *Charms* attractive traits
[290] *Pride of Conquest* feeling proud of having young men in love with you
[291] *Youth* a young man
[9] *Grace renown'd* known to be graceful/talented in every aspect of upper-class life
[10] *Taste and Science* someone with good taste in the arts and possessing great knowledge in many fields
[11] *Ambition's Wiles* the temptation to gain achievement through dishonest means
[12] *Superior both to Fortune's Frowns and Smiles* being unchanged by both failure and success

Like a new Star, in native Lustre bright,[13]
That boasts no Radiance from reflected Light:[14]
Allow'd[292] the rising Genius of his Age;
By ev'ry Excellence thy Heart engage;[16]
Like Him[17]who bless'd thy Mother's Nuptial State;[18]
But O! may Heav'n give Thine a longer Date.[19]

[13] *Like a new Star, in native Lustre bright* well-known to everyone
[14] *That boasts no Radiance from reflected Light* not dependent on someone else for reputation
[292] *Allow'd* acknowledged, declared, and praised as one of the most intelligent people of his time
[16] *By ev'ry Excellence thy Heart engage* win your love through his superior character
[17] *Him* John Boyle (1707-1762), 5th Earl of Cork and Orrery
[18] *Nuptial State* marriage
[19] *Longer Date* a wish that Elizabeth's marriage will not be cut off by death as her mother's was

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Mary Barber

Kyla Dowling, Simon Fraser University

Mary Barber (1685-1755) was born in Dublin, Ireland to unknown parents and much of her childhood is unknown. She married Rupert Barber, a woollen-draper, in 1705 and had nine children with him. Four survived to adulthood. She claimed that her work was born out of a desire to educate her children and support her family financially. She often wrote on behalf of her children in order to help them succeed in life, such as "An Apology Written for my Son to the Reverend Mr. Sampson, Who had Invited Some Friends to Celebrate Lord Carteret's Birth-Day at Mount Carteret near Dublin, and Desir'd my Son to Write on that Occasion," which involved her taking on her son's responsibilities in order to further his chances for success.

"The Widow Gordon's Petition to the Right Hon. The Lady Carteret," also known as "The Widow's Address" (1725) shows Barber's concern not just with her children but with social justice. This poem was a commentary on the socioeconomic struggles of women, particularly widowed women, who struggled to support their children while facing lack of care from the government. Another early publication of hers with a moral involving the rich being generous to the poor is *A Tale, Being an Addition to Mr. Gay's Fables* in 1728.

One of Barber's chief literary supporters was Anglo-Irish poet Jonathan Swift. He placed her in his "Triumfeminate," a group of three female Irish writers under his patronage who helped each other with their poetry; however, the other writers, Constantia Grierson and Elizabeth Scian, allegedly considered her a poorer writer than they were and thought their edits vastly improved Barber's work. Barber was a rare case of a writer who allowed her work to be heavily edited as her end goal was to financially support her family—not maintain artistic integrity. In 1731 someone sent a letter supposedly from Swift praising Barber to Queen Caroline, but Swift denied it and suspicion for the forgery fell on Barber.

Barber wrote over one hundred poems, seventy-six of which were letters or addresses, mostly on behalf of her children or regarding her children's education. The majority of her work was published in *Poems on Several Occasions* in 1734, by subscription. This form of publishing, which involved people paying in advance and getting their name on a list in the text, was the main form of publishing that was accessible to her as someone lower-class and unestablished.

Her poetry collection was prefaced with a letter from Swift, whose glowing review of her work helped her to gain an audience. One of the poems in *Poems on Several Occasions* is "A Letter to a Friend, on Occasion of some Libels written against Him," a verse epistle in iambic tetrameter couplets. In it, she advises a friend that, just as people envious of someone's wealth will inadvertently make him richer by trying to ruin his credit, so the people who have been libeling the friend will only increase the friend's fame in the end.

Barber suffered from a severe case of gout that first afflicted her in 1732 and prevented her from returning to Ireland from England when she initially wished to. The amount of writing she produced subsided over the years as she remained ill. Her last poem was written in 1741; however, in 1755, a large swath of her poetry was published in Colman and Thornton's *Poems by Eminent Ladies*. She passed away later that same year.

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A Letter to a Friend, on Occasion of some Libels written against Him[293]

AS in some wealthy, trading Town,[294]
Where Riches raise to sure Renown,[295]
The Man, with ample Sums in Store,
More than enough, yet wanting more,
Bent on Abundance, first secures
His Rails,[296] his Windows, and his Doors,
With many a Chain, and Bolt, and Pin.
To keep Rogues[297] out, and Riches in;
Ranges[298] his Iron Chests in View,
And paints his Window Bars with Blue;[299]
Discounts your Notes,[300] receives your Rents,
A Banker now, to all Intents.

SUPPOSE his more successful Labours
Should raise him high above his Neighbours:
As sure, as if *Apollo*[301] said it,
They'll all combine to blast his Credit:
But if, in solid Wealth secure,
Their vain Assaults he can endure;

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[293] *Poems on Several Occasions*, 1734, pp. 68–69; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[294] *Some wealthy, trading town* possibly Dublin, Ireland
[295] *Renown* fame, honour
[296] *Rails* railings outside the home
[297] *Rogues* lawbreakers
[298] *Ranges* arranges
[299] *Paints his window bars with blue* paint was used to seal and hide the exposed ends of window bars
[300] *Notes* banknotes
[301] *Apollo* Greek god of the sun, prophecy, poetry, and more

Their Malice but augments[302] his Gain,
And swells the Store it meant to drain.

THE Case in ev'ry Point's the same,
In Funds of Wealth, and Funds of Fame:
Tho' you're secur'd by ev'ry Fence
Of solid Worth, and Wit, and Sense;
In vain are all your utmost Pains,
Your Virtue's Bars, and Wisdom's Chains;
Nor Worth, nor Wit, nor Sense, combin'd,
Can bar the Malice of the Mind.

THE firmest, and the fairest Fame
Is ever Envy's surest Aim:
But if it stand her Rage, unmov'd,
Like Gold, in fiery Furnace prov'd;
Unbiass'd Truth, your Virtue's Friend,
Will more exalt you in the End.

[302] *Augments* increases

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Mary Barber

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Mary Barber (1685-1755) was an Irish housewife-turned-poet. She married Rupert Barber in Dublin and lived there from 1705 to 1724. She had nine children and began writing poetry to educate them. Barber's poems embody her social conscience. In 1724 she gained recognition for a collection of poems she sent to Lord and Lady Carteret, and this collection included a poem pleading the case of an army officer's widow and her blind son in need of charity. Her poetry also attracted the attention of Jonathan Swift, one of the foremost satirists in the English language. Swiftly famously became an outspoken advocate of her work, complimenting her poetic genius and manners to many of his contemporaries. As a result of their professional relationship, Barber was included in Swift's Triumfeminate.[303]

Barber was no stranger to controversy. In 1731, a work attributed to Swift titled *Three Letters to the Queen on the Distresses of Ireland* was published, applauding Barber as the greatest female poet of all time. Swift, however, swiftly denied any involvement in writing those letters. Suspicions against Barber for forging Swift's signature arose and never disappeared. Still, Swift eventually forgave her, even leaving her a medal he received from Queen Anne and Prince George in his will. Barber was caught in another mysterious event in 1734, when she was arrested for allegedly importing into England a collection of Swift's controversial political poems attacking Prime Minister Horace Walpole, but the matter was quickly dropped. After her release, Barber moved to live in Bath with her son Rupert.

In 1734 Barber's *Poems on Several Occasions* was published with over nine hundred subscribers, a large percentage of whom were aristocrats. Notable inclusions were Swift, who subscribed for ten copies, Lord and Lady Carteret, and the Earl of Orrery, to whom she dedicated the collection. It was an unprecedented publication with an equally unprecedented number of subscribers, especially considering Barber's gender and commoner background. However, Barber was eventually forced to retire from the public eye after her battle with gout worsened. During her absence, she contributed writings, usually about gout,

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[303] *Triumfeminate* Jonathan Swift's nickname for a group of notable female Irish poets including Constantia Grierson, Mary Sican, and Mary Barber

to publications such as the *Gentleman's Magazine*, but they received little attention and fanfare. Unfortunately, due to a subscription model in which subscribers only had to pay after the publication of the collection, subscribers who either refused to pay or could not be reached played a role in forcing Barber to move back to Ireland in 1736 and live in poverty.

Included in Barber's 1734 collection, "To the Rt. Hon. Charlotte Lady Conway, on Her Resolving to Leave Bath" is one of many verse epistles Barber presumably wrote to friends and (potential) patrons and later published. The poem is in very typical iambic pentameter couplets and praises Lady Conway extravagantly.

Mary Barber was given prominent representation in Colman and Thornton's 1755 *Poems by Eminent Ladies* for her contributions and died the same year. Her final resting place is unknown.

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To the Rt. Hon. Charlotte Lady Conway, On Her Resolving to Leave Bath[304]

O Charlotte,[305] truly pious, early wise!
The Pleasures sought by others, you despise:
Nor Bath,[306] nor Bath's Allurements[307] thee detain.
Unmov'd, you quit[308] them to the Gay[309] and Vain.[310]
But tho' nor Health, nor Pleasure will prevail.
The Happiness you give, should turn the Scale.[311]
O stay, and teach the Virtues of thy Breast:
Thousands by thy Example may be blest:
A Mind so humble, and so truly great,[312]
So fitted to oblige[313] in ev'ry State.[314]
A Manner, so engaging and discrete,[315]
A Manner, so inimitably[316] sweet!
These, and thy thousand Charms, who can express?
Seymour,[317] how vast a Treasure you possess!

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[304] *Poems on Several Occasions,* printed by Rivington, 1735, p. 195; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[305] *Charlotte* third wife of Francis Seymour-Conway, 1st Baron Conway of Killultagh
[306] *Bath* a city in the west of England, known for its hot springs
[307] *Bath's Allurements* Bath was famous for its extravagance: parades, assembly rooms, pleasure gardens, and dancing
[308] *Quit* relinquish or leave
[309] *Gay* lively, light-hearted, carefree
[310] *Vain* foolish, thoughtless
[311] *Turn the Scale* your ability to give happiness to your friends should outweigh your dislike of the town's pleasures
[312] *Great* admirable
[313] *Oblige* "to create a debt of gratitude" (*OED*)
[314] *State* people of every class
[315] *Discrete* individually distinct; possibly also "discreet," wise in a way that avoids embarrassment
[316] *Inimitably* in a way that cannot be imitated
[317] *Seymour* her husband

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Elizabeth Carter

Kevin McDonough, Simon Fraser University

Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806) was born in Deal, Kent, the daughter of the town's perpetual curate.[318] Because of her father's position in the church, Carter received more education than was common for women of her time. Carter learned both Latin and Greek, the latter of which greatly influenced her poetic works. At a time when academia was male-dominated and hostile towards women, Carter was an outlier among her peers: she was well regarded among male academic circles some of whom, because of her intellect and respectability, considered her to match the ideal form of womanhood. Later in life, she joined the Blue Stockings Society, a circle of female academics who strove to further education for women. However, despite her unique position as a well-respected female academic, Carter openly abhorred early feminists such as Mary Wollstonecraft for what were then radical opinions. Carter gained enough of a reputation to be personally introduced to the queen of England in 1791 and was visited by several other members of the royal family in her old age.

"Ode to Wisdom" reflects Carter's personal connection to ancient Greece and is an early example of a resurgence of interest in ancient Greek culture during the long eighteenth century in Britain. The poem is a Horatian ode with a pattern of two lines in iambic tetrameter followed by one line of iambic trimeter. The Horatian ode is stylistically inspired by ancient Greek drama and is contemplative in tone, featuring a steady and repeated metrical pattern, rhyme scheme, and stanzaic form.

The poem was briefly the centre of controversy when English writer Samuel Richardson included it in his novel *Clarissa* without crediting Carter, who responded with a strongly worded letter expressing her displeasure. Although Richardson apologized and later received Carter's blessing to use her work, the damage had already been done. "Ode to Wisdom," one of Carter's most famous works, is now mainly ascribed to Richardson.

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[318] *Perpetual Curate* a low-ranking priest of the Church of England

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Ode to Wisdom[319]

THE solitary bird of night[320]
Thro' the thick shades now wings his flight,
And quits his time-shook tow'r;
Where, shelter'd from the blaze of day,
In philosophick[321] gloom he lay
Beneath his ivy bow'r.[322]

With joy I hear the solemn sound,[323]
Which midnight echoes waft around,
And sighing gales repeat.
Fav'rite of PALLAS![324] I attend,
And faithful to thy summons, bend
At WISDOM's aweful[325] seat.

She loves the cool, the silent eve,
Where no false shews[326] of life deceive,
Beneath the lunar ray.
Here Folly[327] drops each vain disguise,
Nor sport her gaily-colour'd[328] dyes,

---

319 *A Collection of Poems: In Six Volumes*, edited by R. Dodsley, vol. 3, 1763, pp. 209–213; *Eighteenth Century Poetry Archive*
320 *Solitary bird of night* an owl, the sacred animal of Athena
321 *Philosophic* calm or stoical
322 *Bower* a shaded area beneath plants, sometimes used for sleeping
323 *Solemn sound* an owl hooting
324 *Pallas* epithet of the Greek goddess of wisdom and battle strategy, Athena
325 *Aweful* awe-inspiring
326 *Shews* shows
327 *Folly* foolishness
328 *Gaily-colour'd* brightly coloured

As in the beam of day,

O PALLAS! queen of ev'ry art,
That glads the sense, and mends the heart,
Blest source of purer joys:
In every form of beauty bright,
That captivates the mental sight
With pleasure and surprize:

At thy unspotted[329] shrine I bow;
Attend thy modest suppliant's[330] vow,
That breathes no wild desires:
But taught by thy unerring[331] rules,
To shun the fruitless wish of fools,
To nobler views aspires.

Not FORTUNE's gem, AMBITION's plume,[332]
Nor CYTHEREA'S[333] fading bloom,
Be objects of my pray'r:
Let AV'RICE,[334] VANITY, and PRIDE,
Those envy'd glitt'ring toys, divide
The dull rewards of care.

To me thy better gifts impart,

---

[329] *Unspotted* spotless, pure, or virginal
[330] *Suppliant* one who pleads humbly to an authority
[331] *Unerring* never mistaken
[332] *Plume* feathers on a bird or on a hat as a status symbol
[333] *Cytheria* Greek goddess of love, more commonly known as Aphrodite
[334] *Av'rice* greed or desire to amass wealth

Each moral beauty of the heart,
By studious thoughts refin'd:
For Wealth, the smiles of glad Content;
For Pow'r, its amplest, best extent,
An empire o'er the mind.

When FORTUNE drops her gay parade,
When PLEASURE's transient[335] roses fade,
And wither in the tomb;
Unchang'd is thy immortal prize,
Thy ever-verdant[336] laurels[337] rise
In undecaying bloom.

By thee protected, I defy
The coxcomb's[338] sneer, the stupid lye[339]
Of ignorance and spite:
Alike contemn[340] the leaden[341] fool,
And all the pointed ridicule
Of undiscerning wit.

From envy, hurry, noise and strife,
The dull impertinence[342] of life,

---

[335] *Transient* impermanent
[336] *Verdant* green, associated with plant-life
[337] *Laurels* bushes whose branches were woven into crowns and wreathes symbolizing victory in ancient Greece
[338] *Coxcomb* a vain man
[339] *Lye* lie
[340] *Contemn* to treat with contempt
[341] *Leaden* dull or of low value
[342] *Impertinence* irrelevance or triviality

In thy retreat I rest:
Pursue thee to the peaceful groves,
Where PLATO's sacred spirit roves,[343]
In all thy beauties dress'd.

He bade Ilissus'[344] tuneful stream
Convey thy philosophick theme
Of Perfect, Fair, and Good:
Attentive Athens caught the sound,
And all her list'ning sons around
In aweful silence stood:

Reclaim'd, her wild licentious[345] youth
Confess'd the potent voice of TRUTH,
And felt its just controul:
The Passions ceas'd their loud alarms,
And Virtue's soft persuasive charms
O'er all their senses stole.

Thy breath inspires the POET's song,
The PATRIOT's free, unbiass'd tongue,
The HERO's gen'rous strife;
Thine are Retirement's silent joys,
And all the sweet engaging ties
Of still[346] domestick life.

---

[343] *Peaceful groves where Plato's sacred spirit roves* references the Platonic Academy of Ancient Greece, which was in a sacred grove of olive trees dedicated to Athena outside of Athens.
[344] *Ilissus* a river that flows through Athens, Greece
[345] *Licentious* free from social customs and rules, often with sexual connotations
[346] *Still* calm, quiet

No more to fabled Names confin'd,
To the supreme all-perfect Mind
        My thoughts direct their flight:
Wisdom's thy gift, and all her force
From thee deriv'd, eternal source
        Of intellectual light.

O send her sure, her steady ray,
To regulate my doubtful way
        Thro' life's perplexing road:
The mists of error to controul,
And thro' its gloom direct my soul
        To happiness and good.

Beneath her clear discerning eye
The visionary shadows fly
        Of Folly's painted show:
She sees thro' ev'ry fair disguise,
That all but VIRTUE's solid joys
        Are vanity and woe.

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William Cowper

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William Cowper (1731-1800) was born in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire, England and is known for his success in writing and enduring an immense amount of suffering in his life. When he was only a child, Cowper's mother passed away (1737), causing some emotional trauma. Shortly after, he moved to a boarding school in Westminster, London where he continued his education. In 1749, Cowper began to study law and eventually became a lawyer's apprentice. Although he was called to take the bar exam in 1754, Cowper declined because he no longer wanted to be a lawyer. During his time at university, he fell in love with his cousin, Theodora Cowper, but her father called off their engagement.

In 1763, Cowper experienced his first attack of insanity and attempted suicide. He attempted suicide three, possibly four, times during his life. After this first attempt, his physician Dr. Nathaniel Cotton placed Cowper in his private asylum with hopes to help Cowper escape from his mental illness and depression. As a result of religious discussions with Cotton, Cowper began reading the Bible and converted to Calvinistic Evangelicalism.

After leaving the asylum in 1765, Cowper moved to Huntingdon and lived with the Evangelical Unwin family. It was here Cowper formed a quiet routine where he lived alongside many pets, including hares, dogs, cats, and birds. They therapeutically brought him joy. We see Cowper's love for animals through positive references in his poetry. When pets were not enough distraction, he began gardening, carpentry, reading, and writing poetry. After two years of Cowper's living with the Unwin family, Clergyman Morley Unwin passed away. Cowper remained with Unwin's widow for the remainder of his life. In 1779 he published a volume of hymns called *Olney Hymns* with the Rev. John Newton. Shortly after this, Cowper published a book of poems called *Poems: by William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq*. which includes "The Doves."

Cowper's poem "The Doves" features quatrains that use an alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter style and an ABAB rhyme scheme, in other words hymn stanza. This poem uses an allegorical pair of birds to encourage its readers to live in a virtuous way. "The Doves" is one of Cowper's poems that uses positive animal metaphors, such as turtle doves, a common symbol of love, to promote the idea that marriage is an ideal act of virtue.

In 1785, Cowper released his greatest work, *The Task*, a blank verse poem that contains six books. The first book within *The Task* is titled "The Sofa." This is because Cowper claimed he had nothing to write about at this time; however, Cowper's friend and neighbour, Lady Anna Austen, suggested that he should

write about the sofa he sat on. Shortly after the release of *The Task*, Cowper published his blank verse translations of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (1791).

Cowper continued to live in Huntingdon in an affectionate but innocent relationship with Mary Unwin. Her passing in 1796 introduced a new wave of mental illness to Cowper. Only four years later, Cowper was overcome by dropsy,[347] causing his death. After his death, Cowper's reputation suffered due to questions about a link between Calvinism and suicide (Faubert). Today Cowper remains a well-known Calvinist poet, though he is now more famous for "The Castaway" than *The Task*.

Further Reading

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Reference

Faubert, Michelle. "Calvinism, Enthusiasm, and Suicide: The Regulation of Subjectivity in the Romantic Period." *Studies in the Literary Imagination,* vol. 51, no. 1, 2018, pp.79–102.

[347] *Dropsy* today is called edema: "A morbid condition characterized by the accumulation of watery fluid in the serous cavities or the connective tissue of the body" (*OED*)

The Doves[348]

REAS'NING at every step he treads,
Man yet mistakes his way,
While meaner[349] things whom instinct leads
Are rarely known to stray.

One silent eve I wander'd late,
And heard the voice of love,
The turtle[350] thus address'd her mate,
And sooth'd the list'ning dove.[351]

Our mutual bond of faith and truth,
No time shall disengage,[352]
Those blessings of our early youth,
Shall cheer our latest age.

While innocence without disguise,
And constancy sincere,[353]
Shall fill the circles of those eyes,
And mine can read them there,

Those ills that wait on all below,[354]

---

[348] *Poems: by William Cowper, of the Inner Temple, Esq*. 1782, pp. 299–301; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[349] *Meaner* inferior
[350] *Turtle* a turtle dove
[351] *Dove* a symbol of love
[352] *No time shall disengage* no time could free from obligation or engagement
[353] *Constancy sincere* being faithful and loyal
[354] *All below* all that is below heaven

Shall ne'er be felt by me,
Or gently felt, and only so,
As being shared with thee.

When light'nings flash among the trees,
Or kites[355] are hov'ring near,
I fear lest thee alone they seize,
And know no other fear.

'Tis then I feel myself a wife,
And press thy wedded side,
Resolv'd an union form'd for life,
Death never shall divide.

But oh! if fickle and unchaste[356]
(Forgive a transient thought[357])
Thou couldst become unkind[358] at last,
And scorn thy present lot,[359]

No need of light'nings from on high,
Or kites with cruel beak,
Denied th' endearments of thine eye
This widow'd heart would break.

[355] *Kites* a bird of prey
[356] *Unchaste* lacking chastity or impure
[357] *Transient thought* a brief thought
[358] *Unkind* acting in a way that is not considered morally good
[359] *Present lot* an individual's destiny or situation in life as given by God (*OED*)

Thus sang the sweet sequester'd[360] bird
Soft as the passing wind,
And I recorded what I heard,
A lesson for mankind.

[360] *Sequester'd* cut off from surroundings

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William Melmoth

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William Melmoth the younger was named after his father, William Melmoth the elder. Melmoth was born in 1710 London. There is little known about his life. Melmoth was a classical scholar who began a legal career in 1732, moved to Ealing, West London, and married Dorothy King, daughter of William King. He wrote and published his first book, *Letters on Several Subjects*, which includes "Epistle to Sappho," in 1742 under the pseudonym Sir Thomas Fitzosborne. Melmoth wrote numerous poems, and his wife was commonly the subject of his verse epistles.

Melmoth's "Epistle to Sappho" includes the themes of vice, virtue, and women. The poem is a verse epistle (a poetic letter) in iambic pentameter heroic couplets, though not in this case to his wife. The poem addresses a pre-pubescent young lady and advises her, as she grows up and is exposed to the world, to remain virtuous because of the principles that she was taught at a young age and to suppress the immoral and wicked behaviour that comes with her gender.

Melmoth dedicated much of his time to translating the works of Roman writers, including Pliny and Cicero. His works were praised for their accuracy, and some claimed that they were better than the originals. Melmoth also wrote a second volume of *Fitzosborne's Letters* in 1748. In 1761, after the passing of Melmoth's wife, he moved to Bath and remarried. Melmoth continued to publish translations, though his last work was a book dedicated to his father, titled *Memoir of a Late Eminent Advocate*, published in 1796. Melmoth passed away in 1799 and was buried in Batheaston.

Further Reading

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Wilson, Penelope. "Melmoth, William." *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 2004.

Epistle to Sappho[361]

WHILE yet no amorous[362] youths around thee bow,
Nor flattering verse conveys the faithless vow;[363]
To graver[364] notes will Sappho's[365] soul attend,
And ere[366] she hears the lover, hear the friend?
Let maids less bless'd employ their meaner arts[367]
To reign proud tyrants o'er unnumber'd hearts;[368]
May Sappho learn (for nobler triumphs born)
Those little conquests of her sex to scorn.
To form thy bosom to each generous deed;
To plant thy mind with every useful seed;[369]
Be these thy arts: nor spare the grateful toil,[370]
Where Nature's hand has bless'd the happy soil.[371]
So shalt thou know, with pleasing skill, to blend
The lovely mistress, and instructive friend:
So shalt thou know, when unrelenting Time
Shall spoil those charms[372] yet opening to their prime,
To ease the loss of Beauty's transient[373] flower,

---

[361] *A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes by Several hands,* edited G. Pearch, 2nd edition vol. 2, 1770, pp. 137–138; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[362] *Amorous* affectionate, related to sexual desire
[363] *Vow* promise of fidelity
[364] *Graver* more serious
[365] *Sappho* typically a name for a wise woman
[366] *Ere* before
[367] *Meaner arts* schemes or artifice
[368] *Unnumber'd hearts* large group of male suitors
[369] *Seed* seed of an idea
[370] *Toil* here, education and practice
[371] *Soil* her mind and heart
[372] *Charms* pleasing (sexual) traits
[373] *Transient* existing briefly, temporarily

While reason keeps what rapture[374] gave before.
And oh! while Wit, fair dawning, spreads its ray,
Serenely rising to a glorious day,
To hail the growing lustre oft be mine,
Thou early favourite of the sacred Nine![375]
And shall the Muse[376] with blameless boast pretend,[377]
In Youth's gay[378] bloom that Sappho call'd me friend:
That urg'd by me she shunn'd the dangerous way,
Where heedless maids in endless error stray;[379]
That scorning soon her sex's idler[380] art,
Fair Praise inspir'd and Virtue warm'd her heart;
That fond to reach the distant paths of Fame,
I taught her infant genius where to aim?
Thus when the feather'd choir first tempt[381] the sky,
And all unskill'd their feeble pinions[382] try,
Th' experienc'd sire prescribes th' adventurous height,
Guides the young wing, and pleas'd attends the flight.

---

374 *Rapture* sexual pleasure
375 *Sacred nine* nine daughters of Zeus and Mnemosyne, the muses
376 *Muse* a poet's inspiration
377 *Pretend* claim
378 *Gay* to be positive, cheerful, or happy
379 *Endless error stray* wandering into bad behavior
380 *Idler* a person who idles, one who spends time aimlessly
381 *Tempt* shortened version of attempt
382 *Pinions* the outer part of a bird's wing including the flight feathers

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James Merrick

Michael Labbé, Simon Fraser University

James Merrick (1720-1769) was born in Reading, Berkshire, and was the second son of John and Elizabeth Merrick. While earning his MA (1742) at Trinity College, Oxford, Merrick specialized in Greek and Latin translation and paraphrasing. Merrick's most famous translation, *The Psalms, Translated or Paraphrased in English Verse* (1765), was critically acclaimed, gaining a considerable following. Alongside his translation work, Merrick also wrote several original and well received poems: Thomas Warton suggested that Merrick had "a flow of poetical language, and richness of imagery, which [gave] dignity to the subject, without departing from the sense of the inspired writer" (Watson). Merrick was a devout Christian and a priest in the Church of England; however, he only occasionally preached (1747-1749) because of a chronic illness that prevented him from taking on more responsibilities. In 1769, James Merrick died due to his prolonged illness and was buried near his family at Caversham Church, Oxfordshire.

"The Trials of Virtue" is from Merrick's 1763 published collection *Poems, on Sacred Subjects*. Within the collection, he writes primarily in ballad stanza: ABAB rhymes with alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter. His "sacred subjects" include vice and virtue. The speaker in "The Trials of Virtue" understands that, although his heart is virtuous, the vices and temptations of the world call to him. These vices manifest themselves within chaotic ocean imagery, which Merrick's speaker constantly refers to as "the deep." The evil temptations of the deep are held at bay by faith in God along with God's literal words of affirmation. Minor changes in posthumous editions of the poem intensify its religious fervour but may be by an editor or executor.

Further Reading

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The Trials of Virtue[383]

Plac'd on the verge of Youth, my mind
Life's op'ning scene survey'd:
I view'd its ills[2] of various kind,
Afflicted and afraid.

But chief my fear the dangers mov'd,
That Virtue's path inclose:
My heart the wise pursuit approv'd;
But O, what toils oppose!

For see, ah! see, while yet her ways
With doubtful step I tread,
A hostile World its terrors raise,
Its snares delusive spread.

O! how shall I, with heart prepar'd,
Those terrors learn to meet?
How from the thousand snares to guard
My unexperienc'd feet?

As thus I mus'd, oppresive Sleep
Soft o'er my temples drew
Oblivion's veil.[3] The watry Deep,
An object strange and new,

Before me rose: on the wide shore
Observant as I stood,
The gath'ring storms around me roar,
And heave the boiling flood.

---

[383] *Poems on Sacred Subjects,* 1763, pp. 20–25; *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online*
[2] *Ills* changed to hills in *A Collection of Poems in Four Volumes. By Several Hands,* G. Pearch, 1770, pp. 144–147
[3] *Drew / Oblivion's veil* caused forgetfulness

Near and more near the billows[4] rise;
    Ev'n now my steps they lave;[5]
And Death to my affrighted eyes
    Approach'd in every wave.

What hope, or whither to retreat?
    Each nerve at once unstrung,
Chill Fear had fetter'd[6] fast my feet,
    And chain'd my speechless tongue.

I feel my heart[7] within me die;
    When sudden to mine ear
A voice descending from on high
    Reprov'd my erring[8] fear.

"What though the swelling surge thou see
    Impatient to devour?
Rest, Mortal, rest on God's decree,
    And thankful own[391] his pow'r."

"Know, when he bade the Deep appear,
    Thus far, th' Almighty said,
Thus far, nor farther, rage; and Here
    Let thy proud waves be stay'd."

I heard: and lo! at once controul'd,
    The waves in wild retreat
Back on themselves reluctant roll'd,
    And murm'ring left my feet.

Deeps to assembling Deeps in vain

---

[4] *Billows* a swelling of the ocean waves produced by wind
[5] *Lave* to wash against/flow past a body of water
[6] *Fetter'd* to shackle
[7] *Heart* continuation of a heart symbolic of virtue
[8] *Erring* to have wrong judgement or opinion
[391] *Own* acknowledge

Once more the signal gave:
The shores the rushing weight sustain,
And check th' usurping wave.

Convinc'd, in Nature's volume wise
The imag'd truth I read;
And sudden from my waking eyes
Th' instructive Vision fled.

Then why thus heavy, O my Soul?[9]
Say why distrustful still,
Thy thoughts with vain impatience roll
O'er scenes of future ill.

Let Faith suppress each rising fear,
Each anxious doubt exclude:
Thy Maker's will has plac'd thee here,
A Maker wise and good.[10]

He to thy ev'ry trial knows
Its just restraint to give,
Attentive to behold thy woes,
And faithful to relieve.

Then why thus heavy, O my Soul?
Say why distrustful still,
Thy thoughts with vain impatience roll
O'er scenes of future ill.

Though griefs unnumber'd throng[11] thee round,
Still in thy God confide,
Whose finger marks the Seas their bound,
And curbs the headlong Tide.

---

[9] *Soul?* in 1770 edition question mark changed to exclamation mark
[10] *Good* in 1770 edition stanza ends in exclamation mark
[11] *Throng* gather

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Henry Taylor

Signe Simonsen, Simon Fraser University

Henry Taylor was an eighteenth-century reverend and poet, though not much else is known about him. He was baptized 1711 and died 1785. He attended Queen's College, Cambridge. His church jobs included being the rector of Crawley and a vicar in Portsmouth. He is not a well-known poet, and he most likely did not write many poems during his lifetime. His poem "Paradise Regain'd" was first published in 1758 in Robert Dodsley's first edition of *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes, By Several Hands.* More than a hundred years later "Paradise Regain'd" was featured, along with some of his other works, in Peter A. Taylor's *Some Account of the Taylor Family*, published in 1875.

Henry Taylor's "Paradise Regain'd" is in quatrains of alternating iambic pentameter and iambic tetrameter, rhymed ABAB. It examines vice and virtue and how they relate to each other. Rather than the original story of how Paradise became lost to mankind because of their indiscretions, Taylor writes about the ways in which we can find a new Paradise, one that is not lost due to sin but rather gained through the very qualities that make us human. "Paradise Regain'd" celebrates the pleasures of men and women, instead of condemning them, and tries to explain how true virtue in humans lies in the realization of this. Paradise in "Paradise Regain'd" is not in The Garden of Eden, the earthly habitat of Adam and Eve (traditionally in the ancient Middle East, which is why Taylor refers to "Asiatic climes" and the rivers of Tigris and Euphrates). Taylor wants us to seek eternal residence in this place of happiness and delight, but instead of clinging to the old tale of human deterioration, we should instead celebrate the possibility for everyone to attain an innocent and happy lifestyle by eschewing luxury and other urban corruptions.

The poem shares a title with John Milton's sequel to his most famous poem *Paradise Lost* (1667). Milton's *Paradise Regained* was published in 1671, and it deals with the heroism of Christ and his eventual victory over Satan's temptations. The defining themes of Milton's poem are an enduring faith in God and having the spiritual strength to persevere through trials where our faith is put into question. Henry Taylor chose to title his own poem after Milton's and the two poems do share similarities. They both relate to the struggles of being human and how that can put a strain on our relationship with God. However, Taylor's

"Paradise Regain'd" seeks to celebrate the human experience of pleasures that are separate from the vices that God would not forgive. Where Milton believes firmly in the Fall of Man (we are all born sinful), Taylor supports the emerging philosophical movement of Sentimentalism (we are all born innocent and only become corrupted by civilization). In this, Taylor is probably influenced by writers such as the Earl of Shaftesbury and Francis Hutcheson.

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Paradise Regain'd[392]

I.

SEEK not for Paradise with curious eye
In Asiatic climes,[393] where Tigris' wave,
Mix'd with Euphrates[394] in tumultuous joy,
Doth the broad plains of Babylonia lave.[395]

II.

'Tis gone with all its charms; and like a dream,
Like Babylon[396] itself, is swept away;
Bestow one tear upon the mournful theme,
But let it not thy gentle heart dismay.

III.

For know where-ever love and virtue guide,
They lead us to a state of heav'nly bliss,
Where joys unknown to guilt and shame preside,
And pleasures unalloy'd[397] each hour increase.

IV.

Behold that grove,[398] whose waving boughs admit,
Thro' the live colonade,[399] the fruitful hill,

---

[392] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes. By Several Hands. Vol. VI.* R. and J. Dodsley, 1763 [1st ed. 1758]; *Eighteenth Century Poetry Archive*
[393] *Asiatic climes* the East, here the Middle East
[394] *Tigris' wave mixed with Euphrates* the Tigris is the easternmost of the two great rivers that define Mesopotamia (Iraq), the other being the Euphrates
[395] *Doth the broad plains of Babylonia lave* washes the land of Babylon
[396] *Babylon* the capital city of the ancient Babylonian Empire (today, Iraq)
[397] *Unalloy'd* not mixed with anything, such as negative feelings
[398] *Grove* a small group of trees
[399] *Colonade* a row of columns, usually supporting a roof for example in a Greek temple (present spelling is "colonnade")

A moving prospect[400] with fat herds replete,
Whose lowing voices all the valley fill.

V.

There, thro' the spiry[401] grass where glides the brook,
(By yon tall poplar which erects its head
Above the verdure[402] of the neighb'ring oak,)
And gently murmurs o'er th' adjoining mead;[403]

VI.

Philander and Cleora,[404] happy pair,
Taste the cool breezes of the gentle wind;
Their breasts from guilt, their looks are free from care,
Sure index[405] of a calm contented mind.

VII.

'Tis here in virtuous lore the studious fair
Informs her babes, nor scorns herself t' improve,
While in his smile she lives, whose pleasing care
Dispenses knowledge from the lips of love.

VIII.

No wild desires can spread their poison here,
No discontent their peaceful hours attend;
False joys, nor flatt'ring hopes, nor servile fear,[406]
Their gentle minds with jarring passions rend.[407]

IX.

---

[400] *Prospect* what you look at or see in front of you
[401] *Spiry* curving or coiling in spirals
[402] *Verdure* fresh green color of flourishing vegetation, greenness
[403] *Mead* short for *meadow*
[404] *Philander and Cleora* typical names of shepherds in pastoral poetry
[405] *Index* indication of something
[406] *Servile fear* the fear of a servant in relation to their master
[407] *Rend* to tear apart

Here oft in pleasing solitude they rove,
Recounting o'er the deeds of former days;
With inward joy their well-spent time approve,
And feel a recompence[408] beyond all praise.

X.

Or in sweet converse[409] thro' the grove, or near[410]
The fountain's brink, or where the arbour's[411] shade
Beats back the heat, fair Virtue's[412] voice they hear,
More musical by sweet digressions[413] made.

XI.

With calm dependence ev'ry good they taste,
Yet feel their neighbours' wants with kind regret,
Nor cheer themselves alone, (a mean repast!)[414]
But deal forth blessings round their happy seat.

XII.

'Tis to such virtue, that the pow'r supreme
The choicest of his blessings hath design'd,
And shed them plenteous over ev'ry clime,
The calm delights of an untainted mind.

XIII.

Ere yet the sad effects of foolish pride,

---

[408] *Recompence* to reward a person for something done or given
[409] *Converse* could indicate sexual intercourse, as opposed to conversation, in the time the poem was written
[410] *Or … or near* in contemporary literature we would use either…or
[411] *Arbour's shade* a bower or shady retreat in which the sides and roof are formed by trees and/or intertwined shrubs like vines
[412] *Fair virtue's* fair meaning beautiful; the most valued virtue of that time was courage, preferably related to equity or justice
[413] *Digressions* turning aside from a path or track
[414] *A mean repast* a stingy meal

And mean[415] ambition still employ'd in strife,
And luxury did o'er the world preside,
Deprav'd[416] the taste, and pall'd[417] the joys of life.

XIV.

For such the Spring, in richest mantle[418] clad,
Pours forth her beauties thro' the gay parterre;[419]
And Autumn's various bosom is o'erspread
With all the blushing fruits that crown the year.

XV.

Such Summer tempts, in golden beams array'd,
Which o'er the fields in borrow'd lustre[420] glow,
To meditate beneath the cooling shade
Their happy state, and whence their blessings flow.

XVI.

E'en rugged Winter varies but their joy,
Painting the cheek with fresh vermilion-hue;[421]
And those rough frosts which softer frames annoy
With vig'rous health their slack'ning nerves[422] renew.

XVII.

From the dark bosom of the dappled[423] Morn

---

[415] *Mean* of little value, inferior
[416] *Depraved* could relate to taste, appetite; otherwise meaning something rendered bad or morally corrupt, perverted, wicked, etc.
[417] *Pall'd* weakened
[418] *Mantle clad* wearing a loose sleeveless cloak (in this case, of flowers)
[419] *Gay parterre* bright, lively-looking space in a garden occupied by ornamental flower arrangements
[420] *Lustre glow* shining by reflective light
[421] *Vermillion-hue* to have red cheeks from cold weather
[422] *Slack'ning nerves* weakened nerves
[423] *Dappled* spotted, speckled

To Phoebus[424] shining with meridian[425] light,
Or when mild Ev'ning does the sky adorn,
Or the pale moon rides thro' the spangled night.

XVIII.

The varying scenes in ev'ry virtuous soul
Each pleasing change with various pleasures bless,
Raise cheerful hopes, and anxious fears controul,
And form a Paradise of inward peace.

[424] *Phoebus* also known as Apollo, deity in Roman and Greek mythology; poetic term for the sun
[425] *Meridian light* midday or noon

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Mark Akenside

Ezzah Ali, Simon Fraser University

Mark Akenside (1721-1770) was a competent poet and physician born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England to parents Mark and Mary Akenside. He was a youthful academic prodigy with a physical disability in having one leg longer than the other. Originally set to attend the University of Edinburgh to become a dissenting (not Church of England) minister, Akenside instead pursued medicine to become a physician. His medical career was only moderately successful, possibly because people found Akenside to be cold and conceited.

Akenside's poetic success stemmed from when he was sixteen years old and sent a poem in Spenserian stanzas to the *Gentleman's Magazine* titled "The Virtuoso." During his time at university, he began his best-known work: *The Pleasures of Imagination,* a didactic and philosophical poem in three books. This poem had seven editions and was translated into a variety of languages including French, German, and Italian. Akenside wrote some medical treatises and other literary works, but none were as famous or successful as *The Pleasures of Imagination*.

Inscription III is one of a group of six inscriptions for monuments and fictional graves published in the sixth volume of Dodsley's *A Collection of Poems by Several Hands* in 1758. With a theme of melancholy and tragic love, this poem is a blank verse epitaph. Iambic pentameter is a meter Akenside excelled in writing.

Akenside died in 1770 at the age of forty-eight due to a severe fever. Although his posthumously published odes had an influence on Coleridge and Southey, there was a decline in interest in Akenside during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, which Robin Dix's account of Akenside's lifework may reverse.

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Inscription III[426]

WHOE'ER[427] thou art whose path in summer lies
Through yonder[428] village, turn thee where the grove
Of branching oaks a rural palace old
Imbosoms.[429] there dwells Albert, generous lord
Of all the harvest round. And onward thence
A low plain chapel fronts the morning light
Fast by a silent riv'let.[430] Humbly walk,
O stranger, o'er the consecrated[431] ground;
And on that verdant[432] hilloc,[433] which thou see'st
Beset with osiers,[434] let thy pious hand
Sprinkle fresh water from the brook and strew[435]
Sweet-smelling flow'rs. For there doth Edmund rest,
The learned shepherd; for each rural art
Fam'd, and for songs harmonious, and the woes
Of ill-requited[436] love. The faithless pride
Of fair Matilda sank him to the grave
In manhood's prime. But soon did righteous heaven
With tears, with sharp remorse, and pining care,

---

[426] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes, By Several Hands. Vol. VI.* London, edited R. and J. Dodsley, 1763 [1st ed. 1758], pp. 31–32.
[427] *Whoe'er* abbreviation of "whoever"
[428] *Yonder* over there
[429] *Embosoms* embraces, surrounds
[430] *Riv'let* a rivulet or small river
[431] *Consecrated* made sacred
[432] *Verdant* green, associated with flora
[433] *Hilloc* a small hill
[434] *Osiers* a specific type of willow tree
[435] *Strew* scatter on the ground
[436] *Ill-requited* unreturned love

Avenge her falsehood. Nor[437] could all the gold
And nuptial pomp,[438] which lur'd her plighted faith[439]
From Edmund to a loftier husband's home,
Relieve her breaking heart, or turn aside
The strokes of death. Go, traveller; relate
The mournful story. Haply some fair maid
May hold it in remembrance, and be taught
That riches cannot pay for truth or love.

[437] *Nor* "nor" in copytext
[438] *Nuptial pomp* a marriage celebration
[439] *Plighted faith* a promise to marry, engagement

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Anna Laetitia Barbauld

Quinn Fletcher, Simon Fraser University

Anna Laetitia Barbauld was a prominent English writer in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. She was an accomplished writer, poet, essayist, children's author, editor, literary critic, teacher (at Palgrave academy from 1774 to 1785), and abolitionist. She was born in 1743 in Kibworth-Harcourt, Leicestershire and died in 1825 at age eighty-five. Many literary scholars consider her work a cornerstone of feminism and feminist literature. Barbauld was a very politically minded writer and often expressed her views in her works such as *Epistle to William Wilberforce Esq* (1791), in which she explained her disdain for slavery, as well as *Sins of the Government, Sins of the Nation* (1792), which had an anti-war message. During the French Revolution she wrote *An Address to Opposers of the Repeal of the Corporations and Tests Acts* (1790) in which she expressed her desire for dissenters such as herself (British Protestants not members of the Church of England) to have full citizenship rights. Her most famous and prominent work may be "The Rights of Woman*"* (1792) which some critics have seen as an anti-feminist response to Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman,* while others see Barbauld as a proto-feminist.

There is also "The Mouse's Petition, Found in the Trap where He had been Confined all Night" (1773), a poem in ballad stanza in which she took a stance on animal rights. The poem is dedicated to Dr. Joseph Priestley, a family friend, who was experimenting with vacuum jars and used mice as test subjects. Most of the critical attention to this poem is to its place in scientific and animal rights discourse (for example, Julia Saunders, Mary Ellen Bellanca, and Kathryn Ready).

During her time, she was heavily praised by other successful authors such as William Taylor, Joanna Baillie, Samuel Johnson, and Joseph Addison. Unfortunately, during her later years, when several of her peers adopted more conservative views, she was shunned. Her works remained largely hidden until the rise of feminist literary criticism in the 1980s, when they regained popularity.

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The Mouse's Petition,[440] Found in the Trap where He had been Confined all Night[441]

Parcere subjectis, & debellare superbos.

Virgil[442]

OH! hear a pensive[443] captive's prayer,
For liberty that sighs;
And never let thine heart be shut
Against the prisoner's cries.

For here forlorn and sad I sit,
Within the wiry grate;
And tremble at the approaching morn,
Which brings impending fate.[444]

If e'er thy breast with freedom glow'd,
And spurn'd a tyrant's chain,
Let not thy strong oppressive force
A free born[445] mouse detain.

Oh! do not stain with guiltless blood
Thy hospitable hearth;[446]
Nor triumph that thy wiles betrayed

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[440] Author's footnote: To Dr. Priestley
[441] *Poems*, printed for J. Johnson, 1773, pp. 37–40; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[442] Epigraph means "to spare the vanquished and subdue the proud," from *Aeneid* bk. 6, l. 853.
[443] *Pensive* to be in deep thought
[444] *Impending fate* a reference to people about to be executed for their crimes
[445] *Free born* somebody not born into slavery
[446] *Hearth* a symbol for one's home

A prize so little worth.

The scattered gleanings[447] of a feast
My scanty meals supply.
But if thine unrelenting heart
That slender boon[448] deny,

The cheerful light, the vital[449] air,
Are blessings widely given;
Let nature's commoners[450] enjoy
The common gifts of heaven.

The well taught philosophic mind
To all compassion gives;
Casts round the world an equal eye,
And feels for all that lives.

If mind, as ancient sages[451] taught,
A never dying flame,
Still shifts thro'[452] matter's varying forms,
In every form the same,

Beware, lest in the worm you crush
A brother's soul you find.

---

[447] *Gleanings* a word for leftovers gathered by the poor from the rich
[448] *Boon* a requested favour, often from a divine source
[449] *Vital* life sustaining
[450] *Commoner* ordinary person with no rank or lands
[451] *Sage* someone of exceptional wisdom and virtue, here the Greek philosopher Heraclitus
[452] *Thro* through

And tremble lest thy luckless hand
Dislodge a kindred mind.

Or, if this transient[453] gleam of day
Be *all* of life we share,
Let pity plead within thy breast
That little *all* to spare.

So may thy hospitable board
With health and peace be crown'd.
And every charm of heartfelt ease
Beneath thy roof be found.

So, when unseen destruction lurks,
Which men like mice may share,
May some kind angels clear thy path,
And break the hidden snare.

[453] *Transient* something that lasts a very short time

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Mary Barber

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Mary Barber was born around 1685 in Dublin, Ireland and died in 1755, having lived in different English and Irish towns but primarily in Bath. Barber suffered from gout for the majority of her life and likely went to Bath to visit the spas, which many believed would aid in the treatment of the disease. During her life, she would only publish one work, titled *Poems on Several Occasions* (1734), while she was living in England.

Interestingly, in the preface to *Poems on Several Occasions* Barber states that she only wrote poetry to teach her children. Despite this supposed disinclination to write, her poetry was noticed with the help of Jonathan Swift, who had inducted Barber into his group he called the Triumfeminate, made up of three Irish women writers. The Triumfeminate was Swift's play on words on a triumvirate, typically a political group of three powerful men. The other women in Swift's group were Constantia Grierson (editor and poet) and Elizabeth Sican (a literary critic and poet). Swift was certainly Barber's most vocal supporter and once called her the best female poet in both Ireland and England. At the time, Barber's peers did not share the same admiration for her work. Laetitia Pilkington, an Anglo-Irish poet, said her work "might … be seen in the Cheesemongers, Chandlers, Pastrycooks, and Second-hand Booksellers Shops" (383), in other words recycled as food wrappers.

In 1731, Barber was at the center of a moment of controversy when a letter, signed by Swift, praising Barber and her poetry was delivered to Queen Caroline. Despite Swift's friendship with Barber, he claimed that he had not written to the Queen, thus revealing that someone had forged the letter. Swift's rejection of the letter led some to believe that Barber was the one who had written it, and, although this theory was never proven, the suspicion remains.

Barber's poem "Written at Bath to a Young Lady, Who Had Just Before Given Me a Short Answer," was one of the poems included in her single publication. It is one of the less commonly studied poems, and not much academic writing is available on it. The poem is in iambic tetrameter couplets and is a satiric epistle against satire that ultimately serves as a defence of herself and the way she responded to being treated poorly.

Further Reading

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Written at Bath to a Young Lady, Who Had Just Before Given Me a Short Answer[454]

YOU us'd me ill, and I withdrew,
Intent on satirizing you.
The *Muses*[455] to my Aid I call;
They came; and told me, one and all,
That I mistook their Province[456] quite,
They never sully'd[457] what was bright;
And said, If Satire was my Aim,
I ought to chuse another Theme.

I HEARD with Anger, and Surprize;
Begg'd they'd inspire, and not advise.
In vain I begg'd – they all withdrew;
When to my Aid a Phantom[458] flew,
And vow'd she'd give my Satire Stings,
And whisper'd some resentful Things–
Said, You delighted, all your Days,
To torture her a thousand Ways:
Bid me revenge her Cause, and mine,
And blacken you in ev'ry Line.

---

[454] *Poems on Several Occasions*]. London, C. Rivington, 1734, pp. 124–125; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*; a *Short Answer* means a rude reply
[455] *Muses* the nine muses of Greek mythology associated with the arts, including poetry
[456] *Province* "a sphere of action, influence, or responsibility; the proper function or area of concern of a particular person or group" (*OED*)
[457] *Sully'd* dirtied
[458] *Phantom* humanoid figure lacking a physical presence

THIS I resolv'd;[459] but still in vain
We both must unreveng'd remain:
For I, alas! remember now,
I long ago had made a Vow,
That, should the *Nine*[460] their Aid refuse,
Envy should never be my *Muse.*[461]

[459] *Resolv'd* decided to do
[460] *Nine* the nine muses
[461] *Muse* artistic inspiration

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Nathaniel Cotton

Max D'Ambrosio, Simon Fraser University

Nathaniel Cotton was born in London in 1705, studied medicine at the University of Leyden, and then settled at St Albans Hospital in Hertfordshire, working there as a physician until his death in 1788. Cotton was not well known as a poet and only slightly more renowned as a doctor. Accounts of his life suggest a longstanding preoccupation with virtue, and most of his poems are morality tales aimed at children or young adults. Many of these works are adaptations of John Gay's verse fables.

Apart from his regular medical practice, Cotton also owned and managed a private sanatorium for the mentally ill. The poet William Cowper[462] was confined in this facility from 1763 to 1765 during his first major period of mental illness. Cowper reviewed the institution positively, writing that Cotton was both empathetic and willing to engage with him intellectually. The pair held long conversations about religion, philosophy, and morality, which Cowper regarded as a great help in his recovery. Scholars of Cowper believe that this experience is the primary reason for his conversion to the evangelical Methodist interpretation of Christianity, which had profound effects on his life and writing.

Cotton's love of giving instruction about virtue also seems to have extended to his relationship with his own children, including his daughters Phoebe and Katherine. The pair served as inspiration for his poem "The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow: A Fable. Address'd to Phebe and Kitty C. at Boarding School." This iambic tetrameter verse fable in rhyming couplets is an example of the allegorical literature often used to pass down moral norms to children of the eighteenth century. It makes use of virtuous anthropomorphic animal characters typical of the period, as well as a character that serves to represent the vices opposite to their virtues.

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[462] There are three Cowper poems in this anthology.

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The Bee, the Ant, and the Sparrow: A Fable[463]

Address'd to Phebe and Kitty C. at Boarding School

MY dears, 'tis said in days of old,
That beasts could talk, and birds could scold.
But now it seems the human race
Alone engross[464] the speaker's place.
Yet lately, if report be true,
(And much the tale relates to you)
There met a Sparrow, Ant, and Bee,
Which reason'd and convers'd as we.
Who reads my page will doubtless grant
That Phe's the wise industrious Ant.
And all with half an eye may see
That Kitty is the busy Bee.
Here then are two — but where's the third?
Go search your school, you'll find the Bird.
Your school! I ask your pardon fair,
I'm sure you'll find no Sparrow there.
Now to my tale — One summer's morn
A Bee rang'd o'er the verdant lawn;
Studious to husband[465] every hour,
And make the most of every flow'r.
Nimble from stalk to stalk she flies,
And loads with yellow wax her thighs;

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[463] *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes. By Several Hands.* Vol. V, R. Dodsley, 1763, pp. 169–174; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[464] *Engross* occupy
[465] *Husband* manage

With which the artist builds her comb,
And keeps all tight and warm at home:
Or from the cowslip's golden bells
Sucks honey to enrich her cells:
Or every tempting rose pursues,
Or sips the lilly's fragrant dews;
Yet never robs the shining bloom,
Or of its beauty or perfume.[466]
Thus she discharg'd in every way
The various duties of the day.
    It chanc'd a frugal Ant was near,
Whose brow was wrinkled o'er by care:
A great oeconomist[467] was she,
Nor less laborious than the Bee;
By pensive parents often taught
What ills arise from want of thought;
That poverty on sloth depends,
On poverty the loss of friends.
Hence every day the Ant is found
With anxious steps to tread the ground;
With curious search to trace the grain,
And drag the heavy load with pain.
    The active Bee with pleasure saw
The Ant fulfil her parents' law.
Ah! sister-labourer, says she,
How very fortunate are we!

---

[466] *Or of its beauty or perfume* either of its beauty or its perfume (likewise, the "or…or" structures in preceding lines)
[467] *Oeconomist* economist, in the sense of being concerned with planning and efficiency

Who taught in infancy to know
The comforts, which from labour flow,
Are independent of the great,
Nor know the wants of pride and state.
Why is our food so very sweet?
Because we earn, before we eat.
Why are our wants so very few?
Because we nature's calls pursue.
Whence our complacency of mind?
Because we act our parts assign'd.
Have we incessant tasks to do?
Is not all nature busy too!
Doth not the sun with constant pace
Persist to run his annual race?
Do not the stars, which shine so bright,
Renew their courses every night?
Doth not the ox obedient bow
His patient neck, and draw the plough?
Or when did e'er the generous steed
Withhold his labour or his speed?
If you all nature's system scan,
The only idle thing is man!
A wanton[468] Sparrow long'd to hear
Their sage discourse, and strait[469] drew near.
The bird was talkative and loud,
And very pert[470] and very proud;

---

[468] *Wanton* prone to recklessness or sexual promiscuity
[469] *Strait* immediately
[470] *Pert* disrespectful

As worthless and as vain a thing,
Perhaps as ever wore a wing.
She found, as on a spray[471] she sat,
The little friends were deep in chat;
That virtue was their favourite theme,
And toil and probity[472] their scheme:
Such talk was hateful to her breast,
She thought them arrant[473] prudes at best.
When to display her naughty mind,
Hunger with cruelty combin'd;
She view'd the Ant with savage eyes,
And hopt[474] and hopt to snatch her prize.
The Bee, who watch'd her opening bill,
And guess'd her fell[475] design to kill;
Ask'd her from what her anger rose,
And why she treated Ants as foes?
    The Sparrow her reply began,
And thus the conversation ran.
    Whenever I'm dispos'd to dine,
I think the whole creation mine;
That I'm a bird of high degree,[476]
And every insect made for me.
Hence oft I search the emmet[477] brood,

---

[471] *Spray* branch
[472] *Probity* the quality of adhering to moral values
[473] *Arrant* complete
[474] *Hopt* hopped
[475] *Fell* vile or villainous
[476] *Degree* status
[477] *Emmet* ant

For emmets are delicious food:
And oft in wantonness and play,
I slay ten thousand in a day.
For truth it is, without disguise,
That I love mischief as my eyes.
Oh! fie, the honest Bee reply'd,
I fear you make base man your guide;
Of every creature sure the worst,
Tho' in creation's scale the first!
Ungrateful man! 'tis strange he thrives,
Who burns the Bees, to rob their hives!
I hate his vile administration,
And so do all the emmet nation.
What fatal foes to birds are men
Quite to the Eagle from the Wren!
Oh! do not men's example take,
Who mischief do for mischief's sake;
But spare the Ant — her worth demands
Esteem and friendship at your hands.
A mind with every virtue blest,[478]
Must raise compassion in your breast.
Virtue! rejoin'd[479] the sneering bird,
Where did you learn that gothic[480] word?
Since I was hatch'd, I never heard,
That virtue was at all rever'd.
But say it was the ancients' claim,

[478] *Blest* blessed
[479] *Rejoin'd* retorted
[480] *Gothic* antiquated

Yet moderns disavow the name;
Unless, my dear, you read romances,
I cannot reconcile your fancies.
Virtue in fairy tales is seen
To play the goddess or the queen;
But what's a queen without the pow'r,
Or beauty, child, without a dow'r?[481]
Yet this is all that virtue brags,
At best 'tis only worth in rags.
Such whims my very heart derides,
Indeed you make me burst my sides.[482]
Trust me Miss Bee — to speak the truth,
I've copyed men from earliest youth;
The same our taste, the same our school,
Passion and appetite our rule.
And call me bird, or call me sinner,
I'll ne'er forego my sport or dinner.
A prowling cat the miscreant[483] spies,
And wide expands her amber eyes:
Near and more near Grimalkin[484] draws,
She wags her tail, protends[485] her paws;
Then springing on her thoughtless prey,
She bore the vicious bird away.
Thus in her cruelty and pride,

[481] *Dow'r* dowry, the money or property given to a groom by the bride's family upon their marriage
[482] *Burst my sides* laugh hard, as in the expression "side-splitting laughter"
[483] *Miscreant* a misbehaving or villainous person
[484] *Grimalkin* a domestic cat
[485] *Protends* extends

The wicked wanton Sparrow dy'd.

William Cowper

Priya Lail, Simon Fraser University

William Cowper (1731–1800) was born in Great Berkhamsted. His father, John Cowper, was the Rector of Berkhamsted, at the Church of St. Peter. Cowper's mother died in 1737, overwhelming him emotionally. After her death, William was sent to a local boarding school and then to Westminster School in London for eight years. He went on to study law in 1749 but did not pursue the career further. A year later, he fell in love with his cousin, Theodora Cowper; however, the engagement was called off by her father due to Cowper's depression.

Cowper endured a great amount of suffering in his lifetime. From grieving his mother's death, to dealing with his own mental health issues, there was always something that he was battling against. In 1763, Cowper had an anxiety attack at the age of thirty-two, evidence (to us) of an underlying severe anxiety disorder; however, at the time people believed that Cowper was insane. He even convinced himself that God was damning him eternally for sinning against the Holy Ghost. Because of this, he became more depressed and attempted to commit suicide three, possibly four, times but ultimately failed. He sought help for his mental illness from a physician, Dr. Cotton (who was also a poet and has a poem in this anthology), who temporarily persuaded him that he was delusional.

Cowper converted to Evangelical Christianity in 1764, before deciding to move in with the family of Mrs. Unwin, with whom he had a complicated platonic relationship. After a terrible dream in 1773, he became convinced that he was unable to be saved by any amount of prayer or by the church itself. To keep himself distracted from the conviction of his damnation, he took up an interest in pets such as dogs, cats, and birds. In addition to his interest in animals, Cowper found relief in carpentry and gardening.

When Cowper was fifty years old, he became serious about writing poetry. In 1782, he published a variety of poems such as "Table Talk," "The Progress of Error," "Truth," and "Human Frailty." "Human Frailty" was published in his book called *Poems by William Cowper of the Inner Temple, Esq.* ("of the Inner Temple" means someone with a law degree). "Human Frailty" explores the idea of man being weak in mental and emotional health. If we take into account his many attacks of insanity and attempts at suicide, this poem displays Cowper's sensitivity towards the concept of mental health issues. "Human Frailty" consists of twenty-

four lines in hymn stanza (alternating iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter in quatrains) with a rhyme scheme of ABAB.

"Human Frailty" did not receive much critical or public attention, but *The Task* (1785) gave him an incredible amount of exposure and built his reputation. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century, many considered him to be the most famous English poet. He was offered the laureateship (a prestigious award) for his famous poem *The Task* but declined the offer in 1788. In 1791, after working on them for several years, he published his blank verse translations of *The Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Five years later, Mrs. Unwin died. Cowper died in 1800 at the age of sixty-eight, due to a disease called dropsy (edema).

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Human Frailty[486]

1.

WEAK and irresolute[487] is man;
The purpose of to day,
Woven with pains into his plan,
To morrow rends away.

2.

The bow well bent and smart the spring,[488]
Vice seems already slain,
But passion[489] rudely snaps the string,
And it revives again.

3.

Some foe to his upright[490] intent
Finds out his weaker part,
Virtue engages his assent,[491]
But pleasure wins his heart.

4.

'Tis here the folly of the wise[492]
Through all his art we view,
And while his tongue the charge[493] denies,
His conscience owns it true.

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[486] *Poems by William Cowper,* J. Johnson, 1782, pp.311–313; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive. Frailty* "moral weakness; instability of mind; liability to err or yield to temptation" (*OED*)
[487] *Irresolute* "unresolved or undecided as to a course of action" (*OED*)
[488] *Spring* the action of the archery weapon
[489] *Passion* any strong emotion
[490] *Upright* "adhering to or following correct moral principles; of unbending integrity or rectitude; morally just honest, or honourable" (*OED*)
[491] *Assent* agreement
[492] *Wise* possibly a reference to 1 Corinthians 3:19
[493] *Charge* a legal accusation

5.

Bound on a voyage of awful[494] length
And dangers little known,
A stranger to superior strength,
Man vainly[495] trusts his own.

6.

But oars[496] alone can ne'er prevail
To reach the distant coast,
The breath of heav'n must swell the sail,
Or all the toil is lost.

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494 *Awful* inspiring awe
495 *Vainly* "with personal vanity; conceitedly" (*OED*) but also futilely
496 *Oars* referring to the objects with which to row a boat

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Mary Leapor

Beata Shifchik, Simon Fraser University

Mary Leapor (1722-1746) was a prolific labouring-class poet whose love for poetry began in childhood. Because she died at the age of twenty-four, she never had the chance of seeing her lifeworks published, and it was only after her death that she had gained appreciation for her talent and her poetry. Her posthumous collection of poetry was at first positively received and beloved, deemed "extremely fit for young ladies" (Whiston 41), but it then went out of fashion, causing Leapor to fall into near obscurity until she gained recent scholarly interest.

Leapor was born in the English town of Brackley in Northamptonshire. Growing up, she showed great interest in reading and writing, especially poetry, of which her mother disapproved. Yet she never stopped writing verses, even when she was busy at work. She became a kitchen maid for one family and then another, but eventually she became unemployed. By then, however, many of her poems had circulated around her hometown. It was during this period that her verses reached Bridget Freemantle. The two became close friends, and Freemantle not only encouraged her to write more, but she was also her patroness. Freemantle came from the gentry, and she organized a subscription for Leapor, which sought to fund and thus publish Leapor's works. But, before Freemantle could bring these poems into the public eye, Leapor unexpectedly died of measles in 1746.

Throughout her life, Leapor was generally in ill-health. She also suffered from depression and thought her own works unworthy of public attention, so much so that she even destroyed some of her earlier pieces. In fact, public attention made her anxious: "My Name to publick Censure I submit, / To be dispos'd as the World thinks fit" (Leapor, "Mira's Will," ll. 3–4). Yet, despite her apprehensive feelings about publicity and in turn the subscription, Leapor's final wish was for Freemantle to publish her poetry. Through Freemantle's efforts, Leapor's work appeared in the *London Magazine*, then her works were printed in two volumes, gaining a larger exposure than ever before.

"The Fall of Lucia" appears in *Poems Upon Several Occasions*, which was published in 1748, two years after Leapor's death. The poem itself is written in iambic pentameter and in the heroic couplet form, with one instance of a triplet. It is influenced by Restoration drama plots, Augustan poetry such as that by Pope

and Swift, and the pastoral genre, fashionable with upper-class readers at the time. Yet the poem is not merely typical. Leapor challenges the conventional genres of the eighteenth century, often blending them together. This is a tale of an innocent maiden who has fallen, and thereby is ruined, by having sex. The poem then shifts into a moral lesson on abstinence, vice and virtue, and female transgression. But behind those morals, there also lingers a sense of shame and guilt. Leapor either criticizes women like Lucia or she illustrates the perils of being a woman, from her own female and lower-class perspective.

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The Fall of Lucia[497]

LUCIA[498] was fair and bright as rising Day,
Sweet as *Arabia,*[499] or the Buds of *May*;[500]
Fresh as the Winds that sweep the dewy Hills,
Or Beds of Roses wash'd by healthy Rills:[501]
Whose Soul was softer than a trembling Dove,
Nor[502] knew a Failing till she learn'd to love.
Nor Fraud nor Scandal to her Lips were known,
And thought each Bosom[503] guiltless as her own.
Thus only arm'd with Innocence and Smiles,
She fell the Victim of a Tyrant's Wiles.[504]
So[505] lost from Shepherd and its mourning Dam,[506]
Through some lone Desart[507] roves a stragg'ling Lamb;
No Danger fears, but as he idly strays
Round ev'ry Bush the heedless Wanton[508] plays;
Till raging Wolves the beauteous Toy[509] surround,
Or foaming Tigers rend the mossy Ground:
Then from his Heart the guiltless Purple[510] flows,

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[497] *Poems upon several occasions: By Mrs. Leapor of Brackley in Northamptonshire*. J. Roberts, 1748, pp. 48–50; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[498] *Lucia* her name itself means light
[499] *Arabia* refers to fragrance, perfume, or spice
[500] *Buds of May* springtime, alludes to youthfulness but could also refer to Shakespeare's Sonnet 18
[501] *Rills* brooks
[502] *Nor* neither
[503] *Bosom* refers to the breast as a metaphor for emotions and the heart
[504] *Wiles* deceitful and cunning tricks
[505] *So* an indicator of the beginning of a simile
[506] *Dam* mother of a sheep
[507] *Desart* desert, a barren area
[508] *Wanton* a person who has no regard for others
[509] *Toy* refers to the actual lamb, but it is also a metaphor that denotes a person and their lack of value
[510] *Purple* a poetic term for blood

A grateful Morsel[511] to his hungry Foes:
Thus[512] wrap'd in Sorrows wretched *Lucia* lies,
Whose Sighs still answer to her streaming Eyes.
And *Damon*[513] still – Ah! faithless *Damon* cries,
No more those Lips like dewy Roses glow;
Her weary Lids no peaceful Slumbers know:
But left to strike her pensive Breast in vain,
And curse the Author of her lasting Pain.
Her Soul of Ease has took its long Adieu:
Hear this, ye Nymphs;[514] but hear and tremble too,
Ye Fair that lanch[515] in Pleasure's tempting Sea,
Though Fortune crowns you with a calmer Day,
And Joy's soft Gale[516] salutes your nimble Oar:
Where *Lucia*'s Fame was shipwreck'd on the Shore,
Yet let Reflexion[517] mark your gliding Days,
Nor drink too deeply in the Draught[518] of Praise:
For Flatt'ry is – "So say the learned Schools,
"The Bane[519] of Virgins and the Bait of Fools."
How happy she whose purer Spirit knows,
No Thought less harmless than a Saint's Repose,
Whose guiltless Charms[520] pursue no greater End,
But to rejoice a Parent or a Friend:

---

511 *Morsel* the smallest amount of food
512 *Thus* here begins the second element of the simile
513 *Damon* typical pastoral name for a man
514 *Nymphs* in pastoral conventions, youthful, virginal women
515 *Lanch* launch, set forth in a boat
516 *Gale* "a gentle breeze" (*OED*)
517 *Reflexion* alternative spelling of reflection
518 *Draught* "the 'drinking in' of something by the mind or soul" (*OED*)
519 *Bane* ruin and destruction
520 *Charms* refer to physical beauty

Whose Care it is her Passions to control,
And keep the Steerage[521] of a quiet Soul:
Then this shall grace her monumental Page,[522]
" In Youth admir'd, and belov'd in Age."

[521] *Steerage* nautical metaphor for guiding one's own life
[522] *Monumental Page* a written record, especially on a monument such as a tombstone

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Matthew Prior

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Fig. 1. Luca Giordano, *The Death of Seneca*

Matthew Prior was born in 1664 in Westminster, Middlesex, to George, a Dorset joiner, and Elisabeth Prior. George and his brothers, one of whom owned a Rhenish (wine) tavern, sent his eight-year-old son Matthew to receive his education at Westminster School. Showing an early interest in poetry, Prior excelled in the three years leading up to the untimely death of his father. Without his father's financial support, Prior left school and began working for his uncle, spending his spare time reading and translating. The Earl of Dorset, Charles Sackville found him reading the Roman poet Horace in his uncle's tavern. Impressed with his translation skills, Sackville sponsored the remainder of Prior's education, becoming Prior's first patron. In 1681 Prior was named a King's Scholar, which recognized his skills in classical languages, ultimately allowing him to go against the wishes of his sponsor and attend St. John's College until 1687. After his graduation, Prior drifted, eventually becoming tutor to the sixth Earl of Exeter's children in the middle of 1688.

Prior's appointment as Secretary to the English Ambassador at the Hague in 1690 marked the beginning of his political career. It was not long afterwards that

Prior found himself aligning with the Tories, who embodied the brotherhood and community that Prior valued. Prior, however, saw his political pull decline after the death of King William in 1702 and, up until the death of Queen Anne in 1714, he found more purpose in poetry than politics. Seventeen of Prior's poems were published by Edmund Curll in 1707 under the title *Poems on Several Occasions*. Prior, unsatisfied with the anthology, created his fifty-one-poem collection using the same title, published in early 1709 by Jacob Tonson.[523]

When Queen Anne died in 1714, Prior was recalled from France, where he was the acting ambassador, and placed under house arrest. The Whigs, who came to power under King George, confined him to his home. Prior, refusing to implicate his fellow Tories in treasonous activity, was eventually released two years later. Prior became so unpopular in 1718 that some of his friends, including Pope, Swift, Gay, and Arbuthnot, promoted a subscription to his collection as a way of supporting him. By subscribing to a poetry collection, people paid extra ahead of time and would be rewarded with a dedication or a special edition copy. This allowed Prior to continue living in relative comfort, along with the money he received from his Cambridge Fellowship.

"Picture of Seneca dying in a Bath, by Jordain: At the Right Honorable the Earl of Exeter's at Burleigh-House" was written as an occasional poem (something written for a specific occasion) and was published in this 1718 collection. The poem is in iambic tetrameter couplets, easily read aloud. While Prior wrote many occasional poems during his career, this is not amongst his most famous or popular works. Having been educated in classical literature, Prior's knowledge of Seneca and Nero would have been great enough that he could make connections between them and his own situation. In many ways, this poem reflects the betrayal he experienced during his years as a politician.

Prior wrote this poem on the occasion of seeing *The Death of Seneca*, which hangs in the third George room at Burghley House (see fig. 1). Having been sentenced to death by the Roman Emperor Nero, Seneca chose to bleed to death with his feet in a bath, taking poison to speed up the process when his demise became drawn out. In the foreground of the 246.5cm by 301cm oil on canvas piece, Seneca's students write down his final thoughts. In the background, a group of men and Roman soldiers watch on from the Roman countryside. Books are

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[523] Catalogues list the text as "[1708] 1709," which likely indicates it appeared before March 25 in 1709, which was still officially 1708: until 1752, England did not use the Jan. 1st start of the Gregorian calendar prevalent in Europe. Many publications from Jan.-Mar. in the years 1582–1752 are double dated or ambiguously dated. Tonson may have released the text early but dated it 1709.

scattered around Seneca's feet, and a dog sits facing the Stoic. This painting would have been available for Matthew Prior to view while tutoring the sixth Earl of Exeter's children and is still available for viewing at Burghley House in Peterborough, England.

Further Reading

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Picture of Seneca dying in a Bath, by Jordain: At the Right Honorable the Earl of Exeter's at Burleigh-House[524]

WHILE cruel NERO[525] only drains
The moral SPANIARD's[526] ebbing Veins,[527]
By Study worn, and slack with Age,
How dull, how thoughtless is his[528] Rage!
Heighten'd[529] Revenge He should have took;
He should have burnt his Tutor's[530] Book;
And long have reign'd[531] supream in Vice:
One nobler Wretch[532] can only rise;
'Tis He whose Fury shall deface
The Stoic's[533] Image in this Piece.[534]
For while unhurt, divine JORDAIN,[535]
Thy Work and SENECA's remain,
He still has Body, still has Soul,

---

[524] *Poems on Several Occasions,* J. Tonson and J. Barber, 1718, p.8; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*

[525] *Nero* fifth Emperor of Rome (54-68 CE), famous for his vices

[526] *Spaniard's* Seneca was born in Córdoba, Spain

[527] *Veins* ordered to commit suicide, Seneca bled to death in a warm tub, aided by poison

[528] *His* Nero's

[529] *Heighten'd* augmented

[530] *Tutor's* Seneca tutored Nero, beginning in late childhood

[531] *Reign'd* facing death by crucifixion, Nero fled the Roman senate and committed suicide

[532] *Wretch* someone deeply saddened or misfortunate, here an imagined person who would vandalize the painting

[533] *Stoic's* a school of Philosophy that preached the correlation between positive behaviour and positive experience and that the wise man is immune to misfortune

[534] *Piece* the painting *The Death of Seneca* by Luca Giordano

[535] *Jordain* while W. Pickering suggests in his 1835 collection *The Poetical Works of Matthew Prior: With the Life of Matthew Prior, Volume 1* that this painting was created by Jacques Jordaens, it is far more likely that this poem references *The Death of Seneca* by Luca Giordano, sometimes credited as L. Jordanus

And lives and speaks, restor'd and whole.

Elizabeth Singer Rowe

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Elizabeth Singer Rowe (1674-1737) was a talented poet and non-conformist religious writer of her time. Born in Ilchester, Somerset, Rowe was the eldest daughter of Walter and Elizabeth Singer (née Portnell). Her father was a strong non-conformist who greatly supported Rowe in a career that started in her pre-teens.

In her early twenties, Rowe wrote poems and sent them under the anonymous name Philomela to John Dunton's well-known periodical *Athenian Mercury*. He published her collection *Poems on Several Occasions* (1696), many of which were reprinted in the *Athenian Oracle* up until 1704. In this collection, Rowe's spiritual background is strongly demonstrated. For instance, "The Reflection" is a poem in which a female speaker pauses to reflect on the decision to have sex or not. Importantly, on this philosophically passionate reflection depend her life and soul.

Elizabeth Rowe's growing reputation earned her some romantic attention from male poets. However, it was not until 1709 that she met a young scholar in Bath, Thomas Rowe, who suited her and was thirteen years her junior. They married only a year later. Though supposedly a happy marriage, it did not last long. Thomas Rowe died merely five years later, leaving Rowe heart-broken. She would later publish an elegy "On the Death of Mr. Thomas Rowe" in a later edition of her *Poems on Several Occasions* (1717), which was admired by Alexander Pope.

Rowe's religious poetry and especially her collection of fictional letters called *Friendship in Death* (1728) made her extremely popular. Paula Backscheider notes that Rowe "revolutionized the characters, plots, and quests" of the epistolary novel genre (p. 3). Her balance of faith, reason, and a newfound conception of the female as autonomous and capable would be especially revolutionary.

We see such a balance in "The Reflection," a short dramatic monologue in heroic couplets, as the female speaker displays autonomy over her sexual desires and must reason through spiritual convictions to resist the temptation to give in. Similar accomplishments earned Rowe prestigious titles such as "'a Champion' for women against 'the Tyranny of the Prouder Sex,'" the "Pindaric Lady in the West," and the "the richest genius of her Sex" (Lonsdale, pp. 45–46). Several obituaries even noted of her respected work, "She has oblig'd the World with *Friendship in Death*, and *Letters Moral and Entertaining*, besides several excellent Poems in the Miscellanies" (quoted in Backscheider p. 4).

Rowe's influence did not cease in 1737 at the time of her death, but later her work became largely forgotten until the early twenty-first century.

Further Reading

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Lonsdale, Roger. *Eighteenth Century Women Poets: An Oxford Anthology*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990.

The Reflection[536]

Where gilde[537] my thoughts, *rash inclinations stay*,
And let me think what 'tis you fool away,
Stay ere it be too late, yet stay and take,
A short review of the great prize[538] at stake.
Oh! Stupid folly 'tis eternal Joy,
That I'm about to barter for a toy;[539]
It is my *God* oh dreadful hazard, where
Shall I again the boundless loss repair!
It is my *Soul* a Soul that cost the blood,
And painful agonies of an humbled God,[540]
Oh blest occasion[541] made me *stay to think*,
Ere I was hurri'd off the dangerous brink,
Should I have took the charming venom[542] in,
And cop'd with all these *terrors for a sin*,
How equal[543] *had my condemnation been?*

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[536] *Poems on Several Occasions*. First edition, John Dunton, 1696, p.43; *Eighteenth-Century Poetry Archive*
[537] *Gilde* to make something gold, usually with gold leaf; some editions say glide, referencing moving thoughts; later editions also add punctuation not present in the 1696 edition, e.g. ll. 5-9
[538] *Great prize* the female speaker's virtue/virginity
[539] *A toy* having sex
[540] *Painful agonies of an humbled God* the crucifixion of Christ that allowed humans the free gift of salvation
[541] *Blest occasion* God prompting her to think and thereby abstain from having sex
[542] *Charming venom* either the seducing words of the male lover or his semen
[543] *Equal* could mean either her suffering will be the same in this life and in damnation if she partakes in sex, or her condemnation would be fair and just

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