



Bawdy Brits

West End Wit

Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era



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February 18 – April 16, 2011



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Acknowledgements

Bawdy Brits & West End Wit: Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era is a curatorial project by senior art history students participating in an exhibition seminar at Dickinson College. The annual seminar is designed to introduce students to the practice of preparing an exhibition and catalogue. Working with objects drawn from The Trout Gallery's permanent collection, the curators selected the works for the exhibition, organized the material into major themes, and prepared the following essays.

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Cover:

George Cruikshank, *Mixing a Recipe for Corns* (detail), 1835. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College (cat. 8).

James Gillray, *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver* (detail), 1804. Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College (cat. 33).

Back Cover:

James Gillray, *Very Slippery-Weather* (detail), 1808. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College (cat. 37).

Frontispiece:

James Gillray, *Very Slippery-Weather*, 1808. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College (cat. 37).

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Introduction: British Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era at The Trout Gallery

Phillip Earenfight, Seminar Advisor
Director, The Trout Gallery

On February 10, 1808, Hannah Humphrey published James Gillray's *Very Slippy-Weather*, a satirical print that shows a comical scene of a man slipping on the icy street outside her print shop at No. 27 St. James's Street, London (Fig. 1).¹ Behind the unfortunate man, who struggles to maintain his wig, coins, and snuff box, to say nothing of his composure, a crowd has gathered at Humphrey's windows to view the prints on display. The prints—all by Gillray—feature a range of topics from contemporary politics, to health, personalities, leisure activities, and life in the city. This simple etching, which sold for little more than a shilling—or two if hand colored—provides a view into a popular aspect of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century London and is a fitting introduction to *Bawdy Brits & West End Wit, British Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era*.

Humphrey's print shop was located on St. James's Street, west of Piccadilly and between St. James's Park and Mayfair—in the broader area known as the "West End" (Fig. 2).² The West—or "Worst"—End of London was, during the century following Shakespeare's death, the largely undeveloped area between old center of London and the city of Westminster, along the northwest bend in the Thames. Save for key streets that paralleled the river and connected the two cities—The Strand and White Hall—much of the growth along this stretch was restricted to the areas near the wharf. However, during the seventeenth century, lack of space in the old city forced the development of the West End, pushing



Fig. 1. James Gillray, *Very Slippy-Weather*, 1808. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 37).

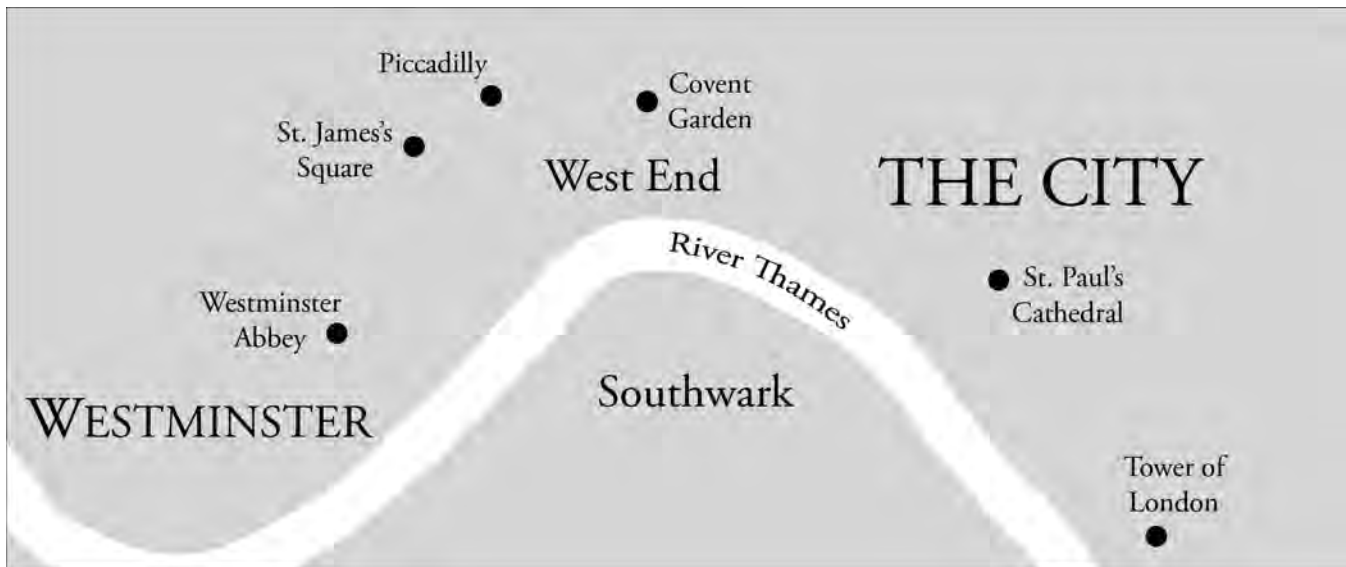


Fig. 2. *Map of London*.

new development in the areas north and northwest, well beyond Piccadilly, toward the fashionable neighborhoods of Mayfair, Soho, and Bloomsbury. Today this area houses many of the city's major sites, including Charing Cross, the National Gallery, the Royal Academy, and Trafalgar Square. However, during the Georgian era, this highly desirable section was home to many of the city's most prominent officials and royals, coffee houses, gin halls, art dealers, social clubs, taverns, print-sellers, and brothels. Regarding the latter, it is estimated that as much as 20 percent of the city's female population was engaged in prostitution and many of them centered their activities at Covent Garden and the West End.³ Although the eastern edge of the West End merged with the area near Covent Garden, its western edge terminated in the ever fashionable St. James's area, which abutted the royal palace and Westminster to the south. Thus, the West End housed a curious mix of the very wealthy, the ever fashionable, the politically powerful, the highly ambitious, the middling merchant, and the very poor, all with a range of distractions to fit every budget. Such an environment provided endless fodder for satirical printmakers and publishers, who made their neighborhoods and world of London the subject of their prints.

Such aspects of urban life and its challenges are well represented in *Very Slippy-Weather* and in other light-hearted scenes such as Richard Dighton's *A London Nuisance. Ple 4th. A Pleasant Way To Lose An Eye.* (1821) or George Cruikshank's *Symptoms of Life in London—or—Love, Law, & Physic.* (1821) (Figs. 3, 4).⁴ While *A London Nuisance* shares in the same slapstick humor as *Very Slippy-Weather*, Cruikshank's *Symptoms of Life in London* points to the biting satire one frequently associates with this genre of prints. In this example, we see in the left scene a drunk dandy flanked by prostitutes who stand outside a tavern; in the middle a bailiff and dandy appear on the street; and on the right, a doctor and nurse tend to a patient. Although each scene represents an aspect of London society, read together they suggest a progression from unchecked lust to its potential legal and health consequences. As we see in this last scene, as well as in the prints featured in the windows of *Very Slippy-Weather*, health and health care was a prominent subject among the printmakers of this period. Indeed, Thomas Rowlandson's *Palatable Physic* (c. 1810) comments on the role of spirits in health, as a parson, a woman, and a gout-ridden man drink bottles of "sham pain" (Fig. 5). The parson, with a sermon on temperance in his pocket, proclaims, "This good appetite gives,"; the woman responds, "Cures the vapours also—"; while the man complains, "Will it cure the cursed pain I've got in my toe?"

Moving further into the domestic realm, the satirical printmakers took a no-holds-barred approach to comical and



Fig. 3. Richard Dighton, *A London Nuisance. Ple 4th. A Pleasant way to Lose an Eye.*, 1821. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 13).



Fig. 4. George Cruikshank, *Symptoms of Life in London—or—Love, Law, & Physic.*, 1821 Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 5).

lewd subject matter, as we see in Thomas Rowlandson's *The Wooden Leg—or Careful Landlady* (1809) (Fig. 6). In this print, the ever-tidy landlady (and procuress?) has mistaken a sailor's peg-leg for the handle of a bed-warmer, both of which crudely allude to the sailor's penis.

In addition to making prints dealing with London life at home and on the street, the satirical printmakers spent a great deal of their time lampooning all matters political, including the crown and royals, parliament, ranking



Fig. 5. Thomas Rowlandson, *Palatable Physic*, c. 1810. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 46).

members of the Anglican church, the Papacy, and the French. For example, in Theodore Lane's *The C-R-L--E Column* (1821) (Fig. 7), he satirizes the widely described private affairs of Caroline of Brunswick, the wife of George IV, and momentarily—by her claim—the Queen of England (Fig. 7). Although Lane dared not spell out her name completely, there is no doubt about the subject of the triumphal column. Among the many comical references to her highly public sexual affairs is the book held by the statue on the left of the column, which is titled "Boccaccio illustrated."⁵ Clearly, no figure was spared the bite of the satirical printmaker.

As this selection—including Gillray's *Very Slippy-Weather*—makes clear, the range and nature of subject matter covered by the satirical printmakers were boundless. Prints were sold individually and produced at a rate of several new releases each day. As *Very Slippy-Weather* suggests, members of the general public gathered for each new release to be posted in the print shop windows. Collectors of these prints included members of the highest levels, who were themselves often subjects of the prints, as well as shopkeepers and middling sorts. While many of the prints appear to have been designed with a male audience foremost in mind, women print sellers and print collectors are well documented. Because satirical prints were not regarded in the same manner as an etching by Rembrandt or Dürer, they were often handled casually over the centuries and are frequently in poor condition.

While modern historians of the Georgian era regularly

reference satirical prints in their books and articles, surprisingly few have made this medium a focus of their work. This is not for lack of source material. As Frederic George Stephens and Mary Dorothy George demonstrated in their twelve-volume *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, the British Museum alone holds more than 5,000 such items, the bulk of which date from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶ That such a treasure of material has not been probed more fully is due in part to the liminal nature of satirical prints. Despite the wit and artistry they display, satirical prints were neither fine art nor text documents. Neither the realm of art history nor history, satirical prints are frequently used simply to illustrate a point that had already been made through the analysis of other images or texts, but were not interrogated and analyzed on the basis of their own merits as a hybrid image-text object. However, over the past few decades, academic scholars and museum curators have looked more closely at satirical prints in their own right and have yielded rich and textured results. Among these studies, most notable and recent are Diana Donald's *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (1996), Richard Godfrey and Mark Hallett's *James Gillray: The Art of Caricature* (2001), and Vic Gatrell's *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (2006).⁷

In organizing the exhibition and catalogue, *Bawdy Brits and West End Wit: British Satirical Prints of the Georgian Era*, the goal is to build upon recent developments in the scholarship of satirical prints, considering the works on their own

terms and from a variety of angles. The essays in this catalogue were researched and written by senior art history students at Dickinson College. Like the prints in Humphrey's windows, the essays and the exhibition itself survey a number of themes addressed in the satirical prints. The catalogue opens with Grace Zell's study on the relationship between British satirical prints and ancient Greek satirical theatre. It is followed by Carey Stadnick's analysis of the close relationship between text and word, arguing that, as a hybrid form, these prints must be considered from a distinct hybrid perspective that is neither exclusively image nor text based. The next pair of essays by Emily Bastian and Matthew Morowitz considers prints that deal with British identity and politics. Bastian looks at the image of John Bull and how it ultimately replaces Britannia as the symbol of England and Englishness, particularly during the years leading up to and after the Napoleonic Wars. Closely related is Morowitz's essay, which considers the satirical printmakers' approach to the Napoleonic Wars and how they contrast sharply with prints of the same subject made by Francisco Goya. Matters of health are addressed in Christy Gray's study of quacks in satirical prints, which focuses in particular on William Hogarth's sharp comparison of doctors to undertakers. Lauren Woodcock considers a series of prints that lampoon the English adoption of French manners and hair styles, while Emily Maran examines images of prostitutes. Allison Schell's essay on Hannah Humphrey provides a view into the world of print publishing by one of the leading dealers in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century London. Laura Wilson's essay considers the various half-hearted attempts to regulate and control the production and sale of satirical prints, particularly those that represented powerful political figures. The final pair of essays by Margaret Staudter and Aimee Laubach examines classical and fine art references in satirical prints, showing how such elements play a fundamental role in the iconography of the prints and suggests a degree of learning that the printmakers and their clients possessed. Taken together, the essays provide a fascinating introduction to the nature of satirical printmaking during the Georgian era. The essays are followed by an illustrated catalogue, which features the forty-eight prints that make up *Bawdy Brits & West End Wit*. The works were selected from a larger pool of well over one-hundred prints to present a survey of themes commonly represented at this time—life in London, health, love and lust, famous personalities, vanity, leisure activities, and politics.

THE GINSBURG CARICATURE COLLECTION

Bawdy Brits & West End Wit would not have been possible without the generosity of the family of Robert and Wendy Ginsburg, who, through the Brookes V Limited Partnership,



Fig. 6. Thomas Rowlandson, *The Wooden Leg—or Careful Landlady*, 1809. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.



Fig. 7. Theodore Lane, *The C-R-L-E Column*, 1821. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 44).

have promised the prints to The Trout Gallery. The prints were acquired beginning in 1952 by Dr. and Mrs. Leon Ginsburg, parents of Robert Ginsburg.

Dr. Ginsburg was born in 1897 in Baltimore and was a first generation American. His parents were Lithuanian and came to this country in the 1880s. Dr. Ginsburg attended public schools, graduating from Baltimore City College, an all-boys high school, in 1915. He then went on to Mt. Vernon College for two years and then the University of Maryland Medical School where he earned his MD in 1920. After graduating, he interned at Sinai Hospital and began practicing as a family doctor in 1922 or 1923. Ultimately, he gained an interest in dermatology and in 1926 with \$900, Dr. Ginsburg traveled to Vienna, Austria for further study. From 1927 until his death in 1963, he practiced dermatology and became the Head of Dermatology at Sinai Hospital as well as an Associate Professor of Dermatology at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Hilda Ginsburg Stern was born in Baltimore in 1909, the daughter of Esther and Harry Kaufmann, also born in this country. Hilda graduated from Western High School, an all-girls public school, in 1926 and then attended the Peabody Music Conservatory for two years studying the classical piano. She spent two more years at Goucher College in Baltimore. In 1931, she met Leon and at the age of 23 they married.

On an extensive trip to Europe in the summer of 1952, together with their son, Robert, and on their first stop in London, the Ginsburgs became intrigued with caricatures which they saw at the Portobello Road Saturday Antique show and at various galleries around London including the area of Camden Passage. Over a period of ten years, the Ginsburgs returned to London several times and continued their acquisition of prints with a medical or political theme. Hilda Ginsburg, Leon's wife, thought this was a good way to get her husband out of the office and interested in things other than his busy practice as a dermatologist. When Dr.

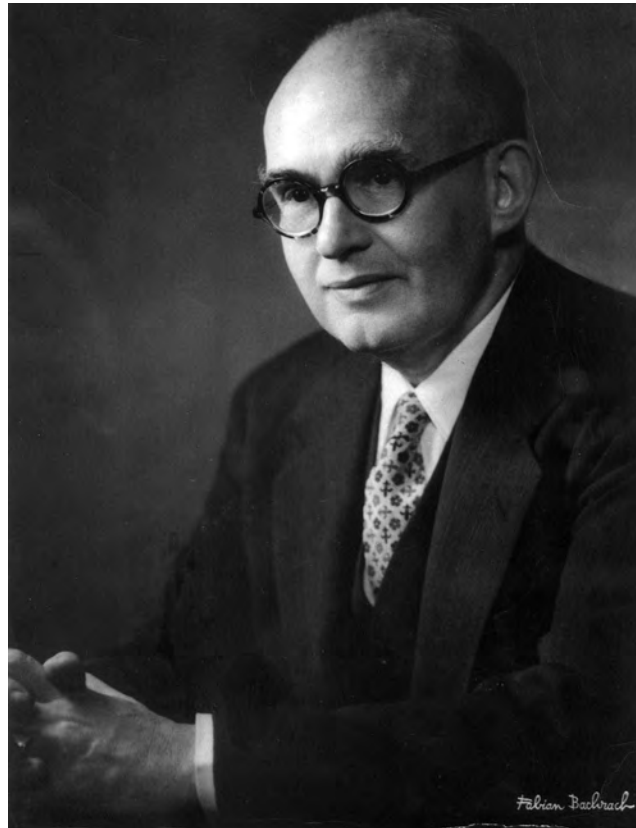


Fig. 8. Dr. Leon Ginsburg.

Ginsburg died in early 1963, his widow, Hilda, held on to the prints. When she remarried in 1966, she retained a number of framed prints in her home as well as that of her son, Robert.

The Ginsburg Family, through the Brookes V Limited Partnership is delighted to donate the bulk of their caricature collection to The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, in memory of Leon Ginsburg and Hilda Ginsburg Stern who so enjoyed the acquisition of these prints.

1 Richard Godfrey and Mark Hallett, *James Gillray: The Art of Caricature* (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), 199–200; Draper Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts: Caricatures by James Gillray* (London: Phaidon Press, 1966), 175.

2 On the West End and its place in the satirical print trade, see Vic Gattrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 51–81.

3 On Covent Garden and its pleasures, see Gattrell, *City of Laughter*, 82–109.

4 For *A London Nuisance and Symptoms of Life in London*, see Frederic George Stephens and Mary Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 12 vols. (1870–1954; reprint, London: The British Museum, 1978), 10:273–274 and 268, respectively.

5 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 10:273–274 and 268, respectively.

6 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 10:197–198.

7 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996). Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts*; Diana Donald and Christiane Banerji, trans. and ed., *Gillray Observed: The Earliest Account of his Caricatures in "London und Paris"* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Godfrey and Hallett, *James Gillray: The Art of Caricature*, Gattrell, *City of Laughter*.

Grace Zell

James Gillray's —*a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!—i.e.—Emancipation of "All the Talents" (1807) (Fig. 9) represents King George III responding violently to his ministers after they presented him with the Catholic Emancipation Bill, which reduced or removed the restrictions on British Roman Catholics, enabling them to own land, inherit property, or join the army. While this riotous scene never occurred as such, it expresses, in a comical way, the attitudes and emotions of those involved. The print shows an imagined scenario based on actual events and played by real characters, although exaggerated for humorous effect. Satirical prints such as this one were widespread during the Georgian era, portraying national politics and foreign policy as well as fashion and gossip. The prints were created to entertain but also to draw attention to problems in society, however, without reconciling them. The satirical tradition that developed within British print culture has its roots in ancient Greek satire. Just as Ancient Athenian playwrights sought to point out problems in society through entertainment and topical treatment of the issues, the goal of the prints was to entertain the viewing audience, making them aware of societal problems, but without actually providing the means to solve them.¹ The satirical prints of the Georgian era successfully combined topical wit with a complex, yet inclusive, mocking spirit to reinforce and identify England's social and political problems.*

The classical satire that most closely aligned with the British satirical prints derives from the idea of "Old Comedy." The key characteristics of Old Comedy were topicality, festivity, and complexity. The topical nature of the subject matter features actual people (although characterized) in association with actual political or social events. The targets of the topicality were as wide ranging as the events, with foreigners as a particularly popular subject. Old Comedy's emphasis on known personalities and contemporary issues, such as politics and wars, sometimes makes it difficult for the modern viewer to understand the humor without a full history of the time period. In contrast, when presented to the original audiences, these kinds of self-mocking jokes provided a true sense of action for the viewers, as if the illusion of the theatre was simply a joke, too. The festive tenor associated with Old Comedy generated a tradition of openly bawdy and rude jokes. Obvious costumes, slapstick, and ridiculous behavior aided the series of topical subjects and provided the audience with recognizable visual clues to the characters. The dirty jokes also reflected the relaxation in standard behavior. Finally, the complex scenarios that were



Fig. 9. James Gillray, —*a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!—i.e.—Emancipation of "All the Talents" (1807). Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 34).*

presented in the Old Comedy often included various entertainments, puns, invented silly words, and a play on accents. The festive attitude was again amplified by a strong emphasis on absurdity and fantasy elements within the plot.

Originally, Old Comedy was associated with the Greek festival of *komos*, an intoxicated and noisy celebration, such as a festival of Dionysus. During the *komos*, a standard practice was the verbal abuse and mockery of onlookers who were not participating in the drunken revelry.² It is this festival attitude, where normal behavior was suspended, that provides the necessary background to the spirit of the ancient Athenian Old Comedy. This early satire was the uninhibited expression of free speech and it was exceptional in the fact that it could shape popular opinions of political and social life. Of course, this freedom was bound to an understanding that viewers could separate the satirical festival attitude from the normal life of the city. While early satire poked fun at individuals, it did so in a way that emphasized general aspects of Athenian society. Just as the festivals gave the Athenians a space where comedy could be practiced in an environment that functioned outside the normal attitudes, the market for satirical prints of the Georgian era, which were sold cheaply by print and book sellers, also created a space that functioned outside societal norms and politeness. The print publishers were able to market gossip, poke fun at rival nations, or portray known personalities in a less than flattering light, even the king, without facing severe punishment. Both the Athenian dramas and the Georgian prints thrived in the liminal space where free speech, the absurd, and often, fantastical situations were allowed to flourish.

TOPICAL SUBJECT MATTER

Like the Old Comedy, satirical prints tended to rely on topical subjects, as a commentary on the local issues and real, known personalities. In —*a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!*— *i.e.*—*Emancipation of "All the Talents*, Gillray did not hesitate to characterize King George III as a mad, anti-Catholic extremist. Indeed, political personalities were one of the most heavily featured and popular prints as the subjects would have been familiar to the entire population. The men and women featured in these political prints provided plenty of material—especially under the threat of Napoleonic invasion—for the satirists to make seriously biting jokes. From the English Foreign Secretary to the powerful Prince Regent, no one was above the reach of the satirists' mocking commentary on societal issues.

In *Phaeton alarm'd!* (1808) (Fig. 10), Gillray satirizes a current political issue of the day. George Canning, the new Foreign Secretary and famous Anti-Jacobin under the Pitt administration, appears as Phaeton, the ill-fated half-mortal son of Apollo. Members of the opposition government, who appear as constellations and signs of the zodiac, confront Canning as he races the chariot of state across the constellations. The oppositional government, better known as the "Broad Bottoms," blocks the path of the chariot, challenging Canning. The Broad Bottoms was a national unity government formed by Lord Grenville to make peace with France, despite all their different political backgrounds and party associations. Particularly menacing is Lord Grenville as Scorpio, with members of the Broad Bottom government on his shell. Canning's most outspoken political enemy, Lord Horwick, appears as a fire-breathing python. The print suggests that Canning, like Phaeton, will lose control of the chariot and come to a fiery demise. Indeed, its wheels appear to crush the scales of justice labeled "Copenhagen," which sharply alludes to Canning's failed campaign against the Danish Navy that helped pave the way for Napoleonic destruction across Europe. In the print, this destruction is represented through a tiny figure of Napoleon riding the Great Bear (Ursa Major) across a fiery Europe. While this image exaggerates the rate and force of Napoleonic destruction, it suggests that Canning's current trajectory will face harsh attacks from both the opposition government and the threat of foreign invasion. For those less familiar with classical mythology, Gillray provided the relevant passage from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which describes Phaeton's adventure. Politics aside, this print also pokes fun at the French, representing Napoleon small and boney, in contrast to the well-fed British politicians, who are all big and corpulent. While this print seems to be an overt attack on George Canning, it more importantly addresses the criticisms of the government in general and draws attention to threat



Fig. 10. James Gillray, *Phaeton alarm'd!*, 1808. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 38).



Fig. 11. George Cruikshank, *The Prince of Wales or the Fisherman at Anchor*, 1812. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

presented by Napoleon. In the print, Gillray recasts known political figures as mythical creatures or constellations in a comic narrative. The added element of fantasy and obvious absurdity enhanced the potency of the satire.

The Prince of Wales—George IV, Prince Regent and future king—was another popular subject in the Georgian prints, for both his political dealings and his sordid social and personal life. The Prince Regent provided a great deal of topical material for the printmakers and his appearance tended to be one that was heavily characterized and caricatured.³ In *The Prince of Wales or the Fisherman at Anchor* (1812), George Cruikshank shows the Regent as an enormous whale hooked by the current Tory Prime Minister, Perceval (Fig. 11).⁴ The depiction of a whale, with a comic oversized head, curly hair, and sideburns and his corpulent body, would have been easily recognized as King George IV. Indeed, Cruikshank's caricature of George IV became so popular that other engravers adapted these features and soon it became commonplace to associate the Prince Regent with

them. Eventually, Cruikshank's caricature became an easily identifiable emblem that determined George's image for many years, even after the king's death. Cruikshank's playful, yet critical, distortion of the Prince Regent as a whale became a biting symbol of his reign and criticized both his physical appearance and his decadent court expenses. The physical distortions are fictionalized but the behaviors they stem from and some of the physical features are exaggerated to express the sentiments of his subjects on the king's spending habits and adultery. Such visual distortion and caricature was a common element in British satirical prints, and was an effective way to poke fun at the object of their humor.

Comparatively, Old Comedy, as in the case of Aristophanic satire, ridiculed known personalities by exaggerating their flaws for a comic effect. In *Clouds*, Aristophanes sketches a distorted character of Socrates and his school of thought by implying that philosophy is merely the manipulation of words. *Clouds* exaggerates the known personality of Socrates to try to prove the ridiculousness of his philosophy, its practice, and popularity. Like the Gillray print, a figure in a position of power or of status is mocked and exaggerated to the delight of the audience, expressing thoughts and sentiments directly to those in question. As noted earlier, this type of satire functions outside societal norms and pushes the boundaries of appropriate behavior. The satirist exaggerates in the face of opposition and so satire is never considered fair toward the party under attack. However, this unfair treatment reveals issues that otherwise may not have been addressed. Similar to the mockery of the Prince of Wales, Aristophanes created a fictionalized and exaggerated version of an actual general in order to express the cynicism soldiers might have had towards him. In *Clouds*, the braggart general Lamachus is portrayed as a self-important dope whose oversized crest and shield is used to showcase his conceited nature. He is announced to the audience: "Hail Lamachus! You whose eyes flash with lightning/Appear and come to our rescue, hero of the Gorgon Crest!" His ridiculous entrance and comically oversized shield only add to the ridicule of the real Athenian general this was directed towards.⁵ Lamachus is comical because he fails to recognize his own faults. Likewise, Gillray employs exaggeration and a distortion of the familiar to draw attention to the truth behind high society's closed doors. The distortion provides the audience with a clearly visible way to mock the subject of the satire. The British monarchy was as salacious and scandalous as could be and the satirists reminded the public of this. However, the humor was also meant to be entertaining and topical and was not meant to incite change, only to poke fun and sell prints.



Fig. 12. Attributed to George Townley Stubbs, *His Highness in Fitz*, 1786. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

FESTIVE TENOR

Regarding the topical and festive aspects, caricatures of known personalities, bawdy jokes, and rude humor were immensely popular in Georgian prints. One of the most salacious scandals of the Georgian era was the affair and illicit marriage between the Prince of Wales and his mistress Mrs. Fitzherbert.⁶ *His Highness in Fitz* (1786) shows the prince in bed with Mrs. Fitzherbert (Fig. 12). Here the printmaker boldly illustrates the Prince of Wales and his mistress engaging in even the lowest tavern-like antics of libertines. Again, this unseemly behavior, in terms of how the monarch was usually portrayed, enforces a connection between the devices used in Old Comedy and the devices seen in the Georgian satirical prints. This kind of behavior would have been especially entertaining to the people of Georgian England because the satirists dared to portray the powerful monarchy in an embarrassing situation. This print also implies a complete and blatant disrespect for the English monarchy in a mainly loyalist age.⁷ Old Comedy devices of dirty jokes and inappropriate humor show a complete disrespect for authority and take full advantage of the festival attitude that accompanied the freedom of speech. Ordinarily, citizens may not have expressed such opinions on the affairs of the royal family, but the printmakers functioned outside this societal norm and voiced the unheard thoughts of the general public.

However, this rude humor was not limited to the monarchy but can be found in representations of other classes. *The Wooden Leg—or Careful Landlady* (1809) shows two sailors in a cheap lodging house. One is soundly sleeping, while the other sits up in bed to yell at the landlady because she has pulled on his wooden leg believing it to be the handle of a warming pan (Fig. 13). The surface level humor is simply comical because the woman has mistaken

his leg for the warming pan. The underlying and rather rude joke is that both the sailor's peg or the warming pan handle leg can be construed as something else—the sailor's genitals. While not as overtly crude as *His Highness in Fitz*, this print is another example of the popularity of dirty jokes throughout the Georgian era and that these jokes were not limited to known personalities or people of status. Both prints also touch on the element of absurdity and wordplay that was closely connected with the festival tenor of both Old Comedy and the satirical prints.

COMPLEXITY

While the complex nature of the prints can be extended to a variety of topics under that general heading, the complexities of wordplay in this visual tradition are the most entertaining. Complex and clever wordplay is both closely aligned with the festival nature of the prints, as well as some of the more absurd elements of the caricatures. The title *His Highness in Fitz* cleverly implies the Prince Regent is “in” Fitz (in terms of sexual intercourse) as well as in the middle of an orgasmic “fit.”⁸

This use of the pun is also repeated in Cruikshank's *The Prince of Whales*. In this instance, Cruikshank replaces “Wales” with “Whales,” referring to the Prince's exaggerated corpulence. This pun is further amplified by showing the Prince as a massive whale instead of as a man. This absurdity completes the complex nature of the print in both wordplay and in the actual image. A similar absurdity in caricature is used in *Phaeton Alarm'd!*, where Gillray portrays members of the opposition government as giant constellations which clearly leans toward an absurd representation. The constellation Scorpio—Lord Grenville—has been given an especially large rear to emphasize his membership in the Broad Bottom opposition government. This element of caricature and fantasy was often used in the Old Comedy tradition where the humor was unrestricted and the plot elements included impossible situations. Like the comedians of Old Comedy, the satirists of the Georgian prints were able to explore the limits of humor in ridiculous caricature and in clever wordplay.

While the satirical prints of Georgian London shared many qualities with the Old Comedy of fifth century Athens, it also shared qualities with the later comedic traditions of the Greeks and Romans—the New Comedy. In particular, both the satirical printmakers and their New Comedy counterparts relied heavily on stereotypical characters or “types”—often related to professions—as a comic device. Samuel De Wilde's print, *John Bull in a Fever*. (1809), pokes fun at one of the most reliable comic types—quack doctors and the practice of medicine (Fig. 14). In this print, John Bull, who stands for the English every man, sits in a chair whilst numerous quack



Fig. 13. Thomas Rowlandson, *The Wooden Leg—or Careful Landlady*, 1809. Engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.

doctors converge on him, touching, pulling, and subjecting him with various treatments.⁹ John Bull seems uneasy amid the chaos and the quack doctors. While not all medical doctors were considered quacks, in the context of satirical prints, the satirist draws attention to the questionable state of medicine and presents a stock character that all viewers could appreciate, standing in place of a specific or known doctor. Satire frequently relies on stereotypical characters and the quack doctor proved to be an almost timeless character in satire from antiquity to the Georgian age. This print represents the comical world that exists, suggesting perhaps that it ought to be otherwise.

END OF AN ERA

In 1820, after over forty years of verbal and visual abuse, King George IV sought to censor satirical printmakers who were critical of him.¹⁰ Although censorship often benefits the development of satire—because it forces the satirists to employ creative guises and allegory to mask the identity of the individual or institution they are mocking—King George IV nevertheless aimed to stop production at the source. He had his ministers go directly to the publishing houses to buy out existing prints as well as the copper plates. While this approach offered him a margin of protection from the satirists, his individual efforts at official censorship was dwarfed by a growing cultural trend that favored greater decorum in the public realm. This new era marked a shift in the political culture and a shift in what was considered “polite humor.” The rise of the middle class contributed to this shift, as they still wanted to display the absurdity of the customs and politics of the higher classes. With this mounting tension, satirists like George Cruikshank began producing more and more blatantly radical prints that actually called for social revolution and hinted at how to carry out



Fig. 14. Samuel De Wilde, *John Bull in a Fever*, 1809. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 11).

revolutionary activities. The print market reflects this trend, too, as the print shops migrate from occupying spaces in the fashionable West End to moving into middle- and lower-class neighborhoods.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century, the Old Comedy of satire was moving away from its origins in public visual entertainment. Humor now had to abide by the new rules of politeness and ruled out any rude humor. Jibes and biting remarks about drinking, bawdy behavior, and affairs also disappeared. As the Georgian era gave way to the Victorian, satire began to change and move away from the Old Comedy characteristics. This is inherently connected with the political atmosphere as people began to move away from engaging the government in the same way as they had in the eighteenth century. The spirit of satire and the celebration of exaggeration began to lose focus after 1820. The emphasis on topical political and personal matters of those in power were no longer sources of humor as the

middle class continued their upward climb and visual satire started offering advice on the issues of the day. This shift in print culture marks the movement away from the Old Comedy Greek satirical tradition where an exaggerated narrative gave a voice to opinions that could never be spoken outside the festival context.

Satirical printmakers of the late eighteenth century strove to make fun of problems in their society and government. The topicality, festivity, and complex narratives of the satire all served to create a bold form of entertainment among the citizens of London. If Old Comedy flourishes in a stable society that understands place outside societal norms, then Georgian England was the prime location for it to take root. The radical satirists blossomed in England's freedom of press, where their words could be a "Palladium of Liberty" and the structure and practice of Old Comedy satire could be upheld.¹¹

1 Antony Andrewes, *The Greeks* (New York: Knopf, 1967), 224.

2 Stephen Halliwell, "Aristophanic Satire," in *English Satire and the Satiric Tradition*, ed. Claude Rawson (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Inc., 1984), 7.

3 Leonard Feinberg, *Introduction to Satire* (Ames: The Iowa State University Press, 1967), 30.

4 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 511.

5 Aristophanes, *Acharnians*, 566–569.

6 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 12.

7 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 12.

8 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 12.

9 On John Bull, see Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2003). On eighteenth-century health practices, see Roy Porter, *Health for Sale: Quackery in England 1660–1850* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1989).

10 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 530.

11 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 198.

Carey Stadnick

The use of words and text is an intrinsic part of satirical prints of eighteenth-century London. In James Gillray's *Push-Pin*. (1797), text provides the title in the lower margin of the print (Fig. 15). It serves to solidify the image's tone and further the innuendo hinted at in the ample rump of the woman on the left and the phallic angularity of the man pressuring her on the right. Copyright laws required that the print identify the title, the artist name, publisher, and date, but often the artists used words to further the range and type of text added to prints. The prints are defined by discursive titles, marked with margins filled with prose, and divided by speech bubbles emanating from the mouths of caricatures. Yet in much of the critical work devoted to satirical prints, the words are secondary to the image. They are considered subordinate to the visual scene, which itself is frequently regarded as simplistic and limited, requiring some linguistic explanation. Yet, within the prints, text is so conspicuously present that it is difficult to accept that its function should be supplemental. The two forms, the text and the image, are inextricably linked and, emerging from the emblematic tradition, are equally dependent on one another to produce comic effect. The text is the representation of the literary tradition in which the entire medium of the print participates. It provides layers of content, which the reader must unpack, process, and analyze in conjunction with the image. For viewers accustomed to and vested in a literary tradition, the intricacies of a layered conceit, an apt nickname, or a delicately woven series of puns were not just welcomed but relished. The function of the visual imagery is both comical and satirical in essence, but the unification of the visual with the satirical qualities of the text generates deeper levels of humor, levels that eighteenth-century Londoners craved.

Primary in the discussion of the interplay between text and image in these prints is to dispel the notion that text is used exclusively as a result of some absence of artistic thought or quality. Those who are critical of the medium often follow the argument that satirical prints are "poorly conceived and amateurishly executed," that the print cannot help but to "resort to balloons and streamers and verbal devices to compensate for lack of inspiration."¹ The mistake is to consider satirical prints as pictorial, as wholly illusionistic compositions. Gillray's work, for example, is full of line and text with drawing and word working together. This is certainly not to say that the work is amateurish and lacks inspiration. The "balloons," "streamers," and "verbal devices" are essential to the form and its aesthetic. The "weaving together of representation and discourse" is the most effective



Fig. 15. James Gillray, *Push-Pin.*, 1797. Etching, stipple engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 20).

way to link the highly communicable forms and advance meaning.² Modern theorists analyze this relationship in comic strips, descendants of the British satirical print, and posit that "words and pictures can send essentially the same message, and words can just add a soundtrack to a visually told sequence."³ But while the modern comic strip is given much attention for the interrelation of text and image, it is key to acknowledge that London's satirical printmakers mastered the move much earlier, especially in terms of humor, as a precursor to today's familiar comic medium.⁴ Printmakers of the Georgian era certainly recognized the importance of text in their satires and its ability to communicate with their audiences. A leaf of paper, a print on a page, or a folio begs the presence of text to illuminate the medium in ways that a highly pictorial rendering, or even a photograph, does not.

Though less analyzed than other aspects of art historical theory in the Western art world, the study of the interrelationship between text and image is significant because of its recognition and use of earlier theory, or in the case of satire, literary technique. Inspiration abounds for artists utilizing this marriage of forms and requires that the interplay be carefully molded so that meaning and interpretation is precise and poignant. Ambiguity plays no part in the brief moments the artists have to convey their message. They are instead dually constructing meaning so as to "stabilize and unify the field of representation and discourse."⁵ For example, in Samuel De Wilde's *John Bull in a Fever*. (1809), published in *The Satirist*, there are labels written on objects,

the only text in the image other than its title in the lower margin (Fig. 16). The image shows a gaggle of quack doctors surrounding John Bull, the representational every-man of England, holding various medical instruments, ointments, and cures for whatever physically (or metaphorically) could be wrong with John Bull. A commentary on the poor knowledge of health in eighteenth-century England, each doctor offers his best solution—milk, opium, stow leeches, or leek broth—to the hesitant John Bull. The text described clarifies the action in the scene that might otherwise appear as a group of men attacking John Bull with various dishes and bottles. Through these identification labels, it is evident that the prints have to be read in order to make the meaning clear and that part or all of the joke would be lost with just images alone.⁶ Reading a print like this one was natural to the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century audience. Paper had long been associated with text, stemming from the books, pamphlets, and other means of distributing literature at the time. Accustomed to the medium, having to read the text embedded in a print's image was quite ordinary, even expected, given the tangible, hand-held nature of prints.

Although the strength of satirical prints stems from their combination of text and imagery, it is this combination that causes problems among critics. Even prints by the aforementioned Gillray, which are considered “among the great creative works of [his] era,” are marked as lesser objects, potentially a result of his combination of the visual and literary worlds.⁷ This indicates a discomfort with the satirical print as a form. Gillray's use of text prompts critics to declare that “he often lacked solid conception” and as a result “had to resort of long explanatory captions,” when in fact his use of those captions is inseparable with his imagery.⁸ An analysis of these prints requires at least a nod to the historic moment of their intended consumption and that they were “a separate distinguishable art form.”⁹ As members of the London elite held these prints in their drawing rooms, the compounded message, through both image and text, was what drove them to react. Assuredly the reaction of even the educated elite was not to question some artistic failing of melding text with image, but to laugh.¹⁰ This visual and verbal melding, encouraging laughter, is the product of the satirical form.

In most pictorial art from the Western tradition, image and text remain separate.¹¹ The exception would be elements that happen to have writing on them that appear in the composition as a background element, such as a shop sign, a book, or a billboard. Within the confines of a pictorially cohesive sense of space, a speech bubble would interrupt the illusionistic composition. For example, Hogarth rarely introduced text bubbles into the pictorial area of his prints, rather he usually placed it under the image. This reverence for the pictorial space appears to be based on his profession as



Fig. 16. Samuel De Wilde, *John Bull in a Fever*, 1809. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 11).



Fig. 17. William Hogarth, *Gin Lane*, 1751. Engraving. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum/Art Resource, NY.

a painter. Hogarth's text within the images is usually restricted to believable elements, like the street signs in *Gin Lane* (1751) (Fig. 17). In contrast, later printmakers like Gillray were less concerned with maintaining a cohesive illusionistic scene, in part, because it enabled the text and image to coordinate and harmonize better. This is aided by the graphic quality of the prints and their emphasis on line in lieu of light and dark. Fittingly, Gillray used aquatint sparingly so as to keep the print's background white and more receptive to text, which has the same value as a line. When tone is added, the print becomes more illusionistic and less hospitable to text; three-dimensional space is not



Fig. 18. James Gillray, *The Gordon-Knot,—or—The Bonny-Duchess hunting the Bedfordshire Bull*, 1797. Etching, engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 21).

suitable for words. Likewise, prints with a well-developed system of linear perspective, like those of Isaac Cruikshank, have much less text than the two-dimensional spaces of Gillray's prints. Aware of the relationship of text and two-dimensional imagery, Gillray often kept the design of his prints flat and linear, so as to allow for text insertion. This insertion of text into the print medium was based on the more graphic, visually two-dimensional emblematic tradition, and was dependent upon their audience's understanding of the intricate and layered messages they produced. For the British audience, these prints were born of a larger tradition of satire that depended on words as much as a text-image tradition that relied on their interplay for meaning. Viewers were both interested in and accustomed to the use of text to produce humor in conjunction with images.

The satirical prints of eighteenth-century London were preceded by their verbal equivalents in literature. The genre of literary satire features the same high-low dichotomy of the artistic aspects in prints, particularly in the mode of burlesque. Caricature itself is wrought with symbolic language, "graphic idiom and ideology," and emblematic content, all of which parallel its literary equivalent.¹² Satire has roots far deeper than the eighteenth century both in literature and in art. In terms of a literary base contemporary to print makers like Gillray, Cruikshank, and Thomas Rowlandson, the artists reference writers such as Alexander Pope, John Dryden, and Jonathan Swift. Prints were seen as mimicking the strategies of these writers, particularly because of their

lack of association with high, academic art. For the subject of political satire, however, eighteenth-century England experienced a "cultural and generic change."¹³ "The sedition that mattered to the law was textual, not visual" and written accounts of satire were noticed and checked, subject sometimes to censure.¹⁴ This allowed some leeway to the images contained in prints. That is not to say that satirical prints were dangerously subverting British power structures, unchecked by the authorities. More, they colored political sentiments and could be at their most virulent when the subject was gossip, not politics. That "satirical engravers were too low a breed to be much noticed" was advantageous as they enjoyed freedom of expression unique to progressive London at the time.¹⁵ By injecting their images with words, printmakers were able to attract a range of audiences, both those getting a laugh with a quick glance at the image and those taking the time to read and process the words in conjunction with the image. The layered content, rooted in "the non-discrete relationship between the higher-order concepts, metaphor and metonymy" in both image and the devices of satire, was the material and style to which the British readership was already accustomed.¹⁶ The course of satirical prints ran parallel to that of satirical novels, but satisfied "a wider audience in a more complicated society."¹⁷

Satire is the logical literary form to accompany the artistic endeavor of caricature. Both are "fused" with and "married to parody, wit, irony, innuendo [and] allegory" which was "more intriguing to sophisticated viewers."¹⁸

While *John Bull in a Fever* demonstrates the necessity of labels for conveying meaning, Gillray's *The Gordon-Knot,—or—The Bonny-Duchess hunting the Bedfordshire Bull.* (1797) shows how the text supplements a much more connective meaning (Fig. 18). Without the text, the image of a portly woman following a bull with a ribbon appears to be a mother snaring a mate for her daughter, who stands to the right. The three women in the background reinforce this theme of matrimonial conquest as one has a dog, which suggests fidelity and fertility, and another has a broom, which is a symbol of an unmarried maid. The image alone does not provide much more than that. Yet when a reader considers the text, there is a meaning far beyond the pictorial representation. The content is gleaned from the title in the bottom margin and is supported by the word "MATRIMONY" on the Duchess' ribbon. Lady Charlotte is identified by the leash of her spaniel, which reads "H. CHARLES' BREED," representing her marriage to the Duke of Richmond. Lady Susan's pantaloons read, "MANCHESTER VELVET," signaling her marriage to the Duke of Manchester. The print was published after the marriage of Lady Georgiana Gordon. Her mother, the Duchess, is represented as the large woman in the foreground and is chasing the Bloomsbury Duke, represented by the Bedfordshire Bull.

These individuals were well known in London at the publication of the print. Indeed, the print is not a critique of the practice and pursuit of marriage, but a satire of known individuals and their actions in a specific event. The humor is further layered in the speech bubbles, which grant them speech and also make further mockery of them. Speech bubbles first appeared in the art of the Middle Ages, emerging from the hands of the figures to express their thoughts or ideas, which they believed issued from the hand in writing. In Georgian satirical prints, speech bubbles were similarly used to connect an individual to something they might say or think. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries they came from the mouth or the head of a character, like in speech, and could have varying effects on the audience and the humility of the subject.

In *The Gordon-Knot*, the Duchess speaks in diction that is fragmented, accented, and belonging to a much lower class than her garb suggests.¹⁹ It is a function of the satirical technique of low burlesque. The duchess declares,

Deel burst your weam, ye overgrown Fool, what are ye kicking at? are we not ganging to lead ye to Graze on the banks o' the Tweed, & to mak ye free o' the Mountains of the North? Stop! Stop! Ye silly Loon ye! Stop! Stop! Stop!"

while her daughter follows behind encouraging,



Fig. 19. James Gillray, *Homer singing his Verses to the Greeks.*, 1797. Etching, engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 22).

Run, Mither! Run! Run! O how I long to lead the sweet bonny Creature in a string! Run! Mither! Run. Run.

The whole practice compromises the station of their class, represented in the diction of their accented speech. The social implications are that they do not belong in the upper class and that they are acting of a lower class in this scene. The Lady's origin and words matter less than her speech, which is used to satirize her aggressive influence in the courtship of her daughter. The accents bring in an audio component that gives voice to the figures in ways that strict pictorial imagery cannot. Text is both visual and auditory; without it, the pictorial imagery remains mute poetry. To a well-read viewer of *The Gordon-Knot*, the techniques used here are immediately identifiable. The parody of the individuals in the hunt for a husband satirizes both the people and the practice. Further, the form of the speech reminds the viewer of associations with other low-born individuals, likely from literature, in the syntactical structure.²⁰ The satirical qualities in language only further the joke of the caricatures in the drawing. The visual and verbal interact in "easy connivance."²¹ Here it is accomplished through low burlesque, simple nickname recognition, and pun.

Yet with variations in the text, the written aspects of the prints sometimes rise to higher levels of satire and require a cultured reader. Gillray's *Homer singing his Verses to the Greeks.* (1797) uses text to joke about the Prince of Wales' drinking habits (Fig. 19). Positioned on the left of the print, the Prince of Wales sits with members of his inner circle. The man on the furthest right addresses the drunken prince, "Come sing me a Bawdy-Song, to make me merry." The shabbily clothed prince has a pamphlet in his pocket entitled, "Captain

Morris's Songs by Subscription," and is holding a leaf of paper inscribed, "A new SONG to the Tune of PLENIPO." Captain Charles Morris was known to be a favorite singer of the prince and was also associated with his raucous, booze-laden lifestyle. His song, "The Plenipotentiary," was "the rudest song of its day" and referenced "the Algerian ambassador's allegedly gigantic penis."²² The print implies the prince's low society practices and his crass lifestyle through invoking Morris' "The Plenipotentiary." The form of song, especially one well known to Gillray's viewers, requires the knowledge and use of this written (and sung) form. Again, the figures are given voice through text with the representation of lyrics, which go well beyond speech. This grants a personality and context to the image that provides its more acute meaning. Without the associations made by the text, the image might just contain three drunken friends. The text indicates who is in the picture as well as how its figures are behaving, provoking laughter at the expense of the Prince of Wales.

Specific figures, like the Prince of Wales, were prevalent in prints, as were specific social and political moments in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century England. As a result, the dissolution of the Broad Bottom Ministry in James Gillray's *—a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!—i.e.—Emancipation of "All the Talents" (1807)* is expressed equally through the compositional confusion and mayhem, as it is by the obstructed figure of King George III's indignant speech (Fig. 20). He taunts,

what! what! bring in the Papists!—O you cunning Jesuits, you! what you thought I was like little—Boney & would turn Turk or any thing? —but if you have no Faith or Conscience I have!! ay, & a little Old Protestant Spunk too! so Out with you all! out! with all your Broad-bottom'd-Popish Plots!!! —Out with you—out!—out!—out!

The speech offers the nature of the Broad Bottom Ministry, the English critique of France and Napoleon ("little Boney"), and King George's desire to be rid of such dissenting factions. The Broad Bottom Ministry was the collection of governmental officials who were supposed to provide broad, cross-party appeal. King George dissolved the group when it proposed a bill that extended privileges to Catholic soldiers above all others in the British military. The use of recognizable exclamatory punctuation grants a tone to the caricatured mass that may otherwise be misconstrued. The blend of a visual and verbal experience places the scene in a real, specific context, the proposition of The Catholic Bill by Lord Grenville (a prominent member of the Broad Bottoms), and not a general one. Grammatical devices play a role here,



Fig. 20. James Gillray, *—a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!—i.e.—Emancipation of "All the Talents" (1807)*. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 34).



Fig. 21. James Gillray, *Apotheosis of the Corsican-Phoenix*, 1808. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 39).

just as much as the context of the speech itself.

The London printmakers reached their highest level of weaving text and image when they played on the literary techniques found in written contexts. Building on visual symbols, written representation of a specific textual form creates an advanced use of satire. Below the lower margin of the *Apotheosis of the Corsican-Phoenix*. (1808), Gillray cites

text from what appears to be an encyclopedia entry from *The New Spanish Encyclopedia*, to grant authority to his ridicule of Napoleon's station as Emperor of France and the degree of his dominating presence in Europe, a favorite subject of the British (Fig. 21):

When the Phoenix is tired of Life, he builds a
Nest upon the Mountains, and setting it on Fire
by the wafting of his own Wings he perishes
Himself in the Flames! And from the smoke of his
Ashes arises a new Phoenix to illuminate the
world!

The use of the encyclopedic entry has a double effect.²³ On the one hand, a quick glance at the text suggests to the viewer that it is an actual encyclopedic entry accompanying what is a caricature of Napoleon as a phoenix. Upon closer examination, however, the viewer realizes that the pairing of "The Corsican-Phoenix" as the title for the entry and the hyperbolic nature of the illumination of the world in the phoenix's rebirth is blatantly sarcastic. It mocks something that seems to have significance by reducing it to a joke. Both the authority of the encyclopedia and the majesty of Napoleon and his reign are diminished. That is to say, just as the writing is too romantic and authoritative, so is Napoleon in his image of himself. The "narrative diegesis" is "located in the margins of the image, in a position understood to be 'outside'" the scene because of this façade of authority.²⁴ The effect would not have been the same if, for example, that very

speech emerged from Napoleon.

The marriage between text and image in eighteenth-century British prints was certainly "à la mode." In this "age of caricature," the two "do not exist independently, but form part of a dynamic continuum" in the way of cutting political and social satire and laughter.²⁵ Despite the inclination to dismiss words as a crutch through which the artists express meaning, these examples, and countless others, prove contrary. The unification of words and images produces meaning on levels that reach beyond what initially meets the eye. The text can both pay homage to literary traditions and forms and subvert them to mock or satirize other societal conventions. The words are not the consequence of a lack of inspiration, but rather in many cases they are the inspiration, the central joke, which the image is constructed to match. It would be a mistake to ignore "questions of iconographic tradition, agency and specific purpose" especially in regards to what comprises more than half of the content and meaning in prints.²⁶ The satirical basis is vital to the understanding of how and why people laughed in the eighteenth century and how the print maintained popularity as a medium of entertainment. Social practices, slang, literary and historical citations were all expressed textually in conjunction with the images. Without the text, the prints lose their specificity, their bite. Words were the bridge to link the humor in image and the humor in literature for an audience that craved seeing both. In fact, if one were to look exclusively at the images, he or she might miss the joke.

1 Ralph E. Shikes, *The Indignant Eye: The Artist as Social Critic in Prints and Drawings from the Fifteenth Century to Picasso* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969), 67.

2 W. J. T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 83.

3 Miriam Harris, "Cartoonists as Matchmakers: The Vibrant Relationship between Text and Image in the Work of Linda Barry," *Word and Image Interactions* 6 (2009): 133.

4 An example of this is Scott McCloud, *Understanding Comics: The Invisible Art* (New York: HarperCollins, 1984; reprint of Kitchen Sink Press, 1983), which deals with the hybrid literary-art form of graphic novels.

5 Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 84.

6 Shikes, *Indignant Eye*, 68.

7 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 10.

8 Shikes, *Indignant Eye*, 93.

9 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 47.

10 Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 91.

11 In Asian painting, the presence of text is expected and frequently present in compositions. Writing and painting are inseparable forms and share the same tools and techniques. Notably, British satirical printmakers use the same tools in engraving both text and images. This is in contrast to Western painting traditions, in which painting typically lacks the presence of text so as to preserve the pictorial space within images. Asian art is also interesting in this context because in addition to the marriage of text and image, literary form is implicit, like the argument for

satire in British satirical prints. On text in Asian art, see Michael Sullivan, *The Three Perfections: Chinese Painting, Poetry and Calligraphy* (New York: George Braziller, 1974), 14.

12 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 22.

13 Charles A. Knight, *The Literature of Satire* (Boston: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 229.

14 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 213.

15 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 213.

16 Paul Simpson, *On the Discourse of Satire: Towards a Stylistic Model of Satirical Humour* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2003), 140.

17 Knight, *Literature of Satire*, 229.

18 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 227.

19 Arthur Pollard, *Satire: The Critical Idiom* (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1970), 41.

20 Pollard, *Satire*, 45.

21 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 50.

22 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 296.

23 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 69.

24 Mitchell, *Picture Theory*, 92.

25 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 44.

26 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 44.

From Britannia to Bull: The Embodiment of Englishness

Emily Bastian

James Gillray's *John Bull's Progress* (1793), a four episode satirical print, shows John Bull and his family's progression through the hardships of war (Fig. 22). In the first scene, "John Bull Happy," he sits beer in hand with his family in a picturesque English setting.¹ He is warmed by the fire and nods off into a peaceful state of sleep. In the second scene, "John Bull Going to the Wars," he enlists in the army while his wife and children stand by in tears. As John Bull marches tall and patriotic, his family is disheveled and in mourning. In the third scene, "John Bull's Property in Danger," his wife and children bring their possessions to the pawnbroker. Hunched over, they heave along their last belongings. In the final scene, "John Bull's Glorious Return," he arrives home an unrecognizable cripple, completely impoverished.² The family barely recognizes him, as he has aged dramatically and shed some weight. Their home no longer has furniture and the family appears to be cold, barely surviving their living conditions. The reunion of the family is probably the only positive outcome of the story. The print drastically suggests the hardships imposed by war. While John Bull may at first appear to be a specific person, he is actually a fictional character who developed into the personification of England and appears in many satirical prints during the late eighteenth century. The print captures both John Bull's patriotic qualities, as well as his ability to stand for every English citizen. Over time, the image of John Bull proved to be a versatile type and evolved in keeping with the times and as circumstances dictated.

Prior to the emergence of John Bull as a national symbol, Britannia had been the personification of Britain. Beginning in the first century B.C., she frequently appeared on coins issued in the region. Later, during the reign of James I (1566–1625), she symbolized the union of Scotland and England under the same crown. Her image appeared on British coins and medals in the Restoration and her emergence as the symbol of national identity continued into the eighteenth century.³ By this time her appearance was well established; usually she appeared in classical dress, holding a sword or lance, a Roman helmet, and a shield decorated with arms. She served as an envoy of the spirit of the nation and she inspired English citizens to be loyal despite challenging circumstances, which included corrupt politicians, domestic radicals, and foreign aggressors.⁴ Britannia represented the nation in domestic and foreign affairs. Indeed, as conflict with the American Colonies grew, Britannia became a "mother" figure to her "daughter" America, and prints on both sides of the pond represented the Revolutionary War as



Fig. 22. James Gillray, *John Bull's Progress*, 1793. Etching. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

a mother-daughter squabble.⁵ Britannia also appears in prints regarding the Napoleonic Wars as in *Bony's Vision or a Great little Man's Night Comforts* (1811) (Fig. 23). In this scene, a slumbering Napoleon is awakened by visions of demons that haunt his sleep. The demons flying around him are terrifying figures from his nightmare and all personify different countries or oppressed people under his rule. Britannia appears in the upper right corner, seated and wearing her traditional dress. A winged figure flying above her addresses Napoleon exclaiming,

Napoleon Lo! Britannia still enjoys the blessings
of her Constitution—surrounded by Liberty,
Commerce, and Plenty, supported by her
Heros—and attended, by public felicity, she defies
thy machinations!

The column next to her is inscribed "G[eorge] III Rex," suggesting that he upholds Britannia who represents England as a nation.

Although popular throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, Britannia developed into a more passive, feminine, and maternal figure of the state and appeared less in prints of the Georgian age. Evidently, the fear of women having too much influence in politics became an issue. While the role of women in British politics was well established, as numerous queens and regents provided ample evidence of female leadership, open political campaigning by women was frowned upon in the 1770s and 1780s, which resulted in a



Fig. 23 Artist Unknown (“The Caricaturist General”), *Bony's Vision or a Great little Man's Night Comforts*, 1811. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 2).

reduction of the use of Britannia in political prints. As Britannia's versatility as a national symbol became restricted, the image of John Bull came to stand for the British people in ways that Britannia's character simply could not. Even though Britannia was still used by printmakers as a representation of England, John Bull proved more flexible and better suited to represent a wide range of society at this time. The shift from a classical allegorical female figure to a literal male figure began with the introduction of John Bull in a literary pamphlet.

In 1712, Doctor John Arbuthnot wrote *The History of John Bull*, a political fable in a series of five pamphlets, which consisted of allegorical characters and events referencing contemporary political, economic, and religious problems of the day. John Bull is presented as a proprietor and tradesman whose physical characteristics were described as “ruddy and plump, with a pair of cheeks like a trumpeter.”⁶ Arbuthnot sketches the following characteristic portrait of John Bull, who embodies the national character of England.

Bull, in the main, was an honest plain-dealing Fellow, Cholerick, Bold, and of a very unconstant Temper, he dreaded not Old Lewis either at Back-Sword, single Faulcion, or Cudgel-play; but then he was very apt to quarrel with his best Friends, especially if they pretended to govern

him: If you flatter'd him, you might lead him like a Child. *John's* Temper depended very much upon the Air; his Spirits rose and fell with the Weather-glass. *John* was quick, and understood his business very well, but no Man alive was more careless, in looking into his Accounts, or more cheated by Partners, Apprentices, and Servants: This was occasioned by his being a Boon-Companion, loving his Bottle and his Diversion; for to say Truth, no Man kept a better House than *John*, nor spent his Money more generously. By plain and fair dealing, *John* had acquir'd some Plumbs, and might have kept them, had it not been for his unhappy Law-Suit.⁷

In the pamphlet, the list of principal characters assigns John Bull the role of “the English people.”⁸ The pamphlet appeared when the rivalry between the Whigs and the Tories had reached its high point and reflected English concern with national identity, almost to the point of xenophobia, as a result of England's repeated engagement in war on the continent.⁹ Furthermore, Arbuthnot's work was not simply a retelling of the historical events in politics, but rather a satirical look on the conflicts of the day. This set the tone for later use of John Bull, specifically in satirical prints that would emerge during the Georgian era.

John Bull's popularity and character developed over time, starting with Arbuthnot's pamphlets, and then reached considerable circulation as a figure in satirical prints during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. John Bull originally appeared most frequently in animal or bull form. Artists used the symbol of the bull as a representation of the public because they believed a bull was a fitting image to correspond to the role of ordinary members of society who pay taxes, obey the government, and have little voice.¹⁰ His character was transformed to human form once war with France had begun. Eventually, caricaturists developed John Bull's physical traits until he was crafted into a pot-bellied, stout, middle-aged man, dressed in a jacket waistcoat.

Artists used this versatile figure in the hotly debated realm of politics. John Bull symbolized British discontent—as both radicals and conservatives fought for his loyalty. Countless examples show John Bull's dissatisfaction with the government and the belief that the treatment of Englishmen was unjust and unfair. In a print by William Dent, entitled *The Free-Born Briton or A Perspective of Taxation* (1786), John Bull is composed of the taxes he is forced to pay to the government (Fig. 24). His facial expression suggests raging anger as he is trying to balance his duties and financial burdens caused by heavy taxation.¹¹ The taxes on his clothing, hat, and barrels he is balancing across his back read: custom, excise, stamp, beer, tobacco, coal, wool, cloth, salt, leather, and more. A poem engraved underneath the title reads:

From top to toe all o'er stuck full,
with taxes, grieves poor John Bull,
By arts of state so strictly bound,
Pays shillings fourteen in the pound,
Should taxes nerv the rest surprise,
Like shop-tax, stamps, and law excise,
John must sink beneath the evil,
or kick them all to the Devil.

This print shows that oppressive policies of the monarch were no longer passively accepted by John Bull and directly confronts the grievances Englishmen experienced due to heavy taxation. John Bull displays open disapproval and disobedience towards the practices and policies of the government. William Cowper said in 1792, “the expense attends a kingly government is an argument which millions begin to feel the force of.”¹² For this reason, artists of the era prior to the French Revolution depicted John Bull as a voice for ordinary citizens, who were generally dissatisfied with the untrustworthy politicians of the day. One pamphlet from 1793 stated,



Fig. 24. William Dent, *The Free-Born Briton or A Perspective of Taxation*, 1786. Etching. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

The visible cause of all our sorrows, is the depravity and selfishness of human nature *in general*; but the grand means thereof seems to be the pride, covetousness, idleness, luxury, and pleasure of our civil and ecclesiastical *rulers*.¹³

John Bull quickly stepped into a confrontational role, both directly addressing political leaders' personal lives as well as their controversial politics. In a print entitled *Billy the Tinker Soliciting John Bull to Mend the State Kettle!!* (1803), William Pitt confronts John Bull in front of a large pot representing the economy. Pitt says to Bull, “Take me into your employ.” John Bull hastily responds by saying, “None of your palaver, master Billy, you shan't make another hole in the Kettle, damn me if you shall!”¹⁴ In the print, John Bull is showing a more assertive and aggressive approach to the refusal to accept the oppressive government. This print contrasts with the one by Dent, shows John Bull as a more active and angry critic of the government. In maintaining that he was a symbol of the common people, John Bull's portrayal shows his resistance towards the government and his protest of government oppression—thoughts that were widely circulated among the ordinary British citizens. These types of prints featuring a defiant John Bull emphasized their unhappiness without taking a radical standpoint.

Since his image was fashioned amid war and revolution in France, John Bull came to address a range of British concerns. He countered the French stereotype and represented the chauvinistic attitudes of the day. Furthermore, the caricaturists explored John Bull's flexibility as a symbol, using him as a tool for nationalist propaganda as well as a critique of the government.¹⁵ The Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levelers, founded in 1792, financed nationalist propaganda and campaigned

against Jacobinism by publishing a plethora of loyalist pamphlets. This organization bought the services of James Gillray and other satirists to spread their propaganda. They presented John Bull as a contrast to his counterparts in other countries, particularly France. John Bull's presence, size, and persona dominated the scrawny, sans-culotte Jacobin French national figurehead. The French Revolution dramatically influenced the rapid development of John Bull's character, which is well illustrated in the nature and significant increase in prints that feature John Bull.¹⁶

In James Gillray's *French Liberty, British Slavery* (1792) (Fig. 25), the artist shows the contrast between a French sans-culotte figure and a fat John Bull. The Frenchman eats raw onions on a stool while warming his body in front of a fire. He exclaims,

O Sacre Dieu!—vat sing be de Liberte vive le
 Assemblé Nationale!—no more Tax! no more
 Slavery!—all Free Citizen! ha hah! by Gar how ve
 live!—ve Svim in de Milk & Honey!¹⁷

John Bull is enormous compared to the size of the Frenchman and is dining well on roast beef and beer, complaining about starvation and taxation. He proclaims,

Ah! this cursed Ministry! They'll ruin us, with
 their damn'd Taxes! why, Zounds! – they're
 making Slaves of us all, & Starving us to Death!¹⁸

Although John Bull appears to be complaining, he is comfortable in his home, feasting on his meat and beer—a luxury that the Frenchman clearly does not have. The Frenchman is barefoot and boney, while the Englishman is comfortably situated in a bright, warm, and inviting environment. A small statue of Britannia appears in the background, showing his loyalty to the nation despite what he may be complaining about. The message is clear: French liberty doesn't fill the belly.¹⁹ Gillray juxtaposes the effects of “French Liberty”—filth and violence—with those of “British Slavery”—luxury and bounty. This image was a popular tool of loyalist propaganda, demonstrating that the revolution in France did not translate to a happier nation and urging the British to maintain the status quo.²⁰ The risk of revolt in England was so great that John Bull's image stresses his role as a patriot and protector of the nation.

The radical politicians' desire to spread the awareness that reform would be bad for Britain was a top priority. One of Gillray's most famous prints, *The Tree of Liberty,—with, the Devil tempting John Bull* (1798), shows that John Bull's “wisdom” would keep him from the temptation of reformists (Fig. 26). In this print, Gillray reinterprets the story of the



Fig. 25. James Gillray, *French Liberty, British Slavery*, 1792. Etching, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.



Fig. 26. James Gillray, *The Tree of Liberty,—with, the Devil tempting John Bull*, 1798. Etching, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

Garden of Eden, casting Charles James Fox, a well-known opponent of George III, as the serpent with a human head and chest. He offers John Bull an apple labeled “reform,” and says to him, “nice Apple, Johnny!—nice Apple.” Fox hides behind a tree labeled “Opposition” with roots labeled,



Fig. 27. James Gillray, *John Bull and the Alarmist.*, 1803. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 30).

“Envy,” “Ambition,” and “Disappointment.” Its branches include the phrases “Rights of Man,” and “Profligacy.” Furthermore, the apples on the tree are labeled as “revolution,” “slavery,” and “treason.” Another tree full of apples appears in the distance and is labeled the “Tree of Justice” with the royal crown embedded in the branches. Apples of this “good” and “just” tree are now in John Bull’s pockets. John Bull replies to the devil,

Very nice Napple indeed!—but my Pokes are all full of Pippins from off t’other Tree: & besides, I hates Medlars, they’re so domn’d rotten! that I’se afraid they’ll gee me the Guts-ach for all their vine looks!

John Bull, in this scene, is a clear supporter of the English constitution, which is represented by the other tree filled with healthier apples. He also shows a direct resistance to the temptation to join reformists for the cause of revolution.²¹ This print, like others of the day, shows how satirists were able to express the stableness of the current political system by associating negative terms and ideas with the concept of revolution. Although the printmakers maintained varying opinions on these matters, the radicals hired their services and used the popular printmaking media of the day as a method of campaigning and spreading propaganda that would be accessible to all classes.

The threat of a British revolution, on the example of that in France, caused the loyalists to fight to unify the nation through propaganda targeted at the lower classes. They sought to convince the revolutionists that staying loyal to the state was in their own best interests.²² Consequently,

the number of prints featuring a patriotic John Bull closely identified as a satisfied citizen of the status quo in England surged to the point that they more than tripled from 1793–1800.²³

The threat of revolution in Britain was followed by the threat of a war with Napoleon. In Gillray’s print, *John Bull and the Alarmist.* (1803) (Fig. 27), John Bull stands overweight with a full mug of beer as he is approached by the alarmist Sheridan, a prominent member of Parliament. Sheridan carries a bill and is surrounded by others displaying such phrases as, “Little Boney’s delight,” “Corsican Cruelties,” and “Invasion of Great Britain.” As Sheridan approaches Bull, he states, “The Corsican Thief has slip’d from his Quarters, And coming to Ravish your Wives & your Daughters!” John Bull stands tall in the center, brandishing a beer stein that features the royal crown. From his coat pockets, different pamphlets emerge and read, “List of the Volunteer Corps; God Save the King; Navy List; Rule Britannia.” John Bull replies to Sheridan,

Let him come and be d---n’d! – what cares Johnny Bull! With my Crab-stick assured I will fracture his Skull! Or I’ll squeeze the vile reptile ‘twixt’ my Finger and Thumb, Make him stink like a Bug, if he dares to presume!

In the background of the print, a chair with the royal crown and motto on it is displayed as well as a poster titled “The Roast Beef of England” and a newspaper titled “London Gazette” with a subheading reading “List of Captures.” John Bull stands as a patriot ready to defend his nation if the “Corsican Thief” does invade.

The middle class, in particular, related well to John Bull, but over the course of the war, artists broadened his characteristics so that almost every social class could see themselves in him. By placing John Bull in scenarios similar to those of ordinary citizens, or portraying him with thoughts associated with regular members of society, printmakers and publishers attracted a wide audience of buyers. Tellingly, after the outbreak of war with France, printmakers no longer placed John Bull in satires addressing complaints of high taxes, economic hardships, and the oppressive government.²⁴ Although prints that reflected negative attitudes towards the status quo remained in production, there was a steady decline in the use of John Bull in these types of prints. When he appears in prints addressing protests about the government, Bull was likely pictured as a patient bystander or victim of the oppressive government, showing that repression was unnecessary even given the circumstances. The French Revolution and the war against Napoleonic France led artists to emphasize John Bull's qualities representing honesty, good nature, frankness, and steadiness of purpose.²⁵ In this way, John Bull had evolved from representing the ordinary British citizen into the representation of "the nation on a basis of equality with Europe's monarchs."²⁶

During the eighteenth and nineteenth century, John Bull represented the national consciousness, highly influenced by the threat of revolution as well as the wars fought against the French. By 1820, John Bull's role varied, as he was not definitively a loyalist or a radical.²⁷ His role in satires altered so that he represented both the strengths and weaknesses of the political system, and developed into a politically neutral figure. By tracing the evolution of this

national icon, one grasps the ebb and flow of British society and its changing viewpoints and perceptions on the current political and economic situations. By studying and understanding his role in prints, one can also see how important such a medium was for politicians and loyalists aiming to spread awareness and shape public opinion.

Bull's role and meaning evolved during the mid- and late-nineteenth century where he appears in the pages of *Punch Magazine*, a humorous and satirical publication begun in 1841. By this time, John Bull's role had shifted from a "positive and critical articulation of the political voice of the middle classes," to a reflection of the aggressive and chauvinistic attitudes on free-trade imperialism.²⁸ *Punch Magazine* re-established John Bull's character by drawing him as an honest, overweight, and solid farmer in a Union Jack waistcoat. Due to his frequent appearances in *Punch*, his name was fully established as an icon of British identity. He was featured in books, plays, and even as a brand name. Indeed, several World War I recruiting posters featured John Bull, either alone, or with Uncle Sam. One poster from 1916 features an image of John Bull pointing at the viewer with text reading, "WHO'S ABSENT, *Is it You?*," which is based on a similar design used in the United States, which read, "I Want You for the U.S. Army." The motif was not lost between the wars, as we see in a poster entitled "Let's Get Together," which features John Bull and Uncle Sam shaking hands, promoting a United States-Great Britain alliance in World War II. The image of John Bull, which was first introduced in 1712 with John Arbuthnot's writings, remained a vital symbol of British identity for more than two centuries.

1 Jeannine Surel, "John Bull," in *Patriotism: The Making and Unmaking of British National Identity*, vol. 3, ed. Raphael Samuel (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), 12.

2 Surel, "John Bull," 13.

3 Tamara L. Hunt, *Defining John Bull: Political Caricature and National Identity in Late Georgian England* (Hampshire and Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2003), 121.

4 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 143.

5 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 123.

6 Surel, "John Bull," 6–7.

7 John Arbuthnot, *The History of John Bull*, eds. Alan W. Bower and Robert A. Erickson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 9.

8 Bower and Erickson, *History of John Bull*, ciii.

9 Bower and Erickson, *History of John Bull*, lxix.

10 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 144.

11 H. T. Dickinson, ed., *Caricatures and the Constitution, 1760–1832* in *The English Satirical Print 1600–1832 Series* (Cambridge: Chadwyck-Healey Ltd., 1986), 110.

12 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 149.

13 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 163.

14 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 163.

15 Surel, "John Bull," 4.

16 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 149.

17 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 160.

18 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 160.

19 Surel, "John Bull," 17.

20 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 160.

21 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 148.

22 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 149.

23 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 149.

24 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 161.

25 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 166.

26 Hunt, *Defining John Bull*, 168.

27 Miles Taylor, "John Bull and the Iconography of Public Opinion in England c. 1712–1929," *Past and Present* 134 (1992): 106.

28 Taylor, "John Bull and the Iconography of Public Opinion," 95.

Promis'd Horrors: *Reactions to Napoleon in British Satirical Prints and Francisco Goya's Los Desastres de la Guerra Series*

Matthew Morowitz

James Gillray's *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion* (1796) and Francisco Goya's *Esto es peor* (*This is Worse*) (1812) present the consequences of French invasion, yet the former print presents an imagined scenario, while the latter is grounded in reality (Figs. 28, 29). With the rise of Napoleon and his empire in continental Europe, British printmakers focused on the diminutive dictator as a point of concern for the country, but at the same time as a point of ridicule. Yet, while Britain was separated physically from Napoleon's ambitions, the continent experienced the full force of his imperialistic aspirations. In Spain, the Peninsular War brought some of the greatest atrocities inflicted by Napoleon's armies. Nowhere were these atrocities recorded more vividly than in the prints of Francisco Goya. His *Los Desastres de la Guerra* (*The Disasters of War*) series, etched between 1810 and 1823 but only published posthumously in 1868, records, exaggerates, and conveys some of the sentiments that Goya and his compatriots saw and experienced. Yet, compared to the satirical prints made in England, those made in Spain illustrate the divide between these printmakers, which resulted from their physical and emotional proximity to the Napoleonic Wars.

The major concern of this study is to explore the geopolitical reactions to Napoleon as presented in prints. Although the impact of the "Corsican Emperor" had varying effects on England and Spain, the discussion of Napoleon's rise will be linked with British public opinion of him, whereas Spanish opinion of the leader will be tied to the discussion of the Peninsular War. This choice highlights British opinion of Napoleon, which was influenced by an indirect exposure to the leader's campaigns and policies; whereas the Spanish felt the direct effects of Napoleon, his armies, and his political ambitions.

British attitude toward Napoleon began as a complicated mixture of respect and contempt, but this eventually gave way to feelings of anxiety and national hatred. The first encounter the British appear to have had with Napoleon was news of the young general's victories in a campaign through Italy from 1796 to 1797. At this time, the attitude toward Napoleon was mixed; on the one hand, he gained anti-papal support with his victories over Austrian and Papal armies and some were encouraged by his interest in art, literature, and scholarship (e.g. the Egyptian expedition). Yet, on the other hand, Napoleon's actions during the Italian campaign made him out to be no more than a common plunderer, with reports from his Egyptian expedition showing him as ruthless and bloodthirsty, having no regard for the lives and wellbeing



Fig. 28. James Gillray, *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion—or—Forcible Reasons for Negotiating a Regicide Peace*, 1796. Etching. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

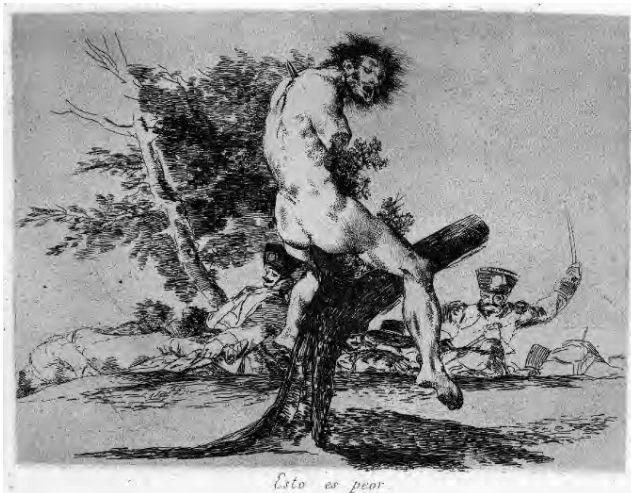


Fig. 29. Francisco Goya, *Esto es peor* (*This is Worse*), 1812. Etching, lavis, drypoint. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

of his prisoners, let alone his troops. However, a coup d'état in 1799 imbued Napoleon with almost supreme political power in France and left the British worried about the nature and ambitions of this new regime. In 1801, debate over Napoleon's politics fell to the wayside as the Treaty of London established peace between the two countries. Six months after this treaty, the Peace of Amiens was signed, ending a longstanding war between England and France. The next twenty months ushered in a period of peace between the two powers. It is during this time of peace that positive accounts of Napoleon appeared in British newspapers, including some appearing in government reports.¹

By 1803, England was once again at war with France, partly as a result of anxiety over a potential invasion of Britain by Napoleon. Yet, it was not just the looming threat of a physical invasion that made the British anxious. The beginning of the nineteenth century was a time of flux for British identity. Many English loyalists feared that the national character was in decline and that the integrity and virtues of the present period no longer lived up to those of their ancestors. They feared that an internal deterioration in British integrity would create an opening for a dominant personality to move in and instill his ideas, beliefs, and laws on the English people, and Napoleon was exactly the type of dominant personality that the loyalists feared.²

How did the British respond to the threat of a Napoleonic invasion? The worry over invasion was as much physical as it was ideological. To calm the public, many British writers and artists created pamphlets, articles, and prints that defined Napoleon and his regime as diametrically opposed to the English character and way of life.³ Prints mirrored British sentiments as many printmakers created works that fed anxiety about the threat of invasion, while others directly attacked Napoleon, demonstrating how the superiority of England's national character would inevitably overcome the efforts of a small dictator.

To understand how the printmakers addressed the threat of Napoleon, it is important to consider the prints. They can be grouped into two categories: the threat and the solution. The former category focuses on the works that served to mirror English fears and anxieties, while the latter examines the prints that attack Napoleon as a person and reduce him to a point of national ridicule.

James Gillray's print, *The New Dynasty:—or—the little Corsican Gardiner planting a Royal Pippin Tree.* (1807), is an example of a print from the threat category (Fig. 30). The print depicts Napoleon tending the garden of Europe, planting a sapling with a king's head on top of it. The sapling represents a member of Ballynahinch, the royal family of Ireland, which was a puppet monarchy supported by Napoleon. This implies that Napoleon would rule Ireland and use it as a stepping-stone to attack England.⁴ To the right of Napoleon, three figures chop down a large tree identified as "The Royal Oak," a symbol of the English monarchy. The three figures, each wielding axes with identifying labels, represent the Whigs, the Broad Bottoms, and the Catholics, implying that these forces, who were all part of the "Ministry of All Talents," would help contribute to the downfall of the English monarchy and clear the way for Napoleon and his desires for a new monarchy in England.⁵ In the background stand rows of pruned trees, each representing the different royal houses of Europe, implying that Napoleon has stripped them of their power and influence. They demonstrate what



Fig. 30. James Gillray, *The New Dynasty:—or—the little Corsican Gardiner planting a Royal Pippin Tree.*, 1807. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 35).

"The Royal Oak" would become as a result of Napoleon's actions and Britain's internal politics.⁶ Thus, this print fuels national anxiety over Napoleon's actions in Europe and his perceived threat to British independence, as well as highlights internal conflict within British politics that would aid Napoleon in his attempt to overthrow England.

Gillray's *Promis'd Horrors of the French Invasion*, mentioned earlier, also falls into the threat category, but deals more with the threat of invasion than the *New Dynasty*. In the center of the scene, figures flog Prime Minister Pitt, who appears tied to a pole capped with a Bonnet Rouge, a symbol of the sans-culotte, who was allied with the Jacobins, the party of the French Revolution. To the left, French soldiers invade a building titled "Whites," where they trample Englishmen, throw them off the balcony, and hang them from the signpost. To the right, Englishmen sympathetic with the French rejoice, holding up a standard that has a head and a broad bottom (literally) hanging off, with a ribbon attached that says "Vive" (live) and "Egalite" (equality). Figures enter a building marked "Brookes's"; one carries moneybags that read "Remains of the Treasury" and "Requisition from the Bank of England." On the balcony stands a guillotine, with a figure behind it holding a wig. Another figure in front holds a burning document in one hand, and a "New Code of Laws" in the other. Beneath this figure is a plate of heads with a sign that reads "Killed off for the Public Good." In the background, the palace of St. James's goes up in smoke and flame.⁷

For England, this scene presents the worst of all possible situations. On the left, the physical threat is presented, with the French shown as savages, barging into buildings, causing damage, and killing Englishmen. On the right is the ideological threat, with the English, under French influence, rewriting their whole political system and killing their own

people. The figures in the center suggest how the French occupation leads to human suffering—a message that would appear in great frequency in Goya's prints.

Gillray's *Apotheosis of the Corsican-Phoenix*. (1808) provides a grimmer look at Napoleon's potential threat to England, but also the rest of the world (Fig. 31). Napoleon appears in the form of a burning phoenix who, as the text at the lower margin suggests, will be reborn:

When the Phoenix is tired of life, he builds a nest upon the mountains, and setting it on fire by the wafting of his own wings, he perishes himself in the flames! And from the smoke of his ashes arises a new phoenix to illuminate the world!!!

In the nest Napoleon rises from an egg-like globe with Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Italy, Turkey, Algeria, Sicily, and Corsica engulfed in flames. Beneath the globe a pile of bayonets forms a nest that rests on a rock identified as the "Pyrenean Mountains," which refers to the Peninsular War in Spain. Above, a dove appears with the words "Peace on Earth" written in its wings and an olive branch in its mouth. It is engulfed in the smoke emitted by the Phoenix's flames, which may allude to the devastation in Spain, which Napoleon invaded in the Spring of 1808, a couple of months before this print was produced.⁸ Taken as a whole, the print proclaims that Napoleon's campaign will destroy any chance for peaceful coexistence with England and ultimately consume the world, only for it to be reborn in his own image.

Other prints that dealt with political issues at the time present the Napoleonic invasion as a consequence of particular issues in question. Gillray's print, —*the Introduction of the Pope to the Convocation at Oxford by the Cardinal Broad-Bottom*. (1809), addresses the fears over Catholic Emancipation and its effects on England (Fig. 32). In this scene, William Grenville, the former Prime Minister, introduces the Pope to the Convocation class at Oxford. Behind Grenville, the Pope holds Grenville's robe, while Napoleon crouches beneath the Pope's mantum. To the left of the scene is the devil, who wears Catholic dress and congratulates Grenville and the other Catholics on the Convocation. The image presents Catholic Emancipation as something evil and detrimental to England, especially its institutions. Grenville, who supported Emancipation, served as Chancellor of Oxford after his tenure as Prime Minister.⁹ The figure of Grenville holds a document in his hands declaring, "...a plan for erecting a new Popish Sanhedrim on the ruins of old Alma Mater," suggesting that his chancellorship would result in a Catholic Oxford. This, in turn would ultimately affect English society as a whole and open the



Fig. 31. James Gillray, *Apotheosis of the Corsican-Phoenix*, 1808. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 39).



Fig. 32. James Gillray, —*the Introduction of the Pope to the Convocation at Oxford by the Cardinal Broad-Bottom*, 1809. Etching. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 40).

door for Napoleon, who crouches next to the Pope.¹⁰ While the print does not deal explicitly with a Napoleonic invasion, it demonstrates the level of concern in Britain regarding Napoleon and how he became a factor in British politics.

As it has been demonstrated, anxiety over Napoleon, his power, and the threat of invasion penetrated many aspects of English politics, but one has to wonder, how did the British respond to this anxiety? The second category of prints, the solution, presents Napoleon as more of a national joke than a

point of concern. In these prints Napoleon is portrayed as weak or that he will fall from power. In effect, the British reinforced feelings of superiority in these prints by projecting the characteristics they saw as weak and detrimental onto Napoleon, while at the same time casting him in situations that showed the diminutive emperor inferior to the British.

An example of a print of this type is Gillray's *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*. (1804), which depicts a scene from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) when the title hero visits a kingdom of giants, known as Brobdingnag (Fig. 33). The scene shows a diminutive Gulliver (Napoleon), sailing a small boat in the direction of a dominant King of Brobdingnag (George III). In the most literal terms, the print casts the British as superior to the French, with a special emphasis on British naval superiority. Here, Napoleon appears as a minor concern if not a point of amusement.¹¹

George Cruikshank, a contemporary of Gillray, also produced many prints that dealt with English reaction to Napoleon. In his *Boney Hatching a Bulletin or Snug Winter Quarters!!!* (1812), Napoleon and his army are shown buried up to their heads in the winter snow, which decimated the French army during the Russian Campaign (Fig. 34). Two figures on the left of the scene question Napoleon about what they should say in the bulletin about the campaign. Napoleon informs the two figures to report falsely that the campaign is going well, specifically stating that John Bull, a national symbol of England, should not find out about the truth of the situation:

Say!!!! Why say we have got into Comfortable Winter Quarters, and the Weather is very fine & will last 8 days longer. Say we have got plenty Soup Meagre plenty of Minced meat-gilled Bears fine Eating—driving Cut-us-off to the Devil. Say we shall be home at Xmas to dinner—give my love to darling—don't let John Bull know that I have been Cowpoxed—tell a good lie about the Cossacks-D-e tell anything but the Truth.

As in *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*, *Boney Hatching a Bulletin* allays fears of an invasion by drawing attention to the faults and recent failures of the French army and Napoleon. The bulletin, mentioned in the print, reinforced British superiority by referencing Napoleon's failed attempt at propaganda by quoting lines from the original bulletin.¹²

The imagined failure of a Napoleonic invasion is also present in William Holland's *The Ghost of Queen Elizabeth!!* (1803) (Fig. 35). On the right side of the scene, Napoleon is taken aback by the figure of Queen Elizabeth, who emerges from an expanse of clouds from the left. The queen holds a



Fig. 33. James Gillray, *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*. (Plate 2d), 1804. Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 33).



Fig. 34. George Cruikshank, *Boney Hatching a Bulletin or Snug Winter Quarters!!!*, 1812. Etching, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

painting entitled “Defeat of the Spanish Armada” and reproaches Napoleon, “Monster! Look at that and tremble!!!” By recalling a previous British naval victory, Holland reminds Napoleon of earlier failed invasions of England. The print underscores British naval superiority as a means to reassure the English, who fear a French invasion.¹³

Although British reaction to Napoleon was always touched with a sense of anxiety, reflecting society's attempt to increase public reaction against Napoleon or to cope with the possibility of national panic, this anxiety went hand-in-hand with a common scenario featured in the prints. They present either the potential effects of Napoleon's ambitions or how Napoleon would fail at the strength of his opponent. But, as stated before, these reactions only existed within the realm of possibility, Cruikshank's print notwithstanding, as most of the other prints discussed here do not deal with a direct confrontation or event that took place between the British and Napoleon. Some of the prints even presented Napoleon

as a secondary concern or a potential consequence of certain actions in domestic policy, such as connected to Catholic Emancipation. The fact that the reactions are all based in the realm of possibility is the result of the fact that the British never experienced direct confrontation with Napoleon on British soil. Thus, as the English never developed the invasion mentality, the prints they produced in reaction to Napoleon had lighter and more humorous themes, whereas in Spain, where Napoleon had actually invaded, Goya's prints are darker and more pessimistic in tone as he was working during times of war and strife. Nowhere is this dark reaction seen better than in the prints produced by the artist during the Peninsular War.

As the court painter for the Spanish royal family, much of Goya's efforts were directed at making portraits; however, he also produced a large volume of prints. Working with etching and aquatint, Goya covered a variety of subject matter, from his *Caprichos* series, which pointed out the follies and superstitions of Spanish society, while also lampooning the Catholic Church, to his *Tauromaquia*, which dealt with the subject of bullfighting. However, in his *Desastres de la Guerra* series, Goya presents a direct reaction to Napoleonic invasion and the Peninsular War.

The Peninsular War was declared in May of 1808, after Napoleon installed his brother on the Spanish throne.¹⁴ For the next six years, the French army fought the Spanish, eventually resulting in a Spanish victory thanks to help from the British and a successful strategy of guerilla warfare.¹⁵ Yet, it was during this war that the Spanish experienced some of the worst bloodshed. Goya, who was in Spain during the war, heard first-hand accounts of the French atrocities, and even saw some of the violence himself. Goya started working on the plates for the *Desastres* series during the height of the war in 1810 and finished them around 1823. It was not published until forty years after his death in 1868. In this series Goya presents the harsh reality of war, removing almost any idea of heroism as generally seen in earlier depictions of war.¹⁶

Los Desastres de la Guerra divides into three sections: the events and atrocities, the famine of Madrid, and the "Striking Caprices."¹⁷ We will focus here on the events and atrocities as they are the most relevant to this study. The first print of the series, *Tristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer* (*Sad presentiments of what must come to pass*) (1810), sets the tone for this first section (Fig. 36). The scene depicts a man in torn clothes, kneeling with his arms outstretched, and his gaze up towards the heavens. With no man to offer aid, he looks for salvation from above; yet, he is only greeted with visions or menacing faces emerging from a dark sky.¹⁸ This scene suggests that war, in reality, is not poetic or heroic, but leaves people broken, suffering, and alone—common themes that appear throughout the series.



Fig. 35. William Holland, *The Ghost of Queen Elizabeth!!*, 1803. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 36. Francisco Goya, *Tristes presentimientos de lo que ha de acontecer* (*Sad presentiments of what must come to pass*), 1810. Etching, burin, drypoint, burnisher. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

The fifth print in the series, *Y son fieras* (*And they are like Wild Beasts*) (1810), represents Spanish women and French soldiers in armed confrontation (Fig. 37). In the foreground, a woman on the left is shown with a baby under her arm and thrusting a spear into the side of a soldier who is standing on the right. In the background, a woman is about to throw a large rock, while a soldier aims his rifle and prepares to fire. In the center of the scene there is a pile of corpses, while in the bottom left hand corner a woman holds a knife and looks up to the sky. As the title of the print suggests, the combatants, both Spanish and French, have become like wild beasts due to their violent actions towards each other. Yet, this transformation resulted from the mentality and actions of the invasion. Thus, the invasion and the mentality brought out the worst of human behavior, as well as the base need for survival and self-preservation.¹⁹

Esto es peor (*This is Worse*) (1812), plate 37 in the series, is the most telling about the atrocities committed during war (Fig. 29). The foreground depicts a dismembered man impaled on a tree. In the background, French soldiers continue the slaughter and drag away the bodies. No part of this scene is heroic; the dead Spaniard evokes sympathy and disgust over the actions of the French. Even the title of the print, which is terse, reinforces the power of the image. This stands in contrast to British satirical prints, which have scenes that depended heavily on text to provide explanation of specific events and figures related to their political and social situations. Gillray's *Promis'd Horrors*, with a central figure that is also experiencing the effects of a French invasion, stands in contrast with Goya's print. Gillray's print requires the use of text within the scene to reference specific figures, groups, and even places to establish a narrative about the effects of French invasion. Goya's print lacks the specificity of Gillray's, as the scene he presents relays the singular message about the horrors of war and human suffering.

Finally, plate 69 reinforces the message that war is human suffering. *Nada ello lo dice* (*Nothing. The event will tell*) (1820) depicts a dark scene with skeletal figures. In the foreground, the most visible figure is shown scribbling the word "nada" (nothing) on a piece of paper (Fig. 38). This print shows the outcome of war in the simplest, most basic of terms. Again, this is in contrast to the text-filled satirical prints from Britain. In Goya's case, no words can fully explain. This difference in mentalities also relates to Goya's artistic temperament as a painter, which as a medium does not favor text. Thus, for Goya, printmaking was an extension of his painterly career as he was more focused on relaying a message through the image as opposed to integrating it with text.

Differences of artistic styles notwithstanding, differences in tone and character between the English prints and those of Goya can be attributed in part to the fact that Napoleon only threatened to invade England but actually did invade Spain. As a result, these separate mentalities changed the different perceptions the societies had about Napoleon, which in turn affected how these artists produced prints related to his actions. The British took a more lighthearted, albeit nervous, approach to attacking the dictator, while Goya decided to record the reality of Napoleon's imperialistic ambitions as he lived through them. As it may have been more complicated for Napoleon to invade England than Spain, the prints also demonstrate an unstated geopolitical awareness, as the British only had to deal with the threat of invasion, a threat they could more easily cope with, whereas Goya's prints dealing with Napoleonic invasion do not reflect the same anxiety.

Yet, it is important to ask: for whom were these prints produced? In Britain, the elite and middle classes consumed



Fig. 37. Francisco Goya, *Y son fieras* (*And they are like Wild Beasts*), 1810. Etching, burnished aquatint, drypoint. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 38. Francisco Goya, *Nada ello lo dice* (*Nothing. The event will tell*), 1820. Etching, burnished aquatint, lavis, drypoint, burin. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

satirical prints, as they were meant to entertain their readers about the latest gossip, political events, and social issues of the day.²⁰ Goya's prints were produced for an upper-class audience, and were not designed for large-scale production and broad dissemination. Moreover, Goya's prints were produced in a series and were sold in costly bound editions.²¹ British satirical prints, on the other hand, were produced by a wide range of artists, referenced different events, and sold individually at an affordable price.

Los Desastres de la Guerra is an interesting case because it was published in the 1860s, well after Goya's death. Many factors contributed to the posthumous printing. After the Peninsular War, scenes of combat were, not surprisingly, in little demand.²² Also, with the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty by Ferdinand IV, Spanish prints and publishers were subject to greater censorship, especially in regards to material concerned with the recent war. Consequently, Goya might

not have had his prints published for fear of censure, especially since he was the painter to the Spanish court.²³ In contrast, there was almost no restriction on the prints being produced in England, where they were created for public consumption and largely uncensored.²⁴ Goya's prints were most likely meant to be public as the series was started before the Restoration. The third section of the *Desastres* series, the "Striking Caprices," was meant to provide social commentary much in the way that his *Los Caprichos* had earlier. Yet, due to the external pressures, *Los Desastres de la Guerra* was never published in Goya's lifetime and as a result became an internal, highly personal response to the Peninsular War, despite its original intent.

The British prints, although artistic in their own right, served mainly as a humorous commentary on news, gossip, and opinions around London. The differences in style help to support this idea that the art was secondary to the message. In contrast, *Los Desastres de la Guerra* was more fundamentally an artistic endeavour and sold as a complete edition, not as independent prints. Moreover, that Goya's prints were not as easily accessible as the British prints situates them more within the realm of high art.

Although Goya and the British printmakers worked during the same time period, it was their different responses to war, as well as the fact that Goya was the painter in the Spanish court and the printmakers solely derived their

income from prints, that helped determine the style of their subject matter. For the English, war with France on English soil was always a looming, but improbable, threat, whereas Goya lived through the Peninsular War that happened directly in Spain. The English prints are filled with words and recognizable figures in order to convey information, whereas the figures in Goya's prints do not have specificity to them, thus giving the scenes universality to them so as to help present his viewers with the images and sentiments of the events he witnessed. Also, the fact that Goya devoted over a decade to complete the scenes in *Los Desastres de la Guerra* series, as opposed to the British printmakers who constantly had to churn out prints to keep up with current events, accounts for artistic differences in not only the quality of these works, but also their messages. Thus, although these groups of prints both represent a response to Napoleon, the differences between them are not only the result of the artists' territorial positions, but also how they fit into the hierarchy of fine art, the market demand for prints of these types, and personal and national responses to the actions and policies of the French dictator. Yet, while these aspects explain the differences between the British and Goya's prints, it is the fear of Napoleon and his influence, whether real or imagined, that unifies the works of these seemingly disparate artists.

1 Stuart Semmel, *Napoleon and the British* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 19–30.

2 Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, 39–40.

3 Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, 46–48.

4 Frederic George Stephens and Mary Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 12 vols. (London: The British Museum, 1870–1954; 1978 reprint), 8: 542–543.

5 Frank O'Gorman, *The Emergence of the British Two-Party System 1760–1832* (London: Edward Arnold Ltd., 1982), 36–39.

6 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 8:542–543.

7 Draper Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts: Caricatures by James Gillray* (London: Phaidon Press Ltd., 1966), 142–145.

8 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 8:660.

9 Ian R. Christie, *Wars and Revolutions: Britain, 1760–1815* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1982), 253.

10 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 8:850.

11 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 8:252–253.

12 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 9:147.

13 Semmel, *Napoleon and the British*, 63–65.

14 David Gates, *The Spanish Ulcer: A History of the Peninsular War* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1986), 5–12.

15 John Lawrence Tone, *The Fatal Knot: The Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1994), 4–5.

16 Janis A. Tomlinson, "Los Desastres de la Guerra," in *Francisco Goya y Lucientes: The Disasters of War, La Tauromaquia, Spanish Entertainment and Other Prints, from the Collection of the Arthur Ross Foundation* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 1983), 12–18.

17 Tomlinson, "Los Desastres de la Guerra," 16.

18 Tomlinson, "Los Desastres de la Guerra," 16.

19 Roger Malbert, *Disasters of War: Callot, Goya, Dix* (London: The South Bank Centre, 1998), 36–37.

20 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 9–12.

21 Juliet Wilson Barea, *Goya's Prints: The Tomás Harris Collection in the British Museum* (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1981), 12.

22 David W. Steadman, *The Graphic Art of Francisco Goya: from the Norton Simon Foundation, the Norton Simon, Inc. Museum of Art and the Pomona College Collections* (Claremont, CA: The Galleries of the Claremont Colleges, 1975), 46.

23 Tomlinson, "Los Desastres de la Guerra," 14.

24 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 240.

Christy Gray

[Faculty of Physic] . . . abounds with Imposters, Cheats and ignorant Pretenders . . . in which number I include, not only those who call themselves regular Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, but likewise all persons who make it their business to preserve health and repair human conditions . . . they are for ever abusing one another as Quacks, Empirics, and ignorant Pretenders, recommending their own remedies to us as the only original and truly prepared specificks; at the same time they kindly forewarn us to beware of Imposters, trump up in imitation of their approved rememies [sic]; for which purpose they direct us to their shops or houses, and seal their preparations with their own Coats of arms to prevent counterfeits.

—Country Journal (1726)¹

Eighteenth-century London was, by modern standards, a disgusting, unsanitary, and overcrowded city, the conditions of which, coincidentally, provided ideal circumstances for the spread of disease. Due to an ignorance of the underlying causes and transmission of disease, the city's officials took few preventive measures to improve the poor condition of the city. Moreover, educated doctors relied on unproven and often unsuccessful practices rooted in Galenic and Hippocratic doctrine, while their uneducated counterparts, i.e., quacks, practiced freely due to an absence of governmental oversight. Citizens were left wondering: who are the real doctors and who can be trusted? The practice of medicine, largely guesswork mixed with traditional treatments, made calling upon a doctor truly a matter of life and death. The frequent portrayal of health-related subjects in literary and print satire of the period reflected society's concern regarding health. Indeed, William Hogarth's print, *The Company of Undertakers* (1736), compares physicians and undertakers, giving voice to the apprehension of the masses and cleverly discrediting the medical field (Fig. 39). The print questions the validity of the supposedly learned doctors by presenting three quacks in the upper part of the composition, while beneath them, several "doctors" practice a form of diagnosis by tasting urine. The confusing role-reversal in the print represents, in a light-hearted version, the all-too-truthful state of eighteenth-century medicine.

The concerns of the populace appear in various sources, including personal letters, poems, satire, and satirical prints, which offer pictorial as well as literary evidence of the prevailing attitudes concerning health and medicine.



Fig. 39. After William Hogarth, *The Company of Undertakers*, 1736. Engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 41).

Although it is a coincidence that the “golden age of quackery” aligns perfectly with the “golden age of satire,” their alignment provided satirists with a litany of material associated with questionable medical practice. In addition to providing simple entertainment, the role of the satirist was to play the cynic and perhaps push for improved conditions. While it is uncertain if satirical prints encouraged any direct change in matters of healthcare, they certainly added humor to medical discourse. Satire also provided cathartic satisfaction for citizens, “the caricature always brought about a sort of compensation, belittling those who think themselves great and permitting the lowly and the oppressed a delightful, if secret, revenge.”² To understand more fully the function and nature of the health-related satirical prints, it is necessary to consider them within the historical context of Georgian England.

During the eighteenth century, London's population grew at a phenomenal rate. From 1760–1820, the population increased from 6 million to 11.3 million.³ The spike in

population aligns with the early stage of the industrial revolution and the arrival of workers and their families in the urban areas of London. New industrial neighborhoods were squeezed into a city that had little space to offer. The effects of over-crowding and a complete disregard for sanitary conditions became a health concern for the city. Jonathan Swift describes the squalid conditions in “Description of a City Shower”:

Sweepings from butchers’ stalls, dung, guts and blood,
Drowned puppies, stinking sprats, all drenched in mud,
Dead cats, and turnip tops, come tumbling down the flood.⁴

Swift’s description of the city directs attention to the severe problem of sanitation. While the city of London had operative sewers that emptied into the River Thames, it was unlawful for citizens to utilize them for personal waste.⁵ Nevertheless, many wealthy citizens disregarded the regulations in favor of their own comforts, while common citizens used cesspools (underground pits).

Although the precise nature of disease transmission remained unknown, many doctors rightly associated poor sanitation with poor health and disease. Through the miasmatic theory, it was generally believed that people would contract diseases by breathing in the fumes generated by decomposing waste or other environmental contaminants.⁶ In 1733, George Cheyne, a Scottish physician, claimed,

the ordure of so many diseas’d, both intelligent and unintelligent animals, the croud’d Churches, Church Yards and Burying Places, with the putrifying Bodies, the Sinks, Butchers Houses, Stables, Dunghills etc. and the necessary Stagnation, Fermentation, and mixture of Variety of all Kinds of Adoms, and more than sufficient to putrefy, poison and infect the Air for Twenty Miles around it, and which in Time must alter, weaken and destroy the healthiest of Constitutions.⁷

In 1831, England experienced its first outbreak of cholera. The disease was responsible for the death of over 5,000 people in London and 32,000 throughout England, shocking the nation into strict sanitation reform.⁸ A new priority to restructure the sewers resulted in the innovation of the dry-closet system, an early version of the composting toilet. The plan was to collect waste and convert it into a saleable fertilizer. However, the daily transport of the

“night-soil” disturbed the citizens and the city officials quickly put an end to the system.⁹ It was not until 1848, through the Public Health Act, that Parliament provided public access to the sewer lines and routed them to empty downstream of the city.

The problem was not limited to matters of sanitation, but extended into the regulation of professional health standards. Licensed as well as unlicensed physicians received little legal restraint.¹⁰ The eighteenth-century medical field operated primarily on a free-market basis, promoting the relentless pursuit of wealth that led to infighting among fellow doctors. This competitive environment prompted a teaching physician to proclaim that only the most ambitious will “enjoy happiness of riches.”¹¹

Doctors practiced within a strict hierarchy, ranging from the physician to the surgeon, apothecary, and eventually the lowly quack. The most highly coveted position, the physician, consisted of one who was educated at Oxford or Cambridge and was likely a member of the Royal College of Physicians. The College of Physicians was founded in 1518; however, it was not until 1674 that it received a royal charter.¹² Their authority to police other medical professions included the ability to summon unlicensed practitioners to court.¹³ Under this charter, doctors were raised to the upper levels of society and their newly founded wealth and status clouded their ethical responsibility to oversee the medical field.¹⁴

In addition to royal patronage, the physician’s growing status was enhanced by the popular belief that the manual labor involved in surgery was inferior to the mental aptitude that was required as a physician. Surgeons did not train at the university; instead they learned their trade through practice; indeed many were trained barbers as well. The Barber-Surgeon College was founded in 1540, as a craft guild; however, it was not until 1745 that the barber and surgeon professions separated from one another.¹⁵ Just as the trade of the physician and surgeon started within the confines of a guild, both professions eventually moved onto qualifications that enforced formal education. Naturally, the learning curve could be gruesome; therefore it is not surprising that printmakers depicted surgeons as butchers and torturers, as in James Gillray’s *Metallic-Tractors* and Thomas Rowlandson’s *The Amputation*.

Even lower in the scale of professional medicine were the apothecaries and druggists. Although the Society of Apothecaries was founded in 1617, physicians enjoyed a monopoly status on prescribing medicine up until 1815.¹⁶ In spite of the amendments in the early part of the eighteenth century, the apothecaries could only charge for prescribed medicine and not for their advice or service.¹⁷ However, apothecaries often knew more about drugs than physicians,

and patients were undoubtedly happy to spend less money on what might amount to the same results.

The division within the medical profession was exacerbated by the power and control of the privileged physicians at the top rung. It was not to the advantage of the empowered to challenge the professional status quo. In fact, the eighteenth-century model for body and health remained entrenched in the nearly two thousand-year-old Hippocratic Corpus—the belief that a healthy body resulted from a balance of the four humors: bile, phlegm, black bile, and blood.¹⁸ The number conveniently corresponds to the universal concept of four elements, seasons, and ages of man, and was generally respected within the guidelines of Grecian belief. Often diagnosis and treatment was given according to the proper moderation of body; for example, if the patient was feverish, the balance would be restored by a cold bath. However, a balance in lifestyle was deemed equally important and doctors paid special attention to the patient's diet, exercise, emotional condition, and other aspects of life. Lacking scientific explanation, physicians relied on educated guesses based on prior experiences with similar illnesses and the current patient's medical history. According to a section dedicated to "Epidemics," Hippocratic advice suggests that the doctor,

Declare the past, diagnose the present, foretell the future: practise [sic] these things. In diseases make a habit of two things—help, or at least do no harm.¹⁹

In this seemingly blind practice of medicine, Roy Porter concedes that the "prating, pompous physician, spouting Greek aphorisms, was an easy satirical target."²⁰

The unfounded hopefulness behind this "heroic" approach to doctoring is expressed in James Gillray's print, *Breathing a Vein* (1804) (Fig. 40). The etching illustrates one of the many balance-restoring techniques that was offered during the Georgian period. Gillray depicts the common practice of bloodletting, venesection, or the modern term, phlebotomy. This technique, used both as preventive medicine and to cure a myriad of ailments, required draining of large amounts of blood to ensure good flow and the removal of bad or infectious blood. Gillray's print depicts a grimacing patient sitting on a chair while painfully clutching his knee. The accompanying doctor, having lanced the patient's arm with a sharp scalpel-like device, stands holding a bowl to catch the stream of blood. The print represents the unpleasant and often painful ordeal patients endured in their search for relief.

During the late eighteenth century, many doctors were already questioning the efficacy of phlebotomy. More



Fig. 40. James Gillray, *Breathing a Vein*, 1804. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 32).

progressive physicians replaced bloodletting with the more recent treatment of balancing the bowels. In 1800, a doctor that often practiced in London's Queen Street recorded one particular case for which he prescribed laxatives. According to the doctor's account, the patient was suffering from swollen fingers that were

thickly studded with eruptions, from which issued a semi-transparent excoriating ichor. I suspected the latent cause, and told her she had neglected her bowels in particular. She confessed to having done so. I prescribed for her a tepid bath and mild aperients.²¹

Several other balance-restoring techniques were used as indiscriminately as bloodletting, including purging, sweating, cupping, and vomiting. While none of these procedures targeted the root cause of the patients' ailments, they provided the basic need of hopefulness, and in the most agreeable occasions, perhaps a placebo effect. In the most tragic instances, however, the treatments worsened illness and occasionally brought on death.

The Royal College of Physicians continued to control the practice of medicine and did little to reform or improve

medical standards.²² Without a governing authority separate from the practitioners, the medical field remained at a standstill. Those who were painfully ill and desperate for treatment turned to anyone who claimed a cure. This was particularly true for those of the rising middle class, who were above folk-healing but could not afford the expense of a trained and educated physician. These conditions provided ample opportunity for unlicensed doctors, or quacks. These practitioners took full advantage of the growing middle class by placing ads for nostrums and treatments in newspapers and journals. While physicians built their clientele through strong family connections, quack doctors most often relied on a faceless business; they depended on advertising to promote their reputation to acquire patients.²³

Despite their low position in the medical profession, quack doctors may have played a role in pioneering medicinal innovation. As early as the eighteenth century, Isaac Swainson claimed that, “In physics, all changes...have been forced on the regulars by the quacks and all the great and powerful medicines are the discoveries of quacks.”²⁴ Patents for experimental medicine could be easily obtained from royal authority. While often quoted as the “license to kill,” the ability to literally “practice” medicine had its advantages. Opium was believed to be used in the sixteenth century as an ingredient in Paracelsus’s laudanum and was used to cure a variety of ailments during the Georgian period, ranging from malaria, coughs, dysentery, sleeplessness, diarrhea, and general use as a sedative and painkiller. Later, it became the source for morphine, codeine, and papaverine.

Another method of treatment that was utilized by quack doctors and physicians alike was uroscopy—the diagnosis and prognosis through the inspection of urine. This practice had been utilized as a respectable method of diagnosis since the Middle Ages. Doctors examined the urine for cloudy formations or “nebulae” and interpreted the results in consultation with the stars.²⁵ Despite such a pseudo-scientific approach, in 1621, Doctor Thomas Willis, after tasting his patient’s urine, provided the first clues to diagnosing what we now know as diabetes. However, by the eighteenth century, uroscopy was considered the artifice of the “piss-prophet,” and appears often in satirical illustrations as a mark of the quack doctor.²⁶

William Hogarth mocked uroscopy in the previously mentioned print, *The Company of Undertakers*, which he cleverly shaped in the form of an escutcheon. Hogarth was a former engraver of heraldic designs and drew upon his familiarity of such motifs to cleverly mock the medical profession. While the print was initially published as “The Company of Undertakers,” the title “A Consultation of Physicians” was used in a subsequent copy by Thomas Cook in 1809.²⁷ The latter title is believed to have been considered

by Hogarth for the original title of the print and alludes to the importance of the composition and the meaning of “consultation.”²⁸ Within the shield, three quack doctors overlook a group of twelve physicians “in consultation.” “Consultation” was a term to describe the meeting of several doctors to argue the diagnosis of an individual patient. According to a 1753 law enacted by the Royal College of Physicians, the doctor with less experience was expected to cede to the doctor with the most senior experience.²⁹ If an agreement could not be reached, a third party would be consulted. Hogarth includes a total of fifteen doctors, a comical exaggeration that was not lost on his audience. In the print, Hogarth separates the quack doctors at the top of the escutcheon from the lower ones with a black wavy “nebulae,” which alludes to cloudy urine and to the wavy border used in heraldic design. Hogarth contradicts the normal order by positioning all twelve educated and supposedly superior doctors “in consultation” below the lesser quack doctors, who look over them. Hogarth literally positions them heads and shoulders above the rest.

Hogarth emphasized the questionable nature of the medical business and the ominous presence of death, by substituting crossbones for the traditional animal supporters that figuratively hold up the shield. He also rendered the border around the escutcheon in black, the color of death. The Latin inscription that appears at the base of the escutcheon, “ET PLURIMA MORTIS IMAGO” (everywhere fear and countless image of death), was lifted from Virgil’s *Aeneid* describing the gruesome battlefield of Troy.³⁰ This inscription reiterates the connection between doctor and undertaker, suggesting the physician’s adherence to medicine is based less on Greco-Roman tradition of Hippocratic and Galenic medicine than “Death’s claim over both the Trojans and the Greeks.”³¹ The lengthy passage at the bottom of the picture contains an encoded set of criticism, based on the nomenclature, colors, and patterns used in heraldic design.

Beareth Sable, an Urinal proper, between 12 Quack-Heads of the Second and 12 Cane Heads Or, Consultant. On a Chief: Nebulae, Ermine, One compleat Doctor issuant, checkie sustaining in his Right Hand a Baton of the Second. On his Dexter and Sinister sides two Demi-Doctors, issuant of the Second, and two Cane Heads issuant of the third; The first having One Eye conchant towards the Dexter side of the Escoccheon the second Faced per pale proper & Gules, Guardent With this Motto.

A chief betoken a senator or Honorable Personage borrowed from the Greeks, and is a Head: and as

the Head is the Chief Part in the Man, so the Chief in the Escoccheon should be a Reward of such only whose High Merits have procured them Chief Place, Esteem, or Love amongst Men. Guillin. The bearing of Clouds in Armes doth impart some exalence.

In her extensive study of the print, Fiona Hislam provides detailed analysis of the inscription.³² “Beareth Sable, an Urinal proper” refers to the black background and announces the intended focus of the composition, the urinal. “Proper” is in reference to the remaining natural color. Both colors are based on heraldic tradition; the word for a color can only be used once and afterwards is indicated by numbers only, therefore “of the Second” refers again to “proper,” the natural coloring. The first sentence establishes that the “Quack-Heads” and the “Cane-Heads” are equal in qualification. “Or” means gold, later “of the third” symbolizes the third color mentioned or gold. The gold color in the print represents the doctor’s batons. “Nebulae,” as mentioned earlier is the heraldic term for the wavy pattern separating the doctors, while “Ermine” is the background of the “Chief,” which is the upper portion of the divided escutcheon. The use of ermine would have recalled several meanings. First, the fur of the animal was often used to line the robes of official persons such as judges and, coincidentally, Oxford alumni. Secondly, the term “ermine” was also used by poets to infer the notion of purity. Therefore, the decorative patterning of ermine was meant to reiterate the intellect and honorable intentions of the Hogarth’s chosen quacks.

“On a Chief Nebulae” addresses the doctors above the wavy border. “One compleat Doctor issuant” refers to the central doctor, dressed in “checkie,” which is in reference to the harlequin patterned clothing. “Baton of the Second” distinguishes that the central doctor is holding a bone, of a natural color. The central doctor is also referred to as the “compleat Doctor,” a double declaration of superior medical practice, since the doctor was not called a quackhead or canehead. “Dexter” and “Sinister” designate the doctors on the right and left of the central doctor which are also called the “Demi-Doctors.” “The first having One Eye conchant towards Dexter side of the Escoccheon” refers to the doctor to the right of the central doctor. In traditional heraldry, the Dexter always signifies the person right of the central “bearer of arms.” “Conchant” refers to the lying down or sleeping position and is portrayed by the closed eye of the doctor. The doctor on the sinister or left side of the central figure has been given the description “per pale proper,” referring to the traditional division of line in heraldry, which is illustrated on his face. “Gules” is equivalent to the color red, the entire sentence referring to the natural and red side of his face,

which provides identification for the figure because of his known birthmark. The second paragraph is relatively self-explanatory, once again addressing the superiority of the central figure.

While Hogarth’s audience no doubt knew the work of the quacks, some may well have recognized the specific personalities, and a few may even had direct experience with them. Indeed, Hogarth’s escutcheon represents some of the most notorious quacks of the Georgian period. At the center of the grouping, holding a bone, is Crazy Sally, otherwise known as Mrs. Sarah Mapp. In Hogarth’s illustration as well as the passage below, she is depicted as the most “compleat doctor.” Born in Wilshire, Sarah Wellington settled in Epsom, where Londoners flocked for her cures. After acquiring a small fortune as a bone-setter, she married a Mr. Hill Mapp, who divorced her a week later and ran away with one hundred guineas and with whatever tangible property he could stow away.³³ She eventually moved to London and was sought out by the queen. Legend has it that Crazy Sally healed a man whose back had been broken for nine years and realigned another who had been lame for twenty years due to a six inch difference between the lengths of his two legs.³⁴ Whether or not she performed these medical feats, she certainly cultivated an extremely loyal following; she even inspired poetry in her honor. While at a playhouse in Lincoln’s Inn Fields, the following was sung to her.

You surgeons of London, who puzzle your pates,
To ride in your coaches, and purchase estates,
Give over for shame, for pride has a fall,
And the Doctress of Epsom has out-done you all,
Derry down.

In physic, as well as in fashions, we find,
The newest has always its run with mankind;
Forgot is the bustle! ’bout Taylor and Ward,
And Mapp’s all the cry, and her Fame’s on record.
Derry down.

Dame Nature has given a doctor’s degree—
She gets all the patients, and pockets the fee;
So if you don’t instantly prove her a cheat,
She’ll loll in her carriage, whilst you walk the street.
Derry down.³⁵

The two other names mentioned in the poem allude to the pair of fellows who flank Mrs. Mapp in Hogarth’s print—Joshua Ward and John Taylor. Ward, who appears on Sally’s proper left, was well known for his pills and drops that were alleged to be composed of antimony and dragon blood.³⁶ Indeed, he was mentioned just one year before

Hogarth's print in the January 1735 edition of the *Grubstreet Journal*.

. . . of Quack Doctor [Joshua "Spot" Ward]. . . whose Abilities and great Success are too well known amongst the Undertakers, Coffin-makers, and Sextons . . . If he can kill by one Drop only, whilst others must fill Vials and Quart Bottles to do it, it shews him the greater Artist.³⁷

This passage not only highlights the popularity of Ward, it demonstrates that the comparison between undertakers and doctors was well established before Hogarth and well understood by the contemporary audience.

Ward is also identified by a well-known birthmark that, in the print, Hogarth alludes to by portraying his face in a division of shadow and light. After giving treatment to the queen and repairing the dislocated finger of George II, he received payment in the gift of a carriage and several horses.³⁸ Additionally, he requested to be granted the privilege of driving through St. James's Place, a park typically reserved for nobility. Later in life and feeling extremely self-important, he audaciously asked for a burial fit for royalty; upon his death, he was not, despite his request, buried next to the altar at Westminster Abbey.

While Ward was located on Crazy Sally's left side in the print, the self-proclaimed "Chevalier" John Taylor was positioned on her right. Taylor had actually received a surgical education in London and became a successful oculist. Despite his fame and prolific career he did not escape scrutiny. Just as Hogarth had traded the typical doctor's cane in for Mrs. Mapp's bone, he distinguished Taylor further by fashioning him in a winking expression and included an eye on the cane that he was holding. The eye was not only a symbol of Taylor's profession, but as Haslam points out, "the resultant wink given to his features may be associated with his ability to 'hoodwink' his clients."³⁹ His lifestyle, as some would say "charismatic" and others "flamboyant," earned him the title of a quack. He was a worldly traveler and knew several languages, but by his own account he was an "Ophthalmiator, Pontifical, Imperial, and Royal, who treated Pope Benedict XIV, Augustus III, King of Poland, Frederick V, King of Denmark and Norway and Frederick Adolphus, King of Sweden."⁴⁰ Although untrue, he also claimed to have restored Bach's eyesight.⁴¹

While many assertions claimed by quack doctors served more as advertising campaigns than truthful testimonies of actual results, it does seem that Mapp and Taylor were among the quack doctors who offered legitimate services. Their loyal and royal following supports this claim. Their services, however, were outside the realm of family physician, and thus



Fig. 41. George Cruikshank, *Indigestion*, 1835. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 7).

ostracized. The oculist, who specialized in the treatment of cataracts, and lithotomists whose job entailed the removal of bladder stones, were professions that were counted among the quack category. Bone-setting and dentistry were also practiced by unlicensed and typically unschooled "quacks." A majority of trades were often learned from within the family business or solely from practice. Relying on nostrums and notoriety, Joshua "Spot" Ward was not the exception but rather the typical quack. In addition to Mapp and Taylor, Ward also received royal patronage. In light of their popularity, it is little surprise that Hogarth singled them out as respected doctors in comparison to their peers and demonstrates the difficulties of determining the orthodox practitioners from the quacks.

Even in approved medicine, much of the treatment relied on the relationship between patient and physician. As noted earlier, the doctor's approach was to identify the patient's history and then to describe the patient's pain, symptoms, how they started, and whether they were new or recurrent. Trained physicians invested much in what the patient said. Without scientific methods, medical treatment was considerably "patient centered."⁴² In general, the patient exam relied on the five senses: feel pulse for irregularities, sniff for gangrene, taste urine, listen for breathing irregularities, and look for eye or skin discoloration.⁴³ However, it was crucial to respect patient modesty as well. With women in particular, the physical exam required minimal touching of the patient, less they should disturb the delicacy or the piousness of the patient. To be a successful doctor, charisma might have been more essential than results; the physician had to be friendly and the medicine had to appear to be working. Perhaps this is why purges, emetics, bloodletting, and sweat-inducing treatments were so popular. It is possible

that patients simply wanted to see the visible effect of medicine, regardless of its true efficacy.

Desperation led people to search anywhere, even in other maladies. During the Georgian age, gout was believed to be a sign of good health. Horace Walpole claimed that, “It prevents other illnesses and prolongs life....Could I cure the gout, should not I have fever, a palsy, or an apoplexy?”⁴⁴ It was a normal part of life. Despite the fact that the disease was often the result of overindulgence, gout was treated as a badge of honor. It was the “disease of the kings,” a sign of good breeding and superiority. Naturally, many satirists took aim at the wealthy and “their” disease.

While gout was a common subject, illustrations of digestive problems were also popular, especially considering that one of the most common jokes in satire was flatulence. George Cruikshank utilized the resulting discomfort of indigestion to comment on the overindulgence of the wealthy. In his 1835 etching, frankly named *Indigestion*, Cruikshank depicts a man surrounded with tortuous demons and past memories of an excessive night of eating and drinking (Fig. 41). The devilish characters tease the sufferer with more food while another pours water down his back. In the background the man on the moon frowns and a hand-shaped cloud points to the “black draught” on the mantel. After having already tried the soda as a remedy, the man seems to have little choice but to give the nostrum a try. The digestive disturbances, as well as the means to cure them, serve as a proper punishment for the man’s gluttony.

The little demons that accompany Cruikshank’s character may have deeper spiritual or religious implications. It was often thought that sins were punished with divine intervention. In the case of *Indigestion*, the man’s sinful overindulgence led to a night of discomfort just as a man’s loose and adulterous ways might lead to a venereal infection. Before modern science could identify and treat the cause, it did no harm to apply religious meaning to ailing health, because it provided an explanation for their condition. Even as religious beliefs came into question during the Enlightenment, Dutch anatomist, Herman Boerhaave, responded, “medicine should study second-causes not primary causes, the ‘how’ not the ‘why’ and ‘wherefore.’”⁴⁵ A concern for the soul continued to be present; however, spiritual beliefs served as “secondary” reasons to the “primary” medical reason for explaining the cause of a sickness.

Precariousness of life and questionable medicine led to a heightened awareness of health in eighteenth-century England. Concern with one’s health was matched by willing practitioners promising relief. In 1600, the number of physicians was around fifty; in 1779, the first national medical register listed three thousand.⁴⁶ Certainly, the numbers would have been higher if there would have been an

accurate way to count the quacks, specialty doctors, and folk-healers. A high number of practitioners, ranging from the educated physician to the folk-healer, insured that most in society had access to some form of treatment. What lacked was a professional place to treat patients and practice medicine. St. Bartholomew and the notorious Bethlehem, or as it was often called, “bedlam,” were the only two hospitals in the city of London. In the absence of city or national control of the medical field, funding generally fell to private charities. During the eighteenth century, the amount of hospitals steadily increased; leading the way was Westminster, Guy’s, St. George’s, and the London hospital, all established between 1720 and 1740. In addition to general hospitals, specialty institutions were, for the first time, created to serve patients with venereal disease as well as new mothers and orphans. There were even hospitals dedicated to the reform of penitent prostitutes. And despite their limited knowledge of germs and infection, fever hospitals were established solely as a way to contain and isolate the sick and diseased.

The presence of hospitals also encouraged the opportunity to practice. The Edinburgh medical school became one of the first learning institutions to link with the city’s infirmary. “Walking the wards” eventually became the standard in learning; students and doctors would follow an experienced physician around, gaining practical training.⁴⁷ Practice allowed doctors to acquire a focus and become more proficient in their specialty. Specialization led to the spawning of specific care for eye, nose, throat, as well as doctors who focused on women and children medicine. For the first time, a trained physician began substituting the role of midwife. The availability of the lying-in hospitals allowed the new profession of the acoucher or the “man-midwife” to improve upon the current system with his anatomical know-how.⁴⁸ In addition to providing a place of practice for learning physicians, the maternity wards allowed unwed mothers the safe and judgment-free delivery of illegitimate children.

Commendable improvements in the health field occurred through the eighteenth century, but there was much more to be done. While the increased number of hospitals represents a sign and encouragement for things to come, greater external oversight of the medical field was necessary.

It was mentioned previously that the English were dependent on a free market during most of the eighteenth century. The members of the Royal College of Medicine were appointed guardians of morals and ethics by the monarchy but did little to reform medical practice. The need for greater oversight was apparent and became increasingly acknowledged by the growing middle class. In *The Company of Undertakers*, Hogarth hinted of people’s growing criticism towards the underserved superiority of the Royal College of

Physicians, who continued to practice a medicine of Grecian origins that had been outdated for centuries. As Roy Porter notes, “Georgian physicians remained sitting targets for satire and censure, being represented as living fossils, clinging to obsolete learning.”⁴⁹ While the Apothecaries Act of 1815 was one of the first steps taken towards medical reform, it did little more than reinstate previously acknowledged medical practices. The act was meant to give apothecaries increased power, but also ensured their subordination to physicians.⁵⁰ Parliament also drew up guidelines for the legal qualifications of general practice but did not prohibit irregular practice, essentially making it difficult to enforce the new law.⁵¹ In 1834, England re-enacted a New Poor Law, based on the previous abolished “Old Poor Law,” which established provisions for the poor, facilitating the steps already taken by philanthropists in the previous century.⁵² The Public Health Act of 1848 required the regular inspection of towns and provided for a system of pipes to remove waste and provide water to the public. The Medical Act of 1858 established the General Medical Council, which operated as a governmental

“medical watchdog,” and for the first time, truly governed medical practice. Although physicians were already required by law to obtain a “society license” upon graduation, the 1858 law finally acknowledged surgery, general practitioners, and other specialty doctors as legitimate professions and required licensure as well. In addition to legitimizing authentic medical practices, the act excluded those who practiced unorthodox medicine.

Although the nineteenth century is usually assorted with the major advancements in medicine and health, the previous century provided the impetus and basis for change. Satirical printmakers played their role in the history of medicine and health by humorously reminding audiences, which included doctors and the patients, of the fallibility of medicine in Georgian England. As the citizens of the nineteenth century witnessed the death of the quack, so too, came the end of satirizing the quack. The Victorian era reined in the liberalism that flourished during the Georgian Period; rancorous humor gave way to benign and precautionary satire and brought the “golden age of satire” to an end.

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- 37 Haslam, “The Company of Undertakers,” 61.
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- 42 Porter, *Health for Sale*, 131–132.
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The Golden Age of Hairdressers: The Portrayal of Hair in Caricature of the Georgian Era

Lauren Woodcock

We are immoderately fond of pleasure, emulating at random every expensive instance of fashionable folly.
—Samuel Fawcener (1765)¹

Samuel Fawcener's *An Essay on Modern Luxury* draws an image of the eighteenth-century London that caricaturists portrayed in their prints. In this society of fashion and exorbitance, the elite of London embraced an increased awareness in public display and appearance. Superfluous ornamentation and decoration became a feature in the clothing and hairstyles of the Georgian era. In particular, hair became a symbol of this "fashionable folly" in caricature, the towering and intricate hairstyles seen in men and women alike, exaggerated to extremes.

Such exaggerated hairstyles appeared as the subject of satirical prints as early as in the work of William Hogarth. In his print, *The five orders of Perriwigs as they were worn at the late Coronation, measured Architectonically*. (1761), Hogarth portrays the different styles of wigs worn by the royalty and elite (Fig. 42). He focuses on the sheer extravagance and ridiculous height of the hairstyles, comparing them to classical capitals. By comparing hairstyles to ancient architectural features, Hogarth pokes fun at the seriousness with which London's elite applied to their hairstyles. Indeed, the word "capital" is derived from the old English word "caput," literally "head." Hogarth cleverly organizes the hairstyles and capitals as they are increasingly ornamented. The five orders progress from the most simple to the most elaborate, or in architectural terms, Doric to Corinthian, while the wigs progress from Episcopal to the cleverly titled Queerinthian. Hogarth also assigns the styles to known persons. The first row represents Dr. Warburton, the late Bishop of Gloucester, and Dr. Samuel Squire, the Bishop of St. David's. The second row shows Lord Melcombe and the Lord Mayor Sir Samuel Fludyer. The most easily recognized is Queen Catherine and her five honorable ladies, who are placed at the bottom. Using historical reference, Hogarth's print ridicules the extravagant hairstyles fashionable among both women and men of eighteenth-century England.

The Georgian era saw a rise in social satire, developing into a distinct genre and gaining a loyal, and even royal, audience that sought to poke fun at society.² This development was associated with a heightened concern for appearance, as a direct result of the newfound wealth and foreign influence during the rise of England's Industrial Revolution in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Britain society transformed, its growing wealth giving its members

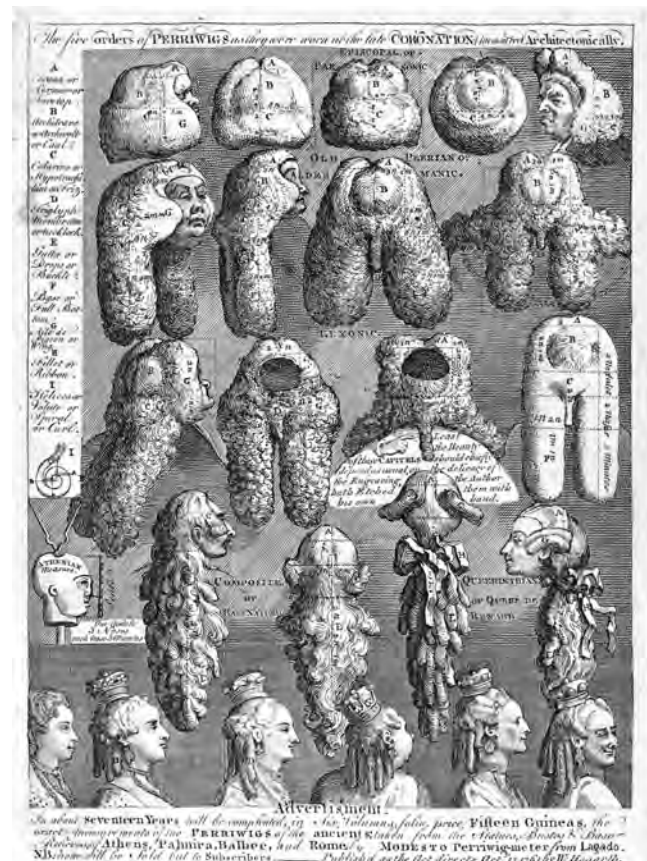


Fig. 42. William Hogarth, *The five orders of Perriwigs as they were worn at the late Coronation, measured Architectonically*, 1761. Engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 42).

the ability to purchase a wider variety of goods.³ The population in London alone nearly doubled, becoming the largest European metropolis, with the upward spiral of economic growth leading to a more splendid way of life for many of England's citizens.⁴ The market-orientated production coupled with domestic and manufactured colonial goods exposed the country to new items and fashions. With the Industrial Revolution came a greater interest and time for leisure among both the elite and middle classes. No longer were luxurious items reserved solely for the elite; the increasing focus on outward appearance and fashion led to a blurring class distinction. The rising income of the middle class allowed them to follow the trends set by the aristocracy, resulting in a massive societal shift in class structure and distinction.⁵ This emerging fashionable culture was drawn to extravagance and foreign fashion and culture, displaying their wealth and elevated status through dress and intricate hairstyles which was reflected in the prints.⁶

Due to increased wealth and foreign influence, the social hierarchy of eighteenth-century England was revised. Exposure to foreign fashions left many desiring more decorative and luxurious styles, straying from the simplified style of the English dress and hair. Past sumptuary laws set sharp restrictions on consumption, specifically foreign products and materials. From the fourteenth through the sixteenth centuries in England, extravagance in dress was banned for much of the population, in order to distinguish class and prevent foreign products from infiltrating markets.⁷ Those of the highest rank were exempt from these laws and permitted to wear the finest clothes; the use of precious metals in dress was banned to anyone below the rank of a knight. This restrictive policy limited rich fabrics to few and banned foreign fabrics as late as 1745 when a five-pound penalty was assessed on anyone wearing certain fabrics from France.⁸ By the eighteenth century, the ascending bourgeoisie had the disposable income and the liberty to purchase many of the same fashions of the aristocracy, reflecting social aspirations and allowing the concern for appearance to infiltrate a much wider group of peoples in England. The rise of fashion caricature reflected and critiqued this growing interest for extravagant display. Without effective restrictions on ostentatious display, both clothing and hairstyles achieved a heightened level of ornamentation and excessive decoration. Inspired by the towering wigs and elaborate fashion of France, extravagance and luxury overtook English hairstyles and daily clothing, especially in London. The popularity of satire critiquing these fashions served as an unofficial means to curb the extremes of eighteenth-century fashion.

Vanity and narcissism were common vices among well-to-do in eighteenth-century England. In response, Georgian caricature sought to criticize this concern for appearances. Many prints sought to portray the fashion-loving class as *déclassé*, their morality obscured behind their elaborate facades.⁹ Critics of the eighteenth century recognized the danger in the falsities of fashion and appearances. The vice of luxury was portrayed among the aristocracy and often seen as degenerate for all of society, distracting the public from the truth and betterment of England.¹⁰ This negative portrayal of fashion and vanity was depicted in both the world of caricature and the literary scene of the eighteenth century. Samuel Fawcener, mentioned earlier, adds,

This social emulation is fatal both to a proper distinction of ranks and 'order of government'... Fashion in dress runs wild, always tending to what is 'most fantastic and ridiculous'... Almost every one sets up for a virtuoso, or man of taste in the polite arts...luxury eradicates all those patriotic affections, which should be the highest ambition

...of social nature...providing for the widow and orphan, the aged, the blind and the lame...¹¹

There was a dark undertone among the clever and at times biting nature of fashion satire, questioning morality and the consequences of a society excessively concerned with appearances. Social climbing and a constant concern for status were criticized as a direct result of this obsession with clothes and appearances. Those living outside of London looked at the city with distaste for the uncomfortable excesses of its metropolitan tailoring and extravagant hairdressing.¹² To many the city corrupted the traditional and simple values of old English character by exposing and embracing decadent foreign fashions.¹³ The English living outside of London saw it as a city that would turn their simple and moral children, many of them moving into the city for work, into lovers of vice and luxury. This fear is reflected in the prints, which highlight parental shock and distaste towards the new fashions and hairstyles of the children. Caricatures depicted women from rural areas coming home from the city and being nearly unrecognizable with their elaborate hair and side curls.¹⁴ The growing towers of hair symbolized fashionable London, teased into massive confections and topped with feathers and other ornamentation. Women often spent all night preparing their hair, forcing them to sleep sitting up so as to not disturb the style. This new importance of outward identity was meant to invoke courtesy, civility, and elegance, but was often ridiculed in the satirical prints as fickleness.

The towering and ornamented hairstyles were visible among well-known women of eighteenth-century England. Judith Baker was a recognizable figure of the time that was constantly lampooned for the sheer height and frivolous nature of her hair.¹⁵ A resident of Durham, Baker established a trading network of goods and material items between London and her town, which made her a figure of local and historical importance. A print collector as well as the subject of many prints, her taste for extravagant fashions and hairstyles was known throughout England.¹⁶ She epitomized the changing British culture and the feminine nature of ads now appealing to women of the middling sort.¹⁷ On one occasion, she paid seven shillings for a cushion of hair, six shillings for a bow, four shillings for two curls, six shillings for three dressings. The cost of such a hairstyle was considerable. While in the 1780s one could get three months of piped water to their home for three shillings, Baker spent six for a bow, a small addition to the already exorbitant cost of hairstyle.

The frivolous ornamentation associated with hair is epitomized in *The Extravaganza or the Mountain Head Dress* (1776). In this print, the woman's hair absorbs the entire composition (Fig. 43). The elaborate bows and detailed

dressings on top of her head emphasize the lengths that styles could go to. Carrots, fruits, and flowers make up a pendant on one side, while a bird, ostrich feathers, and a corn stalk form the top. The woman is reduced to nearly nothing beyond her impressive hairstyle, symbolizing the ability of extravagant hair to overtake an individual.¹⁸ To create such fantasies, hairdressers were forced to climb on small ladders to complete the desired styles that were often so high that wearers had to bend down to enter doorways.¹⁹ Such prints both poke fun and criticize the lengths that women went to in achieving fashionable hairstyles.

Men were equally guilty in embracing extravagant and ornamented dress and hairstyles. As with women's fashion, it was the French style of dress and hair that set the standard among the highly fashionable men, or "macaroni" as they were called. The term was applied to men who had returned from a grand tour of Europe and sported trendy and stylish fashions that they had adopted from Italy and France, in particular. They sought to emulate the stylish appearance of their continental counterparts, developing a new sense for dress and fashion that strayed far from the English simplicity that had been the rule in male fashion. The image of the macaroni with elaborate hair was seen in countless prints of the eighteenth century. The macaronis were recognizable by their high toupees and massive, powdered "clubs" of hair. They often wore clothes that were tight-fitting and lavishly patterned in color and ornamentation.²⁰ The macaroni was a favorite target of satirical printmakers, who routinely attacked them for the highly decorated nature of their fashions, which blurred boundaries of nationality and gender.²¹ Darly's was known as "the macaroni print shop," due to the great number of such prints that were sold there. Bretherton on New Bond Street also published a great number of these prints.²² While the macaronis were a common topic among the printmakers, their portrayals were not always meant to be negative. The prints sometimes served two purposes: to represent the undesired extremes of foreign fashion, flattering the audiences who maintained their simple English ways, and to promote British sophistication and politeness. Whether or not the prints mocked or simply reflected the rising influence of France, they represented a changing English character during the eighteenth century.

Etiquette books and increased awareness in social behavior argued that outward appearance was only one aspect of the rising importance of one's public reputation and societal placement.²³ The importance of outward show was reflected in this increased politeness, often seen as a direct motive of personal vanity and social aspiration.²⁴ Such formalized courtesies were seen as another aspect of foreign influence and were often portrayed in prints as snobby or



Fig. 43. Artist Unknown, *The Extravaganza or the Mountain Head Dress of 1776*, 1776. Etching. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.



Fig. 44. James Gillray, *John Bull taking a Luncheon*, 1798. Etching, hand coloring. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

rude.²⁵ The concentration on public demeanor along with appearance contrasted with the simplicity and unsophisticated way in which the English were previously portrayed.

Many caricaturists contrasted this idea of English simplicity with the ornate foreign fashions and sophisticated demeanor. James Gillray's *John Bull taking a Luncheon* (1798) illustrates the distinction between the old English character and that of the French (Fig. 44). John Bull, the symbolic "every man" in England, appears corpulent and nearly three times the size of his French counterpart. Dressed in simple and unadorned clothing, the unassuming English style is readily identifiable. In contrast, the Frenchman's jacket is perfectly pressed with clean lines and delicate décor, differing greatly from the sloppy and ill-fitting clothes of John Bull. Further, John Bull's hair is unkempt and simple, while the Frenchman wears a wig that is pulled back and highly styled. However, aware that the English character was often regarded

as a sign of provincial backwardness, London's finest sought to escape such rustic qualities and adopted a style of dress and countenance that was thought to be more sophisticated and elegant. Such aspirations drew criticism from the satirists who dually noted their elaborate headdresses, buckled shoes, light stockings, and all-over decorative clothing, but saved their sharpest critiques for their wigs. As one print states, the macaronis had to have a good quantity of hair since their heads produced nothing else, emphasizing the internal corruption that came about through this foreign influence.²⁶ The image of the macaroni was used to attack the perceived vanity, irresponsibility, and lack of patriotism of the aristocracy, especially, but not exclusively the court elite. Their dress and hair was for many a contrast to English patriotism, their toupees symbolizing dandyism and the tainted effects of commercialism.²⁷ The refined manners and countenance of the macaroni is mocked in countless examples of British caricature. Philip Dawe's print, *The Macaroni, a Real Character at the Late Masquerade* (1773), reflects the ostentatious dress and hair of the masquerade (Fig. 45). The entire outfit and shoes of the macaroni are decorated and ornamented in every place possible, the red jacket fixed with flowers and feathers, the superfluity continued in the towering head of hair. The hair reaches the upper margin of the print, topped with a hat that is insignificant in comparison to the elaborate headdress. The side curls and distinguished bow illustrate the ostentatious nature of the macaroni, further emphasized by the vanity table that appears in the background, which underscores the narcissistic behavior. The print parodies the feminization of male culture, as displayed by the extravagance of hair among men.²⁸

The macaronis were in part responsible for the emerging trend of extravagant wigs and hair among men in England. Powder was used to create curls and intricate styles, aiding in maintaining the long hair and necessary to an aesthetically pleasing appearance. Controversy erupted in Britain when William Pitt enacted a powder tax through Parliament, requiring a one guinea fee for people to powder their wigs. The controversy stemmed from exemptions to the tax extended to certain citizens, primarily the royal family.²⁹ This had the effect of a sumptuary tax, separating the royal family from all others. James Gillray's *Leaving off Powder.—or—A Frugal Family saving the Guinea*. (1795) addresses reactions to this issue on a private level within an individual household (Fig. 46). The family assembles in their parlor trying on wigs while examining themselves in the mirror. The wife looks disgusted and horrified at the un-powdered wig that her French hairdresser is placing on her head. The daughter looks equally distraught while she examines herself in the mirror. The husband, in an un-powdered wig, stands reading a



Fig. 45. Philip Dawe, *The Macaroni, a Real Character at the Late Masquerade*, 1773. Mezzotint, hand coloring. The British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 46. James Gillray, *Leaving off Powder.—or—A Frugal Family saving the Guinea*, 1795. Etching. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 17).

newspaper with a headline that reads “new tax,” while the son stands wearing no wig at all. Indeed, the husband looks all the part of the John Bull character and is the only one in the scene who is unphased by the tax. He reads the paper without reaction, conveying the direct English style. His dress contrasts with that of the rest of his family; it is ill-fitting in contrast to the man next to him, who wears a perfectly tailored jacket. On the back wall hangs a portrait of Charles II, showing him with an extravagant, greatly powdered wig. The portrait's placement above the other figures highlights the unhappy family. The importance of appearance and display is emphasized through the distress of the family that is forced to wear un-powdered or unfashionable wigs, a true sign of the urge to be presented well and fashionable for the time.

The concern among men for having proper hairstyles went beyond the wearing of extravagant wigs. Reflecting the

enactment of the powder tax and a decreasing trend in wig wearing, the early nineteenth century saw a whole new realm of cosmetic concern. The importance of appearance to men is shown in *An Alarming Discovery showing the fatal effects of using Cosmetics* (1827). The etching shows two men alarmed after one of them has inadvertently dyed his hair green (Fig. 47). The lord is horrified by the unexpected result of the dye: “Pea green—what a horrible color—merciful powers I shall neve be able to shew my face again.” The other man, evidently the hairdresser who applied the dye responds, “By far I am vere sorry your Lor-ship use dat dam dye it has change a your Lor-ships moustache an Visker all to von dam Pea Green-oh I am quite shocking at it.” The two men hold out their arms in a shocked reaction, the victim of the green beard nearly toppling over the furniture behind him. On the floor lies a piece of paper with the directions that they have just followed to dye his hair, labeled “Russian Hair Dye.” This obsession with outward beauty among men illustrates that such vanity was not just a vice among women.

Caricaturists took opportunity to reflect on the private rituals that people endured in their attempts to perfect their appearance. This very public issue has been privatized in these two prints, taking place at home and away from the public eye. The main characters appear unhappy or frustrated, striving to maintain their outward appearance. Concern for one’s public appearance became an issue of great importance during this period of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in England. With the increasing wealth of the nouveau riche and the absence of sumptuary laws to regulate public appearance, class distinction and individual public display was a concern among many.

The popularity of fashion and hairstyles in prints of the



Fig. 47. Artist Unknown, *An Alarming Discovery showing the fatal effects of using Cosmetics*, 1827. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 4).

time led to its repeated appearance in eighteenth-century British satirical prints. Britain’s increasing industrial success meant more wealth for a greater number of people, which inspired a taste for lavish items and fashions. Elaborate and highly ornamented clothes and hairstyles on the men and women became common symbols of status and beauty. Both men and women went to enormous lengths to achieve the most sophisticated hairstyles, complete with side curls and feathers. It was this aspect of aristocratic dress that printmakers satirized in their prints, depicting both sexes with hair that overtook their entire bodies, full of excessive ornamentation that went well beyond feathers and bows. The underlying message of the prints ranged from simple ridicule to warnings about the dangers of vanity. Hair came to symbolize society’s concern for outward appearance, reflecting an important aspect of Georgian London.

1 Samuel Fawconer, *An Essay on Modern Luxury, or, An Attempt to Delineate its Nature, Causes, and Effects* (London: James Fletcher and J. Robson, 1765), 15–18, as cited in Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 79.

2 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 75.

3 David C. McClelland, *The Achieving Society* (New York: Free Press, 1967), 144–146.

4 Rosemary Sweet, *Women and Urban Life in Eighteenth-Century England: On the Town* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 132.

5 Bruce G. Carruthers and Sarah L. Babb, *Economy/Society: Markets, Meaning, and Social Structure* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press, A Sage Publications Company, 2000), 29.

6 Sweet, *Women and Urban Life*, 132.

7 Robert Harry Inglis Palgrave, *Dictionary of Political Economy: N–Z*, vol. 3 (London: Macmillan and Co., 1894), 482.

8 Palgrave, *Dictionary of Political Economy*, 482.

9 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 86.

10 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 88.

11 Fawconer, *Essay on Modern Luxury*, as cited in Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 83.

12 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 80.

13 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 83.

14 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 84.

15 Sweet, *Women and Urban Life*, 132.

16 Sweet, *Women and Urban Life*, 140.

17 Sweet, *Women and Urban Life*, 133.

18 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 88.

19 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 77.

20 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 80.

21 Amelia Rausser, *Caricature Unmasked: Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2008), 77.

22 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 80.

23 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 93.

24 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 96.

25 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 97.

26 Jennifer Craik, *The Face of Fashion: Cultural Studies in Fashion* (New York: Routledge Publishing, 1993), 176.

27 Craik, *Face of Fashion*, 179.

28 Gillian Russell, *Women, Sociability and Theatre in Georgian London* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 111.

29 Stephen Dowell, *A History of Taxation and Taxes in England: From The Earliest Times to the Year 1885* (London: Longman’s Green and Co., 1888), 290.

Lustful Consumption: Prostitution in the Satirical Prints of Georgian London

Emily Maran

*London for young men especially was a place of lascivious temptation...where all natural instincts and all vices...vegetate very powerfully.*¹

—Pastor Wendborn

In a print cleverly entitled *Dividing the Spoil!!*, Isaac Cruikshank explores the variant and suggestive associations of two London neighborhoods, St. James's and St. Giles's (Fig. 48). In the upper register of the print, four ladies are seen divvying up the profits from gambling, which includes cash, coins, and a large silver sword. In the lower register, he represents a scene in the St. Giles's neighborhood and the base nature of both its consumers and its merchandise. In this scene, four prostitutes contrast with the ladies in the St. James's print. While the fashionably adorned ladies of St. James's Street divide earnings from wealthy gamblers in that part of the city, below, in St. Giles's, their counterparts sport tattered dresses and negotiate the evening's pay, consisting of two tangled pocket watches, a silver dinner utensil, and a few shillings. While settling their evening's earnings, a woman on the right shoves her hand deep into her pocket to extract every last farling. On the left, a fourth is seen from behind, drink in hand. In both registers, Cruikshank portrays the bare breasts of the women; however, only in the St. Giles's scene does he show the entire breast of the women, further illustrating their bawdier nature.

During the eighteenth century, the city of London was widely regarded as a place to consume pleasure. One area in particular was known for such services—Covent Garden, St. Giles's, and the adjacent Drury Lane (Fig. 49). Covent Garden, located in London's West End, was infamous for its carnal temptations. Its urban vicinity was considered to be “the very heartland of the pursuit of pleasure.”² A topographic region demarcated by sexual exchange, Covent Garden was accessible by all ranks of male clientele. A sexual transaction could be found at any price and therefore was feasible for males of varying wealth and stature.

In the vicinity of St. Giles's and Drury Lane, male customers and prostitutes would meet in taverns, public houses, and the communal garden.³ The variety of courtesans available at the garden is portrayed by J. R. Smith's print, *All Sorts* (1776) (Fig. 50). This print provides an image of contemporary dress, while satirizing the prevalence and diversity of urban prostitution. Smith depicts four prostitutes of various fashions in a park setting. A caption in the margin reads, “From the Lucious Tid bit to the bouncing Jack Whore—From the Bunter in Rags to the gay Pompadour.”⁴



Fig. 48. Isaac Cruikshank, *Dividing the Spoil!!*, n.d. Etching, hand coloring. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.



Fig. 49. Covent Garden and surrounding streets, from John Fairburn, *Plan of Westminster and London* (detail), 1801. Engraving, hand coloring.

In this image the prostitute's attire, hair, and demeanor indicate their varying fees. The Tid bit sits on a bench in the far left of the image. Her shy presence and fashionable dress deem her second in line to the Pompadour, who snobbishly glares at the prostitute in passing. The subject of the Pompadour's piercing glare is a Bunter, a bawdy sailor's delight. The Bunter's brash expression, tattered dress, and urban swagger allude to the bargain she provided plebian citizenry.⁵ While all four females used the park as the place to meet clients, it is unlikely that the four would have done so simultaneously. The Bunter and the Jack Whore would frequent the park at night, looking for clientele unable to afford lodgings. Using the night to conceal their sexual exchange, these prostitutes worked a nocturnal shift. In contrast, the Pompadour and the Tid bit usually frequented the park during the day. Their clientele was expected to find a domestic sphere or public lodging to ensure a private sexual transaction. The Pompadour and the Tid bit's fashionable dress allowed them, for the most part, to blend into London's high society. Prostitutes who adorned themselves in fashionable dress posed varying problems for male clientele. To this end, *All Sorts* provides a visual catalogue for the kinds of delights available in London's pleasure gardens. It was not the only source of such information, however. Various literary sources provided a similar topographic map, delineating areas where prostitutes frequented. One such publication was *Harris's List of Covent Garden Ladies*, which provided a pleasure map for interested males.⁶ Together, guides like *Harris's List* and prints like *All Sorts* defined the topographic regions of London with districts infamous for prostitution and provided amusement to readers and clients.

Countless literary descriptions of London streets include references to prostitutes and the "spectacle" of commodified sexuality in urban street culture.⁷ "Prostitution was an urban phenomenon," which makes it a central theme for critique and a frequent subject in London's satirical print culture.⁸ Various prints reference the streets of London, describing them as a breeding ground for immoral behavior.

The threatening feminine allure of the prostitute was often the subject of prints, suggesting the emasculation of the male consumer. The thievery and immoral nature of the prostitute is displayed in *Deceitful Kisses, or the Pretty Plunderers* (1781) (Fig. 51). In the image, a man is seated on a chair in the midst of a boudoir. A trio of adoring courtesans encircles him. The three prostitutes pet the man, who is aloof in his own sexual arousal. One female is portrayed clutching a purse, which hangs in front of the male's genitalia.⁹ The suggestion here is an obvious implication of thievery masked by the prostitute's sexual advances and the man's subsequent arousal. Here the male is depicted as a victim, who has been lured into a state of distracting arousal, facilitating thievery



Fig. 50. John Raphael Smith, *All Sorts*. From the luscious Tid bit to the bouncing Jack Whore—From the Bunter in Rags to the gay Pompadour, 1776. Mezzotint. The British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.



Fig. 51. After John Collet, *Deceitful Kisses, or the Pretty Plunderers*, 1781. Mezzotint, hand coloring. The British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

and deception often associated with prostitutes, procuresses, and brothels. The print describes a comical scene, evoking laughter—and fear—in its male viewers. It is laughable to see the three females dupe a man through lust. However, the image also evokes fear. The prostitute is seen snatching the man's purse, which resides in front of his lap, suggesting a metaphor of castration, which is seemingly facilitated through female allure and overt gestures of sexuality.¹⁰

In her studies on prostitution, Sophie Carter points out the similarities between the reaching of the prostitutes hand into the client's pocket and that of "penetrative intercourse."¹¹ She suggests, "The theft of a purse therefore represents a profound subversion of the financial and the sexual exchange constituting the prostitute/client relationship."¹² While the print may lead to conclusions regarding the economics of sexual trade, it also provides a comedic integration of anxiety regarding male health and sexuality. The print elucidates eighteenth-century fear surrounding quack medicine and male reproductive health. Eighteenth-century medical publications suggested that a man's ability to choose daily means of sexual exhaustion, including masturbation and the common prostitute, was both frivolous and unhealthy.¹³ The print illustrates the loss of male substance, which is physically depicted, and metaphorically suggested in the print. The frivolous handling of male worth (or morally misguided ejaculation) is conflated with the loss of masculinity and authority, demonstrated by the male client in the print. Furthermore the subject implies similarities between partaking in the deceptive and dangerous nature of consumer society, with the analogous nature of prostitution. Commoditized sexuality was used to signify "consumption and the commercialization of sexuality."¹⁴ Indeed, during the eighteenth century, Carter notes that the word "commodity" was vernacular slang for the vagina.¹⁵ Prints containing the archetype of the lustful prostitute called attention to modern fashion and urban culture, while evoking fear by personifying social peril.

Indeed, Maxine Berg suggests that the desire to obtain luxury is associated with pleasurable senses.¹⁶ Berg, following Werner Sombart, discusses an increase in commodified goods and luxury in London and attributes it to human impulse and sexuality.¹⁷ Furthermore, his argument implies that "mistresses, courtesans and salon culture provided the sirens of London consumer society."¹⁸ This analysis of London's consumer culture focuses on financial mobility, which facilitated the rise of the middle class and consumer culture. Interestingly this examination includes the primary function of the nouveau riche, those individuals who quickly rose in class and wished to assimilate with privileged members of society. Those of the nouveau riche often utilized the consumption of goods to emulate elite individuals. The



Fig. 52. James Gillray, *The Whore's Last Shift*, 1779. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

explanation for the rise in prostitution culture during the late eighteenth century is considered by some to be a result of continuous war, vast commercial progress, and an increase in the general population, all of which contributed to moral follies and crime.¹⁹ Prostitution in London was once a luxury commodity; however, the variations in product made it available for all sorts of consumers. As Pastor Wendeborn noted, "London for young men especially was a place of lascivious temptation...where all natural instincts and all vices...vegetate very powerfully."²⁰ The nouveau riche brought to London a growing consumer culture defined by an insatiable appetite for luxury and pleasure. This appetite visually manifests itself in the genre of eighteenth-century satirical prints.

In James Gillray's *The Whore's Last Shift*. (1779), a prostitute stands wearing only her tattered stockings and a wig (Fig. 52). She washes her shift (a loose-fitting undergarment), removing the remnants of her last appointment in a chamber pot, which rests atop a stool on a wooden chair. A black cat perches on the windowsill, his spine curved in a sexually suggestive manner. Staring at the prostitute, his paw motions toward her bare bottom. The depiction of the black cat alludes to the carnal and nocturnal nature of the prostitute. She sports an elaborate wig, which is contrasted by her tattered stockings and humble domestic setting.²¹ The title and her appearance suggest a grim future for the prostitute, whose tattered stockings are disturbingly evocative of syphilitic sores.²² Her luxurious wig suggests there was once a

Fig. 53. George Cruikshank, *Mixing a Recipe for Corns*, 1835. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 8).



time when she could afford such fashions, however, her life is now dictated by lesser circumstance. This stark contrast illustrates “a disparity between the public façade of the prostitute’s appearance and the contaminating physicality concealed beneath.”²³ This duality is further suggested by the two pill cases and a sheet of paper that reads “Leakes famous Pills,” which were a quack remedy for venereal disease. In the back of the room, above the chair, a print representing “Ariadne forsaken” appears poignantly on the back wall. Ariadne, like the prostitute, was once loved but then discarded and left alone. Likewise, a broadside attached near the window opening provides the lyrics to “The comforts of Single Life. An Old Song.” By representing the courtesan alone in her room and in her thoughts, Gillray, in a rare moment of introspection, represents the prostitute in her isolated place in London society.²⁴

On a much more comical level, George Cruikshank’s *Mixing a Recipe for Corns* (1835) describes the vanity and decrepitude of an old bawd (Fig. 53). In the print, an old haggard procuress sits in her room amid a congestion of junk, including medicinal vials, beauty concoctions, cats, dogs, a mouse, and birds. On the left, she mixes a concoction in a large pot atop a blazing fireplace. While the blazing flame appears to be a likely element in a domestic setting, heat and fire were often employed in prints of prostitutes to describe the unrelenting pain of venereal diseases.²⁵ Atop the fireplace

is a shell, an orange, and a jar containing three exotic peacock feathers. Feathers such as those from an ostrich or peacock refer to pride and exotic sexuality, and here allude to the promiscuous past of the now haggard procuress. On close inspection, the old woman’s face bears the scars of syphilitic disease, a marker of grim fate. Her bare, swollen, and deformed left foot rests atop a stool, while her right foot bears a disturbingly pointed shoe—the source of her corn and the reason for mixing a cure. Evidently, the bawd’s corn is the product of spending many a night on her feet. The association of corns to prostitutes is confirmed in a 1762 journal entry, where a male describes London’s urban scene: “We could scarce move without crippling the Corns of an old Bawd, or disobliging the laced shoes of a young Harlot....”²⁶ With great perception, the writer compared the laced shoes of a young prostitute to the corns of an old bawd, illustrating the trajectory of brothel life.

A standard fixture of brothels, the bawd was an older woman responsible for luring innocent females into organized prostitution. Recognizable by both her haggard age and her desire to regain youthful feminine beauty, the bawd is often depicted as a huntress snatching up the young and the pure, transforming them into objects of sexual commoditization. Now too old, crippled, or corned from excessive street-walking to be considered desirable, the bawd hunts for others to procure. The haggard deformity of the bawd is both

a physical and moral critique of prostitution. The presence of the bawd archetype in satirical prints illustrates the omnipresence of the predatory procuress in the city culture of London. The bawd's involvement in the sex trade and her obsession with vanity distinguishes her as a symbol of vice, as well as a scapegoat for those inclined to bask in London's pleasures.

Contrasting themes of humor, tragedy, and fascination elicited by prints chronicling the world of London's prostitutes, beg the question of patronage. Print collectors bought satirical prints representing prostitutes for various reasons. Perhaps the primary reason for buying such prints is discovered in its "safe" representation of dangerous beauty.²⁸ In this instance, the print allowed for males to safely consume the image of the prostitute without the risks of disease, criminal prosecution, or infidelity. Late eighteenth-century prints of prostitutes provided titillating images of women for the supposed male consumer, yet were made in response to contemporary fear surrounding the social and moral repercussions of prostitution in London society.²⁹ Furthermore, these prints facilitated a comedic lens upon an otherwise morosely depicted topic in London culture. The juxtaposition of comedic critique and tragic circumstance recalls a Shakespearean tradition in which comedy and tragedy are played against one another. The effect achieved through the

coincidence of these varying themes creates a general sense of chaos, disorder, and skepticism. These reactions begin to expose the nuances that define eighteenth-century London. The male gaze notwithstanding, one must not overlook the possibility that women purchased such prints as well. They would have been drawn to the visual interest in the beauty and fashionable nature of the print. Their interests concerned the print's depiction of fashionable trends and cultural definitions of beauty.²⁷ The aesthetic and documentary nature of these prints established them as "fashion plates," illustrating the latest trends in attire. But no matter how the prints were consumed, their very existence acknowledges the visibility of prostitution in London culture.

The satirical print culture of eighteenth-century London illustrated an environment that left behind notions of Puritanism, replacing them with the appeal of all that lacked purity, religious sentiment, and morality. Satirical artists including William Hogarth, James Gillray, Thomas and Isaac Cruikshank, and others, created prints that entertained, critiqued, and ultimately mirrored aspects of London's society. These prints exaggerated the follies of British society in an effort to evoke both humor and retrospection on a societal level.

1 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 114.

2 Sophie Carter, *Purchasing Power* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2004), 16.

3 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 11.

4 Cindy McCreery, *The Satirical Gaze* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2004), 51.

5 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 51.

6 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 54.

7 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 8.

8 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 8.

9 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 60.

10 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 60.

11 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 60.

12 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 60.

13 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 61.

14 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 63.

15 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 63.

16 Maxine Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 37.

27 Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure*, 37.

18 Berg, *Luxury & Pleasure*, 235.

19 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 41.

20 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 114.

21 Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 105.

22 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 150.

23 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 150.

24 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 68.

25 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 56.

26 Carter, *Purchasing Power*, 7.

27 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 60.

28 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 60.

29 McCreery, *Satirical Gaze*, 41.

Hannah Humphrey, Print Seller of Georgian London

Allison Schell

The enthusiasm is indescribable when the next drawing appears; it is a veritable madness. You have to make your way in through the crowd with your fists.

—Anonymous (1802)¹

James Gillray immortalized Hannah Humphrey's shop at 27 St. James's Street, London, in his print, *Very Slippy-Weather*. (Fig. 54). The print features a man who has fallen onto the street outside the storefront of Humphrey's print shop. His money and snuffbox pour out onto the ground as he holds up a thermometer to demonstrate that it is indeed freezing outside, thereby accounting for the slippery sidewalk. Behind him is a crowd of spectators, ranging from the wealthy to the poor, gazing at the various prints by Gillray in Humphrey's shop windows. Among them are *Two-Penny Whist*, *A Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!*, and *The King of Brobdingnag and Gulliver*. Inside the shop, but only visible through the window, are two well-dressed customers inspecting another print by Gillray, *End of the Irish Farce of Catholic-Emancipation*.² At first glance, it is difficult to tell whether the focus of the print is the man falling down or if it is the spectacle of the prints in the shop's windows. Regardless, this print is significant because it is one of only a few that illustrates what a print shop, let alone Hannah Humphrey's, may have looked like during the late eighteenth century.

Hannah Humphrey entered the print trade at a time when it was flourishing. Unfortunately, not much is known about Humphrey's life or even about her famous print shop. Her personal letters indicate she was a shrewd, direct person of limited education and simple tastes.³ Humphrey's success, which is verified by numerous accounts, derived from her ability to market prints that appealed to a wide range of classes, her relationship with and monopoly of a leading caricaturist, and her ability to acquire prime locations for her business in London. An examination of these various aspects of her life, personal and public, offers insight into Hannah Humphrey and her place among Georgian print sellers.

The print trade in London expanded sharply during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century due in part to the growing popularity and affordable prices of prints. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, the print industry was dominated by large, family-based publishers which provided an array of paper materials, maps, portraits, imported prints, and drawing manuals.⁴ They would also sell popular prints of the day as well as a wide variety of earlier, old master prints. The ever-increasing demand for prints led to an abundance



Fig. 54. James Gillray, *Very Slippy-Weather*, 1808. Etching, engraving, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 37).



Fig. 55. Artist Unknown, *Caricature Shop*, 1801. Etching, hand coloring. The Lewis Walpole Library, Farmington, CT. Image courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University.

of dealers in specific areas of the city, particularly in the West End. Print shops clustered along Fleet Street, the Strand, and streets around St. Paul's and Covent Garden (Fig. 55).⁵ These shops displayed and sold the best of high and low art, with price ranges available to a wide array of clients, making them

a popular commodity. Collecting prints and caricatures eventually became a national pastime among members of the middle and upper classes, and print shop owners and engravers worked to meet their interests. From the increasing demand for prints during the Georgian era, print sellers developed a significant presence in London society.

The popularity of Hannah Humphrey's shop can be witnessed through contemporary accounts that commented upon the ability of her business to attract crowds and appeal to the masses. An observer in 1803 attested to the popularity of Humphrey's shop:

The heads of the gazers before the shop-front of Mrs. Humphrys were thrust one over another, and wedged so close, side by side, that...nothing could be more amusing than to listen to the remarks of the loitering crowd.⁶

Another observed the scene outside Humphrey's shop:

The enthusiasm is indescribable when the next drawing appears; it is a veritable madness. You have to make your way in through the crowd with your fists.⁷

Humphrey attracted such crowds by displaying many of Gillray's prints in the windows of her shop as a weekly event. This allowed for all people, especially those who could not afford to buy prints, to enjoy them as well. In 1806, Johann Christian Hüttner discussed Humphrey's shop in *London und Paris*:

Caricature shops are always besieged by the public, but it is only in Mrs. Humphrey's shop where Gillray's works are sold, that you will find people of high rank, good taste and intelligence. This woman runs a successful business selling her own publications alone.⁸

Hüttner's commentary demonstrated that even though Humphrey attracted various members of society to her storefront, those who went in her shop and purchased items were mainly of the higher, educated classes. Once again, a writer in *London und Paris* confirmed the shop's popularity: "You will always see dozens of people standing outside the shops which sell these caricatures."⁹

This observation in *London und Paris* proved the importance of a shop's location in attracting customers, which clearly Humphrey used to her advantage. Despite her upper-class clientele, Humphrey managed to create a business that was frequented and discussed by all. The spectacle and atmosphere of Humphrey's shop must also be

credited in part to having a leading caricaturist reside in the building that housed her shop.

By providing the lodging and workspace for James Gillray, Humphrey secured her shop's success by monopolizing his talents. Humphrey recognized the mutual benefit of having a leading caricaturist residing under the same roof that sold his prints. The living situation allowed for Gillray to acquire a sense of place, routine, and comfort, which contributed to his productivity. This sense of invariability probably explains why, over twenty years, Gillray lodged in rooms above Humphrey's shop. Humphrey and her maid, Betty, provided Gillray the supplies he needed so that he could produce a remarkable number of etchings.¹⁰ This partnership also gave Humphrey the convenience of having nearly exclusive rights to the works of Gillray.¹¹ No other publisher at this time had such an advantage. The other publishers had to rely on wholesale and the trading of current and old prints amongst themselves.¹² Moreover, it is possible that Gillray also helped Humphrey manage her finances, since there are examples of receipts in Gillray's handwriting that suggest he may have watched her shop while she or her maid, Betty, were away.¹³ Together, Humphrey and Gillray created one of the most successfully run print businesses of their time through a mutually advantageous professional and personal arrangement.

The success of Humphrey and Gillray stemmed from their ability to sell prints to an extensive audience. While some historians have argued that as publisher, Humphrey inserted her political views into the subject of Gillray's prints, it does not appear to be the case.¹⁴ As Robert Patten has shown, the subjects of Gillray's prints do not adhere to one political point of view, but rather reflected the wider, contradictory interests of the public at large who patronized Humphrey's shop.¹⁵ During the Westminster election of 1788, Humphrey and her brothers published seven plates by Gillray against Charles Fox, a politician.¹⁶ These prints were commissioned by another politician, William Pitt, who established a partnership with Gillray.¹⁷ However, five years later in 1793, Gillray was producing prints in support of Fox, which seemed to reflect trends in the purchasing habits of Humphrey's West End clientele.¹⁸ As the documents reveal, it is difficult to determine whether the artist or publisher agreed with the content of their prints. At the end of the day though, both Humphrey and Gillray were in business to sell prints and occasionally make them to satisfy the leading political parties.

The ambiguity between the printmakers and publishers and the views expressed in their prints is suggested in an encounter between Humphrey and Fox. Evidently Fox heard that a certain "political print was exhibited in the window of the old caricature shop in St. James's-street," so he went to see it.¹⁹

Good humouredly [Fox] addressed Mrs. Humphreys with, "Well, my good lady, I perceive you have something new in your window;" and, pointing to the very print, paid his eighteen pence for it, received his change out of half a crown, rolled it carefully up, and, putting it in his pocket also, smiled a "good morning to you," and gently shut the shop door on his departure. Old mother Humphreys, albeit not much given to the melting mood, overcome with the gentle manner of Mr. Fox, the tear glistening in her eye, observed to Betty, as the great statesman passed the window up St. James's-street, "Ah, Betty, there goes the pattern for all gentlemen! Every body loved Mr. Fox."²⁰

Unfortunately, we do not know the subject of the print and if Fox was the object of praise or criticism. Nevertheless, it appears that some of the well-known figures who were often in the center of gossip decided to buy into slander rather than fight it. Indeed, King George III's eldest son ordered prints at several shops, including one hundred and twenty-one from Humphrey's shop in 1806 and 1807.²¹ Politicians and aristocrats alike soon learned that it was better to keep cordial relations with the print producers than make enemies with them.

While Gillray worked to satirize and critique members of society, he too fell victim to their slander. Ever since Gillray first lived with Humphrey, speculations arose about the nature of their relationship. In 1793, Gillray lived with Hannah at 18 Old Bond Street, then moved with her to 37 New Bond Street, and eventually to 27 St. James's Street.²² The fact that he moved with her to all of these locations suggests that they maintained a close relationship, romantic or otherwise. The editor of *The Caricatures of Gillray* (1824) offered two conflicting views on the matter:

Gillray, it is said, had more than once made nuptial overtures to the mistress of the house, which had not been refused. Indeed, it was asserted that they once proceeded to St. James's Church, to be made one in the holy bands of matrimony, but, that on approaching the door of the sacred place, he whispered to the good lady, "This is a foolish affair methinks, Miss Humphreys—We live very comfortably together, and we had better let well alone," when turning upon his heel, he returned to his old quarters, and went coolly to work on his copper.²³

Yet, this same author also proclaimed: "Though living so



Fig. 56. James Gillray, *Two-Penny Whist*, 1796. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 18).

long with Miss Humphreys under the same roof, report never whispered aught to the moral disparagement of Gillray [or] Miss Humphreys."²⁴

The author of the *Somerset House Gazette*, in his 1824 memoir, complicates the scenario: "Mrs. Humphreys, and her maid Betty were all the world to [Gillray]."²⁵ Even George Stanley, in 1849, felt compelled to comment on the relationship: "It has been whispered that there was a *liaison* between Gillray and Mrs. Humphrey not essential to their relation as designer and publisher."²⁶

Despite the gossip, concrete evidence of an affair has not been found. What little we know regarding Gillray's sentiments towards Humphrey appears in a letter from 1793 where he speaks of a "mark of respect and esteem" for her.²⁷ Regarding Humphrey, one can note a subtle change in the tenor of her letters to him; the early letters open with "Dear Gillray" and end in "yours sincerely," while those from 1804 read "Dear Gilly" and "your affectionate friend."²⁸ It is documented that Gillray remained under Humphrey's care until his death on June 1, 1815.²⁹ Regardless of whether or not there was a romantic attachment between the two, together their partnership created an extremely successful print business.

Their friendship, at the very least, was celebrated in a few of Gillray's prints. In 1796, Gillray featured Hannah Humphrey and her home in *Two-Penny Whist*. (Fig. 56), which contained the only known likeness of Humphrey. The print features two men and two women seated around a table playing whist, a popular card game. Humphrey appears as an older, bespectacled lady in a large white bonnet. Her facial features and small tight mouth describe a woman between the age of fifty-five and sixty.³⁰ Next to Humphrey is her shop assistant, Betty, who holds out the ace of spades, winning the trick. Across from Humphrey is supposedly Thodal, a German friend of Gillray, and next to him is a man

identified as John Hamilton Mortimer, a picture-dealer and art restorer.³¹ The print is important for its relevance to Gillray; one wonders, however, if it was a popular item, meant to capitalize on their supposed romance or simply a personal indulgence on Gillray's part.

Despite Hannah Humphrey's near monopoly on one of the best caricaturists of the eighteenth century, she still faced competition from other print sellers. A husband and wife team, the Darlys, and another popular print seller, Samuel Fores, ran successful print shops close to Humphrey's shop. The Darlys had shops located on the Strand and in Leicester Fields and were the first print sellers to specialize in caricatures, specifically those with political subjects.³² From 1756 to 1766, the Darlys became leaders in the print field, publishing early drawings by Gillray and other caricaturists, as well as their own designs.³³ What makes the Darlys stand out is the talent of both Matthew and Mary as caricaturists. Mary Darly illustrated and published in 1762 the first manual on how to draw caricatures.³⁴ The Darlys also gave lessons on how to draw, wrote about caricatures, and also engraved and published their own prints.³⁵ Compared to Humphrey, the Darlys were more progressive in promoting the actual art of caricature, unlike Humphrey, who focused exclusively on sales.

Another well-known print seller, Samuel Fores, opened his first shop in 1783, which was around the same time that Humphrey started her own business. By the 1790s, Fores was dividing the trade with Humphrey.³⁶ During this time, Fores and Humphrey would compete for Gillray's services. On April 20, 1791, Fores published a print on Pitt's efforts to stall the Russian invasion of Turkey, which was followed the next day by Humphrey with a print on the same subject.³⁷ Despite his rapid entrance into the print business in the 1780s, Fores worked into the 1820s to produce prints comparable to Gillray's.³⁸ The development of similar prints between shops was not uncommon and allowed for shops to foster healthy competition among artists.

Competition notwithstanding, Hannah Humphrey had the good business acumen to pick prime locations for her shops. Humphrey's print business first started with her brother, William, who operated a shop in St. Martin's Lane from 1772.³⁹ In 1774, Humphrey issued two plates and then remained inactive until 1779.⁴⁰ After 1779, she started her own print shop on Bond Street and in 1797 she moved to St. James's Street (fig. 57).⁴¹ The St. James's location was significant because it allowed her print shop to be within a "stone's throw of the Palace," which meant that her shop would be seen by passing members of the upper classes.⁴² Her shop at 27 St. James's Street would have enjoyed the patronage of royalty, statesmen, officers, and politicians.⁴³ Her shop was well positioned opposite Brook's, Boodle's, and White's



Fig. 57. St. James's Street and surrounding area, from Richard Horwood, *Plan of the Cities of London and Westminster, the Borough of Southwark, and Parts Adjoining*, 1799.



Fig. 58. Thomas Rowlandson, *Ackermann's Repository of Arts, 101 Strand*, 1809. Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 45).

gentleman clubs up the street, which would have been frequented by members of the Whig and Tory parties.⁴⁴ She knew that her shop's location was the key to its survival and Humphrey produced material that would appeal to her neighborhood clientele.

While *Very Slippery Weather* provided a clear view of the storefront and a glimpse into the shop's entrance, unfortunately there are no prints that show the interior of Humphrey's shop. We do know, however, what other shop interiors looked like. A print representing Ackermann's shop provides a view of how a print shop would have been arranged (Fig. 58). Evidently, the interior of Humphrey's shop included two mahogany counters that would have prints stacked in various pigeon-holes and several show-cases.⁴⁵ These counters could have also displayed the playing cards, books, and china teapots that the store sold.⁴⁶ The basement of Humphrey's shop would have housed two flat-bed printing presses operated by a team of at least four

men.⁴⁷ Also in the basement would have been a work area for the colorists who hand tinted the prints.⁴⁸ Humphrey then sold the prints in her shop and also distributed them wholesale to other dealers in sets of fifty.⁴⁹ The attic was used as Gillray's living quarters and studio.⁵⁰ In July of 1811, *The Examiner* commented that Gillray, as he grew increasingly ill and was nearing the end of his life, attempted to throw himself out of his attic room, but managed to jam his head on the iron bars outside the window.⁵¹ Ultimately, Gillray died on June 1, 1815 and was buried in St. James's churchyard, Piccadilly. After Gillray's death, Humphrey's shop flourished into the 1820s, when her nephew, George, assumed its operation. George decided to keep the "elegant shopfront," which can be seen in the print *Honi Soit qui Mal y Pense* (Fig. 59), which shares many features with Gillray's *Very Slippy-Weather*.⁵² However, in the later print, a sizeable, more upper-class crowd surrounds the window of prints, demonstrating the next era of prints.

Despite Hannah Humphrey's prominence and importance as a print dealer, the information concerning her is limited.⁵³ What can be derived from contemporary accounts is that her shop was extremely successful and well known throughout London and Europe. Humphrey and her shop were immortalized in two of James Gillray's prints that allowed for a glimpse of her life and business during the height of the satirical print trade. Her acumen enabled her success and popularity in the print business. Unfortunately,



Fig. 59. Theodore Lane, *Honi Soit qui Mal y Pense*, 1821. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

the lack of additional documentation leaves many questions unanswered.

Following the deaths of Hannah and her nephew, George, the site was taken over in 1835 by Welch and Gwynne, print sellers and publishers.⁵⁴ The structure was remodeled twice and eventually demolished in 1963 to provide space for the publishers of the *Economist*, whose offices now occupy 27 St. James's Street.⁵⁵ It is fitting that a major modern publisher should stand on a foundation that once housed one of the most successful print dealers of the Georgian era.

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| 2 Draper Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts: Caricatures by James Gillray</i> (London: Phaidon Press, 1966), 175. | 17 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 31. | 37 Hill, <i>Mr. Gilray, The Caricaturist</i> , 38. |
| 3 Draper Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> (London: Phaidon Press, 1965), 38. | 18 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 47. | 38 Vic Gatrell, <i>City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London</i> (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 243. |
| 4 Mark Hallett, "The Medley Print in Early Eighteenth-Century London," <i>Art History</i> 20 (1997): 216–217. | 19 Henry Angelo, <i>Reminiscences of Henry Angelo</i> , vol. 1 (London: Henry Colburn and Richard Bentley, 1828), 367–368. | 39 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray, The Caricaturist</i> , 17. |
| 5 Hallett, "The Medley Print," 217. | 20 Angelo, <i>Reminiscences of Henry Angelo</i> , 368. | 40 Hill, <i>Mr. Gilray, The Caricaturist</i> , 17. |
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| 8 Donald, <i>Age of Caricature</i> , 4. | 23 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 39. | 43 Patten, "Conventions of Georgian Caricature," 332–333. |
| 9 Diana Donald and Christiane Banerji, trans. and ed., <i>Gillray Observed: The Earliest Account of his Caricatures in "London und Paris"</i> (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 22. | 24 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 39. | 44 Gatrell, <i>City of Laughter</i> , 243. |
| 10 Robert L. Patten, "Conventions of Georgian Caricature," <i>Art Journal</i> 43 (1983): 333. | 25 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 40. | 45 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 23. |
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| 12 Donald and Banerji, <i>Gillray Observed</i> , 246. | 27 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 39. | 47 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 22. |
| 13 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 40. | 28 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 39–40. | 48 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 23. |
| 14 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 12. | 29 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 17. | 49 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 23. |
| 15 Patten, "Conventions of Georgian Caricature," 332. | 30 Hill, <i>Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist</i> , 38. | 50 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 22. |
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| | 33 Mark Bryant, "The Mother of Pictorial Satire," <i>History Today</i> 57, no. 4 (2007): 58. | 53 Hill, <i>Mr. Gilray: The Caricaturist</i> , 38. |
| | 34 Donald, <i>Age of Caricature</i> , 3. | 54 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 175. |
| | 35 Bryant, "The Mother of Pictorial Satire," 58. | 55 Hill, <i>Fashionable Contrasts</i> , 175. |

“Honi soit qui mal y pense”: Censorship of British Satirical Prints in the Georgian Era

Laura Wilson

British satirical prints of the Georgian era circulated humor, social criticism, and gossip throughout the city of London. The culture of printmakers and publishers was well developed by the mid 1700s and was reaching a Golden Age by the early 1800s. As printmakers expressed increasingly pointed criticism, they raised social and political awareness. The printmaking culture's fresh and witty responses to both political and social life of Georgian London entertained and challenged society. While various institutions as well as specific individuals disapproved of the critique offered by popular printmakers, their efforts to censor and control print production was, predominantly, unsuccessful. Political officials employed various tactics, such as buying out an entire edition of a particular print, creating new laws that restricted print distribution, and enforcing existing laws for libel, blasphemy, and sedition.¹ Typically, such efforts towards greater censorship and control only sharpened the printmakers' bite as we see in Gillray's *The Caricaturist's Apology* (Fig. 60).

The citizens of Georgian London harbored an insatiable thirst for news and gossip and satisfied it at the newsstands and print shops in the city. Clientele of most every social class and background flocked to the print shops of Fleet Street, Grub Street, and St. James's Street, contributing to the success and power of print communication in London.² Initially, the focus of satirical prints was aimed at specific social figures or the everyday Londoner. In the eyes of British government, this general spectrum of content was accepted as the simple development of a healthy new market. Political leaders, especially King George III, also turned to the prints as sources of entertainment. It was not until the political leaders themselves became the object of ridicule that they attempted to restrict and prosecute the printmakers.³

Despite the fact that outright instances of prosecution were rare, there are some important examples of printmakers who were threatened for libel. In 1798, Richard Newton produced a print titled *Treason!!!* which depicts a “cheeky” representation of John Bull—a personification of England—mocking King George III by farting at a print of the king's face (Fig. 61). John Bull walks away self-content, while Prime Minister Pitt warns him, “That is treason Johnny.” This rude mockery of the king certainly begged persecution and Newton was detained by authorities.⁴ Although Newton avoided conviction, Pitt cleverly suspended habeas corpus while Newton was in custody, which forced Newton to remain in detention longer than the law normally permitted. Thus, despite the efforts of the government to censor prints, laws were rarely actually enforced.⁵



Fig. 60. James Gillray, *The Caricaturist's Apology*, 1802. Etching, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.



Fig. 61. Richard Newton, *Treason!!!*, 1798. Etching, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.

In the mid to late 1700s, the British government began to develop laws and acts in order to better control the actions of printmakers and the distribution of their prints. An important example of this is The Stamp Act of 1712, which was passed to control the market. It required that print publishers and newspapers be licensed, which yielded a decrease in production volume.⁶ In the 1730s, the British government introduced “measures to encourage British design.”⁷ Among these, the government placed a 20% tax on imported wrought copper, which included engraved plates. This was a clever way for the government to circumvent actual intervention and kept printmakers from sending designs to Holland to be engraved, ultimately avoiding prosecution for prohibited messages.⁸ An interesting stipulation worth noting was an exception made for royalty concerning the copper tax. Thomas Major was allowed to bring Andrew Lawrence’s plates to England in 1753, “Duty free by the generous interposition of His Royal Highness William Augustus Duke of Cumberland, being the works of an Englishman though done abroad.”⁹ While inventive, such measures did not seriously interrupt the production of satirical prints.

Old laws that protected the reputation of the aristocracy such as “scandalum magnatum” were rarely enforced. Indeed, attempts to enforce such claims would simply draw more attention and publicity to the issue at hand.¹⁰ Because of the ineffective nature of the legal approach, those being scrutinized were forced to turn to alternative methods of control. In January of 1812, George IV, the Prince of Wales and future king, was criticized in a satirical print designed by George Cruikshank and distributed by the radical publisher, Andrew Johnston. The print, *A Kick from Yarmouth to Wales*, was both a social and political critique that depicted the Prince of Wales cuckolding Lord Yarmouth. The same plate was also used as the frontispiece of a satirical poem written by poet George Daniel. Not surprisingly, the print was well known and thoroughly enjoyed as it exposed a sexual impropriety of a royal class member. The regent ultimately paid off Daniel, purchased Cruikshank’s plate to prevent more copies from being printed, and bought out all copies left from the initial edition. Unfortunately, neither the plate nor the print survives. While costly, the method of buying out prints was perhaps the most effective tactic of censorship and control used by wealthy individuals who found themselves negatively portrayed in satirical prints.¹¹ Indeed, the duke utilized this approach again when he, as King George IV, sought to divorce his wife Caroline. His efforts at divorce became the subject of ridicule among the printmakers and, as he had done previously, he sought to buy out the prints. The survival of the prints related to this event suggests that the king was less successful in his efforts at censorship than before.



Fig. 62. George Cruikshank, *Boney's meditations on the Island of St. Helena—or—The Devil addressing the Sun—Paradise Lost Book IV*, 1815. Etching, hand coloring. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

Although persecution for scandalous prints was rare in Georgian England, there are important exceptions. In 1817, William Hone went to trial charged with blasphemy under The Blasphemous & Seditious Libels Act (1812–1822) for parodying the catechism and libeling the Prince Regent.¹² In his defense, he cited George Cruikshank’s *Boney’s Meditations on the Island of St. Helena—or—The Devil addressing the Sun—Paradise Lost Book IV*. (Fig. 62). The etching shows Napoleon as the devil addressing the sun: “to thee I call—But with no friendly voice, & add thy name—G - P - R...to tell thee how I hate thy beams, that bring to my remembrance from what state I fell....”¹³ Hone argued that his parodies were like those of Cruikshank and that his attack was on the new subject, not the divine source. Ultimately, Hone was acquitted, but the threat of prosecution for libel, blasphemy, or sedition was always looming. Ever critical and uncompromising, Hone returned to his press to publish his own version of the Lord’s prayer.¹⁴ His loyal friend and professional partner, George Cruikshank, advised him against it. The text was sure to warrant the attention of the church:

Our Lord who art in the Treasury, whatsoever by thy name, thy power be prolonged, they will be done throughout the empire, as it is in each session. Give us our usual sops, and forgive us our occasional absences on divisions; as we promise not to forgive them that divide against thee. Turn us not out of our places; but keep us in the House of Commons, the land of Pensions and Plenty; and deliver us from the People. Amen. ¹⁵

Hone published the work and was jailed five days later for his troubles. Tellingly, government officials and the public offered Hone copious amounts of money for extra copies of the pamphlet.¹⁶ Clearly, the government’s half-hearted efforts at censorship of satirical prints had a limited effect.

While the government took a modicum of precautions to protect itself from ridicule and blame, it also passed laws favorable to artists such as the Engravers’ Copyright Act of 1835, which aimed to protect printmakers’ intellectual property. It reads:

An act for the encouragement of the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints, by vesting the properties thereof in the inventors and engravers, during the time therein mentioned. Whereas diverse persons have by their own genius, industry, pains, and expense, invented and engraved or worked in Mezzotinto, or Chiaro Oscuro, sets of historical and other prints, in hopes to have reaped the sole benefit of their labours: and whereas print-sellers and other persons have of late, without the consent of the inventors, designers, and proprietors of such prints, frequently taken the liberty of copying, engraving, and publishing, or causing to be copied, engraved, and published...¹⁷

The Engraving Act established copyright for fourteen years (first act) and twenty-eight years (second act) to any person who “invented, designed, or etched a print, the term starting on the day of publication inscribed on the plate ‘as the Act directs.’”¹⁸ This “insurance” for the artists was highly appreciated as a means of protection. The Engraving Act also required that the proprietor’s name be inscribed in the margin of each print in the lower right hand corner. This is well demonstrated in prints by James Gillray, who signed his works, “Invenit” or “invnt,” which indicated that it was his intellectual property (Figs. 63–65). He also added “del.” (delineavit) or “des.” (designavit) when the plate was designed by someone else. If the work was originally created by an amateur artist and then given to Gillray to produce, he



Fig. 63. James Gillray, —a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms!— i.e.—Emancipation of All the Talents, 1807. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 34).



Fig. 64. Detail of Fig. 63.



Fig. 65. Detail of Fig. 63

would inscribe “fec[i]t” alongside his signature to infer that it was not an original Gillray design. When Gillray used the ideas of others, he insured his protection by inscribing “J.G. invt. & fect.” Since the proprietor was frequently also the publisher and or print seller, artists would typically forfeit their copyright interest when they sold the plate to the publisher. Anyone found guilty of piracy was liable to forfeit the plate, all copies printed, and five shillings per print. Half of the fee collected per print went to the crown and half went to the plaintiff. Although the Engraving Act provided a degree of protection, it was difficult to enforce.¹⁹ Indeed, when Thomas Rowlandson’s brother-in-law, Samuel Howitt, began to forge copies of his prints, Rowlandson could not claim copyright infringement because he had not signed his prints so as to avoid censorship. In this case, copyright and censorship laws converged in an unusual manner.

Apart from the courts, artists gained a sense of professional security by developing strong relationships with their publishers. Best known is the relationship between artist James Gillray and his publisher, Hannah Humphrey. Humphrey managed several shops during her career, each of which became the home to Gillray as she moved from place to place. As Humphrey opened new shops, Gillray followed her to remain close and maintain their strong professional relationship. The artist worked almost exclusively for Humphrey and developed a strong network among fellow artists and important clients.

Similar to the relationship of Humphrey and Gillray was the bond between printmaker Thomas Rowlandson and print seller Rudolph Ackermann. Rowlandson first resided at 52 Strand in 1792 while his artwork was sold at the print shop “S.W. Fores.” In 1793, he moved to 2 Robert Street, staying close to the center of print shops and printmakers. In the late 1790s, Rowlandson moved to a space above a Mrs. Lay’s print shop, near The Carlton House. Finally, in 1800, he moved to the attic of 1 St. James’s Street, where he remained for the rest of his life.²⁰ Rowlandson maintained a close connection with Ackermann and his prints contributed to the popularity of Ackermann’s shop since demand for Rowlandson’s work was high.²¹ Many of Rowlandson’s prints embodied the risqué character discouraged by the government, which kept close watch on his work, but never took legal action against him.²²

Of course secrecy was among the most effective ways to protect one from censorship. Print shop owners carefully

regulated all stock and plates in order to ensure their safety and that of the shop’s reputation. They would also maintain “loose” records in the event that inspectors paid a visit. Print sellers would hold all plates with marketable content and style, but they did not remain on record in any catalogues.²³ The manipulation of records was a method used by print sellers to protect themselves from prosecution. The government would seldom intrude, but the messages of certain prints were at times too risky to honestly record.

Despite the threat of censorship, the London print market proved to be a well-oiled machine, producing new prints daily to meet popular demand. The artists served the public by providing a range of functions within the political and social worlds of Georgian London. Despite its efforts, officials sought to restrict artists and publishers; their attempts usually failed. Essentially, the government could not control a print trade with such a loyal following without yielding embarrassing backlash. Printmakers and publishers persisted through each challenge and were widely supported by those who gathered in front of the print shop windows and who bought and enjoyed the satirical prints. The royal class members and politicians themselves often enjoyed the entertainment of the prints, but constantly tried to suppress the production of the satirical works. Thus, despite the royal motto, “Honi soit qui mal y pense” (shame to him who thinks evil of it), printmakers and publishers operated a lucrative business insulting the crown and others of high rank and popularity, with everyone in London joining in the fun.

1 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 420.

2 Timothy Clayton, *The English Print 1688–1802* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1997), 216.

3 Sheila O’Connell, *The Popular Print in England 1550–1850* (London: British Museum Press, 1999), 42.

4 Vic Gatrell, *City of Laughter*, 483.

5 Robert L. Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 2 vols. (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 1:79.

6 O’Connell, *Popular Print in England*, 22.

7 Clayton, *English Print*, 86.

8 Clayton, *English Print*, 86.

9 Clayton, *English Print*, 86.

10 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 3–30.

11 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:117.

12 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:117.

13 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:116.

14 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:129.

15 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:128.

16 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:129.

17 “Engravers’ Copyright Act (1735),” *Primary Sources on Copyright (1450–1900)*, eds. L. Bently & M. Kretschmer, www.copyrighthistory.org.

18 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:154.

19 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:154.

20 John Hayes, *Rowlandson, Watercolours and Drawings* (New York: Phaidon Press Limited, 1972), 19.

21 Patten, *George Cruikshank’s Life, Times, and Art*, 1:81.

22 Hayes, *Rowlandson, Watercolours and Drawings*, 21.

23 Clayton, *English Print*, 79.

Margaret Staudter

As my notions of Painting differs from those Bigots who have taken theirs from books...or such as have been brought up to the old religion of pictures who love to deceive and delight in antiquity and the marvelous and what they do not understand...

William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*¹

I would chiefly recommend, that an implicit obedience to the Rules of Art, as established by the practice of the great MASTERS, should be exacted from the young Students. That those models, which have passed through the approbation of ages, should be considered by them as perfect and infallible guides; as subjects for their imitation, not their criticism.

Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses*²

William Hogarth's *Five orders of Perriwigs as they were seen at the late Coronation measured Architecturally*. (1761) conveys his familiarity with the arts of antiquity while lampooning British society's obsession of it (Fig. 66). The print is a parody on James Stuart and Nicholas Revett's widely admired publication, *The Antiquities of Athens Measured and Delineated* (1755), which draws on Vitruvius' treatise on architecture.³ However, it is more than a satire on antiquity; Hogarth's print makes fun of the lavish, ornate hairstyles worn by his contemporaries by comparing them to ancient column capitals. A variety of wigs are shown, which Hogarth identifies with lettering system from "A" to "I," in imitation of Vitruvius' description of classical orders. For example, all the wigs have the "A" component, or the "Corona or Lermier or Fore top," which corresponds to the top part of the column.⁴ They have also been put into separate orders, the simplest of the wigs labelled "Episcopal or Parsonic" in reference to the Doric order. They progress to the most elaborate of the wigs, being the "Queerinthian or Queuë de Renard," which corresponds with the Corinthian order, both visually and phonetically. Aware that Vitruvius associated the Corinthian order with things feminine, Hogarth degrades the male wigs for their ostentatious, ornate, and essentially feminine nature. Evidently, he felt that men's hairstyles ought to follow the less flamboyant Doric Order. As a jab at his sources contemporary and ancient, Hogarth includes a barber's block in the guise of James Stuart, complete with his nose broken off, as if it were an ancient marble.⁵ The advertisement at the bottom continues to poke fun, stating that a folio will be created "In about Seventeen Years..."

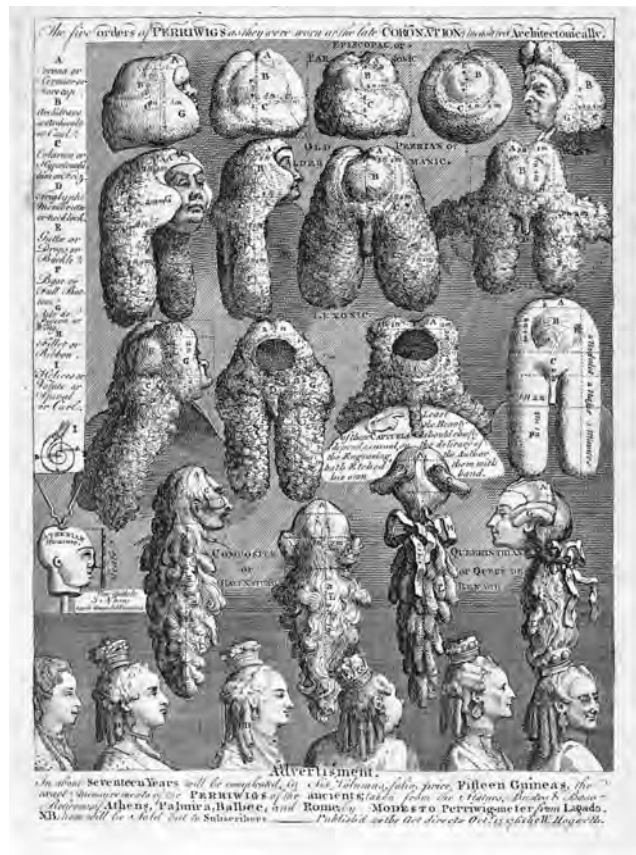


Fig. 66. William Hogarth, *Five orders of Perriwigs as they were seen at the late Coronation measured Architecturally*, 1761. Engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 42).

perhaps commenting on the time it takes for compiling and commenting on the ancient sources.⁶ This print reveals Hogarth's satirical view of the arts in England; he believed that the obsession with antiquity stood in the way of the artist's role to represent contemporary life. As one of the leading satirical artists and printmakers of the Georgian era, Hogarth played a key role in shaping attitudes towards classical art and its place in the history of satirical prints. This essay will consider the satirical prints of Hogarth and his followers, James Gillray and George Cruikshank, and how they worked classical themes and motifs into the contemporary subject matter of their work.

William Hogarth's history with the classics was a bitter one from the start. His father, a former school teacher, opened a Latin-speaking coffee house, which ultimately went broke and placed him in a debtor's prison.⁷ William, on the other hand, apprenticed to a silver engraver and eventually went on to be one of England's leading painters and printmakers.⁸ In 1720, while he was a young artist, Hogarth

became involved at the academy in St. Martin's Lane, when his name first appears on record.⁹ Fourteen years later, he reconstituted the school as "The St. Martin's Lane Academy" and declared that it ought to be run democratically so all artists would be on an equal level.¹⁰ St. Martin's Lane would be an institution that would further the interests of British artists, in the hopes of driving away the country's fascination and market for foreign art.¹¹ Run less like an academy and more like a club, St. Martin's Lane promoted the tenants of the prevailing Rococo style and counted among its members painters, engravers, furniture makers, and architects. It remained the primary gathering center for British artists of the Georgian era, until it was eclipsed shortly after Hogarth's death in 1764 by the Royal Academy.

Members of what would become the English Royal Academy, which included the painter and its first president Joshua Reynolds, met in 1768 to formulate plans for an institution that would bring together accomplished artists and their new students. Together they would learn artistic theory and practice from both the academic teachers and the old masters, as well as exhibit their art to the public. Much of the academy's teachings were based on the discourses and material culture of antiquity, which had its roots in classical Greece and Rome and their revival during the Renaissance and Baroque eras. The use of classical themes in art was well established among British artists and particularly prevalent during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when religious narratives grew less important in the wake of the Reformation.¹²

For Reynolds, who gave and published a series of his discourses, or lectures on art, the study and use of classical theory and stories was a way for academy students to present their contemporary work in the style of old masters, by infusing it with the universality and timeless qualities of the ancients.¹³ These classical models or "infallible guides" that should serve for imitation, as Reynolds noted, were at the heart of England's obsession with classicism. The documents and drawings on the continuous uncovering of ancient statues in Italy made their way to England, where they joined publications of ancient histories and philosophies, all of which culminated together in the virtues of Neoclassicism.¹⁴ The empire that developed under George III and his son George IV was one of heightened extravagance, but also one that borrowed from classical idealism in art and reason.¹⁵

As a symbol of its dedication to classicism and the practice of old masters, the entrance way of the Royal Academy at Somerset House was lined with classical statues to act as both models for students and objects of art for visitors.¹⁶ In juxtaposition, some artists did not support the academy's goals and methods and favored scenes of contemporary life. Reynolds remained in opposition to this modern

approach to art theory and in a lecture commented on Hogarth's position, saying,

...our late excellent Hogarth...he had invented a new species of dramattick painting, in which probably he will never be equalled...Let his failure teach us not to indulge ourselves in the vain imagination...¹⁷

Reynolds' statement hints at a separation between not only two generations of artists, but also between classical and contemporary subject matter.

The knowledge of antiquity in Georgian England increased with the publications of primers on classical mythology and history, as well as translations of key texts.¹⁸ Sources included the Roman author Ovid, as well as the Greek writers Hesiod and Apollodorus, and the Homeric Hymns and Greek tragedies.¹⁹ It is difficult to say whether there was more of an affinity for Roman or Greek sources, but both seem to be widely studied. Despite the anti-Latin tenor of the Reformation, the influence of Latin as part of an elite and academic class would have been established long before the Georgian era. British painters not only studied what they deemed as "ancient," but they looked back on their Renaissance counterparts as having done so well. In his *Discourses*, Reynolds writes,

HOMER is supposed to be possessed of all the learning of his time: and we are certain that Michael Angelo, and Raffaello, were equally possessed of all the knowledge in the art which had been discovered in the works of their predecessors.²⁰

There was a strong inclination to gaze upon the works of Italian Renaissance painters as having embodied the same theory and breath of life in their work, as perhaps the ancient Greek sculptor Phidias.

Hogarth saw England's own contemporary culture as worthy of subject matter. Modern life could be made into heroic narratives, especially if that was the subject matter the public knew.²¹ This weaving of mythology and classical models into a satire on contemporary life, as well as the contemporary view on ancient life, was achieved by recasting modern characters into the ancient narrative or showing details of ancient figures and theories in conjunction with contemporary images. Regardless of how the Royal Academy and Hogarth's followers differed in their respective positions, classical theory and mythology served as visual and iconographic language for satirical artists.

Following in the footsteps of Hogarth, James Gillray first

started at the Royal Academy in 1778 under Francesco Bartolozzi, where he learned the elegance of Italian engraving.²² However, his images bordered on caricatures and he turned to satirical prints due to a lack of work as a proper engraver, never forgetting his academic defeat.²³ Although Gillray's work contrasted with the ideals set forth by the Academy, he used his knowledge of classical subject matter to create complex satires of contemporary figures set into mythological scenes.²⁴ In addition to such fully fledged recasting of mythological events with contemporary figures, Gillray and his fellow printmakers also inserted classical motifs into the backgrounds of his compositions as iconographic elements that cleverly figure in the overall meaning of the print.

Gillray's print, *Phaeton alarm'd!* (1808), provides an example of recasting current events in the guise of a classical myth (Fig. 67). In the classical text by Ovid, Phaeton was the son of Sol or Helios and Clymene the Oceanid.²⁵ After his mother reveals that he is the son of Sol, Phaeton approaches his father and asks him to drive his chariot. However, having no experience piloting the solar chariot, Phaeton drives too close to the earth and scorches it. To save the earth from total destruction, Jupiter strikes young Phaeton with one of his lightning bolts and sends him falling into the Eridanus River.²⁶ In his print, Gillray places specific, well-known figures into the image. The print shows Foreign Secretary George Canning as Phaeton and his mentor, William Pitt, as Apollo.²⁷ The chariot is led by four horses in the guise of four of his cabinet members.²⁸ Canning stands against the bright orb of the sun, which reads "The Sun of Anti-Jacobinism," as he advances into an onslaught of enemies, represented by the signs of the zodiac. The largest enemy among them is "Scorpio Broad-Bottomis," representing just one of the many members of opposition.²⁹ Below Canning, Napoleon rides a bear, or Ursa Major, who symbolizes the Foreign Secretary's siege on Copenhagen after Denmark made connections on a peace treaty with France.³⁰ Cowering in the shadows from the destruction of Canning's chariot is Neptune and Pluto, showing that even two of the most powerful gods are in fear at the potential results of Canning's leadership.

At the bottom of the print, Gillray places lines of Phaeton's story, with the reference, "see Ovid's *Metamorphoses*." It is interesting to note, however, that Ovid's exalted status had been clipped by the time that Gillray was producing his prints. "Ovid the rake, the sophisticated tactician of love's siege-warfare, tended to be separated from Ovid the highly convenient if barely acknowledged source of decorative and sometimes disturbing myths and legends, not to mention Ovid the witty and elegant maker of verses."³¹ Here there is a connection to the wider education of the public, and in particular, Hogarth's thoughts



Fig. 67. James Gillray, *Phaeton alarm'd!*, 1808. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 38).



Fig. 68. James Gillray, *Charon's-Boat.—or—the Ghost's of "all the Talents" taking their last voyage,—from the Pope's Gallery at Rome.*, 1807. Etching, engraving, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 36).

on turning away from classical subject matter and instead looking at British life. There was never a time like the present, "the pagan gods and goddesses who had been first the subject of love and later of study finally became the object of attack and grew progressively less acceptable and less common..."³²

Another example of mythology rewritten is Gillray's *Charon's-Boat.—or—the Ghost's of "all the Talents" taking their last voyage,—from the Pope's Gallery in Rome.* (1807), which presents a mythological scenario recast with contemporaries (Fig. 68). The role of Charon, the boatman who guides the souls across the river Styx, has been given to Charles Grey, Lord Howick. All aboard the boat are those part of the Grenville ministry, who supported a bill that would have

opened military ranks to Catholics, thus the torn sail of the boat reading “Catholic Emancipation.”³³ Awaiting them on the shores of the Underworld are Charles James Fox, Oliver Cromwell, and Robespierre, who is seen holding his head. Above, in the center of the image, sits the three Fates, seen as witches, who represent the new administration secretaries.³⁴ They hold in their hands the chords of life, which they would cut upon the time of death for each individual. The voyage of the Grenville ministry, in the guise of the journey of the ancient damned, drew the parallel between the failure of the ministry and their eternal death in politics. The characters and topic, both classical and contemporary, would have been recognizable to the public and a point of interest for mockery.

The prints created by Hogarth and Gillray were all testaments of the knowledge of classical stories, yet none were direct comments on the academy. Their prints were more concerned with the English public, their joys and fears, and of course their scandals. However, a chance for giving grief to the academy did finally come along. In 1795, a young woman named Anne Provis tricked a large number of the academicians, as well as their president, Benjamin West, into thinking that a copy of a manuscript detailing the “Venetian Secret” or the recipes for Titian’s coloring had come into her possession.³⁵ This hoax would become one of the greatest embarrassments for the Royal Academy and perhaps one of the best opportunities for a satirical print artist to use as subject matter in criticism of the academy.

Gillray’s *Titianus Redivivus;—or—The Seven-Wise-Men consulting the new Venetian Oracle,—a Scene in ye Academic Grove, No. 1.* (1797) was an eye opener for the academy, after exhibitions of the works that were painted according to the secrets of Titian were met with a poor reception (Fig. 69).³⁶ The print shows Miss Provis atop a rainbow painting a figure of Titian, using paints from a sign painter’s pot, alluding to her non-academic origins (Fig. 70).³⁷ Her dress is made up of peacock feathers, a sign of vanity, and is held up by the Three Graces. In the background, scores of artists rush to join Miss Provis in the secret of Titian, while seven artists from the academy sit already knowing the secret. They ignore before them a classical statue of Apollo, as well as an ape urinating on portfolios of academy members who remained detached from the hoax. Listed among the portfolios is one by Gillray’s engraving master, Francesco Bartolozzi.³⁸ In the background, to the right of the Graces, is the Royal Academy with a crack down the middle of its façade, a sign of its weakened reputation. Although Gillray’s use of classical references are the same that would have been at the very heart of the academy’s teaching, he turns them against the academy, mocking their beliefs as well as the madness of fame for the academy’s artists.



Fig. 69. James Gillray, *Titianus Redivivus;—or—The Seven-Wise-Men consulting the new Venetian Oracle,—a Scene in ye Academic Grove, No. 1.*, 1797. Etching. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.



Fig. 70. Detail of Fig. 69.

Printmakers not only employed classical stories for the recasting of contemporary figures into full-scale myths, but these classical references also appear as seemingly mundane pieces of furniture, decorations, objects of art, and other background “prop” elements. These references hint at the characteristics and gossip of the contemporary figures represented in the scene. James Gillray’s *Bandelures*. (1791) seems at first to be a scene of flirtation and amusement, but looking closely at the details of the room’s interior one learns more about the three main figures (Fig. 71). In the top left corner of the print, sitting on the fireplace mantle, is a bust of the Roman Emperor Claudius. As is well known to

classicists, Claudius was humiliated and betrayed by his promiscuous wife, Valeria Messalina, who had plotted to kill him with one of her lovers. The theme of cuckoldry, or unfaithfulness and dishonor done by a wife, was commonplace in British satirical prints. In the context of this print, it refers to the relationship between the three main figures in the scene, the Prince of Wales, his wife Mrs. Fitzherbert, and the man who is seen nuzzling her, Richard Brinsley Sheridan. It was rumored that Sheridan and his wife stayed with the Prince and Mrs. Fitzherbert in 1789 to dodge his creditors.³⁹ Gillray alludes to the amorous relationship between Mrs. Fitzherbert and Sheridan and confirms that suggestion with the bust of Claudius. Also of interest, right next to the bust of Claudius on the mantle, is a small image of a man sitting atop a wine casket with a glass in his hand. The figure here is the well-known god of wine and merriment, Bacchus, and reflects the priorities of the print's characters, which would have been frivolous activities of entertainment and socializing.

Similar to Hogarth, James Gillray also referenced ancient writers in his works, as he spoofed the epic poetic tradition in *Homer singing his Verses to the Greeks*. (1797) (Fig. 72). The print shows a rowdy group drinking brandy, made up of the Prince of Wales, Fox, and Sheridan, in which Sheridan asks the Prince, "Come sing me a bawdy song to make me merry." There is no great Greek epic poem found here. Instead, the Prince is about to recite Captain Charles Morris' "The Plenipotentiary," which honoured the penis of the Algerian ambassador.⁴⁰ Gillray also plays on the term "Greek," which refers to a gambler or cheat, marking Fox and Sheridan as cunning swindlers.⁴¹ Lastly, Gillray has drawn Fox in the guise of Falstaff, the fat, drunken coward of William Shakespeare's plays.⁴² In this spoof on epic poetry, Gillray plays on the public's knowledge of antiquity and modern events to satirize both.

George Cruikshank's print *Mixing a Recipe for Corns* (1835) is another example in which classical references amplify the main action (Fig. 73). Again we look to the top left corner of the print, where set into the mantle frieze is a scene of Diana and Actaeon. Diana, the virgin goddess of the hunt, often linked to the symbol of chastity, turned Actaeon into a stag after he discovered her bathing. In the frieze, Diana watches Actaeon's own hunting dogs chase after their master, whom Diana has transformed into a stag. The woman seated at the table is seen mixing a concoction for corns, with the use of various herbs and tonics that are seen on the table. The title tells us that she is making a recipe to cure the corns on her feet, which she has acquired from tight, fashionable shoes and many hours of walking—all of which identify her as a bawd or prostitute. The reference to Diana on the mantle is a barb at the woman's sexual morals, since



Fig. 71. James Gillray, *Bandelures*, 1791. Etching, stipple engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 15).



Fig. 72. James Gillray, *Homer singing his Verses to the Greeks*, 1797. Etching, engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 22).



Fig. 73. George Cruikshank, *Mixing a Recipe for Corns*, 1835. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 8).

chastity is obviously not an issue here. In fact, unlike Diana, she seeks to attract, not repel men. Diana's youthfulness is also in play, as the prostitute's once alluring appearance is slipping away despite her home remedies. Sitting on the mantle is a vase that holds three peacock feathers, references to the sacred bird of Juno, queen of the gods.⁴³ In this case, they allude to Juno's vanity and exalted nature which the woman is trying hard to match. Though not a classical theme, the painting on the wall in the background depicts Susanna and the elders. The story of a young, married woman who is watched while bathing by male voyeurs would have been recognizable to the viewer, just as the story of Diana and Actaeon. For both stories, the women's invasion of privacy reinforces their virtue and chasteness, which the prostitute in the print lacks. Here, Cruikshank's references to classical mythology provide clues to the image and its

meaning. It demonstrates the degree to which this body of classical material served as a rich source for satirical print-makers, who were at once satirizing both the present and the past.

The focus on contemporary subject matters, as promoted by William Hogarth, and the educational aims of the Royal Academy reflected the debate between modern and ancient notions of art, providing a common element and language from which to draw. References that connected classical sources with contemporary issues were at their liveliest in the hands of the satirists like Hogarth and Gillray, and represent an important aspect of satirical printmaking in the Georgian age. Printmakers adopted and rejected the influence of the ancients and academies, creating prints that were purely English in their wit and subject matter of day-to-day life.

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- 1 William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty*, ed. Joseph Burke (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1955), 209–210.
- 2 Sir Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses in Art*, ed. Robert R. Wark (San Marino: Huntington Library Publications, 1959), 17.
- 3 Mary Dorothy George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank: Social Change in Graphic Satire* (London: The Penguin Press, 1967), 27.
- 4 Marcus Vitruvius Pollio, *Vitruvius on Architecture*, vol. 1, ed. and trans. Frank Granger (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1970), 320.
- 5 George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank*, 27.
- 6 George, *Hogarth to Cruikshank*, 27.
- 7 Matthew Craske, *William Hogarth* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 7.
- 8 Craske, *William Hogarth*, 7.
- 9 Gill Perry, *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press in association with the Open University, 1999), 142; see also William Sandby, *The History of the Royal Academy of Arts from Its Foundation in 1768* (London: Longmans, Green, 1862).
- 10 Perry, *Academies, Museums and Canons of Art*, 142.
- 11 Craske, *William Hogarth*, 25.
- 12 Sir Walter R. M. Lamb, *The Royal Academy* (London: G. Bell, 1951), 1.
- 13 Sean Shesgreen, *Hogarth and the Four Times of Day Tradition* (London: Cornell University Press, 1983), 91.
- 14 Michael Greenhalgh, *The Classical Tradition in Art: From the Fall of the Roman Empire to the Time of Ingres* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1978), 199–200.
- 15 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 31.
- 16 Holger Hoock, *The King's Artists* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 41.
- 17 Reynolds, *Discourses in Art*, 254–255.
- 18 Craske, *William Hogarth*, 30.
- 19 Norman Vance, "Ovid in the Nineteenth Century," in *Ovid Renewed: Ovidian Influence on Literature and Art from the Middle Ages to the Twentieth Century*, ed. Charles Martindale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 216.
- 20 Reynolds, *Discourses in Art*, 99.
- 21 Craske, *William Hogarth*, 29.
- 22 Vic Gattrell, *The City of Laughter: Sex and Satire in Eighteenth-Century London* (New York: Walker and Company, 2006), 264.
- 23 Gattrell, *City of Laughter*, 265.
- 24 Draper Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts: Caricatures by James Gilray* (London: Phaidon Press, 1966), 10.
- 25 Lucia Impelluso, *Gods and Heroes in Art* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 2002), 206.
- 26 Impelluso, *Gods and Heroes in Art*, 206.
- 27 Draper Hill, ed., *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray* (Toronto: Dover Publications, Inc., 1976), 138.
- 28 Hill, *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray*, 138.
- 29 Hill, *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray*, 137.
- 30 Hill, *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray*, 138.
- 31 Vance, "Ovid in the Nineteenth Century," 216.
- 32 Shesgreen, *Hogarth and the Four Times of Day Tradition*, 90.
- 33 Hill, *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray*, 136.
- 34 Hill, *Satirical Etchings of James Gilray*, 137.
- 35 Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts*, 136.
- 36 Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts*, 136–137.
- 37 Frederic George Stephens and Mary Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 12 vols. (London: The British Museum, 1870–1954; 1978 reprint), 7:387.
- 38 Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts*, 137.
- 39 Hill, *Fashionable Contrasts*, 159.
- 40 Gattrell, *City of Laughter*, 296.
- 41 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:356.
- 42 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:356.
- 43 Impelluso, *Gods and Heroes in Art*, 137.

Aimee Laubach

In William Hogarth's *Characters and Caricaturas* (1743), one hundred faces occupy the main section of the composition (Fig. 74). Some face left, some right; some sneer, others smile demurely or grimace. While not exact likenesses, these slightly exaggerated portraits are not caricatures either. Varied in orientation, they congregate haphazardly above a bottom row of seven portraits. The three lower images to the left labeled "Characters" resemble more closely the hundred faces above than the four to the right, labeled "Caricaturas." The idealized "Characters" on the left are associated with Raphael, while the "Caricaturas" on bottom right with outsized or undersized noses, rippled skin, and ridiculous grins are associated with Leonardo da Vinci, Annibale Carracci, and Pier Leone Ghezzi. In juxtaposing his relatively dignified portraits with the caricatures of other masters, Hogarth is clearly identifying with one pattern and emphasizing his departure from the other. More generally, and significantly to our purposes here, he establishes his own work's relationship with that of the old masters.

Hogarth was not alone in referencing old masters. In *Mixing a Recipe for Corns* (1835), George Cruikshank employs another method to incorporate references to fine art in his works (Fig. 75). In this print, a woman sits in a room that features small old master paintings hanging on the walls. She stirs a pot over a fire with her right hand while staring nearsightedly at instructions in her left. The bottles and mortar-and-pestle on the table adjacent to her attest to the complex medicinal contents of the pot, as do the jars on the floor, which are surrounded by an assortment of domestic animals, including a cat playing about the woman's skirt. On the back wall is a picture that features a scene of the biblical story of Susanna and the Elders, recognized by the lustful men who surround the young nude woman. This subject matter was immensely popular among Baroque artists, especially the Dutch and Italian, and well known among British artists. Further examination of Cruikshank's scene reveals a representation of the classical myth of Diana and the Actaeon, which appears on the fireplace mantle. As the viewer soon discovers, this and other works of art that appear as part of the interior decorations are not just furnishings, their subjects relate to the theme of the print, in this case lust and unchecked sexuality, as shown by the prostitute mixing a recipe for corns or the Elders and Susanna. Fine art and their subjects play a significant role in the iconography of the scene.

We have now seen two of the ways printmakers inserted references of "high art" in their otherwise "low art" satirical



Fig. 74. After William Hogarth, *Characters and Caricaturas*, 1743. Engraving. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.



Fig. 75. George Cruikshank, *Mixing a Recipe for Corns*, 1835. Etching, hand coloring. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 8).

prints. The artists' intention was to add greater texture and humor to their prints. However, by doing so, they assume a certain level of education and familiarity of fine art on the part of the viewers.

Satirical printmakers such as Hogarth and Cruikshank acquired their vocabulary in old masters painting and art through various means. In the case of James Gillray, he gained a formal education at the Royal Academy. Those who did not attend the academy could view paintings and prints on display at fine art and print dealers. Also, most printmakers would have gone through an apprenticeship, during which they would have been required to make prints after old master works.

The Royal Academy, founded in 1768, was located in London not far from the center of the print trade in the West End near Picadilly. Architects and artists constituted the thirty-four founding members, among whom were Joshua Reynolds and William Chambers.¹ The two men sought to attain professional status for British artists and architects as well as to provide a place for exhibitions to which the public would be granted admission. Their goal was to establish an art academy through which their skills and knowledge could be imparted to artists for generations to come. In order to raise the professional status for artists, the academy sought to establish a concrete and rigorous system of training and expert judgment in the arts. Exhibitions of contemporary art would be displayed publicly to cultivate a national school of art, establish recognized canons of good taste, and shape the public's appreciation and interest in art.

As part of the academic approach, Joshua Reynolds instructed artists to copy the works of old masters instead of meticulously imitating nature.

When we have had continually before us the great works of Art to impregnate our minds with kindred ideas, we are then, and not till then, fit to produce something of the same species. We behold all about us with the eyes of these penetrating observers...and our minds accustomed to think the thoughts of the noblest and brightest intellects, are prepared for the discovery and selection of all that is great and noble in nature. The greatest natural genius cannot subsist on its own stock: he who resolves never to ransack any mind but his own, will be soon reduced, from mere barrenness, to the poorest of all imitations; he will be obliged to imitate himself, and to repeat what he has before often repeated. When we know the subject designed by such men, it will never be difficult to guess what kind of work is to be produced.²

By copying past masters, artists would gain knowledge of established working methods, which would serve as the foundation for critiquing and understanding art.

Satirical printmakers William Hogarth and James Gillray maintained two opposing perspectives on the role of academic training in art. Hogarth believed that artists should learn by observing nature rather than copying the masters. He argued that imitating the best masters prevented artists from developing their own style.

There can be no reasons assign'd why men of sense an[d] real genius with strong inclinations to attain to the art of Painting should so often miscarry as they do but these (and more that might be given why) those gentlemen who have labour'd with the utmost assiduity abroad surrounded with the works of the great masters, and at home at academys for twenty years together without gaining the least ground, nay some have rather gon backwards in their study... and those done twenty years since will destifie. Whereas if I have acquired anything in my way it has been whole obtain'd by Observation by which method be where I would with my Eyes open I could have been at my studys so that even my Pleasures became a part of them, and sweetened the pursuit.³

Hogarth was forthright with his views on academies and grew ill at the thought of students choosing to spend their time there instead of admiring and imitating "nature with all her particularities."⁴ He adds:

Others, as common face painters and copiers of pictures, denied that there could be such a rule either in art or nature, and asserted it was all stuff and madness; but no wonder that these gentlemen should not be ready in comprehending a thing they have little or no business with. For though the picture copier may sometimes to a common eye seem to vye with the original he copies, the artist himself requires no more ability, genius, or knowledge of nature, than a journey-man-weaver at the Goblins, who in working after a piece of painting, bit by bit, scarcely knows what he is about, whether he is weaving a man or a horse, yet at last almost insensibly turns out of his loom a fine piece of tapestry, representing, it may be, one of Alexander's battles painted by Le Brun.⁵

Like Hogarth, Gillray began his career as an engraver. However, hesitant to enter a vocation that was well below that of a professional painter, Gillray worked slowly, producing only a few plates before he turned twenty.⁶ In 1778, at

age twenty-two, Gillray was admitted as a student at the Royal Academy where he studied under Francesco Bartolozzi, an Italian engraver. It was not until he was twenty-six that he became serious about printmaking and not until after thirty that he placed all his energies in it. William Humphrey, first member of the Humphrey family to enter the print publishing business, was Gillray's principal sponsor until 1780. In 1779, Gillray began etching plates for Hannah Humphrey, print shop owner, publisher, and William Humphrey's sister.⁷ Through his education at the academy, his work as a printmaker, and his lifelong association with the Humphreys, Gillray developed a wide understanding of old master and contemporary painting, which figures prominently in his satirical prints.

As Gillray's career demonstrates, printmakers were exposed to fine art in print shops in the daily course of their work. They were often employed to make engravings after original works, which provided incomparable study of the old masters. Also, they had access to the vast stock of prints at their publishers. Indeed, old master as well as contemporary continental and English paintings were accessible as models and sources for printmakers because of the widespread circulation of reproductive prints. In fact, popular print publishers often advertised foreign prints in catalogues as well as the fact that they reproduced these prints for their own publications.⁸ This pool of imagery provided printmakers and the art buying public with a common visual language rooted in the old masters that was widely employed in the satirical print trade.

While the study and referencing of old master works was widely seen as the means to a career as an academic painter, one genre of the old masters that was not endorsed by academics—but profoundly influential on satirical printmakers—was the art of caricature. Although caricature was created by Leonardo, and later continued by Carracci and Ghezzi, academicians held this genre in low regard. They believed that high art should depict the desirable—things as they should be, not as they actually are.⁹ The academic hierarchy of subject matter was based on the notion that the veristic portrayal of subject matter—warts and all—belonged to the lowest level.¹⁰ As Reynolds noted:

The painters who have applied themselves more particularly to low and vulgar characters, and who express with precision the various shades of passion, as they are exhibited by vulgar minds, (such as we see in the works of Hogarth), deserve great praise; but as their genius has been employed on low and confined subjects, the praise which we give must be as limited as its object.¹¹



Fig. 76. James Gillray, *The Hand-Writing Upon the Wall*, 1803. Etching, aquatint. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA (cat. 29).



Fig. 77. Rembrandt, *Belshazzar's Feast*, c. 1638. Oil on canvas. © National Gallery, London/Art Resource, NY.

With this in mind, we return to Hogarth's *Characters and Caricaturas*, which illustrates the history of caricatures from Leonardo to Ghezzi, while distinguishing characterization from caricature. As noted earlier, the lower register of the composition is divided into five segments, which contain Hogarth's renderings of various heads—the first three are by Raphael, the fourth by Ghezzi, the fifth and sixth by Annibale Carracci, and the final one is a grotesque by Leonardo. One hundred profiles of Hogarth's own characters, drawn from life, occupy the upper space of the print. Each figure exhibits individualized features and is shown looking right or left. However, due to the sheer number of profiles within the small space, the faces differ only slightly, encouraging the viewer to distinguish the characteristics particular to each visage. Hogarth created the print as the subscription ticket for his *Marriage A-la-Mode* series.¹² However, after critics labeled Hogarth's exaggerated characters "caricatures," he released it as an individual print in response to the critics

and to demonstrate that his facial studies were neither idealistic, like those of Raphael, nor coarse caricature, like those of Leonardo, but based on the appearances of actual people. Moreover, he included a line drawing in the area above the second caricature to point out that caricatures are drawn more minimally, and thereby established him as a trained artist, distinct from others who would have been considered caricaturists.¹³ While Hogarth maintained a restrained approach to caricature, relying on his handling of the subject matter to produce laughs, subsequent satirical printmakers such as Cruikshank, freely employed caricature, as is evident in his rendering of the bawd's face in *Mixing a Recipe for Corns*. Thus, despite the low station of caricature within the academic hierarchy, it was an aspect of the old masters that was particularly well suited for the base and bawdy nature of satirical prints.

Another way in which satirical printmakers would reference the old masters is to base a print on a well-known composition. In Gillray's *The Hand-Writing Upon the Wall* (1803), the composition is clearly based on Rembrandt's *Belshazzar's Feast* (c. 1638) (Figs. 76, 77). However, in Gillray's rendering, Napoleon plays the role of the frightened biblical king. In *The Hand-Writing Upon the Wall*, Napoleon appears feasting with his wife Josephine, French soldiers, and various women. The serving plates are inscribed "Bank of England," "Tower of London," "St. James," and "Roast Beef of old England," which allude to Napoleon's claim that he needed only three days of fog to take over London, the Parliament, and the Bank of England.¹⁴ Napoleon, eyes wide with terror, stares over his right shoulder at the strange hand in the cloud pointing to the words "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin" (weighed, weighed, counted and divided). The miraculous inscription implies that the King's (and by extension Napoleon's) kingdom was numbered and soon to be divided. The stern French soldiers behind him glance sidelong at the sky. Josephine, unaware of the supernatural event, continues gulping the red wine and some dribbles down her chin. Rembrandt's handling of the subject provided the template for Gillray's satirical recasting of contemporary political issues as a moralizing biblical prophecy. Evidently, Gillray knew of Rembrandt's composition through Henry Hudson's mezzotint (1786) after the painting.¹⁵

Gillray not only turned to old masters, he also parodied the compositions of his contemporaries, including Joshua Reynolds. Reynolds was co-founder and the first president of the Royal Academy, where James Gillray briefly attended. In Gillray's print entitled *St. Cecilia* (1782) (Fig. 78), a repulsive, bitter-faced woman sits on a low piano bench as she plays the keys. She wears a dress with a lace neckline and her hair is tied up in a bun. The callous figure sneers at the sheet music in front of her. Two yowling cats serve as her vocalists.



Fig. 78. James Gillray, *St. Cecilia*, 1782. Etching. The Trout Gallery, Dickinson College, Carlisle, PA.



Fig. 79. Thomas Watson after Joshua Reynolds, *Mrs. Sheridan as Saint Cecilia*, 1779. Stipple engraving. British Museum, London. Image © Trustees of the British Museum.

Dark, ominous clouds loom above their heads, but rays of light illuminate the woman's face. She is identified as Lady Cecilia Johnstone, who was a contemporary figure known for her bitter tongue, narrow mind, and was sarcastically referred to as "St. Cecilia." Gillray's unsympathetic rendering of Lady Johnstone is based cleverly on Reynolds' composition, *Mrs. Sheridan as Saint Cecilia* (Fig. 79). However, in the original, Sheridan is accompanied by two singing angelic figures with

heavenly clouds hovering above their heads. Mrs. Sheridan, wife of playwright and politician Richard Brinsley Sheridan, was a talented singer and thus likened to Saint Cecilia, the patron saint of musicians. By recasting Mrs. Sheridan with the bitter-tongued Mrs. Johnstone in the role of St. Cecilia, Gillray struck a popular chord with the masses. Not only is it a burlesque version of a renowned contemporary artist's work, but it features a known personality.

Although rare, a controversy in the world of contemporary art provided the basis for a satirical print, Gillray's *Titianus Redivivus;—or—The Seven-Wise-Men consulting the new Venetian Oracle,—a Scene in ye Academic Grove, No. 1.* (1797) (Fig. 80). In this print, a female artist standing atop a large rainbow, which serves to split the composition into two components, is painting a portrait of the Venetian old master, Titian. Contained within the terracotta pot directly in front of the artist is the paint concoction that she created. A donkey guised as Pegasus stoops down to sip from the pot. Written on the wings of the Pegasus-donkey hybrid are the words: "Review, Magazines, Advertis[er], Squib, Herald, Times, True Briton, World, Morning Chronicle, Evening Post, Star, Sham Abuse, Squibbs, Oracle, Courier."¹⁶ They allude to the tabloids, newspapers, and other publications that carried the news of what was to be known as the "Venetian Secret" scandal. An eagle encircled by flames, soaring above the canvas in the dark menacing clouds, clasps in his talons a scroll labeled as the Venetian Manuscript. An angelic herald-trumpeter toots the message: "You little Stars, hide your diminish'd Head[s]." The words resolve into black clouds, from which descend falling stars labeled: "Rubens, Correggio, Michael Angelo, Raphael, Parmegiano" (Fig. 81). In the lower left portion of the foreground, an apparition of Joshua Reynolds surfaces from underneath the paved floor. He utters the words: "Black Spirits & White; Blue Spirits & Grey. Mingle, mingle, mingle!—you that Mingle may."¹⁷ Aside a headless statue of Apollo, an ape leaning on a volumous book entitled "List of Subscribers to the Venetian Humbug at Ten Gs each Dupe," urinates on a pile of portfolios containing the names: "Cosway, Sandby, Bartolozzi, Rooker, Turner, Loutherbouurg, Beechey Pinx, Fuselli." Three men are scurrying away in the lower right part of the foreground. The short man closest to the viewer balances a sack on his head advertising *Lottery 5 Gs a dip*. The sack, dumping its contents behind the men, contains small shreds of papers which read, "Ticket, Picture or 2 Pict[ures]." The diminutive man says: "Damn their secrets, I say!—I've got a fine Load of them here!—come who'll have a Dip in my Lucky bag!—all Prizes here!" The gentleman walking along side him says: "How?—What?—another Gallery?—Mr. President! I'd see them all starve first, the Villains! O my money! my Money!!!" Benjamin West,



Fig. 80. James Gillray, *Titianus Redivivus;—or—The Seven-Wise-Men consulting the new Venetian Oracle,—a Scene in ye Academic Grove, No. 1.*, 1797. Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, DC.



Fig. 81. Detail of Fig. 80.

President of the Royal Academy replies: "Charming Secret Friend, for thee to dash out another Gallery with!—but I'm off!"¹⁸ Seven figures in the foreground, who have already acquired the Secret, say things such as: "Will this Secret make me Paint like Claude? / As I in Reynolds style my works

Begin; / W'ont Titian's Finish, hoist on me the grin? / Will it on White Grounds equal shine? / For when I Trace from Ancient works Divine. / I use no other. / and a paper that reads Method of Eating ones Way into the Academy?"¹⁹ The multitudes of people behind them stand and demand the Secret as well. The façade of the Royal Academy, located in the background, reveals a deep fracture.

The print alludes to events surrounding Anne Provis, a twenty-year-old painting student, who, in 1795, informed Benjamin West, the President of the Royal Academy, that she discovered the secret of Titian's coloring. The information was not only written, but was also demonstrated by Provis. She described Titian's working methods, emphasizing the use of a dark ground and pure linseed oil, and instructed them how to paint like Titian by blending shades of blues.²⁰ Provis disclosed the "Venetian Secret" for the price of ten guineas and sworn secrecy by those purchasing the recipe. West is said to have received the secret for free.²¹ The seven figures portrayed in Gillray's print purchased the information from Provis. Members of the Royal Academy were gossiping and scrambling to acquire the secret. The Venetian Secret sparked controversy at the opening of the academy's 1797 exhibition.²² Ultimately, public opinion, as suggested in Gillray's biting satire, was that Provis was a shameful imposter.

Indeed, it would seem that Gillray, a former student of the Royal Academy, took particular pleasure in satirizing the academics who were hoodwinked by the young Provis. As an unsuccessful painter who shifted his focus to satirical

printmaking, Gillray stands for the paradox of the artist who lived and worked within the fine art world without ever being considered a part of it.²³ The base subject matter and crude nature of Gillray's prints no doubt contributed to this exclusion. Contemporary writer Robert Buss, who had collected his information from Cruikshank, said that Gillray was "highly sensitive to criticism, as, under the reputation of a caricaturist, he really had the talents of a high quality in art."²⁴ By satirizing the academic art world in prints that sold for a shilling or two, Gillray exposed the corruption of the Royal Academy in an attempt to distinguish himself as a serious engraver. Indeed, the composition for *Titianus Redivivus* is among his most complex and pictorial, and seems to suggest his skills were as good if not better than those represented in the print. Despite having established a reputation as a successful satirist, the sharpness of Gillray's attack on the academy suggests that the stigma of working in a lowly medium lingered.²⁵

Whether hearkening back to the Renaissance or simply referring to contemporary artists, the fine art of the past and present provided a common language from which the printmakers drew many of their subjects. Such references injected texture, complexity, and substance to the bawdy, "low" art form of satirical prints. Despite the Academy's dim view of the genre, satirical printmakers incorporated fine art references into their satirical works, which were understood and appreciated by viewers and collectors of the Georgian era.

1 Walter R. M. Lamb, *The Royal Academy: A Short History of its Foundation and Development* (London: G. Bell & Sons, 1951), 8.

2 Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, ed. Robert R. Wark (San Marino, CA: Huntington Library, 1959), 99.

3 William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty: With the Rejected Passages From the Manuscript Drafts and Autobiographical Notes*, ed. Joseph Burke (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), 185.

4 Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, xiv.

5 Hogarth, *Analysis of Beauty*, 10–11.

6 Draper Hill, *Mr. Gillray: The Caricaturist* (London: The Phaidon Press, 1965), 18.

7 Hill, *Mr. Gillray, The Caricaturist*, 22–23.

8 Sheila O'Connell, *The Popular Print in England* (London: British Museum Press, 1999), 156.

9 Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 28.

10 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 28.

11 Reynolds, *Discourses on Art*, 51.

12 Deidre Shauna Lynch, *The Economy of Character: Novels, Market Culture and the Business of Inner Meaning* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), 64.

13 Lynch, *Economy of Character*, 62–65.

14 Frederic George Stephens and Mary Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum*, 12 vols. (London: The British Museum, 1870–1954; 1978 reprint), 8:181–182.

15 Richard Godfrey, *James Gillray: The Art of Caricature* (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), 124. Although it has been documented that Rembrandt's painting was in private hands at the time that James Gillray produced his print, records show that a mezzotint of Rembrandt's painting produced by Henry Hudson in 1786 was in circulation.

16 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:387.

17 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:388.

18 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:388.

19 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:388.

20 Godfrey, *James Gilray*, 86–88.

21 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:389.

22 George, *Catalogue of Political and Personal Satires*, 7:389.

23 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 30.

24 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 31.

25 Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 31.

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE



1. ARTIST UNKNOWN, AFTER TIM BOBBINS or THOMAS SANDARS
CONTENTMENT, c. 1810

Engraving
Paper: 8 ½ x 10 ⅞ in. (21.5 x 27.6 cm)
Plate: 6 ½ x 8 ¼ in. (16.0 x 21.7 cm)
Inscriptions: Pub. June 4. 1810. By Edw^d. Orme. London.



2. ARTIST UNKNOWN ("THE CARICATURIST GENERAL")
Bony's Vision or a Great little Man's Night Comforts, 1811

Etching, aquatint, for *The Satirist*
Paper: 8 ⅞ x 14 ⅞ in. (22.5 x 32.6 cm)
Inscriptions: The Caricaturist General fecit Published for the Satirist Sept 1st. 1811



3. ARTIST UNKNOWN
AN AMATEURS DREAM, 1812

Etching, aquatint
 Paper: 8 7/8 x 15 in. (22.4 x 38.0 cm)
 Plate: 7 5/8 x 14 5/8 in. (19.7 x 37.0 cm)
 Inscriptions: Published for the Satirist Jan' 1. 1812. "Is this that Gallant Gay Lothario." Vide the Fair Penitent.



4. ARTIST UNKNOWN
AN ALARMING DISCOVERY showing the fatal effects of using Cosmetics, 1827

Etching, hand coloring
 Paper: 9 3/8 x 14 1/8 in. (24.4 x 36.4 cm)
 Inscriptions: Esar Del Pub by T McLean 26 Haymarket where political and other caricatures are daily pub—the largest collection of any house.



5. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

Symptoms of Life in London—or Love, Law, & Physic., 1821

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 10 3/8 x 14 3/4 in. (26.2 x 37 cm)

Inscriptions: ?Sher^m Inv^t G Cruik^{td} Fec^d Aug^t 28th by G Humphrey 27 S^t James's S^t London



6. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

Jealousy., 1835

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 8 1/8 x 10 1/8 in. (20.6 x 25.7 cm)

Inscriptions: A Crowquill Esq.^t inv.^t G. Cruikshank fec.^t Pub.^d Aug.^t 1st 1835 by Tho^s M^c.Lean, 26, Haymarket.



7. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

Indigestion., 1835

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 8 x 10 3/8 in. (20.5 x 26.4 cm)

Inscriptions: A Growquill Esq' del' Etched by GC^k. Pub^d.
Aug^t 1st 1835. by Tho^s M^cLean, 26 Haymarket.



8. GEORGE CRUIKSHANK

MIXING A RECIPE FOR CORNS, 1835

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 8 1/2 x 10 1/4 in. (21.1 x 25.9 cm)

Plate: 8 x 9 7/8 in. (20.3 x 25.1 cm)

Inscriptions: [Anchor monogram] G.C.^k Pub.^d by Tho.^d
M^cLean 26 Haymarket. Aug.^t 1.st 1835.



**9. THOMASO SCRUTINY [PSEUDO.],
SAMUEL DE WILDE**
*The RIVAL MAJICIANS or RAISING the
SPIRIT*, 1808

Etching, aquatint
Paper: 8 1/8 x 13 1/4 in. (20.8 x 33.5 cm)
Inscriptions: Thomaso Scrutiny Inv^t. Published for the
Satirist July 1. 1808 by S.Tipper Leadenhall Street.



**10. THOMASO SCRUTINY [PSEUDO.],
SAMUEL DE WILDE**
LOVE FEAST, 1808

Etching, aquatint
Paper: 9 7/8 x 14 3/8 in. (22.6 x 36.5 cm)
Plate: 7 3/8 x 13 3/8 in. (18.7 x 34.1 cm)
Inscriptions: Thaumaso Scrutiny Esq,r fecit. / Published for
the Satirist. Oct.^r 1st 1808 / by S. Tipper 37 Leadenhall
Street



**11. THOMASO SCRUTINY [PSEUDO.]
SAMUEL DE WILDE**

JOHN BULL in a FEVER, 1809

Etching, aquatint

Paper: 7 7/8 x 14 3/8 in. (20.0 x 36.5 cm)

Inscriptions: Published for the Satirist. July 1st. 1809. by
S. Tipper. 37 Leadenhall Street



12. SAMUEL DE WILDE

Sketch for a PRIME Minister or how to purchase a PEACE, 1811

Etching, aquatint

Paper: 12 7/8 x 8 3/8 in. (32.5 x 22.0 cm)

Plate: 9 3/8 x 7 3/4 in. (24.0 x 19.7 cm)

Inscriptions: Published for the Satirist Feb. 1st 1811.



13. RICHARD DIGHTON
A LONDON NUISANCE. PL^E 4th. A Pleasant way to Lose an EYE., 1821

Etching, hand coloring
 Paper: 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (29.8 x 24.0 cm)
 Plate: 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ in. (27.6 x 22.6 cm)
 Inscriptions: Richard. Dighton Inv^t et Sculp. London Pub^d
 by Tom^r M^rLean. 26 Haymarket.



14. S. W. FORCE
THE LOOKING GLASS in DISGRACE, 1805

Etching, aquatint, hand coloring
 Paper: 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (34.6 x 26.0 cm)
 Plate: 12 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (31.8 x 23.3 cm)
 Inscriptions: Pub,^d Jan,^y 1,st 1805 by SW Fores No. 50
 Piccadilly



15. JAMES GILLRAY
BANDELURES, 1791

Etching, stipple engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)
verso: *The Landing of Sir John Bull & his Family at Boulogne sur mer*

Paper: 12 ½ x 17 ¾ in. (31.9 x 41.7 cm)

Plate: 12 x 16 ⅞ in. (30.3 x 40.3 cm)

Inscriptions: London Pub.d Febr 28th 1791 by SW. Fores. No 3. Piccadilly—"thus sits the Dupe, content! / Please himself with Toys, thinks Heav'n secure, / Depends on Woman's smiles & thinks the Man / His soul is wrap'd in, can be nought but true, / "Fond Food, arouse! Shake off thy childish Dream, / "Behold Love's falsehood, Friendships perjurd troth; / "Nor sit & sleep, for all around the world. / "Thy shame is known, with thou alone art blind—Blackmore



16. JAMES GILLRAY

The Power Of Beauty;—St. Cecilia charming the Brute;—or—The seduction of the Welch-Ambassador., 1792

Etching, engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 10 ⅞ x 15 in. (27.1 x 37.8 cm)

Plate: 10 x 13 ¾ in. (25.5 x 35.2 cm)

Inscriptions: —Pub.^d Feb^rth 1792 by H Humphrey. N 18 Old Bond Street.



17. JAMES GILLRAY

Leaving off POWDER.—or—A Frugal Family saving the Guinea., 1795

Etching, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: Patriotic Regeneration.—viz Parliament Reform (left third)

Paper: 10 3/4 x 15 1/8 in. (27.4 x 38.1 cm)

Plate: 10 x 14 in. (25.2 x 35.7 cm)

Inscriptions: J. G. des. et fec. Pub. d March 10th. 1795. by H. Humphrey N^o. 37 New Bond Street



18. JAMES GILLRAY

TWO-PENNY WHIST., 1796

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 9 1/8 x 15 3/8 in. (23.0 x 34.5 cm)

Plate: 8 1/2 x 12 1/2 in. (21.0 x 31.8 cm)

Inscriptions: J. Gillray ad viv. ed fec. Pub. d Jan. 11. 1796. By H. Humphrey New Bond Street.



19. JAMES GILLRAY

The DISSOLUTION; or the Alchymist producing an Ætherial Representation., 1796

Etching, engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 18 7/8 x 12 1/2 in. (48.1 x 31.7 cm)

Plate: 14 1/2 x 10 1/2 in. (36.8 x 26.7 cm)

Inscriptions: J^s. G^r. des et fec. Pub^d. May 21. 1796 by
H Humphrey. New Bond Street



20. JAMES GILLRAY

PUSH-PIN., 1797

Etching, stipple engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 10 1/4 x 12 7/8 in. (26.0 x 32.5 cm)

Inscriptions: J^s. G^r. inv. & fec. ad vivam Pub^d. April 17.th
1797. by H. Humphrey. 27 S.^t. James's Street. London.



21. JAMES GILLRAY

The GORDON-KNOT, —or— The Bonny-Duchess hunting the Bedfordshire Bull., 1797

Etching, engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Portrait of an Irish Chief*

Paper: 11 ¼ x 15 ¼ in. (38.7 x 28.7 cm)

Plate: 10 ½ x 14 ¼ in. (26.7 x 36.6 cm)

Inscription: J^s. G^r. inv^t & fec^t

Pub.d April 19th 1797. by H. Humphrey New Bond SQ
S. James's Street



22. JAMES GILLRAY

HOMER singing his Verses to the GREEKS., 1797

Etching, engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Ms. Van Butchell* (upper half)

Paper: 11 x 13 ⅞ in. (27.9 x 35.5 cm)

Inscriptions: J^s. G^r. ad viram fec^t Pub^d. June 16th. 1797. by
H. Humphrey S. James's Street



23. JAMES GILLRAY

Evidence to Character;—being, a Portrait of a TRAITOR, by his Friends & by Himself, 1798

Etching, engraving

Paper: 7 ½ x 10 ¼ in. (19.2 x 26.0 cm)

Inscription: J^s. Gillray inv & fec Pub^l. Oct. 1st. 1798. By J. Wright. 169 Piccadilly



24. JAMES GILLRAY

—“OH! LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF LOVE.”, 1799

Etching, engraving, hand coloring

Paper: 12 ¾ x 10 in. (32.4 x 25.2 cm)

Plate: 10 ¾ x 8 in. (26.5 x 20.0 cm)

Inscriptions: Publish'd Nov^r 14th 1799 by H Humphrey N^o 27 St James's Street London



25. JAMES GILLRAY

—“*so Skiffy-Skipt=on, with his wonted grace—*,”
1800

Etching, engraving (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 10 x 7 ¾ in. (25.5 x 19.0 cm)

Inscriptions: Pub^d Feb^r 1st 1800 - by H. Humphrey

27 St. James's Street

SIR, LUMLEY, S^t. GEORGE, SKEFFINGTON, BAR^t.

VIDE BIOGRAPHIA DRAMATICA. P. 671. Vide

Birthday Ball. See Morning Herald. Jan^r 20th 1800



26. JAMES GILLRAY

COMING-IN AT THE DEATH., 1800

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Hounds in Full Cry*

Paper: 10 ½ x 14 ½ in. (26.6 x 37.0 cm)

Inscriptions: Publish'd April 8th 1800. By H. Humphrey

N^o. 27. S^t. James's Street, London. B. [royal monogram].

Esq^t. del. J^s. G^r. fecit.



27. JAMES GILLRAY

Bulstrode Siren, 1803

Etching, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 14 3/4 x 10 5/8 in. (37.3 x 27.0 cm)

Plate: 14 1/8 x 10 1/4 in. (35.7 x 26.0 cm)

Verso: *A Great Man on the Turf*

Inscriptions: Pub^d. April 14th. 1803 by H. Humphrey 27 S^t.
James's Street.



28. JAMES GILLRAY

The Three M. Wiggins's., 1803

Etching, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: 13 3/4 x 11 1/8 in. (35.3. x 28.4 cm)

Verso: *A Hint to Young Officers*

Inscriptions: London. Pub^d June 16th. 1803. by
H. Humphrey 27 S^t. James's Street.



29. JAMES GILLRAY

The Hand-Writing Upon the Wall, 1803

Etching, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Paper: trimmed to 10 3/8 x 14 7/8 in. (27 x 37.9 cm)

Inscriptions: Cut from lower margin



30. JAMES GILLRAY

JOHN BULL and the ALARMIST, 1803

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *The Writing on the Wall*

Paper: 10 3/8 x 14 7/8 in. (27 x 37.9 cm)

Plate: 10 1/4 x 14 1/8 in. (27.1 x 36.8 cm)

Inscriptions: Pub^d. Sept. 1st. 1803 by H. Humphrey,
27 S. James St.



31. JAMES GILLRAY
Gentle Emetic, 1804

Etching, engraving, hand coloring
 Paper: trimmed to 12 x 7 1/8 in. (25.2 x 17.9 cm)
 Inscriptions: Publish'd Jan^y. 28.th 1804. by H. Humphrey.
 S^t. James's Street. Esq^t. del. J^s. G^y. fec^t.



32. JAMES GILLRAY
Breathing a Vein, 1804

Etching, engraving, hand coloring
 Paper: trimmed to 9 1/2 x 7 in. (24.0 x 17.7 cm)
 Inscriptions: Missing; would have been: Publish'd Jan^y. 28.th
 1804. by H. Humphrey. St. James's Street. Esq^t. del. J^s. G^y. fec^t.



33. JAMES GILLRAY
The KING of BROBDINGNAG and GULLIVER. (Plate 2^d), 1804

Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring (Miller edition, c. 1818–c. 1825)
 Paper: 13 ½ x 16 ⅞ in. (34.3 x 42.9 cm)
 Plate: 11 ⅞ x 16 ⅞ in. (28.5 x 42.9 cm)
 Inscriptions: —Scene—Gulliver manœuvring with his little Boat in the Cistern. Vide Swifts Gulliver. London Published by John Miller, Bridge Street, & W. Blackwood, Edinburgh.



34. JAMES GILLRAY
*—a Kick at the Broad-Bottoms! —i.e.—
 Emancipation of "All the Talents", 1807*

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)
 Verso: *The Pigs Possessed*
 Paper: 11 x 14 ¾ in. (27.8 x 37.6 cm)
 Plate: 10 ⅞ x 14 ⅞ in. (26.5 x 35.7 cm)
 Inscriptions: J. Gillray inv. & fec. Pub^d. March 23 1807. by H. Humphrey St. James's Str Vide. The Fate of e/y Catholic Bill.



35. JAMES GILLRAY

The New Dynasty:—or—the little Corsican Gardiner planting a Royal Pippin Tree., 1807

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Phaeton alarm'd* (top half; see cat. no. 38)

Paper: 10 3/8 x 14 7/8 in. (27.0 x 37.9 cm)

Plate: 10 x 13 7/8 in. (25.4 x 35.5 cm)

Inscriptions: Pub^d. June 25th. 1807 by H. Humphrey. 27 St. James's Street. London. Js. Gillray inv & fec. June 25th, 1807 / H. Humphrey "All the Talents" Busy in Clearing the Ground of the Old Timber.—Vide. the Berlin Telegraph of May 21st, 1807—Article, the Genealogy of the Royal Race of the King of Ballynahinch—See Mor^s. Post June 17th.-



36. JAMES GILLRAY

CHARON'S-BOAT. —or—the Ghosts of "all the Talents" taking their last voyage,—from the Popè's Gallery at Rome., 1807

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Phaeton alarm'd* (bottom half; see cat. no. 38)

Paper: 11 x 14 3/4 in. (27.9 x 37.5 cm)

Plate: 9 7/8 x 13 7/8 in. (25.1 x 35.1 cm)

Inscriptions: Publish^d July 16th 1807. by H. Humphrey 27 S. James's Street. J. Gillray fecit



37. JAMES GILLRAY
VERY SLIPPY-WEATHER, 1808

Etching, engraving, hand coloring
 Paper: 10 ¼ x 8 in. (26.2 x 20.2 cm)
 Inscriptions: S. James's Street. London. Publish'd February.
 10.th 1808. by H. Humphrey. N^o. 27. S. James's Street.
 Etch'd by J. Gillray.



38. JAMES GILLRAY
PHAETON alarm'd!, 1808

Etching, engraving, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)
 Verso: *The New Dynasty / Charon's Boat* (see cat. nos. 35, 36)
 Paper: 21 ⅝ x 14 ¾ in. (54.9 x 37.6 cm)
 Inscriptions: London, Publish'd March 22nd. 1808—by H.
 Humphrey. 27 S. James's Street. J. Gillray. Inv^d. & fec'.
 "Now all the horrors of the heav'n's spies, / And monstous
 shadows of prodigious size, / That deck'd with stars, lie
 scatter'd o'er the skies / "Th' astonish'd youth where e'er his
 eyes could turn, / "Beheld the universe around him burn: /
 "The world was in a blaze!"—see, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.



39. JAMES GILLRAY

Apotheosis of the CORSICAN-PHCENIX, 1808

Etching, aquatint (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *Overthrow of the Republican-Babel* (lower half)

Paper: 15 3/8 x 11 in. (39.2 x 28.0 cm)

Plate: 14 1/4 x 10 1/2 in. (36.0 x 26.5 cm)

Inscriptions: Publish'd August 2nd. 1808 — by H. Humphrey 27 S^t. James's Street Js. Gillray inv^d. & fec^t When the Phœnix is tired of Life, he builds a Nest upon the Mountains, and setting / it on Fire by the wafting of his own Wings— he perishes Himself in the Flames!—/ and from the smoke of his Ashes arises a new Phoenix to illuminate the World!!! /—Vide. The New Spanish Encyclopedia. Edit 1808



40. JAMES GILLRAY

—the Introduction of the Pope to the Convocation at Oxford by the Cardinal Broad-Bottom., 1809

Etching (Bohn edition, 1851)

Verso: *True Reform of Parliament* (left half)

Paper: 11 3/8 x 15 1/2 in. (29.2 x 39.6 cm)

Plate: 10 7/8 x 14 3/4 in. (27.7 x 37.5 cm)

Inscriptions: GOLGOTHA, i.e: the place of Skulls.—
Published by H Humphrey. 27 S^t. James's Street London
Dec^r. 1st. 1809— J^s. Gillray fec^t



41. WILLIAM HOGARTH, AFTER
The Company of Undertakers, 1736

Engraving, hand coloring
 Paper: 11 1/8 x 8 3/8 in. (28.2 x 21.7 cm)
 Inscriptions: Et Plurima Mortis Imago / Designd by W. Hogarth. / Beareth Sable, an Urinal proper, between 12 Quack-Heads of the Second and 12 Cane Heads Or Consultant. On a Chief Nebulae Erimine, One compleat Doctor issuant, checkie sustaining in his Right Hand a Baton of the Second. On his Dexter and Sinister sides two Demi-Doctors, issuant of the Second, and two Cane Heads issuant of the third; The first having One Eye conchant towards the Dexter side of the Escoccheon the second Faced per pale proper & Gules, Guardent With this Motto.



42. WILLIAM HOGARTH
The five orders of PERRIWIGS as they were worn at the late CORONATION, measured Architectonically, 1761

Engraving
 Paper: 16 1/8 x 12 in. (41.0 x 30.3 cm)
 Plate: 12 x 8 3/4 in. (30.3 x 22.2 cm)
 Inscriptions: Advertisement / In about Seventeen Years, will be completed, in Six Volumns, folio, price, Fifteen Guineasm the / exact measurements of the PERRIWIGS of the ancients; taken from the Statues, Bustos & Baso-Relievos, of Athens, Palimira, Balbec, and Rome. by MODESTO Perriwig-meter from Lagado. / N.B. None will be Sold but to Subscribers.—Publish'd as the Act directs Oct. 15. 1761 by W: Hogarth.



43. THEODORE LANE

Mother Cole, 1821

Etching, hand coloring

Paper: 12 ¼ x 9 in. (31.2 x 22.8 cm)

Inscriptions: London Pub^d by G Humphrey 27 St James's S^t.

July 26 1821

To Brandy I flew to seek relief, / But he's ne'er the less
 before me, / Ah no, no, no, Brandy cannot cure / The pains
 I endure for Bergami.



44. THEODORE LANE

THE C-R-L-E COLUMN, 1821

Etching, engraving, hand coloring

Paper: 15 ½ x 9 ¾ in. (38.4 x 23.8 cm)

Inscriptions: R.H.B. - - - - - fecit THE C-R-L - - E

COLUMN / to be executed in silver / THIS PIECE OF

PLATE / is designed to complete the SUBSCRIPTION

SERVICE / and proposed to be presented by the W - D of

CRIP - L - GATE! / London Pub^d by G. Humphrey 27 S^t

James's S^t Feby 28th. 1821.



45. THOMAS ROWLANDSON
ACKERMANN'S REPOSITORY OF ARTS, 101 STRAND, 1809

Etching, engraving, aquatint, hand coloring
 Paper: 5 5/8 x 9 1/4 in. (14.3 x 23.5 cm)
 Inscriptions: for N^o. 1 Jan^r. 1809
 Pugin & Rowlandson del.



46. THOMAS ROWLANDSON
PALATABLE PHYSIC, c. 1810

Etching, engraving, hand coloring
 Paper: 9 x 13 in. (23.0 x 33.0 cm)
 Inscriptions: Palatable Physic / London Publishing Company



47. THOMAS ROWLANDSON
BUG BREEDERS IN THE DOG DAYS., 1812

Etching, hand coloring
 Paper: 14 1/8 x 15 3/8 in. (35.8 x 39.0 cm)
 Plate: 10 3/8 x 12 3/8 in. (27.3 x 31.4 cm)
 Inscriptions: Pub.^d April 4.th 1812 by J. Rowlandson N^o 1
 James S^r. Adelphi
 Now the Weather's sultry grown / Sweating late and early /
 Better far too lay alone /
 Oh we Swelter rarely—Sweating here Sweating there



48. THOMAS ROWLANDSON
*MATRIMONIAL COMFORTS: Sketch 5.
 KILLING with KINDNESS, 1799*

Etching, hand coloring
 Paper: 8 1/8 x 6 7/8 in. (20.5 x 17.4 cm)
 Inscriptions: Woodward Del. Pub.^d by R. Akerman N^o 101
 Strand Etched by Rowlandson



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