Reading Gossip in Early Eighteenth-Century England

Nicola Parsons

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Introduction: Queen Anne's Bounty

> Historians have recently attempted to revalue the character of Queen Anne, and have even compared her to her predecessor, Queen Elizabeth. But there is some difficulty in fashioning a heroic figure out of this stout, gouty, gluttonous little woman with her dull husband and frequent miscarriages. Her perpetual card-playing, her gambling, her love of tittle-tattle, her schoolgirlish 'crushes' [. . .] were harmless habits enough. The essential fact about her was that she was every inch a Stuart, with most of the Stuart faults.
>
> Maurice Ashley, *Marlborough*, 1939

Maurice Ashley's decisive dismissal of Queen Anne's character and career is typical of the treatment the last of the Stuart monarchs has received from historians.[1] According to Ashley and other like-minded scholars, Anne was hopelessly ordinary: a dim-witted woman who preferred trivial pastimes to the important task of governing the nation. Contemporary assessments are all but united with eighteenth-century accounts, which judge Anne as lacking the critical acumen and the diplomatic skills to govern her people, and suggest she had to be managed by her advisors who guided her through the diplomatic, military, and domestic challenges of her reign. Consequently, the queen becomes little more than a cipher: the successes of her reign are ascribed routinely to the wisdom of those men who occupied high office, while the influence of her ladies-in-waiting – Anne's 'crushes', Abigail Masham and Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough – shadows this public narrative. Although Edward Gregg's definitive biography of Anne and Robert Bucholz's study of her court have revised this picture, demonstrating that the queen was deeply and effectively engaged in the business

of government,[2] the earlier understanding of Anne continues to exert explanatory power. Christopher Hibbert recently described Anne as a 'simple woman', 'no more a naturally imposing woman than she was a clever one', while Toni Bowers argues that within her own reign, 'Anne's status as an outsider is certain.'[3]

Not only is Anne marginalised by traditional accounts of her rule, but her reign itself is also elided in histories of the eighteenth century. This disregard is partly the result of historical happenstance. Anne's twelve years on the throne were preceded by the destruction of the principles of hereditary monarchy necessary for William III to assume the crown in 1688, and the institution of new principles of governance with the accession of Anne's successor, George I, the first of the Hanoverians. As such, her reign is occluded by scholars whose investigations are governed by the teleological principles of Whig history that treats the past as if it were an irrevocable progression towards the present moment. Given the diplomatic, military, and legislative successes of Anne's reign, this disregard is remarkable. Major domestic achievements of her reign include the Union of England and Scotland in 1707 and, most importantly, the resolution of debates over the respective roles of the crown and parliament in governing the nation through Anne's public commitment to the Hanoverian settlement. It was also during her reign that the troubling issue of England's place in Europe was resolved: under the command of John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough, England waged successful wars in Europe that restored the balance of power in England's favour. As Edward Gregg, Anne's most recent biographer, has demonstrated, her reign proved 'the great watershed between the violence of the seventeenth century and the stability and prosperity of the eighteenth century.'[4]

The lack of critical attention given to Queen Anne's reign is even more remarkable when we consider that relations between the people, the government, and their monarch were rethought entirely during this period. Secrecy had been indispensable as a technology of power for Anne's Stuart forebears; its use was sanctified by the first of the Stuarts, James I, upon his accession to the English throne in 1603. James introduced to the English people the concept of the divine right of kings and, in tracts such as *Basilikon Doron* (1599), he theorised its implications. Crucial to this understanding of power was the *arcana imperii*, the body of state secrets sacred to the monarch – James referred to them as the 'secretest drifts of kingship' – that both animated and legitimised each royal decision concerning the state.[5] By the end of Anne's reign, the ideological assumptions underwriting this position had been

entirely renovated. Instead, the conduct of political matters was governed by an ideological imperative that they take place in public view. Voting, in both parliamentary ballots and public elections, was undertaken in public throughout the eighteenth century: to do so in secret was thought to compromise the public quality of the proceedings.[6] This practice provides a barometer of the public distrust of concealed activities, and demonstrates the radical reconceptualisation of the relationship between the crown, the people, and political power. Politics belonged to the commonwealth and not the crown, and forms of government existed in public. Publicity had been installed in place of secrecy as an organising political principle.

This book contends that Queen Anne's presence on the throne both enabled and necessitated the realignment of public and private. The title of this introduction – 'Queen Anne's Bounty' – originally referred to Anne's provision of financial support for poorer members of the clergy. I employ this phrase to describe the way in which Anne's presence on the throne encouraged the development of the communicative practices necessary to the public sphere, and to indicate that this legacy is just as enduring as any financial bounty. It is my aim in this book to contribute to the revisionist reading of Queen Anne and her reign by focusing on the cultural politics of this legacy.

The public sphere

The most influential explanation of the transition from politics governed by public secrecy to political openness is provided by Jürgen Habermas's theoretical category of the public sphere, formulated in *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1989).[7] The public sphere refers to the practice of citizens engaging in critical discussion of the operation of government. Despite the spatialising metaphor of the title in translation,[8] Habermas's focus on communication and judgement indicates that the public sphere should be understood not as a space but as a conglomeration of discursive practices. The term denotes a critical public of citizens before whom actions concerning the nation are performed and upon whose approval the legitimacy of these actions is contingent.

Under the absolutist model of government the public sphere replaced, there was no clear distinction between the public and the private realm. The public dimensions of power were embodied by the monarch and staged before the people – Habermas terms this 'representative publicity' – but the actual workings of power were screened from public

view.[9] The printing industry played a crucial role in initiating and furthering this transition from a spectator public, whose passive presence legitimises state events, to a public that critically evaluates and thus participates in these events. Significantly, Habermas argues that the literary public sphere – that is, the arena where citizens discussed the merits of published materials – provided the training ground for the public sphere in the political realm. For this reason, he maintains the importance of seeing the bourgeois public as a 'reading public'. The democratisation with which the new public is associated, then, is bound up with the expansion of reading.[10] In this model, secrecy is made identical with the body while publicity is associated with print and with readers.

Although the public acquired their critical skills through reading and debating printed materials, Habermas suggests the literary public and the public sphere were not congruent. In particular, he insists that women were excluded, both in fact and by law, from the operations of the political public sphere despite the significant role he accords them in the activities of the literary realm.[11] As other scholars have noted, public practices are saturated with the very protocols of gender identity to which they appear impervious: the universal subject is white, male, literate and propertied, although these traits go unmarked. Other subject positions – most crucially, in this national and historical context, that of the feminine – can only be acknowledged in public discourse as illegitimate because they represent particular, rather than general, interests.[12] It is no surprise that feminist scholars such Joan Landes have described the public sphere as 'essentially, and not just contingently masculine'.[13]

Women, however, were central to the symbolic economies of secrecy and disclosure. In this period, anxiety over women's participation in both the literary and political sphere, which had been building since the mid-seventeenth century, reached its zenith. As mistresses to a male monarch or favourites of a female queen, women were widely perceived to exert illicit power over political affairs. Images of women were used to figure and focus anxieties over what constituted legitimate influence in a landscape that was becoming increasingly democratic. The presence of women – of Anne and her ladies-in-waiting at parliamentary sittings, for example – was believed to thwart these processes, and court women began to signify an inappropriate fusion of public and private.

More particularly, responsibility for embodied, irrational communication was displaced onto women. The popular press used female characters to depict rhetorical styles, such as opinion or faction, that somatised political debate.[14] Femininity was construed as the 'extreme antithesis of the abstract principles of reason made law that were to

govern the public sphere. Femininity, in short, became radically incompatible with the new definition of polity'.[15] Court women in general, and the queen in particular, became extremely significant figures in debates over the separation between public and private.

The category of the public sphere has profoundly influenced a number of disciplines, including literary history and theory, since the translation of Habermas's work into English in 1989. Throughout his discussion, Habermas employs the public sphere as both a discursive category expressing a normative ideal and an historical phenomenon particular to the eighteenth century. Both of these senses have been equally influential. Scholars such as Nancy Fraser and Michael Warner have employed feminist and political theory to draw attention to the ideological principles on which the notion of the public sphere rests. More recent work on Habermas has taken a different approach, seeking to relocate the public sphere, either temporally or geographically, through empirical studies of literature or history.[16] All marshal convincing evidence in support of their contention that a public sphere can be identified in other locations, or as operating differently, than Habermas's account suggests. The sheer number of these studies has lead Brian Cowan to observe that 'like the ever rising middle class or the always separating masculine and feminine spheres, it seems that every era has its own public sphere. The term has become so fluid that with a little imagination it can be applied to almost any time and any place'.[17]

Michael McKeon has recently reinvigorated the field by recasting public and private as epistemological categories. Following Habermas, he argues that the hallmark of modernity is a radically reconfigured relationship between the public and the private: what was once a tacit distinction becomes an explicit and acknowledged separation. Modernity is here evoked as a long process of privatisation.[18] Literary history is just one of the many disciplines that McKeon draws on in tracing the public and private through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; he also considers social and economic history, the architecture of domestic spaces, legal developments, and the history of science. McKeon's scheme refocuses our attention on the conceptual distinction between the public and the private and highlights the material spaces in which individuals experienced this distinction, but he does not treat these individuals as social actors who have the capacity to resist or intervene in the large-scale shift that he traces. As a result, McKeon overlooks the communicative strategies that were used to mediate between the categories of secrecy and openness and, later, publicity and privacy.

In this book, I treat the public sphere as an historical phenomenon and argue that the cultural conditions necessary to its development were established in Queen Anne's reign. The arguments that follow demonstrate how the public sphere emerged through the ways authors and booksellers, courtiers and parliamentarians, attempted to negotiate the tension between secrecy and openness that was engendered by Queen Anne's very presence on the throne. Through an examination of a series of literary texts, this book complicates Habermas's teleological account of the transition from secrecy to openness by demonstrating that somatic and discursive regimes of power were inter-implicated and that the normative value of publicity was generated by non-normative discourses such as gossip and scandal.

The reading public

Print and reading were vital to the public sphere. In an important reconsideration of Habermasian theory, Michael Warner argues that the public sphere can only be comprehended in relation to printed texts and their circulation. Drawing implicitly on Benedict Anderson's model of the nation as an imagined political community – where the novel and the newspaper provide the technical means of representing the nation to its members – Warner argues that the public sphere is identical with the semiotic environment created by the circulation of printed texts.[19] Two features of this semiotic environment are particularly necessary to the construction of a public. First, early printed texts, such as the pamphlet and the broadsheet, staged a debate before the public as the position of one text was countered by another. The assumption that each printed text is part of a conversation – what David Zaret refers to as the 'dialogic nature' of print culture[20] – functions as proof of the public's existence. Secondly, the very fact that printed texts were produced mechanically effaced the link with the individual identity of its author. This provided a clear means of distinguishing between personal correspondence and public communication and supplied a seeming guarantee that the content of printed texts was not subjective.[21]

Importantly, Warner erases the artificial distinction Habermas draws between the literary and public sphere in the political realm. Instead, Warner contends that the capacity of the public to engage with political issues finds an exact counterpart in the characteristics of private reading acts:

> All of the verbs for public agency are verbs for private reading, transposed upward to the aggregate of readers. Readers may scrutinise, ask, reject, decide, judge, and so on. Publics can do exactly these things. And nothing else. Publics – unlike mobs or crowds – are incapable of any activity that cannot be expressed through such a verb. Activities of reading that do not fit the ideology of reading as silent, private, replicable, decoding – curling up, mumbling, fantasising, gesticulating, ventriloquising, writing marginalia, and so on – also find no counterparts in public agency.[22]

This argument emphasises an aspect of the public sphere that is too little understood: its existence depends on a certain understanding of the book and the reading act that brings that book to life.

This understanding of print and the reading practices, implicit in the idea of the public sphere, is termed 'print culture' by Elizabeth Eisenstein in her influential work *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979).[23] Eisenstein argues that the widespread adoption of printing technology revolutionised the public status and organisation of knowledge, and made possible the emergence of the democratic institutions of liberal society.[24] This argument, however, suggests print technology has an immanent logic, which then determines intellectual, cultural and economic practices. Arguing against the technological determinism underwriting this account, Michael Warner and Adrian Johns contend that the academic field of print culture needs to be reconfigured to take account of the cultural environment into which print was introduced, the competing imperatives of the booksellers who used the technology, and of the government bodies that sought to regulate its operations.[25] As Roger Chartier highlights, conventional accounts of print culture erase the presence of the reader, by assuming each text has a transparent meaning to which the reader is subjugated.[26] In contrast to this understanding of reading as an activity already inscribed in the text, Chartier argues, along with Michel de Certeau, that reading is an active and creative process.[27] In the English context, Steven Zwicker and Kevin Sharpe extend this work by demonstrating the many possibilities for reading a text.[28] Their respective work establishes that the image of the privatised reader, engaged in a solitary act of consumption, was neither the only form of reading available nor, indeed, the dominant practice in early eighteenth century England. I aim to extend these arguments by demonstrating how print, politics, and public reading practices were mutually constitutive.

Reading gossip

My book begins by re-reading Queen Anne's reign in order to demonstrate its importance in understanding the evolution of literature and politics over the course of the eighteenth century. Chapter 1 argues that Anne's presence on the throne enabled and necessitated the realignment of secrecy and publicity required by the public sphere. The chapter demonstrates that Anne mediated the competing claims of the somatic model of power provided by her Stuart forebears, and the expectations of discursivity that had been institutionalised along with the constitutional monarchy, by way of gossip. Focusing first on the scandals of the body that attended Anne's reign, and then on the cultural and political location of print publication, this chapter shows how gossip offered a way of negotiating between the demands of secrecy and openness. In contrast to the conventional interpretation of gossip advanced by Patricia Meyer Spacks, who understands it as a type of communication that occurs among intimate groups in private spaces and is engaged in precisely because such groups are excluded from public events,[29] I argue that, in this period, gossip was a political instrument that had crucial public effects. Gossip is a means of communication that does not erase the body; rather it materialises it in different ways and in other locations. In so doing, it provides a way to bring secrecy into print. Gossip not only mediates between somatic and discursive modes of representation in this way, but, through its reification in printed genres such as the secret history, it also provides a crucial instance of the imbrication of literature and politics.

The publication of the *New Atalantis* in 1709 was a defining moment in the political and cultural life of early eighteenth-century England. It was also an important moment in the public life of gossip. This secret history uncovers the purported sexual indiscretions of contemporary figures associated with the Whig Junto that had administered the state since the revolution of 1688. It exposes these seemingly private indiscretions as a way of providing its readership with an index to the public, or political, corruption of those involved, and thus with a set of cues as to how to vote in the upcoming election. The arrest on charges of seditious libel of Delarivier Manley, the *Atalantis*'s author, only served to intensify the text's effects: her arrest supplied readers with an incontrovertible sign that the *Atalantis* did indeed contain incendiary political material. It is no surprise, then, that the text went on to sell in enormous numbers, and was read by denizens of the court as well as the coffeehouse. The *New Atalantis* was contested in print by authors who took issue with

its political vision. It was also referenced by authors who wrote on other subjects altogether, but who sought to capitalise on Manley's success by claiming kinship through titles that echoed her earlier text.

Historians have credited Manley's text with a wide range of political and cultural effects, including the fall of the Whig oligarchy in the elections held the year following its publication. This book extends the list of the *New Atalantis*'s effects. It argues that the *New Atalantis* was not just a significant event or example, but that it became an important cultural signifier of the intersection of secrecy with publicity. As a trope, the atalantis was crucially malleable: the relation it suggested between secrecy and publicity could be re-figured by a series of authors and publishers to support competing political claims. This is particularly the case because the genre of Manley's original text, the secret history, relies upon its readers to decode the text and make its secrets legible. This not only foregrounds the role of the reader in establishing the relation between secrecy and publicity but, as my discussion of the *New Atalantis* in Chapter 2 demonstrates, emphasises that this act of interpretation can follow multiple paths. The atalantis trope is crucial, this book argues, because it prompted authors and publishers to address their readers directly and to grapple with issues of how their texts would be interpreted. In order to make these arguments, Chapter 2 offers a detailed reading of the publication of the *New Atalantis*. It examines how the *Atalantis* configured the relationship between the court and the public, between secrecy and publicity – and further how it was read and received.

Considering its multiple valences, it is not surprising the *Atalantis* was the subject of political contestation. Chapter 3 examines how this contest unfolded. The events that surrounded the trial of Doctor Sacheverell in 1709, the year that the *New Atalantis* was published, taught London the potential consequences of aligning the political and the reading public without paying sufficient attention to how the scope of that public's action might be delimited. It is this problematic Daniel Defoe addresses implicitly in his series of secret histories that focus on Robert Harley (one of Queen Anne's most prominent ministers) in order to justify his conduct in office. In these texts, the referent of the secret history is relocated. Unlike the *New Atalantis*, which always referred back to the real, the act of reference in Defoe's secret histories becomes a purely textual matter. The trope of gossip is elaborated from its material origins and becomes a *mise en abyme* designed to discipline its readers into a purely discursive engagement with political matters.

Chapter 4 continues the exploration of how the interpretative activities of readers were disciplined through a critical reading of two popular periodicals: the *Tatler* and the *Female Tatler*. Both serials use the devices of the secret history to provide fictionalised portraits of prominent public figures under feigned names. Although these portraits are designed to function as political propaganda, no keys are provided for the narratives in which they appear, and it seems they are directed at a broader readership. This suggests a transition from the nostalgic simulation of insider perspectives, to a recognition and cultivation of a broader audience for political information. In these periodicals, the gossip of the secret history metamorphoses into tattle, a communicative mode that has quite different consequences for the audience it aims at. Rather than suggesting a secret that lies at the heart of the text that its readers must uncover, tattle presumes that everyone shares the right to know. In the process, it shifts authority from the interpreter to the text to its teller and founds its authority on representations of women. Through a critical reading of both the *Tatler* and the *Female Tatler* focusing on each periodical's invocation of audience, this chapter shows how the trope of femininity was crucial to the way that tattle was used in the rhetorical formation of a reading and a political public.

In the five years immediately following the publication of Manley's *New Atalantis*, more than 20 per cent of new publications featured 'atalantis' in their titles.[30] Initially a significant number of these publications constituted a challenge to the political vision presented in Manley's secret history, but the word atalantis also began to be used to title collections of tales that had no such pretensions. Through an analysis of the respective careers of Edmund Curll and Jane Barker, Chapter 5 investigates the important shift in the political and literary marketplace indicated by the alteration in the generic register of the word 'atalantis'. Through a reading of Barker's three *Patchwork Screen* novels, this chapter demonstrates how the trope of gossip was refigured again to produce the central image of the literary culture of the long eighteenth century: that of the privatised female reader.

This book argues that the role of the print marketplace in the separation of secrecy and openness, and in the codification of public and private, was a compromised one, and the position of the reader in this contested field was crucial to negotiating the boundaries. Drawing together the discussion presented in the previous chapters, this book concludes by suggesting how understanding the relationship between the reader, the state, and printed texts revises our conception of later printed genres including the novel.

1
Gossip and Government: Deciphering the Body of the State

> Prior to the operations of the law, secrecy and publicity are united terms and fluid categories.
>
> Miranda Burgess, 'Bearing Witness'

On 23 April 1702, Queen Anne was crowned at Westminster Abbey. Her coronation coincided, as had that of William III and Mary II before her, with the day commemorating St George, the patron saint of England. Every detail of the ceremony was dictated by custom and followed strict protocols. Anne's entry into the abbey was heralded by a grand procession of peers of the realm, who were precisely attired and strictly arrayed so as to signify their rank. Like her forebears, Anne entered the abbey under a canopy of gold tissue held aloft by eight barons and proceeded to the altar, where she took the coronation oath, received the symbols of her new station, and was anointed. Unlike her predecessors, however, Anne was unable to make the ceremonial journey from the palace at St James to Westminster on foot: an attack of the gout had rendered her lame and so she was carried to the abbey in an elbow-chair borne by four yeomen of the guards. In an attempt to preserve the sense of occasion, this chair had been specially designed so that her robes could drape over the back and be carried, as custom dictated, by her female attendants. Anne managed to walk into the abbey unaided but, as an observer noted, she faltered at the ceremony's most important moment by stumbling when approached the altar to be anointed.[1]

The failings of Anne's body compromised the image of regality that the coronation ceremony was designed to project. This situation worsened, as did her health, over the course of her reign: within a year of her coronation she was virtually unable to walk, while two years later her

eyesight was so poor she was unable to sign her name. Although Anne's infirmities did not preclude her undertaking royal progresses or prevent her attending more cabinet meetings than any other monarch in British history,[2] it did detract from the public perception of her power. The implications of her physical failings are highlighted by Sir John Clerk's recollection of a court visit made in 1706. Anne was suffering from gout and, Clerk writes, 'everything about her was much in the same disorder as about the meanest of her subjects. Her face, which was red and spotted, was rendered something frightful by her negligent dress, and the foot affected was tied up with a pultis and some nasty bandages'. He continues: 'I was much affected at this sight [...] what are you, poor mean Mortal, thought I, who talks in the style of a Sovereign? Nature seems to be inverted when a poor infirm Woman becomes one of the Rulers of the World.'[3] In the eyes of many Anne's body was unable to support the idea of embodied power customarily associated with the monarch.

These vignettes highlight the fraught position Anne occupied as the last of the Stuart monarchs. As the second daughter born to James II and his first wife, Anne Hyde, her hereditary claim to the throne was strong and unambiguous. In fact, she was the first monarch since Elizabeth I who could claim – as she did in her maiden speech to both houses of parliament and on the medal struck to commemorate her accession – that, by virtue of both her ancestry and upbringing, she was 'entirely English'.[4] But Anne's entitlement to the throne was not only hereditary, it was also guaranteed by two successive acts of parliament, the Declaration of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701), which nominated her as the successor to the throne following William's death. As a result, she had a double right to the throne that was enjoyed by none of her immediate predecessors or successors.

Anne drew equally on these two legacies in exercising and representing her power. She was wary of public claims that her position on the throne was based on divine right – a claim, she is said to have remarked, that was 'unfit to be given to anybody'.[5] Yet, in spite of this, Anne also revived the practice of touching for scrofula and other diseases, a custom that was based on a belief in the mystically curative powers of the royal touch and was used by previous monarchs to demonstrate the divine origins of their power. These ceremonies, held twice weekly during the court season, were enormously popular and attracted an audience of thousands, including those who travelled from the provinces especially for the occasion.[6] Effectively, these ceremonies provided Anne with a public stage on which she enacted the divine right that she disavowed

on other occasions. They suggest Anne located her power in her body as much as she did in the legislature.

Historians conventionally view Anne's reign as a contradiction and argue that each of her entitlements to the throne undermined the other, thus compromising her position as regnant queen.[7] In contrast to these conventional interpretations, this chapter argues that Anne skilfully negotiated between her two entitlements to the throne, and that this negotiation is the key to understanding the successes and legacies of her reign.

Queen Anne's Janus face: somatic and discursive models of power

Queen Anne was England's first sole regnant queen in almost a century.[8] Her predecessor Elizabeth I was adept at deploying both the masculine symbols associated with her office as monarch and the cultural codes of romance associated with her femininity in order to shore up her power and safeguard her position on the throne. Her famous declaration to the troops assembled at Tilbury to repel the anticipated invasion of the Spanish Armada – 'I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too'[9] – illustrates her strategic conflation of masculinity and femininity. Anne borrowed elements of Elizabeth's iconography in the opening years of her own reign: the robes she wore on the occasion of her first address to parliament were carefully modelled on those worn by Elizabeth in a well-known portrait and, by the end of her first year on the throne, Anne had adopted Elizabeth's motto, *semper eadem* (always the same) as her own. These recycled elements were welcomed by the English public as they corresponded with customary ways of representing female power. Indeed, Anne's subjects anticipated the androgynous symbols that had characterised Elizabeth's reign: during her first royal progress, a few short months after her coronation, she was greeted at Bath by an assembly of two hundred virgins who were 'richly attired, many of them like *Amazons*, with Bows and Arrows, and others with gilt Sceptres and other Ensigns of the Regalia in their hands'.[10]

Although Anne drew on elements of Elizabeth's androgynous iconography at the outset of her reign, she chose a different means of symbolically conveying her power to the public over its course. While Elizabeth used masculine and feminine imagery in equal measure, Anne's own iconography emphasised her femininity. The symbolic weight she accorded to her gender continued a practice that was

initiated more than a decade earlier while she was Princess of Denmark. From the time of James II's accession to the throne in 1685, Anne increasingly became the focus of those who were dissatisfied with the Catholicism of her father and his young wife. In 1688, a foreign visitor to the court commented that Anne increasingly affected 'both in public and in private, to show herself hostile to it [the Catholic faith], and to be the most zealous of Protestants, with whom she is gaining the greatest power and credit'.[11] It was her reproductive potential in particular that became the hope of Protestant England and thus a political force to be reckoned with. Popular representations of Anne focused on her capacity to mother children and, according to Abel Boyer, she was famous at the end of the seventeenth century as the 'teeming Princess of Denmark'.[12]

Anne was aware of the symbolic weight carried by her maternal body: the birth of a son would mean that a protestant succession would be secured and prevent the crown from passing to the German House of Hanover. Despite enduring seventeen pregnancies before she became queen, including one of twins, only one of Anne's children lived past infancy. This child, William Duke of Gloucester, was constantly ill and died two years before Anne assumed the throne, shortly after his own eleventh birthday. Recent assessments of evidence documenting Anne's pregnancies, including the burial records of her children, suggest there were at least two episodes of pseudocyesis (more commonly known as 'phantom pregnancy') among her seventeen pregnancies.[13] This provides a clear physiological sign of how acutely Anne felt the imperative to give birth.

Anne made her maternal potential the symbolic centrepiece of her coronation ceremony. The text for the service was drawn from Isaiah, 'Kings shall be thy nursing Fathers, and Queens thy nursing Mothers' (49:23). This was an unusual choice: in likening the power of the monarch to the nurturing power of a parent, the text made a feature of Anne's reproductive body that had so emphatically failed to produce an heir. Instead of suggesting that Anne, as Elizabeth had been before her, was masculinised by virtue of the power she wielded, these lines feminised royal power by representing it as a maternal and nutritive force. Anne's coronation ceremony presented her public power as a kind of symbolic maternity: through it, she effectively became the 'nursing mother' of the entire kingdom.[14]

Elizabeth's public representations had also emphasised the femininity of her body, but the significance attached to that body was very different. Elizabeth's body was famously virgin: she dismissed the prospect of matrimony in favour of her queenship, a kind of spiritual marriage

to her people. The iconography of her reign established a close identification between her body and that of the nation. As the Virgin Queen, Elizabeth embodied the inviolability of England and its borders. The Ditchley portrait, for example, depicts Elizabeth dressed in white and adorned with strands of knotted pearls that emblematise her virginity, with her feet planted on the island of England. Both the Queen and the nation are bodies that cannot be entered. As Queen, Anne's body did not suggest inviolability as Elizabeth's had. Far from being hermetically sealed like that of the Virgin Queen, Anne's body was continually engaged in the task of bringing forth children. It was, in other words, perpetually dilated. Although her childbearing years were behind her when she acceded the throne, Anne's coronation ceremony effectively replaced her physical maternity with its symbolic counterpart. It installed an image of Anne's generative and unbounded body as an emblem of her power.

The body of the monarch is central to theoretical accounts of royal power. Jürgen Habermas argues that the ideology and form of democratic government developed in eighteenth-century England in opposition to the autocratic power embodied by the monarch. Prior to the development of a public sphere, Habermas argues that there were no institutions or spaces that could properly be considered public, and so 'a public sphere in the sense of a separate realm distinguished from the private realm cannot be shown to have existed'.[15] However, this is not to say that political authority and power were not publicly figured. They were represented or, more precisely, embodied by the monarch such that the means and ability to represent power publicly were inseparable from his or her physical presence. The public representation of power was something like a status symbol, made visible in personal attributes such as insignia, dress, stance and demeanour. Habermas terms this mode of communicating political power and authority to the people 'representative publicity'. The audience who witnessed these displays of social and political power was essential to the function of representative publicity. They played no role in its performance – this was not a sphere of political communication – but acted as necessary witnesses and provided an audience for its display. The monarch embodied the state and represented that power before, rather than for, the people.[16]

Habermas's observations regarding the public dimension of power in early modern societies parallel Ernst Kantorowicz's theorisation of the royal body and its signifying capacity. Kantorowicz demonstrates that, within England, the monarch was imagined to possess two bodies: a natural body, subject to infirmity and human passions, and a body

politic that represented the spiritual, political, and dynastic elements of the monarchy. He argues that the successful performance of monarchical authority depended on ceremonies and rituals that suppressed the monarch's human fallibility.[17] However, as David Starkey has shown, it was only within the law that the monarch's body was used to symbolise the private and transitory aspects of kingship. On all other occasions, the royal body provided the 'master symbol' of the divine monarchy as the metaphorical body politic was reified through the material body of the monarch.[18] The special status accorded to the monarch's body natural is indicated by the honour attending the court offices that ministered to its needs. The most prestigious position in the court was that of the groom of the stole, whose chief responsibility was keeping the royal close stool and providing attendance when the monarch made use of it.[19] Far from erasing the body natural from the symbolic economy of the state, the fiction of the monarch's two bodies accorded it greater weight.

The body of the monarch incarnated the *arcana imperii*, or the corpus of state secrets that lay at the heart of the exercise of royal authority. James I referred to the *arcana imperii* as 'the deepest mysteries of monarchy and political government that belong to the persons or State of Kings and Princes, that are gods upon Earth'.[20] As this description makes clear, the existence of the *arcana imperii* was authorised through theological parallels. For example, in attempting to reconcile himself to Charles I's recent flight from Oxford incognito, the royalist poet Henry Vaughan meditated on the levels of disguise that the king ordinarily embodied, writing that the royal 'mysterie's so deep, / Like *Esdras* books, the vulgar must not see't.'[21] John Cleveland described the king in a similar manner:

> Methinks in this your dark mysterious dress
> I see the Gospel couched in parables.
> At my next view my purblind fancy ripes
> And shows Religion in its dusky types;
> Such a text royal, so obscure a shade
> Was Solomon in Proverbs all arrayed.[22]

The king embodies sacred mystery; he is a hieroglyph, or a parable. A similar image of the kingship is evident in later texts, such as Robert Filmer's defense of the hereditary monarchy, *Patriarcha* (1680). Read together, these texts suggest that the monarch represents and communicates the *arcana imperii*: it is literally secrecy that is being made public. In symbolising secrecy, the royal body united the corporeal and metaphysical aspects of kingship.

The fact that the doctrine of the two bodies became entrenched and acquired particular iconographical power in England during Elizabeth's reign suggests that its utility has something particular to do with gender. Elizabeth's strategic emphasis on the spiritual or mystical body of the monarchy served to guard against the latent threat posed by her sexuality, as well as challenging the limitations that would otherwise be imposed by her gender. It also enabled Elizabeth to convert her femininity into a metaphysical sign: her declarations of virginity and her refusal to marry transformed her individual body into an icon.[23] However, her insistence on a strict separation of her position as queen from her status as a woman deliberately diminished the traditional source of royal female power, the ability to bodily engender the political state. By citing her public role as the reason for excluding the possibility of marriage and motherhood, Elizabeth aimed to relocate royal pregnancy to the private realm of women. This strategic move was entirely successful in Elizabeth's case as it enabled her to abstract her power from her body, but created particular problems for Anne, a perpetually pregnant queen. Pregnancy draws attention to the materiality of the royal body, and represents a conflict between bodily secrecy and the demands of dilation.

The events surrounding the birth of a son to James II and his second wife, Mary of Modena, drew particular attention to the body of the pregnant queen as the site for the conflict between somatised power and the demands of publicity. These events are known as the 'warming-pan scandal' in reference to the controversy that ensued. In January 1688, it was announced that Mary, James II's Catholic queen, was pregnant. There was immediate speculation that the pregnancy was a hoax, part of a plot designed to ensure a Catholic heir to England's throne. When it was announced that the queen had indeed given birth to a son, these speculations reached fever pitch. It was widely rumoured that the Prince of Wales was not the biological child of the royal couple, that the birth had been pretended and the child smuggled into the royal chamber in a warming pan. These rumours took hold in spite of the fact that the birth took place before a large audience: the entire Privy Council was in attendance, only separated from the labouring queen by the bed's drawn curtains.[24]

Public speculation as to the truth of the events was such that James II was forced to respond during a session of the Privy Council in October 1688. The evidence supplied during this session was immediately subject to public suspicion and the testimony of the king's inner circle and the midwives who attended the queen was considered unreliable. These

events seemed to confirm the public suspicion that the public aspect and the private reality of the royal body might contradict each other, particularly as they were instantiated by the reproductive body of the female queen.

Under the pressure of this intense interest in how the birth was witnessed, the analogy of the king's two bodies was pushed to its breaking point.[25] According to popular belief, Mary's physical body had falsely signified the birth of a legitimate heir while, in reality, gestating a conspiracy that would advance the private interests of the royal couple. Crucially, Mary's 'pretended bigness' was one of the central points in William III's Declaration of Reasons (1688), a document that concentrates on the deceptions perpetrated by the Stuart monarchs and thematises the idea that the royal body can be deceptive. It declares: 'we ourselves, [and] all the good subjects of those kingdoms, do vehemently suspect that the Prince of Wales was not born by the Queen'.[26] In opposition to the potential duplicity of kings and queens, the documents that attended the Revolution self-consciously formulate print as a more transparent and honest means of representing the nation.

The warming-pan scandal did more than focus attention on the fraught position occupied by the generative royal body in public discourse: it also provided women with a way into that discourse. The midwives and bedchamber women who had attended the queen during her labour provided crucial testimony as to the events of the birth, while women more generally were accorded a special privilege to speak on this matter by virtue of their gender. The warming-pan scandal, as Rachel Weil explains, is an important moment in early modern political culture because it 'made women both the subjects and the objects of political discourse'.[27]

Historians agree that Anne played a decisive role in turning the events surrounding the birth of the Prince of Wales into a scandal. Although she did not openly declare a position, Anne helped undermine the veracity of the queen's account by circulating rumour and gossip. She kept her sister Mary, then resident in Holland, apprised of events through regular letters. In March 1688, Anne reported that: '[the queen's] being so positive it will be a son, and the principles of that religion being such, that they will stick at nothing, be it never so wicked, if it will promote their interest, give some cause to fear there may be foul play indeed'.[28] In a later letter she avowed: 'nobody will be convinced it is her child except it prove a daughter. For my part, I declare I shall not, except I see the child and she parted'.[29] Anne, however, did not see the 'child and she parted' – she was conveniently absent from the court,

having travelled to Bath on her doctor's orders.[30] Similarly, although Anne's letters imply that the queen's refusal to let her feel her belly or see her undressed were suspicious, she later admitted that the queen had not permitted such liberties during any of her pregnancies. As Edward Gregg has argued, it is clear that Anne 'was the major perpetrator, if not the originator' of the rumours that the queen's pregnancy was false.[31]

In a sense, Anne took up the possibilities that were suggested by the intersection of secrecy and publicity in the royal lying-in chamber by adopting the position of a gossip. The speculations surrounding Mary of Modena's pregnancy, and the public meeting of the Privy Council that was convened in response to these rumours, conferred on gossip a new national prominence and drew attention to its long association with women. Although the word originally designated a godparent of either sex, the term has always been more usually employed in reference to women rather than men. In the seventeenth century, the word 'gossip' began to be used to refer exclusively to the women present at a lying in, and so was associated with an exclusively female world to which men were denied access.[32] A popular adage held that it was easier to dam up the arches of London Bridge than to stop gossips talking during a confinement.[33] Here, gossip is a kind of discursive dilation that supplements and accompanies the physiological dilation of the labouring mother. It is copious conversation that circulates endlessly, expanding its scope, deferring its ending, and refusing to draw conclusions.

Publicising secrets: gossip and scandal

Anne's bedchamber, like the lying-in chamber of a labouring woman, was an exclusively female world to which men were denied access. Custom and propriety prevented men from holding positions as Anne's personal servants, and so her bedchamber was staffed wholly by women. Her continual ill health meant she spent a large amount of time in the bedchamber, and often required the assistance of her ladies-in-waiting to accomplish such minor activities as rising from her seat or crossing the room. The virtual segregation from male courtiers that was a consequence of ill health was intensified by Anne's excessive sense of propriety. She was 'so exact an observer of forms', wrote Swift, 'that she seemed to have made it her study'.[34] As a result, Anne was surrounded and guarded by her female attendants.

The influence of Anne's bedchamber women – in particular her succession of favourites – assumed monstrous proportions in the minds of contemporaries. Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough, who

served as Anne's first lady of the bedchamber and groom of the stole, was thought to wield absolute power over the queen. Sarah's fall from the queen's favour and loss of office in 1711 was interpreted variously depending on the political orientation of the observer. Tories believed this was just reward for Sarah's imperious behaviour, while those who shared her politics were adamant she had been turned out of office due to the ascendancy of Abigail Masham, Anne's bedchamber woman and new favourite. A contemporary broadside suggested that Masham was the 'whirlwind that turns us about, / One whiff of whose breath can bring in or put out'. The Duke of Shrewsbury agreed with this sentiment, supposing that Abigail 'could make the queen stand upon her head if she chose'.[35] Later it was Elizabeth Seymour, the Duchess of Somerset and Sarah's successor to the post of groom of the stole, who was assumed to direct Anne's decisions. Jonathan Swift, for example, attributed Anne's wavering during the peace crisis of 1710 and 1711 to Somerset's force, writing that the Queen's indecision was 'all your d – d Duchess of Somerset's doings'.[36]

Contemporaries supposed that these female favourites exercised limitless power over the queen and, through her, the disposition of public events. However, of the three favourites, it was only Sarah who possessed real power as, by virtue of her position as groom of the stole, she exerted some influence over the allocation of household offices. But even this power was not without boundaries. Sarah later confessed to Gilbert Burnet that her attempts to get 'honest men into the service' were often fruitless: 'I never, or very rarely, succeeded in any endeavour of this kind, till the ministers themselves came into it at last.'[37] Even Robert Harley, who relied on Abigail Masham to communicate with the queen following his loss of office in 1708, bluntly reminded her that her power to effect change within the court was also circumscribed: 'You cannot set any one up; you can pull any one downe.'[38] All of Anne's favourites – the Duchess of Marlborough, Abigail Masham, and the Duchess of Somerset – wielded considerably less power than their contemporaries believed. However, their significance lies precisely in the imagined extent of their influence.

As a woman, Anne was imagined to be particularly susceptible to the whisperings of other women. Anne was conscious of this, and protested, 'Everything I say is imputed either to partiality, or being imposed upon by knaves and fools.'[39] That the spectre of female influence loomed so large was partly a result of lessons the public learnt from previous reigns. Charles II was thought unduly influenced by his succession of mistresses, while his brother, James II, was believed to be in thrall to

his Catholic wife, Mary of Modena. These relationships were read as a sign that the monarch indulged his personal desires to the dereliction of his duties and allowed the needs of his personal body to oppress those of the body politic. It also corresponds with contemporary prejudices regarding the frailties of women. Like each of the relationships between her Stuart predecessors and their respective favourites, the attachment between Anne and her favourites was also believed to have a sexual dimension.

Sarah famously commented that the Queen had 'noe inclination for any but one's own sex'.[40] This allegation recurred in popular representations of Anne's relationship with Masham. Several ballads circulating in 1708 suggested the substance of the relationship lay in 'dark Deeds at Night'.[41] Sarah was a particularly keen proponent of this interpretation: she was closely involved in the composition of the aforementioned ballads and ensured their wide dissemination. She wrote to Sarah Cowper, the mother of the Lord Chancellor, promising to sing the 'two ballads of the Battle of Abigail' when next she was in Hertfordshire.[42] Furthermore, Sarah also drew the existence of these two ballads to the attention of the queen. Her letter, while ostensibly condemning the existence of these ballads, also offers a re-framed interpretation of the significance of Anne's relationship with her chambermaid. This relationship is both extremely secret – its substance lies, as Sarah is quick to recall, in 'dark deeds at night' – and extremely public. Sarah begs Anne to remember:

> how many affronts King Charles had, that was a man, upon accounts of the Duchess of Portsmouth; and I think I need not say a great deal to shew how much worse it is for your Majesty, whose character has been so different from his, to be put in print and brought upon the stage perpetually for one in Abigail's post.[43]

The imputation of lesbianism between Anne and her favourites extended the meanings that attached to the rumoured affairs of her father and uncle. Sexual relationships between women were associated with the *ancien régime* and with Catholicism – one contemporary pamphlet suggests this 'Female Vice' is particular to France where 'young Ladies are that Way debauch'd in their *Nunnery* Education'.[44] The suggestion that Anne maintained lesbian relationships with her favourites was a way of indicating that her personal body was beginning to oppress the body politic.

The intimate relationship between Anne and each of her respective favourites was blazoned on the body of each woman. Sarah and then

Elizabeth Seymour each wore a gold key at their waists that symbolised their position as groom of the stole, the principal office of the bedchamber; while Abigail, who never held high office, wore a gold etui, a gift from Anne engraved with the message 'Masham, from her Lovin' Dux' at her waist.[45] These items functioned as worn testimony of the intimacy between Anne and these three women, and worked to publicise the private nature of each connection. More importantly, these speculations reveal the extent to which the secret of royal power was reconceptualised. In stark contrast to the notions of metaphysical secrecy that her forebears had drawn upon with varying degrees of success, the secrecy of Anne's court was sexualised, somatised, and feminised. This meant that the secret of her power was simultaneously public and private: screened from public view, yet furtively publicised through the operation of gossip.

Gossip not only circulated around Anne, it was also crucial to the management of her power. Anne circumvented the isolation imposed by her ill health by leaking information regarding her position on domestic and international affairs, and used gossip gleaned by her servants to maintain an overview of her government and ministers. The backstairs to her privy chambers provided a covert passage that the queen used to bring members of both parties into her presence for secret meetings. These conversations allowed Anne to maintain personal contact with the Tories and Whigs throughout her reign, and enabled her to gather information regarding developments that the other party might prefer to conceal. Robert Harley made frequent use of the backstairs and, by these means, was able to offer counsel to the queen during the short period in which he was deprived of office. The Duchess of Marlborough's outrage at these meetings, sparked by her suspicions they were facilitated by Abigail Masham, have made these the most notorious examples, but Anne conducted similarly secret meetings with William Cowper, John Somers and Gilbert Burnet in the same period.[46] Anne was also in the habit of using her personal servants as political instruments: she drew upon information gleaned by her servants and used them as a means of disseminating her opinions on parliamentary issues. Employing servants as spokespeople carried significant advantage, as it allowed the queen to influence votes on issues over which there was heated debate without exposing her own position directly. Further, this course of action often allowed her to act independently of her ministry. For instance, in the final months of her reign, Anne directed her personal physician, Sir David Hamilton, to initiate a secret correspondence and series of meeting with the Elector himself. These meetings

allowed her to circumvent the ministry's equivocation over the succession. By these means, Anne was able to exert considerable control over the disposition of public affairs.

Gossip provided Anne with a way to negotiate between the secrecy and spectacle associated with her position as the last Stuart, and the openness attendant on her position as constitutional monarch. It also provided her subjects with a powerful political instrument. Nowhere is this more evident than in the dynamics of print publication and reading.

Paper crowns: print, law and royal authority

Print was crucial to the Glorious Revolution. William III had invaded England armed with a printing press and, almost immediately upon landing, he began to disseminate propaganda designed to garner support for his actions. The newly discursive nature of royal power suggested by this propaganda was formalised by the legal documents that created William as the King of England. The Declaration of Rights (1689) and the Act of Settlement (1701) declared powers customarily exercised by the king to be illegal and maintained that his actions were subject to the laws of the nation. These documents, necessary to make William the king of England, fundamentally altered the character of kingship. They ensured that the power of the crown was now constituted, exercised, and made visible through legal documents, instead of through the mystified body of the monarch. A new method of political representation had arisen along with a new discursive system that sought to control it.

Anne did not make use of the representative possibilities offered by the press. In fact, one of her first official acts following her accession to the throne was to issue a proclamation for restraining the printing and dissemination of false news.[47] In this document Anne not only encourages the judiciary to implement the existing laws concerning the press but also to extend their application to forms of writing not specified in the statute. She remained dissatisfied with the regulation of the press throughout her reign, and repeatedly urged the House of Lords and the House of Commons to introduce legislation that would bring its output under tighter control. However, it was during her reign and under the direction of her chief minister and personal favourite that freedom of the press became an entrenched doctrine.

The public character of a printed text is usually taken for granted. So much is this the case, that it is often assumed that print automatically confers a public status upon the text: to publish is to simultaneously

make public and to print. This assumption was first articulated by Elizabeth Eisenstein in *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979), the work that formulated 'print culture' as an area of academic research. Through her discussion of the power of print to effect social change – and particularly of its role in the development of enlightenment ideas – the assumption that print has a fundamentally public character was instituted as one of the principles of this field of study. Eisenstein argues that the development of print technology was motivated by the notion that 'valuable data could be preserved best by being made public, rather than being kept secret'.[48] Throughout her argument, she implies that the meanings attached to printing a document are always the same. This understanding of print also underpins Habermas's model of the public sphere. Like Eisenstein, Habermas assumes that printed texts are public documents by definition. He sets the public character of print against the secrecy and silences of the absolutist monarch, and he considers the development of print technology to be a harbinger of democratic openness. These arguments suggest that printing stands outside history and that its culture is placeless and timeless.[49]

That neither printed texts, nor printing technology, have an intrinsic identity is highlighted by a history of the technology published shortly after Charles II was restored to the English throne. In *The Original and Growth of Printing* (1660), Richard Atkyns attempts to demonstrate that printing is both a technology of kingship and the monarch's personal property.[50] He argues that William Caxton, the man conventionally credited with bringing the technology to England, did so as part of a larger operation that was initiated and financed by Henry VIII. The public and private dimensions of printing technology are immediately complicated by this narrative as the involvement of the king, a 'publick person and a publick purse', effectively privatises the technology. Consequently, Atkyns asserts that printing is an 'Antient and Hereditary Right of the CROWN'.[51] Through this revision to the history of printing, Atkyns endeavours to reconfigure its governing political culture and redefine its identity. Although Atkyns' own interests in this debate cannot be ignored – he had inherited a royal patent for printing law books and so his argument also supports his claim for the reinstatement of these privileges – his personal interest does not negate the influence of his contentions. As Adrian Johns has established, the alternative history of the printing press that Atkyns promulgated in these pamphlets became a 'key resource for arguments over the cultural politics of print' and his pamphlets continued to be addressed and debated until mid-eighteenth century.[52] The understanding of the act of printing advanced

by Atkyns demonstrates that there is no single relationship between a printed text and a particular system of political organisation.

The existence of systems of censorship, which had operated since the moment the technology was introduced into England, further complicates discussions of the public character of print. Annabel Patterson has argued that censorship creates a pervasive habit of secrecy and led to the development in the early modern period of a 'hermeneutics of censorship', a kind of contract between authors and readers governed by an expectation that matters of intense social and political concern will be represented indirectly or under cover. Indeed, Patterson declares that 'literature in the early modern period was conceived in part as the way around censorship'.[53] This suggests an understanding of publication that is contrary to that advanced by Eisenstein and assumed by Habermas. Here, printed texts are publicly available but not widely legible. Instead their contents are encoded. This indicates a suggestive structural similarity between early printed texts and the model of power represented by the monarch: both are publicly circulating secrets.

From as early as 1586, the output of the press had been regulated by a system of licensing which stipulated all printed material must receive an imprimatur from a state-appointed licenser prior to publication. This imprimatur provided a clear signal that the work it prefaced had been authorised by the state. Although the efficacy of this system has been questioned – it is estimated, for example, that less than fifty percent of all materials printed were authorised in this fashion – it instituted a system of pre-publication censorship.[54] Licensing was allowed to lapse in 1695, and the press was without formal controls until the introduction of copyright with the Statute of Anne in 1710.[55] In the interim, the government in general and Anne in particular were concerned to find a new method of regulating the activity of printers, booksellers, and authors. This was found in the law of seditious libel. A seditious libel was any printed reflection on the government, irrespective of its truth, that functioned to disturb the peace. Penalties for publishing such material were harsh – those found guilty could be fined, pilloried, or imprisoned.[56] The transition from regulating the press with licensing to the law of seditious libel is significant, not least because it marks a shift from pre- to post-publication censorship. More importantly, the cultural meanings and epistemic consequences of the licensing act and the law of seditious libel exerted contrary influence on the formation of a reading public.

Both the system and practice of licensing were closely associated with kingship. In order to be lawfully printed, two copies of the completed text would be submitted to one of a small number of licensed officials.

These licensers were appointed by the crown and considered experts in the field of knowledge over which they were given authority. Once approved, a book received an imprimatur that would be printed on the title page, stating it contained nothing 'contrary to Christian faith or the doctrine or discipline of the Church of England or against the state or government of this realme or contrary to good life or good manners'.[57] This stamp announces the intimate relationship between the state and written representations, and certifies that the work it prefaces contains nothing that will disrupt the political sphere. As one anonymous author affirmed, the imprimatur meant that the licensed book was 'distinguish'd like Money, by a Royal Stamp'.[58] The licensing system literally and figuratively marked published works as the property of the king.

Implicit in licensing is a hierarchy of power and understanding that mirrors the structure of the kingdom. Both the vocabulary of the Licensing Act and the practices it instituted construct the potential public of readers as a simple and ignorant multitude who are unfit to participate in written culture. The body of laws that underwrote the practice of licensing repeatedly represents printing as if it were an infectious disease: the very first proclamation against the press, for example, inaugurates the idea that books are sowers and spreaders of poison. What emerges from these legal documents is an image of the public as politically irresponsible, as untrustworthy and vulnerable.[59] This vocabulary was reinvigorated in the debate over press censorship in the final years of Queen Anne's reign. Those who advocated a return to licensing seemed to be animated by a similar conception of the reading public. One author describes potential readers as 'Minors in Understanding' who might be led into mischief by ill-designing authors. It is the duty of their superiors to protect and defend these readers from the ill effects of print.[60]

The cultural meanings that made a system of licensing so attractive to previous Stuart monarchs were the very same that meant it was no longer tenable by the end of the seventeenth century. In allowing the Licensing Act to lapse in 1695, the members of the House of Commons were motivated in part by pragmatic reasons, such as the desire to break the commercial monopoly the act granted to the Stationers' Company, but they were also influenced by a profound change in the relationship between the public and the state.[61] The act's lapse coincided with the introduction of legislation in 1694 requiring elections to be held every three years. This legislation resulted in an unprecedented number of electoral contests, making the early eighteenth century the most volatile period in English electoral history.[62] Not only were elections

held with increasing frequency, but the size of the voting population also increased dramatically in this period. It is estimated that this expansion represented the greatest extension of the franchise before the Reform Act of the mid-nineteenth century.[63] Electoral politics were at the forefront of contemporary consciousness: elections were not only frequent and hotly contested, but a considerably larger percentage of the population was involved in determining their outcome. The lapse of the Licensing Act in this newly volatile political climate suggests the government had redirected its attention from suppressing political literature to exploiting its potential to cultivate public opinion.

Conventional accounts of the development of the press maintain that, in the seventeenth century, the censorship of printed texts proceeded through the joint operation of the Licensing Act and seditious libel laws. F. S. Siebert's *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476–1776*, published in 1952 and still the acknowledged authority on the history of censorship in England, argues that the law of seditious libel developed as an alternative means of prosecuting printed matter while the Licensing Act was still in force. In arguing that libel laws supplemented the provisions of licensing, he suggests that both methods of regulation promoted similar ends and had the same meaning. Drawing on William Holdsworth, who asserts that 'neither the expiration of that [Licensing] Act, nor the Revolution [of 1688], materially altered the law as to what constituted a seditious libel',[64] Siebert argues that the definition of seditious libel was 'broadened' but not revised in the years that followed. His account assumes a fundamental continuity between the seventeenth century, when licensing regulations were still in force, and the eighteenth century, when the press was regulated through libel prosecutions. Further, he suggests that the definition of seditious libel and the means of detecting offences remained unaffected not only by the tumultuous political events that followed, but also by the lapse, in 1695, of the Licensing Act that Siebert believes seditious libel was intended to supplement.

Recent legal scholarship has determined that the law of seditious libel is wholly a product of Queen Anne's reign. Philip Hamburger argues that, far from being an entrenched part of England's legal system, libel laws were relatively unimportant in the seventeenth century and were used only rarely to restrain the press. Conventional histories, such as that offered by Siebert, have distorted the importance of libel laws in this earlier period, in part as a result of judges' generic use of the word 'libel' (a small printed book or pamphlet) to describe the texts they were considering.[65] Yet records demonstrate that, before the dissolution of the

licensing system, libel laws had only punished defamations of named individuals and were applied almost exclusively to manuscript offences. A series of decisions made the by judges of the Queens Bench in the early years of Anne's reign, in particular by Lord Chief Justice Holt, established a new definition of seditious libel that broadened its previously narrow application and enabled it to be used as a means of regulating the press.

One of the most valuable and enabling prosecutions under this newly important law was John Tutchin's trial in 1704 for libelling the government in his weekly paper, *The Observator*. The centre of Tutchin's defence was that a libel on an institution was, legally speaking, no libel at all. Referring to Coke's earlier definitions, the defence asserted that 'there can be no libel, where no person certain is reflected upon or scandalised. A libel that points at nobody in particular is like a shot at random, that seldom does any mischief'.[66] Lord Chief Justice Holt, however, offered a different definition of libel in his advice to the jury:

> If people should not be called to account for possessing the people with an ill opinion of the government, no government can subsist. For it is very necessary for all governments that the people should have a good opinion of it. And nothing can be worse to any government, than to endeavour to procure animosities, as to the management of it; this has been always looked upon as a crime, and no government can be safe without it be punished.[67]

According to Holt, it was as criminal to bring scandal on an institution as it was to libel particular individuals within that institution. Other of Holt's opinions in this period were equally important in re-shaping the law of seditious libel into an effective instrument for regulating the press. His judgment in the trial of Joseph Browne, for example, enabled libels employing irony to be punished by law.[68] It was only in the wake of these modifications that the laws of seditious libel became part of the government's efforts to regulate the press. This was not only a momentous change in the application of the law, but also heralded a significant alteration in the way the relationship between the state, the press, and the reading public was conceptualised. The political and cultural implications of seditious libel are very different to those associated with licensing; they entail a different understanding of the relationship between the state and the press and contribute to a reassessment of the public character of printed texts.

The use of libel laws to regulate the press drew attention to the interpretation of literature. Whether or not a text was deemed to be

a seditious libel depended on how its contents were construed by its readers, and interpretation attained a new cultural prominence as a result. Jonathan Swift satirises the new consciousness of interpretation in *Gulliver's Travels*. Readers – especially those associated with the state – are:

> a set of artists very dexterous in finding out the mysterious meanings of words, syllables, and letters. For instance, they can decipher a close-stool to signify a Privy Council, a flock of geese a senate, a lame dog an invader, a cod's-head a –, the plague a standing army [...] When this method fails, they have two others more effectual which the learned among them call acrostics and anagrams. First they can decipher all initial letters into political meanings. Thus *N*. shall signify a plot, *B*. a regiment of horse, *L*. a fleet at sea. Or secondly by transposing the letters of the alphabet in any suspected paper, they can lay open the deepest designs of a discontented party. So, for example, if I should say in a letter to a friend, *Our brother Tom has just got the piles*, a man of skill in this art would discover how the same letters which compose that sentence, may be analysed into the following words; *Resist; a plot is brought home, the tour*. And this is the anagrammatic method.[69]

This description of the act of reading assumes that each text has a deeply secret meaning at the same time as it highlights proliferating acts of interpretation. Catherine Gallagher suggests that this period was marked by a 'rage for reference', that is, a desire on the part of readers to identify external referents for every text in an attempt to stabilise that text's meaning.[70] The sheer volume of pamphlets purporting to uncover concealed meanings in printed texts innocent of any such pretensions suggests that readers customarily disregarded the literal level of the text in favour of endless hidden truths.

Most importantly, however, the laws of seditious libel provided a means of regulation that privileged an entirely different group of readers than those to which the Licensing Act called attention. Rather than the private act of reading performed by appointed officials 'at home in their chairs', this system of regulation privileged the interpretation of a text conducted in public courtrooms by members of the judiciary. A libel trial was an act of reading, publicly performed. The rules of pleading, for example, stipulated that the prosecution had to explain all innuendoes in defamatory material when filing the charge.[71] This meant the prosecution's interpretation of the text in question would be entered into

the legal record. In this way, the interpretation given to the text by legal professionals is enshrined as that text's literal meaning. Although the jury's role in these proceedings was circumscribed, they performed one very important function. The jury was required to determine whether or not the work in question supported the meanings assigned to it by the state.[72] This is a seismic shift: even as the law was supplanting the crown as a system of surveillance and regulation, the role of the public as a means of authenticating the activities of the state was also increasing.

The supersession of the law of seditious libel for the Licensing Act as a means of governing the press also shifted the object of regulation from the printers and booksellers who made the text public to the author who created its contents. This development is central to Michel Foucault's understanding of the cultural identity of authors. Foucault locates the history of the author within the history of eighteenth-century censorship, arguing that texts only 'really began to have authors [...] to the extent that authors became subject to punishment'.[73] Ultimate responsibility for the text is assigned to the author, who is subject to prosecution and punishment if its contents are found to be transgressive. In this way, the author regulates the relationship between the state and the text. However, the figure of the author also regulates the encounter between texts and their readers by imposing a limit on the potentially endless meanings a text contains. According to Foucault, the author allows a 'limitation of the cancerous and dangerous proliferation of significations', and is the 'principle by which, in our culture, one limits, excludes, and chooses; in short, by which one impedes the free circulation, the free manipulation, the free composition, decomposition and recomposition of fiction'.[74]

The departure from pre-publication censorship (a system that, as I have already argued, had come to connote forms of arbitrary government) meant arbitrary methods used to discover breaches of that act were also abandoned. The secretaries of state had been empowered by the Licensing Act to issue warrants to the king's messengers. These warrants gave the messengers considerable powers: they had the authority to arrest any person they suspected to be involved in publishing the specified item, as well as power to search the shops, homes, and offices of those they arrested in order to seize anything that might incriminate them further.[75] This method of discovering those responsible for seditious publications was no longer lawful once libel laws regulated the press. In fact, shortly after the lapse of the Licensing Act, the crown lawyers declared warrants could only be issued upon the sworn testimony of witnesses.[76]

However, those engaged in unlawful printing operated under conditions of extreme secrecy and consequently witnesses to their activities were scarce. Illicit presses would be well concealed – hidden in bedrooms, coffeehouses, and garden sheds – while their output, the texts themselves, were secreted in hollowed tree trunks and cisterns.[77] In order to uncover these clandestine activities the government began to rely on press spies, or secret agents. Indeed, the crown lawyers recommended just such a course of action, suggesting the best and most efficient means for the secretary of state to discover authors or publishers of scandalous works would be to 'employ some fit Persons to be Conversant among them and to give them suitable rewards'.[78] This introduces an interesting paradox: the operation of a new method of censorship, developed in part in response to a growing demand for democratic openness, actually necessitates the use of subterfuge and deceit on the part of the government. This stands in contradistinction to the interpretations found in conventional histories of the press. The lapse of pre-publication censorship does not result in increased openness, although it might have occurred in response to such an expectation. Instead, the lapse of pre-publication censorship creates secrecy and subterfuge.

Robert Harley, Anne's most infamous minister, was also her longest serving secretary of state. Harley's love of information and his delight in clandestine dealings were notorious among his contemporaries. Jonathan Swift noted Harley's 'obstinate love of secrecy', while the Whig parliamentarian William Cowper observed that Harley's practice was 'never to deal clearly or openly but always with reserve if not dissimulation or rather simulation and to love tricks even where not necessary but from an inward satisfaction he took in applauding his own cunning'.[79] It is perhaps not surprising then that, in his capacity as secretary of state, Harley established an extensive and efficient intelligence system – at one time, he had more than sixty-three agents in his employ. He made frequent use of the messengers of press, shared by both secretaries, who reported suspicious persons engaged in the printing trade, collected evidence for prosecutions, and made arrests.[80] Harley also seemed prepared to track and prosecute zealously publications that transgressed printing regulations. He wrote to inform the Archbishop of Canterbury of his readiness 'to contribute the utmost I can to [...] allaying those heates and animosities which are greatly increased by the many Scandalous and lying Pamphlets which are dayly propagated by designing Knaves', enclosing a copy of a bill designed to 'have a Printer or Author answerable for everything which is published'.[81]

Harley extended his official capacity to monitor the press by entering into private arrangements with additional individuals who gathered information on his behalf. One such individual was Robert Clare, a member of the printing trade who was engaged by Harley to provide information on his colleagues.[82] Clare's weekly reports to Harley give some indication of the nature of his activities: 'I could heartily wish I had a Power to visit every Printing-house in Town, which I endeavour to do every Day; I doubt not (since I can read the metal as well as the Print) but I should make such Discoveries as would be well-pleasing to your Honour.'[83] Clare remarked in a later report that 'More I might have given, but that (thro' my Officious Enquiry) some Persons took Occasion to know by what Power. I having none to produce, was oblig'd to make a more Secret Enquiry, in which having not the Success I could wish or desire.'[84] These reports indicate that Clare was instructed to visit printers' establishments in order to gather information surreptitiously about their activities. Harley turned this information to a public purpose and used it to initiate and substantiate prosecutions for breaches of the law of seditious libel: it is no coincidence that his efforts to curb the press reached their peak in the period immediately following Clare's clandestine activities on his behalf.[85]

Harley drew authors, as well as printers, into his employ. The relationship he maintained with Daniel Defoe is the best known of these and is testament to Harley's understanding of the potency of propaganda. A broadside attack on Harley, published in 1708, described his patronage of Defoe in the following terms:

> He [Defoe] was ready at all time
> T'extol the Monster [Harley] with his rimes
> For crafty climbers never rise
> Without their scribbling deputies
> .....
> Rimes are as useful to the Great
> As Guns and Bells are to the State.[86]

Defoe was not only Harley's chief propagandist, but he was also instrumental to the development of an intelligence system designed to control the press. In fact, Defoe seems to have enjoyed the opportunity to indulge in secrecy and dissimulation as much as it is speculated Harley did. In 1704, shortly after it was announced that Harley had been appointed as one of two secretaries of state, Defoe approached Harley with a series of proposals as to how to use his newly acquired office in

such a way as to direct the course of government. 'Intelligence', according to Defoe, 'is the Soul of all Publick business.' He advises Harley to develop a network of spies in the English court as well as those overseas who would act as 'Constant Intelligencers of Private affaires'. By controlling the intelligence in this way, Defoe believed that Harley's office would become the 'inner cabinet', directing 'Private affaires without the Intervention of the privy Council.' Effectively, Defoe cautions Harley against publicising the information he acquires through his office and advises him to use it instead to privatise the government of the nation. Defoe concludes his letter by reminding Harley that 'as Intelligence Abroad is So Considerable, it follows in Proportion That the most Usefull Thing at home is Secrecy'.[87]

Although historians of Queen Anne's reign have not forgotten Harley's personal obsession with secrecy, they focus instead on the commitment to public openness indicated by his role in securing freedom of the press from state control and his commitment to developing propaganda that strategically publicised the activities of the cabinet. Harley played a key role in formulating the Statute of Anne (1710) and the Stamp Act (1712). Together, these pieces of legislation ensured the intellectual freedom of the press by shifting the object of regulation from the content of texts to their economic potential. Harley was the first politician to actively encourage propaganda in politics: writing pamphlets himself, founding ministerial press organs such as the *Review* and cultivating a stable of writers who were favourably disposed to the activities of his ministry.[88] Less than eight months after he professed his zeal for censorship to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Harley famously urged Godolphin to cultivate 'some discreet writer of the government's side, if it were only to state facts right, for the generality err for want of knowledge, being imposed upon by the stories raised by ill-designing men'.[89] Defoe was also central to the production and dissemination of Harleyite propaganda, and often carried out these duties while also engaged in espionage. In the summer of 1704, for example, Defoe was dispatched to the provinces to gather information for Harley; he also used this tour to establish a commercial network of booksellers for the public distribution of his works.[90]

The position Harley occupies in regards to secrecy and publicity is obviously contradictory and constitutes a paradox particular to Anne's reign. In this period, the practice of making information public was associated with secrecy and subterfuge. The information contained in published texts was not easily available: the texts were opaque and their meanings had to be puzzled out. In this climate, gossip functioned as

a means of communication that engaged readers and, in the process, bridged the gap between the public, and the court and cabinet.

Creating publics: gossip and reading

Gossip is a mode of interpretation that interrogates the otherwise unremarkable signs of the everyday world in order to read their hidden meanings. It arises when knowledge of public events is incomplete or unavailable, and it functions as a means of disrupting instances of public secrecy. Under its scrutiny, an individual's gestures or tone of voice can become evidence of sexual or political infidelity. It is a discursive mode that relies upon shared cultural knowledge to conduct interpretation, and those engaged in its processes rely on exemplary stories and familiar stereotypes to impute a new meaning to events. Because it is a mode of understanding to which everyone has access, gossip represents a kind of 'discursive commons'.[91]

Gossip also utilises the personal details of both the subject and the participants and relies upon the active engagement of those involved in this form of communication. In order to postulate an alternative meaning for commonplace signs, it is necessary for the participants to bring their own knowledge to bear on the puzzle. Gossip's knowledge is produced through dialogue and circulates in conversation.[92] As a consequence, both the knowledge that gossip produces and the manner in which it circulates is contingent. The circulation of gossip parallels that of printed texts insofar as it retells the stories that are entered there, but in doing so it draws attention to material that has been elided through the process of print publication.[93] Moreover, if, as Michael Warner has argued, the semiotic environment of printed texts works to erase the particular identity of each author in favour of an identity that can claim to be general, then gossip restores individual personality to the circulation of information.[94] For these reasons, gossip can be seen as a response to the mechanisation entailed in print publication: it humanises the dissemination of information and makes its circulation dependent on presence and participation, rather than on anonymity and abstraction.

Because gossip is a participatory discourse, it creates a bond of intimacy between those who engage in its processes. It is perhaps because of these social effects that it is usually understood almost exclusively as a form of oral communication. In the standard account of gossip, Patricia Meyer Spacks argues that printed gossip can never imitate oral gossip precisely as it lacks immediate modification and response.[95] This

position not only assumes an enlightenment understanding of reading as a transparent and infinitely replicable act, but it does not take into consideration the different forms that printed gossip can take. In the form of the secret history and in the pages of periodicals, printed gossip that identifies its referents obliquely demands the participation of the reader and ensures that the production of knowledge remains communal. The strategic blanks found in these forms of printed gossip like the secret history are spaces for the reader to occupy.

As both a means of communication and a form of knowledge, gossip has been culturally and historically linked to women. Spacks understands this connection as an effect of women's conventional exclusion from the public sphere. Michael McKeon has recently reiterated these assumptions, describing gossip as 'a female leisure activity' and an 'idle occupation that has no place in public life'.[96] Because women are accorded no role and little interest in public events, it is assumed that their conversations could centre on nothing more than the characters and affairs of others.[97] This argument suggests that gossip is located solely within the private sphere: that it is non-instrumental talk engaged in private spaces by intimate groups of women who gossip precisely because they are excluded from public processes. This model effectively reinscribes women as marginal by diminishing the public significance of the discursive practice with which they were most closely associated. There is, however, a more persuasive way of unpacking the connections between gossip and femininity that limits neither to the private sphere.

Gossip enacts a complex negotiation between the public and private, between the position of insider and that of outsider. It facilitates the formation of its audience into two distinct groups: those who understand its references and participate in its discourse, and those who remain external to its processes. However, the logic of gossip means the limits of this group of insiders are not stable but continually expand and contract as the gossip circulates. Like the open secret, gossip simultaneously maintains and subverts the distinction between inside and outside. Although gossip makes public what it insists is private, the information it disseminates is often in encoded form and is itself transmitted under the sign of secrecy. In fact, because gossip is self-contained – that is, it relies on the resources of the group in which it circulates – the significance is contingent and so its meanings are specific to and contained by each moment of utterance. In that sense, then, the substance of a matter that is publicly spoken about still remains local and private.

Although gossip and scandal are united in their opposition to rational forms of discourse, they each have very different characteristics. In general terms, scandal occurs when the values or standards that are held in common by a community are breached. While gossip can be understood as a process, scandal is an event: even as it circulates, scandal continually recapitulates a single temporal moment.[98] Gossip is amorphous and wide-ranging, seeming to circulate without any specific aim. Scandal, however, has a definite purpose. It is a discourse designed to discredit its subjects, and so it seeks to fix its speculations to a particular individual or event, thereby transforming them into definitive knowledge.[99] Unlike gossip, scandal is understood to have a public place and effect. At the 1663 trial of Thomas Brewster for his role in a seditious libel, Serjeant Morton declared the crime to be serious, as dispersing scandalous books is 'very near a-kin to raising of tumults; they are as like as brother and sister: raising of tumults is the more masculine; and printing and dispersing seditious books, is the feminine part of every rebellion'.[100] Scandal is construed as the equivalent of socially disruptive violence and imagined to have the same effects.

Whereas gossip provides its participants with an instrument with which to unpick perceived instances of public secrecy and a way of surreptitiously monitoring the activities of the state, scandal is one of the means by which this public is itself regulated. Clare Brant has emphasised the programmatic aspects of scandal by comparing its operation to that of the law, arguing that both are mechanisms of definition and control. Each share an interest in controlling representation, but as Brant argues, 'if scandal involve[s] the deregulation of representation, the law is its regulatory opposite'.[101] However, the relationship between scandal and the law extends further than the structural affinity Brant identifies, as it is the operation of the law that creates scandal as an identifiable discourse. Kathryn Temple has recently advanced a similar argument, contending that 'scandal gains its cultural and historical weight from the law'.[102] Much in the same way that the regulation of the press with laws of libel, which was intended to replace the secrecy legislated by the Licensing Act with a form of institutionalised openness, actually created the need for subterfuge, so the law also creates scandal. Scandal is what does not conform to the legal rules of evidence, what is considered improper, impolitic or, at the extreme, seditious.

This demonstrates the fact that gossip and scandal stand in a very different relation to the public sphere. The very existence of scandal suggests the presence of a public – this is the group of people whose shared norms have been offended – but this public is not yet fully realised.

Michael Warner's observation on the relation between gossip, scandal and the public is crucial, because it returns our attention to readers. He argues: 'the idea that superiors can be defamed in print suggests a conflict between a social order in which 'superiors' has a referent, and a discursive order in which the act of reading can be equivalent to a political act of censure'.[103] The next chapter focuses on the popularisation of gossip in the genre of the secret history and undertakes a critical analysis of the role of readers in negotiating the relation between gossip, scandal, and the democratic public sphere.

2
Reading Secrets of State: Delarivier Manley and the *New Atalantis*

> *ata'lantis: (n)* Brief title of a romance satirising those who had effected the Revolution of 1688; hence generally a secret or scandalous history.
>
> OED

In October 1709, it seemed as if the whole of London was reading the same book. Delarivier Manley's newly-published *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of both Sexes, from the New Atalantis* was a secret history of the Whig administration that had controlled the English state without serious challenge for almost two decades.[1] The narrative uncovered a series of pretended scandals – sexual, financial, and diplomatic – that embroiled members of the administration and motivated their public decisions. In the process, the *New Atalantis* divests the proceedings of the court and cabinet of their customary secrecy. This movement towards political openness is complicated by the fact that the information the text contains is encoded by its narrative strategies: contemporary figures are represented in fictional guises and at no point do their real names appear in the text. Moreover, although keys identifying the real-life individuals indicated by the novel's characters were customarily published, these supplementary texts do not simply unlock the information the novel contains. Rather, the narrative of the *New Atalantis* enacts a complicated double movement between secrecy and openness.

Although Manley's secret history was published as *Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of both Sexes, from the New Atalantis*, it was customarily referred to by only a portion of this title, as the *New Atalantis*. This practice not only reduced a cumbersome title to a manageable length, but it also foregrounded the political vision the text

articulates by emphasising Manley's engagement with Francis Bacon's earlier work of political philosophy, the *New Atlantis* (1623). In this unfinished text, Bacon presents a utopian vision of an enlightened society dedicated to uncovering the secrets of nature through rational scientific inquiry. In a seeming paradox, this civilisation is dominated by imperatives of secrecy and goes to great lengths to ensure their presence remains undetected by the inhabitants of those countries they survey. The secrecy surrounding their activities extends to the knowledge gathered, and the members of Solomon's House – the institution dedicated to the discovery of scientific knowledge and the kingdom's ruling body – only selectively disseminate their discoveries to the wider community. As one of the brethren explains, 'we have consultations [as to] which of the inventions and experiences that we have discovered shall be made public, and which not, [...] concealing those which we think fit to keep secret'.[2] Here, secrecy is a technology of power and is presented as a legitimate means of governing the nation. Manley's addition of an extra 'a' to the imagined location, Atalantis, marks her departure from this vision and signals her dislocation of Bacon's vision of institutionalised secrecy.[3]

Readers from all walks of London life eagerly devoured the *Atalantis* and members of the court and cabinet grew alarmed by its popular success. The Duchess of Marlborough, who held no less than three prestigious court offices and was Queen Anne's intimate friend, was troubled by its content and wrote to the queen excerpting some of the book's more incendiary scenes. Soon after, members of parliament instigated Manley's arrest on charges of seditious libel along with the book's three printers.[4] Their collective alarm, as history shows, was well founded. The satiric targets of Manley's secret history, the Whig administration, were defeated resoundingly at the elections following the *Atalantis*'s publication, and the text has been credited with this dramatic turn in the political fortunes of the nation by both eighteenth-century observers and modern-day historians. Its effects were such that the publication of the *New Atalantis* has recently been described as 'an intervening event in the cultural life of early eighteenth-century Britain.'[5]

Manley's subsequent career is inextricably linked to the *New Atalantis*. Her fictionalised autobiography, *The Adventures of Rivella*, reflects this through its subtitle, *The History of the Author of the Atalantis*. In fact, the *New Atalantis* not only elicited many imitations – including *Atalantis Major* (1711), *The Court of Atalantis* (1714) and *The German Atalantis* (1715) – but also became a byword for the genre it exemplified, the secret history. Alexander Pope, Manley's contemporary, famously used

the *New Atalantis* in *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) to emblematise the secret history, a genre he believed would prove ephemeral. Henry Fielding also reached for Manley's example in the mid-eighteenth century to characterise the genre of scandal, referring to a species of contemporary authors as '*Atalantis* writers', while more than a century later, Byron claimed ironically that he would avoid relating the immoral parts of Don Juan's adventures as he 'disdain[ed] to write an *Atalantis*'.[6] In fact, the word 'atalantis' appears in the OED defined as a 'secret or scandalous history'. Through the scandals both represented and occasioned by the *New Atalantis*, Manley is inextricably linked to the formation and conventions of the secret history.

A scandalous genre: defining the secret history

The genre of the secret history, of which the *New Atalantis* is a part, is arguably one of the most complex of the eighteenth century's many literary forms. Its narratives are a self-conscious blend of fiction, politics and gossip, designed to engage the reader's attention equally in the fictional and the referential levels of the text. The genre both engages and subverts the documentary record by imagining what takes place behind the closed doors of public events. The term 'secret history' indicates this oblique relationship to official history, suggesting that the genre both publicises and preserves secrets. These partisan revisions of official history are encoded by a set of narrative techniques, ranging from the substitution of dashes for key letters in individual names – a practice referred to as 'disemvowelling' by Alexander Pope, but called 'innuendo' in the technical language of the court[7] – to forms of disguise that were more elaborate and fictional. The success of secret histories often depended on the strength of their disguise: it not only enabled these texts to avoid prosecution under the libel laws which stipulated that an individual must be named for a libel to have occurred, but it also provided the semblance of secrecy that was a key part of the genre's popular appeal. Indeed, while the practice of substituting dashes for the midsection of proper names ostensibly screens the individual represented, it also invites discovery of their identity. These techniques indicate, rather than conceal, the hidden meanings of the text and license readers to go beyond or beneath the narrative in order to uncover its recessed public meanings.

The secret history in general – and the *New Atalantis* in particular – is experiencing something of a critical renaissance and has become central to the revised history of the novel.[8] The reader is central to this

critical re-visioning, and substantial attention has been devoted to mapping the relationship between the secret history and its audience. For most scholars, this relationship is figured within the text by the repeatedly enacted seduction of innocent women by duplicitous and desiring men. In the first theoretical reconsideration of the genre, Ros Ballaster argues that the seduced woman represents the text's female reader, who is taught more sophisticated (indeed suspicious) principles of reading by the events of the narrative, a process that allegorises the struggle for a specifically female authority in sexual, aesthetic, and party political representation.[9] Although Ballaster argues that the fictional and factual plots of the secret history must be read dialectically, and neither regarded as a disposable cover for the 'real' content, it is the recurring scenes of seduction that are central to her analysis. This single interpretative focus is signalled by her adoption of the term 'amatory fiction' to define a genre that, by her own admission, gave equal weight to its sexual and its political plots. Ballaster's reading suggests that women writers who sought to intervene in public matters had to recreate themselves as objects of erotic allure and deploy elaborately sexualising subterfuges. She does not consider the directly political elements of the fiction, arguing that 'the flagrant instrumentalism of Manley's scandal fiction [...] has blinded critics to the complexity of her negotiation between and subversion of dichotomies of gender and genre'.[10] Here, the elements of Manley's fiction that were designed in response to contemporary politics and intended as party polemic are contained by a paradigm that maintains political matters are only articulated through seduction.[11] Such an interpretation reflects the normative gendering of public and private, suggesting that even these polemical and scandalous narratives must confine their political engagement to a feminised and apolitical realm of representation and artistic production.

The majority of readings that follow in Ballaster's wake focus on the sexualised aspects of the secret history and install the triumvirate of Aphra Behn, Manley, and Eliza Haywood as the genre's principal practitioners. There are, however, vital differences in the way these women experiment with the secret history that their continual triangulation elides. Aphra Behn's *Love Letters between a Nobleman and his Sister* (1684–7) is a case in point. Often understood as the first popularly successful secret history, *Love Letters* was inspired by the public scandal generated when Ford, Lord Grey eloped with Henrietta Berkeley. Their story, as Philander and Silvia, unfolds in three volumes published over four years as the scandal of their romance was itself was developing. While there is no doubting its commitment to public political

commentary, *Love Letters* soon dispenses with the immediate application of Grey and Berkeley's story as that story develops its own narrative interest. The introduction of Octavio, an essential but entirely fictional figure in the lovers' story, in the second volume is an important sign of this change in direction. *Love Letters* attests to the capacity of the secret history to tell stories of private life, whereas the *New Atalantis* exploits the position of the genre on the borders of the public and the private domains.

Michael McKeon has recently added to the growing body of scholarship on the secret history. In *The Secret History of Domesticity*, McKeon considers the genre as part of a broad epistemological history of public and the private in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century England. While McKeon is attentive to the signifying relation between the genre's private and public plots, he concentrates on the way in which these narratives tell stories of private life that gradually subsume their direct public application. He argues that the key to reading these secret histories lies in learning to supplement public reference with the private exemplarity of what is 'characteristic'.[12] This concentration on the development of literary and epistemological techniques for representing private life leads McKeon to select examples that offer sustained narrative and character development, such as Aphra Behn's *Love Letters*. Consequently, he diminishes the importance of the *New Atalantis* in spite of its well-documented public effects and lasting influence.[13] Like Ballaster, McKeon concentrates on the narrative elements of the secret history, rather than its political application. In so doing, they each overlook the specificities of the genre, in particular its strategies of reference. By focusing on the reader as an individual agent and a rhetorical figure in the *New Atalantis*, I aim to show how the secret history contributed to a revolution in reading practices that by turns enabled and challenged the cultural, literary and political transition from secrecy to openness.

The secret history is located neither in the public nor the private, but instead explores the boundaries and the connections between these two spheres. Readers were intimately involved in this experimental inquiry and were invited to participate in delineating the domain of both the public and private through the referential structure of the secret history. There is a long tradition of referentiality in the secret history that is important for beginning to understand the place of the reader in the narrative, a tradition that begins in France. It has long been acknowledged that English authors of secret histories were indebted to French authors. As early as 1969, John Richetti contended that the secret history

was an 'adaptation and localisation of French techniques', and asked 'why were these *romans à clef* so successfully naturalised in England? and what does their popularity [...] tell us about the taste and ideological requirements of their wide audience?'[14] The story of the secret history and its French origins has been told, with different emphases, by a number of theorists, but I want to revisit Richetti's original questions as the initial step in proposing an alternative theoretical model for the secret history.

Perhaps the most conspicuous example of the intellectual debt owed to authors across the channel is the preface to *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705), a secret history of Sarah Churchill, the Duchess of Marlborough, once thought to be by Delarivier Manley.[15] This preface establishes the poetics of the secret history and, in doing so, the anonymous author positions the developing genre as an antidote to the excesses of multi-volume romances. The secret history values realistically detailed characters rather than exaggerated heroic virtues and, unlike the admiring narration of romance, adopts an impartial narrative voice that leaves the business of judging characters and events to the reader. In articulating this competitive claim, the author suggests these differences in literary taste express differences in national character, asserting that 'the little Histories which have banished [French] Romances are much more agreeable to the brisk and impetuous humour of the English, who naturally have no taste for long-winded performances'.[16] Accordingly, the preface has been widely anthologised and cited by contemporary scholars who seek to chart the origins of the eighteenth-century British novel.[17] However, it is a literal translation of an essay in a French courtesy book that itself paraphrases an earlier French publication.[18] The preface attests to the complex connections between English and French fiction in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, rather than expressing – as it is most often thought to do – a particularly English aesthetic sensibility.

As the preface to *Queen Zarah* indicates, the secret history was often pitted against the romance, a practice that was equally common in France and in England. However, the clear differences between the two genres covers over an important commonality: the heroic romance, like the secret history, embedded portraits of contemporary individuals in otherwise fictional narratives. Madeleine de Scudéry was perhaps the most popular and prolific exponent of this genre, and her multi-volume romances met with a wide readership in England and France alike. Her narratives use the threads of historical stories as a means of weaving narratives of more topical events. For example, the ostensible subject

of *Artamène, où le Grand Cyrus* (30 vols, 1649–53) is the exploits of Cyrus the Great, a king of ancient Persia who features in the histories of Herodotus and Xenophon, but embedded within this account is a narrative of the recent civil insurrection of against the Crown by members of the high nobility and judiciary (collectively known as the Fronde). In using romance to allegorise politics, Scudéry's narratives suggest that private matters provide the hidden impetus for and the interpretative key to public events. Throughout, the leading intriguers are dressed up in costume borrowed from ancient Persia and become the focus of the narrative. Representing the rebellious *frondeurs* as the heroes and heroines of ancient Persia unquestionably glorifies the nobility as it diminishes the role of the crown. The effect of this strategy, as Erica Harth has argued, is to appropriate history for the aristocracy just as they were beginning to be excluded from its processes.[19]

Portraits of hundreds of court luminaries are woven into this fabric and hundreds more lobbied for the favour of being included in subsequent volumes. A contemporary remarked: 'You wouldn't believe how happy the ladies are to be put into her novel, more exactly, to have people see their portraits there.'[20] There was no reliable method by which the general reader of this text could unlock these resemblances; even the enterprising reader who applied to the author for assistance was rebuffed. 'The reason for my refusal,' Scudéry wrote, 'is that I have never made one.'[21] The referential level of these heroic romances would only have been accessible to aristocratic readers as it required familiarity with the dense conventions of allegorical representation, as well as a social acquaintance that would enable the characteristics that anchored each portrait to be recognised. Together, this forged a sense of 'exclusive complicity' among the aristocratic readers of the romance and enhanced their cohesiveness as both a social and a political group.[22]

The secret history, which the preface to *Queen Zarah* describes, marks an aesthetic and ideological break with the conventions of the romance. It developed as a self-conscious genre, as authors in France and England alike took advantage of the opportunity offered by prefaces to theorise their own texts. These secret histories appropriated the traditions of referentiality established by the heroic romance, but provided representations of contemporary figures that could be easily identified. Erica Harth has connected these developments to the political climate in France, arguing that these new narratives developed in response to Louis XIV's decision to reduce the number of his councillors and to relocate the court from Paris to the more remote Versailles.[23] Secret histories, which unfolded sexually scandalous narratives of private escapades in

a now-remote court, were read by nobles and bourgeoisie alike and developed as a kind of outsiders' history at a time when both groups found themselves excluded from political processes. In fact, Harth asserts the genre 'betrayed an undeniably democratising tendency in its break with the traditions of the *roman à clef*.'[24] Robert Mayer agrees, and has argued that in England, as in France, short fictional forms developed as part of an aesthetic that was specifically bourgeois and constituted a 'repudiation by middling-sort writers of a self-consciously aristocratic form.'[25]

These secret histories provide their readers with an interpretative key to public events and thus fill the growing gap between the court and the public. The entire oeuvre of Marie Catharine La Motte, Baronne d'Aulnoy, comprising fourteen works in total, was translated into English and several of these titles proved so popular with readers that they went through more English editions than they did French. In fact, one of Manley's first works of prose fiction, the *Lady's Pacquet of Letters* (1707), was initially published alongside d'Aulnoy's *Memoirs of the English Court*. This provides an unmistakable indication of how Manley wanted to position herself within the London marketplace. D'Aulnoy's most influential narratives, *Memoirs of the Court of Spain* and *Memoirs of the Court of England*, narrate a succession of amorous adventures that involve noblemen and ladies of the court. The narratives themselves are episodic, relating a series of seemingly unconnected intrigues such that the reader is privy to a cornucopia of intrigue and scandal. These narratives expose the true character of political insiders and explain the real motivation for political decisions by revealing the sexual intrigues that occurred in cabinet and cabal and, in the process, make significant epistemological claims. Employing this type of narrative to allegorise political events implies that the truth of these public occurrences is to be found in private events, and that one must be privy to these secret machinations in order to understand political proceedings.

The extension of an interpretative key to readers was taken further in England, as the example of John Barclay's *Argenis* (1621) illustrates. In Annabel Patterson's words, *Argenis* is 'an encoded and fictionalised account of European history', especially the recent wars of religion in France, told through a romance narrative that focuses on Argenis, the princess of Sicily, and the four aspirants to her hand in marriage. A supplementary text identifying the historical figures indicated by the text's characters, known as a key, was published shortly after the novel itself, and both texts were translated into English from the original Latin on several occasions.[26] One of these translators, Robert le Grys,

addressed the inclusion of a key, explaining that it allowed readers to draw from the text 'what profitable knowledge they possibly may, not slightly passing it over as an idle Romance, in which there were no other fruit conteined but fantastical tales'.[27] Le Grys illustrates the opposition between the heroic romance and the secret history by juxtaposing the utility of the text he has translated with 'idle Romance'. He also indicates the ideological underpinnings of the new genre as it had been translated to England. The referential level of such texts was not intended to be an exclusive secret; rather, contemporary events were depicted in a transparent disguise and identification of the text's real-life referents was ensured through the convention of a key.

The keys to *Argenis* that were wrought by its various translators take the form of discursive essays that disclose the identities of the principal characters and contextualise these identifications within a broad interpretation of the narrative.[28] The keys that accompanied later secret histories, including the *New Atalantis*, took a very different form. These supplementary texts list the biographical counterparts of the narrative's satirically drawn characters against the page numbers on which their representation can be found, providing readers with an index to the real-life content of the secret histories they accompany. This graphic design juxtaposes the fictional and referential levels of the text, suggesting that their relationship requires no mediation: the key is a device that enables the meaning of the narrative to be 'unlocked' or decoded. This suggestion has been taken up and elaborated in critical accounts of the secret history where the narrative techniques of genre and the phenomenon of the key that accompanies them, are understood to be a result of the operation of the law of seditious libel that prohibited reflection, however truthful, on the government and its ministers.[29] Lennard Davis, for example, argues that the narratives of the secret history are 'a mere tactic or ploy for the concealed message. The surface is now the alibi for the genuine material it conceals.'[30] Here, meaning is effectively relocated to the supplementary text and the key becomes the repository for the meaning of the narrative.

Eighteenth-century authors often appear to endorse this understanding of their narrative techniques and were, as Catherine Gallagher has noted, 'fond of expiating on both their necessity and their transparency'.[31] Manley would later conjecture that the prosecution's case in her own trial for seditious libel had foundered because she 'served her self with romantick names, and a feigned scene of action'.[32] In an oft-cited pamphlet, Jonathan Swift explains the methods employed by his contemporaries to circumvent the law. He writes:

> we have several Ways here of abusing one another, without incurring the Danger of the Law. First, we are careful never to print a Man's Name out at length; but as I do that of Mr *St*——: So that although every Body alive knows whom I mean, the Plaintiff can have no Redress in any Court of Justice. Secondly, by putting Cases; Thirdly, by Insinuations; Fourthly, by celebrating the Actions of others, who acted directly contrary to the Persons we would reflect on; Fifthly, by Nicknames, either commonly known or stamp'd for the purpose, which every Body can tell how to apply.[33]

Swift discusses literary techniques as evasive technicalities and implies that the complex techniques of suggestion and subterfuge constitute a narrative mask that can be discarded.[34] However, the techniques that Swift highlights – innuendo, fictional names, and irony – do not merely lead the reader to a real-life individual, but they introduce a crucial ambiguity into the text.

There is no simple correspondence between the fictional and referential levels of a secret history that the key enabled the reader to decode. The complex relationship between the levels of reference is elaborated in Barclay's *Argenis* as Nicompompous, the poet and a figure for the author within the text, instructs his imagined reader. He declares:

> lest they should complaine that they are traduced, there shall be no man's picture to be plainely found there. To disguize them, I will have many inventions that cannot possibly agree to those that I entend to point at. For this liberty shall bee mine, who am not religiously tyed to the truth of a History [...] Besides, I will every where give them imagined names [...] that in this my Booke, he shall erre, as well, that will have it all to be a true relation of things really done, as he that takes it to be wholly fained.[35]

Nicompompous announces his intention to confound fact and fiction and render them inseparable, alerting the reader to the productive interplay between the imagined and referential levels of his tale. He insists that the fictional elements of his narrative resist decoding.

The actual relationship between the key and the text is one of supplementation, not supersession. Catherine Gallagher also identifies this aspect of the keys to the *New Atalantis*, and concludes that the key operated as a means of rhetorical inflation that ensured the excessive proliferation of satiric subjects. Faced with this excess of reference in relation to representation, she argues that readers responded to the

narrative as a piece of pure fiction.[36] However, her focus on the secret history's role in creating 'nobodies' elides the fact demonstrated by letters, diaries, and marginal annotations: readers were very much focused on fixing the contents of secret histories on biographical somebodies. This is especially so in the case of the *New Atalantis* and consequently it is important to consider the ways in which the keys intersected with the narrative and guided the reader to construe the narrative's references and produce particular versions of its secret 'truth'. Given the oft-stated centrality of the key to the reading experience, it is curious that the triangulated relationship between the reader, the key and the *New Atalantis* has yet to be examined. It is to this task that this chapter now turns.

Unlocking the *New Atalantis*: the key, the text and the reader

The reader of the *New Atalantis* comes to the text through a complex narrative frame that highlights the hermeneutic challenge that lies within. The title page and dedication announce the text has been translated from a manuscript, originally written in Italian but preserved in a French translation, that uncovers the secrets of the inhabitants of a remote island in the Mediterranean. While ostensibly distancing the narrative from England, this elaborate trope of a twice-translated text functions as a rhetorical sign that the events of the narrative had a coded contemporary relevance. This is confirmed by the narrative itself, which positively teems with characters in fictional disguises ranging in complexity from the intentionally transparent to the deliberately opaque. Figures who are central to the politics of the text, such as the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough, appear and re-appear in a number of discrete fictional guises, and major events are both relocated to a reconstructed past or projected into an imaginary future.

Certainly not all readers were able to meet the hermeneutic challenge the *New Atalantis* posed. Reading the *New Atalantis* in Oxford, the antiquarian Thomas Hearne confessed that it 'was not easily understood' without the 'key that was handed about'; while Sir William Trumbull, who had retired to his family estate on the fringes of Windsor Forest in 1698, went to great lengths to obtain a key to aid his own interpretation of the text.[37] Indeed, Manley herself seems to acknowledge her references might be opaque in a letter to Robert Harley, sent with a copy of the *Memoirs of Europe* on the day of its publication. She writes: 'if anything moves your curiosity, I shall explain what you desire', suggesting even one of England's highest-ranking ministers might find her

references obscure.[38] Readers appear to have applied the keys assiduously to the text. Often, marginal annotations associating fictional characters with real life individuals mirror the spelling and syntax of the keys, indicating they were transcribed directly from its pages. These instances suggest there were indeed boundaries to a knowing audience.

However, far from equipping their readers with the means to understand the texts they accompany, the keys to secret histories require careful interpretation themselves. A number of references in the keys to the *Atalantis* are disemvowelled. One key to the second volume of the *New Atalantis* associates the fictional Prince de Majorca with the real-life Duke of O——; another is more enigmatic, identifying the character only as D. O.[39] This suggests, but does not specify, the biographical individual who is to be associated with the character. As a number of biographical individuals are suggested by each combination of letters and dashes, the satirical targets of the text are multiple and fluid and, as annotated copies of the *New Atalantis* demonstrate, readers did indeed interpret these references variously.[40] To complicate matters further, the keys accompanying early editions only provided page numbers where the references to biographical persons could be found rather than supplying character names. Consequently readers were required to identify the specific character on each page to which the key referred, often having to discern between several possibilities. The reader of a second edition of the *New Atalantis* initially identified 'Laurentia's mother' incorrectly as the 'Wid[ow] Laurence of Putney' listed in the key. Realising his error, he subsequently crossed it out, replacing it with 'Mrs Rider' and correctly pairing the reference to the widow Laurence with the character of Laurentia who appears on the same page.[41] Each identification produces an alternative set of referents for the text and a different version of its libellous 'truth'.

Anne Bynn recognised this aspect of the *New Atalantis* and, in a letter to her brother, she admitted that she was 'somewhat scrupulous to fix any [characters] on my own conjectures least I shou'd wrong the innocent.'[42] Her language is revealing, as it suggests the reading process 'fixes' a particular version of the conduct and character of contemporaries. In this sense, secret histories share a structural affinity with forms of slanderous speech. Judith Butler has written that it is a mistake to search for the referents of this type of discourse, since its effect 'is not to refer beyond itself, but to perform itself, producing a strange enactment of linguistic immanence.'[43] Consequently, the referents of the secret history are not simply uncovered by readers; they are produced by the reading process. It is for this reason that Joseph Addison

suggests decoding references constitutes the principal pleasure of reading. Once an allusion has been identified, he suggests the reader is 'not a little Delighted with its Discoveries and feels something like the satisfaction of an Author from his own Composure'.[44] The narrative of the *New Atalantis* does more than simply refer to real-life individuals; it interpellates them by constructing a particular version of their conduct and character.

Many of the tales Manley tells in both the *New Atalantis* and her later secret histories originate, or are subsequently repeated, in the writings of her contemporaries. Identifying the textual networks through which these stories circulates further clarifies the ways in which readers were encouraged to produce the *Atalantis*'s libellous truth. Readers who turn to the key to discover the identity of 'Monsieur le Chevalier', a notorious gambler whose mock title was conferred upon him by those he cheated out of their estates, discover the character represents someone known as 'Sir James of the Peak'. However, this is a cant name with a complicated ætiology bestowed upon the real-life James Ashburne by members of the political circles in which he moved.[45] Portraits of Ashburne drawn under his cant name can also be found in contemporary satirical pamphlets including a Whig broadside published in 1701 and the Tory satire, *Faction Display'd* (1704).[46] The reader of Manley's secret histories would have had to be familiar with this contemporary vocabulary in order to understand the reference in the text. The *New Atalantis* depicts an affair between Sarah Churchill as the Marchioness of Caria and Sidney Godolphin (who was lord treasurer and member of the Whig Junto) as Lord Biron. Allegations of an affair between these two prominent Whigs are also found in two poems, circulated in manuscript, which appear to have been written the year before the *New Atalantis* was published. These two libellous poems use depictions of the affair to similar rhetorical effect: voracious sexual appetite is ascribed to Sarah as a sign of unbounded ambition, while the affair signals the final corruption of Godolphin's politics.[47] Finally, the *New Atalantis* invents an alternative explanation for the rise to power of John Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough, by suggesting his position is the result of his sexual exploits rather than his military success. This charge, like the allegations of an affair between Sarah and Godolphin, also has a history and can be traced back to a poem entitled *The False Favourite's Downfall* (1692), which circulated in manuscript and appeared in several printed collections. Manley provides a variation on this general theme, suggesting Marlborough's rise is enabled by an affair with Charles II's mistress, Barbara Villiers, who he first seduces and then betrays. This variation is repeated in two anonymous satirical pamphlets that were

subsequently published in the service of Tory politics and intended to assist the consolidation of the newly established Tory regime.[48] Most of the scandalous stories contained in the *New Atalantis* can be traced through similar antecedents and bequeath similar legacies.

This series of sources suggest another aspect of the keys to Manley's secret histories. Rather than referring the reader to an extra-textual reality, they instead refer the reader to an extra-textual fiction. The names that appear in the keys are not designed to conjure the biographical person and their actual circumstances, but are intended to invoke the partisan gossip that exists around these figures and is disseminated in a variety of written forms. The gossip to which the keys refer the reader can be understood as a liminal genre: it performs a truth function by authenticating the narrative, but is itself fictional. By pointing outwards towards other instances of printed gossip, the referents of Manley's texts are constituted through a series of Tory fantasies, or a set of rumours and speculation devised for political gain and intended to function as propaganda.

Educated in the habits of active participation by the use of innuendoes in both the text and the key, the reader was also responsible for constructing a coherent narrative out of the *New Atalantis*'s disparate parts. The *Atalantis* is a loose collection of stories or anecdotes, told by the allegorical Intelligence to the goddess Astrea and her mother Virtue as they tour the fictional island that provides the setting. The events of the narrative are organised solely by the happenstance of their journey and, while the events they observe often provide an occasion for sententious reflection, the characters who narrate the events do not provide an interpretative framework that links their stories or suggests their significance. In order to do this, the reader was required to discriminate between the various anecdotes and to divine the links between the text's seemingly unconnected stories.

By no means was all the information contained in the *New Atalantis* of immediate political utility and the real-life counterparts of a handful of the denizens of Manley's Atalantis had predeceased the novel's publication by a number of years. Further, several episodes related in the text seem only to be tangentially related to the real-life individuals with whom they are connected. The earliest scholarship on the *New Atalantis* has highlighted the close similarity between the plot of *The Princess of Cleves* and the story of Madam St L'Amant's passionate but unspoken love for Baron de Mezeray.[49] These similarities, together with the suggestive absence of the association from biographical accounts of Cary Coke and Sir Edmund Baron, the individuals whom the characters are intended to represent, implies that the story was developed with

reference to the enormously popular novel rather than the private lives of the couple it was subsequently associated with. The familiarity of the story, and the engaging details of the narrative, seems to be more important than whether or not the story fitted the circumstances of Coke and Baron. Readers had to distinguish the contemporary political messages that were reworked through 'old Stories that the World had long since reported', as Manley later described them, from items that were included as 'camouflage' or 'textual wadding'.[50] The fact that much of the information contained in the novel was of little immediate political utility meant the reader played a critical role in ensuring the text had political effects.

Reading the *New Atalantis* was thus an interactive process: in order to make sense of the text, its references must first be decoded and the information then categorised. In this way, the *New Atalantis* encouraged its readers to analyse its contents and actively construct the narrative. This engagement was predetermined, even guaranteed, by the structure of the text and its accompanying key. The novel itself teems with characters whose name or title are dashed out (such as Lord ——, Duke de ——, and Chevalier ——); while these innuendoes are expanded in the keys with the addition of several letters (there, reference is made to Ld G——n and the D. of M—g—ue) they are not necessarily expounded. However, although the practice of substituting dashes for the mid-section of a proper name ostensibly screens the individual represented, it also invites the discovery of their identity. This device can be considered as an incorporation of the habits of manuscript annotation into the material properties of the text itself. The innuendo, in other words, can best be regarded as an invitation to the reader to fill the blanks.[51] In her comprehensive study of both the practice and the genre of marginal annotation, Heather Jackson emphasises that acts of annotation are always implicitly critical. Even in instances where the annotations of readers seem subservient to the text itself – such as filling in the names left blank – this type of engagement with a text suggests the annotator presumes to know at least as much as the author, and so can fill intentional gaps in the narrative.[52]

Pressed into active engagement with the text, readers determined how to construe the *New Atalantis*'s references and assessed its claims. They also evaluated the claims of other readers. A particularly vivid example of this type of engagement is provided by an annotated copy of the second volume of the *New Atalantis* preserved in the collections of the Houghton Library. This copy contains marginal notes made in the year of the novel's publication by two successive readers.

These annotations not only demonstrate each reader's engagement with the text, but also their engagement with each other. The second reader uses the margins to take issue with the identifications established by the first reader. For example, the first reader ascertained that the woman the goddesses observe in clandestine labour is a representation of Lady Harriet Greville; the second reader, however, believes this to be a mistake as he 'never heard of such a Lady'.[53] Adjacent to a passage describing the women who have clubbed together to form the 'new cabal', the first reader notes that 'Lucy Wharton', 'the Countess of Dorchester', and 'Mrs Tofts' are included in their number. The second reader disputes these identifications and marks his disagreement in the margins of the text. He crosses out the names recorded by his predecessor, and writes that 'I think these names are a great mistake I believe some body else is mean but I don't know who' (see Illustration 1).[54] The second reader frequently disagrees with the first reader's interpretation, and crowds the margins with his competing interpretation of the text. His notations reveal him to be all but obsessed with discovering his predecessors 'great mistakes' although, in doing so, he makes considerable errors of his own.[55] His example suggests that readers not only participated in, but were also passionately committed to their construction of the text.

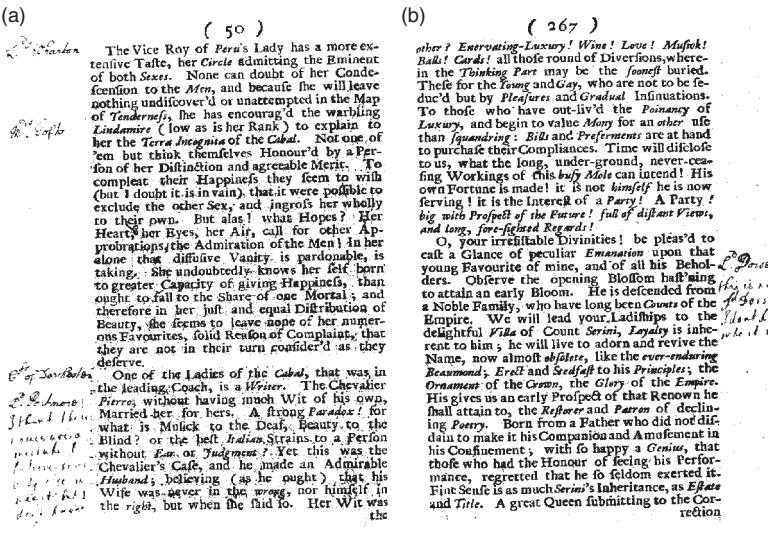

Illustration 1 Delarivier Manley, *New Atalantis* (London: John Morphew, 1709), pp. 50, 267. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University. EC7.MC3148.709s vol. 2.

Along with other partisan literature such as pamphlets and periodicals, Manley's secret history can be considered as instrumental to the construction of a print vocabulary. This vocabulary entailed a set of tropes and sobriquets – such as Godolphin as Volpone, and representations of Sarah Churchill engaged in extra-martial affairs with specific Whig luminaries – that were persistently associated with, and thus used to identify, political and court insiders. These tropes and sobriquets often intersected with those employed by the political elite themselves and sometimes, as Manley's use of James Ashburne's cant name demonstrates, represented a direct appropriation of their vocabulary. This meant one did not necessarily have to be politically *au courant* in order to understand references by and to these insiders; one could also be a reader. Peter Wentworth, an equerry in Queen Anne's court, indicates this in a letter to his brother, an ambassador who was stationed at The Hague. Commenting upon the recent Harleyite pamphlet entitled *An Account of a Dream at Harwich* (1708) and its newly published key,[56] he writes:

> I thought 'twas not proper for me to send you the Harwich Dream til I cou'd send you with it another sort of interpretation than the ill-natured author wou'd have given to't, tho' this is not so good as it might have been, but it will have this good effect that it will pass upon the mob. 'Tis agreed by all pamphlet readers that there's nothing obscure in the Dream, but every one readily understands what the author means, tho' at first I know the Bulky figure in white lay between the A. B. of C. and the B. of S.; but the B. of S. carries it clearly without dispute, for a long [time] the letters (MMTU) was a puzzler; but now 'tis known to have no more in them than what you might find in the fifth C[h]ap. of Daniel, *mene mene tekel uphrasin*, Hebrew words.[57]

Wentworth claims that 'pamphlet readers' would readily understand the references contained in this publication. Even the acronym, formed from a Hebrew phrase taken from the Bible, that Wentworth initially finds obscure, recalls a set of specific associations with contemporary politics once expanded. This phrase, meaning 'your kingdom has been weighed, counted, found wanting and divided', was regularly incorporated into partisan literature since the notorious underground pamphlet, *Mene Tekel: Or the Downfall of Tyranny* (1663).[58] Although Wentworth concedes the pamphlet contains some elusive allusions

which the new key has elucidated, he asserts that, even without its assistance, 'everyone readily understands what the author means'.

It was this aspect of Manley's novel that prominent readers responded to most immediately. The *Atalantis* was brought to Sarah Churchill's attention by an 'impertinent' friend (who was herself implicated in the volume's scandal) within days of the publication of the second volume. Arthur Maynwaring was directed to read the 'vile book' on her behalf and provide an abstract of its contents. Evidently, Maynwaring was quick to execute Sarah's commands because he is soon able to reassure her via letter that the *Atalantis* contains 'not a word in it relating to 240 [Sarah herself] but very old, false, and incredible scandal'.[59] He reiterates this in a later letter, insisting there was nothing but 'old and incredible stuff of extortion and affairs with 38 [Godolphin] and 28 [Charles, Duke of Shrewsbury]'.[60] Maynwaring did not merely adopt this view to comfort the Duchess; it was a perspective shared by other readers in similar circumstances. The *New Atalantis* repeats well-known stories detailing the supposed bigamy of William Cowper, the then lord chancellor, and the suspicious circumstances surrounding the drowning of his brother's mistress. Yet their mother, Lady Sarah Cowper, was none too concerned and commented in her diary that 'the main matter is but old Dirt grown so dry it may not stick if it be not mixt with new Stuff'.[61] The *New Atalantis* did indeed repeat gossip already in circulation and both Maynwaring and Cowper are convinced that, since the novel contains nothing new, it contains nothing that is of concern. Sarah Churchill, however, responded to Manley's use of gossip in the *New Atalantis* rather differently.

In her letters to Queen Anne, Sarah highlights the impropriety of the queen's relationship with Abigail Masham, a bedchamber woman and current favourite. Sarah writes of a change she has perceived in the queen's disposition and actions, and requests she explain 'what it is that prevails with you to oppose the advice of all your old servants and councils, – if it be not that woman [Masham], and those that apply to you by her'.[62] Sarah asserts the truth of her charge with reference to the *New Atalantis*, writing that although the novel 'is ridiculous and [. . .] not well written', this is 'so much the worse, for it shews that the notion is extensively spread among all sorts of people'.[63] She reiterates, 'I hope you will no longer think [. . .] I was the only person that discerned the private way of conversing with Mrs Masham, since all that matter is now in print, and, notwithstanding the prosecution, I suppose sold at every shop.'[64] Here, Sarah uses Manley's novel as a register of contemporary gossip in

order to demonstrate that something thought to be secret was in fact widely known.

Whereas Maynwaring read Manley's the *New Atalantis* as a recitation of common knowledge, a repetition of what he knew everyone knew, Sarah recognised that this common knowledge, or gossip, and its reiteration in the mediated form of the secret history could have serious material effects. She drew the potential power of print to the attention of the queen when informing her of a new ballad that ridiculed Anne's relationship with Masham.[65] In this letter, Sarah recalls that 'it is a melancholy thing to remember that your Royall Father was in a manner sung out of his kingdoms by this very tune of lilly bularo'.[66] The tune to which the ballad of Abigail and Anne is set, *Lilli Burlero*, was an infamous satire of James II that was believed to be instrumental in effecting the revolution of 1688. A contemporary wrote that its effects 'cannot well be imagined by those who saw it not. The whole army and at last all people both in city and country were singing it perpetually. And perhaps never had so slight a thing so great an effect'.[67] Sarah acknowledges the power that print can have: by making something common knowledge, such publications have the potential to sing or write a monarch out of their kingdom. Similarly, she later confessed her belief that she had lost the queen's favour because of the printed gossip, or 'what we properly call Grub-Street storys', that circulated about her own activities.[68] Grub-Street stories can produce powerful effects and their gossip illustrates Sandy Petrey's explication of the potential power of print: 'a sign that performs without a referent can acquire a daunting referential presence'.[69] By shifting our focus to the tales Manley tells within her narratives, we are able to consider how this type of information is disseminated within the novel and what effects it is imagined to have.

Atalantic Intelligence

The *New Atalantis* begins with the return of the goddess Astrea to the island of Atalantis, a thinly disguised representation of England, where she is reunited with her mother, Virtue. This society is a far cry from Francis Bacon's utopian civilisation of the same name. Here, secrecy is a stratagem used by courtiers to screen their profligate behaviour and conceal their accretion of political power. Indeed the corruptions of the English court and cabinet are so notorious that Astrea, having resolved to educate the future monarch of the celestial world in the true principles of government, has returned specifically to observe them.

In order to accomplish this design, she summons Lady Intelligence to accompany her on her journey through the island. Intelligence holds an important position in the Atalantic court: she is chief attendant to Princess Fame, to whom she must report whatever information she uncovers that is 'new, or of any seeming importance' (p. 13). She is given similar responsibilities on her journey with the two goddesses and accordingly, in the narrative that follows, Intelligence provides details of the scandals of contemporary Atalantis. While the goddesses, motivated by their desire to locate moral exempla for their future monarch, carefully evaluate the stories with which they are regaled, Intelligence will not allow anything to interrupt her pursuit of secrets and new information. The comic interplay of perspectives that results deflates the moral pretensions of Virtue and Astrea, as the goddesses' sententious moralising is often undercut by Intelligence's practical interjections, and shifts the focus from evaluation to the dissemination of information.[70]

The term 'intelligence', as Paula McDowell has highlighted, would have had very specific connotations for the contemporary reader of the *New Atalantis*. Its prevalence in the titles of seventeenth century newsbooks and serial broadsheets, and the practice of hawking such publications by crying their titles in London's busy streets, meant it functioned as a virtual synonym for news disseminated by print.[71] Intelligence's suggestive costume – her 'garments are all hieroglyphics' (p. 13) – reinforces the association between her fictional character and print publications. In using intelligence as a synonym for news, these publications invoked an official category of state knowledge, which they borrowed for their authority and depended on for their success. Intelligence in this sense referred to the large body of knowledge gathered by the office of the secretary of state through a network of spies, correspondents, and post office interceptors. In the absence of established channels for the dissemination of news, this office collected 'news' of events that took place on the public stage – such as the death of a foreign monarch or the triumph of the domestic army abroad – as well as using the techniques of espionage to uncover information that would otherwise remain secret.[72] The secretaries combined their monopoly on intelligence with substantial powers to regulate the press: until the Licensing Act lapsed in 1695, their office was one of several that issued imprimaturs to officially-sanctioned publications, and was solely responsible for prosecuting breaches of the laws governing the press.[73]

An association with the secretaries' office came to be understood as a type of guarantee as to the truth of the information due to the large and still-secret body of knowledge that was implicit in each snippet that was disseminated. A government proclamation against unlicensed news issued in 1680 and printed in the *London Gazette* makes it apparent that good or accurate intelligence was understood as that authorised by the state. The proclamation reads: 'it is of great importance to the state, that all news printed and published to the people, as well as concerning foreign, as domestic affairs, should be agreeable to the truth, or at least warranted by good intelligence'.[74] Early eighteenth-century newspapers, then, were understood as agents of intelligence as well as organs of publicity. In the *New Atalantis*, Manley co-opts the figure of truth as defined through association with officially sanctioned information and places it within her partisan scandal chronicle. By associating these figures of official secrecy and truth with Intelligence, Manley lays the foundation for her satiric representation of contemporary politics.

Although Intelligence's newsgathering activities are granted careful license, her occasional relationship to truth is often remarked upon within the text. Intelligence herself declares that her business is: 'to give intelligence of all things, but I take Truth with me when I can get her. Sometimes, indeed, she's so hard to recover that Fame grows impatient and will not suffer me to wait for her slow approach' (p. 162). The imperative to disseminate new information is so strong that it will not often wait discovery of the facts of the matter; the news must be passed on regardless. Therefore, although Intelligence's newsgathering activities appear to be authorised by the narrative structure and by her official titles, her activities in fact generate a strong association with the operation of gossip.

This seeming contradiction does not disturb Intelligence's connection to the contemporary press; instead, her relationship to truth appears to mirror that of the press as a result of the legislation governing its operation. In addition to the law of seditious libel that applied to all printed materials, there were also specific regulations that restricted the circulation of information about political events. Parliamentary proceedings were governed by privilege and it was forbidden 'to print, or publish any Books or Libels reflecting upon the Proceedings of the House [...] or any members thereof, for, or relating to, his service therein, is a high violation of the Rights and Privileges of this House'.[75] Those who transgressed and published domestic political information were prosecuted assiduously.[76] In the absence of current information, authors of printed newspapers often sought to cast existing information in a new and often

partisan light and dealt in speculation rather than fact. These accounts naturally resorted to the same circumlocutions as those who wished to avoid the laws of seditious libel, employing nicknames, innuendo, and feigned locations in their discussions of contemporary affairs. Intelligence, literally covered with printed characters, is a self-conscious modernisation of the trope of gossip. She represents the operation of gossip as it was institutionalised as a dynamic of print culture.

The Lady Intelligence, however, is not the only source of information in the novel, as she occasionally relies on other characters to supply deficits in her knowledge. These supplementary narrators recall the forms of gossip that were culturally dominant. The superstitious countrywoman who relates the circumstances of a recent execution evokes the association between women and gossip as an uncritical discourse, while the foppish gentleman they encounter at the races recalls the developing connotations of gossip as a pastime indulged in by fashionable men and women (pp. 84–6).[77] The distinct differences between the figure of Intelligence and the representation and relation of each of these narrators work to clarify Intelligence's role and also to redefine the role of gossip within the *New Atalantis*. The character who is most important to this task of redefinition is the midwife Mrs Nightwork, who is spied by the goddesses as she arrives to attend a clandestine birth. Intelligence intercepts the midwife as she hurries away with the newborn and questions her about the lady she has assisted. Mrs Nightwork is eager to relate the adventures she has experienced in the course of her occupation. Intelligence takes exception to this, scolding Mrs Nightwork for 'taking my province from me and engrossing all the scandal' and suggests that, in telling stories freely, she is breaking a professional code requiring her discretion (p. 138). Unlike the goddesses' other informants, Mrs Nightwork insists that her role is connected to Intelligence's own and declares that she and her fellow midwives constitute an unofficial 'rearguard' to Princess Fame (p. 138). She insists she is only forbidden to speak of these matters directly and is entitled to relate them obliquely. 'Without this indirect liberty', she opines, 'we should be but ill company to most of our ladies, who love to be amused with the failings of others, and would not always give us so favourable and warm a reception, if we had nothing of scandal to entertain them with' (p. 139). Perhaps taking their cues from these instances, critics have suggested that a kind of professional rivalry exists between the Lady Intelligence and Mrs Nightwork.[78]

Intelligence disseminates information by virtue of her position as an attendant on Princess Fame and, as a result, her role as a newsmonger is

officially sanctioned. In contrast, when Mrs Nightwork tells tales of the intrigues she has been party to, she does so illicitly and in violation of the oath she swore as part of her profession. Mrs Nightwork's defence against this charge – that her recitation of scandal ensures her popularity with those she assists – points to a further crucial distinction between herself and the Lady Intelligence. Mrs Nightwork tells her tales to entertain and divert ladies, and by implication encourages them to indulge their delight in the failings of others, while the stories Intelligence tell have a specific purpose. Indeed, Intelligence explicitly defends herself against the charges Mrs Nightwork so easily concedes by claiming a definite purpose for herself and her tales:

> Did I wrong the good! accuse the innocent! that indeed would be blameable, but the libertine in practice, the devotee in profession, those that with the mask of hypocrisy undo the reputation of thousands, ought pitilessly, by a sort of retaliation, to be exposed themselves, and which I beg leave to appeal to the divine Astrea, whether it not be justice? (p. 137)

By claiming a political purpose, which implicitly recalls the frame narrative's political project of educating a future monarch, Intelligence guards against the assumption that her tales are mere entertainment.

In itself, the gossipy content was not enough to generate the scandal of the *New Atalantis*: although contemporary readers were eager to read the text, they did not seem to be startled by the revelations the text contained. Recall Arthur Maynwaring's reaction, recorded in a letter to Sarah Churchill, that the text contained nothing but 'very old, false, and incredible scandal'.[79] Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who was then living in the country and always eager to hear news of the court, read the first volume of the *New Atalantis* shortly after its publication in mid-1709. She was not astounded by its contents: rather, she hoped that Manley's 'faint essay', or attempt, would encourage a 'better pen to give more elegant and secret memoirs.' Upon hearing news of Manley's arrest, along with her printer and publisher, on charges of seditious libel, Montagu seemed to think the ministry had overreacted and claimed to 'have five hundred arguments at my fingers' end to prove the ridiculousness of those creatures that think it worth while to take notice of what is only designed for diversion'.[80]

Manley was arrested on 29 October, a little over a week after the second volume of the *New Atalantis* was published. She remained in custody for eight days before being admitted to bail on 5 November. Despite Manley's request for a 'speedy examination', the charges were

not heard until February the following year.[81] Manley was examined by Sunderland in his capacity as secretary of state and the trial was subsequently held at the court of the Queen's Bench.[82] Evidently the prosecution was not successful and, although no records survive, it appears the charges were dropped. The only detailed account of the trial is to be found in Manley's own writings, in her fictionalised autobiography *The Adventures of Rivella: A History of the Author of the Atalantis* (1714). Here, Manley wonders whether the charges were dismissed because 'the persons in power were ashamed to bring a woman to her trial for writing a few amorous trifles purely for her own amusement, or that our laws were defective, as most persons conceiv'd, because she had serv'd her self with romantick names and a feign'd scene of action?' Rivella emphasises the public aspects of the trial in her account and confides that, on several occasions, the Secretary of State 'expos[ed] her in person to walk cross the court before the bench of judges'.[83] This suggests that Manley experienced the trial as a public spectacle, and there is some indication that it was. Its existence and progress were remarked upon in several contemporary letters and diaries.[84] It was the operation of the law, as much as the content of Manley's text, that created the scandal of the *New Atalantis*.

As an author of scandalous fictions and disseminator of gossip, Manley stands in a problematic relationship to the figures of Intelligence and Nightwork. The superficial similarities are such that it has been suggested that the Lady Intelligence be read as Manley's 'emblematic self-representation'.[85] It is true that Intelligence's defense of the scandalous aspects of her information – that, by exposing hypocrisy, such stories were narrated in the pursuit of justice – echoes the standard defense of Augustan satire that Manley employed in the service of her own novels. In the preface to the second volume of the *New Atalantis*, for example, she claims that a satire such as hers serves as a substitute for the law because it performs a comparable public service. By directing her satire at particular individuals, rather than at immorality in general, her narrative prevents 'vice [from] stalk[ing] at noon, secure from reproach' (p. 132). However, the manner in which Mrs Nightwork defends her gossiping – by asserting that she may tell secrets indirectly and indeed must provide such entertainments in order to be popular with her clients – shadows Manley's own novel disturbingly and thus complicates any equation of Manley with Intelligence. Nightwork is prevented from directly relating the events she encounters in the course of her profession, but she claims a loophole that enables her to discuss such matters indirectly: 'I must not say I delivered my lady such a one of a lovely boy in such a place and at such a time, that is being directly

forsworn. But I may say, I did such a lady (describing her person as well as I can) the good office, but can't for my life imagine who she is' (p. 139). This recalls the techniques of Manley's own secret history and echoes the preface to the second volume of the *Atalantis*, where she remarks disingenuously that it is unnecessary to justify her techniques because she writes not of England but of 'an island with which those of ours are but little acquainted' (p. 132).

Indeed, Manley often relies upon the tropes of gossip that the Lady Intelligence disdains. This self-representation is particularly apparent in her fictionalised autobiography, *The Adventures of Rivella*. Manley claims that in writing the *Atalantis* she merely took 'up old stories that all the world had long since reported' and was motivated to do so by the treatment she had received herself: 'she did no more by others, than others had done by her (i.e.) tattle of frailties; the town had never shown any indulgence, but on the contrary reported ten-fold against her in matters of which she was wholly innocent'.[86] This is articulated, however, in a fictionalised representation of her trial for seditious libel and recalls the fact that the majority of these representations of her authorial project as gossip were written by Manley after her arrest and prosecution for the content of the *New Atalantis*. Perhaps these representations demonstrate that the position adopted by Intelligence proved untenable for Manley herself. Moreover, they illustrate the utility of the trope of gossip – that it is a way of disseminating information but, when pressed, disavowing intent.

Revealing Intelligence: court politics and Sarah Churchill

The specific positions that Intelligence is said to hold within Princess Fame's court are crucial. She is 'groom of the stole' and 'first lady of the bedchamber', the positions occupied in Queen Anne's household by Manley's real-life satiric target, Sarah Churchill the Duchess of Marlborough. This can be no accident, especially within the genre of the secret history which continually prompts its readers to seek an extra-textual significance for its narrative elements. The correspondence of their roles was first noticed by McDowell who, reading Intelligence as a figure for Manley, argues that it reveals a fundamental affinity between the author and her satiric target. Both Manley and Churchill are 'female intelligencers'; women who sought political involvement through the newly available medium of print.[87] Curiously, McDowell does not press this association further by considering the place of the groom of the stole within the Stuart court. A close examination of the duties of this office reveals a significant connection between the

operation of the court and the operation of Manley's text. It is this connection that unlocks the politics of the *New Atalantis*.

The groom of the stole was arguably one of the most important offices in the royal household. As part of the elaboration of the royal household under Henry VIII, the monarch's most private apartments – the privy or bedchamber – were separated from the chamber proper and duties allocated accordingly. The ceremonial life of the monarch remained the responsibility of the lord chamberlain and his staff, but private body service to the monarch became the responsibility of the bedchamber staff, headed by the groom of the stole.[88] By the reign of William III, the groom of the stole had become the third great office of the royal household and the intimate connection to the monarch represented by the privilege of body service was a clear sign of the office's prestige.[89] By using this office to indicate the close relationship between Intelligence and Princess Fame, Manley demonstrates that the significance of these offices within the royal household was widely known.

The new status of the bedchamber and its principal officer was articulated in the bedchamber ordinances, formulated by William in 1689 and adopted by Anne on her accession to the throne. This ordinance established the groom of the stole at the peak of its public dignity and importance: it was now the third great office of the royal household (after the lord chamberlain and lord steward).[90] The groom of the stole was entrusted with considerable power as her main responsibility was regulating access to the monarch.

Anne's continual poor health meant she spent a significant amount of time in her bedchamber, and so the groom of the stole was a particularly powerful position during her reign. As the ordinance decreed, individuals were only granted access to the bedchamber and the queen at the discretion of the groom of the stole. Only the highest office holders – the lords of the Privy Council and the secretary of state – were admitted as a matter of course.[91] The groom of the stole performed this regulatory function even during public drawing rooms, as royal etiquette stipulated that one could not approach the monarch before being formally presented by the holder of this office. Perhaps the most significant mark of distinction was that the groom of the stole was the only member of the royal household who did not have to 'send in' to the monarch to see if they would be received. The groom of the stole not only had unlimited access to the monarch herself but was also authorised to limit the access of others.[92]

The nature of the power exercised by the groom of the stole is evident in the symbol associated with the office: a gold key on a blue ribbon,

worn as a badge of office. This key not only symbolised the unrestricted access enjoyed by the holder of this office but also provided it, as it opened the royal bedchamber as well as the doors to the gardens, privy lodgings, and rooms of state in the various royal palaces.[93] Indeed, just as the lord chamberlain, lord steward and lord treasurer were frequently referred to by their symbol of office, as 'white staves', so the symbol of this office often replaced its name in contemporary parlance. Peter Wentworth substituted the symbol for the office in his correspondence and makes the implications of this rhetorical move explicit. Commenting on the appointment of a new groom of the stole on the accession of George I, he remarks: 'I think the Duke of Argyle very wise in accepting the key to the P— [Prince] for it will give him frequenter access to court than the junto men care for.'[94] The gold key of office appears prominently in Sarah's portrait and her occupation of this office was a source of considerable pride (see Illustration 2).

Illustration 2 Sir Godfrey Kneller, *Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, [1700], Petworth, The Egremont Collection (acquired in lieu of tax by H.M. Treasury in 1957 and subsequently transferred to The National Trust). © NTPL/Tim Stephens.

Manley's use of these titles to signify Intelligence's central role in the information business at a time when anxiety over the political influence of Anne's bedchamber women was a dominant cultural preoccupation is significant. By using this specific figure of official secrecy, Manley focuses her satiric representation on a single, prominent political figure and so gives her satire an immediate political utility. The charge most often levelled against Sarah Churchill in satires of the period was that she illegitimately privatised Queen Anne and monopolised royal bounty. A satirical poem of 1708, for example, represents Sarah as entirely dictating the actions of her queen: 'Nor shall she dare at my directing nod/To own her kindred, friends, her church, her God.'[95] Indeed, part of Sarah's fury at Abigail Masham, her cousin and Queen Anne's bedchamberwoman, was elicited by the fact that Masham had found a way to bypass Sarah's role as the queen's gatekeeper, by sneaking Robert Harley into the bedchamber and the presence of the queen by the famous 'backstairs'. Royal favourites behave in a similarly repressive manner in the *New Atalantis*. After observing the conduct of the Atalantic court and, in particular, the behaviour of the characters designed to represent the Marlboroughs, Astrea announces she will forbid her prince to:

> oppress his nation with the pride and avarice of favourites. That monarch who would entirely discharge his duty should have none [...] Have not all his subjects an equal title to the benefit of his attributes? And, how is it, then, that he suffers one or two to engross those benefits, representing things through their false, mischievous, or flattering glass, appropriating the royal ear and favour that should be open and shine diffusively as does the sun? (p. 211).

This criticism of royal favourites, directed particularly at Sarah Churchill, is reiterated throughout Manley's later secret history, *Memoirs of Europe*. There, Sarah is said to have deprived 'the noble Patricians that in former Reigns have serv'd their Country' of office, and presiding over a court where the 'few had usurp'd the Royalties of many'.[96]

The contrast between the Duchess of Marlborough's performance of her duties as groom of the stole and the manner in which these duties are discharged by Intelligence is instructive and points to Manley's satiric intentions. Unlike Sarah Churchill, who used her 'key' to make the monarchy secret and privatise the monarch within her chamber, Intelligence cannot keep anything to herself. Indeed, it is her very business to reveal all she knows. Upon her initial meeting with Astrea and Virtue, Intelligence declares she is 'engaged in a very pressing affair.

To be short, between friends, the King of this island is just dead; 'tis yet a mighty secret, but I must make what haste I can to divulge it'. When entrusted with the secret of the goddesses' identities moments later, Intelligence confesses, 'the honour of being let into so important a secret sits heavy upon me, 'till I have disburthened myself' (p. 13). In making Intelligence the 'groom of the stole', Manley is appropriating a symbol of secrecy and illegitimate restriction for her own satiric ends. The key that Sarah had used to closet the monarch becomes central in Manley's satire and its symbolism is reversed: rather than indicating the unrestricted access of an individual office holder, while also suggesting the capacity of that individual to prevent the access of others, the key is metamorphosed into part of the novel's textual apparatus. As a printed, supplementary text, the key to the *New Atalantis* becomes an instrument to release information about secret intrigues.

The critique of secrecy is conducted on all levels of the *New Atalantis*, and its cumulative effect is perhaps best demonstrated by the narration of the activities of the 'new Cabal', an exclusively female 'sect' encountered by the goddesses on their tour of Atalantis. Like the figure of Intelligence herself, the word 'cabal' would have engaged a set of specific associations for the contemporary reader of Manley's novel. The word had been applied to many political factions, but it came to be associated specifically with a particular group of ministers from Charles II's reign through a coincidence that meant 'cabal' was also an acronym of the first letters of their names or titles. This group – Sir Thomas Clifford, Lord Arlington, the Duke of Buckingham, Lord Ashley and the Earl of Lauderdale – were publicly associated with one of the greatest political scandals of Charles II's reign. This was the Treaty of Dover, which created an alliance with France against the Dutch and contained a secret clause, known to the cabal members, wherein Charles promised to declare himself a Roman Catholic on the outbreak of the projected war.[97] The group came to be known as 'The Cabal' and reified the political connotations of the word as an icon of the political duplicity fostered by secrecy. The designation of these women in the *New Atalantis* as the 'new Cabal' suggests that they are to be understood as the successors of this original group.

The episodes involving the new cabal in the *New Atalantis* are remarkable because they mark the only occasion where Intelligence is not 'minutely informed' of the otherwise secret predilections of the inhabitants of Atalantis. Unusually, she is reluctant to describe the practices of the cabal to the goddesses, and declares that she is unable to understand

the scandal they have generated in Atalantis. Intelligence is aware that the women of the cabal have been accused of lesbianism, but suggests that such an accusation requires the imagination to be extended beyond her capacities. Such censurers pretend to 'find the vices of old Rome revived [...] which could only subsist in imagination and can, in reality, have no other foundation than what are to be found in the dreams of poets' (p. 154). Intelligence declares that secrecy is a 'material article' of the cabal and her account reveals it is also an important part of the vocabulary of affection. The women 'meet, they caress, they swear inviolable secrecy and amity' (p. 155). She defends the cabal members because she believes that their secrecy conceals innocence and declares herself amazed at the malicious attempts to cast a taint on their mysteries. The stance Intelligence takes here violates the logic of the text, as the preceding tales in the *New Atalantis* demonstrate and the connotations of the word cabal emphasise, secrecy rarely conceals innocence but more usually covers political or sexual duplicity. The text has established that secrecy is a code or a signal of disreputable behaviour that the narrative acts to uncover or expose.

However, Intelligence description of the new cabal's activities presses her protestations of their virtue and chastity to the breaking point. This is especially evident in her account of the Marchioness of Sandomire who, dressed as a man, engages prostitutes to oblige her 'peculiar taste with all the liberties that belonged to women of their loose character and indigence'. Despite the implications of the description, Intelligence declares that these adventures could not 'in reality wound her chastity. Her virtue sacred to her lord and the marriage bed was preserved inviolable!' (p. 157). The irony generated by the tension between the account and its frame suggests that Intelligence's surprise and wonder is a posture and not a position she genuinely inhabits. Elizabeth Wahl has argued that Intelligence's conscious 'innocence' of the new cabal underscores the creation of 'open secret' and introduces a 'new coded language that is recognisable to the "knowing" female reader as well as to an elite male readership'.[98] The description of the cabal plays with the reader by alerting them to Intelligence's disingenuous stance but obscuring the cabal's pleasures from view. To read the narrative at Intelligence's word is to be hoodwinked by the text, while to search for sure evidence of their practices is to be frustrated. This suggests the vital play between the imagination of reader and the referential aspects of the text: it is in the productive interplay between the two that the pleasures of gossip and scandal reside.

On the basis of the *New Atalantis*, recent critics have asserted that Manley advocated open access to political information. In a representative argument, McDowell suggests that the information Manley presents in her text is intended for the lower orders, arguing that she demonstrates that '"rumour" and "gossip" were the 'news' of the politically disenfranchised' and 'shows how they could also be the tools'.[99] McDowell attributes the effect of the text to the intentions of the author, but it is not at all clear that Manley herself advocated open access to political information. In fact, Manley's later texts are troubled by the notion that the court and the cabinet are being exposed to a seemingly indiscriminate audience, despite the fact that they participate in this very project. This is made plain in her later secret history, *Memoirs of Europe*. Here, Manley represents the increasing role public opinion played in politics by suggesting that serious issues were 'made the sport of crowds' (p. 451). Manley's anxiety in this later novel is that the crowd will take up her tales, and repeat the example of *Lilli Burlero* with her texts. It can be argued that the genre of the secret history exceeds Manley's intentions as an author. Manley might intend her texts to act as a means of restoring the status of insider to members of the nobility, yet the genre promises that any of its readers can attain this position. An exploration of the relationship between Tory political ideologies and the genre of the secret history forms the theme of the next chapter.

3
Reforming Reference: Trials and Texts

> Every Man that Prints, Appeals to the People who Read, and ought to be content, to hear them pass their judgement – Nor is it unjust for any Man to Answer, Censure, or Animadvert, upon a Printed Paper, provided only that his Answers, Censures, or Animadversions, are but themselves to be defended in the nature of them.
>
> Daniel Defoe, *A Letter to Mr Bisset* [. . .] *In Answer to his Remarks on Dr Sacheverell's Sermon*, 1709

In the elections of November 1710, the unequivocal Whig majority elected only two years previously was resoundingly overturned. Observers estimated that the Tories now outnumbered the Whigs by at least two to one, an estimate that exaggerates the size of the majority but accurately reveals the perceived magnitude of the changes the election wrought.[1] Delariver Manley claimed a role in securing this surprising victory. In letters to Robert Harley, she nominated *New Atalantis* as 'the first public attempt made against those designs and that Ministry, which have been since so happily changed' and proclaimed its success in 'exposing the enemies of our constitution' and 'open[ing] the eyes of the crowd'.[2] Although she freely asserts the *Atalantis*'s role in persuading the crowd of Tory principles in these letters, Manley's subsequent secret history, *Memoirs of Europe* (1710), is critical of the operation of public opinion in contemporary politics. The reading public, which is neither imagined nor invoked in the *New Atalantis*, figures prominently in *Memoirs of Europe*, as do the schemes of the Junto politicians and the 'mercenary scribblers' employed on their behalf. The propaganda sponsored by the Whig Junto 'quickly Poison'd the unwary Multitude' and serious issues, such as the right of resistance and passive obedience,

becomes the 'sport of crowds'.[3] Throughout the narrative, the reading public are represented as unfit to participate in political processes. Even the Tory victory at the recent elections is attributed to divine intervention and not to the good judgment of a right-thinking public. The outcome, Manley writes, 'could be interpreted to nothing but the express finger of God, his Almighty influencing Spirit dispers'd amongst the meanest of the Crowd'.[4]

It is perhaps because of this disdain for the critical capacity of her readers that the narrative of *Memoirs of Europe* is considerably less opaque than *New Atalantis*. The fictional names given to contemporary figures are easy to decode and linear structure of the narrative reflects the real chronology of the events represented. *Memoirs of Europe* marks a definite departure from the narrative structure of the *New Atalantis*, where historical events are projected into the future and biographical figures appeared in several different guises. The most recent editors of *Memoirs of Europe* suggest Manley's new-found clarity was a direct result of the foreshadowed loss of power of the politicians whose vices she exposed and the likelihood she would be protected from future reprisals.[5] However, while this security no doubt increased Manley's confidence, the text itself suggests the clarified narrative style was the result of other factors. The narrative indicates this new transparency was produced by an increased consciousness of both the materiality of print and the fallibility of readers.

Rather than returning to the deliberate ambiguities that surrounded her role in the *New Atalantis* and protected her from prosecution, Manley made her responsibility for *Memoirs of Europe* an incontrovertible fact. Her initials are subscribed to the dedication of the first volume and she personally registered the text with the Stationers' Company in accordance with the newly enacted copyright laws, becoming one of the first authors of either sex to do so.[6] In particular, *Memoirs of Europe* is marked by an awareness of the differences between gossip in its oral and printed forms. The narrator comments on this distinction, remarking: 'I have often wonder'd at it, why that Man shou'd be thought uncharitable, a Satryist, or Libeller, who but repeats with his Pen what every Body fearlessly reports with their Tongue: Is it because the Reproach is more indelible?'[7] Once in print, gossip loses its productive ephemerality. Moreover, in order to exploit the fluidity that characterises oral gossip, authors must rely on readers to decode their strategic ambiguities. If readers are not up to the task, then authors must speak plainly.

While the narrative of *Memoirs of Europe* registers one reconfiguration of the secret history in 1710, literary history records another. Whig

writers and polemicists appropriated the genre of the secret history, hitherto associated almost exclusively with the Tory party, in increasing numbers following the elections of 1710. In fact, in a sharp reversal of earlier patterns, the majority of secret histories published in the remaining four years of Anne's reign were written with a bias *against* the Tory party.[8] Annabel Patterson focuses on these later secret histories in order to establish the importance of the genre in the production of liberal thought and practice. She argues that, following the revolution of 1688, the secret history 'became recognisably a Whig genre, and hence spawned some Tory repartee in the first decades of the eighteenth century'.[9] Patterson dismisses secret histories that engage tropes of sexual scandal, mentioning Manley only in passing and disregarding the *New Atalantis* altogether in spite of its popularity and its well documented public effects.[10] Consequently, her account of the secret history's role in the production of democratic practices is overly neat. She argues that there was an explicit 'structural relationship between the genre and the fundamental liberal issues, freedom of information, freedom of speech, freedom of the press'.[11] However, as the arguments presented in the previous chapter have shown, secrecy and openness were inter-implicated in the genre of the secret history. The genre had to be re-formed and separated from its origins in the material culture of the court for a relationship between the secret history and democratic principles to appear self-evident. Indeed, the affiliation of the genre with the ideologies of the Tory party produces peculiar disjunctions in attempts by writers otherwise affiliated to appropriate it for their own purposes.

Perhaps this shift in the political bias of the genre can be attributed to the fact that the Whigs, who had enjoyed a majority in the House of Commons when the *New Atalantis* was published, were now the exiled party.[12] However, this alteration has its origins in another public event. The incendiary sermon delivered by Dr Henry Sacheverell in late November 1709 and the events surrounding the subsequent impeachment of its author focused attention on the public consequences of unregulated interpretation of texts. The Doctor's trial, alongside the *Atalantis*, is one of the two most significant legal, political, and literary events of Queen Anne's reign. Sacheverell's sermon, and the events surrounding the trial that followed, wrought a fundamental alteration in the respective relationship between the Tory and Whig parties and the political public. As a result, the Whigs became as interested as the Tories had been in communicating under cover. This chapter investigates the radical reconfiguration of the relationship between political events and the reading public registered by the Sacheverell trial and by

the appropriation of the genre of the secret history by those outside the Tory perspective.

The reading public and the spectacle of Dr Henry Sacheverell

The calendar in early eighteenth-century England was replete with anniversaries that served as reminders of the country's turbulent recent history. Some of these anniversaries, such as the revolution of 1688, were commemorated publicly in order to reaffirm their meaning; others, such as the date of William III's death, were celebrated clandestinely by those who sought to reanimate political principles that ran counter to the current order.[13] The fifth of November was one of the most significant dates in the official political calendar. It commemorated the providential failure of the Gunpowder Plot – a Catholic conspiracy to blow up James I and his parliament – as well as the day William of Orange landed on English shores. These two events were celebrated annually and by law with a service at St Paul's Cathedral that was attended by court, city and church dignitaries. The sermon delivered on this day was intended as a celebration of the ideology and achievements of the Whig party, and customarily denounced the evils of Popery while lauding the Revolution of 1688 and the benefits it conferred on the fortunate English.

In 1709, the sermon was delivered by Dr Henry Sacheverell at the invitation of the recently elected Tory Lord Mayor of London. Sacheverell was a force to be reckoned with in the High Tory camp, not only for his passionate preaching but also for his direct involvement in party politics. His activities in this regard are memorialised in Daniel Defoe's famous parody of High Church clergy, *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* (1702), and his reputation was such that a full six months before the famous sermon, a fellow clergyman noted 'nothing is so much talked of as [Sacheverell] all over town'.[14] Given his reputation, it is no surprise that Sacheverell chose to ignore the accepted significance of the fifth of November. His ninety-minute sermon promoted the traditional Tory commitments of passive obedience and non-resistance, and excoriated fundamental Whig principles, such as the consent of the governed and the right of resistance. Focusing on the revolution of 1688, the proving ground of Whig ideology, Sacheverell expounded his chosen text, 'in perils among false brethren' (2 Cor. 11:26), in relation to the presence of Protestant dissenters and occasional conformists in the Church and in relation to those who rejected divine right doctrine in the State. Throughout the sermon, Sacheverell associated the corruptions of false

brethren with the Whig ministry and made oblique references to specific individuals. Godolphin was included in the sermon as Volpone, a sobriquet that had gained broad currency through the popular press and thus a reference that, as one contemporary noted, 'was next to naming him'.[15]

The audience that gathered to hear Sacheverell had no doubt that the sentiments expressed in sermon were seditious. Three weeks later, the sermon was published and sold in extraordinary numbers. It is estimated that 100,000 copies were sold in Great Britain alone and, further, that each of these copies had several readers. The audience who had heard Sacheverell deliver the original sermon was limited to a few hundred people, but its publication enabled it to be read, at the most narrowly conservative estimate, by at least a quarter of a million men and women.[16] Yet, in spite of the text's obvious transgressions, Sacheverell was not charged with seditious libel. The published sermon avoids direct references to particular persons or events and, perhaps learning from the fate of authors like Manley who was arrested on charges of seditious libel only six days before he delivered his sermon at St Paul's, Sacheverell also sought the advice of three different lawyers before the text was published.[17]

However, the extraordinarily wide dissemination of the printed version meant parliament could not let the seditious sermon pass without punishment. Accordingly, the Whig majority in the House of Commons took the decision to impeach Sacheverell for high crimes and misdemeanours. The trial was seen by the Whig managers of the impeachment as a chance to make an example of Sacheverell and stem the growing practice of clergymen using their pulpits for political ends. It was also the perfect public forum in which to consolidate the commitments of the Whig party against Sacheverell's criticism. The articles of impeachment make this intention manifest. They declare Sacheverell's sermon 'asperse[d] the Memory of his late Majesty' and 'maintain[ed] that the necessary Means us'd to bring about the said happy Revolution were odious and unjustifiable'.[18] Defoe noted astutely in his *Review* that the trial would determine more than the fate of Dr Sacheverell: it would also evaluate the 'validity of the Revolution [...] the present constitution and [...] the Church established by law'.[19] A printed text was set to become the centrepiece of legal events that assumed national significance.

Impeachment trials customarily ran for between three and five days before the Bar in the House of Lords, and were closed to the non-parliamentary public. The Sacheverell trial broke with all these

conventions, most dramatically in the fact that its proceedings were opened to the public. Christopher Wren was commissioned to erect extra seating in Westminster Hall that, once complete, accommodated close to two thousand spectators.[20] Tickets to proceedings were issued to the clamorous public in the weeks leading up to the trial, but demand far exceeded the supply and so Londoners had to exploit all their connections in order to secure a place in the gallery.

Women were particularly eager to attend the trial, and were a significant presence at the trial itself. Sarah Churchill, who still occupied the office of the groom of the stole, created a scandal on the opening day by making her allegiances clear: she left her designated place near Queen Anne to join the Whig managers of the prosecution, only relinquishing her newly-assumed seat under the escort of the Serjeant-at-Arms.[21] Anne Clavering (the sister-in-law of William Cowper, the Whig Lord Chancellor), rose at four a.m. on each of the trial's twenty-five days in order to secure a seat inside Westminster, while Lady Rooke snatched back a chicken wing offered to the man seated next to her upon discovering he did not share her sympathies for the Doctor.[22] The Tory party undoubtedly encouraged the passionate identification of women with the Doctor's cause. They sponsored the sale of 'Emblematical FANS, with the true Effigies of the Reverend Dr Henry Sacheverell done to the Life, and several curious Hieroglyphicks in Honour of the Church of England, finely painted and mounted on extraordinary genteel Sticks', that would display and heighten women's attachment to the Doctor.[23] By the conclusion of the trial, Sacheverell had become the nation's most eligible bachelor and, as he passed through villages en route to his new living in the country, he was waylaid often by women who 'went to get a kiss of him'.[24] Representations of the trial return obsessively to the involvement of women as an index of the extent to which the events excited the passions of the public rather than their reason. Defoe thought the trial had wrought a permanent 'Transmutation of Customs as they affect the Sexes', as:

> the Women lay aside their Tea and Chocolate, leave off Visiting after Dinner, and forming themselves into Cabals, turn Privy Counsellors, and settle the State: The Men leave off Smoking Tobacco, learn plain Work, and to knit Knots, play at push Pin [...] and leave the more Weighty Affairs of the Nation, to the newly assuming Sex, whose Business it is, they say, (under a Petticoat Government, as they call it) more now than usual.[25]

Defoe was not alone in suggesting that women's rapt attention to the progress of the trial had disordered the relationship between the sexes. The author of *The Officers' Address* (1710) complained that young ladies were so passionately devoted to the Doctor that the marriage market was in total disarray.[26]

The trial was a public event in two very different ways. For those who attended the proceedings in London, it was a physical spectacle witnessed from the renovated stadium-like interior of Westminster Hall. Those who were not able to witness this spectacle first hand were still privy to events through the press, as hundreds of authors defended or impugned Sacheverell in print. The trial sparked a paper war of immense proportions such that, in the pages of the *Tatler*, the 'political upholsterer' is said to devote all his hours to reading these publications in a futile attempt to keep abreast of events.[27] Consequently, proceedings were opened out to an audience that far exceeded the two thousand or so individuals who occupied seats at Westminster: they took place before a reading public that rivalled the entire electorate of England and Wales in size.[28]

These readers had been exposed to an increasing number of political events through popular genres concerned with political gossip such as the secret history. Through their experience of reading and evaluating these texts, members of this reading public were developing a habit of active critical engagement with political issues. These habits had public consequences that had not been anticipated by either the Whig managers of the prosecution or Sacheverell's Tory supporters. However Sacheverell, the subject of their attention, seemed mindful of the reading public's potential.

Sacheverell used the press strategically in his defense. His formal answer to the articles of impeachment was prepared in advance of the trial and was circulated to the public before being presented to the parliament. This was done, as a contemporary observer noted, in order to 'incense the People and prepossess them in his favour, before there were any Proceedings upon it'.[29] Sacheverell counters the four articles with nineteen detailed pages. In these, he analyses the sections of his sermon that underwrite the impeachment charges and contests the interpretation offered by the prosecution. His case is carefully constructed, and supported by precise references to the lines and pages of his sermon so that readers can understand the principles on which his argument rests. In part, this was undoubtedly a strategy designed to encourage readers to purchase copies of his sermon so they could peruse these controversial passages in full. However, it also draws the reader into his defense,

implicitly inviting them to read the original passages for themselves and judge which interpretation was correct. The involvement of readers in the events of the trial, encouraged at its outset by Sacheverell, was sustained by the deluge of pamphlets, prints, and periodicals produced over its course.

Those on either side of the quarrel represented the public's involvement with the trial as evidence of a national epidemic of irrationality. John Dunton makes this explicit in characterising Sacheverell as a knight errant. He writes, 'I call him Errant, because he wanders about, like the Crack-brain'd *Don of Mancha*, in *Quest of Imaginary Giants*, and Monsters that wou'd ravish, or eat up *Dulcinea*, his Ideal Mistress (what he calls) the CHURCH'.[30] Jack Touchwood elaborated this conceit in a letter to Isaac Bickerstaff, the *Tatler*'s eidolon. He dubs Sacheverell '*DON HENRICO FURIOSO de SACHEVERELLO, Knight of the Firebrand*' and suggests that, just as 'his clear sighted Predecessor took every Inn for a Castle, and the very Scrubs of both Sexes for Knights and Damsels, so our Modern Adventurer falls into a very odd Conceit'. Touchwood detects the foundation of Sacheverell's mania in his approach to written texts. Connecting the Doctor's reading strategies to the methods of torture employed by the Inquisitors, he argues Sacheverell 'racks a text to make it confess *a meaning it never dream'd of*'.[31] As Wendy Motooka has argued, this image of textual torture signifies the extent to which 'quixotism is a tyranny over meaning, a conflation of reason and force'.[32] Representations of the trial suggest the Doctor's mania spread to the people, depriving them of their wits as well. The *Examiner* would later write that 'the true spirit of Quixotism' has not just 'touch[ed] here and there a weak Head, or reach[ed] only to a few frolicksome Individuals' but it has 'Infected whole Bodies and Societies'.[33] The interpretative practices modelled by the Doctor and adopted by the nation parodied rational discourse. Moreover, their inflationary tendencies easily segued into actual activity on the streets of London.

The most disturbing indicator of the public's involvement in the trial was provided by the crowds of people that surged alongside Sacheverell's coach as he made his way to Westminster each day and returned each evening for his journey home. On the third day of the trial the crowd that accompanied Sacheverell on his return journey – estimated to be three thousand strong by one observer – failed to disperse and began to riot through London's West End, chanting 'High Church and Sacheverell'. The crowd focused their attention on the meeting houses

of dissenters (the 'false brethren' of Sacheverell's speech), sacking and demolishing six of the best known and making huge bonfires of their contents. Lasting eight hours, these riots are among the worst popular disturbances in eighteenth-century England, second only to the Gordon Riots that took place later in the century.[34]

Londoners were fearful of a return to the tumults of the civil war and so militia were posted at key points in the city for the remainder of the trial. Johann Phillip Hoffmann, the imperial resident in London, believed England had not experienced such convulsions since Cromwell's time.[35] If, as I have already suggested, the trial had become a public site for the struggle over the meanings of the Glorious Revolution, then this struggle took place in the shadow of recurring mob violence and under the continual pressure of public opinion. These events made it clear that the trial did not provide a stage on which political meanings could be comprehensively debated and, finally, consolidated before a passive public of spectators. Rather, this public was informed and attempted to directly involve themselves in determining its events.

These riots posed a challenge to traditional party ideologies. Adopting 'High Church and Sacheverell' as its battle cry, the mob declared its allegiance to the Tories, the party that traditionally represented expressions of popular opinion as the harbinger of violence and anarchy. In fact, Sacheverell himself denounced popular opinion in the dedication to the very sermon that elicited this show of popular support. He maintained 'truth [is] oppress'd by Number, and Noise, and Rebellious Appeals to the People'.[36] The irony was not lost on contemporaries: Robert Harley's nephew commented that popular insurrection was 'an odd way of defending passive obedience and non-resistance'.[37] In stark contrast, the Whigs found the national will they had long esteemed as the only legitimate foundation for government was now against them.[38] One observer commented that, having cultivated the idea of the public as a political force, they were:

> surprised to find that the people or mob as they called them, were entirely turned against them upon whose interests and affections they pretended ever since the Revolution to this time to value themselves, having by newspapers, pamphlets and speeches in parliament, magnified their power and to whom upon all occasions they appealed; but to their great mortification, they found the whole body of the common people of London enraged at the prosecution of the Doctor.[39]

Although there is a conceptual distinction to be made between the free consent of the political nation and the public disobedience of the unenfranchised lower orders, they cannot be wholly dissociated. And so, to the contemporary mind, there was a clear disjunction between the political ideologies traditionally espoused by each party and the position they adopted in relation to popular opinion during Sacheverell's trial.

Faced with an overwhelming show of popular support for the Doctor, writers affiliated with the Whigs were forced to use the language and rhetoric of the Tory party and dismiss the Sacheverell rioters as a blind, impulsive multitude.[40] In the popular press they argued the people had been duped into rioting by High Church clergy and Tory politicians; that the Sacheverell rioters were an artificial mob because they did not express the genuine will of the people. Thus, Whig writers denounced the Sacheverell rioters while maintaining the rights of the English people to determine the course of the political nation.[41] Similarly, although Tory polemicists and politicians made strategic reference to these expressions of overwhelming popular support for their cause, they mostly sought to distance their party from the people's vigorous demonstrations in their favour. Far from embracing this popular support, Tories argued the pro-Sacheverell mobs had been engineered by the Whigs in order to discredit their rival party.[42]

The public's passionate involvement with the trial became an urgent political issue. Under the pressure of addressing the unpredictable phenomenon of the rioters, both the Whig and Tory parties unwittingly mediated the ideological gulf that separated their approach to the public and, in doing so, collaborated in the rhetorical construction of a more or less unified 'public'. As a result, the Whig and Tory parties came to view the actively-engaged public, and not the other party, as their ultimate adversary. This mutual recognition, as John Lucaites has argued, prompted the Whig prosecution and the Tory defence to collaborate in order to negotiate the meaning of the revolution of 1688 as an emblem for the relationship between the public and the state.[43] Over the course of the trial, the interpretation of such traditional Tory principles as passive obedience and non-resistance offered by the defence came to mirror the meanings accorded to the Whig principle of the right of resistance by the prosecution. The people retained the right to resist their government, but it was only legitimate to exercise this right in extraordinary circumstances. Although they retained their traditional labels, the Tories and the Whigs actually came to a consensus as to the nature and structure of the relationship between the government and the governed as a

result of the trial. In this sense, the rioting over Sacheverell's impeachment marked 'a turning point' in both the doctrines of each party and in their relations to the political public.[44]

In the pamphlets produced around the trial and the arguments mounted by each party over its course, new definitions of the political public begin to emerge. The Whigs gradually began to insist that the political public explicitly excluded the mob. Although they still insisted that the government was accountable to the people, the people were restricted to the middling sort and their betters.[45] This brought the Whigs into closer alignment with the idea of the public that the Tory party had upheld all along. As we have seen, the trial prompted an awareness of the close connections between politics and literature, and demonstrated that the latter could play an instrumental role in the former. The public's fervent engagement with the progress of the impeachment strongly suggested that the audience for propaganda needed to be delimited. Indeed, it seems that the events surrounding the Sacheverell trial illustrated the necessity of addressing the general public in narrow terms, specifically as a reading public rather than a force that could take to the streets. Through policing these borders and circumscribing the methods of address, the nature of public involvement could be regulated. The remainder of this chapter will demonstrate how this new relationship was consolidated through the reconfiguration of the secret history by authors affiliated with the Whig party. Daniel Defoe's *The Secret History of the White Staff* provides a particularly appropriate occasion to investigate this shift as this text also responds to the impeachment of a public figure.

(Re)Forming reference: reading *The Secret History of the White Staff*

Daniel Defoe was thoroughly implicated in the Sacheverell affair. His texts were quoted liberally by both the prosecution and defence in order to illustrate the abuses of authors and, in turn, Defoe devoted whole weeks of his paper, *The Review*, to the trial's events. Defoe was also among the many authors affiliated with the Whig party who sought to appropriate the secret history for their own purposes. He opened his first secret history, *Atalantis Major* (1710), by claiming Manley's earlier text as his model, and published six secret histories in the coming four years.[46] Significantly, he used the genre to defend the conduct of his sometime-patron, Robert Harley, as rumours he would be impeached by the new ministry began to circulate. Entitled *The Secret History of the White Staff*

(1714–15), this text exonerated Harley from suspicion of intriguing with the Jacobites by exposing the real conspirators within his own party. If the response of fellow authors is anything to go by, the text had a respectable readership. Challenges to its version of Harley's last days in office issued rapidly from the pens of interested contemporaries. However, *The Secret History of the White Staff* was not successful in forestalling Harley's rumoured impeachment, which took place in mid-1715. Nevertheless, Harley relied heavily on the representation of events in this text in defending himself against the charges once they were levelled, and Defoe's most recent biographer has argued that *The Secret History of the White Staff* played an important role in securing Harley's acquittal when he was finally brought to trial. Like the *New Atalantis* before it, this text also had significant public effects.

The Secret History of the White Staff was published anonymously, but the fact it was by Defoe quickly became common knowledge and was publicised by authors who sought to contest his account of Harley's last days in office.[47] Some readers, most often those on the other side of the political spectrum, were quick to assign a second author to *The Secret History of the White Staff*, believing the text had been produced with the collaboration of its subject. Harley was intent on countering this perception and publicly rejected rumours of his participation. He went to such lengths as to place a notice in the *Evening Post* disavowing involvement in the pamphlets, claiming they were published without his knowledge, direction, or encouragement.[48] J. A. Downie, the principal chronicler of Harley's relation to the press, argues that the professional relationship between Defoe and Harley had disintegrated by the end of Anne's reign, but notes Defoe continued to defend Harley in print despite the fact he was no longer paid or encouraged to do so.[49] It is possible that Defoe mounted his defence of Harley independently, out of gratitude to his former patron. However, considering the clandestine nature of their early relationship, it is more likely Defoe persisted with Harley's approval and perhaps also with his financial support.

The Secret History of the White Staff appears to have been designed to have political effects that extended beyond its immediate utility as a defense of Harley's conduct. In what almost amounts to a procedural statement, Defoe writes his secret history lets his readers:

> into the State of things transacted within Doors, which otherwise they had been Strangers to; and concerning which they were in great Uncertainty, by reason of the various Misrepresentations of evil Men, who either for Interest, or for mischievous Ends, sought to have

> publick persons, and publick Things also, seen only in such Disguises, as they thought fit to make them withal.[50]

Defoe intends to restore the public character of political processes and to overturn the practice of secrecy that he sees as illegitimate. This is similar to the claims Manley makes for her own text, the *New Atalantis*. However, as the previous chapter has demonstrated, Manley is not only concerned to expose public corruption – that is, the decisions taken in cabinet and cabal that have public effects – but she is also intent to expose the secrets of the private lives of her subjects. The *New Atalantis* assumes that the public act and the private person are intimately linked and that the propriety of one provides an indicator as to the propriety of the other. The salacious details of her text are a way of representing political, or public, corruption.

In *The Secret History of the White Staff*, Defoe assumes a different model of the relationship between the public and private actions of the individual. In this, Defoe is governed by a sense of decorum to which he draws attention at several points in his text. In a representative instance, he refers to a rumour that the group of Tories whose actions precipitated Harley's fall from office in 1714 were associated with the Jacobites, but declares, 'I will not load them with Things which I think have their Foundation in the common Prejudices, unless farther Proof was made of the Particulars.'[51] The sense of propriety Defoe evokes at these moments in the text is clearly connected to his sense of genre. He emphasises the historical elements of his secret history, rather than those elements that could be construed as fictional or scandalous. He claims to follow different generic conventions to earlier secret histories, writing that 'this secret Relation being purposed for a History only, shall not fall upon the Persons of any, who, by the Necessity of the Relation, we are not compell'd to speak of'.[52] Remarks such as these recur throughout the text and, with them, Defoe formulates different generic rules for his secret history and, in a sense, recasts the genre. Instead of conflating public and private as Manley does in her text, Defoe insists on their separation.

Although this is a defence of Harley's conduct, it is also a valorisation of his infamous trickery. He was known to his contemporaries as 'Robin the Trickster', and his love of secrecy was notorious.[53] This character is recalled in *The Secret History of the White Staff*, but it is suggested here that his secrecy was indispensable to the successful management of public affairs. Harley's secretive behaviour was designed to thwart the plots and cabals that threatened the state; he could not have frustrated these schemes had he acted transparently. He is able to defeat an early

conspiracy to remove him from office, for example, because he 'made himself so effectually Master of the Plot, even before it broke out, that he baffled them both ways'.[54] The tactical foundation of Harley's secrecy is elaborated as Defoe builds a defense of his conduct:

> *Tho' the Sum* of all this was, That as the Success of all his Management was, in a great measure, owing to his being Master of his own Measures, and he saw great Reason not to put his Schemes in some hands, who were mighty importunate to be trusted, They less regarding the publick Good, than the gratifying the Vanity of being employ'd, took an Offence even there where they ought, had they been in the same Post, to have acted in the same manner, or have been expos'd to the Censure of the whole World, for Men who were not equal to their own Measures.[55]

His secrecy is represented as public-spirited and not, as in the instances of secrecy traced in the *New Atalantis*, the result of a desire to advance his private interest. Interestingly, Harley's own answer to the impeachment charges, tabled to the House of Commons four years later, echoes this 'fictional' defense. Harley claimed that his seeming deceptions were designed 'to serve the public, and without any view to his own private advantage'.[56] In this way *The Secret History of the White Staff* reconfigures the ideological assumptions of Manley's *New Atalantis* and the genre of the secret history more generally. Secrecy no longer necessarily signifies illegitimate influence and corruption, but instead can be the sign of practised management of public affairs.

There is a clear link drawn in *The Secret History of the White Staff* between this notion – that is, that the security of the state depends upon restricting full knowledge of certain matters to a select group of individuals – and the *arcana imperii* of monarchical government. In the model of politics that emerges from *The Secret History of the White Staff*, Harley stands in the place occupied with respect to information by the king or queen in a monarchy. In fact, the word 'arcana' is regularly used to describe the deep secrets that animate Harley's successful management of public affairs. Harley recognises flaws in Bishop Atterbury's character, for example, and so 'kept him at *Bay* as to Secrets, and acted with reserve to him in the *Arcana*'.[57] Like the *arcana imperii* of monarchical government, the secrets of Harley's government are those that can be legitimately kept and that are necessary to the efficient operation of the state. Habermas, however, argues that the practice of publicity emerged and was consolidated against the concept of *arcana*

imperii.[58] This suggests the idea of licensed privacy wanes in exact proportion to the development of the public's right to know; that the existence of publicity necessarily supplants the practice of institutional secrecy. This narrative is not sufficiently nuanced to account for the actual relationship between publicity and the *arcana* in early eighteenth-century England. It seems there was little diminution in the principle of political secrecy, but rather a change in its orientation. The principle of political secrecy is now attached to the commons rather than to the court and, as a result, there is a fundamental change in the way this secrecy is imagined. It is no longer part of the mystification of the royal body and a necessary adjunct to the principles of monarchical government, but instead is specifically associated with the flow of information. Secrecy is a matter of restricting access to documents and information, rather than an acquisitive personal practice that is akin to vices such as sexual profligacy.

It is also the *arcana* of Harley's management that *The Secret History of the White Staff* explicitly takes for its subject. The third volume, for example, ends by foreshadowing a sequel, as there are several areas 'which have some *Arcana* of publick Matters to bring to light, before the History of the *White-Staff* can be said to be complete'.[59] Indeed, those who sought to discredit the account offered in this text did so by challenging Defoe's claim to expose state secrets. One author sought to discredit *The Secret History of the White Staff* by suggesting that it presents common knowledge as if it were secret – that the author has done no more than 'tease' the public with a 'parcel of Stale Stories, for Arcanas of State' – challenging him to 'name one Fact that has not been told a thousand Times in as many *Coffee-Houses*'.[60] Defoe's claim to be master of the arcana meant that he and Harley occupied analogous positions: both are conversant with the deep secrets of state management, and mediate this information to the public. Defoe has the added responsibility of explaining and publicising their import. Secrecy is imagined to attend both the principal minister and the privileged author.

While Harley's secrecy is recuperated in *The Secret History of the White Staff*, other forms of secrecy are uncovered as the narrative unfolds and their legitimacy questioned. The secretive behaviour of others, such as Henry Bolingbroke, Francis Atterbury and Simon Harcourt, is sharply distinguished from Harley's own strategic withholding of information. Their shared desire for material benefit separates them from Harley, but so does their collaboration with women. The narrator uncovers the hitherto undisclosed involvement of Abigail Masham in a plot orchestrated by Atterbury and Harcourt to remove Harley from office. This is not

only the most secret aspect of a clandestine plot, but it is also the secret that lies at the heart of *The Secret History of the White Staff*. The narrator declares: 'the secret part of this History is that there is a Woman at the Bottom of all this Matter'.[61] Abigail's involvement in manipulating public events is especially scandalous because it signifies the use of illegitimate 'influence' to achieve political outcomes rather than the use of rational management. This is highlighted by the terms in which her participation in public matters are most frequently cast. In using Abigail to effect their schemes, Atterbury and Harcourt are said to be 'plough[ing] with the Heifers of the Court'.[62] This idiosyncratic phrase is from the Old Testament, where is it coined by Samson upon discovering his betrothed has assisted her people, the Philistines, to decode a riddle he set as a challenge (Judg. 14). Samson is furious his riddle has been deciphered through the influence of his bride-to-be rather than through the operation of reasoning or logic as he had intended. The narrator of *The Secret History of the White Staff* elaborates the significance of this aphorism for its new context, suggesting that this 'homely Saying' refers to the exploitation of 'Female Weakness, and the timorous Nature of Women to enforce [...] Importunate Measures'.[63] Given the documented relationship between Harley and Masham, especially her role in gaining him access to the queen, the relocation of this inappropriate relationship to Harley's enemies is strategic. In fact, the Duchess of Marlborough used a similar turn of phrase to describe the relationship that developed between Harley and Abigail Masham, referring to Anne's new favourite as 'the machine in the hands of Harley'.[64] The association of women with influence is a way of stigmatising a particular mode of political operation that proceeds through personality.

As a self-proclaimed secret history, *The Secret History of the White Staff* draws on a range of techniques to distance its representation from its referents. The principal subject of the secret history, Robert Harley, is referred to throughout the text as the 'white staff', the symbol of his office as Lord Treasurer. However, this was a commonplace rhetorical strategy. Holders of important court offices were regularly referred to by the symbols associated with their role – the Lord Treasurer, along with the Lord Chamberlain and Lord Steward, were known collectively as the 'white staves', while the office of the groom of the stole was often referred to as the 'key'. Other characters are designated by innuendoes, rather than fictional names, and elements of their proper name or title are blanked out. The Duke of Marlborough is referred to as the D. of M——h, Lord Godolphin becomes the Earl of Godo——n, and

Kensington Palace is Ken——ton.[65] No doubt, these seemingly perfunctory attempts to disguise real persons are employed in part as legal technicalities, designed to enable the text to evade prosecution under the libel laws, the consequences of which Defoe had first-hand experience.[66] In this very publication, Defoe confesses his fear of 'follow[ing] the Truth too close at the Heels' and of 'touching the Follies of some Men, before they are dispossess'd of the Power to resent it'.[67] However, this is more than a perfunctory legal strategy, it is a narrative style with significant epistemological implications.

There is a constitutive difference between the use of innuendo in the *The Secret History of the White Staff* and the fictional names more usually employed by authors of secret histories and satires. The scandalous allegations made in *The Secret History of the White Staff* are not suggested or reinforced by these names as they are by the designations Manley chooses for her subjects. The designation of Richard Steele as Monsieur L'Ingrate in the *New Atalantis*, for example, prompts the interaction of text and reader that is necessary to produce the libellous referent of the text. The combination of letters and dashes that simultaneously screen and reveal the identities of characters in *The Secret History of the White Staff* are substantively different. While readers could associate a character bearing a fictional name with any number of real-life figures, the compass of their libellous imagination is restricted when confronted with a character such as the D. of M——h or a location like Ken——ton to the boundaries prescribed by the initial and concluding consonant. The effects of this strategy were addressed a decade later by the 'publisher' of the 1728 edition of the *Dunciad*. The names of the dunces were 'disemvowelled' in this edition and the publisher explains that he thought 'it better to preserve them as they are, than to change them for fictitious names, by which the Satyr would only be multiplied and applied to many instead of one'.[68] The reader's autonomy is sharply curtailed by this strategy, as they must connect the events of the narrative to the real world within the relatively narrow pathways mapped by the text.

The structure of reference in *The Secret History of the White Staff* is significantly different from that found in previous examples of the genre, most particularly in the *New Atalantis*. Reference in the *New Atalantis* operates in such a way as to continually remind the reader of the relationship between real events and their representation in the text. In contrast, the referential act in *The Secret History of the White Staff* directs the reader to other printed accounts rather than substantiating its claims

through eyewitness reports or the politics of reputation. When discussing a conspiracy to remove the Duke of Marlborough from office, the anonymous narrator does not provide his reader with eyewitness testimony but instead claims 'to have many Tracts written about the Years 1708–9–10, to prove this'.[69] On another occasion, the narrator refers to a letter written by Queen Anne to Sophia, Electress of Hanover, in order to refute contemporary rumours that Anne intended to reverse the Protestant succession. In this letter, Anne avows that if Sophia could '*propose anything for their further* Satisfaction and Security in the matter of the Succession, her Majesty would *come into it with Zeal*'. Following the quotation, the reader is directed to 'See Her Majesty's Letter'. Readers who were so inclined could actually examine Anne's letter: it was published shortly after it was written along with two other items of royal correspondence, and was subsequently incorporated into Whig and Tory propaganda.[70]

The repeated references to external documents found in *The Secret History of the White Staff* imply that printed documents provide automatic authentication of the narrative. Previous secret histories had also made reference to external or historical documents but these references were designed to produce very different effects. The prefatory material of the *New Atalantis* reveals the narrative that follows has its original in an ancient Latin manuscript, long ago translated into a French dialect, and now laboriously rendered into English for the benefit of the reading public. These tropes – lost manuscripts, twice- or thrice-translated documents – recur in numerous secret histories from the period. They testify to the reliability of the account that follows by foregrounding its usual exclusivity. It must be mediated to the reader by the translator who has both specific expertise and the privilege of access. No musty manuscripts are invoked in *The Secret History of the White Staff*. Instead, the documents that are referred to are in the public domain and are available for purchase in the print marketplace. Their strategic deployment in this text suggests that truth is to be found in print and in the public domain rather than in private transactions. These references work to supplement the record of the event for its experience, and to displace the referent from the actual event to the document that records its occurrence.

This suggests a fundamental alteration in the subject position extended to readers: the reader is no longer imagined as a political and, by implication, aristocratic, insider but as an expert reader who is external to political processes. The narrator lays claim to just this type of audience for his text, declaring that it is designed 'for the sake of those who are willing to be rightly informed of Things, and to pass

their Judgement according to Evidence, not according to Prejudices, and the Interest of the Parties'.[71] His is a discerning readership that is both willing and able to decode the signs of political corruption and evaluate evidence. Moreover – and, perhaps, more importantly – this reading position is dematerialised. The subject position offered to the readers of this text is not a simulacrum of that of the political insider, but is that of an expert interpreter and, moreover, as the narrative unfolds the reader is taught principles for decoding public events. The reader is part of a discursive world whose existence is limited to the circulation and critical consumption of texts.

The effect of this is enhanced by the fact that the reader of *The Secret History of the White Staff* is frequently referred back to the text itself. The second volume begins, for example, by referring to the volume previously published. The narrator claims it is impossible for him to 'preserve the Connection of the Historical Relation of things' by simply taking up the narrative where he left it off. He must instead recapitulate several of the circumstances already related and, in order to do so economically, the reader is referred to specific sections of the previous volume. These references are quite precise: the reader is directed to '*Page* the *19th* of the former part of this History' and a lengthy section from this page is incorporated into the current volume.[72] Undoubtedly, this is a convenient means of extending the length of the narrative without adding to the labour, but it also has the unusual effect of directing the readers' attention away from the real world of events and into the text itself.

The referential act becomes still more self-reflexive when, in discussing the conspiracy to remove prominent Whigs such as the Duke of Marlborough from office, the narrator directs the reader's attention to two particular printed commentaries that describe the development of the conspiracy in greater details. One of these tracts, *Memoirs of Scotland* (1714), is said to have been published anonymously, while the other, *The October Club* (1711), is attributed here to 'the late Sir. *G. H*—'. These attributions are entirely disingenuous as both of these texts were written – and elsewhere publicly acknowledged – by Defoe.[73] This withdrawal of authorship is strategic, insofar as it contributes to the impression that the account presented in *The Secret History of the White Staff* can be corroborated by external sources.[74] However, by cloaking his authorship of these texts in anonymity, Defoe retreats ever further behind a series of masks. Between the publication of the second and third volumes of *The Secret History of the White Staff*, Defoe withdrew even further from his readers.

Just before the final installment of Defoe's secret history was published, a new book hit the market. *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff* (1715), published anonymously, promised to uncover the circumstances of the original text's production. The remarkable fact that this is a secret history of a publication and not political events suggest the extent to which the genre had become concerned with documents rather than real-life occurrences. The narrator of this particular text meets a succession of witnesses to the publication of the original secret history before finally meeting Defoe himself. But this is not quite the triumphant encounter with the original author the narrator anticipated; instead, Defoe reveals his involvement with *The Secret History of the White Staff* only extended as far as correcting two pages of text at the request of the bookseller. However, like the original defence of Harley, this secret history was also written by Defoe.[75] The strategy behind this systematic withdrawal of authorship is hard to fathom, especially considering that, since the decade-long association between Harley and Defoe was well known, Defoe himself was the greatest guarantee of the work's authenticity. Readers who sought to pursue *The Secret History of the White Staff* back to the real world and to its author find themselves in a dizzying vortex wherein the referent retreats ever further behind the act of reference. Reference in this text is a circular act: it operates as a kind of *mise en abyme*, a space in the text where the work turns back on itself and refers inward rather than outward. While reference in the *New Atalantis* functions in such a way as to materialise the scandal of the text, the referential act in *The Secret History of the White Staff* leads the reader on a paper chase wherein it seems there is no real to be referred back to.

The vindication of Harley that Defoe provides in *The Secret History of the White Staff* and the revelation of the secret dealings and intrigue that consume other politicians was, at the time of its publication, as controversial a representation of contemporary politics as Manley's had been several years earlier. Although both texts elicited responses from contemporaries on either side of politics, the reaction each prompted was widely divergent. Direct engagement with the *New Atalantis* came from authors who recognised the political utility of the genre. Partisan writers including Oldmixon and Defoe attempted to appropriate the tropes of Manley's secret history and incorporate them within Whiggish political propaganda. However, those who contested the version of political occurrences found in the *New Atalantis* did so by vilifying its author, and so Manley was pilloried as a scandalmonger – dubbed 'Scandalosissima Scoundrelia' by one of her contemporaries – and was assumed to be

sexually unchaste.[76] The reaction to *The Secret History of the White Staff* was markedly different. The version of the machinations that animated public political occurrences offered in this text was contested by other authors in print. These responses took direct and explicit issue with Defoe's text, rather than with its author. One such response, *A Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Pamphlet, Entitl'd the Secret History of the White Staff* (1714), expanded on and added to the sources provided in the original text in order to construct a counter-narrative. The anonymous author not only contests Defoe's account by way of documents, but he does so with recourse to the reader.

A simple way to account for the different responses to each secret history would be by pointing to the gender of their authors. The reaction to Manley's text, for example, is a recognisably conventional response to printed texts by women writers in the early eighteenth century. Early women writers were frequently the subjects of satirical attacks suggesting that the publication of their works was evidence of personal sexual immorality. Moreover, as we have seen throughout this argument, the involvement of women in political affairs – Masham's involvement in Atterbury and Harcourt's plots; Sarah Churchill's interfering in the operation of the court – was judged especially harshly; thought to connote illegitimate influence rather than rational advice.

However, the difference in the reception of Manley's *New Atalantis* and Defoe's *The Secret History of the White Staff* is also produced by the generic claims of each text and, more importantly, by the political inflections that these generic innovations carry. As the scandal of the *New Atalantis* had been material, rather than textual, so attacks on the text concentrated on the personality of its author. In *The Secret History of the White Staff* political scandal becomes an evidentiary matter that depends upon the measured evaluation of printed accounts rather the virtual witnessing of events.

Defoe precipitated the flurry of publications that countered the claims of his own text. The second volume of *The Secret History of the White Staff* ends with what amounts to a challenge to contrary-minded readers to answer him in print. He writes that 'if any are offended at this brief, but Impartial History of Secret Things, they must be at the same liberty to Write against it, that I have taken to Write it'.[77] A number of readers seem to have taken the narrator of *The Secret History of the White Staff* at his word. Within a year, six responses to Defoe's secret history had been published.[78] These texts presented an alternative version of the events narrated in the original by ascribing political corruption to Harley and absolving others, such as Bolingbroke, Atterbury and Harcourt, from the

charges of Defoe's text. Each of these texts constructs a counter-narrative of Harley's last days in office by scrutinising the sources used in the original text, and pointing to documents that counter Defoe's claims. These pamphlets shared emphasis on rational disputation is evident from their very titles, such as *A Detection of the Sophistry and Falsity of The Secret History of the White Staff* (1714). This anonymously authored pamphlet asks its readers to compare Defoe's text with other printed sources, such as 'the letter to Sir Miles Wharton concerning Occasional Peers' and issues of contemporary periodicals including 'the *Reader*, number 6'.[79] These examples suggest Defoe's secret history produces readers who are full habitués of a printed political culture; expert readers who are able to assess the representations of those in power.

The significance of this shift can by gauged by another response to *The Secret History of the White Staff* that issued from the pen of John Dunton. This pamphlet, entitled *The Secret History of the White-Staff* [. . .] *With a Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Said Pamphlet* (1714), is constructed as an animadversion, or a detailed refutation of the claims made in Defoe's narrative.[80] Short sections of the original are reproduced in full, and each is followed by a paragraph or so that evaluates – and eventually invalidates – the evidence for each claim. The genre of this particular response is interesting, as an animadversion was a legal, as well as a rhetorical, term. In the judicial sphere, it referred to the process of taking legal cognisance of something that required censure or punishment and it often appeared in accounts of legal proceedings.[81] It is this type of detailed notice that the anonymous author of this text pays to the original; each statement is carefully evaluated and eventually overturned.

In his analysis of the intersections between early modern habits of reading and modes of political engagement, Steven Zwicker discusses the genre of the animadversion as part of a phenomenon he calls 'combative reading'. Influenced by the events of the Civil Wars, the practice of reading was transformed from the work of admiration that is epitomised by the habit of commonplacing, to become an act of disputation and disagreement. Reading, Zwicker argues, became a contest that replicated the struggles that were taking place in other domains.[82] The text that Zwicker offers as a paradigmatic example of combative reading, John Milton's *Eikonklastes* (1649), employs exactly the same techniques that Dunton called upon in writing *The Secret History of the White-Staff* [. . .] *With a Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Said Pamphlet*: Milton meticulously scrutinises the claims of an earlier text, in this instance, Charles I's *Eikon Basilike*, in order to invalidate them. However,

although their techniques are identical, the relationship between readers, texts, and politics that each text assumes is markedly different. The use of animadversion in *Eikonklastes* replicates real discord: it reproduces and encourages an antagonistic relationship between readers and forms of government. In contrast, the use of animadversion in *The Secret History of the White-Staff* [. . .] *With a Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Said Pamphlet* suggests the increasing separation of reading from forms of active involvement in political matters. As a result of the reformation to the act of reference traced in this chapter, the reader's critical attention was directed further into the text itself and, as a result, political discord was increasingly confined to paper skirmishes and did not materialise as actual conflicts. The next chapter continues to explore this reconfiguration of reading practices through an analysis of contemporary periodicals.

4

Lucubrating London: The *Tatler* and the *Female Tatler*

> Ask a Lady for a Receipt, she knows nothing of the matter, 'tis probable her Servant may, but she desires you to read such a Pamphlet, and to give her your Thoughts how it is Writ, and who you think is meant by those Letters and Dashes: The first Question in a Morning is not what Conveniences the Family may want, but if the Tatler be come in.
>
> *Female Tatler*, no. 111

On 12 April 1709, a new paper appeared in London. The *Tatler*, as the first issue announced, was to be published thrice weekly on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. The masthead proclaimed the paper's author to be the fictional Isaac Bickerstaff Esq., but readers soon detected the presence of Richard Steele in the Squire's personality. Steele was no novice in the business of periodical publication and had recently been appointed as editor of the *London Gazette*. In stark contrast to the *Gazette*, an official paper that reported foreign news and published proclamations issued by the queen and by parliament, the *Tatler* declared its interest in the 'Conversation-Part of our Lives'. Its first issue maps its contents onto the social sites of London as it outlines its intention of putting the world into print. 'All accounts of *Gallantry, Pleasure*, and *Entertainment*, shall be under the article of *White's Chocolate-house*', Bickerstaff writes, '*Poetry*, under that of *Will's Coffee-house; Learning*, under the Title of *Grecian; Foreign* and *Domestick News*, you will have from *St James's Coffee-house*; and what else I have to offer on any other Subject, shall be dated from my own *Apartment*.'[1] At once conceptual and material, this scheme effectively embeds the *Tatler* in London's coffeehouses, sociable sites that not only provided the paper with its audience but also constituted the subject of the paper's reflections.

The *Tatler* quickly became one of the most popular and widely imitated periodicals in early eighteenth-century England.

The *Tatler* (1709–11) and its successor, the *Spectator* (1711–12), are central to Habermas's arguments regarding the public sphere. For Habermas, the new periodicals and the coffeehouses with which they were associated were vital cultural sites in a developing public culture of rational discussion. The periodicals mirrored the conversational culture the coffeehouses modelled: a discursive space that 'turns conversation into criticism and *bon mots* into arguments.'[2] The middle style of the *Tatler* and its fellows signals 'their proximity to the spoken word' and the papers themselves were 'not only made the object of discussion by the public of the coffeehouses but were viewed as an integral part of this discussion.'[3] The sociable traffic between the coffeehouses and these periodicals emphasises a conversational ethos and facilitates the dissemination of this model of public culture. However, Habermas's understanding of periodicals and the coffeehouses through which they circulated as exemplary instances of a 'discourse-oriented' public sphere has been thoroughly complicated by recent scholarship.

From their inception, coffeehouses were unruly sites that hosted impassioned political debate and disseminated gossip. Seventeenth and eighteenth century representations of the coffeehouse disclose scenes of verbal and physical hostility as frequently as they depict reasoned debate. This image of the coffeehouses not only revises our understanding of the social sites of London, but it also refigures the orientation of the Steele's *Tatler* and Addison's *Spectator* to their readers, now understood as a conscious attempt to reform the coffeehouses and regulate the conversation of their patrons by modelling a virtual social space in which partisan debate is disallowed. This new understanding does not modify the terms of the debate, as much as reverse them: Addison and Steele's periodicals no longer anticipate a political culture, but they are part of a contested attempt to create it.[4] Further, the *Tatler* and *Spectator's* projection and promulgation of Whig sociability was stimulated by that party's declining fortunes. As Brian Cowan has recently argued, the papers were designed to shift the terms of public debate away from the discussion of religious politics, in which Whig politics were increasingly losing ground to the high Tory resurgence, and away from the constitutional principles that were hotly contested during Sacheverell's trial.[5] The papers, then, are an attempt to reform public discussion of politics and to develop a mode of political debate that can rival – and ultimately subsume – the spectacle of impassioned public involvement that accompanied the Tory resurgence.

Although the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* are concerned with governing public conversation, they adopt very different methods of regulation. The *Tatler* models talk through its engagement with the trope of gossip, while the *Spectator* models distanced deliberation by emphasising written reflection. These differences are encapsulated by the titles adopted for each paper: the title of the *Tatler* suggests its investment in material oral culture, while the title of the *Spectator* introduces a critical distance between the paper's eidolon and the events that occasion his essays. Yet, in spite of the evident differences between the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, conventional accounts of eighteenth-century literary culture collapse the two papers into a single phenomenon.[6] This chapter will explore the sociable project of the *Tatler* by examining the methods and materials of Steele's periodical and those of his most widely read imitator, the *Female Tatler*, in order to investigate how each publication helped reform their respective audiences. It focuses on the trope of gossip, which features in the titles of both papers in the refigured form of tattle, in order to determine how it is used to manage the relationship between the reader and the text.

'Fair-Sexing it': locating the *Tatler* and its audience

Readers were crucial to the *Tatler* and their centrality is reflected in both the paper's form and content. Bickerstaff's address to 'all persons, without distinction' and his provision of the first issues gratis encouraged a wide readership to engage with his paper, while his declaration in the first issue that the paper was designed to tell 'Politick Persons [...] *what to think*' heralds his desire to reform his audience.[7] Employing the language of indulgent gallantry (in Vivien Jones' apt phrase), Bickerstaff even extends his project to the 'fair sex' for whom he resolves to have 'something of entertainment' in each paper.[8] Although contemporaries commented derisively on the paper's habit of 'talking to the ladies', women readers are invoked in the pages of the *Tatler* not as a reflection of the paper's audience, but as a rhetorical figure demonstrating the paper's solicitation of an audience that was democratically broad.[9] The paper's readership figured prominently in its pages, not only as the subject of each issue but also as participants in its construction. The *Tatler* exploits the dual meaning of the word conversation, which in the eighteenth century referred to speaking and to the exchange of letters. In his third week of publication, Bickerstaff issued an invitation to his readers to contribute to his paper, requesting details of the 'Occurrences you meet with relating to your Amours, or

any other Subject within the Rules by which I have proposed to walk.'[10] The stream of letters that ensued began the following week and only ended with the paper itself. These letters, almost two hundred in total, formed an integral part of the *Tatler*.

The figure readers engaged in conversation, Isaac Bickerstaff, had a definite presence in London. The pages of the *Tatler* show him to be immersed in all aspects of life in the capital. Indeed, as the putative author of Jonathan Swift's satire on astrologers and almanac makers, he had a literary presence in the city before Steele's paper commenced. The satiric prognostications of this pamphlet, *Predictions for the year 1708*, caused a stir and the Bickerstaff persona rose to public prominence as the satire was first contested and then extended. Steele later attributed the *Tatler*'s immediate success to his adoption of this familiar persona, acknowledging that Swift's 'pleasant writings in the name of *Bickerstaff*, created an Inclination in the Town towards any thing that could appear in the same Disguise.'[11] Bickerstaff's appearance in these various publications meant readers were acutely aware that the identity was a mask inhabited by a series of transient authors. In fact, the word 'Bickerstaff' was used then – as it is now – as a general term, a synonym for a literary *nom de plume*. In this respect, the Bickerstaff persona is potentially emblematic of an eidolon's rhetorical function, a deliberately ghostly presence that is designed to obscure the author's identity. As Michael Warner and Tedra Osell explain, an eidolon represents the relationship between private identity and published persona demanded by the public sphere suggesting that individual particularities must be subsumed by general exemplarity in order for a public voice to be legitimated.[12]

And yet although Bickerstaff functions as a mask for Steele's own identity, he rapidly assumes a particularised appearance, personality, and circumstances. Bickerstaff is a confirmed bachelor approaching his mid-sixties. He has an oval face and a lanky body, wears spectacles and has a shaky hand. Several physical likenesses of Bickerstaff were sold as accompaniments to the *Tatler*. The most famous of these, an engraving by Bernard Lens showing Bickerstaff at his desk, employs allegory and portraiture in equal measure: a cat is used to represent domestic space, but Bickerstaff's face is creased and careworn (see Illustration 3).[13] This indicates the instability of the distinction, in Bickerstaff's case, between individual particularity and general exemplarity. The illusion of Bickerstaff's material existence was made more particular still. A *Tatler* from early January 1710 prints a letter from Thomas Doggett, an actor, inviting Bickerstaff to his coming benefit. Bickerstaff accepts, promising to 'come in between the First and Second Act, and remain in the Right

Illustration 3 Bernard Lens, *Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq.*, [1709]. By courtesy of Special Collections, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

Hand Box over the pit til the End of the Fourth', and he recounts in a subsequent issue the 'universal Clap, and other testimonies of Applause' with which he was received.[14] This was more than a literary jest: according to a contemporary, a 'person dressed for *Isaac Bickerstaffe* did appear at the Play-house on this occasion.'[15] This suggests the extent to which Bickerstaff (and, through him, Steele) slips between individuality and general exemplarity and, in the process, paradoxically makes the public mask into a private person.

If Bickerstaff's person alternates between private particularity and general exemplarity, so too do the contents of his paper. Although the *Tatler* ostensibly eschewed commentary on real people, the paper was often represented in contemporary periodicals and newspapers as in need of decoding. The Tory *Examiner* ridiculed Bickerstaff's claim to represent

'general Characters, [which] stand for a whole *Species*' by identifying the Londoners that stood behind several of the paper's characters and suggesting that 'at least fifty more' could be provided.[16] Steele was aware that readers plumbed his paper for allusions to events and individuals and often complained of the public's propensity to read contemporary references into the characters he depicted in his paper. In late October 1709, he devoted an entire issue to the reception of the previous week's *Tatler*. This earlier issue contained the long-promised allegory, the 'Tables of Fame' wherein historical figures (such as Alexander the Great, Aristotle and Plato) were seated at tables in a strict order designed to reflect their merit.[17] The readers depicted in the following number assume these characters, whose accomplishments and virtues were so carefully assessed and ranked, mask contemporary figures whose identity could be discovered under careful scrutiny. Bickerstaff's ironic declaration, that he is pleased his 'Readers can construe for themselves these difficult points', reveals his frustration at his readers' propensity to interpret his paper according to their own acquaintance and way of life.[18]

Certainly, much of its contemporary audience read the *Tatler* as a compendium of social and political gossip. Peter Wentworth sent copies of the new paper to his brother, Lord Raby, then stationed at The Hague. Each bundle of issues was accompanied by a letter discussing the papers' contents along with news of the family and the town. Wentworth identifies the real-life persons indicated by the *Tatler*'s characters with assurance, commenting approvingly on 'the description of Africanus, wch is Sir Scipio Hill' and noting that the lovelorn physician, Aesculapius, 'is upon Dr Radcliff[e] who they say is desperately in love with [the] Duchess of Bolton'.[19] This method of reading the *Tatler* was not particular to the Wentworth family, it was a disposition shared by most readers. Abigail Harley, Robert Harley's daughter, commented on the first issue of the *Tatler* in a letter to her aunt. A particular passage captured her interest: the unrequited passion a society gentleman (referred to in later numbers as 'Cynthio') bears for a particular lady and the enigmatic reference to a recent event that demonstrated he 'has most Understanding when he's Drunk, and is least in his Senses when he's Sober'.[20] Cynthio, Abigail Harley declared, was Lord Hinchinbrooke and the incident the *Tatler* referred to was his inebriated outburst against marriage during a recent playhouse performance. Even though 'his title was not put in', she is certain her identification is correct because there were witnesses enough to the actual event 'to tell everybody who it was'. Abigail's comments reveal much about how the *Tatler* was received because, although this letter is written in order to tell her aunt of the

newly established *Tatler*, Abigail has yet to see the new paper herself. She writes: 'I have seen none yet. If they are worth anything [I] will send them [to] you.'[21] The fact she is able to provide the real-life referent for a character in a paper she has not read indicates that these identifications were widely made and publicly discussed.

These examples suggest Bickerstaff speaks to his readers in two registers: he exposes the failings of particular Londoners to their acquaintances, while he exposes vice in abstract to the general reader. Here it is useful to recall contemporary observations regarding the circulation and popularity of the *Tatler*. While the *Spectator*'s famous estimate of twenty readers for each of its published numbers might exaggerate the size of its readership,[22] it accurately evokes the convivial reading and discussion the paper stimulated. John Gay wrote that the owners of London's coffeehouses were sensible of the fact that the *Tatler* 'alone had brought them more customers than all their other newspapers put together'.[23] The paper was not only read and discussed in conventional public sites, but it also formed the subject of ladies' assemblies: eight months after the *Tatler* began publication, Lady Marow advised her daughter that 'all the town are full of the *Tatler*, which I hope you have to prepare you for discourse, for no visit is made that I hear of but Mr Bickerstaff is mentioned'.[24]

Like the *New Atalantis*, the *Tatler* draws on contemporary gossip, and the narrative accounts presented in the paper become the subject of further gossip as readers seek to connect the printed account to a verbal report. Inside these expanding and contracting circuits of discourse, one does not need first-hand knowledge of the people or events depicted in order to detect the individuals represented in the paper. As Abigail Harley's letter reminds us, readers could acquire the knowledge necessary to associate the characters drawn in the *Tatler*'s pages with real-life individuals by engaging in conversation or by frequenting one of the spaces where the paper was regularly discussed. Although the paper might otherwise contain encoded stories about real-life personages, these stories were transformed by the activity of readers and the circumstances in which they were read. Through these cultural practices, gossip becomes tattle, a democratising discourse that emphatically lacks a sense of exclusivity.

Bickerstaff claims he titled his paper in honour of the fair sex and so affiliates his paper with tattle as an explicitly feminine discursive mode. However, in spite of their respective associations with women, there is a constitutive difference between the operation of gossip and tattle. As spoken communication, the responsibility for gossip is shared between small groups of individuals who are intimately connected, and the

knowledge it yields is constructed communally by those who participate in its processes. Gossip not only disseminates information, it also works to reaffirm the bonds of intimacy that exist between its participants. These social effects also attend textual manifestations of gossip. As reified in the genre of the secret history, gossip effectively simulates the experience of being intimate with the *cognoscenti* by sharing their secrets with its readers. Although the operation of the literary marketplace somewhat counteracted the impulses of these texts towards secrecy, gossip nevertheless, in both its oral and its printed forms, remains a discourse with exclusionary impulses. The economy of tattling, however, is very different.

To tattle is to disseminate information indiscriminately, with scant attention to the nature of one's audience. Gossip might insist on the confidentiality of its contents, but tattle relentlessly publicises. Whereas gossip requires those who listen to also participate, tattle is a monologic form of discourse: the focus is upon the telling of a tale rather than on puzzling out its implications. Tattle emphasises the authority of the talebearer as the sole owner of knowledge and the authority of that position is not shared equally among the group. Those who listen to tattle are passive, and for this reason alone it does not perform the same social functions as gossip. In fact, accounts of tattling often emphasise its potential to breach social bonds by characterising it as a betrayal of secrets that has deleterious effects on its subject or 'victim'.[25] The focus of tattle is not on forging intimacy, but on destroying it, in favour of supplying knowledge to a larger public.

Bickerstaff capitalised on the implicit authority of the tattler as talebearer by laying claim to a pseudo-official role. In April 1710, he assumed the mantle of 'Censor of Great Britain'.[26] He models this office on that of the censor of classical Rome, the magistrate responsible for periodically counting the citizens and also for controlling public morals.[27] In assuming the position of censor, Bickerstaff explicitly declares his ability and fitness to legislate in matters of taste. This authority was wishfully enacted in the pages of his paper. He imagines 'court days', held in his own apartment, convened to evaluate social affectations and moral irregularity. In these projected scenes, he assumes a legal position and not only judges the offender but issues sentence, declaring his ability to 'punish Offences according to the Quality of the Offender.'[28] The public heeded Bickerstaff's self-proclaimed title: an unpublished letter, in the form of an official complaint regarding the forms of address assumed by women, is addressed 'To Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq., Censor of Great Britain', while another correspondent happily concedes that 'as censor of Great Britain, you certainly are entitled to have

the examination of all causes which our constitution has not submitted to some other jurisdiction.'[29] Anne Clavering's letter to her brother following the death of the Duchess of Beaufort – wherein she remarks that she has 'met with none that can answer my query concerning the Duke so I must apply to Mr Bickerstaff of the *Tatler* to know whether his Grace should drink down his sorrow or refrain excess for some few days'[30] – is a wry comment on the extent to which Bickerstaff had become a culturally privileged expert on social matters.

Yet in assuming this position, Bickerstaff is aligning himself with the programmatic aspects of scandal rather than the slippery qualities of tattle and gossip. As I have already established, scandal and the law share striking structural affinities as mechanisms of definition and control. In aligning his discourse with scandal and with censure, Bickerstaff is creating a space for his paper that is easily sublimated into a legal domain. The localised and particular concerns of gossip are written over with the national interest and the public benefits of this discourse are insisted upon: the tattler becomes the 'Censor of Great Britain' and tattle is transformed into the work of social reformation. There is, of course, a paradox here, as satire depends for its substance on displaying the very behaviour that Bickerstaff claims he would eradicate. The juridical function that Bickerstaff seems to imitate here is self-consciously wishful and the *Tatler* produces censorship as a trope that the paper necessarily exceeds.

Bickerstaff's deliberately masculine and particularised persona was consolidated in opposition to one prominent female author in particular. Richard Steele and Delarivier Manley were more than just colleagues in the literary marketplace: surviving correspondence suggests they shared an early friendship (and perhaps a more intimate relationship) that soured into professional and personal rivalry.[31] The origins of this animosity were the subject of sustained, yet widely divergent, accounts in each of their public works. While Manley suggests that the breach in their friendship resulted from personal events – she claims in the *New Atalantis* that in spite of her early generosity to Steele, he refused her a small loan when she was in exigent circumstances[32] – Steele implied that it was a professional dispute. Manley appears in the pages of the *Tatler* as '*Epicene*', 'the Writer of *Memoirs from the Mediterranean*, who, by the Help of some artificial Poisons convey'd by Smells, has within these few Weeks brought many Persons of both Sexes to an untimely Fate.'[33] In naming her 'Epicene', Steele elides Manley's gender by representing her as figure that is neither male nor female. This portrait stands in stark contrast to the usual terms in which Manley and her

methods were represented. Contemporary characterisations of Manley emphasised her femininity by exploiting the conventional wisdom that gossip was a pastime fitted to that sex. While this focus trivialised the importance of Manley's works, it was used with equal effectiveness by those who sought to denigrate or defend her writings. In the pages of the *Tatler*, however, gossip is not a trivial pursuit but a murderous weapon, and Manley is unsexed through her devotion to its dictates. Perhaps because of the centrality of the rhetorical tropes of femininity to his paper's project, Bickerstaff unsexes Manley in order to differentiate his project from hers. The severity of these images serves, to a degree, to distinguish Bickerstaff's tattle from Manley's gossip. It also works to militate against the inference that the affiliation of the paper to gossip suggests the triviality of its contents. The *Tatler*, effectively, wrests gossip away from women.

Telling news, talking politics

In introducing his readers to the coffeehouses that pattern the *Tatler*'s contents – White's Chocolate House will host accounts of gallantry and pleasure, Will's Coffeehouse poetry, the Grecian learning, and St James's Coffeehouse the news – Bickerstaff also draws attention to the means by which his paper's contents were acquired. Much of the paper relied on information gathered by informants who report conversations held in coffee-houses, correspondents who supplement Bickerstaff's knowledge of events in London and inform him of happenings outside the capital, and Pacolet (Bickerstaff's 'familiar') who spies and steals letters on his behalf. Unlike the Lady Intelligence, who gathers information for the sententious goddesses in the *New Atalantis*, Bickerstaff's informants are unambiguously connected to London's civic sites. His clerks, Sir Humphrey Kidney and Sir Thomas, are waiters at St James's Coffeehouse and White's Chocolate House respectively, and their characters were designed to represent the men who actually filled these positions.[34] But like the Lady Intelligence in Manley's secret history, Bickerstaff exploits the material basis of his paper as a means of demarcating his persona from that of a 'gossip'. In the first issue, he emphasises the labour of establishing and the cost of maintaining his network of paid informants. This pose is elaborated as the *Tatler* continues. In devoting a section of his paper to the inappropriate use of the term 'esquire' as a form of address, Bickerstaff claims to have 'taken an Inventory of all within this City, and look'd over every Letter in the *Post-Office* for my better Information'.[35] On another occasion, having become curious as to

why the object of Cynthio's affection has rejected him, Bickerstaff sends Pacolet to her lodgings in search of correspondence that might discover the secrets of her heart.[36] His methods of gathering information mimic those employed by the secretary of state's office, which regularly supplemented the intelligence gathered by spies, foreign correspondents and the interception of letters with the gossip that was gleaned by agents stationed at London's most prominent coffeehouses.[37] This emphasises the involvement of the *Tatler* in the life of London and highlights the collaborative nature of the paper.

Bickerstaff's pose as a 'Court Intelligencer', as he was characterised by the authors of the *General Postscript*,[38] also served to remind contemporary readers of the paper's connection to the *London Gazette*. Steele had been appointed editor of this, the capital's sole official newspaper, early in May 1707 and continued to act in this capacity until late in 1710.[39] The *Gazette* was firmly tied to the government: its editor worked under the immediate supervision of the secretaries of state, conducting the business of the paper in Lord Sunderland's office in the Cockpit, and its contents were drawn from the 'intelligence' that that office gathered to maintain the security of the nation. While coveted, the office of editor, or Gazetteer as it was familiarly referred to, was a government appointment; Steele likened the work to that of the 'lowest Minister of State'.[40] For all but two months of the *Tatler*'s existence, Steele was writing the two periodicals concurrently and readers viewed his association with the whiggish *Gazette* as a clear indication of the politics of his new paper.[41] This assumption was not unwarranted: a letter written by Lady Elizabeth Hervey to her husband in the week before the first issue of the *Tatler* hit the streets reveals Steele's new paper, like the *Gazette* before it, was born in the secretary's department. She writes: 'This is all the news I know, except this inclosed paper, which I heard Lord Sun[derland] commend mightily, so I have teased Mr Hopkins [the undersecretary] till he got it for me, for tis not published, tho' it is printed.'[42] Her comments indicate that Steele's new venture was read and approved of by the ministry before it was published.

The *Tatler* was centrally concerned with politics. Bickerstaff's declaration in the first issue that his paper was designed to 'tell politick persons what to think' can be considered a procedural statement, as the *Tatler* was intended to form political subjects and, furthermore, to govern the manner in which those subjects engaged in contemporary issues and debates. The usual register of the paper's political engagement is taken to be the regular inclusion of domestic and foreign news under the heading of St James. Steele used information he was privy to as Gazetteer in

assembling the news for the *Tatler*, and it was often only minor syntactical differences that separated the printed reports in each paper. The evident similarities motivated the *Examiner* to devote an entire issue to the matter, reprinting sections from each paper in parallel columns so as to demonstrate the only difference between the two accounts was in their word order.[43] Steele would later acknowledge that the inclusion of the news 'brought in a Multitude of Readers' but, its evident popularity notwithstanding, the lengthy sections devoted to the news diminished as the end of 1709 approached.[44] After the hundredth issue in late November the news is only included on a further six occasions.

Rather than marking the paper's renunciation of politics, the attenuation of sections devoted specifically to the news merely signalled that the paper's political engagement had changed its form. Contemporary readers noted a reinvigorated interest in party political matters in the *Tatler*. Swift claimed the paper was highly regarded during its first year of publication – the year the news department was a regular feature featured – precisely because it did not concern itself with politics. He argues the paper was 'equally esteemed by both parties, because it meddled with neither. But some time after Sacheverell's trial, when things began to change their aspect, Mr Steele [...] would needs corrupt his paper with politics; published one or two most virulent libels, and chose for his subject even that individual Mr Harley, who had made him gazetteer.'[45]

The *Tatler* continued to concern itself with political issues following the defeat of the Whigs at the elections later that year.[46] However, the nature of the paper's political engagement, which began to change in late 1709, was transformed entirely. Whereas previously the *Tatler* had conveyed its political position in a mild and relatively straightforward manner in the expectation readers would rationally evaluate the information the paper contained, Bickerstaff now attempts to influence – perhaps even manipulate – his readers' judgements by representing political figures as fictional characters engaged in questionable activities. These are the techniques Bickerstaff uses in representing Robert Harley as Polypragmon, a 'cunning fellow' who delights in ostentatious secrecy and is possessed of the 'monstrous Affectation of being thought artful.'[47] In relying on these strategies to shape the dispositions of his readers, Bickerstaff contradicts the discursive trope of his paper as he ceases communicating information and turns instead to influencing his readers. Accompanying this is a general contraction of the paper's discourse from the coffeehouses that once acted as virtual hosts to conversations regarding literature, learning, gallantry and politics to the privatised space of Bickerstaff's own apartment. The withdrawal staged

in the pages of the paper is also signalled by the word – lucubrations – that comes to describe Bickerstaff's reflections on social matters and, later, function as a surrogate title for the paper itself. As Samuel Johnson defined it in his dictionary, lucubration refers to 'study by candlelight; nocturnal study; any thing composed by night'.[48] It reflects the privacy of Bickerstaff's meditation on public life and suggests his disengagement from direct conversation with his readers. The reasons why this might be the case are revealed through the representation in the *Tatler*'s pages of one particular reader who perused the paper for its political content.

Early in April 1710, Bickerstaff introduced his readers to a new character, the 'political upholsterer', a gentleman who neglects his own business and family in order to devote himself entirely to the pursuit of news. Bickerstaff initially encounters the upholsterer in St James's Park, where he is frantically soliciting and disseminating information about the progress of the war even though 'his Wife and Children were starving'.[49] The upholsterer's desire for news is all consuming, and he treats news as if it were gossip. He wakes Bickerstaff early one morning in order to inform him of 'a Piece of Home-News that every Body in Town will be full of Two Hours hence', and passes on other items of news as though they were secrets.[50] Most often, the political upholsterer communicates with Bickerstaff in whispers. Whispering is a means of publicly staging a secret: it is a way of performing the secrecy shared between two individuals for a third who is excluded from their intimate communication. This is the sense exploited in a later letter to the *Spectator* (thought to be by Alexander Pope) that proposes a new periodical – a 'Newsletter of Whispers'. He writes, 'By Whispers I mean those Pieces of News which are communicated as Secrets, and which bring a double Pleasure to the Hearer; first, as they are a private History, and in the next place, as they have always in them a Dash of Scandal.'[51] In his encounters with Bickerstaff, we witness the political upholsterer attempting to privatise the dissemination of public knowledge. He endeavours to construct an aura of secrecy around information that is disseminated democratically through the periodical press and uses it to construct clubs and cabals.

The upholsterer's obsession with the news is finely calibrated. He reads the tory *Post-Boy* and the *Supplement*, alongside the whiggish *Post-Man* and the neutral reportage of the *Daily Courant*. His passion for the news, represented here as a mania, is inflamed by the practices of news writers. Much as the political upholsterer augments items of public knowledge with an aura of secrecy before passing them on to others, news writers also embellish, or 'upholster', reports of public events before presenting

them to the reading public. It is the techniques designed to extend small items of news into the substance of a paper and, more particularly, the strategies of indirection – 'the most happy Art of saying and unsaying' – that are largely responsible for this mania. The generic style of the periodicals obscures meaning and Bickerstaff draws a parallel to the chivalric romances that consumed Don Quixote, warning that 'the News-Papers of this Island are as pernicious to weak Heads in *England* as ever Books of Chivalry to Spain'. Such publications have the capacity to addle the brains of readers who are unable to discriminate extraneous material, or padding, from disguised content, those who 'were not born to have Thoughts of their own, and consequently lay a Weight upon every Thing which they read in Print'.[52] Disapprovingly, Bickerstaff remarks that the political economy of Britain cannot help but languish in the throes of such an epistemological disturbance: 'The Tautology, the Contradictions, the Doubts, and Wants of Confirmations, are what keeps up imaginary Entertainments in empty Heads, and produce Neglect of their own Affairs, Poverty, and Bankruptcy, in many of the Shop-Statesmen.'[53]

The spectre of the news-addicted reader haunts the pages of the *Tatler*. The word 'quidnunc' (literally 'what now') is coined to describe these individuals in one particular issue of the paper.[54] A quidnunc was a newsmonger, one who misused his leisure time by constantly asking after the latest news. The term effectively highlights the conjunction of gossip and the dissemination of news during Queen Anne's reign. The character of the quidnunc is elaborated in the *Spectator* in a letter from one Thomas Quid-nunc, who writes with the hope of persuading Mr Spectator to include more news in his paper. Following the news, he declares, is 'the noblest Entertainment of the Rational Creature'. He continues:

> I have a very good Ear for a Secret, and am naturally of a communicative Temper; by which Means I am capable of doing you great Services in this way. In order to make my self useful, I am early in the Antichamber, where I thrust my Head into the thick of the Press, and catch the News, at the opening of the Door, while it is warm. [. . .] At other times I lay my Ear close to the Wall, and suck in many a valuable Whisper, as it runs in a straight Line from Corner to Corner. When I am weary with standing, I repair to one of the neighbouring Coffee-houses, where I sit sometimes for a whole Day, and have the News, as it comes from the Court, fresh and fresh. In short Sir, I spare no pains to know how the World goes. A Piece of News loses

> its Flavour when it hath been an Hour in the Air. I love, if I may so speak, to have it fresh from the Tree; and to convey it to my Friends before it is faded.[55]

The story of the political upholsterer and Thomas Quidnunc serve as cautionary tales: even news that is imparted openly can be misused by the reading public, received as if it were a secret and thus re-privatised. Consequently, as the *Tatler* continues, the paper turns from tattling political news and begins to employ strategies of indirection. Political information goes undercover, as the periodical focuses increasingly on telling its readers what to think about affairs of state. The reason for this alteration become more legible when it is placed in the context of contemporary developments in both the literary and political spheres.

The timing of the *Tatler*s concerned with the political upholsterer is crucial to understanding their import: the first of these appeared two short weeks after the conclusion of Sacheverell's very public impeachment trial and in the wake of the public demonstrations of popular support for the Doctor's cause.[56] Indeed, in a later number, the political upholsterer reveals himself to be consumed by the very flood of pamphlets that supported or denounced Sacheverell. The upholsterer has devoted both his days and nights in the six months since the verdict to reading the literature produced in response to the trial, but confesses that 'the Authors are so numerous, and the State of Affairs alters so very fast, that I am now a Fortnight behind-hand in my Reading, and know only how Things stood Twelve Days ago.'[57] While the *Tatler*'s bias against the public's use of news was evident from its very first number, it was reinvigorated by the trial, particularly by the role the press played in engaging the general reading public with the serious issues under debate, and the manner in which this public engagement was manifest. Considered alongside these numbers on the political upholsterer, the timing of the eclipse of the news in the *Tatler* assumes greater significance. It coincides with a considerable increase in the public's involvement with political affairs, as evidenced by the extraordinary popularity of the *New Atalantis* and the public's impassioned involvement in the Sacheverell affair.

The distrust of impassioned discussion of the news is dramatised in the final numbers of the *Tatler* as the reason for its conclusion. One of the final numbers of the paper, published in early December 1710, is addressed to the paper's talkative readers. It is headed with a motto drawn from Horace – *favete linguis*, or favour me with your silence – and focuses on the social abuses enacted by garrulous men in coffeehouses.

These are men who 'utter their political essays, and draw parallels out of Baker's 'Chronicle' to almost every part of her Majesty's reign'. This 'loquacious Kind of Animal' is not confined to coffeehouses but also haunts 'private Clubs and Conversations over a Bottle'.[58] Bickerstaff equates loquacity of this kind with robbery and proposes to invent a watch that can be used to restrict these men to a minute of speech. In bringing the paper to a close, Bickerstaff notes the irony involved in satirising talking within a paper that takes tattle, a variety of talk, as its emblem. He assures his reader of the great difference between 'tattle and loquacity, as I will show at large in a following Lucubration.' This number, however, never eventuated. Instead, the *Tatler* itself falls silent: the paper drew to a close six issues later as Richard Steele, speaking to readers in his own voice, resigned the pretension of 'talk[ing] in a mask'. The *Tatler* began its conversation with readers in a political and cultural climate favouring the Whigs; it fell silent in a climate that was not nearly as hospitable. The Whigs had been, as Stuart Sherman summarises, 'politically muted' by the 1710 elections and the impassioned involvement of readers in public debates signalled a culture of public engagement that was emphatically Tory.

It is little surprise, then, that Steele and Addison's next venture into print makes a feature of silence. Mr Spectator, the eidolon of the new paper, is the paradigmatic instance of a virtual print persona. His self-portrait, in stark contrast to Bickerstaff's own, emphasises his immateriality and isolation from the social life of the capital. He is a 'silent man', determined to 'print myself out'. The new paper is substantially different in content and form, eschewing both news and gossip for essays on social principles. Mr Spectator continually polices the boundaries between the kind of curiosity directed at the private lives of his readers and his dispassionate survey of London life. The paper's essays, as Brian Cowan has recently argued, were not envisioned as a forum for competitive debate between ideologies, but 'as a medium whereby a stable political consensus could be enforced through making partisan political debate appear socially unacceptable in public spaces such as coffeehouses or in media like periodical newspapers.'[59]

The *Female Tatler* and the female reader

The *Tatler* inspired a multitude of publications that sought to capitalise on its success: six appeared during the paper's initial six months of publication, and another three in the following year. These imitators and detractors became so numerous that Steele was obliged to acknowledge

them in print, denouncing the 'numberless Vermin that feed upon this Paper, [...] the small Wits and Scribblers that every Day turn a Penny by nibbling at my Lucubrations.'[60] Inspired perhaps by the *Tatler*'s own emphasis on dialogue and exchange, these 'numberless vermin' treated Steele's paper as a discursive commons by freely adapting elements of his paper to their own ends. A number of these periodicals declared their affiliation to the *Tatler* through their titles – such as the *Tory Tatler*, the *North Tatler*, and the *Tattling Harlot* – while others suggested a closer kinship by transporting characters born in Bickerstaff's pages to their own paper. The anonymous author of *The Whisperer* appropriated the persona of Mrs Jenny Distaff, Bickerstaff's sister, who had been introduced to readers of the *Tatler* in its tenth issue; while the eidolon of *Gazette A-la-mode*, Sir Thomas Whipstaff, adopted the patronym 'staff' in order to bring himself into a familial relationship with Bickerstaff himself.[61] These titles indicated the more extensive dialogue they initiated with Steele's original: throughout their respective runs, these papers not only engaged the content of the *Tatler's* tri-weekly issues but they also often referred to themselves as participants in a generic project, as one of the 'TATLERS'.[62]

Most of Steele's 'doughty antagonists' were transient publications, which lasted only one or two issues. The exception is the *Female Tatler*, which began publication on 8 July 1709, three months after the first *Tatler* hit London's streets, and continued until 31 March 1710. The *Female Tatler* continues the privatisation of talk staged in the pages of the *Tatler*, and extends its scope by reasserting gossip's gendered character.

The *Female Tatler* was authored by Mrs Crackenthorpe, a fictional lady who, as the masthead announces, 'knows every thing'. The authorship of this paper has never been determined conclusively and the publishing history of the paper itself is intricately tangled. Shortly after the venture began, Mrs Crackenthorpe moved her paper from its original home at the printing house of Benjamin Bragge to that of Abigail Baldwin, claiming she was 'disingenuously us'd' by Bragge.[63] However, Bragge continued to publish a periodical with the title of the *Female Tatler* by an author who claimed to be Mrs Crackenthorpe. For eight weeks, the two papers attempted to outdo each other in print – their concurrent publication testifying further to the popularity of these generic Tatlers – before the spurious *Female Tatler* suddenly ceased publication. Less than a month after this dispute resolved itself, Mrs Crackenthorpe announced she had resigned the authorship of her paper to 'a Society of Modest Ladies'.[64] This society – Lucinda, Emilia, Arabella, Rosella, Artesia and,

later, Sophronia – authored the paper until its demise in March 1710. Although these ladies are as fictional as Mrs Crackenthorpe herself, this was not merely a revision in the way the paper was presented to the public. Instead it constituted an actual change to the authorship of the paper: the person behind Mrs Crackenthorpe resigned the paper to a syndicate of new authors that included Susanna Centrelivre and Bernard Mandeville among their number.[65]

The author who stood behind the original incarnation of Mrs Crackenthorpe continues to elude detection. The conventionally triangulated relationship between gossip, scandal, and gender has led to the periodic attribution, both by paper's first readers and modern scholars of early eighteenth literature, of the *Female Tatler* to Delarivier Manley. In enumerating his paper's antagonists, Steele contends that the *Female Tatler* and the *New Atalantis* were 'of the same character', while the *General Postscript* went one step further by suggesting Manley (dubbed 'Scandalosissima Scoundrelia') produced the paper in collaboration with two others.[66] Other readers detected a different author behind Mrs Crackenthorpe's mask. In September 1709, after trading squibs with the *Female Tatler*, the *British Apollo* confidently identified its antagonist:

> But others will swear that this wise Undertaker,
> By Trade's an *At——ney*, by Name is a *B——r*,
> Who rambles about with a Female Disguise on,
> And lives upon Scandal as Toads do on Poyson.[67]

Mrs Crackenthorpe is identified as Thomas Baker, an attorney and a moderately successful dramatist. The attribution of the *Female Tatler* advanced here by the *British Apollo* has become the critical consensus.[68] While the attribution of the *Female Tatler* to Manley rests on the coincidence of dates between her arrest and the paper's change of authorship, it has been ascribed to Baker on the basis of careful reading of the paper's preoccupations.

The spurious association between Delarivier Manley and the *Female Tatler* has led to a curious misreading of the paper's content. The assumption that Manley, the foremost female Tory polemicist, was the author of the paper has meant a similar political character has been ascribed to the *Female Tatler*. Ros Ballaster describes the *Female Tatler* as a 'party political paper, a Tory riposte to the Whiggish ideologies of its male counterpart'; while Alison Adburgham argues 'the *Female Tatler* was a vehicle for the violently Tory invective of Mrs Crackenthorpe.'[69] However, aspects of the paper contradict this reading. The very fact

the *Female Tatler* was housed at the printing shop of Abigail Baldwin, a trade publisher extensively involved in Whig politics, demonstrates the politics of the paper were not as evident as Adburgham and Ballaster suggest. In fact, later issues of the paper disclose Whig political sympathies as they include a paean to Marlborough following his victory at Malplaquet.[70] Mrs Crackenthorpe often draws attention to her political neutrality. Responding to a letter from a reader asking her to 'declare what Party she's of', Mrs Crackenthorpe seeks to distance herself from party politics entirely:

> Why should People that are independent of the ministry, be so impertinently busy as to Trouble their Heads with any Constitution that they live happily under? and 'tis a sign English People are strangely perverse when the present Establishment, which is the wisest, the best concerted, and the most flourishing that ever was, cannot persuade a cordial unity.[71]

Later issues of the paper uphold this promise to remain apart from state skirmishes – for instance, the paper dramatises an impassioned debate between a 'high-flying Churchman' and a 'gentleman of the army' over Sacheverell's guilt or innocence, but refrains from drawing conclusions. In fact, one of the most striking features of the *Female Tatler* is its curiously apolitical character, especially when the politically-engaged nature of almost all writing during Queen Anne's reign is considered.

The ascription of the *Female Tatler* to Manley has also meant that insufficient attention has been paid to the significance of a male author seeking discursive authority through a feminine mask. The *Female Tatler* is one of the first instances of a publication that consistently exploits the femininity of its eidolon in order to communicate publicly. It seems clear Baker adopted a feminine persona in order to exploit the trope of tattling. The paper's first number acknowledges that tattling 'was ever adjudg'd peculiar to our sex', and it is women's propensity to engage in scandal-mongering that is most often dramatised in the paper's pages.[72] Indeed, Mrs Crackenthorpe's gender was not only an important part of her popular success, but it was also the crucial grounds of her public authority. Those who sought to undermine the paper's credibility did so by insinuating the paper's true author was a man. By the twelfth issue of the *Female Tatler*, these reports were so widespread that Mrs Crackenthorpe was compelled to deny them in print as 'a splenetic and irrational aspersion upon our whole sex.'[73] The reports continued to circulate and became a potent weapon in the months

two rival *Female Tatlers* were produced. Each author attempted to prove the other a fraud by demonstrating their competitor was a man: the paper published by Bragge suggested the rival paper was authored by his footman, Francis, who had absconded with his papers, while the version issued by Baldwin printed a reader's letter unmasking the spurious Mrs Crackenthorpe as a 'surly, sullen, morose, splenetic old Dotard' who haunts the ale-houses surrounding St Paul's Church-yard.[74] Assuming a feminine persona, then, had real discursive authority.

The motto of the paper – *Sum Canna Vocalis*, or 'I am a talking reed' – strongly evokes an image of tattling and illustrates the increasingly unambiguous link between the communicative method of tattling and democratic discourse. Mrs Crackenthorpe explicates the motto she has chosen in the third number of her paper in order to settle a dispute that has arisen between several of her female readers regarding the story to which the motto refers. The motto recalls the myth of a man who digs a hole in a riverbank in which to whisper a secret he is unable to keep. Nearby reeds take up his secret and broadcast, or publish, it with each gust of wind. This story provides a motif for the *Female Tatler*'s approach to its subject matter: rather than suggesting the intimate communication that is established and sustained by gossip, it emblematises communication that is indiscriminate and thus relatively democratic.

The ephemeral nature of tattle is not only symbolised by the paper's motto, but also represented by the persona of Mrs Crackenthorpe herself. While Bickerstaff's personality and appearance become increasingly specific as the *Tatler* progresses, Mrs Crackenthorpe remains an elusive presence in the pages of her paper. Readers were eager to know more about their author, and Mrs Crackenthorpe responded to their requests on two occasions: first, with her portrait which is subsequently incorporated in the paper's masthead; and then with an account of her person and family. In describing her person, Mrs Crackenthorpe announces that 'no Person can truly define themselves [so] I shall only tell the Town, what a sort of Woman I'd have 'em imagine me to be'. In what follows, she steers her readers' imagination to the middle ground, directing them to imagine 'a middle-aged, middle-sized brown woman, that's neither awkward or coquettish, foppish or fanatical, but dresses herself like a gentlewoman, moderately in the mode, with an easy affable disposition'.[75] Her portrait, too, is remarkable for its lack of particularity. Unlike Bickerstaff who is depicted surrounded by the accoutrements of writing and whose face is delineated in such a way as to demonstrate his character, Mrs Crackenthorpe could well be any of

Illustration 4 Masthead of the *Female Tatler*, no. 21 (24 Aug. 1709). Courtesy of the Houghton Library, Harvard College Library. 15493.52.20 F.

London's fashionable ladies (see Illustration 4). Yet the manner in which Mrs Crackenthorpe's image is incorporated in the masthead is suggestive: her portrait is framed by the paper's motto, 'I am a talking reed', and her name emblazoned across the bottom. This makes the reference of the motto undeniably specific – Mrs Crackenthorpe is the paper's talking reed – and emphasises the ephemeral nature of her persona.

Although Bickerstaff listed the *Female Tatler* as one of his antagonists, Mrs Crackenthorpe aimed to complement, rather than censure, the contents of the *Tatler* proper. The paper was published on alternate days to the *Tatler* and was presented as a feminised version of the masculine style and concerns of Bickerstaff's paper. Mrs Crackenthorpe declares that she 'consult[s] the Honour and Interest of the Ladies, with as much Fervency as the Male TATLER does that of the Gentlemen' and, on a number of occasions, is called upon to explain some of more arcane aspects of the *Tatler* proper that her readers assume were written with a male audience in mind.[76] Mrs Crackenthorpe later suggests the complementary relationship between their papers by joining her paper to Bickerstaff's as a collaborative Tatler that is 'daily published'.[77] This is illustrated neatly in a suggestion, made by one of the company present at Mrs Crackenthorpe's twice-weekly drawing rooms, that her host would make a suitable match for the unmarried Bickerstaff.[78] However, although Mrs Crackenthorpe's female voice is imagined to be

more amenable to the ladies, it is not exclusively addressed to them. She carefully observes that men and women share the pleasures of scandal equally, and commonly describes her readers as 'Gentlemen and Ladies'.[79]

The *Female Tatler*, like the *Tatler* proper, originates from a specific material site. The paper emerges from Mrs Crackenthorpe's drawing room, or 'scandal office', as it has been dubbed by one of her more regular visitors in tribute to the gossip that is exchanged there. These drawing-room assemblies not only supply Mrs Crackenthorpe with the information necessary to fill her pages but, as she writes frequently on subjects suggested by her visitors in conversation, these discussions often directly shape the substance of her paper.[80] Rather than standing against the public sphere – as a private realm demarcated from the public space of politics – Mrs Crackenthorpe's drawing room encompasses all its sites. She purposefully represents the basis of her intelligence as co-extensive with that of the *Tatler* and advises her readers that her apartment 'comprehends, *White*'s, *Will*'s, the *Grecian, Garraway*'s in *Exchange-Alley*, and all the *India-Houses* within the Bills of Mortality.'[81] However, despite the array of subjects canvassed by Mrs Crackenthorpe – the conversation, as she claims, regularly includes discussion of law cases, the price of stocks, removals at court, books, new fashions, and tittle-tattle – the fact remains her knowledge of these matters depends on word of mouth. Mrs Crackenthorpe is not a presence in the world she describes: her knowledge is restricted to the gossip she gleans during her drawing-room assemblies, rather than through participation in or direct observation of the events she remarks upon.

Mrs Crackenthorpe claims that the stories recounted in the *Female Tatler* are written with the intention of serving the public by reforming vice and ridiculing the vanities of the age. The *Female Tatler* is 'not an impertinent Rotation of Chit-Chat but a well-grounded Design, divertingly to lead People into good moral Instruction whose intent in reading this Paper might be only to find out some invidious Reflection, or laugh at an idle Story'.[82] This, of course, echoes the professed goals of the *Tatler* proper and, indeed, when Mrs Crackenthorpe laments the difficulties entailed in her project of moral and social reformation, she explicitly aligns her paper with Bickerstaff's. 'Now, would anybody suppose when *Tatler*s are daily published that people should be so horrid silly? But as the ingenious Mr Bickerstaff says – one may write to eternity, the world is still the same.'[83] Mrs Crackenthorpe's focus on reformation is so singular that she often claims to be inundated with 'intelligence' from readers, which she is obliged to ignore as it contains particular reflections on

individuals that she refuses to publish. She complains much of the vast volume of correspondence she receives is unsuitable for her paper, as it contains nothing but 'silly Amours, petty Reflections, frivolous Tales, and scandalous Aspersions'.[84] Readers are invited to engage with the periodical, but their contributions will be excluded if they fail to take a particular form.

It is often difficult to discern whether the characters that form the substance of each issue are intended as reflections on actual members of London society, or whether they are entirely fictional figures, invented in order to illustrate a specific moral point or matter of social etiquette. Readers do not necessarily have to be able to discern the identity of characters such as Andrew All-night, a denizen of London's taverns, or Lady Would-be, a lady who affects great learning but has little practical knowledge, in order to understand the import of the narratives in which they appear. Since the misdeeds these characters are engaged in are so common, they are also widely applicable. Unlike the political vices narrated in the *New Atalantis*, which are so singular that they could belong to only one individual, it is conceivable that every reader of the *Female Tatler* would be able to fit the characters drawn in its pages to someone of their own acquaintance. Mrs Crackenthorpe remarked on this propensity of the reading public and protested that 'if I point at a particular Vice, it is always owned and laid hold of by a particular person'.[85] In a later number, Mrs Crackenthorpe pauses in relating the events that led to a broken engagement in order to comment on her method and the intended audience of her paper: 'the purpose of my Design is to write for the Entertainment of such as are Strangers to their Character, as well as those who have a perfect Knowledge of, and insight into, their Affairs'.[86] Perhaps because of the diminished interest in producing real-life scandal, these stories have a narrative interest that is entirely absent from the tales contained in Manley's secret history and so it is possible to read the tales related in the *Female Tatler* for either their referential or for their narrative elements.

However, the *Female Tatler* does contain a number of identifiable references to real-life individuals. The most sustained reflection on a particular individual, and the instance that was most notorious amongst contemporary readers, was the sketch of Deputy Bustle and his two daughters that appeared in late August.[87] An entire issue of the *Female Tatler* was devoted to ridiculing the proud and arrogant Bustles for affecting airs and graces beyond their station and, as marginal notes made in one copy of this issue demonstrate, contemporary readers were able to discern that 'Deputy Bustle' was in fact Deputy Skinner.[88]

Mrs Crackenthorpe later referred to this issue as the 'noisy' number and it seems it did provoke uproar; the *Apollo* reported that the person behind the *Female Tatler* had received a 'cudgelling' as a result of its contents.[89] Other issues of the paper also contained characters that could be recognised by its eighteenth-century audience. These characters, however, are not of the same status as those represented in secret histories such as the *New Atalantis* or *The Secret History of the White Staff*. Most often, they are actors, playwrights, and theatre managers such as the actress Ann Oldfield, Colley Cibber, and the manager of London's Drury Lane, Christopher Rich. Although the imperative to disseminate gossip is all but absent from the body of the paper, this is not the case for the entirety of the publication. Each issue concludes with a series of notes that amount to a register of contemporary gossip. For example, one issue admonishes 'Mrs Clack' who is 'continually prying into her Neighbour's Affairs, and buzzing groundless Suspicions in every Husband's Ear, and suspecting every Woman's Charity' to 'turn her Opticks within herself, and particularly, not to be so publickly familiar with Will. Whitebread, the B—r.'[90] These references lack a political charge, and demonstrate the differences between the concerns of the *Female Tatler* and those of the publications studied in preceding chapters.

The *Female Tatler* was one of several papers brought to the attention of the Grand Jury of Middlesex in late 1709. The Jury declared the paper to be a 'great nuisance' and its practices were denounced in the following terms:

> A great Number of Printed papers are continually dispers'd in and about this City under the Names of the *Female Tatler*, sold by A. Baldwin, *The Review of the British Nation*, and other Papers under other Titles [...] which under feign'd Names, by describing Persons, and by Placing the first and last Letters of the words, and otherwise, do reflect on and scandalously abuse several Persons of Honour and Quality; many of the Magistrates and abundance of Citizens, and all sorts of People; which Practice we conceive to be a great nuisance, does manifestly tend to the Disturbance of the Publick peace, and may turn to the Damage if not Ruin of many Families if not prevented.[91]

This confirms the fact that stories contained in the *Female Tatler* were read as reflections on particular individuals, but it is the terms in which the paper is censured that are of greatest consequence. Although the paper might abuse public figures, such as magistrates and persons of

quality, the *Female Tatler* is of concern to the public only insofar as it possesses the ability to destroy private families. Mrs Crackenthorpe seeks to reform her readers by presenting them with sketches of their contemporaries that are designed as cautionary tales. In this way, she turns the private aspects of gossip to a public service. Thus, the *Female Tatler* lacks the disciplining imperative that is so overwhelmingly present in the *Tatler*. Instead of imitating Bickerstaff's censorious attitude and seeking, through legalistic interventions, to reform their behaviour directly, Mrs Crackenthorpe seeks to persuade her readers of the value of right conduct. Thus, the *Female Tatler* is concerned with turning gossip to the service of the community rather than to the service of the state.[92]

The diminution in the public status of gossip that is dramatised in the paper's pages can be illustrated through its engagement with Manley's *New Atalantis*. One of the earliest numbers of the *Female Tatler* prints a letter from Burgersdicius, who presents a verse version of a story drawn from Manley's *New Atalantis* to Mrs Crackenthorpe. Burgersdicius is an 'admirer' of Manley's novel and has written the poem in homage to the 'Female Empire' of gossip and scandal. The first section of the poem re-narrates the story of the Duke and his ward, Charlot, and is printed in this number; the second installment, continuing their story, follows a number of issues later.[93] The narrative of the Duke and Charlot is perhaps the most salacious episode in the *New Atalantis*. It is regularly used to focus discussions of the secret history, such that the vignette has almost become emblematic of the text.[94] The narrative has featured in so many recent discussions of Manley's secret history that Kathryn King has complained, 'How many times are we to encounter discussions of the *New Atalantis* that centre upon the Charlot episode?'[95] The re-narration of this section of the *New Atalantis*, then, amounts to a revision of the centre of Manley's *roman à clef*.

Manley's Duke is an ambitious and avaricious member of William III's court, who has resolved to educate his ward in the principles of virtue with the intention that she eventually becomeswife to his son. Her education is prescriptive: she is prevented from reading romances, poetry, novels and other texts that will not edify. However, the Duke develops a passion for Charlot and so resolves to weaken the virtue he has taken pains to inculcate. In order to do so, he embarks on another program of education and introduces her to the works of Ovid along with other scandalous texts. This has the desired effect and the Duke is soon able to seduce his ward. In the *New Atalantis*, this account of near-incest is just one of the scandalous stories that Intelligence narrates to the goddesses. In the *Female Tatler*, however, the tale is translated from this

original context and becomes the sole subject of a lengthy poem. In the process the story is transformed and its narration aestheticised. 'Charlotte: Or, the Guardian' is directed to a female audience – 'the Fair' who are inscribed in the poem's initial lines – and the virtuous beginning of the relationship between guardian and ward is dwelt upon. The principles of feminine silence and obedience are emphasised and, ultimately, the program of education devised by the Duke is endorsed. Indeed, the relation of Charlot's education concludes with a maxim that sanctions the principles that the Duke sought to inculcate: 'Woman must yield the Sovereign Right to Man, / Tho' in th' Auspicious Reign of Conquering – ANNE.'[96] The relationship between the Duke and Charlot remains virtuous for the entirety of the poem and although the final lines, containing a reference to Ovid's story of Myrrha's passion for her father, gesture towards the ending of Manley's story, the corruption of Charlot at the hands of her guardian is not given any imaginative space.

The quatrain with which the poem concludes emphasises the radically different orientation of the *Female Tatler* towards political scandal:

> Here draw the Friendly Veil, let busie Fame
> Invert her *Tube*, and blast no more that Name;
> For wholesome Truths in *Parables* are shewn,
> And Morals may be drawn from Names unknown.[97]

In stark contrast to the *New Atalantis*, the *Female Tatler* is not invested in the production of political scandal and will not encourage its readers to know the names of those who are fictionalised. Rather, it is concerned to turn scandal to an instructive end. Indeed where actual events could be turned to a moral purpose, as is the case here, it was necessary to erect a wall between the published narrative and the real participants to screen their identity.

As its title suggests, the *Female Tatler* denotes a diminution of the scope of gossip. In its pages, gossip is represented as a pursuit of the middle classes; its subject confined to domestic matters rather than ranging over political or civic issues. Mrs Crackenthorpe explains in an early number that the middle sort occupy themselves with gossip about family affairs because they are excluded from the 'World's Agreements'.[98] This seems to chart a privatisation of gossip, its concerns are returned from public affairs to domestic matters. This transition is indicated by the terms in which the *Female Tatler* is censured by the Grand Jury: the paper appears to be considered a public nuisance only insofar as it destroys private families. Part of this privatisation of the concerns of

gossip seems to be a newly awakened assertion of its gendered character. In this paper, female tattle embodies neither a public nor a political threat, its preoccupations were with private matters and with moral rather than state business. The transmutation of gossip staged in the pages of the *Female Tatler*, however, also highlights an important link between women readers and democratic reading practices. The next chapter pursues the new location of gossip, and the rhetorical link it forged between women and reading, through an investigation of the respective careers of Edmund Curll and Jane Barker.

5
A Newer *Atalantis*: Political and Generic Revolutions

> At twelve, a Wit and a Coquette;
> Marries for Love, half Whore, half Wife;
> Cuckolds, elopes, and runs in Debt;
> Turns Auth'ress, and is *Curll*'s for Life.
> Her Common-Place-Book all gallant is,
> Of Scandal now a *Cornucopia*;
> She pours it out in *Atalantis*,
> Or *Memoirs* of the *New Utopia*
>
> Jonathan Swift, 'Corinna', 1711

In the final year of Queen Anne's reign, the infamous publisher Edmund Curll printed a collection of short fictional pieces titled *The New Atalantis, for the year 1713*.[1] The six texts brought together in this collection were not new; but in issuing them together under the rubric of the atalantis, Curll made a particular claim for their public significance. The collection's title suggests the texts gathered under its banner follow the example set five years earlier by Delarivier Manley's *New Atalantis*, revealing the secrets of real-life Londoners in order to generate political scandal. However, the stories bear little resemblance to Manley's original. They relate aspects of domestic or civic life rather than political gossip, and deal in characters that have no real-life counterparts. The collection forms part of a new and striking phenomenon of the London publishing scene: nearly half of the fictional works published in 1713 and 1714, the final years of Queen Anne's reign, claimed kinship to Manley's *succès de scandale* through their title.[2] This phenomenon

provides a clear indication of the extent to which the relationship between politics and literature had been reconfigured.

The New Atalantis for the year 1713 also marks the beginning of the professional association between Jane Barker, a novelist who specialised in narratives of retired country life, and the famously 'unspeakable' Edmund Curll. Curll remains one of the most notorious figures in the early eighteenth-century book trade: his publishing practices were denounced by his peers as exploitative and opportunistic, while his professional appetite for political intrigue and sexual scandal was widely known and equally infamous. But this is not the entire picture. Curll's catalogue contained many works of polite literature and advertised his shop as a place 'where Gentlemen and Ladies may be Furnish'd with all the New Books, Plays, and Pamphlets that come out'.[3] Curll also sustained professional relationships with almost every female author at work in the early eighteenth century and it is now becoming clear that he was 'an important force behind the early growth of women's fiction'.[4] Jane Barker was the first of a long line of female authors with whom Curll developed an ongoing professional relationship. Published in this collection, *Love Intrigues: Or, the History of the Amours of Bosvil and Galesia* was not only Barker's first novel, it was also Curll's first foray into publishing fiction. Their relationship continued throughout their respective careers: with the exception of Barker's final novel, which appeared when legal exigencies forced Curll into temporary retirement, all her fiction bore Curll's imprint.

Jane Barker and Edmund Curll make strange associates for most literary historians of the early eighteenth century. In the first article devoted to Barker and Curll's intersecting careers, William McBurney confessed 'it is tempting to picture her as a bizarre figure using Curll's shop as a cover for international political intrigue', but discounts this idea regretfully. More recent archival work has demonstrated that Barker was involved in exactly the kind of radical politics that McBurney could only imagine: she was a member of the outlawed Catholic Church, and a faithful supporter of the exiled Stuarts.[5] In the light of this new information, Kathryn King has revisited the 'long, productive, and somewhat puzzling' relationship between Barker and Curll, but concluded that the reasons for their association 'must remain a mystery.'[6] New scholarship on Curll has also drawn attention to the bookseller's dealings with Barker, declaring 'it is now evident that she made a significant contribution to the publisher's list', without illuminating the grounds of their association or the meaning of their connection.[7]

The relationship was not remarked on by their contemporaries because, in its contemporary moment, it was unremarkable. Indeed, the very fact that Barker and Curll's association has come to seem so perplexing, tells us much about the lens through which we view the relation between politics, literary production, and gender, and suggests that lens might distort these relationships rather than bringing them into focus. It is suggestive that their association begins with the publication of *Love Intrigues*, and its subsequent connection to the atalantis trope. It suggests the extent to which the significance of that trope – with its imbrication of politics and literature, and of somatic and discursive representation – was re-figured and re-gendered around the poles of publication and authorship. This chapter examines the careers of Barker and Curll, both as they developed independently and as they intersected, in order to map the alteration in the atalantis trope, and the realignment of literature and politics that it entailed.

Atalantis revived: Jacobite hopes and the Hanoverian succession

The New Atalantis for the year 1713 was likely devised by Curll as a way of marketing titles already in his possession. The fact he did so by publicly declaring a relation to Manley's *New Atalantis* indicates that the atalantis trope retained its popular appeal and its political charge. The rubric of the atalantis would have provided potential readers of this collection with a clear (if ultimately misleading) signal that its contents bore a coded relation to public affairs and that each of the six texts must be read for references if their secrets were to be discovered. If this reading practice was indicated by the title of the collection, it was confirmed by the list of its contents. Curll had modified the titles of each text for inclusion in this collection in order to suggest their scandalous public relevance. *The History of the Yorkshire Gentry* became *The Northern Atalantis; Two Speeches made in the Theatre at Oxford* was re-titled *Cambridge Intrigues, with a key inserted*. Barker's narrative did not escape alteration: the phrase '*Love Intrigues*' was added to the more prosaic title, *The Amours of Bosvil and Galesia*, in order to suggest that its subject matter was also illicit. The relationship that Curll constructed between these six texts and public affairs was not entirely without foundation. Although none of the texts engage political matters directly, each bears an oblique relationship to contemporary political concerns.

Early readers of the advertisements announcing the collection's publication responded immediately to its suggested public relevance. Shortly after the collection was first advertised, the following notice appeared in *The Post Boy*:

> The Publick is desired to take Notice, that this Book [the *New Atalantis for the year 1713*] was not writ by the Author of the 4 vols of the *Atalantis*, publish'd by John Morphew; the Author of those Volumes, having never seen this Book, nor knowing any thing of the Contents, will not be answerable for whatever may be display'd therein.[8]

There is little doubt that this notice was written by Manley herself or, at the very least, on her behalf. Its publication in the *Post Boy*, a periodical with a definite Tory bias, suggests that it was intended for an audience of party sympathisers. It seems Manley feared the collection would contain politically incendiary material for which she could be held responsible. During Manley's lifetime, nine texts were published that declared their kinship to the *New Atalantis* through their title. Yet this is the only occasion that Manley publicly disavowed responsibility for a text and knowledge of its contents. This is because the publication of *The New Atalantis for the year* 1713 was the first step in a systematic campaign undertaken by Curll in order to appropriate the political and cultural meanings of the atalantis trope for his own professional practices.

Two months later, Curll published a second text that extended his exploitation of the atalantis trope. This was *The Adventures of Rivella: Or, the History of the Author of the Atalantis*, a thinly fictionalised account of Manley's own life. As its subtitle suggests, *Rivella* concentrates on the circumstances surrounding the publication of the *New Atalantis* and on the trial that followed. This text broke with Curll's established practice of publishing spurious biographies of celebrated authors as, unlike the earlier biographies that bore his imprint, *The Adventures of Rivella* was authored by its subject – by Manley herself.

Although Manley's involvement in *Rivella* was the greatest guarantee of the authenticity of its contents, her name did not appear on the title page. Her authorship remained a closely guarded secret during her lifetime and was only revealed to readers in the third edition of the text, published after her death in 1725. In the preface to this edition, Curll outlined the circumstances that persuaded Manley to write an account of her personal and writing life, and supplied evidence in

the form of a sequence of letters. According to Curll, Manley 'generously resolved' to write her own story in exchange for the suppression of a version of her life being prepared for the press by one of Curll's hack writers, Charles Gildon.[9] Manley's correspondence with Curll over her biography suggests she was writing under duress, and her fervent desire to conceal her authorship of *Rivella* from those she knew (she repeatedly begs Curll to 'keep the secret'), indicates she was blackmailed into writing the text.[10] The lengths to which Curll went to secure this text attest to his awareness that the atalantis continued to command public interest.

The *Adventures of Rivella* did not end Curll's exploitation of the atalantis trope or, for that matter, of Manley herself. He continued to publish texts with titles that proclaimed their kinship with the *New Atalantis*, including *The German Atalantis* (1715), and *The Court of Atalantis* (1720). He also recognised that the *New Atalantis* continued to embody a potent political threat. In the mid-1720s, Curll wrote to advise Robert Walpole, the then-prime minister, of a letter he had glimpsed in Manley's hand. He claimed Manley's letter revealed a fifth volume of the *New Atalantis*, intended to have the same effect on the course of public events as the original, was just printed and awaiting publication. Claiming to quote from Manley's letter, Curll writes that the design of the new book:

> in her own words, is, 'to give an account of a sovereign and his ministers who are endeavouring to overturn that Constitution which their pretence is to protect; to examine the defects and vices of some men who take a delight to impose upon the world by the pretence of public good; whilst their true design is only to gratify and advance themselves.' This, Sir, is the laudable tenor of this libel, which is (but shall be in your power only to suppress) ready for the intended mischief upon the rising of the parliament.[11]

The threat Curll reports was taken seriously: nine days after the date of this letter, the secretary of state issued a warrant to seize any copies of 'a seditious and traiterous Libel [...] *The New Atalantis Vol ye Fifth* or with some like Title'.[12] No such text was ever published and, as there are no further records or mentions of a fifth volume, it is likely that the text never existed. The very fact, however, that Curll's report was taken seriously demonstrates the prospect of another *Atalantis* was considered a real political threat.

Something of Curll's enduring interest in the atalantis trope can be gauged by examining one of these texts, *The German Atalantis*

(1715). The narrative is advertised as 'by a young lady', despite the fact that Curll's receipts establish its author as Robert Busby.[13] *The German Atalantis* is structured as a conversation between two intimate female friends, Baritia and Calista, who exchange stories of their experience of love and detail the obstacles they must overcome so their romances may flourish. Baritia visits Calista to solicit her friend's help in convincing her father to support her marriage to Fradonia, the soldier to whom she has remained loyal through exile and mistaken grief at his rumoured death, and over whom her father has threatened her disinheritance. Calista consoles her friend with her own story of lost love, her reluctant betrothal to another and the success of this new marriage, before successfully persuading Baritia's father to allow the lovers' union. Unlike the proliferation of characters that marks the *New Atalantis*, the narrative centres on three developed characters who are neither representations of particular individuals nor allegories of specific political types. However, the circumstances in which Baritia, Fradonia, and Calista find themselves resonate with versions of the English national story: a tyrant king has usurped the throne, the legitimate monarch is forced into exile, and subjects must choose whether to remain loyal to the exiled king or seek accommodation with their new monarch. When Fradonia tells of a successful rebellion, fomented by 'the party which secretly remain'd firm' to the exiled monarch and the supporters that followed him into exile,[14] the resemblance between the fictional world and the English experience seem particularly pointed. This is especially so, given that the text was published in 1715, the year of the thwarted Jacobite uprising. However, *The German Atalantis* does not reflect on contemporary occurrences in a sustained or systematic way. Instead, Jacobite experience is encoded in a romance narrative that celebrates fidelity through long periods of separation and in the face of seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

The preface of the *German Atalantis* invokes the 'royal motto', '*Evil be to him that Evil thinks*', in an attempt to transfer responsibility from the author to the reader for any references that may be discovered.[15] This motto is not only a form of narrative prophylaxis, but it also provides an index to the text's cultural location. The phrase in French – *honi soit qui mal y pense* – was the motto of the Order of the Garter. Edward III founded the Order in part as a means of furthering his claim to the French throne, and its motto was directed against those who doubted the legitimacy of his claim.[16] The use of this phrase in the preface to *The German Atalantis* locates the narrative in a context that both highlights

issues of legitimate rule and, through reference to this chivalric order, renders continuing loyalty to the sovereign glamorous.

The *German Atalantis* reveals the significance that Curll saw in the atalantis trope and the way in which it could be used to invoke an audience with particular political sympathies. The publication of the text was announced in the *Post-Boy*, the staunch Tory readership of this paper revealing the audience Curll anticipated for the text.[17] Further, internal evidence suggests he added the *German Atalantis* to the original title of *The History of Baritia and Fradonia*, in order to highlight the latent connections between this elegiac narrative and the presence of a new king and his court.[18] Taken together, Curll's actions suggest the audience for this tale of love and fidelity was drawn primarily from the disaffected.

Jacobitism became an increasingly public phenomenon during Anne's final years on the throne. The widespread public suspicion that Anne intended to undo the Act of Settlement and nominate James II's son, James Francis Edward Stuart, as her successor were not without foundation. Two of the Queen's leading ministers – Harley and Henry Bolingbroke – were engaged in serious negotiations with the Prince of Wales, but his refusal to renounce the Catholic faith and commit himself to Protestantism meant he ultimately forfeited their support.[19] Jacobitism was also a growing force within the parliament and the success achieved by those with thinly veiled Jacobite sympathies in the elections of 1710 and 1713 meant it was increasingly visible at the centre of power.[20]

On the first day of August 1714, Queen Anne died and George I was proclaimed her successor. To those who remained loyal to the hereditary monarchy and the house of Stuart, Anne's death was a tragedy. In stark contrast to his predecessors, who had attempted to moderate the ideological conflict between the two parties, George's determination to secure his dynasty's hold on England as rapidly as possible led him to rely exclusively on the advice and assistance of the Whigs. In the months that separated his accession from his arrival in England, George issued orders from Hanover dismissing key Tory ministers and installing their Whig rivals in the now-vacant places. Public dissatisfaction was such that the King's coronation, held almost four months after his accession, was marked by anti-Hanoverian riots in more than twenty locations. The situation the Tories found themselves in only worsened after the first general elections of the new reign: the Whigs won a substantial victory and the new parliament reconvened initiated impeachment proceedings against Harley and Bolingbroke.

The popular unrest that was evident on the occasion of George's coronation began to escalate following the elections and the move toward impeachment. A large number of Jacobites still believed a Stuart restoration was possible and in 1715 they planned a coordinated rebellion. This uprising was a resounding failure: the government discovered the planned insurrection and was able to arrest a number of its leading actors before it could be put into effect. The attempted revolution was used by parliament to justify significant institutional changes. It provided the grounds for new legislation increasing the interval between elections from three years, as mandated by the Triennial Act that governed electoral contests during Anne's reign, to seven. Hanoverian-Whig rule became entrenched and developed both ideological and affective roots in Britain. Linda Colley has challenged the traditional argument that the Tory party effectively collapsed under the weight of proscription,[21] but the very fact that argument can be posited demonstrates how entirely the political landscape had altered.

Turbulent party politics were a defining feature of Anne's reign. The state was continually in flux, and a vigorous trade in printed political propaganda substantially influenced its course and direction.[22] It was this dynamic intersection between literature and politics that led to the publication of such texts as Manley's *New Atalantis*, and it was the recognition of the fact that such texts could have consequential effects that led to her arrest. The political structure of the Hanoverian era, in contrast, was relatively settled and so the chance that literary texts would have an immediate political impact was greatly reduced. As a result, far fewer texts refer to the specific political moment in which they were published. While authors might seek to comment on or represent contemporary individuals or situations through their writing, there is no longer an expectation that the relationship of the world of the text to the world of the reader will be straightforward or easy to decode.

The forms of political engagement developed by those who had been marginalised by earlier radical political transformations provided a model for those who were disaffected by these contemporary developments. The allegorical vocabulary of love and desire that grew up around the Restoration – when the return of Charles II to England was figured as the fulfillment of a reciprocally felt desire between the king and his people – was elaborated after the revolution of 1688 into an idiom that was particular to Jacobitism.[23] Matters of the heart, especially unrequited love, were used to represent the contemporary political situation and

figure the relationship between the people and their monarch. These images are not only evident in literary expressions of Jacobitism, such as the lost lover ballads described by Paul Monod, but also figured in popular practices. For example, women would celebrate the Pretender's birthday by wearing white roses, which were both a token of love and a symbol of the exiled monarch.[24]

Romance, or more specifically sexuality, was of course the structuring trope of the secret history. Its centrality was the result of a peculiarly Tory epistemology that understood that the motivation and meaning of public events were to be found in private occurrences. As we shall see, there is a constitutive difference in the way romance is used in the secret history, where it is used to publicise specific instances of political corruption and to shape readers' perceptions of the court and cabinet, and in Jacobite narratives, where it is used as a means of reconciling readers to their disappointed political situation in which fidelity to the hereditary monarch had to be its own reward. This provides some indication of how the political situation, particularly as it crosses the Jacobite literary marketplace, had altered.

Women are central to the genre of romance and were accorded a special place in these representations, so it is not surprising that, once Jacobitism symbolically became an affair of the heart, women were considered to be especially susceptible to its lure.[25] A strong indicator of how central femininity had become to the rhetoric of Jacobitism is provided by the fact that texts like the *German Atalantis* were publicly advertised as 'by a young lady' when in actual fact they were authored by men. More particularly, the fact Jacobite rhetoric sexualised the relationship between the exiled monarch and the loyal subject inverted the relation between gender and political debate that was being established in public discourse. As both a result of the gender of the exiled monarch and as a way of encapsulating the power dynamic of the relationship, the position of the faithful political subject was feminised. Consequently, Jacobite rhetoric offered a way into political debate that was uniquely available to women and, as Carol Barash has demonstrated, it was an opportunity that many female authors eagerly availed themselves of.[26] The scope for participation in political debate that Jacobite rhetoric allowed women expanded at the same time as the abstraction of political debate from the body contracted these possibilities in the public sphere. Edmund Curll sought to intervene in the separation of public debate from the body and in the gendering of political representation.

'Curlicism': somatic publishing practices and discursive authorship

The particular scandal of Curll's publishing practices was generated not by his abuse of writers or the unseemly nature of some of his texts, but by the manner in which he manipulated the names and reputations of well-known authors. Curll not only issued pirated editions of popular works, but also published collections of letters to and from contemporary authors without their permission, and assembled unauthorised biographies of authors who were recently deceased. In addition, Curll used the names of well-known authors as a means of advertising works by those who had yet to establish a reputation. Unwitting readers were likely to find that the 'J. Addison' proclaimed by a pamphlet's title page was only responsible for a small part of the work, or perhaps was not the famous Joseph at all but rather a John or a James.[27] The liberty Curll took with names was the source of Jonathan Swift's complaint to his bookseller, Benjamin Tooke. Swift had just received a copy of the spurious key Curll created for his *A Tale of a Tub*, and writes: 'it is strange that there can be no satisfaction against a Bookseller for publishing names in so bold a manner [...] at this rate, there is no book, however so vile, which may not be fastened on me.[28]

While Curll's practice of publishing hastily assembled biographies of recently deceased authors is well known, it is not often remembered that he regularly accompanied these lives with a copy of the author's last will and testament. By the end of the 1720s, his collection was substantial enough to warrant its own catalogue and included the wills of Joseph Addison, Gilbert Burnet, and William Congreve.[29] John Arbuthnot was so struck by Curll's habit of retailing the literary 'remains' of authors that he memorably described the bookseller as 'one of the new terrors of Death'.[30] Yet Curll's interest in the body of the author extended even further. In an audacious gesture, he appropriated the image of Alexander Pope as the emblem for his shop.[31] The poet's effigy headed the bookseller's printed catalogues and marked the location of his shop in Covent Garden; his books advertised as 'Printed for Edmund Curll, at the Pope's Head'. The poet's countenance became the bookseller's trademark, suggesting a strikingly vivid material point of origin for the books Curll published. His professional practices combine to fetishise the person, not just the personality, of the author.

Curll had been a regular presence in the courts since entering the book trade, and endured all manner of prosecutions for his many literary misdemeanors. However, his most serious encounter with the law began in

February 1725 when a warrant was issued to arrest Curll for publishing 'Lewd & Infamous Books'. As Paul Baines and Pat Rogers have recently shown, this prosecution was the culmination of a decade of interest in Curll on the part of the government and a consequence of the substantial number of enemies, both inside and out of the government, he had amassed over his course of his career. The initial warrant lists a number of books, but by the time of Curll's examination and subsequent prosecution, all but two had disappeared from the charges.[32] The two items that Curll had to answer for before the court were *Venus in the Cloister: or, the Nun in her Smock* (1724), a translation of a pornographic French novel, and *A Treatise of the Use of Flogging in Venereal Affairs* (1718). He did so by claiming that the first performed a public service by exposing the hypocrisy of priest and nuns, and that the second was a medical treatise and not a pornographic work.[33] Curll was found guilty in spite of this spirited defense. However, his counsel was able to postpone sentencing by highlighting a question of legal jurisdiction that needed to be resolved before the sentence could be settled.

Before the matter of jurisdiction was settled, Curll returned to the court of the King's Bench on another matter. In 1727, he was arrested on charges of seditious libel for his involvement in the recently published *Memoirs* of John Ker, a notorious double agent appointed by Queen Anne to spy among the Jacobites. Curll was found guilty at the trial that took place in October of that year and, when sentencing occurred a few months later, the court was ready to hand down a sentence for the deferred obscenity charge as well the current case.[34] For the two obscene libels, he was ordered to a pay a fine of twenty five marks each and enter a bond of a hundred pounds for his good behaviour, while for the *Memoirs* he was ordered to pay an additional fine of twenty marks, and sentenced to stand in the pillory at Charing Cross. Although it has been argued that the courts used Ker's *Memoirs* as a pretext to finally punish Curll for *Venus in the Cloister*, the sentence itself draws the political and sexual offences together. *The British Journal*, for example, announced that Curll was punished for both his 'amorous and political offences'.[35] The coincidence of the sentences meant that the sexual and the political were yoked together in popular understandings of the bookseller's punishment just as they were in his subsequent representations. As such, Curll's punishment for both his 'amorous and political offences' amounts to a re-staging of the atalantis trope in the legal and social domain.

When Curll stood in the pillory on 23 February 1728, he did not meet with the usual treatment from the crowd that had gathered. Instead

of being a target for clods of earth and rancid vegetables, Curll was received by the crowd as a popular hero. The one man who attempted to mete out the usual popular punishments by throwing a rotten egg at the bookseller was nearly lynched by the crowd and, once the allotted time had expired, Curll was carried off as if in triumph to the nearest tavern.[36] Doubtless, the response of the crowd had something to do with the rapidly growing climate of anti-Walpole sentiment that increased the appeal of those who fell afoul of the ministry, but it was also cultivated by a strategy of Curll's own making. He had printed the following broadside, addressed to the spectators, that was distributed throughout the crowd:

> *Gentlemen*,
> I hope you'll consider, that this Gentleman who now appears before you, is not guilty of any base or villainous Crimes; he has indeed been found guilty of publishing three Books, and that for which he is thus exposed, is called, *The Life and Actions of* John Ker of Kersland, and who had from Her late most gracious Majesty Queen Anne, of immortal Memory, the under written Royal Leave and Licence, which will shew You the Trust She had in him, and which he faithfully discharged [. . .][37]

Under this preamble, the royal warrant Ker had received from Queen Anne licensing his activities was reproduced for the benefit of the readers. While the defense of his conduct Curll constructs in this broadside makes immediate reference to Ker's *Memoirs*, it also makes a more general claim. It suggests that Curll stood in the pillory for vindicating the memory of Queen Anne, and he is able to win popular support by recalling the spectacle of royal secrecy. Curll stood in the pillory using Queen Anne as a shield.

The strategic connection Curll drew on this occasion between his publishing activities (or more specifically the spectacularising punishment he received as a result), and Queen Anne is not unique. At several key points in his career, Curll drew meaningful links between his publishing practices and the iconography of power associated with the Stuart monarchs. These links reveal that Curll's invocation of royal protection was more than an attempt to arrogate the cultural authority that was denied him by his contemporaries.

In 1718, Defoe denounced Curll's professional appetite for obscenity and scandal in two consecutive issues of Mist's *Weekly Journal*. Cataloguing the bookseller's crimes, Defoe coins the term 'curlicism' to identify

the scandalous and salacious texts in which he argues Curll specialises. Defoe links the increase in the literary crimes Curll emblematises to the accession of George I, and draws a connection that is still maintained by some historians: the eclipse of the Stuarts is equated with an increase in liberty of all kinds, especially that taken by authors in print.[38] Defoe obviously intended 'curlicism' as a way of disparaging Curll's professional activities, but the bookseller gleefully adopted the term as a kind of trademark. He did so in *Curlicism Display'd* (1718), a pamphlet that is both a response to Defoe and a kind of professional manifesto. He begins by disputing Defoe's suggestion that his scandalous publishing practices were enabled by the Hanoverian succession and the relaxation of the laws governing the press. Instead, Curll argues vigorously that he is the heir to the literary and cultural practices of the Stuart monarchs. He declares bombastically that 'CURLICISM (since it must be so call'd) dates its Original from that ever memorable *Era* of the Reign of the first Monarch of the Stuartine Race.'[39]

Curll takes a particular item from his recent catalogue, the best-selling *The Case of Impotency and Divorce* (1718), to illustrate the features of curlicism. This book drew together salacious material from a scandal that captured the interest of James I and his court. In 1613, Frances Howard sought to have her seven-year marriage to Lord Essex annulled on the grounds it had never been consummated, giving rise to rumours Essex was impotent that were elaborated in a series of scandalous broadsides. Curll reminds his reader that the original account of the trial, and the source for his recently published title, was drawn up by no less a personage than the Bishop of Canterbury, George Abbott, in response to the interest the case elicited from the court. Curll uses this book as an emblem for curlicism, and declares the volumes were printed 'in the Reign of her late *so pious* MAJESTY [. . . and] publish'd by the immediate Command and Authority of the Government it self.'[40] By his own definition, curlicism is published material that blends intimate sexual and political details and is licensed by the example of the court.

The kinship Curll claims between his scandalous publications and the cultural practices and symbolic structures associated with the Stuart monarchs is crucially important to understanding the political, literary, and legal significance of his professional activities. It suggests that, like the Stuart monarchs in general and Anne in particular, Curll's publishing practices relied on an atavistic model of authority. The success of his practices depends on the assumption that a kind of public power can be located in the display of the physical form. Although Curll's habits – of

piecing together additional titles from works already in his possession, and using hack writers to produce new texts swiftly in response to market demand – suggest he was engaged in a kind of textual briçolage, his practices were always figured in physical terms.

Contemporary representations of Curll translate the scandal of his publishing practices into an embodied spectacle. Defoe describes Curll in such a way as to make his body a mirror for the nature of his texts. He is 'odious in person [. . .] he has a bawdy countenance, and a debauched mien; his tongue is an echo of all the beastly language his shop is filled with, and filthiness drivels in the very tone of his voice'.[41] Other satirical portraits of Curll present the work he publishes as materialisations of the author's labour – they become incarnations of the blood, sweat and tears of the author. In the *Dunciad*, the texts Curll publishes are associated even more closely with the body and its leavings. Curll slips in a lake of urine left by his 'Corinna' (the possessive pronoun suggesting a sexual as well as a professional relationship) while competing with another publisher for the works of a genuine poet. This passage is Pope's allegorical recreation of a recent episode: Curll had recently printed a selection of Pope's private letters which he obtained from a woman only known by her literary pseudonym, Corinna. In Pope's version of these events, this unauthorised and unethical text becomes a puddle of waste in which Curll slips, only to emerge with his vigour renewed.[42]

These associations did not only occur at the level of representation, they were also materialised through the retribution that Curll's contemporaries exacted from him for his publishing crimes. The first such instance was a consequence of Curll's publication of *Court Poems* (1716), an unauthorised miscellany of poems from London's best-known authors. Curll used the title page of the collection to insinuate that the poems bore a relation to the recently concluded trial of Lord Winton on charges of high treason, declaring the manuscript was discovered during the proceedings in Westminster Hall. The collection was prefaced with a series of clues hinting at its famous authors – Alexander Pope, John Gay and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Although all were incensed, it was Pope who retaliated. Upon meeting Curll at the Swan Tavern in Fleet Street, he contrived to slip an emetic into the bookseller's glass of sack. Curll spent the night vomiting heartily as a result. This physical retribution was quickly parlayed into an opportunity for a further exchange of texts, as Curll and Pope contradicted each other's accounts of the event in print.[43]

This was not the only occasion when Curll's activities had physical consequences. Soon after, he was publicly beaten and tossed in a blanket

by a group of students from Westminster School for his unauthorised (and ungrammatical) publication of a funeral oration. Samuel Wesley Jr, author of the earliest account of Curll's punishment for this offence and an assistant teacher at Westminster School, anticipates the glee with which the incident will be taken up by fellow authors. He writes: 'Why *Pope* will write an Epick on't! / *Bernard* will chuckle at thy Moan, / And all the Booksellers in Town, / From *Tonson* down to *Boddington*. / *Fleet-street* and *Temple-bar* around, / The *Strand* and *Holborn*, this shall sound'.[44] While Wesley overestimates the attention the incident would generate, Curll's close encounter with the schoolboys' blanket did become the subject of a number of satiric prints and poems.

The punishments exacted upon Curll's body by Pope and by the Westminster schoolboys demonstrate the ways in which the bookseller was made to embody the scandal of his texts. The emetic Pope administered radically transformed Curll's body and turned it into a corporeal metaphor for his professional activities. Suffering from the effects of the emetic, Curll lost control of his body's borders which became, as Eric Chandler has summarised, an 'ironic corporeal analogy for [his] publishing business that seems to find opportunity and profit in various violations'.[45] Through these representations, Curll's body becomes abject and is used as a figure for systems of threatening and chaotic cultural production and consumption. These representations, together with the bookseller's own fetishising of authorial bodies, demonstrate the way in which Curll's publishing practices and the texts he produced worked to re-corporealise authorship and authority. They amount to a recursion in the handover to print as a form of disembodied representation.

The recursive aspects of Curll's publishing practices are evident in a series of caricatures of the bookseller that were included in the *Grub-Street Journal* (1730–37), a periodical devoted to satirising the practices hack authors and booksellers. One of these shows the publisher at work in his print shop or, adopting the term Curll coined to describe his place of business, his 'literatory'.[46] The caricature, entitled 'The Art and Mystery of *Printing* Emblematically Displayed' was printed in two consecutive issues of the paper (see Illustration 5). Exploiting the cultural practice of referring to printers' apprentices, who would become blackened with ink, as 'printer's devils', the caricature reveals the monstrous figures who staff Curll's printing shop: the typesetter has an ass's head, while the boy who lifts the printed pages onto drying racks has grotesque, bird-like features. Supposing this bird-like figure to be Curll, David Saunders and Ian Hunter have argued the bookseller

Illustration 5 'The ART and MYSTERY or Printing, Emblematically Displayed', *The Grub-Street Journal* no. 148 (Mon. 30 Oct. 1732). By courtesy of Special Collections, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Libraries.

is represented as monstrous because his practices insistently united activities – printer, journalist, publicist, pornographer, pamphleteer, literary agent, pirate, and bookseller – that institutional mechanisms were working to separate.[47] He is represented as half-man, half-bird in order to figure the monstrous hybridity of his professional practices. However, Saunders and Hunter focus exclusively on the first of these consecutive issues of the *Grub-Street Journal* and overlook the fact that the discussion is continued in the following week's issue, where the significance of the engraving is elaborated by its authors. The interpretative frame that is given to the engraving in this issue gives as much prominence to the cultural meanings of print technology and its deep implication with political matters, as it does to representing the transgressive nature of Curll's practices through corporeal monstrosity.

In the 'explication' of the picture, the identification of Curll is deliberately unstable. He is associated with the monstrous figure in the third panel, but he is also identified with the janus-faced figure overseeing the work of the others in the centre of the engraving. Moreover, his janus face is given a particularly clear significance: one of the faces is said to be Whig and the other Tory, and his possession of both is a sign 'that printers in general do not scruple, in political and party controversies, or indeed in any other, to print on both sides'. The face also symbolises the cultural location of printing and publication. The authors ask: 'what statue can more properly be placed in a printing-house, than that of a

JANUS; to shew that the possessors of this art retrieve the transactions of past ages, and transmit them safe, together with those of the present, down to the latest posterity?'[48] Curll's practices call on the past for their authorisation and, in the process, demonstrate the impossibility of continuing to locate public authority in the body.

It is of no small significance that a sheet entitled *Atalantis* is among those arrayed on drying racks in the third section of the engraving. Its inclusion among sheets bearing the titles of other Curll's publications, such as *The Cases of Impotency and Divorce* and *Rochester's Poems* suggests the title is meant to signify Curll's *Atalantis*, that is, the *New Atalantis for the year 1713*. However, not all of the titles pictured are Curll's and perhaps the title is meant to evoke memories of Manley's original secret history. Other contemporary publications are included, such as *The Craftsman* and *Fog's Journal*, along with titles like *The Examiner* that were published during Queen Anne's reign. All of the titles that are displayed, however, are those of texts that were either sexually explicit or politically engaged. Their appearance in this engraving, which makes the transgressive elements of Curll's publishing practices legible through the monstrous physical forms of those who labour in his literatory, demonstrates that the mix of fiction and reportage, sexuality and politics, which was emblematised by the *Atalantis*, was as monstrous and unthinkable as Curll's attempt to bring embodied practices into print.

The monstrous mixing of Curll's publishing practices was a key factor in a number of legal and literary developments that secured the discursivity of authorship and ensured its independence from political occurrences. As Saunders and Hunter have argued, Curll utilised the practices of manuscript publication as much as he exploited the new possibilities that arose with print technology.[49] The scandal of his activities reinforced the need to demarcate authorial property from common property and so was of critical importance to the development of the author as a public figure who bears responsibility for his work. Curll's marketing strategies created the author, and not the text, as the scandalous subject of the readers' attention. Authors who sought to defend themselves against this state of affairs did so with recourse to the relatively new copyright laws that enabled the author, not just the bookseller, to exercise rights of ownership over the text.[50] Alexander Pope was the first author to use the copyright legislation aggressively, and he did so in direct response to Curll's activities. The suit that Pope brought against Curll in 1741, for example, was the first test of copyright legislation in the court and the decision handed down by Lord

Hardwicke was of critical importance to the development of the author as a public figure who bears intellectual as well as legal responsibility for the published work.[51] However, as Foucault points out, with ownership comes responsibility and as the text was increasingly identified with the author, so the possibilities for political engagement were drastically curtailed.[52] In this sense, the emphasis Curll placed on the body led to the aestheticisation of authorship and influenced the creation of new, discursive models of authority. Jane Barker took advantage of the possibilities created by Curll's publishing practices and, in the process, developed an alternative model of authorship, gender, and politics.

Public screens, private texts: patchwork, politics, and literature

Jane Barker's literary career, like that of her publisher, had a special affiliation with the nostalgic political culture of Jacobitism. Barker was among the thousands of loyalists who followed James II and his court into exile in France and took up residence at St-Germain-en-Laye. Her writing life began in earnest in this milieu. Assuming the literary pseudonym Fidelia, Barker composed poems that celebrated aristocratic values while depicting their threatened existence. These poems, circulated individually through the émigré community and collected together for presentation to the Prince of Wales, mark the beginning of an elegiac court culture that was to become characteristic of literary Jacobitism and Barker herself has been described as the 'poet laureate of the exiled Stuarts'.[53] When Barker returned to England fifteen years later, she began to explore the possibilities offered by a new genre, the novel, for representing the Jacobite experience. In doing so, she turned the literary pseudonym she adopted in her earlier poetic coterie, Galesia, into a semi-autobiographical character. It is on these novels – *Love Intrigues, Patchwork Screen for the Ladies*, and *The Lining of the Patchwork Screen* – that Barker's nearly canonical reputation rests. Until very recently, critical interest in Barker's novels was over-invested in Galesia's character, as scholars theorised the relationship between gender and genre and concentrated on the connections between the life of the character and the life of her creator.[54] It is only now becoming clear that Barker's novels, like the poetry they often incorporate, are also complex narratives of cultural and political resistance.

It is important to recognise that Barker's commitment to the Jacobite cause extended past her writing. A recently discovered letter sent by

Barker to an exiled peer reveals she provided practical assistance to those who sought to overthrow the regnant king and restore the exiled Stuart line. In cryptic language, Barker informs the Duke of Ormonde that the time would soon be ripe for a military invasion of England. She writes:

> [T]he number of your friends increases every day. They strongly wish to see you with your friend and [wish] that they could dispossess those who unjustly withhold his goods [...] But I must tell you that if you wish to find inexpensive houses here, you ought to come after the end of the session of Parliament, when everyone goes to the country. I would never advise you to come during the session everything then being too expensive.[55]

Although it is likely that Barker served as an amanuensis for others whose names and handwriting would be known to the authorities (in fact the margins record official ignorance of her identity – 'one is not aware who Barker is'), the letter nevertheless provides an important example her negotiation between her lived experience and the larger national narrative. By encoding seditious political sentiments in an account of the annual rhythms of London life and commonplace details such as the price of housing, Barker embeds the political in the domestic. This provides us with a clue as to the reading strategies her novels demand.

In the first full length study of Barker's works and circumstances, Kathryn King has argued that the ties between Barker's career as a writer and the Jacobite imperative invite us 'to think more closely about the role of party politics in the formation of the novel and to consider the possibility that the early novel, often regarded as the most self-consciously modern of forms, was (in some manifestations at least) implicated in conservative politics'.[56] I take up King's invitation by reading the model of political engagement present in Barker's novels against the model provided by Manley through the atalantis trope. The differences between the two models reveals much about the shifting relationship between politics and literature, as well as the production of both authorship and reading as gendered categories. In the remainder of this chapter, I analyse the Galesia trilogy to demonstrate how the productive tension between Barker's nostalgia for the lost Stuart line and her struggle for expression in an encoded form allowed for the development of the novel as a private genre.

Barker's first novel, *Love Intrigues*, opens in a context that is both domestic and foreign. Galesia and her friend Lucasia are talking of public and private matters as they take a 'turn or two by the Little Wood' in the public gardens. However, it soon becomes clear that this quotidian scene is actually profoundly displaced. These two intimate English friends are not on home soil; instead, they are in France, among the Stuart loyalists who have followed James II into exile at St-Germain-en-Laye. The narrative that follows performs a similar oscillation between the domestic and the political. Galesia and Lucasia initially discuss the latest news from the 'Campaigns' – a term that, as Carol Shiner Wilson has demonstrated, refers to the insurrections of the 1690s that aimed to restore the Stuart king to the throne[57] – but when the conversation becomes too melancholy, Galesia begins to confide in Lucasia the details of her recent frustrated romance with Bosvil. The courtship narrative that results traces the awkward progress and gradual disintegration of their romance, concluding with Galesia's determination to shun marriage in favour of poetic endeavour. This narrative bears an oblique, but nonetheless evident, relationship to its political and cultural frame. Galesia herself reflects on her experiences in terms that encourage the reader to associate her emotional turmoil with a wider story. For instance, in contemplating her struggle to sustain her vow and resist the future temptations of romance, she ventures, 'the Consideration of this makes me see how difficult it is to draw a Scheme of virtuous Politics, whereby to govern this little Microcosm'.[58]

The connections between Galesia's frustrated romance and its political and cultural frame, hinted at here by Galesia herself, have been elaborated by a number of scholars. Her loss of her potential lover and husband, and her subsequent commitment to remain single, invoke the tropes of lost love and fidelity that were central to Jacobite rhetoric and suggestively mirrors the situation of Stuart loyalists who had lost their king. Moreover, because Galesia experiences the positions of poet and wife as antithetical – an experience that is reinforced through the Muses' instruction, 'since thou has the Muses chose, / Hymen and Fortune are thy Foes' (p. 95) – the novel suggests that those who produce literature are those who are disappointed in love. Placed in the context of the Jacobite narrative that Galesia's experiences allegorise, this suggests a natural affiliation between poetic endeavour and political disaffection.

The connections between *Love Intrigues* and the developing rhetoric of Jacobitism might only have just become apparent to scholars, but they

were immediately evident to Curll. In publicising the text, he sought to bring its encoded features to the attention of sympathetic readers. Most immediately, its inclusion in *The New Atalantis for the year 1713* effectively announced that the text contained a secret, providing a cue to partisan readers the narrative must be read for references. The title page of the single edition issues a similar invitation; it alerts Jacobite readers to the context in which they should read the narrative by proclaiming that is it 'as told to Lucasia in St Germain's Garden', thereby drawing attention its location in the exiled Stuart court. Curll targeted this readership further in advertising the text. *Love Intrigues* was advertised in the *Post-Boy*, a periodical with a strong Tory bias that has already been noted. The advertisement itself is curious: it is addressed to the 'Lincolnshire Gentry' and draws attention to the fact that the work is dedicated to the Countess of Exeter.[59] This advertisement seems designed to bring *Love Intrigues* under the protection of an aristocratic audience for whom it suggests the work has a special significance.

There is no doubt that *Love Intrigues* was published prematurely, before Barker had secured permission for its dedication to the Countess of Exeter. The second edition, published together with *Exilius* in *The Entertaining Novels of Mrs Jane Barker* (1719), registers Barker's embarrassment at its publication history. She writes, 'I was extreamly confus'd to find my little Novel presenting itself to your Ladyship without your Leave or Knowledge'.[60] This new dedication prefaces a silently revised narrative, as Tonya McArthur has recently noted. The most telling alteration is that the tolling of the bells that call the community of faithful to mass at the conclusion of the original edition is replaced with a distinctly Protestant emphasis on individual conscience, indicating that Barker sought to diminish the overt Jacobite elements of the text.[61] *A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies* (1723) and its companion, *The Lining of the Patchwork Screen* (1726), are the first of Barker's novels explicitly oriented towards the literary marketplace. She addresses the prefaces of these two novels directly to her readers, exhorting them 'to buy these patches up quickly if you intend to know the secret'. Propelled into print by twin forces – by Curll's premature (if not unauthorised) publication of her first novel, and by the economic hardship experienced by all Catholic recusants – Barker developed more complex narrative strategies for concealing her oppositional sympathies.

A Patchwork Screen and the *Lining* implicitly take up Galesia's vow to dedicate herself to poetic endeavour by making a feature of reading and writing. They are a series of literary anecdotes held together by a frame narration. In *A Patchwork Screen*, Galesia tells her story to an

unnamed Lady with whom she stays after a mishap delays her journey to England's north. The Lady's house is decorated with items of needlework produced by the female members of her family. An unfinished fireside screen is among these items, and she invites Galesia to help her complete it. Galesia's unconventional life, however, has left her with 'Pieces of Romance, Poems, Love-Letters, and the like' rather than the more usual trappings of female life. The Lady assures her that, although these are unusual offerings, they will be a welcome addition to the screen. Galesia relates the circumstances surrounding each piece's composition as the textual patches are incorporated into the screen and, in the process, the story of Galesia as a younger woman is told. Whereas the frame narration of the *New Atalantis* positions the stories in two contexts that enable their real-life effects – first, as pieces of gossip that are of consequence within the *mise en scene* of the narrative, and then relocated, through the device of the key and the efforts of the reader, to the public sphere – the tales that are told in Barker's novels are situated in a feminine and domestic context that emphasises their isolation from the real world of action.

The patchwork screen provides a particularly suggestive metaphor for the construction of the narrative. Patchwork screens were fashionable items of drawing-room furniture, made of panels of fabric that were first stitched together and then embroidered communally by groups of aristocratic women. The completed items were both functional and decorative: they provided a shield from the heat of the fire while also displaying the skills of their makers. A patchwork screen, then, both conceals and reveals. The term 'screen' had recently become part of the public's political vocabulary. Robert Walpole's effort to protect members of the court and cabinet from the fallout following the South Bubble (England's first great stock market crash), had earned him the nickname, 'Screenmaster-General'.[62] His efforts to keep the secrets of the court had become so notorious that, according to one contemporary, 'there is hardly a Child in London but now calls Walpole the Skreen'.[63]

As Leigh Eicke argues, Galesia's metaphorical screen "hides and displays the political concepts in the text. It protects by surrounding politics with stories of interest to other audiences, and it displays by using key words and phrases to signal political stance to the partisan reader."[64] A number of poems that are included in *A Patchwork Screen* are modified versions of poems that circulated in manuscript among the exiled Jacobite court. The fact that the name Galesia, one of the two literary pseudonyms Barker adopted in her coterie exchanges, is given to

the fictional character that features in her published novels is crucial. It reminds the partisan reader of the presence of these intertexts, which – when revealed – display the Jacobite sympathies of their author more explicitly.[65] Further, as a metaphor for the production of the novel, the patchwork screen reveals how entirely Galesia's life is enmeshed in the nostalgic and aristocratic culture of manuscript circulation. The frame narration requires Galesia to produce each text, or 'patch', prior to relating the story it contains, reminding the reader that each of these stories had circulated in manuscript prior to finding their place in the novel. This reminder appears to act as a way of declaring the political orientation of the text, by making a feature of its genesis in a literary culture that has clear political affiliations.

Barker offers the patchwork screen as an emblem for her own authorship that could replace the model signalled by the atalantis trope. She had earlier employed the patchwork screen to signify the protection she anticipated from her patron – thanking the Countess of Exeter in the dedication to *Love Intrigues* for allowing her to 'skreen this little novel under [her] auspicious protection'.[66] In her subsequent novels, Barker refigures this image into an emblem for her own protective narrative strategies. The atalantis had provided a model for fictional texts that engaged public events directly and sought to alter their disposition. These texts used the strategies of gossip to demand the active participation of their readers, who were required to bridge the boundary between the printed page and the public sphere, and exploited the new possibilities for political participation. In contrast, the intricate patchwork screen Barker favours as an emblem for her own work screens the very fact of the text's engagement with contemporary politics. While secret histories display their secrets through the use of innuendo or character names such as Monsieur L'Ingrate, the secrets contained in Barker's patchwork screen novels are deeply recessed and intricately embroidered with the novels' fictional elements.

The motif of embedding meaning recurs throughout *A Patchwork Screen* and is emphasised at the conclusion of the narrative. As the Lady adds the final patch to the screen, she glimpses writing on its reverse. This second fragment, a poem meditating on the difficulties of love, functions as a palimpsest or a second layer of meaning that is recessed beneath the outward facing patch. The trope of the patchwork screen suggests the privatisation of the text and the personality of the author. The text is withdrawn from the public realm to a domestic and

feminised space, and so its potential public effects are similarly circumscribed. As Barker's final novel, the *Lining of the Patchwork Screen*, makes clear, this new model of politics and literature also entails a new relation to the public tradition of women's writing.

Although Barker's final novel, *The Lining of the Patchwork Screen*, shares the same metaphor for its construction with *Patchwork Screen for the Ladies*, the texture of the narrative is slightly different. Much longer tales are related on this occasion that, in terms of the metaphor established by the previous text, will provide the lining to the patchwork screen of manuscript verse stitched together in the previous novel. The stories will provide a background to Galesia's life and writings. The stories that are told here are unusual in that they are drawn from the reading lives, rather than the lived experiences, of characters. As if to emphasise the recycled nature of the material, a number of the tales appear as illustrations of old sayings – that a rolling stone never gathers any moss, a good conscience is a continual feast, and so on. A number of the tales that are re-told in the *Lining* had been popular with earlier audiences and would have remained familiar to Barker's readers. Galesia narrates a version of the once-fashionable Portuguese nun stories, while other tales closely mirror stories from Aphra Behn's posthumously published collection, *Histories and Novels* (1698).[67] A tradition of writing texts for publication and their reception is embedded in the *Lining*, the continuation of Galesia's tale.

By examining one of these re-narrated stories against its original iteration, the significance of this embedded tradition becomes apparent. This tale is told by Philinda, one of Galesia's guests, who begs leave of the company to tell a story she was struck by in diverting herself with one of her hostess's novels. The story she tells the company is based on Aphra Behn's novella, *The History of the Nun: Or, the Fair Vow-Breaker*. Behn's heroine is a beautiful nun, Isabella, who escapes her convent and breaks her vow of chastity in order to marry. Penury soon separates the couple, as Isabella's husband, Henault, joins the army to try and make his fortune. After some time, Isabella believes Henault has perished in battle and remarries, only to be confronted with the reappearance of her first husband. Isabella is not only afraid that this will damage her reputation – she has committed adultery, however unwillingly – but she no longer loves Henault and is unwilling to relinquish her new husband, Villenoys. First, she plans to kill Henualt with Villenoys help, but later resolves to kill both men, as she

is unable to face the possibility of future reproach. Although Isabella's actions are described as 'black' and 'wicked', Behn's narrative stresses the mitigating circumstances – they stem directly from the fact that she was forced into a convent and pressured into taking vows before she was capable of fully understanding the consequences. The narrator suggests 'an abundance of miseries' would have been prevented had the decision to enter a convent been deferred until Isabella was mature enough to make it.[68] As Toni Bowers, Jane Spencer and Jacqueline Pearson argue, Isabella's story is presented as an illustration of what can happen when one is compelled to take vows in exigent circumstances.[69]

The story becomes rather different when it is incorporated into a new political and literary context through its inclusion in Galesia's tale. In this version, the nun's story is refigured to become a clear condemnation of breaking vows, no matter the circumstances. The nun's physical attraction to the cavalier is emphasised, and she escapes the convent in order to gratify her desires. In re-telling the story Philinda describes the nun's actions as 'wicked' and 'execrable', a judgement reinforced within the narrative by her second husband's condemnation of the murder. He looks on his wife as 'a bloody and a hateful Monster, never to be forgiven by God or Man'.[70] The relationship between Behn's original story and its retelling in Barker's novel has been examined by Jacqueline Pearson to investigate what it might reveal about the developing tradition of women's writing in the early eighteenth century.[71] However, the retelling of the story resonates more strongly with the rapidly developing tradition of print culture and the politics of the public sphere.

The fate of the nun, in Philinda's retelling, is represented as a direct result of her decision to leave the convent. It becomes an illustration of the inviolability of vows, no matter how exigent the circumstances. This depiction, of course, would have had particular resonance for readers with Jacobite sympathies. Moreover, the very fact that the story is retold suggests that readers of Barker's novel are offered a particular way of interpreting printed texts. Much as the structure of the *Patchwork Screen* makes a feature of manuscript circulation, the structure of the *Lining* seems designed to showcase the partisan reading of narrative.

In this respect, the relationship that is established between the two novels through the metaphor of their construction is especially

significant. The later novel, the *Lining*, is represented as the background to the earlier novel, the feature *Patchwork Screen*. Through this metaphor, the usual relationship between manuscript and print culture is reversed: here, print culture provides the background to manuscript circulation which occurs in the foreground. This privileges the atavistic political and cultural significances of manuscript publication, but it also suggests that it cannot be understood in isolation from print culture. Instead, the *Lining* describes a way of embedding a partisan community in print by orienting the sympathetic reader to print culture. Indeed, the 'lining' signifies the interior or secret knowledge available only to a few and suggests that political meanings are recessed even further.

The strategies of gossip and anecdote that were so central to the *New Atalantis* and functioned to enmesh the text in its political and social context here have quite different implications. In the *New Atalantis*, gossip invites the reader to shift their attention from the text to both political occurrences and to other instances of partisan literature – a partisan political community of readers is invoked through the operation of gossip in the text. A similarly partisan community of readers is evoked by the Galesia trilogy, but this community is confined, or screened, by the limits of the text. Although the reader is occasionally required to transfer their attention from the characters and their narrative situation, they are required to move their focus only so far as other printed texts and not to the political or cultural milieux that occasioned them. The use of manuscript circulation is crucial here. Like gossip, the description of the reciprocal production and exchange of texts simulates a personal tie to the object that is being disseminated. This strategy projects an affective community, whose members are held together by the deeply engrained values they share. In this way, an intimate political community is embedded in the text and, through the subject matter of each story, the values that bind this community together are strengthened and confirmed.

The references to other texts that are made in the Galesia narratives create another context for the reader to place Barker's text: that is, the context of imaginative literature. This is a community of writers and readers who are bound together by their shared knowledge of the conventions and practices of fiction. The projection of this community within Barker's novels also authorises the consumption and production of such texts. Galesia is not just a writer, but her life is thoroughly enmeshed in literature. Almost without exception, every significant

event or emotion that Galesia experiences becomes the occasion of another poem. The death of her mother, her study of anatomy, and her disappointments in love are all memorialised in her poetry. It seems it is only through writing that Galesia is able to reconcile herself to these events. Galesia is not just a writer, but she is also a reader. In the last of the three novels, the *Lining*, Galesia is often depicted reading books that are 'dirty and rumpled' from frequent perusals. She also has a good knowledge of contemporary authors: she is most obviously familiar with the works of Katherine Phillips, but she is also conversant with the works of John Dryden and Aphra Behn.

Kathryn King's observation that Galesia is a 'creature of print culture',[72] needs to be qualified with the recognition that, in these novels, reading and writing are represented as activities that belong properly to the private sphere. Galesia composes her poems in solitude, either in the seclusion of the country or in a small garret room isolated from the rest of her household. These retreats from the domestic world of the household allow meditation on matters of national import. Here, she composes essays that link the political to the personal. Her contemplation of the Civil War, for instance, results in an essay on the personal vice of covetousness. Reading is also represented as both a solitary and a communal activity. Although Galesia reads in private – taking up a book when she is without company – her knowledge of books is shared with small groups of friends in conversation. The stories encountered in private become the subject of retellings for this wider audience. The patchwork screen emblematises the social context in which poetry is embedded: Galesia's poetry will be incorporated into a fireside screen and become part of the furnishings of the lady's apartment. In this context, the patchwork, or needlework, metaphor that structures the text assumes renewed significance. It has been previously noted that likening literary production to needlework has the effect of naturalising women's literary activity, by suggesting that writing is an activity as appropriate for women as needlework.[73] By extension, this metaphor also suggests that literary production belongs to the private sphere.

However, Barker's note to the reader that prefaces *A Patchwork Screen* suggests that these private worlds of women and of manuscript circulation also have public dimensions. Here, women's ability to bring fabric of different shapes and patterns together in a pleasant design is used as an analogy for the capacity of women's conversation to accommodate

and harmonise positions that would normally be in conflict. Barker writes:

> Whenever one sees a Set of Ladies together, their *Sentiments* are as differently mix'd as the *Patches* in their Work: To wit, *Whigs* and *Tories, High-Church* and *Low-Church, Jacobites* and *Williamites*, and many more Distinctions, which they *divide* and *sub-divide*, 'till at last they make this *Dis-union* meet in an harmonious *Tea-table* Entertainment. (p. 52)

Although the tea-table may be located in the domestic space of the private sphere, the discussions that take place there are oriented to the events of the public sphere. Moreover, this passage appears to suggest that women are better suited to discussions of public matter than are men – that it is women, and not men, who are able to unify and harmonise wildly divergent opinions. King has argued that, as it is represented in *A Patchwork Screen for the Ladies*, the tea-table is not a feminised space apart from the public realm but it is the political sphere in microcosm.[74] However, because the discussions that take place between women in the novel itself do not hint at any public dimension, the characterisation of the tea-table in the preface seems designed to serve quite another purpose.

As King herself has noted, the political divisions that are invoked in this passage were no longer active possibilities when *A Patchwork Screen* was published in 1723.[75] The ideological differences between Jacobites and Williamites were particularly vigorous during the 1690s, while the party politics that separated Whig from Tory and the religious issues that divided High and Low Church were active during Queen Anne's reign. The Hanoverian succession had altered this situation dramatically. George I stripped Tory office-holders of their positions and replaced them with their Whig counterparts, while legislative developments increased the weight of proscription against both Catholics and Jacobites and effectively erased their public presence. This passage, then, recalls the recent past when these divisions were acute. This recollection of the past also entails an evocation of women's active involvement in such religious and political issues. When set against the substance of the narratives that the preface frames, this passage seems to highlight the differences in the character of women's public lives in the Stuart and the Hanoverian periods. Women in the Galesia narratives are depicted as the denizens of private spaces, and their tea-table and drawing-room discussions are mainly concerned with matters of love and romance.

This contrasts strongly with the evocation of an earlier period when women were active participants in public life. As public printed discourse that engaged with state matters required its participants to be able to abstract themselves from their circumstances, particularly from their bodies, it became increasingly difficult for women to participate in politics in print.

Print and politics

It seems no coincidence that as the possibilities for women to engage in public debate became restricted, women turned in greater numbers to writing prose fiction.[76] The careers of Edmund Curll and Jane Barker illuminate why this is the case. Although Curll's publishing practices are now thought to prefigure the commercial imperatives that came to dominate the press, my analysis of the way his practices were represented by both the publisher himself and his contemporaries demonstrates that they were understood as a recursion to the forms of embodiment that had conveyed the power of the hereditary monarch and to the scandalous blend of politics and sexuality signalled by the atalantis trope. Curll's strategies created the author and not the state as the scandalous subject of the reader's attention. Authors such as Alexander Pope who sought to defend themselves against this state of affairs did so with recourse to the copyright legislation that had been passed in 1710. This created the text and the personality of the author as private property, but it also further demarcated texts from the business of the political public sphere. Jane Barker developed the possibilities for the author as a privatised individual that Curll's activities made available. Even though Curll connected Barker's first text, *Love Intrigues*, to the atalantis trope, as her career continued, she developed the novel as a privatised and feminised form. There are political references in her text but, as *Love Intrigues* demonstrates, these are not only deeply encoded but are also presented as consoling fables, rather than as aids to action. However, the fact that these political references can be discerned in Barker's texts is what makes her such an important example of the changing relationship between politics and fiction in this vital period. It demonstrates that the privatisation of the novel is achieved against an earlier tradition that was not feminised but was thoroughly politicised. As Barker laments in the preface to *A Patchwork Screen*, 'women's published fictions no longer engage the divisions between 'Whigs and Tories, High-Church and Low-Church, Jacobites and Williamites.' However, the private status of the novel is itself no simple matter. As Barker's

texts exemplify, the novel is not naturally concerned with private or domestic matters. Rather, these private concerns are produced as a way of recessing, or screening, public meanings. It is this screen, however, that emphatically separates the author, text, and reader from public matters.

Conclusion: Anne's Legacy

> In the Statute of Anne, the author was established as a legally empowered figure in the marketplace well before professional authorship was realised in practice
>
> – Mark Rose, *Authors and Owners*

This book has traced a series of revolutions in the relationship between authors and their readers, and in the relationship between texts and contexts. These relationships enabled the public sphere to emerge, although they are seldom considered in conventional accounts of the public sphere or the rise of the novel. However, there is one event that occurred in Anne's reign that is held to be central, albeit in a slightly compromised way, to these histories. On 10 April 1710, the Statute of Anne came into effect.[1] More familiarly known as the 'copyright act', this legislation was concerned with the rights of ownership of a literary text. It was noteworthy because, for the first time, it extended these rights to the author as well as the bookseller. Proprietary right to a work could now be secured when the author or the bookseller entered the title into the records of the Stationers' Company, and was retained for a period of fourteen years. This piece of legislation is conventionally regarded as the foundational moment in the creation of the author as an institutionally defined figure.

Revisionist legal and literary historians have recently argued that this assumption is a romantic anachronism and demonstrated that, while the act provided the statutory basis on which authors could assert their rights, the legislation was not specifically concerned with authors. Rather, it was designed to regulate the book trade, and its principal concern was with printing practices and the activities of booksellers. It is clear from the vocabulary employed in the statute that it was

intended to codify rights in material objects. For example, those who printed texts to which another held the copyright were liable to 'forfeit such Book or Books, and all and every Sheet or Sheets' so that the owner could 'Damask and make Waste Paper of them'.[2] The act was concerned with the book as a printed commodity, and did not address itself to a more abstract notion of literary property. Consequently, literary and legal historians often discuss the statute as if its meanings were confused or opaque, suggesting the potential it contained for empowering the author was not realised until later in the century when it was clarified through case law and precedent. As David Saunders has persuasively argued, this is a teleological account: it assumes there is an inevitable end point to which authorship and copyright evolve and faults the statute of Anne for failing to recognise the rights that are assumed to inhere naturally in the personality of the author. In other words, the Statute of Anne is in some way flawed because it fails to bring the legal and aesthetic personalities of the author into proper alignment.[3] The potential it contains must be activated by more cognisant individuals at a later point in the century.

The statute, then, is an emblem for the way that Anne and her reign are assessed: while it is acknowledged that the legislation that empowered the author and was the genesis of the author as an institutionally defined figure was passed in her reign, its effects are relocated. There is no small irony in the fact that, even though the act bears her name, its productive effects are projected forward into a period that is easier to map ideologically. Needless to say, the Statute of Anne looks quite different if it is approached as a historically specific phenomenon, rather than one that predicts later developments. Indeed, when it is examined in this way, the statute exemplifies precisely the ways in which the cultural conditions of Anne's reign were productive.

The act itself had immediate effects. Authors began to exercise their new-found rights of ownership over their work without delay. Delarivier Manley was one of the earliest authors to take advantage of these rights; her signed entry in the registers of the Stationers' Company claims authorship, and thus ownership, of the newly-published *Memoirs of Europe*.[4] The idea that authors, and not just booksellers, could own texts forced a reconceptualisation of what literary property might consist in. Authors are necessarily more concerned with the composition of a text rather than its eventual material form and, as a result, attention shifted away from the book as an object. In its place arose an abstract notion of the text.

That the statute was concerned with books as material objects has long been part of the arguments rehearsed by literary and legal historians who wish to revise conventional accounts of its centrality. The statute, however, also represents authors, as well as their texts, in a similarly material manner. If the author was still living at the expiration of the fourteen-year term specified by the act, then the right to the text would be returned to him or her for a further fourteen years. This reversion clause provides a clear indication that texts were objects that were tethered to the lives of their authors. This clause also suggests a very different understanding of authorship from the one that governs enlightenment understandings of the press. The text seems to be linked to the body and not the mind of its author; and the author is understood as the progenitor of the text rather than as its intellectual parent. The author engenders the text. This is the kind of relationship that is figured, grotesquely, by Pope in the *Dunciad* – in the synecdoche that turns Eliza Haywood's 'babes of love' into both her illegitimate children and her scandalous novels – but whereas Pope, writing in the 1720s, uses this relationship to brand certain kinds of literary production as illegitimate, its presence in the statute suggests that this was the usual way that authorship was conceived at the time the legislation was drafted. This clearly marks Anne's reign as a transitional moment, and draws our attention to the importance of considering how the transition to the types of discourse that characterise the public sphere was achieved. The authority that had belonged unproblematically to the state first had to pass through the bodies of the author and the reader, before it could be abstracted. This moment of embodiment is also the very moment of transition to a public sphere that this book has been concerned to map.

In considering the book to be a property, however, the statute helped to consolidate the revolutions in the relationship between the text, reader, and context that this book has traced. The libel laws had considered the text as a relationship between the author, reader, and state that needed regulation. The copyright act, however, abstracted the text away from this social process and reified the text as an object. Casting literary production in terms of a property that had two potential owners limits those concerned in the book to the author and bookseller, and suggests that the meaning of texts was transparent and infinitely replicable. The statute is not concerned with the way that a text might affect the disposition of state affairs through the mediation of the reader. Indeed, the reader is left out entirely. In this way, the Statute of Anne captured and consolidated the revolution in the relationship between the text, the reader, and the political context that were taking place in

the literary field itself. The provisions of the act helped to institutionalise the separation of the text from the state and political processes, and the disciplining of the text and the reader's otherwise revolutionary potential. This transformation, which was simultaneously occurring on other fronts and in other arenas, made it possible to construe literature as a sphere of special privileges and as a refuge from public processes. It was this shift that made it possible to connect authority – albeit, authority of a special kind – with the author.

This book began by addressing the gap in accounts of the public sphere, and it has attempted to account for the precise ways in which the democratic possibilities of discourse were realised by demonstrating how reading was transformed from a social activity anchored in aristocratic culture to a privatised and disembodied activity that had implications for the entire nation. The arguments presented in this book have demonstrated that gossip provided a means of publicly circulating secrets, and thereby offered an effective means of negotiating the customary divide between the embodied secrecy of royal power and the growing demands of publicity. Its very success, however, demanded the direct involvement of those who participated in its processes who were required to decode and activate the information that gossip contained. By publicly circulating the secrets of the court and cabinet in print, Manley's *New Atalantis* roused its readers into active engagement with the text and also with political processes. Once the presence of this engaged and informed readership came to public attention, the strategies of reference involved in gossip were altered – directed inwards by Defoe in his secret histories, or transmuted into the didactic trope of tattle by Steele – in order to discipline both the reading process and the type of political activity that the text engendered.

This book has demonstrated that readers were not abstractions for Manley or her contemporaries. Rather, reading was an activity that had immediate public consequences, and the relationship between texts, readers, booksellers, authors, and the state is complex and dynamic. Far from being the stable term in each of these relationships, the text itself is volatile ground. By focusing on the reader – either as an individual agent, or as a rhetorical figure in the pages of the text or in the discursive operations of the law – the arguments presented in this book clearly demonstrate that the text is an interactive site. Its meanings are fluid and mobilised to evoke, endorse, or proscribe a range of different, and sometimes contradictory, relationships between the state and the public, and between authors and readers. While Manley successfully develops the genre of the secret history with the intention of rousing her

readers to direct political action, Defoe adapts these tropes, equally successfully, in order to proscribe just this relationship between readers and the state. The strong tendency of literary history towards seeing the text as a fixed object works to contain the radically productive possibilities of the nexus between the reader and the text.

In tracing this moment in the twinned history of the public sphere and the novel, this book has shown how the material changes to forms of state authority, to the structure of party politics, and to legal regimes governing the press, produced the very categories of public and private that we are accustomed to use to account for these discursive developments. These categories are not only inter-implicated, but they are active and productive. If, as I have argued, Barker's patchwork screen novels are a paradigmatic example of the ways in which the domestic novel is discursively produced, then the domestic novel itself – long considered to exemplify the privatisation of printed discourse – actually enacts a complex movement between the public and the private. In Barker's novel, the public or political meanings of the text are recessed and written over with private concerns. The private, in this sense, is used to screen the public. Because it is understood in terms of formal generic categories, conventional literary history cannot accurately account for the social, political, and ideological location of these texts and tends to elide these complexities in order to maintain the separation of each category. However, the arguments presented in this book urge a re-conceptualisation of the terms in which these histories are usually considered. They demonstrate the merit of an approach that attempts to preserve the interactive and fluid relationships between texts, readers, authors, and the state, for it is these dynamic relationships that materialise the categories that we otherwise treat as given.

Notes

Introduction: Queen Anne's Bounty

1. For the twentieth-century tradition, see Sheila Biddle, *Bolingbroke and Harley* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1974); David Green, *Queen Anne* (London: William Collins, 1970); Geoffrey A. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London: St Martin's Press, 1967); and G. M. Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne*, 3 vols (London: Longman, 1934).
2. Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London: Routledge, 1980); R. O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court: Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993). See also Rachel J. Weil, *Political Passions: Gender, the Family and Political Argument in England, 1680–1714* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), ch. 7; and Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry, 1649–1714: Politics, Community and Linguistic Authority* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 216–36.
3. Christopher Hibbert, *The Marlboroughs: John and Sarah Churchill, 1650–1744* (London: Viking, 2001), pp. 90–1; Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 87–8.
4. Gregg, *Queen Anne*, p. 400.
5. James I, *Basilikon Doron*, in *The Political Works of James I*, ed. Charles Howard McIlwain (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1918), p. 5.
6. Jeff Weintraub, 'The Theory and Politics of the Public/Private Distinction', in *Public and Private in Thought and Practice: Perspectives on a Grand Dichotomy*, ed. Jeff Weintraub and Krishan Kumar (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 5.
7. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989). This work was first published in German as *Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* in 1962, but was not translated into English until 1989.
8. As Michael Warner has argued, the original German, '*öffentlichkeit*', suggests something more like a quality of 'openness' or 'publicness'. *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), p. 47.
9. Jürgen Habermas, 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article', *New German Critique* 1, no. 3 (Autumn 1974): 51.
10. Joan DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns: Culture Wars and the Making of a Fin De Siècle* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 37.
11. Habermas, *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, p. 56.
12. Michael Warner, 'The Mass Public and the Mass Subject', in *The Phantom Public Sphere*, ed. Bruce Robbins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p. 239. See also Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*; and Warner, *The Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990).

13. Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1988), p. 7. See also DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*; Marie Fleming, 'Women and the "Public Use of Reason"', in *Feminists Read Habermas: Gendering the Subject of Discourse*, ed. Johanna Meehan, *Thinking Gender* (New York: Routledge, 1995); Nancy Fraser, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy', in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, ed. Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).
14. See, for example, the figure of Miss Faction in the *Spectator* no. 81 (11 June 1711). Dagmar Friest provides a genealogy of the gendering of opinion in *Governed by Opinion: Politics, Religion and the Dynamics of Communication in Stuart London, 1637–1645* (London: I. B. Tauris, 1997); while Hans Joachim Neubaurer does the same for rumour in *The Rumour: A Cultural History* (London: Free Association Books, 1999).
15. Sarah Maza, *Private Lives, Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), p. 209.
16. Those engaged in this critical project include Alexandra Halasz who challenges the notion that the public sphere expresses a rational consensus through an examination of late sixteenth century pamphlets in *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and Public Spaces in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Joan DeJean, who argues that the public sphere was a seventeenth century French phenomenon in *Ancients against Moderns*; and most recently David Zaret, who suggests that the public sphere emerged in and around the civil war in *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2000). Other studies include: Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998); Freist, *Governed by Opinion*; Kathleen Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715–1785* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
17. Brian Cowan, 'What Was Masculine About the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England', *History Workshop Journal*, no. 51 (Spring 2001): 127–8. David Zaret makes a similar point and describes 'unmasking the ideological façade of the public sphere' as 'a popular academic pastime'. Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*, p. 33.
18. Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. xix, 323–4.
19. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, p. 67.
20. Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture*, pp. 13–14, ch. 7.
21. Warner, *Letters of the Republic*, pp. 34–70. A good illustration of this is provided by readers' reaction to printed works that used the script font devised by Ichabod Dawks. In *The Tatler*, Steele characterized Dawks's newsletter as an uncomfortable hybrid: 'His Style is a Dialect between the Familiarity of Talking and Writing, and his Letter such that you cannot distinguish whether Print or Manuscript.' *Tatler*, no. 178 (30 May 1710), in *The Tatler*, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), vol. 2, p. 471.

22. Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics*, p. 123.
23. Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979). Marshall McLuhan argues similarly that each technology of communication has an immanent logic that alters human perception in *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1962); while Walter J. Ong adopts a comparable model of print technology, but offers a nostalgic account of the oral and manuscript culture it replaced in *Orality and Literacy: The Technologising of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982).
24. Eisenstein, *Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, vol. 1, p. 117. Eisenstein identifies the features of print culture as the compilation, preservation, dissemination, standardisation, and reinforcement of knowledge.
25. Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). See also the debate between Johns and Eisenstein in the AHA Forum, 'How Revolutionary was the Print Revolution?', in the *American Historical Review* 107.1 (Feb 2002): 84–128. Michael Warner offers a compelling critique of the technological determinism of standard accounts of print culture in *Letters of the Republic*, pp. 1–33.
26. Roger Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early Modern France* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987); and Chartier, 'Texts, Printing, Readings', in *The New Cultural History*, ed. Lynn Hunt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).
27. Chartier, 'Texts, Printing, Readings'; and Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984). Recent critical work on scribal culture has also been important for redefining the role of the reader. The work of Margaret Ezell, Harold Love, and Arthur Marotti respectively has established that scribal and print publication co-existed as equally significant forms of public discourse until well into the eighteenth century, and demonstrated how changes in readership altered the meaning of the text. See Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999); Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Arthur Marotti, *Manuscript, Print and the English Renaissance Lyric* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995); and the collection of essays edited by Arthur F. Marotti and Michael D. Bristol, *Print, Manuscript, and Performance: The Changing Relations of the Media in Early Modern England* (Columbus: Ohio University Press, 2000).
28. Kevin Sharpe, *Reading Revolutions: The Politics of Reading in Early Modern England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2000); Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker, 'Introduction: Discovering the Renaissance Reader' in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1–40; Steven N. Zwicker, 'The Constitution of Opinion and the Pacification of Reading,' in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Steven N. Zwicker, 'Reading the Margins: Politics and the Habits of Appropriation', in *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*, ed.

Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 101–15.

29. Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985). This understanding of gossip is also advanced by anthropologists and historians, including Sally Engle Merry in 'Rethinking Gossip and Scandal', in *Toward a General Theory of Social Control*, ed. Donald Black (Cambridge, MA: 1984), pp. 271–302; Steve Hindle, 'The Shaming of Margaret Knowsley: Gossip, Gender and the Experience of Authority in Early Modern England', *Continuity and Change* 9, no. 3 (1994): 391–419; and Alexander Rysman, 'How the 'Gossip' Became a Woman', *Journal of Communication* 27, no. 1 (Winter 1977): 176–80. Recent work on gossip by Lorraine Code, in *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations* (London: Routledge, 1995), pp. 144–53; Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print*; and Jason Scott-Warren in 'Harington's Gossip,' in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 221–41, is beginning to challenge this model.
30. These statistics are gathered from William McBurney, *A Checklist of English Prose Fiction, 1700–1739* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).

1 Gossip and Government: Deciphering the Body of the State

1. For an eyewitness account of Anne's coronation, see Celia Fiennes, *The Journeys of Celia Fiennes*, ed. Christopher Morris (London: Cresset Press, 1947), pp. 299–304. See also, David Green, *Queen Anne* (London: William Collins, 1970), p. 96.
2. R. O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court: Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 51. Anne's six progresses are detailed in R. O. Bucholz, '"Nothing but Ceremony": Queen Anne and the Limitations of Royal Ritual', *The Journal of British Studies* 30, no. 3 (July 1991): Appendix 1, p. 315.
3. John Clerk, Sir, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, 1676–1755*, ed. John M. Gray (Edinburgh: University Press, 1892), p. 62. Clerk, a Scottish parliamentarian, was appointed in 1706 as one of thirty-one commissioners on the treaty of union with England and met with the queen on two occasions.
4. Anne I, Speech to Both Houses, 11 Mar. 1702, in *Journals of the House of Commons*, (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1803), p. 788. Anne's accession medal displays the legends: 'Atavis Regibvs' (from the royal ancestors) and 'Entirely English'. Helen Farquhar, 'Portraiture of our Stuart Monarchs on their Coins and Medals: Part VI: Anne,' *The British Numismatic Journal* 10 (1913): 223–4.
5. Duke of Shrewsbury to Robert Harley, 20 Oct. 1710, quoting Queen Anne, in HMC, *Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquis of Bath* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1904–8), vol. 1, p. 199.
6. The royal touch was practiced after the Restoration by both Charles II and James II; naturally, William III refused to continue the practice. For further details of this custom, see Marc Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France*, trans. J. E. Anderson (London: Routledge,

1973). For the popularity of the royal touch during Anne's reign, see John Sharp, Archbishop of York, to William Lloyd, Bishop of Worcester, 31 Mar. 1703, reprinted in *English Historical Review* 5, no. 17 (Jan. 1890): 122.

7. See, for example, the discussion of Anne's entitlements to the throne in Geoffrey A. Holmes, *British Politics in the Age of Anne* (London: St Martin's Press, 1967), pp. 186–216.
8. Although the Revolution Settlement of 1689 had created both William and Mary, Anne's sister, as regnant monarchs, substantive power was vested wholly in William III. Mary ruled as regent while William was not in England but, even in these circumstances, her power was circumscribed as any order her husband issued from overseas would overrule her own. For these reasons, Mary's power was much less than that of a regnant queen. See Lois G. Schwoerer, 'Images of Queen Mary II, 1689–95', *Renaissance Quarterly* 42, no. 4 (Winter 1989): 717–48; and W. A. Speck, 'William – and Mary?,' in *The Revolution of 1688–89: Changing Perspectives*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 131–46.
9. Elizabeth I, Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, in *Collected Works*, ed. Leah S. Marcus, Janel Mueller, and Mary Beth Rose (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 326.
10. Abel Boyer, *The History of the Reign of Queen Anne. Year the First* (London, 1703), p. 228.
11. Terriesi to the Grand Duke of Tuscany, 2 Jan. 1688, as quoted in Edward Gregg, 'Was Queen Anne a Jacobite?', *History* 57 (1972): 361.
12. Abel Boyer, *The English Theophrastus: Or, Manners of the Age* (London: W. Turner, 1702), p. 3.
13. Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London: Routledge, 1980), pp. 55–6.
14. Horace Walpole satirically refigured this iconography in a letter regarding a projected history of the Stuarts, declaring: 'I do not care a straw what he writes about the church's wet-nurse, goody Anne.' *The Works of Horatio Walpole, Earl of Oxford* (London, 1798), vol. 5, p. 651. For a detailed discussion of the significance of Anne's symbolic maternity, see Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680–1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
15. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 7.
16. Ibid., p. 8.
17. Ernst Kantorowicz, 'Mysteries of State: An Absolutist Concept and Its Late Medieval Origins', *Harvard Theological Review* 48 (1955): 63–91; Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957).
18. David Starkey, 'Representation through Intimacy: A Study in the Symbolism of Monarchy and Court Office in Early Modern England', in *Symbols and Sentiments: Cross-Cultural Studies in Symbolism*, ed. Ioan Lewis (London: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 188–9.
19. Ibid., p. 204.
20. 'A Proclamation touching D. Cowel's booke called *The Interpreter*', 25 Mar. 1610, in *Stuart Royal Proclamations*, ed. James F. Larkin & Paul L. Hughes, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973), vol. 1, p. 243.

21. Henry Vaughan, 'The King Disguis'd,' in *The Works of Henry Vaughan*, ed. Leonard Cyril Martin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1914), p. 605.
22. John Cleveland, 'The King's Disguise', in *Minor Poets of the Caroline Period*, ed. George Saintsbury (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 53.
23. Paul Hammond, 'The King's Two Bodies: Representations of Charles II', in *Culture, Politics and Society in Britain, 1660–1800*, ed. Jeremy Black and Jeremy Gregory (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), p. 14. See also Marie Axton, *The Queen's Two Bodies: Drama and the Elizabethan Succession* (London: Royal Historical Society, 1977).
24. Mary was acutely aware that she was on display and requested James to hide her face with his head and wig 'for all the Council stood close at the bed's feet'. Anne to Mary, Princess of Orange, 24 July 1688, in *The Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne*, ed. Beatrice Curtis Brown (London: Cassel, 1935), p. 40.
25. Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), p. 551.
26. William III, *Declaration of his Highness William Henry, Prince of Orange, of the Reasons Inducing him to Appear in Armes in the Kingdom of England*, 10 Oct. 1688, in *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England* (London: T. C. Hansard, 1810), vol. 5, pp. 1–11.
27. Rachel Weil, 'The Politics of Legitimacy: Women and the Warming-Pan Scandal', in *The Revolution of 1688–1689: Changing Perspectives*, ed. Lois G. Schwoerer (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 75.
28. Anne to Mary, 14 Mar. 1688, in *Letters and Diplomatic Instructions of Queen Anne*, p. 34.
29. Anne to Mary, 20 Mar. 1688, in ibid., p. 35.
30. Gregg, *Queen Anne*, pp. 56–7.
31. Gregg, 'Was Queen Anne a Jacobite?', pp. 361–2.
32. The lying-in chamber remained the new mother's sanctuary for the month following the birth and this space was policed by the gossips.
33. The popular saying is recorded by Adrian Wilson, *The Making of Man-Midwifery: Childbirth in England 1660–1770* (London: UCL Press, 1995), p. 30.
34. Jonathan Swift, *Memoirs Relating to that Change which Happened in the Queen's Ministry in the year 1710*, in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939–68), vol. 8, pp. 110–11.
35. 'Verses Upon Mr Harley Being Lord Treasurer', reprinted in David Green, *Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1967), Appendix 4, p. 322; Sarah records the Duke of Shrewsbury's remark in an account of her own conduct, drafted in 1710, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61422, fol. 107r.
36. Jonathan Swift, 1 Dec. 1711, *The Journal to Stella*, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Blackwell, 1974), vol. 2, p. 427. See also Swift, *The Windsor Prophecy* (London, 1711).
37. Sarah Churchill to Gilbert Burnet, Bishop of Salisbury, n.d., in *Private Correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough*, 2nd edn (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), vol. 2, p. 111.

38. Harley to Abigail Masham, 14 May 1714 [draft], Portland Papers, BL MS 70333, unfol. (Formerly BM Loan 29/10/8/1).
39. Anne to Sarah Churchill, 21 Nov. 1702–4, in *Letters of Queen Anne*, p. 100.
40. Sarah Churchill to Anne, 26 July 1709, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61417, fol. 153r.
41. 'A New Ballad to the Tune of Fair Rosamund,' in George de F. Lord, and *et al*., eds, *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1600–1714* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963–75), vol. 7, p. 309.
42. Sarah Churchill to Sarah Cowper, 16 July 1708, Panshanger MS, Hertfordshire Records Office, D/EP/F228, fol. 27r.
43. Sarah Churchill to Anne, 26 July 1708, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61417, fol. 156r.
44. *The Rival Dutchess: Or, Court Incendiary* (London, 1708), p. 5.
45. The etui Anne gave to Masham is held by the Victoria and Albert Museum in London (Jones Collection, 950–1 to 7–1882). The significance of the gold key, the symbol of the groom of the stole's office, is discussed further in the following chapter.
46. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court*, p. 180.
47. 'A Proclamation for Restraining the Spreading of False News, and Printing and Publishing of Irreligious and Seditious Papers and Libels,' *London Gazette* no. 3795, Mon. 30 Mar. 1702.
48. Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communications and Cultural Transformations in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), vol. 1, p. 116.
49. Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 19. For a critique of Eisenstein's argument that proceeds along similar lines, see Michael Warner, *Letters of the Republic: Publication and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), pp. 1–33.
50. Richard Atkyns, *The Original and Growth of Printing* (London, 1660). The text was expanded from a single sheet into a pamphlet in 1664.
51. Ibid., p. 22.
52. Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, p. 338. See also Joseph Loewenstein, *The Author's Due: Printing and the Prehistory of Copyright* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), p. 198.
53. Annabel Patterson, *Censorship and Interpretation: The Conditions of Writing and Reading in Early Modern England*, rev. edn. (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), p. 71.
54. F. S. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England, 1476–1776: The Rise and Decline of Government Controls* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1952), p. 243.
55. The Statue of Anne sought to regulate the press by way of economic controls, rather than through more direct legal means.
56. These punishments were more severe in practice that they appear to be on paper and the pillory, in particular, was often a horrific experience. William Fuller, pilloried in 1703, wrote of being 'stifled with all manner of Dirt, Filth, and rotten Eggs; and my Left Eye was so bruised with a Stone [. . .] that I fell down [. . .] and hung by the Neck [. . .] I was all over bruised from Head to Heel; and on the small of my Back, as I stood stooping, a Stone struck

me, which weigh[ed] more than six Pounds.' *The Whole Life of William Fuller* (London, 1703), p. 107.

57. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press*, p. 243.
58. *Arguments Relating to a Restraint Upon the Press*, (London, 1712), p. 16.
59. See, for example, 20 Henry VIII ('Enforcing Statutes Against Heresy; Prohibiting Unlicensed Preaching, Heretical Books') and 22 Henry VIII ('Prohibiting Erroneous Books and Bible Translations'). Harold Weber discusses these statutes and their implications in *Paper Bullets: Print and Kingship under Charles II* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1996), pp. 19, 135–40.
60. *Arguments Relating to a Restraint Upon the Press*, p. 22.
61. 'Commons Reasons for not Renewing the Licensing Act,' 17 Apr. 1695, in *Journals of the House of Commons*, pp. 305–6.
62. W. A. Speck, *Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701–1715* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 124–31. See also, John Cannon, *Parliamentary Reform, 1640–1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), appendix 3.
63. This expansion was partly the result of economic factors – the process of inflation meant that one of the requirements for the franchise, possession of a forty-shilling freehold, had come within reach of many more individuals than when it was first established – as well as the manipulation of electoral boundaries by interested parties. Speck estimates that the proportion of the electorate to the total population was 4.3% at the end of Anne's reign. The Reform Act of 1832 only increased this percentage to 4.7%, a mere 0.4% greater than in the early eighteenth century. Speck, *Tory and Whig*, pp. 14–16.
64. William Holdsworth, *A History of the English Law*, 2nd edn. (London: Methuen, 1937), vol. 8, p. 341.
65. Philip Hamburger, 'The Development of the Law of Seditious Libel and the Control of the Press,' *Stanford Law Review* 37, no. 66 (1985): 674n39. He identifies occasions when Siebert, Holdsworth, and Stephen have all mistaken the evidence in this way.
66. *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, ed. T. B. Howell, (London: R. Bagshaw, 1809–28), vol. 14, p. 1119.
67. Ibid., vol. 14, p. 1128.
68. Hamburger, p. 738.
69. Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*, ed. Peter Dixon and John Chalker (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1985), pp. 236–7.
70. Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 124–5. Lennard Davis advances a similar argument in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*, 2nd edn. (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), p. 150.
71. C. R. Kropf, 'Libel and Satire in the Eighteenth Century,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1974–5): 159. See also John March, *March's Actions for Slander, and Arbitrements* (London, 1674), p. 141. These readings were governed by the legal precept of *in mitiore sensue* (literally, 'in the more lenient sense'), which required all innuendoes or double meanings to be taken in their more innocuous sense unless the context directly proved otherwise.

Thus references to the pox, for example, would always be taken to mean smallpox rather than venereal disease.

72. Kropf, 'Libel and Satire,' p. 157; and Siebert, *Freedom of the Press*, p. 273. See also Lord Chief Justice Raymond's ruling in the trial of Richard Francklin in *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, vol. 17, pp. 671–2.
73. Michel Foucault, 'What is an Author?,' in *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, ed. Paul Rabinow (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1984), p. 108.
74. Ibid., p. 118.
75. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press*, pp. 374–5.
76. PRO Regency Papers, SP 44–274, fol. 14 (30 May 1695), as quoted in Hamburger, 'Development of the Law of Seditious Libel,' p. 721.
77. Johns, *Nature of the Book*, pp. 129–30.
78. PRO Regency Papers, SP 44–274 fol. 14 (30 May 1695), as quoted in Hamburger, 'Development of the Law of Seditious Libel,' p. 721.
79. Jonathan Swift, 'A Character of the Earl of Oxford,' 1 Jan. 1713, *HMC Bath*, p. 227; and William Cowper, 6 Jan. 1706, *The Private Diary of Lord Cowper*, ed. E. C. Hawtrey (Eton: Roxburghe Club, 1833), p. 33.
80. Henry L. Snyder, 'The Reports of a Press Spy for Robert Harley: New Bibliographical Data for the Reign of Queen Anne,' *The Library* 5th ser., 22, no. 4 (1967): 329–30.
81. Harley to Thomas Tenison, Archbishop of Canterbury, Jan. 1702, Lambeth Palace MS 930, fol. 25; as quoted in Lord and *et al*., eds, *Poems on Affairs of State*, vol. 7, p. 571.
82. The exclusivity of Harley's arrangements with these individuals is indicated by the records of his professional relationship with Robert Clare. As the correspondence between Clare and Harley makes clear, Clare was not well acquainted with the other Secretary of State, Sir Charles Hedges. In fact, he does not appear to have had any contact with Hedge until, well into his employment and in response to Harley's assent to Clare's wish to be 'Establish'd &c,' he approached his office via letter. See Report 10, 27 Nov. 1705, in Snyder, 'Reports of a Press Spy for Robert Harley,' p. 341.
83. Report 3, 10 Oct. 1705; in ibid., p. 334.
84. Report 5, 24 Oct. 1705; in ibid., p. 337.
85. Ibid., p. 329. Snyder argues that Harley was most active against the press in 1706; Clare's reports to Harley on the transactions of the printing trade cover the end of 1705.
86. *The Welsh-Monster: Or, the Rise and Downfall of That Late Upstart, the R——t H——ble Innuendo Scribble*, (London: 1708).
87. Defoe to Harley, July–Aug. 1704, in *The Letters of Daniel Defoe*, ed. George Harris Healey (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 34–8.
88. For a comprehensive discussion of Harley's relationship to the press, see J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).
89. Harley to Sidney Godolphin, 9 Aug. 1702, BL Add. MS 28055, fol. 3v.
90. Maximillian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 243.
91. Halasz, *Marketplace of Print*, p. 169.

92. Lorraine Code, 'Gossip, or in Praise of Chaos,' in *Rhetorical Spaces: Essays on Gendered Locations* (London: Routledge, 1995), p. 146.
93. Halasz, *Marketplace of Print*, pp. 128–34.
94. See Warner, *Letters of the Republic*, pp. 34–47; and Warner, *Publics and Counterpublics* (New York: Zone Books, 2002), pp. 78–9.
95. Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985), p. 72.
96. Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. 345, 456, 480, 829n17.
97. See Spacks, *Gossip*, pp. 38ff.
98. William A. Cohen proposes a similar model of scandal, arguing that that scandal should be understood as an event with a 'tripartite juridical model of plaintiff, defendant, and jury,' in *Sex Scandal: The Private Parts of Victorian Fiction* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996), p. 7.
99. Ibid., p. 9.
100. Serjeant Morton at the trial of Thomas Brewster, *State Trials*, vol. 6, p. 549. Francis Bacon drew similar conclusions in his *Wisdom of the Ancients*: 'rebellious actions, and seditious reports, differ nothing in kind and blood, but as it were in sex only, the one sort being masculine, the other feminine.' 'The Wisdom of the Ancients,' *The Essays, or Councils, Civil and Moral of Sir Francis Bacon*, (London, 1701), p. 39.
101. Clare Brant, 'Speaking of Women: Scandal and the Law in the Mid-Eighteenth Century', in *Women, Texts and Histories, 1575–1760*, ed. Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 243, 256.
102. Kathryn Temple, *Scandal Nation: Law and Authorship in Britain, 1750–1832* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), p. 7.
103. Warner, *Letters of the Republic*, p. 52.

2 Reading Secrets of State: Delarivier Manley and the *New Atalantis*

1. Delarivier Manley, *New Atalantis: Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes*, ed. Ros Ballaster (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1991). Further references to this edition will appear parenthetically in the text. The *New Atalantis* was originally published in two volumes: the first appeared between May and June, the second appeared in late October. For these details, see Edward Arber, *The Term Catalogues 1668–1709* (London: E. Arber, 1906), vol. 3, p. 643; and the advertisement in the *Tatler* no. 83 (20 Oct. 1709).
2. Francis Bacon, *New Atlantis. A Work Unfinished*, in *Select Philosophical Works*, ed. Rose-Mary Sargent (Indianapolis, IL: Hackett Publishing, 1999), p. 267.
3. Eleanor F. Shevlin also discusses the relationship Manley and Bacon's respective titles in 'Novel Entitlements: Titles, Property Law, and the Making of the English Novel' (PhD diss., University of Maryland, 2000), p. 232.
4. Sarah Churchill to Anne I, Nov. 1709 [drafts], Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61418, fols 54–9, 65–9. Manley provides an account of her arrest in her fictionalised autobiography, *The Adventures of Rivella*, suggesting she was arrested shortly after the three printers who had had a hand in the

Atalantis. A note recording the warrant issued for the *Atalantis*'s two publishers and three printers survives in the National Archives, dated 20 Oct. 1709 (State Papers 34, 11, fol. 69), but there are no records of Manley's arrest or examination. Ruth Herman also discusses this warrant, but mistakes its date, in *The Business of a Woman: The Political Writings of Delarivier Manley* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), p. 73.

5. Bradford K. Mudge, *The Whore's Story: Women, Pornography and the British Novel, 1684–1830* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 137.
6. Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, (London, 1714), canto 3, line 165; Henry Fielding, *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, ed. Douglas Brooks-Davies and Douglas Keymer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 163; Lord Byron, *Don Juan*, (London, 1819–24), canto 11, stanza 87, line 693.
7. 'The Publisher to the Reader,' Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad, an Heroic Poem. In Three Books* (London, 1728), p. vi.
8. Recent work on the secret history includes: Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); Eve Tavor Bannet, ' "Secret History": Or, Talebearing Inside and Outside the Secretoire', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, nos. 1–2 (2005): 375–96; Toni Bowers, 'Sex, Lies, and Invisibility: Amatory Fiction from the Restoration to Mid-Century,' in *The Columbia History of the British Novel*, ed. John J. Richetti (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), pp. 50–72; David Brewer, ' "Haywood," Secret History, and the Politics of Attribution,' in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood*, ed. Rebecca P. Bocchicchio and Kirsten T. Saxton, (Lexington, KA: University of Kentucky Press, 2000) pp. 215–39; Mark Knights, 'The Tory Interpretation of History in the Rage of Parties', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 68, nos. 1–2 (2005): 353–73. Lennard Davis also discusses the secret history in *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), pp. 110–22.
9. Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, pp. 131–6. William Warner makes a similar rhetorical move, arguing that the figure of the seducer represents the reader actively seeking new pleasures in the print marketplace. *Licensing Entertainment: The Elevation of Novel Reading in Britain, 1648–1750* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), pp. 91–4.
10. Ballaster, *Seductive Forms*, p. 123.
11. In a recent article, Kathryn King has recently expressed similar reservations about the increasing use of Ballaster's category of 'amatory fiction' to refer to the scandal chronicles of Behn, Manley and Haywood. She writes: 'Few ask what it means that this [female amatory] "tradition" consists of only three writers – Behn, Manley and Haywood – or consider the implications of a critical move that assimilates a broad and complex range of work to its sexiest moments.' 'Female Agency and Feminocentric Romance', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 41, no. 1 (2000): 56.
12. Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and the Division of Knowledge*, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 2005), p. 539. This example is taken from McKeon's discussion of Aphra Behn's *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and his Sister*, but it characterises his general approach to the secret history.

13. McKeon devotes a full chapter to *Love Letters*; his considerably shorter section on the *New Atalantis* focuses principally on the autobiographical elements of the text. Ibid., pp. 506–40, 589–98.
14. John J. Richetti, *Popular Fiction before Richardson: Narrative Patterns, 1700–1739* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 124. In *Seductive Forms*, Ballaster claims that it had been conventional to consider the secret history as a development of 'indigenous traditions in popular culture' such as ballads, rogue tales and early comedies and that the notion of French influence has been 'largely ignored or denigrated' (p. 60). This statement elides the fact that John Richetti's earlier account, which Ballaster discusses elsewhere in detail, had already established a French genealogy for English secret histories.
15. For an analysis of the debates surrounding the attribution of this text, see J. A. Downie, 'What if Delarivier Manley Did *Not* Write *The Secret History of Queen Zarah*?', *The Library* 5, no. 3 (2004): 247–64.
16. 'To the Reader', *The Secret History of Queen Zarah* (London, 1705), sig. A2v.
17. See, for example, Joseph F. Bartolomeo, *A New Species of Criticism: Eighteenth-Century Discourse on the Novel* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1994), and George L. Barnett, *Eighteenth-Century British Novelists on the Novel* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1968).
18. That the preface to *Queen Zarah* directly translates Jean-Baptiste Morvan de Bellegarde's *Lettres curieuses de littérature et de morale* (1702) was first noticed by John L. Sutton Jr in 'The Source of Mrs Manley's Preface to *Queen Zarah*', *Modern Philology*, 81 (1984): 167–72. An English translation of Bellegarde's *Lettres* was published in 1705, the same year as *Queen Zarah*.
19. Erica Harth writes that the message of romances like *Le Grand Cyrus* was clear: 'You, not the monarch, are the real heroes of the day.' See *Ideology and Culture in Seventeenth-Century France* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 100 and passim.
20. Gédéon Tallemant des Réaux, *Historiettes*, ed. Antonie Adam, (Paris: Gallimard, 1960–1), vol. 2, p. 689; as quoted in Harth, *Ideology and Culture*, p. 97.
21. Scudéry to Taisand, July 1673, as quoted in Dorothy McDougall, *Madeleine de Scudéry: Her Romantic Life and Death* (London: Methuen, 1938), p. 111.
22. Harth, *Ideology and Culture*, p. 141.
23. Ibid., pp. 143–53. See also Dena Goodman, 'Public Sphere and Private Life: Toward a Synthesis of Current Historiographical Approaches to the Old Regime', *History and Theory* 31 (1992): 17.
24. Harth, *Ideology and Culture*, p. 190.
25. Robert Mayer, ' "Did You Say Middle Class?": The Question of Taste and the Rise of the Novel', *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 12, nos. 2–3 (2000): 286.
26. Three different translators translated the text into English: the first among these was Ben Jonson, although his translation was destroyed by fire shortly after it was completed. Paul Salzman provides an account of the form and popularity of *Argenis* in *Literary Culture in Jacobean England: Reading 1621* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), pp. 75–81.
27. John Barclay, *John Barclay, His Argenis. Translated out of Latine into English*, trans. Robert Le Grys, (London, 1629), p. 485.

28. Kingsmill Long, 'The Key to Unlock *Argenis*', prefaced to John Barclay, *Argenis*, trans. Kingsmill Long (London: Henry Seile, 1636), sig. A5r-Cv; Robert Le Grys, 'The Clavis', appended to John Barclay, *Argenis*, tran. Robert le Grys (London: Richard Meighen, 1629), pp. 485–9.
29. C. R. Kropf, 'Libel and Satire in the Eighteenth Century', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8 (1974–5): 153.
30. Davis, *Factual Fictions*, p. 150.
31. Catherine Gallagher, *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 97.
32. Delariver Manley, *The Adventures of Rivella*, ed. Katherine Zelinsky (Peterborough, ON: Broadview, 1999), p. 111.
33. Jonathan Swift, *The Importance of The Guardian Considered*, in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939–68), vol. 8, pp. 14–15.
34. See Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, p. 97.
35. Barclay, *Argenis*, p. 131.
36. Catherine Gallagher, 'Political Crimes and Fictional Alibis: The Case of Delarivier Manley', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23 (1990): 511.
37. Thomas Hearne, *Remarks and Collections of Thomas Hearne*, ed. C. E. Doble (Oxford: Oxford Historical Society, 1886), vol. 2, p. 292. Trumbull's requests for a key to the *Atalantis* are answered by a number of family members. In particular, see letters from Ralph Bridges in the Trumbull Papers, BL Add. MS 72494 fols. 139v, 142v, 144r, and from Anne Bynn, Trumbull Papers, BL Add. MS 72515 fols. 98r, 100r.
38. Manley to Harley, 12 May 1710, in Portland Papers, BL Add. MS 70026, fol. 24. This letter was written on the very day of the novel's publication and entry into the register of the Stationers' Company. Four days after Harley received this letter, he produced his own handwritten key to the book it accompanied. This short timeframe precludes formal assistance, but might have allowed Harley to avail himself of just the kind of informal advice Manley offers in this letter. Harley's key is in the Portland Papers, BL MS 70333, unfol. (Formerly BM Loan 29/10/20/1).
39. 'The Key to the Second Volume of the *Atalantis*' bound in with the 1720 edition, BL Shelfmark 1081.f.14; 'The Key to the Second Volume of the *Atalantis*' bound in with the 1716 edition BL Shelfmark 1507/1616.
40. For example, one reader concluded that the character identified in the key as the E of B —represented the Earl of Bath while the reader of another copy of the same text thought he stood for the Earl of Berkshire. *New Atalantis* (London, 1709), vol. 1, p. 212. British Library, Shelfmark 12612 ff. 5 and Shelfmark 12611 dd. 24.
41. *New Atalantis* (London, 1709), vol. 1, p. 184. Collection of Patrick Spedding, 92:385.
42. Anne Bynn to Sir William Trumbull, 27 March 1710, Trumbull Papers, BL Add. MS 72515 fol. 100r.
43. Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 45.
44. Joseph Addison, *A Discourse on Ancient and Modern Learning* (London: T. Osbourne, 1739), p. 2. I became aware of this example through

its discussion by David Brewer in *The Afterlife of Character, 1725–1825* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), pp. 26–7.

45. The 'sir' in Ashburne's nickname is gratuitous, while the suffix, 'of the Peak', is a play on his surname. Ashburne was also the name of a small Derbyshire village whose proximity to a nearby mountain called the Peak meant it was occasionally referred to as Ashburne of the Peak. See Henry L. Snyder, 'The Identity of Monoculus in *The Tatler*', *Philological Quarterly* 48, no. 1 (Jan. 1969): 24.
46. *A full and true relation of a horrid and detestable conspiracy against the lives, estates and reputations of three worthy members of this present Parliament* (London, 1702), p. 2; William Shippen, *Faction Display'd* (London, 1704).
47. These are 'The Glory of the English arms retrieved' (Harley Papers, BL Add. MS 6914, fol 170r), and a poem beginning 'All things went well in church and state' (BL Add. MS 40060, fol. 70). The later poem links politics and sexuality in a strikingly graphic manner: 'Oh were the sage Volpone bound / His head her thighs betwixt, sir / To suck from thence his notions sound / And savoury politics, sir.' These poems are dated by Rachel Weil who makes a similar argument for the rhetorical effects of the affair in *Political Passions: Gender, the Family and Political Argument in England, 1680–1714* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), pp. 200, 226n64.
48. The subsequent publications that echo Manley's novel are *Oliver's Pocket Looking-Glass* (London, 1711), and *The Perquisite Monger* (London, 1712).
49. See, for example, Paul Bunyan Anderson, 'Mistress Delariviere Manley's Biography,' *Modern Philology* 33, no. 3 (Feb. 1936): 272.
50. These are Ruth Herman's suggestive descriptions in 'Enigmatic Gender in Delarivier Manley's *New Atalantis*', in *Presenting Gender: Changing Sex in Early-Modern Culture*, ed. Chris Mounsey (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2001), p. 204.
51. Steven N. Zwicker, 'Reading the Margins: Politics and the Habits of Appropriation,' in *Refiguring Revolutions: Aesthetics and Politics from the English Revolution to the Romantic Revolution*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), p. 109.
52. H. J. Jackson, *Marginalia: Readers Writing in Books* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 90.
53. Manley, *New Atalantis*, (London, 1709), p. 7. Houghton Library, Harvard University, Shelfmark EC7.M3148.709s vol. 2.
54. Ibid., p. 50.
55. For instance, the second reader crosses out the identification of the 'prince of the blood' as the Duke of St Albans and suggests it is a representation of the Duke of Richmond. He later disagrees with his predecessor's identification of Intelligence's 'young favourite' as Lord Dorsett, writing 'this is not Ld Dorset I don't know who it is'. Ibid, pp. 255, 267. Similar examples can be found on pp. 17, 50, 164.
56. Although this pamphlet was published anonymously, it closely adheres to a manuscript of Harley's, *Plain English*. J. A. Downie attributes it to Harley in *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 107.
57. Peter Wentworth to Lord Raby, 28 Jan. 1709, Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31141 fol. 277v.

58. [Robert Jones], *Mene Tekel: Or the Downfall of Tyranny* (London, 1663). John Partridge revived the phrase in 1688 to prognosticate the downfall of James II in *Mene Tekel, being an astrological judgment on the great and wonderful year, 1688* (London, 1688) and *Mene mene, tekel upharsin, the second part of Mene Tekel* (London, 1689).
59. Arthur Maynwaring to Sarah Churchill, 15–22 Oct. 1709, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61460, fol. 85v. This letter was written a matter of days after the publication of the second volume of the *Atalantis* on 20 Oct. 1709.
60. Arthur Maynwaring to Sarah Churchill, 4–5 Nov. 1709, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61460, fol. 105r.
61. Lady Sarah Cowper, *Journal*, 23 July 1709, Panshanger MS, Hertfordshire Records Office, D/EP/F33, fol. 12.
62. Sarah Churchill to Anne, Nov. 1709, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61418, fol. 56r. This letter is undated, but since Sarah refers to the fact that the Manley had been in custody and was now under prosecution, it seems likely it was composed early in November 1709.
63. Ibid., fol. 56v.
64. Ibid., fol. 59v.
65. This ballad is entitled *A New Ballad: to the Tune of Fair Rosamund*. It is likely Sarah had a hand in its composition, either by supplying suggestions to or collaborating with the author. See George de F. Lord, and *et al*., eds, *Poems on Affairs of State: Augustan Satirical Verse, 1600–1714* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1963–75), vol. 7, pp. 306–7, and headnote.
66. Sarah Churchill to Anne, 26 July 1708, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61417, fol. 154v.
67. Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Times*, (London, 1725–34), vol. 3, p. 1331.
68. Sarah Churchill to Mr Hutcheson, 1713, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61425, fol. 15v.
69. Sandy Petrey, *Speech Acts and Literary Theory* (New York: Routledge, 1990), p. 159.
70. Gallagher, *Nobody's Story*, p. 119n51.
71. Paula McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace, 1678–1730* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 238. The English Short Title Catalogue records close to thirty newsbooks that incorporate 'Intelligence' in their title. Further, as Joad Raymond has demonstrated, the word intelligence was often used as a heading to separate news from editorial comment within these papers' crowded pages. *The Invention of the Newspaper: English Newsbooks, 1641–1649* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 161.
72. Peter Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State and Their Monopoly of Licensed News, 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956); Alan Marshall, *Intelligence and Espionage in the Reign of Charles II, 1660–1685* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994).
73. Under the provisions of the Licensing Act, the principal secretaries of state were responsible for licensing all books concerning history or affairs of state. The secretaries of state also acted as 'detectives, searchers, arresting officers, examiners, and committing authorities in cases involving not only seditious but merely objectionable publications'. F. S. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in*

England, 1476–1776: The Rise and Decline of Government Controls (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1952), p. 255. See also Fraser, *Intelligence of the Secretaries of State*.

74. *London Gazette*, 20 May 1680. Conversely, news that was not officially sanctioned through formal or informal association with the secretaries' office was sometimes dismissed as rumour or bad intelligence. See Fraser, *Intelligence of the Secretaries of State*, pp. 115–17.
75. Siebert, *Freedom of the Press in England*, p. 371. Even though official records of votes taken in the House of Commons were published from 1681, authors were prohibited from reproducing this information in their own publications.
76. For examples of such prosecutions, see ibid., pp. 286–7, 347–9.
77. For the traditional associations between gossip and women, see Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985), pp. 26ff. Gossip was associated with other forms of leisure activity such as tea drinking. See Clare Brant, 'Speaking of Women: Scandal and the Law in the Mid-Eighteenth Century', in *Women, Texts and Histories, 1575–1760*, ed. Clare Brant and Diane Purkiss (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 249–54; and Beth Kowaleski-Wallace, 'Tea, Gender, and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century England', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 23 (1994): 138.
78. McDowell, *Women of Grub Street*, pp. 254ff.
79. Arthur Maynwaring to Sarah Churchill, 15–22 Oct. 1709, Blenheim Papers, BL Add. MS 61460, fol. 85v.
80. Montagu to Mrs Frances Hewet, 12 Nov. 1709, in *The Complete Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu*, ed. Roger Halsband (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), vol. 1, p. 18.
81. Manley to Sir John Hopkins, 2 Nov. 1709, Pierpont Morgan Library, MA 4695, r.
82. See Manley, *Rivella*, pp. 107–11; and Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1857), vol. 6, p. 546. Such examinations were held prior to the trial in order to discover evidence that would assist the prosecution. They were usually conducted by one of the undersecretaries but, on occasions, the secretary himself would act as examiner.
83. Manley, *Rivella*, p. 111.
84. See for example Hearne, *Remarks and Collections*; and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Mrs Frances Hewet, 12 Nov. 1709, in *Complete Letters*, vol. 1, p. 18.
85. McDowell, *Women of Grub Street*, p. 239.
86. Manley, *Rivella*, p. 108.
87. McDowell, *Women of Grub Street*, p. 239.
88. David Starkey, 'Representation through Intimacy: A Study in the Symbolism of Monarchy and Court Office in Early-Modern England', in *Symbols and Sentiments: Cross-Cultural Studies in Symbolism*, ed. Ioan Lewis (London: Academic Press, 1977), pp. 197, 213.
89. R. O. Bucholz, *The Augustan Court: Queen Anne and the Decline of Court Culture* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1993), p. 39.
90. Starkey, 'Representation through Intimacy,' p. 213.

91. Henning Papers, Worcestershire Records Office, BA 2252/2, fols 67–9; as quoted in Bucholz, *Augustan Court*, p. 153.
92. Bucholz, *Augustan Court*, p. 154.
93. This is the function of the key as specified by the Bedchamber Ordinances of 1689, which were adopted by Anne on her accession to the throne.
94. Peter Wentworth to Lord Raby, 8 Oct. 1714, in Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31144, fol. 321v.
95. 'St. Albans', May 1708, BL Add. MS 40060 fols. 68–9.
96. Delarivier Manley, *Memoirs of Europe, Towards the Close of the Eighth Century*, ed. Patricia Köster, *The Novels of Mary Delarivier Manley*, vol. 2 (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1971), p. 666. As the pagination of the original text is erratic, I refer to the pagination of the collected volume.
97. J. P. Kenyon, *The Stuarts: A Study in English Kingship* (London: B. T. Batsford, 1963), pp. 130ff. For a general history of the administration of the cabal, see Maurice Lee, *The Cabal* (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1965).
98. Elizabeth S. Wahl, *Invisible Relations: Representation of Female Intimacy in the Age of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), p. 124.
99. McDowell, *Women of Grub Street*, p. 265.

3 Reforming Reference: Trials and Texts

1. For these estimates, see W. A. Speck, *Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701–1715* (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 110.
2. Manley to Harley, 19 July 1711, Portland Papers, BL Add. MS 70028, fol. 79 [my foliation]; Manley to Harley, 16 [Apr./Jul. 1710], Portland Papers, BL Add. MS 70290, fol. 1.
3. Delarivier Manley, *Memoirs of Europe, Towards the Close of the Eighth Century*, in *The Novels of Mary Delarivier Manley*, ed. Patricia Köster (Gainesville, FL: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1971), vol. 2, pp. 448, 451.
4. Ibid., p. 683.
5. Delarivier Manley, *The Selected Works of Delarivier Manley*, eds Rachel Carnell and Ruth Herman (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2005), vol. 1, pp. 23–6.
6. Stationers' Hall Records, BL M985/6, vol. 1, fol. 21, 12 May 1710; vol. 2, fol. 86, 23 Nov. 1710.
7. Manley, *Memoirs of Europe*, p. 254.
8. These texts include *The Secret History of Arlus and Odolphus* (1710), *The Secret History of the October Club* (1711), *The Secret History of the White Staff* (1714) and *The History of the Mitre and Purse* (1714).
9. Annabel Patterson, *Early Modern Liberalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 185.
10. Patterson's only reference is to *Queen Zarah and the Zarazians* (1705), an earlier and much less remarkable secret history that can no longer be confidently attributed to Manley. Ibid., p. 184.
11. Ibid., p. 197.
12. The Tory majority of 151 that resulted from the 1710 election contrast starkly with the majority of 69 that the Whigs had enjoyed following the 1708 elections. For these statistics, see Speck, *Tory and Whig*, p. 123.

13. Jacobites would celebrate 19 March, the date William III died in 1702, by drinking toasts to 'the little gentleman in black velvet' in reference to the mole whose hill caused his horse to stumble and throw him.
14. Ralph Bridges to William Trumbull, 12 Apr. 1709, Trumbull Papers, BL Add. MS 72494 fol. 109r.
15. Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Times*, (London, 1725–34), vol. 6, p. 1068. The name first appeared in print five years previously in William Shippen's *Faction Display'd* (London, 1704), was used widely in printed material and private correspondence.
16. See J. A. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the Age of Swift and Defoe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), p. 116; Geoffrey A. Holmes, *The Trial of Doctor Sacheverell* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1973), pp. 74–5.
17. Peter Wentworth to Lord Raby, 16 Dec. 1709, Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31143 fol. 428r.
18. *A Compleat History of the Whole Proceedings of the Parliament of Great Britain against Dr Henry Sacheverell* (London, 1710), p. 13.
19. *Review*, vol. 6, no. 136 (18 Feb. 1710). A month earlier, Defoe elaborated this position, writing: 'It is not necessary, that the House should push at this or that Person, but it is absolutely necessary that the Principles of absolute Government, the Doctrine of Non-Resistance, and the scandalous Jest of the Divine Right of Personal Hereditary Succession to the Government should be condemn'd and exploded by Parliament, and so bury'd in this Nation, as never to be brought to Light again among us.' (*Review*, vol. 6, no. 477, 12 Jan. 1710).
20. *A Description of the High Court of Judicature for the Tryal of Dr Henry Sacheverell* (London, 1710), p. 125.
21. For an account of this incident see the entries for 27 Feb. 1710 and 28 Feb. 1710, in 'An Account of the Trial of Dr Sacheverell,' Beinecke Library, Osborn Collection, MS 13043.
22. Lady Wentworth to Lord Raby, 6 Mar. 1710, Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31143, fol. 464r; and Anne Clavering to Sir James Clavering, 18 Mar. 1710, in *The Correspondence of Sir James Clavering*, ed. H. T. Dickinson (Gateshead: Surtees Society, 1967), p. 37.
23. These fans were sold at Mrs Beardwell's (the printer of the Tory *Post-Boy*), and advertised in the *Post-Boy* no. 2387 (31 Aug. 1710).
24. Anne Clavering to Sir James Clavering, 18 Mar. 1710, in *Correspondence of Sir James Clavering*, p. 37.
25. *Review* vol. 7, no. 19 (Tues. 9 May 1710).
26. 'When we dress to court my lady's daughter, the servant is immediately interrogated whether the master be High-Church or Low-Church, and he answers that he does not find that his master goes to church at all [...] When we describe our restless, waking nights, the fate of amorous eyes, she cries truly, she was up before six as well as we. When we would [...] let her know the thin diet that we lovers are confined to (a kind look being a full meal) she answers that the careless servant put up a nasty black-legged chicken into the napkin, which obliged her to fast the last day of the trial.' *The Officers' Address to the Ladies* (London, 1710), p. 2.

27. *Tatler* no. 232 (3 Oct. 1710), edited by Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), vol. 3, p. 200. F. F. Madan lists over five hundred titles in *A Critical Bibiliography of Dr Henry Sacheverell*, ed. W. A. Speck (Kansas: University of Kansas Press, 1978).
28. For estimates of the readership of Sacheverell's sermon, see Holmes, *Trial of Dr Sacheverell*, pp. 74–5. For an analysis of the size of the electorate during Queen Anne's reign, see Speck, *Tory and Whig*, p. 16.
29. [John Toland], *High Church Display'd: Being a Compleat History of the Affair of Dr Sacheverell* (London, 1711), p. 11.
30. John Dunton, *The Bull-Baiting, Or Sach——ll Dress'd up in Fire-Works* (London, 1709), p. 4.
31. Jack Touchwood, *Quixote Redivius: Or, The Spiritual Knight-Errant* (London, 1710), pp. 4, 9.
32. Wendy Motooka, *The Age of Reasons: Quixotism, Sentimentalism and Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 50.
33. *The Examiner*, vol. 5, no. 44 (26 Apr. 1714).
34. Geoffrey A. Holmes, 'The Sacheverell Riots: The Crowd and the Church in Early Eighteenth-Century London', *Past & Present* 72 (1976): p. 55.
35. Hoffmann's dispatch of 5 May 1710, as quoted in Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London: Routledge, 1980), p. 306. Lady Wentworth expressed a similar sentiment in a letter to her son on 6 March 1710: 'pray God send it ends well for this confusion seems to me to be like the beginning of the late troubles, I having lately read Baker's Chronicles' (Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31143, fol. 464r).
36. Henry Sacheverell, *The Perils of False Brethren* (London, 1709), sig. A2v.
37. Edward Harley to Abigail Harley, 2 Mar. 1710, Harley Papers, BL Add. MS 70026, fol. 5r.
38. Lee Horsley catalogues the Whig response to the advent of Tory populism in '*Vox Populi* in the Political Literature of 1710', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 38, no. 4 (1974–5).
39. Edward Harley, 'Memoirs of the Harley Family', Mackintosh Collections, BL Add. MS 34515, fol. 135v.
40. Horsley, '*Vox Populi* in the Political Literature of 1710', p. 352.
41. Ibid., pp. 347ff.
42. See, for example, William King, *A Vindication of the Reverend Dr Henry Sacheverell*. (London, 1711), p. 11.
43. See John Louis Lucaites, 'Constitutional Argument in a National Theatre: The Impeachment Trial of Dr Henry Sacheverell,' in *Popular Trials: Rhetoric, Mass Media, and the Law*, ed. Robert Hariman (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1990), p. 200n3.
44. Horsley, '*Vox Populi* in the Political Literature of 1710', p. 339.
45. See Ibid.: pp. 352ff.
46. While there is considerable controversy over the attribution of Defoe's works, there is consensus that he was responsible for *Atalantis Major* (1710); *The Secret History of the October Club* (1711); *The Secret History of the White Staff* (3 vols, 1714–15); *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff* (1715); *The Secret History of One Year* (1714); and *The Secret History of State Intrigues in the Management of the Sceptre* (1714).

47. John Dunton, for example, declared that the original text was 'written by De Foe, as is to be seen by his abundance of Words, false thoughts, and false English'. *The Secret History of the White-Staff* [. . .] *With a Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Said Pamphlet* (London, 1714), p. 4.
48. *Evening Post*, no. 922 (5 July 1715). See also the letter from Harley to Dr Stratford, 23 Nov. 1714, in *HMC Portland*, vol. 5, p. 501.
49. Downie, *Robert Harley and the Press*, p. 186. Defoe's relationship with Harley is discussed above in Chapter 1.
50. Daniel Defoe, *The Secret History of the White-Staff* (London, 1714–15), vol. 3, p. 2.
51. Ibid., vol. 2, p. 45.
52. Ibid., vol. 3, p. 5.
53. See, for example, the letter from Anne Clavering to Sir James Clavering, 1 Apr. 1710, in *Correspondence of Sir James Clavering*, p. 76.
54. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 1, p. 33.
55. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 41.
56. William Cobbett, *Parliamentary History* (London: T.C. Hansard, 1810), vol. 7, p. 210.
57. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 40.
58. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 52.
59. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 3, p. 80.
60. *A Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Pamphlet, Entitl'd The Secret History of the White Staff* (London, 1714–15), vol. 3, pp. 4, 31.
61. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 29.
62. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 42.
63. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 3, pp. 28–9.
64. Sarah Churchill and Nathaniel Hooke, *An Account of the Conduct of the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough from Her First Coming to Court in the Year 1710* (London, 1742), p. 247.
65. Defoe, *Secret History of the White-Staff*, vol. 1, pp. 46–7; vol. 2, p. 7.
66. Maximillian E. Novak, *Daniel Defoe: Master of Fictions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 179–95. In 1703, Defoe was found guilty of seditious libel for authoring *The Shortest Way with Dissenters* and endured a harsh sentence – he was pilloried on three occasions, paid a substantial fine, and spent a total of five months in Newgate Prison.
67. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 42.
68. 'The Publisher to the Reader,' Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad, an Heroic Poem. In Three Books* (London, 1728), p. vi.
69. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 8.
70. The letter was written on 19 May 1714 in order to dissuade Sophia from establishing her son, the future George I, in England while Anne was still living and, at the same time, to reassure her as to the security of the succession. Sophia died shortly after receiving this letter and the shock of its contents was rumoured to be a precipitating factor. Defoe alters the pronouns in quoting the letter ('her Majesty' for 'I'), but his quotation is otherwise accurate. Anne to Sophia, 19 May 1714, in *Three Letters Sent, Two from Her Most Gracious Majesty, viz. one to the Princess Sophia, the other to the Duke*

of Cambridge; and one from the Lord High Treasurer to the Duke of Cambridge; relating to his coming over to England (London, 1714), p. 1.
71. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 66.
72. Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 3–4.
73. For Defoe's authorship of *Memoirs of Scotland*, see P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, *A Critical Bibliography of Daniel Defoe* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1998), p. 174, entry 92(P).
74. Defoe employed this strategy to similar effect in *Atalantis Major* and in writing *The Review*. For representative examples, see *Atalantis Major*, pp. 21–2 and *Review* vol. 6, no. 144 (9 Mar. 1710).
75. Daniel Defoe, *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff*, (London, 1715). The text was advertised as 'this day published' in the *Post-Man* and *Evening Post* for 4 Jan. 1715; the third and final part of *The Secret History of the White Staff* was advertised as 'this day published' in the *St James's Evening Post* for 28 Jan. 1715. For Defoe's authorship of *The Secret History of the Secret History of the White Staff*, see Furbank and Owens, *A Critical Bibliography of Daniel Defoe*, p. 150, entry 67. See also P. N. Furbank and W. R. Owens, *The Canonisation of Daniel Defoe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), pp. 167–9.
76. This is how Manley is described by the anonymous author of the *General Postscript* [. . .] *in a Dialogue between Novel and Scandal* no. 1 (27 Sept. 1709). John Oldmixon referred to Manley similarly, as the 'lewdest Wretch in the Island' in his *Court of Atalantis* (London, 1714), p. 87.
77. Defoe, *Secret History of the White Staff*, vol. 2, p. 70.
78. These texts include *The History of the Mitre and Purse* (1714); *A Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Pamphlet, Entitl'd the Secret History of the White Staff* (1714); *The White Staff's Speech to the Lords* (1714); *Considerations Upon the Secret History of the White Staff* (1714); and *Neck or Nothing; or, the History of Queen Robin* (1714).
79. *A Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Secret History of the White Staff*, (London, 1714–15), vol. 1, p. 21.
80. John Dunton, *The Secret History of the White-Staff* [. . .] *With a Detection of the Sophistry and Falsities of the Said Pamphlet* (London, 1714). Despite the similarities in the titles of Dunton's narrative and the text discussed above, the two texts bear different imprints and are distinct in form and content.
81. See, for example, *A Complete Collection of State Trials*, ed. T. B. Howell (London: R. Bagshaw, 1809–28), vol. 17, p. 154.
82. Steven N. Zwicker, 'The Constitution of Opinion and the Pacification of Reading', in *Reading, Society and Politics in Early Modern England*, ed. Kevin Sharpe and Steven N. Zwicker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 300–1.

4 Lucubrating London: The *Tatler* and the *Female Tatler*

1. *Tatler*, no. 1 (12 Apr. 1709), in *The Tatler*, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), vol. 1, p. 16, reverse italics. Subsequent references to the *Tatler* will provide the original publication details, followed by the volume and page number from Bond's edition.

2. Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, trans. Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1989), p. 31.
3. Ibid., p. 42.
4. Arguments that are especially influential in this regard are those presented by: Brian Cowan, 'Mr Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37, no. 3 (Spring 2004): 345–66; Brian Cowan, 'What Was Masculine About the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England', *History Workshop Journal* 51 (Spring 2001): 127–57; Markman Ellis, 'The Coffee-Women, *The Spectator* and the Public sphere in the Early Eighteenth-Century', in *Women and the Public Sphere*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger *et al*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp 27–52; and Michael Ketcham, *Transparent Designs: Reading, Performance, and Form in the Spectator Papers* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1985), p. 5.
5. Cowan, 'Mr Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere', p. 358.
6. Cowan refers to the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* as instances of a single undertaking that he describes as the 'Spectator Project' in 'Mr Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere', p. 346. Erin Mackie similarly describes the *Tatler* and the *Spectator* as 'exemplary instance[s] of the discursive institutions of the public sphere.' *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity and Gender in the Tatler and the Spectator* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), p. xv.
7. *Tatler*, no. 1 (12 Apr. 1709), vol. 1, p. 15.
8. Ibid. Vivien Jones, 'Introduction', *Women and Literature in Britain, 1700–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p. 5.
9. Bickerstaff's habit of 'talking to the ladies' is commented on in the *Review*, vol. 7, no. 19 (9 May 1710), and by Jonathan Swift, 26 Jan. 1712, *The Journal to Stella*, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1974), vol. 2, p. 482. For the significance of the paper's address to women, see Kathryn Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture: The Construction of Femininity in the Early Periodical* (London: Routledge, 1989), p. 36.
10. *Tatler*, no. 7 (26 Apr. 1709), vol. 1, p. 63.
11. Richard Steele, 'Preface to the *Tatler*', in *The Tatler*, edited by Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), vol. 1, p. 31.
12. Michael Warner, 'The Mass Public and the Mass Subject', in *The Phantom Public Sphere*, ed. Bruce Robbins (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), pp. 234–56; Tedra Osell, 'Tatling Women in the Public Sphere: Rhetorical Femininity and the English Essay Periodical,' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 38, no. 2 (2005): 284–5.
13. Bernard Lens, 'Isaac Bickerstaff Esqr' (London: John Sturt, 1710). Michael McKeon discusses 'the domesticating conventionality of household pets' in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century portraiture in *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), pp. 213–16.
14. *Tatler*, no. 120 (14 Jan. 1710), vol. 2, pp. 215; and no. 122 (19 Jan. 1710), vol. 2, pp. 220–1.
15. *The Works of the Right Honourable Joseph Addison, Esq*. ed. Thomas Tickell (London: Jacob Tonson, 1721), vol. 2, p. 266.

16. *Examiner* vol. 3, no. 48 (4 May 1713), and vol. 4, no. 2 (18 May 1713).
17. *Tatler*, no. 81 (15 Oct. 1709), vol. 2, pp. 13–21.
18. *Tatler*, no. 83 (20 Oct. 1709), vol. 2, p. 27.
19. Wentworth to Lord Raby, 8 July 1709, Stratford Papers, BL Add. MS 31143, fol. 405v, and 22 July 1709, BL Add. MS 31143, fol. 441v. The first letter refers to the *Tatler* no. 36 (2 July 1709), vol. 1, p. 265, and the second to the *Tatler*, no. 44 (21 July 1709), vol. 1, pp. 312–14.
20. *Tatler* no. 1 (12 Apr. 1709), vol. 1, pp. 17–18.
21. Abigail Harley to Aunt Abigail Harley, 19 June 1709, in HMC, *The Manuscripts of His Grace, the Duke of Portland* (London: H. M. Stationery Office, 1891–1931), vol. 4, pp. 522–3.
22. *Spectator*, no. 10 (12 Mar. 1711), in *The Spectator*, ed. Donald F. Bond (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965), vol. 1, p. 44.
23. John Gay, *The Present State of Wit, in a Letter to a Friend in the Country* (1711), reprinted in *Essays on Wit*, no. 3, edited by Donald F. Bond (Los Angeles: Augustan Reprint Society, 1957), p. 3.
24. Lady Marow to Lady Kaye, 5 Jan. 1710, in HMC, *The Manuscripts of the Earl of Dartmouth* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1887–96), vol. 3, p. 148.
25. Patricia Meyer Spacks, *Gossip* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1985), p. 30.
26. Bickerstaff is first referred to by this title in a letter from a reader, printed in no. 103 (6 Dec. 1709), vol. 2, p. 131. He adopts the title himself in no. 162 (22 Apr. 1710), vol. 2, pp. 402–5, where he elaborates on what he perceives to be his duties.
27. Plutarch describes the office of the Censor as 'the crowning honour of Roman civic life' and delineates their duties as being 'to watch, regulate, and punish any tendency to indulge in licentious or voluptuous habits and to depart from the traditional and established way of living'. Plutarch, 'Cato the Elder', in *The Makers of Rome: Nine Lives*, trans. Ian Scott Kilvert (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1965), pp. 130–1.
28. *Tatler*, no. 162 (22 Apr. 1709), vol. 2, p. 404. For example, on the first court day Simon Trippit petitions Bickerstaff to allow him the continued use of his cane, applying (as it were) for an exemption from the decision taken in an earlier number that such accessories were affectations. Bickerstaff declines Trippit's request, pronouncing him an affected fellow, and devises a punishment that is intended to wean him from his cane. *Tatler*, no. 103 (6 Dec. 1709), vol. 2, pp. 131–2.
29. See Letter 53 and Letter 86, in *Original Letters Sent to the Tatler and Spectator*, vol. 1, pp. 130, 219–21.
30. Anne Clavering to Sir James Clavering, 15 Sept. 1709, in *The Correspondence of Sir James Clavering*, ed. H. T. Dickinson (Gateshead: Surtees Society, 1967), p. 42.
31. Steele seems to admit a former intimacy with Manley, writing in the *Guardian* of 12 May 1713 that it is 'credibly reported that I have formerly lain with the *Examiner* [. . .] it is nothing to me, whether the *Examiner* writes against me in the Character of an estranged Friend or an exasperated Mistress.' The *Examiner*, of course, had been edited by Jonathan Swift (Steele's 'estranged friend') and then by Manley (the 'exasperated Mistress'?).
32. See Delarivier Manley, *New Atalantis: Secret Memoirs and Manners of Several Persons of Quality, of Both Sexes*, ed. Ros Ballaster (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1991), pp. 101–5.

33. *Tatler*, no. 63 (3 Sept. 1709), vol. 1, pp. 439–40.
34. Richmond Bond, *The Tatler: The Making of a Literary Journal* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 138, 176.
35. *Tatler*, no. 19 (24 May 1709), vol. 1, p. 152.
36. *Tatler*, no. 22 (31 May 1709), vol. 1, pp. 174–5.
37. Peter Fraser, *The Intelligence of the Secretaries of State and Their Monopoly of Licensed News, 1660–1688* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956); and Steve Pincus, '"Coffee Politicians Does Create": Coffeehouses and Restoration Political Culture,' *Journal of Modern History* 67 (1995): 807–34.
38. *General Postscript* [...] *In a Dialogue Between Novel and Scandal*, no. 12 (24 Oct. 1709).
39. It is not clear exactly when Steele resigned the editorship of the *Gazette*. Narcissus Luttrell notes the event under the date of 17 Oct. 1710, the very same day that Abel Roper wrote to Harley asking to be appointed to the position since Steele had resigned. Narcissus Luttrell, *A Brief Historical Relation of State Affairs from September 1678 to April 1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1857), vol. 5, p. 643; and Roper to Harley, 17 Oct. 1710, in *HMC Portland*, vol. 4, p. 615.
40. Richard Steele, *Mr Steele's Apology for Himself and his Writings; Occasioned by his Expulsion from the House of Commons* (London, 1714), p. 81.
41. Stuart Sherman discusses Steele's simultaneous work on the *Gazette* and the *Tatler* in *Telling Time: Clocks, Diaries and English Diurnal Form, 1660–1785* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), as does Scott Black in 'Social and Literary Form in the *Spectator*', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33, no. 1 (1999): 23–4.
42. Lady Elizabeth Hervey to John Hervey, 9 Apr. 1709, in Sydenham H. A. Hervey, ed., *The Letter Books of John Hervey, First Earl of Bristol, 1651 to 1750* (London: Ernest Jackson, 1894), vol. 1, p. 249.
43. *Examiner*, no. 5 (31 Aug. 1710).
44. Steele, 'Dedication to Mr Maynwaring', reprinted in Bond, ed., *The Tatler*, vol. 1, p. 8.
45. Jonathan Swift, *The Importance of The Guardian Considered*, in *The Prose Works of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Herbert Davis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1939–68), vol. 8, p. 6.
46. See, for example, no. 214 (22 Aug. 1710), vol. 3, pp. 124–7; no. 220 (5 Sept. 1710), vol. 3, pp. 148–52; no. 237 (14 Oct. 1710), vol. 3, pp. 220–4; no. 239 (19 Oct. 1710), pp. 227–32; and no. 257 (30 Nov. 1710), pp. 302–8.
47. *Tatler*, no. 191 (29 Jun. 1710), vol. 3, p. 34.
48. Samuel Johnson, *A Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th edn. (Dublin: Thomas Ewing, 1775), p. 92.
49. *Tatler*, no. 155 (6 Apr. 1710), vol. 2, p. 370.
50. *Tatler*, no. 160 (18 Apr. 1710), vol. 2, p. 394.
51. *Spectator*, no. 457 (14 Aug. 1712), vol. 4, pp. 111–12.
52. *Tatler*, no. 178 (30 May 1710), vol. 2, p. 471.
53. Ibid. See also Wendy Motooka, *The Age of Reasons: Quixotism, Sentimentalism and Political Economy in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (London: Routledge, 1998), p. 59.
54. *Tatler*, no. 10 (3 May 1709), vol. 1, p. 89. This is the first recorded example of the word in the OED.
55. *Spectator*, no. 625 (26 Nov. 1714), in Bond, ed., vol. 5, pp. 136–7.

56. The first paper dealing with the political upholsterer was published on 6 April 1710, two weeks after the conclusion of Sacheverell's trial on 23 March 1710. See the discussion of these events in the previous chapter.
57. *Tatler*, no. 232 (3 Oct. 1710), vol. 3, p. 200.
58. *Tatler*, no. 264 (16 Dec. 1710), vol. 3, p. 336. Stuart Sherman also discusses this number in *Telling Time*, p. 131.
59. Cowan, 'Mr Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere', p. 351.
60. *Tatler*, no. 229 (26 Sept. 1710), vol. 3, p. 187. The 'numberless vermin' Steele refers to include: *Titt for Tatt* (1710) by Jo' Patridge, *The Whisperer* by Jenny Distaff (1709), *Gazette A-la-mode: Or, Tom Brown's Ghost* (1709), the *Female Tatler* (1709–10), the *Tory Tatler* (1709), the *North Tatler* (1709) and the *Tatling Harlot* (1709).
61. The history of the 'Staffian Race' is elaborated in *Tatler*, no. 11 (5 May 1709), vol. 1, pp. 99–102.
62. See, for example, the *Female Tatler*, no. 28 (9 Sept. 1709), no. 39 (5 Oct. 1709).
63. *Female Tatler*, no. 20 (22 Aug. 1709).
64. *Female Tatler*, no. 51 (2 Nov. 1709).
65. See Jane Yates, 'Bernard Mandeville and the *Female Tatler*', *Notes and Queries* n.s. 32 (230), no. 2 (June 1985): 199–200; Iona Italia, *The Rise of Literary Journalism in the Eighteenth Century: Anxious Employment* (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 50–2; and M. M. Goldsmith, Introduction to *By a Society of Ladies: Essays in The Female Tatler* (Bristol: Thoemmes Press, 1999), pp. 11–71.
66. *General Postscript* [. . .] *In a Dialogue Between Novel and Scandal*, no. 12 (24 Oct. 1709).
67. *British Apollo*, no. 49 (14 Sept. 1709).
68. Scholars who argue that the paper should be attributed to Baker include: Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 121–2; Goldsmith, Introduction to *By a Society of Ladies*, pp. 43–4; Ruth A. Herman, *The Business of a Woman: The Political Writings of Delarivier Manley* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2003), pp. 223–4. Tedra Osell stands alone in arguing 'Manley is now recognised as the author of the *Female Tatler*' ('Tatling Women,' p. 293).
69. Alison Adburgham, *Women in Print: Writing Women and Women's Magazines from the Restoration to the Accession of Victoria* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1972), p. 57; and Ros Ballaster *et al*., *Women's Worlds: Ideology, Femininity and the Woman's Magazine* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 56. M. M. Goldsmith has argued in the opposite direction, declaring 'it is unlikely that the Tory Mrs Manley participated in the Whiggish *Female Tatler*'. Introduction to *By a Society of Ladies*, pp. 43–4.
70. *Female Tatler*, no. 27 (7 Sept. 1709). This issue also analysed by Sarah Prescott and Jane Spencer in 'Prattling, Tattling and Knowing Everything: Public Authority and the Female Editorial Persona in the Early Essay-Periodical', *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23, no. 1 (2000): 48.
71. *Female Tatler*, no. 17 (15 Aug. 1709).
72. See, for example, the *Female Tatler*, no. 3 (13 July 1709), no. 16 (12 Aug. 1709), no. 20 (22 Aug. 1709), no. 26 (5 Sept. 1709).
73. *Female Tatler*, no. 11 (1 Aug. 1709).

74. *Female Tatler*, no. 19 (Bragge, 19 Aug. 1709), and no. 35 (Baldwin, 26 Sept. 1709).
75. *Female Tatler*, no. 43 (14 Oct. 1709).
76. *Female Tatler*, no. 29 (12 Sept. 1709).
77. *Female Tatler*, no. 39 (5 Oct. 1709).
78. *Female Tatler*, no. 2 (11 July 1709).
79. See, for example, numbers 5 (18 July 1709), 7 (22 July 1709), 26 (5 Sept. 1709), 28 (9 Sept. 1709), 30 (14 Sept. 1709) and 44 (17 Oct. 1709).
80. See, for example, the *Female Tatler*, no. 6 (20 July 1709).
81. *Female Tatler*, no. 1 (8 July 1709).
82. *Female Tatler*, no. 42 (12 Oct. 1709), see also no. 2 (11 July 1709).
83. *Female Tatler*, no. 39 (5 Oct 1709).
84. *Female Tatler*, no. 7 (22 July 1709).
85. *Female Tatler*, no. 42 (12 Oct. 1709).
86. *Female Tatler*, no. 31 (16 Sept. 1709).
87. *Female Tatler*, no. 24 (31 Aug. 1709). The social aspirations of the Bustles were satirised in a further five issues of the *Female Tatler*, numbers 30 (14 Sept. 1709), 39 (5 Oct. 1709), 43 (14 Oct. 1709), 47 (24 Oct. 1709), and 50 (31 Oct. 1709).
88. Fidelis Morgan records that this annotation appears in a copy of *The Female Tatler*, now in the collections of the Bodleian Library. Introduction to *The Female Tatler*, ed. Fidelis Morgan (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1992), p. x.
89. *British Apollo*, no. 49 (14 Sept. 1709).
90. *Female Tatler*, no. 20 (22 Aug. 1709).
91. *British Apollo*, no. 59 (14 Oct. 1709).
92. This is similar to the role accorded to gossip by anthropologists, who emphasise its ability to maintain the values and unity of social groups by restating the group's moral code. For a summary of these arguments, see Sally Engle Merry, 'Rethinking Gossip and Scandal,' in *Toward a General Theory of Social Control*, ed. Donald Black (Cambridge, MA: 1984), pp. 273–5.
93. *Female* Tatler, no. 8 (25 July 1709), and no. 15 (10 Aug. 1709).
94. Ros Ballaster argues that the story of the Duke and Charlot is 'a landmark story in Manley's text, [...] an exemplary tale of seduction and betrayal to or from which all subsequent stories in the novel correspond or diverge' (*Seductive Forms*, p. 132). More recently, both Ellen Pollak and Ruth Herman have argued that episode is the key to unlocking both the economy of representation and the political import of the *New Atalantis*. Herman, 'Enigmatic Gender in Delarivier Manley's *New Atalantis*', in *Presenting Gender: Changing Sex in Early–Modern Culture*, ed. Chris Mounsey (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2001), pp. 202–24; Herman, *The Business of a Woman*; and Ellen Pollak, 'Guarding the Succession of the (E)State: Guardian–Ward Incest and the Dangers of Representation in Delarivier Manley's *The New Atalantis*', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 39, no. 3 (Autumn 1998): 220–37.
95. Kathryn King, 'Female Agency and Feminocentric Romance', *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 41, no. 1 (2000): 56.
96. *Female Tatler*, no. 15 (10 Aug. 1709).
97. *Female Tatler*, no. 15 (10 Aug. 1709).
98. *Female Tatler*, no. 30 (14 Sept. 1709).

5 A Newer *Atalantis*: Political and Generic Revolutions

1. Although the title appears to indicate that it was published in 1713, an advertisement announcing the collection as 'this day published' in *The Evening Post* (8 Apr. 1714), notices in *The Post Boy*, no. 2954 (15 Apr. 1714) and *Examiner*, vol. 5, no. 39 (12 Apr. 1714) designed to distance Manley from the contents of the collection, and its appearance in Curll's catalogues for 1714, all locate its publication firmly in April 1714.
2. This fact is noted by Paula Backscheider in 'The Novel's Gendered Space', in *Revising Women: Eighteenth-Century 'Women's Fiction' and Social Engagement*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), p. 3.
3. This advertisement is appended to Sarah Butler's novel, *Irish Tales: or Instructive Histories for the Happy Conduct of Life* (London, 1716). It is also discussed by Kathryn King in 'The Novel before Novels (with a Glance at Mary Hearne's Fables of Desertion)', in *Eighteenth-Century Genre and Culture: Serious Reflections on Occasional Forms*, ed. Dennis Todd and Cynthia Wall (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), pp. 36–57.
4. Cheryl Turner, *Living by the Pen: Women Writers in the Eighteenth Century*, (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 90.
5. Barker was among the community of faithful followers who followed James II and his court into exile in France after the Revolution of 1688. King has also discovered a government abstract of a letter written by Barker to James Butler, the Duke of Ormonde, in 1718. The letter declares in coded language that the swelling support for James Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender) means that the time is ripe for a Jacobite invasion of England. See Kathryn King with Jeslyn Medoff, 'Jane Barker and Her Life (1652–1732): The Documentary Record,' *Eighteenth-Century Life* 21, no. 3 (1997): 26.
6. Kathryn King, *Jane Barker, Exile: A Literary Career, 1675–1725* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 189.
7. Paul Baines and Pat Rogers, *Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 154.
8. *The Post Boy* no. 2954 (15 Apr. 1714).
9. See Edmund Curll, 'To The Reader', in Delarivier Manley, *Mrs Manley's History of Her Own Life and Times. Published from Her Original Manuscript* (London: E. Curll, 1725), pp. iii–viii.
10. Ibid., pp. vi, vii. Manley was particularly keen to keep her involvement in the text a secret from John Barber, who had printed the *New Atalantis*. At the time of the publication of *Rivella*, Manley was living with Barber, likely as his mistress.
11. Curll to Robert Walpole, 2 Mar. 1724, in S. N. M., 'Stray Notes on Edmund Curll, His Life, and Publications,' *Notes and Queries* 2nd series, no. 49 (6 Dec. 1856): 443. A note from John Henley accompanied Curll's letter, testifying to its truth. 'As to Mr Higgons's and Mrs Manley's affair,' Henley writes, 'I have seen original letters under both their hands.'
12. The warrant is held in the collections of the National Archives at PRO SP/44/81/339. In his biography of John Barber, Curll writes that Manley had made 'considerable progress' on a new novel, only to cease work when Barber

began to treat her badly. *An Impartial History of the Life, Character, Amours, Travels, and Transactions of Mr John Barber*, (London, 1741), p. 47.

13. *The German Atalantis: Being, a Secret History of Many Surprizing Intrigues, and Adventures Transacted in Several Foreign Courts* was first published in March 1715, re-issued in 1718, and then re-published in 1721 as *Hanover Tales*. Curll's receipts identifying Busby as the author are in the collections of the British Library (BL Add. MS 38728 fol. 37r).
14. *The German Atalantis*, pp. 80–1.
15. Ibid., sig. Av.
16. Hugh E. L. Collins, *The Order of the Garter, 1348–1461: Chivalry and Politics in Late Medieval England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 12, 234. Eirwen Nicholson and Paul Monod discuss other invocations of this motto within popular Jacobite narratives. See Nicholson, ' "Revirescit": The Exilic Origins of the Stuart Oak Motif,' in *The Stuart Court in Rome: The Legacy of Exile*, ed. Edward Corp (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), p. 25; Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People, 1688–1788* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 205ff.
17. *The Post-Boy* no. 3091 (1 Mar. 1715).
18. The running heads and the title that appears on the first page of the *German Atalantis* suggest the original title was 'The History of Count Fradonia and the Unfortunate Baritia'.
19. Edward Gregg, *Queen Anne* (London: Routledge, 1980), pp. 364–77.
20. It is estimated that eighty of the Tories elected in 1713 were committed Jacobites. For further details of the election results, see W. A. Speck, *Tory and Whig: The Struggle in the Constituencies, 1701–1715* (London: Macmillan, 1970), pp. 113–23.
21. Linda Colley, *In Defiance of Oligarchy: The Tory Party 1714–60* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
22. Speck, *Tory and Whig*, p. 114.
23. See Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, pp. 62–9, and Murray Pittock, *Jacobitism* (London: Macmillan, 1998), pp. 68–70. Howard Erskine-Hill analyses the violent sexual imagery that was employed in Jacobite literature to figure the Revolution 'Literature and the Jacobite Cause: Was There a Rhetoric of Jacobitism?', in *Ideology and Conspiracy: Aspects of Jacobitism*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), pp. 49–52.
24. Paul Monod, 'The Politics of Matrimony: Jacobitism and Marriage in Eighteenth-Century England', *The Jacobite Challenge*, ed. Eveline Cruickshanks and Jeremy Black (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1988), pp. 34–5.
25. See Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People*, pp. 63ff; and Pittock, *Jacobitism*, pp. 68–70.
26. Carol Barash, *English Women's Poetry, 1649–1714: Politics, Community, and Linguistic Authority* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 149–208.
27. Ralph Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll: Being Some Account of Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (London: Chapman & Hall, 1927), p. 25. These practices are memorialised by Pope in the *Dunciad*: 'Curll stretches after Gay, but Gay is gone: / He grasps an empty Joseph for a John' (Book 2, lines 119–120).
28. Swift to Benjamin Tooke, 29 June 1710, in *The Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, ed. Harold Williams (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), vol. 1, p. 165.

29. According to his contemporaries, Curll purchased these wills from the Doctor's Commons (the probate court) for a shilling apiece. See [Alexander Pope], *A Full and True Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge by Poison, on the Body of Mr Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (London, 1716).
30. Arbuthnot to Swift, 13 Jan 1732/3, in *Correspondence of Jonathan Swift*, vol. 4, p. 101.
31. In an earlier, short-lived gesture, Curll appropriated the image of William Congreve for the same purpose.
32. The five books listed in the initial warrant are: *Venus in the Cloister* (1724); *A Treatise of the Use of Flogging in Venereal Affairs; De Secretis Mulierum* (1725); *Three New Poems* (1721), and *Ebriatatis Encomium* (n.d).
33. In *The Curliad*, Curll reiterates his defense and transcribes a supporting statement from Dr Rose, a member of the College of Physicians that was entered into evidence on his behalf during the trial (pp. 13–19).
34. *The London Evening Post* no. 25 (6 Feb. 1728).
35. *The British Journal*, no. 4 (10 Feb. 1728). Alexander Pettit argues that the pornographic *Venus in the Cloister* disturbed those in authority because it contradicts hegemonic constructions of female sexuality by depicting its resistance to male agency. For this argument, see: 'Rex vs Curll: Pornography and Punishment in Court and on the Page', *Studies in the Literary Imagination* 34, no. 1 (Spring 2001): 65–7.
36. Straus, *The Unspeakable Curll*, p. 121.
37. Curll's address to the spectators was reprinted in full in the following day's *London Evening Post* (no. 33, 24 Feb. 1728). A single copy survives, held in the John Johnson Collection at the Bodleian Library and is reproduced in *The John Johnson Collection: A Catalogue of an Exhibition* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1971), p. 26.
38. Defoe writes that 'these four years past of the blessed days we live in, and wherein justice and liberty are flourishing and established, more beastly insufferable books have been published by this one offender, than in the thirty years before by all the nation.' The connection is elaborated further in what follows: 'O Whigs! O Reformers! O Lovers of the Protestant Succession, rouze up your selves! Shall debauching the Nation begin at the Restoration of the Whigs! Shall the Reign of K. George stand mark'd in History for tolerating these crimes!', *The Weekly Journal* no. 69 (5 Apr. 1718).
39. *Curlicism Display'd: Or, an Appeal to the Church* (London, 1718), p. 2.
40. Ibid., p. 25.
41. *The Weekly Journal* no. 69 (5 Apr. 1718).
42. *The Dunciad Variorum*, book 2, lines 65–9, 149–80. For further discussion of this episode, see: Sophie Gee, 'The Sewers: Ordure, Effluence, and Excess in the Eighteenth Century', *A Concise Companion to the Restoration and Eighteenth Century*, ed. Cynthia Wall, (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005), p. 118.
43. Edmund Curll, *The Curliad* (London, 1729); and Alexander Pope, *A Full and True Account of a Horrid and Barbarous Revenge by Poison on the Body of Mr Edmund Curll, Bookseller* (London, 1716).
44. [Samuel Wesley, Jr.], *Neck or Nothing: A Consolatory Letter from Mr D-nt-n to Mr C-rll Upon His Being Tost in a Blanket* (London, 1716), p. 16.
45. Eric V. Chandler, 'Pope's Emetic: Bodies, Books, and Filth', *Genre* 27, no. 4 (Winter 1994): 363.

46. *The Grub-Street Journal* no. 147 (26 Oct. 1732) and no. 148 (30 Oct. 1732). Because the *Grub-Street Journal* mirrored the position Pope adopted in *The Dunciad*, the poet's involvement has been assumed in spite of the evidence. It is more likely that its editors, Richard Russel and John Martyn, contrived to create the impression that Pope was behind their activities as a way of generating sales. See Bertrand A. Goldgar, 'Pope and the *Grub-Street Journal*', *Modern Philology* 74, no. 4 (May 1977): 366–80.
47. David Saunders and Ian Hunter, 'Lessons from the "Literatory": How to Historicise Authorship', *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 3 (Spring 1991).
48. *The Grub-Street Journal* no. 148 (30 Oct. 1732).
49. Saunders and Hunter, 'Lessons from the "Literatory",' p. 496.
50. David Foxon, 'Pope and Copyright', in *Pope and the Early Eighteenth-Century Book Trade* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).
51. Pat Rogers, 'The Case of Pope v. Curll', in *Essays on Pope* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Mark Rose, 'The Author in Court: Pope v. Curll (1741)', *Cultural Critique* 21 (Spring 1992).
52. Michel Foucault, 'What Is an Author?', in *The Foucault Reader: An Introduction to Foucault's Thought*, ed. Paul Rabinow (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin, 1984).
53. Paul Korshin, Afterword to 'Jacobitism', special issue, *ELH* 64, no. 4 (1997): 1091.
54. For instance, Jane Spencer once declared that critics were 'safe in assuming [Barker's] works to be autobiographical'. 'Creating the Woman Writer: The Autobiographical Works of Jane Barker', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 2, no. 2 (1983), p. 166.
55. Jane Barker to the Duke of Ormonde, 19 March 1718, Stowe Papers, BL MS 232, fol. 93. I am following the translation from the original French provided by King and Medoff in 'Jane Barker and Her Life', p. 26.
56. King, *Jane Barker, Exile*, p. 169.
57. Carol Shiner Wilson, Introduction to *The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems of Jane Barker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 26.
58. Jane Barker, *Love Intrigues*, in *Popular Fiction by Women, 1660–1730*, edited by Paula Backscheider and John J. Richetti (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 89. Further references to this edition will appear parenthetically in the text.
59. *The Post-Boy* no. 2814 (23 May 1713). This advertisement is also discussed by King in *Jane Barker, Exile*, pp. 170–1.
60. Jane Barker, Dedication to the Right Honourable Countess of Exeter, *The Entertaining Novels of Mrs Jane Barker* (London, 1719), vol. 1, sig. A2r.
61. Tonya Moutray McArthur, 'Jane Barker and the Politics of Catholic Celibacy', *SEL* 47, no. 3 (2007): 595–618.
62. Paul Langford, *Englishness Identified: Manners and Character, 1650–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 98.
63. King, *Jane Barker, Exile*, p. 210n59.
64. Leigh A. Eicke, 'Jane Barker's Jacobite Writings', in *Women's Writing and the Circulation of Ideas: Manuscript Publication in England, 1550–1800*, ed. George L. Justice and Nathan Tinker (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 143.

65. Ibid., p. 145.
66. Jane Barker, Dedication to the Honourable Countess of Exeter, in *Popular Fiction by Women, 1660–1730: An Anthology*, ed. Paula R. Backscheider and John J. Richetti (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 82.
67. The 'History of the Lady Gypsie' and the 'History of Tangerine', read together, resemble Behn's *The Wandering Beauty*; 'Philinda's Story out of a Book' retells Behn's *The History of the Nun*; and 'The Story of the Portugueze Nun' draws on the fashionable tales popular in the late seventeenth century.
68. *The History of the* Nun, in *Oroonoko and Other Writings*, ed. Paul Salzman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 141.
69. Toni Bowers, 'Sex, Lies, and Invisibility: Amatory Fiction from the Restoration to Mid-Century', in *The Columbia History of the British Novel*, ed. John J. Richetti (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994); Jacqueline Pearson, 'History of *The History of the Nun*', in *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, Criticism*, ed. Heidi Hutner (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993); and Jane Spencer, *Aphra Behn's Afterlife* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).
70. Jane Barker, *The Lining of the Patch-Work Screen; Design'd for the Farther Entertainment of the Ladies*, in *The Galesia Trilogy and Selected Manuscript Poems of Jane Barker*, ed. Carol Shiner Wilson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 216. Subsequent references are to this edition and will appear parenthetically in the text.
71. See, for example, Pearson, 'History of *The History of the Nun*'; and Jacqueline Pearson, *Women's Reading in Britain 1750–1835: A Dangerous Recreation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).
72. King, *Jane Barker, Exile*, p. 7.
73. Kathryn King, 'Of Needles and Pens and Women's Work', *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature* 14, no. 1 (1995).
74. King, *Jane Barker, Exile*, p. 202.
75. Ibid., p. 201.
76. See the catalogue appended to Turner, *Living by the Pen*, pp. 154–216.

Conclusion: Anne's Legacy

1. 8 Anne c. 19 ('An Act for the Encouragement of Learning, by Vesting the Copies of Printed Books in the Authors or Purchasers of Such Copies').
2. Benjamin Kaplan, *An Unhurried View of Copyright* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967), p. 14.
3. David Saunders, 'Dropping the Subject: An Argument for a Positive History of Authorship and the Law of Copyright' in *Of Authors and Origins: Essays on Copyright Law*, ed. Brad Sherman and Alain Strowel (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 93–110. See also David Saunders and Ian Hunter, 'Lessons from the "Literatory": How to Historicise Authorship', *Critical Inquiry* 17, no. 3 (Spring 1991): 431–44.
4. Stationers Hall Records, BL M985/6, vol. 1, fol. 21, 12 May 1710; vol. 2, fol. 86, 23 Nov. 1710.

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