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PLAYING THE AGNES:

Hester Thrale-Piozzi and Frances Burney

by

Margaret J. Curlewis. B.A.(Hons.)

This thesis is submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, to the School of Humanities, Deakin University, in the month of August, 1991.
DEAKIN UNIVERSITY

CANDIDATE'S CERTIFICATE

I certify that the thesis entitled Playing the Agnes: Hester Thrale and Frances Burney and submitted for the degree of Master of Arts is the result of my own research, except where otherwise acknowledged, and that this thesis (or any part of the same) has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

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# Playing the Agnes

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PLAYING THE AGNES: HESTER THRALE-PIOZZI AND FRANCES BURNEY.

by Margaret Curlewis.

Guided by the feminist intention of reasserting the importance of neglected female writers, I have used this work to re-examine the lives and texts of eighteenth-century diarists Hester Thrale-Piozzi and Frances Burney. Adopting an interdisciplinary methodology, I draw on both literary and non-literary material to examine the effect of familial and social patriarchy in eighteenth-century England. Using the diaries, journals and letters of Hester and Frances, I ask why female conformity to masculine domination was expected, and how violence was used to extract subserviant behaviour from women.

Beginning with gossip, and encompassing social, editorial and physical abuse, I use the medical profession's manipulation of female vulnerability to exemplify the way society legitimates violence to ensure female ductility. Moving beyond this physical aspect, I then examine the psychical, and question the existence of a "self" which is vulnerable to external manipulation. By diverging from the influence of Freudian psychology, and developing a form of Jungian feminism, I propose the existence of an essential female Self which transcends the constraints of societal expectations and physical violence.

In this work, both Hester and Frances emerge as physically and psychically strong entities who were forced to adopt socially conformist personae to survive.
Introduction

Eighteenth-century Englishwomen’s diaries and letters provide a fascinating insight into their lives and status in the community. By using the writings of Hester Thrale-Piozzi and Frances Burney, I intend to examine the degree to which patriarchal society influenced their lives and texts. My contention is that despite an apparent conformity to patriarchal expectations, these women transcended social and familial pressures to exhibit a physical and psychological strength unsurpassed by their male contemporaries.

A re-examination of women’s diaries and letters provides an interesting comparison with the fate of women, as both the written genre and female gender have suffered from literary and social neglect. For female writers, their texts have been ignored, plundered, or derided because of the masculine domination of social structures such as education, religion, and publication. In the same way, the genres of journal, diary and letter writing were relegated to a non-canonical status through the post-Romantic elevation of poetry, prose fiction and drama to literary legitimacy, when according to Raymond Williams, literature became "imaginative writing." By recording actual events and dialogue, diaries, journals and letters fell between the creative and imaginative aspects of both subject matter and writing, especially as the word "literature" led to a nineteenth-century exclusion of speech from its definition.

Although developing from different historical perspectives, many eighteenth-century diaries and journals had become enwined with letter writing to form an irregular but distinctive form of the self-revelatory genre of writing. The written discourses of Hester and Frances exemplify this tangle, as their journal entries range from the domestic to the spiritual; diaries record events, appointments and opinions; while their letters were written to individuals, for familial and social group-readings, and even, as Frances’s careful editing suggests, for possible publication.

While all texts can be considered to reveal aspects of their narrator, whether intentional or not, the genres of letter, journal and diary writing contain powerful elements of self-revelation which may transcend authorial intention. Consciously, the writer may aspire to a totally honest recapitulation of diaristic detail which reaffirms his or her identity as an author. However, either consciously or unconsciously, the writer may assume a "persona", masking the author behind a
narrator who subjectifies or fictionalises detail. For the writer, the form can provide the psychological function of self-analysis. To the reader, the genre may offer a strong sense of identification with the narrator who is able to elevate mundane human experiences reaffirming the continuity of life and lessening an awareness of social alienation through identification with suffering. When writing of this "reader" I refer to a female audience because I agree with Dale Spender's comment that "women have a different but autonomous view of the world ... we have different standards, different priorities, different problems." Thus, when both writer and reader are female their association differs from a male and female one.

This form of writing also allows for divergence into gender-specific identification through the textualizing of a wide variety of female experiences rarely recorded in print, such as child-birth, mastectomy, menstruation, procidentia, vaginal rape and various discharges. Awareness that these areas of women's lives have been suppressed and edited out of from our history engenders a strong sense of identification between narrator and female audience, which bridges the transhistorical chasm to recreate what Edward Shorter calls "the female subculture of solace". 4

My methodology has been interdisciplinary in nature: the journals of Frances and Hester are its main focus, but I have drawn freely from feminism, psychology and social history when it seemed appropriate to do so. In this, I have been influenced by Elaine Showalter's contention that new feminist criticism need not derive literary principles from any single messianic authority. 5 Combining literary and non-literary texts beside the diary, letter and journal I have attempted to reduce "the fissure of female discontinuity" which Felicity Nussbaum maintains has been caused by the neglect of women's texts and histories. 6

Because diaries, letters and journals are so strongly cued into social history, this focus became an important aspect of my aim to reduce the possibility of transhistorical misunderstanding of social practices and attitudes in eighteenth-century England, and therefore, misinterpreting the actions of Hester and Frances.

Further, once these differences became evident, it became necessary to explore beyond the physical forces that shaped women's lives, and examine the "psychical", that being the word I adopt to indicate any non-physical aspects of a being. For this, I begin with the Freudian-based psychoanalytic theory which many feminists use to discuss the existence of self. Finding Freudian and some feminist
theories to be inadequate to account for the different aspects of eighteenth-century female life, I use a form of Jungian feminism to examine the texts of Hester and Frances. Although Carl Jung was not a feminist, his form of psychology has been modified to accommodate areas of feminist theory by such writers as Barbara Black Koltuv and Irene Claremont de Castillejo. This modified theory proposes an essential and intrinsic aspect of female self which is based on Jungian analytical psychology, and its theory of archetypal potentialities within the human psyche. These potentialities can be personified in female form, and because Jungian psychology proposes a hypertrophied female aspect, the "anima", within the male, many of his theories can accommodate feminism. As Jungian philosophy contains recognition of an inner, spiritual self, it also seems more applicable to eighteenth-century concepts of the religious soul and a developing awareness of self.

The decision to concentrate on Hester and Frances was not an easy one, as so many women wrote journals, diaries and letters during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; for example, Mary Delany, Mary Wortley Montagu and Harriet Martineau. I chose these women because they were near contemporaries and within the same broad social circle. Between them, they had lived through the full range of female experiences. Their writings were copious and accessible, yet were diverse enough to provide contrasts. They also had a relationship between them that encountered all of the most positive and negative aspects of female friendship.

Beginning with a discussion of the status of diaries, letters and journals in terms of genre the first chapter examines the nature of eighteenth-century English middle-class society, to determine the prevalent degree of patriarchy. By using the Thrale and Burney households as typical examples of English families, I use the positions of Hester and Frances within their homes to exemplify the status of middle-class women. Michel Foucault claims that "the family does not duplicate society, just as society does not imitate the family", but he agrees that insular and heteromorphous patterns can be used to support similar power mechanisms. To determine a patriarchal status of this society, I refer to social historians beside the literary texts, and argue against what Laurence Stone calls an "affective society" developed from the contractual agreements proposed by Thomas Hobbes. Stone contends this society exemplified an increased awareness of individualism, and a decrease in the dominance of patriarchy. Rather, I see this society based on such
inequality of power through gender, that the potentiality for a contractual form of marital agreement was impossible.

In the second chapter, I examine the main methods used to perpetuate the gender inequalities of social and familial structures. Beginning with the seemingly harmless method of gossip to ensure female conformity, it quickly becomes apparent that reinforcement of patriarchal dominance relied on violence for perpetuation. Becoming increasingly physical, violence permeated not only the diaries, journals and letters of both women, but also Frances's novels. In this section I have relied heavily on Patricia Meyer Spacks's *Gossip* for an understanding of the diverse forms of social talk proposed by gossip. I then draw upon a range of editors, literary critics and other eighteenth-century texts to examine the forms of socially accepted, or tolerated, violence.

Chapter Three examines the more insidious form of ensuring female ductility, through the development of medicine as a science. The eighteenth-century struggle between physicians, surgeons and apothecaries for legitimacy, was resolved during the eradication of the power of female midwives, "empiriks" and mountebanks. The female body was caught within this power struggle. Made vulnerable through her reproductive system, the woman was powerless against legitimized medical violence which was endorsed by other masculine institutions. To place the experiences and written texts of Hester and Frances within this framework, I have used a succession on non-literary texts by eighteenth-century medical practitioners, Edward Shorter's sympathetic *The History of Women's Bodies*, and Julia Epstein's essay on Frances Burney's mastectomy. 10 Moving beyond this material, I have used the primary texts to propose that Frances had suffered from postpartum birthcanal trauma which caused procidentia, the effect of which was noticeable in both her writing and her actions.

In the fourth chapter, I examine the existence of all non-physical aspects of the women — the psychical — and question the existence of an intrinsic self. Diverging from feminist psychology of a Freudian cast, I propose the existence of an essentially female self based on a reinterpretation of the analytical psychology of Carl G. Jung. Using a range of feminist, Freudian and Jungian texts beside Hester's and Frances' own, I argue that the violence and social expectations of female conformity result in a strengthening of the psychical self by consolidating it. Combining the aspects of psychological, intellectual and spiritual with an intrinsic
female aspect derived from archetypal potentialities, I propose the existence of a Self much less likely to become engulfed in the chaotic dispersal which threatened the male contemporaries of Hester and Frances.

Although I have benefited from the work of many critics, I found those of the following to be of most assistance: Joyce Hemlow, Katharine Balderston, Julia Epstein, Margaret A. Doody, Patricia Meyer Spacks, Edward Shorter and Carl G. Jung.

In keeping with the practice suggested by feminists such as Doody, I have used Frances instead of the belittling diminutive "Fanny". I have also used the Christian names of both women deliberately, with no intention of trivializing their importance, but to lessen the confusion caused by the alterations of their patronymic surnames. "Frances" refers to Frances or "Fanny" Burney, Miss Burney or Madame d'Arblay. "Hester" covers the young Hester Lynch Salusbury, Mrs Thrale, and Mrs Piozzi. The use of the given name by other women also attempts to bridge female historical and literary "fissures" and create a transhistorical subculture of solace and solidarity.

I would like to thank Dr Kevin Hart for his unfailing courtesy, encouragement and guidance with this work.
Notes to Title and Introduction.

"Playing The Agnes" was the term used by Hester Thrale to describe a weak clinging-vine type of woman. It was derived from Arnolphe's speech to Agnes:
"The one half is supreme, the other subordinate: the one is all submission to the other which rules." Moliere, L'Ecole des Femmes (The School for Wives), Plays By Moliere, (New York: The Modern Library of Random House, n.d.,1662), Act 3, Scene 2, 69.

1 Raymond Williams, Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society (Glasgow: Fontana, rpt: 1979), 153.
2 Williams, 154.
7 Janet Todd in The Sign of Angelica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1800 (London: Virago Press, 1989), 277, claims that Dr Burney was an "unthreatening unpatriarchal man", yet lists many examples which deny her statement.
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<td>Frances Burney, <em>Camilla or A Picture of Youth</em>. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983.</td>
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CHAPTER 1.

"The Safe Domestick Fire": Patriarchy
In this chapter, I examine the nature of eighteenth-century English society. Because this work concerns Hester Thrale-Piozzi and Frances Burney, I begin with a discussion of diaries, journals and letters as this was a main focus of their writing. Drawing on the contrasting theories of social historians such as Laurence Stone and Alan Macfarlane, I discuss the position of women within their society. Relying largely on the primary texts of Frances Burney and Hester Thrale-Piozzi, I contest Stone's claim that the era was one of lessening patriarchal dominance due to an increased awareness of an individualism which promoted contractual equality. Corroborative evidence is drawn from both contemporary eighteenth century sources and modern feminist texts, in order to establish that, in Georgian Britain, there was a gender inequality based on power, which precluded the possibility of contractual arrangements, especially in the parental and conjugal associations.

By an examination of the nuclear and extended Thrale and Burney households through the lenses of the diaries, journals and letters of both women, it becomes apparent that their society was dominated by men, and supported by social and familial patriarchal structures. Women were only acceptable in this society when adopting conformist personae and behaviour acceptable to men.

**Diaries, Journals and Letters**

When Frances Burney complained, "I write in enormous haste this now being Baker's Day", she depicted all that is desirable and enjoyable in the reading and writing of journals. ² The reader is aware of a pleasant sense of voyeuristic engagement in the life of the author. The writer has succeeded in transposing every-day life into writing, re-endorsing the possibility for every potential writer. By the lack of punctuation, she has reaffirmed her haste as a physical necessity, and reaffirmed her own importance in the eyes of her audience; but if she were truly in enormous haste, she would not be writing at all! She further succeeds in engaging us in the discourse of domestic gossip. Ah, we respond, Baker's Day! Well, we all know what that means!

Diaries, journals and letters are written in different styles and to suit diverse ends which makes them difficult to define with exactitude. ³ While Blodgett encapsulates all such writing as a "genre of personal record," ⁴ she spurns Frances's because of their self-editing and the fact that they were often written years after
the event. This judgement is hasty; it exposes the danger of evaluating texts on
the dubious veracity of authorial claims of recording entries chronologically with
the intention of converting a subjective interpretation into an objective truth. Such
rejections are spurious because of Blodgett's acceptance of Thraliana as a journal,
despite Hester's habit of returning to the same scene to record it days later in
minute detail, as her anger gained momentum.

Journals may be used, as was Frances's in part, to record an unstable historical
period for posterity, to "compare experience with expectations" or "place in permanent
from one's daily processes" as Samuel Johnson claimed. They may also provide
a place for "confidential outpourings of an overburdened heart", or moral self-
evaluation. They may record shopping and visiting lists, domestic details, fashion,
religious conversion or the development of morality. Any narrow definition can be
almost immediately qualified by a counter example. Journals are almost interchangeable
with diaries, the former having implications of daily recording, the latter of evaluation.
Yet, when combined with letter-writing, they complete a revelatory genre of exposition
and evaluation which transcends authorial intention. It maintains an association
between author-self and reader-self which is evoked and interpreted subjectively during
both the construction and reconstruction of the text.

Reading diaries, journals and letters means suspending, as much as possible,
the critical forms traditionally applied to post-Romantic canonical genres. The
content of this form of writing creates an illusion of total subjectivity which can be
at variance with the authority of the published text. As with autobiography, other
self-revelatory genres create the impression of being true because the party once
lived. It creates what Felicity Nussbaum describes as a relationship "opaque, highly
codified, and politically charged; it is entangled in the material reality of lived
experience." In the women's writing, it is of course open to all kinds of fictional
shaping and elaboration.

Extending this entanglement further, we find Frances's journals circulated
as letters, letters written and copied with the express intention of publication,
prayers addressed to God, plus circulated and annotated books. Also, we find
opinions varying as to whether all letters form just one genre, because of their
design as a unit completely detached from the writer's life and motives. However,
this distinction is circumvented by letters being published in a series, or within journal
entries, because such publication entangles the letters with the writer's life.
Beginning from Puritan expository texts intended to embody the workings of the Spirit with the individual's striving toward God, Englishwomen developed a literary tradition of serial writing in journal form which Blodgett claims must be held distinct from those written by men. Because of the "differing subject matter, problems of representation and points of view," they create a different form, which is the largest component of Sloman's fragmentary genres of women's writing.

Although some feminists propose diary-writing as a "characteristically female literary form" in toto, this attitude is too generalised as the Pepys and Boswell diaries indicate; however, it is possible to propose one form of diary writing specific to females, existing within the wider genre, and exemplified by Virginia Woolf's description of "something looseknit, and yet not slovenly, so elastic it will embrace anything, solemn, slight or beautiful that comes to mind". The Thraliana encompasses all of Woolf's criteria, especially denoting the lack of pretension to morality and self-assurance so prevalent in male diaries. In fact, Hester's Family Book — which was a kind of eighteenth-century baby book — Hyde contends to be an apparently unique document because of its recording of the purely domestic, and its emphasis on the development of the child. However, it also indicates the initial point of departure for female diary-writing which was to be considered a quasi-literary form from the post-Romantic period, an evaluation which legitimised its plunder for aggrandisement of eighteenth-century male contemporaries.

The diarist and letter-writer, because of his or her concentration on the quotidian, posed a threat to the elitist vision of the writer as preserver of an aesthetic and cultural aristocracy. Linda Zionkowski goes so far as to contend that the elevation of "scribblers" posed an anarchical threat to respect for religion and rank, "the dual supports of English society". Diarists and letter writers became the mechanics, or mob, in the "Empire of Letters", because their discourses were unrestrained, undisciplined and unaesthetic. Zionkowski believes that canon-formation was an effort to control this unseemly rabble of scribblers, by relegating them to quasi-literary status. Raymond Williams, however, sees the distinction less in terms of politics and power, but more as a "steady distinction and separation" from other forms of writing based on their less imaginative or creative aspect, which aligned them with history. Samuel Johnson, using humour as a typical male weapon, suggested not only taxing would-be authors "a groat a year", but conscripting "the
ladies of the pen" as camp followers or for enlistment in a separate female regiment as a cure for their literary presumptions. 23

In an age when female writing represented "vulnerability, exposure, indelicacy", letter-writing remained an acceptable pursuit for even the most domesticated woman. It contributed to the reinforcement of the family as a social unit and provided isolated women with the indirect companionship of other females, without involving direct physical interference from maternal kin who may have intruded on the authority of the conjugal partner. Letter writing often provided the only means of perpetuating the female sub-culture which invariably develops within a suborned section of the community. This subculture is described by Edward Shorter as a relationship of female solace in the face of constant and unbearable bodily discomfort. 25

Denied adequate outlets for their imaginative expression by their domestic isolation, women converted their experiences of life into the dual forms of solace-evoking gossip or written discourse through letters and private journals. As their experiences were forced more and more into the "acceptable" domestic area by the idealization of the family, their writing reflected that shift, while it retained the self-affirmation of all first-person recording.

Nussbaum contends that this use of first-person narratives allowed the middle-class to regulate itself through the formulation of a self which was used to maintain gender hierarchies. 26 Although exploration and reinforcement of ego-centred, subjectified texts became permissible for women, full access to the traditional print and publication mechanisms was restricted. Men controlled publication through brutal criticism, patronization and control of editorial rights. This led to an inexorable easing of self-revelatory modes of writing into the domestic or "female" realms of subjectivity and sensibility.

Middle-class Society

To examine the full effect of patriarchal restrictions on the lives and writings of Hester and Frances, we must briefly examine the nature of eighteenth-century middle-class England, then use the family as an analogy for the wider society, wherein the family becomes the preparatory ground for all later political life.

Alan Macfarlane contends that the later eighteenth century was in a "state of alteration from a distributive Catholic ethic to an accumulative Protestant one"
which was integrated and hierarchical. 27 Schochet, Thirsk and Thomas, and Laslett all concur, with an emphasis on a "patriarchally ruled family and society from birth." 28 Laurence Stone, however, finds evidence for a decrease in patriarchy during this era, citing an increasing absorption in the personal and individual which was exemplified by new attitudes to property settlements and death, which he calls "affective individualism." 29 Yet within this structure he ignores subtleties and subversive forms of familially based power enforcement. He views only masculine legitimations of legal and social developments to enforce his theory of the development of the egalitarian family.

In his discussion of property laws in Albion's Fatal Tree Douglas Hay refers to a general reluctance of the Parliament of the era to institute any reforms, claiming that this failure reflected the deeper mental and social structure of eighteenth-century England. 30 He attributes this failure to a private manipulation of the law by the wealthy and powerful, and states "the gentlemen of England knew that their duty, was, above all, to rule. On that depended everything. They acted accordingly." 31 This conservatism and obsession with power tends to support a view of an enduring paternalistic family structure.

Although Stone's suppositions concerning the familial alteration to a more nuclear mode are supported by Randolph Trumbach, 32 Susan Moller Okin and Erna Reiss argue convincingly against the move. 33 Their case, in short, is that of the reality of a common law proviso that all property became the husband's on marriage, despite parental discretionary powers concerning portions inherited by females and younger family members. Property thus empowered the male conjugal partner to a disproportionate degree, regardless of the origin of that property.

The "separate entity" equity law on which Stone and Trumbach base their contentions was developed during the late sixteenth century, not the period they propose as that of declining patriarchy. Even those property holdings retained by women for life, were without power of anticipation of disposal. Although the separate entity law was apparently developed to protect the rights of a married daughter, Erna Reiss proposes that this entitlement was intended to protect the property holdings from wastrel sons-in-law. It was intended to hold it intact for the female's family under the threat of a possible general social movement toward female independence.

Okin further develops an argument which refutes Stone's contention of
declining patriarchy, while the evidence of both Boswell and the Thrales reinforces this contention. Boswell's diary entry for 13 August, 1769, amply describes his own position in regard to female inheritance. When arguing with his father about the possibility of his disinherition of the family estate of Auchinleck, he wrote, "I argued that a male alone could represent his forefathers. That females, in a feudal light, were only vehicles to carry down men to posterity, and that a man might as well entail his estate on his post and chaise." 24

When Mrs Salusbury, Hester's mother, agreed to settle her personal property on any sons she bore Salusbury, she colluded with patriarchal authority either from fear or because of her "Mad Attachment to him", even agreeing to settle on the male children of Salusbury's brother in favour of any female children of her own. 25 Hester records the inequality of her parent's marriage thus: "My father pressed her to give up her Joyniture to be mortgaged. She endeavoured at Resistence. my father forced her..." 26

Legalities quoted by Stone become mere technicalities when faced with the realities of a violently reinforced patriarchy which was evidenced in rural and lower-class life by the husband's ability to sell his wife to another man for a nominal sum. 27 This practice is recorded in Anne Lister's diaries, where she refers to wives being "cried three market days at the market cross and sold the last day and 'livered in a halter." 28

Although apparently illegal and certainly irreligious, this practice was widespread, especially during the 1750-1800 period in the south-eastern, central and northern parts of England. 29 It was less popular in the Celtic fringes of Britain, however, due to the lingering influence of the old Celtic system of temporary marriage.

Samuel Pyeatt Menefee reports wife selling recorded as early as 1073, and as late as the twentieth century. This practice offers a clear indication of eighteenth-century perceptions of woman as commodities without the right of self-directed disposal. Menefee records four hundred documented instances of wife-selling where most were accomplished by quasi-legal means such as payment of a market or turnpike toll, and provision of a witnessed statement. If contracted in a market place with the wife led there by a halter, most of these agreements were considered to be folklorically legal.

Although wife selling declined after 1850, it was so fashionable in 1797 at
London's Smithfield Market that jocular references were made in the popular press to the habits of bucks, butchers and the "ton" attending to examine the "cattle" on show. "Like child and corpse selling, not to mention slavery, wife selling used powerless commodities of society for monetary or property gain, or used its threat as yet another means of ensuring subservience.

**Familial Patriarchy**

Peter Laslett states, "The authority of the father in traditional England was real enough." In the cases of Frances and Hester, this was exemplified by their marriages where Doctor Burney's cold disapproval caused his daughter misery, but because this hostility was unsubstantiated by patriarchal property, it was only effectively translated into coldness. Whereas for Hester, her father's similar and more violent admonitions only ended with his death, and the assumption of patriarchal power by her uncle, Sir Thomas, whose authority was reinforced by property and the threat of withdrawal of inheritance. The position of both daughters was of being property. "I was sold to a Man I did not like for a Barrell of Porter," Hester recalls, while Frances, the literary daughter, reflected fame on her father who resented its removal through her marriage.

In Dr Gregory's popular *A Father's Legacy to his Daughters*, he advocated three main elements:

i) the presupposition of parental affection which must not degenerate into fondness;

ii) creation of filial obligation; and

iii) fear and awe in the child which must be modified into love and friendship."

The work was intended to apply to male and female children alike, but applied more rigorously to the females who were tied to the home while their brothers came under the direction of tutors or institutions. Girls were forced to abandon their pre-Oedipal maternal attachment in the face of contempt for, and devaluation of, the maternal role.

The Conduct Books' emphasis on tenderness and cloying paternal guidance, successfully quashed any possible rebellion and corrupted it into guilt and malleability, as is obvious in the relationship of Frances Burney and her father, which straddles almost every possible emotion from bitterness and anger to embarrassing adoration.
This fluctuating ambivalence expresses the duality that results from suppression of resentment and rage under claying affection, constructing a painfully created persona of conformity in a daughter, and later, a wife. 46

This ambivalence of attitudes within the family led to the paradoxical appearance of contractual familial relationships disguising the realities of the patriarchal system. The parent-child paradigm continued to be the only means by which any individual of socially inferior status — peasant, industrial worker or wife — could relate to the nature of patriarchal institutions of government, church and sovereignty.

While the reasoned analogy of family and society reinforces the structure of that society, the contractual theory ignores the affective cause of reinforcement of any male-female relationship — violence. Any contractual agreement implies equality or possession of commensurate barterable commodities. The maternal commodities contracted as part of the marriage arrangement (that is, virgin sexuality, domestic order, heirs and possible property) rarely commanded equality at the "domestick fire." Wives were more likely to be, as Hester wrote of her mother, "shut up with at a Distance from Society, where the natural Roughness of the male Sex is not restrained; & Gallantry can obtain no Reputation; is so dangerous that I wonder almost how She escaped with her Life." 47

The reinforcement of this dominant authority was needed to maintain both the hierarchical nature of society suggested by Macfarlane and the theoretical potentiality of Thomas Hobbes’s and John Locke’s contractual arrangements, and was initiated within the family as a preparatory measure for indoctrinating individuals to other forms of political legitimacy. 48

Dorothy Van Ghent extends the father-monarch analogy, claiming that our fathers are not only our individual fathers but all of those who have gone before us, which has profound implications for women. 49 It lodges them not only under the rule of actual fathers and other male family members, but of extended household males, and all men throughout society, breeding a race of Beth Kowaleski-Wallace’s "men centred women," 50 or even daddy's girls, whose inferior position is maintained by fear of violence, 51 or fear of transgressing the apparent benevolence of the family patriarch.

In the cases of Frances and Hester, this dynamic is apparent in their relationships with their own fathers, both through fear and an almost incestuous
intensity of emotion. Frances offers a virginal first reading of her manuscript to her father and flutters, "I was almost afraid — & quite ashamed to be alone with him...I fell upon his neck with heart-beating emotion." This fear was reaffirmed in a letter to Susan where she reports an "anxious nervousness" and of being afraid "of seeing my father...I cannot sleep half the night for planning what to write next day, & then next day am half dead for want of rest." 53

Even given that Frances enjoyed creating a literary persona24 of a fluttering heroine, 23 there is sufficient implication of Rowlands' "heavy father" relationship to infer both psychological and textual seduction of an incestuous nature by the symbolic and actual bearer of patriarchy and its language forms. 56 In Frances Burney: The Life in the Works, Doody evaluates the effect of Doctor Burney who "was to inculcate in his children the pervasive dread of offending someone". "His children were early taught to consider his feelings first. It was their duty to beguile the low spirits he dreaded." 57 Naturally, because the brothers were away at educational institutions or at sea, this "beguiling" fell to the daughters. While Macaulay's evaluation of Dr Burney as a "Circassian Father" who had sold his pretty daughter to the "Turkish slave market" 58 of King George's court may be florid, the reality of his emotional and conniving manipulation was not. 59

That Dr Burney saw himself as the centre and patriarchal head of the family is best illustrated by his ultimate selfishness after the death of Frances's "Angel—that saint & Martyr now at length at rest"— Susan, for, despite her dying request that her daughter, Fanny, might be sent to live with her Aunt Frances, Dr Burney over-rude this request. "For my dearest Father", Frances wrote, "says he will never part with her, & promises himself all he can gain of future happiness in her attachment." 60 At one stroke of his pen, he denied one dying daughter's request, refused another's desire, and completely disregarded any opinion of his granddaughter, in order to gain happiness for himself by ensuring a replacement housekeeper who would "beguile his low spirits".

He showed a selfish disregard for the happiness and health of his daughters when he complained of being "sick-tired-offended, almost, by your procrastinations" and "cannot pass the winter without a female of the family for his Evening Companion," 41 to his daughter Susan. Even Susan remarks on this with irony in a letter to Frances, "our Father wishes for me— for Himself wishes it — for his own comfort and consolation— [not] simply from compassionate and tender feelings
for mine! " Yet at the time Susan's health was seriously impaired and she was in a marriage where she lived in physical fear of her husband, Major Molesworth Phillips. She was undergoing the emotional trauma of her husband's infatuation for another woman. "His pursuit is flagrant and his assiduity unceasing," she wrote to her sister of this infatuation for Jane Brabazon, carried out despite the fact that Susan was actually dying from a "wasting" disease. 64 This proposes a dual piece of brutality: physically and socially abusive by Major Phillips, and emotionally manipulative by Dr Burney.

Frances, with her "iron pen", revenged herself to some extent. While conforming to her father's wishes, she records and perpetuates his selfishness in the text of her diary encompassing both aspects of Straub's "unresolved doubleness" which accurately describes the ambivalence of adoration and anger which are essential aspect of Frances and her literary discourses. 65

Hester remarked, of her own father, "he was of late grown so Jealous lest I should ever marry at all," 66 a state she elaborates on during many other journal entries, yet it is in her conjugal relationship that patriarchal repression is best seen. 67 She gives many brief, but all too evocative examples of this marital inequality in the eighteenth century. In 1772, having given birth to Penelope who died ten hours later, "she had hardly recovered from her painful labor with the big baby Sophie, before she conceived again." "She was weak throughout the pregnancy, and under great emotional and physical strain." 68 Beneath this brief reference, we infer the conjugal attitude to a husband’s sexual "rights" regardless of the physical and mental condition of the wife, whose suffering from postnatal lochial discharge or trauma to the pudendum meant little.

Again, in the September of 1877, she records, "I think myself once again pregnant, and am astonished ay & disgusted too to find Mr Thrale not at all rejoiced at it...he seems rather offended than delighted." 69 Statements such as these are liberally scattered throughout women's diaries, if not of themselves, then regarding female friends and relations, such as when Frances writes of her sisters' and nieces' pregnancies, making mockery of Stone's contractual aspect of marriage. During an age when married woman's reproductive biology decreed her destiny of pain and discomfort, the implications of domestic abuse and marital rape legitimized the inequality of the familial contract.

In her Autobiographical Memoirs Hester Piozzi further articulated Henry
Thrale's domination in a manner which implied increased resentment which had festered well into her old age, "I lived like my husband's kept mistress - shut from the world, its pleasures, or its cares," reiterating the refrain of the Thraliana. "I have no Friend or Relation in the World to protect me from the rough Treatment of a Husband should he chuse to exert his Prerogative's." Although this is difficult to prove, Henry Thrale behaviour appears to typify the absolute conjugal control of a husband at a time Stone would have us believe men were experiencing a decline in patriarchal power. As we shall see, the behaviour of Mary Granville-Delany's first husband would appear to corroborate this contention.

In reality, little had altered since the time James Tyrell wrote, "there never was any Government where all the promiscuous Rabble of Women and Children had Votes, as not being capable of it ... since Women, as being concluded by their Husbands, and being commonly unfit for civil business ... and without any Property or Goods or Land, had no reason to have Votes in the Institution of the Government."

Although Frances's conformity is best exemplified by her relationship to her father, and Hester's to her first husband, the opposite connection can often be inferred. Although unlikely, Hester may have been parodying Johnson's words when both women called their husbands "My Master", and Hester's father died during the time of losing his daughter in marriage. While General d'Arblay is constructed and perpetuated by Frances's texts as a tender and caring man, she also writes of "Adjusting her plans to the vicissitudes of d'Arblay's affairs." Any actual challenge to husbandly superiority was achieved in the d'Arblay household by Frances' own inner strength, her position as bread winner, and d'Arblay's lack of property and position: assets which would have reinforced his position as patriarch.

Both women repeated the paternal relationship within the marital one; Frances's relationship with her father having been maintained through cloying and restrictive affection and shame mechanisms which successfully pre-empted rebellion or rejection. In her marriage to d'Arblay, despite written evidence of an affectionate and enduring relationship which Laslett proposes as a distinctly English notion because of its companionate elements, we can often read a subtext of manipulation subconsciously exposed by Frances in her journals and letters. Sometimes, it is suggested by her judicious editorial endeavours to suppress unpleasant familial material.

If Frances can be considered subservient through emotional manipulation, Hester's relationship of acquiescence was assured by more overt forms of abuse.
Her father's domination was repeatedly documented in the *Thraliana*. Hester was already preconditioned by her mother's example of submission to domestic tyranny, so Henry Thrale was assured a wife acquiescent to both his personal demands and to her own mother's collusion in the enforcement of marital submission. No matter how strongly a female audience wishes to deny this submissive behaviour, it is well documented throughout Hester's Thrale years. The female reader can strongly empathize with Hester during many of her humiliating experiences. The most forceful example of this occurs in relation to her father's prediction that she would end up treating Henry's pox if ever she was foolish enough to marry him. Later, its humiliating fruition occurred when, hugely pregnant, she agonised over Henry's lies and evasions concerning his swollen testicle, and finally succumbed to wifely duty, spending hours at a time on her knees, embrocating and bathing the affected part. "Mr Thrale's Complaint was venereal at last" — she objects to her Family Book, a journalistic haven for the angry yet apparently submissive wife, "What need of so many Lyes about it!"

**Extended Households**

At the edge of these domestic hearths, we find an extended family of men, all with vested interests in perpetuating the demands for female conformity. Brothers, uncles, cousins and sons, all potential or actual fathers, enjoyed the luxuries endowed on them as the dominant sex within their households and society.

Brothers, as in the Burney household, enjoyed the privilege of education for a career, and took part in perpetuating and eliciting acquiescence from their females. A prime example of this is found in James Burney's teasing of Frances about her early inability to read and write. He called her a "little dunce", then later lived in an incestuous relationship with Sally, a half-sister, yet enjoyed the reflected glory of Frances's fame gained by her petitioning for his advancement in the navy. In Hester's case, the influence of uncles was enormous, tied up with power and property, false promises and cancelled wills. Her uncle, Sir Robert, "protested that if I would live always with him, I should be his Housekeeper, & he would give me ten Thousand Pounds." Sir Thomas, another uncle, would make her his heir. Neither promise came into fruition. Both uncles attempted to purchase an attractive young female for company (given the most innocent explanation in an era of considerable
licentiousness). 82

These extended households moved far beyond familial boundaries despite Laslett's contention that Western societies were confined "for the most part to the parents and children themselves, what is called the nuclear family form." 83 Both the Burney and Thrale households differed from Laslett's model; the Burneys' complex unit being comprised of the children of Dr Burney's marriage to Esther Sleepe, his children by Mrs Allen, and her children by her first husband, as well as continuous residence by cousins, in-laws, and later, grandchildren. The young Hester Salusbury paid extensive visits to her uncles' families, and, while her father was in Canada, lived with her mother and the tutor Dr Collier who also, "rather opposed my marrying anybody." 84 In the Thrale household we find the widowed Mrs Salusbury in permanent residence, and a long series of semi-permanent residents from the well-documented years of Johnson, to Frances herself, Guiseppi Baretti, Sophie Streatfield and others.

Although I do not deny either Johnson's or Boswell's literary talent, or the social benefits the Thrales gained from Johnson's patronage, I do maintain that, when weighed, Johnson's influence on the lives of both women was a negative one. For Hester, it was in both a direct and physical form which placed a great strain on her ability to perform as a woman and a writer. While Johnsonians have tended to see his influence as only beneficent and avuncular, the great gossip Horace Walpole stated that Hester was afraid to contradict Johnson "for fear he should spit in her face if she disagreed with him." 85

Although it was unlikely that Walpole's opinion of Johnson was ever unbiased, due to his intense personal dislike of the man, some trepidation on Hester's account is supported by other sources. Even Boswell, during his Hebridean tour, refers to Johnson's rough treatment of her when the Scottish biographer wrote "I have seen even Mrs Thrale stunned" by the lexicographer. 86

In the case of Frances, however, although the familiar patronising of Johnson's jocular gibes to "down" Mrs Montagu, have gained him the reputation of a benevolent prankster, and reinforced her image as a kittenish young girl, Macaulay's effect was much more pernicious. In his Essay on Madame D'Arblay, he proposed the theory that has since been historically perpetuated, that Frances's writing, especially of Cecilia, suffered from her self-imposed desire to imitate Johnson's writing style. 87

This later subversive form of reinforcing both the submissive aspect of both
women plus Johnson's deification, flickers through a great deal of literary criticism on both women. Yet resentment of Johnson's patronage lies implicitly in many of Hester's own journal entries. Through her inability publicly to articulate her own repression, she colluded with the society which lionized Johnson to the point of idolatry. By overlooking the realities of his private self with its frailties, she helped create the public icon whose existence Nussbaum attributes to Boswell's creation of a "stable identity that personifies Truth." For Hester Thrale, this collusion itself was the result of submission to the "perpetual endurance of a yoke my husband put on me ... the perpetual confinement I will own to have been terrifying in the first years of our friendship, and irksome in the last." Mary Hyde sums up this "yoke" thus: "from Mrs Thrale's point of view the gloomy complaining demanding presence of Samuel Johnson was unbearable." 

Although these comments were made after her break with Johnson, other comments were recorded in the Thraliana during the times when Johnson was an extended family member and Hester was supposed to have been gaining only positive benefits from his patronage, which tend to support his presence as a "yoke."

A June 1771 entry of Hester's Family Book describes Lucy's suffering of an "Imposture of the Head" after eight months of ear discharge, and ends, "Mr Johnson told me yesterday a Story of Miss Fitzherbert's dying in Consequence of just such a Thing, which shocked me dreadfully ... it lay on my Spirits all that Day & Night & this Morning I can scarce bear to think about it." Many such examples of Johnson's thoughtlessness exist in Hester's journals. Perhaps none is more powerful than that of 1773, when Hester was nursing her dying mother — even sleeping in her room every night — had a child with infected mastoids, another with anaemia and rickets, and was pregnant, when Johnson announced that he needed to visit and be looked after because of a severe eye inflammation! Although she cared for his eye, she had no time to entertain him and he complained of becoming morbid. Yet again, between the tragic death of Harry in April 1776, and Cecilia's birth in February 1777, Johnson wrote "begging to come and be nursed" as he was suffering from emphysema and acute bronchitis.

Johnson's letters to the then Mrs Thrale are riddled with complaints, demands and criticisms sure to engender typical female guilt reactions and guaranteed to elict Hester's subordination to his needs as a literary and social patriarch. Small whining
complaints: "Instead of writing to me you are writing to the Thraliana," 93 and forms more subtle, such as "I design to love little Miss Nanny very well but you must let us have a Bessy some other time," referring to Hester's naming her child without consulting him. 94 There was no reason for Hester have named her daughter after his late wife, a woman she had never met, except to pander to his whims. In making this demand for further reproduction, he also reinforces her life-role in terms of her ability to breed, showing little regard for her as a person.

While a positive impression is often created concerning Johnson's supposed fondness for Hester, and gratitude for her care, in reality she was well aware of his use of her as a convenience and a lesser being than the egocentric Henry. "He was always on the side of the husband against the Wife" she wrote repeatedly, and resentfully. 97 Her complaint which was made most famous by Jane Austen's use of it in a letter to her sister, went as follows: "One of my own Children was ill & I fretted to see my husband very little affected — you says Mr Johnson may make a stir about Lucys Teeth for you have nothing else to make a stir about, but he has his Great Casks to fill." 98 Even in her resentment, she maintained a ready wit, remarking drily of Johnson's supposed fondness for her "his devotion was at least as warm towards the table and the table cloth at Streatham." 99

Ironically, even some feminist writers have been seduced by the perpetuation of belief that Hester's main value as a woman and writer was in the nurturing of Johnson. 100 As recently as 1988, Harriett Blodgett included Hester Thrale in her comment on women, "Several are known because of their male connections," yet Hester's poem "The Three Warnings" was still being published in anthologies of poetry over a hundred years after her death. 101 Prominent Johnsonian, A. Edward Newton, surprisingly proposes the opposite view of Johnson's supposed influence on Mrs Thrale's writing, as "Mrs Thrale, by her own crisp, vigorous English, influenced the Doctor finally to write as he talked, naturally, without that undue elaboration which was characteristic of his style." 102 This possible influence has conveniently been forgotten by critics!

While Johnson's influence extended to Frances because of both his acquaintance with her father, and their frequent sojourns at Streatham, her destruction of his letters rather than giving them to Boswell indicates that they contained material to either Johnson's, or her own, detriment. Her protective act may have been intended to protect Johnson's vulnerabilities in the same way she attempted to edit out her own
family's frailties. It may also have been an attempt to censor something socially shameful of which Boswell was unaware because of its sexual implications. An attempt to protect Johnson's vulnerabilities, however, was unnecessary because of Boswell's ability to integrate the public and private dissonances of Johnson's life to create his defined "Truth".

Johnson's negative influence, though, was extended long past his physical presence, perpetuated by means of Macaulay's Essay on Frances's declining fiction-writing abilities, which he attributed to the paternal example of Dr Johnson. A Times Literary Supplement article of 1940 stated this fact succinctly, "by 1843 Macaulay, in one of his least assailable essays, had fixed her legend, and apart from the correction of detail it has never been changed." He goes on to mention the pernicious effect of Johnson's friendship and praise "genial it is true, admiring, jocular, flirtatious, but Johnson still groping with his eyes close to every page that she wrote." Apart from the gross sexual implication of this statement, it creates a possible third image of Johnson. Although Boswell's portrait encapsulated the reality in its depiction of the keeper of the sacred masculine "Word". at Streatham, Hester's Johnson was a demanding, petulant child, totally self-absorbed and chauvinistically supportive of the family patriarch. With Frances, we are shown this grossly jocular and flirtatious angle, along with her unflattering description of Johnson in 1777 as "very ill-favoured" with a mouth always opening and closing, twisting limbs and "see-sawing" motions, as well as disordered and unclean dress plus frizzled wig. When coupled with flirtatiousness, this provides an entirely new image of Johnson. It is difficult to suppress an empathetic frisson of distaste when reading about this physically obscene man kissing Frances's sister on their first acquaintance, yet his social position would have guaranteed her acquiescence no matter how revolted.

It is, however, through Frances's relationship with the other Samuel — Crisp — that this extended patriarchy can be observed. Schrank and Supino describe this relationship: "Fanny adored him from their first meeting in 1764," and, as time went by, he became her "Daddy Crisp," she became his "Fannikin" and "the dearest thing on earth." Her letters reaffirm this; they are addressed to "my dear, dear beloved Mr Crisp" who her father called her "flame" to which she added "Indeed he is not mistaken." Yet Crisp colluded with Dr Burney in condemning Frances's play The Witlings which she laid aside, and felt authorised by his own cloying affection to criticise and make paternal demands; demands which Shrank and
Supino contend were the only reasons Cecilia was written at all. 18 Emily Hahn further suggests that "Fanny's one true love was Mr. Crisp, who was forty-six years older than herself", supported by the fact that she only felt free to marry after his death. 19

Matrimony

Enfolded within a circle of authorial figures during the premarriage years, and yet another during the marriage, there appears only the brief moment of courtship when a woman could gain a form of putative autonomy, neither quite under the paternal nor conjugal thumb. It is therefore not surprising that this all too brief period engages so much attention of female novelists and readers, and forms the resolution of conflicts in Frances's novels. This emotional focus was the cause of the most severe editing in Frances's diaries and caused many bitter entries in Hester's journals written in hindsight. For both women, this brief snatch at autonomy was fraught with disaster inflicted by a succession of males: Dr Burney and Samuel Crisp's initial pressure for Frances to marry Mr Barlow; George Cambridge's lack of a proposal; and Dr Burney's refusal to attend the d'Arblay marriage. For Hester, there was her uncle's intense pressure for her to marry, opposing the strong pressure not to marry from her father and Dr Collier, her father's apoplectic fit, and later, the amazing social scape-goating she evoked just before her marriage to Gabriel Piozzi.

For both women the annihilating pressures to conform to paternal devices were only surpassed by the stronger pressure to conform matrimonially. Poovey contends that the act of marriage is a conforming action which leads from childhood dependency to a "second dependency as a wife." 110 Although both Hester and Frances married, each expressed a denial of this dependency by the choice of marriage partner, a more subtle expression of autonomy. Frances's choice not to marry Mr Barlow defied paternal pressure just as effectively as her decision to marry d'Arblay, although her manner of ensuring their fulfilment accords with the creation of herself as a submissive daughter. She resorts to blushing, trembling tearfulness to mask the reality of her stubborn strength.

Hester, whose paternal domination was ensured by Mrs Salusbury's example of subservience, colluded with her mother and uncle to defy her father's wishes, thereby pleasing one father while frustrating another. She defied the whole
Salusbury-Cotton family pride by marrying a man in trade. Later, she defied both literary parent, Johnson, and her whole society, by marrying Piozzi. For both women life was precariousl balances acts of apparent submission masking personal strength, ambivalently defying one set of expectations while succumbing to another.

In taking Mr Thrale, Hester was conforming to contemporary pressure to marry. As Priscilla Wakefield wrote in 1798 "an advantageous marriage is the universal prize", and "To this one point tends the principal part of female instruction." In securing the prize of Thrale, Hester had access to the contractual ideal. She brought superior familial connections, intelligence and wit and the potential for procreation, while Henry provided substantial property, his name and security. As part of his contract, he obtained the physical and moral ignorance of a young woman cloistered by her family to create a marketable commodity because of the social oppression which decreed her virginity. While this contractual potentiality implies equality, the reality was recorded by Mrs Delany thus: "the wife is only considered a head servant in the family, and honoured with the head of the table, only that she may have all the troubles of carving." The vulnerability of the female to domestic and medical violence, her possible inability to provide a healthy male heir, loss of the reinforcement of her own parent's authority, and the constant drain of child-bearing on health and autonomy, combined to reaffirm her vulnerability to the dominant ethos.

Frances can be considered lucky in regard to provision of a male heir because of the lack of property in consideration, and because of the ambivalent attitude to French title inheritance. Her own intended inheritance to Alex was, as befits a literary lady, the mass of journals and letters she wrote to never-to-be-realized grandchildren at their rectory fire. For Hester, however, the male heir was of paramount importance. His provision not only secured her own position as the mother of the heir, but realised her fulfilment of any contractual element of their marriage. With typical wit and irony, she records this need for an heir, and her own failure, in a passage concerning a young couple's noisy children's disruption of a social event: "we ancient Maids, sterile Wives or disappointed Parents were peevish to see others happier than ourselves in a little Boy who naug[h]ty as we called him — three people would have been glad to purchase with ten thousand Pound — Garrick, Thrale or old Deputy Paterson." Despite her despair over the death of two male children, especially the beloved Harry, it is possible to infer a gleeful vengeance
on the three men whose expectations and demands caused so much bitterness and misery for their wives.

Even Johnson recognised the disaster of Harry Thrale's death to his parents, not only depriving Henry of an heir and Hester of her importance as mother of that heir, but also providing Baretti with another form of abuse to level at her. Other women diarists reaffirm the vital nature of heir-provision. Even the lesbian Anne Lister sympathetically recorded the experiences of her former partner Marianne Belcome-Lawton, whose husband was all attention, giving her "strengthening medicines and washing her back with cold water every morning ... All this in hopes of a son and heir." 112 It is ironical that women themselves were held responsible for heir-provision, over which they had no form of control. It almost certainly prevented many women from completing Stone's contractual agreement, and provided men with yet another means of subjecting their wives to critical abuse.

Although Locke rejected ideas concerning the innate abilities and rights of women, this theoretic equality was rarely to intrude on the actual lives of women. Mary Hays — that "thing, ugly and petticoated" as Coleridge referred to her — wrote a description of the reality of woman's position in 1792 as "A class, upon whom the Almighty has stamped so sublime, so unequivocal masks of dignity and importance, that it is difficult to conceive why men should wish to counteract the benevolent designs of Providence in their favour; by leading in chains, often too galling to their sensible and tender natures, those, whom heaven having in its wisdom formed their equals, could never surely, save in its wrath, doom to be the slaves of man." 116 In this "Appeal" Hays exposes the reality of the oppression of eighteenth-century women within a purely theoretical concept of equality, the origin of which lies in the ambivalence inherited through classical studies by male contemporaries who espoused opposing philosophies. These studies were explained in detail by A. R. Humphreys in "The 'Rights of Woman' in the Age of Reason", where he compares Aristotelian philosophy with Socratic, to show how women such as Mary Hays, Mary Wollstonecraft and Mary Astell were caught between the two philosophies. Existing contemporaneously, Aristotelian philosophy deduced that man's innate temperament decrees his position as commander and woman's as servitor. Socratic theory, however, was based on equality by primacy of reason, and demanded equal rights and education for individuals regardless of sex. Eighteenth-century women could aspire to equality in theory, but were expected to retain inferior status."117
Although the century had seen some movement toward the perception of equal education rights for women, expressions of Aristotelian inequality had earlier been regularly perpetuated in popular press items, such as Steele's Tatler. These papers equated women with prudence and men with wisdom, delegating the social position of women to a shadowy region of potential equality and enacted inferiority.

Although it is possible to propose a gradual development of an eighteenth-century feminist movement which proposed the acceptance of Socratic-Platonic concepts of the female position, in the lives of both Frances and Hester we find considerable evidence of the continuance of the patriarchal mode continuing to dominate eighteenth-century middle-class England, which trivialised daughters and wives. Compared to her brothers, Frances received very little education, and although the young Hester was provided with a liberal, almost classical, education for a girl, she was viewed as a mere plaything by her father and uncles, and groomed just as readily for matrimony as any ill-educated girl child. Mary Hays referred directly to this preparation: "from the first dawn of reason — from the cradle to the grave — is one continued tissue of hypocrisy and disguise", as it merely prepared females to become Steele's "companions of reasonable men."

This, then, was the position of eighteenth-century women. Although possessing the theoretical potentiality of Lockean emphasis on individuality, women were inexorably entrapped within the ideology of patriarchy, dependent on the whims of the parental-conjugal male for consideration. Any "contract", as proposed by Stone, was based on an inequality which ensured its own negation. While offered food and shelter, women were expected to return subservience in many areas; unrestricted access to sexuality and childbearing, domestic management, possible property relinquishment, and to collude in their own dominance. To ensure the perpetuation of this system, society relied on total subservience of women which was elicited by legitimising violent methods of enforcement.
Notes for Chapter 1.

8. Johnson, Diaries, Prayers and Annals, xii.
10. Robert Halsband, Rev. of The Journals and Letters of Fanny Burney ed. by Jane Hemlow. Philological Quarterly 52 (July, 1973), 475-7. Halsband states that the early journal entries written to herself are fascinating, whereas the later letters intended for circulation are tedious.
11. Family Book, 14 September, 1775. "Oh thou most adorable Creator, Redeemer & Comforter of Man - most Holy Trinity preserve my Children ..."
17. The evaluation of Pepys, Boswell and Rousseau as the greatest diary writers has been proposed and perpetuated by other males such as T. B. Macaulay. Virginia Stephen Woolf, The Diary of Virginia Woolf. Ed. Anne Olivier Bell, vol. 1. (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1977).
18. Both Hester and Frances were only valued as writers for their references to Johnson, Boswell and the Court, as is stated by William McCarthy in "The Writings of Hester Lynch Piozzi: A Bibliography," Bulletin of Bibliography 45: 2 (1988), 129, "Conventionally her writings have been valued as sidelights on Johnson."
20. Zionkowski, 8.
21. Williams, 152.
Epstein, 22.
Nussbaum, xviii.
See Joan Thirsk, "The Family", *Past and Present* 27 (April, 1964), 112.
Keith Thomas, "Women and the Civil War Sects", 13 *Past and Present* 1958), 42.
Hay, 53.
Stone, 250-8.
Thraliana, 1: 282.
Thraliana, 1: 280.
Thraliana, 1: 281.
Menefee, 132.
Thraliana, 1: 300.
Boswell in *Search of a Wife*. "Margaret felt it her duty to be submissive to study his happiness, and be entirely guided by him," xxi.
Thraliana, 1: 281.
51 Kowaleski-Wallace, 275.
53 D.&L., (Dobson), 1: 32.
59 Macaulay states that Dr Burney accepted 20 pounds sterling for the copyright of Evelina, and lost Frances 1200 - 1500 pounds sterling. 4:125.
60 J.&L., 4: 384.
63 Johnson, 120.
64 Kristina Straub, Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1987).
65 Miriam Benkovitz, "Dr Burney's Memoirs", Review of English Studies 10 (1959), 257. Benkovitz evaluates Frances's attitude to her father as "unjust and untruthful".
66 Thraliana, 1: 300.
67 Thraliana, 1: 448, 283, 43.
69 Family Book, September 1777.
70 Autobiography, 257.
71 Thraliana, 1: 43.
73 J.&L., 2: 78 and throughout Thraliana.
75 Laslett, Family Life, 13.
76 Thraliana, 1: 283.
77 Family Book, Aug - Dec. 1776.
78 Family Book. 21 Dec. 1776.
80 D.&L., v.
81 Thraliana, 1: 283.
83 Laslett, Family Life, 13.
84 Thraliana, 1: 305.
85 Walpole's Letters, 25: 640, 638. 3: 244 n.2.
86 Life, V: 288.
87 Macaulay, "Essay on Madame D'Arblay."
88 Nussbaum, xx.
89 Autobiography, 102.
90 Mary Hyde, 64.
91 Thraliana, Johnson was "always on the side of the husband against the wife."
92 Thraliana, 1: 45.
93 Thraliana, 1: 64.
94 Letters, letter: 506.
95 Letters, letter: 547.
96 Letters, letter: 203.
97 Thraliana, 1: 181.
98 Piozziana, 22.
99 Autobiography, 35.
100 Minna Steele Smith, "Manuscript Notes by Madame Piozzi in a Copy of Bozwell's Life of Johnson," London Mercury (January, 1922), 86.
101 Blodgett, 11
106 Schrank and Supino, 6.
108 Schrank and Supino, 11.
112 Patricia M. Spacks, "Ev'ry Woman is at Heart a Rake." Eighteenth Century Studies 8 (Fall, 1974), 31.
113 Mary Granville-Delany, The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany, with interesting Reminiscences of King George The Third and Queen Charlotte. 3 vols. Ed. Lady Llandover. (London: Richard Bentley, 1861) 2: 547.
114 Thraliana, 1: 107.
115 Anne Lister, 2.
118 Humphreys, 268.
119 The Tatler, No. 72. Reprinted in Humphreys, 260.
120 See Katherine M. Rogers. Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1982).
121 The Tatler, No 248. Reprinted in Humphreys, 260.
CHAPTER 2

Kick'd And Cudgel'd: Gossip And Violence
"I have been beaten till I know
What Wood the Cudgel's of, by the Blow;
And Kick'd till I can tell you whether,
The Shoe was Spanish - or Neat's leather." 1
(Hester Piozzi)

In Chapter One I examined the nature of eighteenth-century middle-class English society to determine its dominant ideology. Denying the existence of balanced contractual parental-conjugal arrangements, I concluded that women were disadvantaged despite society's theoretical idealization of individualism. To perpetuate male domination, women, along with children and servants, were maintained in a position of subservience.

In this chapter, I shall examine the methods used within familial and societal environments to perpetuate this hierarchy of masculine dominance. I propose that women were kept in a position of subservience through shame and fear. This fear was not only a response to overt physical violence, but fear of rejection, embarrassment, social ineptitude and other shame-inducing situations, all intended to ensure submissive behaviour. Although this externally applied pressure to conform relied on many forms to gain results, all methods proposed the use of some form of violence. Beginning as an apparently harmless form of reinforcement of social structure, gossip provides a centripetal pressure on familial structure, reinforcing the strength of family attachment, as we see in Frances Burney's letters to her sisters and cousins. But along this continuum of mechanisms used to elicit conformist behaviour we find a gradual but increasing amount of violence and brutality. Reinforced by predominantly patriarchal structures such as the publication industry, verbal spite becomes editorial criticism and censorship, gaining added authority when set in print. Verbal harassment becomes physical abuse, taking many forms, but is frequently most effective when domestic. All of these forms occur within the journals, diaries and letters of Hester and Frances.

To track this gradual decline into violence, I begin with an examination of the mechanisms of gossip, using Patricia Meyer Spacks' Gossip as a base for discussion of diaries, journals and letters. Using writings by Boswell, Johnson and Macaulay, I examine the means by which the writings of Frances and Hester were derided, plundered and neglected. Combined with the parental and conjugal abuse both women suffered, their diaries evoke images of lives distorted and behaviour manipulated.
Running subtextually throughout this work is the influence Samuel Johnson had on both Hester and Frances, which I contend to be a negative one, despite the obvious intellectual and social benefits gained from his erudition and fame. In this chapter, his influence can be seen both in his position as an extended family member of the Thrale household and in the way his adherents have plundered the works of both Frances and Hester for his aggrandisement. From a series of events, clues and subtle implications, I propose the idea that Johnson's harassment of many of the women of the Thrale-Burney circle was of a sexual nature.

With successive, intensive readings, I discovered that both women's lives were saturated with domestic abuse, incest and violence which they endeavoured to resolve by seeking solace in their journals, diaries and letters.

Gossip

Gossip, with its voyeuristic ambiance and "repetitive formulaic stories", provides a never-ceasing source of textual initiation for both Hester and Frances. The voyeuristic element of journal-reading provides considerable appeal because it provides a medium for transaction between writer and reader which is analogous to the association formed in verbal gossip, which Beers describes as the "easy slippage between the discourse of narration and the discourse of language" empowering language as a commodity.

Defining gossip, then inferring its natural progression into verbal and physical abuse, is problematic because, although etymologically intended as "Godsib", or of "kin together through God," it degenerated in altruistic intention, gaining different connotations. When defined by Johnson, the word's secondary meanings included a friend or neighbour, tippling companion, tatter or newsmonger, or the tattle of gossip. However, even in 1882, its primary definition was still related to the baptismal party, although the qualification "for the most part [referring] to the mother", aligned the term with the female sex. Given the Church's patronage of women, this allusion undoubtedly led to the trivialisation of gossip. The implication of triviality in gossip's talk was possibly founded in the belief of the Middle Ages and seventeenth-century that derogatory talk could harm the soul. This power of the word is evoked with obviously phallic symbolism in James 3: 5-8, which states, "The tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things."
Gossip, perhaps through its reliance on being "a little member", also embodies a positive, regenerative force which may be used to reinforce power and purchase the subjugation of women by direct or indirect means. Ironically, it seduces women into colluding with men to perpetuate their own powerlessness through its repetition, making it a potent method of enforcing social conformity.

In its more harmless forms, "freed from ordinary social inhibitions, seeking no material benefits, proceeding by established rules, forging bonds within their group, talkers pursue a game which, like all absorbing games, expresses impulses and satisfies needs." These are the "on dits" described by Hester Piozzi as harmless scandal and anecdotes, always verbal and sociable in intention. Because we have inherited written not oral discourses from Frances and Hester, we have their "flim flams" instead: the verbal "on dits" recorded in letters and journals, the harmless talk expressed in written discourse as entertainment, bridging the historical gap as an "on dit".

Hester was a thorough mistress of the flim flam, expressing wit as rapier-sharp as Horace Walpole's though without his edge of cruelty. A comparison of their styles and content is perhaps the most expressive form of depicting the difference between female and male forms; the former possessing less critical intention and therefore less power. Let us make a brief comparison. First, Hester Thrale wrote, "Of poor Sir Thomas Drury & his wife I remember saying that he looked always as if he was making a Stink, & her Ladyship as if She was smelling it", and of Sir George Colesbrook in his green coat and white waistcoat, Lady Lade said, "he looked like a leg of Lamb and Spinach." Compare this wit with Walpole's, in relation to Hester's Anecdotes having sold out in one day, "no doubt she expects on her landing to be received like the Governor of Gibraltar ... Alack! she will discover, that though she has ridden an ass, she will be welcomed with no hosannas. She and Boswell and their hero are the joke of the public." He also wittily, but with cruel sexual innuendo, refers to the two biographers thus: "the cock biographer has fixed a direct lie on the hen." He later abuses Hester's publication of her travels, referring to the "excessive vulgarisms so plentiful in these volumes."

There is often this notable difference in the intention behind intersexual gossip mechanisms. In the gossip concerning men, expressed by women, there is this sense of trivialisation and amusement, but no challenge to the status quo of power. When men gossip about women, they frequently resort to measures
guaranteed to subjugate women to their acceptably repressed social level.

Running subtextually throughout gossip's discourse, is Spacks's "means of solidarity" 19 which has great significance for supressed minority groups; what Edward Shorter saw as a female subculture of solace, or a place where uniquely female experience and bodily pain could find understanding. 14 In the case of Frances, this empathy was largely experienced in the "one soul" reputedly shared with her sister Susanna (Mrs Molesworth Phillips) by Pacchierotti, and reaffirmed in the circulated health bulletins of the Burney females. 15 Their "alives" recorded such items as post-natal recoveries "a few after pains" and by 3 o'clock "she eat [sic] the wing of a Chicken with pleasure & at 5 my young Gentlemen sucked with pleasure." 16 This assurance of survival and normality was essential in a world where every pregnancy threatened life, and also to reaffirm the female solidarity of their solacing friendships.

For Hester Thrale, deprived of her mother's companionship by death, the written text supplied a substitute. It differed from the discourses of Frances because it lacked the awareness of the particularised audience which was to circulate each item, an audience frequently composed of both sexes. As Hester's "on dits" became "flim flams", readers can empathise strongly with their narrator, because frequent lack of consciousness of audience creates the illusion of verbally articulated gossip. The female reader joins the narrator in a place of solace created by female solidarity and shared familial and social experiences. Whether this sense of association is shared by male readers is difficult for a female to evaluate. Given the difference in gossip's patterns examined by Jack Levin and Arnold Arluke, who claim that gossip threatens "mens traditional advantage over women", similar sense of empathy seems unlikely.17 Hester's lack of a gossip-partner is apparent in many entries in Thraliana, for example, in the entry, "N.B. I am sure I went 10 complete Months with Harriet — I conceived 24:th of August quicken'd 25:Dec & was delivered the 21:June 1778."18

This sense of female friendship and source of consolation found expression in objections against the petty tyrannies of the husband or father, as was exemplified even by Johnson when he wrote, "My father considered tea as very expensive, and discouraged my mother from keeping company with the neighbours, and from paying visits or receiving them." 10 Beneath this fairly harmless mention of a domestic matter concerning the cost of tea, lies a vital piece of social evidence of the strength and absoluteness of conjugal tyranny, evoking a series of further queries. Was the expense
of tea a monetary one, or simply an 'expense' of women's time and effort? Did Michael Johnson consider his own tipple to be an unnecessary expense? Was tea used as an excuse to isolate and subjugate Mrs Johnson just as surely as Hester recorded of Mrs Salusbury? Where a wife is "shut up with a Distance from Society, where the natural Roughness of the male Sex is not Restrained", his domination is ensured. Johnson's statement also exhibits an ignorance of the female mechanisms of friendship and solace, which would have permitted informal or familial visiting by Mrs Johnson with lessened expectation of reciprocation. Very little imagination is needed to picture Mrs Johnson's whispers of Mr Johnson's economies to a female friend or relative, if economy was the only issue involved.

With the defiant wisdom of age, and widowhood, Mrs Johnson "lived to say, many years after, that, if the time were to pass again, she would not comply with such unsocial injunctions." Notably, this defiance only occurred when the threat of physical or verbal abuse had vanished. This early injunction against tea-drinking and the emotional connotations the beverage aroused, undoubtedly influenced Samuel Johnson's own attitude to tea. What sensitive child, hearing and seeing teadrinking used as an emotional bludgeon, would not retain an emotional attitude to the subject? While Johnson's tea-drinking has been thoroughly documented, even G. B. Hill, Johnson's foremost editor, questioned whether the subject may have been mythologized. The enormous number of cups Johnson was reputed to have consumed, although the number varies, indicate a deep-seated neurosis which could be developed at length as a subject for analysis. With every cup, Johnson was defying the sanction of the paternal-parent, "killing" the injunction against tea-drinking with an Oedipal intensity. With every exaggerated account of the number of cups he consumed the observers were recording a subjective impression perhaps more indicative of the intensity with which each cup was procured and consumed than the actual number. Consider Johnson's self-description:

A hardened and shameless tea-drinker, who has, for twenty years, diluted his meals with only the infusion of this fascinating plant; whose kettle has scarcely time to cool; who with tea amuses the evening, with tea solaces the midnight, and with tea welcomes the morning.

Significantly, the word "solace" is aligned to tea-drinking, indicating not only its ability to soothe but its relationship with the female and maternal attributes. Typically of a diarist, Johnson was to leap to a written defence of tea when it was
pronounced anathema by Jonas Hanway. Not only did Johnson continue to console himself with the maternally-perceived beverage, but also he transferred his defence into print in an essay refuting Hanway's, completing an interesting intersection between text, solace, gossip and nurturing.

Well before Cassell's 24 distribution of penny packets of tea to combat gin-drinking, tea was symbolic of the domestic and feminine interests in contrast to those associations of the Coffee House. 25 Steele's Tea-Table (December 1715) and Chit-Chat (March 1716), were specifically aimed at women, as was Allan Ramsay's Tea-Table Miscellany (1724). Letters to The Spectator made constant reference to the tea-table as a place of encouraging "common Tea-Table Talk" and not "that of Politicks and Matters of State", 26 to which Steele added the further dimension of "harmless talk as to turn the Discourse, which, from being witty grew to be malicious." 27

Tea-table talk was a means of engendering the female sub-culture but also was a factor ensuring female collusion in reinforcement of acceptable forms of conformist behaviour. In a letter to The Spectator (June 1712), Budgell makes an impassioned plea for female virginity and ignorance, claiming: "There is no Charm in the Female Sex, that can supply the Place of Virtue. Without Innocence, Beauty is unlovely, and Quality contemptible, Good breeding degenerates into Wantonness, and Wit into Impudence", he desires, with emphasis, that "this Paper maybe read ... at all Tea-tables within the Cities of London and Westminster," 28 thereby utilising one of the few literary domains of women's culture to perpetuate masculine oppression.

Steele's astute remarking of the case with which harmless "on dits" slip into malicious talk, not only indicates how gossip gradually degenerates into forms of abuse, but evokes the means by which a female culture, relying on gossip for its dynamism, is distorted by the intrusion of men.

In a world where marriage remained the universally sought prize awarded for female subservience, competition intruded a darker aspect onto female friendship, admirably exemplified in Frances's novel The Wanderer, in the relationship of Elinor Joddrel and Ellis/Juliet Granville. Their complete empathy and sympathy existed despite their characterisation as polar opposites of femaleness. Their closeness was only threatened and destroyed when implicated with Albert Harleigh, the matrimonial prize.

This shadowy aspect is exemplified in life by the intrusion of Hester's second
husband into their friendship. These women were close friends and, usually, strong supporters of their own sex. Frances reported that her "perfect Happiness on Earth was over after my Heart adored Sister, Susanna Elizabeth Phillips, had ceased to breathe," 30 while Hester rarely wrote negative comments on any women, describing the actress as "Charming Siddons" and Cornelia Knight as a very "Extraordinary woman." 31 The relationship of Hester and Frances, recorded over long years in both women's journals and letters, was one of deep affection and friendship, if not love. It was recorded and historically perpetuated in Frances's novels, particularly Cecilia. Doody attests "No other novelist devoted so much time and attention to the development of a friendship between two women who are neither contemporaries nor relatives", 32 referring to the young Cecilia's entry into the marriage-market and her friendship with Augusta Delvile, whose physical description, attributes, and marriage, reflect Hester's own. 33

Later, after the Piozzi scandal and marriage, Hester was to write sadly, "Miss Burney had seduced that Family [the Lockes] to hate us; but She now has no Time, nor I trust further Inclination to hurt me ... how cruel were her Efforts to undo me! how unnecessary to encourage my Daughters in their harsh Thoughts of a Mother who still continues to adore them." 34 This reveals not only the reversal of the affection of the two women, but gives considerable insight into the difference in written texts of the two women. Hester's journals display the constant need to reiterate a consciousness of herself as a woman, and to attempt to construct a persona of maternal self-image in keeping with her own idealization of her mother. Frances's are more concerned with the construction of a dutiful and submissive daughter persona to cover the decisive woman indicated by her authorial strengths.

It is Frances, however, who reports the intrusion of masculine approval mechanisms with a perceptible subtextual defensiveness of her own vulnerability. In a reported conversation with George O. Cambridge, her former suitor, concerning the Thrale daughters, he commented on how he was glad to find "they were to become more quiet in their appearance, less, continued he; laughing, of Pink — & of Ribbon", Frances, records herself thus: "They? I cried — I thought there was never any of Pink but for Susan?", and adds cattily, but only for the diary, "Poor Susan rouges, I have heard, furiously." 35 In this apparently slight piece of malice is encoded a long history of bitter disenchantment and disappointment suffered because of the competitive marriage market, over which she has constructed a bright and careless persona to
entertain the circulating journal’s audience. Cambridge, the unsecured matrimonial prize, must be exposed to this audience as still enchanted by Frances’s quick wit; but his intrusion between herself and her reader’s knowledge of all he implies, can only be negated by the destruction of another woman’s attraction, displaying yet again the ambivalence of female relationships caused by male intrusion.

This rejection of female friendship because of a male protagonist is equivalent in result to the rejection of a lover. It indicates either latent lesbianism and sexuality implicit in relationships, or the psychological implications resulting from the dual maternal aspects of the female. The mother is nurturer and font of all emotional and physical sustenance, but her shadow aspect is of withholder of this nurturing. The duality is analogous to all aspects of female existence, but particularly that of emotional female friendships which derive from mother-daughter relationship patterns, such as those of Hester and Frances.

Spite

As gossip can be seen as a reinforcer of solidarity among a subordinated section of the community, so, in its increasingly negative aspects, it is used to reinforce submissive behaviour through threat to women’s reputations. Female "reputation" must be maintained in an inviolable state to command a matrimonial prize. Spacks examines the dual attitudes to "reputations" for men and women in considerable depth, delineating the differences thus: "for men, the unearned reputation of sexual activity sometimes aggrandizes social position; for women ... it would prove devastating to status in respectable society." 36 Frances and Hester were both to suffer from threats to reputation. While Hester’s post-Thrale life was made miserable by imputations of sexuality, both in the Piozzi and Conway affairs, Frances’s was the opposite. Although evincing a conformist persona to enhance her lovableness, this mask successfully excluded overt sexuality from her journals and letters. Frances’s detractors have taken this discretion as a form of abuse even into the 1970’s when Irma S. Lustig refers to her as "a prude of contained heart" who was "excessively prim and righteous." 37

Peter Glassman claims that her life was ruined by "her wilful, by her no doubt actually diseased, submission to imposed and invented criteria of behaviour." 38 Not only does Glassman fail to question what elicited this apparent submission,
but accuses her of wilful and "invented criteria" of a self-construction based on nothing but vanity. Ironically, Frances's detractors seem to find Susanna's term of "prudent" for her sister, to be synonymous for prude and prudish!

This inexorable decline from gossip to physical abuse encompasses both rumour and malicious spite. Spacks refers to three areas of gossip which encompass its negativity as "circulation of slander", "betrayal of secrets" and "penetration of privacy", all aspects which embody some form of threat. The witty Hester Thrale-Piozzi manages to embody the circulation of gossip that rarely intrudes into the area of slander - or, as we perceive it, in the libellous form which assumes more authority because of its reproduction in print. When she wrote "Beckford is a Professor of Paederasty", she intruded on the first of Spacks's classification, while "Harriet Lee thinks the Prince of Wales means to deny her child" and "something did whisper to my heart, that Cumberland liked the Masculine gender best", amply exemplify the second and third. These comments also indicate her use of the journal as the recipient of confidences usually exchanged verbally with a close friend.

Spacks further contends that malicious gossip becomes one of the few avenues of aggression left open to the subordinated and suppressed, reaffirming the elderly Hester Piozzi's words, and her explanation of "the malus animus" which she discovered to be rife among the Bath set. Wherever malicious gossip is encountered it is possible to infer a rejection of the dominant party or ideology by the less powerful, or to assume a vulnerability against which the gossiper is protesting. Even the extreme "malus animus" Baretti directed at Hester, and his libellous articles in The European Magazine can be attributed to his feelings of financial servitude, domestic insecurity and eventual rejection.

What is curious is not so much the contemporary eighteenth and nineteenth century spite which lead to "wicked Insinuations concerning my past Intimacy with my present Husband" but the continued historical perpetuation of this spite, despite her denials and subsequent contrary proof. This malice is particularly plain in regard to her relationship with her heir which was described thus: "the creature of her bounty ... appears to have neglected her, at least to have yielded none of the warm affection which was her due." Yet letters kept unpublished until after the death of John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury are full of tender regard, and were annotated by him to detail his replies. Addressed to "my dear Boy" they make references to "your kind and comfortable letter", and "your very agreeable
Letter," from "your Affectionate Aunt." 7

This spite appears to be a continuation of that perpetuated by Boswell and Hester's male contemporaries, which proposes the interesting possibility of their own feelings of inferiority to her wit and intellect. "Boswell's insinuations and Gifford's satire" 4 were recorded indignantly by the elderly Mrs Piozzi, as were Boswell's accusations of inaccuracies which began to appear after the appearance of the Anecdotes, 5 implying that he suffered from a high degree of jealousy.

As Mrs Thrale, Hester encountered one of the most malicious pieces of social abuse shown to any woman. As Mrs Piozzi, she suffered a treacherous piece of scapegoating of such malicious proportions one can infer she posed a considerable threat to male writers who resented her intrusion into their literary domain.

Macaulay's words "All London is crying shame on her" and "She meanwhile fled from the laughter and hisses of her countrymen and women" 9 depict his personal method of reinforcing patriarchal domination by means of overstatement. Although he also extended his criticisms to men, their positions as equals within the social hierarchy made them less vulnerable to such attacks on their social reputations. Such criticisms of Hester accurately portray the force of social repudiation of the woman who had committed no crime but of remarrying in her widowed state, although daring to defy familial and Johnsonian disapproval.

Boswell's attempts 9 to destroy a literary rival may be responsible for much of the continued criticism of Mrs Piozzi, but his allegations were questioned by Minna Steele Smith who threw doubt on Boswell's accuracy, not Hester Piozzi's. Many contrary examples occur, such as Boswell's reporting of a dinner engagement which had been described by Baretti during which Mrs Thrale was reputed to have eaten a lark for supper and called Samuel Johnson "my dear Johnson", although she never ate suppers, ate larks only when out of England, and would never have dared called Johnson by so familiar a form of address! 9

Although many of Boswell's accusations of Hester's inaccuracy of reporting or recollection can be justified, his highly emotional and abusive attacks must be questioned. Irna Lustig details these charges in "Boswell at Work: The Animadversion of Mrs Piozzi," where she reveals that John Courtenay insisted that Boswell reduce his "scurrilities and innuedos" for his own benefit. 9

Ironically, no one has accused Macaulay of his inaccuracies (except perhaps his spiteful adversary J. W. Croker), although his contentions have been perpetuated
as truth, despite their lack of veracity. A prime example occurs in his famous Essays on Madame d'Arblay, where he claims that Samuel Crisp's savage efforts to suppress Frances's play was based on the bitterness and failure of his own play "Virginia", which lead to his retirement from society to Chesington. However, Annie Raine Ellis points out that Virginia was reprinted twice (in 1778 and 1784) in selections of English plays and ran for eleven nights, compared to only nine nights for Johnson's Irene. She also claims that Crisp did not retire to Chesington for many years until driven there because of ill-health and reduced circumstances.

Many of Hester's annotations on Boswell's work throw an interesting light on his accusations which, however, have been perpetuated by the society which reinforced a literary superiority of which there was less evidence during the lifetime of Mrs Piozzi. "Peter Pindar's" poem "Bozzy and Piozzi" can be used to indicate the degree of equality their society accorded the two biographers, despite the imbalance which later occurred.

Part of the perpetuation of literary abuse aimed at Hester has resulted from the famous "rejection" letter of Johnson's, although less attention is accorded the rest of the series of which this letter is part. This series was in the possession of John Salusbury Piozzi Salusbury in 1861, and depicts Johnson's anger unfavourably, beside her dignified responses.

John Riely and other Johnsonians refer to Johnson's "rough" letter. That description minimizes the tone of Johnson's letter more than a little, as it accused her of abandoning her children, religion, reputation and country. Riely condones Johnson's abuse as a benign disappointment at losing a daughter's veneration. Johnson's persistence in offering further advice after this piece of abuse, indicates his efforts to regain a pseudopatriarchal control of the Thrale females and their household. It is also indicative of a possible thwarting of sexual passion, or circumvention of marital intentions toward the widow. This, however, is a complex issue which has engendered much debate about the nature of Mrs Thrale and Johnson's relationship. While Balderson argues for an erotic masochistic attachment on Johnson's part, others, such as Martine Brownley, suggest a parent and child relationship which became reversed in later years. I base my supposition of Johnson's marital intentions on Boswell's assumption of its truth, and on Boswell's composition of the lewd poem "Ode by Dr Samuel Johnson to Mrs Thrale upon her Supposed Approaching Nuptuals." Surviving this period, the older Mrs Piozzi was to encounter
more social persecution during her attempts to re-enter London and Bath societies, but this social malice culminated in a posthumous piece of literary malignancy in 1843 with the publication of *Love Letters of Mrs Piozzi Written when she was Eighty, to William Augustus Conway*. This work accused her of being madly in love, at eighty, with the twenty-seven year old actor. By selecting a few comments from her letters, such as "heart and soul" the author created an incongruous image of a raddled crone infatuated by a handsome young man. A full reading denies this charge, as the letters contain gossip, references to his mother and messages from Sophia Pennington. They also contain reports on Hester's illnesses and indigestion, with references to herself as his old friend. This misrepresentation has been denounced and refuted since 1862, when it was described as "so garbled and distorted" as to change the letters, and evidences many passages of the full letters which "sufficiently refutes the calumny." The possessor of over a hundred of the letters also wrote an indignant objection to the publication, objecting that the elderly Mrs Piozzi's regard for Conway was "that of an affectionate mother" and claimed she had been "atrociously maligned." Yet, even in 1912, A. J. Russell published an essay, "Mrs Piozzi's Love Letters at the Age of Eighty", in which he claims she "fell head and ears in love with the actor, as any school girl might have done," and described a "frustrated autumnal love" by once again misquoting selected snippets of the letters as proof of his contention. An excellent example of his misquotation occurs when he refers to her exhortation to Conway to "exalt his love" and "bestow his love upon herself." In reality, her letter was urging Conway to recover from his depression from being jilted by Miss Stratton. Her words were, "Exalt thy love-dejected heart - and rise superior to such narrow minds." This, and other publications, initiated the spirited and gracious *The True Story of the So-Called Love Letters of Mrs Piozzi, in Defence of an Elderly Lady*, by Percival Merritt. It was published in a limited edition of only 350 copies as the malice of what R.W. Chapman was to declare to be a literary fraud was, it seems, of more interest to readers than the truth.

The anonymous author of "Love Letters", whom Chapman calls "Z", depicts the "incomparable amount of malice toward Mrs Piozzi" which has been perpetuated by successive generations ever since the Piozzi affair. Its criticism extended from her education, talents, appearance, wit, published works and morality to her supposed maternal callousness. Instances of inaccuracies about her, or belittlement of her
abilities, recur constantly. Even during the 1980's, enlightened biographers wrote critically implying an above average death-rate for her children, perpetuating Baretti's charges of neglect.

Perhaps male biographers are unable to decode the despair behind Hester Thrale's constant repetition of maternal misery. "I have got the Child home to us ... -I hold her to my Heart all Day long, as Niobe did little Choris; if they steal her away from me now I shall lose my life," or her Family Book entries, "the Child was going, oh what were my Feelings for my Lucy? my Dear, my Favourite Girl!" and barely a year later, "The Child Ralph is vastly ill indeed—dying I think—the Confluent Sort ... O Lord, Oh Lord! What shall I do?—Up every Night & all Night long again!—well if this don't kill me & the Child I carry, sure we are made of Iron." There is a depth of pain easily inferred from many journal entries; and a ring of authenticity impossible to deny, notably because of the different degrees of anguish behind the death of a beloved favourite and healthy daughter, compared with the happy release of the mentally disabled son.

More subtly evocative of maternal despair are the written passages concerning the death of Harry, the male heir, where she resorts to the solace - structure of the journal during the initial heat of misery, and a withdrawn textual silence during the later passage of grief. How significantly she encodes her despair when she describes how she wove and spun Harry's "brown Thread Stockings"! "My poor Dear Son wore them often, and had them on the Morning that he died; I flung them in the fire that nobody else might ever wear them after his Death." There is almost a Medea-like quality in her passionate cremation of Harry's stockings. By destroying what she had created, she reasserted a feeling of control over a situation utterly beyond expression.

Although Thrale-Piozzi's social scapegoating in this way has been perpetuated for generations, so has Frances's, although in a more subversive form, insisting on her reputed prudery and childishness as an image. By ensuring the perpetuated image of her conformist behaviour as the "true woman" she could be trivialized as a writer. Hester was abused because of the threat she posed to patriarchy by being an intelligent, articulate woman who combined sexual passion with maternity. Her literary influence over Johnson could be denied, and her eighteenth-century pride in combining Lockean and Protestant concepts of child-raising, could be hidden under the camouflage of a damaged reputation.
**Literary Criticism**

This pattern of verbal and textual scapegoating and patronage continues under phallocentric literary criticism which places the writer and critic in opposition, not according the "intelligent appraisal; rational evaluation, objective judgement" of male criticism to female writers. This lack causes resentment, and further abuse of the women who were bold enough to embark into the realm of literary criticism as did Hester Piozzi in her circulated annotations and published letters, biography and world history.

Two examples of the enduring and destructive force of phallocentric criticism are as follows. For Hester, we have Boswell's bitterness over the publication of her *Anecdotes of Doctor Johnson* which appeared a full five years before his own, although his *Journal of a Tour of the Hebrides* preceded his *Life*. As Balderston points out, he referred to her work "only to condemn it, and its author, for inaccuracy, faulty emphasis, inconsistency, misunderstanding of Johnson's character," showing "uncharitableness, and downright malice," a view supported by Hayward and others. No-one would deny that Hester was capable of being flippant and trifling when writing anecdotes, because it is the nature of an anecdote to be witty and amusing. Exaggeration and embroidery are essential tools of the art of narrating flim flams. Boswell's criticism would have been more justified if he had acknowledged her ability to create a witty story and memorable character, suggested exaggeration, but recognized her as a fellow biographer of equal, but different, style. Yet when Boswell questioned the authenticity of a poem she attributed to Johnson, he was forced to publish an apology to her in the second edition of the *Life* when her work was verified. His hostile abuse of her is further opened to ridicule, given the title of her work. His *Life* made a higher claim than her own *Anecdotes*, for which her careful choice of title is indicative of the style of writing and textual content; a succession of entertaining flim flams concerning the man she had known for a much longer period, and in more intimate circumstances, than Boswell.

Frances's form of abusive criticism concerned the enduring belief in an "extraordinary revolution in her style, which ruined her work and made The Wanderer unreadable," according to Rowland Grey. He perpetuates the words
of that "splendid panegyric" of Macaulay's which stated authoritatively that everything she published for the last forty-three years of her life lowered her literary reputation because she carried a poor writing style into France, and emerged with a "broken Johnsonese, a barbarous patois." 76 Macaulay entirely overlooked the possibility of maturation of the woman and her writing style. Some modern feminist criticism denies Macaulay's contention, claiming her last novel, The Wanderer to be a mature and intelligent text, full of experiences unique to females and therefore valuable, 77 although Macaulay dubbed it "very bad".

Opposed to this phallicly empowered form of criticism, it is possible to attribute Frances's style alteration to other sources as many female writers have done. Janet Todd, for example, claims that Frances would not have been influenced in this way by Johnson because she was too selectively aware of her own writing style. She used either the female language of sensibility, or, when appropriate, the bombastic male discourse of commonsense used by fathers, guardians and Johnson. 78 Virginia Woolf attributed her loss of immature but pleasing sparkle to her removal from the Teignmouth set, where the Rishtons had provided Frances with much of the social raw material for her novels. 79

Nicole Ware Jouve, following concepts proposed by Cixous and Kristeva in "Her Leg's Bestride the Channel", 80 writes of bilinguality in terms of maternity and paternity, where the original language remains at the pre-Oedipal state, while the acquired language remains symbolic and patriarchal. This supposition is doubly confounded by Frances, where the acquired language, French, was the native tongue of her maternal Huguenot grandmother, Esther Sleepe, with whom she spent much time. 81 And although apparently acquiring the second language which Macaulay believed influenced her style, this "second" language may have reawakened the maternal pre-Oedipal bond, proposing it as first, and not second at all! Hence, we have a confusion of style as Frances actually wrote her early texts in the acquired patriarchal tongue which she addressed to her paternal parent, while reverting to the pre-Oedipal maternal language (if in a rudimentary form) in later life. This ambivalent fluctuation between the two forms accounts more readily for her style change than the supposed influence of Johnson. For although it is impossible to deny the possibility of Johnson having some influence on the style of any writer of that era, the degree of acceptance of Macaulay's contention has diminished her ability as a novelist. Although Isobel Grundy credits Johnson with "assisting and bringing forward" 82 a number of
women writers, she also states that "Johnson saw no woman as reaching the pinnacles of literature," perhaps reflecting the attitudes of the century. In one astounding piece of malignancy, Tourtellot successfully encapsulated the personal criticism society levelled at both women, when he wrote that, by 1794, "Fanny Burney was gone from the busy stage of eighteenth-century life as surely as Mrs Piozzi, and was missed much less acutely. In her praise, however, it must be said that her exit was far more glorious." This animosity is difficult to understand, as both women married under similar circumstances, that is, to socially disapproved of men. Neither woman committed a crime or an unsociable act, yet were to be subjected to adverse criticism or neglect for the following one hundred and fifty odd years.

Even at best, literary criticism of both women and their female editors has maintained a patronising form of faint praise, while reaching malice at its most critical point. Take, for example, J. W. Croker's review of The Memoirs of Dr Burney, "As a literary work we have not a word to say in its favour" and "a strange galimatias of pompous verbosity," and of The Wanderer, "Though tedious and tiresome as a whole, there are still strong gleams of sense which enliven the repetition of full and uninteresting adventures." These are typical Croker reviews; but, because the nature of the "uninteresting adventures" is specifically female, his comment is markedly biassed.

On the editorial work by Charlotte Barrett, critics wrote, "A large portion of the diary might have been omitted, without detriment to the work," and even of Joyce Hemlow's edition, "As though aware of a certain thinness of matter in the text, Miss Hemlow over-annotates." For sheer malignancy, it is difficult to surpass one review of Charlotte Barrett's edition of The Early Diaries:

Of all the self-admiring performances ever given to the world, this the most profoundly, and perpetually self-admiring ... It should more properly have been called a register of all the panegyrics uttered by all the prouners of her day ... of all the gossip that was ever lavished on a novelist, and her novel—— of all the twaddle of Bath—— and all the silliness that variegated the colloquies of the Thrale dinner table.

Abuse

In the long descent from the harmless talk of gossip, after encountering
abusive literary criticism and phallocentric editorial practices, we encounter the mental and physical abuse frequently practised by the "safe domestick fire" and often symbolised or encoded in women's self-revelatory writing. The reader soon encounters and recognises the fear and awareness of physical power in Frances Burney's novels. In fact Doody claims, "She is a student of aggression and obsession; one of her major motifs is suicide." For Hester, the abuse is more overt; often exposed by her seeking of solace in the deflected companionship of her writing. Often, this awareness is camouflaged by the rapier-sharp wit which made her such an asset to society.

"Mr Minchin," Hester writes, "is said to be bound by a secret but solemn Oath never to speak to his own Wife, with whom however he continues to live like other People." She adds, without further comment, that he "has likewise a large Family of Children." Accrediting her reader with the intelligence of a gossip-confidante, she does not articulate the implication of marital rape which would be part of such domestic tyranny. Yet she herself was well aware of its existence, as she wrote to Frances of "when the Pillow is hard and disgusting of itself." During the Welsh tour of 1774, when "Mr Thrale will not be conversed with by me on any subject", she again became pregnant.

This lack of interest in a wife's well-being compared to her availability as a sexual commodity, denies the equality which any contractual form of marriage implies. It was obviously a wide-spread attitude, as is evidenced by Boswell: "Mrs Boswell, after a slow recovery from her miscarriage of the previous winter, was pregnant once more."

Such sexual and domestic violence are intertwined in both Frances's and Hester's lives, if not through their own experiences, then vicariously through relatives and friends. Then, as now, attitudes to seduction and rape were ambivalent, although theoretically gaining disapproval, especially since influenced by the domesticity of George the Third's court. Effectively, licentiousness and ribald humour were an integral aspect of society.

In Thraliana, Hester indignantly expresses her own view of revulsion toward the "Monster" who had spent dark evenings stabbing the pretty girls of London "to which Enormity was added by the Perpetrator some Expressions of peculiar Cast; cruel, indecent and undeserved." While she applauds a decent, rich merchant, J. J. Angerstein for offering a reward for the man's capture, she notes angrily that the
Strawberry Hill enclave (Walpole and his set) "sett all the Town o' Laughing at Angerstein because of his Quixotism." This was despite the humiliation and pain of the victims, with whom she obviously empathised.

This physical form of abuse also existed beside a verbal form of sexual taunting, intended to ensure female subjugation. In her diary, Anne Lister records the social stigma attached to her lesbianism, and the puerile forms of humour through which many taunts were administered. "The people generally remark, as I pass along, how much I am like a man ... At the top of Currey Lane, as I went, three men said as usual; "That's a man", and one asked [sic] "Does your cock stand?" I know not how it is, but I feel low this morning," she adds, indicating the depth of depression this verbal harassment caused her.

Much of the social ambivalence of attitudes to rape and seduction can be attributed to the comparative relaxation of Puritan influences, leading to the works of Defoe, Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne, whose writings, although often ribald, were more socially acceptable than the contemporary but pornographic productions such as John Wilkes' parody Essay on Women which was condemned by parliament, The Fifteen Plagues of a Maidenhood, Venus in the Cloister or Cleland's notorious Memoirs of the Life of Fanny Hill.

Hester Piozzi's friend and apologist, Edward Mangin, saw Samuel Richardson's novels not only as "effusions to be decried for their imbecility, but condemned as pernicious and to arraign their author as a licentious writer." This evaluation might now seem Puritanical; however, when the enormous success of Clarissa is considered with its pivotal rape scene, it had a considerable impact on women and contemporary attitudes. No matter how many women he consulted, Richardson, as a male writer, could never accurately portray the female experience of rape. Clarissa remained a projection of Richardson's own female potentiality, the aspect Jung called the anima. Terry Eagleton describes this duality as a "paradox" expressed in terms of the masculinity of Clarissa's writing and the femininity of Lovelace's, and does not consider them to be projected aspects of Richardson himself. In the same way, Lovelace personifies all that is atavistic in the male, recreating the author's own darker, or Shadow, aspect. Under an urbane and literate persona, he is Hester Thrale's "Monster", who perpetuates "cruel, indecent and undeserved" acts on powerless women. Instead of Walpole and the Strawberry Hill enclave's applause of the Monster, we find Richardson and his entourage colluding in the perpetuation of male domination under the guise of
a moral text.

While Eagleton proposes Stone’s affective nuclear family model’s emphasis on development of bourgeois individualism leading to "exaltation" of women, his claim that Clarissa proposes the true history of women’s oppression at the hands of eighteenth-century patriarchy, is weakened. At no time does Clarissa indicate an alteration between the two modes. She is denied all expressions of individualism. Clarissa exhibits proof of the continuation of a patriarchal mode of family as the paradigm for society; all revolves about the actual or symbolic phallus. Beyond the rhetoric and discourse, for females, Clarissa remains a novel perpetuating rape; immortalizing the raper as a rather attractive rogue unable to contain his lust, and the victim as a woman preferring to die than live and be defiled. Clarissa, after defying a male parent, suffers deflected paternal punishment, while voyeuristic readers and critics titter and applaud with compassion equal to the Strawberry Hill’s reaction to the "Monster".

Sexuality

Richardson’s novel proposes one example of eighteenth-century attitudes to the female sexuality which is forced into encodement and subtextuality in their journals and letters. Twentieth-century female readers are able to empathise strongly with the suppressed forms of anxiety expressed in the self-exploratory forms of women’s writing, speculating on the suppressed content of texts by editors and biographers, especially in regard to sexuality. This transhistorical sense of anxiety transcends the writer-reader polarity and creates the sense of solidarity which overides questions of "truth" and subjectivity of interpretation.

A sense of subjective association of experience between reader and narrator can be engendered by female anxiety over sexuality, as is exemplified when Frances records Samuel Crisp’s first reading of Evelina, and his realization of its authorship. Even the Victorian editor, Annie Raine Ellis, detects the sexual implications of their relationship. The inequality of years and domination implicit in the Crisp-Burney girls’ relationship is evocative of threatening sexual encounters, or more overt forms of conduct. The pleasure of visiting Chesington and their demonstrative affection for Crisp are results typical of the female child’s interpretation of sexuality in terms of affection and pleasure, justifying her own collusion in sexuality in terms
of grand passion. The relationship of Crisp was merely an extension of the manipulative behaviour of their father, infused with an equally cloying form of possessive sentimentality. When Crisp calls the girls his "virtuous seraglio", he not only derides their virginity, perhaps because it is withheld from him, but also blatantly exposes his own sexual fantasy about them. He uses the word "seraglio" with its sexual connotations, where a term like "adopted daughters" would have been more acceptable, if less provocative.

Crisp's use of the diminutive "Fannikin" is indicative of his lover-like attitude to her, especially when considered with his first letter to her, and her reply, which contain flirtatious remarks such as "we old Fellows are inclined to be very Fond of You." Significantly, these letters have been severely edited by Frances herself, with half sections of two pages entirely cut away; a strange necessity in first letters between a sixty-six year old man and a twenty-one year old girl. Crisp's own intentions, whether conscious or not, can hardly be doubted in the light of some of his letters. For example, he writes to Susan with blatant sexual imagery, if not phallic then clitoral, ordering her to buy two ermine - pointed paint brushes of "the shortest and stiffest", promising "I'll pay Fannikin in money, and you in love." This direct reference to the dual means of repayment indicates his own power over both girls as commodities, either through monetary or emotional bargaining; both indicate an awareness of domination.

A similar pattern of behaviour which indicates masculine use of sexuality to enforce his own dominance, can be seen in Johnson's attitude to Hester's daughter Queeney. Although Johnsonians would have us applaud his kind interest in a developing young girl, and consider it to have grandfatherly implications further examinations of such an unnatural relationship between such disparate individuals suggests a less innocent relationship.

In The Queeney Letters, Lord Lansdowne gives ample indication of Johnson's fawning affection for the young girl, as he addressed her as, "My sweet, dear, pretty little Miss", "My Dearest Love", "My Sweeting", "My dear Charmer", "my Lovely Dear", and similar appellations, more suited to a mistress than a pre-and post-pubescent female child. Later, he wrote,

everybody talks of pretty Miss Thrale, and proud Miss Thrale, and Miss Thrale in this place, and Miss Thrale in that, but I am all for my own dear Miss Thrale in the Borough, unless I could be with her I could persuade myself that every place was the Borough.
On 28 August 1780, he wrote pettishly to admonish her, "no new acquaintance [can] much love you, you slight those who love you more in favour of those that love you less." 109 This indicates that she was attempting to distance herself from him; an attitude hardly supportive of the grandfatherly role history has accorded him.

The inference of something unacceptable in the Johnson-Queeney relationship is most powerfully indicated by his own words of complaint to the young girl in 1772. "Mamma used us both very sorely when she hindered you from writing to me." 110 Lansdowne interprets this as officious maternal interference by Hester, to whom he shows continued 'malus animus'. Lansdowne complains, "we now find her endeavouring to prevent Queeney from writing to him again." 111 These attempts at prevention question why Hester thought it necessary to intervene, given that it occurred during the period of Johnson's almost continuous stay in the Thrale household. From this most significant piece of interference we can assume that Hester became aware of some impropriety existing in Johnson's attitude or behaviour to her young daughter. This contention is amply supported by the subsequent behaviour of all parties.

Johnson, as social, literary and extended-familial patriarch, saw it as his right to extract subservience, entertainment and some form of sexual gratification from the female Thrales. His rage at being circumvented twice by Hester — once through her intervention over Queeney, and again of her rejection of his "guardianship" — was the motivating force behind his most abusive letter.

Hester's obvious relief at being able to eject Johnson's negative influence from her life, implies a desire to eradicate all reminder of his impositions, as well as his threatening physical presence from her daughters. Queeney's later hostility toward her mother was a perfectly normal reaction of resentment for having allowed Johnson's irregular behaviour and attachment to have occurred in the first place. Ambivalently, it also expressed a resentment of suppression of Johnson's affection and his gifts. Her hostility was also a reaction to making sexuality visible through acknowledgment, instead of keeping it in the private realm of guilt or shame-ridden secrecy.

It is difficult to assess the degree of sexual impropriety which occurred, but a corroborative piece of evidence that Johnson's influence on the Thrale females was negative, occurs in Merritt's editorial writing of Mrs Piozzi's "Minced Meat for Pyes." He comments on the elderly spinster Susan Thrale, who was quoted and interviewed by George Ticknor of Boston in 1857, and remarked that "she did not
care to talk about Doctor Johnson, or still less about her mother," indicating continued hostility. 111

Given that Crisp and Johnson and stood in partially paternal roles in both households, and were empowered by age and gender over the young, vulnerable girls in the homes, such interference is analogous for incest. Even modern male editors, such as Lars E. Troide, attribute this attraction to "Fanny's intelligence, coupled with an emotional maturity beyond her years," colluding with the secretive sexual power-mechanisms of the original offenders. 112

Incest

"A horror of incest was, according to Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown, a universal human fear", states Alan Macfarlane. He claims, "in England, I found that such a revulsion was hardly present at all. The English from early times seemed regularly unconcerned about incest." 114 Macfarlane's view is unrealistic given the secretive nature of this crime. Because it relies so heavily on power for perpetuation, and on the victim's fear for collusion and secrecy, his deduction of "unconcern" tends to mirror the attitude of the perpetrator. The opposing "concern" of the victim is rarely articulated orally or in print, and so, to Macfarlane, does not exist. Because he finds little documented proof of revulsion, he assumes a tolerance which most women would find totally unacceptable.

Incest, however, did permeate the lives of both Frances and Hester and the only evidence supporting Macfarlane's contention of its acceptability, is implied by the typical secrecy around which families try to guard their vulnerabilities.

Doody has documented most of the incestuous realities of Frances Burney's life, such as Maria Allen's falling in love with her step-father at sixteen, and exposed the degree of incestuous implication in passages of her novels. 115 In Evelina, the young heroine's reaction to her father, shown in, "I can never describe my feelings when I saw him sink upon his knees before me!", when he cries, "Oh, dear resemblance of thy murdered mother!" is much more passionate than her decorous acceptance of Lord Orville's hand. 116 In fact, the passionate father-daughter passages represent Frances's own relationship with her father "this dearest, most amiable, this best-beloved-most worthy of men" as is shown during her lapse into ecstasy at twenty, when her step-mother went away and left her to care for her father." 118
It is also in *Evelina* that we find the potentially incestuous relationship between the heroine and Macartney circumvented. Significantly, it is between half-brother and sister, repeating the real-life equivalent of Frances's brother James and his elopement and incestuous menage with their half-sister Sarah (Sally). As James was also the brother who had teased Frances about her reading and called her a little dunce, it can be assumed that the only sphere for his enactment of sexual dominance was by the "safe domestick fire" where he could reflect the male authority of its patriarch.

In Hester's life, we find significantly encoded mechanisms of sexuality in her childhood. In her *Autobiographical Memoirs*, she recalls being a "joint plaything" for both her uncle and father, whose "anxious Tenderness for me would often pass the Bounds of common or of uncommon Attention." Later, she recalled her father's reluctance to face the possibility of her marriage, and his jealousy. Mr Salusbury's possessiveness is typical of the incestuously-inclined parent, whether fulfilled, conscious or unconscious, and can be equated to Moulton-Barrett's, indicative of an unnatural and unsolicited passion.

Incest, as in Frances's life, was to arise repeatedly in Hester's, firstly, through her thoughtless exclamation on first meeting Gabriel Piozzi, "He is amazingly like my Father!" which gave Baretti fuel to fire his malignant criticisms of her by circulating the rumour that Piozzi was Mr Salusbury's illegitimate son. Secondly, the possibility of incest was aroused by Jeremiah Crutchley's supposed courtship of, and admiration for, Queeney Thrane, which must have caused Hester great anxiety, owing to her belief that Crutchley was Henry Thrane's illegitimate son. Her concern was, as usual, misinterpreted by her detractors.

**Domestic Violence**

Incest is the most obviously sexual aspect of domestic violence, but employed for the same reason, to ensure female subjugation in the familial hierarchy. There is obviously nothing new about domestic violence, as women's lives in the eighteenth century were organized to accept brutality as inevitable. Mary Granville Delany's biographer wrote "her early recollections read like the innermost confessions of a melancholy Bedlamite" when, for eight years, she suffered nocturnal weeping paroxysms and cruel "separation of my mind" because of the treatment of her forty-three years
older husband. The Cornishman, Alexander Pendarve, "could inflict a parallel cycle of agony on his helpmeet without going to the trouble of thinking about it." 125

Frances was to inscribe the domestic violence suffered by her sisters into her novels, not only as a means of subverting and advertising her own anger and empathy, but as a form of reassurance to them, knowing how closely they read her texts. She inscribed within them a reassuring message of survival and normalcy which would bring resolution of fear and powerlessness. Even her heroines offer that message, ensuring the female reader of the possibilities for happiness and fulfilment. 126 Cruel husbands die; wives seek separation; aggressive and undesired suitors can be spurned; "wanderers" find a safe haven.

From Frances's novels, it is possible to be educated in a wide range of domestic violence. Doody maintains, "She is masterly at depicting emotional blackmail" and each of her novels is a study of anxiety. 127 In Cecilia the reader encounters one of the most distressing literary scenes of domestic violence because it encompasses so many aspects. 128 It covers emotional blackmail and silences, threats of suicide, demands for money, lies, cruelty, threats with a weapon, and physical abuse culminating in a suicide intended to cause guilt. For Frances to have imagined this total scenario is less likely than her having utilized the domestic dramas of her sisters Charlotte Francis/Broome and Susan Phillips, whose experiences can be inferred from Frances's brief references such as, "she dreads some new outrage from his vindictive character." 129

Hester's life was also surrounded by domestically encountered violence. Of her beloved mother, she wrote, "I wonder almost how She escaped with her Life." 130 Later, she was to repeat this of her daughter Cecy's complaints of her husband's "gross Avarice and rough Behaviour", but it was through her own life with Henry Thrale that she was to experience the full violence of domestic abuse which undoubtedly led to appreciation of peace with her second husband.

Ironically, domestic cruelty has become yet another of the charges levelled at Hester through her treatment of her children. Despite the Lockean ideals of child-rearing, the Thrale children were also reared under Biblical injunctions admired by their mother, an assiduous student of the Scriptures in their original languages for over sixty years. 131 Hebraic patriarchal injunctions such as "sparing the rod and spoiling the child" were reinforced by the rigour of Protestant attitudes decreeing scourging the body for the preservation of the soul. Although corporal
punishment was to become viewed as an abhorrence, it was not only still socially acceptable but often desirable in the light of Dr Gregory's injunction to first inspire fear and awe in a child before modifying it with veneration and friendship. 132

Although Hester's silver whistle and use of the "smart" (the whip on the nursery mantelpiece) actually illustrate her wish to purify their souls by chastisement of the body, it is also possible to infer the possibility of an unconscious desire to punish the children for their existence, which she may have resented through her unwilling conception, a view I further consider in Chapter three. Their presence ambivalently lent her own some importance in the household, while denying her valuable time and freedom to further any literary aspirations.

However, in the conjugal relationship with Henry, domestic abuse cannot be accorded any positive intentions. It was as an extended family member that Johnson stated, "I know no man who is more master of his wife and family than Thrale. If he holds up a finger he is obeyed." 133 Such subjugation can only be elicited as a result of domestic tyranny, the violence of which may well have destroyed a weaker woman than Hester Thrale. Her submissive behaviour pattern was enacted, as by many women, as a survival tactic, ensuring a relatively harmonious environment for familial and social interaction. She evaluated her position judiciously in the Thraliana thus, "with Mr Thrale I was ever cautious of contending, conscious that a Misunderstanding there would never answer." 134

Once again, there is further evidence of the Thrales' "hard and disgusting Pillow" which indicates the use of sexual power in the home. 135 It is implicit in the bald reporting of apparently divorced, but interconnecting, comments such as we saw when Hester became pregnant during the time Henry Thrale used silence as a punishment. 136 When, on 9th April 1776, she wrote, "So ends my Pride, my hopes; my possession of present, & expectation of future Delight" that signified the death of Harry, within weeks, she was once again pregnant, despite being rendered inarticulate by despair. In 1778, when the brewery was failing, she wrote "My Master dispirited & almost in Despair about pecuniary Matters," which forced her to utilize her nimble wits to rescue his brewery: "The journey did me no harm I think, tho' in the 8th:Month of the 12:" Pregnancy," yet "Here is a new Agony" she added, on going into Labour prematurely. Later, she recorded a further account. "I pressed him [Henry] to order the coach—he could not be hurried ... I told his Valet my Danger, & begged him to hasten his Master: no Pain, no Entreaties of
mine could make him set out." "I" Later, she miscarried in "utmost Agony".

Beginning with the gentler methods of ensuring conformity within the female section of society, we have seen an inevitable progression toward more overt forms of violence. Within the Burney, Salusbury and Thrale households, the methods used to guarantee female subjugation ranged from emotional manipulation, through incest to domestic violence. Ironically, both Frances and Hester have continued to suffer from editorial and historical violence for generations.

Both women were forced to adopt conformist personae for physical and social survival, yet each used her written discourse as a method of ensuring personal integrity and reinforcing her own importance as both an individual and a woman.
Notes for Chapter 2.

15. E.D., lxiv.
18. Family Book, 3 July 1778.
29. Wakefield, 29.
32. Doody, 115.
33. Cecilia, 461.
34. Thraliana, 2: 739.
36. Spacks, Gossip, 32.
39. Spacks, Gossip, 32.
Notes (cont.)

40 Thraliana, Vol. 1, 467.
41 Thraliana, Vol. 1, 969, 969 n.2.
42 Piozziana, 139.
43 The European Magazine, xii (1788), 313-17, 393-9, xiv (1788), 89-99; "the frontless female, who now goes by the mean appellation of Piozzi." Baretti accused her of causing the death of Harry through bad nursing, of threatening Queeney's life by the use of tin worm-pills, and of having an affair with Piozzi while still married to Thrale.
44 Thraliana, Vol. 2, 615 refers to an unknown letter (3 Nov, 1784) in which Baretti accused her of "Murder and Fornication in the grossest Terms."
46 "Love letters of Mrs Piozzi to William Augustus Conway," Living Age (Boston: 18 October, 1862), 103.
48 Piozziana, 12.
49 Thraliana, 810, n.1.
50 Autobiography, 128-9.
51 Life. For Boswell's accusations of her misrepresentation of Johnson's character: Vol. 1, 28, 68; Vol 4, 201, for his accusations of inaccuracies: Vol. 1, 92, 416; Vol 3 226, 229; Vol 4, 412.
52 Steele Smith, 289.
54 F.D., xliii.
56 Order of letters:
   i) from Mrs Piozzi to Dr Johnson, 30 June, Bath;
   ii) a circular to the other guardians of the Thrale daughters, including a copy to Johnson;
   iii) the famous rejection letter (Letters, Vol. 3, July 2, 1784,) 1;
   iv) her response; and
   v) his last letter.
57 A. Edward Newton states: "I am a Johnsonian ... but I am bound to admit that Johnson had behaved badly and was to behave much worse", 790.
60 "Letters of Mrs Piozzi to William Augustus Conway", 170.
61 True Story, 6.
A. J. Russell, "Mrs Piozzi's Love Letters Written at the Age of Eighty", The Bellman xii (Minneapolis, 23 March 1912), 3-14.
Chapman, 154-6.
True Story, 5.
Marjory Nicholson, "Thomas Paine, Edward Nares and Mrs Piozzi's Marginalia," Huntington Library Bulletin x (Oct. 1936), 123, n.2, lists the contradictory reports of 's ability to read and write different languages.
Thraliana, 1: 686.
Hyde, Family Book, 83.
Thraliana, 1: 272.
Thraliana, 1: xix.
Autobiography, ii. "Boswell was jealous of Mrs Thrale (...) as a rival biographer and lost no opportunity of depreciating her." Also, Morris Brownell, in "Hester Lynch Piozzi's Marginalia," Eighteenth Century Life 3 (1977), 100, states, "Since Boswell's Life of Johnson it has been customary to attack Mrs Piozzi's irresponsibilities, inaccuracy and carelessness as a writer and critic."
Rowland Grey, 81-2.
Macaulay, 152.
Todd, 282.
Todd, 285.
Monteith, 7.
E.D., xliii.
Grundy, 66.
Rev. of The Wanderer, British Critic, new series 1 (April 1814), 374-86.
Rev. of Charlotte Barrett's The Early Diaries of Frances Burney 1768-1778, Eclectic Review 11, (April 1842), 451-70.
"Madame d'Arblay", Blackwood's Magazine, 51 (June 1842), 784-94.
Doody, Frances Burney: The Life in the Works, 3.
Thraliana, 260.
A. M. Broadley ed, Dr Johnson and Mrs Thrale, (London: John Lane, 1910), 193-4. Also, Hyde, 108.
Boswell for the Defence, 147.
Notes (cont.)

95 Thraliana, 770.
96 Anne Lister, 48.
97 H. Montgomery Hyde, 103-4.
98 Piozziana, 70

See also Susan Staves, "British Seduced Maidens," Eighteenth Century Studies, 14: 2 (1980-1), 109-134, which equates the parallel development of the pathetic seduced maiden as a literary construct, with the developing status of the father who is seen as the chief victim.


101 Thraliana, 770.
102 Eagleton, 5.
103 E.D., Vol 1: introduction "I".
104 E.D., Vol 1: ix.
106 E.D., 1: xxxiv.
107 Queeney Letters, 5, 20, 21.
108 Queeney Letters, 23.
109 Other examples include, 19 April 1781: "I would not have you think that I want either tenderness or respect for you." Why should she, if his attitude is totally innocent?

12 August 1784, "I love you, I loved your Father, and I loved your Mother as long as I could," indicating his attempts to manipulate her through sentiment, plus continuous animosity toward for her rejection of him.

110 Queeney Letters, 8.
111 Queeney Letters, 7.
112 Marginalia, 83
113 E.J.&L., 1: xviii. Yet another example of this sexually-implied domination of an old man occurs when Frances records, with revulsion, of her sister, being "kissed whether she will or no "by Baretti, who demands "Kiss - a- me, Charlotte," E.J.&L., Vol.1, 247, n. 52.

114 Macfarlane, 3.
115 Doody, Frances Burney, 130
116 Evelina, 372.
118 E.D., 1: 211.
120 Thraliana, 1: 127.
121 Thraliana, 1: 300, 297.
122 Thraliana, 1: 448.
123 Queeney Letters, 61.
124 Queeney Letters, 61.
125 Tourtellot, 206.

Other examples include Mary Granille-Delany's reference to Lord Dysart's "ill-usage" of his wife, Vol 2, 12, and Dr Burney's recollection of Mrs Clive Arne's "manual flagellation," Slava Klima (ed), 63.
Notes (cont.)

126 Feminists have difficulty resolving the self-contradictory nature of Burney's novels because their realistic assessment of female difficulties is resolved by the ideology of romantic love. For a further discussion, see Straub's "Divided Fictions."
127 Doody, Frances Burney, 3.
128 Cecilia, 384-419.
129 I&L, 4: 36; 4: 272, 345.
130 Thraliana, 1: 281.
131 Piozziana, 7.
132 Kowaleski-Wallace, 344.
133 Autobiography, 28.
134 Thraliana, 1: 133.
135 Doody, Frances Burney, 105.
136 Broadley, 193-4, and Hyde, 108.
137 Thraliana, 1: 400-1.
CHAPTER 3

"Searches and Expectations"¹: The Female Body
In Chapter two, we saw the progressively violent means used by society and family members to ensure conformist behaviour in women. In this chapter, I extend this examination into the burgeoning scientific field of medicine. Beginning with a general overview of the status and practice of medicine during the lives of Hester and Frances, I use non-literary medical texts beside the written discourses of both women, to determine the degree to which their lives and texts were altered by the violence legitimised by medical science. Concentrating on the vulnerable procreative organs of the female body, I maintain that the physical stresses and abuse women suffered meant that much potential creativity remained unrealized.

I am aware that this mingling of literary and non-literary texts tends to deny some structuralist and post-structuralist aims of negating the dynamic of context. However, juxtapositioning socio-cultural theory with the primary texts of eighteenth-century diarists enhanced my own awareness of both, and I believe that "context" can only lose relevance through a contractual equality between reader and narrator. The more culturally or historically alienated the two parties are, the more vital and dynamic the part that context plays in the association, particularly in relation to the writer. If this understanding is not established, comments by diarists become irrelevant. A pertinent example of this occurs in Hester Piozzi's comment on the "death-doing crotchet", which is puzzling to the twentieth-century reader unless familiar with the murderous tools of eighteenth-century midwifery. Even a novel like Tristram Shandy becomes a more valuable social document with the realisation that Sterne was parodying contemporary childbirth, obstetricians and obstetrics throughout his first four chapters.

In studying Hester Thrall-Piozzi, I concentrate on her pregnancies and childbearing, as they dominated so many years of her life. To determine the degree of pain and extent of demand that childbearing made on her body and time, I try to reconstruct her experiences by braiding together later eighteenth-century middle-class birthing practices and comments from her Family Book and Thrallana. The main violence done to Hester, although minimised by the immense strength of her tiny body and her careful choice of midwives, was through familial and social expectations of women to reproduce with demonstrable fecundity, even with an often brutal and uncaring husband. Frances Burney proposed a different area of examination because of the surgical violence of a mastectomy performed on her body. Using the texts of Julia Epstein, I examine the implication of Frances's mastectomy on her writing,
but diverge from Epstein’s contention to develop a theme which proposes that Frances suffered horrific birth-canal trauma, or procidentia, with the birth of her only child. This condition, I maintain, affected her writing, behaviour and marital relationship, and was initiated by an inept rural delivery of her son.

Thus, in this chapter, I contend that both women were subjected to unnecessary violence through the vulnerability of their bodies, and both showed an enormous amount of physical and mental strength to have survived to become such elderly Bath widows.

Eighteenth-century Medicine

While writing an introduction to her edition of Mary Granville-Delany’s Autobiography and Correspondence, Lady Llandover described Mrs Delany’s relationship to the medicine of her day, thus: “the wholesale destruction of constitution and often life, entailed by the medical treatment of the last century... [Mrs Delany] could not divest herself of the idea of the duty of submission to medical decrees which had been inculcated in her from birth.” Mrs Delany’s attitude and her sufferings at the hands of doctors exemplify the lot of most of her class and contemporaries.

The eighteenth century was, however, a period of great change for the medical profession. Male doctors were wresting childbirth from the hands of female midwives and drug provision from apothecaries; and as a result of the changed views of the Church of England regarding the spilling of blood, surgery was being removed from the trade of barber. Violent and radical surgery became a means of asserting autonomy for the formerly fragmented profession. This violence is most readily visible when applied to the female body, especially those parts solely female, because of the constant need of attention to their reproductive organs. Women were ideal patients because of their conditioned submission to all things masculine, and their vulnerability through bodily pain.

Throughout Judaic-Christian culture, the female body has widely and generally been considered an inadequate replica of the male, so it was not surprising that men used the vulnerability caused by their female contemporaries fear of pain and death to ensure further submission. This power was enforced with such brutality that it is possible to infer masculine fear of both maternal reproductive power, and what
Spacks calls, "the raging force of female sexuality," leading to an unconscious desire to eradicate both.

This ambivalence has found expression throughout Christianity, personified through the two Marys — the Virgin-Mother and the Whore — and can be considered as a vital factor in causing the social scapegoating of Hester Thrale-Piozzi. Married to a man she hardly knew, she had found approval as the mother of a large family. When her passion for Gabriel Piozzi was revealed, it unleashed such a social disapproval of her sexuality that its repercussions are still firmly entrenched in twentieth-century commentaries on her life.

As modern medicine can be said to have developed between the reigns of George I and George IV, its similarities to our own treatments are readily apparent. Sir William Cheselden had perfected a method of lateral lithotomy which took only fifty-four seconds to perform, successfully reducing the death rate from kidney stone to seventeen percent. Percival Pott delineated fracture treatment. James Lind treated scurvy with vitamin C. There was a great deal of interest in alternate medicines which took two forms: mountbacks ("quacks") or observers ("empiricks"), such as John Wesley whose Primitive Physick had run to thirty-two editions by 1828: recommending the use of natural herbs and grains as well as the wonder drug of the century, Peruvian bark, cinchona, used by both Hester Thrale and Frances Burney.

Yet, even with this developing plethora of medical skill, Priscilla Wakefield stated, "no apprehension need be entertained of women becoming too robust; their natural inferiority in strength, and the indisposition incident of childbearing, will too often secure the feminine delicacy of their persons and constitutions." Ironically, instead of endeavouring to alleviate this vulnerability to reproductive disease and trauma, the medical profession’s excursions into the area were all of a violent nature. Such excursions were required in order to demonstrate power, in short, to draw control of all medicine into male hands. Medicine, and its influence over women, was a highly politicised affair, especially as improvements in technique were adopted with reluctance. Ironically, other really innovative improvements such as James Lind’s recommendations in his Treatise on the Scurvy were adopted with great speed.

The female body’s vulnerability to social expectations provides a starting point for the development of conformity. Wakefield wrote of the health dangers of "steel collars, braces, backboards, and feet-stocks" designed to enhance the female figure and cause submissive behaviour to the physical restrictions they
imposed. She and others complained of the torturous whalebone stays and leathern bodices. All this pain was designed to create an attractive commodity to sell on the marriage market, and fear of not succeeding as an object of barter was oppressive. Mary Wortley Montagu described it thus, "I have a Mortal Aversion to be an Old Maid, and a decaid Oak before my Window, leavelesse, half-rotten, and shaking its wither'd Top, puts me in Mind every morning of an Antiquated Virgin, Bald, with Rotten teeth and shaking of the Palsie." The medical profession was able to use this social anxiety when it combined with pain, to enhance its domination of the female body.

Edward Shorter, in the provocative and awesome A History of Women's Bodies, not only examines this contention of female pain but also evokes such powerful images of female suffering through his descriptions of nauseating discharges, gangrenous uteri, brutal raping husbands and haemorrhaging inverted cervices, that he evokes a great sense of empathy within a female reader. His powerful writing exposes the limitations of personal evidence of sufferings — glimpses of which must often be sought in the diarist's textual nods, winks and silences.

Breast Cancer

One of the strongest and most significant pieces of writing concerning a uniquely female experience occurs in Volume 6 of Frances's Journals and Letters which is known as the "mastectomy document." Through Hemlow's edition of this work, and Julia Epstein's essays on this piece, women can now gain access to a neglected but valuable text.

A first reading of the journal-letter entries evokes the full horror of an unanaesthsctised mastectomy, and an awareness of the woman's bravery. Epstein's study claims the work as a paraliterary document because its "non-professional descriptive history encapsulates the psychological and anatomical consequences of cancer," by textualizing her pain and intimately-encoded responses, uses the act of writing to embody and palliate her suffering.

Violence and the fear of it form a strong theme in all Frances's novels, providing an impetus for her impulse to corporealise her medical terror into a narrative. In the same way her fear of committing social improprieties in Queen Charlotte's court had been diminished by her witty conversion of her anxiety into
the "coughing, sneezing and choking" passage she wrote for Susan's amusement.  

For Epstein, the mastectomy document provides a matrix of violence for the diarist's writing as it was a socially defiant and self-inflicted act, resulting from a long, painful inability to write comfortably before, and a long convalescence after, the surgery. Yet, when the surgeons arrived to perform the operation, she immediately took up her pen and wrote notes to her husband and son, her invariable reaction being to translate fear into text.

Although I believe to infer Frances's corporealising of fear into text to be a transformation of her inner self into written discourse, Epstein believes the reverse and that Frances's ability to write resulted from her ability to displace herself from the body. However, I suggest the former, given Frances's short, revelatory injunction written on the copied version of the mastectomy passage. It reads "Breast operation/Respect this/ & beware not to injure it!!!" Yet, both in the record of her own subjective reactions, and her written quasi-medical documentation, an ambivalence is recognisable through her attempt to incorporate both forms of narrative in a single text. This may explain the appearance of fictiveness picked up by Epstein. It is also possible to infer a desperate attempt to mask the realities of terror and anger from Frances's wider male audience, and an exhausting effort to maintain a submissive persona in the face of such violence.

Fully to appreciate the mastectomy document, it is necessary to consider the editorial comments of Joyce Hemlow, et al., as they help to allay some confusion over the existence of two apparently original versions. Although the original letter from Frances to Esther Burney was written over nearly four months, a "fair" copy was made by her son Alexander and husband, which she annotated and circulated. The original, kept with other relevant pieces of writing, were later edited and further annotated from 1820-1825.

Therefore, the whole "mastectomy document" is comprised of the original letter of reply from Baron de Larrey announcing the necessity for the operation, a letter from the police authorising the spreading of straw outside the d'Arblay residence to lessen noise, a full medical record written by de Larrey's assistant, and the original letter to Esther.  

In this cluster of transcribers, copies, narrations and audience we see both the difficulties of definition which attend self-revelatory writing genres, and their importance as societally reinforcing discourses. Although Epstein tends to place
Frances's personal alienation within a context of pain and authorial creativity, I see this whole document to be a celebration of familial and social relationships. It creates an enormous reserve of interaction, and demonstrates the diverse and widespread influence of a personal trauma on extended social relationships.

By using the widest variety of literary and non-literary sources, Frances has created an original piece of literature. Read in one way, it provides a sociological study of surgery, the extent of police interests, home nursing, and pre- and post-surgical practicalities. From a subjective viewpoint, Frances exposes the fear of acknowledgment of the possibility of facing cancer, reluctance to face surgery, and concern for the vicarious suffering of her relatives. She also exhibits the prime characteristics of the gossip-evoking solace mechanisms by inviting her audience to participate in the drama, terror and pain of her experience.

In this document, Frances has fashioned herself as the heroine of this drama. "My heart beat fast: I saw all hope was over. I called upon them to speak. M. Dubois then ... pronounced my doom." Further, she has narrated her own story with as much drama as one of her novels, becoming a combined heroine, narrator, dramatist and medical researcher. By accomplishing this blend, she reaffirms herself as a woman while under the threat of physical and emotional disintegration. At the same time, she offers her intended, and possible, audience, the reassurance of her survival, replicating exactly the apparent intention of her novels. Through her fiction, she assures women that they will survive neglect, abuse and social ineptitude. The best example of this is in her novel Cecilia, where Priscilla Harrel is neglected, abused, threatened and ultimately widowed by her husband's dramatic suicide. In the mastectomy document, she dramatises her own experience to offer reassurance of the survival of painful surgery, and even of that most dreaded of ailments, cancer. Because Frances is personally and authorially engrossed in evoking a female solidarity through gossip and solace, her texts slip effortlessly between the languages of verbal and written discourse, gossip and fiction. Her actual audience of Esther and other family members, become entwined with her potential audience. "I relate this, false confidence, now, as a warning to my dear Esther — my Sisters & Nieces," and so, to all women readers.

As well as her female readers, however, her wider audience included the husband and son Frances felt must be shielded from her own pain and terror, to the extent that she made excuses to send them away. This audience included
the male surgeons who performed the surgery, and the family males who would later be permitted to read the circulated journal-letter.

At a later date, Frances wrote, significantly, of the operation "which I was induced to undergo by the touching persuasions of the tenderest of husbands." 29 The surgery was performed by skilled army surgeons more used to the male anatomy, who, despite respect for her as a writer, patronized her by promising only a partial amputation. She soon realised Larrey's intentions to do a full removal when she saw his hand signals through the thin gauze handkerchief over her eyes. 30 "M. Dubois now tried to issue his command 'en militaire', but I resisted all that were resistable", she reported defiantly. 31 Dubois, d'Arblay and Larrey all colluded to patronize her, she recorded later with barely veiled resentment.

It is tempting to concur with Epstein's contention that "modern physicians have questioned the validity of the diagnosis made of Burney's illness," as it supports the proposition of masculine violation of females. However, her implication becomes speculative and unlikely with the realisation of the amount of knowledge of cancer which was extant in the eighteenth century. A British Medical Journal article records the existence of specialist cancer wards in a Middlesex Hospital in 1791, based on the French equivalent at Rheims conducted by Jean Godinet. 32 Radical mastectomy as a treatment for breast cancer had been documented since 1570, when Barthélemy Cabrol of Montpellier had excised a woman's breast and pectoralis major muscle and sprinkled the wound with vitriol. She survived a further twelve years, and died of a completely unrelated disease. 33 Although France was the forerunner of breast cancer research, records of its incidence have been documented in England since 1747. From this knowledge, it is unlikely than any reputable surgeon or physician would have failed to recognise such a widely documented condition, especially in France and given that Frances was attended by seven of the top French physicians and surgeons. 34 Whether radical surgery was a valid treatment at all, is another matter. H. J. Bloom and others, report at length on women whose breasts were entirely necrotic and declared inoperable, living for up to a further thirty-five years! One woman, described as having a whole breast "replaced by a fungating tumour with satellite nodules in the surrounding skin," survived for eighteen years and three months after discovering her tumour. 35

Bloom describes three degrees of untreated tumour activity based on a histological grading, which details a life expectancy of from four and a half to
fourteen years depending on the grade. Even if Frances’s tumour had proven inoperable, or if she had been left untreated, she may have survived a total malignancy for up to fourteen years. This questions both the efficacy of a treatment which is most likely to kill through operative trauma, post operative shock, haemorrhage or infection, and the legitimation of such medical violence toward women.

Breast cancer, and the fear of it, exists almost universally in women’s subculture, while trepidation over disfigurement from its treatment makes women vulnerable to both male demands for beauty, and the violence of brutal surgery. Part of this fear is diffused by its transference into gossip then writing. Ironically, this transference also perpetuates the fear through making the condition more visible and, therefore, more widespread.

Frances’s form of cancer was also of paramount importance in Hester Thrale’s life, as she suffered vicariously through her mother’s death due to breast cancer. A passage recorded in the intimate Family Book exposes not only the close relationship between the mother and daughter but proceeds to record the long description of suffering which ended in Mrs Salusbury’s death. 30 Hester wrote, “on observing her frequently to unbutton her Jesuit [a dress buttoned to the neck] and handle the part: I insisted on knowing what had happened, and found a small Lump which gradually and in despite of Medicine & Surgery increased in Size & Pain, till today/when/it ended in Death. it never broke at all tho’ sometimes it would bleed; but the Swelling was enormous, & the blackness quite horrible.” 31

As was her usual practice, Hester returned to this ordeal, writing and rewriting her despair into her own substitute for a pre-Oedipal maternal attachment and the non-existent female gossip partner who would provide solace — her journal.

Childbirth

If breasts provide a slight indication of the intimate encodement of textual female gossip, the "unspeakable" area of childbirth and the female uterus provides a further effect on their lives and writing — or, more significantly, what was not written concerning the subject. 32 While many references to childbirth exist in women’s writing, such intimations usually refer to the socially acceptable areas, such as to the recording of the birth of an heir. Ann Oakley attributes this lack of detail to the fact that, "Childbirth stands uncomfortably at the junction of the two worlds
of nature and culture. A biological event, it is accomplished by social beings—women—who consequently possess a uniquely dual character." In bearing children, women both "accomplish a work" and, as Sylvia Plath said, "become the centre of an atrocity." 33

Childbirth proposes an ideological alteration between the nature-birth and culture obstetrical dichotomy which was being developed during the eighteenth-century English changes in medical science. It also proposes the contradictory elements of the virtuous mother image compounded with that of the sexually active whore, a dualism that apparently causes discomfort to the male psyche. Even today, however, some feminists tend to view childbirth as a source or cause of social inferiority, while others believe that women's biological destiny will only be addressed through the complete technological alienation of childbirth. 34

The use of the childbirth metaphor for the writer's production of the written text recurs as frequently as the analogy of the pen for the penis. Frances herself refers to her work in those terms in The Wanderer, "this Fourth Child of my Brain," a legitimate metaphor when used by a parous woman. 35 This image, extended to include both masculine publisher and male obstetrician, becomes doubly valid, as it proposes both domination by violent unnatural interference and the perpetuation of the ideology of patriarchy. Both childbirth and publication rely on the inculcation of shame as an extension of female innocence; an embarrassment which protected the advertisement of obstetrical ineptitude, as well as the censorship of specifically female intimacies in publication.

The uterus, that amazingly resilient organ of the body which exists in over half the population, has received minimal literary notice. Even in women's writing, it has traditionally been reduced to symbolic status as a "vas" or receptacle, adorned by self-consciously literary adjectives like 'gravid' or 'fecund'. Considering the major role it plays in the perpetuation of life, one would think it deserves more attention.

During the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, changes were occurring in patterns of childbirth. While Elizabeth Burton, applauds William Smellie's Treatise on Midwifery (1753) and its influence on birthing, the subject of obstetrics did not become compulsory part of medical studies until 1833, although as early as 1694, a Midwives Act was proclaimed in Edinburgh outlining a code of practice and ethics. 36 It took a further four years after Scotswoman, Anna Ker, received a
licence on being examined on all aspects of midwifery, for the subject to be completely legitimised as a masculine area through Thomas Young's instigation of an eight bed lying-in infirmary. These two acts denote the dual insurping of childbirth from women by the patriarchal system, as Anna Ker's deliveries had to be legitimised by a board of male medical examiners. Thomas Young's infirmary initiated the inexorable movement of birthing from the home into a medical institution, regardless of the good health of the mother and child.

Oakley refers to this in terms of the corpus of obstetrical knowledge being removed from the reproducers themselves, to the hands of men because of their claim to superior expertise. It is also indicative of many other aspects of female-male relationships. It provides yet another area of enforcement of female subjugation through legitimised surgical intervention, both on the conscious and unconscious levels, by the male practitioner. It also indicates resentment of the female ability to reproduce, and social-scientific reinforcement of the familial patriarch by intruding another male into the home. It further replicates the patriarchal hierarchy of family within the confines of the lying-in hospital. Masculine control of birthing also ensured increased and constant remuneration went into the hands of the medical profession. To propose the use of the female body for experimentation in the absence of other alternatives is a macabre, but not necessarily unrealistic, possibility, given that the debate over the possibility of women not possessing a soul had raged only a few years previously.37

When Hester Thrale bore her children, upper to middle class women's childbearing was beginning to be influenced by Smellie's "Treatise" which, despite some advances, still discussed superfoetation where a second conception occurs during a pregnancy. He recommended intruding the hand into the cervix to snip joined babies, and the use of crotchets to pull a baby's head apart through the fontanel if it was suspected of being one of Smellie's "Monsters". 38

Among the expectations of a normal pregnancy, he lists kidney and bladder stones, costiveness, nausea, vomiting, pains, anal haemorrhoids, hernias, ruptures, dropsies, incontinence, pendulous stomach and miscarriage. Also, he lists that bane of female pre-antibotic existence "fluor albus" (known in women's subculture as the whites, the flowers, and so on); the generic term for trichomonas vaginalis, candida albicans, and haemophilus vaginalis, which, in former times, resulted in women suffering from foetid body odours, white or "bubbly yellow-green discharge," pain, itching and bleeding. 39 Anne Lister's formerly encoded diaries refer directly to this
form of female suffering. Isabella Norcliffe’s letter to Anne complains, "I have been unwell since last Friday and it has turned into the fluor albus and most violent." 40 Anne further records her own suffering quite vividly, especially in regard to a sexually transmitted disease and its treatment, although she also records douching for "the whites".

Willughby’s description of female sufferers is yet more vivid, describing lumps of “whitish solid matter issuing from their body, or thick yellow pus-filled discharges.” Such descriptions evince appalled admiration for multiparous women like Hester Thrale who survived twelve full pregnancies and countless miscarriages - either recorded or conjectured. In fact, if Hester Thrale’s combined full-term pregnancies are counted, including the usually accepted postpartum recovery period of six weeks, during her life she spent almost five hundred and forty weeks (plus miscarriages, an estimated six hundred weeks) forty two thousand days or eleven and a half years of her life in direct childbearing.

She makes comparatively few references to reproduction in her journals, but their limited number indicate the diagnoses and prognoses of female oppression described by Oakley. From those few records and the significant silences which imply an awareness of possible masculine examination of her writing, much can be inferred. More of her gynaecological comments are recorded in the Family Book than the Thraliana, indicative of its domestic bias and its self-instigation. The Family Book was not the result of Johnson’s recommendation nor Henry Thrale’s purchase, nor was it influenced by her increasing reputation as a hostess or the literary woman A. Edward Newton was to call a “light blue stocking.”

Although she obviously considered her status as a child-bearer a vital one, there is a thread of negativity below every reference to her pregnancies and births. Sometimes she expresses anger or despair, from "I was exceedingly oppressed by pregnancy," 42 “The labour was rough and tight," to the more descriptive, "I felt sudden and violent pains come on; I hastened to bed & by 1 o’clock in the Morning was delivered with very little pain of a small weakly Female ... The Child presented wrongly but being small it did not signify." 43 These off-hand references to times of stress indicate not only the trauma of suffering which rendered her almost inarticulate, but the lack of available opportunity for recording more detail. Where are the references to discharges, incontinence, haemorrhoids, lochia, incomplete placental material, frequency of contractions, after-birth pains and splits to the pudendum which would
have been experienced during twelve births? Although thoroughly digested in verbal female gossip, these details were unacceptable to record in a diary for two reasons: firstly, because a husband may be revolted by the "unspeakable" aspects of reproduction; and secondly, because there was no inherited example of such writing which would have legitimised its inclusion. It is only through essential and unique female experiences that this silent subtext can be inferred by other women through reading their journals and letters.

During the 1773 nursing of Lucy, she confided into her journal "the Child was going, & oh what were my feelings for my Lucy?" She was so distraught that the brief entry "Bromfield, who was on the 8: of Nov: called to deliver me of a second Boy—Ralph Thrale—was quite of Lawrence's opinion as to Lucy," "heralds the appearance of a second male heir with little acknowledgement of his importance in terms of inheritance. It also records nothing of the misery of the situation inherent in being isolated from the dying child to bring another into the world.

In her Autobiographical Memoirs, she recalls her old accoucheur as Doctor Bromfield of Gerard Street, a licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians with a medical degree from Aberdeen. Although he was one of the new doctor-midwives, Hester was lucky in her choice of him above many others: not only because he had studied in Scotland, the site of much medical innovation, but he was a man given to less interference than most, although she also recorded a preference for "an Old Woman" to assist. "

The reader is left to infer much of the detail, not only of the birth where "The Labour was Long & the Birth difficult from the uncommon Size of the Child," but this passage occurs while nursing her dying mother, spending "past many days and Nights in her room." And once again, soon after, she cries, "big with Child too again God help me." "Below this entry lies the unrecorded image of conception and the conditions under which it must have been accomplished. It indicates the totality of Henry's position as Master, his total disregard for the exhausted — and possibly damaged — mother of the large baby, for her personal wish to nurse her dying mother, and the sexual obligations of the eighteenth-century wife. Add to this scenario the complaints for attention from Samuel Johnson!

In his Treatise on the Management of Pregnant & Lying-In Women, Charles White advocated many new and startling innovations, but also described the typical birthing practice of the day, which we can infer to have been similar to those of
Thrale, as it was based on both traditional and Smellie's practices. Although a long work, as it evokes a powerful image of what Hester Thrale experienced on over twelve different occasions, it is well worth quoting:

she is often attended by a number of her friends in a small room, with a large fire, which, together with her own pains, throw her into profuse sweats; by the heat of the chamber and the air of so many people, the whole air is rendered foul, and unfit for respiration. If the woman's pains are not strong enough, her friends generally pour into her large quantities of strong liquors ... As soon as she is delivered, if she is a person in affluent circumstances, she is covered up close in bed with additional cloaths, the curtains drawn around the bed ... to exclude the fresh air. ... She is confined to a horizontal posture for many days together, whereby both the stools and lochia are prevented from having a free exit. 47

This restriction is reaffirmed by Frances who wrote to her father three weeks after the birth of Alexander, "I am forbid turning over" (9 January 1795). Despite natural loss, venesection, or phlebotomy, was performed after birth as well as during pregnancy to reduce plethora due to retention of the menses. This violent surgery was needless given the contrary evidence of Doctor Lobb's Compendium of the Practice of Physick which records the weight of the average loss of menstrual fluid at four pound, six ounces and the combined average weight of child, amniotic fluid and placenta at sixteen pound, seven ounces proving that no plethoric state existed. Even though Hippocrates had warned "venesection in a pregnant woman will produce a miscarriage, especially if she be far gone," eighteenth-century English women were bled to prove the superior skills of surgeon-physicians over the midwives. 48 In the light of Dr Lobb's investigation, the continuation of blood letting and cupping was a purely political act in which the helpless pregnant woman was a tool. In Mary Delany's Autobiography, her editor, Lady Llandover, supports the debilitating effect of medical intervention with, "had not Mrs Delany's constitution been strong, she would have died early for the bleedings she underwent were so frequent that it's wonderful she survived them." 49 By the act of surgical venesection physicians were empowering their own profession to the status of a medical science which rejected the traditional practitioners of cupping and leeching as forms of blood letting.

For both Hester and Frances, childbirth would have been accomplished in
the favoured British position of lying prone on the side with her back to physicians, despite White's ultra-modern — but not-adopted — contention "standing, sitting, hanging by the arms betwixt two persons, half-sitting and half-lying, either upon the bed or on the knee of an assistant maybe, and I believe are often serviceable in expediting delivery." In his amalgamation of traditional female birthing practices with the real medical advances supported by increased life expectation, White showed his own regard for the well-being of his patients which evidenced no unconscious desire to harm women. It is therefore significant that his approaches were not adopted, as he never lost a single mother during birth, despite the appalling maternal death rate of the time. Although Shorter makes occasional reference to a husband's presence during labour, it is unlikely that Henry Thrale or General d'Arblay were present at their wife's birthings. Husbandly participation was a nineteenth-century phenomenon and not encouraged in former times by midwives. J. Jill Suitor contends that a husband's presence coincided with male-physician attendance. This seems to indicate that husbands attended from the desire to chaperone and preserve a wife's sexual modesty as much as from any sentimental reason.

Henry Thrale cannot be accused of husbandly sentimentality. After the birth of their first child, although apparently pleased, he visited his wife formally, as always, on three set days per week. Although her mother approved, Hester wrote with anger, "I therefore appeared to think so too." Her sense of neglect is more apparent when she refers to the birth of a still-born son, "by bringing which I only helped to destroy my own health, and disappoint a husband who wanted a son." That this indomitable little woman, although only four feet eleven inches tall, managed to survive the twelve full-term pregnancies and births at all is amazing. Surprisingly, she gives much more credit to Doctors Broomfield and Denman than she does her own physical and mental strength.

Later in life, she was to recall that the "pleasures" of her first marriage "consisted of holding my head over a Bason Six Months in the Year." This statement gives considerable credence to her subconscious rejection of the state of pregnancy. Ann Oakley contends that "hyperemesis gravidarium" (pregnancy sickness) can be considered a rejection of femininity, where "femininity" is considered the social maternal norm. This pattern is particularly applicable to Hester Thrale where cultural idealization of the maternal role was combined with negatively enforced conception with an alienated spouse. This would have led to her continuous attacks
of vomiting through psychological rejection of her condition. W. A. Harvey, in his work on pregnant women's nausea, quotes Robertson's definition: "relevant etiologic characteristics of the personality are disturbed coital functioning, undue mother attachment, and, to a lesser extent, a history of previous dyspepsia." 26 Personal histories of patients studied by Harvey and Sherfey revealed anxiety, and all but one displayed "suppressed and scarcely suppressed resentment" leading to an approximate correlation between the kind and degree of emotional disturbance and the severity and duration of vomiting — in Hester’s case this is significant. So too was Harvey and Sherfey’s striking finding of a "consistent association of anxious emotion and gastro-intestinal dysfunction with sexual disorder, leading to a failure to achieve vaginal or clitoridean orgasm ... also a conscious strong aversion to coitus in every case." 27 That Hester suffered strong aversion to Henry’s sexual demands was amply exemplified by her objection to their "hard Pillow", and, given the contemporary attitudes to masturbation, such a recourse was an unlikely possibility as an alternative.

The extraordinarily 1766 popular publication Ononia, or the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution which threatened every medical disaster and the urge to murder as the result of masturbation, had an enormous influence on attitudes over the following forty years. Even the force of its threats increased, as it became applicable to both sexes adding "impotence, dimness of sight, vertigo, epilepsy, manalgia, fatuity and death." 28

The enormous impact of this work can hardly be overestimated, as the inaccurate term "onanism" was used until the late nineteenth century as a direct result of this publication. Its full negative impact was best exemplified in Anne Lister's diaries where she implies both her own masturbation and the guilt and fear it engendered. "Mused on all this but did not let it lead to anything worse", 29 and, more directly "it is infinitely better than the thing alluded to there meaning onanism. This is surely comparatively unpardonable." 30 Later, with Piozzi, Hester desired a child as a symbol of their union, and obviously found it frustrating that she could conceive and carry to full term the children of a man she often disliked and resented, yet was unable to do so with her second husband. Her regret was expressed over two "disappointments" in bearing his child, in 1787 and 1788, the second of "a Daughter at Mrs Lewis's House." 31 The fact of its being sufficiently developed to indicate its sex, evidences that the pregnancy was an advanced one. Although well into her forties, she long maintained the hope of pregnancy. She
referred to her own "present Vigour" implying sexual activity, and that "the Turn of Life seems however to be yet far distant." ¹⁹ From this anxiety to reproduce it is possible to infer, despite her contentment with Signor Piozzi, that she felt the need to consolidate her position more securely, or the desire to satisfy her husband's desire for offspring. Whether this desire was expressed wistfully or with full paternal aggression, it indicates pressure to conform to eighteenth-century norms of childbearing.

Although Gabriel Piozzi's desire for children must remain a matter of speculation, Henry Thrale's is not, and is amply documented throughout his wife's early and later journals. One of the most powerfully evoked examples of his neglectful and unappreciative attitude to his wife's health and well-being recurs in her texts, giving adequate indication of its impact on her self-esteem. She refers to Henry's neglect "especially of myself, then near my confinement, and disarmingly low-spirited; notwithstanding which, Mr Thrale very unceremoniously begged of me to change places with Sophy [Streatfield] who was threatened with a sore throat, and might be injured by sitting near the door ... I burst into tears & I said something petulant." ²⁰

Not only does this report indicate the off-hand paternal attitude to a wife's dignity and position in the home, as it took place before a large group at dinner, but it indicates the degree of Henry Thrale's infatuation with the blonde Sophie. It also indicates one of the widest disparities between the journals of Frances and Hester, as the latter does not record herself in any heroic fashion but as both physically and mentally vulnerable. She not only admits her own petulance but also exposes her hurt and anger with a later comment to Johnson and Edmund Burke who were present: "I cannot help remarking with what blandness and composure you witnessed the outrage," signifying the collusion of the two men with this rudeness, despite their seeming friendship with her. ²¹

Frances would have recorded this passage with much more emotion and descriptive power, including clasped hands and appealing glances at Johnson from tear-filled eyes, an embarrassed inability to act, silence throughout the room, a valiant struggle to her feet and a fainting droop into the other chair — or a tearful, feeble totter toward the nearest door. Each, of course, would have been describing and enacting the scene in accordance with her own conditioned reactions, and through subjective interpretation which is the journal's greatest charm. Both would have found revenge by their translation of the scene into authoritative written form.
which provided a type of catharsis.

While the subjective nature of diaries is thus exemplified, so too is the parallel necessity for embroidering a base truth to convert it into written discourse. Given the nature of Henry Thrale and Samuel Johnson's mastery, it is probable that Hester's later comment to Johnson and Burke was the expression of a wish of what she would have liked to have said, rather than words actually articulated. This subjectified element indicates the dual dynamic nature which entwines journal-writing with verbal gossip, and creates a relationship into which the reader can intrude. Reader awareness of this form of journalising-gossip provides such a strong empathy between reader and writer that it involves both in the solace-seeking mechanisms of the female subculture.

Hester's pregnancy and Henry's treatment of her during those many months, do not indicate the extreme physical danger of women engaged in procreation. Hester might equally well have written that her condition's life-threatening element entitled her to some consideration, even if her position as Mistress did not. With the maternal death rate in London at 1% - 1.5% during 1800, her life was in constant peril. Those figures only refer to deaths occurring during childbirth and not during the six months following confinement, nor the usually accepted postpartum recovery period of six weeks. When Sigismund Peller included these details, he calculated a childbirth and post partum death rate at 11% for fertile European upper-class families.  

The London figures do not include the dangerous nine day "sweat" period which was crucial for the development of puerperal fever; the four week lapse during which "white leg" or embolism occurred most frequently; nor the puerperal convulsions documented by Fleetwood Churchill as formerly attributed to apoplexy.

Even more significantly, the figures apply to each birth, so a woman giving birth to six children would be at an 8% risk of dying during labour and a horrific 66% from later complications during her lifetime. Although it is amazing that Hester Thrale survived at all, it is not surprising that she often expressed the universal fear of agony and death during childbirth. This terror is a constantly recurring theme in the writings of both Hester and Frances. In 1794 Frances's letters constantly reiterated her fear, "whether or not I live to be blest a moment as to present you myself my little Infant," and by 16 December, she referred to "this advancing critical time ... presses upon probability to end in death."  

Hester's lament was constant and recurring "I may pay for my own Life for
it," and, bitterly, "Mr Thrale it is not his Principle to lament for the Dead, so my Loss will not break his Heart."  

This theme of death runs throughout the writing of these women during pregnancy, and indicates not only their need to translate their fear into writing, but also indicates the extent of reproduction's influence on oppressing women's potentialities. It also provides a glimpse of women's subculture through its expression in journals and letters, especially as in the case of the endangered labour of Princess Charlotte which reverberated throughout female society. Hester Thrale exemplified the sympathetic urge which annihilated social boundaries — indicating their essentially masculine nature — which female subculture transcended. "Every female must feel not only afflicted but indignant, at one express coming here after another, telling us all how charmingly the business was going on. Forty-eight hours of agony! But the face of life must go on, till death drops the curtain I suppose!"

The anger she expressed is obviously aimed at the violation of female privacy, a celebration of pain and probable maternal death in the interests of the newspapers. Not even this vital feature of female life was sacrosanct from the empowered and brutal hands of the masculine newspaper, as it converted female agony and death into a saleable commodity.

Princess Charlotte's death not only evoked dramatic empathy from women, it exemplified the immanent dangers of childbirth to women regardless of class and challenged the supposed superiority of the masculinization of medicine, which was symbolised by the development, and brutal use of, the forceps. Although originally invented by the inherited family of male-midwives, the Chamberlens of London, and used privately before 1730, they had been improved on by Smellie and Levret to become a source of terror to mothers. Of their use, William Hunter is reported to have complained indignant, "where they save one they murder twenty." Despite an often supportive attitude to medical science, Hester attested to a low opinion of the instruments during the labour of her daughter Cecilia, "I hate these Country Accoucheurs ... They are so forward to produce their Instruments". She later complains of "the horrid death-doing Crotchet", with a hatred expressive of the terrors of the suppressed maternal sub-culture.
Procidentia

Alongside the possibility of death was the even more likely potentiality of damage. The most common form, after a lacerated perineum, was procidentia, the prolapse of the uterus, of which there had been only one successful case of excision of a gangrenous organ recorded before 1763.

Before the surgical improvements of the later part of the nineteenth century, treatment of procidentia included remaining prone, or wearing a waist-supported pessary to hold the uterus in place. The incidence of some degree of this condition was quoted as an amazing five out of twenty women by one European midwife. It is safe to assume this was a very conservative estimate given the embarrassingly private nature of the condition.

Few references to the condition occur in women's writing, although some cases may be inferred from corroborative evidence. When Hester Thrale wrote that her mother "could never go through another Pregnancy, so hard had been her Labour, and so awkward her Treatment", we can suppose either gross lacerations of the pudenda or some degree of procidentia resulting from relaxation of the vaginal walls into cystocele, rectocele or enterocoele positions.

In its fullest degree, procidentia can be described as where "the body of the uterus actually hangs outside of the vaginal introitus, dragging an inverted vagina behind it." "The woman looks as though she has an elephant's trunk between her legs", a condition which Shorter decrees "a clap of doom on their femininity." His statement shows a remarkable disregard for the individuality of the woman, reducing her to a being of value only through her sexual availability or child-bearing.

Sadly, the lack of mention of prolapse in women's writing reaffirms the importance of the woman's body in relation to that writing; both being subjected to the censorship of masculine expectations and approval. Women writers were made aware that their bodies were rendered so gross and unacceptable during reproduction that they were afraid to convert their experiences into writing for fear of offending male sensibilities.

Even Frances, indomitable writer of the mastectomy, who attempted breaking the code-mechanisms of shame to articulate a specific discourse enclosing body and emotions in text, failed to record anything of her own uterus. Her body remained only partly articulated; the rest was repressed by the "social contract" proposed by
Julia Kristeva. Thirty-odd years of menstruation, a pregnancy and birth, pre- and post-natal states of health and emotions, have received the most cursory textual attention, although no doubt they provided much material for gossip. Yet, this over-forty year old primigravida, who produced only one child in an age when women were multiparous until their late forties, is the one most likely to have suffered irreparable damage to her organs during the birth of Alexander. Her age, like that of Samuel Johnson's mother, would have made her doubly vulnerable. Johnson wrote of his own mother, "My mother had a very difficult and dangerous labour", despite the reputed skill of male mid-wife, George Hector, no doubt because of her age, forty, and being a primigravida.

In fact, it is possible to infer from her later relationship with d'Arblay, that after the birth of Alexander, Frances's marital relationship developed into a "marriage blanc," that is, nonsexual, where sympathy and the easy tolerance of years of separation resulted from a lack of sexual domination and availability.

Although some of Frances's few references to pregnancy were jocular, "How long should the Pot [sit on the] Fire?," most were fearful and depressed by the bodily demands of the condition. "I have been very ill ... how shall I be about Christmas? --- ah! I did not want self-experience to make me feel for what so often you have described of your feelings & your sufferings", she wrote to her sisters. "Her post-natal comments were absolutely negative, "to endure what precedes its appearance" she groaned of childbirth, and "its travelling so cumbersome and cruel", were comments in keeping with a disastrous delivery. Her long recovery-period was recorded by Mrs Siddons in a letter to Mrs Piozzi, a full three months after the birth when she referred to Frances as "an invalid for she has been extremely ill it seems since her lying-in." Years later, when writing the "mastectomy document", she was still able to recall the trauma of labour when asked "whether I had cried or screamed at the birth of Alexander", by Baron de Larrey. "Alas, I told him, it had not been possible to do otherwise."

Although Frances was later able to convert the pain and distress of her mastectomy into gossip and text, she appears to have encoded no fear of loss of the "femininity" or sexual appeal which is a universal reaction of mastectomies. Because of this lack of fear, I contend that she had already conquered her fear of rejection as a woman many years before her mastectomy. This was because the birth of Alexander caused such horrific birth canal trauma it may have left her
either incontinent of bowels as well as bladder, or, even more likely, suffering from procidentia as "inverted uteri following normal deliveries were familiar." Although her mastectomy resulted partly from fear of pain and death, it was enacted as a result of externally applied pressure, releasing her from a sense of self-blame. Procidentia, however, because of its secret and disastrous effects on sexual activity, was more likely to decrease her sense of self-worth. A wife whose husband did not reject her after this cessation of sexuality, would have no further fear of self-image destruction from any further depredation to her body. It is Frances’s lack of fear regarding her sexual attraction which provokes the most puzzling element of the mastectomy and post-mastectomy documents.

Evidence supporting this assertion can be found in her writing. Before the birth of Alex, sexual imagery and symbolism are apparent in her letters to the General. Whether these originated consciously or subconsciously is immaterial. Despite her reputation for prudery, it must be remembered Frances lived in a wide and artistic section of the community, in an age of fluctuating post-Puritanism and licentiousness, and would have been aware of any sexual pun or connotation occurring in her own or another’s letter.

During the courtship, her letters abounded with phallic symbolism. When d’Arblay presents her with a pen, the next three lines of correspondence are so determinedly expunged that they evaded even the determined twentieth-century scientific efforts of Professor Hemlow and her team to restore them.88 They elicited a reply from Frances, which, given her enjoyment of puns, is significant, "Come little Pen! & tell me what you have been doing ... Will you serve me as well as you have served your late Possessor? ... O, little Pen! — if after your long service you degenerate from that noble simplicity — I reject you with aversion. — But if, on the contrary you fulfil my expectations, I will keep — & use — & cherish you forever." 89 The General’s reply was also significant, especially in his use of italics which proves an ulterior significance of the word, "My little pen is very happy indeed!"

Even after his death, Frances continued to link the pen with life, fertility and reproduction of text. "I have stopt my Pen — I have checked — laid by — but tis vainly I strive to write." 90

Before the birth of Alex, Frances was writing in a jocular manner of the General, "God knows, I am the most 'contentte personne' in the World to see his Sabre so employed." 91 After the birth, the use of such symbolism to make coy but
explicit *doubles entendres*, was displaced. Symbolic reproductory images were only used in regard to writing. In Freudian terms, such an alteration would indicate a displacement of libidinal instincts, conversion of the sexual activity into the activity of writing. The move can also be seen as a liberating one, as, no longer restricted by either subjective or external pressure to conform to images of sexual arousal, she was partially freed from the constraints of writing her youthful romantic fantasies, and able to progress to the maturer form of *The Wanderer*. In that novel, she exemplifies the dual aspects of herself in Ellis (Juliet Granville) the idealised romantic heroine, and Elinor Jodral, the mature, dramatic warrior-woman. Each was burlesqued in typical Burney fashion, but indicated the deep-seated realities of the woman's position in her contemporary society.

When attempting to ascribe to one cause the most powerful influence on the lives of these women, we invariably return to their bodies and the pervasive effect of their reproductory expectations or experiences. Their early lives revolved around the presentation of a suitably endowed body to capture the best prize on the marriage market, after which, their lives were at the beck and call of the husband who had replaced the father. If they did not bear children they were subjected to possible abuse. If they did bear offspring, they suffered enormous degrees of pain; throughout, their bodies provided the most vulnerable source of legitimation of violence to ensure submission. Shorter supplies the most pertinent summary of their position thus, "material is anecdotal and sketchy, but it helps to set the stage for the hard realities ... Traditional women were sexually cowed and emotionally brutalised by men. They found it impossible to escape intercourse, and sought solace from its unpleasant consequences only in the company of other women." If such women were unavailable, or divided by distance, such solace was sought within the pages of the journal, or by letter. Frances, in a letter to her sister, succinctly correlates the importance of the corporeal body and the written corpus, "What an Age since I have written—at least with my PEN, to my dearest Charlotte! with my heart, I have ten times answered."

Within this female solace-seeking mechanism is a compensation for the pain of their bodies. We can gain only an idea of the relationship of their sexual bodies within the conjugal state, although Spacks interprets the internal shame of female desire as omission and deflection, indicating the woman's need for secrecy and encodement of her sexuality, especially if she was treated violently. Shorter attests to the likelihood
of women experiencing a great deal of violence through marital rape, including doctors recording a "refusal to abstain from intercourse during the mother's lying-in period", and gives anecdotal evidence, "Stories abound of husbands mounting their wives just after they had delivered, heedless of doctor's pleas," often resulting in infection and haemorrhage. 95 Hester Thrale's case offers the possibility of some such treatment both by the speed with which she conceived after most pregnancies, and her reference to her lying-in and "those Days that he would come as usual, Saturday, Sunday, & Monday." 96

Within this picture of violence, vulnerability and medical disunity, we find not only a refutation of the equality of the marital contract, and a total disregard for the well being of the female section of the community supposedly developing universal liberal humanism, but a curious delay in the implementation of medical and surgical refinements of treatment in the realm of female ailments. No doubt this reluctance can be expressed partly through the ambivalent status of childbirth as neither a culture-science nor nature-birth polarity.

The reluctance of male physicians and surgeons to extend obviously beneficial medical developments to women, indicates a conscious or unconscious wish to retain control of women by manipulation of their vulnerability due to gender-specific reproductive organs.

Reading the recommendations of Charles White, made in 1773, is strangely like reading a twentieth-century document on the management of natural childbirth. He, and others, recommended exercise, a diet of fresh fruit and vegetables in large quantities, sea bathing for exercise, vegetable teas and discontinuation of lacing and so forth. 97 His detailed explanation of a totally natural birth is described lucidly and sympathetically, describing what to do if a young inexperienced mother is "taken alone in labour" and abhors the then current practice which recommended rotating a closed fist in the fundus uteri "until all the secundities have been discharged", a manual dilation and curette carried out with unclean hands. White objects both on the grounds of uncleanness and degree of impropriety.

His proposals further recommended free discharge of the secundines (placenta, lochia and so on) and reaffirms John Leake's recommendations of early ambulation to promote vaginal drainage and good health. His recommendations were widely published and read, as were those of Irishman Robert Collins, who used chlorine to wash and calcium hypochlorite as a gas, to clean the rooms of lying-in hospitals,
reporting a post partum death rate drop to 0.54%. 98

One of Hester Thrale's male midwives, Dr Thomas Denman, the elder, wrote Introduction to the Practice of Midwifery deploring the many careless procedures resulting in maternal death, while White advocated the revolutionary development of a "thin napkin ... of clean linen" instead of unchanged personal and bed linen for lochial discharges. 99

Despite the removal of midwifery from the traditional practitioners, medical science could have contributed to an easing of the pain and mortality of eighteenth- and nineteenth century mothers by adopting the proven improvements suggested by White, Leake and Denman. Recommendations were widely published in medical journals, but many were not to be adopted for nearly two hundred years. From this fact, and their reluctance to modify their use of instruments, we may infer that many male doctors, perhaps unconsciously, preferred to keep reproductive mortality rates high rather than lose power to natural birthing methods. Having invented instruments, and gained ecclesiastical permission to let blood, many were determined to persevere with these demonstrations of power, rather than defer to the contra-indications of increased maternal mortality.

For women living in the eighteenth century, violence not only permeated the familial and social environment, it intruded into their most intimate bodies, personal moments and written discourses in the form of a legitimizing science.
Notes for Chapter 3

1. Dr James treated a swollen belly as "a Worm Case, but nothing verminous appeared, not withstanding our Searches & Expectations." Family Book, 49.
2. Granville-Delany, 614.
4. P. M. Spacks, "Ev'ry Woman is at Heart a Rake", 27.
5. This ambivalence is well documented in Hazel Mews, Frail Vessels: Women's Role in Women's Novels, from Fanny Burney to George Eliot (London: The Athlone Press, 1969), esp. 5-6.
8. Wakefield, 14.
18. J. & L., Vol 6, 598 reads " apprehensions to which I was a stranger." J. & L., Vol 6, 598, "I revolted from the idea."
28. J. & L., Vol 6, 610. "The 7 Men in Black" who performed the mastectomy were Drs de Larrey, Moreau, Aumont and Ribe, with two assistants. Previously, Frances had also been examined by Drs Jouart and Dubois.
29. Bloom, 213.
30. See Spacks, "Reflecting Women", The Yale Review 63 (1973), 33. Spacks interprets their relationship only negatively as "bitter and anything but open", and in terms of sexual competition. However, Spacks appears to have only consulted The Thraliana for this view, and makes no reference to the Family Book, Autobiography or Piozziana for corroboration.
32. For other examples, see Marianne Francis's letter, J. & L., Vol 7, 20, n 4;
Notes (cont.)

34 Oakley, 631.
39 Shorter, 256. He lists an horrific number of female ailments.
40 Lister, 2 November, 1823.
41 Shorter, 257.
42 *Autobiography*, 289.
43 *Autobiography*, 11.
44 *Family Book* (26 Feb-6 March 1771), 84.
45 *Thraliana*, 974. This passage also refers to her horror of obstetrical instruments.
46 *Family Book* (3 July 1777).
48 White, 28.
49 Mary Grenville-Delany, Vol 2, 614.
50 White, 28.
52 *Thraliana*, 1: 308.
53 *Autobiography*, 289.
54 McCarthy, 26.
55 Oakley, 617.
57 Harvey and Sherfey, 4.
59 Lister, 3 May 1820.
60 Lister, 5 August, 1822.
62 *Piozziana*, 22.
63 *Thraliana*, 356.
64 *Thraliana*, 356.
65 Shorter, 98.
67 *L. & L.*, Vol 3, 91. These fears were expressed on 12th October and repeated 16th December, 1794.
Notes (cont.)

68  **Family Book**, 7 January, 1777.
69  Many similar references recur, for example, of Cecilia's delivery, "She is taken III - exceedingly III-dangerously III", **Thraliana**, 974; "The moment of danger is now fast approaching" and "I thank God my courage rises to meet my fate Daily, be it as it may", *I. & L.*, Vol 3, 91; "a new danger accorded to her Heart's dearest comfort", Frances Burney of Charlotte Barrett's labour, *I. & L.*, Vol 9, 94.
70  **Thraliana**, 13 Nov. 1817. Also in Lister, Saturday, 8 Nov. 1817.
71  Glanville-Delany records, "Mrs Fortescue ... last Tuesday se'night she died ... six children, the eldest but seven years of age," 165.
72  Shorter, 173-4, 86, 153-55; also Cash, 198-224.
73  Herbert R. Spencer, "The History of British Midwifery from 1650 to 1800" **Academy of Medicine Society** (1978), 74.
75  For a detailed study see Ludwig A. Emge and R. B. Durfee's "Pelvic Organ Prolapse: Four Thousand Years of Treatment", **Clinical Obstetrics and Gynaecology**, 9 (1966), 997-1032.
76  Emge and Durfee, 1005.
77  Shorter, 273.
78  Between the years of 1875 and 1928, one Boston Hospital treated 683 patients for complete procidentia, that is, a completely inverted uterus which hung outside the body. Shorter 273-4.
79  **Thraliana**, 1: 281.
80  Shorter, 273-4.
81  Julia Kristeva, "Women's Time", **Signs** 7 (1981), 24-5.
82  Johnson, Diaries, **Prayers and Annals**, 3.
87  Shorter, 64.
93  Shorter, 16.
95  Shorter, 9.
96  **Family Book**, 118.
97  White, 29-31.
98  White, xcviii.
99  White, 48-9.
CHAPTER 4.

"A Rose Unique": The Female Self
After having examined the externalities of women in the eighteenth century, it becomes apparent that there is a wide fissure which has not been bridged: their internal lives. In this chapter, I propose two areas of examination concerning the non-physical attributes of a being. Firstly, I try to establish the existence of an intrinsic self, and ask whether it relates to gender. Secondly, I ask to what degree this self is distorted by violence and other externally applied pressures for people to conform to social expectations.

While I acknowledge the Freudian based form of feminist psychology which denies differentiation between male and female psyches, I use an alternate form of feminist criticism based on the analytical psychology of Carl Jung. While my proposal differs from some forms of feminist theory, it is, I believe, more pertinent to eighteenth-century concepts of the self because it acknowledges a spiritual element which is pertinent to Burke, Johnson, Burney and Thrale but which is noticeably lacking in Freudian theory.

By proposing the category of the self, one can also construe a specifically female form of self which develops an essential strength lacking in the male equivalent. Ironically, it results from externally applied pressures which create a centripetal force causing contraction and intensification of self-awareness and self-identification. For although the male is subjected to social pressures to succeed and maintain a masculine image, he is not under the unremitting social and domestic force which is perpetuated by patriarchally legitimised forms of violence.

Arguing that women contain an essential female potentiality within the psyche, I maintain that it is this unique aspect which gave Hester and Frances the great psychical strength that was unknown to their male contemporaries.

Once again, to support my contention, I juxtapose non-literary texts with literary discourses, relying most heavily on the works of Carl Jung. To examine the vital nature of mother-daughter relationships, I use Freudian child psychologists where pertinent. For the eighteenth-century equivalence of psychological definitions, I found Stephen Greenblatt’s work on "self-fashioning" to be valuable.²

The Self

Definition of the self is problematic and largely reliant on subjective satisfaction of interpretation, for as Harriet Blodgett points out, "Self is a prickly term" ³ which
tends to evade definition because of its contingent reliance on language and external others for expression.

This reliance is ironic, as self is being defined by media antithetic to its own existence. Because this chapter uses analytic psychology for its interpretation, I propose using the "self" to indicate all non-physical aspects of a being, the immanence of an individual which encompasses all potentialities of the psyche: all that falls under the categories of intellectual, emotional, religious and psychological connotations. I am aware of the dangers of adopting such a broad definition of a concept so difficult to explain, because of the contradictions and modifications which immediately spring to mind. For every Aristotelian proposal of individuality expressed as first substance, there is an opposing denial such as Plato's. Throughout philosophy, contradictions of definitions create difficulties of explanation. Yet many alternate views appear to contain the one aspect which has led to my use of Jungian definition, the possibility of a spiritual aspect which Hegel referred to as the Absolute, or ultimate subject of every statement. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, while considering many opposing alternatives, defines the self as "the whole series of a person's inner mental states and sometimes, more restrictively, the spiritual substance to which the philosophers say they belong." Self thus questions the unity of the mind and appears to prevent a definition which relies on the temporal persistence of the body, despite the psychophysical being the only means of knowing a person. The choice to use "self" to indicate all psychical aspects must remain a subjective one, because it elevates the concept above other philosophic and psychological terms such as subject or ego; neither of which encompasses the elements of the female being I wish to indicate. Subject and ego, even when considered within their contextual oppositions of "other" — object and non-ego, — are too connotative of reliance on physicality for cognition.

The 'self', by contrast, contains elements of remarkable similarity to those of eighteenth-century equivalents, although the language encapsulating them is markedly dissimilar. Instead of reason and ardent imagination (alternatively known as sensibility or fancy), we have the concepts of the conscious-logical and unconscious-unreasoned selves. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu aptly inscribed the eighteenth-century concepts thus, "My reason makes me see all its absurdity, and my heart makes me feel all its importance." The greatest dissimilarity of concepts, however, occur in their ultimate resolution. Whereas eighteenth-century idealism lauded the supremacy of virtue and religious piety, modern aimlessness of resolution denotes alienation.
A simple psychoanalytic definition of "self" creates enormous difficulty because it proposes such a range of complexities to be resolved, moving between the triad of early analytic systems; the symbolic parent-child exchange of the phallus for Freudsians, recognition of the Jungian Imago Dei and syzygial anima and animus, and the Hegelian-originating dynamism of Adlerian sibling power structures. A fuller recognition would need incorporation of all of the developments and possibilities such as Reich's libidinal orgone, or Lacan's "moi" resolved through meconnaissance, reconnaissance and so forth. All, however, are antireductionist and propose an intrinsic nature of some form of non-physical aspect of the individual; the psychical aspect which we call the self. The choice of the interpretation must remain subjective. Many feminists choose to reject Freudian analysis; by way of agreement I shall concentrate on the Jungian interpretation which is also more in accord with eighteenth-century concepts.

For Jung, the Self is the seat of objective reality, compared to the ego which denotes subjective reality. He denotes the difference of his concept of a self with the use of the capital, "Self", because of its connections with an inner empirical deity (the Imago Dei). It combines the point of contact between eternal and temporal lives, the organic unit with the inorganic, the fusion of personal life with transpersonal energies, bringing order out of chaos. Because it contains a host of archetypal potentialities which include specifically female images, its use in defining a female self is doubly relevant. Not only does it propose the existence of a gender-specific portion of the psyche, but also it does not define the woman in terms of negative "other" or as lacking the phallus. This concept is redefined by feminism as synergry, or as woman identification by women, indicative of a specifically female spirit or power.

The development of a female self can be traced as for the universal self, presupposing the existence of a primary totality of Self from which the ego slowly emerges, becoming separated in mid-life, and cyclically returning to a unity with ageing. While the Jungian Self is the enduring Self of pre-birth and post-death, the ego is the "manufactured" element, latent at birth. The Self, then, contains the soul and Spirit, an element of paramount importance to the eighteenth-century perception of a self. The word "self" we can use to encompass not only the religious element but also the ego elements of personality: intellect and emotion.0

"Self" was of great interest to the developing humanist individuality of the eighteenth century. The word occurs frequently in Frances's novels as self-love " and self-
dissection, repeating the renaissance fascination for "self-fashioning", which had been in England since the sixteenth century. In his Dictionary, Johnson defined "self" through its major use in this way as a prefix, or, alternately, as an adjective. Interestingly enough, he attributed this use of the popular hyphenated prefix to Saxon origins. The Saxon use of such compound words was perpetuated in the works of Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden. Many examples of their use are quoted by Johnson, proving that an continued use of the word was a cultural and social tradition.

Contrary to the twentieth-century concept, the pre-eighteenth-century definition was, "a sense of personal order, a characteristic mode of address to the world, a structure of bounded desires — and always some elements of deliberate shaping in the formation and expression of identity." This definition indicates an autonomous ability to control this development which is lacking in both the modern analytic definition, and the Biblical reference by Job: "Did not one fashion us in the womb?" indicating an external intervention. This self and its sense of personal selection of attributes, sits oddly beside the popularity of Calvinism and its doctrine of predestination, yet both apparently developed contemporaneously.

This developing self, being fashioned from within political institutions, precluded the female, making man-gender, not Man-generic, the subject of liberal humanism, just as effectively as in original Freudian psychoanalysis. Early "self-fashioning" was seen in terms of inherited class or caste, a submission to an ideological authority in relation to a threatening other. Within its development, it contained a lack of intrinsic order resulting from the experience of threat, causing possible effacement or loss of the developing self. Such a potentiality I believe to be more likely in the male for whom this development was descriptive. For the female, always acutely aware of herself as "other", the threat was less severe. She could not fear losing what she had never possessed; instead, she had developed a strangely powerful sense of otherness which she could perceptualise as analogous for the otherness of the deity, as both were implicitly other than man.

Greenblatt contends that the fashioning of the self occurs partly through language, and that the Protestant rejection of the confessional resulted in a penitential writing-form which was inextricably linked to both the fashioning of the self and the revelatory writing process. The latter attempted to negate the depersonalisation of the process of printing, returning us not only to the place of the diarist, but to a reiteration of female otherness, through her exclusion from
androcentric language.

Although the self poses problems of definition, depending on the cultural and philosophical position adopted, I believe a definition which encompasses the Jungian with the eighteenth-century concepts to be most suitable in in this instance. The self which I suggest contains the *Imago Dei* as a potentiality; developing ego which encapsulates emotional, intellectual and personal characteristics with a level of unconscious material; and the possibility of development through personal choice. A potentiality at birth, it is initially without gender in so much as it contains an androgynous aspect which will cause cultural development of one aspect through hypertrophy, or latency through atrophy, significantly always containing the latent "other" which Jung described in terms of his syzygial anima and animus. 17 Although this interpretation appears to perpetuate the form of humanist feminism in which cultural aspects denote gender-reactions, because of its content of archetypal potentialities in female form it also encompasses the specifically female spirit or power proposed in gynery.

This parapsychanalytic concept of self may be further reinforced by linguistic reaffirmation, such as the self-revelatory or expository forms of writing, or gossip. Spacks believes gossip to be the most "elegant form" of psychoanalysis, rejecting the derisive Freudian contention that "hysterics suffer mainly from reminiscences." 19

Assuming that this self exists and encompasses all non-physical aspects of an individual, proposes a question as to its possible gender. Linda Anderson contends that "The female self exists as a potentiality which has never fully come into being." 20 This reinforces the contention of Oakley and others that because feminist psychologists propose the place of women as a mirror image of their ideological social and economic location in an androcentric world, they are denied a subjective reality by the phallocentricity of language. Blodgett, however, proposes a modification, as the distinctive female self is "an enduring illusion derived from experience." 21 While society's dominant ideology reflects patriarchal language and structure on women, and their experience exists mainly through that reflection, Blodgett's modification creates a rift between total male reflection and "experience" in the form of the pre-Oedipal relationship with the mother. For although the mother becomes Anderson's unfulfilled female potentiality because of the restrictions to her fulfilment through phallocentric language constructs, she maintains an inherited maternal form which perpetuates the existence of an unfulfilled potentiality. In each generation of daughters exists a transhistoric feminist empathy embodied in the subject
of their writing, which Nussbaum interprets to be "a collective sphere of female subjectivity." This potentiality may be simply a sense of otherness in relation to the male, rather than an identification, always redefining the female in terms of what is not rather than the positive is.

Psychologist such as J. Money and A. Erhart, through their study of hermaphrodites, see sexual identification as purely cultural aspects and find no attributes of masculine or feminine psychology. However, because of conditioning during the development of the ego, a culturally produced female self exists, successfully atrophying the male aspect of the psychical self but maintaining, as for the physical body, the residual underdeveloped components of the opposite. The hypertrophied aspect reflects the mother’s own sense of self. Ironically, the female child develops dual insecure maternal self-perceptions, of both herself as a child and herself as a mother. The mother thus identifies the female child with her own repressed little-girl aspect and the masculine social construct which has conduced her into self-effacement, the shadow-like creature who survives by deferring to other. Moira Montieth refers to this condition as "the tragic aspect of women's individually experienced inequality" because "she is isolated in her feelings of inadequacy and lack of confidence."

While this development can be profoundly negative for the potential self, it contains the more positive aspect within the mother-daughter alliance. For, although participating in the gender identification which fixes them both in the shadows of androcentricity, it encloses them within a distinctly female alliance of otherness before the enclosure of patriarchal language intervenes to cause cultural estrangement through female competitiveness. In the case of complete hypertrophy, the daughter is constructed by the mother-complex into a female whose only goal is childbirth. Her husband is relevant only through his potential for procreation, as is her own personality, because she lives entirely through identification with the objects in her care. This state is, of course, idealised in patriarchal society because it alienates women from other aspects of life.

The positive "Eros" in the hypertrophied female psyche creates an urge to power which is thwarted in every creative aspect of a male-dominated society, and turns back to domestic realm in a frustrated attempt to create. Meeting the paternal-conjugal repression of the family, it is vented on the children and reproductive cycle. The negative aspect of this thwarted Eros often leads to intense
jealously in a mother-daughter relationship, and a continued desire to outdo each other. This leitmotif applies to aspects of Mrs Salusbury's relationship to Hester, but even more aptly to that of Hester and her daughter Queeney.

In Hester Thrale we see not only the force of hypertrophic pre-Oedipal attachment but also the ambivalently destructive and positive results of its unnatural continuance well into maturity. Hester Thrale, unable to find what Freud would call a true place in the Oedipal framework because of her extended attachment to her mother, was unable to accept her own sexuality, indicated, as we saw, by her extended bouts of "hyperemesis gravidarum" or pregnancy vomiting.

Because of the long fixation on her mother, she was unable to enjoy the sexual aspects of her own body which are actualized through the dual identification of the self, and desire of the other which Freud calls an "incessant process of repetition, reversal, and dispossession, dispersal across an 'other'." 

Mr Salusbury's violence would have ensured the enclosure of the mother and daughter in a cycle of female identification and truncated self-awareness, resulting in the conformist behaviour patterns which were only to be severed by Mrs Salusbury's death on "this fatal and ever memorable as miserable day" (18 June 1773) when Hester lost her mother, and "She left me destitute of every real, every natural Friend". She accurately goes on to denote the otherness of the males around her thus: "Mr Thrale and Mr Johnson are the mere Acquisitions of Chance; which chance or change of Behaviour, or Intervention of new Objects and twenty Things beside Death can rob me of." 

Frances was also to mourn her sister Susan with the same intensity of grief, as the last of a long line of maternal figures who betrayed her: Esther Burney, Mrs Sleepe, Mrs Thrale and Mrs Delany, all who perpetuated images of conformity.

In The Tremulous Private Body, Francis Barker questions the idea of enforcement of conformity, and proposes a "more profound strategy of domination which is achieved not by post hoc intervention from without, but by the preconstruction of the subject in its subjection," which, in application, infers that the female self is controlled from within, crippled by internal anxiety and struggles. 

In this deduction, however, Barker fails to address the sexist nature of external pressures which initiate these internal anxieties, entirely ignoring the dual systems employed to bolster male domination through reaffirmation and legitimised forms of violence which reassert female otherness. Yet, his proposal does remind us of the dualism
of internality and externality, questioning whether or not conformist behavior more often results from female self-perception than external social pressure.

Within the lives of Hester and Frances can be found such ready expressions of resentment, anger and denial, that to propose their conformity as self-enforced is absurd, even given the vulnerability of the female psyche to self-blame on both conscious and unconscious levels. These expressions of fear and anger are expressed as both self-protection and self-destructive forces to straddle the ambivalent clamouring of the self for recognition amid the socially defined image of female as submissive to others. From these outward expressions of fear, anger, and psychic projection, we can infer that their conformity was the result of external, not internal, pressure, and that submission was a defensive reaction to mask those socially unacceptable emotions.

Indications of this anger exist subtextually throughout the writings of Hester and Frances. It has been well documented in Julia Epstein's The Iron Pen, where she uses select examples to depict the expression of Frances's anger: her physical torture at Court, a near drowning, the General's death and her mastectomy, because they provide "spectacular outcroppings of the issues at stake in this project of self-construction." It is only through anger that Frances's destruction of her father's memoirs can be interpreted; anger at being the non-favourite child who at last has control of the parent, and as an expression of her rage at never being able to satisfy his egocentric, manipulative familial affection. In Heavy Fathers, Grey anticipated Epstein's work, suggesting that Frances "had her revenge by editing his own literary remains in the dismal later style which replaced the spontaneity and gay simplicity of Evelina. [It] was not more than he deserved, its style having successfully relegated it from shelves to library 'stacks'."

While Frances's anger, like her other defenses, took the form of cathartic writing, Hester's were often recorded as witty extensions of her "on dits" and "flim flams." Against Johnson's criticisms of her verses, she writes with an irony which barely suppresses her anger, "a good one says he --- for a LADY!" Her anger is most evident when complaining, "I used to say I would teach this Science to my own Family but these frequent Pregnancies disable me." These words she could only record, not expresses to Henry, as she reaffirms, "I have never disputed my Husband in my Life," showing the degree to which she was forced to subjugate her anger.
Personae

This subjugation, however, being an acquired characteristic, can be considered part of that element of the self which is ego, and because of its ability to be assumed defensively, must be considered one of those masks, or personae, described by Jung in terms of a mediator between the ego and the environment. As a defence, the persona is without peer, unless the ego begins to identify with a persona and internalises it through the layers to the unconscious. As Jung's two purposes of the personae were to conceal the individual's self from intrusion and to present a specific impression to other people, Frances and Hester exemplify both of these intentions.

While Hester was constructing a persona to keep her vulnerability private from prying eyes and social misconceptions, Frances was creating her own mask to convince society of her submission. Although both masks were created for the opposite reasons, they showed an essential female similarity behind the concept.

The importance of this construction cannot be over-rated as it provides one of the most powerful universal defences, but becomes particularly dynamic for women in the face of severe external pressure to conform. The apparent submission to such pressure ensures its diminishment or deflection, while keeping the internal self inviolable.

Visible social submission suppresses unacceptable social reactions until an alternate source of release can be found through verbalization in gossip, or textualization in written discourse. A perfect example of this assumption of a conformist persona to gain time, acceptance, and, ultimately, complete control of a situation, can be seen in Frances Burney's rejection of the marriage proposal of Thomas Barlow. Despite intense family pressure to accept Barlow's proposal, she emerged triumphant, not only retaining her unmarried status but also the wholehearted affection of the family members and Samuel Crisp.

In the recently-released second volume of Lars E. Troide's edition of Frances's Early Journals and Letters, the reader can follow this whole unfolding drama. Troide remarks that it is during this event that she "comes centre stage herself" for the first time in her writing. He does not explain why, but it is evidently her first social experience of being a "heroine" of a romance, in the best fictional tradition, a role which had previously being played by her stepsisters and sisters. In this role, we
first detect the strength which was to maintain her through her later life, and her
talent for gaining a victory by assuming an appealing timid persona.

In her diary she records her incapability of resisting "not merely my Father's
persuasion, but of even his Advice," because of his ability to manipulate her
emotions through guilt and shame. * Yet, after having expressed this image of a
submissive daughter in writing, and reaffirmed it in her letters to Crisp, she is
obviously using the time gained to develop a strategy to reinforce of her refusal.
The pivotal scene which she records as altering the pressure on her to accept
Barlow, is more emotional — and even melodramatic — than any scene she was
to describe between her lovers in her novels. As we noted before, her father-
daughter scenes invariably contained more pathos and sentiment than any other
male-female encounter. "O Sir! — " cried I — "I wish for Nothing! — only
let me Live with you! — " "My life!" cried he, kissing me kindly, "Thee shalt live
with me for ever, if Thee wilt!" 37

This passage evokes the comment from Troide: "Fanny's journals, at their
best, often read like a novel," faint praise, as is usual from male editors, no matter
how thorough. 38 His comment provokes the awareness that they are not always "at
their best." This implication recurs through Troide's introduction where he patronises
her again with "Fanny's portrait of Dr Johnson in her letter to Daddy Crisp is worthy
of a Boswell." 39 Worthy of a better writer, or better biographer, he suggests, perpetuating
the belittlement of female diarists. Troide seems unaware that Frances's portrait
of Johnson is an extremely valuable one because it records a purely subjective evaluation
by a female who was less impressed with his fame, than with his uncouthness! Her
aim in recording this meeting was not so much to claim social distinction from it
as to amuse her readers.

Frances encodes her anger and fear over her marriage proposition from
Barlow beneath her persona of a timid and submissive daughter. That she can
extend this persona into her text so convincingly must surely give her writing a
greater claim to value.

The anger expressed textually by Hester Thrale indicates not only a degree
of fear which ensured her assumption of a conforming persona, but the powerfully
cathartic effect of her journal writing. Although her writing usually contained a
sense of possible other in the form of a reader which precluded inscribing unmentionable
physical details, she often encoded a strong degree of resentment and anger beneath
her wit and irony.

When a family party stayed in lodgings on the North Parade, Johnson slept on the second floor, Henry Thrale on the first, and Hester near her maids and a "dirty Irish family" in the parlours. She remarked that they were like the tree in Sophy's Fable Book, where the eagles inhabited the top, the fox lived in the middle, and the pigs wallowed at the bottom. * Amusing, but it was also strongly indicative of her bitter evaluation of their social and familial hierarchy.

Frances's conformist actions were slightly different to Hester's in that she also attempted to inscribe her persona into her writing. This practice has led to her historical perpetuation as a harmlessly chattering diarist and inferior novelist. Although her novels must be read with care to discover the degree of violence and anger which they encode, they create a superficial impression of domestic triviality which was acceptably "feminine". Dr Burney's Memoirs made an acceptable bid to inscribe a paternal parent's history, an act which accorded with Frances's construction of herself as the dutiful daughter who allowed her plays to be censored and censured. She proved herself to be not only a mistress of the act of persona-creation, but of its incorporation into her text, much more successfully than Hester who fought against her submission throughout her writing.

Although Hester Thrale's private life was kept submissive by the expectations of reproduction, medical science and fear of masculine violence, her Piozzi-writing betrayed asexuality; and what was most unforgivable, it intruded unashamedly into masculine domains. Her wit and intelligence, although restricted by her position as a woman in a masculinist society, refused to be suborned in line with her body once she was partially released from fear of violence.

Alienation

The different aspects of their youthful manipulation depicts one of the greatest differences between the two women, for although the young Hester Salusbury was conditioned to a fear of paternal abuse and violence, Frances was suborned by cloying paternal emotional manipulation and its shame and guilt reactions. Frances became fixated in the Oedipal stage, identifying with the father and experiencing all of the difficulties implicit in dealing with language, such as illiteracy and alteration of styles. Hester, fixated in the pre-Oedipal state, spent her writing life attempting to reaffirm
the validity of the expression of the "other" voice, worthy of a language. Spacks, however, believes that all women rise above such classifications when they inscribe journals, because they reaffirm their own connection with other enduring and domestically-achieving women mythologizing them in much the same way that men perpetuate physically heroic myths.  

Hester Thrale accomplishes this mythopoeia by not only reinforcing her own strength as a physically "enacting" woman by comparison to "passive" man, but also by textualising herself as an acquiescent woman deliberating masking her self-perceived superiority:

little do These wise Men know or feel, that the Crying of a young Child or the Perverseness of an elder, or the Danger however trifling, of anyone — will soon drive out of a female Parent's head a Conversation concerning Wit, Science or Sentiment, however She may appear to be impressed with it at the moment.  

She further refers to herself as a "Merle de familie", which reaffirms her own sense of importance. Because doing something is more important than hearing something, she appends herself a title: one of the most powerful language deprivations for a female.

This mythologising provides a great attraction for female readers as it accomplishes Montelth's diaristic aim of "The discovery of one woman by another, implying a different sense of ancestry, a female line of descent."  

This relationship places the journal within the internal space of the subjective voice impenetrable without the common ancestry implicit within the pre-Oedipal maternal bond which encloses the sense of female "otherness".

This common ancestry includes the alienation from linguistic and logical processes developed from the masculine construction of language. Post-Lacanians such as Hélène Cixous and Julia Kristeva suggest this alienation proposes female repression in language to such a degree that it leads to inarticulation during intense moments. In Frances, this is palpable, beginning with the restriction of illiteracy, and leading to her alteration in writing style. At its most intense, she records an uncontrolled nightmare vision in Camilla where "her own hand involuntarily grasped a pen of iron" and wrote "with a velocity uncontrollable."  

Later, "unlicensed by her will," she lifts the pen again, but the paper remains blank, the pages explode and the book bursts, whereon she hears disembodied echoing voices surrounding her. This passage is seen by Epstein as indicative of an act of precariously balanced
defiance and submission, and therefore, it becomes self-defining. It can also be read as Frances attempting to articulate female inadequacy in the area of masculinist construction of language, or, more simply, of her maturing dislike of the necessity to write as a girlish romantic.

The silence and inability to write is doubly significant. It encodes women’s acknowledged self-perception of inadequacy within the masculine aetiology, and indicates a withholding of the self as a defensive mechanism for the linguistically deprived. With every statement not made, the woman diarist is encoding Cixous’s "luminous torrents" of overflow which are engulfed by the sense of shame and fear of exposure to parental or conjugal phallocentricity.

This sense of overflow is implicit in women's writing and exemplified through timid indications of menstruation. Hester Thrale makes a bold and unusual reference to menstruation in her *Family Book* (8 August 1777) "Something happened now however to cure Hester's Eyes and all her other Ailments if She had any:" a "Change of Constitution". This reference to Queeney's menarche is not only a rare one, but indicates the essential lack of control which extends the analogy of liquid torrents, and the uniquely female view of menstruation as a healing act. She goes on, "the inflammation which I suppose belonged to this Affair — the Blood which could not readily find its proper Place of Evacuation, filled the Vessells of the Eye." The only defence against this lack of control is exhibited in the silence which surrounds it; a silence of withholding that does not deny its existence, but conforms to male expectations of reticence concerning such an "unspeakable" act. In recording its existence, Hester Thrale indicated her journalistic intention of the *Family Book* as a place of solace for the female condition. This book was filled and the idea modified in the *Thraliana*, a work with a stronger perception of the possibility of an audience.

In this small inscription of a uniquely female experience, Hester Thrale was attempting to become an "escapee" from the self-satisfied ideology of androcentric writing. She had no previous diaristic example among the male writers, but determinedly attempted to articulate the woman’s experience, and this superb piece of feminism should have gained her a place in writer ancestry, beyond that of a mere companion to Johnson.

When Cixous wrote "Censor the body and you censor breath and speech at the same time," she encapsulated the full implications of female intimidation. By censoring women's right to textualise their menstruation, reproduction and
"unspeakable" bodily functions, they are denied a language of their own and a means of self-affirmation through legitimised sources.

Although Frances’ writing appears to conform to the submission that society demanded of her, we often get indication of her iron will, such as when she stayed in Brussels although almost the only non-native to do so, all others fleeing the approaching army. Instead of claiming the bravery which was undoubtedly her own, she immediately condoned her action in conformistically acceptable terms, claiming she stayed because the General had told her to do so. When she spoke to Spanish prisoners of war while awaiting a boat to England, and thereby endangering both her escape and life, she immediately covered the act by adopting a literary guise of terrified heroine, which eventually ensured her safety. She dashed half way across war-torn Europe without money or personal conveniences, yet explained it as simple wifely duty. Although she refers to the General’s mastery, she was the family provider through her court pension and writing. She wrote Evelina despite an apparent terror of discovery, but published the work anyway, blasting her supposedly terrified persona away. She married d’Arblay despite her Father’s disapproval. She manipulated and colluded in the aim to save Susan from her husband’s cruelty. Despite all these instances of an iron will, she managed to construct an almost indestructible persona of submission and conformity as a defence against public authority and parental manipulation. Frances exposes herself and her ambivalence by juxtaposing two statements, hiding one under irony, and the other inscribing her shame. "I am," she writes, "the ingenious, learned, and most profound Fanny Burney," and "I dreaded being thought studious and affected."  

Frances was to juggle these two attributes in her assumption of modesty within the masculine domain of publication of narration, a "degradation" she denoted it, in the introduction to The Wanderer.  She created this duality in her diaries and letters which resulted in missish reactions being recorded in a confident, authoritative voice. The dualism is best exemplified in the forms of the submissive heroine "Ellis" and the forceful Elinor of The Wanderer.

The Animus

It is through Frances’s novels that we find a potent expression of the problems of self-awareness and identity through the construction of her heroes. Although erroneously
believed to be based on Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison, Frances's heroes make the greatest claim to her many rights to fame, as she was the first woman successfully to personify an animus projection into text. She created a purely female idealisation of desirability in a mate, significantly without the deliberate emphasis on morality which is found in equivalent masculine constructs. Her fantasies were those which have encapsulated the ultimate female ideal of a man endowed with the power of worldly position and wealth, desirable physical attributes, and a never-failing romantic desire for the heroine (with whom the female reader identifies), courting and winning her against apparently insurmountable problems. Although after Lord Orville her heroes were to become modified and differ in type, they remained as projections of her own fantasies expressed through her own maturing preferences for a man, even if that man contained the aspects of ineptitude noted by Straub.  

This construction returns to Jungian terms. As in Lord Orville, Frances created her own youthful ideal of a hero: a man upon whom she could project the latent, atrophied aspect of her female self — the animus. In each of her four novels, her heroes provide an example of each of the four potential animus stages, which makes their interest for women of considerable psychological importance. Orville is the projection of a young girl's fantasy; Delville progresses, he values family above all things but has very little contact with the real world of objects and people. He is becoming more of an abstraction and is less physical than Orville. Edgar Mandlebert personifies the third aspect in his devotion to "the word". He is constantly being reduced into inaction by advice, and only becomes resolved into action when overhearing Camilla's verbal confession to her mother. With Frances's mature work, The Wanderer, we discover Albert Harleigh, who adds meaning to the fourth stage of projection: "more invincible than the prejudices of ages", 22 because he understands and empathises with the female difficulties the writer proposes to be the lot of everywoman. The Wanderer's story was so evocative of the problems and resolutions of eighteenth and early nineteenth century female life, that it almost assuredly signed its own death warrant. In a world of masculinist editorial and publication institutions, its stridently feminist message proclaimed on a subject which you have long since in common with everyman that breathes, wished exploded, the Rights of woman: Rights, however, which all your sex, with all its arbitrary assumption of superiority, can never disprove, for they are the Rights of human nature; to which the
two sexes equally and unalienably belong. But I must leave to abler
casuists, and the slow, all arranging ascendance of truth, to raise our
oppressed half of the human species to the equality and dignity for
which equal Nature, that gives us Birth and Death alike, designs us.\textsuperscript{35}

A close examination of the much under-rated novel, \textit{The Wanderer}, shows
not only a markedly feminist message, but an almost continuous discourse on the
ambivalent state of women in eighteenth-century life. It is typical of Frances that
this evaluation is resolved pragmatically; the conforming female who naturally wins
the "prize" of Albert being much closer to male idealisation.

While in her creation of her female characters Frances reaffirmed an aspect
of her self, her male characters personify a whole range of potentialities of masculine
characters and conducts, exhibiting not only her own acute observation of the opposite
sex, but a laudable desire to display male inadequacies and violence as an example
to other women. \textsuperscript{34}

Alongside her portraits of idealised heroes, she accurately depicts their
realistic equivalent. For every Lord Orville, there is a neglectful renegade parent
like Sir John Belmont. With Mortimer Delvile we have the vision of what he will
become, the proud Mr Delvile, as the unmarried Edgar may easily become the
domestic tyrant and suicide Harrel. Juxtaposed against the enlightened and
understanding Albert, we find the cruelest portrayals of male inadequacies in the
would-be seducer Sir Lyell Sycamore, the gouty old goat Sir Jasper, and the
sniggering fool Mr Ireton.

\textbf{Defences}

The need to give expression to idealised fantasies was one of Frances's
defences against male manipulation, because beyond her own personal romantic
rejections, through her novels, she was able to maintain a mastery of men which
was impossible in society. Further, through her journals, she was able subjectively
to interpret disappointment in order to find compensation, drawing desired inferences
from particulars of smallest significance, such as,

I almost fancied I saw a little disappointment on his face at my early
departure; but I am convinced it was \textit{accident} not fancy. He stood so
that I was obliged to Courtesie as I passed him. \textsuperscript{36}
This was written on meeting George Cambridge years after his disappointing behaviour. Examined closely, this is a remarkable piece of writing as it encompasses her own desire to witness a reaction in George, denial of that need, yet reaffirmation of its enactment! It attributes his choice of position to a desire for social contact, and blames him for forcing her to curtesy, yet she cannot quite bring herself to be dishonest and state that he did express disappointment, instead, she articulates the suggestion of her own wish in the manner of true gossip's repetition, modification and subjectively interpreted material.

She indicates her ability as a diarist to create her own submission as a heroine, out of a piece of embarrassing reality. In her "Courtship Journal" she records a fictive self, fluttering and reluctant to accede in "this little Battle." "I felt half gasping with apprehension of what was to follow" denoting barely suppressed sexuality and trepidation during the General's proposal. At exactly the same time, she is handing him a ten pound note to ease his financial embarrassment. "I gave a sort of taunt — & distressed assent" she writes, constructing her timid persona over the reality she exposed immediately with, "I determined to name it to my Father." In her writing she was able to portray herself as a modest, artless, submissive and passive, attributes which have endured as images of her real self, despite her obvious anger and cool practicality.

Hester Thrale-Piozzi's submissive persona was created from very different material. In the place of Frances's flutter, we find self-deprecating irony which covers her hurt and distress under a veil of wit and insouciance, as in this passage concerning her husband's passion for another woman.

Mr Thrale is fallen in love really & seriously with Sophy Streetfield ... She is very pretty, very gentle, soft and insinuating; hangs about him, dances with him, cries when She parts from him, squeezes his Hand slyly, & with her sweet Eyes full of Tears looks so fondly his face — & all for Love of me as She pretends; that I can hardly sometimes help laughing in her Face. A Man must not be a Man but an It to resist such Artillery. 77

Not only does Hester expose the infatuation of Henry for our amusement, she records her own anger both of it, and of Sophy's behaviour enacted with the "safe domestick fire" of her own home. It is with surprise we realize that this occurs when Hester is hugely pregnant. Even more contemptible, there is jocular talk of Sophy replacing her as a second wife if she fails to survive her pregnancy.
Between Frances and Hester they exemplify the dual possibilities of female submission. For Hester, her submission was a physical one that only partially intruded into her journals mainly through the repression of reproductive issues. For Frances, her submission was a literary one, a desire she constructed through her work. Hester's was the result of direct male abuse, Frances's of the shame and guilt reactions to manipulative affection.

Their relationship with their parents gives ample indication of the development of their reaction patterns. Hester, comfortable in the pre-Oedipal maternal relationship with her mother, was able to recognise and resolve the mechanisms of shame; but, conditioned to passivity in the behaviour of Salusbury, was vulnerable to a violence-fear-conformity pattern in her life with Henry Thrale. Frances, on the other hand, suffered an abrupt cessation of maternal bonding, not only through her mother's early death (when Frances was ten years old) but because of the rapidity with which she was succeeded as her mother's baby. Charles was born 1753, then Susanna 1755, Charles 1757, Henry 1760, Charlotte 1761. When Frances was born, the fourth child under four years old, her arrival co-incided with the death of the third child: "a position almost guaranteed to ensure maternal deification. All attributes Frances perceived as belonging to the idealized and absent mother, she recalled in Dr Burney's Memoirs. She recorded an example of this deification when a neighbour queried the young Frances's illiteracy, and Mrs Burney replied, "No, no, - I am not uneasy about her!" * Given Frances's ability to fictionalise even to the point of melodrama, if this had been an expression of her own desire for such maternal support, we can suppose it would have been more extravagant. Because of its slightness, it rings true as the faded and pleasurable reminiscence of an elderly lady.

Because the autobiographical sections of the Memoirs were written at such an advanced age, it is likely that they fulfilled analytical functions. Deprived of almost all of her female solace-providing circle, she resorted to that "elegant" form of gossip which provided an unknown analytic function in the reunification of the ego with the Self. * In eighteenth-century parlance this would have been viewed as the preparation of the soul for death and judgement. As part of this preparation, she was resolving both the maternal and paternal aspects of her developed ego. Significantly, it was when she wrote the autobiographical parts of the Memoirs that the reader recognizes the sparkle of the girlish writer of Evelina, using the
language of maternal attachment reinforced by female sibling relationships. In the areas written to aggrandise Dr Burney, she becomes more restricted and pompous as she recalls her unconscious struggles with paternal language structures in her bid for his approval.

Significantly, this difficulty re-emerged in her old age, reflecting the equivalent difficulties she had experienced as a girl; a fact she could only recall with comfort after reaching an advanced age when all experience appears trivialised. Realisation of her disability explains a great many of her ambivalent reactions to writing; uncontrolled urges to inscribe discourse, inability to write at all, vulnerability to masculine censure and censorship, plus the shame and guilt reactions which were resulting of her childhood's disability.41 This urge to return to the safe maternal language of pre-Oedipal awareness, expresses both Frances's continued need to resolve a hypotrophic maternal state through a reconciliation with the mother, even at an advanced age. The need for this resolution can be seen throughout her long life; for although her sisters were of paramount importance for their solace-attachment, she projected the need for maternal identification on to a succession of other women, such as Mrs Delany and Hester Thrale-Piozzi, of whom she had once written, "Mrs Thrale! she — she is the goddess of my idolatry!"42 In her novels, although each heroine is virtually motherless though death or distance, a whole parade of idealised motherly providers appear: Mrs Tyrrol, Mrs Delvile, Miss Margland, beside the duality of the rejecting mother: Madame Duval, Lady Margaret, Mrs Maple and others.

In this fictive creations or projections, we see the difference between Hester and Frances in terms of other women; for Hester was secure in her knowledge of female attachment, both as an only child, and through the mother-daughter attachment which had been initiated by the physical violence of Mr Salusbury, and enhanced by the abuse of Mr Thrale.

Although Frances tended to idealise this maternal attachment through her alienation from its reality, her projection of the ideal and her personification of it into her novels enhances the female content of the texts considerably. Her fictive creations resolved the ambivalence of the mother's creative aspect and the mother who left her duality of images, a proposition which was to re-emerge during the Piozzi marriage with all of the real force of its fury, threatening Frances's comfortable resolution of maternal duality to such a degree that it ensured her powerful enmity for many years.
While Frances Burney suffered the deprivation of a full maternal relationship, Hester Thrale-Piozzi suffered from the lack of siblings and female friends with which the younger woman's life abounded, denying Hester of strong solace-attachments, driving her back to her mother as the source of all consolation and ultimately to find an only replacement in her journal-writing.

The curiously polar oppositions of reactions in the two women tend to indicate an aspect of "self" which exists beyond that of the mother-attachment or conjugal-paternal bond, although each provides a great influence on the development of ego. Despite similar levels of external expectations and deprivations, the two women reacted in different ways, indicating some as yet unconsidered aspect of individualism. While Frances reacted to paternal manipulation with shame and a conformist persona, Hester reacted externally, challenging masculine canonical writing institutions and flouting social rules of patriarchy. This differing aspect of "self" can be fully explored by parallel eighteenth and twentieth century notions.

As part of the eighteenth-century society, we saw the ambivalence of reactions to women, viewed as creatures of "fancy", rather than logic. As Frances expressed it, and Jane Austen was to reiterate, showing reactions of sensibility rather than sense. Although later more frequently attributed to females, sensibility was a notion that included the mid-eighteenth-century cult of "the Man of Feeling", described by Forde in 1755 as "such a Sorrow as he loves to indulge; a sort of pleasing Anguish, that sweetly melts the mind, and terminates in a Self-approving Joy." "Strongly rooted in the humanitarian aspect of Latitudinarian Anglicanism which detested the darker aspects of Puritanism that believed passion and affection lead to sin, the Man of Feeling reverted to the concept of Christ as the suffering servant, and negated Protestantism's "Stoic insensibility." By the mid-eighteenth century, the word "sensibility" had become eulogised from moral weeping to goodwill externally enacted to all men, and an internal empathetic reaction of misery to another's suffering. "Sensibility" became a subjectified sense of the naturally occurring goodness of a human being, rejecting the Hobbesian contention that a powerful external force was necessary to prevent constant war between individuals because of their inability to gain ascendancy over natural passions. "

John Mullan traces sensibility much further, to the point where it became inextricably linked with sentimentality and gained dual forms of self-expression: firstly, by the bodily enactment of feeling into subjectified nervous disorders, such as melancholy, disorder, hypochondria or "spleen", all detailed intimately by Hume,
Richardson and Sterne; and, secondly, into the area of written discourse translated into descriptions of sighs, fluttering, palpitations and collapses where the feelings become textually observable.

During the lifetimes of Hester and Frances, we have this concept of sensibility co-existing with the earlier Augustan rationality: the Man of Feeling living in a lingering Age of Reason. Rationalists, however, because their power is based on the legitimising power of language, soon trivialised the notion of sensibility by denoting it illogical and therefore "other"; this form of otherness not being reasoned and male, therefore unreasoned and more attributable to females. By reducing its idealized vision of Christian perfection, it became entangled in sentimentality, then susceptible to parody. Beyond the sighs and flutters came the vapours, false swoons, and inevitably, its implication in melodrama's contrived dramatic form.

In twentieth-century parlance, the concept remains, described in Jung's character typology as oppositions of the two reasoned aspects of function types. Although not dogmatic, they reaffirm reactions of individuals and reinterpret the eighteenth-century concepts, with surprisingly similarity.

Frances can be seen as the visual depiction of the state of sensibility. Whether this image was entirely her own construction is difficult to assess, given her ability to evade personal detection behind her literary persona; but, when compared to Hester Thrale-Piozzi, her reactions of shame and embarrassment recorded by others and not only herself, indicate a direct emotional internalisation of reaction which would be in order for a feeling, or "sensible" type. In Hester we see the opposite. Her reactions are more those of a logical mind. Furthermore, these characteristics became those most admired by each woman: where Frances desired to be the submissive, prudent repressor of natural passion, and Hester the logical-minded author of authoritative texts.

Although originating from differing personality types and diverse needs, both women found their most effective defence against society was the development of conformist personae to protect their non-physical selves. As long as these personae were in place, the women were considered admirable members of society. Mrs Thrale as the witty hostess gracing her husband's table despite his neglect, cruelty and infatuations, breeding annually, supporting and being patronised by Johnson, was admirable. Little Fanny Burney, fluttering girl-woman, able to write wittily domestic novels, court-dresser, prudent and prudish virgin, was admirable. As long
as they remained firmly ensconced behind these socially defined roles, they were feted and found approval.

If we wonder why these women maintained their personae, we have only to examine what happened when they attempted to articulate their own self-identity and anger. When the widowed Mrs Thrale remarried, she not only refused to be guided by the great patriarch of the day, she rejected Protestant Englishmen hopeful of marrying property, in favour of a Roman Catholic Italian. Her severance from Johnson has led to almost two hundred years of scapegoating by the pens of his adherents. Her ambitious ventures into publication, although acceptable while she viewed herself as a poet and diarist, later drew vituperative criticism. \footnote{The reason for this is simple. Not only did she write like a man in form, but in style and content as well, intruding into traditional areas of patriarchy, attempting to become the first Englishperson to write the history of the world in Retrospection. Men could accept her poetry, letters to newspapers, witty aggrandisement of Johnson in the Letters and Anecdotes and even the Thraliana, but they could not accept her intrusion into authoritative historical forms.}

One of the most powerful gender-specific pieces of literary criticism ever written occurred as a result of Hester Piozzi’s ambitious projects British Synonymity and Retrospection, or a Review of the most Striking and important Events, Characters, Situations and their Consequences which the last 1800 years have presented to the View of Mankind. While this comprehensive review of the history of the world would have been an ambitious project for any person, the fact of her being a female legitimised criticism of a particular type: neither relying on criticism of content or style, but on the fact of the author’s sex. In making this assertion, I am not attempting to judge the literary or historical worth of her projects, but evaluating the criticism of her work simply on its sexist bias.

It is Ancient History in dishabille, in a dinity morning gown, her slippers down at heel, and her front awry; the Modern History in a cotton gown, and pattens, just returned from the shopping, with a new cambric pocket-handkerchief, three yards of pink ribbon, a cake of Windsor soap, and an ounce of all-spice in her reticule. \footnote{Such forms of criticism occurring during the life time of the author could be guaranteed either to ensure her future publications were published under a male pseudonym so that they would attract only asexual criticism, or successfully to}
ensure no further venture into male areas of publication. If published posthumously, they almost certainly ensured the end of their published life.

Such externally enforced restrictions, however, only indicate the social attitudes toward female intellectual endeavour, and not the reality of female intelligence. They could create an external appearance of inferiority in the same way as conformity to brutality, but could not diminish the essence of the "self", only its public perception.

This intellectual paradigm can be extended to the religious and psychological aspects with equal veracity. No matter how rigorously and negatively the Church debated the lack of female soul, it could not influence the possible existence of that soul, only the masculine perception of its actuality. 76 Although the Protestant religion could nullify the female aspect of the divinity by removal of the Virgin as an aspect of worship 71 and exclude women from the ministry, 72 it could only change and diminish women's participation, not alter the self-perception of women in regard to their own association with a deity.

Through her chosen second marriage, Hester was able to slough-off much of her assumed persona, as she no longer faced physical violence, but the aspect of maternal self-identification she shared with Mrs Salusbury was to evade her in her own daughters causing her life-long guilt and distress, because the image of Henry Thrale was always between them or in them.

For Frances, although her persona was largely a self-constructed literary one, it was created so powerfully and legitimised so thoroughly by Macaulay, that its removal has only been partially accomplished through the re-editing and republishing of her works. These books are being restored and re-evaluated by feminists as they expose the strength and anger in her texts. In her own life, she maintained a submissive persona, except when it suited her to lift it and exert her iron will. The "rigorously wilful mind of her own" was detected by Epstein and exposed; but, unlike Hester Thrale-Piozzi, her mask was lifted so infrequently and cautiously that she was able to maintain her popularity with her contemporaries. 73 Although her marriage was almost identical to Hester's, she was able to accomplish it with a tact and discretion of which the older woman was incapable. Both married Roman Catholic Europeans, yet, the "lovely Burney" was able to manoeuvre him into social favour, although she too was to suffer bitter criticism when attempting to write more powerfully than in the frothy Evelina. In the same way, her tact and diplomacy over the Court appointment's cancellation offended no one, yet its accomplishment indicated the iron will which
 existed behind the conformist image we have inherited.

**Immutability**

Francis Barker infers that underlying these layers of conformist mechanisms is a form of common sense which results from an introspective fear of madness and an extrospective recognition of text as a means of recording an apparent self. By the process of articulating anxieties and fears, the writer substitutes the text for his or her own "tremulous private body." Although Barker proposes a fear of madness, it is possible to detect a stronger fear of external violence and pain in women. Ambivalently, while the dominant patriarchal social model is based on external application of pressure and violence, for the male it introverts a sense of chaos into Barker's fear of madness, deduced from his gender-specific interpretation. For the woman, existing subculturally and denied external forms of empowerment, she fears internalised chaos much less than the external world of pain. This duality is powerfully exemplified through a comparison of contemporary diaries of men and women.

Take, for example, passages from *Boswell in Holland*, where the young Boswell makes repeated references to being "confused and changed and desperate," being gloomy, distressed, distracted, drowsy with weak nerves and low spirits. Other times, he refers to "blackest melancholy" under the Demon of Hypochondria, and fears madness. Yet there appears to be little external negativity to cause such mental chaos. He is removed from his usual milieu, largely by choice, unlike many wives who are forced to journey to alien patriarchal households. He has the burden of an awareness of sin because of his whoring, but chooses to persist. Initiated by insecurity over metaphysical debates, under these minimal threats of internal and external pressure, he is apparently close to a mentally chaotic state. His *The Hypochondriak* articles, "On Hypochondria", "On Suicide", and "On Fear" reaffirm his constant preoccupation with the theme of psychic disintegration. Samuel Johnson also frequently referred to fear of disintegration of the mind, and Hester Thrale made occasional discreet references to his fear and even the possible enactment of melancholy madness. In *Samuel Johnson in the Medical World*, John Wiltshire details Johnson's role as both a patient and a medical layman, dealing sympathetically with a "labyrinth, or a battlefield" of competing theories,
perceptions and facts concerning his medical state. Wiltshire does not consider psychoanalytic theories, but refers to Mrs Thrale’s “therapeutic friendship” with Johnson. He accords it less value than Boswell’s especially in regard to melancholy. However, this is justified in regard to their shared experience of the masculine form of mental disintegration. Wiltshire also records a long list of other males’ writings on madness, including William Battie, Richard Brocklesby, John Locke and George Cheyne. Other examples of this fear occur in Horace Walpole’s Letters, and Boswell even refers to Henry Thrale’s melancholy!

In men’s diaries, we tend to find an emphasis on self-evaluation or exploration indicating an awareness of the self as the centre of a social circle which is threatened by this internal disintegration. The female diary contains the self as interpreted by others, attempting to create an identity from alienated masculine language forms and texts yet always containing a subtext of external violence which inextricably links the physical body with a corpus of writing.

In this corporealizing, we find woman’s textualizing of language about herself used as a form of self-sustainment or reflexive consciousness to counter patriarchal attacks on self worth and identification. By reaffirming the existence of the self in written discourse, the female diarist reaffirms her autonomy. Significantly, silences, encodement and inability to write are frequently recurring aspects of women’s texts, denoting their physical fear of recording themselves and thus rendering themselves vulnerable to further attack, as well as their ambivalence toward the self-images they wish to perpetuate. Frances was particularly vulnerable to this ambivalence in maintaining her submissive persona throughout her long life. "My pen and I have quarrelled — or, rather, we sulk, for we have not had sufficient commerce even to disagree," she records so vividly that the reader forgets that existence of the written passage completely denies her assertion!

Hester interprets her silence differently, "I must eat up my own Heart, and be quiet," again depicting the vital difference between the two women; for Frances shifts the blame for her inactivity to external burlesque by personifying the pen and herself in terms of marital discord. Hester re-enacts violence by internalising it to the degree of self-cannibalistic imagery, recording both the depth of her self-hatred at being afraid, and her submission into silence.

Stated simply, this duality of fears in men and women results in opposition of selves. Instead of creating a fearful easily fragmented sense of female self, the
application of this powerful social pressure by paternal mechanisms of violence and language, condenses and strengthens the intrinsically female self. Whereas in the male, the diminished pressure which only accords to the laws of society, creates a less concentrated, weaker inner self in constant fear of chaotic dissolution. Ironically, this weaker self is masked by the strength of socially legitimised structures, while the female must create her own. Unable to find protection within the dominant ideology, the woman devises her own strategies for dealing with life: the construction of socially pleasing personae. Part of that reinforcement of persona occurs during the writing of the self-revelatory diary, which is equally valuable for self-affirmation.

In women's self-expository writings, instead of the reputedly weak inner female self, we find a defensive means of strengthening that self. Beneath all of the masks of characterization, the fear of violence, potentialities for personal pain and disaster, I detect a superior sense of self in women that is not only indicated by their maintenance of sanity in the face of bodily misery, but its influence on bodily survival mechanisms. For both Hester and Frances, this physical strength was indicated by longevity despite the depredations made on their bodies by medical science and paternalistic demands for reproduction.

Instead of negative results from the violently extracted conformism of women, it is plain that both women were stronger, more self-aware creatures than their male counterparts through their uniquely female ability to give birth, and for celebrating self-affirmation instead of self-destruction in the face of patriarchal pressures to conform.
Notes for Chapter 4

1. Marginalia, "Minced Meat for Pyes", 123.
5. Edwards, 8, 38.
8. This is particularly true of early feminists such as Betty Friedan and Kate Millet, although Juliet Mitchell and others believe a rejection of psychoanalysis and of Freud's works is fatal for feminism. Many feminists, however, believe Freudian psychology and feminism to be mutually exclusive.
12. Camilla, 736.
16. Many feminists reject this concept which was popularized during the 1960's, believing that it invariably becomes phallocentric.
17. Spacks, Gossip, 104.
23. Montieth, 29. During 1880, Hannah More was recording similar ideas in her Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education, see especially p. 63.
30 Grey, 82.
31 Thraliana, 1, 55.
33 Thraliana, 55.
40 Thraliana, 49.
41 Spacks, "Reflecting Women", 27.
42 Thraliana, 2, 15.
43 Monteith, 67.
44 Camilla, 875.
47 Family Book, 8 August 1777.
48 Chous, 879.
49 D. & L., Vol 1, 22.
52 The Wanderer, 175.
53 The Wanderer, 161.
54 Doody claims that even her naming - patterns are efforts to reaffirm herself as Evelina, Cecilia, Camilla, Elinor, Jodrel, Ellis, Mrs Howel and Mrs Maple all contain the "el" sound indicative of "elle" or she.
55 J. & L., Vol 1, 175.
57 Thraliana, 1: 356.
59 Madame d'Arblay (Frances Burney), Memoirs of Dr Burney, 3 Vols, (London: Edward Moxon, 1832), Vol 2, 123.
60 By 1832, only Hetty and Frances's nieces remained.
62 D. & L., (Dobson), Vol 1, 40.
64 Crane, 217.
65 Crane argues this point fully, see 220-2.
67 Carl G. Jung, Psychological Types. The Collected Works. Bollingen Series
Notes (cont.)


68 Piozziana, 106. Hester wrote poetry until she was 79, and her poems were reprinted in anthologies for over 100 years.

69 Love Letters, 8-9.

70 Belsey, 56.

68 One early Christian group, the Mariamites, worshipped a Trinity which was one-third female.

72 Many lay-preachers of early Methodism were women, and only excluded after John Wesley's death. Lady Huntingdon's chapels were also absorbed into mainstream Calvinist-Protestantism.

73 Epstein, The Iron Pen, 15.

74 Barker, 60.


76 Boswell, 279.

77 Boswell, 193. Also see 205-7, 209-12, 217, 279-82.


79 Johnson, Diaries, Prayers and Annals, Vol 1, 661.


84 Life, 3: 633.

85 Pepys's exhibit retrospective assurances of masculinity, Boswell's a confessional history of a self, and Rousseau's an eloquent and introspective exposition of a man.


87 Family Book, 20 Dec. 1777.
Conclusion

"Spite of Virtue, Sense & Wit"
Using diaries, journals and letters to rediscover our literary mothers, provides us with an excellent opportunity to re-evaluate our own lives and literary texts and to examine our own actions in order to reaffirm, or deny, the proportion of our lives still negatively affected by patriarchal domination. It appears shocking that we can empathise and identify transhistorically with an age as removed as the later eighteenth century, and saddening that although the forms of subversive and legitimised violence have altered, their enactment has not. Like the eighteenth century, the twentieth recreates the ambivalence of an idealised antidiscriminatory contract, while frequently enacting its opposite.

Although considered a pseudo-literary genre since post-Romantic times, the self-revelatory form of journal writing is of great importance to women, because it exposes the subjectified realities of women's lives beyond the view legitimised by canonical socio-historical texts. Reading the journals and letters of women such as Thrale-Piozzi and Burney, Lister, Wortley Montagu, and Delany, although all qualifying as roughly middle or landed-gentry class, is valuable, while their socially and economically defined level is ambivalent. Given the vulnerability of females to their reproductive systems, it is possible to infer a similar disparity of contractual potentiality in women of all classes, denying Felmar and Hobbes contractuality and McFarlane's "affectual" element which propose an equality within the marital contract. The essentially biological nature which denies this equality is amply exemplified by Shorter's examples and proposals, and by his conclusion, "Beneath this male torpor lay a massive indifference to the suffering of wives which is the antithesis of 'modern' family sentiment." From the example of female diaries, journals and letters, we can recognize the inequality of this contract within the family, and from the familial paradigm decide the nature of the society experienced by Hester and Frances to be predominantly patriarchal.

Although individualism was idealised during this era its application related mainly to men, and was restricted for women by the legitimisation of violence, or threats of its enactment. Ranging from the verbal forms of harmless and spiteful gossip concerning loss of the commercially viable product — virginity — to vituperative literary criticism, women frequently colluded with masculine methods of enforcing social expectations, thereby perpetuating their own vulnerability. Beginning with gossip as the least physical form of abuse, and ending with aspects of outrageous domestic violence, proposes a range of violence more applicable to polar degree,
than difference. Conditioned to resignation toward the verbal threats, acceptance of the physical became inevitable and an integral aspect of supporting dominance in the parental-conjugal relationship.

Although Frances and Hester both experienced the full range of subversive power-enforcement, it was in the enactment of legitimised medical science that their vulnerability was most evident. For Frances, her mastectomy, whether necessary or not, was instigated and enacted by males. Although Mrs Thrale was more fortunate than many women because of her access to skilled midwives and physicians, her experiences in childbirth must have been horrific on many occasions, as witnessed by her references to other women. Indirectly, her own experiences were almost negated by her inability to articulate them into written text. Having been inculcated with the belief that her own body was "unspeakable", and interpreting that decree into the duality of female body's relationship to corpus of writing, she was denied her only access to female solace-mechanisms within her journal. Thus, women are denied access to knowledge of the uniquely female experience of birthing.

Medical science's inability to incorporate obvious universal medical improvements into the realm of childbirth, indicates its intention to disempower women by keeping the parous woman vulnerable because she represents the ambivalence and irresolution of the nature-culture dichotomy. By retaining control of birthing, male physicians not only colluded with patriarchal power structures, they successfully deluded the community over their inability to conquer nature which would have damaged their credibility.

While the vulnerability of the female body to violence is apparent and irrefutable, no matter how successfully it is legitimised, the degree of effect on the non-physical aspect of the woman is more difficult to evaluate. The non-physical aspect proposes problems of definition which I have attempted to resolve through the incorporation of eighteenth — and twentieth-century propositions, resulting in the acknowledgment of a "self" which is initiated in the form of a potential Self containing elements of the "imago Dei", recognisable to eighteenth-century Christianity as the soul and spirit. This potentiality develops an ego in relation to the external world, a conscious self unfolding within a pre-Oedipal maternal world of "otherness" which is later absorbed into the Oedipal restrictions of paternal language and social structures.

The female self, I believe, differs from the male self, not because of an
intrinsic gender difference, but because the female aspect of an androgynous potentiality is hypertrophied under an actual or idealised maternal influence. If continued, this develops further into a maternal fixation, evidenced by Hester Thrale and her inability to resolve her sexuality, her desire to master the "otherness" of perceived masculine logic and language structures, and her own relationship with her daughters. In Frances, the idealised maternal image was to create the dualism of her written discourses, lead to internalised feelings of shame and anger, and caused her inevitable alienation from Hester Piozzi, who proposed both positive and negative aspects of the mother image.

Both women displayed diverse survival mechanisms to the trauma of being "other" in a masculine world, although their patent anger, resentment and fantasies indicate their ambivalent status, yet I believe their most successful defence was the assumption of conformist personae to shield the realities of their non-physical female selves. By enacting submission physically and textually, they ensured themselves a degree of safety from all of the violent mechanisms endemic in a male dominated society. Only by reading the subtexts of silence, encodement and symbolism can we infer the iron will that lay beneath the forms of subjugation, and release these women from nearly two hundred years of "playing the Agnes".

Ironically, it is these submissive personae that the patriarchal institutions have perpetuated, and that twentieth-century women have inherited as role models. Because both Hester and Frances have been defined in relation to their male contemporaries, and edited into further submission, they have been perpetuated historically only as Johnson and Boswell (not to mention Macaulay's influential misreading of them) — and their adherents — have permitted, obscuring the reality of their strength and abilities.

I believe we can restore these women to their correct places through examination of their texts, especially their noncanonical discourses, which assisted in the consolidation of their female selves by allowing them to define and redefine themselves to their own satisfaction. Because they resorted to their journals for female solace when none was physically available, and inscribed both their deliberately assumed personae of social acceptability and the censored subtext of universal female experience within their texts, woman can, even after the lapse of many generations, access their diaries and recreate a transhistorical bridge of shared gossip and solace.
Notes to Conclusion

2. Exemplified in doggerel and folkloric jokes. "A man beats his wife so badly that he has to call both the doctor and the apothecary, paying them twice ... Once for this time and once for the next." Shorter, 6
   "If the cow kicks off, mighty cross,
   If the wife kicks off, no big loss." Shorter, 7
3. Shorter, 9
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