

“Paper Bullets of the Brain”: Satire, Dueling and the Rise of the Gentleman Author

Shannon Raelene Heath

Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts
In
English

Dr. Peter Graham, Chair
Dr. David Radcliffe
Dr. Linda Anderson

May 21, 2007
Blacksburg, VA

Keywords: satire, dueling, Johnson, Macpherson, Gifford, Pindar, Wolcot, Byron, Moore,
Jeffrey

“Paper Bullets of the Brain”: Satire, Dueling and the Rise of the Gentleman Author

Shannon Raelene Heath

ABSTRACT

In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the duel of honor functioned as a formal recourse to attacks on a gentleman's reputation. Concurrently, many notable literary figures such as Samuel Johnson, William Gifford, Thomas Moore, and Lord Byron were involved in literary disputes featuring duels or the threat of physical violence, a pattern indicating a connection between authorship and dueling. This study explicitly examines this connection, particularly as it relates to social acceptance, the gentrification of authorship, and the business of publishing. The act of publishing, putting one's work into the public sphere for consumption as well as critique, created an acute sensitivity to issues of honor because publishing automatically broadcast insults or accusations of dishonorable conduct to the reading public.

This study requires a grounded discussion of complex, interconnected concepts, specifically: masculine identity, social hierarchy, and violence; satire; dueling; and authorship. Discussion moves from a foundational concern with violence and the assertion of social status, to the relationship between status and honor, to specific modes of defending honor, and finally to the attempt to establish authorship as an honorable profession. Although each of these quarrels exhibits physical violence or the threat of physical violence, these examples also exhibit verbal violence through satiric assaults or an exchange of verbal attacks and parries.

As professional writers struggled to overcome the stereotype of the literary hack and gain social respectability, dueling, with either lead or paper bullets, became a way for authors to defend and maintain the fragile social status they had gained.

Table of Contents

“Paper Bullets of the Brain”: Satire, Dueling and the Rise of the Gentleman Authori

Abstract.....ii

Table of Contents.....iii

Dedication.....iv

Acknowledgements.....v

Introduction and Review of Literature..... 1

“Reasonable Incredulity”: Johnson, Macpherson and the Ossianic Controversy..... 18

A Cut at a Cobbler and *A Diss on a Doctor*..... 32

“A fairer subject for quizzing [...] an author and a critic fighting with pellets of paper”
..... 52

Conclusion..... 84

Works Cited..... 90

Curriculum Vitae..... 93

I would like to dedicate this project to my mother,
Judy Heath,
and to the memory of my grandmother,
Savannah Mitchem –

I could never have done this without your unwavering support.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my committee members, Dr. Peter Graham, Dr. David Radcliffe, and Dr. Linda Anderson for their continual support and assistance throughout the completion of this project. During what has been, for myself and the Virginia Tech community, a very difficult semester, Dr. Graham, Dr. Radcliffe, and Dr. Anderson never failed to assist in reading drafts, pointing me toward new information and possibilities, or offering emotional support after the events of April 16, 2007, my illness, and the death of my grandmother – a debt I cannot repay, but for which I am eternally grateful.

“Paper Bullets of the Brain”: Satire, Dueling and the Rise of the Gentleman Author

Honor is a universally prized virtue. From China, to the Middle East, across Europe and into the Americas, honor is the summation of a man’s (or a woman’s) social worth. Honor is frequently described in terms of one’s reputation within a social group, a description which is dependent not only upon the individual’s character and actions, but also on the public’s perception of those action. For a “gentleman of honor” in eighteenth century Europe to preserve the good opinion of his peers, it was essential that he have a method for defending against attacks on his reputation, particularly in the social circles of the gentility and the aristocracy, where good manners and appearances were crucial. The noted author Samuel Johnson remarked that in a society which emphasizes such refinement:

A body which has a very fine polish may be easily hurt [...and] in a highly polished society, an affront is held to be a serious injury. It must, therefore, be resented, or rather a duel must be fought upon it; as men have agreed to banish from their society one who puts up with an affront without fighting a duel. Now, Sir, it is never unlawful to fight in self-defense. He, then, who fights a duel, does not fight from passion against his antagonist, but from self-defense; to avert the stigma of the world, and to prevent himself from being driven out of society. (Boswell, *Life of Johnson* 484)

Johnson’s statement emphasizes the importance of reputation in relation to social acceptance, then describes the typical defensive strategy used for protecting that reputation – the duel. Thus, the duel of honor became a socially accepted, albeit illegal, means to redress grievances involving honor and protect against potential injuries to an individual’s reputation. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, many literary figures were involved in duels and disputes, despite the fact that the gentlemanly status of

literary figures who did not have rank independent of their accomplishments was a matter of contention. The act of publishing, putting one's work into the public sphere for consumption as well as critique, raised the stakes in the game of honor to acute levels. Whereas normally an incident provoking a quarrel would remain a private matter among a close circle of family and peers, publishing automatically broadcast the insult or offence in print for all the reading public to see. Accusations of immorality or dishonorable conduct in and of themselves were offences to one's reputation; however, an accusation which appeared in print compounded the seriousness of the affront because the general public (as opposed to a limited number of people) were made aware of the offense.

In some cases, such as those of Samuel Johnson and James Macpherson, Thomas Moore and Francis Jeffrey, and Thomas Moore and Lord Byron, an unfavorable literary review preceded the challenge to a duel. In the case of Peter Pindar (John Wolcot) and William Gifford, however, the publication of several fiercely declamatory works such as Pindar's postscript to *Lord Auckland's Triumph* and Gifford's *Epistle to Peter Pindar* preceded a physical altercation in a London bookstore. The scholarship consulted for this study relegates these threats or occurrences of physical violence to incidents of biographical note but fails to examine their importance to their related literary duels. Consequently, the purpose of this study is to examine explicitly the connection between dueling and authorship, particularly as it relates to social acceptance and the business of publishing. The complexities of this study require a grounded discussion of a series of interconnected concepts, explicitly: masculine identity, social hierarchy, and violence; honor; dueling; and authorship. I have chosen to discuss these issues in this particular sequence in order to move from a foundational concern with violence and the assertion of

social status to the relationship between status and honor, to a specific mode of defending honor, and finally to the attempt to establish authorship as an honorable profession.¹ As publishing necessarily exposed the author to public opinion and criticism, how did issues of honor influence the actions and writings of notable literary figures such as Johnson, Gifford, Moore, and Byron? Johnson's remarks on dueling and reputation affirm that dueling was viewed as a defensive strategy used to maintain social status when insults had occurred. For authors seeking a respectable social position, the uncertain and shifting status of authorship in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries created a heightened sensitivity to issues of honor, particularly to accusations which appeared in print. Therefore, dueling, with either lead or paper bullets as the circumstances dictated, became a way for authors to defend and maintain the fragile social status they had gained.

In "Masculinities and Interpersonal Violence," Walter DeKeseredy and Martin Schwartz, Professors of Criminology and Sociology respectively, assert that recent contradictory studies suggest that there is no clearly defined causal relationship between masculinity and violence. In their review of previous studies, DeKeseredy and Schwartz point out that assertions that violence results from mental illness, high testosterone levels and sexual competition, or poverty, fail to account for the facts that "no more than 10% of all incidents of intimate violence can be blamed on mental disorders" (354) and sexual competition is an insufficient explanation because "men kill not only men but also women" (354). Nor is violence an exclusively learned social behavior, since "there is no

¹ The OED defines "profession" as "In [a] wider sense: any calling or occupation by which a person habitually earns his living. (Now usually applied to an occupation considered to be socially superior to a trade or handicraft; but formerly, and still in vulgar (or humorous) use, including these" (def III.b.). Although this definition, in its older form, is suggestive of less respectable trade occupations, I have followed Linda Zionkowsky's example in using "profession" and "professional" in its more modern sense, for lack of a better descriptor.

simple standard of being a man that guides all male behavior, including violence” (356). They ultimately assert that “Masculinities studies show that although men are encouraged to live up to the ideals of hegemonic masculinity and can be sanctioned for not doing so, violence is just one of the many ways of ‘doing gender’ in a culturally specific way,” and that the perceived methods for affirming masculine identity, including violence, are shaped by external factors such as class, race, and peer groups (356). The direct relationship between peer groups and social standing is best described by Jon Swain in “Masculinities in Education,” where he discusses the influence of peer groups on adolescent boys forming social identities. He notes the “constant pressures on individuals to perform and behave to the expected group norms” (217), standards which emphasize the appearance of normalcy to provide “a certain protection from teasing and, perhaps, even subordination” (217). Conversely, this statement implies that a failure to uphold these group norms results in the possibility of ridicule and ostracism. Swain concludes that:

One of the most urgent dimensions of school life for boys is the need to gain popularity and, in particular, status: Indeed, the search to achieve status is also the search to achieve an acceptable form of masculinity. Boys’ notion of status comes from having a certain position within the peer group hierarchy that becomes relevant when it is seen in relation to others. It is not something that is given but is often the outcome of intricate and intense maneuvering and has to be earned through negotiation and sustained through performance. (218)

Swain also notes that this “performance” includes “physicality (sportiness, toughness, etc.)” (218), an argument parallel to DeKeseredy and Schwartz’s assertions that peer groups play a part in the commission of domestic violence or “confrontational homicide” (359). Domestic violence is the result of the fear that patriarchal males will view losing one’s partner as a “threat to a man’s masculinity” (359), while confrontational violence is

“triggered by a perceived challenge to their masculinity or honor” (359), since “many men and male youths commit violent crimes in anticipation of the status they will gain (or lose) from friends” (359-360).

The explanation of violence attempted by DeKeseredy and Schwartz is further complicated by the influence of peer groups and honor. In Frank Henderson Stewart’s study *Honor*, he describes personal honor as one’s adherence to “certain standards” which have been “picked out as having particular importance, that [measure] an individual’s worth along some profoundly significant dimensions” (54-55). When Stewart’s definition is examined in conjunction with Swain’s description of the influence of peer groups, one may conclude that behaving honorably is merely the action of conforming to the standards of a specific peer group. Just as Swain’s study emphasized the importance of adhering to social norms and implied the consequences of a failure to do so, Stewart says that “a member of the honor group who fails to meet these standards is viewed not just as inferior but often also as despicable” (55). Moreover, honor can be classified into various categories. Chapters 2 through 5 of Stewart’s study examine Western concepts of honor (ix), including what he characterizes as “horizontal and vertical” honor. Horizontal honor, he says, represents the right to respect among individuals of the same status and peer group, honor which can be lost, but not increased; alternatively, vertical honor represents the right to respect from individuals of higher rank or superiority and may likewise be lost, but may also be increased (54-59). Stewart further classifies vertical honor as either rank honor, “the honor which is enjoyed by all members of a superior rank in relations with their inferiors,” or competitive honor, “the

honor which is enjoyed by those who have shown themselves to be superior individuals” (59-60).

Whereas DeKeseredy and Schwartz suggest that protecting honor and reputation leads to violence, the type of violence to which they are referring appears to be more generalized. The examples from which they draw their conclusions may be described as instances of informal violence based on domestic disputes, “pub fights,” and street scuffles (358-359), altercations typically marked by spontaneity and intense emotional agitation. However, Stewart’s emphasis on the strict codes and rankings of honor groups implies a type of violence which is more systematic and ritualized in establishing and maintaining one’s inclusion in a peer group. The duel of honor, as it came to be in the modern era, is a dominant example of ritualized violence because of the highly structured rules regarding honor and social behavior, and how those rules relate to inclusion or exclusion in various peer groups. Although only one incident in this study results in an actual duel, the underlying concepts of the duel and its relationship to peer groups is a key element of the discussion.

The eighteenth and nineteenth century duel with pistols continued a long history of single combat, dating back to the medieval practices of trial by ordeal and trial by combat. In *The Duel: A History of Dueling*, Robert Baldick notes that the outcome of the ordeal or the battle decided the guilt or innocence of the accused based on the belief that “Providence is deemed to have determined in favour of the truth” (15). Just as the judicial duel determined the outcome of criminal accusations, its sister combat, the duel of chivalry was “a meeting in single combat between two knights...to settle a difference of law, possession or honor” and to decide civil disagreements (Baldick 22). Thus, from

its foundations, the duel evolved as a standard of determining truth, merit, ownership, and status. Baldick's account of the duel is a straightforward historical examination of process, ritual and formality related to the duel, but only hints at larger social contexts. V. G. Kiernan's work *The Duel in European History*, on the other hand, is an extended examination of the duel as a reflection of social elitism and aristocratic codes of conduct. Kiernan draws attention to the fact that the trial by combat and duels of chivalry were championed by knights as opposed to members of the lower classes, associating victory in the duel with status and power. The duel's association with the aristocracy and gentry is due to the ties between nobility, knighthood, and military glory, since as Kiernan says:

readiness to fight was the badge of the entire élite of nobility or 'gentlefolk'. In terms like 'gentleman', 'gentilhomme', and their cognates, there survives the first meaning of 'gentle': noble, generous, from *gens*, signifying good family descent. Readiness to draw the sword enshrined contempt or defiance of death...It was a standing reminder of the title under which blue blood kept its place. (14)

Furthermore, he asserts that "[The duel's] affiliation was always and everywhere with social groups occupying a pre-eminent and privileged position, or inspired by the striving towards such a position" (2). Kiernan's assertion that the duel allowed individuals to "strive" for higher status suggests that social advancement was made possible through displays of "courage and prowess" (2).

In seventeenth century Europe, the decline of the feudal system, the move from agrarian, property-based measures of wealth into an industrial and mercantile economy, helped bolster the practice of dueling as social climbing. As Kiernan notes, society became "the earliest home of an urban mixture of mercantile and aristocratic, each component having to adjust itself to a changing society. Higher-class boundaries being blurred, status had to be upheld by attention to externals" (47). The duel, with its highly

ritualized rules, was one such external factor. These rules, he suggests, delineated an exclusive subset of society in that only true gentlemen would be able to observe all the formal customs and procedures properly in a disagreement with a gentleman of equal status (135-136). The polished rules of dueling became a way to keep socially ambitious members of the middle class in their original place below the level of gentility, by showcasing the refined manners of gentility even as tempers threatened to erupt. Kiernan explains that “A duel was a breach of the façade of harmony required to impress inferior classes, but when properly draped and stage-managed its disruptive character could be greatly softened, or even reversed” (135). Even in the face of petty quarrels, a “gentleman must be ready to fight, but with decorum and dignity...which the man in the street could recognize as proof of superiority” (136). While the use of violence to resolve disputes may seem counter-intuitive to Christian morality, Pieter Spierenburg, in his Introduction to *Men and Violence* states that:

Several qualifications can be made to the idea that the duel promoted civilized behavior. If we take it at face value, we must assume that the prospect of having to face an opponent in arms restrained men in social intercourse; they thought twice before they said a wrong word....The implicit assumption is that honorable men actually do not want to fight at all and do everything they can to avoid it. (9)

This assertion is supported by Marku Peltonen’s observation in *The Duel in Early Modern England*, that “The duel of honour and its theory came to England as part of the Italian Renaissance notion of the gentleman and courtier” (18) as these ideas were portrayed in Italian courtesy manuals, which related closely to already popular medieval courtesy manuals and the Christian doctrine of civility. Their emphasis on civil courtesy and civil conversation, respectful conduct between peers designated dueling a method of recourse when civility was breached (Peltonen 18-35). Thus, dueling was introduced to

England in the beginning in conjunction with general, daily discourse and proper behavior. If this “civil conversation” were observed from the outset, then the necessity for dueling would be avoided.

Just as the courtesy manuals dictated a strict set of social procedures, the publication of numerous dueling codes attests to the “formality of a church service” (Kiernan 135) associated with dueling. Publications such as William Thomas’s *The Historie of Italy*, published in 1549 (Peltonen 17-18), and *The Art of Duelling*, published anonymously by “A Traveller” in 1836 (Baldick 45) – and numerous other works in between – provide “how to” advice on dueling, describing every aspect of the encounter and its preparations, including which offences are duel-worthy and beyond apology; how to write challenges, choose seconds and weapons; and how to stage the fight itself. The proliferation of dueling manuals contributed to the overall impression of “gentlemanly deportment” (Kiernan 142) by emphasizing manners and behavior as well as protocol. The advice given by “A Traveller” goes so far as to suggest activities for pre-dueling relaxation, such as inviting friends to dinner, playing cards, or reading ““some amusing book – one of Sir Walter’s novels, if a lover of the romantic; or Byron’s *Childe Harold*, if he delights in the sublime”” (qtd. in Baldick 45). Such suggestions, interspersed with reminders to the duelist to ““secure the services of his medical attendant”” (qtd. in Baldick 45) give the duel of honor a gloss of emotional detachment and decorum, the sense that “ritual, a non logical factor, has an appreciable part in maintaining the tone of society” (Kiernan 5).

Although the rituals of dueling suggest the attempt to impress and exclude the lower classes, the very nature of ritual lends itself to imitation. The publication of the

dueling manuals as well as the portrayal of duels in literature and on stage allowed the middle class to glimpse the rules and thereby imitate the behaviors and attitudes associated with members of the upper classes. Kiernan's description of the duel as a "stage-managed" affair suggests that the dueling manuals provided a script which arguably could be as memorizable and performable by the lower classes as it was for the aristocracy and gentility. He furthers this idea when he says that "Principals and seconds were actors, carefully conning the parts laid out for them, each word and gesture, ideally at least, carefully calculated for effect" (10). The conventions of etiquette practiced by the gentry and nobility conformed to little more than public performance for the lower classes, who also saw imitation of these same standards as a way to promote themselves socially. Kiernan says that "Fiction and stage could induct young men of social strata rising towards gentility...into the patterns of behavior that their new status would require of them" (10).

While male members of the aristocracy were born into the higher social strata through inherited titles, the class of gentility was more permeable from below, and the "code of honour could help to incorporate middle-class candidates" (Kiernan 16) by instructing them in the proper modes of behavior. Jennifer Low takes up this argument in *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture*. She refers to Lawrence Stone's "crisis of the aristocracy," saying that "When the aristocracy ceased to be defined as a military elite, male aristocrats lost the warlike tradition that had structured their way of proving themselves" (3). She points to the duel as a way to reaffirm masculine identity and "reinforce the patriarchy through its validation of the duellist's status as a principal representative of his family or social group" (7). Like Kiernan, she

says that the ritualistic manner in which dueling was carried out was “meant to impress a small elite community with one’s style” (17), defining reputation with “one’s skill at social performance” (18). This “social performance” combines with issues of class and gender to create what she calls the “confusion between reputation and essential being” (22) and the elevation of “reputation to the status of personal worth” (17).

While the duel illustrated the nobility’s and gentry’s struggle to maintain the gulf between gentility and the middle class, an emerging sub-division of gentility, the class of the professional author, developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and sought to establish its respectability. Linda Zionkowski opens her book *Men’s Work: Gender, Class, and the Professionalization of Poetry, 1660-1784*, with an incident from James Boswell’s *Life of Johnson* in which Samuel Johnson defends a fellow author’s desire for respect. Boswell tells how Oliver Goldsmith, a notable author of the time, feels that he has been slighted by a nobleman who “took no more notice of [him] than if [he] had been an ordinary man” (*Life* 962, and qtd. in Zionkowski, 1). Boswell and his companions laugh at Goldsmith’s self-importance, yet Johnson answers that “A nobleman ought to have made up to such a man as Goldsmith” (qtd. in Zionkowski, 1). Zionkowski asserts that Johnson and Goldsmith believed in the meritocratic superiority of literary achievement and scholarship as qualities befitting a gentleman, elevating the professional writer to a status “not yet defined...: neither ordinary nor noble, but somehow superior to both” (2). Zionkowski points to the studies of Alexander Beljame, A. S. Collins, and J. W. Saunders to show that the growth of a commercial economy and changes in the publishing industry allowed the emergence of professional authorship, which she defines as “intellectual and, primarily, financial independence—as emerging directly from [the

author's] economic success" (3). Beljame's primary example of a professional author is Alexander Pope, while Saunders exemplifies Johnson as "the model for modern authors" (Zionkowski 3), an author who gained respectability even as he pursued a literary career. She makes a further distinction between professional authors and amateurs (women and aristocrats) by saying that for the amateurs, "social identities are not conflated with their occupation" (3). She ends Part I of her introduction by saying that she wishes her work to "restore, and perhaps complicate, the focus on commercial literary production as a site of struggles between social groups" (4).

Zionkowski positions her work as a re-examination of the effect of social and economic transformations on authorship and the publishing industry, focusing primarily on poets (as will this essay) when she says that the commercialism of the literary trade provided little income or financial benefits to authors (5-6). Yet professional authorship in the eighteenth century was affected by social attitudes as well as economic difficulties. In *Printing Technology, Letters, and Samuel Johnson*, Alvin Kernan describes Alexander Pope's *Dunciad* (1728-1743) as portraying "the apocalypse of an old courtly order of letters" and "the end of polite letters and ultimately of civilization" (8-9). Kernan points to the literary revolution of the paid author as "the expression of closely related new economic and social as well as technological orders...replac[ing] the literary arrangements of the old regime with those more in the spirit of it's own mechanical, democratic and capitalist tendencies" (9). He attributes Pope's success to the fact that he "so well understood the economics of the publishing business and how to profit from them" (10) even as he "carefully cultivated an old-style image of the writer as a gentleman and man of means" (10). Pope is an extraordinary example, however.

Although Pope's works were wildly successful, Zionkowski points to the low compensation received by most authors, notably saying that "the ten guinea sum that Johnson received for 'London' (1738) seems paltry" (6), further using these examples of meager compensation to highlight the stereotype of the "starving poet" (7). A professional author was regarded as "a source of profit by booksellers and a source of idle diversion by readers [but] cannot perform to his capacity or exercise the high moral authority that accompanies his talent" (8). The financial desperation with which authors were depicted led to the idea that "writers who lived upon the sale of their work faced the charge of debasing their talents, often being stigmatized as hacks or prostitutes who exchanged their abilities for maintenance by a patron, bookseller, political party, or combination of the three" (8). Here, Zionkowski illustrates the ways in which the constant need to produce written works for remuneration was said to cause a loss of originality, authorial autonomy, and sincerity. Writers for hire, those dependent upon patrons or upon cultivating the readership of the "idle, and the vain" (qtd. in Zionkowski 9), played to the sensibilities of the audience rather than any moral or intellectual advancement. I would add to this assertion that early professional writers were also perceived as "selling out" – writing for whomever paid them, rather than maintaining specific political or moral principles, a charge repeated in Richard Savage's *An Author to Be Lett* (1729). The subordination of the author, she says, likewise threatened concepts of masculinity. She points to the work of Richard Helgerson when she says that "for men of lower rank in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, making a career out of poetry signified taking up the role of a menial paid to provide entertainment; for men of higher rank, writing verse meant indulging in an adolescent practice, one that courtiers, as they

entered into adulthood, were supposed to reject for a more serious and prestigious pursuit” (9). Although this citation points specifically to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it establishes the view of authors as either servants or juveniles, not adult male professionals. The idea of the author as a “literary prostitute” likewise effeminizes authorship, contributing to an overall perception of the author as socially inferior on financial and gender-based criteria.

However, as authors such as Samuel Johnson began to experience the intellectual and financial freedom of professionals, they also sought the respectability provided to other careers, as Boswell’s anecdote of Johnson’s defense of Goldsmith illustrates. This same intellectual and financial freedom exemplifies the “masculine traits of self-management and self-containment” (Zionkowski 16) which marked the superiority of the upper classes, traits which the commercial nature of the book trade had previously denied professional authors. As the social sub-set of the author developed, the boundaries of gentility gradually became more permeable, and thus allowed for the possibility of upward mobility. In fact, many of the arguments and assumptions used to stereotype professional poets mirror the accusations used as catalysts for dueling. The lack of maturity, morality, or sincerity of which the author was accused was considered a slight of honor among the gentility and aristocracy, and therefore grounds for dueling. The correspondences between accusations and the desires to gain or maintain respectability make it reasonable to assume that poets may have copied the attitudes and actions of the aristocracy and gentility in order to help create the perception of the respectable, gentleman author.

The authors chosen for this study, Samuel Johnson, William Gifford, Thomas Moore, and Lord Byron (and the personages from whom they received challenges, or to whom they issued challenges), represent the most fruitful range of examples in their various authorial roles and social statuses. The study begins with an examination of the controversy between Johnson and James Macpherson, primarily because Johnson's comment cited earlier marks a growing transition into a melding of literary meritocracy with gentility. Macpherson, a young, upstart poet, published the *Ossian* series under the guise of translating ancient Gaelic poems. As the poems gained in popularity, Macpherson became a respected, wealthy author, although his other projects, such as his translation of the *Iliad*, failed to match *Ossian*'s popularity or quality. One biographer, Bailey Saunders, states that Macpherson began to develop pretensions because of his works' popularity, pretensions which may have contributed to his vehement defense of their authenticity. Johnson, however, an already established literary critic, jeopardized Macpherson's reputation by outing the *Ossian* poems as Macpherson's creations rather than the translations they were claimed to be. The formalized quarrel between Johnson and Macpherson offers several interesting possibilities, in part because of Johnson's previous verbal endorsement of dueling. Yet Johnson ultimately refused Macpherson's challenge, preferring to rely on an oak stick and the justice system to settle the matter. The dispute never actually came to a physical altercation due to Johnson's adept verbal maneuvers in insisting that Macpherson produce the original manuscripts.

Gifford and Wolcot also provide a useful counter-example to gentlemanly behavior and dueling because of their failure to maintain coolheaded detachment during their quarrel. After a brutal review of Pindar's *Nil Admirari* in the *Anti-Jacobin*, of

which Pindar believed Gifford to be the editor, he attacked Gifford in a postscript to *Lord Auckland's Triumph*. Gifford replied with a fiercely defamatory satire, *An Epistle to Peter Pindar*. The two authors then resorted to publishing advertisements against one another in the newspapers. This back-and-forth repartee resembles a literary series of thrusts and parries, a publishing duel if not a literal one. However, the verbal duel between them became a physical altercation when Wolcot found Gifford in a London bookshop and attempted to beat him. The physical violence which ensued damaged Wolcot's career, already sullied by his violent temper and financial motivation. Wolcot's subsequently falling reputation is also grounds for examination when compared with Gifford's rising reputation as a literary critic and his editorial relationship with Byron.

Moore, Jeffrey, and Byron provide the essence of this study, however, because of the tangled events leading up to and surrounding the publication of *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (hereafter referred to as *EBSR*). Moore originally issued a challenge to Jeffrey because Jeffrey's review of *Epistles, Odes, and Other Poems* in the July 1806 volume of the *Edinburgh Review* accused him of "immoral" poetry. The incident ended in further scandal after Jeffrey's weapon was found to be unloaded. After the wounding response to Byron's *Hours of Idleness* in the January 1808 volume of the *Edinburgh*, Byron's biting response to Jeffrey inadvertently affronted Moore by rehashing the scandal of the Moore/Jeffrey duel, spawning a challenge from Moore. Class also affects the interpretation of these events, since Moore and Jeffrey were both from the educated middle class, while Byron was a baron and member of the House of Lords. Moore and Jeffrey stood to increase status socially and authorially through dueling, while Byron already held an unquestionably elite social status. Byron's pose in the preface to *Hours*

of Idleness suggests an amateur, careless attitude toward writing, a contributing factor to the rebuke he received in the *Edinburgh Review*. His satiric response in *EBSR* suggests an effort to raise himself authorially rather than socially, to be considered as a serious author rather than a dabbler.

Although in each of these quarrels, physical violence or the threat of physical violence is explicitly present as an informal beating or a formal duel, these examples also exhibit verbal violence displayed as casual abuse or as the systematic series of verbal attack and parry exchanges between participants that can be seen as a literary duel. In *Verbal Dueling in Heroic Narrative*, Ward Parks describes the verbal duel as a “scenario repeated unendingly in many of the world’s great narrative traditions” (1). His study focuses primarily on the dialogues of heroic narratives such as the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, and *Beowulf*, to name a few. Yet his opening paragraph is significant as a generalized description of verbal dueling and its relationship to literal, physical dueling:

As two hostile armies first square off against each other, or later, during a lull in the storm of battle, or at a public assemblage, or in the beer hall, or at a tournament or athletic contest, a hero is engaging in provocative display. A second hero takes umbrage at the public attention the first one enjoys and draws him into a verbal contest. Flyting ensues: The adversaries name and abuse one another, compare ancestries or accomplishments, debate their relative heroic merits, prognosticate on some projected competition or exploit. After a physical contest in the shape of direct combat, athletic competition, or some other feat, a winner is eventually determined; and his victory receives a ceremonialized acknowledgement, by the boasts and curses of winner and loser respectively, or through reconciliation and an exchange of gifts. (5)

Although Parks’s description applies primarily to the heroes *within* the text, by substituting “heroic merits” with “literary merits” the description is just as easily applicable to the authors themselves rather than their creations. The verbal duels examined in this project reflect the naming and abuse, comparison of lineage and

achievements, and debate over merit which Parks describes as part of the verbal duel of heroic narrative.

Biographical research, as well as close readings of relevant poetry and contemporary literary reviews, will constitute the primary research materials. Shifting notions of class and authorship, combined with variables such as education, family history, nationality, political leaning, and social status, provide a rich variety of complexities in each instance of quarreling. Therefore, vignettes or case studies of the exchanges between Johnson and Macpherson, Gifford and Pindar, and Moore and Jeffrey will provide a contextual background for examination of the literary quarrel between Byron, Jeffrey, and Moore.

“Reasonable Incredulity”: Johnson, Macpherson and the Ossianic Controversy

In 1760, James Macpherson published the first of *The Poems of Ossian*, verses he put forth as translations of ancient Scots-Gaelic epics written by Ossian, the bardic son of the third-century king Fingal. In 1998, Howard Gaskill used his introduction to his edited collection of critical essays *Ossian Revisited* to draw attention to the scarcity of scholarship on these poems. He points to the essays contained in the volume, as well as Fiona Stafford’s *The Sublime Savage*, and Paul J. deGatigno’s *James Macpherson*, as “welcome and long overdue studies [which] are the first comprehensive treatments in English since the turn of the century” (1). Gaskill proposes that this long scholastic silence may be influenced by *Ossian*’s “status as ‘translation’” and “the snide and sneering tones which disfigure so much of the literature on Macpherson,” saying that “too often these result from ill-masked ignorance, prejudice and embarrassment” (1). The

situation to which Gaskill alludes is the debate surrounding Macpherson's claim that he merely collected and translated the poems, a claim which spawned what deGategno calls "a controversy unrivaled in the rich history of English literature" (ix). Consequently, the Ossianic controversy is a large portion of any biography of Macpherson, given the continual debate during Macpherson's lifetime, extending from the publication of *Fragments of Ancient Poetry* in 1760 until the Highland Society of Scotland published the results of an investigation into the poems' authenticity in 1805, nine years after Macpherson's death (deGategno 24, 99). However, the social, economical, and political contexts of Macpherson's life are equally important to understanding his puzzling reactions to critics, particularly Samuel Johnson.

James Macpherson was born in October 1736, the only son of Andrew Macpherson, an impoverished farmer whose Highland clan was distinguished by its skill in battle (deGategno 2). Macpherson's early life is a complicated mix of poverty and faded family glory, as the once-prosperous Macpherson clan experienced political oppression following the Highland uprisings of 1715 and 1745. The clan's staunch Jacobite support of the Catholic pretenders to the throne led to their downfall, marking Macpherson's childhood with "rebellion and oppression" and years "in which he saw his close kin hunted down, his locality ravaged, and his community demoralized" (Ashley 1). Yet his father "cherished the idea of his son becoming a gentleman" through a career in the ministry; and James Macpherson was well-educated, eventually entering King's College, then moving to Marischal College when tuition at King's became too expensive, and then to the University of Edinburgh as a student in theology (deGategno 2-3). Macpherson, however, left without receiving a degree and began teaching and writing

poetry in his spare time. He later returned to Edinburgh with “a desire to establish himself as a writer” (deGategno 3), turning away from a respectable career in the ministry to a career in the dubious business of authorship. Macpherson’s early employment in Edinburgh consisted of “literary hackwork” and copyediting, then work as a private tutor for wealthy families (deGategno 3). His position as a tutor for Thomas Graham, the son of the laird of Balgowan, enabled him to meet individuals who would factor heavily into his success with *Ossian*, men such as clergyman and gentleman Adam Ferguson, dramatist John Home, professor Hugh Blair, and many others among the Edinburgh intellectual elite. Their shared interest in Gaelic poetry led to the publication of *Fragments* in 1760 and the funding necessary to undertake the “search” for *Fingal* and *Temora* the following year. The two latter poems were published in dedication to “an unnamed ‘certain nobleman of exalted station,’” who was later revealed as John Stuart, Earl of Bute (deGategno 4-5).

Thus Macpherson had several marks against him, even before critics cast doubt upon the *Ossian* poems—he was born poor and born a Scot, facing prejudice in Edinburgh for being a Highlander, and facing prejudice in London for being a Scot at all. In his 1894 biography of Macpherson, *The Life and Letters of James Macpherson*, Bailey Saunders points to the “fierce hatred of the Scotch which then prevailed in London” (183), citing the perceptions of the Scottish people, and Highlanders in particular, as savage and warlike (3), “foreigners,” “subject to ignominious disabilities and peculiarly liable to corruption” (183-184). This perception, combined with the Macpherson clan’s involvement in the Jacobite rebellions, no doubt complicated Macpherson’s struggle for respectability, as did Macpherson’s ties to Bute, a Tory who, although “prime minister of

England and at the height of his power” (deGategno 5), was “burnt in effigy, [and] attacked in the streets” (Saunders 185). On the one hand, Macpherson’s early career mimicked the stereotype of the starving author as he fell into the same traps which kept authors out of the realm of respectability, namely the lack of financial and intellectual independence. Zionkowski points to the early perception of authors becoming “menials” (9), a role Macpherson undertook through hackwork as well as domestic service as a tutor. His financial dependence on Blair and Bute further marked him as one of the literary “hacks or prostitutes who exchanged their abilities for maintenance by a patron, bookseller, political party, or combination of the three” (Zionkowski 8). Yet Macpherson prospered by using the patronage system to finance his research excursions, gain contacts in higher social groups, and build subscription lists to publish his works. When the Ossian poems were published, many believed that they were “Scotland’s pride and had enhanced their country in the eyes of the world” (deGategno 100), spawning a “renaissance of Scottish letters” (Hugh Blair qtd. in deGategno 25) to elevate Scotland above the stigma of brutality and savagery . Therefore the controversy over authenticity tangled Macpherson’s personal reputation with the honor of the whole of Scotland, since so many reputable men of letters had written in support of Macpherson’s claims.

Even though the Ossian poems gained considerable popularity throughout Europe, they met with immediate skepticism from critics such as Dr. Warner, “M. de C.,” Irish scholar Charles O’Conor, and Horace Walpole, who questioned the poems on the basis of historical accuracy and relations to Irish accounts, the realistic possibility of oral transmission, and the suspicious similarities to more famous works post-dating Ossian, such as *Paradise Lost* (Smart 131-137). As the debate escalated, even Macpherson’s

supporters Hume and Blair began to have reservations and encouraged the collection of corroborating evidence to assuage public doubt (Smart 137-138). Macpherson's most severe critic, however, was Samuel Johnson, who voiced his perception of the Ossian poems as Macpherson's own creation, containing "nothing truly ancient but the names and some vague traditions" (Boswell, *Journal* 252). Unlike Macpherson's background, Johnson's life and career positioned him as a voice of authority in literary circles. Socially, Johnson fell within a social group which was marginally genteel. He was the son of a bookseller and a self-made man, well respected in the community of Lichfield (Bate 11-12), while his mother's family was propertied and "connected by marriage with the gentry" (Bate 13). Johnson's circumstances of birth gave him the advantage over Macpherson by way of social standing as well as exposure to the commercial exchange of bookselling at an early age. Professionally, by the time Johnson published *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* in January 1775, he was an established author credited with the *Rambler* essays, his *Dictionary* (1755, which earned him an honorary Master of Arts degree [Bate 256]) and *Lives of the English Poets* (1781), as well as the recipient of a pension for work already completed (Saunders 192). Conversely, by the time of the Ossian controversy, Macpherson was well established in political circles, after having been appointed to various governmental positions in the colony of West Florida (deGategno 6) and having published several political pieces, including *An Introduction to the History of Great Britain and Ireland* and pamphlets concerning the Revolutionary War.

Saunders notes that Johnson's opinion carried the weight of a "literary dictator" (192) although Smart says he was more likely to dictate "to a dinner party" (130). In

either case, Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*, published roughly a year after his return from the Scottish Highlands, dealt a severe blow to Macpherson's reputation. In it, Johnson denounces Macpherson's claims when he says that "Few have opportunities of hearing a long composition often enough to learn it, or have inclination to repeat it so often as is necessary to retain it; and what is once forgotten is lost for ever" (117), adding "Yet I hear that the father of Ossian boasts of two chests more of ancient poetry, which he suppresses" (117), taking a direct stab at Macpherson's claim. Johnson also states that "I believe [the poems] never existed in any other form than that which we have seen. The editor, or author, never could shew the original; nor can it be shewn by any other; to revenge reasonable incredulity, by refusing evidence, is a degree of insolence, with which the world is not yet acquainted; and stubborn audacity is the last refuge of guilt" (118). Johnson's critique "gives the lie" to Macpherson's claims of authenticity, an accusation regarded as the most serious affront to personal honor. This accusation was made all the more severe by its appearance in print, branding Macpherson as a liar to a broader public. The relationship between verbal expression and print is critical to an examination of this exchange. Markku Peltonen notes the importance of language in dueling exchanges by repeatedly emphasizing the belief that "Injuries are either by words or by deeds" (Saviolo qtd. in Peltonen 59). In the case of publishing an accusation, however, the difference between words and deeds is further complicated because publication is a matter of deeds and words alike and thus creates the possibility of an injury wider and more enduring than a mere oral expression could offer.

For Macpherson, this injury stood to affect his financial situation as well as his reputation as an author. In his book, Johnson gives Macpherson the lie, which is made

more heinous since he accuses Macpherson of lying to the public and his readership. As deGategno says, Macpherson's "worst insult has been to perpetrate a hoax upon a gullible public" and he has "neglected his moral obligations to the society" (106), an allegation which could ruin his chances of becoming a respected author and one of the elite authors of gentility suggested in Boswell's anecdote. Johnson draws attention to the simple remedy that Macpherson could publish the originals of the purported Ossian manuscripts, yet has (according to Johnson) failed to do so.² In his description of the conflict between Johnson and Macpherson, Alvin Kernan says that "Macpherson's one mistake...was to claim that the Ossian poems were translated from ancient manuscripts rather than recorded from the memory of oral performances" (88). This insistence upon the existence of an earlier written form is the result of the influence of a growing print culture: "[Although] Ossian was conceived as a primitive oral bard,...Macpherson, in order to make him believable and real, had to invent written manuscript versions of the poems and then put them into print, where their authenticity could be challenged and their style and sentiments rationally analyzed and dated by comparison to other works" (90). According to Kernan, "the struggle between the old oral and the new print cultures" (89) influenced Macpherson to concoct the existence of the manuscripts in an attempt to gain more credibility. However, as Johnson notes, the lack of physical evidence to support Macpherson's claims causes him to lose face with his reading public and results in "an accusation of bad faith...for the charge implied that no trust could be placed in the word of the accused" (Peltonen 3-4). Being labeled as a liar would harm Macpherson

² Macpherson never produced the original manuscripts; yet as Smart says, "In 1775 his publisher issued a statement that the Gaelic text of *Fingal* and other poems of Ossian had been placed in his shop in the year 1762 for many months, for the inspection of the curious, and that public notice of this had been given in the newspapers. No one, it appeared, had made use of this opportunity; and the papers had at last been withdrawn and restored to their owner" (140-141).

socially, tarnishing his honor and damaging his reputation among friends and acquaintances, making him a man few would trust. Yet this injury carries over into his readership, creating the same sense of mistrust and causing his readers to place little value on the information with which he presented them. The potential loss of readership further threatened Macpherson's maintenance of authorial gentility by the loss of financial independence, since he had already profited substantially from the sale of the Ossian poems and works brought about through their influence. Macpherson's "popular success as a translator of two epics in two years had brought him £1200. In addition, Bute secretly sent him £300 a year" for services rendered to the government (deGateno 6). The publicity over the Ossian controversy likewise netted Macpherson £3000 when he negotiated the copyright to his *History of Great Britain* (deGateno 8).

However, a greater implication of this accusation involves the highly politicized content of *Original Papers Containing the Secret History of Great Britain*, a series of documents intended to provide the basis for the forthcoming *History of Great Britain*. DeGateno points to this shift toward writing histories as Macpherson's attempt to "reclaim a reputation for accuracy and veracity" (136), yet the controversy over the *Ossian* poems threatened the histories' success. The *Original Papers* contained information regarding intrigues of the Jacobite Rebellion, which would affect lingering, "persistent anti-Tory bias" (deGateno 138) and "stir the embers of a past struggle" (Saunders 228). Johnson's disavowal of *Ossian's* authenticity threatened to destroy Macpherson's credibility regarding the *History* and the *Original Papers* on which the *History* was dependent. One Whig critic accused Macpherson of "charging the ancestors of some of the best families in England with the basest treachery" (Saunders 229). The

anonymous critic further enjoined him to ““Clear up the mystery of Ossian...before you ask us to believe in Nairne”” (qtd. in Saunders 229), reflecting the strain the Ossianic controversy was having on Macpherson’s reputation. Thus, Macpherson attempted to defend himself against Johnson’s accusations and their effects by claiming issues of honor as a guise for protecting the future political and financial success of his works.

Until the confrontation with Johnson, Macpherson’s general strategy of response to attacks on his credibility was to maintain silence, stating openly in the introduction to *Temora* that “the suspicions engendered by [*Fingal*] [were] beneath his notice, and...giving him no concern” (Saunders 191). However, on learning of Johnson’s commentary on the Ossian poems, Macpherson proceeded to take action, first seeking to have the injurious passages excised, then, finding that cancellation was impossible, seeking to have Johnson insert a disclaimer. Saunders states that Macpherson “was angry at the language which Johnson thought fit to apply to him, and as the affront was entirely unprovoked, it can hardly be said that he did wrong to be angry” (244). As Peltonen asserts, the demeanor of a gentleman was reflected by “Good manners and grace, beauty and attire,” yet he also emphasizes that “speech and words were by far the most crucial in shaping a gentleman’s courteous image” (25). While other critiques question Macpherson’s work on scholarly grounds, Johnson’s commentary demonstrates a lack of “civil courtesy” (Peltonen 25) by employing language which reflects on Macpherson in a personal light. Macpherson took offence at the words “insolence,” “audacity,” and “guilt,”³ words that reflect on his character as a gentleman rather than as an author. Yet while Saunders draws attention to the importance of language and diction in Johnson’s attack, equal attention should be given to Macpherson’s response, portions of which bear

³ See second letter to Strahan, quoted on the following page.

repeating here. In Macpherson's letter to Johnson's publisher,⁴ William Strahan, he claims that:

However unwilling I may be, *at this time especially*, to do anything that may create noise, I find I cannot pass over the expressions contained in Dr. Johnson's pamphlet. I desire, therefore, that you will use your endeavours with that *impertinent fellow* to induce him to soften the expressions concerning me, though it should occasion the loss of a few days in the publication. If he has a grain of common-sense, I suppose he will see the impropriety of the words, and prevent further trouble. (qtd. in Saunders 245)

Macpherson's response is alternately described as an "ill considered correspondence" marked "with the audacity that had long been his hallmark" (deGategno 105), and "neither tactful nor dignified" and delivered "in a burst of rage" (Smart 151). Saunders, contrarily, notes that "Macpherson angrily adopted the example which Johnson had set him" (248). Whether provoked or unprovoked, Macpherson's expressed attitude toward Johnson likewise fails to meet the guidelines for gentlemanly conduct and civility since Macpherson's language is just as severe as Johnson's. Whereas Johnson accuses Macpherson of "insolence" and "stubborn audacity," he also qualifies his comments as his opinion, supported by what he feels are adequate reasons. Macpherson, on the other hand, boldly asserts that Johnson is "impertinent" and accuses him of a lack of "common-sense," even as he appeals to Strahan to intervene with Johnson for making similar statements. The verbal freedom Macpherson takes in this letter may be explained by his relationship with its recipient, since Strahan was Macpherson's publisher as well as Johnson's, and possibly the person who informed Macpherson of Johnson's remarks (Saunders 244). Macpherson, however, included a second letter, also addressed to Strahan, but written in much softer tones as it was intended to be shown to Johnson:

⁴ The biography by Saunders is the only source consulted for this study which contains the full text of Macpherson's correspondence on this issue.

In expressing his incredulity with regard to the authenticity of the poems of Ossian [Johnson] makes use of the words *insolence*, *audacity*, and *guilt*. To his want of belief on this subject I have not the smallest objection. But I suppose you will agree with me, that such expressions ought not to be used by one gentleman to another; and that whenever they are used, they cannot be passed over with impunity. To prevent consequences that may be at once disagreeable to Dr. Johnson and myself, I desire the favour that you will wait upon him, and tell him that I *expect* he will cancel from the *Journal* the *injurious expressions* above mentioned. I hope that, upon cool reflection, he will be of [the] opinion that this expectation of mine is not unreasonable. (qtd. in Saunders 246)

In this second letter, the insulting tone disappears, reflecting Macpherson's assertion that "such expressions ought not to be used by one gentleman to another." This change in tone demonstrates Macpherson's "[mastery of the] technique of self-representation – to offer as good a picture of himself as possible" (Peltonen 21). In addition to referencing a forthcoming challenge, he invokes the code of dueling in his responses by drawing attention to the "cool reflection" of gentlemanly behavior. In this second letter, Macpherson also reiterates the threat of further action if Johnson fails to comply, a threat he evidently maintained in a letter written directly to Johnson after his request was ignored. The original text of this final letter has not survived, yet W. Jackson Bate points to differing accounts, one telling Johnson that "his age and infirmities, alone protected him," and another saying that "neither his age nor infirmities should protect him" (qtd. in Bate 521). Most critics refer to Macpherson's last letter to Johnson as a direct dueling challenge;⁵ however, considering the wording of the two fragments proposed by Bate, an actual challenge only appears possible in version two, since the wording of version one suggests deference to Johnson's age. These phrases seem severe enough, yet biographers Saunders and Smart include the additional phrase "from the treatment due to an infamous liar and traducer" (Saunders 248, Smart 152). Macpherson turns the accusations back

⁵ Saunders, p. 250, J.S. Smart, p 151, deGategno 106,

against Johnson, claiming that Johnson had agreed to edit the manuscript so that it would not reflect negatively on Macpherson's reputation.⁶

Johnson's final reply⁷ is a brutal attack on Macpherson as an author and as a gentleman, made all the more painful by the public nature of the conflict. DeGategno states that the "wide reports of [Johnson's] verbal thrashing of Macpherson barely satisfied an impatient public, which had enjoyed their contest, unequal though it was" (106). The letter, each sentence calculated for full effect and equally relevant, cannot easily be quoted in part:

Mr. James Macpherson – I received your foolish and impudent note. Whatever insult is offered me I will do my best to repel, and what I cannot do for myself the law will do for me. I will not desist from detecting what I think a cheat, from any fear of the menaces of a Ruffian. You want me to retract. What shall I retract? I thought your book an imposture from the beginning. I think it upon surer reasons an imposture still. For this opinion I give the publick my reasons which I here dare you to refute. But however I may despise you, I reverence truth, and if you can prove the genuineness of the work I will confess it. Your rage I defy, your abilities since your Homer are not so formidable, and what I have heard of your morals disposes me to pay regard not to what you shall say, but to what you can prove. You may print this if you will.
SAM: JOHNSON

Johnson's reply successfully demolishes any hopes Macpherson might have had for seeking "satisfaction." Johnson first belittles his opponent personally, calling him "foolish and impudent" and a "Ruffian," then attacks Macpherson's morals, noting the difference between words and actions. He then limits the courses of action available to

⁶ Ashley states that "Johnson made soothing noises through Strahan, but nothing was done, and the *Journey* appeared unedited. To make matters worse, a second edition was already in press" (14-15).

⁷ Bate indicates that "For generations, the best-known version (there were three) was one that Boswell got Johnson to dictate. Finally, the original letter turned up; for, incredible as it may seem, Macpherson—for whatever reason—kept the letter" (521). The text of the letter varies among authors, having slight differences of the first paragraph between Boswell (*Life of Johnson* 579) and Saunders (250) and Smart (152). Later versions, printed in the biographies by Bate (521) and deGategno (106), follow the same general text, except the addition of the sentence "You want me to retract" at the beginning of the second paragraph and some punctuation differences. The text used here is that found in deGategno.

Macpherson by denying him the opportunity for actual, physical reprisal through dueling by deflecting the matter to the legal system.⁸ Next, Johnson attacks his foe as an author, calling attention to the failure of Macpherson's translation of the *Iliad*, a statement that had severe impact on Macpherson's status as a man of letters. As Linda Zionkowski asserts, Johnson believed that the professional author held rank according to measures outside "the conventional assessments of social worth" (2), elevated by literary talent beyond the traditional hierarchy of birth. By attacking Macpherson as an author and as a gentleman, using two separate tactics, Johnson denies him the hybrid status of a professional author as described by Zionkowski, the blending of "social identities...with occupation" (3). Johnson's final strategy is to give Macpherson permission to print the letter, a move which would reflect more negatively on Macpherson than Johnson. Publishing the letter would draw attention to Johnson's lack of civility, yet it would also broadcast Johnson's refusal of the invitation to duel. This refusal would demonstrate to the public that he held Macpherson too contemptible for gentlemanly discourse, as well as intensifying the attention on Macpherson's failure to produce the manuscripts.

Johnson's statement on dueling cited at the beginning of this study appears to condone dueling in certain circumstances, such as the defense of honor and reputation. Johnson's publication of *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* certainly scuffed the polish on Macpherson's reputation, a scuff which caused an uproar as the Scottish men of letters sought to defend what they thought were pieces of Scottish heritage and the English sought to expose a fraud. Yet when challenged by Macpherson, why does

⁸ Johnson also purchased "an oaken stick, with which to defend himself if Macpherson should suddenly burst in on him," (Wain 332) which John Hawkins described as "upwards of six feet, and from about an inch in diameter at the lower end, increased to near three," with a knot at the top the size of a large orange (qtd in Wain 332).

Johnson respond the way that he does? What is important to note in this incident is the way in which actual physical violence is avoided. The underlying threat of violence is present in Macpherson's mock challenge and in Johnson's purchase of an oak stick with which to defend himself, but Johnson's skillful verbal maneuvering denies Macpherson the possibility of a duel even as Johnson refuses to recant. By refusing a duel, Johnson traps Macpherson – the only option Macpherson now has to defend himself is to publish the manuscripts or admit the hoax. Instead of a literal duel, however, Macpherson and Johnson engage in an epistolary duel, attacking and counter-attacking in an exchange of letters which utilizes threats and verbal abuse. From the information gathered related to Macpherson's governmental associations, it appears as if his motives for initiating this exchange are based on financial and political aspirations. The Ossian poems gave Macpherson his "first fame," as well as the political and financial support of many of Scotland's intellectual elite. This patronage enabled Macpherson to continue writing and publishing with great success, a patronage system which gave him the opportunity to secure a post with the government. When Macpherson took up the task of writing the histories, he did so with an obvious Jacobite and Tory bias. Contrarily, when Johnson called into question the authenticity of Ossian, he endangered Macpherson's professional stability, but Johnson, also a Tory, could not have been operating under a sense of political bias. Instead, his emphasis on publishing the originals shows a concern with truth and accuracy, which had already been demonstrated in his biographies. By questioning the work on which Macpherson's career was founded, Johnson sheds doubt on all subsequent pieces, particularly those relating to political or historical events, a doubt which would likely cause Macpherson to lose his patronage and government

positions since political persons could not afford to patronize someone believed to be a fraud. While Johnson also partook of the advantages of patronage, his projects, such as the *Dictionary* and the *Lives* are more politically neutral, avoiding the appearance of selling literature for personal gain. Johnson's goal is to promote the concept of a gentlemanly author who is as true to his principles as he is to his facts.

A Cut at a Cobbler and A Diss on a Doctor

The infamous quarrel between William Gifford and Peter Pindar (Dr. John Wolcot)⁹ began in 1800 with a simple confusion of names, developed into a fierce, public literary battle, and deteriorated into a physical brawl in Wright's bookshop in Piccadilly. The incident is complicated by a plethora of factors, among them the fierce satirical styles of both authors, their differing social classes, their former professional associations, and the lack of gentlemanly decorum on the part of both authors. Pindar, the author of *Nil Admirari*, received a stinging harsh critique in the November 1799 volume of *The Anti-Jacobin Magazine and Review*, an article which portrays him as "a monster interested only in vice and scandal" (Vales 21). Among the accusations directed at Pindar, the review claims he "followed the *trade* (we would be understood *literally*) of a wholesale dealer in doggerel-rhymes, which, in any other country than this, would not have obtained for their miserable author, a daily meal of bread and cheese" (321). The review's authors likewise labeled his verse as "brazen," "callous," and "malignant" in response to his satiric treatment of Hannah More (322). The review's attacks accuse

⁹ Wolcot's use of a pseudonym complicates discussion somewhat through a confusion of man and authorial persona. When discussing the content of reviews or poetry, I have chosen to refer to him as "Peter Pindar." Later discussion of Gifford's *Epistle to Peter Pindar* and the physical encounter in Wright's bookshop necessitate discussion of authorial persona *and* the actual person being represented by that persona. Discussion of biographical details will refer to "John Wolcot."

Pindar of being a literary hack with a “prostituted muse” (326), one of the primary accusations preventing paid authors from becoming respected professionals. Pindar had, in fact, expressed the desire to be financially independent (Vales 14), and his poetry reflects the theme of “the economic element of artistic production” as well as a “fascination with money” (Bertelsen 6). This fascination also influenced his literary battle with William Gifford, since accusations of prostitution (literal and authorial) are prevalent throughout their reciprocal attacks.

The accusations enumerated in the review of Pindar’s verse attack on Hannah More, *Nil Admirari* would be considered grounds for dueling, since they threatened Pindar’s personal and authorial reputation. The charges of hackwork and moral negligence rob him of the status of an author and a gentleman, necessitating a response from Pindar to protect his honor. A dueling challenge, however, would break the illusion of Peter Pindar, the authorial persona adopted by John Wolcot.¹⁰ Instead, of a challenge, Wolcot responded to the criticism through the guise of Pindar by means of a postscript attached to *Lord Auckland’s Triumph*. He directed his response at those whom he believed to be the authors of the article in the *Anti-Jacobin Review* and at Thomas Mathias, the author of *The Pursuits of Literature*, which had also leveled a severe critique at *Nil Admirari*. However, Wolcot made a severe miscalculation in identifying his targets. The editor of the *Anti-Jacobin Review* was John Gifford, a pseudonym taken by John Richards Green (Clark 250, n29); yet as Roy Benjamin Clark says in his 1930 biography of William Gifford, “Wolcot, knowing that [William] Gifford had been the

¹⁰ Wolcot writing using the persona of Peter Pindar was far more vitriolic than Wolcot writing as himself. Vales says that “From June 1793, to February 1796, he occasionally wrote literary criticism for the *Monthly Review*. Contrary to the image Wolcot created as Peter Pindar, as a caustic but genial critic, he acted in these book reviews the gentleman toward female writers; and, as for the males, merely wished they would cease writing as if for oblivion.” (20).

editor of the *Anti-Jacobin*, and knowing also that a Gifford was editor of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*¹¹, naturally concluded that the author of the attack in the *Review* was William Gifford” (18). Pindar, knowing only the surname of the editor, confused the two men and addressed the postscript to William Gifford by mistake.

The title page of *Lord Auckland’s Triumph* records the contents of the volume, beginning with the title piece and its subtitles, a short excerpt, and a list of smaller poems which are included. The final line of the title page, however, lists “a most interesting postscript” (*Works* 299), with no other indication of its subject matter. The vagueness of the title suggests a work of little importance, yet the positioning and wording allows Pindar to capitalize on his audience’s curiosity to ensure that his attack on Gifford is still noticed by the reading public, a furtive means to strike at his opponent, rather than addressing him directly. In the postscript, Pindar positions himself as a victim of over-zealous criticism by saying that in “‘Nil Admirari, or a Smile at a Bishop,’ I most *ingeniously*, and with a pretty portion of the *ars critica*, appreciated the merits of *my own* Work, with a view of *assisting* some *monthly* Aristarchuses in their literary discussions, and of fixing the muzzle of restraint upon the mouth of Calumny. [... But...] the *poet* was damned, and the *man* overwhelmed with slander” (*Works* 331). This “appreciation of his own work” is a prefix written by Wolcot’s protégé, John Opie, praising the verses. The authors of the review, however, rebuke Pindar as a “vain, conceited, Egotist, puffed up with pride” (327) for including a review which is obviously colored by professional obligations. In response, Pindar calls their criticisms “willful” and “malicious” (334), and says “Violent has been the torrent issuing on me from those Water-spouts of abuse,”

¹¹ John Taylor clarifies the difference between the publications when he says that John Gifford (John Richards Green) was editor of the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, while William Gifford was editor of the *Anti-Jacobin Examiner*. (Taylor)

assaulting “Not only my *poetical*, but my *moral* Character” (334). Yet even as he claims he was assaulted as a poet and as a man, on professional and ethical grounds, he proceeds to direct the same types of criticism at his targets, attacking their social standing, their literary abilities, and their moral integrity. His first target is “Little Mister Mathias (the son of a Cobler, says Fame; nevertheless a Rhyme-monger and Critic)” (331), a problematic description of Mathias’s parentage. Mathias was, in fact, the son of the sub-treasurer in the queen's household and inherited his father’s position in 1782 when his father died (*Dictionary of National Biography*). Pindar’s next victim, however, William Gifford, was apprenticed to a cobbler. When Pindar claims that Mathias is the son of a cobbler “says Fame,” he evidently implies a literary relationship between Mathias and Gifford, since Mathias’s *Pursuits of Literature* is a verse satire attacking a variety of contemporary authors (including Pindar), a form similar to Gifford’s *Baviad*. He says that Gifford is “also a Rhyme-monger and Critic, although some years ago actually a *cobbler* in the little town of Ashburton in the county of Devon” (331). A monger, as it is defined by the OED, is “a person engaged in petty or disreputable trade or traffic,” thus, in calling both men “rhyme-mongers,” Pindar trivializes their literary ability in connection with Gifford’s social standing, which also debases Mathias by association. Thus, Pindar bases his defense of *Nil Admirari* in social and literary elitism.

Here, the focus should be on Pindar’s bias against lower classes and trades. Pindar’s earlier poems develop a class bias against cobblers and other tradesmen in phrases and lines such as “more like a cobbler than a gentleman,” “don't choose cobblers, blacksmiths, tinkers, tanners: / *Some* people love the converse of low folks,” “gaping Coblers [with] gaping graces,” with the most developed bias shown in Pindar’s poem

“Ode To Certain Foreign Soldiers, In Certain Pay,” where he says in his introduction that he “draweth a natural and pathetic Picture of poor little Louis, reported to have been disgracefully put an Apprentice to a Cobbler.”¹² These individual lines develop a distinct stereotypic view of tradesmen as inferior in morals and in actions, incapable of “grace,” proper conversation, or the social carriage of gentlemen. Moreover, repetition of the plural “Coblers” makes the trade of the shoemaker representative of the lower classes as a whole. In his satire, *Proemium*, “Ode,” Pindar applies this class bias directly to the arts when he says:

My lord--who boasts a pretty tuneful palate,
Who kindly teaches cobblers how to sing,
Instructs his butler, baker, on the string,
And with Apollo's laurel crowns his valet

`A cobbler, baker, chang'd to a musician,
Butlers, and lick-trenchers!' my reader roars;
`The sacred art is in a sweet condition— (lines 265-271).

By listing individuals from these trades as men engaged in the arts, then showing his readers' supposed reaction, Pindar insinuates that being a man of letters is something reserved for the higher classes of gentility and aristocracy. Pindar uses his readers' imagined response to show the absurdity of crossing class boundaries to engage in the fine arts, regarding it as a violation of “the sacred art.”

In his attack on Gifford, he further draws attention to Gifford's “*elevation*” into Lord Grosvenor's service as a tutor for Grosvenor's son, then insults Gifford's

¹² “more like a cobbler than a gentleman” –from *Lyric Odes, to the Royal Academicians*, 1787, “Ode III,” line 29.

“don't choose cobblers, blacksmiths, tinkers, tanners: / *Some* people love the converse of low folks” – *Lyric Odes for 1785*, “Ode III,” “To Peter Pindar Esq.,” line 68.

“gaping Coblers [with] gaping graces,” – “Imitation of Horace: On Messierus Pitt and Co.,” line 33, *A Poetical Epistle to a Falling Minister; also an Imitation of the Twelfth Ode of Horace*, 1789.

“Ode To Certain Foreign Soldiers, In Certain Pay,” *Pathetic Odes*, 1974.

intelligence by implying that because of his social status, his education is insufficient to instruct Lord Grosvenor's son on their trip to Italy. He implies that Gifford's only knowledge comes "partly from *inspiration*; and partly from the most excellent engravings in wood at the heads of ballads," particularly a woodcutting of St. Crispin, the patron saint of cobblers (332). This wood cutting, Pindar claims, with its "*crook back and squinting eyes*" is a likeness of Gifford, drawing attention to Gifford's physical disabilities as the result of a childhood accident (Clark 3), an insult completely irrelevant to his class, education, or literary abilities that serves only to depict Gifford as less than a man physically. Pindar also says that, for Gifford, the engraving spawned the "itch in his *mind to cut a figure in print*," (333), a subtle play on words which trivializes Gifford's literary aspirations as mere affectation for the benefit of "the apprentice-girls and stable-boys" (332).

The next step in Pindar's defense is to rebuke the authors of the critique in a passage describing his initial reaction. He says, "in all the calmness of reflection, when Prejudice was asleep, I said to myself, 'What have I done to these fellows...?'" (334). This "calmness of reflection" and lack of "Prejudice" disappears in his next statements, however, when he lists a series of accusations leveled at the subjects of his attacks, and Gifford in particular:

"I say I *may* have called them the Rag-men of Parnassus; the Old-clothes Men to the Muses; *literary* Pincushions composed of scraps and bran. I must confess that I have at times smiled at the unmeaning noisy lines of two wretched things called Baviad and Maeviad, and smiled moreover at the self-consequence of their Author. I *may* have said, that if Mister *Esop* Gifford, instead of *Baviads* and *Maeviads*, had only composed *Cobleriads*, he would have been more *at home* on the subject" (335).

In this first excerpt from Pindar’s response, phrases such as “Rag-men” and “Old-clothes Men” reference rag paper as well as cast off clothing, implying that Gifford and Mathias’s verses are worn out, and second-rate, like cast-off clothing. Pindar accuses Gifford of having an inflated ego and warns that he should have written satires on cobblers, an effort to censure his efforts to rise above tradesman’s status into the realm of a respectable author. After attacking Gifford’s literary abilities through his social status, Pindar then turns to a generalized moral harangue which he carefully words so as not to be directed at anyone specifically, but which, through corresponding details, is an attack on Gifford’s morals:

I *may* have said, that when a man receiveth *subscription-money* for a Work, and without any intention to produce that work, he is a *literary swindler*, and deserveth a *rope*. I *may* have asserted, that the *dirtiest* of all occupations is a *pimp*. I *may* have said, that the wretch who can write lampoons on the Patrons who took him from the dunghill, and placed him in a situation of respectability, is a *scoundrel*. I *may* have said, that a fellow with the *form* of the letter Z who publicly attacks an unfortunate woman for a disorder of which the Divine Being is the sole author, is little less than a *demon* and a *fool*. And finally, I *may* have declared that the wretch who, after the most important favors conferred on him by a friend, can, by the most infernal machinations, mediate the ruin of that friend, to pave the way for his own ambitious consequence, is a *villain*.—But what is all *this* to *Esop*? These reflections might have been *general*; but, unfortunately for *me*, they have been considered as *particular*: so that *certain folk* have positively sworn, in the language of an old ballad, ‘That was levelled at *me*.’ (336-337)

By reiterating the phrase “I may have said” before each of these statements, Pindar simultaneously distances himself from actually uttering the phrases and repeats them. What he may or may not have said in his private ruminations is un-provable – yet the suggested thought in print is still an accusation. Although the charges may have been “general,” Pindar implies that because certain persons (i.e. Gifford) had taken them to be direct references, these “certain persons” must be guilty of the accusations in order to see

the resemblance. His discussion of Gifford directly before and at the end of the passage likewise implies that Gifford is the subject of his statements. Moreover, Pindar's statements correlate directly to circumstances in Gifford's life, events of which some members of the reading public would likely be aware.¹³

In July 1800, Gifford responded to the abuse in kind, attacking Pindar openly in *An Epistle to Peter Pindar*. Gifford uses the title itself as a retaliatory point, naming his adversary openly rather than attempting to "sneak one by" as Pindar had done in the surreptitious postscript attached to *Lord Auckland's Triumph*. By printing his adversary's name, Gifford ensures that the reading public will see this response as the newest installment of their public literary quarrel. Gifford's response essentially "gives the lie" to Pindar's accusations, straightforwardly naming Pindar's mistake in identifying the wrong target. In the final lines of each of the first three stanzas, Gifford declares his innocence, repeating, "Why, Peter, leave the hated object free, / and vent, poor driveller, all thy spite on me?" (lines 5-6, 11-12, 17-18). Gifford, however, refuses to take the stance of an innocent victim, instead choosing a tone of righteous indignation supported by a gloss of Christian morality in order to refute the accusations made against him. In the opening lines, Gifford says that "many a Noble Name, to virtue dear, / Delights the public eye, the public ear" (1-2). With these lines, Gifford holds satirists to a higher moral standard since they are responsible for criticizing the vices of their targets. By noting the public nature of the criticism, Gifford also emphasizes the importance of

¹³ The first such event Pindar mentions is Gifford's failure to produce a subscription edition of Juvenalian translations. The edition was proposed by the Rev. William Cookesley, Gifford's patron, upon whose death Gifford abandoned the project and later returned the subscription monies to the individuals he could locate. (Clark 8-9). Pindar also mentions Gifford's quarrel with William Peters and alludes to the circumstances of "Mary Weeks," a story which Clark says was written by Wolcot and contains "enough truth in his whole account to make one wonder which is truth and which pure fabrication" (13).

reputation, relying on the link between “noble names” and “virtue” to build public trust. Yet in stanza two, Gifford takes the virtue of the satirist a step further. The parallel structure of referencing virtue and religion in subordinating clauses in the first two stanzas places the “Noble Name” of the author and his work in the same position as the prelates (9) and mitres (8), “ecclesiastical [dignitaries] of exalted rank and authority” and the headpieces worn by bishops, respectively. This parallelism elevates the satirist to a position of Christian authority, and by association to the social position of an aristocrat, since senior bishops are also considered members of the House of Lords. Thus, when Gifford says “pure Religion’s beam,.../ O’er many a mitre sheds distinguished light” (7-8), he implies that religious sincerity will illuminate the moral content of satire, making the satirist a distinguished member of society through class and morality. He then says that the authority of these poetical prelates comes from the fact that they “in the path their Savior trod / In trembling hope, ‘walk humbly with their God’” (9-10).

Yet the structure of these two stanzas proceeds to isolate Pindar from his contemporaries, morally as well as literarily. By contrasting Pindar the “poor driveller” with the “Noble Names” of line 1, Gifford insults the quality of Pindar’s verse even as he proceeds to mark Pindar as an object of ridicule and a moral inferior. While Gifford elevates the satirist to a position of Christian authority, he addresses Pindar, saying that the work of other satirists “fills thy canker’d breast with such annoy” (3), implying that since Pindar is affected by the moral admonitions of satire, he must be guilty of the same transgressions a satirist should be disparaging. Furthermore, Gifford points to Pindar’s hypocrisy of “[leaving] the hated object free,” sparing vice by attacking an innocent man (4), thereby undercutting Pindar’s credibility with the public. In stanza two, Gifford’s

usage of “mitre” also helps to develop the accusations of hypocrisy. The word “mitre” echoes the word “mite,” a small amount or fragment (OED), synonymous with “mote.” This word association, when combined with Gifford’s use of “beam” and “sight,” alludes to the Gospel of Luke, Chapter 6 and the parable of the mote.¹⁴ In the parable, a man must be aware of and eradicate his own faults in order to criticize the faults of others, a reproach which also applies to the satirist. The satirist who is able to follow this dictate will have the moral efficacy of his works illuminated by the “distinguished light” of virtue. However, for Pindar, Gifford says the “beam of pure Religion” is “bane to thy sight” (7), once again making Pindar the object of scorn and an enemy of God and moral truth rather than one of the authors designated to criticize immorality. By attacking Pindar’s morality, Gifford tarnishes Pindar’s personal honor and reputation, denying him the name of a true satirist and the status of a gentleman author.

Gifford continues to batter Pindar’s reputation on all fronts, personal and professional, authorial persona and true identity, painting Pindar as evil instead of merely immoral. He describes Pindar as having a “deep-detested name,” and says when he heard it “A shivering horror crept through all my frame, / A damp, cold, chill, as if a snake or toad / Had started unawares across my road” (41-43). By equating Pindar to a snake or toad, Gifford hearkens back to his comparison of Pindar and Satan in stanza 1, making Pindar representative of evil and an enemy of God. Gifford’s vocabulary also contains more tangible nastiness, designed to rely on all the senses for revulsion. Pindar’s heart is “canker’d” (3) and filled with “filth” (22), conjuring images of spiritual corruption so

¹⁴ Luke, Ch. 6. 41: “And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” 42: “Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother, let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye.”

deep that it manifests itself in physical ways as well. Yet Gifford's diatribe is not limited to Pindar's authorial persona – instead, Gifford turns to battering John Wolcot, the man behind the pen. Gifford develops a narrative of Wolcot's many "crimes" against God and humanity from infancy onward, since even "His little tongue in blasphemies was loos'd / His little hands in deeds of horror us'd" (73-74), claims which appear to be mere repetitions of accusations leveled by other enemies of Pindar (Clark 103). Gifford compounds Wolcot's evil nature, implying that even as a child, he failed to possess the innocence of an infant and committed "blasphemies" and cruelty, making him unnatural and more Satanic. Gifford begins with Wolcot's supposed childhood horrors in order to attack Wolcot as a medical professional, saying that as he grew, he advanced to killing larger animals with an "insidious dose [mixed] with wicked skill" (80), watching with "wild joy" (81) as they died. Gifford mentions the use of poisons in order to allude to John Wolcot's apprenticeship to an apothecary, breaking through literary boundaries to attack John Wolcot, the doctor, rather than Peter Pindar the authorial persona. The cruelties of which Wolcot is accused directly affect his personal life, threatening to damage the reputation of his medical practice and to harm Wolcot's financial capabilities in either profession. By noting Wolcot's profession prior to his satiric work, Gifford attacks Wolcot with the same charges with which Wolcot had attacked him. Since apothecaries gained knowledge of their profession through apprenticeships, the same as tradesmen, Gifford draws attention to Wolcot's lower professional status, even though Wolcot had stopped practicing medicine around 1779 (Vales 16).

Yet Gifford continues. Pindar's "hate turn'd from animals to man: / Then letters, libels, flew on secret wings" (84-85), and, according to Gifford, he is exiled from

England to Jamaica. Wolcot had gone to Jamaica in August, 1768 as a personal physician to Governor William Trelawney, where his “income was small, and his duties light” (Vales 14). In order to secure a better living, Wolcot returned to England, where he was ordained a priest on June 25, 1768, in the hopes of procuring the parish of St. Anne in Jamaica, which was expected to become vacant. When this opening failed to materialize, he settled for the smaller parish of Vere, “a community of six thousand Negroes employed in the area’s sugar mills and one in which the parishioners went to market on Sunday and not to church services” (Vales 15). From this history, Gifford builds his next attack on John Wolcot, saying that in Jamaica, his immorality was enough to offend even the slaves, with his “drunkenness and lust” (98) and “unhallowed prayers” (1-5) behind ministerial robes “hot from debauch” (104). Gifford uses these last examples, with their emphasis on blasphemy and ungodliness, to maximize the appearance of Wolcot’s corruption, “a foe to man, a renegade from God” (68), again crossing the boundary between literary rebuke and personal attack. Gifford’s purpose is not merely to discredit the poet, Peter Pindar, but also to annihilate John Wolcot’s reputation on all sides.

Even as Gifford attacks John Wolcot as a doctor and a minister, his focus is on the verbal, as demonstrated in his caricature of Wolcot’s childhood when he says “his little tongue in blasphemies was loosed” (73) and “his little hands in deeds of horror us’d” (74). The emphasis on speech and hands recalls the physical act of handwriting and composing poetry, implying that Pindar’s verse is likewise blasphemous and horrible. Wolcot’s “unhallow’d prayers” in Jamaica were also “Pour’d stammering forth” with “noisome airs” (105-106), an image of corrupt verbal expression that Gifford repeats in

describing Pindar's verse when he says that "a slimy toad, . . . spits and spues, / The crude abortions of his loathsome muse" (129-130), tying Pindar's verse to the satanic portrait of Wolcot's character. Gifford plays off the physical implications of corruption when he says that "from thy mildew'd lips, on virtue blow, / And blight the goodness thou can'st never know" (33-34), implying that works proceeding from someone physically corrupted must necessarily be corrupt as well. Gifford likewise critiques Wolcot's use of a pseudonym, saying that in his early life, "letters, libels flew on secret wings" (85), echoing how Wolcot has hidden behind a persona to launch his attacks. Throughout the poem, Gifford emphasizes that Pindar's verse is filled with lies (22, 59) and filth, (22, 57, 100, 169), characterizing his work as "lascivious song" (30), "impious song, . . . jest obscene" (138), "tainted verse" (143), and "lewd rhymes" (156). The verse itself is corrupt, yet Gifford accuses Pindar of using this corruption in a moral reversal in that he "[Trucks] praise for lust, [hunts] infant genius down, / [strips] modest merit of it's last half-crown" (31-32), attacking worthy poets (such as Gifford) in order to assault virtue and further his immoral ends.

By playing off Wolcot's brief service as a clergyman and the perceived moral responsibilities of a satirist, Gifford maintains a gloss of Christian morality throughout *An Epistle to Peter Pindar*; however, this gloss is a screen for retaliation and straightforward abuse. As part of the critique of corruption, the satirist generally admonishes the target to grasp repentance, yet throughout most of the *Epistle* Gifford offers no such relief for Pindar – he is irredeemably evil "From noxious childhood to pernicious age" (69). In the final four stanzas, Gifford fulfills the requirement of admonishing his target by expressing concern for the "sluggish soul" of his opponent, yet

this concern is hollow. Gifford appears to end his tirade when he says “Enough! – Yet Peter! Mark my parting lay— /...*An Atheist thou may'st live, but cans't not die!*” (147, 154). He encourages Pindar to repent, exaggerating Wolcot's advanced age of 62, when Gifford calls him a “poor tinkling bellman of four-score” (155) and cautioning him not to rely on a deathbed confessional since senility might leave him “*to spit at heaven*” (159-160). Any appearance of concern for Pindar's soul evaporates, however, with Gifford's closing lines: “*Thou cans't not think, nor have I power to tell, / How much I scorn and loath thee—so, farewell!*” (171-172). The final lines end with biting hatred, effectively overthrowing the seemingly benevolent warnings issued a few lines previously. With this conclusion, Gifford's overall purpose is not one of moral correction or even exposing faults – it's total annihilation based on personal dislike and supported by Christian allusions to evil and sin.

In answer to Pindar's careless accusations against Gifford, some critical response is justified to refute the charges, yet throughout the poem Gifford takes glee in battering Pindar as severely as possible. He says, “ne'er did aught of thine / Profane, thank Heaven! One thought, one word, of mine” (39-40). Now, however, “scorn shall screen thee from my arm no more” (50), implying that Peter Pindar is of such low account that he is unworthy of notice except when necessity dictates that Gifford defend his own reputation and honor. However, as Clark points out, Gifford's response to Pindar is “equally abusive and libelous” (19), rehashing the accusations of prostitution, class inferiority, and literary hackwork which were leveled at him in order to tear down his opponent. Additionally, Gifford resorts to the same type of gossip-mongering that Pindar had used by repeating the rumors about John Wolcot's supposed conduct as a child and a

young man in England and as a clergyman in Jamaica. Gifford's strategy of response makes him guilty of the same ungentlemanly behavior of which he accuses Pindar. He justifies the severity of his attack by claiming that Pindar must be "'cut to the bone,' before he will begin to wince" (Gifford, qtd. in Kinsley 161).¹⁵ Gifford accuses Pindar of weakness (52), telling him to return to attacking men who are too cowardly to refute his charges (53) because Gifford will "give no easy conquest to the foe" (56). Yet the epistolary form of the poem invites a further response from Pindar since Gifford addresses Pindar directly. Moreover, Gifford shifts that "invitation" to an outright challenge when he says:

Come then, all filth, all venom as thou art,
Rage in thy eye, and rancour in thy heart,
Come with thy boasted arms, spite, malice, lies,
Smut, scandal, execrations, blasphemies;
I brave them all. Lo, here I fix my stand,
And dare the utmost of thy tongue and hand. (57-62)

By daring Pindar's "tongue and hand," Gifford challenges Pindar to respond through more print accusations. Pindar, unabashed, took up this challenge. Clark says that Gifford's *Epistle* provoked Pindar to issue a "threatening advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle*, which Gifford countered by advertising for some back numbers of the *Times* which contained damaging references to some of Wolcot's earlier deviltry" (19). These advertisements prolong the verbally dueling authors' very public display of animosity, attacking, defending and counter-attacking each other in full view of the reading public. The series of print articles act out a verbal series of thrusts and parries intended to salvage their own reputations with their readers even as they tear down their opponent in that same medium.

¹⁵ This quotation comes from Gifford's 17-page prose introduction to *Epistle to Peter Pindar*. Original text unavailable.

Finally, however, in August of 1800, the print duel between Gifford and Pindar became physical. Both Vales and Clark report that Wolcot contacted Gifford directly by sending a “threatening letter” (Vales 21), and on August 18, Wolcot set out to find Gifford and came across him in Wright’s bookshop. By taking it upon himself to find Gifford, Wolcot eliminated the possibility for a detached resolution to the dispute through the ceremonial aspects of dueling. Instead, the encounter depended up on face to face communication, a medium which removed the authorial persona of Peter Pindar behind which Wolcot had been shielding himself. Yet Wolcot rapidly dispensed with communication as well. All accounts indicate that Wolcot was the first to strike, hitting Gifford with the head of his cane, a weapon more suited for beating dogs or “malicious monkeys” (as Wolcot claimed later, Clark 20) than a gentleman. Gifford then defended himself by wrestling the cane away and turning it on Wolcot. Two other men present in the bookstore forced Wolcot out into the street, where he was prevented from re-entering the shop (Clark 19-20). Wolcot’s attempt to beat Gifford is a severe breach of the rules of gentlemanly decorum through violence and a lack of self-control, a lack which was already apparent in the unrestrained vituperation of Pindar’s post-script and Gifford’s *Epistle*. After the incident, Wolcot published his account of the incident in the *Morning Chronicle*, an account which varied greatly from the story told by Gifford and other witnesses in that he claimed Gifford used his own cane against Wolcot, and that Wolcot had attempted to give Gifford a letter (Clark 19). The letter supposedly stated that “had Gifford possessed something more of the human form, he would have been treated as a man; but as things were, he had to be contented with being whipped as a malicious monkey” (Clark 20). This statement shows Wolcot’s contempt for the younger poet, as

well as a prejudice against Gifford's handicap. Wolcot's published account also declared that he would write another satire entitled *A Cut at A Cobbler*, a further attempt to discredit Gifford as an author by referencing his background as a tradesman, but this publication was abandoned (Clark 20).

Contemporary authors and journalists condemned both men for their ungentlemanly actions in the affair by claiming that they dishonored the literary profession even as they dishonored themselves. One anonymous author declared that:

Peter Pindar seems to have been stimulated to this step by the foulest and falsest libels, on the part of Mr. Giffard [sic], that ever issued from the English press. Mr. Giffard charged a crime upon Peter, from a suspicion of what the world never altogether exempts those who charge it. The whole of a long and most scurrilous attack in a pamphlet might have been palliated by the previous attacks of Peter; but no provocation on earth can palliate so infamous a calumny as that alluded to; and Mr. Giffard will probably feel the effects of it throughout life, since no man of prudence and character can be safe in the company of one who falsely makes such charges. Mr. Giffard has had provocation. Peter Pindar first attacked him in a very unmanly manner. What have the world to do with the obscurity and humbleness of Mr. Giffard's early life? ("Literary Fracas")

The anonymous author begins with what appears to be a justification of Wolcot's actions (although the author refers to him by his authorial pseudonym), by acknowledging the severity of Gifford's attack as well as the fact that the accusations enumerated within *Epistle to Peter Pindar* were merely repetitions of old gossip. He condemns Gifford for alluding to "so infamous a calumny," a charge which is out of proportion with the "scurrilous attack" which Pindar had originally leveled at him. Then the anonymous author turns to justifying Gifford's actions by reproaching Pindar for attacking Gifford's childhood and early apprenticeship. However, the anonymous author proceeds to rebuke both authors for their public display of animosity and lack of decorum:

These gentlemen would have acted wisely had they fought by deputy, and sent their Muses alone into the field of battle. They might have expected that a combat of private character would but bespatter both, by holding both up to the derision of the world...[Their mutual abuse] does neither of them honour; and, what is worse, it tends to dishonour literature. It is strange that poets cannot so far feel for the honour of poetry, as not to degrade those who devote themselves to it; it is remarkable that two men, who have not been sparing of their satire, cannot themselves bear attack. (“Literary Fracas”)

The anonymous author’s final statements emphasize the difference between literary violence and physical violence. By sending “their Muses alone into the field of battle,” they would be engaging in a literary duel which would still leave them open to the censure of the public, but avoiding the more scandalous and ungentlemanly effects of a physical quarrel. Nevertheless, a literary quarrel debases the literary arts since poetry is being used for personal vendettas rather than intellectual pursuits, an action made even more shameful since both men are satirists and “have not been sparing of their satire [yet] cannot themselves bear attack.”

In John Taylor’s memoir, *Records of My Life*, he states that after the altercation he “explained to Dr. Wolcot his mistake in confounding the two Giffords, and attacking the wrong one. When the matter was understood by both parties, all enmity was at an end. I succeeded in making them send amicable inquiries as to the health of each other, which I conveyed with pleasure...” (Taylor). Although Taylor attempted to reconcile the two men in private, “neither satirist withdrew his charges; each continued to republish them in subsequent editions of his work” (Clark 21). Wolcot’s re-publication of accusations compounds the original error of confusing William Gifford with John Richards Green, alias John Gifford, because the charges are willfully repeated even though Wolcot is now aware that he had confused the two Giffords. This culpable persistence in error,

combined with Wolcot's aggressive lack of decorum likely contributed to his subsequent fall in popularity. After 1800, Wolcot's popularity declined as did his reputation and health.¹⁶ Gifford, on the other hand, after defending himself became a respected member of the literary community. The *Baviad* and *Maeviad* had established Gifford as a young but talented satirist, and in 1802 Gifford published the long-awaited translations of Juvenal (Clark 21), for which Wolcot had accused him of taking money with no intention to publish.¹⁷ Gifford continued his career with editions of Ben Johnson's works and the satires of Persius, and as editor of the *Quarterly Review* for fifteen years.

In Samuel Johnson's remarks on dueling, he emphasizes that in "refined society" where outward appearances of honor and reputation are crucial, dueling is self-defense, to guard against ostracism and social criticism. However, Boswell feels it necessary to remind the reader that "this justification is applicable only to the person who *receives* an affront. All mankind must condemn the aggressor" (*Life* 484). In the feud between William Gifford and John Wolcot, alias Peter Pindar, Wolcot is clearly the aggressor. Although he believed himself to be the victim, Wolcot unjustly instigated the attack on Gifford when he identified the wrong target. He initiated the quarrel by publishing the attack on Gifford in *Lord Auckland's Triumph*, then took the initiative to find Gifford and beat him personally. Gifford's vitriolic response is justified as self-defense, a position made more sympathetic to the public by his innocence. Wolcot's attack on Gifford is an inexcusable act of aggression in the eyes of the public, made more heinous by his error

¹⁶ Robert Vales records that in 1807, Wolcot was charged with adultery at the age of 69, and that his satires declined in frequency and sales afterward (21-22).

¹⁷ This edition became another minor literary quarrel with the *Critical Review*, which Gifford countered by publishing pamphlets in his defense (Clark 22).

which demonstrates carelessness, impulsive actions and a lack of forethought due to his failure to check facts and identify the correct target.

Unlike Johnson and Macpherson, who avoided an outward show of violence through skillful verbal maneuvering and a logical checkmate, the encounter between Gifford and Wolcot feeds on the exchange of both figurative verbal and literal physical battering. A gentlemanly encounter, such as a duel, would normally cease after each man had fired the appropriate number of shots,¹⁸ yet Gifford and Pindar engage in a literary feud that resembles more of a boxing match, with each man punching as hard and as frequently as possible. The constant streams of abuse from both parties are attempts to discredit each other on all accounts. Pindar attacks Gifford as an educated man and as an author in an attempt to exclude him from his literary peers and as a gentleman in order to exclude him from the society of his patron, Lord Grosvenor, and other supporters. Gifford, likewise attacks Wolcot as a gentleman, yet Wolcot derived his income from booksellers and not patrons; therefore, Gifford's focus on Wolcot's "blasphemous" crimes is a strategy designed to discredit Peter Pindar in the eyes of the reading public, Wolcot's financial base. Gifford adds professional abuse in order to discredit him among his medical peers as well, an extra punch to retaliate for Pindar's attack on Gifford's youthful apprenticeship and Wolcot's obvious class bias against tradesmen.

¹⁸ Baldick quotes the entire text of the "twenty-six commandments," a *code duello* "adopted at the Clonmel Summer Assizes, 1777, for the government of duelists, by the gentlemen of Tipperary, Galway, Mayo, Sligo and Roscommon, and prescribed for general adoption throughout Ireland" (33-36).

“A fairer subject for quizzing [...] an author and a critic fighting with pellets of paper”¹⁹

The only actual duel examined in this study comes from the quarrel between Thomas Moore, “one of the leading poets of the time, and an established favourite in society” (White 111), rising from an Irish-bourgeois background, and Francis Jeffrey, the editor of and periodical contributor to the *Edinburgh Review*, a highly influential literary magazine founded on Whig principles in October 1802. This quarrel resulted from Jeffrey’s review of Moore’s *Epistles, Odes and Other Poems*. In July 1806, the *Edinburgh Review* published Jeffrey’s unsigned attack on Moore’s poems, accusing Moore of “gently perverting the most simple and generous of [his audience’s] affections” by “concealing [corruption] under the mask of refinement” (Jeffrey, qtd. in White 55). Moore’s *Epistles* is a collection of short poems which Moore himself describes as a “pot-pourri” (Jones 91) of miscellaneous topics and written about and addressed to various female figures, a variety which was to cause Moore much grief in the review. Terrence de Verre White says that *Epistles* “was [Moore’s] third book. The first was remarkable for precocity; the second had largely a *succès de scandale*, and it had been presented as juvenilia; but, at twenty-seven Moore would not be let through the critical net” (54). Previously, in July 1803, the *Edinburgh Review* had critiqued Moore’s first two poetic collections, the *Odes of Anacreon* and *The Poetical Works of Thomas Little, Jr*, saying that “A style so wantonly voluptuous is at once effeminate and childish” and that Moore’s verses were “much better calculated for a bagnio” (qtd. in Jones 93). The accusations of impropriety were harsh, but it appears that Moore paid little attention to these early censures. One possible reason may be that the *Edinburgh Review*’s critique

¹⁹ Dowden, Wilfred. *The Letters of Thomas Moore*. Letter to Lady Donegal after the aborted duel with Francis Jeffrey, August 16, 1806.

was preceded by other more favorable evaluations from publications such as the *Monthly Review*, the *British Critic*, and the *Monthly Magazine*, praising Moore's style as elegant, if somewhat lavish (Jones 93). Other reasons contributing to Moore's lack of attention to the article may have been that, in July 1803, the *Edinburgh Review* was a popular, yet still fledgling publication, having only released its first issue in October 1802 (Flynn 39), and that the review of Moore's poems came two years after their initial release, losing the timeliness which marks periodical publication.²⁰ Jones also proposes that Moore may have ignored the review because he was engrossed in "the Bermuda business," an appointment secured for him by Lord Moira as registrar of a naval prize court in Bermuda, for which he sailed on September 25, 1803 (93, 61).

But by July 1806, when the critique of Moore's *Epistles* appeared, the *Edinburgh Review* had become one of the most respected publications of the day with an "unchallenged authority" over the reading public (White 54). In his biography of Francis Jeffrey, Philip Flynn describes the rising popularity and influence of the *Review* when he says that "it was something truly new under the British sun," with essays discussing issues of political economy, epistemology, and aesthetics (44), and heavily colored by the characteristic practicality, analysis, and educational drive of the Scottish Enlightenment. The *Review's* editorial principles likewise contributed to its originality. Firstly, the *Review's* critics were independent contributors, unconnected with the booksellers who would have encouraged "puffs," self-serving positive reviews meant to sell more copies. Secondly, the "contributors were anonymous, and contributors were handsomely paid at a rate of £10 per sheet, a rate that Jeffrey accurately believed to be 'without precedent'"

²⁰ *Odes of Anacreon* was published July 1800, and *The Poetical Works of Thomas Little, Jr* was published in 1801.

(Flynn 44). Because every reviewer, regardless of his social or financial status, was required to accept payment, those who reviewed out of need could do so without loss of caste” (Flynn 44). Francis Jeffrey, who had taken the editor’s position in 1803, was likewise touted as a superior literary critic, having been a member of the Speculative Society, one of the premier literary clubs in Edinburgh (Flynn 36).

Having heard that a review of his *Epistles, Odes and Other Poems* was imminent, Moore wrote to George Thompson on July 11th, saying “The *Edinburgh Review* will be published by the time you receive this, and if you will immediately forward me a copy of it under the covers I have mentioned, you will do me a kindness which I shall feel very grateful for” (Dowden 129). Moore also wrote to Mary Godfrey, the sister of Moore’s friend and supporter Lady Donegal and explained his delay in joining Lord Moira in Ireland. He says that “I wait but for the arrival of the *Edinburgh Review*, and then ‘a long farewell to all my greatness’” (Dowden 130). Both letters indicate that Moore was anxious to read the *Edinburgh’s* verdict, yet the second letter also reveals his fear of unfavorable criticism. The *Edinburgh’s* previous remarks, challenging the moral acceptability of Moore’s works as well as his masculinity, although ignored by Moore, were a likely sample of the forthcoming critique. True to Moore’s fears, the review compared him to the profligate author the Earl of Rochester, yet concluded that Moore was infinitely more dangerous because his poetical gifts. Jeffrey begins by noting that Moore’s poems have “a ‘singular sweetness and melody of versification—smooth, copious and familiar diction—with some brilliancy of fancy and some flow of classical erudition [that] might have raised Mr. Moore to an innocent distinction among the song writers and occasional poets of his day’” (Jeffrey, qtd. in White, 57). The key word here,

however, is “might”; Jeffrey’s review proceeds to bash Moore for immorality, saying that the pleasing features of his verse only contribute to a “cold-blooded attempt to corrupt the purity of an innocent heart;...for the purpose of insinuating pollution into the minds of unknown and unsuspecting readers” (Jeffrey, qtd. in Jones, 94). To say the verses are dissolute is a severe accusation, yet Jeffrey leaps to imply that Moore has sought to intentionally hide indecent material behind pleasing verses in order to make his message more amenable to his “innocent readers.” Jeffrey accuses Moore, through Moore’s use of varied names for the subjects of his poems, of “[taking] care to intimate to us, in every page, that the raptures which he celebrates do not spring from the excesses of an innocent love, or the extravagance of a romantic attachment; but are the unhallowed fruits of cheap and vulgar prostitution, the inspiration of casual amours, and the chorus of habitual debauchery” (Jeffrey, qtd. in Jones 94). The accusations of sexual depravity contribute to an overall picture of Moore as an immoral person to be shunned by the general populace in his person as well as his writing.

Jeffrey, however, encounters a problem in writing his review, namely that Moore’s work carries the names of many people of respectable and even distinguished social status. Moore dedicates individual poems to “Lady Donegal; Mrs Henry Tighe, author of *Psyche*; several ladies of title; the Hon. William Spencer; and the whole offending volume to the tantalizing Lord Moira” (White 56). Since Moore’s works are associated with “persons of the first consideration...both for rank and accomplishment” (Jeffrey, qtd. in White 56), Jeffrey warns that Moore’s immorality will easily spread through respectable society and eventually trickle down to the general populace. White points out that Jeffrey overlooked the lack of objection from the dedicatees and concludes

that “The answer to the question why the polite world was not outraged by Moore was simply, that, unlike Jeffrey, it knew Moore” (56). Moore, under the patronage of Lord Moira, had become a habitué of fashionable Whig society at the time, and attended dinners in the company of Lady Donegal and Miss Tighe, as well as “a small supper at Lord Harrington’s to meet the Prince,” and numbered Samuel Rogers and Monk Lewis among his acquaintances (White 52). In short, Moore was something of a society favorite, having many friends among the social and intellectual elite. Jeffrey’s fears that this favoritism would give Moore’s immoral verses more weight in the public mind were grounded in the idea that Moore’s friends were persons in a position of respectability and authority, and were therefore held up as examples to the lower classes. Jones says that in Jeffrey’s critique, he “proposed to correct both Moore and the aristocratic reading of the age” (93), yet this review goes beyond a mere critique of Moore’s literary ability, and extends to an attack on his morality which causes damage to his reputation. Jeffrey also implies that the persons to whom Moore’s work is dedicated are also guilty of immorality by association, harming their reputations as well. Since Moore’s publishing thrived on the patronage and support of these same persons, damage to their reputations might cause them to abandon Moore, leaving him without the financial means to publish and support himself. At the time, financial ruin was a very real possibility for Moore after he returned from Bermuda in debt (White 52).

After receiving the July 1806 issue of the *Edinburgh Review*, Moore wrote to George Thomson on August 6, 1806, to thank him, although he is unsure whether the copy he received is from Thomson or his own publisher. Moore says:

If I am in your debt however, I have some hopes of being able to repay you *in person*, as I think it likely I shall soon visit Edinburgh—I was

agreeably disappointed by the article on my Volume of Poems—there is all the *malignity* which I expected, but not half the *sting*, and I hope I shall always be lucky enough to have such dull, prosing antagonists—Will it be too much trouble for you to answer me a question by return of Post?—does Mr *Jeffrey* (one of the persons concerned in the Review) reside in Edinburgh, and is he there at present? (Dowden 101-102)

Moore's letter is posturing as well as plotting. He acknowledges the review's ill will, yet downplays its affect by implying that he had expected much worse. His response to the article takes the tone of gentlemanly superiority by critiquing the anonymous reviewer's remarks as "dull" and "prosing," yet his nonchalance is bracketed by statements which suggests the opposite. By expressing a desire to visit Edinburgh and inquiring as to the home of Francis Jeffrey, Moore implies an intention to meet Jeffrey face to face. Jeffrey, as editor, was responsible for the *Review*'s content, and therefore Jeffrey becomes the figurehead on whom Moore focuses his anger. After discovering from Rogers that Jeffrey was in London (Jones 95), Moore proceeded to secure Thomas Hume to act as his second and carry a formal challenge to Jeffrey. Moore's challenge read: "You are a liar; yes, sir, a liar; and I choose to adopt this harsh and vulgar mode of defiance, in order to prevent at once all equivocation between us, and to compel you to adopt for your own satisfaction, that alternative which you might otherwise have hesitated in affording to mine" (Jones 95). Moore's cartel deserves examination. As Robert Baldick describes it, "one authority, in a handbook on duelling [sic], observed that 'the most accredited mode is to conduct the whole affair with the greatest possible politeness, expressing the challenge clearly, avoiding all strong language...'" (37). Moore "gives the lie" to the

review's accusations of immorality, although his cartel is worded more bluntly than a "gentlemanly" challenge ought to be by blatantly calling Jeffrey a liar.²¹

Interestingly enough, Moore also describes the situation as "this harsh and vulgar mode of defiance," although from this excerpt provided by Jones, it is difficult to know whether Moore is referring to the wording of his cartel, or the duel itself.²² Most likely, Moore is referring to the duel itself, because, as White states, "Moore did not like pistols. In youth he had nearly blown off his thumb playing with one" (59). Yet, the question bears asking: if Moore was opposed to violence, why adopt dueling as his method of rebuttal? Why not publish a public rebuke as Gifford had done? The answer is that dueling was a customary form of defense of reputation among the aristocracy and gentry, as opposed to the middle class. Moore, the upwardly mobile, university-educated son of a prosperous grocer from Dublin, had likely been in his early life imbued with the middle-class repugnance for the ritualized violence of dueling, yet it is equally likely that he felt pressured to adopt dueling as a method of defense because of his ambitious connections with the higher social strata in which dueling was acceptable, or even expected. Formally challenging Jeffrey would allow him to maintain the air of respectability among his upper-class patrons and to continue publishing with their support. Therefore, the decision to issue a challenge can be seen as intertwining issues of honor with financial practicality. In a letter dated the day after the encounter, Moore

²¹ Baldick references Touchstone's speech in *As You Like It* as an example of the varying severity of accusations of lying. He says that Touchstone "enumerated the seven causes of a quarrel—the retort courteous, the quip modest, the reply churlish, the reproof valiant, the countercheck quarrelsome, the lie with circumstance and the lie direct—before concluding: 'All these you may avoid but the lie direct; and you may avoid that too with an *if*...'" (33). Although Touchstone's catalogue is comedic, Moore proves the danger of a "lie direct" by bluntly calling Jeffrey a liar, a statement which leaves no room for resolution prior to a dueling encounter.

²² A full text of the challenge has not been included in Dowden's collection of *The Letters of Thomas Moore*. The only available text was found in Jones's biography of Moore.

writes to Lady Donegal that “if the business was to be again gone through I should feel it my duty to do it” (Dowden 134), indicating this sense of obligation. Obligation or not, neither Moore nor his opponent was prepared for dueling, as evidenced by the fact that none of the individuals involved actually owned pistols, so Moore was forced to borrow firearms from William Spencer to conduct the affair. Moore’s ignorance is likewise shown in his over-purchase of powder and bullets “in such large quantities...as would have done for a score of duels” (qtd. in Jones 95-96, source unidentified).

On August 15, 1806, Jeffrey and Moore met at Chalk Farm, a northern district of London, where the affair of honor deteriorated into an embarrassing scandal. While Jeffrey and Moore made a civil acquaintance, Hume, Moore’s second, and Francis Horner, a fellow reviewer acting as Jeffrey’s second, attempted to load the pistols. William Spencer, who had supplied the pistols for the duel, had also divulged knowledge of the planned encounter to Lord Fincastle, who had notified the Bow Street Police (Jones 96). Just as the pistols were raised, the officers stormed the field, knocked the weapon from Jeffrey’s hand, and arrested both men. Moore and Jeffrey were detained, their bail was set and paid, and then they were released. Yet, when Moore returned to collect the pistols, “he was given a nasty reception by the police officer. The magistrate had come to the conclusion foul play was intended. There was no bullet in Jeffrey’s pistol” (White 60). The missing bullet has alternately been attributed to the seconds’ lack of familiarity with weapons, to being knocked out when the officer struck Jeffrey’s weapon (Jones 98), or to the possibility of Hume removing the bullet to protect his friend (White 61), but not to Moore’s harboring dishonorably cowardly, even potentially murderous intentions. Whatever the case, the missing bullet entered into newspaper

accounts of the duel the next morning, causing Moore much embarrassment. Moore attempted to have a statement drawn up and signed by all participants in order to clarify the matter, yet Hume refused to sign, leaving Moore with a weakened “letter of denial” (White 61). The newspapers also translated “bullet” to “pellet,” giving leeway for the publication of satiric poems such as “The Paper Pellet Duel,” which claimed the lead had been nothing but wads of paper and the whole affair a sham (Jones 98-99).

Whereas the unfavorable review of the poems of *Anacreon* and *Thomas Little* was refuted by favorable critiques, *Odes, Epistles, and Other Poems* continued to be criticized by other publications on the same grounds of immorality and over-sensuality (Jones 99). As Jones points out, Moore could not challenge all of his negative reviewers, and the thwarted duel had left Moore vulnerable to the same criticisms from other sources. Under this new and overwhelming assault, Moore left for Dublin and let the matter drop, but not before repairing matters with Jeffrey. Throughout the ordeal, Jeffrey and Moore had acted congenially toward one another, walking together amiably before the duel (Jones 96) and then “[falling] into literary talk” as they waited for bail to be posted (White 60). Two days after the duel, Jeffrey and Moore met at the home of Samuel Rodgers for a “reconciliation breakfast” (Jones 99), yet oddly, Jones and White neglect to discuss the event. But in Moore’s letters, he writes to Lady Donegal on August 17 (the day of the meeting), that he “received from [Jeffrey] the most satisfactory apologies for the intemperance of his attack on me. He acknowledged that it is the opinion, not only of himself but his friends, that the Review contained too much that was exceptionable, and that he is sincerely sorry for having written it” (Dowden 134). Perhaps the reason for such an auspicious reconciliation is that Jeffrey, like the other members of Whig society,

came to “know Moore” (White 56). In the latter part of August or early September, Moore wrote to Lady Donegal and Joseph Atkinson describing his satisfaction with the outcome and the praise he had received for his actions in the duel. He tells Lady Donegal that Lord Moira wrote to him that “a fair tribute to the spirit with which you vindicated your character will remain” (Dowden 105), and, recounting the same story to Atkinson, Moore concludes that “whatever service or injury the affair may do me in the gross world’s eyes, the *ames choisies* among whom I live do me the most flattering justice throughout it all” (Dowden 107). Just as Moore’s earlier letter expresses a feeling of obligation to undertake the duel in an effort to perform according to the standards of the upper class, Moore’s delight in recounting these remarks also expresses a desire to be viewed favorably by the socially superior group in which he lives and works.

Even though Moore and Jeffrey had come to an amiable understanding, Moore’s dueling blunder was resurrected in 1808 when Lord Byron published the verse satire *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* in response to a devastatingly mocking review of his poetic collection *Hours of Idleness*, which appeared in the January 1808 edition of the *Edinburgh Review* and called his collection childish and egotistical. Byron attacked Jeffrey in *EBSR* and used the failed duel as ammunition because he believed Jeffrey to be the author of the anonymous review (when in fact it was Henry Brougham). Whereas Moore’s first two publications had escaped the most severe critiques as “juvenilia,” Byron’s work was not so fortunate, in part due to Byron’s own posing. As Peter Graham says in *Lord Byron, Hours of Idleness* is “best characterized as a collection of schoolboy verse” (12). In fact, *Hours* is actually a reworked version of Byron’s earlier collection *Fugitive Pieces*, a privately published volume which Byron’s peers in Southwell claimed

was “too warm” and in need of censorship. In the collection’s new rendering as *Hours of Idleness*, “what was liveliest had been skimmed off the adolescent effusion; what was blandest remained for general circulation when the poet-peer made his bow to the reading public beyond Southwell” (Graham 12). In the preface to *Hours of Idleness*, Byron draws attention to both his age and his title, presenting himself as a young and noble dabbler in poetry: “These productions are the fruits of the lighter hours of a young man who has lately completed his nineteenth year” (*Complete Poetical Works* 1: 32)²³ and “Poetry, however, is not my primary vocation” (*CPW* 1: 33), an allusion to his title. In an attempt at seeming self-effacement, he declares that “It is probable that I have dared much and done little” (*CPW* 1: 32), promising that this work is both his first and last attempt at poetry, and has only been published at the urging of close friends. In *Byron: Life and Legend*, Fiona MacCarthy aptly describes Byron’s attitude as “[nurturing] the dilettante status of the aristocrat-writer, the talented young lord throwing off a few verses in the night hours after his social events” (62), an attitude which pervades throughout the preface. The overall tone of the preface is that of a young man merely trifling with authorship, as indicated in the title, *Hours of Idleness*, as well as the tone of hollow self-effacement, reminding the reader that the works are the product of a youth, and alternately pleading that this factor might “arrest the arm of censure” (*CPW* 1: 32) yet his poetry’s “numerous faults...cannot expect that favor which has been denied to others of maturer years” (*CPW* 1: 33). Byron’s preface to the new volume illustrates his careful attempts to position himself favorably within a broader, more experienced readership rather than just a close circle of friends; however his attempts miscarried, instead opening himself up to scathing criticism. As Graham says, “He affects to toss off mere trifles, yet

²³ *The Complete Poetical Works* is hereafter cited as *CPW*.

by publishing the verses under his name solicits attention from a wider world than his coterie” (12).

Early on, the volume received favorable reviews and reasonable sales, yet this good fortune may be attributed to booksellers promoting their own interests. As Marchand notes, John Crosby was Byron’s London agent who had distributed copies of *Hours of Idleness*, reporting to Byron that sales were favorable, yet “He was, as Byron soon discovered, also the publisher of a magazine called *Monthly Literary Recreations*, in the July number of which it ‘chanced’ that there appeared a very favorable notice of *Hours of Idleness*” (134). As Flynn noted in his biography of Francis Jeffrey, reviewing in the days before the dominance of the *Edinburgh Review*’s high-minded disinterest was often marked more by a sense of sales promotion and self-interest than by any actual critical assessment, and the early favorable reviews of Byron’s work appear to have been biased in this same way. Nevertheless, Marchand also notes that Byron “warmed his ego” (135) from such reviews, referring to Byron’s letter of August 2, 1807 to Elizabeth Pigot: “in Town things wear a most promising aspect, & a *Man* whose works are praised by *Reviewers*, admired by *Duchesses* & sold by every Bookseller of the Metropolis, does not dedicate much consideration to *rustic Readers*.” (*Byron’s Letters and Journals* 1: 130).²⁴ Byron’s concern with the social rank of his readership as well as the number of sales indicates a preoccupation with impressing the upper social strata, a preoccupation of which Moore was also guilty. Although Byron held the title of Baron, he still expressed a concern for gaining the favorable opinions of nobles who outranked him in the hierarchy of aristocracy. His emphasis on *Man* and *Duchesses* also indicates the desire to be considered manly and mature, as well as attractive to the female readership. In the letter,

²⁴ *Byron’s Letters and Journals* is hereafter abbreviated as *BLJ*.

Byron continues by referencing an article from a publication entitled *Literary Recreations*, noting that the critic has praised him highly, although “a proper quantum of censure is administered, just to give an agreeable *relish* to the praise” (130). Again, Byron appears to be more concerned with appearances than honesty as he relied on the flattery of reviewers to boost his reputation.

But the *Edinburgh Review*'s was not the only negative critique. In October, *The Satirist*, edited by Hewson Clarke,²⁵ “mercilessly ridiculed” the volume (Marchand 138), and in January 1808, the *Monthly Mirror* published a review that states “If this was one of his lordship's *school exercises* at Harrow, and he escaped whipping, they have there either an undue respect for lords' bottoms, or they do not deserve the reputation they have acquired” (qtd. in Marchand 144). Byron was rankled by both critiques, particularly the second which appeared shortly before a visit to Harrow. The review attacks Byron for his status as well as his education, implying that he has been the recipient of deferential treatment because of his social standing rather than his actual merits, and that he is therefore poetically inferior. This second review actually incensed Byron enough to consider issuing a challenge, as he writes to Edward Long on January 28, 1808. Byron says, “My dear Long, -- I have sent to Mr. Twiddie demanding whether he is the author of the article in question or not, and if he refuses a satisfactory answer, my second Davies has a challenge to Deliver” (*BLJ* 1: 150). Marchand's discussion in Byron's biography indicates that the matter was evidently dropped since no further mention is made (145), yet Marchand's work on Byron's letters and journals references a letter to Robert Dallas

²⁵ A letter from July 3, 1808 indicates that Byron also considered challenging Clarke, although not for the original review. Marchand's notes indicate that Clarke had continued to take potshots at Byron after *Hours of Idleness* was originally reviewed, culminating in a reprint of “quotations from some of the most caustic reviews” as well as a poem titled “Lord B—n to his Bear” (*BLJ*, VI, 167). Clarke was also satirized in *EBSR*, starting at line 973.

on January 25, 1809, in which Byron makes suggestions for additions and corrections to *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, including a remark on the title. He concludes, “Your title is too humourous,--and as I know a little of Dubois, I wish not to embroil myself with him” (*BLJ* 1: 190). Marchand’s notes here indicate that Byron had by this time discovered that Edward Dubois was a contributor to the *Monthly Mirror* and the actual author of the article critiquing *Hours of Idleness* instead of Twiddie. But why leave Dubois alone? As intriguing as this question is, Dubois is never mentioned again in any of Byron’s letters or biographies, a silence which leaves Byron’s response a mystery.

Between these cutting reviews, in November 1807, Byron’s publisher urged a new edition, from which Byron cut the “egoistic and mock-modest Preface” (Marchand 138), but not in time to save himself from one of the critics of the *Edinburgh Review*. In January 1808, fast on the heels of the attack from the *Monthly Mirror*, the anonymous reviewer Henry Brougham found as much fault with Byron’s preface as he did the entire volume, quickly dismantling Byron’s posing, saying straight away that “the noble author is peculiarly forward in pleading minority. [...] Much stress is laid upon it in the preface; and the poems are connected with this general statement of his case, by particular dates, substantiating the age at which each was written” (*Byron’s Complete Works* 451).

Brougham concludes that although Byron *is* a minor, this fact alone cannot save him from critique since it was Byron’s choice to publish. The author of the review likewise draws on Byron’s frequent references to his title and family history throughout the preface and volume of poems, recalling the notion that gentlemen and aristocracy are only amateur writers, defeating another of Byron’s attempts to elude harsh criticism. The review proceeds to bash Byron’s verses on issues of rhyme, meter, originality,

translation, imitation, and lack of feeling and sincerity. After quoting one passage in which Byron imitates Macpherson's *Ossian*, the reviewer remarks that "of this kind of thing there are no less than *nine* pages; and we can so far venture an opinion in their favor, that they look very like Macpherson; and we are positive they are pretty nearly as stupid and tiresome" (*Byron's Complete Works* 452). The article overall rebukes Byron for egotism as well as inferior verse, concluding that all readers should be thankful that this is Byron's last attempt at poetic endeavors.

Marchand describes the review as "unnecessarily provocative and meanly personal" (148), an apt description considering the great lengths at which the reviewer discusses Byron's age and status rather than his poetic ability. But after responding to the criticisms in the *Monthly Mirror* with the possibility of a duel, why counter the *Edinburgh Review* with a satire? One possibility for the satire may be mere convenience: Byron began working on *EBSR* sometime in October 1807, as indicated in a letter to Elizabeth Pigot (*BLJ* 1: 135-136). The original plan was merely a generalized, Horatian satire on "the poetry of the present Day" (*BLJ* 1: 141), yet the poem swelled into the caustic invective aimed at poetic rivals. Other issues involved, however, suggest that this explanation is insufficient. First, Brougham had "laid bare the very vanities he thought he had concealed in his Preface" (Marchand 148). Byron's attempt and subsequent failure to hide those "vanities" are part of the complex verbal maneuvers he attempts in an effort to make himself acceptable to a wider reading public. One prime example, as Graham notes, is that "Having claimed in his preface to have crossed his poetic Rubicon, Byron declares that now that he's on the public (that is, published) side of the river he will 'submit without a murmur' if the critical verdict goes against him. Then he proceeds

to special pleading” (14). Byron claims, simultaneously, that he wants to be treated with the same critical rigor as his peers, yet pleads for mercy based on youth and status, a claim which ultimately makes him look foolish, as Brougham points out.

An additional consideration is that, as Marchand concludes, the *Edinburgh Review*'s popularity and reputation as one of the premier literary publications contributed to the force of Byron's reaction, which is famously chronicled in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers* (148). Because the *Edinburgh* was a staunchly Whig publication, “a thrashing in his culture's preeminent quarterly bothered Byron far more [than the review in the *Satirist*]—particularly because it was the literary organ of the political party he intended to join on attaining his majority, the Whigs” (Graham 13). Byron viewed a critical battering of this nature as something of a betrayal and in a drunken moment threatened to withdraw from the Cambridge Whig Club because of the “rather scurvy treatment from a Whig Review” which had “demolished my little fabric of fame” (*BLJ* 1: 158-159). Not only did the review make him look foolish to the wider reading public, it endangered his success with his Whig peers. Finally, a satiric response would accomplish several goals. It would prove his poetic ability and allow him to rebuff Brougham's jibe that “we should be thankful” that Byron would be unlikely to “again condescend to become an author” (*Byron's Complete Works* 452), by giving the reviewer exactly what he claimed they would never see. *EBSR*, with its Juvenalian tone and heroic couplets, would also allow Byron to demonstrate his classical education and adherence to the Augustan standards of literature practiced by literary greats such as Alexander Pope. A satire in the style of Pope's *Dunciad* would furthermore allow Byron to strike at several personages at once, including the reviewers who (he believed) had savaged *Hours*

of *Idleness* and the contemporary authors who failed to uphold classical standards.

Whereas a duel, which would be conducted privately within a small group, daring to publish again allowed Byron to broadcast his critical rebuttal and satiric affirmation of his abilities to his authorial peers, Whig peers, and aristocratic peers.

The first edition of *EBSR* appeared anonymously in March 1809, attacking his contemporaries such as Robert Southey, William Wordsworth, Samuel Coleridge, and Thomas Moore, among others, as well as the reviewers who Byron perceived were pandering to literary fashion rather than quality, men such as Francis Jeffrey and William Lamb. Byron chooses his targets based on what he views as their failure to adhere to a literary inheritance of classicism based on Augustan poets such as Pope and Dryden. Byron's own verse form in *EBSR* is heroic couplets, most likely adopted from the works of Pope and William Gifford's *Epistle to Peter Pindar* which Byron had studied beforehand in an effort to prepare for his own mini-Dunciad (Marchand 159). In the first edition,²⁶ he began his satire by saying that

Time was, ere yet in these degenerate days
Ignoble themes obtained mistaken praise
When Sense and Wit with Poesy allied,
No fabled Graces, flourished side by side,
.....
Then, in this happy Isle, a POPE's pure strain
Sought the rapt soul to charm, nor sought in vain;
A polished nation's praise aspired to claim,
And rais'd the people's, as the poet's fame.
Like him great DRYDEN poured the tide of song,
In stream less smooth indeed, yet doubly strong. (103-114)

Byron introduces his satire nostalgically, noting the perceived degeneration of the new poetic styles and their lack of intellectual substance, a classic convention of satire. He

²⁶ The text used for this essay is the one found in McGann's *Complete Poetical Works* of Byron. McGann's notes indicate that the first edition of *EBSR* would have begun at line 103 in the text of subsequent editions (*CPW* 1: 397).

points to the specific examples of Pope and Dryden for models of what poetry should be, making the connection that the manners and morality of the nation are reflected in the manner and morality of its literary arts. The bulk of his attack, however, occurs in the lines added for the second edition of *EBSR*. In these lines, Byron partly blames the literary critics for this deterioration, particularly Lamb and Jeffrey. Jeffrey specifically he refers to as a “self-constituted Judge of Poesy” (62), yet all critics are “young tyrants” (83) and “usurpers on the Throne of Taste” (84), reflecting their attempts to attack other poets wrongfully through their lack of poetical knowledge (66), pandering opinions (70-71), and flighty following of literary fads (135-136). For this last critique, Byron uses biblical allusion to demonstrate modern critics’ contemptible practices by referencing the golden calf of Exodus:

Each country book-club bows the knee to Baal,
And, hurling lawful genius from the throne,
Erects a shrine and idol of its own;
Some leaden calf – but whom it matters not,
From soaring SOUTHEY down to groveling STOTT. (138-142)

Byron’s allusion reflects what he sees as critics’ unwillingness to examine poetical merit outside of a narrow interpretation of “good literature” as whatever is in style at the moment. By likening the preferences of individual book clubs to worship of the false god, Baal, Byron demonstrates how literary fads can supersede good sense and literary merit. That each literary coterie erects an “idol of its own” shows the ways in which popular opinions differ when guided by fashion and not the reasonable guidelines of sense. The “leaden calf” wittily reflects the worthlessness of reviewers’ opinions (since lead is a baser metal than gold), but also refers to the materiality of publication, with

“lead” furnishing the type from which pages are set and “calf” being a material that might eventually bind those pages in the reading public’s libraries.

Byron also shows how the current age has supposedly fallen by saying that “No dearth of Bards can be complained of now” (124), noting that “’Tis pleasant, sure, to see one’s name in print; / A Book’s a Book, altho’ there’s nothing in’t” (51-52). These lines demonstrate the ways in which people are drawn to publishing through the desire for fame, even though the talent is lacking. Boldly, Byron admits that “I, too, can scrawl, and once upon a time / I poured along the town a flood of rhyme / [...] I printed—older children do the same” (46-49). Admitting his earlier folly gives Byron an air of authority over the subject by recognizing the youthful folly and egotism with which he had been accused. Byron proceeds to name several contemporary poets in his attack: he calls Walter Scott’s works “stale romance” (172); he upbraids William Wordsworth for blank verse and base subject matter (235-254); he criticizes Monk Lewis for dark, supernatural tales (265-282). Byron finally hits on Thomas Moore, saying that “LITTLE! Young Catullus of his day, / As sweet, but as immoral in his lay!” (286-287), repeating the previous charges against Moore of writing erotic verse. Whereas other poets such as Southey elicited responses such as “’God help thee, ’...and thy readers too” (234), Byron cautions Moore merely to “’mend thy line, and sin no more” (294), a soft rebuke that tells Moore to continue writing. Byron makes other smaller quips to this effect (308, 341-347), yet his most personally offensive attack on Moore is accidental.

In lines 464-493, Byron attacks Jeffrey by recounting the dueling incident between Moore and Jeffrey. Byron says:

Can none remember that eventful day,
That ever glorious, almost fatal fray,

When LITTLE's leadless pistol met his eye,
And Bow-street Myrmidons stood laughing by?
.....
But Caledonia's Goddess hovered o'er
The field, and saved him from the wrath of MOORE,
From either pistol snatched the vengeful lead,
And straight restored it to her favourite's head. (464-493)

Byron's notes to the incident added to the severity of the attack:

In 1806, Messrs. Jeffrey and Moore met at Chalk-Farm. The duel was prevented by the interference of the magistracy; and, on examination, the balls of the pistols,²⁷ were found to have evaporated. This incident gave occasion to much waggery in the daily prints. (CPW 1: 407)

When he wrote to Byron January 1, 1810, Moore expressed his displeasure at having had the embarrassing ordeal repeated in the press, particularly the detail of the missing bullet, which Moore had previously denied. Yet Eisler points to a further slur embedded in Byron's verse, by drawing attention to the "leadless pistols" and the "evaporated balls," saying that "Moore was far more humiliated by these aspersions on his manhood than by Jeffrey's dismissal of his verse" (310). The phrases imply not only lack of courage but sexual impotence, an all-around slur on Moore's reputation and virility. However, Byron attacks his main target in this section, Jeffrey, when he surmises that the lead bullet was returned to Jeffrey's head, a further insult of stupidity to add to Byron's pile of accusations found in the earlier lines. In Byron's attempt to take revenge on Jeffrey, Moore becomes collateral damage, as White says, "with the harshness of the young, he was indifferent to Moore's feeling when he found out he fitted into his plan for hitting back at the author of the *Edinburgh Review*" (108).

Moore's challenge states that "Having just seen the name of 'Lord Byron' prefixed to a work entitled *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, in which, as it appears

²⁷ The text in Jones's biography of Moore also includes the phrase "like the courage of the combatants" here (141).

to me, the *lie is given* to a public statement of mine respecting an affair with Mr. Jeffrey some years since, I beg you will have the goodness to inform me whether I may consider your Lordship as the author of this publication” (109). Moore’s tone is far less blunt than that of his challenge to Jeffrey and the references to Byron’s title draw attention to the social differences between the son of a Dublin grocer and a hereditary Lord. The stylistic differences in wording of the two challenges may be accounted for by the maturity Moore gained during the years between the challenges, but it is more likely that the differences are the result of Moore modifying his tone to suit the status of his highborn adversary in an attempt to balance personal gentlemanly outrage with courteous respect for a man of higher rank. The previous challenge, issued to Jeffrey, acted as an exchange between men of equal status, both university educated, and both holding degrees at law, gentlemen in an educational meritocracy. Working from this equal footing, Moore was better able to adopt a blunt, straightforward tone without losing the appearance of gentlemanly conduct. To Byron, however, Moore becomes more distant – instead of boldly asserting that Byron is a liar (as he had done Jeffrey), Moore first gives Byron the opportunity to claim the publication as his own, a practical measure considering that the first edition had been published anonymously, but also a more indirect way of issuing an accusation.

When this challenge was issued, Byron had already gone abroad on his grand tour of the Mediterranean and never received the challenge, which was in the care of Francis Hodgeson. Eisler suggests that Hodgeson withheld the letter intentionally because he suspected that it was a challenge (311), a suggestion corroborated by Leslie Marchand (245). While Byron was abroad, Moore let the matter drop. When Byron returned to England in July 1811, after more than a year and a half, Moore was reluctant to renew the

issue. However, *EBSR* was about to enter its fifth edition, still retaining the offending verses and note,²⁸ which raised Moore's ire again, prompting him to send another letter repeating his grievance and inquiring as to Byron's lack of response to the first missive. Moore's second letter is a complex rhetoric of social awareness and aversion to violence, the latter stemming from his marriage to Bessy Dyke in March, 1811, and his impending fatherhood (Eisler 311). Throughout, Moore tactfully approaches the matter with words and phrases which would allow him and Byron to resolve the issue without violence.²⁹ He first courteously and sympathetically alludes to the death of Byron's mother, saying that "if there were any thing of hostility or unkindness towards you, I should think it too soon even *now* to disturb you unpleasantly from your retirement," positioning himself as a gentleman considerate of Byron's circumstances and willing to resolve the issue without hostility. Next, Moore says that it is very probable that his first challenge went unanswered because Byron was abroad. He restates the issue at hand, Byron's repetition of the false account of the duel, yet says that "The time, that has elapsed since then, though it has done away neither the injury nor the feeling of it, has so very materially altered my relative situation in life—...that I should consider myself, at present, not only selfish but unprincipled, were I to consult any punctilious feeling of my own, at the risk of leaving undischarged the many duties which I owe to others." Moore makes it obvious here that he desires to avoid bloodshed if at all possible, appealing to Byron's sense of familial responsibility even as he attempts to fulfill the "dictates" of honorable behavior

²⁸ Marchand, VI, 245 – On June 6, 1810, Byron received a letter from Hodgeson, quoting Cawthorn as saying that he was preparing a third edition of *EBSR* after the second had sold out.

Marchand VI, 278 – By the time of Byron's return to England, the fourth edition had almost sold out as well and a fifth edition was in the works.

²⁹ The full text of the letter can be found in Moore's letters and journals, page 161-162. Dowden's text gives the date of the letter as October 22, 1811, whereas Eisler gives October 11, 1811.

by protecting his reputation. Eisler notes that Byron was amused at Moore's tone, describing "with patronizing amusement, the 'Irish Melodist[']' acrobatic efforts to stand on his dignity while groveling for Byron's favor" (311). Moore tells Byron, "I mean merely to express that *uncomfortableness* under a charge of falsehood,... which if I were not sensibly alive to, I should indeed deserve much worse," pressing the perceived necessity of some type of atonement or resolution, even as he attempts to exclude dueling from the options for satisfaction. He closes by proposing they use a mutual friend, Samuel Rogers (who had also helped to reconcile Moore and Jeffrey) as a mediator.

Byron responded on October 27, 1811, confirming, as Moore had suggested, that he never received the letter, although he adds "in whatever part of the world it had found me, I should have deemed it my duty to return and answer it in person" (*BLJ* 2: 118). This statement protects Byron's honor even as it allows him to explain away the possible appearance of dishonorable actions by ignoring the letter. He explains that he was unaware of Moore's statement repudiating the newspaper account, and had compiled his information for *EBSR* from his own memory of the events reported. He admits, however, that "When I put my name to the production,... I became responsible to all whom it might concern,—to explain where it requires explanation, and, where insufficiently or too sufficiently explicit, at all events to satisfy. My situation leaves me no choice; it rests with the injured and the angry to obtain reparation in their own way" (*BLJ* 2: 118-119). This single statement carries much weight toward explaining the manner in which their reconciliation unfolded. Byron admits responsibility for the blunder as well as responsibility for making amends; yet his statement that the injured can "obtain reparation in their own way" leaves room for both parties to defend their honor without

violence. Byron hands the task of determining a resolution back to Moore by saying “You do not specify what you would wish to have done,” adding that he is willing to accept “any conciliatory proposition which shall not compromise my own honour” (*BLJ* 2: 119).

Moore responded on October 29 that Byron’s response was satisfactory when he says “Your Lordship’s letter...contains all that, in the strict *diplomatique* of explanation I could require” (Dowden 165). Moore, however, focuses on the confusing circumstances of the un-received letter by clarifying that he had sent the first letter through a business acquaintance, who passed it to Byron’s publisher, who then passed it to Hodgson who had never forwarded it on to Byron. Moore adds that has a copy of the letter which he had sent, “if your Lordship should feel the least inclination to see it” (Dowden 165). Byron responds by offering to open the still-sealed letter, which had remained in Hodgson’s possession, in Moore’s presence: “If, on examination of the address, the similarity of the handwriting should lead to such a conclusion [i.e. that the letter is the one sent by Moore], it shall be opened in your presence, for the satisfaction of all parties” (*BLJ* 2: 120). This proposal represented the most practical, gentlemanly solution to the issue, similar to Samuel Johnson’s insistence that James Macpherson produce the original manuscripts of *Ossian* to prove his claims. As White asserts, “Implicit in the strange correspondence was a determination to prove that [Byron] had not avoided a challenge” (111). Opening the letter in Moore’s presence allowed both parties to retain their honor by proving that Moore had fulfilled his duty in seeking satisfaction, as well as proving that Byron had never (intentionally) shirked his responsibility to *give* satisfaction. An insistence on violence would have done nothing for either man’s reputation since the

solution was found so easily non-violently. In these circumstances, honor intertwines delicately with the business of publishing and authorship. As Eisler notes, “Moore was, after all, the more established poet and the drawing room darling of Whig society, Byron’s own potential constituency” (311). Even though Moore and Byron had conducted the preliminaries to the resolution through private correspondence, the insult had appeared in print, requiring some type of public satisfaction to save face with the public and their authorial peers. The mediatory dinner conducted by Samuel Rogers also included Thomas Campbell, another prominent author, which allowed Byron and Moore to reach an amicable conclusion to the ordeal with their fellow authors as witnesses. Furthermore, in November 1811, Byron altered the note in the next edition of *EBSR*, eliminating the words referring to Moore and Jeffrey’s lack of courage and explaining that he had only recently been made aware of Moore’s statement denying the lack of bullets (*CPW* 1: 407)³⁰, providing solid proof of the reconciliation for the benefit of the readership. Byron was later to suppress the entire fifth edition of his satire, having met and become friends with many of the people he had attacked. Yet this alteration specifically served to resolve the immediate issue of the dispute with Moore and to protect their individual reputations.

During the exchange of letters in which Byron and Moore resolved the dispute, Moore made overtures of friendship to Byron. In the first letter upon Byron’s return, in which Moore inquires as to the fate of the original challenge, Moore says, “So *very* far am I, however, from treasuring any ungenerous revenge, that it would give me this moment the most heart-felt pleasure, if, by any kind, candid & satisfactory explanation,

³⁰ “I am informed that Mr. Moore published at the time a disavowal of these statements in the newspapers as far as regarded himself, and in justice to him I mention this circumstance: as I never heard of it before, I cannot state the particulars, and was only made acquainted with the fact very lately.—Nov. 4th, 1811”

you would enable me to ask for the honour of your intimacy” (Dowden 162). Byron’s direct response appears to have ignored Moore’s initial offer of friendship and, at face value, this overture is an example of what Eisler refers to as Moore’s verbal acrobatics. However, subsequent correspondence and the resulting events indicate that Moore was indeed sincere. After Byron’s neglect to address Moore on this issue, Moore responds, “As your Lordship does not shew any great wish to proceed beyond the rigid *formula* of explanation, it is not for me to make any further advances—*We Irishmen*, in business of this kind, seldom know any medium between decided hostility and decided friendship; but,...any approaches towards the *latter* alternative must now rest with your Lordship” (Dowden 166). Byron responded to Moore by calling attention to issues of honor, when he says:

With regard to the latter part of both your letters, until the principal point was discussed between us, I felt myself at a loss in what manner to reply. Was I to anticipate friendship from one, who conceived me to have charged him with falsehood? Were not *advances*, under such circumstances, to be misconstrued,—not, perhaps, by the person to whom they were addressed, but by others? (*BLJ* 2: 120)

Byron’s focus in this exchange is to protect his honor and, as he notes, premature reconciliation might be misconstrued by their authorial and social peers as some way of avoiding the issue of Byron’s unintentional insult of Moore. The nature of the dueling challenge creates a reflexive model of accuser and accused – Byron had originally issued the insult to Moore in *EBSR*, making Moore the injured party; yet when Moore issued the challenge to Byron, Byron became the defender and not the aggressor. By accepting Byron’s explanation of the circumstances, Moore resolves one half of the issue, but Byron is still in the awkward position of accepting or rejecting friendship from one who had accused him of falsehood. Byron is aware that an acceptance of friendship in these

circumstances might appear to others as an avoidance of the charges, rather than a resolution. Moore misreads Byron's hesitancy as a rebuff and responds with a brief, reserved missive in which he apologizes for his "imprudence" and agrees to drop the issue after declaring that he is satisfied with Byron's explanation (Dowden 166). Byron, seeing Moore's sincerity, takes the initiative to make his own overtures now that the issue of satisfaction has been resolved. He says, "I felt, and still feel, very much flattered by those parts of your correspondence, which held out the prospect of our becoming acquainted. If I did not meet them, in the first instance, as perhaps I ought, let the situation in which I was placed be my defense," concluding that if Moore still desires friendship, he is willing to accept (*BLJ* 2: 121). Moore responds to this by initiating the dinner with Samuel Rogers, in which Byron made the acquaintance of Campbell and Rogers, who Moore said "has long wished for the pleasure of your Lordship's acquaintance" (Dowden 167).

The dinner resulted in Byron forming lifelong friendships with all three of the other diners, yet Byron and Moore appear to have formed the strongest bond of the four. Shortly after the quarrel's resolution, Moore expressed the desire to be admitted to the Alfred Club, for which Byron proposed Moore's name (Dowden 170, *BLJ* 2: 145). Their continuing correspondence reflects Byron's growing trust in Moore as an author and as a personal confidant. Their letters frequently mention their respective publications, including Byron's *Corsair*, which he dedicated to Moore (Eisler 412), *Don Juan*, and *Cain*, as well as Moore's *Lallah Rookh*, *The Fudge Family in Paris*, and *Loves of the Angels*, which shows their shared literary interests. In a letter to Murray, dated September 12, 1821, Byron further explains their bond when he says that "Moore and I –

the one by circumstances & the other by birth – happened to be free of the corporation— & to have entered into its pulses and passions ‘quarum partes fuimus’” (*BLJ* 8: 207), a statement which Jeffrey Vail says in *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore* reflects the “worldly, cynical perspective that they shared, both having had the experience of feeling themselves at the center and at the periphery of fashionable life at the same time” (2). Both men, it seems, were compelled to struggle with navigating the complex social expectations of the literary and societal elite because of their origins: Moore, as “an Irish Catholic and the son of a Dublin grocer” and Byron as “[coming] from an impoverished family without a lord’s typical complement of connections and relatives” (Vail 1). Vail also cites their similarities in temperament, strong belief in their common political views, and shared revulsion for “insincerity and cant” (Vail 2).

The bond which developed between Byron and Moore evidently influenced Byron to entrust Moore with several of his journals and personal papers, beginning with his journal of 1813-1814 and his Ravenna Journal, both of which Moore published in excised versions. More significantly, however, during Byron’s self-imposed exile on the continent, Moore visited Byron in Italy in October 1819, where Byron also granted Moore his infamous *Memoirs* (DeFord 25), which “Moore had sold to Murray for posthumous publication [but] were burned in the fireplace of Murray’s parlour after Byron’s death, over the protest of Moore it must be said” (*BLJ* 1: 25-26). By entrusting the memoirs to Moore, Byron proffered a large personal favor to Moore. After returning from Burmuda, Moore had continued to retain his position as registrar and the income it provided with a deputy to fulfill the actual duties of the position. This deputy, Moore learned, had embezzled £6000, for which Moore was responsible. Unable to repay the

money, Moore left England and headed for the continent to avoid a debtor's prison (DeFord 25). By giving Moore the manuscript for publication, Byron provided him with financial leverage to help him repay the debt (MacCarthy 388). Moore was designated to carry out the task of becoming Byron's biographer, since, as Byron says in a letter to John Murry dated September 21, 1821, "The task will of course require delicacy—but that will not be wanting if Moore and Hobhouse survive me—and I may add—yourself—and that you may all three do so" (*BLJ* 8: 216). Even though he trusted all three men to edit his letters and journals, the specific task of writing the biography is left to Moore, since "Byron was shrewd enough to know that he needed an eloquent ally to defend him after he was gone and that Moore's friendship, integrity, and talent made him the best candidate for the job" (Vail 169). Moore, as a society favorite and fellow literary Lion, stood the best chance of writing Byron's biography in a way which would make him appear sympathetic and possibly minimize the damage done to his reputation during the various scandals in which Byron had been involved. Contrarily, Hobhouse was passed over for the primary task, most likely because during their Albanian journey, Hobhouse had insisted on destroying a previous journal and its references to "unorthodox loves" (MacCarthy 538). Byron also assisted Moore in gathering additional sources for the future publication of the memoirs and Byron's biography (MacCarthy 402). This close friendship between the older poet and the younger lord gave Moore first-hand access to intimate information, such as that contained in the *Memoirs*, which enabled Moore to write the official contemporary biography of Byron, as opposed to the standard "Life and Letters" biographies of the early nineteenth century which contained only direct quotations from the individual's works and little or no commentary or personal

information (DeFord 73-74). Although Moore's biography of Byron was also sanitized to avoid libel lawsuits from persons such as Lady Caroline Lamb, Lady Byron and her family, and others (DeFord 80-81), "In the end, the book [Moore] wrote justified him" (DeFord 80).

The conciliatory ending to the dispute between Lord Byron and Thomas Moore is a further example of the erasure of traditional boundaries for the professional author and man of letters. In the quarrel between Samuel Johnson and James Macpherson, the distinction between professional writers and gentlemen becomes blurred by Macpherson's debt to his writing for the political positions he gained and Johnson's insistence that writers must hold to a standard of truth, fairness, and accuracy. The new archetype of the literary critique, begun by the *Edinburgh Review* further exemplifies this insistence on the blending of gentlemanly behavior and thought with professional writing. Firstly, the magazine's insistence on paying contributors a standard sum, regardless of status or experience, treats all contributors equally as professionals. Writers who accepted payment were no longer viewed as literary prostitutes, allowing educated men to contribute without incurring the stigma of a literary hack who published out of financial necessity. Secondly, the magazine's inclination to choose books "for review [which] were often only pretexts for long expository essays on the principles of political economy, epistemology, or aesthetics" (Flynn 44) helped to augment the dignity of professional writers as men of education and scholarly worth rather than writers of stories and poems with little intellectual substance. This latter characteristic helps to explain why Byron and Moore found themselves victims of the *Review*. The *Review's* preference for intellectually stimulating material clashed with the less serious content of Moore's

Epistles, Odes, and Other Poems and Byron's *Hours of Idleness*, both collections containing numerous sentimental, mildly erotic lyrics, examples of a gentlemanly, amateur "fluff genre" of poetry intended to impress members of the social elite rather than the intellectual readership.

Moore's reactions to both the *Edinburgh Review* and Lord Byron's insult in *EBSR* demonstrate his attempt to make himself appear gentlemanly by maneuvering within codes of behavior established to demarcate the aristocracy and the gentility from the common, working class citizens. Moore, in debt after his return from Bermuda, likely saw the need to protect the financial support he received from patronage as well as his tenuous status among English high society. Without the support of the upper classes with whom Moore socialized, he would be unable to publish and therefore lose any additional income from sales of his works. As Doris Langley Moore writes in *Posthumous Dramas*:

Moore's most persistent foibles were snobbery and the kind of defensive pride that is found chiefly in men who lack security. An Irishman in an epoch when the Irish were still an oppressed people, a grocer's son who had magically won a foothold in the world where birth was usually indispensable to acceptance, his position was rendered still more vulnerable by his being poor—dismally poor. (31)

Although Langley Moore is referring specifically to Moore's position in relation to the destruction of Byron's memoirs, this social defensiveness which Moore displayed in this instance is a more developed version of the social self-consciousness Moore demonstrated when he told Lady Donegal that challenging Jeffrey was an "obligation" he was bound to uphold. Without the impediment of a family to support, Moore was free to issue the original challenge to Byron in order to fulfill this obligation and protect his position.³¹ Like Moore, Byron was also severely in debt after his Cambridge exploits;

³¹ An attitude which changed with Moore's marriage during the time Byron was abroad.

however, as a lord, he had no system of patronage to rely on and necessarily focused on the commercial aspects of publishing in order to make his way. Although it was typically considered ungentlemanly for lords to accept money for published works, and Byron refused payment for several of his early publications, social restructuring in the literary world, such as that being done by the *Edinburgh Review*, made it more acceptable for paid authors to move from being considered as literary prostitutes to being thought of as respectable professionals. Early in his career, Byron showed a strong interest in the commercial aspect of the book trade in regard to the second edition of *Hours of Idleness*. Eisler points to Byron's letter of November 11, 1807 to John Ridge, the publisher, in which Byron remarks "When I was in London, I observed the Booksellers objected to the size, & two or three said, the poems should have been printed in the same size, as Ld. Strangford's & Little's poems, in this opinion I coincide, & with your leave the next Edition shall be printed & bound in the same manner, & in the same coloured Boards as Little" (*BLJ* 1: 137). Ironically, Byron looks to Thomas Moore's volume as his design model, but more importantly, Byron's attention to detail indicates a concern for the material production and promotion of his volume. Eisler interprets this concern as "A new professionalism...in Byron's perspective on his work, which now extended to the design and production of the second edition" (140), at least in so far as being aware of the effect certain bindings might have on the perceptions of his intended audience. By taking Lord Strangford and Thomas Moore as his examples, Byron selected authors who appeal to his own social peer group of the aristocracy and gentility; imitating the design of these authors' publications would, Byron may have thought, also give his volume a gentlemanly appearance. MacCarthy and Marchand note further examples of Byron's

awareness of the marketing aspects of the book trade. MacCarthy says that Byron had “always [been] an author with strong views on the appearance of his books in matters of paper, printing and binding, [and] now proposed that his own portrait should be used as a frontispiece” a move which “shows clearly how Byron had already become conscious of the value of his own image in the selling of his work” (63-64). And Marchand refers to Byron’s statement to Francis Hodgson that Murray “wants to have [*Childe Harold’s Pilgrimage*] in quarto, which is a cursed unsaleable size” (Marchand 301-302 and *BLJ* 2: 113). This awareness of the financial and marketing aspects of the book trade is an early indicator of Byron’s later professionalism, since, after the sale of Newstead Abbey, Byron began to accept compensation, even going so far as to haggle with John Murray over his fees for *Don Juan* (*BLJ* 8: 186-187). In writing *EBSR* as a response to the critique, Byron not only takes the opportunity to publish and profit again, but he also demonstrates the ability to publish serious works, based on classical training and an awareness of the poetic art, not just the “fluff” poetry of the amateur erotic lyric for which he had been criticized.

Conclusion

The bulk of this study has been dictated by two underlying questions: Why duel or resort to violent actions? What is the relationship between writing and violent actions? The former question I have attempted to answer in individual sections by examining the social, economical, and biographical issues surrounding each of the participants. Yet the latter question remains to be answered, perhaps because the easily permutable range of relationships between physical and verbal violence is complex and not easily parsed into a definitive answer. The goal of this study is not to attempt such an answer, but to offer

preliminary conclusions which may allow for further examination of these and like incidents. In each of the four quarrels, between Samuel Johnson and James Macpherson, William Gifford and John Wolcot, Thomas Moore and Francis Jeffrey, and Thomas Moore and Lord Byron, the outcomes are seemingly unconnected and too individualized to perceive definitive patterns of behavior. Yet the incidents fall into two groups -- those which end in physical violence and those which do not. In the first group, the episode between Gifford and Wolcot ends in a pummeling in a London bookstore, while the quarrel between Moore and Jeffrey ends in a duel. One is low, street violence, the other is the highly ritualized violence of dueling. Do the writings preceding the incidents have any bearing on their outcomes? The answer, it appears, is yes, because of the nature of insults contained in those writings. In the case of Gifford and Wolcot, both authors attacked each other directly and publicly through a prolonged series of violently abusive writings, focusing on intangible accusations of dishonesty, perversity, and moral corruption. Gifford's *Epistle to Peter Pindar* was also a straightforward challenge to Wolcot, addressing him directly with personal insults. Each successive writing in this series of exchanges of paper bullets, from the postscript to *Lord Auckland's Triumph*, to *Epistle*, to the newspaper advertisements, created a mounting heap of vituperation to the point that verbal violence could no longer satisfy the mounting anger of the participants and tempers spilled into a physical altercation. In contrast, a private exchange of letters, as opposed to a public exchange of insults appears to have aided Thomas Moore and Francis Jeffrey in making an amicable settlement afterwards, since the letters conformed to the detached, calculated ideals of dueling. This unemotional correspondence stalled the buildup of hostilities beforehand, yet did not prevent the duel from occurring. The

cause of violence here, then, cannot be said to be emotional, but rather the result of a feeling of obligation to conform to what was perceived by Moore as the proper modes of behavior to protect his reputation against the charges of immorality and dishonesty leveled at him in the *Edinburgh Review*.

The incidents between Johnson and Macpherson, and Moore and Byron, ended non-violently, endings which appear to be in part due to whether the insult contained in the writing is a dispute of fact or appearance. Like Gifford and Wolcot, Johnson's accusations against Macpherson originally occurred in public print through *A Journey to the Western Islands* and were continued in the newspapers, pamphlets and other publications of the day (Saunders 254-256). Yet the correspondence afterward is largely private, conducted between Johnson and Macpherson with their publisher as an intermediary. Although Boswell says that "Dr. Johnson's answer [to Macpherson] appeared in the newspapers of the day, and has since been frequently re-published..." (*Life* 579), Boswell was the first to bring the full account into the public sphere with his publication of Johnson's biography. The original purpose of dueling, in the case of chivalric and judicial duels, was to settle intangible issues of guilt when no other evidence was available, which resolved the matter by consent of the participants to accept the outcome as divine justice. This theory of settling the issue according to the outcome carried over into the duel of honor since honor cannot be decided based on factual evidence, only perceptions. By utilizing the duel as a method of resolving disputes of honor, the participants and members of the peer groups in which dueling was used acknowledged an unspoken agreement to accept an individual's participation and the outcome of the duel as a substitute for factual evidence. However, the damaging

statements in the incident between Johnson and Macpherson hinged on issues of fact, not morality, and can be easily proved or disproved with the publication of Macpherson's originals of *Ossian*. A violent outcome would still not alleviate the underlying issue of whether Macpherson had actually acquired these originals and translated them, or whether he had created his own poem and passed it off as antique.

The outcome of the dispute between Byron and Moore is likewise easily settled non-violently by tangible proof. Byron had repeated in *EBSR* the allegations given by Jeffrey, yet that issue had long before been addressed by the previous duel; successive critiques of *Epistles* in the same vein had also left Moore basically speechless on the issue. The prominent conflict, therefore, resulted from Byron's version of events which belied Moore's personal statement. After a two-year lapse between Moore's original challenge and Byron's return, Moore's anger was dissipated into a mere expression of distress. Byron's anger at the reviews attacking *Hours of Idleness* had likewise diminished over the course of time, in part because he had been able to vent his frustrations and show himself as a more serious and mature poet in *EBSR*. By attacking several critics and contemporaries in verse, his anger was distributed across a large swath of the literary population and not concentrated on any one individual as Gifford and Wolcot had done in their literary responses. The print response achieved his goal of retaliating against those who had attacked him, as well as demonstrating his poetic capabilities, whereas issuing a challenge might have resulted in further ridicule, as he learned from the public response to the abortive duel between Moore and Jeffrey; or resulted in death, as he learned from his friend, Charles John Cary, 9th Viscount Falkland, who was killed in a duel and whom Byron immortalized in a footnote to *EBSR*

(MacCarthy 85). Moore had accepted Byron's statement that he was unaware of Moore's account of the events; therefore the only issue remaining to be resolved was whether or not Byron had originally received the challenge. Byron's offer to produce the letter was a strategy likely learned from Boswell's account of the Johnson incident, in that tangible evidence was an effective method of settling a dispute without violent means or loss of reputation.

The amicable ending for Byron and Moore and Moore and Jeffrey results from the nature of correspondence and its ability to distance participants emotionally from the original incident even as it deals directly with the insults and accusations involved. The correspondence in these two quarrels indicates a willingness to resolve the dispute and face the consequences, as the offenders in these incidents, Jeffrey and Byron, face up to their mistakes. Jeffrey apologized to Moore and Byron retracted his statements, whereas in the other incidents, Johnson's responded to Macpherson with unwavering insistence on the manuscripts, and Gifford and Wolcot continued to belittle one another without ever attempting to address the issue at hand. The combatants' personality likewise affects the outcome by considering their attitudes toward fighting and whether or not personal animosity is a part of the dispute. J. S. Smart states that "The robust doctor [Johnson] used to say that in controversy a man should try to lessen his antagonist: to treat him with respect would be striking soft in a battle" (152), a statement which explains Johnson's unrelenting and overwhelming criticism of Macpherson. Johnson's objective is not to resolve anything, unless it is resolved in his favor. This strategy is taken to the extreme by Gifford and Wolcot, who never attempt to address the dispute, preferring instead to batter each other mercilessly with dehumanizing insults. Jeffrey and

Moore, however, demonstrate a reluctance to fight, engaging in gentlemanly small talk before the contest, with Moore notably commenting that it is “a morning made for better purposes” (White 60). Likewise, when Moore writes to Byron the second time, he begins by expressing condolences for the death of Byron’s mother, and adds that “if in what I have to say at present there were any thing of hostility or unkindness towards you, I should think it too soon even *now* to disturb you unpleasantly from your retirement. But I trust that you will find that, notwithstanding the injury of which I complain, the spirit in which I address you is neither revengeful nor ungenerous” (Dowden 161). In both incidents, Moore’s actions and personality reflect a genuine concern for his adversary rather than personal animosity. This human, gentlemanly consideration helps to dissolve any underlying animosity and helps to achieve a peaceful resolution. From these incidents, it is possible to infer that the relationship between the written word and the expression of violence is dependent upon the authors’ intentions and regard for their opponents. When the goal is to distribute or resolve anger, it appears that writing has the ability to vent frustration without exacerbating the emotional state of the author or the recipient of the attack. On the other hand, when the writing is focused on one person, aimed at retaliation, writing has the ability to compound the original emotional upheaval to the point that the individuals involved are no longer capable of physical restraint.

Works Cited

- The Anti-Jacobin Magazine and Review*. Ed. John Gifford [John Richards Green]. London: Nov. 1799. (Review of *Nil Admirari*, by Peter Pindar)
- Ashley, Scott. *British Writers, Supplement VIII*. Ed. Jay Parini. Charles Scribner's Sons, 2003. *Literature Resource Center*. Thompson-Gale. Virginia Tech, Newman Lib. December 8, 2006.
- Baldick, Robert. *The Duel: A History of Duelling*. New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1965.
- Bate, W. Jackson. *Samuel Johnson*. Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 1975. Rpt. 1998.
- Bertelsen, Lance. *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 109: Eighteenth-Century British Poets. Second Series*. Ed. John Sitter. The Gale Group, 1991. *Literature Resource Center*. Thompson-Gale. Virginia Tech, Newman Lib. December 8, 2006.
- Boswell, James. *Life of Johnson*. London: Oxford University Press, 1953.
- *The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. Penguin Classics Series. London: Penguin Books, 1984. (combined edition with Johnson's *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*.)
- Byron, George Gordon, Lord. *The Complete Poetical Works*. Ed. Jerome McGann. Vol. 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980.
- *Byron's Complete Works*. Boston: Phillips, Sampson, and Company, 1854. (Review of *Hours of Idleness*)
- *Byron's Letters and Journals*. Ed. Leslie A. Marchand. 12 vols. Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1973-1982.
- Clark, Roy Benjamin. *William Gifford: Tory Satirist, Critic, and Editor*. Columbia University Press, 1930. New York: Russell & Russell, 1967.
- deFord, Miriam Allen. *Thomas Moore*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1967.
- deGategno, Paul J. *James Macpherson*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1989.
- deKeseredy, Walter S. and Martin D. Schwartz. "Masculinities and Interpersonal Violence." Kimmel, Hearn and Connel 353-366.
- Dowden, Wilfred S., ed. *The Letters of Thomas Moore*. 2 vols. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1964.

- Eisler, Benita. *Byron: Child of Passion, Fool of Fame*. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1999.
- Flynn, Philip. *Francis Jeffrey*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1978.
- Gaskill, Howard, editor. "Introduction." *Ossian Revisited*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991. 1-19.
- Gifford, William. "Epistle to Peter Pindar." Kinsley and Boulton, 160-168.
- Graham, Peter W. *Lord Byron*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1998.
- Johnson, Samuel. *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*. Penguin Classics Series. London: Penguin Books, 1984. (combined edition with Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*.)
- Jones, Howard Mumford. *The Harp That Once—:A Chronicle of the Life of Thomas Moore*. Henry Holt & Company, Inc., 1937. New York: Russell & Russell, 1970.
- Kernan, Alvin. *Printing Technology, Letters, & Samuel Johnson*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Kiernan, V.G. *The Duel in European History: Honor and the Reign of Aristocracy*. Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Kimmel, Michael S., Jeff Hearn, and R. W. Connell, eds. *Handbook of Studies on Men & Masculinities*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc., 2005.
- Kinsley, James and James T. Boulton, eds. *English Satiric Poetry: Dryden to Byron*. Columbia, S.C.: University of South Carolina Press, 1970.
- "Literary Fracas." *The Morning Post*. August 19, 1800. rpt. Radcliffe, ed. <<http://198.82.142.160/spenser/CommentRecord.php?action=GET&cmmtid=12392>>, May 21, 2007.
- Low, Jennifer A. *Manhood and the Duel: Masculinity in Early Modern Drama and Culture*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.
- MacCarthy, Fiona. *Byron: Life and Legend*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2002.
- Marchand, Leslie A. *Byron: A Biography*. 3 vols. New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1957.
- Moore, Doris Langly. *The Late Lord Byron: Posthumous Dramas*. Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1961.

- Parks, Ward. *Verbal Dueling in Heroic Narrative: The Homeric and Old English Traditions*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Peltonen, Markku. *The Duel in Early Modern England: Civility, Politeness and Honour*. Cambridge University Press, 2003.
- Pindar, Peter. [John Wolcot]. *The Works of Peter Pindar, Esq.* 5 Vols. London: J. Walker; J. Robinson; Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown; and G. Robinson, Paternoster-Row; and G. Goulding and Co., 1812.
- Radcliffe, David H., ed. *Spencer and the Tradition: English Poetry 1579-1830*. <<http://www.englishpoetry.org>>, May 23, 2007.
- Saunders, Bailey. *The Life and Letters of James Macpherson*. New York: Greenwood Press, Publishers. 1894. Rpt. 1969.
- Smart, J. S. *James Macpherson: An Episode in Literature*. London: David Nutt, Long Acre, 1905.
- Spiereburg, Pieter. "Masculinity, Violence, and Honor: An Introduction." *Men and Violence: Gender, Honor, and Rituals in Modern Europe and America*. Ohio State University Press: 1998.
- Stewart, Frank Henderson. *Honor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994.
- Swain, Jon. "Masculinities in Education." Kimmel, Hearn, and Connel 213-229.
- Taylor, John. *Records of My Life*. Radcliffe, ed. <<http://198.82.142.160/spenser/CommentRecord.php?action=GET&cmmtid=10928>> May 23, 2007.
- Vail, Jeffrey W. *The Literary Relationship of Lord Byron & Thomas Moore*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.
- Vales, Robert L. *Peter Pindar (John Wolcot)*. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973.
- Wain, John. *Samuel Johnson*. New York: Viking Press, 1974.
- White, Terence de Vere. *Tom Moore: The Irish Poet*. London: Hamish Hamilton, 1977.
- Zionkowski, Linda. *Men's Work: Gender, Class, and the Professionalization of Poetry, 1660-1784*. New York: Palgrave, 2001.

Curriculum Vitae

Shannon Raelene Heath
600 Washington St. SE, Apt 4,
Blacksburg, VA 24060
540-552-3687
304-922-8928
srheath@vt.edu

EDUCATION

- 2005-2007 Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University
M.A., English
Certificate in “Preparing the Future Professoriate”
Final GPA: 3.83
- 2000-2005 Concord University Athens, WV
B.A., English with Writing, Literature, and Journalism Emphasis
Minors in Computer Science and Mathematics
Final Overall GPA: 3.58
Final Major GPA: 3.86
Cum laude
- 1996-2000 Mount View High School Welch, WV GPA: 4.0
Co-Valedictorian

PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Teaching Experience

- August 2005 – present
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University Blacksburg, VA
Graduate Teaching Assistant, English
Spring 2007 – Teaching two sections of English 1106 (Freshman
Composition)
Fall 2006 – Teaching two sections of English 1105 (Freshman
Composition)
Spring 2006 – Teaching one section of English 1106 (Freshman
Composition)

Duties included course design, lesson planning, office hours, supervising and grading student work, and coordinating online assignments and communications through the Blackboard software environment. Work was done under the supervision of a current faculty member and in accordance with Virginia Tech’s composition requirements and objectives.

Fall 2004

Concord University

Athens, WV

Student Teaching

Teaching one section of a developmental English course under the supervision of the English Department chair and an English 90 instructor. Student teaching was part of a two-course program within the English education curriculum. The program included English 414 – Special Methods in the Teaching of English Language Arts, and English 415 – Practicum in the Teaching of English Language Arts.

Other Employment

Fall 2006

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Blacksburg, VA

Research Assistant for Dr. Peter Graham

Research for “Byron and Expatriate Nostalgia”

Summer 2006

McDowell County Commission

Welch, WV

Office Assistant

Summer employment consisting of basic office duties.

December 2000 – May 2005

Concord University, Human Resources

Athens, WV

Office Assistant

Entry of Sick and Annual leave into the Banner network

Handling of confidential documents and forms in addition to basic office duties

Summer 2001

Welch News (formerly Welch Daily News)

Welch WV

Summer Assistant

Took over the responsibilities of the front page editor after she was forced to leave for medical reasons

Newspaper layout for society, health, obituary and front pages on the PageMaker computer program

Typing, proof-reading, and layout of newspaper articles and photos

Basic office duties as related to a newspaper environment

Summer 2000

Welch News (formerly Welch Daily News)

Welch, WV

Summer Assistant

Typing, proof-reading, and layout of newspaper articles and photos.

Layout of society and obituary pages.

Basic office duties.

HONORS AND AWARDS

Virginia Tech English Department Delegate to the Graduate Student Association, Fall 2006 – present
Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges, 2004-2005
Concord University Deans List – Fall 2000, Spring 2001, Fall 2001, Fall 2003, Spring 2004, Fall 2004, Spring 2005
Concord University Presidential Scholar, Fall 2000 – Spring 2004 (Scholarship limited to four years.)
Concord University Student Government Senator, Fall 2001-Spring 2002

PAPERS ACCEPTED AND PRESENTED

“To punish me with this and this with me”: *Hamlet*, the duel, and divine justice – Virginia Tech Graduate Student Conference, March 2007

“‘Knock’d on the head for his labours’: Byron and the Politics of Revolution”

Accepted to the 5th International Student Byron Conference, May 2006 and June 2007. (The 2006 conference was cancelled; I had standing acceptance for June 2007, but was unable to attend the conference because of a death in the family.)

Accepted to “Writing Into the Profession,” English Graduate Student Association, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, September 30, 2005. (I was unable to attend due to a severe illness in the family.)

“*Manfred*’s Byronic Hero and the Epic of Self” – 4th International Student Byron Conference, Messolonghi Byron Society, Messolonghi, Greece, May 17-25, 2005

“Los: The Eternal Prophet” – West Virginia University Undergraduate Literary Symposium, February 19, 2005

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

The Byron Society of America

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Lord Byron and Romantic and Victorian poetry
Verse satire
Philhellenism and the Greek Revolution
Honor, dueling, and the class system
The role of language, translation, and culture in education, literature, and the arts

My typical research approach combines close reading with an examination of cultural, historical, and biographical contexts.

Current Projects:

“Paper bullets of the brain’: Satire, Dueling and the Rise of the Gentleman Author”

An alternate reading of the character Astarte in Lord Byron’s *Manfred*