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Laura J. Rosenthal

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## Introduction: Recovering from Recovery

*Laura J. Rosenthal*  
University of Maryland

In 2010, the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies Women's Caucus celebrates its 35th birthday. For thirty-five years, the ASECS Women's Caucus has promoted the study of women, gender, and sexuality by sponsoring panels, opening discussions, and giving out prizes for excellent work in the area. The annual luncheon at ASECS has been a place to do business, but also to connect, catch up, and meet new people engaged in the overlapping projects of feminist studies, gender studies, and the study of women's contribution to eighteenth-century life and cultures. To celebrate this anniversary, the current issue of *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* is devoted to "The Future of Feminist Theory in Eighteenth-Century Studies," a topic that contributors have taken in a variety of directions. The first part of the issue offers shorter, polemical statements about possible directions for the future. Several of the writers respond specifically to the challenge in this issue's call for papers to consider the possibility that feminist theory has a limited future because so many of the barriers have been broken and so much of the work has been done. Joan DeJean assesses the state of feminist work in French studies; Judith P. Zinsser explores feminist issues particular to biography; Melissa Mowry and Alison Conway in different ways think about where theory and historical research need to go in the future; and Ellen Pollak demonstrates the enduring ties between eighteenth-century studies and feminist analysis. The second part of this issue points toward possible new directions through scholarly examples. Toni Bowers shows the truly impressive depth of engagement that feminist studies has brought to the novel, and Jennifer Thorn and JoEllen DeLucia explore, through their own practice, emerging interdisciplinary feminist possibilities that reveal the interconnectedness of gender, race, and history.

By way of introduction, I want to consider briefly here the future of women *writers* in eighteenth-century studies. The inclusion of women writers (or women artists, philosophers, political agents, or historical actors) into eighteenth-century

studies was the foundational issue for feminist studies in our field, and the fact that so few of the essays here focus primarily on this topic suggests how far we have come, although, as DeJean points out, this progress has been uneven across the various disciplines represented at ASECS. In the study of British literature and culture, however, women writers have gone from marginal to indispensable: a Norton or a Longman anthology without sufficient entries by women writers at this point would be more puzzling than offensive, as if the publisher had left out the page numbers. Feminist theory has long addressed a wide range of issues, and its early engagement by eighteenth-century scholars reflects this variety. Certainly, some of the earliest forays into feminist thought in eighteenth-century studies included the critique of male-authored texts as well as the effort to recover women. Yet, arguably, it was the search for women writers, in part with the hope that those women would provide counter-representations to dominant narratives, that turned gender studies into a field and made possible the kind of support and solidarity that one finds in the Women's Caucus, in spite of the highly varied interests of its members. The "recovery project" consolidated feminist thought and practice, gave shape to a certain kind of specialization, and established an enduring foundation for future work. Further, of all the achievements of eighteenth-century feminist theory, the recovery project has probably had the most impact on scholarly and critical practice in the mainstream of eighteenth-century literary studies, with influence on and analogies to other forms of recovery in other disciplines in eighteenth-century studies as a whole.

But while recovery has been, and continues to be, indispensable, it has nevertheless framed women writers in ways that sometimes limit our full understanding of their intellectual, historical, and artistic force. Feminist recovery made demands on its subjects that had not been made on male figures with long-secured anthology sections. The earliest feminist scholars celebrated women writers for the ways their texts often seemed to propose alternative sets of values while exposing the patriarchal structures; later critics replied by exploring the patriarchal complicity of these same writers and/or their failure to extend their objections to gender hierarchies into other forms of injustice. While much work has certainly moved beyond these questions, they nevertheless continue to frame our reception of women writers in ways that do not necessarily account for their full significance. Each figure under consideration becomes a particular example of a "woman writer" rather than as, say, "one of the most important playwrights of the Restoration" or "a key intellectual force in shaping eighteenth-century cosmopolitanism." Is there a way, then, to recover from recovery? Will our attention to women writers at some point transcend the category of "women writers"? Should it? There is no question that eighteenth-century culture understood female authors as "women writers," but this category prompted different questions at the time than it does now. While many of the eighteenth-century questions would have addressed

the author's gendered propriety and decorum (or lack thereof), more and more contemporary scholarship suggests the extent to which women were involved in a very wide range of debates, as well as a variety of commercial, civic, political, social, and aesthetic projects.

Before elaborating on the problem of gender and canon formation, though, I would like to emphasize that while attention to women writers established, consolidated, and institutionalized feminist theory in the field, it remains nevertheless only one project in a larger landscape, which in its most expansive sense includes the study of gender, of women, of men, of sexuality, and of the ways in which those categories intersect with history, race, nation, science, Enlightenment, commerce, class, and so forth. If feminist theory includes all thinking that takes seriously the category of gender as manifested in political structures, artistic objects, everyday life, and various human, non-human, and post-human bodies, then it will remain crucial to our field for the foreseeable future. As Pollak astutely notes in her essay in this volume, feminist theory and eighteenth-century studies simply cannot be understood without each other. We inherit from the eighteenth century our most profound configurations of gender: the two-sex model of the human body that Thomas Laqueur has illuminated; the fundamentally gendered assumptions behind contractarian modernity that Carole Pateman has described; modern domesticity as analyzed by Michael McKeon, Nancy Armstrong, Toni Bowers, Tita Chico, and others; the gendering of visual dynamics in performance, as Kristina Straub has shown; the creation of a new masculinity (Shawn Maurer); the politics of the public sphere; reconfigured kinship and family relations (Ruth Perry); and distinctly modern ways of gendering work, including sex work.<sup>1</sup> While Aphra Behn never wrote about reproductive rights and Susanna Centlivre may have found the conflict over gay marriage perplexing, they both lived during a period that formed the very language for discussing such possibilities: What is an individual and who counts as one? What constitutes a family? Who regulates marriage?

Perhaps because eighteenth-century culture formed our most basic structures of gender, it seems now impossible not to recognize how constructions of masculinity and femininity shaped the development of eighteenth-century writing in ways not necessarily related to the gender of the author. James Thompson, for example, has argued that sharpening distinctions between a public and a private sphere produced two separate genres: the novel, in which sympathetic characters disavow economic motives, and an economic discourse with no room for emotions. These genres, like the two spheres themselves, were born from and continued to reproduce categories of gender. Laura Brown has demonstrated the ways in which misogyny became crucial to the way several satirists express their resistance to colonial expansion; Anne Williams has describe the late-century branching off of a male and female gothic aesthetics.<sup>2</sup> Gender shaped the production of social categories as well as literary genres. Erin Mackie, for example, makes the point in *Market à la Mode* that not only

women but also “all that is symbolically feminine” becomes “bound up with all that seems socially, politically, and ethically dubious about early modern capitalism”: “The nature of woman and fashion are marked by the whimsical caprice, arbitrary change, and addictive involvement that characterize credit. And Credit is a woman on the verge of a nervous breakdown.”<sup>3</sup> Gender profoundly shaped categories of racial difference in the period, as Felicity Nussbaum and Charlotte Sussman have in different ways shown. In Armstrong’s classic study of the eighteenth-century novel, the reorganization of the category of gender becomes crucial to rationalizations of class difference.<sup>4</sup>

Much criticism has further suggested that gender emerges as an increasingly important category of human identity in this period as the hereditary categories of rank overlapped with shifting class divisions. Susan Staves, Pat Gill, Lisa Freeman, Straub, and Jean Marsden have shown the various ways in which gender shaped theater and theater shaped gender.<sup>5</sup> That women’s writing appeared regularly on the commercial stage during this period is only one factor of many in these studies, which look at actresses, actors, visual dynamics, and the gendered language of the stage. Tragedy, as Marsden has shown, highlighted the suffering female body while comedy, as Staves argued in her groundbreaking book, explored the possibility that the seventeenth-century attack on political absolutism opened up a critique of patriarchal absolutism that destabilized the traditional marriage plot. The significance of shifting paradigms of gender to the study of the eighteenth-century novel can hardly be overstated, as Bowers’s essay in this volume demonstrates.

Clearly, then, feminist theory has helped to open lines of inquiry into a range of topics in eighteenth-century studies. Feminist theory has informed not just the study of literary genres but also the study of science, political thought, criticism, portraiture, travel narrative, and philosophy, to name just a few. Future scholars will take feminist studies into many new realms: they will challenge the most fundamental premises of their predecessors and open up topics for consideration that no one thought could be opened. But even though feminist theory might have arguably begun with rudimentary and embarrassingly undertheorized questions about the place of women writers, we need to keep this history in mind as we move into the future. There are, of course, still plenty more women writers who have not been recovered, although this remains only a part of this project. As DeJean argues in this volume, while the works of eighteenth-century women writers need to be available to advanced scholars, they need to be available to students as well—a project with particular urgency for French studies. Even in English departments, many of us continue to be frustrated by texts slipping out of print and the inevitably idiosyncratic access to good paperbacks. I would prefer to teach Eliza Haywood’s *The Rash Resolve to Love in Excess* in my survey course, but am also faced with the choice between a fine Broadview edition and expensive course packs or inconvenient PDFs. *Eighteenth-Century Collections Online* has opened up some classroom options,

but its price tag still limits access for many working and teaching in the field (my own university's library only acquired this database in 2009). Further, if students are reading a well-edited copy of *Roxana* from Oxford University Press and *The Rash Resolve* in strange letters on their computer screens, they inevitably will form differing impressions of the significance of their authors.

But while recovery and the mechanics of access remain urgent issues for consideration, we also need to think about some of the problems generated by the feminist project itself. Feminist scholarship has given us unprecedented access to women writers from the eighteenth century; at the same time, it has framed these writers in particular ways that have inadvertently underserved certain aspects of their work. By reading them through particular feminist lenses and largely in the context of particular feminist issues, we have, in many cases, not yet fully explored their intellectual significance, aesthetic power, cultural importance, political complexity, and historical agency. To illustrate this point, I will offer a brief glimpse into the reception of two key British women writers: Aphra Behn and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Behn may have been the first woman writer in eighteenth-century British studies to be substantially "recovered." Just as Ian Watt mentioned few women besides Jane Austen,<sup>6</sup> so Norman Holland, in his groundbreaking effort to raise another genre of the long eighteenth century to critical respectability, barely mentions Behn in *The First Modern Comedies* (1959), even though her plays would have fit well into his argument. Holland's book provides an interesting example of modern canon formation: he argues that Restoration comedies have been underappreciated and misunderstood, partly because scholars have mistaken "superficial smut-tiness" for immorality.<sup>7</sup> Holland sets out explicitly to revive these plays from scholarly neglect and into academic respectability. He offers, as an excuse for his "unorthodox" method, a frank desire "to stir up interest in Restoration comedy, not just among professional scholars and critics, but among people interested in the comic or in the theater or just in good reading."<sup>8</sup> The "unorthodox" method Holland chooses consists of several departures from tradition: first, he describes the plots of the plays to reach the broadest possible audience; second, "the eleven chapters dealing with the plays are 'readings,' that is, attempts to show first how the various parts of each play . . . all fit together into one unified whole, and second, to show how that whole reveals certain aspects of reality"; and finally, he concentrates on only a few plays when "most books on Restoration comedy treat a great many plays; one, for example, deals with 282."<sup>9</sup> Holland offers close readings of plays by George Etherege, William Wycherley, and William Congreve, making the case for the importance of these writers.

Holland offers little detail about the kind of scholarship he rejects with this new method of close reading, but he might have included George Henry Nettleton's *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century* (1914). Nettleton saw his work as filling a gap in knowledge rather than promoting appreciation: plays from this period, in his view, lack both depth and breadth when com-

pared with their predecessors in the Elizabethan age. But while Elizabethan drama suffers from coarseness and impurity, "not even in its decadence . . . does it touch the depths of Restoration immorality."<sup>10</sup> Nettleton does not offer readings so much as descriptions and taxonomies; nevertheless, he includes Behn in his broad sweep of the period. Holland, by contrast, in spite of his thoughtful open-mindedness before sexual explicitness in the plays of Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve, dismisses Behn as "the rather smutty 'Incomparable Astraea'" in his only mention of the playwright who had more pieces performed in the period than anyone except John Dryden.<sup>11</sup> Nettleton, however, mentions Behn's plays when discussing, for example, the influence of Spanish drama, the importance of romance, and the appearance of Harlequin (he credits her with introducing this figure to the English stage).<sup>12</sup> He categorizes her as "minor" but nevertheless includes a brief sketch of her career. His assessment offers the familiar accusations of plagiarism and scandalousness; at the same time, he credits her plays with a "vivacity of action" and "lively . . . humour."<sup>13</sup> Further, he declares in her defense that upon her "unlucky head . . . have been visited many of the sins which she shared with her contemporaries."<sup>14</sup>

The difference between Nettleton and Holland is suggestive. In 1914, Behn may not have been sufficiently appreciated, but she was not a forgotten writer in need of recovery. Holland introduced a method to the study of drama that resembles what Watt introduced in the study of the novel: a method of close reading (although in Watt's case a highly contextualized one) practiced on texts previously considered to be shallow products of popular culture. Nettleton, however, considered nearly all of Restoration drama to be the shallow produce of popular culture, so including Behn posed no contradiction. Holland, by contrast, was distinguishing between playwrights for the purpose of elevating writing from this period for serious consideration. It seems reasonable to suggest, however, that gender had something to do with Holland's exclusion of Behn from his canon since his single mention of her refers to her sexual explicitness, perhaps ironic in an intellectual project defending Restoration drama in general from this charge. I can not actually prove gender bias here in Holland's subjective evaluation of one genre and one period with few female contributors, but critics and audiences in both the early twenty-first and late seventeenth centuries have certainly shown considerable appreciation for Behn's writing and thus would probably for the most part see her exclusion as something beyond a purely aesthetic decision. Holland's formalism, in spite of its claim to objective evaluation, seems to be limited by gendered conceptions of significance. Nettleton does not say why Behn has been unjustly made the scapegoat for the sins of the period; perhaps, though, he assumed the reason would be obvious. Holland's project to create a canon of major writers from this period whose work rewards close scrutiny and careful reading, then, had less room for Behn than the more traditional theater historian, who could not help but recognize her significance and in doing so recognized the gendered



bias in the reception of her plays. After Holland, Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve remained at the center of the Restoration drama canon—so much so that several critics would later object that the near-exclusive focus on a handful of playwrights from this period has led to distortions in our understanding of Restoration drama in general.

With the rise of feminist criticism in the academy, Behn's fortunes turned around. While earlier criticism like Holland's (arguably) excluded Behn's writing because she was a woman, in the 1970s and 1980s scholars sought to recover it *for the same reason*. Feminist scholars were not sifting through all of Nettleton's "minor" dramatists from the period in the hope of finding an undiscovered jewel; instead, they were particularly interested in Behn on the assumption that previous critics had left out important women and that Behn's work would also be worth reading for historical and sociological reasons. Behn's writing held an inherent interest at this time, ultimately not bound by any sense of its particular polish, sophistication, depth of insight, or appeal. Thus, feminist scholars were not trying to be like Nettleton in presenting a complete picture of Restoration theater history, nor were they trying to be like Holland in selecting authors who could redeem the period. Because researchers with a stake in gender studies revived interest in Behn, it makes sense that much of the early Behn criticism took up problems of gender in her work, her life, and her career. A good example of this convergence was Jacqueline Pearson's *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642–1737* (1988), although interest in Behn had already been generated by biographies written by Maureen Duffy (1977) and Angeline Goreau (1980).<sup>15</sup> Pearson placed gender at the center of her inquiry, looking at the way the period represented women in a variety of texts, the range of ways women participated in theater culture, and plays written by women. While Nettleton organized his work around theater history and Holland focused tightly on a small group of plays with, in his view, the greatest aesthetic and intellectual payoff, Pearson organized her project around the problem of gender itself, both in the plays and in authorship. Considerable work on Behn followed, much of it excellent and provocative. But as Heidi Hutner pointed out in her 1993 collection, *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Politics*, a great deal of the early work on Behn focused on Behn's life at least as much as her art, as if understanding her biography was a "surefire means to understanding her work."<sup>16</sup> Objecting that biography too often replaced interpretation in Behn studies, Hutner describes the essays in her own collection as engaged in a wider range of questions—which indeed they are. The distance between *The Prostituted Muse* and *Rereading Aphra Behn* might be understood not as turning away from gender, but as complicating gender with other considerations, such as race, sexuality, religion, economics, and party politics. Since *Rereading Aphra Behn*, much criticism has expanded in these directions.

Now, in the 35th year of the ASECS Women's Caucus, Behn not only has become at least as canonical, I would argue, as Etherege, Wycherley, and Con-

greve but also has become something of a figure for the problems of canonicity itself, as W. R. Owens and Lizbeth Goodman's volume, *Shakespeare, Aphra Behn, and the Canon* (1996) suggests.<sup>17</sup> As I have discussed elsewhere in greater detail, while an initial wave of feminists recovered Behn and celebrated the challenges that her work posed to the patriarchal structures of her time, the next wave (including many of the essays in Hutner's collection) looked at a broader scope of the political implications of her writing, sometimes with less optimism.<sup>18</sup> Feminist expectations had to be adjusted to seventeenth-century contexts; perceived objections to gender inequality did not necessarily translate into objections to other forms of oppression (such as those imposed by race and class). This new work thus often criticized a previous generation's excessive faith in Behn's progressive agenda. But while there are notable changes from the first wave to the second, there is continuity as well. Most of the essays in Hutner's collection, in spite of the introductory rejection of reliance on biography, engage at some point with Behn's gendered historical situation as a woman in Restoration patriarchal culture and some, such as Catherine Gallagher's "Who Was That Masked Woman? The Prostitute and the Playwright in the Comedies of Aphra Behn," have this issue at the center of their studies. I point this out not to lament that we have failed to overcome biography or even to object to continuing to think about Behn's life, but to note, in the most neutral way I can think of, that we still treat women writers differently.<sup>19</sup> In the substantial body of criticism available on Wycherley, Etherege, and Congreve, there is little comparable consideration of the ways in which each man's gendered, authorial position shaped his plays. Most of the criticism on these figures offers "readings" in Holland's sense: they show how the various parts of the plays fit together and how the whole "reveals certain aspects of reality."<sup>20</sup> Now, the aspects of reality that contemporary critics find these play revealing differs considerably from those discovered by Holland; nevertheless, critics of Wycherley, Etherege, and Congreve have been less inclined to explore the ways in which the situations of the authors and their historical experiences shaped their work. Further, criticism of these indisputably canonical authors spends proportionally less time, I would venture, than in Behn criticism, exploring the party politics and even ideological implications of the plays, although perhaps this is becoming less the case. In both the initial critical discussions of Behn's writing by feminists and in much newer, more broadly engaged work, the kinds of questions on the table still tend to be framed by the recovery project.

Part of the problem—although perhaps I should say, part of the opportunity—for the future of feminist theory has to do with the fact that there were many years of interesting debates, discussions, and readings of Restoration drama that did not include Behn. Behn criticism is marked by her inclusion in the canon through the feminist recovery project, which has shaped the kinds of questions that we ask about her work. (This is even more the case in criticism of *Oroonoko* than in criticism of her plays.) In some ways, this has been an

advantage—perhaps initially political readings of Behn proved less controversial and seemed more urgent than, say, a political reading of Wycherley (although now we are more likely to read Wycherley in political ways as well). Any newly historicized engagement with *The Country Wife*, however, benefits from decades of what Holland simply calls “readings”: that is, extended investigations of how the various parts of the play fit together (or do not), how the language works, and how the characters play against each other. To be sure, some of the older readings that contextualize our current debates about *The Country Wife* might seem way off base and excessively engaged in the moral issues that Holland was trying to point us away from. Nevertheless, many of these readings are filled with insight and appreciation, focusing attention on key issues in the plays in ways that can be tremendously helpful in preparing class discussion or sharpening one’s own critical argument. They have given us many ways to think about how *The Country Wife* works: how Wycherley defines the characters against each other, the complexity of the language, the disturbing implications of the plot. Behn criticism is more likely to focus on the author’s feminism (or lack thereof) and on the relationship between gender politics and other cultural/political configurations; thus, one finds fewer “readings” in the traditional sense. While we are now asking those gender/culture/politics questions about Wycherley after much consideration of more formal aspects of his work, perhaps we are only beginning to understand Behn’s full intellectual importance—her engagement in a wide range of political, social, philosophical, and aesthetic conflicts. Perhaps we are also only beginning to understand the way her plays *work*.

A quick detour to Montagu might elaborate this point. Montagu is perhaps newer to the contemporary eighteenth-century canon, but she has nevertheless fascinated many critics. Unlike Behn, she did not publish (what we now consider) her most important work during her lifetime, and, as a member of the elite, she held an entirely different view of authorship. The volume we now call her *Turkish Embassy Letters*, however, received considerable acclaim upon its posthumous publication and influenced letter-writers for generations. But while interest in Montagu’s work has exploded in the last two decades or so, it sometimes seems, searching through the MLA bibliography, that she really only wrote one letter and one poem. Her letter describing the Turkish baths and her poem responding to Jonathan Swift’s description of a lady’s dressing room have probably attracted as much attention as everything else she has written combined. The reasons for this are not hard to see. “The Reasons that Induced Dr. S to Write a Poem called ‘The Lady’s Dressing Room’” offers an incisive response to a fascinating and disturbing poem by a canonical male figure. The Turkish bath letter has attracted interest for different reasons. Not only is the letter indeed extraordinary, but feminists have become productively interested in the converging or competing claims of gender and other forms of alterity, and thus in texts like this letter (and Behn’s *Oroonoko*) that reveal or refute a

European woman's particular empathy with other forms of oppression. In both the case of Behn and of Montagu, however, because serious interest in these writers had to wait until the feminist recovery project, those first motivated to understand these writers came to them with particular questions to which some pieces of their writing spoke better than others. The Turkish bath letter raises questions about gender and alterity in forceful ways. However, critics often treat this letter in isolation from Montagu's volume of letters, which both of her major biographers agree was carefully selected and perhaps even revised extensively.<sup>21</sup> In other words, it seems highly likely that Montagu herself considered the volume as an artistic object to be appreciated in its entirety. While we have given much thought, then, to the fascinating exigencies of gender and alterity in Montagu's description of her experience in the Turkish bath, we nevertheless may not have fully come to terms with her intellectual stakes and aesthetic strategies in compiling her volume of letters. When we compare the critical reception of Montagu with the reception of Pope and Swift, it becomes clear that we have not yet fully explored Montagu's significance, intellectual force, or artistic contribution.

In the spirit of thinking about the future of feminist theory and, in particular, about the future of thinking about women writers from our period, my point is that there is still work to be done. While there are currently fewer limits on which eighteenth-century authors might be legitimate objects of study and we know much more than we used to know, we still do not fully appreciate the place of women or the contribution of the women we regularly teach and write about. This is not simply a suggestion that we look at the "minor" works of "major" authors, but an observation that since these women were brought into the canon at a particular time and through the lens of particular questions, we still have much to learn beyond those initial inquiries. Feminist theory, of course, does not aim for a moment of completion. We will have made considerable progress, however, when an even fuller scope of the impact, engagements, and intellectual propositions of women writers significantly exceeds the paradigms that allowed us to take them seriously in the first place.

## NOTES

1. See Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass., 1990); Carole Pateman, *The Sexual Contract* (Stanford, 1988); Michael McKeon, *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge* (Baltimore, 2005); Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York, 1987); Toni Bowers, *The Politics of Motherhood: British Writing and Culture, 1680–1760* (New York, 1996); Tita Chico, *Designing Women: The Dressing Room in Eighteenth-Century English Literature and Culture* (Lewisburg, Pa., 2005); Kristina Straub, *Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth-Century Players and Sexual Ideology* (Princeton, 1992); Shawn Maurer, *Proposing Men: Dialectics of Gender and Class in the Eighteenth-Century English Periodical* (Stanford, 1998); and Ruth Perry, *Novel Relations: The Transformation of Kinship in English Literature and Culture, 1748–1818* (New York, 2004). On eighteenth-century sex

work, see Laura J. Rosenthal, *Infamous Commerce: Prostitution in Eighteenth-Century British Literature and Culture* (Ithaca, 2006).

2. See James Thompson, *Models of Value: Eighteenth-Century Political Economy and the Novel* (Durham, 1996); Laura Brown, *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century English Literature* (Ithaca, 1993); and Anne Williams, *Art of Darkness: A Poetics of Gothic* (Chicago, 1995).

3. Erin Mackie, *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in The Tatler and The Spectator* (Baltimore, 1997), 40, 113.

4. Felicity Nussbaum, *Torrid Zones: Maternity, Sexuality, and Empire in Eighteenth-Century English Narratives* (Baltimore, 1995); Charlotte Sussman, *Consuming Anxieties: Consumer Protest, Gender, and British Slavery, 1713–1833* (Stanford, 2000).

5. Susan Staves, *Players' Scepters: Fictions of Authority in the Restoration* (Lincoln, 1979); Pat Gill, *Interpreting Ladies: Women, Wit, and Morality in the Restoration Comedy of Manners* (Athens, Ga., 1994); Lisa A. Freeman, *Character's Theater: Genre and Identity on the Eighteenth-Century English Stage* (Philadelphia, 2002); Straub; and Jean Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660–1720* (Ithaca, 2006).

6. See Ian P. Watt, *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding* (Berkeley, 1957).

7. Norman Holland, *The First Modern Comedies: The Significance of Etherege, Wycherley, and Congreve* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959), 4.

8. Holland, 7.

9. Holland, 7.

10. George Henry Nettleton, *English Drama of the Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1642–1780)* (New York, 1914), 6–7.

11. Holland, 131.

12. Nettleton, 46, 343.

13. Nettleton, 115.

14. Nettleton, 114.

15. Jacqueline Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642–1737* (New York, 1988); Angeline Goreau, *Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn* (New York, 1980); and Maureen Duffy, *The Passionate Shepherdess: The Life of Aphra Behn 1640–89* (London, 1977).

16. Heidi Hutner, ed., *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism* (Charlottesville, Va., 1993), 3.

17. W. R. Owens and Lizbeth Goodman, *Shakespeare, Aphra Behn, and the Canon* (New York, 1996).

18. Rosenthal, "Oroonoko: Reception, Ideology, and Narrative Strategy," *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, ed. Janet Todd and Derek Hughes (Cambridge, 2004), 151–65.

19. Indeed, I think these issues actually are crucial and I have written about them myself.

20. Holland, 7.

21. The two main biographers of Montagu are Robert Halsband, *The Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (Oxford, 1956); and Isobel Grundy, *Lady Mary Wortley Montagu* (Oxford, 1999).