THE GENDER OF TIME IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
University of North Texas in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

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Eighteenth-century writers produced progressive narrative by rendering abstract seventeenth-century scientific theories of motion, then conflating those theories with literary constructions of gendered time that originate in the Renaissance. The mechanics of progressive narrative operate in the oppositional relationships that writers create when they assign gender to static and dynamic narrative: the former assumes feminine characteristics, the latter, masculine. The product of their union is progress, conceived as movement along a horizontal plot line in which the force of desire generates and regenerates Newtonian impulse, gendered as masculine, in a forward trajectory through feminine-gendered sites of resistance.

In *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Daniel Defoe becomes the first writer to conflate gendered time with Newtonian mechanics in order to sustain narrative through the figure of the narrative transvestite, a bi-gendered individual whose uses of time regulate progress toward productive ends by reconciling contradictions. Defoe uses the static narrative mode of romance fiction to establish chronotopes of narrative resistance, a tactic that both Charlotte Lennox and Tobias Smollett use to sustain their narratives.

Lennox and Smollett demonstrate in their works the adaptability of gendered time to differing ideological purposes. Lennox uses feminine narrative strategies to buy time for her heroine by stalling dynamic narrative processes in *The Female Quixote* (1752). Her
work portrays the connections between female character and feminine narrative while simultaneously reversing the power relations within the gendered regime of progressive narrative. Smollett further demonstrates the flexibility of gendered time when he genders England and Scotland in order to “marry” them in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). Smollett’s epistolary format focalizes and refocalizes his narrative through several narrative transvestites as he attempts to reconcile the contradictions that his feminization of Scotland presents, particularly as he attempts to promote Scotland’s economic advancement. All three writers demonstrate the flexibility of gendered time and its uses in constructing a sustainable narrative.
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INTRODUCTION

THE GENDER OF TIME IN THE EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY ENGLISH NOVEL

This study takes a structuralist approach to the development of the novel, arguing that eighteenth-century writers build progressive narrative by rendering abstract, then conflating, literary theories of gendered time that originate in the Renaissance with seventeenth-century scientific theories of motion. I argue that writers from the Renaissance through the eighteenth century generate and regulate progress-as-product in their narratives through gendered constructions of time that corresponded to the generation and regulation of economic, political, and social progress brought about by developing capitalism.

The mechanics of progressive narrative operate in the oppositional relationships that writers create when they assign gender to static and dynamic narrative: the former takes on feminine characteristics, the latter, masculine. The product of the union between these two narrative modes is progress, conceived as movement along a horizontal plot line in which the force of desire generates and regenerates masculine-gendered impulse in a forward trajectory through feminine-gendered sites of resistance. I demonstrate that prominent writers of the Renaissance such as Francis Petrarch and Baldesar Castiglione assign gender to narrative when they associate characters and situations in their writings through metaphor to gendered conceptions of social and economic processes, and I demonstrate that these metaphors became a tradition that eighteenth-century writers
developed into the novel. Centrally, I explore the ideology that each of the novelists in this study—Daniel Defoe, Charlotte Lennox, and Tobias Smollett—promotes through gendered time and to what purpose.

My argument throughout this study is that eighteenth-century writers established and adapted a methodology that artificially reproduces a sustainable narrative form modeled on the natural reproductive processes of life. My approach differs from Ian Watt's classic study, in which Watt realizes that the "issue which the novel raises more sharply than any other literary form" is "the problem of the correspondence between the literary work and the reality which it imitates." Certainly, Watt's thesis that "formal realism" separates the novel from other genres is difficult to dispute; his theory provides some of the groundwork for structural studies such as mine. But Watt does not attempt to demonstrate how the various elements of formal realism operate together to produce a sustainable, realistic narrative. Further, his assertion that "the novel's formal realism . . . involved a many-sided break with current literary tradition" is not entirely accurate (33). In this study, I trace the manifestations and metaphors of time and gender in the novel back to their origins in epideictic poetry to their transmutations during the Protestant Reformation to their applications in the scientific community. Further, I argue that plot in the novel, particularly as it relates to static time, owes much to the romance tradition that it consciously tries to repudiate.

My study also differs from the other major study of the novel's origins, that of Michael McKeon's, which attempts to reconceive Watt's argument as a "dialectical theory of genre." His explanation of the novel as a "simple abstraction" that "encloses a complex
historical process" answers some of the omissions or inaccuracies in Watt's study, and in
this very general way, it comes close to my own thesis. However, my concern here is
structural, his philosophical and ideological. His theory takes a different turn when he
argues that “the novel comes into existence in order to mediate” a “change in attitudes”
about “how truth and virtue are most authentically signified” (20-21). Certainly these
were concerns of the early eighteenth-century English; but to suggest, as McKeon does,
that the only reason that the novel exists is to perform this mediation is to ignore the
development and evolution, both social and literary, of certain conventions that had been
present in narrative in one form or another since the early Renaissance, without which the
development of the novel at least would have occurred very differently. Nonetheless,
McKeon's observations about the contributions of romance fiction and about the struggle
between what he calls “progressive ideology” and “conservative ideology” are useful, and,
I think, correct.

But neither of these studies is concerned, as mine is, with establishing a structural
theory of the mechanisms by which novelists generate and regenerate narrative over time.
My theory joins many others that attempt to explain narrative progression in terms of
some kind of differentiation or dichotomy. For instance, Mieke Bal's description of a
narrative cycle is based on either the “improvement” or the “disintegration” of a situation
(22-23). Gérard Genette's idea of narrative progress occurs through the establishment of
“equilibrium,” the instigation of “disequilibrium,” and the re-establishment of equilibrium.
These oppositions appear to arise from conceptions of narrative progress over time, as my
theory does, oppositions which Frank Kermode posits as the linear relationship between
“tick” and “tock.” Claude Lévi-Strauss proposes an abstract, oppositional structure at work in all cultures, such as life/death, which Wallace Martin describes as part of a series of “deep structures that can be actualized, as a temporal succession, in various ways.”\(^3\)

My study points to the deep structure embedded in progressive Western narratives that operates from the differentiation and opposition of gendered representations. Studies in which issues of gender arise can become essentialistic if scholars are not careful to acknowledge variations of what constitutes “masculine” and “feminine,” or if the way in which scholars use these terms goes unexplained. Whenever my use of these terms becomes essentialist, that essentialism necessarily reflects the manner in which gender was being constructed during the period to which I refer. Nonetheless, I recognize variations on masculine and feminine traits when I argue that the writers in my study regulate narrative movement through the figure of a narrative transvestite, a male or female character who adopts characteristics that his or her culture had assigned to the opposite sex. Therefore my use of the term “narrative transvestite” differs from that of Madeleine Kahn’s: she refers to male writers who narrate through female characters.\(^4\) In my use of the term, narrative transvestites “try on” characteristics of the opposite sex to varying degrees, which enables them either to take action or to remain passive according to the demands of the situation, thereby regulating the progress of the narrative. Through the narrative transvestite, the writer controls pace and controls the reader’s desire to continue reading.

Further, I rely on historical accounts that trace the development of gender from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, particularly as those accounts explain the
as for time, female subjectivity would seem to provide a specific measure that essentially retains *repetition* and *eternity* from among the multiple modalities of time known through the history of civilizations. On the one hand, there are cycles, gestation, the eternal recurrence of a biological rhythm which conforms to that of nature and imposes a temporality whose stereotyping may shock . . . on the other hand, and perhaps as a consequence, there is the massive presence of a monumental temporality, without cleavage or escape, which has so little to do with linear time (which passes) that the very word ‘temporality’ hardly fits. 

Kristeva tries to avoid dichotomizing these two kinds of time against chronological time by not assessing as masculine “a certain conception of time . . . as project, teleology, linear and prospective unfolding: time as departure, progression, and arrival” (192). She also refuses to exclude from cyclical and monumental time what she calls “masculine values.” Nonetheless, she associates linear time with logic and with the processes of language: “noun + verb; topic-comment; beginning-ending.” If Kristeva takes pains to avoid the essentialist approach, early scientists such as Francis Bacon did not. In his 1602 tract *The Masculine Birth of Time*, and throughout many of his other influential works, Bacon encourages men to be projecting, intrusive masters of an explicitly femininized nature. 

Indeed, the sexual differentiation upon which Bacon’s theories seem to depend find their contemporary counterpart in the movement of cinematic narrative, which, like that of the novel, progresses along a string of oppositions that depend upon sexual
differentiation as a structuring device. The operations of gendered time that I argue for in novelistic narrative function similarly to cinematic "cuts" and "negations" that give viewers what Stephen Heath describes as "the sense of the image in flow." When I describe the juxtaposing of masculine dynamics and feminine stasis, I rely on Kaja Silverman's explanation that in cinema, "each image is defined through its differences from those that surround it syntagmatically and those it paradigmatically implies," which Heath defines as "this but not that." Heath's definition suggests the extent to which the structure of cinematic narrative--and, I argue, novelistic narrative--depends upon the blend of strict oppositions that may seem essentialist (and probably are), but nonetheless serves as a real structuring device for all that.

More than merely a structuring device, sexual differentiation and its close relative, gender differentiation, provide what appears as one of the most dominating paradigms in Western culture. Laura Mulvey argues that narrative cinema is structured around "man as bearer of the look," a form of scopophilia that demonstrates the extent of Bacon's influence: the scientist whom Bacon describes in his works makes active observations of nature that "penetrate" into "her" deepest secrets. Likewise, woman as "image" in film attracts the male gaze; she is the contemporary equivalent to Petrarch's Laura whose passivity corresponds to static elements in narrative, particularly those found in descriptive passages in which no action occurs. She is landscape, raw nature: correspondingly, landscape and the passages that describe it--indeed, all descriptive passages--in novelistic narrative are gendered feminine and rendered static.
The representation of woman or of that which is gendered feminine has consequences for all forms of narrative movement, as Lennox demonstrates in *The Female Quixote*. Sexual differentiation in narrative theory relies on psychoanalytic theory, which characterizes the female as lacking or castrated: for viewers and readers, then, according to Mulvey, woman as lack “always threatens to evoke the anxiety it originally signified” (21). One way of neutralizing this threat of castration has Baconian overtones: the narrative can stage a “re-enactment of the original trauma (investigating the woman, demystifying her mystery), counterbalanced by the devaluation, punishment or saving of the guilty object.” Mulvey sees this method as “sadistic”; however, it “fits in well with narrative,” for “sadism demands a story, depends on making something happen, forcing a change in another person . . . all occurring within a linear time with a beginning and an end.” This helps to explain the ending of Lennox’s novel; she effectively casts the viewer/reader as scientist, following Bacon’s imperative to subdue nature—or the heroine—to the point of enslaving her.

The other method of neutralization, one that we see in Lennox’s novel *The Female Quixote* (1752), has the potential to bring the narrative to a halt and to disrupt the assumptions upon which the system of differentiation is constructed. Mulvey explains that this method involves the “substitution of a fetish object or turning the represented figure into a fetish so that it becomes reassuring rather than dangerous” (22). Fetishistic scopophilia “can exist outside linear time as the erotic instinct is focused on the look alone.” Once outside linear time, the narrative becomes stranded in a no-man’s-land of stasis, a territory gendered feminine both by its associations with the Lacanian imaginary,
where the word of the fathers cannot reach, and by an inversion of power relations within static narrative. Silverman explains that this inversion reveals that

the power relations which are inscribed into classic cinema through its scopic regime are by no means as stable as is the regime itself. In other words, the identification of the female subject with specularity and the male subject with vision does not necessarily assure the latter a dominant position. The construction of woman-as-fetish carries with it certain dangers for male subjectivity. Not only does that construction facilitate the detachment of the female image from narrative control, but it can challenge the very assumption upon which the existing symbolic order depends--the assumption, that is, that woman is castrated or lacking. (229)

Lennox presumes this inversion of power relations from the outset in her novel through her heroine, Arabella. Since Arabella believes that the desire for women motivates the actions of men, she sees herself as the dominant force in all her relations with men, who can only rearrange their narrative impulses to suit her control of resistance.

I organize this study chronologically so that the development of gendered time in narrative unfolds logically, making influences easier to understand. Chapter 1 provides historical background about the ways in which time was gendered during the Renaissance by Petrarch and Castiglione; it explains the manner in which William Tyndale’s translation of the Bible into English affected constructions of desire; and it traces the connections by which the gendering of time escaped the domain of the court to influence the attitudes of the general public. Once in the public arena, writers such as Defoe, who were familiar
with scientific advances, conflated gendered time and Newtonian theory to construct the mechanical operations of sustainable narrative. Chapter 1 also demonstrates the ways in which the gendering of time came nearly full circle from its beginnings as a poetic convention to its uses in prose narrative from the romance to the novel, and traces its route through political ideology, scientific philosophy, religious doctrine, and social construction.

The following three chapters illustrate the principle of gendered time in action. Chapter 2 explores the ways in which Defoe conflates gendered representations of time and Newton’s principles of motion to form a mechanical model of narrative in Robinson Crusoe (1719). Defoe’s familiarity with Newton’s theories is crucial to his creation of sustainable narrative, to his ideology of progress, and to this study as well, since I argue that Defoe provides other writers with a model of prolonged narrative that they then adapted to fit their own agendas. Chapter 3 investigates the ways in which feminine narrative sabotages this model by stalling dynamic narrative processes, as Charlotte Lennox proves in The Female Quixote (1752). Her work most accurately portrays the connections between female character and feminine narrative while simultaneously reversing the power relations within the gendered regime of progressive narrative, a trait that Silverman observes in the fetishistic practices of classical cinema. Chapter 4 explores the flexibility of gendered time when Tobias Smollett genders England and Scotland in order to “marry” them in The Expedition of Humphry Clinker (1771). Smollett’s status as an economic progressive and as a Scotsman places him in a unique position among the other authors in this study, particularly when we consider his feminization of Scotland and
his ambitions for his native country. The novelists that I have selected for this study, then, span fifty-two years of the eighteenth century as well as a variety of authorial perspectives on a spectrum from dominant nationalist to subversive to a blend of the two.

In Chapter 1, I provide an overview of the theory and history of gendered time at work in the novels of Defoe, Lennox, and Smollett. I introduce one of the earliest models of a linear narrative sustained by its contact with stasis in the epideictic poetry of Petrarch, whose Platonic narrative of ideal love is motivated by a one-way flow of desire inspired by the male lover’s vision of an external object of desire: Laura. The movement of Petrarch’s lyric narrative depends upon the stationary position of the female image whose passive resistance to the Petrarchan lover’s advances keeps alive his desire and sustains the narrative of Petrarch’s sonnet cycle. Laura’s elevation above desire situates her not as a real person, but as a representation, an image of the courtier’s femininity, that part of himself which he loses when he projects a passive image at court. This division of self, then, is at the bottom of the poet/courtier’s desire: the complete self that his union with Laura represents is his goal, one that he cannot reach in this life, but one which holds out the possibility of a reunion in the afterlife.

For the courtiers of the Italian Renaissance, the active pursuit of desire in any form was being curtailed by the realities of the early modern state, whose hierarchal structure demanded the subjugation to the state of courtiers who formerly had enjoyed independent power. Castiglione uses Petrarchan models of deferred desire to demonstrate in more concrete terms than poetry allows the manner in which courtiers can safely pursue their desire through a process of self-improvement. The courtier’s ability to “produce” self-
improvement marks him as a progressive individual: hence, Castiglione becomes one of the earliest writers to promote progress-as-product. This ideology evolved through the Protestant Reformation into a religious and economic doctrine with a multitude of practical applications, including the extended fictional representations of progressive narrative in what would become the novel. Castiglione’s model allows courtiers to defer their desire for political power, which, since the medieval period, had been metaphorically linked to their desire for women, by displacing that desire into a Platonic ideal of the prince. In effect, the image of the ideal prince became a conduit through which courtiers could channel their desire toward a worthier goal—that of worshipping God—in much the same way that the Petrarchan lover channeled his desire through Laura toward the source of her beauty. The gendering of time, then, begins in the Italian Renaissance: ultimately, whether the courtier desires a woman, an image, or God, his real desire is for the stasis of eternity; and this desire motivates all his actions in linear time.

Castiglione seems to have recognized the extent to which the courtier’s psyche was divided along lines of gendered differentiation, and he took advantage of this division to make his most significant contribution to the idea of individual progress by adding to Petrarch’s model the image of the courtier as a narrative transvestite. That “certain mean” which Castiglione advises the courtier to achieve in his behavior advances the courtier’s personal progress by allowing him to regulate his behavior according to the demands of the situation rather than according to his own unregulated desires. In this way, Castiglione puts the courtier’s divided psyche to use by encouraging the courtier to allow his feminine projection of self to regulate the impulsiveness of his masculine desires. Thus Castiglione
creates an individual capable of adopting either masculine or feminine characteristics to make himself—and, occasionally, herself—useful in every situation.

Before Italian models of progress could evolve into a form that could sustain prolonged narratives, however, the positioning of the object of desire as an inspirational force had to shift. The first indication of this shift occurs in England, when Tyndale translated the Vulgate version of the Bible into English (1525). Tyndale urges readers of biblical text to "suck out the pith of Scripture"; in doing so, he extends to readers the possibility of empowering themselves through their own constructions of biblical meaning, a possibility that the Italian, Catholic version of desire attempted to deny. Thus the Italian literary model of the object of desire as an external force that draws readers magnetically toward that object as toward a transcendental goal is superceded by the English, Protestant model of desire as a force internalized by the reader's consumption of biblical text.

Tyndale's insistence on reading the Bible sequentially, the Calvinists' gendering of idleness and productivity, and the Protestant conception of life as a planned, unified system together construct a philosophical model that proposes narrative time itself as a planned, unified system. The idea that there is a "proper" way of proceeding through a text corresponds to the advent of clock time in the seventeenth century that made possible an increasingly accurate measurement of chronological time. Particularly, the Protestant faithful could measure their chronological progress toward eternity and so plan for their own salvation. In the process, they came to see any form of idleness or waste as a sin that
gave birth to a variety of other evils. In an adaptation of the Italian method of gendering stasis as feminine and dynamics as masculine, the English associated idleness with feminized stasis and productivity with masculinized dynamics. The gendering of idleness and productivity was enhanced by the separation of men and women in the labor market: men began to work outside the home, women inside--or better still, not at all, since having a wife who did not work was a mark of social status for men. The Protestant vision of works as proof of salvation prompted the planning and cataloging of these works into a "whole" system through which they made "projections" into the future. Not surprisingly, this period marks a resurgence in the popularity of Castiglione's writings as a model upon which to plan self-improvement.

Protestant models of projection and progress correspond with Bacon's philosophy of scientific endeavor. Bacon's unpublished tract *The Masculine Birth of Time* (1602?) exemplifies the Protestant insistence on unified systems and the gendering of the scientific enterprise in a way that would have consequences for progressive narrative. Bacon's heirarchical relationship between feminine-gendered nature and masculine-gendered scientist established a paradigm for advancement in scientific knowledge. His argument that "genuine truth" is "uniform and self-reproducing" reflects Protestant doctrine and projects an ideal of self-sustenance (71). However, Bacon seems to recognize the need for that "certain mean" in the scientist that Castiglione promotes in the courtier: he advises his masculine scientist to adopt feminine traits in order to become a receptacle for the ingestion of truth. Nature, too, is regendered masculine, and in these transferences of
gender, Bacon acknowledges the need for the scientist to reconcile contradictions in the same manner that the narrative transvestite must in the novel.

However influential Bacon's philosophies were, the extended narrative of the novel would not be possible without Newton's theories of motion as promulgated in the *Principia* (1686). Newton's mechanical laws codify for the first time the physical applications of force, propulsion, friction, and rotation that novelists would render abstract and conflate with gendered time. His description of force applies equally to that of desire: "Force consists in the action only, and remains no longer in the body when the action is over." Rupert A. Hall observes that "for Newton inertia is a property of mass" and Newton is the first to recognize that "a body's mass has separate and distinct aspects. Mass is a measure of the body's resistance to being accelerated or undergoing a change in its state of motion or of rest." Writers correspond the idea of inertia with that of stasis, a conception of time that already carried with it gendered characteristics.

The question of what nature could do for "man" arose in the debate between "natural nature" and "artificially produced nature," an issue that novelists address—whether consciously or not—when they attempt to artificially duplicate the motions of nature. H. Floris Cohen points out that scientific discoveries dating from Bacon onward "made sense only in the context of an "artificially produced nature," as distinguished from "natural nature." G. S. Rousseau observes that "Newton's ideas were rapidly applied to domains other than the physical universe; moreover, authors unfamiliar with Newton's actual texts were often unaware of the debt they owed to these applicators." Newton influenced the literary writer in three ways, according to Rousseau: "insofar as science books were
shaping his general world view; in his impulse to collect these science books; and in the myriad ways in which he was invoking science in his own writing” (227). The first of these, Rousseau acknowledges, is “subtle and elusive, rarely perceived by writers on a conscious level, and even when perceived it is not always clear what difference this angle of vision resulting in a gestalt makes to a writer’s final text.” The last, the invocation of science in writing, is even “more uncertain,” but Rousseau cites the use of scientific “metaphors and tropes” as evidence that literary writers were picking up these terms and ideas and incorporating them into their own works.

Defoe mechanizes gendered narrative time in *Robinson Crusoe* through a combination of grammatical and narrative chronotopes that fix, reverse, and advance the narrative as needed to maintain continuity and the reader’s desire. At certain points in the novel, Defoe fixes a date, such as Crusoe’s birth in 1632, or his departure from his parents, or his arrival on the island. These dates operate as points of resistance, a Newtonian conception of static time from which Defoe reverses the narrative in a backing-up motion that he signifies by the use of past perfect tense. Defoe then picks up the narrative in future perfect tense to “tease” readers, piquing their desire to discover what happened in between. His characters also operate as sites of feminine resistance and masculine impulse. Crusoe’s father provides the initial example of resistance as he tries to persuade Crusoe to remain at home and live a life of satisfied desire; he is the novel’s first narrative transvestite, a male character adopting the feminine characteristic of inertia. Crusoe’s impulsive drive to go to sea conflicts with his father’s inertia and provides the friction that
the novel requires to stimulate narrative and which Defoe replicates in various ways to restimulate narrative throughout the novel.

In Brazil and on the island, Defoe develops Crusoe as the novel's narrative transvestite, bi-gendering him so that in his solitude, Crusoe can still generate narrative. Defoe bi-genders Crusoe by engaging him in activities gendered masculine or feminine by virtue of their classification as “inside” or “outside” labor, and he demonstrates in Crusoe certain psychological qualities that analysts have identified with both masculine and feminine tendencies. In this way, Defoe can allow Crusoe’s masculine impulse to regulate feminine stasis, and vice versa; Defoe further suggests that the survival of any individual depends upon his (or her) ability as an individual to generate and to regulate desire. Late in the novel, Defoe demonstrates that productivity is the result of confined desires—that the plan moves, not the planner; this model resembles the relationship of novel to novelist in which the plot moves, not the plotter. In fact, Defoe makes a number of references throughout the novel to narrative construction, alluding several times to the necessity of an audience to complete the writer’s purpose.

Defoe’s narrative chronotope develops through his use of romance conventions still popular in the eighteenth century. These conventions—chance, simultaneity, adventure-time—constitute a static narrative mode in which the “hero” makes no progress because he is the victim of circumstances, a man with no plan. Defoe does not use a woman as the source of Crusoe’s desire; rather, Crusoe’s desire is aimless, without motivation, but it generates the same results: nonproductivity. Defoe’s method of confining Crusoe’s desires is to confine Crusoe to the island, where his progress and that of the narrative
provide the necessary opposition to his stasis as he is forced to become productive or perish. Crusoe's initial tendencies to keep time in a linear journal gradually give way to his recognition of cyclical time as the source of productivity and of God, not man, as the eternal source of deliverance.

The romance narrative is arguably the literary form most influential to the construction of the novel, and of the three authors in this study, none recognizes this influence more obviously than Charlotte Lennox does. Until recently, critics assumed that her novel *The Female Quixote* (1752) is a satire of romance fiction and the excessive conventions of that form; and on its surface, it is. Lennox's double-voiced discourse in this novel, however, makes it easy to misread the heteroglossia lurking under the surface that motivates the novel's narrative dynamics. Lennox carries out her double voicing through equivocation—literally providing an "equal voice" to her satire on romance and to her subversion of that satire. Lennox ultimately proves that the novel form does not depend solely upon linear narrative, that a cyclical format is capable of sustaining narrative—and indeed, provided the basis for narrative sustenance.

In Arabella, Lennox creates the novel's narrative transvestite, a female character whose upbringing inculcates her into a masculine sensibility that requires her to reconcile oppositions between form and desire. Lennox recognizes that female desire can motivate plot, and in this case, Arabella's desire to be desirable and to be a romance heroine involve her in adventures of her own making. Female agency and the feminine narrative mode dominate this novel: Lennox suggests at every turn that women can use time to their advantage by prolonging courtship, by developing comraderie among women, and by
regarding history as a series of subjective male stories as easily reconstructed as any
fictional narrative.

Arabella's ability to recast into a romance context every "realistic" situation or
comment bespeaks Lennox's sub-version of novelistic narrative, a desire to write in a
voice that the critics of her day no longer approved. Lennox symbolizes the loss of her
female literary inheritance when the narrator informs us that the female-authored romances
that motivate Arabella's behavior were left in her father's library by her mother before her
mother's death. The slow advances that Arabella's fiancé Glanville makes following each
romantic episode demonstrates Lennox's ability to reconcile the contradiction implicit in
containing a linear narrative within a cyclical plot.

Smollett, too, demonstrates the ability to reconcile contradictions in *The Expedition of
Humphry Clinker* (1771). The epistolary format regulates the pace of the novel by
containing linear narrative within letters that in and of themselves represent static
segments of historical time. Smollett uses these letters to focalize and refocalize readers
as they move from one letter to the other, instituting a process of interpellation or
identification with each correspondent that reinforces readers' voyeuristic desire. Smollett
controls narrative pace in several ways: by clustering several letters together on one date,
by juxtaposing letters out of sequence, and by juxtaposing those that refocalize the same
events. Smollett's novel appears to be a linear account of events on a journey; in fact, it is
a cyclical account in which the journey's pretended linearity is more and more dominated
by romance narrative, as Lydia's situation demonstrates. The most powerful regulator of
progress in this journey as well as in the novel is the narrative transvestite, and Smollett
uses more than one. Indeed, one example of the difference between my conception of the narrative transvestite and that of Kahn’s is found in the relationship between Smollett’s voice and that of Lydia. Smollett is not a narrative transvestite in Kahn’s sense of the term here; he seems uncomfortable being “in” her voice, as indicated by the distance between his voice and Lydia’s.

The ability to reconcile contradictions for the good of progress is the trademark of the narrative transvestite, and in Smollett’s novel, not only do Matt Bramble and Jery act as transvestites, but so do Tabby and Lismahago. Matt, like Crusoe’s father, is handicapped by the gout and therefore moves with difficulty; yet he is also the instigator or planner of this journey. Once out of England, his energy seems restored, and he becomes a “projector” who “penetrates” into Scotland’s interior. Jery, on the other hand, suffers from an unregulated dynamism that, like Crusoe before his stranding, tends to retard his development and render him static. Tabby represents England’s colonial interests abroad and its domestic economy at home; she is a masculinized figure who plots, as Smollett indicates in the “snares” that she lays for men and in the instructions that she sends home in her letters. Lismahago represents Scotland itself, and Smollett’s feminization of this figure indicates the extent to which Scotland itself is feminized. The union of Tabby and Lismahago represents not the political union between England and Scotland, which had already taken place in 1707, but the economic union that Smollett hoped would enable Scotland to become productive.

The sharpest contradiction that Smollett must reconcile in this novel is between his desire to see Scotland developed economically and his desire to see Scotland as an
independent power. In order to attract English investment, he portrays Scotland as a feminized object of desire, a metaphor inconsistent with the image of power. He attempts to make up for this by flattering Scotland, extolling the virtues of his country but in such a manner that, again, he renders Scotland as an object of desire. Ultimately, he cannot have it both ways.

From the three novels in this study, I will demonstrate the differentiation and opposition of gender as the basis for a deep structure of narrative in which the progress of the plot depends upon the regulation of dynamics by stasis and of stasis by dynamics. From the Renaissance constructions of gendered time and deferred desire to the relocation of desire in the Protestant Reformation, desire is the metaphorical fuel of narrative, the relocation of which allowed eighteenth-century writers to sustain their narratives. Bacon’s explicitly gendered representations and Newton’s theories of motion allowed these writers to mechanize progress and regulate it to useful purposes. Defoe’s conflation of gendered time and mechanical models of friction create the first sustainable narrative; Lennox subverts this mechanical order to demonstrate that female desire and feminine narrative can operate the plot of a novel, and Smollett demonstrates the universal applications of gendered time when he genders nations in his attempt to reconcile the contradictions between a progressive England and an resisting Scotland. These three novelists show, through various narrative techniques and through different perspectives, that the gender of time remained a steady influence in the structure of sustainable narrative in the eighteenth-century English novel.
Notes


CHAPTER 1

THE GENDER OF TIME

Notions of personal progress that emerged during the Renaissance and the metaphorical constructions upon which writers concurrently built progressive narrative serve as antecedents in the evolution of gendered narrative time in the novel. Political, economic, social, and especially, scientific methodologies in which gender operates abstractly to conceptualize progress led to its use in the novel as a mechanism of time in artificially reproductive narrative. Gendered time is found, I argue, as early as Petrarch's sonnets: he dramatizes the uses of gendered time in narrative, with emphasis on deferring desire through the image of an external object of desire. Castiglione forms his later ideological writings upon Petrarch's narrative model to illustrate progress-as-product for courtiers during the transition from the medieval court to that of the early modern period. Sustainable narrative, however, depended upon a revised vision of desire as a source of inspiration produced by the reader's ability to internalize or "consume" text, a revision that William Tyndale brought about with the advent of Protestantism in England. Tyndale's debate with Thomas More over the reading of texts would foreshadow patterns of reading, writing, as subjectivity in the novel.

The ability of eighteenth-century writers to use gender and desire as the raw material of narrative machinery depends more directly, however, upon the scientific revolution of
the seventeenth century in England. Francis Bacon adapted Tyndale’s philosophies for
scientific purposes: Bacon’s images of the masculine scientist’s exploration of feminized
nature created a practical, immediate paradigm through which seventeenth- and
eighteenth-century writers viewed constructions of gender. These gendered
constructions, in turn, served religious and economic purposes: the Puritan associations of
idleness with femininity and progress with masculinity repeated Petrarchan metaphors of
gendered time for different purposes and made these metaphors a cultural commonplace.
When eighteenth-century writers united Sir Isaac Newton’s theories of motion formulated
in the late seventeenth century with gendered time, they rendered abstract a mechanical
model of progress capable of sustaining the prolonged narratives of the novel.

Identifying narrative properties as parts of a mechanism is not a new approach.
Tzvetan Todorov models his “grammar of narrative” on a structuralist model in which a
narrative progresses or stalls when equilibrium is either maintained or disrupted by one of
two parts of speech that form the predicate of a proposition.¹ These parts of speech, the
adjective (descriptive) or the verb (active) do not relate to syntactic grammar; rather, they
describe states or initiate actions that correspond to what I refer to as “stasis” and
“dynamics.” The adjective and verb act as mechanisms that establish equilibrium, create
disequilibrium, and re-establish a new equilibrium, all of which, for Todorov, creates
narrative progress. Desire figures in Todorov’s theory in the form of the “obligative”
mood of will, in which a character is compelled by another or by society to act or not act;
and desire figures in the “optative” mood of will, which corresponds “to the actions
desired by the character” (114). Boris Tomashevsky and A.-J. Greimas both posit
theories based on the opposition between stasis and dynamism, but neither have observed
the gendering of these elements. The static/dynamic model and the adjective/verb model
of narrative structure both mediate between the models of other structuralists, such as
Vladimir Propp’s totally syntagmatic approach and Grimas’ and Claude Lévi-Strauss’s
exclusive paradigmism.2

Theories of novelistic narrative must sooner or later deal with the question of narrative
time. Ian Watt distinguishes the novel’s linear narrative from “most previous fiction by
its use of past experience as the cause of present action: a causal connection operating
through time replaces the reliance of earlier narratives on disguises and coincidences” to
form a “cohesive structure.”3 The novel’s “formal realism,” particularly as Watt relates
it to the development of character, relies on “the novel’s insistence on the time process
. . . the novel’s closeness to the texture of daily experience directly depends upon its
employment of a much more minutely discriminated time-scale than had previously been
employed in narrative.” In a more quantitative approach, Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan
defines narrative time as “the relations of chronology between story and text.”4 In this
definition, “the narrative text as text has no other temporality than the one it
metonymically derives from the process of its reading.”

The constructions of story-time and text-time are thus only “pseudo-temporal,” as in
Gerard Génette’s model that compares story passages with extra-story passages.5 Genette
divides “duration” between story and text—”between a temporal dimension and a spatial
dimension”—and tries to measure the temporal equivalences between the two. He
attempts to establish a “norm” between “a duration (that of the story, measured in
seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and years)" and the length of text devoted to it, "measured in pages and lines" (87). Genette expresses this norm as "constancy of pace," or the "unchanged ratio between story-duration and textual length." He identifies "descriptive pause" with "minimal speed," and "ellipses" with "maximal speed." In the story, these two temporal regulators are represented in summary and scene. Summary accelerates story-time by condensing time; scene is one and the same with story. In this model, Genette refers to the "isochronism of the narrative," not in relation to story but "in a way that is more or less absolute and autonomous, as steadiness in speed" (86-112).

However, Genette's steadiness in speed seems to rely on an unquantifiable factor: the relationship between the time represented in the story and the amount of text it takes to tell the story. He does not take into account the way in which the author chooses to juxtapose story and "descriptive pause" to allow for optimum movement of plot and optimum manipulation of the reader's desire to progress through the narrative. The "base" narrative, which for Genette operates on a primary "diagetic level," comprises in my argument the main story with no interruptions—no description, no flashbacks, nothing to interrupt the temporal flow of desire that drives the dynamic element in the plot "forward" and constitutes its progress, regardless of the sequence of events in the overall narrative. Any obstacle to the satisfaction of desire within the text represents a "pocket of stasis"—interference by a character or events, their refusal to cooperate, the narrator or a character's need to sidetrack the story by telling additional stories (digressions), by evaluating, or by providing background information or description to the reader. The problem or interruption must be overcome before the story can continue. Any
interruption of the flow of action--and thus the reader’s desire to follow that flow--disrupts the reader-story continuum, and either builds or breaks the reader’s desire to follow the story. Thus the reader’s perception of the amount of time it seems to be taking to complete a particular passage and to satisfy his or her desire to follow the story is one of the principle indicators of narrative progress.

The evolution of gendered time that formed the mechanism for progressive narrative in the novel begins in the Italian Renaissance. Castiglione codified ideologically the ideal courtier as a work of art in progress in the first three books of The Book of the Courtier (1528). Wayne A. Rebhorn argues that Castiglione codifies political and social progress by uniting “the twin goals of moral-political training and personal self-realization,” with emphasis on “personal self-development” through aestheticism.

Castiglione mechanizes his ideology by insisting on its practical applications in the real world of the Renaissance court as opposed to the kind of training that produces what Rebhorn refers to as only an “abstract morality divorced from society” (29). Castiglione demonstrates the uselessness of this abstraction in the courtier’s process of development through the speech of Federico Fregoso:

there are certain others that stand so aloof that they shun human society too much, and so far exceed a certain mean that they cause themselves to be regarded either as too timid or too proud . . . let the Courtier be eloquent when it suits his purpose, and, when he speaks on political matters, let him be prudent and wise; and let him have good judgment to adapt himself to the customs of the countries where he happens to be; then
let him be entertaining in lesser matters and well-spoken on every subject.

(115-16)

Castiglione understands, as a practical matter, that in a court setting his ideal courtier does not have much opportunity for the heroic behavior that had previously defined the progressive individual as an active force in battle; thus he casts the courtier's heroism, hence his progress, in his powers of self-possession.

Castiglione seems to equate aloofness with stasis, eloquence with dynamics, adaptability and purpose with the ability to plan, or "plot." When Castiglione advises courtiers to adapt themselves to new surroundings or situations, he advocates what Stephen Greenblatt identifies as an "improvisation of power," a philosophy that Greenblatt associates with the Age of Exploration. Improvisation is a process whereby those seeking power adapt to and incorporate as their own the customs of new societies or new situations; then, the courtier displaces his familiar surroundings into these new customs, absorbing or assimilating the new custom as their own. This process becomes particularly important in the novels of Defoe, Lennox, and Smollett: each novelist sustains the narrative of his or her main character by displacing that character into foreign landscapes and cultures, where these characters absorb—and are sometimes absorbed by—local customs. Improvisation creates individuals who are both themselves and other at the same time, a simultaneity which enhances the development of prolonged narrative by allowing writers to accommodate contradictions, about which more later. Castiglione proposes to his reader-courtiers that they possess what Rebhorn calls "the potential . . . to behave like heroes" through the process of improvisation (86). In this potentiality,
Castiglione abstracts into an ideal the image of the progressive individual that would later become central to writers of progressive narrative.

Castiglione characterizes heroism and progress in gendered terms to form the metaphorical mechanism of narrative reproduction. He praises Ottaviano Fregoso as a man of virtù who triumphs over fortune: "those misfortunes which he so firmly endured were indeed enough to prove that fortune, as she ever was, is, even in these days, the enemy of virtue" (2). Castiglione follows convention, feminizing fortune as Machiavelli does in The Prince, opposing it to masculinized conceptions of virtue. Rebhorn notes that "More than man’s opponent in bringing about his death, fortune obstructs his plans to achieve material security, fame, and earthly immortality" (110). Castiglione asserts that Fortune "set herself against" Guidobaldo, crippling him with gout and "opposed him so in his every undertaking that he rarely brought to a successful issue anything he tried to do . . . whether in arms, or in anything, great or small" (14). Feminine Fortune opposes and obstructs Guidobaldo’s progress; Castiglione here suggests in the terms of reproduction a dichotomy in which virtue is gendered masculine.

In this passage, we see progress-as-product in the metaphor that Castiglione uses to describe the expected results of an “undertaking”: a “successful issue,” a term that normally refers to progeny or a pregnancy carried to term. Fortune mires in stasis Guidobaldo’s attempts at dynamism so that the only heroism he achieves is through the courtier’s virtue: “his many and diverse calamities . . . he always bore with such strength of spirit that his virtue was never overcome by Fortune; nay . . . he lived in sickness as if in health, and in adversity as if most fortunate” (14). Clearly, Castiglione abstracts
virtue into a masculine metaphor that disguises the static hero by "projecting" him into a
dynamic image. Guidobaldo's ability to reconcile contradictions--sickness and health,
adversity and fortune--mark him as an early form of what would become the narrative
transvestite, a mechanism that each novelist in this study embodies to advance narrative
progress.

For the courtier, the abstract relationship between masculine and feminine is inverse, a
trait of narrative transvestism that Castiglione demonstrates in his portrayal of the inverse
relationship between men and women at the Urbino court. Feminized Fortune is the
aggressor that acts on virtue, which can do nothing but hunker down and endure. The
stasis of virtue mimics the courtier's static relationship to the prince and, in Guidobaldo's
court, the relationship between virtue and fortune also mimics the relationship between
the courtiers and the women of the court, who preside over the men's conversations and
regulate them in Guidobaldo's absence. Indeed, Rebhorn argues that Castiglione includes
the misogynistic arguments in Book 3 not just to liven up the conversation but to allow
readers to "relate those attacks directly to the inversion of traditional social roles at the
court of Urbino" where the misogynists' opinions "rest upon a clear perception of the
social order operative during their discussions, and their arguments can thus be
interpreted as a real protest against what they see as a flagrant violation, an inversion, of
the normal hierarchy of their world" (126-27). Ottaviano attacks courtly graces as
"frivolities and vanities . . . for these elegancies of dress, devices, and mottoes, and other
such things as pertain to women and love . . . often serve merely to make spirits
effeminate" (289). Rebhorn cites two reasons for the misogynists' discomfort: that their
normal masculine activities through which they achieve identity are limited at court and that the rules of the game also “limit their range of emotional expression” (130). Here Castiglione demonstrates what will ultimately become one of the goals of gendered time in narrative: to provide a mechanism that regulates progress by controlling its random aggression, its energies, and channeling them to the useful.

The progress of novelistic narratives, then, depends upon the novelist’s ability to achieve a workable balance between dynamics and stasis in a manner similar to that of individuals who were encouraged to regulate their activities through controlled desire. In this regulatory role, the narrative transvestite becomes one of the most significant catalysts for narrative production. Castiglione creates the narrative transvestite through the inversion of sexual and gendered roles. The women at Urbino participate little in the conversation and activities at court. In that sense, they are static and conform to images of femininity. They “act,” then, as sites of resistance against the headlong, potentially unproductive impulses of male conversation and activity, so that the friction between impulse and resistance channels courtly narratives to productive ends. Rebhorn explains that the role of the women, and, by abstraction, of feminine stasis, is “not to eliminate potentially destructive aggression, but to tame it and harness its energies so that they animate conversation and do the constructive work of civilization” (131). Here is the heart of narrative gendering: stasis applies the brakes to aggression, but only as needed; otherwise, aggression supplies the dynamism that “animates [Castiglione’s] and all societies, giving meaning and movement to discussions that might otherwise stagnate in endless repetition” (148). In an abstract sense, these regulatory figures in narrative
become transvestites, male or female figures who “try on” the accoutrements or characteristics of the opposite gender. Thus one gender regulates the other, here as separate entities that stand in for the bi-gendered individual—a construction that Defoe replicates in *Robinson Crusoe*—creating that “certain mean” that Castiglione advises courtiers to achieve. Lennox, however, will use this mechanism to stall time and subvert progress as an aid to her heroine’s search for identity and power in *The Female Quixote*. The Urbino women become symbols of stasis, not to stall progress as Lennox does, but so that they may “act” on male aggression in order to render it productive. So Castiglione’s archetype for personal progress becomes the archetype for narrative progress two centuries later when novelists abstract into fiction the gendered mechanism of progress that Castiglione attempts to inculcate into court life.

The “certain mean” that Castiglione inspires allows the transvestite to ensure a seamless passage or transformation from “time” to “time,” from stasis to dynamics, to “make” or, more to the point of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century thinking, to “produce” progress, particularly over the long term. Madeleine Kahn points out the narrative transvestite’s “compulsively cyclical nature” whose “reason for being” is that “it can embrace contradiction over time” (26). The idea of a narrative transvestite corresponds to eighteenth-century masquerade figures, in which Terry Castle sees a kind of “*discordia concors*” in which “new bodies were superimposed over old.” Castle describes as “profoundly antitemporal” the masquerade spirit (7), arguing that “the costumed bodies posed a mysterious relationship between antinomies, connection where there had been before only separation” (77). In this joining of opposites, Castle observes
that time seems to stand still: “in place of temporal dialectic it substituted an eerie simultaneity,” particularly when masqueraders dressed as historical figures and “subverted the separation between past and present, antiquity and modernity” (76-77).

Todorov proposes a conception similar to that of the narrative transvestite and to the masquerade figure when he argues for a time continuum based on “transformation” that synthesizes “difference and resemblance . . . it engages and suspends time, in a single movement” and “makes narrative possible” (233).

Further, the transvestite regulates the friction generated in the clash between dynamic and static elements, friction that builds the desire of the dynamic character and typically that of the reader. These obstacles, or pockets of stasis, may seem random; but they divert narrative to the useful by generating a desire for closure within the narrative and within the reader that changes the potentially nonproductive course of the narrative’s dynamics to a productive direction. Thus Castle is right to argue that a novelist’s use of the masquerade’s “link with the forces of transformation and mutability . . . typically has a catalytic effect on plot” (117-18). This catalytic effect occurs at the point of conflict, a site where gendered forces meet, generate friction, and propel the plot, which Castle seems to note in the words she chooses to describe this narrative moment in masquerade: “The masquerade episode serves as a point for narrative transformation—the privileged site of plot . . . Masquerading substituted randomness and novelty—prerequisites of imbroglio—for the highly stylized patterns of everyday public and private exchange” (120-21).
Another of Castiglione’s attempts to influence courtiers’ lives that had later repercussions for narrative concerns the pursuit of desire. Castiglione’s first three books seem to adapt courtly behavior, including the frank pursuit of desire that was supposed to exist in the Middle Ages and early Renaissance under absolutist rulers, to the realities of the early modern state. Medieval ideology channeled desire in a cyclical flow that sustained the mechanics of feudal European political economies and linked metaphorically the desire for political power to the desire for women. Joan Kelly-Gadol explains the centrifugal nature of these medieval traditions in the synchronous, analogous relationship between vassal and lord, cavalier and lady in feudal society: “vassalage, the military relation of knight to lord, distinguished itself (in its early days) by being freely entered into” and just as vassalage was a voluntary state of bondage, so courtly love “metaphorically extended the social relation of vassalage to the love relationship,” forming a reciprocity in which “love freely proffered was freely returned.”13 Feudal ideology asserted through its system of shared codes that as the vassal was faithful to his lord, so the two lovers should be faithful to each other. The chivalric relationship, theoretically, allowed real men and women a way out of what Joseph Allen Boone calls “the irreconcilable opposition of passionate desire and utilitarian marriage.”14 These extramarital relationships allowed spouses to vent passions that the marriage itself denied, a practice that supposedly stabilized marriages that, Kelly notes, were “arranged by others, [and] carried the taint of social necessity for the aristocracy” (23). Courtly love linked love to sexuality in a way that marriage could not, a link that violated the church’s
teachings about adultery; yet the church accommodated courtly love by associating the ecstasy of the lovers' "Platonic" passion for one another with the passion of Christ as an exemplification of Christian "feeling."

The cyclical analogy between lover and lord served the state well and gave Castiglione the opportunity to practice his own doctrine: he improvises the medieval system of desire into the structure of the early modern state. Boone notes that "the service of love could easily be deflected into heroic or national action" (37), so when the early modern state gradually began to replace personal, reciprocal loyalties with one-way loyalty to itself, the relationship between desire and politics required a similarly abstract replacement, or, more to the point, a displacement. The dynamics of lineal succession in an absolute monarchy forced the state to suppress the desire for power of those whom the hierarchy of succession excluded, or at least to vent this desire toward a different object. Kelly describes this suppression of desire as a "transformation of aristocratic service to statism, which gave rise to Castiglione's leading idea of nobility as courtiers," creating "the problem of obedience" that Castiglione himself experienced as a "condition of servitude" (43). Kelly argues that the theme of Castiglione's entire work is "how to maintain by detachment the sense of self now threatened by the loss of independent power"; thus Castiglione advises the courtier to "renounce wanting such power" or to preserve his independence by "avoiding desire" for it. The courtier may avoid desire for political power by contemplating the prince's power into "a pure idea" so that he "loves and serves an image only," an image of the courtier's own making. Castiglione casts this transcendental experience as a virtue in which the courtier serves God by serving the
prince: "As in the heavens the sun and the moon and the other stars exhibit to the world a certain likeness of God, so on earth a much liker image of God is seen in . . . princes" (307). The hierarchical structure of relationships in the early modern state thus maintained itself by displacing the nobles' desire for power so that it would not form the basis for action and conflict.

Castiglione expresses the doctrine of displaced desire not directly through the courtier's relationship to the prince, but by a system of shared codes, through the courtier's relationship to women, a model of displacement that found expression in the sustained narratives of romance. Castiglione adapts the theme of medieval romances to his own purpose when Cesare Gonzaga defends women: "just as no court, however great, can have adornment or splendor or gaiety without ladies, neither can any Courtier be graceful or pleasing or brave, or do any gallant deed of chivalry, unless he is moved by the society and by the love and charm of ladies" (204). Here Castiglione acknowledges men's desire for women and for pleasing women as the force behind their actions. But he circulates this desire safely back to its origins, to the centrality of the female-ruled court and the reality of the feminized courtier. Just as the courtier was expected to avoid his taboo desire for power by refiguring it into the idea of an abstract, distant god, so he was expected to avoid physical desire for his beloved by abstracting her into a similar idea.

The evolution of Platonic, courtly love continues in the romance genre, a medium through which females and feminine narrative alike enjoy the upper hand to create the literary form that most obviously precedes the novel. M. M. Bakhtin points to the Greek romance as a predecessor to what we can think of as kairos or stasis in the novel.
Bakhtin argues that Greek romances lack "the real time-line of the heroes' lives, and of effecting change in both the heroes and in the events."16 The heroes do not age, they do not learn; more significantly, they do not plan. In fact, Bakhtin observes that the plots of these romances are driven entirely by chance. Classical romances mark change within the plot by "specific link-words: 'suddenly' and 'at just that moment'" (92). In this externally manipulated form of time, the passive hero is motivated by an external object of desire, and he is as powerless to control his fate as a pawn on a chessboard. The movement of the plot depends on "chance simultaneity," which conforms to Castle's "eery simultaneity" of the masquerade in which time seems to stand still. The Greek romance traditions, revived in seventeenth-century Europe as part of a resurgence in Platonistic thought, were largely promoted in seventeenth-century France by what Alfred Horatio Upham describes as "a brilliant and mobil group of social leaders" known as the "précieuse."17 Upham associates the Platonism that the précieuse practised with the Petrarchan sonnet or "the more direct influence of Il Cortegiano and its kindred" (308). Just as D'Urfé's pastoral romance, the Astrée, was being printed in 1610, Madame de Rambouillet was gathering the précieuse into her salon, know as Hôtel de Rambouillet. Upham reports that conversation was "the chief resource" at the Hôtel, "and one of the favorite topics of the circle's discussions was the moving passion of [D'Urfé's] whole story--love" (310-11). The emphasis that Madame de Rambouillet's circles placed on conversation, Upham argues, is part of "an outgrowth of feminine domination," similar to that of Guidobaldo's court in Castiglione's book (313).
The précieuse tradition, marked by elaborate expression in conversation and the imitation of romance conventions articulated in lengthy prose narratives, began to influence England in 1625 when Charles I married Henrietta Maria. Her influence at court as well as the English predisposition to mimic French literary style introduced English readers to voluminous romances—and to the potential for feminine domination whose hallmark is stasis. Patricia A. Parker argues that the late Renaissance saw romance as a “Circean, female (or even effeminate) form” which was “potentially corrupting” and capable of “leading astray . . . the will, as making it into a kind of Prodigal Son who might never return to his father.”

William Habington expresses the English fear of effeminacy in his preface to a volume of poetry:

> It [poetry] hath too much ayre, and . . . wantons too much according to the French garbe. And when it is wholly employed in the soft straines of love, his soul who entertaines it loseth much of that strength which should confirme him man. The nerves of judgement are weakened most by its dalliance; and when woman . . . is the supreme object of wit, we soon degenerate into effeminacy.

Feminine social and literary influence among the upper classes did not end with Henrietta Maria but extended itself into the bourgeoisie by the mid-1600s. Three coterie leaders of England—Lucy Hay, Countess of Carlisle; Margaret Cavendish, Duchess of Newcastle; and Catherine Philips, “The Matchless Orinda”—promoted the imitation of romance ideals throughout England.
The Platonic model upon which Castiglione and romance writers constructed their images of ideal men and women owes much to Petrarchan ideals. Dante and Petrarch achieved the sublimation of male desire through a Platonic model by imagining a non-reciprocal, one-way flow of desire from courtier to beloved, a desire that the beloved never answers since, in the literature of the period, she herself does not experience it. Here we find an early model of linear narrative sustained by its contact with stasis. Petrarch tells Laura in Sonnet 3 that “Love found me altogether disarmed” and did not “even show his bow to you” (9, 14). The poet/courtier’s desire motivates his pursuit of Laura, who remains passive and unaffected. Castiglione inculcates this image of displaced desire into courtly manners through the voice of Cardinal Pietro Bembo, who separated the physical “sense” from the metaphysical “intellect,” with reason as mediator, to “direct his desire beyond [the beloved] to the true, intelligible source of her beauty” (338-39). So Petrarch had already dramatized what Castiglione refers to here directly: both writers abstract the female into the feminine to create a static ideal that “Laura” or the “beloved” merely represents. “But,” as Kelly argues, “Love, Beauty, Woman . . . were in effect denatured, robbed of body, sex, and passion by this elevation” (41), an elevation in which the female image, synonymous with political power, becomes an object of desire that can be obtained only in the afterlife. Kelly rightly claims that Castiglione robs women of their bodies, but this disembodiment becomes central to the gendering of progress that eighteenth-century writers would fictionalize and mechanize as gendered time in the novel.
Castiglione’s ideal courtier spells out in practical terms the representation of self that Petrarchan poetics attempt to dramatize. Petrarch’s verses respond to the courtier’s situation, in which the courtier had to represent or project an image of himself in public that did not necessarily match his private sense of self, a self divided in its attempt to harbor contradictions simultaneously. Petrarch’s speaker claims in Sonnet 292 that Laura had “estranged me from myself and isolated me from other people” (3-4). At bottom, then, the poet/courtier’s desire has less to do with either power or the beloved and more to do with his own psyche. He desires to unite his two selves, to be “whole” again.

Petrarch articulates the male desire for wholeness, expressing it through—and as—Laura, the unmoving image and imagined complete self. Once united with Laura, the poet-courtier will be reunited with himself, or with that part of himself that he projects as an image.

Although Petrarch followed Dante in versifying deferred desire, Petrarch’s very method of composition, in which he constantly refers to writing as an act of sublimation, transcends images into activities in a way that Dante’s verse does not. Robert M. Durling argues that “Petrarch’s subject is the possibility of a sublimated, virtuous love, and the different forms of his fantasies are expressions of the conflict inherent in sublimation. . . . Dante states the theme directly . . . Petrarch’s poem enacts the principle dramatically.”

This dramatization corresponds to conventions of cinematic dramatizations, as Laura Mulvey’s conception of the relationship in narrative cinema among the camera, the viewer, and the characters demonstrates. She divides the cinematic gaze into three parts:
that of the camera as it records the profilmic event, that of the audience as it watches the final product, and that of the characters at each other within the screen illusion. The conventions of narrative film deny the first two and subordinate them to the third, the conscious aim being always to eliminate intrusive camera presence and prevent a distancing awareness in the audience. Without these two absences (the material existence of the recording process, the critical reading of the spectator), fictional drama cannot achieve reality, obviousness, and truth.24

The camera here focalizes the gaze of the viewer, just as the “speaker” in print narrative focalizes the reader’s “view”: both camera and speaker are “disavowed in order to create a convincing world in which the spectator’s [or reader’s] surrogate can perform with verisimilitude” (26). This performance and disavowal originates in the Renaissance courtier’s projection of image, a projection that he must perform with verisimilitude, and therefore a projection that he must always disavow.25

“Laura,” then, is not a female representation at all but the image of the feminized male that the courtier plays at court; the courtier’s pursuit of this image generates dangerous consequences for self-progress, and later, for narrative. The possibility of uniting self with image is narcissistic—not surprising considering the influence of Ovidian myth in Petrarch’s sonnets—and this union quells desire, producing stasis. Durling explains that in Sonnet 23, Petrarch “recounts how he has reenacted the myth of Echo. But Echo, after all, wasted away because of her love for Narcissus, and the implicit connection (Petrarch = Echo means Laura = Narcissus; if Laura’s image = Narcissus’s image, Petrarch =
Narcissus) is both established and evaded” (31-32). Perhaps Petrarch evades the issue because to acknowledge it would waste away his poetics, and--as in Durling’s observation that Petrarch “dramatizes” sublimation--here we can see the narrative structure in Petrarch’s essentially lyrical works. Not in Laura, who is theoretically attainable, but in Laura’s image, which, supposedly, is not, Petrarch’s speaker has a goal for which to continually strive, as Durling notes: “the imagination assumes the form of a lady as a mental image, so the will assumes her form as its goal” (18). Only by pursuing his goal—not by achieving it—is the courtier able to take action, or at least he can imagine that he is.

Of course, the flaw in Petrarch’s poetics and in Castiglione’s ideology as it relates to the courtier’s sense of self-progress--and later, to novelistic progress--is that the disavowal of projection creates the danger of effeminacy, a product of satisfied desire that Castiglione seems to have recognized as the death of narrative. Castiglione stresses to the courtier the importance of avoiding an effeminate appearance, for in avoiding the desire for power or the appearance of it, the courtier in effect had to project a feminine image. Mulvey makes the balancing act between genders in narrative performance apparent when she describes the suppression of the viewer’s intrinsic gaze in cinema: “as soon as fetishistic representation of the female image threatens to break the spell of illusion, and the erotic image on the screen appears directly (without mediation) to the spectator, the fact of fetishization, concealing as it does castration fear, freezes the look, fixates the spectator, and prevents him from achieving any distance from the image in front of him” (26). This is just the kind of look that the courtier--and the writer--must cultivate.
Mulvey explains in Freudian terms that in cinematic narrative, “the presence of woman is an indispensable element of spectacle . . . yet her visual presence tends to work against the development of a story line, to freeze the flow of action in moments of erotic contemplation” (19). If the courtier satisfies his desire in erotic contemplation of his own feminine image, then he loses impulse; or put another way, the narrative loses plot. When the courtier’s passion has been vented and spent, he is rendered ineffectual, caught up in static time that renders him metaphorically castrated and effeminate, his narrative at a standstill.

Petrarch’s need to ensure narrative continuity through sustained desire may account for Laura’s death and her speech from the hereafter. Laura speaks after death not from any certain “place,” but from a certain time that she has always represented and now occupies. Laura finds her voice in death and holds out the possibility of union with the courtier whose feminine image she represents. Petrarch and Castiglione thus achieve “suture,” a term that identifies in film an act of improvisation that in this case displaces and absorbs the courtier into the text itself. By pointing out the inadequacies of the poet/courtier, Petrarch and Castiglione allow their (male) readers a symbolic re-entry into their culture through identification with an ideal who pursues their “better half.” Then courtiers could entertain the notion that they were an independent power and dominating force.

Central to the dynamics of progressive narrative is the creation and sustenance of the feminine image, which the poet-courtier projects as an image of stasis and a metaphor for eternal time—particularly as that time relates to the courtier’s desire and to narrative. This
stasis, or to put it in another, more physical way, this stability, forms the basis for
dynamic narrative since without it, no sense of progress can occur. Heather Dubrow
seems to recognize the relationship between stasis and dynamics and the importance of
stasis to narrative when she argues that for Petrarch, “psychological stasis . . . is the most
significant temporal mode”; the Petrarchan lover “moves without moving,” making stasis
“the physical state that represents an emotional state of depression and compulsive
repetition.”27 The model of the passive female formed an integral part of social
realignment since women became the concrete embodiment of feminine imagery that
subordinate males at court had to assume in the abstract. Mulvey observes that when
women in narrative try to cast off this passive role, she is portrayed as a wrongdoer to be
reprimanded or a sick person to be cured, a motif that Lennox carries on in defining her
quixotic heroine. Either situation typically requires the confinement of the female, a
scenario adopted for the courtier’s use after his own powers at court became
circumscribed. The reciprocal relationships of the Middle Ages no longer existed for
men or for women; women, however, were subjected to a code of absolute chastity to
assure an unsullied line of heredity. This code reinforced the overall hierarchy by valuing
female reproductivity as the private property of the male, an image that, when gendered,
began to signify various forms of production—in this case, narrative production.28

Thus the behavior of women around men generally and at court particularly became an
important issue within Renaissance thought: almost as much attention was paid to self-
presentation of women as to that of men. Since speech and self-presentation had become
virtually synonymous, the ideology of the period attempted to circumscribe women’s
speech as a vital component to the success of socializing courtly conventions. Joel Fineman notes that the Renaissance court recognized language itself as equal to the act it represented: “language is the thing of which it speaks.” Ann Rosalind Jones notes that women had to speak cautiously at court because of the "mentality that connected open female speech to open sexuality ... popular wisdom aligned silence with chastity in opposition to frank speech and promiscuity, so that talking to women was the same thing as having sex with them." Instructions from a courtesy book written by Annibal Guasco, who sent his daughter Lavinia to court in Turin, advised her “to proceed cautiously in such exchanges, watching what the other women around her do, and he reminds her that ‘there is no cure for the loss of chastity; it besmirches a woman even after her death.’” However, we can see the extent to which masculine dynamics owes its progress to feminine stasis in Ann de Beaujeu’s comments to the daughter she sent to court: she expected her daughter both to enjoy herself and to be cautious, for “however beautifully and well guarded a castle may be, if it has never been assaulted, what reason is there to praise it?” The mechanics of Petrarch’s epideictic poetry and Castiglione’s ideology are spelled out in de Beaujeu’s comment: impulse must challenge resistance in order to generate progress-as-product.

Many women seem to have understood their role in progressive narrative, and on those occasions when they took control of the discourse, they subverted it and made problematic the gendering of time as well as the presentation of the feminine image and self, as Lennox demonstrates in her novel. By disrupting social icons, they cautiously adapted the unnaturally constructed objects of desire found in such “heroines” as
Petrarch's Laura and Dante's Beatrice to suit their own ethos. Certain women poets of the Renaissance appropriated the Petrarchan love lyric as a medium in which they could maintain their chastity. Its conventions of distance permitted women to regender it to provide them an avenue of articulation—and thus their writings often contradicted and criticized the construction of the self, both male and female, that male writers had so carefully built. They performed what Luce Irigaray describes as a "jamming" of "the theoretical machinery" in order to overcome the way in which "the feminine often finds itself defined, within discourse, as the lack or negation of the (masculine) subject."

Male response to this appropriation and subversion was sometimes harsh. Between 1593 and 1599, Mary Sidney, Countess of Pembroke and sister to Sir Philip Sidney, translated Petrarch's *Triumph of Death* (1374?) significantly the only verses in which Petrarch allows Laura to speak, then only because she is dead. Sidney's translation, unlike the other translations done by male poets, activates Petrarch's heroine, who lectures the poet on his emotional excesses from a celestial distance. Sidney's appropriation of a female voice originally cast by a male poet earned her a rebuke from Thomas Moffett to "Let Petrarke sleep, giue rest to Sacred Writte." Moffett's comment suggests that Sidney's revelation of dynamic character within the dead, eternal, and therefore static image of Laura subverts the authority of the dominant order to gender and to manipulate narrative in life as well as in literature, a challenge that Lennox takes up in her novel by her manipulation of stasis as a source of female power.

Since much of this literature served instructional purposes and was intended to be imitated, concerns about female appropriation of literary ideology were strong, especially
regarding romance—concerns that carried over into the eighteenth century. The practice of concealing one’s identity under a romantic pseudonym implies a transformation of fiction into fact. Upham sees another characteristic emblematic of women who imitated romance conventions in the cultivation of a “passionless attitude toward love, as Sir John Suckling describes”:

Her wit being most eminent among the rest of her great abilities, she affects conversation of the persons who are most famed for it. She cannot love in earnest, so contenting herself to play with Love as with a child.

Naturally she hath no passion at all. (352)

A passionless attitude gave the power of controlled desire to the female and would have granted her the ability to control the discourse of courtship and marriage in a similar manner to that of pious Christian women who adapted religious discourse to their own ends, about which more later. Lennox makes the most obvious use of this convention in her novel to allow her heroine to manipulate courtship and thereby to sustain the plot of her narrative.

The emphasis on realism and plotting in the novel springs largely from the need to overcome romantic stasis and to institute a form of literature that inculcates the ideology of progress. Those who opposed romance conventions in literature and in life noted that female domination produces a kind of paralysis in the male, and so it is with gendered narrative itself: a predominance of feminine stasis creates a slippage of narrative friction in which masculine dynamics, in effect, merely spins its wheels. Parker associates feminine narrative with a “threat to the execution of closure or accomplishment” and
within the text, it induces the writer to find “ways of mastering or controlling the
implicity female, and perhaps hence wayward, body of the text itself” (11). The notion of
the feminine text as “wayward” corresponds to notions of women as property whose
confinement to the home was seen as necessary to prevent their wantoness. But, in spite
of attempts by women writers to influence literary representations of the female and the
feminine, the silence to which male writers attempted to relegate women actually and
imagistically became one of the codes of stasis upon which later writers of novelistic
narrative would rely to generate desire and progress.

So if we find the origins of Castiglione’s ideology in Petrarch’s poetics, then here, in
the Italian Renaissance, we also find the gendering of time. In Petrarch, if male desire to
merge with a female image motivates the speaker’s actions and thus the dynamics of the
poem, then his unification with the image will fulfill his desire and induce stasis, so stasis
is what the speaker really desires. By tracing desire to its goal of stasis, we can better see
the problematics of gendering: traits assigned by sex become free-floating metaphors that
cling to male and female alike—and to virtually any other entity, as Smollett proves when
he metaphorically marries England and Scotland in Humphry Clinker. Dubrow notes that
Petrarchism displays “its own version of cross-dressing” (55); the poet-courtier supplants
the female image with the image of a male God, who never speaks. By redirecting desire
through contemplation, a silent state of meditation in which the poet-courtier does not
express anything, the poet-courtier mimics the stasis of the image. Durling explains that
in Petrarch’s fantasy of sexual fulfillment,
Petrarch calls for time to stand still. Petrarch's model is the Beatific Vision of God; the more sensuous the content, the greater the tendency to assimilate the fantasy toward the safe religious category of contemplation. The stasis Petrarch desires is both an intensification of the fantasy and an evasion of the idea of activity. This critical tension between contemplative form and sexual content is a major theme of the *Rime sparsa* . . (20)

Petrarch opposes “eternity and time (eternity represents fullness of being, unchanging stability; time represents succession, change, instability)”; by doing so, he creates the gendered model of narrative mechanics that Castiglione duplicates ideologically and that later writers would revise into the sustainable narrative of the novel.

However, such predominately static models of narrative as Petrarch’s and Castiglione’s had to give way to more dynamic models before ways of thinking about narrative progress could evolve into novelistic form. When William Tyndale translated the Vulgate version of the Bible into the vernacular (1525), he made the Scriptures available to the English layman for the first time; in doing so, he effectively relocated the force of desire and ignited modern narrative technique.37 Greenblatt argues that “the vernacular was the unself-conscious language of the inner man” that presented “the text in full immediacy” and as such was instrumental in internalizing desire (96). Tyndale exhorted readers of his translation to “think that every syllable pertaineth to thine own self, and suck out the pith of the Scripture.”38 Tyndale’s encouragement amounted to a call for readers to see themselves as objects of desire—of God’s desire—and to respond by
metaphorically consuming biblical text, making it part of themselves. By consuming the text, readers displaced it and therefore displaced desire itself, which the reader internalizes. Thus the Bible—and language itself—becomes an object of desire for readers.

Instead of attempting to inspire readers to displace desire away from themselves toward God through contemplation of a distant, desired object, as Petrarch does in his sonnets, readers now receive desire that they themselves displace from the text, consuming it, not contemplating it, and by displacing the text readers receive a source of internal inspiration. Greenblatt observes that desire generates dynamics in Tyndale’s “The Obedience of a Christian Man” (1527?), which is “precisely designed to be absorbed: one should not, in principle, be able to say where the book stops and identity begins” so that “Christian obedience is at once a form of action and an inner state” (84). If we assume that Christians desire to be obedient, then not only does Greenblatt’s statement make sense in its own context but in another as well: desire becomes an inner force that drives the individual to action and creates its own dynamics.

Tyndale legitimates the innate desire of the reader to follow the narrative by legitimating the way in which readings are relative to each individual and by opening almost limitless possibilities for each reader to extract a personalized meaning from the text. He does so by distinguishing institutional interpretations of texts, in which a word has a fixed, objective meaning, from individual interpretations in which a word may take on dynamic, subjective meanings. Tyndale advises that “if this word congregation were a more general term than this word church, it hurteth not, for the circumstance doth ever declare what thing is meant thereby.” Greenblatt explains, however, that Tyndale’s idea
of a relative reading must arise from the reader’s sensitivity to what Greenblatt describes as “the natural order of a text” (103). Tyndale writes in the Prologue to Romans that “Only when the reader has fully experienced the meaning of the first seven chapters is he ready for the eighth which, in turn, is the necessary introduction to those that follow.”

The linearity that Greenblatt notes in Tyndale’s thinking expresses the Protestant attitude toward good works and life as a unified system, about which more later. Greenblatt argues that readers who follow “the order of the reading experience” will find that the chapters have been arranged rhetorically to produce essential psychological effects which are at the same time doctrinal truths. There is a kind of historicity and narrativity built into the experience of faith through the act of reading: by following the text in its proper sequence, the reader reenacts in his own spirit the passage from the Old Testament to the New, from the law that kills to God’s free gift of grace. (103-04)

Compare, then, Tyndale’s dynamic theory of reading--and writing--to Thomas More’s response on behalf of the Catholic Church, which More acknowledges is “tedious to read”:

therefore have I taken the more pain upon every chapter, to the intent that [readers] shall not need to read over any chapter but one, and that it shall not force greatly which one throughout the whole book. . . . Now he that will therefore read any one chapter . . . when he shall in that chapter as I am sure he shall, find his holy prophet plainly proved a fool, he may soon be eased of any further labor. For then hath he good cause to cast him
quite off... and then shall he never need to read more of my book

neither, and so shall he make it short enough.  

The very form--or lack thereof--in More’s response attempts to refute Tynedale’s argument, and here we see a written example of the same planlessness that marks Catholic attitudes about good works; More confirms in his text’s circularity its stasis and thus its opposition to the dynamic narratives of Protestantism.

Tyndale’s insistence on the “proper” order of reading as a progression through the text in sequence seems to anticipate the seventeenth-century advent of clock time and its importance to the extended narrative. Stuart Sherman argues that “the fusion of ‘counting’ and ‘narrating’ in the etymology of *tell*”--as it refers to telling time or telling narrative--“apparently derives from the importance of sequence in both processes... where clocks count time, narratives *re*count it.”  

Sherman identifies “two temporalities” that correspond to the two genders of narrative, its “special temporal properties and privileges (elasticities of language) on one hand, and on the other the time (duration, sequence) of the events narrated. But usually [narrative] will orchestrate something far more complex. It will offer by its form a reading of, and a contribution to, the workings of time in the culture.” Indeed, Sherman’s description of the clock’s mechanism seems to reflect the culture’s mechanism of time, desire, and regulation that we finally realize in the novel: “First, it needs a source of energy to start and sustain movement; second, a brake-and-release mechanism to parcel out the energy into a succession of small motions by a rapidly repeated series of starts and stops; third, a regulating device to assure that the stops and starts occur at even intervals” (3).
As a cultural byproduct of measured, sequential time, Calvinists inaugurated the economics of gendered time through Biblical interpretation by associating idleness with sin and productivity with predetermined election to heaven. John Calvin recognized how the force of those desires could be harnessed to advance the Protestant cause by breaking free of static, centrifugal Catholicism. Charles H. George and Katherine George compare the Catholic view of riches to that of the Protestants: "the Roman Catholic heirarchy of vocations . . . ranged all of the economically useful people in lower orders of spiritual and moral being" (170), but Calvinism, according to R. H. Tawney, "was an active and radical force" for whom the "enemy is not the accumulation of riches, but their misuse for purposes of self-indulgence or ostentation." Calvinists saw these twin evils as "waste," a theme that Defoe portrays in Crusoe's pointless rambling at the beginning of Robinson Crusoe. Protestants objected to wealth only as it causes "relaxation in the security of possession," as Max Weber points out--an idea that sorts with Castiglione's admonitions against effeminacy, and for the same reason: narrative inertia. Weber explains that "only activity serves to increase the glory of God" so Protestants viewed "waste of time," through idleness, sociability, or even "inactive contemplation" as "the first and in principle the deadliest of sins." Richard Baxter saw idleness as a "crime not to be tolerated in Christian societies." George Herbert's priest declared it a "national sin"; Richard Sibbes accused popery of "maintaining stately idleness." Christopher Hill points out that what the Puritans attempted in this assault on idleness amounted to "the urgent necessity of imposing a new ethic" in which labor was a "social duty." Specifically,
Puritans attacked what Hill describes as their "horror of waste of time" (130); so essentially, the Puritan’s attack on idleness was also an attack on stasis.

The feminization of idleness that became prevalent in the seventeenth century was predated by the sixteenth-century’s association of idleness with women. Petrarch’s poetics aside, Anthony Fletcher reports that sixteenth-century men defined women primarily as reproductive beings given to idleness and a life of ease. Medical writers of the period fueled this perception by noting that if women labored strenuously they often stopped menstruating and thus appeared to turn into men. As early as 1580, Robert Hitchcock gendered idleness by suggesting that itinerant preachers would help to “root out idleness, the mother and breeder of vagabonds.” Puritans associated the productivity of the marketplace with human reproductivity and criticized everyone from vagabonds to the gentry if by refusing to work or to cultivate their lands they would “dry up the springs of the market and so depopulate the countryside.” Vagabonds were not even considered as part of the community. Without the dynamism associated with employment and productivity they were without identity, a status not far removed from the selfless, static image that Petrarch established centuries earlier in the ever-idle Laura. However, the focus of that image and the desire associated with it had shifted. The unemployed were not the center of attention as was Laura, the courtier’s desired image of stasis; they existed on the periphery of society, now undesirable because static.

A further consequence of evolving gender ideology was the gendering of labor, idleness, and economic habits, which led to the separation of “outside” work from “inside” work, as Defoe’s bi-gendering of Crusoe in Robinson Crusoe demonstrates. By
separating men and women in the work force, or rather women from the work force, the new patriarchy created what Fletcher refers to as "the secularization of gender" (295). This separation and secularization was based on Locke's reworking of patriarchy in which men are no longer subject to the state as they had been previously, yet women remain subject to men because men are the "abler and stronger." This distinction, based on the ability to perform strenuous tasks, privileges masculinized labor over feminized labor. Here Castiglione's improvisation of state and gender is abandoned; however, the association of female confinement with chastity is not. The construction of housewifery as a feminine activity associated each woman's skills at home with what Fletcher calls "sexual reputation" or the "tendency to assume that modesty implied good housewifery and that a spendthrift was likely to be a wanton" (226). Thus women's confinement to the house corresponded to their sexual confinement; freedom for women meant promiscuity, an attitude carried over from the Renaissance. Fletcher notes that "degrees of whoredom . . . were closely related to a perceived relation of women as male property: once a whore a woman had escaped male control, a common whore was further out of control, becoming the property of the male community" (123). By this standard, a woman's reproductivity was seen as an extension of a man's productivity--another Renaissance legacy. Since she was, at least metaphorically, his property, then by extension, this model corresponds to the reproductive capacity of gendered narrative in the novel and the novelist's productivity. In this construction of gender ideology, "feminine" came to mean something unproductive in and of itself, something to be owned and contained.
However, the Protestant doctrines that correspond spiritual progress with economic progress affect narrative production in a way that Catholicism, with its doctrine of mediation, stasis, and deferred desire, cannot. Protestantism insists that individuals—all individuals—can fulfill their desire for union with God not through an intermediary such as the Church but through the direct action of reading the Bible themselves. Subsequently, Protestants reconfigured the significance of “doing works,” rejecting the Catholic notion of salvation through works—again, a static conception because it relies on salvation as an external object of desire for its motivation. Catholics see the Church as interpreter and intermediary between the individual and God; doing good works could replace the negative mediation of sin between man and God with a positive mediation. Petrarch’s sonnets exemplify the idea of positive mediation in Laura, a mediator between the poet-courtier and God through whom the poet’s desire passes and is purified. For Calvinists, good works and sin never came between man and God because, at God’s pleasure, an individual was either one of the elect or was not. Weber explains that “the community of the elect with their God could only take place and be perceptible to them in that God worked (operatur) through them and that they were conscious of it”; his conduct “is not only willed by God but rather done by God” (113-14). The Protestant view that good works were generated by God through the individual began to replace the conception of externalized desire with one of internalized, unfulfillable desire.

By 1660, the English were reconstructing models of masculinity, a reconstruction dependent upon controlled desire, so it is not surprising that the decades just prior to the publication of Defoe’s first novel mark a resurgence of Castiglione’s popularity in
England. The Restoration (1660) restored not only a monarch to his throne but a sense of reserve to men, a suppression of the desire that had spun out of control under Cromwell, the excesses of Charles II’s court notwithstanding. Fletcher argues that the new term “masculinity,” first appearing in print in 1748, indicated an attempt to “express a more rounded concept of the complete man . . . This was more a matter of manners and outward behaviour than of inner qualities” (323). Particularly reminiscent of Castiglione’s advice is the idea of “portability and of usefulness in one way or another at all times and places” in which “the emphasis was on skill in performance and on spectator activities pursued in a polite social setting” (326). Individuals were encouraged to regulate their own desires in the name of “usefulness” or productivity. In Clement Ellis’s popular guide to gentlemanly manners, we see the importance of controlling desire that became a hallmark of the dominating classes, cast in gendered terms: “His will and affection he makes the instruments and servants not the guides and mistresses of his soul.”59 The warnings against feminine affectations are present here as they are in Castiglione’s writings. Ellis advocates that “certain mean” in which a man should be “masculine and noble, such as becomes his heroic spirit and yet always accompanied with a wonderful humility and courtesy” (122). Castiglione had advised courtiers to displace their desire for power at court by pretending that they did not want it; seventeenth- and eighteenth-century gentlemen were advised to displace their desire for identification with the upper classes, not just at court but in the world at large, because, presumably, they had already achieved that status.
The Interregnum also inadvertently provided an avenue for reconstructing femininity by allowing many previously suppressed entities a voice as models of controlled desire through religious expression. By legitimating individual interpretations of the Bible, Protestants also legitimated women as individuals to a greater or lesser degree, depending on sect. Fletcher observes through his studies of the texts of funeral sermons for pious women that these women often used daily prayers as an acceptable method of providing time for themselves. Through private devotions, women could separate themselves from their more “public” duties as household managers. Women could also use Scripture as a form of access to and interaction with ministers and other Christians on the pretense, if indeed it was a pretense, not to understand particular passages. Many Christian women kept diaries in which they explored themselves by exploring their religious devotion, and these diaries became a form of “self-fashioning” for them: “Elizabeth Bury, it was noted in her funeral sermon, ‘would often say that, were it not for her diary, she should neither know what she was or what she did.’” Women used their diaries as a way of recording history and analyzing it in terms of what that history meant when compared with the Bible. Elizabeth Richardson left her diary as a spiritual legacy to her daughters. Thus Christian women took advantage of their religion to attain a sense of self and a sense of history.

The freedom that women attained as a result of their piety depended upon the ability that this piety granted them to control their own desire, like the ladies of the précieuse. The Countess of Bridgewater’s papers include a formula for escaping marital difficulties through devotion: if wives receive little attention from their husbands, such a lack may
simply [drive] them into the arms of God.” Jane Ratcliffe’s case, as Peter Lake points out, reflects what he calls “a sort of displaced patriarchalism” in which she created “a persona of some potency.”52 In this persona, Fletcher observes the “process of sublimation and internalization of her religion.” John Ley revealed in his eulogy for Ratcliffe that she became “estranged from the world, which was plainly perceived by a threefold freedom. First from desire of sensual delights. Secondly from love of worldly profits. Thirdly from the liking of life itself.” Christian belief often provided an avenue of expression for women who otherwise could not react against forced marriages and other situations in which they were powerless. Male acceptance of this kind of female control allows Fletcher to conclude that “If the good woman was now being socially produced—constructed indeed—this was the direction in which the world of gender was moving.” If the previous construction of gender depended on the opposition between “good” men and “bad” women (the productive masculine and the idle feminine), the reconstruction of femininity depended on the ability of all individuals to harness desire and control it.

The most significant affect of Protestantism on narrative structuring seems to originate, however, in the Protestant conception of a life well lived as a life systematically planned. Weber points out the contrast between this notion and that of Catholic laymen, for whom “good works did not necessarily form a connected, or at least not a rationalized, system of life, but rather remained a succession of individual acts” in which “the single good or bad action was credited to the doer determining his temporal and eternal fate” (116). However, “the God of Calvinism demanded of his believers not
single good works, but a life of good works combined into a unified system . . . the moral conduct of the average man was thus deprived of its planless and unsystematic character and subjected to a consistent method for conduct as a whole” (116-17). The Catholic vision of desire as external, and works as an avenue to salvation to be used or not at the discretion of the individual, was fading in England; the Protestant vision of internal desire, and of works as an expression of an already-achieved salvation, began to act as a catalyst for economic planning in life, and later, narrative plot in fiction. Sherman points to Joseph Addison’s Tatler and Spectator as examples of the trend to facilitate a “sustained project of psychological and social transformations” in which daily papers convey to readers not “the urge to keep up with fast unfolding external events,” but the need “to enact over time an ongoing narrative of internal reform” (144). Addison’s project sorts with the Protestant view, which contributes as much to the eventual sustainability of novelistic narrative as it does to the personal narratives of individuals.53

In keeping with Protestant notions of unified systems and predictable results, seventeenth-century writers began to make progressive assessments of the past and the future. To use a popular expression of that period, they made “projections,” a conceptualization that filters down from economic thought and becomes critical to progressive narrative as the model upon which novelistic plot imitates reality. Economists attempted to quantify the processes involved in market economy and to explain the new set of relationships that the gradual ascendancy of capitalism entailed. Behind the economic theories that emerged during the seventeenth century was the tacit understanding that economics could, in fact, be contained in a theory; that somewhere in
the abstractions of the marketplace and in the responses of humans to those abstractions were rules that governed the flows of commerce and individuals’ reactions to those flows. This passion for theory carried over to the eighteenth century: Martin C. Battestin notes that “one of the special pleasures of neo-classical art... is the sense conveyed of the triumph of form, of a dynamic variety of materials having been reduced to order by the shaping intelligence.” Economists conceptualized market relations in abstract terms, according to Joyce Oldham Appleby, because “the increasing invisibility of buyers and sellers prompted men to treat [buyers and sellers] as impersonal economic agents.” She sees the market economy “as a depersonalizing mechanism using men and women as things; as a promoter of economic liberties; as a purveyor of new attitudes about utility; as an all-pervasive pedagogue teaching people to plan, economize, calculate” (15). If Appleby is right, then once economic operations are abstracted into a machine, writers can further abstract this machinery into any number of other applications, as they did in the case of the novel.

The Protestant ideology that inspired economic projections also seems to have inspired scientists’ characterizations of the relationship between nature, man, and machine that eighteenth-century writers would abstract into the novel. Appleby notes that seventeenth-century writers began “to construe social patterns as orderly processes” (95)—scientific processes, even. Whether new scientific theories grew out of new economic processes or vice versa, both science and the economy were synchronizing their methodologies by the end of the seventeenth century. The publication of Newton’s Philosophiae Naturalis

*Principia Mathematica* (1686) codified the machinery of physics whose principles can
also work in the abstract to explain the mechanics of the economy, of social relations, and of literary narratives. \(^5^6\) Newton himself observed that “the common people conceive those quantities [time, space, place, and motion] under no other notions but from the relation they bear to sensible objects. And thence arise certain prejudices” (6). Indeed, and many of the prejudices already in place were gendered.

Newton’s predecessor, Francis Bacon, exemplifies in his scientific tract *The Masculine Birth of Time* (1602?) the practical applications of both the Protestant insistence on unified systems and the gendering of scientific endeavor that would figure prominently in the development of progressive narrative. \(^5^9\) In fact, Bacon’s rhetoric is progressive: he entitles Chapter 1 “The Legitimate Mode of handing on the Torch of Science,” which implies a linear genealogy of ideas that he attempts to carry out literally in his rhetorical approach. He addresses the reader as “my son” (61), acknowledging paternity and excluding those who disagree with him. That Bacon genders nature feminine is certainly not new; that he creates a hierarchical, sexualized relationship between nature and scientist is. He vows to lead his male readers to “Nature with all her children to bind her to your service and make her your slave... to stretch the deplorably narrow limits of man’s dominion over the universe to their promised bounds” (62). He genders science feminine as well: it is an object of desire, something “to be sought” (69). His aim is advancement: he claims that he is “preparing things useful for the future of the human race” (68), and that he acts out of “the profoundest care of the future” (62). Bacon compares the human mind, which “in studying things, becomes big under the impact of things and brings forth a teeming brood of errors” to “genuine truth,” which is
“uniform and self-reproducing” (70-71). Here Bacon’s thinking takes a decidedly Protestant turn; the uniform self-reproduction that he notes of genuine truth is replicated in the production of the novel.

Throughout the tract, Baconian philosophy resembles Protestant philosophy, and this resemblance has consequences for gendering. Bacon sounds like Tyndale exhorting readers to consume Biblical text when he berates Plato for giving out “the falsehood that truth is, as it were, the native inhabitant of the human mind and need not come in from outside to take up its abode there” (64). Evelyn Fox Keller describes the “unobstructed receptivity” that the prospective scientist whom Bacon addresses in this tract must cultivate in order to receive “God’s truth”: “the mind must be pure and clean, submissive and open. Only then can it give birth to a masculine and virile science.”

Once the mind is purified, the scientist can be, in Keller’s words “impregnated by God, and in that act, virilized: made potent and capable of generating virile offspring in its union with nature.”

The position that Bacon asks the son to assume here is similar to that of Tyndale’s reader: the son must internalize God’s truth, or nature’s, and Bacon proposes that this can be accomplished by a transference of gender in which the son becomes a feminine receptacle. In this case, Bacon takes on the role of God, urging the son to “give yourself to me so that I may restore you to yourself” (72). As the scientist becomes feminine, nature also changes gender, becoming “he” rather than “she,” so that the “chaste, holy, and legal wedlock” between them can occur. Keller asserts that Bacon knew “on some level,” that “the scientific mind must be . . . a hermaphroditic mind” (42). The scientific mind, like the figure of the narrative transvestite, must reconcile contradictions, as Keller
points out: “Nature is commanded by being obeyed, revealed by being enslaved . . .
Science is to be aggressive yet responsive, powerful yet benign, masterful yet
subservient, shrewd yet innocent” (37).

Baconian gendering plays a significant role in the evolution of novelistic narrative; yet
the mechanism itself with which the gender of time is abstracted for use in the novel is
formulated in Newton’s *Principia*. Newton ascribes “resistance” to “bodies at rest, and
impulse to those in motion,” thereby codifying for scientific purposes the properties of
stasis and dynamism that poets, preachers and politicians had been conceptualizing since
the Renaissance. Indeed, Margaret Jacob explains that “consumers of the new science . .
were repeatedly told that what they were learning sanctioned the existing social and
constitutional order.” Newton describes a “force . . always proportional to the body
whose force it is” that only exerts its force, or “inertia” when “another force, impressed
upon it, endeavors to change its condition” (2), conceptions of propulsion, friction, and
rotation that novelists would abstract into narrative. His description of the properties of
force mirror the properties of desire: “force consists in the action only, and remains no
longer in the body when the action is over.” Desire, too, is spent or satisfied when the
individual it possesses achieves the object of desire. Todorov identifies this property in
the narrative “mechanism”: “The satisfaction of desire signifies its death” (104-06).
Todorov implies the scientific and economic relationship between desire and narrative
when he observes desire as one of the “universals (exchange might be another).”

Bakhtin identifies folklore as the first literary link between nature and narrative. He
credits Rabelais with inventing the literary form that provided “new and more authentic
matrices and links that correspond to 'nature'" (205), links that, for Bakhtin, originate in
tfolklore. Bakhtin argues that capitalism created an environment in which medieval
thinking was disintegrating along with its “concepts in which real time is devalued and
dissolved in extratemporal categories” (206). Rabaleis finds in folklore what Bakhtin
describes as “a new form of time and a new relationship of time to space, to earthly space
. . . that would permit one to link real life (history) to the real earth.” Bakhtin’s theory
opposes the “temporal relationships of growth” to the temporal contiguity of
phenomena,” finding in growth a “time of labor” and productivity in which “time marks .
. . a movement toward . . . the future” (207). Although opposed to one another, these
oppositions work together: “consumption . . . is not separated from productive labor” but
rather works with it as a static partner, a necessary element in producing the friction that
in turn produces progress.

The relationship between dynamic and static time for which Bakhtin argues in the
“chronotope” contains Newtonian elements. Bakhtin reveals the chronotope as that
which “provides the ground essential for the showing forth, the representation of events”
(250). In other words, events can only be represented against the stability provided by
static or what Bakhtin calls “binding events”; and the “showing forth” is what occurs at
“the primary point from which ‘scenes’ in the novel unfold.” This primary point is the
“concrete utterance of a speaking subject where centrifugal as well as centripetal forces
are brought to bear” (272). The pivotal point in the narrative agrees with Castle’s “point
for narrative transformation” at the “privileged site of plot.” Parker describes a similar
narrative moment of representation when she notes that the term “display” “involves
simultaneously an act of unfolding, offering to the eye, and the more static sense of something to be gazed upon and seen” (127). Paul Ricoeur sums up the Freudian interpretation of this juncture:

For a philosophical critique, the essential point concerns what I call the place of that energy discourse. Its place, it seems to me, lies at the intersection of desire and language. . . . The intersection of the ‘natural and the ‘signifying’ is the point at which the instinctual drives are ‘represented’ by affects and ideas; consequently the coordination of the economic language and the intentional language is the main question of this epistemology and one that cannot be avoided by reducing either language to the other. It was necessary to oppose to eschatology a creative and generative time, a time measured by creative acts, by growth and not by destruction. 62

So it seems that critics of narrative, each from their own perspective, have been drawn to this nebulous “point” or “intersection” or “juncture” in the novel which is the site of regeneration, of conflict and crisis and resolution, where narrative dynamics meets with stasis and in overcoming it, sustains and rejuvenates the plot of the novel.

From Petrarch’s poetics of external desire and gendered time to Castiglione’s adaptation of those ideas as a cultural construction, we can see in the Italian Renaissance the beginnings of what would later become novelistic narrative. We can trace the evolution of gendered time to the emergence of Protestant doctrines that insisted on unified systems of life that strictly accounted for a believer’s time and inculcated a linear
way of thinking into English culture that we also find in linear plot. We can also trace novelistic influences to the writings of Tyndale, whose images of consumed text created the shift from external to internal desire. Finally, we can understand the ways in which the new science provided a form and a mechanism with which gendered time and desire serve as the raw materials of progressive narrative. Not one of these influences alone, but all of them together form an evolutionary pattern from which the novel eventually emerged.
Notes


10. As gendered rather than sexualized entities, Fortune and virtue fight for control not only in men but in women as well. Castiglione praises Duchess Elisabetta Gonzaga because

    her virtues might have remained somewhat hidden . . . but Fortune, as if admiring such rare virtues, chose to reveal through many adversities and stings of calamity, in order to prove that in the tender breast of a woman,
and accompanied by singular beauty, there may dwell prudence and
strength of spirit, and all those virtues which are very rare even in austere
men. (16-17)

distinguish my argument from hers: the transvestism she investigates involves that
of male novelists posing as female characters as a way of reaffirming male identity.
In my argument, I investigate the transvestite as a male or female character who
“tries on” traits which gender the opposite sex through the social constructions of
gender, thereby regulating the machinery of narrative progress.


argues that in narrative cinema “the new order always turns out to have been the
original order, temporarily interrupted” so that film rearticulates “the existing
symbolic order in ideologically orthodox ways” (221).


19. Qtd. in Upham 330.

20. For a history of the *précieuse* tradition in England, see Upham 350-63.


22. Silverman points out the significance of the female body in narrative (whether in cinema or print): through the system of suture, a process in which viewer/readers identify with a character in the narrative and “become” that character. Courtiers could therefore identify with the Petrarchan lover and displace his own passivity. According to Silverman, suture operates

   by setting up a relay of glances between the male characters within the fiction and the male viewers in the theater audience, a relay which has the female body as its object. Similarly, one of the most effective strategies at its disposal for deflecting attention away from the passivity and lack of the viewing subject’s own position is by displacing those values onto a female character within the fiction. (222)


25. The courtier disavows his performance by adopting an attitude of “sprezzatura,” a
kind of nonchalance that Castiglione defines through the speech of Count Ludovico da Canossa: “conceal all art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it” (43).

Silverman describes suture as a process whereby the inadequacy of the subject’s position is exposed in order to facilitate (i.e., create the desire for) new insertions into a cultural discourse which promises to make good that lack. . . . [suture] involves attributing to a character within the fiction qualities which in fact belong to the machinery of enunciation: the ability to generate narrative, the omnipotent and coercive gaze, the castrating authority of the law (231-32)


Samuel Johnson’s opinion on women and property sums up the situation: “the chastity of women being of the utmost importance, as all property depends upon it, they who forfeit it should not have any possibility of being restored to good character.” See James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1980) 702.


Annibal Guasco and Ann de Beaujeu qtd in Jones 15-17.

Jones presents evidence that “the Petrarchan mode . . . could be regendered to guarantee the chastity of a woman poet” (34); she cites examples from Mary Wroth’s *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* and Gaspara Stampa’s *Rime*. Naomi J Miller
argues that Lady Mary Wroth “appropriates and transforms the tropes of her father and uncle, both Petrarchan poets *par excellence*” in *Changing the Subject* (Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1996) 156.


35. Miller argues that Mary Wroth also gave agency to her heroine in *Urania*: “Wroth not only represents Urania as an active presence,” but distinguishes “her narrative discourse from the conventionally idealized conceits of her male predecessors . . . locating the emerging subjectivity of her protagonist, however beautiful, in a perishable human body” (170). Wroth was criticized by Lord Denny, who, interestingly, called her a “hermaphrodite” (169).


37. Tyndale translated the Pentateuch in 1530.


40. Tyndale, *Doctrinal Treatises* 505.


47. Qtd. in Hill, *Society and Puritanism* 137.


49. Qtd in Fletcher 294.


51. Fletcher 353-63.

52. Qtd in Fletcher 353.

53. Greenblatt argues, however, that the paradox for Tyndale’s philosophy of internal desire is Tyndale’s “intense need for something external to himself in which he could totally merge his identity . . . for More, to be sure, the assurance rests in an
institution, while for Tyndale it rests in a sacred text illuminated by faith, but both
achieve guaranteed access to a truth that lies beyond individual or social
construction” (111).


55. Joyce Oldham Appleby, Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth Century

56. Sir Isaac Newton, Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy and His System
of the World, trans Andrew Motte (1769), revised Florian Cajori (Berkeley: U of

57. Francis Bacon, “The Masculine Birth of Time,” The Philosophy of Francis Bacon,

58. Evelyn Fox Keller, Reflections of Gender and Science (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985)

59. For a study of the affect of Newton’s Optics on poetry, see M. H. Nicolson, Newton
Demands the Muse (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1946). See also William Powell
that “in the early eighteenth-century,” Newton was “cited by theologians, essayists,
and poets alike as authority for the proof of celestial order” (96).

58. Margaret Jacob, The Cultural Meaning of the Scientific Revolution (Philadelphia:
Temple UP, 1988) 129. Jacob explains that Newtonian theory was disseminated to
the general public through a series of lectures in which laypersons were taught that
nature was “knowable; its laws could be mastered and, just as important, applied” (142).

See Stephen Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1988). Greenblatt argues that for Shakespearean drama, “friction could be fictionalized, chafing chastened and hence made fit for the stage, by transforming it into the witty, erotically charged sparring that is the heart of the lovers’ experience” (89). He claims that “the play—plots, characters, and the pleasure they confer—cannot continue without the fictive existence of two distinct genders and the friction between them” (93). Genette notes “a very subtle effect of friction . . . between the slight temporal displacement of the narrative of events . . . and the complete simultaneousness in the report of thoughts and feelings” (217). What Genette remarks upon is the lag-time between an event and its telling, “displaced just enough to create dissonance” (218).

Critics have variously identified Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) as a romantic adventure, an economic manifesto, a religious tract, a psychological profile, a treatise on individualism, or simply as a work of juvenile fiction, to name but a few of the categories that have suggested themselves to the novel's readers. Finally, Defoe's first work of fiction is all of these. I am not concerned here with what the novel is, but with how the novel came to be: in short, how does Defoe sustain a prolonged narrative to create what many critics now recognize as a prototype of the novel? With what devices does Defoe progress his narrative, and what relationships does he establish between narrative progress and other forms of progress?

I shall argue that Defoe was a "mechanick" in the eighteenth-century sense of that term whose familiarity with Newton's theories of motion allowed him to conflate Newton's ideas about resistance and impulse with popular conventions of gendered time. Since Defoe's method of juxtaposing gendered time forms the nucleus of my argument, I will use a schematic approach to unfold chronologically Defoe's narrative strategies. Defoe uses the raw material of gendered associations in his narrative machinery, concentrating masculine and feminine forces in the figure of the narrative transvestite, a character who regulates desire to both regenerate energy within the narrative and to direct
corresponds to Puritan projections of individual progress in an economic and a spiritual sense; Defoe’s mechanical model ultimately provides a blueprint for the construction of the novel.

The principles of physics that Newton set forth in the *Principia* seem largely responsible for inspiring Defoe’s narrative mechanics, much as Newton’s *Opticks* provided new viewpoints for poetics. Defoe’s familiarity with the works of Newton is not surprising; his early education with Charles Morton, who Pat Rogers notes had “special interests” in scientific and mathematical theory, undoubtedly acted as an early influence on Defoe. Defoe’s Puritan background helped to establish his interests in science. G. S. Rousseau asserts that “Puritanism in particular ... played a seminal role in the dissemination of the new curiosity about natural philosophy ... as did the relation of the sexes and the notion that science was a masculine activity.” Rousseau also notes that “Newton’s ideas were rapidly applied to domains other than the physical universe” (217), and he confirms that Defoe owned dozens of scientific tracts, among them those of Newton (238-241). In *Robinson Crusoe*, Defoe describes progress or lack of progress as “projection” or “miscarry,” terms that also appear in his earlier nonfiction works; his use of gendered language, both literal and metaphorical, corresponds with narrative movements that model Newtonian principles of resistance and impulse. Defoe’s tendency to render abstract these gendered expressions to explain trade and historical matters is a short step from adapting them for use in the novel.

Defoe begins *Robinson Crusoe* with an accounting of time in which tense serves as a grammatical chronotope, a ground from which the mechanics of his narrative operate. In
a pattern that Defoe follows throughout the novel, he establishes a chronotope from which he can move either forward or backward in time: Crusoe notes that "I was born in the year 1632." Crusoe uses his birthdate as a marker from which he narrates his family background, generating momentum by "backing up," in effect, as if to get a running start on the plot. By the end of the paragraph, Crusoe brings readers from his birth in 1632 to the novelistic present, fluctuating back and forth in time, as his tense shifts indicate: "we call ourselves and write our name, Crusoe, and so my companions always called me."

Defoe continues to alternate tense in the next paragraph by referring to his history in the past perfect: "My father . . . had . . . designed me for the law"; then future perfect: "but I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea." The past perfect tense marks a static time in which Crusoe's life has been planned for him in accordance with another's desire. Crusoe's lack of satisfaction with these plans--his desire to pursue another course--establishes resistance against his father's plans and generates the friction that will soon create conflict between them. This friction builds a grammatical chronotope, as Defoe signifies by his use of the future perfect tense into which Defoe projects Crusoe's desire and with it, narrative progress.

In addition to the grammatical chronotopes that help constitute Defoe's narrative physics, his characters also operate as sites of resistance and impulse. Crusoe's father embodies the stasis that Defoe's narrative requires in order to generate friction and, subsequently, plot. The elder Crusoe, who is "very ancient" and "confined by the gout," is unable to move about easily (27). Crusoe looks back on his father's advice as "excellent"; indeed, his father is willing to start Crusoe on a middle-class life by ensuring
that he would be "well-introduced." However, this mechanism is not conducive to novelistic narrative since the desire to launch Crusoe on this middle-class path is his father's, not his. As soon as the force of his father's desire had spent itself, Crusoe would be immobilized, unable to regenerate narrative energy without his own desire to do so.

M. M. Bahktin argues that the process of "becoming," which we can read as "progressing toward," is inspired by what we can think of as the friction generated in the "struggle and dialogic interrelationship" between "categories of ideological discourse":

another's discourse . . . strives . . . to determine the very bases of our ideological interrelations with the world, the very basis of our behavior; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse. An individual's becoming, an ideological process, is characterized precisely by a sharp gap between these two categories: in one, the authoritative word (religious, political, moral; the word of a father . . .) that does not know internal persuasiveness, in the other internally persuasive word that is denied all privilege, backed up by no authority at all, and is frequently not even acknowledged in society.\(^7\)

The relationship between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse resembles the relationship between Newtonian resistance and impulse. Authoritative discourse, like that of Crusoe's father, is the discourse of the narrative transvestite who resists the potentially nonproductive impulses of internally persuasive discourse. Once the "gap" between the two discourses closes, their conflict generates the friction that drives the narrative.
Regardless of the positioning of the two discourses, no plot can be set in motion without the force of desire. Even had Crusoe been moved by his father’s desire to “raise [his] fortune by application and industry,” Crusoe’s future was not one of continuing progress but of eventual stasis, “a life of ease and pleasure” (27-28). Maximillian Novak notes that theories of Crusoe as “economic man” rely on Crusoe’s “dissatisfaction with his present lot” as his motivation for leaving his father; Novak sees Crusoe’s “refusal to follow the ‘calling’ chosen for him by his father” as his “original sin.” If so, then we can say that narrative may be fueled by sin. Defoe does not identify productivity as a result of “confined desires” until the last third of the novel, but he demonstrates the principle in Crusoe’s father. The elder Crusoe points out that by cleaving to the “middle state,” his son would avoid the struggles of “the mechanick part of mankind” and the “ambitions” of those in the upper stations, both of whom embody the kind of action that fuels novelistic narrative. But the progress of novelistic narrative depends on such desire. The authoritative, middle-class discourse of Crusoe’s father contains what Bakhtin identifies as “ennobled language . . . purchased at the price of polemical abstraction.” Bakhtin sees this kind of language as

inert, static and moribund . . . the restricted world view of a man trying to preserve one and the same immobile pose, someone whose movements are made not in order better to see, but quite the opposite—he moves so that he may turn away from, not notice, be distracted . . . cleansed of all possible associations with crude life. (385)
Crusoe’s father characterizes the middle state as an economic way of life “calculated” to provide “peace and plenty . . . temperance, moderation, quietness, health, society, all agreeable diversions, and all desirable pleasures” (28). In this middle state, Crusoe could achieve the perfect stasis of those who “went silently and smoothly thro’ the world, and comfortably out of it . . . not enraged with the passion of envy” (28-29)—in short, he could achieve an almost death-in-life state that provides little engagement with life and little material for progressive narrative.

When Defoe opposes the desire of the father to impose stasis on his son against the son’s desire to escape this stasis, he not only generates the novel’s first point of conflict, or as Bahktin would have it, “the struggle and dialogical interrelationship” between “categories of ideological discourse”; he also arranges the point at which the discourses of gender meet. Crusoe’s father “acts” here as the narrative transvestite—in this case, a male character who assumes feminine characteristics to become the static point of resistance whose duty is to regulate the movement of the narrative in a productive direction. Thus the narrative transvestite ensures progress in a manner similar to that of the women of Guidobaldo’s court in Castiglione’s Book of the Courtier. Indeed, the economic success of the elder Crusoe results from his ability to regulate his own movement, directing progress for himself and others from a position of stability. Defoe’s concern about regulating desire and channeling it toward productive ends becomes apparent in his earlier economic tracts, a concern that carries over into his fiction.9

Geoffrey M. Sill sees Robinson Crusoe as a work of ideology in which Defoe attempts to systematize “the ideas of nature, kingship, providence, opportunity, and self restraint.”10
Manuel Schonhorn observes "Defoe's alarm over the difficulty of regulating a society of self-seeking individuals in an increasingly complex culture." Indeed, Crusoe appears to require regulation: Novak notes that Crusoe's disobedience seems aimless, arising out of "a strangely adventurous, romantic, and unprofitable desire to see foreign lands" (48).

Had Defoe allowed Crusoe's father the final victory in this struggle, however, Defoe would have defeated the progress of his narrative; Crusoe's unconfinable desire is what eventually drives the narrative out of its stasis.

In Crusoe's father, Defoe localizes and genders the mechanics of Newtonian physics. Crusoe's father pleads against the often deadly passion of dynamic change; his separation from the desires of narrative dynamics have an effeminating affect on him and mark him as the inert site of centripetal force. When Defoe defines the elder Crusoe as inert and feminine, he associates him with the utterly confined, controlled desire whose literary originals are Petrarch's Laura and the romance heroine, and whose literal model is Jane Ratcliffe and her "estrangement... from the liking of life itself." The inertia of narrative stasis enables the senior Crusoe to control the actions of others who fall within his "orbit," a trait that Newton observes in centripetal force: "all bodies... endeavor to recede from the centres of their orbits; and were it not for the opposition of a contrary force which restrains them to, and detains them in their orbits... would fly off." In this case, Crusoe's father may represent the mercantilist point of view; Crusoe's hindsight that his father was right to advise against seafaring adventures may reflect Defoe's ambivalence about the safe yet slow progress of mercantilism in contrast to both the risks and the promises of the rapid advancement inherent in unbridled capitalism.
The friction that Defoe generates in the conflict between centripetal and centrifugal forces motivates narrative progress, as Bakhtin observes when he defines "stratification" and "heteroglossia" in physical terms. Bakhtin places these forces side-by-side: “alongside the centripetal forces, the centrifugal forces of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralization and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralization and disunification go forward” (272). For Bakhtin, the centripetal force of stratification is “unitary” and “generative,” qualities more often associated with the feminine, but which I associate with the narrative transvestite’s ability to generate progress by reconciling oppositions. Heteroglossia, its centrifugal counterpart, consists of “diversity” and particularly, “penetration,” a commonplace sexual term. Defoe’s narrative strategy demonstrates Bakhtin’s theory that stratification and heteroglossia are “not only a static invariant of linguistic life, but also what insures its dynamics” (272). Crusoe’s father caps his argument against his son’s plans--and against the novel’s plot--with an emotional plea for unity:

... and to close all, he told me I had my elder brother for an example, to whom he had used the same earnest persuasions to keep him from going into the Low Country wars, but could not prevail, his young desires prompting him to run into the army, where he was killed. (29)

In the effect of this plea on Crusoe, Defoe demonstrates the power of stasis to regenerate and thus to enlarge itself by centripetal force. If we think of this force, as Newton did, in terms of the motions of heavenly bodies whereby the gravitational pull of the stronger force detains lesser forces in its orbit, then we can see how Crusoe’s father
metaphorically pulls Crusoe into his orbit. Newton observes that in this force “bodies are drawn or impelled, or in any way tend, towards a point as to a centre” (2). Stasis accomplishes this enlargement here by invoking the fear of its permanence when Crusoe’s father recounts his elder son’s story as a history, a fixed time in which his brother is trapped when his “young desires” propelled him toward the permanent stasis of death. Crusoe’s father enlarges his orbit by pulling Crusoe in; and this first conflict results in Crusoe’s temporary stasis: “I was sincerely affected . . . and I resolved not to think of going abroad any more, but to settle at home according to my father’s desire” (29-30). Crusoe seems aware that as long as he remains near his father, he feels his father’s centripetal influence: “In short, to prevent any of my father’s farther importunities, in a few weeks after, I resolved to run quite away from him” (30).16

Though Crusoe’s desires are not yet strong enough to break the inertia that his father’s argument induces, they are strong enough to “move” the elder Crusoe; and here again, Newton’s physics are at work. Newton states that “if a body impinge upon another, and by its force change the motion of the other, that body also (because of the equality of the mutual pressure) will undergo an equal change, in its own motion, toward the contrary part” (14). The result is that one body will “obstruct the progress of the one as much as it advances that of the other.” Thus while Crusoe’s father argues that Crusoe should stay put, the father is himself “moved”: “I observed the tears run down his face very plentifully, and especially when he spoke of my brother who was killed . . . he was so moved that he broke off the discourse, and told me his heart was so full he could say no
more to me” (29). Regardless of Crusoe’s ability to move his father, the old man proves difficult to pull away from; Crusoe takes more than a year to leave his home for the sea.

Crusoe’s adventures at sea seem to result from Defoe’s interest in romance narrative. In his preface, Defoe fixes the novel’s literary conception in romance when he identifies Robinson Crusoe as “the story of any man’s private adventures in the world” (25).

Defoe’s use of romance narrative answers to at least two purposes: its uses as a source of static narration and its popularity. Once Defoe detaches Crusoe from his father’s orbit, he must move Crusoe toward another form of stasis in order to sustain his plot. Ian Watt observes a similar tendency in capitalism when he argues that “Crusoe’s ‘original sin’ is really the dynamic tendency of capitalism itself, whose aim is never merely to maintain the status quo, but to transform it incessantly.” Romance narrative provides the kind of synchronic chronotope from which narrative diachronics can move, much as the romance genre provides a basis for novels themselves, as Tzvetan Todorov observes: “Novels are interpretations of preceding novels . . . the novel genre as a whole represents a reinterpretation of other genres, specifically the romance.” Ever the tradesman with an eye on the public’s taste for adventure narratives, Defoe “illustrates the continuance of romantic tastes in the literature of the masses,” as Robert Morse Lovett and Helen Sard Hughes assert. Paula M. Backscheider points out that Defoe urged the instructive uses of romance when he argued that romance serves a regulatory function by making “Impressions on the Mind” in “handsome Oratory.” In these ways, romance narrative answered to Defoe’s purpose.
Defoe's narrative of Crusoe's adventures at sea demonstrates how Defoe uses the romance convention of chance to illustrate the lack of progress inherent in planless action, or "plotlessness." Crusoe avoids the pull of his father's desires by leaving "casually, without the purpose of making any elopement that time" (31). His lack of purpose indicates that his first voyage is the work of chance, an element that Bakhtin identifies in the Greek romance and its seventeenth-century French imitation when he observes that the "logic" of chance "is one of random contingency" (92). Bakhtin recognizes in this "adventure-time" an "extratemporal and in effect infinite series [of incidents] . . . controlled by one force--chance" (94). The diachronics of such a narrative depend utterly on synchronicity: "should something happen a minute earlier or a minute later, that is, should there be no chance simultaneity or chance disjunctions in time, there would be no plot at all, and nothing to write a novel about." Backscheider notes that Defoe became "a master of collapsing time . . . particularly alert to simultaneity" (86).

The lack of planning inherent in chance indicates the extent to which Crusoe's desires are unconfined; with no goal and no deliberation, Defoe places Crusoe in a passive situation in which his fate is out of his hands. Bakhtin argues that the happenings of a timeless narrative occur when the "normal, intended, or purposeful sequence of life's events is interrupted," providing for "the intrusion of nonhuman forces--fate, gods, villains--and it is precisely these forces, and not the heroes, who in adventure-time take all the initiative" (95). Crusoe does not deliberately book passage on a vessel: he falls prey to a centripetal force stronger than that of his father, "the common allurement of seafaring men"--free passage. Once at sea, Crusoe reaches his next point of stasis.
Romance narrative carries connotations of time that privilege inertia and thus help to establish characteristics of feminine time that Defoe uses as raw material for reproductive narrative. The extratemporal, infinite character of adventure-time marks it as a feminine form of narrative in which the (usually) male character can make no progress because progress, by its nature, can be measured only in the temporal, finite terms of diachronic narrative. And here we see in Crusoe’s relationship to his environment an affinity between his directionless desires and the directionless motion of the sea, a force of nature, like all of nature, conventionally gendered feminine. He considers the “breach of [his] duty to God and [his] father” only when the “wind began to blow and the waves to rise in a most frightful manner” (31), thoughts which “continued all the while the storm continued” (32). However, the next day, Crusoe confesses that

as the sea was returned to its smoothness of surface and settled calmness by the abatement of that storm, so the hurry of my thoughts being over, my fears and apprehensions of being swallowed up by the sea being forgotten, and the current of my former desires returned, I entirely forgot the vows and promises made in my distress” (32-33).

Crusoe’s desires are aimless; they flow along without purpose or goal with the changeless current in an equally changeless pattern that marks the progress—or lack of progress—of the romance “hero.”

During nonlinear passages, Defoe sustains the narrative by again manipulating the desire of the reader through the manipulation of tense as a grammatical chronotope.

Defoe prefaces the forthcoming dynamic passage by feminizing the narrative preceding it
in time-frozen, past perfect tense: \textquotedblleft I had in five or six days got as compleat a victory over conscience as any young fellow that resolved not to be troubled with it could desire\textquotedblright\ (33). Then, in future perfect tense, Defoe excites the desire of his readers by projecting them into the dynamic passage that follows with a preview of it, like the \textquotedblleft trailers\textquotedblright\ that advertise films:

\begin{quote}
But I was to have another trial for it still; and Providence, as in such cases it generally does, resolved to leave me entirely without excuse. For if I would not take this for a deliverance, the next was to be such a one as the worst and most hardened wretch among us would confess both the danger and the mercy.
\end{quote}

Defoe\textquoteright s regulatory method here is similar to his method in the novel\textquoteright s first paragraph; in both instances, he uses tense shifts to gain momentum between passages, creating a sense of lack in readers that they desire to fill. In his earlier works of nonfiction, Defoe was already in the habit of forming an intimate relationship between character and reader, so that, as Rogers points out, when he paints \textquotedblleft the Operations of Nature when agitated by Violent Passions\textquotedblright\ he could also \textquotedblleft move the same Passions in the Reader, that he Describes with his Pen\textquotedblright\ (101). Rogers notes that Defoe involves readers in Crusoe\textquoteright s adventures by rendering everything \textquotedblleft through the narrator\textquoteright s consciousness\textquotedblright\ so that \textquotedblleft we are in there with Crusoe as he changes his mind in mid-sentence . . . an act of complicity\textquotedblright\ in which Defoe teaches writers \textquotedblleft how to bring their characters within the circle of [the readers\textquoteright] privacy\textquotedblright\ (101). Instead of using the force of Crusoe\textquoteright s desire to drive the narrative, Defoe here and in similar passages uses the force of desire that he hopes to generate in the reader to
sustain interest in Crusoe’s plight and to project them through an essentially static period in the narrative.

Defoe manipulates the reader’s desire by juxtaposing gendered passages in order to displace desire from the text into the reader. After Defoe stabilizes Crusoe’s dynamic account of the storm in Yarmouth roads by again fixing a point in time—“the sixth day of our being at sea”--Crusoe’s narrative again moves back and forth in time, generating an almost sexualized movement that both entices readers to continue and produces the friction necessary to propel the narrative. Backscheider argues that in his nonfictional work, Defoe understood the extent to which structure determines “impact” on the reader:

Defoe’s contemporaries believed their task to be discovering sequence and pointing out relationships within this sequence . . . the most influential decisions Defoe makes are structural. The way the historian arranges his material determines far more than clarity; it implies relationships--temporal, spatial, causal, and analogical . . . it indicates simultaneity or unrelatedness as well as sequence; and, most crucially, it shapes the readers’ understanding and reaction, both rational and emotional. (74-75)

Defoe displaces desire from text to reader, a practice that Protestants encouraged readers of biblical text to perform; this desire seeks a conclusion that reconciles both reader and text. Paul K. Alkon argues that “Defoe’s is a more diachronic than synchronic view of both character and morality . . . it leads readers to suspend judgment until the last page” by providing “a rationale for one to consider episodes of a life or a narrative from the perspective of the end.”

Crusoe’s account of being stranded in the roads, then being
tossed about in the violent storm, juxtaposes utter stasis with utter dynamics. Here Defoe demonstrates the pointlessness of an essentialist approach to gendering narrative time; merely juxtaposing stasis and dynamics with no regulatory figure to ensure narrative resolution cannot sustain novelistic narrative, but traps the story in the continual flow of adventure-time.

Defoe illustrates his method of successfully sustaining novelistic narrative by juxtaposing gendered narrative time to regenerate narrative desire in one paragraph following the shipwreck. The captain encourages Crusoe to return home, and Crusoe must decide “what course I should take, and whether I should go home or go to sea” (38). Defoe pauses narrative action to allow Crusoe time in which to ponder his folly at refusing to return to his father; and, in the stasis of this pause, Crusoe reaches a point of no return:

In this state of life, however, I remained some time, uncertain what measures to take, and what course of life to lead. An irresistible reluctance continued to going home; and as I stayed awhile, the remembrance of the distress I had been in wore off; and as that abated, the little motion I had in my desires to a return wore off with it, till at last I quite lay’d aside the thought of it, and lookt out for a voyage. (38)

This paragraph provides one of the best examples in the novel of the physics operative in Defoe’s narrative strategy. Crusoe’s stasis at the beginning of the paragraph, marked by a “state” in which he “remained some time, uncertain . . . what course of life to lead” establishes the initial stability, or Newtonian resistance, from which the force of his
desires operates. His “irresistible reluctance” to return to his father is a form of negative desire that allows him, in his own stasis—“as I stayed awhile”—to resist the inertia of his father. When his “distress” wore off, so did the negative form of desire that prevented his return to sea, and without that force, he lost “the little motion” to return to his father. In this paragraph, Defoe commits Crusoe—and his own narrative—to a progressive course of action in which moving backward is no longer an option.

If moving backward is no longer possible, then moving forward is still a matter of chance for Crusoe. Carl R. Lovitt recognizes in another of Defoe’s novels, *Moll Flanders* (1722), that Defoe seems to write “two qualitatively different kinds of narrative,” one “unified by tight thematic links and a balanced structure of repetitions,” and the other, concerning Moll’s criminal activities, which “consists essentially of discrete and loosely connected episodes.” These narratives constitute the opposition between linear and cyclical time schemes, or “real” time and “adventure” time that Defoe also employs in *Robinson Crusoe*. Crusoe recognizes an “evil influence” that prompts him to board a ship bound for Africa, considers it a “great misfortune” that he did not “ship out... as a sailor,” yet later indicates that it was his “fate” to “choose for the worst” (39). Here Crusoe seems to edge up to the admission that his own desires drive him to make these choices, yet he never quite lets go of chance as the prime motivator. Indeed, he goes on board “in the habit of a gentleman” who “neither had any business on the ship, nor learned to do any,” a statement that in Defoe’s day equaled a confession of idleness, a condition that Defoe’s culture had identified with effeminacy since the seventeenth century. Further, Crusoe’s voyage to Africa is encouraged by the ship’s captain, who
notices Crusoe’s “desire to see the world”—a passive sort of desire that suggests Crusoe’s status as a spectator, not an actor. The captain requires no investment or labor from Crusoe; in fact, Crusoe’s passage is, again, “at no expense.” Even the capital that Crusoe invests in the toys he brings on board comes from relatives who contribute to what Crusoe recognizes as his “first adventure.”

Yet once the voyage gets underway, the narrative pace picks up, and here we see Defoe juxtaposing feminine narrative to masculine narrative to create the friction that regenerates progress in the plot. Crusoe’s first voyage to Africa “was the only voyage” in which Crusoe was “successful in all [his] ventures” (40). Defoe’s language implies that Crusoe’s economic projections have proven dynamic; indeed, he has personally progressed in that this voyage makes Crusoe “both a sailor and a merchant.” Crusoe’s return on his investment in the amount of 5 pounds 9 ounces of gold dust generates both his “aspiring thoughts” and the next phase of the narrative. In the next paragraph, Defoe slows the narrative when Crusoe recounts that “even this voyage” had its “misfortunes,” a return to the vagaries of chance in which he was “continually sick,” being acted upon by “the excessive heat of the climate.” Returning to the novelistic present, Crusoe is “now set up for a Guiney trader” and he begins to take more initiative as a decision-maker: “I resolved to go the same voyage again.” Back at sea, however, Crusoe is once again transformed into a feminized victim of chance: “Our ship making her course towards the Canary Islands . . . was surprised in the grey of the morning by a Turkish rover of Sallee, who gave chase to us with all the sail she could make.” Neither Crusoe nor the vessel’s captain seem to have control of the ship, which apparently steers itself. The element of
surprise, as Bakhtin observes, belongs to the romance narratives of chance, and here the Turkish sallee is clearly in control of the situation. Being made a slave also comes as a surprise to Crusoe, whose will and desires are now coopted by his master (41).

Defoe uses Crusoe’s captivity as an opportunity to expound on the novelistic enterprise and to foreshadow Crusoe as the narrative transvestite, the first indication of linearity in the novel, since, in a sense, this role represents an inheritance from his father. Although Crusoe “meditated nothing but [his] escape,” he found all his methods impractical because he “had no body to communicate it to” (41). Here Defoe seems to recognize novelistic narrative as a partnership between active writer and passive reader, with language as the all-important mediator, for there is “no Englishman, Irishman, or Scotsman there but my self” with whom to communicate (42). He identifies the feminine practice of generating narrative in the way in which he “often pleased” himself with “the imagination” of his escape in what amounts to a two-year gestation period. He recognizes, however, that he “never had the least encouraging prospect of putting it into practice” without someone to whom he could transfer his imaginings and thereby produce or project the masculine execution of a narrative. Thus begins Crusoe’s thoughts of the dynamic generation of his own plot, which Defoe makes possible by the union of masculine and feminine within the same character.

However, even in Crusoe’s escape, Defoe continues to place Crusoe at the mercy of chance. Crusoe’s escape depends first of all upon “an odd circumstance” that “presented it self” (42). His escape from the inertia of slavery is not toward a particular goal other than freedom; but again, as with his father, he runs away from stasis, for he did not “so
much as consider whither [he] should steer his boat; for any where to get out of that place was [his] way" (43). The narrative begins to move again when Crusoe literally “plots” his escape, moving the narrative forward with a chronological account of his actions, beginning with his “first contrivance.” Defoe might have “contrived” to continue this dynamic narrative indefinitely, but he stalls its progress and uses the subsequent static narrative as a pivot point upon which to turn Crusoe’s story. Crusoe is all but becalmed at Cape de Verd, and with the islands in sight, he “could not tell what [he] had best to do” (52). He is at this point again a victim of chance, for a mere “fresh of wind” might place him out of reach of the islands (53). His situation makes him “very pensive” and he sits down inside the cabin, for the moment rendered inert. Then— at just that moment— chance intervenes again and Xury spies the Portuguese ship that will take Crusoe to Brazil.

In Crusoe’s narrative of his life in Brazil, Defoe affords readers their first glimpse of Crusoe as a successful narrative transvestite. Once in Brazil, Crusoe regains his narrative impulse, “resolving” to “turn planter among them,” so he “formed a plan for [his] plantation and settlement” (55). In this plan, Defoe’s dynamic plot is driven by a desire for stasis, not just to plant and settle and to be planted and settled. This desire corresponds to the desire of Petrarch’s eternally weeping lover, whose narrative is driven by desire for the ever-static Laura and, ultimately, the union of the divided self. And here as well, Defoe establishes a cause-and-effect relationship that sorts with scientific method. Crusoe’s ambition to become a planter is born when he observes, in Baconian fashion, the conditions around him, “seeing how well the planters lived, and how they grew rich suddenly.”23 Crusoe is master of his fortunes now: he “causes” his belongings
on the ship to be delivered to him; he “acquainted himself” with the methods of sugar production; and within a few short years, his “land began to come into order.” These projections amount to an active, dynamic execution of plot; yet in order to achieve his goals, he must remain inert, his desires confined within his plans. For the narrative transvestite, the plan moves, not the planner.

However, in Crusoe’s narration of his success in Brazil, Defoe seems to realize that the impulse toward a static object of desire has the potential to becalm the narrative as soon as that object is reached, and he uses this stasis to regenerate the narrative. The Brazilian narration has the character of a dynamic account; yet Crusoe, having reached his goal of prosperity, “had no remedy but to go on” (55)--indefinitely. In short, his narrative is over because in reaching his goal, he has established himself within a cycle without end. Part of the “regret” with which Crusoe views his condition arises because he has “nobody to converse with but now and then” a neighbor who lives at a distance, and here Defoe hints at the analogous relationship between narrative movement and the reader to that of the narrative transvestite and the writer.

The analogy works like this: narrative movement depends upon the force of desire to overcome inertia, just as the arrangement of the gendered elements responsible for this movement must generate desire in the reader to continue reading. The distance between Crusoe and the neighbor is the distance between the writer and reader, a distance that must be alternatively maintained and overcome through the juxtaposing of masculine and feminine elements within narrative in order to provoke the reader’s desire and the movement of the narrative. Thus the role of the narrative transvestite in the novel
corresponds to that of the writer, both of whom must regulate the movement of the
narrative in such a way that it not only progresses toward a goal but regenerates itself
after reaching that goal. Crusoe discovers to his horror that in spite of his success in
Brazil, his existence there is "directly contrary to the life [he] delighted in" (55), and in
the term "contrary," Defoe seems to acknowledge the necessity of establishing an
opposition within his narrative. Crusoe associates his new life with his old one, "coming
into the very middle station, or upper degree of low life, which my father advised me to
before . . . I might as well ha' staid at home" (56). Defoe rescues his plot by resorting
once again to romance convention: rather than extinguishing Crusoe's desire because he
has achieved the object of that desire, Crusoe's stationary life in Brazil acts as a new
point of resistance that regenerates his longing for adventure and thus regenerates the
narrative.24

The regenerative purpose of the masculine and feminine characteristics of narrative
find their most obvious expression in Defoe's repeated use of the term "miscarry." When
applied to narrative, this term reconstitutes the literal meaning of a failed union between
male and female into a failed union of masculine and feminine that results in an
enterprise that never sees it own end. Indeed, in some instances Defoe seems to suggest
not a miscarriage, but an abortion--terms that were synonymous in the eighteenth
century--as when Crusoe's desires drive him to "go and leave the happy view I had of
being a rich and thriving man in my new plantation" (58), with "plantation" used here as
a metaphor for impregnation. The distinction between miscarriage and abortion seems to
be one of will, the abortive sense implying that Crusoe's desires lead him to deliberately
cast aside productive enterprises, whereas to miscarry implies that circumstances beyond his control influence the termination of his plan. Rogers notes this tendency when he states that for Defoe, the "refusal to learn from the past . . . is not just imprudent but against nature, perverse and, as it were, self-renewing" (65). Defoe uses the image of an incomplete gestation to end one line of narrative in order to regenerate a new line and thereby to recharge novelistic momentum.

Defoe juxtaposes Crusoe’s dynamism in Brazil with his passivity at sea, a demonstration of Defoe’s use of romance convention as the feminized element in his macronarrative. Crusoe’s continuing desire for adventure reflects the romance tradition in which Bakhtin identifies the failure of events to alter the hero’s character. Crusoe’s character is not altered by his previous misadventures, as his construction of his static situation in Brazil and his desire to return to sea indicate. His return to sea replays the circumstances of his earlier voyages: out of chance, “it happened” that the merchants and planters approached him to undertake this trip, offering him an “equal share of the negroes without providing any part of the stock”—once again, free passage (59). As if to underscore the repetition of events, Crusoe marks the date he sets sail as “the [first] of [September, 1659], being the same day eight year that I went from my father and mother at Hull.” In this repetition, we also see the cyclical nature inherent in feminine narrative. Crusoe’s vulnerability to the storm at sea underscores his passivity; he can only describe his feelings as his ship is driven by other forces and he himself is unable to act.

However, once shipwrecked, Defoe regenerates narrative momentum when Crusoe becomes once again capable of action, a capability that Defoe can only provide in a
pattern of stranding. Crusoe’s own unproductive impulses must be forced to a halt so that Crusoe can direct those impulses toward production, an effect we see in Brazil and on the island as well. As in Brazil, Crusoe rescues items from the ship for his use on land. Defoe masculinizes this passage as Crusoe observes, “I had no time to lose” (68); in other words, his survival depends upon his productive use of time. Within the stasis enforced upon him by feminine chance, he engages in activities that had been gendered as masculine at least since the seventeenth-century distinction between “outside” and “inside” labor: he hunts; he explores the island; and he builds, first a shelter, then furniture and tools. Crusoe’s narration of his activities assumes the characteristics of commercial accounting as Crusoe prioritizes his activities, lists his supplies, and describes his every situation in detail. In the first indication that Crusoe attempts to combat the forces of chance, he performs nothing without purpose, exploring the island not because he is curious about where he is, but as a duty for which he lists reasons: “My next work was to view the country, to seek a proper place for my habitation, and where to stow my goods to protect them from whatever might happen” (71). His idea of the island being “barren” is apparently that no other human inhabits it, for it seems well-supplied with other forms of life. Here Crusoe may again refer to the writer-reader relationship, since he assumes that no one will hear the tale of his arrival on the island.

Defoe marks an end to the novel’s adventure-time when Crusoe begins to account for his activities, and, in effect, to write his own narrative through his attempts to control time. Crusoe begins his “melancholy relation of a scene of silent life,” which he speculates “was never heard of in the world before” (81). In his account, he takes
command over the events that stranded him and relates them in linear fashion: "I shall take it from its beginning, and continue it in its order. It was, by my account, the 30th of Sept. when, in the manner as above said, I first set foot upon this horrid island." This linear narrative corresponds to Crusoe's Baconian observations of nature and his place within it: "the sun being, to us, in its autumnal equinox, was almost just over my head, for I reckoned my self, by observation, to be in the latitude of 9 degrees 22 minutes north of the line." Crusoe thus fixes his place within nature, becoming a masculine scientist in the Baconian tradition by using nature for his own purposes. Indeed, F. Floris Cohen links Baconian penetration of nature to time when he observes that "a decisive change in the degree of accuracy desired" of clocks "set in as soon as scientists made their entrance of the horological scene." He speculates that "the mechanical clock, as a little pocket of relative yet unique precision in the midst of a still by and large traditional society . . . contributed its share to the emergence of early modern science as the embodiment of the quest for precise and reliable knowledge." Defoe further inscribes his control of time into nature itself by cutting the Sabbath into

a large post, in capital letters, and making it into a great cross I set it up on the shore . . . upon the sides of this square post I cut every day a notch with my knife, and every seventh notch was as long again as the rest, and every first day of the month as long again as that long one, and thus I kept my kalander, or weekly, monthly, and yearly reckoning of time.

In this manner, Crusoe "kept" time, if not to control it, then at least to control his conception of it and to control how he "spends" time, in an economic and Calvinistic
sense, by being able to account for his activities within time. John M. Warner sees a “tension” between “the linear time of the retrospective account and the daily cyclicity of the journal,” precisely the tension that Defoe maintains within the novel through gendered narrative time. The sense of control that Crusoe gains helps to reverse his earlier situation in which he was held captive in adventure-time as its passive victim.

However, as Crusoe develops a sense of control through linear time, he also begins to develop a keener sense of his bifurcated self through writing. His account of his arrival on the island literally divides his thoughts between blessings and curses. In the “Evil” category, his list focuses on his separation from others, his misery at being singled out, his hopeless situation and lack of clothes and defenses. He balances these items with his “Good” list, in which his impulse for survival fights off the resistance and inertia of his misery (83-84). The only item that Crusoe cannot seem to answer is the last, in which he has “no soul to speak to.” Crusoe’s journal seems to represent his attempt to avoid the inertia of silence and to project himself in print. Crusoe finds in his list and in his journal a way to communicate with himself, to “comfort” himself, and to “deliver [his] thoughts from daily poring upon them, and afflicting my mind” (83), as if his writings become a projection of himself, a psychological object of desire that he pursues by imagining that his psyche is split into different and distinct individuals. Warner notes that the “extended commentaries” in the journal “could only have been written by the narrator of the novel, not by the narrator of the journal” (27). Crusoe admits that he does not expect anyone else to ever read his writings, so he must invent his own reader: himself.
Defoe's journal also regulates narrative tempo by forcing readers to slow down as Defoe places them in a bifurcated position similar to his own. Alkon observes that the journal causes readers to operate "simultaneously" at "two different time levels . . . for comparison to illustrate the advantages of his situation" (146-49). The reader's situation is also similar to that of Crusoe's in that, like the reader, Crusoe also already knows what happens to him and is himself reviewing his narrative, first as a writer, then, presumably later, as a reader. Further, Crusoe's journal again represents Defoe's manner of narrating the story through reversal, projection, and miscarriage. Defoe's pattern of projection begins in the narrative present: "And now it was when I began to keep a journal of every days employment" (86). He then backs up the narrative: "for indeed at first I was in too much hurry, and not only hurry as to labour, but in too much discomposure of mind."

Rogers observes that "the journal serves to free the narration from direct dependence on chronology (when it is dropped, the time-scale can be slipped out of gear)" (118). Defoe describes what Crusoe would have written had he attempted the journal from the beginning of his stranding, possibly in an attempt to head off the readers' abandonment of the narrative by reassuring them that the journal will not be dull. Finally, Defoe backs up the tense before returning readers to the narrative present: "I began to keep my journal, of which I shall here give you a copy," then projects them into the future and the miscarriage: "as long as it lasted, for having no more ink I was forced to leave it off."

This projection provides readers with the relief of knowing that although they are about to read what they have already read, albeit in abbreviated form, this rereading will not last
throughout the remainder of the novel, since Crusoe will run out of ink relatively soon and the original narrative will regenerate.

Defoe further illustrates the bifurcated nature of Crusoe's psyche through Crusoe's undertakings not merely to survive, but to make himself comfortable as well. Crusoe originally demonstrates the tendencies that psychoanalytic theory identifies with the feminine, in which the insecure subject constructs a mental enclosure filled with disconnected imagery associated with maternal bonding. Defoe uses conventional womb imagery in describing Crusoe's construction of "a tent under the side of a rock, surrounded with a strong pale of posts and cable, but I might now rather call it a wall" (84). Crusoe brings his "goods into this pale" but observes that "at first this was a confused heap of goods, which as they lay in no order, so they took up all my place, I had no room to turn my self; so I set my self to enlarge my cave and works farther into the earth." Here Crusoe recognizes for himself that feminine security is not his only need and he labors to separate himself from his abode so that he achieves "not only egress and regress" but "room to stow my goods" (85). Defoe's language suggests that Crusoe is becoming comfortable with his divided psyche: "I set my self to enlarge my cave" and "now I began to apply my self." The notion of making your "self" behave in a certain manner indicates that Crusoe possesses two distinct selves that conform to the dictates of eighteenth-century gender ideology: a dominant, masculine self and a subordinate, feminine self. Crusoe observes the scientific way in which these two selves interact to fulfill his needs:
as reason is the substance and original of the mathematicks, so by stating
and squaring every thing by reason, and by making the most rational
judgment of things, every man may be in time master of every mechanick
art. I had never handled a tool in my life, and yet in time, by labour,
application, and contrivance, I found at last that I wanted nothing but I
could have made it.

In the mastery of “every mechanick art,” Rogers observes that “Crusoe shows the Jack-
of-all-trades as a successful challenge to the division of labor” (85). Such mastery is
traditionally gendered as masculine, yet the factor that seems to determine the success of
the enterprise is time, in this case a feminine conception of time as a kind of holding
pattern that Crusoe can be “in” while he learns his craft. The inclusive conception of
time is further symbolized in how he spends this time, as Warner observes in the
circularity of “the baskets he weaves, the pots he makes, the rounds he walks between his
various ‘estates,’ [and] the enclosures he persistently constructs.” Crusoe’s bifurcated
consciousness is gendered so that he does not require a female on the island—artificial
reproduction is Defoe’s goal. In fact, a female—or even another male, at this point—
would hobble Defoe’s plot of individual progress. Crusoe’s isolation lends credence to
Jonathan Culler’s observation about the relationship between individual events and the
narrative as a whole: we “have to ask ourselves . . . whether this is an event that
determines meaning and discourse or whether it is itself determined by various narrative
and discursive requirements.” 27
Here Defoe furthers Crusoe's development as the narrative transvestite, using impulse to make progress against resistance; and, simultaneously, using resistance to regulate the progress of impulse. Sill notes that at this point in the novel, Crusoe's "self-knowledge and self-restraint... permits him to direct his passion towards necessary goals... by the pursuit of his desires." Crusoe's safety is threatened by his abode; its feminine, womb-like environment proves not only physically dangerous but psychologically dangerous as well. Following the earthquake, Crusoe's "fear of being swallowed up alive" competes with his "apprehensions of lying abroad without any fence" (98). His challenge here as transvestite is to regulate feminine inertia to the useful: too much retreat into his enclosure results in the kind of inertia that makes him "very loath to remove" from it and would have ended the narrative. Defoe rescues Crusoe from narrative stagnation by again invoking time when Crusoe notes that "it occurr'd to me that it would require a vast deal of time for me to do this [build a safer abode], and that I must be contented to run the venture from where I was." He will venture on, but he is learning to confine his desires.

This contentment with extended periods of time that the stranding motif develops has its roots in Defoe's conception of the "negative good man," whose virtuous actions compete with his lack of timely reflection so that he remains "perfectly a stranger to the essential part of religion"--and therefore to narrative strategy. Defoe identifies this problem, at least in part, as a problem of language: "Take this man's conversation apart... what notions has he of misspent hours, and of the natural reflux of all our minutes, on the great centre and gulf of life, eternity?" (90). Alkon comments that such deficiencies
in temporal recognition stem from “an inability to look far enough ahead [or] attention deflected from the future outside time by a sense of present individuality.” Defoe uses the motif of stranding Crusoe to force him into the stability that contentment in his situation provides; in this way, Crusoe may plan his activities and project them into the future. From this position of stability, Crusoe gains by desire the friction necessary to act, resolving that he would “go to work with all speed to build me a wall with piles and cables &c, in a circle as before, but that I would venture to stay where I was till it was finished and fit to remove to.”

Crusoe’s dream of God further bifurcates his consciousness, moving its two halves into an oppositional relationship within himself. Crusoe’s “conscience” reproaches him with his “past life” (105), a conflict as much between time as between levels of consciousness. But Crusoe’s “self,” heretofore the passive recipient of instructions from the reason that seems to constitute Crusoe’s “I,” again receives “thoughts” that it does not generate, but which merely “occurred to him” (106). Crusoe’s aggressive “I” constructs a syllogism that allows him to conclude that God “has appointed all this to befal me,” and since “nothing occurred to my thought to contradict any of these conclusions . . . immediately it followed: Why has God done this to me? What have I done to be thus used?” (107). Crusoe’s linear logic has retreated his consciousness into a defensive posture that bodes ill for his spiritual progress. His conscience, now the only internal voice opposing his reason, “presently checked [him] in that enquiry” and he “thought it spoke . . . like a voice: ‘WRETCH! Dost thou ask what thou hast done? Look back upon a dreadful misspent life, and ask thy self what thou hast not done.’” The difference that
Crusoe’s conscience points out between what Crusoe has done or not done is the difference in the way that Crusoe has exercised his will, allowing his desires to roam unconfined. Crusoe’s actions have been unproductive and have stymied his progress, both economically and spiritually; by placing his fate in the hands of chance, he has “misspent” his life in both senses of the term. Certainly, Crusoe has “done” many things; yet, in fact, he has “done”—or produced—nothing.

Crusoe’s religious revelation marks a shift in the direction of his desires. Previously, Crusoe’s object of desire—the sea—was external and lured him magnetically. Now, his object of desire is internalized and his desire becomes an inner force that drives him to action and creates its own dynamics. Defoe symbolizes Crusoe’s internalization of God in Crusoe’s ingestion of tobacco. Crusoe fears a return of his illness and looks for a roll of tobacco to use as medicine, “directed by Heaven, no doubt” (108). Under the influence of the tobacco, Crusoe becomes the passive recipient of the words in the Bible: “the first words that occur’d to me were these: Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shalt glorify me.” Crusoe notes twice that these words “made a very great impression” on him (108-9)—in short, he internalized them, and the next day, he “continued much altered for the better.” Crusoe now becomes a reader of Biblical text—an ingester or consumer in the Tyndale fashion—and its interpreter. Thus he “began to construe the words mentioned above, Call on me, and I will deliver you, in a different sense from what [he] had ever done before” (111). His interpretation shifts from the notion of deliverance as an external object of desire—a ship to take him off the island—to an internalized deliverance that lifts “the load of guilt that bore down all my comfort.”
Once Crusoe accepts his condition on the island, he can begin to function more fully as a narrative transvestite. He does so by attaining characteristics and engaging in activities gendered feminine during the seventeenth century when English society made the distinction between “inside” and “outside” work. The ability to do so is engendered from his changing conceptions of time, as Warner points out: “Time hovers for Crusoe between two different kinds of reality; throughout most of his island experience he lives in a liminal world between that of myth and that of history” (34). Warner cites the work of Victor Turner, who asserts that “liminality is frequently likened to death, to being in the womb, to invisibility, to darkness, to bisexuality, to the wilderness, and to an eclipse of the sun or moon” (my emphasis). Novak sees this liminality in Defoe’s creation of “an interaction between man and nature by which nature was to be made more productive and man more pure” (58). Richetti argues Crusoe’s “new condition” as “the synthesis which results from the thesis and antithesis of pure action and pure passivity” (47).

Crusoe temporarily gives up hunting and building to explore the island “to see what kind of productions” he might find; he discovers and gathers fruits, melons, and grapes. Crusoe makes it his “business” to collect for his use whatever raw materials he finds, and he begins to develop plans for cultivating a garden and for growing livestock. He distinguishes time differentials by season instead of relying on his calendar: “the rainy season and the dry season now began to appear regularly” to him (117), and he constructs a calendar based on these seasons rather than on artificial time (119). By learning to rely on cyclical time instead of linear time, he produces his first crops and so is made “master of [his] business” (118). His next “employment” is basket weaving, then he finds a way
to make pottery. Michael McKeon sees the union of Crusoe’s two selves as the union of disparate times, “the beginning of the movement of narrative ‘atonement,’ when Character and Narrator come together, and this can be seen in the ease with which Robinson will shortly distinguish between not aimless past and repentant future but anguished past and contented present.” By becoming skilled in these occupations, he combines activities gendered masculine and feminine by the division of labor to make a form of progress in his condition that advances both his comfort and his understanding of time.

As Crusoe constructs his own kingdom in miniature and constructs an image of himself as a god-like entity, Defoe demonstrates the extent to which Crusoe falls victim to the very inertia he generates. Crusoe begins to think of himself for the first time as god-like: “this was all my own . . . I was king and lord of all this country indefeasibly” (114). He explores his island with difficulty, however, once again at the mercy of feminized nature when he becomes lost in a valley shrouded with mist (123-24). His return to what he now thinks of as home is a return to familiar inertia: “This little wandering journey, without settled place of abode, had been so unpleasant to me, that my own house, as I called it to my self, was a perfect settlement to me, compared to that . . . I resolved I would never go a great way from it again” (124). Crusoe’s linear calendar allows him to celebrate the anniversary of his stranding, which now becomes a cyclical event in which he recognizes “how much more happy” he is now and how much his “very desires altered” (125). Slowly, Crusoe’s determination to match time and narrative action begins to fade with his third year on the island: “I have not given the reader the trouble of
so particular account of my works this year as the first” (126). Yet he can observe in “general” that he was “very seldom idle,” having “divided his time” in much the same manner as his psyche is divided, between the masculine and feminine. First, he “set apart some time” thrice a day for his “duty to God,” which he characterizes as “employments.” Setting time aside deliberately excludes it from a linear accounting. We know only that in this time he is “reading the scriptures,” so this time is both active and passive, both masculine and feminine, for as a reader he is both a passive recipient of narrative and an active consumer and interpreter of text. Thus the notion of this time as an employment makes sense: it is a productive activity that engages both masculine and feminine elements to produce narrative, this time for Crusoe as a reader, not for Defoe as writer. The rest of his time is divided between capturing food and preparing it, again a productive blend of activities gendered as masculine and feminine by virtue of their status as “inside” and “outside” labor. Although Crusoe narrates these activities as divided time, Defoe demonstrates how the two opposites work together in a nonessentialistic manner to generate both literal and narrative productions.

Gradually, Defoe’s macronarrative begins to drift as Crusoe’s desires fade, stranding the story in the details of everyday life and likewise stranding the reader in a narrative that becomes increasingly synchronized and feminized. Crusoe first describes in general terms how he raises his rice and barley crops, then retards the narrative by reviewing his method of corn production in detail. Defoe immerses Crusoe in reflection and evaluation at the fourth anniversary of his stranding, and here Crusoe notes that he “entertained different notions of things. I looked upon the world as a thing remote, which I had
nothing to do with, and no expectation from, and indeed no desires about” (139). In his solitude, he is “lord of the whole manor . . . king or emperor over the whole country.” As his desires lessen, the division within his psyche begins to merge into a whole, complete, and more feminized being; in doing so he begins to lose his ability to describe: “I began to look more upon the bright side of my condition . . . to consider what I enjoyed, rather than what I wanted; and this gave me sometimes such secret comforts, that I cannot express them” (140-41). Indeed, the narrative action of the novel comes to a near standstill for readers as Defoe devotes almost six pages to Crusoe’s reflections (139-44), which end as he realizes his entire life as a synchronization:

First, I had observed that the same day that I broke away from my father and my friends, and run away to Hull, in order to go to sea, the same day afterwards I was taken by the Sallee man of war, and made slave . . . The same day of the year that I escaped out of the wreck of that ship in Yarmouth roads, that same day-year afterwards I made my escape from Sallee in the boat . . . The same day of the year I was born on, viz. the 30th of September, that same day I had my life so miraculously saved twenty-six year after, when I was cast on shore in this island, so that my wicked life and my solitary life begun both on a day. (143-44)

Again, Crusoe’s keeping of linear time allows him to see the cyclical nature of his life and his relationship to natural rhythms.

Defoe rejuvenates the novel’s dynamics with Crusoe’s trip around the island, and at the same time he allows readers to question Crusoe’s reliability as narrator. While Defoe
spends six pages on Crusoe's reflections of contentment, Crusoe spends two years
building a canoe “in hopes of having a boat to go off to sea at last” (146). Crusoe is not
without desire as much as Defoe leads us to believe. Crusoe’s desire projects him into
time, and two years later the canoe becomes the “product of so many months of labor”
(153), a pregnancy brought to term. His desire is again thwarted, however; the canoe is
not large enough for an ocean crossing. Crusoe uses it instead to circumnavigate the
island, another metaphor for the inertia in which Crusoe is trapped. Here Crusoe’s
language—and presumably, his thinking—changes: “It was the sixth of November, in the
sixth year of my reign, or my captivity, which you please” (147). The near-opposition
between “reign” and “captivity” indicates Crusoe’s changing point of view about his
condition as he imagines the possible fulfillment of his desire, and certainly calls into
question the professions he makes during his reflections. The voyage itself is a
pregnancy, this one miscarried because incomplete, as Crusoe indicates when he lies
down to sleep, “being quite spent with the labour and fatigue of the voyage” (151).
Defoe then returns the narrative to everyday pursuits, relieved at having been “delivered”
from his failed voyage. Defoe proves in the narrative conflict instigated by desire
between masculine impulse and feminine resistance, in the resolution of that conflict, and
in the dynamics that this process generates that “we never see the true condition of our
state till it is illustrated to us by its contraries, nor know how to value what we enjoy, but
by the want of it” (149).

In Defoe’s strategy of associating thwarted desires with outward projection, he
demonstrates to readers how to channel desire toward productive ends by associating
Crusoe's inertia brings his desires under control: 
“I... contented my self to be without any boat,” and “in this government of my temper
... lived a very sedate, retired life... [and] resigning my self to the dispositions of
Providence, I thought I lived really very happily” (153). Once his nonproductive
impulses are defeated by the resistance of Providence, he channels his desires to the
useful: “I improved my self in this time in all the mechanick exercises which my
necessities put me upon applying my self to.” Defoe here gives voice to the Puritan
connection between improving the individual self and improving one's situation,
particularly as this improvement is achieved through “mechanicks” or any form of useful
industry. He improves his skill in working with those items that he actually uses, as
opposed to his failures in navigation, which from the beginning of the novel have served
no useful purpose to him. Significantly, as he improves his skills in working with
materials gendered as feminine by their association with “inside” labor, he begins to run
out of both ink and ammunition.

Crusoe's productivity suffers a reversal, however, when he discovers the footprint,
which Defoe uses to reflect upon the counterproductive nature of negative desire. Crusoe
notes how his desire for company reverses itself after discovering the footprint, so that
“To day we love what to morrow we hate; to day we seek what to morrrow we shun; to
day we desire what to morrow we fear”(164). If positive desire is the urge to move
toward something, then negative desire is the urge to move away from it, as in fear or
aversion. Defoe had dealt with this theme before: in Old Whig and Modern Whig
Revived, in the Present Divisions at Court (1717), as Sill notes, “Defoe suggested that the
greatest danger to England lay not in external threats, but in internal divisions that prevented economic progress” (150). On the other hand, Richetti argues that Crusoe’s debate creates “an anatomy of experience that enables [Crusoe] to stand both in and out of experience, to be in those contraries and eventually to stand apart from them in the moment of action which is a magical combination of both”—in short, a liminal space (52-53). Crusoe’s aversion to the idea of company proves counterproductive: Crusoe spends three days inside his walls so that he “began to starve for provision” (166); his next thoughts are to destroy all that he has worked for by tearing down his enclosure and turning loose his goats (167). Nonetheless, Defoe uses this aversion to advance the narrative; Rogers observes that the effect of the footprint is to “set in motion a chain of events [so that] the episode shifts our attention from the present to the future” (115), reproducing in events the same effect he created earlier grammatically with future perfect tense. Crusoe spends the next two years strengthening his fortifications and planting overgrowth to hide them. Defoe places such works in the debit column: Crusoe observes that “all this labour I was at the expense of, purely from my apprehensions on the account of the print of a man’s foot” (170).

Crusoe’s discovery of the footprint and of the remains of the cannibal feast propels the narrative forward in time; but for Crusoe this time is also counterproductive. As time passes, Crusoe begins to live more easily with his fears, but his situation produces a further divide between public and private man: Crusoe is now cautious about firing his gun, building fires, or hammering nails, all of which would announce him to any visitors. In short, he has learned to live quietly. Crusoe notes that not only does he have few
desires now, but that “the concern I had been in for my own preservation, had taken off
the edge of my invention for my own conveniences; and I had dropped a good design” to
make beer. Fear is nonproductive, even in narrative; indeed, Crusoe admits that “it would
take up a larger volume than this whole work is intended to be, to set down all the
contrivances I hatched, or rather brooded upon in my thought, for the destroying these
creatures” (175). The narrative dynamics motivated here by negative desire operate not
through reason but through imagination: “I went so far with it in my imagination, that I
employed my self several days to find out proper places to put my self in ambuscade”
(176). Eventually, Crusoe’s reason returns and checks this counterproductive narrative;
by halting Crusoe’s paranoid plans, however, Defoe also halts that line of narration and
stagnates the novel in contemplation. Crusoe admits that “these considerations really put
me to a pause, and to a kind of a full-stop; and I began by little and little to be off of my
design” (178). Crusoe notes that he became “more retired than ever” (180), and he also
notes his nonproductivity: “these constant dangers I lived in, and the concern that was
now upon me, put an end to all invention, and to all the contrivances that I had laid for
my future accommodations and conveniences” (182).

Crusoe breaks through his cycle of nonproductivity when he “delivers” Friday,
through whom he achieves a state of confined desire that sorts more with divinity than
with humanity and which enables him to write the narratives of others. McKeon observes
that Crusoe identifies his “desires as heaven-sent,” and “this internalization of providence
entails a reciprocal expansion of his own identity as one not only delivered by God but
able to deliver others as well” (330), a product of his bi-gendered consciousness. Defoe
launches the last third of the novel with Crusoe’s reflections on the past and his projections of the future, and here Defoe directly identifies confined desire as that self-regulatory element most conducive to productivity:

had that providence, which so happily had seated me at the Brasils as a planter, blessed me with confined desires, and I could have been contented to have gone on gradually, I might have been by this time (I mean, in the time of my being on the island) one of the most considerable planters in the Brasils (198-99).

This same control of desire in time also serves the novelist in his enterprise, particularly in instructional works. The theme of “taking advice” runs throughout the novel; William Lytton Payne has observed in his work on “Mr. Review” that “as Daniel Defoe and as Mr. Review he insisted on being the dominating director of lives, those of his own creating as well as those of his readers.” Crusoe not only “delivers” Friday by giving him food, water, and shelter, but begins to redirect Friday’s life by converting him to Christianity. R. H. Tawney identifies the uses of confined desire when he associates this need for domination with Puritan training for “the mastery of others through the mastery of self.” Friday’s conversion marks an advancement for Crusoe’s spiritual progress, or as Rogers puts it, a “regeneration” in the Calvinist sense, as when the believer’s plan of life and their record of that life coincide (54). Crusoe decides to name Friday after “the day I saved his life” and “for the memory of the time” (209), and thus Friday becomes a
calendar of sorts, a fixed entity whose narrative Crusoe will now write. Indeed, Crusoe does all the naming here and sets the terms of their relationship by teaching Friday to call him “Master.”

But Defoe seems not so much interested in establishing a master-slave relationship as a god-subject relationship in which Crusoe constructs Friday in his own image. Friday is his “man” (210), whom he endows with “all the sweetness and softness of a European in his countenance” (208). He even dresses Friday as a European (210-11). Crusoe sees Friday as a being “without passions, sullenness, or designs, perfectly obliged and engaged; his very affections were ty’d to me, like those of a child to a father” (211-12). Crusoe maintains his godly mystique by being careful at first not to load his gun in Friday’s presence so that the gun will appear miraculous to Friday. Because Crusoe can read and Friday cannot, Crusoe reads the Bible to him, a significant act not lost at all on Defoe, who must have realized that reading--and interpreting--the Bible for someone else makes Crusoe a kind of Protestant priest (218-223). Only after indoctrinating him into his religion does Crusoe let Friday in on the secret of the gun. Friday becomes so devoted to Crusoe that he will not go home without him (227); when savages return to the island, Friday assures Crusoe that he not only will fight for him but declares “‘Me die, when you bid die, master’” (231).

As Defoe advances the narrative, Crusoe becomes more involved in the action, but more importantly, he now directs the actions of Friday; he “ordered Friday to take one of the canoes, and go and fetch our muskets,” and he “ordered him to go and bury the dead bodies of the savages” (241). Crusoe is determined that no one shall write his narrative,
though: he informs the Spaniard that he fears “their treachery and ill usage of me, if I put my life in their hands” (243). Crusoe’s reasoning indicates Defoe’s narrative strategy: “gratitude” renders the grateful static, under someone else’s control; but the “advantages that [the Spaniards] expected”--their desires--would motivate their actions and threaten Crusoe.

Crusoe also posits himself as a god-like figure toward the Spaniards and the mutineers in much the same manner that he does toward Friday. He has the Spaniards take a “solemn oath, that they should be absolutely under my leading, as their commander and captain” (244), yet they must also “swear upon the holy sacraments and the Gospel, to be true to me, and to go to such Christian country as that I should agree to, and no other; and to be directed wholly and absolutely by my orders . . . and if I should undertake their relief, they would live and die by me.” The Spaniard that Crusoe rescues compares Crusoe’s situation with the Spaniards to that of God and the Israelites, who rebelled against God when they grew hungry after their deliverance (245); and the Spaniard suggests that they delay their departure until they can grow enough food to supply the crew on the voyage home.

Crusoe’s god-like condition allows him more freely to direct the lives of others, so that now Crusoe is writing their narratives from a position of stasis. His authority over them is absolute: he “set Friday and his father to cutting [trees] down (246); he “made Friday and the Spaniard” gather goats for the flock; and he “caused” the grapes to be hung to make raisins. Crusoe literally writes the narratives of the Spaniards when he gives the Spaniard he rescues “a strict charge in writing” to bring only those men who
would swear to be “entirely under and subjected to [Crusoe’s] commands; and that this should be put in writing, and signed with their hands” (247). Crusoe’s stasis is apparent in his inability to account for time, which he seems to lose as his desires become more confined, to which he confesses as he prepares for an October departure: “but as for an exact reckoning of days, after I had once lost it, I could never recover it again; nor had I kept even the number of years so punctually as to be sure that I was right.” Crusoe’s godly stasis culminates in omnipotence as he seems to read the thoughts and emotions of the Englishmen brought to shore by the mutineers:

these three poor desolate men knew nothing how certain of deliverance and supply they were, how near it was to them, and how effectually and really they were in a condition of safety, at the same time that they thought themselves lost, and their case desperate. (250)

Of course, Crusoe attributes their rescue to God, but he is the actual instrument of that rescue; if this fact does not make Crusoe a god, it certainly gives him those attributes, for the men he rescues see him as a “spectre-like figure” sent “directly from heaven” (252).

Defoe reinforces Crusoe’s control over the narratives of others when Crusoe becomes the governor of the island. Crusoe deals with the mutineers as if he possessed the power of life or death over them (258). Once the mutineers are brought on the island, Crusoe as governor remains out of sight “for reasons of state” (265); his nonappearance can be seen as a kingly analogy, but it seems to sort better with the idea of Crusoe as an unseen god who will shortly pass judgment on the men. Crusoe moves the narrative forward here by moving others: he tells the English captain his “project for seizing the ship” (265-66),
which the captain "resolved to put . . . in execution the next morning." Indeed, once Crusoe returns to civilization, he discovers that during his enforced stasis on the island, his business dealings have progressed in his absence and he is now wealthy.

Defoe seems to have had trouble ending Robinson Crusoe; just as the novel should be winding down toward closure, Defoe opens a new line of narrative. Crusoe reflects on his new set of conflicts upon returning to civilization:

> I was now to consider which way to steer my course next, and what to do with the state that Providence had thus put into my hands; and indeed I had more care upon my head now, than I had in my silent state of life in the island, where I wanted nothing but what I had, and had nothing but what I wanted. (281)

Defoe begins a new narrative in which Crusoe must become dynamic again; Crusoe is in charge of static moneys and is responsible for moving or preserving them. Crusoe is unable to place the kind of restrictions upon those he encounters in Europe that he had placed upon those he encountered on his island. Richetti calls the narrative after Crusoe's rescue "a rather tedious accounting" of Crusoe's wealth (61); here Richetti seems to notice Defoe's inability to generate in readers any interest in Crusoe's fate once they perceive that the best part of the story is really over. James Thompson sees Defoe's inability to end his novels as the result of writing a "narrative of accumulation, for it is by definition a story without end; unless some state, some amount can be affirmed as enough, then it is a procedure without goal." He notes that Crusoe has already
established domestic security on the island, so in effect, Defoe restarts the novel by rescuing Crusoe.

Defoe’s problems with closure, then, result from his inability to satisfy Crusoe’s desires and the reader’s concurrently. The reader needs closure because, as Frank Kermode puts it, “the End is a fact of life and a fact of the imagination, working out from the middle, the human crisis.” Readers search for closure as a logical extension of their search for origin, a vantage point from which they can see the narrative as a whole. Crusoe fails to meet readers’ desire for closure because he privileges Crusoe’s desire for further adventure—or he privileges his own desire to write a sequel, a possibility considering the speed with which a sequel appeared. Regardless, Defoe deposits readers back “in the middle” of the narrative again. Having fulfilled readers’ desires to see Crusoe rescued from the island, Defoe cannot sustain their interest.

Further, Defoe may simply be unable to “conclude” the motion of narrative; he more or less stops the novel rather than bringing closure to it with the promise that Crusoe’s adventures were not at an end:

And thus I have given the first part of a life of fortune and adventure, a life of Providence’s chequer-work . . . Any one would think that in this state of complicated good fortune I was past running any more hazards . . . but I was inured to a wandring life . . . especially I could not resist the strong inclination I had to see my island. (287)

If Crusoe seems to have lost what Sill describes as “self-knowledge and self-restraint . . . that permits him to direct his passion towards necessary goals” (231)—then so has Defoe.
In one sense, however, the novel does end in kairos: Crusoe returns to adventure-time, where his free will is lost to circumstance, casting doubt on whether Defoe could accommodate both a narrative of accumulation simultaneously with a narrative of conversion.

Further, the physics of Defoe’s Newtonian narrative machinery do not allow the realization of desire to bring closure to the narrative; two sequels of lesser merit follow Robinson Crusoe. Defoe is unable to break the pattern that works so well for him throughout the novel, in which Crusoe’s periods of stasis act as new points of resistance that regenerate desire and narrative—a pattern that helps to explain the novel’s lack of chapters as well as Defoe’s inability to bring closure to the novel as a whole. Richetti notes that in these sequels, Crusoe “goes wandering and trading, moving incessantly . . . but having lost the island and its free space, he loses our interest” (62). Thompson points out that “if the bourgeois self is based on deferred gratification and personal development that leads to some final goal . . . contentment in some form . . . then Defoe has the external form of accumulation without the internal psychological model of development; his is a form between the static self of chronicle and the developmental self of bildungsroman” (131). In this sense, then, Crusoe is indeed “inured to a wandring life.”

Stuart Sherman notes the extent to which the “Tick, Tick, Tick” of the clock “organizes intervals and fills them . . . but in terms that privilege successiveness and resist closure.” The excess narrative indicates that Defoe simply does not know how to turn off the narrative machinery.
Defoe demonstrates in *Robinson Crusoe* the possibility of applying new scientific theories of motion to narrative, and in doing so he also demonstrates the capabilities of such mechanical forces to shape a new genre. Defoe’s nonfiction works gave him the experience working with static forms of narration, particularly grammatical chronotopes of tense and the placement of reflective passages beside chronological passages. Defoe seems to have recognized the significance of such placement to affect narrative movement, and he seems to have been particularly sensitive to the regenerative uses of gendered qualities inherent in narrative time in the production of a sustained narrative. Perhaps most importantly, Defoe understands the necessity of confining desire in the character of a narrative transvestite in order to direct narrative to the useful. He is the first to demonstrate the possibilities, both commercial and instructional, of prolonged fictional narrative, and the first to understand the mechanisms by which these narratives were sustained.
Notes

1. The term “mechanick” was first used in 1549 to mean “manual labor” or “working at a trade.” By 1713, it had come to mean “of person and their aptitudes.” See The Oxford English Dictionary, 2d ed., s. v. “mechanick.”


5. “Projection” or “project” has been used since 1400 to designate a “plan, draft, scheme.” The meaning of “miscarry” has changed significantly, however. Its 1618 usage meant “misconduct, misbehavior,” and not until 1662 does the term come to mean “untimely delivery (of a woman: usually taken as synonymous with abortion = expulsion of the fetus before the twenty-eighth week of pregnancy.” See The Oxford English Dictionary, 2d ed., s. v. “project” and “miscarry.”


16. Crusoe’s mother reacts in what we usually consider a more masculine manner to Crusoe’s plea for her blessing on his going to sea: “this put my mother into a great passion” (30). She does not cry like Crusoe’s father, but rather seems to become angry.


29. Daniel Defoe, _Serious Reflections During the Life and Strange Adventures of Robinson Crusoe with his Vision of the Angelic World_ (Boston: Dana Estes, 1903) 170-72.

30. See John Bender, _Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of Mind in the Eighteenth Century_ (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1987). Bender insists that Defoe’s narratives represent a combination of “elapsed time, causal sequence, perceptual registration, and associative psychology” under which the “liminal prototype gives way to an ideal of confinement as the story of isolated self-consciousness shaped over time, within precise material circumstances, under the regime of narrative discipline” (44).


CHAPTER 3

THE INERTIA OF EQUIVOCATION: LENNOX STALLS FOR TIME

IN THE FEMALE QUIXOTE

By 1752, when Charlotte Lennox's second novel, The Female Quixote, was published, Defoe's method of sustaining narrative through impulse and resistance had been adapted and altered by other writers as they experimented with novelistic mechanics. The two most influential novelists in this period are Samuel Richardson, who demonstrates the power of stasis through the epistolary format in Clarissa (1747-48); and Henry Fielding, who combines the periodical essay with the novel to sustain the narrative in Tom Jones (1749).¹ We need not assume that any of these writers, including Lennox, were familiar with Newton's theories; we may assume, however, that they were familiar with trends in novelistic constructions, not only as these trends related to the creation of sustainable narratives but also as they related to novelists' ability to sell their work to potential readers. The popularity of the romance genre with the reading public lingered well into the eighteenth century and provided writers a rhetorical platform on what had become in eighteenth-century England a method of economic progress and consequently a recurring topic in fiction and drama: marriage. By manipulating the mechanics inherent in progressive relationships between male and female characters, novelists could also manipulate, more concretely than in representations that rely solely on gender, the
mechanics of time inherent in progressive narrative that Defoe abstracts in *Robinson Crusoe*. Although Samuel Richardson is the eighteenth-century novelist most recognized for his construction of femininity, he does so from a male perspective that makes obvious his heroines' “constructedness.” The often unrealistic results that he generates occurs because he can only speak for his heroines in a male voice.²

Lennox contributes to the history of the novel in *The Female Quixote* by investing the site of narrative physics with female voice. Like her male contemporaries, she locates as the site of narrative physics her heroine, Arabella, through whom Lennox initiates a dialogic tension between desire and form that controls the pace of the novel. Specifically, Lennox controls pace by the distance she achieves through refraction between her voice and the voices of the narrator and characters of the novel. Patricia Meyers Spacks notes the unique character of refraction in women’s writing, which she claims arises from women having “written books only during the eras of their social subordination, books that necessarily refract the effects of that subordination in ways hardly possible for a man to duplicate.”³ Lennox’s vehicle of refraction and distance is equivocation. The “equal voice” inherent in equivocation that Lennox provides to her heroine and that she offers, by extension, to her female readers marks Arabella as the novel’s narrative transvestite. This figure, like the women of Castiglione’s court, initiates, regulates, or stalls narrative progress, and in this novel, it manipulates the mechanics of resistance and impulse, the dynamics of courtship, and Arabella’s fate.⁴ Through these manipulations, Lennox questions the validity of accepted historical narrative and interpretations of ongoing reality that affected the progress of social relationships between real men and women.
Lennox controls the distance between female voice and female character by first double-voicing the structure and style of *The Female Quixote* to produce what M. M. Bakhtin has labeled “heteroglossia.” Bakhtin argues that heteroglossia serves to express authorial intentions but in a refracted way. Such speech constitutes a special type of *double-voiced discourse*. It serves two speakers at the same time and expresses simultaneously two different intentions: the direct intention of the character who is speaking, and the refracted intention of the author.⁵

Lennox follows convention when she structures her episodic novel into chapters, prefacing each with a heading in which the narrator directly addresses the reader. She then intrudes into the narrative by refracting her voice into the narrator’s; this allows her to increase or reduce the distance between author and narrator and between narrator and reader. These headings serve the apparent intention of informing the reader what to expect in the coming chapter. At the same time, they serve a number of authorial intentions.

First, the headings help Lennox to control the pace of the novel: in much the same way that Arabella regulates the pace of courtship, Lennox uses the intrusion of the narrator to regulate the pace of the plot so that author and character are virtually “in synch” throughout the novel.⁶ Lennox interrupts the sequence of events and frequently changes the point of focalization through which readers view these events in order to slow narrative progress. Mieke Bal explains focalization as “the relation between the elements presented and the vision through which they are presented.”⁷ Changes in focalization
slow readers' progress because, as Thomas Docherty explains, readers experience a
“disorientation” when the time-space continuum between reader and character is broken;
“the position of another perspective” replaces the one which had seemed “all-embracing
because it assumed a continuity of perceiver and perceived.” The break between
Chapters 3 and 4 in Book 1 divides a continuous narrative: Chapter 3 ends when Lucy,
here the character focalizer through whom readers must perceive the action, accepts a
bribe from Hervey to take his letter to Arabella. The intrusion itself refocalizes the action
through the narrator: Lennox shifts focalizers again at the beginning of Chapter 4 through
Hervey, who “was at first at some loss, how to address a Lady of [Arabella’s]
Quality.”

Although Lennox’s omniscient, third-person narrator shifts focalizers between
caracters frequently during chapters, the break between chapters forces readers to
change perspectives twice when she shifts from character focalization to external
focalization by inserting the narrator as focalizer. What follows the intrusion is either a
smooth continuation of the previous narrative that advances the plot, as when Lucy
accepts Hervey’s bribe and then Hervey begins to write the letter; or what follows is a
relation of events in simultaneous time that stalls the plot, usually expressed as
“meanwhile” or “in the mean time.” The narrator’s intrusion in Book 3 between Chapters
6 and 7 detains readers in “simultaneous time” by creating inertia that stalls narrative
progress. Chapter 6 ends with a conversation among Arabella, Mr. Glanville, and Miss
Glanville; Chapter 7 begins with the narrator’s intrusion: “In which our Heroine is
suspected of Insensibility.” The chapter itself proceeds: “While these things passed at the
Castle, Sir George was meditating on the Means he should use to acquire the Esteem of Lady Bella” (129). Lennox’s heading cycles future time backward into the present, then recycles what had previously been present time backward into the past, a manipulation of narrative chronotope that parallels the back-and-forth grammatical chronotope that Defoe uses in Robinson Crusoe. The momentary conflict that readers experience as they refocalize their perspectives, not once but twice, either provides the friction that advances dynamic narrative, or, if Lennox stalls narrative time, cycles readers away from the ongoing plot into the inertia of the previously narrated time-frame.

By acting as regulators, the narrator and Arabella also act as narrative transvestites. In Lennox’s and Arabella’s case, the meaning of “productive” is subjective: what she produces is time itself by subverting the linear narrative that works toward concrete goals. Lennox’s intrusions and her other narrative manipulations place her in what Docherty describes as a “masculinist line of writing” in which she establishes a “heirarchy of discourses, with the author of the narrative at the top, and the reader at the bottom of the scale” (239). The more distance that Lennox achieves between her voice and Arabella’s, the more masculinized her establishment of self in the narrative becomes; the verticality implicit in heirarchy is “phallic,” according to Docherty (239). When Lennox narrows the distance between her voice and those of her characters—distance that male writers have difficulty overcoming between themselves and their heroines—she also levels the “status between author and reader” so that they meet in a kind of “no-man’s-land” that carries with it “the possibility of a feminist writing.” Lennox’s use of “masculinist”
techniques to achieve a “feminist” goal makes any attempt at an essentialist reading of this work problematic indeed.

Secondly, Lennox’s intrusions entice readers to continue reading while attempting to influence their reception of forthcoming events, just as Defoe’s action of grammatical chronotopes do; and here Lennox’s narrator acts as the cross-gendered site of narrative physics in her roles as both feminine temptress and masculine director of narrative. Patricia Parker associates the “female enchantress” of romance with the “dilation of romance narrative” and with “romance itself as a Circean, female (or even effeminate) form.” Book 5, Chapter 1 begins with the heading, “A Dispute very learnedly handled by two Ladies, in which the Reader may take what Part he pleases” (179). Here Lennox encourages readers to take an active role in the narration, but she does not always do so. She often interprets for readers, as she does in Book 1, Chapter 4: “A Mistake, which produces no great Consequences--An extraordinary Comment upon a Behaviour natural enough--An Instance of a Lady’s Compassion for her Lover, which the Reader may possibly think not very compassionate” (13). Lennox’s equivocations quietly draw conclusions for readers, who, again, may or may not agree that the “Mistake” is minor, that the “Behaviour” is “natural,” or that Arabella is “not very Compassionate.” This heading both anticipates readers’ responses to the following chapter and dictates them in the refracted voice of the author.

Although the mechanical aspects of narrative play a large role in Lennox’s novel, no evidence exists that Lennox herself was familiar with Newton’s theories of motion. However, she certainly may at least have been exposed to them. G. S. Rousseau reports
that "popular knowledge about natural philosophy was disseminated in dictionaries and
cyclopedias... and nowhere more so than in women's magazines." He claims that
"by approximately 1740 any literate woman, of low or high class, could select from a
very large number of printed works... to quench her thirst for science." Rousseau
further assumes that the "sheer volume of popular scientific literature written explicitly
for women" indicates that "they possessed a vigorous interest in the subject" (213-14).

Certainly, the equivocations that I will shortly argue that Lennox masters in The
Female Quixote demonstrate Newton's Third Law of Motion: "To every action there is
always opposed an equal reaction: or, the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other
are always equal, and directed to contrary parts." An equivocation is, inherently, a
term in which meaning is both apparent and the "contrary" of what seems apparent. Thus
apparent agreement may conceal disagreement; or apparent femininity may conceal
masculinity. As with Lennox's use of gendered time, her use of equivocation makes an
essentialistic approach to gendered narrative virtually impossible. Like Lennox's
intrusions, her equivocations reinforce gendered time in the novel; they constitute a form
of narrative transvestism that obstructs the progress of impulsive narrative by maintaining
sites of resistance. In turn these sites subvert linear narrative to privilege a cyclical, inert
narrative. If women who wanted to see their work published often resorted to
equivocation to disguise their intentions, as Catherine A. Craft asserts that they did, then
we may see equivocation as a cultural inheritance from the Renaissance courtier, a tool in
his projection of a feminine image that disguised his desire for power. And if, as Craft
also argues, these women "produced narratives that seemed, at first glance, to be no
different from the tales told by men," except that "women’s fictions . . . often contained elements contradictory to and critical of the ideology which formed the standards and content of the main portion of the text," then we may see in equivocation that which Newton later codified for science. Using Newtonian principles of motion to contradict dominant ideology, particularly that which relegated women to idleness, may seem antithetical to Lennox’s purpose unless we consider the room that Newton’s principles allow for equivocation once those rules become absorbed into language. He observes that “motion and rest, as commonly conceived, are only relatively distinguished; nor are those bodies always truly at rest, which commonly are taken to be so” (2).

Rather than creating a narrative antithetical to the scientific principles of her day, then, Lennox imitates those principles exactly in Arabella’s modus operandi, which adapts romance narrative to mechanistic seventeenth-century philosophies of reality. Carolyn Merchant documents the criteria that scientists of the period had established for recognizing reality, which they had abstracted from “the structure of machines”:

The mechanical structure of reality (1) is made up of atomic parts, (2) consists of discrete information bits extracted from the world, (3) is assumed to operate according to laws and rules, (4) is based on context-free abstraction from the changing complex world of appearance, and (5) is defined so as to give us maximum capability for manipulation and control over nature.14

First, Arabella’s romances consist of certain predictable behaviors or “parts” that, when narrated, form into equally predicable patterns. These narratives consist of “discrete
information bits” in the form of historical data that romance authors had “extracted from the world” and that conform to the “laws and rules” of romance. Indeed, the historical data upon which romance narrative frequently depends are “context-free” in the strictest sense of that term, particularly when romance authors remove these data from its “proper” chronological time and place. Finally, romances manipulate and control nature so that the deeds of its heroes become extraordinary--unnatural, even. Arabella’s fanatical reliance on precedent indicates the extent to which she relies on the mechanistic approach to reality and the extent to which Lennox understood reality itself as a construction.

Lennox’s equivocations allow her heroine to live a romance narrative in a “realistic” world, but they also mask the role reversals that mark her gendering of time in this novel. Like Defoe, Lennox characterizes time in economic terms that sorts more with a masculine perspective than a feminine one. Arabella takes a Calvinistic stance when she sees as a “waste” of time the empty-headed pleasures of assemblies, parades, and parties that women like Miss Glanville, and presumably, most women, were supposed to enjoy: “I am of Opinion, replied Arabella, that one’s Time is far from being well employ’d in the Manner you portion it out: And People who spend theirs in such trifling Amusements, must certainly live to very little Purpose” (279). Arabella sees nothing productive in Miss Glanville’s pursuits, and it occurs to her that these pastimes obstruct progress for both sexes so that those who engage in them negate themselves: “Are not such Persons always buried in Oblivion, and can any Pen be found who would condescend to record such inconsiderable Actions?” Finally, Lennox genders idle amusements as feminine
when Arabella cannot persuade herself that "those Men whom [she] saw at the Assembly, with Figures so feminine, Voices so soft, such tripping Steps, and unmeaning Gestures, have ever signalized either their Courage or Constancy; but might be overcome by their Enemy in Battle, or be false to their Mistress in Love." By gendering the time spent on these activities, Lennox argues that the fault in pursuing them lies not in being male or female, but in being progressive or idle.

The tension between progress and idleness hints at the underlying tensions between oppositional conceptions of novelistic time. Tzvetan Todorov demonstrates these oppositions in other terms: his theory of narrative builds on the tension between "two kinds of logic: narrative and ritual," which also derive "from two contrary conceptions of time":

Narrative logic implies, ideally, a temporality we might call the 'perpetual present.' Time here is constituted by the concatenation of countless instances of discourse . . . [which is] never behind and never ahead of what it evokes . . . . Ritual logic is based on a conception of time which is that of the 'eternal return.' Here no event happens for the first or last time. Everything has already been foretold, and now one foretells what will follow. The origin of the rite is lost in the origin of time; what matters is that the rite constitutes a rule which is already present, already there.\(^\text{16}\)

Lennox genders narrative logic or the "perpetual present" as masculine and ritual logic or the "eternal return" as feminine. Arabella lives in the "eternal return" when she relies on the precedents of romance to dictate her actions; for her, the "whole present" is "already
contained in the past, [and] the past remains present in the present,” so that the “narrative constantly . . . turns back on itself” (134). Both Todorov and Bakhtin remark on the “cyclical construction” and “interchangability” of this kind of narrative.17 The other characters in Lennox’s novel live in the “perpetual present,” motivated in the novel by their attempt to cope with Arabella while trying to force her into their progressive present.

Lennox narrates her novel in the high rhetorical style of romance fiction, a style that allows her equivocations to disguise subversion behind a double voice that says one thing and means another. Margaret Anne Doody observes that Lennox’s argument in Shakespeare Illustrated (1753), published one year after The Female Quixote, takes Shakespeare to task for appropriating romance plots while misappropriating its heroines, an argument that Lennox makes with “a force not uninspired by some rage.”18 Doody argues that the fall of romance as a legitimate literary genre eradicated “women’s whole literary experience for two generations” so that “women’s tradition, their lore and language, are all considered false and must be given up.”19 Consequently, Doody sees Lennox’s novel as “a hidden drama of relinquishment, of bidding farewell to poetic hopes—the author’s hopes, not just Arabella’s.”

Doody’s argument invites us to listen more carefully to Lennox’s tone in The Female Quixote. If Lennox is actually a “defender of romance and novels” (303), and if The Female Quixote is “covertly polemical beneath its facade of compliance and conformity” (307), then Lennox may have defended romance at least partially on personal grounds.
for her a crown of laurels,” he attacked romance in The Rambler. In order for Lennox to continue courting favors with writers like Johnson, romance language had to become “other” to her. Bakhtin’s insistence that heteroglossia is “another’s speech in another’s language” is appropriate to Lennox’s situation. Bakhtin identifies the double-voicing of “other” language as “always internally dialogized,” especially parodic discourse, in which refraction characterizes the narrator, the characters, and, especially in The Female Quixote, “a whole incorporated genre” (324). In this sense, of course, The Female Quixote would not have been possible without Johnson’s censorship.

However, the subtlety with which Lennox manipulates her equivocations through double-voicing makes it easy for readers, particularly contemporary readers, to miss her allusions, so skillfully does Lennox conceal her satire of romance critics within her satire of romance. Lennox refracts her voice through the very medium she appears to repudiate to caricature Johnson in a romance narrative as “the illustrious Artaban”:

from the condition of a private Man, [he] raised himself to the sublimest Pitch of Glory by his Valour; for he not only would win half a dozen Battles in a Day; but, to shew that Victory followed him where-ever he went, he would change Parties, and immediately the Vanquished became Conquerors; then, returning to the Side he had quitted, changed the Laurels of his former Friends into Chains . . . to this Height of Power did he raise himself by his Sword. (128)

Doody’s comment that romance made available to women “public language and form which might convey private experience” is significant here. Through equivocation, what
appears as one of the most tedious passages in Lennox's novel disguises one of the most interesting as she establishes a realistic agenda for romance by abstracting Johnson into a romance narrative.21

Although Lennox appears to warn readers against the dangers of imitating romance characters, she nonetheless suggests that equivocation allows women an opportunity to negotiate the distance between “official” and “unofficial” forms of language, time, and reality. Bakhtin characterizes the dialogic qualities of double-voicing by the extent to which they are “aimed sharply and polemically against the official languages of its given time” (273). Apparently Johnson viewed romances as a threat to the “official language” not because they are “unrealistic” per se, but because they were popular and to some extent imitable, and had thus become a form of reality for some persons.22 The “moral” novelists also saw the novel’s potential as a tool of instruction: Ian Watt observes that the novel’s power results from reader’s sensations that they are “in contact not with literature but with life itself.”23 But whose life? If women wanted to express their “dreams and desires” through fiction, as Deborah Ross claims—and if dreaming and desiring often constituted much of the increasingly idle eighteenth-century woman’s life, then Madame de Genlis’s statement that “The life of every woman is a Romance!” rings true.24 Doody sees the salons of the late seventeenth century as an example of fiction converted to reality, particularly those of Catherine Phillips, who assumed the identity of “The Matchless Orinda” and whose friends also assumed romantic identities as part of her coterie. Doody concludes that by imitating romance, “the ‘real world’ could be assimilated to that other one which gives the woman authority and power” (298-99).
Lennox was apparently not anxious to relinquish this “power”; her “criticisms” of romance in romance language amount to a double-voiced sleight-of-hand. First, she criticizes only the voluminous seventeenth-century French romances, not the shorter eighteenth-century novels derived from those romances. Even at that, Lennox absolves Arabella’s folly by characterizing the romances that Arabella reads as “not in the original French, but very bad translations” (7). Ross points out that the “tension between romantic and realistic elements” that Johnson encouraged when he “directed novelists to polarize values and preserve perfect justice” made the novel’s characters impossible to imitate: since Arabella’s chief virtue lies in her artlessness, she is “most virtuous when she is least imitable.” (466) In Arabella’s imitations of “historical” women such as Cleopatra, however, she holds herself out as a model of behavior for others; this constitutes a circularity or repeatability that defines feminine plot in the cyclical logic of the eternal return.

The problem with romance as reality surfaces in the conflict between romantic ideas of behavior and dominant ideas of reality: the excessive language of romance fiction and the excessive female behavior associated with it became synonymous with excessive feminine control of discourse and time. Frank Kermode explains that the need to establish one set of standards for reality may have placed dominant and subordinate elements in different cultural, temporal, and linguistic camps: “cultural differentiations” of time “must make sense, give comfort . . . it may be that linguistic differentiae, which go very deep, reflect radically different styles of questions asked about the world,” so that “at some very low level, we all share certain fictions about time . . . however conscious
some, as against others, may become of the fictive quality of these fictions. Early modern writers concerned about whose linguistic differentiae defined these fictions also seem largely responsible for constructing gender in oppositional terms. Gender polarization demonstrates an apprehension about meaning in general—a legacy from Tyndale—and equivocation in particular as early modern writers attempted to fix meaning in opposition. Parker classifies Thomas Wilson’s 1551 logic manual *The Rule of Reason* as a text of “social regulation” that largely concerns itself with linearity, or with “what follows’ with the chain of ‘consequence’” (100). She cites as Wilson’s “particular concern” the control of “meanings of words” whose degree of equivocation could “verbally negotiate the distance” between opposites:

> The ‘doubtfulnesse’ of words—their capability of being ‘twoo waies taken’—not only undermines reason’s ‘rule’ but may lead to specious and politically dangerous ‘consequentes’ based on the transport of words outside an acceptable range of regulated meaning.

Wilson’s concerns are realized in *The Female Quixote* as Arabella negotiates the distance between the oppositions of voice and silence. Indeed, the very premise of Lennox’s novel is the double-voicing that occurs between two competing discourses—“one point of view opposed to another,” as Bakhtin declares (314)—between the probable and the improbable, the realistic and the idealistic, the masculine and the feminine. The union of opposites constitutes the machinery of novelistic narrative and generates the confusion between fiction and history.
Lennox’s double voice allows her to construct Arabella as the novel’s narrative transvestite, simultaneously its resident equivocator and equivocation.\(^{27}\) Lennox does this as other novelists have not: she appropriates a particularly male sensibility about rules into Arabella—a sensibility best explained in terms of Jean Piaget’s 1932 studies on children’s game-playing.\(^{28}\) Piaget predicates his studies on the dictum that “All morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules” (1). His results indicate that males privilege rules and will go to some lengths to enforce them, whereas females, more casual about rules, privilege relationships. In short, girls have a more “pragmatic” attitude toward rules, regarding “a rule as good so long as the game repays it” (76). Piaget’s results are not as essentialistic as his dictum about rules and “the essence of morality” indicates. Carol Gilligan recasts Piaget’s findings: in any given situation, men usually prefer that people conform to rules, while women usually prefer that rules conform to people.\(^{29}\) Lennox seems sensitive to such a distinction, as Spacks realizes when she claims that “the subversive power” of the novel “derives from the fact that its heroine has appropriated ‘masculine’ values.”\(^{30}\) When Lennox assigns male traits to a female character, she genders these traits: Arabella’s determination to fashion her behavior according to the rules of romance becomes a masculinized trait that Arabella nonetheless tries to reconcile, if sometimes uncomfortably, with her innate female nature.

The role of the narrative transvestite, in part, is that of narrative regulator, as Defoe had already demonstrated in *Robinson Crusoe*. Arabella observes a strict code of conduct that regulates her own behavior and that of others, primarily men, just as Castiglione’s
women regulated male conversation at the Urbino court. Arabella’s romances provide a link with Castiglione’s tradition: Upham notes that the development of early seventeenth-century French salons was “more closely akin to the earlier circles of the Italian nobility, as they are mirrored in Il Cortegiano . . . as in the Italian coteries, the influence of woman was dominant” (312). Fletcher claims that by the early eighteenth century, Castiglione’s work became perverted in attempts at gender construction; it was used to label women as “weak” in nearly every way (293). Nonetheless, in 1740, W. Wilkes considered a woman strong enough morally to “avoid running herself into a hazard” where men were concerned, so in a sense Arabella regulates her conduct in accordance with the advice books of her day (393). The need for female regulation of male conduct may be the result of what Fletcher calls “the excessive confidence of unchecked male power”--so it appears that both sexes were charged with regulating the excesses of the other. Fletcher particularly notes the excessiveness of male sexual power, which seems to have required female regulation in order to establish “a stable society on the basis of household patriarchy” (405), much as productive narrative relies on sites of resistance for stability.

Ros Ballaster contends that women became “a force for social cohesion, precisely by virtue of her very distance from the corruptions of political identity and class conflict” (207). To gender the regulation of the male in a text is to regulate masculine narrative so that it is not spent too soon; narrative regulation thereby corresponds to conservation efforts that Merchant describes as part of a “managerial mentality associated with the mechanical order” (235). Merchant finds that John Evelyn, founder of the Royal Society,
recognized the connection between conservation or regulation and progress when he expressed the need for “sound conservation practices” as a means to “economic progress” (237).

Arabella’s transvestism is a “natural” product of the transvestivity found in the idea of her father’s “male nurturing” and of her mother’s “female inheritance.” In a characterization similar to Defoe’s portrait of Crusoe’s father, Lennox constructs Arabella’s father as the novel’s first point of resistance, a narrative transvestite himself whose passion for rules and for directing others’ lives around his own desires render him and Arabella inert. As in Defoe’s novel, the plan moves, not the planner. The Marquis is a man of rules: driven from his governmental post when his enemies take over and, of course, change the rules, he reconstructs history to suit himself, and “behaving rather like a Man who had resigned, than been dismissed from his Posts, he imagined he triumphed sufficiently over the Malice of his Enemies, while he seemed to be wholly insensible of the Effects it produced” (5). Thus the Marquis distances himself from society in misanthropic fashion to follow “the Plan of Life he had laid down” (6)–or, in mechanistic parlance, to manipulate “its material parts in accordance with a prescribed set of physical operations,” a conception that Merchant observes in Descartes’s “emphasis on the concept of a plan or form” for ordering information (231). Like Arabella, the Marquis’s behavior demonstrates the Calvinist directive of planning.

The chronotope of seclusion from other females in which Lennox situates Arabella corresponds to the exclusion of romance narrative from the literary canon. Arabella enjoys no close female relationships as a child: her mother dies when Arabella is three
days old, and she has no siblings. Her father removes her, at age four, from the “Nurses and Women appointed to attend her” and educates her himself; Lennox here suggests that Arabella’s father subjects her to the Lockean philosophy of *tabula resa*, or the blank slate (6). In doing so, he tries to establish her intellectual development in a linear fashion beginning with his teachings. This method admits of no prior claims on her being in what amounts to an erasure of nonlinear feminine influence. When Arabella discovers the romances that had entertained her mother housed in her father’s library, she “naturally” assumes that this maternal inheritance enjoys paternal validation. These romances crop up like a weed in a well-planned garden; but weeds are a valid part of nature, part of the cycle of life that “plans” and linearity try to deny.

Here Arabella seems to confuse feminine authority with masculine authority, another of Lennox’s equivocations that Lennox herself seems to have experienced. Doody notes that maternal inheritances are “customarily presented by women in their novels as dangerous or double-edged” (xxi), possibly because, as Naomi J. Miller points out, maternal inheritance “from ‘beyond the grave’” is also “beyond the scope of traditional cultural constraints.” If so, then feminine authority has the potential to overrule masculine “law.” Miller cites Mary Beth Rose’s studies on mother’s advice books in the seventeenth century to reveal that “these mothers presume to assert their authority through a legacy not of money or of land, but of words.” Their voices from beyond the grave repeat the tradition that Petrarch establishes in the *Triumph of Death*, the only verses in which the now-dead Laura speaks--but speaks with the voice of eternal authority, a kind of “law of the mother” that subverts and overthrows the “law of the
father” that Jacques Lacan identifies with entry into symbolized civilization. The uncivilized behavior of romance heroes indicates that the voice of the dead mother also parallels the voice of dead romance that serves as Lennox’s literary inheritance.

If so, then again, Lennox’s double-voicing allows her to express forbidden feminine authority, satirizing Arabella’s rigidity of form when it conflicts with her desires. The more that Lennox equivocates, the more distance she maintains between these two voices, the more force Arabella commands as a site of resistance, and the more the narrative stalls.33 Bakhtin explains that both voices in double-voiced discourse—in Arabella’s case, the voice that “speaks” desire and the one that “speaks” form, “know about each other . . . it is as if they were actually holding a conversation with each other” (324). When Arabella’s father chooses a husband for her, the rules of romance—form—compel Arabella to deny her own desire for her handsome cousin:

The Truth is, she had too much Discernment not to see Mr. Glanville had a great deal of Merit . . . She often wondered, that a Man, who, as she told her Confident, was master of so many fine Qualities, should have a Disposition so little capable of feeling the Passion of Love, with the Delicacy and Fervour she expected to inspire . . . However, added she, I should be to blame to desire to be beloved by Mr. Glanville, for I am persuaded that Passion would cause no Reformation in the Coarseness of his Manners to Ladies, which makes him so disagreeable to me . . . (30)

Here Lennox manipulates the distance between desire and form as she manifests them in Arabella’s male nurturing and her female nature, now nearly uniting them, now pulling.
them apart. Arabella displaces her desire onto Glanville by admitting that she “expected to inspire” passion in him and by realizing that even if he felt such passion, she could rely on form to find the “Coarseness of his Manners to Ladies” objectionable. Lennox sustains her narrative through Arabella’s resistance, without which her father’s and Glanville’s plans would have ended the novel before page 30.

Lennox seems aware, however, that the distinction between confining desire and denying it altogether becomes problematic for feminine narrative. The physics of progressive narrative operate by harnessing desire and directing it toward productive ends, as Defoe demonstrates in *Robinson Crusoe* and as Castiglione does in *The Book of the Courtier*. Lennox seems to sense the paradox that occurs when gendered narrative becomes sex-specific: if women deny themselves the opportunity for a progressive narrative of their own by denying desire altogether, they merely reinforce their position as a site of resistance for male impulse and progress. Spacks explains that for Simone de Beauvoir, “There is no feminine nature, only a feminine situation which has in many respects remained constant through the centuries and which largely determines the characters of its victims,” a fiction “assented to by women” that “traps them in the prison of ‘repetition and immanence.’”

In denying her desire for Glanville, Arabella finds herself more and more denying her female sensibilities in obedience to the rules of romance. After her father’s death, she becomes “extremely melancholy”; furthermore, she “recollected the many agreeable Conversations she had had with Glanville; and wished it had been consistent with Decency to have detained him” (67). Detainment is Arabella’s strong suit and her only
method of derailing male progress, which inevitably leads to marriage—or, paradoxically, to increased male desire, the linear nature of which demands an end. Indeed, as Michael McKeon argues, "virtue in the guise of female chastity becomes powerfully normative in progressive narrative."35 In this case, Arabella’s dedication to form confines male narrative but negates her own narrative and has the potential to halt narrative progress altogether. Edward S. Casey and J. Melvin Woody identify this potential as a function of time: "if the human subject could not distance itself from itself in time, it would live an unsplintered life of immediacy... for the advent of demand and desire, there must be a power of projecting satisfactions in time."36 And, although the narrator merely purports to relate Arabella’s thoughts, the phrase “consistent with Decency” rings with the author's refracted voice as Lennox mocks Arabella’s continuing internal conflict between desire and form. Lennox suggests that what is not “consistent with Decency” is Arabella’s denial of desire.

Although Arabella bemoans her inability to act, she uses her apparent stasis as a source of power through the distance that equivocation provides. Lennox realizes that equivocation neutralizes desire, and that whoever controls desire controls progress, so the less desire that Arabella experiences herself, the more she can generate in others.37 Lennox quells Arabella’s desire linguistically through *litotes*, the negative expressions common in romance fiction which silence emotion by describing it in terms of what it is not. Arabella cannot say that she loves Glanville; she merely “does not hate” him. For Madeleine Kahn, the transvestite, “like the paradoxist... asserts something that is and is
not true at the same time.”38 “Not hate” equivocates, double-voiced by what it expresses and by what it fails to express.

In this phrase, Arabella neutralizes her desire by invoking form: normally, litotes represent the opposite of that which they negate, but here Lennox’s “not hate” suggests an emotional vacuum, an absence of any emotion whatever; it establishes an explicit dichotomy, not between hate and love, but between hate and indifference, and merely implies the negative of hate as love. Distanced from emotion, Arabella avoids any course of action that might admit attachment and entangle her in a relationship in which she loses autonomy. She receives Sir George’s flattery with “great Indifference; the most extravagant Compliments being what she expected from all men: And, provided they did not directly presume to tell her they loved her, no Sort of Flattery or Adulation could displease her” (118). Indeed, any declaration of love forces Arabella to invoke her favorite distancing tactic, that of “banishing” the offender from her “Presence.” Banishment, of course, invokes the power of the absent image, an effect calculated to slow narrative pace by increasing female power as it increases male desire.

Lennox also slows narrative pace and maintains synchronicity between author and character by stylizing Arabella’s speech and that of the narrator in romance fashion. Arabella does not “converse,” precisely; she, like the narrator, orates in sophistic romance style. Again, as with her use of litotes, her oration almost always lacks specificity, a characteristic of romance fiction itself and a manifestation of its synchronicity. Lennox’s ability to synchronize with her heroine seems to correspond to Kahn’s assertion that “in transvestism the self is split into a doubly gendered being” that mirrors itself by creating
“an endless oscillation between the object and the reflection of the object” in order to achieve a “temporary transfer of identity from the physical self to the transforming reflection” (18). The temporary nature of the transfer to “other” helps to reassert the identity of the original gender.

The gaps in Arabella’s equivocal discourse provide the distance necessary to keep her suitors—and her father—at bay, effectively pulling them into her orbit. When Arabella becomes aware that the Marquis plans to marry her to Glanville, Lennox stylizes Arabella’s response:

[Arabella] told her father, with great Solemnity of Accent, that she would always obey him in all just and reasonable Things; and, being persuaded that he would never attempt to lay any Force upon her Inclinations, she would endeavour to make them conformable to his, and receive her Cousin with that Civility and Friendship due to so near a Relation, and a Person whom he honoured with his Esteem. (27)

Here Arabella conforms to her father’s expectations. He hears only her submission, admires her “Eloquence,” and does “not draw any unpleasing Conclusions from the nice Distinctions that she made” (28). Arabella’s equivocation allows her a voice—an “equal voice”—in the matter while not directly confronting her father. Thus her father believes that his plot is advancing, while Arabella believes that she remains in control of her fate.

Equally important in maintaining narrative inertia is maintaining control of discourse: Lennox negotiates the distance between voice and silence by realizing that what is not spoken creates an palpable absence that works to the advantage of inertia. Discourse
control acts as another distancing device that allows Arabella room to equivocate and to sustain courtship while it also allows Lennox room to sustain her plot. Arabella rejects Glanville's "advances," literally, but more specifically, she rejects his amorous discourse. When Glanville questions Arabella's anger at his expression of love for her, she corrects him: "Without telling you . . . whether I am angry at being loved, 'tis sufficient you know, that I will not pardon the Man who shall have the Presumption to tell me he loves me" (44). Not love itself, but its articulation and the control of its discourse, concerns Arabella; she perceives his attempt to usurp her command of inertia when love is the topic.

Arabella's "projection" of disinterest is a feature of the feminine image of the objectified, autonomous self that male courtiers adopted to grant themselves the illusion of autonomy as well as the illusion that they did not desire power; for the female courtier, an attitude of disinterest was cultivated particularly toward men. Evelyn Fox Keller characterizes the autonomous self as having "escaped the influence of desires, wishes, and beliefs" (70), and she associates it with "a need for control and a desire for domination" that "arises not so much out of empowerment as out of anxiety about impotence" (72, 124). In feminine narrative, the disinterested, autonomous self has an expanding effect that Parker notes also occurs with distancing tactics, constituting a "dilation" of the text. According to Parker, Renaissance writers characterized the tactic of disinterest as an erotic "female plot" in which the female puts off the male so that "holding a suitor at a distance creates the tension of a space between as well as an intervening time" (16). The tactic was still popular in the eighteenth century: Addison
addresses *Spectator* No. 89 to “women of dilatory Tempers, who are for spinning out the Time of Courtship.”

Losing control of the discourse is so disagreeable to Arabella that she is prompted by negative desire to misdirect discourse, and in doing so she inadvertently initiates her own dynamic plot. As Defoe demonstrates in *Robinson Crusoe*, negative desire is counterproductive; in Crusoe’s case, it thwarts his plans to produce beer and other items for his comfort. But Arabella’s idea of productivity is to produce time itself, so for her, a dynamic plot is counterproductive. Arabella is forced to conceal the real reason for her anger at Glanville when he fails to conform to her romantic expectations:

> It not being possible for her to tell him she was offended, that he was not in absolute Despair for her Absence, without, at the same time, confessing she looked upon him in the Light of a Lover, whose Expressions of a violent Passion would not have displeased her: Therefore, to disengage herself from the Perplexity his Question throw her into, she was obliged to offer some Violence to her Ingenuousness; and, contrary to her real Belief, tax him again with a Design of betraying her into the Power of the Unknown. (113)

Arabella’s efforts to “disengage herself” amount to a disengagement from desire that leads her into a false discourse. The consequences of this false discourse for narrative are eventually its own demise when distance from desire threatens narrative dynamics.

Lennox temporarily loses her satiric voice when that voice encounters the masculine authoritative discourse of male-defined morality. Arabella’s commitment to her false
discourse forces her to banish Glanville for participating in a presumed attempt to abduct her, although she doubts his guilt: "she had laid herself under a Necessity of banishing Mr. Glanville; if he did not give some convincing Proof of his Innocence; which, as Matters stood, she thought would be very hard for him to procure; and, as she could not absolutely believe him guilty, she was concerned she had gone so far" (124). The style of this last phrase contrasts with Lennox’s earlier style because she loses her refracted voice when she encounters what Bakhtin describes as “authoritative discourse.” Authoritative discourse “does not merge” with other discourses but
remains sharply demarcated, compact and inert . . . its semantic structure is static and dead, for it is fully complete, it has but a single meaning.
Therefore authoritative discourse permits . . . no gradual and flexible transitions, no spontaneously creative stylizing variants on it. . . . It is by its very nature incapable of being double-voiced; it cannot enter into hybrid constructions. (343)

Arabella realizes how far she has projected her plot and seems to fear the extent to which her desire for autonomy has led her into dynamic narrative. Now she may have to admit her desire for Glanville, break form, and lose control of the narrative. Certainly justice demands that she reprieve Glanville, and this very justice constitutes authoritative discourse, or what Bakhtin, Lacan, and others gender as “the word of the fathers” (342). This “word” ends Lennox’s capacity to manipulate distance in her narrative and thus also ends chapter 3, book 3. In effect, masculinist authoritative discourse has here silenced both Arabella and Lennox.
Ultimately, Lennox displaces the voice of Arabella's conscience onto convention, invoking for Arabella the dictates of romance and "the word of the mother" as her authoritative discourse. In doing so, Lennox stifles Arabella's female sensibilities (which might have led Arabella to the conclusion that the game no longer repaid the rules), reinforcing her masculine consciousness so that these rules justify, in Arabella's mind, her denial of responsibility for her actions. Arabella mistakenly believes that she has caused a man to commit suicide: "Oh! How unhappy am I . . . to be the Cause of so cruel an Accident--Was ever any Fate so terrible as mine--Was ever Beauty so fatal--Was ever Rigour so unfortunate" (315-16). She cuts short her lamentation, however, easing her conscience through romantic form: "Why do I thus afflict myself for what has happen'd by an unavoidable Necessity? . . . Let us lament as we ought the fatal Effects of our Charms--But let us comfort ourselves with the Thought that we have only acted conformable to our Duty." Unlike the "word of the fathers" that assigns individuals responsibility for their actions and meets out punishment, Arabella's voice of authority relieves her of responsibility for her actions because, technically, she has followed form and obeyed the laws governing romance heroines--in effect, the "word of the mothers." For once, however, the word of the father and the mother in a sense coincide: Arabella's romantic behavior in this case is conformable to eighteenth-century conduct books, which Fletcher notes "taught women to perceive themselves as desexualized embodiments of spiritual value" whose "sexual passivity" would absolve them of "responsibility for arousing their partner or themselves" (393).
Again, the competition between authoritative discourses closes the distance between Lennox’s voice and Arabella’s and between apparent and authorial intention. When Arabella’s father discovers that Arabella has banished Glanville, he commandeers her voice, forcing her out of the synchronicity of form by having her write Glanville a letter of apology, which she does in the most “distant and haughty” terms (40-41). Arabella’s objections to a forced marriage to Glanville echo what must have been the objections of many eighteenth-century women forced to marry for economic reasons:

Has he merited my Esteem, by his Sufferings, Fidelity, and Respect; or, by any great and generous Action, given me a Testimony of his Love, which should oblige me to reward him with my Affection? . . . If my Happiness be dear to you, do not precipitate me into a State from whence you cannot recal me, with a Person whom I can never affect. (42)

Her father ignores the merit of her argument, which amounts to a plea not to be traded off to someone she barely knows and who does not appear to love her. Arabella’s language, a language her father does not understand, is silenced: “She would have gone on, but the Marquis interrupted her sternly: I’ll hear no more . . . since you seem to be so little acquainted with what will most conduce to your own Happiness, you must not think it strange, if I insist upon directing your Choice in the most important Business of your Life.” Lennox then conflates voice and will: when Glanville returns and wonders if she is displeased, Arabella acknowledges that “Since I am not allowed any Will of my own . . . it matters not whether I am pleased or displeased” (43). By silencing Arabella, her father silences her double voice and closes the distance between his will and his daughter’s, and
between Lennox and Arabella. As Lennox conflates voice and will in Arabella, she also
seems to recognize that same conflation in herself in the idea that both men and women
must adhere to the same literary standards, dictated within a masculinist tradition and
promoted as objective.

If Arabella’s father cannot speak the “other” language of romance, Sir George can;
here Lennox’s romance narrative has much in common with Defoe’s account of Crusoe’s
early life. The narrator notes in the heading to Book 4, Chapter 1, that Sir George has
“exactly copied the Stile of Romance” (209):

Tis very certain . . . that the Forwardness of my Spirit gave great
Uneasiness to my Father; who, being, as I said before, inclinable to a
peaceful and sedentary Life, endeavored as much as possible to repress
that Vivacity in my Disposition, which he feared might involve me in
dangerous Enterprizes (211).

The mechanics of novelistic narrative become obvious here in Sir George’s
“Forwardness,” his father’s “sedentary Life,” and his father’s attempts to contain his
son’s desires. Lennox progresses Sir George’s narrative by rendering certain parts of it
inert; he condenses the story of his family’s “Misfortunes” and omits altogether his
infancy and childhood (210-11). Sir George describes “Dorothea” in Petrarchan
language; her beauty causes him to “remain fixed” so that he “should never have moved,”
except that she runs from him and causes him to pursue her (214). When he catches her,
he informs her that she has the “Power to dispose of [his] Destiny” (215). Sir George
captures the romance technique that displays the power of feminine narration to stall or to motivate plot; here Dorothea has the same effect on Sir George that the sea has on Crusoe.

With the first flaw in Sir George’s romance plot, Lennox replicates the difficulties that male authors encounter with predominantly feminine narrative. Dorothea tells Sir George that “she was Daughter to a Farmer,” so Sir George “talked to her of [his] passion” (216). Arabella quickly corrects him: “And therein you was greatly to blame,” for “though the fair Dorothea told you, she was Daughter to a Farmer, yet, in all Probability she was of a much higher Extraction, if the Picture you have drawn of her be true.” Sir George’s mistake is trying to advance the plot too quickly, a flaw that eventually destroys the intent of his plot to secure Arabella’s heart by having her believe him to be a romance hero.

Ballaster notes the precedent in women’s amatory fiction of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century in which

* male desire is, with rare exceptions, short-lived and end-directed,
* constituting a series of metonymical displacements of woman for woman
* in search of an impossible and unattainable satisfaction . . . the seduction scene is presented as a struggle for power and, more particularly, a
gendered conflict over the interpretation of the woman’s body as amatory sign. (175).

When Sir George finishes his “history,” in which he loves and leaves three ladies, Arabella faults his “Constancy” as well as the veracity of his story: “your suffering so tamely the Loss of the last Beauty . . . while you permit another Affection to take
Possession of your Soul, is such an Outrage to all Truth and Constancy, that you deserve to be ranked among the falsest of Mankind" (250). The problem with Sir George’s narrative is that the “hero” progresses from one heroine to another, rather than confining his desires to one heroine alone.

Sir George defends himself in Newtonian terms. He argues that he could not “resist that powerful Impulse” to love those who seem worthy of it, but his plea carries no weight with Arabella, who admonishes him to “Call not . . . that an irresistible Impulse, which was only the Effect of thy own changing Humour” (251). Sir George’s narrative takes up an entire book—forty-five pages—yet his fault lies in timing and male voice: he breaks out of narrative inertia and thereby breaks his character and story free from feminine regulation, destroying his romantic ethos. He is “overwhelmed with Shame and Vexation”--not at his inconstancy, but “at having conducted the latter Part of his Narration so ill” (252). In the fashion of the male authors among whom Lennox numbers him, he goes home to plot how to “draw himself out of the Embarrassment his was in” (253).

Glanville is the novel’s normative figure who maintains equilibrium between the narratives of accepted reality and those of romance. He does so by helping Arabella achieve what Piaget believes impossible: Michael Chapman explains that for Piaget, “the individual could ‘construct for himself a system of stable definitions, constituting what one might call a set of auto-conventions.” Piaget rejects this idea because the “coherence necessary to an operatory system presupposes cooperation.” However, Glanville tacitly provides Arabella with the cooperation she needs to construct just such a
system. First, as James J. Lynch notes, Glanville “measures up to the substance if not the style of her expectations.” After Arabella explains to Glanville her views on declaring love, then leaves the room, Glanville was “more captivated with her than ever”:

He found her Usage of him was grounded upon Examples she thought it her Duty to follow; and, strange as her Notions of Life appeared, yet they were supported with so much Wit and Delicacy, that he could not help admiring her, while he foresaw, the Oddity of her Humour would throw innumerable Difficulties in his Way, before he should be able to obtain her. (45)

Through the narrator, Lennox here lets readers understand Glanville’s insights into Arabella’s motivations and projects the narrative into a future of obstacles, which, according to Todorov, simply fuel desire (104). But now that Glanville can recognize when Arabella is “riding her hobby-horse,” as Lynch puts it (57), he can lay his plot: in order to “accomodate himself . . . to her Taste” and to conform his behavior to her reality, he “never mentioned his Affection, or the Intentions of her Father in his Favor” (46). In this sense, then, time is no longer on Arabella’s side. Indeed, Glanville had made “every Day some Progress in her Esteem.”

Glanville progresses by adopting what Todorov identifies as the “obligative mood of will,” which compels characters to act or not act according to another’s desires, as opposed to his own “optative mood of will,” which corresponds to his own desires (14). These moods constitute in part Todorov’s “grammar of narrative,” in which the establishment, disruption, and re-establishment of equilibrium progress or stall the plot.
The disequilibrium of plot corresponds to Piaget’s theory of disequilibrium, which “consists in a failure to coordinate two points of view” (187). The Marquis notices that equilibrium is reestablishing itself as Arabella begins to accept Glanville, and he relies on “time” to bring Arabella around—that is, to bring her back in line with accepted reality.

Glanville’s attempts to “bring Arabella around” as a goal toward which the progression of the novel depends suggests him as a representative of what McKeon calls “circular linearity,” a feature that McKeon associates with the “status inconsistencies” that occurred when the gentry married into the nobility. McKeon notes that “one great advantage of telling stories about status inconsistency was that narrative imposed solutions upon problems of social categorization by locating them in time. Stories transformed the static conflict of incompatible social identities into a potentially intelligible relation of events on a continuum of change” (220). Although Lennox reveals little about Glanville’s situation, we know that he is the son of a knight, Sir Charles, and the Marquis’ sister. Sir Charles appears, through his speech patterns and forthright expressions, to be a tradesman; Glanville, then, is the product of a mixed marriage of sorts, and by marrying Arabella, he will create yet another mixed marriage. The Marquis wonders if the fact that Glanville “has not a Title” causes Arabella’s rejection, since “his Person or Mind . . . is certainly Worthy of you” (41). McKeon explains the “problems” that occur in making “linear plots circular”:

A narrative whose events are interchangeable . . . has the temporality not of historical process but of mutability, and it thereby forfeits the capacity for making intelligible explanations. By arranging events in a certain
linear order, progressive narrative automatically invests personality with the distinct moral qualities that are implied in the condition of being either in decline or on the rise.

Glanville’s status as a tradesman’s son will improve if he marries Arabella, and Lennox has invested him with the “distinct moral qualities” necessary to justify his “rise.”

Glanville’s role as the novel’s equalizer becomes more significant following the Marquis’ death as Arabella ventures out in public and gains the freedom to project her romantic sensibilities on an unsuspecting world. Arabella creates disequilibrium when she bolts from the stability of her house: she suspects that Edward, a former employee of her father’s, has come to abduct her. She seeks the protection of a passer-by, who later appears to her unworthy of the task when he calls Cleopatra a “whore” (105). Glanville sees an opportunity to persuade Arabella to return home, thereby to reestablish equilibrium: bringing Arabella home, in a sense, brings the narrative back to where it was. By learning to play her game, Glanville also learns to manipulate stasis as equilibrium every time she initiates dynamics as disequilibrium, a correspondence that Piaget notes in his calculations on interpersonal exchanges (183). Piaget’s conclusion that “every operation has an inverse operation that compensates it exactly,” in turn relates to Newton’s Third Law of Motion: “To every action there is always opposed an equal reaction; or, the mutual actions of two bodies upon each other are always equal, and directed to contrary parts” (13). In a sense, Glanville is forced into an equivocal situation that indicates the extent to which Lennox has switched power relationships between Glanville and Arabella. When Glanville defends Cleopatra in romance style, he
gains ground with Arabella and in doing so, he facilitates Arabella’s narrative of inertia by bringing events full circle, regenerating the plot by validating Arabella’s romantic sensibilities.

Glanville’s role-playing allows Lennox to stall for time, again placing author and character in synch as they both fend off their end of their narratives. Arabella’s need to control Glanville’s professions of desire matches Lennox’s need to control the movement of time in the novel. Arabella explains how a woman, by manipulating time, can negotiate or at least postpone her fate:

> when a Lady has once given her Lover that permission, she may lawfully allow him to talk to her upon the Subject of his Passion, accept all his Gallantries, and claim an absolute Empire over all his Actions; reserving to herself the Right of fixing the Time when she may own her Affection: And when that important Step is taken . . . she at last condescends to reward him with her Hand; and all her Adventures are at an End for the future. (137-38)

Here the “lady” is in control of discourse and time, but once she relinquishes her control of “fixed” narrative, she sacrifices her future. Indeed, her future does not exist in progression at all but in her ability to maintain a sort of permanent present or dilation of time. Parker notes that the term “dilation” in Renaissance usage involves a spreading of biblical Word, an activity in which “a promised end is yet postponed . . . a curious combination of difference and deferral, dilation, expansion, or dispersal in space but also postponement in time” (9). The impracticality of this attempt to freeze time becomes
obvious when Miss Glanville asks Arabella if “the illustrious Mandana,” who, like Arabella, expected a ten-year courtship, had considered “what Alterations ten Years would make in her Face” (111). Miss Glanville points out the impracticality of Arabella’s desire to sustain her courtship too long: “Do you resolve to be Ten Years a courting? Or rather, will you be loved in Silence Ten Years, and be courted the other Ten; and so marry when you are an old Woman?” (112). Arabella’s “law of the mother” is eternal, not temporal; her inability to deny the linear, temporal authority of biology ends Lennox’s heteroglossia and the conversation when Arabella criticizes the “Coarseness of [Miss Glanville’s] Language.”

Again, Lennox loses the distance between her voice and Arabella’s when she runs out of room to equivocate between reality and romance. Arabella perceives that if a man controls romantic discourse, he will “satisfy [his] Passion as well as his Love [and] make himself Master of her Liberty” (34), and here again, satisfaction of male desire equals loss of female control. In 1696, Mary Astell warns that “She who is either so simple or so vain as to take her Lover at his Word either as to the Praises he gave her, or the Promises he made for himself: In sum, she whose Expectation has been raised by Courtship ... will find a terrible Disappointment.” Arabella understands that her will and voice exist only in stasis; in dynamic time she must marry and lose both. So she dissociates herself from passion while soliciting it, distances herself from men in discourse and presence, and otherwise adapts romance conventions to suit herself—in short, Arabella equivocates as much as she can—for as long as she can.
In fact, the only way that Lennox achieves a plot in *The Female Quixote* is through Arabella’s ability to “produce” plot out of her ability to use equivocation to resolve in her favor the conflict between romance and reality. To do so, Lennox operates two levels of authorial interpretation here: hers and Arabella’s, so that in a sense, Arabella is writing her own story. Lennox’s equivocations allow Arabella to reinterpret reality by refocalizing it according to Arabella’s own understanding of custom. This refocalization corresponds to Gerard Genette’s distinction between the “basic diegetic level” or “what happened” and the authorial level, which explains or interprets what happened. Lucy reports to Arabella that Hervey kissed the letter that Arabella returned to him because “he thought your Ladyship had sent him an Answer” (14). Arabella corrects her: “No, Lucy, he kissed the Letter, either because he thought it had been touched at least by my Hands, or to shew the perfect Submission with which he received my Commands.” Arabella now assumes that he will commit some “desperate Outrage” against himself, as the heroes of romance do, and is at first stunned to hear that when he realized “his Mistake, he laughed heartily.” She refocalizes the situation by deciding that he laughed because “his reason was disturbed.” Arabella is forced to construct romantic contexts; Merchant notes that in spite of mechanistic theories to the contrary, “structures are in fact not independent of their contexts... but integrally tied to them”—a reality that even Descartes “was forced to admit” (230).

Lennox engineers equivocal situations as the engine that animates Arabella’s narrative and stalls everyone else’s. Arabella motivates her servants to defend her from the threat that Hervey seems to pose when they meet him on horseback: she thinks he will abduct
her; they think he is a highwayman (19). Hervey’s “extreme surprise” renders him “motionless.” His plan to stab her servants if they do not release him does not affect Arabella, who tells him that “it is not with Threats like these . . . that I can be moved” (20). She claims that Hervey is now “solely in [her] Power”; she offers him terms of surrender, which he is compelled to accept, being unable to convince anyone that he is innocent. He quits the neighborhood the next day, constructing his own alternative reality in the form of a letter he pretends to receive obliging him to leave at once.

Lennox suggests in her heroine’s fight for voice and for control of her fate throughout the novel that women always equivocate, always speak someone else’s language when articulating power. Until the mid-eighteenth century, romance was the only form of writing that could be considered a female medium in that it allowed women a voice in their fate—voiced by women. Lennox understands this: Arabella begins to speak “in the language of Cleopatra” until Glanville interrupts: “I have no patience with that rigorous Gipsy, whose Example you follow so exactly . . . Speak in your own Language, I beseech you” (116)—which is tantamount to ordering her silent. Arabella, however, relies on the “historical” female voice: “not withstanding your unjust Prohibitions, I shall make use of the Language of that incomparable Lady, to tell you my Thoughts.” Lennox encourages women to voice their lives and to shape their own histories as authoritative discourse, but the dynamics of language work against female power voiced through romance discourse, as the eighteenth-century reinterpretation of the term “adventure” indicates. Every woman in Lennox’s novel appears shocked at Arabella’s use of that word, which to them connotes a sexually promiscuous woman; again, as in the Renaissance, freedom for
women is linked to sexuality through language. "Adventure" is tainted with illegitimacy, a bastard word that falls outside of the family of language authorized by the "word of the fathers."

Ultimately, Lennox plays the narrative transvestite by accommodating contrary ideas simultaneously: she stakes a claim for women's history in male terms. Miss Glanville seems astonished at Arabella's adventures: "Why, will you write your own History then?" (110). Arabella's response never questions her place in history: "I shall not write it... tho', questionless, it will be written after my Death." Arabella plans to leave to the world a legacy of her adventures, which sorts with Lennox's theme of maternal inheritance and a female tradition, as well as with the diaries and autobiographies that many seventeenth-century religious women left for their families. The absolute quality of "questionless" and Arabella's determination to make history indicate the extent to which Arabella has commandeered romance language as authoritative language for herself, and, indeed, she is an authority on romances. Miss Glanville has never considered her life as a history: "I really have nothing to tell, that would make an History." Arabella's response acknowledges that history is written in the masculinist terms of warfare, and she phrases women's history in terms of emotional war:

You have, questionless, returned Arabella, gained many Victories over Hearts; have occasioned many Quarrels between your Servants, by favouring some one, more than the others: Probably, you have caused some Bloodshed; and have not escaped being carried away once or twice: You have also, I suppose, undergone some Persecution, from those who
have the Disposal of you, in Favour of a Lover whom you have an
Aversion to; and lastly, there is haply some one among your admirers,
who is happy enough not to be hated by you. (111)

Miss Glanville does not understand that “not to be hated” implies that women who
control their emotions may have a voice in their destiny: “I assure you . . . I hate none of
my Admirers.” Miss Glanville does not understand how to manipulate rules in her favor.
Miss Glanville then changes the discourse and speaks not for herself, or of herself, but of
and for her brother. She refuses to learn equivocal language and customs; when she
changes the “subject,” she loses subjectivity and voice in masculinist language. 47

Lennox insists throughout the novel that history builds comraderie, a comraderie that
Lennox herself apparently never achieved with her female peers. Arabella relies on
history as she knows it to refute Sir Charles’ assertion that she will not be carried away:
“Do not the same Things happen now, that did formerly? . . . May not the same Accidents
happen to me, that have happened to so many illustrious Ladies before me?” (261). Here
the voice of character and author close in on one other: Lennox asserts that women are
bound by common experience, which they legitimize through articulation. 48 Arabella
traces this articulation to an oral tradition: “And may I not be carried into Macedonia by a
Similitude of Destiny with that of a great many beautiful Princesses, who, though born in
the most distant Quarters of the World, chanced to meet at one time in the City of
Alexandria, and related their miraculous Adventures to each other?” (261). Craft notes
that Arabella attempts to “assist members of her own sex” (836), as Arabella’s
willingness to listen to the “histories” of other women demonstrates.
Arabella has little luck, however, convincing other women that the events of their lives have importance and bear relating. Perhaps this is so because women’s amatory fiction has little precedent for female bonding: Ballaster argues that “Haywood’s novels are rarely resolved through the friendship of women... the only examples of plot resolution through female friendship among these romances of the 1720s occur when there is no possibility of rivalry between the women for the attention of a man” (185-86). Ballaster contends that the only instances in which one woman shows “compassion” for another, whether between characters or between narrator and reader, is when “the heroine is posited as ‘victim’ and her feminine submission/suffering revealed to be ‘authentic.’”

Arabella’s conversations and misunderstandings with Miss Glanville, Miss Groves, and the Countess may parallel Lennox’s own apparent failure to establish comraderie with her female peers, particularly given her apparent popularity among male writers.49

Lennox exposes conventional conceptions of history that pretend to be objective accounts of universal narrative as subjective constructions in which those who control narratives of the past determine who will control those of the future. Historical events are fixed in time (like the female image), becoming chronotopes that, paradoxically, also become pliable and open to interpretation. Mr. Selvin’s pretense to historical scholarship demonstrates this pliability and illustrates how easily society accepts as fact whatever it considers authoritative discourse (264-67). Arabella does not question events as such, only the motivation behind events. Her premise, that “love is the ruling Principle of the World,” allows her to construct a history that privileges women as the motivators of men. Lennox stages another duel between authoritative discourses when Glanville argues that
the king’s law is superior to romance law. Arabella asserts that “The Empire of Love . . .
like the Empire of Honour, is govern’d by Laws of its own, which have no Dependence
upon, or Relation to any other” (320). Glanville falls back on the pretense of objectivity
when he asserts that “Our Laws have fix’d the Boundaries of Honour as well as those of
Love.” Both versions depend upon the monoglossia of law as seen from opposing points
of focalization. Arabella’s version works because her law is truly monoglossic in that it
has “no Dependence upon, or Relation to any other.” Arabella questions the monoglossia
of Glanville’s law, asking how “a Man may be justify’d by the one [honor], and yet
condemn’d by the other [love]?” Glanville loses this argument because his law depends
on the laws of language, which are diachronic; its shifting signifiers and signifieds over
time undermine his authority when they expose the paradox of authoritative language: the
pretense of synchronicity in the face of change. Arabella’s law is synchronous, depending
on and relating to nothing but itself so that it never conflicts with any other.

Arabella’s discourse, rather than changing with time, relies on the recitation of
historical romance sources and seems to change time itself. Relating these histories
slows the narrative and establishes a circular pattern that again places Lennox and
Arabella in synch with one another. Miss Groves’s history, for example, is related by her
“woman,” who, must, of course, recycle narrative time to retrieve events. Thus Lennox
creates a narrative-within-a-narrative. But Arabella interrupts Miss Groves’ history
several times to relate some distant historical event that she retrieves from her romances
in order to parallel that event to Miss Groves’ situation. Here Lennox creates two affects:
she generates a narrative twice-removed from the original, what Todorov recognizes as an
"embedded" narrative (73); and she regenerates a circular pattern of narrative that
continually forces readers back to a point of origin further and further removed from the
narrative present, so that in a sense, Lennox regresses rather than progresses the narrative.
When Arabella controls the discourse, she frustrates the desire of Miss Groves's woman
to finish relating the story, as Lennox frustrates the desire of her reader to finish reading
it.

The ability of author and character to operate in synch ends when the authoritative
discourse of the Doctor begins. As the narrative loses the power of the equivocal, so
Arabella loses the power to reconcile opposites; the voice of the Divine silences all voices
but his own. For this reason, the debate about whether Lennox or Johnson wrote this
chapter does not pertain to this study, although certain twists in the narrative indicate that
Lennox wrote it in imitation of Johnson's style. Arabella lists a number of romance
heroines to bolster her contention that women have a history, but the Doctor, directly
representing the "word of the fathers," replies "To the Names of most of these illustrious
Sufferers I am an absolute Stranger" (374). Although Arabella continues to argue with
him, she no longer speaks in romantic terms. Just as Arabella had formerly silenced
others by regarding romances as authoritative discourse, so the Doctor silences Arabella
when he replaces her authority with his. Her "imaginations are too quick for Language"—
or at least, for "official language" (371). Arabella holds her ground by ruling her
emotions: she confutes the Doctor's arguments with cold logic. He equivocates
accidentally, effectively engaging her in her own language, when he argues that romances
"vitiate the Mind, and pervert the Understanding" (374). Arabella instantly recognizes
the fallacy that “glances from the Books upon the Readers.” The narrator reveals that the
Doctor’s “Vehemence had hinder’d him from discovering all the Consequences of his
Position” and he finds himself “entangled” and “submissive”—one of the twists that may
indicate Lennox’s authorship of this chapter. The Doctor confesses: “my Words imply an
Accusation very remote from my Intention.” As a representative of monoglossia, he
cannot successfully equivocate.

The heart of their dispute is time. The Doctor asserts that “we can judge of the Future
only by the Past” (372). Of course, whoever focalizes the past for others—a past
represented as a singular, static, monoglossic narrative—may focalize those of the future
and attempt to narrow the limits of potentially subversive narratives in order to sustain
itself. Further, these focalizers dictate the boundaries of present reality, as Kermode
asserts: “history . . . is a fictive substitute for authority and tradition, a maker of concords
between past, present, and future, a provider of significance to mere chronicity.
Everything is relevant if its relevance can be invented” (56). Arabella’s dependence on
her romances as true history makes her version of reality vulnerable: the Doctor’s role is
to prove that romances are fiction and to disrupt the cycle of the eternal return.
Arabella’s control of the present—based on the past—is lost, her sense of immediacy
broken. When the Doctor champions the notion that “the Order of the World is so
established, that all human Affairs proceed in a regular Method,” he attempts to defeat
her feminine authority through a masculinist tradition of linear time that demands a
beginning, middle, and especially, an end. Kermode explains that “concord of
consonance really is the root of the matter” (58): “We project ourselves . . . past the End,
so as to see the structure whole, a thing we cannot do from our spot of time in the middle” (8). In such a way Lennox projects the marriages of Arabella and Glanville, and Sir George and Miss Glanville, at the end of the novel.

In order to halt her narrative and bring the novel to a close, Lennox uses the character of the Doctor both to discipline and to cure Arabella. The Doctor functions as physician, delivering Arabella into the real world in rather violent fashion by bringing closure to her romantic notions, just as Ballaster argues that Aphra Behn, Delarivier Manley, and Eliza Haywood came to see the error of their ways for writing in the romance tradition. Arabella’s ability to dilate and thus extend the text indefinitely constitutes what Parker calls a “threat to the execution of closure” (11). Parker associates dilation with the “propogation or generation” of text, a feminine, naturalistic method of generating narrative that masculine, mechanistic approaches seek to mimic, a “postponing of death through natural increase”:

Dilation as the ‘opening’ of a closed text to make it ‘increase and multiply’ and to transform its brevity into a discourse ‘at large,’ then, joins dilation as both sexual and obstetrical ‘opening’ and the production of generational increase. (15)

To control what Parker calls “the implicitly female, and perhaps hence wayward, body of the text itself” (11), Lennox introduces the Doctor, who “has the Cure of Arabella’s Mind greatly at Heart” (368).

However, the Doctor makes little distinction between curing Arabella of a disease and convicting her of a crime, and here we may see the beginning of the philosophy that
Piaget used as a premise of his studies on children and rules. His conception that “all morality consists in a system of rules, and the essence of all morality is to be sought for in the respect which the individual acquires for these rules” has its ancestry in what Ballaster sees as the eighteenth-century equation of “formal realism” with “moral realism” (198). She argues that for critics of romance, “the accusation of improbability had come to stand for that of immorality.” Of all Arabella’s mistakes and misunderstandings, her greatest fault is to have “made some Approaches to the crime of encouraging violence and revenge” (381)—paradoxically, an admission that women, through their “encouragment,” could in fact influence and motivate the actions of men. This revelation ends Arabella’s argumentative discourse and marks the last time in the novel that Lennox synchronizes her voice with Arabella’s.50

Arabella’s confession of wrongdoing is insufficient; as the new male authority figure in Arabella’s life, Glanville initiates his own version of her punishment and returns the narrative to a condition of disequilibrium upon which masculine plot relies. Glanville “fancied to himself the most ravishing Delight in conversing with his lovely Cousin” (382). Considering the manner in which the term “ravishing” is used throughout the novel as well as the sexual connotations historically involved in “conversation” with women, this language strongly suggests the image of rape. But first, it occurs to Glanville that “now is the Time” for Sir George to confess his deception of Arabella, so that she could realize “the poignant sting of Ridicule which she would then perceive that she had incurred.”
Glanville seems less loving than before, but Lennox seems to anticipate Todorov's argument that "the abolition of the distance between desire's subject and object abolishes desire itself... this object is the same only materially and not symbolically; yet only this latter dimension matters to us here. We must once again abandon any static image of consciousness" (104). In another sense, too, Lennox recognizes the reality of gendered narrative: when Arabella ceases to function as a narrative transvestite, she becomes merely female; Glanville, then, must return to a more traditional male role. W. Austin Flanders points out that "we lose interest" once Arabella has been cured of her strange notions; the readers' desire to continue reading is lost, and with it, a plausible narrative. Kahn argues that the oppositional relationship of gender requires that each gender define itself against the other; Glanville's seeming villainy may reflect what Kahn describes as his need continually to "reaffirm his selfhood by negating all others whose very existence threatens his identity" (47). This idea may explain why Lennox requires Arabella to relinquish her selfhood to Glanville: "To give you myself... is but a poor Present"—a poor present indeed, and a poor future, too.

On the other hand, Lennox's conclusion works within the confines of the romance novel tradition: Ballaster points out that Eliza Haywood's novels, published in the 1720s, featured heroines whose transgressions are both "indulged and punished" (170). To construct the "modern female reader of romance fiction," Haywood encourages "erotic fantasy on the part of the woman reader, a heterosexual fantasy of subjugation and self-abandonment... in the secure knowledge that ultimately female sexual pleasure will be
punished or tamed.” It may also explain why Lennox seems to turn Glanville from an equalizer and facilitator into an initiator of disequilibrium and oppression.

Piaget’s theory of disequilibrium also helps to explain the seeming contradictions in the ending Lennox chooses for her novel. Arabella appears happy with Glanville; yet how can she be happy with someone whom Lennox seems to have converted into a monster? Chapman explains Piaget’s studies, which indicate that “disequilibrium may come about either through egocentrism, which consists in a failure to coordinate the two points of view, or through constraint” (187), a tendency that Glanville demonstrates in his apparent intentions to humiliate and dominate Arabella. The contradiction develops when we consider whether the novel is a closed or an open system. Piaget argues that closed systems, such as those found in the development of “logic and mathematics,” are “characterized by a certain directionality, although it is neither predetermined nor leads to any final state of overall equilibrium” (190), such as that seen in dynamic narrative. This idea would help to explain Susan Kubica Howard’s observation that Arabella’s forced conversion and “the plot’s resolution seems at odds with the pace of the novel and with Lennox’s characterization of Arabella” (17-19); and Flander’s assertion that the novel’s conclusion is “unconvincing” (187). Open systems, on the other hand, such as “certain social, economic, and biological structures . . . cannot--because of the absence of closure-involve such complete integration of function in the structural mechanism.” Lennox may have left readers with one final equivocation: if we privilege a reading in which Arabella is so mortified with her own behavior that she is now happy with her disequalized status, then we can see the novel as a closed system. If we cannot quite
believe in her happiness, then we may see the novel as an open system, a social exchange between author, characters, and readers whose lack of closure or whose “historical role of imbalances... can actually lead to integrations of structures” in Piaget’s formula. In gendered terms, the first reading renders the novel as a linear, therefore masculine narrative; the second renders the novel as an indeterminable, feminine narrative.\textsuperscript{54}

If \textit{The Female Quixote} is a relinquishment of sorts for Lennox, it may have been more than just a relinquishment of romance: Lennox also seems to have relinquished her ideas of creating a harmonious community of women who would support and encourage each other. The ending of her novel implies that her heroine enjoys a companionate marriage promoted during the eighteenth century, but as social critics have noted, those marriages were based on the subordination of women whose principle role was to provide emotional support to their husbands and to regulate their conduct.\textsuperscript{54} His narrative became hers, so that the need for a narrative transvestite is answered in the marriage itself. However, we are left with a question, a paraphrase of Kelly-Gadol’s essay entitled “Did Women Have A Renaissance?” In the age that saw the expansion of the idea that we now recognize as individualism, did women have individuality?
Notes


2. Laurie Langbauer, in “Romance Revisited: Charlotte Lennox’s The Female Quixote,” Novel, 18:1 (1984), observes that Lennox appears to refer to Clarissa when Arabella considers fleeing her house to avoid her father’s intentions to marry her to Glanville. Arabella pauses to reason that “The want of a Precedent, indeed, for an Action of this Nature, held her a few Moments in Suspense; for she did not remember to have read of any heroine that voluntarily left her Father’s House, however persecuted she might be” (35). Langbauer then argues that what Clarissa does is “unnatural, improbable, beyond even romance heroines” (37).


4. Deborah Ross argues for the “highly equivocal” nature of Lennox’s novel in which she finds what we may see as a certain mechanics that “exaggerated the difference between novel and romance” in “Mirror, Mirror: The Didactic Dilemma of The Female Quixote,” SEL 27 (1987): 456.


6. Here the influence of Fielding is apparent: Lennox regulates the narrative through her intrusions, just as Lockwood argues that Fielding’s “talk” motivates narrative progress in Tom Jones, in which Lockwood notes that Fielding “acts as a screen
through which we see the story” (230). Also see Langvauer, p. 43. She also notes the blending of Lennox’s voice with Arabella’s.


17. For Todorov, “the cyclical construction of substitutions” in the kind of narrative that “represents a series of variations that stack up along a vertical line” is opposed to “one-directional and contiguous construction” of horizontal, causal narrative (136). For Bakhtin, the novel of chance ends by returning everything “to its source, everything returns to its own place . . . and yet people and things have gone through something, something that did not, indeed, change them but that did . . . affirm what, and precisely they, were as individuals” (106).

19. See Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler* No. 4 (1750), and a variety of other examples of the eighteenth-century literati’s approbation of romance in Joan Williams, *Novel and Romance 1700-1800* (New York: Barnes & Noble, 1970). See also Susan Kubica Howard, Introduction, *The Life of Harriot Stuart, Written by Herself* (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson UP, 1995), who argues that the support of the male literati came at the expense of Lennox’s “personal and artist control” and may have resulted in a “weakening of the novel” (18).


21. See Ros Ballaster, *Amatory Forms: Women’s Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992). Ballaster sees the complaints of Pope and others that women who wrote amatory fiction were inverting “the natural business of women” (161-63). This inversion reverses the situation in Castiglione’s *Book of the Courtier* in which the inversion of roles between men and women allowed women to regulate the conduct of others.

manners and sentiments of the French salons” by “assuming romantic names” and conducting “Platonic correspondences” (20).


24. Ross points out that novelists like Richardson could “fail to see the problem” with “unreflecting heroines,” believing that they might “inspire a love of virtue in the reader” (469). Fielding, she argues, knew that “giving the artless angel a point of view . . . automatically makes her inconsistent and hypocritical.” David Marshall, however, argues in “Writing Masters and ‘Masculine Exercises’ in *The Female Quixote,*” *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 5:2 (1993), that Arabella’s power derives from “a plot that has become a script that governs Arabella’s life” in which “her will to power (and fame) is essentially a will to imitate” (122).


by the seventeenth century, "contemporary literature, ballads, sermons, and pamphlets" were "warning women to desist" from cutting their hair and dressing in a manner "now designated as masculine." She reports that "after the Restoration, gender distinctions came to be drawn more sharply than ever before: male and female were separated by ascribed nature and by function" with a "greater polarization of mind and nature, reason and feeling, objective and subjective" (62-63). Upham sees an association with the salons of the "later précieuses" who imitated romance and the "femme savante," whose pretense to knowledge she did not necessarily possess makes her "a confident pretender of language" (343). A pattern of male concern about female language emerges during this period: see Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1995), who observes that "the discourse of containment dominated men's thinking about the education of girls from 1600 to 1800" (375).

Marshall notes the same affect and points out that later in the novel, Lennox conducts a "double cross-dressing . . . a female author disguising herself as a male storyteller" in the Princess of Gaul, who is "a male impersonation disguised as a female impersonation" (116). Spacks argues for Arabella's psychological transvestism when Arabella "claims male prerogatives, welcomes male responsibility--and declares both female" (541), in "The Subtle Sophistry of Desire: Dr. Johnson and The Female Quixote" in *Modern Philology* 85:4 (1988): 532-42.

For a cultural view of transvestism in eighteenth-century culture and in romance, see also Deborah Ross, *The Excellency of Falsehood* (Lexington: U of Kentucky P,


31. See Fletcher for an extensive study of these conduct guides (376-400).


Miller's contention that the dead mother's voice serves as a power source points also to the source of women's power in romance: the past, which, as Ross observes, Arabella draws on through her romances, "supported by centuries-long tradition" (461). Ross also sees a "sympathy" between Lennox and Arabella, and further "enlists the reader's sympathies on what the novel formally designates as the wrong side," an observation in line with romance as a dead genre.

33. In fact, Arabella behaves as a proper coterie leader should, according to Upham. He cites a letter from Sir John Suckling about sixteenth-century coterie leader Lady Carlisle, in which he remarks that she plays "with Love like a child. Naturally she hath no passion at all" (352).


36. See Edward S. Casey and J. Melvin Woody, “Hegel, Heidegger, Lacan: The Dialectic of Desire,” *Interpreting Lacan*, ed. Joseph H. Smith and William Kerrigan (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983), 91. See also Claudine Herrmann, “Women in Space and Time,” *New French Feminisms*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schoken, 1981). Herrmann’s analysis of women and time points out Casey and Woody’s misuse of “human” as a generic term. She writes that “if man lives in an organized temporal perspective, delineated by the realization of goals he sets for himself, woman . . . prefers to consume immediately, without keeping anything in reserve . . . she lives in the present, and does not project herself into the future. Men’s time is, in effect, just another system, but the most frightening of all, the one that deprives you of the present in the name of the future and puts off the present moment indefinitely by crushing it under the past and the future.” (172)

37. Arabella’s strategy can be explained, at least in part, by Luce Irigaray’s description of women’s “economy”: “it is really a question of another economy which diverts the linearity of a project, undermines the target-object of a desire.” See “This Sex Which Is Not One,” *New French Feminisms*, ed. Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivron (New York: Schoken, 1980), 104.


40. Miller argues that in Shakespearean configurations of desire, "the lady operates as both impetus and obstacle to the bonds between men" (32), a configuration repeated in Lennox’s novel as Arabella prevents bonds between Glanville and her father regarding her marriage to Glanville, and between Glanville and Sir George in their rivalry.


45. By 1755, Jonhson called "adventure" "a low word, seldom used in writing," and by the nineteenth century, the term had associations with "concubinage." See *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v., "adventure" and "adventurism."

46. See Fletcher, 356.

47. Langbauer argues that Arabella is the "ideal reader, completely given over to the sway of the text" (30); if so, then Miss Glanville seems not to be a reader at all.
Lennox expands on a tradition that Ballaster argues for in women’s amatory fiction, that the female readers will find some kind of subjectivity in amatory novels.

48. Craft notes that Arabella and the Countess model the “community of women” that romance helps them to conceptualize: “they are capable of caring about others of their own sex.” By being “generous, compassionate, and helpful,” they can “do all those things that the male-dominated society has proscribed” (836).

49. Just as Lennox failed to reestablish romances as legitimate literature, so she failed to establish her ideal of comraderie between herself and the women of her day: Small reports that the comments of “Fanny Burney, Mrs. Thrale, or Miss Hawkins, all of whom decry Mrs. Lennox’s charm and abilities” may indicate the “general disfavor with which she was regarded by the women of the period while the men unite in finding her worthy of regard, assistance, or sympathy” (34).

50. See Marshall, 131-33.

CHAPTER 4

THE GENDER OF NATIONS IN SMOLLETT’S

THE EXPEDITION OF HUMPHRY CLINKER

Tobias Smollett’s dual position as an economic progressive and as a Scotsman places his narrative in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771) in a unique position between the other two authors of the narratives in this study. Defoe speaks as an English national to a readership of English nationals, directly addressing a group of which he is already a member. Lennox speaks as a female within a profession and a culture dominated by men; as a subordinate member of that group, she tailors her discourse to satisfy a readership that promotes dominant literary and cultural standards while she also subverts that discourse to indirectly address the group to which she most immediately belongs. Like Lennox, Smollett belongs to a subordinate group whose interests he attempts to promote. As a Scottish national living in England, he sees the benefits that Scotland’s cultural assimilation with England would bring. His love for Scotland motivates his desire to see the entirety of his nation profit from English investment; at the same time, he appears to regret the devaluation of Scottish character and the loss of Scotland’s independence that assimilation with England had so far meant.

Unlike Lennox, however, and in spite of whatever regrets he may have experienced, Smollett actively promotes England’s economic and cultural agenda in *The Expedition of*
Humphry Clinker (1771). Although Smollett expresses subversive Scottish opinions about the 1707 union with England, he uses his position "in the middle" of two cultures to reconcile the contradictions that the assimilation he promotes suggests, at least in his fiction. This, and the epistolary form of the narrative that he employs, enables the novel's dynamics and his own role as narrative transvestite, a role that he parcels out to his characters and which regulates the progress of the Bramble party and the progress of the novel.

Smollett's vehicle of narrative delivery—the letter-journal—allows him to control the pace of the novel and to manipulate narrative time more precisely than either Defoe or Lennox. The letters determine the reader's progress and synchronize reader with writer throughout the novel; thus the letters become the synchronized regulators of narrative. If we cannot say that letters—or indeed, any type of text—are overtly gendered, we can consider the ways in which their characteristics suggest that possibility. All forms of writing are static; letters particularly synchronize time during which events take place. They create form through a chronotope established by the date of the letter, a paradigm that focalizes the reader's perspective through that of the correspondent. The letter signifies its writer; it stands in place of its writer, embodying the writer in text in a way that no other form of writing can. Further, the letter embodies the world as viewed by the writer, or, as Wolfgang Iser sees it, letters become a "medium for an intensified observation of the outside world," an important distinction in light of Tyndale's view of [biblical] text as consumable and Bacon's view of nature as exploitable. ¹ As an embodiment, letters become an object of desire to readers, a medium through which they
make contact with the writer; and, if the letter is read by someone other than the addressee, that desire becomes voyeuristic.

The voyeurism that letters encourage furthers the process of interpellation, the narrative process that psychologically "sutures" readers with the speaking voice in the narrative through a series of identifications. But as Ruth Perry notes, this process works only if the reader believes that the letter is "from real people undergoing real stresses, and that the evidence had not been prepared for public eyes." The publication of private letters in the eighteenth century was very often heralded with protests from their writer that they were never intended for public perusal, and Perry observes that in many cases, the writer claims that they had either been stolen or accidentally found (71). Whether these claims were true or not, they became an effective way to pique readers' interest. Jonathan Dustwich's letter to Henry Lewis at the novel's beginning excuses his publication of the Bramble party letters by defending himself against any wrongdoing and by declaring them to be for "the information and edification of mankind," and so it is his "duty" to publish them. The "unliterariness" of letters is significant to Smollett's purpose in Humphry Clinker: his efforts at persuading English readers to take a more positive view of Scotland would not have been advanced by a more prepared, more obviously didactic approach, since his approach could have been read as merely rhetorical, self-interested, and lacking in sincerity.

By focalizing readers through the date and the author of each letter, Smollett interpolates them into the text, and thus readers become both a part of the "lived" experience of the correspondent and an outsider to it. Iser argues that in the "letter-form,
the reader is directly confronted with the characters, and since none of the addressees writes in return the reader must take their place... he himself must combine the pieces of information he finds in the various letters" (254). Smollett was already experienced in constructing fictional correspondences; in The Briton he formulated responses to letters supposedly written by readers as a vehicle for his opinion.⁵ Stuart Sherman identifies dated writings as a "strategy of narrative" in which travel-journals "constantly collate the data of exotic space with that of familiar time—with dates that their first readers had simultaneously occupied at home, and could recall."⁶ Dates serve as a link between the "sedentary reader and the outwandering narrative"; thus "time organizes the perception and the charting of motion, and situates the British subject near the center of the reading." Smollett varies the timing of the letters to chart the motion of his narrative: if he wants to advance the plot, he will often skip dates, trying to avoid what Defoe calls "a Journal of Trifles" in which narrative bogs down in unimportant detail.⁷ Sherman notes that "no journal letterist published without parading his or her alertness to this problem of plenitude as a kind of credential" (181), and neither does Smollett. Nearly every letter of substance in Humphry Clinker ends with an apology for length or at least a reference to it.

Rather than relying on insignificant details to slow the plot, Smollett restrains narrative time by dating more than one letter on the same day, and so he allows different characters to voice their impressions of that day's events. This refocalization retards the narrative in a similar manner as Lennox's intrusions. Further, the journal-letter accommodates what Sherman calls "a measure of retroactive self-restraint" (191), allowing the time between experience and writing to cull out superfluous observations. By
synchronizing reader to text and with the writer who generated it, Smollett also demonstrates what J. Paul Hunter sees as a desire for "contemporaneity" or "a large cultural embracing of the present moment." Perry argues for the significance of the immediacy that the journal-letter provides when she observes that

One effect of telling stories about the consciousness of the characters is that it gives a continuous sense of time even where there is no formal unity of time or place in this genre. The reader soon disregards the formal dislocations and paces himself instead to the inward rhythms of the epistolary characters who are always reacting to the present. The immediacy of such writing also encourages the inclusion of all the psychological particulars. For when the writer is recounting something from the past, as in a memoir, knowledge of the outcome influences the telling, pruning much of the surrounding detail. However, when writing about an event while living through it, all the immaterial psychological nuance seems potentially relevant and deserving of attention. (120)

This desire for immediacy in a literary sense and the possibility of dwelling on psychological happenings rather than physical action constitutes a feminine mode of narration that privileges an everlasting present that monitors the progress of linear constructions of past and future. Here Smollett certainly seems influenced by Richardson's comments that the epistolary form "facilitates this self-examination . . . with what may be called instantaneous Descriptions and Reflections."
Further, the epistles through which Smollett conveys the travels of Matthew Bramble and his party operate as cogs in the narrative machinery and reflect eighteenth-century mechanistic expressions of time; their exact dates allow Smollett a tighter control over the pace of the narrative more tightly than either Defoe or Lennox have in their works. Sherman argues that technological advances in timekeeping during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries made diurnal narrative possible. Particularly, the advent of the watch helped to construct time in a "private capacity; it can produce time, by various means of enclosure, as a private property: to read time as property on a watch, and to write it as property in a diary, is to attain knowledge (and hence possession) of the self in time" (107).

Each letter serves as a separate chronotope—or in Sherman’s terms, an enclosure—that reverses chronology, "producing" the past as a private property shared between correspondent and reader. In the beginning of the novel, Smollett places the date of each letter at its beginning; but by the 26 April correspondence from Winifred Jenkins, he places all dates at the end. Until readers begin to remember which character writes to which addressee, they must come to a full stop, momentarily skipping the contents of the letter to ascertain its writer and date. In other words, they must focalize and refocalize themselves, first to the chronotope established by the date of the letter’s writing, then to the writer of each letter. Readers must then return to the beginning of the letter, only to be drawn further back in time to the beginning of the events that each character narrates. Finally readers come full circle at the end of the letter to arrive at the chronotope that the date of each letter marks. The back-and-forth narrative that Smollett uses resembles more
closely Lennox’s use of this narrative movement as a focalizing chronotope than Defoe’s use of it as a grammatical chronotope. The circular pattern of reading forces readers to disengage from the text completely, then re-engage, creating friction between reader and text that increases the reader’s desire to know the letter’s contents, so that, as Iser argues, “the over-all structure of [Humphry Clinker] gives a shape to empirical reality” (254). The cyclicity that genders this mechanism feminine allows Smollett to create the text of each letter as an object of desire, a process that he begins by prefacing the Bramble party’s letters with those of Dustwich and Lewis.

We can measure Smollett’s narrative progress by examining his juxtaposition of letters. When Smollett concentrates on a particular chronotope by grouping letters from several writers on the same date, or when he backtracks narrative time by placing letters together out of sequence, he slows the progress of readers through time. Smollett backdates only four letters: the first, Wilson’s to Lydia, dated 31 March, follows Matt’s dated 17 April 17, and precedes Jery’s dated 18 April. Its inclusion at that point marks a change of plot or narrative planning, because it shifts attention from the journey to Lydia’s feminine-gendered romance plot, effectively freezing the main narrative. Smollett again backtracks time when Matt’s letter discussing his change of residence at Bath, dated 23 April, follows Jery’s dated 24 April. However, Matt apparently began the letter before he changed residence, since his account of the move follows his signature like a postscript. Nonetheless, the change of residence represents a change of plans that does not advance the narrative, but rather seems to stall it.
The narrative also stagnates when two characters narrate the same sequence of events but emphasize different aspects of those events. Readers arrive at Matt’s letter dated June 12 before they read Jery’s dated June 11: readers may suppose that Matt wrote his letter first, since he narrates the misunderstanding between Mr. Barton, Lydia, and Tabby at length, even reproducing Mr. Barton’s message to Matt. He describes Clinker’s arrest, which occurs later in the day, in much less detail (138). However, all of the events that Matt and Jery narrate happen on June 11, the day before Matt writes—or at least finishes—his letter. So Matt actually takes more time than Jery to record events, and not surprisingly, he dwells more on female activity than on male activity, while Jery provides only a brief summary of the romantic misunderstanding and focuses on Clinker’s predicament in detail. Jery’s dynamic account is written on the same day that all of these events occurred (143), but since Matt’s account covers details of events that occur earlier in the day, Smollett may have elected to place his letter first to maintain a clearer sense of linear sequencing. Paul-Gabriel Boucé observes, correctly, I think, that Smollett “tended to be extremely meticulous about precision of details . . . certain chronological contradictions are too obvious not to be deliberate,” which argues against the notion that Smollett’s sequencing is merely sloppy.11 His decision to date Matt’s letter a day later seems to reflect the propensity to delay that characterizes both the events narrated in Matt’s letter and their narrator.

The last incident of backdating occurs at the farthest reaches of Scotland and, although Matt’s letter is dated and placed after Jery’s, seems to demonstrate Jery’s uncontrolled dynamics more than Matt’s tendency toward stasis. Jery’s letter, dated September 3 from
Argyleshire, is written "in a gentleman's house, near the town of Inverary," having "left Edinburgh ten days ago" (228). Matt's letter, dated August 28 from Cameron, follows Jery's; he reveals that "About a fortnight is now elapsed, since we left the capital of Scotland, directing our course towards Stirling, where we lay" (237). Matt takes this letter and the following one, dated September 6, to catch up to Jery; but rather than being frustrated by Matt's delay, readers are left with the impression that Jery has run ahead of the others somehow, not an unreasonable impression since Matt has already described Jery as "hot and hasty" (13). The two letters that follow Jery's help Smollett to regain his former narrative pace.

Smollett’s juxtaposed letters indicate the extent to which narrative time is static or dynamic, feminine or masculine, and ultimately controls the pace of the novel. After the first two letters from Dustwich and Lewis, Smollett begins in stasis: four letters, from Matt, Tabby, Winifred, and Jery, are synchronized at April 2. Lydia writes the next two letters, one to her governess and the other to Miss Willis, both dated April 6; however, rather than progressing the narrative, these letters divert it, referring not to plans for the expedition, but to past matters that Smollett does not allow Lydia to explain. The lack of specificity creates a sense of mystery that places this narrative in the synchronized adventure-time of romance. From there, the narrative advances in fits and starts, just like the journey itself. Jery projects readers into the narrative future when he tells Watkin Phillips that "our progress from place to place shall continue to be specified in these detached journals" (236), as if their progress could not "continue" in a linear manner without the specification that the dated letter-journal provides in piecemeal fashion. By
the time the party returns to England, the narrative begins to slow again, as if to be in
England is to be caught in a field of inertia: Jery writes that "we follow no determinate
course.—We make small deviations, to see the remarkable towns, villas, and curiosities on
each side of our route; so that we advance by slow steps towards the borders of
Monmouthshire" (274). As flows the course of the journey, so flows the course of the
narrative.

Smollett sequences an average of three static letters to three dynamic letters, but given
that stasis is more powerful than dynamics, this equality creates an imbalance of stasis
that lasts until the Bramble party leaves London after June 14, on page 154. Narrative
pace then picks up seven dynamic letters covering the time from Brambles’ departure
from London to their arrival in Edinburgh. Cities seem to slow the party: Edinburgh
generates two sets of static letters, Glasgow generates one. We can probably attribute
these pockets of stasis to the many diversions a city typically offers.

Synchronicity builds again as the novel draws to a close because Smollett ends his
narrative in romance time. Boucé remarks on the "absence of precise geographical
details in these last twenty letters" and speculates that they are "related to the apparent
lack of respect for chronology . . . psychological and moral equilibrium remain vague"
(202). Overall, synchronicity predominates in this novel: Boucé notices that "this
vaguely circular journey has neither beginning nor end" (202); and Thomas R. Preston
points out that "the sequence of events serves primarily as a means for epistolary self-
revelation and cross-revelation of character . . . the chronology of the journey does not
even seem to have much importance for plot." Each letter, however static or dynamic
its positioning or dating make it appear, is itself a site of resistance, recounting the past, 
projecting the future, and regulating the progress of the narrative from the fixed 
immediacy of the date on the letter. Smollett’s juxtaposing of static and dynamic 
correspondence as indicated by date, place, and energy of narration constitutes the 
mechanism and regulation of narrative movement in this novel.

In these ways, Smollett artifically produces in his novel the natural processes of 
reproduction. Iser identifies, in other terms, a similar conception of Smollett’s narrative 
reproduction in what he calls “transformation” and “blend.” He remarks that in Humphry 
Clinker, Smollett blends “traditional forms of the novel”—in this case, travel narratives, 
epistolary narratives, and picaresque narratives that mark “the point of intersection in the 
development of narrative prose” (245). Iser points out that rather than wrestling with 
moral issues as Richardson’s characters do, Smollett’s characters only “want to reproduce 
the world around them” (247). Iser’s language again suggests the inherent—and therefore 
sometimes difficult to detect—gendered qualities of novelistic narrative in general, 
Smollett’s in particular. Iser sees that the “combination of forms leads to an increased 
breadth and vividness,” terms that are gendered by the association of breadth with 
expansion, production, and regeneration of text, and vividness with vigor, energy, 
projection, and drive. The “shape” that the “over-all structure of the novel gives” to 
“empirical reality” is simply the process of imaginative creation, a literary mimicry of the 
process of physical creation. Iser correctly points out that “it is only natural that the 
forms and elements combined here... should undergo a reduction in the meaning
attributed to them in the traditional eighteenth-century novel, for only thus could they be used for new possibilities” (256).

Like Defoe, Smollett’s fictional writings preaced and intermingled with his non-fictional writings and prepared Smollett to engage in what Louis Martz calls “imaginative synthesis,” or what I refer to as the juxtaposing of static and dynamic narrative time. Martz compares the prose style of The Present State of All Nations (1768-69) with similar passages in Humphry Clinker to demonstrate the “sharp breaks between description and narrative” in the former: the narrative of the novel, however, flows forth “lightly and smoothly” with “little cleavage between incident and description, between characterization and description” (147). Thus Smollett breaks up the dry, static facts of description that he had grouped together in Present State, distributing them “in accordance with entirely different trains of association” in the novel (148). What Martz observes in the novel is the friction generated when Smollett juxtaposes static and dynamic narrative, creating in this friction a sense of progress that we recognize as gendered when Martz describes the narrative of the novel: it is “vital,” “vivid,” and “vigorous.”

Proximity of cause and effect plays its part in rendering an essentially static narrative more dynamic as well. When Smollett conjectures about the connection between the Highlanders’ practice of raising cattle and their idleness in Present State, he places the effect first, the cause afterward: “The People of this country are generally reputed idle and lazy; but this laziness is probably owing to their want of employment, and the means of exercising their industry.”

Note also the lack of specificity as to cause, a
nonlinearity that slows narrative. In the novel, Matt Bramble repeats these remarks, but with a difference. Here Smollett provides a linear description, placing a specific cause ahead of effect: "Perhaps this branch of husbandry, which requires very little attendance and labour, is one of the principal causes of that idleness and want of industry, which distinguishes these mountaineers in their own country" (245). The linear passage does not require readers to backtrack their thinking as the more circular account does; thus Smollett enlivens static, feminine-gendered narrative by interspersing it with masculine-gendered, dynamic narrative. Martz comments on Smollett’s skill at juxtaposing text in Present State, where “each fact is placed precisely in its proper section” (12). However, Martz misses the mark when he states that “systematization can go no further”: what he notices as “the fluency with which [the narrative] moves” is the regenerative effect that Smollett “creates” in the novel when he juxtaposes gendered narrative to literally “produce” the reader’s progress through the text (154).

As readers look over the shoulder of each addressee they remain at least two steps removed from narrative action, their voyeurism further stimulating their desire to progress through the novel. Within each letter, Smollett leaves gaps between the writer and the addressee: the silences represent assumptions that each writer makes about the addressee’s knowledge, and readers must be astute enough to fill in the blanks. The addressee corresponds to Gerald Prince’s description of the narratee: “the zero-degree narratee knows the tongue” of the narrator, and “to know a tongue is to know the meanings . . . the signifieds as such and, if applicable, the referents—of all the signs that
constitute it. " Readers are encouraged, then, to write their own version of the relationship between each writer and addressee as they fill in narrative gaps.

If Smollett encourages readers to help write the narrative of each letter, he seems to do so under the influence of epistolary poetics. But the role into which Smollett and other epistolary writers inscribe their readers is more than merely voyeuristic. We have already seen the extent to which the mechanics of dynamic and static narrative in the novel owe their origins to previous poetic conventions; we have yet to examine the extent to which poets begin to shift to novelists their burden of speaking as the voice of the community. This shift is best seen in the similarities between the verse epistle and the epistolary novel. William C. Dowling posits the “lonely situation of the letter-writer” against “the situation of the poet, imagined since Homer and Virgil with the voice of the community as a whole, the tale of the tribe listening to its own story.”

Dowling sees the eighteenth-century community “threatened by fragmentation and alienation” and argues that the verse epistle’s “rhyme and meter . . . steadily insist on the status of the discourse as public utterance that then project an audience at one remove . . . an overhearing or listening in on the epistolary exchange between letter-writer and addressee” (11-12). Here the audience is “internal” to the poem, not merely voyeuristic, part of a deliberate attempt to inscribe a community of readers as part of the audience of the work itself. Dowling explains the dynamics of the “double register” that he finds in epistolary verse, a dynamic that we can also see at work in the epistolary novel:

the verse epistle posits a symbolic situation in which epistolary audience is at once external to the discourse of the speaker and internal to the
discourse of the poem, overhearing the exchange between letter-writer and addressee from a middle region in which the ontological claims of poetry and society, otherwise so readily conceived as separate spheres of reality, are suddenly and surprisingly heard to be mutually intelligible. (12)

This is precisely the effect of the epistolary novel. Smollett's characters may be writing to a fictional audience, but Smollett presumes a real audience, a community of readers whom he expects to understand his references and whom he hopes to influence.

Smollett uses the addressee/narratee as a sounding board for his ideas on the economic development of Scotland in order to entice English readers into favorable views of the country and to encourage their investment. Prince notes that the narratee, in this case Dr. Lewis and the others, "knows absolutely nothing about the events or characters mentioned and he is not acquainted with the conventions prevailing in that world" (10), and this ignorance is particularly important for Smollett's apparent purposes, since Matt's observations about Scotland are intended for English readers who also, presumably, are unacquainted with Scotland. Herein lies another mechanism of Smollett's rhetorical power: he "moves" the reader by regulating the impressions that his readers receive through the narratee/addressee, for, as Prince notes, "without the assistance of the narrator, without his explanations and the information supplied by him, the narratee is able neither to interpret the value of an action nor to grasp its repercussions" (10-11). Conversely, without the narratee, the narrator cannot establish the "concrete framework" upon which epistolary novels like Smollett's depend as a "model upon which a work or narration develops" (22). Smollett does not create the "zero-degree narratee" that Prince
describes, though. His narratees are not entirely “without any personality or social characteristics”: each character writes to someone whose social position and personal traits are indicated by the degree of intimacy that he or she enjoys in relation to the character.

The initial letters between Jonathan Dustwich and Henry Davis, as well as those of the Bramble party, begin in media res: Dustwich sketches his previous correspondence with Lewis regarding the letters; Matt hails Dr. Lewis with “The pills are good for nothing—I might as well swallow snow-balls to cool my reins—I have told you over and over, how hard I am to move; and at this time of day, I ought to know something of my own constitution” (7). In this passage, Matt apparently refers to his bowels, but Smollett refers to the narrative itself: Matt, as the character who most strongly refracts Smollett’s voice and who acts as one of the fictive narrative transvestites, possesses the dual characteristics of feminine synchronicity by being “hard to move,” yet he simultaneously functions as the masculine instigator—the plotter—and the director of the tour to Scotland. Matt makes the decisions about when to leave one place for another and how long the party remains in one place. The long delays at Bath and at London seem to correspond to the amount of mass to be moved initially. Matt is a large man with the gout, whose infirmities confine him in England: it takes Smollett 153 out of 337 pages to move Matt out of Bath and London, or two and a half months out of the seven it takes for the entire journey.

Once in Scotland, the pace of travel picks up as Smollett warms to his subject, and here the content of Matt’s letters indicate the extent to which Smollett commits him to the
role of the principle narrative transvestite. His letters are mainly descriptive or argumentative, not narrative, and they represent the longest letters to be written by any of the party. Prince identifies in such dilated texts “narratives in which explanations and motivations abound,” the mark of narrators “who find the dimension of discourse (discours) more important than that of narrative (récit) or who are acutely aware of the gratuitousness—and even the falseness—of any narrative or of a certain type of narrative and consequently try to exorcise it” (16). Matt’s letters read less like travel literature and more like philosophical treatises: he continually offers his opinions and advice about all things Scottish and economic, which appears to be the primary purpose of Smollett’s novel. This holds true also for the other principle narrative transvestite, Jery. He begins a letter to Watkin by announcing the extent to which he is dilated with narrative: “The truth is, I am big with the secret, and long to be delivered” (21). The image of the pregnant male is another metaphor that the narrative trasvestite generates.

Smollett also uses Matt’s misanthropic attitude at the beginning of the journey as one of the properties of his effeminacy; Matt’s hatred of “man,” especially the masses, originates from the unnatural uses of feminine-gendered nature that Matt witnesses in Bath and London. At Bath, he complains in a letter to Dr. Lewis that “I am now as much afraid of drinking, as of bathing,” because “it is very far from clear to me, that the patients in the Pump-room don’t swallow the scouring of the bathers . . . medicated with the sweat, and dirt, and dandruff; and the abominable discharges of various kinds, from twenty different diseased bodies” (45). He is also convinced that the water is polluted because the Roman baths are built over an old burying ground, so that “we swallow the
strainings of rotten bones and carcasses.” The bread Matt eats in London is a “deleterious paste,” an “adulteration” (119). The fact that Londoners “prefer it to wholesome bread” leads Boucé to comment that Smollett’s depiction of this “perversion of nature” is “not so much endured by mankind as willed.” The same will to perversion marks Mrs. Baynard’s “improvements” of the grounds of her husband’s estate that Matt discovers on his return through England. She has “seized into her own hand” once-productive farm land and turned it into a useless bog (281). All three passages indicate an uncontrolled dynamic at work, an unchecked, masculine-gendered tendency to tinker with nature to its detriment. Preston notes that Smollett’s “urban satire does not, however, oppose progress” (xxvi)—only unregulated progress.

What Boucé observes in Londoners’ will to pervert nature, as well as Mrs. Baynard’s misguided attempts to follow fashion to the detriment of nature is, perhaps, the “natural” result of Baconianism taken to the extreme. Bacon espoused what Margaret Jacob calls “a natural philosophy that would be practical and progressive, one capable of ‘perpetual renovation,’” a philosophy underwritten by the gendering of nature as a feminine mystique to be unmasked and plundered by the masculine scientist. Thus comes about the “monstrous invasion of nature” (208), as Boucé puts it, that so sickens Matt Bramble in London. With no feminine influence to direct masculine dynamism to useful purposes, the uncontrolled “progress” that Smollett assigns to the English constitutes nothing but rape and generates nothing but waste.

In spite of Smollett’s apparent love for Scotland and his apparent distaste for England, he nonetheless acts through Matt and Jery as a representative of England, a particular type
of representative in that Bramble and his family are Welsh, a successfully integrated "colony" of England. Smollett's descriptions of Scotland correspond to Edward W. Said's descriptions of "imperial possessions" that are "usefully there, anonymous and collective." Said associates the "facts of empire" with "sustained possession, with far-flung and sometimes unknown spaces, with eccentric or unacceptable human beings, with fortune-enhancing or fantasized activities like emigration, money-making, and sexual adventure" (63-64). Certainly the excursion into the Highlands qualifies at least part of Scotland as far-flung, as Smollett's description of the "house of Cameron" indicates:

Above that house is a romantic glen or clift of a mountain, covered with hanging woods, having at bottom a stream of fine water that forms a number of cascades in its descent to join the Leven; so that the scene is quite enchanting. A captain of a man of war, who had made the circuit of the globe with Mr. Anson, being conducted to this glen, exclaimed, "Juan Fernandez, by God!" (243)

The colonial connotations in the captain's exclamation are obvious. The image of Scotland as a remote wilderness is further advanced in Matt's description of its "weeping climate," its "neighbourhood of high mountains," and its exposure "to the vapours of the Atlantic ocean."

Some historians often couch Scotland's relationship to England during the eighteenth century in Newtonian terms: K. E. Wrightson, for example, claims that "Scotland was increasingly incorporated into a larger economic and social system in which the centre of gravity lay far to the south. Whatever Scotland's particular achievements, they were
increasingly overshadowed by, harnessed to, or subsumed within those of a bigger, richer, more powerful, more self-confident neighbor" (250).\textsuperscript{18} Scotland, then, functions as one of England's satellites: whatever its own movements may have been, it capitulates to the movements of its larger neighbor and in doing so, its movements correspond to Newton's First Law of Motion: \textit{"Every body continues in its state of rest, or of uniform motion in a right line, unless it is compelled to change that state by forces impressed upon it."}\textsuperscript{19} Newton further explains the relationships between bodies with respect to centrifugal force:

\begin{quote}
I refer the motive force to the body as an endeavor and propensity of the whole towards a centre, arising from the propensities of the several parts taken together; the accelerative force to the place of the body, as a certain power diffused from the centre to all places around to move the bodies that are in them; and the absolute force to the centre, as endued with some cause, without which those motive forces would not be propagated through the spaces round about. (5)
\end{quote}

Smollett demonstrates the motive force in the circulation of currency from Scotland to England: Lismahago asserts that "none of their treasure stagnates in Scotland--There is a continual circulation, like that of the blood in the human body, and England is the heart, to which all the streams which it distributes are refunded and returned" (268). The whole currency is moved toward the center, London, which in turn occupies the "centre" by being the "heart" of the Britain. Lismahago complains that Scottish profits are
‘engrossed by the natives of South-Britain’; still, Smollett seems to encourage England to exert an accelerative force on Scotland.

Smollett employs a variety of characters to represent “unacceptable” people in Scotland, all having to do with idleness. He blames the landscape and climate for the Highlanders’ lack of economic success, where they can raise only “black cattle”:

Perhaps this branch of husbandry, which requires very little attendance and labour, is one of the principal causes of the idleness and want of industry, which distinguishes these mountaineers in their own country—When they come forth into the world, they become as diligent and alert as any people upon earth. They are undoubtedly a very distinct species from their fellow-subjects of the Lowlands, against whom they indulge an ancient spirit of animosity. (245)

The opposition that Smollett represents between the Highlands and Lowlands is also the opposition between feminine-gendered idleness and masculine-gendered industry. To what extent Smollett may owe this specific landscape of idleness to certain passages in the *Spectator* is unknown. However, Sherman observes that Richard Steele associates idleness with the landscape of a “barren country, that fills [the Eye] with the Prospect of naked Hills and Plains” (149). The landscape portrayed as feminine stasis evokes the same paralytic effect seen in images of the female in cinematic narrative.

Apparently, it never occurred to Smollett that the Highlanders’ idleness could be their way of resisting colonization. When they emerge from the Highlands, they are no longer on their own ground; hence, no cause to resist. From a Newtonian viewpoint, then, the
Highlanders occupy a site of resistance, a characterization that becomes more obvious when Matt tries to argue with Lismahago, about which more later. R. A. Dodgson attributes the cause of this resistance to shifting economic attitudes when he writes that by the early eighteenth century, landowners like the Duke of Argyll began to change their thinking on clans, feuds, and food as currency; the clan itself did not. Essentially, the attempt by the clan’s rank-and-file “to preserve a sixteenth-century style of life down into the early eighteenth century” represents their conflict with time as much as with economics. They were simply trying to remain static, to preserve the reciprocity that their society had always recognized as its dominant, if medieval, social system. Their will to stasis accounts for the lack of development in the Highlands as remnants of the clans attempted to resist modernization. The principles of physics apply here as well: Dodgson notes that “those who lost or were marginalized by this process turned to social banditry,” which he describes as a “re-direction of the energies and values of the feud” that constituted “a form of protest” (195-97). Other colonized peoples demonstrate the same trait: Said cites the observations of British travellers Beatrice and Sidney Webb, who “noted the difficulty British employers were having with Indian laborers working for the Raj” (203). They identified “laziness as a form of resistance,” then add:

What is equally clear is that the Indian is sometimes an extraordinarily difficult worker to sweat. He does not care enough for his earnings. He prefers to waste away in semi-starvation than overwork himself. However
low his standard of life, his standard of work is lower—at any rate when he is working for an employer he does not like. And his irregularities are baffling.

Matt, although Welsh, aligns himself with England when he states that “Our people have a strange itch to colonize America, when the uncultivated parts of our own island might be settled to greater advantage” (248). Here, Matt’s inclusion of himself as part of “our people” associates him with England’s dynamic interests.

Matt’s switch from colonized Welshman to colonizing Englishman is enabled by the travel narrative. Matt’s feminine stasis is most recognizable in the first sections of the novel, when the Bramble party is still in England, but he recovers his masculine vitality after the party enters Scotland. Stephen Greenblatt’s theory of “improvisation,” which he refers to as “the ability to capitalize on the unforeseen and to transform given materials into one’s own scenario,” helps to explain the psychological process by which colonizers perform their mission.22 The best example of improvisation is found in Jery’s correspondence. Jery acclimates himself to the Scottish landscape through improvisation: he simply converts the land of the Scots into his own land by noting its similarity to Wales. Greenblatt argues that this ability is a by-product of the “Age of Exploration” engendered in the Renaissance, in which the explorer can “transform given materials into one’s own scenario” (227). Jery transforms the unfamiliar mountains of the West Highlands into the familiar by noting that they are “not at all surprising to a native of Glamorgan” (231). Jery also observes that the Scottish form of Gaelic “has a great affinity to the Welch, not only in the general sound, but also in a great number of radical
words”; he surmises that they are “both sprung from the same origin” (233). He then compares the Lowland Scots to the English and the Highlanders to the Welsh: “The peasants of these hills strongly resemble those of Wales in their looks, their manners, and habitations; every thing I see, and hear, and feel, seems Welch.” Greenblatt identifies this process as one of the two characteristics of improvisation: displacement, or “the process whereby a prior symbolic structure is compelled to coexist with other centers of attention” (230). By displacing Wales into Scotland, Jery makes himself at home.

Smollett’s literary efforts to lead the colonization of Scotland through Matt Bramble and his party while simultaneously trying to defend the integrity of his country present one of the sharpest contradictions in the novel. Part of Smollett’s effort at colonization involves describing the topography of the Scottish landscape, embodying Scotland in text just as a correspondent is embodied in a letter. In 1780, Richard Gough connected the lack of description available on Scotland to its lack of economy: “Whether through want of materials or application, the nationality of our northern neighbours long suffered the natural and artificial face of their country to lie as undescribed as their poverty left it unimproved and unadorned.” The Baconian overtone in this passage is unmistakable; to observe, to describe, to invest, and to renovate is to take masculine action on a pristine wilderness. Martz notes that one of the first sources describing Scotland “consists of static descriptions annexed to much larger accounts of England” in much the same way that a static Scotland itself was annexed by England (110). Scotland’s new dynamism appears in subsequent descriptions: “the rapid improvement in commerce and transportation resulted in a fresh form of description which soon infused new life” into
Scotland. The language of gender is subtle here: to infuse new life implies that the static
descriptions of a static Scotland served to portray Scotland as a feminine object of desire
to English investors, whose displacement, infusion, and absorption—accomplished by
description—metaphorically impregnated Scotland and resulted in production. Martz
indicates the extent to which Smollett participated in this infusion: “by a combination of
industry and originality Smollett composed the most comprehensive, clear, orderly, and
probably the most accurate description of Scotland proper which had thus far appeared ..
his accounts of Scottish resources are obviously advertisements designed to attract
English capital” (120).

Smollett uses the second characteristic of improvisation, absorption, as a metaphor
representing England’s assimilation of Scotland. Greenblatt explains absorption as “the
process whereby a symbolic structure is taken into the ego so completely that it ceases to
exist as an external phenomenon” (230). Jery writes to Sir Watkin Phillips that

If I stay much longer at Edinburgh, I shall be changed into a down-right
Caledonian—My uncle observes, that I have already acquired something of
the country accent. The people here are so social and attentive in their
civilities to strangers, that I am insensibly sucked into the channel of their
manners and customs, although they are in fact much more different from
ours than you can imagine—That difference, however, which struck me
very much at my first arrival, I now hardly perceive, and my ear is
perfectly reconcile to the Scotch accent. (213)
Matt, too, notes that the “other particulars that smack of our Welch language and customs, contribute to flatter me with the notion, that these people are the descendants of the Britons, who once possessed this country” (239). However much affinity Matt finds between the two lands, he nonetheless tells Dr. Lewis that “I think the Scots would do well, for their own sakes, to adopt the English idioms and pronunciation” (225). Just why they should do so “for their own sakes” cannot be explained unless the remark is considered in light of the improvisational tendency to absorption.

Humphry Clinker himself may be one of the least obvious, therefore more effective, objects of absorption in the novel, and in Clinker the influence of Defoe is most obvious. Matt discovers Clinker in a half-dressed state, gives Clinker a guinea to clothe himself, and Clinker becomes “metamorphosed” (80-81). Clinker’s subsequent loyalty to Matt resembles Friday’s to Crusoe: Clinker follows Matt’s coach and declares that “his honour had been so good to him, that he had not the heart to part with him; that he would follow him to the world’s end, and serve him all the days of his life, without fee or reward” (81). Matt refers to him as “my man Clinker” (243), a clear reference to Crusoe’s “man Friday,” and remarks on Clinker’s “natural superstition.” In two senses, Clinker represents Matt’s creation: first, by virtue of being his son; second, by virtue of Matt having rescued him, “metamorphosed” him, in the same manner that Crusoe rescues Friday.

Smollett’s use of absorption also helps to explain the title of the novel. We can see Matt Bramble in several respects as an analogue to Smollett, then Clinker, Matt’s creation, is analogous to Smollett’s creation: the novel-as-expedition.
points out that "Smollett begins by reversing the usual order of quest literature, for
instead of the son's search for the father in order to gain strength and power, it seems to
be the father who stands more in need of the son for health, peace of mind, and perhaps
maturity itself." Clinker proves useful in moving the Bramble party and hence, the
narrative. His skill as a farrier and blacksmith comes in handy when the coach needs
repair, so that they "were in a condition to proceed in little more than one hour" (181).
Clinker advances Matt's self-regulatory capacity as well; Matt cannot understand "what
business" people have "to get children to plague their neighbors" (7); he believes that he
has not produced children. Matt is not at first inclined to accept responsibility for his
niece and nephew, but by the end of the novel he takes full responsibility for Clinker.
This situation "begets" another: the responsibility of the writer to acknowledge his or her
work, and the possible consequences for failing to do so. Matt absorbs Clinker, first into
the party by re-dressing him and employing him, then later into the family when he
recognizes Clinker as his son.

The expedition itself is a displacement of the Bramble party into Scotland, where they
absorb the Scottish countryside and mannerisms. More interestingly, Smollett displaces
himself into the novel-as-expedition, projecting himself into Scotland while undergoing a
loss of self in which Greenblatt notes "its opposite: a ruthless displacement and
absorption of the other. Empathy . . . may be a feeling of oneself into an object, but that
object may have to be drained of its own substance before it will serve as an appropriate
vessel" (236). So finally, Clinker, through an act of displacement and absorption,
becomes analogous to Scotland. In fact, Smollett's idea to introduce Clinker by his "bare
posteriors" (78), may have been inspired by a letter he received from Dr. John Armstrong on March 28, 1769, in which Armstrong complains that Smollett’s *Present State* “has too much exposed the posteriors of our brothers to the north.”27 Matt, the representative of empire, absorbs a poor, downtrodden Clinker into his party and family, just as Smollett hopes that England will absorb poor, downtrodden Scotland.28 Smollett’s description of Scotland constitutes a draining of Scotland’s substance, and this may have been the only way that Smollett, the displaced, absorbed Scottish expatriot, could reclaim Scotland as his own--in effect, he enacts for Scotland Tynedale’s exhortion to absorb [biblical] text. So *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* is, in fact, the expedition to, as well as the displacement and absorption of, Scotland.

Once in Scotland, Smollett uses the travel motif to regender Matt. When Matt surveys the resources of the Highlands, he devises projects for their economy that Greenblatt sees as “the opportunistic grasp of that which seems fixed and established” (227). Here Matt’s character is regendered; his misanthropy seems to abate in Scotland, as does his stasis, allowing him to take on the masculine role of English colonizer. His eventual return--full circle, so to speak--to England renders him static again, as if Matt, as a Welshman, cannot function dynamically in the land of the colonizer. Said argues that the “quest or voyage motif” can be co-opted by subversives, so that “the decolonizing native writer... re-experiences the quest-voyage motif from which he had been banished by means of the same trope carried over from the imperial into the new culture and adopted, reused, relived” (210-11). This formula is twice-told in Smollett’s novel, once by the Scottish Smollett, again by the Welsh Bramble. Paul Langford notes that English “contempt” for
the Welsh was "maintained by chapbook stories of dishonest drovers and the vagrants and tinkers who came with them," an image that Smollett may be trying to dispel with Matt's party, because, as Langford reports, "Scots hoped to make literary success a basis for Anglo-Scottish co-operation." Matt, then, becomes a vehicle through which Smollett invites the English to colonize Scotland, an odd circumstance unless we consider Said's argument that "nationalism was often led by lawyers, doctors, and writers who were partly formed and to some degree produced by the colonial power. The national bourgeoisies and their specialized elites . . . in effect tended to replace the colonial force with a new class-based and ultimately exploitative one, which replicated the old colonial structures in new terms" (223). Matt loses much of his stasis and begins "to feel the good effects of exercise" only when he journeys outside of England's domain (211).

Perhaps because Smollett often seems to be at cross-purposes in this novel, his economic views are difficult to ascertain. Matt's distaste for the "schemes of interest or ambition" that "too much engrossed" the people of London must be balanced against his desire to see the English invest in Scotland (121). Again, we may be witnessing here Smollett's thinking that the projecting, masculine dynamic of capitalism can somehow be regulated. Matt sees that rampant, uncontrolled progress "might be remedied with a very little attention to the article of police, or civil regulation," but Matt finds in Londoners a belief that "all regulation is inconsistent with liberty; and that every man ought to live in his own way, without restraint." Boucé sees Matt's philosophy as "mercantilist" (216), and indeed, Matt's focus on agricultural development and manufacturing sorts more with mercantilism than with capitalism. Yet Boucé also remarks that "economic progress
takes place to the detriment of the political independence of Scotland, for the moment
subjugated by the superior economic potential of England” (222). Lismahago expresses
what appear to be Smollett’s misgivings about “the nature of commerce,” which really
appear to be Smollett’s reservations about the nature of capitalism: it “could not be fixed
or perpetuated, but, having flowed to a certain height, would immediately begin to ebb,
and so continue till the channels should be left almost dry; but there was no instance of
the tide’s rising a second time to any considerable influx in the same nation” (198). In
this passage, Smollett seems to concede his concern that capitalism is a force of nature
that cannot be controlled.

Smollett’s tale of Scotland’s evolution from an independent, patriarchal state to an
English colony is also a tale of emasculation. Smollett feminizes Scotland as an object of
desire to English readers as Matthew Bramble and his family “project” and “penetrate”
into Scotland’s interior, where they, as assimilated Welsh, “discover” Scotland’s beauty.
Matt Bramble describes the Highlands as “amazingly wild,” “savage nature,” where “all
is sublimity, silence, and solitude” (244). He notes that those who people this land are
now fragmented, but if “united, they could bring into the field an army of forty thousand
fighting men, capable of undertaking the most dangerous enterprise” (245-46). In the
past, the Highlanders were intensely masculine: their history is narrated in masculine time
as a linear patriarchy of clans; indeed, one man distinguishes himself from another by
patronymics, or a brief lineage recited as his name. This form of patriarchy became
feminized when it became associated with the past rather than the future. Matt Bramble
uses the same terms to describe the Highlanders’ threat to England that he uses to
describe his family’s journey into Scotland: when recounting the Jacobite rebellion of 1745, Matt notes that the Highlanders “penetrated” into England and could not be “cut off.” He characterizes Scottish soldiers as a potentially subversive force capable of clandestine activities that would undermine the strength of standing armies: “such people, in quality of soldiers, must be invincible, when the business is to perform quick marches in a difficult country, to strike sudden strokes, beat up the enemy’s quarters, harrass their calvary, and perform expeditions without the formality of magazines, baggage, forage, and artillery.” In other words, they violate the accepted rules of warfare. Here Smollett endorses the need for dominant entities to force those they would dominate into “form” or synchronicity, lest they destabilize narrative friction. Scotland can never be assimilated into the Commonwealth if it is driven in its own direction by its own desires.

Smollett also seems to endorse the imperialist terms that the English use when they speak of containing the Scots. Matt notes that “In order to break the force of clanship, administration has always practised the political maxim, Divide et impera” (246). Here Smollett does not associate Matt with the British; interestingly, Matt does not say “our administration,” but leaves off the pronoun altogether, possibly Smollett’s attempt to misdirect the reader’s attention, as if he suddenly did not want to be associated with English colonialists. Matt then describes what could be termed the Scots’ “deculturation”: “The legislature hath not only disarmed these mountaineers, but also deprived them of their ancient garb, which contributed in a great measure to keep up their military spirit.” Langford identifies the Disarming Acts of 1746 and 1747 as “the most poignant note” to those who rediscovered “the romance of the Highlands in the late
A Freudian reading of "disarmed" can translate into "emasculated," a term that Langford uses when he describes Lord Milton's "interest in social regulation" of Scotland, which "went far beyond the political emasculation of the Highlands." Milton, Langford notes, "had a strong sense of the connection between commercial progress and political stability." Matt recognizes the influence of the clan's patriarchy when he advises that "If the legislature would entirely destroy this connection, it must compel the Highlanders to change their habitation and their names" (247). Matt makes his colonial intentions clear in capitalistic terms when he states that "The most effectual method I know to weaken, and at length destroy this influence, is to employ the commonalty in such a manner as to give them a taste of property and independence," precisely Milton's plan to turn the Highlanders into a "tenantry on the English model" (217). Greenblatt's assessment of capitalism helps to explain this chilling projection:

This absence of reciprocity is an aspect of the total economy of the mode of improvisation . . . the ownership of another's labor conceived as involving no supposedly 'natural' reciprocal obligation (as in feudalism) but rather functioning by concealing the very fact of ownership from the exploited who believe that they are acting freely and in their own interest.

(229)

Smollett's desire for English investment in Scotland all but guarantees that Scotland will never achieve independence, so Smollett's position as a capitalist rather than a mercantilist seems more plausible.
Smollett’s model of tenantry finds its expression in the “venerable druid,” a figure who provides readers with the image of a happily colonized Scotland and with a portrait of eccentricity that Said asserts as a staple of imperialist description. In this character, Smollett symbolizes the cultural emasculation of the Scottish; this man is metaphorically castrated, a eunuch-like figure of the Highlands who, significantly, has no name. Formerly a dynamic individual, he was “once proprietor of these lands” and still lives “among oaks of his own planting”; but at some point in the past, “being of a projecting spirit, some of his schemes miscarried, and he was obliged to part with his possession.” Smollett conflates sexuality with economics to indicate that the Scottish, once virile and dominant, lost their masculinity as a culture when they lost their economic productivity and capacity for progress. Effectively, the Scottish are castrated and thus akin to the transvestite—possibly in the same manner that allows Matt Bramble, as a contented Welshman, to act as the narrative transvestite of the novel. The old man, now under the care of others, lives “in great health, peace, and harmony, and, knowing no wants”—that is, stripped of the kind of desire that motivates progress—he enjoys “the perfection of contentment.” Smollett here portrays the same kind of stasis that Defoe depicts in Crusoe’s father—a stasis with which novelistic narrative cannot exist. This utopian scene binds the Scotsman in stasis, containing—yet allowing—his desire, for he still “cultivates with his own hands” his “little garden” and “insists upon steering his pleasure-boat upon the lake.” The images of planting, cultivating, and steering indicate the extent to which this figure’s regulation of his own activities produces his own happiness. But Smollett’s choice of words to describe what this man’s proprietors allow him to regulate—his “little
garden” and his “pleasure-boat”--also indicate the extent to which Matt, representing empire, patronizes the Scottish as a colony of that empire. The proprietors’ accommodation of the old man represents England’s relationship to Scotland, and here, Smollett seems to suggest a certain “dynamic stasis,” an oxymoron that makes sense when we consider that accommodation is, essentially, an attempt to reconcile contradictions. Nonetheless, Smollett cannot quite resist mentioning the old man’s “slight fever the year before the union.”

Smollett himself reconciles contradictions in the gendered characters of Tabby, Matt Bramble’s sister, and Lismahago, the Scotsman she eventually weds. Lismahago is Scotland itself, named for a “place in Scotland so called” (187). Particularly, Lismahago seems to stand in for those who are content with Scotland as it is--Jery describes him as a quixotic figure (182). His attempt to “reconcile contradictions” marks him as a feminized figure of assimilation, as do his experiences in America, where he was more colonized than colonizing (185). Lismahago’s stasis may relate to his captivity: Boucé notices a “prisoner’s complex” often “develops in a man for whom the world has stood still during his captivity” so that he “takes refuge in an emotional and occasionally cantankerous addiction to the past” (221). Lismahago survived torture at the hands of Indians to marry the masculine huntress Squinkinacosta, whose tribe were “too tenacious of their own customs to adopt the modes of any nation whatsoever” and who discouraged “the introduction of any fashion which might help to render them corrupt and effeminate” (189). Although the tribe assimilates Lismahago, he is not castrated like his friend Murphy, and within the form and customs of the tribe he maintains a degree of
independence and respect, gaining the office of sachem. Dustwich’s letter at the
beginning of the novel indicates that Lismahago gains a similar office in England, where
he becomes “Mr. Justice Lismahago” (3). Smollett further genders Lismahago by
associating his speech with the chemistry of female sexuality; Jery notes that while
courting Tabby, Lismahago “began to sweeten the natural acidity of his discourse.”

Nonetheless, Tabby and her family find Lismahago’s conversation “desirable,”
making Lismahago himself a feminized object of desire (197). And to no one is he more
desirable than to Tabby. Tabby is Lismahago’s suitor, and courtly conversation is their
mode of exchange. Tabby “did not fail to compliment him” and “began to glew herself to
his favour with the grossest adulation” (187). But Tabby’s chief desire is Lismahago’s
conversation: “she discovered a surprising eagerness to know the particulars of his life,”
but, like Renaissance women of the court, he guards his narrative closely, “affecting a
reluctance to satisfy her curiosity.” The more that Lismahago reveals, the more “these
observations served only to inflame her desire” to know more. Smollett compares
Tabby’s interest in Lismahago’s narrative with that of Desdemona to Othello’s: Tabby
“did seriously incline her ear;—indeed, she seemed to be taken with the same charms that
captivated the heart of Desdemona, who loved the Moor for the dangers he had past.”

Greenblatt notes that this passage in Shakespeare is followed by a reference to
“Cannibals, that each other eat” and then a description of Desdemona, who would come
“and with a greedy ear / Devour up my discourse” (1.3.149-50). Tabby’s appetite for
Lismahago’s discourse marks her as a dynamic force under the influence of desire;
Lismahago is an object of desire encapsulated within his own narrative, just as Smollett
designates Scotland as a narrative object of desire to be consumed when Matt first arrives in Edinburgh and begins to “eat like a farmer” (211). Smollett characterizes Tabby as a hunter who entangles men “in her snares”—or colonizes them; thus she is analogous to Squinkinacoosta.

Tabby represents England as both a domestic ruler and a foreign conqueror; she is more concerned on a day-to-day basis with economics than any other character in the novel, as her letters home to Brambleton-hall with explicit instructions as to local economy detail. Lydia describes Tabby’s manhunt in economic terms that demonstrate the female person as property: “My poor aunt... has gone to market with her charms in every place where she thought she had the least chance to dispose of her person” (251). Her method of courtship is military: she “opened her batteries” on Lismahago, according to Jery, who also writes that Tabby, far from representing feminine synchronicity, makes “continual advances” to Lismahago, whom she finds not just a pretty gentleman, but “the prettiest gentleman” (193). Tabby’s letters home are the only correspondences that give instructions and plan for the future. The rest of the party is concerned only with reporting on past, or at best, current events. Tabby balances and regulates Matt’s generosity, and she urges Mrs. Gwyllim to “take care there is no waste” (44).

The letters of Tabby and, especially, Winifred Jenkins indicate their relationship, as women, to an oral tradition long past. Such misuses as “frite” for “fright” and “Grasco” for “Glasgow” demonstrate Lismahago’s complaint about homophones, about which more later. Winifred’s errors also point out that writing is exclusionary: only those with some education can write at all, and only those with more can write correctly. If Smollett
is being conventional by placing malapropisms in the mouths of these women, such as "deception" for "conception," or "comfit" for "comfort," and by confining Lydia's discourse primarily to romance narrative, then he follows a convention that places women outside the bounds of legitimate language. At the same time, Smollett points out in the letters of Tabby and Winifred the constructedness and artificiality of language, particularly writing. Perhaps to soften this impression, Smollett presents their "mistakes" as humorous, indicating that such language is, in any case, not to be taken seriously.

These uses of language to gender various traits and entities finally point to the conclusion that different forms of language itself are gendered according to power relationships, as Smollett realizes. Lismahago argues that "the English language was spoken with more propriety in Edinburgh than in London because the 'modern English, from affectation and false refinement, had weakened, and even corrupted their language, by throwing out the guttural sounds, altering the pronunciation and the quantity, and disusing many words and terms of great significance" (194). He attempts to gender language by its inherent characteristics, not by its relationship to dominance and subversion. Lismahago asserts that the Scots have maintained "genuine old English" in synchronicity but that the "false refinement" of English as spoken in London has actually "impaired the energy" of the language, which he demonstrates in the four words pronounced "rite." His claim that homophones confuse the meaning of spoken words and create the distinction in language between speaking and writing make this distinction analogous to the validity of the oral tradition in old English and its increasing lack of validity in modern, capitalistic economies. William Robertson, in *The History of*
Scotland (1812), explains the effect on language of the new power relationships wrought by the union: "by the accession, the English naturally became the sole judges and lawgivers in Language, and rejected, as solecisms, every form of speech to which their ear was not accustomed." Smollett understands that the privileged act of writing disables the speech act. He identifies the relative permanence and the synchronicity of writing, characteristics that impair its energy by creating inertia; however, its "impaired energy" demonstrates its regulatory function in statutory law and in contracts that replace oaths and memory.

The effects of time on language and its gendering have direct connections to capitalism. Benedict Anderson argues that “print-capitalism . . . gave a new fixity to language” by creating "unified fields of exchange and communications below Latin and above the spoken vernaculars." In short, printed language is feminized because synchronized, and thus writing becomes an object of desire—the language of contracts and capitalism. We can trace Lismahago’s concern about dynamic spoken language to the assimilation of his culture: all spoken English becomes changable. His conception of spoken English as synchronized is peculiar to his culture, but not an object of desire to the English. Said argues that “The concept of the national language is central, but without the practice of a national culture--from slogans to pamphlets to newspapers, from folk tales and heroes to epic poetry, novels and drama--the language is inert; national culture organizes and sustains communal memory” (215). The inertia of language that Lismahago values in Scottish speech is the same inertia that cripples the Scottish economy; the emasculation of the Scottish culture is the emasculation of its language as
well. The inertia of language that Lismahago prizes is part of the oral culture of his country that has been regendered by the machinery of its colonizer in order to incorporate Scotland as part of Great Britain.

Lismahago’s refusal on behalf of Scotland to accept Matt Bramble’s compliments—or, really, Matt’s efforts at seduction—indicates the same resistance to desire and domination that Arabella demonstrates in the distancing tactics she employs to avoid marriage; but unlike Arabella, Lismahago does not try to write his own narrative so much as he prevents others from doing so. Perry sees this type of seduction as “a matter of will power rather than desire—a measure of who dominates whom rather than an occasion for physically forced compliance” (129). Matt writes that

> When I observed, that [Lismahago] must have read a vast number of books to be able to discourse on such a variety of subjects, he declared he had read little or nothing . . . My nephew remarking that the Scots in general were famous for their learning, he denied the imputation . . . “At least, (cried Tabby) all the world allows that the Scots behaved gloriously in fighting and conquering the savages of America.” “I can assure you, madam, you have been misinformed.” (197)

By refusing to allow others to define him or his nation, he also refuses to allow the Bramble party, and, by extension, England, to commodify him or his nation by extolling their virtues and citing what uses might be made of them.

Thus Smollett suggests in Scotland’s colonization the same loss of identity at the national level that Lennox notes in marriage at the personal level. Or perhaps Smollett
responds here to the situation that Janet Adam Smith describes: "The Union was conceived as a partnership, Scots like Hume and Carlyle intended to make it a true partnership, the English made it an unfair and uneasy one." Unfair or not, Smollett seems determined that Scotland should make the best of it. He accommodates Scotland’s complaints by voicing them through Lismahago, a figure who appears to function as Smollett’s alter-ego. Lismahago demonstrates a fear of capitalism: "I might have borrowed money for the purchase of a company... but that loan must have been refunded; and I did not choose to incumber myself with a debt of a thousand pounds, to be payed from an income of ten shillings a-day" (185). He is proud that he can support himself, and when he dies, he will break even: "I shall leave effects sufficient to defray the expense of my burial." He aspires to no more for Scotland: "No country is poor that can supply its inhabitants with the necessaries of life" (265). Lismahago argues that Scotland is "rich in natural advantages" and rejects Matt’s notion that Scotland’s “present prosperity” is derived “from the union of the two kingdoms” (265-66). As a figure of Scottish nationalism, Lismahago acts as a site of resistance against progress and capitalism.

Lismahago’s preference for the natural resources of Scotland and his rejection of capitalistic idea of production genders him feminine, as does Scotland’s relationship to England. Smollett claims through Lismahago that Scotland, as the metaphoric bride of England, has been silenced in the Parliament, subjected to England’s debts, and England “got,” among other advantages, “a never-failing nursery of seamen, soldiers, labourers, and mechanics” (267). In this heavily gendered passage, Smollett gives voice to
subversive feminine discourse, which he suggests that England must learn to accommodate if it would remain dominant. Martz argues that through Lismahago, Smollett “gives vent to feelings and opinions which he has either suppressed or carefully modified in Present State” (169). But what Smollett constructs here in his fiction is a novel of accommodation aimed at dominance: he bears out Greenblatt’s assertion that “the subversive perception of another’s truth as an ideological construct . . . must at the same time be grasped in terms that bear a certain structural resemblance to one’s own set of beliefs” since a totally alien ideology “could be destroyed, but not performed” (228). Often, the form that the accommodation of opposing forces takes is integration. Neil Smith recognizes how “capitalism historically has produced a particular kind of nature and space, an unequally developed landscape that integrates poverty with wealth, industrial urbanization with agricultural diminishment. The culmination of this process is imperialism.”

Perhaps the greatest contradiction that Smollett must reconcile is his desire to be both Scottish and a dominator of the Scottish, and he both reconciles and maintains this contradiction through the distance between his voice and that of the characters. The distance between the narrator, the narratee, and the characters helps to establish Smollett’s voice in the novel, similar to the way in which distance dictates degrees of refraction in Lennox’s novel. In each correspondence, the writer becomes masculinized by the virtue of having a voice, the narratee feminized by his or her silence. The nearer that Smollett’s authorial voice comes to that of the letter-writer, the more contact the writer makes with the addressee/narratee, and the more productive—and pregnant—the narrative becomes. In Prince’s terms, “this dialogue develops—and consequently the
narration also--as a function of the distance separating [narrator and narratee] from each other" (19). In relation to the reader, the narratee acts as a path of transcendence, or as Prince puts it, a “relay between the narrator and the reader(s), or rather between the author and the readers(s)” (21). This position correlates to that of the Petrarchan Laura, the conduit through whom the poet-lover was to direct his desire for God. The narratee is further feminized by his or her regulation of the plot, just as the women of Castiglione’s court regulate conversation, for the narratee’s level of knowledge about the subject of the letter dictate the amount of static background information the writer must provide and therefore the pace at which the events the writer describes proceed. Smollett’s epistolary form uses what Prince identifies as “the most economical and the most effective sort of mediation,” that of making “direct and explicit statements by the narrator to the narratee.”

Conversely, the distance between Smollett’s voice and that of the female correspondents in his novel is so great that he can generate no significant length to their correspondences, a distance that has led some critics to mistake the importance of women in the novel. Walter Allen sees Lydia as “the least interesting” character: “Smollett was no good with well-bred virtuous young ladies.” Smollett demonstrates the difficulty that male writers face when trying to impersonate a female rather than that which is merely feminine. If we look closely at Lydia’s narrative, though, we see both Smollett’s struggle in portraying her and her role as romance heroine. Smollett’s difficulties become apparent in the first letter from Lydia to her former governess, in which she claims that “I never harboured a thought that was otherwise than virtuous” (11). This statement is a
romance convention that Smollett makes all the more unbelievable by including it in a reality-based novel.

Smollett carries on the romance tradition in Lydia's character. Her status as an orphan and her desire-less pretenses toward men mark her as the static motivator of narrative. She has "no mother of [her] own"; and to Wilson's initial overtures she "never once allowed . . . the favour of a salute," although she continues to see him because she did not want him to become "miserable and desparate." Lydia makes Winifred Jenkins her "confidant" (12)—a romance tradition—and through her transmits letters to and from Lydia's friend, Miss Willis. Her orphan status contributes to her position among those whom Perry describes as "lonely individuals standing outside of the culture who therefore can be the test cases for working out a new balance between society's regulation and individual desire" (23). In Lydia's case, Smollett balances her between her partially dynamic desire for Wilson and the strict regulation she endures from her brother Jery.

Smollett employs the romantic commonplace of disguise when Wilson approaches Lydia at Hot Well masquerading as a Jew selling spectacles (27). Her refusal to accept his letters and her reliance on chance to advance her plot with Wilson—"But, why should I despair? Who knows what will happen?"—replicate the mechanism of romance narrative.

Smollett parcels to Lydia a limited role in narrative production, but an important one: she regulates the dynamics of others and regulates readers' responses to the other accounts of events. Lydia hopes "to soften . . . in time" the aggressive, masculinized Tabitha, who scolds her for her conduct with Wilson; her hard-to-move, feminized Uncle Matt is "moved by [her] tears and distress." Her first letter is a plea to her governess for
forgiveness; here Lydia tries to re-establish what Tzvetan Todorov describes as narrative equilibrium. Lydia returns her relationship to her governess back to where it was before the incident occurred, although Lydia’s arrangement with Laetitia to return a miniature to Wilson at “the usual place” indicates, as Boucé remarks, that “relations were much better organized than Lydia wishes the governess to think” (194). Perry explains the significance of Lydia’s concern over her governess: “almost all epistolary novels make the assumption that when a woman allows a man into her consciousness and writes personal letters to him, sooner or later she will also open her body to him . . . the perfect governess” was to ensure that letters be kept “public, harmless, and scrutinized thoroughly by the guardians of a girl’s honor” (133). This concern over women and language seems to reflect a carry-over from the Renaissance idea that talking to a woman at court was the same as having sex with them.

Lydia’s character also regulates the progress of the other characters’ narratives. She stymies Wilson’s progress by refusing his letters, a common response for romance heroines; as Perry puts it, ladies “treat the writing as if it were some kind of physical pawing” (133). But Lydia does not snub Wilson to the extent of discouraging him; she “gave [him] leave to hope” (17). Lydia is his object of desire and in the one letter that he writes to her, he speaks to her in Petrarchan terms: “when I found myself in your presence;—when I heard you speak;—when I saw you smile; when I beheld your charming eyes turned favourably upon me; my breast was filled with such tumults of delight, as wholly deprived me of the power of utterance” (17). Wilson is properly enamoured of her and keeps his distance. But the Captain who flirts with her at Bath puts her “out of
countenance" with the "boldness in his look and manner" (41). Lydia also becomes angry with Lady Griskin, who attempts to make a match between Lydia and Mr. Barton: she "over-acts her part," according to Lydia; Lady Griskin feels that she has "the authority of those who had a right to direct [Lydia's] conduct" (132). Lydia is even unmoved in spiritual matters, for she is "not sensible of those inward motions, those operations of grace, which are the signs of a regenerated spirit" (133). Lydia declares that Jery is "persecuting" her and that she may have to withhold him "any share of [her] affection." Were it not for Lydia's commentary, readers would never see Jery as anything more than a carefree gentleman or a caring brother--not an insanely jealous persecutor. More than anything else, Jery's plotting worries Lydia, who is "afraid that he has formed some scheme of vengeance."

Lydia's narrative provides readers with a counterpoint to the narratives of the other characters, a point of view that we would not see if her opinions had been left out. Her relationship to her brother Jery, particularly, is strained by his uncontrolled dynamics. She declares her hopes for him when he meets a young lady "whose charms seemed to soften, and even to subdue [his] stubborn heart... but he no sooner left the place than he relapsed into his former insensibility" (249). Her own constancy leads her to declare that Jery's "indifference is not the family-constitution." Smollett couches Lydia's lament over her brother's jealous anger in terms of rape: "I cannot bear to have my wounds probed severely" (250). Perry explains the significance of the passage in which Jery intercepts Wilson's letter to Lydia at Gloucester so that "the whole plot was discovered" (14). Perry argues that since "letters reveal the self," then "reading the letters written and
intended for other eyes is the most reprehensible invasion of privacy and consciousness in epistolary fiction. These are overtones of sexual invasion—of mind-rape—in the intercepting or ‘violating’ of another’s words” (130). Perry explains the significance of reading a lady’s letters and the marriage plot endemic to epistolary fiction:

Most early epistolary novels duplicate a women’s consciousness by providing her letters, and then allowing the audience to get inside it by reading those letters. The fact that the climax of the plot generally also has to do with ‘getting inside’ a woman suggests that the sexual act works as a metaphor for the more important literary innovation—the getting inside of a woman’s consciousness by the writer and by the reader. (131)

Or, in an alternate reading, the “getting inside a woman’s consciousness” may be seen in gendered terms so that reading anyone’s letter, male or female, constitutes the effeminization of the writer and the masculinization of the reader.

But in and of himself, Jery is not dynamic. Matt Bramble sees Jery as “a pert jackanapes, full of college-petulance and self-conceit; proud as a German count, and as hot and hasty as a Welch mountaineer” (13). Jery’s temperament and the “schemes” that go with it reflect not a productive nature, but the kind of nonproductivity that Defoe demonstrates in Crusoe before Crusoe becomes stranded. Jery’s role is similar, however, to that of Matt’s: he exists to refocalize and to help move the narrative by virtue of his role as a narrative transvestite. His character is feminized by its stasis: Bouché notes that Jery “does not change at all” and that he holds himself “aloof from events and human problems in order the better to observe them . . . Jery is indifferent” (205). Since the
narrative transvestite is static (the plan moves, not the planner), Jery’s indifference and objectivity allow him to forward narrative progress—even if readers do not like him very much in the process.

Lydia’s growing apprehension of her brother and her growing despair of ever seeing Wilson again, taken synchronically, ultimately function diachronically to bring the plot to an end. Joseph Allen Boone argues for a hierarchically ordered sequence of intensifying crises, wherein each new event presents a larger, more potentially catastrophic version of the crisis point that has just been passed—which in the love-plot generally means making the eventual union of lovers appear more and more remote. Closely related to such sequencing is the way in which the various phases of the developmental structure often seem to become repetitions of each other . . . the same situation of impasse in a given text (say, an unsuccessful declaration of love) is enacted time and again, in various guises, until its intensified replay finally leads to a breakthrough, reversal, and resolution.37

Each time that Lydia crosses paths with Wilson, she sees him for shorter and shorter periods of time. And, with each of these events, Jery comes closer and closer to meeting him in a face-to-face confrontation that might have ended tragically. Perry argues that these conflicts were about “power rather than sex . . . the military metaphors . . . that were standard in the eighteenth-century language of love, are very much to the point; that is, the object of the game was winning as much as pleasure” (21). In Smollett’s novel, this
power struggle plays itself out between Lydia and Jery more so than between any set of lovers. Twice Jery attempts to duel with Wilson after he perceives that Wilson has made or will make contact with his sister.

This repetition-with-a-difference that motivates romance constitutes a circular narrative that reinforces conservative, synchronic—hence feminine—plot. Again, as "conservative" implies, its function is regulatory; in this case, repetition regulates desire and conserves energy in order to return the plot to its beginnings, but to return it to a different state from that which it left. Boone points out that "this mode of structural repetition in the traditional love-plot thus serves an ultimately familiarizing and stabilizing function, binding and connecting scattered parts of the text for its 'proper' and ultimately conservative expenditure of energy in a seemingly unified climax and release" (77). Boone's use of the terms "climax" and "release" further indicates the extent to which the mechanics of plot are gendered.

Lydia criticizes almost all forms of plotting and eventually grows tired of writing and travelling as her chances of satisfactorily resolving her romance seem to fade. Lydia criticizes Winifred's romantic dynamics when her "confidant" simultaneously pursues Clinker and Dutton; Lydia comments that Winifred "aimed at conquest" and wonders how "our sex in general make it their business to ensnare the other" (250-51)—although in this line readers can hear the distance between Smollett's voice and Lydia's. Lydia appears uncomfortable as a manipulator of linear narrative, a role she assumes as a letter-writer; she misses the reciprocity of return correspondence and complains to Letty that "This method of writing to you from time to time, without any hopes of an answer... is
at best a very imperfect enjoyment of friendship, because it admits of no return of confidence and good counsel” (296). She is “hearty tired of this itinerant way of life” and is “quite dizzy with a perpetual succession of objects.” Lydia seems to reach the conclusion that the game no longer repays the rules; she notes that the travails of travelling “make me pay very dear for the gratification of my curiosity.”

Just as Lydia comes full circle and wishes only to return home, the romance plays itself out and she is united with Wilson, who, she discovers, is now Dennison, and she enjoys a newfound dynamism. Indeed, arranging a wedding typically provided eighteenth-century women with their only opportunity to be dynamic. Lydia decides to “put [Letty’s] friendship to the test” by commanding her to join her at once for the wedding: “I desire that immediate application may be made to your mamma; and that the moment her permission is obtained, you will apprise [me]” (321). She literally writes Letty’s narrative, and Letty is a faithful reader, subordinate to Lydia’s desires. In the end, then, Lydia seems to have conserved enough energy to generate the plots of others. Boone argues that such happy, circular endings leave readers “in a state of unquestioning repose and acceptance” because “the self-contained or “classic” text inculcates a vision of a coherence or stability underlying social reality and cultural convention alike; the finality of the end becomes the ultimate signifier of this immutable worldview” (78). The reader’s acceptance not only of Lydia’s marriage, but especially that of Tabby and Lismahago, help Smollett to cement a union of individuals, of nations, and of the text itself.
Similarly, Matt's dynamics are further empowered in relationship to Dr. Lewis by Matt's mobility. Since the Bramble party is travelling, Dr. Lewis cannot easily respond to Matt's letters; hence, Matt only encourages Dr. Lewis to write to him after the party decides to remain at the Dennison's for Liddy's wedding: "I am so agreeably situated in this place, that I have no desire to shift my quarters... Considering how you are tethered by your profession, I cannot hope to see you so far from home... but as I am now stationary, I expect regular answers to [my] epistles" (317). Matt speaks here from a position of power as the narrative transvestite who voices his expectations to the doctor; he is both the feminized recipient of correspondence and the masculinized director of that correspondence, in the same way that Crusoe directs the lives and actions of those who come across him on his island. Prince describes such relationships between narrator and narratee as a "sort of war" that "can be found at the level of the characters... on the level of events as well as on the level of narration" (22). Matt wins the war by nearly having completed his narrative; he has "no desire" left, at least for narrative; and so that he may pursue more active occupations, he decides "to renounce all sedentary amusements, particularly that of writing long letters" (336). As ends the journey, so ends the narrative.

Smollett's self-assigned role as cultural liaison forces him to accommodate and reconcile opposites while simultaneously maintaining the distinctions that characterize each entity. These distinctions are critical to his novel: the opposition between England and Scotland provides his purpose, and he carefully voices Scotland's subversive opinions through the novel's most bizarre character, Lismahago, and just as carefully, he
voices criticism of England through the novel's resident crank, Tabby. One reading might characterize England as dominant and threatening, another as dominant and benign, but clearly England dominates. The opposition between masculine and feminine at work throughout the novel is at the core of narrative dynamics: the novel's narrative transvestites culminate in Smollett, whose business here is to attempt a reconciliation of past with future through the narrative of the present. If his efforts at portraying Scotland as an object of desire to the English had succeeded, then Smollett would not be just a novelist or historian, but a futurist as well.
Notes


4. Charles L. Batten, Jr. argues differently. He argues that the inclusion in the title of “By the Author of *Roderick Random*” indicates that Smollett was “clearly not attempting to disguise his fiction as a collection of authentic letters” (396). Batten acknowledges, though, that the distinction between history and fiction was so blurred that telling one from the other was still problematic. See “*Humphry Clinker* and Eighteenth-Century Travel Literature,” *Genre,* 7 (1974): 392-408.


10. Smollett seems to have been in the habit of placing dates at the beginning of his letters in his personal correspondence. See Lewis Melville, The Life and Letters of Tobias Smollett (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1927), and Tobias Smollett, The Letters of Tobias Smollett, ed. Lewis M. Knapp (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1970). Apparently, placing the date at the end of the letter is a literary construction that Smollett himself devised; Richardson dates his letters at the beginning in his epistolary fiction, as do all other authors of epistolary novels that I consulted.


16. Margaret Jacob 30.


23. See Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1993). Kidd finds that "the meaning of Britishness was a major issue in the political furor of the early 1760s," shifting from Welsh associations in the early part of the century but "by the middle of the eighteenth century Britishness had become associated with Scottishness" (205-06).


25. The closest reading of the title of the novel is Boucè's: he analyzes "expedition" and finds that Smollett could refer to a quest, or as a verb, "to expedite" or
“'hasten the progress of.'” The term could also refer to a “'liberation worked by Humphry Clinker’” (249).


28. Wrightson notes that the union produced “Scotland’s marginalization, the removal to London of the apex of the political and social order, and Scotland’s eventual absorption as a junior partner in the larger political unit of the United Kingdom” (250).


CONCLUSION

The abstractions involved in gendering time and in conflating gendered time with Newton's theories of motion to produce and reproduce narrative in the novel are complicated and often so subtle that they have heretofore escaped notice. My study has explained the history of gendered time in literary narrative from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century, from the writings of Petrarch and Castiglione to those of Daniel Defoe, Charlotte Lennox, and Tobias Smollett. I have argued that the placement of desire shifted from external to internal under the influence of the Protestant Reformation, particularly as a result of the writings of William Tyndale; and that this shift made it possible to adapt desire and gendered time as the elements of narrative machinery based on Newton's practical models of the operations of force on mass through impulse and resistance. I find that Defoe was the first writer to conflate gendered time with Newtonian mechanics to sustain narrative, and that he does so through characterizations of the narrative transvestite. Lennox and Smollett use the same model to sustain their narratives, each demonstrating the adaptability of gendered time to differing ideological purposes.

Petrarch's idealization of Laura is one of the earliest sources of feminine-gendered stasis in narrative; and the Petrarchan lover is one of the earliest representations of gender differentiation. In Laura, the poet-courtier pursues his own completion of self, a self divided by his projection of a passive, feminized image at court. The Petrarchan lover's
dynamic narrative is inspired by Laura as an external object of desire. Castiglione maintains Petrarch’s model of external desire, but he inverts gender to create the narrative transvestite, a figure who “tries on” the characteristics of the opposite sex. The narrative transvestite regulates stasis and dynamics to ensure that the narrative moves in a productive manner, and so Castiglione takes advantage of gender differentiation to idealize the progressive individual.

Tyndale initiates the conception of desire as an internal motivational force when he urges readers to internalize biblical text by consuming it, making it part of themselves. The Protestant Reformation also brought a shift in thinking about stasis: Protestants rejected the Renaissance, Catholic model of stasis as a positive representation of eternity when they began to see stasis as a form of idleness, nonproductive at best and at worst, sinful. They maintained the association between stasis and femininity, however, and they masculinized advancement, as Bacon’s philosophy of scientific investigation makes clear. When Newton’s codification of the laws of motion provided a practical demonstration of the machine as a unified system, he also provided a mechanism that eighteenth-century writers rendered abstract for use in the novel.

Defoe’s background in scientific study and his entrepreneurial spirit made it possible for him to see the way in which Newtonian theory could work to sustain narrative. *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is the result of Defoe’s conception of progress through an individual whose uses of time renders him bi-gendered; Crusoe becomes the novel’s narrative transvestite in a manner similar to Castiglione’s ideal courtier, but with
Protestant motivations. Lennox takes advantage of the evolution of narrative constructions, particularly authorial intrusion, to demonstrate the ways in which feminine time can sustain novelistic narrative in *The Female Quixote* (1752). Lennox draws on romance conventions within a realistic plot to reconcile the contradiction between linear and cyclical narrative. Her heroine, Arabella, is the novel’s narrative transvestite, the figure through whom Lennox models the suspension of time for women as a method of empowerment. Smollett, too, is concerned with empowerment: he attempts to reconcile the concessions that Scotland must make to England in return for England’s economic investment in Scotland in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771). Smollett relies on the various time mechanisms inherent in epistolary fiction to control the pace of plot. He expands on gendered constructions in the novel by assigning gender to England and Scotland in order to “marry” them, a process of assimilation in which Scotland, like many eighteenth-century brides, loses identity. Smollett focalizes and refocalized events through his characters, more than one of whom serve as narrative transvestites, to provide a rounded view of events that substitutes for overt narration.

These three novelists represent gendered time as a mechanism of progress through an individual, a woman, and a nation. Defoe’s conflation of gendered time with Newton’s theories of motion provides the model that later writers would use to sustain narrative motion. Defoe, Lennox, and Smollett adapt Castiglione’s narrative transvestite to regulate the feminine-gendered resistance and masculine-gendered impulse that constitute the gendering of time in the eighteenth-century English novel.
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