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The philosopher's seduction: Hume's essays and gender

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THE PHILOSOPHER'S SEDUCTION: HUME'S ESSAYS AND GENDER

by

VICKI JUNE SAPP

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
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ABSTRACT

The Philosopher's Seduction:
Hume's Essays and Gender

by
Vicki J. Sapp

The Philosopher's Seduction documents the experience of a non-professional-philosopher-female reader's encounter with a father of modern philosophy. I review and analyze the critical history of David Hume's "literary" essays which ostensibly appeal(ed) to a female readership; the gender politics of academic discipline, canon formation, and reader-response theory provide background and substance to my study. Hume's turn from the Treatise to the essay form, but especially to the "woman-appeal" mode, has been critically judged as a deviation from the practice of serious philosophy, to the mercenary and effeminate service of a feminine (both biologically and symbolically) public. These critics point to Hume's own excision of these texts from his subsequent essay editions, and to these essays' putative deficiencies in style and subject matter, as eminent grounds for their rejection by both author and critical traditional.

This critical rejection of Hume's woman-appeal essays can be studied as a virtual catalogue of misogyny persisting to the present date in the relevant academic disciplines. Foregrounding my experience as a woman "of Sense and Education" (Hume's own phrase for his intended female readership) in reading Hume, I demonstrate how the shift in reader gender identity and, therefore, conventionally-predicated experience can entail a reversal of critical perspective on the woman-appeal essays. In fact, only by reading "as-a-woman" can one gain access to the philosophical
core of these texts, to discover their epistemological centrality to Hume's entire system. In them Hume discloses, through such literary devices as anecdote, metaphor, and irony, how gender issues and in particular woman's situation in society underlie both his conception of philosophy ("understanding") and his moral philosophy. It is crucial to recognize how Hume's manipulation of gender issues along a philosophy-literature continuum reflects his self-consciousness and motivations as a "philosopher" and "belletrist"--two occasionally collaborating, occasionally conflicting literary roles--within his culture.

Analogies between Hume's eighteenth- and late-twentieth-century female readers are difficult to discern and uneasy; yet, a common experience of "woman-appeal" and reading "as-a-woman" can be hypothesized against the backdrop of an enduring patriarchal (misogynist) economy. The Philosopher's Seduction reverses the terms of this economy by re-placing Hume's woman-appeal essays into the critical canon and in an epistemologically primary place. At the same time, this study traces an ambivalent coming-to-power of Hume's woman reader "of Sense and Education": in the context of these essays, a qualified invitee, or ultimately initiate, into the traditionally gender-exclusive practice of philosophy.
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3 Scenes From a Marriage--A Man's Castle 125
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ABBREVIATIONS

T  David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*,
   Eds. L. A. Selby-Bigge and P. H. Nidditch

EMPL  David Hume, *Essays: Moral, Political and Literary*,
      ed. Eugene F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty
      Classics, 1985)

E  David Hume, *Enquiries Concerning the Human
   Understanding and Concerning the Principles
   of Morals*, ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge, 2nd Ed.
PREFACE

This Preface will consist of a series of apologies offered to specific individuals and institutions; these apologies follow a presumption, an omission, and an excess. I realize that apologies up-front may give the reader a somewhat negative predisposition to the document to follow; this is a risk that must be taken, given that these apologies are necessary. As apologies may be distracting or even disruptive within the formal body of the text, it seems appropriate to insulate them in a "preface." But as prefatory, they may also serve to introduce the reader to some of the main contexts and lines of questioning in *The Philosopher's Seduction*. In fact, "apology" anticipates a, or perhaps the deep structure of this project: a non-professional-philosopher woman reader's reading of a high-canon philosopher's rejected literary essays—an anxiety-provoking critical project, to be sure. If I risk alliance with old essentialisms, as well, by implying that women readers of my qualifications ("Women of Sense and Education," as Hume once described such—but women with no formal and extensive academic training in "philosophy") should feel nervous and insecure about venturing into a traditionally masculinist context; or, that women as such have special paranoia about powerlessness, then, I apologize for that, too, but plead the authority of experience.

My first specific apology should be offered, then, to the professional philosopher, a Hume scholar, a woman and allegedly, a feminist, who looked at me blankly as I shared my ideas with her about my project and then summarily concluded: "Well, I just don't see how a non-professional philosopher can presume to write a book on David Hume!" This judgment was handed down upon my anxious questions about some fine points of social contract philosophy, empiricism, or some such category. I felt shamed, shaken; but, I rallied, recalling that this philosophy/literature boundary has long since been crossed on both sides with fruitful exchange on both sides. Recovering my dignity about my project, I supplemented the above comfort with the
solid fact that Hume wrote many of his works, and especially the Essays, with a
general public in mind—including, and in some cases, especially, with an
undereducated, decidedly non-professional-philosophical female readership in view. Of
course, he did ultimately reject most of these texts from his opus for posterity; but this
gesture, as they say, is history; reasons for such editorial cuts, especially those
occurring as the late-career decisions of "a splenetic invalid," I lay out here as the
material warp of my dialectical study of Humean gender.

Following the episode with my philosopher-challenger and in spite of my rapid
recovery, I began to feel no small misgivings about my status as reader, even outside of
a general perception of misogyny in the philosophical establishment. As Kathryn
Shevelow and others have complained, it is exceptionally difficult to know how
eighteenth-century women readers read; this holds especially true for the "tea-table,"
Addisonian female public that Hume presumably (by critical consensus) appealed to in
his essay foray. Yet, I began this project with a strong sense of (if not longing for)
identification with Hume's female reader. My claims throughout for a misogynistic
economy common to both eighteenth- and late-twentieth-century female readers
necessarily underpin this reader quest for identification, for a common issue of
experience beneath the different social and political facades of the two periods. At
times I have held up "Authority"—feminist critics who have asserted the perpetuity of
patriarchy, misogyny, etc.; at other times I have pleaded "Experience"—a personal,
visceral, "I-still-feel-oppressed, rejected, etc." in the empirical confluence of woman
and scholar. Reading Hume, I have tried on the hats of historically separated women;
of women Ph.D.'d and uneducated, domestic and academic; of pilgrim belletrist in a
philosopher's minefield (the metaphor intentionally strained here for accuracy).
Where, I ultimately pleaded, is the reader who, some five years ago, read some Hume,
the "withdrawn" essays in fact, and "simply" enjoyed the prose and felt rather
positively addressed? That reader, long since covered over by onion-layers of critical
discourse and scholarly reflection, yet returns regularly in a small but epistemologically significant voice, reminding me that some woman reader back in time responded warmly to Hume. Once the academic project idea swept in with all of its caveats or even taboos, a strategy became necessary. A seduction strategy . . . ?

Thus I come to my next apology: to the French theorists of seduction (Lacan, Irigaray, Baudrillard, etc.) and their commentators, and to readers who expect in a study thus entitled the foregrounding of this very important critical legacy. These thinkers will not be found here in the spotlight; although here I will give my first acknowledgment of my great debt to Prof. Jane Gallop as teacher and inspiration. Also, I will risk identifying my own approach to Hume with a strategy attributed to Luce Irigaray: to "initiate dialogue with her philosopher-lovers by weaving herself in and out of their arguments, thus insinuating the feminine into their systems" (Burke 228). If not self-consciously "insinuating the feminine into," I have at the least sought the feminine within Hume's system; I have been seduced, perhaps, into seeking a reflection, an identification of my "feminine" concerns and desires already inscribed within Hume's text. Thus my seduction theme is partially predicated upon seduction as the feminine, or as a feminine (con)text or operation. However, ultimately, a consideration of seduction as "man-to-man" or homosocial (Eve Sedgwick's term) proves equally, if not more productive to my inquiry into Hume's relationship as essayist to his female reader. This seduction operates within the male homosocial network, synchronic and diachronic, where "woman" appears as a rather paradoxical cipher in a truly male-dominated economy. Where "seduction" appears as a masculine ploy grounded in both the symbolic of feminine artifice, and in the material power structures of culture, I have chosen to work with the more literal relationships formed and broken in seduction's pathways.

I will similarly sidestep other obviously invoked contemporary critical factions. M. A. Box states his position outright: "Whereas [Jerome Christensen] views Hume
from a modern theoretical perspective drawn from Gramsci, Foucault, and Greenblatt, I attempt to understand Hume as he understood himself" (7n8). Unable to identify with either Christensen's perspective or Box's attempt, I have chosen rather to come in from the spaces between "viewing" and "understanding;" thus I have found myself between early eighteenth- and late-twentieth-century female personae, between ignorance and education, between "sexism" and "feminism," philosophy and literature, binary logic and the dream of a beyond. The foregrounded feminist approach reflects more a struggle with a seduction than a rational decision to subject Hume to a political inquiry. Where M. A. Box has attempted to be intellectually one with Hume ("to understand Hume as he understood himself"), I have sought a more emotional commingling with the philosopher: perhaps, as Annette Baier has characterized her own attraction, I have desired Hume as my "champion." Or, to use the more cognitive terms, I have attempted to understand Hume from the viewpoint of an Other--a reader defined both by "otherness" to the male philosopher and desire for identification, or as Hume would perhaps see it, for "sympathy." The possibility for "sympathy" between male (philosophy) and female (literature) persists as a question throughout this exchange.

Finally, I would like to apologize to the scholarly community for what might be perceived as an excess. Annette Baier launches her latest book on Hume, A Progress of Sentiments, with the following apologetic supposition: "As it has recently become the custom to ask: Why another book on Hume?" Finding myself a second-order suspect in this case, I would like to lean on Prof. Baier's own self-defense:

Because he is a philosopher who invited 'the latest posterity' to reinterpret him, because my own interpretations differ in some ways from others, including those to which I am very much indebted, and because my own interpretations of [the Essays] would 'loosen and fall of themselves, when unsupported by the approbation of others' (T 264-65) or at least by the concurrence of some readers. (Progress vii)
I would like to embrace especially Prof. Baier's second assertion regarding her indebtedness and her difference therefrom. The heat of some of my addresses to certain critics has been generated from the interest they sparked in me; even when I am most irritated by these critics' pronouncements on Hume's woman-appeal, I am very grateful for their attention to this issue, their groundbreaking studies and the challenges thrown out in their readings of Humean gender. The critical survey and polylogue presented in this study provide the essential structure for my arguments about Hume's essays and their place in social and critical history. But finally, "Why another book on Hume?" Because (to use the familial metaphor on which Hume himself frequently depended) this book seeks to restore "Hume's orphans," his ostracized rebel daughters, to the family; responsible criticism cannot forever tolerate exclusionist prejudices and decisions about what is worthy in a writer's production.

Finally and inevitably, I will conclude my apology checklist on a very personal note: I would like to apologize to my family, friends and students for the "sympathetic" disruptions such a piece of work demands; and certainly to my husband, Dr. Ali Koymen, who has nodded alertly and encouragingly through years of my Humean visions and revisions both substantive and formal. Most of all, I apologize for any lapse of duty or favor to my three-year-old son Erol who has been, chronologically at least, co-produced with this book and who far surpasses it in originality and brilliance.
Introduction

Literary history has occasionally suffered the critical rejection of a certain body of a great author's works.¹ Seven of David Hume's essays, in modern editions anthologized as "Essays Withdrawn" and "Essays Withdrawn and Unpublished," have met this fate from Hume's time to the present.² These critically neglected texts, when considered at all, have been deemed frivolous, shallow, and mercenary: that is, written strictly to appeal to and therefore be readily acceptable to facile public taste. They have been deemed at best "Addisonian," imitative of that great journalistic crowd-pleaser. These essays have been boxed up, stamped "Addisonian," and thus critically shelved.

Hume wrote some fifty essays and published these in various editions throughout his lifetime. Seven of these essays either appeal to women directly, addressing "the ladies" or "the fair sex" in that current habit, popularized by the Tatler and Spectator, which Jonathan Swift termed "fair-sexing it," or offer subject matter which would likely appeal to women or directly touch some aspects of their lives as women of that culture. These seven essays are "Of Polygamy and Divorces," "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," "Of Essay Writing," "Of the Study of History," "Of Moral Prejudice," "Of Love and Marriage," and "Of Avarice" (I will hereinafter refer to these essays as a group as the "woman-appeal essays"). Of these seven, the last five belong to the "Withdrawn" category. Considering Green and Grose's early editorial classification of these five essays by virtue of their woman- and literary appeal,³ one might suspect a misogynistic association of the feminine and the literary. As we will see, criticism of Hume's essays, especially the rejected ones, virtually constitutes a catalogue of such association, or a range of footnotes on a single heading: the "feminine" seduction of men from their "serious" concerns to something fallen, deviant, weak, merely symbolic or fashionable. And, Hume himself characterized his own devotion to the pursuit of literary fame in an elaborate simile:
Had I a Son I shou'd warn him as carefully against the dangerous Allurements of Literature as James did his Son against those of Women; tho' if his Inclination was as strong as mine in my Youth, it is likely, that the warning woud be to as little Purpose in the one Case as it usually is in the other. (Greig 1: 459)

Defining a Western misogynistic tradition in terms of "seduction by the Letter," R. Howard Bloch associates the authorial act with Eve's transgression; the author "seduces, in the words of Tertullian, 'by mere words' . . . The danger of woman, according to this reading of the phenomenon of misogyny, is that of literature itself" (2). Bloch's equation summarizes an underlying gendered motive for the critical neglect of Hume's woman-appeal essays which have been deemed, not only by the critical tradition but also by their own author, "shallow," "frivolous and finical," and seductive as "mere words" proferred for entertainment value or mercenary gain. In fact, Hume's turn from the Treatise mode to essay writing has been precisely characterized as a turn from philosophy and masculinity, to the effeminate service of a "feminine" public.4

Vivien Jones has marked the suspicion-unto-hostility of eighteenth-century critics responding to the new literary genres (in particular, the novel) appealing to female readership: "The virulence with which fiction was attached as a corrupting 'female' genre is telling evidence of its disruptive potential" (12). The new woman-appeal authorial impulse, with its alleged seduction into romance, idle fantasy or worse, apparently posed a threat to patriarchal establishment, by both stimulating and targeting sexual license. In one of his sermons (1766) James Fordyce pointed to novels "in their nature so shameful, in their tendency so pestiferous, and contain[ing] such rank treason against all decorum, that she who can bear to peruse them must in her soul be a prostitute, let her reputation in life be what it will "(qtd. in Jones, 176). "Treason" would in fact occur in the fall of patriarchy to a new commercialism which
courted the interests of the female reader. This commercialism, also carried on the rise of the essay and popular-press genres, would entail the conversion of wife, daughter, polite lady into a prostitute. The prostitute stands at the intersection of patriarchal service and transgression; the allure of female literacy likewise posed a danger (as expansion of female consciousness and knowledge) and an opportunity (as manipulation of same) to the patriarchal status-quo. The appeal to female readership had to be given substance in a careful and controlled vehicle.

In his recent The Suasive Art of David Hume M. A. Box gestures toward the critical association of the feminine and the literary in the rejected essays. Taking up the important question of Hume's own rejection of these texts--Hume gradually edited them out of all editions of his essays--Box notes of these rejects that "not one . . . significantly, was political" (123). An essay "moral" or "political," the categories under which the bulk of Hume's essays appear in both his own editions and subsequent critical ones, might yet count as a philosophical work and not as "literary." This is the kind of distinction that would be made by a modern commentator sure of the inherent separability of these "philosophical" and "literary" modes. And, it would be axiomatic that women are not as interested in or concerned with the public world of politics or morality, as they would be in more "literary" topics and styles. We can infer that M. A. Box assumes the "political" to include only those public issues of politics and morality--and thus patriarchal authority--that Hume treats in the majority of his "retained" essays on war, religion, government, and economics. But Box declares his most challenging position outright: "What strikes the reader as most remarkable in the essays of apprenticeship, because so out of Hume's character, is their utter emptiness of new or even rigorous thought" (124)(emphasis added). What strikes this reader, aside from Box's presumptions about his knowledge of "Hume's character" and what constitutes "new" or "rigorous" thought, is his assumption about reader identity and response. Apotheosizing two centuries of rejecting readership, such a
judgment serves to box-in the reader—especially the woman reader—and call into question the validity or even the viability of her reading. Such criticism suggests to the reader, "If these texts appeal to you, you are either frivolous, misled, or both." The last decade's reader-response theory has valorized critical pluralism; that is, since the reader "completes" the text, no reader response can be deemed essentially invalid. Criticism of Hume's woman-appeal essays has tended to invalidate reader completion of these texts—by the insistence on their inherent invalidity, on the grounds of their woman-appeal: their deviation from stylistic norms for "serious" texts, and their focus on gender(ed) or, specifically, domestic issues.  

To clarify my point and purpose here, I need to speak autobiographically. Some four years ago, while reading through Hume's works, I was struck by my understanding and enjoyment of a high-canon philosopher. (This was a rare if not unique experience to me in my limping history as a would-be philosophy student.) Although I found fascinating and deeply enjoyed many moments of the Treatise, I was particularly attracted to a number of Hume's essays: several of the retained but primarily, as it turned out, the "rejects." Puzzled by this negative and even repellent label, I reread these essays many times and found them not only edifying and entertaining but also provocative in their strange discursive mixtures. Overall, I thought them "philosophical" in that they took up questions which seemed to me indubitably "philosophical," or concerning fundamental human situations and problems. In my way of thinking, the relationship between men and women is close to the epitome (just under the problem of mortality) of a "philosophical" problem: very complex, comprehensive in its range of issues, and very important, even central, to human society.  

Why had philosophers failed seriously to engage with this problem, on a philosophical—that is, supposedly rational and factionally unbiased—level? It seems that, without exception, Western philosophers have either grounded society in sexual inequality or teleologically guaranteed its rise in society. In the rejected essays
Hume seems to deal quite "philosophically," that is inductively through inquiry instead of deductively through essentialism, with problems of gender identity and relationships. On the other hand, these "philosophical" treatments appear quite accessible--although no less "philosophical"--to the non-professional-philosopher reader.

I was dismayed, but then not particularly puzzled, at the academic reception--particularly in the last decade--of Hume's "woman-appeal" essays. Most mainstream commentaries (those by professional philosophers, in philosophical journals, etc.) eschew the essays for the sake of the *Treatise* and *Enquiries*. Or, at least the essays are marginalized, seen as a mere "apprenticeship" or transition between periods of philosophical production. When in the 1970s critics began to turn their attention to matters of style, and feminist critics turned to Hume in what can best be described as a mild attraction-repulsion response, the essays had to receive some attention. However, literary and feminist critics alike have remained primarily interested in the *Treatise* and the *Enquiries*, the "serious philosophy." Feminist critics have focused intensively and confusingly on the "Of chastity and modesty" section of the *Treatise* (Book III, Part III, section ii). In 1976, Louise Marcil-Lacoste nodded to the woman-appeal texts by suggesting (in a marginal note) that "A study of this question [of Hume's views on sexual equality] should include Hume's rather literary Essays Moral, Political and Literary. My analysis focuses on the *Treatise* and the *Enquiry* only" (439n27)(emphasis mine). In an article investigating "Hume's Position Concerning Women," Marcil-Lacoste ignores those texts, the woman-appeal essays, which offer vital information about that topic.

Such noted Hume critics as John Valdimir Price, Donald Livingston and John Richetti have appreciatively included some discussions of the rejected essays, primarily "Of Essay Writing" and "Of the Study of History." Both of these essays, although centrally addressing gender issues, topically address "public" or "political" subjects.
However, Hume's commentators have, relatively speaking, neglected the essays and have certainly dismissed the withdrawn ones. Even feminist critics—mostly professional philosophers—have been wary of them, choosing for the most part to concentrate on the major philosophical texts.

Upon defining Hume's attraction for me as his "woman-appeal," I fell into self-doubt; why did I appreciate these texts so much, if critical history has dismissed, ignored, or insulted them? Paranoia crept into my female-non-professional-philosopher-reader's consciousness; I became wary of being a reader too easily impressed, shallow, or perhaps even seduced by a deliberate appeal to my "feminine" weaknesses or mere "tastes." Foreclosed upon by the critical tradition, I felt betrayed; but, by whom? By Hume, who himself eventually rejected these essays? By the critics who have generally upheld Hume's decision? Or, by my own reading, somehow guilty of hermeneutical error if not outright intellectual failure? It seemed, at any rate, that the academic woman reader responding positively to Hume's woman-appeal essays would find herself forced into the awkward position of either (1) believing herself "talked-down-to" (as many critics such as Box chalk up these essays as Hume's necessity to "write-down" to a philosophically inept or at best "uninitiated" readership); or (2) having to vindicate both Hume and herself—if she happens to discern real "philosophical" value in these texts. Thus, the woman reader of the woman-appeal essays finds herself in a Humean jam, of "skepticism with regard to her [critical] senses."

Norah Smith, author of the only unified piece on the rejected essays, fueled my reader anxiety as she characterized these texts as "the rambling and the female-oriented approach . . . the use of illustration rather than reasoned argument to make a point" (362). So, this is the kind of reading I liked: "rambling," "female-oriented," "illustrative" and by implied contrast, "unreasoned." Indeed, it seemed to be; why, then, given the "Addisonian" frivolity and the obvious eminent rejectability of these
essays, was I seeing so much of value, such wealth unmined (to risk a metaphor Hume
treats critically in "Of Avarice") in them?

Box's and Smith's judgments carry on what Barbara Herrnstein Smith sees as
the pervasive anti-evaluative critical tradition epitomized by such as Northrup Frye,
who banished from the canons of effective criticism what he deemed, "all the literary
chit-chat which makes the reputations of poets [or philosophers!] boom and crash in an
imaginary stock-market" (Frye qtd. in Herrnstein Smith, 21-2). Frye's judgment of
public literary taste as leisure-class gossip pointedly in its subject ("chit-chat") isolates
women readers as a large contingent of worthless evaluators of textual worth. Not only
is the judgment misogynist in tone and allusion, but it also fails to acknowledge the
validity of general public reception in canon formation—a phenomenon newly central to
publication in Hume's time, and especially significant for him, precisely in the addition
of educated women readers to his target literary audience. These judgments which
exclude all but the privileged few of academic scholarship (and these highly acclaimed
specialists, to boot) ignore the matrices of response and interpretive parameters of a
literary work's total readership—a readership which may have intentionally been
"general" (including women) in the first place, as in the case of Hume's essays, and
which certainly has encompassed a great diversity of reader response over the years or
centuries and has crossed many intersections of class, gender, creed, profession and
personality. In short, to claim that a great writer was "writing down" to his or her
readership must primarily betray a projection from the view down one's own
privileged, personal nose.

In the case of these essays, there is an obvious need for a more careful inquiry
into gendered constructions and gender-politics of reading and, especially, of criticism.
That is, if Hume directed a number of his essays to the woman reader, and had as well
specific ideas about how women read and should read, then perhaps he had intended
particular types of response to these texts, a reading as-a-woman.7 Perhaps Hume—or
at least the Hume of a certain literary moment—did not intend for his female readership a second-class status, or worse. In fact, such a negative assessment of Hume's woman-appeal intentions may in fact say more about our own critical misogyny than it does about that of Hume's time. Many scholars have explored the complex and often contradictory (as both patronization and empowerment) motives which seemed to underlie eighteenth-century belletrists' (Addison, Steele, John Dunton, Eliza Haywood, etc.) appeal to "the ladies."

More theoretically, certain philosophical access to Hume's essays could actually occur as a function of reading "as-a-woman." I perceive myself, as a woman reader, motivated to a certain type of response through Hume's stylistic front to a particular content; and thereby as particularly attentive to more covert channels of Hume's thought. My reading as-a-woman has seemed to allow me particular access to what we might call a "forgotten Hume" (to borrow from a different context Mossner's descriptive phrase): a Hume suppressed or denied by mainstream criticism; a Hume denied (as he denied himself in the banishment of these essays) a comprehensive critical evaluation from his entire intended readership. Ultimately, I feel positively unwilling to concede that my reader-response is shallow, deluded, frivolous, or in any other way inferior to those reader-experiences which reap the traditional philosophical harvest from the "serious" works, that is those employing "reasoned argument to make a point." My reading of these essays has been perhaps more personal, open-minded, creative, "literary" than the experience of a high-canon philosopher should be; but certainly I have enjoyed a productive, passionate inquiry.

It would seem that the most sensitive and productive gleaning of these particular woman-appeal essays can only be achieved upon a serious consideration of one's relationship as-a-woman to the Humean text: a relationship that Hume himself obviously considered and manipulated. All is not optimism for the case of Hume's female reader; Hume presents special challenges to her. He both—and simultaneously—
upholds traditional patriarchal gender stereotypes and predictions, and subverts this tradition by setting up the possibilities for reading against that status quo. Reading as-a-woman, that is, reading with special insights and interpretive opportunities—some of these actually arising from essentialist feminine stereotypes—can give one access to these subversive possibilities. A woman finds herself cast simultaneously as stereotyped object and active subject in Hume's text, and must somehow come to terms with these two presences. Both "woman" and "women" figure centrally in women's lived history, and this dualism proves a challenge wherever encountered; as Teresa de Lauretis judges: "The tension is between 'Woman' as representation, as the object and the very condition of representation, and, on the other hand, women as historical beings, subjects of 'real relations' . . . [and this tension] is the contradiction that feminist theory must be built on, and its very condition of possibility" (qtd. in Nussbaum, "Politics," 380). Hume's modern woman reader can and must be constantly attentive to the configurations, the pulses of this tension in and among his texts.

Hume presents an early case, and as a great patriarch philosopher a particularly interesting one, for the study of reading as-a-woman as a textual function: that is, as a set of cues strategically placed within the text. These cues may both "immasculate" the woman reader, and empower her as a specifically female reading subject. I will argue throughout that this empowerment might occur chiefly as a response to Hume's unfolding of the entirely conventional grounds of misogyny. My evaluation of Hume's positive contribution to feminist theory follows method and purpose of feminist reader-response critics focusing on the "Resisting Reader": "to disrupt the process of immasculcation by exposing it to consciousness, by disclosing the androcentricity of what has customarily passed for the universal."8

Contemporary women readers have suggested how Hume's own standards for judgment in aesthetic taste, set out in "Of the Standard of Taste" (EMPL 226-49),
exclude women on empirical grounds from status as effective critics and therefore taste-setters. This thesis would pit the philosophical validity of a retained essay against the empowerment project putatively launched in the rejected essays. However, the question remains as to whether this charge of critical ineffectuality (which he does not explicitly charge to women in the "OST") would be essentialist, that is to say, sexist; or whether it would point factually to a societal given and then (however indirectly) philosophically to a political and philosophical evil: women's artificially restricted perceptual opportunities in patriarchy—women are not fundamentally incapable of good judgment, they are simply ill-equipped for it due to restrictions and impositions on their experience. Hume's text variously calls forth feminine stereotypes; however, these prove to be either illustrations of a point about societal convention, or to be peculiar rhetorical moments, window-dressing for specific popular-appeal purposes. In all cases, this obvious decoration is supplantable by a return to philosophical argumentation; in no case does Hume, in this "turn," supplant his female reader—although several commentators have claimed so.

Often, Hume seems to assume traditional associations of femininity with emotion, physicality, the literary and the taste for fiction; however, he appears in the case of the woman-appeal essays to account for a special interpretive potential in these allegedly female propensities. Such valorization of essentialized stereotypes of "femininity" has occurred as paradigm shift, where "revisions of traditional thought created concepts of femininity upon which female authority could build;" for example, the eighteenth-century paradoxical empowerment of feminine "weakness" and "delicacy" in the new cult of Sentimentality which was to dominate the following century. While Hume's woman-appeal can be seen to rely somewhat on such stereotype, "stereotype" does not tell the whole story: Hume's consideration of "feminine" emotionality, and especially of sympathy—typically assumed a feminine
strength--has a definite philosophical purpose. Hume's philosophical address to women can be seen both drawing strength from and pushing through feminine stereotype.

The affirmation of feminine models and strategies of interpretation would not be surprising to Hume's readers who accept at face value his famous reversal of that infamous hierarchy: that reason is, after all, only the slave to the passions (T 415). I am proposing that Hume's "rambling, female-oriented," illustrative mode might represent, from the heart of his philosophy, the more potent text in its more direct appeal to the passions, its initial seduction of the reader through more emotional--and therefore primal--cues, as opposed to the scholastic, pointed appeal of "reasoned argument." On the literary "persuasion" essential to any text M. A. Box echoes Hume, "To move an audience to adopt experimental habits of reasoning themselves, even to get them to read the Treatise through, would involve more than argument and conviction. Everything would depend upon the author's success in exciting a motivating passion" (56) (emphasis added). Box's absolute "everything" recalls and ironically empowers the traditional portrayal of woman as essentially passion-motivated. It also (however unintentionally on Box's part) breaks down another misogynist, essentialist linkage, of "passion" with "weakness." In short, ironically within the essentialist tradition, the best reader--of any text--might just prove to be a woman. While I do not mean that Hume himself overtly proffered this belief, I do wish to open an inquiry into Hume's writing as differently philosophical--that difference embracing the female readership even as this readership may be assumed within certain essential stereotypes. Hume's philosophy opens itself to readers bringing different expectations and skills to it, expectations and skills which have been scorned and dismissed, even as they have been deliberately inculcated, by traditional scholarship canons. The woman-appeal essays host this philosophical difference in all of its problematical glory.
To sum up, Hume's women readers face two fundamental problems; both of these are complicated by apparent internal contradictions in the Humean text. The most obvious problem can be seen in Hume's writings about women and women reading, and in his relationships with his women readers. These texts and contexts evince both "sexism" and "feminism": a contradiction that has tended to polarize modern feminist Hume criticism and therefore impede its deeper investigation into Hume's relevance for feminism. Feminist Hume studies have bogged down in apparently futile attempts to push Hume decidedly into one ideology or another, either "sexist," or "feminist." In so doing these scholars remain within the patriarchal tradition of invidious binarism while failing to think historically, that is, to take into consideration the different perceptions of, and concessions and demands made of a writer in different historical/cultural milieux.

A second, deeper complication derives from Hume's distinction between "philosophy" and "common life;" and respectively, in the rejected essay "Of Essay Writing," between the "learned" and the "conversible" worlds. Given the educational inequalities of Hume's time, "philosophy" would almost certainly be entirely male-populated; although "common life" would by no means be a necessarily "feminine" realm. As Donald Livingston summarizes, "common life" includes the "unreflectively received beliefs, customs, and prejudices of common life" (3), expressed emotionally, socially, conversationally. But traditionally "philosophy" can be associated with abstraction, reason, "learning" and the discipline of philosophy, independence, solitude (the lone individual in his study)—and therefore, uniquely, with masculinity.

In his opening statements of the Enquiries, Hume characterizes "two different manners" of philosophy, the "accurate and abstruse" and the "easy and obvious." It is very easy to imagine these two manners in terms of gender; for example, the "easy and obvious" philosophers "paint [virtue] in the most amiable colours; borrowing all helps from poetry and eloquence, and treating their subject in an easy and obvious manner,
and such as its best fitted to please the imagination, and engage the affections." They are to "allure us into the paths of virtue," a task Hume elsewhere assigns to a stereotyped femininity: "What better school for manners, than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavor to please must insensibly polish the mind, where the example of the female softness and modesty must communicate itself to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that sex puts every one on his guard, lest he give offense by any breach of decency?" (EMPL "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," 133-34). Clearly describing a social medium, this philosophical manner "enters more into common life; moulds the heart and affections" (E 7) and finds welcome in, in fact draws sustenance from, the "conversible world." In "Of Essay Writing" Hume characterizes the "conversible world" as a female "sovereignty." It may be, perhaps, too tempting for the female reader to imagine Hume breaking down the walls of a uniquely male discipline to make a place for her there as sovereign of half of philosophy's domain. Is riding in on essentialist coattails better than finding no access at all? And, more shockingly, is her half actually dominant:

Happy, if we can unite the boundaries of the different species of philosophy, by reconciling profound enquiry with clearness, and truth with novelty! And still more happy, if, reasoning in this easy manner, we can undermine the foundations of an abstruse philosophy, which seems to have hitherto served only as a shelter to superstition, and a cover to absurdity and error! (E 16)

The fact that Hume saw these two philosophical "worlds" as mutually dependent instead of opposed is in and of itself iconoclastic, given the tradition of academic philosophy's scorn for domestic or convivial scenes. Furthermore, Hume's quest for "true philosophy" "presupposes the authority of common life as a whole," in that philosophers must always in the end "rely on some philosophically uncertified prejudice or custom of common life which alone can give content to what is an entirely vacuous
way of thinking" (Livingston 3). (Here we confront the real value of "illustration" relative to "pointed argument.") The desirability of doing "true philosophy" lies not in the abstract truth-value of this particular mode of thinking, but rather in the true philosopher's ability to recognize the conventional parameters of "human nature." These conventions do not exist apart from Truth or as sub-forms, but rather as the logic of the convention-bound truth of human existence. And, once we return from a higher perspective—that recognizing, for example, the conventional parameters of misogyny—we must resituate the "sovereigns of conversation" in their second-class status. The challenge is formidable: within Hume's system, "masculine" and "feminine" can be philosophically understood to form a complementary system of complete human possibility with no invidious distinctions. But the inevitable "authority of common life" breaks down this paradise. The true philosopher must see both "women" simultaneously. In fact, this true philosopher may helplessly find himself, as I believe for Hume's case, a feminist "philosopher"—and a "common" sexist. We should read Hume's texts—the philosophical Treatise as well as the literary essays—with such a double vision in mind. Failure to do so can blind the reader to Hume's very exciting struggle with binary logic, a logic which for Hume appears fundamentally gendered. I will propose that this struggle is most evident in the literary arena, when we read Hume as a system of styles and tropes overseen by the question of gender.

In light of the philosophy/common life binary, we can recognize the apparent ideological contradiction ("feminist" or "sexist"?) on the Humean surface as a function of the philosopher's literary ideals. To state matters simply, Hume wanted to be read, understood and admired by the widest possible readership. In letters throughout his life, and in the autobiographical "My Own Life" composed shortly before his death, Hume reminds us of his "Love of literary Fame, my ruling Passion." He was aware of both the potential and limitations of his female readership's attraction to his works and therefore influence on his reputation. In fact, Hume's career was dominated by
conflicts of philosophy and common life, conflicts entailing trouble in his public reception. He wryly confessed in a letter to Henry Home (1737) to "castrating . . . the nobler parts"—cutting out the iconoclastic "Of Miracles"—from the Treatise, "endeavoring that it shall give as little Offense as possible" to readers of intended future revisions (Greig 1: 25-6). As a good fundamental ontologist, Hume philosophically hypothesized the uniformity or predictability of human beings in "human nature." Predictably, as a human being, he had some unphilosophical ideas, not to mention the conventional majority of his reading public to please. The question of how Hume could remain faithful to both philosophy and common life takes on special complexities in the gender context; the woman-appeal essays emerged as sites of such complexity and even conflict often manifested as paradox or irony, or even contradiction.

Hume's philosophy/common life dualism seems to entail a split-personality attitude towards women. This split occurs in the philosopher's recognition, even in his quest for a neutral "truth" about human nature, of the authority of convention within that truth. The Treatise section "Of chastity and modesty," which has drawn the bulk of commentary on Humean gender, most clearly exemplifies this "split" recognition and ensuing difficulties for Hume's readers. In this section of Book III, "Of Morals," Hume explains—or justifies—the double standard by finding its origin in patriarchal paranoia about the biological ownership of children (the "mama's baby, daddy's maybe" problem). As Hume carefully argues, since paternity, as opposed to biological maternity, is always symbolic—before the age of DNA testing, dependent on the mother's word—men needed to come up with a system pervasively powerful enough to "guarantee" their paternity of their wife's offspring. Hence derived patriarchy's standards of "chastity and modesty" for women, obviously artificial and symbolic now, Hume insists, in their enforcement even on women incapable of childbearing.
Christine Battersby finds Hume guilty of "'bigotry' [against women] of a very special kind" (312); she finds that "his justification of morality presupposes the social and political superiority of men" (309-10). Battersby's charge of sexism here hits an easy target; Hume's investigation of that particular convention certainly and unavoidably "presupposes" this fact of his culture's common life. Steven Burns and Louise Marcil-Lacoste conclude that "Hume's moral system works as a philosophical justification of sexist discrimination." Marcil-Lacoste poses a final question: "Can we take Hume, the moralist, seriously and not participate in a philosophical justification of sexist or other kind of discrimination?" (440). These critics decide on a Hume who ultimately believed in and upheld the masculinist status-quo. Annette Baier, writing a few years later, comments: "Hume's chapter ["Of chastity and modesty"] is sometimes perceived, and was earlier perceived by me, as sexist in tone and content, but now I find it remarkable for its devastating clarity, its exposure of the double standard as a 'useful' means of indulging the vanity of socially powerful males." Reading more deeply (presumably than Burns or Marcil-Lacoste) into that text, Baier then concludes that "Hume shows himself in his writings, as he did in his life, remarkably free of discriminatory sexism" ("Good Men's Women" 9-10). Almost a decade later, Baier elects Hume to the supreme honor of "women's moral theorist" or champion. Obviously taking "Hume, the moralist," very seriously, she does so via a disclaimer: "Our main concern here is not with feminism, but rather with the implications, for ethics and ethical theory, of . . . differences between males and females both in moral development and in mature versions of morality" ("Women's Moral Theorist" 38). Implying that "feminism" is a response both to and within the conventional level of Hume's text (and thus what Hume would deem a "factional" or common-life interest), Baier intends to go deeper to the Hume who does philosophy, whose province is analysis of the truth observable in the delineations of factional interest.
What clearly emerges from this argument is that Hume does carefully delineate and define the conventional or "artificial" level of "sexism" operating in societal standards for females—and may occasionally himself write from this level. Unlike the majority of his philosopher colleagues who have written on the subject of woman, Hume does not obviously presuppose woman's second-class citizenship as a natural, inevitable, or a priori manifestation of human nature. However, this philosophical stance did not necessarily preclude Hume's acceptance of the givenness of this cultural convention. One might say that today, the charge of agreeing with or appealing to public taste is an especially harsh accusation. Or, at least, such an appeal in the late twentieth century is manifested very differently, among very different entities and judgment categories. If we find a "sexist" Hume appealing to status-quo or conventional morality, we must be careful to read that appeal historically, sensitive to Hume's situation within his own Zeitgeist. This situation hosted something of a contradiction. On the one hand, "sexism" was an eighteenth-century phenomenon hardly isolable as an "-ism": the subjugation of women to men simply laid the foundations of culture. As historian Roy Porter sees the eighteenth-century gender context,

Slightly over half the nation was female. Yet, compared with men, we know little about what women felt, thought, and did... In the public eye, women were laced tightly into constrictive roles: wives, mothers, housekeepers, domestic servants, maiden aunts. Few escaped. The commonness of the stereotyping created a kind of invisibility: women were to be men's shadows. (35-6)

To speak as an eighteenth-century "feminist"—especially a male one—would have been a far more radical gesture than we can perhaps imagine today (especially given the problems late twentieth-century female feminists have with their male colleagues' practicing "feminism"). To establish a case for the mere conventionality, or
contingency, of women's inferiority, may have been shocking enough to the reader able to grasp this Humean argument.

On the other hand, as we will consider in this study, the (relatively) exponential growth in opportunity for basic female literacy, along with the rise of a leisure class, contributed a significant new audience potential, "women of Sense and Education" (as Hume himself delineated in "Of Essay Writing"), to the author eager for literary fame. Also, our perceptions of the banality and frivolity of the Addisonian popular presses (noteworthy particularly in their overt targeting of the female reader) may misrepresent what was in fact a different(ly) philosophical context: at the time Hume turned to the essay form, "philosophy" may have embraced a topically wider and less gendered (as "serious" or "gay," to use a Humean distinction) range, for reasons to be examined here. Gary Shapiro reminds us that the "republic of letters," to use Hume's phrase for his purview, "contains an educational program with a strong emphasis on the public dimension." "Philosophy" and "literature" were not as separable as they were to become in the next century; and, the eighteenth-century "man of letters" suffered charges (such as effeminacy) from later critics who took up the case for cleanly separating "the vocation of the writer [or philosopher] from . . . the mundane and degraded world of the man of letters" (123). These adjectives may remind us of the critical degrading of the feminine; the republic of letters not only included a solid contingent of women readers (institutionally powerless but socially significant); this republic would itself be conceived of as "feminine" by future critical history.

Historical blindness can lead the critic to impose her own conventional parameters on Hume. How can we require Hume to excise the undeniably "sexist" common-life dimension from his thought? By his theory this common-life dimension makes up the substantive part of the weave of any belief system, including the ideal of true philosophy. Leo Damrosch examines this problem of the historical Hume:
The eighteenth-century philosopher is not an isolated hero giving shape to what would otherwise be unintelligible, but a cultural spokesman who explores the ways in which everybody *already does* make sense of the world... the goal of eighteenth-century thought, whether conservative or "enlightened," is to dispel illusions and identify a bedrock of experience that underlies psychology. One unpacks clichés in order to understand where they came from.

Perhaps gesturing toward the negative thrust of the last decade's critical trends, Damrosch adds: "Not all philosophies regard the procedure of taking commonplaces apart as an exposure of their emptiness." Hume's exposure of the "sexist" convention of society does not necessarily demand his rejection of that convention or theorizing of a replacement for it. Hume's goal as fundamental ontologist was to track the manifestations of "human nature" and attempt to understand its structures, not to operate from "some ideal notion of ontological stability that lies beyond human discourse" (namely, for this case, a non-hierarchical, non-sexist society: the androgyna myth). Corroborating my own perceptions of Hume's "feminist philosopher"/"vulgar sexist" complement, Damrosch proposes that Hume "show[s] that common wisdom works in practice even if reason is bewildered" (22-3). Even if Hume cannot philosophically make a case for sexism, he will nonetheless show us that, and how, it does work in observable human practice. And, in a perfectly Humean way, Hume himself sometimes participated in that observable human practice of common life.

But I will argue that in the woman-appeal essays, we can discern gestures toward a philosophical corrective for sexism, if not the practice of that correction. However, these corrective gestures do not appear in the patriarchal discourses of academic logic or prescriptive moralizing; they are perceived upon the following of other cues and intuitions characterizable as "literary." In the case of the essays, feminists charging sexism generally attack what they perceive as Hume's patronizing
gallantry--his participation in a popular discourse of his culture. This discourse includes "Addisonian" patronizing and flirtatious address to women, appeal to feminine emotion, descriptions of women as "delicate," "weak," passion-ruled. These are undeniably present in the woman-appeal essays. However, unlike in Addison and other popular essayists of the "fair-sexing" tradition, Hume's gallantry most often sharply contrasts with the subject-focus of the essay: a sort of form-content dialectic can be postulated. Women readers who find in Hume a champion may be responding to a deeper level, in a text which can be hierarchically separated into content (feminist) and rhetoric (sexist) levels. This form-content dialectic might also be described as a form-content irony. The reader, refusing the demands of the "total Hume"'s irony, might stop at the formal level. Or, she might push on into the compelling potential of Hume's content, a philosophical layer present even in the most allegedly unphilosophical of Hume's texts, the rejected essays. The patronizing or sexist rhetorical component mirrors the ideological foundation of culture and responds to the common-life expectation or public tradition; while the feminist potential lies in Hume's appeals to alternative modes of reading, to other reasonable and capable readers, within the critical praxis of true philosophy.

Although failing (as his critics have pointed out) absolutely to correct the sexism of his culture (as these critics seem to presume would have been possible for him), Hume may have accomplished a different form of redress. Accepting some of the conventional judgments about women, Hume simply may not have perceived these characteristics absolutely, as the inferior terms of an inexorable binary tradition. I have already suggested that the woman-appeal essays may establish special and very productive conditions for a more comprehensive reading I call Humean reading "as-a-woman," that is, not only intellectually but also emotionally, even bodily. These reader "senses" are not invidiously predisposed; rather, they cooperate in a mutual check-and-balance polylogue. Hume did not imagine negative traits such as weakness, excessive
piety or enthusiasm, and ignorance as exclusive to women; nor would reading with emotion, a passion for fiction, and a certain visceral understanding be an exclusively feminine potentiality. But as these were responses traditionally assigned to women, Hume complied in employing devices in his woman-appeal texts which would elicit feminine response. Yet—in this case, reading "as-a-woman" would be the way to the philosophical content of the essay; that is, Hume's serious point can be achieved only by bringing reading as-a-woman into play.

In his own theorizing about reading as-a-woman, Jonathan Culler quotes Shoshana Felman asking, "Is it enough to be a woman in order to speak [or read] as a woman? Is 'speaking as a woman' determined by some biological condition or by a strategic, theoretical position, by anatomy or by culture?" For this study I wish to acknowledge the theoretical (and thus "neuter"?) possibility of reading as-a-woman; however, I am more interested in the biological determination underlying this model. Culler quickly adds, "Reading as a woman is not simply, as Felman's disjunctions might seem to imply, a theoretical position, for it appeals to a sexual identity defined as essential and privileges experiences associated with that identity" (Culler 49). Humean reading as-a-woman is such precisely because women have been essentialized and have had particular experiences as females. Because these "feminine" traits are conventional and not innate—as Hume took pains to prove—they define a "woman" as a cultural identity biologically derived but symbolically manufactured. This identity has remained fairly intact over the last three centuries; the misogyny I have encountered in very recent criticism by both men and women attests to this endurance. On these grounds I make very little of differences between "biology" and "culture," between the "female" and the "feminine." These are not, at least in common life, practically separable as concepts. On the same basis, I do not foreground distinctions between a putative eighteenth-century woman reader and our contemporary; although there are some considerable superficial differences (mainly having to do with improvements in
"legal" rights), these two women share the hegemonic misogyny of patriarchy to which I constantly refer. Speaking of the eighteenth-century, Felicity Nussbaum believes that "Women apparently understood that very few of their sex were excepted from universal condemnation" (Brink 6). In a late twentieth-century culture suffering shocking gender discrepancies in employment conditions, rampant rape and pornographic exploitation of women, clinics overflowing with battered and abused wife cases, and persistent powerful efforts to re-legisl ate women's situation with regard to the reproductive control of their own bodies--few could argue against the current applicability, within a little-changed symbolic economy, of Nussbaum's proposition.

For neat terminological and theoretical contrast, I will propose something called "reading as-a-man." This reading would follow the decrees and dictates of patriarchal convention. Although such a reading should be characterized (following convention) by reason, logic, autonomy, objectivity, intellectual acuity--we can easily see, with even a surface perusal of philosophers' commentaries on women, the results of such "reasonable" thinking by men about women. So, let us roughly define reading as-a-man as reading in conformity with the expectations of one's patriarchal culture, the status-quo line. This reading, assuming the second-class or even negligible contribution of texts by and for women to intellectual tradition, would tend to reject or at least suspect any text overtly featuring woman-appeal. Of course, response to such textual cues as metaphor, bodily references, and emotive language cannot be rigidly marked as "masculine" or "feminine." These cues I characterize as woman-appeal open up the theoretical space in Hume for a culturally-(including or as patriarchally-) determined reading as-a-woman.

These theoretical straw-sexes should suggest some answers to troubling questions about Hume criticism. It matters not if "M. A. Box" (or "Norah Smith" for that matter) is male or female; he/she reads Hume "as-a-man," or following certain patriarchal expectations, still heavily represented in the critical canon, about
texts and, more covertly now perhaps but correspondingly, about women. Box finds the woman-appeal essays' a-politicality, that is their lack of overt focus on sanctioned subjects of masculine, "public" appeal, eminent justification for their rejection. A woman reader, responding to the issues, anecdotes, themes and motifs of these essays, might find them eminently retainable for their attention to such political issues as marriage and the relationship between the sexes, childbearing, the female body, female education, ecology and other properly "feminine" subjects. Excising these issues from her realm of concern, Norah Smith does not choose to retain these texts within but to reject them from the range of public interest. What Box, Smith and others ignore is the direct link between these subjects and certain core elements of Hume's serious philosophy in the Treatise and elsewhere. For example, Annette Baier has proposed that the family, or consanguinity serves as the first-mover metaphor for Hume's entire philosophical system. If the essays were intended, as Baier, John Valdimir Price and others believe, as illustrations of Treatise philosophy (proven unpalatable in that form to public taste); then the woman-appeal essays importantly complete the picture by exploring those issues so central to "human nature," human activity in a world.

In these essays Hume offers a philosophical foundation for revising sexist hermeneutics in a way other than radically eliminating the problem; a challenge which, as discussed previously, would have proven impossible for Hume and has not been adequately met to-date. Seeing both the bad and the good in qualities traditionally deemed "feminine," Hume set up the possibility for the validating and empowering of certain "feminine" interpretive modes. Perhaps his most radical contribution along these lines is a masterpiece of Humean irony: in these essays, reading as-a-woman is "philosophical," while reading as-a-man proves "common." Moreover, while being a woman would guarantee the reader comprehensive opportunity into the text, being a man would not. In Western culture, a man is a man; while a woman in patriarchy must
always be both "man" and "woman," biologically female but socialized in patriarchal tradition: therefore, experientially androgynous (for better or worse). She alone lives both within sameness, conformity to patriarchal convention--and difference, in her negative predication as "other" to that convention. It (binarily) logically follows, then, that the woman might be the more sensitive reader of any text, as she has or has been forced into a more comprehensive epistemology. She would be the more sensitive to, and capable of discerning and working through, the gender politics of texts and contexts.

It is obvious that my arguments to this point, as they will be henceforth, are heavily implicated in traditional binary logic. I hope that, at the same time, I suggest ways in which Hume challenged this authority. Hume did not openly criticize binary logic; rather, he purposively worked within it. But Hume tends to plant conflict or contradiction as a hermeneutical device within his texts. Eighteenth-century writers believed very strongly in the interpretive stimuli of antithesis and paradox. Attempting to be faithful to Hume's intellectual milieu and his own reification and subversion of it, I hazard to work from the dual perspective of employing binary logic as a, or the dominant epistemological tool it has been for Western culture, while calling it into question (as per our century's theoretical models). Drawing the good from the binary model, I try to follow Hume in using this good to turn the model critically on itself.

The title for this entire study acknowledges my own critical debt but, more specifically, echoes a central moment of Hume's rejected essay, "Of the Study of History." Hume's putative purpose in this essay is to recommend the study of history to women. About a quarter of the way into the essay, he declares: "But I know not whence it comes, that I have been thus seduced into a kind of raillery against the ladies;" this sentence marks a turning-point in the essay, from a previous conventional, teasing, "Addisonian" address to the "fair sex," to a subsequent project to "handle my subject more seriously."
Thus Hume marks the difference between two discourses, "raillery" and "seriousness," by the term "seduction." I suggest that "seduction" serves as a trope for a Humean epistemological model—as a key translation between opposing discourses and ideologies: philosophy and literature; "philosophy" (as academic discipline) and belles lettres; individuality and society; masculine and feminine.16 "Seduction" has many implications which cross many discursive and disciplinary boundaries; one might be "seduced" by a person, a cause, an ideology, an ambiance, an unseen force. One might be either very willing, or resistant, or ambivalently wavering between both. The entailments might be pleasurable or painful, comic or tragic. The seduction might result in a lasting relationship, or in a betrayal. One both seduces as a subject, and is seduced as an object. While not necessarily involving sexuality, "seduction" as a term inevitably bears sexual overtones.

All of these aspects potential to "seduction" apply to Hume's situation as a writer and his relationship with his readers past and present. Thus "seduction" performs as both motif and metaphor for this study of Hume's essays and their gender implications. On the popular front, seduction was a common motif of eighteenth-century arts and letters (witness the obsession with avoiding it evinced in popular moralizing literature; as well as, of course, the equal obsession with experiencing it in the tradition of the stage and the novel). The term directs our inquiry here to questions of gender and gendered questions. More importantly, "seduction" may best describe the dynamic of motivating passion in Humean intellection: "reason" does its work only after having been seduced by "passion," responding as reason does only to support or develop a more fundamental emotional attraction. If a thinker is not first seduced, then all of his reason is impotent in that it has no direction to follow, no work to do. Finally, Hume himself described his turn from the rigors of "closet" philosophy to the popular, literary front as a response to a seduction by "Mistress Public": a perhaps offhand comment in a friendly letter that dropped a gold mine in the laps of critics fond
of metaphor. But Hume submitted not only to a feminine seduction, but also to a masculine one, as I will argue; when he naively postures, "I know not whence it comes, that I have been seduced into a kind of raillery against the ladies," we may feel that we know precisely "whence it comes," what kind of a seducer requires that particular kind of rhetorical compliance from the seduced within a particular conventional decree.

This study will trace a network of seductions. This introduction itself tells a seduction tale, as I have admitted to an attraction and obsession which may not be "rational." I have taken pleasure in reading this often intimate and jolly philosopher; he has attracted me to a certain body of his works, which admitted seduction I must now reason out in scholarly argument. My fear has been that my reasoned argument will not stand-up-to my emotional involvement. Moreover, I have discovered that this candid ambivalence on my part does have its counterpart in previous criticism of Hume by women; in most of such pieces, a warm sort of attraction seems to underlie even the coolest criticism. Such a scrupulous thinker as Annette Baier, a professional philosopher, confesses as we have seen above to a coming-around, a change of heart from suspicion and even hostility, to unmarred devotion to Hume as a champion (she admits to finding Hume "fascinating"). Women readers seduced by Hume must, it seems, attempt to discover whether they have a faithful relationship with the philosopher--or whether he ultimately betrays them. And, if there is a moment or potential of betrayal in Hume's text, this must certainly lurk in those essays where the writer's seductive powers are ascendent, the woman-appeal essays--themselves betrayed, rejected by their own author and the subsequent critical tradition.

But, as we note in "Of the Study of History," Hume himself has been seduced. He has seduced his woman reader on several levels both "common" and "philosophical"--but this seduction of the other has taken place as a function of his own
seduction by an other. And, it may turn out that his degree of fidelity to his seducer will bear heavily on his seduction of the woman reader.

Rather than becoming further tangled now in a web of abstract seductions, I will proceed with my study in the hope that these *laisons heureuses ou dangereuses* mysteriously alluded to here will take on flesh, become manifest and attractive to my reader. For this is the agenda of my own seduction plot: to interest my reader significantly in the woman-appeal essays. My "reasoned" strategy includes the establishment of new criteria for reading these essays and asserting their significance in Hume's *opus* as a whole. I hope to accomplish this through an intensive study of certain woman-appeal motifs, themes, stylistic modes and moods in six of Hume's essays, two retained and four rejected, and their dialogue with central moments of the "serious" philosophy.

Obviously, a study of six essays cannot represent the entire body of Hume's essays, much less Hume's work as a whole. My definition of and focus on "woman-appeal" has a critical and political goal: to increase critical awareness of a fuller range of issues comprising and essential to Hume's philosophical system, by bringing his relationship with "woman" to the front; and to anatomize with the gender model some key Humean devices and maneuvers, for example, irony (seen by many commentators as Hume's ruling device). In showing how these work within the gender question, I may shed some light on their entailments elsewhere in Hume's writings.

It will be observed, in the chapters that follow, that a family or filiation metaphor comes into my argument to compete with seduction for tropical primacy. Seduction, both within Hume's system and in general, is both good and bad for families. Seduction may bring a man and woman together in "amorous passion," which may in turn result in a family; then, too, seduction may enter into this relationship as an outside threat, as the irruption of selfish passion into the social, conventional bond. The metaphorical conflict between "seduction" and "family" here
reflects not only a literal conflict in human society but also a gendered issue at the heart of Hume's political economy.

In Chapter One, "Re-fusing the Androgyna," I attempt to ground a thesis that Hume is philosophically sympathetic to women. While I do not feel that arguments about whether Hume is "sexist" or "feminist" can be ultimately productive, I do align myself with such as Prof. Baier who find philosophical justification for their attraction to Hume. I suggest and identify Humean anti-patriarchal elements, which can ground my belief in Hume's positive contribution as a philosophical opponent to misogyny. In the retained "Of the Original Contract," I point out the collusion of Hume's anti-religious and anti-contractual positions in a sort of necessarily foundational anti-patriarchalism. In the retained "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," Hume ironically criticizes polite society as emblematic of patriarchy's artificial--and stressed--institution for the gendering and therefore control of natural human inclinations. In two rejected essays, "Of Essay Writing" and "Of the Study of History," Hume has also probed artificial gendered divisions within human society; in these essays he re-fuses male and female separated by "spurious distinctions" [J.V. Price's phrase] back into a kind of philosophically whole and healthy equality-in-complementarity, and especially equality-in-difference: an equality it has been in patriarchy's factional interest to suppress.17

But in Chapter Two, "Refusing the Androgyna," lifelong bachelor Hume puts forth his most biting critique of patriarchy by attacking its keystone institution, monogamous marriage in the patriarchal nuclear family. In "Of Moral Prejudice" and "Of Love and Marriage," Hume refuses the androgyna, the classical myth of Perfect Complementarity and the modern myth of blissful oneness in marriage. Hume's philosophical first principles admit but do not approve this androgyna model, though in common life it may be the best possible model, or at least the one best serving patriarchal interest. For man and woman alike--but particularly perniciously for
woman who has more to lose, materially and intellectually--the androgyna marks a symbolic seduction into a literal property arrangement.

Chapter Three, "Scenes From a Marriage--A Man's Castle," and Chapter Four, "Scenes From a Marriage (The Woman Within)," continue the analysis of Hume's anti-patriarchalist critique of marriage by focusing on the retained essay, "Of Polygamy and Divorces." Concretizing through example and anecdote the mythical and metaphorical devices discussed in Chapter Two, this essay vividly illustrates the "shocking violence" (Jane Gallop's phrase, Body 1) implicit and explicit in patriarchy's appropriation of the female body and person in marriage. Both overtly and by implication "Of Polygamy and Divorces" could be Hume's most productively "feminist" moment.

Yet, in Chapter Five, "Hume's Orphans: The Politics of Rejection," I again look to "Of Polygamy and Divorces"--this time as a man-appeal text in a differently conceived masculinist economy. This chapter reveals a Hume not self-conscious of his own seduction, but rather actively appealing to two opposing ideologies with the same text, the same goal. Considerations of Hume's seduction of the "sexist" reader, and of his "lust for literary fame" threaten to compromise my thesis of a "feminist" Hume. But here, too, I contrast Hume's and Addison's man-appeal strategies, to prove how different these two essayists' female readership projects actually were (Addison's reifying moral didacticism vs. Hume's subversive philosophical "correction").

Concluding this chapter, and my study, is my own critique of Norah Smith's 1972 consideration of the "rejected" issue and her situation of Hume in the Addisonian tradition. I underscore the endurance of critical misogyny by exposing a catalogue of critically misogynist moments in Smith's essay, all the more noteworthy as such, because Smith is a woman reader.

In spite of evidence that Hume's man-appeal differs significantly--as more philosophically attentive to female reader subjectivity--from the Addisonian model, I must ultimately confront the damning evidence of Hume's own rejection of the woman-
appeal essays, his striking five of them out of his collected works and thus, presumably, candidacy for value in future critical canons. This rejection, performed on allegedly stylistic grounds, can surely be seen today as political. The phenomenon of two centuries of rejecting readers within the canon argues powerfully for a reinterpretation of Hume's motives in the critical case of his rejected texts.

While we may never be able to agree on "the consistency of Hume's position concerning women," we might come better to understand the probable sources and motivations of what we perceive as inconsistency. Inconsistency is, after all, perfectly consistent with Hum(e)an nature. But the raising of the woman-appeal essays into serious critical consideration will accomplish something far more viable (because, in Humean terms, less factional): the extension of Hume evaluation to a consideration of his "other" readership, not only the general public but especially the woman reader, both eighteenth-century and present. Following Herrnstein Smith's appeal for a more responsible criticism, I attempt to discover what the woman-appeal texts may have offered to Hume's woman reader, such as she was—and also, what they offer to the contemporary woman reader "of Sense and Education." In so doing, I have tried to discover a common reception field for these historically and to a certain degree ideologically separated women. As previously confessed, I must dangerously rely sometimes on enduring essentialist definitions, sometimes on feminist re-visions of woman and women reading. I imagine this dual approach not as a perilous tiptoeing over contradiction, but instead as a comprehensive embrace of the languages (histories, myths, images, opinions, etc.) that women encounter and among which must situate themselves and make sense, if not use.
Re-fusing the Androgyna

Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has interrupted the male bonding of the patriarchal social system with her caveat, that "no element of [male homosocial desire] can be understood outside of its relation to women and the gender system as a whole" (1). Several decades earlier, psychoanalyst Karl Stern, "prompted by clinical observations of certain abnormalities of character," launched a study of psychopathology of the aggressive and successful "organization man," and found "at the bottom of it all a maternal conflict and a rejection of the feminine" (1). These two introductory judgments reflect a cross-disciplinary tendency in modern Western epistemology, to lay out foundational investigative pathways running either to or from "woman." "Woman," and women, throughout Western history, have occupied the stressful situation of both center and circumference (as margin) of patriarchal culture.

For this study I work with a dual, though mutually dependent, definition of "patriarchy." My more general definition "refer[s] to a social system that privileges males over females." R. W. Connell specifies the "defining point of patriarchy: All women live and act in conditions shaped by the structural fact of men's supremacy, even those women, the Thatchers and Gandhis, who are very powerful indeed" (qtd. in Holland and Eisenhart 238). This general definition serves as my theoretical backdrop here, although it is not intended to describe a sadistic politics of male tyranny over each and every individual female life. Gordon Schochet has provided the more historical definition of "patriarchy" applicable to Hume's own time; this "patriarchy" issued from a divine origin (God's legacy to Adam), and decreed that human relationships were the natural outgrowths of the familial association and its paternal authority . . . Virtually all social relationships--not merely those between fathers and children and magistrates and subjects--were regarded as patriarchal or familial in
essence . . . So long as a person occupied an inferior status within a household—as a child, servant, apprentice, or even a wife—and was subordinated to the head, his [or her] social identity was altogether vicarious . . . the father-master of each family was both its link with society as a whole and its authority, and his status was universally recognized. (65-6).

Jean Elshtain has aggressively attacked those "radical" feminists who have persisted into the late twentieth century in using the term "patriarchy" as a catchall bugbear for an essentialized, victimized femininity. She rejects "patriarchy" as a working concept for modern feminist politics, on the grounds that "not a single one of the . . . conditions" of patriarchalism as defined by Schochet "pertains" to our twentieth-century Western culture. Elshtain also rejects "patriarchy" as a more metaphorical term, such as Connell's general definition above; Elshtain finds that the "repetition of such key words . . . can become a substitute for thought" (215-16), can replace careful observation with worn-out generalization. While I respect and in principle agree with Elshtain's implied demand for a scrupulously inductive reasoning—out of such questions as women's victimization, I feel that she is overly sanguine about the socio-political situation of modern women. While it may be reductive to work from such a polarizing or divisive term as "patriarchy," it seems to me presumptuous, or even a form of denial, to disallow the concept of patriarchy to feminist politics. Even a quick overview of contemporary religion, politics, law, and everyday life (e.g. absence of women from power positions in government and church, public debate of reproductive issues, pornography, rape statistics, etc.) discovers a persistent patriarchal backdrop, "a social system that privileges males over females." Connell's softer terms—"privilege," "general oppression," "men's supremacy"—seem appropriate here precisely because they do not characterize all men as the vicious subjugators of women, or all women as the helpless victims of men. These terms, in my view, do accurately
describe a ruling hegemony since the days of historical patriarchy. Also, while including a politics of "oppression" of woman based on "her" essentialized symbolic identity, patriarchy has at the same time existed by virtue of its material placement of women—as wives, mothers, moral guardians and social directors—at the center of culture.

In spite of her history of political inferiority in patriarchy, "woman" has been the social if not the epistemological center of Western culture. As Sedgwick and Stern above (two among thousands) indicate, culture is virtually defined by the gathering around and the flight from womanhood. As we shall see, Hume proves to be a rich but far from clear-cut case study as to his judgments and pronouncements both about women and the patriarchal construct, "woman." Throughout his writings, and at key points of his earlier (Treatise and Essays) texts, Hume offers observations about women's implication in the patriarchal social system of his time; also, he makes compelling judgments about why men fear the mother and oppress women. One thing seems clear enough: by describing rather than prescribing women's situations in patriarchal culture, Hume contributes to a philosophical corrective for the symbolization of "woman" so useful to culture and so problematical for women.

We might begin to study Hume's place as philosopher in patriarchy by a metaphorical look at Western intellectual history. In her study The Flight to Objectivity, Susan Bordo maps "the specifically epistemological expression of the seventeenth-century flight from the feminine: 'the Cartesian masculinization of thought,'" and thus brings the woman question close to home/Hume. Bordo defines the seventeenth-century epistemological paradigm shift that ushered in the "Enlightenment" as the "re-visioning of the universe" from a living, all-embracing feminine entity to an indifferent machine: "The project that fell to both empirical science and 'rationalism' was to tame the female universe. Empirical science did this through aggressive assault and violation of her 'secrets.' Rationalism . . . tamed the female universe through the
philosophical neutralization of her vitality.". This "vitality" took the form of interrelationship and interdependency among the individuals not only of society but of the universe at-large. Bordo clarifies this "feminine principle" by distinguishing it with a term which proves Humean:

If the key terms in the Cartesian hierarchy of epistemological values are clarity and distinctness--qualities which mark each object off from the other and from the knower--the key term in this alternative scheme of values might be designated . . . as sympathy . . . It means granting personal or intuitive response a positive epistemological value, even (perhaps especially) when each response is contradictory or fragmented.

Humean "sympathy" draws together in fellow-feeling the otherwise disparate and unrelated (or rationally unrelatable) entities which "are" together in space and time. "Hume . . . may now be seen as having a rightful place," asserts Bordo, "in the ["constant, although 'recessive'" post-Cartesian] critical protest against the Cartesian notion that reason can and should be a 'pure' realm free from contamination by emotion, instinct, will, sentiment, and value" (100-16). Upon these last five terms patriarchy has predicated the "feminine" and used this predication to assign woman's second-class epistemological status in a Western epistemology that has remained resolutely "rational," positivistic. Since Hume grounds his philosophy of human understanding in the respect for "secrets" ("It appears, that when we say we desire to know the ultimate and operating principle, as something, which resides in the external object, we either contradict ourselves, or talk without a meaning" (T 267), and his moral and political theory in "sympathy" or the bedrock empathy which interrelates human beings and makes society possible, then following Bordo we might see Hume as anti-Cartesian or at least the Cartesian model she depicts, which both/either defines or derives from the patriarchal model. If we see Hume's essay career, a turn to the certain realm of experience, or "common life" and conversation as a balance to the
harsh rigors (as well as the popular failure) of skeptical philosophy, then we can find in the essays as a whole a textual body opposed to mechanical indifference to others and autonomous intellectual arrogance. The word "balance" is very deliberately chosen, here; Hume never abandons the masculine project of philosophical analysis (as a cutting-up, separation and even alienation)—but he introduces the living, social body and its experiences, the certain knowledge of the senses as well as the "intuitions," as the essential correlate to speculation. James Moore logically decides, "that Hume's decision to recast his philosophy in the form of essays marks no radical break with the orientation of his earliest philosophical reflection. His concern throughout was to understand human nature in the condition that seemed to him the usual or typical condition of human experience, the experience of men in society" (34). Hume thus carried on the work of a roughly contemporary group of English philosophers who "agreed in assigning priority to the role of feeling or sentiment in human conduct, in opposition to those moral philosophers who upheld the primacy of reason" (25). Hume's essays reflect a discursive transition along a continuum from autonomy and alienation, to society and integration—but he purported to seek a sort of mean in "true philosophy," the most comprehensive (because extra-factional) inquiry into modes of human understanding.

Can Hume's essay career be seen as a "flight from patriarchy," a radical yet stylistically disguised revolt against a politics and an hegemony whose most protected tenets conflict with his own foundational philosophical convictions? The question presupposes, in line with critical opinion to be examined here, that Hume's deliberate turn to "common life" for a post-Treatise readership was, at least by implication, a turn to the feminine as both a literal and a metaphorical body. However, working through this question in gendered terms not only allows us to theorize Hume's position on gender difference; it also helps us understand how patriarchalism can be "repugnant" (an adjective Hume applied to the original social contract theory, "Of the Original
Contract") to Hume's principles for the practice of true philosophy itself. In his anti-patriarchalism, Hume's "woman" becomes a philosopher and vice versa.

It is a provocative question, one for which we must confront the perils of paradox: Hume's turn to the feminine opens the possibility for (1) a legitimate address to women as rational and autonomous reading subjects and thus a potentially subversive channel for the transmission of alternative--because anti-patriarchal--philosophical and political ideas; and (2) a "popular" appeal (to common-life) which relies on convention for accessibility (what Hume refers to in the Enquiries as "the easy and obvious" style of philosophy)--and thus depends on and even reinforces patriarchal culture. A third scenario, a particularly Humean dialectical one, sees the philosopher/"man of letters" accomplishing both of the above possibilities, simultaneously, with the essays. In a study of gender in Hume's essays, it seems desirable always to proceed dialectically; but, more simply for the moment, posing this particular question may redress a problem in recent critical consideration of Hume's positions on gender: the attempt to polarize Hume as either "sexist" or "feminist."^1

Although this categorization may be attractive in light of the last decade's inquiry into misogynist tradition in the philosophical establishment,^2 "sexist or feminist" can be perceived as a dualism irresponsible to history and to Hume. First, "sexism" as we now try to characterize it cannot be a particularly useful critical term for an eighteenth-century context; the noun suggests a form of factionalism within an hegemony, while "sexism" was, in fact, the first principle of patriarchy and thus the unquestionable predicate of culture. (Whether this situation has changed over the centuries is largely a question of semantics.) To call Hume a "sexist" makes as much sense as calling him a "philosopher," it is possible to discern something which might seem "sexist" almost everywhere we turn in Hume. Of course, some eighteenth-century women did challenge this hegemony; we can locate "feminism" in its first modern forms in Mary Astell, Mary Wortley Montagu, Mary Wollstonecraft.
However, modern scholars cannot come to unanimity on the nature or effectiveness of "the Marys" politics; there arise complicated arguments about the goals and purposes of eighteenth-century feminists.3

To want Hume to be "feminist" one must insist that he make a political preference not only rare for his time but also against his stated purpose as a philosopher ("to serve as a mediator between contending parties and to promote compromise or accommodation ... by a balanced appraisal of party controversies in which each side is led to see that its views are not completely right and that the opposing views are not completely wrong" (EMPL 466)). This "sexist or feminist" polarization signals, in Humean terms, the question's factionalist, as opposed to philosophical, derivation; it suggests a premature foreclosure on an inquiry into Hume's relationship with a complexity of issues. In this form, the question can only lead to narrow and opinionated--and therefore "vulgar"--answers. The search for anti-patriarchal elements in Hume, while in its "anti-" predisposition not entirely free of factionalist desire, should follow the same pathways of a "sexist-feminist" inquiry but in a more empirically as well as historically sensitive way. In the case of this reader, the motivation to search for anti-patriarchalism in Hume derives from my retracing through memory an associative chain, a chain of perceptions of Humean themes and motifs, opinions and scholarly assertions, writing styles and lifestyles which overtly or suggestively go against patriarchal grain.

Raymond Williams points to one such grain, and to Hume's particular manner of opposition. "When he is affirming certain kinds of convention, in the language of his period, an evident blandness of tone can take temporary charge." Thus Williams characterizes Hume, the consummate "man of letters," and discovers in Hume a need to remain true to his sustaining (re)public with its "certain kinds of conventions." Hume apparently responded to the demands of his "period" with a certain rhetorical legerdemain allowing him simultaneous fidelity to both common life/convention and his
universalized philosophical principles. We can also read in Williams' comment a grammatical allusion to Hume's passivity before a masterful "charge," a power which in this period proved to be representable by "an evident blandness of tone." Williams considers the suggestion that Hume's moralizing catered, for example, to the particular "trivial and external concerns of Lord Chesterfield" (139); he quotes Hume from An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals: "He must be unhappy indeed, either in his own temper, or in his situation and company, who has never perceived the charms of a facetious wit or flowing affability, of a delicate modesty or decent genteeelness of address and manner." Such "heavily compromised" language, Williams believes, betrays in fact a passive-aggressive or even devious revolt against such "social morality":

A certain smoothing complacency is undoubtedly present: most often, I think, when he feels he is going against the grain of his time, and seeks anxiously to appease it. I find it necessary to remember, when Hume purrs in this way, that in fact, through most of his life, he was challenging some of the central beliefs of his time. (139)

A model for Hume's indirect revolutionary style; his behind-the-back, smoothed-over protest; his "purring," what might even be deemed his "cattiness," we might label "feminine." The power model proves the same: needing to please his sustaining public, Hume must make sure not to offend, disappoint or otherwise alienate it. He must not brazenly bite the hand that feeds him, that can determine his fate. If he has complaints, he must very carefully disguise them--especially in those deliberate mass-appeal vehicles, the essays.

Hume himself reflected on his effeminate submission to a master public which demanded "bland" and "complacent" service; he cast the model in courtly terms: "The Public is the most capricious Mistress we can court; and we Authors, who write for Fame, must not be repuls'd by some Rigors, which are always temporary, where they
are unjust" (Greig I: 222). These rigors, however temporary, may take a severe form. For his study of Hume as Enlightenment man of letters, Jerome Christensen relies foundationally on Hume's famous metaphor for his editing of the section "Of Miracles"—an anti-"superstitious" and thus anti-Christian piece—from the Treatise; he wrote to Henry Home in 1737, "I am at present castrating my work, that is, cutting off its nobler parts; that is, endeavoring it shall give as little offense as possible." Christensen concludes, "The enabling condition of [Hume's] career is to respond to the allure of the feminine public by a castration that makes authorship a necessarily barren romance" (emphasis added). Notice that in such courtly language Christensen has decidedly imagined Hume's post-Treatise reading public as feminine, the post-Treatise text as "necessarily barren romance," in short, literary:

For a philosophical readership he has already begun to substitute a feminine public whose "castrated" figure his writings will ideally mirror. He has begun his embassy from masculine philosophy to polite letters, a domain which, Hume acknowledges, is and ever ought to be ruled by women. (95-6)

In Christensen's fantasy here, Hume's "polite" feminine readership requires not only bland complacency, but also the writer's own emasculation; these "ruler"-pretenders exact a high price from their subjects who must "mirror" the mutilation entailed by the rulers' actual status in patriarchal culture. His "castration" mirrors their barrenness, a metaphor made possible by a sliding from "feminine" to "romance." Writing for/by the feminine cannot engender real, vital "philosophical" substance. In his last sentence above Christensen refers to Hume's proposal of feminine empowerment, in his "Of Essay Writing." With this essay, later rejected, Hume purported to launch his career as popular-appeal essayist by serving as a "kind of ambassador" from the "learned" (masculine) to the "conversible" (feminine) worlds. These two "worlds" would then collaborate as equals, if not under female
"sovereignty," in the comprehensive praxis of true philosophy. Does this empowerment in "Of Essay Writing" imply a restoration of fertility to both Hume and his women, the "sovereigns of conversation"? Critics, it seems, have been unable to agree on this question of (to put things literally) whether or not Hume was "serious" when in "Of Essay Writing" he established his learned/conversible world model, what Ralph Pomeroy has taken seriously enough to term the "integrative principle . . . basis of a rhetorical program" for the essays in general (394). It is likely that critical ambivalence responds to Hume's proposal that women rule at least one-half of this androgynous kingdom, a characterization that must surely be perceived in intention as literary instead of literal.

Christensen's focus on Hume's early-career symbolic castration makes a case for the ultimate anti-patriarchal gesture which nonetheless continues to privilege masculine authority. Evaluating Hume's taking-up of "the example of the female" in his post-Treatise literary effort, Christensen declares, "Only the male can choose to castrate himself, an interpretation or discovery of authority that defines an image of strength and designs a reading and a reader. Power is either direct and barbarously phallic, or it is polite and a function of self-castration" (98). Predicated as the Enlightenment (and therefore modernity itself) is on "polite society," this latter form of power (as discourse) must have succeeded barbaric phallicism in a "decently genteel" coup d'état, a soft revolution. By feminizing himself--excising aggressive controversy and philosophical criticism from his text--Hume could acquire the distinctively modern power of the man of letters: the power to sell books to a literature-hungry public. The feminized "literary," then, proves a castrating (as well as barren) bitch--but a polite, erudite and seductively profitable one.

The trick is, the aggressive, critical philosopher's power is never lost or given up; the phallus is only veiled or disguised, or temporarily displaced: "The generous male alleviates his natural superiority by a 'complaisance' 'studied' in the example of
the female whom in his gallantry he seeks to please. Male superiority is not denied, but the appearance of superiority is regarded as a 'breach of decency,' to be avoided like any other 'peculiarity of manner' (98). Borrowing phrases here from Hume's retained essay, "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," Christensen emphasizes the paradoxical nature of this modern form of criticism: its "masculine" authority derives from its "feminine" "complaisancy," its delivery in a form palatable and therefore desirable to the general public in a new age of mass literacy. That crucial original excision, "Of Miracles," would reappear in 1748 as Section X of An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding, the philosophical work which Hume, once and for all repudiating the Treatise, begged to be "alone regarded as containing his philosophical sentiments and principles" ("Advertisement"). This re-appearance of the phallus might be taken as emblematic of Hume's late-career realignment with patriarchy, the philosophical muscle which, during a courtship phase, gallantly and profitably curtained itself behind polite society. (This realignment will be taken up as a problem and considered in further examples in Chapter Five here.) The Enquiries appear then not as a feminization, but as a domestication of philosophy, the restoration of a properly patriarchal home where the husband (philosophy) eclipses and dominates the nonetheless essential presence of the wife (popular appeal, the literary, the "easy and obvious"). After the pleasures and playful role-reversals of courtship inevitably come the rigors and political realities of marriage.

The association of the eighteenth-century "general reader" and the feminine is shared by recent Hume critics spotlighted in the present study: Christensen, M. A. Box, Norah Smith. In light of this association the essays, but especially the "woman-appeal" (because of their alleged deliberate "Addisonian" crafting as a seduction strategy) essays must not only be excavated from their critical oblivion, but must be foregrounded as epistemologically central in Hume's authorial development. "Feminine" or literary in subject matter, style and spirit, these essays also feature,
although disguised or "veiled," philosophical critiques of patriarchy's cherished keystones: marriage, the double standard, suppression of female education, accumulation of wealth, invidious power distinctions, and polite society itself. In other words, disguised as a "woman," Hume retains his philosophical authority—and, strikingly, turns it upon the hegemony enabling that authority.

These rejected-essay critiques take a philosophical path through convention; that is, they self-consciously attend to the conventional or artificial nature of the phenomena they describe. While it is possible, following a certain discursive vein, to read these essays as reifications of patriarchal convention, the presence of anti-patriarchal elements within them can be ascertained by a certain mode of reader attention—a philosophical attention which for the case of the essays, and especially the rejected essays, I attempt to define as "reading as-a-woman." I base this definition at least in part on a particularly modern theory, that as a "marginalized" reader a woman has a certain freedom to operate outside of the conventional frames of a text or critical canon. Already denied "canonical" epistemological authority, she can rely on other strategies, instincts and responses in her reading. Or, feeling that she has little to lose ("barren"), she might simply rebel and arming herself with what she has managed to gain within patriarchy, purposively seek out subversive possibilities. In the case of Hume's career and for the essays, the female reader is called to the fore both literally and metaphorically; this is obvious even if one reads her presence there as a function of patriarchal convention; for example, what Swift referring to the Addisonian popular press called "fair-sexing it."

And, in Humean terms, her marginalization in a certain optimistic light might correspond to the position of the true philosopher, who in refusing to foreclose the inquiry finds himself exhilarated outside the bounds of convention, able to comprehend the figure as a structure—and also to play around in the ground. In a position both within and outside of patriarchy, "she" alone can work this way. But as the opening
paragraphs of this chapter propose, "Woman" in Western culture proves perpetually suppressed as figure or object-ified as structure, while at the same time elevated epistemologically as ground of all movement in her world. Reading herself in this ontological dualism, a woman may be able to see the mechanics of her oppression and the reason things should be otherwise (in other words, the logical inconsistency of the dualism)--but she may not be able clearly to envision a resolution point. Examining Hume's position on "chastity and modesty," one philosopher finds a similar impotent epistemological privileging of the female in Hume's system, a "world" which for certain reasons explicated in the article, "is a paradoxical world . . . in which only women are psychologically equipped to have both a Humean sex-neutral general idea of man [i.e., to understand "human nature"] and disjointed ideas of woman and man, while simultaneously being psychologically prevented from seeing the contradiction between the two" (Bar-On 375). The obstacle to the woman reader's recognition of "contradiction" in her dual image can be seen, philosophically, as a tall order: she must somehow manage to transcend not only figure but also ground--both being patriarchally predicated.

By the Treatise's failure freed to move outside of the academic "philosophical" frame, and aware of the conventional parameters of the common-life social realm he then entered, Hume found a new freedom as essayist. We will ask whether this new freedom entailed a certain escape from patriarchy as figure and ground--or whether the essays remain largely faithful to the system. Reversing "prior assumptions" (by traditional academe) about Hume's contribution, by proclaiming the philosophical and popular richness of these texts, Pomeroy deems the essayist Hume, "the true Hume" (387), a position I as a woman reader find appealing for reasons to be proposed and examined here. Failure in patriarchy pushed Hume into becoming a "woman," or, ultimately, into bisexuality--a possible resolution point as the appropriately gendered
entity for the practice of "true philosophy." Perhaps the only way out is a calculated entry back in, in a theatrical performance (as androgyne) of the system itself.

Christensen's castration metaphor does, ironically, prove epistemologically fertile, in that it dramatizes—and therefore (literally) brings to light—the logical paradox of Hume's essay career: that his essays simultaneously represent a disempowerment (in philosophy, the masculine) and an empowerment (in common life, the feminine). But as a castrated and therefore disempowered man, Hume becomes empowered (because liberated, en-lightened of a political burden) as a philosopher who finds himself free critically to explore the ideology motivating such violence as "castration." But Christensen's model becomes problematical in two obvious ways. First, at his prompting we must recognize that Hume's castration was not final or complete, but was merely a theatrical gesture, a disguise. That detached but still possessed phallus wanders surreptitiously behind our thesis of "feminine" critical empowerment; significantly complicating (but unable to cancel) this subversive thesis, Hume's phallus makes reading-as-a-woman exciting but very anxious. Is it androgyny?—or, to borrow Elaine Showalter's phrase (149), a convenient "cross-dressing?"

On a more prosaic level, the castration model de-naturalizes Hume's essay foray into common life; that is, it makes of "a characteristic Enlightenment aim: the circulation of ideas" within the broadest possible audience which certainly included women (Pomeroy 394), a function of the modern history of psychoanalysis instead of a predictable eighteenth-century belletristic strategy understandable within and by its own historical situation. It is hindsight which informs us that the eighteenth-century turn to the feminine, in a new capitalization on increased female literacy, proved at least as much a deadly trap for female identity as an empowerment channel for the woman reader. Although these two models, the psychoanalytic and the social/historical, are not mutually exclusive, the former (castration) seems here, inevitably, to work to the
detriment of the feminine. It does so by either overtly or more deceptively downplaying—or even preempting—the possibility of women's active implication as reading subjects of the essays, for the sake of casting "the female" symbolically as straight man in Oedipal comedy. Mary Jacobus, pointing to "the adversarial relation between rival theorists," employs Freudian models for her own feminist politics: "Women figure conveniently as mirrors for acts of narcissistic self-completion on the part of some male theorists. . . . The shutting-up of a female 'victim' can open theoretical discourse." "Female desire," a character's in the text or the reader's, "is impossible except as a mimetic reflection of male desire" (136). We might indeed note Christensen's accounts of the "sympathetic" readings of women like Mme Dupre or Mme de St. Maur, "whose attention is held completely [by Hume] and who finds what she should find, an opinion of herself higher than she had ever held before. The response of such a reader is merely the token she exchanges in grateful payment for that access of vanity" (112) (emphasis added). It is, in fact, difficult to locate "Christensen," as it is often difficult to pin down "Hume," in such as the following:

Power is either direct and barbarously phallic, or it is polite and a function of self-castration. Under either dispensation the female (reader), who is assigned her exemplary status, has no power. She has had done to her what the gallant (author) does to himself. The woman's inability to cut off any noble part removes her from any authority: even more, it virtually removes her from any embodiment. She is the idea that induces the male and as idea can make neither choices nor demands; indeed, she can never be anything but a creature of pride or vanity who is pleased to gaze at her image mirrored in the softened figure of the male. (98-99)

Christensen continues, "This imagined incapacity of the female allows Hume's casual adoption of the monarchical court as his model of civility." Who "imagine[s]" this
"incapacity"--Hume, Christensen, Freud, someone/thing else? Perhaps this "imaginier" is the same entity by which Hume finds himself "seduced into raillery" in "Of the Study of History," within a system which conventionally requires certain epistemological models, frames, departure points--all relying upon woman's centrality yet silence, inferiority. (We can recall as well Bat-Ami Bar-On's passive elision of agency, that Humean woman is "being psychologically prevented" from understanding fully the implications of her situation.) Denied the privilege of an original identity or act, woman must only mirror her society's already-in-place model of her.

Denied the dissemination of the Treatise's "original" philosophy, by a rejecting learned readership (those who should be capable of comprehending and celebrating "originality"), Hume found himself forced to mirror a society seduceable primarily by "easy and obvious" means. Thus, a castration of the "accurate and abstruse" (the very adjectives have a virile ring) proved necessary for the effeminate seduction of polite society, that is, the general readership (significantly including, if not represented by, women) of a newly literate class.

It is very difficult for the woman critic to proceed confidently with the terms of Christensen's castration model--unless she has been able to develop an awareness of both the model's universality (ground) and its historicity (figure). Whether Hume's, Christensen's, or Freud's representation, or her own internalization, this model in modern form epitomizes patriarchal rejecting readership. Even in light of metaphors of embracing feminine universes, "woman" as "true philosopher," or unifying symbol of "sympathy," Hume's woman reader, eighteenth-century or present, works always under a shadow (if not sentence) of doom. The eighteenth-century female reader was formally and institutionally excluded from the epistemological power centers of her culture and, as "reader," may indeed have been entirely object-ified, "sacrificed to male bonding," as Mary Jacobus puts it, in the republic of letters. Her presence as both character in and reader of texts may have occurred primarily as patriarchal
reification, a symbolic and/or economic (eg. the popular presses) service to ruling interest. Whether Hume worked against or participated in this axiomatic denial of female reader subjectivity is under consideration here.

But Hume's 1990's reader, empowered with feminist awareness and theoretical models, must still feel no small anxiety about the fate of her reading, in the light of centuries of rejecting readership (especially within the modern disciplinary boundaries of "philosophy"). As we will see in the case of Norah Smith, women reading Hume seem to face a double bind: how to do a confident reading of "rejected" essays, for example, while responding to the woman-appeal of those texts--including those "feminine" features insulted, despised and rejected by the critical tradition? How to do this without validating essentialist judgments? How to do this without slipping into manliness, immasculation, for the sake of powerful criticism? The double bind in this case involves feeling confident, as a woman critic, in a patriarchally-decreed void of "rejection." A women reader may feel, as I did, haunted by both Hume's eighteenth-century woman reader's silence (except for such as what Christensen points out as the embarrassingly "feminine"--passionate, hyperbolic, coy--effusions of such as the Comtesse de Boufflers, Hume's longtime correspondent and perhaps sometimes "lover") and her own 1990s anxieties about critical power.

Reading as a woman, reading Hume, I feel more powerful leaving behind "castration," however useful it may be, and assuming myself an active female reading subject with a straightforward purpose: the description of anti-patriarchal moments in the essays. This inquiry will require the invoking of patriarchal models by which to compare these suspected anti-patriarchal moments, and is, deliberately, a modern woman's reading: one supported by a modern awareness, translated into theoretical models, of woman's paradoxical situation within and without patriarchy. My data for the delineations of these patriarchal models derive from a seamless combination of scholarship and experience as a woman in patriarchy. I propose a connection between
my own and Hume's reading of culture, where "The masculinity inscribed in the text—a male voice roused to life in the reading, in addition to any overt textual strategies—triggers the female reader's deep-seated inclination to adapt herself to the male viewpoint" (Schweickart and Flynn xix)—and then, I will add for Hume's case, to resist, in a studied subversion, that same viewpoint. My own readings of the essays may tend to mirror Hume's own dialectic of capitulation and resistance, with the resulting text struggling for balance/peacefully smug in irony.

Any conjecture about the possibility of the eighteenth-century woman reader's sensitivity to anti-patriarchalism in Hume, must be launched from experiential grounds. Especially in the case of the grand patriarchal institutions—government, religion, marriage, property ownership—I assume to share much experience with Hume's contemporary female reader; because patriarchal history has remained fairly consistent in terms of "the process by which women's experience is made conscious, articulated, and ... constructed." Tania Modleski has interrogated influential models of feminist critical empowerment (Kolodny, Showalter, Greenberg) and has focused on the particularly feminist problem of coming to power from a tradition of powerlessness. She locates "a typically feminine reluctance to admit to the desire for power" (130), while asserting that "power" is what the critical enterprise is about and must be reckoned with. Bluntly asking, "Since when have women been granted the power of interpretation or our readings accorded the status of interpretive power by the male critical establishment" (127), Modleski insists that the feminist critic's/woman reader's burden is to come to power in some effective way: "The ultimate goal of feminist criticism and theory is female empowerment" (136). Our ambivalency over the realization of this goal remains a late twentieth-century analog to the eighteenth-century woman's literal legal and institutional powerlessness.

Modleski's foregrounding of female critical trouble informs me especially here, as I must wrangle with anxieties of critical self-empowerment, questions about
eighteenth-century female reader power, Hume's own failures and successes at empowerment in contexts differently gendered, and my desire to empower the body of Hume's woman-appeal essays—as Modleski describes her concern to empower female readers, to "rescue them from the oblivion to which some critics would consign them" (136). For Hume's case I have located "some critics" as the patriarchal critical tradition of reading as-a-man, of rejecting any woman-appeal occurring either as "feminism" or as addresses to the real lives of women as human subjects in whatever ideological context. I would also include, peripherally, in this tradition those critics who work freely from a symbolization or metaphorization of "woman" with little attention to her historical grounding.

Starting with two retained essays and broad, speculative questions, we will move on to two marginal rejected essays. These latter two, "Of Essay Writing" and "Of the Study of History," I think of as marginal rejects, because they are topically "political" or public in the conventional (that is, patriarchal) sense, and may fairly easily be read conventionally by denying certain features of Hume's argument while channeling one's impressions along certain predictable (as misogynist) lines. Then, in Chapter Two, "Refusing the Androgyna," we will look at the more problematical—because more purposively "feminine" in style and subject matter—"Of Love and Marriage," and "Of Moral Prejudice." For Chapter Two, we will adopt our own metaphor to flesh-out the inquiry, one which assumes woman as active subject and object in text and social context conceived of as "family." This active feminine subjectivity in the rejected essays replicates the position of woman in the evolving bourgeois family, where her very "authority" ultimately proved to be a serious threat to her subjectivity within the larger society. Within the retained texts, the "woman" (as woman-appeal text) finds herself already domesticated, surrounded, suppressed by discourses of power as knowledge and political authority; yet, her presence there, if understood in the system as a whole, proves the origin and power source of that
system. The woman reader's task, it seems, must be to remain aware, at each step, of the within/without implications of her reading: how her reading marks both her indoctrination and anxieties within patriarchy, and her attempt either to locate an "outside" and map out politics from that relative freedom, or to tap her power potential from her position within. Like most women's work, such critical double duty proves an exhausting but perpetual necessity.

A look at two retained essays and some speculative comments suggesting Hume's foundational anti-patriarchalism will set up an epistemological backdrop for a detailed analysis of four rejected essays. Hume's views on religion and his political philosophy have attracted volumes of dissenting scholarly commentary. Looking at the retained "Of the Original Contract" and "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," I wish to start with the question: Can a true philosopher be a patriarchalist, and if not, at what cost? Given his philosophical opposition to organized Christianity (and religion in general), and his scorn for metaphysical theories of human society, can we find in Hume an opponent of patriarchy--and therefore, philosophically, an anti-sexist? What can we make of the appositive in this sardonic declaration against the "rigors" of public authority: "I believe I shall write no more History; but proceed directly to attack the Lord's Prayer & the Ten Commandments & the single Cat[echism]; and to recommend Suicide & Adultery" (New Letters 43)? Finally, were his anti-patriarchal views kept in check, confined to private (epistolary) outbursts or ironic (philosophy veiled as literature) critiques, only by an anticipated public disapprobation, the force of which Hume had learned at a high price with his "deadborn" Treatise?

In "Of the Original Contract" Hume describes the two political parties' (Whig and Tory) explanations, the "speculative principles" adopted by the two systems, for the origin of human society and government. He precedes his descriptive critique with a caveat: "Each of the factions, into which this nation is divided, has reared up a
fabric of [speculative philosophy], in order to protect and cover that scheme of actions, which it pursues" (EMPL 466). They must do this, because they cannot carry out their political agendas without doing so. The task of the philosopher, who as such cannot take "factionalist" sides, is to mediate between opposing scenarios and help to some workable compromise. Thus in the practice of truth the philosopher might serve the ends of common life, the way humans really live. This will be Hume's intended role as essayist.

The two parties' theories Hume describes are "divine authority" (Tory) and the "original contract" (Whig):

The one party, by tracing up government to the DEITY, endeavour to render it so sacred and inviolate, that it must be little less than sacrilege, however tyrannical it may become, to touch or invade it, in the smallest article. The other party, by founding government altogether on the consent of the PEOPLE, suppose that there is a kind of original contract, by which the subjects have tacitly reserved the power of resisting their sovereign, whenever they find themselves aggrieved by that authority, with which they have, for certain purposes, voluntarily entrusted him. (467)

Throughout the retained essays, Hume the philosopher works through the ground between the extremes represented by these two positions ("Of Passive Obedience," "Idea of a Perfect Commonwealth," "Of Civil Liberty," "Of the Origin of Government," etc.) The type of logical extreme posed by these two parties' speculations, Hume refers to in the Treatise as (bad) philosophers' "idle fiction" (T 494). Both rhetorically and substantively, Hume easily conveys the idleness of the two factions' fictions:

That the DEITY is the ultimate author of all government, will never be denied by any, who admit a general providence, and allow, that all
events in the universe are conducted by an uniform plan, and directed to wise purposes. (466)

The hyperbolic terms of this description ("never," "all," "any") cooperate with the generalizations ("general," "uniform," "wise") in a parodically unempirical, unHumean epistemology. Hume continues to explain, on both logical and empirical grounds, that the very abstract nature of this divine donation ("The same divine superintendent, who, for wise purposes, invested a TITUS or a TRAJAN with authority, did also, for purposes, no doubt, equally wise, though unknown, bestow power on a BORGIA or an ANGRIA") makes it an untrustworthy model for affairs of the real world.

Hume attacks the original contract faction with a similar appeal to reason based on experience:

> If the agreement, by which savage men first associated and conjoined their force, be here meant, this is acknowledged to be real; but being so ancient, and being obliterated by a thousand changes of government and princes, it cannot now be supposed to retain any authority. If we would say any thing to this purposes, we must assert, that every particular government . . . was, at first, founded on consent and a voluntary compact. But besides that this supposes the consent of the fathers to bind the children, even to the most remote generations (which republican writers will never allow) . . . it is not justified by history or experience, in any age or country of the world. (471)

Hume points here to the fact that both factions derive from the same root: patriarchalism, which presupposes the original authority of God over Adam, the first son, and the legacy of this paternal authority through Adam. Both Hume's celebrated agnosticism and his philosophical location of origins in an inexplicable bedrock of "human nature"—of which we can only know anything by observing human convention-
would lead him to reject patriarchalism, a divine and therefore fictional model, for a human, scientific one; Gordon Schochet insists:

David Hume found the beginnings of political authority in the primitive kinship group, but his purpose was not to prove that government arose from either a patriarchal right or a primeval contract. Hume intended to demonstrate that neither account was meaningful and that political societies were founded upon natural human sentiment and the need for coercive education that would teach men the social utility of justice and obedience. His patriarchalism was purely anthropological. (64 )

"A theory of this kind [as the original contract]," asserts Hume at "OCS"'s conclusion, "leads to paradoxes, repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind, and to the practice and opinion of all nations and all ages" (EMPL 486). Although in this essay Hume has never offered the case of women and the rather moot question of their degree of consent in civil society, one might readily see by experience and observation that this half of society's consent means and has meant little in the plan of government and law. Or, we might translate one of Hume's examples into the case of woman in patriarchy:

Can we seriously say, that a poor peasant or artizan [or woman] has a free choice to leave his country [marriage], when he knows no foreign language or manners, and lives from day to day, by the small wages which he acquires? We may as well assert, that a man, by remaining in a vessel, freely consents to the dominion of the master; though he was carried on board while asleep, and must leap into the ocean, and perish, the moment he leaves her. (475)

We might, by the same terms, point to the situation of eighteenth-century women in marriage; by both law and social agreement, very little public opportunity of any respectability existed for a woman who failed to marry. Another of Hume's empirical
observations applies (as only a slight exaggeration) to a woman’s experience in marriage as a social and economic institution, imposed by both Divine and earthly father: "Almost all the governments [marriages], which exist at present, or of which there remains any record in story, have been founded originally, either on usurpation or conquest, or both, without any pretense of a fair consent, or voluntary subjection" (471).

Hume’s dismantling of divine origin and original contract leaves only the possibility that man’s laws and contracts are entirely of his own making, and either at practical motivation or by the imposition of force. Because of a "weakness... incurable in human nature," that man is easily "seduced from his great and important, but distant interests [such as civil society in general], by the allurement of present, though often very frivolous temptations," man must come up with the "palliative" of government, based on "OBSEDIENCE... a new duty which must be invented to support that of JUSTICE" (EMPL: "Of the Origin of Government" 39). Historically "obedience" has had a special, because absolute meaning for women, even in so-called "free" societies. We shall see here in Chapter Three, how Hume explicated this theory the most clearly for the case of women’s subjugation to patriarchy by the artificial and exaggerated rules of "chastity and modesty," instituted by men to promulgate and protect, by guaranteeing paternity within a nuclear family setting, their rule through property possession and private ownership. Hume explains in the Treatise, in the section "Of the origin of justice and property," how female obedience to these rules, of paramount importance to the regulation of society, forms the foundational part of education:

As publick praise and blame encrease our esteem for justice; so private education and instruction contribute to the same effect... For these reasons [parents] are induc’d to inculcate on their children, from their earliest infancy, the principles of probity, and teach them to regard the
observance of these rules, by which society is maintain'd, as worthy and honourable, and their violation as base and infamous. (T 501)

Different "principles of probity" apply to the sexes; Hume is careful to explain that a biological difference—that women can be absolutely, immediately sure that their offspring is "theirs," while men cannot—prompts this distinction: "From this trivial and anatomical observation is deriv'd that vast difference betwixt the education and duties of the two sexes" (T 571). Consequently a girl must learn that "reputation" will be as sure a check to her "weakness" as any constitutional laws or institutional impositions might ever be; the worst possible transgression necessitates the most pervasive and sensitive possible network of checks. Hume's best example of the conventionality, as opposed to the metaphysicality, of human society's foundations he gave in the Treatise for the case of women's subjugation and its origin from "education, from the voluntary conventions of men, and from the interest of society."10

In the middle of another retained essay, "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," Hume devotes several pages to the goals and purposes of gendered education, in a discussion of gallantry in polite society. This essay begins very philosophically, that is, posing a general question about "distinguishing between chance and causes;" Hume will attempt to prove how "What depends upon a few persons is, in a great measure, to be ascribed to chance, or secret and unknown causes: What arises from a great number, may often be accounted for by determinate and known causes" (EMPL 112). Although the genius which inspires artistic and scientific progress may be rare and more due to "chance," due to the intensity of its "passion" and "delicacy," Hume also finds a case for its more general—and therefore generalizable, knowable—foundation: "It is impossible but a share of the same spirit and genius must be antecedently diffused throughout the people among whom [such geniuses] arise," in order that "genius" might be recognized as such by the people. This possibility of
sharing genius arises, it would seem, as a result of "sympathy," a natural tendency to mutual feeling among all human creatures. While natural, this sympathy is not "divine": the inspiration of genius "only runs along the earth; is caught from one breast to another; and burns brightest, where the materials are best prepared, and most happily disposed" (114).

With these introductory premises in mind, we might fairly easily understand Hume's incorporation of a discussion of gallantry within this philosophical, erudite text; "politeness" makes possible an "enlightened" society, by keeping in play certain inviolable but tacit laws of conduct within an otherwise "free" society. And these laws had their source in the social relationship between the sexes; this intercourse was the eighteenth-century model for the larger schema of relationships within human society. Gallantry represented the careful regulation of social "materials," and stabilized culture by sublimating the more savage natural instincts thus allowing the dissemination of ideas via the "calm passions" of reason and taste.

Zeroing in on Hume's tossing-out of the word "digression" at the close of his gallantry commentary ("But, to return from this digression, I shall advance ... a fourth observation on this subject, of the rise and progress etc." (134)), M. A. Box finds in this term reason enough to isolate the gallantry passage as a feminine anomaly within a masculine text: "In essays preponderantly of erudition [Hume] manages to include something calculated to hold or retrieve the attentions of the ladies, as when in 'Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Science" he digresses to discuss gallantry" (120-21). Box would deny any "erudite" significance to what he sees as a purely digressive text; but in doing so, he must overlook the fact of the importance of gallantry as a foundational model for Hume's society. Box's quick decision on the primacy of the term "digression" reflects as well a patriarchal axiom, that any appeal to the woman must be a sinking in prose, a discursive shift to the "easy and obvious," or at the least a mere device, an *entremet*, within a virile, substantive program. It is
difficult to imagine how that which is deemed marginal, "digressive," might rule at the epistemological center of culture.

A serious justification of Hume's gallantry discussion in "ORPAS" does in fact prove difficult for a reader alert to lapses, paradoxes and ironies in the Humean approach; and, this difficulty may be conceived of as Hume's problem with the belief within his own system in any kind of natural superiority of man over woman. What is superior in one system may prove inferior in another. Hume describes a "natural" human condition which gallantry must supercede, on the belief in "education" and "the interest of society":

As nature has given man the superiority above woman, by endowing him with greater strength both of mind and body; it is his part to alleviate that superiority, as much as possible, by the generosity of his behaviour, and by a studied deference and complaisance for all her inclinations and opinions. Barbarous nations display this superiority, by reducing their females to the most abject slavery; by confining them, by beating them, by selling them, by killing them. But the male sex, among a polite people, discover their authority in a more generous, though not a less evident manner; by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and, in a word, by gallantry. (133)

Many inconsistencies disturb this passage. Taking Hume's comparison quite literally, Jerome Christensen apparently does not see these glitches; he studies this passage for its foregrounding of the uniquely male power of self-interpretation and definition (98). Christine Battersby, choosing not to respond to these, cites this passage as emblematic of Hume's "sexism;" such passages pointing to the "inferiority" of women "put Hume's occasional favorable comments on women in an equivocal light" (304). I would like to point out inconsistencies and problems here which, even if we read Hume at a "sexist"
face value, at the very least must raise questions about his possible blindness to his own bad logic.

The first sentence above does unquestionably assert man's "superiority above woman" in "strength" both of body and mind. But how would Hume really have assessed such advantage? One might well demand of the philosopher here: by what standard(s) do you judge bodily and mental strength? While "natural" bodily strength superiority might well be proven empirically—that is, by literal, hands-on experience—mental superiority cannot be proven except by recourse to conventions and institutions; such "proof" would constitute a kind of circular logic, as those conventions and institutions have in fact guaranteed the mental "inferiority" of women—a point Hume works from in the rejected "Of the Study of History." So, while physical strength superiority might be ascertained as an actual sense impression, mental superiority must be judged by cognition and thus represent a human, historical decision more than a phenomenal or brute fact (such as the experience of pain, pressure, etc.). While it is true that both the experience of physical sensation and the cognition of mental worth entail "reflection," I wish here to differentiate these reflective levels by virtue of their varying degree of complexity as a function of language: "mental" acts can be perceived, that is to say understood, only within the mediate realm of language.

A second difficulty lies in the nature of mental "superiority." Why must it be a man's "part to alleviate that superiority"? Why not simply maintain and utilize power? Because, a claim to self-superiority threatens to slip into "avidity," that "selfish love of gain" which, as a "state of nature" remaining incorporated in human nature, "is insatiable, perpetual, universal, and directly destructive of society" (T 492). Hume has made the point philosophically, in the midst of "ORPAS"'s digression, earlier in the same paragraph:

Whenever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw
the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of sentiments different from those to which they naturally incline. Thus, as we are commonly proud and selfish, and apt to assume the preference above others, a polite man learns to behave with deference towards his companions, and to yield the superiority to them in all the common incidents of society . . . Gallantry is nothing but an instance of the same generous attention. (EMPL 132)

"Gallantry," then, follows the same philosophical necessity as does any other encounter between potentially savage beings, even between two equal men, in a society that would be civilized. The shade of difference lies in the conventionally-established judgment of "natural" female inferiority, making it is easier to set up an elaborate yet standardized set of rules, definable as "gallantry," governing the male-female encounter.

But avidity always threatens to, and in fact often does, break loose and wreak havoc upon civilization. "Barbarous nations" prove this fragility in "human nature" every day, especially in their treatment of women. The curiosity in the second sentence above (133) appears first in the contiguity of the terms "barbarous" and "superiority." Here, Hume must refer to physical strength superiority alone; because, how could enslaving, confining, beating, selling and killing women ever reflect mental "superiority"? Hume must recognize this problem, because in the third sentence above (133), the term "superiority" slips over to "authority": "But the male sex, among a polite people, discover their authority in a more generous, though not a less evident manner; by civility, by respect, by complaisance, and in a word, by gallantry." Hume thereby implies the synonymity, in a causal relationship, of the terms "authority" and "superiority" within his system. Between sentences two and three he sets up for the polite reader an antithesis, opposing terms of savagery (inferior) to terms of civility (superior), and resolves this antithesis in the third term, "authority." Gallantry,
authored by patriarchy to preserve its stability from the smallest unit (the man-woman encounter) up, practices an authority veiled by the author, as Jerome Christensen argues, out of "complaisance" to the female. This convention masks a savagery always ready and able to break loose and wreak havoc: avidity coupled to superior physical strength or, in the case of women, a "tenderness" and "weakness" inculcated by bad education and entailing a tendency to heightened passions and therefore, to fatal (to patriarchy) sexual wanderlust. Hume concludes his characterization of the masquerade with a very anxious rhetoric:

What better school for manners, than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavour to please must insensibly polish the mind, where the example of the female softness and modesty must communicate itself to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that sex puts every one on his guard, lest he give offense by any breach of decency? (134)

Note that where Jerome Christensen isolates the phrase, "the example of the female," the actual example-objects of Hume's phrase prove to be "female softness and modesty." The motivating agency of this tense scenario originates in patriarchal decree, not in any a priori female "incapacity." The legal modals (must, lest), the absolutes (what better, any breach), the insecurity (endeavour, guard) signal the strained artificiality of the gallant posture. And, Hume has given just cause for nervousness at the very beginning of his gallantry discussion, when he has most un-empirically universalized the relationship between the sexes for all living creatures: "Nature has implanted in all living creatures an affection between the sexes, which, even in the fiercest and most rapacious animals . . begets a friendship and mutual sympathy, which runs through the whole tenor of their lives" (131). Today we hear that such is true of swans; of which species was Hume thinking? Such lapses, uncharacteristic of the "philosopher" Hume, force the reader to a decision, which might
be characterized thus: he is either serious and straightforward (universalist, erroneous, sexist), or he is ironic (critical, philosophical, even feminist).

A third possibility, dialectical resolution, comes to mind: Hume may be using the same text to appeal simultaneously to two opposing ideologies, which we can call in Humean terms the "common" vs. the "philosophical," or in modern terms the "status quo" vs. the "subversive." In another retained essay, "Of Polygamy and Divorces" ("OPD," the subject of Chapters Three, Four and part of Five here), Hume also places a female subject in the interior, or at the center, of a masculine, erudite frame. This gendered relationship characterizing the essay establishes, as in the case of "ORPAS," dual channels for reader response: first, a conventional isolation of the female as a mere popular-appeal device or digression; but second, a philosophical inquiry, in light of not only the rhetorical configurations of but also certain key elements shared by the "feminine" and "masculine" texts. Such a gendered essay structure may mirror the polite world of the salon, manifesting the androgyna as masculine-feminine symbiosis (learned and conversible commingled across gender boundaries), or as artificially- and superficially-fused disparate elements perpetually subject to strain and breakdown into hierarchical fragments—or as both, depending on the observer's will and inclination.

We will explore in detail here in Chapter Five how Hume manages to domesticate the potentially subversive female at the center of "OPD" and will define a "politics of retention" for a certain type of Humean woman-appeal essay. But since the subject of this chapter is anti-patriarchal strains in the essays, I will just mention Hume's domesticating strategies at the end of the gallantry section of "ORPAS." We have already looked at his introduction of the "digression" tag; this is an easy way to dismiss the importance of a text in a canon which insists on the linear progress of meaningful argument. (Swift's Tale of a Tub and Sterne's Tristram Shandy spring to mind as two prominent examples of eighteenth-century parody of the linearity principle.) But as Steven Burns reminds us, "It is a hermeneutic technique of some
importance for the understanding of Hume to be watchful for irony" (421). This may be especially true for the essays, where, as we have seen, Hume came to terms with the defeat of his philosophy by moving it into a bisexual arena--the public, social world--a dangerous place for Western philosophers, a need for protective devices all around.

Hume employs another cover when he segues back into the linear flow of the "rise and progress" argument by re-placing the gallantry discussion into a typical comparison between the ancients and moderns regarding relative degrees of "refinement" and manners. Hume immediately follows the anxious paragraph cited above ("What better school for manners" etc.) with the following judgment: "Among the ancients, the character of the fair-sex was considered as altogether domestic; nor were they regarded as part of the polite world or of good company." The pernicious result of this uncivil neglect? "This, perhaps, is the true reason why the ancients have not left us one piece of pleasantry that is excellent." As it turns out, one "considerable improvement" brought by gallantry to society, is the fertilization of the "talent for ridicule" (134). This paragraph serves as a foil to the menacing seriousness of the immediately preceding one, and quits the topic leaving a rather vivid impression of Hume's talent as satirist--only, we cannot be completely sure about whom or what is being satirized. We may imagine that Hume here reassures his readers that women's intrusion with any serious intent into the public arena will inevitably occasion a good joke; such jokes might serve to smooth over the anxiety entailed both by gallant society's forced suppression of savage instincts and inculcated propensities, and by the reader's consideration of the domestic realm's centrality to natural and social life, and most significantly, to patriarchal power. The "example of the female," the woman at the text's center, proves powerful and threatening, indeed--a monster at the center of patriarchy's social/political labyrinths. The question of how such a monster came to be created seems to fuel two of Hume's most substantial rejected essays.
In "Of Essay Writing" and "Of The Study of History," Hume brings his woman into the spotlight; as self-conscious woman-appeal essays featuring some gestures toward gender equality, these essays were doomed to eventual rejection by a misogynist critical tradition. Not only did Hume himself strike them from the final edition of his essays, but critics to the present date have found ways to neglect, ridicule or at the least lightly brush-off these texts. These two rejected essays, however, have received more of the scant critical attention given to their lot than the other five (Pomeroy's article on "Of Essay Writing" is the unique text devoted to a single rejected essay); this is surely due in part to their topically political foci, the scholarly disciplines of history and philosophy, as well as to their easy identification, within a certain reader attitude, with the patriarchal status-quo. This identification must, and does, take place at the cost of denying real philosophical "seriousness" on Hume's part in the writing of these two essays. Hume's Victorian literary historians, T. R. Green and T. H. Grose wrote off these rejected essays in a two-page mention in their "History of the Editions;" M. A. Box echoes Green and Grose in pointing out the "journalistic" and therefore necessarily ephemeral quality of the essay project in general. "After the intellectual rigors of the last few years, the writing of a weekly piece might easily have seemed . . . a diverting and potentially remunerative project" (114). This denial might be otherwise worded: "He can't have been 'serious'--he just wrote these to sell books to the literature-hungry, tea-table public."

For the case of the rejected essays, such denial suggests these male critics' deep-rooted anxiety about the patriarchal power legacy. Since these essays call for the provision of a better, non-factional education for women, and a more philosophically gender-egalitarian (if nominally segregated as "learned" and "conversible") society, they must be classified in an insulating judgment as "frivolous," or at least satirical. If serious, they propose agendas threatening, or even fatal, to patriarchal rule. Hume's essayistic "turn," from philosophy to the literary, already implies a more equitable
distribution of the wealth: knowledge as power, disseminated among the "general public." This threat needed to be critically domesticated by a general discrediting of the public's ability effectively to uphold this power in common life. But at least for a short period in intellectual history, "philosophy" deliberately went public.

"Good relations between philosophy and literature, then, are a matter of some importance. Philosophy without tasteful presentation is vitiated for society, and society without philosophy is undiscerning and directionless," concedes M. A. Box (15). That these two equal partners had long been "estranged" necessitated, for the sake of civilization, a reconciliation and even remarriage. Hume had already established that in fact, philosophy absolutely requires "society," where alone data for reasoning can be obtained: "We must . . . glean up our experiments . . . from a cautious observation of human life, and take them as they appear in the common course of the world, by men's behaviour in company, in affairs, and in their pleasures" (T xix). Bringing philosophy into polite company creates the conditions requisite for Hume's lifelong experiment, the investigation of "human nature." As Box states the case, "The idea here is not to trivialize philosophy, but to raise the moral sophistication with which people conduct their daily lives." Today, we might scoff somewhat at the proposal that "moral sophistication" in daily conduct be the first goal of "philosophy." But, at least in Hume's time, "Philosophy that shows people how to get along better is much more valuable than that which squares the circle" (Box 17), a belief we find strong in other eighteenth-century belleslettistic philosophy (eg., Pope's Essay on Man, Dunciad).

Critics have commonly rejected the essays by accusing Hume of writing them for literary fame rather than for more scholarly reasons. Again, this judgment betrays an ahistorical approach: in our time and culture, we have tended to separate cleanly the "famous" and the scholarly, and enjoy indulging in a smug scorn for the popular bestseller list (our contemporary American scorn reflecting more class than gender prejudice). Although Mossner has "disposed of the notion that Hume craved mere
vulgar success," after the Treatise failure he was keenly interested in establishing a broader readership; in fact, as J. V. Price reminds us, "During the time between the publication of the Treatise and the Essays, Moral and Political, Hume was making every effort to establish for himself a literary reputation" (18). This effort had a reasoned motivation closely following the passionate; if the experiment with human nature was to continue and yield fruit, the experimental field had to be fully and broadly established. Ralph Pomeroy rationalizes, within the Humean spirit, that "Fame . . . ought not to be despised by the philosopher. However well- or ill-deserved, it performs a valuable function for him; it puts his ideas to an experiential test by bringing them out of the learned and into the conversible world. But more than that: insofar as the ideas get talked about by posterity, the test continues" (391). The social setting of the salon, with its simultaneous practice of philosophy and entertainment which Hume so enjoyed and admired in France, just may have been the ideal experimental field for him. Biased by a strong hatred of ignorance and superstition ("He never tired of proclaiming . . . his disdain for the ignorance of the masses," asserts Rodney Kilcup in his Introduction to Hume's History of England), and committed to the happy marriage of scholarship and entertainment in "philosophy," Hume would find (if not create, as Christensen proposes) his utopia in polite society as a gender-mixed company of learned and genteel individuals.

"Of Essay Writing" ("OEW"), the introductory venture into his career turn, describes what I call Hume's Utopia, a re-fusing of two artificially and wrongly separated halves of an essential whole. This whole is not a natural but a conventional structure, predicated not first on a gender but a class distinction: "The elegant Part of Mankind, who are not immers'd in the animal Life, but employ themselves in the Operations of the Mind, may be divided into the learned and conversible" (EMPL 533). These two factions represent, as we have seen, the two branches of Hume's philosophy as explicated in the Treatise (Book I, Part IV, section vii and Book III, Part
I, section i in particular) and later differentiated in the Enquiries ("Human Understanding," I, i) as the "accurate and abstruse" and the "easy and obvious." Hume makes it absolutely clear that both models are philosophical and that neither holds dominion over the other. The learned/conversible model is not, then, simply a "facile dichotomy"; such "a cliche of his age" (Pomeroy 391) can be seen as well as an employment of that trope dominating eighteenth-century rhetoric, antithesis: the dialectically poised binary opposition which dominates eighteenth-century belles lettres. An upset in the "balance of power" disrupts the practice of true philosophy. "The Separation of the Learned from the conversible World seem to have been the great Defect of the last Age," Hume observes, resulting in a frivolous society or public life, and a "chimerical" and "unintelligible" turn in philosophy.

In order to restore both the proper character to each "world" and the balanced interdependency essential to stable society, Hume elects himself a "Kind of Resident or Ambassador from the Dominions of Learning to those of Conversation." He alone will effect this reunion, with "such Essays as these with which I endeavour to entertain the Public." These connective essays are to be little equations for the representation of true philosophy in-process; Hume uses an economic metaphor for the process:

I shall give Intelligence to the Learned of whatever passes in Company, and shall endeavour to import into Company whatever Commodities I find in my native Country proper for their Use and Entertainment. The Balance of Trade we need not be jealous of, nor will there be any Difficulty to preserve it on both Sides. The Materials of this Commerce must chiefly be furnish'd by Conversation and common Life: The manufacturing of them alone belongs to Learning. (535)

Such manufacturing involves a circular process where the learned, supplied by "intelligence" from the conversible, manufacture "commodities" for the formation and nourishment of further "intelligence." Although Mossner insists (and Norah Smith
agrees) that the "balance of trade leaned heavily on the side of the learned world, and the attempt to preserve it was soon dropped" (implying Hume's model a mere rhetorical service to gallantry) (Smith 370), the manufacturing metaphor proves how philosophically this imbalance cannot occur. A rash attribution of banter to Hume's equation, for the sake of preserving the appropriate hierarchies, suggests not only patriarchal anxiety but also the critic's late Capitalist orientation and consequent lack of touch with the production phase of commodification. As Box points out, the learned-conversible interdependency derives as well from a strenuous empiricism: nothing exists except as a configuration or integration of the raw materials, the sense impressions, of experience—a philosophy dependent on the production mode. Hume's "League betwixt the learned and conversible Worlds" proves to be philosophically anti-Cartesian; mind and matter are at the least codeterminant, and questions of hierarchy have no useful or otherwise justifiable place.

Thus far in "OEW" Hume has spoken for a nominally gender-neutral problem, "The Separation of the Learned from the Conversible World." Halfway through the essay, he genders his dualism through a gallant (as stiffly artificial) address to "the Fair Sex, who are the Sovereigns of the Empire of Conversation." His gallant language here also mocks the patriarchal triumvirate—religion, politics, and war:

I approach [these Sovereigns] with a Reverence; and were not my Countrymen, the Learned, a stubborn independent Race of Mortals, extremely jealous of their Liberty, and unaccustom'd to Subjection, I shou'd resign into their fair Hands the sovereign Authority over the Republic of Letters. As the Case stands, my Commission extends no farther, than to desire a League, offensive and defensive, against our common Enemies, against the Enemies of Reason and Beauty. (536-370)
Readers have pointed to "Reverence" as a buzz-word automatically betraying scorn, pointing as it does to a devotional, and therefore superstitious, intention. To the "Learned," Hume attributes raw self-interest and will to dominate, a governance where strong passion eclipses reason. Confronting the bad intellectual habits contracted by each "world" during the pernicious separation, all Hume can do is attempt to compromise difference in the common battle "against the Enemies of Reason and Beauty"--a puzzling and bombastic allegorization worthy of Addison.

M. A. Box decides that "At this point Hume entangles himself in his own figurative language (his literary strengths lay elsewhere)" (537). This lapse into contradiction, strained irony and bombast may serve a more intentional purpose than Box will allow in his judgments of Hume's Addisonian pratfalls. First, we have noted the satire, lurking in the bombastic language, on patriarchal tenets. When we continue into the next paragraph, we find Hume brushing off the previous paragraph's messes and changing mood and style:

To be serious, and to quit the Allusion before it be worn thread-bare, I am of Opinion, that Women, that is, Women of Sense and Education (for to such alone I address myself) are much better judges of all polite Writing than Men of the same Degree of Understanding; and that 'tis a vain Panic, if they be so far terrify'd with the common Ridicule that is levell'd against learned Ladies, as utterly to abandon every Kind of Books and Study to our Sex. Let the Dread of that Ridicule have no other Effect, than to make them conceal their knowledge before Fools, who are not worthy of it, nor of them. (536)

The announced rhetorical turn leaves behind bombast but not gallantry; it does, however, allegedly shift the mood to the "serious." It preserves the address to women readers but purges the absurd metaphor in which that address was tangled up with the
rhetoric of patriarchal factionalism. Having served a certain discursive requirement, Hume is now free to deliver his message to women.

This passage has several potentially patronizing qualifiers--"polite writing," "the same Degree of Understanding"--suggesting a separate standard for the judgment of female reading. But the passage is not without good sense; Hume's proposal that female readers abandon "the Dread of Ridicule" positively attends to a prejudice that moved Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to recommend that if her granddaughter was to have learning, she should hide it like a deformity, and Johnson's observation that "in the female world any acquaintance with books was distinguished only to be censured."

Hume then further qualifies his point, by assuring his "fair Readers" of the grounds for new confidence on their part: "all Men of Sense, who know the world, have a great Deference for their Judgment of such Books as ly within the Compass of their Knowledge, and repose more Confidence in the Delicacy of their Taste, tho' unguided by Rules, than in all the dull Labours of Pedants and Commentators." Here, Hume seems again ambiguous; he may be pointing to the inherent limitations of female readership, or he may be confining his argument to rational boundaries: it is only reasonable to look for good judgment only where there exist the raw materials, empirical data ("compass" indicating a range and not a potential); while an ungendered "delicacy of taste" Hume will later praise in a retained essay ("Of the Delicacy of Taste and Passion") as a general corrective to unruly passion and as the actual first mover of polite society (Box finds that in "ODTP," "the banter is gone," and "there is much in the argument of interest even to aficionados of accurate and abstruse philosophy" (133)). Hume then overdetermines the case in an observation which Christensen situates symbolically within his castration complex, that in France "the Ladies are, in a Manner, the Sovereigns of the learned World, as well as of the conversible." This is an overstatement in that, as Jerome Christensen would have it, this French female authority "is authority only in a manner of speaking;" it is a symbolic "republic which
has all the blessings [delicacy of taste] of a monarchy with none of its terrors [real political power]" being patriarchally denied any authority in religion, politics and law. Hume "converts political hierarchy into theater" and simultaneously "lays claim to a special kind of authority" (99-100) for himself as unique knowledgeable ambassador between England and France, patriarchy and theater, philosophy and literature, male and female. This ambassadorship cannot be taken lightly; "authority" in the new republic of letters, modern Europe, would increasingly come to be understood "as a manner of speaking," as rhetorical manipulation of a commercialized and ever-growing mass audience.

Hume concludes "OEW" with an observation that has offended feminist sensibilities; he confesses that

There is only one Subject, on which I am apt to distrust the Judgment of Females, and that is, concerning Books of Gallantry and Devotion, which they commonly affect ["to be fond or pleased with"] as high flown as possible . . . I mention Gallantry and Devotion as the same Subject, because, in Reality, they become the same when treated in this Manner; and we may observe, that they both depend upon the very same Complexion. As the Fair Sex have a great Share of the tender and amorous Disposition, it perverts their judgment on this Occasion, and makes them be easily affected. (537)

Christine Battersby sees this paragraph as Hume's essentialist judgment of female weakness and deficiency:

All the 'amiable weaknesses' that Hume finds in women can be traced back to the debilitating effects of romantic love or 'amorous gallantries' which open the mind to other powerful passions, in particular, fear, jealousy, revenge, the lust for power and a superstitious belief in God.
It is no wonder that Hume observes, 'Gallantry and Devotion . . . both depend upon the very same Complexion.' (308)

Pulling phrases out of context from "Of the Study of History" to support her argument, Battersby refuses to read on in either essay to discover Hume's identification of a source of female weakness: bad reading. (In fact, she baldly decides, "Hume does not even speculate that this vice ["overly exaggerated concern with love"] may not be 'natural' to woman" (309).) In both essays Hume points to bad reading habits, caused by "dread of ridicule" and other restrictive gender stereotyping, as creating the conditions for the female tendency to "devotion;" while in later texts such as "ORPAS" he exposes the conventional exigencies of "gallantry"--including the creation and perpetuation of weakness and piety in women. Whether as readers or as written texts, women are intellectually nourished on a very thin, conventional fare. Hume recommends, to conclude "OEW," three correctives to this situation: more reading, more egalitarian intellectual exchange with men, and more self-confidence and assertion:

Wou'd the Ladies correct their false Taste in this Particular [their addiction to "Books of Gallantry and Devotion"]; Let them accustom themselves a little more to Books of all Kinds: Let them give Encouragement to Men of Sense and Knowledge to frequent their Company: And finally, let them concur heartily in the Union I have projected betwixt the learned and conversible Worlds. (537)

To call for an end to devotion would be highly impractical, a waste of ink; to call for an end to gallantry would demand toppling the entire social edifice. What Hume can do for women, is to suggest ways for those women who are in the social position to do so ("of Sense and Education") to improve their intellect through experience and their self-esteem through will--even if the stakes prove merely symbolic, as a will to power within a utopian vision of androgyny. His judgments of
the female "Complexion" seem not essentialist but rather focused on accident. (If any "-ist," the judgments are elitist, based on individual potential as a telos of class status.) A woman having the class means to pursue these goals might look toward the learned and conversible symbiosis as a kind of beacon within the prejudice of her own society. She might heed Hume's final admonition, about how she may be received by men in the new scheme: such women "May, perhaps, meet with more Complaisance from their usual Followers than from Men of Learning; but they cannot reasonably expect so sincere an Affection: And, I hope, they will never be guilty of so wrong a Choice, as to sacrifice the Substance to the Shadow." Hume's advice may be practical, as well, for the modern reader who attempts to work through the gallant rhetoric to the argument in "OEW." The effort to join, rather than beat, will pay off in both the pleasure of Hume's "sincere Affection," and an awareness of the sincerity of his partiality for "Learning" as the corrective of all human vices—a partiality which, after all, makes good sense on any level; here we see seduction hot in the service of induction. If Hume's woman reader takes his advice, then she might become Hume's perfect reader: intellectually and socially "sovereign." She will also be all the more willing, and able, to read more Hume. That the payoff is, in any case, a function of male approval makes it difficult for feminist readers to accept; Hume's Utopia is not without its pitfalls. But even in projecting a utopia, Hume elects to work within the given world, in his case one seemingly irrevocably erected on gender and class division and inequality.

In "OEW," we observed a rhetorical movement from the general, to a central "turn," to the woman-appeal specific. In "Of the Study of History" ("OSH"), we find the mirror-reversal of this rhetorical staging: from specific address to the ladies, to "turn" paragraph, to general proposition. In these two essays in particular, Hume seems to be experimenting rhetorically: how simultaneously to effect popular appeal and philosophical message, how to remarry society and philosophy, even and especially
when the two oppose each other. The specific-general divisions and internal "turns"—within the overall address to women readers—indicate either Hume's unease and clumsiness with the mix of philosophy and the female, or a deliberate highlighting of an artificial split and its illogical or pernicious entailments.

Two "factionalist" observations on "OSH" have been made by modern women, Norah Smith and Christine Battersby. Smith, whose reading of Hume's essays will be closely critiqued in Chapter Five, insists upon finding a schizoid division in this essay. As in "OEW," Hume divides "OSH" into two moments, separated by a self-conscious turn-paragraph. As Smith observes, "The essay opens in a light, typically Addisonian vein, concluding with a compliment to the ladies." There is much teasing about women's love of gossip ("secret history" as opposed to "history") and frivolous intellectual habits. Hume has opened the essay in a rather oblique address to the "female readers":

There is nothing which I would recommend more earnestly to my female readers than the study of history, as an occupation, of all others, the best suited both to their sex and education, much more instructive than their ordinary books of amusement, and more entertaining than those serious compositions, which are usually to be found in their closets. (563)

Smith is accurate in her observation, that such could open any "fair-sexing" Spectator paper. In fact, purveyors of didactic literature for women frequently recommended the study of history to them: "No study is so proper to adorn the minds of young ladies, and even to improve their morals, as history," wrote Charles Rollin in 1737.14 In a paper topically interesting to men, Hume immediately pulls in the woman reader as a public relations device. Followed as this introductory paragraph is with the teasing about gossip and such, we settle-in for some Addisonian patronization. But we also note in this paragraph Hume's critique of "amusement" or gallantry, and "seriousness" or devotion—which he finds characterizing women's reading. This critique threading
through the banter opposes the *Spectator* prescription for just such literature for women as will indoctrinate lovely but modest and pious wives. Also, the biological appeal to "female readers" deviates from the inevitable Addisonian social address to "the ladies," or "the fair sex."

Hume interjects, almost halfway into the essay: "But I know not whence it comes, that I have been thus seduced into a kind of raillery against the ladies." The eye-catcher is "seduced": tempted, lead astray by (perhaps false) promises of pleasure and commitment. We might instantly think of the seductions of Mistress Public, where the "allure of a feminine public" leads Hume astray from philosophy and brings him to self-castration for the effeminate service of an intellectually barren readership. This service Hume characterizes as "raillery against the ladies," an impotent activity and a source of confusion for him; how did he get into such a position? "Whence came" that seduction, that demand that the philosopher change discourses, for the worse, for a new and inferior readership?

Hume immediately attempts to solve this mystery, by continuing, "Unless, perhaps, it proceed from the same cause, which makes the person, who is the favourite of the company, be often the object of their good-natured jests and pleasantry." Still, the "cause" goes unnamed, identifiable only by a particular way of treating a "person": making that person an object of meaningless banter in a public double gesture of objectification and belittling. Lest the negativity of such a scenario persist unmitigated, Hume adds, "We are pleased to address ourselves after any manner [surely a dangerously broad implication!], to one who is agreeable to us [the "one" brings this raillery onto "oneself" by appearing, however unintentionally, "agreeable" to the "we"]; and at the same time, presume that nothing will be taken amiss [there is, indeed, something potentially "amiss"] by a person, who is secure of the good opinion and affections of every one present." The "we" retain the power of presumption, assuring the raillery's victim--whose gender Hume carefully elides in his apology,
suggesting a benignly neuter universality—that "we only tease you because we like you." How could a "person" be "secure of the good opinion and affections of every one present"—an empirically untenable prospect—unless the "opinion and affections" are conventionally prescribed and therefore unnatural?

Following this concise anatomy of the perilous artificiality, generalization and even falsehood (the "purring" cattiness) of polite rationalization (a discourse Christine Battersby accurately judges "a product of gallantry rather than of honesty" (304)), Hume again shifts gears:

I shall now proceed to handle my subject more seriously, and shall point out the many advantages which flow from the study of history, and show how well suited it is to every one, but particularly to those who are debarred the severer studies, by the tenderness of their complexion, and the weakness of their education. The advantages found in history seem to be of three kinds, as it amuses the fancy, as it improves the understanding, and as it strengthens virtue. (565) (emphasis mine)

Norah Smith finds what follows this shift in "OSH" to be "normal" for Hume, as opposed to "a manner completely foreign to his way of thinking" which characterized the "raillery." Smith's observation is most useful when taken out of context; that is, apart from the invidious distinction she is with this division actually making between an effeminate, Addisonian Hume (the rejected essays, the literary) and a virile, scholarly Hume (the retained essays, the philosophy). Hume is, evidently, eager to "handle [his] subject more seriously;" but he does not, as Smith implies, change his subject from an address to "the ladies" to something else, like, for example, an address to the men. If we insist on a change, we might decide that Hume returns from a foray into "raillery against the ladies," to "advice to the female readers." We might even imagine that Hume's "recommend[ation] to [his] female readers" is intended to transform a certain conventional object, "ladies," into a more active subject, "female readers." His
recommendation seems, grammatically at least, to point an accusing finger to a mysterious power such as the "seducer" named previously; a power with which he evidently aligns himself as "we" but then marks a sort of possible ideological division in the "I." The essay's division occurs not in readership or subject matter, but within the author himself. The seducer promises pleasure and gain from submission—but Hume cannot, on philosophical grounds, continue to comply.

"Those" who should pay particular attention to Hume's advice have been forbidden more rigorous study, for example philosophy, due to tender complexions ("bodily constitutions") and weak educations; these conditions exist, however, as a result of the ladies' having been debarred such study. The argument proves circular, the passive construction signalling an active but unnamed influence demanding such tenderness and weakness. Although apparently having a stake in finding Hume "sexist," Christine Battersby is nonetheless forced to admit that "he makes several observations that could be used to show that the inferiority [of women] is accidental, and not essential to the feminine make-up" (309). As in Hume's rhetoric, Battersby's elision by passive construction suggests an anxiety in the face of a power, a seductive power which can win one over in spite of one's best critical intentions. Such observations "could be used"—but Battersby will not use them, choosing to submit to a polarizing influence whose best interests lie in opposing her to the philosopher. The 1970's critical market-temptation, to criticize male authors' "sexist" views of women, was just too seductive.

Hume continues, after the turn, to describe the threefold "advantages found in history;" these comprehend ways of knowing corresponding to the three books of the Treatise: "fancy" (passions), understanding, and "virtue" (morals). In the remainder of "OSH" Hume develops his argument inductively, by his own system philosophically evolving each advantage-step: the pleasure in reading history, witnessing its "spectacle," leads us easily to "erudition;" the erudition teaches us how to be wise,
prudent and virtuous—the highest purpose of learning in civilized society. Thus Hume appeals to his female readers in the same philosophical terms he sets up in the philosophical Treatise. He makes his argument in "OSH" by appealing to women's most common experience, by metaphorizing these stages in domestic terms: reading history, we can "observe human society, in its infancy, making the first faint essays towards the arts and sciences;" "we should be forever children in understanding," did we not gain so much knowledge from history; we make "continual additions to [our] stock of knowledge" by such reading. Such domestic metaphorical woman-appeal generally appears in the eighteenth-century popular presses; however, a rash assumption that all such discourse must be read as facile and demeaning privileges a misogynistic interpretation of history: if it concerns women's lives, it must be trivial and degraded. As we shall consider later, a responsible philosopher will see the need to "speak the language" of his intended readership and may see this need readily served by bringing into play literary strategies and cues.

Hume finally cautions, "A woman may behave herself with good manners, and have even some vivacity in her turn of wit; but where her mind is so unfurnished, 'tis impossible her conversation can afford any entertainment to men of sense and reflection." This opinion lacks the sugary paternalistic, patronizing tone of the Tatler and Spectator papers (favorably compared by Smith to the rejected essays); but still suggests Addison, Steele and other contributors in their pointed definitions of the unique purpose of a woman's education: the formation of a man's most distinguishing piece of property, a wife. Hume's insistence here that a woman's capacity to entertain men be one of her chief virtues also appears to echo a society (criticized so strongly by such as Wollstonecraft) which cultivated in women habits of frivolous adornment and pastime for the social or public setting as well.

This observation, however, needs to work through its dialectical alternative: "entertainment" was also a focal dynamic of polite society, a vehicle for the
interchanges of philosophy and common life. While the French salon epitomized this convergence (Dena Goodman sees the salon as "the convergence of female and philosophic ambitions"), "entertainment" served philosophical discourse in clubs, social gatherings and the new journalism in eighteenth-century England. "Entertainment" marked the convergence of public and private discourse and thus represented an epistemological marriage. In the "OSH" caveat above Hume takes the case from a demand for mere ornamentation to a desire for "entertainment;" he activates woman as a participating subject in societal discourse where the "entertainment" of polite conversation among the learned had a strong ethical purpose.

In "OEW" and "OSH" Hume brings men and women together in conversation and mutual intellectual support and thus responds to a great eighteenth-century dread: the failure of conversation, reason and judgment within a mutually supportive society. Writers such as Swift and Pope satirized the breakdown of social discourse into factionalism, self-interest, and incommunicability; likewise, the continued strict segregation of masculine and feminine education and "world" in general must inevitably entail confusion, division and destruction. Political scientist Jean Elshtain, analyzing the "public man/private woman" dualism since Plato, points to the problem of separate male and female "language-worlds" (Wittgenstein's phrase) instituted by gender segregation, intellectual and otherwise. Elshtain quotes St. Augustine from The City of God: "For when men cannot communicate their thoughts to each other, simply because of difference of language, all similarity of their common human nature is of no avail to unite them in fellowship." Following Augustine, Elshtain claims that women historically have had no place to bring their thoughts, certainly no public arena to give them voice . . . When they did speak, it was labeled so much reactive noise, devoid of meaning and significance . . . [Women and men] were separated by social arrangements and practices, ideologies, valuations, and the range and nature of spoken and written
communication itself . . . The results of one sex almost exclusively inhabiting a public sphere and the other sex the private may help explain why so many women and men literally could not (and cannot) 'speak' to one another. (67-8)

I have quoted Elshtain at length here, because I believe her words lend powerful credence to Hume's ambassadorship between "the learned and conversible worlds" and lay bare the evil which Hume purported to redress in this mission. Since "union in fellowship" must be the foundation of a strong marriage, and since such union proves equally important to Hume's moral philosophy, such a separation of male and female "worlds" certainly threatens society at both its private and public roots (this threat on the private front will be the subject of the next chapter here). Hume proposes remedies for the public realm, remedies readily achievable in the form of female education and mutual respect and intellectual exchange in the social intercourse between the sexes. Within Hume's philosophical project, such enlightened and enlightening conversation might well occur even within the acknowledgment of gendered differences of interest, skill and life role. The fact of such difference precisely requires and motivates communication between the sexes, or the sharing of language worlds.

Recall that in the Treatise, Book One, Hume has characterized "philosophy" as the private realm--closeted, alienated, deficient; and "common life" as a public arena of fellowship and entertainment. This inversion of the "public man/private woman" binary --as private philosopher/public woman--suggests his awareness of the dangers of keeping worlds segregated, especially under arbitrary or illogical distinctions. Certainly, Hume recognized as well the traditional binary predicated on woman's inferior education and irrational degree of subjection to public man, a subjection derived from and imposed by male self-interest.

Hume concludes "OSH" with some observations about the errors of self-interest (that passion the strongest, most persistent and most "destructive of society") which
plague the politician, the businessman, and the philosopher. He finally offers, "The writers of history, as well as the readers, are sufficiently interested in the characters and events, to have a lively sentiment of blame or praise; and, at the same time, have no particular interest or concern to pervert their judgment." Here Hume equates in intention (masculine) writers of history with (feminine) readers: passionate motivation coupled with disinterest as non-factionalism. This final assertion, while featuring the gender-neutral "reader," may certainly be thought to refer back to the first sentence's appeal to the "female reader." Beyond this structural reference is an implication within this paragraph, that as women typically "have no particular interest or concern to pervert their judgment," because they are not allowed participation in the public political/institutional arena, they may in fact be the best readers of history—and thus the superior moralists.

Keeping in mind the critics (e.g. Marcil-Lacoste) who claim to have found "sexism" inherent in Hume's philosophical system, Annette Baier, relying on Carol Gilligan's work in moral theory, nonetheless finds there a place for "woman" as superior moralist. "A human heart, as well as human reason, is needed for the understanding of morality, and the heart's responses are to particular persons, not to universal principles of abstract justice" ("Women's... Theorist" 41). These passionate "responses" can, and should, be "corrected" by "general rules" observable in human nature and society; history is thus an ideal textbook for such correction. So is the conversible world, if we accept Baier's summary from the Treatise: "As Hume said, it seems that only a cautious observation of human life, of 'experiments' gleaned as they occur in the 'common course of the world' in people's 'behaviour in company, in affairs, and in their pleasure' can found any empirical science of moral development" (ibid 49). If women can learn to read well enough to pick up Hume's cues, they can find ample justification for self-confidence within his philosophical system. Attempting to resolve the "sexist" Hume, identifiable as the gallant, bantering
Hume of these essays, with the philosophical Hume (as moral theorist), Baier concludes that in the moral context

Hume never judges women inferior. He does call them the "timorous and pious" sex, and that is for him a criticism, but since he ties both of these characteristics with powerlessness, his diagnoses here are of a piece with his more direct discussions of how much power women have. In those discussions [some woman-appeal essays] he is at pains to try to point out not just the subordination of their interests to those of men in the existing institutions (marriage in particular) but also to show women where their power lies, should they want to change the situation. (ibid 53)

This power lies in both the qualities by which they have been essentialized (emotion, sympathy, circumstantial reasoning) and the actual roles they most commonly play within the nuclear family, what Baier calls "care and mutual care." One possibility for reading woman (reading) in Hume, and especially in the two rejected essays discussed above, is the empowerment of women within patriarchy and at least in part on patriarchal terms. In these texts Hume manages both to remain within the system, and to set up the possibility for "correction" from the inside. The ultimate threat to patriarchy would be an internal challenge launched by women from their base enclosure of patriarchy's own terms; such an implied threat would seem to epitomize Humean "remediation" (Christensen's term): a reasonable redress (as opposed to a violent revolution) with the tools and materials of given circumstance and to the service of the greater good.

There seems to be no philosophical reason to believe Hume is not "serious" in "OEW" and "OSH." His propositions, that "learning" and "conversation" are equal partners in philosophy; and that women should educate themselves with better reading, are of a piece with, or at the very least supplement, the "serious" philosophy of the
Treatise and the Enquiries. Of course, a woman reader might naturally desire such concessions to her humanity as can be identified in these propositions. To her, these propositions speak to the central void of her life: her lack of intellectual credibility and respect, not to mention social and political equality, in patriarchy. She might well disagree with such critical observations that "in the apprentice pieces . . . [Hume] propounds the following trivial theses: That learning is a desirable conversational trait . . . that marriages would be happier if spouses did not seek dominance, that it would be good for women to read books of history;" she might not accept that "These rejected essays] are in sharp contrast to the penetrating theses and insights of the political and the retained moral essays" (Box 127). These subjects are not "trivial," but central to one-half the human population if not the whole. The woman reader might elect to bypass or rationalize the bantering, the patronizing, the still-truncated expectations for her mental life which may also be detected in the two rejected essays discussed above—for the sake of the positive good these texts propose for her and thus for society.

Finding ideological compatibility in Hume's essays informs the reader about his or her "passions," as much as such identification discovers anything about Hume's ideas. Here we can find him extracting the good from a "vulgar" convention, while exposing the philosophically bad in that same convention. Or vice versa. While fleeing one patriarchal stance, the self-inflation of factionalism, Hume may alternately appear to support and dismantle particular factions within patriarchy. Rejecting a factionalist conclusion about Hume's alignment with "sexism" or "feminism," I have nonetheless chosen, according to my desire, to note anti-patriarchal notes and measures in several of Hume's essays, retained and rejected.

Patrocinio Schweickart, discussing the "resisting reader" theoretical model, asks a question which haunts my thesis here in light of a general perception of Hume's gender politics: "Why do some . . . demonstrably sexist texts remain appealing even
after they have been subjected to thorough feminist critique?" In the face of hard evidence and the critical conclusions of others, I have persisted in reading anti-patriarchalism in Hume and thus have insisted on a kind of contradiction in Hume's text. I have admitted to anxiety about the dizzying difficulty of working "in and out" of something called the "system," meaning patriarchy. Responding to the above question, Schweickart continues: "The usual answer—that the power of male texts is the power of the false consciousness into which women as well as men have been socialized—oversimplifies the problem and prevents us from comprehending both the force of literature and the complexity of our responses to it." This has been my argument against the "sexist-feminist" polarization, and for the re-fusing of these ideological enemies within a more dialectical relationship, as well as the motivation for my self-critique as woman reader of Hume.

Schweickart proposes an alternative feminist reader response, a "feminist reconsideration of male texts" based (significantly) on a male theorist's, Fredric Jameson's, statement: "The effectively ideological is also at the same time necessarily utopian." This statement accurately, I believe, describes Hume's power to attract the woman reader past and present: Jameson's thesis "implies that the male text draws its power over the female reader from authentic desires, which it rouses" (Schweickart 42). I have stopped short, excising the remainder of Schweickart's thought, "and then harnesses to the process of immasculating." Hume's text does rouse female desire, as a longing for power or at least self-awareness within a system which oppresses her from all sides. But rather than "immasculating" her, that is seducing her to accept "as normal and legitimate a male system of values," Hume's text disrupts the very utopia he sets up, by laying bare the conventional structures—including misogyny—which dictate from the center of this value system. If this disruption exists as a latent possibility in "OEW" and "OSH," it is a more active presence in the marriage essays.
Hume's most paradoxical, and anti-patriarchal, thinking interrogates the nuclear family—the effectively ideological patriarchal utopia: the promise of marriage as a oneness, a spiritual union and equal partnership of two different beings; the lure of "family" as an oasis of peace and stability within a violent state of nature. The next three chapters, "Refusing the Androgyna" and "Scenes From a Marriage" I and II map Hume's assault, launched from diverse perspectives and on many discursive planes, on the institution of marriage: a refusal on a more foundational level of what was gently and reasonably re-fused for the sake of bisexual "polite society," Hume's utopia, in the essays thus far considered.
2.

Refusing the Androgyna

Empiricism, the theory that all knowledge originates in experience, would not seem to translate well into gender politics: witness the familiar case of monogamous marriage. A kneejerk response to the assertion that "all knowledge originates in experience" might well be, "Yes--but WHOSE?" In this and the next chapter we will work through the problem of a woman's "experience" in marriage: a philosophical problem, because in marriage, one person is required to have "knowledge" by another's experience. This is not only a philosophical puzzle, but has been a moral--and legal--requirement for women under patriarchy.

English jurist Sir William Blackstone wrote in 1765:

The husband and wife are one person in law; that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage, or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband: under whose wing, protection and cover, she performs everything. (442) (emphasis added)

Volumes have been offered covering the phenomenon of English marriage; for the most part, marriage is studied as a phenomenon, instead of as the phenomena possible within or manifestations possible to a legal contract. According to Blackstone above, the range of possibility lies entirely within the bounds of the presumably "mutual" contract--as the experience of one member, the husband. And, the experience of the husband proves limited by the goals and purposes of marriage itself, whose "essential features are the incorporation of unfree persons, and paternal power," for the establishment and preservation of property increasingly construed over the course of Western history as "private," as Friedrich Engels has defined (Bishop and Weinzweig 172). Tony Tanner describes the dominion of the marriage contract: "Marriage . . . is a means by which society attempts to bring into harmonious
alignment patterns of passion and patterns of property . . . for bourgeois society marriage is the all-subsuming, all-organizing, all-containing contract. It is the structure that maintains the Structure, or System" (15). Rather than being derived from experience, knowledge (as convention) imposes both form and content upon experience; in short, for the case of marriage, knowledge precedes experience. A married woman is doubly subsumed, organized, and contained. How can we make statements about "her" experience, which can have any meaning beyond social prescription?--a question generally arguable within the history of philosophy but preeminent for the history of women.

Critical perspective on the gendered experience of marriage has divided along gender lines. For example, Alan Macfarlane, in a chapter entitled "Romantic Love" of his Marriage and Love in England 1300-1840, finds that "Love was the essential prerequisite of marriage" from the seventeenth century on; he focuses on the positive good of the "companionate marriage" (which he obviously assumes the norm), and generally offers anecdotes of "This rapturous picture of man and woman as two halves of one whole, one flesh and one blood," which he acknowledges as "central to the modern concept of the deeply interdependent nature of the married couple." Macfarlane deeply admires the devotion of the "good husband" and "good wife," a beneficent mutuality he believes to define modern marriage (179). We can compare Macfarlane's vision of paradise regained, the androgyna, to Katharine Rogers' assessment of an eighteenth-century woman's fate: "Marriage was more or less forced on women, as their only way to a recognized position in society." Entering this contract entailed entering into "mild subjection to virtual slavery," in the agreement that a wife not only should but must tolerate an absolute sexual double standard, any ill treatment or otherwise abusive behavior her husband might incline to, and the loss of any legal rights whatsoever--even to her own children (not to mention her own "person") (7-8). Virginia Woolf has stated the case even more succinctly; without
recourse to law (which actually sanctioned wife-beating as legitimate "chastisement"), women—as wives, sisters or daughters—were "locked up, beaten and flung about the room" (45). Such, it appears, could define the "experience" of being the blissful half of a perfectly harmonious whole.

My purpose here is not to reiterate the shocking history of misogyny and abuse in marriage, but to try to describe a Humean view of this putative first principle of civilization. Hume's contemporary social contractarians share the vision of an original coming-together of a man and woman motivated by sexual and benevolent mutual feelings, and the persistence of their relationship through the bearing of offspring and thus the "seeding" of civilized society in the nuclear family. Coming to terms with Hume's version of this story and his views on marriage, we must cover some rough ground: the Humean concepts of "body," "experience," "selfhood," and other personal issues never resolved by Hume or his future commentators. I do not attempt to resolve these problems myself, but rather to respond to them with some questions about the situation of the female body and experience, and of marriage as "body," within Hume's human nature schema. Configurations of particularity and wholeness—often metaphorized or literally seen as physical (bodily) dismemberment and integrity—dominate our inquiry within an eighteenth-century epistemological frame.

In her book on the history of philosophy and woman, a woman scholar incorporates the following question in her overview of Hume:

Consider the following argument:

All knowledge derives from experience.

Hume was a bachelor throughout his life.

Therefore Hume knew nothing about marriage.

If the preceding premises are true . . . what is the consequent status of Hume's claims about 'the married state'? (Mahowald 100-01)
Such a question may represent "bad philosophy" (as one professional philosopher put it to me in conversation), but it can open an inquiry into Hume's views on marriage; it is true that the epistemologist of experience remained resolutely single throughout his life. Obviously, Hume felt that the first requirement for society did not impose any requirement on him. About his own "family" he wrote in a 1753 letter to friend Dr. John Clephane:

About seven months ago, I got a house of my own, and completed a regular family; consisting of a head, viz myself, and two inferior members, a maid and a cat. My sister has since joined me, and keeps me company. With frugality I can reach, I find, cleanliness, warmth, light, plenty, and contentment. What would you have more? Independence? I have it in a supreme degree. Honour? that is not altogether wanting. Grace? that will come in time. A wife? that is none of the indispensable requisites of life. Books? that is one of them; and I have more than I can use. (Greig I: 170)

In his banter to his friend, Hume actually describes the patriarchal "regular family": "a head . . . and two inferior members." But instead of wife and child, Hume possesses "maid and cat"—a parody-patriarchy. His sister he does not classify as "inferior," she serves the invaluable role of "keep[ing] me company." While a wife may be indispensable, books certainly are not. Hume extends the wifely caretaking roles among the entire household: a housekeeper for domestic (and possibly sexual) upkeep; a cat for nurturing and amusement; a sister for honest companionship; books for knowledge and leisure. The whole constitutes a perfectly functioning "family," a utopia, with power hierarchies a question of class rather than gender.

Hume's communication to Clephane recalls the paragraph in "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences" ("ORPAS") where, describing the "school for manners" of polite "mix'd" company, Hume praises "the example of the female
softness and modesty," the "delicacy [which] puts every one on his guard, lest he give
offence by any breach of decency" (EMPL 134). In a passage eventually excised from
the essay, Hume followed up the tense atmosphere of the above with this admission, a
stark reversal of both rhetoric and message:

I must confess, That my own particular choice rather leads me to prefer
the company of a few select companions, with whom I can, calmly and
peaceably, enjoy the feast of reason, and try the justness of every
reflection, whether gay or serious, that may occur to me. (626)

Hume pointedly contrasts the guarded derivativeness of society governed by "the
eexample of the female," to the relaxed inductiveness, the calm empiricism of reason's
feast with freely selected companionship. The distinction must be philosophical, for
society essentially requires the "school for manners;" such conventional indoctrination
must be recommended for common life. Not every man on his own would seek the
feast of reason; he would be more likely to fall into the riot of passion. As
"ambassador" capable of inhabiting both worlds, the learned and the conversable, Hume
can see the advantages of both and is free to make his particular choice—a handpicked
company of persons effectively incorporating the virtues, strengths and seductions of
both worlds into the exercise of true philosophy.

In fact, in the above confession, Hume refuses the male-female "androgyyna," as
two differing but complementary halves joined in a perfect whole; his "companions,"
unidentified by gender, are actually projections of sameness-in-otherness from Hume
himself. They exist as critical mirrors of the philosopher himself. Like the man
Hume, they enjoy the "feast" (of food and reason); their role is to respond intelligently
to the intricacies of his true philosophy, a seamless production of reason and wit.

Hume elides gender from this companionship, because gender is always already
conventional; and as gendered, group behavior must always be circumscribed within
that social convention. Nothing like an "androgyyna" could be imagined as motivating
principle for the ideal company, although men and women both could be present in the reasonable service of true philosophy. The above description cannot be seen as strictly "homosocial" (Eve Sedgwick's term for male bonding) because Hume will characterize a men-only group homo-phobically in the remainder of the excised passage:

But as such a delightful society [as the above-described] is not every day to be met with, I must think, that mixt companies, without the fair-sex, are the most insipid entertainment in the world, and destitute of gaiety and politeness, as much as of sense and reason. Nothing can keep them from excessive dulness but hard drinking; a remedy worse than the disease. (EMPL 626)

The question of Hume's participation along a homosocial-homophobic continuum is a provocative one; this particular passage might well mark a starting-point for it. But for the present, I will turn from Hume's intriguing disgust for men-only society (which may indeed prove to be part of a joke after all) and to the particular gendered social construct he is pointing to in this passage. The rarity of true-philosophical society, with its comprehensive but modest intellectual and spiritual perfection (and therefore sexual neutrality), leads Hume to the next best situation: companies of men and "the fair-sex." Here, gender roles are again rigidly prescribed (as suggested by the highly conventionalized "fair-sex"); society proves andro-gynous in its balanced pas de deux of "gaiety and politeness," and "sense and reason." This antithetical but (anxiously) stable, mutually dependent pair contrasts with the philosophical and ungendered, single-term "reflection" of Hume's ideal dialogue; "reflection" as that mental function bridging sensation to idea (T 8) represents all thought in potential, the very energy of thought, and can be disseminated infinitely into particular "ideas" (although the ensuing "ideas" will inevitably follow conventional lines). The true philosophers of Hume's select companionship would somehow communicate on this bridge, that is, pre-conventionally and thus on a purer plane of truth (not a man-made "utopia" but an
original Paradise). In the impossibility of this Paradise the androgyna, a gendered wholeness, arises hopefully re-fused from the fragments of true philosophy—that is, from the conventions which frame human understanding. But its company will always be second-rate for Hume; who at best could, as ambassador, effect not a seamless refusing of but only a close oscillation between the discrete entities (and ideologies) of common life. Where Hume's ideal "company" forms, paradoxically, a Logos whose dissemination proves infinite—the androgyna represents a closed, self-enclosed system already circumscribed within, because defined by, convention. It is the patchup concept necessitated by the Fall from an original Paradise.

Hume excised this rich paragraph from the ultimately retained "ORPAS;" as I propose later in this study for Hume's excision decisions in general, this cutting-off of an unruly member probably served the authority of convention, the chief characteristic of the retainable. But now I return to the subject of Hume's family, on literal and metaphorical level the site of a cutting-off. As an infant he lost his father, and thus never experienced first-hand the first principle of patriarchal rule. However, as second son, Hume was through primogeniture cut-off from the inheritance which would have proved so supportive to a philosopher; he was forced into that most anti-philosophical of situations, the necessity of earning a living. As stated above, he never married or had children (although he was accused at an early age of fathering a child with a neighborhood girl—a charge he managed to elude). 3

In fact, Hume thought of his books as his closest "family," if we can believe his own metaphors. (Annette Baier decides that, "Hume's new method of passionate metaphorical reflection can without contradiction establish, in metaphors, its own practice" ("Helping" 169).) This family suffered much tragedy and loss; Donald Siebert reviews the fate of Hume's publication-family: "They are his innocent progeny who do not merit the disregard or antagonism they receive. We pity the father and his unfortunate family: the Treatise of Human Nature 'fell dead-born from the Press'; the
second volume of the History of England 'helped to buoy up its unfortunate Brother'" (136). Siebert's summary of failed filiation is not quite complete; he ignores the case of the rejected essays, about two of which Hume wrote in a letter to Adam Smith:

I was engag'd to act contrary to my Judgement in retaining the 6th & 7th Essays ["Of Love and Marriage" and "Of the Study of History"], which I had resolv'd to throw out, as too frivolous for the rest, and not very agreeable neither even in that trifling manner: But Millar, my Bookseller, made such Protestations against it, & told me how much he had heard them praised by the best Judges; that the Bowels of a Parent melted, & I preserv'd them alive. (Greig I: 168)

Hume's consideration of violence, of infanticide, here has been overlooked by critics attending to his "cuts." For Hume did, eventually, cut off these and five other essays from the familial body. These children--weak, frivolous, not even agreeable--Hume struck with violence into oblivion, after recovering from his effeminate "melting" for them, a sympathy induced by public opinion. Like the excisions from the retained essays, these cuts were most likely made in response to a seduction; as Jerome Christensen observes of the excision of "Of Miracles" from the Treatise, Hume probably intended these cuts to increase his "yield" in future appreciation of his work:

If the castration of the Treatise undermines the biological metaphor for authorship by instituting a symbolic understanding and use of the text, it also marks the entrance of Hume into commerce as a proprietor . . . The cut increased Hume's stock and initiated the scattering of pieces that might possibly produce a successful yield. (124)

According to Christensen, then, Hume's turn from patriarchy as fatherhood symbolized in the production of the philosophical Treatise, to the "barren authorship" of the essays, marks not the collusion of patriarchy and capitalism against women--but rather the alliance of capitalism ("commerce") and femininity against the nuclear, patriarchal
family. In such a case literature (the "symbolic") would empower the feminine as reproducer of literary fame, even as biology had kept women occulted as reproducers of men within the patriarchal family. However, in the case of the rejected essays, the rejecting cut excised not a masculine member but a feminine one, woman-appeal; Hume was simply purging the deviant stock--what we shall later designate, along the guidelines of critical history, as the feminine or effeminate--from his paternal legacy. At his life's end, as he performed his final cuts, he felt no need to pursue further his symbolic dissemination; thus, he had no further use for woman as partner in that textual act.

But, as a young son, Hume was deeply devoted to his widowed mother--a biographical fact Annette Baier deems central to her theory of Hume's appeal as a moral philosopher ("Helping" 183). In fact, we can note a contrast between the violence and disruption in his literary "family," and the apparent importance of the familial bond to his philosophy. If we believe that his metaphors betray anything about the foundations of his thinking, we might assume that "family" was conceptually supreme for him. Annette Baier implies that Hume's mother-attachment laid the ground for his entire philosophy; she claims that for Hume, "the products of associative thought derive from social forms of association," which in turn "derive from the most basic form of social association, the natural family" (ibid 167). According to Baier, Hume found in the familial relationship an "ultimate cause" locatable and observable in human experience. The "hidden biosocioepistemological [!] metaphor uniting Hume's Treatise" ultimately refers to his bond with the mother. Baier supports this claim by invoking the only epistemological "certainty," "the only stable role a person would be really assured of": that he is, indeed the "child of such and such a mother" (ibid 183). This particular evidence makes more sense in the light of the a priori significance of "maternal certainty, paternal uncertainty" in the erection of patriarchal society: that
"trivial anatomical difference" which dictates gender difference and therefore all of the politics of civilization, public and private.

But in the case of Hume's personal life, the "natural family" was uniquely presided over by the mother's loving presence; Hume praised her as "a woman of singular Merit, who, though young and handsome, devoted herself entirely to the rearing and educating of her Children" ("My Own Life," in Mossner 611). His "though" points to her ready ability to rejoin, via a second marriage, the proper patriarchal, husband-ruled nuclear family. Her decision not to do so proves for Hume a philosophically sound one vis-a-vis her relationships with her children; in the Treatise, "Of the Love of Relations," Hume considers the weakening of consanguinal bonds by a second marriage:

'Tis easy to remark in common life, that children esteem their relation to their mother to be weaken'd, in a great measure, by her second marriage, and no longer regard her with the same eye, as if she had continu'd in her state of widowhood . . . This also takes place with regard to the second marriage of a father; but in a much less degree: And 'tis certain the ties of blood are not so much loosen'd in the latter case as by the marriage of a mother. (T 355)

Feminist critics have found this observation distasteful; Hume explains the phenomenon by reference to our imagination's natural tendency to focus on "greater" objects. A woman's remarriage thus transfers the children's attention to the "greater object" of the husband and his circle of authority, and weakens the attraction with the mother. We may argue about whether Hume refers here essentially to an a priori gender hierarchy, or whether he simply relies on a conventional understanding of gendered authority in human society. But for now, I am more interested in the autobiographical admission of this "philosophy." Hume tells us that his own strongest "natural" and most "secure" tie—which, according to Baier, would set down the organizing principle of his thought—
was never interfered with by a "greater" force or authority. He did not have to compete for her, nor did he witness her molding her existence around any other "greater" than himself. We might imagine that the inviolate strength of the mother-son tie in Hume's case prepared the philosopher who, according to Jerome Christensen, could readily transform his "monstrous heap of desires into an object body upon which calm, surgical acts could be performed" (96), or in other words, could envision from the disparate phenomena of empiricism a comprehensive philosophical system mapping-out the possibilities of human understanding and uniquely receptive to his analysis. The strength of that natural tie motivated him toward a coherent vision of "human nature."

As for Hume's dead father, the primal absence of the consanguinal father's authority may well have enabled the son to transgress patriarchal boundaries in his thinking. The father's authority in Hume's system most often derives from acts of usurpation or force otherwise. Christensen summarizes the anti-patriarchalism possible in the free space of the absent father:

Although in his relatively sparse commentary on the family Hume never directly challenges the dominance of the father, nonetheless his social anthropology [observable in the essays] circumscribes the power of the father either to ordain or maintain society and indirectly contributes to the mitigation of the patriarchy that was occurring on a variety of fronts in the eighteenth century. Even Hume's insistence on the crucial social significance of female chastity, though it incontestably figures women as a species of property, has the corollary of figuring the potentially commanding male, whose word is law and whose law is an act of phallic violence, as a property owner whose passions are mediated by the conventions of society and are enacted only within the diminutive
marketplace that Lawrence Stone has called the 'companionate marriage.' (27)

In the father's absence, Hume takes control but in a coup; his transgressive authoritative gesture imposes that control over the system itself—or in this case, over the mortal manifestation of that system's power, the father. (Hume's critique of metaphysics and religious "enthusiasm" may be considered the first and enabling transgressive gesture; although depending on the approach to the question, one could argue that the absent father also enabled the radical critique of religion.) If the wife is property of the husband, the husband is also the property of "the conventions of society," or, more specifically, the "marketplace" that requires his situation in a specific political unit. Like the wife and the polite author, each seduced into a relationship by an authoritative other's promises of pleasure, commitment and security, the husband is also seduced by a higher authority who promises him the lease of a unit whose existence is meaningful primarily as service to the general economy.

Hume celebrates his mother's refusal to reenter the patriarchal microcosm. ("Life for both sexes . . . is arduous, difficult, a perpetual struggle," observes Virginia Woolf; a struggle which requires above all an invidious self-confidence, the "feeling that one has some innate superiority . . . over other people." Upon this necessity the world divides into two halves: "Hence the enormous importance to a patriarch who has to conquer, who has to rule, of feeling that great numbers of people, half the human race indeed, are by nature inferior to himself" (35).) Within Hume's home there was no patriarchal superior-inferior model, just the closest possible blood ties united by the closest mutual sympathy. Hume chose never to replicate the first-principle, gendered power model, marriage, in his own adult home; instead, he would rely on the closest available consanguinity, his siblings (with whom he variously shared residence)—and in particular Katharine, his sister, along with some "select" others (servants, pets, books) to provide his companionate needs. Lifelong, he sought a contented and easeful
existence free of conflict and difficulty. He would rely as well on the extensive network of select bosom companions with whom he shared "the feast of reason" both at table and in letters. (That many of these were women is evident from this correspondence.\(^4\))

Although in the Treatise Hume grounds human society in the "amorous passion betwixt the sexes" and the ensuing nuclear family relationship, in "Of the love of relations" he does not attribute the strongest relational ties to the marriage relationship but to parent and child, and then to the attraction in "resemblance" of like "tempers and dispositions." Outside of the blood-tie or the attraction of resemblance, other relations may have this effect: "Whoever is united to us by any connexion is always sure of a share of our love, proportion'd to the connexion, without enquiring into his other qualities" (T 352); but such artificial links cannot be as strong. The marriage link may in fact be quite unstable, founded as it is on the strong--and temporary--passion of "amorous appetite" and the ensuing requisite difficulty of finding mutual agreement between discrete "tempers and dispositions."

Virginia Woolf's judgment of life's hardship points back to Hume's lamentations over the rigors of "closet" philosophy: the accurate and abstruse unmitigated by the easy and obvious; learning untempered by conversation. Recall in "Of Essay Writing," Hume's condemnation of academic isolation: "Learning has been as great a Loser by being shut up in Colleges and Cells . . . Even Philosophy went to Wrack by this moaping recluse Method of Study" (EMPL 534). We should remember that the young Hume immediately experienced the destructive alienation of the closet-philosopher: "The period 1729-1733 . . . is that crucial period during which Hume pressed his investigations [for the Treatise] into 'a new Scene of Thought' so ardently as to ruin his health" (Mossner 74). When this "new Scene of Thought" had with its difficulties the effect of leading the philosopher into "the most deplorable condition imaginable, inviron'd with the deepest darkness, and utterly depriv'd of the use of
every member and faculty," Hume found an effective remedy: "I dine, I play a game of back-gammon, I converse, and am merry with my friends" (T 269), which restores the alienated consciousness.

Baier finds the benefit for Hume of good company directly comparable to the parent-child security ("Helping" 173). The "delightful society" of "a few select companions" ("ORPAS"-excised, EMPL 626) is, in Hume's way of thinking, "naturally so rejoicing, as presenting the liveliest of all objects, viz a rational and thinking Being like ourselves, who communicates to us all the actions of his mind; makes us privy to his inmost sentiments and affections; and lets us see, in the instant of their production, all the emotions which are caus'd by any object" (T 353). Hume's description brings to mind the mirror-imaginal fantasy of the true philosopher and his companions (discussed for the case of "ORPAS"'s excised paragraph); and also, the perfect immediate gratification of an unsevered connection with the mother. If Hume did indeed "dream of being all things to all men" (Christensen's attribution), in the above fantasy he imagines a paradise in which all men are all things to him; that is, Hume experiences the philosopher's dream of seeing cause and effect simultaneously "in the instant of their production," in the locus of the other. Subject and object distinctions vanish, in the flash of complete, immediate mutual recognition. Baier conjectures: "Such total secure intimacy, such clear insight into productive causes, this is the innocent state of grace from which the refined philosophical Hume had fallen when, in Book One, he asks, 'Where am I, or what? From what causes do I derive my existence . . . what beings surround me?' There too, however, he has control over this 'deepest darkness' and knows its remedy to be the light of good company" (T 269 qtd. in Baier, ibid, 173). Or, the tie to the mother.

In this frame we might see the debilitating rigors of accurate and abstruse philosophy as the alienating imposition, the "divide and conquer" strategy of the authoritative father. Hume the philosopher divided himself from society in the
Treatise’s production, his passage into adulthood as "philosopher;" but upon his entrance into masculine maturity he was conquered by the academic community’s rejection of his "child," by a patriarchal infanticide. Turning again to the mother (whom he had never really "left" in producing the original, self-confident Treatise), Hume sought in the essays to recuperate that delightful and enlightening mutuality in the sovereignty of the female, "the light of good company."

One might argue that in this turn Hume covertly accepted inevitable male sovereignty over anything female: the "mother" would never crush him, would always approve of the "son," because of her natural subordination to any male within patriarchy. In other words, within this transaction the essayist Hume sought, one might say, the conventional affirmation of an essentialized nurturing femininity. This holds true only if one insists on imposing "patriarchy" by force over the entire Humean system; it seems possible always to implicate any transaction in our culture in the power inequities of this enduring hegemony. But we should remember that during the eighteenth century European culture witnessed paradigmatic changes in the relationship of gender and social class. As many have argued, "gender" cannot be conceived, perhaps especially in this early modern period, without reference to economics. As Ann Ferguson points out, "there is no easy formula by which to determine the amount of power women have . . . in a certain historical period" without reference to her specific roles in production-consumption systems (45). In the new European (as Anglo-Franco) republic of letters, a Humean vision of matriarchy is not unthinkable and is in fact apparent in his defection, philosophy—and therefore power—intact (if disguised), to the essay form.

Having discussed Hume’s inviolate attachment to the mother as source of his impulse to a Grand Unified Theory of human nature, we might look again at Susan Bordo’s focus on the separation and alienation of the authoritative Cartesian man. Bordo interprets Cartesian doubt as a mode of separation anxiety, a recuperative
strategy for power when faced with the primal loss of immediate attachment and gratification. The overcoming of this loss involves "the Cartesian project of starting anew through the revocation of one's actual childhood--during which one was 'immersed' in body and nature--and the re-creation of a world in which absolute separateness (both epistemological and ontological) from body and nature are keys to control rather than sources of anxiety." Bordo summarizes this evolution metaphorically as becoming the "father of oneself" (452). This born-again father relegates the mother to the plane of "body and nature." There now exists, in the place of mutual sympathy, a male-female power hierarchy: "She becomes 'it'--and 'it' can be understood," as "pure res extensa, totally devoid of mind and thought" (450). She is now mechanical matter, to be manipulated by a superior "mind"--that of another, a man. Fallen from the original sympathy of mutuality, "she" can now be understood--categorized, conventionalized, rationalized--as the thought-object of a masculine mind.

In light of this comparison, we can see why critics' (Battersby, Burns, Marcil-Lacoste) attempts to pinpoint a "Humean Female" or to isolate a Humean position on "Female Nature" have failed or at least proved insufficient. The same goes for their perceptions of the "relatively scant" occurrence of Hume's observations about "woman." Hume's descriptions of women consider their situation as conventionally imposed or defined; or, they take a narrative form as conventional banter or literary anecdote. Hume never purports to "understand" (as Bordo's masculine model) women, but rather to observe them within human experience; in other words, in lieu of controlling women, he reflects upon their being-controlled by politics, education, polite convention, and religion. He effeminately becomes passive to authority. Having never himself experienced consanguinal patriarchal control or witnessed his mother under its sway, and having always had a close, loving relationship with his mother, Hume did not have this immediate psychic model for the political control of others. Rather, as the center and circumference of the maternal universe, he felt a more primal impulse to
control—through sympathy as a feminine mode of understanding, superior to "acts of phallic violence," or violent cuts of phallic analysis. Sympathy and understanding, in the light of "good company," give access to that "reflection" which would see the connective tissue among the ideas of men, Cartesian and other. Hume's recuperative strategy conserves the mother's authority through a re-immersion of patriarchalism, now to be "understood" as a convention within human nature.

Hume's philosophical system can be easily metaphorized in terms of the feminine: an essentialist model of benevolent interdependency, perhaps—but in terms of the passions, and therefore of morality (especially the social) a model preferable to the bereft Cartesian, the disembodied monad. My argument here certainly entails a power reversal, but a philosophical one: from masculine understanding, as control, of the feminine; to "feminine" understanding, as description, of the "masculine." Institutional political control within convention or factionalism gives way to narrative control, the authority of the literary to de- and inscribe the nature of things.

Several of the rejected essays feature narratives of gendered power struggles. In "Of Moral Prejudices," which appeared in only one edition (1742), Hume tells an anecdote about a single mother of a son. Her story is one of two primary anecdotes which seem to be offered for comparison purposes, in the essay's thesis on "moral prejudice": to illustrate a "Humour" with a "very bad Effect on those, who indulge it. I mean that grave philosophic Endeavor after Perfection, which, under Pretext of reforming Prejudices and Errors, strikes at all the most endearing Sentiments of the Heart, and all the most useful Byasses and Instincts, which can govern a human Creature" (EMPL 539).

The first anecdote tells of a "Eugenus" ("nobly born," "good character," etc.) who apply'd himself, with the most unwearied Labour, to the Study of Philosophy; and nothing was ever able to draw him from it, except when an Opportunity offer'd of serving his Friends, or doing a Pleasure to
some Man of Merit. When he was about thirty Years of Age, he was
determin'd to quit the free Life of a Batchelor (in which otherwise he
wou'd have been inclin'd to remain), by considering, that he was the last
Branch of an antient Family, which must have been extinguish'd had he
died without Children.

The anecdote continues with the story of Eugenius' "Choice of the virtuous and
beautiful Emira for his Consort," of her production of heirs and her death, and of her
husband's lifelong, well-regulated passion of grief over her loss. He finally arranges
that "a Monument shall be laid over them [buried in the same grave], and their Mutual
love and Happiness celebrated in an Epitaph, which he himself has compos'd for that
Purpose."

Hume bridges from this idealized tale of "Eugenius" to the second anecdote by
announcing to "communicate to the Public" the contents of a "Letter;" apparently the
anecdote contained there is a true story, "the common topic of Conversation" in Paris
in 1737" and thus "gossip." Hume intends to offer the anecdote "as an Example" of
an overly zealous "Philosophic Spirit," which dares to "depart too far from the receiv'd
Maxims of Conduct and Behaviour, by a refin'd Search after Happiness or Perfection."
The philosopher in question here is "A young lady of Birth and Fortune," who has
resolved to remain single for life. She bases her decision on her observation and her
knowledge of other women's experience in marriage:

She had been determin'd to embrace this Resolution, by observing the
many unhappy Marriages among her Acquaintance, and by hearing the
Complaints, which her Female Friends made of the Tyranny,
Inconstancy, Jealousy or Indifference of their Husbands.

Like Hume himself, she has relied on her observation and the accounts of others for her
knowledge of the marriage experience. Finding these excessively negative, and "Being
a woman of strong Spirit and an uncommon Way of thinking," she has remained
resolutely single in spite of many opportunities and "Temptation." She very much, however, wanted "a Son, whose Education she was resolv'd to make the principal Concern of her Life, and by that Means supply the Place of those other Passions, which she was resolv'd for ever to renounce."

In her overly zealous "Philosophy" she finds "no Contradiction betwixt such a Desire and her former Resolution." She chooses a suitable man to father a child with her, and "communicates to him her whole Intention." Their ensuing "Intercourse" eventually makes her "Mother of a Boy." "Gladly wou'd she have continued her Friendship with the Father," but his excessively strong passion for her as a "Lover" (in lieu of the "calm passion" of a "friend") provokes her to attempt to pay him off with "a Bond of Annuity," to leave her alone for ever. He responds by attempting legally to take to himself their son, "whom he pretends a Right to educate as he pleas'd, according to the usual Maxims of the Law in such Cases." The mother, on the other hand, holds up their mutually-agreed contract, their "express Agreement before their Commerce . . . that he had renounc'd all Claim to any Offspring that might arise from their Embraces." Hume closes the essay without telling the outcome of the case, "which puzzles all the Lawyers, as much as it does the Philosophers" (EMPL 542-44).

This anecdote astonishes me with its presentation of the unnamed single mother. She behaves like a model man: independent, jealous of her liberty, self-reliant and deriving her decisions from her own observation, unwavering in her resolve, determined in matters of education, and ruled by the calm passions. She does precisely what men do with women: she makes a contract based on her own interest, seduces a man into this agreement, and abandons him when he ceases to serve her purpose or please her. She even attempts to pay him off, a benevolent gesture sometimes practiced by divorcing or otherwise abdicating husbands. This woman's story pleases me, a modern woman reader, a great deal; it may have been quite shocking to Hume's contemporary English female reader. Whether it pleased or dismayed her, we have no
evidence and can only speculate that some may have been thrilled (secretly), others offended by its kidney-punch to patriarchy, its complete reversal of the patriarchal plan.

How, exactly, does Hume feel about his single mother? The scant critical commentary on this text comes to no agreement. According to Norah Smith, "Of Moral Prejudices" is "weak by any standards" (371). This sweeping condemnation represents a majority opinion on the general effectiveness of the rejected essays; such critical overkill fails to attend to these essays' strategic appearance at a particular stage of Hume's life and career. As John Valdimir Price sees it, "The verbal weaknesses in Hume's writings are, more often than not, subtleties of language that become apparent when seen against the pattern of his life and his thought at the time of their composition" (72). What appear to be equivocalities, unanswered questions and shallow derivations (the Addisonian "Eugénicus") may well mark Hume's struggle with the status quo; or, in more general terms, his efforts to integrate philosophy with common life.

Leaving aside for the moment such an absolutely rejecting impulse as Smith's, I will turn to the ever-suspicious Christine Battersby, who cites "Of Moral Prejudices" to support her claim that in his discussions of the double standard, Hume "is merely buttressing the status quo, not showing that women's position in society cannot be changed." Furthermore, Battersby insists, "Hume's image of woman is that of a creature of passion," of extreme "enthusiasm." She supports her argument by noting "that in 'Of Moral Prejudices' Hume treats it as absurd that a woman should, by prior contract, seek to exclude the father of her child from its education and upbringing and support it financially herself" (311). Battersby takes an approach very different from my own; she chooses the term "absurd," where I find Hume very moderate—even hesitant—in his judgment of the young mother's "re'in'd Search after Happiness or Perfection." The single mother has simply "depart[ed] too far" from convention, and
not committed an "absurd" act. Also, Battersby neglects Hume's key emphasis on the
father's lawsuit, his "pretension" to the "Right to educate [his son] as he pleas'd,
according to the usual Maxims of the Law in such Cases." The father appeals to his
selfish passion and established law for his case to educate the boy; while Hume has told
us that the mother would focus on the boy's education in the service of regulating the
strong passions--an admirable philosophical goal for Hume. The father's challenge,
based on the "usual Maxims of the Law in such cases," to the supposedly mutual
contract can be seen as well as a critique of the contractual theory itself; this incident
points out the potential impotency of contracts made outside the dictates of "usual"
convention; the "contract" deemed primary in a liberal society by contractualists proves
to be effective only in service to a predetermined structure. The contract, including the
marriage contract, is not a tool of free consent--but a derivative assent.

M. A. Box believes that Hume offers the single-mother anecdote

as a counterexample to the preceding story of Eugenius, whose moderate
philosophy did not forbid him the indulgence of conventional familial
sentiments. The letter illustrates Hume's point, that philosophy goes
awry when followed without a respectful deference to our incorrigibly
passional human nature and the received maxims of conduct that channel
our passions into acceptable forms of behavior. (117)

This certainly represents the status-quo reading which follows certain predictable lines
for eighteenth-century morality as well as for Hume's own insistence that strong
passions must be "corrected" for society's sake. The single mother transgresses in her
failure properly to show "respectful deference" to the ideology which would entirely
"channel our [but especially HER] passions into acceptable forms of behavior." In
short, she does not respect as her superior either particular male authority or general
patriarchal law.
Moreover, Box's reading does not attend to certain problems in "Eugenius"' presentation. Eugenius seems to me anything but "moderate;" first, he had closeted himself as a philosopher for thirty years, and "nothing was ever able to draw him from it, except when an Opportunity offer'd of serving his Friends [he never sought one; it had to offer itself], or doing a Pleasure to some Man of Merit [suggesting the occasional obsequious gesture]." He seems to have had little social contact, and to have cared little for the "light of good company" so essential in Hume's system to a balanced philosophical perspective. Then, he marries not for love or companionship; his motivation is the fulfillment of the property legacy. Given Eugenius' history of a lack of warmth, emotion and the need for human affection and society, the rest of his story--the unique emphasis on his tender and obsessive grief--strikes me as excessive, exaggerated, even "absurd."

There is no moderation, it would seem, for "Eugenius": he passes from a passionless life to an obsessively passionate dependency. Annette Baier highlights the latter in her mention of the "more interesting and more radical [among the other rejected essays] 'Of Moral Prejudices': Baier finds that here Hume "describes a man who is totally dependent, emotionally, on his wife and daughter, and a woman who makes herself minimally dependent on the chosen father of her child" ("Womens . . . Theorist" 38). Baier suggests that Eugenius acts the part of the model woman in his overnight transition, through a politically-motivated marriage, from isolated dependency (on the father, "Philosophy") to a socially acceptable dependency (on the spouse). Or, we might see that Eugenius is ruled first by the esoteric "Philosophy," then by a conventional model; not his "wife and daughter," but "received maxims of conduct" demand his dependency.

On the other hand, the single mother's actions seem more motivated and directed by reason. She, too, separates herself from normal society, where men and women should interact in mutually supportive and pleasing situations both political and
social, but instead live in unequal, unhappy, despotic marriages. She proves more "moderate" than Eugenius; her willingness to keep her child's father in her life as "friend" points to Hume's discussion elsewhere of the essential value of friendship above all between married persons (EMPL 189). But when the father exceeds this reasoned boundary with an excessive emotion, she responds by ejecting him from her life. If Hume is, indeed, criticizing her, he does so less for her refusal to marry—a decision which he made for himself—than for her unwillingness to mitigate a cold, calculating reason which has separated her from the nuclear family's "natural" social model as a microcosm of human society. Knowledge, derived from observation, has taught her to refuse marriage; but she refuses to allow that prejudice to be "corrected" by her experience of a worthy and loving—if somewhat overly devoted—suitor. Thus, what began as reason eventually turned into single-minded "enthusiasm" for her cause. Her masculine control of the relationship drives the spurned father to his own effort to gain control, the recourse of patriarchal law: a "puzzling" and intriguing drama, as Hume himself judges.

It is likely that Hume found both characters, Eugenius and the single mother, excessive and errant. Eugenius marries for strictly reasonable purposes, the maintenance of male property legacy, and then later as a widower devotes his life to smarmy passion allegedly discreet and "regulated," but obviously quite public in its narrative form. The single mother purposively acts on reason but eventually proves herself passion-ruled; she uncompromisingly flouts the system and thus creates havoc in three lives. Individual control of the relationship and its issue underlies each life story ("Emira" conveniently dies after serving her function; the single mother ejects her stud when, after serving his, he seems troublesome to her). What would a philosophically "corrected" marriage be like? Is such possible within Hume's system?

Linda Bell has studied the problem of individual control in marriage within the general question: "Are hierarchies necessary in human relationships." Her historical
overview of philosophers’ decisions on the specific question, "Does marriage require a head?" finds a dominant "yes," based on patriarchal theory (the theological model, Adam’s legacy) and the general belief in women’s relative "weakness." Marriage must have a "head," so that the conflicts inevitable to human society (and especially to the society of two) can be readily resolved; as Locke decided the case: "But the husband and wife, though they have but one common concern, yet having different understandings, will unavoidably sometimes have different wills, too; it therefore being necessary that the last determination, i.e., the rule, should be placed somewhere; it naturally falls to the man’s share, as the abler and stronger" (from Two Treatises of Government, qtd. in Bell "Marriage" 144). Such an essentialist judgment naturally violates our modern sensibilities; Bell concludes that the "only compelling argument" is the need within a marriage to settle "disagreements where common action is required."

This need suggests the advantage of "some recognized division of responsibility" so that the power-center of the marriage can shift according to context; decisions can then be made "following the lead of the party who is likely to have the cooler and wiser head on the matter under dispute" (152). This is surely an admirable goal; but how could one ever set up the "division of responsibility" equitably and based on abstract (a-political) principles, to allow for such a reasonable power exchange in marriage? After all, division of responsibility has persisted as the problem for women in patriarchy; the problem is, women’s responsibilities have not been deemed as responsible, their heads never as "cool" or "wise," as men’s.

As we have seen in "Of Moral Prejudices," Hume was very interested in the problem of control, or "dominion" within marriage. As we will see in the next chapter, he casts in idealized terms his assertion that the calm and mediating passion of "friendship" should be the goal of marriage. "Love of dominion" in spouses, coupled with the license of patriarchal control, would always tip the hand to the husband. With this imbalance always in play, the marriage situation perpetually trembles with
repressed strong passions (anger, envy, lust): passions which might be mediated in a friendship, but which must be locked away in the artificial court of matrimony. Interrogating the gender inequality at the heart of social contract philosophy, Ruth Perry comments on the problem lingering in the mitigated patriarchalism of Hobbes and Locke:

Because they never posited parity for women in a state of nature, neither Hobbes nor Locke assumed that women participated in the struggle for control over others. Women's tacit obedience to their male relatives was taken for granted: male dominion within the family was assumed. Locke does not even notice when he proclaims that 'he who attempts to get another man into his absolute power does thereby put himself into a state of war with him,' that he is describing the everyday situation of courtship. (452-3)

In the next chapters I will spotlight Hume's attention to the "state of war" within the marriage relationship: a problem at the social foundation which he did notice. The marriage relationship, a microcosm of the polite social arena considered in "ORPAS," maintains the anxious artificiality of convention in an even more compressed--and oppressive--form. Hume took pains, often witty ones, over the attempt to work out this scenario philosophically, in his two essays on marriage, "Of Love and Marriage," and "Of Polygamy and Divorces."

"Of Love and Marriage" appeared in the first edition of *Essays: Moral and Political* (1741), and in spite of Hume's attempts to withdraw it (as "frivolous," "not even agreeable in the trifling [Addisonian] Manner"), it endured up to the 1760 edition of the essays. On the surface, the essay seems to be a light mixture of "banter to the ladies" and lighthearted Addisonian allegory--a witty retelling of the androgynia myth.

But it is equally possible to take "Of Love and Marriage" not as a "frivolous" lapse for a serious philosopher, but as his attempt to retell in more accessible form a
very serious story: the myth of monogamy as androgyny, the theory of the natural complementarity of essentialized "halves." John Valdimir Price finds the origin of this essay in the famous Treatise section, "Of Chastity and Modesty," where Hume anatomizes the conventionality of the double standard. Price believes that "It is possible that the irony of the Treatise had been too subtle for most of his readers, and Hume attempts to write in an Addisonian vein" to domesticate (but not alter) his critique. The key word is "irony;" Hume's description of the double standard, what many critics have taken as "buttressing of the status quo," Price takes ironically. Focusing on a sentence Hume interjects into the middle of "Of Chastity and Modesty": "Such wou'd be the reasonings of our speculative philosopher. . ." (T 572), Price finds in this "transitional" the clue to a ruling irony. "Prior to that [transition], Hume had discussed the 'ideal' rules which would govern sexual behavior. To make clear that he doesn't think these rules are ideal, he then treats them to a series of ironic objections" (13).

We have already seen how Hume employs irony in a mode of "cattiness;" he sets up a text such that different types of readers gain access to different levels of the text. A reader who accepts him at the reportage level might take observation as opinion, and thus believe Hume to be assenting to status-quo "sexism." Another reader more sensitive not only to the philosophical but also to the literary mode, the play in and of language, can see another Hume--a more subversive Hume (self-)signalled as such by the strains and glitches in his otherwise scrupulous discourse. Jerome Christensen has identified a "caricature" mode in Hume, where the philosopher "bundl[es] awkward and dangerous notions under the catchall rubric of the fictive in order that they can at once be recognized and disabled" (70). But, once "recognized," they might also be utilized, expanded through the Humean system and tested for viability. Hume's text readily lends itself to "the fulfillment of a wish and as wish fulfillment," to borrow Christensen's turn of phrase.
"Of Love and Marriage" appears to follow the "rejected" formula: "half banter, half serious, linked by a 'turn' paragraph;" in this essay we actually find several "turns." The opening banter attends to the question of women's "suffering" in marriage, and who is to blame for marital misery. Hume first identifies in this suffering a kind of paranoia, in a metacritical frame; he ponders why women "always consider a satyr upon matrimony as a satyr upon themselves." Deciding that to answer this literary question with a literary model (writing a "panegyric" to a "satyr" or vice versa) might "misrepresent facts," Hume glibly decides, "I must be more a friend to truth, than even to [facts], where their interests are opposite" (EMPL 558).

He next sets out on a candid admission: "I shall tell the women what it is our sex complains of most in the married state . . . 'tis their love of dominion." Christine Battersby cites this essay as a source for Hume's observations on women's overwhelming and insatiable "lust for power," but Hume gives as illustration a tale whose origin has not been discovered by any editor (558). He tells of Scythian women who "put out the eyes of the whole male sex" in order to gain authority over them. This hideous act they have performed as a self-sacrifice; by eliminating the visual capability, they have incapacitated the perception of beauty—the first mover of "the amorous passion, or love betwixt the sexes" (T 394-97). The Scythian women reason: "We shall hear no more tender sighs; but in return we shall hear no more imperious commands. Love must for ever leave us; but he will carry subjection along with him" (EMPL 559). In this "fictive rubric," Hume proffers with elegant antithetical clauses resolved on the "but," a very "dangerous" notion: that for women, "love" entails or even equals "subjection." The only recourse to subjection proves to be an a counter-violence, a physical dismemberment. The Scythian women's "lust for power" is not the will to authority (a power reversal); rather, it rises from the desire to escape subjection and tyranny. Hume then offers, by implication, an equally "awkward and dangerous" idea:
'Tis regarded by some as an unlucky circumstance, since the women were resolved to maim the men, and deprive them of some of their senses, in order to render them humble and dependent, that the sense of hearing could not serve their purpose, since 'tis probable the females would rather have attacked that than the sight: And I think it is agreed among the learned, that, in a married state, 'tis not near so great an inconvenience to lose the former sense as the latter.

To introduce an age-old joke stereotype about women's assault on male "ears," Hume describes what appears to be a necessity in marriage: to maim and deprive one party of the senses, in order to render that party "humble and dependent." Here we see Hume "enabling" a philosophical inquiry, while with a joke "disabling" the political implications of such an inquiry—a technique of caricature-command which Hume brought to perfection in the retained "Of Polygamy and Divorces." But the philosophical inquiry might lead us to some key questions for feminism about Hume's elusive mind-body theory; questions which follow the lines of a general inquiry into the patriarchal assumption of rights to the female body and control of the female "person."

This inquiry starts from the liberal democratic premise that rational, equal individuals participate in a characteristically contractual social structure. As we have seen, marriage seems to be placed at the origin of contractual theory as espoused by the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century social contractarians. Wifehood poses a destructive contradiction to such theory, because within the patriarchal system a wife must entirely cede her "political agency"—the prerequisite natural authority of the autonomous individual in liberal theory—over to the husband. Feminist philosophers studying this contradiction focus on the female body as property in patriarchy and locate a source of this problem for liberal theory in the philosophy of Descartes. (Recall in Chapter One here Susan Bordo's theory of "the Cartesian masculinization of thought" and its usurpation of a "feminine" cosmology and epistemology of mutual
sympathy.) These feminist philosophers, represented here by Joanna Hodge, consider "how to disconnect theories of the rights of man and of political subjectivity from the Cartesian notion of the subject which . . . is implicitly connected to a male experience of the world and to a masculine body" (153). Specifically, this experience is founded on a "model of taking the body for granted as an appendage of rational processes," a model which we began at the opening of this chapter to question, "Whose rational processes?" We must ask this question, because as a challenge to this philosophical (presumably neuter, "human") model, "for cultural reasons, it is not possible for the bodies of women to function in the required way . . . since both world and body are culturally constructed by men as belonging not to women but to men" (162). What we will consider here is whether Hume's challenge to the Cartesian monolithic "subject" as rational master of the senses and their mechanical grasp of inert "objects" can be construed as anti-patriarchal; Hume reworked this "subject" into subjective process or the experience of a "world" inseparable from sense impressions of it. "Subject" and "object" dialectically resolve into "experience." Our perception of "objects" occurs on the common-life plane, and thus definitions of "objects" necessarily arise from convention.

Hume's theories of the mind-body connection form the basis of his radical skepticism; it proves impossible to ground any concept of the "self" in any form of certainty:

Upon the whole our reason neither does, nor is it possible it ever shou'd, upon any supposition, give us an assurance of the continu'd and distinct existence of body. (T 193)

Nor have we any idea of self, after the manner it is here explain'd. For from what impression cou'd this idea be deriv'd? This question 'tis impossible to answer without a manifest contradiction and absurdity. (T 251)
Given this philosophical skepticism, and the fact that I wish to argue (or open an argument) for a Humean defense of personal integrity, I would seem to be working from or towards a contradiction.

However, Hume opens Treatise section, "Of scepticism with regard to the senses," with this question: "We may well ask, 'What causes induce us to believe in the existence of body?' but 'tis in vain to ask, 'Whether there be body or not?' That is a point, which we must take for granted in all our reasoning." Here Hume consents to an inevitable belief of common life: that discrete "things" called "bodies" indeed "exist." Hume well understands the common-life contradiction to the philosophical inevitability: "Whatever may be the reader's opinion at this present moment [after digesting the philosophical skepticism] . . . an hour hence he will be persuaded there is both an external and an internal world" (T 218). For a feminist incorporation of Hume's mind-body epistemological division, we can work to our advantage from both the philosophical and the common-life standpoints. Modern philosophy has worked hard to complete Hume's scepticism as a perceived task of debunking the substance and personal identity concepts; Hume himself did not devalue the common-life belief or place it in unequal competition with the philosophical skepticism. The common-life belief essentially mitigates and regulates the philosophical belief along the necessities of human society—and thus becomes subject to the decrees of convention.

Hume's philosophical program, which includes the deconstruction of the "subject," can be seen in the feminist context to set up a defense of a subject's individual autonomy and rights. For feminist thinking this need not be a contradiction, but a politicization of the philosophy/common-life interaction. Philosophically, "personal identity" derives fundamentally from the sense impressions, and the subsequent memory of and reflection upon these perceptual data. Therefore, a "person" should always occur only as a more or less intact system of impression-reflection; what I sensually experience constitutes what I am. Janet Todd addresses by
implication the Humean case and genders the foundations of knowing, when she points to Locke's "suggestion" that "sensibility--openness through sensation to the world--was the only route to knowledge" (24). But the degree of "openness" proves to be precisely the variable: "openness" might be culturally prescribed to the effect of truncating feminine knowledge even as "sensibility." In a truly liberal economy, a person should enjoy a perceptual liberty, as a sort of absolutely open perceptual field, and the possibility of processing perceptual data in an original way. Each person should "see herself" as her "own" impressions.

Of course, this philosophical "person" responsible to and for her own impressions is too clean for common life. Pre-conceptual "reflection" is a philosopher's dream and never an already-socialized human's reality. While male experience as well necessarily responds to and reflects social convention, a woman's very impressions always already represent a channel of convention which may entail strange contradictions for her; for example, as we will further discuss in the next chapter, the excruciating sense data from bound feet (pain as bad) should be reflected upon as the experience of obedient wifehood (pain as good). Such is patriarchal "utilitarianism."

But we can see that within Hume's philosophical model, it makes no sense to objectify "body" and assign essential values to "its" experience. "Body" is only an integral participation in phenomenal experience, and consequently always individual or particular (as opposed to essential or universal). Paradoxically, then, Hume's subjective process both denies the reality of "body," and resubjectifies it, or returns the proprietorship of "body" to the perceiving entity. On the philosophical level, every entity has the unique and inviolable experience of her own body; we might translate this as the right to self-determination--a "right" which must remain an abstraction within common life.
Convention drives the wedge between philosophy and common life. In the gender context, the space between these is no aporia but a conjugation between a feminine "is" and a masculine "ought." Hume’s essays featuring the situations of women within conventional mores and institutions reify this abstraction. This is particularly dramatic in those essays either literally or metaphorically focusing on the role of the body in social institutions. Even in such a universally condemned rejected essay as "Of Avarice," we can recognize Hume's contemplation of patriarchal manipulation of a feminine or feminized body:

Our old mother Earth once lodged an indictment against AVARICE before the courts of heaven, for her wicked and malicious council and advice, in tempting, inducing, persuading, and traiterously seducing the children of the plaintiff to commit the detestable crime of parricide upon her, and, mangling her body, ransack her very bowels for hidden treasure. (EMPL 572-73)

In a perhaps embarrassingly derivative allegorical critique of human "avidity" (the "nature" both enabling and constantly threatening the patriarchal property System), Hume foregrounds a morbid domestic scene in which coopted "dames" "induce . . . seduce" "children" to violate the mother's body in service to property, materialism. Even within the virtually negligible "Of Avarice," we find a metaphorical microcosm of Hume's seduction-induction model: how human nature hosts conventions which seduce certain beings in order to rationalize their induction to acts of violence on others.

Hume philosophically renders impossible, or at least absurd, the belief in objective "body." He thus counters the philosophy which enables the master-slave dynamic, the incorporation and use of another's body and forced alteration of its experience and experience of self. We can philosophically understand the situation of misogynist violence within convention and its service to political control. At the very
least, Hume's philosophical and common-life concepts of substance and personal identity point to the continuing need to detoxify our thinking of the subject-object model as a hierarchy of mastery and subjection. This model, after all, tenaciously underlies arguments from all alleged angles on the question, "Does marriage require a head?"

Before further elaboration on Hume's descriptions of patriarchal dismemberment of and other violence to the female body, we return to "Of Love and Marriage" for a close look at Hume's version of an original dismemberment and violence: the splitting of an "Androgyne," necessitating marriage and its apparently inevitable tales of woe. "Of Love and Marriage" tells not a romantic tale ("idle fiction") but a mythical truth: that the very source of marriage is violence, a physical dismemberment, betraying a power struggle.

"I am afraid that it is the fault of our sex, if the women be so fond of rule, and that if we did not abuse our authority, they would never think it worth while to dispute it." In "Of Love and Marriage" Hume follows his Scythian women anecdote with this simple hypothesis which then leads into his version of the androgyna myth. But there seems to be no human model of "authority" without eventual "tyranny;" and thus history marches on in a dialectics of power: "Tyrants, we know, produce rebels; and all history informs us, that rebels, when they prevail, are apt to become tyrants in their turn." This human inevitability leads Hume to fantasize: "For this reason, I could wish there were no pretensions to authority on either side; but that every thing was carried on with perfect equality, as between two equal members of the same body." To attempt to "induce" married people to such a fantasy, voluntarily to "embrace those amicable sentiments," Hume employs philosophico-literary (!) seduction: "I shall deliver to them PLATO'S account of the origin of love and marriage" (EMPL 560).

An editor's note to this paragraph tells us that Hume follows "the dialogue by the comic poet Aristophanes" on love, and that he "changes some crucial details."
According to this editor, Aristophanes relates the splitting of three "original sexes": the male-female, and two "composite" sexes, male and female. Hume, however, chooses only the male-female, and "is silent, however, about homosexual love, which results from the splitting of the other composite persons . . . Whereas Hume writes in support of heterosexual love and marriage, Aristophanes deprecates it and praises instead male homosexuality" (560). This editorial commentary is interesting for two main reasons; first, Miller assumes that Hume might also have written in an essay on love about homosexual love--a dubious topic for a popular-forum essayist at a time of "pogroms" and other legal and social persecution against homosexuals in England (Sedgwick 83-5). Also, Miller readily concludes, with the majority of commentators on this essay, that Hume "writes in support of heterosexual love and marriage." This status-quo reading, I argue here, reflects more an assent-fantasy within an existent status quo, than a sensitive attention to Humean rhetoric and tone which may uncover "awkward and dangerous notions" haunting that status quo.

We have observed how occasionally a single term can disrupt the complacent surface of the Humean text.

Mankind . . . were not, in their original, divided into male and female, as at present; but each individual person was a compound of both sexes, and was in himself both husband and wife, melted down into one living creature. This union, no doubt, was very intire, and the parts very well adjusted together, since there resulted a perfect harmony betwixt the male and female, altho' they were obliged to be inseparable companions. (560)

Passing over the "no doubt" and the "perfect" for bigger game, we might focus on that "altho'", rhetorically signifying as it does a disruption within an orderly system. There can be no "perfect" where there is an "altho'." Hume must be talking about an already-conventionalized system, one therefore subject to human frailty. In fact, as
rhetorically disrupted, this particular model breaks down into a part-whole paradox; Hume joins in this androgyna two apparently contradictory first principles of empiricism: (1) that everything that exists, exists in particular; and (2) every notion must be shared in order to be significantly verified and adequately generalized for human and thus social use. Translated into the marriage context, this contradiction can be expressed, "Marriage is a common-life system necessitated by a philosophical truth." We are all discrete, autonomous individuals who for reasons within our "nature" cannot live alone and must form societies.

In this primal wholeness the Androgynes were so perfectly happy, that they "became insolent upon their prosperity, and rebelled against the Gods." Even the Androgyne, that perfect creature, found itself in a power conflict with a superior being--from which resulted the act of violence, the dismemberment. The divine act of disabling the Androgyne's autonomy acknowledged its threat: a god's first requirement for his subjects is subjection and dependence.

Hume continues the story with a description of the split halves' perpetual search for their original perfect complements. They make many mistakes in this effort; upon coming together and discovering a poor fit, "the union was soon dissolved, and each part is set loose again to hunt for its lost half, joining itself to every one whom it meets, by way of trial." This instability that seems to describe romance in late twentieth century America, Hume will attend to in "Of Polygamy and Divorces": this perpetual sexual trial-and-error cannot be permitted if a stable--that is, male-property-guaranteed--society is to be maintained. But the question remains: how to find one's perfect complement? This, certainly, should motivate and inform the marriage decision, the choosing of one single partner for life.

Hume now announces a turn to his own ideas: "Were I disposed to carry on this fiction of PLATO . . . I would do it by the following allegory." Such grammatical indirection signals, as Price has observed elsewhere, Hume's ironic intention.
Layering "allegory" over "fiction" over myth, Hume heavily covers that first and foremost patriarchal institution of marriage with the literary. Having effectively shielded himself, both grammatically and generically, from "serious" implication, he can now proceed to give his version of the problems imperiling this institution. What follows is very serious philosophy, cleverly disguised and adorned (in women's clothing).

Hume introduces new dramatis personae to the myth. After "quelling their pride and ambition by so severe an operation," Jupiter takes pity on the male and female halves, and sends "Love" and "Hymen" to help repair the broken wholes "in the best manner possible." These two started off effectively, but soon "dissension arose betwixt them" due to the influence of their "counsellors," "Care" ("prospects of futurity; a settlement, family, children, servants") and "Pleasure" ("momentary gratification"). Hymen and Care ultimately prove the "irreconcileable enemies" of Love and Pleasure:

No sooner had Love fixed upon two halves, which he was cementing together, and forming to a close union, but Care insinuates himself, and bringing HYMEN along with him, dissolves the union produced by love, and joins each half to some other half, which he had provided for it. To be revenged of this, Pleasure creeps in upon a pair already joined by HYMEN; and calling Love to his assistance, they under hand contrive to join each half by secret links, to halves, which HYMEN was wholly unacquainted with. (561-62)

This "allegory" of natural attraction preempted by material consideration; of unhappy, mismatched couples seeking relief in extramarital liaisons—in short, this tale of "amorous appetite" thwarted by arranged marriage and refacilitated by adultery—transparently veils an obvious fact of eighteenth-century English life. The solution to the "pernicious consequences" of this sexual chaos Hume proposes in Jupiter's
intervention and commandeering of the situation by force: he "ordered an immediate reconcilement betwixt LOVE and HYMEN, as the only expedient for giving happiness to mankind;" likewise, "he laid his strict injunctions on them never to join any halves without consulting their favourites Care and Pleasure, and obtaining the consent of both to the conjunction." "Happiness" in marriage, the Androgyne, must, it seems, be forcefully legislated by a higher power. This Hobbesian resolution appears finally in conditional terms:

Where this order is strictly observed, the Androgyne is perfectly restored, and the human race enjoy the same happiness as in their primaeval state. The seam is scarce perceived that joins the two beings; but both of them combine to form one perfect and happy creature. (562)

Thus Hume concludes his essay "in support of heterosexual love and marriage;" we must conclude, however, that what Hume "supports" is the conventional enforcement of monogamy, rather than the blissful natural perfection of the marital union—a perfection which apparently must, in common life, entail the loss of at least one of the individuals in that union. And, on what grounds can we believe that he actually "supports" this enforced truce?

Hume's Androgyne is an anti-empirical creature; "one" cannot verify or understand anything, and certainly cannot be "happy." Perfect Humean happiness, as we have previously seen, is possible only within a private context and as the free choice of companionship. "Perfect" felicity cannot occur in common life, a fallen realm of division and contention. The (hu)man's highest achievement would be the natural, sympathetic flow of reason among like minds which nonetheless differ, discuss and debate.

In such enforced wholeness as described above for the Androgyne, two entities are required to think and act as one. While "two" may have in their very difference been able to come together and form the first society (as a cooperative working-
together), Hume's "one" does not define a particular, working within a productive part-whole system— but rather a nonsignifying space where no mental work can be done. "Perfect complementarity" cannot permit the difference, conflict, experimentation and resolution that constitute the real, social world. Nor can the absolute authority of one half of a whole, a power situation which simply collapses the "two" of difference back into a nonsignifying "one."

But Hume tells us in the Treatise that he is no proponent of "primaeval states;" he refers to such concepts as "idle fiction":

'Tis utterly impossible for men to remain any considerable time in that savage condition, which precedes society; but that his very first state and situation may justly be esteem'd social. This, however, hinders not, but that philosophers may, if they please, extend their reasoning to the suppos'd state of nature; provided they allow it to be a mere philosophical fiction, which never had, and never cou'd have any reality . . . This state of nature, therefore, is to be regarded as a mere fiction, not unlike that of the golden age, which poets have invented; only with this difference, that the former is describ'd as full of war, violence and injustice; whereas the latter is painted out to us, as the most charming and peaceable condition, that can possibly be imagin'd. (T 493)

Juxtaposing these two fictional scenarios, Hume informs us that there is no real difference between them; violence and charm, injustice and peace co-exist as difference within the social body. The conjugal body, as the microcosm of the social, embodies this difference—an inevitable split which, in common life, entails a power struggle. If difference might be recognized and maintained as "difference," then marriage without one party's domination might be conceivable. But in patriarchy, difference is necessarily construed as hierarchy; and in patriarchal convention, hierarchy is
legislated, enforced--and gendered. The Androgyne appears as a fictive gloss over the political reality.

Following Marx, Eve Sedgwick suggests that "the function of ideology is to conceal contradictions in the status quo by, for instance, recasting them into a diachronic narrative of origins;" she gives as "a nicely condensed example of ideological construction in this sense," the ever-popular phrase, "A man's home is his castle," which reflects an economically more concrete (and therefore more secure) feudal model of patriarchal power (14). In Hume's essays discussed here, he discovers the "contradictions in the status quo" of marriage: that in spite of overwhelming experiential evidence to the contrary, cultural fictions define marriage as a liberal economy of equality and mutual satisfaction. Through the "literary" forum of the essays, Hume responds to this status-quo with counter-fictions embracing a range of type and degree of "disguise" devices, including rhetorical "roughening," irony and even parody. He assails patriarchy's first institution by a "feminine" text working from and toward--and sometimes around--an individual's actual, observable experience in marriage.

We have thus far examined a number of motivations Hume might have had for opposing patriarchy. John Valdimir Price also finds "Of Love and Marriage" an ironic critique of marriage, a critique reflecting Hume's philosophical and common-life distress with this patriarchal locus of control. First, Price sees Hume as "impatien[t] with spurious distinctions over the abilities of the two sexes," distinctions on which inequalities in marital rights and roles were legally and "morally" based. Then, too, Hume seems to have "sympathized with their plight . . . the unfair and sometimes inhumane treatment women received in a marriage agreement." But this humane Hume had to follow simultaneously an equally passionate second impulse--the seductions of authorial fame. In this context, Hume "knew the role of the male writer was not to disparage" the status quo, the male readership, which would establish his reputation
(15). "Of Polygamy and Divorces," the essay subject of the following chapters, appears as the strange grafting, not of complementary gendered natures--but of feminism, as a vivid expose of marital inequality and violence; and misogyny, as a putative conventional defense of monogamy. The substantial and rhetorical complexities of Hume's simultaneous seduction of two opposing ideologies forcefully challenge our critical capabilities and induce us to confront our immersion within and discomfort with binary logic. Although perhaps repugnant to our philosophical sensibilities, the Androgyne, as a first mover of binary logic, has been very seductive to thought and historically useful within patriarchal hegemony.
Scenes From a Marriage--A Man's Castle

"Of Polygamy and Divorces" (hereinafter referred to as "OPD") appeared in 1742 in the Second Volume of Hume's initial essay publication, Essays Moral and Political. This publication proved very popular with the general public and immediately went through several editions. At this time, the woman-appeal essays appeared undifferentiated among those of both EMP volumes. Unlike the other woman-appeal essays, "OPD" was retained, included in Hume's final preparations of his essay editions for posterity. Why did Hume preserve this essay which, in its subject matter of love and marriage, would seem to be, in M. A. Box's words, "directed largely to woman readers"? What exactly made its woman-appeal less vulnerable to rejection?

As one of the few commentaries whatsoever on this essay, Box's treatment of it merits some scrutiny. He implies that this essay's stylistic superiority to the other "moral" or woman-appeal essays partly defines its suitability for permanent inclusion. More significantly, following traditional patriarchal assumptions about what makes for a suitable piece, Box uses Hume's own categories, defined in the Enquiries (I, i, "Of the Different Species of Philosophy"), to compare the "accurate and abstruse" essays (the retained or "political" ones) with the "easy and obvious" woman-appeal rejects. "OPD" falls somewhere in-between, but the balance is tipped at the last moment by its partial resemblance to a patriarchal paradigm: "The prose of the relevant passages [he does not specifically designate these] contrasts with that of the rest of the essay in being almost legalistic. Although "OPD" cannot be called accurate and abstruse [a deficiency], it is only impurely easy and obvious [faint but compensatory praise]" (133).

Box's observations line up with an observable general critical tendency, to regard any text which addresses or appeals to women as "easy and obvious." This
philosophical category embraces attributes which have been traditionally associated with femininity: "This species of philosophers paint [virtue] in the most amiable colours; borrowing all helps from poetry and eloquence, and treating their subject in an easy and obvious manner, and such as is best fitted to please the imagination, and engage the affections" (E 5). The "abstruse" disciplines of science and philosophy--those calling upon the "reason" and "understanding," and "aiming at the approbation of the learned and the wise" (E 6)--have been masculine provinces, while the "easy and obvious" bellettristic fashions have appealed to feminine tastes (hence the favorite critical sport of Addison-bashing). Box has a ready nose for "banter," which he believes to distinguish the woman-appeal essays (in his view, "Of Love and Marriage" "consists of about half banter and half allegorical fable" (130)). The "banter" label provides a readymade formula for writing-off essays featuring this alleged frivolity. But how does Box excuse "OPD," which also "features a good deal of banter with the ladies" (albeit this mercifully was "largely excised from later publications")? In this essay we also find "a plentiful erudition that draws illustrations from diverse cultures and ages;" but, more importantly, "the banter and erudition are integrated into argumentation, which pervades the essay" (130-31). Here we might infer Box's belief that the presence of such "argumentation" would approximate the "political" thrust requisite for retention.

Another reason for this essay's retention may be in fact (and not merely inference) a political one: that this essay is, ultimately, again in Box's words, a "perfectly conventional" thesis, "that indissoluble, monogamous marriages are best." Later on I will explore the politics of retention as a capitulation to convention. My decision to postpone to a later chapter a close look at Hume's conventionality--associated here, for argument's and experience's sakes, with misogyny, "sexism"--admits both my own seduction and a seductive strategy on my part. I have already described the grounds for my perception of a subversive or even feminist Hume; this
perception actually phenomenally preceded my attention to the counter-discourse of misogyny in Hume. Initially, I resolved the "which came first" problem on confusion, a good enough starting-point for a study of apparent contradiction. My retrospective of this entire study remains haunted by this question of whether I sought, or stumbled upon, feminist subversion in Hume. ("OPD" was, in fact, the first Hume text I read.) Whatever the case, my decision to foreground a feminist-sympathetic Hume within the "OPD" patriarchal subversion-submission inquiry certainly denotes a political stand within my project of bringing-to-light a neglected Hume, the essayist as woman-appeal philosopher. Because writing, and reading, short of the split-page device, are necessarily linear processes, I can only argue from the hindsight of my project in Chapters Three, Four and Five here that subversion and submission must be (re)considered as coapparent in Hume's dual seduction in "OPD."

I will first deal with a particular complexity of "OPD," a function of what Box characterizes as a "stray[ing] somewhat from easy, obvious philosophy" (131). Where Box sees this diversion only in the "preliminaries" of the essay, I see Hume "straying" throughout. Box has given the key word in "integrated," where he describes the collusion of "banter" and "erudition" in "argumentation." This integration mode not only strays from the easy and obvious, but generates some fairly intense paradox or irony. And this irony complicates, even compromises, the essay's conventionality. Not the least ironic aspect of this essay is the fact that the "easy, obvious philosophy" carries the conventional patriarchalism of the text, while the "straying" proves subversive, or even feminist.

Unlike in the cases of the other woman-appeal essays, the "banter" and "erudition" here--conventionally translatable as the "feminine" and "masculine"--cannot be readily distinguished. In fact, it is difficult to ascertain where, exactly, this "banter" occurs. Box gives no examples of it, except for his parenthetical reference to some excised material. As I will shortly demonstrate, I believe that this excised
"banter" may prove the site of some of Hume's most philosophically critical gestures. The same may hold true for the "erudition." In fact, in the body of "OPD" what seems to be "banter" appears more directed to men, while the "erudition" operates in the philosophical sense as an appeal to women, or more specifically, to feminism. The key to disclosing Hume's latent feminism in this essay, and to untangling the gendered paradox of his "argumentation," may lie in the gender of the reader--or, more theoretically, whether one reads as-a-woman, or as-a-man.

Certain readers can, apparently, readily identify some feminist appeal in "OPD." Annette Baier discovers in this essay a case against husbandly tyranny in marriage, not only in Hume's obvious illustrations of the "odiousness" of harems and other Eastern systems (well-known hotbeds of masculine tyranny over women) but also in such assertions (however indirectly launched: "it may be urged with better reason") as the following: "this sovereignty of the male is a real usurpation, and destroys that nearness of rank, not to say equality, which nature has established between the sexes. We are by nature their lovers, their friends, their patrons: would we willingly exchange such endearing appellations for the barbarous title of master and tyrant?" (qtd. in Baier, "Good . . . Women" 14.) (Christine Battersby has taken Hume to task for this statement, by pointing out that "the phrase 'not to say equality' is grammatically ambiguous" (305).) Box reasonably argues, it seems, for such cases: "It is possible to sustain our objection to his condescension and yet refrain from quite condemning him for not being in advance of his epoch in the treatment of women" (121). Baier also considers Hume's conclusions against divorce: "Nothing is more dangerous than to unite two persons so closely in all their interests and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total" (EMPL 189, qtd. in Baier). By interpreting this "rendering" as "that exclusive sexual fidelity Hume thought necessary for rendering the union entire and total" ("Good . . . Women" 14)-by assigning only one possibility, mutual sexual fidelity, for this rendering--Baier finds in
Hume a champion against the double standard. Another possible interpretation—the more likely one, traditionally speaking—quickly reverses Baier's ideological implication of Hume's entire and total union: since no two persons can share all interests entirely and totally, then such a perfection must entail the absorption of one person's will into the other. Here, of course, we find ourselves back in the heart of the patriarchal institution, monogamous marriage, where in general the wife must find herself absorbed. It appears that the ultimate utility of this passage must finally occur as a function of reader desire or ideology (Hume would be the first to say that behind every ideology, there is particular desire).

Such hermeneutical paradox characterizes "OPD." In the broadest sense, this essay exemplifies the special demand Hume makes on his reader to work through double gesture or apparent contradiction, typically generalized as Humean "irony." Echoing Hume, Donald W. Livingston summarizes this demand:

In most of [Hume's] philosophical works his thought is put into some sort of dialectical and dramatic form where there is an attempt to 'come to terms with principles, which are contrary to each other, which are both embrac'd by the mind, and which are unable mutually to destroy each other'. (36)

I find in Hume's words here an (however unintentional) encapsulation of the Humean philosophy of marriage. The male-female binary, as conventionally defined, and confined, in the institution of monogamous marriage, finds itself "contrary" but "embrac'd." "Unable mutually to destroy each other," for personal but primarily societal reasons, the two persons must co-exist in a relationship which should be a continuous "coming to terms"—but where the terms, one or both find to their inevitable frustration, are already come to and prescribed conventionally.

Reading "OPD," I attempt to identify the contrary embracing principles which Box has defined as "banter" as woman-appeal, and "erudition" as man-appeal—and
which make up the "argumentation" not only holding this text coherently if problematically together, but also lifting it up out of the rejected category. Identifying and analyzing this uneasy symbiosis might teach us a great deal about a number of problems: Hume's simultaneous and sometimes cross-purposes as a philosopher and a bellettrist; his gendered relationships with his readers and the "ambassador" essay form; and, his apparently simultaneous "sexism" and "feminism" and the ontological, ideological and textual implications of such paradox. In any case, we do here again recognize the centrality of marriage and gender relationships, metaphorical or real, to Hume's philosophical system. Hume was, unquestionably, less able to pass over the gender question than his philosophical and political predecessors and contemporaries. In the case of gender, he was unable to come to philosophical terms with common-life conventions; he seems in some texts equally unable to rest easy with common-life gender inequalities and injustices.

Box finds a tripartite structure in the "reasoning" of "OPD": "preliminaries, argument over the comparative merits of polygamy and monogamy, and argument over where it would be good to allow divorce" (131). I find a different progression, one proceeding from conventional truism but increasingly gathering subversive force, to the end of threatening from within its putative status-quo argument. I will attempt to discover the validity, if any, of Hume's concluding paragraph:

The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage. (EMPL 190) the "perfectly conventional thesis" that Box finds. Box locates "straying" only in what he defines as "preliminaries," deeming Hume's "supporting arguments" perfectly conventional as well. I wish to turn Box's schema inside-out. By cross-reading this essay with the Treatise, Book 3, Part 2 (Box observes that the essay is "philosophically . . . all of a piece with the political philosophy of book 3, part 2 in the Treatise" (131)), in particular the section, "Of the origin of justice and property," I intend to
prove Hume's preliminaries perfectly conventional and his supporting arguments subversive, or at least potentially so.

We might eventually conclude that the "accurate and abstruse" leanings of this essay derive from its subversive or latent feminist content. So, what has been perceived as "banter" tossed out for the eighteenth-century woman reader might also prove to be solid nourishment for the twentieth-century feminist. What might be taken for common journalism might also be seen to carry Hume's most deeply philosophical message in this text. This appearance of "contrary principles" serving two opposing ideologies from the same text makes for a stellar case of Humean irony, a case which can be at least somewhat resolved through an understanding of the philosophy/common life play in this essay.

Hume introduces "OPD" as follows:

As marriage is an engagement entered into by mutual consent, and has for its end the propagation of the species, it is evident, that it must be susceptible of all the variety of conditions, which consent establishes, provided they be not contrary to this end. (EMPL 181)

Carole Pateman has investigated the problems involved in assumptions of "consent" in classic social contract theory—the main problem, of course, being that the woman's "consent" figures but very little, if any, in the grand scheme. So Hume's "mutual consent" either betrays his blindness to this obvious fact of his own social context, or represents a fantasy common to Lockean social contract philosophy, an example of what Hume was to call in the Treatise an "idle fiction" (T 494). The second term of the argument, "and has for its end the propagation of the species," though equally weighted with the first by the conjunctive "and," actually proves to be antithetical to the first term. "Consent" already implies civilization, society, contract (as Pateman points out), while the "propagation of the species" by virtue of its very rhetoric here, if nothing else, signifies a wholly natural, even animal (and therefore pre-contractual)
urge. Simply stated, Hume declares here that marriage is a civilized state entered into for pre-civilized goals. Moreover, the animal function dominates the civilized function, which "is evident" by the remainder of Hume's assertion: "all the variety of conditions, which consent establishes" refers to the near-infinite variability of civilized convention—that is, short of a convention which would thwart the natural, animal end of "propagation."

M. A. Box reads this opening statement as unconventional, by pairing it with another Hume makes several paragraphs later:

Municipal laws are a supply to the wisdom of each individual; and, at the same time, by restraining the natural liberty of men, make private interest submit to the interest of the public. All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature; though they are not all equally convenient, or equally useful to society (EMPL 183, quoted in Box, 132).

Box reads these comments as unconventional because anti-"superstitious" and therefore anti-Christian. He finds that Hume's arguments in this essay are to be "carried out in terms of the principle of utility, without appeal to supernatural sanctions and prohibitions" (132). Box does not define here "the principle of utility," but this obviously denotes the preservation of offspring, and therefore the perpetuation and facilitation of society; the Hume statement occurs in the middle of a paragraph describing how "nature herself, being the supreme legislator," makes sure that all of her creatures act most effectively to this end of propagation/preservation. She accomplishes this by endowing man with reason, which in turn prompts him to obey her dictates by restraining his natural liberty and submitting his private interest to that of the public. Thereby, Hume circles back again to nature: "All regulations, therefore, on this head are equally lawful, and equally conformable to the principles of nature."
Within the narrow focus of Hume's critique of Christian "superstition," Box correctly finds that "in the preliminaries he strays somewhat from easy, obvious philosophy." But what Box ignores is the deeper "philosophy" here which is perfectly conventional, easy and obvious—in that it reflects classic social contract philosophy which "obscure[s] the origin of the family in the relation between husband and wife. The fact that men and women enter into a marriage contract—an 'original' contract that constitutes marriage and the family—and are husbands and wives before they are fathers and mothers is forgotten" (Pateman 27). We have seen above how Hume's opening paragraph "strays somewhat" from the "easy and obvious" mostly in its predication on a false assumption (mutuality of consent implied in the elision of the parties' gender-political situations) and a cart-before-the-horse assertion (culture preceding nature).

We can now look at Hume's version of the "original contract" in Book III, Part II, "Of the origin of justice and property," in the Treatise. What I would like to show in a comparison of "OPD" to this section is (1) that the utilitarian notion of submitting private interest to public, apotheosized in the marriage arrangement, is perfectly conventional social contract philosophy and is as such presented by Hume in this section of the Treatise; but that (2) "OPD," while ostentiously carrying this purpose into the common-life vehicle of the essay, actually underscores the "idle fiction" on which that social contract philosophy is based. As we have seen, Hume openly declares his anti-contractualism in the retained essay, "Of the Original Contract": "A theory of this kind . . . leads to paradoxes, repugnant to the common sentiments of mankind, and to the practice and opinion of all nations and all ages" (EMPL 486). We might, then, consider this problem as representative of those slippages inevitable to the passage from "philosophy" to "common life"—where the latter will always provide some particular details or "reality principles," derived from "observable realities," as Box reminds us (132), which challenge the authority of the former. Hume ultimately
dramatizes with the test case of marriage, in both the *Treatise* and "OPD," how philosophical speculation may not withstand the challenge of common experience.

We will move here from a starting-point in the essay, the first sentence of paragraph two: "A man, in conjoining himself to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement: In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their subsistence and education," to our exploration of the apparently analogous, apparently conventional philosophy of the *Treatise*. From there, we will return to the essay, the second sentence of paragraph two: "When he has performed these two parts of duty, no one can reproach him with injustice or injury." I will show how Hume's former sentence, derived from and reasserting the *Treatise* philosophy, turns on itself to betray a fundamental gap in that philosophy. Then, returning to the absolute judgment of the latter sentence, I will attempt to prove how in "OPD," while Hume may have accomplished Box's perceived "perfectly conventional" thesis, "that indissoluble, monogamous marriages are best," he also demonstrates that he is not a perfect utilitarian: that in marriage of any kind the private interest of the principle parties gives over at a very high price. And I will finally argue that Hume was well aware that the female party in most cases pays her price at the expense of her personhood itself—an empirically untenable position as well as an inhumane one. Much "injustice and injury" might be performed outside the parameters of this simplistic prohibition here ("no one may reproach him etc."); nothing is said about the relationship between the marriage partners. Monogamous marriage, the ideal common-life convention for a stable "society," may well be philosophically quite undesirable, fraught with repugnant paradoxes, for the individual and especially for the wife.

We may be stuck at the end with a Hume who found no other system preferable to monogamous marriage for the ends of a stable society—under strictly patriarchal utilitarian constraints. But such marriage should then resemble a mythological
impossibility, like the "idle fictions" of the golden-age myth. Like the androgyna, this conjugal entity should be a seamless union of two individuals. With its severe form-content strain, "OPD" shows wide gaps in this idle philosophical fiction. When the essay ends with a flourish on this concluding paragraph:

The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage.

we may consider it appropriate to understand this assertion by re-casting it: does the exclusion of "murder" and "cancer" sufficiently recommend "suicide" as the rational alternative mode of dying?

"A man, in conjoining himself to a woman, is bound to her according to the terms of his engagement: In begetting children, he is bound, by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for their subsistence and education." Elaborating in paragraph two on his introductory statements of "OPD," Hume continues to offer rather confusing terms and terminology, and some interesting refinements. Now, the "mutual consent" is at least properly grounded in the "terms of his engagement," terms which may have originated in his free will but to which he now finds himself "bound." Likewise, he is now "bound" not merely to "propagate," but also, "by all the ties of nature and humanity, to provide for [his childrens'] subsistence and education." So, a marriage that begins in "consent" (/contract/culture) for the purpose of serving the ends of "propagation" (/nature) entails the regulation of nature to the ends of culture. "Did not human laws restrain the natural liberty of men, every particular marriage would be as different as contracts or bargains of any other kind or species," Hume concludes paragraph two. In other words, did not culture decree otherwise, "marriage" could include the possibility of terminating the consent with the act of propagation--or returning to the momentary gratifications sought by animals--or men--in their "natural liberty." But because nature has endowed man with reason, he sees (somehow!) that his offspring may not survive unless the propagative embrace somehow anticipates the
lifelong demands of parental concern. But why, in the simple "state of nature," should he care about a remote future event of which he may have little or even no awareness? Why should the amorous act betwixt the sexes presage, in the minds of its performers, a future of care? (See Treatise Book II, Part III, "Of contiguity, and distance in space and time" for Hume's discussion of man's natural preference for "contiguous objects" over those "remote.")¹

So Hume continues the dizzying circularity of "nature" and "culture" in the classic tradition of social contract philosophy. Carole Pateman has observed that in this tradition, every good social contract must have been preceded by a sexual contract, a logically impossible sort of pre-civilized, civilized consent between a man and woman in a "state of nature." Pateman then puzzles over the fact that this mysterious reverse-logic is entirely taken for granted and elided from further considerations of the gender relationship in society. Most social contractarians disturbingly presuppose the "natural" subjection of female to male and forget that the woman, originally a reasonable being, must have consented to this inferior position. And, Pateman dwells on the overwhelming question, why should the rational, equal individual/woman have done so? What, short of her innate inferiority—which would violate the most fundamental presupposition of equality and reason in social contract origins—would cause her to accept an eternity-long second-class citizenship (or even enslavement)?

Hume's particular presentation of the "original [sexual] contract" story indirectly but fully illuminates the mythic or fictional status of such philosophy; we can follow both specific lines and inferences of his untraditional awareness of the gender problem infecting this myth. These strains and pains appear in the apparent contradictions, ironies, slippages of terms and other problems which plague Hume's reader; not the least of these is the slipperiness of the term "nature": not a characteristic Humean "slipperiness" in clever paradox, but rather a real definitional puzzle. These problems occur in the Treatise section, "Of the origin of justice and
property," to be examined here; however, in the essay "OPD," Hume seems to have brought them within a kind of focus, of rhetorical control which suggests a new strategy on his part—a critical moment. In the common-life milieu of the essay, Hume could bring in the challenge of "real life" to confront the philosophers' "idle fictions" in an ironic resolution.

Hume does not in "OPD" directly announce his program to criticize social contract philosophy and thus patriarchal monogamy. The reader must have some awareness of the ironic Hume, in order to gain access to Hume's subversive intent. Reader desire must be excited to a motivating passion for the ironist's challenge. Naturally, the reader most motivated to mine the latent criticism from the irony would be the one suffering within the presumably criticised institution. The belief that Hume does not set out contradictions or paradoxes, such as the ones analyzed below, for mere display—much less out of error—will help the passionately motivated reader through them. Her passion coupled with her sensitivity to the "literary" Hume should lead her through the web of contradiction to the politics of the irony.

In the Treatise, Hume's thesis about the origins of society commences perfectly conventionally: that man's wants as an individual are too numerous and severe for him to remain for any time in a "state of nature," alone and without society. However, Hume's elaboration on this origin deviates from the conventional presumptive gloss over the gender issue, and is worth quoting at length here:

But in order to form society, 'tis requisite not only that it be advantageous, but also that men be sensible of its advantages; and 'tis impossible, in their wild uncultivated state, that by study and reflexion alone, they should ever be able to attain this knowledge. Most fortunately, therefore, there is conjoin'd to those necessities, whose remedies are remote and obscure, another necessity, which having a present and more obvious remedy, may justly be regarded as the
first and original principle of human society. This necessity is no other than that natural appetite betwixt the sexes, which unites them together, and preserves their union till a new tye takes place in their concern for their common offspring. This new concern becomes also a principle of union betwixt the parents and offspring, and forms a more numerous society; where the parents govern by the advantage of their superior strength and wisdom, and at the same time are restrain'd in the exercise of their authority by that natural affection, which they bear their children. (T 486) (emphasis added)

Annette Baier has found Hume's focus on familial relations a controlling reality as well as metaphor, so much so that "the natural family is the root concept dominating all Hume's thought, generating the explanatory principles he appeals to" ("Helping Hume" 170). This is only logical if the "first and original principle of human society" can be philosophically located in the family (whose enduring epistemological significance the tradition of Western academic philosophy has principally ignored or undermined to prefer man's public relationships and institutions). Baier observes that Hume assigns the strongest possible associative or relational sense to that of consanguinity;² and, relatedly, he assigns "present and more obvious" stimuli the stronger influence over human motivation.

Hume gives focused and emphatic attention to that first link in human society, "that natural appetite betwixt the sexes;" he gives this appetite a kind of close philosophical attention by introducing the problem which, unnoticed, haunts the contractualists. The problem appears in a split marked by commas in the relative clause: "which unites them together, and preserves their union, till a new tye takes place in their concern for their common offspring." How is this union "preserved"? The problem can be stated simply enough: until the infant is born, there can be no "consanguinity," but only "that natural appetite." In other words, the gap lies between
a "natural" act of animal gratification and the "social" motivation produced by ties of love and concern. Just how does that "natural appetite" "preserve their union" for nine months' time?

Hume suggests (in various texts) two inevitable obstacles to that preservation, both of which are indigenous to "the natural liberty of men": selfishness, and something even more fundamental which Hume refers to in "OPD" as the "disorders of love," the craving for sexual variety. First, his remarks on the power of the selfish urge are unconditional and absolute: this urge is "insatiable, perpetual, universal, and directly destructive of society . . . 'Tis certain, that no affection of the human mind has both a sufficient force, and a proper direction to counter-balance the love of gain, and render men fit members of society, by making them abstain from the possessions of others" (T 492). Hume finds that only a "natural" impulse in man to control this selfish impulse, "to preserve peace among his children" and then thus improve upon this peaceful principle "as the society enlarges," could explain why the selfish impulse does not perpetually triumph and result in anarchy—which is obviously, and by common observation, not the case: "If all this appear evident, as it certainly must, we may conclude, that 'tis utterly impossible for men to remain any considerable time in that savage condition, which precedes society; but that his very first state and situation may justly be esteem'd social" (T 493). Hume's judgments on the control of this primary ruling passion of selfishness can be seen as a leap of faith, a superimposition of the "social" over the "natural"--and grounded as these judgments are in a presupposed innate awareness, on the part of "natural" man, of parenthood and its perpetual commitments, they cannot explain why the selfish passion might be suppressed long enough to keep one "natural" human being for nine months with another in a kind of "social" bond.

Hume offers a possible remedy to this gappy logic in his transition from the concept of "justice"--that sense that I, as do others, have the right to some of the scarce
commodities around me—to that of "property": "After this convention, concerning abstinence from the possessions of others, is enter'd into, and every one has acquir'd a stability in his possessions, there immediately arise the ideas of justice and injustice; as also those of property, right, and obligation." This notion of property is absolutely essential and proves to be the true goal of all reasoning thus far; again, Hume's judgment deserves quoting at length:

No one can doubt, that the convention for the distinction of property, and for the stability of possession, is of all circumstances the most necessary to the establishment of human society, and that after the agreement for the fixing and observing of this rule, there remains little or nothing to be done towards settling a perfect harmony and concord. All the other passions, beside this of interest, are either easily restrain'd, or are not of such pernicious consequence, when indulg'd. (T 490-91)

Hume goes on to cite vanity, pity, love, envy and revenge as these negligible other passions which might be "easily restrain'd" or relegated to little consequence. It is striking that, although he has tried to work the steps carefully through from "that natural appetite" to "property," the end result is the same: "the first and original principle of human society" proves to consist of a lightning-speed transition from lust to property, nature to culture. All human feelings in the (scarcely perceptible) interim serve this end. And this is all "perfectly conventional;" as Rae Blanchard succinctly reminds us: "The prevailing conception of marriage in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was . . . that of . . . a social and economic contract, designed to protect private property and male inheritance."³ Private, "selfish passions" played little role—unless a disruptive one—in this scheme.

And, significantly, we note that Hume elides the passion of lust, "the natural appetite," from his above list of allegedly insignificant passions. In actuality, this particular passion which constitutes the (presumably now-negligible) pre-property
original impulse, ironically proves deadly to its component "property," when liberated from that component and re-activated. And this possibility Hume well recognizes and deals with exclusively in a later chapter of the Treatise, "Of chastity and modesty," although he anticipates this chapter at the end of this one under concern here: "As publick praise and blame encrease our esteem for justice; so private education and instruction contribute to the same effect . . . [parents] are induc'd to inculcate on their children, from their earliest infancy, the principles of probity, and teach them to regard the observance of those rules, by which society is maintain'd, as worthy and honourable, and their violation as base and infamous" (T 500-01). As his commentators have duly noted, Hume regards "chastity and modesty" as exemplary virtues of the artificial kind, derived and imposed to ensure the most stable maintenance of society by controlling, in the name of property, the natural appetite of a key piece of that property, women.

Social contract philosophy has rewarded men, at least, for their control of their natural appetite in stable society: they are permitted to be the possessors of the property—women. Property turns out to be the naturally-motivated artifice that regulates, from the outset, the stability of "the new-establish'd union": "that after the agreement for the fixing and observing of this rule, there remains little or nothing to be done towards settling a perfect harmony and concord," even with regards to that natural appetite betwixt the sexes. Hume, however, does not in the Treatise make this invidious observation, that husbands gain a property in their wives (Addison defines why a man so values female chastity: it gives him "a Property in the Person he loves, and consequently endears her to him in all things" (Spectator 1: 99)). But he avoids doing so at the expense of producing a self-contradiction, or at least his own "idle fiction."

Hume parrots the conventional wisdom that "if every man had a tender regard for another, or if nature supplied abundantly all our wants and desires, that the jealousy of
interest, which justice supposes, could no longer have place; nor would there be any occasion for those distinctions and limits of property and possession, which at present are in use among mankind" (T 494). Philosophical speculations on a supposed "state of nature" ("full of war, violence and injustice") or "golden age" ("the most charming and most peaceable condition, that can possibly be imagin'd") necessarily arise from an "idle fiction," a for-better-or-worse fantasy of pre-social man. Hume's "ifs" point to the fantastical status of these notions. In order to underscore this fictionality, Hume refers to a golden-age scenario never observed, or observable, in human history or experience: "Even the distinction of mine and thine was banish'd from that happy race of mortals, and carry'd with them the very notions of property and obligation, justice and injustice."

"But," this idle fiction "yet deserves our attention, because nothing can more evidently shew the origin of those virtues, which are the subjects of our present enquiry." "Those virtues" lie, evidently, in the capacity to refrain from the violation of others and to preserve peace through the careful maintenance of property rights. Thus, men might come to show and to know "benevolence" in human society: "Encrease to a sufficient degree the benevolence of men, or the bounty of nature, and you render justice useless, by supplying its place with much nobler virtues, and more valuable blessings." Now, to ground this point empirically, Hume appeals to common life:

Nor need we have recourse to the fictions of poets to learn this; but beside the reason of the thing, may discover the same truth by common experience and observation. 'Tis easy to remark, that a cordial affection renders all things common among friends; and that married people in particular mutually lose their property, and are unacquainted with the mine and thine, which are so necessary, and yet cause such disturbance in human society. (T 495)
We must, it seems, call into question Hume's "common experience and observation" claim. In a society where property settlements figured largely in marriage decisions, and where the wife lost all legal claim to the property she may have brought into the marriage and effectively became the chattel of her husband,⁴ where, do we suppose, did Hume make such observations? Also, on what empirical grounds does Hume establish that all marriages involve "increased benevolence" between the partners, or increased "bounty of nature" (perhaps in the form of unlimited sexual availability: "when there is such a plenty of any things as satisfies all the desires of men")? After establishing the fact of the conjugal "golden age," Hume concludes this paragraph by returning to his "if"-clauses: "if men were supplied with every thing in the same abundance, or if every one had the same affection and tender regard for every one as for himself; justice and injustice would be equally unknown among mankind" (T 495).

Hume is fascinatingly inconsistent in his mirror-presentation here of an impossible fiction, and then a report from "common experience and observation" which turns out to be indistinguishable from that fiction, both content-wise and rhetorically. But what seems to be inconsistent in the philosophical work, or at least logically strained for the sake of argument, takes on a new mood in the essay-version, "OPD."

I have described Hume's "preliminaries" in this essay as the conventional circular argument that, although marriage must certainly take as many forms as human convention can discover, all convention must serve the ends of "propagation" and nurture of progeny--translatable as male legacy and property interest in general. According to Box, the ensuing discussion of polygamy and divorce constitutes "supporting arguments" for the "perfectly conventional" thesis, "that indissoluble, monogamous marriages are best." I will address in some detail the nature of these "supporting arguments" directly; immediately I will concentrate on testing Box's judgment, based as it must be on a ready acceptance of Hume's concluding paragraph:
"The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage."

The question intrudes itself: "best"--for whom? or what? I have previously indicated the purely rhetorical status of Hume's concluding terms; Hume has simply held up three terms and asserted the undesirability of two of them. Like Box's "best," Hume's "recommends" touches empty air: logically speaking, the exclusion of polygamy and divorces means no more than just that--these two conditions are undesirable. So, how are our present European practices "recommended," exactly? Hume has, indeed, offered some observations on the desirability of the monogamous relationship. However, if we closely examine the content and rhetoric of these passages, we find an intensification of the same empirical impossibilities, logical strains and rhetorical legerdemain that threaten the reasoned surface of Hume's Treatise philosophy.

These moments occur in Hume's "three unanswerable objections" (EMPL 188) against divorce. "Having rejected polygamy, and matched one man with one woman" (187), but considered the possibility of allowing divorce, Hume reasons as follows: "First, What must become of the children, upon the separation of the parents?" Here, Hume's utilitarian reasoning follows-up on his original thesis, that nurture of children must be the true goal of marriage, and seems truly, as Hume proposes it, "unanswerable." Given the conventional argument that life is hard and naturally full of "inconveniences" imposed from all corners, "shall we seek to multiply those inconveniences, by multiplying divorces, and putting it in the power of parents, upon every caprice, to render their posterity miserable?" (188) Such a "capricious" action as divorce imperils an entire generation, "posterity"--and thus patriarchy itself--and must be eschewed for society's sake.

Hume's other two arguments against divorce focus on the individual's experience of marriage and become provocatively "answerable" to the reader alert for irony.
These two arguments betray a significant shift in tone, from the tightly logical and irrefutable to the uncertain and even flawed. Hume is still arguing from necessity, but here the necessity deviates from the utilitarian to the psychological:

Secondly, If it be true, on the one hand, that the heart of man naturally delights in liberty, and hates every thing to which it is confined; it is also true, on the other, that the heart of man naturally submits to necessity, and soon loses an inclination, when there appears an absolute impossibility of gratifying it. These principles of human nature, you'll say, are contradictory: But what is man but a heap of contradictions?

Here Hume overtly serves up one of his beloved "contradictions" with a rhetorical flourish which threatens to dismiss the problem altogether. And it is certainly a sticky problem in the marital context: both terms of the either-or contradiction are negatively predicated. It is amusing to discover Hume's definition of monogamy as antithetical to "liberty" of any kind within the tradition of Lockean liberalism; this situation is either paradoxical, or realistically illuminating. Once married, "man" loses his naturally-cherished "liberty" and hates the cause of his "confinement;" however, he equally naturally "submit to necessity" and capitulates to the inevitable, the "absolute impossibility" of gratifying his natural desire. Either way, individual "gratification" in wedlock would appear to be, inevitably and naturally, impossible--due to the invariable first principles of human nature. To justify this grim proclamation, Hume offers the assessment that the passion of love, "restless and impatient," "requires liberty above all things." Therefore, passionate love, the ultimate narcissistic gratification, certainly cannot exist in marriage. Hume drives this point home with a literary argument, in a passage eventually excised from "OPD": "Even romances themselves, with all their liberty of fiction, are obliged to drop their lovers the very day of marriage, and find it
easier to support the passion for a dozen years under coldness, disdain and difficulties, than a week under possession and security" (EMPL 628).

What here may shockingly offend our post-Romantic sensibilities may have appeared more reasonable to a culture well-accustomed to arranged marriages, imposed spinsterhood and other passionless predicaments. But the alternative Hume calls for is not emotionless matrimony but another affective arrangement:

But *friendship* is a calm and sedate affection, conducted by reason and cemented by habit; springing from long acquaintance and mutual obligations; without jealousies and fears, and without those feverish fits of heat and cold, which cause such an agreeable torment in the amorous passion. So sober an affection, therefore, as friendship, rather thrives under constraint, and never rises to such a height, as when any strong interest or necessity binds two persons together . . . We need not, therefore, be afraid of drawing the marriage-knot, which chiefly subsists by friendship, the closest possible. (189)

This passage holds many sobering implications for monogamous marriage. First, when read alongside the Treatise sections previously discussed, it immediately sparks a contradiction. Recall that the first mover of human society proved to be the "natural appetite betwixt the sexes," that "amorous appetite" which originally drew pre-civilized (and therefore savage) man and woman together into the copulative act which should ultimately result in the "strong interest" of offspring. (We presume that this original natural act was not "conducted by reason.") Then, too, Hume's language here is increasingly ironic in a special way; however reasonable his sense may be, his rhetoric proves negative, distasteful, even grim: "cemented," "obligations," "sober," "constraint," "necessity," "binds," "knot" seem terms of imprisonment rather than domestic felicity. Hume concludes this second argument with a logically stressed question:
How many frivolous quarrels and disgusts are there, which people of common prudence endeavor to forget, when they lie under a necessity of passing their lives together; but which would soon be inflamed into the most deadly hatred, were they pursued to the utmost, under the prospect of an easy separation? (189)

"Lying under" _la peine forte et dure_ of lifelong, legal commitment, "people of common prudence" (whatever that might be) refrain from entering into the state of savage war that would otherwise (in "liberty") be inevitable and natural. Note Hume's allusion to the single condition as a warlike state of nature permitting such natural passions as "deadly hatred." Notice as well that irrevocably married people merely "endeavor to forget" their grievances; they may not be successful and these problems may persist to simmer just below the mark of "most deadly hatred." Or, they may break through the mark in any case. (Recall Locke's claim in the _Second Treatise of Government_, that any attempt by one "man" to dominate another will inevitably entail "a state of war." )

Convention is the civilized containment of hatred, or imposition of "frivolity" over deadliness. The evenness of this match will vary from couple to couple.

Hume's playful complication of shifting point-of-view especially problematizes the essay in this argumentation against divorce. Hume has previously presented his most compelling argument for divorce in much the same terms as those against:

But the liberty of divorces is not only a cure to hatred and domestic quarrels: It is also an admirable preservative against them, and the only secret for keeping alive that love, which first united the married couple. The heart of man delights in liberty: The very image of constraint is grievous to it: When you would confine it by violence, to what would otherwise have been its choice, the inclination immediately changes, and desire is turned into aversion. (187) (emphasis added)
Hume carries the same language of constraint, violence and aversion from his arguments for divorce into his reasons against it, although the logic is supposedly reversed. Moreover, "those who would defend" (187) divorce put forth the most concrete argument against lifelong monogamy: "In vain you tell me, that I had my choice of the person, with whom I would conjoin myself. I had my choice, it is true, of my prison; but this is but a small comfort, since it must still be a prison" (188). Although Hume switches from "those who would defend etc." to "there seem to be . . . objections against," implying an uneasy shift to the first person, the argumentation of the two viewpoints proves mirror-imaginal. If this essay is supposed to prove the "perfectly conventional" thesis, "that indissoluble, monogamous marriages are best," then it is certainly curious that Hume derived all of his descriptive language for that institution, pro and con, from the imagery of war and imprisonment.5

The essay's three concluding paragraphs prove still more disturbing, contradictory, and suggestive of an unconventional agenda. Hume's third argument against divorce features the most strained language and logic yet:

In the third place, we must consider, that nothing is more dangerous than to unite two persons so closely in all their interests and concerns, as man and wife, without rendering the union entire and total. The least possibility of a separate interest must be the source of endless quarrels and suspicions. (189) emphases added)

This sort of totalizing rhetoric is very unhumean or at least indicative of an abandonment of philosophical inquiry for the sake of common-life moralizing in the form of "idle fictions." The rhetoric here is, in fact, distinctly Addisonian; in The Spectator 295 we find this echo: "A marriage cannot be happy where the pleasures, inclinations, and interests of both parties are not the same" (III: 295).

I have noted Hume's puzzling self-deconstruction in the "mine-and-thine" marriage example in the Treatise; where he establishes the paradox that marriage is
based on property interests, but that individual property interests disappear within a marriage. We have also seen how Hume playfully but philosophically explores the (im)possibility of androgynous symbiosis in "Of Love and Marriage." Androgynous symbiosis, "the union entire and total," can only be a non-empirical proposition, a non-verifiable hypothesis. A theory drawn from observation and reason must inevitably bow to the ways of common life, or the affairs of the material given. And any sentient being of Hume's milieu would have to have been well aware that in "real life," that seamless conjugal body would nonetheless be gendered male, in a society where men were unquestionably dominant. Addison and Steele were two such sentient beings; Spectator 295 continues: "There is no greater incitement to love in the mind of man, than the sense of a person's depending on him for her ease and happiness; as a woman uses all her endeavors to please the person upon whom she looks as her honor, her comfort, and her support."

Alternately, Hume is simply wallowing in irony, here: a self-subverting, even self-mocking irony. But to set the matter straight, Hume resolves this paragraph with a presumably empirically-based speculation about the consequences of stopping short of re-fusing the androgyna: "The wife, not secure of her establishment, will still be driving some separate end or project; and the husband's selfishness, being accompanied with more power, may be still more dangerous." Of course, however, the wife's only true "security" ensues from her giving up any separate end or project, and thus conferring absolute power on her husband in this merging of identities--into his. Several earlier editions of "OPD" read as follows: "What Dr. PARNEL calls, the little pilf'ring temper of a wife, will be doubly ruinous." Hume's revision, as omission, of this allusion would seem to support my thesis that his logic here is less than "conventional," straightforward; the change from the ugly, "bantering" insult to the more psychological evaluation of the wife's difficulty points to a shift from appeal to
no body will pretend to refuse the testimony of experience" (189). Anticipating the empiricist's return at last to observable examples of the marital relationship, we are surprised to find ourselves studying the "testimony of experience" of the ancient Romans:

The more ancient laws of ROME, which prohibited divorces, are extremely praised by DIONYSIUS HALYCARNASSAEUS. Wonderful was the harmony, says the historian, which this inseparable union of interests produced between married persons; while each of them considered the inevitable necessity by which they were linked together, and abandoned all prospect of any other choice or establishment. (190)

From the "unanswerable" reflections of an ancient orator Hume produces a conclusion ironic-unto-comic: the "prison" is "wonderful." This citation spotlights Hume's rhetorical reliance on antithesis, what Christensen calls "the Augustan trope of power,"6 in his arguments against divorce:

affection  
conducted by reason  
cemented by habit  
sober; thrives under constraint

frivolous quarrels  
deathly hatred

two persons  
entire and total union

least possibility  
endless quarrels and suspicions

wonderful harmony  
inevitable necessity  
abandoned all prospect of other choice

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Such strong irony struck from antithesis must leave the reader—the one not satisfied with stereotypes derived from conventional expectations—quite uneasy about the desirability of the married state. This rhetorical play shouts to be considered apart from its conventional baggage of marriage-manual moralizing.

Marriage is, after all, perhaps the perfect antithesis for the empiricist philosopher: two separate entities are compelled, by convention, to lead their lives as one social and psychological unit. Such an antithesis would be unresolvable, were it not for the customary political recollapsing of the opposition within the established unit; that is, both entities are to live on the husband's terms. But Hume has been careful, in the essay's opening and concluding arguments, to remain on the philosophical (as in nonfactional, nonbiased) plane: he has addressed the experience of "two persons" in marriage. As previously suggested, Hume seems to elide the problem of gender hierarchy from the general predicament of wedlock, here in this argumentative frame of "OPD." Although his ironic play might suggest the philosopher's self-questioning, parody or even undercutting of his own "conventional thesis," Hume has remained, politically at least, on relatively safe conventional ground.
4.

Scenes From a Marriage (The Woman Within)

Hume presents "OPD"'s argument in two forms: "reasoned" frame and "the testimony of experience" interior. We have examined thus far the "reasoned" frame of the essay, its formal and substantive dependence on logic and abstract moralizing. The essay's interior, however, proves to be a series of anecdotes describing or dramatizing women's experiences in marriage. Hume's "reason" may be offered as neuter (that is, equally applicable to either sex); but his "testimony of experience" is decidedly gendered. Moreover, at the essay's heart appear several anecdotes which may be seen, in a certain light, to dramatize what is probably the most general (because panhistorical, pandemic) and serious problem feminists have had to confront: the patriarchal assumption of rights to the female body. In "OPD," within this interior anecdotal body, Hume presents vivid, specific examples of male possession and mistreatment of the female body in marriage.

If Hume did in fact direct this essay "largely to his women readers," then what hypotheses can we draw about these women readers' experiences of these anecdotes? In considering this question we not only "stray from the easy and obvious" conclusions derivable from conventional moralizing, but we also find ourselves in an exemplary text for the study of gendered reader-response, not to mention of women reading "philosophy." If we agree with John Valdimir Price and Annette Baier about the Essays' general value as interpretive keys to Hume's more abstract philosophy,¹ we can study "OPD" with its striking anecdotes about patriarchal abuse of the female body as a particularly practical dramatization of Hume's mind-body reflections; in this essay we can draw not only philosophical but also political and social implications from Hume's attention to body. Such interpretive challenge might be especially attractive for Hume's women readers. With Lawrence Kohlberg's work on comparative gender moral development in view, Baier emphasizes "the girls' need to fill out [moral] puzzle
questions with a story, before answering them" ("Women's Moral Theorist" 47). Thus we can pursue the question of how Hume’s anecdotes of female suffering might point the way to a feminist philosophy of body and especially a disentangling of the female body from patriarchy.

I will first consider several examples Hume offers of one of his opening premises, "As circumstances vary, and the laws propose different advantages, we find, that, in different times and places, they impose different conditions on this important [marriage] contract" (EMPL 182). These "informative" anecdotes about different conjugal arrangements in remote times and lands then give over to a pointed critique of "eastern" marriage, the "odious" effects of polygamy. The final retained anecdote takes place in seventeenth-century Spain, a European country, and features in its representation of tormented womanhood the essay's most compelling feminist implications. A final anecdote, excised in later editions, serves as the essay's feminist philosophical node. As in the essay's "frame," where Hume proceeded from "unanswerable" logic to unresolvable irony, these anecdotes also follow a certain evolution: Hume begins informatively, objectively, in remote history and geography; and works his way through an increasingly critical and politically suggestive stance back to his contemporary Europe. Connections to England are drawn with jokes in marginal notes; in fact, Hume's most dangerous potential feminism—dangerous because easily transferable or otherwise applicable to English life—occurs in eventually excised passages. Later on I will propose some reasons for this excision analogous to the "cutting of the nobler Parts" of the Treatise.

All four of the above-mentioned introductory "variable marriage contract" anecdotes feature women reduced to exchange commodities or at least assumed subject to male will and command. These are obviously not marriages "entered into by mutual consent" and may not favor or even permit a man's "duty" "by all the ties of nature and humanity" to nurture his own offspring. All of these anecdotes describe conjugal
situations which go against the grain of the marriage-property equation Hume set up in the Treatise, as they violate the one-man-with-one-woman-forever monogamous requirement.

In fact, Hume points out that the ancient Britons, for a closer-knit (and therefore more secure) society, "took an equal number of wives in common; and whatever children were born, were reputed to belong to all of them, and were accordingly provided for by the whole community" (EMPL 183). Although wives were "taken," no one woman--and no one child--"belonged" to one man. Such a communal sexual contract opposes and logically threatens the entire social structure of the modern West, based as this latter is on the monogamous individual ownership contract. In the "ancient Britons" anecdote, the individual good--a woman's right to "her" children, a man's to his property--gives over to the communal good.

Another anecdote seems to prioritize the temporary happiness of the male over either the couple's happiness or the societal good. "In Tonquin, it is usual for the sailors, when the ships come into harbour, to marry for the season; and notwithstanding this precarious engagement, they are assured, it is said, of the strictest fidelity to their bed, as well as in the whole management of their affairs, from those temporary spouses" (182). Ideal for the male afflicted by "the disorders of love" (184; Hume's phrase for sexual wanderlust), this particular contract satisfies the wifely fidelity demand while permitting, by its temporary nature, a perpetual change of scenery. Nothing is said of the women's "affairs," or of the problem of progeny (unless one wishes to read the latter into the vague, "whole management of their affairs"); in this case, men would never know their children at all. Such a society is then, by Western standards, "precarious" at best, because men do not own in perpetuity their wives and children. They would be, in fact, perpetual stepfathers--not connected by blood to offspring and therefore not duty-bound to them. Quite obviously, as well, they would
not be property owners in such a society—as the perpetual ownership of women proves the tacit basis of property contracts in Western society.

If "OPD" is indeed, as M. A. Box believes, "directed largely to [Hume's] woman readers," then what assumptions can be made about these woman readers' response to these anecdotes? Did these women find Hume sympathetic to the unconcern for mutuality or for the woman's situation, implied by these anecdotes? Did the eighteenth-century woman dependent on the security of marriage and the ability to produce heirs feel compassion for these women bereft of their own offspring, of their "temporary" husbands? After all, to illustrate the supposed infinite circumstantial variability of the marriage contract, Hume has chosen these anecdotes which do not fulfill the universal requirements he lays down for marriages in his opening paragraph; these anecdotes, in fact, depict the violation of the nuclear family: the woman's security and the man's legal identity, the very "origin of justice and property." And then, what would the woman reader make of this anecdote:

that agreeable romance, called the History of the Sevarambians, where a great many men and a few women are supposed to be shipwrecked on a desert coast; the captain of the troop, in order to obviate those endless quarrels which arose, regulates their marriages after the following manner: he takes a handsome female to himself alone; assigns one to every couple of inferior officers; and to five of the lowest rank he gives one wife in common. [Various revisions add the following:] Could the greatest legislator, in such circumstances, have contrived matters with greater wisdom? (182-83)

Would Hume's eighteenth-century educated and sensible woman reader find this tale of "handsome females" "taken," divided like cattle and subject to institutionalized gang-rape an "agreeable romance"?
In fact, this "romance," far from being an "idle fiction," may be deemed a more accurate representation of the origins of society—more accurate, that is, than the mysterious mutual-consent image central to the patriarchal social contract philosophy Hume obviously considers in the *Treatise*. In the Sevarambian story, women—a "scarce commodity"—are allocated by a central (patriarchal) authority, the captain, in order to permit the establishment and perpetuation of order in the community. In exchange for the more chaotic and unpredictable perils of a "state-of-nature" freedom, the Sevarambians are guaranteed a prescribed sexual availability. The division process follows rigid lines of both social status and "natural" suitability: the "handsome females" are, by right of their physical attributes, reserved for the high-ranking males—it being obvious that the women are assigned no rank or social status otherwise. Although those women assigned to "five of the lowest rank" (the literal "drunken sailors") would seem to suffer the worst prospects, at least in terms of sheer physical demand, the captain's wife might also suffer horribly if that particular man proved to be a cruel or perverse tyrant. Most basically, the Sevarambian women have no "consent" whatsoever in the "assignment" of their fates, or at least their consent is not at issue. The "great wisdom" of this arrangement turns out to be its desirability for the higher-ranking males and the society as a whole: precisely the situation of Western patriarchy. The men are spared the perils of competition for the females, or worse, from potential sexual unavailability of the women (they might escape, hide, violently resist); the women are spared mass rape and subjected to controlled rape in exchange for their freedom.

The above analysis of the "variable marriage contract" anecdotes represents a twentieth-century woman reader's path through this first anecdotal group. As we have no data on eighteenth-century reception of "OPD," I have merely posed questions about the eighteenth-century woman reader's probable reception of Hume's text. Kathryn Shevelow articulates this problem of attempting to map possibilities of reader
identification: "Whenever we as modern readers and writers situate the production of 'meaning' in the engagement between the reader and the text, we cannot know with any degree of certainty how historically distant readers read" (Women . . . Culture 16). What we can know with no small certainty is the centrality of marriage to the life of Hume's female reader. The "variable marriage contract" anecdotes describe alternatives which threaten male ownership and monolithic domination in the domestic microcosm; the female is, however, threatened body (and its productions) and soul.

Considered in the essay as a whole, these anecdotes do line up with Hume's putative defense of monogamy, in that they depict arrangements which meet only very imperfectly, or not at all, Hume's universalized utilitarian picture of the "end" of marriage: the propagation and nurture of children in a nuclear family situation. Looking back through "OPD" to the Treatise, I have suggested that Hume manages to disclose, however indirectly, a hidden agenda to this "end": the Western patriarch's need to have a property in his wife and children to compensate for his loss of liberty in keeping them. Unlike in other cultures where her needs and desires simply have no meaning, a woman living in Western monogamy receives the dubious status and merely contingent security of her own possessions--husband and child--in exchange for becoming, herself, a legal possession. Hume can hardly be thought of as a sentimentalist for the nuclear family (see Chapter Two here). Although he ostensibly offers these anecdotes as undesirable alternatives to Western practice, their disturbing content serves as a foil to the new popular press (eg. Addison and Steele's projects) with its idealization and sentimentalization, its heavily moralized anecdotes of monogamy and the nuclear family, presented for the education of the female reader certainly assumed as, or to be a wife.

Referring to the periodical literature exemplified by the Tatler and Spectator, Kathryn Shevelow observes that these "constructed their representation of women readers in terms of characteristics and needs predicated upon certain definitions of the
feminine, and at the same time created an image of femininity itself as an object of desire" (50). Shevelow stresses that in spite of this at least nominal, if essentialist, attention to women's "characteristics and needs," the popular presses were not in fact working from or towards any presumption about gender equality: "The possibility of women's benefitting from individualist ideas about equality was undercut by the very configuration the family was assuming . . . the idealization of the 'sentimental family' [in the periodical presses] . . . fostered a very restricted notion of spousal egalitarianism indeed . . . in fact, had catastrophic implications for the future of women's rights and freedoms" (13). Such strong language conveys Shevelow's impression that the Spectator's female reader was strategically allowed little room for interpretation or personal reference otherwise; textual cues (including anecdotes about marital unhappiness) pulled her centripetally into uncritical service to patriarchy within the nuclear family. In short, Addison and Steele's conventionalism would pose no interpretive challenge to the reader and no alternative path to a didactic one-way street.

Do "OPD"'s central anecdotes, those related within the conventional frame of the essay, present a more overt and serious critique of patriarchy than that latent (as irony or otherwise) in that frame? I propose here that Hume's presentation, through the vivid anecdotes he chooses, of woman's situation in marriage suggests the philosopher's sensitivity not only to woman's plight but also to the epistemological value of her emotions as a reader. In fact, the woman reader may have a special access, through her emotions, to certain radical and subversive implications in Hume's text. She might come to understand his sympathetic expose of married women's fates as sensitive philosophical criticism of patriarchy: criticism dramatized in "literary" form. The central anecdotes, those specifically describing women's physical suffering in marriage, establish a case for the study of feminist reader identification as well as the hermeneutical problems in feminist reading of earlier texts (those remote in history and reflecting different ideological parameters). The case of "OPD" calls for different
interpretive parameters; different, that is, from the abstract logic and "reasoned argument" of traditional evaluation. I will propose here that "OPD" calls for "thinking through the body" as a particularly feminized hermeneutical possibility. This possibility arises especially in the next evolution of the anecdotal interior, what I call the central anecdotes.

Hume's evolutions are provocative in their passage from formal argument and distance, to example and immediacy; and then, in a dialectical "resolution," to irony. This essay proves to be a somewhat baffling mixture, or if you will uneasy marriage, of two antithetical textual strategies, which I will for argument's sake deem "masculine" (formal argument and distance) and "feminine" (example and immediacy). But unlike in the case of real marriage, Hume's textual marriage does not permit the domination of one mode. The commingling of these modes generates multilevel irony which I shall try to map out (as I began to in the essay's frame). In the following discussion I purport to respond, as a woman reader, to "OPD"'s "feminine" text of example and immediacy: the central anecdotes.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this essay is its central anecdotal critique of patriarchy—or at least, its anecdotal presentation of issues and situations of this hegemony's abuse of women. In fact, each anecdote, whether "informative" or "critical," defines one or more possibilities of that abuse. And the vivid depictions of these abuses call the woman reader's attention viscerally, emotionally, to them and the milieu of their inception; from her subjective response (which may include empathy) to these depictions, she might then work her way to a reasoning-through of the politics of misogyny. Such, we recall, is a beautifully Humean problem-solving scenario, from perception, to "passion," to "reason." For several reasons, the essay's anecdotes may appropriate and direct the woman reader's response and cause her to find in the irony a feminist intent, a genuine critique thinly disguised in irony. The essay's central (both physically and, I think, thematically) anecdotes, those offered "to render polygamy
more odious," may especially effect this appropriation. This theory obviously relies on an assumption of reading as-a-woman; not only as a biological woman, but as a woman's experience somehow apart from her culture's epistemological impositions on that experience.

Following his "contract variability" examples and contributing to his end of excluding marital systems other than monogamy, Hume offers examples "to render polygamy . . . odious." He introduces Turkish women—or rather, a part of their bodies; he recounts an anecdote of a French physician who, called in to treat the grand signior's seraglio women, found only "a great number of naked arms, standing out from both sides of the room. He could not imagine what this could mean; till he was told, that those arms belonged to bodies, which he must cure, without knowing any more about them, than what he could learn from the arms" (EMPL 185-86).

Hume attributes this bizarre scene to the sultan's jealousy and absolute possessiveness, his fear of another man's gazing upon the whole bodies of his harem women: "the frightful effects of jealousy, and the constraint in which it holds the fair-sex all over the east" (185). The very sight, a form of possession, of the woman's body threatens her owner's proprietorship. (The image of the eyes devouring the female body suggests the male mind's conquest of the female body, as well.) Female "modesty," the covering or concealing of her body, ironically serves not to protect her from such appropriation, but rather to protect the man who has appropriated her. As previously discussed, Hume has famously taken up the question of patriarchal standards of "chastity and modesty" for women. He has seen these standards as entirely artificial, based on male insecurity about paternity and subsequent anxiety about property legacies and other material concerns; in short, about possession of and rights to the female body and its productions (T 570-73). His example here of the covering (and thus erasure) of the female body (albeit Turkish) as a "frightful effect of jealousy"
and "constraint" can be easily translated, via the "modesty and chastity" section of the Treatise, to the situation of Western women.

Hume then explains that the French physician was only called "when sickness may be supposed to have extinguished all wanton passions in the bosoms of the fair, and at the same time, has rendered them unfit objects of desire" (EMPL 185). Sickness menaces not the woman's entire body or being, but rather a part of this being and that part as consumable commodity: it places an obstacle to the Sultan's sexual use of "his" women. In this anecdote, here of a Turkish seraglio but applicable to any male-ruled culture, Hume manages to summarize patriarchy's most pernicious subsumption of the female person into its own agenda: its dismemberment of the female body and redefinition of the female being as a function of some body parts—those that can directly serve patriarchal (or simply, male) interest. Concordantly, patriarchy has suppressed or denied (veiled or curtained-off) woman's subjectivity while entertaining a phantasmic image of a desired object behind the curtain or veil. Hume's harem arms thwart the observer's path to female subjectivity; Helena Michie has described the reader-effect of such synechdochal description:

Synechdoche is both a way of introducing sexuality by implication and a fragmentation and fetishization of culturally selected parts of the female body. The hand or arm that comes to stand for the unnameable body parts at once introduces the larger body by implication and focusses the reader's attention on disembodied fragments. (86-7)

The arm image serves two masters in its direction of attention to the fragmented body, a distressing image of dehumanization—and to the erotic body, the "unnameable parts" of male fantasy. The harem woman is a paradox of exotic sexual pleasure on the one hand, and oppression and abuse on the other: a contradiction resolved in the unique perspective of male interest in and ownership of the female body.
Hume follows this arms anecdote with a mention of feet, or the foot-binding cultures where "they render their wives cripples, and make their feet of no use to them, in order to confine them to their own houses" (EMPL 186). But he immediately brings this remote barbarism, a literal mutilation, as a symbolic mutilation home to Europe. He offers the following anecdote about Spain's queen-mother (a foreigner) offered a gift of stockings in a small town famous for that commodity:

But it will, perhaps, appear strange, that in a EUROPEAN country, jealousy can be carried to such a height, that it is indecent so much as to suppose that a woman of rank can have feet or legs . . . when the stockings were presented, [the major domo] . . . flung them away with great indignation, and severely reprimanded the magistrates for this egregious piece of indecency. Know, says he, that a queen of Spain has no legs. The young queen, who, at that time, understood the language but imperfectly, and had often been frightened with stories of Spanish jealousy, imagined that they were to cut off her legs. Upon which she fell a crying, and begged them to conduct her back to GERMANY; for that she never could endure the operation: And it was with some difficulty they could appease her. PHILIP IV. is said never in his life to have laughed heartily; but at the recital of this story. (186)

John Immerwahr finds this tale equally "amusing" (363), thus however unintentionally contributing to an alarming history of male amusement at female suffering; the woman reader may not find it so amusing. The queen's misinterpretation of her plight may be touching, or very disturbing, reflecting as it does her very unamusing presupposition of masculine rights to the female body. Obviously, she believed that they could cut off her legs, if they deemed such censure appropriate. The anecdote seems a sort of feminist Kafkaesque tale of institutional punishment for unknown or undisclosed individual crime.
In certain lights or eyes these anecdotes show a comical and entertaining facet; but they also explicitly describe an "odious" political reality. They point directly to a Western philosophical foundation: male appropriation of the female body and therefore being. Hume sees "reality" as inseparable from our experience; the Spanish queen's epistemological realm—that of a woman in patriarchy—might include the constant and horrifying threat of dismemberment or annihilation, literal or symbolic.

Hume concludes the Spanish Queen anecdote with a marginal note; this note was excised in the last volumes of the Essays. In the note Hume conjectures: "If a SPANISH lady must not be supposed to have legs, what must be supposed of a TURKISH lady? She must not be supposed to have a being at all" (EMPL 628) (emphasis mine). Here Hume directly equates the appropriation of the female body with the erasure of her "being" or personhood. His question grimly suggests patriarchy's piecemeal and gradual devouring of woman; the West may devour only partially, but monogamy and polygamy are philosophically equivalent in patriarchy. Hume's movement around the world reflects his awareness of the mind-body problem in the general case of woman. His anecdotes imply, or overtly state, that woman's body serves as a mere instrument or appendage; not, however, in the Cartesian sense, of her own mind—but of man's, whether Sultan, father, husband, government or church official. And if the part or whole offend, he may alter or strike it away as he sees fit.

Carole Pateman reminds us that the "individual"'s body in Western politics and philosophy has always been a masculine body, "very different from women's bodies. His body is tightly enclosed within boundaries, but women's bodies are permeable, their contours change shape and they are subject to cyclical processes" (96). Apparently, this obvious physical mutability has suggested or justified the separation of the female mind and body; at least, under patriarchy, the female body is not entirely the instrument of its physically "attached" mind. Thus, in a very strange way philosophically, two entities—"male" and "female"—participate in a woman's
experience. Female personal identity— that is, in the Humean sense her bodily or sense impressions and ensuing mental constructs and associations—is subsumed into the male's experience. This is (absurdly) possible because "experience," translated from philosophy to politics, has been defined and validated in terms of men's experience. Hume's disembodied Turkish woman illustrates this usurpation of female identity, and the nonentity status attributable to those "beings" whose bodies are the properties of others and therefore object to the "mind" of others. Hume's treatment of this problem in the Treatise, "OPD" and other woman-appeal essays contributes to the redressing of the gap between "philosophy" and human lived experience in its varying cultural contexts, between "philosophic doctrines and racial theory, justifications of slavery, or arguments for colonial exploitation" as well as the generalizable problems of patriarchal oppression of women. When John Locke declared, "Every man has a Property in his own Person. This no Body has any Right to but himself" (Treatises 305), he was either making a non-empirical statement or defining all experience in terms of the European male.

Thinking through Hume's difficult theory of personal identity or "self" as "that succession of related ideas and impressions, of which we have an intimate memory and consciousness" (T 277), we might consider how women have been taught to identify their "self" through the ideas and impressions of another. Defining herself in the "constant conjunction" ("the transition from an impression present to the memory or senses to the idea of an object, which we call cause and effect . . . founded on past experience, and on our remembrance of their constant conjunction") (T 87-94) of culturally-imposed (i.e. male) perceptions, could a woman recognize anything like her "own" ideas and impressions? For example, we might think of the physical abuse of wives, such as Hume reports in "OPD." How might the "impressions" of physical agony brought about by bound feet translate into being a "good wife"? For this wife, the constantly conjoined impressions of physical torture and wifely submission must
entail a strangely divided "self": the experience of pain (bad) equals being a proper wife (good). Or, that "self" may slip into an abyss between the impossible poles of this conjunction: if being "a good wife" demands being veiled, curtained or locked away, footbound, otherwise mutilated or silenced—then it also entails self-denial. The wife's "own" experience, pain, must be denied for the sake of the husband's experience, the positive good of absolute wifely obedience. Hume points to a cause of "non-entity"-hood: the physical "insensib[ility] of myself": "Were all my perceptions remov'd . . . I should be entirely annihilated, nor do I conceive what is farther requisite to make me a perfect non-entity" (T 252). Does not the same self-annihilation result when I am rendered psychically "insensible of myself" through abuse or torture, or other perceptual manipulation by an other?

In common life, a "mind" and a "body" at least have the impression that they are an inseparable epistemological unit. If another "mind" takes over the control of my body and dictates the meaning of its perceptions, then this vital synapse of unity must be broken with an ensuing disintegration of selfhood. The Turkish woman, buried behind the curtain in the narrow realm of the seraglio chamber (a realm materially erased but synecdochally evoked for the reader), is such a victim of perceptual and therefore personal annihilation.

At least two English women readers made the connection between the plight of Eastern women and the situation of the English wife. Early in the century, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in her Letters from Turkey written while sojourning two years there with her ambassador husband, brazenly declares that the Turkish wives "have more Liberty than we [English wives] have" (Embassy 111). She points out that Turkish women keep their own wealth in marriage, enjoy near-total autonomy in their segregated female society, and have the right to request divorce. She thus counters Hume's later assertion in "OPD" that Turkish husbands "in their domestic affairs rule with an uncontrollable sway" (EMPL 184), a charge she believes far more applicable
to the English household. In her *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) Mary Wollstonecraft offers this observation of the English woman:

They spend many of the first years of their lives in acquiring a smattering of accomplishments; meanwhile, strength of body and mind are sacrificed to libertine notions of beauty, to the desire of establishing themselves—the only way women can rise in the world—by marriage... they dress, they paint, and nickname God's creatures. Surely these weak beings are only fit for a seraglio! (83)

Although Wollstonecraft's judgment reflects the Orientalist stereotype cultivated in eighteenth-century England (see Chap. Five here), it does indicate that little had changed for the English woman/wife, in spite of noteworthy advances in female education and women's publication. One final view of the eighteenth-century English patriarchal manner of female torment and erasure, especially as this custom appears in the immensely popular journalism of the day, might discover the completion, by English example, of Hume's anecdotal evolution in "OPD." In Steele's *Tatler* No. 75 popular press folk hero "Isaac Bickerstaffe" describes his transformation of spirited sister Jenny Distaff into the appropriately sober and restrained English wife:

Her Wit she thinks her Distinction; therefore knows nothing of the Skill of Dress, or making her Person agreeable. It would make you laugh to see me often with my Spectacles on lacing her stays; for she is so very a Wit, that she understands no ordinary Thing in the World. For this Reason I have dispos'd of her to a Man of Business, who will soon let her see, that to be well dress'd, in good Humour, and cheerful in the Command of her Family, are the Arts and Sciences of Female Life.

Steele's anecdote here is fascinating in many aspects: Jenny's pitiful grasp at selfhood or "Distinction" through her "Wit," and the patriarchal enforcement of her
abandonment of this hope for the sake of cosmetic endeavor; the association of physical torment with feminine modishness and the male humor at female torture; the shallow attempt at sarcasm ("for she is so very a Wit..." ); the "disposal" of Jenny to "a Man of Business," the sacrifice of her selfhood to both the requirements of marriage and Capitalism in the transformation of woman into exchange commodity. But this Tatler tale also throws into contrasting relief Hume's project in "OPD." Hume's anecdotes, although rather comical in certain lights, do at the very least criticize the situations they depict, under the label of "odious" Eastern customs. The Spanish Queen anecdote moves the theater to Europe. The completion of the global tour, the evocation of English analogy, is left largely to the reader.

Attempting to support my belief that "OPD" features an ironic critique of Western monogamy, I have focused on Hume's general critique of patriarchy through the anecdotal illumination of its global abuses. His critique of monogamy proves both implied and ironic, because the same anecdotes he presents against "Eastern" customs for his by-contrast argument for monogamous marriage, can by extension and analogy be applied equally well against Western custom. This irony is fulfilled by the philosophically expansive rhetoric of the anecdotes which provide the interior substance/support for the rhetorically and logically strained, limited arguments of the essay's "frame." Achieving this ironic level requires two reader-responses which might well be labelled feminist: first, the dismantling of suspicious and unstable "reasoned argument" with this "unanswerable" logic of experience; and second, emotional identification with the anecdotal content, an identification which would serve as a "motivating passion" (Box's phrase, see Introduction here) to bring the reader to the essay's experimental/experiential core.

However, I have good reason to hesitate before generally labelling "OPD" feminist. For the sake of a pro-feminist argument, my need to find in Hume a philosophical "champion" (a la Baier), I have largely ignored a paradox working within
the irony of the essay. Although "OPD" might certainly be politicized in a feminist
direction, by virtue of its features I have previously studied here, it may be politicized
in more than one direction. Hume obviously criticizes patriarchal abuse of women in
this essay, and we can recall that he has elsewhere considered the unequal treatment of
women in Western law, marriage and education. Yet, a feminist emphasis on the
political significance of content in "OPD" may well have to occur with a concomitant
denial of some very striking formai features. The reader must confront Hume's
tendency to bemused witticism or "literary" gallantry, his urbane "tea-table" delivery
which defuses the serious, philosophical implications of the essay. Hume's rhetoric
and tone work to control the philosophical reaction, stopping it before it turns really
subversive. Or, as Christine Battersby puts it, Hume's "'gallantry' does not permit
him to tell the whole truth" in his addresses to and about women (304)--a judgment
especially relevant to "OPD."

My analysis of this rhetorical defusing strategy will make up part of my
investigation of "the politics of rejection" in the case of the woman-appeal essays. This
withholding of the "truth" can be motivated by two pressure groups; first, by the
women readers themselves, who would not want to read Hume's "true," sexist opinions
of them (this appears to be Battersby's suggestion above). A second pressure group
would be the conventional majority readership--the male citizenry or the Addisonian
readership (male and female) thoroughly indoctrinated into the "restrictive"
sentimentalized family model; these would not want to read Hume's philosophical truth
about patriarchal oppression of women. In either case, for either pressure group, the
withholding of truth would be accomplished as a burial (or veiling, curtaining) of truth
under the rhetoric of gallantry. This rhetoric, market demand, and Hume's excision of
both pieces and entire texts of his own work for personal and political reasons are the
variables for a study of the politics of critical rejection.
Even if one chooses to raise to priority the gallant layer of "OPD," I propose that Hume does offer to the woman reader, within this essay, the opportunity for resistance to that discursive prescription. The woman reader seeing behind the thin conventional/rhetorical curtain the anecdotes of erasure, rape, torture and dismemberment of the female body might come to understand such violation as sanctioned and practiced, albeit in "a variety of conditions," by patriarchy in general. This understanding would be reached principally through a hermeneutics of suffering, as women throughout history might recall and relate the experiences of their own bodies in their own patriarchal contexts. Jane Gallop believes that "if we think physically rather than metaphorically, if we think the mind-body split through the body, it becomes an image of shocking violence" (Body, 1). Reading Hume's anecdotes through womanly eyes, we find the opportunity to recover our "own" experience--even if it is one of pain.

Such recovery should not be assumed a uniquely biologically feminine possibility. After all, Hume--a man--drew for us the female body to which we empathetically respond in "OPD." Certainly men might also "think through the body." In fact, given Hume's predication of moral theory on "passion," in particular on sympathy as the "mirroring" among individuals that makes civilized society possible, we might imagine that Hume intended such male sympathy with female suffering. He may have felt that such male sympathy for the female on the level of body-knowledge would contribute in general to the evolving of a kinder, gentler society. But Carol Kay warns about such logic, otherwise natural for the eighteenth-century moral context, in the gender arena: "When the differential of men and women appears, even in moral theory, we are reminded of the inescapable relevance of power to sympathy." Proposing that Humean "sympathy . . . figures in an ethics that is crucially attached to a politics," Kay points to evidence that Hume "shows relatively little interest in sympathy manifested in pity or compassion," as in the Treatise, he devotes much of
Book II "Of the Passions" to analyses of sympathy as pride in power and wealth, and "only a few pages to compassion, to which he says 'women and children are most subject'" ("Sympathy" 77-92).

Significant here is the hypothesis that Hume directed this essay "largely to his woman readers." If we accept Kay's perception of sympathy-inequality in the Treatise, we may have to reevaluate the feminist theory of sympathy here hopefully attributed to Hume. Eighteenth-century social conditioning of women may have minimized the potential for woman-to-woman sympathy, reducing it to what Kay has called a "shadow"-passion. Box and the few others who have nodded at this essay find its woman-appeal in its subject matter of marriage, its defense of monogamy alongside "bantering" swipes at husbandly tyranny, and related status-quo issues. Such interpretation ignores the anecdotes of violence to women and would require the woman reader, as Kathryn Shevelow believes regarding women in general, "to replace her self-regard [and therefore, her mirroring sympathy] with regard for the perceptions of another than herself" (Women . . . Culture 125). In other words, rather than identifying her self with another suffering self, she should forget Hume's painful illustrations of patriarchy's evils for the sake of absorbing his (alleged) easy conventional moralizing on the value of monogamy. Of course, this is precisely what the woman reader should do, if she reads within the status-quo frame established for her by popular "Addisonian" literary culture; she should read disembodied, or, through a man's mind.
5.

Hume's Orphans: The Politics of Rejection

The image of a female body rebelling against the restraining frame of masculine discourse in "OPD" both challenges and disturbs. This image of a male author nurturing a vital female subject in his discursive matrix challenges (and, depending on the reader, pleases) the critical imagination, because it throws an unexpected twist into a misogynist image, that of the female body usurped into the male brain and transformed into a vehicle of his politics. For example, we can recall Zeus's ingestion of the pregnant Metis, original goddess of wisdom, and subsequent birth of daughter Pallas Athena through his split skull. Metis as maternal creativity is destroyed, erased from the family and thus from the mythographic canon; while virago Athena rules over "wisdom and arms," knowledge as conquest. As such, "she" is considered by many modern readers as a female vehicle of patriarchal oppression. In the previous chapter I have suggested that the vital female subject of "OPD," if brought forth to light from its conventional frame, might serve the subversive (in lieu of status-quo) politics of her author.

The image is also very disturbing. It can be understood as a monstrous birth, a horrible phenomenon in both the "natural" and the "social" senses, in both twentieth- and eighteenth-century contexts: it is unnatural; it cannot fulfill its role in the patriarchal (property) scheme. In fact, this monstrous female birth should have been aborted. Jerome Christensen, fond of self-mutilation metaphors in Hume, refers to Hume's dashed early hopes for the Treatise's success, finding him unaverse to abortion: "Rather than suffer that failed filiation, rather than deliver his child into the world maimed and imperfect, he would abort the project and live and die in obscurity" (50-1). The fact that Hume did not choose to abort complicates "OPD"s status as a "retained" essay. Hume seems unafraid of this filial or father-daughter relationship; or, perhaps he did not view this particular offspring as particularly feminine. Like
Pallas Athena, she may after all have been father-born to reify the conventions of her patriarchal milieu. Norah Smith, author of the unique extensive study of the "rejected" issue, finds that, "None of Hume's retained essays . . . are written specifically with the ladies in mind" (362).

As in the case of Hume's famous Treatise castration metaphor, we may find in the woman-appeal essays a site of physical mutilation, whether in terms of metaphorical abortions or literal excisions. In fact, although the literal and metaphorical "family" may function as one of Hume's strongest unifying terms in the Treatise, 2 the "family" disintegrates at a violent hand in the context of Hume's essay production for public taste. We can read Hume first-hand on this familial violence in the case of these essays. Referring to "Of Love and Marriage" and "Of the Study of History," Hume recounts how he decided against aborting these texts from the 1748 edition of the Essays Moral and Political: "Millar, my Bookseller, made such Protestations against [their excision], & told me how much he had heard them praised by the best Judges; that the Bowels of a Parent melted, & I preserv'd them alive" (Greig I: 168).

However, this preserving-alive (or carrying-to-term) decision would eventually be cancelled, as Hume had banished seven among his total essay production by the time of his last edition preparations. This ultimate excision might be envisioned in another metaphor of family dysfunctionality: the banishment from the house of the rebellious or otherwise shameful daughter, a phenomenon familiar to eighteenth-century literary taste. 3 In the case of "OPD," Hume allowed the daughter to remain, but with some qualifications: her rebelliousness— that is, her latent and actual subversiveness or feminism, her philosophical and political platform— must be somehow disguised, veiled. We can recall Lady Montagu's advice to her daughter concerning the education of her granddaughter: If she has "learning," let her hide it "as she would hide crookedness or lameness" (Letters 414). If Hume had indeed engendered a monstrous daughter within the apparently healthy consensual frame of "OPD," then he decided at last not to throw
out the baby and the bathwater; somehow "melting" for this daughter, he found a way
to keep her but to disguise or hide her deformity. With a veil of gallantry, and finally
by excision of certain potentially inflammatory features (in the form of observations
and allusions), he hid her from eyes easily offended by deviancy.

Or, looking at the frame-interior structure of the essay as a whole, we might
conclude that Hume safely engendered and contained her within familiar (familial) and
inviolable parameters. Christensen finds that at a certain moment of Hume's career
(actually rather late, in 1764)

The discourse of the sublime and the discourse of gallantry (and, one
might add, the discourse of skepticism) resolve into the same thing: a
safety net of convention that theatricalizes all risks--the threat to male
superiority, to reason, to life itself--that contains the different by making
it imaginable to a spectator who is always at some remove from danger.

(240)

In "OPD," the "different"--feminist-sympathetic images of female oppression--proves
retainable due to its containment within a patriarchal entity: an argument presumably
for monogamous marriage as the uniquely acceptable social keystone. In "OPD" the
sublime (as exotic, romantic), the gallant (as polite, witty) and the skeptical (as
philosophical, critical) do resolve into a strong superficial layer of convention. The
spectator is further "removed from danger" by his and her all-consuming indoctrination
into the ethos of the subject institution, patriarchally-enforced monogamy; this is a
necessary institution, no matter what the consequences for the individual (and
especially the wife).

The spectator can be seen as "removed from danger" primarily because such
danger does really exist as the backdrop of his culture. We have seen how Hume
practically builds human society from "that trivial anatomical [gender] difference"
entailing paternal anxiety vs. maternal certitude. With female sexual transgression
posing a perpetual "danger" to patriarchy, measures must be taken to minimize a threat
that can never be entirely eliminated in liberal, enlightened society (that is, a society
eschewing the "harem" recourse). Polite society, "sex in the head and not in the bed,"
with its tense postures, proved one containment of the threat. Following Jerome
Christensen's claim that Hume purposively set out to author the very polite society for
which he would serve as authority ("ambassador"), we might begin to see how Hume's
woman-appeal—as both subversion and capitulation—could both inscribe/guarantee the
"danger" to patriarchy and provide its remedy. Hume could place this danger at some
"remove" by re-imagining this threat within gallant discourse. Thus contained, this
(described/inscribed) danger as proto-feminism would find itself defused, recast as
entertainment or even joke material. Yet, this defusing remains conditional upon the
reader's getting the joke, and accepting it as such. The danger still lurks, from a
reader-response-dependent distance.  

Hume variously added and then excised much material from "OPD." These
"floating" paragraphs (introduced and deleted intact) prove very significant in their
content and in the fact of their excision from the text as it appeared in the final edition
of the Essays. In Chapter Four here I identified one such excision as the "philosophical
node" of the essay: "If a SPANISH lady must not be supposed to have legs, what must
be supposed of a TURKISH lady? She must not be supposed to have a being at all"
(EMPL 628). This observation was added to the essay in the Second Edition, Essays:
Moral and Political, 1742, and was removed for a 1768 edition. As it was added and
then removed, all of a piece, twenty-six years later, it must have had some special
meaning for Hume. I have proposed that it dramatizes, in the feminist context, a
political implication of Hume's mind-body theory: how the appropriation of the
other's body to one's service is philosophically tantamount to the usurpation or erasure
of the other's "being"—a philosophy of the master-slave contract.
But I derived my theory from a sin of omission—or at least, neglect. The entire excised passage is also a playground of gallantry. This "Turkish lady proposition" stands at the head of two paragraphs of excised material, as follows:

If a SPANISH lady must not be supposed to have legs, what must be supposed of a TURKISH lady? She must not be supposed to have a being at all. Accordingly, 'tis esteemed a piece of rudeness and indecency at CONSTANTINOPLE, ever to make mention of a man's wives before him.¹ [Footnote: "Memoires de Marquis d'Argens"] In EUROPE, 'tis true, fine bred people make it also a rule never to talk of their wives. But the reason is not founded on jealousy. I suppose it is because we should be apt, were it not for this rule, to become troublesome to company, by talking too much of them.

The author or the PERSIAN letters has given a different reason for this polite maxim. 'Men,' says he, 'never care to mention their wives in company, lest they should talk of them before people, who are better acquainted with them than themselves.' (628)

On first reading, the material following the Turkish lady proposition would seem to be very distasteful "to the ladies," the essay's female readership of "Women of Sense and Education." In spite of Hume's gallant sentence at the end of the first paragraph, his supposition of husbands' fond obsession with their wives, this passage as a whole suggests the general promiscuity of women; the jocular citation of Montesquieu correlates Eastern and Western women in the allegation of philandering.

But this is all in good fun. In this passage Hume "banter" with female and male alike. The "our" in paragraph 1 certainly signifies that Hume primarily assumes a male audience here; however, the piece of gallantry pointing to the "European" habit must be intended for the ladies. We have seen, here in Chapter Four and in the bellettristic eighteenth-century community in general, that conventional "good fun"
proved frequently at the expense of women. Yet, it is very difficult to gauge mass feminine resentment of this sexist humor. Due to the known popularity of the essays and their open intention for female readership, it is easier to assume that women were expected to enjoy such wit. Why did Hume cut out this bit of good fun presumably gratifying to both audiences?

Consider whether the spirit of the first sentence, the Turkish lady proposition, is replicated "accordingly" by this banter. It is very difficult to read the Turkish lady utterance as "banter;" certainly to do so would cancel the philosophical import and reverse the feminist implication. Hume's unfortunate "accordingly" marks an aporia, a slippage point for the understanding of "OPD" in one ideological parameter or another. Whether Hume is a vicious "sexist" or a philosophically groundbreaking "feminist" may prove to be a reader-response question after all: that is, a problem of ideological--and especially historical--situations of reader consciousness.

If such recasting of "OPD"'s hermeneutical problem is valid, then we can reframe the remainder of this excised passage; we can read it not strictly as status-quo "banter" but rather as more of the same indirect criticism as we believe to find in the Turkish lady proposition. We can do this by continuing to read in the light of Hume's observations on " chastity and modesty," and on marriage and property in the Treatise. Like the Tonquin and Sevarambian anecdotes, Hume's sly humor here actually probes the Achilles' Heel of patriarchy: the ultimate undecidability, prior to our late twentieth century, of paternity; and the perpetual threat of property disruption at the will of a transgressive female. The "ignorance-is-bliss" position described by Montesquieu reflects patriarchal repression of the recognition of that feminine threat, and thus underscores the artificial necessity of female "disembodiment." The talkative EUROPEAN husband allusion describes not a fond as much as an obsessive possession; this husband feels compelled perpetually to project his wife from his head, a word-wife
to keep always in plain sight. Many a truth is told in jest—and the truth of Hume's jests here, while clever "banter," makes for uneasy reality.

This interpretation of the above passage makes possible an explanation for Hume's inclusion and then excision of these comments. Their "bantering" or gallant (and for us, sexist) aura establishes their appeal to a wide readership and describes Hume's purpose of literary success in the essays' publication. On the other hand, their ultimately politically menacing content, their implied challenge to the status quo, might set them up for rejection. To read this way and reach this conclusion, one must also assume that Hume's thoughts were changing about the mentality of his readership in relation to his position in literary history. Perhaps at the end of his career a more conservative Hume felt these jocular passages a trifle too raw in their allusions to adulterous wives, their reminder of this plague afflicting more liberal patriarchies. Perhaps, at the last, Hume did not want to be inscribed and remembered as patriarchy's gadfly.

I will elaborate further on Hume's rejection decisions by exploring another excised passage, this one immediately focused upon the English woman. Again, added in 1742 and deleted in toto in 1768, this passage completes a paragraph where Hume muses in general on the destructiveness of jealousy, especially for the male as both "lover" and "husband." Acting as "master and tyrant" over his wife, out of his jealous fears, this husband destroys the good he shares with his spouse (as her "lover," "friend," "patron"); he proves "a foolish wretch indeed, that throws away the rose and preserves only the thorn" (EMPL 184). The excised passage continues from this elegant metaphor with the following anecdote and reflections:

I would not willingly insist upon it as an advantage in our EUROPEAN customs, what was observed by MEHEMET EFFENDI the last TURKISH ambassador in FRANCE. 'We TURKS,' says he, 'are great simpletons in comparison of the Christians. We are at the expense and
trouble of keeping a seraglio, each in his own house: But you ease yourselves of this burden, and have your seraglio in your friends' houses. The known virtue of our BRITISH ladies frees them sufficiently from this imputation: And the TURK himself, had he travelled among us, must have owned, that our free commerce with the fair sex, more than any other invention, embellishes, enlivens, and polishes society. (627-28)

This passage proves an uneasy mixture of politics, "banter" and irony. First and perhaps most obviously, Hume tells a joke in the anecdote, a funny but menacing one as well for the male reader. Hume casts him simultaneously as subject (as master) of patriarchal authority and object (as victim) of its transgression. For the female reader, this joke both erases her personal identity or object-ifies her in the substitution of "seraglio" for "wife," and calls upon her as reading/thinking subject to note the "odious" political reality: that Eastern and Western women alike live behind "seraglio" walls, their human identities concealed or even erased under a man's, within a man's castle. Hume is able to accomplish this double call by placing this offensive (if comical) story in the mouth of the infidel Turk: thus Hume can both appeal in complicity to what is obviously a global "seraglio" mentality, and criticize same as "odious." However, his next move proves to reverse the infidel stereotype, the Western prejudice of the immoral, barbaric Turk; here, it is this Turk who urbanely points out the immorality, the adultery pervasive in the Christian culture. His culture, although tyrannical, putatively prevents that ultimate transgression against patriarchy--while the "enlightened" West permits and thus lives by that transgression, however covertly (hypocratically). Hume "would not willingly insist upon [this] as an advantage in our EUROPEAN customs;" equally, it seems, he would not deny its truth. Patriarchy without absolute tyranny cannot protect its most cherished cornerstone, wifely fidelity.
Feeling himself perhaps on dangerous ground with male and female reader alike, Hume changes tone—or does he? "The known virtue of our BRITISH ladies frees them sufficiently from this imputation." Here, Hume's eighteenth-century woman reader must implicate herself, for better or worse, in the joke. The gallant gesture is rhetorically suspicious: two words, the impersonal "known" (by whom?) and the weak "sufficiently" (recall "OPD"'s concluding sentence: "The exclusion of polygamy and divorces sufficiently recommends our present EUROPEAN practice with regard to marriage") hint at sarcasm, or at least the frivolous tone characteristic of Hume's "raillery." The explanatory judgment following the colon does little to create a more sincere impression: "embellish," "enliven" and "polish" are not verbs which contradict or correct the adultery allegation; like Hume's gallantry in general, these terms merely imply a type of gloss over human nature's more primitive impulses.

Recall in "Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences," Hume has defined "gallantry," in the familiar nature/culture circularity: gallantry is "natural in the highest degree" because it inevitably "arises from reflections on duty and convenience" with regard to love of the weaker sex. This "natural" behavior is practiced strictly to produce an appearance: "Wherever nature has given the mind a propensity to any vice, or to any passion disagreeable to others, refined breeding has taught men to throw the bias on the opposite side, and to preserve, in all their behaviour, the appearance of sentiments different from those to which they naturally incline" (EMPL 131-32). So, the presence of "gallantry" might always be presumed to mask and thus be a sign of other, opposite and perhaps even violently antipathetic sentiments, those to which men—and especially women—"naturally incline." Gallantry reminds us of danger even while reassuring us. Witness the precarious practice of male gallant "appearance," a material manifestation of the posturing of Hume's rhetoric:

What better school for manners, than the company of virtuous women; where the mutual endeavour to please must insensibly polish the mind,
where the example of the female softness and modesty must communicate itself to their admirers, and where the delicacy of that sex puts every one on his guard, lest he give offense by any breach of decency? (EMPL 134)

As in "OPD," Hume's choice of terminology here betrays an association, even if subconscious, of this gender convention and menace, constraint, confinement. And again, as in "OPD," an added-excised passage (1742-64) corroborates the perception of irony in its immediately preceding paragraph (above):

I must confess, That my own particular choice rather leads me to prefer the company of a few select companions, with whom I can, calmly and peaceably, enjoy the feast of reason, and try the justness of every reflection, whether gay or serious, that may occur to me. But as such a delightful society is not every day to be met with, I must think, that mixt companies, without the fair-sex, are the most insipid entertainment in the world, and destitute of gaiety and politeness, as much as of sense and reason. Nothing can keep them from excessive dulness but hard drinking; a remedy worse than the disease. (EMPL 626)

Here, true philosopher Hume autobiographically confesses his preference for "reason" and "justness" over the artificial "biass" of gallant society: here he pointedly contrasts philosophy ("the feast of reason") and common life (mannerly display, polite society) in an invidious juxtaposition. Lest we imagine the "feast of reason" exclusively available to men, we should recall Hume's Treatise ("Of chastity and modesty") conclusion that female "virtue," "softness and modesty" are artificially (that is, factionally) imposed upon women by patriarchal society, in order to dissuade them from their natural propensity to the vice of lust, and thus to guarantee the paternity of heirs. As for men, Hume alludes to their "lawless will" underlying the checks and balances of social interaction. Males are naturally inclined to tyranny over "weaker"
creatures, and a selfish, anarchic tyranny at that; the restraint of this selfish passion arising from the accident of superior "strength" can only occur as the result of a seduction: "Though the males, when united, have in all countries bodily force sufficient to maintain this severe tyranny, yet such are the insinuation, address, and charms of their fair companions, that women are commonly able to break the confederacy, and share with the other sex in all the rights and privileges of society" (E 190-91). All persons attending the "school for manners" of polite society tread the often-thin ice of convention over the torrents of their animal natures: women their lust, men their savagery. "Any breach of decency" might not only "give offence," but also topple the entire social artifice, precarious in this one issue of female "virtue and modesty" and ironically reliant upon a seduction (women use lust to conquer men's savagery). Hume strongly suggests here that common life, the inevitable network of conventions within which humans live their daily lives, nonetheless necessarily suffers the vulnerability of artifice. He suggests equally the ideality of the "feast of reason," of true philosophy, where convention (society) and truth ("justness") would be, indistinguishably, epistemological source and proof "of every reflection, whether gay or serious." And also, possibly, where men and women could be together—at table—naturally (as outside of conventionally) and productively in the service of true philosophy.

Hume finally defuses the seriousness of this critical observation of gender convention with the "hard-drinking" joke; however, his gallant- and companion-company comparison, with its rather blunt allegation of unreason and injustice underlying patriarchy's social game, remains uncomfortably inscribed. Nothing to do but cut it out, on the ultimate anxiety about delivering to his future reputation in literary history its philosophical slight to polite society—not to mention its vulgar reference to participation in a male Dionysian rite, "hard drinking."
Unlike the case of the other woman-appeal essays, "OPD" cannot be easily separated into philosophical content and gallant "banter." In fact, as I have suggested above, in this essay what can be construed as "banter" actually marks some instances of Hume's most critical, philosophical assessments of patriarchy. The fact that Hume eventually excised parts of these "gay" passages may signal his perception of a dominant philosophical "seriousness" in these remarks; or, at least, he may have felt that he took too great liberties with his conventional audience's sense of humor. Philosophically, the gay and serious threads of this text entwine indistinguishably in truth; for the common-life readership the gay should veil this truth to make it more socially appealing. Hume may finally have judged the banter too thin a veil for the nettling truth it sought to disguise: that the "vast difference betwixt the education and duties of the two sexes" (T 571) relies entirely--and artificially--on male property paranoia, a paranoia entirely justifiable and justified, given the inevitable irruptions and subsequent disruptions of "human nature" (as bi-sexual) into polite convention.

In the end, "OPD"'s interior anecdotes remained, relieved of their potentially embarassing excesses. Hume must have judged this essay in some way different from the other woman-appeal essays, as he retained it for his final edition. He may have felt, simply, that this woman-appeal essay was "smarter" than the others, not a trifling imitation of Addison after all but a stronger essay in both form and content. But there remains disagreement about "OPD"'s target audience, between those critics who have nodded to this essay; recall that M. A. Box sees "OPD" as "directed largely to women readers" (130), while Norah Smith has decided that as a retained essay, "OPD" could not have been written "specifically with the ladies in mind" (362).

I will now offer another argument for the possibility that in spite of its latent subversiveness, "OPD" was largely directed to the status-quo, translated here as male readership. This reader-response reassessment is possible in the light of an English
literary subtext, an increasingly popular motif in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature: the Oriental tale and especially the motif of the harem.

Eighteenth-century England took a great interest in things "Oriental," due primarily to Europe's experiences of Ottoman military encroachment as well as the general opening of the Near East to English trade and travel. Travellers to "the Orient" returned with tales of their observations there. As Lady Montagu scoffs in her Letters, these male travellers' accounts of Turkish women's lives often widely missed the mark of truth: "I cannot forbear admiring either the exemplary discretion or extreme stupidity of all the writers that have given accounts of [the Turkish women]." Lady Mary accurately points out that since no man could ever gain access to the women's dwellings or personal lives, their accounts of this subject must necessarily be largely conjectural.

Although from her direct experience and observation Lady Mary was able to conclude that the Turkish women "have more Liberty" than the English, and that they are "the only free people in the [Ottoman] Empire" (Embassy 111), eighteenth-century European arts and letters featured numerous tableaux of Turkish harem women enslaved and oppressed. Examples include a range from Montesquieu's Lettres Persanes (1721), Diderot's Les Bijoux Indiscrets (1748), Mozart's Die Entfuhrung Aus Dem Serail (1782), and Lord Byron's Don Juan (1818); to innumerable small pageants, plays, novellas and magazine pieces (Soliman, 1767; The Sultan or a Peep into the Seraglio, 1778); journalism ("Vindication of the Liberties of the Asiatic Woman," 1810 Annual Register); and even pornography (The Lustful Turk, 1828). Common to all of these artistic representations are "exotic" images of "Oriental despotism, Oriental splendor, cruelty, sensuality," images thus appealing to the most basic of animal instincts, sex and aggression. This "irrational, depraved (fallen); childlike, different" Orient served as foil to a "rational, virtuous, mature, 'normal'" Enlightenment Europe (Said 3-4, 40). The eighteenth-century European writers used Orientalist themes and
images, including and especially that of the harem, to attract the reader--by contrast--to moralizing tales of Enlightenment manners, conventions and institutions. But this moralizing may appear ironic when one considers the decidedly gender-biased erotic appeal of the harem tale.

When read alongside "OPD," Lady Mary's accounts of Turkish women's lives situate Hume's harem tales in an authorial tradition of male fantasy. Her descriptions of independent and strong Turkish women illuminate by contrast the stereotypical nature of Hume's representation of harem culture in anecdotes which speak more of the male reader's fantasy than they actually do of observed reality. In her unique survey of eighteenth-century English literary Orientalism, Martha Pike Conant asserts that, "The typical English writer of philosopher oriental tales . . . dwelt in an imaginary country of pure speculation, and entered the world of fact only for the purpose of moralizing" (231). While Hume the moralist and Hume the writer might seem to have been at cross-purposes, the two conjoin in the goal of selling essays in the eighteenth-century.

Hume may have intended his representations of and allusions to encreamed females to attract and titillate his male readership; after all, even though Hume offers these anecdotes to describe the "odiousness" of polygamy (Hume the moralist), he also gives them a comic and risqué flourish (Hume the writer). I found myself uncomfortably and confusedly dismayed and amused simultaneously by them. But female readers may also have enjoyed the Orientalist subject matter, as they recalled such tales as "Isaac Bickerstaffe"'s The Sultan where English female virtue and spunk ultimately triumph over the title character's absolute sway ("Who would have thought, that a little cock'd-up nose would have overturn'd the customs of a mighty empire?"--that nose synochochaly an impossibly strained hybrid of female coquetry, feminine modesty, and masculine power and authority). But given this subject's extreme popularity, I assume that Hume recognized this essay's potential appeal to a mass readership, in status-quo terms. By status-quo I intend to describe an "Addisonian"
readership (the Oriental tale appeared in numerous Spectator papers), or one which would not have questioned the natural subjection of women under patriarchy; as Katharine Rogers summarizes their situation, eighteenth-century married women lived in "mild subjection to virtual slavery" (7), at the will and authority of their husbands. Some female readers might have felt (however temporarily) empowered by a "feminist" interpretation of Hume's anecdotes; however, such a dissident readership could hardly have been Hume's primary intention—not, at least, we might assume, as a mass marketing target for an eighteenth-century author.

Robert D. Mayo warns from the outset in his The English Novel in the Magazines 1740-1815 that, "We should not . . . oversimplify the eighteenth-century 'reading public.' To a considerable degree it defies analysis." This defiance arose from the exponentially-increased literacy—including that of women (urban middle-class and up)—of a rapidly growing population. Thus a "reading public" evolved "which was monolithic in size but not in character . . . the appeals to reader interests and prejudices, sometimes within the same periodical, were extremely diversified, if not contradictory" (3).

Yet for the gender issue, the picture emerging from Mayo's comprehensive study of the mid-eighteenth-century popular press proves status-quo, in the general sense: as the reduction, careful regulation and confinement, and manipulation of woman's epistemological sphere. Publication data corroborate this opinion; for example, we find in Mayo's "A Catalogue of Magazine Novels and Novelettes 1740-1815," two hundred pages of titles representing gender-biased morality tales ("The Conflict Between Reason and Love," "Conjugal Infidelity," "The Cruelty of Deserting Natural Children, and the Danger of Slight Breaches of Duty: Exemplified in the History of a Natural Daughter, as Related by Herself"), Oriental tales and allegories and "philosophical" treatises ("The Danger of Too Much Knowledge without Solidity of Judgment"). In addition, Mayo's perceptions of the publications of Eliza Haywood,
"an old hand at the wheel of public taste," in particular her serial The Female Spectator, are revelatory: "Considering its bewitching blend of passion and propriety, fashion, and gossip, it is not surprising that The Female Spectator should achieve a very gratifying sale" (emphasis added). While it may be dangerous to "oversimplify" one's image of the eighteenth-century reading public, such oversimplification apparently proves less problematical for the imagining of eighteenth-century female reader taste, and gender convention. Kathryn Shevelow (author of Women and Print Culture, 1989) conclusively defines the eighteenth-century gender status quo:

By drawing on the virtually homogenous background of female social conditioning, and relying on the Aristotelian principle of the complementarity of ethos and pathos, the Tatler (assumed exemplary by both Mayo and Shevelow) established within a single framework multiple contexts for addressing women . . . the social and historical determinants brought into play through the paternal voice create a covert rhetorical effect activated in the very process of reading. And that rhetoric carries a message of female subordination in a patriarchal culture. ("Fathers") (emphasis added)

Working from the reader-response theories of Wolfgang Iser, Stanley Fish and W. Daniel Wilson, Shevelow models an "intended audience" for eighteenth-century popular literature: "that audience both overtly designated by the author and covertly affected by the rhetoric buried in the text . . . the background and attitudes which the text demands of its readers in order to "read" (i.e., properly understand) it." Shevelow's model is, synonymously, paternalism, or the father's special authority over his children and especially his daughters. This paternalism thoroughly infused all psychological, sociological and aesthetic dimensions of a woman's life and therefore, it logically follows, her reading; in fact, this paternalist "network was shared by all early
eighteenth-century readers, male and female alike" (122nn3-5, 108-09). Addison and Steele put into play the same "double-edged didacticism," both overt and covert rhetorical appeals, as I have above attributed to Hume in the case of "OPD." However, different from Hume's complicated ideological dualism, Addison and Steele’s double-edge shows two indistinguishable faces: the reification and enforcement of patriarchy and paternalism. These essayists' production represents the authoritative directing voice of the father; a voice/power model which, according to Shevelow, reduces all readers to the status of "daughter": "The [text] establishes a dynamic between author and reader based on familial ties... The book, acting in loco parentis, elicits a response based on the reader’s experience. The reader becomes, in effect, a surrogate daughter" (111). Of course, as the female reader "in-effect" was also in-reality a biological daughter, we can imagine that her internalization of this dynamic proved especially profound for her, a double (as literary and literal) dose of authority. For this reader, there could be no escape hatch (such as legally or even Oedipally coming-of-age), no possibility of rebellion or even re-vision of the father's schemes for her.

Shevelow's text-father, reader-daughter model turns our attention back to Hume's rejected essays; for these texts in the most general frame do not follow the Addiscon familial laws. That is, their status as "fathers" must be radically called into question, as I have attempted to prove here in Chapter Two. I have already metaphorized these texts as rebellious "daughters," given their "feminine" subject matter and their flouting of patriarchal laws and institutions. As such, they might attract the reader-daughter while suffering eventual rejection at the hands of the father-author(ity). The woman reader's experience may include the approval of such perspectives or events as Hume describes in these essays; the male reader's experience should be, in the context of patriarchal politics, the despising of same for their refusal of his dominance. In the literal "final analysis," these essay-daughters deviated from
the circle defined by their ultimately convention-bound authorial "father," Hume himself. This may well be the reason why Hume refused to retain them, and in fact with his particular stated judgments cast them for the future into critical oblivion.

Shevelow's above model lends itself usefully to a comparison of Hume and Addison, in light of the fact that critics--the few who have attended to these essays at all--have consistently favorably compared the rejected essays to the Spectator example. While certain topical/thematic and rhetorical parallels appear obvious, the "familial" text-reader dynamic differs importantly. Focusing on Norah Smith's unique treatment of the rejection question, I will argue that her perceptions represent less a sensitive comparison of the two essayists and more a predictable critical foreclosure on the woman-appeal issue. Smith's 1972 "Hume's 'Rejected' Essays," offers, however unintentionally perhaps, compelling proof that Hume's mid-18th-century rejections were politically motivated.

"Predictable" points, even more recently than 1972 (Smith's article) to a critical moment of Addison-bashing, a favorite modern sport. The sportsman in our scope here is M. A. Box (1990). Citing only Matthew Arnold, Box declares that "Hume was consciously writing in the 'trifling manner' of Addison, who now has the reputation of being one of the most uninteresting minds to have written works of classic status" (128). For its first distinction, this judgment issues, unaltered historically, from the eighteenth-century roots of Hume's retained "Of the Standard of Taste," attacked by modern feminists for its alleged monocural inquiry into who should serve as a culture's taste-setters. Hume's "OST" argument seems circular, leading inevitably to the proposition that economically privileged, well-educated and certainly, white males should supply from among their ranks these superior critics: "It is sufficient for our present purpose, if we have proved, that the taste of all individuals is not upon an equal footing, and that some men in general . . will be acknowledged by universal sentiment to have a preference above others" (EMPL 242). Relying on two "tastes" alone--his
own and Matthew Arnold's--Box condemns the eighteenth century's most popular mass-readership author. Presumably, the eighteenth-century subscriber was too ignorant and dull to recognize the lack of legitimate interest value in what he or she appreciated in Addison.

The remark's second distinction is its failure to acknowledge what must be axiomatic, that what is "interesting"--or "political," or "philosophical"--to one reader may not affect another in the same way, generically or emotionally. Such variation occurs inevitably from a complexity of variables, including gender, and would especially hold true for separation in historical time, over centuries (or even decades). Carol Kay stresses this critical difference, especially as it affects late twentieth-century academic judgments about genre and discipline--and therefore value--for eighteenth-century texts:

Twentieth-century assumptions about what counts as a logical argument and what counts as a subject susceptible of logical argument attach to other assumptions about what sort of writing counts as philosophical . . . Although there was philosophy in the academies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the English-language philosophers of the period we think of as great made careers outside the academy. They crafted their works for a broad public and chose subjects and occasions they considered crucial for that public, while avoiding elaborate, specialized vocabularies . . . Their philosophic practices should not be thought of as popularizations, as if their 'real' philosophy were more specialized and recondite, more like our philosophy, than the forms in which they wrote. 8

In the Introduction to his five-volume collection of Spectator papers, Donald Bond acknowledges the historicity of philosophy: "By modern standards many of these [papers] seem unnecessarily simplified and 'unphilosophical', but to the contemporary
reader they provided just the right amount of critical learning, amply supported with
illustrative quotation and without the pedantry of the schools." (In a related
observation, M. A. Box evokes Addison when, discussing Hume, he proposes the
entertainment value of eighteenth-century philosophy: "The frequency with which
teachers of philosophy employ Hume's writings as texts for introductory classes
suggests the extent to which Hume succeeded in providing pleasant stimulation for the
interested but uninitiated" (59).) Bond significantly points to the democratization of
learning in 18th-century England, and to Addison's essays as the finest reflection of the
needs of a newly diverse readership, "persons with a multiplicity of interests and
backgrounds. A new reading public is emerging in England, not confined to the
aristocracy or to the learned" ( ). Female readership made up an increasingly
important part of that "public," and certainly defined a population who had had little or
no exposure to academic philosophy. It certainly appears that Hume and Addison mark
a brief moment in Western intellectual history when a democratization of "philosophy"-
-specifically the inclusion of women within the sensus communis--was attempted.
Hume's and Addison's (different) addresses to women's common sense can and should
be examined in light of the historical relationship between philosophy and rhetoric; of
special interest would be critical history's response to the dangers lurking in these
essayists' woman-appeal rhetoric perceived as seduction at the expense of substance.

The "learned" of today who fail to appreciate (and who even abhor) Addison's
bringing of "Philosophy out of the schools and colleges, to dwell in Clubs and
Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses," do so necessarily within a narrow
definition of "Philosophy." Like "morality," which in the 18th century included
anything derived from or concerning "human nature," 9 "Philosophy" seemed intended
to nourish comprehensively the human hunger for knowledge of the world. Quoting
Goethe, Peter Gay points to the anti-"metaphysical" (as "pretentious meddling with the
unknowable"), "common-sensical" aim of Enlightenment philosophy:
"People opened their eyes, looked straight ahead, were attentive, diligent, active, and believed that if they judged and acted soundly in their own circle they might venture to put in a word about more remote matters. According to such a view, everyone was entitled not merely to philosophize, but gradually to come to think of himself as a philosopher" (from Dichtung und Wahrheit)." (Goethe qtd. in Gay, 133)

Donald Bond's inventory of Spectator subjects includes "natural science, classical learning, the theatre, the world of books, philosophy, religion, art and music;" we might add courtship, marriage, childrearing, cooking, entertaining and other domestic arts and sciences. "The variety of subject-matter and the freshness of its treatment help us to understand why the Spectator was such a tremendous success in its day and why it continued to be read throughout the century" (lxxiii). In fact, Bond's tribute to the "astonishing success" Addison and Steele enjoyed includes this observation by George Sherburn: "If one wishes to know what the eighteenth-century Londoner thought about, one can do no better than to read The Spectator" (qtd. in Bond, xiii). But the Spectator's "tea-table Philosopher" was not to enjoy a lasting authority; Peter Gay reports the downfall of common-sense "philosophy": "Modern usage has cheapened the term [common sense] . . . 'That man has no common sense' is a coarse insult. 'That man has common sense' is an insult too" (133). Carol Kay points to the rational and clear, social and conversational mode of Addison and Steele as reflecting "the progressive elements of a broadly shared middle ground of eighteenth-century culture [and philosophy] that was . . . soon to disappear" (69).

But could the eighteenth-century common-sense philosopher, even in the common-sense qualification, have been female? Sherburn's sweeping judgment as well as Goethe's prescription become questionable in the case of the female readership. We must pose the question in stages: what is the nature of what the eighteenth-century female Londoner "thought about"? Was she thinking about the same things that the
male Londoner did? Was there a difference in the kind of "philosophy" the female Londoner was to espouse? And, if women were presumed able to share the same "philosophy" as men, did this intrusion signal from the outset the inevitable failure of "common-sense philosophy"? Most importantly, to what extent can the Spectator's portrayal of women--including descriptions of women as well as supposed original correspondence by "real" women--be thought to convey what female Londoners actually thought?

To a great extent--if we recognize the power and active political agenda of the "status quo" to shape female consciousness, according to Kathryn Shevelow. We should assume that such publications' portrayal of feminine "thought," actually mirrors that thought, as a more or less unanimous content, because it was supposed to. However much awareness of female issues ("fair-sexing"); however much lip-service paid to female potential, educability, "sense;" however much "philosophy" this journal purported to convey to the tea-table--the early essay-periodicals served, at least to a good degree, as a patriarchal strong arm. Taking Richard Steele as example, Rae Blanchard summarizes the case: "It was Steele's belief that the only service which women can render to society lies entirely within the circle of home, that 'the utmost of a Woman's Character is contained in Domestick Life: She is Blameless or Praiseworthy according as her Carriage affects the House of her Father or her Husband'" (Spectator 342, qtd. in Blanchard 353-54). About the Tatler, Kathryn Shevelow writes: "The mocking flattery of the paper's title is characteristic of the language the Tatler adopted to address women, mingling compliment and chastisement in the service of a didactic intent." This intent included the assurance of a continuous supply of acceptable wives to the changing male citizenry, a rising tide of "public" men who required domestically and socially competent yet wholly docile and submissive spouses. Thus Shevelow (sharing the much earlier conclusions of Rae Blanchard) establishes that the Tatler, in spite of its heralding a new literary age for women as both
subject and contributor, was "decidedly conservative, reinforcing the values of female subordination to patriarchal social structures, within the family and without . . . it demonstrates the use of literature to maintain a restrictive status quo" ("Fathers" 107, 121-22), which would be maintained if not expanded by the public press throughout the century. Rae Blanchard concludes that in fact, it was precisely Steele's "lack of feminist zeal," coupled with his genteel Enlightenment attitudes, which caused him to have a far larger reading public and thus more influence on gender stereotyping than more polemical writers could have had—a situation we have considered for the case of Hume's ideological back-pedaling in "OPD."

We can now re-pose the question: is Hume's essay address to female "common sense" menaced on the popular front by a genuinely philosophical—as opposed to patronizing—appeal to female subativity (if not "feminist zeal")? We have seen how at the most basic semantic level, Hume employs terms, images and metaphors of domestic life; on the stylistic front he brings into play a discursive array (including bodily allusions, "raillery," historical and mythical tales ("gossip"), and confession) to include what Jean Elshtain might refer to as the "private language-world;" and most importantly, for subject matter he describes women's lives, rights and restrictions in wifehood, motherhood and citizenship. In so doing, as essayist-rhetorician, Hume follows a Platonic assumption articulated here by Hans-Georg Gadamer: "that the rhetorician must be . . . knowledgeable and at home with the souls on which he hopes to work" (emphasis added). Gadamer's domestic metaphor here need not be overdetermined; yet, it does point back to Hume's claim—raised to metaphorical priority by Annette Baier—that the strongest possible influence on a person would come from his or her closest possible connections, epitomized by the natural family or the domestic unit. Philosophy itself, if it is to be brought into social praxis (and thereby legitimized), cannot be exempt from this claim. Hume's feminized text, then, can be reconceived not as a philosophical talking-down (if philosophical at all), but as a
facilitated talking-to, a requisite acknowledgment of a common human language-world. Hume brings philosophy not only to the tea-table, but home in general.

Recall that Hume also directed his woman-appeal to women in their public appearances as "sovereigns of conversation" in the social life of polite society. Remarkably, their epistemological priority within this society (which Jerome Christensen feels compelled to devalue as a commodity-exchange economy), Hume again introduces women into a Platonic scene, one from which they surely were excluded in the "common-sense" vision of Plato himself. Gadamer, commenting on Plato's positive judgments in the Phaedrus, "that [dialectical] rhetoric can offer an essential contribution to the discovery and transmission of insight and knowledge," believes that "true rhetoric cannot be separated from . . . the art of leading a conversation." Being understood, in the true marriage of philosophic and social ambition, requires a "communicative context" of "agreement" and even "goodwill" (Gadamer 348). Hume's mid-text repudiations of seduction into raillery, along with his attacks (overt or ironic) on that raillery's logic as ignorant and divisive, signal a kind of general philosophical imperative behind his woman-appeal, as opposed to the "Addisonian"s' apparent preference for conventionalized and thus prescriptive tableaux of gender issues. The proffering of woman-appeal issues does not philosophical woman-appeal make, as we can see in the Addisonian case. The father-daughter model must be updated into the citoyen-citoyenne, where, to echo Gadamer, agreement and goodwill--even in the acknowledgment of difference--"make speech truly possible and open the way to insight."

But we must return to our still-unresolved question: does Hume indeed construct such a utopia in his woman-appeal essays? Are they open forum for a philosophical inquiry into the gender issues of Hume's day; within the gender context do they thus mark a paradigm shift from factional interest to philosophical concern? Or, are they mere rhetorical seduction devices within an ultimate firm stand in status-
quo and self-interest? How might they simultaneously serve two opposing ideologies? It is indeed difficult to decide, especially given the two-and-a-half centuries of critical dismissal these texts have suffered. What sort of introduction to the readership do the labels "Rejected" (Smith's title), or "Withdrawn and Unpublished" (Miller) provide for the forlorn titles huddled beneath? How to empower texts that have been so bashed by the critical establishment—as well as eventually by their own parent? If compelled—or seduced—to such an empowerment attempt, we might begin by attacking the recognizable misogyny in such criticism. If we have had difficulty pinpointing straightforward, unequivocal "sexism" in Hume's text, we do not encounter such difficulty in the case of certain commentators.

The previous discussion of the eighteenth-century popular press as a vehicle of "philosophy" for public consumption (and especially for the gender context) should provide a background for our understanding of Norah Smith's 1972 essay, "Hume's 'Rejected' Essays." It should do so not only because Smith investigates the Hume-Addison comparison in the eighteenth-century essay tradition, but also because she judges the rejection phenomenon in a particularly modern frame which proves nonetheless to rely on eighteenth-century status-quo characterizations such as described by Shevelow. In short, Smith reads as-a-man, both eighteenth-century and modern. She speaks from a persistent politics of rejection for woman-appeal. These politics include the stereotyping of female interest as "frivolous" or "trifling;" the association of "literary" style with frivolous femininity—or at the least, lack of seriousness; the strict division of learning into "philosophy" and "literature" (occasionally referred to as "lightweight nonsense") and the exclusion of women from philosophy; and the use of "axiologic logic" (Hernstein Smith's phrase) which assumes a central and universal authority for passing (pre)judgment. The fact that Smith is a woman makes her unique attention to the rejection issue all the more informative; it proves the durability of eighteenth-century, "Addisonian" gender modeling where a woman must learn to
recognize the roles and limitations inevitable to her "weaker sex." Thus blinded to any other possibilities for the rejected essays, Smith is, ironically, impelled to condemn them in the patriarchal critical tradition. And, although Smith's essay appeared in 1972, before the last two decades' theoretical developments regarding gender and reading, we cannot regard its content as dated and shelvable: we have seen in the other critical texts examined here the endurance, to the present, of some if not all of the misogynist ideas and associations she worked from at her own moment.

Smith opens her inquiry into "the reasons for Hume's rejection of these essays" with the important fact that he launched his essay career after the public's rejection of the Treatise. In fact, Smith's handling of this topic, her choice of evidence, implies that the rejecting critics actually treated the Treatise like a woman: they attacked it not with "first rate philosophical criticism," but instead with "belittling and arrogant comments," and "personal jibes." Smith concludes her summary of this critical rejection with Mossner's assertion, "that the criticism of Hume's philosophy itself 'is all of a piece: raillery and falsification'" (355).

The term "raillery" recalls Hume's use of the same term in "Of the Study of History" to describe his own "seduction" into a certain patronizing—and "falsified"—rhetorical stance toward "the ladies." Treated like a woman by his critics, Hume did the womanly thing and set about "to be instructed by the Public" (Greig I: 187) in how to please. He believed that his failure to do so "had proceeded more from the manner than the matter" (Mossner 612), that he must change his style in order that his philosophy should be more pleasing, because more easily accessible. Smith highlights Hume's use of a fertility metaphor to describe the purpose of his Essays: "They may prove like dung with marl, and bring forward the rest of my Philosophy, which is of a more durable, though of a harder and more stubborn nature" (Greig I: 43). The Essays, "a necessary exercise in style and form of expression," had in their literary emphasis the dung-role, "which might fertilise his reasoning and argument in the rest of
his philosophy, so as to 'bring forward' these philosophical ideas" (Smith 356). To the aid of the "dead-born" Treatise Hume brought, it seems, a sort of midwife, to invoke another feminine metaphor. This midwife, although critical to Hume's legacy, must yet be assigned dung-value, a lowly entity whose only purpose is to help "philosophy" on its climb to fame—after first bringing it into being at all. But, to introduce a third feminine metaphor, this lowly dung-midwife is also a whore, to be brought into service for the seduction of public taste. Once the public could be seduced, the woman could be cast away. Hence Smith, along with Box, sees the rejected essays as "apprentice pieces" (masculinizing the metaphor here but keeping within the authority paradigm), to be abandoned once maturity is achieved: "It is probable that Hume found the essay form so successful that he decided to continue using it, but recognised that certain essays, included at first to suit more general tastes, had become incongruous amongst essays of a more serious nature" (Smith 356). In short, in the beginning of his essayist career, in the initial seduction pieces, Hume experimented with making philosophy a "woman."

Carol Kay has implied that the "emphasis on opinion and passion" in eighteenth-century moral philosophy "turned all moral beings into women." Following this logic, we can imagine that the very literariness of the rejected essays would have enhanced their value as "serious" moral philosophy for Hume's readership. Kay emphasizes the influence of sympathy theory and the central importance of social life in general in eighteenth-century epistemology:

The widespread acceptance of the dictum that art should instruct and delight suggests that 'high' art did not aim for detachment from the general social exchanges by means of an hypostatized sphere of eternal aesthetic value. Response to art was a favorite topic for moral philosophers because it was considered analogous to ethical feeling and
connected to ethics and politics in the increasingly historical understanding of social life. ("Canon" 67)

But critical history has not always proved so sanguine about popular ("general social exchanges") and feminine contributions to philosophy, aesthetic, moral or otherwise.

We have seen how Hume himself derogated "certain essays," gradually rejecting these (as "frivolous" or "finical," "bad imitations of the agreeable Triffling of Addison"") from his editions. Norah Smith poses a circular-logic question:

The question arises as to why Hume wrote the rejected essays at all and one reason can be found in the preface to the original volume of Essays: "Most of these ESSAYS were wrote with a View of being published as WEEKLY-PAPERS, and were intended to comprehend the Designs both of SPECTATORS & CRAFTSMEN." Hume confesses some anxiety as to the probably success of his work but asserts that his strength lies in his "Method of handling POLITICAL SUBJECTS." Even here he would appear to have had some misgivings over the essays he later described as "bad Imitations of the agreeable Triffling of Addison." (358)

Smith pairs her references to Hume's anxiety with his prefatory statement of intention for the essays in general, that they would be journalism for the general public (the teatable philosophers). In her paragraph Smith achieves the effect of correlating serial publication for popular taste with "bad"ness and "Triffling." She fails to account for another Humean statement she quotes from the 1741 preface, where Hume asserts that the strength of his new endeavor "lies in his 'Method of handling POLITICAL SUBJECTS'." Smith's reader, recalling M. A. Box's decision that "not one of [the rejected essays] was political" (Box 123), may well feel confused: did Hume only temporarily imagine that he was handling "political subjects" in the rejects; or, do "political subjects" somehow become a-political, "triffling," when they are offered to the general public readership? Heading the gappy logic of the paragraph in general,
Smith's "question" finally begs some attention; why does "the question arise" as to why the rejects were written, when good reasons are visibly present? It must arise because Hume and centuries of other rejecting critics have led us to suspect not only Hume's statements of intention, but any positive identification of the political or philosophical (i.e. serious) and mass taste ("common sense")—especially when feminine.

The fact that a considerable faction of this mass taste was female supplies Smith with her strongest evidence that Hume indeed was imitating Addison in the case of the rejected essays. She reasons as follows: "When writing for the ladies, Hume's language becomes flowery . . . and he indulges at times in a most uncharacteristic coyness." He adopts a "playful, mock-gallant tone" which "would certainly appear to have its source in Addison's writing." The essays she cites in the paragraph are "Of Love and Marriage," "Of the Study of History," "Of Essay Writing," and "Of Moral Prejudices." But Hume's reader would strain hard, it seems, to force a comparison between any stylistic excesses on Hume's part in the above-cited essays, and the following "Addisonianism":

I consider woman as a beautiful romantic animal, that may be adorned with furs and feathers, pearls and diamonds, ores and silks. The lynx shall cast its skin at her feet to make her a tippet; the peacock, parrot, and swan shall pay contributions to her muff; the sea shall be searched for shells, and the rocks for gems; and every part of nature furnish out its share towards the embellishment of a creature that is the most consummate work of it. (Taitler 116)

Here, what F. W. Bateson delicately deems "The ambivalence of Addison's attitude to women" in this text (148), surely has no equivalent in Hume, even in his apologetic "raillery."

Addison makes little distinction between "raillery" and "seriousness" in his didactic paternalism which is also, as I perceive it, either absent from Hume's
addresses to women or very self-conscious, even apologetic. Recalling Hume's "Of the Study of History," his self-conscious repudiation of "raillery," we can compare unfavorably Addison's approach to the same topic of women's reading:

As I have taken the Ladies under my particular Care, I shall make it my Business to find out in the best Authors ancient and modern such Passages as may be for their use, and endeavour to accommodate them as well as I can to their Taste; not questioning but the valuable Part of the Sex will easily pardon me, if from Time to Time I laugh at those little Vanities and Follies which appear in the Behaviour of some of them . . . I flatter my self that I see the Sex daily improving by these my Speculations. My fair Readers are already deeper Scholars than the Beaus . . . I cannot but observe that the former are superior to the others not only in the Sense but in the Spelling. (Spectator 92)

Addison's "serious" message, that women profit from good reading, remains throughout inseparable from his "compliments" to them (what Hume has termed "raillery") and especially from his continuous patronizing reassertions of his own authority.

Smith acknowledges Hume's difference from Addison in "Of the Study of History." She implies that the "raillery" indeed mimics Addison, while the "serious" remainder does not:

It is not simply that Hume when he is imitating Addison writes on more frivolous topics than he would normally: it is that he writes in a manner completely foreign to his way of thinking. In the later part of "Of the Study of History" he comes into his own and elaborates in an ordered fashion . . . This is very much his approach in the retained essays. (Smith 362) (emphases added)
Clearly, Smith sees little or no connection between the two "parts" of "Of the Study of History." The address to the ladies, being "frivolous," is not a "normal" topic for Hume. Where I have seen the part-difference here as stylistic, a "seduction" into a particular manner which had little real effect on the matter, Smith judges the division invidiously as Addison/Hume, female/male. She curiously finds Hume's "raillery" "completely foreign to his way of thinking," making a rigid distinction between the gay and the serious while emptying the former of any thoughtful content. Instead of shifting from one discursive practice to another within the same conventional paradigm, Hume grows up--abandoning his immature ways--and "comes into his own," a decidedly male rite of passage. He leaves behind his Addisonian effeminacy (the intellectual eunuch), and becomes a man practicing virile philosophy. Smith thus suggests that part two of "Of the Study of History" proves, after all, worthy of being-retained.

Indeed, Addison's essay epistemology itself seems to Smith effeminate; she selectively reports Addison's remarks on essay-writing from *Spectator* 476:

Addison reveals a markedly different attitude [from the "ordered fashion" characteristic of Hume's retained essays], regarding an essay as lacking order and method and maintaining that 'it is sufficient that I have several Thoughts on a Subject, without troubling my self to range them in such order, that they may seem to grow out of one another, and be disposed under the proper Heads." (Smith 362)

According to Smith's selection here, Addison seems to be characterizing the essay form on the whole as "rambling," disorderly--and feminine. She fails to include Addison's attribution of this essay style to "Seneca and Montaigne," and to mention that the remainder of No. 476 praises the "methodical" style of essay-writing as exemplified by "Tully and Aristotle." Smith needs to establish Addison's effeminacy, it seems, in
order to effect her comparison of Hume's "retained" style to the "rambling and female-oriented approach" she assigns to Addison and finds in Hume's rejected essays.

Smith's summary of the "likenesses" between Hume's rejected essays and what she generalizes as Addison's essay style includes "rambling," "female-oriented," and "the use of illustration rather than reasoned argument to make a point." These likenesses "make the greatest contrast with Hume's retained essays," which are, then, by implication "orderly," "male-oriented," and "reasonably argued" (362). Smith then supports her summary-claims with a rambling, illustrative enumeration of Hume's literary strategies in the rejects. She baldly terms Hume's "learned and conversible" model, in "Of Essay Writing," "fictional worlds." Likewise, the anecdotes, letters and allegories found in these essays indict them as illustrative rather than reasoned. Other literary devices characterizing the rejects are personification and the use of personal pronouns; Smith compares the twenty-nine occurrences of "I" in "Of the Study of History"'s 1550 words with the mere nine uses in the combination 2930 words of two retained essays. Her scrupulous positivism here suggests not only the "ordered" nature of her inquiry, but also the self-enclosed effeminacy of the rejected essays. An essay featuring twenty-nine occurrences of "I" in 1500 words could hardly be grounded in the impersonal logic of the disembodied Cartesian mind, modern Western philosophy's first mover.

Smith eventually concludes that Hume's admiration for Addison as an intellect was not, overall, overwhelming. "It may well be, then, that Hume wrote the rejected essays, not from an undue admiration of Addison's manner of writing, but in order to comply with popular (and publisher's) expectations of what a collection of essays should contain." Thus Hume was seduced into Addisonianism by the latter's success; both writers responded to the seductions of Mistress Public. Smith sees Hume's gradual rejection of these seduction-essays as his recognition that the relationship was now secure, the wooing-period concluded: "When Hume found he could successfully
adopt the essay form as a vehicle for his more serious writing, the lighter essays became superfluous" (368).

Smith finally supports her lighter-serious comparison with a few illustrations of expert opinion on such matters. Central to her argument is the judgment of Thomas Wallace, who in a 1797 address to the Royal Irish Academy unfavorably compared Addison's style to that of more academic writers: Addison's language is "too weak for the weight of abstract moral disquisition and too vague for the niceties of metaphysical distinction" (Smith 368). Smith believes that Hume made the same judgment of the essays he rejected. The connection is neat, but Smith ignores what Enlightenment scholars such as Peter Gay go to great lengths to stress about the Enlightenment philosophers, including Hume—that abstraction and metaphysics were anathema to them. Hume may have indeed ultimately preferred "less trivial writing" (Smith 368), but Smith's evidence choice here reflects, it would seem, less Hume's stated preference and more the critical politics of post-Enlightenment scholarship.

But there is a general problem of reader identity in Smith's article. Her "axiologic logic" drives her to absolute critical distinctions which as such must topple immediately at the opposition of one dissenting opinion—in this case, my own. For example, she makes two obviously relativistic judgments while concluding her point about Hume's "fair-sexing": "In writing essays for the 'fair sex', Hume was adopting an uncharacteristic mode. Hume's inclinations did not lie in producing lightweight nonsense" (369). First, it would be extremely difficult—even perhaps empirically impossible—to define Hume's "characteristic mode;" countless scholars (Christensen, Livingston, Richetti, Price, Baier, and others) have labored over Hume's polygeneric discursive and frequently ironic prose without feeling the need to pin down a uniquely Humean definitive text. Then, the phrase "lightweight nonsense," besides its critical worthlessness ("frivolity"!), is clearly aimed over Hume's head and at the particular genre of woman-appeal in the eighteenth-century fair-sexing tradition.
Smith is able to conclude that Hume's retained essays differ from Addison's in general in the intended audience; she quotes the monolithic Johnson's *Life of Addison* to prove "That Addison aims at a wider and less educated reading public." Yet, she quotes later from the same source, that the Addison publications were "among the first books by which both sexes are initiated in the elegancies of knowledge," and thus she suggests a wider educated reading public. Smith finds the sore point in "elegancies" and declares Hume to be "more concerned with truths." Anyway, she assumes, "Hume's readers . . . required no such sugar coating to the pill and were able to follow clear, but closely reasoned argument. It was natural for Addison to use stock epithets, since more succinct writing would make too great a demand on the readers he wanted to attract" (369). Following her logic to this point, we might reasonably conclude that Smith assumes Hume's target audience, for all but the rejects, to be male. Her "too great a demand" phrase directly mirrors Addison and Steele's prescriptions for female reading; in his play *The Refusal* Colley Cibber writes of the wifely potential of his character Charlotte: "As her Learning never went higher than Bickerstaff's *Tatlers*, her manners are consequently natural, modest, and agreeable."

Smith reaches a crescendo of axiologic logic:

Hume's attempts in a light vein were unsuccessful, the essays being mainly on trivial topics and demanding of him an uncharacteristic mode of thought and expression. While Hume acknowledged Addison as an 'elegant' writer, it is clear that his own literary ambitions extended beyond Addison's 'agreeable trifling' and that his frivolous essays were originally included, partly as an experiment in style and partly to appeal to the general reader. (371)

This conclusion boils down to error (the allegation of "unsuccessful"--these essays were immensely popular), relativistic judgment and unsupportable generalization. Throughout, Smith has correlated, if not outright defined an equation between the
female reader and the "general reader"--a public entity to be seduced and discarded for more "ambitious" (because "serious") projects once literary fame was in place.

Smith's use of such axiological terms and phrases as "We may judge" (Hume's rejection policy in general), "while it is easy to understand" (why certain essays were omitted after appearing only once), and "weak by any standards" (inflicted without any clarification on "Of Moral Prejudices"), implies an anterior authority supporting her own. Perhaps her most telling phrase appears here: "It can safely be said, then, that Hume withdrew these essays on account both of their trivial nature and their failure etc." "It," a definite pronouncement on the case, "can be said" because permission, even encouragement, and corroboration are there; "safely" because the pronouncement reinforces an always-already-operative critical standard, "then"--I have positively proven my case, nothing more need be said.

Quoting from a speech by Ursula LeGuin, Jane Tompkins reminds us: "The essential gesture of the father tongue is not reasoning, but distancing--making a gap, a space, between the subject or self and the object or other . . . The father tongue . . . goes one way. No answer is expected, or heard" (127). In her essay on Hume's rejected essays, Norah Smith speaks the father tongue: a critical tradition whose gender roles were clearly set down in Hume's time and which manifestly endures into our own critical generation. She follows, or is seduced by, a tradition which distances, divides, authoritatively judges and attempts to rule out difference. Like Hume's reward of popular fame for his seduction by Mistress Public, Smith's seduceability allows her into the hallowed 1972 community of the MLA publication; however, unlike Hume's popularity, Smith's would not be "popular," but rather elite, as academic.

Norah Smith's "Hume's 'Rejected' Essays" is important for this study here in its status as the lone general overview piece on these texts. Moreover, it exemplifies critical treatment of the rejected essays to-date; little of any substance or novelty has been offered about them since Smith's time. But her essay takes on a larger importance
when approached as a catalogue of critical rejection strategies based on gender, a politics of rejection especially serving the tradition of gender distinction on intellectual grounds, as I have attempted to bring out. It seems ironic, that in "Hume's 'Rejected' Essays" Smith gives us the only piece to-date entirely devoted to the study of this rejection question; while simultaneously, she grounds her study in the arguments for why these texts are not really worthy of scholarly interest. In other words, in an article entitled "Hume's 'Rejected' Essays," she fails to study the rejected texts in any way on their own terms, choosing instead to repeat the same criticism Hume himself leveled at them. She chooses to prove why Hume was accurate in his repudiation of these eight essays, and actually works hard to prove that this rejection had much to do with the woman-appeal of these texts. Thus she not only carries on the exclusion of woman-appeal from the critical and philosophical canons—she argues to justify this politics of rejection.

"It can safely be said," then, that Hume's rejected essays would have had to remain in mis- (as incomplete) understanding, obscurity, and even neglect until critical politics evolved into a different paradigm. This paradigm would establish (and sanction) the channels and methods for searching out such forgotten or neglected texts as Hume's orphans, and reuniting them with the familial body of their origin. This reunion will enable the formation of a more complete picture of a canonical writer such as Hume, a composite unedited previously by prejudicial decisions about what counts or is "interesting," and for whom (Hume), in that writer's opus—including, and perhaps especially, those decisions made by the writer himself.
NOTES

Introduction


3 For a history of these editions, see Green and Grose, Ibid 9-86, "History of the Editions." Here they designate the woman-appeal rejects: "Six others may be classed, apparently designed to attract the attention of ladies, and marked by the mannerisms of what was then a fashionable literature" (44).


5 Susan Winnett's "Coming Unstrung: Women, Men, Narrative, and Principles of Pleasure," *PMLA* 105.3, May (1990) 505-18, contributed to my reader-response thinking about these essays, in its thesis that narrative and reader-response theory has been conceived in terms of a male experience, or more specifically, the male sexual experience. Winnett helped me to formulate my pleasure in the woman-appeal essays in terms of a female sexual experience, differently physiological and emotional than the
male. This particular "marriage of true minds," between Hume's text and my reading, represents not "a platonized, legalized, entirely male circuit of desire" (507), but rather a marriage where the woman's pleasure--both "physical" and intellectual--is granted considerable importance. The physical pleasure occurs in the following of the stylistic deviation, the intellectual pleasure in the perception of appeal to female consciousness and experience.

I also appreciate Winnett's treatment (as critique of Peter Brooks) of "the crisis of paternity" as the "androcentric paradigm" or "model for all narrative" in the novel. Her critique prompted me to consider Hume's deviant narrative in the woman-appeal essays as an anti-patriarchal gesture; "the crisis of paternity" figures largely in Hume's theories of gender convention and thus in his philosophy on the whole. While I am not prepared to analyze Hume's anti-patriarchalism in terms of narrative theory for this particular study, such analysis would contribute a missing "literary" inquiry here.

6 Carole Pateman has inquired into this centrality of heterosexual relations to the "social contract;" she proposes that behind every good social contract lies a "sexual contract" which presupposes male superiority and dominance. Carole Pateman, The Sexual Contract (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988).

7 For the phrase "reading as-a-woman" and my first introduction to the theorized model, I am indebted to Jonathan Culler, On Deconstruction (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1982), esp. 43-64, "Reading as a Woman." However, I do not elect to ground my theory of reading as-a-woman in Culler's discussion, choosing instead to attempt to build it from my own personal experience of reading Hume as a woman. I will refer to Culler for assistance along the way.

8 Patrocinio P. Schweickart, "Reading Ourselves: Toward a Feminist Theory of Reading," Gender and Reading, ed. Elizabeth A. Flynn and Patrocinio P. Schweickart (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 1986) 42. The term "immasculate" is

9 These woman critics are Barbara Herrnstein Smith, "Hume's Natural Standard" in her Contingencies of Value; and Marcia Lind, "Indians, Savages, Peasants and Women" Hume's Aesthetics," unpublished essay, Duke University, 1990.

10 For a detailed discussion of the "cult of sentimentality" in English literature see Janet Todd, Sensibility (London & New York: Methuen, 1986).


12 For a catalogue of Western philosophers' treatment of the double standard see Linda Bell, Visions of Women (Clifton, N.J.: Humana P, 1983).

13 Donald Livingston sums up Hume's attraction to contradiction by quoting him: "In most of [Hume's] works his thought is put into some sort of dialectical and dramatic form where there is an attempt to come to terms with 'principles, which are contrary to each other, which are both at once embrac'd by the mind, and which are unable mutually to destroy each other' (T 215)" (36).

14 My definition of "political" here follows Felicity Nussbaum's expansion of the term from issues of public (i.e. institutional) interest and power to, more generally, "a study of the discourse of power and its relations." For my study here, the private or domestic realm takes on primary significance as an original source and network of "power and its relations." See Nussbaum, "The Politics of Difference," Eighteenth-Century Studies 23.4 Summer (1990) 377.
15 This debt is to Prof. Jane Gallop, who introduced me to feminist theory in the first place, taught me to see "theory" as a branch of feminist theory, and helped me to revise a stiff, repressed writing (and thinking) style. Also, Prof. Gallop's two seminars (Feminist Theory, Deconstruction) at Rice University, her books and articles, and conversation led me to the place where I could recognize and validate "seduction" as an extremely useful epistemological model.

16 My preference for "seduction" compares with Jerome Christensen's focus on Humean "induction." Christensen locates the Humean point of condensation in the term "induction": "Hume explicitly grounds his story of origins in the power of induction. Induction is the essential power . . . Its timely force is felt at exactly that moment when men discover that they are totally incapacitated by their passions for the society which alone can supply the means for the satisfaction of those passions." Thence arises the discourse of gallantry, according to Christensen "not a prelude to a seduction, but its surrogate, sex in the head not in the bed" (Christensen 31, 214). Humean "seduction," it seems, serves as a sort of discursive (or literary) lubricant to "induction," a conventional motivation supplanting the natural course of gender relations.

17 For a provocative explanation of the philosophical root of patriarchy's interest in suppressing gender equality as complementariness-in-difference, see Jean Bethke Elshtain's coverage of Plato in her Public Man, Private Woman. Elshtain argues that Plato's critically celebrated promotion of women to Guardian status entails the denial or erasure of female individuality as personal, lived history—and, therefore, the nullification of difference. Plato's "thoroughgoing rationalist, meritocratic order would require . . . the application to, and assessment of, all human beings on a single set of formal and abstract criteria" (40). Elshtain's argument hinges on her claim that the "costs of parity" for the Guardian women would include a "thoroughgoing
deprivatization" of their lives as wives, mothers, daughters: the loss of private and social identity as women.

18 Herrnstein Smith, 28. This new, more responsible evaluative criticism would explore the multiple forms and functions of literary evaluation, covert as well as overt, nonverbal as well as verbal, institutional as well as individual; it would account for the features of literary and aesthetic judgments in relation to the multiple social, political, circumstantial, and other constraints and conditions to which they are responsive; it would chronicle 'the history of taste' in relation to a more general model of historical cultural dynamics and specific local conditions; and it would devise descriptions and accounts of all the other phenomena and activities involved in literary and aesthetic evaluation in relation to our more general understanding—as it is and as it develops—of human culture and behavior.

1. Re-fusing the Androgyna

1 Critics who have interrogated the "Hume--Sexist or Feminist" possibility are Annette Baier, Christine Battersby, Steven Burns, Louise Marcil-Lacoste, and John Immerwahr.

Battersby's need to accuse Hume of "sexism" leads her not only to generalizations from a grab-bag of out-of-context citations but also to self-contradiction. In an introductory critique of Hume's inattention to gender difference in "human nature," Battersby notes: "There is a tidy chapter on female morality in A Treatise of Human Nature, but nothing comparable for female nature as such." Then, on the next page, she concludes, "If we connect Hume's views on female morality with his underlying views on female nature, the evidence for discriminatory sexism seems overwhelming" ("An Enquiry Concerning the Humean Woman," Philosophy 56 (1981) 303, 305.)
Burns similarly attacks Hume for inattention to "the Woman Question" (yes--but whose?); he alludes to sinister sexism in Hume, "I find that he exposes himself (!) in three places." Burns does concede that "Hume is, of course, just reflecting the accepted views of his class and his century." However, he immediately chastens, "This does not excuse him." The grounds for such paternalistic disapproval seem to be that "philosophers should know better" ("The Humean Female," Dialogue 15.3 (1976) 415, 419). Marcil-Lacoste, imagining a unified politics on Hume's part, simply declares, "The 'Humean Female' qualifies as an expression of what we call today a male chauvinist position" ("The Consistency of Hume's Position Concerning Women," Dialogue 15.3 (1976) 425.

Annette Baier finds that "Hume shows himself in his writings, as he did in his life, remarkably free of discriminatory sexism" ("Good Men's Women: Hume on Chastity and Trust," Hume Studies, V (1979) 14. Rescuing him from the 1970's repudiation of the "sexist," and announcing her project to examine Hume's importance for feminism as a moral theorist, Baier distinguishes herself: "Our main concern here is not with feminism." In so doing she implies that her study will be non-factionalist, more philosophical and therefore more "faithful" to Hume ("Hume, the Women's Moral Theorist?" Women and Moral Theory, Eds. Eva Feder Kittay and Diana T. Meyers (Rowman & Littlefield, 1987) 38.

John Immerwahr's title, "David Hume, Sexism, and Sociobiology," Southern Journal of Philosophy XXI.3 (1983)) announces both its concern with "sexism" and its basis in a modern discipline. Immerwahr proposes: "It is intriguing to determine whether Hume should be described as a 'sexist.' By contemporary standards Hume was progressive in his rejection of anti-semitism, but, at the same time, he was racist in his views about blacks. Given his rather mixed record, Hume's views on women become especially interesting" (359). His "should" is quite interesting, suggesting as it does a moral imperative to classify an alleged Humean position on women. Also
challenging is the implication that if one is "racist" or "anti-semitic," one might necessarily be "sexist" as well--an all-or-nothing generalization about the pathways of judgment.

2 For investigations of misogyny in the philosophical establishment, there exist a number of general sources, for example: Feminist Perspectives in Philosophy, eds. Morwenna Griffiths and Margaret Whitford (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana UP, 1988) esp. the Judith Hughes's "The Philosopher's Child" and Joanna Hodge's "Subject, Body and the Exclusion of Women from Philosophy." Other anthologies addressing feminism and philosophy are Feminism and Philosophy, eds. Mary Vetterling-Braggin, Frederick A. Elliston and Jane English (Totowa, New Jersey: Littlefield, 1977); and Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason: "Male" and "Female" in Western Philosophy (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984).

For a radical critique of misogyny in Western epistemology and theology in general, see Mary Daly, Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy (Boston: Beacon P, 1984).

3 For example, see the recent debate on Mary Wollstonecraft's "Enlightenment" feminism, featured in Gender and Theory: Dialogues on Feminist Criticism, ed. Linda Kauffman (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989); the co-respondents are Timothy J. Reiss, "Revolution in Bounds: Wollstonecraft, Women and Reason," and Frances Ferguson, "Wollstonecraft Our Contemporary."

4 It is, therefore, curious that Christensen--so theoretically scrupulous and example-rich--virtually ignores the essays as examples of "the example of the female." It would seem that given his poststructuralist, Lacanian theoretical approach, he would not shy away from these as can be expected in the more traditional philosopher's readings of Hume. I am surprised that, given his interest in castrations and other excisions, he did not take more note of Hume's excision of the "rejected" essays from the total body of his works, an excision repeatedly reinacted by the critical tradition from Hume's time.
to the present. I am tempted to conclude that for Christensen the "female" is ultimately more interesting and useful as Example--an already-predicated concept--than as example, bodies of lived experience.

5 For the most recent and thorough study of this paradox see Kathryn Shevelow, *Women and Print Culture* (London & New York: Routledge, 1989).

6 In his review of *Practicing Enlightenment* (*Eighteenth-Century Studies* 21.3 Spring (1988) 400-04), John J. Richetti also expresses reservations about "The Example of the Female." Richetti, however, faults a perceived general theoretical excess, and sums up the reader-response difficulty: "Christensen dwells everywhere on the significance of what might appear meaningless to another sort of reader" (404).

I would argue that this "other sort of reader" might certainly be female or at least a reader sensitive to the gender politics of theory; Christensen's focus might appear far from "meaningless" to this sort of reader. Richetti's ready relegation to "meaningless[ness]" of Christensen's attention to Hume's female reader, coupled with his failure to push on to the implicit misogyny in Christensen's reading contribute a piece as well to the total picture of critical misogyny and Humean gender.

7 In his *The Life of David Hume*, Mossner devotes a chapter to the Comtesse de Boufflers, the French saloniere to whom Hume wrote in 1764, "You have saved me from a total indifference towards every thing in human life" (Mossner 474)--a curious utterance, especially in light of the fact that Hume seems to have spent a good deal of energy avoiding actual, physical contact with the passionate Comtesse. Jerome Christensen also devotes considerable pages to the relationship, insisting on its principally symbolic intercourse: "Through it all, though Hume seems to abandon himself, he clings to marks that, whether they be of indifference, friendship, or submission, are nonetheless merely signs of a passion and vehicles of its indirection" (239). Referring to the primarily epistolary contact between the two, Christensen points to the literary interest of Hume's unique "love affair."
8 I am thinking of woman's empowerment as domestic "sovereign," a status contributing to her separation from "public" life and thus her exclusion from the institutions of government and education (including philosophy) seen properly to belong to the public world, that is, to men. See Jean Elshtain, Public Man, Private Woman (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton UP, 1981); Kathryn Shevelow, Women and Print Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 1989).


Reading from the Treatise, the first Enquiry, and The Natural History of Religion, Donald Livingston describes Hume's theory of "the convention of causal judgment" (as convention in lieu of "tenselessly conceived structure") and its history in the transition from polytheism to monotheism. Livingston's remarks suggest how this evolution of the convention of causal judgment might explain the origin of "sexism" as we now understand it, the essential belief in male superiority, in the rise of modern, secular philosophy and science. In Hume's system "instinct" (eg. limited benevolence) proves "the causal foundation of causal judgment;" however, "the judgments themselves (philosophical, scientific) have a structure which is the result of ideas of reflection," which always take a narrative form and can thus "be understood only by understanding their history." A "judgment" is always grounded in the reflection of an historical being and never mirrors some ideal form, although monotheism has made possible a kind of compromise model. Livingston relates how causality--that is, power--came to issue necessarily from a "one;" we might then infer how that "one" in its historical manifestation must be understood as male/patriarchal:

Though instinct be the causal foundation of causal judgment, the judgments themselves have a structure which is the result of ideas of reflection, and these have a rationale of their own which can be
understood only by understanding their history . . . The convention of causal judgment is first raised from the instinctual to the reflective level by religion. The first theoretical causal judgments were polytheistic judgments about invisible divine powers. As polytheism developed into theism, the idea of many powers merged into the idea of one. Philosophy grew out of the theoretical shift from polytheism to theism, and began to view causal powers as forces independent of the Deity. Out of this perspective grew the conventions of metaphysics and eventually of modern science. With the advent of modern science, men have acquired the habit of making causal judgments independently of religion; nevertheless, owing to a propensity of our nature, we are compelled to view our isolated inductive judgments as part of an ultimate system structured in some way by "mind or intelligence." (248-49)

We have seen earlier in this chapter how Susan Bordo, focusing on Cartesianism, finds this "mind or intelligence" a masculinized force (as mono-, distinct, independent) usurping a female universe (as poly-, interrelated, interdependent). In Hume's theory as described above we can see how polytheism, which included female deities, gave way to the univocal authority of an abstract God the Father. With the secularization of this latter model, the "causality" would naturally pass from Father to son--to provide a kind of philosophical account of the patriarchalist model.

Hume's insistence on the conventionality/historicity of judgment, along with his model of the evolution of theism and correlate rise of the secular epistemological systems, allows us to identify the historical roots of sexism in the religious impulse and "a propensity of our nature." As feminists, we may by the same arguments recognize how Hume's "our" is gendered male, as a "natural" patriarchalist legacy.

A debate on the degree of "sexism" in Hume's observations on female "chastity and modesty" and on the double standard can be followed in Annette Baier, Bat-Ami Bar-
On, Steven Burns, Louise Marcil-Lacoste, and John Immerwahr in the texts cited in Note 1 above.

11 In 1734 James Forrester published a tract entitled *The Polite Philosopher* in which he proposed certain rules for men to observe in their conduct if they wished to be sociable and agreeable in their relations with others. These rules "to regulate conduct" reflect the social thought milieu to which Hume responded in the essays, and set up a distinction between the "artificial" manners of "good breeding," and those of "natural politeness." The latter "can be no other way attained than through an intimate acquaintance with the other sex" (qtd. in Moore 32-3).

This "other sex," was, of course, already an artifice itself, a conventionally-molded model of behavior essentialized as "feminine."

12 Dena Goodman introduces her discussion of philosophy in the French salon with a similar caveat about criticisms reliant on essentialist gender distinctions:

Why did women form salons? Not, I think, because they sought fame and power through their association with brilliant and powerful men. This is the sort of explanation that assumes the centrality of men in understanding the actions of women. It is what the men who frequented the salons thought and what historians of the salon have continued to write. (332)


14 From Charles Rollin, *The Method of Teaching and Studying the Belles Lettres* (London, 2nd ed., 1737); quoted in Miriam Lermanbaum, "'Mistresses of Orthodoxy':

Richard Steele exemplifies his recommendations about women's education in "Advice to Ladies on Exercise and Education":

The common design of parents, is to get their girls off as well as they can; and they make no conscience of putting into our hands a bargain for our whole life, which will make our hearts ache every day of it. I shall, therefore, take this matter into serious consideration, and will propose, for the better improvement of the fair sex, a Female Library. This collection of books shall consist of such authors as do not corrupt while they divert, but shall tend more immediately to improve them as they are women . . . They shall all tend to advance the value of their innocence as virgins, improve their understanding as wives, and regulate their tenderness as parents . . . the whole shall be so digested for the use of my students, that they shall not go out of character in their inquiries, but their knowledge appear only a cultivated innocence. (from *Tatler* 248)


2. Refusing the Androgyna

Scholars who have recently investigated the "social contract" model of original, mutual consent between man and woman and its patriarchal derivation and implications are Carole Pateman, Susan Moller Okin, Gordon Schochet, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Coral Brown, Zillah Eisenstein, Gayle Rubin and Mary O'Brien.
2 Hume's refusal to marry, despite his great "eligibility" and his close relationships with many women; his idealization of the Parisian salon; his liaison with the Comtesse de Boufflers; and, the Rousseau "affair" might be studied as Hume's situations along a "homosocial continuum." Mossner and Christensen offer the most thorough coverage—the former biographical, the latter theoretical—of the Boufflers and the Rousseau affairs.

For the concept of "homosocial desire" and the homosocial-homosexual continuum, see Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire (New York: Columbia UP, 1985) 1-5.


4 Note that at the end of Hume's career and life, in the recuperative "My Own Life," Hume rhetorically places distance between himself and his women friends: "And as I took a particular Pleasure in the company of modest women, I had no Reason to be displeased with the Reception I met with from them" (Mossner 615), an act which further evinces his re-alliance with patriarchy in the end: a curious but explicable—as a function of Hume's desire for immortal fame—final imposition over his entire opus.

5 M. A. Box reports this anecdote as historical fact (117).

6 For a discussion of this myth see Ann Ferguson, "Androgyny As An Ideal for Human Development," in Vetterling-Braggin et al 47-51.

7 I am aware that Hume's mind-body theory and especially his concept of personal identity are far from resolved or even clear in the minds of critics (as they were not for Hume, either—see "Appendix" to the Treatise 623-26). I am suggesting here that Hume's mind-body theory offers relevant study to feminist philosophers.

8 See Jane Gallop, Thinking Through the Body (New York: Columbia UP, 1988), especially Chapter One, "Thinking Through the Body."
3. Scenes From a Marriage--A Man's Castle

1 Jerome Christensen has raised this question for Hume's "social composition" in general and finds the philosopher in some difficulty here, which he can only resolve by resorting to the literary:

Subject to the same Humean epistemology as everyone else, natural unnatural man could not be sensible of what he had not yet experienced. In order to respect that deficiency and yet to bridge the gap that separates the savage from society, Hume goes on to reconstruct imaginatively a domestic economy that would remedy the weaknesses of natural unnatural man by simple genealogical extension based solely on the 'natural appetite betwixt the sexes' (T 486). But it won't work. Society will always stand slightly beyond the family group, the very naturalness of which is its flaw. (27)

2 Recall that Annette Baier has suggested that Hume's "return to [common] life" from the despair of philosophical skepticism, as described in his autobiographical My Own Life, can be seen as a return to the mother as the locus of primary, unmediated--and therefore unquestionable--gratification and good.


5 Jane Austen may well have had "OPD" in mind when she settled Marianne's case with Col. Brandon at the problematical marriage-closure of *Sense and Sensibility*:

With such a confederacy against her--with a knowledge so intimate of his goodness--with a conviction of his fond attachment to herself, which, at last, though long after it was observable to everyone else--burst on her--what could she do? . . . She found herself at nineteen, submitting to new attachments, entering on new duties, placed in a new home, a wife, the mistress of a family, and the patroness of a village. (366-67)

6 Christensen, 152.


4. Scenes From a Marriage (The Woman Within)


2 For a more philosophical study of Hume's use of anecdote, see Deborah Esch, "'Think of a Kitchen Table': Hume, Woolf, and the Translation of Example," in *Literature as Philosophy/Philosophy as Literature* (Iowa City: U of Iowa P, 1987) 262-76. Esch opens her essay with a Humean epigraph: "No criticism can be instructive which . . . is not full of examples and illustrations." Hume's belief in the epistemological value of example anticipates Kohlberg's hypotheses on feminine moral
reflection; juxtaposed here Hume and Kohlberg imply the epistemological superiority of reading as-a-woman, if we accept the stereotype (that women require "examples and illustrations" in their philosophy).

3 I am grateful to Cindy Pietruszykowski for pointing out the problems with children in these anecdotes, and to Cindy and Chris Miller, both of the U of Texas at Arlington, for their fresh and intelligent insights into this essay. Their observations helped me structure my own thinking about "OPD."

4 In a paper on the epistemology of emotion, Alison M. Jaggar merely skims with a brief note over Hume's famous reversal of the reason-passion hierarchy: "Philosophers who do not conform to this generalization [that "emotions have usually been considered potentially or actually subversive of knowledge"] include Hume and Nietzsche, Dewey and James." Alison M. Jaggar, "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology," Inquiry 32 (1989) 173n1.

Hume's status in modern philosophy as foundational apologist for the role of emotion in knowledge and interpretation should make him particularly interesting for feminists studying the essentializing of women as "emotional" and the consequent critical suppression of women's status as knowers.

5 For the role of body and bodily knowledge in critical evaluation, see Jane Gallop, Thinking Through the Body (New York: Columbia UP, 1988).

6 For an historical overview of this Western patriarchal agenda, see Linda A. Bell, Visions of Women (Clifton N. J.: Humana, 1983), and Genevieve Lloyd, The Man of Reason (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1984).

7 The hymen is the most obvious example of literal to symbolic dismemberment: how a woman's entire epistemological realm has been absurdly linked to a part of her body given over to patriarchal definition and control. Two striking eighteenth-century literary dramatizations of this philosophical problem appear in Rousseau's Julie, ou La Nouvelle Heloise and Richardson's Clarissa. In the former novel, Julie epitomizes the
physical and symbolic dismemberment and subsumption of the female self when, after losing her virginity, she begs her lover St. Preux: "Be my whole being, now that I am nothing." Following her rape by Lovelace, Clarissa Harlowe commits psychic suicide; dying, she asserts, "I am nobody's." In order to gain control of her own "Person," she must first become "nobody," disembodied.

With these disembodied heroines in mind, we can easily read the irony in Hume's words on female "chastity and modesty" and guarantee of paternity--words equally applicable to the presence or absence of the hymen: "From this trivial and anatomical observation is deriv'd that vast difference betwixt the education and duties of the two sexes" (T 571).


5. Hume's Orphans: The Politics of Rejection

1 Feminist philosopher/theologian Mary Daly sees the forgetting or eliding of Athena's maternal origin as Athena's fault, as the daughter's capitulation to patriarchy and total identification with the father: "The twice-born Athena fighting the battles of the fathers and sons... is a practitioner and model of masochistic 'courage,' for her deep self-interest is denied, defeated--often with the deluded belief that she is acting out of "enlightened self-interest." Mary Daly, Pure Lust: Elemental Feminist Philosophy (Boston: Beacon, 1984) 222. Daly's victim-blaming here fails to recognize the masculine mythographic tradition from which Athena's various father-identified manifestations derive.

For the Metis story, see Christine Downing, The Goddess (New York: Crossroad, 1981). For the male assumption of female intellectual power (in Athena's case) in the mythographic tradition see Fulgentius the Mythographer, trans. & Intro. Leslie George Whitbread (Ohio State UP, 1971) and The Ovidium Moralizatus of

2 See Chapter Two here.

See Annette Baier, "Helping Hume to 'Compleat the Union'." Baier finds that in Hume, "The products of associative thought derive from social forms of association and the three principles of association derive from the most basic form of social association, the natural family" (167).


4 I am grateful to Gregory Laugeros of SUNY-Buffalo whose paper, "I Will Not Use Daggers! I Will Tell a Tale!" (South Central Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies meeting, Texas Tech University, Lubbock, 1992) inspired this paragraph's line of thought.


6 Mayo 92. Mayo points out that Haywood is the same "author whose 'lewd inventions' were formerly under attack [in a Spectator paper, the most predictably status-quo vehicle] . . . as the 'corrupter of virgins'."

8 Carol Kay, "Canon, Ideology, and Gender: Mary Wollstonecraft's Critique of Adam Smith," *New Political Science* 15 (1986) 63-76.

Kay's argument is especially relevant to the closing of the "philosophy gap" in modern comparisons of Hume's Essays and his "philosophical works," the *Treatise* and *Enquiries*, a gap betrayed in the overwhelming majority of articles on the latter works in philosophical journals and the paucity of attention to the Essays.


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