

**Equal Performances: An Exploration of Eliza Haywood's Depiction of Hillarian Ideals
in *Fantomina***

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Fig. 1 p.77 Line engraving of Eliza Fowler Haywood by George Vertue, after the
original portrait by Jaques Parmentier
National Portrait Gallery, D13931

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Abstract

My thesis connects Eliza Haywood with the Hillarians, a London-based coterie of young writers and artists headed by Aaron Hill in the first half of the 1720s, and explores the possibility that in *Fantomina, Or Love in a Maze* (1725), Haywood used tropes of performance from her theatrical career to work out the implications of the Hillarian ideals of progressive conduct on female agency. Haywood's early novels, including *Fantomina*, can be connected to the group, and can be shown to encompass its behavioural ideals – a self-consciously progressive model of male-female conduct.

My first chapter examines aspects of what Charles Taylor terms the “social imaginary” of the early eighteenth century. John Locke's theory of personal identity (Part I) redefined the self in terms of consciousness, which meant the self could change. Conduct literature (Part II) defined the behaviour of women as “innate” through the regulation of sexual desire. In Part III, I show women philosophers, writers, and playwrights began to see women's conduct, like the self, as constructed, and began applying this to relations between the sexes. If conduct was constructed it could change, and women began to work out these ideas and the implications of this change on stage. I show Haywood could have taken this theatrical convention of working philosophical ideas out on stage and adapted it to her fictions, particularly to *Fantomina*, via the process of novelisation. It is possible that as theatrical tropes crossed over into fiction in novelisation, the use of performance to work out philosophical ideas crossed over too.

My second chapter explores Haywood's participation in manuscript literary culture. Part I positions her in the literary culture of her time, and connects her with the Hillarians, opening a new critical context in which to read her work. Part II connects the composition of her early

texts with her coterie, arguing it is possible all her 1719-1725 texts, including *Fantomina*, were conceived and first read within the group. It explores the impact of this on the context and meaning of *Fantomina*, and how Haywood could have used genre, particularly the tropes of amatory fiction, to explore the ideas of the Hillarians.

Chapters Three and Four draw these strands of manuscript and performance together. Haywood's association with the Hillarians, as I argue in Chapter Three, likely influenced her authorial agency in *Fantomina*. In Part I, I argue Haywood possibly had control over the image of the original portrait of her 1725 *Secret Histories* frontispiece. I then examine her narrative agency (Part II). Shifts in narrative discourse in *Fantomina* show Haywood used narration techniques adapted from the theatre, and these narrative shifts gave her a public voice: in these shifts, she appears to comment on how relations between the sexes are constructed – a pivotal focus of the Hillarians. Chapter Four explores Haywood's development of the heroine's agency in relation to sexual desire. This focus reveals the differing conduct of the heroine and Beauplaisir within the same relationship, as well as the power structure of the relationship – again pivotal focuses of her coterie. Haywood appears to be working out the implications of Hillarian ideals in relation to female agency, particularly sexual consent.

I conclude Haywood used masquerade and performance to develop a system of self-knowledge that relied on its expression through emotion, rather than the mind, and that this system can be extended beyond knowledge of the self to knowledge of others – and possibly further.

Introduction

I am captivated by the work of Judith Butler, particularly by the idea of performance, that we create ourselves by how we behave. As I began to explore Eliza Haywood's (c1693 – 1756) canon, I found this idea of performance creating the self across her texts, in her fictions, journalism, and plays – and found it in other women playwrights, philosophers, and writers of the period: Mary Astell, Mary Pix, Delarivier Manley, Damaris Cudworth Masham, Susanna Centlivre, and Catharine Trotter Cockburn, to name a few. These women appeared to be working out what Butler would argue some 300 years later, that changing how gender is performed can undo “normative conceptions of sexual and gendered life” and this undoing can change “a prior conception of who one is” (1). What these women were writing three centuries ago seems to have formed part of how we think about gender and ourselves today.

I therefore situate my thesis within the theoretical framework of what Charles Taylor terms “the social imaginary.” Taylor argues ideas go through “a series of ‘redactions,’ each richer and more demanding than the previous,” from their inception to the present (5), and these ideas infiltrate the nature of our social reality and *change* it. The social imaginary is more than “context.” It is an active shaping of “that largely unstructured and inarticulate understanding of our whole situation, within which particular features of our world show up for us in the sense they have” (25); it is how “people imagine their social existence, how they fit together with others,” their expectations, and “the deeper normative notions and images that underlie these expectations” (23). These ideas eventually become so absorbed into and part of our self-definition we lose the sense of them being *ideas*.

My thesis connects Haywood with the Hillarians, a London-based coterie of young writers and artists headed by Aaron Hill in the first half of the 1720s, and explores the possibility that

in *Fantomina, Or Love in a Maze* (1725), Haywood used tropes of performance from her theatrical career to work out the implications of the Hillarian ideals of progressive conduct on female agency. Haywood's early novels, including *Fantomina*, can be connected to the group, and can be shown to encompass its behavioural ideals – a self-consciously progressive model of male-female conduct.

Haywood is not usually associated with manuscript. Most theorists, as Sarah Prescott notes, consider her the “typical dependent professional, geared only to the exigencies of the commercial marketplace” (30). My focus on Haywood's participation in manuscript therefore broadens the context in which to read her work. Taylor argues that at this time (as now) “widely separated people sharing the same view” were linked in “a common space of discussion through media” (84-85), a “public sphere.” The social imaginary shapes conclusions reached within this public sphere just as the conclusions reached shape the social imaginary (Taylor 84-85). But print alone was not a sufficient condition for the formation of ideas. The whole social imaginary is a necessary condition: ideas “had to be taken up in the right cultural context, where the essential common understandings could arise” (Taylor 85). As James Raven notes, print-led models of this time “simply do not apply” to a number of forums of exchange and conversation (92).

Haywood is critically well-known for her focus on agency and masquerade. Reading her as a member of the Hillarians reveals possibly why these ideas infiltrated her work, and creates new meanings and understandings of *Fantomina*. Her engagement with manuscript critically repositions her within the literary culture of her time. Catherine Ingrassia in “‘Queering’ Eliza Haywood” notes that as Haywood scholarship grows, critics run the risk of attaching “identifying markers within a critical shorthand” to her, “potentially ossifying” her into the canon (20). This ossification will affect interpretations of Haywood as an author because

more critical work is needed before canonisation (Ingrassia, “Queering” 20). Haywood’s printed texts have been recovered, but the contexts in which she wrote are still being critically formed. Scholars therefore risk canonising a partial Haywood. Toni Bowers calls this ossification “a premature solidifying” (“Achievement” 56). Part of what it means to canonise an author, she argues, is to build up “a body of critical discourse” (Bowers, “Achievement” 56-57) about all the literary contexts in which an author participated. Critics can change their methodology, to “ask previously unthought *kinds* of questions, to give careful attention to previously unregarded *categories* of materials” (Bowers, “Achievement” 58, her italics).

Chapter One of my thesis explores aspects of the social imaginary of the eighteenth century relating to self, conduct, and performance. Ideas of self were changing. John Locke’s theory of personal identity, published in his second edition of the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1694), introduced the idea of consciousness, the idea that the self was not static or innate as previously believed, but *made* (Part I). This meant the self could change, develop, and grow. Conduct literature (Part II) defined the behaviour of women as “innate” through the regulation of sexual desire. In Part III, I show women philosophers, writers, and playwrights began to see conduct, like the self, as constructed, and began linking these ideas with performance. Astell was the first philosopher to argue conduct, particularly women’s conduct, was constructed and other thinkers, such as Masham, began applying this to relations between the sexes. If conduct was constructed it could change, and women began to work out these ideas and the implications of this change on stage. I adapt the theoretical work linking Cockburn’s plays with her philosophy to show Haywood could have taken this theatrical convention of working philosophical ideas out on stage and adapted it to her fictions, particularly to *Fantomina*, via the process of novelisation. It is possible that as

theatrical tropes crossed over into fiction in novelisation, the use of performance to work out philosophical ideas crossed over too.

My second chapter explores Haywood's participation in manuscript literary culture. Part I positions her in the literary culture of her time, and connects her with the Hillarians, opening a new critical context in which to read her work. Haywood was an early member of the Hillarians (Gerrard 67), a literary coterie unusual for the time in that it was a socially mixed group of men and women (61-62). The Hillarians were interested in the "artificial codes of social conduct" expected between the sexes, and practised "progressive" conduct, a new way of relating between the sexes, within the group (Gerrard 76-77, and King, "New Contexts"). Part II connects the composition of Haywood's early texts with her coterie, arguing it is possible all her 1719-1725 texts, including *Fantomina*, were conceived and first read within the group. Haywood likely circulated drafts of her work within this coterie, and members could have commented on these. Gerrard writes that circle members exchanged verse and "engaged in acts of responsive, collaborative authorship" (74). I explore the impact of this authorship on the context and meaning of *Fantomina*, and how Haywood could have used genre, particularly the tropes of amatory fiction, to explore the ideas of the Hillarians.

Chapters Three and Four draw these strands of manuscript and performance together. Haywood's association with the Hillarians (Chapter Three) likely influenced her authorial agency in *Fantomina*. In Part I, I argue Haywood possibly had control over the iconic image of the original portrait of her 1725 *Secret Histories, Novels, and Poems* frontispiece because she sat for the portrait as an actress, not as an author, and actresses had more control over their images than authors. I then examine her narrative agency (Part II). Shifts in narrative discourse in *Fantomina* show Haywood used narration techniques adapted from the theatre, and these narrative shifts gave her a public voice: in these shifts, she appears to comment on

how relations between the sexes are constructed – a pivotal focus of the Hillarians. Chapter Four explores Haywood’s development of the heroine’s agency in relation to sexual desire. This focus reveals the differing conduct of the heroine and Beauplaisir within the same relationship, as well as the power structure of the relationship – again pivotal focuses of her coterie. She appears to be working out the implications of Hillarian ideals in relation to female agency, particularly sexual consent.

This thesis therefore makes several new, perhaps unusual, connections. It argues Haywood could have used performance tropes from her theatrical career to work out philosophical ideas. It appears Haywood incorporated the progressive ideals of the Hillarians into *Fantomina* and used performance to work these ideas out. It also argues Haywood likely circulated drafts of her early work within the coterie. This changes current understandings of *Fantomina*, because it changes the context of the text, and therefore changes its meaning. Haywood’s intentions as an author are revised to incorporate her participation in manuscript and her theatrical career. Her authorial agency and her development of female agency within the text are linked to the Hillarians and to the stage. Also linked to the stage is the *Secret Histories*’ frontispiece. The frontispiece has traditionally been associated with the amatory texts that followed it, but a focus on Haywood’s theatrical career reveals the image of the original portrait was initially associated with her career as an actress, and only later engraved as a frontispiece.

My thesis also combines, or links, several new areas of eighteenth-century literature and Haywood studies: such as gender and sexuality in the eighteenth century; Haywood’s involvement in the Hillarians; the debunking of many of the biographical “facts” of her life (such as her sexual relationship with fellow-Hillarian Richard Savage) and the theoretical piecing together of others (such as her relationship with Hill); and connecting the ideas of

Astell, Masham, and Cockburn. Theorists are just beginning to link Haywood's fictions to her theatrical career (Ingrassia, for example, in "The Stage Not Answering My Expectations"). They are also beginning to respond to Juliette Merritt's urging for a "long view" of Haywood's career (*Beyond Spectacle* 7). As Ingrassia in "'Queering' Eliza Haywood" notes, Haywood scholarship is booming: "since 2000, scholars have produced nearly 150 articles on Haywood (and that is only what the *MLA International Bibliography* captures; obviously other work exists); in the previous 100 years, there were 74" (19). That she noted this in an entire journal issue devoted to Haywood – last year's autumn edition of *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* – proved her point.

This thesis explores the implications of Haywood's Hillarian connection on *Fantomina*, but I acknowledge these implications can run – as King in "New Contexts for Early Novels by Women" argues – across her 1719-1725 works. In taking the long view of Haywood's 38-year writing career, I can, as Merritt writes, see a "sustained a set of preoccupations and strategies" (*Beyond Spectacle* 5) running across her work – from her first fiction, the 1719 *Love in Excess*, to *The Husband*, published just after her death in February 1756. One of these recurring themes is, for me (even though her association with the Hillarians ended in 1725), her use of performance to work out the implications of the coterie's ideals of progressive conduct, what it would mean for women if these ideas were acted out.

Chapter One: Aspects of the social imaginary

I. John Locke's theory of personal identity: consciousness and the self

The historian Jerrold Seigel defines what “we commonly mean” by the “self” as “the particular being any person is, whatever it is about each of us that distinguishes you or me from others, draws the parts of our existence together, persists through changes, or opens the way to becoming who we might or should be” (3). Concepts of self do not persist through time. Even Seigel, who appears to argue his historical analysis of the self using this definition, admits “the nature and meaning of the self are subject to constant definition” (3). Who we are, or who we take ourselves to be, is a historical concept. Seigel wrote his definition in 2005. We are chronologically close enough to his definition to feel it applies to us. His are the terms of our sense of “self” – those of being a “person,” of an ability to distinguish our-“self” from another “self,” of drawing a continuity in our existence, of a “self” that persists through change, and of one that develops. But in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, these terms were the ideas of a raging debate, based around the popular – and controversial – philosopher John Locke and his theory of personal identity, published in the second edition of his *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* in London in 1694. At the heart of the debate was the nature of identity, the very nature of the self and of what it meant to be a self, the defining of concepts we consider fundamental to our “selves” today – “identity,” “self,” “soul,” “person.” For Locke introduced “a thoroughly new and radical vision of the self” (Fox 8) – he introduced Seigel’s definition, the idea of self-in-consciousness, an idea of self we still use today.

In late seventeenth-century England, the self was considered a union of material substance – body – and immaterial substance – soul. The soul was an “individual rational and immortal

substance” (Smith 50). This theory of self-in-substance had prevailed more or less intact since Aristotle. In this version of the self, what a person was born as, they died as. Locke’s theory of personal identity however, changed this. His theory introduced a new and radical idea – consciousness – and linked the self with this new idea. He argued for a self-in-consciousness, that the self was not determined by substance but by consciousness. His theory of personal identity detached the self from the “immortal substance” of the soul, arguing that the self “is not determined by Identity or Diversity of Substance, which it cannot be sure of, but only by Identity of consciousness” (Locke 112). It was this consciousness that ensured continuity: “Nothing but consciousness can unite remote Existences in the same Person ... For whatever Substance there is, however framed, without consciousness, there is no Person” (Locke 111). We can therefore change from moment to moment and remain the same person.

This idea of consciousness radically changed how individuals in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries thought about themselves, how they defined themselves, what it meant for them to be a “person,” a “self,” and have an “identity.” Christopher Fox argues our modern idea of our-“self” as self-in-consciousness “tends to blind us to just how radical *this* notion was when Locke first proposed it” (4, his italics). Locke was seen to be rejecting substance, the very thing Early Moderns like Haywood believed made them a self. What you were born as was no longer what you died as. He was challenging the way Early Moderns defined themselves, how they understood themselves to be the same person from moment to moment, throughout their lives (Fox 2). Fox argues that Locke “simply shocked” his contemporaries; they felt he had destroyed the “abiding self ... by shifting the locus of the personality from the indivisible soul to the floating ideas of the ever-changing consciousness” (13-14). Locke’s idea of self-in-consciousness has become so much a part of our current

social imaginary, so “well installed,” that, as Taylor argues, it is easy for us to forget there was a time when there were other possible definitions, other ideas that made sense (17). Locke appeared to shatter the certainty of what a self was, and what he put in place of the soul – consciousness – appeared insubstantial.

As Roberto Palaia writes, Locke was not the first philosopher to use the idea of “consciousness,” and British philosophers were already debating the term before the publication of his second edition *Essay* (305-306). But he was the first to use the term as specifically as he did, giving it a new definition. The Oxford English Dictionary Online records Locke’s 1694 use of “consciousness” – “[t]he totality of the impressions, thoughts, and feelings, which make up a person's sense of self or define a person's identity” – as the first usage of its kind, and one still in use today. Locke determined consciousness as “the universal meaning of thought that somehow reflects itself” and recognises this activity (Palaia 307). This awareness, this ability to recognise one’s “self” determined an individual’s identity (Palaia 306) and continuity, how one could change and exist as the same person from moment to moment.

Palaia argues that determining individual identity was especially significant at this time because a “new commercial society” was spreading through Europe, the emerging Modern society (306). It was Locke, as Palaia argues, who encoded this idea of consciousness “as the essential prerequisite to the definition of the citizen and his rights” in this new society (306). Consciousness became essential to determine the identity of this citizen (Palaia 306), and was used to explain how to balance individual autonomy with social life (Myers, “Enthusiastic Improvement” 534). The terms being debated – “identity,” “self,” “soul,” “person” – had implications regarding “individuals’ legal, moral, and spiritual responsibility in relation to church and state” (Ready 565), particularly at this time in England’s history, of the new

constitutional monarchy, the Glorious Revolution, and the subsequent questioning of the divine right of kings in the ascension to the throne of William and Mary (who were offered the throne by the Convention Parliament as opposed to inheriting it). This situation continued to inform the social imaginary well into the time Haywood wrote.

Locke's idea of consciousness caused social, religious, and political uproar. He was condemned from pulpit and podium. The crux of the controversy was what made a person the same over time. Substance was fixed and stable, thus in the theory of self-in-substance the self was fixed and stable – it did not change. But Locke introduced consciousness and consciousness is fluid. This meant a person changed from moment to moment and it was only consciousness that connected one to one-“self” in each moment. Fluidity of consciousness was the implication that concerned Early Moderns the most. The ensuing debate spilled over into all aspects of society – its concerns were ubiquitous (Myers, “Catherine Trotter” 54) – and was especially prominent in literature. Literary historians, as Fox notes, accept that issues of personal identity pervaded the age (3). Some of Locke's opponents merely dismissed his ideas as “overly ingenious,” but others declared them “dangerous” (Ready 564). Kathryn Ready argues that Locke insisted he challenged only our knowledge of substance, not its existence, while his opponents argued it was this challenge which called into question the very existence of substance (564-565). The Earl of Shaftesbury, writing in 1711, countered Locke by asserting that to say he existed was one claim, but claiming to “*persist* through time as a continuous entity” was another (Fox 2, his italics). Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, John Arbuthnot, and other members of the Scriblerus Club, writing in the *Memoirs of the Extraordinary Life, Works and Discoveries of Martinus Scriblerus* (written in 1714 but published in 1741), contributed to this “*great noise*,” burlesquing these new ideas of “*Individuality: how a man is conscious to himself that he is the same Individual he was*

twenty years ago” (62). *The Spectator* weighed in with its opinion, as did figures familiar to us today – Anthony Collins, Edward Stillingfleet, Samuel Clarke, Joseph Butler, George Berkeley, Laurence Sterne, and David Hume.

This debate over personal identity had particular significance for women. Women had a “special stake” because Locke’s theory of self-in-consciousness provided a “tacit philosophical foundation,” an ideology, for women to “renegotiate the relationships between the mind, body, and soul” without “posing too radical a challenge to the status quo” (Ready 563-4). Locke’s theory of self-in-consciousness provided this philosophical foundation in two ways. Firstly, it enabled women to separate their gender-neutral minds from their gendered bodies – their ability to reason from their biological sex – because consciousness appeared to be disembodied. Secondly, the fluidity of this disembodied consciousness implied the self was a process, particularly a process of creation, and could therefore be changed. This two-pronged foundation destabilised the focus: it took the focus off the gendered body of women by focusing on women’s genderless mind, thereby allowing women thinkers to refocus on the body, and write about it, in a different way.¹ They used Locke’s ideas to represent gender as performative, to show gender was a process of creation just like the self – a process that could be changed. This is shown in Part III of this chapter: Mary Astell focused on women’s genderless mind; Damaris Masham extended this focus to the sexual double standard; and playwrights began working out these philosophical ideas of self on the stage. Part III concludes with my argument that women writers (particularly Haywood) continued to use performance to work out these concepts of self in the developing novel.

¹ This is not incongruous. Jacqueline Broad argues women thinkers at the time did not see the mind, body, and soul as separate but as different aspects of a whole being – they did not see “matter and the body as entirely separate from the soul and the spiritual realm in general” (10).

Fluidity of consciousness also enabled Haywood to develop the heroine's agency, and therefore expose the power dynamic between the sexes. A self-as-substance was fixed and stable, unchanging (Fox 8, 10). I agree with Fox's (and other's) interpretation of Locke: a self-in-consciousness was fluid, impermanent, and changeable (10). For Locke, we are selves because in "Every Act of Sensation, Reasoning, or Thinking, we are conscious to ourselves of our own Being, and in this Matter, come not short of the highest degree of Certainty" (cited in Ready 564). A person, a self, has a sense of itself, of its individuality as a person "on the one hand and of unity and continuity on the other" (Ready 566), of being "the same thinking thing in different times and places" (cited in Ready 565), by projecting back, that is, by extending consciousness back to behaviours, ideas, actions, and thoughts in the past, and taking them to be one's own. His theory emphasised the self as process, "the way in which we must constantly appropriate and reappropriate our experiences" (Alford 138). We reinterpret our past experiences based on what we experience in the present to project ourselves into the future (Alford 138). The close reading in Chapter Four shows that as the heroine takes on each role, she appears to incorporate the learning from her experiences in her previous roles into that new role. This enables her to learn and grow, and acquire sexual knowledge. This development exposes the differences in the heroine and Beauplaisir's experiences of the same relationship. Fluidity of consciousness allowed a self to differentiate it-self from other selves – "a way to draw distinctions as well as to describe something that was supposedly foundational to the human world" (Smith 52). If self is experience then, as Ready argues, the perceived differences between the minds of men and women are the result of their experiences (566), particularly their *different* experiences.

II. Conduct literature: ideology, gender, and the politics of desire

Kevin Hayes defines the conduct literature of the eighteenth century as “any writing which gives advice concerning how to behave” (59). It generally advised on “the virtues a woman should possess and the roles she should fulfill” (Hayes 60). In their introduction to *The Ideology of Conduct*, Nancy Armstrong and Leonard Tennenhouse appear to use the terms “instruction book” and “conduct book” interchangeably to indicate a form of literature that offered women in particular, information and instruction to “refine” their “judgment, taste, demeanor, speech, and dress” (5). For Armstrong in “Rise of the Domestic Women,” this literature addressed readers who socially situated themselves between the aristocracy and the “laboring poor” (100-101). During the eighteenth century, the number of texts that addressed “the qualities of a new kind of woman” surpassed those directed at men (Armstrong 99). I use the term “conduct literature” and follow the above definitions.

Conduct literature formulated ideas of “innate,” or “natural,” gendered behaviour. For Vivien Jones, women can textually be made to conform to ideas of “natural” sexual difference – from “biological function” to social roles and mental qualities – and conduct norms even if they are not doing so in their everyday lives (4). Any form of literature, from obituaries to fiction, can be written presupposing a “‘natural’ complementarity of gender” that has not yet become socially entrenched (Jones 1-4). As Emily Hodgson Anderson notes, “the existence of conduct literature does not prove that women read it or that it altered their behavior, or even their assumptions about behavior” (“Performing” 13n). But it does show there was an ideal, and society defined women by this ideal. The more this ideal was written, the more it existed, the more women were made to textually conform, the more they did so in their daily lives (Jones 1-4); this ideal came to be seen “as normal, natural, and good” (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 16).

The point of view this literature was written from speaks to the probable force of its ideology. It “could speak from the point of view of a minister, a mother, a father, or a peer” (Hayes 59). One of the most popular conduct texts of the century was Lord Halifax’s *The Lady’s New-Year’s Gift, or, Advice to a Daughter* (1688), which ran through 24 editions over the next hundred years (Armstrong 99). Mark Brown notes the text’s translation into French in 1692 (154); while Hayes writes it “circulated widely” throughout colonial North America (61). For Hayes, the “fatherly advice” of *The Lady’s New-Year’s Gift* gives the work its force (61). It speaks from an intimate point of view – Halifax wrote the work for his teenage daughter, Elizabeth, as a present – but many young women found his advice on religion, marriage, behaviour, family, and conversation “pertinent” and responded to the advice as they responded to advice from their own fathers (61). Halifax’s text, therefore, “became the advice of every father who gave the work to his daughter” (Hayes 61).

I focus on conduct literature because these texts are not “static ‘background’” or “a supply of historical facts” as context (Jones 8-9); they actively create the context. These texts provide the “residual cultural information” of a given moment in a social reality (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 23) – the social imaginary. The proliferation of conduct literature over the course of the eighteenth century indicates a change in ideology about the construction of the self, particularly in regards to gender, and an increasing focus on conduct itself. Conduct literature is part of the present-day, as it was part of the Middle Ages (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 4), but something happened in the eighteenth century that caused an explosion of conduct literature, to such an extent it began shaping the ideology by which people defined themselves. Armstrong associates this with “the rise of the popular press,” the market for conduct literature “virtually explod[ing]” after the Licensing Act was not renewed in 1695 (99). This information “existed in such abundance” that it gradually changed the way “literate

people understood themselves;" it established "a set of norms for representing sexual behavior," and provided a "material record of everyday life as it was supposed to be lived" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 5, 19, 23). Within this framework, changes in a society's ideas of desire and gender can be seen, at the same time conduct literature plays a role in these changes (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 3). Conduct literature, particularly that aimed at women, documents a history of sexuality (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 19), and can provide an understanding of "the complex and varied ways" in which gender relations were negotiated (Roulston 38), particularly in the regulation of sexual desire. Considering conduct literature as part of the social imaginary illuminates Haywood's participation in manuscript: as I discuss in Chapter Two, as a member of the Hillarian coterie, Haywood was part of a group that debated "progressive," new ideas about relations between the sexes. Her amatory fiction, as shown later in this section, can challenge the basis of power between the sexes because it can redefine the negotiation of these gender relations, particularly in regard to courtship, and redefine the expression of women's desire.

Jones, and Armstrong and Tennenhouse, link conduct literature to the identity of the emerging middle class, that the development of the identity of this class was dependent on the construction of gender. This ideology formed particularly around women. Jones argues that conduct literature was "powerfully instrumental" in shaping the ideological identity of this new class (14). This was achieved through the incorporation of the ideology of conduct literature into women's limited education (Jones 98), ensuring definitions of "'women' and 'femininity' played a crucial part in a wider redefinition of social categories and social roles" (7). For Armstrong and Tennenhouse, conduct literature was used to educate the daughters of the "numerous aspiring social groups" that came to form the middle class (10). This produced "a new object of desire" that represented the interests of this class: its women (Armstrong and

Tennenhouse 10). It proposed a curriculum that made these young women desirable (marriageable) because of their femaleness – qualities that differentiated them from men – and femaleness was redefined on these terms (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 10).

Conduct literature “naturalised” gendered behaviour through the regulation of sexual desire. This was achieved through marriage. Marriage controlled desire and ensured people married within their class. Desire – how a woman made herself desirable for marriage and her own personal desire – thus became political tools to maintain the new class structure. For Ready, women had traditionally been defined in terms of their bodies (565). This “definition sanction[ed] their subordination on several grounds” and kept the focus of debate about women’s “natural” inferiority on their bodies (Ready 565). Women were treated “as objects whose sexuality it was necessary to regulate,” and thus conduct literature defined women “primarily in relation to their bodies, focussing on how women might transform themselves into objects of male desire” (Ready 565). For Armstrong, although conduct literature “aimed simply at making young women desirable to men of a good social position,” the ideology of the instruction held two other, concomitant, aims: it represented “a specific configuration of sexual features as the only appropriate object for men at all levels of society to want for a wife,” and provided “diverse social groups with a basis for imagining economic interests in common” (96). Ideas of “what made a woman marriageable,” ideas that had remained “constant for centuries,” underwent a rapid transformation in the first decades of the eighteenth century (Armstrong 98). For Jones, conduct literature was concerned with how women could “create themselves as objects of male desire” on terms that contained this desire “within the publicly sanctioned form of marriage” (14). Conduct literature aimed to control female sexuality: the economic and social aims of the emerging middle class were articulated through “the objectification and limitation of female sexuality” (Jones 57).

Desire was regulated through representations of gender. These representations increased in importance as the new middle classes became more entrenched (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 16). At the beginning of the eighteenth century, conduct literature “presupposed the existence of a gendered self” based on “positive female features, rather than on the lack or even the inversion of certain qualities of the male” (Armstrong 128-129). This is Thomas Laqueur’s one-sex model: the bodies of men and women were not seen as “opposite and incommensurable biological sexes” (154) until “sometime in the eighteenth century,” when “sex as we know it was invented” (149). The body became “the gold standard of social discourse,” and women’s bodies “the battleground” for redefining relations between men and women (Laqueur 150). Women’s bodies were reconceptualised, creating the idea of two sexes, and this concept of different sexes was used to invent “a new foundation for gender” (Laqueur 150). This new foundation focused on sexual desire: the “purported passionlessness” of women was “one of the many possible manifestations of this newly created sex” (Laqueur 150). The two competing discourses co-existed for some time, with the two-sex model eventually dominating (Laqueur 150). Laqueur does not specify an exact timeframe, but Sally O’Driscoll dates this change from roughly the 1670s to the early 1800s (125-126n). Armstrong argues that by the end of the eighteenth century, this “deference not only represented the essential qualities of female nature,” but also “endowed this representation with the power of behavioral norms” (129). Conduct literature thus changed woman “into the bearer of moral norms and socializer of men,” simultaneously taking “the qualities once attributed to her nature and turn[ing] them into techniques for regulating desire” (Armstrong 129).

In her analysis of theatrical representations of lesbian desire in the seventeenth century, Valerie Traub concludes an ideology of heterosexuality developed around a social need to

regulate women's bodies as the means of reproduction (163-164). This created male-female desire as a sexual and marital norm, and created legitimate and illegitimate sexual desires and actions when this desire became considered appropriate only within marriage (Traub 163-164). This redefined marriage because it changed "the boundaries of what counted as a sexual act and how such acts would be interpreted" (O'Driscoll 113). Marriage became companionate, and women's erotic expressions were severely limited – and contradictory. Sexual acts and desire were to be "channeled into the marriage" (O'Driscoll 113) at the same time sexual acts and desire for women came to be considered unnatural and unfeminine. This led to a change in the acceptable sexual behaviour expected from women. Before 1700, O'Driscoll argues, "conduct books and sermons lectured women on the need for modest *behavior*, after 1700 it began to be argued that modesty should *be* a woman's nature" (107, her italics). Women's "proper nature" was to have little or no sexual desire (O'Driscoll 107).

These changes in ideas of marriage and sexual relations formed part of Haywood's experiences in manuscript culture because they were central to the Hillarians' discussions. Chris Roulston argues that the definition of marriage was "undergoing an important paradigmatic shift" (26). At the start of the 1700s, "[m]arried life and social life were seen as intimately connected;" the qualities of one flowed into the other (Roulston 29). How one behaved publically "provide[d] a pedagogical space for learning the codes of behaviour between spouses" (Roulston 29). By mid-century, conduct literature was "more focused on the problems" created by intimacy (Roulston 29). Literature that tells women how to be sexually desirable tells a woman not only what kind of woman she should be, but also "determine[s] what kind of woman men should find desirable" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 5). This implies two aspects of desire: "a desired object, and a subject who desires" (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 5), and the redefinition of the one implies the redefinition of

the other. This shift changed how husbands and wives, men and women, related to each other (Roulston 26).

By the 1720s, these ideas had developed into a topic of serious intellectual discussion. The Hillarians were known for determining their own frameworks in which to behave; Haywood was part of a coterie that debated new ideas of how men and women conducted themselves in their relationships with each other (Gerrard 76-77). In *Fantomina*, as shown in Chapter Four, the heroine has greatest agency as Incognita – in this role, she is fully embodied, able to express her sexual desire, and has equal power in the relationship between the sexes. This appears a contrast to the ideology expressed in conduct literature – this “new foundation of gender” of women’s passionlessness, and the debate of their “natural” inferiority focused on their bodies. For me, this contrast suggests Haywood has something to say on these ideas. As I show in Chapter Three, she did comment on contemporary debates and ideas. She used her narrators to give herself a public voice, and therefore comment on conduct between the sexes. Incognita appears to be attempting to embody the progressive ideals of the Hillarians.

Sexual desire upholds political authority. Texts that focus on desire, however, have the potential to challenge this authority. Armstrong and Tennenhouse argue conduct literature, especially that written for women, is “integral and instrumental to the history of desire” because it “strive[s] to reproduce, if not always to revise, the culturally approved forms of desire” (1). This is ideology “in its most basic and powerful form,” because the culture designates it as natural (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 2) and the behaviour it produces as innate. The assumption of “natural” upholds political authority: the “terms and dynamics of sexual desire” become the “political language” of society (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 2). Any text concerned with “women and the vicissitudes of sexual love” is therefore a political text and any text that redefines desire and courtship can potentially “revise the basis of

political power” (Armstrong and Tennenhouse 2). Representations of desire can – as Armstrong and Tennenhouse argue – thus be “a form of political power in their own right” (2). Haywood’s amatory fiction can therefore redefine this power and challenge this concept of “natural” or “innate.” As I show in Chapter Four, *Fantomina* redefines desire and courtship because the heroine masquerades to express her sexual desire. This redefinition creates an equal balance of power in her relationship with Beauplaisir. But as noted (and paraphrasing Armstrong and Tennenhouse) above, the redefinition of the desired object implies the redefinition of the subject who desires. Beauplaisir walks out after his sexual encounter with Incognita – he leaves “the House determin’d never to re-enter it” (67). This suggests to me that Haywood is working out what would happen if the progressive ideals of her coterie were put into practice. As I outline below, and argue from Part III of this chapter on, she uses performance to do this.

Conduct, sexual desire, performativity, and self-knowledge

Haywood critics argue her focus on sexual desire links conduct, subjectivity, and performativity. My reading of Haywood develops out of this scholarship. Women are the primary objects of textual voyeurism because “they most directly transgress against sexual regulations” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 3). King argues Haywood removes sexuality from its every-day contexts and “subjects it to the narratorial surveillance of those capable of finely sensitive modes of discrimination,” such as her narrators (“New Contexts” 269). This allows her to privilege feminine consciousness as she repositions sex and sexuality “somewhere between the disruptions of desire and the regulatory effects of the Augustan refinement of manners” (King, “New Contexts” 269). For Juliette Merritt, Haywood creates “scenes of looking that allow her to explore the complexity of the relationship between vision and power” (*Beyond Spectacle* 8). Haywood’s amatory fiction shows women “construct

themselves to be seen” and this “desire to be desirable is central to their identity and their sexuality” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 8). Female identity in *Fantomina* can therefore be shown to be a performance – “changeable” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 23). This linking of theatricality and subjectivity reveals “the constructed nature of human identity” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 23). *Fantomina* therefore not only reveals identity is constructed, it “explores the performativity at the heart of female (and possibly male) sexuality” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 23).

For Rebecca Tierney-Hynes, Haywood was “a theorist of the passions” (154). The passions for Haywood philosophically determined the human condition (Tierney-Hynes 154) and led to knowledge of human nature (165). The philosophical imperative “know thyself” was the purpose of fiction and philosophically defining the self in relation to passion belonged to fiction first (Tierney-Hynes 154): to “know thyself” was to “read the heart,” to read the heart was “to know the passions,” to know the passions was “to read fiction” (155-156). Fiction taught both readers and writers “how to be social critics” (Tierney-Hynes 163-164). It provided more than the text: it revealed “the process of ‘reading’ the heart so central to both philosophic and fictional descriptions of the self” (Tierney-Hynes 164). A “hierarchy of affect,” Tierney-Hynes suggests, “might be deployed to justify a kind of reading that deliberately provoked the passions” (158).

I extend Tierney-Hynes’ argument: Haywood deployed “a hierarchy of affect” to “justify a kind of reading that deliberately provoked the passions” to produce self-knowledge. Haywood uses the passions to show that how these passions were acted out constructed the self, and this performance led to self-knowledge. Self-knowledge is not agency, but it enables agency. Throughout this thesis, I define agency as an awareness of self, and the ability of this self to act and make effective choices. “Passion” at the time was variously defined. Locke, for

example, saw it as “the involuntary response of any subject, animate or inanimate, being acted upon” (Tierney-Hynes 156). For Tierney-Hynes, all definitions tend to concur the passions occupied “a liminal space between sensation and intellection” but were more closely associated to sensation (156) and the body. Haywood used the term “emotion” – “a somewhat unusual term at the time” – in both its “older” sense of “inward turbulence” and its newer, modern sense: a “specific feeling associated with differing circumstances” (Tierney-Hynes 158). Emotion was philosophically distinguished from passion in that emotions were considered internal phenomena of the soul, whereas the passions were externally produced (Tierney-Hynes 158).

Self-knowledge is linked to theatrical performance. For Anderson, emotion was part of “a crucial debate” acted out on the eighteenth-century stage (*Eighteenth-Century* 8). Contemporary science and physiognomy held that the body reacted to emotion consistently (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 8), but actors and audiences were divided as to how to theatrically express emotional experiences. Here, I adapt and add Anderson’s argument to my own. Aaron Hill’s *An Essay on the Art of Acting* (1753), a well-known acting manual of the time (Ingrassia, “Stage” 214), taught the actor expressed emotion from the inside out and this expression caused the face and body to change (Hill 9-16).² Haywood was well-aware of these ideas and used them in the composition of *Fantomina*, as I discuss in Chapter Three. But acting showed that gestures and actions could “conceal intentions and sentiments” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 8). Haywood (and other women writers) saw emotions as “preexisting” expression and thus representation, that there was “often a separation between what one feels on the inside and what one expresses on the surface” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-*

² Although first published in volume one of *The Works of the late Aaron Hill* in 1753, Gerrard writes that Hill worked out the ideas in “a series of journal articles, letters, poems, and essays” between 1733 and 1746 (167). He appears, however, to have had a long and sustained interest – “a life-long passion” (Gerrard 25) – in all aspects of the stage. He was general manager of Drury Lane by 1709 (Gerrard 25), and training actors by 1721 at the new Little Theatre (59). This suggests he could have developed his ideas on acting even earlier.

Century 9). A reading experience that deliberately provoked the passions would explore this gap and therefore lead to self-knowledge.

The heroine of *Fantomina* masquerades; she performs. She takes on a series of roles in order to express her sexual desire. But in every role she takes on, there is a gap between what she feels on the inside and what she is able to express on the outside. As shown in Chapter Four, the roles come with pre-determined conduct and she can only express her desire within this framework. She learns from each role, however, and applies the learning from her previous roles to each new role she takes on. Each new role enables her to better express her desire. Each new role therefore narrows this gap. Her final role of Incognita, in which the heroine has the greatest agency, closes this gap. She applies the learning from her previous roles: she creates the role for herself and therefore the framework in which she can fully express her desire. Haywood appears to be saying that agency only comes when this gap is closed. Self-knowledge is necessary for agency.

III. Philosophy, the stage, and novelisation: why Haywood performed the self in her fictions

This section shows that women philosophers, writers, and playwrights in Haywood's time began to see gender – like the self – as constructed. Mary Astell was the first philosopher to argue conduct, particularly women's conduct, was constructed and others, such as Damaris Cudworth Masham, began applying this thinking to relations between the sexes. If conduct was constructed it could change, and women began to work out these ideas and the implications of this change on stage. I adapt the theoretical work linking Cockburn's plays with her philosophy to show Haywood could have taken this theatrical convention of working philosophical ideas out on stage and adapted it to her fictions, particularly to *Fantomina*, via the process of novelisation. I argue it is possible that as theatrical tropes crossed over into

fiction in novelisation, the use of performance to work out philosophical ideas, particularly ideas of the self, crossed over too. My argument in Chapter Four extends this: Haywood appears to use this performance in *Fantomina* to work out – perform – the progressive ideals of her coterie. I also argue in Chapter Three that the *Fantomina* narrator uses a theatrical narrative technique (of addressing the audience, as Haywood did as playwright and actress) – and that this technique probably crossed over into fiction during novelisation too.

Philosopher Mary Astell was the first thinker to systematically argue custom determined a person's conduct. Just like the self, how a person behaved was *made*. In *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greatest Interest*, published in 1694 (Part I) and 1697 (Part II), she showed women's conduct was constructed, not innate. Gender was therefore a process of creation. Locke's theory of personal identity appeared to grant both sexes the "same faculties of reason and reflection" (Ready 565). Astell asked why the mind was ungendered but the focus on the body gendered. Why did men and women behave differently if they had the same rational potential? Astell's answer was custom; she argued women were uneducated not because they were incapable of being educated, but because they were *kept* uneducated by custom. She linked how women behaved, that they were perceived to be irrational, with how they were treated: "if from our Infancy we are nurs'd up in Ignorance and Vanity; are taught to be Proud and Petulant, Delicate and Fantastick, Humorous and Inconstant, 'tis not strange that the ill effects of this Conduct appear in all the future Actions of our Lives" (61). Women's behaviour was made, so women's behaviour could change. Astell argued that if women were educated, then the way they behaved would change – they would "attend to the Dictates of ... Reason" (68).

Lady Damaris Cudworth Masham (1659-1708) extended Astell's argument on the conduct of women to include conduct between the sexes. Her argument in the anonymous *Occasional*

Thoughts in Reference to a Vertuous or Christian Life (1705) included the sexual double standard. She defended Locke's ideas of self (Ready 569); argued, liked Astell, that custom determined a woman's behaviour – women did not conquer the "Ignorance, or Errors of their Child-hood" because of the prejudice against female learning (Masham 21); and then used this reasoning to focus on relations between the sexes. Masham links chastity to custom: "a transgression herein ... is ordinarily talked as lightly of, as if it was but a peccadillo in a young man, although a far less criminal offense against duty in a maid shall in the opinion of the same persons brand her with perpetual infamy" (154-155). Masham objects to this double standard – especially the claim that a woman's "virtue" is primarily her chastity (Frankel 85). She changes the focus: sex is a bodily act, but chastity is a conscious mental choice to use and experience the body in a particular way. Chastity "gives the impression that a women's moral duty consists in regulating her *body* alone" (Broad 139, her italics). This is not determined by the woman herself but by custom, and this custom can change. Chastity can be "a sacred duty for both sexes" (Frankel 85). Masham's extension is an important redaction in the social imaginary: although not arguing for chastity, Haywood appears to comment on the relationship between the heroine and Beauplaisir in this same way – by drawing attention to the double standard (this is shown in Chapter Four).

These ideas of self, gender, and conduct began to be linked to performance: women thinkers began to work out these ideas on stage. Recent theorists – such as Paula Backscheider, Joanne Myers, Jane Duran, and Roxanne Kent-Drury – argue philosopher, writer, and playwright Catharine Trotter Cockburn (1679–1749) staged her philosophical ideas in order to work them out. Part of these ideas included the Lockean concept of self – in her *A Defence of Mr Locke's "Essay on Human Understanding"* (1702), she argued personal identity was disembodied, because it existed in the same consciousness, not in the same material

substance. Cockburn staged set situations to solve the philosophical concern of how this new self was to behave in these situations. For Duran, Cockburn performed “a sort of theoretical defense of some of her ideas in her published plays” (491). Myers argues Cockburn’s plays can show the development of the social imaginary: plays, as “imaginative texts”, gave writers freedom to “play with” and think about questions “in ways that more formal and discursive texts” such as philosophical treatise did not (“Catharine Trotter” 55). Cockburn’s plays are more than “mere fictionalizations of her philosophy” however (Myers, “Catharine Trotter” 70); they enable her to render a philosophical solution imaginatively, using a “process of moral reflection that entails applying general principles to particular cases” (59). For Kent-Drury, the theatre was a place where “significant cultural conflicts” and moral issues could be resolved (115). Cockburn integrated cultural debates into her work and assessed the impact of these debates on women (Kent-Drury 111).

Backscheider, in “Stretching the Form,” shows Cockburn’s working out of her ideas of self on stage, and the audience’s engagement with the debate of self via the stage, meant playwrights adapted the genre to meet these demands. They began to include the idea of a character’s inner self, consciousness. Cockburn’s characters exhibit consciousness and for audiences “this part of personal experience had become more interesting than actions” – playwrights were developing “multiple ways of giving audiences and readers access to the thoughts and feelings of their characters” (Backscheider, “Stretching Form” 456). For me, this adaption of the genre appears to be linked to the agency of women characters. Cockburn gives her characters consciousness and “her audience access to thought” by conveying “that the characters know themselves” (Backscheider, “Stretching Form” 457). She elevated her women characters to a new subject position: “a subject that projects ‘conscious worth’” (Backscheider, “Stretching Form” 457). Her women characters were given at least one scene

in which the character “explode[d]” with “vitality” and “power” allowing the audience to see her subjectivity and the character to express her identity (Backscheider, “Stretching Form” 457).

These reflections on Cockburn could also be applied to Haywood. In *Fantomina*, the heroine, to paraphrase Backscheider, explodes with vitality and power when she reads Beauplaisir’s duplicitous replies to the Widow Bloomer and “Fantomina.” This outburst enables her to express her inner thoughts on the different behaviour expected of women (the only time she does so in the text): “Traytor! (*cry’d she*), ‘tis thus our silly, fond, believing Sex are serv’d when they put Faith in Man: So had I been deceiv’d and cheated, had I like the rest believ’d, and sat down mourning in Absence, and vainly waiting recover’d Tendernesses” (59). It also reveals she is choosing her roles consciously – she will not “make [her] Life a Hell, burning in fruitless Expectations, and dreaming out [her] Days in Hopes and Fears, then wake at last to all the Horror of Dispair” (59). The roles give her power in the relationship; she claims a visual authority Beauplaisir lacks: “But I have outwitted even the most Subtle of the deceiving Kind, and while he thinks to fool me, is himself the only beguiled Person” (59). (This is further explored in Chapter Four.) That this scene in *Fantomina* mirrors contemporary theatre suggests something was happening between these two genres.

The theatre, novelisation, and agency

I argue that just as women adapted theatre to show agency, they adapted various other discourses to show and explore agency in the novel, including theatrical discourses; it is therefore possible they continued to use performance to work out ideas of the self. I acknowledge the theorists I use in this argument do not argue this – I add (and occasionally adapt) their argument to my own. For Jane Spencer, women were developing literary

authority *at the same time* “the novel’s generic identity was becoming established” – and each affected the other (“Women Writers” 215). Ideas of agency are related to the development of the novel, in that the form developed to accommodate the modern experience. For J. Paul Hunter, the “novel” – “the form of prose fiction that emerged as dominant” in eighteenth-century England (25) – was partly a response to social concerns about the “structuring of everyday life,” as well as “the feelings that flow from – and inspire – ordinary actions” (5). Writers and readers, in other words, were looking for an original “literary innovation” that reflected their “modern” experience (Hunter 12). Concomitantly, the theatre is related to the development of the novel in that writers used techniques from older, established genres to do this. The development of discourses to show agency in the novel is therefore likely dependent on similar discourses in theatre. Hunter argues there were two waves to the development of this new, “novel,” literary form (11): the first began at the start of the century; the second mid-century. The first sprawled across “genres and modes more or less indiscriminately” (Hunter 16). It was “unfocused” (Hunter 16), with “little form [and] no firm sense of direction” (12). The novel was formed from a generic mixture of many kinds of writing (Hammond and Regan 18).

This sprawling enabled what Brean Hammond calls “novelisation.” Hammond loosely defines novelisation as “the set of material, cultural, and institutional changes responsible for the promotion of prose narrative to its undisputed preeminence as the most widely consumed form of imaginative writing” (303). I use the term “novelisation” slightly differently, to indicate the process by which writers experimented with the stock ideas and techniques of other genres to build what would become the novel. Novelisation hybridises genres: as a process, it is biased toward joining these “disparate forms of writing toward the condition of narrative” (Hammond 250). Theatre played a prominent role in this hybridisation. Hammond

uses the term “hybridisation” to indicate a novelistic blending across all genres. While I agree with his definition (and acknowledge Haywood – and others – likely incorporated aspects of her poetry and journalistic career into her fictions too), I specifically use “hybridisation” in this thesis to refer to the joining of drama and the novel in the process of novelisation. For Hammond, novelisation was part of a new, growing market for imaginative writing, and of the development of professional writers who earned a living by satisfying this market – adapting what they wrote to readers’ tastes and expectations (304). The theatre was “the main dynamo of literary production” because the stage gave these writers “a straightforward means” of making money that kept them “semi-autonomous” from the publishing industry (Hammond 6-7).

The narrative created by this hybridisation is linked to agency. Genres carry meaning. If novelisation hybridised genres, it likely hybridised the meaning these genres carried – including articulations of agency. For John Richetti, the ideas of “autonomy, agency, and self-consciousness” that dramatised the characters of these eighteenth-century texts that became the novel were “new and controversial ideas” (“Introduction” 5). This “assertion of modern individuality” and “the narrative form that expresses it” happened gradually, coexisting with older forms and *the ideas these forms carried* (Richetti, “Introduction” 6, my italics). It is therefore possible the ideas women explored in the theatre and the techniques they used to convey these ideas carried over into the novel in this hybridisation. It is therefore also possible that the agency women were developing in the theatre they adapted to the novel. As seen above, women playwrights like Cockburn used the theatre to interact with the debates of her time and work out her philosophical ideas. As seen in Backscheider’s argument, these women playwrights *changed* the form as they did this, particularly regarding

the representation of consciousness to develop agency. The latter, as I showed, can also be seen in *Fantomina*.

As women changed from writing drama to writing fiction, they took the ideas and tropes of the theatre and adapted them for the novel.³ It is therefore also possible they continued to use performance and the staging of set situations to work out ideas of the self. When we look at Haywood's work across genres, we can see this happening (as I argue in Chapters Three and Four respectively). For Jessica Munns, while plays in the early eighteenth century articulated ideas (about love and marriage, for example) using "clichés," "stereotypical characters," and "formulaic plots," it was the manipulation of these "known terms and structures" that enabled playwrights to articulate "meaningful critiques" (89), particularly in regard to the sexual double standard. The stage began to shift "tropes of ideology" as it began to work through different and new ideas (Munns 99). What makes these plays subversive is not that they changed sexual standards (they didn't) but that the playwrights acknowledged "the very fact of the sexual double standard" as they examined its "operations and consequences" (Munns 90-91). Women appear to have used these "clichés," "stereotypical characters," and "formulaic plots" to stage set situations in order to articulate these "meaningful critiques."

They used the tropes of amatory fiction the same way. Theorists such as Toni Bowers in "Representing Resistance" and Margaret Case Croskery in "Masquing Desire" argue women used these tropes to comment on social and sexual politics, particularly the double standard. These tropes could carry "dangerous or incendiary ideas" (Bowers, "Representing Resistance" 140). Hammond and Richetti, however, would likely disagree on the grounds of

³ The writing careers of women changed during this period (not necessarily because of novelisation). At the end of the seventeenth century, the main commercial literary activity for women was drama (Prescott 18), and writing plays was "the most viable means for women to earning a living by imaginative writing" (Wright 6). By the end of the 1720s, however, the main commercial genre for women was the novel (Prescott 18).

genre. For Hammond, amatory fiction was “simply too *absorptive*,” when the “formulas became recognizable and tired, there was no reason to go back to them” (27, his italics). Richetti links Haywood to the development of novel, but plays down the linkage because the form is “absolutely irrelevant in either a moral or an aesthetic sense” (*Popular Fiction* 119). I discuss this further in Part II of Chapter Two.

These tropes also appear to be similar to each other. Lisa Fletcher uses speech act theory to argue conventional narrative structures and textual complicity guarantee reader accessibility (24). In other words, if readers are familiar with it and it works, use it. At the same time, this can be “the most potent mode of subversion” because it can speak to the most “conventional” reader (Fletcher 24). Performance is an example (Fletcher 24). The familiar can be used subversively: the telling of a story can also reveal why the story unfolds as it does (the narrator of *Fantomina* uses this convention, as the close reading in Chapter Three shows). Haywood – as an actress, playwright, and author – would have been familiar with the tropes of both genres. For Anderson, Haywood’s repetitions – her “love plots” and “heroines” – are “first blatantly, then covertly formulaic” (*Eighteenth-Century* 24). Haywood “repositions tropes of performance” in her fiction, showing that “if a woman’s attitudes toward love and marriage could not be staged, they could nonetheless be performed” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 30).⁴

This hybridisation of drama and the novel – and the meanings the forms carried – was gendered. For Margaret Doody, the “peculiarly gender-conscious” Restoration (58) “played out its uncertainties, its estrangements, its (often irate) apprehensions of social conflict, and its understanding of conflicts within individual psychology” in terms of what critics now call

⁴ I refer to Haywood’s “fictions” rather than her “novels” – the novel as we know it was developing at this time, it had not yet formed.

“gender” (62-63). This gender-consciousness could have carried over into the novel. Tiffany Potter argues that an “important implication of Haywood’s work” is “her creation of a powerful and distinct idiom” to express the feminine (169). While it does not refer to novelisation, her thesis can be adapted to show Haywood appropriated the tropes of other genres to reflect gendered experiences in her fictions. She manipulated genres and “cultural-linguistic expectation[s]” to articulate “the private experiences of femininity” by creating “hyper-sexualised narratives” that embody “a distinctly feminised form” (Potter 170). Over the course of her career, Potter argues, Haywood mastered “this language of passion” and claimed it “as a creative, powerful production of value” (171).

Haywood, hybridisation, and agency

I argue Haywood actively participated in this hybridisation. Many critics, among them Ros Ballaster (in *Seductive Forms*) and Hunter (36-38) acknowledge Haywood’s “significant” role in the development of the novel. New research, however, is linking her plays to her fictions. Scholars are starting to “look at the way even her prose fictions are conceived in theatrical terms” (King, *Political Biography* 18). Haywood began her literary career in 1719 with the publication of *Love in Excess*, but she began her acting career in 1714 at the Smock Alley Theatre in Dublin (King, *Political Biography* 18). She published several plays in the 1720s and 1730s – including *The Fair Captive* (1721), *A Wife to Be Lett* (1723), *Frederick Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh* (1729), and the hugely successful *The Opera of Operas* (1733) – and acted up to the last night before the 1737 Licensing Act came into effect.⁵ For Catherine Ingrassia, Haywood was “a competent and recognized actress with considerable experience” (“Stage” 214). Her plays appear to have been popular. Ingrassia notes “many of

⁵ The first season of *The Opera of Operas* ran from 31 May to 25 June (Spedding 335) – plays at the time were generally considered successful if they ran to author’s benefit third night, making it the equivalent of a modern-day blockbuster.

the benefit performances for her netted financial amounts that compare favorably” with the benefit nights of older, well-established plays (“Stage” 214-215).

Anderson, Ingrassia, and Stephanie Harzewski argue for the intertextuality of Haywood’s plays and fictions. While Anderson does not use the term “novelisation,” her argument covers the (gendered) generic cross-over between theatre and fiction, particularly in regard to Haywood. Novelists were frequently also playwrights and the writers who “most frequently” engaged in the “cross-genre experimentation” between theatre and fiction were women (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 3). For Harzewski, Haywood “wrote across and blurred” genres (194). *Fantomina* has a “theatrical quality” that overlaps with aspects of Haywood’s dramatic career: Haywood can “provide strong characterization of her heroines in a matter of a few paragraphs;” the story has a “general compactness” in terms of “character entrances and exits” (Harzewski 180); and the text has the “visual purity” of a play (185). Ingrassia argues Haywood’s fictions were informed by “the theater as an institution,” “drama as a literary text,” and “the performative aspects” of her acting career (“Stage” 215). Her plays “share qualities with her fiction,” and “her novels owe a great deal to the theater, specifically in terms of the representation of gender and social interaction” (Ingrassia, “Stage” 215). To read Haywood is to “situate her fiction within the cultural field of her dramatic writings,” revealing “the degree to which drama and the performative mode of the period influenced the texts people read, shaped authorial discourse, and informed social interactions” (Ingrassia, “Stage” 215).

Both Anderson and Ingrassia link Haywood’s theatrical career to her use of performance tropes in her fictions to develop agency. Haywood “consciously” explored masquerade on two levels – her heroines often “disguise themselves to express themselves,” and through her authorial choice “to work between two specific eighteenth-century genres, novels and plays”

(Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 2). Performance therefore became part of Haywood's authorial agency (as I explore in Chapter Three). Anderson connects Haywood's participation in the developing novel to her use of masquerade as a form of self-expression. This choice of self-expression was particular to women (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 1-2). Theatre audiences assumed actors did not "speak for themselves," so the stage became a space in which women playwrights could "do or say something personal, something un-feigned, something that it is perhaps socially unacceptable to say or do in any other way" (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 1). Playwrights and actors manipulated this, using the playhouse as a vehicle for self-expression, and this "quickly infiltrate[d] eighteenth-century literature and society more generally" (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 1-2).

Performance also became part of how Haywood developed the agency of her female protagonists (I explore this in relation to the heroine of *Fantomina* in Chapter Four). For Ingrassia, Haywood displays a "consistent pattern" of creating heroines "who are self-consciously actresses, powerfully suggesting the performative nature of social interaction and also revealing Haywood's familiarity with contemporary acting theory" ("Stage" 215), the heroine's masquerade echoing the acting manuals of Hill and Thomas Betterton's *The History of the English Stage* (216). Her masquerade also shows "the highly performative quality of women's virtue and other desirable feminine characteristics" (Ingrassia, "Stage" 217). For Anderson, women playwrights who were also authors depicted characters "who perform their feelings" in both their plays and fiction (*Eighteenth-Century* 7). Across the genres she wrote in, Haywood explored "a strategy" of what Anderson terms "self-conscious performance" – "women acting roles that they have independently conceived to express romantic desires that would, if articulated outside of performance, be met with disastrous results" (*Eighteenth-Century* 17-18).

Both Anderson and Ingrassia argue this by linking *Fantomina* to Haywood's *A Wife to Be Lett*. For Anderson, the heroine of *Fantomina* is not "as unconventional for Haywood as critics claim": "Fantomina, like Amadea and Mrs. Graspall, conceives and carries out various stratagems to communicate her feelings, and like the women in *A Wife to Be Lett*, she covertly manipulates her lover's behavior" (*Eighteenth-Century* 31-32). The "easy explanation" for the differences between the two texts – such as the heroine's more overt sexual behaviour in *Fantomina* – is genre (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 32). *Fantomina* as fiction may describe scenes and show behaviours Haywood "could never stage" (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 32). For Ingrassia, *A Wife to Be Lett* "explores gender relations, courtship, and the institution of marriage" in ways that "anticipate or echo" Haywood's prose fiction ("Stage" 220). The formulaic tropes of drama are "joined" in the play by "devices such as disguise that are simultaneously dramatic and novelistic" and this "shares much" with *Fantomina* (Ingrassia, "Stage" 221).

I link *Fantomina* and *A Wife to Be Lett* in Chapter Three, showing Haywood used the same narrative performance tropes in both, and that she used these tropes to create her authorial agency. She also used these tropes to give herself a public voice, enabling her to use the narrator of *Fantomina* to comment on conduct, particularly the differing conduct of the heroine and Beauplaisir in the same relationship. Conduct in relations between the sexes was an important focus of Haywood's coterie, the Hillarians. The following chapter links Haywood to the coterie and its ideals of progressive conduct between men and women.

Chapter Two: Haywood in print and manuscript: textuality and her use of genre

I. Haywood in print and manuscript

This part of the chapter situates Haywood within the literary culture of her time. It links her with contemporary manuscript culture, with the coterie of young men and women known as the Hillarians who gathered around poet, dramatist, and critic Aaron Hill (1685-1750) in London in the first half of the 1720s. Scholars know Haywood almost exclusively as a print author. She is considered the “typical dependent professional, geared only to the exigencies of the commercial marketplace” (Prescott 30). She is not traditionally associated with manuscript culture. Sarah Prescott and Kathryn R. King, however, are among a (growing) handful of critics who link Haywood with the Hillarians. King in “New Contexts for Early Novels by Women” argues Haywood’s involvement in the coterie possibly impacted her early works – including *Fantomina*. The Hillarians were self-conscious of their conduct within the group and their behaviour between the sexes (Gerrard 74-77; King, “New Contexts” 267-269). They circulated their work within the circle, and “engaged in acts of responsive, collaborative authorship” (Gerrard 74). I explore the implications of this in Part II – that Haywood possibly used her participation in the group to develop her ideas, and the genre of amatory fiction to express these ideas. Haywood’s association with the Hillarians likely influenced her authorial agency in *Fantomina* and her development of the heroine’s agency.

I take the period 1690-1730 to be one of fluidity in the culture of writing. Literary culture at this time was not fixed into “competing technologies” of print and manuscript (Ezell, *Social Authorship* 2). These two modes of literary production merged and overlapped (Wright 14), complementing and influencing each other. Women engaged in a literary culture of multiple

contexts, one that was not fixed and stable but fluid. This fluidity also encompasses the process of novelisation happening at this time, as well as the resultant hybridisation of genres. As I argued in Chapter One, Haywood played a significant role in both processes. Fluidity therefore also encompasses women writers' use of performance, particularly their use of performance to work out their ideas. I define fluidity as an understanding that the development of a public sphere of print at this time was not so much a progress as an interaction, a process, in which women used manuscript to write in print and print to write in manuscript, and incorporated the techniques and ideas of various genres as part of this process. Fluidity is a loose, catch-all phrase that acknowledges many points of intersection. Fluidity captures the strands of women's engagement in literary culture at the time into an ever-changing social imaginary that enabled them to have a range of publishing choices and practices, authorial self-fashionings, and use of forms.

In this chapter and the following, I build on the thesis of Gillian Wright in *Producing Women's Poetry*. Although Wright often refers to print and manuscript as "rival modes" (23), she argues that participation in literary culture in the long seventeenth century, for women and men who chose to write, blurred the boundaries between these two modes. Wright's argument focuses on three "interlinked" key issues (14): textuality – the document produced as part of the literary production process and its paratexts (14); genre; and the agency of the author. This chapter focuses on textuality and genre (Part I), and their interaction with agency (Part II). I discuss authorial agency in Chapter Three. Wright uses these three interrelated issues to explore and assess "the diverse manifestations and implications" of women's literary production (14). I take these three issues a step further, using them to explore the implications of Haywood's manuscript participation on her work, using *Fantomina* as an example. My focus on Haywood's participation in manuscript broadens the context in which

to read her work. Haywood is critically well-known for her focus on agency, masquerade, and performance. Reading her as a member of the Hillarians reveals possibly why these ideas infiltrated her work, and adds to the critical perspectives of how she used them.

Haywood in print culture

The theory of women's engagement in literary culture from 1690-1730 is, often, contentious. Most paradigms of women and publication tend to focus on print. The period is commonly acknowledged to "mark the first substantial development of a commercial literary marketplace and a culture of professional authorship," in which a writer became "professional, commercial and market-orientated" (Prescott 2). Successive Printing Acts (or "Licensing Laws"), which had restricted printing to London, Oxford, Cambridge, and York, as well as the number of printing houses, lapsed in 1695, and the printing trade flourished (Raven 9, 85). Professional writers were given some financial control in this trade in 1710, when the Statute of Anne legally regulated copyright. Only the author, and the printers they sold their writing to, could publish the author's work. But manuscript was "still a competitive, if not the dominant mode of transmitting and reading" texts (Ezell, *Social Authorship* 12).

Cheryl Turner's groundbreaking statistical analysis, *Living by the Pen*, details the extent women were involved in print publication from 1696-1796. The number of professional women writers in print from 1690-1730 increased "steadily but slowly," building into a "subsequent explosion" from the 1760s (Prescott 9; see also Cheryl Turner). The exception is the 1720s. Most theorists agree Haywood's prolific output in this decade pushes the figures of printed fiction by women up dramatically. Her work accounts for roughly half the printed fiction by women at this time. Even without Haywood, however, theorists mark this decade as "the first important cycle of eighteenth-century fiction" and women as instrumental in it

(Prescott 9). Most current critical paradigms of eighteenth-century print do three things. First, they reflect a dichotomy of a woman writer as modest and virtuous or scandalous, equating professional female authorship with “the literary equivalent of prostitution” (Pettit and Croskery 9), a dichotomy women authors had to embrace or defend. Second, they link literary culture and the eighteenth-century economy, arguing radical financial changes led to the development of an (almost) financially viable professional female authorship. Third, they take this development of a professional female author as “an unequivocal advance for women writers” (Prescott 4), because women were making money from writing.

The dichotomy of a woman writer as modest and virtuous or scandalous appears to have developed alongside the study of eighteenth-century women writers. Early theorist Jane Spencer links the emergence of the novel with the emergence of the professional female author (*Rise of Women Novelist* viii). She argues the writing of professional women was “deeply marked” by contemporary cultural demands of femininity (Spencer, *Rise of Women Novelist* viii), and that these women were granted “respectability” if they displayed “a number of positively valued ‘feminine’ characteristics” (ix). Haywood thus emerged as a “scandalous” woman writer. For Prescott, however, this dichotomy is a result of the woman writer’s life and reputation “conflated with the type of writing she was seen to produce” and the authorial self-fashioning she was seen by her readers to adopt (5, 8). Haywood’s authorial self-presentations in print were personae to market and sell her work.

Catherine Gallagher links female authorship to the emergence of a literary marketplace and argues many women writers emphasised their femininity for remuneration within this marketplace, connecting their gender and their paid occupation as writers as part of this exchange (xiii). Women incorporated the changing ideas of “women” and “self” into their authorial self-fashioning, changing ideas of authorship as they connected these discourses to

a changing eighteenth-century economy (Gallagher xiv). “Woman,” “author,” “marketplace,” and “fiction” reciprocally defined each other at this time (Gallagher xviii). Ingrassia also links the economy, the literary marketplace, and the professional female author. She argues the economy and literary marketplace “were constructed as culturally analogous” (*Authorship* 2). The new economic possibilities of “paper credit” thus became embedded in the “genre and discourse of the novel,” creating a space for women’s participation (Ingrassia, *Authorship* 2). This, combined with the notion of “feminized” activities and subjects, formed the core of gender construction and how these changes were culturally represented (Ingrassia, *Authorship* 2). Haywood’s publishing in print fits this model. Her engagement with print literary culture shows an awareness of her dependence as a writer and woman on this new economy of “paper credit,” that “she could earn only various types of ‘credit’ within the literary marketplace” (Ingrassia, *Authorship* 12). But Ingrassia then situates Haywood within Grub Street: Haywood’s “paper credit” was based on the scandalous “allure” of her fiction and her authorial self-presentation (*Authorship* 12).

Haywood’s print practices fit Gallagher and Ingrassia’s theses. Most models of women’s engagement with literary culture can incorporate Haywood’s print publication. With their focus on the financial, however, these models are not fluid enough to include Haywood’s participation in Hill’s coterie. Several later theorists, such as Prescott, also challenge the assumption of the dominant model of women writers as professional, sexualised Grub Street hacks (15). Haywood published 80-plus texts, including more than fifty novels and at least five plays in her 38-year career. Her literary output, longevity, and reputation that enabled her to shop around for the most lucrative buyer of her copyright, puts her above the Grub Street melee (Prescott 110).

Our post-Victorian ideas of “progress” (Raven 4) are also likely to cloud how we see the development of a public sphere of print. Much recent scholarship focusing on manuscript and its interaction with print acknowledges Early Modern women’s writing “does not represent a single, unbroken narrative of progress” (Wright 241). Wright, for example, concludes “we cannot tell a simple story” of women’s engagement with literary culture, a story in which women “gradually gain better access to print, engage with more challenging topics and genres, and establish themselves as professional literary writers” (241). Parts of this narrative may be correct, but it does not capture the “complexity” of literary experience (Wright 241). In *Writing Women’s Literary History*, Margaret Ezell argues theorists make unconscious assumptions when writing about the history of women’s engagement with literary culture. They tend to replicate a progressive model of the development of the public sphere of print that “marginalize[s] or devalue[s] a significant portion of female literary experience” (Ezell, *Writing Women’s* 7) because it marginalises and devalues the role of manuscript. It cannot be assumed, for example, that all writers, men or women, would have had “the kind of literary aspirations best satisfied” by print (Wright 243). Many worked “in the ambiguous middle ground” between the two modes (Wright 249). The narrative of progress is enough to “unsettle” (Wright 241), however, to suggest something interesting was happening at this time.

I see the culmination of this focus on dichotomy, economy, and progress leading to what Backscheider calls “The Story” of Haywood’s publishing career – that “for purely commercial reasons, Eliza Haywood ‘reformed’ and became a moral novelist” (19). The Story has been used to explain the turn in her career, from writing amatory fictions such as *Fantomina* in the 1720s to the later *Female Spectator* (1744-1746) and what Merritt refers to as “respectable novels of domestic sensibility” (*Beyond Spectacle* 4). In other words,

Haywood the scandalous novelist changed the direction of her career in response to her (paying) readership and an economy-fueled, progressively changing literary marketplace, transforming herself into a moral writer to continue making money. As Backscheider sees it, and I agree, *The Story* “is a barrier to addressing – even recognizing – questions with which mature studies of writers need to be concerned” (“Story” 19-20).

Changing the critical focus

Much of the theory of women’s engagement with literary culture in the eighteenth century (particularly for the 1720s) concentrates on print. Far less research focuses on women who published in manuscript.⁶ Scholarship on women’s writing in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, is very much focused on manuscript, and on manuscript as *the* method of women’s participation in the social imaginary. Catharine Gray, for example, argues that “the religious meeting, the poetic coterie, the extended family” were the “material base and ideological model” for public debate for women in the seventeenth century (3). Melanie Bigold extends this into the eighteenth century, arguing manuscript publication was a “productive” and “accepted method” of engagement (xiii). While research is now focusing on the “impact and importance of manuscript culture,” few scholars consider “the status of manuscripts” in the careers of women writers at this time (Bigold xi), particularly women writers who also published in print.

Ezell and Prescott come close to fluidity in that both acknowledge the interdependence of manuscript and print. In *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print*, Ezell sees manuscript and print culture in this period as mutually informative, coexisting authorial choices (2). Prescott

⁶ I use Donald Reiman’s definition of “manuscript”: “handwritten memoranda or communications on paper and other flexible surfaces,” “used to *transmit* written records across distances,” and originating when “typography and the printing process joined handwriting as a primary means of conveying such records and communications” (1, his italics).

builds on Ezell's thesis, arguing for a "pluralist model" embracing the multiple contexts from which women wrote, published, and presented themselves as writers. Plurality allows that "manuscript culture and coterie styles of authorship impinge on women's public personae and publication practices," and that "the literary marketplace relied on older writing practices to conceptualize the idea of the author in print" (Prescott 9-10). While Prescott links Haywood to these "older writing practices" in the Hillarian coterie, she does not examine the implications of this association on Haywood's engagement with literary culture – such as how her publication in manuscript interacted with her choice of form, or her authorial persona in print, which is what I explore in Part II of this chapter and in Chapter Three respectively.

Examining "the status of manuscripts" in Haywood's career reveals this participation potentially influenced what she published in print. Writers negotiated and appropriated literary modes *and* the ideas these texts carried. Wright argues writers negotiated and appropriated both printed and manuscript texts to construct and shape their own (15). This "movement between modes" was mainly a transition from manuscript into print (Wright 15). Print to manuscript interaction, however, did exist. This included "the creative readership of printed texts" (Wright 16); women read printed material and creatively incorporated the ideas of this printed material into their manuscript writings. What they were reading showed in what they were writing (Wright 16). Extending these two arguments together could link the ideas of the Hillarians with Haywood's printed work: the ideas these women were *discussing* as they participated in manuscript could have showed in what they were writing. This extends my definition of the fluidity of literary culture at this time. Fluidity becomes a process in which women used manuscript to write in print and print to write in manuscript, incorporating the ideas and practices of these two modes as they also incorporated the

techniques and ideas of various genres. This process allows for the interaction of the Hillarian progressive ideas of conduct, masquerade and theatrical performance, and Haywood's printed texts. Like genre (as shown in Chapter One), manuscript and participation in manuscript carry ideas (just as print and participation in print carry ideas).

Haywood's participation with the Hillarians changes the critical focus. For Ezell, linking the development of the professional women writer and the economy (that is, linking writing with financial reward) privileges professionalism and print to the detriment of examining the forms of women's writing not written for money (Wright 5-6). I see this in the current critical understanding of Haywood's writing. Criticism concentrates so much on Haywood writing for money it privileges her role in print. This privileging can lead to the assumption she only participated in literary culture via print. I don't assume any writer who took their writing seriously, including Haywood, would inevitably want it printed. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, for example, writing in London at the same time as Haywood, only circulated her work in manuscript. Her work was well-known and well-regarded by her contemporaries: the Duke of Buckingham named her a prospect for poet laureate (Grundy 196). Although women could not then be nominated for the honour, it "shows her poetic stock was high" (Grundy 196). For Prescott, the decisions of women who published in manuscript were not a "retreat from literary life or the commercial culture of the London marketplace" (40), but rather "a deliberate piece of self-fashioning" (41). This points to Haywood's possible intentions as an author (developed in Part II).

Haywood and the Hillarians

Prescott's 2003 *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture* links Haywood with the Hillarians. She argues participation in the Hillarians provided "support and acceptance," as well as "a

number of professional advantages and connections” for its members (26). Haywood was “repeatedly” published by the partnership of Samuel Chapman and Daniel Browne (Prescott 106), for example, booksellers linked to her literary circle (107) – Chapman also published the work of other members of Hill’s coterie (106). Prescott argues Haywood’s participation in the coterie “directly affected” her authorial practices (28), that print culture at the time was “to an extent, based on literary coteries and circles of writers,” and participation in these groups would have influenced the careers of the women now seen as professional female print authors (30).

Prescott argues the Hillarians exchanged poetry in manuscript (27), adopting the coterie practice of pseudonyms (30). King identifies Haywood’s pseudonym as “Clorinda” (“Eliza Haywood” 730), while Prescott identifies it as “Cleroa” (30). This coterie manuscript circulation crosses over into print. Professional print writers were styling themselves “as part of coterie groups *at the same time* as they were involved in the commercial world of the literary marketplace” (Prescott 27, my italics). Prescott gives two examples that directly link Haywood’s participation in the Hillarians to her appearance in print. The first is *Miscellaneous Poems and Translations. By Several Hands. Publish’d by Richard Savage, Son of the late Earl Rivers* (1726). Savage was a Hillarian and the volume was sponsored by Hill (Prescott 28). Most of the poems are by Hillarians, some published under their coterie pseudonyms (Prescott 28). Several poems are Haywood’s or, in typical coterie style, addressed to Haywood as a member: “To Mrs. *Eliza Haywood*; by Mr. *Savage*,” and “To Eliza” by Hill (Prescott 28). The second is a periodical edited by Hill in 1724, *The Plain Dealer* (Prescott 29). Number 53 is a poem by “Cleora” on the death of Delarivier Manley, showing Haywood published in a commercial print venture under her coterie pseudonym as part of a “coteric-style exchange of verses” (Prescott 30). For Prescott, and I agree, this

counters paradigms that see Haywood eschewing “coterie names in her professional approach to publishing her name on the title-page,” and shows coterie participation was “influential” in the career of “a woman writer ... viewed as the typical dependent professional” (30).

Scholars are beginning to build another theoretical context for understanding Haywood, one that includes her participation in manuscript. Academic interest has tentatively expanded with a handful of publications. King, in “Eliza Haywood, Savage Love, and Biographical Uncertainty,” uses Haywood’s participation in Hill’s coterie to question the sexualised biographical details theorists have added to (the little known of) her life as “fact.” She uses the dynamics of the group to argue for a refocus on Haywood’s poetry as part of a “sophisticated coterie role playing” of sublime writing, as the verse of a “remarkably focused poet intent upon staking out her own territory as practitioner of the new poetry of excited feeling” (King, “Eliza Haywood” 733). King’s later, 2005 essay, “New Contexts for Early Novels by Women,” argues for a “more historically grounded approach” to reading Haywood, one that focuses on “what appears to have been her earliest reading community,” the Hillarians (263). For King, the coterie was the community of readers in which Haywood’s first novels “were conceived and first read” (263). This has implications for *Fantomina*, and will be fully explored in Part II. Earla Wilputte uses Haywood’s membership of the group to reread her *Poems on Several Occasions*. The seven poems become Haywood’s “bold statement” on her writing, the “aesthetic effects of art,” and how the works of men and women are read differently (79). Like King in “New Contexts,” Wilputte links Haywood’s participation in the coterie with the opportunity to experiment; her rereading draws attention to “Haywood’s penchant for experimental writing” (81). Like King, Wilputte also links this participation to Haywood’s full engagement with the literary culture of her time, and her use

of this literary culture as a site of debate – Haywood emerges as “an author wholly engaged with and sensitive to the cultural and literary discourses of her time” (99-100).

Reconsidering Haywood’s work within the multiple contexts of fluidity therefore opens up her use of genre. Haywood could experiment with and discuss in manuscript what she would eventually publish in print. Circulating her ideas in manuscript as a Hillarian gave her a forum for discussion and debate. Wright argues manuscript “retained its appeal for many women” – poets such as Anne Finch, Elizabeth Rowe, and Judith Cowper – up to and including the 1720s (251-252). These poets used manuscript as a “repository for sensitive materials or work in progress,” “a safe space for experimentation,” and “a site for privileged communication and debate” (Wright 251-252). Untangling the threads of Haywood’s manuscript involvement gives a more comprehensive idea of how she participated in the literary culture of her time. *Fantomina* would have been influenced by the ideas Haywood was experimenting with and circulating in manuscript. Manuscript thus emerges as a space for women known almost exclusively for their printed texts, such as Haywood, to experiment and debate the ideas that emerged in their printed works. Any discussion of her printed work is therefore incomplete without including her involvement in manuscript.

II. Haywood’s use of form

This part of the chapter explores the inter-dependence of genre with textuality and agency in relation to Haywood and *Fantomina*. It connects Haywood’s early works to the Hillarians and outlines how her participation in the group may have influenced her printed texts (including *Fantomina*), in that they were possibly conceived and first read within her coterie. She could have used manuscript circulation to develop and debate ideas. This connects her coterie with her choice of genre. She could use amatory fiction to develop philosophical ideas relating to

conduct and agency – ideas her coterie was exploring, debating, and practising. Using the repetitive, formulaic tropes of amatory fiction, Haywood creates spaces within the text of *Fantomina*. These shifts are a gap between the expression of emotion and the inner self, and the exploration of this gap leads to self-knowledge. How she does this in relation to her agency as an author I explore in Chapter Three. How she does this to develop the heroine's agency in the text is explored in Chapter Four. I refer to two agencies from here on. Building on my definition of agency in Part II of Chapter One, I define the development of the heroine's agency in the text as her developing awareness of her-self, and her ability to act and make effective choices for this self; I define Haywood's authorial agency as her awareness of her-self as an author, and her ability as an author to act and make effective choices.

Amatory fiction and agency – both authorial agency and the development of female agency within Haywood's texts – are critically linked. Critics appear to judge the efficacy of agency, authorial agency in particular, by how they feel about the genre. Authorial agency and genre appear to have been linked from the outset of both Haywood's career and reception history. Alexander Pope in all four books of *The Dunciad* (1728-1743) attacked her reputation as a writer by attacking her reputation as a woman, associating her personal life with her amatory fiction: Haywood is the sexualised prize of the booksellers' pissing contest. King sees this as Pope's effective stripping of Haywood's authorial agency (*Political Biography* 28), a stripping that enabled later critics to give Haywood an "appealingly unconventional" and "sexually scandalous past" (5). Valerie Rumbold too, argues this is an attack on Haywood's agency, one that refocuses "the threat of female creativity" away from women writers onto Dulness, thereby marginalising their writing (524).

Much of this linking has to do with how scholars read Haywood, and who they assume her contemporary readers were. In the past 30 years, scholars have begun reclaiming Haywood's

choice of genre by redefining her authorial self-fashioning within the genre, and by linking amatory fiction to her development of female agency within the text. Some scholars now consider Haywood used amatory fiction to explore contemporary and “serious” ideas, from party politics (such as Ballaster in *Seductive Forms* and “A Gender of Opposition”) to the sexual double standard (Croskery and Merritt, for example). In detailing the historical reception of *Fantomina*, Harzewski argues this text has been elevated to iconic status in critical circles as *the* example of Haywood using the amatory to depict female agency. This critical apotheosis has derived part of its impetus in its use of genre to project “onto the historical Haywood” (Harzewski 176) when scholars know so little about her. Critics use the textual ambiguity and masquerade themes of *Fantomina* to “complement Haywood’s biography or lack thereof” (Harzewski 182). Haywood is linked to her fiction in that in attempting to explain the mystery of the identity of the heroine in *Fantomina*, scholars link Haywood to her fictional character (Harzewski 182).

For me, this appears to be a muddling of agencies and creates issues for how scholars contextualise Haywood within the genre. The text’s “libertinism,” Haywood’s writing style, and her “extensive detail in scenes of consensual sex, seduction, and rape,” has created a perception of her as a “libertine” (Harzewski 178). Her first biographer, George Frisbie Whicher, for example, held Haywood wrote her amatory fictions with “little thought and less revision” for “an eager and indiscriminating public” (13). While he acknowledges that Haywood’s contribution to the development of the novel “cannot safely be ignored” (vii), he does express concerns with her choice of genre. Her amatory fictions, because they are amatory fictions, appear as unstable sites for the development of new ideas and philosophical knowledge, and thus the construction of the social imaginary. Genre therefore raises “a series of reader-response issues,” creating ambivalence about the text’s “moral seriousness” (Harzewski 186).

This downplays the significance of both the form and the writers who chose it. Richetti in *Popular Fiction* and Lennard Davis in *Factual Fictions*, for example, are uncomfortable with the genre and criticise the moral seriousness of these texts: both claim the texts eroticise the reading process. For Davis, this eroticism is the only reason readers would read them (116-118).

Changing the critical focus: Haywood's early works and her coterie

Just as Haywood's participation in manuscript changes the critical focus of her engagement in literary culture (as argued in Part I), it can also change the critical stance on amatory fiction, and on how Haywood used the genre. It can be argued Haywood's early amatory fictions were conceived and first read within her coterie. King argues Haywood's connection to the coterie changes ideas about who read her texts, and therefore changes perceptions about the moral seriousness of these texts. While "much criticism" has tended to read amatory fictions by women, "Haywood's in particular," through "the imagined reading experiences of heuristic readers generally supposed to be females of diminished cognitive ability," her Hillarian membership changes critical assumptions about who was reading Haywood, and therefore the moral seriousness of her work ("New Contexts" 261), because it changes critical assumptions about who her readers *were*. The young, barely literate "Ann Lang" has become part of the assumed "predominantly female audience" of Haywood's amatory fiction – readers who, as Richetti claimed, did not grapple with moral ideals (*Popular Fiction* 167, 181). But Haywood's participation in the group reveals her earliest reading community to be "the circle of young artists and writers, men and women" who comprised an idealistic, serious, literary coterie (King, "New Contexts" 263). This is the context in which Haywood's earliest works, including *Fantomina*, "were conceived and first read" (King, "New Contexts" 263). As Ballaster notes, the construction of this "female

reader” enables critics to deny women writers such as Haywood used these genres to write in the political and ideological mainstream (*Seductive Forms* 2).

King’s “New Contexts” is a “more historically grounded approach” (263). It changes the emphasis of accounts of Haywood’s literary engagement in two important ways: it focuses on the Hillarians – as opposed to Ann Lang – as serious readers of Haywood’s texts, and it reads Haywood “in relation to her literary friends and allies,” as opposed to detractors such as Pope (“New Contexts” 263). This “dual change of emphasis” keeps Haywood as “a figure for the scandal of the early novel and for the anxieties aroused by the encroachments of (in Swift’s phrase) stupid and infamous scribbling women” but it also allows her to emerge as “a promoter of politeness and refined taste” (“New Contexts” 263). It keeps the focus on Haywood’s “scandalous” choice of genre, at the same time it lends a context of moral seriousness to the reading of her texts, a sense of this genre as a site for the development of serious philosophical ideas such as female agency, and the incorporation of these ideas into the social imaginary. Expanding readings of Haywood to include the conception of her print texts in manuscript allows critics to expand their “range of inquiry” and acknowledges texts “exist in a complicated relationship to a plurality of contexts” (King, “New Contexts” 272-273).

When Haywood’s association with the Hillarians ended is unclear. Most critics agree it was over by 1725. This places *Fantomina* as possibly one of the last of Haywood’s fictions written in the Hillarian context. King links all Haywood’s 1719-1725 publications with her participation in the group, including *Fantomina* (“New Contexts” 272). I concur, and argue this is likely because of Haywood’s rapid publication rate. *Fantomina* was published on 6 August 1725, in volume three of *Secret Histories, Novels, and Poems*. Patrick Spedding notes Haywood “was so busy” (223) in the two years leading up to the *Secret Histories* collection

that she registered a flurry of texts (225): twenty, to be precise. In 1725 alone, Haywood published three texts in the first four months: *The Lady's Philosopher's Stone*, *The Unequal Conflict*, and *The Tea Table*, the copyright of which was registered on 9 April (Spedding 225). A text a month – *The Dumb Projector*, *Fatal Fondness*, and *Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots* – followed before the publication of *Fantomina* in August. In the twenty months or so leading up to the *Secret Histories* collection, which also included new works such as *Fantomina*, Haywood appears to have experienced a massive surge in creative output, at the same time as her involvement in, and subsequent estrangement from, Hill's coterie. Spedding speculates Haywood was “producing work so rapidly that there was a backlog” with her publishers (229). I take *Fantomina* as likely part of this backlog, and this could date its composition to the height of Haywood's association with the coterie.

King identifies four aspects of Haywood's earliest works that show these texts were conceived and first read in Hill's coterie. My reading extends these points and adapts them to my argument. These four points link Haywood's engagement with manuscript culture to her printed texts, and show her participation in manuscript is linked to the genre she wrote in. They show manuscript enabled her to use texts such as *Fantomina* as sites to develop ideas, particularly regarding conduct and agency.

King's first point is that Haywood adapted “the transporting effects” of the sublime poetry written by coterie members to her prose fiction (“New Contexts” 263). Haywood's early novels, she argues, can “be read as experiments in the Longinian sublime,” and that this mode of writing “excited” the Hillarians (King, “New Contexts” 263). At this time of novelisation and generic hybrids, Haywood chose a genre that enabled her to express this sublime. For King, the “notoriously exclamatory nature” of Haywood's fiction – “its melting and swelling tendency” – may be her attempt to “translate into amatory fiction the effects of the sublime,”

to “represent the transporting effects of love” in the genre (“New Contexts” 265). For Christine Gerrard, Haywood’s poems “redeploy the language of the high sublime,” sensualising it and “investing it with erotic and sensual overtones” (70). This enabled Haywood to use the genre to develop female agency. Haywood “moved the experience of the sublime into the realm of small, female, sexualized spaces, crafting melodramatic plots capable of projecting a range of extreme and unsettling states of mind — excesses ... that show ordinary women filled with and exalted by the sexualized sublime” (King, “New Contexts” 265). She could create a space between the emotion and its performance, and use these “erotic and sensual overtones” to explore this gap. Haywood’s experimentation, and discussion within the group, can be linked. Gerrard also notes Haywood’s poems, like much of the verse of the Hillarians, circulated in manuscript “several years before they eventually found their way into print” (69).

The second aspect is the paratext of Haywood’s first two fictions. *Love in Excess* (1719) and *Letters from a Lady of Quality to a Chevalier* (1720) were “elegantly produced and marketed for fashionable audiences” (King, “New Contexts” 263). King argues the Hillarian ideal of “polite conversation and mutual respect between men and women” (“New Contexts” 263) may have given Haywood the confidence to address “the elegant upper end of the literary marketplace” and the social connections to do so (264, 266). Both texts were elegant productions, “printed in Elzevir on thick, glossy paper,” with elaborate printer’s ornaments and much white space (King, “New Contexts” 266). *Love in Excess*, instead of emerging as a “trashy and overblown” amatory text, was designed to appeal to serious, literary readers (King, “New Contexts” 262). This indicates a genre contemporary readers took seriously. This also appears to counter dominant critical paradigms which suggest, as Wright does, that “of those early modern women who did write, only a relatively small proportion engaged in

the literary genres which their own culture held in highest regard” (9). Sarah Creel argues Haywood’s *Poems on Several Occasions* (included in the second edition *Secret Histories*) was also a “grand statement” compiled by a “significant literary coterie,” “[p]rinted in quarto with red ink,” “a host of subscribers (including nobility),” “a dedication to Lady Mary Wortley Montague [sic],” and “a liberal number of printer’s ornaments” (41).

What followed these texts, however, was a “string of cheaply produced, short amatory tales and secret histories,” published in “rapid succession,” and printed “in crowded lines on thin paper” (King, “New Contexts” 266). King does not speculate on the reasons for this. For Ballaster, Haywood’s later “estrangement” from the Hillarians meant she lost her connection with “the only cultural circle of the early eighteenth century that was hospitable both to female artistic endeavor and to the social and partisan politics” of her fiction (“Gender” 146). For King, Haywood had two literary reputations by 1725, one “elegant” and lauded, the other “scandalous” (“New Contexts” 266). She suggests the paratexts, read alongside the poetic praises of coterie members, evoke the lauded Haywood whose early novels were “received as uplifting offerings in the world of polite entertainment” (King, “New Contexts” 269).

Haywood’s early novels encompass the behavioural ideals of the Hillarians. Members were particularly self-conscious of their conduct within the group. This is the most important of King’s points for my thesis. She does not explore the implications of this for any of Haywood’s texts. I argue *Fantomina*, with its focus on roles and masquerade, and the double standard, could have emerged from this context. I also argue Haywood’s authorial agency – that she uses shifts in narration to give herself a public voice and comment on conduct between the sexes – could have emerged from this context.

The Hillarians promoted polite, rational discourse between the sexes; their discussions often centering on “the inhibiting artificial codes of social conduct” expected of men and women (Gerrard 77). Unusually for the time, the Hillarians believed in the idea of “perfect” friendships between men and women (King, “New Contexts” 267), and promoted a model of male-female friendship recast along “self-consciously progressive lines,” a model not involving the expected female conduct of “coquetry,” nor the expected male conduct of “pursuit” (Gerrard 76; King “New Contexts” 268). They also “celebrated the Platonic love tradition of the equality of souls” (Gerrard 77), promoting “high-minded heterosexual love guided by principles of sincerity, generosity, and openness” (King, “New Contexts” 267). Polite, social gatherings of male and female writers and artists were hosted at the Hill residence to promote the careers of coterie members (King, “New Contexts” 264). The coterie was “one of very few” in which female talent was encouraged (King, “New Contexts” 264), and was known as “one of the most lively” in London (Gerrard 74). For King, the Hillarians were “a social network of like-minded peers” whose members “exchanged verses to and about each other,” encouraged each other in their literary work and, crucially for my thesis, “discussed ideas” (*Political Biography* 29). The ideals of the group can be seen in Haywood’s work: *Love in Excess* is “a recasting of male and female relations” along these Hillarian ideals (King, “New Contexts” 268), as is *The Tea Table*, Haywood’s attempt to recreate the group’s “polite mixed conversation” (264). Gerrard also points to the group providing “literary friendships” and “discussion,” as well as a focal point for “the incessant circulation of poetic manuscripts” (76).

Members’ discussion of ideas and the circulation of manuscript within the group appear to be linked. Critics are exploring new evidence that the Hillarians circulated their poetry and prose within the group, and commented on each other’s work. King argues “surviving poetry by

and about” Haywood indicates she was circulating her work – possibly prose as well as verse – in manuscript by 1718, a year before *Love in Excess* was published (*Political Biography* 22). She cites a poem (composed in 1718 but published much later) by Jane Brereton expressing “disapprobation” at Haywood’s “soft seducing style,” and speculates the manuscript “raising eyebrows” was “an early version of her first novel that was making the rounds” (*Political Biography* 22). Gerrard also argues Haywood circulated earlier manuscript versions of some of her fictions: Fowke knew of the defamatory content of Haywood’s *Memoirs of a Certain Island Adjacent to the Kingdom of Utopia* (1724) (in which she accused Fowke of an incestuous relationship with her father) before it was printed, “perhaps from other members of the Hillarian circle” (88). The Hillarians also commented on each other’s work: Gerrard cites a letter in which Hill comments on the writing of coterie members Richard Savage and Martha Fowke (64). Hillarian members therefore may have commented on early drafts of Haywood’s work, including early drafts of *Fantomina*.

King’s fourth aspect is that Haywood published as part of the Hillarians’ printed efforts to support Savage’s aristocratic claims. *The Rash Resolve* (1723) appears to be the first of the group’s efforts (King, “New Contexts” 270). This reveals the topicality of Haywood’s fiction: she used the genre to comment on the issues and debates of her time. What we read today as “timeless tales of seduction and betrayal” contained, “for their earliest readers a racy topicality now lost to us” and there is a “strong likelihood” Haywood’s other amatory fictions are “embedded in local, immediate, and topical contexts in ways that have gone unrecognized” (King, “New Contexts” 272). Gerrard, for example, argues the “Discourse” attached to *Letters from a Lady of Quality to a Chevalier* could be read as Haywood’s comment on the “real-life” – and publically outed – romantic correspondence between Hill and Fowke (90), both of whom were married to other people at the time. Researching

Haywood's participation in manuscript culture could, potentially, reveal more of these contexts. It does reveal a "tissue of references" only coterie members would understand (King, "New Contexts" 271). For Gerrard, Haywood depicts Fowke in at least four of her works: *Letters from a Lady of Quality to a Chevalier*, *The Injur'd Husband* (1723), *A Spy Upon the Conjurer* (1724), and *Memoirs of a Certain Island* (89). She depicts Hill, "open[ly] or veiled," in her poems and prose, including *The Injur'd Husband* (as Beauclair) and *Memoirs of an Island* (as Lauranus) (Gerrard 70). For King, reading *The Rash Resolve* in light of the group's politics creates another reading, one that would have resonated "in special ways" within the "tight" circle ("New Contexts" 271). This is especially significant when considering that Haywood might have circulated drafts of *Fantomina* within the group – a group whose members were aware of their conduct and practised a progressive ideal of behaviour. *Fantomina* could have resonated "in special ways" within the coterie, ways it does not resonate with readers today.

These four points show Haywood's choice of genre allowed her to use her texts as sites for the development of serious philosophical ideas in that they connect the genre with her coterie. First, contemporary literary readers inside and outside the coterie took amatory fiction seriously. Readers of *Fantomina* would have read the text for its ideas, and for the ideals it expressed. They could have been aware of her Hillarian membership, and the coterie was known for its ideals of a new way of behaving between men and women.⁷ Gerrard's detailing of Hill's group seems to imply the coterie – its membership, ideals, and scandals – was private and elite but not secret. Hill publicised his writers to further their career (Gerrard 62-63) and members published in print together and in support of each other (96). The topicality

⁷ Ezell in *Writing Women's Literary History* writes that although critics refer to women's coterie participation at this time as private, they may be making twenty-first century assumptions of "private," creating connotations that did not exist or have the same meaning in the eighteenth century (5). Hill's coterie was unusual for the time in that it was mixed-sex, so the usual associations of women's coterie participation being "private" may not apply.

of her work reveals Haywood might have used amatory fiction to comment on the issues and debates of her time. Again this is particularly important when taking into account the Hillarian focus on progressive conduct. Not only did Haywood practise these ideals as a member of the group, but her first readers, the people who might have commented on her work or drafts and discussed them as part of the coterie, did too. That *Fantomina* appears to concentrate so heavily on roles and masquerade, and the sexual double standard, shows Haywood was using the genre to explore issues of self and conduct that society, and the Hillarians, were exploring at the time. Lastly, Haywood's expression of the effects of the sublime in amatory fiction enabled her to use sexual desire to develop and explore female agency because she could explore this gap between emotion and its performance. As Tierney-Hynes argues, Haywood claimed the passions "as a mode of moral and social arbitration, even as the model for cultural production" (154). As I adapted her argument in Part II of Chapter One, philosophy at the time, following Locke's *Essay*, was "oriented by self-examination," and Haywood applied her reasoning to the passions of daily life, which became "the route to our knowledge of human nature," an "epistemological quest to define the self" (Tierney-Hynes 155, 165) – the passions led to self-knowledge.

Implications: the Hillarian context and textual meaning

This has implications for how *Fantomina* was composed. Manuscript can show the *various* ways Haywood used performance in the text. One of the most striking aspects of *Fantomina*, for example, is how it is structured. It appears to be a series of vignettes, episodic stories or plots linked together to form a longer text. Critics have noticed the episodic layout of *Fantomina*. Potter writes of the "multiclimactic structure" of Haywood's novels (176). She argues Haywood's fiction is based on a "feminised model of narrative as sexualised discourse," as opposed to a model of "narrative/sexual organisation" that is "single-climax"

(Potter 175). Patricia Comitini too, notes the “serial form” of *Fantomina* (70). Harzewski writes Haywood handles “episodic structure” very well (182-83), the text is “structurally tight,” and “portrays at least ten separate scenes” (184-185).

The text’s structure can point to the fluidity of literary culture at the time (as well as Haywood’s effective use of hybridisation): she appears to have incorporated aspects of her manuscript participation and her theatrical career and these two aspects are interrelated. Early novels had the structure they did because of manuscript (Flint 6). As writers began experimenting to form what would become the novel, they incorporated the older literary practices of manuscript into the form – as Christopher Flint notes, the manuscript mode “often ghosted innovations” (29). These manuscript vignettes appear to mirror the scenes of a play. *Fantomina* reads like a play, as if it were written in scenes. (*Fantomina* also appears to be narrated like a play – I discuss this in Chapter Three.) Vignettes allow for easy dissemination, and reading, within a coterie, and each vignette appears to discuss aspects of conduct within the sexualised framework of amatory fiction, performed as if in a play.

This also has implications for the ideas Haywood possibly explored in the text. Donald Reiman’s *The Study of Modern Manuscripts* can be adapted to show how Haywood could have used manuscript to develop serious philosophical ideas in *Fantomina* through dissemination within her coterie. Reiman discusses manuscript study from the start of the Enlightenment to the late Romantic period (17). He distinguishes between three types of manuscript – private (or personal), confidential (or corporate), and public, arguing these categories better focus the study of manuscripts because the distinctive uses of the manuscript are better understood (17). Public manuscripts are “formal compositions prepared for publication or other transmission” (Reiman 38). They record texts accessible to a “multiplicity” of unknown readers interested in “the official or public positions that the

writers occupy or with the intellectual, informational, or aesthetic attributes of their writing” (Reiman 38), such as Haywood’s printed texts. Private manuscripts, in contrast, are intended for specific readers whom the writer knows and has “selected in advance” (Reiman 38), such as the drafts of a work in progress (Reiman 39). Confidential manuscripts are more widely circulated than private manuscripts in that they are “addressed to a specific group of individuals all of whom either are personally known to the writer or belong to some predefined group that the writer has reason to believe share communal values with him or her: an audience that will receive the communication in the spirit that corresponds to the purpose of its composition” (Reiman 39). Adapting Reiman, it appears as if the way Hillarian members used manuscript blurs this distinction between private and confidential manuscripts, in that (as shown above) they possibly circulated draft copies (private manuscripts) of their prose within the group, changing the status of these drafts to confidential manuscripts.

Manuscript here emerges as a site of experimentation and debate among the group in which the manuscript is circulated. Like genre, manuscript also emerges as a determiner of meaning. The meaning of *Fantomina* could therefore be other than what readers assume today. The use of a manuscript is dependent on “the social intentions of the writer,” however “ambiguous or ambivalent” (Reiman 40). A manuscript changes status if it is used differently. When we read documents in circumstances other than those they were intended for, the context changes the meaning of the text (Reiman 53). This changes the context of *Fantomina*. Haywood possibly intended the ideas expressed in the text for her coterie *first*, and then print. This changes the meaning of the text: it incorporates the progressive ideals of the Hillarians. (I use the close reading in Chapter Four to show this.) The documents Haywood (and others) circulated within the coterie were meant to be understood within the

“share[d] communal values” of the group; members would have “receive[d] the communication in the spirit that correspond[ed] to the purpose of its composition.” Adapting King’s argument, the manuscripts would have resonated “in special ways” within the “tight” circle (“New Contexts” 271), that “predefined group” with whom Haywood shared these values. Reiman argues we read a published text differently when we read the rough drafts the author developed into the published text we know (53). The drafts may “require explication” because they have been taken out of their “generative context” – these documents “are never meant to be obvious to anyone except the writer and the recipient, or the very limited circle to whom they are first directed” (Reiman 54).

Discussion of Hillarian ideas and the circulation of manuscripts within the group therefore appears to be linked to the meaning of these circulated texts. Wright maintains writers used manuscript “as a repository for sensitive materials or work in progress, a safe space for experimentation, or a site for privileged communication and debate,” and this was its appeal (252-253). Confidential manuscripts are “not meant for random dissemination,” so they are often written without a writer’s concern for reputation (Reiman 40). Manuscript could, therefore, contain new or controversial ideas, without a writer risking a loss of reputation or income, and these ideas would be read and discussed by literary friends and allies with similar ideas and aims; in Haywood’s case, within the coterie, friendly first readers with shared ideas of conduct, who jointly practised a new way of behaving between men and women. The appeal was that these ideals were shared, and the discussion around these ideas would grow. For Reiman, writers in the eighteenth century “came to see greater value in the process of thinking through a problem and making public the growth and changes in their understanding” (13). This process of the growth and development of a writer’s ideas developed value (18), and to “show oneself able to grow and change in the light of extended

study and greater reflection was a sign of an intellect in proper working order” (Reiman 13-14). This idea of tracing the progress of the mind and its development reached its height in the Romantic period (Reiman 20), but it was developing in the 1720s (interestingly, as writers were exploring this new concept of self-in-consciousness, and thus a self that could develop and change as their works and ideas developed and changed).

This points to Haywood’s intentions. If she did not want the ideas and debates of the Hillarians incorporated into her work – and if she did not want her works to be incorporated into the ideals and debates of the Hillarians – she would not have been a member of the coterie. Haywood chose to distribute her work within the social and intellectual framework of the coterie. This influenced the meaning of the text because the ideas it expressed were intended for the Hillarians – and as shown above, they debated these ideas. For Reiman, a “more socialized view” of the creative process, viewing the work as a “social product” adds a “useful dimension” to the work because it “implies” and “assumes” the writer’s willingness “to meet the demands of the system of distribution” (109-110). In this printed works are not unique, but manuscripts are, in that they “represent the private world of the author’s individual intentions more clearly” (Reiman 117). Haywood would have met “the demands of th[is] system of distribution” in that she was a member of, and participated in, the coterie, including this shared discussion of ideals. For Wright, coterie members wrote as part of an “inventive” network in “textually fluid conditions” (17). She draws on the work of Harold Love (*Scribal Publications*) and Arthur Marotti (*Manuscript, Print, and the English Renaissance Lyric*) to note authorial agency is problematic in manuscript texts because these texts often deal in “less absolute forms of literary responsibility” than printed texts (17). For Marta Kvande, textual authority in manuscript culture came from the author as well as from the “social status, group, or coterie to which that author belonged” (“Printed” 241). Authority

was conveyed because the text was felt to express “the relationship between individuals in a social network” (Kvande, “Printed” 241).

Hillarian ideals and the tropes of amatory fiction

Haywood appears to use the tropes of amatory fiction to explore the progressive ideals of the Hillarians. The repetitive, formulaic tropes enabled her to create shifts in the text. These created a gap between the expression of the emotion and emotion as experienced in the inner self – because it is amatory fiction, between the expression of desire and the desire itself. The tropes therefore enable Haywood to develop the heroine’s agency in relation to sexual desire (as I show in Chapter Four). For Croskery, Haywood radically rewrites the paradigm of persecuted maidenhood as the story of *Fantomina* progresses, using passion as “an essentially amoral, motivational force” to redefine female virtue (Croskery 70). She uses passion, the tropes of the formulaic genre of amatory fiction – what Richetti refers to as the clichés, the repeating “rhetoric of love’s power and the tragic and compulsive dramatic universe it implies” (*Popular Fiction* 208) – to offer an alternative paradigm. For Richetti, Haywood continued to use the same repetitions of the form instead of innovating with form, financially pandering to “popular taste” (*Popular Fiction* 179). As I noted in Chapter One, Croskery argues that in this, Richetti misses Haywood’s innovation. Haywood’s plots are “almost all driven by the tangible, amoral, directive, conflicting, incarnate experience of female desire, as opposed to the simple threat of male sexual predation” (Croskery 70). This distinction, this reversal of the typical seduction trope, is important because it enables Haywood to use the form to create alternative realities in which the heroine is able to express her desire in situations she has created and has control over – her roles are realities in which she has agency.

Haywood appears to use these tropes to explore the Hillarians' ideas through performance. The heroine in *Fantomina* stages set-situations. Haywood uses these tropes to create an altered textual environment in which the heroine can change her conduct and so gain self-knowledge and agency – there is a gap between her performance and her-self. As outlined in Chapter One, Astell was the first philosopher to argue a woman's conduct was constructed, so a woman's conduct could change. Women began using these ideas to explore relations between the sexes – Masham, for example, extended Astell's thinking to include the sexual double standard. As I then argued, women began using performance to work out the implications of these ideas as they related to the self. With each role the heroine develops greater agency. Just like Locke's self-in-consciousness, her-self can change and grow.

The heroine is “A young Lady of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit, and Spirit” (41), but due to a circumstances which give her unusual freedom – “having no Body in Town, at that Time, to whom she was oblig'd to be accountable for her Actions” (41) and access to seemingly unlimited funds – she is able to take on the roles to explore a range of behaviours to express her sexual desire. For Bowers, seduction fiction allowed for experimentation, and part of this experimentation was using the genre as a focal point for fantasy (“Representing Resistance” 140). The genre offered readers “recognisable narrative rubrics: familiar plot devices, character types, and themes” (Bowers, “Representing Resistance” 140). Women writing amatory fiction could therefore use the expectations of the genre to create a fantasy world in contrast to reality, to show other possibilities. Haywood could both therefore “reflect” and “challenge the culture from which she was writing” (Luhning 152). This altered reality, Ingrassia argues, “challenged the dominant construction of gender” in that it showed women behaving in “empowering” and “transgressive” ways (*Authorship* 12). The altered reality “provided an imaginative displacement of self” and showed other possibilities; it

became “a vehicle for women to conceive of the world and their relationships within it differently” (Ingrassia, *Authorship* 12). Haywood could work out the implications of the Hillarian ideals in her fictions.

Haywood appears to be asking what would happen if the Hillarian ideas were played out, if women had equal agency in relations between the sexes. For Patricia Comitini, the combination of the content of amatory fiction and the imaginative reading practice it engendered, produces “a particular kind of imaginative thinking, or consciousness” in the reader, one “separate from rational cognition, judgment, or knowledge” (70). The generic formulations, or “stock moments,” of amatory fictions – the “suggestions of seduction, rape, and sexual encounters” – stimulate a reader’s body and mind (Comitini 73). This stimulation is in response to a narrative (Comitini 73). Haywood uses this shift to show how sexual desire is “less about looking at a particular woman’s body (a physical prompt to sexual desire or love), and more about the fictions that make the feminine body attractive (as an imaginative perception of something real)” (Comitini 73). As I show in Chapter Four, the role of Incognita reveals sex for Beauplaisir is about something other than sex. He wishes to see Incognita’s face – “he said all that Man could do, to prevail on her to unfold the Mystery” (67). When she refuses – “but all his Adjurations were fruitless” (67) – he leaves the house “determin’d never to re-enter it” (67). His sexual desire is “less about looking at a particular woman’s body” – he has made love with the same woman in four different roles without being aware of it – and “more about the fictions that make the feminine body attractive.”

These fictions are related to power. As I argued in Part II of Chapter One, Haywood’s amatory fiction can challenge the basis of power between the sexes because it can redefine the negotiation of gender relations, particularly in regard to courtship, and redefine the expression of women’s desire. As the heroine gains greater agency with each role, the power

structure of her relationship with Beauplaisir, including the sexual double standard, is revealed because she tips this power dynamic in her favour. Incognita's mask enables her to keep her power in the relationship – she does not “pay the Price of his Company with the Discovery of her Face, and Circumstances” (67).

Haywood therefore also uses the tropes of amatory fiction to reveal this power dynamic in the heroine's relationship with Beauplaisir. For Bowers, women used seduction fiction to define agency in relation to power, particularly the agency of “less powerful partners – those who have to say yes or no, but whose ability to choose is limited” (“Representing” 141-142). King writes the “seduction-driven” plots of Haywood's early amatory fictions repeatedly expose the power dynamics of heterosexual relationships, “lay[ing] bare abuses of power on one side (the chronically inconstant male) and thoughtless credulity and susceptibility to fantasy on the other (the too-credulous female)” (*Political Biography* 9). For Merritt in *Beyond Spectacle*, Haywood uses a methodology of spectatorship to create this shift (12), and explore female visual agency (15). Her heroines are simultaneously “objects of sight” (15) and “desiring subjects” (16). Looking is power, and who does the looking is who has the power. In the system of looking, a “subject/object dichotomy” is created in which power is traditionally thought to “accrue to the subject side” (16). Men (such as Beauplaisir) “who make women the objects of their gaze” therefore have the power within this system (16). Merritt argues Haywood challenged the way this power was distributed (16). She gave her heroines subjectivity by giving them sexual desire, and defined this subjectivity in relation to the distribution of power in the sexual relationship, tipping the balance into the heroine's favour.

For Wright, genre has the potential to make an author's gender visible or invisible (20). These “points of visibility and invisibility” enable us to identify “those culturally charged

moments where gendered considerations are at their most fraught, and also those other moments where gender, for whatever reason, fades away” (Wright 20). Haywood used genre to make herself visible. She was a member of a coterie known for its practise of progressive behaviour between the sexes. The points where she makes herself visible are shifts within the tropes of amatory fiction, and she uses the space created to explore female agency in relation to the progressive ideas of her coterie. I explore this in relation to Haywood’s authorial agency in the following chapter. It is as if by making herself visible at these points, Haywood is linking herself as coterie member with this exploration. She therefore shows a keen awareness of the potential of her chosen genre and of the potential to experiment within this genre.

Chapter Three: Influences of manuscript on Haywood's authorial agency

This chapter shows how Haywood's involvement in the Hillarians, particularly the fact that she may have circulated her manuscripts in the group, could have influenced the authorial agency we see in her printed works. A writer has different, or divergent, authorial agencies depending on the literary medium she engages in. Following Reiman's argument from the previous chapter, when a writer engages in a literary medium their willingness "to meet the demands of the system of distribution" (109-110) is assumed. Ezell in *Social Authorship* argues manuscript as an authorial choice was characterised by "very different physical conditions of writing and reading" and a "very different self-definition of authorship" (12). Traditional literary histories, she argues, assume "the human emotional or psychological dimension of authorship" is "universal" and "transcendent," that is, the same concepts of authorship we use now, we expect to apply to earlier periods (*Social Authorship* 13-14). Authors – and readers – of the early eighteenth century had "very different notions of playing the game of authorship" to us today (Ezell, *Social Authorship* 3). We therefore cannot assume "the process of the creation, distribution, and consumption of manuscript texts" was the same as those of print (Ezell, *Social Authorship* 14). For Wright, writers had more control of this agency in manuscript: a woman may have written her text, but other agents "played an important part," determining how it was "selected, organised and (re-) produced for subsequent readership and transmission" (18) in print. Here I use the term "author" as H. Porter Abbott uses it: the person who wrote the narrative (85).

Adapting Reiman's argument, print authorship therefore implies specific conventions, conventions applying only to the medium of print, are followed. The printed product is thus more formulaic, whereas manuscript more accurately reflects the author's intentions. The author has to fit into print conventions, to conform within a certain set of boundaries. In the

1720s, these boundaries were determined by the booksellers, who marketed the author's work after they had bought the copyright. Authorial agency in print therefore emerges as a series of marketing strategies employed by the booksellers, rather than an agency designed solely by the author. Prescott argues Haywood's booksellers marketed her work by publishing collections of her work to indicate her canonical status, including a frontispiece in the 1725 *Secret Histories*, and associating her with the amatory content of her work. These constructed "the particular image" (Prescott 69) her booksellers thought would attract book-buying readers – they were marketing strategies, rather than authorial agencies she developed for herself.

Haywood's participation in manuscript potentially destabilises this focus in two ways. The more inclusive focus of the fluidity of literary culture at the time reveals more of how Haywood's theatrical career may have influenced her printed works. As I explore in Part I of this chapter, the iconic frontispiece of the 1725 *Secret Histories* has traditionally been associated with the amatory texts that followed it, but a focus on Haywood's theatrical career reveals the image of the original portrait was initially associated with her career as an actress, and only later engraved as a frontispiece. Her booksellers could – and probably did – use this image as a marketing strategy, but the original image was a marketing strategy for her theatrical career, not her print career. This potentially challenges the arguments of many critics – Janine Barchas for example – who link the authorial agency or authority conveyed in the image to the work of amatory fiction that followed. Although this does not include a focus on the Hillarians, I feel it is important to include the section in this thesis because it is part of a larger discussion (such as Creel's in "(Re)framing Eliza Haywood") of how Haywood presented herself in all aspects of her literary career. In Part II, I go to her texts to look for the narrative agency Haywood styled for herself. Shifts in narrative discourse in

Fantomina show she used narration techniques adapted from the theatre, and these shifts gave her a public voice: in these shifts, she appears to comment on how relations between the sexes are constructed – a pivotal focus of the Hillarians.

I. Haywood's authorial agency and the 1725 *Secret Histories* frontispiece

The original image of the portrait from which the iconic frontispiece of the 1725 *Secret Histories* was engraved can be linked to Haywood's theatrical career. It could have been developed as part of Haywood's self-fashioning of her celebrity as an actress. Going by dates, the frontispiece (Fig. 1) appears connected to her acting career. Haywood played the lead role in her *A Wife to Be Lett* at Drury Lane from 12-14 August 1723 (King, *Political Biography* 19). Although it is assumed to have first appeared as a printed frontispiece in 1725, this engraving was first *advertised* on the day of the play's opening, 12 August 1723 (Spedding 783). It was engraved by George Vertue in 1723, probably from a portrait by Jaques Parmentier (Spedding 782-783). Spedding speculates the original painting is likely lost, or at least "no record of it is presently known" (782). It perhaps then appeared in the fifth edition of *Love in Excess* in 1723, but was more likely first published in *Secret Histories* (Spedding 783). At the time, Vertue was a "famous and revered engraver" (Creel 30) – he also engraved Pope's portrait in 1717 (Prescott 74) – and this would have added to the status of the image. The image would have been developed with other agents – such as Vertue and Parmentier – but the original portrait was developed outside the marketing strategies of print. This could counter the arguments of critics who link Haywood's authorial agency to the image and then to the work of amatory fiction that followed it.



Fig. 1

Haywood possibly determined how she was portrayed in the portrait. Laura Engel, in her discussion of the image-making of eighteenth-century British actresses, argues portraits were a strategy for “fashioning celebrity” controlled by the actresses themselves (14). These portraits were “self-authored” (Engel 14) and “self-authorized documents of image making” (5), a way for actresses to take charge of shaping their public images (14). As an actress,

Haywood would have had an awareness of the theatrics of portraiture, and the theatrics of portraying a persona – literary and theatrical – for an audience, be this audience readers or viewers (or in the case of the frontispiece, both). Engel argues “actresses’ memoirs (written by themselves), [their] portraits, and [their] theatrical roles” were the “significant strategies” with which these women constructed, shaped, and manipulated their public images and celebrity (4-5). These actresses had “some agency” in this, at the same time “their personas were fashioned in many ways already for them by the tastes, desires, and anxieties of eighteenth-century audiences” (Engel 3). While these strategies were therefore determined by the society and times they lived in, these women nevertheless controlled these strategies – these were the strategies of the actresses themselves as opposed to other agents. Celebrity culture flourished around these images and portraits of actresses (Engel 3). Perhaps this is why Haywood’s booksellers chose *this* particular image for the frontispiece, because it was an image audiences and readers already knew.

Performance was part of the image. Actresses having portraits of themselves painted “by a well-known artist was both a form of self-aggrandizement and self-advertisement” (Engel 18). It was “a kind of theatrical event” in which the actresses as sitters performed – they posed in “a particular costume” and the pose and costume flattered “the subject and promote[d] the goal of the portrait” (Engel 18). The sitters used these “signifiers” to assume a persona in the portrait, and this was an “acceptable form[] of display and spectacle off stage” (Engel 18). Viewers read these “symbolic and iconographic visual clues” to read the “message” the portrait conveyed (Engel 18). The sitter was thus “mimicking,” simultaneously “masquerading” and herself (Engel 18). This masquerade was a “powerful visual self-fashioning technique” (Engel 19).

What we see of the portrait in the frontispiece, however, appears to correspond to the conventions of frontispieces for women writers at the time. In her discussion of the frontispieces of Haywood's contemporary, Elizabeth Singer Rowe, Backscheider identifies the 1684 engraving of Behn by Robert White as *the* frontispiece that set the trend for the representation of women writers (25). By 1725, she argues, this frontispiece was "formulaic": "an oval frame on a bust stand," a "glimpse" of a shift above the drape of heavy gown, a "simple hair ornament," and a "single curl" of hair on the shoulder (Backscheider, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 25). Vertue's engraving of Haywood follows these trends, including the fashions of "a much lower cut dress" and "quite rounded breasts" (Backscheider, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 25).

Many critics link Haywood's authorial agency – styled by herself or her booksellers – to the 1725 frontispiece and (as argued in Chapter Two) to the genre she wrote in. From Prescott's discussion of how Haywood's booksellers styled her agency in print, there appears to be two contradictory views of Haywood as author in print: her booksellers marketed her as the "potentially scandalous and salacious" (Prescott 74) author of amatory fictions such as *Fantomina*, but also as someone who wrote seriously, a distinguished literary figure with two collections of works. She had two collections published in two years: *The Works of Mrs Eliza Haywood; Consisting of Novels, Letters, Poems, and Plays* (1724) and (the hugely successful) *Secret Histories*. In publishing editions like this, booksellers were claiming their women writers as "authors of a corpus of writing worthy of collection" with "canonical standing," "literary importance," and economic viability (Prescott 72). But booksellers mostly conflated a woman writer with "the amatory themes" of her fiction (Prescott 69): they linked genre with agency. Her literary abilities were connected with her representations of passion (Prescott 69), making her the site of desire generated by the text (Prescott 79).

Haywood was seen as writing her personal experience. Many women writers were aware of the “commercial value” of presenting their texts with an emphasis on the amatory (Prescott 83).

For Barchas, the frontispiece gave the author a “caste label” of authority (21), but because Haywood wrote amatory fiction, and the 1725 frontispiece represents this, this particular frontispiece fails to confer this authority. In her discussion of the paratext framing the eighteenth-century novel, Barchas argues for “the dubious status” of the frontispiece to give Haywood authority, because contemporary readers would have interpreted its “visual clues” and known a work of amatory fiction followed (24). These visual clues are not Backscheider’s well-established trends but linked to Haywood as a writer of “warm” fiction. She has a “dramatically plunging neckline,” a “brazen, direct gaze,” “unfastened locks of hair arranged suggestively over both shoulders,” and a “ruffled informality” to a gown that now “appears to be a dressing gown” (Barchas 24). As Creel argues, Barchas reads the portrait as if Haywood “were to be cast in one of her own amatory fictions” (30-31). The cameo nature of the portrait – “framed as a private miniature on ivory and pinned to a background with a ribbon” – adds to its intimacy (Barchas 24). It becomes a “clever advertisement,” a “pin-up” of Haywood (Barchas 24). Barchas concludes the frontispiece “deliberately titillates” but does not confer authorial authority because it personifies Haywood with her text (24).

Creel examines the images – printer’s ornaments and frontispieces – that frame Haywood in print to show how “the circulation of her image” was used to “build a carefully constructed persona” in her texts (26-27). These representations are clues to how readers would have interpreted “Haywood’s status as an author” (Creel 45). Creel links the 1725 frontispiece to Haywood’s acting career, but does not examine the possible implications of this. She interprets the *Vertue* frontispiece “as a suggestion of authorial branding” (27). The

“iconographic embellishments” of frontispieces at the time, combined with the status of the artist, “supplement[ed] the image of the author,” making a marketable, sellable, profitable persona (Creel 29). Although she appears to give more agency to Haywood in the construction of her print images, Creel also links these images with genre, arguing readers likely understood a connection between these images and the text, understanding the image supported the message of the text (42). She links the “typically amatory symbols” of Barchas’ reading with the “frame of legitimate female authorship” of Backscheider’s discussion of Rowe (31). But she does not make clear if Vertue is making these decisions (this is problematic: he engraved the portrait, but the image is not his), or Haywood. Creel concludes that adopting the posture of Rowe with the tropes of amatory fiction makes the image “multilayered” – “a fairly conventional author portrait that *also* uses the trope of amatory fiction to create more subversive commentary about [Haywood’s] power as a female author” (Creel 31).

For me, the dating of the original image of the frontispiece, Haywood’s portrait by Parmentier, to the opening night of *A Wife to Be Lett*, potentially undermines these arguments. Either eighteenth-century theatre and amatory fiction were more linked than critics now realise, and the arguments remain relatively unchallenged, or the portrait initially had nothing to do with amatory fiction, and Haywood was marketing herself in theatrical terms only. For me, it is enough to destabilise, to suggest another aspect of interaction between Haywood’s print and theatre careers.

II. Haywood’s narrative agency in *Fantomina*

Narrative agency overlaps textualities – it is developed in manuscript and adapted to print. Extending Reiman’s argument, Haywood’s narrative agency in manuscript shows her

intentions more clearly than the composite agency of print. Haywood had more control over this narrative agency, as opposed to the agency constructed mostly by other agents after she sold her manuscript for print. It is an agency Haywood would have developed within a coterie setting, whose members were, possibly, the first readers of *Fantomina* – and whose members self-consciously focused on their conduct within the group. I argue the ideals of the group can be seen in her use of the narrator in *Fantomina*. Manuscript therefore opens another context in which to read Haywood. Throughout this section, I use the term “narrative agency” to refer to Haywood’s narrative agency in manuscript. I define “narrative agency” as narratological awareness, that is, the narrator has a sense of herself and can act and make effective choices within the text – such as the narratological shifts I discuss in this section.

This section explores two aspects of Haywood’s narration and relates them to her possible intentions as an author. Both aspects give Haywood narrative agency, and enable her to develop the heroine’s agency within the text. The first narrative technique is that of the outside narrator. For Abbott, an external narrator, that is, a narrator who tells a narrative in the third person, is situated outside the world of the story (71). Kvande refers to this as an “outsider narrator”: a disinterested narrator who is not involved in the fictional world of the text. This narrator does not usually include references to “I” or “me,” and therefore does not draw attention to themselves, or invite the reader to “look” at them (Abbott 71). The narrator is set “apart from the characters she describes” (Kvande, “Outsider” 632). The narrator of *Fantomina* does not have a name and is not a character in the story. She is gender-neutral, neither male nor female. Nor does she appear biased toward either the heroine or Beauplaisir; she appears to be a simple raconteuse. But the narrator interrupts the narration, creating a shift in narration. This disruption is indicated by the narrator’s use of the word “I.” Here the narrator offers an opinion on the story, and invites the reader to look at her, creating a point of

visibility: she explains why Beauplaisir cannot see through the heroine's disguises. She comments on the differing conduct of the heroine and Beauplaisir within the same relationship. Her point of visibility is linked to her comments.

Haywood's use of performance and the Hillarian ideals can be linked in this disruption. In the shift, the narration moves from that of an outside narrator to a theatrical narrative technique, in which the narrator addresses the reader directly, as an actress might address an audience in the epilogue or prologue of a play. Haywood's narrator is able to do this because she is an outsider in the story. In the second half of this section, I show Haywood uses the outside narrator to give herself a public voice, and the interruption enables her to nudge the reader toward a particular interpretation of the text. The interruption also claims a visual authority, the authority that comes with being the one who sees, for the narrator (and for the heroine), an authority that is usually reserved for men. I show that in her *A Wife to Be Lett*, Haywood used the contemporary theatrical narrative technique of the epilogue to address the audience as a playwright, an actress, and a writer. The audience would have understood the interplay of all three within the narrative. I adapt this argument to the narrative shift in *Fantomina*. In this interruption, *Fantomina* appears to be narrated like an epilogue of a play, *narrated as if the narration is being performed*. For Anderson, writers of the time worked in and through two genres (*Eighteenth-Century* 3). Haywood played her theatrical roles off against the audience's knowledge of her as a playwright and a writer thus making visible and subverting the "negative assumptions about female behavior" that "swirl[ed] around both Haywood and the character she depict[ed]," and creating a space for self-expression (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 1). Audiences were aware of this double performativity of the theatre (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 1): what transpired in this forum was feigned and simultaneously real.

Haywood created a space in which to express both the real and the unreal, and theatre audiences would have understood this address to be her self-expression, a performance of her sentiments. What Haywood says in this interruption can therefore develop a clearer understanding of her intentions as an author. The shift draws attention to how she is ideologically using the text: the narrator comments on conduct and draws attention to performativity in the construction/development of female agency. The narrator draws attention to herself, makes herself visible, using this double performativity, at the same time she draws attention to herself – and the heroine – *performing*. This theatrical double performativity and the fiction are linked. Haywood likely appropriated this technique as part of the hybridisation of genres in novelisation. For Anderson, “the novel, like the playhouse or the masquerade, could offer its authors yet another theatrical frame; the fictional text, which announces a discrepancy between its author and the sentiments it conveys, could function as an act of disguise; and authorship could become an act of performance” (*Eighteenth-Century* 2). Anderson sees Haywood as “the consummate, perpetual performer” (“Performing” 12). She reads Haywood’s texts in this context, understanding her career “as a series of purposefully adopted roles” in which she explored female performance (“Performing” 12). Considering her texts as performances allows critics to read these texts how they “ought to be read” (Anderson, “Performing” 12) – how they were read at the time.

Gender, genre, textuality, and performativity

Genre and narrative agency are linked. The narratological tropes of the amatory genre could reveal Haywood’s possible intentions. The genre, as Fletcher argues, has ideological ends (13). As I noted in Chapter One, the familiar can be subversive, in that the telling of a story can reveal why the story unfolds as it does, and this is particularly relevant for the stories of amatory fiction. The narrator’s interruption is therefore crucial to readers’ understanding of

the story: at the same time the author can “suggest and conceal” her own ideas within the tropic disruption. Romance narratives are “regulated by a dynamics of secrecy and confession,” “veiling and unveiling,” and “concealment and revelation” that moves the plot along (Fletcher 36, 37). For Carnell, Haywood’s narratological position emphasised “her power to divulge or conceal secrets at her own discretion,” at the same time she “self-consciously” suggested and concealed her own ideas on the subject (118). The narrator disrupts the narration to reveal more information at her own discretion. She comes in to explain why the heroine and Beauplaisir behave as they do – she focuses on their conduct. The narrator of a text is not its author, but narration is a paradox. The narrator is “an instrument, a construction, or a device wielded by the author” (Abbott 68). But in creating a narrator, an author leaves “discernable traces of the real” them within their text (Abbott 68). As King notes, Haywood’s fiction “abound[s] in fascinating self-inscriptions and authorial self-representations,” but she rarely “speaks *in propria persona*,” or comments on herself directly (*Political Biography* 1). King refers to Haywood as a “shape-shifting author,” because she used “a variety of means ... to make herself heard in the public sphere,” at the same time hiding herself and her personal life “behind a succession of masks” (*Political Biography* 2).

Backscheider relates similar shifts in narration in contemporary texts to manuscript. Haywood’s possible suggesting and concealing of her own ideas within these interruptions can therefore be linked to her use of manuscript, particularly the *discussion* that comes with manuscript circulation. Backscheider identifies these shifts “as part of the transition from a primarily manuscript culture to one dominated by print” (*Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 73). The narrative discourse tended to “move, sometimes smoothly and sometimes with jolts, from speaking to an intimate coterie circle to addressing the new audience of miscellaneous strangers” (72). If it is possible Haywood circulated drafts of her work within her coterie

before these texts were printed (as I argued in Chapter Two), it can also be possible these interruptions are Haywood moving between addressing her coterie, as the first readers of her work, and this “new audience.” Backscheider appears to link women’s participation in manuscript, novelisation, and the author’s intent in these shifts. These shifts in narration, shifts from one narrative discourse to another, were “an important strategy for exploiting the strengths of various literary kinds” and developing genres – women selected and juxtaposed narrative discourses for strategic purposes (Backscheider, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 73), often mixing different discourses to create certain effects. Haywood could use any form of discourse that would serve her intent.

As I argued in Part III of Chapter One, women used techniques from older, established discourses, particularly theatre, to do this, resulting in a hybridisation of genres. Women writers used these narratological shifts in the developing discourse of the novel to relate gendered experience. A genre’s meaning, including articulations of agency, was likely hybridised too. For Backscheider, “the struggle to find ways to depict experiences new to literature, to develop novelistic discourse, and to deal with the special gender demands on expression created the varying and, to our ears today, often strange combinations of language types and levels” (*Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 124). Writers needed to develop a way of writing in the new medium of the novel. This meant the new narrative discourse was often unstable, irregular, and florid; it tended to “wild swings” and “extravagances” (Backscheider, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 124). Women writers created these shifts because they deviated from “the discourses of masculine forms” – “the greater the *deviance* from the discourses of masculine forms also determined (and still determines) the degree of rejection” – and this determined “a very narrow corridor” of what was acceptable for them to write (Backscheider, *Elizabeth Singer Rowe* 124, her italics).

These shifts are therefore places where genre, textuality, gender, experience, novelisation, and ideology are linked to agency. Adapting Fletcher's argument in *Historical Romance Fiction* links these shifts in narration to performativity. In this analysis of the modern-day historical romance novel (a study that can be adapted to *Fantomina* because her arguments are "condition[s] of romance *per se*" [21]), Fletcher links the genre with gender and performativity. She argues that since the publication of Janice Radway's *Reading the Romance*, "gender" has become *the* criterion in analyses of romance fiction (3) and the romance "depends on the force and familiarity of the speech act, 'I love you'" (1). This performativity can reveal more of Haywood's possible intentions as an author. For Fletcher, analysing romance using theories of speech acts and performativity shows the genre "turn[s] back on itself," that is, it is "a circuitous repetition or retracing *and* ... an unravelling or undoing" (2, her italics). In this way, Haywood can both represent and comment on society in *Fantomina* using performativity – it shows "processes of definition and subversion" (Fletcher 18). For Fletcher, performativity and disguise create a "crisis" in romance in that the borderline delineating a gender role becomes "permeable," and upsets the defining characteristics of the gender because it is no longer a "distinct" category (27). Performativity therefore also enables Haywood to develop the heroine's agency within the text.

The outside narrator

Kvande argues Haywood gives the narrators of her texts "outsider status" and this status gives her narrators authority ("Outsider" 627). For Kvande, the outside narrator addresses the reader to comment on the story because the narrator is an outsider. She does not separate these two narrative techniques – that of the outside narrator and of addressing the audience/reader – nor address the performance aspect of the second. But her argument uses both to show Haywood used the narrative, particularly shifts in narration, to comment on

contemporary issues. This outsider status enables Haywood's narrators to "look beyond the appearances that deceive others" (Kvande, "Outsider" 633). The narrator in *Fantomina* can therefore comment on the heroine and Beauplaisir's conduct and point out *why* they are behaving as they are. Haywood's narrator is able to critique the story she tells, and Haywood is able to use her texts to give herself a public voice. By focusing on the conduct between the heroine and Beauplaisir, she appears to use this voice to focus on her coterie's ideals of progressive conduct.

Kvande applies the theorem of narratological outsider status to Haywood's political novels but concludes Haywood used this narrative methodology in all her fictions, that "at every stage of her career, Haywood deployed this outsider narrator as part of her claim to a place in the public sphere" ("Outsider" 640). She used the new position of Tory opposition to "claim a public voice for her narrators": they "identity themselves as political outsiders" denied power (Kvande, "Outsider" 626). This enables the narrators to claim both an "apparently disinterested position" and an "authority as exemplars of public virtue," from which they are "uniquely qualified to offer criticisms" (Kvande, "Outsider" 626). These narrators are "deeply involved" in party politics but, because they are outsiders, they are also "deeply involved" in "efforts to shape social norms" (Kvande, "Outsider" 640).

For Kvande, the authority of the outside narrator enabled Haywood to claim a role in public discourse ("Outsider" 626). Haywood uses the narrator's interruptions to manage the readers' interpretation of her text. These narrators make criticisms that "consistently argue" the behaviour of politicians is a public issue because it "affects the public sphere" (Kvande, "Outsider" 626). This is "nudging": the narrator interrupts the story to help the reader see the connections "between public and private actions and, more pointedly, into using those connections as a way to evaluate political behaviour" ("Outsider" 633). This is the education

the reader is supposed to receive from the text. Adapting this to *Fantomina*, in the interruption, the narrator nudges the reader to see connections “between public and private actions and, more pointedly, into using those connections as a way to evaluate” *sexual* behaviour. Haywood appears to be nudging the reader toward evaluating the heroine and Beauplaisir’s behaviour. Performativity plays a crucial part in these interruptions. As Fletcher argues, performativity enables critical insights into ideology – it can “describe that process whereby particular human practices become naturalized, taken for granted” (8).

The outside narrator and visual authority

Merritt observes in “Spying, Writing, Authority” that Haywood’s texts often feature “an invisible or unnoticed observer” as narrator (183). She examines the use of this observer in two Haywood texts: *The British Recluse* (1722) and *The Invisible Spy* (1755). The use of this observer, she argues, enables Haywood to create a discourse “out of the connection between seeing and writing” that also calls attention to the discursive authority of this “discerning spectator” (Merritt, “Spying” 183-184). Adapting her argument to *Fantomina*, the narrative disruption questions Beauplaisir’s ability to discern. Discernment was a “leading” trope of rationality in the early eighteenth-century (Merritt, “Spying” 184). It was considered an essential component of a person’s ability to judge and reason (Merritt, “Spying” 184). Haywood uses this disruption to claim visual authority for both her narrator and the heroine, based on their ability to discern.

The narrator interrupts the story to explain to the reader why Beauplaisir cannot see through the heroine’s masquerades. The heroine changes her body, and the reader has to rely on the narrator to explain how. The narrator interrupts just after Beauplaisir has met the Widow Bloomer, and before the heroine takes full control of her sexual expression and agency as

Incognita. Beauplaisir's inability to discern and therefore claim visual authority is linked to the heroine's ability in the "Art of feigning." The narrator relates his inability to discern fantasy from reality to sex: "It may, perhaps, seem strange that *Beauplaisir* should in such near Intimacies continue still deceiv'd: I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility, and that no Disguise could hinder them from knowing a Woman they had once enjoy'd" (57). The narrator explains his inability to see reality in terms of acting, that the heroine, as a woman, is a good actor: "I can only say, that besides the Alteration which the Change of Dress made in her, she was so admirably skill'd in the Art of feigning" (57). Beauplaisir is unable to see past the disguises: "These Aids from Nature, join'd to the Wiles of Art, and the Distance between the Places where the imagin'd *Fantomina* and *Celia* were, might very well prevent his having any Thought that they were the same, or that the fair *Widow* was either of them: It never so much as enter'd his Head" (57).

The interruption creates a shift in the discourse, drawing attention to the visual authority of the narrator. This is "the privileged position of the spectator, a position conventionally regarded as male territory" (Merritt, "Spying" 184). In this, the gender-neutral narrator is linked to gender. The narrator draws attention to herself, creating a point of visibility, as occupying a distinctly male position of visual authority: the narrator, not Beauplaisir, is the one who sees. It draws attention to the agency of the narrator, as well as to the narrator's perceived intellectual abilities, because the narrator is able to see through the masquerade. It also draws attention to the heroine's ability to discern in that she has chosen to masquerade, to create fantasy roles, because she knows Beauplaisir will rove. She is able to discern reality and adjust her performance accordingly. When Beauplaisir wishes to go to Bath alone, for example, the heroine is aware it is "for no other Reason, than that being tir'd of her Conversation, he was willing to be at liberty to pursue new Conquests" (51). It appears she

knew this would happen: she “had already laid a Scheme” – of following him to Bath and being seduced by him again as the maid Celia (50-51). She is aware it is the “Beauty” she portrayed as “Fantomina,” and will portray as Celia, “which alone can bring back the fugitive Lover” (51).

But for Merritt, the nature of the narrator – voyeuristically watching in on amatory intrigues – undermines its authoritative position, suggesting Haywood’s narrative strategy is more determinate of power than authority (“Spying” 190-191). The narrator has the power to watch, but this watching undermines claims to linguistic authority. I concur with Merritt; this distinction between power and authority is purposeful (“Spying” 190-191). It is Haywood’s strategy of authorial agency (Merritt, “Spying” 184), a rhetorical strategy developed to enable her to participate in public discourse (185). Haywood also uses this strategy to develop the heroine’s agency. As the heroine develops greater agency, culminating in her role as Incognita, the power dynamic in her relationship with Beauplaisir is exposed. This suggests Haywood has something to say on how the relationships between the sexes are constructed – a pivotal focus of the progressive conduct practised in the Hillarian circle. Adapting Merritt’s observations, the heroine can determine her own roles and therefore has the power in the relationship because she is the one who “sees.” Beauplaisir is unable to see through the heroine’s roles, and this subverts his “privileged position.” I explore this in the following chapter.

Haywood’s theatrical narration of *Fantomina*

In Part III of Chapter One, I adapted the theoretical work linking Cockburn’s plays with her philosophy to show Haywood could have adapted the theatrical convention of working philosophical ideas out on stage to her fictions via the process of novelisation. I argued it was

possible that as theatrical tropes crossed over into fiction in novelisation, the use of performance to work out philosophical ideas, particularly ideas of the self, crossed over too. The end of the section used the arguments of Ingrassia (“The Stage Not Answering My Expectations”) and Anderson (*Eighteenth-Century Authorship*) to link Haywood’s fictions with her plays, particularly that she used performance tropes from her theatrical career in her fictions to develop agency. In this section, I show that using the prologue of *A Wife to Be Lett* (in which Haywood is referred to as an author and actress – she played the female lead, Mrs. Graspall), and the epilogue (in which Haywood addressed the audience as playwright), can link her roles of novelist, playwright, and actress as theatre-goers of the time did – and as Haywood appears to. I use this linkage to analyse the narrative interruption in *Fantomina*, in which Haywood appears to address readers directly, as she would on stage. Performance therefore becomes a part of Haywood’s authorial agency, as well as her development of the heroine’s agency in the text.

For Backscheider (as outlined above), these shifts in narration were produced by women writers moving between narrative discourses to represent gendered experience in the new novelistic discourse. These women used jarring narrative techniques from established genres like the theatre to express experience in fiction. Readers would have understood these shifts had meaning because writers, working in a discourse still being established, would have indicated this in order for their text to be understood. Fredric Jameson argues genres are tacit “contracts” or agreements between authors and readers (135). All speech is “marked with certain indications and signals” of how it is used and understood (Jameson 135). Adapting his argument, in the theatre, these indications and signals are given and understood “by the context of the utterance” and “by the physical presence of the speaker,” that is, their gestures and “intonations” (Jameson 135). When this speech is taken out of this “concrete situation,”

such as its adoption in the process of novelisation, it must be replaced with other indications and signals to be understood (Jameson 135). The author of a text therefore manages readers' interpretations by using generic-appropriate conventions, or "stock devices" to replace the context and physical gestures of speech acts (Fletcher 13). I suggest one of the ways Haywood did this in her fictions was linking her roles as actress, author, and playwright as theatre-goers – and herself on stage – possibly did at the time.

Linking Haywood's roles of author, actress, and playwright

A Wife to Be Lett was staged at Drury Lane from 12-14 August 1723 (King, *Political Biography* 19). It was announced Haywood took on the role of Mrs. Graspall at the last minute because the original actress was "indisposed," but King speculates Haywood "engineered" this "to cast herself as a replacement for a role she had intended for herself" (*Political Biography* 19-20). The prologue of the play was spoken first, by actor Theophilus Cibber, and plays on Haywood's literary reputation. In the prologue, the audience's attention is drawn to Haywood's presence on stage as author and actress: "A dangerous Woman-Poet wrote the Play: / Measure her Force, by her *known Novels*, writ ... / She, who can talk so well, may act yet better" (*Wife* v). These lines link her roles: Haywood the playwright is introduced to the audience as author and actress. More importantly, Haywood as playwright wrote these lines and therefore introduces *herself* as author and actress. Although Susan Staves dismisses Haywood as an actress, she notes Haywood regularly, and strategically, "used her notoriety as an author" as a "commodity" on stage, and her theatrical roles advertised her books (189). For Anderson, the theatre was "an invaluable place" for Haywood to advertise her fiction in terms of her own authorial personae; it gave her an identity that made her "simultaneously mysterious and accessible to her public" (*Eighteenth-Century* 29).

Haywood spoke the epilogue as playwright. For Polly Stevens Fields, the epilogue established a “dialogue” between women playwrights and the audience (258). The epilogue of *A Wife to Be Lett* comments on the play, and Haywood’s character in it. Here Haywood appears to link the role she acts with her roles as author and playwright. She seems, for example, to allude to her amatory fictions in her outline of Mr. Graspall’s pimping of his wife: “A rich old Miser, melting down his Wife, / Not into soft Desires, and amorous Puling, / He, sober Thinker! was for no such Fooling” (*Wife* vii). Contemporary audiences would have responded to this on many levels. Munns writes audiences “rapidly knew the players well and would react to performances in terms of their knowledge of their off-stage reputations as well as their expected casting” (87). Audiences were “raucous” and interacted with each other and with the actors on stage (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 25). Haywood’s part in this interaction as playwright was her epilogue, her address to her audience. The epilogue thus potentially reveals some of her intentions.

Several critics extend this linking of roles to the play entire. For Anderson, connections between author, actress, and character seem “purposeful and pronounced”: Haywood chose to play Mrs. Graspall, had “likely” experienced difficulties in her marriage (as that character does), and the playbills advertised her as author and lead actress (*Eighteenth-Century* 28). Haywood’s “numerous and overlapping public careers” were crucial to her public appeal, “she intrigued audiences with the suspected scandalous circumstances of her private life and the scandalous circumstances of the erotic narratives she published while working on stage” (*Eighteenth-Century* 29, 28). Her choice of roles asked her audience to identify “the actress with the novelist, the novelist with her all-too-amorous ingénues” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 28-29).

Ingrassia connects Haywood's involvement in theatre to her use of dramatic techniques and modes of performance in her representation of gender and social interaction in her fiction ("Stage" 215). Haywood's female characters are consistently and "self-consciously" actresses – they show "the performative nature of social interaction" (Ingrassia, "Stage" 215). I concur with Ingrassia, and adapt her argument to reveal Haywood's possible intentions in her fiction. I argue that what Haywood said as she linked her roles as author, actress, and playwright on stage would have resonated a particular way with her audiences. What she says in these similar shifts in her fictions may have resonated in a similar way with her readers.

Haywood's plays and fictions potentially informed each other. Backscheider notes early authors who were also playwrights "generally ... attracted the same audience as their plays" ("Women Writers" 255). Audience members were the likely readers of Haywood's texts, and this intertextuality was two-way – they would have watched her plays with a knowledge of her texts, and read her texts having watched her plays. Haywood plays on this. She draws attention to herself as an author who is acting/performing. Ingrassia argues that as Mrs. Graspall, Haywood "points directly to the challenges of the written, fictional rather than performed, dramatic text" ("Stage" 221):

How small a Relic can Books afford us when the Mind's perplex'd? The Subject that our Thoughts are bent upon, form Characters more capital and swelling, than any these useless Pages can produce and 'tis no matter on what Theme the Author treats; we read it our own way, and see but with our Passions Eyes ... These Opticks too are Traitors, and conspire with Fancy to undo me (*Wife* 21)

For Ingrassia, Haywood here is highlighting the limitations of her fictions: "as author, actress, and dramatic character [she] appears to privilege the immediacy of the dramatic over the

discursive text” (“Stage” 221). This “gain[s] a greater resonance” because it is “literally uttered by Haywood” (Ingrassia, “Stage” 221). I extend this: it gains greater resonance because it is “literally uttered by Haywood” performing before an audience of her readers. The narrative utterances in her fictions could have achieved a similar resonance. For Ingrassia, Haywood’s appearances on stage, in her plays and in others’, “foregrounds the simultaneous dissonance and continuity between the stage and the (novelistic) page” (“Stage” 221).

Exploring the gap

My argument can lead to the identification of the woman writer with her work if the process of novelisation and contemporary audiences’ understanding of this double performativity is not taken into account. Backscheider in “Women Writers and the Chains of Identification” argues conventions in drama and fiction at the time tended to identify women writers with their work (246). This confined their creativity because they were seen as “committing not just outrageous acts but outrageous *autobiographical* acts” (Backscheider, “Women Writers” 245, her italics). These women, willingly or unwittingly, contributed to this identification in that they used “the conventions that existed when they first became writers” and adopted new novelistic conventions as these were created (Backscheider, “Women Writers” 257). Women writers reacted to this identification in various ways: some exploited it, some resisted it, and some “transformed old conventions into new” (Backscheider, “Women Writers” 257). I agree identifying women writers with what they wrote diminishes critical perceptions of their creativity. At the same time, writing – and acting – is a form of communication. For Anderson, this conflating of the writer with her heroine or narrator loses “the dimensionality created by [the writer’s] choice to write fiction” (*Eighteenth-Century* 4), at the same time resisting this assumption can lead to another, that writing a novel or acting a role “seems to

indicate a clear authorial decision not to speak openly or exclusively about oneself” (5). She argues these two “expressive possibilities” coexist with and influence each other, as eighteenth-century audiences well-knew: “sincerity and feigning, reality and fiction” are part of a dynamic relationship (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 4-5), and this double performativity can create a space for self-expression.

I extend Anderson’s argument: Haywood used this double performativity, and eighteenth-century audiences, as noted earlier, would have understood this to be a performance of her sentiments. As I discussed in Part II of Chapter One, how an actor performed emotion was a debate acted out on stage (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 8). The identity a performer developed on stage assumed a gap between role and actor, between the external body and internal emotions (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 9). Haywood explored this gap to develop her authorial agency and the agency of the heroine in that performance enables the narrator and heroine to bridge this gap, leading to self-knowledge, which is essential for agency. Hill’s *Essay* taught the actor expressed emotion from the inside out and this expression caused the face and body to change (9-16), but acting showed gestures and actions could “conceal intentions and sentiments” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 8) – there was a gap between what was felt and what was revealed. This enabled women writers to “privilege emotion as the defining, consistent component of identity” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 10). The work of these women thus appears to express “some authorial sentiment,” in that these women “turn to literary texts as a way to communicate a very personal and otherwise inexpressible feeling” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 12).

Haywood’s performance as author and actress and the heroine’s ability to perform, her skills in the “Art of feigning,” are linked in the interruption. Ingrassia links this passage to Haywood’s “commanding knowledge of the English dramatic canon and her insight into the

politics of the London theatrical world,” and then to Hill’s *Essay*, and Betterton’s *History* (“Stage” 214-217). The narrator’s description of the heroine’s masquerade is taken from these two manuals. Adapting Ingrassia’s argument, the narrator links the heroine’s role-playing to the playhouse and makes it clear she is a good actress: she “knew so exactly how to form her Behaviour to the Character she represented, that all the Comedians at both Playhouses are infinitely short of her Performances” (57). Her performances echo contemporary acting techniques. She “had the Power of putting on almost what Face she pleas’d” (57); “She, could vary her very Glances, tune her Voice to Accents the most different imaginable from those in which she spoke when she appear’d herself” (57). In his opening paragraph, Hill writes that to “act a passion well,” an actor must, ideally, “never attempt its imitation, till his fancy has conceived so strong an image, or idea, of it, as to move the same impressive springs within his mind, which from that passion when it is undesigned and natural” (*Essay* 9). The actor must use “the face, body, voice, and gesture to represent emotion” (Ingrassia, “Stage” 216).

Hill acknowledges some actors can take a “*shorter road*” (*Essay* 15). This actor can “help his ... idea” by “annexing at once, the *look* to the *idea*,” thus creating “the image, the look, and the muscles” that represent the emotion (*Essay* 15-16). Betterton encourages the actor to use eyes, eyebrows, mouth and hands to express “the Nature of the Things you speak of” (97). An actor must “make the Gestures supply Words ... joining these significant Actions to the Words and Passions justly drawn by the Poet” (Betterton 104). As the Widow Bloomer, for example, the heroine is her own poet; she “disclos’d by the Gestures with which her Words were accompanied, and the Accent of her Voice so true a Feeling of what she said” (56). Her actions are those of the stage. Beauplaisir does not recognise her as she changes roles because she is so skilled in changing her body. For Ingrassia, the heroine is an actress and playwright

at the same time: she creates “plots” in which she assumes disguises and “act[s] appropriately” (“Stage” 216).

As outlined in my discussion of Haywood’s use of the outside narrator, she uses the narrative disruption to give herself a public voice. She commented on conduct and nudged the reader toward a particular evaluation of this conduct. The narrator’s ability to discern gave her narrative agency and developed the heroine’s agency – her masquerade gives her visual authority and this balances the power dynamic of her relationship with Beauplaisir. Adding to this, the double performativity of the theatre created a space for self-expression. Haywood’s narrator could bridge the gap between the real and feigned, achieving self-knowledge. Haywood links her comments on conduct to performance. Beauplaisir is unable to recognise the real. He cannot recognise the body the heroine creates by her performance – her acting creates a gap between her role and herself, between her “external body and [her] internal emotions” (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 9). Beauplaisir is unable to separate her body from her roles (and therefore see this gap). But the heroine, in developing a role that can express her emotion, is able to bridge this gap as Incognita and achieve full agency. Beauplaisir does not have “any Thought” that “Fantomina,” Celia, and the Widow Bloomer “were the same”: “It never so much as enter’d his Head, and though he did fancy he observed in the Face of the latter, Features which were not altogether unknown to him, yet he could not recollect when or where he had known them” (57).

This links Haywood’s development of agency with the ideals of her coterie. Beauplaisir’s inability to discern nudges the reader to see his behaviour and assess the sexual double standard. When the Widow Bloomer later meets Beauplaisir, “she found that her Lover had lost no part of the Fervency with which he had parted from her,” but when the next day “she receiv’d him as *Fantomina*, she perceiv’d a prodigious Difference; which led her again into

Reflections on the Unaccountableness of Men's Fancies, who still prefer the last Conquest, only because it is the last" (60). Her performance shows "there could not be a Difference in Merit, because they were the same Person" (60). Beauplaisir's conduct therefore requires an explanation: "the Widow *Bloomer* was a more new Acquaintance than *Fantomina*, and therefore esteem'd more valuable" (60). In the opening lines of the epilogue of *A Wife to Be Lett*, Haywood appears to be nudging the audience toward a similar interpretation: "We Women, who by Nature love to teaze ye, / Will have it, that the newest things best please ye; / Sure then, to-night, our Graspall claims Compassion" (*Wife* vi).

Haywood's exploration of this gap by-passes Backscheider's chains of identification. To me, it appears Haywood is voicing an opinion. As I wrote in Part III of Chapter One, for Myers, Cockburn's plays were more than "mere fictionalizations of her philosophy" ("Catharine Trotter" 70) because they enabled her to render a philosophical solution imaginatively, using a "process of moral reflection that entails applying general principles to particular cases" (59). Adapting this to Haywood and my argument at this point: it appears as if Haywood's early amatory texts, drafts of which she possibly circulated within her coterie for discussion and comment, including *Fantomina*, were more than "mere fictionalizations" of the group's philosophy in that they enabled her to render a philosophical solution imaginatively, using a "process of moral reflection that entails applying general principles to particular cases" – in this case, the heroine's relationship with Beauplaisir. As I argue in the following chapter, she appears to be performing, working out, the implications of her coterie's ideas of behaviour on female agency. In using theatre and novelistic performance, self-expression moves from autobiography ("a conscious narration of self") to autobiographical association ("an ability to speak for oneself") (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 12). In-text or on-stage reflections on authorship, or the role of the author in her work, are therefore autobiographical (Anderson,

Eighteenth-Century 12). For Anderson, Haywood (and other writers) defines herself through “the practice of authorship,” so what Haywood is expressing in her texts – her plays and her fictions – is “a desire for authorship, a desire for expression itself” (*Eighteenth-Century* 12). The author figure in Haywood’s works is thus a construct of the text or of the performance (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 14).

At the same time, because of the “dynamic nature of this relationship,” the author plays some part in the construction of the text (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 14). This by-passes Backscheider’s chains of identification in that “there is a difference” between connecting and conflating author and narrator (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 15). The narrator is separate from the author, and thus able to channel the emotions the author would otherwise not be able to write (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 15). Extending this, Haywood uses the narrator to explore this gap between emotion and what is revealed. By embracing fiction in theatrical terms, writers created a conduit for voices other than their own, a “form of theatrical performance” that conveys authorial sentiments (Anderson, *Eighteenth-Century* 15). This brings us closer to her sentiments, what Reiman would term her intentions.

Chapter Four: Equal performances: the development of the heroine's agency in *Fantomina* and the ideals of the Hillarians

In *Fantomina*, the heroine's agency is developed through a series of roles or performances. As she develops the perfect role in which to express her sexual desire (and, as I show, express it *safely*), she develops greater agency. Each of these roles enables her to learn and grow as she acquires sexual knowledge. As I defined the term in Chapter One, "agency" denotes an awareness of self, and the ability of this self to act and make effective choices. Locke argued for a self-in-consciousness and this consciousness is fluid. Part of this ability therefore is an ability to learn and grow – to project our experiences of our past into our future in a way that enables us to make better and more effective decisions for ourselves. The heroine's roles show this development and change of self – she learns from her experiences. She appears to choose a role based on its ability to enable her to express the sexual knowledge she acquired in the previous roles. This extends the arguments of Astell et al that conduct could change. With each role, the heroine's conduct changes, and her conduct within each role is shown to be dependent on the role. I acknowledge, however, as Merritt does, that the heroine's agency is conditional. The heroine's roles depend "on her wealth and autonomy;" she is only able to achieve this agency because she has the means to, for example, rent houses for her amorous encounters (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 69).

This chapter discusses the development of the heroine's agency as she progresses through the roles of prostitute, "Fantomina," Celia, the Widow Bloomer, and Incognita. As she progresses through each role, the differing conduct of the heroine and Beauplaisir in the same relationship is revealed, and the power dynamic of her relationship with Beauplaisir is exposed. The Hillarian focus on the conduct between the sexes is therefore expressed in *Fantomina*. The heroine's performance gives her visual authority. She has the power to look

in her relationship – Beauplaisir cannot see past her disguises. This ability to see exposes Beauplaisir’s conduct, and reveals the power structure of their relationship. In *Beyond Spectacle*, Merritt develops part of her argument by linking this visual authority with the heroine’s agency. *Fantomina* demonstrates the development of female agency “must refigure women’s role” within a system of viewing that traditionally gives men power because women are the objects of their gaze (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 16). Agency is achieved because masquerade enables women to look and simultaneously evade this male gaze. The heroine looks, so masculine desire becomes the “object of enquiry,” subject to her – and the reader’s – gaze (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 45). She can use her position as observer to become “a theorist of masculinity” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 61). This enables her to “make rational choices,” and she is not stuck in a relationship in which she “receives only ill-treatment” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 61-62). Merritt argues the heroine can dominate Beauplaisir because she has the more complete knowledge – she sees whereas he is “beguiled” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 61-62). I argue instead that the heroine uses her masquerade and resulting visual authority to *balance* the power dynamic in her relationship, creating the possibility of equal agency, where neither partner can dominate.

For me, however, the focus on conduct between the sexes reveals something more: *Fantomina* appears to be more than Haywood’s “mere fictionalization” of her coterie’s philosophy – she appears to be rendering a philosophical solution imaginatively, using the heroine’s relationship with Beauplaisir to work out, perform, the implications of these ideals of behaviour on female agency, particularly sexual consent. The heroine’s agency appears linked to her ability to give consent. She achieves full agency in *Incognita*, and this is the only role in which she has the power in her relationship to express her sexual consent. Consent was a topic of much debate in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Locke, for

example, tackled the philosophical problem of political consent from the first edition of his *Essay* (1690). It was an issue that baffled theorists because, as Jonathan Brody Kramnick writes, “it tested the ability to understand the thoughts that belong to other people and even to oneself” (453). To philosophically argue sex “should be voluntary” presented what he terms a “root paradox” – that is, “consent dwells in the mind, and can only be inferred in practice; it is at once elemental to legitimacy and autonomy and beguilingly inaccessible” (Kramnick 453). This can be adapted to my definition of agency. As I developed in Chapter One, a self has a sense of itself by projecting back, that is, by extending consciousness back to behaviours, ideas, actions, and thoughts in the past, and taking them to be one’s own. This fluidity of consciousness therefore allowed a self to differentiate it-self from other selves – by experience – and allowed a self to develop, change, and grow by these same experiences. Agency can thus be used to infer this consent that “dwells in the mind” of another. In her exploration of her coterie’s ideals, Haywood appears to conclude consent relies on equal agency of both the heroine and Beauplaisir in the relationship.

The prostitute

The heroine takes on the first role, a prostitute at the playhouse, as a curiosity, “to put in practice a little Whim which came immediately into her Head” (42). She discovers she can attract the attentions of Beauplaisir in this role – a man she has admired “in the Drawing-Room,” but because of “her Quality and reputed Virtue” cannot converse with him in the “free and unrestrain’d Manner” (42) she can as a prostitute. She maintains and adapts her masquerade in order to keep the (roving) sexual interest of Beauplaisir whom, after their first encounter, she claims to love: “She loved *Beauplaisir*; it was only he whose Solicitations could give her Pleasure” (51).

How the heroine changes for her roles reflects the contemporary theatrical debate of the gap between the performance of an emotion and the inner self. The heroine appears able, as Hill urged, to take the “*shorter road*” and annex “the *look* to the *idea*” (*Essay* 15-16), creating “the image, the look, and the muscles” of the required emotion. To take on this first role, the heroine changes her dress, “dress[ing] herself as near as she cou’d in the Fashion of those Women who make sale of their Favours” and “muffling her Hoods over her Face” (42). But – as in her subsequent roles – she also appears to change more than her dress. When “A Crowd of Purchasers” gather round her, they do not recognise her: “some cry’d, *Gad, she is mighty like my fine Lady Such-a-one*, naming her own Name” (42). When Beauplaisir looks into her face, a face he has seen in “the Drawing-Room,” he “fancy’d, as many others had done, that she very much resembled that Lady whom she really was” but he cannot recognise her: “the vast Disparity there appear’d between their Characters, prevented him from entertaining even the most distant Thought that they cou’d be the same” (42-43).

Sexual violence

This first sexual encounter is not an amorous “warm” scene of the sort Haywood was famous for but one of force. When the heroine finds herself alone with Beauplaisir, he is “bold,” “resolute,” and she “fearful, confus’d, altogether unprepar’d to resist in such Encounters, and rendered more so, by the extreme Liking she had to him” (46). Critics differ as to how they discuss this. Ballaster defines it as rape, unequivocally: “Beauplaisir rapes her” (*Seductive Forms* 188). Croskery too uses the term “rape.” The scene “is powerfully disturbing,” and the heroine’s confusion about “the social ramifications of disguising her identity ... raises the deepest questions surrounding the definition of consensual sex” (Croskery 73). While expressing agreement with Croskery’s account, Kramnick appears to be ambiguous. He argues “Haywood’s understanding of these questions may not be ours,” this scene is “the

difficult situation of consenting agency between two separate minds” (Kramnick 462), and that both Croskery and Ballaster base their reading “by cutting the final clause, the ‘extreme Liking’” (463) the heroine experiences for Beauplaisir. This shows Croskery and Ballaster’s “nervousness” about Haywood’s “ambiguous treatment of consent and desire” (Kramnick 463).

Merritt does not define it as rape, although she does write the encounter remains “entirely within the economy of male dominance and female submission” (*Beyond Spectacle* 51). The heroine “succumbs” to protect her reputation, but “not without a secret desire to” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 51). Bowers attempts to distinguish three aspects of eighteenth-century sexual relations: “the now familiar (though still problematic) distinction between *courtship*, supposedly a process of mutual consent, *seduction*, which involves the gradual achievement of female collusion with primary male desire, and *rape*, an act of force defined by female resistance or non-consent” (“Representing Resistance” 141, her italics).

I define this encounter as rape. I argue that as the heroine takes on (and as Incognita, creates) her roles, she is finding the role (and therefore the conduct) in which she can express both her desire *and* her consent. Although Bowers’ discussion does not focus on *Fantomina*, by her definition, the heroine is raped. It does not appear to be seduction because Beauplaisir sees her in the role she has assumed. He appears “infinitely charm’d” (43) but expects to pay prostitutes – “he gave himself no farther Trouble, than what were occasioned by Fears of not having Money enough to reach her Price, about him” (46) – not seduce them. For this reason, “He could not imagine for what Reason a Woman, who, if she intended not to be a *Mistress*, had counterfeited the Part of one, and taken so much Pains to engage him, should lament a Consequence which she could not but expect, and till the last Test, seem'd inclinable to grant” (46-47). While I agree our understanding of sexual consent may be different from Haywood’s

and she does not use the term “rape” (according to the OED, its current definition was in use in the 1720s), the narrator does make a point of the heroine being forced. The heroine “struggled all she could,” and Beauplaisir would not have stopped – “he little regarded, or if he had, would have been far from obliging him to desist” (46).

That there is no description of the heroine’s body in this encounter – of how her body responds to Beauplaisir, or of how Beauplaisir responds to her body – strongly suggests she is raped. As Celia, Beauplaisir responds to “her Lips, her Breasts with greedy Kisses, held to his burning Bosom her half-yielding, half-reluctant Body” (53). Incognita’s body is fully part of her sexual experience. Whereas Celia’s body is described in terms of Beauplaisir’s enjoyment, Incognita’s body is described as part of *her* sexual enjoyment. As she prepares to receive Beauplaisir, as she prepares her performance, “she dress’d herself in as magnificent a Manner, as if she were to be that Night at a Ball at Court, endeavouring to repair the want of those Beauties which the Vizard should conceal, by setting forth the others with the greatest Care and Exactness” (65). She dresses to show off, “Her fine Shape, and Air, and Neck, appear’d to great Advantage” (65). This suggests part of the heroine’s development of sexual knowledge is her embodiment, the sexual expression and enjoyment of her body.

Incognita’s body is part of her sexual power. That she hides her face while exposing her body implies Beauplaisir has not actually *seen* her body. It reveals the structure of power in her relationship, particularly in this first encounter. It suggests sex for Beauplaisir is about something other than her body. In the role of Incognita, Beauplaisir leaves the house “determin’d never to re-enter it” (67) because she refuses to unmask. Her performance shows Beauplaisir is having sex with (and desires) the same body he raped and unable to recognise it. This suggests this first encounter in particular (and sex in general) is about something other than sex for Beauplaisir. His desire appears based not on the body but on power.

The heroine's reaction also suggests she is raped. She weeps and appears distracted (46). She also experiences "Some Remains of yet unextinguished Modesty, and Sense of Shame" (48). I acknowledge it is problematic the heroine stays the night in the house, and subsequently expends a vast amount of time, energy, and money on maintaining a masquerade to keep a man not interested in keeping her. The latter could be read as revenge. Kramnick, for example, notes that from here on the heroine "becomes *the* author of her own actions, and seduces and tricks Beauplaisir for the rest of the novel" (464-465, his italics).

Theorists differ in the number of roles they assign the heroine. Most – Merritt in *Beyond Spectacle* for example – appear to assign her four roles, linking the roles of prostitute and "Fantomina." A handful of theorists, such as Croskery, assign the heroine five roles. I assign her five roles, in that she takes on the identity of "Fantomina" after her role of prostitute collapses and she is raped. The role collapses because she cannot escape it. (She learns from her experiences, however, because in the roles she assumes after this, she ensures she can walk away.) Beauplaisir expects sex *because* he sees her as the role: "It was in vain; she would have retracted the Encouragement she had given: In vain she endeavoured to delay, till the next Meeting, the fulfilling of his Wishes" (46). The heroine assumes the second role of "Fantomina," when Beauplaisir asks her identity. "Fantomina" protects her – "if he boasted of this Affair, he should not have it in his Power to touch her Character" (48). It is not initially a role of sexual expression. Croskery argues that behind this role, the heroine "remains remarkably safe from the loss of honor, financial ruin, and emotional harm which traditionally plague the maiden raped by a man who does not intend to marry her" (75).

"Fantomina," and subsequent roles, appear to be a reaction to the collapse of her first role and rape. The heroine appears to be deferring the social consequences of the rape (saving her reputation) – "the Intreague being a Secret, my Disgrace will be so too" (49) – but not the emotional consequences. She appears to be using the roles to find a way of avoiding sexual

violence. At the same time she appears to use the roles – as most theorists agree – to develop the perfect role in which to express her sexual desire. The heroine thus appears to be using her masquerade to find the role in which she can express her sexual desire *safely*. This appears to play out in the text: there are descriptions of four sexual encounters, but the bulk of the text is this first – rape – and the last, in which Incognita balances the power dynamic in her relationship with Beauplaisir.

How the heroine sets up the role of Incognita reveals strong links to her rape. It is, for example, the only role of the five in which she can express both her desire *and* her consent. As Harzewski writes, the “behavior of Incognita, the identity closest to the identity of the protagonist when raped ... mirrors these attributes of reenactments especially in the vizard's risk element as the sole concealing accoutrement” (190). Incognita masks her face, but exposes her body. This is perhaps her truest role in that unlike her previous roles, Incognita does not change her body. Her body does not “perform;” she does not annex “the *look* to the *idea*.” Instead, she sets her body off to her greatest sexual advantage. For Harzewski, Incognita’s “elaborate machinations and level of control are eerie” (190). I agree. It is as if the heroine sets up the role to ensure she has control – and remains in control. This eerie level of control keeps her safe.

“Fantomina”

The heroine’s assumption of the “Fantomina” role is an important moment of visual authority. This moment exposes the sexual double standard. Beauplaisir could not see past her first role, and he has “no Reason to distrust the Truth” of her second (48). But he “did not doubt by the Beginning of her Conduct, but that in the End she would be in Reality, the Thing she so artfully had counterfeited” (48). He knows the heroine is accountable for her actions,

at the same time he knows he is not: he “had good Nature enough to pity the Misfortunes he imagin’d would be her Lot: but to tell her so, or offer his Advice in that Point, was not his Business, at least, as yet” (48). It also exposes the power dynamic between the heroine and Beauplaisir. The moment is an in-between stage; the first role has collapsed, but the heroine has yet to become “Fantomina.” Beauplaisir has “gain’d a Victory, so highly rapturous, that had he known over whom, scarce could he have triumphed more” (46). Beauplaisir does not know, and this gives her power. “Fantomina” enables her to keep this power – “It will not be even in the Power of my Undoer himself to triumph over me” (49) – and allows her to circumvent the sexual double standard: “I shall hear no Whispers as I pass, She is Forsaken: The odious Word *Forsaken* will never wound my Ears; nor will my Wrongs excite either the Mirth or Pity of the talking World” (49). The heroine has visual authority because she sees what Beauplaisir does not – not only her masquerade, but that this masquerade enables her to avoid the consequences “he imagin’d would be her Lot.”

How she talks about sex changes from this moment. In her first role, she appears naive. When she considers Beauplaisir may expect sex because he assumes she is “a Woman, who he supposed granted her Favours without Exception,” she relies on “the Strength of her Virtue, to bear her safe thro’ Tryals more dangerous than she apprehended this to be” (44). This role collapses because he *does* expect sex and she is unable to maintain control of the role. She experiences desire for Beauplaisir, but is unable to articulate it, as if she does not yet understand it: “Strange and unaccountable were the Whimsies she was possess’d of, wild and incoherent her Desires, unfix’d and undetermin’d her Resolutions” (44). During and after the rape, she talks of sex in terms of her reputation and virtue. As she struggles, she knows telling Beauplaisir who she is, exposing the role and revealing “the whole Secret of her Name and Quality,” will ruin her reputation: “the Thoughts of the Liberty he had taken with her, and

those he still continued to prosecute, prevented her, with representing the Danger of being expos'd, and the whole Affair made a Theme for publick Ridicule" (46). When Beauplaisir (unable to see past her role) gives her a bag of gold "for her Favours," she turns on him: "Can all the Wealth you are possess'd of, make a Reparation for my Loss of Honour? Oh! no, I am undone beyond the Power of Heaven itself to help me!" (47).

"Fantomina" talks about sex differently. She mitigates "the Loss of her *Reputation*," and ignores "the Ruin of her *Virtue*" – she "grew perfectly easy with the Remembrance she had forfeited" it and the "more she reflected on the Merits of *Beauplaisir*, the more she excused herself for what she had done" (49). She expects "the Prospect of that continued Bliss" (49). By the time Beauplaisir leaves her to go to Bath, she is talking about sex in terms of pleasure: "Her Design was once more to engage him, to hear him sigh, to see him languish, to feel the strenuous Pressures of his eager Arms, to be compelled, to be sweetly forc'd to what she wished with equal Ardour" (51). These are the "warm" scenes Haywood was famous for.

Celia and the Widow Bloomer

The heroine's use of performance is accentuated in her next two roles. As Celia, she changes her clothes: "a round-ear'd Cap, a short Red Petticoat, and a little Jacket of Grey Stuff" (52). She changes her body: "with her Hair and Eye-brows black'd" and takes on "a broad Country Dialect" (52). She changes her demeanor, taking on "a rude unpolish'd Air" (52). As the Widow Bloomer, the heroine changes her dress, "The Dress she had order'd to be made, was such as Widows wear in their first Mourning"; how she presents her body, "her Hair, which she was accusom'd to wear very loose, both when *Fantomina* and *Celia*, was now ty'd back so strait, and her Pinnars coming so very forward, that there was none of it to be seen;" and

her facial expressions, “together with the most afflicted and penitential Countenance that ever was seen, was no small Alteration to her who us’d to seem all Gaiety” (53-54).

How the heroine changes for these roles appears to reflect the contemporary theatrical debate of how to act an emotion and the gap between this performance and the inner self. Celia and the Widow Bloomer express their desire differently, even though they are the same woman, responding to the same man. This implies the heroine’s roles determine her sexual expression and behaviour. The conduct within each role is pre-determined. Celia is expected to be shy and blushing, to have “seeming Innocence” (53). The heroine has agency in that she can choose the roles, but not her conduct within each role. She appears to have learnt from “Fantomina,” and to have chosen the role of Celia in an attempt to express her newly-acquired sexual knowledge. When Beauplaisir, “fir’d with the first Sight of her,” takes no “farther Notice of her” than “giving her two or three hearty Kisses,” she is unperturbed (52). She knows the role has ignited his interest: “she now understood that Language but too well, easily saw they were the Prelude to more substantial Joys” (52). But the role determines how she expresses her desire. She has to appear “half-yielding, half-reluctant” (53). For Merritt, Celia’s “pretended submission” conceals from Beauplaisir “an active desire that must remain undefined and unarticulated in order for her to retain control over his desire” (*Beyond Spectacle* 55). This suggests the roles assigned to women inhibit their sexual enjoyment, and hinder their sexual power, in that the power structure within the roles is already determined. As Merritt argues, the first roles (other than Incognita) are women “socially inferior to Beauplaisir” and their seduction shows Beauplaisir’s use of sex to affirm “his greater social as well as sexual power” (*Beyond Spectacle* 58).

As Celia, the heroine still faces the possibility of sexual violence. As the Widow Bloomer, she seems to have avoided this possibility. She appears to be learning from her roles, and

choosing them accordingly. The heroine is aware the role of chambermaid comes with the sexual attention of male guests, and appears to have learnt how to avoid possible violence, if not in her choice of role then in being aware of the circumstances in which the role plays out: “there were no others of the Male-Sex in the House, than an old Gentleman, who had lost the Use of his Limbs with the Rheumatism, and had come thither for the Benefit of the Waters, and her belov’d *Beauplaisir*; so that she was in no Apprehensions of any Amorous Violence, but where she wish’d to find it” (52). As Merritt argues, the heroine appears to have chosen the role of Celia with these circumstances in mind. *Beauplaisir* assumes Celia, because she is a servant, is sexually available to him, and she “counts upon this assumption” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 55-56).

As the Widow Bloomer, the heroine can talk more openly about sex than “*Fantomina*” or Celia – “never any Tongue run more voluble than hers, on [its] prodigious Power” (56) – but reveals less of her desire than *Incognita*. The role, however, ensures *Beauplaisir* hears enough to understand “there were Seeds of Fire, not yet extinguish’d, in this fair Widow’s Soul” (56). How the Widow Bloomer is able to articulate her desire implies a more mutual sexual experience than that of “*Fantomina*” or Celia. As she talks with *Beauplaisir* in the coach, “she pass’d to a Description of the Happiness of mutual Affection” to “the unspeakable Extasy of those who meet with equal Ardency” (56). It appears she has learnt from her previous roles, and has chosen the role of the widow in order to meet *Beauplaisir* on more equal sexual terms. When they arrive at the inn, however, when *Beauplaisir* “declar’d himself somewhat more freely” and she experiences “the strenuous Pressures with which at last he ventur’d to enfold her” (56-57), the widow – like “*Fantomina*” and Celia – cannot actively express her desire. She experiences conflict: “not thinking it Decent, for the Character she had assum’d, to yeild so suddenly”, but “unable to deny both his and her own Inclinations” (57). She solves

her dilemma by fainting; Beauplaisir carries her to the bed, and she is “too grateful to her kind Physician at her returning Sense, to remove from the Posture he had put her in” (57).

Rebecca Bocchicchio argues many of Haywood’s heroines experience “in the terms of Augustan medical understanding, a hysterical attack” (96) when faced with seduction – “their bodies refuse to obey the dictates of their modesty” (95), and the heroines experience “hyperventilation,” a “pounding pulse,” “confusion of mind,” and “halting speech” (96). Adapting her argument, Haywood’s texts overproduce hysteria, showing a rift between “surface and substance” (102) similar to the gap created between acting and the emotion being performed. This “surface submission” opens up possible resistance – Haywood’s use of over-hysteria shows the heroine’s reaction is “the result of cultural forces” (102), what happens when a woman desires while unable “to express that desire” (105). A hysterical attack enables the heroine to resolve this dilemma – the attack “leaves them sensate and yet unable to exercise their will ... a way to satisfy their desire without having to admit its existence” (111). That the Widow Bloomer faints consciously suggests she is bridging this gap.

The heroine can claim visual authority within these roles, whereas Beauplaisir cannot see past the masquerade. Beauplaisir “notices” Celia enough for his libido but not enough to discern the woman behind his attraction. When he meets the Widow Bloomer, he cannot recognise her: “he rejected the Belief of having seen her, and suppos’d his Mind had been deluded” (57). These roles have a ready-made power structure that the heroine exploits. For Ingrassia, the heroine “represents women from every point on the social spectrum” and Beauplaisir changes his conduct “in a way that clearly illustrates the very class-specific nature of male-female relationships” (“Stage” 217). In his analysis of Early Modern sexual culture in England, James Grantham Turner writes libertinism was “complicated by the politics of class

and gender” in that it was “not so much a philosophy” applied to “‘free’ or extramarital sexuality” as a set of performances (x), that when applied to sexuality evoked contradictory extremes (xi). Beauplaisir seduces the same woman, and his seduction strategy changes each time. This shows his conduct is constructed, dependant on the role, not on the woman.

Just like the heroine’s conduct, Beauplaisir’s conduct is a performance. He becomes “an able performer” adapting his advances to the heroine’s roles (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 56). When Beauplaisir first meets Celia, he asks her questions “befitting one of the Degree she appear’d to be.” He treats Celia as “one he believes naive and simple” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 55-56). When Beauplaisir meets the Widow Bloomer, he changes his strategy: “He did not, however, offer, as he had done to *Fantomina* and *Celia*, to urge his Passion directly to her, but by a thousand little softning Artifices, which he well knew how to use, gave her leave to guess he was enamour’d” (56). This highlights “the transparency of his strategy” for the reader, as well as the “artful performance” of his seducer (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 57).

But as I noted in Chapter One, the redefinition of the desired object implies the redefinition of the subject who desires. Each role the heroine assumes requires a different conduct from her, *and* a different conduct from Beauplaisir. The heroine’s masquerade reveals the *interdependence* of the conduct between the sexes. When the heroine’s roles and therefore her conduct within these roles is pre-determined – such as prostitute, chambermaid, widow – Beauplaisir’s conduct is also pre-determined, he knows how to behave. The heroine, however, creates the role of Incognita. In this role, the heroine has full agency. She is able to bridge the gap between her emotion and its performance because the role has no pre-determined conduct. In this role, she is fully embodied, able to express her sexual desire, and has equal power in her relationship with Beauplaisir. Beauplaisir, however, has no established behaviour to draw on in his encounter with Incognita. He has no idea how to

behave. He leaves “the House determin’d never to re-enter it” (67). Their relationship is shown to be an equal performance on two levels: equal in that both occupy roles, and therefore equal in that in order to ensure equal agency, a balance of power between the sexes, the conduct of both must change. This suggests to me that Haywood is working out the implications of her coterie’s ideas.

Incognita

The heroine creates the role of Incognita. Her conduct within this role is therefore not pre-determined. She can determine her sexual expression. Her creation of the role is “if possible, more extraordinary than all her former Behaviour” (61). She expresses her desire, and determines the boundaries of this expression, in a letter of invite to Beauplaisir. She can express her desire, is therefore able to bridge the gap between her passion and its performance, and achieve full agency in the role. She states what she wants: “*I am infinite in Love ... and if you have a Heart not too deeply engag’d, should think myself the happiest of my Sex in being capable of inspiring it with some Tenderness*” (63). When Beauplaisir meets with her as Incognita, she does not need to feign a reluctance she does not feel – “It would have been a ridiculous Piece of Affection in her to have seem’d coy in complying with what she herself had been the first in desiring: She yeilded without even a Shew of Reluctance” – and experiences mutual sexual enjoyment: “if there be any true Felicity in an Amour such as theirs, both here enjoy’d it to the full” (65). There is no gap between what she feels and what she is able to express. Unlike her previous roles, she appears able to give her consent.

The heroine has visual authority. This ability to see exposes Beauplaisir’s duplicitous conduct and the sexual double standard, and reveals the power structure of their relationship. She appears to have learnt from her previous roles and to apply this learning to the role of

Incognita: she is able to predict Beauplaisir's conduct and has prepared the role accordingly. She addresses her invitation to "the All-conquering Beauplaisir," and draws attention to the process of her learning: "*I Imagine not that 'tis a new Thing to you, to be told, you are the greatest Charm in Nature to our Sex*" (63).

The heroine, however, also states her boundaries in the invite, and that these boundaries keep her safe. Beauplaisir is asked not to enquire "*the Knowledge of my Name*" because "*the Sight of my Face will render [it] no Secret*" (63). He does not intend to adhere to the conditions of Incognita's invite, however, and does not expect her to either: he did not imagine "*Incognita varied so much from the Generality of her Sex, as to be able to refuse the Knowledge of any Thing to the Man she lov'd with that Transcendency of Passion she profess'd*" (64). His conduct is transparent in that he replies he will honour the conditions: "*I shall, however, endeavour to restrain myself in those Bounds you are pleas'd to set me*" (64). She is fully aware he does not intend to comply: "when she was told how inquisitive he had been concerning her Character and Circumstances, she could not forbear laughing heartily to think of the Tricks she had play'd him" (64). This awareness is part of her power in the relationship. When she receives Beauplaisir's reply, she contemplates "her own Strength of Genius, and Force of Resolution, which by such unthought-of Ways could triumph over her Lover's Inconstancy" (64).

Incognita's ability to keep herself sexually safe is linked to her ability to predict Beauplaisir's conduct. This highlights Beauplaisir's role in that safety and the interdependence of conduct between the sexes: his duplicitous behaviour shows he does not seem to consider her safety important. He expects the double standard to keep *him* safe. He "little fear[ed] any Consequence which could ensue" from the proposed meeting (64). He also expects it to be predictable. He draws on "his many Successes with the Ladies" to give "him Encouragement

enough to believe” (64) the proposed encounter will fulfil his expectations. He appears unaware the sexual power dynamic can be changed.

The heroine, however, maintains that “eerie” control. When she refuses to unmask, Beauplaisir “with such an undeniable Earnestness pressed to be permitted to tarry with her the whole Night;” he is “determin’d in his Mind to compass what he so ardently desir’d” (66). She knows why he is asking, and appears prepared: “she was not without a Thought that he had another Reason for making it besides the Extremity of his Passion, and had it immediately in her Head how to disappoint him” (66). They sleep in a darkened room and Beauplaisir awakes in a darkened room: “she had taken care to blind the Windows in such a manner, that not the least Chink was left to let in Day” (67). When she still refuses to unmask the following morning, he leaves determined not to return.

The heroine’s mask balances the power dynamic in the relationship. Although “prodigiously charm’d,” Beauplaisir is “wild with Impatience for the Sight of a Face which belong’d to so exquisite a Body” (65). He appears preoccupied; the mask seems to draw more of his attention than sex – “not in the Heighth of all their mutual Raptures, could he prevail on her to satisfy his Curiosity with the Sight of her Face” (65-66). There appears to be something missing for Beauplaisir in this sexual encounter. The boundary of knowing Incognita’s body but not her identity appears to hinder his sexual pleasure. When trying to persuade her to unmask, he tells her, “this Restraint was the greatest Enemy imaginable to the Happiness of them both” (66). Incognita keeps her boundaries. She refuses to unmask, to “gratify an Inquisitiveness, which, in her Opinion, had no Business with his Love” (66). She knows this exposure will end her ability to express her sexual desire, in that she will lose her sexual safety: “He complain’d of her Behaviour in Terms that she would not have been able to resist yielding to, if she had not been certain it would have been the Ruin of her Passion” (67).

Incognita keeps her power because Beauplaisir does not see her face or know her name. He has no power over her. She has the option of walking away.

In refusing to unmask, she reveals this “Inquisitiveness” *is* the “Business with his Love.” As I argued in Chapter Two, Haywood uses the tropes of the genre to show Beauplaisir’s sexual desire is “less about looking at a particular woman’s body” – he has made love with the same woman in four different roles without being aware of it – and “more about the fictions that make the feminine body attractive.” For Croskery, the heroine has “discovered a significant difference between her desires and Beauplaisir’s” (89). Beauplaisir’s desire is based on “sexual victory ... as the dominant spectator,” not physical pleasure (89). This also appears to play out in the story – the first sexual encounter in each role is described, but that the pair continue to have sex after this encounter is intimated. These encounters are not expanded on. It is as if only the first encounter is of interest to Beauplaisir.

Beauplaisir rejects the role of Incognita, and leaves “the House determin'd never to re-enter it, till she should pay the Price of his Company with the Discovery of her Face, and Circumstances” (67). The heroine is aware of “the Price of his Company” in a way Beauplaisir is not. In her previous roles she has experienced rape, and the loss of his interest in “Fantomina,” Celia, and the Widow Bloomer. Beauplaisir sees her refusal to unmask as a lack of trust in him – “he made no Scruple of expressing the Sense he had of the little Trust she reposed in him, and at last plainly told her, he could not submit to receive Obligations from a Lady, who thought him incapable of keeping a Secret” (67) – but by his conduct has not demonstrated trustworthiness. He cannot be trusted to keep her sexually safe. For Harzewski, the heroine is “an exceptional young woman growing increasingly dependent on stratagems and disguises employed to entice a smooth operator who rapes her and then

dumps her, in modern parlance, three times” (187). Whatever she does, however she performs, “Beauplaisir will still have ‘a Heart inclined to rove’” (Harzewski 187).

For Merritt, Incognita “evades the dominating male gaze entirely,” concomitantly subjecting Beauplaisir “to the discomforts of being the object of someone’s unhindered and unobstructed looking” (*Beyond Spectacle* 62). This exposes Beauplaisir’s objectives in the relationship: “Incognita’s mask reveals the voyeuristic impulse that lies at the heart of male sexuality” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 63). Power is in the eye of the beholder. Incognita denies Beauplaisir this visual authority. For Merritt, “Incognita dismantles the entire apparatus of specular relations which accords power to a dominant male gaze” (*Beyond Spectacle* 63-64). I disagree with Merritt’s conclusion, however. She takes this to mean Beauplaisir “enjoy[s] Incognita in fragments” – he “has access only to her body” because the heroine has achieved disembodiment, a split she has been creating “all along between her subjectivity (her identity) and her body as merely a fetishized object” (Merritt, *Beyond Spectacle* 64). For me, Incognita’s power comes from her body. She uses her body, its ability to change, masquerade, and perform, to deny Beauplaisir visual authority and expose the real object of his sexual desire – power. Her power comes from the full embodiment of her-self.

This embodiment and therefore power is also linked to her ability to consent, to express her sexual desire safely. For Kramnick, the heroine gains agency as she exploits the uncertainty of consenting agency (464-465): how we can know what is in the mind of another. For Kramnick, the culmination of the heroine’s subjectivity is “the constancy of her objectification” – to “desire is to be serially the object of someone else’s desire” (466). He implies Haywood adapts Locke’s ideas of consciousness. Locke argued consciousness was “an ever-present feature of waking minds, a recognition that one is thinking” and this made consciousness “the very seat of personal identity” (Kramnick 466-467). This locates

consciousness within the person. But Haywood appears to distribute consciousness from mind to mind, and this “loosens thinking and desiring from the subject” (Kramnick 467). The heroine therefore attains agency because she is desired, rather than she desires – “the novel asks its reader to credit the young lady with volition precisely when she sees herself from the perspective of someone else who considers her to be an object” (Kramnick 467). Haywood “makes a clear departure from Locke” because the heroine’s agency does not arise, as Locke would argue, from her inner self, but from that self “in concert with others” (Kramnick 468).

While I agree Haywood appears to adapt and use Locke’s ideas of consciousness and its fluidity, I disagree with Kramnick’s conclusion. The heroine’s agency *does* arise from her inner self, because she bridges the gap between this inner self and her outer performance. Haywood solves the paradox of consent using performance; using passion, she could explore “the thoughts that belong to other people” and the thoughts that belong to “oneself.” She can bridge the gap. Because of the interdependency of conduct between the sexes, however, the solution to the paradox of consent relies on both partners’ ability to develop, learn, and change – it relies on equal agency. As the heroine develops her roles, and grows and learns from these roles (she develops agency), she also develops knowledge of Beauplaisir – she knows how he will behave. This knowledge keeps her safe. This knowledge leads to her embodiment, and the full sexual expression of her-self. It is knowledge of her-self.

Conclusion

This thesis argued the possibility that Haywood used tropes of performance from her theatrical career to work out the implications of the Hillarian ideals of progressive conduct on female agency in *Fantomina*, particularly the implication of sexual consent. She rendered her philosophical solution imaginatively. I began, however, by noting the similarity between the ideas she (and others at the time) was exploring and gender theory today.

Taylor's conception of the social imaginary can give an idea of how we use these ideas to define ourselves today – and performance emerges as crucial to the process. We act out our ideas. Our collective actions – “the ‘repertory’ of collective actions at the disposal of a given group in society,” those “common actions that they know how to undertake” (Taylor 25) – create our collective consciousness. The idea may lead to new practices and behaviours, which then inform the social imaginary, or it may reinterpret an established practice and transform it (Taylor 109). This acting out of the idea is crucial, because the idea cannot become dominant in our social imaginary, beating out its competitors, without “this penetration/transformation of our imaginary” (Taylor 29).

Haywood's participation in manuscript also emerges as an essential component – it was the ideas of her coterie she was working out – as well as her choice of genre. As Fletcher argues, “[t]aken performatively, texts are sites of definition, redefinition, and disruption,” they are “intimate participants in the production and reproduction of the logical (or illogical) systems and matrices through which we are defined and define ourselves” (14).

For me, consistently emerging throughout this thesis is the idea that Haywood appears to have created a way of developing knowledge based not on the intellect but on the passions.

Tierney-Hynes argues that as “a theorist of the passions,” Haywood uses the passions in fiction to enable the reader to “read” their heart and so fulfil the philosophical imperative “know thyself.” I can see Haywood used masquerade and theatrical performance to develop a system of self-knowledge that relied on its expression through emotion, rather than through the mind. This thesis showed this can be extended beyond self-knowledge – Incognita is able to predict Beauplaisir’s conduct, for example, so it appears this system can extend to knowledge of others. I can see it extending a lot further.

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