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"THE DISTEMPER OF A GENTLEMAN": GROTESQUE VISUAL AND LITERARY DEPICTIONS OF GOUT IN GREAT BRITAIN 1744-1826

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ABSTRACT

In this dissertation I explore the way in which visual and literary representations of gout in British literature and popular culture during the period 1744-1826 evince anxieties regarding over-consumption, particularly in relation to imperial expansion. I argue that the prevalence of gout in graphic satire indicates a common cultural understanding and perception of upper-class over-consumption of food, alcohol, material goods, and sex that threatens the health of the entire British body politic. These depictions provide a way through which the interests of those outside of the ruling classes can begin to develop a sense of community and subtly articulate a voice calling for an alteration or revision of the unwritten constitution of the nation. In chapters one through three I demonstrate the ways in which examples of gout in graphic satire evidence widespread dissatisfaction with upper-class over-consumption as it affects the nation's political, economic, and social systems. In chapter four I examine representations of gouty men of the aristocracy and upper gentry in Sarah Fielding's *The Countess of Dellwyn* and Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random*; I contend that Fielding and Smollett offer rather more radical and nuanced depictions of this stock figure than those common within the graphic satire of the era. These authors' representations thus offer greater possibilities for revision of the unwritten constitution structuring the nation and its institutions. In chapter five I argue that Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* depicts Mr. Harlowe as a nouveau riche character representative of the changing physiognomy of the upper classes; his over-consumption demonstrates the contagious nature of immoderation and the tragic effects that it has upon women, who are treated as commodities used to enable further aggregation and aggrandizement.

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Introduction

> For humble individuals like myself, there is only one poor comfort, which is this, viz. that gout, unlike any other disease, kills more rich men than poor, more wise men than simple.
>
> --Thomas Sydenham

My project examines the ways in which gout was constructed in Great Britain during the period 1744-1826. With examples drawn from both popular culture and the novel, I conclude that these representations demonstrate societal anxiety regarding over-consumption by men from the nobility and gentry classes. I begin with a personal story. I was diagnosed with diabetes in early February of 2014. I was devastated. I knew I was predisposed to the disease because of my genetics; both of my parents, all four grandparents, and at least two great-grandparents are or were diabetic. Still, I blamed myself. I had made an effort to exercise frequently and eat right. I had thought I could stave off the disease by living a healthy life, but it did not work, and I thought I had failed. I saw myself as I thought society saw me and others who had Type II diabetes: fat, weak-willed, undisciplined, and lazy. Then, though, I had a talk with my doctor, who explained to me the factors that were out of my control, mainly genetics in this case, as well as the incredible amount of stress I was under trying to finish my PhD. She looked me straight in the eyes and said, “Calinda, this is not something you did or did not do. We cannot just escape our genetics.”

Although her words made me feel better, it wasn’t until several weeks later, when I talked to my advisor about the issue, that I understood what I had been doing. I was

ascribing a set of values and a metaphorical significance to what I saw as—what society had told me was—a disease of consumption. This incident and the extreme irony of its coincidence with my doctoral project showed me that society is still struggling, as Susan Sontag explains in *Illness as Metaphor*, to understand and cope with our fears about disease by using metaphor. I recognized that presumed diseases of over-consumption were not a thing of the past. A seeming worldwide obesity epidemic and its representations in the media demonstrate the continued tendency toward imbuing diseases with symbolic significance. Even gout is making a big comeback, as evidenced by advertisements on television of prescription medicines to treat the disease. That none of this discourse surrounding disease and consumption is new is what I will demonstrate with this project.

Early in my graduate studies I began to notice that gouty characters were depicted frequently in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novel, often the object of mockery and scorn, and I concluded that these satirical representations were so commonplace as to constitute a significant cultural trope. But although I knew the disease was seen by many (often mistakenly) as the consequence of over-consumption and greed and that today, societal blame happens with regard to many diseases, the weight of projections of metaphorical significance onto the body was not something with which I could really identify until I became one of the diseased.

The important work of Michel Foucault and feminist theorists such as Rachel Blau DuPlessis, Julia Kristeva, and Hélène Cixous has trained us to look at the body as a means of learning more about the ideologies of particular cultures. Their theories have laid important groundwork for scholarship on the body and disease, but there is still much

work to be done to gain a clearer understanding of the role of the body in reflecting social mores and structures of power and discipline. Foucault's work in particular has often been criticized for taking a monolithic approach to this subject, leaving room for—and indeed requiring—more nuanced approaches to this area of scholarship. My study furthers the project of increasing understanding of the way(s) in which representations of and discourses surrounding the body enable us to better understand both the cultures of the past and the means by which contemporary society might replicate these same systems of regulating the body in its individual and social forms. In the following section I provide both an overview of the historical milieu of eighteenth-century Britain and of recent scholarship on the body and on gout in particular.

Great Britain in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries was the scene of great change. Frank O'Gorman points out that because of wars, religious ideology, and systemic political shifts, Britons began to develop a sense of national identity in the eighteenth century, despite their differing backgrounds and classes (O'Gorman 96-97). Linda Colley further contends that a sense of Britishness developed because of the physical separation that resulted from Great Britain's position as an island nation and Britons' own perceived differences from Europeans, which were based largely on a shared commitment to Protestantism and antagonism toward Catholic France (55). At the same time, O'Gorman argues, an elite ruling class of land-owning Britons emerged who were increasingly cohesive in their manners, values, beliefs, and lifestyles (98). Part of this lifestyle included rich eating and drinking as a means of demonstrating wealth and hospitality. Perhaps as a result of the famines that plagued Britain and Europe from the thirteenth through the seventeenth centuries, Britons seemed to understand that hearty

eating and drinking warded off disease and death (Roy Porter "Consumption" 59). And, because these wealthier members of society could afford to do so, they did indeed eat and drink heartily. In fact, the British of the Georgian era were soon notorious for their gluttony: Roy Porter notes that they were said to be "digging their graves with their teeth" ("Consumption" 60-61).

This heavy consumption by the upper classes did not end with the eighteenth century, though. Sally Mitchell observes that the Regency, during which the decadent Prince George (later George IV) ruled the country in his ailing father's stead, was famous for aristocratic extravagance, and that the Industrial Revolution in Britain, beginning in about 1780 and continuing through the nineteenth century, saw a shift from an agrarian economy to an industrial one (Mitchell 2-3). Once-humble persons made fortunes from industry, which resulted in a new moneyed class. As Mitchell notes, railroads and the improvement of roads for horse-drawn transportation also drastically changed consumption habits for Britons of all classes; improved transportation resulted in cheaper and better-quality foodstuffs for everyone as the nineteenth century progressed (6); increasingly throughout the course of the early nineteenth century, working class persons, whose diets were comprised chiefly of bread, potatoes, tea, and "drippings" of bacon or beef, were able to afford a greater variety of meats and produce transferred from other parts of the country because of the reduced prices. The upper classes, however, had always been able to procure a greater variety and better quality of food, particularly proteins, and indeed, the diet of upper and even middle-class Britons was largely meat-based. Mitchell points out that menus and cookbooks for both classes call for a greater amount of meat than those for Europeans of similar classes (126). L. A. Healey cites the

physician William Cadogan as saying that the Englishman had no knowledge of temperance whatsoever—"What was temperance to the Spaniard or Italian was downright starvation to the Englishman" (qtd in "Port Wine" 660). The hearty appetites of wealthy Britons, once thought to ensure their health, soon led to sickness for the greatest consumers, men of the upper-middle and upper classes. Gout is the disease that most effectively demonstrates the consequences of over-consumption.

Gouty men have limped across the annals of history since ancient times. Alexander the Great, Charlemagne (Yoo), and Khublai Khan (Rossabi 227) each conquered new territories, but none could conquer gout. Gout didn't stop da Vinci (Leapman), Milton (Forsyth 62), or Charles Dickens (Slater 582) from creating masterpieces, but one can assume this incredibly painful ailment hampered their enjoyment of success.

Today we know gout is a form of rheumatoid arthritis in which needle-like deposits of uric acid form in the joints of the sufferer, usually beginning with the big toe (Brewerton 121). The deposits of uric acid are caused by eating and drinking substances high in purines: foodstuffs such as many game meats, mutton, shellfish, and fortified alcohols such as port wine or champagne (L. Healy "Port Wine" 662). During the period of my study—1744 to 1826—none of this food or drink would have been regularly available to people of the lower and lower-middle classes, hence gout's designation as "the patrician malady" (Porter and Rousseau 285).

While gout has maintained a constant presence among the wealthy for ages, it becomes particularly noticeable in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British popular culture, especially in the form of morality poems and stories, news items about

the aristocracy and gentry, advertisements, and pictures in *The Spectator*, *The Examiner*, *The New London Magazine*, and many other periodicals. As well, one may note frequent representations of gout in the developing genre of the novel. The rise of the printing press and the emergence of a more literate public meant that the overall number of published materials itself increased, and with it, the increased number of published materials dealing with gout. The prevalence of representations of the disease cannot be ignored or dismissed as simply a sign of the times in which many notable figures and wealthy persons were stricken. Instead, I contend that depictions of gout are metaphorically significant because of the nature of the disease and how it is presumed to be contracted, as well as because of the persons who are depicted as sufferers—generally men of the upper-middle and upper classes. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century illustrations of gout present an often-humorous image of the disease and its victims as greedy, wealthy over-consumers who reap the fruits of their own gluttony. These depictions represent a public consciousness of British upper/upper-middle-class masculinity and demonstrate a sense of societal anxiety regarding the health and stability of this group as a political body that decided policies for and dictated the actions of the ever-expanding British Empire. (That given, I acknowledge that through the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Industrial Revolution brought changes to the old order of ranks and thus to the classes who were increasingly able to claim political power, an issue I explore below.)

I examine eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century visual depictions of gout and its illustrations ascribed to particular characters within selected novels as a metaphorically significant, socially charged disease. Sontag notes that disease metaphors

are frequently used as rhetorical tools to discuss the trials and difficulties facing the social and/or political body. Margaret Healy argues that, in fact, metaphors of the body are extremely effective rhetorical devices because they "facilitate understanding and […] enable us to have a cognitive hold on the more problematic, intangible experiences of our everyday existence" (Healy 1).

While the name of the disease, "gout," provides a label for the condition and its associated symptoms, it is important to examine visual and written representations of gout because of the complexity with which its metaphorical significance can be read. Not only was gout contingent upon consuming these rich foodstuffs, but the sufferer was also thought to have had to consume them in excess in order to contract the disease. Over-consumption as the root cause of gout then comprises part of its metaphorical significance. The disease and its visual indicator, a swollen foot wrapped in a white bootie, are inexorably linked with intemperate eating and drinking; the bootie serves as a cue to viewers that the person who has gout has engaged in such activities. The link between over-consumption and gout's visual indication serves as what Charles Stanton Peirce calls an indexical indicator because they have a presumably existential relationship (Sturken and Cartwright 32); that is, the bootie has coexisted with the disease, which is known to be caused by over-consumption. Gout is therefore always already metaphorically linked with over-consumption, and it is indicated in graphics by the presence of the victim's wrapped foot. Gout's cultural meaning is derived largely from its indexical meaning that is a trace of the real disease and its symptoms.

In the eighteenth century, "over-consumption" connoted consuming beyond what was necessary to ensure good health. In the texts I examine, images of corpulence and

gout signify eating and drinking too much. John Evelyn's 1699 *Acetaria, or a Discourse of Sallets* recommends a plain diet emphasizing vegetables, while William Buchan, author of the extremely popular *Domestic Medicine, or a Treatise on the Prevention and Cure of Diseases* (1769), advised eating meals consisting of more vegetables than meat at regular hours each day. For Georgian people, such healthy, moderate diets laid the foundation for a healthy social body. Similarly, over-consumption signaled living beyond one's income and could refer to exceeding the limits of good taste with regard to displays of wealth (ostentatious spending on one's table, garish displays of costly jewels and dress, filling one's home with pretentious furnishings, and driving about in showy equipages). Many treatises and religious and medical discourses of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries advised moderation, and popular images and other texts of the era showed that when immoderation was the order of the day, individuals and society as a whole were primed to suffer.

Another factor critical to gout's metaphorical significance is its projection of gender and class as closely linked to its cause. As will become apparent, those represented with this ailment in the eighteenth century are almost exclusively male and upper-class—male because men are more genetically predisposed to develop gout (Brewerton 121). Upper-class and upper-middle-class men suffered from gout more frequently because poorer people could not afford diets rich in protein and expensive fortified alcohols. Thus, men of the upper and upper-middle classes—not men in the lower and lower-middle classes—appear in visual and literary representations of the disease.

Perhaps this trope tells us something about the critical mindset of the print-makers and those who solicited such work from them as well as that of the writers who employ such metaphors. It is important to note that the majority of caricature artists were involved in the trade of drawing and engraving as a means of earning a living. Only John Colley Nixon seems to have produced his works without monetary aspirations (Cust). James Gillray, in spite of his talents in other mediums, chose to pursue caricature despite its comparatively low pay as a means of exercising his sharp sense of humor and providing political and social commentary (McConnell and Heneage). Hogarth, too, created his moral and satirical art for pecuniary reasons (Bindman). While some artists created their own pieces independently, most drew or engraved at the request of publishers for a certain type of work; a radical publication might request that Gillray create a lampoon of a government figure as a means of criticizing a particular law, while a more conservative press might place an order for a morale-boosting caricature of Napoleon. Unless one knows specifically what terms these pictures were created under, it is difficult to determine exactly whose message is being delivered in these satirical graphics.

However, thanks to art historians such as M. Dorothy George, we do know that the market for satire during the latter part of the eighteenth and earlier nineteenth centuries was congested, with artists such as Cruikshank struggling to keep creating more inventive and novel pieces to catch the attention of buyers. Because of the financial motives expressed by most artists, one can safely assume that the intent for creating these works was as a means both of earning a living and of standing out amongst competitors. Some of these artists--Hogarth, Gillray, and Cruikshank--made names for themselves and

were celebrities. Printers' shop windows were popular sites of display. As well, while surviving prints and engravings indicate fairly substantial prices of sixpence or a shilling, George cautions us to remember that these better-quality pieces are the ones that have survived, while prints on lower-quality paper would have deteriorated more quickly but were likely more plentiful. She goes on to say that cheap prints were consumed by all but the very poorest, and almost every house would display prints on the walls for decoration (George *Hogarth* 17). We can conclude, then, that the medium of production of these prints determined who consumed them. Engraved books and portfolios, which were usually produced by subscription, were bought by the wealthy, while cheap single prints were purchased by the working classes. Nonetheless, these graphics were consumed by people of all classes.

Class itself is a complex notion, particularly during this era. Increasingly throughout the second half of the eighteenth century, people were making fortunes through trade and the industrialization of labor and goods in Great Britain. O'Gorman observes that the nation pursued a course of imperial expansion throughout both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a means of securing new markets for raw materials and manufactured goods, which resulted in vast economic gains for those who controlled such materials and goods in the private sector (177). These early capitalists also contributed to the gustatory consumption practices of the nation by bringing back such goods as tea, sugar, liquors, coffee, and other exotic foodstuffs and making them available for daily consumption. According to O'Gorman, along with this economic boom also came the Industrial Revolution, stimulated by the aforementioned commercial expansion (324), which made vast fortunes for mill and factory owners in the late

eighteenth century and well throughout the nineteenth. Despite differences in the ways by which one acquired fortune, one defining cause of gout was either having money or having a close connection to those who had it. It is important to note that men made newly wealthy from industrial expansion were not honored in the culture to the extent that those who were historically well-established in their wealth and position were, that is, members of the landed aristocracy and gentry. Wealth, as one of the ostensible conditions leading to gout, became somewhat of a stereotype of the gout sufferer. However, despite the ascribed connection of wealth to gout, wealth is not itself a medical factor but rather a sociological circumstance whose correlation with the disease seems to place it almost within the realm of a pre-condition necessary for developing gout.

While gout seems to have developed as a disease almost exclusive to the upper and upper-middle classes, I do not wish to suggest that this group of people was truly cohesive simply because of their shared access to wealth and luxury items. Upper classes in Georgian England included the titled nobility, the landed gentry, and wealthy members of professions such as the clergy, barristers, and physicians. However, "class" was not a term or a concept that was in play during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Rather, persons identified standing in terms of more concrete situations such as their loyalties with a particular political group or religious sect or by the tangible things they associated with gaining wealth and position. While class was not a term the British were using in the eighteenth century, everyone made distinctions within their own social spheres (Wahrman 49).

R. S. Neale discusses these distinctions in both pre- and post-industrial England in *Class in English History 1660-1850*. He contends that pre-industrial England was

characterized by a number of different strata based on the possession (or lack) of property and the corresponding power and status that came with it. These landowners combined with the monied interest, those who are often termed usurers, and the Crown and its administrators to form the top stratum. But there were also divisions within this stratum, particularly between landowners and the monied interest (Neale 74-76). Despite these conflicts, these three groups came to increasingly realize their shared interest and "underlying unity" against the propertyless (Neale 77).

Post-industrial Britain is divided, Neale argues, into a five-class model headed by the upper class, those of the nobility and higher orders of the gentry, who held the greatest authority (131). This group is followed by the middle class, holders of commercial and industrial property and of senior professional and military rank. Members of this group aspire for acceptance into the upper class and are thus deferential to its members, while the middling classes, the next social tier, are made up of a literate, artisanal, group of aspiring professionals and artists who lack this deference toward their "betters" and instead wish to remove the power and privileges of the upper class (Neale 131). Meanwhile, the working class is divided into two groups under Neale's model: Group A, consisting of skilled and semi-skilled factory and domestic industry workers, which also lacked deference to the higher classes and wanted protection rather than liberation from their government, and Group B, which was made up of agricultural laborers, non-factory urban workers, domestic servants, urban poor, and most women from the working classes. Group B was characterized as "deferential and dependent" (Neale 131).

The notion of class and rank was in flux during this time period, particularly during the time coinciding with the Industrial Revolution. The term "class" was originally associated with forms or groups in an educational context, as is still common today in reference to grades or forms. The practice of using class to refer to social position originated in the period from 1770-1840, according to Raymond Williams, and was a result of the gradual realization that social position is "made rather than merely inherited" (27). Penelope Corfield argues that the word was used in addition to other terms designating social hierarchy for some time before developing its modern connotation; it gained popularity and was used alongside "sort" and "part" to designate socioeconomic class and the possibility of conflict (112-114). She observes that in the eighteenth century, the previous persistence of the "Great Chain of Being" as a means of organizing and explaining social structure was thwarted by "social mutability," or a world in flux, caused by a lack of obvious designations of rank that resulted from significant changes in British society such as the repeal of sumptuary laws, more diverse sources of wealth, and "the decay of subordination" (106-108). It was no longer obvious from a person's manners or appearance what rank or order s/he was; therefore, new terms and designations were developed in order to describe these new conditions.

In his groundbreaking work *The Origins of the English Novel, 1600-1740,* Michael McKeon discusses this epistemic and philosophic upheaval, what he terms "status instability," that resulted in tremendous conceptual changes within both literature and the social order. He characterizes the social order prior to the late seventeenth century as based upon "aristocratic ideology," in which virtue is conferred on the basis of birth and inheritance (21). Aristocratic ideology shifts to "progressive ideology" in the

late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, which criticizes the arbitrary nature of aristocratic privilege due to its conference of virtue based on birth and instead advocates rectifying this system with one based on personal achievement and merit. Nonetheless, progressive ideology too came under fire from "conservative ideology," largely because the divide between the rich and poor was still deep, yet there was no helpful softening of the situation through the notion of inherited honor (23).

Indeed, E. P. Thompson discusses this notion of "helpful softening" between persons of higher station and those below them in rank. Class in the eighteenth century, Thompson contends, was based upon a vertical model rather than one that is horizontally divided into opposing classes (149). He characterizes the relations between those of higher rank and the rest of the population in the eighteenth century as exhibiting the traits of a paternalistic society rather than one characterized by consistent conflict and strife (149). Certainly hegemony existed, and the aristocracy and gentry held most practical political power, yet paternalism implies a soft, symbiotic, face-to-face relationship between the respective parties. Instead, when the populace did rebel against the aristocracy and gentry, their intent was to punish them rather than overthrow the hegemonic system (164).

Thompson discusses class in some depth in *The Making of the English Working Class*, where he argues both that class must be treated as a relationship rather than an entity, and that identification and labeling of these relationships only occur after the fact of their historical presence; hence, class is fluid and ever-evolving (Thompson 9). Until around the 1790s, the relationship between the higher orders and the remainder of the population maintained a paternalistic aspect. However, during the late eighteenth and

early nineteenth centuries, "most English working people came to feel an identity of interests as between themselves, and as against their rulers and employers. This ruling class was itself much divided, and in fact only gained in cohesion over the same years because certain antagonisms were resolved (or faded into relative insignificance) in the face of an insurgent working class" (11). In turn, the common Briton did not hold a democratic stance or favor popular social and political reform. Instead, he would be better described as "anti-absolutist"; he might have relatively few individual rights, but he was protected against absolute and arbitrary power (79-80). The notion of class, then, developed within a frame of conflict between the highest orders and the middle and lower sorts.

Nancy Armstrong further discusses the development of the concept of class in her important work *Desire and Domestic Fiction*; she argues that, during the eighteenth century, conduct books geared toward a female audience demonstrated a clear anti-aristocratic sentiment criticizing the perceived excesses of the higher orders (72). Armstrong's argument demonstrates that character and virtue were developing into qualities perceived as learned or developed rather than inherent or dependent upon wealth and high social station.

J. C. D. Clark and Roy Porter contend that the eighteenth century was characterized by far greater stability of aristocratic hegemony than do Thompson, Armstrong, and Corfield. Clark argues that some interpretations overplay the notion of class conflict and read political, cultural, and economic events in terms of later events such as the Industrial Revolution and rise of the middle class. Such readings of eighteenth-century history ignore the evident social and political stability of the

monarchy and aristocracy that characterize the period, he contends. Roy Porter, too, argues against the existence of a rising middle class, noting that aristocratic power did not decline over the course of the century, which the emergence of an anti-aristocratic middle class would have necessitated. He claims, instead, that the strength of this group from the seventeenth century to the end of the eighteenth demonstrates "the phenomenal tenacity of the English social hierarchy" (*English Society* 57-9, 66).

The continued dominance of the upper class does seem evident from historical record. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the middling and lower orders did not feel and express dissatisfaction with the wealthy and powerful. The unflattering images of the wealthy, powerful, over-consuming man with gout in the graphics I examine evidence these tremors of discontent beneath the surface; they demonstrate important subversive behaviors that act as small fissures in the foundation of aristocratic hegemony during the long eighteenth century.

Amanda Vickery observes that interaction and intermarriage were frequent between the upper and lesser gentry and even between the wealthy merchant classes, and indeed interests, leisure activities, manners, and other facets of lifestyle, coupled with proximity, led to a relatively uniform society (Vickery 26 and 35). Wahrman argues that developments in communications and travel resulted in some homogeneity among those in the elite orders and those in the middling ranks who had acquired the wealth and education to advance socially, but that despite this cohesion within the upper and upper-middle classes as a whole, there was a considerable divide between those in eighteenth-century Britain who saw themselves as part of an emerging national society and those who were part of a polymorphous communal-provincial culture: persons in the middle

classes who considered themselves gentlemen capitalists, together with landed gentlemen who became involved in capitalist activities, formed a distinct socio-cultural milieu in which they followed an ideology of civility tied to cultivated refinement, but those who saw themselves as independent bourgeois defined themselves in opposition to the national culture and developed their own local values and behaviors (Wahrman 43, 44 and 55). Their differing interests in developing these identities resulted in some political and social strain on both local and national levels.

While the behaviors, manners, dress, and leisure activities of the differing factions within the upper classes may have been relatively uniform, British elite society was not without tensions. Though it was universally recognized that trade was the life-blood of the nation, men in trade came far behind landed gentlemen in status, wealth, and power, and indeed there was an unspoken conviction among the upper classes that, while trade was important, those who practiced it must stay in their place.

Great men were not entirely free from the realm of industry or trade, though. Because they held the vast majority of the nation's land, they were able to realize the resources located on those lands. Porter points out that wealthy men of the nobility and gentry had estates that produced rents, agricultural products, and timber, stone and slate, or perhaps minerals and precious metals; because the system of primogeniture decreed that wealth, title, and lands passed from father to the eldest son, younger sons were expected to make their own way in life in which trade was an acceptable choice, but only certain professions were suitable, namely overseas finance or trade (Porter 52, 59). Colley explains that despite the ostensible respectability of trade, those at the highest levels of the British upper class were men of inherited titles and wealth, so while it was

nominally possible to rise in position, very few men ever made it beyond the bottom rungs of the upper class and that, as well, in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the value of lands increased sharply, as did the rents they brought their owners, and the landed classes were now richer and more secure than ever, and possibly more resented, too. (Colley 152, 160) The greatest tension between members of the upper ranks seems therefore to have been based on resentment toward those great persons of the aristocracy and landed gentry, and expressed by those formerly or currently engaged in trade, who were denied equitable legal, political, and social power by virtue of Britain's stratified social system. Most representations of gout, in both their visual and literary forms, were created by members of the middling orders or lower gentry, those who were intellectually and artistically inclined. Their creations offer some evidence of the conflicts and tensions present within the social aspect of the unwritten constitution that structured Britain during this time.

While the class structure commonly associated with gout is important to understand, so is the disease itself. Naming and defining a disease is problematic, both ideologically and theoretically, and gout is certainly no exception. Gout's name is derived from the Latin *gutte* and the Old French *goutte,* which both mean "drop" and refer to morbid matter "dropping" from the blood into the joints (*OED* "gout"). It may be significant also that, as Roy Porter and G. S. Rousseau observe, though gout tophi have been discovered in the bodies of Egyptian mummies (Porter and Rousseau 13) and the malady was spoken of by Hippocratic writers such as Plato, the ancients did not have a term for the disease in the way that we do now. I am greatly indebted to Porter and Rousseau's work on gout for my study. For example, they observe that in Britain before

the Enlightenment, humeral theories of the body and medicine posited that the disease was the result of accumulation of a particular humor, most likely phlegm (14) and that the prominent early-Enlightenment medical man Thomas Sydenham turned theories about gout upside-down when he asserted that gout was incurable and patients should not seek medicinal treatments to alleviate it. They further point out that Sydenham also created a persona for gout and the gout-sufferer by aligning the disease with genius and greatness (46), a connection that resonated with the inhabitants of late seventeenth-century England and shaped Georgian views of the disease as well. I assert, indeed, that eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British culture used depictions of the disease as an indicator of other personal characteristics, in this case great wealth and great appetites.

Eighteenth-century beliefs about gout's causes and effects continued to espouse certain positive beliefs about sufferers of the disease, however. Porter and Rousseau demonstrate that medical practitioners and sufferers of the disease alike considered it to be a talisman against other ailments and an indicator that those who had it would live a long life, thanks to an "integral, protective systemic response" by which the body rid itself of poisons and toxins (52). Furthermore, as they argue, despite the fact that attacks of the gout were painful and usually immobilized their victims, those who suffered from the malady were generally thought to be of hale and hearty constitution as a result of the purgative nature of the disease (Porter and Rousseau 73). They describe how eighteenth-century medical men such as William Cadogan and John Hill engaged in fierce debates regarding the hereditary nature (or lack thereof) of the disease: Cadogan argued that the disease was not inherited but instead merely a product of intemperance and indolence, while Hill and others staunchly maintained that it was passed from father to son (111),

much in the way primogeniture ensured that property would pass relatively uninterrupted through the male lines of families. Late eighteenth-century debates also considered the issue of whether one should take medicine, particularly colchicum, to treat the gout. Porter and Rousseau present material that makes a dramatic story of the chain of advances, as for example that finally in 1797, William Hyde Wollaston published a paper in which he proved that the substance that was excreted by gouty tophi—deposits of crystalline uric acid and other substances at the surface of joints or in skin or cartilage—was the same as that derived from urinary concretions—uric acid—by Carl Wilhelm Scheele in 1770 (136), a discovery that led to modern understanding of the nature of the disease.

These debates, then, that surround seventeenth- and eighteenth-century notions about the nature and treatments of gout provide evidence that identification of the disease is theoretically and politically problematic. Thus, while my analysis certainly examines gout from the perspective of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century discourses surrounding the disease, I also challenge eighteenth-century understandings of the rhetoric of gout and its historically politically charged definition.

The symptoms of gout as understood by eighteenth-century British people are important to the representations I am studying. The disease, said to be extremely painful, rendered the person nearly immobile, which of course limited his agency. He would be generally confined to his own rooms within the house and would suffer so much during attacks that his capacity for doing much of anything would be severely limited. He would not even be able to wear regular shoes—he would wrap his foot in a linen bootie and prop it up on an ottoman or stool, as demonstrated by a number of the depictions I

discuss. Trapped within his home, he became an inhabitant of the private sphere, significantly, the very sphere marked as the domain of women during the eighteenth and especially the nineteenth century. The gouty man of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries could in this way become weakened or almost powerless, an important consequence of gout's effect on societal perceptions of upper-class British men. The upper-class man's confinement and essential impotence is depicted by the humor and ridicule with which gout sufferers are portrayed, both in illustrations and novels. Thus, although gout is at this cultural moment associated with wealth and high social status, its representations are not heroic.

Gout is a key instrument of satire during this time. However, as I demonstrate, there exists a contradiction in how the culture constructs representations of gout; despite the weak position of being trapped within the private sphere, the victim of gout can still command a certain amount of respect because of his position or his wealth, and because, despite any vulnerability the disease causes by restricting him to the private sphere, he is still a man with money and power. As the representations of gout I examine in Chapters 1-3 demonstrate, the gouty man is able to draw the public to him, even within the restricted realm of his own chambers, as a result of his gender, wealth, class, and power.

The prevalence of gout within popular culture makes its appearances in graphics a ripe subject for study. In addition, I examine cultural representations and their iterations in the novel. Ronald Paulson asserts that the novel became the ideal vehicle for satire in the eighteenth century first, because of Walpole's Licensing Act of 1737,[1] which required

[1] Walpole's Licensing Act of 1737 was passed in response to the number of plays written and produced that clearly attacked and satirized Walpole, which included *Tom Thumb*, *The Beggar's Opera*, and *Covent Garden Tragedy*. It required all new plays to be approved by the Lord Chamberlain before being

all plays to be approved by the Lord Chamberlain before being performed, and therefore significantly reduced the opportunity for dramatic satire (Paulson *Satire* 9), and secondly, because of the poetry of Alexander Pope, which after his death left poetic satirists with nowhere to go but down. Satire, Paulson explains, operates by juxtaposing two or more different meanings and their associated values against each other; the key aspect that distinguishes satire from other comedic forms is that it identifies one meaning or value as normative or ideal and so causes the reader or viewer to pass judgment upon the non-normative value (16). Within both the graphic satire and the novels I examine, this trend can be seen in gout's depiction as a disease of the glutton. The most successful satire, Gilbert Highet explains, "has the minimum of convention, the maximum of reality" (231). Likewise, in Ian Watt's classic formulation, the novel also depends upon realism as well as individual experience for both its style and subject-matter. Ian Watt contends that, from the time of the Renaissance onward, the importance of individual experience was such that it began "to replace collective tradition as the ultimate arbiter of reality" (14), culminating in the eighteenth century, when, with the Enlightenment, society's reliance on Lockean ideas of truth and perception was at its highest. The realism of the novel then relies on individual experience for both characterization and plot, thus utilizing a minimum of convention when compared with other genres such as the epic or stage tragedy, whose machinations often take the form of sylphs, gods and goddesses, extreme natural disasters, and/or a chorus.

Furthermore, the novel is the perfect site for examination of gout in relation to social class. In "The Epic and the Novel: Towards a Methodology for the Study in the

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performed to ensure that neither Walpole nor any other important being such as the Crown was the object of ridicule.

Novel," Mikhail Bakhtin argues that the novel is unique in its ability to capture the spirit of the new world as it continues to develop and to simultaneously catch and depict this unfolding of events; the novel contains what Bakhtin terms a "spirit of process and inclusiveness" (*Dialogic Imagination* 7) that leads to its adaptability and flexibility; these attributes offer a means of re-defining the individual and his/her subjectivity. The diversity of voices the novel offers, or heteroglossia, and their conflicts with one another, constitute the defining characteristic of the genre for Bakhtin; these voices, comprised as they are of authors, narrators, and characters, thus express diverse and conflicting elements. Because of the novel's reliance upon, or perhaps even insistence upon, the conflicts of subjects within its plot, the genre is shaped by notions of linguistic difference and class stratification. As Bahktin contends in "Discourse in the Novel," "A sealed-off interest-group, caste, or class, existing within an internally unitary and unchanging core of its own, cannot serve as socially productive soil for the development of the novel unless it becomes riddled with decay or shifted somehow from its state of internal balance and self-sufficiency" (*Dialogic Imagination* 368). Novels thus utilize this notion of imbalance within both linguistic and class-centered realms as a means of effecting change and shaking up, as it were, the status quo. When I examine depictions of gout in the novel, I demonstrate changing notions of subjectivity and voice that are occurring in the long eighteenth century. Additionally, according to Pat Rogers, "the novel is the place where above all the physical is the sign of the inward" (168). Rogers finds the novel particularly suited to corporeal examination because it is a form that forces the scrutiny of characters, particularly of their parts; writers of prose fiction create characters for their readers by minutely describing their personal, bodily attributes (Rogers 178), among

which gout and its physical accompaniments often figure in the eighteenth century. The eighteenth-century novel's combination of realism and satire thus make it ideal as a site of cultural examination of the real but grotesque and therefore easily satirized disease, gout.

Four veins of scholarship have influenced and underwritten my study: work concerning the body and disease; theories of the novel and print culture; visual studies of the eighteenth century; and scholarship concerning gout. In the following part of this introduction, I discuss these four informing approaches in turn. After that, I describe my project's contributions to the field of literary-cultural studies and provide an overview of the remainder of the book by outlining the contents of each chapter.

Gout's role as the butt of the joke for both graphic and literary satire is perhaps best explained by using theoretical constructs derived from Foucault's *The Birth of the Clinic*, where he posits that one can learn about culture and society through studies of the body and disease. Cultural discourses concerning diseases and bodies provide a means of analyzing ideological positions. Particular diseases such as gout offer a means of identifying and categorizing conditions, both physical and ideological, that function as a means of disciplining the individual body and social groups. He argues that in the late eighteenth century, medical knowledge and diagnosis changed drastically with the "birth" of the clinic and what was assumed to be a new, empirical, and purely scientific method of studying and diagnosing disease—a system based upon "the rediscovery of the absolute values of the visible" (Foucault xii). Foucault notes, however, that this shift is laden with power implications in which the patient became the object of the "clinical gaze" (133), also known as the medical gaze, which is presumed to be based on empirical

observation and the medical professional's interpretation of the symptoms. Foucault argues that the medical gaze focuses on the patient's body and neglects his/her identity. As a result, the patient *becomes* a wound, a condition, or a disease rather than an actual person. I demonstrate that this process of identity and disease conflation happens with representations of gout. However, while this theory is helpful in providing a contextual understanding of eighteenth-century shifts in medical philosophy, Foucault's approach lacks nuance that would help us understand the systems and cultural ideologies that influence constructions of the specific disease, in this case, gout, as part of identity.

There have been a number of other studies focusing on the role of the body and disease in enhancing cultural understanding; earlier feminist scholars particularly produced works valuable in their contributions to this avenue of scholarship and theory. Gail Turley Houston's *Consuming Fictions: Gender, Class, and Hunger in Dickens,* Pamela Gilbert's *Cholera and Nation: Doctoring the Social Body in Victorian England,* and Margaret Waller's *The Male Malady: Fictions of Impotence in the French Romantic Novel* undertake studies of particular diseases as a means of demonstrating the ideological cultural factors inherent within representations of diseases in literature. Helena Michie's *The Flesh Made Word: Female Figures and Women's Bodies* and John Wiltshire's *Jane Austen and the Body* demonstrate ways in which representations of the body reveal prominent social issues and public anxieties regarding the state of the body politic of the nation; nonetheless, these studies focus on diseases other than gout, and only Houston's work includes substantive discussion on consumption practices. Following these scholars' lead in terms of methodology and analysis, my project reveals the means by which representations of gout in both graphic satire and the British novel of

the eighteenth and early nineteenth century provide an enhanced understanding of the roles of gender, class, and modes of consumption in representing political power and forming communities.

To theoretically ground my study of literature, I turn to theories of the novel that attempt to explain the historical and social impetuses that have created this politicized genre, particularly those issues that resulted in new constructs of gender roles and subjectivity for women and persons of the middle or lower classes. Barbara Benedict's *Framing Feeling: Sentiment and Style in English Prose Fiction, 1745-1800* posits one such explanation. Refuting scholars who argue that sentimental fiction is a genre that celebrates and encourages individuality, Benedict contends that this form directs and shapes the responses it invokes by forcing characters and their actions into modes and arrangements that direct the reader into conventional, community-oriented feelings and values rather than overly individual or revolutionary ones (2-4). Nancy Armstrong argues similarly in *How Novels Think* that novels begin to highlight the struggles between reconciling an individual's desire and the greater needs of the community and social order (7); the individual protagonist has to learn to become a "self-governing individual" (Armstrong *Novels* 6). Toni Bowers's "Representing Resistance: British Seduction Stories 1660-1800" asserts that the seduction story, which was used as a means of disguising criticism of political issues, also struggles with issues of defining courtship, seduction, and rape, a struggle that resulted in disadvantaged fictional agents who gain the power, achieve agency, and gain subjectivity within the novel. Studies such as these demonstrate the ways in which the novel is historically linked to issues of the individual's

struggle for self-actualization and the conflicts and confines caused by powerful social institutions and mores linked to class, wealth, and sex.

Likewise, Susan Lanser's "The Novel Body Politic," which profoundly underwrites my theoretical approach, contends with issues of subjectivity in regard to the development of the body politic that coincides with the rise of the novel. She argues

> [T]hrough its (re)distribution of speaking bodies, the novel engages the pressing eighteenth-century question of who shall participate in civil society, in what ways, and with what rights, of who shall have public power and whose interests shall be recognized and served. It is […] during the period coextensive with the "rise" of the English novel that the meaning of a body politic undergoes a dramatic shift: from a sovereign head, who confers rights according to particular stations, to a legislative body representing citizens by whose consent that body governs […] (483).

So, according to Lanser, at the same time the genre of the novel is developing and posing questions regarding the role of the individual in modern society, the political and social structure of British society is also undergoing changes. When King Charles I toppled from a position of absolute power, the makeup of the ruling state began to shift, and the body politic is redefined in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries. Lanser explains that British society goes from a structure headed by an absolute monarch to one increasingly controlled by the populace in the form of a legislative body that governs citizens contingent to their election and subsequent permission (483). Drawing from the theories of philosopher Jacques Ranciére, she asserts that voice is the enabling factor of

politics (485), so when a subject who once had no voice is able to gain one, s/he is taking part in the political system, which in turn alters the shape of the political body.

Lanser's theory is key to my study because it supports my contention that the gouty, upper-class, male body can be represented in such a way as to call attention to disparities between these bodies and those of other, less privileged groups. In my study, I show that when gout in visual and written representations becomes a site in which the culture can debate and judge some attributes of power, it makes possible a latent interrogative voice that will, by the end of the eighteenth century, make room for modes more resistant to class privilege and the grotesque over-consumer of the upper classes. Such a voice is a harbinger of voices of the lower orders that become more insistent during the nineteenth century, particularly in the Victorian era. Artistic and literary expressions of gout, with their traditional gender and class associations and subsequent representations of consumption, make possible later social critiques of the traditionally powerful wealthy landholding factions.

Therefore, for example, when gout makes its mark on the individual body within the novels in my study, this suggests that the traditionally powerful social body (in the form of the wealthy man of the landed aristocracy, the gentry, and the rising upper-middle classes) is literally lamed and diseased. The gouty man within the novel is both an individual and a representation of the ruling classes, so it is important to consider which one is at the forefront when he does speak. However, I note that it is not the gouty man himself who is speaking. Rather, these representations of gout within visual culture and the novel provide avenues for cultural analysis and allow for discussion and consideration of potentially radical positionalities. In essence, then, it is the artists and writers who are

overtly speaking, and the representations they create represent the voices of those in the middle and lower orders.

Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* argues that "print capitalism," the increasing tendency within early modern Europe for printers and writers to create books in the vernacular to maximize their consumption (38), helped to create nationalistic ideas of community, partly by providing nation-states with a new "fixity" of language (Anderson 44) that allowed speakers of different dialects to understand each other. I argue that print culture in the form of visual representations of gout enabled class critique. These images interpellate viewers in such a way that persons consuming these images in Georgian Britain become, in a sense, a loosely formed, fluid community of viewers, familiar with the particular social code of the swollen, bandaged foot as representative of the condition. The effectiveness of these graphic representations of gout in conveying criticisms of over-consumption depends on artists' abilities to utilize social codes understandable to all members of society, who thus develop a sense of community based on this shared understanding.

Visual depictions of gout are especially important in helping viewers to form a sense of community because most Britons were not literate. Though eighteenth-century Great Britain was a nation of increasing literacy, a great number of persons, particularly those of the lower classes, were still unable to read; Carey McIntosh claims that approximately 60% of males were literate during the period of 1700-1790, while approximately 50% of women could read at the end of the eighteenth century (171). However, this does not mean that such persons were at an advanced reading level or that

they had access to much reading material at all; indeed, novels and other bound volumes would not have been readily available for many Britons outside of the upper classes.

Such estimates of literacy indicate that the number of persons unable to read text made up nearly half of the population of Great Britain during the eighteenth century. Thus, British shops still advertised their services with pictures and figures in order to ensure that all persons would be able to ascertain what was being offered. Print-sellers and engravers also advertised their wares—pictures—by placing them in their windows. Kate Arnold-Forster and Nigel Tallis point out that prints and graphics such as those I examine were expensive and so not widely available to the public (5); other than those prints and engravings displayed in the windows of print-makers' shops, the number of people who actually circulated these pictures was small, and the scenarios, events, and stock characters depicted within them were familiar "almost exclusively" to this narrow social group (Arnold-Forster and Tallis 5). Despite Arnold-Forster's and Tallis's assertion, however, one must keep in mind that even if the circulation of the pictures was limited to the wealthy, this does not mean that more people did not see them, from the servants in the household to tradespersons the print-holder encountered to the masses of people in the streets of cities such as London and Edinburgh who looked at the engravings displayed in print-shop windows. Even if these persons were not the target audience for satirical pictures, one cannot simply conclude that they would have no understanding of the content of these pictures, particularly with regard to representations of diseases, given the cohesiveness of the effects of these ailments. The universality of the linen-wrapped booty as representative of gout over the course of more than a century

within graphic satire bespeaks its acceptance and understanding among a great many people, both literate and illiterate.

I argue, then, that, like print capitalism, visual depictions of gout serve to create a fluidly formed group of viewers with a sense of community born of their shared cultural consciousness in eighteenth-century Great Britain. Despite the considerable inequalities and disparities of allocations of resources within this community, the metaphorical and political significance of gout and its depictions serves to create a "deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 7) in which viewers are able to identify themselves as a part of a group who understands the metaphorical significance of gout. This group, despite the variance among its individual members, is made up of persons who understand and acknowledge, at the very least, the power difference and capability for consumption shared by persons who have gout.

Images of gout evidence ambivalence regarding consumption within Georgian society: while it is certainly possible that viewers envied the wealth and power associated with the gout sufferer, the over-consumption of the sufferer is largely presented as a negative characteristic. These implicit criticisms suggest societal anxieties regarding the imperial expansion of Great Britain and the increasing levels of consumption it allowed. The continual presence of gout, the disease of over-consumption, within Georgian visual culture and novels suggests that Great Britain is plagued with an increasing tendency to over-consume, which in turn has led to an unhealthy society.

Also key to my study of representations of the upper-class gouty man is the notion of the grotesque, a condition wherein boundaries are breached and exaggeration is used as a means of highlighting the similarities between the real and the imagined or fantastic.

Bakhtin famously presents the grotesque as originating in the medieval carnivals' suspension of hierarchy and order; the laughter of carnival originates within the lower classes as a way to critique received ideologies of class privilege. Their laughter degrades its object and brings that object into the realm of materiality. The emphasis on materiality leads to grotesque realism, which inspires both terror (often manifest as anger and disgust) and laughter. A frequent feature of the grotesque is exaggeration of a body part or the entire body, as in representations of gout in which grotesque exaggeration disrupts the body's symmetry and harmony. Phillip Thomson notes that the grotesque mode is prevalent in societies undergoing transformation, as Britain was during the mid-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Geoffrey Harpham's discussion of the grotesque emphasizes this reflection of a communal nature within its depictions, arguing that it is characterized by its effect of discomfort upon the audience, which relies upon a collective consciousness, a shared historical and cultural understanding of norms and conventions (465). The grotesque nature of representations of gout thus suggests that because society is in flux, people are particularly uncertain about the economy and the effects its changes will have upon their lives. The grotesque reflects this uncertainty in part through inversion. In depictions of gout, the deformity that the disease causes is humorous because the representation is exaggerated and renders the sufferer ridiculous, but simultaneously it inspires fear and disgust through representations of bloated over-consumption. The grotesque shows death and decay, but Wolfgang Kayser argues that the horror it incites really has to do with the fear of living—how will we live in such a world where over-consumption is idealized and even striven for, these artists ask with these pictures.

Representations of gout as manifestations of the grotesque reveal the uncertainty plaguing Georgian Britain. By examining these graphics and literary representations of the disease through the theoretical lens of grotesque realism, the fear and ambivalence with which Britons of this era viewed their world are revealed. It is the presence of the grotesque within the visual and literary culture of this era that demonstrates that the economy, the government and political system, and social structures are in flux. The grotesque allows us, in hindsight, to recognize widespread societal anxieties articulated within Georgian culture resulting from an ever-expanding web of social change and the subsequent realization that the institutional categories in place for hundreds of years were no longer relevant. With the rise of imperial expansion and mechanical industry during the Georgian era, Britons of all classes and ranks were subjected to a confusing flux of change. The grotesque nature of gout imagery therefore allows consumption to be seen as a force substantially altering the bodily and political constitution of the nation.

Roy Porter explains that during this period, moral and religious teachings emphasized moderation and temperance, and that medical opinion maintained a hearty appetite was healthy, but that excess produced physical dissolution ("Consumption" 59, 62-63). For Georgian people, healthy, moderate diets laid the foundation for a healthy social body. For example, Adam Smith characterizes the expenditures of the wealthy in *The Wealth of Nations*: "The luxuries and vanities of life occasion the principal expense of the rich, and a magnificent house embellishes and sets off to the best advantage all the other luxuries and vanities which they possess" (V.2.i).

Consumption alters the individual body in obvious ways—too much consumption causes a person to become overweight or obese and perhaps develop diseases such as

diabetes and gout. When we see the individual body with gout represented within these graphics, we clearly see the individual as an over-consumer. His bodily constitution, or "the physical nature or character of the body" ("constitution") has been negatively affected by too much consumption. Additionally, because we may read the individual body as a representation of the larger social and/or political body,[2] gout's impact can be seen on a larger, more metaphorical scale as well in graphic satire. Gout/over-consumption's impact upon the whole of the social body is damaging to its physical character from a moral standpoint, as consumption beyond what is necessary to sustain good health leads to those with means consuming more than their fair share, which leaves those without means struggling to maintain their bodily health, or constitution. From an economic standpoint this is damaging to the nation's economic health because resources and capital are stagnant, and their circulation important to Great Britain's economy.

Finally, we can read the impact gout and over-consumption have on the nation's political system in both a bodily/physical and a governmental sense. The nation's political body is ruled by a relatively non-democratic system that is constituted of a monarchy and both houses of Parliament, the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Because all of the individuals within this system (its constituents) are of the upper and upper-middle classes, we can safely assume that they are men of means who do not have to perform physical labor to earn their daily bread. They are, therefore, almost exclusively, the largest group of over-consumers in Great Britain. When they over-consume and develop health issues such as gout, the nation's ruling political body is unable to perform at highest capacity because gout limits movement, causes great pain,

[2] I read the individual body as a manifestation of the social/political body as a whole by following the methods many critics and scholars, including Roy Porter, Gail Houston, Helena Michie, and John Wiltshire, just to name a few, have used for decades.

and usually confines the sufferer to bed or home. Individual members of Parliament and monarchs are thus not maintaining a healthy political body when they over-consume and develop gout. King George IV and leaders of government such as William Pitt were well-known for having terrible gout; the disease prevented the king from writing, riding, and participating in a number of governmental offices during his later years. We may read the impact of gout and over-consumption as altering political forms of the nation's constitution by causing immobility, decay, and, ultimately, ruin.

Visual depictions of gout are important for study because of their prevalence. The period of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century is considered the golden age of graphic satire. During this time, artists, printers, and engravers produced many pictures that served to make biting commentary on a variety of issues, particularly political and social ones. M. Dorothy George explains that after the 1820s, editorial responsibility began to emerge, and libel—which characterized the golden age of graphic satire—was no longer the preferred mode of representation (*Hogarth to Cruikshank* 220). George notes, "Social satire was lapsing into the form of the illustrated joke" (*Hogarth to Cruikshank* 220); no longer were folios of these drawing and engravings produced to be rented out for an evening's entertainment. Instead, the political or social cartoon was on the rise, with its greater reliance on veracity with regard to subject and far less use of outright slander and libel. The profusion of pieces of graphic satire during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as well as the rise of the novel that took place during this era make this period an ideal time and these two types of texts ideal sites of analysis.

Because of its reliance on graphic satire as an indicator of cultural understanding about class-specific consumption practices, studies in art history and visual culture are

important to my study, particularly Fiona Haslam's *From Hogarth to Rowlandson: Medicine in Art in Eighteenth-Century Britain,* which examines artistic representations of medical practices and disease in relation to medical knowledge and treatments available at the time. She argues that these images were used to convey messages, whether political, social, or moral, to the public in a way that would be easily comprehended, and can thus reveal some of what the public understood and thought about medical practices at the time. In his two-part article "A Gallery of the Gout: Being a Miscellany of Prints and Caricatures from the 16th Century to the Present Day," Gerald P. Rodnan presents printings, engravings, and drawings that depict gout, and explains gout's traditional historical use as an allegorical and metaphorical symbol of wealth, greed, and excess (27). Neither of these projects, however, gives a full representation of gout's long history within graphic satire, partly because they were produced previous to the wave of digitization that has occurred within the last decade. My study thus provides a more comprehensive examination of visual representations of gout simply by virtue of it taking place during the digital age.

M. Dorothy George's two-volume *English Political Caricature: A Study of Opinion and Propaganda* and the book *Hogarth to Cruikshank: Social Change in Graphic Satire* undertake to explore the considerable volume of English pictorial propaganda. Sander Gilman also examines images of disease in *Disease and Representation: Images of Illness from Madness to AIDS*. Ludmilla Jordanova undertakes a similar project dealing with gender and medical and scientific representation in *Sexual Visions*: *Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries***.** These works demonstrate the means by which visual

representations can reflect conflicts, anxieties, ambivalence, and ideological disagreements of a culture.

Scholarship on the subject of gout is scarce, despite it being a prevalent malady within both the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and playing a consistent supporting role in the visual culture and literature of the time. Aside from Roy Porter and G.S. Rousseau's *Gout: The Patrician Malady,* few if any book-length studies of the social and cultural implications of the disease exist. Porter and Rousseau's book, while fascinating in its detailed portrayal of the social and medical history of gout from ancient times through the twentieth century, provides limited treatment of depictions of gout and does not analyze literary representations of the disease. Porter undertakes to explain the political nature of gout in "Garrison Lecture: Gout: Framing and Fantasizing Disease." He contends that "The gouty body constantly doubled as an analogue of the state. Gout tells tales of political anatomy" (Porter "Garrison" 16). However, Porter fails to tell us what those tales are.

L. A. Healy discusses the medical and cultural history of the causes of gout in "Gout and Gluttony: Yesterday and Today" and "Port Wine and the Gout." E. G. L. Bywaters undertakes a similar project combining medical examination with historical context in "Gout in the Time and Person of George IV: A Case Study." Derrick Brewerton's *All about Arthritis: Past, Present, Future* and W. S. C. Copeman's *A Short History of the Gout and Rheumatic Diseases* also provide general medical and historical information on the discourses of gout and arthritis from ancient times to the mid- and late twentieth century. While their works provide some historical understanding of the role gout plays within eighteenth-century culture, none treats the disease's metaphorical

significance in any detail; none connect representations of gout to our understanding of culture.

In his 1975 article "Thomas Dekker and Some Cures for the 'City Gout,'" R. Mark Benbow associates debt with gout and Dekker's metaphorical disease, "City Gout," with flawed morality; the article is an early example of linking gout with other issues of overconsumption. In another literary study of gout, Akiko Takei argues convincingly that General Tilney from *Northanger Abbey* has gout but refuses treatment for it because he is proud to have the disease, as it is a marker of high social station and wealth. As well, Richard Gooding offers helpful insight into the gendering of the disease in relation to Henry Fielding: he argues that Fielding's identity within *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon* is divided because of his two degenerative illnesses, gout and dropsy, and their respective gendering as masculine and feminine diseases within eighteenth-century social and medical discourse (Gooding 388). These studies offer support to my argument that gout is used as a literary and cultural indicator of masculinity, wealth, and over-consumption, but they have a limited scope in that they each focuses only on a single text, whereas my project gives a more comprehensive view of the disease's cultural significance.

In her study of medicinal discourse, Julia Epstein says that "Cultures produce explanatory stories about the human body in order to contain human beings safely within recognized social norms" (4). In order to demonstrate the cultural norms and discourses from which the texts I am studying are produced, my research uses in part a visual cultural studies perspective, in order to establish the kinds of conversations about and representations of gout that, taking place within popular culture, demonstrate notions of

public consciousness about the disease. Pictorial representations are particularly important for establishing a central cultural site. Many pictures depicting gout make their subjects evident without requiring the viewer to read any writing that might be included within their texts. The use of graphic satire makes these texts a natural choice for study in this project, as they effectively represent cultural ideologies and discourses about gout in an age of limited literacy.

In my examination of these pictures I analyze the overall tone and meaning of the graphic while considering conflicts and anxieties that the grotesque nature of representations of gout may indicate. I detail the contents of each picture and then offer a general interpretation of the picture's overall meaning. I then move into a close reading of the graphic's individual parts. Many of the graphics include historically specific topical references, which I explain as a means of historicizing and elucidating the cultural significance of each piece. In particular I draw both from material in periodicals such as *The New Monthly Magazine* and the *British Register* and from medical treatises as a means of offering contemporary viewpoints on the pictures and the issues depicted within them. I examine each visual depiction of gout as a product of its culture. My object is not to comment on the aesthetic merits of these graphics but rather to examine them as a means of determining what, if anything, we can learn about attitudes toward consumption in relation to class and gender during this era.

By utilizing a variety of visual texts as a means of demonstrating the social significance of gout as an embodiment of grotesque over-consumption and combining my analysis of the text with historical data regarding the disruptions of class and gender occurring at this time, I demonstrate that the visual documents suggest immanent social

upheavals and debates about class and consumption practices. Such a paradigm then complicates literary representations of the disease within the novels I have selected, and I unpack their significance through close reading and literary analysis.

In chapters 1-3, I examine graphic satire depicting gout in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. I analyze these pictures in order to demonstrate that gout was depicted grotesquely and perceived as a disease of the wealthy, over-consuming man during this time. As well, I discuss ways in which these representations of gout offer insight into shifting cultural attitudes toward consumption, class, power, and gender. In these three chapters I call attention to ways in which over-consumption impacts the British constitution (in all senses of the word).

In chapter one, I examine overtly political representations of the disease within graphic satire; I argue that the prevalence of gout's depiction within political commentary renders it a political disease. Here I demonstrate the impact that over-consumption has upon political aspects of the unwritten constitution structuring British society, which includes the tenets and practices that establish the governing principles of the nation, as well as the practices both of those in power and of the greater body politic. The grotesque nature of political depictions of gout could incite fear, inspire angry laughter at the rich, and/or call into question one's own social position.

In chapter two, I examine personal and national practices of economic excess through analysis of depictions of grotesque over-consumption of foodstuffs and goods. I contend that these pictures demonstrate how excessive appetites for food, drink, and material goods and the connection of those goods to imperial expansion and colonization have altered notions about and practices of personal economy, that is, the economic

system of the nation. The grotesque nature of these representations suggests shared anxieties among the lower and middle classes regarding the economic impact of over-consumption and stagnation caused by inadequate circulation of capital and resources.

In chapter three, I treat pictures that primarily focus on the gouty man's excessive sexual appetite and concurrent impotence as a means of evincing the impact over-consumption has upon social aspects of the nation's informal constitution. I contend that these depictions evidence social anxieties about the impact over-consumption has upon institutions such as marriage and the family as well as upon sexual behaviors linked to gender and class. The grotesque nature of these depictions calls into question how Britons will live in a society increasingly mired in conspicuous consumption of foodstuffs, goods, and sex. The graphics in all three chapters reflect, among other things, the possibility for subtle critiques of privilege and over-consumption. The tropes I discuss allow me to form a paradigm of societal views about gout as a disease and about the gouty man. The grotesque nature of these depictions of gout and bloated over-consumption evidence prevalent social discourses surrounding the changing structures that shape Britain's constitution in its explicit and implicit forms.

In Chapter 4, I analyze the gouty man rooted within traditional agrarian social models in Sarah Fielding's *The History of the Countess of Dellwyn* and Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random,* where I argue that the fates of the Countess and of Roderick Random at first seem to reaffirm the traditional social order based on rank. However, the grotesque nature of these characters' representations offers a subversive representation of social rank and consumption. Fielding's and Smollett's representations of gout demonstrate sentiments of resistance to class privilege and provide sophisticated

cultural critiques of a practice that is weakening and corrupting the nation. In Chapter 5, I examine the nouveau riche gouty man Mr. Harlowe in Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* and argue that his efforts to rise in social station result in his essentially consuming his daughter Clarissa. His actions, combined with elements of the grotesque that characterize his persona, demonstrate that the problematic nature of the consumption practices of the aristocrats and upper gentry are passed on to those whose fortune is newly acquired, which suggests anxieties regarding the contagious spread of over-consumption to the body politic as a whole.

In my conclusion I discuss the legacy of gout on the nineteenth-century British novel. Though I recognize that depictions of gout represent a myriad of competing ideological meanings, I am most interested in their functions within both graphic and literary satire as a means of representing anxieties and concerns that later in the nineteenth century produce more explicit resistance to the traditional social structure of upper-class privilege. I finish by briefly examining the implications of gout's legacy as a metaphor for over-consumption as it pertains to modern culture and society.

Chapter 1

Political Representations of Gout in Graphic Satire during the Georgian and Regency Eras

Representations of gout within graphic satire vary greatly in their intent and message. But, because of gout's metaphorical significance, the meaning it derives from the way in which one is presumed to develop the disease (over-consumption of rich foods and fortified alcohol) as well as its subsequent association with the upper-class (or otherwise wealthy) man (because of the cost of such foodstuffs), all such representations are inherently political. Those men who were more prone to developing gout and who are most often represented as having the disease are the de facto rulers of Great Britain during this time, hence any depiction of the wealthy gouty man in the medium of graphic satire has a politically charged message that is implicitly critical of the British political system, as I demonstrate below.

While it is clear that all such illustrations of gout have an undertone of political criticism at least, many representations of the disease within the realm of graphic satire during this period were overtly political. These pictures frequently refer to specific political figures who had gout or whom the artist wanted to represent as an over-consumer. Their grotesque configurations are an indication of the ways in which over-consumption was seen as reshaping the constitution of politics in Great Britain. Gout's use as a trope indicating greed and over-consumption in politically charged graphic satire creates a site where viewers can debate and attempt to understand a disease common among the wealthy and powerful, a disease that speaks volumes about the values of the British political system. Political graphics of gout therefore depict the effects of over-consumption upon the British body politic: the grotesque alterations to the political body

made by gout evidence rumblings of discontent beneath the surface of a system formed and controlled by upper-class hegemony. Even if, as E. P. Thompson contends, the rebellious behavior of those outside the system of political and social privilege is intended as a means of punishing the wealthy and powerful rather than altering the system itself, expressions of rebellion in the form of political graphic satire depicting gout offer a subtle means of protest. The graphics I examine rely on the collective cultural consciousness of eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century viewers. The images offer the possibility for viewers to imagine a shared sense of oppression through gout's meanings. Theses viewers then form the beginnings of a community that would eventually combine with other such groups in protest of the status quo and change the constitution of British politics forever.[3]

The pictures I analyze below all demonstrate a specific political agenda, that of criticizing a particular political figure or party or of critiquing a more general representation of the ruling upper-class male body. Because of their richness with regard to topical issues and particular events that concerned the denizens of the British Empire during the period 1744-1830, I provide detailed exposition of the contents and contexts of these texts as a means of demonstrating the often complex layers of meaning we can derive from these works. I first describe the picture, illuminating details such as script and color. Then, I move into analysis of the ways in which each depiction works in

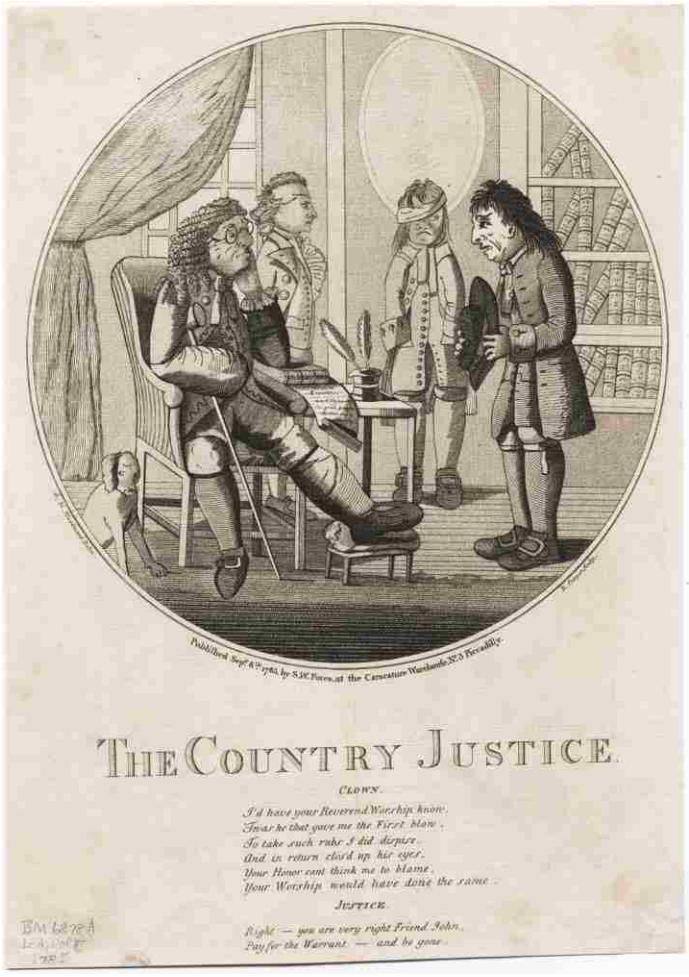
[3] I wish to note that word "constitution" has a number of different meanings, and it is because of this fluidity in definition that I use it within this text. See the introduction for explanation of the term as applied to the impacts of over-consumption and gout upon both individual and metaphorical bodies. The *OED* defines it as "An ordinance, settled arrangement, institution"; "The way in which anything is constituted or made up; the arrangement or combination of its parts or elements, as determining its nature and character"; "Physical nature or character of the body in regard to healthiness, strength, vitality, etc."; "The mode in which a state is constituted or organized; especially, as to the location of the sovereign power"; and "The system or body of fundamental principles according to which a nation, state, or body politic is constituted and governed" ("constitution"). Context will determine which particular definition is in use, and I will clarify which meaning I intend as necessary.

creating representations of gout that serve to satirize the political rulers of the period and thereby demonstrate the impact of grotesque over-consumption upon the constitution of national politics.

Susan Lanser theorizes that in the eighteenth-century novel, a "(re)distribution" of the speaking body takes on questions of who should and should not be engaged within public political and social discourses, who will hold power, and whose interests that person or group in power shall serve (483). In these and other graphics depicting gout, the artists also formulate speaking bodies that raise the same questions, sometimes through words, but often only through images, which then serve as a form of rhetorical gesture laden with meaning regarding over-consumption. Gout raises questions about the changing form of the nation's political system; it offers subtle criticisms of the traditional British system of oligarchy in which political decisions are controlled solely by the monarch and upper classes. Following the accepted practice of scholars reading individual bodies as representatives of larger social bodies, I contend that in visual depictions of gout, the diseased individual body serves to demonstrate the impact of over-consumption on a larger body, which, in this chapter, is the political body governing the nation.

One 1785 print, *The Country Justice*, depicts the effects that over-consumption has had upon the judicial realm of the political system. The artist, Robert Cooper, was an engraver and portraitist who often contributed to the periodical press (Pelz "Robert Cooper"). In the graphic, a judge with gout is charging a seemingly innocent man to pay for a warrant for his release. From this perspective, we may read the gout-ridden judge in *The Country Justice* as standing in for the justice system as a whole, which is apparently

a corrupt entity. And, because the justice system falls under the larger umbrella of the political system as a means of keeping peace and order throughout the nation, we may read this graphic as evidencing the effect over-consumption has both upon the bodies of individuals and the body politic as a whole.



The drawing shows the judge, who is seated with his swollen, linen-wrapped foot elevated on a stool in front of him. Across from him stands the supplicant with his hat in his hands. He says in the caption, "I'd have your Reverend Worship know, / T'was he that gave me the first blow, / To take such rubs I did despise, / And in return closed up his eyes, / Your Honor can't think me to blame, / Your worship would have done the same." The judge replies, "Right—you are very right Friend John, / Pay for the warrant—and be

gone." Another man with a bandage over one eye stands between these two, a tremendous scowl on his face, and a fourth man wearing a uniform stands at attention on the far side of the judge.

The judge's gout immediately marks him as an over-consumer. His occupation also designates him as being in a position of considerable power, for, in many cases, he would have the sole decision as to the fates of those accused of crimes within his jurisdiction. Judges were often reputed to accept bribes and decide unfairly against those who could not pay. Henry Fielding, who was also chief magistrate of London for a time, portrays such a corrupt legal system in his novel *Amelia*. Similarly, Tobias Smollett constructs a corrupt judge in *The Adventures of Roderick Random*, which I explore in a later chapter. This theme of a corrupt legal system comes forth in this print as well, for the judge has little interest in seeing justice served. He asks no questions of John or the other man involved in the fight. All he is interested in is obtaining money from John. This blatant self-interestedness, combined with the judge's gout, represents the judge as a greedy, corrupt man with political power. This combination of position, power, and the moral deficiency suggested by the presence of gout demonstrates popular opinion that greed and corruption were permeating the judicial (and thus, by extension, the political) system in Great Britain at the end of the eighteenth century and thus seriously damaging its unwritten constitution.

The drawing creates a sense of community by encouraging the viewer to identify with the two persons standing before the judge, persons who are being treated unfairly at the hands of a powerful entity. The judge seemingly cares not one whit for what actually happened. He just expects John to pay him for his release, the warrant, which will allow

him to make a profit from the situation. This administration of "justice" speaks to the corruption of the political and legal system, which is controlled by the wealthy and powerful, who, according to the sentiments expressed within this graphic, all too often are interested only in furthering their own interests. The judge represents the oppression of "the common man" at the hands of a corrupted, unjust, over-consuming politically powerful oligarchy. Those without the power and influence such people as the judge enjoy can hereby understand that their situational lack of privilege is very common within British society. The depiction of gout therefore allows those of the lower-middle and lower classes to see a place where their anxieties about the nefarious political system and its impact upon them are clearly manifest. This knowledge then encourages a sense of community among viewers, who can then consider and discuss their understanding of wealth, privilege, and class stratification and the ways in which those intersecting factors impact how justice is (or is not) served within British society in the late eighteenth century. They can see that the most important factor in deciding justice in this case is money. The greedy, self-interested behavior of the judge bespeaks an unprincipled nature, and the evident impact of his subsequent over-consumption takes a toll on his own health, or constitution, which functions as a representative metaphor for the political system as a whole. The judge's bodily condition suggests a greater illness is impacting political aspects of the nation's constitution, and the common British people are the victims of unbridled greed and grotesque over-consumption. The sense of community fostered within this graphic serves as one tool for moving such individuals toward forming an actual community based on a sense of disenfranchisement and dissatisfaction with the British political system.

The grotesque elements of this picture, though subtle, hint at the ambiguity and uncertainty characterizing the situation. The two main figures, the judge and the "clown," are drawn with exaggeratedly irregular facial features, as the detail below demonstrates:

The two men have features that one could characterize as animalistic, particularly when viewed in contrast to the more regular ones of the uniformed bailiff. The clown's sunken eyes, craggy eyebrows, and low forehead covered with shaggy, coarse hair are fronted by a large, hawk-like Roman nose featuring exceptionally large, cavernous nostrils. His cheeks are deeply lined and bordered by heavy jowls similar to a bulldog's. The judge has facial features that one might describe as lumpish; his face rests in heavy rolls below his judge's wig; his beady, bird-like eyes squint beneath spectacles that rest on a large, bulbous nose, and his lower lip protrudes heavily. The judge's and clown's exaggerated, caricatured physiognomies go beyond simply being plain or unalluring; these faces combine features of the human and animal into one composition, a traditional feature of the grotesque (Kayser 24). These two figures might be said to resemble gargoyles, the "poster-children," as it were, of the grotesque, whose features combine animal, human, and the fantastic. The faces of the judge and the clown seem both comic and disconcerting at once. Their faces evoke humor because of their non-human elements, but at the same time they offer a glimpse into a world where traditional elements of balance,

symmetry, and proportion have been cast aside, which elicits discomfort and possibly even horror from viewers (Kayser 21). This mixture of comedy and uneasiness, combined with the corruption evidenced in the scene being depicted, elicits a feeling of discomfort that characterizes the grotesque, according to Wolfgang Kayser (21).

The judge's body only serves to heighten this discomfort with his greatly swollen limbs. His lower left leg is swollen and bandaged, as is his right forearm. These gouty limbs further contribute to the picture's grotesqueness by creating an even greater impression of asymmetry—the gouty arm and leg are alien-looking in comparison with their companion limbs, and, what is more, are even on opposite sides of the judge's body from each other. The judge in particular forms a grotesque figure because of his gout, which only strengthens his role as a representation of a decaying, corrupt political body. Not only does he have the ubiquitous linen booty, but his disease has spread beyond that to affect his upper body. He has evidently compromised both his bodily health and his integrity by greedily over-consuming, and this graphic conveys the impression via these grotesque elements that Great Britain's political system—its politicians, the laws they create, and those who enact them—are also compromised. As a result, the drawing implies that the constitution of the nation's political system is also dangerously unhealthy, perhaps even lamed, by over-consumption. Taken into context with the considerable number of other graphics (and literary characters) evidencing similar depictions of corruption within the legal and political systems, this graphic demonstrates the strong ideological thread woven together from strands of disapproval, dissatisfaction, and interrogation of the role of government figures within Georgian society.

John Cawse's 1813 *The Compliments of the Season!!!* offers another subtle criticism of the political system of Great Britain and those persons who comprise its ranks. The graphic depicts a man with a variety of ailments, including gout, that are caused by "the Season" of London gaiety. The portly man sits in his chair with the eternal linen-wrapped, swollen foot propped up on a stool. He is dressed in breeches and a jacket but also wears a house-cap, and his head appears bald, suggesting he is within his own home, as gentlemen typically wore wigs when going abroad during the eighteenth century. His mouth lolls open and his eyes bulge wide in surprise at three black demons who perch themselves on and around him. The one on top of his head with its arm waving gaily is labeled "catarrhe!" The second, who is clinging to the man's right arm is "rheumatism!" while the third, who is labeled "Gout!," sits astride the man's bandaged foot and brandishes a cat o' nine tails in the air, which indicates that he is beating the man's foot with it. Meanwhile, two books lie next to the man's chair; their titles are *Domestic Harmony* and *Treatise on the Gout*. Decanters of port and other wines also sit nearby. This man, like so many others before him, is being tormented by the gout-devil, who has evidently brought friends this time. Because the graphic connects the gout sufferer directly to the London Season, one can reasonably conclude that this man loosely represents all those who take part in the political activities during this yearly event. His age, gender, race, apparent wealth (as demonstrated by his evident ability to over-consume port and other wines, comfortable furnishings, and possession of books), and host of bodily ailments all put him in the right categories to partake in British politics in the late eighteenth century. Even if he is not being directly represented as a political figure, his evident position and presence in London during the season indicates that he

would probably have some connections to or interest in British politics. This man's grotesque representation of gout in this graphic shows what impact over-consumption and dissipation has had upon the nation's body of political rulers.

The London Season was a major part of the social lives of upper-class and other wealthy Britons in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Coinciding with the sitting of Parliament, the Season generally ran from the late fall through summer. Aristocrats, gentry, and other wealthy families usually came to London to engage in politics and socialize with each other. The various balls, teas, plays, and other social events were meant to give the unmarried sons and daughters of the elite chances to meet, court, and form advantageous engagements. For those not on the marriage market, it was a chance to see and be seen. Young debutantes were presented to their monarch, and a general whirl of exclusive gaiety ensued for those fortunate enough to have the title, connections, and/or means to enter London society. All of this merriment became too much for many people, however, and resulted in dissipation and disease from being constantly in

crowded assemblies, keeping late hours, and overindulging in food and drink (and perhaps, for men, in the pleasure district of Covent Garden).

London was indeed unhealthy for all who resided there. Its combination of smoke from burgeoning industries and the famous fog resulted in smog, and the River Thames and other bodies of water were tainted with open sewage running into them daily (Oosthoek). The earliest Parliamentary legislation on these issues did not come about till the 1850s (Oosthoek), when conditions had become so bad they resulted in many deaths from illness such as cholera and typhoid as well as the lung disease known as consumption, which generally referred to tuberculosis but covered many lung-related ailments brought about by unclean air. Going to London for the Season, then, was a risk for even the healthiest of persons. The man in this drawing, whose age, weight, and obvious propensity for drinking indicate that he is not in the bloom of health, has apparently succumbed to three ailments of the Season: catarrh, rheumatism, and gout. This man's grotesque form thereby suggests the deteriorating condition of the body politic of Great Britain[4].

Two of this man's demons, Gout and Rheumatism, are closely related ailments, as gout now is considered a form of rheumatoid arthritis. While gout was generally thought to be caused by over-consuming food and alcohol, rheumatism referred to "a vast array of inflammatory joint disorders" (Mandal). The two diseases are frequently coupled in medical literature of the period, particularly in treatises and advertisements that promise to provide a cure for both, whether by taking the waters, applying leeches, or taking a new patent medicine. Dr. George Charles Meyer, for example, outlines his own methods

[4] Despite the heavy social aspect of the London Season, its real purpose is political—without the meetings of Parliament occurring, the tradition would have never begun as Georgians knew it. Thus, I am treating this graphic as politically themed.

for cure in his 1813 *Familiar and Practical Observations on the Causes, Prevention, and Cure of Gout and Rheumatism*, where he states "gout and rheumatism have a great resemblance to each other […] That symptoms of two diseases nearly related are frequently intermixed, is a common observation, and wherever this happens in cases of gout and rheumatism, we […] call this mixed disease the rheumatic gout" (qtd in "Familiar" 677). Rheumatism, according to Meyer, is caused by "the inconstancy of the climate, the dampness of the atmosphere," while gout results from the "great consumption of animal food and fermented liquors" (qtd. in "Familiar" 677). Partakers of the Season such as this man are then primed for both of these ailments, as the evening and late-night entertainments expose them to the dampness and fog of London nights and to the rich "animal foods" and alcohol served at ball suppers and dinner parties. Even the time of year was right for gout and rheumatism, as they occur "usually in Spring" (Meyer qtd in "Familiar" 677). The Season offered a "perfect storm" of conditions to negatively impact the constitutions of political representatives in Georgian Britain.

The books next to the tormented man, *Treatise on the Gout* and *Domestic Harmony*, both underscore his efforts to alleviate his disease and other discomforts. *Treatise* indicates that he is researching his ailment in an attempt to provide some relief from it, but the devil with his cat o' nine tails whips away relentlessly, leaving smarting marks on the man's bandaged foot. The presence of the decanter of port next to the man's chair demonstrates that the patient is perhaps not following all of the advice given in the book, as he is still consuming fortified wine. The second book, *Domestic Harmony*, hints at another association with gout: venery. London was well-known as being a center for vices such as gambling and visiting prostitutes, especially in the Covent Garden area,

with its brothels and gambling- and coffee-houses (Porter *London* 5-6). In the eighteenth century, a guide to the ladies plying their trade in this area was even published, *Harris's List of Covent-Garden Ladies*, which detailed the appearance, history, and special skills of each known worker. The 1789 "kalendar" sold for two shillings and sixpence, making it a fairly costly investment, which suggests that it was produced for men in the upper rungs of society, those who would be spending the Season in London and who, because of their class and its associated lifestyle, would be prone to suffering from gout also, as in the case of the man in this picture. The presence of *Domestic Harmony* indicates that this gentleman needs instruction in how to maintain marital and domestic peace in his household, which suggests his propensity for vices such as visiting prostitutes and gambling, popular London pastimes for gentlemen in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries that would perhaps have displeased their wives and families and thus caused a lack of domestic harmony.

The implication of sexual overindulgence this particular book offers, as well as the traditional association of gout with venery, indicates that this man has become a slave to his appetites for fine foods, alcohol, and sex. His over-consumption in these areas has resulted in his own physical and emotional torment and the wreck of his constitution, and it is fair to say that he is not unique in this sense. As a representative of many such gentlemen, the gouty man in this graphic demonstrates that greed and corruption can be said to have also negatively affected the process of politics in the nation. After all, political leaders who regularly suffer the discomforts of illnesses such as gout and rheumatism can hardly be said to be functioning at their best and perhaps might not be

thinking clearly or rationally at all times. In this sense, then, overindulgence is negatively affecting the constitution of national politics in Great Britain.

The third demon tormenting the man by straddling his neck is Catarrh, the third of the Season's trifecta of diseases. Catarrh is essentially sinus congestion, "a build-up of thick phlegm or mucus" in the sinuses or other airway (*OED* "Catarrh"). Modern sufferers usually characterize these symptoms as part of a cold, allergies, or a sinus infection, and nasal sprays, plenty of fluids, or antibiotics will alleviate the problem in a few days. For eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sufferers, however, catarrh could become much more of a problem, with mucus hardening in the nasal passages and causing blockages, difficulty hearing, loss of senses of smell and taste, fatigue, and even facial pain and headaches, particularly when exacerbated by the poor quality of London air (*OED* "Catarrh"). Catarrh was thought to be caused by not wearing enough warm clothing outdoors (resulting from a desire to be dressed fashionably rather than appropriately for the weather) and subsequent exposure to artificially produced, irregular heat in close, stuffy apartments (Art. XIII 684). Catarrh was certainly a common symptom for those partaking in the London season, as travel in carriages to and from evening events would have exposed merrymakers to the cold, damp English weather and then to hot and stuffy or chilly and drafty rooms, all of which could contribute to getting a cold, that is, suffering from catarrh. The disease's presence here suggests that the sufferer has undertaken to lead a fashionable life of entertainment and dissipation that has compromised his bodily health. If we are to read this man's body as representative of British political representatives, then the graphic suggests that this group's concern with

living life *á la mode* has negatively impacted their ability to do their jobs as officials appointed and elected to positions of political responsibility.

Catarrh's depiction within the print *Compliments of the Season* is important for another reason, its connection with consumption. Chronic catarrh was thought to lead to consumption (Art. XIII 684). The cause of catarrh, then, was also a potential, though indirect, cause of consumption. Gadding about during the London season and exposing oneself to cold and heat willy-nilly and considering fashion above health could lead to this infamous disease that almost certainly meant a death sentence for eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britons, as evidenced by its popularity as the means by which countless literary characters perish. Catarrh's link with tuberculosis, which literally consumed its victims, is thus more important when it is juxtaposed in this picture with gout, a disease caused by the victim's over-consumption. As is the case with gout, the causes of catarrh and consumption also seem to have an element of victim-blaming, as in Dr. John Reid's *A Treatise on the Origin, Progress, Prevention, and Treatment of Consumption*, where he writes that "by adapting clothing to the state of the weather than to the fashion of the times, and by avoiding, as much as possible, confinement in close and heated apartments […] susceptibility to consumption will be considerably diminished" (qtd in ART. XIII 684). Avoiding gatherings and dressing warmly without regard to fashion, though sensible for one's health, was most likely not deemed a suitable option for many people of fashion, however. Such advice for preventing gout, catarrh, and consumption demonstrate Georgian societal views that bodily health was a person's own responsibility. Regulating one's consumption of food and drink as well as minimizing entertainments outside the home would ward off these diseases and

potentially regulate the political body by preventing over-consumption, particularly among those participating in the London Season, most of whom were wealthy and/or powerful. This illustration demonstrates the diseases of consumption that went hand-in-hand with the opulence of the London Season and, by extension, were connected to British politics and members of Parliament.

Additionally, the conditions plaguing the man in this graphic all seem to involve stagnation or retention of matter within the body—gout is caused by a build-up of uric acid in the joints; rheumatism entails the swelling of joints, which causes difficulty in moving them and results in a lack of mobility; and catarrh involves retention of fluid or phlegm in the respiratory system. The nature of these conditions and the ensuing immobility of their victims are thus significant in relation to their impact on the nation's political system. If over-consumption and a life of dissipation cause stagnation, then we can reasonably conclude that the political body of Great Britain is similarly lamed. Without proper exercise and healthy consumption habits, Britain's body politic is doomed for illness and decay, as over-consumption does not allow for the circulation of wealth and resources. The immobility of the political system and those who constitute it may subtly suggest the impending necessity of a constitutional augmentation.

The grotesque elements in this graphic are more prominent than those of *The Country Justice*. The gouty man is exceedingly corpulent, evidencing his over-consumption. His facial expression registers evident horror and pain at the presence and actions of the three tormenting demons. The man's mouth is opened very wide, perhaps in a cry of pain, and his eyes are bulging from their sockets, giving his face a comical appearance, which thereby combines the shock and horror he feels with the presumed

amusement of the viewer. While his discomfort contorts his face into an expression that might provoke laughter from the audience, the situation he is in with regard to his pain and discomfort is also evidently the result of his own excessive consumption, which may also elicit horror, anger, and disgust from the audience at the man's own lack of self-control and at the wanton disregard for moderation he has demonstrated. This combination of emotions elicited by the primary figure in this graphic seems to mirror feelings characteristic of those Bakhtin argues are generated by the grotesque—laughter, anger, and horror.

While the gouty man's bloated over-consumption is clearly a strong element of the grotesque in this graphic, the three demons visiting their ailments upon the man offer an even greater connection to the principle. The three figures are ambiguous—they resemble human figures in that they have similar bodily structures and walk erect, yet they also combine other physical elements that are alien to the traditional human body. For instance, the "Cattarhe" demon astride the man's neck raises a well-formed human arm above his head, yet his leg dangling over the man's shoulder ends in a foot strongly resembling that of a chicken or other fowl. The "Gout" demon sitting on the man's bandaged foot has a foot much the same as many humans', yet he also sports a tail similar to many dogs'.[5] The ambiguity of these figures offers another grotesque element, one that would most likely cause a shared discomfort among viewers of the drawing. After

[5] The demons are blackish-grey in color, which, particularly for modern viewers, raises the possibility of their being connected to persons of African descent or the issue of slavery. I do not analyze the figures in light of such a reading, however, because during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries a number of non-English ethnic and national groups, namely the Irish and Welsh, were represented as black or with exaggerated features mimicking those common among persons of African descent. For more explanation of this trend, see S. Gilley's "English Attitudes to the Irish in England, 1789-1900", in C. Homes, ed., *Immigrants and Minorities in British Society,* (1978), L.P. Curtis's *Anglo-Saxons and Celts: A Study of Anti-Irish Prejudice in Victorian England* (1968), and N. Stepan's *The Idea of Race in Science: Great Britain* (1982).

all, despite the amusement they might feel at the gouty man's comical expression, he is at least a fellow human being, worthy of a soupçon of sympathy at minimum. The demons, however, are not human; they are other-worldly beings of ambiguous origin, and most viewers would probably have experienced a twinge of empathy for a suffering person being tormented by alien beings, regardless of whether that person seems to have brought that situation upon themselves with over-consumption. The demons, however, are solely grotesque.

The moral significance of representing these illnesses as devils is important in this graphic as well. The combination of the sacred and the profane that characterizes the carnivalesque as an element of grotesque realism is evidenced here by the use of a figure imbued with religious significance, the devil, to represent the earthly, non-religious elements of disease. The devil, according to Judeo-Christian tradition, is a figure to fear for his supernatural abilities to do great evil. In this graphic, however, the devils are turned into elements of caricature and represented as humorous figures. While the ominous elements of the devils are softened in this particular depiction, the moral significance they offer remains. Representing these diseases connected with over-consumption and dissipation as devils offers a moral judgment about those who are afflicted with them, suggesting that these individuals have "gone to the devil," as it were. If we read this man suffering from all three of these diseases as a representation of the ruling political body composed of men of the higher classes, then it is evident that the graphic suggests that this body of people has fallen into disease and decay as a result of habitual over-consumption. The political system of the nation is thus rendered

increasingly unhealthy as a result of the lack of moderation and constraint practiced by its constituents.

Compliments of the Season further expresses anxieties about the role of consumption within a political body immersed in the emerging system of capitalism. In order for capitalism to work, says Marx, consumption is necessary. People must produce goods for consumption, and this consumption must continually increase or else the economy stagnates. But, as eighteenth-century viewers knew, over-consumption leads to diseases such as gout. This graphic captures an underlying sense of anxiety regarding this trend of increasing consumption on a broader societal level. As trends of (over)consumption spread from the upper classes into the middle and lower levels of the social stratum, the possibility of a diseased body politic becomes very real. *Compliments of the Season* suggests that while the constitution of the nation's political system is certainly suffering from the effects of over-consumption, the entirety of the body politic is at risk of catching the disease as well.

Compliments of the Season demonstrates the host of ailments that were associated with the man of privilege, chief among which is gout. This picture allows viewers to see the physical consequences of the lifestyle of over-consumption that wealthy, politically powerful men were presumed to lead. The sufferer's connection to the London Season, which is political at its base, suggests that he is representative of the elite group of men who wielded political power in Great Britain and who were often presumed to hold their own interests, rather than the suffering of their fellow humankind, to be of the utmost importance. Viewers of this picture are joined through a shared understanding of gout's metaphorical significance, and their common understanding of the disease's meaning

allows for expression of a voice resistant to the class and wealth privilege in British politics in the Georgian era. This graphic thus reveals anxieties regarding the potential degradation and decay of the political system and the potential results for the nation's domestic situation and body politic.

This trend of expressing anxieties about political aspects of the national constitution continues in the work of George Cruikshank. Cruikshank was one of the most popular caricaturists of the early nineteenth century. The son of Isaac Cruikshank, also an engraver and caricaturist, George Cruikshank created prints for advertisements, songheads, and frontspieces, and produced political prints for both conservative royalist and liberal, anti-monarch publications alike (Patten). Cruikshank's 1818 picture *Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room* depicts the last gathering held by George III's wife Queen Charlotte. This crowded scene depicting grotesque over-consumption suggests the degraded state of the British political system during the early nineteenth century.

In this scene, the crush of bodies in the royal drawing room results from everyone rushing to be first in the presence of Queen Charlotte and other royals. According to one of Cruikshank's contemporaries, a Captain Gronow, there was "an immense crowd […] much confusion. Everyone wished to get first into the presence of royalty, much rushing and squeezing took place, loud shrieks were heard and several ladies fainted" (Gronow qtd in Wardroper 62): the scene this etching was based on was apparently utter chaos. Various pieces of clothing litter the carpet, evidence of the frenzied rush to reach the royals. On the left side of the picture, a uniformed man is pressed against a piece of furniture, while next to him the lady in gold gapes in consternation at another officer beside her who has stepped on and torn her gown.

At the center of the room is the doorway, where the crowd presses forward into a bottleneck. At the head of the surging wave of people are a stout lady in white and a rotund gentleman in a gold waistcoat who has gout; their combined girth has made it impossible for them to enter the room at the same time. The lady in white has gathered her skirts to avoid stepping on them and has instead trodden upon the linen-bandaged bootie of the heavy man in gold, whose red face is arranged in a grimace of pain. The faces of those visible behind them evince expressions of mirth at their uncomfortable situation. The people on the right side of the picture seem dismayed at the onslaught of people, and several are crushed into the recess behind the door the footman is opening. A more slender lady in white appears to be losing her footing, and the blue-jacketed man next to her braces to keep his balance. One of his golden epaulettes has been displaced from his shoulder and landed on the lady's head. Indeed, an unidentified commentator

claims that Cruikshank's depiction of the highest members of society turns them into "a scrum of bitching grotesques" ("George Cruikshank").

The centrality of obesity and gout in this picture featuring the members of the highest tiers of society makes clear the association of over-consumption with this class of people and thus with the political forms of the unwritten constitution of Great Britain. The gouty man, despite his debilitating ailment, has made his way to the front of the crowd in an effort to be first into the drawing room. This movement, in combination with his sizeable girth, serves to demonstrate both his considerable greed and his high degree of self-importance. His gluttony is accompanied by a thirst for recognition from the royals. His over-consumption of food holds him back in his quest for royal favor, however, as the considerable circumference of his belly combines with the woman's equally portly middle to trap both of them in the doorway, their bulging bellies pressed together. When the woman steps on his gouty foot, their combined discomfort seems to give those behind them something to laugh about, a moment of *schadenfreude* at the expense of this large, pushy pair. The comic element of the grotesque is clear in Cruikshank's representation of this pair, and the implicit symbolisms represented therein should be considered.

These two are noticeably larger than everyone else in the room. The other men present are all elegantly thin, more slender even than the footman letting everyone into the drawing room, and the only other two women whose bodies are visible also seem shapely but lean. The marked weight difference between the pushy, porcine pair and the rest of the company, as well as their central position in the picture and the ludicrous situation they are in, sets them apart as satirical objects, even within a picture that is

meant to poke fun at all who are gathered here. The man's size, dress, and presence at a royal gathering mark both his high status and his gout that solidify his social station. The stout lady in white also is apparently well-born, judging from her presence at this royal drawing room, yet the artist's portrayal of her greed stops with her size and her eagerness for royal notice, as gout is seen as a particularly masculine trait in the early nineteenth century. The presence of gout as a characteristic of the male half of one of the most ridiculed objects in the etching marks it as a tool of satire that easily demonstrates what many saw as the greed and lack of regard for others that typified those who formed the ruling classes and thus constituted the class of politically powerful Britons.

The significance of the political commentary Cruikshank offers in this picture is clear. The drawing room is filled to capacity with useless, greedy people who seek to gain advantage for themselves through connections with royals and other important political personages. This gathering suggests a similarity to the houses of Parliament, which many Britons in the early nineteenth century saw as being filled to capacity with equally useless, greedy persons interested only in procuring favors for themselves rather than serving their electorates. In fact, during the early nineteenth century, more than 140 Parliamentary seats (of 658 total) in the House of Commons were from "rotten boroughs" or "pocket boroughs," election districts whose populations were very small, usually fewer than 100 persons, that were maintained by a particular patron to control seats in the House of Commons and thus ensure representation for a particular party ("pocket borough"). The Reform Act of 1832 eliminated these seats and redistributed them according to population density, but in 1818 pocket candidates were very much in

existence, thus over-filling the political system with useless, sometimes unqualified persons, much as Queen Charlotte's gathering is shown to be in Cruikshank's depiction.

The jam of persons this graphic depicts suggests additional symbolic meaning. The lack of free movement shown here connects this drawing to the mercantile system of economy the nation was moving away from during the early nineteenth century. Mercantilism, which I discuss more in the following chapter, operated on the principle that trade was the key to economic development, and developing profitable trade balance through protectionist policies would preserve bullion and build greater wealth. Capitalism, however, required free and constant movement of capital and product; preserving and hoarding bullion was counterproductive. Instead, capital should be reinvested as a means of stimulating production and thus increasing profit. Over-consumption works essentially as a means of hoarding; if one consumes one's wealth, especially in the form of eating and drinking, then no one else may have it. These persons cramping the drawing room and preventing free movement are part of the upper classes, probably the aristocracy, persons who have held the greatest political capital in Great Britain for centuries. Their stagnation therefore implicitly mirrors the stagnation of both the economic system that shaped the early and middle parts of the eighteenth century and of the system of privilege that structures the nation's political system. This graphic may suggest that without free movement and industrial expansion, both the economic and political systems will remain stagnant, which will thereby weaken Great Britain and its body politic.

Grotesqueness also forms a major element of this graphic. Contrary to common perceptions regarding rank, nobility, and gentility, these graphics, *A Crowded Drawing-*

Room in particular, depict as grotesque persons from the upper classes, rather than those from the lower orders, as may be supposed. The ridiculous position all in attendance at this gathering are forced into produces a strong element of humor. The most powerful and affluent class of people in the nation are degraded into undignified positions resulting from their desire to hobnob with the royals. This behavior seems vulgar and ill-bred, not characteristics that were supposed to be associated with the nobility and gentry. Costumes are torn and in disarray in the drawing room, people are losing their balance, and two people are jammed together in the doorway, unable to move as a result of their own combined girth and impatience; the confusion and lack of balance in the drawing caused by these elements elicits discomfort and horror from viewers. Bodily symmetry is disrupted by the gouty man's and stout woman's extremely large midsections as well as from the twisted countenances they and other persons evidence. The bloated over-consumption this pair demonstrates is mirrored in the conspicuous consumption the other persons in attendance show with regard to adorning themselves with finery. Ornate headdresses, tiered gowns, gold braid, embroidery, and fine footwear are all in evidence, most of which has been ruined as a result of the tumultuous fray, resulting in a tremendous waste of materials and money. While this "scrum" is amusing to look upon, when one considers the waste evidenced therein and the reason for that waste—merely to be in the presence of royals—viewers of this drawing may well also be filled with horror and disgust at this evidence of greed, bloated over-consumption, and the degradation of those who for centuries had been considered the cream of English society. The death and decay characteristic of the grotesque are demonstrated here in the death and decay of the dignity of those depicted here, the class of wealthy and politically powerful Britons.

Character decay inspires horror among viewers, who must ask themselves how they and society as a whole will survive in a world led by such a group of people, a body altered, lamed, and decayed by greed and over-consumption.

The political power and social capital that the gouty man and the other members of the drawing room party have at their disposal renders this picture a pointed jab at the wealthy, powerful classes and their unquenchable thirst for royal favor and notoriety. It demonstrates the perceived values held by this group, values that are very different from those held by the remainder of the population. Cruikshank's work was incredibly popular and commonly displayed in shop windows to entice buyers, so people from all levels of society would have seen it, which ensures that the message within this piece would have been seen and understood by many viewers of the middling and lower orders of society. This piece of graphic satire not only pokes fun at the excesses of the nation's elite, it also represents this ruling body, particularly through the depictions of gout and obesity, as a means of allowing a voice resistant to the class privilege depicted therein to be heard. This draws together viewers who shared anxieties regarding the impact the over-consumption of the ruling classes had on political aspects of the nation's informal constitution.

Graphic satire takes another overtly political aim in William Benbow's 1820 *The Brightest Star in the State, or, A Peep Out a Royal Window*. Benbow, a shoemaker, Nonconformist preacher, and one-time creator and seller of obscene literature and prints, was also a leader of radical reform movements and once went to prison for seditious libel; in 1821 he was arrested for caricaturing the king (Chase). In this print, the colossal, grotesque figure of George IV sits in a chair with two horned demons on his lap; the

devils hold the ends of a string that cinches around the king's waist painfully. The words "Pains and Penalties" are written above the string, and "Ports-mouth Briggs Changed for a Dinner" is written below it on his tan breeches. "Pains and Penalties" says the demon on the left, while the devil on the right shouts, "Purge Corruption from the Commons Sewer!" The monarch's right foot is obviously affected by gout, as it is swollen, wrapped in the ubiquitous linen booty, and rests upon a red pillow with gold braid. Written on it are the words "Pillar of the State." A third demon stands by the king's left leg and rips off his garter ribbon; he says "Down with the Star and Garter that old sign must be hung on another Post!"

The king himself says "Quee- Car—o," which refers to his wife, Caroline of Brunswick. On the left breast of the king's blue coat are three small heads with arms and hands

representing Parliamentary ministers who surround a horned devil's head in the middle. Castlereagh, leader of the House of Commons, is on the left and says "Hang the people what a riot they make Thank God I'm safe at home, they surely won't drag me out of C—n H—e." Lord Chancellor Eldon is in the middle and says "Cast—rag what's that noise about Queen for Ever Tower Guns Firing. Thank G-d I'm here. For it's a knell that would summon us to H-ll." And Liverpool, the leader of the House of Lords on the right, declares "Devil take the Bill they want to make me pay it at Sight on Tower Hill, but I should have run my head against a block for they would have axe'd me about it, which I shouldn't like."

This caricature of George IV displays his unpopularity at this juncture in his reign. While he had frequently been criticized for his scandalous sexual behavior and debts throughout his regency, his official succession to the throne in 1820 brought disgust toward him from both commoners and nobility alike, largely because of his efforts to pass the Pains and Penalties Bill. This bill was meant to establish that his queen consort, Caroline of Brunswick, had committed adultery and would thus allow him to divorce her.[6] This plan seems to have backfired, however, because many who sought political change and Parliamentary reform championed Caroline's cause (Robins 86). Jane Robins argues that Caroline had always concerned herself with being a "people's queen" (83), and that now sympathy lay with her on the part of many in Parliament as well as the common people because for such reformers Caroline was a blessing—she was a popular royal figure who could be used "to attack the excesses of the king and his corrupt Parliament" (Robins 86).

[6] George and Caroline's daughter Charlotte had died in 1817 after giving birth to a stillborn son, leaving the king without a child to inherit his throne. If her were able to divorce Caroline, he would be free to marry again and potentially produce another heir.

George and Caroline's marriage had not been a success. The Prince Regent had only married in order to increase his allowance from Parliament, as he was heavily in debt, and he found the princess unattractive and overall quite unclean (Robins 17). The couple had separated in 1797, shortly after the birth of their daughter Princess Charlotte, and later George banished Caroline from court as well as gave orders that she was not to be received by courts abroad (Robins 85). Robins asserts that the British people largely saw Caroline as a "pitiful victim in need of assistance" (Robins 21), and says that this latest effort on the part of George IV to injure her rendered him even more unpopular, especially when combined with his extravagant spending, corrupt Parliament, and known adulterous relationships. George IV had heard Caroline had taken lovers abroad and so designed the Pains and Penalties Bill to bring Caroline on trial in Parliament and to expose all of her personal business to the world so that he might divorce her, though his extramarital affairs were well-known. This particular drawing represents the fallout the king experienced with regard to his habitual over-consumption and excessive venery in combination with what was commonly regarded as his harsh treatment of his wife. Her reputation as a people's queen and his unpopularity combine in this graphic to depict him as ridiculous, hypocritical, and grotesque.

While the king is apparently associated with hypocrisy in his treatment of the Queen, given that his sexual exploits were common knowledge among aristocrats and commoners alike, he is also connected with gluttony in this picture. He is a tremendously fat figure; his paunch, drawn in two by the cord the devils are holding, threatens to burst at any moment, and his double chin is prominent above his collar. Contemporaries of the king and historians alike have noted his extreme corpulence; E.G.L. Bywaters adds that

by 1816 George was so obese that he could not even get on a horse without the help of "special and ludicrous machinery" (333).[7] His obesity combined with his hearty sexual appetite mark him as one disposed to over-consumption. In this drawing George is the pinnacle and central depiction of disgust for gout; he is the epitome of the over-consuming aristocrat. The distaste for the ruling figure of Great Britain evidenced in this graphic does seem to illustrate a self-aware class-bonding disgust for his actions. Viewers are made aware of what he is doing to the body politic through all his excesses—symbolized by over-consumption and the resultant gout—and thereby are able to form a sense of community built upon a mutual disgust for the consumption habits of their sovereign and the effects his actions have upon the political system and the well-being of the body politic.

This sense of disgust is further enhanced by elements of the grotesque. George IV's mammoth size places him in the realm of the grotesque, as does the combination of humor, disgust, and horror his image provokes. The caricature is drawn to elicit amusement at the king's expense, and his well-known obese condition is displayed to the artist's advantage. The string cinching his waist nearly in half emphasizes his hefty paunch and even makes him appear pregnant, which further emasculates the monarch. The demons tormenting him differ from the demons in Cruikshank's drawing in that they display few if any human characteristics; instead, their figures, with cloven hoofs, long, thin legs, drooping ears, and horns are much like goats, perhaps a reference to the king's well-known voracious sexual appetite. Overall, the king appears ridiculous, making the humorous element of the grotesque clear in this caricature.

[7] See Cruikshank's etching *By Royal Authority* (1816) for an example of this contraption.

George IV's ludicrous depiction also inspires horror, however, as part of his grotesqueness. His size, a key element of the grotesque, emphasizes the enormity of the situation. He dwarfs the ministers shown to be in his pocket—a reference to the corrupt Parliament he was thought to be official head of—and towers over the three demons as well. His size indicates the degree of bloated over-consumption he has reached, a point at which he has consumed so much that he (and his office of monarch) has grown beyond all recognition. The king's out-of-control consumption habits are calculated to inspire disgust and horror in viewers, resulting in the combination of comedy and horror that marks the grotesque. By emphasizing these traits of the monarch and focusing on the disease that affects his lower stratum, Benbow constructs George IV in this picture as a grotesque figure representing the decay of both his own person and of his office as monarch of the nation, which results in the degradation of the nation's political system as well. Viewers who consume this picture gain a means by which they can, according to Kayser, at the very least cope with their dissatisfaction with the king's lack of consideration for his subjects and, at most, according to Bakhtin, participate and become involved with the political process by voicing their frustrations.

George IV's gout was well-documented public knowledge during his regency and reign, as evidenced through both numerous references in historical documents such as diaries and newspapers from the era and from his depictions in graphic satire. His wrapped foot in *The Brightest Star* is a tame rendering of his disease, which had spread to both of his knees by 1816 (Bywaters 332) and had affected all of his limbs by 1828, when he could barely hold a pen (Bywaters 336). His gouty foot labeled the "Pillar of the State" evidences public opinion regarding the unsteady base that he, a gouty, gluttonous,

lascivious king, made for the nation of Great Britain. Even the three ministers of state in his pocket suggest the flaws of the political system at large; they suggest that the highest political figures have much more in common with the sovereign than to ordinary Britons. This graphic suggests the disgust that many Britons felt toward the king and his cohorts, aristocratic men whose careless over-consumption had led to the nation of Great Britain having what many felt was a very shaky foundation, particularly in the bloody aftermath of the French Revolution, which many people, monarchists and reformers alike, felt was catalyzed by the irresponsible over-consumption of the Bourbon court and subsequent lack of consideration for the needs of the general populace. Gout's representation as an indicator of grotesque over-consumption indicates common cultural feelings of uneasiness regarding George IV's massive spending and perceived immorality. His behaviors in this regard seem to counter the logic of capitalism, in which movement of capital is necessary for a healthy economy. George's spending and consumption seem mostly calculated to end up settled in his own person, however, as evidenced by his obesity and gout. In this way he actually hinders the nation by stopping the flow of its life-blood—money. His immorality thus reaches new levels, and Britons are able to consider, debate, and even dissent against the practices and values of the monarch via this representation of his corpulence and gout. Gout's symbolic meaning depicted in this drawing demonstrates the common perception that those controlling the political system were foundering on their own excesses, which promised disastrous consequences for lower- and middle-class Britons and the country as a whole.

S. W. Fores published another depiction of George IV with gout in his political satire *A King-Fisher*, from 1826.

This scene depicts King George IV fishing with his mistress, Lady Elizabeth Conyngham, in front of an oriental-styled pavilion. His fishing-rod is a golden scepter with a line tied to it, and Lady Conyngham reaches into the water with a net to scoop the fish out. She exclaims, "Oh, what a beautiful fish! I think it's something of the gudgeon kind, but a most noble one." The king reposes on a plush red stool and has his gouty, linen-wrapped foot propped on a matching low ottoman. His hips, thighs, and buttocks appear large and out of proportion with the rest of his body, which seems of average size, thus giving him a grotesque appearance; this drawing seems to be a somewhat kind depiction, as it was common knowledge and has been well-documented that George IV was extremely obese at this time (Bywaters 333). A bird, presumably an actual kingfisher, sits across from the couple on the opposite river bank and stares.

Despite the seemingly innocuous representation of the king and his mistress in this picture, George was apparently mortified at this depiction. Bywaters notes that these cartoons ridiculing the king were suppressed; he says that the king's agents bought them

all up so the public could not see them (335), which suggests a certain amount of awareness about class differences and hostility toward the upper classes on the part of those in the lower and middling orders. However, according to Lady Frances Shelley, this picture alone stopped him from fishing for the rest of his life (cited in Bywaters 335). Perhaps any depiction of the king living his everyday life and doing "common" things such as fishing was embarrassing to the sovereign. Maybe publicly viewed renderings of him with his mistress were indecent, despite the fact that essentially everyone knew of his extramarital affairs. Or, perhaps the king's disease of overconsumption being depicted so frankly and publicly was unacceptable to him, and he wanted them hidden from his subjects. Though it is unclear precisely why the king was so mortified by this piece, it offers a wealth of material for analysis in terms of class relations and over-consumption.

One key element of satire in this piece rests both in the fish the king has caught and in Lady Conyngham's comment. The gudgeon is a small, bottom-feeding freshwater fish common to Europe that was often used as bait ("gudgeon" 1a). However, the term gudgeon was also used as a pejorative term for a gullible person, one who will bite at or swallow any bait ("gudgeon" 2a). The "most noble" gudgeon in this print is apparently George himself, netted in the very hands of Lady Conyngham. His mistress was not well-liked among people at court during the time of their affair. She was considered vulgar and greedy, and her frequent feuds with Lady Castlereagh, wife of the leader of the House of Commons, were said to increase the friction between the king and government (Hyde 82). Princess Dorthea von Leiven even referred to Lady Conyngham as having "nothing but a hand to accept pearls and diamonds [with]" (Hyde 82). She was able to ensure that the king granted many favors to her family during her time as his mistress, and, according

to Montgomery Hyde, many in the royal household and in government saw her as greedy, scheming, and manipulative, using the king to benefit her intimate friends. The king is the figurative gudgeon in the picture, the one who has been duped or fooled at the hands of Lady Conyngham, which may after all be the real reason he wished to suppress this picture. She carries her influence with him to get what she wants; he has swallowed her bait, which also reflects the considerable amount of swallowing he has done in over-consuming food and drink to develop gout. The picture also mimics the literal gudgeon in the form of Lady Conyngham, whom many considered a "common bottomfeeder" and has used herself as bait to get a larger fish, the king. This representation of the king as foolish and of his mistress as common and manipulative paints an unflattering picture of the royal household, one that George IV and his agents sought to hide and destroy.

The king's gout is interesting given his chosen hobby of fishing, or angling. Fishing was thought to prevent or alleviate a variety of ailments, including gout. Izaak Walton's popular seventeenth-century work *The Compleat Angler* notes, "I will beg you to consider with me, how many do, even at this very time, lie under the torment of the stone, the gout, the toothache, and this we [anglers] are free from" (qtd in Rodnan 181). When done properly, fishing would doubtless provide a means of warding off gout. It requires movement such as running up and downstream and well as strength in finally capturing the fish. When one only sits in one place, then only the least active fish are likely to bite, bottom-feeders such as the gudgeon mentioned here. Such fish are often the least healthy and tasty, which makes them wholly undesirable. In this sense, one may read this picture as a kind of allegory in which the king's lack of energy and movement

reflect the lack of political action such as voter reform taking place to better meet the needs of common Britons.

The king's lack of movement in his fishing is also important in its connections to economic aspects of the nation's unwritten constitution as well. Capitalism needs channels that move products and money quickly so that the whole system keeps moving, or the economy is stopped. The king's static body (a result of his gout) suggests the way in which his over-consumption, and that of people like him, hinders movement in the whole body politic, which can thereby negatively impact political aspects of the national constitution as well. When economic growth stops or slows considerably, as it did in Britain for several years after the Napoleonic Wars, political unrest tends to increase, which can result in larger disruptions in political aspects of the national constitution, as would be shown just a few years later in 1832. The king's static attempts at fishing indicate the far-reaching impacts that the over-consumption of the politically powerful can have upon Great Britain as a whole. In any case, angling has not relieved his gout, and his opulent surroundings provide another clue as to why.

George IV sits fishing under the canopy of an oriental-styled pavilion with Lady Conyngham. This large shelter has been constructed very close to the river, and his plush footstool, embellished with gold, appears to be mere inches from the water. The prince even fishes with his royal scepter in this drawing rather than with an actual reed or pole. Next to the stool supporting his gouty foot sits a small gold box, possibly a snuffbox, with the royal emblem on it. A creel, a basket for caught fish, also lies next to the king's chair. The pavilion itself contrasts sharply with the English countryside and the surrounding buildings. Windsor Castle sits in the right foreground while a Tudor-style

home is visible across the river. These distinctly English structures are solidly placed in the earth, whereas the pavilion, with its onion-domed canopy poles and cloth roof, is only a temporary shelter, suggesting the solidity and sturdiness—and thus superiority—of Great Britain in comparison to the Asiatic-themed pavilion. George IV is thereby pictured as neither a solid nor sturdy foundation for the nation's political system; he is a weakened, diseased body with a presumably weak, susceptible mind. His illness is not affecting only him, however; gout's very nature is depicted as causing the disease and downfall of the entire nation.

The Buddhist pagoda tiers and geometric patterns that decorate the supporting poles of the pavilion the king and his mistress sit under conjure up images of the Far East and of the continued expansion of the British Empire. The pavilion suggests the ways in which England and notions of "the oriental" have intertwined in the lives of Britons. These allusions to the British colonization of Asia call to mind the systems of consumption and mercantilism that drove the economy and pervaded the culture of Great Britain in the 1820s. It is this very system, Roy Porter argues, that drove Britons to over-consume, which resulted in diseases such as gout ("Consumption" 58). In order to prevent waste, he explains, the system dictated that all perishables should be exported and sold in order to accrue non-perishable money (Porter "Consumption" 58). The king, however, well-known for his extravagance, waste, and debts, not only over-consumes the domestic food and drink that cause him to develop gout but also consumes goods imported from and associated with other countries, particularly Asian ones. The scene depicted here suggests the inherent unhealthiness of both the system of mercantilism and a capitalist economy. The conquering British Empire and its system of colonization are

diseased from their inception and thus promise illness in the form of crashes, panics, recessions and the like in the years to come and which have already occurred during the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century. The effects of over-consumption on George IV and the political body he heads are darkly hinted at by the king's exotic tastes in décor as represented in *A King-Fisher*.

George's love for Asian decorations and the presence of his small pavilion in this cartoon also connote his (in)famous Brighton Royal Pavilion, the prince's home in the seaside town where he often went to partake of sea-bathing for his gout and other ailments. What was initially a small farmhouse became a villa in 1787 then grew into a magnificent "oriental" palace over the course of the years 1815-1820 (Brighton and Hove City Council "History"). King George's fascination with "the Orient" was evident in both his building design and in the furnishings he chose for the interior of his home, which included Chinese furniture and art and even hand-painted Chinese wallpapers (Brighton and Hove City Council "History"). His over-consumption was not simply limited to foodstuffs but also ranged to goods, particularly Asian exports, the expense of which many people, politicians and commoners alike, certainly resented after the economically difficult times caused by the expense of the Napoleonic Wars. Paying taxes to uphold the Prince Regent's expensive habits did not sit well with the public, and George IV was lampooned in graphic satire for years. This picture captures and criticizes what is seen as the monarch's lack of restraint in his personal consumption, which has reached astonishing levels in its impact on both his personal constitution and the nation's body politic.

George IV's caricature in this graphic becomes grotesque in its rendering of his apparent cluelessness and incapability to lead a nation bent on expanding and maintaining an empire. His fascination with goods from Asia and with Lady Conyngham is amusing on the one hand, as it reveals a weak, impressionable mind. His subjects might laugh at his ability to be distracted by shiny objects and a voluptuous figure, but, upon further reflection, this caricature inspires viewers with horror and disgust at the knowledge that their monarch is possessed of a weak, facile mind. This graphic begs the question of how Great Britain will ever maintain its place as a world leader with such a captain at its helm. This grotesque rendering offers a means through which Britons may express dissatisfaction with their monarch and the political system he heads and attempt to cope with the question of how they will survive in a world where grotesque over-consumption among leaders is the order of the day.

The king's weakened, gullible condition depicted here does not paint a promising picture of the future of Great Britain. He is a man both physically and mentally vulnerable and apparently caught in the net of Lady Conyngham. George IV's representation within *A King-fisher* demonstrates the precarious position of the nation's political system at the hands of those who grossly overindulge in their desires for luxury. The picture's representation of gout is key in that it effectively and succinctly indicates all that is wrong with the class-stratified system of Great Britain—the monarch is supremely over-consuming at the expense of the people, who are left with very little. Gout's depiction allows a voice of dissention to be heard in the midst of this common cultural understanding; the message this voice is sending is that the ruling body of Great

Britain in the form, here, of the monarchy, is diseased, decaying, and often morally corrupt, which compromises the health of the nation in turn.

Representations of those who held the majority of political power in Great Britain showed considerable signs of weakness in both bodily health and strength of character and morality, as these examples of graphic satire indicate. These portrayals then suggest the presence of considerable uneasiness regarding the unsound political system of Great Britain. No longer did the aristocracy rule by divine right, and many common people were tired of having few civil rights and little by way of wealth and property while aristocrats and the wealthy lived and consumed unrestrained. The consistency and frequency with which these gentlemen are depicted with gout indicates a shared cultural understanding of this condition and its metaphorical significance. These graphics and the many others like them suggest that most people were aware of this problem of over-consumption impacting British politics, but, because of the stratified class system and the great privilege these people enjoyed, common people were unable to actively speak out against the greed and corruption they saw taking place within the political system. Perhaps no greater evidence of the sense of antagonism felt toward the monarchy and aristocracy caused in large part by the excesses of conspicuous consumption is the behavior of Queen Victoria, who came to the throne in 1838. Her efforts to distance herself from the excess and profligacy of her Hanoverian uncles by leading a comparatively simple, seemingly middle-class existence suggest her awareness of the tide of sentiment gathering against the upper classes. For artists and creators of graphic satire, conflating the perceived greed, avarice, gluttony, and selfishness of an over-consuming ruling body together in representations of gout provided an easily understood metaphor

for what many considered the depravity and decay—both moral and physical—of the upper classes and the political system they controlled.

The grotesque body of the individual gouty gentleman in graphic satire represents the larger social and political body of that same group of persons, and gout itself serves as a means of subtly uniting viewers by providing a site of common understanding around which they can judge attributes of power and characteristics associated with those who maintained control of the political system of Great Britain. And judge they did, as these barbed instruments of satire reveal. Gout's consistency of representation in such graphics both speaks to the community of viewers and expresses the folk consciousness of the nation. It demonstrates that this disease of the over-consuming, wealthy, and often politically powerful affects these people not just individually but also the country as a whole. Though not literally contagious, gout and its effects threaten to spread to the rest of the nation, which will result in the sickening of the entire body politic. The common ground provided by grotesque representations of gout in the graphic satire of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth century provides a means by which dissenting voices resistant to the entrenched system of class privilege that results in political power for the wealthy can subtly express their dissatisfaction with the nation's unhealthy political system, the gouty body upon whose shoulders the nation's power rested. The articulation of these resistant, subversive voices via grotesque representations of gout, however, may result in these voices and the community they represent starting to gain political subjectivity, as Susan Lanser argues. These graphic depictions offer a platform upon which political dissidents can begin to raise issues about the ineffective, diseased political body ruling the nation. They also, as Bakhtin contends, allow the disenfranchised to

begin slowly dismantling the fixed hierarchy that characterized the political system of Georgian Britain.

In the following chapter I continue my analysis of gout's representations in graphic satire, this time focusing on grotesque depictions of over-consumption and gout relating to economic aspects of the nation's unwritten constitution. I discuss how these graphics depict the shifting economic conditions characterizing Great Britain and argue that these illustrations suggest how over-consumption degrades the economic system of the nation. These graphics thereby allow for the expression of quiet voices critical to the diseased system of class privilege and so facilitate the formation of a sense of community that may begin to gain political subjectivity through this latent expression.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2: More than His Fair Share: Personal Economy and Grotesque Over-Consumption in Graphic Satire

> "A great empire has been established for the sole purpose of raising up a nation of consumers, who should be obliged to buy, from the shops of our different producers."
> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*

Susan Lanser argues that within the eighteenth-century novel the act of speaking allows previously disenfranchised persons to gain agency and become active political subjects. Speaking can be much more complex than simply voicing words, however. Gout's grotesque, satirical representation within both the novels and graphics of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is itself a subtle voice resistant to class privilege and grotesque over-consumption by the upper classes. These representations become a site around which viewers may develop a sense of community by acknowledging, debating, and judging these systems of power and their effects upon both individuals and larger social groups.

In the previous chapter I discuss ways in which gout's representation demonstrates the effect of over-consumption on political aspects of the constitution of the nation. These graphics present the gouty man as a grotesque figure available to readings by those resistant to the system of class privilege that structures the political system of the nation. I argue that in this golden age of graphic satire, the frequency with which political figures (both specific individuals and abstract beings representative of class privilege and power) are depicted with gout renders the disease political, as it indicates that this illness is strongly associated with higher social class, wealth, political power, and the male gender. Thus, any time the disease is depicted, the representation carries

with it political significance: the sufferer is presumed to be wealthy, male, and the recipient of privileges based on those factors of gender and class, privileges that often include political power and social capital. In the graphics of the period, the disease becomes one of the markers of the societal ills caused by over-consumption plaguing the country's political system.

Representations of gout, while always political because of gout's metaphorical significance, often depict scenes and persons not in the political arena, but rather within private life, which is the setting of much of this chapter. Such depictions of gout within people's personal lives demonstrate the effects of over-consumption upon both individuals' physical and economic constitutions as well as the impact their lack of moderation has upon the constitution of the entire British economy. These pieces of graphic satire seem to suggest that those who over-consume impact both their own lives and the lives of the rest of the body politic in a deeply personal way.

It is important to note that one's personal economy relates to more than simply finances. I discuss personal economic habits in terms of individual consumption of food and drink and material goods as well as in terms of the (mis)use of monetary resources because one's personal constitution, or health, is inherently related to his/her economy. One cannot nourish one's body without sufficient economic resources, and over-consumption—and gout—thus requires an abundance of those resources. Over-consumption is therefore a sign that the individual in question has not practiced moderation in their own personal economy. The grotesque alterations to the human bodies represented in these graphics therefore evidence the debilitating impact that over-consumption has upon the economies of both individuals and the nation as a whole. In

such depictions, the voices of the lower classes and disenfranchised are subtly represented by way of this consistent, substantive critique of the upper classes' perceived values regarding consumption habits and personal economic practices.

The alterations gout makes to bodies within graphic satire reflect the ways in which economic aspects of Great Britain's unwritten constitution were also changing during the Georgian period. In the seventeenth and early-to-mid-eighteenth century, Great Britain's economy could be characterized as a mercantile system. The British government therefore favored protectionist practices meant to stimulate the nation's economy by stifling competition through imposing tariffs on imported goods so that citizens would purchase those goods produced domestically instead. The overall goal was to maintain a positive trade balance with other countries and thus preserve bullion within the British treasury. Mercantilism was essentially a zero-sum game in which all the players/countries attempted to export as much as possible while importing as little as they could. Patrick O'Brien explains that the protective tariffs upon foreign products (which were mainly imposed on agrarian-based goods) combined with re-exported goods from the British colonies to provide a source of considerable revenue for the nation (57-58). Such practices thus helped conserve Great Britain's supply of bullion (O'Brien 57-58).

As a means of further nourishing the nation's economy, the government encouraged the development and expansion of trade, and by extension, the British Empire, by presenting very few hindrances to the evolving system of credit controlled by merchants and shipping companies (O'Brien 62). By developing their own trade and personal connections across the globe, merchants were able to act as guarantors for one another, which resulted in the development of credit networks. These networks made

credit cheaper and easier to obtain as the eighteenth century progressed, which in turn helped increase trade and secure Great Britain a foothold as an imperial power (O'Brien 62).

In order to maintain its advantage in trade while continuing to expand both access to raw materials and to more diverse markets to which it could ship manufactured goods, Great Britain went to war often during the Georgian era. The French and the Dutch continually clashed with the British throughout the course of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century in disputes over the control of and trade rights to islands in the West Indies, India, the Caribbean, and other colonial outposts. Britain fought four Anglo-Dutch Wars intermittently between 1652 and 1784 while also fighting wars against France (and occasionally in alliance with them) such as the Seven Years War and the Wars of the First and Second Coalitions. Britain also continued its quarrels with France through the first years of the nineteenth century in the Napoleonic Wars, which finally ended in 1815.

Wars are and have always been expensive, and the British government had to borrow money to finance them. As a result, Parliament was forced to increase taxes as a means of financing the national debt. O'Brien contends that the share of government debt increased so much that before the Glorious Revolution, the amount of tax revenue used to pay the interest on the royal debt (which eventually became the national debt) was at about 5%, but during the Seven Years' War it increased to 56% and eventually settled at around 50% during the first few decades of the nineteenth century (62-64). O'Brien contends that most Britons were relatively compliant about these tax increases because they understood they were for the good of trade, the national economy, and the empire (70). Indeed, as Linda Colley argues, these wars were key in developing a sense of

"Britishness" (3). According to O'Brien, only a small amount of the population resented this expansion of trade and the subsequent increase in taxes and governmental authority, and these persons consisted of an "enlightened intellectual fringe" from among the middling orders (70). Nonetheless, the sheer number of depictions critical of over-consumption, greed, and corruption in graphic satire that one may connect to issues of national economy suggests otherwise. In addition to their national significance, because these pieces typically utilize the trope of using an individual to represent the nation's body politic or a particular group such as the aristocracy, we may read these criticisms of consumption on both micro and macro levels; that is, they pertain to both personal and national economy. These grotesque depictions of gout's effect on economic aspects of the nation's constitution indicate that such sentiments critical of the over-consumption of the government and those closely connected with it, the upper classes, were plentiful, thus revealing the undercurrents of discontent flowing beneath the surface of Georgian society.

Another major factor influencing the British economy and aiding in the shift away from mercantilism to a free market economy was the Industrial Revolution. Around 1750 Parliament passed a series of laws known as the Acts of Enclosure. These acts ceded common land to private estates as a means of increasing food production. As a result, farming became more efficient and required fewer laborers. Many persons were now forced to find work in cottage industries and eventually went to factories. This concentration of persons into industries such as textiles and mining resulted in a variety of mechanical innovations being developed, which many historians believe helped spur the Industrial Revolution. These advances in technology and the resulting mechanization

of once time-intensive, laborious practices such as weaving completely altered Britain's economy. It shifted from a mercantile system to an early version of the modern capitalist economy we are familiar with today.

This tremendous alteration of the nation's economy from one characterized by protectionism and monopolies into one largely free of government restriction or intervention was praised by eighteenth-century economists such as Adam Smith. Adam Smith's famous work *The Wealth of Nations* functions as a critique of mercantilism and a promotion of a free-market economy. He writes, "in the mercantile system, the interest of the consumer is almost constantly sacrificed to that of the producer" (Smith VIII), referring to the monopolies and resultant oligarchy he believed were created by the system of protectionism and government regulations of trade. In the burgeoning system of capitalism, Smith thought, there was greater possibility for economic opportunity; in a free market, talent, perseverance, and improvement through competition could result in success for a greater number of people, those outside of the oligarchy of producers and beneficiaries of monopoly. While mercantilism hinged on the idea that gaining wealth was by nature a zero-sum game, the free market offered the possibility for continual creation of wealth.

Though we as inhabitants of the twenty-first century have the benefit of hindsight and have seen the pitfalls of laissez-faire economic policy, in contrast to the system of monopolistic protectionism that characterized the mercantile economy, the free market might have seemed to provide greater possibility for workers and consumers. Smith's predecessors, including Francois Quesnay and Pieter de la Court, advocated a liberal economy and a shift away from mercantilism; such sentiments were later echoed by

Smith's contemporaries such as the Marquis de Condorcet, yet it was Smith's publication of *The Wealth of Nations* that seems to have had the most profound impact upon British economic policy. John Rae, Smith's biographer, asserts that in the two years after its publication, Parliamentary proceedings demonstrate that Lord North imposed taxes upon man-servants and goods sold at auction in 1777 and on house inhabitations and malt in 1778, all of which Smith stressed the need for in his work (294). The *Wealth of Nations* appears to have influenced British economic policy quickly and in a substantial way. Not all reacted with enthusiasm toward and acquiescence to Smith's proposed policies, but the book does seem to have been very popular and sold well, with the first edition having sold out within six months (Rae 285). Political economy and the free market were stopped short, however, in the 1790s in the aftermath of the French Revolution, as was much Parliamentary reform. The considerable upheaval caused by Smith's promotion of what many saw as radical economic policy as well as the increasingly rapid pace of industrialization and a diminishing agrarian way of life must have resulted in considerable societal anxiety. These feelings manifest within graphic satire from the latter part of the eighteenth century and well into the first quarter of the nineteenth. In these depictions, grotesque alterations to the body caused by gout reflect tensions regarding the flux impacting various economic aspects of the nation's constitution.

One such graphic evidencing this tension is William Austin's print *Major G****n and Lady Landing at Southampton in Cripples Walk,* one plate from a 1773 twelve-print satirical series. The illustration suggests ways in which personal over-consumption affects the economy of Great Britain.

Austin, a drawing-master, painter, and ardent supporter of Whig politician Charles James Fox (Clayton), specialized in satirical caricatures of this nature. This one features a gentleman, Major G, whose illustration bespeaks his privileged status and over-consumption. He is wearing his red military coat, which indicates a certain amount of wealth, as he would have purchased his military commission. He is hobbling along with crutches and is wearing a linen booty on one foot, a sure sign of gout. His stomach balloons out, stretching his waistcoat significantly in front of him, and his face is quite red. His protruding stomach and flushed face suggest that he has over-consumed food and drink, which has in turn led to gout. The major's caricature emphasizes his proclivity for over-enjoyment in gustatory matters and greatly exaggerates a few definitive characteristics. Exaggerated representations of bodily features such as the stomach and the swollen foot are key features of caricature and connect with grotesque realism as well because gross exaggeration, according to Wolfgang Kayser, is one of the "essential

elements of the grotesque" (51). This embellishment then serves to render the major ridiculous as a result of his over-consumption and lack of restraint in personal economy.

The major is also said to be walking in Southampton, a popular spa town for sea-bathing and treating various ailments, including gout. Like other spa towns such as Bath, Southampton enjoyed a fashionable status as a place for the wealthy and sick to recuperate and socialize. His "lady" is with him, whose caricature is, if possible, even more grotesquely constructed and also suggests lack of economic restraint. She walks slightly behind and upon her neck is a large bejeweled golden cross. Written next to her picture are the words "A diamond cross upon her neck is / Which Jews might kiss and Infidels adore," a paraphrase from Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* that describes the large diamond cross upon Belinda's neck that "Jews might worship and infidels adore" (II.i.7).[8] The lady's diamond cross in the picture suggests that she is also performing the motions of religious devotion and is wearing the jewels solely as adornment rather than as a symbol of her piety. As I discuss in the introduction to this volume, ostentatious displays of wealth and costly adornment were considered signs of over-consumption. Diamonds on the beach in Southampton are out of context, to be sure, and suggest the wearer's desire to appear finely appointed, despite the seemingly pious simplicity of her clothing. Her desire to display wealth is amusing, certainly, because she renders herself ridiculous by "rigging out" in jewels to go walking on the Cripples' Walk, much in the same manner that children adorn themselves with as many baubles as possible when playing dress-up. In spite of the amusement the lady's depiction offers, her diamonds do reveal a lack of propriety, which in turn may also produce discomfort among viewers.

[8] This part of the poem suggests that Belinda's ornamentation is for the sake of her own vanity and to solicit admiration for her wealth rather than an indication of her religious devotion.

What at first appears laughable becomes grotesque because it suggests that this woman also forgoes considerations of safety, economy, and appropriateness in her quest to distinguish herself as wealthy yet pious.

The woman's fineness also extends to her physical constitution. Her great sensibility is evidenced by her wearing a cloak and hood on the beach and using a delicate walking stick. All of the other female beach-goers are wearing head-coverings, as was the custom for ladies in the eighteenth century, yet no one else is wearing the degree of covering that Major G's lady is. She has a hood rather than a hat or cap, as the other ladies wear, and has wrapped her cloak tightly around her body, leaving only her hands exposed. The tightly wrapped cloak and large hood seem to be serving as a shield of protection against the elements of the outdoors that might damage her hair and complexion. In her exposed hand is a vial of hartshorn, a kind of smelling salt, which indicates that she is prone to being shocked or perhaps has a tendency to faint, both of which suggest an affected manner of behavior. In her own mind at least, the major's lady is a woman of delicate sensibilities.

In reality, however, the lady seems to be much hardier than she would like to appear. She towers over her husband, stooping uncomfortably, and her chin, upper lip, and jaw are covered with a substantial amount of hair. Her nose is long and hawk-like over her sharp, pronounced chin, and she has a large mole in the corner of her mouth. Her appearance is positively witch-like. Despite her considerable height, the lady's feet are tiny, especially when contrasted with the gouty swellings of her husband, indicating that perhaps she is wearing shoes that are too small in order to appear more delicate and feminine. Just as is the case with her diamond adornment, this lady's performance of

delicacy becomes grotesque because it is so overdone. Austin's exaggerated caricature relies on elements of realism to produce satire, which by definition contains an element of truth. The truth in this instance seems to be that the major's lady, like her husband, has compromised her own physical constitution through a lack of personal economy and sensibly moderate behavior.

The Major's role as an officer of the British military suggests a more pointed and serious element to this graphic's focus on economic conditions. The military, as I explain above, was a key component in expanding and maintaining Britain's trading networks and empire. It is unclear in which branch the major serves, but his red coat suggests that it is the army. Troops were deployed around the world as a force of protection and to keep order among the colonies (and those who were being colonized) (Houlding 4). As a result, upon closer examination, the major's gout becomes more problematic because he is presumably an active service member. He is an officer, certainly, but only a major, not a very high-ranking officer such as a Colonel or a General, so he would be one who was expected to carry out the strategic plans of his superiors by leading troops into battle and overseeing daily activities. If he is among those charged with serving the nation and protecting the British Empire, then his over-consumption (as evidenced by his gout and portly midsection) becomes a sign that perhaps he is personally consuming the goods and resources he has been assigned to protect/fight for.

Major G.'s body demonstrates his lack of consideration for personal economy, which has wreaked havoc upon his constitution. Instead of leading his troops into victory, the major is hobbling along the Cripples' Walk with his lady, both of whom comprise a grotesque picture of immoderation and lack of personal economy. If we read

the major as a representative of the nation's military body as a whole, then the graphic suggests that Britain's army and navy are actually agents whose presence and actions are aimed at promoting and preserving their own over-consumption. This graphic then offers potential indications of anxiety regarding the mercantilist economy. The (over)consumption of raw and manufactured goods, particularly by agents of the military, limits the possibility for increased consumption of these goods by consumers at home, just as the mercantilist focus on producers of goods creates a privileged oligarchy. The liberal economy Adam Smith advocates is driven by consumption, so if there are fewer goods to purchase, the economy is unable to grow at maximum capacity. This drawing subtly suggests that the system of imperial expansion promoted by the mercantilist policies protecting British trade is troubled because it encourages and promotes personal consumption, especially among those charged with ensuring protection. In effect, the major and his lady represent the oligarchy of privileged persons who benefit from this system. They are withholding their wealth by keeping it on and/or within their own persons, as the major's girth and gout and his lady's jewels indicate. Over-consumption by persons such as Major G. and his lady results in stagnation for the country's economy, which counters the principles of the emerging capitalist system and offers little if any chance for growth. Therefore, this graphic suggests that the personal economy of the major and his lady (and those like them who are also connected to protecting and expanding British trade opportunities) can be detrimental to Britain's national health. The grotesque alterations that have affected their persons demonstrate the detrimental impact that personal over-consumption can have on both individual constitutions and the economic aspects of the nation's constitution.

The grotesqueness of Major G and his lady on the Cripples' Walk is further illustrated by a seemingly minor detail—the presence of the "rabbit doctor" in the left background near the water's edge. The doctor is walking with a lady and another man and carrying a rabbit under his arm. The historic person this label refers to is Nathanael St. Andre, a Swedish surgeon to the royal household of George I who gained notoriety in the 1720s for treating Mary Toft, who claimed to have given birth to fourteen rabbits; St. Andre asserted that he witnessed the birth of a fifteenth. After Toft later admitted that the rabbit-birthing was a hoax, the doctor was suspected of being involved (though Toft and independent investigators claimed he had been duped), and both his position in the royal household and his salary were subsequently revoked. Many people then considered him to be a quack doctor. After he treated an MP unsuccessfully a few years later (the MP died), he found himself unable to practice medicine anymore in London, so he and his wife retired to Southampton, where he attempted to build up a practice of wealthy patients.[9] Regardless of his knowledge of Mary Toft's scheme, his chief desire was evidently to gain wealth of his own. In St. Andre's case, the conception and birth of the rabbits is both ludicrous and horrifying and reveals a failed, unnatural form of birth and regeneration. The presence of the "rabbit doctor" suggests the perverted reproduction he was associated with. Gout becomes further linked to notions of the grotesque in this graphic by Austin's reference to the ultimate fusion of human and non-human elements in Toft's "birth" of the rabbits.

The humorous, satirical elements of this depiction of Major G, his lady, and St. Andre are supposed to make viewers feel amused, certainly, but they also elicit

[9] Alan Shepard's "The Literature of a Medical Hoax: The Case of Mary Toft, 'the Pretended Rabbet-Breeder'" explains the case of Toft's alleged rabbit-birthing and St. Andre's involvement.

discomfort. The grouping of the three suggests their shared greed, ridicule, and grotesqueness. The grotesqueness of all three characters offers monstrous elements alongside the ridiculous, thereby tempering simple caricature with elements of real concern. The laughter the picture produces may allow many viewers outside of the upper classes to cope with their own lack of economic choices and to voice critical opinions regarding the lack of personal economy that people in all classes may have perceived as representative of the lifestyle of elite Britons. It may also present an element of self-mockery for consumers of the upper classes. This graphic therefore subtly insinuates that British protectionist trade policies and imperial expansion are not beneficial to economic aspects of the nation's constitution because they encourage personal over-consumption and hoarding rather than increased economic expansion through exchange of capital. This graphic suggests, then, that contrary to O'Brien's assertion that most Britons were complacent with and even proud of imperial expansion and its effect on the economy and nation, undercurrents of dissatisfaction with the status quo were beginning to voice themselves in a seemingly innocuous way, that of graphic satire. These criticisms of mercantilism and the oligarchy it creates and protects that are evidenced within Austin's drawing may be read as significant sites that allowed viewers to begin to form a critique of class privilege that structured Great Britain.

Henry William Bunbury's 1783 picture, *The Origin of the Gout*, also highlights excess and lack of personal economy. Bunbury, the second son of a baronet, enjoyed the status of a "gentleman artist" and was well-known for his humorous caricatures of foreigners, military life, and high society living. His drawings were immensely popular, according to Christopher Reeve, largely because of his "gentle" style and avoidance of

political topics; he “eschew[ed] malice” and “offend[ed] nobody” (Reeve). This particular depiction offers a relatively mild critique of personal over-consumption, yet it also offers subtle criticism of the mercantile economy that creates and preserves an oligarchy of elites and thus hinders the nation’s economic development.

The picture centers on the gouty gentleman, who sits at the table playing a cello. On the table are a glass of red wine and the decanter from which it came, a smaller bottle that probably would have held a liqueur, and a larger glass of what may be white wine. His leisurely activity and the considerable spread of alcohol suggest that he is a member of the upper classes and does not have to pursue any profession to earn a living. One of his feet is propped up on a chair beside him, while his visitor, a black, horned and winged devil carrying a tri-cornered hat, pokes at this leg with a menacing-looking bone scepter. The man’s face expresses a comical look of surprise and pain at this touch of the gout-devil. As is characteristic of Bunbury’s style, this caricature relies mostly on elements of

humor to express the message that this lavish style of personal economy is inherently damaging to the individual's constitution.

The damaging, degrading effects of over-consumption manifest as slovenliness and corpulence as well as in gout. The gouty man is unkempt; his shirt appears wrinkled and bunched around his protruding stomach and looks as though it may be gaping near the bottom. Further contributing to his sloppiness is his facial hair. While his face itself is clean-shaven, his neck and double chin show distinct stubble. This "neck-beard" also accentuates the man's corpulence by contrasting the unshaven skin of his excess flesh with the paleness of his face, a paleness that indicates his high social station by suggesting that he is not required to spend much time out of doors. Additionally, the clock on the wall reads nearly half-past one. Judging from the man's dress, which is not evening- or dinner-wear, this scene is occurring in the afternoon, which further suggests idleness and indolence. This graphic depicts the man in an uncomplimentary light because of a perceived lack of moderation in personal economy, as demonstrated by the presence of gout. His lack of occupation would not have been seen as an inherently negative thing in the late eighteenth century because of his class, but the gouty man's indolence and apparent pleasure-seeking are represented critically; the presence of the devil implies an aspect of moral judgment to the graphic. The man's lack of attention to his appearance also implies moral judgment, as a gentleman of his station would be expected to dress neatly and groom himself properly. The gouty man exudes an air of slothful entitlement, which may have irritated many Britons who were not part of the higher classes. Bunbury's drawing therefore subtly criticizes the idleness and over-

consumption perceived as characteristic of the upper classes in late eighteenth-century Britain.

The presence of the devil in this picture is significant in its allusion to morality regarding consumption practices. The horned devil, possibly Satan himself, has come to inflict the man with the pain of gout as punishment for his gluttony, as we also saw in the drawing *Compliments of the Season*.[10] The devil holds a grisly bone as a wand with which to inflict this pain while his red eyes shine and his tongue sticks out of his mouth in a leer. His composition combines human and non-human elements in the form of a goat's horns, a bird's wings, cloven feet, and a human body and hands. This combination of parts demonstrates his grotesqueness while also emphasizing the humorous elements of the caricature. Though he is a figure imbued with religious and moral significance, the devil is also comical and campy, even for Georgian Britons. He thus embodies the principles of the carnivalesque, further enhancing the grotesqueness of Bunbury's work.

The gouty man's evident moral failings have greater significance than simply representing one fictional character's idleness and excess in personal economic practices. If we read the man as a larger representation of his class, then the graphic suggests that the practices of the privileged oligarchy are inherently damaging and morally reprehensible. It indicates that their behaviors are causing a multitude of negative effects, both physical and symbolic, on the body politic of Great Britain, especially with regard to the economy.

While a cursory reading of the graphic seems to simply suggest that sins beget suffering, if we read it in terms of the discourses of economy and the system of emerging

[10] See my discussion of *Compliments of the Season* in Chapter 1 for discussion of the devil's significance as well as for references to discussions of representations of blackness in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

capitalism that inherently color its creation as a product of a particular culture, the morality of the devil's presence combined with gout's metaphorical significance suggests that the over-consuming upper classes are inhibiting economic growth. While consumption is good and necessary for both mercantilist and capitalistic economic systems, the picture suggests that too much consumption is immoral on both personal and economic levels. In addition to causing diseases in the individual's constitution, over-consumption is also harmful to economic aspects of the nation's constitution because it leaves others to do without by concentrating wealth and goods among a select few, those with the greatest economic means, the upper classes. The gouty man's indolence places him within the bourgeoisie, yet instead of using capital to re-invest and sustain trade and production, he has settled his wealth upon his own person, as evidenced by his corpulence and poor health. His over-consumption causes him to become immobile, trapped in his dining room by his disease. Read symbolically, the graphic indicates that the nation's economy is also rendered largely immobile. Those at the top of the economic ladder are still consuming more than those at the bottom, but no one is moving much when over-consumption among the wealthy is the norm. Wealth cannot be spread more equitably when it is concentrated among a very few, and those at the lower end of the economic stratum are left to make do with less and less.

When read within context of the many pictures depicting gout created during the Georgian era, Bunbury's drawing, though fairly innocuous when viewed on its own, suggests a subtle sense of criticism of the perceived personal consumption habits of the upper classes. The picture voices acknowledgment of the negative metaphorical significance the disease had acquired and subtly demonstrates the debilitating effects that

over-consumption had upon economic forms of Great Britain's constitution. The graphic then serves as a tool by which these groups may begin to acknowledge their situation and develop and recognize a sense of community critical of economic systems privileging the upper classes while seriously inhibiting the growth of the national economy as a whole.

Further evidence of graphic satire's role in commenting upon trends of over-consumption in the late eighteenth-century appears in George M. Woodward's *A Sudden Call, or One of the Corporation Summoned from His Favorite Amusement* (1799), which was published by Samuel William Fores, one of the most dominant and prolific publishers of graphic satire in London during the late eighteenth century until his death in 1838 (Turner). Woodward also produced many drawings that were often etched by well-known engravers such as Isaac Cruikshank and Thomas Rowlandson (Heneage). Much of the humor of his pictures depended on captions that used wordplay and verse to express jokes (Heneage), which suggests that he had a literate class of viewers in mind as the target audience for his creations. Despite this verbal element of *A Sudden Call*, Woodward's piece is also easily understood by persons who could not read because it features the ubiquitous linen booty, key indicator of gout, and a skeleton who represents Death. The drawing offers a moralistic message suggesting the ill effects of over-consumption upon the individual consumer's personal economy and physical constitution.

The drawing shows a man with gout, his bootied foot supported by a small stool, being throttled by a skeleton, Death, at the dinner table. The words "l-i-t-t-l-e m-or-e t-u-r-t-le" escape his mouth, as Death tells him "Come, old boy, you have play'd an excellent knife and fork—you cannot grumble—for you have devoured as much in your time as would have fed half the Parish poor." The gouty man's servant, who apparently cannot see Death, stands behind his master's chair with his mouth gaping. He says, "Bless us,

what's the matter with the Alderman—I never knew turtle disagree with him so before—why he has got the rattles in his throat!"

This print demonstrates that this man has not practiced moderation in his personal economy and is thus paying the price for it in terms of his physical constitution. The alderman is dying at his own dinner table, where he is eating turtle, an expensive and rare delicacy. His servant mentions that he has "never [known] turtle disagree with him so before," which indicates that the alderman dined upon turtle with some regularity. Eating turtle regularly thus demonstrates his wealth and appetite for fine foods and suggests that he is storing resources within his person, which is a form of hoarding; his obvious girth and his gout support this notion. The words of Death also confirm his over-consumption, as apparently the man has eaten "enough to feed half the Parish poor" during his life. That Death himself brings up the parish poor whom the alderman, a town official, has ignored in favor of his own appetite is significant; he is reminding the alderman of his own lack of moderation in personal economic decisions and neglected the community. Instead of practicing restraint or socially conscious generosity, the alderman has damaged his health beyond repair and essentially gorged himself to death, hearkening back to the idea expressed by some foreigners during the eighteenth century that the English were "digging their graves with their teeth" (Porter "Consumption" 60-61).

This graphic is among the most grotesque of all the prints in this study. Woodward relies on humor and caricature to temper the horrific elements of the drawing and thereby convey a moral message. The irony of the alderman dying at the dinner table while supping upon turtle seems crafted to create humor; the amusement is heightened for the viewer upon learning that the man's last request is to be able to consume more

food. That the man would want more turtle even as he is dying serves as a hyperbolic caricature of the perceived over-consumption of the upper classes. This exaggeration contributes to the satire of the piece and to the trope of theatricality that is so often a part of graphic depictions of gouty men.

The satirical humor of *A Sudden Call* is tempered by its horrific elements. Perhaps most horrifying is the information that Death imparts while he collects his victim. The alderman's over-consumption has resulted not just in the ruin of his own bodily constitution but in the damage to other people's bodies as well. The idea that one could consume so much as to perhaps deprive "half the parish poor" of sustenance is both shocking and appalling, though clearly hyperbolic. This man effectively personifies the deadly sin of gluttony in this graphic, and his bloated over-consumption represented by gout that results in the actual deprivation of others inspires horror. The graphic demonstrates the impact that the stagnation of resources, or hoarding, that this man practices through his lack of moderation in his personal economic practices has upon the nation and its economy.

A Sudden Call therefore continues the tradition of using gout's representation as a tool for satirizing and moralizing about the perceived over-consumption of the upper classes. Gout is depicted as a means of indicating the moral failure of the sufferer, which is made explicit in this instance with Death's mention of the poor who could have been fed with the tremendous amount of food the man has partaken of in his life. The alderman's lack of restraint within his personal economy has a clear, demonstrated effect on both his personal, bodily constitution and on a larger scale, specifically that of the parish. If his over-consumption has wreaked havoc on his own body, the picture suggests,

then he gets his comeuppance by dying at the dinner table. However, Death brings up the parish poor, who are evidently underfed, while taking the alderman's life. The specter suggests that his victim has consumed so much that he has actually taken away from those who are starving and needy. The alderman's practices have therefore impacted a larger segment of the population; he has essentially damaged the parish's—and the nation's—economic and physical constitutions by his personal over-consumption.

Despite the harmful effects of the alderman's over-consumption upon the needy, with Death's mention of the poor, the less privileged people whom the gouty man affects with his over-consumption gain a form of political subjectivity and representation. When Death speaks upon their behalf, viewers are reminded, however briefly, of the existence of such persons in every parish. The grotesque alteration to the alderman's body and his subsequent death offers them the chance for a moment of shared empathy for those persons who are, at best, the indirect victims of such over-consuming men's greed and, at worst, who have suffered direct deprivation resulting from the lack of moderation practiced by public officials such as the alderman. The rather violent manner of his death in this picture also suggests a latent but nonetheless ugly tide of resentment against upper-class privilege. In fact, in the aftermath of the French Revolution, particularly the Reign of Terror, many English nobles and gentry were very nervous about the state of political affairs at home, as middle- and lower-class Britons were becoming increasingly vocal about their dissatisfaction with the decidedly undemocratic state of the nation ("Citizenship"). In this way Woodward's graphic functions as a tool by which viewers may identify with the underprivileged victims of the over-consumption of the upper

classes. The drawing may, in some ways, help to develop the beginnings of a sense of community resistant to the class privilege that characterizes Great Britain.

James Gillray was another highly successful artist and creator of graphic satire in Georgian Britain who is today often called the "father of the political cartoon" (Rowson). Known for his caustic, bawdy wit, Gillray gained notoriety by producing some of the first caricatures of the royal family. Interestingly, Gillray himself developed gout in his later years, probably as the result of his habit of heavy drinking (McConnell and Heneage). He produced *Punch Cures the Gout, the Colic, and the 'Tisick* in 1818. In this work, the representation of gout is joined with depictions of other diseases associated with excessive consumption. This picture ultimately suggests over-consumption is weakening both individual bodies and the body politic of the nation.

Three people sit at a small table around a decorative bowl of punch in a well-appointed room with plush chairs that have gold edging on a rug or carpet with a pink and gold pattern. On the right is an older obese man splayed in a chair. His face is red, as are his

lips, and his mouth is opened widely. He is dressed casually in an un-tucked button-down striped shirt and blue breeches; he is also wearing an open dressing gown, which suggests that he is within his own home. Both his swollen feet are bandaged in the linen booties that indicate gout and are propped on two low red plush stools. This man's hand is also wrapped in linen, indicating that his gout has spread upward through his joints unchecked. The reason for the intensity of his disease seems to be found in his words, "Punch cures the gout." "Punch" during this period meant a mixed concoction that included spirits or fortified wines. The gout-stricken man in this picture holds in his hand a glass of alcoholic punch. Gout can of course be caused by over-consumption of fortified alcohols, and this man's apparent rate of consumption demonstrates his dependence on the drug and suggests that he has not practiced temperance or moderation in his personal economy.

Next to the gouty man sits a woman with red hair wearing a white, flowered dress. Her face is also flushed, and in her right hand she too holds a glass of punch. Her left hand clutches her stomach, and she adds to her gouty neighbor's statement with the cry, "And the colic!" In the early nineteenth century colic generally referred to any severe localized abdominal pain. Physicians today normally diagnose these pains as kidney or gall-stones or intestinal blockage, and the American Academy of Family Physicians recommends avoiding alcohol, as it can trigger or aggravate intestinal colic in adults (Cartwright and Knudson 974). This Regency woman is obviously not aware of the contemporary information, however, and is downing the punch in an effort to "cure" what ails her, possibly by numbing the pain of her condition. By neglecting to practice

moderation in her personal economy through over-consuming alcohol, this woman continues to compromise her bodily constitution.

The third reveler at this table is a very thin man on the far left who adds that punch also cures "The tisic," which is an abbreviated form of "phthisis," another name for pulmonary consumption or tuberculosis. The man seems to be in the final stages of this wasting disease. His extremely thin body contrasts sharply with the corpulence of his gouty friend. His breeches and blue coat hang off of his thin frame, and his hand holding the punch looks extremely fragile. In contrast to his ruddy-faced tablemates, this man is pale, with the exception of two small spots on his cheeks, which are apparently a result of the punch's spirits. Though he appears to be a fairly young man based on his full head of brown hair, his face is sharply lined and wrinkled, much more so than his companions'. His teeth almost blend into the scarlet of his mouth, so stained with red they are. This stain might come either from the blood he expels from his lungs when he coughs or from copious amounts of red wine. He too is consuming the punch in an effort to relieve the disease plaguing him and, by doing so, is compromising his constitution.

Like the diseases of his companions, this man's tuberculosis is actually negatively impacted by alcohol. In a 2009 study, Jurgen Rehm and six associates commented upon the historical association between heavy alcohol use and tuberculosis; for example, as early as 1785 Benjamin Rush noted a correlation between heavy drinking and incidents of TB and pneumonia (Rehm et al 452). The study by Rehm and associates concluded that there was indeed a strong association between frequent, heavy alcohol consumption and TB; this study, as well as numerous others, has shown that alcohol has a pathogenic effect upon the immune system, which causes susceptibility to the disease (Rehm et al

453).[11] While the direct connection between alcohol and TB was in the Regency period not necessarily well-known or indisputably established for laymen or medical professionals, temperance crusades got their start during this period, so even though most viewers might not have been aware of the correlation between alcohol abuse and tuberculosis, discourses surrounding the issue of alcohol's harmful effects when over-consumed were well-established within the public consciousness. Such awareness was demonstrated by the many ads for patent medicines promising cures for "drunkenness" and moral tales warning readers about the dangers of alcohol, especially liquor, that comprise the pages of popular periodicals of the early nineteenth century. "Intoxication," judged Samuel Richardson in the middle of the eighteenth century, is "the most destructive of all vices" (qtd in Porter "Consumption" 61). Regardless of viewers' knowledge (or lack thereof) of the effects of alcohol on specific diseases, the satire in this piece is evident in its reference to the damaging effects of over-consumption of alcohol.

All three of the people in this graphic are depicted as giving way to their appetites for alcohol, harmful though it may be to their respective constitutions and thus depict grotesque over-consumption. Gilray's drawing offers humor in its representation of the gouty man in particular, whose lumpish figure and slovenly attire suggest foolishness and excess. In contrast, the trio's merrymaking inspires horror and discomfort for viewers as well. All three of their depictions indicate the weakened, compromised condition of their respective constitutions, which have been brought about through a habitual lack of

[11] I mention this not to suggest anachronistically that the artist understood or had knowledge of this connection between alcohol and TB or even the colic I discuss above; instead, I am citing this contemporary medical research in order to demonstrate that over-consuming alcohol to self-medicate for these diseases was common but ultimately very physically damaging. Most people understood that over-consumption of anything was ultimately harmful, which is the point so many of these illustrations are making, so even if nineteenth-century viewers of this print were not aware of the specific physiological effects of alcohol it is not important to my discussion; the overall message against over-consumption is still clear.

moderation in personal economy. While each person expresses significant pain and suffering as a result of his/her disease, all of them continue to consume alcohol to excess and thereby worsen their conditions. Such revelry while facing serious illness, perhaps even death, creates the ambivalence that so often characterizes grotesque images of gout.

These grotesque figures, particularly the man with gout, give voice to social critiques of improper consumption practices caused by a lack of moderation. Each of these persons has compromised his/her own health, or constitution, through over-consumption, which has led to their respective illnesses and apparent imminent demise. In particular the men depicted here are in very poor condition; the consumptive man especially seems to be on death's doorstep, so thin and haggard does he appear. The gouty man has lost the use of three of his limbs, which effectively immobilizes him and probably renders him largely helpless. The lack of moderation in personal economy these three figures seem to have practiced has a larger effect, however, than of simply ruining their own bodies. Viewers may note, for example, the prevalence of the colors of the British flag (red, white, and blue) in this picture, which suggests that a lack of moderation in personal economic practices is affecting the nation at large. The damage these persons have done to their constitutions is irreparable, just as widespread bloated over-consumption will continue to damage the nation's economy as well.

All three of the diseased persons at this table drinking punch to "cure" their various ailments are actually aggravating them. The gouty man and the tubercular man are both affected by obvious diseases of consumption. Both appear to have overindulged in alcohol, but its effects on them are totally different. The gouty man's excesses have had a direct impact on making his body turn to excess also—he is fat and bloated, both of

which indicate retention of matter and fluid. Gout, too, involves retention, that of uric acid, which builds up in the spaces within joints (Brewerton 121). The man's over-consumption has demonstrated the effect that excess and retention can have on one's body and health. We may read his ingestion and subsequent bodily retention of matter as commentary upon the changing economic system of Great Britain. This graphic offers an indication of the danger that over-consumption and hoarding pose for the constitution of the nation's economy.

Punch Cures the Gout offers some subtle recognition and understanding of the damaging effects that a lack of moderation in one's personal economy, particularly among the wealthy, has upon the nation and its people. While increased consumption is helpful in a capitalist economy, hoarding and retention of wealth, as evidenced by gout's cause and its retentive nature, leads to stagnation and, ultimately, economic disease in the form of recession and depression. Gillray demonstrates the dangers of over-consumption and hoarding for Great Britain's economy. His drawing voices a critique of the lack of moderation in personal economy that was steadily increasing during the early nineteenth century. I do not wish to suggest, of course, that this graphic is a direct manifestation of Gillray's opinion; certainly art's relation to culture is not that simple. However, the graphic does offer an opportunity for viewers to understand and acknowledge voices critical of the perceived consumption practices of those with the greatest economic means. By expressing such critical opinions of the personal economy practiced by members of the upper classes, the picture capitalizes on the shared consciousness of many Regency viewers. This shared sentiment serves to unite viewers, however loosely and subconsciously, and offers evidence of the role of graphic satire in helping to create a

community of viewers critical of the class privilege that shapes the unwritten constitution of Great Britain.

An 1826 print by Thomas Lord Busby, entitled *The Remedy Worse than the Disease*, depicts the often terrible and extreme nature of remedies for gout. Busby's print is unique in its demonstration of excess as it applies to the gouty man's efforts to alleviate his suffering. This drawing ultimately suggests the debilitating effects that a lack of moderation in one's personal economy can have upon the person's constitution.

In this black and white drawing, a man sits in an armchair with his left leg swollen and propped up on a stool in front of him, allowing viewers to understand at first glance that he has gout. Another stool is in front of his right leg, but this one is turned on its side; this leg stretches out straight in front of him. The gouty man's face is distorted

into a grimace and his fists are clenched, one around the neck of a bottle labeled "Brandy." The man is well-dressed in breeches, a waistcoat and jacket, a cravat, and a loose cap, but he is quite portly; his stomach protrudes from underneath his waistcoat and bulges over his hips. A larger jug of brandy lies on its side under the table to the left of him, and on the table itself is a bottle labeled "Reynold's Drops." To the right of the man is a large jug of "Thompson and Fear-him's Mixture," and directly in front of him an open book entitled *Scudamore on Gout* lies against the overturned stool. The man's efforts to manage his disease have evidently resulted in a considerable outlay of economic resources, as brandy, books, and some medicines would have been costly. This apparent expenditure in an attempt to treat the gout mirrors the man's presumed expenditure in developing gout through over-consumption.

The medicines and advice the gouty gentleman is consulting here are apparently quite dreadful, or "worse than the cure," as the title indicates. Brandy was commonly used to help gout sufferers self-medicate; the alcohol may have helped ease the pain of the gout, but now we know it ultimately made the disease worse by increasing uric acid levels in the drinker's body. James Parkinson recommends replacing wine with brandy, however, in his 1806 treatise *Observations on the Nature and Cure of Gout, on Nodes of the Joints, and on the Influence of Certain Articles of Diet in Gout, Rheumatism, and Gravel*. He also promotes other methods such as leeching the affected area, avoiding fruits and vegetables, and taking barks and bitters, calomel, aloe, and rhubarb (Art. V 447). Another method presented by Dr. Stonehouse in 1804 advocates holding the affected area directly over a bucket of nearly boiling water ("Cure for the Gout" in *Weekly Entertainer* 356), while an 1814 edition of *The Monthly Magazine* recommends a

hot poultice of rye flour, yeast, and salt be applied to the feet six times for twelve hours apiece ("Cure for the Gout" 127). The plethora of remedies available and their often bizarre methods reflect the excess and immoderation that was presumed to have caused the disease initially. Ultimately, however, these "cures" only served to further weaken the patient's bodily constitution and potentially shorten his lifespan while often causing excruciating pain.

While some of these methods are counter-productive and uncomfortable at best, one of the most popular remedies for treating gout was often deadly. By 1826 the use of tinctures of *colchicum autumnale* was common for treating the symptoms of gout because of its anti-inflammatory and pain-relieving properties; George IV had been using it to treat his gout since 1817 (Bywaters 332). Nonetheless, it was not without its critics even in the early nineteenth century. A. Rennie, author of *Observations of Gout, Critical and Pathological*, maintains that the "fashionable" remedy is damaging to the body overall; even though it may provide temporary relief of gout, Rennie claims that it undermines the constitution so completely that "a train of evils" is unleashed upon the patient's body ("Observations of Gout" 153). It appears Rennie was correct about this medicine. The plant contains a highly poisonous alkaloid, colchicine, which is still used in pharmaceuticals intended for the treatment of gout today (Georgetown University Medical Center), though in small amounts and in combination with other substances. Regency-era users, of course, had no governing medical bodies to ensure the quality and quantity of what they consumed, which resulted in adulteration of the colchicum with other, sometimes dangerous substances and its essentially unregulated usage. In addition to death, usually from a severely weakened immune system or kidney and/or respiratory

failure, *colchicum autumnale* had other unpleasant side effects, which included vomiting, intestinal pain and burning, diarrhea, hair loss, severe anemia, and muscle pain or atrophy (Georgetown University Medical Center). The body's deterioration resulting from colchicum use mirrors the weakened nature of the constitution of Great Britain caused by the same lack of moderation in personal economy and consumption.

Charles Scudamore's *A Treatise on the Nature and Cure of Gout*, referenced in this picture, recommends use of *colchicum autumnale* in treating gout, despite the possibility of dangerous side effects. This substance probably constitutes (or is supposed to constitute) at least part of the other medicines in the gouty man's arsenal, the "Reynold's drops" and "Thompson and Fear-him's Mixture"; certainly the poisonous substance's consequences for the body would cause fear of the probable pain and suffering for the user. The gout sufferer in this picture is clearly in pain, given his grimace and clenched fists. The way that the stool and book lie on the floor suggests that the patient kicked or knocked them over in a paroxysm of pain or perhaps in a fit of petulance, given that the gouty man was also often depicted as having a bad temper.[12] The possibility of an "adult tantrum," whether caused by pain or sheer rage, provides a humorous element to this picture: a well-off, middle-aged man throwing books and kicking stools over is ludicrous. That is not how people normally behave in polite society. Nonetheless, this lack of adherence to social norms also elicits discomfort for witnesses, perhaps even horror. After all, the apparent social position of this man would mean that he was supposed to be an example for the lower orders, to demonstrate the "gentility" in "gentleman" through respectable behavior and good breeding. This gouty man, however,

[12] *The Bad Man at the Hour of Death*, *The Old Batchelor*, and *The Gout, or One of the Miseries of Life* are only three of many pictures that portray the gouty man as bad-tempered and splenetic.

is unable to maintain control of himself in the face of gout's pain. Within this combination of the comic and appalling lies the grotesque.

The ambivalent nature of the graphic also demonstrates grotesqueness. The drawing and the presence of gout suggest that the man initially compromised his bodily constitution by over-consuming, which has led to disease. Now, he is again over-consuming by imbibing a great deal of alcohol and taking very strong medicine in his efforts to treat gout. While the extreme measures he is taking to combat the disease are presented theatrically with the medicines, books, alcohol, and furniture strewn about the room, any amusement at this dramatic behavior must be tempered by the realization that the man's disease—and the remedies he is using to treat it—is actually very serious. The suffering of a fellow creature may elicit feelings of discomfort; though his own over-consumption presumably brought about his agony, the sight of a body in pain, for most viewers, calls forth sympathy or empathy. The ambivalence created by this combination of feelings contributes to the grotesqueness of Busby's graphic.

The gouty man's apparent lack of moderation in his personal economic decisions and consumption practices results in the grotesqueness of his representation. This grotesqueness offers latent indications of anxiety regarding over-consumption in Georgian Britain. As with Major G. and the other over-consuming gouty men I discuss in this chapter, the issue with their over-consumption comes with its effect on the economy. Their over-consumption results in stagnation, as evidenced by the build-up of uric acid in their respective bodies that causes gout. While unlimited consumption might seem to be an aid to a capitalist economy, the gouty men's retention of goods and resources is essentially a form of hoarding. They do not stimulate the economy with their

consumption because they do not move capital and resources when they hoard. From a socioeconomic perspective this over-consumption is also damaging to those on the lowest end of the stratum. When the gouty men over-consume they leave less for others. As well, by retaining wealth within their bodies, they could create scarcity of resources. In this way, *The Remedy Worse than the Disease* reflects the undercurrent of concern and dissatisfaction regarding the perceived bloated over-consumption of the wealthier members of British society and expresses anxieties concerning the impacts of such over-consumption upon the nation and body politic.

As well, this picture could reflect conditions of social unrest caused by the economy within the country at the time of its publication, which was during the Bank Panic of 1825-26. The panic was caused in good measure by the efforts of British Parliament and the Bank of England to move the country onto the gold standard and diversify the economy (Dick). J. R. McCulloch, one of the most important political economists of the day, wrote several pamphlets and articles proclaiming that the crash was the fault of the government and national bank, who did not understand "the principles of political economy and [were] […] extending credit far in excess to what the economy could hold to aristocratic landowners and country farmers" (Dick). McCulloch eventually reconsidered his position and concluded that the crash was not the fault of any one entity but was the result of a variety of factors in efforts toward diversification (Dick), but his initial opinion was a common one, especially with everyone looking for someone to blame for the dire economic conditions that initially resulted from the panic. The gouty, wealthy man depicted in this drawing may function as a site for currents of social unrest and antipathy toward the financial elite of the Bank of England and the

British government for their role in possibly overextending the economy in favor of aristocrats and landowners. The desperate remedies the gouty man takes could reflect the outrageous actions the British government has had to take to prevent utter financial collapse—infusing gold from the Banque of France into the Bank of England (Bordo 77). Such an indignity for the British government and people must have been unimaginable given the nation's traditional rivalry with France, which Linda Colley contends is one of the key factors in the development of British identity (Colley 55). The thought of depending on France to save Great Britain from financial ruin may have seemed to Britons to be akin to swallowing poison. In this way the drawing may be reflecting contemporary anxieties about the financial situation of the British economy and the ruin it nearly came to, which many blamed on over-consumption by wealthy and powerful figures in the Bank of England and British Parliament.

The fraught environment in which this picture was produced renders the representation of gout especially important because the depiction of the disease relies upon a common understanding of its metaphorical significance. By voicing criticisms of what is seen as a lack of moderation in personal economy and consumption, the graphic subtly encourages a sense of community among viewers who share anxieties about the economic future of Great Britain. In this way, gout's representation within graphic satire again serves as a tool through which anxieties regarding the role of (over)consumption and hoarding in shaping and perhaps hindering the burgeoning capitalist economy may be manifest quietly and safely by voices resistant to the system of class privilege that shaped economic aspects of the nation's constitution.

The hyperbolic, exaggerated nature of excess in all of these grotesque representations of the gouty body also adds to the complexity and meaningfulness of these works of graphic satire. The ridiculousness of many graphic representations of the gouty man renders the pictures almost within the realm of fantasy, and this element of satire serves to partially disguise and subdue the political and social critiques that these pictures contain. In this way the artists and publishers were able to make social critique more palatable and decrease the chances that they'd be prosecuted for libel or treason by caricaturing the wrong person or have their careers negatively impacted. Taken individually, these pieces of graphic satire might not seem to have made a significant impact upon Georgian culture. But the consistency with which gout is represented during this period as an indicator of the effects of over-consumption upon the constitutions of both individuals and institutions and thus upon the economy as a whole points to a common understanding of the metaphorical significance of the disease. The combination of gout with elements of the grotesque demonstrates the palpable anxiety surrounding issues of (over)consumption and under-circulation that were impacting Britons on individual and systemic levels. The voices of dissent heard, or perhaps more appropriately, seen, within these illustrations offer subtle indications of pockets of resistance to the economic practices of the nation, both in its mercantilist and capitalist iterations. The expansion of empire and its resultant taxes as well as the "liberal economy" Smith advocated may not have been met with the complacency that scholars such as O'Brien believe.

As Susan Lanser points out, the act of speaking allows for the speaking subject to take part in the political system. While these voices of critique expressed within graphic

satire featuring gout are merely faint whispers at this historical point in time, they are voices all the same. They could not be silenced, as population shifts into cities placed more and more people in position to learn about domestic and even foreign politics, and increasing literacy rates furthered people's understanding of the economy and the impact of imperialism upon their daily lives. With people's increased understanding of affairs and their real impacts on individuals' lives came the expectation these citizens would take a more active role in shaping the political, economic, and social aspects of the informal constitution of British society. Graphic satire may thus be read as a tool through which populism developed, as it offered the chance for middle and lower-class viewers to develop a sense of community with others outside of the nation's elite. By consuming graphic satire, viewers were able to acknowledge the often-subtle criticisms these pictures conveyed. Reading these images could possibly have helped viewers recognize that gout's metaphorical significance in relation to consumption practices indicated a common cultural understanding—and critique—of the considerable privileges wealth could buy. In this way, those lacking economic resources gain a form of political subjectivity via depictions of gout and over-consumption in graphic satire.

In the following chapter I continue to examine graphic satire featuring gout, where I focus on the impact of over-consumption upon social aspects of the unwritten constitution of the nation. I discuss the means by which these images offer viewers an opportunity to gain a sense of community and form of political subjectivity through their acknowledgement and critique of the social advantages offered to those with political and economic power. I discuss the manifestations of this anxiety through the graphics' depictions of sexual mores and improper copulation.

Chapter 3

Graphic Satire Indications of Grotesque Over-Consumption upon Social Aspects of the Constitution of Georgian Britain

> The most violent appetites in all creatures are lust and hunger; the first is a perpetual call upon them to propagate their kind, the latter to preserve themselves.
>
> --Joseph Addison

As I have explained in the previous two chapters, the impact of grotesque over-consumption on the political and economic constitutions of Great Britain during the Georgian era is evidenced through frequent representations of gout within the graphic satire produced therein. These alterations to the political and economic bodies demonstrated within these drawings and engravings offer evidence of dissatisfaction with the perceived consumption habits of the monarchy, aristocracy, gentry, and upper-middle classes and seem to show concern about the impact such immoderation may have upon the informal constitution of the nation, which shaped political, economic, and social policies. Demonstrations of such concerns suggest that the interests and voices of the middling and lower orders might be subtly represented within these works.

Susan Lanser argues that the act of speaking within the eighteenth-century novel functions as a way for characters to gain political subjectivity. I have argued that the action of speaking extends beyond mere words, however. As the old saying goes, a picture is worth a thousand words, and Georgian graphic satire has much to say. These graphics function as a means through which those outside of the traditional realm of privilege may be able to gain a sense of community by recognizing and perhaps articulating veiled criticism of the British system of class stratification that promotes over-consumption, particularly among the upper classes. Representations of gout within

graphic satire may thus allow the less privileged to gain a subtle sense of political subjectivity by offering a site based on common cultural understanding that expresses sentiments resistant to class privilege as well as anxieties regarding the impacts of grotesque over-consumption upon Britain's body politic as a whole.

While the impacts of over-consumption on the body politic are apparent within the realms of politics and economics, its effects are not limited to those spheres. The social aspect of the constitution of the nation was also shaped through immoderation. This form of the constitution is comprised of the various rules and institutions that govern the conventions and behaviors of a people. Examples of such customs and institutions might include practices of class deference, conventions of politeness, marriage and courtship, and the family. In this chapter, I focus on how the impact of over-consumption is manifest through alterations to Great Britain's social order. The gouty man in the selections of graphic satire I examine in this chapter is a grotesque figure whose excesses with regard to his passions demonstrate the detrimental impacts that over-consumption has upon both the individual and the nation as a whole. These depictions seem to suggest that lack of moderation on the part of the upper classes has significantly damaged the constitution of Georgian Britain, so much so that the nation's futurity is threatened.

One aspect of immoderation prevalent within the graphics I discuss in this section relates to sexual behaviors. The illustrations featured in this chapter all include elements suggesting sexual over-consumption, particularly in the form of older gouty men attempting to use and consume younger women sexually. As such, they generally connect lechery and impotence with gout. This emphasis on sex is a key component of the grotesque, which, as Bakhtin explains, is characterized by emphasis on materiality,

particularly with regard to food, drink, and sexual activity (20). By consistently using tropes indicating sexual over-consumption, these graphics offer indications that the social institutions that shape the nation, namely marriage and domestic life, are being compromised by immoderation and a lack of self-restraint, which will in turn weaken Great Britain's social constitution and have devastating results for the nation's populace.

One such piece, *The Assembly of Old Bachelors*, ca. 1743, drawn by Louis P. Boitard, combines a depiction of gout with themes of sexual over-consumption to suggest the damages occurring to the nation's body politic. Though born in France, in the early eighteenth century Boitard immigrated to England with his father, who was also an artist and engraver. His status as an outsider may have given him a unique perspective on British consumption habits. According to Timothy Clayton and Anita McConnell, Boitard was well-known as a producer of illustrations for works such as Cambridge's *Description of Ranelagh Rotundo and Gardens* and Jacob Tonson's editions of Shakespeare, but he also had a thriving practice in designing graphic satire. They classify his satires as focusing on critiques of luxury and consumption of French goods as well as "the riotous confrontation of poverty with affluence" (Clayton and McConnell). His tradition of producing works critical of over-consumption suggests that this piece may also contain such sentiments. *An Assembly of Old Bachelors* was produced with a similarly grotesque companion piece, *An Assembly of Old Maids*, in which a rather ghastly company of female counterparts to the bachelors are arranged in a similar manner.[13] *Old Bachelors* lampoons the practice of wealthy old men seeking young wives

[13] While the caption of *Old Bachelors* suggests the inappropriateness of the men's desire for marriage with young brides by quoting the Dryden play, the one printed below *Old Maids* takes the tactic of simply ridiculing these women's lack of desirability and success on the marriage market with an original poem.

and more clearly highlights the association of gout with venery that I mention in Chapter One. It suggests the infection of over-consumption has metaphorically seeped into a key component of the constitution structuring Great Britain, marriage.

This drawing features ten older men gathered together and displays a quotation from Dryden below the picture. It reads: "The Bloom of Beauty other years demands / Nor will be gathered by such withered hands; / This impudence of age, whence can it spring? / All you expect, and yet you nothing bring: / Eager to ask, when you are past a grant; / Nice in providing what you cannot want" (Dryden). These lines from the play *The State of Innocence,* an operatic production of *Paradise Lost* in which the aged Aremant tries to wed the young Indamora, seem to indicate that these men are conspiring to procure and marry women much younger than themselves.

One line reads: "That they are Virgins their faces may vouch, / For who but the Devil their bodies could touch?"

These ten men are gathered together in a semicircle with their legs and feet stretched forward, thus making their lower limbs a focal point of the picture, a trend Bakhtin identifies as common among grotesque representations. All the men are scarlet-faced, indicating that perhaps they have been drinking, or maybe this is Boitard's sly indication that they are blushing because of the impropriety of their behavior in seeking to pursue young women.

The man in the center of the picture lolls in his chair and has his right foot propped up on a stool; this foot evidences gout, as it is wrapped in a linen bootie. He also has a crutch propped up against him, which he holds with his left hand. His mouth lolls open and he appears to be in a stupor while the man to his left lays his hand on the gouty man's own and talks to him with an animated expression on his face. This man makes a fist with his other hand, a gesture that suggests some strong emotion. His animated behavior seems to indicate a passionate, perhaps immoderate personality, suggesting that this group can be characterized by more than one form of immoderation.

The gouty man is distinguished from his fellow bachelors in terms of his dress. All of the others are well-dressed, wearing such things as fine coats with braid on them, delicate cravats, lace edging on their sleeves, elegant wigs, breeches and stockings, boots, and tri-cornered hats. The gouty man is obviously in *dishabille*—his shirt is a plain-looking button-down shirt that would have been hidden under a jacket and waistcoat if he were outside the home, and he is wearing a dressing gown and bedroom cap. The "assembly" is probably in this man's home, maybe in his own private chambers, as a gentleman would not have gone out in public attired so. The location of this assembly within the home may offer an indication that over-consumption has become ingrained

within the personal lives of Britons in the upper classes and has become established within the home.

The scene has a distinctly masculine air, not only because of the presence of so many bachelors, but also because of the room's décor. Two of the pictures on the walls feature hunting scenes with foxes and dogs, while a third, the center picture, presents a winged cherub pulling a reveling Bacchus in a chariot. The god of wine-making and wine consumption holds a large goblet that is presumably filled with that beverage and carries a grapevine in his other hand. These pictures all suggest the predatory and over-consuming nature of this group of men. Bacchus's picture on the wall implies the owner's love of Bacchanalian revelry and of wine in particular, an implication that is confirmed by the man's having gout. The hunting pictures feature men and dogs tracking down foxes; the one on the right shows the fox surrounded by dogs before it is presumably to meet its bloody fate. This combination of themes in the gouty man's decoration choices for his room underscores the idea that he is lecherous and predatory, particularly when one considers the epigraph on the bottom of the graphic. The scene seems to suggest that the gouty man and his cohorts are planning to hunt down much younger women, whom they will use to gratify their sexual desires.

The attitudes and posturing of the other men in this scene convey this idea of lecherous, over-consuming masculinity as well. All are, as mentioned above, well dressed and seem to occupy fairly comfortable positions within the upper-middle classes or above. Some, including the man with gout, have obviously protruding stomachs, signs of wealth and a relatively sedentary lifestyle because of their ability to eat more calories than they expend. Several are wearing what seem to be military uniforms, while one, the

man to the gout sufferer's immediate left, appears to be dressed in the clothing of a clergyman. Both such professions were exclusively masculine in the eighteenth century, and, despite the professed aim of both soldiers and the clergy to provide protection and guidance to the people of Britain and the Church of England, respectively, these men's chief concern seems to be protecting and ensuring their own comfort and desires.

Overall, then, this picture presents a gathering that demonstrates traditional notions of masculinity, greed, and lechery. From the four phallic canes in the front of the picture to the artwork to the men themselves, the picture demonstrates an image constructed from iterations of genteel masculinity. Because gout is literally in the center of this picture of British manliness, it seems there is a correlation between the disease and the performance of masculinity. The old bachelors' efforts to seem virile, suggested by the room's décor and the caption of the picture, may be linked to this performance. Despite such efforts, the performance ultimately fails to be effective; the men are still old, infirm, and made ridiculous in their aspirations toward gaining young, desirable wives or mistresses.

During this time marriages or sexual arrangements between partners of disparate ages were not uncommon because of traditional gender roles for women of the upper and upper-middle classes. Opportunity for women to gain financial security and social advancement was generally limited to their making an advantageous marriage, so wealthy older men could attract and marry younger women, despite their own age or lack of personal desirability. I discuss such a marital misalliance in the following chapter in my analysis of Sarah Fielding's *The History of the Countess of Dellwyn*. In addition, some women became the mistresses of older men in order to procure financial assistance and

protection. Boitard seems to suggest that these matches are improper or ridiculous by his inclusion of the Dryden quote. Gout's representation among a scene of overt lechery indicates that the over-consumption of men in the upper class of Great Britain is not limited to foodstuffs, money, and material goods. Instead, *Assembly* subtly implies that the degenerative effects of immoderation extend to the nation's general constitution as well. Sexual over-consumption might threaten systems such as marriage, heredity, and family, thereby upsetting the social order.

Anxieties regarding the alterations taking place within the social aspect of the nation's constitution are also expressed through a sense of grotesqueness in this work. It relies on a sexually suggestive, somewhat coarse humor, as do many of the illustrations I discuss in this chapter. The idea of these men wooing and pursuing (or perhaps simply hunting down, as the artwork on the wall suggests) young, attractive women is ridiculous and offers the element of humor that characterizes the grotesque. The practice of May-December marriages was certainly a fairly common one, as many men did not inherit their titles or property until their own fathers or uncles had died. Prior to inheritance most would rely on an allowance, which left many unable to support wives and children in style. Nonetheless, the image of these debauched old bachelors, who have seemingly few personal attractions to offer, plotting to make alliances with young women is ludicrous to most modern viewers and would likely have also been for eighteenth-century consumers of this illustration.

This very humor may also subtly suggest a sense of horror about or discomfort with the social aspects of the unwritten constitution that has led to this situation. That such ill-matched pairs are relatively common in illustrations from the Georgian era (as I

show later in this chapter) suggests they reflect real life, which is troubling and reflects a system that features women as objects who are treated as prey. Even if the practice of these age-disparate marriages was considered normative, that doesn't mean it was regarded with approbation. The comical aspect of this very illustration indicates that lecherous older men were ridiculed and thereby at least mildly criticized for such aspirations of marriage with young women. These sentiments suggest anxieties within the mid-eighteenth-century regarding over-consumption and its impact upon society. If such "old bachelors" accomplish their lecherous purpose and succeed in marrying young women, then those wives' prospects do not seem good. While it is doubtful that most of the old codgers depicted here will be able to copulate, given their age and various infirmities, if they were to somehow produce children with these younger women, they will likely not live for a great many more years. The old husband's death would then leave his family without the guidance of a patriarch. Georgian ideals regarding women's capabilities for reason, logic, and extended financial management suggest that families deprived of the father and husband would not be successful in forming the minds and morals of young Britons. The decline of British masculinity within the upper-middle and upper classes that is suggested in this graphic thus exudes a subtle sense of foreboding with respect to the social practices shaped by the unwritten constitution of the nation. When the wealthy and powerful members of society are steeped in debauchery and excess and the accompanying diseases, what will the future bring? The question raised by this picture may inspire discomfort and anxiety with regard to how one will live in such a society wrecked by over-consumption. This uneasiness combines with the humor expressed in this graphic to produce the grotesque.

This pairing of sexual and material over-consumption within the "assembly of old bachelors" suggests the moral and social decline of the class of people most capable of over-consuming, the wealthier classes. That these men are bachelors suggests they do not have legitimate offspring, which may be why they are all seeking fertile young brides. Not having heirs, especially male heirs, could be a considerable problem in the distribution of wealth, property, and titles. Such a situation is depicted, for example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. The lack of viable offspring that may be plaguing these gentlemen of means captures early veins of societal unrest about the future of the nation; if the wealthy and powerful who have ruled for centuries are unable to or do not produce fit replacements to rule in their stead, then Great Britain's entire social structure will become altered beyond recognition or may even collapse, as it is a metaphorical body whose structure is formed through class stratification. The men's apparent desire for young wives may thus have as much to do with the need for an heir as it does with their sexual proclivities, which could suggest anxieties regarding the failings of the system of primogeniture and hereditary privilege, decaying systems represented by the immobilizing, weakening disease gout and the decaying bodies of the men depicted here. This structure privileges such men as these and, in many ways, encourages them to over-consume, especially during the earlier parts of the eighteenth century. Gout's representation in this graphic may latently offer an early indication of the uneasiness of persons outside the system of wealth and privilege regarding the practicality and effectiveness of such a societal structure in ensuring a healthy body politic.

Another eighteenth-century depiction of gout featuring both over-consumption and lechery occurs in the 1766 print *Gouty Husband and Young Wife*. This illustration

seems to reiterate the types of themes regarding gout and masculinity portrayed in *The Assembly of Old Bachelors*. The illustration combines gout, venery, and impotence into a grotesque suggestion that British notions of domestic harmony on both the personal and public levels are being disrupted through over-consumption, which in turn affects and alters social aspects of the constitution.

In this graphic, the gouty older man sits in the center of the room; gout indicates his social station is of the upper-middle or upper class. He has evidently married a young woman, who is depicted behind his chair. Another man stands kissing her; on his back is the label "The Companion of Youth." A maid or nurse kneels next to the gouty man's chair and says, "The swelling in one leg has gone quite down, Sir," suggesting that perhaps he has also suffered gout in his other leg as well. In the upper right part of the picture, next to the window, a bird in his cage, presumably a talking parrot, says "Caesar and Pompey were both of them horned." The horns the bird speaks of allude to the legend that a cuckold, a man whose wife was unfaithful, would grow horns as a sign that he had been deceived. The gouty man, judging by what is going on behind his chair, has

been cuckolded. The words beneath the clock, “Tempus edax rerum,” are Latin and translate to “time, that devours all things.” This discrete message seems to suggest that time has devoured the gouty gentleman, much in the way that he has devoured food and drink and perhaps sex, which has resulted in his disease and infirmity.

The gouty husband’s words even seem to indicate his awareness of the impropriety of his marriage; he says, “I perceive I have more occasion for a crutch than a young wife.” His disease has rendered him almost immobile, which may mean that he is confined to his own rooms. This immobility therefore makes it highly unlikely that he would be able to perform sexually, which is perhaps why his young wife has turned to another man to fulfill her sexual needs. The husband’s words also suggest this inability to perform sexually; he acknowledges that he needs an aid to help him walk, a crutch—another phallic symbol. If he acknowledges that he needs a hard and upright device, then he may have been unable to consummate the marriage. His wife, meanwhile, finds comfort in the arms of a young man who does not need a crutch, suggesting he is virile and healthy enough to perform sexually, in contrast to her husband.

Also contributing to this notion that the gouty man is impotent is a bottle of “cantharides,” which sits on the window sill. These pastilles, sometimes called “Spanish Fly” were a poisonous substance used in the eighteenth century not only to treat minor skin irritations, but as well, as both an abortifacient and an aphrodisiac. Their presence here is significant in light of the gouty man’s possible inability to have sex. Perhaps they are his, and he is using them to try and achieve an erection so he can have sexual relations with his wife. Or, they might be used by his wife, perhaps as a romantic aid to her affair with her lover, or even to abort an unwanted baby that could result from this

affair. If her husband is indeed unable to have sex, she of course cannot get pregnant without revealing her transgressions, and thus the cantharides would help hide her sins from her husband. In any case, the presence of the Spanish Fly is not complimentary to the gouty man; it suggests that he is either unable to perform sexually or that his wife is using it in her affair with the "companion of youth"; both purposes emasculate the gouty master of the house. If we read the individual as a representative of a larger body of men of his station, then his impotence indicates the possibility of public perceptions that the rulers of the nation are not effective patriarchs successful in their superintendence of Great Britain's domestic affairs.

Next to the gouty man sits a bell labeled "The Companion of the Aged." This sign is juxtaposed with the label on the young man kissing the young wife. The "companion of youth" is a virile, active human being, but the "companion of the aged" is merely a means to call others to him in his illness. This bell also further confirms the class of the man who has gout, as does the maid attending to him; clearly he can afford servants to take care of him. His "young wife" need not take care of his foot, as a nurse or maid does so, which seems to further confirm his comfortable lifestyle. The bell next to him also demonstrates what could be a nearly complete lack of mobility. If he is unable to have sex or even move about his own house, the man's decrepitude is severe indeed; he is reduced to a static figure trapped within his own home, perhaps even his own rooms. His confinement and sexual passivity then cause him to become an emasculated figure. Thus, while this man and others in the class he represents are ostensibly leading the nation, they may not even be able to walk down the hallway of their homes. This ambivalence in gender representation within the picture, combined with insinuations of impotence, could

subtly suggest that British men of the ruling classes were ineffective and possibly even useless. That the men of this station still hold considerable sway as some of the only British citizens who can vote, serve in Parliament, and own property is therefore problematic for the social well-being of the nation. If an inept, infirm class of persons is leading the nation, what does this mean for Great Britain's future? Where are Britons of the middle and lower order being led, if the gouty man is creating no locomotion at all?

This very ambivalence caused by gout's debilitating effects and the people it was presumed to affect thus produces a sense of grotesqueness. On the one hand, the gouty man's position is laughable. If he was foolish in selecting such an inappropriate wife, then his position as a cuckold offers an ironic twist. His lechery and excessive lust have led him to this position, but instead of enjoying the favors of his young wife, he is unable to partake of conjugal relations. His frustration at this foiled plan offers an element of grotesque humor in the graphic, as does his overall emasculation and impotence. He is an object of scorn and derision whose situation may produce mocking humor among consumers of this print, particularly those outside of the privileged classes. After all, this print could evoke feelings of righteous indignation among members of the lower and middling orders, whose economic situation kept them from being able to afford the lifestyle that produced gout, so having a laugh at the expense of an over-consuming representative of the upper classes might offer an outlet for any frustrations associated with class relations. The graphic may in this way offer middle- and lower-class viewers a feeling of community brought about by humor and their shared understanding of the pitfalls of decadence and unbridled consumption.

The behavior of the gouty man's wife may also produce horror and discomfort, the second pillar of grotesqueness. On the one hand, imagining her life as the wife of such a decrepit old man may inspire revulsion. Even if the man is unable to perform sexually, picturing the intimate condition of marriage and cohabitation in the company of such a husband is enough to make anyone squeamish. Perhaps even more horrifying for viewers, however, is the wife's overt sexual behavior. She and her lover fondle one another in the presence of her husband and in full view of the servant. This unabashed lustfulness the young wife displays contradicts generally acceptable behaviors for women of the higher classes. While it was often deemed permissible for men of the aristocracy and gentry to have pre- and extra-marital sex, the social consequences for women who engaged in adultery were severe. Even the appearance of impropriety was damning; when Clarissa Harlowe, the heroine of Richardson's *Clarissa*, is tricked into eloping with Lovelace, for example, she is "ruined" from the moment she enters his carriage, even though she has not engaged in any sexual behavior at all. Despite her innocence, she knows that she cannot go home after this fateful step, and unless Lovelace marries her, she is doomed to be a social pariah, a "ruined woman." The gouty man's young wife is directly flouting normative social conventions by engaging in sexual activity with a man other than her husband in the very same room, apparently caring very little for privacy or even secrecy from the servant-woman.

The wife's demonstrated disregard for social mores in this graphic may therefore cause viewers to feel discomfort and horror at the idea of a society in which traditional mores are boldly flouted by women. If a lady is willing to engage in adultery in the very presence of her husband, then something must be terribly amiss with her morals and

values. Her behavior bespeaks unabashed enjoyment of sexual activity outside of marriage, which would have been considered immoral in the Georgian era. This young woman's flouting of traditional morality and embracing of her own sexual enjoyment with a man who is not her husband may have been very frightening to Georgian viewers, as it suggests that long-established, normative behaviors prescribed for women of the upper and upper-middle classes may be cast aside in favor of sensual pleasures. In an era before reliable birth control options, controlling women's sexuality was virtually the only way to ensure secure paternity of a child; such control primarily took place in the form of marriage. The young wife's openly sexual behavior therefore further suggests that the reason for the Spanish Fly is as an inducement of abortion. The woman's lustful behavior in effect mirrors that of her husband, whose lechery caused him to seek a young wife in the first place, but she, unlike him, is able to act on her desires, as is her lover, which threatens social foundations. Their lack of inhibition in practicing sexual behaviors indicates that they have chosen to flout convention; in this drawing they, particularly the wife, are effecting change upon social aspects of the informal constitution, a change that could inspire horror at the disruption of the social order that women's unbridled sexuality might bring. Unless women's sexual activity is regulated in Georgian society, then the practice of heredity and the institution of the family, both important parts of the nation's unwritten constitution, may be compromised.

This illustration suggests that while the body politic faces a number of threats, none is more dangerous than sexual excess. The gouty husband's excesses in consuming have brought about his disease and the inappropriate match with the young wife, though it is probable that he is sexually impotent and unable to have relations with her. In turn,

the wife's own lust has caused her to break her marriage vows, a great sin for Georgian Britons. The impropriety of the marriage, the wife's adultery, and the possibility that she may be using Spanish Fly to rid her body of an unwanted pregnancy all indicate disharmony within the home. Applying these circumstances on a larger scale could suggest domestic disharmony within Great Britain.

John Colley Nixon's 1784 print *Physical Advice* is another variation upon the theme of the overweight gouty man with a young wife. Nixon is unusual among the artists included within this study because he was of the wealthy merchant class; he was also an honorary member of the Royal Academy and sometimes exhibited in their shows (Cust). Nixon was good friends with another well-known caricaturist, Thomas Rowlandson, and even traveled with him to Bath in 1792 (Cust), a trip that evidently served to provide them with ample material for their satirical arts. Despite the fact that Nixon came from the wealthier classes and did not pursue graphic satire for his livelihood, he still casts a critical lens upon the consumption habits of the wealthy. *Physical Advice* focuses on this theme and connects representations of gout with colonialism and the grasping tentacles of the British Empire. The picture offers indications that uninhibited over-consumption, which is seen here as spreading all over the world as a result of the expanding British Empire, can significantly alter social aspects of the constitution of Great Britain as well as seriously impact the colonized populations who fall under its control.

In the illustration, the gouty gentleman, his doctor, and a young woman all occupy a well-appointed room within the man's home. The gouty man is in the center of the picture and wears a dressing gown and cap while his shirt seems to gape in the middle from his protruding stomach. He is sitting in a chair with his gout-ridden foot propped up on a low stool while the doctor, on the right, holds his wrist and takes his pulse. The gentleman's tongue sticks out of his mouth, perhaps at the request of the doctor in the course of his examination. In front of the man is a table, upon which are a book and several papers covered in writing. These papers relate to the man's diet and contain words such as "strawberries" and "turtle soup." A dog and a cat are in front of the man's chair. The young woman stands to the left of the scene, looking on behind a chair that she is resting her arm on. She appears to be a good deal younger than the gouty man; her

presence in this examination may indicate that she is his wife, as it is unlikely a daughter would be present during a medical examination, and she is too well-dressed to be a servant. The gouty man may therefore demonstrate sexual excess in addition to his overindulgence of food and drink.

The décor of the room also suggests the sexual overindulgence of its owner and supports the notion of a sexual relationship between the gouty man and this young woman. On the mantel stands a goat statue, a traditional symbol of lust and male sexuality. The conspicuousness of the goat makes its connection to the gouty man clear; if he has chosen to ornament his room with a metaphorical symbol of venery and lust, then it stands to reason that he finds the object, and therefore its meaning, appealing. On either end of the mantelpiece are statues of fat, naked men, probably Buddha or another eastern deity, who are holding curved posts with cylinders on top. They suggest the exoticism of romanticized notions of the Orient, which are imbued with sexuality. Edward Said contends, "Orientalism responded more to the culture that produced it than to its putative object" (22). Thus, the exoticness and sexuality with which the British imagination viewed the East, as evidenced through such objects, was a reflection of British values and mores rather than an indication of those of peoples from the Orient. The connection between the sexual nature of the décor and the young woman's presence strongly suggests that this gouty man, like those in *An Assembly of Old Bachelors* and *Gouty Husband and Young Wife*, lusts after younger women.

The "Orient" is in the eighteenth-century a vague designation for areas that sometimes seem to stretch from North Africa to China and Japan, but which most often refers to areas in and around present-day Turkey. Eighteenth-century English

"Orientalism" is prevalent in costuming, architecture, paintings, and "oriental tales," and represents attempts to understand the Muslim East. However, this is as well part of the eighteenth-century English "discovery," enslavement, and/or colonization of large parts of the world. It is an example of early English imperialism. These elements of decoration within the gouty man's home indicate that he is taking part in the system of colonialism, at least indirectly. His consumption and display of these objects and the fetishization of the cultures they supposedly represent perpetuates exoticized notions of Eastern cultures and thereby effectively homogenizes the distinctive ethnic, linguistic, religious, and cultural elements of a multitude of peoples and places. All the cultures of the Middle and Far East are melded into a single unity, the Oriental, which serves to differentiate the West as normative and ultimately superior. By othering all cultures outside of the West, colonials succeeded in establishing the supposed inferiority of the colonized peoples, which therefore made it easier to conquer and abuse them. Orientalism is ultimately an indication of an attitude of white supremacy. The gouty man has evidently bought into this mindset and is participating in the colonial agenda by consuming goods that promote and uphold such notions.

Some of the wall hangings in the picture further demonstrate excess. On the left side of the fireplace hangs a picture of a laughing, naked male cherubic figure clutching a vine and sitting under a tree; two birds hold the end of the vine. The sylvan scene and the vine, as well as the happy expression on the figure's face, suggest that this may be a painting of Bacchus/Dionysus, the god of wine- and merry-making who is often also associated with lovemaking. This picture further suggests the gouty man's proclivity for excess in drink and sexual desire.

On the far right above the mantlepiece hangs a portrait of another overweight man, possibly an ancestor of the current master of the house. His considerable portliness suggests his own practices of immoderation. The gouty man's surrounding himself with indicators of over-consumption in his choice of decoration may suggest that he sees such behavior as natural and normal. If we read him as a metaphorical representation of his class, then the graphic latently suggests that the insidious and contagious nature of over-consumption has been absorbed into society as an accepted, expected behavior of the wealthy, but gout suggests that its impacts continue to damage and degrade the overall health of the informal national constitution.

The center picture on the wall is also significant in its connection with over-consumption and colonization. It is a map of the "West Indies," which includes such islands as Cuba and Jamaica and part of Mexico, places in the New World that served as outposts for colonial expansion. For Britons of the eighteenth century, such maps were an artistic means of illustrating Britain's military might and economic prowess. Hanging such pictures demonstrates a kind of pride in and support for a hierarchical government and its policy of colonization. The map and other exotic pieces of decoration in the room may suggest that the gouty man is involved in imperial trade, namely in the West Indies. His desire to consume is apparently not limited to his home and immediate vicinity; he is evidently part of those who, whether directly or indirectly, are responsible for inflicting colonial wounds upon the indigenous persons of the Caribbean, Latin America, and persons of African descent forced into the slave trade. The gouty man's possible connection with imperial business practices might suggest that his over-consumption is directly related to the exploitative practices of colonization; his illness and decrepitude

may indicate that the colonial system is inherently unhealthy and damaging to the nation. Though the map's presence as an artistic object seems designed to indicate pride in Britain's presumed superiority, its connection with the over-consuming, decadent gouty man ultimately undermines notions of the nation's might and supremacy.

This graphic's connection to the West Indies is also significant because of events affecting the imperial economy that occurred there during the early 1780s. Most notable is the Great Hurricane of 1780, which affected the eastern Caribbean islands. This storm remains the deadliest on record, with a death toll of about 22,000. Islands in the Antilles including Barbados, Martinique, and Saint Lucia were devastated; witnesses reported sturdy stone buildings being completely razed and even heavy cannons being blown about by the raging winds. In some cases entire towns were completely gone. Also, because of the American Revolution, Great Britain had a strong military presence in the area and suffered many casualties. The naval fleet was hit especially hard: Admiral Rodney's fleet at Port Castries was totally destroyed. Prior to this disaster, the West Indies saw a lengthy period of prosperity, but losses were so great that a period of economic and cultural decline followed. (material in this paragraph: "Great Hurricane of 1780"). This social and economic decline seems to be mirrored in the bodily decline of the gouty man. His own prosperity led to over-consumption, which in turn caused his disease and decline.

In addition to the deadly hurricane of 1780, another terrible event took place in the West Indies just short time afterward, in late 1781. The *Zong* Massacre, as it is referred to today, was an especially ugly incident in the already appalling annals of Great

Britain's imperial history, especially as it pertains to slavery.[14] The *Zong* was a slave ship captained by Luke Collingwood and owned by James Gregson. Because slaves were a valuable commodity, overloading the ship was a common practice. The already horrific conditions of a slave ship were made even worse when Collingwood took on 470 slaves in Africa and set sail for the Americas. By the end of November, the ship was in dire straits; over 50 slaves and seven crew members were dead from illness and malnutrition. The *Zong* was also then stranded in an area known as "The Doldrums," a portion of the mid-Atlantic infamous for little to no wind where ships could be stuck for weeks, so Collingwood became desperate. He decided to order the crew to throw 132 ill slaves overboard during the next week; he reasoned that this would rid the ship of all illnesses, preserve provisions for the remainder of the occupants, and allow the owner to make an insurance claim on the loss of these slaves. About 10 more slaves threw themselves overboard in defiance or despair. When the owner of the ship filed his claim, the insurance company disputed it. Though the Jamaican courts initially ruled in the owner's favor, throughout 1782 and 1783 the case gained much attention during the appeals process. Members of the abolitionist movement in particular publicized the story in an effort to bring about the end of the slave trade in the British Empire. Despite the efforts of Granville Sharp, a leading abolitionist, no criminal charges were brought against the ship's captain and crew (information in the previous two paragraphs: Bernard).

In the years leading up to the creation of *Physical Advice,* the Zong Massacre was thus a well-publicized event thanks to Sharp and other abolitionist leaders. This atrocity's connection to the West Indies and the colonial economy and the over-consumption it

[14] Although chattel slavery was essentially abolished in Great Britain in 1772, the practice still occurred in British colonies, particularly the West Indies, and the slave trade in Britain was not abolished till 1807.

promotes may even be revealed within the graphic through its allusion to the region via the map; at the very least, consumers of the picture could have easily made the connection between the West Indies and slavery. Nixon's own connection to the imperial economy in his capacity as a merchant is interesting, then, as he may be casting aspersions upon the very class of people he is a part of in his satire of and social commentary upon over-consumption and its impact upon the constitution of Great Britain.

In connection with gout, *Physical Advice* certainly demonstrates grotesqueness. The gout sufferer's marriage to a young wife offers humor. His weakened, infirm condition is contrasted with his wife's youthful form, and, as with *Gouty Husband and Young Wife*, the graphic insinuates that his state of health probably makes sexual activity impossible. Sexual impotence was a frequent source of humor during the Georgian era and indeed remains so even today. While this particular wife is not obviously having an affair, the incongruity of their ages renders their marriage ludicrous.

Also contributing to this ironic humor of the drawing is the overtly sexual décor with which the room is furnished. Again, the tone of virility that the room sets with its goats, Bacchanalian figure, and orientalist influences is contrasted with the gouty man's decrepitude, thereby suggesting that his efforts to exude an air of masculine vigor and potency have been undone by his very person. His tongue lolling out of his mouth, combined with his gout, paunch, and advanced age, is repulsive, and so while the theatrical, overdone nature of his over-consumption is amusing, it also is horrifying. Indeed, who would want to share a bed with that man? The drawing's insinuation that the gouty man's presumed efforts at sexual activity have been fruitless allows viewers to

share in a form of humor based on mutual understanding and thereby form a sense of community based upon feelings of derision toward the perceived habits of over-consumption that characterized the upper classes during the Georgian era. From the perspective of upper-class men such as this one, marriages between older men and younger women demonstrated the man's vast prerogative, but when those arrangements are visually associated with illness, the man's privileges begin to appear "sick" themselves. Thus, although the young wife may initially appear as an accoutrement to his power, her presence may ultimately undermine that power and suggest impotence or inefficacy instead.

In addition to the discomfort, horror, and possibly even nausea the gouty man's relationship with this young woman might inspire, another horrific element of the graphic lies in its connection with the role of the West Indies as an element of the country's colonizing economic practices. This connection, though subtle, may conjure up the horrors of the slave trade and the colonial system at large. Both mercantile capitalism and free market capitalism depended upon Great Britain acquiring raw materials for manufacture and new markets for those manufactured goods. The West Indies in particular was the site of large sugar plantations producing most of the sugar consumed in Europe.[15] Sugar cane production and harvesting were incredibly difficult and labor-intensive, and the system came to depend entirely upon slave labor by the eighteenth century (Bridenaugh and Bridenaugh 266). Thus, the region represented in the map on the wall was linked with the appalling practices of the plantations and the abysmal lives of the slaves who inhabited them. These conditions were no secret, either, thanks to the

[15] According to David Richardson in "West African Consumption Patterns and Their Influence on the Eighteenth-Century English Slave Trade," sugar consumption nearly quadrupled in Britain between 1710 and the early 1770s, going from about 6.5 lb/head to 23.2 lbs (304).

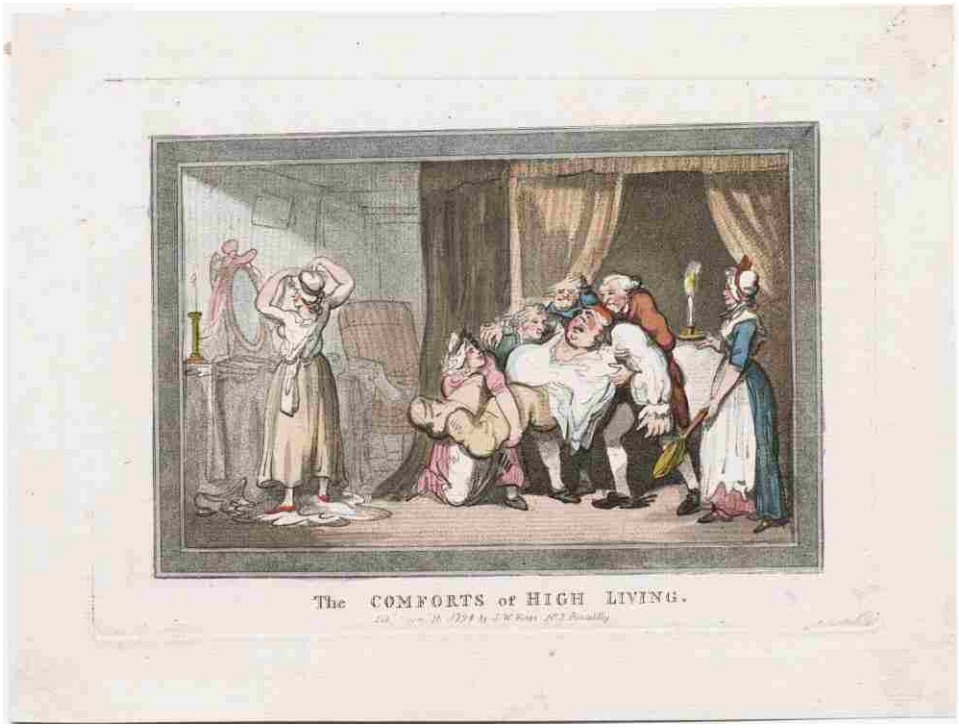
efforts of abolitionists such as Granville Sharp, so it is therefore possible that *Physical Advice* and its subtle connection to the slave trade might inspire a sense of horror in viewers who were opposed to such practices.

The bloated over-consumption and lechery depicted within the graphic in combination with the allusions to the horrors of the slave trade thereby produces a deep current of grotesqueness that expresses a sense of anxiety about these issues and their impact upon Britons. If the misery of slaves has enabled men such as the one depicted here to founder from unregulated consumption, then the drawing may pose a moral question about the way in which the economy of the British Empire has enabled and even encouraged immoderation, which in turn has weakened and degraded the body politic.

This picture is significant in that it connects gout, greed, and personal over-consumption with colonization. Here, the actions of an individual are subtly connected to the issue of immoderation on a national scale, and gout serves as a metaphor indicating that greed and over-consumption are affecting the body politic on both micro and macro levels. By uniting sexual over-consumption with gout, a disease of immoderation in and of itself, the graphic suggests the morality and desirability of temperance in one's consumption of food and drink and in curbing one's sexual appetite. This graphic ultimately expresses unease with the role that over-consumption has played in colonization. The drawing questions what will become of a nation whose entire way of life seems to hinge upon over-consumption; its answer seems to be that it will sicken and decline.

Nixon's friend Thomas Rowlandson was well-known for his satires in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth-centuries, and he, too, criticized over-consumption in

many of his works. He produced serious works as well as satire, including complex, detailed narrative scenes. Early in his career he won the silver medal for a bas-relief figure from the Royal Academy (Hayes). He created works for a variety of mediums and audiences, from the bound color-plate volumes that the wealthy would have purchased or rented to pieces for the *Caricature Magazine*, which catered to a more plebeian audience. Rowlandson produced a number of drawings depicting appetite for food, drink, and sex. He especially seems to have enjoyed using the trope of the old, corpulent man and the young, attractive woman, who is frequently depicted engaging in sexual behavior with a younger lover. His 1794 print, *The Comforts of High Living*, depicts the advantages the gouty man is able to procure with his wealth and status yet emphasizes the decrepitude and poor health that over-consumption causes to develop within the body politic.



In this picture, a young woman stands on the left getting undressed in front of a mirror; she is reaching up to her mob cap, and she has removed her bodice so her breast

is exposed. Four servants, three men and a woman, are carrying a hugely overweight man with gout to his canopy bed. The men are supporting their master's torso while the maidservant holds his feet. Both of the man's feet appear to be swollen and wrapped, indicating that he has a double dose of gout. All of the servants carrying the man are very red in the face, a clear sign of the strain they are experiencing. Another female servant stands behind this group carrying a bed-warmer and candle, having evidently just completed the office of warming the bed. The grotesque nature of this scene suggests anxieties regarding the effects of over-consumption upon the constitution of Great Britain.

This scene depicts yet another indication of sexual excess. The dress of the young woman at the mirror suggests that she is a servant, and her nakedness indicates a sexual relationship with the gouty man. The fact that she is undressing while the servants put the master into bed suggests she will follow once he is settled. This drawing implies that the wealthy gouty man's excessive consumption spreads to his sexual appetite; he can hardly move from debilitating obesity and gout, yet he likely has used his wealth—indicated by the number of servants he has and the well-appointed room he is in—to persuade a pretty young woman to be his mistress.

The grotesqueness of the scene is presented with some familiar tropes we have seen other artists use in Georgian satire. The humorous sexual element is obvious, certainly.[16] The man and woman are in his bedroom, which would indicate it is the scene of their sexual relations, if indeed the obese, gouty man is capable of engaging in sexual

[16] Rowlandson used this particular trope of a gouty man and young, buxom woman several times in his works of satire, which he seems to also have combined with his erotic drawings. Some of these works feature a wife in amorous circumstances with another, younger man as her husband sleeps. Most have erotic elements, as in *The Comforts of High Living*; at least one is downright pornographic.

intercourse at all. The ribald Rowlandson perhaps depicts the woman's exposed breast as a means of emphasizing this relationship. The woman's body also lends to the humor of the grotesque—her young, healthy, trim figure is contrasted with the gouty man's infirmity and obesity; indeed, his body is nearly double the size of hers. This extreme contrast highlights the disparity between their persons and seems to indicate that this relationship is both ridiculous and inappropriate, worthy of mockery and laughter.

While the woman's exposed breast seems calculated to lend rather coarse, juvenile humor to the graphic, it may also be disconcerting to a thoughtful viewer. Her state of undress takes place within the intimate scene of the bedroom, certainly, but the addition of five other people, servants, three of whom are men, makes this situation problematic in terms of eighteenth-century propriety. A modest woman would not have permitted male servants to be in the room while she was half-naked, nor is it likely those servants would have entered when she was disrobing. Her seeming nonchalance at being naked in front of three male servants casts aspersions on her character; Rowlandson may be suggesting that she is used to being naked in front of men. A lack of modesty and chastity in a woman during the Georgian era was considered a terrible transgression. The indication that this woman's virtue is in question may suggest a defect within social aspects of the informal constitution. Consumption standards were gendered then as they are now, and while over-consumption among wealthy men was expected if not always necessarily approved, women were expected to keep greater control over their various appetites, particularly their sexuality. The gouty man's mistress here is presented as lacking the sort of modesty and moderation necessary for "decent" women. When such standards are not upheld, this drawing may suggest, the domestic situation is on shaky

ground. If habits of over-consumption as demonstrated by immodesty and wantonness have spread to women, Rowlandson's graphic seems to ask, what is the future for the rest of society?

Horror also may arise from the man's condition. He is hugely overweight and so gouty he is unable to walk to his bedroom; all indications are that he is an over-consumer of the highest order. His current immobilized state can be read as a direct consequence of his over-consumption. To be completely dependent upon others for one's every need might inspire horror, especially given that the graphic indicates that the man has brought it upon himself through indolence and intemperance. The gouty man seems to have no self-control whatsoever. That notion of bloated, unchecked consumption and the man's inability to moderate himself may also inspire horror, especially when one reads the man as a metaphorical representation of the wealthier classes rather than only as an individual. This drawing suggests that a complete surrender to one's desires is unhealthy and could lead to helplessness, especially for those who already depend so much upon the services of the working classes, as the gouty man apparently does. If the upper-middle and upper classes are over-consuming in this manner, Rowlandson suggests here, then the burden will ultimately fall on those in the lower orders. Just as the gouty man is physically being supported by the servants carrying him, so, too, will this population have to carry the burden of the problems created by such over-consumption. The situation depicted in this graphic may mimic the economic concerns coinciding with the Industrial Revolution and the increased strength of capitalism during the late eighteenth century. When one over-consumes to such a great extent yet fails to expend in turn, as evidenced by the gouty man's obese figure, which is clearly retaining much of the material he has consumed, the

system shuts down. A flow of capital is necessary to catalyze increased production and more consumption overall, and the gouty man's illness and lack of mobility demonstrate that he has caused a stoppage and must be forcibly moved by those outside of his own social order. The servants carrying the gouty man in this graphic may suggest that it is up to the middling and lower classes to clear the likes of him away in order to ensure that the channels of production and consumption remain clear. Such notions indicate the changing sentiments of the middle and lower classes as the eighteenth century winds to a close, sentiments that would become increasingly radical during the nineteenth century,

Rowlandson's graphic satirizes what some may have seen as the dangers of leading a life of privilege—while the gouty man's wealth has ensured that he has some power, at the very least in the form of people to wait upon him within his home and in public life, it has resulted in his degeneration and eventual dependency. Thus, while he has achieved or inherited monetary independence, and with it, apparently, some social consequence as demonstrated by his ability to persuade the young woman to be his mistress, his over-consumption, enabled by his wealth, has immobilized him. It has turned him into a helpless being, a huge infantilized man who inspires mockery, horror, and perhaps pity. With its inclusion of a group of lower-class laborers struggling under a shared burden, the drawing may function to bring viewers of the working (and possibly middle) classes to form an unconscious sense of community or solidarity, as it could be read as a warning of what might happen to social aspects of the nation's constitution if over-consumption and retention of goods and capital is allowed to continue unchecked.

Rowlandson's sentiments are echoed by Johann Heinrich Ramberg. Ramberg is another artist, who, like John Colley Nixon, studied and exhibited at the Royal Academy.

Ramberg was born in Hanover, where his father was war secretary of the electorate. The young Ramberg attracted the attention of George III, who was also elector of Hanover, in the 1780s, and even studied at the Royal Academy under the special protection of the sovereign; eventually he was appointed royal court painter of Hanover (Graves). Despite his royal patronage, many of Ramberg's works take up the theme of over-consumption in all its forms. Ramberg's 1800 print *Age and Luxury* recycles the trope of the gouty man being duped by his young wife, whom he is presumably unable to satisfy sexually.[17] This drawing combines the specter of the dangers of over-consumption with what are perhaps criticisms of the British Empire and colonization.

The print depicts an overweight middle-aged man with gout asleep in a chair in the center of the room, his diseased foot propped on a stool. To the right and slightly

[17] This piece is a very close adaptation of Plate II of Hogarth's 1732 *A Harlot's Progress*; the young wife's exposed right breast, the monkey, and the servant-boy gaping at the couple are all reproductions of the scene depicted there. However, in that painting the young woman is the mistress of an older Jewish money-lender, with whom she is about to take tea. She knocks over the tea-table in an effort to provide cover for the escape of her young lover, who is shown in the background sneaking out with the help of her maid.

behind him, a young woman, apparently his wife, stands with a young officer in a red coat straddling her, his hands on her waist and her right breast exposed. Her face simpers while her eyes are cast in the direction of her husband. A servant boy comes into the room with a tray, upon which is a roasted fowl. Mouth open, he gawks at the couple canoodling behind his master. On the far left of the room, a small pet monkey pulls a bunch of grapes from the table. The gouty man sleeps while his young wife engages in sexual behaviors with the young officer; his sleep is doubtless induced by his overeating and drinking and sedentary habits caused by the immobility of gout. His servant is entering with yet more food, indicating that he will soon be eating again, which will probably make his condition even worse. The item on the platter is a roast fowl, which demonstrates the man's wealth and status. Because of poaching laws, only those with land could hunt wild game such as pheasants, grouse, and guineas, and only those with a comfortable income could afford to regularly buy domestic fowl raised for consumption, such as chickens, geese, ducks, and the like. Because the man is dining on this fowl *en famille*, it seems that this day is no special occasion, just a normal meal, which evidences both his wealth and appetite.

The sexual element of this print also conjures previous images of gouty men being duped by adulterous wives and uses many of the same tropes to create a grotesque scene. Here the young adulterers are also engaging in their affair right under the gouty husband's nose and in plain view of the servant. The wife's bodice-kerchief, which covers her breasts, is half off, leaving her right breast bare, just as in *The Comforts of High Living*. As in that work, the low humor of a woman's exposed breast perhaps offers some titillation for viewers as well as provides a chortle. Her paramour's hands are

around her waist, while her left hand is raised and her index finger points toward her sleeping husband and perhaps indicates “wait” or “caution” to her soldier. The blind, cuckolded state of the gouty husband, as well as his obesity, also provides elements of ironic humor in this grotesque scene. The age disparity between husband and wife suggests that this is a lecherous old man who engages in (or at least attempts to) sexual over-consumption, so her taking a lover could suggest that the gouty husband is getting his comeuppance for unchecked over-consumption.

The monkey on the far left of the picture also underscores the element of sexual excess in the picture, both the wife and soldier’s lust for one another and the gouty man’s lechery as evidenced by his marrying a much younger woman. Monkeys, like goats, are traditional signs “of exotic and deviant sexuality” (Tobin 36), so the animal’s presence in the room evokes that connotation for viewers of this text. It suggests that the occupants of this room are over-consuming (or attempting to) with regard to sexual practices. Such sexual over-consumption by all parties shown in this graphic would have generally been viewed as immoral and perhaps deviant in the eighteenth century, as my previous discussion of Georgian attitudes toward moderation has shown. As such, these behaviors might indicate the problematic state of various social aspects of the constitution of Great Britain. If dissolution with regard to eating and drinking were not bad enough, the institution of marriage is also threatened, as evidenced by the behaviors on display. The gouty man has married a companion entirely inappropriate for him because of his lustful nature, while the woman has broken her marriage vows and is engaging in adultery with another man, a serious social crime in the Georgian era. In addition, the soldier, too, has ignored traditional notions of honor in his affair with the woman. He has, according to

the social mores of the day, gravely insulted the gouty man by gaining his wife's sexual favors. If his behavior were discovered, the players in this tableau would all be caught up in great scandal, especially the young wife, who would probably be a social outcast for the remainder of her days, as we see in the fate of Charlotte Lucum in *The Countess of Dellwyn*, which I discuss in the following chapter. The monkey therefore underscores the degree of sexual over-consumption that has infiltrated the household depicted here and perhaps Britain's constitution at large.

In addition to sexual excess, the monkey further indicates the privilege of the gouty man and his wife, for as Kirsten Olsen points out, monkeys were exotic creatures that many upper-class men and women kept as pets in the eighteenth century (Olsen 32). They would have to be imported from Africa, Asia, or the Americas, which would probably have made them fairly difficult to come by and thus expensive. This monkey's position in the house is apparently that of a favored pet, as he inhabits this room with the master and mistress of the house and is even so bold as to help himself to the grapes on the table, fruits that were also a luxury item for the English and were probably grown in a hothouse. The monkey's presence thus demonstrates both the affluence of his master and mistress and also offers a bit of sly humor directed toward wealthy and/or upper-class society. Wendy Moonan argues that the fascination with monkeys is a result of their likeness to humans, and depictions of primates performing human activities were popular for that reason during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; she claims that the presence of monkeys emphasized that humans are just animals in clothes (Moonan). The libidinous behavior demonstrated by the wife and her lover and the lechery suggested by the contrast between the ages of husband and wife indeed liken all of them to animals

who are unable to moderate their own sexual behaviors. The animalistic behaviors practiced and implied by the presence of the monkey thereby lend to the overall grotesqueness of this scene.

In addition, the monkey's connection to imperialism is also significant. He would have come from a land with jungles such as Africa, Asia, South America, or perhaps an island in the Caribbean, all of which are places that the British Empire was colonizing during the early nineteenth century. The monkey may therefore subtly reflect the dangers and cruelty that characterize the colonial system, particularly slavery. He was plucked from his homeland and brought to a new place, where the climate and surroundings were completely foreign to him, and was expected to entertain his owners. The monkey's possible origins show it to be a kind of casualty of the callous thoughtlessness that characterizes imperialism, a practice that transplanted or displaced many unwilling people in the name of expanding the economy of the British Empire.

The soldier's role is also important with regard to the effects of sexual over-consumption upon the national constitution because of his occupation. He is supposed to be serving and protecting the British people both at home and in the burgeoning empire abroad. However, he is shown here seriously compromising the well-being of British domestic life. His role as instigator (at least in this scene) of sexual contact with a married woman subtly suggests that, in contrast to Patrick O'Brien's argument[18] that the vast majority of citizens met imperial expansion with complacency and overall support, not all Britons are quite happy with the increasing military presence caused by imperial expansion. Indeed, according to this drawing, important institutions such as marriage are

[18] See Chapter 2

being threatened because of such actions related to empire, which ultimately threaten social aspects of the unwritten constitution of the nation.

The humor and potential discomfort this graphic may have incited in Georgian viewers seem closely connected to imperialism, which promoted consumption of goods such as sugar, coffee, chocolate, and tea, among other things. The man's gout offers an indication that he has over-consumed the products of colonialism, and his young wife's presence suggests that he has been immoderate in his sexual desires as well. The clear connections to colonialism that the servant and monkey provide might suggest continued anxieties regarding trade and its relationship to consumption. Tobin argues that by the end of the eighteenth century anxieties about the role of luxury in promoting vice such as those expressed within Bernard Mandeville's 1714 poem *The Fable of the Bees* had been replaced by a general attitude of complacency in consuming the products of imperial expansion (35), yet this graphic's grotesque nature and the presence of gout indicate that a sense of uneasiness remained regarding potential over-consumption and its impact upon social aspects of the constitution of the nation. Much as the servant boy enters unknowingly into a scene of debauchery and excess, *Age and Luxury* suggests that the British may also be walking into such circumstances in embarking upon the journey of empire.

A number of themes emerge among these representations of gout I analyze in this chapter. These pieces of graphic satire make a strong, consistent connection between gout, a disease caused by over-consumption of food and drink, and sexual excess. The older gouty men all demonstrate intent to enter into sexual relationships with women much younger than they, a situation that offers parts of the humorous element that

characterizes the grotesque. These illustrations seem to indicate that the immoderate consumption that leads to diseases such as gout has infiltrated the very constitution of the sufferer. Excess has seeped into the gouty man's moral fiber and compromised his well-being. If we read these individuals as representatives of the larger social group they seem to embody, then the sexual excess they demonstrate seems to suggest a lack of principles. Because the men of the upper classes served as its leaders on both national and local levels, any suggestion that they might be unfit to lead the nation could evidence anxieties about the ways in which over-consumption is altering social components of the constitution of the nation, particularly as it impacts institutions such as the family.

Additionally, the lack of morality these graphics suggest also seems to show that the gouty men are impotent. These men are not capable of performing basic tasks such as walking and caring for themselves as a direct result of their over-consumption, so they become ineffective, even infantilized beings. These representations also suggest that these men's feebleness extends to sexual impotence as well. Their decayed bodily conditions and frequent depictions as cuckolded husbands undermine their efforts to appear virile and instead render them ridiculous, thereby offering elements of humor that contribute to the grotesqueness of these graphics.

As well, in many instances the gouty man's impotence leads to a loss of control within his own home. A number of these and other depictions represent the young wives as having escaped the control of their husbands and engaging in sexual affairs with younger men. This lack of control within the gouty man's home suggests that they are not capable of managing their households as a proper patriarch should. Read as metaphorical representations of their class, the gouty men are shown to be incapable leaders. After all,

if they are unable to control their own households, these works suggest, then how will they lead the nation at large? These pieces evidence anxiety regarding the fitness of men of the upper and upper-middle classes to serve as MPs, landlords, town officials, and any number of other positions of authority that men of their class would have been expected to serve in. Such works become increasingly pointed as the eighteenth century progresses and may evidence growing sentiments of dissatisfaction and discomfort with the class stratification that characterized British society.

A number of these works also include references to empire and colonization as they relate to over-consumption. The illustrations depict the system of imperial expansion as contributing to over-consumption while also subtly suggesting the detrimental effects of colonization upon both the colonized populations and native-born Britons. The connection of colonization with over-consumption and disease suggests an unhealthy social and economic system. The domestic setting of these pieces signals that the ugliness of imperial conquest has infiltrated the core of British society, though such a suggestion is implicit rather than overt. The graphics form an association with men of the upper classes and illness. Thus, that correlation could have helped Georgian Britons to begin to read against the grain of acceptance of and adherence to notions of British pride.

These first three chapters have demonstrated ways in which over-consumption, indicated by gout, has impacted the political, economic, and social forms of the unwritten constitution of Great Britain during the period 1744-1830. The grotesqueness that characterizes such pictures offers an indication of the anxieties prevalent during this time, particularly in relation to the dissatisfaction with the monarchy, the changing economic system, colonialism, and over-consumption of both a material and sexual nature.

Evidence of sentiments of resistance to class privilege and disgust with over-consumption are more apparent as the Georgian era comes to a close, suggesting that consumers of these works of graphic satire were becoming increasingly radical in their turn. The illustrations capture anxieties and veins of unrest coursing through British society during this time. They may also function as a site through which viewers could form and develop a sense of community based on a sense of uneasiness caused by the role of over-consumption in changing the constitution and institutions of Great Britain. These early, loose formations may serve as a means through which the middle and lower classes eventually gained voices that allowed them to develop political subjectivity.

The relative fixity with which gout was represented in graphic satire indicates that persons both literate and illiterate could comprehend its metaphorical significance. Now I turn to literary representations of the disease within selected novels of the era, where these representations of gouty men gain greater nuance as the Georgian era draws to a close. In the following two chapters I examine several characters with gout represented in three novels from the period of my study. I discuss ways in which these literary representations complicate and interpolate the somewhat simpler paradigms expressed in graphic satire as a means of critically examining and articulating the ways over-consumption has affected the various aspects of the constitution that structures Great Britain.

Chapter 4

Unhealthy, Wealthy, and Despised: Gouty Gentlemen in *The Countess of Dellwyn* and *The Adventures of Roderick Random*

My Lord, you are my disease.
--Sarah Fielding, *The Countess of Dellwyn*

The figure of the grotesque gouty man makes his appearance as a character within the novels of the Georgian era as well as in the graphic satire. He hobbles or is wheeled through the pages in all his gouty glory, his disease functioning as a subtle critique of the social system that privileges the wealthy ruling classes. His significant presence suggests the existence of positionalities resistant to this stratified system, which may loosely unite readers who understand the metaphorical meaning behind the disease and can participate in the active social critiques taking place around this site of cultural analysis. The representations of gout within Sarah Fielding's *The History of the Countess of Dellwyn* (1759) and Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) provide early examples of gouty men whose behaviors offer criticisms of over-consumption in the upper classes. The diseased bodies of the earl and the judge (the gouty characters within these novels) demonstrate the impact that excess consumption has upon the constitution of individuals within the upper classes as well as on the class as a whole. The effect that these characters have on those around them, particularly women and dependants, also suggests the damaging effect that immoderation will have upon the greater body politic of Great Britain. These novels are certainly multifaceted and include representations of Tory voices and values as well, but the more radical strain of criticism is also evident through representations of the upper-class, diseased male body. With this underlying suggestion, Fielding and Smollett's representations might allow those outside the ruling

classes to gain a latent form of political power and subjectivity, to realize a voice, as Susan Lanser contends, through their mutual recognition of the criticisms of class-specific modes of consumption these characters represent. This (usually implicit) voice speaks to complex debates about the perceived values held by members of the upper classes and the impact of such values upon the political, economic, and social constitutions of the nation.

In the three previous chapters I offer analysis of visual representations of gout within Georgian graphic satire. I contend that these representative samples of the vast number of such graphics created and consumed during this period demonstrate veiled anxieties regarding the effects of upper-class over-consumption upon the political, economic, and social constitutions of Great Britain. The gouty man is repeatedly associated with certain characteristics including over-eating, over-consuming alcohol, ostentatious displays of wealth frequently connected to the products of imperial expansion, lusting after younger women, and impotence. These consistent tropes indicate a shared cultural consciousness among viewers and consumers of such works, which may thereby begin to offer a foundation for creating discourse communities that debate and judge the nation's social, political, and economic constitutions, which potentially paves the way for alterations to the British social and political system at a later time. I have shown that as the Georgian era draws to a close, these criticisms of upper-class consumption in visual culture become increasingly obvious, suggesting the presence of more radical positionalities among producers and consumers of these works.

In this chapter I turn to literary representations of gout and their role in adding layers of complexity to the generally fixed representations of the disease in graphic satire.

While the literary constructions of the titled, landed, wealthy man of the aristocracy and upper gentry is characterized by many of the same tropes depicted in the graphic satire, the representations of this character that Fielding and Smollett each create are complex and nuanced. These characters function to allow these authors to articulate subtle, yet potentially radical, critiques of systems of hereditary class privilege and offer alternatives to the gouty ruling body, which they see as decaying, decrepit, dying, and ultimately infecting the constitution of the body politic. The characters created by Fielding and Smollett offer rich material through which the reader may consider radical possibilities such as the disruption of the current class system and the possibility of a radically altered British constitution, the system of unwritten rules and norms governing the nation's political, economic, and social institutions.

Fielding's *The Countess of Dellwyn* enters into debates about class and privilege through her representation of a gouty aristocrat, the Earl of Dellwyn. In this novel, sixteen year-old Charlotte Lucum, a motherless girl who has lived a retired life in the country, is manipulated into marrying the Earl of Dellwyn, a man 47 years her senior, through the machinations of her conniving, status-seeking father, who seeks to rise in social station and gain political appointment through the marriage of his daughter to an aristocrat. The earl, jealous of his beautiful wife's youth and spirits and threatened by the attention she receives from other men, berates and confines her to their lodgings, which eventually drives Charlotte to illness and desperation; she has an affair with the dashing young nobleman Lord Clermont. When the earl finds out, he divorces her publicly. She lives out the remainder of her days in infamy, participating in gaming as alimony from the earl allows. Her fate demonstrates the contagious, corruptive nature of over-

consumption and perhaps suggests that contact with the class of over-consumers represented by the earl is inherently dangerous and unhealthy.

The Earl of Dellwyn comes to an equally ignominious end; he marries his housekeeper, who "governed him as absolutely as if he had been a real Infant" (*CD* 217) and forces him to leave her everything he possibly can in his will.[19] Fielding's critiques of the system privileging hereditary wealth and titles combines with the didactic purpose of a sentimental conduct book to suggest that the nation's constitution is diseased and decaying because of habitual over-consumption. The novel can certainly be seen to imply that such behaviors are contagious and will taint the entire body politic, just as they spread to Charlotte's physical and moral constitutions; in essence, Fielding's novel might be read as a subtle intimation that the system of class privilege encouraging over-consumption and immoderation is inherently unhealthy for the constitution of the British body politic as a whole.

Despite its rich significance as a piece of social commentary, *The Countess of Dellwyn* has been largely overlooked by literary scholars, as has the majority of the corpus of Fielding's work.[20] Despite the "rediscovering" of the works of Sarah Fielding

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[19] Interestingly, Sarah Fielding's brother Henry, who also suffered terribly from gout as well as dropsy, married Mary Daniels, the maid of his wife, Charlotte, three years after her death (Allen "Henry Fielding").

[20] Many critics only consider Sarah Fielding's work in connection or comparison with her brother's, as in Gary Gautier's "Henry and Sarah Fielding on Romance and Sensibility"; others speculate about the implications of both writers' use of the theme of brother-sister incest within their works, as Martin C. Battestin and Terri Nickel have in their respective articles. Only Sara Gadeken explores this work in its own right at any length in her article "Managing and Marketing Value in Sarah Fielding's *History of the Countess of Dellwyn*," where she discusses the power available to women in the novel as consumers of goods. Several critics have discussed the importance of the body within Sarah Fielding's *David Simple* novels. Elizabeth Kubek undertakes feminist psychoanalytic criticism in her book chapter "Speaking Pictures, Magic Mirrors: Illustration and the Limits of Signification," where she argues that the feminized, grotesque bodies presented in the *David Simple* novels display connections to the Kristevan chora, or semiotic realm, and point to the abject and rejection of the "monstrous mother" (422). James Kim focuses on Sarah Fielding's creation of a style that he terms "sentimental irony," arguing that she develops and uses this form in *David Simple* as a means of providing readers with a means of coping with the market-value focus of early modernity. Carolyn Woodward has perhaps produced the greatest number of works focusing

and other women writers such as Eliza Haywood who were immensely popular during the eighteenth century, it is Henry Fielding who draws the great majority of critical attention, though it was his sister who produced the greater number of novels. I believe it is important to bring Sarah Fielding to the fore as a writer who uses the motif of the gouty man to complicate the conservative conduct book for women by investigating and critiquing the class system that encourages and enables over-consumption among the upper classes. The novel seems to express latent anxieties about a potential epidemic of over-consumption among Britons of all stations. Such a system of over-consumption, Fielding seems to suggest via the representation of the Earl of Dellwyn, is both morally bankrupt and unsustainable and may lead to a diseased British body politic.

The Earl of Dellwyn's decaying, diseased body may itself serve as Fielding's critique of the classist structure of Georgian Britain that encourages accumulation of wealth and over-consumption to the point of surfeit. Nonetheless, descriptions of the earl's past and current motivations remain detached overall; he is described with the ironic style characteristic of Sarah Fielding, but readers are not privy to his internal struggles and motivations in the way that those of Charlotte or even Mr. Lucum are revealed. The Earl's role as a figure representing what Felicity Nussbaum refers to as "national […] interests and anxieties" (Nussbaum 58) is suggested by Fielding's preface to the novel, which indicates that its purpose is to demonstrate a moral to her readers by "displaying the natural Tendency of Virtue towards the Attainment of Happiness; and, on

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on Sarah Fielding, including "Jane Collier, Sarah Fielding, and the Motif of Tormenting," "Who Wrote *The Cry*? A Fable for our Times," and, most recently, "The Modern Figure of the Author: Sarah Fielding and the Case of the Histories of Some of the Penitents of the Magdalen House." Despite the merit of these works, none focuses on the importance of disease and the body within *The Countess of Dellwyn*, a lack my project addresses.

the contrary, that Misery is the unavoidable Consequence of vicious Life" (*CD* 3). The preface contends that

> the mind, under the influence of any indulged vicious passion, is of itself essentially unhappy […] as truly as the body is unhealthy while it labors under any distemper whatever, for virtue is certainly the strength of the mind, as health is visibly the cause of the vigor of the body, and the soul is as much defeated by vice as the body is by a fever (*CD* 12).

The earl's "indulged vicious passions" are evidently lust, selfishness, and immoderation in consumption, which have brought him to a state of disease in both body and soul evidenced by his gout.

This comparison between body and mind alluded to in the novel's preface demonstrates the eighteenth-century belief in the connection between a person's character and body, a connection that is demonstrated most notably within the novel by the grotesque figure Lord Dellwyn. What I suggest, however, despite Fielding's ostensible focus in the introduction on promoting a universal ethical system that is pertinent to all classes, is that she assesses and comments upon the British system that favors the decadent aristocratic patriarchy, suggesting that it would taint and corrupt other classes who look to emulate this group in their fashions and manner of living. The earl has lived a life of intemperance and over-consumption, which are revealed to be the reason for his gout and host of other bodily ailments. The novel relies on readers' familiarity with representations of these ailments and the characteristics and the debates those conditions implicitly voice about the perceived values and behaviors of the aristocracy. The shared cultural consciousness demonstrated by the earl's display of the traits so commonly

depicted within Georgian graphic satire (intemperance in consumption of food and drink, lust, and impotence) suggests the possibility of a sense of rising dissatisfaction with the system that privileges the aristocracy. Fielding's novel may offer readers a site through which to develop a sense of community based on a common feeling of anxiety caused by these perceived modes of class-specific consumption habits and their damaging effect on the body politic at large.

Charlotte's disastrous encounter with this class of over-consumers begins when the earl sees her in another person's house and lusts after her, indicating his propensity toward sexual over-consumption and self-indulgence; his sexual desires set into motion the series of events that ultimately lead to her ruin. The earl's position as the initiator of Charlotte's ruin within the novel is central to the plot and yet, interestingly, his character ultimately remains undeveloped. He apparently schemes with Charlotte's father to convince her that wealth and position are the highest attainment she can hope for and therefore she should marry him, yet readers are initially aware of his machinations only through deduction, as the third-person limited perspective of the narrator does not allow the reader access to the personal interactions between Mr. Lucum and the Earl of Dellwyn. Charlotte at first refuses Lord Dellwyn's offer of marriage, calling such a match "prostitution" (*CD* 31), which suggests Fielding's own radical critique of such marital arrangements that were common in the eighteenth century. Her refusal displeases Mr. Lucum, as he has come to an understanding with Lord Dellwyn about some possible future employment at court the earl can arrange for him. Soon after Charlotte's refusal, her father takes her to London with him to set his schemes in motion; indeed, "Mr. *Lucum* had not been long conveyed, in Fancy, to *St. James's*, before he determined

to convey the heavier Part, his Person, also thither" (*CD* 31). In his quest for political power and economic gain, Mr. Lucum views and uses his daughter as a valuable asset to dispose of to the highest bidder, the one who can offer him the most advantageous bargain. While the Lucums are gentry and live in a seemingly comfortable manner, Mr. Lucum's desire for political advancement and association with the very highest members of British society demonstrates the irresistible pull of the privilege enjoyed by the aristocracy upon those below them in station.

It is here in the gay, fashionable world of London society that the young Charlotte's gentle nature is perverted and she is taught to value status and material goods above all else, particularly the clothes and jewels of her friend and relation Lady Fanny Fashion, in favor of the sober, more wholesome pleasures she was once used to while living a retired country life. Lord Dellwyn and Mr. Lucum's schemes to convince Charlotte to marry the earl reveal deep reverse-psychological tactics while also suggesting the corruptive nature of blind allegiance to the aristocracy; Mr. Lucum appears to drop his case of persuading his daughter to marry the earl while at the same time having Lord Dellwyn frequently over to dine and visit him while he resides in London, all the while professing that Charlotte may or may not preside over his social affairs as hostess as she chooses. He gives the illusion that he accepts her choice, that she has agency in making decisions regarding her future, though this is only a ploy. The two men then concoct a story that the earl is engaged to Lady Fanny in order to make Charlotte jealous so she will agree to marriage with the earl. They have planted the seeds of envy, greed, and pride in Charlotte, and those seeds take root and begin to spread through her own moral constitution as a parasitic plant might overtake a garden, stifling

and killing all that is natural and good within her and leaving nothing but dead things in its wake.

All the while, Lady Fanny Fashion never mentions plans of matrimony with the earl, though she and Charlotte are intimate friends, suggesting that the engagement is merely a farce designed to bait Charlotte. The narrator insinuates that this is indeed the case when Charlotte finally agrees to the marriage, noting "Miss *Lucum's* Mind was too much engrossed by Pleasure to make room for Reflexion, or she would have perceived, that, if Lord *Dellwyn* was really engaged to Lady *Fanny Fashion*, as he had given her sufficient Reason to conclude, he must necessarily now act a most dishonourable Part" (*CD* 47). The use of the subordinate conjunction "if" in this instance suggests that Charlotte has fallen for a ruse. Charlotte is too caught up in the possibilities of her new rank to realize that she has been, in modern terminology, "played." She does not consider circumstances objectively nor contemplate the consequences of her actions, namely that she would be betraying her friend by entering into the engagement and that her intended is a scoundrel if he has indeed jilted another woman. She is so socially inexperienced that she does not understand that she and the earl will both be censured by society if Lord Dellwyn were truly engaged to Lady Fanny and broke things off to marry Charlotte. Instead, the calculations of Mr. Lucum and the earl have paid off, and Charlotte has utterly abandoned her formerly strong principles in exchange for the earl's wealth, a coronet, and the title of Countess. Fielding suggests that the allegiance toward rank and wealth Charlotte has learned from her father, the earl, and her fashionable London acquaintances has caused this once-virtuous, simple young woman's moral constitution to suffer a staggering blight from which she will never recover. With her

engagement and the commencement of more intimate associations with the earl, Charlotte's values become irreparably altered, further insinuating that the nature of over-consumption is infectious.

Despite the underhanded dealings Lord Dellwyn seems to have been privy to and a part of in his quest to obtain Charlotte as his wife, none of those machinations are actually revealed in chronological order as they happen within the story. It is only much later, after the earl and Charlotte have been married for some time, that he confesses how he and her father created this elaborate ruse as a means of convincing her to become his countess (*CD* 57). The earl's constant presence at the Lucum home and his conspiracy in the story that he is engaged to Lady Fanny (even going so far as to ask Charlotte to serve as bridesmaid for the other woman) were all part of the plot of deceiving and manipulating her; he is an active partner to Mr. Lucum. In fact, because of the power differential between the two men, with the earl holding considerably more status and cultural capital than Mr. Lucum, one might reasonably conclude that he was the instigator of the plan, despite Charlotte's own conviction that he was only a "humble instrument" to carry out her father's scheme (*CD* 57). He helps engineer Charlotte's entrapment, yet throughout all of those events Fielding provides little in the way of character development for him. It is his body rather than his personality that is most significant in the text because of the moral and social decay brought about by over-consumption that it represents.

The earl's body may thereby serve as a warning toward men of the upper classes about the grave effects of vast over-consumption. Fielding describes Lord Dellwyn as a decaying man of sixty-three who is "laboring under a complication of diseases,"

including gout, that were brought about by "a luxurious and intemperate manner of wasting the pleasant bloom […] of life" (*CD* 21). The earl's maladies, particularly his gout, are apparently the result of his own excessive habits, which reinforces popular eighteenth-century notions about the cause of the disease; during his youth he "gave a loose to every gratification that either his inclination or his whims could suggest" (*CD* 25). The earl has been in possession of his fortune from the age of twenty-two, when his father passed away "of the Effects of a violent Surfeit" (*CD* 24). A surfeit is an illness caused by excessive eating and/or drinking, which demonstrates the previous earl's own intemperance ("surfeit"). The present earl's own pattern of over-consumption as confirmed via his gout suggests that his lack of temperance and moderation is hereditary, part of a way of living that has been passed down from previous generations. This suggestion points to the sickness that Fielding sees as inherent to the aristocracy: their legacy is wealth, decadence, and disease rather than the honor and nobility their titles are supposed to indicate. Over-consumption seems to be a moral inheritance among this class. The problematic system of heredity exemplified in this passage demonstrates Fielding's criticism of the moral and physiological diseases affecting the constitution's social form (and thus the entire body politic) that are caused and perpetuated by the system of class privilege that structures Great Britain.

The present earl indeed follows the example of excess set forth by his father, particularly with regard to his gustatory and sexual appetites. The gout that the earl suffers from is apparently the result of his own gluttony and his ability to obtain purine-rich foodstuffs and alcohol. Likewise, the earl has "destroyed his health by riotous living" (*CD* 25) and "destroy[ed] the Peace of his own mind, by all manner of iniquities" (*CD*

25). His own constitution has been wrecked by "riotous" living, indicating that he has engaged in excessive, wanton behaviors characteristic of men of his station such as drinking, gambling, and visiting prostitutes. That he has committed any manner of "iniquities," or sins and acts of wickedness, seems to confirm sexual excess as well as mere overeating and drinking, as he has "arriv[ed] at real and lasting Pain, through the Road of […] momentary Pleasures" (*CD* 25). That he is said to pursue these pleasures suggests that this is his occupation, just as one might pursue medicine or the law as a career. His "work" as a man of the aristocracy was to lead a life of idleness and self-gratification, which would eventually result in his diseased bodily condition. All such pleasurable activities the earl is presumed to have indulged in, such as eating food and drinking spirits, are temporary, though their immediate effects can be considerably longer than momentary, particularly those of alcohol, from which a person can remain intoxicated for hours. Sexual pleasures, however, are certainly only momentary; once the sex act is complete and orgasm achieved, the pleasure is over. The diseases that result from the Earl of Dellwyn's "occupation" of seeking luxury and enjoyment may be seen to inform an important part of the inheritance of the ruling classes. This inheritance, Fielding indicates, is a tradition of over-consumption and dissipation that results in the diseased condition of the aristocratic body. *The Countess of Dellwyn* suggests that, because of this habitual over-consumption and as a result of the leading role of the nobility within British society, the constitution of the nation might become diseased in turn.

Ironically, the earl spreads his "disease" of greed and over-consumption to Charlotte in an effort to institute a self-reform. Despite his age and poor bodily condition,

the Earl of Dellwyn decides that his declining years will be made happier by living soberly in the presence of a "virtuous young wife" (*CD* 26). His decision to marry is brought about by his encountering Charlotte, "a fair Object he had accidentally beheld," (*CD* 26) in the house of another gentleman. He sees this young woman, lusts after her, and decides to make her his wife. Ignoring the impropriety of such a match, the Earl pursues her as a hound would a fox, just as in the artwork depicted in the drawing *An Assembly of Old Bachelors*, which I discuss in Chapter 3. There, as in the earl's case, old, decrepit, diseased men plan to hunt down young wives. His pursuit of Charlotte as a trophy to be chased and captured is further emphasized during the marriage ceremony, where he "pronounced his assent to take to wife his destined prey" (*CD* 22) and during which his shaking, palsied hand drops the wedding ring, "the gilded Chain," three times (*CD* 22). That Fielding refers to the troth ring as a chain signifies, among other disparate things, the way in which Charlotte has been ensnared by the earl, just as an animal might be by a hunter.

Also, significantly, the chain is described as "gilded," not gold. Gilding refers to the process of covering an object with a thin layer of gold, thereby giving the appearance that said object is made of pure gold when it is in fact not ("gilded"). This is not to say that Charlotte has been given an impure ring; doubtless it is of costly, pure gold befitting the earl's station and wealth. However, the nature of the marriage itself, the way in which both parties entered into it for secret, selfish reasons and with dishonesty on the earl's part, is encapsulated with this reference to the ring being "gilded." Charlotte and her new husband each seem to have an idea that their marriage will bring about the lives they desire, but they soon find that their expectations were false, just as gilded objects prove

false in their value because only the outside layer is actually gold. The ring's description may even be read as an allegorical allusion to the aristocracy the earl is a representative of: while this class may be looked upon as the best and brightest of society, upon closer examination its value is only at the surface-level. Ultimately, the symbolism of the ring suggests, the values represented by the aristocracy are empty and false.

The Earl of Dellwyn's desire for Charlotte is also based solely on appearances, and the predatory way in which he pursues her, despite the considerable age difference between them, exhibits the trope of excessive lust or venery so often associated with the gouty man in the visual culture and graphic satire of the era. His need for a virtuous young wife and his obsession with obtaining Charlotte as his countess suggests that he hopes that association with these characteristics will then transfer them to his own weak, aged person. Despite his wealth and station, he has obviously been unable to procure a wife of his own class who fits his standards of beauty and purity, suggesting perhaps that the moral decay he demonstrates is common among ladies of the aristocracy. Charlotte, though of the gentry rather than aristocracy, is from a good family and knows the customs of polite society. She is sure, the earl probably thinks, not to embarrass him with gauche behavior at balls and assemblies. Additionally, her youth and comparative naivety give the Earl of Dellwyn an advantage in their "courtship" by allowing him to dupe her; the Lucum family's station is key in providing the earl with social capital to use as leverage with Mr. Lucum in the marriage plot. He seems to believe that marrying a young woman from the country whose beauty and grace are so exceptional as to be unparalleled in London society will also improve his personal and social life. In modern parlance,

Charlotte is the ultimate "trophy wife" for the earl. She has become the gilding concealing his decrepitude from himself and, he hopes, from society as a whole.

The extent of the earl's decrepitude is further alluded to when the narrator refers to the desirability of achieving a respectable status in old age by living a virtuous life as "a consummation devoutly to be wished," as Hamlet says (*CD* 23). The hope of achieving respectability has escaped the Earl of Dellwyn in the winter of his life because of his wild youth and debauched middle age; he has failed to "consummate" this ideal of living peacefully and respectably in his declining years. His failure to consummate this life-goal and Fielding's choice of the term itself then suggests his failure at another important consummation, that of his nuptials. He is, after all, old and in very poor health; he can barely stand on his own and has to be conveyed from place to pace in a gaudy reclining wheelchair, so the likelihood of his being able to perform sexually seems pretty slim. Fielding's portrayal of gout then not only links the disease with excessive, improper lust but also, conversely, to impotence, as is also demonstrated by such graphics I discuss in Chapter 3 as *Gouty Husband and Young Wife* and *An Assembly of Old Bachelors*. Like the gouty men pictured in those works, the earl is portrayed as an ineffective head of household. He is unable to govern Charlotte's behavior, and later he is under the complete control of his new wife, the housekeeper. His role as powerful patriarch remains ultimately unfulfilled. If we read him as a metaphorical representation of his class, his impotence, both in terms of sexual inability as well as personal ineffectiveness, could latently suggest that the nobility may increasingly be perceived as ineffective leaders during the Georgian era.

Fielding hereby subtly questions the patriarchal power structure in *The Countess of Dellwyn*. She uses the earl's ineffective governance of his household, coupled with his bodily infirmity, to provide a metaphorical analogue for a large segment of the aristocratic male hierarchy. Decadence and over-consumption have led to a sick society, just as they have resulted in a diseased body for the earl. That he cannot practice moderation to maintain a healthy constitution might suggest that the nobility as a whole is unable to regulate its consumption and must also suffer from the ensuing diseases of both a physical and metaphorical nature.

The earl's self-indulgence is further evidenced when he is suffering from attacks of the gout shortly after he and Charlotte are married, during which he at first only abuses servants and nurses with frequent bouts of temper and petulance as a means of proving "that he had the Power of commanding himself when he pleased, and only vented his Passions when, and on whom, he thought proper," (*CD* 53) which is, at this point, not his wife. But eventually he turns on Charlotte to "vent his spleen" (*CD* 70). During a gout attack while they are in Bristol, where they have gone for the sake of her health, he becomes irritated that she is going out and enjoying herself during his indisposition, so he forbids her to go anywhere and insists that she attend upon him constantly, which of course causes further decline in her health and spirits. His decree makes "Entrance under his roof her absolute abhorrence" (*CD* 68), and he also begins casting up other women to her who are more "dutiful" to their husbands, such as the paragon of conjugal faithfulness and obedience, Mrs. Saunders, which certainly does not improve Charlotte's temper or make his presence more desirable to her.

The earl's temperament eventually makes him entirely unbearable to Charlotte. After having to spend much time with the gouty, grouchy earl, both at his home and in Bristol, Charlotte grows to despise her husband, his presence and his person, so much that her health and spirits begin to decline noticeably. The earl actually thinks she is dying from galloping consumption. And, in a sense, she is. She is being consumed by the earl's demands upon her for his entertainment and gratification, which cause her essentially to begin to waste away. She, the "object" of the Earl of Dellwyn's desires, is being used up and worn down by him, so much so that she thinks to herself at one point in response to his inquiries about her health, "my Lord, you are my disease" (*CD* 60). Fielding has used the character of the earl to personify gout: he is a worrying, tormenting pain that Charlotte cannot escape. The earl/gout is draining Charlotte both physically and emotionally and tainting her body and mind by association with him. Charlotte is thereby fully degraded to the earl's level when she engages in a sexual relationship with another man; she, too, has given way to sexual immoderation. The narrator indicates that she is totally corrupted through her association with the diseased aristocratic body of the earl. In many ways, the literary depiction of the earl and Charlotte thus comes to echo the visual depictions of the adulterous wife or unfaithful mistress to the gouty old man so common during the Georgian era.

Lord Dellwyn does not or will not understand why his company is repulsive to Charlotte; he judges her through the lens of his own avarice and so reasons that she "owes" him for making her a countess and therefore must give him her love and affection as a duty. His internal monologue, the only true glimpse we are allowed into his thoughts throughout the novel, reads thus:

> Have I raised a young Woman of plebeian Rank to almost the highest Sphere in this Country? Have I, for her Sake, connected myself with her Father when he was despised and abandoned by the rest of Mankind? Have I been so profuse to her Pleasures, that she might have spent my Fortune at her Will? And for all these great Advantages on her Side, I have requested only her Love and Affection, and that she should delight in my Company. Small Favours surely, in comparison of those I have conferred on her (*CD* 72).

Eighteenth-century definitions of "plebian" suggest that the earl is being deliberately insulting in this mental soliloquy. While the word could simply refer to the non-aristocratic station of the Lucum family, it was also commonly used during the Georgian era in a derogatory fashion to mean "unsophisticated, commonplace, coarse, vulgar" ("plebian"). This statement and alternate meanings of "plebian" demonstrates the earl's snobbishness and the great value he places upon rank. He evidently equates titles with true nobility. So, while the Lucums are gentry, because they are not of noble birth, he sees them as being inherently inferior to himself, though he has certainly not demonstrated exemplary behavior at any point in the novel. The earl's attitude evidenced in this passage highlights Fielding's discreet criticism of the false values inherent within the British class system, which may subtly reflect changing Georgian attitudes toward what constitutes real gentility and nobility of character. Charlotte, though a commoner, was said to be possessed of all imaginable virtues of beauty, gentleness, and purity prior to her marriage, suggesting that personal merit is the true measure of nobility, a fairly radical sentiment in the mid-eighteenth century. This ironic comparison as indicated by the derogatory denotation of the word "plebian" suggests the alterations taking place

within the social form of the nation's constitution—a transformation that may eventually have positive ramifications but that also might cause anxiety for the majority of Britons, who have never known or probably even imagined any other social system.

After the earl divorces her for having an affair, Charlotte spends the rest of her days in infamy, an object of the scorn of many, while the earl recovers himself sufficiently to pursue matrimony again. He feels confident that he can ensnare another young woman into marriage, and eventually he does by marrying his housekeeper, another woman many years his junior. Once again he is portrayed as exhibiting excessive venery, a key trait of the gouty gentleman within popular representations of the era. The effects of these marriages also speak to the spread of over-consumption, however; both Charlotte and the housekeeper are shown to be infected by greed through their relationships with the earl. The contagious nature of over-consumption demonstrated within the novel may subtly suggest the threat that it poses for the social aspect of the constitution in the Georgian era. The expansion of the British Empire during the mid-eighteenth century, particularly the battles in India with the forces of the Nawab of Bengal and in North America as part of the Seven Years' War, resulted in the increased availability of foreign goods and products. This influx of goods, along with the rise of capitalism, led in part to the Georgian Britons embracing consumer culture in the mid-eighteenth century, which social critics and intellectuals such as Fielding may have felt was getting out of control and becoming dangerous to Britons of all classes.

With the conclusion of the novel, Fielding resumes the agenda of a typical conservative conduct book by warning women against sexual precocity and people at large against greed and over-consumption, yet throughout the remainder of the story, she

uses gout and the earl's bodily representation as a means of richly critiquing eighteenth-century British systems of class privilege imposed and upheld by a large segment of the ruling classes. The earl's gout and the decaying condition of both his body and character within *The Countess of Dellwyn* are important because they evince critiques of the habitual over-consumption thought to characterize his class. His powerful position mimics the real power of British peers during the mid-eighteenth century, and his illness works as a metaphor that demonstrates concerns that Fielding and others may have felt regarding the degeneracy of upper-class gentlemen, the *de facto* rulers of Great Britain. The decay of his body speaks to social anxieties about over-consumption and its effect upon the political, economic, and social forms of the unwritten constitution that structures the nation.

The figure of the earl is also important in its relation to the grotesque. The earl is a member of the aristocracy, which places him in the realm of the metaphorically "high, spiritual, ideal, [and] abstract" (Bakhtin 19). Most regular Britons would probably have never come into contact with aristocrats; they might have glimpsed them at a distance, but these figures would most likely have remained abstract ideals for commoners representing wealth, education, and possibly even valor, as titles were originally conferred upon those who had distinguished themselves in the service of their monarch. His character, with Fielding's description that focuses on negative bodily aspects such as his palsy, toothlessness, and inability to sit or stand, is degraded from the high to the lower, material realm. Because the Earl of Dellwyn remains a flat character throughout the novel, we hear most about his corporeal complaints, which often result from his gout. Instead of learning about the earl's inner nature and motivations, the focus on his material

body renders him a grotesque object of satire. He is mocked through Fielding's ironic narrative tone for his lust toward Charlotte, his life of excess, and his bad temper and vindictiveness. Even his very person is confined to the lower realm of the earth; the narrator indicates that he is conveyed about in a wheelchair that allows him to remain almost supine, and his gout manifests in his lowest body part, the feet. Thus, he is not only a flat character important largely for his bodily representation; he is literally flat on his back throughout much of the novel.

This focus on the materiality of the earl may cause horror or discomfort at the thought of his bodily decay and eventual death, which serves as a reminder of the reader's own mortality. He is practically a corpse, a supine figure being wheeled from place to place in the manner of a modern hospital patient on a gurney. The earl's cadaverous condition renders him an aristocratic bogeyman whose body bespeaks the dangers of over-consumption. Charlotte's intimate association with him may cause additional horror—that this charming young woman is linked sexually (regardless of his potential inability to consummate the marriage) to such a person might make any reader shudder, regardless of the time period in which they live. The corporeal contrast between the corpselike earl and his bride may provoke a similar reaction to the relationships depicted in works of graphic satire such as Thomas Rowlandson's *The Comforts of High Living*, which I discuss in the previous chapter. The disparity between their bodies highlights the impropriety of the match. The relationship is on the one hand worthy of mockery: the earl essentially buys Charlotte's hand in marriage in order to gain access to her body, while she partakes in what she formerly termed prostitution to gain access to great wealth and a higher social station. His lechery and her avarice render them perhaps

even more ridiculous than the great contrast in their age and health; one might chuckle at their mutual folly. Nonetheless, any humor the novel may provoke is tempered by the tragedy of Charlotte's eventual fate. Overall, the couple's relationship depicts a tragicomedic situation that highlights the plight women like Charlotte faced in the Georgian era—being sold to the highest bidder on the marriage market or living a life of struggle as a spinster. Fielding herself knew the gravity of this struggle well, yet this novel suggests she preferred and even advocated that life to one in a loveless, degrading marriage. Fielding's representation of the earl and his relationship with his wife may inspire disgust, horror, and laughter, key elements of the grotesque. This grotesqueness may therefore subtly demonstrate widespread anxieties about the system of class privilege and the habitual over-consumption it enables that lay beneath the surface of society.

Despite the oppression that persons outside of the aristocracy experience at the hands of the Earl of Dellwyn and his ilk, Fielding's novel allows them to gain a form of political subjectivity and agency through the representation of the earl's gout. Its pervasive cultural significance provides a site where its politicized, satirical depiction is understood by readers critical of the stratified class system that characterized Great Britain during the Georgian era. Gout makes its mark on the earl and on the nation's ruling body by weakening and laming it, which may offer subtle criticisms of the social structure of the nation. Through such sentiments readers might begin to form a sense of community receptive to radical changes in the various aspects of the constitution that forms Great Britain. They are allowed a form of political subjectivity through Fielding's representations of the concerns surrounding the nearly unchecked power of the upper

classes, which many readers would probably have shared. The earl's gout allows for the quiet, subtle voicing of anti-aristocratic sentiments and ultimately suggests changing perceptions of what social class actually means (or does not mean) about a person's character. The novel, while using many of the common tropes associated with gout in its visual depictions during this time, offers a more nuanced and perhaps more radical viewpoint regarding over-consumption and its contagious impact upon the body politic. The earl's significant bodily decline and the moral corruption he is directly connected with seem more overtly critical than do the works of graphic satire featuring gouty men. The novel's representation may thus offer a model for the potential disruption of the traditional order. After all, the housekeeper, his second wife, is left with the lion's share of his fortune when he dies, a major interruption of the hereditary system of property distribution and therefore a considerable alteration to the political, economic, and social aspects of the British constitution.

Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* also ends in a state of disruption of the traditional social order. It features a gouty man who embodies a number of the characteristics associated with gout in the graphic satire of the Georgian period and thus seems to function as a critique of upper-class consumption. As with the majority of Fielding's novels, *Roderick Random* has been much neglected by critics in comparison with some of Smollett's other works, particularly *The Expeditions of Humphry Clinker,* despite its success in helping to make a literary reputation for the author. Smollett's own life as a medical professional and his knowledge of medicine and anatomy seem to have influenced his fiction in subtle yet important ways, and the squire's gout offers an indication of such influences upon his fiction. John F. Sena first suggests that medical

theory shapes Smollett's portrayal of Narcissa's aunt in *Roderick Random,* who exhibits signs of hysteria (271). Alain Morvan examines eccentricities within the novel in terms of Smollett's clinical and scientific methodology, arguing that the author presents characters' eccentricities in behavior and appearance, including bodily abnormalities and disease, with the approach of a doctor to a patient, not fetishizing the norms they are supposed to deviate from but rather "extenuat[ing] such discrepancy by simultaneously blurring the borderline between rule and transgression" (149). In this section, I carry this scholarly trend of analyzing Smollett's medical interest in the human body as a character by arguing that his representations of gout, with its metaphorical significance and accompanying value judgments, may express, at least in part, a critique of the patriarchal social and legal system that privileges the interests of the wealthy ruling classes. The grotesque body of the old judge indicates the decay and disintegration of the political and social forms of the constitution of Great Britain that are brought about by over-consumption; his decaying person metaphorically represents the potential demise of the class of people who control these aspects of British society. The possible expiration of this class, as represented by the death of Roderick's tyrannical grandfather, seems to suggest the necessity for a new social order or a considerable alteration of the current one. Smollett's critical examination of over-consumption and its impact upon the body politic of the nation uses gout to suggest that the nation is formed upon an inherently unhealthy constitution, the stratified British class system, which promises to sicken and die. Such an unsteady foundation, the novel suggests, impacts the entire population and threatens to damage perceptions of British superiority both at home and abroad.

Critics have discussed Smollett's treatment of consumption practices most within *Humphry Clinker* (1771);[21] however, Alfred Lutz argues that the respective styles of fiction in *Roderick Random,* his first novel, and *Humphry Clinker*, his last, evidence a conservative stance toward traditional modes of consumption. Lutz contends that Smollett uses the space of Scotland in particular to display his position within the "anti-luxury camp" outside of commerce (2). Indeed, both novels end with the principals ensconced on landed estates in Scotland, far away from centers of commercial trade and industry such as Glasgow. These conclusions, Lutz argues, show that "Smollett advocates the ideal of the self-sufficient landed gentleman as guarantor of an ordered society" (11). This idea of the governing body of landed aristocrats and gentry providing order and stability demonstrates prevalent social conceptions of the role of the upper-class man in ruling over and maintaining order amongst his dependents and persons of lower rank; I contend, however, that Roderick Random's grandfather, a landed, judicial figure representing the inherently flawed legal system, an extension of the political aspect of the constitution, contradicts this notion of the landed gentleman as a figure through whose body social order is enforced and maintained. Instead, the gouty body of the old gentleman (resulting from the over-consumption that led to his illness) in *Roderick Random* is ultimately the cause of a disrupted social order that must be repaired through the meritorious actions of Roderick, or Rory, as he is usually called, who represents a new system based upon exhibitions of personal quality as indicators of worthiness rather than titles and inherited wealth. This critique of the British system of class privilege

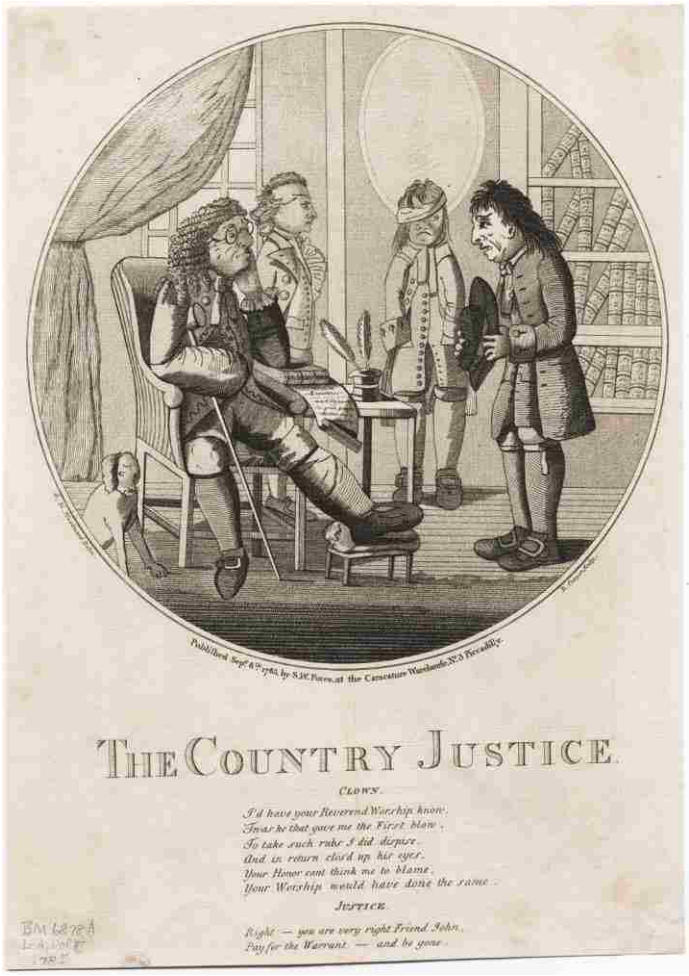
[21] *Humphry Clinker* also features a character with gout, Squire Matthew Bramble, who plays a much more prominent role in the novel than either the judge in *Roderick Random* or the earl in *The Countess of Dellwyn* does. I do not examine him in this chapter, however, because his complaints of gout are essentially a manifestation of his hypochondria rather than actual instances of the disease.

offers the possibility that Britons may be beginning to increasingly question traditional beliefs regarding the exclusive suitability of the upper classes to lead the nation and its people. The novel's outcome suggests a latent, though still persistent, desire for permanent alterations to the nation's political, economic, and social constitutions.

The old judge's role within *Roderick Random* is, as with the Earl of Dellwyn, parenthetical. This character's actions catalyze the events that cause the protagonist Rory's mother's death, his father's insanity and desertion, and Rory's own poverty and abuse as well as his misadventures depicted in the remainder of the novel, but the old man is present only throughout the first four chapters of the first volume. His action in persecuting Rory and his family is not so much action as inaction, or action by proxy in some cases. He rules through a system of hegemonic power that results from his wealth, status, and gender. He epitomizes the upper-class body of Georgian Britain, and the habitual over-consumption evidenced by his gout demonstrates the consequences of unchecked decadence upon that body and its individual constituents and the resultant effects on the entire population of Great Britain.

In his introduction to the Oxford edition of the novel, Paul-Gabriel Boucé describes *Roderick Random* as "very much of a man's book, written with men in mind" (xxv), a notion that is demonstrated at the very beginning of the novel when we meet Roderick Random's gouty grandfather, the squire-judge, who is clearly a "man's man," as it were. The old man is said to be "a gentleman of considerable fortune and influence, who had on many occasions signalized himself on behalf of his country; and was remarkable for his abilities in the law, which he exercised with great success […] particularly against beggars, for whom he had a singular aversion" (*RR* 1). The judge is

therefore marked as a wealthy man of the upper or upper-middle classes. That he is titled as "squire" also reveals his class standing; "squire" is short for "esquire," a title conferred by the Crown upon barristers, justices of the peace, and higher officer ranks in the armed services (Cannon 405). Despite this title, the squire is of course not a member of the aristocracy. Instead, he is of the landed gentry, a "gentleman" who could live entirely off of the rents from his lands (Cannon 405). As a judge or justice of the peace, the squire is at the heart of the country justice system; in most legal cases, he is able to make the sole decision as to their outcome. His diseased condition suggests the sickness of the often-corrupt British legal system that in many cases does not carry out justice at all but instead upholds class privilege and thus hinders real justice. The character of Roderick Random's grandfather conjures up the image of another corrupt, gouty judge from Cooper's 1785 graphic satire, *The Country Justice,* which I discuss in the first chapter and have reproduced below.

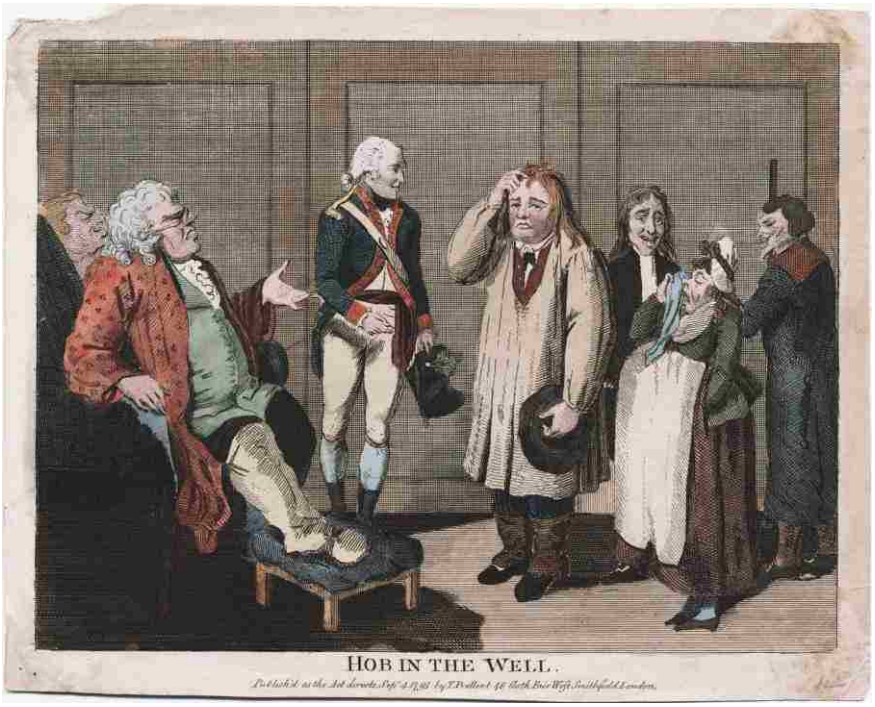


This graphic is one among many[22] that, along with the character of the squire-judge in Smollett's novel, indicates the prevalence with which the legal system and its administrators were viewed as inept or even as corruptors of justice rather than its champions. Even through this picture was published nearly forty years after *Roderick Random*, the sentiments depicted therein have remained relatively consistent over this period, suggesting that this was an ongoing problem for which a solution was slow to come, a festering sore upon the political form of the constitution that refused to heal. The judge's character represented in *Roderick Random* and his gouty condition offer an early

[22] William Hogarth's 1758 print *The Bench* is another well-known work that satirizes the legal system, particularly the inattention of judges during legal proceedings.

suggestion of the corruption, decay, and weakness of the legal system in the Georgian era., which could allow readers to begin to engage with debates around differing class ideologies regarding privilege, justice, and consumption.

The judge's flawed moral constitution is also alluded to in reference to his "singular aversion" for beggars, which indicates that he is both ungenerous and unfeeling, especially toward the poor. This descriptor conjures up the scene displayed in the 1793 picture *Hob in the Well*, where a gouty old landowner is cruelly evicting a man who cannot pay his rent, despite the fact that he has a wife who is in an advanced state of pregnancy.



The landlord's harsh actions depicted in this image echo the earlier actions of the judge in *Roderick Random,* who evicts his own son and pregnant daughter-in-law from his house. The other commonality of the two characters is gout, which suggests the long-standing association between gout and harsh, unsympathetic treatment of the needy. Both figures

serve as representatives of the landed gentry, and each of the representations offer criticism of the apparent habitual overindulgence and greed thought to characterize members of this social group. The old squire is said to be strongly opposed to the suits and interests of beggars in his legal capacity, where he is supposed to be unbiased and disinterested; however, the narrator reveals that the old gentleman is not sympathetic or even fair to these persons. His social and professional position and his having gout subtly suggest that the legal system is based on a flawed premise, as it depends largely on individual discretion and the susceptibility of many individuals to bribes. Despite the fact that the judge's title indicates justice and integrity, Smollett's portrayal of this character suggests that the political form of the British constitution, of which the legal system is a facet, is, in many cases, ineffective in providing due process for all people, particularly those who lack both wealth and high social status.

The squire's ungenerous spirit also governs his actions in his own domestic circle as well as in his professional capacity. Roderick's father, youngest son of the judge, falls in love with a poor relation who is working as housekeeper in their home. He marries her without asking permission of his father, who, upon being told of the rumors alluding to his son's secret nuptials, is "alarmed […] so much" (*RR* 1) that he summons his youngest son a few days later and tells him "it was high time he entered into the holy state of matrimony, and he had provided a match for him, to which he could in justice have no objection" (*RR* 1). The judge's words and actions here are telling, as they center on the irony of his perverted sense of justice. This summons serves as a sort of ruse by which the old man can find out the truth about his son's marital status. The old man has apparently hunted up a suitable match for his son, whom he expects to obey without

question as long as he is not already secretly married. His idea of a suitable match is obviously one who brings a fortune to the marriage, as apparently the primary objection to his housekeeper and relation is that she is poor. His greedy nature is confirmed by the revelation that he also has gout. As I have shown in this study, gout's mark upon his constitution indicates that he is complicit and actively participates in the corrupt political system that perverts justice for those who are not wealthy and well-born.

The judge's blind allegiance to rank and wealth results in his horror at the thought of his son marrying a woman who is poor and must work in service (and thus allying their house with such a person). Despite the fact that the woman in question is already a distant relative and is known for her "virtue, beauty, birth, and good sense" (*RR* 2), the judge disowns and disinherits his son, thus leaving the young couple in penury. His prejudice toward the poor and obvious preference for those who have wealth demonstrates his lack of capacity for impartiality at best and for any sympathy or feeling at worst, thus suggesting his utter unsuitability to acting as a judge or governor of any estate. He caters only to the needs of a few elite persons and therefore thwarts the purpose of the legal system. The old man is enacting the perceived ethics of his class, which suggests that Smollett uses this figure and his actions to critique the values supposedly espoused by the upper classes, particularly greed and blind allegiance to rank and wealth.

In spite of the power he holds in this capacity as patriarch of the family and landowner and head of the estate, the judge is not an active agent in enforcing his power and will, indicating his impotence, one of the tropes used frequently in Georgian graphic satire. He is old, has gout, and apparently requires that people come to him in his home to

seek his approval, advice, or favors. The villagers come to him for his judgment, his family gathers around him in his home, and he sits in his chair to watch his laborers in the fields, all of which indicate his passivity. This passivity is further demonstrated by the fact that his only actions are reactions, negative responses to the doings of others. His power seems to lie in reaction to events through denial, as when he refuses to recognize his son's marriage to the housekeeper or when he rejects his daughter-in-law's pleading for a reconciliation to alleviate the suffering of herself and her husband.

In this particular scene, the young woman, who is in an advanced state of pregnancy, begs for leniency from the judge, but the old man is unyielding and dismisses her mercilessly. His reply is to tell her only that the "indiscretion" by her and his son had "compelled him to make a vow" (*RR* 3) that he cannot now undo. In this instance he places the responsibility for his immovability onto the vow itself, thus deflecting his own blame in the situation. The vow becomes the active party in his response to his daughter-in-law; he has effectively shifted the focus from himself to his vow, as one does in the course of making a sentence shift from active to passive voice. The old judge emphasizes the vow as an obstacle in and of itself, despite the fact that he himself made it. This deflection of responsibility for the misery and suffering of his son and daughter-in-law emphasizes the negative means and passivity through which the judge exercises his power and suggests his ineffectiveness as an agent in his own right. The judge's refusal of his daughter-in-law causes her to become so upset she goes into an early labor within the home, where she subsequently delivers Roderick. An old servant takes the young woman to a drafty garret room and saves both her life and that of her child; after three days the judge sends word that he wants them out of his house and thereby also dismisses

the servant-woman for assisting them. His unfeeling, selfish nature in his dealings with his son and daughter-in-law, coupled with his passivity and impotence, is then only heightened in his treatment of the young Rory, the hero of this picaresque novel.

Rory's mother dies soon after his birth through want of necessary comforts and attention, and his father "remained six weeks deprived of his senses" (*RR* 4). Rory's father disappears when he is still a baby, and his grandfather relents to a degree, sending the infant Rory to a nurse and then allowing him to live in his house. He sends for his senseless son to be brought to him, but the grieving man disappears soon after. The old judge professes himself sorry for his treatment of his son, yet the narrator Rory indicates that he is actually not sorry; he is only worried that his character will suffer in the neighborhood (*RR* 4). His action here is again mostly reaction; the baby Rory is brought to him by the people his parents were lodging with, rendering him the recipient or indirect object of the baby. He directs the infant be sent to nurse and he sends for his son—both actions are only action through proxy. He neither takes the baby anywhere nor actually goes and fetches his grieving, senseless son, further indicating that the old man's power lies within the hegemony created through his class, wealth, and position as patriarch and landowner rather than through any action of his own. In terms of real action or physical power, the judge is lacking, which presents him as an impotent figure, confined within the home/private sphere. Conversely, however, despite his inactivity, because of the system of class privilege he benefits from, the judge can exercise considerable power by commanding others. With the old man's representation, Smollett emphasizes the irony inherent in the class-stratified constitution of Great Britain—those who do least have the greatest power.

The healthier alternative to the judge's exercise of hegemonic power offered by a system based on merit is represented by Rory, whose mixed-class parentage seems to suggest that Smollett may reject unquestioned allegiance to inherited rank and wealth. The diseased nature of the system that the old squire-judge represents is further exemplified as the boy grows older. When Rory is about six years old, his grandfather sends him to a village school "of which he had been dictator time out of mind" (*RR* 5). The use of the term "dictator" further reflects the judge's unyielding nature and may suggest the rigidity of the customs mandated by a society whose structure E. P. Thompson argues is deeply embedded in cultural traditions and institutions that promote and preserve class consciousness and divisions (10). Rory's grandfather again exercises negative power when he does not pay for his grandson's board or school fees or buy him clothes, books, or other necessaries. Instead, the schoolmaster teaches the boy for free out of fear of the old man, who relies on the hegemonic power of his status and wealth to speak and work for him while he remains inactive. Because of his grandfather's neglect, the boy's condition is "ragged and contemptible" among his peers (*RR* 5). When Rory learns to write, he sends letters to his grandfather requesting the things he needs, and the old judge reacts in anger. He "sen[ds] for [Rory's] master, and chid[es] him severely for bestowing such pains on [his] education" (*RR* 5), railing at the schoolmaster for teaching the boy to write. In essence, Rory's grandfather here objects to his grandson becoming an active figure who supplicates him for the materials necessary to his health, education, and upkeep. The old man's reaction may suggest his resistance to the new, more active class Rory represents. Again, though, the old man deflects responsibility onto another person. Rather than writing back to Rory himself and denying him his requests, he chooses the

course of least action by sending for the schoolmaster and scolding him for teaching the boy to write. The teacher promises to do his best to prevent the boy from learning or writing any more, and the old judge's will is done, all without his leaving his home.

The narrator Rory also soon reveals that his grandfather is laid up with gout at this time, which doubtless contributes to his inaction. His gout would prevent much locomotion, and this may be why he continually requires people to come to him, though his status and demanding nature also certainly contribute to this arrangement. The lack of movement on the old judge's part seems to subtly reflect the nature of the gout itself, as it was characterized by the buildup of uric acid crystals in the joints, which causes swelling and additional stagnation within the sufferer's body. The old man's gout and the inflexibility of his nature also further establish him as part of an outdated system. Indeed, the way in which his body retains matter while he focuses on gaining more wealth even reflects the waning mercantilist system: his actions mirror those of a nation attempting to gain a positive trade balance by minimizing output of capital and maximizing profit, as when he decides to marry Rory's father to a "suitable" bride—one who brings a sizeable dowry to bolster his own coffers—and behaves in a miserly fashion toward Rory himself. As with the mercantile economy, the squire-judge seems to live life as a zero-sum game in which he holds onto and gains as much wealth and power as he can while at the same time continually trying to get the best of other parties as a means of maintaining superiority. His actions and "singular aversion" toward the poor and needy, among whom are his own family members, reflect such a philosophy: by keeping them downtrodden and emphasizing and frequently demonstrating his own power, he is able to continually gain and maintain a greater share of cultural capital. In essence he is a hoarder of wealth,

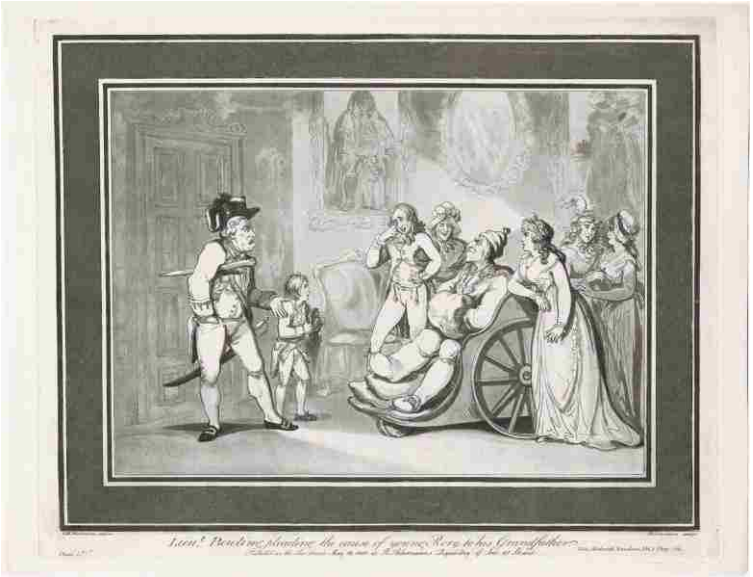
power, and even the food and drink he has over-consumed, as those substances, in the form of uric acid, never leave his body. Like mercantilism, which was declining as the nation's primary economic system in the mid-eighteenth century, the squire is also on his way to fading out of life.

Even upon being called to account for his actions by Rory's uncle, Lieutenant Bowling, the judge remains steadfast in his resolve against the progeny of his son's union with the housekeeper and is therefore still inactive. He offers to set the boy up as an apprentice in some trade, but the lieutenant demurs, feeling that Rory has much more talent and promise than to enter trade.[23] The uncle's attitude presents a paradox regarding his beliefs about class. On the one hand, his refusal to allow Rory to become an apprentice indicates his belief in a meritocracy—he feels that Rory's promising abilities will allow him to rise in station, and thus he must pursue a different, more respectable course in life. At the same time, however, the lieutenant's aversion toward Rory entering trade seems to reveal the same sort of beliefs about class determining the inherent value of a person that are held by the squire himself, despite the connections to trade shared by many upper-class families. In any case, Rory's uncle ultimately wants the best opportunity for his nephew and is not afraid to stand up to the squire, suggesting that any beliefs he holds about the importance of class deference do not extend to countenancing injustice toward his nephew.

An 1800 print drawn by Rowlandson depicts this very scene in which Lieutenant Bowling appears before the old judge, who is surrounded by his granddaughters and his heir, all of whom form a human barricade around the old man's wheelchair. In this

[23] As I explain in the introduction to this project, while tradespeople could include persons such as doctors or solicitors, whose position was respectable as members of the lower gentry, the squire seems to be indicating that he will apprentice Rory into one of the lower trades requiring manual labor.

rendering of the scene, both of the old man's feet are swollen with gout, suggesting that this artist's interpretation of the novel indicates that he has over-consumed to an even greater degree than most other gout sufferers depicted in graphic satire. The squire is thus distinguished as an extreme over-consumer.



In comparison with the clothing worn by his cousins, who have clearly inherited their grandfather's taste for fine things, young Rory is attired in clothing that appears patched and rather ragged. He holds his hat in his hands respectfully in his grandfather's presence, in contrast to the haughty poses of his cousins. Rory's uncle, Lieutenant Bowling, appears to be an active, upright figure. His straight posture reflects his military background and his figure is lean and muscular. His capable appearance is presented as a sharp contrast to the impotent one of Rory's grandfather.

The old judge is represented as a weak, incapable character, and his connection with the legal system of Great Britain suggests that it, too, is weak, corrupt, and ineffective. However, both entities wield considerable power, so therefore gout's effects upon men of the upper classes create a paradox in which their social power is potentially

undermined by physical weakness. Rory's grandfather embodies this very contradiction. The squire is in a wheelchair, which indicates that he is unable to walk, and his hands are stuffed inside a muff, which suggests that his age and inactivity fail to keep them warm. While he is a man whose position is elevated within society and who represents the high, noble profession of the law and by extension the political form of the constitution of Great Britain, he is degraded within both this graphic and in the novel itself.

The squire's decaying, decrepit body is on the verge of death, demonstrating his physical weakness and impotence in spite of his symbolic power. In this way he functions as a grotesque figure: the power of the hegemony he and the legal system as a whole represent are undermined by their bodily weaknesses. This is not to say that Smollett is suggesting a revolutionary overthrow of the hierarchical class system and a total reformation of the British constitution; instead, the body serve as a warning to those at the top of the hierarchy that they must remain healthy (both physically and morally) in order to ensure that the nation remains healthy in turn. In the judge's case, his gout renders him weak both physically and morally (because he was unable to practice moderation in his consumption practices), yet his position, wealth, and legal authority ensure that he maintains considerable power over those below him in station. The squire-judge becomes an inverted figure in this way, and inversion is a strong indicator of grotesqueness. Gout therefore inverts the traditional order of class privilege and status and instead renders the sufferer weak and impotent. If we read the judge as a representative of the legal system, then one might conclude that it, too, has been weakened and rendered impotent because of men such as the squire and the corrupt judge in *The Country Justice*: their unjust actions degrade the legal system and, by extension,

the explicitly written constitution that structures the nation and its government. If the carriage of justice is determined by the wealth and class of those involved in a legal dispute, as the words of the judge and descriptions of the squire's behavior suggest, then the nation's laws and policies are always already undermined for those outside of the upper classes, and Britain is not in fact the superior nation it prides itself on being. The deformity of the judge's body caused by gout and the inherent deformity of the political constitution his diseased body subtly implies may inspire horror among readers. If the world of order and legality is disrupted by over-consumption, what will be the fate of the body politic, the novel seems to ask. This uncertainty and horror in the face of the unknown, key elements of the grotesque, seem to reflect the presence of strong yet subconscious anxieties about the diseased political form of the constitution resulting from over-consumption and its potential effects upon the nation.

The extremity of the judge's over-consumption and its impact upon his constitution is fully realized when the narrator-Rory tells readers that his grandfather's death was drawing near, as his gout had "mounted from his legs to his stomach" (*RR* 12). This focus on the lower sphere of the body again ties the old man to the grotesque. Bakhtin explains that depictions of the grotesque focus on the lower parts of the body, particularly those that relate to consumption of food and drink and reproduction such as the belly and reproductive organs. That the gout was said to have moved into the stomach is symbolically significant also; gout originated in the stomach via the sufferer's over-consumption, so the cyclical nature of the grotesque in terms of disease, decay, death, and rebirth is demonstrated by gout's return to its supposed origins. This diagnosis might seem odd to modern readers, but gout's connection to the stomach is historical. Some

physicians even thought gout was caused by an inflammation in the stomach that moved into the limbs ("The Gout" 73). In advanced stages of the disease, they believed, gout could move from the limbs back into the stomach and internal organs, which was then fatal to the victim ("The Gout" 73). Because of its attribution to gout, the judge's demise is finally linked directly back to his over-consumption.

With the death of Rory's grandfather, Smollett may be offering a warning that the over-consumption of the class of people the squire represents will lead to their demise and the birth of a new Britain with a stronger constitution not based upon hereditary wealth and privilege but upon merit. The fates of all the deserving characters are neatly wrapped up at the close of the novel, with all good persons getting their rewards and the bad ones being punished. Rory and his father, with whom he is reunited in his picaresque adventures, make their fortunes and ultimately purchase the squire's estate from the obnoxious, fox-hunting heir, who has squandered his fortune by hunting and living large. The conclusion suggests that their endeavors will meet with great success as a result of their personal merits, though it is unclear if they will change any principles and practices of management, though it is implied that they are kind and generous landlords, in contrast to their predecessors. They fall back to the traditional lifestyle of landed gentlemen-farmers, but their ability to buy and run the hereditary estate is itself a perversion of the traditional social order—Rory's father is a younger son who was disinherited, so he was not the presumed heir at any time. The social order Smollett points to with the conclusion of his novel is that of a moderated hierarchy that includes a strong element of meritocracy—the deserving Rory and Narcissa (and Strap and all of the other noble characters) are rewarded and the spoiled, lazy, rotten young squire squanders his

inheritance. The old judge's direct heir and favorite proves himself unworthy of managing the estate and stepping into the role of manager. This conclusion points to Smollett's radical commentary upon the system of primogeniture—he subtly suggests that the heirs of the gentry and aristocracy, upper class men such as the old squire, are unfit to carry on the expectations set forth by "traditional social order." Smollett may even leave open the possibility that an entirely new social order is necessary. Much as the squire began to decay and suffer bodily, the novel suggests that this very social form of the constitution is grounded upon an unhealthy foundation made worse through over-consumption. Such disintegration promises to continue with subsequent generations as the disease of over-consumption becomes more firmly entrenched within the social aspect of the constitution. Smollett's representation of the upper-class gouty man within *The Adventures of Roderick Random* suggests the need for the establishment of a new social order that is based upon individual merit, regardless of birth order or adherence to class norms.

These gouty upper-class men, the Earl of Dellwyn and the nameless old squire grandfather in *Roderick Random,* provide the means through which Sarah Fielding and Tobias Smollett engage with complex debates about the unjust class systems the country's unwritten constitution was based upon. Gout's metaphorical significance allows middle- and lower-class perspectives to achieve recognition and agency; these depictions of gout allow a previously disenfranchised subject to gain a form of recognition. Through the potential articulation of such voices in the Georgian novel, readers may begin to develop a sense of community resistant to traditional class privilege and the perceived habitual over-consumption that such a system promotes. While

Fielding's and Smollett's treatments of these characters differ with regard to their positionality and roles in the novels, their functions as representatives of the ruling classes point to the decline and fall of this governing body. The Earl of Dellwyn ends his days the chattel of his housekeeper; he loses his agency entirely and slips into a state of infantilism. Charlotte, too, is punished for her transgressions, among which is over-consumption, by living out the remainder of her life in infamy. Fielding's vision of a new social order deals mostly with the negative effects of over-consumption, but it is clear through the happy endings of deserving minor characters that she advocates for a universal system of morality and moderation. In *Roderick Random* Smollett takes a more radical approach when the old squire grandfather's plans for his estate are ultimately thwarted through the over-consumption of his heir, who presumably learned such ways from his gouty grandfather. The merit of hard-working, good-hearted young men such as Roderick Random, the picaro who finally succeeds in finding his identity, is rewarded in the end, and the bad people, often those caught up in ideas of rank, wealth, and luxury, are punished appropriately. The dissolution of the gouty man in these novels suggests the beginning of a slow but permanent alteration to the various forms of the constitution, both in its explicit and unwritten forms, that comprises Great Britain. In this way Fielding's and Smollett's literary depictions of gouty upper-class men seem to offer a discernibly stronger indicator of the necessity for the treatment and remediation of Britain's illnesses caused by over-consumption than those depicted within the graphic satire of the period.

In the following chapter I examine one representative of the *nouveau riche*, Mr. Harlowe from Richardson's *Clarissa*, whose position and representation offer further

engagement with the critiques and debates surrounding systems of class privilege in Great Britain and the impact of over-consumption upon the social form of the British constitution in particular during the eighteenth century.

Chapter 5

"Aspiring to Greater Distinction": Mr. Harlowe and Contagious Over-Consumption among the Nouveau Riche in *Clarissa*

In the previous chapter I examine representations of gout exhibited by landed, titled men of the upper gentry and aristocracy in Sarah Fielding's *The Countess of Dellwyn* and Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random*. I argue that Fielding and Smollett's gouty characters in these novels serve as a means of critiquing the unhealthy nature of over-consumption and its impact upon the British constitution, by which I mean the set of unwritten laws and mores that govern political, economic, and social practices. These representations may in turn provide a site for cultural analysis that allows readers the possibility of questioning class values expressed through gout's metaphorical significance. Such an opportunity for reconsideration of the nature of Britain's unwritten constitution is important in that it may help readers resistant to the rigid hierarchical system to form a loose sense of community and imagine revisions of said system, which could in turn lay the foundation for more radical social and political movements later in the nineteenth century. In effect, then, gout's representation in the novel might serve as one of many indirect factors that allowed those outside of the ruling classes to begin to gain a form of political subjectivity, which Lanser contends the novel was important in developing during the eighteenth century. In the following section I continue my analysis of the systemic meaning of gout's representations by examining a new figure, the nouveau riche gouty man, whose depiction offers a more complete representation of the makeup of the British body politic.

Gout in Georgian Britain was not found only among the aristocracy and titled gentry. Indeed, other sectors of the upper classes were becoming increasingly powerful during this period, with the House of Commons boasting such influential persons as William Pitt the Elder, eventual Prime Minister of the nation, who was called the Great Commoner until he was created Lord Chatham late in his career. Such untitled persons were typically considered members of the middle or lower gentry (Cannon 405), and they made up a considerable portion of the ruling-class population of Great Britain. After all, there were only so many titles to be inherited or conferred by the crown.

Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady,* depicts such a man, Mr. Harlowe, whose preoccupation with aggrandizement results in several attempts to raise his family's social station through arranging an advantageous marriage for his daughter Clarissa. Her refusal to marry the man of her family's choosing as well as the devious machinations of Lovelace, another suitor who is hated by the family, drive the plot of the novel. She is tricked into eloping with Lovelace, who brings her to a London brothel and eventually drugs and rapes her. The novel ends with her tragic death resulting from the devastating effects of the rape upon her mind and spirit. Because of the epistolary form of the novel, readers learn of Mr. Harlowe's words and deeds primarily through the perspectives shared in the letters of Clarissa, her best friend Anna Howe, his elder daughter Arabella Harlowe, and his wife Mrs. Harlowe rather than through Mr. Harlowe's own accounts of events. Despite the lack of a more comprehensive picture that his own letters might create, Mr. Harlowe is an important figure in the novel and in this study because of his class standing as a nouveau riche man and his gout, which, along with his tremendous temper, indicates his tendency toward excess. The character of Mr.

Harlowe therefore seems to reflect the changing makeup of the upper classes, and his gout, the disease of over-consumption, suggests the contagious nature of habitual immoderation and seems to confirm its role as an important behavior for men of the upper classes, be their money new or old. His character's portrayal thus may evidence latent anxieties regarding the spread of aristocratic modes of over-consumption and its role in effecting the changes occurring within the various constitutions of Great Britain in the eighteenth century. In particular, Mr. Harlowe's treatment of Clarissa as a commodified object evidences these possible anxieties about the effect of such habitual over-consumption. Through his efforts to procure greater wealth and a higher social status (presumably in order that he may continue to over-consume), he renders her an object to be hoarded, dominated, and eventually devoured.

As I discuss in my introduction, the period 1740-1830 saw considerable social changes in Great Britain. The British Empire gained considerable momentum with the support and aid of the British East India Company, which helped the nation establish outposts in the Indian continent and South Asia. Further exploration and wars with other trade powerhouses such as the Dutch and the French also resulted in Britain gaining additional territories in the Americas and beyond. The British were eventually able to import and export goods all over the world, spreading and tightening their net of colonization and controlling or influencing trade at home, on the Continent, and in their new colonial outposts. All of this expansion led to quarrels with natives as well as continual war with other nations such as France and the Netherlands, who wished to bolster their own trade position throughout the world. The subsequent wars fought (the Anglo-Dutch wars, Seven Years War, and Napoleonic wars in particular) over trade and

Britain's overall success in gaining a secure foothold as a world power resulted in incredible opportunities for capital ventures during this period. People made or lost great fortunes. As well, beginning in the middle of the eighteenth century, the Industrial Revolution brought mechanized production to the country, in particular to the nation's textile industry. The advent of machinery resulted in mass-produced goods being available for the first time in history, which also led to inventors, mill owners, and speculating opportunists becoming wealthy (Mitchell 3). The massive fortunes such people were making through trade and industry brought a considerable influx of wealth into Great Britain, thereby altering forever the physiognomy of the British upper classes. The Harlowes are one such family whose success in trade and other ventures has resulted in their rising into the ranks of the upper classes. Though fictional, their circumstances are at least loosely reflective of the changes being wrought upon the political, economic, and social constitutions of Great Britain.

With money comes power, yet in the complex, stratified British social system this relationship is not automatic. Inheritance mattered, whether it was of titles, names, wealth, or reputation. Those whose family made money in trade might climb in social class as a result of their wealth, yet the nouveau riche were not quite equal to persons whose wealth and status were inherited over successive generations (Vickery 33). Indeed, these newly wealthy persons usually were without land or titles at all until they could purchase an estate, as Clarissa's father has done, and a title, as her older brother expects to do (though of course not all wealthy persons could procure a baronetcy or peerage). Persons such as these were increasingly common throughout the eighteenth century, and they outnumbered the aristocracy. Therefore, it is important to examine Mr. Harlowe,

whose representation of gout is linked with his wealthy status, as a figure who reflects the changing makeup of the upper classes in the Georgian era.

Because of the complex system of the untitled English gentry and the social gradations contained therein, I will situate Mr. Harlowe within the Georgian social structure. Mr. Harlowe owns an estate of his own, yet persons such as the squire-judge grandfather of *Roderick Random* outrank him. Because the grandfather is titled Squire, he is among the ranks of the upper gentry, which includes baronets, knights, and esquires; the remainder of men within the gentry are simply called gentlemen, among whom Mr. Harlowe is positioned (Cannon 405). This field of gentlemen should not be presumed monolithic, however; differences in rank also existed within this category. Men such as Jane Austen's characters General Tilney and Fitzwilliam Darcy would be classified as upper gentry because of their great wealth and their family's longtime possession of landed estates, while Charlotte Lucum, the protagonist in *The Countess of Dellwyn*, came from a family with moderate wealth and land holdings, and thus she is situated within the middle gentry before her marriage to the earl. We learn that Mr. Harlowe's estate has been purchased relatively recently, as his father made a fortune through various ventures and his wife brought a substantial dowry upon her marriage. Even though the Harlowe land and money are new, the family is solidly situated within the middle gentry because their standing does not depend upon a profession, as is the case with Oliver Goldsmith's titular vicar of Wakefield or Austen's Mr. Collins, who would be positioned within the lower gentry.

Though the Harlowe wealth may be new, Mr. Harlowe has quickly followed the examples set by his betters in the aristocracy and upper gentry by over-consuming to the

extent that he develops gout. His actions in trying to force Clarissa into marriage as a means of raising the family's wealth and status suggest that he strives to uphold the system of class privilege and to obtain greater wealth, actions that were deeply ingrained into Britain's unwritten constitution during the Georgian era. His gout may thereby subtly offer a warning of the dangers of the over-consumption that so frequently accompanies such riches, as is seen among the aristocracy. Gout could thus present a veiled form of critique of aristocratic modes of consumption seeping downward to the greater body politic. Mr. Harlowe's consumption ultimately results in him objectifying and effectively consuming Clarissa in his efforts to amass greater wealth and status by disposing of her in an advantageous marriage.

Scholarly works focusing on identity and class in *Clarissa* abound, so I will discuss only a few of the most important contributions to this conversation, so as to give an overview of trends. Ian Watt's seminal work *Rise of the Novel* links the advent of the novel form with the rise of the middle class, whose taste for realism of subject-matter and characters and events outside the realm of the aristocracy resulted in a genre whose characteristics reflected this preference (13). Watt argues that *Clarissa* is shaped by the conflict between a rising bourgeoisie ("new money") class and the traditional cultural hold the aristocracy maintains upon society. Dorothy Van Ghent, too, makes this argument in *The English Novel: Form and Function*, going so far as to view *Clarissa* as a celebration of middle-class values. In *Clarissa's Ciphers: Meaning and Disruption in Richardson's Clarissa*, Terry Castle also focuses on the changing power dynamics reflected within the novel; Castle contends that the epistolary form of the novel provides an interpretive instability of both Clarissa herself and the events that occur within the

telling and re-telling of events through the lenses of the various characters (20). Castle urges us to read this instability as the product of power structures that shape reading practices, particularly those that make Clarissa the victim of the manipulations of both her family and Lovelace (21, 28).

Terry Eagleton also discusses issues of class and gender in *The Rape of Clarissa: Writing, Sexuality and Class Struggle in Samuel Richardson*, where he argues that Richardson's novels reflect the struggle of the bourgeoisie society against established aristocratic hegemony. Clarissa's ultimate failure of communication, he maintains, arises from the "strategic contexts—gender and class—that inherently limit her ability for expression" (Eagleton 83). Eagleton contends, however, that while the interests of the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy may differ in some regards, they are "part of the same ruling-class power bloc" (88). Carol Houlihan Flynn, in her introduction to *Clarissa and Her Readers: New Essays for the Clarissa Project*, addresses the considerable scholarship regarding the "authenticity" of the epistolary form of the novel, asserting that the appearance of authenticity the form evokes suggests that the values and notions of the "new order" (the middle class) came from within the very bosoms and minds of those people, though of course the epistolary form in fiction is neither more genuine or authentic than any other form, particularly in its revelation of the mindset of the emerging middle class (3). Nancy Armstrong also discusses the conflict that arises between the bourgeoisie/nouveau riche class and the aristocracy in her essay "Reclassifying *Clarissa*: Fiction and the Making of the Modern Middle Class." Drawing from Watt's theory regarding the rise of particular genres as related to the rise of the middle class, she examines the captivity narrative as the style that emerged from this social transformation.

Clarissa, she contends, upholds her middle-class identity despite being imprisoned (quite literally) by the aristocracy in the form of Lovelace, which mirrors the way in which the middle class was forced to carve out and maintain a bourgeoisie identity eschewing immorality and decadence in the face of a hostile aristocratic hegemony (Armstrong "Reclassifying" 22).

Clarissa demonstrates a struggle between social responsibility and individual desire and depicts the young heroine's trials as she attempts to transition from an oppressed object to a politically viable subject-agent against the machinations of more powerful groups such as the class-climbing aspirations of her family and the manipulations of a more powerful aristocracy via the character Lovelace. The plot of Richardson's novel in this way reflects the theories of Benedict, Armstrong, and Bowers (outlined in my introduction) regarding the depiction of eighteenth-century conflicts between the desires of the individual and the welfare of the larger community in the sentimental novel or seduction story. Benedict argues that sentimental fiction directs and shapes reader responses to the text by forcing the characters into actions that are conventional and community-oriented rather than overly individualistic or revolutionary (2-4); in this way, she contends, the genre advocates conventionality. In *How Novels Think*, Armstrong explores a similar element within the genre when she contends that eighteenth-century novels begin to demonstrate the struggles of protagonists to reconcile their own desires with the greater needs of the community and social order (7), which thereby necessitates that the protagonist become a "self-governing individual" (6). Bowers argues that the seduction story is a frequent means by which writers disguised political criticism, yet it also features disadvantaged fictional agents who achieve agency

and gain power and subjectivity. Clarissa herself obviously faces these conflicts, yet Mr. Harlowe, while not a protagonist, also demonstrates these struggles when dealing with his desire for his family's aggrandizement, his own accumulation of personal wealth, and his daughter's welfare.

As well, Richardson's epistolary masterpiece engages with those issues of change in the makeup of the body politic that Lanser discusses by demonstrating the impact that the rise of newly wealthy people such as the Harlowes into the landed gentry had on social and political mores and policies both explicit and unwritten. The representation of the gouty Mr. Harlowe in particular allows us to identify and understand shifting class values related to consumption; the oppression and over-consumption he practices articulate a latent voice critical to the patriarchal system of class privilege that structured Britain's unwritten constitution: political, economic, and social.

Richardson's representation of Mr. Harlowe's gout may suggest the contagious nature of over-consumption among the wealthy. His desire to gain advantages for himself and his family in order to ensure even greater future opportunities for consumption suggests that the newly wealthy classes are catching the mental and spiritual disease of over-consumption and then developing the physical disease resulting from excess, gout. Richardson's novel may allow readers to recognize the greater social issues resulting from the system of class privilege heavily steeped in consumption and displays of wealth via material goods and that necessitates continuous social advancement. Gout's representation may offer a veiled critique of the perceived values and practices of the consumption habits of the upper classes.

The novel depicts Clarissa as an oppressed body in that she is caught between the grasp of her own family and that of Lovelace. Lovelace tries to ensnare her to satisfy his own desires for conquest and revenge, while with her family she encounters the aspirations of the nouveau riche for social advancement and pride, which her father and brother seem to feel will result from her marrying Mr. Solmes (the heir apparent to a baronetcy), whom Clarissa despises. It is through the character of her father Mr. Harlowe that we see the motivations and struggles of a newly wealthy member of the gentry to gain higher status, particularly by making alliances with the aristocracy and titled upper gentry. Because Mr. Harlowe, whose wealth, respectability, and ownership of land mark him as a gentleman, is nonetheless not of the aristocracy and titled gentry or among those whose wealth has been long-established, his social position is somewhat less than that of such persons who hold titles or have held landed estates for generations. Despite this difference, when he insists on his own interests, he still represents the interests of an emerging wealthy elite. As Daniel P. Gunn argues, these differences between the Harlowes and Lovelace and his relations are essentially minor (8). Instead, in their wealth and land ownership they are uniting to form a small class of property owners who increasingly work to maintain their privilege and who exploit and oppress the dispossessed.

Mr. Harlowe demonstrates this close connection between the newly wealthy bourgeoisie and those who have long-established positions based on wealth and titles in mid-eighteenth-century England. His gout serves as a mode of physically connecting his nouveau riche body to the tradition of wealth and over-consumption long associated with the upper classes in popular representations of the disease. He is not satisfied with his

family's status, however, and so attempts to further aggrandize their position. Mr. Harlowe's gout and class position, along with his efforts to raise his family's status, evince the possible presence of latent social anxieties regarding the spread of over-consumption through British society. Clarissa's tragic fate as collateral damage to such aspirations for social advancement (driven at least partly by the desire for greater consumption) allows readers to see the very real impact of over-consumption upon the greater body politic. No longer is gout the only corporeal evidence of immoderation upon the body; instead, Clarissa herself is eventually consumed entirely by her family and Lovelace, and her wasted, hollow form at her death suggests the inherently damaging nature of over-consumption, even upon those who do not practice such behaviors.

Mr. Harlowe's gout distinguishes him as the chief over-consumer of the family, and his words and actions serve to confirm his greedy, social-climbing nature. Despite the profusion of scholarship on the subject of class in *Clarissa*, little if any focuses on Mr. Harlowe and the rich class significance his character offers as one who has risen to the status of gentleman. He is a nouveau riche man; his late father notes in his will that while his fortune is "principally of my own raising," his three sons have been "uncommonly prosperous, and are very rich" (*C* 53). Mr. Harlowe himself has gained considerable wealth "by what has […] fallen in to him on the deaths of several relations of his present wife, the worthy daughter by both sides of very honourable families; over and above the very large portion which he received with her in marriage" (*C* 53). His two brothers, Clarissa's uncles, are also wealthy, the eldest "by unexpected benefits he reaps from his new found mines" (*C* 53) and the youngest, Antony, by his "East-India traffic, and successful voyages" (*C* 53). Thus, although the Harlowe family is respectable and

very wealthy, their money is not "old," as it has been earned and acquired through marriage portions, mining, and trade.

While Clarissa's grandfather "raised" his fortune and Mr. Harlowe's two brothers also made their fortunes through their respective endeavors, Mr. Harlowe himself is wealthy because of his marriage to Clarissa's mother, the daughter of a viscount and heiress of several other relatives. Because these inheritances pass legally to her husband through British property laws, they belong to him. Thus, early in the history of this young lady Mr. Harlowe is set apart from the industriousness of his father and brothers. While he is perhaps the wealthiest of all his family, Mr. Harlowe is, like the Earl of Dellwyn and the squire in Roderick Random, principally inactive, as his wealth has largely come from his wife rather than his own efforts. Indeed, he is also rendered immobile because of his gout, which necessitates his remaining in his home most of the time. By being confined within the home, Mr. Harlowe is denied the opportunity to participate in the traditional forms of public governance he might expect to take part in otherwise by supervising his lands, visiting tenants, or entering into local or national politics.

Perhaps because he does not take an active role in such traditional forms of masculine governance, Mr. Harlowe exerts unusual, one might venture to say tyrannical, control over his household, particularly with regard to the affairs of his wife and his younger daughter. He rules the women in his house with an iron fist by wielding the weapon of his terrible temper. Both Clarissa and her mother fear angering him and yet excuse Mr. Harlowe for his ugly temperament and tyranny, saying his gout makes him behave this way. Despite the fact that Clarissa is suffering greatly because of his anger at her refusal to adhere to his will and marry Mr. Solmes, she justifies his surliness a

number of times to Anna Howe, remarking "[He] has some excuse for his impatience of contradiction. He is not naturally an ill-tempered man […] when not under the torture of a gouty paroxysm" (*C* 55). When she describes the pain of gout as "torture," Clarissa suggests that her father is a prisoner or captive to the disease; indeed, she even says that he is "under the torture" of the disease. With this linguistic structure, Mr. Harlowe is represented by his daughter as the victim of the "gouty paroxysm," which is personified as an enemy. Clarissa's effort to absolve her father from guilt to her friends, and perhaps to herself as well, transfers responsibility from him by making him an object acted upon by the disease. Instead of him simply being obstinate and churlish, through Clarissa's characterization of his physical and mental distresses, Mr. Harlowe becomes the suffering victim at the hands of a terrible captor, an action he later reenacts upon Clarissa. Though she attempts to soften criticism against him with this statement, Clarissa ultimately only underscores his weakness of both body and moral character. After all, his frequent bouts of the disease throughout the novel indicate that he has not practiced the temperance and moderation required to alleviate gout attacks, which suggests that he lacks the self-discipline to control his sensual desires for food and drink. Like the Earl of Dellwyn, too, Mr. Harlowe vents his spleen upon those over whom he has power, in this case Clarissa and her mother, whose gender and respect for his position as father and husband make them convenient targets for his anger and frustration. Thus, Mr. Harlowe enacts the role of a petty tyrant toward his wife and younger daughter.

Despite Clarissa's efforts to excuse her father, Anna Howe continually criticizes Mr. Harlowe's unyielding nature, writing "Another would call your father a tyrant, if I must not; all the world that know him, do call him so" (*C* 130). Apparently his

intractability is well known to all his acquaintances. Clarissa again tries to defend him, even effectively blaming her mother indirectly for his willfulness:

> They were my father's lively spirits which first made him an interest in her gentle bosom. They were the same spirits turned inward […] that made him so impatient when the cruel malady seized him. He always loved my mother. And would not LOVE and PITY excusably, nay laudably, make a good wife (who was an hourly witness of his pangs, when laboring under a paroxysm, and his paroxysms becoming more and more frequent, as well as more and more severe) give up her own will, her own likings, to oblige a husband, thus afflicted, whose love for her was unquestionable?—And if so, was it not too natural […] that the husband thus humored by the wife, should be unable to bear control from any body else. (*C* 133)

Through Clarissa's words Mr. Harlowe has once again become a prisoner to the gouty paroxysms; he is even "laboring under" these episodes of disease, just as we saw that Lord Dellwyn "labored under" a conglomeration of diseases in the last chapter. "Laboring under" a disease or malady implies that one is struggling against or is in fact overwhelmed by it. Clarissa's phrasing does suggest that Mr. Harlowe is struggling—both physically and in terms of power over others—beneath the gout, which has played an aggressive part in seizing him. Gout becomes the harsh captor at whose hands Mr. Harlowe suffers, just as Clarissa eventually suffers at both his and Lovelace's hands. His position as one tormented and imprisoned by gout seems to further support yet also complicate Armstrong's reading of the novel as a captivity narrative; Clarissa is perhaps not the first or only prisoner Richardson depicts. Mr. Harlowe is taken prisoner by the

gout, certainly, but only as an effect of over-consumption, which becomes the cruelest and most relentless captor after all.

Likewise, Mrs. Harlowe and Clarissa become prisoners of Mr. Harlowe and his gouty paroxysms. Clarissa's mother was initially attracted by her husband's "lively spirits," and when these spirits have "turned inward" and made her husband obstinate and temperamental as a result of the gout, she still retains her feelings for him and "give[s] up her own will" to "oblige" her husband. According to Clarissa's account of events, Mrs. Harlowe, through her pity and affection for her spouse, is effectively an enabler. She has given way to her husband's "spirits" so much that he demands subservience from her and eventually from Clarissa as well. Anna frequently urges Clarissa in their correspondence to stand up to her father by going to the estate her grandfather willed her, so that she might escape the reach of her grasping, conniving siblings and the tyranny of her father. Clarissa refuses to disobey her father's wishes with regard to the estate, though, and eventually becomes an actual prisoner in her own chambers under her father's orders when she refuses to agree to the marriage with Mr. Solmes.[24] Clarissa's efforts to justify the sense of entitlement Mr. Harlowe displays effectively serve to blame the closest, most frequent victim of his tyranny, her own mother. It is she, after all, who has indulged his "spirits" by being too dutiful a subject. It is clear, however, that Clarissa herself is guilty of the same excessive degree of obedience and enabling. Mr. Harlowe's domestic despotism seems to fall almost entirely upon his wife and younger daughter, both of whom have always shown absolute compliance with his wishes. Mr. Harlowe's

[24] Though Clarissa's banishment from the sight of her family comes at the instigation of her brother and sister, it is nominally from her father, which is the reason for her obeying the order.

governing power is thus limited, as he otherwise submits to the rule of his son, a more active and conniving figure in the novel.

Clarissa's explanation of her father's behavior as a result of his gout also demonstrates the way in which the disease actually changes the nation's constitution. Gout—undoubtedly preceded by over-consumption—affects the way Mr. Harlowe feels, thinks, acts, and looks. Richardson implies through this representation that these changes occur as well for the body politic. As the patriarch of his family, Mr. Harlowe is expected to provide for and protect those in his care, particularly the women. He does not do so. Considering this, we might conclude that by extension, the body politic becomes altered beyond recognition; originally formed to ensure fair governance and protection for the people, the self-indulgence of over-consumption results in disease, which in turn leads to a perversion of governance in which the needs of the nation are ignored in favor of privileging and enabling the over-consumption of the upper classes. This alteration of the body politic thereby results in a form of tyranny where the people are held hostage till they do what the rulers demand—obey laws, pay taxes--though they are receiving little or nothing in return, just as Clarissa herself is trapped under the chains of her father's desire for social advancement and insistence on absolute obedience in the matter of her marrying the disgusting Mr. Solmes.

In fact, the one area where Mrs. Harlowe opposes her husband's wishes is in the matter of Clarissa's proposed forced marriage to Mr. Solmes, whom Mrs. Harlowe also finds repulsive. Clarissa writes to Anna in frustration at her father's use of his wife, who would plead on Clarissa's behalf in favor of not forcing her to marry Mr. Solmes: "How can the husband of such a wife […] be so positive, so unpersuadable, to one who has

brought into the family means, which they know so well the value of, that methinks they should value her the more" (*C* 82). Despite the fact that it is largely owing to her that he is such a wealthy man, Mr. Harlowe disregards his wife's feelings completely in this matter, which demonstrates his obsession with his family rising in class. His treatment of his wife might actually be the result of the situation caused by Mrs. Harlowe's marriage portion. As I note above, Mr. Harlowe is distinguished from his two brothers in his father's will as having acquired his fortune as the result of his wife and her relations. Though the money she brings in her marriage settlement legally belongs to Mr. Harlowe after their union, he has this wealth only because of her, which calls into question his business capabilities and talent for acquiring wealth, especially alongside the success of his brothers and father. Mr. Harlowe's tyranny might then be enacted in an effort to evince power in his household as a means of counteracting the emasculation Mrs. Harlowe's wealth could have caused.

One must also consider the systemic implications that the marriage laws of the eighteenth century have for society with regard to over-consumption, which the Harlowes' marriage captures perfectly. In a society where men gain all the wealth and property that women bring to a union, men become extreme over-consumers without producing anything of their own, particularly in the marriages of gentlemen, who are not working or plying a trade; instead, they simply consume what their lands (and thus tenants) produce in the form of agricultural produces and rents. This system of class privilege rewards these men for over-consuming, glorifies them, in fact. But, as the Harlowes' marriage suggests, this patriarchal system of over-consumption can result in the sickness and weakening of social aspects of the nation's unwritten constitution.

Despite his lack of real activity or industry, Mr. Harlowe's anger is ferocious when anyone threatens his control over his family. Just after Lovelace has wounded James Harlowe, Clarissa's brother, in a duel, the entire family is of course insulted and enraged, but none more so than Mr. Harlowe. His two brothers, Clarissa's uncles, treat Lovelace with "greater incivilities" (*C* 52) than he had previously received, but Mr. Harlowe must be "held by force from going to him with his sword hand, although he had the gout upon him" (*C* 52). His fury is tremendous indeed if he tries to charge Lovelace despite the terrible pain of a gout attack. And no wonder he is enraged. Lovelace has threatened Mr. Harlowe's control over his family, first by attempting to court Clarissa against the family's wishes and then by wounding his heir James, whom the family expects to acquire enough wealth and property to someday purchase a peerage and thereby further elevate the status of the Harlowes.

The wound James receives at the hands of Lovelace is very slight and does not endanger his life, but it does sully the family's reputation. James's poor performance in the duel casts aspersions upon his masculine capabilities. After all, he instigated the fight but was soundly defeated by the more skillful Lovelace. Additionally, dueling was illegal and increasingly considered barbaric in Europe in the eighteenth century, when enlightenment ideals regarding individual responsibility and obligations toward community had taken hold within the British constitution, both legally and socially. James might face both prosecution and social ostracism for his actions, and by extension the Harlowe family might also lose face socially. This reason may explain the intensity of Mr. Harlowe's rage toward Lovelace; not only has Lovelace challenged Mr. Harlowe's authority over his family in his pursuit of Clarissa, but he has also potentially damaged

the family's reputation in his too-easy vanquishing of James. As well, the injury to James is obtained at the hands of an aristocrat, which only serves to rub salt in this wound to Mr. Harlowe's pride. When James loses in a duel, a very manly, traditionally upper-class form of fighting, not only James but the Harlowes as a family are embarrassed. James's duel, combined with his father's efforts to emulate aristocratic modes of consumption, indicates the extent to which these two Harlowe men are attempting to play the part of upper-class masculinity.

The Harlowes are posturing to imitate traditional aristocratic behaviors. Clarissa's eventual tragic fate, however, demonstrates what can happen when those who are often truly powerless, women, are caught up in a system that perpetuates the over-consumption of the upper classes. Her gender dictates that she is to be disposed of as a means of making connections advantageous to the family, and her family, particularly her brother and father, pursue this end with little or no thought of her welfare. Clarissa's lack of agency in deciding her own fate thereby highlights a serious constitutional weakness present within British society. Her objectification ultimately demonstrates the extent to which her father and brother have bought into the notion of aristocratic over-consumption—even a treasured daughter becomes a mere commodity with which to better Mr. Harlowe's position.

Mr. Harlowe is also incensed when, through the means of his father having left Clarissa an estate, what she calls her little dairy-house, she is made potentially independent. She explains to Anna, " my father himself could not bear that I should be made sole, as I may call it, and independent, for such the will, as to that estate and the powers it gave […] made me" (*C* 78). The potential of Clarissa's independence is

particularly difficult for Mr. Harlowe to deal with, as it threatens his own power over her person and decisions. Clarissa has always been an obedient child, as her family reiterates continually throughout the time she is being persuaded to accept Mr. Solmes, but that she now has the means of establishing her own life and estate challenges Mr. Harlowe's power as patriarch. Clarissa, after all, is a paragon of beauty and virtue, and though she is only eighteen years old, has already received a number of proposals of marriage. Her father and the rest of the family know that because she is a jewel of a woman, they can expect to make an advantageous alliance with her marriage. Most women in the eighteenth century had marriage as their only option for gaining social standing, wealth, and usefulness in the eyes of society, but Clarissa's grandfather has absolved her of this need by leaving her an estate. She can, and indeed she professes that she prefers to, lead a single life independent of the governance of any man, whether her father, her brother, or a husband. Thus, she has the means to defy the norm of the patriarch consuming the sustenance of the culture in the form of the bodies and fortunes of women. The notion of his daughter leading a life free of masculine governance threatens Mr. Harlowe's sense of control, which causes him to react in anger and jealousy.

Clarissa manages to appease her father and please him and her uncles by giving up to her father's management "not only the estate, but the money bequeathed" by her grandfather (*C* 78). She also notes that she does not request any of the income from this estate or addition to her allowance, contenting herself "to take as from his bounty what he was pleased to allow" her (*C* 78). Mr. Harlowe and his brothers are extremely pleased with Clarissa at this "act of duty" (*C* 78) and express great favor of her and admiration for her sense of duty. Mr. Harlowe's "pleasure" (C 78) with his daughter in this instance

results from her relinquishment of the estate and money and thus of her potential power and independence from him. If he has control of her assets, he not only increases his own wealth, he can also be assured of maintaining control of her choices. That he continually reminds her that her grandfather's will could be contested and overturned demonstrates his intense anxiety that she will escape his governance. The patriarchal system of the exchange and consumption of women would be disrupted by Clarissa's independence, and Mr. Harlowe, whose gout marks him as an over-consumer of all things, is relieved that his daughter's sense of duty toward him causes her to fall back under his control. In this way her resources and her person remain available for him to consume or dispose of as he wishes.

Nowhere is Mr. Harlowe's spleen at loss of control more evident than in his malediction upon Clarissa after Lovelace has spirited her away and he no longer has her person within his keeping. Clarissa's older sister Arabella writes to her via Anna Howe to condemn her and inform her of the terrible consequences her elopement has wrought within the family. She writes, "My father, […] on discovering your wicked, your shameful elopement, imprecated on his knees a fearful curse upon you. […] 'that you may meet your punishment, both here and hereafter, by means of the very wretch in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence'" (*C* 509). Mr. Harlowe's anger at Clarissa removing herself from his control is very severe here, as revealed through the medium of Arabella's words. In order to profess his malediction upon his youngest child he goes upon his knees, which would be extremely painful for one with gout. His toes, the primary joints affected in the feet by gout, would be touching the floor with the pressure of his body upon them. Gout was so painful that legend has it even the weight of

a light linen blanket upon a joint affected with gout was unbearable, so this position taken by Mr. Harlowe demonstrates the strength of his resentment at this loss of control, as seemingly he is insensible of his malady, just as when he charged Lovelace with his sword after the duel. As well, Mr. Harlowe's spleen is not even bounded by this earthly world; he hopes Clarissa is punished both in this life and in the hereafter for thwarting his authority. For one who is religiously devoted, as Clarissa is, this statement would have tremendous weight, particularly as it comes from her own father, whom she loves and reveres. Mr. Harlowe's temper, though said to be brought about by his gout in the first place, is then so strong when his control over his family is threatened or broken that he can briefly forget the pain of the very ailment that has allegedly so altered his body and temperament.

Bakhtin contends that the grotesque body is characterized in part by being presented as excessive and grandiose (19), and no two words more aptly describe Mr. Harlowe's depiction. His temper is excessive, as evidenced by the rage that enables him to momentarily forget or ignore the intense pain of his gout to try to charge a young man with his sword and to go upon his knees to curse his daughter for leaving his control, as he thinks she has done. His grandiosity and affected sense of importance also become clear in these instances; he apparently sees himself as an authority figure who must not be contradicted by any party, particularly his daughter. Mr. Harlowe's fits of temper and subsequent behavior as related by his daughters provide the few instances of humor within the novel, but this humor is combined with the discomfort characteristic of the grotesque. Excessive spleen in the form of an adult tantrum might amuse the reader; after all, the mental image of an older man charging a dapper rake such as Lovelace is

ridiculous. His efforts to enact traditionally masculine behaviors associated with the aristocracy such as sword-fighting as a means of maintaining rigid control over his household presents a grotesque rendition of patriarchy. While his excessive anger becomes amusing through its theatricality, when one considers the effects that his words and actions have upon Clarissa, feelings of discomfort suppress the desire for laughter. The tragedy of her eventual fate is deepened by her father's malediction. Her dying efforts include the attempt to persuade her father to lift his curse upon her afterlife, which produces some of the most pathetic scenes in the novel.

In addition, Mr. Harlowe embodies the concept of inversion, another common element of the grotesque. He is, as I establish at the beginning of this chapter, a gentleman of means who owns land and commands considerable respect because of his wealth and position. Nonetheless, he is unable to participate in traditional forms of governance outside of his household; instead, for most of the novel Mr. Harlowe is seated and remains in his home. His brothers and other family members always come to Harlowe Place at his bidding to discuss family matters. Thus, on the one hand, he does exercise traditional patriarchal power, but, on the other hand, such enactments only take place within the private sphere rather than in more active, public arenas. In this way Mr. Harlowe's depiction offers contradictory elements of power resulting from his wealth and privilege combined with physical weakness caused by his gout. His tragicomedic representation in the scenes wherein his anger is manifest, combined with the inversion of his social power and physical weakness, construct him as a grotesque figure. This element of his depiction, combined with the metaphorical significance of his gout, result

in a clash of emotions that reflect the fluctuating political, economic, and social aspects of the constitution of eighteenth century Britain.

The key reason Mr. Harlowe's temper is invoked in these instances is that his desire to attain greater wealth and property through disposing of Clarissa in an advantageous marriage is being prevented, and, along with it, his chance to rise in social standing. Clarissa's refusal to marry Mr. Solmes is especially offensive because this marriage would bring greater wealth to the Harlowes, as Mr. Solmes has made contracts to settle much of his wealth and property upon Clarissa or the Harlowes if she is to die without having children; Mr. Solmes will also someday inherit a baronetcy from his relation Sir Oliver, and such a connection would enhance the Harlowes' status. The marriage settlement Mr. Solmes has offered could potentially feed Mr. Harlowe's gout by giving him the means and opportunity to continue his over-consumption. Mrs. Harlowe tries to convince Clarissa that it is her duty to comply with her father's wishes for the advancement of the family:

> He has declared, that he had rather have no daughter in you, than one he cannot dispose of for your own good […] as the general good of the whole family is to be promoted by your obedience. […] What, therefore, can be his motives, Clary Harlowe, in the earnest desire he has to see this treaty perfected, but the welfare and aggrandizement of his family, which already having fortunes to become the highest condition, cannot but aspire to greater distinctions? (*C* 109)

Mr. Harlowe's greed and desire for higher social status are apparent to all, and Mrs. Harlowe, as his spouse, knows it better than anyone. Her words reveal that Mr. Harlowe views his daughter as an object who can be "disposed of" to improve the family's

fortunes and esteem. Though the Harlowes already have "fortunes to become the highest condition," Mr. Harlowe seeks more. His desire to "aggrandize" his family suggests he has succumbed to social pressures dictating that one should always strive for more wealth and a higher status. Though he is a member of the gentry, enhancing his family's social station is clearly of paramount importance to him. Richardson's construction of Mr. Harlowe's behavior in this regard suggests a critique of the attitudes that foster over-consumption and the exploitation of less-powerful persons, in this case women, whose purpose is to be commanded, disposed of, and consumed by men.

Because wealth and status are so important to Mr. Harlowe, he believes he can bend Clarissa to his will through promises of material goods and money, the outward signs of riches and rank. Clarissa's rather mocking description of her father's and uncles' attempts to bribe her into submission reflects this focus on materiality: "if I will suffer myself to be prevailed upon, how happy (as they lay it out) shall we all be! Such presents I am to have, such jewels" (*C* 78). Her mother, too, pleads with her on her father's behalf in this manner, telling her that he has ordered "patterns of the richest silks" for her from London (*C* 109). When these silks arrive, Mr. Harlowe sends them up to Clarissa, along with a letter from Mrs. Harlowe, who describes them as "the newest, as well as the richest, that we could procure; answerable to our situation in the world" (*C* 188). The silks are evidence of and even mimic the Harlowe family's status and wealth, being both new and rich. Clarissa's parents thus indirectly emphasize how these materials and the gowns she will have made from them will appear to others. Mr. Harlowe in particular seems to believe that the pleasure of both obtaining new clothes and gaining a husband who is to inherit a baronetcy will suffice to resign his younger daughter to marriage with

the odious Mr. Solmes. His behavior demonstrates societal notions that to appear wealthy and to obtain a higher social station are the greatest achievements one can hope for. However, Richardson's irony via Clarissa's words show that this is not the case. Clarissa's is a voice opposed to such notions; in effect, she thereby defies a fundamental part of the system of class privilege existing in Great Britain in the mid-eighteenth century. Her resistance subtly offers the possibility of alterations to social aspects of the constitution. Though Richardson is certainly not suggesting a radical societal shift through Clarissa's rejection of material goods as bribes for her acquiescence to an unwanted marriage, his heroine's actions may provide an instance of possibility for readers, the possibility that, even in a consumerist society, ordinary people could reject the lure of the material in favor of the moral principles of moderation.

Mr. Harlowe's offer of the silks as a means through which to persuade Clarissa to marriage with Solmes serves another purpose as well, that of reiterating the family's status to himself. The clothing that Clarissa is to have will reflect the family's wealth, which is important to Mr. Harlowe. Mrs. Harlowe tells her, "Your father intends you six suits (three of them dressed suits) at his expense. You have an entire new suit, and one besides, which I think you never wore but twice. As the new suit is rich, if you choose to make that one of the six, your father will present you with an hundred guineas in lieu" (*C* 188). His focus on clothing demonstrates both his own preoccupation with material goods as status symbols and the monetary value of the suits. Irene Fizer argues that this offer of clothing reminds Clarissa that to accept clothes from another "constitutes her as a feminine subject and obliges her to the donor's bidding" (10). Because the clothes Clarissa daily wears are the property of her father, she is, daily, under his control. The

cost of the new suits is also emphasized here: if Clarissa keeps one of her current suits as one of the six her father promises, she will instead receive 100 guineas, no small sum. Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass compare this practice of conferring clothing to dependents to the outfitting of servants in livery—it marks the wearer as being under the control of the giver (405-407). Mr. Harlowe emphasizes Clarissa's dependence on him and his position as her superior with these repeated allusions to her trousseau, a practice that not only reminds her of his position of authority but also helps him reassure himself of his role as governor of his household.

Mr. Harlowe's splenetic manifestations of insistence on control over the actions of his wife and daughter suggest a deeply held need to exert his dominance over the women who have had or do have a means of independence from his governance, which suggests that he fears losing control over them, even though heretofore their natures have been nothing but respectful and compliant. His treatment of Mrs. Harlowe and Clarissa reveals that he sees them as a means of aggrandizing his family's (read: his own) status. He desires Clarissa to marry Solmes so that he might increase the family's social standing while also maintaining a degree of control over his daughter. Solmes is an obsequious, groveling man, and despite the fact that he is to inherit a title, it is only that of a baronetcy. Lovelace, in contrast, is already independent and will inherit his uncle's earldom as well as considerable wealth, so Mr. Harlowe probably doubts his ability not only to maintain control over him, but also over Clarissa and indeed the estate her grandfather bequeathed her, which would legally fall to Lovelace upon their marriage. Mr. Harlowe's objectification of Clarissa, in particular seeing her as one whom he can dispose of as he sees fit, and his attempts to bribe her with clothing and jewels only

highlight his role as an over-consumer. His gout becomes a physical manifestation of the efforts he makes to consume and to display said consumption as a sign of his wealth and status. Mr. Harlowe's political and class circumstances reveal a possible vein of critique of the unwritten constitution of eighteenth-century Britain—specifically of its social system—and the over-consumption that continually threatened to alter the state of the nation's body politic.

Richardson's representation of the gouty man offers some insight into societal perceptions of the medical etiology of gout. But more important, it critiques excess consumption (and, though perhaps inadvertently, the patriarchal structure that supports such consumption and its impact on individuals and society as a whole). Mr. Harlowe's desires for social advancement provide a lively representation of the changing face of the upper classes in eighteenth-century Great Britain. This form of systemic patriarchy and classism structures the British constitution politically, economically, and socially, through the impact not only upon laws and policies but also on individual human relations. Mr. Harlowe and the class he represents consume excessively as a means of displaying affluence and status, and in their embodiment of over-consumption they suggest the weakened state of the British constitution politically, socially, and economically, as well of the toll that this diseased condition and its systemic social causes takes on the nation. The novel offers some suggestion that the entire British body politic is at risk of developing gout through rampant, infectious over-consumption.

The spread of gout into the new-money class of men represented by Mr. Harlowe suggests that over-consumption is dangerous and contagious, and that its spread will result in a decadent, diseased body politic. Gout's depiction in this novel may thus serve

as a subtle warning of the dangers of over-consumption and also make available implicit critiques of the class-stratified constitution of Great Britain.

My discussion of graphic and literary representations of gout during the Georgian and Regency periods ends here. In the following conclusion I comment briefly on the implications that this study has for eighteenth-century literary and cultural scholarship and look forward to gout's legacy in the Victorian novel.

Conclusion

In this study I argue that grotesque visual and literary representations of gout, a disease whose metaphorical significance makes it nearly synonymous with over-consumption, seem to express latent anxieties regarding the effects of upper-class over-consumption on the political, economic, and social constitutions of Great Britain. Such anxieties may suggest the possibility that habitual immoderation could in turn cause the body politic to sicken and the nation to weaken and falter in its efforts for imperial expansion and military and trade domination. Though subtle, the fixity with which upper-class gouty men are represented as greedy over-consumers who are both lecherous and impotent point to a shared social consciousness among both producers and consumers (viewers and readers) about the perceived consumption habits of the upper classes. The grotesqueness of these depictions offers an uncomfortable combination of humor and horror at such bloated examples of excess and may in a manner reflect apprehensions regarding both the flux Great Britain was experiencing during the Georgian and Regency eras and the effects of so many changes upon the various constitutions of the nation and the body politic at large.

The subtle undercurrent of uneasiness suggested by the continuous presence of gout within the visual and literary culture of the period 1744-1826 seems to offer unique historical insight for cultural studies scholars and literary critics alike. While I am not suggesting that these depictions necessarily offer direct criticism of the upper classes or advocate a radical populist sentiment, there is a possibility that they serve the function of loosely uniting producers and consumers of these texts on the basis of a shared cultural consciousness that equates gout with immoderation on both individual and societal levels. With these potential sources offering so many Britons the opportunity to develop a sense

of community via this shared understanding, one may read texts depicting gout as one of many important yet latent means through which ordinary people were able to question or critique the nation's political and social institutions. I argue that such critiques, subtle though they may be, offer an opportunity for those outside of the upper classes to gain a voice, which, as Susan Lanser argues, allows them to begin to transform into subjects with potential political agency. While quiet, perhaps only a whisper at its loudest, this voice and the sense of community that allowed it to form its words may be one of many ways through which populist movements and reform initiatives were established later in the nineteenth century.

While this project focuses on only a handful of the prints and novels featuring gout from this time period, there are many more that are available for study. However, because it was not feasible to incorporate every single instance of visual or literary depictions of gout into my analysis, I selected works largely from popular artists such as Rowlandson and Cruikshank and well-known novelists such as Fielding, Smollett, and Richardson that would have been viewed, read, consumed, and understood by a greater proportion of Britons than perhaps those from minor artists and authors. I reasoned that these samples would best reflect the cultural consciousness of the Georgian and Regency eras, as their producers were almost exclusively driven by a desire for monetary profit and so would attempt to write or create works that would be received well by the public and therefore sell. Additionally, with reference to the graphics, most works that survive in collections today have been preserved in large part because they were produced by such well-known artists, which potentially skews the sample of works I had to choose from for my analysis.

Another important issue this project devotes only limited space to is that of the racial homogeneity of the British upper-class man featured in these works and assumptions of whiteness inherent to their depictions. I explore mostly elements of gender and class throughout my analysis, but in future iterations of this study I intend to devote additional attention to racial assumptions as well. Whiteness seems to be another important feature of representations of the upper classes, regardless of whether or not visual works actually feature a person with gout. Scholars such as Beth Fowkes Tobin have explored the role of eighteenth-century art depictions in marginalizing persons of color, particularly those of African descent. The scarcity of depictions of such persons within British graphic satire indicates that this genre may be an important, overlooked means through which a racially homogenous British subject was also defined. Given the role of colonization and the expansion of the British Empire in helping to "forge" British identity, as Linda Colley terms it, a closer, more nuanced examination of colonial attitudes toward race and the ways in which they are evidenced throughout eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century visual and literary depictions over over-consumption is necessary to better explore the often-unseen power structures that helped to shape the British constitution in its political, economic, and social forms.

Readers will also notice that the literary depictions I examine in Chapters 4 and 5 predate most of the graphics I analyze in the first three chapters. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, the process for producing prints was more difficult in the early and mid-eighteenth century. Printing methods for graphics in this period in Great Britain relied mostly on the mezzotint method, in which a copper plate of a picture is made rough in varying degrees, or burrs, through use of specialized tools; when the printer rubs ink over

this plate, the ink will sink into these recesses and, depending on the smoothness or roughness of the various burrs, creates tonal gradations of black and white when pressed onto paper (Barker). This process was difficult and labor-intensive, and the plate could only be used a few times to make prints because of the delicacy of the burrs (Barker).

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, however, British artist Paul Sandby refined the method of aquatinting, which required much less labor and offered printmakers the possibility of greater use of tone in etchings (Ives). By using resin and acid to create various surfaces on the copper plate, printers could achieve more subtle and precise tonal variations in their prints, which closely resemble ink or watercolor washes (Ives). This more precise and efficient methodology was well suited to the growing popularity of caricatures in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Thus, it makes sense that a greater number of graphics in total would have been produced after this development, and therefore more depictions of gout would have been produced. The availability of such technology resulted in the cheapening and increased production of such works, which ushered in the "golden age of graphic satire."

Secondly, the literary depictions, which predate the majority of the pictures available today, were available to a more limited audience. During the mid-eighteenth century books were not widely available, and even if they were, most Britons could not have read them. Thus, it seems reasonable that commentary upon or critiques of over-consumption among upper-class men would have begun among intellectuals. O'Gorman indicates that dissatisfaction with imperial economic policies was limited to an intellectual fringe, and Smollett, Fielding, and Richardson were members of such fringe-groups. Then, as literacy rates began to climb, perhaps the ideas offered via their novels

were disseminated to a greater number of people and became fixtures within the popular culture of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain. The difference in prospective audiences could explain the relatively simplistic tropes used within graphic satire depictions of gout as opposed to the more complicated ones offered through the medium of the novel.

While the period of my study ends with graphics from 1826, representations of gout continue well into the Victorian era (and beyond). Though the golden age of graphic satire had come to a close with the advent of a greater sense of editorial responsibility in the 1830s, illustrated jokes were still common, and they appear more frequently in periodicals during the middle and later nineteenth century rather than as individual prints or in folio collections. Nineteenth-century novels also offer no shortage of gouty characters, with Austen, Anne Brontë, Dickens, and Ellen Wood, among others, all producing works featuring the familiar tropes of their literary and artistic predecessors. Further analysis of gout's representation in this era thus comprises an important project for future research.

Finally, even twenty-first century popular culture is not without the lingering presence of gout, despite the fact that many people view it as a disease of the past. Advertisements for medicines treating the disease frequently appear on television and in magazines, and even an episode of the cartoon *King of the Hill* features gout as its subject. However, the specter of gout as an indicator of the over-consumption of the patient who suffers from it has largely been replaced by other, more common diseases and conditions such as diabetes and obesity, which also seem to be imbued with significant moral implications. Even I, author of this project that focuses on unpacking

the social significance of a disease related to over-consumption, was not immune to feelings of shame and guilt following my own diagnosis of diabetes in 2014. Nonetheless, with continual advances in medicine and science, we are learning that the causes of such conditions are more complicated than were previously thought, and projects such as mine seem to demonstrate that greater understanding of the cultural baggage accompanying disease (and its potential emotional and mental consequences for sufferers) is necessary for effective treatment.

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