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## **Making the Margins Legitimate: Travel, Family, and National Identity in Eighteenth-Century British Fiction**

Teresa R. Moore

*University of Tennessee - Knoxville*

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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Teresa R. Moore entitled "Making the Margins Legitimate: Travel, Family, and National Identity in Eighteenth-Century British Fiction." I have examined the final electronic copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in English.

John Zomchick, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and recommend its acceptance:

Misty Anderson, Janet Atwill

Accepted for the Council:

Carolyn R. Hodges

Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

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Janet Atwill

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Accepted for the Council:

Anne Mayhew

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Vice Chancellor and  
Dean of Graduate Studies

(Original signatures are on file with official student records.)

MAKING THE MARGINS LEGITIMATE:  
TRAVEL, FAMILY, AND NATIONAL IDENTITY  
IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY BRITISH FICTION

A Thesis  
Presented for the  
Master of Arts Degree  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Teresa R. Moore  
August 2006

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## Abstract

This study examines the first novels of Frances Burney and Tobias Smollett in order to analyze the effects of inner, familial forces and outer, worldly forces on the narrators' national identity. Written thirty years apart, the novels follow a remarkably similar plot structure to arrive at different configurations of national identity. I argue that success creating a fictional character who fully enters British society is ultimately dependent upon the author's own sense of marginalization. Indeed, Burney and Smollett configure their sense of Britishness around their own social positions as a woman and Scot respectively. Finally, these findings maintain that the differing pictures of national identity raised in these novels indicate a changing national situation. While the image of an ideal Briton remains unstable, the forces moving authors and readers to define Britishness are widespread.

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## 1. Creating Space for a New National Identity

Literature has been credited with both creating nationalist sentiments and making them more complex by fragmenting and multiplying them; critics studying individual narratives can discuss the effects of national influences in terms of characters or authors rather than entire populations. This focused discussion has been beneficial in uncovering certain common ideologies that spread throughout nations but has also caused debate over how representative the writings of one author are for an entire population. Though the precise amount of credit that should be given to written texts, a genre, or an author is difficult to determine, the fact that literature reflects and affects national identity among a larger population is difficult to deny.

In Great Britain, literature, and the novel in particular, has been linked to the creation of a middle class consciousness commonly credited as the basis for a modern British national identity. Gerald Newman, for example, believes British national identity rests in the hands of literary men and women—particularly eighteenth-century novelists—as they wrote to a national audience and simultaneously created a national audience. He terms national identity “a creation of frustrated writers [that] is an archetype of simple morality and humble social class; it subtly conveys not only the supposedly distinctive moral virtues of the citizen but the moral fraternity of all the nation’s downtrodden and oppressed” (127). What these novelists chose to write about—the middle and lower classes—and how they chose to write about them—in a prose



accessible to a larger population—creates an identity that can be associated with Britain, by both national and international readers.

Indeed, these novelists often represented outer and inner influences acting on their characters and creating their plot conflicts. In these novels, the protagonists come in contact with varying characters, each presenting a different ideological influence to the character and the nation. The protagonist must then decide whether to affiliate him or herself with that particular viewpoint or reject the corresponding character from his or her circle of friends. In terms of national theory, the rejection of an ideal embodied in a character is strongly aligned with patriotic fervor, the acceptance of a character with nationalism. Newman distinguishes between these two terms; borrowing heavily from the theory of Leonard Doob, he defines “patriotism as group-oriented feeling or psychological predisposition which exists universally...and nationalism as a much more complex, pragmatic and historically conditioned elaboration of this simple feeling into patterns of demands and actions deeply affecting group policy” (Newman 52). Patriotism, attached to international prestige and military might, “focuses outward, while nationalism takes all the nation’s affairs, internal as well as external, into its compass” (54). This definition links patriotism to perceptions of difference between the focus nation and other communities; nationalism, however, includes both internal and external identity markers. Nationalism remains definitively vague because it includes so many sources for identification.

Most scholars tend to agree with Newman’s outline of patriotism and how nationalism differs from it. Terence Bowers, for example, presents a similar binary: “in contradistinction to patriotism, an ancient phenomenon defined as a feeling of group

loyalty directed against outsiders threatening the group, nationalism is a more complex, historically conditioned phenomenon that also looks inward at the group's own political, cultural, and social make-up" (16). For Bowers, the distinction between the terms is more focused on inner versus outer modes of collective identification than that introduced by Newman, though Bowers also grants nationalism the ability to break out of this binary. Bowers, however, also links nationalism to primarily modern identity distinctions and considers patriotism a precursor to nationalism. These two terms, whatever, their specific differences, indicate both the complexity of nation studies and of the events, associations, and relationships that produce national markers.

Within literary works, the inner and outer forces that form both nation and identity are associated more with ideological constructions and personal values than nationalist or patriotic sentiments alone. National identity thus denotes neither the communal movement of like-minded citizens asserting political doctrine associated with nationalism nor the rejection of outside groups or organizations associated with patriotism; moreover, it does not deny the legitimacy of either type of association to argue for a single community of humans as universalist movements do. Instead, national identity incorporates both the inner and the outer forces that unite a community into a form that presents such arguments as "universal" human emotions. Though the arguments for identity are specific, they are presented to the reader in such a way that asks for their empathy, understanding, and, ultimately, their support.

Benedict Anderson, like Newman, looks to literature and other forms of print as the source of national identity. He begins his discussion of print culture's influence, however, by discussing its effects on national language. He credits print capital with

providing a standard language for a range of dialects and argues that certain parts of the country became more powerful by being associated with a proper linguistic standard (44). While language takes precedence in this initial theory as a means to unite a reading audience, Anderson ultimately looks to the novel to explain the spread of a British national identity across a varied countryside. The novel, he argues, functions the same as a national ideology: “the idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogenous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history” (Anderson 26). The novel, in this theory, shows a changing consciousness to a national identity. It allows a character to experience outer and inner forces simultaneously and to change, create, and develop a system of values to suit such forces. Moreover, the characters meet comrades united in their experience who are creating the same national system. As Anderson points out, this world created in the novel and the relationships the characters portray are rarely separated from the novel’s real world counterpart (29). Thus, the reading audience becomes enveloped in the fiction’s particular social creation and national image. Fiction becomes a method for spreading a national identity as well as a language.

In both of these theories, fiction remains distinctively personal and individual, yet offers a representation of an individual within a larger community. The author offers a picture of an individual’s encounter with national ideologies, stereotypes, enemies, and cultural indicators as though he or she was universal rather than national representative. National identity, then, presents itself as the very opposite of national identity in fiction; it is the author’s argument for the predominance of certain national values and ideologies projected onto a readership as unmitigated truth. Though the author projects his or her

ideal national image, national identity also refers to the corresponding reaction of each reader. The reader retains control over the interpretation and is able to identify with or reject certain aspects of the author's creation.

This process of ideology creation and interpretation is present in Tobias Smollett's *The Adventures of Roderick Random* and Frances Burney's *Evelina, or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*. Published thirty years apart, these novels share a preoccupation with personal status and position within the burgeoning British Empire. Incidentally, the two creative works also share a remarkably similar plot structure. Both novels begin with the plight of an orphaned youth who travels to London in order to gain experience and, ideally, a fortune. Both heroes experience ridicule and embarrassment within the city but also begin to grasp a social system that initially seems foreign to them. Both characters then leave the city, only to return with a more advanced knowledge of British social systems and a heightened ability to function within those systems. Yet, both also are confronted with evidence of their still incomplete knowledge of social purposes and ultimately leave the city unsatisfied in their goals a second time. After this second departure, both central characters are reunited with their fathers and receive large fortunes that allow them to marry a member of the English gentry and claim a prestigious title themselves. However, the narrators then elect to shun the city and return to their place of origin.<sup>1</sup> These similarities in the two narratives underscore the differences in the two authors' value systems, perceptions of British culture, and ideal British national identity; in other words, the differences within their narrators offer

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<sup>1</sup> Such similarities of storyline might possibly be intentional as Burney scholars have often remarked on Smollett's influence on her writing style. However, a claim that Burney is rewriting Smollett's narrative would be merely speculative, especially considering the popularity of storylines similar to these at the time.

varying creations of national identity to their audiences. This study highlights these differences in order to expose the varying and opposing influences for British national identity presented during the eighteenth century and argues that any notion of a British identity during this time period remains fundamentally unstable.

### **Conflicting Origins**

The instabilities within these texts begin with the authors; Burney and Smollett both faced insecurities in writing to a public British audience. These insecurities are linked to their own social standing in that community at the time of their writing. *Evelina* and *Roderick Random* are both authors' first published works and, as such, address the potential for rejection. Their prefaces apologize for the social deficiencies of both author and title character. But these prefaces and introductions also reveal an attempt to interpolate their potential audience into the narrative and make these readers more accepting of the author and narrator despite, or even because of, their social inferiority.

Smollett's preface, for example, makes use of apologetic yet confident rhetoric surrounding his and the narrator's birthplace. He justifies his choice to make his narrator Scottish by claiming such a move would allow him to

bestow on him such education as I thought the dignity of his birth and character required, which could not possibly be obtained in England, by such a slender means as the nature of my plan would afford. In the next place, I could represent simplicity of manners in a remote part of the kingdom, with more propriety than in any place near the capital; and lastly, the disposition of the Scots, addicted to traveling, justifies my conduct in deriving an adventurer from that country. (xxxv)

Such a note to his readers exemplifies the tension Smollett perceived between Scottish and English interests. Smollett feels compelled to explain his choice of a non-English narrator, which was indeed unusual for the time, because of fears of English displeasure and rejection of his work. His preface, as Leith Davis points out, is an encoded balance between praise and criticism of the English system and the British union. Davis notes that Smollett's first remark on his choice of nationalities lauds Scottish education systems while the last admits the necessity for Scots to move southward in order to find profitable employment (Davis 68). Moreover, the middle comment, concerning simple manners, is more easily identifiable as praise rather than criticism; Smollett could be praising English cosmopolitanism but he might just as likely be referring to English corruption, crime and hypocrisy depicted in the novel (Crawford 60). Moreover, a suggestion of simplicity links Random (and Smollett) to notions of natural sensibility that were becoming increasingly popular throughout the British readership. The readers are thus encouraged to liken Scotland not with political aggression but with virtuous innocence. Even before the novel begins, the reader is aware of Smollett's precarious positioning of the Scots as both critics of English society and voyagers in need of experience and knowledge. In doing so, Smollett attempts to avoid distancing his audience, and particularly his English, readers, from his message.

Burney also feels the necessity to explain her choice of narrators, and particularly her narrator's situation before the action of the novel begins. She describes her heroine as a young female, [who,] educated in the most secluded retirement, makes, at the age of seventeen, her first appearance upon the great and busy stage of life: with a virtuous mind, a cultivated understanding, and a feeling heart, her ignorance of

forms, and inexperience in the manners of the world, occasion all the little incidents which these volumes record, and which form the natural progression of the life of a young woman of obscure birth, but conspicuous beauty, for the first six months after her *Entrance into the World*. (9)

Burney's introduction of her character attempts to direct her audience's reception of the heroine's actions. While Burney attempts to explain Evelina's social inexperience by placing her in a "secluded retirement," she also supposes that education, particularly virtuous education, is more easily completed outside of London's influence. As with Smollett's "simplicity of manners," Evelina's "inexperience in the manners of the world" indicates innocence only available to a person distanced from London. The virtuous education Evelina has received in the countryside and her corresponding lack of "worldly" knowledge provides Burney with a narrator primed to critique city manners. The moral trials, or "little incidents," Evelina encounters in the city are termed a part of "the natural progression" for a young woman, indicating that Evelina's journey is also meant to test her education. As with *Roderick Random*, *Evelina* prepares the reader for an analysis of urban British culture, yet simultaneously creates an empathetic character; this act seeks to settle rather than disturb her audience in order to make this audience more accepting of the particular ideal being formulated within the narrative. Both prefaces thus work to nullify objections to the narrator and author's authoritative inadequacy; Smollett and Random as Scots and Burney and Evelina as women are now able to present a national image under the guise of an innocent, and thus virtuous, character. Worried about potential audience judgment and rejection, both young authors attempt to explain

their motives and make supple their readers, yet stay true to their authorial message.<sup>2</sup>

They do not wish to alter their narrators' states but do hope to avoid negative reader reactions.

The opening chapters or letters of both novels continue to balance these issues by drawing attention to the main conflict or threat to the title characters' national identities. The first sentence of *Roderick Random*, for example, opens with an understated reference to the problem of Scottish identity: Random, the narrator, tells us, "I was born in the northern part of this united kingdom in the house of my grandfather, a gentleman of considerable fortune and influence, who had on many occasions signalized himself in behalf of his country" (1). This sentence, as bifurcated as the Scottish identity itself, swings between "northern," an indication of Scotland, and "united," an indication of Britain.<sup>3</sup> The sentence then ends with an ambiguous reference to "country," which is not directly linked to either of these designations. If Random's grandfather's service to "his country" serves as a subtle reference to the protracted wars between Scotland and England, that service "in behalf of his country" could as easily denote his involvement in Scottish battles *against* the English as his assistance to Britain. Moreover, when the timeline of events in the novel and the grandfather's apparent age at the start of the narration are taken into account, it appears that Random's grandfather would have been of prime fighting age well before the Union of 1707. The ambiguous loyalty of the

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<sup>2</sup> The authors, by identifying themselves closely with their central characters, ask their audience for leniency as well. Smollett, as a Scotsman, hopes that like his character, he will be seen as educated and virtuous. Burney, more explicitly makes her link to her narrator in her dedication where she describes herself as "without name, without recommendation, and unknown" (5) and thus asks that any social faux pas within the novel be attributed to this lack of experience and direction.

<sup>3</sup> Smollett's unwillingness even to state Scotland directly indicates his reluctance to draw his audience's attention to that place. Written shortly after the 1745 Scottish revolts, *Roderick Random* attempted to skirt such large-scale issues as Scottish political dissent. It does, however, address the resulting tensions of the revolution and prejudices that intensified following the event.



grandfather, coupled with the absence of Random's birth parents, results in Random's lack of an inherited identity, whether British or Scottish. Indeed, Random is fully accepted only by his Uncle Bowling, a naval captain whose loyalty to the sea supersedes any narrowly national identification. In spite of the fact that the narrator is a proud member of the kingdom, he remains a suspect subject because of his loyalty to Scotland. Indeed, Random's Scottish national ties are a force that must be overcome to gain British acceptance and identification

Likewise, *Evelina* begins with a series of letters between Mr. Villars, her guardian, and Lady Howard that illustrate the similarly unfixed national identity of Evelina. The two discuss Evelina's situation as an unrecognized heiress of Lord Belmont and her corresponding appearance as a bastard to the public eye. Evelina's unclaimed state, like Random's Scottishness, presents an obstacle to her attaining full British identity. Evelina, as a woman, must be claimed by a man and introduced into British society by him in order to claim an advantageous position within that society. Her lack of family connections thus leaves Evelina free from inherited national identifications but also unaccepted by fashionable society. In fact, such inherited identifications threaten Evelina at the start of the novel. After seventeen years, Madame Duval has declared a desire to take over care of her granddaughter and bring her to France to live with her. Described as "at once uneducated and unprincipled; ungentle in her temper, and unamiable in her manners," Duval is linked to both French dissipation and underclass immorality (Burney 15). Duval, the lower classes, and France all become increasingly linked to deception in these early letters and throughout the novel. As a "waiting girl at a tavern," Duval first snares the attentions of Evelyn, Evelina's grandfather; this seduction

indicates an undesirable and suspicious desire in Duval to elevate herself to an undeserved position of wealth and prestige. Moreover, her continued residence in France since the unhappily wed couple retired there in “shame and repentance” (15), binds Duval to this opposing national force. At once the embodiment of a presumptuous underclass and French immorality, Madame Duval threatens to overwhelm Evelina’s identity and proper upbringing. Because Duval is among her closest relations, she also has the potential to exert a large power over Evelina’s social status, a potential that, at the start of the novel, she is just starting to attempt to use. Evelina’s mother’s death and her father’s rejection of her opens the door further for this negative influence to take precedence over the advice of Evelina’s English friends and mentors and force Evelina into the family cycle of disgrace based in France. Thus, this novel, like *Roderick Random*, also begins with the title character placed in an unstable and precarious position. Evelina, raised according to English values, is threatened by French corruption and lower class immorality. These threats expose Evelina to the danger of forfeiting forever her legitimate claim to a prominent British identity.

In these exemplar novels, these two conflicts over British national identity—French influence and Scottish invasion—were perhaps the two largest fears amongst the English population of the time; indeed, xenophobia had a particularly strong hold on England in the eighteenth century. Among the travelers to England at the time, the deplorable conditions faced by the Scottish were noticed with pity; Michael Duffy relates that “after two particularly hysterical decades in the 1760s and ‘70s, the German Wendeborn was convinced that the English were more adverse to the Scots than to any continental foreigners” (18). Basic English xenophobia was compounded in the Scottish

case due to the Scots' success at gaining wealth and prestige through the new British Empire. The English felt threatened by such success stories and found that "it rankled enormously that the Scots who thus ingratiated themselves into place and favour were both foreigners proud of their Scottish nationality and, in the eyes of many Englishmen, traitors ready to turn on the hands that fed them" (Duffy 20). Colley locates such paranoia in a core of truth, pointing out the increasing number of Scots immigrating to England and the growing number of Scottish allies they could find there (Colley 124). The Scottish were gaining power in the English system; though they were perhaps barred from the most prestigious positions, Scotsman continued to play a part in the growing military and imperial projects of Great Britain.

French influence was as despised as the Scottish invasion and, on many levels, a legitimate threat to the British nation. Indeed, the kingdom's peripheries posed a far less serious threat to the English than the French, whom all the British could see as threatening, or at least as imperial and mercantile opponents. In fact, scholars tend to agree that all Britons could unite in an anti-French interest; Gerald Newman goes so far as to claim that:

a consciousness of France as England's military, commercial and diplomatic enemy was one of the foundation stones of the national mind, perhaps in those days even more basic than the sense of common territory and language, and one of the very few articles of belief that in some way or another was capable of influencing all Britons beneath otherwise immense diversities of wealth, locality, dialect, occupation, religion, and political faith. (75)

Indeed, all classes of Britons, no matter their specific value system, could see the potential threat of the French on their territory, trade, and lifestyle. In addition, the influence of French over Britons, particularly upper class Britons, threatened to weaken the British nation. This threat was often pointed to in the lifestyle of the British gentry, who tended to emulate French fashion and tastes to heighten class distinctions. Doing so led to a growing dislike for fashion and particularly French culture by the lower class. This dislike often translated into attacks on the upper class, bringing the social tension to the forefront. Printed tracts and popular complaints would attack the upper class as weak: “As long as British patricians spoke French among themselves, the claim went, . . . as long as the taste for French cultural and luxury imports was allowed to put native artists, traders and manufacturers out of business, national distinction would be eroded and national fibre relaxed” (Colley 88). Indeed, France and the British upper class began to be seen as a common enemy and a site of national weakness and the source of a potential “collective domestic moral ruin” (Newman 67). Seduced by French culture, the French nation, it was believed, would soon be able to control the British state. In this view, the British had much to lose by emulating any facet of the French-dominated European culture.

In their novels Burney and Smollett discuss each of these potential threats and their corresponding prejudices. Realizing the deeply engrained distrust and prejudice their audience might hold against these French and Scottish influences, Burney and Smollett create protagonists who resist such forces. At the same time, the authors work to weaken these prejudices within their audience and defuse these threats to British identity by advocating a moral British nationalism that does not immediately reject France or

Scotland. Smollett attempts to assimilate his Scot into a British commercial and social setting while Burney resists notions of French influence and xenophobia by arguing for the continuing triumph of British values within Evelina's character. While neither character denies these influences completely at the end of the novel, they attempt to blend them with Britishness and judge justly the real danger of such threats. In this negotiation, a compromise formation of the modern British subject emerges, and the two authors inadvertently create new models of national identity.

### **Identity Lack**

Evelina and Random are not immediately free to judge the French and Scottish influences surrounding them; instead, there are protracted conflicts as the two narrators encounter both positive and negative aspects of London culture and must decide which of these aspects to align themselves with. The narrators' ability to choose these connections is possible because of their weak family relationships; neither Random nor Evelina has a strong parental influence. In fact, both are likened to orphans or bastards. While this unconnected position causes the protagonists' social vulnerability, it also enables a strong individual moral conviction to develop throughout the novels. By positioning these narrators in a state of apparent disadvantage and subjecting them to opposing national pressures, Burney and Smollett are, in fact, using issues of national identity as a means of building their narrators' national character.

The bastard's position was culturally loaded during the eighteenth century because the century saw an increasing number of illegitimate children starting around the time of *Roderick Random's* publication in 1748. As the number of real illegitimate

children rose in the latter half of the century, so too did the appearance of illegitimate children in literature. Lisa Zunshine points out three important aspects of these literary bastards, or foundlings: first, she connects them to middle-class values either by their literary birth or by the views the characters express (3); second, she notes that many of these literary bastards, especially female foundlings, turn out to be legitimate children “conceived within lawful if ill-starred wedlock” (7); and third, the foundlings, and again primarily female foundlings, are in search of “moral excellence and true identity” rather than wealth and power (7). These forces are working through *Random* and *Evelina*’s orphaned states in varying degrees. *Random*, for example, is hardly on a moral quest; rather, he seeks to gain the fortune and prestige that he feels he already deserves by birth. *Evelina*, however, is very much invested in discovering her identity and having it publicly acknowledged; at the same time, she places import on that recognition as a means to display her virtuous qualities. Indeed, both characters are assured of the justness of their quests from the beginning of the narratives because their legitimacy is never questioned. *Random* is only treated as a bastard because his grandfather disapproved of his father’s marriage; the marriage itself was fully legitimate and even an idealized version of romantic love. *Evelina*’s parents were also legally married; it is only the treachery of her father, who burned the marriage certificate that has denied *Evelina* public status as his legitimate heiress. Finally, Zunshine’s connection between foundlings and the middle-class values are revealed in both narratives. Though *Random* and *Evelina* repeatedly emphasize their genteel births, they also are intimately connected to the middle class and each spends a large portion of the narratives among the middle ranks. It is ultimately the connection of both characters to middle-class values, however, that

cements the relationship between foundling and the middle class in the novels. Random affiliates himself with a merchant class, invested in personal and British monetary gain; Evelina sides with simple manners and useful occupations. With such moral priorities, both authors give voice to a broadened acceptance of and praise for these virtues normally associated with the middle classes.

Along with these social implications, the foundling child was also a useful literary device that allowed the author to create characters with more social freedom. Indeed, critics from Zunshine to Michael McKeon have commented on the increased freedom from “specific family or social class” that “allows [literary characters] to embody the promise of expanded social and economic possibilities” (Zunshine 15). When characters are closely linked to a family, their social identity is fixed to the social position of that family since how a person was received outside of the family group had much to do with the social power of that family (Olshin 30). By not having recognizable family connections, both Random and Evelina appear unconnected, and thus undecipherable, to the London population; without a family connection, the characters’ class and national connections are also unidentifiable. Indeed, the London crowd is unsure how to read either character. Random, for example, is defined solely by his regional origins in his first visit to London, and, in his second visit when this connection is weaker, his peers cannot even place his social class or birthplace. Evelina, too, is defined by her birthplace rather than family situation in her trips to London, where those who meet her wonder at her social position, speculate about her family connections, and repeatedly refer to her childhood in the country. Moreover, Evelina, unconnected to a family, is then identified according to the company she keeps; in this manner, her social class is unclear as she

moves from the Mirvan's social circle to the Branghton's and is even susceptible to being connected to prostitutes. Though this unstable social identity is distressing to both characters who are trying to assert their authority as upper class gentry, it also allows for a more complex freedom of interpretation and more pointed debate over what sorts of connections and identities are desirable. In other words, both narrators are given a chance to decide how they would define an ideal British national character. This opportunity only arises because others do not have the power to force their interpretation of Britishness onto the narrators.

The two narrators' lack of identity is also a result of their lack of experience. Both first encounter London—termed “the World” by Burney—in a manner that displays their lack of cultural knowledge. This lack of knowledge connects both characters to a “natural” and thus true vision of the state of British identity. Although Smollett begins his novel in Scotland where Random faces many personal trials and adventures, it is not until he and his friend Strap travel to London that these trials become situated in a national context. In Scotland, the young hero's travails have a universal quality; in a London gripped with xenophobia, the residents attack the two newcomers because of their Scottish indicators. The two men's accents, clothes, and even hair color make them easy targets of English cruelty. Coach drivers curse their accents while splashing them with mud, and bystanders deliberately misdirect or taunt them. This conglomeration of negative experiences within hours of entering London serves to alienate the two travelers from their new community. Strap perhaps best sums up their frustrations when he exclaims, “God send us well out of this place, we have not been in London eight and forty hours, and I believe we have met with eight and forty thousand misfortunes—we



have been jeered, reproached, buffeted, pissed upon, and at last stripped of our money” (Smollett 72). All of these hardships are brought upon the Scotsmen due to their national origin, and, while their treatment does improve during their stay in London, Random and Strap are never able to become fully “naturalized” South Britons.

Likewise, Evelina’s early days in London are filled with personal strife and confusion. She is unable, at first, to understand her environment and to connect her identity to the worldly ways around her. Upon entering St. James Park, Evelina remarks, “I never saw so many people assembled together before. I looked about for some of my acquaintance, but in vain, for I saw not one person that I knew, which is very odd, for all the world seemed there” (Burney 28). Evelina, here, remarks upon a new experience and attempts to place it into her previous knowledge, but such an attempt merely underscores the limits of her early life. Evelina’s propensity to think of events and places as she experienced them in the country result in her continual surprise in the behavior of those around her and the size and complexity of the events.

As Evelina begins to realize the extent of her ignorance, she becomes insecure and uncertain of her ability to understand the social world around her. At her first ball, Evelina feels utterly displaced; following her embarrassing faux pas in refusing to dance with one partner and accepting another, Evelina felt “quite ashamed of being so troublesome and so much *above* myself as these seeming airs made me appear; but indeed I was too much confused to think or act with any consistency” (33). Unsure of the rules dictating actions at the ball, Evelina can only act with hesitancy and error; in this situation where women are unable to produce their own image, Evelina is subject to men’s interpretations of her mistakes. Although she is genteel, she appears otherwise

through her lack of social knowledge and consequently *is* ill-bred, snobbish, or stupid to her new society. As unable to control her cultural markers as Random, Evelina is subjected to the critique of men without the ability to correct their interpretations of her. Likewise, Evelina, normally confident in her understanding of human character, no longer considers her observations to be just. She is not sure whether Lord Orville *means* his polite behavior towards her because, “these people of high life have too much presence of mind, I believe, to *seem* disconcerted, or out of humour, however they may feel” (33). Evelina’s powers of interpretation are stymied upon her first arrival in London; because her ability to control her own appearance is compromised, so too is her ability to control and understand others’ appearances. She, like Strap and Random, feels an immediate desire to escape her persecution: she tells Villars “I would not live here for the world. I don’t care how soon we leave town. London soon grows tiresome” (38).

Though inexperienced and unconfident, both Evelina and Random’s thoughts and actions are also filled with anger and resentment at the new environment. Evelina’s embarrassment at this first ball is, in fact, a direct result of her anger at her position within the system. Her initial comments on the ball explain how

the gentlemen...looked as if they thought we were quite at their disposal, and only waiting for the honour of their commands...and I thought it so provoking, that I determined, in my own mind, that, far from humouring such airs, I would rather not dance at all, than with any one who would seem to think me ready to accept the first partner who would condescend to take me. (30)

Evelina’s response is surely “more than the shock of innocence at the disportment of behavior outside the bounds of her experience” (Cutting-Gray 46). Moreover, her

“assessment that she has been displayed as merchandise is accurate, and her resentment justified” (Epstein 107). Evelina has noticed the unfair treatment of herself and the other women at the ball and the presumption of the men around her that women are servants at their social, and perhaps sexual, disposal. Her response, however justified, only leads to her discomfort and humiliation. While Evelina can initially read the situation with confidence, her realization that her actions, and her refusal to dance with Mr. Lovel, are incorrect and potentially harmful to her, she loses her ability to speak, act, or judge. In short, this experience disturbs her confidence in her inner identity and outer social appearance.

Random, too, encounters situations that anger him, but his response, like Evelina’s, only leads him to further insult. Though more able to act out forcibly in response to the cause of their humiliation and corresponding anger, the two men are just as susceptible as Evelina to making social errors and misreading their surroundings. Thus, the two men are easy targets of a con made by an English man experienced in dealing with migrant Scotsmen. He approaches Random and Strap singing praises of Scotland and offering assistance to the two men. Such assistance, however, is quickly revealed to be a ruse as the two unsuspecting men are led to stacked gambling tables where they lose most of their money. Though Random and Strap again appear ridiculous for being so easily tricked, the two men have acted reasonably according to their experience. These past experiences, however, have little bearing on their current state, and they soon realize that they do not know who to trust or how to act within their new surroundings.

Smollett and Burney’s inclusion of these embarrassments, and indeed part of the

reason for their choosing inexperienced narrators, points out the unnatural aspects of the city's social constructions. Smollett satirizes these English prejudices against the Scots in order to draw attention to the discrimination they faced in London; Burney satirizes the men's behavior at the ball to underscore the unfair treatment of women. Their satire, and satire's general goal, is to make a culture look inwardly at its actions. Such introspection is accomplished by forcing the reader to view his or her actions from a new perspective, often the perspective of a traveler. Charles Knight, studying eighteenth-century authors' use of satire, argues that travelers are essential to satiric works because "the traveler encounters a new culture, alien to him but familiar to us, and his efforts to interpret it lead him logically to principles and values, or alternatively to problems and uncertainties, that both cultures share" (499). From the foreign perception of a familiar culture, a universal morality is discovered; as the familiar culture is defamiliarized, the reader is able to see and reinterpret cultural actions and norms in terms of a larger world. By representing English abuse through the thoughts and feelings of two Scots, Smollett exposes the cruelty fostered by xenophobia; by looking at the actions of upper class society through the eyes of an intelligent but inexperienced girl, Burney exposes the cruelties of class and sexism. Hoping to redress these prejudices, Smollett and Burney introduce satire to establish a shared set of values for their narrator and their English readers.

This universalism, however, acts in direct opposition to nationalism. As Knight points out, nationalism "suggests...that an intermediate culture stands between human individuality and the comprehension of universal human nature" (507). To suppose that a nation determines specific characteristics and talents rejects all theories that humans are fundamentally similar. When a foreigner reinterprets national behavior as ridiculous or

inhumane, national indicators are denied and replaced with a value system based on common human experience. Smollett criticizes English attacks on surface traits of difference to reveal emotional, moral and bodily similarities; Burney ridicules the presumptions of men to underscore the double standards of power and the paradoxes of a woman's social standing. Through these depictions, Burney and Smollett use satire to establish a universal nature that can be improved by the right national conditions to create an ideal British identity. The two characters' own innocence and inexperience are thus transferred to their reader who now sees society according to their interpretation; in this manner, Burney and Smollett have created a reading public that is also void of identity connections. The novel form itself assisted Burney and Smollett in this goal. Seeing social situations apart from their normal connections, the audience too can reinterpret the behavior of a nation and restructure their views of British identity.

Into this void created by innocence and inexperience, varying concepts of Britishness are given their chance to win over the social newcomer. Yet, because of that same innocence and inexperience, the choice made by the narrator is presumed to be a "natural" one; the image of Britishness that will acquire the esteem of Evelina or Random will be the one that is most moral because these characters, though both flawed, are also foreign to deceit and deception and resist all such forces. This morality is tested as each character is followed by a stigma that distances them from a British identity throughout most of the novel. For Random, his Scottish heritage, as well as his fierce loyalty to that heritage, impedes his ability to assimilate a British identity and forces him into unpleasant situations and physical violence. For Evelina, her relation to Madame Duval continues to pull her towards unthinking French influence, as well as into undesirable

social situations. For both characters, the threats to Britishness become increasingly complex. Evelina and Random need not fear just French or Scottish influence, but also the possibility of *no* national identity. Like Duval, Evelina may become indistinguishable as a British or French woman. Like his British upper class friends, Random may relinquish his loyal values for fashionable speech siding with French interest. Thus, the novels' progressions follow the encounters of the narrators to competing arguments for national influences that they choose to either reject or accept. The readers, taken along this journey, are asked to choose themselves while trusting in the innocent direction of their literary leader.

## 2. Roderick Random's Migrating Nation

Following their persecutions during their first stay in London, Smollett's protagonists repeatedly support Scottish efforts to assimilate into the English cultural situation. While Random and Strap are given advice on how to "fit in" by numerous other Scottish migrants, the most extended and interesting exchange of this nature occurs between Random and Mr. Concordance, a friend of Strap's. Concordance, a previous migrant from Scotland to London, makes his living by teaching other migrants methods of assimilation. Most notably Concordance advertised his abilities to teach "the English tongue, after a method more speedy and uncommon than any practiced heretofore" (Smollett 66). Concordance, however, is undoubtedly a figure of ridicule whose obsession with assimilation is immediately suspect. Roderick complains that "although I could easily understand every word of what I had heard hitherto since I had entered England, three parts in four of his dialect were as unintelligible to me, as if he had spoke in Arabick or Irish" (66). With such a critique, Smollett obviously hopes to satirize those Scots in London that completely rejected their heritage in order to assimilate. Through his attempts to negate his Scottish origins, Concordance actually becomes more outlandish in speech, dress, and behavior than other Scottish migrants; his efforts to erase his Scottish markers have succeeded, but his assumption that erasure equals assimilation is unfounded. Indeed, Concordance is made ridiculous by his insistence that he is not Scottish. As Robert Crawford notes, Concordance distances himself from Roderick and Strap by referring to Scotland as "your country" instead of "our country" (Crawford 58). Concordance clearly believes that without his Scottish markers he is a member of an

English, rather than Scottish, culture and seeks to divorce himself from any internal or external associations with the northern kingdom, an impulse Smollett clearly derides.

Despite Concordance's excesses, both Roderick and Strap benefit from this friendship, finding employment and a level of acceptance in English society through his suggestions. Through his insistence, the two men rid themselves of external Scottish markers that instigate English ridicule; assimilation is acknowledged as a first step in gaining a British identity as well as a necessary means to become successful within that society. Though by no means the only step to reaching a British identity, assimilation does allow the Scots to function within the city. This first stay in London thus reveals Smollett's political motivations—through assimilation of both style and speech and the argument for moral universalism, Smollett presents a character who is eager to find commonalities with British subjects. Yet, at the same time, Roderick remains internally attached to and identified with his Scottish identity. Though Roderick makes many efforts to assimilate, he still considers himself primarily Scottish, feels most comfortable surrounded by fellow Scots, and violently opposes any criticism of Scotland. His ability to see the benefits of assimilation, however, begins to break down these allegiances, once again leaving the narrator open for new visions of a British identity.

Susceptible to new influences, Random begins to reassess his surroundings in London and to contemplate the meaning of his heritage in his new surroundings. Faced with these new ideas, Random begins his journeys out of London—to the Caribbean and the continent—where he continues to encounter conflicting ideologies that he must either reject or accept. His national character continues to develop throughout these experiences



and to become increasingly associated with merchant class values of simplicity of manners, anti-French sentiments, and imperial growth.

### **The Migrating Margins**

As Random begins his first voyage to the Caribbean, his connections to his Scottish identity are still strong. Indeed, Random will risk his life, health or safety to defend the honor of Scotland aboard the Thunder.<sup>4</sup> For example, he brawls with a fellow sailor who he claims “began to sing a song, which I found highly injurious to the honour of my country, and therefore signified my resentment, by observing, that the Scots always laid their account in finding enemies among the ignorant, insignificant and malicious” (Smollett 155). Here, Random defines his country as Scotland and professes a clear loyalty and attachment to it.

At the same time that he is defending Scotland, however, Random begins to look beyond his native land for his personal identity. Indeed, in many ways, Roderick takes on the identity of an “absolute functionary” as defined by Benedict Anderson. As a functionary, Roderick “sees before him a summit rather than a centre. He travels up its cornices in a series of looping arcs which, he hopes, will become smaller and tighter as he nears the top” (Anderson 55). This search for wealth and success was begun in London as Roderick formed coalitions and connections with other enterprising Scots as these men attempted to gain success in the British system. Nearly all the assistance Random and Strap receive in the capital was from fellow Scots; they find lodging and food in London

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<sup>4</sup> Random repeatedly criticizes the British navy, its policies, and its commanding officers on the same voyage. Throughout, Random is unwilling to risk even his pride to defend Britain and repeatedly alludes to the unnecessary loss of life through its naval practices. This behavior underscores his commitment to Scotland rather than a larger Britain.

from the recommendation of a Scottish man, and Random learns the system of British political bribery from fellow Scots. In fact, Random owes his position on the man-o-war to a combination of chance and the recommendation of Thomson, a Scotsman. The ability of the Scots to create opportunities of advancement for one another led to many Scots' success but also created more prejudice against the migrants. John Wilkes contended later in the century that "No Scot ever exerted himself but for a Scot" (qtd. in Colley 123), and many English already agreed with the assertion in 1748. Yet the prejudice this assistance helped fuel made the process all the more important to Scottish migrants and to other migrants from Britain's margins.

Indeed, once he has entered the imperial system, Random continues to rely on this assistance at sea; however, in doing so, his circle of friends grows to include a Welshman named Morgan. Morgan first begins to trust Random because of his fight with the prejudiced sailor. After hearing Random defend "his country" vigorously, Morgan "wished [Random] the joy of the event of combat; and [...observed] that in all likelihood, the ancient Scots and Britons were the same people" (Smollett 156). Recognizing Random's similarly marginalized position, Morgan immediately reframes his national heritage to include him.<sup>5</sup>

These two men soon forge an even greater bond than that between Random and Thomson, the two Scotsmen on board. While Random and Morgan join forces to question the authority of the head surgeon, Thomson remains too cautious to do so. In

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<sup>5</sup> Morgan considered himself a direct descendent of Brutus, the famed Roman mythologized as the founder of modern England. A common myth of *English* origin, Smollett places this sentiment in the mouth of a Welshman, thus diffusing its narrative power. Here, Morgan also allows the Scots common ground in this myth, broadening it to include all Britons while simultaneously ending its ability to be used as anti-Scottish propaganda.

this defiance and through the subsequent punishments for their rebellion, Random and Morgan earn trust for and come to depend on one another for their mutual success. With this relationship, Random expands his Scottish circle to one that includes other migrants from Britain's margins, a move that further defines Random as an absolute functionary. As with all functionaries, Random "encounters as eager fellow-pilgrims his functionary colleagues, from places and families he has scarcely heard of and surely hopes never to have to see. But in experiencing them as traveling-companions, a consciousness of connectedness emerges" (Anderson 55). Though Random has no desire to journey to Wales and Morgan has no plans to visit Scotland, the two men experience a common present, serving aboard a man-o-war in service of the British Empire, which allows them to evoke a common past. This present calls a shared heritage into being and combines the men's marginal identities into a new center. This new center is ultimately based on fraternal rather than patriarchal affiliations. Aboard the ship, these two men who are politically marginalized on the island are able to forge a brotherly connection that gives them strength to protest against the ship's authority. The ship's governing system realigns political power in a more balanced, though more violent, process based on fraternal strength rather than patriarchal prestige. Through this process, Random begins to embrace a more cosmopolitan, British identity in place of his original Scottish one. Indeed, his attachment to Thomson while aboard the ship continues to loosen and is severed when Thomson throws himself overboard; thus, Random relinquishes his strictly Scottish ties to embrace a fraternal society of like-minded sailors. This new connection reveals the ability of members of Britain's margins, like Random and Morgan, to find common identities based on similar nationalist convictions rather than place of birth.

The friendship between Random and Morgan comes to symbolize the modern tradition that Edward Said outlines in his distinction between filiation and affiliation, between family connections and social friendships. Random, spurned and disconnected from his own family members, now looks to members within his social sphere to provide the physical and ideological support normally provided by family relations. Random has encountered the “failed idea or possibility of filiation” but embraced “a party, an institution, a culture, a set of beliefs, or even a world-vision” that provides him and his companions “a new form of relationship” (Said 19). Yet, in these early stages of the novel, Random and his companions are still unsure of their specific ideological affiliation. As functionaries, their society is based more upon chance than on a connection through common ideas. Through continued interactions and common experiences, Random and Morgan begin to create a sense of common “culture and society” that ties them together in a manner not unlike familial devotion. Like affiliations, functionary relationships break down beliefs in “natural bonds and natural forms of authority—involving obedience, fear, love, respect, and instinctual conflict” and replace them with ideas of “consensus, collegiality, professional respect, class, and the hegemony of dominant culture”(Said 20). Separated from a mainland still concerned with family prestige, the men on board the Thunder create their own society based on individuals’ ability to navigate a system of hierarchy particular to the ship.

Perhaps ironically, the relationship between Scot and Welch is forged primarily through a shared animosity for the Irish and a common wish to exclude them from their nationalist thought. The ship’s captain and the head surgeon Mackshane, men depicted as

inept and cruel, are of Irish, and thus potentially Catholic, descent.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, this disdain for the Irish identifies a moment of shared patriotic fervor against an identified outer group. In portraying these men as such a negative manner, Smollett vilifies the Irish in his narrative, displacing onto them many of the English fears of the Scots. While the morally straightforward Morgan, Random, and Thomson struggle to gain wealth, power and success in the British system, the corrupt Irish already hold the two highest positions of authority on the ship. The manner in which these positions were obtained is made suspect because Oakhum and Mackshane are repeatedly characterized as morally corrupt and educationally inferior. Their deficiencies in character are manifested in their treatment of Random, who is falsely accused of treason by his shipmates who use his journal written in Greek as evidence of his plots against Oakhum. While Mackshane's ignorance is made apparent in his inability to read the classical language, his propensity for deception is likewise confirmed in this scene. Mackshane, as a surgeon, should be able to read both Latin and Greek. Yet rather than admit his deficient education, he gathers together other Irish sailors to hide his lack of knowledge and denounce Random. These Irish sailors consult in an Irish "brogue" which they claim is Greek in order to argue that Random's journal is not written in Greek but in code developed for traitorous plans (Smollett 176). Mackshane and the Irishmen are thus both ignorant of formal learning and in league together against their fellow sailors and migrants and, presumably, the English. Moreover, the Irish connection to Catholicism gives additional rhetorical power to the novel's portrayal of these men's deceit. A Protestant nation, the English

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<sup>6</sup> The fact that both Oakhum and Mackshane are Irish becomes somewhat lost when Oakhum later appears to not recognize the Irish language. However, at their first introduction, the reader is told that Captain Oakhum "brought along with him a surgeon of his own country" (156) and in this passage it is clear that both men hail from Ireland.

government was paranoid about Catholic conspiracies against the British. Smollett capitalizes upon these fears in order to further deter his reader from formulating such paranoid sentiments about the Scottish. Smollett's obvious act of othering the Irish serves to strengthen Random's ties to Morgan while simultaneously helping his and the Scots' ability to gain a British identity by excluding the Irish from such a denotation.

At the same time that Random is developing his relationships with other functionaries, he is likewise progressing socially through the economic system based on Britain's imperialism. In the eighteenth century, the empire became a way to utilize and subdue the Scots while providing the Scots a means to advance economically, and thus "redressing some of the imbalance in wealth, power and enterprise between them and the English" (Colley 129). The Scots in many cases did find wealth through the imperial system, and the British government continued to advertise such opportunities in order to make the Scots accept the union. Colley explains that lawmakers believed with an "absolute conviction that trade and patriotism were inseparably linked. If more Scottish Highlanders could be hooked in to the commercial system, the argument went, their loyalty would be bound to blossom. And once that happened, they could be safely absorbed into the imperial war machine" (120). These enticements for imperial gain, however, did not always translate into political and social power. In fact, many imperial adventurers were powerful within the colonies but barred from such positions within Great Britain. Indeed, Smollett's Random is not aware of the dual function of imperialism and seeks full membership into British society through his service. While the government used the empire as an impetus for civil peace, it also subjects its own colonizers: Anderson's functionaries "constituted simultaneously a colonial community

and an upper class. They were to be economically subjected and exploited, but they were also essential to the stability of the empire” (58). Random and his fellow functionaries served both as wealthy, powerful colonizers within the new empire and as inferior, colonized peoples at the center. The empire, in this way, was a project that served to balance personal gain against political dissatisfaction but not to restructure the internal political infrastructure of the kingdom. The imperial system, then, served both as a means of profit and continued persecution for the marginal migrants who traveled to the colonies.

Random’s own political dissatisfaction is tempered by the promise of wealth in the empire. Though he criticizes the conduct of the imperial battles, Random chooses to remain in the Caribbean for financial gain. In fact, he finds the Caribbean far more appealing than England, claiming:

when I recalled to my remembrance the miseries I had undergone in England, where I had not one friend to promote my interest, or favour my advancement in the navy, and at the same time, reflected on the present dearth of surgeons in the West-Indies, and the unhealthiness of the climate, which everyday, almost, reduced the number, I could not help thinking my success would be much more certain and expeditious, by staying where I was, than by returning to Europe.

(Smollett 199)

Random’s experience in London and his ambitious pursuit of personal fortune cause him to put his future into imperial endeavors. His loyalties are directly connected to his financial opportunities rather than to an ideology; indeed, this monetary focus may indicate a new ideology for Random. Though he spurns England, Random still invests in

its imperial system to gain for himself. In this instance, Random's personal interests coincide with Britain's imperial aims; this coincidence marks the way in which Random's changing formation of a national identity is initially a result of the natural pursuit of self-interest.

Random's gamble to remain in the Caribbean is quickly rewarded with a fortune. At this moment, Random re-identifies himself with England rather than Scotland. He asserts, "Now that I could return to my native country in a creditable way, I felt excessive pleasure in finding myself out of sight of that fatal island, which had been the grave of so many Europeans" (Smollett 207). In this exclamation of joy, Random refers to a "native country" that is more distinctly connected to Britain than to Scotland. Indeed, Random looks forward to displaying his new wealth in London, not in Scotland, and his ship is expressly sailing to that city's harbor. As he earlier made claims to avoid London for monetary reasons, he now seeks out the city as a wealthy man. Thus, wealth is shown to be the key to British identity; and wealth has no identifying national markers, at least in this version of Smollett's fable of British subjectivity.

This mentality is supported by later events in the novel after Random loses his fortune when his ship wrecks off the coast of England. After dueling with a gentleman of fortune, Random flees to the sea where he is captured by outlaws and abandoned to abject poverty. This loss and subsequent banishment upon entering British waters underscores the functionary's position. Random may increase his wealth in the colonies, but this wealth and power is not transferable to the colonial center. Before Random can join the British elite, Random must acquire not only wealth but also an internal affinity with the British nation; his search for this identity is again removed from the island and continues



in France. There, he stumbles once more upon his benevolent Uncle Bowling who urges Random to return to London with him. Without his fortune, however, Random has little interest in returning to England; he once again refuses to return because of difficulties gaining wealth there. He “looked upon it, at this time, as the worst country in the universe for a poor honest man to live in; and therefore determined to remain in France” (Smollett 236). He rejects England, but this time determines to remain in France, its enemy country, rather than again attempt his imperial adventures. Random’s aversion to England when penniless thus supports a thesis that national identity is tied directly to wealth.

### **Finding Britain in France**

Contrary to this idea of wealth as the determining national trait, Random begins to use the standard of British constitutionalism during his stay and service as a mercenary soldier in France; indeed, France is the first stop on Random’s journey that makes England look desirable to him. Both Scotland and the Caribbean have offered Random more chances for advancement than England. France, however, reverses this trend and rehabilitates England’s initial image as a land of promise. Among loyal French subjects, Random argues for the superiority of English political thought and economic freedom. First, he denounces the absolute power of the French monarchy, unchecked by a parliament; he “could not help expressing [his] astonishment at the absurdity of a rational being, who thinks himself highly honoured in being permitted to encounter abject poverty, oppression, famine, disease, mutilation, and evident death, merely to gratify the vicious ambition of a prince” (Smollett 245). At the same time, Random claims that anyone that suffered these misfortunes for one’s *country* was “to be applauded for his patriotism”

(Smollett 245). Even while Random is denouncing loyalty to a monarch, he praises loyalty to one's country, distinguishing between service to a person and service to a system or government; this distinction again suggests that Random's national concerns are associated with the ability for the individual to enrich his or her own life through the social system ascribed to. This distinction reveals that Random's own loyalty is not won solely by monetary means but rather through internal identification of political values and the mere ability to gain fortune, distinction, and power. Random's display of nationalist association with Britain's emphasis on quality of life is mingled with his patriotic denunciation and othering of the French system's differences. In this criticism of France, Random is not only agreeing with British ideals but also clearly forming internal ties to that country.

Random later tells these same French gentlemen about the British belief in natural rights. He espouses a very English-sounding rhetoric to answer French criticisms of the English:

In vindication of my countrymen, I adduced all the arguments commonly used to prove that every man has a natural right to liberty; that allegiance and protection are reciprocal; that when the mutual tie is broken by the tyranny of the king, he is accountable to the people for his breach of contract, and subject to the penalty of the law; and that those insurrections of the English, which are branded with the name of rebellion, by the slaves of arbitrary power, were no other than glorious efforts to rescue that independence which was their birthright from the ravenous claws of usurping ambition. (Smollett 246)

In this eloquent harangue, Smollett creates many ties between Random's mentality and

the English political system. Random, though a Scot, displays remarkable assurance and support for this political system first enacted by the English and even defends their actions before England and Scotland united. Moreover, in this passage, Random identifies his countrymen very concretely as the English. His reaction to criticism of the English, then, is more than a mere antagonism against the French soldiers, but also a strong indication of attachment to an English identity. Smollett underscores this identification through Random's duel with a French soldier after that soldier criticizes the English. As Random defended Scotland with his physical strength on the British man-of-war, he now risks his life to defend the English system against its French detractor. Though Scottish, Random's willingness to fight over slurs against the English shows an important shift in his psychological identification. Random now interprets insults aimed at England as personal ones, much as he interpreted Scottish slurs as personal affronts earlier in the novel; in this psychological move, Random internalizes the idea of a Britain which combines the Scottish and English interests.

In fact, after Random is unexpectedly defeated in his first duel with the Frenchman, he trains in order to be successful in a second. He instigates this second duel by expressing "the valour of the English with all the hyperboles I could imagine, and decried the pusillanimity of the French in the same stile" (Smollett 249). Random and the French soldier have formed their identities through loyalty to a nation's ideology and in contradiction to another. Random chooses to continue the feud on these patriotic grounds rather than switching to more personal, individual identities. Moreover, Random's dedication to train in order to honor England, as well as his willingness to create the conflict, leaves the reader with little doubt concerning Random's loyalties.

Random's specific objections to the French system and Smollett's depiction of the French were in no way original or unknown by the novel's audience. In fact, Smollett merely plays upon popular anti-French propaganda of the time. Much of this propaganda focused on the French government, its poor or starving subjects, and their adherence to the Roman Catholic religion.<sup>7</sup> Smollett uses these depictions to create a British patriotism that defines itself against the French and, from earlier in the novel, the Irish. Smollett uses both of these animosities to underscore that Random, and Scots in general, are loyal, ideal British subjects. Moreover, by emphasizing the differences Britain had with these other nationalities, a clearer picture of an ideal Briton comes into focus. Though Smollett's definition of Britishness is by no means clear-cut, his animosity towards the French and Irish reveals a general belief that Britishness is based on independent trade, natural rights, and the moral treatment of individuals.

### **Fighting the French Threat**

After his patriotic combat with the typical Frenchman, Random returns to London where he both benefits from his world experiences and is threatened by similar ideological arguments as those put forward by his French antagonists. Though still poor, Random is much more successful in this second visit than he was upon first arriving in the national capital because of his distance from his Scottish markers. After his experiences abroad, his dress and mannerisms are no longer identifiably foreign. He makes friends with Englishmen and is able more easily to discern the characters of these men and avoid being the brunt of their jokes. He visits fashionable coffeehouses and joins in English

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<sup>7</sup> See Duffy's compilation of British national propaganda.

jests. Though Random still is not financially successful, he is playing the social game as well as his English acquaintances. He gambles but, unlike his first gambling experience in London, finds the fair tables and wins. He is able to avenge the past slurs against him from his previous visit and clear his name of its blemishes. He attempts to win a rich bride and only fails to do so because of his preference for another woman. These successes are ultimately connected to Random's new, more cosmopolitan identity. His Scottish indicators have all but disappeared. As Leith Davis notes, his "language no longer gives him away," and assimilation becomes the key to overcoming "anti-Scottish prejudice" (69). Indeed, Random appears to have completed this assimilation process and learned what English behavior to mimic and how to use this knowledge to his advantage. In his acceptance through assimilation, homogenization rather than wealth becomes a central factor in the creation of a British identity.

But Random's own homogenization does not nullify the counter nationalist arguments Random discovered in France. Instead, he finds such arguments renewed by wealthy English gentlemen and women at a dinner Random attends shortly after his arrival in London. At this dinner party, the conversation dwells on the wars with the French with "the whole company...in the French interest" except Random and an older gentleman (Smollett 260). This older man "was very unequal to his antagonists, who were superior to him in learning and experience, and often took the liberty of travelers, in asserting things which were not strictly true, because they thought themselves in no danger of being determined by him" (260). The elite at the table clearly take advantage of the man's ignorance and, at the same time, reveal a willingness to lie in order to support the French. This event furthers Smollett's agenda to gain British acceptance for Scots.

The English elite was commonly under attack in the print media for being too enamored with French culture to act in the interest of England.<sup>8</sup> The English support of the French in this scene reveals that Random is in fact more patriotic than those supposed icons of Englishness. In fact, this dinner raises suspicions of the ruling class's motives and loyalties to the nation. Thus, Smollett simultaneously argues for Random's further identification as a British subject and for yet another displacement of fear commonly directed at the Scots onto another social group.

Though Smollett succeeds in his depiction of Random as a loyal nationalist, this scene simultaneously reveals Random's lack of knowledge of the English upper class. To them, the argument concerning the French wars is more of a display of social interaction and standing than an actual debate about the wars; political knowledge and affiliation is merely a way to perform a social status. Random's dinner mates, intent on displays of wealth, are thus contrasted to the middle class mentality of production and pursuit of wealth that Random defended in France. Returning to Britain, he discovers these same ideological principles under attack by British citizens. Those at the dinner table who were able to speak authoritatively about foreign affairs from a foreign perspective were in fact rehearsing a cosmopolitan mentality valued by the upper class and meant to distinguish its members from the lower classes. The common method of gaining this distinction was to take the Grand Tour through France and Italy. Over time the Tour came to indicate a means of social control rather than merely a method of gaining worldly knowledge. Terence Bowers explains the cultural phenomenon as "the main form of induction into the nation's elite" and "a shared experience among noblemen. As such, it helped Britain's

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<sup>8</sup> See Duffy's compilation of popular eighteenth-century propaganda images.

noble ranks coalesce into a ‘unified, not a stratified patrician corps,’ which enabled them to assert their collective interests effectively and maintain their dominance at a time when other sectors of society were demanding equal right to active citizenship” (4). In fact, the British upper class’s cosmopolitanism made their loyalty suspect. In order to maintain these cosmopolitan distinctions, the upper class began to insist more and more on French cultural superiority. Consequently, an elaborately coded social dialect emerged around the Grand Tour and European influence: “On tour, an Englishman might display his personal superiority before both Continentals and other Englishmen by despising the best and costliest that Europe could produce; at home nothing English could compare with what he had seen abroad” (Newman 45). This reaction to foreign influence revealed not a paradox in upper class behavior, but a “struggle for status” (Newman 45). Random’s dinner partners are merely enacting an elaborate social code that Random does not understand.

As the eighteenth century progressed, those who found economic success through trade and thus social mobility became more and more likely to take or send their children on the Tour. With the deterioration of the Tour as a means of social marking, the British upper class turned to more and more extravagant means to signify their superiority. Such struggles to differentiate the classes led to “significant alterations in dress, speech, etiquette, taste, intellectual tone, manners, and morality” (Newman 32). In essence, a race to remain fashionable was staged as the lower classes continued to emulate the behaviors of the upper class. Indeed, “the culture of the English bourgeoisie, that of the great unthinking mass of it, was becoming as cosmopolitanized and frenchified as that of the aristocracy...[and] sought cultural distinction and social credit by aping the distinctive

cultural style of the World” (Newman 46). As the middle class “aped” the upper class, the upper class continued to change outward indicators of prestige, turning to the more and more outlandish dress and manners often ridiculed in popular literature of the time.<sup>9</sup> Random, however, is not completing this process of emulation; his experiences in France, divorced from a traditional Grand Tour, have offered Random a different outlook on foreign relations than his upper class counterparts. Motivated by these opposing foreign experiences, he confronts his upper class peers on their French manners and suggests an alternative version of Britishness—one based in the movement against the French influence and associated with the simpler manners Random finds among his middle-class and marginalized friends.

Ultimately, Random’s dislike for the French fashion and culture places him among the middle classes, who harbored a growing distaste for the upper class and French influence. This historical distrust of the upper class often translated into attacks on the elites similar to Random’s observations of upper-class infidelity, bringing the social tension to the forefront. Printed tracts and popular complaints would attack the upper class as weak: “As long as British patricians spoke French among themselves, the claim went, as long as they favoured French clothes, employed French hairdressers and valets, and haunted Parisian salons on the Grand Tour, as long as the taste for French cultural and luxury imports was allowed to put native artists, traders and manufacturers out of business, national distinction would be eroded and national fibre relaxed” (Colley 88). Indeed, France and the British upper class began to be seen as a common enemy and a site of national weakness and the source of a potential “collective domestic moral ruin”

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<sup>9</sup> Hogarth’s prints were perhaps the most popular satirizing French influence and upperclass culture. For a thorough collection of his and other satirical prints see Duffy.



(Newman 67). Seduced by French culture, the French nation, it was believed, would soon be able to control the British state. In this view, the British had much to lose by emulating any facet of the French-dominated European culture.

With this social significance added to the event, Random's dinner party is revealed as a battle to show social hierarchy. The sole Englishman to denounce the French way is one who has not made the Grand Tour and is consequently considered socially inferior. Random's European travel, however, is quite different from the normal Tour; whereas many English travelers were introduced to the inferiority of English art, Random experienced the superiority of British political and material culture. His support of Britain, coupled with evidence of his foreign travel and worldly knowledge, lead Random's dinner mates to speculate that he is foreign born, rather than British or Scottish. Because Random lauds the benefits of British life, he is no longer stigmatized by his English peers but also not accepted as a member of the national elite. Random is still unsuccessful as an English gentleman despite his thoughts and actions that show his loyalty to the English national system. This English system, however, is reclassified as distinctly British in this second London excursion. Indeed, the status category of the "English gentleman" is itself called into question during these experiences; Random's specific loyalties are associated with British simplicity and devotion most easily found in his Scottish and Welsh associates rather than in the performed class consciousness of the elite. Random must now define a new British standard for his identity in order to escape the Francophilic taint of the English elite and maintain his new confidence in the London world.

Ultimately, Random fails financially as well, ending this London visit in prison

for debt, a debt he accrued in his attempts to acquire the outward trappings of the English elite. Here, Random is forced to abandon his pursuit of franchophilic appearance but retains his social confidence. In prison, Random remains able to assist his friends, but he is once again thrown into a world of the margins—his fellow prisoners are composed of other failed Scots. Moreover, Random is only able to gain his release through the help of his Scottish friends, his Uncle Bowling and Strap. Thus, Random enters into the final stages of the novel still insecure in his social position and uncertain in his national affiliations. He has, however, made significant strides towards defining himself and the nation according to mercantile goals and transferring his Scottish sense of loyalty onto a larger British nation.

### 3. Evelina's Internal Journey

As Random's early experiences were shaped by his Scottish heritage, Evelina's experiences are formed by her female gender. As a woman, Evelina is unable to make the same world voyages as Random; she is, however, able to experience a similar range of lifestyles and ideologies within London. In fact, Burney likens the city to the world in the secondary title of the novel—*the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World*. Burney's London is indeed varied; as William Gallerpin notes, the city is characterized as “a ‘world’ caught up in a trajectory of descent, where different classes of people are routinely thrown together in a continuous reminder of their common humanity and in opposition to the hierarchizing tendencies that elsewhere guide the narrative's deliberation” (40). In this “world” Evelina encounters similar socio-economic forces that drive Random in Smollett's narrative. Like Random, Evelina must determine her own identity in terms of these new forces.

These social forces emerge in the form of Evelina's personal interactions with individuals in London. She discovers natural filiations that vie for affiliative attachments in the characters of Madame Duval and the Branghtons. She is also introduced to a number of characters who represent potential affiliative connections; Lord Orville, Sir Clement Willoughby, Captain Mirvan, Mr. Lovel, and Mr. Macartney all represent distinct national perspectives that Evelina may choose to embrace or reject. Evelina's decisions concerning these affiliations become the focus of the narrative. Increasingly alone in the city, Evelina learns to think on her own and decide her own preferred attachments. Within the London world, Evelina decisively rejects national projects based

on prejudice and violence and embraces policies of deferred judgment and shared respect.

### **Evelina Alone**

Evelina visits London on two separate occasions in the narrative. During the first, she attends town with Mrs. Mirvan as a guardian and her daughter Maria as a companion. During the second, she arrives under the care of her grandmother, Madame Duval. In both instances, social observers consider Evelina to be alone and unconnected. During the first visit, Evelina's lack of family connections leave her identity open for speculation; during the second, Evelina remains alone despite her filiations because of her disdain for, and thus distance from, her relations and because of her association with a merchant class whose connections carry less social capital.

In both situations, Evelina's aloneness translates into a lack of protection. Neither Mrs. Mirvan nor Madame Duval can provide Evelina with the protection she needs against the impositions made on her physical person and emotional identity. Mrs. Mirvan, for example, cannot even provide protection from the violent jokes and vulgar humor her husband inflicts on Evelina and others. Duval, on the other hand, does not wish to provide Evelina with protection but instead seeks to place Evelina into circumstances that make Evelina even more susceptible to masculine advances and more open to undesirable marriage unions.

Because females cannot offer her protection, Evelina seeks out a proper male guardian in the city. Indeed, her judgments of her surroundings at her first ball in the city center on observations of men and calculations of their ability to embody her personal ideal and to provide protection against men with undesirable traits. Evelina quickly

dismisses Mr. Lovel as a fop and thus both undesirable as a social companion and too effeminate to provide protection. Evelina finds Orville to be much closer to her own desired identity and observes that “the rank of Lord Orville was his least recommendation, his understanding and his manners being far more distinguished” (Burney 34). She later learns, however, that Lord Orville had insulted her at the ball and thus is identified as a threat rather than a potential protector. Evelina immediately disassociates herself from Lord Orville and instead hopes to discover the identity of her unnamed “defender” against Lord Orville’s insults of her behavior (Burney 37). At the next social dance, Evelina learns that Willoughby was her protector; however, Willoughby proves to be far more threatening to her ideal and own identity than any other male in the novel.

Willoughby thus becomes attacker and protector, a man too prying and self-centered to be Evelina’s ideal but also too cultured to be entirely othered from it. The danger of Willoughby’s doubled position is portrayed in Evelina’s carriage ride with Willoughby. Seeking protection from the embarrassment of association with the vulgar Branghtons, Evelina accepts Willoughby’s offer of ride home from the opera. Willoughby then proceeds to direct his driver away from Evelina’s destination and to force his affections onto Evelina. Alone with Willoughby, Evelina is at his disposal now more than ever; her fears that Willoughby will murder or rape her are an accurate understanding of her vulnerability. Willoughby has used his ability to protect Evelina as an opportunity for his own attack on her virtue and identity.

The only remaining male protector for Evelina in the city is Captain Mirvan. His protection, however, is only provided when it serves his own interests. At the second

dance, Evelina hopes to find reprieve from Willoughby's attentions from the assistance of Captain Mirvan. He proves unhelpful and uninterested in his position as a possible protector of Evelina; when Willoughby applies to the Captain to persuade Evelina to dance, his only answer is that Evelina "is her own mistress" (Burney 44). Evelina is then left in the care of Mrs. Mirvan who proves unable to resist Willoughby's persuasions; Evelina is forced to submit to Willoughby's desire to dance because her protection was inadequate to deter his threat. Though of little help in this early situation, the Captain becomes "very suddenly, so warmly my friend" (Burney 55) when Madame Duval enters their acquaintance. Against Duval, the Captain is willing to defend Evelina because it furthers his own interests. He limits Madame Duval's ability to direct Evelina merely to limit Duval's power rather than to protect Evelina. These attempts at protection, however, serve the Captain's own agenda against Evelina's grandmother and the French rather than Evelina.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, the only man that Evelina trusts, her guardian Mr. Villars, is absent. As such, he is unable to provide any real protection against threats in the city. Moreover, his advice in letters forces Evelina into company and identities she would wish to avoid. Villars urges Evelina to act with kindness towards Madame Duval and "conduct yourself towards her with all respect and deference due to so near a relation" (Burney 56). In this advice, Villars proves himself unreliable as a protector; his desires for Evelina's future social and monetary advancement conflict with her own present wish to escape negative influences. Moreover, his continued trust in the family as a natural authority suggests that

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<sup>10</sup> In this manner, Captain Mirvan's protection against Duval's French threat proves unsuccessful. Rather than protecting Evelina and promoting British interests, Mirvan is more concerned with violently limiting the French.

Villars is also unconnected to the search for a national affiliation. Thus, Evelina is cast into a world where trust in men is unsure and her own state makes her vulnerable to their desires.

This vulnerability, however, is not without positive consequences. Because she is so alone and unconnected, Evelina is able to evaluate what sort of protection she desires, from whom to gain such protection, and against what forces she requires it. Irene Tucker introduces this freedom of evaluation as a paradox of Evelina's orphaned state: "while her unconnectedness is what allows her to be seized as the stuff out of which others' self-production is made, Evelina nonetheless needs to imagine an absence of connection (at least of connection to men) as the foundation of her own identity" (429). Evelina gains a certain amount of inner, intellectual control by her orphaned position. Though susceptible to physical, outer impositions on her time and actions, Evelina remains capable of dominating her own judgment and does not adhere to any inherited mode of thinking.

### **French Threats**

Evelina's ideological independence is consistently threatened by false or shallow representations of national virtue and prestige. In particular, French influence threatens to corrupt Evelina's innocent virtue by tempting her to accept deceptive representations as an ideal identity. Evelina naturally exhibits a strong moral aversion to such constructions; however, these threats are represented most strongly in Madame Duval—the only character in London with a legitimate authority over Evelina's behavior. As Evelina's closest relative, Duval can demand Evelina's acquiescence to any of her requests. Moreover, because Duval has inherited a fortune, Evelina must submit to her demands in

order to provide for her own financial future. For these reasons, Duval remains a legitimate force in Evelina's identity-constructions despite Evelina's own dislike for Duval's behavior.

One of Duval's most terrifying impositions on Evelina is her repeated threat to take Evelina to France. For Evelina, traveling to France would be particularly demoralizing because of her family's tragedies associated with that country. Indeed, from the start of the novel, France is aligned with insincerity and deception. Because of these associations, Leanne Mauna argues, France is a place to which Evelina cannot travel without harming her virtue. The country is first associated with these negative qualities through its depiction as the place where Evelina's grandfather exiled himself after his marriage to Madame Duval and where her mother became entrapped in her unfortunate marriage (Mauna 104). It is also the place where Evelina's father hides his own guilt for abandoning Evelina's mother by sequestering the girl whom he supposes is a result of that marriage, a decision that both conceals Belmont's guilt from the world and continues to allow him to be deceived in his daughter's identity (Mauna 105). Finally, it is the place where social identity itself is unstable. Madame Duval tells stories of underclass women passing for gentility and is able to perpetrate this fraud herself.

In addition, Madame Duval's national affiliations are unclear. Her affected French accent, dress, and loyalties conceal her English birth. Because Duval is both French and English, upper class and working class, family and other, Evelina finds Duval upsetting to all notions of social hierarchy and convention. To Evelina, Duval "represents the threat of dual identity, an identity that challenges Evelina's way of seeing the world. If France is a dangerous land, then it is especially dangerous to encounter a woman from this



country like Madame Duval, who is not quite French and yet not quite British” (Mauna 106). Duval’s dualities displace beliefs in stable class, social and political structures. Indeed, Duval represents the quintessential other because she deconstructs social structures and displays the negative traits of both sides of her dual identities. Madame Duval, consequently, brings instability to Britain, attempts to force Evelina into false representations of herself, and threatens to connect this deception with British national identity. Her ambiguous identity threatens Evelina both personally and nationally; it threatens to impose a similar instability on Evelina’s personal identity and also attacks conventional concepts of national difference. Like Duval, Evelina, too, could lose her British virtue and become “polluted” by “French phrases, habits, and dress” (Mauna 111). By othering Duval’s duality, deception, and affected French airs, Evelina determines that what is British should also be honest, simple, virtuous, and natural. Moreover, Evelina and Britain become associated with chosen affiliations and against traditional notions of filial attachments. Evelina and her British ideal depend more on Mr. Villars and Mrs. Mirvan than on her blood relations. The entrance of Madame Duval into the World of London thus indicates the potential for the London world to usurp Evelina’s affiliate attachments and Britain’s new unions—especially since the histories of Evelina’s family and England’s past are intimately related and connected to France.

Madame Duval also imposes herself upon Evelina’s existing identity. While under her grandmother’s care, Evelina’s ability to make her own decisions is limited. Forced to mind her grandmother’s wishes because of filial obligations and Duval’s fortune, Evelina cannot refuse Duval’s requests. She attends the opera with the Branghtons during her first London visit because Duval threatens to cut her out of her

will. Likewise, Evelina returns to London with Duval because she cannot afford to offend her grandmother. During this second visit, Evelina's freedoms are more fully restricted. No longer able to use the excuse of competing obligations to the Mirvans, Evelina's actions are completely controlled by Duval. When, for example, Evelina refuses Mr. Smith's invitation to a dance, Duval is able to force her to attend. Moreover, though Evelina continually attempts to distance herself physically from the Branghtons, their friends, and their society, Duval repeatedly forces Evelina to join their social events by reminding her of filial duties. Duval and her demands display a situation when family duty and filial love are undesirable and less advantageous for Evelina and thus the nation.

But Duval's impositions over Evelina's do not end with her insistence on interacting with vulgar society; she also uses her own vulgarity to impose her desires on Evelina. This vulgarity takes the form of violence. Prone to rages and emotional displays, Duval often expresses her frustrations and dissatisfactions in acts of violence. Though these acts are normally directed at servants or her persecutors, Duval does not exclude Evelina from her fury. In the most extreme of these instances, Duval slaps Evelina to express her humiliation at being drug from her carriage, bound, and thrown in a ditch by Captain Mirvan disguised as a robber. Rather than accept Evelina's assistance, Duval slaps her and accuses her of abandoning her to her attackers (Burney 149). This act, like Duval's other mannerisms, continues to separate Evelina from her relation. "Surprised and confounded at the blow" (149), Evelina cannot understand or accept such violent displays into her own identity or any acceptable identity. Duval's violence directed even at her friends and family confirms Duval's otherness and inappropriate representation of personal or national identity.

### **Guardian of Britain**

Evelina, aware of the threat in Madame Duval's influence, seeks protection from her desires. Fittingly, her guardian at the time of Duval's arrival is Captain Mirvan, a man who violently opposes all things French. Mirvan expresses great joy in thwarting any of Duval's wishes and thus provides some amount of protection to Evelina by allowing her to escape some of Duval's attentions. Indeed, in many ways, Mirvan succeeds in his role as a British protector; he silences Duval and reduces her ability to act within London and the English countryside (Mauna 112). Moreover, he succeeds in establishing British, and his own personal, dominance; his use of violence repels those he dislikes as well as any French manners. His violence, however, is indiscriminate and denigrates those connected to him; by bullying his own wife and daughter and subjecting them to his vulgarity, Mirvan also argues for male dominance over women (Newton 51). Thus, as the Captain asserts his superior power over Duval, he also asserts his power over everyone else, including Evelina and her national ideal.

But Evelina is not content to willingly accept Captain Mirvan's help in order to protect herself against Duval. The Captain and Madame Duval are equally repulsive to her, and Evelina's descriptions of both characters in her letters to Villars are equally negative. Even as she complains of Madame Duval's crass manners, she condemns Mirvan's behavior and wonders at his family's joy at his return, commenting, "If he had spent his whole life abroad, I should have supposed they might rather have been thankful than sorrowful" (Burney 40). Evelina, feeling the Captain's own impositions on her will and control over her actions, wonders at his wife and daughter's ability to follow his lead

with little complaint. In her observations of the Mirvan family, Evelina discovers the negative consequences of filial obligation that she has escaped as an orphan. Unused to such required deferment to a patriarchal family head, Evelina sees Mirvan's authority much as she views Duval's—as inappropriate means to enforce submission and loyalty.

Mirvan's inappropriateness is signified by an excessive patriotism. He insists that anything not English should not only be set apart as other but also actively despised. Included in this despised category is most art and high culture, which particularly rankles Evelina's sense of propriety. To Evelina art transcends national boundaries and is not be included in the contest of identities. Her love of the opera, music and theatre with continental roots are all separated from her dislike for Madam Duval's Frenchness; indeed, if anything, Evelina searches for acceptance in circles that have high taste in artistic works.<sup>11</sup> Captain Mirvan's negative reactions to art only on the grounds of its international influences reveals a lack of true judgment and discernment on the part of the Captain. Unable to see beyond national associations, he produces some of the most immoral acts and opinions in the narrative. Indeed, the Captain, “too xenophobic, too extreme in his beliefs,...is capable of producing some of the most socially embarrassing moments for Evelina and her group”; likewise, his actions threaten his power by “causing [the reader] to question the righteousness of all of his actions” (Mauna 120). The Captain, though a protector of British interest, also undermines British interests by his immoral patriotic extremism; Evelina rejects Mirvan's jingoism and instead sees such violence as a danger to herself and the nation.

Moreover, Mirvan grants trust and friendship to others based solely on similar

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<sup>11</sup> This affiliation with high artistic taste is underscored by Madame Duval's undifferentiating tastes and propensity to rejoice in low culture.

displays of patriotism. Indeed, Mirvan makes hasty character judgments that include a particularly low opinion of any Briton that does not immediately agree with his xenophobia. Similarly, he dismisses women's opinions with little discretion. When Maria or Evelina are asked their opinion of a play, event, or spectacle, Mirvan immediately derides their response without listening to the sense of their judgments. For example, when the two girls give positive responses to the Pantheon, Mirvan claims their answers are informed by "the fashion" rather than their own rational thought (Burney 108). Mirvan's dismissal of Evelina's opinion is particularly ironic since her responses to London's entertainment are, in fact, far more nuanced than Mirvan's own. Mixed with both admiration and satiric observation, Evelina's impressions of the city, as Straub argues, "bespeak detachment and a controlling judgment rather than blind complicity" (91). Thus, Mirvan's dismissal of her opinions and thoughts reveal another level of Evelina's distaste for him. Confidant in her judgments of high art, Evelina finds herself a target of Mirvan's prejudice. Exerting the true extent of her powers of judgment, Evelina determines that Mirvan's opinion of women is a product of prejudice.

Evelina's dislike of the Captain is not to claim his actions and views are completely antithetical to Evelina's ideal Britishness. Indeed, the Captain's influence over others in the novel immediately complicates his political role within it as well. The Captain is aligned with all of Evelina's favorite and most admired friends and those she considers closest to her British ideal. The other characters may not agree with the Captain's extreme and very public actions, but they do agree with the private provocations of such action. Mrs. Mirvan, Maria, and Lady Howard all allow for his behavior and attempt to reclassify it as part of a British character through their own

politeness. Moreover, Lord Orville agrees with several of the Captain's observations on culture and society. For example, the Captain responds to the exhibits at Cox's Museum by asking about the utility of the devices, claiming, "I'm no Frenchman, and should relish something more substantial" (Burney 78). The Captain aligns his desire for utility to his British nationality; later in the novel, Lord Orville agrees, mourning the fact that the "ingenious" displays at the Museum were "turned to no better account; but its purport is so frivolous, so very remote from all aim at instruction or utility, that the sight of so fine a shew, only leaves a regret on the mind, that so much work, and so much ingenuity, should not be better bestowed" (Burney 111). Both men, though in very different manners, agree that the exhibit is faulty because of its lack of utility. Similarly, Villars agrees with several of Mirvan's ideological assessments; in particular, they both distrust London society. The Captain repeatedly finds fault in the city and its manners. Villars writes to Evelina that, "however I may differ from Captain Mirvan in other respects, yet my opinion of the town, its manners, inhabitants, and diversions is much upon a level with his own. Indeed, it is the general harbour of fraud and of folly, of duplicity and of impertinence" (Burney 117). Here, the Captain and Villars both find the city threatening to the morality of the British nation. Thus, Evelina's primary protectors, while behaving differently and more privately than Mirvan, do agree with his opinions on simplicity, utility, and, in a way, xenophobia.

Thus, Mirvan's opinions are condoned viewpoints of the British nation on many points; his violent actions caused by his opinions, however, are not a part of that ideal

image.<sup>12</sup> Ultimately, Evelina does not object to Captain Mirvan's disdain for Madame Duval or the French; she does object to his actions and their results, which place Evelina in uncomfortable situations and force her to empathize with Duval. For example, Evelina is forced into compliance in the case of the carriage robbery staged by Mirvan and Willoughby. She does not necessarily object to the joke; in fact, she finds it somewhat amusing and even admits she was "almost compelled...to laugh" (Burney 152). Evelina, like the Captain, finds Duval's exaggerated reactions to his persecution amusing; however, unlike the Captain, Evelina must exert herself to calm Madame Duval and show her devotion as a granddaughter. With his teasing, the Captain has forced Evelina into a dangerous spot; she, having seen the extent of the Captain's violence, must stand up to him to practice her moral beliefs and protect her relation. At the same time, Evelina is forced to stand up in defense of someone whom she does not trust and whose influence she finds distasteful. The Captain thus forces Evelina into duplicity herself—she must support both Madame Duval and Captain Mirvan at the same time. In this position, Evelina is susceptible to appearing and acting false. The nation also becomes susceptible to such falsehood through the Captain's violent behavior. Because Mirvan provokes others in the name of Britain, the reader is forced to side against this British interest in order to value humanity. Though Madame Duval and French influence remain the primary threat to a British identity, Captain Mirvan's violent xenophobia proves incompatible with the novel's image of an ideal Briton.

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<sup>12</sup> This is a distinction that Willoughby does not recognize as he joins the Captain in his violent practical jokes against Madame Duval. His hopes of reaching Evelina through this friendship ultimately fail as does his image of proper British behavior.

## **Othering Language and Travel**

Having chosen to define herself against the violence of Mirvan and Duval, Evelina must determine her own standing on the question of French influence. Rejecting both xenophobia and French superiority, Evelina creates a more complicated understanding of her own, and Britain's ideal, international opinion. To reach this understanding, Evelina evaluates the behavior of the characters around her, expressing admiration for some and disappointment in others. To signal Evelina's reactions, Burney uses language and dialects to underscore the characters' positive and negative associations. Indeed, language becomes a signifier itself of characters' placements in Burney's British society.

The Captain's language, for example, is continually ridiculed for its use of sea-phrases, colloquialisms, and violence. Evelina writes to Villars that she has difficulty in replicating all of his speech, partially because of his use of unfamiliar sea terminology but also because "for almost every other word he utters, is accompanied by an oath" (Burney 141). Evelina, writing to her guardian, cannot produce these oaths without distancing herself from her own and Villars' sense of morality and propriety. As the Captain complains of the incomprehensible use of French phrases in everyday speech, so too is he incomprehensible because of his use of professional jargon or profanity. Moreover, the use of such technical jargon reflects Mirvan's ungentlemanly behavior. As John Barrell argues, the gentleman's social power rested on his ability to speak a language "universally intelligible" (34); the Captain's incomprehensibility, then, reveals that he is divorced from a gentleman's disinterested observation. His use of trade language and jargon portrays the Captain as a man deeply invested in his own, and his profession's, interests. While these interests aid the state by repelling the French, they



also repel some of his fellow Britons and reveal a narrow intellect.

Mr. Lovel highlights this uncultured speech by claiming that Captain Mirvan's language identifies him as other to London, and therefore to British, culture. He accuses Mirvan of being a member of "the gentlemen of the ocean" who hold "a set of ideas, as well as a dialect, so opposite to *ours*, that it is by no means surprising *they* should regard London as a mere *shew*, that may be seen by being *looked at*" (Burney 397). Lovel here capitalizes on the distance the Captain creates in his behavior towards London culture and the distinctions of manners Evelina herself notes. His criticism suggests that the Captain, despite his loyal British bravado, is actually not an ideal Briton in speech. Mirvan's corruption of the language, like his overly violent behavior, actually distances Mirvan from a moral and pure British culture. However, Lovel's attempts to criticize the Captain hold little weight because his own language distances him from British society; his speech is as corrupt as Mirvan's. Peppering his sentences with French phrases, Lovel characterizes himself as a fop, susceptible to the same overindulgence of French influence as Duval. His preference for a foreign tongue reveals an underlying belief in French superiority over the British. Both he and the Captain, then, prove inferior subjects through their language. Indeed, their linguistic differences have given Gerald Newman cause to label them as two of the novel's primary villains. He claims that their language and characteristics are a threat "to the moral fabric of the nation itself" (137). Their negative portrayals (one as a "pattern John Bull," the other as a "pattern London man of fashion") are displayed visually on the page through their speech. As these two men use the English language, they distort it, thereby threatening to also distort British culture and nationhood.

Though his own language is suspect, Lovel does understand the implications language plays in British society as a class marker. He succeeds in offending Evelina by suggesting she is too uneducated to understand French (Burney 83). Evelina's anger at his supposition indicates that she too understands that the knowledge of the French language is a social marker and not merely a foreign influence. This understanding and her characterization of the language, however, become quite complex as the novel proceeds. This changing definition of French language and French influence is exemplified in Evelina's altered perceptions of Monsieur Du Bois, her grandmother's French companion. Evelina first introduces him in her letters as inferior because of his ignorance of the English language. She suggests that his ability to function in society is incomplete because he can misinterpret his surroundings, as she suspects he does when he first meets the Captain and interprets an insult to be a compliment (Burney 58). Du Bois' linguistic ignorance limits his social capabilities and makes him more open to Mirvan's xenophobic violence. Moreover, Du Bois' inability to speak to anyone besides Duval links him fully with her negative characteristics and leads to Evelina's basic ignorance of him during her first stay in London.

However, during her second sojourn in the city, Evelina reconsiders Du Bois because of a change in her social surroundings. Now, Du Bois "was the only man of the party to whom, voluntarily, I ever addressed myself. He is civil and respectful, and I have found nobody else so since I left Howard Grove" (Burney 195). Du Bois, now classified by his manners rather than his language and understanding, proves more desirable than Evelina's cousins and their friends. Moreover, in a new class situation, Evelina prefers his French interests to the uneducated tastes of her cousins. In order to allow for this new

friendship, however, Evelina must also reexamine her linguistic affiliations. She tells Villars that Du Bois's "English is very bad, but I prefer it to speaking French myself, which I dare not venture to do. I converse with him frequently, both to disengage myself from others, and to oblige Madame Duval" (Burney 195). Du Bois may be raised above his comical counterparts during this London visit but Evelina still refuses to accept his French influences. Instead, she refuses to speak French with him though his English is difficult to understand. Indeed, Evelina claims that she "dare not" speak French. As Burney's British exemplar, Evelina cannot be shown in the novel speaking French, for such an act would affiliate her with Duval and Lovel. Thus, French remains an important social marker, but one unusable by the heroine threatened by French filiations. A paradox emerges in the novel, then, wherein French influence is both necessary as a class marker and threatening as a national one.

We are reminded of this paradox in Burney's use of foreign travel as another class marker in the novel. Foreign travel, like knowledge of the French language, was acknowledged throughout Great Britain as a sign of social prestige. Only those wealthy enough to afford the trip were able to complete a Grand Tour of Europe. During the time of *Evelina's* writing, such foreign travel was becoming more and more accessible to the merchant classes. Thus, foreign travel was losing much of its exclusive signifying power as the newly wealthy vied with the traditional elites for social power and prestige. Thus, foreign travel, like French influence, indicates the possibility for expressing false superiority. For example, Madame Duval has not only traveled but lived abroad and supposes that this fact should elevate her in the minds of the British. When her French manners instead meet with scorn from Captain Mirvan and Willoughby, she is taken

aback and confused. She responds to her failed attempts to claim superiority in London with anger towards the system and its changes that now threaten to exclude her just as she is given a chance to benefit from the old hierarchy of travel.

Indeed, Madame Duval still sees foreign travel as a positive influence and wants to take Evelina to France to teach her “proper” manners; Evelina writes that Duval “talked very much of taking me to Paris, and said I greatly wanted the polish of a French education. She lamented that I had been brought up in the country, which, she observed, had given me a very *bumpkinish air*” (Burney 69). With this desire, Evelina faces a real threat. As she cannot be represented speaking French, she cannot leave the British isles in the narrative either. To travel outside of Great Britain would mean relinquishing her identity to those forces she has termed conflicting to British values and becoming entrapped in her family’s history in France. Indeed, the manners that Duval claims she needs are in direct opposition to Evelina’s own ideas of proper manners. Evelina has tested these manners and her morality by traveling to London and experiencing such conflicting ideals; to travel any further would indicate a loss of identity or re-association of her morals with the less desirable French or European ones.

But again such a simple negative view towards foreign travel is too simplistic. Burney also sees it as an appropriate source of social prestige—but only if the journey has been completed carefully. Madame Duval is ironically the source of this distinction; she asks Lord Orville and Willoughby if they have traveled abroad. Both men answer yes and Duval’s response to their answer identifies the effect she believes foreign travel should elicit. She tells Lord Orville that she believed he had traveled and enjoyed it “because you look so like a gentleman” (Burney 62). Meanwhile she tells Willoughby

that his being abroad for three years is “very surprising! I should never have thought it: however, I dare say you only kept company with the English” (Burney 62). Duval voices a concern that foreign travel lacks purpose and values because the traveling Englishmen were using the travels as a chance to carouse together in a different locale rather than learn the manners of an international diplomat. Thus, foreign travel could provide a man like Lord Orville knowledge, virtue, and understanding but could also teach a man like Willoughby to practice immorality and deceit.

Regardless of how or where, Willoughby has learned deceit and practices it with far more agility than Madame Duval. Willoughby’s deceit is represented in linguistic distinctions quite different from those that distinguish the other negative characters in the novel. Willoughby’s language aligns him with the virtuous and upper class characters of the novel; his actions, however, are increasingly immoral. Evelina first notices this distinction when she agrees to ride home from the opera in his carriage. There, Willoughby imposes himself on her and directs his coachman to take a roundabout drive to Evelina’s residence. While his actions threaten Evelina’s reputation, his words do not. In fact, his excessive praise of Evelina elicits her to respond to his duplicity: “if you did not talk in one language, and think in another, you would never suppose that I could give credit to praise so very much above my dessert” (Burney 99). Willoughby’s language indicates potential insincerity and immorality to Evelina; indeed, his words are far too poetic for Evelina’s simple and honest ideal. Yet even with these strikes, Willoughby is still able to practice his deceit in such a manner that Evelina is never completely disgusted with him and even enjoys his company and linguistic ability on many occasions. Comparing Willoughby to her male acquaintances during her second visit to

London, Evelina declares that “it is true, no man can possibly pay me greater compliments, or make more fine speeches, than Sir Clement Willoughby, yet his language, though too flowery, is always that of a gentleman, and his address and manners are so very superior to those of the inhabitants of this house, that to make any comparison between him and Mr. Smith would be extremely unjust” (Burney 179). Evelina here distinguishes the affects of class difference in male speech. Willoughby’s addresses are more acceptable because of his language, which reveals his good “breeding”; Evelina’s objections to it are its excessive ornamentation, not its form. In this distinction, Burney argues that Willoughby’s knowledge of French influence and foreign travel, though a threat, are preferable to a lack of such knowledge which evidences a lower class.

### **Class Discrimination**

Burney thus turns her evaluation of language and travel away from national difference and towards a class distinction. Evelina chooses to identify with the traditional elite social rules and cosmopolitan sensibilities rather than the vulgarities and narrow experiences of her merchant class relatives. Evelina no longer sees the foreign influence manifest in Duval as her primary threat, but instead fears her lower-class associations. Indeed, Madame Duval encapsulates this threat as well because she worked as a bar maid before she married Evelina’s grandfather. Duval now threatens Evelina on multiple levels as she attempts to draw Evelina closer to her lower-class family. Her proposed trip to France becomes far less distressing than Duval’s insistence that Evelina marry her cousin. While Evelina saw little chance in avoiding a trip to Paris if Duval truly insisted, Evelina refuses to even consider Duval’s marriage plan, despite the possibility that such a refusal could

result in the same loss of Duval's inheritance.

As with Evelina's othering of Duval and Mirvan, her distaste for the Branghtons originates in their refusal to acknowledge her intelligence, a belief that immediately places Evelina at odds with her family. Indeed, Evelina's cousins find enjoyment in seeking out London amusements, which Evelina has not experienced, in order to point out her rural origins. In doing so, the Branghtons refuse to grant Evelina any cultural knowledge. Consequently, the cousins fail to ask directions from their "country cousin" when they arrive at the opera despite the fact that Evelina is the only person present to have previously attended one; because she is from the country, Evelina's cousins assume she is more inexperienced than they. Similarly, her family believes the world is contained within London, whereas Evelina sees the city as a means of interacting with a larger world. Evelina's uncle, for example, "does not seem to want a common understanding, though he is very contracted and prejudiced: he has spent his whole time in the city, and I believe feels a great contempt for those who reside elsewhere" (Burney 69). Though a relatively intelligent man, Mr. Branghton remains ignorant because he refuses to look beyond commercial life of London. Moreover, his prejudice, though not violent, reveals a lack of cosmopolitan understanding and includes the country-raised Evelina in it discriminations. This prejudice is particularly unmerited because Evelina's cultural and artistic sensibilities are far more refined than her family's. Indeed, Evelina shows a far greater understanding of the opera than the Branghtons. While they are unable to understand the opera and "made no allowances for the customs, or even for the language of another country, but formed all their remarks upon comparisons with the English theatre" (Burney 93), Evelina is able to recognize the quality of the music. Where her

cousins fail to see the cultural value in the event and limit their understanding to London entertainment, Evelina is able to derive worldly understanding from the event. Thus, while London represents the world for Evelina, it remains a confined, British space for her cousins who fail to partake in the worldly affairs there. The Branghtons are unable to realize that England and London is not the world in reality and should not be compared equally with foreign tastes like the opera.

Understanding, in this manner, is linked to class culture rather than to place of birth and experience. Evelina's superior, worldly sensibility is thus tried in her second stay in London. The world has altered along with her social circles. She writes to her companion from the first visit, "Oh Maria, London now seems no longer the same place where I lately enjoyed so much happiness; everything is new and strange to me; even the town itself has not the same aspect; --my situation so altered! My home so different!— my companions so changed!" (Burney 173). Evelina has entered into another, more vulgar, sphere of the London world and must once again adjust to her surroundings.

In this world, men again present both a potential for protection and a threat to Evelina's safety. Now, however, their threats are associated with the class affiliations of Evelina's romantic pursuers. Judith Newton draws a distinction between genteel and mercantile romantic pursuits; she notes that "even in behavior, men of the ruling class imply not that Evelina is merchandise but, rather, that she is sexual prey. The distinction now may seem nonexistent, but evidently for Burney it is less invidious that Evelina be identified as goods" (36). Indeed, Evelina holds her merchant-class suitors in more contempt than her upper-class ones. While she smarted at being considered disposable by the ruling class, she is even more repulsed by the mercenary offers made by Mr. Smith



and the young Mr. Branghton. These two men attempt to purchase Evelina's devotion, buying her ball tickets, carriages, and offering to pay for her admission into social events. In return, the men expect Evelina's attention in conversation, dance and, ultimately, marriage. Evelina, however, repeatedly rejects these attentions and begins to gain a certain amount of power and success in deterring their attention. Mr. Smith succeeds in buying her a ticket to a ball, but he does not succeed in dancing with her. Evelina uses her superior knowledge of city manners, learned during her first London visit, to repel Smith's advances: "I should at last have been obliged to submit, had I not fortunately recollected the affair of Mr. Lovel, and told my persecutor that it was impossible I should dance with him, even if I wished it, as I had refused several persons in his absence" (Burney 225). Evelina has learned to use the social system that caused her so much embarrassment and agony earlier to spurn the advances of unwanted suitors. Her greater understanding of upper-class social decorum ultimately gives her the upper hand within her new circle.

Her ability to judge, then, remains intact despite her lack of like-minded companions. Even without Maria and Mrs. Mirvan, Evelina is able to act with some decorum and to make judgments concerning the art, entertainment, and company around her. For example, Evelina chooses to associate with Du Bois rather than with her vulgar family. In this movement, Burney shows the merchant class to be a more serious threat to Evelina's identity than a French connection. But Evelina also learns that class affiliation is not an easy measure of manners and virtue. Even during her first London stay, unmannerly and immoral upper-class men affront her and cause her discomfort. For example, Evelina meets a man in a public area that stares inappropriately at her; when she

learns that this man is a Lord—Lord Merton—Evelina exclaims, “Lordship!—how extraordinary! that a nobleman, accustomed, in all probability to the first rank of company in the kingdom, from his earliest infancy, can possibly be deficient in good manners, however faulty in morals and principles.” (Burney 107). Having interacted with Willoughby and seen the duplicity between his words and actions, Evelina has begun to question the morality of certain upper-class characters. Her first encounter with Lord Merton, however, suggests that Willoughby’s behavior is more widespread than she had previously believed. Evelina does, however, retain a preference for and belief in proper social behavior. Though she no longer expects to discover it in every man she meets, she does continue to seek out gentlemen who exhibit qualities of polished manners and honest concern for others’ well-being.

Willoughby ultimately fails to meet Evelina’s requirements and his actions soon join ranks with Lord Merton’s shocking behavior during Evelina’s second London journey. His behavior towards Evelina changes when he learns of her filial connections with the merchant class, and Evelina is no longer able to classify his behavior as gentlemanly. Evelina attributes his change to her own change in social positions. She writes:

this unrestrained curiosity, that I would not expect from a man, who when he pleases can be so well-bred...He seems disposed to think that the alteration in my companions authorizes an alteration in his manners. It is true, he has always treated me with uncommon freedom, but never before with so disrespectful an abruptness. This observation...of his *changing with the tide*, has sunk him more in my opinion, than any other part of his conduct. (Burney 203)

Evelina finds that Willoughby is more deceptive and immoral than she had previously thought; his treatment of her earlier had less to do with moral objections to mistreating her but with a concern for the consequences of pursuing an upper-class woman. Now, as Evelina appears within the merchant class, Willoughby treats her as beneath himself and thus more easily attainable and no longer restrains his pursuit in any manner. After this realization of Willoughby's character, Evelina is far more assertive in her rejection of him. Though earlier his gentlemanly behavior required an answering decorum, Evelina is now also less restrained in her rebukes towards his advances. Moreover, whereas Evelina had earlier placed Willoughby above her lower-class suitors, this distinction now disappears. Virtue and manners rather than class alone determine how Evelina treats her suitors and whom she will allow to associate with her.

Evelina also begins to reevaluate her assessment of the lower-class circle she now moves in. Though she continues to despise the company of her relations, she feels differently about their boarder, Macartney. Evelina reads Macartney according to his own merits, virtues, and behaviors. Her opinion does not take into account her cousins' views on Mr. Macartney, who refer to him as "nothing but a poor Scotch poet" and deride him as one of many Scotchmen who "only come here for what they can get" (Burney 177). Even as Burney furthers the stereotype of the Scottish, melancholy poet, she also forces her narrator to look beyond his appearance. When Evelina discovers and halts Macartney's plans for suicide, she reacts with compassion for his problems and wishes him escape from the prejudice of her cousins: she writes, "I cannot imagine what can induce him to remain with this unfeeling family, where he is, most unworthily, despised for being poor, and, most illiberally, detested for being a Scotchman" (Burney 179).

Evelina's complaints against her family are especially evident of the changes in her own social positions. In her previous visit, Evelina had attempted to avoid French influence and earlier in the same visit has disparaged lower-class manners. Here, she finds that judging one based on their economic status and national origin is unjust. In fact, Evelina actively resists these judgments as she repeatedly joins forces with Macartney and complains, "how much does my disgust for these people increase my pity for poor Mr. Macartney. I will not see them when I can avoid so doing; but I am determined to take every opportunity in my power, to shew civility to this unhappy man, whose misfortunes, with this family, only render him an object of scorn" (Burney 193). Evelina, thus, decides to affiliate herself with the poorer, foreign man, rather than her own family connections.<sup>13</sup> This decision of affiliation also holds import in the narrative because it marks one of the first and few moments when Evelina withholds judgment about a character until she gains more information about his state. Macartney is ultimately deemed virtuous and well-mannered, and Evelina's patience allows him to assert his morality. Thus, Evelina reveals that she does not place all lower class characters beneath herself and unable to embody the national ideal.

Evelina's sense of class distinction takes one final blow during her second London visit. Lord Orville, her icon of genteel virtue and manners, also proves deceitful. Evelina receives a note from Lord Orville that addresses her in an inappropriate and ungentlemanly manner. Evelina takes this as a revelation of his character and resolves to

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<sup>13</sup> Evelina later discovers that Macartney is a closer relation to her than her uncle and cousins and that his parents are both English citizens. These two facts undermine her realizations concerning the unreliability of class status to indicate virtue but also deconstructs the national stereotypes presented by the Broughtons. Ultimately, however, Evelina begins to focus on individual morality and behavior rather than specific social classifications while making her character judgments.

withhold even positive judgment in the future. She tells Villars:

perhaps I have rather reason to rejoice than to grieve, since this affair has shown me his real disposition and removed that partiality, which, covering his every imperfection, left only his virtues and good qualities exposed to view. Had the deception continued much longer, had my mind received any additional prejudice in his favor who knows whither my mistaken ideas might have led me? (Burney 238)

Evelina has learned that class distinction, as well as hasty judgment, is what is truly unstable in the world. In order to avoid deceit and deception, one must maintain distance from the world and those who live within it. Moreover, prejudice, either to benefit or harm another, should be avoided at all costs in order to judge properly.

Thus, Evelina has become an independent thinker. In London without the backing of any like-minded friends, she is able to assert and trust her opinions. More importantly, she has learned to think beyond conventional boundaries provided by a larger social hierarchy. Instead, her personal judgments take precedence and determine how she judges her surroundings. Britain and British character, then, are aligned with reserve and judgment free from prejudice, a virtue continually praised in the novel. Villars and Lady Howard, Evelina's advisors, both encourage one another to have minds "superior to being governed by prejudices" (Burney 124). Likewise, those characters whose manners and virtues are immediately disassociated from a British ideal—Duval, Lovel, and Mirvan—are those most associated with prejudice. Moreover, Burney underscores the need for mental reserve and withheld judgment by removing her narrator from London and the World. Madame Duval has relinquished her control over Evelina as have the Branghtons.

Evelina has escaped these exterior threats to her identity, but also the interior threats of her growing prejudices. Armed with renewed virtue and a conception of Britishness as straightforward, rational, and unprejudiced judgment, Evelina moves from the London world to that of Bristol; indeed, she never returns to London, no longer needing the lessons of the world. Evelina, having established her intellectual abilities returns to the country with a more complete social understanding.

In her new setting, however, Evelina continues to practice her lessons on prejudice. She again finds immorality and bad manners in the upper class. Her new social circle, consisting of Lady Louisa, Mr. Coverly, Lord Merton, and Mr. Lovel, is filled with prejudiced characters that treat her poorly because of her inferior social position. Finding herself the victim of prejudice, Evelina removes herself from society as much as she can, referring to herself as the “Nobody” of Lovel’s criticism (Burney 288). Though Evelina has established the immorality of prejudice in herself and others, she remains unable to combat it through action. In this new situation, Evelina again turns to men to find an ideal that will not just contain the characteristics of an ideal Briton, but also act upon them.

#### 4. The New Briton

While the experiences of Smollett's and Burney's protagonists diverge within London, their stories realign during their final voyages away from the city. Following their second visits to London, Random and Evelina fall ill. Evelina returns to Berry Hill where she languishes with an unidentified ailment that causes her to become weak and lackluster. Similarly, Random falls into fits of hysteria and dejection in prison, ignoring his own hygiene in the process. In both cases, the ailments are characterized as more psychological than physical ailments. Upset at his failure, Random loses his drive and allows his robust physicality to falter; disappointed in the inadequacy of her chosen ideals, Evelina loses the humor and energy to continue her search. These psychological illnesses represent the doubt both characters face as a result of their failed identity missions. No longer confident that they can obtain the proper status or characteristics of the ideal Briton, both Evelina and Random succumb to a period of self-doubt.

This illness and doubt, however, lead both protagonists to the final leg of their journeys. Evelina is sent to Bristol to regain her spirits under the care of Mrs. Selwyn. Random once again sails as an imperial functionary with his uncle to regain his fortune.<sup>14</sup> On these final journeys Evelina and Random also regain confidence in themselves and their ideal Britishness. Though circumstances had caused them to fail before, their beliefs and morals are still correct. The process of implementing and supporting these morals,

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<sup>14</sup> Random's and Evelina's guardians on these final journeys both represent a break from the norm. Mrs. Selwyn and her masculine behavior upset traditional gender divisions. Likewise, Bowling and his loyalty to the sea upset traditional national loyalties. Under this unconventional direction, the protagonists are given even more freedom to determine their own affiliations and connections to both nation and gender.

however, has changed; Evelina and Random are more cautious in their social transactions and more calculating in their romantic pursuits. Their illness and self-doubt has prepared them for future failure and simultaneously trained them for success.

### **The Private Sphere**

The two narrators also enter into more hospitable environments as they leave London for the countryside or sea. No longer burdened by London conventions, both characters are able to escape the social restrictions placed upon them there. Random is able to gain a fortune through merchant work rather than marriage or military endeavors; Evelina is able to win Lord Orville's heart and a fortune through virtue rather than social status or crass seduction. These changes are made possible by the more private spheres based on family or functionary connections that the protagonists enter. In Bristol, Evelina enters Mrs. Beaumont's home and a much smaller social sphere, which allows her personal character rather than social position to take precedence, leading to greater social action though not immediately greater prestige. Random also gains acting ability in his new setting; aboard Bowling's ship, he commands his own parcel of merchandise, which he is able to sell with ease in the foreign port towns, and enjoys a fluid social position. These more private locales thus serve to highlight the ideals rather than social hierarchies Evelina and Random have framed throughout the novels.

Ultimately, the departures from the civic sphere of London and journeys to the retired sphere of Bristol or the ship signal a shift from a public to a private domain. In contrast to Evelina's descriptions of the crowds and bustle of London, Burney's Bristol is noted for its nurturing qualities and serene landscape. In contrast to the vanity and



deception prevalent in the city, Smollett's ship and port towns offer sincere friendships and honest transactions. As Random reenters the functionary sphere, his friends reappear to bring him good tidings, hospitality and encouragement for his future success. In this social sphere, Random need not grapple with his appearance but only act as himself. In this way, Random proves himself an insider, rather than observer or imposter, in this social sphere. Likewise, as Evelina withdraws to Mrs. Beaumont's household, she enters a domestic sphere where she functions as an insider vying for position in the system, rather than an outsider distinguishing and critiquing the system. She gives up her outward-looking satiric voice of London and instead becomes the introspective romantic heroine. Her satiric observations are passed over to Mrs. Selwyn as is Evelina's well-being. Though Newton and others have termed this tonal shift a loss of power for Evelina (Newton 48), the shift in fact indicates a change in type of power. Though Evelina's powers of observation are dulled, her abilities to act in the romance are expanded.<sup>15</sup>

Evelina, as a woman, is part of the domestic space of the "private sphere" in ways that she was never a part of London's civic and social sphere. This private sphere, as Carol Pateman argues, is not completely separated from public issues; instead "the private sphere is part of civil society but is separated from the 'civil' sphere. The antinomy public/private is another expression of natural/civic and women/men" (11). In other words, Evelina's private sphere reflects the same potential degradations of her national and civic ideal, but simultaneously remains less concerned with public

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<sup>15</sup> Mrs. Selwyn, as she takes on Evelina's satirical voice, is aligned with masculine behavior. Critics have read Mrs. Selwyn as both a cause for Evelina's success (Epstein 106) and her failed advocate (Straub 28). Both stances, in a sense, are correct. Selwyn's assistance to Evelina is caused by her refusal to watch over the romantic heroine. Burney insures that the reader is well aware of Selwyn's understanding of Evelina's situation and her romantic suitors by frequent mention of her observant intelligence and teasing jibes. Selwyn's choice to not assist Evelina socially is precisely what allows Lord Orville to take that position and thus moves the romance plot.

performance of these ideals in order to focus on the natural expressions of ideal virtues. Though ultimately inferior to the political spheres, this lesser sphere grants Evelina the power to act and exert force by expressing her own “natural” virtues. Her newly-gained power is supported by her securing Lord Orville’s interest. Indeed, in this new sphere, Evelina has gained confidence in her social abilities and writes Villars that “ a thousand occasional meetings could not have brought us [Lord Orville and myself] to that degree of social freedom, which four days spent under the same roof have, insensibly, been productive of” (Burney 296).

Burney’s third volume thus rearranges social power from its status in the first two volumes. This volume enacts the power of domestic fiction described by Nancy Armstrong as “an alternative form of political power [that functions] without appearing to contest the distribution of power that is represented as historically given” (Armstrong 28). The London world Evelina evaluated signifies a historical and official determination of power; Bristol, on the other hand, offers an additional social sphere where Evelina can take a larger role. As she interacts with Lord Orville in this new setting, her identity becomes related to her inner rather than outer workings. While in London, she was susceptible to identification with her surroundings. Thus, Lord Orville could worry about her potential association with prostitutes and its affects on his acquaintance with Evelina. In Bristol, Lord Orville no longer requires such explanations of appearances and does not ask for an explanation concerning her meeting with Macartney. Instead, he claims that her decision to explain appearances is an inner determination and “Miss Anville must best judge for herself” (Burney 299). Orville’s concern here is not for Evelina’s outer associations and their reflection on him, but on Evelina’s inner determinations and whom

she chooses to love. Evelina's inner character rather than public appearance becomes her defining factor.

Moreover, Evelina is able to take decisive action when dealing with Macartney in this sphere. Whereas she initially promises to divulge all information concerning him to Lord Orville and even refuse to see Macartney if Lord Orville objects to her meeting him, she later rethinks these promises. Instead she decides to act contrary to Lord Orville's desires; she decides "I ought not to betray Mr. Macartney, and I will not forfeit a confidence which would never have been reposed in me, but from a reliance upon my honour which I should blush to find myself unworthy of" (Burney 302). While Evelina still qualifies this defiant decision by claiming she is acting as though Villars was there to advise her (302), the decision and subsequent actions are all Evelina's own. Consulting her own sense of propriety, Evelina seeks out the honorable action in this situation rather than the most socially acceptable one. Though she risks Lord Orville's censure and her own embarrassment, Evelina continues to meet with Macartney and aid in his social and romantic success. Though she finds it difficult to rely on her own virtue alone, Evelina learns to trust her own judgment and act on her own decisions.

At the same time, Evelina's social power is stunted by her participation in a private sphere that is not her own. She is a guest in Mrs. Beaumont's house and must play by the social rules determined by Beaumont and Lady Louisa. These women have determined that Lady Louisa should be the social center, and the household functions according to this rule. Lord Merton, Mr. Coverly, and Mr. Lovel all flock to her side and compete for her attention. In such surroundings, Evelina is seen primarily as romantic competition and thus ignored by both women and men. Lord Orville's attentions thus

serve to restore Evelina's power within the sphere. As he attempts to make her feel "at home," he allows her to function and exist in the private sphere. He is able to do so because, as Lady Louisa's brother, he is exempt from courting her and free to woo Evelina instead. When he proposes his brotherly services to Evelina, however, he upsets this social sphere and is rebuked by his sister for it (Burney 314). Lady Louisa, worried that her own social position is being threatened, reminds her brother that she rather than Evelina requires his protection. Her worries are not unfounded in the narrative; as the pampered, lazy foil to Evelina's independent judgments, Louisa's gentility is called into question by the narrative's emphasis on Evelina's proactive virtue. Representative of a traditional feminine position based on physical beauty, Louisa is usurped by a new image of femininity based on natural virtue and strength of character. In this manner, Evelina is no longer the "Nobody" Lovel calls her but a force destined to gain a position within the house and eventually the family.

Random also gains a position in society through his functionary world. Like Evelina, Random finds it much easier to act in this sphere. To function as a British gentleman in the civic center, Random is repeatedly reminded of the duplicity of others' characters. Beginning with the untrustworthy promises made to Random during his first London experience, culminating in the affected fashion and pranks of his English friends during his second London stay, and ending with the protracted legal battles with Narcissa's brother during his last London visit, Random's experiences in London are consistently portrayed as a battle against duplicitous appearances and untrustworthy promises. Moreover, throughout the novel, Random himself is increasingly forced to take

up with these practices himself. To avoid the dangers of these duplicities, Random must leave the civic center and return to the sea and a functionary lifestyle.

Indeed, as a sailor, Random would be ridiculed for following London fashions and customs by his fellow functionaries and his uncle. Captain Bowling, divorced from such social conventions, represents one of the few honest characters in the novel and Random's only family member to show concern for his nephew. This filiation is made all the more concrete by the men's shared affiliations with other seafaring men. While Bowling is made ridiculous by his sea jargon and exaggerated devotion to the sea, he is also admirable for his bravery in battle, just treatment of his crew, and compassionate behavior towards Random. These traits more fully describe Random's ideal of simplicity, bravery, and loyalty than any found in the London characters. Supported by such a man, Random himself begins to recognize his ideal and seek it within himself. He too develops his sea connections and friendships and embraces a life of mercantile, rather than genteel, origins. Indeed, in his functionary world, these traits have more social capital than an elite education or genteel manners. Random thus gains his own confidence both in himself and the superiority of his ideal national image.

### **Affiliating the Family**

In these new social spheres, the narrators are reunited with their fathers. These reunions result in the narrators' reclamations of their proper class positions; both fathers bestow part of their fortune on their children and provide them with proper names. Moreover, the reunions subsume the protagonists into a family circle. Evelina, recognized by her father, now relishes her new role as daughter and sister to Macartney. Random, discovering his

father is alive, enjoys his new role as son and is inspired to return to the family estate.

Finally, the fathers' returns make legitimate the personal and national ideals Random and Evelina had been developing. Because the return of the patriarch does not cause the narrative to revert to traditional identity constructions, these narratives support the ideals and virtues developed throughout the novels.

Random's father, for example, supports his son's functionary lifestyle and his middle-class ideals. Indeed, Random's father is himself a functionary, gaining his fortune in a Spanish colony. Because he is disconnected from the British center, however, Random's father is unable to offer his son a heritable British identity. He can, however, support his functionary pursuits and their corresponding social sphere. As a functionary, Random's father has nurtured the same sorts of affiliations as his son—affiliations that require loyalty not to national origins but the embodiment of national virtues. Moreover, Random's father offers support in his son's belief in the middle-class value of hard work. After hearing Random's hardships, he praises his lack of wealth and "blessed God for the adversity [Random] had undergone, which, he said, enlarged the understanding, improved the heart, steeled the constitution, and qualified a young man for all the duties and enjoyments of life, much better than any education which affluence could bestow" (Smollett 415). Random's father finds these lessons and the functionary lifestyle to be more helpful, moral and instructive for his son than the easier life of an English gentleman. The father's approval validates Random's experience and his identity.

Similarly, Evelina's father supports his daughter's virtuous development. Believed to be immoral and unremorseful for abandoning his wife and child at the start of the novel, Sir John Belmont is discovered to have repented the act and attempted to

rectify the situation by providing for the girl he believed to be his daughter. This supposed daughter is in fact a fraud, which Evelina's appearance immediately uncovers.<sup>16</sup> In her father's past repentance and present efforts to aid Evelina and his earlier repentance, Belmont proves himself to be far closer to her virtuous ideal than earlier supposed. He approves of her pending marriage to Lord Orville and recognizes Macartney as an illegitimate son and thus Evelina's brother, thus legitimizing Evelina's own choices of association. With these recognitions, Belmont confirms Evelina's judgment and virtue with his own choice of association.

Indeed, both Random's and Evelina's fathers approve their choice of spouse. As these spouses represent the narrators' chosen ideals, these approvals support the new national and personal identities being fostered by the protagonists throughout the novels. Thus, the fathers' assistance in staging the weddings and their financial support of them indicates an authorization of these new identity forms. Moreover, in both cases, these approvals become more important than other filial obligations. Random is able to marry Narcissa without the approval of her brother; Evelina is able to marry Lord Orville despite his sister's disregard for her. These new, chosen affiliations are thus turned into filiations both through the act of marriage and the approval of the father.

Moreover, in each novel, the spouse represents both an upper-class social position and middle-class virtue. This combination of traits allows the narrators to marry both

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<sup>16</sup> By uncovering this fraud, Evelina reveals the true lineage and once again uncovers deception. This act is ultimately linked to a middle-class perception of illegitimacy. While the upper class could afford to support both legitimate and illegitimate children, bastards were a serious threat to middle-class patriarchal systems. According to Lisa Zunshine, Burney soothes these fears through Evelina's reunion with her father in two ways: "[Evelina] turns out to have displaced the illegitimate usurper, Polly Green, and thus reasserts the privileged socioeconomic standing of legal children. Furthermore, unlike the indigent Mr. Macartney or any real-life illegitimate child, Evelina does not really need her father's money because of her marriage to Lord Orville" (Zunshine 147). Evelina, by avoiding all of the stigmas of deceit and greed commonly linked to a bastard child, exemplifies a middle class ideal of patriarchal inheritance.

within the system and argue for a changed system. Evelina, for example, marries Lord Orville, a man of noble birth. His birth, however, is not enough to make him Evelina's ideal. Instead, it is Orville's blindness to class distinctions and his preference for and embodiment of middle-class virtues that distinguishes him. Indeed, these traits are what allow Lord Orville to triumph over his competitor, Sir Clement Willoughby. Willoughby, also a member of the upper class, does not practice the same lack of class-consciousness or exhibit middle-class traits. In fact, Willoughby's behavior is linked to upper-class rakes, as is well exhibited in his altered treatment of Evelina when he learns of her merchant-class filiations. Lord Orville's behavior to her, on the other hand, does not change when her social position does. Evelina notes the "difference of his behavior when nearly in the same situation to that of Sir Clement Willoughby. He had at least equal cause to depreciate me in his opinion, and to mortify and sink me in my own: but far different was his conduct; --perplexed, indeed, he looked, and much surprised,--but it was benevolently, not with insolence" (Burney 239). Evelina also distinguishes between Lord Orville's concerned questioning and Willoughby's rude, direct inquiries. Lord Orville's behavior and honest concern for Evelina's well-being rather than his concern for his own public appearance by association with her raises Evelina's opinion of Lord Orville and links him with natural, rather than social, virtue. This same distinction remains Evelina's marker for morality in Lord Orville when he arrives in Bristol. His unaltered behavior towards Evelina and his regard for her comfort is again focused on Evelina herself and not those she is associated with.

With the arrival of Willoughby in Bristol, the two men's behavior is once again juxtaposed for contrast. In a garden showdown, the two men state their intentions



concerning Evelina. Willoughby reveals that he sees Evelina as inappropriate for marriage because of her lower-class status. He tells Lord Orville, “I think Miss Anville the loveliest of her sex, and, were I a *marrying man*, she, of all the women I have seen, I would fix upon for a wife: but I believe that not even the philosophy of your Lordship would recommend to me a connection of that sort, with a girl of obscure birth, whose only dowry is her beauty, and who is evidently in a state of dependency” (Burney 347). Willoughby reveals here that class is the defining motivation for marriage; his pursuit of Evelina is thus revealed to be based on sexual desire rather than esteem for Evelina’s character, yet remains so debased solely because of Willoughby’s inability to overcome class barriers. Lord Orville, on the other hand, expresses only opinions relating to Evelina’s character and virtue. He tells Willoughby that “This young lady, though she seems alone, and, in some measure unprotected, is not entirely without friends...she has a natural love of virtue, and a mind that might adorn any station, however exalted” (Burney 346). Lord Orville expresses his ability to see beyond class disparity and, in doing so, become Evelina’s ideal defender, a role reversal from the introduction of the two men at Evelina’s first ball.

Orville’s continued regard reveals his association with middle-class virtue. Concerned with Evelina’s behavior rather than her wealth or connections, Lord Orville exemplifies a middle-class value in personal achievement rather than inherited social standing. Lord Orville, unable to reduce Evelina to her social position as Willoughby has, is also better able to pursue her. Indeed, Orville proposes to Evelina before learning about her true parentage. More importantly, he is aware of the social breach he is making, but is persuaded in his decision by Evelina’s character and “the uncertainty of seeing [her]

again, [which] put him quite off his guard, and ‘divesting him of prudence, left him with nothing but love’” (Burney 389). The two are consequently engaged before Evelina’s future is settled in order to prove Lord Orville’s superior morality in pursuing Evelina for herself rather than her wealth and station. Thus, Lord Orville becomes the personification of Evelina’s ideal. Through his actions, this ideal is linked to a changing understanding of national perspective in which personal value is decided by virtue and action rather than social connections and prestige.

As Evelina chooses her romantic ideal as the embodiment of national virtue, so too does Random. Random marries an English woman, tellingly named Narcissa. Such a name “indicates that she is the reflection of the hero’s better self, that self that has survived the deforming influence of social intercourse” (Zomchick 214). This “better self” represents more than some internal integrity in the hero; it is also the other half of the kingdom. Random’s marriage to Narcissa symbolizes the union of Scotland and England into the British kingdom. England, then, is the better self of Scotland only in so far as it is a reflection of a Scottish hero who has earned a right to call himself a Briton. Narcissa’s significance, however, exceeds this national association. She, like Orville, represents both an upper and middle class. A member of the landed gentry, Narcissa connects Random to this upper class society; at the same time, Narcissa exhibits a similar lack of class-consciousness. Having met Random when he was a servant of her aunt, Narcissa falls in love with him after he saves her from the violent advances of a nobleman. Though Random has revealed his true genteel origins to Narcissa, her esteem for him rests on his actions rather than his origins. She is drawn to his ability to persevere through his personal trials and to protect her from harm. Her desire to marry Random

despite his lack of fortune thus links Narcissa with the same middle-class emphasis on personal achievement that Orville's lack of mercenary thought does.

### **Unnatural Bliss**

As these marriages and reunions add credence to the personal and national ideals developed by the narrators, they simultaneously disrupt their value. Though the fathers authorize their child's ideal gained through new affiliations, they also restore traditional filial attachments. Likewise, while the chosen spouses deny the importance of class status, both marriages remain conventional upper-class unions. Indeed, many of the unique identity constructions in the novels are undermined by the contrived endings. Fraternal bonds are replaced by paternal ones, class mobility is discovered to be rigid, and independence is relinquished for traditional roles as father and wife.

The clash of tradition with the new social ideologies ultimately manifests itself in the narratives, causing a stylistic clash within the novel form as well. This disruption is perhaps most evident in Smollett's decision to move his newlyweds to Scotland and the Random family estate. This choice and the contrived, rushed telling of it undermine Random's seeming success integrating into the English system and becoming a British gentleman. The identity that Random worked so hard to obtain is abandoned when he returns to his Scottish roots and familial heritage. Moreover, Smollett contradicts the marriage union's implication of England's superiority through Narcissa's positive reaction to Scotland. Smollett claims that "Narcissa was so much pleased with the civilities she received, that she protested she would never desire to live in any other part of the world" (432). Scotland's praise voiced through Narcissa, the character meant to

symbolize England's superiority, ultimately shakes the foundation of Smollett's narrative and ultimately ends in the novel's unexpected change in tone that begins with Random's reunion with his father.

Indeed, many scholars have noted the strange shift the narrative takes in this final cycle, many of whom merely discount the work entirely because of this "faulty" ending. Some critics consider Smollett's structural indeterminacy as a psychological reflection of Smollett's own unwillingness to face the subjects he broaches in the text. K.G. Simpson, for example, claims that Smollett's own cultural upheaval keeps him from deeply interrogating the cultural situations he depicts (66). Others, such as Crawford, view the ending more positively as "the acceptance of Random's continuing Scottishness with a British union" (61).

Crawford's final suggestion claims that Smollett's structural motives lie in what scholars of national identity call concentric loyalties. In this theory:

the Scots could be loyal to both their Scottish and British identities without any sense of contradiction. Indeed, this sophisticated model allows the Scots to compartmentalize their national identities into appropriate categories. For example the Scot would find himself or herself Scottish when it came to identification with a particular locality and culture, yet could think of himself or herself as British when it came to issues concerning the empire, foreign policy or the crown. (Finlay 122)

This separation of identities has been proposed (and lauded) in studies of Scotland's

history since the union and is still studied in present day Britain.<sup>17</sup> Colley argues that eighteenth-century Scots in some cases did manage to uphold these concentric loyalties through the use of a British rather than Scottish or English identity (125). This synthesis, however, does not seem to be apparent in Smollett's own discussions of identity. While the union with Narcissa would imply that he believed that Scotland and England could exist together within one identity, his movement to Scotland and the praise he heaps on that nation in the final pages of his novel suggest otherwise. Because of the obvious disjuncture from the rest of this narrative, such a blissful ending actually exposes a profound doubt over the possibility of such a union in Smollett's failure to blend generic forms. As the two generic modes remain separated, so too do Scottishness and Britishness ultimately fail to reconcile their differences in this novel.

Such a claim is supported by Smollett's own biography, which catalogues the anxiety Smollett felt, during the writing of this novel and throughout the rest of his life, about his own national identity. Having served in the Royal Navy himself, Smollett felt qualified to be considered British and his writings suggest that he thought of imperialism and military excursions as a Briton (Choi 235). Yet, even with these qualifications, Smollett "could never completely escape the stigma of his Scottish heritage" and was constantly accused of favoring Scottish interests in his writing (Basker 87). Indeed, even late into his life, Smollett confronts such difficulties in determining his identities and loyalties. His journals written during his tour of France and Italy indicate both a growing resentment against other traveling Britons coupled with a projected ideal of a middle-class, work-related Britishness. Moreover, Smollett continued throughout his life to

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<sup>17</sup> See A.H. Birch's study of Scottish and English school children in *Political Integration and Disintegration in the British Isles*.

manipulate his own speech and mannerisms in order to assimilate into the London society in which he lived, including efforts to rewrite *Roderick Random* in order to edit out Scotticisms (Basker 89). Smollett's continued battle within the two cultures reveals that, "in Smollett's case, as in Roderick's, the dividing line between being 'protean' and being unstable is tenuous" (Choi 251). Indeed, Smollett, like many other migrant Scots, continued to live in the center while never feeling a part of it.

Smollett betrays these insecurities concerning national connectedness in his portrayal of Random, his only Scottish narrator. Though Smollett provides his character with virtually every determining factor linked to the construction of national identity currently suggested by historians and critics, Random still remains separated from the English center of the new empire. Though he sets himself apart from other cultures by othering the Irish and the French, maintains a strong Protestant identity and gains through the imperial system, Random is still not secure in his Britishness. Though he accepts and acts with loyalty towards the British system of law and acknowledges British ideals of political liberalism and individual rights, Random remains at the margins of Britain. Ultimately, his return to Scotland cannot be reconciled with the union—he is unable to be both Scottish and British at the same time. Thus, Random ends this journey exactly as he began it; he cannot distinguish if he is Scottish or British, yet cannot be both at once.

Much as Roderick Random's identity is split between British and Scottish, so too do father and husband, upper and middle class ideals, split Evelina. The narrative itself struggles to combine these forces:

On the one hand, the circularity of Evelina's narrative, in which she travels to her rightful station as a noblewoman possessed of both a noble husband and father,

accords with the aristocratic and ultimately conservative function of romance in effectively militating against any fundamental status inconsistency or disruption of the status quo. On the other hand, the simultaneously linear course of Evelina's progress, by which her final ascension is somehow earned or perceived as the deserved consequence of attributes independent of rank or lineage, accords with a more progressive or bourgeois ideology which replaces a hierarchy based exclusively on birth with another based on excellence. (Gallerpin 38)

With these conflicting narrative progressions, Burney attempts to support both middle-class and traditional upper-class social forms. Evelina is both an embodiment of middle-class virtue but remains confined within the elite hierarchy of the British upper class.

But Evelina's narrative form also struggles to make these national connections hold true throughout the novel's conventional romantic ending. Indeed, Burney's structure is often derided for its contrived ending that includes conventional switched identity (Polly and Evelina) and relational revelation (Macartney and Evelina) plot shifts. Beyond these standard plot critiques, Burney is also faulted for Evelina's perceived moral stagnation. Olshin argues that "no emotional maturation has taken place (39) and "little moral change has been effected in the heroine and therefore, potentially in the reader" (38). Severance has a similar reaction to Evelina's moral state; she argues that the narrative does not progress but "circulates repeatedly around Mr. Villars' reassurances and exhortations" rather than Evelina's own inner understanding (132). Newton, too, argues that the narrative falters but offers the excuse that this is caused by Evelina's gender and thus "we cannot attach to her growth and autonomy the same significance we might attach to the growth and autonomy of a young man" (50). This criticism suggests

that Burney too confronted difficulties in ending the narrative with an altered heroine; Evelina in many ways remains as she was in the beginning of the novel—unsure of her social and class associations.

Interestingly, the difficulties Burney faces with her female protagonist are more easily portrayed in her male romantic lead; indeed, Burney does succeed in reconciling some of these conflicts in Lord Orville. He is both the upper-class and the middle-class ideal because he exudes genteel manners but is drawn to middle-class virtues of simplicity and utility. In this way, Orville becomes the justification for Evelina's final situation and serves as an argument for the standing social hierarchy (Newton 41). As the "exemplum of what male authority ought to be" (Newton 41), Lord Orville sets himself apart from immoral upper-class deceit and from the vulgarity of the middle class; he becomes Evelina's British ideal by sharing traits with each station. Moreover, the plot contrivances do not affect Lord Orville, and he ultimately remains emotionally detached from both Evelina's reunion with her father and her brother. His behavior and conviction in Evelina's character does not change. Instead, there is growing evidence of Orville's social muscle as he corresponds successfully with both upper-class Belmont to resolve his and Evelina's marriage and with Captain Mirvan whose practical jokes only he is capable of stopping.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> The practical joke in question here is Mirvan's introduction of a dressed monkey into a room of upper class characters. The monkey meant to ridicule Mr. Lovel's foppishness is violently disruptive to those surrounding the scene. Lord Orville halts the prank by using violence himself to throw out the monkey thus signaling "the only time anyone succeeds in containing Mirvan" (Newton 54). In this act, Orville again shows the reader "that only good and ruling-class male control is effective against bad" (Newton 54). In other words, Orville's hybrid of upper-class birth and middle-class virtue trump the crassness of Mirvan's joke.



Yet, Burney fails to create this same hybrid in *Evelina*. She marries the ideal Briton, but cannot *be* it. She remains caught between submitting to her father and gaining an upper class position or in marrying Orville without this position and, like a lower class imposter, becoming dependent on his wealth. *Evelina* attempts to overcome both of these positions by insisting on resolving her status with her father before marrying Orville. In doing so, however, she denies her middle class virtue and worries about class status, fretting over Orville's decision to marry and love an unconnected woman. With this worry, *Evelina* aligns herself with an upper-class concern with class distinction and separation, a concern which portrays *Evelina* as primarily upper class in association rather than merchant or middle class. By ensuring that her heroine would not disrupt social conventions at the close of the narrative, Burney compromises her hybrid status, forcing *Evelina* to side more decisively with upper-class values rather than the middle-class virtue portrayed throughout the novel. In this manner, *Evelina*, as a woman, appears unable to switch class codes and become the hybrid that Orville is. Instead, she must choose to return to the conventional upper-class story or risk losing her autonomy by accepting a lower-class marriage position.

While these national and class hybrids remain compromised by the narrative forms, Burney and Smollett do succeed in depicting the conflicting forces facing, or making, a British subject in the eighteenth century. Although these resolutions remain insufficient endings to the complex social conflicts raised within the narratives, the national constructions suggested in the novels present an argument for a growing national awareness and shifting ideal. By returning to filial connections at the end of the narratives, Burney and Smollett's works suggest that these new constructions were not

yet accepted enough by the population to offer proper fodder for a happy ending to their comedies. Instead, the authors are forced to return to both conventional constructions of both narratives and identities to provide happy endings where identities can be formed only through connections that are at once both filiate and affiliate.

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## Vita

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