Urban Life and Urban Landscape
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FOR SARA, DARIAN, AND “THE STORY”
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At the start of the twenty-first century, London’s eighteenth-century foundations seem structurally familiar yet historically distant at the same time. Through pedestrian eyes, London’s Georgian squares, plastered symmetry, Palladian architecture, and Portland stone may conveniently be read as the innocent, opening chapters of the same narrative that leads us to present-day London. For example, Ian McEwan’s 2005 novel, *Saturday*, opens with his protagonist, Henry Perowne, rehearsing London’s fictional history at his bedroom window in Fitzroy Square:

Standing here, as immune to the cold as a marble statue, gazing towards Charlotte Street, towards a foreshortened jumble of facades, scaffolding and pitched roofs, Henry thinks the city is a success, a brilliant invention, a biological masterpiece—millions teeming around the accumulated and layered achievements of the centuries, as though around a coral reef, sleeping, working, entertaining themselves, harmonious for the most part, nearly everyone wanting it to work. And the Perownes’ own corner, a triumph of congruent proportion; the perfect square laid out by Robert Adam enclosing a perfect circle of garden—an eighteenth-century dream bathed and embraced by modernity, by street light from above, and from below by fibre-optic cables, and cool fresh water coursing down pipes, and sewage borne away in an instant of forgetting.¹

Using organic metaphors to comprehend London’s diversity, McEwan’s character interprets his urban environment as “an eighteenth-century dream bathed and embraced by modernity.” McEwan’s excerpt is notable since it describes a twenty-first-century Londoner “embracing” a dreamt (i.e., fictional) connection to eighteenth-century London. Acknowledging the historical distance between eighteenth- and twenty-first-century London, we may, however, question what is at stake in our waking from this dream. For example, did eighteenth-century Londoners really dream of being “bathed” and “embraced” by our modernity? When eighteenth-century Londoners
dreamed of urban “success,” did they dream of twenty-first-century London? Most importantly, to what extent are we interested in reading eighteenth-century London simply to anticipate ourselves? As McEwan suggests, the answers to these eighteenth-century questions are frequently, like the city’s rubbish, “borne away in an instant of forgetting.” *Reading London* revisits these questions and outlines the variety of answers made possible by writing in eighteenth-century London. Between the letters of eighteenth-century London and the telecom towers of its twenty-first-century version resides an entirely different story of urbanization and an entirely different set of alternatives to the modernity that Londoners now face.

*Reading London* traces an alternate urban history that begins with, and is made possible by, the destabilization of sovereignty during the 1688 Glorious Revolution and concludes with the self-governing strategies that James Boswell and Frances Burney developed to respond to the destabilizing effects of a print-saturated London. The evidence for why this alternative history should be told is predominantly literary since London’s historical and geographical conditions provided fertile ground for eighteenth-century literature to offer alternatives for urban governance after the fall of absolutism. In the particular literary strategies, stylistic maneuvers, and rhetorical tools that writers used to reimagine London we may see evidence for this argument. These alternatives ultimately suggest that our twenty-first-century problems and conceptions of “the city” did not have to be this way—that our ideas about how to create, manage, and police centralized populations in urban settings do not have to be viewed as the culmination of an inevitable process. In other words, *Reading London* exposes the fictional status of what some may see as a natural, or determined, historical sequence.²

Two problems that encouraged writers to imagine new forms of government after 1688 are geographically and historically bound to eighteenth-century London. First, the rapidly expanding geography of eighteenth-century London presented writers with the opportunity to develop new strategies for organizing the city. Consider, for example, the popular fact touted by urban theorists: in 1700 there were roughly 500,000 people living in Westminster and the City of London; by 1800, one million people lived in London. While the one-hundred percent increase in the city’s population is staggering, this statistic also suggests that between 1700 and 1800 two separate cities (the City of Westminster and the City of London) became one city (London). Two cities that had been traditionally defined by their separate administrative boundaries merged during
“the long eighteenth century” into a city that was unified at least in name. No formal proclamation dictated this unity; no parliamentary law dictated this merger. By reading eighteenth-century texts as participants in shaping urban history, however, we can begin to understand the factors that made Westminster and the City of London appear as though they composed a single entity. Although eighteenth-century London lacked environmental architects and other accoutrements of urban planning as we now know them, London was nonetheless built. In particular, I argue that literary writing by and about London authors between 1716 and 1782 contributed to building post-Fire London. By “building,” I mean an imaginative act in which urban writers developed strategies for conceptualizing themselves as legitimate authorities who could compete with London’s traditional authoritative bodies, such as Parliament and the Corporation of the City of London, for control over an urban populace. To legitimate this imagined authority, these writers represented themselves as indispensable figures who could help readers comprehend and relate to a newly complex London. In one way similar to that used by twenty-first-century mapmakers, these eighteenth-century poets and novelists advertised their printed product as the proper technology for knowing the city. These writers catered to a market whose product was urban knowledge; thus, *Reading London* outlines how certain types of literary writing constituted essential blueprints for reimagining London’s infrastructure. In the contest to render London a knowable object, writers presented themselves as victors armed with alternatives for organizing London. To eighteenth-century writers and readers, London was newly complex because its administrative geography posed new problems for the way individual Londoners defined their relationships to a diluted monarchy.

A second problem that enabled writers to imagine new forms of government involves the Glorious Revolution of 1688 and the fall of absolutism in England. James II’s abdication to the rule of William and Mary is not simply a matter of stabilizing Protestant succession; rather, it signifies a moment when monolithic, absolute rule was—or was perceived to be—shattered and its fractured remnants distributed among a variety of governmental and extra-governmental institutions. For example, Carol Kay argues that when seventeenth-century institutions of English sovereignty confronted newly conceived “non-governmental forms of power” such as “commerce, the family, religion, the arts and sciences,” there surfaced the Hobbesian theory of sovereignty that “required consent to shared law and agreement about which institutions have final authority
to make law.” What is therefore new to England after 1688 is that the
task of garnering this “consent”—of consolidating a shared, communal
opinion—is no longer in the hands of the monarchy. Instead, participants
in formerly non-governmental practices, such as writers, merchants, and
priests, now found themselves trying to shape the qualities, characteris-
tics, and tastes that determined this shared consent. During the late twen-
tieth century, these non-governmental practices became visible as a new
type of cultural study emerged in the fields of literary and urban studies.
Reading Restoration politics through the lenses of new historicism, critics
have detailed the types of extragovernmental institutions that refashioned
what Kay terms “consent to authority” after 1688, and as a result, the
study of how non-governmental institutions fashioned public consent has
matured into a valuable field of cultural study. For example, John Brewer
and Roy Porter’s Consumption and the World of Goods offers several
essays that define trade and consumerism as extragovernmental institu-
tions which assisted in shaping notions of community and shared consent.
Alternatively, the work of Lawrence Klein and Carol Kay focuses on the
community-building effects of political partisanship and philosophy.
Linda Colley privileges Protestantism and the military as crucial elements
for “forging” the common identities of London and Britain after the 1707
Act of Union. And Michael McKeon’s comprehensive study on the ori-
gins of the novel reads the literature surrounding the Glorious Revolution
through a historical perspective as he details how new forms of printed
text tried to address as well as regulate social change. Building upon
McKeon’s connections between literature and socio-political change after
1688, Erin Mackie has analyzed how eighteenth-century periodicals such
as The Tatler and The Spectator attempt to “fashion” categories of choice
and discrimination for London’s readers. Reading London contributes
not only to these emerging discussions about the nature of sovereignty
after 1688, but also to McKeon’s and Mackie’s ongoing dialogue about
the ways writers tried to shape new communal notions of authority. In
particular, I focus on the specific problems and opportunities presented by
London’s geography and the way writers reimagined London’s topogra-
phy to generate consensus.

Although England still functioned as a monarchy after 1688, Londoners
no longer defined themselves primarily in terms of being subjects to the
King. This political realignment changed the terms of the seventeenth-cen-
tury social contract and initiated a period of reassessing one’s importance
in a city no longer reliant upon unquestioned absolutism. This historical
episode has even spawned a school of postmodern political theory that questions how notions of “liberal governmentality” negotiated absolutism. In the introduction that follows this preface, I will clarify why speaking in terms of liberal governmentality is valuable; for the immediate moment, however, let me specify how eighteenth-century writers in London characterized these political changes. The Glorious Revolution affected the Cities of Westminster and London in very particular ways; for example, the medieval notion of a self-evident Londoner, separate from the King and Court, was not as inviolable as it was in the past due to the fact that the Great Fire of 1666 had forced Londoners to listen carefully to city-based regulations for rebuilding and to royal proclamations. Readers from the City of London joined readers from previously disenfranchised areas located between the expanding cities (areas such as Soho and other fringes of the Town) in a communal attempt to comprehend their relationship to a non-sovereign city. With the shattering of absolutism and the rise of publication, a string of questions now accompanied the act of reading: to what extent should I trust an author’s knowledge about London? Will I ever meet the writer who is supplying this information on how to structure my interior? How do I know that I’m part of a community of fellow readers and not just some alienated, misanthropic dunce? These questions highlight the speculative activity that reading about Restoration and eighteenth-century London encouraged. As Londoners questioned the governing ideas that united them as Londoners, many writers, politicians, architects, and priests vigorously competed to offer a wide range of answers and to provide viable alternatives to the sovereign foundation upon which London’s government had previously operated. This realignment cannot be underestimated; it changed the way humans experienced the city since they no longer determined their identities solely by their distance from the King. It changed also the way humans viewed their individual significance and status in the city, before they even stepped onto the streets. Although the disorienting effects of a loss of absolute monarchy are historically foreign to twenty-first-century readers, they may be approximated by a modern counterpart.

Take, for instance, the experience of walking along Fifth Avenue in New York City and the communal assumptions about authority that we usually do not question while taking that walk. To whom do we owe unquestioned deference while walking down Fifth Avenue—to the police? To the mayor? To the hot-dog vendors? To citizens with guns? To your conscience? Now imagine all of the answers to these questions
to be equally valid. Given the variety of literary strategies that writers developed to attend to these questions of authority after 1688, we may begin to access the sense of possibility that saturated London and infiltrated eighteenth-century imaginative thought. More importantly, these questions highlight the extent to which Kay’s “agreement about which institutions have final authority to make law” shapes the way we experience and perceive how we “fit” in a city—how we imagine our individual identities to relate to a larger metropolis. Determining one’s place in an urban community is not, however, simply a matter of reading an urban guidebook. For example, John Bender describes this process of acquiring self-knowledge in cities as a type of internalized self-discipline that relies upon a continual, voyeuristic monitoring of oneself. Bender’s notion of speculative control contributes to my study since he outlines the philosophical, literary, and visual strategies developed by eighteenth-century artists to elicit readers’ imaginations as tools for self-discipline and self-surveillance. But I want to extend Bender’s work by exploring how writers reimagined the activities of reading and writing, specifically, to shape what it meant to be a Londoner after 1688. As all of these questions suggest, the Glorious Revolution did not force writers simply to redefine the city, but also to adjust what it meant to be a reader. Just as readers speculated about their new relationships to authority in London, readers speculated about their relationships to writerly authority as well. At the same time that urban writers questioned their social responsibility, they seized a historical episode that enabled them to imagine that they could govern London’s populace. In this historical context, writers participated in a new art of government by offering blueprints for new modes of urban authority. Reading London traces these writers’ quest for supporting roles in London’s government following the Glorious Revolution.

Each of the following chapters (whose arguments I summarize in the final section of the introduction) addresses a topographical problem that writers imagined they could resolve by using specific literary strategies (metaphors, abstract personifications, and strategies of interiority to name three) to change how readers interpreted London. I argue that by closely reading the strategies that eighteenth-century writers developed in London—and contextualizing these strategies in terms of London’s government after the Glorious Revolution—we may draw several conclusions about the ways printed text projected or speculated upon futures for eighteenth-century London that are distinctly different from the one that twenty-first-century Londoners are living. In the remainder of this pref-
ace, I gesture towards these conclusions as well as explain the theoretical apparatus that helps me reach these points. Several theoretical lenses assist me in making the following claims, and I will explain how these lenses bring specific elements of London’s printed text into focus.

The first conclusion involves the fluctuating status of eighteenth-century genre. In particular, a study that considers geography and genres as models for organizing London allows us to understand literary genre as an imaginative, experimental tool for organizing readers. Eighteenth-century writers recognize that both geography and textual traditions have the potential to become convenient tools for categorization and organization. Each of the writers addressed in this book develops a distinct model for knowing London that is grounded in the terms provided by geography and textual traditions. Consider, for example, Henry Fielding’s attempt not only to be a novelist but also to reimagine himself as a textual magistrate for the Bow-Street area while publishing the final volumes of *Tom Jones* in 1749. Consider also Alexander Pope’s attention to London’s civil projects such as Westminster Bridge in his *Epistle to Burlington* as well as his attempt to cast poets as moral engineers of urban improvement. Rather than advertising the novelist and poet as occupying socially acknowledged positions, Frances Burney’s novels and John Gay’s *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London* present the writer as an urban guide who was essential for disseminating new knowledge about London by yoking imaginative tasks to specific geographic locales. All of these roles catered to and constituted a specific episode during London’s urbanization as each writer uses printed text to envision a reader’s relationship to London’s administrative complexity. These roles and the textual forms writers used to create them served a unique social function: to render London a knowable object. For these writers, geography and textual traditions constituted familiar patterns or structures that writers could fill with meaning to organize knowledge about London; more importantly, their goal was to train readers to interpret these models and metaphors as completely natural, inherent structures of the human mind. The didacticism of these texts is, therefore, their most imaginative trait.

Throughout this book, I examine genres within their constantly fluctuating eighteenth-century contexts. The work of Paul Hunter and McKeon is crucial to understanding this generic flux since it suggests that rather than approaching eighteenth-century genre as a system of concrete taxonomies, we should instead consider how cultural innovation relates to a continual cross-pollination of textual traditions. Writers enlisted urban geography
and genre as strategies for defining their functions as authors because they recognized that both entities were in flux and in need of definition. Boundaries were dissolving not only between the cities of London and Westminster, but also between the early modern textual traditions that writers had used to represent those cities. The “mock”-genres of the early eighteenth-century provide evidence of this generic instability. For example, John Gay’s “mock”-genres (the mock-pastoral *Beggar’s Opera* and mock-epic *Trivia*) blend classical textual traditions to result in an unfamiliar product that mirrored the unfamiliar, new urban landscape in which Gay wrote. My point is that writers enlisted geography and genre as their tools for organizing, categorizing, and establishing imaginative realms in which they could represent—and experiment with—the full range of possibilities for governing London’s new future. In the metaphoric playground created by printed text, they imagined that they could reconcile readers with the unfamiliar and lead readers to participate in an art of government that was defined primarily by writers.

In the way writers conceived them, geography and genre constituted the raw materials that allowed writers in London to claim that they were socially indispensable figures. At this intersection of geography and genre, the functions of “writer” and “reader” in London surface, and we may begin to unpack the complex tasks that authors associated with or assigned to the practice of writing in eighteenth-century London. For example, lacking any concept of criticism as a professionalized practice as we have come to know the term, eighteenth-century writers had to approach writing not only as a rhetorical performance for generating social authority, but also as a tool for distinguishing their social contributions from those of franchised professions such as the law. Urban writers had to prove or legitimate their social value while creating the terms that would constitute this proof or legitimacy. *Reading London* explores this complexity by identifying some of the assumptions writers brought with them to the act of writing in London. The major difference between writing in eighteenth-century London and writing in twenty-first-century London involves the way eighteenth-century writers were in part creating their positions rather than adopting prefabricated, specialized titles such as “novelist” or “theorist” with which readers are now familiar. Eighteenth-century writers brought assumptions with them to the act of writing in or about London that are foreign to us, but there are specific reasons why writers could consider geography and genre to be valuable strategies for imagining urban authority during the eighteenth century.
One of these reasons involves the imagined effects of genres (or ‘species of writing’) upon readers. Samuel Johnson categorized these species based upon a text’s effect upon its reader. G. Gabrielle Starr echoes Johnson’s comments in the way “novels and poems are different objects of experience, objects we encounter in different ways because they ‘ask’ us to do so”; or, in Hunter’s words, “preparing readers to read the text at hand is always the first task of any textual beginning.” The generic lens that I use to view London’s literature is therefore not only a historically specific one but also a lens that considers eighteenth-century theories about genre as emergent rather than structurally static. Whether conscious of it or not, the generic frame through which a reader must pass before reading the first word of a text does shape how the text is read and experienced. Thus, the creativity of eighteenth-century writers consists not only in a work’s content but also in the way it guides readers to experience that content. Viewed through a historicized lens of genre theory, these instructions become essential to the way writers tried to guide readers to perform specific roles in London’s changed environment. This careful positioning of the reader brings me to my next claim.

The second conclusion suggested by my study clarifies the governing role that eighteenth-century writers in London shaped for themselves. This role may be summarized as a conductor—a figure who, in the wake of 1688, led readers to recognize the boundaries of London’s geography as well as the boundaries of literary genre. Similar to personal fitness trainers, writers trained readers to exercise skills of their own making. When readers applied these interpretive skills beyond the confines of the page, writers led them to believe that readers would be credentialized members of a healthy urban community. After 1688, writers stressed how geography and genre were in need of guidance, systematization, and organization. In their attempt to provide this guidance and to participate in a growing market for conduct literature, writers first highlighted these problems and then offered specific solutions in the metaphors and abstractions that their printed texts produced. The writers that I examine in the first part of this book catered to these urban needs by yoking abstract notions of morality to a literal cityscape (Gay), recasting the relationships between textual traditions (Pope), and advertising writers as credentialized artisans of London’s administration (Fielding). As the final chapters of this book show, Boswell and Burney recognized the potential of writing to reimagine London to such an extent that they imagine the possibility of a completely self-governed London—a London in which police are
not necessary since Londoners police their own thoughts and actions. Although Boswell and Burney’s self-governing techniques respond to a specific cultural problem that was new to late eighteenth-century London (i.e., the proliferation of printed text), they nonetheless inherit the idea that writing can reimagine the urban social environment. For twenty-first-century readers, the idea of a London where individuals govern themselves may seem difficult to imagine as an alternative to a thoroughly policed and surveyed metropolis; yet ultimately, the goals of these eighteenth-century urban writers are experimental and imaginative. I therefore suggest that one specific function of early eighteenth-century writers in London was to conduct projects—to guide readers to, and speculate upon, alternate futures.

As I emphasize throughout this preface, Reading London seeks to outline these alternate futures and contribute to the fields of literary and urban studies by avoiding the New-Critical tendency to overlook eighteenth-century London’s differences for the sake of “seeing ourselves” in literature that perhaps does not refer to our age, our city, or our London at all. A reader’s familiarity with the phrase “early modern London” attests to the popularity of reading eighteenth-century London in the manner that I am resisting here. For example, Elizabeth McKellar’s The Birth of Modern London (1999) scans the literature and speculative building practices of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century London for the seeds of modernization, proclaiming, “the creation of modern London was an evolutionary not a revolutionary process.” While McKellar and other early modernist critics detail the connective tissue of this evolution, I closely read eighteenth-century literature not to draw similarities but to recover alternatives to our modern concept of “the urban.” The theoretical lenses that allow us to see the “otherness” of eighteenth-century London are best described as those belonging to a tempered version of historicism, “tempered” in the sense of carefully avoiding the impulse to draw lightning-fast connections to the past while writing a history of the present. In other words, the concept of “a city” is present in both eighteenth-century London as well as modern London, but each version of this city is surrounded by different cultural contexts. Reading London therefore traces a genealogy of writers’ alternate methods for organizing and conducting large populations of readers. This being said, I do not claim that the following chapters employ a magical theoretical apparatus for reading this literature in “the one way” that authors originally intended them to be read. But I do claim that by closely reading these texts for the
metaphors they use, we may approximate one of the many assumptions that eighteenth-century writers brought with them to the acts of writing and reading in London. The evidence that justifies this interpretation surfaces by closely reading these writers’ language and textual traditions, and this brings me to an additional lens that frames each of the following chapters—a lens that historicizes these close readings. Much of this book considers conduct as a metaphor for activities that we no longer associate with the word. By closely reading the contexts in which writers imagined they were conducting readers’ behaviors, imaginations, and assumptions about literature’s social function, we may understand why conduct literature was so vital to post-1688 London and begin to question why we are no longer familiar with its metaphoric connotations.

A final conclusion provided by this study is that the tradition of imaginative writing about eighteenth-century London is much larger than previously assumed. Works traditionally celebrated as “literature” (or, in Arnoldian terms, writing that is apolitical as well as disconnected from literal geography) may be seen to imagine new possibilities for governing London. For instance, many readers lament the fact that most eighteenth-century novels do not reflect eighteenth-century London with a Victorian novel’s intense attention to detail; Defoe does not explicitly detail London’s physical characteristics in *Moll Flanders* with the same intensity as Dickens details the city’s exterior in *Dombey and Son* or *Bleak House*. However, most eighteenth-century novels like *Tom Jones* and *Cecilia* are not interested in mirroring London *as it was* but as these writers imagined it *could* be. In other words, the dominant mode of eighteenth-century writing about London is neither reflective nor mimetic; the mode is instead experimental and suggestive.26 As I will suggest in the third chapter, this explains why it may be productive to read certain printed texts about London with the same interpretive lenses we use to approach eighteenth-century projects. This perspective allows us to understand eighteenth-century literature about London in two new ways; first, writers we have typically cast as “literary authors” can contribute to London’s industry of urban planning; and second, these writers may be seen to rub elbows with London’s pamphleteers as they compete to imagine alternate strategies for governing London’s changing population.

Although an eighteenth-century conception of the imagination is not my primary object of analysis, I do outline some possibilities as to what eighteenth-century writers might have assumed they were doing when they “imagined” in printed text. The theoretical lens that helps us to
understand what the act of imagining looked like before the romantic age is a decidedly historicist one, and this book describes the types of printed text that are produced when an eighteenth-century writer “imagines” (as a verb); however, I do not assume that these writers are familiar with a Wordsworthian entity know as “the Imagination” (as a noun) since a unified conception was not formulated until the final decade of the eighteenth century. When eighteenth-century writers imagine, they, unlike Victorians and other post-romantics, perform a mental activity that does not refer to an object possessing essential characteristics. As my study suggests, eighteenth-century “imagining” resembles neither unrealistic fictionalization nor didactic prescription; instead, it gestures towards a third definition we have yet to recover. By thinking about imagination beyond a mere binary of creativity and didacticism, we may sense that reading and writing printed text were not alienating activities in eighteenth-century London; literary interpretation was not divorced from social use. Even if the metaphors, modes, voices, and tones employed by these writers are not legal trials, parliamentary motions, or written law, this does not mean that writers in London were barred from participating in an art of government after the Glorious Revolution. Just because writers designed their governing metaphors in printed text does not mean that we may dismiss these writers as lacking social efficacy or cast them as wishful dreamers of urban utopias. The reason for this involves the status of “imagining” during the eighteenth-century as well as the century’s connotations for the word “imaginative”—connotations that need to be recovered. In other words, these eighteenth-century printed texts were socially useful since they provided patterns for systematizing, professionalizing, and ranking knowledge about Britain’s largest urban community.

All of the mental activities that writers assigned to reading this imaginative writing about London lead to the title of this book. If writers were devising new literary forms to both alter and describe this changed urban environment, then it is not surprising that they supplied instructions on how to read and interpret their novelty. For example, hidden in Gay’s meditative diversions to Trivia and couched within Fielding’s introductory chapters to the books of Tom Jones are essential instruction-manuals for reading newly devised textual forms. As Fielding and Gay become interpretive guides for readers who are experiencing their works, they establish (by means of metaphors) strategies for experiencing London. From this perspective, writers reimagine the act of “reading” to constitute a guided, interpretive activity in which they encourage readers to speculate upon
not only the nature of the writer’s authority but also the nature of urban authority. This is why the act of reading printed representations of London during the eighteenth-century, as the writers in this study construct it, may best be described as communal speculation. I mean “speculation” here in the sense of (according to the *OED*) the “conjectural anticipation of something”—a conjecturing that is similar to the work of eighteenth-century projectors and their attempt to access an alternative future through the genre of the project. In this way, writers cast themselves as gate-keepers to readerly imaginations; writers try to generate an explicit sense of community in readers’ minds.

One final lens that helps me reach the conclusions I have just summarized involves the question of agency—a question that is pervasive in contemporary materialist thought. In particular, I consider the agency of writers, and their ability to affect urban environments, not in oversimplified terms of cause (printed text) and effect (the city), but in terms of reciprocal engagement (known in Bakhtinian discourse as “dialogic criticism”).

In other words, the historical status of post-1688 London made certain forms of imaginative writing possible, and reciprocally, the imaginative activity of these writers made certain interpretations and experiences of this urban environment possible. The evidence for this reciprocity exists, again, in language and shared diction. This approach contrasts with T. F. Reddaway’s purely economic reasoning for why London looks the way it does—a reasoning that Marxist critics such as Raymond Williams have adopted as well. Cynthia Wall carefully qualifies Reddaway, arguing that while the economic impetus to recover London’s trade-based normalcy is part of the reason why post-Fire London “was largely rebuilt on its own old lines,” the other half of this reasoning involves “a cultural stubbornness” that did not allow rebuilding to take place without architectural and topographical acknowledgement of the ancient City’s foundations.

In a similar manner, *Reading London* does not offer an economically determined narrative to explain London’s topography; instead, I offer an analysis of how writers imagined ways that London could function in its newly changed context. And this is where I differ from and extend Wall’s carefully qualified thesis about post-Fire London’s ability to “reconstruct the known” and “recreate the [fictionally stable] past in the context of the [likely unstable] future.” The cultural contexts of post-Fire London are not the contexts of post-1688 London. By the start of the eighteenth century, London was resurrected upon its medieval template, but this does not mean that eighteenth-century Londoners were required to experience
this replicated, architectural space in the same way that their Restoration counterparts had experienced it. The streets may be the same, but the experiences available to Londoners on these streets have changed due to sovereignty’s destabilization. The writers in this book recognize this, and they seize their pens in a desperate attempt to shape and to codify these experiences for a reading audience.

Although Wall traces how writers mapped meaning onto empty spaces in the wake of the Great Fire, I adapt her critical model to address a different period when writers mapped meaning not onto empty spaces, but onto a pre-existing geography whose relationship to Londoners was rendered politically obsolete after 1688. In contrast to absences and empty spaces that characterize the surveys, maps, and royal declarations of London between 1666 and 1688, the houses, streets, and buildings of post-1688 London were physically present (in terms of being “geographically” present) yet politically “empty” (in terms of their being “topographically” readable and interpreted by individuals who experienced an altered relationship to this physical geography). Also, whereas Wall sees an increasing “publicization” of spatial ideas after the Fire, I stress that not all eighteenth-century writers were comfortable participating in a monolithic march towards a supposedly freeing public sphere. For instance, as I will show, Boswell and Burney promote a very private form of self-discipline as the necessary prerequisite for not only navigating public spaces but also securing the healthy interior of a self-governed Londoner who can therefore avoid drowning in a print-saturated London. Thus, the majority of this study details the new literary forms, techniques, and strategies that writers developed to attend to, and engage in, a changed urban environment. To recognize these new literary strategies, however, we need to be familiar with the specific types of changes in London that necessitated new kinds of writing. For readers who are uninitiated in the complex lexicon of eighteenth-century London, labels such as the City, the Court, the Corporation of the City of London, the City of Westminster, and the Town may amount to a nightmarish mass of obsolete signification. To approach a more comprehensive understanding of the ways London’s changed urban environment made certain types of writing possible, the following introduction reviews the unique problems and opportunities represented by these various names.
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Introduction

TWO CITIES, ONE LONDON

To understand how writers tried to manage London during the eighteenth century, I organize the following chapters according to the goals that distinguish early eighteenth-century writers from those who inhabit a print-saturated London of the late eighteenth century. Reading London examines not only how early eighteenth-century writers developed imaginative strategies for governing other Londoners, but also how late eighteenth-century writers reinterpreted these strategies to govern themselves. This distinction between controlling others and controlling the self appears by mid-century, and it registers an important change in the cultural problem that London presented to writers. While early eighteenth-century writers such as Gay, Fielding, and Pope addressed the problem of how a diluted sovereignty following the 1688 Glorious Revolution affected a Londoner’s perception of urban governance, late eighteenth-century writers such as Boswell and Burney addressed a completely new problem: the proliferation of print in London. To solve the first cultural problem (a problem unique to early eighteenth-century London’s history), writers developed textual techniques for governing readers; to address the second cultural problem (a problem unique to late eighteenth-century London’s history), writers reimagined textual strategies for governing the self. To clarify this distinction, the first three chapters of this book examine the innovative techniques that writers devised to manage and to conduct readers; the final two chapters show how Boswell and Burney adapted these techniques to stabilize and to shape the individual self. An interchapter punctuates these two stages of London’s history and clarifies how the proliferation of London’s print culture motivated Boswell’s and Burney’s efforts at self-government. I argue that the two tasks of governing others and governing the self respond to specific cultural problems that writers experienced during the eighteenth century.
By focusing upon these historical distinctions and time-dependent goals, I trace a critical narrative about London that involves three projects. The first project involves authors’ efforts to imagine textual techniques to manage or conduct readers and help them relate to a newly conceived, post-Fire London. The purpose of this introduction is to outline London’s unique historical and material conditions that make this first project possible. In particular, eighteenth-century London’s changing administrative geography provided writers with a cultural problem that required an imaginative solution, and this solution involved a new, textual art of government or “governmentality.” This is why conduct becomes a central concern for these writers, and I review the eighteenth-century status of conduct books to contextualize this first project. The first part of this book therefore details the solutions that Gay, Fielding, and Pope develop to address their problems with sovereignty and consensus in early eighteenth-century London.

The second project that I investigate involves readers’ efforts to master a newly complex London. By “readers’ efforts” I mean the way readers were to assume that certain textual genres constituted specific ways of interpreting, and therefore knowing, London. The second part of this book (chapters 4, 5, and 6) examines this second project by describing Boswell’s and Burney’s efforts at reading, interpreting, and relating to a London imagined by writers from an earlier generation. The third and final project that I consider involves readers’ efforts to discipline themselves. As I clarify in the second part of this introduction as well as in chapter 4, a print-saturated London caused Boswell and Burney to adapt their predecessors’ textual techniques so that Boswell and Burney could govern themselves. As exhibited by Boswell’s and Burney’s writing, the sheer heterogeneity of texts that tried to manage an individual’s experience of London threatened their development of a single identity in the city. Boswell and Burney develop self-governing strategies to combat this threat. This third project imagines the completely self-governed Londoner (a Londoner ruled by neither police nor any other external authority) as a historical possibility, and this possibility originates in textual strategies for controlling others. In my attempt to contextualize these three projects, I trace a critical narrative that identifies several historical alternatives to the types of urban authority that currently police cities. Since London’s historically specific geography was a foundational factor that enabled writers to imagine these alternatives, it is the issue to which I now turn.
LONDON’S CHANGING GEOGRAPHY

As the events of 1688 loosened the notion of urban authority from the Court’s sole domain, writers were some of the first Londoners to connect this loss to changes in London’s geography and the administrative tensions between the Court, Town, and City. One of the earliest writers to draw attention to London’s changing administrative geography is Abraham Cowley. Cowley’s 1668 poem, “On the Queen’s Repairing Somerset House,” adapts the seventeenth-century country-house poem to an urban setting. Cowley’s poem represents a city in transition by reinterpreting a textual tradition (the country-house poem) to suit an urban environment. Cowley personifies Somerset House, a royal property on the banks of the Thames between Court and City, by giving it a voice. This voice does not try to detail Somerset House but instead calls attention to its peculiar surroundings:

Before my gate a street’s broad channel goes,
Which still with waves of crowding people flows;
And every day there passes by my side,
Up to its western reach, the London tide,
The spring-tides of the term; my front looks down
On all the pride and business of the town.

... My other fair and more majestic face
(Who can the fair to more advantage place?)
For ever gazes on itself below
In the best mirror that the world can show.¹

Cowley focuses our attention not on the house but the house’s front entrance on the Strand (“a street’s broad channel”) and back entrance on the Thames (“the best mirror”). But Somerset House’s location is privileged in another way:

And here, behold, in a long, bending row,
How two joint cities make one glorious bow;
The midst, the noblest place, possessed by me;
Best to be seen by all, and all o’ersee.
Which way soe’er I turn my joyful eye,
Here the great Court, there the rich Town I spy;
Cowley’s poem screams, “Location, location, location”; it suggests that “the midst, the noblest place,” exudes authority because it forms a type of panopticon (“Best to be seen by all, and all o’ersee”) that is unique to its location between “two joint cities.” Although Cowley seems to unify Westminster and the City in “one glorious bow,” he maintains each city’s independence later in the poem when he refers to “two vast cities, troublesomely great.” From Cowley’s perspective in 1668, the adjectival phrase “troublesomely great” highlights the revolutionary associations that people attached to the City of London after the Civil War—associations which Valerie Pearl reviews and questions in London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution. Although Cowley’s phrase evokes the City of London’s history during the Puritan Revolution, it also gestures towards a growing perception that the geographic distance between Court and City belied an even greater political distance between the two entities. In this sense, Cowley’s “trouble” alludes to a divisive urban history that eighteenth-century writers would eventually inherit.

Cowley’s “trouble” also emphasizes the fact that what we now recognize as London began as two separate cities: the City of Westminster, which was the home of the Court and parliament, and the City of London, which was the home of the Corporation of the City of London and trade. Discussing London’s separate origins is an unusually difficult task. The names that we presently use to refer to London’s spaces retain a confusing and faded sense of their separate, eighteenth-century referents. Consider, for example, how “the City” commonly refers to the ancient walled “City of London,” but “the city” refers to Westminster and the City of London in general. Although the name “London” now subsumes Westminster, the City of London, and a number of other boroughs such as Southwark and Camden, tourists visiting London’s West-End during the twenty-first century can claim without reproach that they are in “the city”; however, they would be technically incorrect to claim that they are in “the City of London.”

Place-names therefore present particular difficulties for my attempt to discuss eighteenth-century London. For the purposes of clarity, I use “Westminster” to refer to the Court, “the City” to refer to the ancient, walled City of London, and “London” to refer to Westminster and the City of London informally combined. But this difficulty in referring to
eighteenth-century London is more than a semantic problem; the difficulty attests to the problems surrounding the history of Westminster’s and the City’s relationship to a new “London.” If language is a receptacle for cultural episodes, then by interpreting the names we have inherited to refer to London’s urban spaces, we can understand how eighteenth-century literature tried to attend to, resolve, or amplify the confusion between Westminster and the City of London. Linguistic problems can be symptoms of historical impasses.

Part of this confusion stems from modern critics’ desire to see Westminster and the City of London as the only two components of eighteenth-century London. The details surrounding Westminster’s and the City of London’s exponential growth during Charles II’s restoration, however, offer a more complicated picture. In particular, speculative builders began to bring attention to the spaces between and on the margins of Westminster and the City of London. Following the Great Fire of 1666, these spaces were waiting to be filled with not only inhabitants, but also meaning. What we now call “suburban sprawl” characterized Restoration London’s building boom. This was the age of speculative estate-projects, the planning of Bond Street, and the building of Red Lion Square. Builders were not the only Londoners who speculated about the value of the spaces between and on the margins of Court and City, however. Speculative growth affected writers as well.

The middle ground between Court and City (commonly called “the Town”) was a geographic novelty for eighteenth-century Londoners, and writers such as Cowley advertised the ramifications of this novelty. In particular, writers questioned what this novelty could do for their reputations. For example, Alexander Pope adopted Cowley’s hyper-sensitivity to the unique space between Court and City in *Windsor Forest*. In particular, Pope seizes Cowley’s “one glorious bow” to locate a new type of poetic authority:

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Behold! Augusta’s glitt’ring Spires increase,
And Temples rise, the beauteous Works of Peace.
I see, I see where two fair Cities bend
Their ample Bow, a new White-Hall ascend!
There mighty Nations shall inquire their Doom . . . .
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Like Somerset House’s privileged perspective for observing and therefore indirectly controlling Westminster and the City, Pope’s poet also occupies
a privileged perspective (“I see, I see”) from which he may prophesy the British Empire. Number 454 of Richard Steele’s *Spectator* (commonly known as *Twenty-Four Hours in London*) also hinges upon a famous distinction between “two joint cities”:

> The Hours of the Day and Night are taken up in the Cities of *London* and *Westminster* by Peoples as different from each other as those who are Born in different Centuries. Men of Six-a-Clock give way to those of Nine, they of Nine to the Generation of Twelve, and they of Twelve disappear, and make Room for the fashionable World, who have made Two-a-Clock the Noon of the Day. 

Steele suggests that Westminster and the City are so different that the cities cannot even be measured by the same timepiece. We should note that Steele, as an early eighteenth-century critic, observes this distinction from a privileged perspective beyond Court and City, and he begins the paper by describing the advantages of this distanced perspective: “It is an inexpressible Pleasure to know a little of the World, and be of no Character or Significancy in it.” Letter five of Daniel Defoe’s *Tour through the Whole Island of Great Britain* considers the margins of Westminster and the City to constitute a completely new realm:

> Supposing now, the whole body of this vast building to be considered as one city, London, and not concerning myself or the reader with the distinction of its several jurisdictions; we shall then observe it only as divided into three, viz. the city, the Court, and the out-parts.

> The city is the centre of its commerce and wealth. The Court of its gallantry and splendour. The out-parts of its numbers and mechanics; and in all these, no city in the world can equal it. Between the Court and city, there is a constant communication of business to that degree, that nothing in the world can come up to it.

“A constant communication of business” marks the area “between the Court and city” for Defoe. Depending upon the degree of “communication,” this area could separate or unify London’s two authoritative poles. Cowley, Pope, and Steele rendered the space between Westminster and the City visible; Defoe went a step further, describing London in three “parts” rather than two cities.

The desire to see London as two symmetrical parts is further complicat-
ed by the fact that London never adopted French boulevards, a rectangular matrix of cross-streets, or an elaborate symmetry, and, for this reason, historians tend to view London as “a muddle that always worked.” In an attempt to understand this “muddle,” we may over-emphasize the administrative interaction between the Court and the City; in turn, Court and City come to resemble the opposite ends of a binary that serves to decode any complexity London’s muddle might present. In this binary, Westminster is the symbolic pole for Tories, tradition, and sovereign monarchy, while the City of London is the location of rebellion, Whigs, and trade. This model might look good on undergraduate classroom blackboards, but it discounts “the Town”—that marginal, third term that Restoration and early eighteenth-century writers emphasize. This literature—“Town literature,” one might call it—exposes the Court-City binary for what it really is: an oversimplification that distorts urban complexity. By understanding what this third term meant to urban writers, we may begin to witness how writers imagined themselves to be legitimate urban authorities.

Writers residing and working between Whitehall and Ludgate Hill occupied a space in which they could either promote or disassemble the informal tensions between Court and City. Their mediated residence between the poles of Court and City provided a point of entry into an administrative dialogue designed to reimagine London’s cityscape. One of the reasons writers could more easily imagine their role in this middle ground than in either the Court or City was that several of these marginal spaces were organized into an antiquated administrative unit: the liberty. According to John Strype’s updated edition of John Stow’s *A Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster: Containing the Original, Antiquity, Increase, Modern Estate, and Government of those CITIES*, the space surrounding the Strand—the road literally connecting Westminster to the City—was still, in 1720, referred to by its medieval title, the “Liberty of the Dutchy of Lancaster.” Liberties were “formerly monastic precincts” marked by “freedom from the jurisdiction of the customary administrative unit.” Recognizing these defunct administrative spaces, writers like Boswell, Fielding, and Burney filled these spaces with new meaning. In Boswell’s case, the Town dominated his urban experiences, particularly his experiences at London’s theaters, the majority of which were concentrated beyond the walls of the City and just outside Whitehall during the eighteenth century. Boswell’s *London Journal* is filled with dramatic metaphors that actors and actresses used to define themselves onstage. For Boswell’s particular experience of the Town, theatricality character-
ized this space. This middle ground also relates to Fielding’s Bow Street career, which aimed to police these defunct spaces. Finally, as a woman writer, Burney reconceived this middle ground as a space of possibility for women to escape the gendered voyeurism that characterized Westminster and the City.

What all of these excerpts from Restoration and early eighteenth-century literature show us is that writers were assigning a unique value to London’s geography. In particular, the areas between, beyond, and on the margins of Court and City were valuable to writers because these disparate areas (Grub Street, the Town, Holborn) appeared to require special regulation and new administrative apparatuses. I argue that writers living in or writing about London recognized these areas’ administrative particularities as opportunities for participating in and constituting Defoe’s prized “communication of business.” The kinds of topographical opportunities that writers in this book observed include: reconceiving the Town as a known space (chapters 1–2), redirecting urban projectors and funding to address this space (chapter 3), managing street-level performances between Court and City (chapter 5), and defining alternative modes of interiority to comprehend the Town’s “middling” influence on London as a whole (chapter 6). Paying particular attention to how this middle ground and the possibilities it represented affected urban writers, we may begin to unravel the sense in which London was “a muddle that always worked.”

**SHAPING POLITICAL CONSENSUS IN TUDOR AND STUART LONDON**

If early eighteenth-century writers considered London’s administrative geography to represent a problem that needed solving, then the status of sovereignty and political consensus in late seventeenth-century London added a political element to this problem. Compared to its earlier incarnations, London was newly complex in a very specific way: London’s geography changed as seventeenth-century concepts of political sovereignty accommodated new techniques for acquiring consensus. While these changes distinguish eighteenth-century London from Tudor London, these changes did not suddenly appear in a fit of revolutionary fervor as much as the title “The Glorious Revolution” might like to suggest. Instead, these eighteenth-century changes were enabled by a history that reaches back to sixteenth-century London. This prehistory begins with Tudor London’s
transition from a late-medieval marketplace to the uncomfortable centerpiece of an absolutist state, and it ends with Stuart London’s restoration in the wake of the Puritan Revolution. I do not recount the intricacies of this prehistory here since Lawrence Manley’s Literature and Culture in Early Modern London offers that comprehensive analysis; however, part of Manley’s thesis is worth repeating since it describes the exact nature of a “restored” London in 1660 and prefigures the changes that define eighteenth-century London:

[T]he restored order that was promised, and to some extent the one that was eventually and fitfully delivered, had more in common with the revolutionary movement toward expansion, diversity, progress, and increase than with the ancient regime that had preceded it. And not least of the enduring legacies were the ethical innovations—a cosmopolitan disinvestment in the local and “parochial,” a reliance upon reason, autonomy, and self-discipline, a self-restraint in the face of diversity—that, by linking personal liberty dialectically to new patterns of social discipline, helped to consolidate the urbanizing process. Perhaps typical of the revolutionary force of these innovations is [William] Walwyn’s view that nothing “maintains love, unity, and friendship in families; Societies, Citties, Countries, Authorities, Nations; so much as a condescension to the giving, and hearing, and debating of reason.” The emergence, from the Puritan Revolution, of views like Walwyn’s and others makes it possible to see how the historical development of sedentarism could give moral force to [Edmund] Burke’s later clam that liberty is a function of ethical maturity . . .

Manley’s point is that even after the revolutionary arguments of liberty and nonconformism that characterized 1642 to 1660, London’s most liberal and individualistic qualities relied upon a type of general consensus and restraint to make the city resemble a communal (i.e., “sedentary”) capital. After the Puritan Revolution, this new “Reason,” with its origins in absolutist consensus, appeared to balance, moderate, and check London’s civil society. Manley’s study ends at the Restoration with this conclusion, and this notion of a tempered civil society, liberated yet reliant upon shared consensus, is the context in which the 1688 Glorious Revolution, the discourse of sovereignty, and London’s literature of conduct functions.

New to late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Londoners,
however, were not only the literary techniques developed by writers to generate shared consensus but also the type of writer and genres that were able to create these works. Whereas sixteenth-century writers distributed their manuscripts in courtly circles as they strove to become patronized “Courtier-Poets,” an expanding print culture during the early eighteenth century brought about an entirely new audience of readers. New print technologies (marked by the popularity of new literary genres such as periodicals and novels) appeared beside the dissolution of the absolutist state, and the result was a window of opportunity for writers to define not simply their social value. If Manley’s thesis is accurate in claiming that the type of absolute monarchy inherited by Restoration London rested upon a type of civil liberty (previously associated with the City of London’s nonconformists) that was tempered by consensual discipline (previously associated with one’s being “subject” to the King’s sovereignty), then the shattering of absolutism in 1688 complicated the qualities that now constituted reasoned and enlightened discipline. At this moment, the goal was neither to discipline oneself to be “subjects” in the same way that Tudor Londoners were “subject” to the King, nor to discipline one’s mind according to the reasoned standards of Court-appointed philosophers, poets, and artists. Since the City of Westminster housed the Court, and the City of London came to be associated with civil liberty after the Puritan Revolution, writers throughout London (such as Cowley, Pope, Addison, and Steele) were quick to sense how these abstract notions of “reason,” “consensus,” and “liberty” easily mapped onto London’s physical geography. And they recognized this geographic connection to absolutism’s demise for a very specific reason. London’s geography gave a substance to these previously inaccessible and unquestionable abstractions that organized seventeenth-century London. Geography presented the possibility to all writers (not simply Courtier-Poets) that they could seize these previously transparent notions of consensual rule, render them legible to readers by means of geographic metaphor, and reimagine a different London. As eighteenth-century writers in London saw it (and they witnessed it quite literally in the way London’s geography and administrative boundaries were changing), consensus was now disenfranchised from the absolutist state. Therefore, it was fair game for ownership; consensus was now in the hands of priests, aldermen, the guilds, lawyers, politicians, and writers—the very people who were previously “the ruled” rather than “the ruling.”

Other recent work on London’s pre-Restoration social organization has
reassessed the nature of London’s environmental changes by questioning
the binary extremes that historians and literary critics have traditionally
used to describe London’s changed environment. The most familiar bina-
ries employed by historians of seventeenth-century London include aris-
tocratic versus bourgeois, Protestant versus nonconformist, Whig versus
Tory, apocalyptic Hell versus City of God, gentry versus citizen, landed
economy versus *rentier* economy, and Court versus City. Although
these studies have tried to rebalance these generalized binaries to more
accurately represent London’s growth, Ian Archer discards binary think-
ing altogether, arguing that “culture is best understood as a process, that
people are constantly drawing upon a variety of different cultural forms,
adapting them in the process to meet the needs of specific situations.” I
suggest that we read London’s eighteenth-century literature to recover the
imaginative terms developed by eighteenth-century humans to shape their
experience amid several overlapping binaries. From this perspective, we
may begin to question how these binaries have oversimplified—or even
ignored—the sensitive cultural work that eighteenth-century writers imag-
ined they were accomplishing. For instance, when I claim that London’s
eighteenth-century geography was newly complex, I do not mean to
polarize competing authorities for the sake of simplifying London. It
is too simplistic to label the City of Westminster to be a “Tory” space
and the City of London to be a “Whig” space, in the same manner that
speaking of “red” and “blue” states in American elections oversimplifies
political nuance and dissent. Instead, *Reading London* seeks to reveal the
way eighteenth-century literature offers a variety of third-, fourth-, and
fifth-terms that explode our preconceived binaries and allow us to sense
the eighteenth-century alternatives to the terms we now use to account for
urban change.

Recent studies of London’s governance have also challenged strictly
deterministic (i.e., economic) views of why London looks the way it
does; that is, many critics consider personal experience to be as valuable
as economic and political determinants for explaining London’s changed
environment. For example, J. F. Merritt’s *Imagining Early Modern
London* stresses “the human, the particular, and the personal” motivations
for social change and vows to “restate citizens as active participants in the
changing city—not simply as passive observers of a developing cityscape,
but as individuals making creative, pragmatic responses to a changing
urban environment.” In *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social
History of Early Modern London*, Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner
introduce their anthology by highlighting how the essays pose “questions about how the city was experienced and about the social relations of its inhabitants.” Reading London contributes to this analysis of the ways personal experience both shaped—and was shaped by—London’s changing geography. This “shaping” and “being shaped by” are not mutually exclusive activities. Writers represented London’s geography in a way that allowed readers to experience it as the writers intended. In this sense, writers shaped London’s topography by offering mental maps that they imagined could be reproduced in readers’ minds. Writers also inevitably had to respond to London’s unprecedented growth and its growing, trade-based economy. In this sense, London social conditions shaped writers’ responses. I argue that literature about London evinces both of these activities, operating simultaneously and almost inseparably. In this way, personal experience, when recorded in printed text, can both reimagine London and be shaped by it. After the Glorious Revolution’s disenfranchisement of absolute power, carefully regulated experiences (i.e., experiences stylistically represented by writers and other previously disenfranchised professionals) became the tools for shaping consensus and shared consent in the city.

VEHICLES FOR READING LONDON: GENRE AND CONDUCT

The second project that I examine in this book (readers’ efforts at mastering a newly complex London) invokes the eighteenth-century status of genre and metaphors since these textual conventions were accompanied by strategies for reading, interpreting and knowing previously unknown objects. For Boswell and Burney, London constituted one of these unknown objects that they could understand by carefully interpreting a writer’s metaphors and generic maneuvers. For Gay, Fielding, and Pope, the task of acquiring a reader’s consensus made it incredibly important to train readers to interpret these metaphors and generic experiments properly. Although London’s changed environment presented different writers with different generic and metaphoric opportunities, there is a common thematic element to these writers’ responses to London’s geographical changes: conduct. If the argument that eighteenth-century urban writers imagined their own authority seems abstract, it is because words such as “conduct,” “authority,” and “governing” are abstractions that require eighteenth-century contextualization—a context to which the remainder
of this introduction is devoted. Writers cast these words as metaphors and abstract personifications because they constituted valuable tools for producing knowledge about London that preceded commercially available maps, aerial photography, and other modern techniques for relating to a city. Readers with interests in literature’s relationship to cartography will be particularly interested in the review in chapter 1 of the history of map making and its status at the beginning of the eighteenth century when Gay writes *Trivia*—a poem that exemplifies how literature’s metaphoric play offered alternatives to mapping London. Eighteenth-century literature competed not only with visual technologies to represent London but also, as Hunter argues, with notions of seventeenth-century guidance: “By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the metaphor of the book as guide—a verbal map to space and time—had become fully established, words in print having replaced human leadership as the model for appropriate walking with God.” From this perspective, readers may witness how the titles of “sovereign God” and “the Poet” merge in London.

The geographic details that I have described in the preceding section were the material conditions that enabled writers to develop rhetorical strategies and, in turn, to imagine themselves governors over London’s populace. Urban authors wrote about London’s middling and marginalized areas because they experienced these environments in their daily lives. First, writers had to travel through these areas. Boswell, for example, tried to trace the footsteps of Steele’s Mr. Spectator through Court and City. Fielding’s jurisdiction as Bow Street Magistrate addressed both the City of Westminster and the middling liberties. Burney’s interest in writing for the theatre and her career as Second Keeper of the Robes for Queen Charlotte suggest that Burney was familiar with not only with the Court, but also the theatrical, literary, and musical worlds operating just beyond Whitehall. Second, many writers take pains to advertise the Town as their realm—a textual kingdom where the courtiers of Whitehall and the aldermen of the City are woefully beyond their jurisdiction. For instance, Gay uses the final lines of *Trivia* to pay homage not only to his Fleetstreet publisher, but also to the location where his poetry advertises itself to the world: “High-raised on Fleetstreet Posts, consign’d to Fame, / This Work shall shine, and Walkers bless my Name.” Gay’s self-referential ending is an eighteenth-century public-relations device; his poem first describes urban spaces and then guides readers to the spaces where his poem was published and advertised. Geographic citations like this example were meaningful to eighteenth-century writers and readers because
they pointed to the realm of imaginative production. In Gay’s case, these areas of production became unabashed subjects of his poem. Thus, we need to consider geographic locations in eighteenth-century urban writing not only as literal place names but also as important abstractions that writers used to moralize London and draw attention to the kinds of writing taking place there. If urban writers could utilize geography in this manner, then the tasks of “governing” and “conducting” readers through these geographic abstractions became valuable abstract tools for trying to help Londoners relate to a newly complex London. By yoking eighteenth-century London’s geography to abstract notions of morality, these writers appeared to render London less complex. For instance, in order to yoke materiality to spirituality, writers used metaphors, abstract personifications, and other rhetorical textual devices whose purpose was to fill unfamiliar abstractions with familiar meaning. In this sense, a writer’s governing takes place in the styles and rhetorical devices of printed text. Due to its figurative flexibility, conduct became one of these foundational metaphors for navigating the physical and moral treachery of London.27 Since my phrase “the metaphor of conduct” may appear strange since it no longer functions as a primary strategy for knowing modern cities, a careful understanding of how conduct could operate beyond its literal meaning is in order.

Conduct literature is a familiar topic for readers of eighteenth-century literature—perhaps too familiar. I say “too familiar” because misinterpreting conduct literature as a purely didactic form, barren of stylistic qualities, may detract readers from seeing the social ramifications of such an omnipresent genre. Dieter A. Berger attributes this absence to a modern literary perspective that refuses to consider any type of book offering “rules to realize an acknowledged cultural ideal” as worthy of literary (or stylistic) analysis.28 Nancy Armstrong’s Desire and Domestic Fiction and her introduction to The Ideology of Conduct written with Leonard Tennenhouse are some of the first examples to seriously study conduct literature. In an attempt to comprehend the variety of conduct books in terms of their political and economic agendas, Armstrong argues that “conduct books imply the presence of a unified middle class at a time when other representations of the social world suggest that no such class yet existed.”29 For Armstrong, conduct books established a “domestic ideal” that promoted “a concept of the household on which socially hostile groups felt they could all agree.”30 Conduct books accomplished these social functions because, as Armstrong and Tennenhouse claim,
these books “strive to reproduce, if not always to revise, the culturally
approved forms of desire.” Following Armstrong, critics like Berger
and Lawrence Klein consider how standards of conversational conduct,
in particular, fashioned a “culture of politeness” to promote a new type
of public gentleman (with explicitly defined political and philosophical
motivations) as the proper English citizen. In this sense, politeness does
not refer to a timeless sense of inherent virtue; rather, politeness is a time-
dependent concept shaped in part by different writers at different historical
moments for different purposes. Recalling that conversation refers to any
type of social engagement, from a mercantile interaction to a personal chat
with a lover, this concentration upon the proper conduct of conversation
suggests that writers recognized how post-1688 authority resided partly
in the ability to shape linguistic interactions among Londoners. What all
of these critics agree upon is that conduct literature is a socially engaged
and ideologically imaginative literary form; Reading London contributes
to this critical conversation by examining the conducts that were available
to eighteenth-century Londoners.

For eighteenth-century readers, conduct literature was not a new liter-
ary tradition. Seventeenth-century conduct literature consisted primar-
ily in three forms: courtesy-books (guides for accessing and perfecting
courtlly mannerisms that were supposedly inherently natural characteris-
tics for aristocratic courtiers), chapbooks (dialogues or ballads that offered
standards of courtship), and phrase-books (fabricated phrases with their
attendant occasions for conversational usage). During the eighteenth-
century, however, the lines between these textual traditions blur, and crit-
ics such as Jacques Carré, Tim McLoughlin, and Georges Lamoine find
“the dissemination of [conduct literature’s] subject-matter into a broad
range of literary genres.” As this current work on conduct literature sug-
gests, the degree of this “dissemination” was so great that it is difficult
to understand what types of eighteenth-century writing are not conduct
literature. A common explanation for why conduct and issues of courtesy
seem to pervade a multitude of textual traditions during the eighteenth
century involves the perception that London transformed from a society of
well-bred aristocratic courtiers to a marketplace for middle-class profes-
sionals whose lack of breeding defined them as such. As a result, Carré
locates a “crisis of courtesy” at the start of the eighteenth century in which
the courtly connotations of “courtesy” were now in danger of becoming
prescriptive rules of etiquette, available to everyone.

Although eighteenth-century conduct books may resemble lists of rules
(and more analysis of conduct books’ stylistic strategies may dislodge this resemblance), the literature of the period adopts the task of normalizing certain standards of physical and mental activity in London. They do so because writers acknowledged that the imaginative qualities attached to reading seventeenth-century textual traditions were perfect vehicles for helping readers envision new relationships to a newly changed London. This provides a reason for why a variety of eighteenth-century texts may be discussed under the rubric of conduct literature. It also explains the heterogeneity of these forms. All of the “Town literature” examined in this book conveys a mode of writing that is neither purely creative in the post-romantic sense of castles and unicorns nor purely didactic in the sense of formulaic lectures and textbooks. Their mode is neither laughably fantastical nor sternly prescriptive; instead, they display a species of generic play that mocks our oversimplified binaries of creative imagination versus didactic prescription—a species that begs to be caught with a more contextualized critical apparatus. Partly because of its seventeenth-century and aristocratic associations, conduct has become synonymous with “proper behavior” or “mannerism.” But conduct is also a value-producing abstraction. As an alternative to Armstrong’s discussion of actual conduct books and their “ideology,” I suggest that we examine the topographical conditions that allowed the metaphor of conduct (and not just actual conduct books) to acquire social value and produce notions of morality in London.

Conduct literature was valuable to eighteenth-century writers because it was a familiar textual tradition; it brought with it explicitly defined ways of reading that emphasized the metaphysical reasoning for proper behavior and mannerism. Relying on this familiarity, writers seized conduct as a stable “known” amid the new “unknowns” of post-1688 London. And this is where writers’ metaphoric play acquires value. Metaphors were particularly valuable to these writers since metaphors familiarize the previously unknown—a function that is perfect for helping readers know their place in a newly changed urban environment. In particular, writers interpret conduct as a metaphor because a reader’s familiarity with conduct’s seventeenth-century associations could be transferred, through figurative similitudes, to refer to new, urban unknowns such as self-government (Burney and Boswell), urban space (Gay), and policing (Fielding). In other words, writers use conduct beyond its familiar, literal meaning; readers may see the word “conduct” on the page, recognize its literal meaning, but are now asked to extend its literal and familiar mean-
ing into new, unfamiliar and imaginative contexts. A metaphor that is common to twenty-first-century readers may help to clarify the familiarizing effects of metaphors. For instance, when we say “my love is a red, red rose,” we do not literally mean that there exists one rose that possesses all of our love; it would be laughable to have a rose permanently take our place in bed beside our significant other. The proclamation makes sense only if we read beyond its literal meaning. But it is an extremely valuable metaphor because it attempts to connect an intangible unknown (“love”) with a tangible known (“a rose”) and therefore familiarize readers with something previously unknown. In addition, this metaphor is so communally accepted that the roses actually acquire economic value; that is, roses are extremely expensive. Like the metaphor of the rose, writers use the metaphor of conduct to exceed literal meaning. For the writers in this study, conduct sometimes refers to instructive public behavior, and at other times it refers to a type of imaginative guidance which only a writer could provide, especially in the way John Locke uses it to title his essay, *On the Conduct of the Understanding* (1706). Sometimes conduct referred to the practical execution of a theory, and at other times it referred to what we now call the conscience. Most importantly, conduct could refer to the set of specific rules that a reader followed to make sense of, and engage with, printed text. In this sense, conduct refers to emerging theories of genre, and these examples suggest that conduct is an important metaphor to writers because it could accomplish imaginative tasks in excess of its literal meaning. That is, writers could assign new tasks to conduct’s familiar associations with social status, and in this way, they imagined they could manage London and fill the void left by the abdication of James II. By figuratively referring to conduct beyond its literal meaning and in ways that seventeenth-century writers never intended, eighteenth-century writers made conduct resemble a desirable object (almost tangible, like the cityscape) that printed texts embodied and conveyed to readers. Furthermore, writers were able to transform this abstraction into an almost priceless necessity for interpreting London properly; they did so by anchoring this abstraction to London’s literal, physical geography. In this way, the intangible (love or self-government) is rendered tangible (through the vehicle of a rose or writing in a journal).

The metaphor of conduct could also refer to a writer’s guidance for helping readers interpret new, urban spaces. Consider, for instance, how John Gay’s long poem *Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London* guides readers through a literal cityscape by cataloguing street names.
Readers become familiar with Gay’s London not by identifying and visiting monuments, streets, and churches but by yoking the way people act—their particular conducts, their “art of walking”—to specific named streets. Beyond referring to a literal cityscape, Gay’s poem urges readers to develop imaginative activity in order to know a new London. Gay used material conditions (urban geography) to accomplish figurative work (to know London by reading properly). Many of the writers I address in *Reading London* use the word “conduct” as a metaphor for textual form. Boswell’s “schemes,” Burney’s “plans,” and Fielding’s “Method” or “Conduct in Writing” are all closely related to “kind,” “species,” and the archive of words that eighteenth-century critics used as placeholders for “genre.” Invoking the metaphor of conduct, writers could shuttle value between textual authority, which was performed by the narrator’s or poet’s self-conscious entry into a work, and social authority, which was performed by the writer’s helping readers to relate to London in a new way. Interpreting the metaphor of conduct to relate to genre, we may account for the proliferation of kinds of writing about London during the first two decades of the eighteenth century and for the omnipresence of “mock” genres that translated classical Roman textual traditions into vehicles for addressing London’s local conditions. This suggests why several of the texts discussed in this book may seem generically foreign to us. For example, Burney’s *Cecilia*, Boswell’s *London Journal*, and Gay’s *Trivia* resist our categories of novel, journal, and poem because each is a textual vehicle designed to clarify specific traits that characterized eighteenth-century London. The idea that eighteenth-century urban writers developed textual modes that we neither have nor recognize as our own may seem strange, but it is completely consistent with writers’ attempts to reconceptualize their authority in terms of the administrative geography and notions of conduct of eighteenth-century London. Thus, writers reconceived textual modes to address specific urban problems that were unique to London.

Genre and the features that defined individual genres were not self-evident or well defined for all eighteenth-century writers; therefore, to address only one genre in this book (such as novels, poetry, or drama) would imply that eighteenth-century urban writers viewed genres as natural categories. This is simply not true. Gay’s *Trivia*, which could be described as a poem, a guidebook, an urban georgic, or a mock-epic, shows that the metaphor of conduct was valuable because it could shuttle value between geography and a variety of textual traditions to render a previously unknowable object, the city, familiar. Each of the following chapters suggests ways to
expand our notion of eighteenth-century conduct to understand it not only as a synonym for some abstract notion of public propriety or an ideological vehicle for refiguring subjectivity, but also, when in the hands of urban writers, as a metaphor for London’s new spaces, governance, and patterns of writing and reading. In the following chapters, the metaphor of conduct produces meaning where there previously was none. Writers in London recognize that metaphor is a crucial tool for making writers appear to be governing while they write, and making readers appear to be governed as they learn to read and interpret properly. This does not simply mean that we should interpret our city as we would interpret a book. Instead, conduct is an eighteenth-century metaphor for a complex system of knowledge production for both readers and writers.

**Governmentality**

By the middle of the eighteenth century, London’s problematic administrative geography had encouraged writers to generate imaginative solutions, and these solutions participated in a new, textual art of government known as governmentality. By “governmentality” I refer to an important theoretical lens that assists readers in seeing the strategies of imaginative government that writers devised after 1688. Discussions about authority in eighteenth-century London frequently invoke language derived from twentieth-century theories about eighteenth-century notions of power and authority. These theories are dominated by the words “public,” “civil,” and “governmentality,” and are generally derived from the writings of Jürgen Habermas and Michel Foucault. The theory of liberal governmentality initially posited by Foucault and more recently examined by Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, Mary Poovey, and Judith Butler forms the modern understanding of the social context that enabled eighteenth-century urban writing to resemble governing. Modern critics use liberal governmentality to refer to an “art of government” that appeared after 1688 to compete with a fading monarchical absolutism. In contrast to divine right, liberal governmentality did not strictly operate “by coercion”; instead, it “elicited voluntary compliance through the mechanisms of fashion and taste.” In twenty-first-century terms, Judith Butler suggests that we are familiar with governmentality in terms of post-9/11 military tribunals and “indefinite detention”; to Butler, governmentality “denotes an operation of administration power that is extra-legal. . . . [it] designates a field of political power in which tactics and
aims have become diffuse, and in which political power fails to take on a unitary and causal form.” Although Butler uses governmentality to interpret twenty-first-century events, she nonetheless acknowledges the relationship of governmentality to eighteenth-century notions of sovereignty:

Governmentality thus operates through state and non-state institutions and discourses that are legitimated neither by direct elections nor through established authority. Marked by a diffuse set of strategies and tactics, governmentality gains its meaning and purpose from no single source, no unified sovereign subject. Rather, the tactics characteristic of governmentality operate diffusely, to dispose and order populations, and to produce and reproduce subjects, their practices and beliefs, in relation to specific policy aims.

Printed text in eighteenth-century London constitutes one of these “extra-legal” tactics for replacing a “unified sovereign subject.” From this perspective, we may consider the metaphors, rhetoric, and literary styles employed by early eighteenth-century writers as extralegal tactics for organizing London in new ways.

J. A. Pocock’s work is also important since it carefully qualifies these theorizations of liberal governmentality by injecting “manners” into these discussions of eighteenth-century civic government. In particular, Pocock traces how ancient notions of English virtue were redefined in terms of “manners,” a concept of civic regulation that negotiated England’s past with the onset of commercialism by combining “the ethical” with “the juristic.” Pocock’s point here is that a technology of manners reconciled any ethical problems that people had with London’s new materialism. While this argument offers one way to understand why eighteenth-century literature is obsessed with manners, conduct, and direction, I argue that in the way eighteenth-century writers theorized it, “conduct” was a technology not only suited for reconciling trade with an ancient regime, but also for projecting alternate futures that frequently, at least in their surface content, have nothing to do with trade. In its forward-leaning, goal-oriented movement towards imaginative speculation and projection, “conduct” is therefore distinct from “manners.” Both metaphors target discipline and consensus, but each one reaches these goals via different modes (i.e., political, aesthetic, religious) and different cultural vehicles (i.e., writing, reading, performance).

Early eighteenth-century literary writing, most notably Addison and
Steele’s *Tatler* and *Spectator* papers (published between 1710 and 1712), frequently attempts to outline an individual’s relationship to an urban community. In the shadow of divine right, textual discipline constituted a new prerequisite for a properly organized society. Conduct figured prominently in this periodical project as a monitoring device that left communal standards of taste intact, yet permitted readers to envision themselves as independent authorities. While critics such as Habermas have viewed Addison and Steele’s project as the birth of bourgeois subjectivity, I am more interested in how writers after Addison and Steele not only participated in liberal governmentality (their writings are attempts at controlling others), but also advertised printed text as a site of urban authority (their writings could govern other people in the place of divine right). Writers advertised their new method for knowing London as society’s best and only way to comprehend a city filled with isolated individuals. These writers therefore had to define their social function while performing it; for them, governmentality implied self-authorization.

Each of the following chapters frames a cultural problem in London that writers attempted to resolve by shaping consensus in a post-1688 environment. In turn, each chapter also details the textual technologies and modes that interact with, or arise from, London’s cultural geography, and it is these technologies and forms that constitute the writer’s experiment in the art of government. My goal is neither to synthesize every chapter under a grand generalization nor to discount the differences between the projects of Gay, Fielding, Pope, Boswell, and Burney. Instead, I offer five different ways in which eighteenth-century literary writing about London may be seen to be experimental and exploratory rather than prescriptive and regulatory. In addition, each writer participates in textual governmentality by means of several different genres.

The principle that has guided my selection of the writers I analyze is based on my desire to show how the stylistic and rhetorical strategies of canonically “literary” eighteenth-century texts may, with the help of different theoretical lenses, be shown to strive for cultural goals that extend beyond traditionally literary goals (i.e., to be aesthetically pleasing or reflect an authentic “reality”). For instance, although she is a writer who was irretrievably influenced by London’s physicality, Aphra Behn does not figure in the following study since she writes on the verge of sovereignty’s realignment in 1688, much of her work being swan songs for the Stuart cause before her death in 1689. Writers such as Eliza Haywood and Daniel Defoe also do not figure prominently, but their absence is not due
to their inability to imagine alternative Londons; instead, spatial limitations have caused me to test the validity of my thesis with texts that, with the exception of the past two decades, have traditionally been critiqued for their aesthetic and “realistic,” rather than cultural or political, merit. Thus, the following chapters interpret traditionally literary works in frequently nonliterary ways to offer several conclusions about the ways writers administered urban and textual spaces to readers.

Not all of the writers in the following chapters contributed to ideas of liberal governmentality in the same way. For example, Gay, Pope, and Fielding aimed to present themselves and their textual products as unquestionable social authorities. They carefully focus a reader’s attention on the new formal techniques that they were developing to guide the reader through unknown territories and textual forms. If the theory of governmentality can help suggest why writers in early eighteenth-century London were in the position to imagine themselves as authoritative figures, then this theory can also suggest how Gay’s “Art of Walking the Streets of London” participated in an “art of governing.” Boswell and Burney, on the other hand, offer detailed sketches of what should be taking place within Londoners’ minds. Their works narrate what happens when Londoners internalize the disciplinary techniques posited by Addison, Steele, Gay, Pope, and Fielding; therefore, Boswell and Burney represent a generation of writers raised on the models of an earlier generation. But Boswell and Burney’s self-governing techniques are not divorced from a specific experience of London; in fact, they are enabled by a new cultural problem that distinguishes late eighteenth-century London from its predecessor: the proliferation of print. To be sensitive to this cultural problem that distinguishes the motivations of early eighteenth-century writers from those of the late eighteenth-century, I organize the chapters of this book under two headings that refer to the changing functions that writers assigned to printed text: “governing others” and “governing the self.” The final section of this introduction reviews the problems and arguments for each chapter that I include beneath these headings. In this way, the order of the chapters sketches a developmental history of these writers’ experiments in eighteenth-century governmentality.

**Governing Others**

There are three reasons why I begin a study of how writers attempted to control others with Gay. First, Gay unapologetically anchors his poem to
the material conditions of eighteenth-century London. The hypersensitivity with which Gay details street names provides us with an idea about how meaningful eighteenth-century London’s geography was to writers. Desperate to refer to quotidian urban conditions and render them less complex, Gay also engineers over the course of the poem a powerful abstraction: urban space. In particular, Gay conceptualizes space as an archive of conduct (styles of walking, dress, and transport) each of which denotes a specific street. Another reason why a discussion of *Trivia* is important is that it details London’s streets and conceptualizes space in a way that Fielding, Boswell, and Burney would eventually take for granted and consider to be common knowledge. The “art of walking” that Gay’s poem describes allows us to view *Tom Jones* and the *Epistle to Burlington* as urban artifacts, even though they are not always viewed as such. My interpretation does not dispute that a work like *Tom Jones*, for example, may also be read as a mock-heroic *Bildungsroman*, but I do suggest that viewing this novel as an urban artifact reveals important facets of a shared artistic project. Finally, Gay’s poem frustrates attempts to forge twentieth-century relationships to a 1716 long poem. The work wears its alterity on its sleeve; its specificity demands that we see the poem as a document written to address local conditions and to guide readers through a moment in London’s history. Thus, I do not interpret the spaces that Gay conceptualizes in *Trivia* as primitive centers of modernity that reflect a modern “self.”50 One can only claim that eighteenth-century views of London prefigure twentieth-century perspectives on this or any other urban model by downplaying the sense of geographic and administrative specificity that *Reading London* strives to highlight.

I argue in the second chapter that the textual strategies Fielding used in *Tom Jones* to guide his readers through a new textual form (the novel) are identical to the strategies that he used in his Bow Street prose to introduce himself to the populace he governed as Magistrate on Bow Street. If we recognize how Gay relies upon the metaphor of conduct to fabricate ideas about urban space (as well as his social value as a poet), we may contextualize how Fielding’s *Tom Jones* helped Fielding merge the novelist with the Bow Street Magistrate. The connection between Fielding’s novel and his civil prose is stylistic; Fielding developed a specific way of guiding readers’ relationships to their proper authorities that not only helped him police the liminal districts surrounding Bow Street, but also lent writers (whether novelists or writers of social treatises) legitimacy in an urban environment.
The third chapter contextualizes Alexander Pope’s 1731 Epistle to Burlington in terms of London’s industry of urban projecting and improvement. I argue that by using the final eight lines to Pope’s verse-epistle as its epigraph, Nicholas Hawksmoor’s 1736 Proposition for a New Stone-Bridge at Westminster points to the importance of Pope’s poem for imagining London’s mid-century cityscape. In particular, Pope’s To Burlington, which Pope wrote to his architect-patron Lord Burlington, assigns a proper “Use” to wealth. Pope defined this use by using the poem to reinterpret the words “Taste” and “Use”; however, the way in which readers approached Pope’s Horatian epistle as well as the poem’s erratic publishing history suggests that To Burlington began to be read as a Humean—and definably British—essay. Witnessing the way Pope translates Roman textual tradition into a definably British form, readers were able to imagine that To Burlington transferred authority from Rome to London. In turn, Pope resembled a classically educated interpreter whom, in the absence of a sovereign monarch, London needed to render its social problems legible to an eighteenth-century populace. One of these problems involved the eighteenth-century competition between sovereignty and liberal governmentality. This problem of urban authority was best symbolized during the 1730s by the fervor over the construction of a bridge at Westminster that would compete with London Bridge, the City of London’s ancient viaduct for trade. As Hawksmoor’s epigraph suggests, Pope’s poem, in both its form and its content, attempted to reconcile these immediate problems that threatened Court and City.

A NEW CULTURAL PROBLEM: THE PROLIFERATION OF PRINT

In an interchapter (chapter 4) that I position between the sections entitled governing others and governing the self, I detail not only the historical conditions that gave rise to the proliferation of print in London but also several reactions to this textual proliferation that recognize it as a new problem for Londoners. Writers moved from governing others to governing the self because the proliferation of governing projects that writers like Gay, Fielding, and Pope had popularized during the first half of the century had become incredibly varied, chaotic, and seemingly unrelated. From the perspective of late eighteenth-century writers such as Boswell and Burney, these early eighteenth-century experiments in textual government had failed to cause substantive political change due to the fact that Gay, Fielding, and Pope relied upon imaginative techniques to control Londoners. The “print-
saturated London” which I outline in the interchapter therefore presents a cultural problem to late-century writers since they not only encountered early-century writers’ failure to effectively guide readers’ imaginations, but they also inherited a cacophonous number of proliferating textual voices that made urban unity seem impossible. The saturation of printed text in mid-century London therefore denies a reader’s ability to fashion a single, individual self since there were an infinite number of different texts and forms that claimed to relate readers to London in the proper way. By the late eighteenth-century, a single “London” became more difficult to imagine since there was no single textual tradition in which to imagine London. The sheer heterogeneity of textual forms that constituted a print-saturated London threatened the notion of a single self. In short, the new cultural problem that London now presented to readers and writers was that a print-saturated London blurred London’s readability.

The chapters that I devote to Boswell (chapter 5) and Burney (chapter 6) register two experiences of this cultural problem and result in Boswell’s and Burney’s developing textual modes of self-government. As a heterogeneous, print-saturated London threatens the conception of an individual self, Boswell and Burney respond by reappropriating the textual strategies that Gay, Fielding, and Pope had originally conceived to manage others. Boswell and Burney adapt these strategies to manage themselves, and as a result, they contribute to a late-century version of governmentality that involves self-government. In their self-governing responses to a print-saturated London, Boswell and Burney show how notions of private individuality both inherit and alter the terms of communal identity conceived by an earlier generation of writers.

**GOVERNING THE SELF**

In chapter 5 I argue that Boswell responds to London’s incongruous textual representations and images by internalizing the modes of government that Gay and Fielding had developed to address readers. If London’s heterogeneity threatened Boswell’s sense of an individual self, then he needed a way to reimagine unity in late eighteenth-century London. In his *London Journal*, Boswell recognized that the critical unity associated with dramatic metaphor represented a way to reimagine a unified self. For example, Boswell frequently adopts other personas in “scenes,” and he introduces dialogues that contain parenthetical stage directions. To understand how Boswell’s
dramatic metaphor worked as a vehicle for recording his experiences within
and between Court and City (the areas, not coincidentally, in which the
majority of London’s theaters were located), I historicize the connotations
that the word “dramatic” would have carried in London between 1762 and
1763. Doing so, we can see that Boswell’s use of dramatic metaphor origi-
nated in and was yoked not only to the Town’s undisciplined geography but
also to post-Restoration literary and social criticism. The *London Journal*
represents Boswell’s attempt to critique his every move in an effort to
become, with the help of no one but himself, a proper Briton. To accomplish
this feat, Boswell viewed the act of writing as synonymous with perform-
ing—and governing—the self; Boswell became both the authoritative actor-
writer and the reflective critic-reader. Boswell’s *London Journal* represents
in many ways a logical conclusion to Addison and Steele’s attempt to gov-
ern readers by means of printed texts.

Unlike Boswell’s experience with the endless possibilities that a print-
saturated city offered him, Burney recognized that these possibilities actu-
ally limited a woman’s urban experience. Burney found that London’s
heterogeneity did not offer women a variety of choices; instead, London’s
endless possibilities for self-definition presented an endless number of ways
to limit a woman’s agency in London and render her a passive object. In
the fifth chapter, I interpret Burney’s second novel, *Cecilia*, as a sequel or
attempt to recast these problems of London’s gendered spaces by reimagi-
ing the gendered literary traditions that surface in her first novel, *Evelina*.
Recognizing the formal limitations that a novel of letters had imposed upon
her writing about a young woman’s maturation in London, Burney wrote
*Cecilia* not only to reappropriate the formal limitations that *Evelina* had
allowed her to recognize, but also to write beyond the epistolary tradition so
as to identify alternate sites of feminine authority in London. The forms in
which male writers were producing knowledge about London frequently did
not relate to women; for example, women lacking male conductors on eigh-
teenth-century streets were considered prostitutes. Gay’s “Art of Walking
the Streets” therefore addresses male readers; it does not address women
who were brought to and conducted throughout London by male escorts.
In response to these masculine strategies for producing urban knowledge,
Burney uses *Evelina* and *Cecilia* to suggest ways in which women could
reimagine themselves as both the conducted individual and the conductor.
One way to accomplish this imaginative task, Burney suggests, is to reject
the idea that epistolary confession is the only means for knowing one’s self.
Women could instead interpret their own experiences rather than waiting
for a reader to interpret and critique their urban experiences. Burney takes this suggestion to heart when she, as a woman novelist, rejects epistolary confession and reinterprets the role of letter writing in *Cecilia*.

Burney occupies the final chapter because she questions what a woman’s authentic self might resemble in London. But she was also able to exploit the metaphor of conduct in a way that male writers such as Boswell and Gay could not. In particular, her first two novels question how notions of conduct and textual form made gender meaningful. She in turn exposed the metaphor of conduct for what it really was: a rhetorical device that writers used to imagine authority. Burney, however, did not discard the metaphor of conduct as a defunct or tainted strategy of authorization. She instead reinterpreted it in order to propose an alternative (and gendered) mode of soul-searching that did not rely upon confessional tactics. Burney’s writing therefore outlined strategies of self-authorization that catered to women writers, but she continued to seize the opportunities that London’s geography and its modes of governmentality made available to writers in general.

With these concrete examples in mind, I return to my central argument: eighteenth-century urban writers advertised an authority that they never really possessed, but imagined they held. None of the texts discussed here—not even Gay’s *Trivia*—attempts to reflect London as it actually existed; instead, authors used their works to reimagine London and their roles in London’s immediate present. To the extent that the guidebooks, novels, poems, journals, brochures, plays, periodical papers, and treatises I analyze tried to imagine a credentialized role for the urban writer that did not exist, these works should be seen as eighteenth-century projects. For example, Fielding’s *Tom Jones* is just one example of what eighteenth-century novel writing looked like; Fielding had no way of knowing that his (or rather Cervantes’s) self-conscious narrative voice and style would be adopted by later novelists as a defining characteristic of a British genre. Burney never fully resolved her problems with confessional literary vehicles in *Evelina* and *Cecilia*; she used each novel to make problems visible, not to solve them. We should also remember that Boswell’s *London Journal* is not a self-contained work; it is just one volume in his recorded life. Boswell takes great pains to advertise that his *London Journal* does not end with a reformed, chaste hero. Instead, the *London Journal* tries to identify a British style of writing that Boswell could take with
him on his Grand Tour. Fielding, Burney, and Boswell wrote without knowing what the end to their projects would be; thus, their works exemplify the eighteenth-century sense of the word “project” as Daniel Defoe had defined it: “a vast Undertaking, too big to be manag’d.” While none of these urban writers tries to “manage” the ends of these projects, each writer imagines exerting some control over London’s present. It is not my intention to prove that Pope’s poetry actually built a bridge or to prove that Londoners actually considered space in the way Gay imagined it; instead, I stress the important roles that writers’ imaginations played in fabricating both London and the Londoner. I focus not only on textual projects that tried to clarify conduct’s role in understanding London, but also on the textual strategies and formal traditions that defined and valorized the process of “conducting” or writing in eighteenth-century London.

By focusing on conduct as an abstract yet influential “governing idea,” I offer one way to answer questions about why eighteenth-century urban writing differs from the urban writing from other centuries. I have chosen to focus on conduct because, although an abstraction, it had ramifications for London’s daily life that demand further, sensitive clarification. Describing conduct as a governing idea allows me not only to visualize its relevance to theories of liberal governmentality (“governing”) and imaginative thought (Hume’s “ideas”), but also to question the self-evident status it enjoys as a governing idea in twenty-first century criticism about eighteenth-century literature. I have not attempted to make this study of conduct the last word on the subject of eighteenth-century urban writers’ alterity; instead, I hope to provoke more questions that will render the peculiar complexities and lost subtleties of eighteenth-century writing visible to a twenty-first century audience.

The crucial characteristic about eighteenth-century urban literature that my study reveals is the experimental, exploratory tone of some of the most “canonical” works of the period. The experimental tone of these literary urban-projects questions the post-romantic notion that eighteenth-century writing is prescriptive and unimaginative (according to a Wordsworthian definition of imagination). By closely reading the textual strategies that writers developed to contribute to London’s government, I sketch an urban history that suggests that our ideas about how to create, manage, and police centralized populations in urban settings do not have to be viewed as the culmination of an inevitable process. In other words, Reading London shows how eighteenth-century literature offers alternatives for urban governance and ultimately suggests that our twenty-first-century problems and conceptions of “the city” did not have to be this way.
Conclusion

Throughout this book I have argued that by closely reading the metaphors that eighteenth-century writers developed in London—as well as contextualizing these metaphors in terms of London’s government following the Glorious Revolution and the proliferation of printed text in London during the late eighteenth century—we may understand how eighteenth-century literature tried to reimagine London. In their attempts to reimagine London, these writers design projects that speculate upon (or “conjecturally anticipate”) not only an alternative urban present, but also a more socially engaged role for the urban writer. This role casts writers as indispensable managers of a reader’s imagination. Since this role was imagined, we may claim that these projects were destined to fail, especially if we wish to define “failure” as the inability to produce political change. As the speculative goal of late-century writers changes from governing others to governing the self, we witness their desperate attempts to reverse this failure and to make writing valuable to the individual. Yet their inability to cause substantive political change does not render them culturally ineffectual; instead, these eighteenth-century projects are important in London’s cultural history since they represent imaginative alternatives to the type of politics that now organize London as we know it. These eighteenth-century projects imagine alternative futures, and these imaginative acts are crucial to defining London’s imagined sense of community. From this perspective, urban imagination indeed serves a social function.

Analyzing these imaginative and speculative techniques has allowed me to outline three conclusions as well as define several fields where more research is necessary to grasp the full extent to which printed text projected and speculated upon futures for eighteenth-century London that are distinctly different from the one twenty-first-century Londoners (and other urbanities) are living. The first conclusion involves the fluctuating status of eighteenth-century genre and how this fluctuation represents eighteenth-century writers’ acknowledgment that both topography and
textual traditions have the potential to become convenient tools for categorization and organization. For example, John Gay recognizes that London’s geography was a physical manifestation of social change, and Gay seizes this fact to explore the ways that changes in literary form could attend to changes in urban form. All of these altered textual traditions, such as Gay’s mock-georgic long poem, Fielding’s civil prose, Pope’s verse epistle essay, Boswell’s journal, and Burney’s nonepistolary novel, provide the terms in which writers and readers attempted to negotiate these geographical changes. In the end, genre and geography constitute familiar templates that writers are able to fill with new meaning. In particular, these writers use genre and geography to train readers to understand the metaphor of conduct as a natural and inherent structure of the mind.

The second conclusion suggested by my study clarifies the governing role that eighteenth-century writers in London shaped for themselves. This role may be likened to a conductor—a figure who, in the wake of 1688, led readers to recognize the boundaries of London’s geography as well as the boundaries of literary genre. The writers that I examine in this book cater to these urban needs by creating texts that sketch experimental modes of interiority (Burney and Boswell), yoke abstract notions of morality to a literal cityscape (Gay), recast the relationships between textual traditions and civic projects (Pope), and advertise writers as credentialized artisans of London’s administration (Fielding). In this way, the metaphor of conduct sometimes offers to instruct public behavior, and at other times it refers to the imaginative guidance which only a writer could provide. For Pope, conduct referred to the practical execution of an abstract theory, and for Boswell and Burney, it referred to and outlined what we now call the conscience. Most importantly, conduct refers to emerging theories of genre—as well as how to read these genres—because it could accomplish imaginative tasks in excess of its literal meaning. In particular, eighteenth-century writers transformed conduct to resemble a commodified object that printed texts could transmit to readers as well as guide them to functional models of urban self-government. London’s literal, physical geography helped to legitimize the figurative work of the metaphor of conduct.

A final conclusion is that the tradition of imaginative writing about eighteenth-century London is much larger than previously assumed. In each chapter, I have attempted to recover the subtle nuances of what it mean to “imagine” in eighteenth-century printed text about London; however, literary criticism is far from comprehending the eighteenth century’s
alternate conception of the imagination (if there is one) that preceded the romantic imagination. This is where more work in eighteenth-century studies may be concentrated. With this work, we may discover that London’s urban setting performed the same function for eighteenth-century writers that nature performed for Wordsworth; that is, the local conditions of the urban environment encouraged writers to imagine their role in new ways.

I have also stressed throughout this book that much of London’s eighteenth-century literature offers an archive of alternatives to our notions of not only genre but also urban phenomena. For example, Gay’s *Trivia* promotes not only “an Art of Walking the Streets” but also an art of reading street-level behavior as the main strategies for knowing London. Gay imagines a future city in which citizens inhabit and indulge in street-level experience not as a means to an end, but as a communal experience in its own right. In fact Gay’s street level is where the urban community organizes itself and where it interacts. In this way, Gay’s street-level, interpretative techniques stand as distinct alternatives to knowing a city by gaining a bird’s-eye view of its geography—a perspective so common with modern maps. From Gay’s perspective, one need not disengage oneself atop a skyscraper’s observatory or a Millennium Wheel, surveying ant-like citizens in order to know the city. Instead, Gay considers the way street-level interpretation and social engagement enact the proper form of urban knowledge. Another notable alternative is presented by Boswell’s *London Journal*. In particular, Boswell internalizes Gay’s interpretive skills and applies them to his textually represented self. For Boswell, disciplined writing and rereading offered the possibility of successful self-government, especially in their attempt to become viable substitutes for the police forces outside one’s head.

I have not highlighted these urban alternatives to suggest that we try to recover these eighteenth-century alternatives or (impossibly) reinhabit their conditions of possibility; instead, I have written this book to provoke questions about the ways we have been trained to read eighteenth-century literature about London. The self-evident truth that all of the different alternatives presented in this book ask us to question is, quite simply, the inevitability of our urban present. For example, how have we come to privilege maps rather than street-level experience? How have we come to rely upon police rather than experimental forms of self-discipline? And most importantly, how have histories of writing in nineteenth-century London as well as histories of reading literature during the twentieth and
twenty-first centuries been able to virtually erase these eighteenth-century experiments in imaginative social engagement? These are questions whose answers are likely to be found in the distance between Frances Burney’s and Ian McEwan’s London. They are also questions whose answers will help us approach an understanding as to why eighteenth-century London appears historically foreign yet architecturally familiar at the same time.

Exploring the intersection of these issues in eighteenth-century London’s imaginative writing may also assist us in finally tracing imagination’s alternate history—a history that suggests how our ideas about how to create, manage, and police centralized populations in urban settings do not have to be viewed as the culmination of an inevitable process. Indeed, when the 9/11 Commission Report proclaims a “failure of imagination” to be the reason for a twenty-first-century city’s vulnerability, it uses imagination in a very practical way. This usage suggests that the post-romantic concept of a unified imagination has apparently retained its eighteenth-century usage. And from this perspective, writing about eighteenth-century London may present twenty-first-century readers with not only histories of their present government, but also solutions for realizing a different future.
Glossary


**absolutism** Literally “all-powerful,” the term refers to the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century trends of monarchial rule throughout Europe in which the monarch establishes a society where individuals are defined by the degree to which they are “subjects” to the King.

**Bow Street** Not only a literal street in the City of Westminster but also a conceptualized English space that is synonymous with enforcing civil law in London. Its name originates in its supposed shape (a bow) and was first yoked to legislative matters when Thomas de Veil “opened London’s first magistrates court here in 1740, a time when there was little official protection for members of the public” (LC 108–9). The novelist Henry Fielding presided over the Bow Street court beginning in 1747; he therefore acquired the name “the Bow Street Magistrate.” Bow Street’s liminal geographic position between Court and City allowed Fielding to pursue new types of authority for urban writers. For example, Bow Street stands directly across from the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden; this geographic intersection of opera and law represents a visible reminder of how eighteenth-century writers (such as novelists) may have viewed urban, legislative authority as an additional “art” of civilization to which they were uniquely entitled.

**City of London, the** An explicitly defined, conceptualized English space that is synonymous with “the City”—an administrative space characterized by the ancient “square mile” of London consisting of guilds, vestries, and aldermen. Britons frequently associate the phrase “the City” with mercantile activity and thereby distinguish this phrase from the governing activities of “the Court.”

**Conduct** A metaphor valued by writers for its connotative flexibility. For the writers in this study, conduct may refer to: instructive public behavior, imaginative guidance which only a writer could provide, the practical execution of a theory, the mental activities we now associate
with the conscience, or the set of specific rules that a reader followed to make sense of, and engage with, printed text. In this sense, conduct refers to the stylistic and generic maneuvers in printed text.

**Court, the** A conceptualized space that informally refers to England’s governing apparatus and royally determined governing bodies. It is frequently a synonym for “the City of Westminster” in opposition to “the City of London.” Generically, the term refers to the English monarchy.

**Covent Garden** To eighteenth-century Londoners, a public square patterned after the piazzas of Italy, bordered on its west side by Inigo Jones’s St. Paul’s Church and on the east side by the Royal Opera House. The area is “built on what was the Saxons’ Thames port of Lundewic and is probably the same as Bede’s ‘Metropolis . . . a mart of many peoples coming by land and sea,’ which was abandoned c. 900. After Westminster Abbey bought the lands at the beginning of the thirteenth century it established a _convent_ garden, later Covent Garden, which grew into London’s major flower and vegetable market, giving its name to the area in a corrupted form . . .” (LC 98). When Londoners refer to “the Town,” Covent Garden stands at the center of this reference and therefore occupies a crucial space between Court and City for writers such as Fielding (Bow Street) and Boswell (who first met Samuel Johnson at Davies’s Bookshop just east of the square).

**Fleet Street** Thoroughfare connecting the City of London to the Town. Fleet Street turns into the Strand on its westernmost end. See the Strand, Whitehall

**Genre** A textual tradition that carries with it specific conventions of writing, reading, and interpreting. These conventions may be defined by the writer or, more importantly, brought to the text by the reader. For eighteenth-century literature, genre is rarely a stable, theorized entity; instead, it is a concept in continual change and historical flux.

**Glorious Revolution of 1688, the** James the Second, heir to Charles the Second’s throne, leaves England due to the public perception that James is too overtly Catholic to rule a Protestant country still reeling from the Puritan Revolution. The Protestant-friendly William and Mary are therefore given rule of England, and this monarchical realignment is deemed “glorious” since no blood was shed. For late Restoration and early eighteenth-century Londoners, however, the Glorious Revolution signifies the destabilization of absolute monarchy and the contested disruption of a seamless Stuart lineage.
**liberal governmentality** A twentieth-century term theorized mainly by Michel Foucault to describe a mode of government that appears after the Glorious Revolution destabilizes absolutism. The term refers to the resulting “arts of government” that develop as alternatives to absolutism. These arts involve the work of politicians, clergy, writers, alderman, and institutions that clamored to fill the absolutist void of 1688. Foucault theorizes the term in his 1978 lecture, “Governmentality.”

**London** Due to its history, the term “London” has inherited two distinct meanings: one local and one global. In locally specific terms, “London” refers to the “the City of London.” In global terms, “London” has become an umbrella-term for not only the ancient City of London but also the City of Westminster, the boroughs, counties, and suburbs surrounding the more formally defined Cities of London and Westminster. See also City of London, the City of Westminster, the Court, and the Town.

**self-government** In contrast to sovereign monarchy and absolutist states, the term refers to a form of authority in which the individual is stressed over an all-powerful monarch or police force. Self-governed people are therefore individuals rather than subjects whose status in English society was determined by their being “subject” to the ruling monarch.

**Soho** A traditionally bohemian area of the Town between Court and City characterized during the eighteenth century by coffeehouses, theaters, and housing for artists. The marginal qualities of this area are evinced in the origin of its name; when hunters wished to call attention to their sighting a pheasant in the fields that bordered between Court and City, they yelled, “so-ho!” to alert their gunmen while pointing towards the animal. This rural hunting call now refers to this decidedly urban area and emphasizes the rapid transition many marginal areas experienced as they were transformed from field, to suburb, and finally, to city.

**Strand, the** Named after the shore (or “beach”) against which the Thames ran during the late seventeenth century, the Strand is the thoroughfare that connects Court to City. In particular, the Strand is located in the Town, originating in Whitehall on its west end and Fleet Street on its east end. Due to its position between Court and City, the Strand represents the “middling” environment of the Town—a street of publishers, shops, and housing for writers and other artists.

**Thames, the** Titled by Caesar as “the River Tamesis” (*BG* 347), London’s tidal river supported the creation of “Londinium,” the town newly founded by the Romans. For eighteenth-century writers, the Thames became a convenient, organic metaphor for a type of natural, urban
harmony since the river unapologetically connected the administratively foreign areas of Court, Town, and City.

**Town, the** A generic term for the marginally policed parishes located between Parliament and the City of London. Although technically under the jurisdiction of the City of Westminster, “the Town” refers to the unregulated “liberties of the Strand.” During the eighteenth century, the Town was characterized by bohemian artistry, rampant crime and poverty, and most importantly, London’s theatres. Due to its administrative liminality, the Town presents a number of opportunities and problems to writers in London, including the opportunity to yoke morality to geography (John Gay); the problem of Westminster Bridge (Alexander Pope); the opportunity for performative self-government (James Boswell); and the chance to navigate explicitly gendered spaces (Frances Burney).

**Westminster Bridge** Completed in 1749, Westminster Bridge spans the Thames and connects the City of Westminster with southern England. When Pope crafted his *Epistle to Burlington*, Westminster Bridge represented a highly contested symbol between the city’s self-government and Westminster’s traditional governing bodies. Today’s Westminster Bridge was designed by Thomas Page and built in 1862 (*BG* 349).

**Westminster, the City of** The formal title for the area of London containing the governing bodies of England, including the Houses of Parliament, the royalty of St. James’s Palace, and aristocratic estate homes. The City of Westminster is markedly separate from the City of London in terms of rulers and legislation.

**Whitehall** The street upon which the Houses of Parliament anchor themselves. Britons use the term to refer to “the Court” or a body of royal government.
Notes to Preface

2. Critics who study eighteenth-century London for its “early modern” traits usually do so to explain why modern London looks the way it does. In many ways, the phrase “early modern London” presupposes that a “modern London” is the triumphant goal which any city of the past aimed to realize. For examples of what I call these “narratives of London’s historical inevitability,” see the essays included in J. F. Merritt’s anthology Imagining Early Modern London: Perceptions and Portrayals of the City from Stow to Strype, 1598–1720, edited by J. F. Merritt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Lawrence Manley, Literature and Culture in Early Modern London (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Elizabeth McKellar’s The Birth of Modern London: The Development and Design of the City, 1660–1720 (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999). In all of these titles, a recognizable entity called “early modern London” figures prominently.

While these narratives of London’s early modern history are valiant enterprises since they attempt to understand our urban inheritance of the past, especially McKellar’s detailed study of London’s post-Fire design and architecture, I am more interested in tracing the alternatives to our modern notions of “the urban” that eighteenth-century Londoners devised. I am interested in London’s “otherness” for two reasons. First, as shown by the work I have just cited, connections between eighteenth-century London and the modern city have been almost thoroughly explored elsewhere, and I refer readers to these studies to understand these connections. Second, the alternatives that eighteenth-century writers imagined for London’s future strike me as crucial elements for understanding not only the function of eighteenth-century literature about London but also the problems that modern cities presently face. These urban social problems—poverty, policing, suburban sprawl, to name a few—do not always have their origins solely in a decision of the past, and literature from the past may frequently offer solutions (aka alternatives) to these supposedly inevitable problems of urban civilization.

“[T]he sovereignty issue continued to bedevil English political life throughout the reign of Charles II, to break out into open revolution once again in the events of 1688–89, when his brother James II was driven from the throne in favour of a Protestant succession. At least part of the problem with the later Stuart monarchy was the attraction that absolute monarchy held for them, and that proved a critical element in the emergence of party politics in this period, with the Tories, broadly speaking, supporting the absolutist ideal and the Whigs opposing it” (4).

4. Robert B. Shoemaker shows how the reformation of manners campaigns of the 1690s also contributed to the dissemination of extralegal power following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, and that “the reformation of manners campaign was as much about social reform as it was about religious reform,” especially given the fact “that reformers were far more active in cities than in the countryside” (“Reforming the City: the Reformation of Manners Campaign in London” in Stilling the Grumbling Hive: the Response to Social and Economic Problems in England, 1689–1750 edited by Lee Davison, Tim Hitchcock, Tim Keirn, and Robert B. Shoemaker [New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1992], 100).


7. See John Brewer and Roy Porter, Introduction to Consumption and the World of Goods, edited by John Brewer and Roy Porter (London: Routledge, 1993): “But it would be a mistake to assume that the new world of goods was primarily or overwhelmingly domestic, merely to do with the building of ‘home.’ As Tim Breen argues, personal accoutrements, perhaps clothes above all, created styles which established public identities, by processes of assimilation and distinction” (5); see also 3–5.


9. Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707–1837. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), see especially 67–68: “The Protestant ruling order established by the Revolution of 1688, and ensured by the Hanoverian succession of 1714, supplied traders with positive advantages. One of its foremost innovations, after all, was annual sessions of Parliament, and this was of considerable value to men and women hungry for parliamentary intervention and sympathetic legislation.” Colley sees Protestantism and war as factors that were more important than trade in contributing to Britain’s communal identity: “For it was the British government’s huge investment in the navy, together with the imperial reach that this increasingly made possible, that allowed overseas trade to grow in the way that it did, and with the speed that it did. In this sense, it was actually trade that was parasitic on the resources of the nation state” (68). See also 64 for Colley’s description of London’s unique position as “the hub of British commerce” as well as “the meeting place of Parliament.”

11. Erin Mackie, *Market à la Mode: Fashion, Commodity, and Gender in The Tatler and The Spectator* (Baltimore: the Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997), 4. Mackie’s focus on “the discourse of fashion” as her “central category of analysis” has injected the verb “fashion” into critical discussions of how writing tried to shape public consensus after 1688. Mackie’s Marxist interpretation of *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* attempts to exhibit “some of the structures of distinction, prescription, and exclusion that underlie the very formulation of these promises [of liberation and inclusion], which, after all, can only be fulfilled through an internalized adoption of quite particular, class-based ideological regulations. These regulations follow the modern paradoxes of a bourgeois, hegemonic social order whose most formidable strengths lie not in outright censorship but in widespread consensus garnered through the free assent of each individual; not in coercive and repressive prohibition but in the deep subjective identification of each person with sociocultural norms that become integral to his or her very psyche; not in the performance of power and authority as imperious display but in the fashioning of each strand of the fabric of everyday life through the management of taste, style, and manners” (262). In particular, Mackie’s dialectic between individual free will and hegemonic consensus extends the dialectic that McKeon outlines in *The Origins of the English Novel.*

While adopting these historically situated lenses to read eighteenth-century literature, I differ from McKeon’s and Mackie’s methods of analysis since I claim that writers such as Boswell and Burney do understand this dialectic tension between “free assent” and “widespread consensus” as they reimagine London—that they are not deluded individuals whose writings are solely economically determined. My discussion on eighteenth-century imagination in the chapter on Boswell (chapter five) will clarify this distinction.

12. Michel Foucault’s lectures on governmentality are responsible for sketching the methodologies to historically reassess an eighteenth century “art of government” (See especially Foucault, “Governmentality,” in *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality, with Two Lectures and an Interview with Michel Foucault*, ed. Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991], 87–104). Critics who extend Foucault’s arguments to address the English political sphere in particular most notably include John Bender (*Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* [Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1987]) and Mackie (*Market à la Mode*). I expand upon and qualify the ways this work bears upon London in the introduction.


15. John Bender, *Imagining the Penitentiary: Fiction and the Architecture of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1987), 228. In particular, Bender’s seventh chapter entitled “The Aesthetic of Isolation as Social System” argues for the imaginative foundation of urban self-discipline: “The penitentiary suspends the offender within a tightly specified topography of spectatorship which reproduces, as physical practice, an invisible masterplot that structures mental life in metropolitan society. This plot is capable of full enactment only through sympathetic construction, in the imagination, of those material particulars that govern the sensibility and behavior of others. Thus the penitentiary does not need to be accessible to visitors, or even physically present to view (in fact, by contrast with the old prisons, they came increasingly to be located outside of cities) because its rules are one and the same as those that govern consciousness itself. Citizens at large function, in imagination, as the beholders of penitentiary punishment, picturing themselves at once as the objects of supervision and as impartial spectators enforcing reformation of character on the isolated other. . . . The impartial spectator is a personification, not a personality: its character exists, like the grammatical procedures of free indirect discourse, only as a general code. Although Bentham and other architects were able to specify every detail of structures in which the principle of inspection could be played out bodily—and in the mature Panopticon scheme every guard and turnkey, not just offenders, would have been subject to the gaze of others—inspection is not so much a physical condition as a way of living in a transparent world” (228).

16. Whereas Bender relies upon the work of eighteenth-century philosophers (Adam Smith and Thomas Hobbes), painters (William Hogarth and Joseph Wright of Derby), and “the role of novelistic representation in institutional formation” (*Imagining the Penitentiary*, 2) as cultural evidence for his argument, I am interested primarily in the role that printed text and literary style plays for writers who are trying to attend to the specific topographical demands of eighteenth-century London.

17. Bender’s *Imagining the Penitentiary* also examines the eighteenth-century psychological motivations for this categorization, following Foucauldian theorizations of “disciplining” knowledge via genres, education, and degrees.

18. In my attempt to show how writers used literary form to “render London a knowable object,” I contribute to the work mainly done by Cynthia Wall and Elizabeth McKellar, which examines the relationship between literary genre and urban planning.

19. See especially J. Paul Hunter, *Before Novels: the Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1990), 4–5 and 223–24. Wall’s *The Literary and Cultural Spaces of Restoration London* also stresses how easily it may be to misinterpret the stability of what writers considered to be eighteenth-century generic categories; see especially xii.

20. For Johnson on genre and readers, see especially *The Rambler* Nos. 8, 36, 37, and especially 125.


23. Hunter also highlights the reader’s role in generic innovation as he explores Providence and Wonder Books and their connection to the English novel: “Readers often were surprised around the borders of popular kinds they knew and depended on, for writers learned to use the ambiguities of generic overlap and exploit the claims that title pages made. And readers (consciously or not) are complicit by their participation in the generic pretense, which they explicitly join at the moment they pass the title page and begin to discover where it was—and where it was not—honest in promising what lay beyond” (*Before Novels*, 223).

24. My characterization of eighteenth-century writers in London as “conductors” is meant to specify both the literal and figurative work that I see writers trying to accomplish in the city. Therefore, I use “conductor” here to allude to a very specific type of guidance espoused by the more generalized tradition of eighteenth-century Guide-literature, a textual tradition outlined by Hunter: “By far the most popular of the identifiable ‘kinds’ in all the didactic para-literature of the time—and the closest in spirit to the novel—is the Guide. . . . Many Guides offer practical instruction in manual arts, the procedures of a particular craft, or the demands of a certain discipline. The social history of eighteenth-century London, is, in fact, well preserved in the treatises on cookery, conversation, ciphering, writing letters, dancing, playing games, keeping a household, and performing the duties of a trade, for the most of them plainly state social expectation while implying which aberrations are the most popular. . . . Print culture took over functions that the oral culture could no longer handle, becoming a vehicle for social change as well as a measure of it” (*Before Novels*, 252–53).


26. Bender also stresses the need to understand eighteenth-century literature, particularly novels, as “the vehicles, not the reflections, of social change” in *Imagining the Penitentiary* (1), and he elaborates as to why a mimetic mode misleads readers: “But we can see more in works of art than mere reflections. They clarify structures of feeling characteristic of a given moment and thereby predicate those available in the future. This is the specific sense in which they may serve as a medium of cultural emergence through which new images of society, new cultural systems, move into focus and become tangible. I use the term ‘structure of feeling’ to identify qualities that are contained within a culture at any given moment and that emerge in process as conventions play out their relationships within literary and visual forms. . . . Such forms have constructive force as the bearers of a culture’s organizing principles and master narratives” (7, emphasis Bender’s).

In this way, Bender’s theorization of “structures of feeling” as templates for emergent social change are crucial to my ability to argue that eighteenth-century literature about London contains alternatives to our notions of “the urban.” Some of these alternatives we have embraced; others we have rejected. The task of the twenty-first-century literary critic, as I see it, is to understand the contexts and research the terms in which these choices were made.

27. For more on the different connotations attached to imagining and reading during the eighteenth-century (as opposed to during the romantic and post-


29. See Reddaway, *The Rebuilding of London*, 42–90 and especially 67. After a careful review of the political negotiations leading to the proclamations for rebuilding London in late September 1666, Reddaway argues that “the extent of the improvement possible was clearly defined by the funds available to pay for it” (67). See also Raymond Williams, *The Country and the City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973), especially 302–6.

30. Wall, *Literary and Cultural Spaces*, 52 and 39, respectively.


32. Wall, *Literary and Cultural Spaces*, 63; see especially 63–70.

Notes to Introduction


4. In particular, Pearl questions whether the City of London was authentically “Puritan” in its sympathies leading to the revolutionary crises. Her thesis is that “the subsequent political standpoint of the leading groups in the chartered trading companies [of the City of London] strengthens the thesis of this work (although it cannot, of course, be said to confirm it) that their sympathies in the crisis of 1641 and 1642 lay primarily with the crown and that the eventual alignment of London with Parliament was the result of force majeure, that is to say, of the seizing of power in the City by the parliamentary puritans” (*London and the Outbreak of the Puritan Revolution: City Government and National Politics, 1625–43* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961], 184). See also 1–37 and 237–84.

5. For a detailed account of this building boom, see John Summerson, *Georgian London* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1962). For an account of Restoration London’s growth from a perspective of “town-planning,” see Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *London: The Unique City* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1991), especially 99–122. See also McKellar, *Birth of Modern London*, especially 15–21. McKellar calls the Strand “a major commercial nexus linking the City and the Court” (24) and stresses the way Defoe and Addison advertised the Court-City binary (22). I push McKellar’s brief discussion of literature’s relationship to the Court-City binary further by suggesting that literature was as important to shaping London as were the surveyors, carpenters, and the writers of technical handbooks.
that she analyzes. McKellar includes excerpts from Defoe and Addison but does not move beyond a claim that these excerpts prove that “Addison as a propagandist for a new form of polite urban culture naturally emphasized the gap between Court and City, whereas Defoe, with a sharper eye for the economic pulse of the town, discerned the umbilical cord which linked the two worlds, namely money” (22). The goal of my work is not to speculate upon the politics of urban writers but to outline the textual strategies that writers used to make themselves appear valuable to urban society.


17. Manley’s *Literature and Culture* shows how the seventeenth-century city’s experience with reformation and revolution actually reinscribed Londoners into resurrected forms of social control; in other words, they read literature about London and became complicit in what Manley calls the New Historicist “dialectic of subversion and containment” (13). For example, as Manley argues, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century writers described—or reinvented—London to encourage a type of absolutist “neofedualism” in which new ideas of “radical justice” revalidated medieval notions of “radical power” (20). For example, during the sixteenth
century, London’s expanding commercialism overlapped with print technologies “to establish new priorities of communal life, to refashion the corporate identity of what was coming to be called the ‘common weal’ or ‘commonwealth,’” and much of the resulting literature equated the health of the city with that of the absolutist state (63). Although writers such as Sir Thomas More and William Bullein represented Tudor London to be a center of reformation, they simultaneously contained this sense of unbounded reform by centralizing it within London; or in Manley’s terms, “the more radical the reform projected, the more radical the concentration of power in London” (see 110 and 113–22). This results in “fictions of settlement” (210) in which London is linguistically invented rather than reflected, and Manley suggests that the decrease in civic community and corresponding increase in bourgeois privacy in seventeenth-century London exposes these fictions to be such.

Like Manley, I do not view “New Historicist dialectic of subversion and containment” as the point of my study (13). Unlike Manley, I consider the way writers believed they were genuinely guiding the imaginations of Londoners to enact new urban projects, some of which never posed “containment” as their goal.

18. Ian Archer also identifies different manifestations of seventeenth-century absolutism before and after the Puritan Revolution: “[I]t is striking how the different elements of popular political discourse . . . contributed to the antagonism between Londoners and the priorities of James’s and Charles’s government in the 1620s: Protestantism, xenophobia, civic chivalry and the defence of the integrity of the civic community all intersected in growing disillusionment. Londoners remained loyal to the Crown, but they had constructed their grounds for loyalty on a very different basis from that insisted upon by Charles I” (“Popular Politics in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries,” in Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London, Paul Griffiths and Mark S.R. Jenner, eds, [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000], 41).

19. J. A. Downie acknowledges as well as accounts for the degree of authority that writers such as Swift and Defoe seemed to accrue after the Glorious Revolution: “Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift were the mainstays of the Oxford ministry’s propaganda machine. [Robert] Harley [earl of Oxford] had succeeded in winning over the two most potent pamphleteers of his day, and the curious thing is that at the beginning of the year [1710] they were both actively involved with the whigs. . . . The simple fact that Harley should bother to accommodate men who had no real political power, and who might just as easily have been silenced, is a signal indication of his awareness of the importance of propaganda and the need to appeal to public opinion” (Robert Harley and the Press: Propaganda and Public Opinion in the age of Swift and Defoe [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979], 129, emphasis Downie’s). Downie’s phrase “no real political power” refers to writers’ extralegal strategies of authority which they developed after 1688. I argue that after 1688, although writers’ power is not traditionally “real” in the absolutist sense, it nonetheless affects how “real” political power is now structured, debated, and mobilized. Downie admits this as well by stressing Harley’s concentration upon Defoe and Swift as important players on the political stage. See also Downie, 195.


21. Archer, “Popular Politics,” in *Londinopolis*, 27. Archer’s point is that seventeenth-century Londoners did not always defer to the elite; instead, Archer examines the impact of civic concerns on the City’s decision-making apparatus. These concerns, (as revealed in the previous footnote), include “Protestantism, xenophobia, civic chivalry and the defence of the integrity of the civic community” (41).


24. Hunter reviews eighteenth-century Guide-literature in a similar way, making the point that Guide-literature is symptomatic of larger cultural change: “The context that led to the extensive production of Guides involves lost personal contact and radically changed institutions and situations” (*Before Novels*, 273). The “radically changed institutions” upon which I focus in this study include sovereignty and urban administration.


27. It is in my concentration on conduct’s metaphoric connotations that my study differs from Hunter’s work on “the metaphor of guidance” (*Before Novels*, 261) since Hunter uses the label “Guide-literature” to refer to an enormous body of didactic texts providing technical and spiritual guidance (exclusive of the novel, poetry, and drama) whereas conduct-literature refers to a very specific body of writing (including the novel, poetry, and drama). Hunter sees “guidance” and “conduct” to be separate categories as well: “didacticists enforced the metaphor of guidance and direction as something the written word could provide. The verbal guidance of books began to replace the sense that exemplary personal guidance—of parents, pastors, or patriarchs—was necessary to proper conduct” (*Before Novels*, 261). For Hunter, “guidance” (written direction for the individual)
transforms into “conduct” (interpretive behavior for the communal body and mind) during the act of reading, and it is this imaginative transformation that I aim to detail.


32. See Berger, “Swift and Polite Conversation,” in The Crisis of Courtesy, especially 81–88, for the way Jonathan Swift’s “non-ironic tracts are marked by an endeavor to heighten the matter of conversational conduct—by referring it to Enlightenment ideals, uniting it with a general criticism of culture, bringing in aspects of gender, and admonishing the reform of aristocratic refinements—and to enliven the stylistic presentation with personal impressions and amusing anecdotes. In spite of this their overall didactic intent is not to be overlooked. In Polite Conversation, however, one of the last books he saw through the press before his mind became distorted, the approach to the subject of courtesy is one of literary alienation. Although an equal weight is put on instruction, the entertaining factor is of even greater importance. Now the concept of conversation as an art is also presented in the form of a literary work of art” (87–88).

Berger argues for the stylistic artistry of Swift’s Polite Conversation since “apart from its utility to Swift’s contemporaries, it still appeals to us by the brilliant transformation of courtesy material into art by the playful fusion of parody and irony with satire. Even a reader abhorring conduct literature must be delighted with it” (91). Although appealing to post-romantic conceptions of literary “art,” Berger’s argument is important to my study since it explores how conduct literature’s stylistic maneuvers allow us to interpret the tradition as socially engaged literature.

Lawrence A. Klein’s Shaftesbury and the Culture of Politeness examines how Anthony Ashley Cooper, the third earl of Shaftesbury, writes his Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times (1711) as a treatise on politeness with political underpinnings that coped with the changed environment of the Glorious Revolution: “[Shaftesbury’s] moralism, his deism, and his aesthetic interests were all harnessed to a political project. Moreover, far from being an exercise in Whig radicalism, that project was nothing less than the legitimation of the post-1688 Whig regime. As, in his view, the Revolution had definitely established the dominance of gentlemen over English society and politics, so it ushered in an era of gentlemanly culture, the norms and content of which he was attempting to envision” (1). Like Klein, I examine conduct literature for its stylistic strategies “to envision” (or, in my terms “speculate” or “imagine”) an alternate future. I
differ from Klein’s argument in that many of the writers in my study are, unlike Shaftesbury, not strictly interested in the political ramifications of their imaginative acts.

33. See Neils Haastrup, “The Courtesy-Book and the Phrase-Book in Modern Europe,” in *The Crisis of Courtesy* for a summary of the “unfortunate borderlines” that the disciplines of literature, linguistics, and history encounter when faced with the task of historicizing politeness and courtesy (76).

34. For more detailed discussions of these different seventeenth-century traditions, see Carré, *The Crisis of Courtesy*, especially 11–64. Gilles Duval explores the changes that chapbook literature experienced during the eighteenth century in “Standardization Vs. Genre: Conduct-Books and English Chap-Literature” in *The Crisis of Courtesy*, 41–49.

By the eighteenth-century, “good manners” refer to “a universal of human nature, and therefore attainable for everybody relying on reason” whereas “good breeding” refers to “the particular rules of courteous behavior, also known as ceremony or etiquette, . . . acquired only by personal effort, either by the observation of social practice or by the study of books” (Berger, “Swift and Polite Conversation,” *The Crisis of Courtesy*, 83).


36. The “crisis” to which the title of Jacques Carré’s anthology, *The Crisis of Courtesy*, refers involves Carré’s perception that the “spiritual significance of courtesy” declined during the eighteenth century: “The fatal decline of the British courtesy-book, a genre so brilliantly illustrated in the sixteenth century, should not in fact be traced to the Victorian and Edwardian age and its obsession with social solecisms. . . . The crisis of courtesy and its attendant decline into mere conduct . . . was in fact older, and may be described as a lengthy and gradual process extending through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What is more, it did not simply lead to the narrowing down of a genre into repetitive, uninspired, although (for modern readers) occasionally hilarious manuals of etiquette; but rather it involved the dissemination of its subject-matter into a broad range of literary genres, such as, preeminently, the novel. The decline of the courtesy-book in fact meant the rebirth of the literature of conduct in other, often much more sophisticated, forms. . . .” (2).

I agree with Carré’s claim that “the great age of the metamorphosis of conduct-
literature in England . . . was clearly the Augustan Age”; however, I do not interpret eighteenth-century writers’ use of “conduct” to strictly equate with litanies of rules and/or etiquette. Instead, as I show in the close of the introduction, writers recognized that the metaphoric connotations of conduct in poems and novels and their influence upon readers’ experiences of traversing and comprehending London constituted part of this “dissemination” of the traditional functions of seventeenth-century conduct literature.

38. These writers use conduct as a metaphor in the purest sense of the term, with a tenor, vehicle, and ground. A metaphor produces knowledge by comparing a previously unknown entity (the tenor) to a familiar entity (the vehicle), and is only successful at a point when the two entities are similar (the ground).
39. For example, Pope uses conduct to mean “execution” in his 1711 An Essay on Criticism (in Poems of Alexander Pope, p. 152):

In ev’ry Work regard the Writer’s End,
Since none can compass more than they Intend;
And if the Means be just, the Conduct true,
Applause, in spite of trivial Faults, is due. (Ins. 255–58)

42. Foucault, “Governmentality,” Foucault Effect, 92.
43. Poovey, Modern Fact, xx.
47. Pocock, Virtue, Commerce, and History, 49. In the way Pocock describes it, manners reconciled any ethical problems with London’s materialism and “at last, a right to things became a way to the practice of virtue, so long as virtue could be defined as the practice and refinement of manners” (50).
48. Colley offers “recurrent Protestant wars, commercial success, and imperial quest” as three additional modes of national and governmental consensus—a consensus that depended not upon “an integration and homogenisation of disparate cultures” but rather “an array of internal differences in response to contact
with the Other, and above all in response to conflict with the Other” (Britons, 375 and 6, respectively).

49. See Habermas, The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere. Habermas’s conceptualization of the public sphere “as a sphere between civil society and the state” (Thomas McCarthy, introduction to Habermas, Structural Transformation, xi), which seems to have originally meant to clarify ideas of power in eighteenth-century London, has itself become a twenty-first-century abstraction. Habermas’s theory informs my arguments in so much as it describes the historical conditions (such as coffeehouse culture) in which urban modes of liberal governmentality appeared.

50. Miles Ogborn in Spaces of Modernity: London’s Geographies, 1680–1780 (New York: The Guilford Press, 1998) implies that if we can interpret social treatises published on the Strand, we can gain access to a modern process (see especially 1–38 and 201–230). Although Ogborn defines modernity in an eighteenth-century context, the assumption still seems to be that this modernity relates to us today: “As a ‘project’ modernity is less a realised set of relationships, institutions and experiences than a series of claims and attempts to make and remake the future. . . . Read in this way the ‘spaces of modernity’ considered here might be seen as anachronisms: spaces that were self-consciously novel, spaces that didn’t fit, spaces that sought to constitute a different future. Just as modernity involves a transformation of space, these were its spaces of transformation, spaces where change was possible and desirable” (28). Although I use the word “project,” I do not refer to the forward-looking sense in which Ogborn uses the word. In the chapters on Fielding and Gay, I salvage Ogborn’s ideas of “spaces that were self-consciously novel” and “spaces where change was possible and desirable”; however, in doing so, I want to strip from them any tinge of the “modern” and show that writers such as Gay and Fielding were rarely thinking about “constitut[ing] a different future.” Instead, they were focusing on the immediate present. These writers were not imagining a future that someone, somewhere would bring into being; they were instead reimagining their own present. Modernity has in many ways become a meaningless abstraction; thus, I avoid suggesting that the act of imagining alternative futures characterizes modernity.


Notes to Chapter 1

1. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 78. According to Wall, “the first surviving printed map of London, the ‘Copperplate,’ dates from about 1559” (227, n. 5).

2. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 80 and 84, respectively.

3. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 96.

4. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 76, emphasis Wall’s.

5. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 83 and 90–111.


8. Merritt, “The Reshaping of Stow’s *Survey*,” in *Imagining Early Modern London*, 88. Merritt specifies the nature of the *Survey*’s reassuring fiction of continuity: “Perhaps it is not too fanciful to suggest that the preservation of medieval London in the pages of the *Survey*, where it blended almost effortlessly (indeed confusingly) with the present, may have provided a much-needed sense of stability and identity” (88).

9. Wall, *Literary and Cultural Spaces*, 100. Wall’s examples of these grammatical constructions stem from a specific moment of Stow’s *Survey*: “after that is Grubstreets, more then halfe thereof to the strightning of the streeete, next is Whitecrosse streeete, up to the end of Bech lane, and then Redcrosse street wholly, with a Parte of Goldingland, even to the Posts there placed, as a bounder . . . and so haue you all the boundes of Criplegate warde without the walles” (Stow qtd. in Wall, 100).


11. Wall, *Literary and Cultural Spaces*, 133. Wall also argues that “unlike Swift’s and Pope’s, Gay’s poem read confidently, optimistically, the need for negotiation or containment not urgently ideological but practical, sensible” (133). As I will argue, I instead interpret *Trivia*’s “practical, sensible” tone to be the effect of a very urgent and ideological literary project to inject writers into the developing discourses of governmentality.


13. See McDowell, especially 33–179.

14. See McDowell, especially 82–90 and 128–79.


18. Woodman, “‘Vulgar Circumstance,’” 88. Woodman presents the most detailed (and overdue) comparison of *Trivia* to Virgil’s *Georgics*, cataloguing what grants *Trivia* the right to align itself with anything “classically georgic.”
21. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, xv.
24. Vinton A. Dearing’s annotations to Trivia in John Gay: Poetry and Prose, vol. 2 (Oxford: Clarendon, 1974) support my view of Trivia’s specificity. Dearing’s annotations are entirely necessary because they suggest—rather than recover—eighteenth-century traditions of London. In turn, the notes show how many jokes and satiric jabs are lost on the modern reader. I push this issue further in this chapter to claim that we do not “get” Trivia’s references because we neither recognize nor “read for” the type of knowledge which this long poem ostensibly offers to us.
25. I do not write “what we would now recognize as” urban planning for a very specific reason; I wish to preserve an “otherness” of the work Gay’s poem accomplishes. The practice of urban planning, as we know it, is a system of credentialized study in which “a long poem” is not a likely vehicle for building a city. The eighteenth-century long poem is a genre of the eighteenth century which we have now lost; therefore, Trivia’s textual vehicle is foreign to us. For these reasons, Gay is not an “urban planner”; he is, during a lack of any credentialized practice of urban planning, an eighteenth-century version of our urban planner. In this chapter, difference and otherness underwrite my approach to Trivia.
26. Gay’s The Beggar’s Opera (1728) has also suffered this fate due to what is too often seen to be an anarchic stance towards “genre” and the text’s “re-birth” into the historical context surrounding The ThreePenny Opera.
28. Indexes for eighteenth-century long poems seem to count as a twentieth-century version of critical work. I refer to the constant demand for indexes and variorum editions to eighteenth-century long poems. Gay’s index to Trivia obviously satirizes the motives and values behind this editorial—or even “literary”—work.
29. The prostitute also appears in an entry of the first type I have just described: “*Whores, the Streets where they ply.*”

30. One example of Gay’s “satiric ordering” is pertinent here: the entry “*Cheese not lov’d by the Author*” immediately follows “Cheapside” (an entry referring the reader to the episode in the poem where the walker-poet enters streets surrounding this area of east London).


34. In this peripatetic context, “to tread” also implies “to shape” or to cut a new path.

35. Elkanah Settle, as Dearing notes, was “the last” poet to occupy this position of “city-poet”—“an office not actually aspired to by a poet of Gay’s caliber” (in *John Gay: Poetry and Prose*, vol. 2, 550).

36. For the remainder of this chapter, I use “London” to refer to a composite of City, Town, and Court. Part of *Trivia*’s goal is to make “London” an identifiable referent.

37. To fit the iambic pentameter of line six, “conduct” must be a verb with the stress on the second syllable. However, Gay does use conduct as a noun elsewhere in the poem (see 3.310), and it is from Gay’s alternate usage that I derive my reading of conduct in its double meaning.


41. I refer to our poet’s persona as our “walker-poet” to distance the poet of *Trivia* from the walker—the figure whom the walker-poet addresses and simultaneously designs as a “reader.” To claim that our poet is simply a “walker” ignores the distinct sense of distance (common in the eighteenth-century prospect poem) between poet and reader which Gay does preserve by using only the first-person when the poet retreats from his object during a moment of extreme danger or when the poet envisions public praise for his text while writing. Furthermore, the walker-poet might be Gay himself, and I use “walker-poet” and “Gay” interchangeably throughout this section because *Trivia*’s poetic persona blatantly
incorporates the act of writing into the poem itself (a claim that I specify in the next section). However, Gay’s association with Trivia’s poetic persona—as a poet radically opposed to a shoulder-to-shoulder walk with the reader—still maintains a distinction between poet and the walking audience.

42. “The Play,” is, of course, an activity that characterized the areas surrounding the Strand; however, given the general inconclusiveness over the type of audience (courtly or otherwise) of early eighteenth-century plays, it is possible that Gay here refers to a theatre-scene attended primarily by patrons of the Court.

43. Woodman stresses that Trivia considers walking to be an “art of reading codes of dress and speech,” but he concludes that these codes only function “to respond appropriately to strangers in the confusing new conditions” (Woodman, “‘Vulgar Circumstance,’” 88). I am suggesting here that Gay creates what is “appropriate” instead of merely offering ways of “respond[ing] appropriately” to others. Furthermore, what I call “protocols of reading” apply not only to “dress and speech” but to the immediate physical surroundings such as buildings and signage. I also differ from Woodman here in calling Gay’s idea of reading a “skill” rather than “an art”—a distinction I clarify later.

44. Wall, Literary and Cultural Spaces, 121. See also 131–33.

45. The accompanying glosses to these sections also nurture this sensitivity: “Signs of cold Weather,” “Signs of fair Weather, and “Signs of rainy Weather.”

46. A “Glazier” performs the rather specialized job of placing plates of glass in window “sashes.” The joke here is that the glazier aims the ball towards the Penthouse windows and, as a result, produces more work for his guild. The “gingling Sashes” allude to the anxiety surrounding the “falling tiles” of the rooftops of Juvenal’s Rome (see Satire III, in The Sixteen Satires, trans. by Peter Green [London: Penguin Books, 1974], Ins. 269–70). Gay almost directly quotes this line, as Dearing notes, on 2.270.

47. As I will explore in the next section, Gay shores up his connection of walking to virtue in the final lines to book two: “O rather give me Sweet Content on Foot, / Wrapt in my Vertue, and a good Surtout!” (2.589–90).


I wander thro’ each charter’d street,  
Near where the charter’d Thames does flow,  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

49. Woodman focuses on Gay’s reference on 2.45 to “Due Civilities” in his essay “‘Vulgar Circumstance’”; however, my approach differs in that I consider the function of these “Civilities” to fashion space whereas Woodman sees these “Civilities” strengthening “the traditional hierarchical analogy between reason and nature” in London (Woodman, 88–89 and 92).
50. I also use “moral” here to highlight its present-day ambiguity—an ambiguity which Trivia dissolves by making “morality” visible in the way people conduct themselves through different areas of London. That is, Trivia makes morality an observable quality capable of being registered and evaluated by others.

51. Alexander Pope’s Cloacina episode for the Fleet-diving scene of The Dunciad resembles Gay’s episode. It is important to note that no glosses appear during this origin-myth; that is, this origin-myth is beyond the type of knowledge nurtured by the glosses.

52. See especially Peter Stallybrass and Allon White’s The Politics and Poetics of Transgression (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986) for the relationship of eighteenth-century carnivalesque to satire and the “infraction of binary structures” (18) that results from high-low comparisons.


54. Both Gay and Pope write verse “Epistles” to Lord Burlington: Gay’s To the Right Honourable the Earl of Burlington (1715) and Pope’s To Richard Boyle, Earl of Burlington (1731).


Notes to Chapter 2

1. Tim Wales, “Thief-Takers and Their Clients in Later Stuart London,” in Londinopolis, 68 and 72, respectively.

2. For an account of the historical tension between the governing bodies of Westminster and the City of London, see Roy Porter, London: A Social History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). Part of Porter’s thesis is that “London was above all the uncontrolled city. . . . London has no unifying municipal government” (8), and this argument informs my conception of eighteenth-century London as a collection of dispersed sites of administrative authority.


4. John Entick, A New and Accurate History and Survey of London, Westminster, Southwark and Places Adjacent, vol. 4 (London, 1766), 400, cited in An Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers and Related Writings, edited by Malvin R. Zirker (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 2, n. 2. Local conditions separate from the Court and the City, no matter how informal, seemed to have ruled these districts, of which the Strand was part. The full title of the Charge also details Fielding’s realm of authority over “the City and Liberty of Westminster, & c.” (Henry Fielding, A Charge Delivered to the Grand Jury at the Sessions of the Peace held for the City and Liberty of Westminster, & c. on Thursday the 29th of June, 1749 in Related Writings, 1).


7. Tim McLoughlin’s essay, “Fielding’s Essay on Conversation: A Courtesy Guide to Joseph Andrews?” in Crisis of Courtesy, concludes with the argument that “[t]he Essay on Conversation can be read as a guide to the general principles of good breeding which inform Joseph Andrews, but more tantalising is the possibility that Fielding, realising the restrictions inherent in the mode of the Essay, turned to the novel as a more open kind of discourse in which to express his perceptions of what kind of person a man of good conduct might be” (102). My study of Fielding’s civil prose and its connection to Tom Jones agrees that Fielding indeed turned to the novel to devise new conceptions of urban conduct; however, as I seek to show in the following chapter, the “man of good conduct” that results from Tom Jones is the Author himself.


9. Establishing a specific “conduct” or certain way knowledge is produced is intimately tied to Foucault’s concept of discourse itself. Fielding’s discussions of conduct are a primitive version of the disciplinary specificity needed to establish discourse and, eventually, to validate practices that become “professional” because they possess their own, specific way of acting, performing, and generating ways of knowing. In this way, Fielding’s emphasis on conduct participates in the larger project of distinguishing types and practices of knowledge from one another.

10. For evidence of this overlap, see especially Martin C. Battestin with Ruthe R. Battestin, Henry Fielding: A Life (London: Routledge, 1989), 439–53. Battestin also suggests that the dedication to Tom Jones is an epistle of gratitude to two men, George Lyttleton and John Russell, the Duke of Bedford, who helped elect Fielding as Magistrate (459).


13. Leo Damrosch, God’s Plot and Man’s Stories: Studies in the Fictional Imagination from Milton to Fielding (Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1985), 302 and 300, respectively. For more on Tom Jones and providential readings, see Patrick Reilly, Tom Jones: Adventure and Providence (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1991), especially the conclusion, (135–37) for the supposed reasons to explain modern readers’ adversity to classical, comic endings.
14. The reader will recall that Jones gives the money that he makes from selling the horse and the Bible to Black George so that George’s family may purchase food. Fielding dissolves two of the mock-trials included in this list in the same way he dissolves Jenny Jones’s mock-trial: with versions of the word, “dismissed.” (T, 3.4.131 and 3.8.143).

15. Fielding, An Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers in Zirker, Related Writings, 73.

16. See Malvin R. Zirker, introduction to Related Writings, xxv: “Relatively few of the many thousands of charges delivered to grand juries in the eighteenth century have survived (the Webbs cite only ten charges published in the eighteenth century before Fielding’s), but we may safely assume that, when not totally perfunctory, the chairman’s charge focused on those social disorders he considered particularly in need of redress.”

17. Sir John Gonson’s Five Charges to Several Grand Juries (London, 1740) collects four examples of charges delivered to the “Grand Jury of the City and Liberty of Westminster” and one City charge delivered to “the Grand Jury of the Royalty of the Tower of London, and Liberties and Precincts thereof.” In the British Library’s fourth-edition copy of Gonson’s collection, Fielding’s Charge of 1749 is an unlisted yet appended as part of the anthology and stands as a sixth example.

18. “The presiding justice’s charge to the grand jury was one of the signal public events in the legal process of assizes and quarter sessions. The ceremonies attached to assizes were generally grander, for they involved the semi-annual visitation of the king’s justices to the counties . . . .” Zirker, introduction to Related Writings, xxiv.


20. Henry Fielding, A Charge Delivered to the Grand Jury in Zirker, Related Writings, 4. All subsequent references to this text will be cited internally.


23. Zirker, introduction to Related Writings, xxv and xxx.


25. See Zirker for the most detailed account of Penlez’s initial claims against Owen’s bawdy-house, introduction to Related Writings, xxiv.

26. See also Zirker, introduction to Related Writings, xl–xli.

27. Fielding, A True State of the Case of Bosavern Penlez in Zirker, Related Writings, 58. All subsequent references to this text will be cited internally.

28. The factor that distinguishes the public from the private is the number of rioters involved (see Case, 35–40).

29. Zirker, introduction to Related Writings, liii.


31. Fielding, An Enquiry into the Late Increase of Robbers in Zirker, Related Writings, 73. All subsequent quotations of this text will be cited internally.
32. Fielding devotes Section VI entirely to questions on how to deal with “Vagabonds” who commit crimes specifically in the Town: “Now, however, useful this excellent Law [to prevent crimes committed by wanders] may be in the Country, it will by no means serve the Purpose in this Town” (Enquiry, 142).

Notes to Chapter 3

1. See the title page to Nicholas Hawksmoor’s A Short Historical Account of London-Bridge; with a Proposition for a New-Stone Bridge at Westminster (London, 1736).

2. Michel Baridon’s “The Gentleman as Gardner: Pope, Shenstone, Mason,” in The Crisis of Courtesy argues that “It is no exaggeration to say that in his Moral Epistles Pope took his cue from the Spectator. His intention was the same, to provide moral standards for the post-1688 age, but his tone was different, even when he spoke of gardens, a theme which Addison had developed in several numbers of the Spectator” (130). Baridon considers this “different” tone to stem from Pope’s yoking morality to property, his visual aesthetics, his poetic psychology, and his “giving a literary expression to the phantasmal forms” of scientists. This leads Baridon to conclude that “in spite of their attraction to solitude, the gentlemen-gardeners of the eighteenth century contributed actively to the movement of ideas. As such, albeit implicitly, they can be considered active promoters of new patterns of behavior” (141).

The art of gardening takes on a very communal function when looking at Pope’s career, and critics such as Maynard Mack and Baridon stress how “cultivating the garden” becomes an operative metaphor for guiding the philosophical, scientific, and aesthetic imaginations of the community, city, and nation. Therefore, I agree with Baridon’s claim that the cultivation of “solitude” is not Pope’s immediate goal.

3. See Maynard Mack, The Garden and the City: Retirement and Politics in the Later Poetry of Pope, 1731–1743 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969). Mack’s epilogue substantiates this metaphoric connection: “For Pope—so my argument runs—the garden and the grotto supplied [literally and figuratively, a place to stand, an angle of vision]. They supplied a rallying point for his personal values and a focus for his conception of himself—as master of a poet’s ‘kingdom,’ a counter-order to a court and ministry that set no store by poets. . . . Through them his retreat at Twickenham became, not only in his own eyes but in those of a number of his contemporaries, a true country of the mind” (232–33); “[In Pope’s satires of the ’30s], all play their part in an extended fiction (which is by no means all fiction) of the virtuous recluse who ventures in and out of London to remind his contemporaries of the City a little further up-river. Though the throne is empty, there remains an alternative center, and a power of a different kind: the poet-king-philosopher in his grotto, midway between the garden and the river” (236).


5. Pope establishes this “Poet-Critic” as early as lines 17–18 of the Essay:
“Authors are partial to their Wit, ’tis true, / But are not Criticks to their Judgment too?”

6. Cynthia Wall, introduction to The Rape of the Lock, edited by Cynthia Wall (Boston: Bedford Books, 1998), 4 and 5, respectively.

7. According to Joyce D. Kennedy, Michael Seidel, and Maximillian E. Novak’s headnote to Defoe’s An Essay upon Projects, “Projector evokes stereotypes—the cockeyed virtuosi; economic alchemists; the figure the OED describes as invidious, ‘a schemer; one who lives by his wits; a promoter of bubble companies; a speculator, a cheat’” (xxi).

Yet Kennedy, Seidel, and Novak stress that “it is almost as if the reign of William after the [Glorious] Revolution provided the opportunity to rid the nation of that proliferative breed of schemers and virtuosos left over from Stuart times” (xxiv). These critics’ emphasis upon the change in projecting after 1688 may be attributed to the burgeoning “art of government” in which writers increasingly participate.

8. Kennedy, Seidel, and Novak, headnote to Defoe’s An Essay upon Projects, xxiv and xxv, respectively. The authors’ characterization of Defoe’s work also echoes Fielding’s work, which I have detailed in the preceding chapter: “By proposing, as he will, that there are two ways to look at the projector’s art, Defoe lays the groundwork for his own legitimacy” (xxv).


11. See G. Gabrielle Starr, Lyric Generations. In particular, Starr sees lyric episodes in eighteenth-century novels creating an intermediary realm between “truth and lie” as “chiastic sites”: “These figures help create the novelistic ideal of the ‘fictional’ as a category distinct from truth or lie, a category closely tied to the emergence of the novel as a cultural force” (108). Starr’s conception of a lyric imagination is important, especially in its relation to “projection”: “The spaces of memory, projection, and personification are the imaginative and hence sympathetic spaces of the mid-century lyric” (109–110).

12. For a recent study that has served to analyze this Augustan-romantic divide by focusing upon the birth of the romantic imagination, see James Engell, The Creative Imagination: Enlightenment to Romanticism (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981).

13. For examples of the foundational type of work that has created this interpretative space for questions about eighteenth-century views of the imagination, see David Fairer, Pope’s Imagination (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984) and Leopold Damrosch, Jr., The Imaginative World of Alexander Pope (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

14. I am therefore arguing that although eighteenth-century notions of the imagination may have appeared socially complex, Pope’s To Burlington offers a way to discipline this complexity during a specific historical episode. Dennis
Todd also argues that Pope had tried to represent the function of imagination in his poetry; however, Todd examines the final stage of Pope’s career to argue that an anxious link exists in *The Dunciad* between “Dulness” and imagination (see Dennis Todd, *Imagining Monsters: Miscreations of the Self in Eighteenth-Century England* [Chicago: the University of Chicago Press, 1995], 179–216). In contrast to Todd’s argument, I see Pope disciplining the imagination to accomplish a social duty much earlier. I also see Pope designing the imagination to be a socially relevant tool rather than what Todd sees Pope approaching as an alienating faculty or even “monstrous” (216) entity (see especially Todd, 183–92).


18. See Ferraro, 156, n. 9: “The revisions discussed in this paper are principally those from the first edition, the various editions of the 1735 *Works*, together with that of 1739 and the *Four Ethic Epistles* of 1744.”

19. Ferraro’s thesis is that “[the different versions of to Burlington] are poems the various versions of which have a different resonance, scope, and meaning at different points in their history, rather than being supplanted by subsequent revisions in a straightforwardly teleological development” (“Taste and Use,” 155). Because I am interested in the various generic reincarnations of this poem, this chapter uses the Twickenham’s version of *To Burlington*, included under the title Pope gave to the epistles in 1744, *Moral Essays*. My choice does not mean that I am privileging this version above all other earlier versions. The Twickenham version has simply become a “standard” edition of the poem; thus, I use this convention as a means of arguing my claims about this poem to a wider audience.

20. Although we have come to recognize *To Burlington* as *Epistle IV* of the *Moral Essays*, Pope wrote *To Burlington* between 1730–31 and published it in 1731, well before his other three epistles (“Epistle to Bathurst” [1733], “Epistle to Cobham” [1734], and “Epistle to a Lady” [1735]). Thus, *To Burlington* initiated an epistle sequence; it started a larger project. Combined with its multiple revisions and various published versions, these details suggest a reason why *To Burlington* has received the most attention of the four *Moral Essays*.


23. Poovey argues in *A History of the Modern Fact* that the English essay was an attempt “to replicate experience instead of demonstrating propositions” and that this constituted an alternate form of knowledge production (212; see especially 210–13). I will return to Poovey’s argument to detail how it can suggest new approaches to Pope’s poetry.
24. For discussions about the otherness of the eighteenth-century imagination in relation to Pope, see again Damrosch, The Imaginative World of Alexander Pope and David Farber, Pope’s Imagination, especially 1–7.

25. T. G. Nelson, “Pope, Burlington, Architecture, and Politics: A Speculative Revisionist Review,” Eighteenth-Century Life 21 (February 1997), 46. If written by Pope himself, The Master Key supports the argument that Pope recognized how crucial it was to instruct readers on how to read the content of To Burlington properly; the Key provides satiric instructions to solve this inane (and in Pope’s opinion, interpretative) problem in 1732, a period before his revising the title of the four epistles.

26. The Master Key to Popery, quoted in Brownell, 313.


29. See Pope’s The First Epistle of the First Book of Horace Imitated (1738); The Sixth Epistle of the First Book of Horace Imitated (1738); The First Epistle of the Second Book of Horace Imitated (1737); The Second Epistle of the Second Book of Horace Imitated (1737); and The Seventh Epistle of the First Book of Horace Imitated in the Manner of Dr. Swift (1739).


33. My concept of To Burlington’s narrative is similar to Brower’s summary of the poem, cited above. But I do not believe that the poem ends with “a single bad case and its nobler opposite” (Brower, 97). Pope extends beyond this Horatian ending. In fact, Pope’s ending, as I will soon show, is where he deviates from Horace and outlines his imaginative project.


35. See especially Ferraro, 146.


37. Steiger, 14.

38. See Stack and his discussion of Shaftesbury’s detailing “the self-consciousness of the Horatian manner” (15, 116–49), and especially the section entitled “The Poet’s Public Self” (128–31).


40. Pope also co-titled his Epistle to Bathurst, the second poem in this project, “Of the Use of Riches.” This detail supports my claim that To Burlington initiates an imaginative project centering upon wealth’s relationship to a new imperial powerhouse.

41. The social value that the essay acquired during the 1750s is foreign to the twentieth century. See Poovey, p. 213: “... the proliferation of some new genres
of imaginative writing in the eighteenth century (the novel) and the persistence of others (poetry) demonstrates that Britons still cultivated modes of knowledge production that departed from the systematic idea of philosophy. Indeed, during the eighteenth century, then increasingly at century’s end, these imaginative modes briefly came to seem at least as appropriate as moral philosophy to the crucial task of exploring the human motivation that underwrote liberal governmentality. The reign of the modes of writing that we call literature over the domain of subjectivity was relatively short-lived, however.

42. Poovey, 204, 198.

43. Ferraro’s argument also centers upon the visibility of Pope’s transition from “Taste” to “Use”; however, while Ferraro succeeds in detailing this transition through Pope’s manuscripts and revisions, he does not interpret its significance beyond an argument about Burlington himself (see especially 155).

44. For this reason, perhaps an even more fitting title for To Burlington would have been “Of Use.”


46. Quoted in Ferraro, 152.

47. I refer the reader to the infamous etching, “Taste, or Burlington Gate” (1732), a print previously attributed to William Hogarth that depicts Pope tottering above a scaffold, whitewashing the word “TASTE” carved over the entrance to Burlington’s main gate. I would add that this etching has also been a contributing factor to interpretations that view To Burlington solely in terms of Pope’s relationship to an architect.

48. Mack qtd. in Ferraro, 154.


51. I would argue that Pope’s multiple revisions to this poem also support the claim that Pope wrote To Burlington to address very specific conditions of the early 1730s.


53. See the title page to Nicholas Hawksmoor’s A Short Historical Account of London-Bridge; with a Proposition for a New-Stone Bridge at Westminster (London, 1736).

54. Hawksmoor’s Proposition was just one of many plans submitted to the Commissioners for the Westminster Bridge (a committee headed by William Pulteney and of which Burlington himself was a member beginning in 1737). Thomas Ripley and Colen Campbell also had submitted plans. Construction of Westminster Bridge began in 1738 and was completed in 1749. (Again, see Brownell, Georgian England, 301–4; and Walker, Old Westminster Bridge, especially 77–104).

55. For more on Labelye’s design, see Walker, Old Westminster Bridge, especially 77–87.
59. Lord Burlington transitively relates to Hawksmoor via Pope, but Burlington served as an informal advisor to the Bridge Committee headed by William Pulteney. Although Burlington strongly recommended an architect of his Palladian agenda, Colin Campbell, to Pulteney’s committee in addition to hiring “two eminent mathematicians, Edmund Halley and Dr. Arbuthnot, to check Campbell’s design” (Walker, *Old Westminster Bridge*, 47), portfolios from a variety of different architectural camps poured into the committee in hopes of securing a public works project that was a cultural lynchpin for London.

**Notes to Chapter 4**


Press, 1928), 168. Because Irving does not reference the actual law, I am relying upon Entick’s citation. I also thank Alison O’Byrne (University of York) and the Eighteenth-Century Listserv for helping me to locate references to this act.

6. “The humble representation of the commissioners of the sewers and pavements within the said city and liberties” quoted in Entick, *A New and Accurate History*, vol. 3, 266.


17. Klancher, *The Making of English Reading Audiences*, 23. Klancher considers the 1790s to be a turning point when “new periodical writing . . . foregrounds the discontinuity of publics” (44). If this is true, then Boswell and Burney represent a prehistory that leads to this late-century “foregrounding”; in other words, Boswell and Burney try to reappropriate their predecessors’ textual strategies to react to the proliferation of print and develop new modes of self-government in which “the London individual” may be realized.


Notes to Chapter 5


3. David Harvey theorizes the imaginative power of these “God-like’ vision[s]” as he introduces his study of “the city in imagination” in his introduction to *The Urban Experience* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), 1.


8. I owe the methodology I am using here to two essays that have reappropriated the discourses of metaphor and genre in history. First, Erin O’Connor tackles the rhetoric of Victorian medical metaphors in her essay “Breast Reductions,” in *Raw Material: Producing Pathology in Victorian Culture* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2000), 60–101. O’Connor’s thesis is that we need to “consider catachresis as a historical, textual, and analytical entity. . . . Thinking catachresis in turn forces us to think more carefully about what constitutes ‘context’ and about what we mean when we say that signifying practices are ‘political’” (100–1). Second, Mary Poovey’s essay “The Model System of Contemporary Literary Criticism,” emphasizes the need to understand genre as an “organizing metaphor” that itself has a history in the professionalization of literary criticism (*Critical Inquiry* 23, no. 3, 408-38). Both of these studies highlight the need for us to understand the history of the metaphors we use to explicate text.


12. Richard Steele, *Tatler* 1, Tuesday, 12 April 1709, in *Selections from The

13. One of the most famous Spectator papers is Steele’s Spectator 65, Tuesday, 15 May 1711. It is famous because it addresses George Etherege’s The Man of Mode (1676). Critics and professors of eighteenth-century drama frequently use it to understand the contemporary reaction to the play, particularly the rake Dorimant. Not surprisingly, Steele reflects in this paper upon the “unnatural” conduct of the characters (see Ross, Selections, 407).

14. There are extended evaluations about how Boswell wishes to be Macheath (see especially Friedman), but few studies have interpreted Boswell’s obsession with Addison and Steele with the same vigor.

15. See Pottle, introduction, 40, n. 4. Boswell elaborates on his weekly plan to send these installments to the Scottish Johnston within the London Journal: “In the evening I went to Douglas’s, where I found a letter from my friend Johnston which gave me much satisfaction, brought many comfortable ideas into my mind, and put me on a regular plan of sending him my journal” (68). Johnston’s vetting this journal suggests another reason why we should trace Boswell’s strategies for refining and managing his own conduct.


18. Boswell’s authorship of the View was in a way sealed in 1976 when the Augustan Reprint Society published the text in facsimile with Boswell’s name on the cover. In his introduction to this edition, David W. Tarbet, states that “circumstantial evidence favors the claim for Boswell. The dedication to Boswell’s current idol, West Digges, and the extravagant praise of Mrs. Cowper, Boswell’s current passion, suggest his enthusiasms. The evidence of his letters shows a strong and early interest in the theatre, and an indirect reference in a 26 September 1759 letter to John Johnston appears to make an amused claim of the authorship for part of the View which had earlier appeared in the June and July numbers of the Edinburgh Chronicle.” (David W. Tarbet, introduction to A View of the Edinburgh Theatre during the Summer Season, 1759, by [James Boswell] [Los Angeles: University of California, 1976], i).

19. [James Boswell], A View of the Edinburgh Theatre during the Summer Season, 1759 (Los Angeles: University of California, 1976), iii.

20. Richard Steele, Tatler 1, 12 April 1709, in Selections, 65 (emphasis Steele’s).


22. I argue that Boswell is conscious of his own use of metaphor. For an example of this self-consciousness, see when Boswell calls attention to, or reflects upon, his own artful handling of metaphors following his participation in a Saturday-dialogue at Child’s coffeehouse: “I don’t think this at all bad. My simile
of the hares (my metaphor, rather) is pretty well” (76).

23. I choose 1798 because it is the year Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth began to circulate this “romantic” view of a creative imagination in the Lyrical Ballads.


26. See Alan R. White, The Language of Imagination (Oxford: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1990), 5: “It was an emphasis on this active strand in imagination which, despite its still unsevered tie to the sensory image, opened the way to a view of imagination as the instigator of novelty, inventiveness, and originality, and as the source of the power, displays, flights, and feats of imagination. It is this strand, often under the Aristotelian name of ‘fancy,’ which Hobbes and later aesthetic theory praised for its wit, beauty, and art, and Descartes, Locke, and Hume disparaged for its unreality, extravagance, and lack of discipline.”


28. See White, Language, 35.

29. In fact, a new volume of Hume’s History appeared during Boswell’s residence in London (1762).


32. Addison, Spectator 411, Saturday, 21 June 1712, 368–9. As Angus Ross points out in his notes to the Penguin edition, Addison fails to make this distinction between “fancy” and “imagination” (549, n. 2). The distinction may primarily be a post-eighteenth-century phenomenon.


34. Addison, Spectator 409, Thursday, 19 June 1712, 367. The most famous example of Boswell’s continued obsession with Addisonian self-government takes place on 18 October 1763, during the second month of his studies at Utrecht, as he composes his “Inviolable Plan: To be read over frequently.” This “Plan,” written entirely in a commanding, second-person voice, offers an explicit example from Boswell’s journals of how he considers the delayed interpretation of his writing to constitute the source of self-knowledge and “certain fact.” Consider how Boswell uses the Plan’s preamble to reinterpret everything that came before this day in Holland:

Let those years be thought of no more. You are now determined to form yourself into a man. . . . You studied with diligence. You grew quite well. This is a certain fact. You must never forget it. Nor attempt to plead a real incurable distemper; for you cured it, when it was
at its very worst, merely by following a proper plan with diligence and activity. This is a great era in your life; for from this time you fairly set out upon solid principles to be a man. (Boswell, *Boswell in Holland, 1763–1764*, ed. Pottle [New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1952], 387)

Boswell uses this preamble to reflect upon the past and establish two “certain fact[s]”: first, Boswell can bring a previously agentless illness (“a real incurable distemper”) into his own control; and second, he can obtain his own “cure” and become his own agent by “following a proper plan with diligence and activity.” I claim that the source of Boswell’s “proper plan” is the disciplined writing and reading of his journals because he concludes his “Inviolable Plan” with the same Delphic mantra that marks the threshold of his *London Journal*: “Know Thyself” (*Holland* 390). Thus, the plan of the *London Journal* and his “Inviolable Plan” share objectives; that is, Boswell’s idea of “the individual”—of “an excellent character”—stems from incessant, textual self-monitoring.

36. Boswell also details another “bowing” episode as he leaves Edinburgh:

I made the chaise stop at the foot of the Canongate; asked pardon of Mr. Stewart for a minute; walked to the abbey of Holyroodhouse, went round the Piazzas, bowed thrice: once to the Palace itself, once to the crown of Scotland above the gate in front, and once to the venerable old Chapel. I next stood in the court before the Palace, and bowed thrice to Arthur Seat, that lofty romantic mountain on which I have so often strayed in my days of youth, indulged mediation, and felt the raptures of a soul filled with ideas of the magnificence of GOD and his creation. (41–42)

Amid these bouts of bowing, it is interesting to see how Boswell transfers the value of bowing from Edinburgh to London over the course of the *London Journal*’s narrative. Boswell also attaches an unregulated language of imagination (“mediation,” “raptures,” “magnificence”) to the Edinburgh episodes. This diction is striking in comparison to the way Boswell bows to St. Paul’s in London.

38. It is important to remember that “fancy” and “imagination” were still used interchangeably by many eighteenth-century authors including Addison, Steele, and Pope. (In Pope’s case, see especially David Fairer, *Pope’s Imagination* [Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984], 2–3). Boswell here is trying to develop his own rules for distinguishing the two words from each other.

39. For other examples of this critical distancing strategy, see Addison, *Spectator* 69, 19 May 1711 where the narrator visits the Royal Exchange and imagines perspectives from the King’s courtyard that surveys, and therefore manages, the activity below.

43. Dryden’s *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* also used dialogue to convey critical knowledge to his readership.
44. In order to understand, contextualize, and know what his condition is, Boswell again uses similes: “I this day began to feel an unaccountable alarm of unexpected evil: a little heat in the members of my body sacred to Cupid, very like a symptom of that distemper with which Venus, when cross, takes it into her head to plague her votaries” (149).
45. Boswell’s tense shifts seem to parallel Fielding’s strategies of authorization, and it is tempting to say that the *London Journal* is novelistic. However, the *London Journal* is an urban project that is both similar to and distinct from the novel in the same way it is similar to and distinct from every other canonical genre of the time: history, drama, epistolary, diary.

**Notes to Chapter 6**

1. Frances Burney, *Cecilia, or Memoirs of an Heiress*, ed. Peter Sabor and Margaret Anne Doody (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 897. All subsequent references to this text will be cited internally, marked by “C” and the relevant page number(s).
2. Catherine Gallagher’s *Nobody’s Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670–1820* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994) explores Burney’s wrestling with the effects of female authorship in chapter 5 of her book, “Nobody’s Debt: Frances Burney’s Universal Obligation.” In this chapter, Gallagher offers a comprehensive analysis of Burney’s interactions with Samuel Johnson and other literary celebrities as they shape her publishing career. Unlike Gallagher, however, I am interested in how Burney used her first two novels to represent the experience of passivity on London’s streets and in London’s spaces in order to suggest alternate interpretive strategies that might cauterize this passivity.
3. Frances Burney, *Evelina, or, The History of a Young Lady’s Entrance into the World*, ed. Stuart J. Cooke (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998), 70. All subsequent references to this work will be cited internally and marked with an “E” and relevant page number(s).
4. The immediate cause of Evelina’s unhappiness is the return of Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval to Howard Grove. Evelina continues, “But do not suppose London to be the source of these evils; for, had our excursion been anywhere else, so disagreeable an addition to our household, must have caused the same change at our return” (*E*, 98). Regardless of this qualifier, “place” acquires value in this passage as something separate from Evelina’s self (“me”).
6. “[A]s soon as Mama saw it she immediately knew the Hand—it was Stephen’s—I am sure I should never have suspected it was by the same Hand came to Hetty— . . . .” (Burney, “Saturday” Journal 1768, in The Early Journals, vol. 1, 9).


8. When Burney writes about traversing London’s streets in her journal, an abstract threat infiltrates her language:

We stayed very late, to avoid the Crowd, but the [King’s Opera] House emptied very slowly, the Pit & Boxes being quite full. When we went down, we got with difficulty to our Coach; but, after the usual perils & dangers, we were drove out of Haymarket, & into Suffolk Street. Here we concluded we were safe,—but, as we afterwards found, there had been left a load of Gravel in the street, which the shade (of a moonlight) hid from the Coach man. We found ourselves suddenly mounting on one side—Mama, who is soon alarmed, cried out, “We are going! we are going!” I sat quite quiet, thinking it a false alarm: but presently the Coach was entirely overturned. . . .

. . . some people immediately gathered about the Cariage [sic], &,
I believe, opened the Door, which was now at the Top of the Coach. . . . I made shift to stand up—& a Gentleman lifted me out. He had no Hat on, being come out of a Neighbouring House. He beg’d me to go with him, & promised to take care of me:—but I was now terrified [sic] for Mama & Susan. . . . I quite wrung my Hands with horror—This Gentleman took hold of me, & almost used violence to make me go away—I remember I called out to him, as I broke from him, that he would drive me distracted! . . . However he would not leave me, for which I believe I am very much obliged to him, as I was surrounded by a mob . . . (Burney, Journal, 13 February 1773, in The Early Journals, vol. 1, 239–40)

9. In literary histories, Frances Burney’s career is almost exclusively represented by Evelina. One of the reasons for Evelina’s overstated singularity involves the novel’s supposed participation in the epistolary tradition of confessional interiority. I argue that our approaching Evelina in this manner, however, discounts the alternate modes of interiority that Burney was outlining.

10. Patricia Meyer Spacks has argued that “locating polarized qualities in opposed social spheres, [Clarissa and Evelina] use London and its class structure as way of rendering internal division. Impulse toward indulged passion and desire for restraint, these contrasted sides of female nature find correlates in the fictional city” (“Women and the City,” in Johnson and His Age, ed. James Engell [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984], 505). While I agree that Burney uses London “as a way of rendering internal division,” I disagree
with Meyer Spacks that “the city implies an alternative to traditional patriarchal arrangements, but Burney finally evades that alternative” (507). I do not see Evelina by itself detailing an elaborate “alternative”; rather, the novel destabilizes the form though which Burney conveys these “traditional patriarchal arrangements” to the reader.

11. William Galperin’s essay “The Radical Work of Frances Burney’s London” (Eighteenth-Century Life 20 [November 1996]) claims that “while Burney’s London remains, in many respects, a site of radical hope and possibility, her novel [Evelina]—as it asks to be read—assuredly does not” (47). Similar to Galperin, Meyer Spacks reads London as holding out “ingenious possibilities for female self-assertion” that Evelina ultimately refuses (Spacks, “Women,” 492). Part of my argument in this chapter is that we should not draw conclusions about “Burney’s London” until we understand Cecilia’s formal relationship to Evelina.

12. For more about London’s “synechdoch[al]” qualities, see Spacks, “Women,” 485–507, especially 488.


14. Irene Tucker points out that we need to distinguish “the particular representational paradoxes of the letter form and the ways in which these paradoxes are complicated by being placed within the frame of a novel” (Irene Tucker, “Writing Home: Evelina, the Epistolary Novel, and the Paradox of Property,” English Literary History 60 [1993]: 422). While I agree that Tucker’s distinction is important (and will catalogue what I find to be “paradoxes” specific to Evelina and Cecilia later in this chapter), it is nonetheless necessary to historicize eighteenth-century familiar letter writing to see the public-private tension that was built into the epistolary novel’s development.

15. Tom Keymer, Richardson’s Clarissa and the Eighteenth-Century Reader (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), xvi. Keymer interprets letters as social performances by detailing the two approaches to “epistolary discourse” taken by Pope and Johnson: “Where Pope stresses representational fidelity, Johnson dismisses the notion of the epistolary window as a prelapsarian dream, and finds in letter-writing instead an inevitable gravitation towards disguise. Taken together, their rival explanations mark the two extremes between which all epistolary discourse may be supposed to lie—on one hand, the pure, undressed, expressive ideal; on the other, its impure, addressed, manipulative antithesis” (15).

17. “[U]ntil quite recently, critical discourse has on the whole accepted female epistolary skill as a truth universally acknowledged, and has subscribed to the fiction of the feminine, private letter,” (Gilroy and Verhoeven, introduction, 3).

18. For studies that have examined the relationship between epistolarity and women writers, see especially Nancy Armstrong, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987) and Janet Gurkin Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), and Gilroy and Verhoeven, introduction, especially 1–14.

19. Janine Barchas’s *Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) analyzes the epistolary’s graphics (in particular, the dashes, asterisks, *fleurons*, and *hedera* of Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa*) as interpretable elements of “the novel’s temporal authenticity” and representative of “the space of time”: “Richardson revives the non-ornamental qualities of the printer’s ornament. He activates, as it were, the ancient function of the *hedera* as a mark of punctuation. When Richardson awakens this ability of the ornaments to punctuate, organize, and mark emphasis, he gains greater control over the fiction’s temporal dimensions. He then exploits this control to give the readers an indication of the psychology of his characters” (133 and 152, respectively).

I agree that Burney’s *Evelina* adopts Richardson’s dashes and their function of “temporal authenticity”; however, Burney’s novel also draws attention to moments where letters fail to represent Evelina’s actual experiences, disruptions, meals, etc.

20. Gina Campbell’s essay “How To Read Like a Gentleman: Burney’s Instructions to Her Critics in *Evelina*” (*English Literary History* 57 [1990]: 557–84) also interprets Villars as someone trained in “textualizing Evelina” (581). Whereas Campbell argues “that Burney includes a model of reading within *Evelina* that resembles conduct literature in its emphasis on propriety and that is meant to serve Burney’s literary ambitions by teaching her critics how they ought to read her work” (557), I do not see Burney detailing an elaborate mechanism for correcting her male audience’s reading practices. Rather, Burney signals and performs the problems associated not with “a bad reader” (as Campbell deems Villars [565]) but with a flawed and gendered representational form (the epistolary) in general. Thus, I agree with Campbell that “Villars’s interpretive method thus brings to the personal, private sphere the rules of conduct that apply to young women in the world, namely that anything secret or clandestine is incriminating” (566); however, I see this interpretive method in terms of its religious origin in confession. I differ from Campbell’s argument when I claim that Burney suggests a reformation not in her male readers but in the work that women imagine their letters accomplishing. When viewed from the perspective of *Cecilia, Evelina* signals Burney’s attempt to reject or write beyond the epistolary’s limitations. These limitations included the authoritative position it assigned to its male readers in order for the form to be able to regulate feminine conduct.

21. Analyzing Richardson’s epistolary techniques in *Clarissa* and *Pamela,*
Terry Castle details additional limitations that are inherent in epistolary novels—limitations that may have influenced Burney’s attempt to acquire social authority: “The absence of authorial rhetoric and the shifting of authority to the reader makes the classic epistolary novel marvelously unfit, obviously, for didacticism of any kind. The epistolary novelist can never express moral or social “messages” with the relative precision and clarity available to a novelist using other narrative forms” (Clarissa’s Ciphers: Meaning & Disruption in Richardson’s Clarissa [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982], 168). But Castle distinguishes Evelina not as a “classic epistolary novel” (in which there are “multiple-correspondent[s] . . . in which each letter writer is given approximately the same amount of space in the text”) but rather as an epistolary novel in which “the letters of a single character (usually the heroine) tend to dominate the sequence” (Clarissa’s Ciphers, 168). Castle admits that this nonclassical epistolary novel involves a loss of narrative authority: “The choice of the letter form inevitable entails a weakening of authorial power” [emphasis Castle]; “the very proliferation of fictional voices—the diffuse, babbling effect of correspondence—allows the reader a kind of participation and freedom not granted in other forms of narration” (Clarissa’s Ciphers, 167). If this is true, then the third-person voice of Burney’s Cecilia suggests that Burney desired a strengthening of “authorial power” so that she could distribute her ideas of internalized self-government to a reader’s unadulterated attention.

22. The male contest to conduct Cecilia is an omnipresent pattern in Cecilia. (See especially “The Masquerade” [chapter three, book two] and “An Affray” [chapter four, book two]). Cecilia incessantly attempts to divert or delay these contests.

23. According to Doody and Sabor, Burney probably italicized “propriety of mind” to “suggest a general conduct-book phrase, or a more specific allusion” (see endnote referring to p. 425, C, 985). This detail therefore shows Mrs. Delvile accepting Burney’s new model of conduct that nurtures interiority by rejecting confession and privileging interpretation.

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