

‘For the Love of Ink’: patronage and performance in the
eighteenth century

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Abstract

In order to demonstrate that patronage was an essential component of the eighteenth-century creative economy, this thesis reassesses the social and material conditions of being a patron in the eighteenth century. There are three case studies in the thesis, featuring patrons from across the century, men and women, and writers and artists. Using original archival sources, this thesis examines the literary, material, social, and cultural products of patronage and reveals how they were influenced by the personal, political, or aesthetic values of their patrons. These chapters seek to understand the various performative mechanisms of patronal solicitation and interaction by examining epistolary correspondences, paratextual dedications, and practices of gift-giving. The chapters analyse how Frances Thynne Seymour, countess of Hertford (1699-1754); George, Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773); and Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, duchess of Portland (1715-1785) utilised the performative nature of the implicit negotiations present within these genres in order to not only establish their own identity but also to determine the identity of others by drafting their social role and relationship through social cues. In doing so, this thesis demonstrates the centrality of patronage to constructions of identity within the eighteenth century. At the same time, this thesis broaches larger issues by demonstrating the intersections of patronage with discourses of eighteenth-century sociability; literary production and print culture; politics; material culture; and the enlightenment. It ties these strands of enquiry together by showing how patronage enriches and challenges our current critical understanding of these concepts. By subjecting patronage to hermeneutic analysis, this thesis contributes to original knowledge by showing how patronage is an essential component of the production and dissemination of knowledge, literature, and culture in the eighteenth century.

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This process has been one of both joy and despair and my partner Scott has been there the whole time to celebrate the highs and to pick me up during the lows. He has always believed in me, supported me, and celebrated me and my achievements.

List of Illustrations

1.1 'a miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725' in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alwick Castle, MSS 116

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Introduction

Through detailed studies of literary, material, social, and cultural patronage, this thesis sheds new light on eighteenth-century systems of patronage. In doing so, it demonstrates how the products of that system, whether literary, artistic, or scientific, were influenced by the personal, political, or aesthetic values of their patrons. This thesis seeks to understand how patronage influenced eighteenth-century culture. In order to understand such influence and impact this thesis considers a series of questions. What are the discourses around the performance of patronage in letters and literary works? What was the impact of patronage on the literary work associated with it? How did authors use the dedicatory genre (in both manuscript letters and printed publications) to comment on patronage, literary inspiration, and performativity? How did patronage both facilitate and fail eighteenth-century authors? In order to answer these questions, this thesis analyses the epistolary correspondence and textual artifacts of Frances Thynne Seymour, countess of Hertford (1699-1754); George, Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773); and Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, duchess of Portland (1715-1785) to tease out the nuances of the social, literary, and political contexts that shaped their patronal interactions. In doing so, it examines the histories of the successful, as well as failed, attempts to gain their patronage, and the patrons' own agency in regard to shaping their public image. At the same time, this thesis broaches larger issues by demonstrating the intersections of patronage with discourses of eighteenth-century sociability; literary production and print culture; politics; material culture; and the enlightenment. By subjecting patronage to hermeneutic analysis, this thesis contributes original knowledge by showing how patronage is an essential component of the production and dissemination of knowledge, literature, and culture in the eighteenth century.

To pursue these enquires I have sought to understand the various performative mechanisms of patronal solicitation and interaction by examining epistolary correspondences,

paratextual dedications, and practices of gift-giving. This thesis analyses how patrons utilised the performative nature of the implicit negotiations present within these genres in order to not only establish their own identity, but also to determine the identity of others by drafting their social role and relationship through social cues. It argues that these performative negotiations intimately affect the textual and material fruits of that patronage relationship and the way that the resulting literature, art, and material objects were advertised and distributed to the public. Consequently, these relationships and negotiations have wider implications for eighteenth-century literature, politics, and culture.

Patronage's interaction with these wider concepts poses a series of related points that not only demonstrate that patronage was still a dominant force in the eighteenth century, but also has implications for the way we conceptualise knowledge production and dissemination. Firstly, my research into patronage's interaction with print culture not only dispels the myth that print replaced aristocratic patronage, but also affects the ways in which we conceptualise a printed book and the notions of 'fixity' attached to it. Secondly, this thesis demonstrates how patronage was an integral part in the conception, creation and revision of a text and thus adds new strands to book history. Thirdly, my research builds on existing work on manuscript circulation by arguing that scribal authorship continued to be a viable mode of producing and transmitting literature in the eighteenth century; however, my work extends these existing dialogues by demonstrating that patronage was an essential component of that viability.

As well as challenging pre-conceptions of the printed text and book history, this thesis also problematises discourses of materiality and the enlightenment. It demonstrates how these concepts are currently discussed as equalising the production of art and knowledge in the eighteenth century. That is, in a number of recent accounts scholars, such as Elizabeth Eger and Beth Fowkes Tobin, have argued that the enlightenment values of knowledge exchange

and conversation transcended social barriers.¹ By examining the gradation of labour in collecting practices, attribution of credit, and aristocratic display of curiosities, the thesis disrupts the enfranchising equalising narrative by revealing that collections such as the Portland collection at Bulstrode were built on preserving social hierarchies rather than tearing them down.

Patronage enriches and challenges our current critical understanding of book history, print culture, materiality, performativity, the enlightenment, identity, and sociability. Moreover, as well as showing that patronage was an influential and essential component of eighteenth-century literature, art, and culture, this thesis also invites reflection on our current climate of academic research: it asks us to consider the similarities between eighteenth-century patronage and current systems of funding bodies and grants and how these factors affect our own production and dissemination of knowledge.

Previous studies of Patronage

This thesis offers a new perspective on patronage that can be differentiated from previous studies for several reasons. Firstly, sustained studies of patronage are few and far between and, when patronage is the focal point, the research tends to biographical speculation rather than hermeneutic analysis. These biographical tendencies, and resulting narrow focus, stem from traditional author-centred approaches in literary studies. Three influential works on eighteenth-century patronage are: Michael Foss' *Age of Patronage: The Arts in England 1660-1750* (1971); Paul Korshin's 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Patronage' (1974); and Dustin Griffin's *Literary Patronage in England* (1996).² While they offer useful contextual

¹ Elizabeth Eger, 'Paper Trails and Eloquent Objects: Bluestocking friendship and material culture', *Paragon*, 26:2 (2009), 109-138 (p. 111); and Beth Fowkes Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells: Natural History collecting in the age of Cook's voyage*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 117.

² Michael Foss, *The Age of Patronage: The Arts in England 1660-1750* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1971); Paul J. Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7:4

information and provide a basis for the theoretical framework of patronage, each of these studies focuses primarily on the benefit or detriment of patronage to individual authors' careers. In contrast, this thesis concentrates on the patrons and their patronal networks. In doing so, it considers the influence of patronage on the creation, evolution, and reception of a work and how this speaks to wider aesthetic, cultural, and political concerns in the eighteenth century. Secondly, previous studies tend to offer the conclusion that the influence of patronage diminished during the eighteenth century, whereas this thesis demonstrates that patronage retained its cultural importance throughout the period.

Foss' work seeks to track the patronage of art and literature throughout the period 1660-1750. However, for Foss, this analysis of patronage stems from how 'rewarding' patronage was in comparison to earlier periods. Indeed, one of Foss' opening statements is that the 'old system of courtly and aristocratic patronage was not as rewarding as it had been'.³ What follows is an exploration of how various writers and artists gained from systems of patronage in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. For example, Foss writes that '[Gay] started in the service of the Duchess of Monmouth, and from there he was passed hand to hand until he ended his days in the household of the Duke and Duchess of Queensberry'.⁴ Foss opines that Gay 'might not have survived without' this aristocratic assistance.⁵ Moreover, Foss writes that:

Matthew Prior was another whose worldly misfortunes were eased by aristocratic kindness [...] A folio edition of his poems was brought out, with Harley, Bathurst, Arbuthnot and Swift actively chasing subscriptions. The profit came to over £3,000, which Lord Bathurst invested for the poet, and to which Harley added an equal sum allowing Prior to buy Down Hall for his old age.⁶

(1974), 453-473; and Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 17.

⁴ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 135.

⁵ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 135.

⁶ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 135-6.

These examples indicate that, for Foss, the scholarly interest in patronage lies in how aristocratic patrons assisted their clientele. In contrast, this thesis considers how residential employments and assistance with publications affected the production and dissemination of clients' works and how this was determined by the personal, political, or aesthetic values of their patrons.

Foss concludes his *Age of Patronage* - in a chapter pointedly named 'Failure' - by stating:

[i]n the public market, literature was at the mercy of the Curlls, the theatre in the hands of the Cibbers, and music governed by the Heideggers. In the world of the private patron, matters were as bad [...] gross monarchs neglected art, and aristocrats had turned to trade and politics.⁷

This statement creates a false divide between the 'public market' and the 'private patron' and implies that the two were distinct from each other; however, this thesis shows that 'private' patronage was inextricably connected to the 'public' world. It demonstrates that the influence that patrons exerted over a text and its dissemination stemmed from their desire to impact popular taste, political opinion, and artistic value. Moreover, Foss indicates that since the 'aristocrats had turned to trade and politics', patronage had decreased.⁸ This too creates a divide between patronage and 'trade and politics' whereas this thesis shows that aristocratic patronage was intimately involved with commercial and political interests.

Korshin, in a pioneering article in 1974, called for a reconsideration of the topic of literary patronage on a sounder historical base. In a brief survey he distinguished among many different forms of patronage and suggested that sustained study would show that it 'benefitted relatively few writers'.⁹ Immediately this signals that, for Korshin, patronage must be of some 'benefit' to authors in order to be effective. Elaborating on this, Korshin suggests that 'there is considerable evidence of the difficulty of deriving any certain financial reward

⁷ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 207.

⁸ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 207.

⁹ Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', p. 473.

from writing in the middle of the eighteenth century'.¹⁰ Moreover, Korshin cites *The Court and City Register* (1742-1809) and Edward Chamberlayne's *Angliae Notitia* (1699-1755) as 'show[ing] how few places in the government were specifically designated for literary men and scholars'.¹¹ For Korshin, then, the effect of patronage is measured through how many government positions or financial rewards authors received. Conversely, this thesis argues that the effect of patronage extends beyond this and has implications for the production and dissemination of knowledge, literature, and art in the eighteenth century.

Despite it 'benefitt[ing] relatively few writers' and, in Korshin's view, 'provid[ing] rather small amounts of support', Korshin describes the system of literary patronage in the eighteenth century as 'surprisingly workable'.¹² Though Korshin terms the patronage system as 'workable', the addition of 'surprisingly' suggests that patronage *should not* have been. Moreover, Korshin undermines this 'workability' by stating that patronage benefited 'relatively few writers' and that the support offered was only 'small amounts'.¹³ Korshin implies that the system was ineffective and, as such, diminishes the influence and reach of patronage. This thesis responds to Korshin's claims by arguing that to judge patronage on how many individuals it benefitted is not an effective measure. Instead, it demonstrates that the impact of patronage is shown in how it influenced the production and dissemination of knowledge associated with it.

Griffin's *Literary Patronage in England* (1996) is a key text in framing how we approach literary patronage and was one of the first works to argue that we need to adopt a more theoretical method when considering eighteenth-century patronage. Griffin begins by stating that: 'the bulk of the argument and the heart of the project will be focused on the ways

¹⁰ Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', p. 456.

¹¹ Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', p. 457.

¹² Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', p. 473.

¹³ Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage', p. 473.

in which individual writers consciously worked within the patronage system'.¹⁴ Immediately, Griffin signals that his study is concerned with the effect of patronage on the careers of individual writers rather than the wider implications of patronage for art, culture, and sociability. While this thesis does not have the scope to establish the names and influence of all the active patrons in the eighteenth century, it does offer a cross-section of patrons and their recipients in order to show the differing kinds of patronage and support available to eighteenth-century writers, artists, botanists, scientists, and philosophers. My work demonstrates how patronage permeated all manner of eighteenth-century culture and society and reveals the depth, extent, and longevity of the influence of patronage.

This thesis also brings a timely re-examination to the gendered aspects of patronage. As Griffin has noted, 'little work has been done on the role of women in the patronage system'.¹⁵ Griffin then follows this comment with a single statement on the roles of women writers within patronage networks:

Some women may have hesitated to enter into an arrangement whereby they implicitly engaged to exchange "benefits" with a patron – especially a male patron – or to accept his "protection" at a time when "protection" was a euphemism for sexual "keeping." (This may have promoted the emergence of female patrons.) On the other hand, the traditional dependent status of women may have in fact made it easier for patrons to agree to protect them and for women writers to become literally dependent upon a patron. But even if a patron chose to "protect" a female writer, there were fewer benefits he could confer upon her than upon a man: a woman in the eighteenth century would not be named private secretary to a peer, or set up as a political journalist, or appointed to a church living.¹⁶

Of female patrons themselves, Griffin merely states that: '[w]omen in fact participated in the patronage systems, both as patrons and authors, from the beginning of the century, and (especially if subscription publication is considered) benefited from patronage in increasing numbers as the century ended'.¹⁷ While Griffin does point to the potential difficulties for

¹⁴ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 11.

¹⁵ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 189-90.

¹⁶ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 189-90.

¹⁷ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 189-90.

women, the brevity of his statements do little to explore or insert women into discourses concerning patronage in the eighteenth century. This thesis seeks to redress that gap in the scholarship and investigates how female patrons, as well as female clients, negotiated the commercial nature of print and the social bonds of patronage. In doing so, it intersects with, and expands upon, critical discourses of women in the public eye by showing how women shaped their patronal encounters in order to influence their own contemporary and posthumous reputations.

The common thread that ties these critical accounts of patronage together is an insistence on judging the ‘effect’ of patronage: on how well it benefitted individual authors and their careers. For example, Griffin writes that one of his aims is to show ‘that Young and Savage were more successful in obtaining patronage than they liked their readers to think’.¹⁸ This author-centred approach purely focuses on the financial economies of patronage in relation to authors. In contrast, this thesis considers the author and corresponding text as part of a wider system that fundamentally involves and is guided by the patrons themselves; by concentrating on the patron, the scope, influence, and impact of patronage is revealed. This approach provides an opportunity to see patronage not merely as an economic arrangement, but as part of a much wider ‘creative economy’ of the eighteenth century. The term ‘creative economy’ encompasses the interface between economy, culture, and social aspects, and is a powerful transformative force for socioeconomic development. By showing how patronage intersected with and influenced print technologies, manuscript circulation and coterie correspondence, authorship, sociability, political affiliation and language, and the enlightenment, this thesis shows how patronage was an essential component of the eighteenth-century ‘creative economy’.

¹⁸ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 12.

Methodology

This thesis examines a broad range of texts and objects from a material, social, and textual perspective. These texts (both print and manuscript) include letters, poetry, dedications, printed books, letter-books, and miscellanies. The thesis considers the social contexts, distribution and dissemination, and the practices of marginalia and reading together with the social signs, codes, and cues inscribed within these texts. It considers not only how these texts were consumed but, crucially, how they were intended to be consumed. The three chapters consider the patronal influence behind the conception, production, and distribution of various texts, and the movement between the manuscript and printed versions of those texts, in order to demonstrate not only the patronal influence on literature, but also the construction and projection of identity in the eighteenth century.

A predominant focus of the textual research in this thesis is on the epistolary correspondence that existed between Hertford, Lyttelton, Portland and their wider social network, and patronage clientele. The importance of writing, receiving, and reading letters has been well-established as an important social and literary practice in discourses of the eighteenth century. As Susan E. Whyman notes, there is a tendency to consider the role of letters as applying to individuals and families.¹⁹ However, she states that in an ‘age of empire, war, and expanding trade, governments, as well as citizens, needed to stay connected’.²⁰ Thus, letter-writing functioned as a means of drawing elements of society together and facilitated social cohesion in a time of social mobility and migration. Whyman posits that, in terms of mobility, letter-writing gave people a means of interacting with those above and below them in rank.²¹ As Clare Brant elaborates, ‘a letter of introduction opened doors in the

¹⁹ Susan E. Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 228.

²⁰ Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, p. 228.

²¹ Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, p. 228-9.

eighteenth century'.²² A letter acted as a means of proving respectability and offered a way of changing people's prospects. Through these textual interactions, negotiations about social status were constantly taking place as people considered their own identity and their relationship with the addressee. It is often with these implicit negotiations that my own research is most concerned.

While the surface of a letter may indicate the social ties between individuals, the eighteenth-century epistle functioned much like a conversation and, as such, there were necessary elements of performativity. As Bruce Redford posits, the eighteenth-century familiar letter, like the eighteenth-century conversation, is a performance – an 'act' in the theatrical sense as well as a 'speech-act' in the linguistic.²³ He suggests that, through a variety of techniques, such as masking and impersonation, 'the letter-writer devises substitutes for gesture, vocal inflection, and physical context' and, as such, the letter constitutes an epistolary performance that is a constant adjustment of voice and mask, text and subtext.²⁴ Similarly, Brant suggests that 'one can describe epistolary performances as self-fashioning and link them to that popular form of dressing up in the eighteenth century, the masquerade'.²⁵ Furthermore, Melanie Bigold argues that these epistolary performances functioned as a means 'of both creating and viewing textual representations of oneself'.²⁶ This performative self-fashioning is, again, an important facet of my research into patronage relations and productions. I argue that not only did letter-writing serve as a means of establishing the patrons' identity but, through self-fashioned social cues, it also enabled them

²² Clare Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p. 3.

²³ Bruce Redford, *The Converse of the Pen: Acts of Intimacy in the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 1-2.

²⁴ Redford, *The Converse of the Pen*, p. 1-2.

²⁵ Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture*, p. 24.

²⁶ Melanie Bigold, *Women of letters, manuscript circulation and print afterlives in the eighteenth century: Elizabeth Rowe, Catharine Cockburn and Elizabeth Carter* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), p. 13-14.

to determine the identity of others by drafting their social role and relationship into the construction of an epistle.

For, an epistle is not only a textual representation of oneself: it is also a textual representation of one's relationship with the recipient. Eve Tavor Bannet's collational and comparative approach reveals that contemporary readers were able to 'adduce very subtle shifts in emphasis amongst the various letter types in a given manual – from affection to hostility to quite subtle codes of deference'.²⁷ Bannet emphasises epistolary literacy as giving the recipient the means to understand and read the social cues within the material and social construction of a letter. However, these material and social cues are also a way of the sender imposing their own terms on a relationship that the recipient not only understands but is also invited to adhere to. As such, a patronal client may present a letter in such a way that invites a person to assume the role of patron and, equally, a patron may construct a letter in a manner that determines the social relationship between them and the recipient. Letters not only commented on public opinion or social relationships but, when writers marked parts of their letters as suitable only for the eyes of the addressee and indicated that other parts could be read to assembled company, also show how the writer intended to present themselves to an audience. Furthermore, these marked sections also represent the writer preparing their letters for (usually posthumous) publication; thus, the epistolary manipulation of patrons can be seen as preparing themselves, and their patronal relationships, for public consumption.

It is important to note that these negotiations and performances were not taking place behind closed doors, in 'private' as it were. When discussing the eighteenth-century epistle, it is important to clarify the position of letters within the public/private dichotomy. Although the idea of a letter being a form of 'private' correspondence might resonate in modern society, the term 'private', as many critics have noted, is inaccurate for many eighteenth-

²⁷ Eve Tavor Bannet, *Empire of Letters: Letter Manuals and Transatlantic Correspondence, 1688-1820*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 11-12.

century familiar letters.²⁸ Rather than simply being a correspondence between two individuals, the eighteenth-century familiar letter was regularly composed in company, voluntarily circulated beyond the addressee, and frequently found its way into print. As such, several critics have stated their preference for the term ‘personal’ over ‘private’: Brant suggests, ‘it has the advantage of suggesting a subset relationship: personal is to social as particular is to general. So personal letters articulate in miniature the concerns of a wider society’.²⁹ This notion of letters articulating the concerns of a wider society is vitally important to my thesis as it suggests that the power dynamics present in individual patronage relationships were not only pertinent to that relationship but also indicative of the wider power dynamics of society.

These negotiations did not exist as separate from the literary text; a further significant aspect of my methodology, therefore, is an analysis of the dedicatory epistle. Korshin opines that:

[a] writer might dedicate a book to the person who was his regular, steady patron, and who was already giving him full-time support, but arrangements of this kind were very rare. It is unlikely that most authors ever relied on dedications for anything more than incidental bounty.³⁰

Like Griffin and Foss, Korshin’s work positions patronage as a system purely for the individual financial benefit of authors. This thesis responds to this statement about dedications by demonstrating that, as a genre, they were a powerful tool for creating a public identity for patrons that not only affected their reputation but also, given the paratextual attachment to a text, influenced the way in which the public received and reacted to such texts.

²⁸ Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture*, p. 5; Bigold, *Women of letters*, p. 38; and Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authority and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 38-9.

²⁹ Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture*, p. 5

³⁰ Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Patronage’, p. 467

A dedication existed as a paratext to a printed, or manuscript, copy of a text. The dedication was generally a tribute that was compensated, either by protection or by financial means. As Gerard Genette argues, in periods when literature was not really considered a profession and ‘when the practice of giving the author rights to a percentage of the sales was almost entirely unknown (those rights are won at the end of the eighteenth century as a result of a lawsuit brought by Beaumarchais)’, the dedication was regularly counted among a writer’s source of income.³¹ As Genette tells us, ‘the dedicatory epistle is, as a matter of fact, *de rigueur* until the end of the eighteenth century’.³² The appearance of a dedication in letter form means that the dedication can be analysed in the same manner as epistolary correspondence since, to a reader, the presentation of the dedication in this manner would invite such a reading.

Critical discourses on the nature of paratexts have considered the links between paratexts and the commercialisation of the literary marketplace. As Genette states, ‘the paratext is what enables the text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public’.³³ Paratextual material, including dedications, influence and control readings of the text. Indeed, Genette states that the paratextual ‘fringe’ is:

a privileged place of a pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that – whether well or poorly understood and achieved – is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it (more pertinent, of course, in the eyes of the author and his allies).³⁴

The choice of patron and the wording of the dedicatory address is, as Genette implies, part of the authorial strategy to attract and appeal to a readership. Griffin’s work on eighteenth-century patronage touches upon the consequences of a dedication to the patron by suggesting that they acted as a means of conferring the reputation of ‘an arbiter of taste’ onto the patron;

³¹ Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 119.

³² Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 119.

³³ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2.

³⁴ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 2.

however, this thesis expands on such examples by showing how dedications created a public image of the patron that was attached to a text and acted as a means of establishing their identity within the public sphere.³⁵ David Fairer posits that a printed text is a ‘permanently living thing’ and, thus, an affixed textual dedication can be seen as creating a permanently living public self for a patron.³⁶ Fairer also suggests that ‘poets of the period are acutely conscious of the medium through which their thoughts are being conveyed, and the uncertainties of reception by a reading public make them sensitive about how they are projecting and directing their voices’.³⁷ My research into Hertford, and indeed the other figures in this thesis, shows that patrons were also acutely aware of how their image and identity was being projected.

There are some accepted frameworks for the presentation of a dedication. As Genette states: ‘since the end of the sixteenth century, the canonical site of the dedication has been at the head of a book; this means that the dedication is one aspect of the readers’ first impression of a text’.³⁸ Generally, Genette adds, ‘a dedication will be attached to the first edition of a text’.³⁹ However, print culture offered authors, and publishers, the option of affixing a dedication to a later or subsequent edition of a text. Genette suggests that such a practice ‘unavoidably gives the impression of clumsily making amends, a delayed and therefore suspect nomination’.⁴⁰ This thesis explores such additions of dedications and argues that instead of considering them as suspect; it invites us to recognise that patronage was bound to the social and political contexts surrounding a text.⁴¹ As such, it shows patronage to

³⁵ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 25.

³⁶ David Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2003), p. 9. However, this thesis does contest the ‘fixed’ attributes attached to printed texts in the second chapter on Lyttelton.

³⁷ Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 4.

³⁸ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 126.

³⁹ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 127.

⁴⁰ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 127.

⁴¹ See chapter two for an analysis of James Thomson’s dedication to Frederick, the Prince of Wales (1707-1751) in the 1744 edition of *The Seasons*.

be an important indicator of these changing trends. As well as potentially determining an author's income, there is cultural capital attached to a dedication that was recognised by the numerous individuals who were involved in the creation of a physical book. For, a dedication is an acknowledgment of a relationship that is public in nature – whether intellectual, artistic, political, or other.

Regardless of the official dedicatee, the dedication is always intended for at least two addressees: the dedicatee and the public reader. As Genette notes, 'dedicating a work to an addressee is a public act that the reader is, as it were, called on to witness'.⁴² Genette describes this as a 'typically performative act' in which the dedication constitutes the act it is supposed to describe. Linguistically, this can be thought of as what J. L. Austin termed a 'performance utterance': the issuing of the utterance is the performing of an action.⁴³ The formula that Genette prescribes is thus:

the formula for it is therefore not only "I dedicate this book to So-and-So" (that is: I am telling So-and-So that I am dedicating the book to him) but also, and sometimes even more, "I am telling the reader that I am dedicating this book to So-and-So." But by that very fact, the formula is likewise "I am telling So-and-So that I am telling the reader that I am dedicating this book to So-and-So".⁴⁴

The dedication can therefore be always considered as a matter of demonstration and exhibition: it proclaims a relationship, whether intellectual or personal, actual or symbolic, and, in Genette's words, 'this proclamation is always at the service of the work, as a reason for elevating the work's standing or as a theme for commentary'.⁴⁵

Though studies into print culture and patronage cite the dedication as evidence of patronage relationships, the text of the dedication is largely relegated, with critical responses focusing on author-centred analysis. One example of this appears in discussions concerning the rise of print culture and of the book as a commercial product. As historians of print note,

⁴² Genette, *Paratexts*, pp. 134-5.

⁴³ J. L. Austin, *How to do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 8.

⁴⁴ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 12.

⁴⁵ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 135.

the consequences of these phenomena were that writers and printers encouraged anything that commended a given edition to purchasers.⁴⁶ Adrian Johns, for example, writes that such appeal could be enhanced by ‘whom one presented the book [to], through which channels it was distributed, [and] with which patron it was identified’.⁴⁷ Johns here acknowledges that the patron has a positive connection to the literary text in that their name heightens the appeal for readers, yet he does not elaborate why or how the appeal works. Griffin writes, ‘the generic nature [of dedications] provides some insight into the *systems* of patronage and the function it is expected to perform’.⁴⁸ For Griffin, the system of patronage that the dedication represents is one of ‘quasi-economic gain’, through which the author gains financially while the patron derives a reputation for good taste.⁴⁹ While this statement acknowledges that the patron stood to gain from a dedication, the subsequent studies into patronage by Griffin instead focus on the biographical information that dedications yield and the remuneration provided by the patrons to the authors. He, too, fails to address the why and the how of patronal appeal.

Griffin warns that ‘dedications must of course be read very cautiously: the client presumably says only what he knows the patron wants to hear, or credits the patron with virtues and motives currently fashionable’.⁵⁰ However, it is this very notion of performativity within dedications that this thesis is concerned with. A dedication bridges the gap between the two public worlds of patronage and social networking. By analysing the social cues and self-fashioning within dedications, the power dynamics inherent in the relationship become clear. Moreover, considering the virtues and motives attached to patrons within dedications

⁴⁶ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change: Communication and cultural transformations in early-modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), I, p. 52; and Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 16.

⁴⁷ Johns, *The Nature of the Book*, p. 16.

⁴⁸ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 17.

⁴⁹ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 25.

⁵⁰ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 17.

offers an opportunity to map the changing fashions and trends within polite society. Pat Rogers suggests that '[a] man or woman is not upon oath in a dedication, and the mere fact of dedication (that is the identity of the patron, and the circumstances in which the address appears) may be more important than what is actually said on the page'.⁵¹ This reading again points to the potential performativity of a dedication as if it were a negative aspect of a dedication that should be, in Griffin's words, 'read cautiously'.⁵² Taking the opposing view, this thesis argues that what is said on the page of a dedication is vitally important in understanding the social apparatus and cultural influence of patronage. In addition to the literary hermeneutics of dedications, the dedication also provides important evidence about the book as a material object. Michael Gavin suggests that, as commentary directed at reading communities, 'it provides evidence of a book's distribution and reception'.⁵³ By doing so, the dedication offers valuable clues into the expectations that patrons and authors had of themselves and their readers.

In a similar way to which Whyman depicts letter-writing as a 'glue' that connects society, so too has gift-giving been seen as a means of tracking the social ties that exist between individuals, communities, and societies.⁵⁴ Theories of gift-giving focus on how we can understand the gift as a series of reciprocal exchanges between individuals, families, or communities. Gifts serve to enhance bonds between individuals and families, to express loyalty and deference, to display charity, and to demonstrate power. Marcel Mauss, in his seminal work *The Gift*, suggests how the mechanisms of gift-exchange create and strengthen social bonds and, in doing so, create an unavoidable accompanying obligation.⁵⁵ These

⁵¹ Pat Rogers, 'Book Dedications in Britain, 1700-1799: a preliminary study', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16:2 (1993), 213-233 (p. 231).

⁵² Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 17.

⁵³ Michael Gavin, 'Writing Print Cultures Past: Literary Criticism and Book History', *Book History*, 15 (2012), 26-47 (p. 27).

⁵⁴ Whyman, *The Pen and the People*, p. 228.

⁵⁵ Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions in Archaic Societies* trans. by Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West, 1966), p. 37.

obligations, according to Mauss, can be divided into three related categories: the obligation to give, the obligation to receive, and the obligation to reciprocate.⁵⁶ By studying these mechanisms of gift-exchange, society can thus be viewed as a map of obligations between its members.

Before the eighteenth century, the most palpable manifestation of gift exchange and relations occurred through the workings of patronage, identified by Harold Perkin as ‘the middle term between feudal homage and the capitalist cash nexus’ that ‘was all-pervading, from the Court and Cabinet to the parish poor’.⁵⁷ This top-down dispensation of property, status, and commodities formed the foundation upon which the entire social structure rested: an intricate system of ‘vertical relationships’ linking patrons and clients.⁵⁸ Patronage functioned as a means of providing employment, bestowing charity, encouraging the arts and scientific discovery, and furthering the economic, social, and political interests of certain families. Within these ‘vertical relationships’, gift-giving – as a means of creating social obligations and ties – was an essential component of the patronage system and served as a means for those in privileged social positions to maintain their control. In the context of the eighteenth century, I argue that gift-giving serves not only as a means of establishing the giver’s identity but also as a way of determining the recipient’s identity. As such, material exchange within patronage relationships serves the same purpose as an epistle in terms of a means of signifying identity and social ties.

Throughout these analyses of performative negotiations, this thesis makes a commitment, where possible, to refer to the manuscript version of a text. This is important for several reasons. Firstly, the history of authorship – the experience of writing and reading, the nature of the literary culture, as well as the literary marketplace – is closely related to work

⁵⁶ Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 37.

⁵⁷ Harold Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society* (Routledge: London, 2002), p. 49-50.

⁵⁸ The term ‘vertical relationship’ comes from Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society*, p. 182.

on the history of the book itself and the material conditions surrounding a text rather than an author-centred analysis. This thesis argues that the material conditions of a text are a vital aspect of the performance of patronage. Secondly, while there are some instances where referring to later editions of correspondence is unavoidable, printed editions of letters are generally not diplomatic transcriptions and therefore do not record potentially crucial elements of materiality. Thirdly, a later edition of the letters generally means that there has been an editor who has the power to select and order letters in the manner they see fit. By referring to the manuscript version, this thesis can analyse a text in the manner closer to how the patron intended it to be seen and interpreted.⁵⁹

As James Daybell and Peter Hinds theorise, a ‘comprehensive focus on the material aspects and surrounding social practices of texts is a valuable means of reading and decoding meaning that complements and augments analyses of content’.⁶⁰ In relation to epistolary correspondence, these material aspects encompass the format and spacing of the letter, the width of margins, the quality of the paper, the number of sheets that make up the letter, the forms of address, the amount of space dividing parts of the letter, as well as the afterlife of the letter. The handwriting, spatiality, and storage of these letters are all indicative of their performative nature. This thesis analyses all of these aspects of an epistle in order to determine how the sender invited the recipient to interpret their relationship. Furthermore, the exploration of the textual and material development of the correspondences also encompasses the afterlives of these manuscript copies. This applies not only to the textual developments within the correspondence, but also how the letters were arranged, presented, and copied. Letters were regularly arranged and copied into letter-books that would be displayed to

⁵⁹ As noted in the following paragraphs, manuscripts don’t give unfettered access to ‘intention’ as often they have been collected and curated by individuals and organisations.

⁶⁰ James Daybell and Peter Hinds, ‘Introduction’, in *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580-1730*, ed. by James Daybell and Peter Hinds (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 1-21 (p. 1).

visitors, so a comprehensive understanding of the ways in which patrons utilised this social display is crucial to understanding how these letters were used as a means of performance in the eighteenth century. Moreover, the way in which these letters were stored, collected, and copied is also indicative of how letter-writing can be seen as a tool in the construction of a posthumous identity.

As Daybell and Hinds have postulated, there are problems with the idea of an ‘original’ in studies of epistolary writing. They argue:

[an] obsession with the idea of an ‘original’ – a holograph manuscript with material evidence of having been ‘sent’ – has long shaped our understanding of the ‘authorship’ and function of correspondence, as well as editorial principles applied to the corpus of letter-writers. Yet such a model, as Andrew Gordon demonstrates, fails to account for the material evidence of numerous contemporary copies that survive in archives and manuscript collections. In recent years scholars have begun to appreciate the way in which poems in manuscript circulation might be reshaped to serve particular ends, applied and reapplied in circumstances and conditions different from the initial moment of composition. Letters, it is argued, were also prone to such appropriation, operating in a manner that does not easily fit a simplistic notion of a two-way epistolary exchange.⁶¹

By returning to the manuscript, this thesis seeks not to uncover the ‘original’ document but rather to explore the textual and material development of the epistolary correspondence as a means of tracking the evolution of the textual self-fashioning and the part that patronage has to play within that.

This thesis explores the material and social aspects of texts because manuscript studies have not previously been emphasised in critical discourses of patronage. Indeed, Griffin begins *Literary Patronage* by stating: ‘I do not propose an archival study of the sort called for by Korshin’.⁶² To Griffin, this ‘archival study’ would comprise a list ‘in which the names of all the active patrons are established, together with their recipients, the kinds of patronage, and the amounts of the kind of support’.⁶³ Rather than exclusively using archival

⁶¹ Daybell and Hinds, ‘Introduction’, p. 3.

⁶² Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 11.

⁶³ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 11.

material to further our understanding of the biographical particulars, this thesis shows how an investigation of these scribal and material practices allows us to analyse how patrons shaped their own public identities and established those of their clients. Furthermore, as well as broaching new ground in patronage studies, the archival material that I research, such as the Duke of Northumberland's collection at Alnwick Castle, is previously under-researched in scholarship which adds to the originality of this thesis.

My analysis of the implicit negotiations and performativity in epistolary correspondence, dedications, gift-giving, and materiality demonstrates the centrality of patronage to constructions of identity within the eighteenth century. Furthermore, hermeneutic analyses of these performances feeds into wider dialogues of print culture, manuscript studies, book history, and enlightenment studies by showing how considerations of patronage challenge the accepted conventions of these practices.

From book history to enlightenment

As Ezell notes, 'Histories of print and of bookselling have framed their narratives as the new (young, democratic) technology overthrowing the established (old, aristocratic) one to usher in a new, better world'.⁶⁴ The case for print as the apparatus of modernity was made by Elizabeth Eisenstein in her landmark study *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (1979). She suggests that it would seem accurate to describe many publishers 'as being *both* businessmen *and* literary dispensers of glory. They served men of letters not only by providing traditional forms of patronage but also by acting as press agents and cultural impresarios of a new kind'.⁶⁵ Eisenstein's work has been criticised for a couple of reasons.⁶⁶ Firstly, it fails to consider the variation within print culture, represented by an ongoing

⁶⁴ Ezell, *Social Authorship*, p. 7.

⁶⁵ Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change*, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁶ For a summary of these criticisms see Leslie Howsam, *Old Books and New Histories: An Orientation to Studies in Book and Print Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

manuscript culture. Secondly, her assumptions about the superior authority of print have been challenged by findings from the counter-field of manuscript studies such as Harold Love's *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (1993) and Margaret J. Ezell's *Social Authority and the Advent of Print* (1999); nevertheless, Eisenstein's claims about businessmen and publishers providing 'traditional forms of patronage' suggests a displacement of aristocratic patronage that has prevailed within literary scholarship of the eighteenth century.⁶⁷

Eisenstein's positioning of print as a new, displacing technology is continued in critical accounts of the eighteenth century in a narrative that not only frames print as a modern system, but also a democratic one. Christopher Small's *The Printed Word: An Instrument of Popularity* (1982) concludes that in England, in particular, 'printing and political freedom were very closely linked; the unrestricted use of print was firmly associated with 'democracy''.⁶⁸ Similarly, Alvin Kernan argues that during the early eighteenth century print 'made literature objectively real for the first time'.⁶⁹ Kernan goes on to characterise manuscript texts as 'polite or courtly letters – primarily oral, aristocratic, amateur, authoritarian, court-centred' which were being displaced by the 'new print-based, market-centred, democratic literary system' of print.⁷⁰ Isobel Grundy notes that some of the functions of the patron – introductions, public endorsements, collecting subscriptions – were, during the course of the eighteenth century, taken over by other writers.⁷¹ Moreover, the media of print publication brought about a rise in subscriptions which have been described, by Korshin and Griffin, as 'democratised literary patronage' whereby a large number of patrons may, for

⁶⁷ Harold Love, *Scribal Publication in Seventeenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993); and Ezell, *Social Authorship*.

⁶⁸ Christopher Small, *The Printed Word: An Instrument of Popularity* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1982), p. 23.

⁶⁹ Alvin Kernan, *Samuel Johnson and the Impact of Print* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 4.

⁷⁰ Kernan, *Samuel Johnson*, p. 5.

⁷¹ Isobel Grundy, 'Samuel Johnson as Patron of Women' in *The Age of Johnson*, 19 vols. (1987), I, pp. 59-77 (p. 63).

a relatively small expense, provide the means for a literary work to be printed.⁷² Indeed, Korshin goes on to state that ‘the sense of obligation which pervades and often exacerbates the traditional patron-client relationship is usually diminished or wholly absent in the author-subscriber relationship’.⁷³ Similarly, Ezell notes that in stories of authorship, the ‘democratising impact of print technology in the seventeenth century’ eliminated the need for the ‘old’ manuscript networks of patronage and power.⁷⁴ Furthermore, Helen Deutsch argues that, in the eighteenth century, ‘literary patronage was no longer what it had been [...] print was the venue for an authorial spectacle’.⁷⁵ In these examples we can see clearly the continuation of the construction of print technology as a metaphor for ‘new’ and how it is associated with ‘modern’ in a positive sense. By implication – or, indeed, by direct statement – aristocratic patronage has thus been relegated. This thesis challenges these claims by demonstrating that patronage remained an essential aspect of eighteenth-century culture and creativity. It does so by showing how patrons affected the material conditions of writing and reading and demonstrating how patronage is an essential component in the history of the book.

As the following chapters explore, while attention has been given to the specific issue of gender and print technology, little has been given to the way in which patronage interfaced with print culture and how this not only challenges the assumption that the print marketplace supplanted aristocratic patronage, but also the implied rigidity of the printed form. Ezell suggests that the printed text conforms to a linear chronology: ‘a rough draft leads to a final draft or copy text, which leads to print’.⁷⁶ This construction implies that the transformation to print conveys a fixity onto the text; however, my research into the ways in which patrons

⁷² Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Patronage’, p. 464 and Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 267.

⁷³ Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Patronage’, p. 464.

⁷⁴ Ezell, *Social Authority*, p. 11.

⁷⁵ Helen Deutsch, ‘Bolingbroke’s Laugh: Alexander Pope’s Epistle to Bolingbroke and the Rhetoric of Embodied Exemplarity’, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 38.1 (2005), 137-162 (p. 138).

⁷⁶ Ezell, *Social Authority*, p. 23.

influenced the revised copies of printed editions builds on the work of scholars, such as Jerome McGann and D. F. McKenzie, to show that there was in fact a fluidity to the printed text and one cannot consider the printed version to be the definitive text. The implications of this carry further than the eighteenth century and affect our own modern understanding of a text where the printed version of a text is still largely considered to be the ‘final’ one.

As well as contesting the accepted conventions of print culture, this thesis also enters into the print versus manuscript dialogues that have been a source of contention in discourses of eighteenth-century authorship. As Ezell notes, in stories of authorship:

print publication takes on the heroic role of the revolutionary force, usually represented by male writers eager to seize new opportunities, while manuscript culture has the role of the villain – the elitist, snobby aristocrat, very often a woman, clinging to long-outmoded forms in a futile attempt to retain control and power.⁷⁷

The analytical starting point for analyses of authorship in the eighteenth century tends to be ‘why didn’t this author use print?’ rather than ‘what is the author attempting to do?’. As Ezell and Bigold point out, rather than simply considering scribal authorship as a nostalgic preference for an outdated technology, we need to reconsider what authors are doing through this mode of authorship.⁷⁸ This thesis adds to these dialogues in two ways. Firstly, it contributes to the arguments put forward by Ezell, Bigold, and others by demonstrating that manuscript circulation was still a viable mode of authorship in the eighteenth century. Secondly, this thesis extends these discussions by showing how the negotiations of patronage aid our understanding of scribal practices. It asks why clients chose to ask patrons to circulate their manuscripts rather than simply for financial aid. The answer, I argue, lies in the fact that the circulation of a manuscript casts the patron as an effective spokesperson for the text and allows the client to permeate the patron’s inner circle through their work.

⁷⁷ Ezell, *Social Authority*, p. 11.

⁷⁸ Ezell, *Social Authority*, p. 4 and Bigold, *Women of Letters*, p. 7.

The influence of patronage on manuscript circulation and print culture demonstrates how patronage is an integral component of book history. Historians of the book and the history of the bibliography, such as McGann, McKenzie, and Robert Darnton, have asked us in various ways to attempt to recapture the notion of the text as a material object and a cultural product. As McGann elucidates:

Traditional textual criticism, with its concentration on the linguistic text, is thus happily married to traditional hermeneutics, which elucidates meaning – which *locates* meaning – entirely in linguistic symbologies. Bibliographical signifiers, on the other hand, immediately call our attention to other styles and scales of symbolic exchange that every language event involves. Meaning is transmitted through bibliographical as well as linguistic codes.⁷⁹

It is this definition of meaning that this thesis is concerned with. It is interested not only in the text itself but in the social and technical circumstances of its production. As Darnton explains, the life cycle of a printed text can be described as a ‘communications circuit that runs from the author to the publisher (if the bookseller does not assume that role), the printer, the shipper, and the reader’.⁸⁰ For Darnton, each of these people, as implicit and explicit readers, play a role in the ‘process [of creating a printed text] as a whole, in all its variations over space and time and in all its relations with other systems, economic, social, political, and cultural, in the surrounding environment’.⁸¹ McKenzie suggests that this significant shift in how we consider the text is one which moves ‘from questions of textual authority to those of dissemination and readership as matters of economic and political motive’.⁸² These critical propositions are the foundation of book history studies. This thesis contributes and adds to these dialogues by demonstrating that the patron is an essential component of the production of a text and deserves a place within Darnton’s ‘communications circuit’. For the way in

⁷⁹ Jerome J. McGann, *The Textual Condition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), p. 57.

⁸⁰ Robert Darnton, ‘What is the history of the book’, in *The Book History Reader*, ed. by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery, 2nd edn (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 9-26 (p. 11).

⁸¹ Darnton, ‘What is the history of the book’, p. 11.

⁸² D.F. McKenzie, *The Panizzi Lectures, 1985: Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (London: The British Library, 1986), p. 1.

which a patron influences a text is different from an editor or a publisher since their relationship with the author stems from a different power dynamic; the economic and political interest of a patron is distinctive.

My research into patronage, print culture, book history, and manuscript circulation demonstrates how patronage influences knowledge production and dissemination; it also feeds into critical conceptions of enlightenment exchange and discourse. The enlightenment, a philosophical and political movement that occurred during the long eighteenth century (1685-1815), can be loosely defined as an age of reason, tolerance and emancipation. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor argue that it can be characterised as an ‘evolving entity within which ideas were conveyed between a multitude of individuals via a multitude of media: through novels, poetry, advice literature, popular theology, journalism, pornography, conversation, and reading (both communal and private)’.⁸³ This exchange of ideas and knowledge impacted eighteenth-century culture and communication. John Robertson argues that it gave rise to the Habermasian ‘public sphere’ and defined a social space ‘open to the educated but independent of the institutions traditionally reserved for the ruling elite, and beyond the direct control of the governing authorities’.⁸⁴ The emphasis on learning and knowledge within this cultural public sphere meant, as Deborah and Steven Heller suggest, that: ‘communication and sociability were the real medium of exchange, not money or commodities’.⁸⁵ This implies a move towards a society where class and status are not the defining features of social exchange.

⁸³ Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor, ‘General Introduction’ in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. xv-xxi (p. xvi).

⁸⁴ John Robertson, ‘Women and Enlightenment: A Historiographical Conclusion’, in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 692-704 (p. 693).

⁸⁵ Deborah and Steven Heller, ‘“A Copernican Shift” or, Remapping the Bluestocking Heavens’ in *Bluestockings Now! The Evolution of a Social Role* ed. by Deborah Heller (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), pp. 17-54 (p. 27).

A key feature of enlightened sociability was a focus on conversation and the contemporary understanding of it as a means of transcending the traditional dichotomies of social organisation. In an influential essay published in 1752, Hume wrote that the society of conversation enabled ‘both sexes [to] meet in an easy and sociable manner’.⁸⁶ He advocated conversation as a means of receiving and communicating knowledge that ‘contribut[ed] to each other’s pleasures and entertainment’ and functioned as a way of developing humanity.⁸⁷ This conceptualisation of conversation combines the culture of sociability with philosophical improvement. Similarly, Hannah More’s poem ‘Bas Bleu, of Conversation’ describes conversation as the ‘noblest commerce of mankind’ and encapsulates this idea of conversation as an improving factor in society:

Hail, Conversation, heav'nly fair,
Thou bliss of life, and balm of care,
Still may thy gentle reign extend,
And taste with wit and science blend!.⁸⁸

As Eger argues, ‘the poem self-consciously advertises a belief in the possibilities offered by conversation as a means of asserting social and intellectual equality for women, and overcoming the restrictions of aristocratic decorum through a new form of sociability’.⁸⁹ Here, conversation is seen as a conduit for enlightened exchange that precipitates a move towards social equality.

The perception of the enlightenment as a move towards equality and emancipation has, however, been labelled as problematic in recent criticism, particularly in relation to gender. Mary Wollstonecraft’s depiction of the enlightenment as ‘the enlightened sentiments of masculine and improved philosophies’ has led critics to question how, if indeed

⁸⁶ D. Hume, ‘Of Refinement in the Arts’ (1752), in *Essays, Moral, Political and Literary*, ed. by E. F. Miller (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, Inc., 1987), p. 271.

⁸⁷ D. Hume, ‘Of Refinement in the Arts’, p. 271.

⁸⁸ Hannah More, *Florio: A Tale, for Fine Gentlemen and Fine Ladies: and, Bas Bleu, or Conversation* (London: T. Cadell, 1786), pp. 70-94, ll. 274-277.

⁸⁹ Elizabeth Eger, ‘“The noblest commerce of mankind”: Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle’ in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 288-305 (p. 289).

enlightenment philosophy was ‘masculine’, women fit into the enlightenment movement.⁹⁰ This thesis engages with these discourses which problematise the idea of equality within enlightenment practices but applies them predominantly to class and social status rather than gender. The same arguments that have been put forward about the equalising power of sociable conversation in relation to gender have also been put forward in relation to social status and class. For example, Eger posits that this enlightened sociability was a ‘situation that enabled friendships to flourish more freely across traditional boundaries of class and station’.⁹¹ By looking into the social negotiations and conventions within such ‘friendships’, this thesis shows that while these relationships did exist they were still bound by social hierarchies. This means that the social hierarchies were an influential factor in the production of texts and ideas that the enlightenment is credited with spreading.

Our critical understanding of knowledge production and dissemination in the eighteenth century is bound to our understanding of book history, manuscript studies, and print culture and my research shows how patronage is an essential component of these dialogues. This thesis challenges and enriches these discussions in two ways. Firstly, it shows that patronage was integral to eighteenth-century culture, literature, and art. Secondly, it demonstrates how performances of identity and social bonds are bound to these negotiations. These performances are not confined to the eighteenth century alone but also encompass our understanding of humanity’s production of knowledge.

Three Case Studies

⁹⁰ Mary Wollstonecraft, ‘An Historical and Moral View of the Origin and Progress of the French Revolution, 1794’ in *The Work of Mary Wollstonecraft* ed. by Marilyn Butler and Janet Todd, 7 vols (London: Pickering and Chatto, 1989), VI, pp. 6-7. For an exploration of women within the enlightenment movement see *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007).

⁹¹ Eger, ‘Paper Trails and Eloquent Objects: Bluestocking friendship and material culture’, p. 111.

In order to demonstrate the enduring influence and cultural intersections of patronage, this thesis tells the stories of three eighteenth-century patrons: Frances Thynne Seymour, countess of Hertford (1699-1754); George, Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773); and Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, duchess of Portland (1715-1785). To reveal the shifting parameters and aesthetics of patronage, this thesis considers each patron individually and in chronological order. These three figures are drawn from differing levels of the aristocracy and peerage, each employ different patronal methods, and, together, they provide a useful comparative overview of patronage from the 1720s to the 1780s. The range of social positions, patronal methods, and time frames allows this thesis the scope to demonstrate that patronage was an important influencing factor across material culture; political discourses; literary production and distribution; and our understanding of the enlightenment movement during the eighteenth century. Moreover, these three figures are relatively unstudied in eighteenth-century criticism and I hope that my comparative case studies will not only enrich our understanding of all three, but also show that patronage is a fruitful field of enquiry.

Though she is often acknowledged as an aristocratic patron, sustained critical analyses of Hertford's patronage are few and far between. Helen Sard Hughes' work in the 1930s and 1940s was the first to consider Hertford's patronage and states that her aim was 'to rescue a literary lady from the unmerited disparagement of Dr. Johnson'.⁹² Hughes published several articles on Hertford, focusing on her relationships with prominent poets such as James Thomson (1700-1748), Elizabeth Rowe (1674-1737), John Dyer (1699-1757), and William Shenstone (1714-1763), as well as producing a critical biography *The Gentle Hertford, Her Life and Letters*.⁹³ In these works, Hughes considers Hertford's involvement with these poets

⁹² Helen Sard Hughes, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford', *Modern Philology*, 25:4 (1928), 439-468 (p. 439).

⁹³ Helen Sard Hughes, 'Elizabeth Rowe and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA*, 59:3 (1944), 726-746; Helen Sard Hughes, 'John Dyer and the Countess of Hertford', *Modern Philology*, 27:3 (1930), 311-320; Helen Sard Hughes, 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA*, 46:4 (1931), 1113-1127; Helen Sard Hughes, 'Thomson and Lady Hertford Again', *Modern Philology*, 28:4 (1931), 468-470; Helen Sard Hughes, 'Thomson

and establishes them as a literary network. However, while Hughes' work is an invaluable foundation for my own research, her response to Hertford tends to biographical speculation rather than textual analysis. This thesis argues instead that Hertford's familiar letters and poetry can be more fruitfully examined in terms of traditional literary hermeneutics, as well as through a bibliographical lens, which reveal the performative mechanisms of patronage. In doing so, the chapter on Hertford brings together discourses of materiality and manuscript studies in order to show how Hertford manipulated these devices to establish her own public, patronal identity as well as to shape the identity of those she interacted with.

Modern critics have not examined the decisions that patrons have made in regards to their choice of client and the advertisement of his or her patronage. My research into how Hertford was presented in paratextual dedications not only examines the commercial nature of paratextual appeal, but also demonstrates how these textual representations affected receptions by both contemporaries and modern critics. Delving into such negotiations re-informs our understanding of not only Hertford but also female patrons in general.

As well as showing how textual representations of Hertford affected her public image, this chapter shows how Hertford manipulated material issues in the construction, organisation, and presentation of her textual artifacts. For example, her manuscript miscellany and letter-books show her crafting a reputation as an arbiter of taste for contemporary audiences and with an eye to posthumous reception. This crafting of identity not only shows the importance of textual artifacts to the performance of patronage but also disrupts our understanding of eighteenth-century friendship by showing the inherent elements of constructed appeal.

The second case study of this thesis examines how George Lyttelton's patronage is intrinsically connected with his politics. The political literature attached to the Whigs and the

and the Countess of Hertford', *Modern Philology*, 25:4 (1928), 439-468; Helen Sard Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford, Her Life and Letters* (New York: MacMillan, 1940).

Tories from the 1680s to the 1740s has been well-documented by literary critics. Bertrand A. Goldgar, in the 1970s, began the process of detailing the intertextual relations between politicians and writers.⁹⁴ Since then, Christine Gerrard has specifically focused on the poetry of the patriot opposition to Walpole and the constructions of ‘patriotism’ within those discussions.⁹⁵ Moreover, Tone Sundt Urstad acknowledges the potential of literary propaganda by arguing that ‘Whigs and Tories alike had seen the need to present their parties’ points of view outside Parliament to a wide readership’.⁹⁶ In addition, Abigail Williams has argued for a re-appraisal of the Whig poetic tradition on the grounds of it being so often remembered as ‘bad poetry’ due to the propaganda of the Tory poetic tradition.⁹⁷ In doing so, Williams seeks to offer a more balanced literary-historical context within which to read the period as a whole. She also documents the widespread politicisation of literary discourse, particularly surrounding concepts of ‘enthusiasm’ and ‘virtue’ in the period.⁹⁸ Lyttelton features as a minor player within these critical formulations. Gerrard refers to him as ‘associated with Prince Frederick’s circle’ (that is, as a Court Whig) and Goldgar refers to Alexander Pope’s (1688-1744), John Gay’s (1685-1732), and Henry Fielding’s (1707-1754) relationships with Lyttelton as ‘chance friendships’ that were ‘perhaps as significant in determining their attitude to Walpole’s policies as any abstract ideology’.⁹⁹ In contrast, this thesis demonstrates that rather than ‘chance friendships’, Lyttelton openly scouted and cultivated relationships with the literary figures that surrounded the Prince. He also exerted editorial influence over their works in order to inflect the political resonances. Like many less

⁹⁴ Bertrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722-1742* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976).

⁹⁵ Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

⁹⁶ Tone Sundt Urstad, *Sir Robert Walpole’s Poets: The Use of Literature as Pro-Government Propaganda, 1721-1742* (London: Associated University Presses, 1999), p. 27

⁹⁷ Abigail Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture 1681-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 3.

⁹⁸ Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture*, p. 25.

⁹⁹ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 34 and Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, p. 219.

famous historical patrons, Lyttelton's obscurity is partly a symptom of scholarly trends that analyse patronage from the perspective of the client rather than the patron. But the lack of attention to his literary-political interventions means that we have missed the ways in which Lyttelton influenced literary outputs to act as positive propaganda pieces not only for his political party but also for himself as a public figure.

Critical accounts of Lyttelton's later career tend to place him in a different context: as an associate of Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800), Lyttelton's contributions to the literary scene of this period are normally represented as limited to the opportunities he presented for Montagu's literature. For example, Stephen Bending and Clare Barlow focus on Montagu's contributions to Lyttelton's *Dialogues of the Dead* (1760) and Eger examines the ways in which Montagu constructs her literary ambitions in her correspondence to Lyttelton.¹⁰⁰ Most recently, in *Literary Coteries and the Making of Modern Print Culture, 1740-1790*, Betty A. Schellenberg discusses what she terms the 'Montagu-Lyttelton coterie'. Nevertheless, though she refers to it as the 'Montagu-Lyttelton' coterie, Schellenberg writes that her aim is to 'designate the intimate network of Elizabeth Montagu between about 1758-1773': Lyttelton is once again relegated to the sidelines.¹⁰¹ While his presence in the coterie relationships between Montagu, Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806), and Catherine Talbot (1721-1770) is routinely recognised, his actual influence and participation are negligible in the analysis.

The chapter occupies the space of absence between these two bodies of work. Criticism of the political literature attached to the Whig opposition covers the period up to 1742 and marks Walpole's resignation as an end-point to the discussion; indeed, Gerrard

¹⁰⁰ Stephen Bending, *Green Retreats: Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 136; Clare Barlow, 'Virtue, patriotism and female scholarship in bluestocking portraiture' in *Bluestockings Displayed: Portraiture, Performance and Patronage, 1730-1830*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 60-80 (p. 70); and Elizabeth Eger, 'The Bluestocking Circle: Friendship, Patronage and Learning', in *Brilliant Women: 18th Century Bluestockings* ed. by Elizabeth Eger and Lucy Peltz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 20-55 (p. 32-33).

¹⁰¹ Betty A. Schellenberg, *Literary Coteries and the Making of Modern Print Culture, 1740-1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 62.

refers to the proceeding years as ‘politics as usual’.¹⁰² In contrast, this chapter uncovers the documentary evidence for Lyttelton’s activities in the period 1738-1758. The focus on this time period allows me to recover and assess three aspects of Lyttelton’s intervention in contemporary patronage, politics, and literature. First, Lyttelton’s patronage of opposition writers is far more extensive and purposeful than Gerrard or Goldgar give him credit for. Second, such a focus enables me to consider the relation of Lyttelton’s own writing to changing political discourses as well as aesthetic ones. Finally, it shows how his own political transition, from a member of the opposition to a minister within government, affects his patronage practices and literary aesthetic. At each point, this chapter asks what it means to be a public political figure and to self-promote when one’s political affiliations are shifting.

Lyttelton is an important inclusion to this thesis precisely because he does not operate in the accepted, expected channels of patronage. The traditional author-centred emphasis of patronage studies frames the relationship as one where the author presents themselves and their work to the patron for consideration; however, Lyttelton sought out and cultivated the majority of his patronage relationships. These connections were crafted with a specific purpose in mind: to aid Lyttelton’s political affiliations. Consequently, Lyttelton’s clientele and patronal outputs were not as diverse as Hertford’s since, up to the 1750s at least, they mainly involved male political writers; however, this is the very point of Lyttelton’s patronage and he only approached and cultivated that particular type of client.

Despite the varying diversity in their clientele, Hertford and Lyttelton shared a client who is a prominent feature in the first two chapters: James Thomson (1700-1748). An analysis of Thomson’s relationship with both these patrons enriches this thesis as it shows the multiplicity of patronage through their differing approaches to Thomson and his work. While Hertford utilised Thomson’s poetic revisions and correspondence to enhance her patronal

¹⁰² Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 230.

image, Lyttelton dictated Thomson's revisions to *The Seasons* in order to suit his political agenda. As well as the diverse nature of patronage, analysing how two patrons have two different approaches to the same client demonstrates the value in focusing on the patron rather than the client because it shows how a patron's political, personal, and moral affiliations and opinions affect their approach to patronage.

In addition to cultivating his clientele, Lyttelton's approach to patronage was also unique in contrast to the general perception of patronage. Rather than acting as a direct public patron to these clients, Lyttelton played the role of third-party negotiator and cultivated connections between writers such as Thomson and Frederick, the Prince of Wales (1707-1751) as well as Henry Fielding (1707-1754) and John Russell, the Duke of Bedford (1710-1771). Lyttelton's clients benefitted from these third-party arrangements since they provided financial support and positions within the government. Korshin argues that:

Royal and noble patronage of literature, especially in the form of direct support or appointment to government posts, was not much greater in the eighteenth century than it had been in the Renaissance. It became relatively insignificant because the writing population grew so enormously while Court and Crown influence remained relatively stable. Patronage takes other channels. The most prominent of these is publication by subscription.¹⁰³

This statement diminishes the importance of the provision of government roles for political patronage. In contrast, this chapter shows how Lyttelton utilised the offer of such positions in order to cultivate relationships, inspire loyalty, influence political trends and shape the way the writers' work was distributed and received amongst the reading public.

As aforementioned, Foss indicates that since the 'aristocrats had turned to trade and politics', patronage had decreased.¹⁰⁴ This implies that trade and politics were completely separate from patronage; however, my research into Lyttelton demonstrates that his political interests were inseparable from his patronage. Given the contested nature of the political

¹⁰³ Korshin, 'Types of Eighteenth-Century Patronage', p. 463.

¹⁰⁴ Foss, *The Age of Patronage*, p. 207.

dialogues concerning trade and mercantile activities, Lyttelton's patronage and the resulting political literature necessarily included these issues.

Lyttelton not only influenced the textual productions of his clients through political appointments, he also provided direct editorial input. Chapter two establishes the extent of the integration of his literary patronage with his editorial practises and demonstrates how these activities were used to aid his evolving public persona. Indeed, while scholars of book history have acknowledged the input of other parties in the conception and reception of a book, and are very much indebted to Darnton's concept of a 'communications circuit', this thesis argues that we ought to re-configure our understanding of the connections between patronage and book history and acknowledge the patron as a collaborative authorial presence in the life cycle of a text.¹⁰⁵ While the role of 'editor' is included in the circuit, the role of the 'patron' is not. This thesis demonstrates that the role of the patron, while including editorial influence, is distinct from an 'editor' since the power-dynamics between patron and client are different from that of editor and writer. In doing so, this thesis makes an original contribution to the field of book history by positing that the patron offered a unique way of shaping, distributing, and publicising a text.

The final case study in this thesis is Portland. Rather than proffering the public support, introductions, and editorial influence of Hertford and Lyttelton, Portland provides a different form of patronage: employment and financial support. She employed individuals such as John Lightfoot (1735-1788) and Georg Ehret (1708-1770) and provided monetary contributions to their scientific and botanical research trips both around the United Kingdom and abroad. Moreover, Portland is distinct from the other two patrons since her patronage and the creative focus of her clients centred upon one of her properties: Bulstrode. While Hertford invited poets such as Thomson to her country residence and Lyttelton cultivated relationships

¹⁰⁵ Darnton, 'What is the History of Books?', pp. 65-83

with writers such as William Shenstone (1714-1763) through the proximity of their estates, Portland's central patronal focus was activities at Bulstrode.

Critical accounts emphasise the curious nature of Bulstrode, the productive atmosphere, and the prominent scientific and philosophical guests and visitors who often graced Bulstrode's grounds and interiors.¹⁰⁶ Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts declare Bulstrode to be 'a preeminent site for all facets of curiosity' and that, due to the presence of eminent botanists such as Daniel Solander (1733-1782) and Lightfoot, it 'served as an incubator of Linnaean botany in England'.¹⁰⁷ Stacey Sloboda also points to Portland's proximity to some of the most significant philosophical and scientific figures of her time, such as Joseph Banks (1743-1820) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and declares her collection to be 'an important resource for scientific and philosophical inquiry'.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, Maria Zytaruk suggests that 'direct pathways and points of connection existed between Bulstrode and the major natural history and botanical institutions of the day'.¹⁰⁹ Likewise, Molly Peacock writes that 'Bulstrode buzzed with the activity of a nascent research institute. It was more than a grand house; it had become a prototype for a museum'.¹¹⁰ These connected strands of curiosity, scientific enquiry, and presence of prominent figures have led critics to suggest that Bulstrode embodied the 'heart of the enlightenment'.¹¹¹ This chapter challenges this accepted critical narrative by analysing the nature of Bulstrode's status as a 'curiosity' by positioning it within discourses of the collection and display of 'curiosities' as

¹⁰⁶ Stacey Sloboda 'Displaying Materials: Porcelain and Natural History in the Duchess of Portland's Museum', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43: 4 (2010), 455-72 (p. 464); Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 42; Ann B. Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science: Flora's Daughters and Botany in England 1760 to 1860* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 47; and Maria Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 130-149 (p. 136).

¹⁰⁷ Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, 'Introduction', in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 1-15 (p. 9).

¹⁰⁸ Sloboda 'Displaying Materials', p. 463.

¹⁰⁹ Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', p. 141.

¹¹⁰ Molly Peacock, *The Paper Garden: An Artist {Begins her Life's Work} at 72* (New York, Berlin, London, Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2010), p. 301.

¹¹¹ Rebecca Stott, *Duchess of Curiosities: The Life of Margaret, Duchess of Portland* (Worksop: Harley Gallery, 2006), p. 38.

a distinct intellectual and aesthetic position in the eighteenth century. It argues that the Bulstrode collection is akin to the aesthetically pleasing seventeenth-century ‘cabinet of curiosities’ which has connotations of aristocratic display rather than enlightenment ideas of knowledge and improvement.

As well as ideas of Bulstrode as an ‘enlightened space’, it has also been identified as a site of inspiration and productivity. Tobin asserts that ‘surrounding herself with artists and naturalists, the duchess created an atmosphere that was very productive for those who had the good fortune to reside at Bulstrode’.¹¹² Likewise, Amanda Vickery credits Bulstrode with inspiring the artistic work of Mary Delany (1700-1788) by stating that her ‘collages were begun at Bulstrode in the company of the Duchess of Portland, inspired by botanists and botanical artists’.¹¹³ This chapter interrogates these notions of productivity in several ways. Firstly, it demonstrates the extent of the individual labour of Portland’s clients that went into the collection, curation, and display of the Bulstrode collection. Secondly, it shows how the individual work of artists such as Georg Ehret (1708-1770) became part of the ‘Portland collection’. Finally, it ties these two threads together by showing Portland’s role in overseeing and directing the creative labour of those connected to Bulstrode. In doing so, it disrupts standard accounts by showing that Bulstrode’s creativity and productivity was controlled by social structures akin to a court with Portland as the reigning Queen.

While Portland’s connection to the bluestocking circle and her importance to eighteenth-century material culture and collecting practices have garnered critical attention, there is no sustained study of her patronage.¹¹⁴ The few critical studies of her patronage are,

¹¹² Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 42-4.

¹¹³ Amanda Vickery, ‘The Theory & Practice of Female Accomplishment’ in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 94-109 (p. 102).

¹¹⁴ Sloboda ‘Displaying Materials’, p. 464; Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 42; Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47; Zytaruk, ‘Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History’, p. 136.

as with the other two case studies, largely limited to descriptive biographical information rather than analysis. However, as the richest patron in this study, and a highly influential figure in the latter half of the eighteenth century, she is a significant figure who deserves more attention in patronal studies. Her activity in the latter half of the century goes some way to demonstrating the continued cultural significance of patronage. Indeed, whereas the first two case studies in this thesis are largely concerned with literary patronage, Portland patronised botanists, natural historians, and artists. Her activity shows that patronage, rather than being limited to a literary phenomenon, permeated all aspects of eighteenth-century culture and scientific enquiry. In doing so, this thesis demonstrates that patronage was an essential component of the production and dissemination of knowledge, culture, literature, and material practices in the eighteenth century.

Taken together, the three patrons explored in this thesis represent different levels of the aristocracy and have a unique set of financial and political resources to draw upon for their patronage. Moreover, the clients themselves are also from different backgrounds and have varying networks and resources at their disposal. As such, this thesis considers material and textual evidence from different social strata and genders in order to show the full reach and impact of patronage. Each of these patrons operate within their own networks and are distinct individuals; however, there are connecting threads between them. Firstly, the manner in which the patrons manage the performative negotiations within epistolary correspondence, dedications, and gift-giving determines both their own identity and that of others. Secondly, they influenced the creation and distribution of literature, art, and scientific discovery in order to advance their own public image and, in the case of Lyttelton, their political agenda.

Thirdly, my research into all three shows that archival research uncovers more than biographical information and that the material and scribal practices of these patrons is essential in any analyses of textual meaning. These links demonstrate their patronal influence on the production and dissemination of knowledge and literature across the period.

Chapter One

Agency and identity in the patronage and poetry of Frances Thynne Seymour, countess of Hertford

In the eighteenth century, Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) dismissed Frances Thynne Seymour, countess of Hertford's patronage as a social gesture. He claims she 'invite[d] every Summer some poet into the country' but that '[James Thomson] took more delight in carousing with lord Hertford and his friends than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations'.¹ Similarly, David Steuart Erskine, earl of Buchan (1742-1829) described Hertford as a 'verse-sick Countess'.² In both these accounts, Hertford's influence and taste are rendered insignificant. In order to address these negative constructs, this chapter seeks to establish Hertford's understanding of the mechanisms of literary patronage and show that, rather than intending her patronage to be a social gesture, she utilised such processes to establish her public identity as well as determine those of others. Hertford exhibits a self-conscious awareness of reputation that is attuned to both contemporary and posthumous reception. Her manipulation of her letter-books and her personal miscellany, for example, shows a recognition that the material and social practices related to texts offer a means of impacting interpretative approaches. By exploring how Hertford handles these material artifacts, alongside her use of coterie correspondence to further her patronal aspirations, this chapter contributes to this thesis' arguments by demonstrating the synergy between manuscript studies and patronage. Traditionally, scholarship concerning manuscript studies has focused on how coterie correspondence and manuscript circulation represented a distinct authorial choice that was

¹ Samuel Johnson, *The lives of the most eminent English poets; with critical observations on their works* ed. by Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), IV, p. 99.

² David Steuart Erskine, *Essays on the Lives and Writings of Pletcher of Saltoun and the Poet Thomson: Biographical, Critical, and Political* (London, 1792), p. 258.

still a viable and competitive technology during the rise of print.³ By showing that patrons utilised manuscript circulation, coterie correspondence, and materiality in order to influence contemporary and posthumous approaches to their patronage, this chapter offers an original contribution to eighteenth-century manuscript studies.

To pursue these enquiries I have sought to understand the various performative mechanisms of patronal solicitation and interaction that surround Hertford's patronage. These performances are enacted through coterie correspondence, Hertford's authorial outputs, manuscript miscellanies, the materiality of textual artifacts, and the textual dedications. At each point this chapter shows how these textual and material performances contributed to Hertford's contemporary and posthumous reputation.

This chapter begins by analysing a very material instance of blended patronage and authorship: Hertford's personal miscellany. The miscellany, whether prose or verse, printed or manuscript, was a popular literary genre in the eighteenth century. Michael Suarez defines a miscellany as a compilation of 'relatively recent texts designed to suit contemporary tastes'.⁴ Given its topicality, recent work has pointed to its importance. Barbara M. Benedict posits that because miscellanies do not comprise a single work, and because they have traditionally been considered as ephemeral, 'the genre seemed to lack cultural seriousness'.⁵ Suarez agrees, arguing that the miscellany is distinct from anthologies which 'are generally selections of canonical texts which have a more established history and a greater claim to cultural importance'.⁶ Nevertheless, scholars have suggested that, as a text 'designed to suit

³ See Margaret J. M. Ezell's *Social Authorship and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999) and Melanie Bigold, *Women of letters, manuscript circulation and print afterlives in the eighteenth century: Elizabeth Rowe, Catharine Cockburn and Elizabeth Carter* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

⁴ Michael F. Suarez, 'The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany' in *Books and their Readers in Eighteenth-Century England: New Essays* ed. by Isabel Rivers (London and New York: Leicester University Press, 2001), pp. 217–51 (pp. 218-9).

⁵ Barbara M. Benedict, 'Editing as Art: Authenticity and Authority in the Miscellanies of Dryden and Behn', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 35:1 (2011), 21-38, (p. 24).

⁶ Suarez, 'The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany', pp. 218-9.

contemporary taste', miscellaneous collections celebrated, and indeed constructed, contemporary understanding of originality and exerted substantial influence on the poems, and poets, that were in general circulation.⁷ As Jennifer Batt elaborates, there were thousands of miscellanies in circulation in the eighteenth century:

The contents and omissions, the packaging and marketing, the publication history, and the reception history of every verse collection produced in the 18th century reveals how literary culture was conceived of by its creators and how those creators wished to intervene in the literary marketplace. Each miscellany has its own distinctive story to tell; moreover, reading across many collections can offer vital insights into literary culture, particularly about authorship and anonymity, popular genres, canon formation and the literary past, women writers, and regional tastes and trends.⁸

Within each of these individual miscellany 'stories', there lies information about writers, editors, publishers and readers which, when considered as a whole, offers depth and texture to our understanding of literary culture in the long eighteenth century. As Abigail Williams notes, miscellanies 'are works in their own right, which repackage literature for a range of needs and interests'.⁹ Similarly, Benedict writes that 'many miscellanies served as advertisements or as vanity or publicity venues for a university, a printer, a coterie or a fresh poet'.¹⁰ Benedict's comments relate to printed miscellanies; however, manuscript miscellanies could fulfil similar functions. This chapter seeks to insert Hertford's manuscript miscellany into these dialogues in order to demonstrate that, for her, it served a particular patronal interest as she crafted a specific story of her patronage dealings and her relationship with her patronal clients. Begun in 1725, the miscellany includes poems, extracts, and letters from Elizabeth Rowe (1674-1737), Isaac Watts (1674-1748), William Shenstone (1714-1763), James Thomson (1700-1748), Elizabeth Carter (1717-1806), Stephen Duck (1705-

⁷ Suarez, 'The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany', p. 219; see also Jennifer Batt, 'Eighteenth-Century Verse Miscellanies', *Literary Compass*, 9:6 (2012), 394-405; and Abigail Williams, 'A Just and Graceful Elocution': Miscellanies and Sociable Reading' *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 41:1 (2017), 179-196.

⁸ Batt, 'Eighteenth-Century Verse Miscellanies', p. 397.

⁹ Williams, 'A Just and Graceful Elocution', p. 179.

¹⁰ Benedict, 'Editing as Art: Authenticity and Authority in the Miscellanies of Dryden and Behn', p. 22.

1756), John Dyer (1699-1757), as well as many others. The organisation of this material, as well as the paratextual apparatus for each text, allowed Hertford to construct herself as an arbiter of taste within contemporary literary and cultural conversations.

Drawing from the textual evidence within the miscellany, this chapter focuses on how these literary encounters and interactions are governed by Hertford through the wider social stage of textual dedications and coterie correspondence. It begins by showing how textual dedications are a public encounter that shaped how contemporaries related to Hertford as well as how future historians and literary critics have responded to her. Critical discourses on the nature of paratexts, which dedications are inextricably linked to, have considered the linkages between paratexts and the commercialisation of the literary marketplace: as Gerard Genette states, ‘the paratext is what enables the text to become a book and to be offered as such to its readers and, more generally, to the public’.¹¹ Furthermore, Adrian Johns posits that the appeal of this textual offering could be enhanced by ‘whom one presented the book [to], through which channels it was distributed, [and] with which patron it was identified’.¹² These readings insert the dedication into the competitive, commercial nature of the literary marketplace but do not elaborate on how or why patronage fits into the nature of paratextual appeal. This chapter analyses Thomson’s dedication to Hertford in *Spring* (1728) and demonstrates how it creates a textual representation of Hertford as a paragon of virtuous rural retirement that others, such as Grace Cole, emulate in their attempts to forge a patronage relationship with Hertford. From here, this chapter then shows how Hertford used Watts’ dedication to her in *Reliquiae Juveniles* (1734) to cultivate a coterie identity for herself that was specific to her interactions with Watts. Furthermore, it demonstrates how Hertford took advantage of the proffered dedication in order to ensure that her poems were printed in

¹¹ Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* trans. Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 2.

¹² Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p. 16.

Watts' collection. At each point in the discussion this chapter asks what it means to be a patron, particularly a female patron, and to advertise your patronage within a commercial literary marketplace.

A key aspect of showing how the textual dedications crafted a public patronal advertisement is an analysis of the correspondence within and around the patronage relationship. As I outlined in the introduction, the eighteenth-century epistle functioned much like a conversation; this chapter builds upon this work by analysing Hertford's epistolary correspondence in order to show the centrality of letters to the performance of patronage.¹³ It shows how these relationships were constructed and maintained which not only demonstrates the integral nature of patronage to ideas of identity and sociability, but also challenges our conceptions of eighteenth-century friendship. The correspondence that my research draws on is largely from the Duke of Northumberland's papers in the Alnwick Castle archives. Examining women writers' manuscripts and women's archives is still a fairly recent addition to scholarly practises and it allows this chapter to develop a fresh look at patronage. It not only permits the chapter to draw on analyses of scribal practices and material issues of presentation and organisation, but also diminishes the potential for editorial interventions that can be found in posthumous collections.¹⁴

Hertford's manipulation of texts to the benefit of her own identity extends to her self-authored pieces. Hertford's verse and prose includes fictional letters in Rowe's *Letters on Various Occasions, in Prose and Verse, from the author of Friendship in Death. To which is added Ten Letters by another hand* (1729) under the pseudonym Cleora, as well as poetic

¹³ For the performativity of letter-writing see Bruce Redford, *The Converse of the Pen: Acts of Intimacy in the Eighteenth Century Familiar Letter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Melanie Bigold, *Women of letters, manuscript circulation and print afterlives in the eighteenth century: Elizabeth Rowe, Catharine Cockburn and Elizabeth Carter* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); and Clare Brant, *Eighteenth-Century Letters and British Culture* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

¹⁴ Though, as stated in the introduction, manuscripts do not always provide unfettered access to 'intention' since they are collected and curated by individuals and organisations.

compositions such as ‘Life at Richkings’ (1740). Hertford’s simultaneous occupation of the roles of both ‘patron’ and ‘artist’ offers an opportunity to reconsider the historical understanding of these terms. These terms are normally discussed as two distinct concepts but, by exploring the interface of these concepts, this chapter shows how the terms ‘patron’ and ‘artist’ are not so easily differentiated. The blurring of concepts and terminology associated with patronage is generally understood as a result of the democratisation of the print market and a weakening of aristocratic patronage. Betty A. Schellenberg posits that ‘within this larger system [of print], professional authors, printers, and booksellers from about 1750 increasingly took on roles as patrons (or patronage brokers themselves).¹⁵ This mutuality is deftly articulated by Johnson in a letter to Bennet Langton on 9 January 1759, when he states that he ‘supported’ the performance of bookseller Robert Dodsley’s tragedy *Cleone* ‘as well as I might; for Doddy is my patron, you know, and I would not desert him’.¹⁶ Such accounts of publishers/writers providing ‘traditional forms of patronage’ suggests a form of displacement of older systems. Indeed, when discussing Shenstone’s promotion of poets such as Mary Whateley (1738-1825), Sandro Jung suggests that Shenstone ‘invert[s] the traditional idea of patronage by being a patron himself’.¹⁷ These accounts suggest that the traditional concept of patronage is overturned or displaced in the eighteenth century; however, this chapter posits that, rather than displacement, Hertford’s blurring of the boundaries between ‘patron’ and ‘artist’ show that, instead of undermining traditional forms of patronage, Hertford is an example of the enduring power of aristocratic patronage. Furthermore, this chapter explores how Hertford plays with ideas of poetic and coterie

¹⁵ Betty A. Schellenberg, *Literary Coterie and the Making of Modern Print Culture, 1740-1790* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 1.

¹⁶ Samuel Johnson to Bennet Langton, 9 January 1759, in James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson, LL. D* ed. by John Wilson Croker, 2 vols. (New York: George Deadborn, 1833), I, p. 145.

¹⁷ Sandro Jung, ‘Mentorship and "Patronage" in Mid-Eighteenth-Century England: William Shenstone Reconsidered’, *Bulletin de la société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 54 (2002), 187-198 (p. 197).

identities, specifically in relation to Watts' *Reliquiae Juveniles* (1734), in order to create a cohesive identity for herself. This feeds into this chapter's wider narrative of Hertford's understanding of and control over her own poetic and public identity.

The chapter ends by analysing Hertford's relationship with one of her final patronal clients: William Shenstone. By analysing the manuscript correspondence between Hertford, Shenstone, and their wider social circle, this sub-section helps us to uncover the nuanced relations (as well as the falsehoods) involved in patronage relations. It examines a patronage relationship through the lens of a wider social network and reveals how the performative nature of epistolary correspondence can misrepresent that relationship for commercial benefit. Furthermore, Hertford's explicit rejection of Shenstone's offer of a dedication offers a window into Hertford's concern for her public, patronal persona.

As a whole, this chapter demonstrates how a focus on manuscript circulation and materiality can reveal the nuances of patronage relationships and how these relationships and corresponding texts were manipulated in order to promote particular public and posthumous identities. In doing so, it contributes to dialogues of book history by showing that material organisation and marginalia can alter the readers' perception not only of the texts but also of the patrons' relationship to the author. It shows that Hertford was acutely aware of this and that she controlled her contemporary and posthumous identity through her letter-books and personal miscellany. Moreover, it extends discussions of scribal authorship by showing that the patron was an essential component of the success of manuscript circulation.

Material Patronage: 'a Miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725'

Materiality and the social practices related to texts offer a valuable means of reading and decoding meaning that complements and augments analyses of content. Original archival research uncovers artifacts that provide insight into Hertford's crafting of her patronal

identity. The Duke of Northumberland's Papers, for example, contains letter-books that Hertford created by transcribing her correspondence into volumes. These include single-author volumes such as 'Letters & Verses by M^{rs} Rowe', as well as mixed letter-books with a range of correspondents. These volumes often contain marginalia and framing information throughout by Hertford that informs our reading and interpretation of the material. Likewise, there are several letter-books that contain letters that have been copied by Hertford, but which have been collated and curated by a later person, as well as a leather-bound quarto volume titled, in Hertford's handwriting, 'a Miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725'.¹⁸ Hertford's manipulation of these textual artifacts shows how she shaped her contemporary reception and, importantly, her lasting legacies. In particular, the miscellany provides a very material instance of how Hertford textually collected and organised poets and writers. Investigative research into the connections between these textual artifacts and patronal identity is a previously under-researched area and this chapter seeks to illuminate the relations between the two. I show that the ordering of individual works within personal miscellaneous collections and their paratextual appendages evidences Hertford's affective choices, which, in turn, can impact interpretative approaches to Hertford herself. While manuscript miscellanies remain relatively neglected by scholarship, print miscellanies are understood as celebrating, and indeed constructing, contemporary understanding of originality and exerting substantial influence on the poems, and poets, that were in general circulation.¹⁹ This chapter shows that manuscript miscellanies perform the same function.

The mid 1720s were an important moment in Hertford's entrance into the eighteenth-century social and literary scene. It was in 1724 that she became a Lady of the Bedchamber to

¹⁸ The Countess of Hertford, 'a Miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725' in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle, MSS 116.

¹⁹ See Jennifer Batt, 'Eighteenth-Century Verse Miscellanies', *Literary Compass*, 9:6 (2012), 394-405; and Abigail Williams, "A Just and Graceful Elocution": Miscellanies and Sociable Reading', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 41:1 (2017), 179-196.

Queen Caroline (1683-1737) and, as Hughes states, it was in 1725 that two of her compositions – *The Story of Inkle and Yarico, taken out of the Spectator. By a lady* and *An Epistle from Yarico to Inkle, after he had sold her for a Slave* – were published anonymously in *A New Miscellany... Written Chiefly by Persons of Quality*.²⁰ It is perhaps unsurprising, then, that on 5 March 1725, Hertford began ‘a Miscellany of Verse and Prose’ as a means of recording and documenting her place within contemporary literary culture.

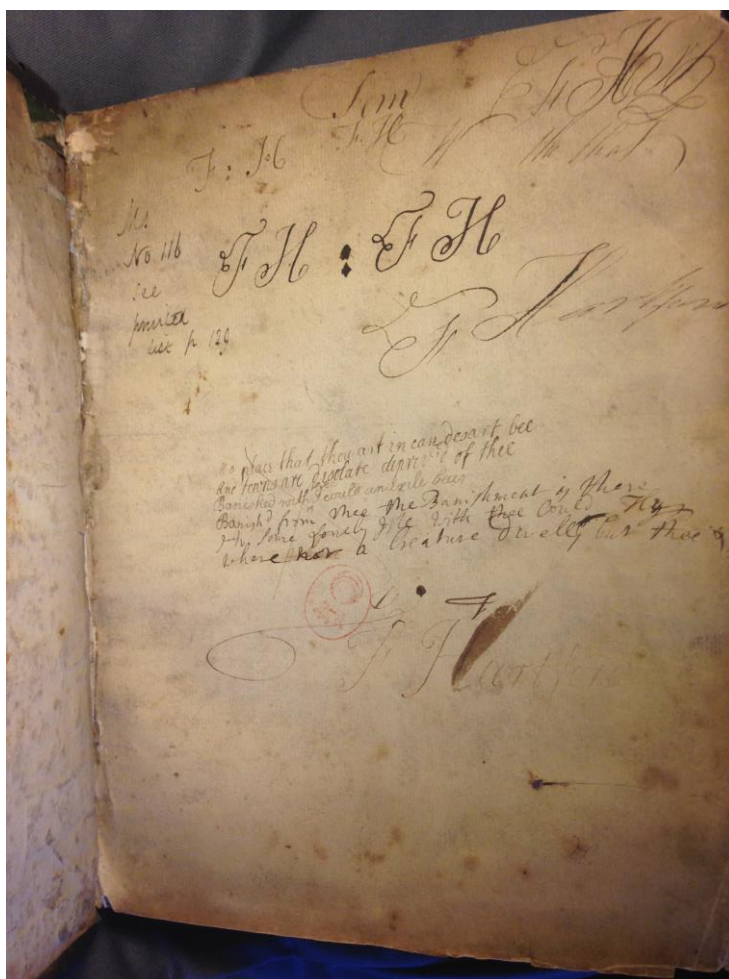


Figure 1.2

²⁰ Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 418.

Before the title page of ‘a miscellany of Verse and Prose’, there is a flyleaf which features what Hughes describes as ‘someone trying a pen’.²¹ I would argue that, rather than trying out a pen, the differing transcriptions of ‘F. Hartford’ and ‘F. H’ are indicative of someone who is attempting to work out what their signature ought to look like. This suggests that Hertford was concerned with the presentation of her name and her identity – a feature that is continued throughout the miscellany.

The first poem that appears in the miscellany is Stephen Duck’s (unpublished) ‘To the R^t Hon^{ble} the Countess of Hartford’. Hertford had been one of several early advocates of Duck’s poetry and she helped to introduce him to Queen Caroline, who took up his cause and made him famous as the ‘thresher poet’. The poem opens by situating Hertford as a ‘protectress’ who assists those who cannot reach the ‘Royal Ear’ alone.²² Duck writes that, ‘Again the Muse to her Protectress flies / Without whose Aid in vain Alas she tries / To reach the Royal Ear’ (‘To the R^t Hon^{ble} the Countess of Hartford’, ll. 1-3). Editorially, Hertford immediately establishes herself as an influential patron with an eye for cultivating poetic talent. However, by establishing Hertford as a ‘protectress’, the poem pits Hertford against the queen by denoting Hertford as the ‘protectress’ while the queen was Duck’s public patron. Simultaneously, the poem also establishes how Hertford was an essential part of the process of Duck gaining royal patronage. This demonstrates the complexity of patronage relationships and the implicit negotiations of power and loyalties that exist within them.

The poem has no date attached, nor was it published, so it is hard to judge when the poem was written or, indeed, when it was transcribed into Hertford’s miscellany. However, the timeline of Duck’s relationship with Queen Caroline does offer some clues. The poem

²¹ Helen Sard Hughes, ‘Thomson and the Countess of Hartford’, *Modern Philology*, 25:4 (1918), 439-468 (p. 447).

²² Stephen Duck, ‘To the R^t Hon^{ble} the Countess of Hartford’ in ‘a Miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725’ in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle, MSS 116, f. 3, ll. 1-3. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text. All references are diplomatic transcriptions.

that brought Duck to the queen's attention was *The Thresher's Labour* (1730) and, consequently, as Batt notes, the Daily Post reported, on 23 September 1730, that Queen Caroline had 'rewarded [Duck's] talents with an annual pension and "a little House in Richmond to live in".²³ Given that Duck talks of reaching the 'Royal Ear' within the poem, it is logical to assume that the poem was composed around the time that Duck gained the queen's patronage; however, this has further implications for either the construction of the miscellany or Hertford's relationship with Duck. The title of the miscellany states that it was begun in 1725; however, Duck's *The Thresher's Labour*, which first gained him notice in influential circles, is thought, as Batt argues, to have been composed in 1729 or 1730.²⁴ This indicates that either Hertford retrospectively decided which poems would be included and where they would be placed or Hertford's relationship with Duck began earlier than previously thought. Though we cannot say for certain which scenario is correct, nevertheless Hertford's placement of the poem at the start of the miscellany is significant as it demonstrates her establishing herself as a patron with the ear of the queen.²⁵

Hertford's miscellany is a mixture of epistles, verses, prose, and translations (both her own and her clients'), and each piece is introduced with the author's name. Benedict suggests that 'miscellany compilers accumulate others' poems according to whim'; however, evidence is very much to the contrary with Hertford as a compiler.²⁶ Hertford's choice of textual additions, paratextual information, and her positioning of these pieces shows her directing her readers' perception of her relationships with these people. Labelling her collection of verses as a 'miscellany' suggests that Hertford purposefully situated this volume within the miscellaneous genre. As the introduction outlined, scholars have suggested that, as a text

²³ Jennifer Batt, 'From the Field to the Coffeehouse: Changing Representations of Stephen Duck', *Criticism*, 47:4 (2005), 451-470 (p. 451).

²⁴ Batt, 'From the Field to the Coffeehouse: Changing Representations of Stephen Duck', p. 451.

²⁵ This anticipates the facilitative role that Lyttelton performs as a patron which is analysed in Chapter Two of this thesis.

²⁶ Benedict, 'Editing as Art: Authenticity and Authority in the Miscellanies of Dryden and Behn', p. 26.

‘designed to suit contemporary taste’, miscellaneous collections exerted substantial influence on the poems, and poets, that were in general circulation.²⁷ Hertford’s positioning of her volume within this genre suggests that she designed it in order to influence cultural production and to frame herself as an arbiter of taste.

Since Hertford’s miscellany is a manuscript book, it might be tempting to suggest that it occupies a ‘private’ space rather than a public one; however, much like eighteenth-century letter-writing, there is evidence which shows that the miscellany was read by others. While most of the handwriting in the book is Hertford’s, there are some pieces which are copied in a different hand. The different hand is intermingled with Hertford’s transcriptions which suggests that it is not a later addition to the volume but rather something that Hertford had requested and shows that others were privy to the contents. Most tellingly, however, there is a poem in the miscellany titled ‘Upon having read the Right Honourable the Countess of Hertford’s verses in this book’. The poem is anonymous, and the handwriting is in a third, unidentified hand, which suggests multiple contributors to the volume. Despite the varied contributors, the content of the poem enhances the impression of Hertford’s creative control. The author writes: ‘Permit me, Hartford, in this Book that shines / Proud of the Merit of thy matchless Lines / Here in this Page, permit me to insert’.²⁸ The repetition of ‘permit’ acknowledges Hertford’s control over the contents of the volume. Moreover, the notion of ‘insert[ing]’ the poem into the volume solidifies the idea of the miscellany as an evolving collection of texts. The presence of the poem, and the title, are important because they not only show that the volume was available to others, but Hertford’s inclusion of the poem also shows that she wished the volume to be seen as publicly available and as a collection that

²⁷ Suarez, ‘The Production and Consumption of the Eighteenth-Century Poetic Miscellany’, p. 219

²⁸ ‘Upon having read the Right Honourable the Countess of Hertford’s verses in this book’ in DNP, MSS 116, f. 227, lines 9-11.

others were responding to. This is significant because it shows that Hertford wished the miscellany to be seen as part of a contemporary literary conversation.

Hertford influenced her place within this contemporary literary conversation by manipulating the texts within the miscellany through paratextual material and spatial placement. One such conversation concerns her relationship with Thomson and how Thomson's presence in the miscellany categorically dispels the falsehood that Hertford and Thomson's relationship deteriorated following the publication of *Spring* (1728).²⁹ Hertford's presentation of Thomson's letters and poems within the miscellany demonstrates his continued importance to her and, crucially, to her patronal reputation.

According to his biographers, Thomson first won Hertford's notice with the publication of his poem *Winter* in 1726. Patrick Murdoch writes in his memoir that 'from that time, Mr. Thomson's acquaintance was courted by all men of taste; and several ladies of high rank and distinction became his declared patronesses: the Countess of Hartford, Miss Drelincourt, afterwards Viscountess Primrose, Mrs. Stanley, and others'.³⁰ The poem itself first came to Hertford's attention through Rowe who, upon reading *Winter*, wrote to Hertford exclaiming: 'There is a poem in blank verse lately printed Call'd Winter by M^r Thom^pson tis very fine so I am persuaded will please the Justice of your taste'.³¹ Hertford, who obviously agreed with Rowe's assessment of the poem, invited Thomson to Marlborough Castle during the summer of 1727, where Hughes reports that at least part of the poem *Spring* was

²⁹ As aforementioned in the introduction, Johnson, in his biography of Thomson, created the myth that Thomson, when invited to Hertford's residence, 'took more delight in carousing with Lord Hertford and his friends than assisting her ladyship's poetical operations, and therefore never received another summons'. Quoted from Samuel Johnson, 'The Life of Thomson' in *The lives of the most eminent English poets; with critical observations on their works* ed. Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), IV, p. 99.

³⁰ Patrick Murdoch, *The Works of James Thomson*, 3 vols. (London, 1802), I, p. 17.

³¹ Elizabeth Rowe to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in 'Letters and Verses by M^{rs} Rowe' in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle, MSS 110, f. 131.

created.³² This was the beginning of a patronage relationship that lasted until Thomson's death in 1748.

The beginning of this relationship demonstrates the importance of correspondence networks within Hertford's circle. Importantly, the record of the recommendation comes from a letter that Hertford transcribed into her 'Letters & Verses by M^{rs} Rowe' letter-book. Hertford's transcription of the letter shows that she wanted to emphasise that this connection was created through Rowe and highlight the importance of her correspondence networks. This is significant because it demonstrates that patronage was a social enterprise, made up of numerous encounters and introductions rather than simply a transaction between patron and client.

Much of the scholarship concerning the relationship between Hertford and Thomson has focused on uncovering clues as to the precise nature of their friendship. Kate Parker succinctly describes this work as 'diligently detail[ing] [...] his amorous feelings for her in embedded private references'.³³ For Hughes, her aim to 'rescue a literary lady from the unmerited disparagement of Dr. Johnson' necessarily meant uncovering the 'friendly intercourse between them'.³⁴ In doing so, Hughes 'cautiously' reveals Hertford to be the unnamed 'Seraphina' from Thomson's *To Seraphina – Ode*, published in the 1750 edition of Thomson's *Works*.³⁵ Furthermore, Hughes traces Thomson's 'intimate references' to Hertford – and Hertford's marginal responses – in her hand-copied version of Thomson's early unpublished drafts of *A Hymn to Solitude* surviving at Alnwick Castle.³⁶ Indeed, Parker herself terms the relationship 'fascinating[ly] libidinous' and examines the 'amorous

³² Helen Sard Hughes, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford', *Modern Philology*, 25:4 (1928), 439-468 (p. 443).

³³ Kate Parker, 'James Thomson and the Affective Body in/of *The Seasons*', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 46.1 (2013), 1-18 (p. 3).

³⁴ Hughes, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford', p. 439 and p. 441.

³⁵ Helen Sard Hughes, 'Thomson and Lady Hertford Again', *Modern Philology*, 28:4 (1931), 468-470 (p. 469);

³⁶ Hughes, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford', pp. 446-449. *A Hymn to Solitude* is copied into Hertford's miscellany: 'a Miscellany of Verse and Prose Begun March 5th 1725' in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle, MSS 116, f. 92-3.

references' to Hertford in Thomson's early poetry.³⁷ Similarly, Hilbert H. Campbell suggests that 'Thomson, although he never married, had a fond and foolish heart where women were concerned [...] The friendly, attractive countess, nearly his own age, apparently affected him strongly'.³⁸ Campbell extends Hughes' detective work, locating a manuscript version of Thomson's *Song*, beginning 'Hard is the Fate of Him who loves,' and he cites an accompanying note from Thomas Percy, Bishop of Dromore (1729-1811), which not only names Thomson as its author but suggests that it was written affectionately *for* Hertford.³⁹ Hughes also notes Percy's testimony regarding the manuscript of the song and suggests that it carries particular weight since Percy was, for a time, in the employ of Hertford's son-in-law, Hugh Smithson Percy, the future Duke of Northumberland (1714-1786), at Alnwick Castle.⁴⁰ Nevertheless, while Percy was friends with Shenstone, an acquaintance of both Thomson and Hertford, there is no evidence that Percy inhabited Thomson's and Hertford's inner circles and it is unlikely that he would have intimate knowledge of their relationship. Indeed, while my own research into the archival material at Alnwick Castle shows that Hertford wanted to emphasise her connection with Thomson, there is no evidence to suggest that there was anything illicit between them.⁴¹

Hertford's miscellany has been used by scholars such as Parker and Campbell to show the affective relationship between Hertford and Thomson; however, this chapter argues that rather than providing evidence of a 'libidinous' relationship, Thomson's presence in the miscellany shows Hertford emphasising her patronal reputation and involvement in his poetry. Though it is undated, the first poem of Thomson's that the reader comes across in

³⁷ Parker, 'James Thomson and the Affective Body in/of *The Seasons*', p. 3-4.

³⁸ Hilbert H. Campbell, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford Yet Again', *Modern Philology*, 67:4 (1970), 367-9 (pp. 368-9).

³⁹ Campbell, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford Yet Again', pp. 367-9.

⁴⁰ Hughes, 'Thomson and Lady Hertford Again', p. 470. Sir Hugh Smithson inherited the Barony of Percy through his wife, Elizabeth Percy (the sole surviving heir of the Hertfords). They were created Duke and Duchess of Northumberland in 1766.

⁴¹ It is worth noting that Hertford did exert her control over her archival material and therefore her posthumous reputation.

Hertford's miscellany is 'A Hymn to Solitude' which Hertford states is 'by M^r Thomson'.⁴² The first version of this poem appeared in Thomson's correspondence with David Mallet which, as Peter Cunningham reports, was on the 10 July 1725, when Thomson writes: 'To fill up this letter I shall give you a few loose lines I composed in my last evening walk, they may be once worth the reading but no more'.⁴³ These lines were the first version of his 'Hymn to Solitude'. The version in Hertford's miscellany is very similar to the original version written to Mallet, apart from the inclusion of the following lines (in place of lines 22-23: 'Now a gay Huntress by the dawn / You trip it o'er the dewy lawn' in the original version):

Then soft divided you assume
The gentle-looking Hertford's Bloom
As with her Philomela she
Her Philomela fond of Thee
Amid the long-withdrawing vale
Awakes the rival'd Nightingale.⁴⁴

This shows Thomson re-working the original version of a poem in order to include a compliment to Hertford and Rowe, whose pen-name was 'Philomela'. The inclusion of Rowe's pen-name alongside Hertford's, and Hertford's subsequent inclusion of this re-working in her miscellany, demonstrates Hertford's commitment to emphasising the correspondence networks that brought about the patronage relationship between herself and Thomson. Hughes' article tells us that when the poem was finally published in *Miscellaneous Poems, by Several Hands* (1729) there were a couple of minor changes to word choices and the rearrangement of certain lines but the tribute to Hertford and Rowe remained.⁴⁵ Parker suggests that the inclusion of the revised version of 'Hymn to Solitude' in Hertford's miscellany 'help[s] to situate Hertford within the universe of Thomson's poetry. She is the impetus for both public revisions and private reworkings, and thus is woven much more

⁴² James Thomson, 'A Hymn to Solitude' in DNP, MSS 116, f. 92.

⁴³ Peter Cunningham, 'James Thomson and David Mallet,' in *Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society*, 4 vols. (London, 1857-58), IV, p. 7.

⁴⁴ James Thomson, 'A Hymn to Solitude' in DNP, MSS 116, f. 92, lines 20-25.

⁴⁵ Hughes, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford', p. 449.

intricately into the fabric of Thomson's writing than we might otherwise expect'.⁴⁶ To say that Hertford's presence in Thomson's work is more 'than we might otherwise expect' implies that their relationship was more than a mere patronal interaction. However, I would argue that, rather than evidence of something illicit, Hertford's impact on the reworkings of Thomson's poetry is instead demonstrative of the patronal material and textual influence that is a core point of this thesis. Indeed, Hertford's inclusion of the revised version of the poem in her manuscript miscellany shows that she wishes to be seen as an individual who inspires such poetic compliments and revisions. Such actions indicate that this is an important aspect of patronal reputation and appeal.

The second poem Hertford includes in her miscellany from Thomson is one she titles, 'A Poem on the Death of M^r Aikman by M^r Thomson'.⁴⁷ By including Thomson's name in the title of the poem, Hertford explicitly signals both the author and her association with him.⁴⁸ Moreover, the poem is followed by a letter that is titled, 'Letter from M^r Thomson with the above written poem Paris Oct 10 1732'.⁴⁹ By clearly aligning the poem with the exchange of familiar letters, Hertford demonstrates that Thomson was part of her coterie correspondence. Notably, this is four years after the publication of *Spring* – thus conclusively disproving Johnson's insinuation that their relationship deteriorated following the publication of *Spring*.⁵⁰ Furthermore, the content of the letter itself is significant. Thomson opens the letter by declaring:

[i]t was but yesterday that I received a letter you did me the honour to write April last the Banker there not having known how to send it to me – I mention this only to prevent my being judged altogether inexcusable and not by way of apology for having so long neglected to pay my respects where they are so justly due.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Parker, 'James Thomson and the Affective Body in/of *The Seasons*', p. 7.

⁴⁷ James Thomson, 'A Poem on the Death of M^r Aikman by M^r Thomson', in DNP, MSS 116, f. 184.

⁴⁸ It is important to note that Hertford attaches Thomson's name to each one of his pieces in the miscellany.

⁴⁹ James Thomson to the Countess of Hertford, 10 October 1732, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 185.

⁵⁰ Johnson, 'The Life of Thomson', p. 99.

⁵¹ James Thomson to the Countess of Hertford, 10 October 1732, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 185.

By evidencing Thomson's apologies for the late communication, and his assertion that his respect for Hertford is 'justly due', Hertford displays the mutuality behind their patronage relationship. This is emphasised later in the letter when Thomson states, '[g]ive me leave to return you my most humble acknowledgements for the honour you did me in presenting my Book to the Prince of Wales'.⁵² By transcribing this into the miscellany, Hertford not only demonstrates the services that she provides for her patronal client, but also her own importance and access at court.

Hertford also transcribes a poem by Thomson into the miscellany which she titles, 'To Retirement an Ode wrote at S^t Leonard's Hill By M^r Thomson June 13th 1735'.⁵³ As Hughes explains, St. Leonard's Hill, or St. Leonard's Hermitage as it is sometimes called, was one of Hertford's country residences near Windsor.⁵⁴ Hertford's specificity in referencing the location demonstrates not only the inspiration Thomson drew from her home, but also emphasises his physical presence in Hertford's residence. Moreover, the first verse of the poem contains a poetic tribute to Hertford:

Come Calm Retirement! Sylvan Power!
That on St. Leonard's lov'st to walk,
To lead along the thoughtfull Hour,
And with the gentle Hartford talk.⁵⁵

This verse frames Thomson and Hertford as companionate souls, walking through St. Leonard's Hill together, and once again emphasises the personal connection between Thomson and Hertford. Other scholars might consider this evidence of a closer, romantic friendship; however, I would argue that Hertford's inclusion of the poem is indicative of her desire to emphasise her status as a patron who provides a physical location for her clients to work as well as inspiration for their poetry.

⁵² James Thomson to the Countess of Hertford, 10 October 1732, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 189.

⁵³ James Thomson, 'To Retirement an Ode', in DNP, MSS 116, f. 229.

⁵⁴ Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 97.

⁵⁵ James Thomson 'To Retirement an Ode' in DNP, MSS 116, f. 229, ll. 1-4.

Both the aforementioned ‘A Hymn to Solitude’ and ‘To Retirement an Ode’ contain poetic tributes to Hertford: ‘gentle-looking Hertford’ (‘A Hymn to Solitude’, l. 21) and ‘gentle Hertford’ (‘To Retirement an Ode’, l. 4). Parker refers to these compliments as ‘intimate, sometimes polite, but highly suggestive’ and implies that they speak to Hertford’s ‘profound influence on Thomson’s compositions’.⁵⁶ Indeed, Parker rather explicitly suggests that the relationship between Thomson and Hertford was more than a platonic friendship. I am not convinced by this reading. Rather, Hertford’s inclusion of poems that contain poetic compliments to her demonstrates her active shaping of her patronal relationship with Thomson. The critical treatment of Hertford’s relationship with Thomson is representative of a wider problem in our discourses concerning female historical figures and women in general: to treat Hertford as the object of Thomson’s sexual desire is to diminish her importance to that of a sexual object rather than to appreciate the subtleties and nuances of how she navigated her public life and reputation.

Another one of Hertford’s patronal clients celebrated in the miscellany is Watts. The acquaintance between Hertford and Watts was most likely brought about by Rowe. Rowe’s instrumental introductions between Hertford and both Watts and Thomson demonstrate her integral place within Hertford’s social and literary circle. Upon reading Watts’ *Horae Lyricae* (1722), Hertford was inspired to write a poem ‘Written in a blank leaf of Mr. Watts’ poems’ which she sent to Rowe.⁵⁷ Rowe responds ‘I never was more pleas’d with anything then [sic] these lines to Mr. Watts they are so correct and so musical that I doe nothing but repeat them. I’ll send him a copy ’twill give him new inspiration, he’ll be as proud of them as if an Angel had given him a wreath of Immortal Amaranthus’; thus, a coterie correspondence between Hertford and Watts was initiated that extended over a period of more than twenty years.⁵⁸ As

⁵⁶ Parker, ‘James Thomson and the Affective Body in/of *The Seasons*’, p. 4.

⁵⁷ The Countess of Hertford, ‘Written in a blank leaf of Mr. Watts’ poems’, in DNP, MSS 110, f. 298

⁵⁸ Elizabeth Rowe to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 110, f. 120.

with Hertford's introduction to Thomson's poem *Winter* through Rowe, her introduction to Watts was also recorded by Hertford in her letter-book which, again, illustrates that this was how Hertford wanted to present the beginning of their relationship. Rowe's statement also deserves unpacking since it foreshadows the way in which Hertford presented herself throughout her patronal and poetic interactions with Watts. Rowe's assertion that Watts considers Hertford an 'Angel' is evocative of the religious virtue which Watts attaches to Hertford throughout his public representations of her. Furthermore, the image of the 'Immortal Amaranthus' in relation to Hertford's poetic conversations with Watts is indicative of how these textual interactions form an image of Hertford that 'does not wither' – the meaning of the name 'amaranth'.

With the appearance of Watts, there is a proliferation of transcribed letters within the miscellany and, as far as I'm aware, these letters have not previously been discussed by scholarship. Many of these letters act as a means not only of showing Hertford's personal connections with her patronal clients, but also demonstrate her controlling the way those connections are presented through which letters are transcribed and where they are placed within the volume. The first piece by Watts in the miscellany is a letter dated 12 September 1727.⁵⁹ As with Thomson's letter in the miscellany, Watts' first letter emphasises both their close connection and patronage relationship. The letter begins with an apology from Watts because he cannot visit as often as he would like: 'Tis not in my Power to render my self happy in the agreeable Conversation to which your Lp Invites me so often as I could Wish'.⁶⁰ This not only illustrates the closeness between Hertford and Watts, since she is issuing invitations to him, but, also, demonstrates Hertford's liberality and commitment to poets and writers by issuing continuous invitations. As a complement to the apology, Watts writes:

⁵⁹ Isaac Watts to the Countess of Hertford, 12 September 1727, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 80.

⁶⁰ Isaac Watts to the Countess of Hertford, 12 September 1727, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 80. Watts' abbreviation 'Lp' stands for 'Ladyship'.

‘your Lp will forgive this freedom of my Pen, while I assure your Lp I retain all due Sense of your Superior Station’.⁶¹ This simultaneously displays Watts’ awareness of Hertford’s aristocratic status and reminds the reader of it as well. Watts ends the letter by stating: ‘I have here Enclosed [...] One of my former Essays in prose and Verse: humbly hoping that your Lp will favour me with such returns as have already Lay’d Many obligations on’.⁶² What Watts is referring to here is the reciprocal exchange of literary writing. Thus, the ‘returns’ and ‘obligations’ are not just monetary, but also intellectual and aesthetic. As well as the letter, the miscellany contains two essays by Watts, ‘Divine Goodness in the Creation and youth and Death’, and a poetic exchange between Hertford and Watts.⁶³ Hertford’s contribution, a translation entitled ‘An imitation of the Italian of Angela Bulgarini’, appears on page 101 and then, directly after on page 102, is a piece by Watts titled ‘Revis’d by M^r Watts’.⁶⁴ By presenting the two poems alongside one another, and specifically referring to Watts’ poem as a revision, Hertford emphasises the poetic dialogue between herself and Watts.

Paddy Bullard suggests that, since miscellanies integrate multiple authorial voices together, the work as a whole consequently ‘fragment[s] or diffus[es] authorial personalities’.⁶⁵ While the aesthetic effect of Hertford’s miscellany is fragmented, since the work switches between genres and authors without much transitional material, nevertheless it forms a cohesive whole since the point of the work is not to present authorial personalities but, rather, to advance Hertford’s patronal reputation. Indeed, her inclusion of poems and letters from certain writers within the miscellany shows a careful and deliberate attempt to influence her reputation and, therefore, reveals not only that Hertford understood the potential

⁶¹ Isaac Watts to the Countess of Hertford, 12 September 1727, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 80.

⁶² Isaac Watts to the Countess of Hertford, 12 September 1727, DNP, MSS 116, f. 80.

⁶³ Isaac Watts, ‘Divine Goodness in the Creation’, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 81-3; and Isaac Watts, ‘youth and Death’, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 98-100.

⁶⁴ The Countess of Hertford, ‘An imitation of the Italian of Angela Bulgarini’ in DNP, MSS 116, f. 101; and Isaac Watts, ‘Revis’d by M^r Watts’ in DNP, MSS 116, f. 102.

⁶⁵ Paddy Bullard, ‘Digital Editing and the Eighteenth-Century Text: Works, Archives, and Miscellanies’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 36:3 (2012), 57-80 (p. 65).

for the miscellany to construct contemporary understanding of taste, but also that manuscript miscellanies perform the same function as printed miscellanies in doing so.

‘a Heart overflowing with Humanity’: Thomson and Hertford.⁶⁶

While Hertford’s manuscript miscellany allows her to craft a particular idea of her role as patron, her clients’ published texts develop that idea in other ways. The beginning of Thomson’s and Hertford’s patronal relationship came about through the poem *Winter* (1726). There is something quite poetic, then, that one of the most public expressions of their subsequent relationship was his dedication to her in *Spring* (1728), since both poems were component parts of Thomson’s *The Seasons* (1730). As a public encounter, the dedication shaped how contemporaries related to Hertford and, indeed, Stephen Bending suggests that ‘Hertford is perhaps best known now as the woman to whom James Thomson dedicated ‘Spring’ in his four-part poem, *The Seasons*’.⁶⁷ Thus, the dedication helped to form how future historians and literary critics responded to Hertford. This section, therefore, focuses on how Thomson crafted an image of Hertford that fitted with contemporary ideas of moral benevolence in order to match the dedicatory portrait with the text itself. In pursuing these enquiries, this chapter explores how patronage fits into the commercial nature of paratextual appeal as well as situating the gendered nuances of the dedication within the context of a marketplace that desired women to appear distant from said commercial market.

Thomson’s dedication to Hertford in *Spring* has been referenced in much of the scholarship concerning both Thomson and Hertford. Campbell suggests that Thomson’s dedicatory compliments to her - such as ‘mind exalted’, ‘heart overflowing with humanity’, and ‘the whole train of virtues thence derived’ - are the ‘usual flattering remarks’ that one

⁶⁶ James Thomson, *Spring. A Poem*. (London: A. Millar, 1728), p. i. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

⁶⁷ Stephen Bending, *Green Retreats: Women, Gardens and Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 34.

sees within a dedication.⁶⁸ While platitudes to a patron's virtue are commonplace within the dedicatory genre, nevertheless there is much more to unpick within the nuances of the dedication and how Thomson moulds it to create a textual representation of Hertford that suits the text of *Spring*. This textual creation is important because it shows the commercial appeal of patronage and, in doing so, demonstrates the continuing influence and importance of patrons to the contemporary literary market and readership. Griffin suggests that 'dedications must of course be read very cautiously: the client presumably says only what he knows the patron wants to hear, or credits the patron with virtues and motives currently fashionable'; nonetheless, to know what it is a patron wants to hear and how the author is publicly framing their relationship is valuable for the very reason that it reveals the contemporary public understanding of taste and virtue.⁶⁹

In order to see how the dedication creates a portrait of Hertford that is akin to the image of mankind in *Spring*, it is first necessary to analyse the poem itself. In *Spring*, man is capable of feeling a love of nature which transforms him into a benevolent man, full of kindly concern for his fellow men. This was emphasised in the contents page of the 1729 reprint of *Spring* which listed a section of the poem as showing the 'Influence of *Spring* on Man, inspiring a universal Benevolence, the Love of Mankind, and of Nature'.⁷⁰ The lines are:

In Thee, Boon *Spring*, and in thy softer Scenes,
 The *Smiling* God appears; while Water, Earth,
 And Air attest his Bounty, which instils
 Into the Brutes this temporary Thought,
 And annual melts their undesigning Hearts,
 Profusely thus in Tenderness, and Joy.
 Still let my Song a nobler Note assume,
 And sing th'infusive Force of *Spring* on Man,
 When Heaven and Earth, as if contending, vie
 To raise his Being, and serene his Soul.
 (*Spring*, ll. 861-870).

⁶⁸ Campbell, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford Yet Again', p. 367.

⁶⁹ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 17.

⁷⁰ James Thomson, *Spring. A Poem*. (London: A. Millar, 1729), p. ix.

These lines exemplify the idea of Spring as a celebration of the effect of the season on man's temperament. Spring is portrayed as exerting a 'force' on man that inspires feelings of 'Tenderness, and Joy' and brings serenity to the soul.

As Maren-Sofie Rostvig postulates, *Spring* is representative of a rural retirement characterised by 'moral benevolence', and this was the image of Hertford that Thomson endeavoured to create within the dedication.⁷¹ While compliments such as her 'Heart overflow[s] with Humanity' and her mind is 'exalted, pure, and elegant' are, as Campbell suggests, regular features within dedicatory addresses, Thomson combines these with a connection to nature and rural retirement. Thomson asserts that he has 'attempted, in the following Poem, to paint some of the most tender Beauties, and delicate Appearances of Nature; how much in vain, your Ladyship's Taste will, I am afraid, but too soon discover' (*Spring*, p. iii). In doing so, Thomson bestows expertise in poetry and its 'Beauties' onto Hertford. Similarly, Thomson declares that Hertford boasts an 'intimate Acquaintance with *Rural Nature*' (*Spring*, p. iii), demonstrating her connection to the landscape. Specifying that it is '*Rural Nature*' that Hertford knows so well suggests that Thomson is drawing a distinction between rural authenticity and the artificial version of nature to be found in ornamental gardens of the period. Furthermore, Thomson lauds the virtues of Hertford's 'calm Evening Walks, in the most delightful Retirement' (*Spring*, p. iii) and suggests that her rural wanderings inspire his own work. The combination of the declarations of Hertford's virtues with the images of rural retirement typify the 'moral benevolence' theme that physico-theological poetry such as Thomson's were founded upon.

Stylistically, the dedicatory address mimics that of the, supposedly, private genre of the familiar letter since it purports to address the patron alone and copies the formal structures and style of a letter. In Thomson's case, he addresses himself to 'the Right

⁷¹ Maren-Sofie Rostvig, *The Happy Man: Studies in the Metamorphoses of a Classical Ideal*, 2 vols. (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 1958), II, p. 265.

Honourable the Countess of Hertford' and ends by declaring himself to be 'Madam, Your most Obedient, Humble Servant' (*Spring*, p. i and vi). Eve Tavor Bannet's work on the guidelines set out by letter manuals for the formal construction of an eighteenth-century letter shows that Thomson's dedication adheres to the correct manner of addressing a social superior.⁷² By following prescribed epistolary guidelines, the dedicatory epistle asks to be understood in terms of epistolary conventions. It invites the reader to imagine that this exchange is a 'private' one between Thomson and Hertford. Thomson cultivates this notion by alluding to the time he spent in Hertford's company while writing the poem: he refers to the poem as 'gr[owing] up under your Encouragement' which, although a common trope in dedications, emphasises the fact that Hertford invited Thomson to her country residence where *Spring* was at least partially written. Moreover, Thomson references Hertford's 'calm Evening Walks, in the most delightful Retirement' which suggests a personal knowledge of her daily routine. In doing so, Thomson implies that in publishing the dedication, he is putting into the public domain something that already existed in the private sphere.

It is not just the dedicatory address that frames Hertford as the picture of moral benevolence; *Spring* also opens with a tribute:

Oh Hertford, fitted, or to shine in Courts
 With unaffected Grace, or walk the Plain,
 With Innocence, and Meditation join'd
 In soft assemblage, listen to my Song,
 Which thy own Season paints, when Nature all
 Is blooming and benevolent like Thee
 (*Spring*, ll. 5-10).

Complementing the dedicatory address, the passage presents Hertford as a model for rural retirement and virtue. By characterising Hertford as a woman fit to shine at court, but who chooses instead to 'walk the Plain, / With Innocence, and Meditation join'd' (*Spring*, l. 6-7), Thomson frames Hertford as a model of unaffected grace and benevolence. Bending suggests

⁷² Bannet, *Empire of Letters*, p. 64

that the associations that Thomson crafts between Hertford and the ‘blooming and benevolent’ nature of the season ‘highlight for us still further an insistently domestic account of female retirement’.⁷³ Indeed, the choice of ‘blooming’ and ‘benevolent’ do create the impression of a plentiful bounty that could be demonstrative of an idyllic rural domesticity; however, there is more to unpick from these terms than their rural connotations. The OED entry for the adjective ‘Blooming’ means ‘in the bloom of health and beauty, in the prime of youth’ and ‘flourishing, full of fair promise’; thus, ‘blooming’ is not only a compliment to Hertford, but also suggests that their patronage relationship is ‘full of fair promise’.⁷⁴ Moreover, the OED entry for the verb ‘Blooming’ states ‘To bear flowers; to be in flower, come into flower; to blossom’.⁷⁵ By attaching this term to Hertford, Thomson creates the impression that their relationship is coming to fruition. As well as referencing Hertford’s generosity, there is also an implication through these meanings that Thomson was *looking* for that generosity and adds a mercenary aspect to the dedication. Similarly, the OED defines ‘benevolent’ as ‘well-wishing, well-disposed *to, unto* (another)’ and specifically references Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, a text Thomson was very familiar with, as using ‘benevolent’ in this manner.⁷⁶ The joys of rural retirement, and the terms ‘blooming’ and ‘benevolent’ all emphasise the bountiful benefits of being Hertford’s patronal client. This is significant because, as well as creating a cohesive image for Hertford through the paratext and text, Thomson also attaches the notion of benevolent patronage to Hertford’s public image by showing others that he had hopes of generosity and that those hopes were rewarded.

Thomson’s dedication not only creates a public image of Hertford, but also speaks to wider discourses of how women were represented in the public sphere. James Sambrook

⁷³ Bending, *Green Retreats*, p. 63.

⁷⁴ ‘Blooming’ in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/>> [accessed 28 February 2017].

⁷⁵ ‘Blooming’ in *OED*

⁷⁶ ‘Benevolent’ in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/>> [accessed 28 February 2017].

refers to the dedication as ‘suitably feminised’ and Bending suggests that Hertford is portrayed ‘as the figure of natural domesticity and connubial bliss’.⁷⁷ Indeed, Hertford is portrayed throughout the dedication as a virtuous figure who seeks retirement from the court. Discussions of women in the public sphere have centred on female writers and ideas of immodesty/modesty. The beginning of the eighteenth century saw a change in literary and theatrical taste. Jeslyn Medoff defines this as a “movement away from the ‘licence’ of the age and towards a more ‘moral’ and sentimental outlook”.⁷⁸ Rather than the liberty of writers such as Aphra Behn (1640-1689) who, as Medoff notes, associated herself with actresses like Nell Gwynn (1650-1687) and noted rakes like John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680), and George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham (1628-1687), eighteenth-century women writers were instead held to the standard of the ‘immaculate image’ of Katherine Philips (1632-1664).⁷⁹ Consequently, rather than seeming to attract or desire fame, women writers were expected to appear modest. Indeed, Sarah Prescott posits that this ‘virtuous image was valuable in a directly commercial sense’ and that a perceived distance from this market was, paradoxically, a virtuous female’s ‘strongest selling point’.⁸⁰ For a female patron, this perceived distance from the commercial market presented a problem for representation, for she needed to simultaneously seem influential to and distant from the marketplace. Thomson’s associations of ‘blooming’ with Hertford represent a way of marrying these two concepts together. The image of Hertford as the season spring, with its ‘blooming’ nature, is at once an image of rural domesticity and one that implies the ‘fruits’ of her patronage and demonstrates the duality that female patrons had to occupy.

⁷⁷ James Sambrook, “A Just Balance between Patronage and the Press’: The Case of James Thomson’, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 34. 1 (2001), 137-153 (p. 142); and Bending, *Green Retreats*, p. 34.

⁷⁸ Jeslyn Medoff, ‘The daughters of Behn and the problem of reputation’ in *Women, Writing, History* eds. By Isobel Grundy and Susan Wiseman (London: B.T. Batsford, 1992), pp. 33-55 (p. 33).

⁷⁹ Medoff, ‘The daughters of Behn’, p. 34.

⁸⁰ Sarah Prescott, *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture, 1690-1740* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), p. 51.

Thomson's construction of Hertford as exemplifying moral rural retirement not only suited the content of *Spring*, it was also instrumental in creating a public, patronal identity for Hertford. Consequently, it offered a blueprint for aspiring beneficiaries of Hertford's patronage. This is significant because it suggests that there is slippage between the 'public' and the 'private' in the dedication, and that Hertford's dedicatory identity was seen as representative of her personal preferences. It shows that rather than simply conferring on patrons a reputation as an 'arbiter of taste', the dedication acted as an advertisement of their patronal identity.

'[My] Example and Patroness': Grace's Cole's petition for Hertford's patronage.

One such aspiring beneficiary of Hertford's patronage was a young lady named Grace Cole, a member of the gentry whose acquaintances included Henrietta Louisa Fermor, countess of Pomfret (1698-1761), and Lady Anne Lumley.⁸¹ The correspondence between Cole and Hertford is a prime example of the literary mechanisms of epistolary performance by a client as she attempted to construct a patronage relationship. This chapter analyses how Cole manipulates the concept of female friendship, coterie interactions, and literary references in order to portray herself as an appealing patronal client. Moreover, it explores how Cole draws on Thomson's dedication to Hertford in *Spring* in order to tailor these epistolary performances to Hertford's taste. In doing so, it demonstrates the centrality of letters to the performance of patronage and builds on our understanding of female coterie exchanges by showing the way in which Cole manipulates standardised tropes in order to forge a friendship with Hertford. Furthermore, in analysing Cole's one explicit request for patronage, this chapter demonstrates the integral nature of patronage to manuscript circulation.

⁸¹ Cole refers to a visit from Pomfret and Lumley on 16 October 1729 in the Duke of Northumberland's Papers at Alnwick Castle, Northumberland, MSS 20: 'Percy Family Letters and Papers. Vol. 22. 1711-1734', f. 215. References are a diplomatic transcription.

Cole is one of Hertford's more obscure correspondents and the only evidence we have of a relationship between them is the survival of sixteen letters from Cole to Hertford in the Duke of Northumberland's papers. The letters begin on 12 August 1729 and end on 16 October 1729, and are preserved in what appears to be their original sequence. Though two of the letters are undated, and another letter has the beginning torn out (thus rendering it undated too), the sequence of the letters suggests that Cole sent letters to Hertford every few days. Though the intensity of their correspondence in the short space of two months can perhaps be accounted for through their respective geographic locations - two of Cole's letters state Grosvenor Street as her address, and one of the surviving envelopes also locates Hertford in Grosvenor Street - nevertheless the timing suggests that their correspondence was a rapid development.⁸² The collection only contains the letters from Cole to Hertford: the location of Hertford's replies is unknown. This information augments analysis of the letters themselves since the concentration of letters immediately suggests that Cole was keen to insert herself into Hertford's social circle and Hertford's failure to transcribe both Cole's letters and her own replies into a letter-book shows that Hertford did not consider Cole to be part of her social presentation.

Hughes, in her article 'A Romantic Correspondence of the Year 1729', is the sole commentator to reference Cole and declares her a 'sentimental devotee'.⁸³ For Hughes, the interest in Cole's letters resides in the evidence of 'sensibility' prevalent within them.⁸⁴ Hughes provides extracts of their correspondence and calls our attention to Cole's 'rhapsodies and introspections', many of which overstep 'the boundaries of common sense,

⁸² Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 42-3. Hughes notes that the Hertford family took up a house in Grosvenor Street as their town residence in the early 1720s. She also notes that this residence offered a particularly social setting for Hertford. Hertford and Cole's mutual occupation of this little pocket of London, as well as Hertford's apparent sociability, offers an explanation for how their acquaintance began.

⁸³ Helen Sard Hughes, 'A Romantic Correspondence of the Year 1729', *Modern Philology*, 37:2 (1939), 187-200 (p. 187).

⁸⁴ Hughes, 'A Romantic Correspondence', p. 187.

[and] bear the opprobrious marks of ‘enthusiasm’.⁸⁵ There is the sense in Hughes’ article that she equates Cole’s ‘sentimentalism’ and ‘enthusiasm’ with expressions of same-sex desire and religious excess. However, this chapter argues that, rather than Cole’s letters representing coded homoeroticism, the notion of a ‘devotee’ is a role she constructed for herself in order to create a patronage relationship with Hertford. Rhetorical analysis of Cole’s correspondence shows the similarities between how Cole is presenting herself and her poetry and how Thomson represented Hertford in his dedication to *Spring*. Furthermore, Cole’s letters also exemplify the performative nature of letter-writing and discourses concerning the relationship between epistolary correspondence and female friendships in the eighteenth century. Indeed, the performativity of the correspondence disrupts the notion of female friendships as a ‘safe space’ away from the world, and that Cole’s positioning of herself as a ‘friend’ to Hertford demonstrates the vexed nature of patronage solicitation within friendship constructs.

Cole is acutely aware of the notion of letters as ‘performatives of character’. In a letter presumably written in late August, she writes: ‘I have this moment been reading your letter and find a thousand new beautys undiscern’d before sure your Soul not only dictates but y^e Guardian Angel guides your pen, your Letters are your Self’.⁸⁶ The construction of Hertford’s soul ‘dictat[ing]’ and her guardian angel ‘guid[ing]’ the pen in order to achieve the effect of the letters indicate Cole’s understanding of the link between letter-writing and performativity. Cole’s acknowledgement of the letter and its role in self-construction indicates the possibility of Cole employing these techniques to perform a character of her own: that of a ‘devotee’ to Hertford. Indeed, Cole’s lines demonstrate an understanding of the construction of a letter and how to make it appeal to the reader. Her admission that she has ‘this moment been reading [Hertford’s] letter’ embodies Redford’s assertion that the familiar letter is an exercise

⁸⁵ Hughes, ‘A Romantic Correspondence’, p. 188.

⁸⁶ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated but placed in the sequence between 26 August 1729 and 2 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 139.

in ‘making present’ like the performance of a play.⁸⁷ Yet the crucial distinction, as Janet Altman reminds us, is that ‘epistolary language, which is the language of absence, makes present by make-believe’.⁸⁸ Cole’s invitation to Hertford to picture her reading the letter is an exercise in make-believe that is designed to flatter Hertford. Similarly, she asserts that she ‘find[s] a thousand new beautys undiscern’d before’ in Hertford’s letter which implies that Cole is reading the letter for at least the second time.⁸⁹

Another stylistic technique that Cole utilises to great effect is the form of address in her correspondence to Hertford. On addresses, Bannet writes, ‘superscriptions and subscriptions indicated [...] the degree of familiarity in which correspondents thought they stood relative to each other’.⁹⁰ Cole’s first two letters, on 12 August 1729 and 18 August 1729, have the superscription ‘Madam’ and end with the subscription ‘Madam, your Ladyship’s, most obedient humble servant, Grace Cole’.⁹¹ The letters follow the correct form of politely addressing a social superior.⁹² However, while the superscription remains the same in succeeding letters, the subscriptions do not. On 26 August 1729 it changes to ‘Your Ladyships, Grateful Humble servant, Grace Cole’ and, in early September, transforms to ‘ever truly yours, Grace Cole’. Furthermore, when the subscription shifts to ‘ever truly yours’, Cole begins to address Hertford as ‘My Valu’d friend’ within the letter itself.⁹³ The change in subscription is not only designed to indicate a growth in intimacy between Cole and Hertford, but Cole’s positioning of herself as ‘Grateful’ and Hertford as ‘Valu’d’ feed into Cole’s construction of herself as Hertford’s ‘devotee’. Bannet confirms such practices, noting the potential for addresses to show where ‘[the writer was] pretending to stand in order

⁸⁷ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 139 and Bruce Redford, *The Converse of the Pen: Acts of Intimacy in the Eighteenth-Century Familiar Letter* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), p. 6.

⁸⁸ Janet Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1982), p. 140

⁸⁹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 139.

⁹⁰ Bannet, *Empire of Letters*, p. 64

⁹¹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 18 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 124.

⁹² Bannet, *Empire of Letters*, p. 65.

⁹³ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 149.

to please, flatter, or persuade their addressee'.⁹⁴ Cole, in changing the form of address in her letters, evidences her desire to display to Hertford, and convince her of, the evolution of intimacy in their relationship.

It is widely acknowledged among critics of eighteenth-century literature that the sociable conventions of politeness, and specifically politeness conveyed in a literary form such as a poem or letter, could be manipulated: David Fairer argues that 'poets of the period recognised that politeness could be a sham performance, a concern for the veneer of manners rather than the substance of virtue'.⁹⁵ Specifically, Fairer provides a link between patronage and politeness by stating that 'politeness was an aspiration to many, and for young poets seeking patronage and hoping to make their way in the world, the various polite codes (in language, tone, etc.) were useful to learn'.⁹⁶ Similarly, Susan E. Whyman suggests that in adhering to polite epistolary codes, such as the placing of a date, place, and signature, shows the writer to be 'a well-trained individual, who has acquired epistolary literacy'.⁹⁷ While the connection between polite social codes and the solicitation of patronage is important, Fairer's statement implies that these constructions of politeness are generic rather than tailored to suit each patron individually. In contrast, Cole's solicitation of Hertford's patronage shows her moulding these sociable polite codes to conform to Hertford's tastes, or, more specifically, the tastes that Thomson's dedication had already ascribed to her.

Cole's letters contain what could be viewed as traditional epistolary social niceties; however, as with the 'usual flattering remarks' in Thomson's dedication, Cole's remarks are more than simple lip service.⁹⁸ For example, on 12 August 1729, Cole writes: 'the greatest

⁹⁴ Bannet, *Empires of Letters*, p. 64

⁹⁵ David Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century 1700-1789* (Essex: Pearson Education Limited, 2003), p. 27.

⁹⁶ Fairer, *English Poetry of the Eighteenth Century*, p. 21.

⁹⁷ Susan E. Whyman, *The Pen and the People: English Letter Writers 1660-1800* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 22.

⁹⁸ Campbell, 'Thomson and the Countess of Hertford Yet Again', p. 367.

Ambition I ever had was to be allow'd that liberty from Lady Hertford and as I have been successful even beyond what I cou'd wish, I can't but carry it on and hope I shall be (long more) happy by the same Honour'.⁹⁹ These sentiments could be epistolary niceties; however, the word 'Ambition' suggests that Cole's desire for a correspondence with Hertford is motivated by more than the simple pleasure of Hertford's conversation. Moreover, to frame herself as 'successful' in achieving this dialogue with Hertford implies that this represents the achievement of a personal aim for Cole. This aim is fully fleshed out in early September when Cole declares herself 'bent on persuing friendship'.¹⁰⁰ Again, this statement could be viewed as the usual flattering remarks; however, to say that one is 'persuing' another aligns friendship with a goal: something to be chased. Furthermore, the phrase 'bent on' not only suggests Cole's purpose, but also suggests elements of *bending* and altering oneself. Penelope Anderson argues that friendship is 'a network of alliances that is both consensual and natural, both made and found'.¹⁰¹ By connecting 'consensual and natural' and 'made and found' in the same sentence, Anderson implies that the forging of friendship is a natural process by mutual consent. What Cole's correspondence with Hertford focuses on is the idea of friendship being 'made' and the mechanisms of construction that go into creating the bonds of friendship.

This notion of friendship as a 'goal' creates the impression of a mercenary approach to friendship that is reflected in Cole's musing upon the subject with Hertford. Throughout the correspondence she refers to their relationship as a 'Grateful friendship' and to Hertford as 'My Valu'd friend'.¹⁰² Though common enough platitudes, they also imply that there is a measurable worth to Hertford's friendship. For example, on 26 August 1729, Cole refers to

⁹⁹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 12 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 117.

¹⁰⁰ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 151.

¹⁰¹ Penelope Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows Women's Friendship and the Politics of Betrayal in England, 1640-1705* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), p. 10.

¹⁰² Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 2 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 138 and Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 149.

Hertford's friendship as a 'Treasure': 'who wou'd Live and never try to find that Treasure of Intrinsic Worth a friend'.¹⁰³ In doing so, she creates the impression of something precious that is worth owning. Furthermore, by suggesting that a friend has 'Intrinsic Worth', Cole implies that there is something basic and fundamental about the value of a friend that suggests the worth lies in the status of having a friend rather than any depths of similarities. Similarly, Cole terms friendship a 'voluntary tribute that can be pay'd but to a very few' and designates Hertford as her 'principal Creditor'.¹⁰⁴ In isolation, the word 'tribute' implies gratitude or respect; however, the addition of 'Creditor' changes the emphasis of 'tribute' to suggest the monetary associations of payments and taxes. In portraying friendship in this manner, Cole creates mercenary associations with the idea of making friends.

For Cole and Hertford, the mediating factor between the oscillating representations of emulation and friendship that appear in the letters is class. As Anderson posits, friendship insists 'upon equality between the two friends'.¹⁰⁵ Though Cole's exact social standing is unknown, presumably she is a member of the gentry and, thus, below Hertford as a member of the aristocracy.¹⁰⁶ In late August, Cole emphasises this distinction in a few lines of verse:

and yet I see I find each moment more
Some merit undiscern'd ~~in thee~~ before
I can't express it but I wish to be
Some-what above the World to Equal thee.¹⁰⁷

What is interesting about these lines is that they appear twice in the correspondence: on 2 September 1729 and in the following (undated) letter. The copy of the lines is exactly the same, apart from the lack of the repetition: '~~in thee~~'.¹⁰⁸ The duplication of the lines indicates their importance to Cole's textual construction. To say that she needs to be 'above the World' in

¹⁰³ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 132.

¹⁰⁴ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 11 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 163.

¹⁰⁵ Anderson, *Friendship's Shadows*, p. 166.

¹⁰⁶ Hughes, 'A Romantic Correspondence', p. 188.

¹⁰⁷ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 2 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 139. This is included in one of the letters that Hertford transcribed so it is possible that the inclusion of '~~in thee~~' is a transcription error on Hertford's behalf or a faithful transcription of Cole's original letter.

¹⁰⁸ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 148.

order to be equal to Hertford demonstrates her awareness of the class difference between them. Moreover, to say that she ‘can’t express it’ further suggests the disparity in their social positions in that neither textual nor verbal intervention can change it. By emphasising the difference in their class status, and that their friendship cannot exist in the public sphere, Cole establishes herself as someone in need of patronage.

The concept of ‘friendship’, particularly between women in the eighteenth century, has a rich critical background.¹⁰⁹ As Sylvia Harcstark Myers’ work on the bluestockings has shown, friendship was a vital way of creating and providing supporting structures for their dedication to both learning and virtue.¹¹⁰ Similarly, Elizabeth Eger argues that:

intimate friendships like this [between the bluestockings] often provided women with access to scholarly resources and gave them confidence to broach the traditionally masculine preserve of a genre such as literary criticism or classical translation and enter the public world of print.¹¹¹

Furthermore, Paula R. Backscheider posits that friendship, and particularly the friendship poem, ‘offered a safe space, for it was a form that critics and moralists largely ignored...Some friendship poems moved into a counter-universe where women could be unapologetic about themselves as women and could freely explore their situations and roles as women’.¹¹² These statements demonstrate the ways in which friendship was a beneficial, and in some cases even essential, aspect of eighteenth-century sociability. This chapter adds to these discussions by further establishing the beneficiary nature of friendship. Not only do

¹⁰⁹ See Sylvia Harcstark Myers, *The bluestocking circle: women, friendship, and the life of the mind in eighteenth-century England* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1990); Elizabeth Susan Wahl, *invisible relations: Representations of Female Intimacy in the Age of Enlightenment* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999); *Brilliant Women: 18th-Century Bluestockings*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger and Lucy Peltz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); and Penelope Anderson, *Friendship’s Shadows: Women’s Friendship and the Politics of Betrayal in England, 1640-1705* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012).

¹¹⁰ Myers, *The bluestocking circle*, p. 2.

¹¹¹ Elizabeth Eger, ‘The Bluestocking Circle: *Friendship, Patronage and Learning*’, in *Brilliant Women: 18th-Century Bluestockings* ed. by Elizabeth Eger and Lucy Peltz (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), pp. 20-55 (p. 31).

¹¹² Paula R. Backscheider, *Eighteenth-Century Women Poets and their Poetry: Inventing Agency, Inventing Genre* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), p. 194.

we see how friendship functioned as a form of self-promotion, but the example of Cole's letters demonstrates how patronage and friendship overlap.

Critical responses to the notion of friendship and appeal in a patronage relationship consider it an essential component. Jessica L. Malay writes, 'To gain even the most limited advantages of patronage, it was essential to carefully construct a text that would strengthen the writer's affinity with the patron'.¹¹³ Cole's letters to Hertford suggest that, as well as constructing a literary text that would appeal, it was also necessary to construct a textual version of oneself that would appeal to the patron. On 23 September 1729, Cole writes: 'I find so many of ^{my} thoughts and inclinations agree with you that since our friendship I am grown half fond of my self even our pleasures are the same'.¹¹⁴ Whether a friendship is formed as an alliance or for pleasure, the unifying factor is one of like-mindedness. By stating that their 'thoughts and inclination' agree with one another's, Cole weaves this idea of like-mindedness into her letters and indicates that she and Hertford view and interact with the world around them in a similar manner. In using the word 'find', Cole signals her discovery of their like-mindedness to Hertford and, in doing so, suggests that there is evidence to be found within their correspondence that denotes these similarities.

It is unsurprising that Cole suggests that there is evidence of their like-mindedness within the correspondence since this evidence has been planted by Cole herself throughout the preceding letters. On 26 August 1729, Cole writes: 'I have heard poor M^{rs} Digby (who was a very good Judge) say the very thing you mention, and I will own I take a letter writ without any form, or reserve, Just as thought dictates, to be the very Image and Essence of the mind how very happy then must yours make me'.¹¹⁵ In the same letter, Cole writes: '[you have] Promised the most agreeable reward in the World, your thoughts to be always sent me

¹¹³ Jessica L. Malay, 'Positioning Patronage: Lanyer's *Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum* and the Countess of Cumberland in Time and Place', *The Seventeenth Century*, 28:3 (2013), 251-274 (p. 251).

¹¹⁴ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 23 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 179.

¹¹⁵ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 131.

Just as they occur to you without the least reserve'.¹¹⁶ Both these statements indicate that the notion of a letter as a medium for thoughts 'Just as they occur' is something that Hertford has previously expressed an admiration or a preference for. Consequently, in the same letter, Cole writes: 'even my Inmost thoughts attend you in their plainest dress'.¹¹⁷ To say that her thoughts are shown in their 'plainest dress' suggests that they are presented without artifice and without reservation. However, just as Altman reminds us that the language of absence is made present by make-believe, so too is the language of sincerity.¹¹⁸ For, even in their 'plainest dress' the thoughts are still in some form of 'dress' and Cole's choice of these words shows her self-awareness of the constructed nature of this mimicry.

All of Cole's letters contain poetry, either in the form of a couple of lines or full verse transcriptions. Some of the lines are recognisable as quotes from well-known poetry such as Alexander Pope's *Eloise to Abelard* (1717) and Thomas Parnell's *A Night-Piece on Death* (1722).¹¹⁹ However, the majority of the poetic verses and lines included are from unknown sources. Hughes speculates that these compositions are Cole's own and, though Cole does not acknowledge them as her own, she does claim the title of 'Rhymer' for herself on several occasions.¹²⁰ There is also evidence of Cole altering the lines of others in order to better suit her correspondence. For example, she alters Dryden's lines:

Fly swift, ye Hours, you measure Time in vain
Till you bring back Leonidas again:
Be swifter now; and, to redeem that Wrong,
When he and I are met, be twice as long.¹²¹

To instead emphasise female friendship:

Fly swift ye hours you measure time in Vain

¹¹⁶ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 134.

¹¹⁷ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 131.

¹¹⁸ Altman, *Epistolarity: Approaches to a Form*, p. 140

¹¹⁹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729 and 18 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 130 and f. 123.

¹²⁰ Hughes, 'A Romantic Correspondence', p. 190. Cole refers to herself as a 'Rhymer' in Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 25 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 185.

¹²¹ John Dryden, *Marriage a-la-mode* (London, 1673), p. 15. All further reference are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

till you bring back my (charming) friend again
 Be shorter now and to redeem that wrong
 when She and I are met be twice as long.¹²²

Dryden's original lines are from *Marriage-a-la-mode* (1673) and are spoken by Palmyra, Leonidas' lover. Cole's implicit connection between herself and Palmyra, and Hertford and Leonidas, could be read as a sign of same-sex desire; however, Cole's designation of Hertford as her '(charming) friend' indicates that it is designed to represent female friendship. The choice of a *Marriage-a-la-mode* quote is an interesting choice both thematically and because of the affixed print dedication - in the first edition of the play - to Dryden's patron, John Wilmot, the Earl of Rochester (1647-1680). In terms of the plot, Laura Linker states that 'Dryden parallels the concurrent heroic and comedic plots to emphasise the potential political dangers of the court's hedonistic impulses'; however, the critique of courtly behaviour is not limited to the 'hedonistic impulses' but also extends to the secretive intrigue for political gain that nearly proves deadly.¹²³ This critique of the court extends into Dryden's dedication, he writes: 'In my little experience of a court (which I confess I desire not to improve) [...] Few men there have the assurance of a Friend, as not to be made ridiculous by him, when they are absent' (*Marriage a-la-mode*, f. 4). By positioning herself and Hertford as characters whose feelings for one another remain true in and amongst the secrets and political scandals, Cole confers a purity and innocence onto their relationship that implies that her own motivations are not financially or politically motivated.

There are a couple of occasions where Cole introduces the verses as being by an unnamed 'friend' that could, conceivably, be a cover for Cole herself since she does not present any hints or evidence as to who this 'friend' is. Playful constructions of self-authorship were common throughout coterie correspondences; for example, Hertford herself

¹²² Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 11 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 166.

¹²³ Laura Linker, "Decencies of Behaviour": Dryden and the Libertines in *Marriage-a-la-mode*, *Restoration and 18th Century Theatre Research*, 24:1 (2009), 47-60 (p. 48-9).

designates the authorship of one of her own poems, ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’, to an ‘unnamed male author’ who Hertford ‘discovered’ in ‘a Cabinet among other papers’ in her correspondence to the Countess of Pomfret.¹²⁴ On 2 September 1729, Cole writes: ‘I am very happy that you like the verses of My friend, and am determined to show you the whole Copy the very first kind opportunity the person that wrote them is lost to almost every Joy in Life’.¹²⁵ The ready accessibility that Cole claims for these verses could simply be representative of a coterie correspondence existing between herself and a friend, or it could be a veil for Cole’s own authorship. Indeed, there are a couple of occasions when Cole exhibits an emotional or personal connection to the verses. For example, on 18 August 1729, Cole introduces a verse as ‘a description of a favorite walk, that I cou’d more then half wish to be on with an agreeable friend’.¹²⁶ The term ‘favorite’ seems to personally attach Cole to the verse.

Cole’s approach to authorship is generally coy throughout the correspondence; indeed, on 25 September 1729 she begs Hertford not to reveal that she is a ‘Rhymer’.¹²⁷ Within this authorial posturing there is also a sense that Cole is mimicking Hertford’s own approach to authorship, or what Cole perceives is Hertford’s approach to authorship. On 23 September 1729, Cole writes: ‘I shall sing your last ballad a hundred times & still it will be new, but depend upon it I wont let anybody learn or have it’.¹²⁸ To not ‘let anybody learn [it]’ suggests a wish to conceal the contents. The added provision of not letting anybody ‘have it’ expresses Cole’s intention not to let anybody see the physical copy of the ballad. Both of these factors could lead to the discovery of Hertford’s authorship. Cole’s assurance that Hertford may ‘depend upon it’ implies that this desire for anonymity has been expressed by

¹²⁴ The Countess of Hertford to the Countess of Pomfret, 28 December 1738, DNP, MSS 111, f. 18.

¹²⁵ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 2 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 141.

¹²⁶ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 18 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 124.

¹²⁷ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 25 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 185.

¹²⁸ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 23 September 1729, DNP, MSS 20, f. 176.

Hertford in a previous letter. Consequently, in the next letter, Cole begs that Hertford ‘will never say to any Mortal living that I am a Rhymer’ which demonstrates the same desire for concealment and implies that Cole is mimicking Hertford in terms of how to frame authorship and authorial intent.¹²⁹

Whether or not the verses are Cole’s own or not, she consistently positions the inclusion of the verses as being for Hertford’s benefit and pleasure. For example, on 26 August 1729, Cole writes that she ‘cannot for my Life help transcribing some Verses [...] I remember to have heard you say you Lov’d letters with Verses and little sort of novels huddled together.’¹³⁰ This description of Hertford’s generic tastes is significant because it captures the content and arrangement of letters and poetry in Rowe’s fictional *Letters Moral and Entertaining* (1729), which contained eight letters addressed to Cleora (Hertford’s pen-name) and Hertford also had unattributed contributions in both the 1731 and 1733 editions of *Letters*. Indeed, Cole’s correspondence shows her awareness of the collection and of Hertford’s hand in it. On 16 October 1729, she writes that herself, Pomfret, and Lumley were discussing ‘the Moral and Entertaining letters’ and that Pomfret ‘expressed a Curiosity to see them, as having been told [Hertford] writ some of the last ten in the book’.¹³¹ Cole declares that she ‘insisted on it that I was certain they were not yours [...] nor did I ever so much as hint not even to Miss Vane or any Living Mortal, that you writ or knew who did write any of them’.¹³² This exchange demonstrates that Cole was not only aware of Hertford’s generic preferences, and situated her coterie contributions within those conventions, but also that she used this knowledge to insert herself into a position of privileged knowledge within Hertford’s social circle.

¹²⁹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 25 September 1729, DNP, MSS 20, f. 185.

¹³⁰ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 26 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 132-3.

¹³¹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 16 October 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 215.

¹³² Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 16 October 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 216.

Cole's verses are not only included as a response to Hertford's general love of verses, but specifically picked as a response to Thomson's dedication in *Spring* and the poem itself. Thomson's dedication was attached to the original 1728 publication of *Spring* and to the reprinted edition in 1729. Since Cole's correspondence was in the latter part of 1729, it seems likely that Cole would have been aware of the dedication and its contents. Cole's correspondence is an attempt to construct a 'self' that would appeal to Hertford as a potential patronal client, it makes sense, therefore, for the verses that she includes to be responding to Thomson's version of Hertford as a poetic patron.

As aforementioned, Thomson's dedication to Hertford constructs her as an exemplar of virtuous rural retirement by speaking of her 'calm Evening Walks' (*Spring*, p. iii) and 'most delightful Retirement' (*Spring*, p. iii) in nature. The first full-length poem to be included in Cole's correspondence is a ballad that expresses sentiments reminiscent of Thomson's *Spring*:

again I fly to sweet retreats
to Sooth my tortur'd mind
and on the verdent grassy seats
sing dittys to the wind.¹³³

The idea of the speaker 'fly[ing]' to nature's 'grassy seats' implies that the speaker is retiring to nature and the continual use of the word 'I' suggests that this retirement is an individual venture. Moreover, to term nature as 'sweet retreats' shows that the speaker views such retirement as a positive movement. Furthermore, the notion of this rural retirement as 'Sooth[ing] my tortur'd mind' is akin to Thomson's assertion that the season Spring brings 'Tenderness, and Joy' to man and serenity to his soul (*Spring*, ll. 861-870).

Cole also copies the poetic language that Thomson uses to describe Hertford. On 11 September 1729, she writes: 'let me Conjure you in the words of another friend of mine:

¹³³ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 12 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 121.

‘What ever weight woes I’m doomed to bear / Let not thy Gentle Soul demand her share’.¹³⁴

The association of Hertford with ‘Gentle’ is common throughout Thomson’s poetic tributes: in ‘A Hymn to Solitude’, he praises the ‘gentle-looking Hertford’s bloom’ and in ‘To Retirement an Ode’ he talks with the ‘gentle Hartford’ (‘A Hymn to Solitude’, l. 20 and ‘To Retirement an Ode’, l. 4). Indeed, Hughes mimics Thomson, titling her biography of Hertford *The Gentle Hertford, Her Life and Letters*.¹³⁵ Cole’s use of the word ‘Conjure’ is particularly apt as it suggests an awareness that she is creating an image of Hertford that corresponds with how Thomson painted Hertford.

Cole also mimics the idealised rural retirement in Thomson’s poetic address to Hertford. In her ‘description of a favourite walk’, Cole writes:

I reach a Darling Melancholy Grove
Which looks ordained for Poetry and Love
Thro flowery Lawns, or waving Corn I stray
While Larks and black birds sing me on my way.¹³⁶

The way in which the verse creates an emotive nature and portrays the speaker as blending into the landscape is reminiscent of Thomson’s poetic lines: ‘In soft assemblage, listen to my Song, / Which thy own Season paints, when Nature all / Is blooming and benevolent like Thee’ (*Spring*, ll. 8-10). In these lines, Thomson combines the ideas of poetry and nature together and, by suggesting that Spring ‘paints’ his song, frames nature as inspiring and responding to art. Likewise, the notion of a grove being ‘ordained for Poetry’ suggests that nature and poetry are intrinsically linked. Moreover, Thomson melded together the concepts of Hertford and Spring by declaring that it is Hertford’s ‘own Season’ and that it is ‘blooming and benevolent like Thee’ (*Spring*, ll. 9-10). Similarly, the lines that Cole repeats show the speaker weaving through corn with the birds acknowledging and accepting her presence. In

¹³⁴ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 11 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 164.

¹³⁵ Hughes refers to Hertford as ‘Thomson’s “Gentle Hertford”’. Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 408.

¹³⁶ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 18 August 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 125.

doing so, Cole is trying to shape herself on the same model that Thomson presents of Hertford – that is, someone who purses the quiet pleasures of rural retirement.

It is not just the verses themselves that respond to Thomson's dedication and *Spring*, the same sentiments are threaded through Cole's mediations of nature. For example, as aforementioned, Thomson's dedication italicises '*Rural Nature*' in what, I argue, shows Thomson's efforts to equate Hertford with a nature that is natural and untouched by man. Similarly, Cole portrays herself as immersed in nature of that kind. She continually portrays herself as partaking in lone walks. For example, she writes: 'I get out and Ramble by my Self every morning at five or six o'th Clock'.¹³⁷ By emphasising that she is alone, Cole positions herself and her walks away from civilisation and fully integrated in nature. On 11 September 1729, Cole writes: 'I am Just come in from Rambling among the trees & bushes In the Wilderness'.¹³⁸ 'Wilderness' creates the impression of an untamed and untouched nature. Even the word 'Ramble' is complicit as an act of rambling is to walk or wander without a definite route or other aim and is particularly associated with the countryside.¹³⁹ This prompts the image of Cole as removed from the confines of time and duty and, again, conjures images of a wild rural authenticity.

As discussed earlier, Thomson characterises Hertford as a woman fit to 'shine in Courts' but who chooses instead to 'walk the Plain, / With Innocence, and Meditation join'd' (*Spring*, ll. 5-6). Similarly, Cole writes: 'a Cottage has many blessings Courts can never host'.¹⁴⁰ By framing a cottage as a more desirable location than a court, Cole is seemingly responding to Thomson's construction of Hertford's preferences. In another comment about a

¹³⁷ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 156. Though the opening of the letter is torn out, Cole references that her location has a garden which is a vista that directs the eye towards Windsor Castle which suggests that she is no longer in Grosvenor Street.

¹³⁸ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 11 September 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 167.

¹³⁹ 'Ramble' in *The Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/>> [accessed 28 February 2017].

¹⁴⁰ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 157.

walk, Cole writes that her walks are '[c]harming sweet and free from all disturbers the dew decks every Green with many Gems and the gay happy birds are singing their little Hymns of Joy'.¹⁴¹ By equating dew drops with gemstones, Cole implies that the real riches to be found are in nature which, again, implies that she considers nature to be a favourable location in a similar manner to Thomson's construction of Hertford's preferences.

Despite Cole's emulations and mimicry, her attempts fall on deaf ears. On 14 October 1729, Cole specifically requests Hertford's patronage: 'I have sent you some verses upon an Old Roman Encampment near Dorchester now Call'd Pomery, you may show them to any Intimate friend, you see they are all my own'.¹⁴² This explicit claim of authorship is a deviation from Cole's authorial framing throughout their correspondence and suggests that Cole considered originality to be a key aspect of a patrons' support for a text. Unfortunately, the verses themselves are lost to us and their absence from Hertford's letter-books or miscellany is a testament to the failure of Cole's request. In terms of the materiality of the letters themselves, fourteen of the letters have been transcribed by Hertford, but the last two in the collection remain in Cole's hand (as evidenced by intact seals). Hertford did not complete her transcription of the letters for reasons unknown; however, Hertford's failure to transcribe all the letters suggests that they, and by extension Cole herself, were not an important part of Hertford's patronage and coterie correspondence. Moreover, the letters are not transcribed into a letter-book, as with many of Hertford's correspondents, but rather the letters have been collated into a volume: 'Percy Family Letters and Papers. Vol. 22. 1711-1734'. This volume is bound in red morocco with marbled end papers. There is no book plate, but there is the gold tooled stamp on the front cover of the Percy Crescent. The individual letters are tipped into the volume on guards, in chronological order and the binding appears to have been carried out in the nineteenth century. This demonstrates that the letters

¹⁴¹ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, undated, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 156.

¹⁴² Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 14 October 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 213.

were not compiled contemporaneously, or at least not in their current format. In contrast, Hertford transcribed her letters from correspondents such as Rowe and Pomfret into individual letter-books for display. The suggestion is that Hertford chose not to transcribe the letters into a stand-alone letter-book because she did not consider Cole to be an acquaintance worth displaying to visitors.

It is not just Hertford's letter-books that Cole is left out from; while Hertford's miscellany contains epistolary extracts, poems, and translations from various patronal clients and acquaintances, such as Stephen Duck, John Dyer, John Dalton, and Elizabeth Carter, there is no mention of Cole. Significantly, the miscellany contains 'A Hymn to Content' titled as 'by M^r Harvey Address'd to his Dear Wife at Ickworth Park' and dated 19 September 1729.¹⁴³ This date corresponds precisely to the time when Hertford and Cole were corresponding. Although Cole only explicitly claims one poem as her composition, 'verses upon an Old Roman Encampment near Dorchester now Call'd Pomery', nevertheless these verses are included in their correspondence but do not make it into the miscellany.¹⁴⁴ The genre of the miscellaneous collection was seen as responding to current tastes and Hertford's decision not to include Cole demonstrates that she did not see Cole's work as contributing to the contemporary literary landscape or, at least, not in a way she wished to advertise in relation to herself.

Cole's correspondence with Hertford not only shows Hertford's manipulation of textual artifacts in order to promote her desired patronal image, but also highlights the importance of coterie correspondence to patronage requests. Cole's one explicit request for patronage was for Hertford to circulate her verses amongst her social and literary circles. If

¹⁴³ 'A Hymn to Content' in DNP, MSS 116, f. 169. The author of the poem is most likely John Hervey (1696-1743) who is mentioned on several occasions in Hertford's correspondence and was Baron Hervey of Ickworth. As far as I can ascertain this poem is unpublished and does not appear in the most recent collection of Hervey's poems: *The Collected Verse of John, Lord Hervey (1696-1743)* ed by. Bill Overton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

¹⁴⁴ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 14 October 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 213.

Cole's verses are circulated amongst Hertford's intimate friends then Cole herself has, in a way, penetrated the circle as well; for, it would ensure that an awareness of Cole and her work permeates Hertford's intimate circle. Traditionally, systems of literary patronage are discussed in terms of print collections: either in terms of dedications or subscriptions. In this instance, the patronage Cole seeks is one of manuscript inclusion and circulation.

As I outlined in the introduction, scholars such as Margaret J. M. Ezell and Melanie Bigold have shown that 'manuscript circulation was still a viable and competitive technology' despite the fact that 'print was becoming the dominant, conventional mode of transmitting what we consider literary and academic writings'.¹⁴⁵ Cole's desire for Hertford to 'show [the verses] to any Intimate friend' not only shows that manuscript circulation was still a desirable option but is also representative of the essential role that patronage played in manuscript circulation and the maintenance of this practice as a workable technology during the rise of print culture.¹⁴⁶ Hertford's potential circulation of the verses casts her as an effective spokesperson for the work and this is an integral part of ensuring the success of a manuscript. A spokesperson such as Hertford would ensure that the verses reached her social circle and beyond with an attached seal of approval. Susan S. Lanser speaks of female friendship as 'private intimacies becom[ing] public relations'.¹⁴⁷ The same might be said of patronage relationships: Cole's request for Hertford's patronage demonstrates her attempt to transition from a private intimacy to a public relationship.

'This public mark of your friendship': Hertford and Watts

The depiction of Hertford as an exemplar of rural retirement – the idea promoted by Thomson and, following him, Cole – was but one of the textual representations of Hertford's

¹⁴⁵ Ezell, *Social Authorship*, p. 1.

¹⁴⁶ Grace Cole to the Countess of Hertford, 14 October 1729, in DNP, MSS 20, f. 213-14.

¹⁴⁷ Susan S. Lanser, 'Befriending the Body: Female Intimacies as Class Acts', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32:3 (1998-9), 179-98 (p. 180).

patronage. As a counterpoint to Thomson and Cole's construction of Hertford as an exemplar of rural retirement, Watts presents Hertford as a model of religious piety in his dedication for *Reliquiae Juveniles: miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse, on natural, moral, and divine subjects; written chiefly in younger years* (1734). In showing this counterpoint, I seek to demonstrate the different public faces of patrons as their image shifted from dedication to dedication. This section draws on notions of inclusivity and exclusivity throughout in order to show how these notions inform the content of the dedication; how the dedication plays with these concepts in order to generate public appeal; and Hertford's understanding of a dedication as something that is attached to her and designed to be visible to others.

Described by Katherine Wakely-Mulrony as 'a prominent nonconformist chiefly remembered for his contribution to British hymnody', Watts' works naturally touch upon religious matters.¹⁴⁸ In his biography of Watts, the Reverend Thomas Milner quotes a contemporary biographer as reporting that *Reliquiae Juveniles* contains many pieces that are 'highly beautiful; some few are on literary subjects, but the far greater part contain the effusions of piety from the lips of a man of genius. They ought to form part of the library of every young person of taste and seriousness'.¹⁴⁹ As a signal of the intentions of the collection, Watts begins with a piece titled 'Searching after God' which meditates on human purpose: '[God] hath set us, who are inferior spirits, this Task in these Regions of Mortal Flesh, to search and *feel after him, if haply we may find* the supreme, the infinite and external Spirit'.¹⁵⁰ By beginning the collection in this manner, Watts frames the text as a religious journey for the reader.

¹⁴⁸ Katherine Wakely-Mulrony, 'Isaac Watts and the Dimensions of Child Interiority', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39:1 (2016), 103-119 (p. 103).

¹⁴⁹ Thomas Milner, *The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts D.D* (London: Thomas Richardson and Son, 1845), p. 488.

¹⁵⁰ Isaac Watts, *Reliquiae Juveniles: miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse, on natural, moral, and divine subjects; written chiefly in younger years* (London, 1734), p. 2-3. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

As with Thomson, Watts' dedication paints a picture of Hertford that conforms to the text itself. He begins by stating that '[y]our Ladyship's known Character and Taste for everything that is Pious and Polite give an honourable Sanction to those Writings which stand Recommended by your Name and Approbation' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. iv). Here, Watts is framing Hertford as someone who is defined by her taste for the 'Pious' and 'Polite' and, likewise, implying that this version of Hertford is already the public version of her identity. Furthermore, as the OED definition states, the word 'sanction' means 'a law or degree; especially an ecclesiastical degree' and was included in Phillips' new edition of *New World of Words* (1706) as meaning 'Decree, Ordinance, especially such as relate to Ecclesiastical Affairs; as the Constitution made at the Council of Basil, for the Reformation of the Church'.¹⁵¹ These definitions show that the word 'sanction' has, or at least had in the eighteenth century, religious overtones that equates Hertford's approval of the text with an ecclesiastical decree and thus confers a religious authority onto the dedication via Hertford. Later in the dedication, Watts also writes: 'the Leisure which you borrow from the Magnificence and Ceremonies of a Court, is employ'd in devout Contemplations' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. vi). The juxtaposition of the magnificence of the court and Hertford's spiritual contemplations serves to highlight Hertford's piety amidst worldly temptations which further emphasises Hertford's suitability as the dedicatee. This rhetoric is similar to the rural retirement that Cole and Thomson both reference in their textual tributes to Hertford; however, Watts' dedication speaks to a worldly and spiritual retirement rather than the pastoral one invoked previously.

The focus on religion in the dedication is particularly interesting, since Hertford and Watts belonged to two different strands of Christianity. Hertford, as a member of the court, was High Church Anglican, while Watts was a dissenter. Their religious affiliations not only

¹⁵¹ 'Sanction' in *The Oxford English Dictionary* [online] <<http://www.oed.com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/>> [accessed 27 February 2017].

affected their forms of worship, but also their public life. Dissenters were restricted from many spheres of public life such as access to public office, civil service careers, and from obtaining a university degree. Watts was offered the chance to study at Oxford or Cambridge but, as Johnson reported, ‘he declared his resolution of taking his lot with the dissenters’.¹⁵² Thus, Watts continued his education at a dissenting academy run by Thomas Rowe.¹⁵³ These factors demonstrate, as J. R. Watson argues, Watts’ ‘sense of apartness from the established church’.¹⁵⁴ However, throughout the dedication there is no mention of religious affiliations or the church itself, it simply refers to ‘the dignity of our holy religion, and the blessed gospel’ (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. v). The phrases ‘our holy religion’ and ‘blessed gospel’ confer a sense of inclusivity onto the collection rather than Watson’s posited ‘sense of apartness’.¹⁵⁵ These universal references are complemented by a focus on Hertford’s religious morality throughout the dedication. Watts proclaims: ‘[I am] a witness of those virtues [...] amidst all the tempting grandeurs of this world, and in an age of growing infidelity’ (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. v). Rather than focusing on the specifics of Hertford’s religious affiliations, the dedication instead emphasises her virtue and morality amidst worldly temptations which potentially broadens the readership to a non-sectarian audience.

By focusing on Hertford’s morality, rather than the specifics of religious worship, Watts’ dedication engages in discourses of secularisation in the eighteenth century. Critics such as Penelope J. Corfield have argued that the long eighteenth century saw an increase in secularisation and that this was characterised by phenomena such as a shift towards ‘lay piety’ and an ‘acceptance of religious pluralism’.¹⁵⁶ The implication of these factors was a

¹⁵² Johnson, *English Poets*, p. 105.

¹⁵³ J. R. Watson, ‘The Hymns of Isaac Watts and the Tradition of Dissent’ in *Dissenting Praise: Religious Dissent and the Hymn in England and Wales*, ed. by Isabel Rivers and David L. Wykes (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), pp. 33-68 (p. 34).

¹⁵⁴ J. R. Watson, ‘The Hymns of Isaac Watts and the Tradition of Dissent’, p. 34.

¹⁵⁵ J. R. Watson, ‘The Hymns of Isaac Watts and the Tradition of Dissent’, p. 34.

¹⁵⁶ Penelope J. Corfield, ‘An Age of Infidelity’: secularisation in eighteenth-century England’, *Social History*, 39:2 (2014), 229-247 (p. 232).

move away from polarising religious difference and instead focused on a fostering of moral benevolence. Similarly, Rostvig writes: '[t]he Epicureanism and the down-right immorality of the Restoration milieu were being exchanged for more serious moral and religious attitudes. As a result, the gap between Tory and Whig poets, between Anglican and Nonconformist, became considerably less'.¹⁵⁷ In conjunction with Corfield's analysis, Rostvig's account suggests that the diminishing of religious schisms was built on the basis of moral attitudes. By speaking solely of 'our religion', without reference to specific religious practices, alongside the emphasis on Hertford's religious piety, the dedication endorses notions of religious pluralism. Consequently, Hertford becomes a public figure attached to discourses of moral benevolence and secularisation. Corfield also links the rise of secularisation with the commercialisation of society and the increase in customer choice.¹⁵⁸ For Watts to include dialogues of this kind in his dedication suggests he is trying to appeal to a large consumer market. By privileging discourses of inclusivity through his connection with the Anglican aristocrat, Watts ensures that his collection appeals to a wider range of customers.

The dedication provides Watts, as it did with Thomson, a means of publicly emphasising the ties of patronage and personal relationship between himself and Hertford. Watts' dedication begins: 'I beg leave, Madam, to flatter myself, that the same condescension and goodness, which has admitted several of these pieces into your closet in manuscript, will permit them to make this public appearance before you' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. iii-iv). On the surface, this statement gives thanks to Hertford for permitting the dedication. However, the choice of words offers a subtle sub-text. The word 'admitted' suggests that a guarded threshold has been crossed. It conveys the impression of exclusivity in Hertford's closet, which in turn imports a sense of worth onto Watts' work. This exclusivity, coupled with the

¹⁵⁷ Rostvig, *The Happy Man*, p. 14.

¹⁵⁸ Corfield, 'An Age of Infidelity', p. 232.

personal image of Hertford's 'closet', strengthens the perception of the relationship between Hertford and Watts. Thus, in the same manner that a familiar letter is a self-fashioning act, the dedication is acting as a textual representation of the patronage relationship between Hertford and Watts. Moreover, the idea of the manuscripts moving from Hertford's 'closet' into the 'public' evokes the idea of a boundary between the private and the public being crossed and the dedication as facilitating that crossing.

Crucially, Hertford acknowledges the public nature of the dedication in a subsequent letter. On 8 April 1734, Hertford writes:

I have received the book to which you had the partiality to prefix my name. This public mark of your friendship, and the kind opinion you express of me, would be in danger of giving me a self-satisfaction which I have no title to, if a crowd of frailties and defects, which are too frequently reminding me how far I am from meriting your esteem, did not hinder me from giving way to a complacence which would be criminal unless my life were more perfect.¹⁵⁹

To say that the dedication is a 'public mark' is an indication of how their friendship should be read: a 'mark' suggests something that is affixed to Hertford and visible to others. Thus, the dedication is acknowledged by Hertford as not only a representation of her relationship with Watts, but, significantly, one that is designed for the public to see.

Given the potential for the readership to base their perception of a patron on a dedication, it might be tempting to conclude that the client had a measure of control over their patrons' public representations. However, Hertford was very much aware of the potential for dedications to create a public image and she manipulated and refused dedicatory addresses according to her desires. For example, Watts' dedication to Hertford in *Reliquiae Juveniles* emphasises Hertford's religious piety in order to suit the text, but, as we shall see, there is much more to the story of this dedication that shows Hertford's control and desire to use dedications for the advancement of her own poems. The notion of a dedicator specifically

¹⁵⁹ Countess of Hertford to Isaac Watts, 8 April 1734, in Milner, *The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts*, p. 504.

moulding an image of the dedicatee to suit the affixed text could be construed as evidence that the patron lacked control over their public image; however, my research into Hertford and the background of the *Reliquiae Juveniles* dedication demonstrates that she was instrumental in forming a cohesive identity for herself and, indeed, that she crafted a coterie identity to suit her correspondence with Watts.

‘Consign[ing] Eusebia to Celestial Fame’: Hertford’s verses in *Reliquiae Juveniles*

Hertford occupied the role of ‘patron’ and ‘artist’ at numerous intervals throughout her lifetime; however, there is one particular instance in which she encompasses both of these identities simultaneously: in Watts’ *Reliquiae Juveniles* (1734). The dedication to Hertford in *Reliquiae Juveniles* provides a public connection between Hertford and the collection.

However, what many contemporary readers could not have known, but that we know today, was that Hertford was also a contributing poet to *Reliquiae Juveniles* under the pen-name ‘Eusebia’. The collection contained four of her poems: ‘A Rural Meditation’, ‘A Midnight Hymn’, ‘A Penitential Thought’, and ‘The Dying Christian’s Hope’ (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. 273-277). The selection of these particular poems is significant because the verses, the prefatory introduction to the verses, and the textual dedication to Hertford all work together to form a cohesive representation.

Critical discourses concerning the inclusion of Hertford’s verses focus on Watts’ role as the organiser of their publication. Hughes writes of Hertford discovering that *Reliquiae Juveniles* ‘is to contain some of those pious verses which she had enclosed in letters from time to time’, and Deborah Kennedy simply writes that ‘Watts arranged to publish four of her poems in his new book’.¹⁶⁰ In both of these accounts, Hertford is devoid of any agency in the decision to have the poems published; however, the correspondence between Hertford and

¹⁶⁰ Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 354 and Deborah Kennedy, *Poetic Sisters: Early Eighteenth-Century Women Poets* (Pennsylvania: Bucknell University Press, 2013), p. 113.

Watts tells a different tale. On 9 February 1734, Hertford writes to Watts to accept his offer to dedicate *Reliquiae Juveniles* to her. She follows this by entreating: ‘if there be any among the things you have of mine which you think worth placing among yours, I shall have just cause to be pleased at seeing them come abroad in such company’.¹⁶¹ While Hughes and Kennedy frame Watts as the driving force behind the inclusion of Hertford’s verses, this letter indicates that Hertford requested that her verses be included in the collection. Moreover, by attaching it to her acceptance of the dedication, the request becomes a condition of that acceptance; thus, Hertford utilises her patronage relationship with Watts in order to create an opportunity for her verses to be published. For Watts, providing the opportunity for the publication of Hertford’s verses could be seen as him acting as a patron to Hertford; however, attaching her request to her acceptance of the dedication shows that the power balance is still in Hertford’s favour and demonstrates a level of control over her own work. Thus, rather than displacement, Hertford’s blurring of the boundaries between ‘patron’ and ‘artist’ show that traditional forms of patronage were still being reinforced in the eighteenth century.

The poems by Eusebia have their own section titled ‘LXIII Piety *in a Court*’ with Watts framing her poetry in the same manner as he framed Hertford in relation to his text. Watts begins the section by writing, in a fictional letter to Philomela (Rowe’s pen-name), that his musings on the line ‘*The Court’s a golden, but fatal Circle*’ gave ‘occasion to the following Enquiries’ (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. 272). These musings form a poem - ‘Piety in a Court’ - that, importantly, is the same poem as Watts’ first poetic tribute to Hertford: ‘To the R^t Hon^{ble} The Countess of Hartford Sent to M^{rs} Rowe By M^r Watts’.¹⁶² The fictional epistle

¹⁶¹ Countess of Hertford to Isaac Watts, 9 February 1734, in Milner, *The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts*, D. D. p. 504.

¹⁶² Rowe’s first poetic collection was published as *Poems on Several Occasions, by Philomela* (1696) and by 1734, following the subsequent publication of *Friendship in Death, or Letters from the Dead to the Living* (1728) and *Letters Moral and Entertaining* (1729), the general readership would recognise ‘Philomela’ as

and poem work in a similar manner to a dedicatory epistle since they are paratextual materials offering the reader a lens through which to read the subsequent text. In this instance, Watts creates a connection between Hertford's unattributed verses and Rowe. In doing so, Watts invites the reader to align the material with Rowe's poetic work and also hints that Hertford is the author of the proceeding verses due to her connection with Rowe and the repeated material from his first poetic tribute to Hertford.

Watts asks: 'Is there a Soul at Court that seeks the Grove / or lonely Hill to muse on heavenly Love' ('Piety in a Court', l. 13). The poem answers its own question:

Have ye not met her, Angels, in her Flight,
Wing'd with Devotion, thro' meridian Night,
Ne'er Heav'ns high Portal? – Angels, speak her Name,
Consign Eusebia to celestial Fame
(‘Piety in a Court’, ll. 17-20).

As with Watts' dedication to Hertford, the poem, and title of the section, create the impression of a virtuous soul in court which is reflected in the pseudonym of 'Eusebia' that Hertford employed for these verses. Watts' first poetic tribute to Hertford was, in fact, the first time the name Eusebia had been used in relation to Hertford. The name Eusebia is from ancient Greek and means piety, loyalty, and filial respect. The general discourse surrounding coterie acknowledges that pseudonyms were adopted as a means of signifying women's writing identities and their place within certain social and literary circles.¹⁶³ Watts' choice of the name 'Eusebia' for Hertford signals that he considers her place within their literary circle as one that is focused on piety and loyalty – her image at court.

This focus on piety and virtuousness is picked up again in another paratextual appendage to Eusebia's poems: a fictional testimony by Alethina – a supposed acquaintance of Eusebia. Alethina writes: '[h]er publick and her private Hours are of the same Colour and

Rowe. 'To the R^t Hon^{ble} The Countess of Hartford Sent to M^{rs} Rowe By M^r Watts' can be found in DNP, MSS 110, f. 254.

¹⁶³ See Prescott, *Women, Authorship and Literary Culture, 1690-1740*, p. 31.

Hue: She is much a Christian in the Family and the Closet, nor doth she put off any part of that glorious profession at Court' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. 273). This statement is remarkably similar to Watts' public dedication to Hertford: 'how happily the leisure you borrow from the magnificence and ceremonies of a court, is employed in devout contemplations' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. vi). Both statements emphasise Hertford/Eusebia's private devout nature by juxtaposing it against the magnificence of court. Thus, Alethina's account mirrors Watts' dedicatory address to Hertford in presenting her as a model of religious piety. In addition to celebrating Hertford/Eusebia's devout nature, Alethina's testimony also offers an account of how the verses came to be in the collection: 'I have been favoured with some of the fruits of her retired meditations [...] I have had leave to transcribe three or four copies with which I have been much entertained, and I am persuaded you will thank me for the entertainment they give you' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. 273). This account relates the events that actually transpired, with Alethina assuming Watts' role as receiver and transcriber of Hertford/Eusebia's coterie offerings. However, Alethina's account implies that Eusebia did not ask to have her verses transcribed while in reality Hertford did. The account instead offers Alethina's enjoyment of the verses as the reason for their transcription and inclusion. This fictional alteration of the journey to print speaks to the issue of female reserve in relation to authorship. Specifically, Alethina's account refers to: 'Eusebia's Modesty [...] a Blush will easily be raised in the Face of so much Virtue' (*Reliquiae Juveniles*, p. 273). By stating Eusebia's 'modesty', Alethina's account frames Eusebia's authorship as detached from the commercial context of the literary marketplace. This offers an additional comment to discourses on women's authorship in the period as it suggests that, commercially, a women's modesty was a valuable commodity.

The public dedicatory address to Hertford and the preface to Eusebia's poems both construct Hertford/Eusebia as religiously devout. The depiction of rural retirement in

Eusebia's poems, as selected by Watts, also adheres to this representation. Hertford's poetic portrayal of rural retirement, and the tranquillity found there, is dependent on God. The first poem 'A Rural Meditation' celebrates God as the creator of the universe: '[His] Word ordain'd the Silver *Thames* to flow, / Rais'd all the Hills, and laid the Vallies low; / Who taught the Nightingale in Shades to sing'.¹⁶⁴ The beauties of the landscape and the tuneful sounds of the Nightingale are all God's creation. Moreover, God not only creates but also sustains; he 'Makes the young Steer obedient till the Land, / And lowing Heifers own the Milker's Hand' ('A Rural Meditation', ll. 17-18). The productivity and sustainability of the land is all part of God's design. Tranquillity is described as 'Joy unmix'd, and Calm Delight' ('A Rural Meditation', l. 6). 'Joy unmix'd', coupled with calmness, represents a peace of mind that is removed from excitement and passion. This peace is attributed to God who: 'Calms the rough Sea, and stills the raging Wind, / And rules the Passions of the Human Mind' ('A Rural Meditation', ll. 19-20). Hertford's celebration of a tranquil, rural retirement that is built upon calmness and stillness suggests this to be a virtuous state of being; thus, Hertford's poetic depiction of rural retirement is a celebration of God in nature and his ability to instil peace.

As with the dedications, Watts' construction of a cohesive identity for Hertford could be seen as his taking control of her public identity; however, behind the scenes, Hertford was pulling the strings. When she requested that Watts include her verses in the collection, Hertford also stipulated that: 'you will have the goodness to conceal my name either under that of Eusebia or a Friend'.¹⁶⁵ As aforementioned, it was Watts who assigned the name 'Eusebia' to Hertford in his first poetic tribute to her.¹⁶⁶ Hertford's request for her verses to

¹⁶⁴ 'A Rural Meditation' in Isaac Watts, *Reliquiae Juveniles: miscellaneous thoughts in prose and verse, on natural, moral, and divine subjects; written chiefly in younger years* (London, 1734), ll. 13-5. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

¹⁶⁵ The Countess of Hertford to Isaac Watts, February 9 1734, in Milner, *The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D. D.* p. 504.

¹⁶⁶ Isaac Watts, 'To the ^{Rt} Hon^{ble} The Countess of Hertford', in DNP, MSS 110, f. 254.

appear under the pen-name ‘Eusebia’ shows that she acknowledges and approves of the persona that Watts has created. Furthermore, Hertford’s adoption of the name ‘Eusebia’ was not unique to the *Reliquiae Juveniles* collection but, rather, was part of a poetic identity and persona that Hertford consistently presented to Watts. For example, Hertford also adopted the name Eusebia in a poetic tribute to Watts: ‘Written in a Blank Lead of M^r Watt’s Poems’.¹⁶⁷ This poem, and the poems in *Reliquiae Juveniles*, are, to my knowledge, the only instances in which Hertford adopts the pseudonym ‘Eusebia’. For Hertford to adopt this pseudonym solely for work relating to Watts is demonstrative of her tailoring her poetic identity in order to suit a particular individual and patronal client.

As well as acknowledging the persona of ‘Eusebia’ that Watts crafted into a cohesive identity for *Reliquiae Juveniles*, there is evidence within the poems themselves that suggests that Hertford crafted this particular identity for Watts. As aforementioned, one of the poems that appears in *Reliquiae Juveniles* by Eusebia was ‘A Rural Meditation’ which, as Hertford’s letter demonstrates, was sent to Watts as part of their coterie correspondence; however, this poem also appears in a different form in a letter to one of Hertford’s other coterie correspondents: Pomfret. On 22 February 1734, Hertford’s letter to Pomfret includes ‘A Rural Meditation’; however, the poem is now titled ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’ and contains twenty-four extra lines. The original lines that make up ‘A Rural Meditation’ are the same apart from a slight change from ‘Calms the rough Sea, and stills the raging Wind’ (‘A Rural Meditation’, l. 19) to ‘Calms the Rough Sea, Rebukes the Noisy Wind’.¹⁶⁸

The change in title from ‘A Rural Meditation’ to ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’ is a paratextual alteration that shifts the thematic focus of the poem. The first title, ‘A Rural Meditation’, with the general encompassing locality of ‘Rural’, purports to offer a meditation

¹⁶⁷ The Countess of Hertford, ‘Written in a Blank Lead of M^r Watt’s Poems’, in DNP, MSS 110, f. 298.

¹⁶⁸ The Countess of Hertford, ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’ in *The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alwick Castle*, MSS 111, f. 39-40. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

on nature as a whole. However, the second title, with the addition of 'Windsor', roots the poem to a specific location. This sense of rootedness extends into the poem and alters the perception of the lines. In the original poem, without this located focus, the notion of 'young Steer[s] obedient[ly] till[ing] the Land' ('A Rural Meditation', l. 17) and the milking of the 'lowing Heifers' ('A Rural Meditation', l. 18) celebrate God as ordering the sustainability and productivity of nature. However, with the new title, the lines rather become about the maintenance of a specific estate near Windsor. The new title also brings a practicality to the act of poetic construction itself. While 'A Rural Meditation' simply suggests that the poet is reflecting on rural retirement, 'Written in a Retreat near Windsor' creates the image of the poet in the act of writing: rooting the poem in a human act. Conversely, the title 'A Rural Meditation' offers a space of rural retreat, removed from the mundaneness of practical husbandry and estate ownership.

The *Reliquiae Juveniles* version of the poem celebrates God in nature. The poem extolls God as creator of the creatures and the land, as well as rejoicing in the peace that can be found in rural retirement. However, the additional lines in the Pomfret version exhibit human interactions with, and effects on, nature. The new section begins: 'Toward Windsors ancient Turrets when we look' ('Written in a Retreat near Windsor', l. 21). Building upon the effect of the title change, this line specifically draws the gaze from the expanse of nature to the more insular view of the turrets of Windsor. As discussed earlier, 'A Rural Meditation' celebrates God as the facilitator of tranquillity in rural retirement and attributes the beauty and order in nature to his majesty. Conversely, the additional lines in 'Written in a Retreat near Windsor' speak of kings, rather than God, and how 'from their Seats, [they] gave albions land their law' ('Written in a Retreat near Windsor', l. 26). Instead of God organising and ordering nature, the onus is now placed on the kings providing a law for the land.

Furthermore, to term it 'land' rather than the description of the 'Hills' and 'Vallies' of the

original verse removes the uniqueness found in nature. Moreover, the original verse celebrates God as a teacher: ‘Who taught the Nightingale in shades to sing’ (‘A Rural Meditation’, l. 15). However, the additional lines privilege the castle views as ‘instruct[ive], like some large Book’ (‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’, l. 22). The new emphasis on the instructive nature of man-made structures changes the focus from nature and religion to a concern with human invention and mastery.

The new verse in ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’ also focuses on the gaze. The verse begins ‘Toward Windsors ancient Turrets when we look’ (‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’, l. 21) which catches the speaker in the act of turning around to look at the turrets. Moreover, there is an emphasis on surveying not only the landscape but also unfolding history: ‘Where’vr we may Survey / The fate of kings, whose Transitory Sway’ (‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’, ll. 23-4). The idea of ‘survey[ing]’ the fate of kings suggests an observation that is mingled with judgement. These notions of gaze being affixed, particularly on ‘kings’ and ‘turrets’, suggests an understanding by the speaker, and Hertford herself, that those at the top of the social hierarchy are being constantly observed.

As outlined earlier, Hertford’s correspondence indicates that it was Watts’ who chose which poems were included in *Reliquiae Juveniles*.¹⁶⁹ This could invite the conclusion that Watts chose verses of Hertford’s that conformed to the cohesive image created by the prefatory introduction to the verses and the textual dedication to Hertford. However, the change in emphasis from a celebration of God in nature in ‘A Rural Meditation’ to the focus on social and man-made structures within ‘Written in a Retreat near Windsor’ indicates that Hertford constructed different versions of the poem depending on the recipient. This shows that Hertford was clearly always mindful and in control of the tone and style of her poetic and patronal identities.

¹⁶⁹ Countess of Hertford to Isaac Watts, 9 February 1734, in Milner, *The Life, Times, and Correspondence of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D. D.* p. 504.

Hertford, Shenstone, and the regulation of dedicatory addresses

The 1740s and 1750s have been cited as a period of retirement for Hertford by both contemporary and scholarly accounts. On 2 February 1753, Henrietta Knight, Lady Luxborough (1699-1756) writes to Shenstone that ‘The Duchess of Somerset is too much retired to hear what passes, and is too much wrapped in religious and moral reflections to admit of other subjects in her letters’.¹⁷⁰ Similarly, Hughes states that Hertford suffered ‘illness and sorrow which led her to retreat from the tumult of the fashionable world’.¹⁷¹ Indeed, Hertford’s personal situation within these decades are indicative of this retirement. As outlined earlier in the chapter, Hertford served as a lady of the bedchamber to Queen Caroline; a duty which came to an end following the queen’s death in 1737. Hertford’s release from this obligation marked the beginning of a social transition away from the courtly life. In 1739 Hertford and her family moved from their previous country residence of St. Leonard’s Hill in Windsor Forest to Lord Bathurst’s former estate at Richings which became known by the new owners as ‘Percy Lodge’. Though their new residence was less than ten miles from Windsor, and St. Leonard’s Hill had only been two miles away, Hertford notes in a letter to Pomfret that: ‘we are extreamly pleas’d [...] with its distance from London’.¹⁷² Hertford’s admission that she wishes to believe herself far away from London indicates her desire to be away from her previous courtly existence. Elucidating the benefits of being removed from London, Hertford, on 25 May 1740, writes:

in London one certainly visits ones Friends, but tis in the Country one Converses with them the most at Leisure, & with the greatest Freedom, one is not interrupted with the noise of Coaches, or the coming in of People who only honour one with their Company, to observe ones Furniture, or ridicule ones Conversation, if they carry on their Good-nature no further, & do not catch up some unguarded Expression, which

¹⁷⁰ Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, 2 February 1753, *Letters written by the Right Honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, Esq.* ed. by John Hodgett (London: R. Dodsley, 1775), p. 330

¹⁷¹ Hughes, *The Gentle Hertford*, p. 408.

¹⁷² The Countess of Hertford to the Countess of Pomfret, 19 April 1740, in *The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle*, MSS 116, f. 157.

may be constru'd into a reflection on ones own Conduct, or that of an absent Friend, there is less of (what is call'd) Society, in Retirement, but in exchange, much more safety.¹⁷³

This statement demonstrates Hertford's distaste of the 'society' of London and the lack of genuine friendship within it.

The 1740s were also a period of great personal sorrow for Hertford. In a brief memorandum Hertford set down the final events of her son's life, concluding:

This dear and ever lamented son died *al Pelegriano* at Bologna, Italy, of the smallpox. Sept. 11th, 1744, upon a Tuesday, the evening of his birthday, in which he had completed nineteen, and calmly resigned his innocent soul into the hands of God. This was written by the hand of his much afflicted and disconsolate mother.¹⁷⁴

Of her sorrow, Hertford writes to Watts that: 'the tenderest bond which held me to earth is dissolved, but I have still have many duties to practice, though, I am afraid, the weight which hangs on my heart hinders me from performing them with the cheerfulness I ought'.¹⁷⁵ This indicates that, as well as Hertford's physical retreat from society, she was also undergoing an emotional withdrawal.

Despite this period of 'retreat', this chapter argues that Hertford's careful control over her patronal identity extended to her last potential patronage encounter: Shenstone's 'Rural Elegance'. By analysing the manuscript correspondence between Hertford, Shenstone, and their wider social circle, this sub-section not only reveals new contextual information, but also helps us to uncover the nuanced relations (as well as the falsehoods) involved in patronage relations. Building on the earlier section on Cole, it further examines the epistolary performances necessary to patronal solicitation. With Cole's letters we only have her correspondence with Hertford available to us; however, Shenstone's correspondence reveals how patronal interactions were governed through performances to a wider social network

¹⁷³ The Countess of Hertford to the Countess of Pomfret, 25 May 1740, in DNP, MSS 111, f. 188-9.

¹⁷⁴ Percy Family Letter and Papers (1744) in The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle, MSS 29, f. 71.

¹⁷⁵ The Countess of Hertford to Isaac Watts, 4 March 1745, in *The Posthumous Works of the late Learned and Reverend Isaac Watts*, 2 vols. (London, 1779), II, 112-4.

instead of just between the client and patron. The following section demonstrates how a patrons' posthumous reputation can be influenced by revised paratextual material. By showing how clients manipulated their textual performances for a wider social audience, this chapter shows that patronage relationships were always played out in the public arena. The power dynamics within these relationships were not confined to two individuals but instead has implications for eighteenth-century sociability and commerciality.

The relationship between Hertford and Shenstone has been presented by critics as a patronage relationship. Hughes refers to Hertford as Shenstone's 'benevolent patroness' and Sandro Jung calls both Hertford and Luxborough 'patrons' of Shenstone. Furthermore, Horace Walpole states that 'To [Hertford], Shenstone addressed his ode entitled *Rural Elegance*'.¹⁷⁶ Similarly, Jung writes that, while Shenstone 'intended "*Rural Elegance*" as a patronage tribute to Frances Thynne Seymour, the Duchess of Somerset, probably owing to her premature death, he rewrote the poem during its long gestation period'.¹⁷⁷ However, to call Hertford Shenstone's 'patron' is to ignore the complexities of their relationship.¹⁷⁸ Indeed these critical receptions present an uncomplicated patronage relationship when, in fact, Hertford refused the dedicatory tribute that Shenstone eventually appended to '*Rural Elegance*'. Hughes observed it many decades ago, and it continues to be true that the correspondence between Shenstone, Hertford, and Luxborough is largely forgotten; however, revisiting it shows the mechanisms of Shenstone's initial solicitation of patronage as well as demonstrates Hertford's understanding and control of dedicatory tributes as a marker of her public identity.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁶ Horace Walpole, *A Catalogue of the Royal and Noble Authors of England, Scotland, and Ireland* (London, 1806), p. 219.

¹⁷⁷ Sandro Jung, 'Shenstone, Woodhouse, and Mid-Eighteenth-Century Poetics: Genre and the Elegiac-Pastoral Landscape', *Philological Quarterly*, 88:2 (2009), 127-149 (p. 137).

¹⁷⁸ Helen Sard Hughes, 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA* 46:4 (1931), 1113-1127 (p.1124) and Sandro Jung, 'Mentorship and "Patronage" in Mid-Eighteenth-Century England: William Shenstone Reconsidered.', *Bulletin de la société d'études anglo-américaines des XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles*, 54 (2002), 187-198, (p. 198).

¹⁷⁹ Helen Sard Hughes, 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', *PMLA* 46:4 (1931), 1113-1127 (p. 1113).

The acquaintance between Hertford and Shenstone began, as did many of Hertford's literary relationships, through the coterie practice of literary exchange. In 1747, Hertford, through the mediation of her friend and correspondent Lady Luxborough, was introduced to Shenstone through Luxborough's description of Shenstone's gardens at Leasowes. 'Lady Hertford writes me word she is charmed with your retreat', Luxborough reports to Shenstone on 8 February 1748; 'as she has only the description of it from me, judge what she'd be if she saw it'.¹⁸⁰ To Hertford she writes the next day: 'I'm glad you like ye description of ye Shropshire Gentle- mens retreat wch my Pen was far from doing Justice: his own may perhaps please you if you see some things of his writing'.¹⁸¹ Rather than poetry being the introductory factor, as it was with Thomson and Watts, in Shenstone's case it was a description of his garden that brought about the connection to Hertford and it is clear that Shenstone remained mindful of that initial connecting factor throughout their relationship.

Following her epistolary introduction to him, Hertford included one of Shenstone's poems – a poetic tribute to Thomson – in her miscellany: 'Written in Autumn 1748 by M^r Shenstone'.¹⁸² Once again, it was Luxborough who initiated this since she sent the poem to Hertford on 14 November 1748.¹⁸³ Upon receiving the poem, Hertford declares that '[Shenstone] has obliged me so much in letting me see his charming Ode upon Autumn & the Honour he does Mr Thomson's Memmory in that Poem, & his Design to erect an Urn for him in Virgils Grove, that I am sorry I cannot agree with him in his dislike of Autumn'.¹⁸⁴ Hertford's emphasis on the honour the poem does to Thomson's memory, and her pointed disagreement with Shenstone's opinion of Autumn, suggests that her inclusion of the poem is

¹⁸⁰ Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, 8 February 1748, in *Letters written by the Late Right Honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone*, p. 8.

¹⁸¹ Lady Luxborough to the Countess of Hertford, 9 February 1748, in *Percy Family Letters and Papers*. Vol. 30. 1745-51, in *The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle*, MSS 30, p. 163.

¹⁸² 'Written in Autumn 1748 by M^r Shenstone' in DNP, MSS 116, f. 265.

¹⁸³ Lady Luxborough to the Countess of Hertford, 14 November 1748, in DNP, MSS 30, p. 198.

¹⁸⁴ Countess of Hertford to Lady Luxborough, 20 November 1748, in *Elegant Epistles: Being a copious collection of familiar and amusing letters* (London, F. C. and J. Rivington, 1814), p. 466.

more of a statement about the closeness of her relationship with Thomson than it is with Shenstone. This is highlighted by the fact that she does not include any other poems or epistles by Shenstone in the miscellany, whereas most of the other writers have multiple entries. This material evidence shows that merely designating Hertford as Shenstone's patron, as Jung and Hughes do, simplifies their relationship and ignores the nuances and spectrums of patronage relationships in general.¹⁸⁵

While Hertford's inclusion of Shenstone's poem within her miscellany does suggest an element of support for his poetic endeavours, Hughes' reference to Hertford as Shenstone's 'benevolent patroness' creates an impression of assistance that Hertford did not provide.¹⁸⁶ Hertford's opportunity to act as a public patron to Shenstone came in the form of a request to dedicate 'Rural Elegance' to her. Shenstone first mentions the possibility of this to Luxborough in 1751: 'The Ode to the Duchess I just read over, and saw enough of it to make me wish it finished and sent. The corrections will, I dare say, take very little time, therefore the task is short, and mine will be pleasing to send it to Her Grace'.¹⁸⁷ As well as Luxborough, Shenstone also mentions his intention to Richard Graves and Richard Jago and, in doing so, reveals his mercenary attitude to dedicatory addresses. On 27 February 1753, Shenstone writes to Jago:

I should be glad to correct that Ode to the Dutchess of Somerset, when once I can find in whose hands it is deposited. I was shewn a very elegant letter of hers, the other day; wherein she asks for it with great politeness; & as it includes nothing but love of rural life, and such sort of amusements as she herself approves, I shall stand a good chance of having it received with partiality.¹⁸⁸

Shenstone's assertion that it includes 'amusements as she herself approves' is similar to Cole's attempts to present Hertford with a poem that appeals to her. His declaration that 'it

¹⁸⁵ Sandro Jung, 'Mentorship and "Patronage" in Mid-Eighteenth-Century England', p. 198.

¹⁸⁶ Hughes, 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', p. 1124.

¹⁸⁷ Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, Equinox 1751, in *Letters written by the Late Right Honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone*, p. 245.

¹⁸⁸ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 27 February 1753, in *The Works, in Verse and Prose, of William Shenstone, Esq.* 3 vols. (London: R. Dodsley, 1777), III, p. 210.

includes nothing but a love of rural life' is particularly telling as Shenstone's own connection with Hertford was through their mutual interest in rural life. Furthermore, Shenstone's personal relationship with Thomson means that he was also aware of Hertford's and Thomson's patronal relationship and Thomson's continual emphasis of Hertford's love of nature. A month later Shenstone is less sure; on 28 March 1753, Shenstone writes to Graves: 'I do not reckon much upon these verses, or the patronage which you mention; though the Duchess is a woman of high reputation, and has as much benevolence as any woman upon earth'.¹⁸⁹ Here, we see Shenstone discussing the process of patronage and highlighting Hertford's reputed 'benevolence' – a word that Thomson associated with Hertford through his poetic tribute in *Spring*.

Despite the poem being mentioned in Shenstone's correspondence as early as 1750, it was not formally presented to Hertford until 23 June 1753.¹⁹⁰ Shenstone begins his letter by stating 'I FIND myself at length enabled to obey your Grace's Commands'.¹⁹¹ Here, Shenstone foregrounds Hertford's authority and his obedience. Additionally, in declaring himself 'enabled' to obey, Shenstone implies a lack of control over events in his own life. In terms of the ode itself, Shenstone introduces it with the hope that 'the *Subject* might recommend it'.¹⁹² Shenstone's recommendation to the patron is reminiscent of Malay's assertion that a textual affinity is required within a patronage relationship.¹⁹³ Furthermore, it implies that Shenstone is offering the poem to Hertford because she might enjoy it, rather than for ambitious motives. This is corroborated later in the letter when he notes: 'how little I

¹⁸⁹ William Shenstone to Richard Graves, 28 March 1753, in *Letters to Particular Friends, by William Shenstone, Esq. From the year 1739 to 1763* (Dublin, 1770), p. 162.

¹⁹⁰ Hughes, in 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', reports the delays as being firstly that Shenstone lost the poem and secondly that Lady Luxborough failed to present the poem to Hertford at Shenstone's request, p. 1120-1.

¹⁹¹ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters Between the Late Duchess of Somerset, Lady Luxborough, Miss Dolman, Mr. Whistler, Mr. R. Dodsley, William Shenstone, Esq. and Others; Including a Sketch of the Manners, Laws, &c. of the Republic of Venice, and Some Poetical Pieces; the Whole Now First Published From Original Copies*, ed. by Mr. Hull, 2 vols. (London: J. Dodsley, 1778), I, p. xiii.

¹⁹² William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹³ Malay, 'Positioning Patronage', p. 251.

am influenced by any other Ambition, compared with that of being esteemed'.¹⁹⁴ However, by expressing his desire to be 'esteemed' by Hertford, the subtext of the letter is that Shenstone specifically wishes his ode to be admired and, therefore, supported by Hertford.¹⁹⁵ These statements are at odds with his correspondence with Graves and Jago where he demonstrates his mercenary attitude to dedications. The combination of his statements to Hertford, Graves, and Jago illuminates the delicate balance that a prospective client had to deploy in order to appeal to a patron.

Having formally received the Ode, Hertford responds on 20 November 1753: 'whenever my Name, or that of *Piercy-Lodge* occurs, you will have the Goodness to fill the Blank (which leaving out those Words must occasion) with Stars, Dashes, or any other Mark you please'.¹⁹⁶ Through her desire to conceal her name, she makes it clear that she does not wish the Ode to be explicitly connected to her. Hertford writes that: '[t]he World [...] will draw mortifying Comparisons betwixt your ideal Lady & the Real one', indicating that her concern lies with her public association with the poem.¹⁹⁷ Furthermore, Hertford declares: '[t]he World in general, since they can find no Fault in your Poem, will blame the Choice of the Person to whom it is inscribed'.¹⁹⁸ Clearly, Hertford believes that the readers' opinions of the poem, whether good or bad, are intrinsically connected with the patron. This demonstrates her awareness that a dedication forms not only a connection between the patron and the client but also between the patron and the text. While the manuscript evidence clearly indicates Hertford's careful negotiation of her patronage relations and receptions, Jung opines that 'patrons like Lady Luxborough and the Countess of Hertford were eager to have dedications inscribed to them and, by doing so, have their patronage acknowledged publicly'.¹⁹⁹ While

¹⁹⁴ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹⁵ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹⁶ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹⁷ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹⁸ William Shenstone to the Countess of Hertford, 23 June 1753, in *Select Letters*, p. xiii.

¹⁹⁹ Jung, 'Mentorship and "Patronage"', p. 198.

this comment recognises a common link between patronage and self-advertisement, in terms of the relationship between Hertford and Shenstone, Hertford's correspondence suggests that Hertford resisted a purely public patronage relationship with Shenstone.

Nevertheless, Hertford's desire to disguise her connection to the ode offers an insight into the ways in which patrons crafted their public persona. In expressing concern with how '[t]he World' will view her after reading the poem, Hertford acknowledges the potential for patronage to negatively influence public patronal personas. It is interesting to note that Hertford's treatment of Shenstone is mirrored in her relationship with Carter and her work. In 1739 Carter attempted to secure Hertford's patronage of her Algarotti translation through a dedication. However, as with Shenstone, Hertford declined.²⁰⁰ On 15 April 1739 Hertford wrote: 'I find myself under the necessity of declining a mark of your good opinion'.²⁰¹ This is the second time that Hertford has referred to a dedication as a 'mark'. As outlined earlier in this chapter, Hertford also termed Watts' dedication as a 'public mark'. To say that the dedication is a 'public mark' is an indication of how their friendship should be read: a 'mark' suggests something that is affixed to Hertford and visible to others. This suggests that Hertford understood the potential for a dedication to be a permanent 'mark' on her public identity.

The request for Shenstone to blank out her name complements this reading of Hertford's desire for disassociation. As Sophie Coulombeau argues, 'the dash or star acts as an acknowledgment that the author is not entirely comfortable "making free" with the name they simultaneously offer and withhold'.²⁰² In the case of a patron, rather than author, simultaneously offering and withholding their name, the inference is still one of discomfort.

²⁰⁰ As with Shenstone, though Hertford declined the offer of a dedication, she did transcribe Carter's 'Ode to Melancholy', into her miscellany. Elizabeth Carter, *Ode to Melancholy*, in DNP, MSS 116, f. 256

²⁰¹ The Countess of Hertford to Elizabeth Carter, 15 April 1739, in *Memoirs of the life of Elizabeth Carter*, ed. by Montagu Pennington, 2 vols. 2nd edn (London, 1808), II, p. 52.

²⁰² Sophie Coulombeau, 'The Knot, that ties them fast together: Personal proper naming and identity formation in English literature, 1779-1800', (Unpublished doctoral thesis: University of York, 2014), p. 115.

Luxborough explains Hertford's reluctance: '[she is] too bashful, in her retirement'.²⁰³ The word 'bashful' indicates a shy reserve which, coupled with the emphasis on Hertford's retirement, suggests that Hertford's disinclination stems from a withdrawal from public life. It is interesting that Thomson, Cole, and Watts repeatedly associate Hertford with the language of retirement, whether rural or moral, in order to create an image of her for public consumption and here Luxborough is drawing on that same language to excuse her rejection of a public connection with Shenstone. As with her earlier control over her own 'retiring' image, Hertford's desire to hide her association with the ode demonstrates her attempts to craft her own public identity by choosing the patronage tributes associated with her. Her public reputation was still important to Hertford.

The afterlife of 'Rural Elegance' offers a further perspective on the nature of patronage as a public performance. Following Hertford's rejection of the inscription, the poem was not published until after Hertford's death when it was printed as 'Rural Elegance: An Ode to the late Duchess of Somerset. Written in 1750' in Robert Dodsley's *A Collection of poems in six volumes* (1758).²⁰⁴ In this posthumous publication, Hertford's name is associated with the poem despite her express wishes to the contrary. Furthermore, Shenstone's correspondence demonstrates how the familiar letter can be used to construct a certain perception of an event. On 29 January 1754, in a letter to Jago, Shenstone declares: 'My Ode, after an astonishing delay, was presented to the Dutchess of Somerset. – It produced two genteel letters from her Grace. I am well satisfied with the event'.²⁰⁵ Shenstone's presentation did indeed result in two letters from Hertford: those expressing her refusal of the inscription; Shenstone's correspondence contains no untruths. However, by declaring the letters to be 'genteel' and that he himself was 'well satisfied with the event',

²⁰³ Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone, 12 December 1753, in *Letters by the Late Right Honourable Lady Luxborough to William Shenstone*, p. 308.

²⁰⁴ *A Collection of poems in six volumes. By several hands.* 6 vols. (London: R. Dodsley, 1758), V, pp. 1-13.

²⁰⁵ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 29 January 1754, in *Select Letters*, By Mr. Hull, p. 170.

Shenstone implies that his proposals met with success. Shenstone exploits the nature of the familiar letter as a textual representation of oneself and one's relationships in order to manipulate the perception of the reader and to suggest a patronage relationship between himself and Hertford. Thus, Hertford's efforts to control her public patronal image were ultimately undermined by Shenstone and his understanding that the perception of patronage is in many ways as valuable as an actual patronage relationship in terms of self-advertisement. As Hughes states, 'in 1758 Shenstone's patroness [Hertford] could bestow upon her poet nothing but her name!' and Shenstone's liberal use of her name within his correspondence and his affixing it to his text shows the enduring influence of patronage and the value of a patrons' 'name'.²⁰⁶

* * *

By analysing Hertford's manipulation of the devices of patronal performance in dedications, paratexts, coterie correspondence, and authorial choices, this chapter has shown that she was instrumental in forming her own contemporary reputation as an arbiter of taste. An analysis of Hertford's personal miscellany demonstrates how she influenced interpretative approaches to herself and her patronage through the ordering of individual works, and the attachment of paratextual appendages to those works, within the miscellany.

As well as Hertford's miscellany, this chapter has also shown how dedicatory addresses, such as Thomson's textual dedication to Hertford in *Spring*, created a public image of the patron which, in Thomson's case, fed into contemporary ideas of moral benevolence in order to match the crux of the poem itself. This is important for several reasons. Firstly, it shows how patronage is linked to the nature of paratextual appeal in a commercial

²⁰⁶ Hughes, 'Shenstone and the Countess of Hertford', p. 1127.

marketplace. Secondly, it feeds into discourses of women in this commercial marketplace by demonstrating how female patrons also needed to adhere to the tropes of female modesty within the eighteenth century. Thirdly, this chapter has also shown how the dedication created a public image of Hertford that was utilised by Cole in order to create a textual representation of herself that would appeal to Hertford. An analysis of Cole's correspondence shows how she manipulated concepts of female friendship, coterie interactions, and literary references in order to cast herself as Hertford's devotee. This is significant not only for critical discourses of female friendship and coterie correspondence, but Cole's one explicit appeal for patronage also demonstrates the integral nature of patronage in the continuation of manuscript circulation as a viable technology in the eighteenth century. Building on the earlier work in the chapter on dedications, this chapter also analysed Watt's dedication to Hertford in order to show Hertford's understanding of a dedication as something that is attached to her and designed to be visible to others. Consequently, this chapter also demonstrated that, with this understanding, Hertford crafted a coterie persona for Watts that adhered to an idea of her as 'Eusebia'; thus indicating that Hertford understood how to craft her poetic and coterie identities in order to aid her patronal image. Finally, this chapter analysed Hertford's final patronal encounter with Shenstone in order to demonstrate how a patron's posthumous reputation could be influenced by revised paratextual material. This analysis indicated how patronage is performed to a wider social audience and how the interpretation of a patronage relationship is influenced through textual performance.

As a whole, this chapter has shown that Hertford's manipulation of texts through scribal practices, organisation, and presentation demonstrates how a comprehensive focus on the material aspects and surrounding social practices of texts is a valuable means of reading and decoding meaning that complements and augments analyses of content. Archival work has not previously been part of patronage studies but my research into Hertford's textual and

scribal practices show that it is an essential component of understanding the implicit negotiations and performativity within the power dynamics of patronage relationships.

Chapter Two

‘All these men have their price’: the patronage networks and editorial work of George Lyttelton.¹

Described as a man who had ‘brilliant promise which sunk into obscurity’, there is little in the scholarly annals of the eighteenth century that accurately depicts the influence of George, Lord Lyttelton (1709-1773).² Deeply involved in eighteenth-century politics, Lyttelton was an important member of the opposition to Robert Walpole’s (1676-1745) government and later served as a minister within the Broad Bottom Administration under Henry Pelham (1694-1754). In his political career, he served as a Member of Parliament for Okehampton (1735-56), secretary to Frederick, Prince of Wales (1737), Commissioner of the Treasury (1744), and Chancellor of the Exchequer (1755). In 1756 he was raised to the peerage as Lord Lyttelton, Baron of Frankley in the County of Worcester. As well as a key figure in political circles, Lyttelton was also an associate of the bluestocking circle, the author of many poetical and prose pieces, and a liberal patron of the arts. Though often mentioned in critical analyses of eighteenth-century patronage and politics, sustained studies of Lyttelton are few and far between. This chapter seeks to redress that gap by providing a more holistic picture of Lyttelton’s critical influence on eighteenth-century culture.

This chapter provides an integrated account of Lyttelton’s literary patronage and his politics to demonstrate the ways in which Lyttelton edited his clients’ work in order to suit his evolving public persona. In doing so, this chapter problematises the way we view authorship in the period and challenges our conceptions of a printed text. It argues that Lyttelton’s creative and editorial influence over his clients’ works means re-conceptualising

¹ John Morley, *Walpole* (London: MacMillan and Co., 1928) p. 127.

² Rose Mary Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton: a study in eighteenth-century politics and culture* (Bethlehem, Penna: Times publishing company, 1939), p. 23.

our understanding of the connections between patronage and book history to acknowledge the patron as a collaborative author in the production of texts. Furthermore, Lyttelton's revisions to James Thomson's (1700-1748) *The Seasons* show a fluidity to the printed form that is at odds with the critical conception of print culture as bringing a 'fixity' to texts.

The chapter begins by establishing Lyttelton's place and reputation in contemporary literary circles. It demonstrates that Lyttelton's preferred patronal role offers a unique perspective on eighteenth-century patronage relationships and the issue of culture as commodity; for, Lyttelton's preference for a facilitative and editorial role challenges the accepted view that patronage is solely equated with monetary assistance. Robert D. Hume declares that 'culture is a commodity produced for gain' and goes on to suggest that, within the economics of culture, 'the importance of patronage has been both misunderstood and underestimated'.³ However, Hume looks at patronage in the specific forms of 'subscription publication and government jobs'.⁴ Indeed, whilst Hume cites the patronage relationship between Lyttelton and Thomson, he merely states that 'Lord Lyttelton got him appointed Surveyor-General of the Leeward Islands, a £300 sinecure'.⁵ This way of evaluating patronage relationships based on how much money the patron brings to the client is mirrored in Dustin Griffin's account of the relationship between Lyttelton and Thomson. Griffin notes that after Lyttelton had joined the ministry he, 'conferred upon [Thomson] the office of surveyor-general of the Leeward Islands. Remaining in England, and assigning the work to his deputy, Thomson clear[ed] £300 a year'.⁶ As Hume states, 'the symbiosis between production and consumption cannot be ignored'; however, these accounts of patronage

³ Robert D. Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London, 1660-1740', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 69:4 (2006), 487-533 (p. 487-8).

⁴ Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London', p. 487 and p. 520.

⁵ Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London', p. 487 and p. 521.

⁶ Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 225-6.

diminish the patrons' input into the production as purely financial.⁷ This chapter argues that while accounts of subscriptions and government positions are important indications of a connection, they are not the whole sum of the patronal input into the production of a work of literature or drama. By demonstrating that Lyttelton preferred his editorial patronage role, this chapter shows that Lyttelton understood his potential to act as a creative director within the contemporary politico-cultural arena.

Lyttelton also utilised his facilitative and editorial role in order to create a literary circle around Frederick, the Prince of Wales (1707-1751), with the intention of producing literature that would aid the political opposition. Relationships that Lyttelton crafted with David Mallet, (1705-1765), William Julius Mickle (1735-1788), William Shenstone (1714-1763), Gilbert West (1703-1756), and Henry Fielding (1707-1754) show how Lyttelton cultivated and maintained each of these figures in a way that allowed other aristocratic figures to be the public patrons but so that the loyalty of the clients remained with Lyttelton.

To clearly demonstrate Lyttelton's importance as a creative director, the majority of this chapter is devoted to a close textual analysis of Lyttelton's editorial interventions on the development and revision of Thomson's *The Seasons* (1730-1758). While analysing the political resonances in the literary themes and aesthetics of *The Seasons*, my analysis focuses on concepts of liberty, credit, commerce, and virtue. These were cohesive positions that the opposition attempted to attach to their party through political propaganda. However, it is also important to note that these were contested terms between the major political parties; Williams' research, in particular, demonstrates how the Whigs and the Tories both used poetry as a means of attaching these terms to their party.⁸ Consequently, it is necessary to contextualise these terms from an opposition perspective. For example, the attention given to

⁷ Hume, 'The Economics of Culture in London', p. 489.

⁸ Abigail Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture 1681-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 25.

notions of ‘credit’ by the opposition stemmed from their suspicions of credit systems such as: those established to fund King William III’s costly Nine Years Wars, the Bank of England, the National Debt, and large City finance houses such as the South Sea Company. The growing tension between Britain and her trade rivals France and Spain also led to the patriot opposition’s campaign for war in the late 1720s. The patriot opposition saw these Atlantic markets as an opportunity to pursue the tradition of trade and empire which Queen Elizabeth I was credited with initiating. Another particularly contested term during this period was that of ‘liberty’: the Whig party had adopted the notions of liberty into their political rhetoric to represent the political liberty obtained by parliament following the Glorious Revolution of 1688. However, the patriot opposition also utilised the values of liberty in their rhetoric and propaganda as representative of liberation from the corruption of Walpole’s government. As aforementioned, these terms were contested and could be modified or amalgamated in order to suit differing political ideologies. Consequently, this chapter is not concerned with furthering the definition of these terms, but, rather, specifically analysing how Lyttelton moulds these terms in order to suit his shifting political positions. My analysis not only demonstrates his contributions to the development of Thomson’s work, but also shows how his own political transition, from a member of the opposition to a minister within government, affected his patronage practices and literary aesthetic.

By exploring the ways in which Lyttelton moulds and edits the literature of those around him in order to suit a particular political discourse, this chapter also enters wider discussions of print culture and book history for three main reasons. Firstly, it shows that the patron ought to be considered as part of the ‘communications circuit’ that Robert Darnton put forward in 1982.⁹ As Darnton explains, the life cycle of a printed text can be described as a ‘communications circuit that runs from the author to the publisher (if the bookseller does not

⁹ Robert Darnton, ‘What is the History of Books?’, *Daedalus*, 111:3 (1982), 65-83.

assume that role), the printer, the shipper, and the reader'.¹⁰ For Darnton, each of these people, as implicit and explicit readers, play a role in the 'process [of creating a printed text] as a whole, in all its variations over space and time and in all its relations with other systems, economic, social, political, and cultural, in the surrounding environment'.¹¹ This chapter contributes to this model by considering Lyttelton not just as an implicit/explicit reader of the text, but as someone who had a specific influence over the text and a specific agenda to promote through his revisions. Secondly, rather than the accepted narrative that print culture supplanted aristocratic patronage, it demonstrates that patrons worked with the medium of print and that the traditional power dynamics were unaffected by the change of medium. Thirdly, Lyttelton's influence on the revision of *The Seasons* over a period of twenty years challenges our concept of the printed text as 'fixed' and 'final'.

'The figure of a [patronal] spectre'.

Horace Walpole described Lyttelton as 'the figure of a spectre' and, while Walpole meant it as a calculated slur, it is in fact a rather accurate account of how Lyttelton's patronal relations have been previously viewed.¹² Though he patronised well-known literary figures such as Thomson, Fielding, Mallet, and Shenstone, Lyttelton's intimate connection with these writers is often demoted to 'chance friendships'.¹³ This chapter re-conceptualises Lyttelton as a patron and demonstrates that this 'spectrality' offers a unique perspective on eighteenth-century patronage relationships. It shows that Lyttelton's 'spectrality' stems from a preference for a facilitative and editorial role rather than a publicly supportive one. By

¹⁰ Robert Darnton, 'What is the history of the book', in *The Book History Reader*, ed. by David Finkelstein and Alistair McCleery (2006), pp. 9-26 (p. 11).

¹¹ Darnton, 'What is the history of the book', p. 11.

¹² Horace Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, 3 vols. (London: published by Henry Colburn, 1847), I, p. 202.

¹³ Bertrand A. Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits: The Relation of Politics to Literature, 1722-1742* (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1976), p. 219.

exploring Lyttelton as a patron, my research shows how this combination of editor and facilitator leads to Lyttelton being a creative director within the contemporary politico-cultural arena. As a director, Lyttelton crafted connections between writers and influential political figures and then influenced their work in order to reflect his political ideologies. This has implications for the way we consider contemporary authorship since it shows that the patron should be seen as part of Darnton's 'communications circuit' that now defines how we conceptualise eighteenth-century book history.

To begin to analyse Lyttelton's role as a creative director, it is first necessary to demonstrate his importance to eighteenth-century literature in order to refute any suggestions that his 'spectrality' means that his patronal encounters were insignificant. As the introduction made clear, this implication is present in scholarly references to Lyttelton who dismiss his relationships as 'chance friendships' and place him on the periphery of the Prince's literary circle.¹⁴ Secondly, this chapter demonstrates that this patronal position was one that Lyttelton chose for himself because he understood that it offered him the chance to influence contemporary political ideology. This is significant because it shows that Lyttelton understood patronage as a means of shaping contemporary discourses and dialogues and, in doing so, influencing the creative economy of the eighteenth century.

Lyttelton's place in eighteenth-century literary culture is exemplified by the public dedications and inscriptions written to him. Pat Rogers puts the number of dedications written to Lyttelton at eleven; however, I have only identified four dedications and two inscriptions.¹⁵ Since Rogers does not cite the eleven texts, it is impossible to verify his account; nevertheless, my own research shows that the texts dedicated to Lyttelton are: Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749), James Woodhouse's *Poems on*

¹⁴ Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 34 and Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, p. 219.

¹⁵ Pat Rogers, 'Book Dedications in Britain, 1700-1799: a preliminary study', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 16:2 (1993), 213-233 (p. 222).

Several Occasions (1766), Cuthbert Shaw's *Monody to the memory of a young lady who died in child-bed* (1769), and Benjamin Stillingfleet's *Miscellaneous Tracts* (1762).¹⁶ William Shenstone and Richard Meadowcourt also inscribed poems to Lyttelton: *The Judgement of Hercules, a poem* (1741) and 'To Sir George Lyttelton, on his house at Hagley' (1755) respectively.¹⁷ I put these inscriptions in a different category to the dedications because an inscription performs a different function to a dedicatory epistle but, nonetheless, they are both means of attaching a work to a public figure. There are also two other texts that were dedicated to a 'Lyttelton': John Courtenay's *The Rape of Pomona* (1773) and Thomas Best's *Matilda* (1789); however, Best's *Matilda* is dedicated to George Fulke Lyttelton (1763-1828) and Courtenay's work is dedicated to a 'Mr. Lyttelton', which suggests it was not the Lord Lyttelton raised to the peerage in 1756.¹⁸ These dedications are significant because they show that Lyttelton was acknowledged publicly as a patron and that his influence as a literary patron extended from the early 1740s to the late 1760s.

As well as the dedications and inscriptions, Lyttelton's literary position is further demonstrated by the number of poems inscribed to him following his death in 1773. These poems include: Anne Penny's 'A pastoral elegy on the death of George, Lord Lyttelton' (1780), Mary Robinson's 'On the death of George, Lord Lyttelton' (1775), the anonymous 'An Ode sacred to the memory of the late right honourable George, Lord Lyttelton' (1773) by, Charles Jenner's 'An elegy to the memory of Lord Lyttelton' (1774), John Jones' 'An Inscription to the Memory of the Late Lord Lyttelton' (1779), Nathan Withy's 'In Memory of the Right Honourable George Lyttelton' (1775) and William Lipscomb 'Elegy on the death

¹⁶ Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2008); James Woodhouse, *Poems on Several Occasions*, 2nd edn (London, 1766); Cuthbert Shaw, *Monody to the memory of a young lady who died in child-bed*, 2nd edn (London, 1769); Benjamin Stillingfleet, *Miscellaneous tracts*, 2nd edn (London: R. Dodsley, 1762).

¹⁷ William Shenstone, *The Judgement of Hercules, a poem. Inscib'd to George Lyttelton* (London: R. Dodsley, 1741) and Richard Meadowcourt, 'To Sir George Lyttelton, on his house at Hagley' in *A Select collection of poems*, 8 vols. (London: printed by J. Nicols, 1780), VI, p. 276.

¹⁸ John Courtenay, *The Rape of Pomona* (London, 1773); Thomas Best, *Matilda* (London, 1789).

of George, Lord Lyttelton' (1784).¹⁹ Thomas Maurice also penned *Hagley. A Descriptive Poem* (1776) - based on the family seat - and Thomas Francklin inserted Lyttelton as a dramatic character into *The Works of Lucian, from the Greek* (1780).²⁰ There is no evidence that these poets knew Lyttelton personally which indicates Lyttelton's well-known position in literary circles. Moreover, Jenner and Johns titled their collections as *Louisa: A Tale. To which is added an elegy to the memory of Lord Lyttelton* (1774) and *An elegy on winter, and other poems: to which is added, an inscription to the memory of the late Lord Lyttelton* (1779) respectively. The addition of these poems to the title page suggests that these were a conscious paratextual addition design to enhance the appeal of the collection to the readership which, in turn, indicates that Lyttelton's name carried weight.

Ironically, though Lyttelton was the subject of several paratextual dedications, it is his reaction to these public dedications that is complicit in the 'spectrality' that Walpole assigns to him and offers a potential explanation for the treatment of Lyttelton's patronage by historians and literary critics.²¹ For, despite having several texts publicly dedicated to him, there is a sense that Lyttelton was a reluctant dedicatee. Within the genre of dedications there is a general consensus that the patron professes their public reluctance in order to assuage potential labels of immodesty or vanity; however, Lyttelton's reaction to dedications goes beyond the normal effusions of modesty. This is aptly demonstrated in Fielding's dedication in *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749). The dedication opens by declaring 'Sir, Notwithstanding your constant refusal, when I have asked leave to prefix your name to this

¹⁹ Anne Penny, 'A pastoral elegy on the death of George, Lord Lyttelton' in Anne Penny, *Poems* (London: printed by J. Dodsley, 1780), pp. 65-7; Mary Robinson, 'On the death of George, Lord Lyttelton' in Mary Robinson, *Poems* (London, 1775), pp. 68-72; *An ode, sacred to the memory of the late Right Honourable George Lord Lyttelton* (London, 1773); Charles Jenner, *Louisa: A Tale. To which is added an elegy to the memory of Lord Lyttelton* (London, 1774); John Jones, *An elegy on winter, and other poems: to which is added, an inscription to the memory of the late Lord Lyttelton* (Birmingham, 1779); Nathan Worthy, 'An Elegy on the late Lord Lyttelton' in *Miscellaneous poems* (Wolverhampton, 1775), pp. 19-20; William Lipscomb, 'Elegy on the death of George, Lord Lyttelton' in *Poems* (Oxford, 1784), pp. 16-19.

²⁰ Thomas Maurice, *Hagley. A descriptive poem* (Oxford, 1776); *The Works of Lucian, from the Greek* ed. by Thomas Francklin, 2 vols. (London, 1780).

²¹ Walpole, *Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, p. 202.

Dedication, I must still insist on my right to desire your protection of this work'.²² Gerard Genette writes that:

[T]his epistle is dedicatory only by preterition, for Lyttelton had refused to accept the official dedication. Fielding gets around the refusal by mentioning it in the first line and then continuing as if nothing had happened, which he certainly could not have taken the liberty of doing if the objection had been very serious.²³

As Genette astutely points out, it is unlikely that Fielding would have truly published the dedication without Lyttelton's permission; nevertheless, the dedication is unique in that it references Lyttelton's refusal rather than mere reluctance.²⁴

While Fielding's dedication suggests Lyttelton's aversion to public acknowledgement, his interaction with the poet Mickle further confirms his aversion to dedications. On 21 January 1763, Mickle wrote to Lyttelton desiring to 'have the honour of Lord Lyttelton's name at the head of a Dedication'.²⁵ Six months later, on 7 July 1763, Lyttelton replied to Mickle saying 'dedicating it to me would be of no service to you [...] but it might be of some use to you, if next winter, on my return to town, you were to come and read it over with me, then we might discourse together upon what I think its beauties and faults'.²⁶ The refusal of dedications is by no means unique; however, in this exchange, Lyttelton is not refusing a patronage relationship with Mickle, merely refusing a dedication. This suggests that Lyttelton viewed the patronage relationship as something more than just a public acknowledgement. Indeed, the significance of this response is that it shows that Lyttelton proposes to intervene as an editor – as he immediately sees how the work can be corrected and that, in his opinion, a patron should assist in the revision process in order to help improve the work. It also reveals his sense of his own political efficacy as he points out

²² Henry Fielding, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (Oxford: Oxford World Classics, 2008), p. ii. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

²³ Gerard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 128.

²⁴ Genette, *Paratexts*, p. 125.

²⁵ William Julius Mickle to Lord George Lyttelton, 21 January 1763, in William Julius Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy* (London: printed by A. Paris, 1794), p. xiii.

²⁶ Lord George Lyttelton to William Julius Mickle, 7 July 1763, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xiv.

that a dedication will do Mickle ‘no service’, whilst his editorial interventions, on the other hand, might be critically ‘of some use’.

As well as advancing his editorial role, Lyttelton also embraced and advertised his role as a facilitator. One of Lyttelton’s early poetic conversations with Alexander Pope (1688-1744), *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome* (1730), foregrounds his mediating role. As the title suggests, the poem adopts the guise of a letter from ‘a Young Gentleman’ to Pope. It quotes an unnamed messenger who entreats the ‘Young Gentleman’ to bear ‘to Pope this Message from his Master’.²⁷ This is significant because, not only does it indicate that the ‘Young Gentleman’ is not the master, but also that the ‘Young Gentleman’ is an intermediary between Pope and his master: a foreshadowing of how Lyttelton’s later patronage relationships would play out. Margaret J. M. Ezell suggests that:

for literary historians, Pope has always been associated with the power of print, the author who took full advantage of the blossoming of the publishing trade to secure a living for himself as a poet free from the constraints of a dying system of patronage and who, furthermore, outwitted the booksellers.²⁸

However, despite this critical impression of Pope’s independence, within this poem Lyttelton is situating Pope within a relationship where his ‘Master’ indicates what literature they would like produced. Additionally, the ‘Young Gentleman’ is unnamed within the poem and, accordingly, Lyttelton’s authorship is also masked by the adoption of the pseudonym ‘a Young Gentleman at Rome’. The anonymity and covertness attached to the exchange further suggests Lyttelton’s preference for the role of mediator rather than public patron.

What this establishes is that Lyttelton’s ‘spectrality’ was a conscious choice that allowed him to adopt an editorial rather than public patronal role. His positioning not only asks us to revisit the lack of attention paid to Lyttelton in studies of eighteenth-century

²⁷ George Lyttelton, *An Epistle to Pope from a Young Gentleman at Rome* (London: J. Roberts, 1730), l. 50. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

²⁸ Margaret J. M. Ezell, *Social Authority and the Advent of Print* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), p. 61.

patronage but also invites us to re-conceptualise how we define patronage. As I outlined in the introduction, patronage is generally considered in terms of financial contributions but Lyttelton's preferred role as an editor challenges the idea that patronage must be of monetary benefit to the client. Moreover, it shows that patrons such as Lyttelton saw their patronage as a means of influencing the direction of eighteenth-century literature and culture.

'I was his Chief Favourite': Lyttelton's relationship with Frederick, the Prince of Wales

Lyttelton's most significant patronage role was that of a facilitator between the Prince of Wales and poets such as Thomson, Mallet, and Gilbert West (1703-1756); however, the importance of Lyttelton's position in relation to the Prince is often erased in critical accounts.²⁹ These erasures fail to credit Lyttelton's significance in crafting the literary circle around the Prince and nor do they account for how he used his influence in order to raise the profile of particular writers to the benefit of the patriot opposition.³⁰ By re-evaluating Lyttelton's relationship with the Prince and poets such as Thomson, Mallet, and West, this chapter shows that Lyttelton cultivated these relationships with the intention of producing poetry that would aid the cause of the patriot opposition.

Maud Wyndham postulates that Lyttelton was most probably introduced to the Prince through their mutual friend, the diplomat Stephen Poyntz (1685-1750), in 1732.³¹ Following the introduction, Lyttelton quickly established himself as an influential figure in the Prince's circle. Robert Phillimore states that among the Hagley manuscripts there is a letter, dated 1733 or 1734, endorsed in Lyttelton's hand: 'Copy of a letter I wrote to the Prince the second year of our acquaintance, before I came into Parliament [...] I was his Chief Favourite'.³²

²⁹ See Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 34 and Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, p. 219.

³⁰ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 34 and Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*, p. 219.

³¹ Maud Wyndham, *Chronicles of the eighteenth-century, founded on the correspondence of Sir Thomas Lyttelton and his family*, 2 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), I, p. 44.

³² Robert Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence of George, Lord Lyttelton, 1734-1773*, 2 vols. (London: James Ridgeway, 1845), I, pp. 50-1.

Rose Mary Davis suggests that, at this point, he unofficially held the position of secretary to the Prince.³³ In the years following the introduction of Lyttelton and Frederick, relations between the King and the Prince became even more strained. In the Autumn of 1737 the King issued an order forbidding all those who paid court to the Prince, or were in his service, to be admitted to the King's presence.³⁴ This order resulted in the resignation of some of the Prince's servants, including James Pelham (1683-1761) who had previously held the official position of secretary to the Prince. Following Pelham's resignation, Lyttelton was formally appointed as secretary. Davis postulates that Lyttelton's appointment was considered the final gesture towards solidifying the Prince with the patriot opposition since there was 'nobody more violent in the Opposition' than Lyttelton, 'nor anybody a more declared enemy of Sir Robert Walpole'.³⁵ This suggests that Lyttelton's political purpose and agency was clearly defined and useful for both Frederick and the opposition.

Lyttelton's own writing from the early 1730s suggests that he understood the importance of royal patronage and the political benefits that it could reap. For example, in 'Observations on the Reign of Queen Elizabeth' (1733), Lyttelton muses about the subject of court patronage of men of letters. Davis cites the unpublished manuscript as containing a dialogue whereby Sir Walter Raleigh criticises Lord Burleigh for his neglect of Spenser, maintaining that it is the duty of a minister to protect such men and to place them in the way of royal patronage; neglect of this office is an injury to the public Raleigh argues.³⁶ Lyttelton follows the advice of his character by ensuring that he used his influence to confer financial security onto certain writers. Indeed, he arranged for Mallet to be appointed under-secretary

³³ Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, p. 51.

³⁴ For more information about the relationship between the King and the Prince see Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, p. 51.

³⁵ Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, p. 51

³⁶ Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, p. 53

to the Prince of Wales ‘with a salary of 200l. a year’ in June 1742.³⁷ Moreover, Thomson’s biographers, Harris Nicolas and George Campbell Macaulay credit Lyttelton with having procured for Mallet a pension of £100 from the Prince (the same amount Thomson enjoyed and which Lyttelton had also arranged).³⁸ We also know from a diary entry from Hugh Hume-Campbell, the Earl of Marchmont (1708-1794) that the Prince ordered a pension of £100 for West at the request of Lyttelton in the Autumn of 1744.³⁹ While the indirect nature of Lyttelton’s patronage may have influenced how he is portrayed in scholarly discourses, it does not, however, diminish the attachment of the writers and poets to Lyttelton. Though the Prince was the public patron of writers such as Thomson, Mallet, and West, and acknowledged as such in Thomson’s dedication of *The Seasons* (1744) and in Mallet’s *Mustapha* (1739), these writers were attached to Lyttelton rather than the Prince. This is demonstrated through the repercussions from Lyttelton’s political defection from the patriot opposition to the Broad Bottom Administration. In the fallout from Lyttelton’s defection, the Prince cut his patronal ties to Thomson, Mallet, and West, the poets that Lyttelton had cultivated and introduced to the Prince. Thomson writes to his friend William Paterson, of being ‘struck off from his hundred pounds a year’ adding that ‘West, Mallet, and I were all routed in one day...out of Resentment to our friend in Argyll Street’.⁴⁰ Thomson’s comment that they were ‘routed’ because of ‘Resentment to our friend in Argyll Street’ (Argyll Street being the location of Lyttelton’s London house) shows that the Prince, despite his public connection to Thomson, Mallet, and West, considered them to be Lyttelton’s men. It is important to note that none of these writers had published a dedicatory tribute to Lyttelton,

³⁷ Samuel Johnson, *The Lives of the most eminent English Poets; with critical observations on their works*, ed. Roger Lonsdale, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006), IV, p. 185.

³⁸ Harris Nicolas, *The Poetical Works of James Thomson*, 2 vols. (London: W. Pickering, 1847), I, p. cvii and George Campbell Macaulay, *James Thomson* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1908), p. 45.

³⁹ *A Selection from the papers of the Earls of Marchmont, in possession of the Right Honourable Sir George Henry Rose, illustrative of events from 1685 to 1750*, 3 vols. (London: John Murray, 1831), I, p. 63.

⁴⁰ James Thomson to William Paterson, undated, *James Thomson (1700-1748): Letters and Documents*, ed. by Alan Dugald McKillop (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1958), p. 196.

which suggests that, while dedications are certainly an important aspect of establishing a patronage relationship, they are not the total sum of patronage dealings. The linking of the writers with Lyttelton suggests that while we often consider patronage relationships as a clear pairing stemming from the named patron, there are many layers of loyalties and politics that suggest a much more complex picture of eighteenth-century patronage.

The notion of placing people in the way of royal patronage is also particularly pertinent to Lyttelton's patronal dealings. As well as being able to confer financial security on specific writers, Lyttelton also acted as a go-between for writers who wished to present their work to the Prince. For example, on 24 December 1742, Shenstone wrote to his friend Richard Graves (1715-1804) that William Somervile's poem upon hawking, *Field Sports*, was out and that he had sent it to Lyttelton to be read to the Prince, to whom it was inscribed and who was known to be fond of hawking.⁴¹ This demonstrates the understanding amongst writers that Lyttelton could be used as a means of introducing a work to the Prince. By the same token, it meant that Lyttelton had the power to decide which texts the Prince ought to be exposed to.

Lyttelton not only assumed the role of literary gate-keeper, he also actively sought out relationships with writers such as Shenstone and Thomson. Traditionally, patronage relationships are portrayed as the client reaching out to the patron; however, in the cases of Thomson and Shenstone, in particular, it was Lyttelton who first approached them. This shows Lyttelton's recognition of the kind of client he wanted to work with and, the unsolicited nature of his initial approach suggests that he had cultivated an awareness of them as writers.

⁴¹ William Shenstone to Richard Graves, 24 December 1742, in *The Works, in Verse and Prose, of William Shenstone, Esq. Containing letters to particular friends, from 1739 to 1763*, 3 vols. (London: R. Dodsley, 1777), III, p. 56; and William Somervile, *Field-sports. A poem.* (London, 1742).

Lyttelton's first meeting with Shenstone is related by Graves: '[o]n a fine evening, about the year 1736, I think, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Lyttelton, with Mr. Thomas Pitt, (Lord Chatham's elder brother) rode over, for the first time, and visited Mr. Shenstone at the Leasowes'.⁴² Following this initiation of contact, Graves reports that Lyttelton 'conversed with great freedom and familiarity, and gave Mr. Shenstone a general invitation to dine at Hagley, whenever he found it agreeable'.⁴³ Moreover, Graves also states that, when Lyttelton took his leave, he 'politely repeat[ed] his invitation to Hagley'.⁴⁴ These comments show that as well as initiating the relationship, Lyttelton followed up this introduction by indicating that he was invested in continuing the acquaintance. The repeated invitation to Hagley further demonstrates his commitment to cementing the relationship. Furthermore, it is also an echo of Lyttelton's correspondence with Mickle where he requested Mickle's presence: 'if you were to come and read it over with me, then we might discourse together upon what I think its beauties and faults'.⁴⁵ This seeming insistence on physically being with his patronal clients suggests that this was something Lyttelton saw as beneficial. Conceivably, the physical presence meant that Lyttelton could ensure that his suggestions and opinions were being heard and, also, offered an opportunity to remind these writers of their social position in relation to Lyttelton's own social standing through his residence.

Graves also comments that: '[a]s Mr. Shenstone had at this time done nothing at the Leasowes worth notice, Mr. Lyttelton's was probably a visit of mere curiosity, Mr. Shenstone being just returned from the university, and began to be known in the neighbourhood as a young man of parts and ingenuity'.⁴⁶ The suggestion that Lyttelton visited Shenstone for 'curiosity' suggests that Lyttelton understood the potential opportunities of introducing

⁴² Richard Graves quoted in Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 280.

⁴³ Richard Graves quoted in Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 280.

⁴⁴ Richard Graves quoted in Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 281.

⁴⁵ Lord George Lyttelton to William Julius Mickle, 7 July 1763, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xiv.

⁴⁶ Richard Graves quoted in Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 281.

himself to young wits, or ‘networking’ with a new generation. We simply cannot assume that this was a disinterested act.

Indeed, Lyttelton’s visit to Shenstone in 1736 began a decades long relationship between the two men and, while Shenstone did not enter the Prince’s circle as others did, or cultivate a reputation as an oppositional writer, he did attempt to assist Lyttelton’s political career. For example, when Lyttelton, ultimately unsuccessfully, contested the Worcestershire seat in 1740, Phillimore reports that Shenstone ‘supported him to the utmost of his power’.⁴⁷ Shenstone was also not the only one of Lyttelton’s patronal clients to support him politically in public: Fielding defended Lyttelton in the *Jacobite Journal* against an ‘impudent Libeller’.⁴⁸ This is significant because that ‘impudent Libeller’ was Robert Walpole and the pamphlet was *A second and third Letter to the Whigs*, in which Walpole accuses Lyttelton, and ‘the Patriots’, of attempting to suppress the freedom of the press and censoring the public.⁴⁹ Thus, Fielding’s defensive piece *To the Author of the Jacobite Journal* (1748) not only shows him providing literary services for Lyttelton, but specifically embroils himself in Lyttelton’s public politics. Brian McCrea draws our attention to the fact that, in this defensive piece, Fielding asserts that ‘neither he [Lyttelton] nor his particular Friends did ever *speak* or *vote*, while in *Opposition*’ for triennial parliaments.⁵⁰ However, as McCrea then notes, Ralph Allen (1693-1764) is quoted in *The Champion* No. 56 as complaining that ‘[t]he *very desirable* Attempt which was expected to be made this Session to restore *Triennial* Parliaments, seems to be no longer thought of’.⁵¹ McCrea argues that this comment provides one case in which a journal supervised by a ‘Friend’ of Lyttelton’s, and written with

⁴⁷ Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 282.

⁴⁸ *The Jacobite’s Journal and Related Writings*, ed. by William B. Coley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 219.

⁴⁹ *A second and third Letter to the Whigs* (London, 1748), p. 10.

⁵⁰ Brian McCrea, *Henry Fielding and the Politics of Mid-Eighteenth-Century England* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1981), p. 153.

⁵¹ McCrea, *Henry Fielding*, p. 153.

Lyttelton's encouragement, did speak against septennial Parliaments.⁵² This is significant because it shows Fielding specifically attempting to influence facts to present Lyttelton and his political allies in a more favourable light. Lyttelton's relationship with both Shenstone and Fielding shows that he cultivated clients who assisted his political aspirations and defended his reputation. It indicates that Lyttelton's work as a facilitator for the Prince was motivated by the benefits it could reap for the political ideology that Lyttelton subscribed to, rather than for the Prince himself.

Lyttelton's initiation of his relationship with Shenstone is also mirrored in the beginnings of his relationship with Thomson. Patrick Murdoch - a close friend of Thomson's - states that Lyttelton's recommendation of Thomson to the Prince 'came altogether unsolicited, long before Mr. Thomson was personally known to [Lyttelton]'.⁵³ As with Shenstone, Lyttelton's approach suggests that he already had an awareness of Thomson and his work and that he had evaluated this before crafting a connection. These reports offer an inversion of the general narrative of patronage in which a poet solicits a patron; instead Lyttelton initiates the connection and this begs the question why? The answer lies in the fact that as well as Lyttelton's connections to the patriot opposition to Walpole's government and later to the Broad Bottom administration, his place within the contemporary literary world also informed the way he facilitated and managed his patronage relationships.

The intersections between Lyttelton's form of mediatory political patronage and corresponding literature is perhaps best illustrated in his *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome*. As aforementioned in this chapter, this poem is written as if it were a letter within which the 'Young Gentleman' relays a message to Pope from his 'Master': Virgil (*An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome*, l. 43). The message indicates that Pope's task is to raise 'A lasting Column to thy Country's Praise' (*An Epistle to Pope*,

⁵² McCrea, *Henry Fielding*, p. 153.

⁵³ Patrick Murdoch, *The Works of James Thomson*, 3 vols. (London, 1802), I, p. 22-3.

from a Young Gentleman at Rome, l. 62), which suggests Lyttelton's desire for Pope to write a poem that situates itself within the political literature of the 1730s; for, a poem concerning 'thy Country's Praise' (*An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome, l. 62*) would necessarily enter contemporary political debates over which aspects of the country to praise.

The message concludes by stating that:

If these Commands submissive thou receive,
Immortal and unblam'd thy Name shall live;
Envy to black *Cocytus* shall retire,
And howl with Furies in tormenting Fire:
Remotest Times shall consecrate thy Lays,
And join the Patriot's to the Poet's Praise
(*An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome, ll. 73-8*).

The notion of joining the 'Patriot's to the Poet's Praise' exemplifies what Lyttelton was attempting to craft through his relationships with literary figures and through his own patronage dealings. Indeed, this relationship that Lyttelton describes in *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome* is later reflected in his relationship between the Prince and several writers. The poem demonstrates Lyttelton's acknowledgement and acceptance of his role as the mediator between the 'Master' and Pope and these final lines of *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome* show his motivation for doing so. The poem shows Lyttelton delivering a message from the 'Master' who 'Commands' the poet to create poetry that will contribute to the political-literary landscape and demonstrates his understanding of how his form of 'spectral' patronage can influence contemporary politics.

In her biography of Lyttelton, Davis states that Bolingbroke and Chesterfield quickly recognised the possibility of winning the Prince over to their cause and of rallying the patriot opposition around him, and that Lyttelton was a 'promising tool in their hands'.⁵⁴ Constructing Lyttelton as a 'promising tool' in the hands of Bolingbroke and Chesterfield suggests that he did not understand the political importance of patronage, it also erases his

⁵⁴ Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, p. 48.

agency in carrying it out. However, Lyttelton's recognition of the necessity of royal patronage and subsequent cultivation and promotion of certain writers shows that, rather than functioning as a simple 'tool' in the hands of Bolingbroke and Chesterfield, he was keenly aware of the role he had to play as arbiter and facilitator of the Prince's artistic and political patronage.

Lyttelton's editorial work

While Lyttelton's role as a facilitator and literary gate-keeper to the political literature that was associated with the patriot opposition is significant, Lyttelton was not content to simply request or promote literature that contributed to contemporary political dialogues: he also actively intervened as an editor. By analysing the epistolary correspondence between Lyttelton and Mickle, Fielding, Mallet, and Shenstone and the corresponding work, this chapter shows that Lyttelton exerted editorial influence on the composition and direction of their literary productions. Helen Deutsch may argue that in the eighteenth century, 'literary patronage was no longer what it had been [and that...] print was the venue for an authorial spectacle'; however, Lyttelton's editorial influence problematises this.⁵⁵

Sambrook suggests that *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome* imagines 'Virgil advising Pope'.⁵⁶ This comment indicates that the relationship should be construed as collaborative rather than authoritarian; however, Lyttelton's words both within *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome* and elsewhere suggest that, though he may have been ultimately unsuccessful in some cases, he viewed the relationship as being on the authoritarian side of the spectrum. For example, the line 'If these Commands submissive thou receive' (*An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome*, l. 73) positions the

⁵⁵ Helen Deutsch, 'Bolingbroke's Laugh: Alexander Pope's Epistle to Bolingbroke and the Rhetoric of Embodied Exemplarity', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 38.1 (2005), 137-162 (p. 138).

⁵⁶ James Sambrook, 'A Just Balance between Patronage and the Press': The Case of James Thomson', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 34. 1 (2001), 137-153 (p. 149).

message from the ‘Master’ as ‘Commands’ rather than advice. Indeed, the invitation for Pope to be ‘submissive’ to the ‘Master’ suggests that Lyttelton envisioned the relationship as part of a hierarchical power structure which is reflected in the following letters. For Lyttelton to construct a narrative, in *An Epistle to Pope, from a Young Gentleman at Rome*, in which a ‘Master’ invites a poet to create a particular form of poem suggests that he envisioned the patronage relationship as allowing the patron to make creative interventions in a client’s work.

As aforementioned, Lyttelton’s relationship with Mickle began with Mickle’s solicitation of a dedication in 1763. The exchange was the start of a four-year correspondence in which Mickle would send Lyttelton poetic drafts and Lyttelton would offer his corrections and suggestions. For example, on 15 July 1763, Lyttelton writes to Mickle that: ‘The correction of a few lines would make it as perfect as any thing of that kind in our language. When I have the pleasure of seeing you, I will take the liberty of shewing you what I think are the faults’.⁵⁷ Similarly, on 18 August 1764, Lyttelton writes:

Some blemishes [in the Ode] I have marked, and endeavoured to correct, but I could not satisfy myself with any correction I could make of this line, ‘The gentle stranger feebly buds and dies.’ Gentle is certainly an improper epithet applied to a vine, but I do not know how to mend it. I also dislike the change of tense in this stanza, ‘Restor’d creation bright before them lay, / The parch’d up desarts smile as Eden’s plains,’ &c.’ It should be smil’d. Is not burning better than parch’d up? The up seems unpoetical.⁵⁸

This extract demonstrates the level of detail that Lyttelton afforded the ‘beauties and faults’ of his clients’ work. It shows that he not only considered the overall message and aesthetic of a poem, but that he was concerned with the minutiae of diction and changes of tense. This is significant because it shows Lyttelton’s concern for the aesthetic implications of his clients’ work and his awareness of the importance of subtle details to the overall perception of a

⁵⁷ Lord George Lyttelton to William Julius Mickle, 15 July 1763, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xvi.

⁵⁸ Lord George Lyttelton to William Julius Mickle, 28 August 1764, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xxi. The edition cites the date as 1767, yet the reply from Mickle is dated as 1764 therefore I conclude that the date ‘1767’ for Lyttelton’s letter must have been a mistake.

work. Moreover, it frames Lyttelton as being in a position to determine the ‘faults’ in his clients’ work which shows that he considered himself to be an arbiter of poetic taste.

The correspondence not only reveals the editorial relationship that existed between Lyttelton and Mickle, but also demonstrates the power dynamic between them. The original letter from Mickle to Lyttelton did not reference Lyttelton having any editorial input and for Lyttelton to ‘take the liberty’ of doing this not only suggests that it was of his own volition, but that he perceived it as part of his role within their patronage relationship.⁵⁹ Moreover, their correspondence reveals that Mickle largely accepted Lyttelton’s suggestions. For example, on 16 August 1764 he responds that: ‘Having lately altered the parts of the Ode which you was so good as to mark for correction, and being very desirous that if possible it might be what your Lordship once pronounced some proper corrections would make it, I have again inclosed it for your perusal’.⁶⁰ This not only shows Mickle adhering to Lyttelton’s corrections, but also that, following this process, he sends the ode to Lyttelton for a second reading. This demonstrates the intimate nature of Lyttelton’s connection to his clients’ work and, given that Mickle included the poem for a second ‘perusal’, confirms the power dynamic within the editorial relationship.

While we do not have any of the correspondence relating to Fielding’s and Lyttelton’s literary relationship, nevertheless Fielding’s dedication to Lyttelton in *The History of Tom Jones* hints at the relationship that existed between them and shows how Fielding was publicly situating their relationship. Fielding generously declares that ‘To you, Sir, it is owing that this History was ever begun. It was by your desire that I first thought of such a composition’ (*Tom Jones*, p. iii). Griffin suggests that ‘dedications must of course be read very cautiously: the client presumably says only what he knows the patron wants to hear, or credits the patron with virtues and motives currently fashionable’; nonetheless, to know what

⁵⁹ Lord George Lyttelton to William Julius Mickle, 15 July 1763, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xvi.

⁶⁰ William Julius Mickle to Lord George Lyttelton, 16 August 1764, in Mickle, *Poems, and a Tragedy*, p. xix.

it is a patron wants to hear and how the author is publicly framing their relationship is valuable in terms of determining the intricacies of patronage relationships.⁶¹ In this instance, Fielding's dedication publicly situates Lyttelton as the instigator of *The History of Tom Jones*. This suggests that Fielding believed that situating Lyttelton as the inspiring force to be at the service of the work, at the service of his relationship with Lyttelton, or, indeed, to the advantage of both. This is significant because, despite protestations against the principle of patronage, for example Johnson's tirades against the practice in *The Rambler*, it shows that patronage, and specifically a patronage where the patron was involved creatively, was still a marketing tool in the eighteenth century.⁶²

Fielding's assertion that Lyttelton aided in the conception of the work, and his later statement that credited Lyttelton with the completion of the work - 'without your assistance this History had never been completed' (*Tom Jones*, p. iv) - evokes the image of Lyttelton orchestrating and facilitating the creation of the work. The nature of Lyttelton's 'assistance' is not explicitly clarified; however, given Lyttelton's partiality to offering editorial assistance it is conceivable that Lyttelton also offered this to Fielding. Fielding elaborates on his comment by stating that 'I partly owe to you my existence during a great part of the time which I have employed in composing it' (*Tom Jones*, p. iv). This implies that Lyttelton was responsible in some way for supporting Fielding financially during the production of the work. Moreover, Fielding specifically references Lyttelton's role in facilitating the patronal relationship that Fielding enjoyed with John Russell, duke of Bedford (1710-1771): 'whilst my gratitude for the princely benefactions of the Duke of Bedford bursts from my heart, you

⁶¹ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 17.

⁶² Samuel Johnson was a particularly vehement critic of patronage. In Johnson's periodical *The Rambler*, forty-two of the essays touch upon patronage, and dedications in particular, in a negative manner. For example, in no. 136 *The meanness and mischief of the indiscriminate dedication*, Johnson declares that the author of a dedication 'professes himself the hireling of vanity' in 'No. 136. Saturday, 6th July 1751' in Samuel Johnson, *The Rambler* ed. by W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss, 3 vols. (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1969), II, pp. 354-359.

must forgive my reminding you, that it was you who first recommended me to the notice of my benefactor' (*Tom Jones*, p. v). Dedications are part of a performative literary genre and statements should not necessarily be taken as truth; however, it shows Fielding publicly crediting Lyttelton with a number of patronal virtues that led to the successful completion of his book. This shows that, as with the relationship between the Prince and Thomson, Mallet, and West, that although Lyttelton, as the facilitator, was not the direct source of financial patronage, the writers that he patronised still publicly attached themselves to him.

Lyttelton's role as an orchestrator is exemplified in his correspondence with Mallet concerning Mallet's desire to write a play about Socrates. On the 11 July 1743, Lyttelton writes to Mallet to express his dismay that 'you have thought of Writing a Play on the story of Socrates, which I have always been of opinion is very unfit for the stage'.⁶³ Lyttelton elaborates on this position by stating that '[t]he Character of Socrates has no Passion in it, and ought to have none', 'parts of your Play must be meer Translations, and can hardly come up to the Beauty and the Force of the Greek Eloquence in the Original', and '[y]ou will also consider how far [Thomson] may claim a Prior Right to it'.⁶⁴ After laying out his argument to Mallet, Lyttelton concludes by saying that 'I wou'd recommend to you the story of the Death of Seneca' since 'I am sure is much more fitt for the Stage, and more peculiarly suitable to your Genius'.⁶⁵ Finally, Lyttelton states that, if Mallet is amenable to the notion of writing a play on Seneca, he should 'ride over to Wickham, and see Mr. West [as] he will be able to show you the Scheme of a Play upon that subject, and be very glad to have it executed by so able a Hand'.⁶⁶ This is an extraordinary intervention in the creative process and shows Lyttelton not only attempting to determine Mallet's choice of topic, but also attempting to facilitate a relationship between West and Mallet in which Mallet would be creating West's

⁶³ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, 11 July 1743, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁶⁴ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, 11 July 1743, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁶⁵ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, 11 July 1743, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁶⁶ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, 11 July 1743, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

vision. This shows Lyttelton's acknowledgement that writers, such as Mallet, can be used in order to fulfil another person's creative vision. This feeds into the wider narrative of Lyttelton as a creative director in which he utilises the creative talents of others in order to advance his political propaganda. It is important to note that both Thomson and Mallet heeded Lyttelton's advice and did not produce a play about Socrates, demonstrating that, due to his interventions in the creative process, Lyttelton was influencing what literature was being produced.⁶⁷

As well as expressing a desire to influence Mallet's subject choices, Lyttelton also concerned himself with improving Mallet's written work. In 1745, Lyttelton, replying to a letter from Mallet, expressed interest in a poem Mallet had sent him. He writes: 'I have read it over with a great deal of Pleasure, and can truly assure you that I see in it distinguishing Marks of a fine Genius, as well as a good, and feeling Heart'.⁶⁸ Furthermore, he expressed his desire to read the whole of the text: 'I shall be better able to Judge of the Merit of the Work upon a sight of the whole, I beg the favour of you, to send me the other two Cantos'.⁶⁹ Lyttelton's assertion that he wishes to 'Judge' the 'Merit' of the work implies that he is evaluating the work and sets himself up as the arbiter of poetic taste. Moreover, Lyttelton states that once he has seen the final version of the poem, he will 'venture to give you my thoughts of it with that sincerity which you have a right to expect'.⁷⁰ As with Mickle, Lyttelton's statement that he will 'venture' his thoughts suggests that the offered corrections are of Lyttelton's own volition rather than Mallet's desire.

As well as interfering with the subject choice of Mallet's plays, the correspondence between Mallet and Lyttelton also reveals his involvement in the staging of Mallet's plays:

You should certainly have heard from me last night, if Mr. Fleetwood had not promised to go to you immediately himself, and tell you what has been settled at

⁶⁷ It is also important to note, however, that neither writer produced a play on the death of Seneca either.

⁶⁸ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, July 1745, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁶⁹ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, July 1745, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁷⁰ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, July 1745, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

Norfolk House. I had the pleasure of hearing His R. H. give his last commands to him that your Play should be acted first, to which he agreed with great seeming Readiness, upon my telling Mr. Thomson's Play wou'd not come on this year. He promised the utmost Dispatch in bringing it on Your's, and I dare say you will be troubled with no more impertinence on that side.⁷¹

Though the letter is undated, and the play unnamed, it is likely that they are discussing Mallet's play *Mustapha* (1739) since it was dedicated to the Prince and was Mallet's only solo dramatic work to be released during the Prince's patronage of him. The note explicitly shows Lyttelton acting as a mediator between the Prince and Mallet to the benefit of Mallet's work. Moreover, it shows Lyttelton assuming a level of responsibility by assuring Mallet that he will meet 'no more impertinence'.⁷² The significance of this is that it suggests that Lyttelton has the authority to exert his power over others and was able to confidently guarantee Mallet of the positive outcome of his interference. This demonstrates Lyttelton utilising his social position in order to intimidate others – a tactic it is possible he employed when requesting his clients to visit his residences in order to discuss their work.

As well as Mallet's dramatic work, Lyttelton, along with William Pitt, also exerted directorial influence on Thomson's play *Tancred and Sigismunda* (1745). This was Thomson's most successful play: a shortened version was played on the London stage in thirty of the fifty seasons following its first performance. The actor playing the principal role of Tancred was David Garrick (1717-1779) and it is in Thomas Davis' *Memoirs of David Garrick* that we find an anecdote relating to Lyttelton's involvement in the play:

I believe it was during this winter of 1743, that Mr. Garrick became acquainted with Mr. Pitt, afterwards earl of Chatham, and Geo. lord Lyttleton, who continued ever after to treat him as their friend and companion. The first addressed him in a poetical epistle, quoted in the Appendix to this narrative. The other paid him very elegant and just compliments upon his acting, in his Dialogues of the Dead. These great persons had taken upon themselves the patronage of Thompson's *Tancred and Sigismunda*; under their direction and influence it was acted at Drurylane. The parts were disposed of to great advantage, to Garrick, Sheridan, Delane, Mrs. Cibber, and Miss Budgell, the natural daughter of the famous Eustace Budgell, who, about 43 years since, threw himself into the Thames [...] The two great statesmen, Pitt and Lyttleton, attended the

⁷¹ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, undated, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁷² George Lyttelton to David Mallet, undated, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

rehearsal of *Tancred and Sigismunda* with great assiduity; they had a sincere value for the amiable author. Their instructions were heard by the players with great respect, and embraced with implicit confidence.⁷³

The crucial details that this anecdote provides are that Lyttelton and Pitt exerted their ‘direction and influence’ on the staging of *Tancred and Sigismunda* and that their instructions were heard ‘with great respect, and embraced with implicit confidence’.⁷⁴ This shows that the two men were understood to have a certain authority with respect to the direction and the staging of the play and that this authority was accepted with ‘implicit confidence’.⁷⁵

Tiffany Stern’s work *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (2000) reveals the significance of Lyttelton’s ‘direction’ over the staging of *Tancred and Sigismunda*. Stern asserts that the notion of a director or producer who took charge of productions did not come to be a regular part of production until the late nineteenth century.⁷⁶ Instead, the emphasis throughout the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries was on ‘private’ or ‘individual’ rehearsal rather than the modern conception of a group rehearsal.⁷⁷ This suggests that for Lyttelton and Pitt to attend a rehearsal and to offer their direction was not a common occurrence. Moreover, Stern writes that visitors were generally discouraged from turning up to rehearsals: “Garrick wrote to a member of the nobility explaining that when ‘noble learned gentlemen [intrude]’ on his practice, ‘annoyance exceeds honour’”.⁷⁸ This indicates that Lyttelton and Pitt enjoyed a privileged position that allowed them to ‘intrude’.

Stern allows for the possibility of politicised intrusions in a performance that are outside of the original intentions of the text: ‘there are examples of actors clearly using their texts simply as vehicles for their own set-pieces – set-pieces that may be at a total remove

⁷³ Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick, Esq. Interspersed with Characters and Anecdotes of his Theatrical Contemporaries, the Whole Forming a History of the Stage, which includes a period of thirty-six years*, 2 vols. (London, 1780), I, p. 78-9.

⁷⁴ Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick*, p. 78-9.

⁷⁵ Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick*, p. 78-9.

⁷⁶ Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), p. 8.

⁷⁷ Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 7.

⁷⁸ Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 241.

from the script itself [...] [as] political rants'.⁷⁹ However, for Stern these intrusions are a consequence of an actor's intention rather than the 'director'. Though the cited anecdote regrettably does not provide the details of Lyttelton's directions, given his overt political interventions in Thomson's poetry (as will be discussed later in this chapter) it is conceivable that Lyttelton's direction was designed to make a political statement which, given the timing of the play, would likely have centred on his transition to the Broad Bottom administration.

These editorial interventions did not exist behind closed doors but were also part of wider social interactions. Unlike Mickle and Mallet, the direct correspondence between Lyttelton and Shenstone concerning his suggestions and corrections is unavailable; however, Shenstone does reference Lyttelton's editorial influence within his correspondence to Richard Jago (1715-1781) and Graves. An analysis of these letters not only shows Shenstone's reluctance to acquiesce to Lyttelton's requests but also his acceptance that he must do so. This demonstrates Lyttelton's editorial dominance and his overriding influence on production of literature.

The correspondence between Shenstone, Jago, and Graves most likely relates to Shenstone's 'A Pastoral Ode. To the Honourable Richard Lyttelton'. The title of the poem in question is never explicitly mentioned by Shenstone; however, he refers to it as 'my ode to Colonel Lyttleton' which is likely a reference to Lyttelton's younger brother Richard (1719-1753) who was promoted to Colonel in 1747.⁸⁰ Shenstone's correspondence concerning the poem and Lyttelton's editorial interventions are important not only for establishing the relationship between himself and Lyttelton, but also for discourses of patronage and authorship.

⁷⁹ Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan*, p. 233.

⁸⁰ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 17 September 1753, in *Letters to particular friends: by William Shenstone, Esq; from the year 1739 to 1763* (Dublin, 1770), p. 159.

The first reference to ‘A Pastoral Ode. To the Honourable Richard Lyttelton’ in Shenstone’s correspondence appears on 17 February 1753, when Shenstone writes to Jago:

Tom comes now to enquire after your health, and to bring back my ode to Colonel Lyttelton; in regard to which, I desire, that you will not be sparing of your animadversions. I whispered my difficulties to Mr. Miller at Hagley, how delicate I found the subject, and how hard it was to satisfy either myself or others; in all which points he agreed with me. Nevertheless, having twice broke my *promise* of sending a corrected copy to Sir George, I was obliged to make my peace by a *fresh* one, which, I suppose, I must, of necessity, perform.⁸¹

Shenstone’s admission that he found the subject ‘delicate’ and that it was hard to ‘satisfy either myself or others’ indicates that rather than being able to follow his own inspiration and complete the verses to his individual satisfaction, there were others who were invested in the project. His confession that he ‘whispered my difficulties’ to Mr. Miller suggests that these ‘difficulties’ were not those he could publicly broadcast. Furthermore, the inclusion of ‘whispered’ in the epistle is perhaps an indicator to Jago that this information should not be shared as epistles so often were in the eighteenth century. Shenstone’s pinpointing of ‘Hagley’ as the location for these whispered difficulties is vital to ascertaining the relationship between himself and Lyttelton since Hagley was Lyttelton’s residence. That Shenstone is ‘whisper[ing]’ his difficulties at Lyttelton’s home, and not addressing them to Lyttelton himself, suggests that Shenstone’s difficulties are, at least in part, due to Lyttelton. It is interesting to note that Shenstone appears to invite Jago’s comments on his work through his hope that his friend ‘will not be sparing of your animadversions’.⁸² This creates a contrast between an invited critique of his work, and the ‘difficulties’ that appear to be forced upon him by Lyttelton.⁸³ Furthermore, once again, this shows Lyttelton asserting his power over those within close physical proximity.

⁸¹ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 17 September 1753, in *Letters to particular friends*, p. 159.

⁸² William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 17 September 1753, in *Letters to particular friends*, p. 159.

⁸³ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 17 September 1753, in *Letters to particular friends*, p. 159.

Shenstone's conclusion that 'I suppose, I must, of necessity, perform' harks back to the nature of the power dynamics between Lyttelton and his patronal clients.⁸⁴ Firstly, Shenstone is indicating the necessity of conforming to the corrections that Lyttelton desires. Secondly, the word 'perform' not only conjures a sense of artfulness, but also the idea that Shenstone must 'perform' specifically for Lyttelton. This implies that Lyttelton has a set role that he requires Shenstone to 'perform' for him. Since the letter and the 'perform[ance]' are related to Shenstone's verses, the exchange suggests that Lyttelton has a purpose in mind for the verses and is determined for his vision to be enacted.

When Lyttelton finally received the verses, Shenstone declared to Graves, on 15 July 1754, that 'Sir George thinks some alterations requisite in my verses, to which I cannot bring myself easily to conform – but must'.⁸⁵ Though not explicitly confirmed, the suggestion is that the poem referred to in this letter is the ode to Colonel Lyttelton. Written over a year later than Shenstone's letter to Jago, his letter to Graves gives the same impression of his relationship with Lyttelton. The word 'must' is closely connected to the earlier statement of 'necessity' and suggests that the power dynamic is skewed in Lyttelton's favour. Though we do not know what Lyttelton's intended edits were, nevertheless their existence and the manner of Shenstone's description of them is important to the narrative of Lyttelton's patronage because it shows that even if authors were reluctant to adhere to his editorial suggestions, they still did so. This compliance stems from the fact that Lyttelton is in a position of power – he has the power to decide which work he presents to the Prince and also which writers are recommended for financial rewards. Therefore, those writers who are connected to him are reliant on him as a facilitator.

Lyttelton's editorial interactions with Mickle, Mallet, Fielding, and Shenstone demonstrate that Lyttelton exerted extraordinary directorial power over their creative

⁸⁴ William Shenstone to Richard Jago, 17 September 1753, in *Letters to particular friends*, p. 159.

⁸⁵ William Shenstone to Richard Graves, 15 July 1754, in *Letters to particular friends*, p. 179.

endeavours. Their correspondence shows Lyttelton controlling not only the revisions but also the initial conception and direction of the work. Furthermore, his exchanges with Mallet hint at Lyttelton utilising intimidation techniques in order to ensure that Mallet ‘will be troubled with no more impertinence’.⁸⁶ While the correspondence between Lyttelton and these figures is crucial in establishing Lyttelton’s belief in his own editorial dominance, nevertheless it does not reveal the full extent of Lyttelton’s creative directing since it does not explicitly reveal the nature of the changes he was asking of these writers. However, the remainder of this chapter provides an in-depth analysis of Lyttelton’s editorial interventions to Thomson’s *The Seasons* which shows exactly how he made alterations which suited his political agenda.

Lyttelton, Thomson, and *The Seasons*

Though Lyttelton’s epistolary exchanges and dedicatory tributes with Mickle, Shenstone, Mallet, and Fielding show that he was creatively and editorially involved in their work, his role as a patronal editor is best shown through his relationship with Thomson and *The Seasons*. Though the poetic collection is often associated with the patriot opposition, the intimate editorial influence that Lyttelton had on the development of *The Seasons* over the course of numerous revisions is repeatedly left out of critical accounts.⁸⁷ Sambrook argues that even before he met Lyttelton, Thomson was turning himself into exactly the kind of ‘patriot poet’ that Lyttelton sought.⁸⁸ He goes on to say that ‘Lyttelton patronised Thomson because he was carrying out the program that had been vainly pressed upon Pope’.⁸⁹ However, Sambrook’s notion that Thomson was ‘turning himself into’ and ‘carrying out the

⁸⁶ George Lyttelton to David Mallet, undated, The Algarotti Papers in the John Murray Collection, London.

⁸⁷ See Clarissa Campbell, ‘The queen of the blues, the bluestocking queen and bluestocking masculinity’, in *Bluestockings Displayed: Portraiture, Performance and Patronage, 1730-1830*, ed. by Elizabeth Eger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 233-253 (p. 234); Tess Somervell ‘Versions of Damon and Musidora: The Realisation of Thomson’s Story in Revisions and Illustrations’, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 46:1 (2013), 47-70 (p. 63); and Schellenberg, *Literary Coteries*, p. 72.

⁸⁸ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 149.

⁸⁹ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 149.

program' assigns a certain politico-cultural agency to Thomson that erases Lyttelton's role in the editing and transformation of the poetry of those that he patronised. The archival records show that Lyttelton was not only editorially attached to *The Seasons*, but that he influenced the direction of the revisions and sought to integrate *The Seasons* into his evolving political agenda. This chapter establishes how Thomson and *The Seasons* have been situated politically and then examines how Lyttelton directed the content of Thomson's work to correspond with his own political opinions on trade, physico-theology, femininity, and publicity. As I have already noted, Lyttelton's editorial interventions demonstrate that the patron deserves to be recognised as part of Darnton's 'communications circuit'. They also challenge the 'fixity' that is often ascribed to printed works and, as a whole, show that patronage is an essential component of considering eighteenth-century book history.

In his *Life of Thomson*, Johnson writes that: 'The reader of "The Seasons" wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shews him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson impresses'.⁹⁰ Johnson's quote captures the way in which Thomson's *The Seasons* both transfixed and transported its readers. Similarly, John Aikin observed in 1778 that 'no poem was ever composed which addressed itself to the feelings of a greater number of readers'.⁹² Described by Philip Connell as enjoying 'extraordinary fame' and by Sandro Jung as 'a desirable commodity', *The Seasons* enjoyed an unusually long and influential cultural life as readers connected to the emotional, political, and theological nature of Thomson's work.⁹³

The composition of *The Seasons* began with the initial publication of *Winter* as a singular poem in 1726. From there, Thomson published *Summer* in 1727, *Spring* in 1728, and

⁹⁰ Johnson, *The Lives of the most eminent English Poets*, p. 103.

⁹² John Aikin, 'An Essay on the Plan and Character of Thomson's Seasons' in *The Seasons, By James Thomson, A new edition*. (London, 1778), p. 272.

⁹³ Philip Connell, 'Newtonian Physico-Theology and the Varieties of Whiggism in James Thomson's *The Seasons*', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 72.1 (2009), 1-28 (p. 3); and Sandro Jung, 'Design, Media, and the Reading of Thomson's *The Seasons*', *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 46.1 (2013), 139-162 (p. 139).

finally a combination of these three poems as *The Seasons*, complete with the poem ‘Autumn’ in 1730. *The Seasons* was re-published in 1735 as *The Four Seasons, and Other Poems* and then included in an octavo edition of *The Works of Mr. Thomson*, printed by Millar in 1738. Subsequently, an extensively revised version of *The Seasons* was published in 1744. As Kate Parker and Jung have argued, the evolving character of the constituent parts, and specifically the visibility of these revisions, makes *The Seasons* an important text for those interested in the study of book history, material textuality, and eighteenth-century politico-culture.⁹⁴

As James Daybell and Peter Hinds have put forward, in recent years scholars have begun to appreciate the way in which poems in manuscript circulation ‘might be reshaped to serve particular ends, applied and reapplied in circumstances and conditions different from the initial moment of composition’.⁹⁵ This sense of fluidity is most often applied to manuscript circulation with scholars such as Ezell referring to a manuscript as ‘a fluid text constantly subject to change’.⁹⁶ By comparison, Elizabeth Eisenstein refers to the printed version of a text as the ‘authoritative edition’ of a manuscript and Ezell suggests that manuscripts become ‘forever fixed in print’.⁹⁷ Both constructions imply rigidity to the printed form. My research into *The Seasons* suggests that the printed revisions to the text evidence the fluidity of the eighteenth-century printed text and, specifically, shows how Lyttelton assisted in moulding the poem to serve his evolving political ends throughout the 1740s and 1750s.

⁹⁴ Sandro Jung, ‘Introduction’ in *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 46.1 (2013), v-xiii (p. ix); and Kate Parker, ‘James Thomson and the affective body in/of *The Seasons*’, *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 46.1 (2013), 1-18 (p. 3).

⁹⁵ James Daybell and Peter Hinds, ‘Introduction’, in *Material Readings of Early Modern Culture: Texts and Social Practices, 1580-1730*, ed. by James Daybell and Peter Hinds (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), pp. 1-21 (p. 3).

⁹⁶ Ezell, *Social Authority*, p. 40.

⁹⁷ Elizabeth Eisenstein, *The Printing Revolution in Early Modern Europe*, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), I, p. 6 and Ezell, *Social Authorship*, p. 23.

Resoundingly, scholarly critique and interest in *The Seasons* has focused on historicist, context-driven analyses of Thomson's politics; these studies have identified his associations with Whig ideologies and have unravelled his discursive engagements with patriotism.⁹⁸ However, the extensive revisions to *The Seasons* within Thomson's lifetime, combined with its compositional history as separate poems, have also led critics to suggest that it is difficult to construct a cohesive political reading of *The Seasons*. David Anderson argues that 'it is practically impossible to see [*The Seasons*] as a coherent whole by attempting to reconcile the many topics it undertakes to discuss' and Glynis Ridley suggests that 'an obvious objection to any attempt to read *The Seasons* in terms of a coherent political ideology is that the poem's origins resist such critical impositions'.⁹⁹ This chapter argues that viewing the revisions and edits to *The Seasons* in relation to Lyttelton's changing political stances, from member of the patriot opposition to member of the broad bottom government, offers cohesion and a unified political reading of the 1744 edition of *The Seasons*.

The dedications and political allusions throughout Thomson's early work contribute to the sense of impossible political reconciliation that Anderson and Ridley put forward. Indeed, the first published component part of *The Seasons*, *Winter* (1726), was dedicated to Sir Spencer Compton, later the 1st Earl of Wilmington (1673-1743). Compton was a Whig statesman who, at the time of the poem's publication, held the post of Paymaster of the Forces (1722-1730) as well as being Lord Privy Seal and a Knight of the Bath in Robert Walpole's Whig government. Moreover, Connell argues that Queen Caroline's presence at the top of the subscriber's list for the 1730 edition of *The Seasons* establishes the poem's

⁹⁸ See Ralph Cohen's *The Unfolding of the Seasons* (London: Routledge & K. Paul, 1970); John Barrell's, *English Literature in History, 1730-80: An Equal, Wide Survey* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1983); and Tim Fulford's *Landscape, Liberty and Authority: Poetry, Criticism and Politics from Thomson to Wordsworth* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

⁹⁹ David R. Anderson, 'Emotive Theodicy in *The Seasons*', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 12 (1983), 59-76 (p. 5); and Glynis Ridley, 'The Seasons and the Politics of Opposition' in *James Thomson: Essays Tercentenary* ed. by Richard Terry (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), pp. 93-116 (p. 94).

‘court Whig credentials’.¹⁰⁰ Sambrook suggests that Thomson’s dedication to Whig political figures was not ‘altogether mercenary: he was a lifelong Whig by upbringing and conviction and had a genuine concern for civic virtue’.¹⁰¹ Similarly, Ridley states: ‘Thomson’s staunchly Whig credentials have never been in doubt, the Thomson family’s politics being firmly located within a Scottish Whig tradition that inculcated vehement support for the Union and the Hanoverian cause’.¹⁰² In a similar fashion to *Winter* (1726), Thomson’s early publications and dedications associate him with Whig ideologies that are largely sympathetic to Walpole’s administration. Indeed, Thomson’s *A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton* (1727) was dedicated to Walpole himself.¹⁰³ When the initial composite version of *The Seasons* (1730) was published Britain, under Walpole’s governance, is referred to as an ‘Island of Bliss’.¹⁰⁴ Walpole himself was prepared to subscribe to the composite version of *The Seasons* which shows that he considered Thomson’s work to be, at the very least, not directly critical of his governance.

Despite the avoidance of direct criticism of Walpole’s government in the 1730 edition of *The Seasons*, it was around this time that Thomson’s growing discomfort with certain policies started to show. Connell argues that Thomson’s anonymous publication of *Britannia. A Poem* in January 1729 ‘confirmed the poet’s oppositional inclinations’.¹⁰⁵ As Ralph McLean has convincingly shown, *Britannia* acts as a ‘rallying cry to all Britons, attempting to energise them with patriotic pride in national achievements, past military glories, and a sense of destiny’ in response to Walpole’s foreign policy.¹⁰⁶ *Britannia* was published at a

¹⁰⁰ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 12. It was, supposedly, through Queen Caroline’s assistance that Walpole remained in power following the death of King George I. It is also important to note that Thomson’s dedication to Hertford appeared within *The Seasons* and that Hertford was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Caroline at the time.

¹⁰¹ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 141.

¹⁰² Ridley, ‘*The Seasons*’, p. 93.

¹⁰³ James Thomson, *A poem sacred to the memory of Isaac Newton* (London, 1727), p. i.

¹⁰⁴ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Seasons* (London: printed by A. Millar, 1730), line 646.

¹⁰⁵ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 25.

¹⁰⁶ McLean, ‘James Thomson and ‘Rule, Britannia’’, p. 6.

time when the mood of the British people was in favour of a more aggressive foreign policy towards Spain given Spain's interference with British trade in the Spanish American colonies; Thomson explicitly refers to this in the poem: 'While, unchastis'd, the insulting *Spaniard* dares / Infest the trading Flood'.¹⁰⁷ Sambrook believes that the publication of *Britannia* in January of 1729 was therefore timed to coincide with the opening of a new parliamentary season and was designed to influence public opinion.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the poem asks the reader from whence came 'this unwonted Patience? This weak Doubt? / This tame Beseeching of rejected Peace? / This meek Forbearance? This unnative Fear?' (*Britannia. A Poem*, ll. 30-32). While the content was political, the anonymous publication of the poem, which was highly unusual for Thomson, suggests that Thomson was not quite ready to tie his name to a public criticism of Walpole's government. Furthermore, McLean points to the fact that in some versions of the poem the statement 'Written in the year 1719' is added which could have been an attempt to 'make the poem less politically incendiary by distancing its creation from the current animosity between Britain and Spain' which, again, points to Thomson's hesitancy to make an explicit political statement.¹⁰⁹

In addition to offering Thomson's first public, albeit anonymous, critique of Walpole's government, *Britannia. A Poem* also offered the first public compliment to the Prince who would become the figurehead of the patriot opposition to Walpole's government. Thomson writes: 'Even not yon Sail, that, from the Sky-mixt Wave, / Dawns on the Sight, and wafts the Royal Youth, / A Freight of future Glory to my shore' (*Britannia. A Poem*, ll. 17-18). The specificity of the naval imagery combined with the description of the Prince as a 'Freight' links him to mercantile trade and expansion for, as the OED definition states, a

¹⁰⁷ James Thomson, *Britannia. A Poem* (London, 1729), lines 23-4. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

¹⁰⁸ James Thomson, *Liberty, The Castle of Indolence, and Other Poems*, ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), p. 18.

¹⁰⁹ McLean, 'James Thomson and 'Rule, Britannia'', p. 5.

‘Freight’ ship is a cargo ship for the transport of goods.¹¹⁰ This mercantile imagery, combined with the later lines, ‘Of Royal Beauty, which about it glows / to hover fond, prophetick of those Days / That, Frederick! dawn delightful in thy Eye’ (*Britannia. A Poem*, ll. 299-301), connects the Prince to the ‘golden days’ of Elizabethan naval supremacy that the patriot opposition regularly drew upon in their critiques of the Walpolean government.¹¹¹ The poem not only praises the Prince as ‘prophetick of those Days’ (*Britannia. A poem*, l. 300) but also as the bringer of ‘dawn delightful’ (*Britannia. A poem*, l. 301) which, when combined with the imagery of mercantile trade and expansion, again praises the Prince as a future benefactor of this country. *Britannia* ends with the lines ‘Burn in the Patriot’s thought, flow from his tongue / In fearless truth’ (*Britannia. A poem*, ll. 293-4) which adheres to the opposition’s rhetoric against Walpole’s government.

Following *Britannia. A poem*, Thomson was publicly identified with the emergent patriot opposition through the publication of the first part of his long poem *Liberty* (1735) which was dedicated to the Prince.¹¹² Furthermore, Sambrook argues that Thomson made his political position clear by addressing ‘a congratulatory ode to the Prince on the birth of his daughter, Princess Augusta Frederica (1737-1813) and having it printed in several newspapers, on the 17 September 1737, within a few days of the King’s expelling the Prince from his court’.¹¹³ It was also to Augusta that Thomson’s two plays *Agamemnon* (1738) and *Edward and Eleanora* (1739) were dedicated.¹¹⁴ Though not dedicated to the Prince, Sambrook also refers to *Alfred, A Masque* (1740), a play that Thomson co-wrote with Mallet,

¹¹⁰ ‘Freight’ in *Oxford English Dictionary* [online], <<http://www.oed.com.abc.cardiff.ac.uk/>> [accessed 28 February 2017].

¹¹¹ See Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry, and National Myth 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) and Isaac Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1968) for information about the ‘cult’ of Elizabeth that existed within the Patriot Opposition.

¹¹² James Thomson, *Antient and modern Italy compared. Being the first part of liberty, a poem* (London, 1735), p. i.

¹¹³ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 145.

¹¹⁴ James Thomson, *Agamemnon, a Tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738), pp. 1-2 and James Thomson, *Edward and Eleanora, a Tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1739), pp. 1-2.

as part of the ‘opposition literary campaign’.¹¹⁵ Similarly, McLean successfully argues that *Alfred* was clearly associated with the Prince since the connection between the two men was established in 1735 when ‘the Prince raised a statue of Alfred by the sculptor John Michael Rysback in the garden of his London house, which bore an inscription championing him as the founder of the country’s constitutional liberty’.¹¹⁶

Widely considered to be an ‘overt indication of his commitment to the Patriot agenda’, Thomson published an extensively revised edition of *The Seasons* in 1744.¹¹⁷ Jung argues that the transformation of *The Seasons* from ‘a largely deistic poem into a poetic account of man’s position within the natural cycle’ introduced ‘many miscellaneous references to historical progress and statements that were inspired by Thomson’s involvement in the writing culture of the Patriot Opposition’.¹¹⁸ Where the 1730 edition had retained the original dedications with each individual poem, with the addition of Arthur Onslow (1691-1768) for *Autumn*, in the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* the patronal name on the half-title to each poem was dropped, though the verse-dedication within the poems themselves remained. This removal of Hertford’s name from the half-title to ‘Spring’ suggests that Thomson’s loyalties were shifting from one patron to another. It is interesting to note that this took place in the 1740s which, as outlined in the first chapter, was a period of physical and emotional withdrawal for Hertford. Furthermore, in their place, the entire text was prefaced by a new dedication to the Prince stating that the edition had been ‘Corrected and Made Less Unworthy of His Protection’.¹¹⁹ It would be tempting to argue, given the dedication to the Prince and the numerous previous public connections, that the 1744 edition marked a further public

¹¹⁵ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 146.

¹¹⁶ McLean, ‘James Thomson and ‘Rule, Britannia’, p. 8.

¹¹⁷ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 25.

¹¹⁸ Sandro Jung, ‘Thomson’s *Winter*, the Ur-text, and the revision of *The Seasons*’, *Papers on Literature and Language*, 45:1 (2009), 60-81 (p. 72).

¹¹⁹ James Thomson, *The Seasons* (London: A. Millar, 1744), p. 1. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

testament of Thomson's loyalty to the Prince. However, while the new prose dedication to the Prince provides an obvious framing of the work as oppositional, the state of the political opposition following the resignation of Walpole in 1742 needs a more nuanced clarification. After Walpole, the premiership passed to Spencer Compton, the Earl of Wilmington (1673-1743). However, following his death in 1743, the vacant position was contested by Henry Pelham (1694-1754) and John Carteret (1690-1763). While the Prince was still the figurehead of the opposition, the contest for leadership following Walpole's resignation created divisions.¹²⁰ Crucially, as Phillimore argues, the Prince reportedly became fascinated by Carteret and his 'military genius', while Lyttelton, William Pitt (1708-1778), Philip Stanhope, the Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), and George Bubb Doddington (1691-1762) were 'disposed to coalesce with Pelham in order to overthrow Carteret'.¹²¹ Phillimore notes that the matter came to a head on 11 January 1744 when, during a debate over continuing British troops in Flanders, Doddington voted against Lyttelton, Pitt, and Chesterfield.¹²² Significantly, *The Seasons*' 1744 appearance aligns itself with the most recent turn in politics. That is, while the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* may have been dedicated to the Prince, as was appropriate given that he still supplied Thomson with a pension at this time, the edition also included new compliments to Lyttelton; Pitt; Richard Temple, the 1st Viscount Cobham (1675-1749); and Chesterfield ('Spring', ll. 904-35, 'Autumn', ll. 1048-81, 'Winter', ll. 555-71, 656-90). In other words, the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* aligns itself with Lyttelton's side of the opposition division.

Ridley states 'it has become almost common-place to note the strong 'Whig bias' in the 1744 edition of *The Seasons*'; to elucidate her point, Ridley specifically draws our

¹²⁰ It is important to note that at this point Lyttelton, the Grenvilles, Pitt, and Chesterfield had not been offered positions in government.

¹²¹ Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 221.

¹²² Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 221.

attention to Thomson's list of English worthies in *Summer*.¹²³ For her own analysis, Ridley attributes this strong 'Whig bias' to Thomson's loyalty to Pelham; however, this erases Lyttelton's importance in terms of the shifting direction of *The Seasons*.¹²⁴ Where Lyttelton is acknowledged, his contribution is diminished. For example, Schellenberg simply states that '[Lyttelton] is commemorated in the 1744 edition of James Thomson's *The Seasons*'.¹²⁵ The notion of Lyttelton being 'commemorated' does position Lyttelton as connected to the text; however, it fails to acknowledge his editorial influence. Similarly, Jung's suggestion that Lyttelton 'supervised' the 1760 edition of *The Seasons* ignores his substantial contributions to the earlier revisions. Indeed, Tess Somervell suggests that '[Thomson's] use of revisions [w]as another medium through which to express his meaning [...] The revisions are Thomson's own'.¹²⁶

One of the few scholars to recognise Lyttelton's editorial role in *The Seasons* is Sambrook. In his 1981 edition of *The Seasons*, Sambrook writes:

Lyttelton's corrections, made usually in the interests of decorum or metrical regularity, affect about 150 lines, over half of them in *Autumn*, and are extensive only in the Palemon and Lavinia story in *Autumn* and the lists of worthies in *Summer* and *Winter*. In nearly every case Thomson accepts the need for a correction, even if he does not take Lyttelton's emendation word for word into his own text.¹²⁷

While Sambrook does acknowledge Lyttelton's 'corrections', he limits the scope of Lyttelton's contribution to 'interests of decorum and metrical regularity'. In doing so, Sambrook diminishes the potential of Lyttelton's influence to shape and inspire the direction of *The Seasons*. Moreover, though Sambrook acknowledges that Lyttelton's corrections 'affect about 150 lines' of the 1744 edition of *The Seasons*, and points out when each occurs in his edition, he does not subject these 'corrections' to hermeneutic analysis. Conversely, I

¹²³ Ridley, '*The Seasons*', p. 101.

¹²⁴ Ridley, '*The Seasons*', p. 101.

¹²⁵ Schellenberg, *Literary Coteries*, p. 72.

¹²⁶ Somervell 'Versions of Damon and Musidora', p. 63.

¹²⁷ James Thomson, *The Seasons* ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. lxxviii.

argue that it is not enough to merely state that Lyttelton had a role in editing the text but that an analysis of the changes is needed in order to ascertain the true extent of Lyttelton's influence on the text and how it aligns with Lyttelton's place within the contemporary politico-cultural climate. Furthermore, this chapter offers a unique comparison between Lyttelton's own writing and his editorial interventions on *The Seasons*.

The textual evidence for Lyttelton's involvement in the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* comes in the form of a copy of *The Works of Mr. Thomson* (1738) held in the British Library.¹²⁸ This copy contains the handwritten notes of both Thomson and Lyttelton which were then included in the revised 1744 edition. In order to conduct a hermeneutic analysis of the political nuances in the 1744 edition, it is vital to note the exact date of publication in relation to the political events of 1744. Sambrook reports that the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* was published by Millar on 17 July 1744.¹³⁰ This means that publication occurred when Lyttelton and his political allies were still in opposition to the government. An alliance between Pelham and members of the opposition, including Lyttelton, was forged in November 1744. Consequently, Carteret resigned the seals on 23 November 1744 and Pelham was appointed as Prime Minister. Following Pelham's appointment, Lyttelton accepted the office of commissioner of the treasury. Thus, the compliments to political figures in *The Seasons* and the political nuances are attached to the opposition to the government.

Dennis Desroches has argued that by focusing on 'highly localised points of content in the poem [...] we miss certain pivotal nuances of the poem'; however, due to the fact that Lyttelton's edits affect around 150 lines, my research necessarily focuses on these localised

¹²⁸ *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17).

¹³⁰ James Thomson, *The Seasons* ed. James Sambrook (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. lxvii.

points of content within the poem.¹³¹ Given that the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* is, inclusive of ‘Spring’, ‘Summer’, ‘Autumn’, and ‘Winter’, 5,423 lines long, this section may seem to offer a limited analysis. Nevertheless, I would argue that a focus on these minute and often subtle details enables a greater understanding of the poem’s situation within, and relationship to, the wider politico-cultural climate of the moment.

One example of a subtle, but politically charged, change occurs in ‘Spring’. Previously, in the 1730 edition, line 767 refers to the ‘rural fear’ as containing ‘aged Oaks, and venerable Gloom’; Lyttelton edited the line to instead be ‘lofty Elms, and venerable Oaks’.¹³² The specific change of adjective from ‘aged’ to ‘venerable’ conveys a heightened sense of esteem and respect onto the ‘Oaks’. This may seem insignificant; however, as Ridley reports, ninety-four percent of a warship’s timber in the eighteenth century was oak.¹³³ Therefore, the change does in fact relate to contemporary foreign policy: one of the biggest foreign policy debates in the late 1730s and early 1740s was how to deal with the Spanish navy encroaching upon British trade routes. Gerrard notes that since the seventeenth century: ‘British merchant ships had been conducting a fast-growing illegal trade with Spanish Central America. During the 1720s the Spanish authorities clamped down, using private hired coastguard ships to retaliate, with notorious severity, on British seamen’.¹³⁴ Indeed, Ridley cites one contemporary commentator as insisting that ‘our existence as a Nation depends upon the oak’.¹³⁵ Lyttelton’s added veneration of the ‘Oaks’ explicitly emphasises the importance of the timber itself but also implicitly refers to the expansive mercantile foreign policy that the patriot opposition desired. As Gerrard states, the oppositional pursuit of the

¹³¹ Dennis Desroches, ‘The Rhetoric of Disclosure in James Thomson’s *The Seasons*; or, On Kant’s Gentlemanly Misanthropy’, *The Eighteenth Century*, 49:1 (2008), 1-24 (p. 3).

¹³² James Thomson, ‘Spring’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), line 767.

¹³³ Ridley, ‘*The Seasons*’, p. 101-2.

¹³⁴ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 7.

¹³⁵ Ridley, ‘*The Seasons*’, p. 101-2.

tradition of trade and empire was part of ‘a much broader valorisation of the Elizabethan age’ which the opposition idealised.¹³⁶ Furthermore, as well as the new focus on ‘Oaks’, the line change also removes ‘Gloom’. This represents Lyttelton’s vision for the future and indicates that a future that includes an expansive mercantile foreign policy was a positive one.

The importance of the navy for mercantile and imperial interests was not limited to the general patriot opposition, but also appeared in Lyttelton’s own political literature.

Lyttelton anonymously published *Considerations upon the present State of our Affairs at Home and Abroad, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament from a Friend in the Country* (1739). He writes:

Sir, we are a trading nation, and whatever affects our trade is our nearest concern, and ought to be our principal one. Of all the branches of our commerce, that to our own Colonies is the most valuable upon many accounts [...] But of late years our merchants, passing to and from our Colonies, have been stopt, examined, plundered and abused by the Spaniards, our ships confiscated, and our seamen enslaved, so that the navigation thither is become so dangerous, that if an effectual stop be not soon put to these practices, this most beneficial commerce will be lost.¹³⁷

While this political tract was published at a time when the opposition were pushing for Walpole to declare war on Spain, which he did later that year, it nevertheless shows Lyttelton’s insistence on the importance of trade and for a foreign policy that protects mercantile interests.

As well as the political elements, critical analyses of Thomson’s poetry regularly draw on the elements of physico-theology within his work. Jung has drawn our attention to the ‘religious sublime’ in Thomson’s *The Seasons*, specifically in ‘Winter’, and Connell has argued that Thomson’s ‘poetic line habitually pursues a corresponding reconciliation of spiritual afflatus and philosophical reason’.¹³⁸ For Connell, the intersections between Thomson’s ‘spiritual afflatus and philosophical reason’ and his ‘other worldly concerns’ are

¹³⁶ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 9.

¹³⁷ George Lyttelton, *Considerations upon the present State of our Affairs at Home and Abroad, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament from a Friend in the Country*, (London, 1739), p. 4.

¹³⁸ Jung, ‘Thomson’s *Winter*’, p. 61 and Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 1.

best shown through the ‘sustained engagement with Newtonian thought’ that runs through *The Seasons*.¹³⁹ For contemporary physico-theologians, Connell argues, ‘Newton’s work reflected and enforced the assumption that the existence of God might be inferred through systematic observation of the natural world’.¹⁴⁰ Furthermore, Connell contends that Thomson’s politics and physico-theological interests intersect through his work ‘address[ing] certain broader questions concerning the ideological applications of Newtonian apologetic in the decades following the Glorious Revolution’.¹⁴¹ Indeed, Connell suggests that ‘historians of science are quite familiar with the claim that Newtonian conceptions of God’s design and dominion might also be taken to imply the providential legitimacy of the post-revolutionary settlement in church and state’.¹⁴² Therefore, the revisions concerning Newton and physico-theology from the 1730 to 1744 edition of *The Seasons* are integral to understanding the evolution of Thomson’s politics and how they relate to contemporary Whiggism.

For Connell, the 1730 *The Seasons* ‘advances a sophisticated defence of Hanoverian succession, Anglo-Scottish union, and Whig ascendancy’ by consistently “opposing popular sedition and the Jacobite rebellion with the enlightened ‘philosophic eye’ of Newtonian science”.¹⁴³ Indeed, Connell points to William Pattison and Richard Savage as evidence that:

court poetry of this period routinely identified Newton as the boast of a nation flourishing under the auspices of enlightened Protestant rule, while popular scientific texts praised Newton’s intellectual achievements as a glorious vindication of the same ‘right reason’ with which Walpolean government defended the ‘liberties of mankind’.¹⁴⁴

Connell specifically draws our attention to a passage in ‘Summer’, which he identifies as being about Robert Boyle (1627-1691), the natural philosopher and Christian apologist,

¹³⁹ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 2-3.

¹⁴¹ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 3.

¹⁴² Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 3. See also Margaret Jacob, *The Newtonians and the English Revolution, 1689-1720* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1976).

¹⁴³ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 4.

¹⁴⁴ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 10.

which celebrates Boyle as seeking: ‘th’Eternal thro’ his Works, / By sure Experience led; and, when He dy’d, / Still bid his *Bounty* argue for his God’.¹⁴⁵ Connell suggests that the reference to ‘his *Bounty*’ is a reference to the celebrated lectures established by Boyle’s will in 1691, for which the purpose was ‘proving the Christian religion against notorious Infidels’.¹⁴⁶ Connell argues that these lectures included ‘some of the most significant works of natural theology to appear in the wake of the Revolution settlement’ and that Thomson’s request, in the following line, of ‘Let comprehensive *Newton* speak thy Fame’ suggests that several of the lectures drew ‘extensively on Newtonian ideas in support of their arguments against atheism and freethinking’.¹⁴⁷

Given the associations between Newton, the Whiggism of Walpole’s government, and specifically, Thomson’s dedication to Walpole in his poem commemorating Newton, it is important to note Lyttelton’s revisions concerning the passage in ‘Summer’ that Connell draws our attention to. As aforementioned, the 1730 edition of *The Seasons* stated ‘Let comprehensive *Newton* speak thy Fame, / In all Philosophy’.¹⁴⁸ For the 1744 edition, Lyttelton changes this line to ‘Let Newton, *pure Intelligence*, whom God / To Mortals lent, to trace his boundless Works / From Laws sublimely simple, speak thy Fame / In all Philosophy’.¹⁴⁹ As with all of Lyttelton’s changes, this may seem subtle but it speaks to the nuances of the Whig political arena in the early eighteenth century. Connell argues that, throughout this period, the ‘holy alliance’ of ‘Newtonian philosophy and Christian apologetic was placed under increasing strain by a coalition between Walpolean government and an

¹⁴⁵ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 6-7 and ‘Summer’, ll. 538.

¹⁴⁶ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 6-7.

¹⁴⁷ Connell, ‘Newtonian Physico-Theology’, p. 6-7 and ‘Summer’, ll. 539.

¹⁴⁸ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), ll. 1560-1.

¹⁴⁹ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), ll. 1560-1.

increasingly militant strain of orthodox churchmanship within the Anglican settlement'.¹⁵⁰ For Lyttelton to explicitly associate Newton with the divine, rather than simply comprehension and philosophy, at a time of growing tension between the Church-Whig alliance shows *The Seasons* taking a more oppositional stance within physico-theological dialogues.

As Sambrook indicates, Lyttelton's most extensive changes to *The Seasons* can be found in the Palemon and Lavinia tale in *Autumn*. Christoph Imscher argues that Palemon and Lavinia is a retelling of the biblical tale of Ruth and Boaz and that Thomson's version offered an "updated 'romantic' version of the Book of Ruth in *The Seasons* (1726–1730), in which 'lovely Lavinia,' forced to glean 'with smiling patience' the fields of Palemon, wins the latter's heart because of her 'native grace' and natural beauty".¹⁵¹ Lyttelton's changes to this section not only situate the poem within its wider political contexts, but also, through a comparison with Lyttelton's own verse, tell us about Lyttelton's versions of femininity and moral conduct.

The most comprehensive analysis of Thomson's 'romantic' episodes (Celadon and Amelia, Damon and Musidora, and Palemon and Lavinia) is from Parker. Parker argues that, the revisions in general, are responses to 'the dominant sexual and sentimental experiences of Thomson's own life'.¹⁵² Specifically, Parker sees the condensing of the 'sentimental' episodes throughout the 1744 revisions as corresponding to 'Thomson's pursuit of one woman: Elizabeth Young [...] as Thomson refines these episodes into dramatized and deeply felt love stories, he is simultaneously pursuing his own intended'.¹⁵³ Parker's analysis largely

¹⁵⁰ Connell, 'Newtonian Physico-Theology', p. 16.

¹⁵¹ Christoph Imscher, 'Susan Fenimore Cooper's Ecology of Reading', *Partial Answers*, 12:1 (2014), 41-61 (p. 44).

¹⁵² Parker, 'James Thomson and the Affective Body', p. 1.

¹⁵³ Parker, 'James Thomson and the Affective Body', p. 2.

focuses on the Damon and Musidora episode in ‘Spring’; however, her comments can be extended and applied to the Palemon and Lavinia episode.

Parker’s attribution of these ‘romantic’ episodes within *The Seasons* to Thomson’s own sentimental experiences diminishes the connections between these episodes and Lyttelton’s poetry. A comparative analysis between Lyttelton’s changes to Palemon and Lavinia and his own poem ‘Advice to a Lady’ (1731) show the similarities between his own poetic message and the evolution of the Palemon and Lavinia episode according to his edits.

In *Summer*, Lyttelton changed lines 203-17 from:

Veil’d in a simple robe; for loveliness
Needs not the foreign aid of ornament,
But is when unadorn’d adorn’d the most.
Thoughtless of beauty, she was Beauty’s self,
Recluse among the woods; if city-dames
Will deign their faith. And thus she went compell’d
By strong necessity, with as serene,
And pleas’d a look as patience can put on,
To glean Palemon’s fields. The pride of swains.¹⁵⁴

to

Veil’d in a simple Robe, their best Attire,
Beyond the Pomp of Dress; for Loveliness
Needs not the foreign Aid of Ornament,
But is when unadorn’d adorn’d the most.
Thoughtless of Beauty, she was Beauty’s Self,
Recluse amid the close-embowering Woods.
As in the hollow Breast of *Appenine*,
Beneath the Shelter of encircling Hills,
A Myrtle rises, far from human Eye,
And breathes its balmy Fragrance o’er the Wild;
So flourish’d blooming, and unseen by All,
The sweet Lavinia; till, at length, compell’d
By strong Necessity’s supreme Command,
With smiling Patience in her Looks, she went
to glean Palemon’s Fields. The Pride of Swains.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁴ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), lines 203-17.

¹⁵⁵ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), lines 203-17.

While the changes are, once again, subtle, they are significant in crafting an idea of womanhood. For example, the simple change of ‘Veil’d in a simple robe; for loveliness’ to ‘Veil’d in a simple Robe, their best Attire’ emphasises the desirability of simplicity in women’s dress. This is similar to Lyttelton’s own poetic lines: ‘An elegance of mind as well as dress; / Be that your ornament’.¹⁵⁶ Both statements suggest that ostentatious dress should be avoided, and that simplicity and elegance is the ‘ornament’ of womanhood. While this relates to ideas of femininity in the eighteenth century, it can also be related to the oppositional values that Lyttelton adhered to and attempted to emphasise through the literature of the 1730s and 1740s. A key oppositional stance was against the emerging capitalism of Walpole’s government and how this ostentation contributed to a rise in crime and immoral behaviour. As Gerrard states, ‘by the late 1730s, a significant part of the nation saw Walpole as a symbol not of peace and prosperity but of pusillanimity and corruption’.¹⁵⁷ Similarly, Sambrook suggests that the patriot opposition saw their purpose as to ‘rescue’ politics and society from present corruptions by providing a moral example.¹⁵⁸ Lyttelton’s change shows him integrating *The Seasons* into this oppositional rhetoric.

Part of the ways in which the opposition sought to craft the perception of their party in opposition to luxury and corruption was to create a city versus country dichotomy. Indeed, Lyttelton’s political literature reflects this contrast as he sets himself up as a ‘Friend in the Country’ when criticising Walpole’s governance.¹⁵⁹ As such, oppositional literature emphasised the beauties and philosophical benefits of rural retreat and this is reflected in Lyttelton’s corrections to *The Seasons*. While Thomson’s original lines place Lavinia as a ‘Recluse among the woods’, Lyttelton’s edits emphasise the closeness of the woods and

¹⁵⁶ George Lyttelton, *Advice to a Lady in The Works of George Lyttelton*, 3 vols. (London: R. Dodsley, 1776), III, pp. 105-112 (l. 28-9).

¹⁵⁷ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 8.

¹⁵⁸ Sambrook, ‘A Just Balance Between Patronage and the Press’, p. 146.

¹⁵⁹ George Lyttelton, *Considerations on the present State of our Affairs, at Home and Abroad, in a Letter to a Member of Parliament from a Friend in the Country* (London: T. Cooper, 1739)

imagine nature as a ‘shelter’ for Lavinia: ‘Recluse amid the close-embowering Woods. / As in the hollow Breast of *Appenine*, / Beneath the Shelter of encircling Hills’.¹⁶⁰ By calling nature a ‘shelter’ for Lavinia, Lyttelton frames the hills and woods as a place of safety and protection. Moreover, to specify that this ‘shelter’ is ‘as in the hollow Breast of *Appenine*’, Lyttelton creates the impression that being a safe place is sufficient, the mountain does not need to contain anything or do anything more. The addition of the phrase ‘as in’ creates a direct comparison between the retreat of the woods and that of the mountain which solidifies the impression of nature as a place of safety and contentment. This positions nature in opposition to the city which ties the image back to the anti-luxury and anti-corruption rhetoric of the patriot opposition.¹⁶¹

Though Thomson’s work in the late 1730s and early 1740s demonstrates a transition from Whig to Patriot ideologies, the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* shows Thomson’s work aligning itself with Lyttelton’s side of the patriot opposition rather than the Prince’s. An analysis of Lyttelton’s editorial interventions illustrates how Lyttelton crafted the text in order to speak to his own political and personal ideas on trade and mercantile interests, physico-theological debates, femininity, corruption, and the city versus the country dichotomy as displayed in his own political literature. Lyttelton’s revisions are significant not only because they exhibit the extent of Lyttelton’s influence - that he could convince Thomson to turn away from his public patron and provider of his pension - but also because it speaks to wider critical dialogues concerning book history and print culture. Lyttelton’s impact on the revisions of the printed editions of *The Seasons* demonstrate a fluidity to the printed form that moves the conversation away from the traditional fixity that has been attached to print.

¹⁶⁰ James Thomson, ‘Summer’ in *The Works of Mr. Thomson. Volume the second. Containing: Liberty, a poem, in five parts: Sophonisba: a tragedy* (London: A. Millar, 1738) in the British Library, Shelfmark (C28e17), ll. 207-9.

¹⁶¹ The Apennines or Apennine Mountains are a mountain range in the Italian peninsula.

‘a magnanimous Patriot tribute’: Lyttelton in the text

The 1744 edition not only saw the presence of Lyttelton as an editor, but also the insertion of a textual tribute to him that Ridley terms ‘a magnanimous Patriot tribute’.¹⁶² As Ridley states, Thomson claims for Lyttelton ‘the highest degree of moral probity and application of virtue for the public good’ as an embodiment ‘for the opposition (and specifically the Patriot opposition) of virtue at the centre of public life’.¹⁶³ However, what is missing from analyses of Thomson’s tribute to Lyttelton is how it is based on a template for public virtue that Lyttelton already laid out in his own poetic tribute to John Churchill, the 1st Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722) in ‘Blenheim’ (1727). There are no handwritten notes of Lyttelton’s pertaining to this textual tribute; however, there are marked similarities between the way in which Thomson depicts the virtue of Lyttelton as a public figure and how Lyttelton himself offered a poetic tribute in ‘Blenheim’. The similarities between the two tributes are significant because they show Thomson situating himself within Lyttelton’s poetic aesthetic and show Lyttelton’s influence on the way virtue is defined for public, political figures.

Thomson’s ‘Spring’, and indeed all of *The Seasons*, and Lyttelton’s ‘Blenheim’ are written in blank verse, a form with its own political implications. As Williams states, ‘blank verse contained within it elements both of modern and the ancient. It could represent the restitution of ancient political liberty and, at the same time, the casting off of a barbarous and uncivilised literary tradition’.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, Williams posits that blank verse offered a ‘paradigm for a paradoxical combination of classical authority and aesthetic freedom: it was, in effect, an established and authoritative poetic tradition defined by the rejection of set

¹⁶² Ridley, ‘*The Seasons*’, p. 112.

¹⁶³ Ridley, ‘*The Seasons*’, p. 112.

¹⁶⁴ Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture*, p. 177.

forms'.¹⁶⁵ Of course, John Milton influentially chose the form for his epic *Paradise Lost* (1667) and, as Gerrard has argued, the new popularity of the style and its associations with liberty 'allowed blank verse to emerge as a kind of house style for writers for the anti-Walpole opposition'.¹⁶⁶ The mirrored use of blank verse for Lyttelton and Thomson's verses not only link the two tributes but also situate them within an oppositional dialogue and tradition.

It is not just the form of the tributes that marks them as appearing within an oppositional dialogue, both poems also explicitly frame themselves within the contemporary political arena. Remembered as one of Europe's great generals, Marlborough led the allied forces during the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714) and was victorious on the fields of Blenheim (1704), Ramillies (1706), Oudenarde (1708), and Malplaquet (1709). Lyttelton's choice to celebrate a war hero against Spain in the late 1720s was an overtly political gesture given the state of affairs between Britain and Spain at this time. As aforementioned, Gerrard notes that since the seventeenth century: 'British merchant ships had been conducting a fast-growing illegal trade with Spanish Central America. During the 1720s the Spanish authorities clamped down, using private hired coastguard ships to retaliate, with notorious severity, on British seamen'.¹⁶⁷ This led to Spain declaring war on Britain in 1727. The opposition had been calling for military action and for Lyttelton to publish a tribute to Marlborough in 1727 shows him attempting to insert his work into this dialogue. Thomson's choice of tribute was no less politically charged. As previously outlined in this chapter, Thomson's decision to offer a tribute to Lyttelton, along with tributes to Pitt, Cobham, and Chesterfield, shows him aligning the 1744 edition of *The Seasons* with Lyttelton's side of the oppositional division.

¹⁶⁵ Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture*, p. 178.

¹⁶⁶ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 72-4.

¹⁶⁷ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 7.

A significant feature of the oppositional rhetoric was a focus on patriotism. This is referenced in both poems through an appeal to national pride, particularly in relation to notions of empire and international reputation. Lyttelton's celebration of Marlborough is always connected to a sense of national pride, he refers to: 'Blenheimia, monument of British fame'.¹⁶⁸ The word 'Blenheimia' rather than 'Blenheim' is evocative of 'Britannia', the Greek and Roman term for Britain. 'Britannia' was revived in the Renaissance period as a rhetorical invocation of British national identity and an image of imperial power and unity. Lyttelton's use of 'Blenheimia' suggests an invocation of these values and concepts through an oppositional lens, signifying that this sense of national pride can be captured through an emulation of Marlborough and Blenheim. Similarly, Thomson writes of how Lyttelton will raise 'BRITANNIA'S Weal now from the venal Gulph' ('Spring', l. 930). This not only asserts that Lyttelton will be a positive influence on the country, but the use of 'Britannia' attaches this positivity to notions of imperial power and empire that the opposition favoured. In both texts, their particular version of patriotism is positioned as virtuous. Lyttelton writes: 'Britain like heaven protects a thankless world / For her own glory, nor expects reward' ('Blenheim', ll. 44-45). By comparing Britain to heaven, Lyttelton here expresses national pride in religious terms. The assertion that Britain acts 'for her glory, nor expects reward' not only attaches moral and virtuous connotations to war but also speaks to the anti-corruption and anti-luxury rhetoric of the opposition: as Issac Kramnick asserts, a key oppositional stance was against the emerging capitalism of Walpole's government and how this contributed to a rise in crime and immoral behaviour.¹⁶⁹ Likewise, Thomson writes of Lyttelton raising Britain from the 'venal Gulph'. The word 'venal' invites a connection to be made between corruption and Walpole's government. The association of the current state of

¹⁶⁸ George Lyttelton, 'Blenheim' in *Poems by the Right Honourable the Late Lord Lyttelton* (Glasgow: Robert and Andrew Foulis, 1773), pp. 21-7, l. 6. All further references are to this edition and will be provided parenthetically within the body of the text.

¹⁶⁹ Kramnick, *Bolingbroke and His Circle*, p. 221.

Britain with corruption and immorality, contrasted with the innate virtue of Britain, conveys an anti-British sentiment onto the current government - which is reminiscent of Lyttelton and Bolingbroke's literature of the late 1730s.

As well as an emphasis on the patriot opposition's concept of 'patriotism', the poetic tributes in 'Spring' and 'Blenheim' also speak to the way in which the opposition party framed themselves as the 'country' party through musings on rural retirement. Of 'Blenheim', Davis states that 'these verses testify that Lyttelton was already interested in the principles of landscape gardening which were to absorb so much of his attention in later years'.¹⁷⁰ However, it does much more than advocate for landscape gardening. Lyttelton writes of the muse turning to 'softer glories' ('Blenheim', l. 62) and seeking 'the woodland shade' ('Blenheim', l. 63). Similarly, Thomson refers to Lyttelton in a setting of 'Woods o'er-hung, and shag'd with mossy Rocks' ('Spring', l. 910). This rural retirement is celebrated as 'Splendidly private, and the tranquil joy / Of contemplation felt' ('Blenheim', ll. 85-6). Lyttelton illustrates the virtues of the countryside by emphasising the joyous contemplation that can exist there. Significantly, the descriptions of rurality adhere to the opposition aesthetic, in which the principles of political liberty were reflected in artistic freedom of form. Thomson writes of 'solemn Oaks, that tuft the swelling Mounts / Thrown graceful round by Nature's careless Hand,' ('Spring', ll. 915-6). Likewise, Lyttelton refers to the woodland as 'the mazy gloom / Of this romantic wilderness' ('Blenheim', ll. 65-6). The description of 'mazy' invokes a freedom of movement, but one with a sense of order at the heart which reflects what Gerrard refers to as 'the Whig aesthetic of naturalised landscape gardening' since intricacy and ornateness were usually equated with Walpolian corruption.¹⁷¹ Thomson refers to no man-made objects and the only objects that Lyttelton places within his rural retirement are a 'wide-stretched arch' ('Blenheim', l. 76) and a 'spacious urn'

¹⁷⁰ Davis, *The Good Lord Lyttelton*, pp. 10-11.

¹⁷¹ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition*, p. 122.

(‘Blenheim’, l. 78). The adjectives of ‘wide-stretched’ and ‘spacious’ that Lyttelton attaches to these objects invoke a sense of expansiveness which also contributes to the aesthetics of freedom that the poem embraces.

Lyttelton’s celebration of Marlborough, who died in 1722, could be construed as nostalgia for a war hero of the past. However, there is always an eye to the future within Lyttelton’s and Thomson’s praise. Thomson writes that:

conducted by Historic Truth,
 [Lyttelton] tread[s] the long Extent of backward Time:
 Planning, with warm Benevolence of Mind,
 And honest Zeal unwarp’d by Party-Rage,
 BRITANNIA’S Weal how from the venal Gulph
 To raise her Virtue, and her Arts revive
 (‘Spring’, ll. 926-31).

This credits Lyttelton with drawing inspiration from the past in order to change the future.

The phrase ‘her Arts revive’ is also particularly politically loaded as Walpole had a reputation as being ungenerous with his patronage of literature and the arts.¹⁷² Similarly, of

Marlborough, Lyttelton writes:

Here may, long ages hence, the British youth,
 When honour calls them to the field of war,
 Behold the trophies which thy valour rais’d;
 The proud reward of thy successful toils
 For Europe’s freedom, and Britannia’s fame’
 (‘Blenheim’, ll. 156-60).

Lyttelton cites Marlborough as an inspiration for future generations and, by holding up ‘Europe’s freedom, and Britannia’s fame’ as the rewards of war, offers positive propaganda in favour of a war with Spain. Crucially, these lines connect the desire for war with the principles of liberty and national pride – a key oppositional ideology.

The two poems constantly weave together different threads of the opposition narrative which not only creates a sense of cohesion around oppositional rhetoric, but also shows

¹⁷² See Goldgar, *Walpole and the Wits*; and Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 49.

Thomson and Lyttelton crafting a coherent definition of public virtue. In their narratives, a virtuous public figure is one: who equates national pride with notions of imperial power and empire; who is anti-capitalist and anti-corruption; whose rural retirement embodies ideas of freedom and rurality; and who is a patron of the arts and looks to future generations. As stated in the introduction, notions of patriotism, liberty, and virtue were very much contested terms in the eighteenth century but here we see Lyttelton and Thomson utilising them in order to hold up particular statesmen as embodiments of them in order to further their political cause.

Lyttelton's posthumous editing of Thomson's work

Following the publication of the 1744 edition of *The Seasons*, further editions were published in 1746, 1750, 1752, and 1758 as well as being included in new editions of *The Works of James Thomson* in 1757 and 1762. While each of these editions would be valuable to the overarching discussion of this chapter and to the relationship between Lyttelton and Thomson's work, the remainder of the discussion will focus on the 1758 edition that Lyttelton intended to publish following Thomson's death in 1748. While Lyttelton's alterations for the 1744 edition are largely subtle, but politically charged, and comprise changes to individual word choices and the insertion of the odd few lines, his proposed edits for the 1758 edition are much more extensive. In the 1744 edition, Lyttelton's alterations affected one hundred and fifty lines. In the proposed 1758 edition, he alters eight hundred and seventy-five lines. The original evidence is cited by Phillimore as being an interleaved copy of the 1752 edition of Thomson's *Works* with the title-page altered, in ink, to 1758 which shows that Lyttelton intended his corrections and alterations to appear in a 1758 edition.¹⁷³ Unfortunately, this manuscript was destroyed in a fire at Hagley in 1925. However, the

¹⁷³ Phillimore, *Memoirs and Correspondence*, p. 319.

British Library contains John Mitford's copy of *Thomson's Works* (1768) into which Mitford transcribed some of Lyttelton's working notes.¹⁷⁴

This edition is entirely Lyttelton's conception and the extensive changes show the full potential of the plan that he had for *The Seasons*. Furthermore, the circumstances surrounding these later edits are markedly different from the 1744 edition. Following Pelham's appointment as Prime Minister in late 1744, Lyttelton accepted a position in the Broad Bottom administration as Commissioner for the Treasury and later became the Chancellor for the Exchequer (1755). The substantial changes not only in the general politico-cultural arena but also to Lyttelton's personal circumstances mean that the proposed revisions and corrections speak to the question of how public figures promote themselves within a changing political climate.

The opening page of Mitford's copy contains a transcribed preface by Lyttelton which shows he intended to market the edition with himself as the professed editor:

This edition, conforms ably to the intentions and will of the author, some expressions in the seasons which have been possibly thought too harsh, or not strictly grammatical, have been corrected, some lines transformed, and a few others left out. The Hymn, which was printed at the end of the seasons in some of the last editions, is likewise omitted; because it appears to good Judges that all the matter of Thoughts in that Hymn are much better expresst in the seasons themselves.¹⁷⁵

By stating that the edition 'conforms ably to the intentions and will of the author', Lyttelton attributes the changes to Thomson's desires. Indeed, Lyttelton was an executor of Thomson's estate following his death which suggests that Thomson, at least in part, trusted Lyttelton; however, there is no positive evidence that he ever approved any changes made to his work. By presenting himself as carrying out Thomson's will, Lyttelton diminishes his own personal

¹⁷⁴ *The Works of James Thomson. With his last corrections and improvements. With the life of the author, by P. Murdoch. [With a copy of Lord Lyttelton's MS. corrections.]* (London: A. Millar, 1768) in the British Library (Shelfmark C. 134c1).

¹⁷⁵ *The Works of James Thomson. With his last corrections and improvements. With the life of the author, by P. Murdoch. [With a copy of Lord Lyttelton's MS. corrections.]* (London: A. Millar, 1768) in the British Library (Shelfmark C. 134c1), f. 6.

connection to the text and, in doing so, removes the potential impression that he is attempting to use *The Seasons* as political propaganda in the new politico-cultural arena.

The preface only mentions the corrections to *The Seasons* and, indeed, Mitford's copy only contains notes on these poems. 'The Hymn' has simply been crossed out entirely and 'A Poem Sacred to the Memory of Sir Isaac Newton', 'Britannia', 'Liberty', 'A Poem to the Memory of the Right Honourable Lord Talbot', and 'Castle of Indolence' have no notes at all. Given that these are Mitford's transcriptions and the original text is lost, we cannot be sure whether Lyttelton intended to make any alterations to these poems or not. However, by stating that the 'Thoughts in the Hymn are much better expresst in the seasons themselves' indicates that, at the moment of the preface's conception, *The Seasons* was Lyttelton's main priority.

Clarissa Campbell argues that, following the change in his political stance, Lyttelton was 'thinking in different terms of the national well-being, looking to the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation, instead of merely a factional, political kind of patriotism'.¹⁷⁶ She attributes this change 'to his deepening religious commitment and his friendship with his cousin, the poet Gilbert West'.¹⁷⁷ However, while the changes certainly respond to and indicate a difference in outlook, they are still deeply political. As with the 1744 edition, Lyttelton's changes are often subtle but carry a significant impact. For instance, near the end of 'Summer', Lyttelton has altered lines 1774-6: 'Ours are the plans of policy, and peace; / To live like brothers, and conjunctive all / ~~Embellish Life~~ Sustains the publick Weal' ('Summer', ll. 1774-6). The phrase 'Ours are the plans of policy, and peace' harks back to the address to Lyttelton in *Spring* which read as a manifesto for the opposition party, and specifically of Lyttelton himself. Lyttelton's addition of 'Sustains the publick Weal' is a seemingly minor adjustment but importantly it changes the tone of the policies of peace to

¹⁷⁶ Campbell, 'The queen of the blues', p. 238.

¹⁷⁷ Campbell, 'The queen of the blues', p. 238.

encompass the current administration and their promises to society. These changes were being made after 1752, when the Broad Bottom administration had been in government for eight years, so the word ‘Sustains’ is key: it suggests not only that the current government are succeeding in bringing peace to the country, but that they can and will sustain this. The phrase creates the impression of a continuation and one that is for the benefit of the public. The small change demonstrates Lyttelton’s change from oppositional policies and promises, to the maintenance of the government’s popularity with the public.

Campbell’s comment suggests that Lyttelton is moving away from a ‘factional, political kind of patriotism’; however, his portrayal of patriotism in the proposed edition, while different from the patriotism of the opposition, is very much still antagonistic as Lyttelton continues to offer a negative portrayal of Walpole’s government in order to effect positive propaganda for the Broad Bottom administration.¹⁷⁸ A pertinent example in *The Seasons* is the replacement of ‘And crush’d our Lives, by secret barbarous Ways / That for their country would have toil’d or bled’ with ‘To curb this barbarous Insolence arose / With honest zeal the British senators’ (‘Winter’, ll. 374-5). The second statement conjures images of the British government resolutely defending society from this ‘Insolence’. The use of ‘barbarous’ evokes ideas of the foreign and uncultured and is reminiscent of the rhetoric employed by the opposition against Walpole’s government. Rhetoric that Lyttelton himself employed in *Letters from a Persian in England, To His Friend at Isphan* (1735) by framing Walpole as the ‘Grand Vizir’ of the Trogladites which conveys an alien and non-British quality onto the minister.¹⁷⁹ However, now, it is the government that are ‘curb[ing]’ this ‘Insolence’ and are thus aligned with British patriotism. The phrase ‘honest zeal’ is particularly significant as it references Thomson’s address to Lyttelton: ‘You tread the long

¹⁷⁸ Campbell, ‘The queen of the blues’, p. 238.

¹⁷⁹ George Lyttelton, *Letters from a Persian in England, To His Friend at Isphan* (London: J. Millan, 1735), p. 55.

Extent of backward Time: / Planning, with warm Benevolence of Mind, / and honest Zeal unwarp'd by Party-Rage' ('Spring', ll. 927-929). The echo of 'honest zeal' ties Lyttelton into this notion of 'British senators'. While the general public would have been unlikely to actively recognise the repetition, nevertheless it reveals that Lyttelton was consciously, or subconsciously, concerned with his own personal reputation.

The irony is that Lyttelton's proposed edition never made it into print. Millar, as the publisher of Thomson's work, referred the matter of Lyttelton's corrections to Thomson's close friend Murdoch who wrote back to Millar:

With regard to the alternations proposed to be made in Mr. Thomson's Seasons, having now fully considered the matter, and seen how few and inconsiderable his own last corrections were; I am confirmed in my first opinion – [...] I can have no hand in any edition that is much different from the small one of 1752, which I shall send you, with as many corrections as seem necessary, marked on the margin. A detail of my reasons would be needless, it being agreed that an author's works should be presented genuine and entire. If he has written well, well: if not the sin lieth, and ought to lye, at *his* door. It is pity indeed that Mr. T. aided by my Lord L. did not correct and alter many things himself'.¹⁸⁰

Murdoch's assertion that it is a 'pity' that the revisions were not offered by 'Mr. T. aided by my Lord L.' suggests that there was an implicit recognition that Murdoch and Miller had to make concessions to Lyttelton by acknowledging that Lyttelton's revisions would have 'correct[ed]' Thomson's work.

Regardless of the fact that the proposed edition was never printed, it is still an important document in the story of mid-century politics, patronage, and propaganda because Lyttelton intended it, and his edits, for the general public to read. It provides a key to what Lyttelton was attempting to circulate and publicise through Thomson's work. It shows Lyttelton editing *The Seasons* in order to create a piece of positive propaganda for the Broad Bottom administration and demonstrates his understanding of how patronage can be used in order to influence literature in favour of a preferred political rhetoric.

¹⁸⁰ John Wooll, *Biographical Memoirs of Joseph Warton* (London, 1806), pp. 252-3.

* * *

Although literary patronage in this period has frequently been seen as a vestige of an older court-based literary culture, Lyttelton's support for writers as a third-party facilitator and informed by political ideology was modern, not traditional. This chapter has shown that, rather than simply promoting literature, Lyttelton sought to conceptualise and create works that reflected his evolving political ideology. He understood how works could be integrated into political dialogues in order to influence the perception of political rhetoric and personal reputations. This understanding resulted in Lyttelton's extraordinary interventions in the work of his patronal clients which controlled the initial conception, design, and revision of these texts. Lyttelton's correspondence with clients such as Mickle and Mallet demonstrates how he edited their work based on his aesthetic principles. Moreover, in the case of Mallet and Thomson, Lyttelton influenced the direction of literary culture by convincing both writers to abandon their plans to write a dramatic work on Socrates. As this chapter has shown, Lyttelton's editorial direction was most clearly evidenced in the evolution of Thomson's *The Seasons* in order to suit Lyttelton's changing political position.

These interventions show the necessity of reconceptualising Darnton's 'communications circuit' in order to recognise the patron as a director in the creative process. For Lyttelton is more than just an explicit and implicit reader, he is a contributor and collaborator, though a collaborator with the power dynamic skewed firmly in his favour. Though never explicitly described, Lyttelton's power is evident throughout all of his interactions. His emphasis on bringing his clientele into his own personal space, such as Hagley, demonstrates an implicit intimidation. Furthermore, this intimidation was obliquely referenced in his correspondence with Mallet when he assured Mallet that he would receive no more trouble from certain individuals.

By evidencing Lyttelton's editorial interventions, this chapter has demonstrated the importance of patronage to book history and studies of print culture. Not only does it demand that we reconsider Darnton's communications circuit, but it also asks us to reconceptualise the notion of the printed text. Studies of print culture have placed the printed form in opposition to a manuscript based on ideas of fixity versus fluidity. Scholars such as Eisenstein imply that manuscripts are in a state of constant flux and revision; however, this chapter has shown that printed texts also existed in a state of mutability dependent on the desires of those invested in the text.

Chapter Three

'The Hive': Industrious productivity in Portland's Bulstrode

Described as the 'paradigmatic aristocratic woman collector of the eighteenth-century', and grouped among the richest collectors of the day, Margaret Cavendish Bentinck, duchess of Portland (1715-1785) cultivated one of the largest natural history collections in England.¹ Drawn from her global and local networks, her collection of natural history specimens, porcelain, illustrations, and botanical varieties was housed at her main residence: Bulstrode. As the spatial locus for the collection, Bulstrode became known in court circles as 'The Hive' and is considered by critics to be a space of intellectual and experimental opportunities which offered a 'very productive' atmosphere and 'an industrious sanctuary for the creatively minded'.² This chapter offers a re-consideration of Bulstrode and Portland's activities by taking her patronage relationships into account. The vastness of Portland's collection was largely facilitated through her patronage of natural historians, botanists, and artists who would identify and collect specimens to be catalogued and housed at Bulstrode. Portland employed several prominent figures within those networks to work in Bulstrode. By examining the nature of these figures' attachment to the collection at Bulstrode, this chapter interrogates the notions of 'productivity' and 'creativity' that have been applied to Bulstrode; it argues that, rather than promoting ideas of individual artistic merit, the culture of encouragement in Bulstrode was in fact geared towards the collective reputation of Portland's

¹ Ann B. Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science: Flora's Daughters and Botany in England 1760 to 1860* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), p. 47; and Portland was grouped among the richest collectors of the day by Horace Walpole in 1758 when describing the high prices fetched at auction: "In short, there is Sir James Lowther, Mr Spenser, Sir Richard Grosvenor, boys with 20 and £30,000 a year, and the Duchess of Portland, Lord Ashburnham, Lord Egremont, and others with near as much, who care not what they give'. See Horace Walpole, *The Yale Edition of Horace Walpole's Correspondence*, ed. by W. S. Lewis, 48 vols. (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1937-83), XXI, p. 200.

² Beth Fowkes Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells: Natural History collecting in the age of Cook's voyage*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2014), p. 42; and Madeline Pelling, 'Collecting the World: Female Friendship and Domestic Craft at Bulstrode Park', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 41:1 (2018), 1-20 (p. 8).

collection and, by extension, Portland's cultivation of her own public, aristocratic image. The previous chapters of this thesis have considered how patronage is intrinsically connected to the creative economy of the eighteenth century by influencing the production and dissemination of knowledge and literature. This chapter contributes to these accounts by showing how the individual labour of others, at the behest of the patron, contributed to the reputation of creative institutions such as Bulstrode.

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in Portland, partly in relation to her place within the bluestocking circle and her proximity to Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800), but largely because of the space she occupies within discussions of eighteenth-century material culture and Bulstrode's relationship to scientific enquiry and advancement. Critical accounts emphasise the curious nature of Bulstrode, the productive atmosphere, and the prominent scientific and philosophical guests and visitors who often graced Bulstrode's grounds and interiors.³ Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts declare Bulstrode to be 'a preeminent site for all facets of curiosity' and that, due to the presence of renowned botanists such as Daniel Solander (1733-1782) and John Lightfoot (1735-1788), it 'served as an incubator of Linnaean botany in England'.⁴ Stacey Sloboda also points to Portland's proximity to some of the most significant philosophical and scientific figures of her time, such as Joseph Banks (1743-1820) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and declares her collection to be 'an important resource for scientific and philosophical inquiry'.⁵ Similarly, Maria Zytaruk suggests that 'direct pathways and points of connection existed between Bulstrode and the major natural history and botanical institutions of the day'.⁶ Likewise, Molly Peacock writes that 'Bulstrode

³ Stacey Sloboda 'Displaying Materials: Porcelain and Natural History in the Duchess of Portland's Museum', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43:4 (2010), 455-72 (p. 464); Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 42; Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47, Maria Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 130-149 (p. 136).

⁴ Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, 'Introduction' in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 1-15 (p. 9).

⁵ Sloboda 'Displaying Materials', p. 463.

⁶ Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', p. 141.

buzzed with the activity of a nascent research institute. It was more than a grand house; it had become a prototype for a museum'.⁷ These connected strands of curiosity, scientific enquiry, and presence of prominent figures have led critics to suggest that Bulstrode embodied the 'heart of the enlightenment'.⁸

What is missing, is a sustained enquiry into Bulstrode not just as an 'epicentre of enlightenment' but, crucially and simultaneously, as a locus for Portland's patronage since the 'visitors' and 'guests' referred to were, in fact, often patronal clients of Portland's.⁹ While Hertford invited poets such as Thomson to Marlborough Castle, and Lyttelton's patronal relationship with Shenstone began through the proximity of their residences, Hagley and Leasowes respectively, their locations did not provide a locus for their patronage in the same manner that Bulstrode did for Portland. The purpose of this chapter is not to diminish Portland's importance as an encourager of natural history, material creativity, or botany, but, rather, to create a more nuanced approach to her engagement with those around her and to Bulstrode as an 'enlightened space'. In doing so, this chapter contributes to discourses of sociability, enlightenment practices, and material culture by showing how the patronal elements of Portland's interactions problematise the supposedly equalising nature of these concepts.

To do so, this chapter begins by examining the reputation of Bulstrode and establishing the relationship between the site and discourses of aesthetic and intellectual 'curiosity' in the eighteenth century. The collection and display of 'curiosities' was a significant intellectual and aesthetic activity in the early modern period and the eighteenth century. As Krystof Pomian has observed, the seventeenth and eighteenth century use of the

⁷ Molly Peacock, *The Paper Garden: An Artist {Begins her Life's Work} at 72* (New York, Berlin, London, Sydney: Bloomsbury, 2010), p. 301.

⁸ Rebecca Stott, *Duchess of Curiosities: The Life of Margaret, Duchess of Portland* (Worksop: Harley Gallery, 2006), p. 38.

⁹ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 41, and Pelling, 'Collecting the World', p. 2.

term ‘curiosity’ relates to a sense of desire, interest, and totality that went beyond the obvious and the every day.¹⁰ He remarks that curiosity is ‘a desire and a passion: a desire to see, learn or possess rare, new, secret, or remarkable things, in other words those things which have a special relationship with totality and consequently provide a means of attaining it’.¹¹

Curiosity is thus a particular intellectual or aesthetic attitude towards the object. The aesthetic position is one in which objects are seen as inciting amusement while the intellectual position is one of instruction. Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz argue that the early modern cabinet of curiosities is considered to represent the aesthetic position whereby ‘materials prized for their singularity, curiosity, or rarity were set in relation to one another to create a visually pleasing whole’.¹² Comparatively, Sloboda suggests that the modern enlightenment museum is viewed as one in which disparate materials and forms were catalogued and systematised in order to instruct visitors and viewers.¹³ This chapter argues that Portland’s collection falls into the aesthetic category and was part of her aristocratic display of wealth and connections.

This chapter then analyses the collection itself in greater detail and argues that the collection was built upon the physical and intellectual labour of Portland’s patronal clients. I firstly investigate the fact that the specimens were collected by other botanists and naturalists on research trips that were funded by Portland. Secondly, I show that the specimens were not just collected by others, but were also catalogued, processed, and advertised by others.

Portland was instrumental in directing these activities and I analyse her correspondence that shows her setting deadlines and keeping track of the progress. Critical accounts have attached labels of creative ‘productivity’ to Bulstrode. For example, Beth Fowkes Tobin lauds the fact that the artist Georg Ehret (1708-1770) ‘made hundreds of botanical illustrations’ at

¹⁰ Krzysztof Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities: Paris and Venice, 1500–1800*, trans. by Elizabeth Wiles-Portier (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), pp. 58–59.

¹¹ Pomian, *Collectors and Curiosities*, pp. 58–59.

¹² Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz, ‘Collections Curieuses: The Aesthetics of Curiosity and Elite Lifestyle in Eighteenth-Century Paris’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 29: 3 (2005), 44-75 (p. 57).

¹³ Sloboda ‘Displaying Materials’, p. 459.

Bulstrode and Portland is credited for his production of ‘innumerable watercolours’ since she created a ‘sanctuary’ for those engaged in artistic and scientific work.¹⁴ Consequently, this chapter interrogates these labels of ‘productivity’ that have been attached to Bulstrode and suggests that, rather than simply providing an inspiring ‘sanctuary’, Portland directed this work for the benefit of her own reputation.

An interrogation of productivity in collections such as Portland’s raises further questions about the wider conversations about collecting practices. Taking Portland’s collection as the example, this chapter utilises these ideas of productivity and creativity to question the gradation of labour involved in aristocratic women’s collecting practices. Traditionally, collecting has been viewed as emblematic of individual personality traits and that a collection such as Portland’s is an extension of her individual self.¹⁵ Indeed, engagement with objects is seen as a signifier of individual subjectivity. Conversely, this chapter suggests that rather than being indicative of individual personality traits or identity, we should instead view whole collections as representative of a social empire that aristocrats such as Portland build for themselves through their patronage.

This idea of a social empire is one that deserves further exploration. Bulstrode has often been linked to salons such as the bluestocking gatherings.¹⁶ The culture of salons, and other such sociable spaces, has been acknowledged by critics such as Monica Bolufer Peruga as a contributing factor in the expansion of enlightenment thought and culture.¹⁷ Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg argue that salons such as those hosted by the bluestockings

¹⁴ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 42; Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts, ‘Introduction’, p. 10; and Pelling, ‘Collecting the World’, p. 8.

¹⁵ Susan Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections: A Cultural Study* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1992), p. 81.

¹⁶ Sylvia Harcstark Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle: Women, Friendship, and the Life of the Mind in Eighteenth-Century England* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1990), p. 268 and Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47

¹⁷ Monica Bolufer Peruga, ‘Neither Male, Nor Female’: Rational Equality in the Early Spanish Enlightenment’ in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 389-409 (p. 400).

‘differed from traditional card-playing gatherings by nurturing intellectual pursuits, polite conversation, philanthropic projects, and publishing ventures amongst a mixed group of guests’.¹⁸ Furthermore, Pohl and Schellenberg suggest that English salons were comparable to the French salons of Catherine de Vivonne, Julie de Lespinasse, Suzanne Necker, and Marie-Therese Geoffrin in their principles of ‘polite sociability, a limited social mobility based on merit, and equality between the sexes based on rational friendship and intellectual exchange’.¹⁹ Of the English salons, some of the most notable were those hosted by the bluestockings – especially those by Elizabeth Montagu and Elizabeth Vesey – who claimed salon culture as a space for sociability which inspired equalising intellectual exchange between those of different social classes rather than the maintenance of social distinctions. Deborah Heller argues that salons, and, in particular, the bluestocking salons, were ‘grounded on the public sphere premise of universality and disembodied reason’.²⁰ This emphasis on creating a space for the public exchange of ideas based on universality and reason adheres to enlightenment values of knowledge exchange. This chapter examines the dissemination of knowledge and social structures within Bulstrode to argue that it was governed by hierarchical social structures, with Portland at the top, rather than universal exchange.

As well as the exchange of knowledge and ideas, this chapter also explores the implications of the exchange of objects for Bulstrode’s social networks. As I outlined in the introduction, gift-giving has been seen as a means of tracking the social ties that exist between individuals, communities, and societies.²¹ The exchange of specimens and objects between naturalists has been seen by critics, such as Tobin, as embodying enlightened ideas

¹⁸ Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg, ‘Introduction: A Bluestocking Historiography’ in *Reconsidering the Bluestockings*, ed. by Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2003), pp. 1-21 (p. 4).

¹⁹ Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg, ‘Introduction: A Bluestocking Historiography’, p. 4.

²⁰ Deborah Heller, ‘Bluestocking Salons and the Public Sphere’, *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 22 (1998), 59-82 (p. 72).

²¹ See Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions in Archaic Societies* trans. by Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West, 1966).

of universal exchange.²² In contrast this chapter argues that Portland's gifting practices, such as the distribution of game and jewellery, were designed to reinforce existing social structures. Just like the Bulstrode collection, Portland's gifting was a means of social display that emphasised her aristocratic status.

Finally, this chapter brings together these strands of enquiry with the case study of Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756). Elstob was employed as a tutor to Portland's children between 1739 and 1756 and is pertinent to discourses of productivity and creativity within Bulstrode precisely because she was not productive. Though she was a notable Anglo-Saxon scholar, Elstob did not produce any creative work whilst residing at Bulstrode. This chapter explores Portland's recruitment of Elstob and suggests that their relationship shows that, rather than a hive of intellectual activity, Bulstrode was instead akin to a court with distinct roles, social positions and restrictions.

Overall, this chapter seeks to analyse patronage's effect on the eighteenth-century creative economy by exploring a creative institution and showing that the labour, productivity, and creativity of Bulstrode are all defined by the social hierarchies that Portland reinforced. In doing so, it challenges current discourses of the enlightenment, material culture, and friendship.

Bulstrode and a 'thousand Curiosities'

A park has existed at Bulstrode since the early Middle Ages. In 1676 the estate was acquired by George Jeffreys, 1st Baron Jeffreys (1645-1689) who, in the period 1676-1685, rebuilt the original house into a red-brick building. In 1706 the estate was bought by William Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland (1649-1709), who completed the wings of Jeffrey's house and laid out the surrounding formal gardens. The house was subsequently bequeathed to Portland's husband,

²² Tobin, *The Duchess' Shells*, p. 120.

William Bentinck, 2nd Earl of Portland. Portland resided at Bulstrode from 1734 until her death in 1785 and she adopted it as the principal residence to house her natural history and botanical collections. At Bulstrode, botanical nurseries and flower gardens were complemented by ponds filled with golden fish and a menagerie containing numerous animals including an Indian bull and a zebra. There was a Chinese-fronted dairy, a grotto formed of shells, and tame peacocks, deer, and hares which roamed freely across the grounds for guests to feed. Portland opened these curiosities and collections to the public, brought in botanists and naturalists to contribute to her collection, and commissioned others to send her botanical, conchological, and live specimens from around the world. Bulstrode was thus transformed, in Tobin's words, into a 'pleasant, sociable space'; but, crucially, one where the sociability was tied to Bulstrode's status as a 'curiosity'.²³ This collection of curiosities has caused critics such as Amanda Vickery to term Bulstrode 'something between a museum and a university'.²⁴ As an extension of Vickery's comment, Rebecca Stott suggests that 'if Bulstrode had survived it would rank with the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the British Museum in London'.²⁵ These comments imply that the Portland collection was designed to be intellectually stimulating for the visitors and guests who interacted with the objects and specimens. This chapter explores contemporary anecdotes of Bulstrode as a 'curiosity' and places these accounts in relation to notions of 'curiosity' as a distinct eighteenth-century aesthetic and intellectual position. In doing so, I show that contemporary accounts position Bulstrode as an aesthetically pleasing collection akin to the seventeenth-century 'cabinet of curiosities'. As such, it is connected to aristocratic ideas of display rather than enlightenment ideals of improvement.

²³ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 28.

²⁴ Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), p. 152.

²⁵ Stott, *Duchess of Curiosities*, p. 38.

Contemporary travel guides, travel accounts, and memoirs show that visiting private collections of curiosities was one of the primary motives for travelling in the eighteenth century, and often the main purpose of a journey. Bulstrode is often featured in accounts of this kind and is almost always framed as a place of ‘curiosities’. For example, Samuel Hieronymus Grimm (1733-1794) painted the likeness of Bulstrode in his aim to depict ‘everything curious’ that the country had to offer.²⁶ Grimm arrived in England in 1768, and worked as a commissioned artist for numerous patrons, including the ecclesiastic and baronet Sir Richard Kaye. It was for Kaye that Grimm embarked on his tour to paint ‘everything curious’.²⁷ Bulstrode is also included in the tour that William Gilpin (1724-1804) embarked upon in 1776, from which he wrote *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, on Several Parts of Great Britain* (1789), and in the diaries of Mrs Philip Lybbe Powys (1738-1817). Powys’ diaries cover the period 1756 to 1808 and record her tours of the English countryside in which she visited places such as Buckingham Palace, Houghton Hall, Holkham, and, importantly, Bulstrode.²⁸

Gilpin opens his account by stating that: ‘we deviated a few miles to see Bulstrode’.²⁹ This frames Bulstrode as a place that he has gone out of his way to ‘see’ and thus immediately positions Bulstrode as a spectacle worth observing. His initial description of Bulstrode consolidates the notion of scene-setting: the park consists:

of a great variety of rising and falling grounds, without water indeed; but in many parts well-planted, and every-where simple, and unforced [...] The scene itself, surrounded by wood, is pleasing. The house formerly belonged to the celebrated Judge Jeffereys, but is now greatly altered and improved.³⁰

²⁶ Brett Dolman, “‘Everything Curious’: Samuel Hieronymus Grimm and Sir Richard Kaye”, *Electronic British Library Journal* (2003), 1–15 (p. 2).

²⁷ Dolman, “‘Everything Curious’: Samuel Hieronymus Grimm and Sir Richard Kaye”, p. 2.

²⁸ Houghton Hall was built by Robert Walpole between 1722-1738 from designs by Colin Campbell. Holkham House was built by Viscount Coke, afterwards Earl of Leicester, in around 1744.

²⁹ William Gilpin, *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1776, on Several Parts of Great Britain...*, 2 vols. (London, 1789), II, p. 187.

³⁰ Gilpin, *Observations*, p. 188.

The detail in the description no doubt appealed to Gilpin's sensibilities as an arbiter of natural beauty, but also implies that a reader would be interested in the detail which evokes the impression of Bulstrode as a place of interest.

The first reference to Bulstrode's 'curiosities' comes in relation to the wildlife and Portland's menagerie:

[Portland] is fond of animals; and among many that are curious, encourages the very squirrels and hares to enjoy a state of perfect tranquillity. The squirrel cracks his nut at your elbow; and looks at you without dismay: while the hare, at her pleasure, takes her morning and evening gambols about the park.³¹

Interestingly, though Gilpin enthuses about the 'curious' nature of the animals on display, the only animals he mentions are squirrels and hares, which are eminently ordinary. Rather than highlighting the rare or the valuable, Gilpin instead describes a scene of subtle visual pleasure: one of 'perfect tranquillity'. This suggests that, for Gilpin, what defines Portland's land as a 'curiosity' is the whole aesthetic ensemble rather than individual, intellectual objects and specimens.

The opening of Powys' account of visiting Bulstrode, in a similar fashion to Gilpin, frames the site as a public attraction. On 13 July 1769, she writes: 'we went with a large party to see Bulstrode, the seat of the Duchess-Dowager of Portland, in Buckinghamshire [...] This place is well worth seeing, a most capital collection of pictures, numberless other curiosities, and works of taste in which the Duchess has displayed her well-known ingenuity'.³² The notion of going with 'a large party' to 'see Bulstrode' positions the visit as a specific outing that is reminiscent of a tourist party visiting an attraction. Her assertion that the 'place is well worth seeing' heightens this impression as it invites others to come and view the site and suggests that it is a place designed to be seen.

Portland's menagerie is also the focus of Powys' interest in Bulstrode:

³¹ Gilpin, *Observations*, pp. 188-9.

³² *The Diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys*, ed. by Emily J Climenson (London: Longmans, 1899), p. 120

there was great variety, as a curassoa, goon, crown-bird, stork, black and red game, bustards, red-legg'd partridges, silver, gold, pied pheasants, one, what is reckoned exceedingly curious, the peacock-pheasant. The aviary, too, is a most beautiful collection of smaller birds tumblers, waxbills, yellow and bloom paraquets, Java sparrows, Loretta blue birds, Virginia nightingales, and two widow-birds [...] Besides all above mention'd, her Grace is exceedingly fond of gardening, is a very learned botanist, and has every English plant in a separate garden by themselves. Upon the whole, I never was more entertain'd than at Bulstrode.³³

Powys' listing of the individual species of birds emphasises the variety of specimens on display at Bulstrode and, by drawing attention to it, suggests that it is a key aspect of Bulstrode's appeal. Powys' assertion that she was never 'more entertain'd than at Bulstrode' positions the curious nature of the site as rooted in aestheticism rather than intellectualism. Both Powys' and Gilpin's manner of framing Bulstrode as a public attraction and aesthetically curious indicates that they saw Bulstrode as a place designed to appeal and entertain.

The common feature of both Gilpin's and Powys' accounts of Bulstrode is the emphasis on live specimens, whether animals, birds, or plants, as the 'curious' highlight of the collection. Tobin argues that an assembly of live specimens was 'derived from older aristocratic forms of collecting related to the early modern cabinets of curiosity, in which the collected object (a rarity) represented a region or a people and displayed the owner's global reach and figurative domination over the world's resources'.³⁴ This form of collecting (displaying rarities in houses, gardens etc.) continued to be practised in the eighteenth century and was understood as a sign of elite status.³⁵ Indeed, Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz have observed that:

The setting up of collections de curiosités proves to have been a distinctive prestige generating practice that presupposed the possession of a considerable fortune [...]

³³ *The Diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys*, p. 121.

³⁴ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 46.

³⁵ See Paula Findlen, *Possessing Nature: Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1994); and *The Cultures of Collecting* ed. by John Elsner and Roger Cardinal (Cambridge MA, Harvard University Press, 1994).

[Collectors] presented themselves to and for their equals in an elaborate performance of style within the framework of a competitive social spectacle.³⁶

As such, the collection of curiosities, and Portland's Bulstrode, can be likened to a status symbol. It suggests that collectors displayed themselves in front of, and for the benefit of, their peers in the setting of a competitive, predominately aristocratic display.

'Duchess of curiosities' and the labour of others

Despite the emphasis on variety in each of the contemporary anecdotes, it is Portland's labour alone that is credited with creating the space. Powys praises Portland's 'well-known ingenuity' in relation to the 'most capital collection of pictures, numberless other curiosities, and works of taste'.³⁷ Perhaps most appropriately, Gilpin enthuses about the feeding of the hares on the lawn and praises Portland as the 'benefactress' while it is the servant who carries out the physical labour of '[carrying] a basket of corn, which he lays in little heaps upon the lawn, before the dining-room windows'.³⁸ This is particularly apt as the Portland collection as a whole was built on the physical, intellectual, and creative labour of those who received her patronage. Bulstrode was not only a place of beauty and curiosity, but, crucially, it was also a spatial locus for Portland's patronage and offered a public display of her as a patron.

The sociable and inspirational nature of Bulstrode is often highlighted by listing the important figures who visited the site; however, there is often an erasure in terms of the patronage that Portland provided these figures and the service that they, in turn, provided for her and her collection. For example, Tobin states that:

visitors and guests included: famous naturalists such as Sir Joseph Banks (1743-1820); premier taxonomist and curator at the British Museum, Daniel Solander (1733-1782); William Curtis (1746-1799) of the Chelsea Physic Garden; and Thomas Pennant (1726-1798), author of *British Zoology*.³⁹

³⁶ Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz 'Collections Curieuses', p. 46.

³⁷ *The Diaries of Mrs. Philip Lybbe Powys*, p. 120.

³⁸ Gilpin, *Observations*, p. 189.

³⁹ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 41.

By terming these people ‘visitors and guests’, the intimate connection that some of these figures, and other naturalists and botanists, had to Bulstrode and its collections is diminished.

One of the most obvious ways in which people assisted with the Portland collection was in the collecting of specimens. While Portland often collected shell specimens from local river banks, the vast majority of the objects were drawn from her global and local networks. One such figure in Portland’s global networks was Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) who acted as Portland’s plant collector or, more specifically, her ‘herborist’.⁴⁰ Cook demonstrates that this role saw Rousseau collecting seeds and plant specimens for Portland and quotes their letters as evidence: ‘[i]f you would take the trouble to mark those [plants] that you lack, I could have the honor of sending them to you [either] fresh or dried’.⁴¹ This shows Rousseau offering to undertake the labour of collecting specimens for Portland. As Cook notes, this was not the only labour that Rousseau performed – he also made at least two portable herbaria for Portland.⁴² As Cook explains:

These were gifts of great personal as well as botanical value—the amount of knowledge, time and effort involved in their production is difficult to estimate; in order to make a herbarium one must be in possession not only of considerable knowledge about plant collecting and identification, but also about the best methods for drying, preserving and mounting them.⁴³

These were, then, works of painstaking care and exactitude. This shows that being Portland’s ‘herborist’ demanded a great deal of Rousseau’s time and labour and contributed to the collection at Bulstrode.

Similarly, Pennant and Lightfoot regularly collected specimens for Portland from their joint trips around Great Britain. Portland sponsored one such trip to the Scottish Highlands and Lightfoot’s letters demonstrate their commitment to sending botanical

⁴⁰ Rousseau and Portland became acquainted in July 1766 through Rousseau’s neighbour at Calwich Abbey, Bernard Granville.

⁴¹ Alexandra Cook, ‘Botanical Exchanges: Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the Duchess of Portland’, *History of European Ideas*, 33:2 (2007), 142-156 (p. 151).

⁴² Cook, ‘Botanical Exchanges’, p. 150.

⁴³ Cook, ‘Botanical Exchanges’, p. 150.

specimens back to Bulstrode. For example, on 12 August 1772, Lightfoot reports to Portland that ‘Mr Pennant has some very fine Alobesti for your Grace which we collected at Glen-Elq in Inverness-shire’.⁴⁴ By designating the ‘Alobesti’ as ‘for your Grace’, Lightfoot implies that collecting specimens for Portland is part of the purpose of the trip.

Likewise, the naturalist James Bolton (1735-1799) collected samples, particularly lichens, for Portland. For example, on 6 April 1782, Bolton writes to Portland that he has ‘shot a fine pair [of Crossbill] the sight of which I hope will afford an agreeable pleasure to your Grace’.⁴⁵ Bolton’s hope that his offerings will be an ‘agreeable pleasure’ to Portland could be seen as merely politeness; however, a previous correspondence of Bolton’s suggests otherwise. In an undated letter, Bolton states: ‘I received your very kind Epistle Enclosing a draft for 20d’ which, in the same sentence, is followed by Bolton’s pleasure that his samples ‘gave [Portland] so much satisfaction’.⁴⁶ By expressing these two sentiments together, Bolton solidifies the impression of his working *for* Portland in order to collect these items for her. Furthermore, Bolton’s correspondence also hints at rivalry between the naturalists when he writes: ‘I have also got a fine specimen of the Mountain Hunting Bird [...] never seen by M^r Pennant: ‘tis a pleasing bird’.⁴⁷ Original specimens were of course naturally more prized; however, the specific naming of Pennant suggests a sense of competition between the naturalists. This is significant because, rather than the harmonious sharing of knowledge and specimens, it suggests that Portland’s patronage of these collections inspired this competition.

The botanist Richard Pulteney (1730-1801) was also part of Portland’s provincial natural history network. Their relationship spanned more than two decades and he regularly sent botanical specimens to her at Bulstrode. For example, on 25 October 1767, Portland

⁴⁴ John Lightfoot to the Duchess of Portland, 12 August 1772, in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection in Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham, Pw E 17.

⁴⁵ James Bolton to the Duchess of Portland, 6 April 1782, in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection, Pw E 5.

⁴⁶ James Bolton to the Duchess of Portland, undated, in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection, Pw E 4/1.

⁴⁷ James Bolton to the Duchess of Portland, 6 April 1782, in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection, Pw E 5.

wrote to Pulteney desiring to know if '*Erica multiflora*, *Bartsia viscosa* and *Antirrhinum repens*' grow in his neighbourhood and, if so, requests that he send them to her at Bulstrode.⁴⁸ This letter demonstrates the processes by which Portland came to own many of the specimens in her collection: she identified what she wanted and then relied on the physical labour of others to procure it for her.

As well as botanical samples, the conchological specimens of Portland's collection were also drawn from her global and local networks. The importance of shells is highlighted by the fact that during the auction that dismantled Portland's collection following her death, of the thirty-eight days of the sale thirty were devoted entirely to the shells. As Tobin has revealed, 'approximately 50 percent of the 4,263 lots consisted of shells, with each lot containing anything from one to dozens of shells'.⁴⁹ Tobin notes that many of these shells were gifted to Portland from a variety of people, ranging from the amateur collector J.T. Swainson to professional naturalists such as Pennant and Banks.⁵⁰ Portland frequently provided naturalists with funds to cover their expenses while they travelled abroad with the expectation that they would collect specimens on her behalf. For example, Tobin notes that she 'gave £100 to Henry Smeathman's voyage to the west coast of Africa (1771) and gave £600 to Dr. Thomas Shaw, a friend of Elizabeth Montagu and frequent visitor to Bulstrode, to collect shells for her while he travelled in the Ottoman Empire'.⁵¹

The physical and intellectual labour of others did not stop once the specimens had reached Bulstrode. As well as his curatorial duties at the British Museum, Solander also assisted with the curation of Portland's collection and wrote many of the descriptions for the

⁴⁸ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 25 October 1767, in the Pulteney Correspondence, in the Linnean Society, London

⁴⁹ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 5.

⁵⁰ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 117.

⁵¹ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 73-4.

items held there.⁵² Solander assisted Banks on James Cook's first Endeavour voyage (1768-1771) and was a student of Carl Linnaeus, the Swedish systematiser, who created a new system of plant classification based on the natural sexual system of plants.⁵³ As well as Solander, Lightfoot also assisted with the curation and care of Portland's collection. Lightfoot's assistance with the organisation and cataloguing of the collection is regularly noted in the correspondence within Bulstrode's social circle. For example, on 24 December 1771, Portland writes to Pulteney that Lightfoot is cataloguing her collection according to the method of Linnaeus.⁵⁴ This not only demonstrates Lightfoot's role in the organisation of the collection, but also shows Portland displaying his relationship to the collection to her social circle.

As well as being collected and organised, the natural history and botanical specimens were also painted and illustrated by Bolton and Ehret. Ehret was a celebrated artist who had spent his early career travelling and working across Europe prior to working closely with Carl Linnaeus at the time the latter was developing his system of binomial nomenclature - and illustrated his findings. Between them they produced over seven hundred illustrations of Portland's collection. These figures are available to us because, following Portland's death in 1785, her collection was auctioned off to other collectors and bidders and there was a detailed catalogue which listed all the items to be sold.⁵⁵ The auction catalogue lists eighty-seven of Bolton's drawings of vegetable and medical plants, a collection of twenty of his paintings of rare British birds, and over six hundred of Ehret's illustrations.⁵⁶ As well as providing

⁵² Portland records Solander's assistance with the collection in her correspondence with others such as Richard Pulteney: Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 19 March 1778, in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

⁵³ For information on the Linnaean system and the social meanings see Shteir *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 24 December 1771, in the Pulteney Correspondence, in the Linnean Society, London.

⁵⁵ The auction was conducted by Mr. Skinner and began on 24 April 1786 and continued for a further thirty-seven days.

⁵⁶ *A Catalogue of the Portland Museum, lately the property of the Duchess Dowager of Portland* (London, 1786), pp. 119-120 and pp. 122-130.

numerical data on Bolton and Ehret's illustrations, the auction catalogue also demonstrates how individual creative acts became enveloped into the collection. The integration of Bolton's art, the specimens collected by Bolton and Pennant, and the curatorial efforts of Solander demonstrate the integral nature of the work of these individuals in creating the 'Portland collection'. Moreover, the listing of these items within the auction catalogue for the 'Portland collection' shows that they became intrinsically linked to her and Bulstrode.

These figures were not merely naturalists and botanists: they were all beneficiaries of Portland's patronage and publicly acknowledged her as their patron. For example, Pennant acknowledged Portland's assistance with a public dedication to her in the fourth volume of *British Zoology* (1777).⁵⁷ Similarly, Lightfoot also dedicated his *Flora Scotica* (1777) to Portland and proclaimed her 'that great and intelligent admirer and patroness of natural history in general'.⁵⁸ Furthermore, Lightfoot twice refers to himself as Portland's 'chaplain' in the text: once on the title page and once more in the dedication.⁵⁹ The inclusion of this information within the volume in such prominent places suggests that Lightfoot is advertising himself as Portland's employee.

There were also those who took up a residency at Bulstrode and who thus consolidate the idea of Bulstrode as a spatial locus for Portland's patronage. For example, both Ehret and Lightfoot lived at Bulstrode as Portland's employees; Ehret was employed as an art tutor to Portland's daughters and Lightfoot was employed as a chaplain at Bulstrode from 1767 until Portland's death in 1785. Although Lightfoot was appointed curate at Colnbrook, Middlesex, which included a 'lectureship' at Uxbridge, he stayed at Bulstrode from Wednesday until Saturday each week.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Thomas Pennant, *British Zoology. Crustacea. Mollusca. Testacea*, 4 vols. (London, 1777), IV.

⁵⁸ John Lightfoot, *Flora Scotica; or, a systematic arrangement, in the Linnean method, of the native plants of Scotland and the Hebrides*, 2 vols. (London, 1777) I, p. i.

⁵⁹ Lightfoot, *Flora Scotia*, p. i.

⁶⁰ John K. Bowden, *John Lightfoot: His Work and Travels* (Kew and Pittsburgh: Royal Botanic Gardens/Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation, 1989), pp. 8-10. Colnbrook is around 20 miles from Bulstrode.

Possibly one of the most well-known figures to reside at Bulstrode was Mary Delany (1700-1788). Once known only to literary historians for her voluminous correspondence, Delany's artistic accomplishments have recently received more recognition.⁶¹ Around 1771, Delany invented a new way of imitating flowers which she called a 'paper mosaic'. This consisted of a collage of a multitude of finely cut coloured paper glued on a black ink background. At times she cut entire leaves or petals from one piece of paper over which she would arrange smaller cuts in order to create shading and depth, sometimes enhanced with watercolours. There are some examples where one flower alone contains over 200 paper petals. Every collage included a label with the plant's Linnaean and common names which meant that her work was valued for its scientific accuracy as well as for its artistic qualities. Delany called the collection of her paper mosaics the 'Flora Delanica' and organised her work into ten albums. These albums were bequeathed to the British Museum by Delany's great-niece, Augusta Hall, Baroness Llanover, in 1897.

Delany's part-time residence at Bulstrode - she spent half of every year there from 1768 until Portland's death in 1785 - is frequently cited by scholars as a significant factor in enabling her creativity. Tobin, for example, states that 'Delany, no doubt, benefited as an artist from her residence at Bulstrode'.⁶³ Similarly, Peacock writes that it was 'in the embrace of Bulstrode' that Delany created her 'botanical concoctions', and Ruth Hayden suggests that '[Delany's] inborn love of nature, eye for detail, and intelligent curiosity all fed on the fine garden at Bulstrode and on the scientific information on plants provided'.⁶⁴ Likewise, Vickery argues that Delany's 'collages were begun at Bulstrode in the company of the

⁶¹ See *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle* ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), and Molly Peacock, *The Paper Garden: Mrs Delany [Begins Her Life's Work] at 72* (London: Bloomsbury, 2010).

⁶³ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 44.

⁶⁴ Peacock, *The Paper Garden*, p. 12 and Ruth Hayden, *Mrs Delany: her life and her flowers* (London: British Museum Publications Ltd., 1980), p. 12.

Duchess of Portland, inspired by botanists and botanical artists'.⁶⁵ While Portland's influence on Delany's creativity is commonly referenced, their relationship is often framed as one based on friendship rather than a patronage relationship. For example, Peacock writes:

that relationship [between Delany and Portland] was friendship, not patronage. Mary Delany insisted upon it. How else could she have maintained her balance on the seesaw of friendship with a woman of such high rank and fabulous wealth – well, a woman who spent fabulously.⁶⁶

Peacock cites the fact that Portland did not provide financial assistance to Delany as her evidence for proclaiming that their relationship was 'not patronage'.⁶⁷ However, this position assumes that money is the only facet of a patronage relationship. Though Portland did not provide an annuity for Delany, she did lend her money to buy a house in London and organised her part-time residence at Bulstrode which facilitated her cut-paper work.⁶⁸ This denotes patronage as Portland used her privileged position in order to support Delany and create an environment in which she could work.

Alongside the intellectual and physical labour of the other botanists and artists, Delany's creative contributions too became intimately attached to Bulstrode and the public perception of the place. One of Delany's most public artistic and material contributions to Bulstrode was the creation of a shell-grotto. This shell-grotto was also included by Grimm in his 'Everything Curious' tour. Grimm's illustration of the shell-grotto, and the title of *Grotto in the Park at Bulstrode*, explicitly link the grotto to Bulstrode and position it as part of Bulstrode's 'curious nature'. Portland first mentions her desire for a grotto in 1737 when she writes to Ann Granville declaring that: 'I have been to see Lady Walpole's *shellery* (for

⁶⁵ Amanda Vickery, 'The Theory & Practice of Female Accomplishment' in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 94-109, p. 102.

⁶⁶ Peacock, *The Paper Garden*, p. 352.

⁶⁷ Peacock, *The Paper Garden*, p. 352.

⁶⁸ In her will, Delany states that Portland advanced her the money to purchase her house in St. James's Place. This can be found in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany: With Interesting Reminiscences of George the Third and Queen Caroline*, ed. by Lady Llanover, 6 vols. (London: Richard Bentley, New Burlington Street, 1861), III, p. 484

grotto I will *not* call it) it is a fine thing, but I can't say it pleases me. *That regularity* is abominable; besides, all the red coral is *painted*- mine shall not be made after that model!'.⁶⁹ That desire was put into action in 1743: on a visit to Bulstrode, Delany writes to her sister that Portland 'intends to build a grotto in the hollow you have a sketch of, and I am to design the plan for it'.⁷⁰ At the time of conception, Delany was not yet residing at Bulstrode but her work on the project spanned the time she was living at Bulstrode.⁷¹ Despite the fact she was not yet living at Bulstrode, the language of the letter nevertheless suggests that the power dynamic of their relationship was skewed in Portland's favour. Delany's reference to Portland's 'inten[tion]' and her exclamation that 'I am to design the plan for it' implies that she has been commissioned and thus positions them within a patron/client relationship.

Lisa L. Moore sees the grotto project as 'an occasion for furthering the spaces and occasions for [Delany and Portland's] intimacy'.⁷² Her analysis draws on the 'erotic and feminine connotations of shells, with their salty smells, vaginal shape, and associations with Aphrodite rising out of the sea-form' to suggest that the grotto gave a 'visual and spatial dimension' to their intimate friendship.⁷³ While the framing of their relationship as sexual is dubious, the idea of the grotto creating a 'visual representation' of their friendship is something that I wish to question further. For, the grotto acts as a means of Portland not only displaying her relationship with Delany, but also the social and scientific links that made the grotto possible. The grotto was constructed with over 1,000 shells that were gathered by Portland's global and local networks.⁷⁴ Ariane Fennetaux has argued that shell-work, as a

⁶⁹ Duchess of Portland to Mrs. Ann Granville 21 June 1737 in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany*, I, p. 608.

⁷⁰ Mary Delany to Anne Dewes, 9 December 1743, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 238.

⁷¹ Delany's letters suggest that in July 1770 the grotto or 'cave' was nearly finished. Mary Delany to Anne Dewes, 8 July 1770, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, IV, p. 274.

⁷² Lisa L. Moore 'Queer Gardens: Mary Delany's Flowers and Friendships', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 39:1, (2005), 49-70 (p. 61).

⁷³ Moore 'Queer Gardens', p. 61.

⁷⁴ For more information about Portland's shell-networks, see Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*.

kind of bricolage, was ‘invested in knowledge practises that link the domestic to the public sphere, often with the aim of commenting on and participating in discourses on empire building’.⁷⁵ Portland’s shell-work grotto offered her a visual representation of her own natural history empire.

As well as the grotto, Tobin tells us that shells were one of the objects commonly placed within the decorative cabinets at Bulstrode and Portland’s shell collection was one of the ‘largest and finest in Europe during the late eighteenth century’.⁷⁶ The study of shells has been particularly fruitful in relation to material culture as they are natural objects, but they are also rich in social and cultural meaning. Tobin’s work suggests that we can consider shells as ‘making us *do* things, such as picking them up on the beach, and, thus, they are not merely empty receptacles or blank slates for us to impose a system of thought upon’.⁷⁷ They are therefore particularly important in considering the relationship between material culture and subjectivity. Portland owned thousands of shells and these were regularly exchanged within her natural history networks and regularly featured within sociable activities at Bulstrode. On the 12th of December 1783, Hamilton records that: ‘Dr Lind brought y^e Dss some shells and fossils; we look’d y^m over, and placed them in drawers’.⁷⁸ This anecdote demonstrates the process of how Portland assimilated objects like shells into her collection: following an individual bringing these shells into Bulstrode, the sorting and organisation of the objects becomes a communal activity.

The nature of display within Portland’s empire did not merely encompass the objects and specimens within the collection, but also those who surrounded her at Bulstrode. For

⁷⁵ Ariane Fennetaux, ‘Female Crafts: Women and *Bricolage* in Late Georgian Britain, 1750-1820’ in *Women and Things, 1750-1950: Gendered Material Strategies* ed. by Beth Fowkes Tobin and Maureen Daly Goggin (Burlington: Ashgate, 2009), pp. 91-108 (p. 104).

⁷⁶ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. vii.

⁷⁷ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 9.

⁷⁸ Mary Hamilton’s Diaries, 12 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, 3: 172.

example, in the practice of her craft Delany participated in the material creativity of Bulstrode, but she also became an object of curiosity in her own right. Following his visit in 1776, Gilpin writes:

Among the works of art at Bulstrode, which abounds chiefly with the curiosities of nature, we were favoured with the sight of one by Mrs. Delany, which we greatly admired. Mrs. Delany, is the widow of the late Dr. Delany, dean of Down, one of the intimate friends of dean Swift. She is now seventy-six years of age, and enjoys her faculties in such vigour, that you find not the least faltering in any of them. The work of hers, which I allude to, is an herbal, in which she has executed a great number of plants, and flowers, both natives, and exotics, not only with exact delineation, and almost in their full lustre of colour, but in great taste. And what is the most extraordinary, her only materials are bits of paper of different colours... These flowers have both the beauty of painting, and the exactness of botany: and the work, I have no doubt, into whatever hands it may hereafter fall, will long be considered as a great curiosity.⁷⁹

Gilpin's lauding of Delany's work as a 'great curiosity' and positioning it as 'among the works of art at Bulstrode' integrates Delany's paper-cut work into the enveloping blanket of Bulstrode's creativity. But, more than this, it also positions Delany herself as part of these 'works of art at Bulstrode'. By listing her age, personal connections, and mental capacities, Gilpin frames Delany as a figure of curiosity. This highlights the way in which Portland's patronal clients are intimately connected to notions of display at Bulstrode, not only in their creations but also in their personage. Thus, Portland's patronage and patronal clients were not only present at Bulstrode, they were also connected to the social fabric of the site and the elements of display and curiosities that denoted the draw of Bulstrode.

'we are as busy as bees': creativity in Bulstrode

The presence of these naturalists, botanists, and artists is often cited as demonstrative of Bulstrode's significance as a site that enabled creativity. Tobin asserts that 'surrounding herself with artists and naturalists, the duchess created an atmosphere that was very

⁷⁹ Gilpin, *Observations*, pp. 190-91.

productive for those who had the good fortune to reside at Bulstrode'.⁸⁰ Similarly, Pelling points to Bulstrode as 'an industrious sanctuary for the creatively minded'.⁸¹ The extent to which individual labour and the creative design of Bulstrode's 'visitors and guests' was intimately linked to the public display of Bulstrode has already been touched upon in this chapter. What requires further investigation, however, is the manner of the production and the 'productivity' that went into the creation of the works of art that represented Bulstrode and how Portland appears at the heart of this 'productivity'. Recognition of the extent to which Portland influenced the production and direction of the creative work at Bulstrode is not only an indicator of Bulstrode's hierarchical structure but also touches on how we can view the role of patronage within the creative process. It argues that Portland's facilitation, and overseeing, of the creative process means that she, as the patron, cannot be separated from the end product.

One of the figures who is frequently cited as benefitting from the 'productive' atmosphere at Bulstrode is Ehret. Tobin points to the fact that Ehret 'made hundreds of botanical illustrations' at Bulstrode and Laird and Weisberg-Roberts cite the production of his 'innumerable watercolours'.⁸² Elsewhere, Laird also suggests that it was Portland who allowed Ehret 'to work outside the commercial marketplace, to draw the less fashionable natives as well as the vogueish exotics'.⁸³ While this productivity is framed in positive terms by these critics, a document from the Portland-Welbeck Collection at the University of Nottingham Special Collections suggests Portland's involvement in overseeing Ehret's

⁸⁰ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 42-4.

⁸¹ Pelling, 'Collecting the World', p. 8.

⁸² Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 42, *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, p. 10

⁸³ Mark Laird, 'Mrs. Delany's Circles of Cutting & Embroidering in *Home & Garden*', in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 150-171 (p. 156).

creativity. The collection contains a list, in Portland's handwriting, entitled 'Plants of Ehrets finished by Taylor' and it is dated 18 December 1778.⁸⁴

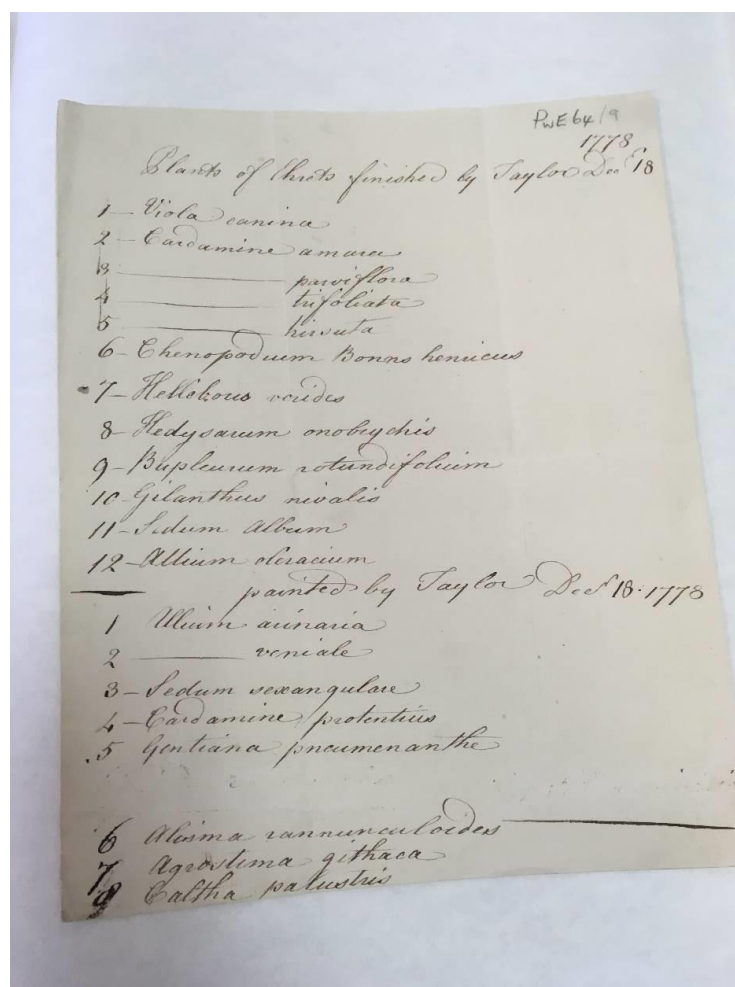


Figure 1.2

As shown in the image, the list contains twelve plants and the page is then divided by the sub-heading 'Painted by Taylor 18th of December 1778', followed by a list of eight plants. The presentation of a list in this manner, complete with the dates, sub-heading, and plant names, shows that Portland was keeping accurate records of the illustrations completed at Bulstrode and, arguably, demonstrates her oversight of this artistic 'productivity'. By

⁸⁴ 'Plants of Ehrets finished by Taylor' in the Portland (Welbeck) Collection in the Manuscripts and Special Collections, University of Nottingham, Pw E 64/9

measuring the productivity and keeping tracking of the illustrations, Portland is positioned as an overseer who controls the production of the illustrations.

The list not only assigns a quantitative aspect to Bulstrode's 'productivity', it also questions the value of individual creativity. Ehret passed away in 1770 and, as the list shows, he left at least twelve unfinished illustrations. Rather than these illustrations remaining incomplete, the list demonstrates that they were completed by another artist: Taylor.⁸⁵ Taylor's involvement in finishing Ehret's work suggests that the completed product is valued more than individual creativity. Moreover, Portland's recording of this, and her further recording of Taylor's artistic productions, indicates that she was a crucial factor in the completion of Ehret's work by another artist. This implies that rather than a space in which artistic individualism and creative 'productivity' were allowed to flourish, the atmosphere of Bulstrode was instead akin to the industrious production of workers.

This idea of measurable creativity at Bulstrode and Portland's implied role as an overseer is reflected in Mary Hamilton's creative endeavours while she was residing at Bulstrode. Hamilton (1756-1816) was a courtier and diarist who was involved in several interlocking royal, literary, and artistic circles in the late eighteenth-century. Crucially, she spent just over a month, between 5 December 1783 and 16 January 1784, residing at Bulstrode at Portland's invitation. This invitation was a form of social patronage and Hamilton's diaries show that she was keenly aware of what Portland was bestowing upon her. The prospect of the visit is first mentioned on 27 June 1783 and Hamilton writes: 'the DP said a great deal about me going to spend a few days with her'.⁸⁶ That she noted this in her diary, and placed an emphasis on Portland saying a 'great deal' about it, suggests that she viewed

⁸⁵ As of yet I have been unable to trace which artist Portland is referring to in the list.

⁸⁶ Mary Hamilton Diary, 27 June 1783. Mary Hamilton Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, HAM/2/3. Most of Hamilton's diaries from this time are small pieces of paper bound together either by another sheet of paper, bound together with a pin, or sewn together with string. Because of their size Hamilton often uses abbreviations in them. In this case 'DP.' refers to the Duchess of Portland.

the visit as an important opportunity. Moreover, on 2 July 1783, Hamilton records: ‘The D.P of Portland took a most kind and aff^t leave of me as she goes to town before I should again see her. Invited & kindly prep’d me to pay her and Mrs. Delany a visit at Bulstrode in the autumn’.⁸⁷ Less than a week later, Hamilton recorded the invitation again in her diaries and emphasises the kindness shown to her by Portland in inviting her to Bulstrode. The dual recording, in such a short space of time, shows the significance Hamilton placed on the invitation. When she arrived at Bulstrode on 5 December 1783, she recorded in her diary a conversation with Delany, who explained that Hamilton’s presence in the house was due to ‘ye affection ye DP. had taken for [Hamilton] &c; how much they both loved me, & how certain they both were that I did & ever should merit ye affection of every one who knew me’.⁸⁸ The notion of ‘merit[ing]’ affection suggests that Hamilton understood that she was expected to bring emotional value to the community.

Hamilton’s interest in natural history stemmed from before her visit to Bulstrode. Several months before her first invitation to Bulstrode, Hamilton wrote from Windsor to her friend Charlotte Margaret Gunning asking, ‘Pray what are your Studies this summer, & what book’s [sic] of amusement have you [...] I have just begged some books on Natural History & hope I shall acquire some knowledge in my favourite studies of this kind’.⁸⁹ However, prior to Bulstrode, her diaries do not note the same creative endeavours that are a focal point of her diaries during her visit. For example, on 9 December 1783, Hamilton records that: ‘Mr Levers, y^e house steward, came to me and brought me y^e chimney-board he had made for y^e library, w^{ch} I had promised y^e D^{ss} to cover wth prints’.⁹⁰ This recording not only reveals Hamilton’s promised creative labour for Portland, but also Mr. Levers’ initial labour in

⁸⁷ Mary Hamilton Diary, 2 July 1783. Mary Hamilton Papers, HAM/2/3.

⁸⁸ Mary Hamilton Diary, 5 December 1783. Mary Hamilton Papers, HAM/2/6.

⁸⁹ Mary Hamilton to Charlotte Margaret Gunning, 14 July 1782. Mary Hamilton Papers, HAM1/15/2/23.

⁹⁰ Mary Hamilton’s Diary, 9 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 166.

creating the chimney board. The following day, Hamilton records that: ‘Y^e Dss came to me, and look’d at my work, y^e screen, &c. soon after she left me’.⁹¹ The image of Portland looking over Hamilton’s work, coupled with the assertion that she left ‘soon after’ creates the impression of Portland as an overseer checking in on Hamilton’s work.

Hamilton’s addition of ‘soon after she left me’ highlights a key feature of her diaries, which is a continual emphasis on time and, specifically, accounting for how she spends her time. For example, on 3 December 1783, Hamilton writes: ‘I left her at 10 o’clock; came to my room; ye Dss sent as usual her chambermaid with enquiries. Abt 12 Mrs. Delany came to me and brought ye newspapers’.⁹² This entry shows Hamilton’s concern with noting the precise time of her actions as well as the movements and activities of herself and others. Importantly, on 22 January 1784, Hamilton records in her diary that: ‘y^e DP D^r of Portland she sent for me into her Breakfast Room, then wast’d ¼ of an hour I drank a dish of coffee’.⁹³ This entry also shows Hamilton’s concern with noting how she spent her time within Bulstrode but also brings up the idea of ‘wast’d’ time. The precise note of how the coffee drinking took up ‘¼ of an hour’, along with the other references to time within her diaries, suggests that she felt the need to account for her time at Bulstrode. Furthermore, the idea that, to her, drinking coffee counted as wasting time, suggests a concern with time being used productively.

Just as the aforementioned list of Ehret’s and Taylor’s illustrations suggest that Portland was aware of the creative outputs of those assisting with her collection, there is also the suggestion that she was keeping track of how they spent their time, specifically the time

⁹¹ Mary Hamilton’s Diaries, 10 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 169.

⁹² Mary Hamilton’s Diaries, 3 December 1783, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 162. Here the abbreviation of ‘ye Dss’ refers to the ‘Duchess of Portland’ and ‘Abt’ is an abbreviation of ‘About’.

⁹³ Mary Hamilton Diaries No. 5 17th Jan. to 17th of Feb. 1784 in *Mary Hamilton Papers*, HAM/2/7, f.12. Here, the abbreviation of ‘DP Dr of Portland’ refers to Portland’s title of the ‘Dowager Duchess of Portland’.

of those organising her collection: Solander and Lightfoot. For example, on 9 April 1772, Portland writes to Pulteney that she fears there may be mistakes in the naming of the shells she is sending him as Lightfoot had not had sufficient time to give Linnean names to all of them.⁹⁴ This shows that Portland was aware of Lightfoot's cataloguing schedule and the time frame involved. Moreover, on 19 March 1778, Portland writes to Pulteney and informs him that Solander was working not less than five hours a day on the shell catalogue.⁹⁵ This not only shows that Portland was making others aware of Solander's role in the collection, but also that she was keeping tabs on the amount of time he was spending on the catalogue. Similarly, on 20 March 1779, Portland writes to Pulteney to tell him that Solander had not yet begun cataloguing the univalves.⁹⁶ This suggests that, just as she was keeping lists of the illustrations completed, she was also keeping track of the work that Solander had completed in regard to the cataloguing of the collection.

The associations with productivity and creativity call to mind the nickname for Bulstrode in court circles: The Hive.⁹⁷ The name 'The Hive' calls to mind, as Pelling suggests, a place of 'an industrious' nature.⁹⁸ However, this image of industriousness is also coupled with that of workers inside a factory, as bees are within their own hives. Indeed, Delany herself refers to those within Bulstrode as bees: 'we are as busy as bees'.⁹⁹ The image of the residents as worker-bees inside a hive is further exacerbated by Portland's nickname: 'our lovely Queen'.¹⁰⁰ Just as bee hives have a queen, so too did Bulstrode. The intimate connections between the artistic work done by Bulstrode's residential clientele and the maintenance of the perception of Bulstrode as a space of intellectual stimulation and

⁹⁴ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 9 April 1772, in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

⁹⁵ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 19 March 1778, in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

⁹⁶ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 20 March 1779, in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

⁹⁷ Pelling, 'Collecting the World', p. 8.

⁹⁸ Pelling, 'Collecting the World', p. 8.

⁹⁹ Mrs. Delany to Viscountess Andover, 25th of September 1776, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, V, p. 260.

¹⁰⁰ Anne Dewes to Mary Delany [date unknown] in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 118.

‘curiosities’ is reminiscent of worker-bees maintaining their own space through individual and collective industry.

The Untidiness of Margaret Cavendish Bentinck

The curatorial work of Solander and Lightfoot has already been referred to in this chapter; however, as well as their acknowledged organisational efforts, the culture of material sociability at Bulstrode meant that other figures were also intimately involved in the design and arrangement of the collection. Building upon the earlier work of this chapter in showing the labour of those involved in the Portland collection, my research into the material sociability of Bulstrode questions aristocratic women’s collecting practices. It suggests that the engagement with material culture at Bulstrode complicates the extent to which we can understand Portland’s collection as an extension of her individual self and, indeed, the extent to which we can see engagement with objects as a signifier of individual subjectivity. It suggests that rather than being indicative of individual personality traits or identity, we should instead view whole collections as indicative of a social ‘empire’.

A significant proportion of recent scholarly work on material culture has concentrated on the relationship between gender and material culture and how women’s subjectivities can be borne out of craft, collecting, and organising. As Eger and Sloboda have argued, the practise of collecting objects such as shells and feathers was a ‘catalyst for discourse and offered a site of sociable conversation, knowledge production, and the formation of subjectivities’.¹⁰¹ Indeed, Vickery has argued that ‘women’s crafts were productions of supreme individuality: handworks were individual in material, aesthetic, customary, and even in legal terms’.¹⁰² Furthermore, Fennetaux has defined craft as ‘a meaningful process whereby women not only expressed themselves as individuals but above all organised,

¹⁰¹ Sloboda ‘Displaying Materials’, p. 464 and Elizabeth Eger, ‘Paper Trails’, p. 127.

¹⁰² Vickery, ‘The Theory & Practice of Female Accomplishment’, p. 107.

appropriated, and made sense of the world around them'.¹⁰³ Women could use objects to convey a multitude of meanings, from fashion, taste, and style to wealth and status, history and lineage, and from science, education, political allegiance, and religious conviction to personality, relationships, memory, and mortality. Material culture is thus an arena for the expression of female subjectivity and creativity.

References to material sociability are a consistent feature of descriptions of gatherings at Bulstrode. Hamilton's diaries always frame the Bulstrode group as engaging with objects, either through craft, sorting, or as conversation pieces. For example, on 14 December 1783, she records that: Mr. Levers, ye house steward, came and brought me a large portfolio of his drawings. Mrs. Delany came and we look'd them over, and he was so obliging to leave them with me'.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, on 9 January 1784, she writes that she 'went to ye Dss; staid wth her till past 4 looking over fine gems, antiques, miniature pictures, &c., out of ye beautiful cabinet, the inside of wch was painted by Polemberg, &c., &c'.¹⁰⁵

Indeed, this engagement with material culture has been a defining aspect of how historians have engaged with the site. Eger opines that 'there was a close proximity between the Duchess of Portland's scientific interests and the decorative and artistic pursuits of her female friends, all of which formed part of the social fabric of life at Bulstrode'.¹⁰⁶ Similarly, Shteir states that Portland:

opened her collections to the public, welcomed naturalists to inspect her holdings, and commissioned plant hunters to send her exotic specimens from all over the world. She received visits from many notable horticultural botanists and was a patron to botanists and botanical artists who came to her estate at Bulstrode Park in Buckinghamshire to catalogue her plants and develop a pictorial record of her holdings.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ Fennetaux, 'Female Crafts', p. 99.

¹⁰⁴ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 14 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 175.

¹⁰⁵ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 9 January 1784, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 201.

¹⁰⁶ Eger, 'Paper Trails', p. 127-8.

¹⁰⁷ Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47.

In Shteir's vision of Bulstrode, the site, and all those who visit it, are all connected to Portland's collection: the 'public', 'naturalists', 'botanists', and 'artists', are all engaging with the material objects present. Moreover, Shteir specifically refers to the processes of that engagement: from the cataloguing of the plants to the development of a 'pictorial record' of the objects.¹⁰⁸ Likewise, Zytaruk analyses Delany's interaction with objects in Bulstrode and argues that it was Delany's 'hope that, as family objects entered Bulstrode's grottoes, cabinets, and gardens, they would solidify social relations with the duchess'.¹⁰⁹ This suggests that Zytaruk views Bulstrode as a space in which social value and meaning was attached to objects.

The engagement with material culture has been an important factor in how cultural historians and scholars have defined Portland as a collector and represented her collecting practices. In some cases, this has resulted in Portland and her collecting practices being represented in a less-than-flattering light. She is portrayed as a 'magpie' or a 'bowerbird' who indiscriminately collected everything she could get her hands on.¹¹⁰ Susan Pearce has argued that our human interaction with objects can function as an extension of ourselves and, indeed, that the collection and organisation of objects can be interpreted as a way of 'shoring up an individual's identity'.¹¹¹ In this instance, the impression of Portland's collection as 'a chaotic jumble' and 'a clutter of shells in a jumble of unsorted boxes' that were scattered randomly throughout Bulstrode has resulted in the portrayal of her as an indiscriminate 'magpie'.¹¹² In these cases, the perception of the organisation of the whole collection is considered to be indicative of the personality and identity of the collector. These perceptions

¹⁰⁸ Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47.

¹⁰⁹ Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', p. 136.

¹¹⁰ David Elliston Allen, *The Naturalists in Britain: A Social History* [1976] (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), p. 25 and Hayden, *Mrs. Delany*, p. 106.

¹¹¹ Susan Pearce, *Museums, Objects, and Collections: A Cultural Study* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1992), p. 81.

¹¹² Sloboda, 'Displaying Materials', p. 460 and Judith Pascoe, *The Hummingbird Cabinet: A Rare and Curious History of Romantic Collectors* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), p. 64.

of Portland and her collecting practices are largely borne out of two contemporary sources: the engraved frontispiece to the ‘Portland Museum Auction Catalogue’ by Edward Francis Burney, which advertised the auction of Portland’s collection following her death in 1785, and an anecdote in Delany’s correspondence.

The 1785 image depicts Portland’s specimens and collectables piled haphazardly in stacks and lying on the floor of one of her Whitehall apartments. The illustration portrays the room as a site of abundance and disorder. This representation is markedly similar to the critical descriptions of Portland’s collection as ‘a chaotic jumble’ and ‘a clutter of shells in a jumble of unsorted boxes’ that were scattered randomly throughout Bulstrode.¹¹³ While the frontispiece may have been interpreted as a visual representation of Portland’s collection, it owes its design and subject matter to a specific genre used to advertise auctions and other kinds of merchandizing. As Tobin argues, the frontispiece employs the ‘visual trope of cornucopia, a spilling forth of abundance, which is heightened by its disarray’ which follows in the French tradition of illustrations accompanying auction catalogues.¹¹⁴ This image signals the dissolution of the collector’s imposition of order on the objects and their readiness for insertion into someone else’s collection. Tobin convincingly argues that ‘[the image] is designed to invite customers to fantasize about rescuing some of these precious objects from the chaos to which they have been consigned either by carelessness or by the disorder that death brings to possessions’.¹¹⁵

Painting a similar picture to the frontispiece illustration, on 3 September 1769, Delany wrote to her sister describing how Portland’s passion for natural history transformed the spaces at Bulstrode, turning ‘her Grace’s breakfast room’ into a:

repository of sieves, pans, platters, and filled with all the productions of *that nature*, [which] are spread on tables, windows, chairs, which with books of all kinds, (opened

¹¹³ Sloboda, ‘Displaying Materials’, p. 460 and Pascoe, *The Hummingbird Cabinet*, p. 64.

¹¹⁴ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 56.

¹¹⁵ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 56.

to their useful places), make an agreeable confusion; sometimes, notwithstanding twelve chairs and a couch, *it is* indeed a little *difficult* to find a *seat*.¹¹⁶

As with the auction illustration, this depiction has caused historians to interpret Portland's collecting practices as chaotic. However, as Tobin superbly demonstrates, this reading overlooks what Portland was actually doing here: '[Portland] has commandeered the domestic space of the breakfast room in order to transform it into a space where she could classify specimens. Though the scene described is visually one of disorder, the opposite – the imposition of order – is what was actually going on'.¹¹⁷ Tobin argues that 'the duchess was doing what every naturalist does when trying to identify specimens; she was in the act of imposing systematic order in the form of Linnaean taxonomy on the diversity of the natural world'.¹¹⁸ For Tobin, the act of identifying and cataloguing objects is a means of defining Portland as a naturalist rather than a 'magpie' collector. The act of sorting and organising, or perceived lack thereof, has therefore become a standard by which to measure our definition of Portland as either a naturalist or a 'magpie' collector. Tobin tells us that:

The duchess is crucial to understanding the collection, for a collection is nothing, literally, without its collector. Unlike the 'it' narrative's protagonist, an individual object, a collection is a collective entity that is brought into being through the collector's efforts, which involve gathering, organising, and displaying the collected objects.¹¹⁹

Nevertheless, my own research into the material sociability of Bulstrode complicates the extent to which we can view Portland as the definitive organiser of her own collection and, to a wider extent, how much we can view collecting practices as markers of individual identity.

The anecdotal evidence from Hamilton's diaries demonstrate that she, and other guests at Bulstrode, not only interacted with the natural history specimens as intellectual curiosities, but that they played an active role in the arrangement and sorting of the

¹¹⁶ Mary Delany to Mary Dewes, Bulstrode, 3 September 1769, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, 4: 238.

¹¹⁷ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 56.

¹¹⁸ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 56.

¹¹⁹ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 20

collection. On 22 January 1784, Hamilton records in her diary that herself and Portland ‘went into y^e Dressing Room I arranged a Cabinet of China’.¹²⁰ The significance of this anecdote lies in the assertion that both Portland and Hamilton went into the dressing room, and yet it was Hamilton alone who arranged a ‘Cabinet of China’. This shows Hamilton participating in material sociability, but also actively contributing to the display and organisation of Bulstrode’s collections. Cabinets were an important aspect of material culture and collecting practices since they were used to store decorative items, such as china, shells, and fossils, both behind their glass-facing fronts and within drawers. The Portland auction catalogue lists twenty cabinets; for sale were: ‘a small mahogany shell cabinet, with 7 drawers and covers’, ‘a cabinet for shells, with drawers, veneered with fine wood, and folding doors’, ‘two very beautiful mahogany cabinets, with drawers, of beautiful wood, with upper parts of plate glass, the back plate silvered’ and, ‘an exceedingly handsome large cabinet, with 36 drawers and folding doors’.¹²¹ The quantity of the cabinets at Bulstrode indicates that they were adopted by Portland as a practical means of displaying her collections. Moreover, the quality of these cabinets implies that Portland intended them to be show-pieces that would be displayed to visitors at Bulstrode.

The cabinets not only offered a practical means of display and storage, but also elevated the status of the objects within. Zytaruk argues that by being displayed or held in a cabinet an object ‘achieved the status of a curiosity’ and was thus offered to visitors as a source of amusement and edification.¹²² Zytaruk goes on to suggest that through enabling the host to participate in sociable ‘polite science’, the decorative object assures the social position

¹²⁰ Mary Hamilton Diaries, 22 January 1784, in Mary Hamilton Papers, HAM/2/7, f .12.

¹²¹ *A Catalogue of the Portland Museum, lately the property of the Duchess Dowager of Portland* (London, 1786), p. 78.

¹²² Zytaruk, ‘Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History’, p. 134. See also Beth Fowkes Tobin ‘Bluestockings and the Cultures of Natural History’ in *Bluestockings Now! The Evolution of a Social Role* ed. by Deborah Heller (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group: 2015), pp. 55-70, p. 64-5.

of the donor.¹²³ Zytaruk's comments are related to the act of donating an object to a host, and to the social ties that this creates, but the implied social value of an object within a cabinet demonstrates their importance to the wider sociability of material culture. The quantity and quality of the cabinets at Bulstrode suggests that Portland understood the social value of an object within a cabinet. Therefore, for her to facilitate Hamilton's organisation of these objects shows not only a gradation in the input of labour involved in these collecting practices but also how Hamilton can be seen as contributing to the collections that earned Bulstrode's reputation as a place of curiosities.

On the nature of display within collections, Dietz and Nutz have suggested that the collector was 'most concerned for things that belonged together by aesthetic criteria to be placed in spectacular, decorative ensembles. It was not only the individual parts that were important; a harmonious arrangement was equally significant'.¹²⁴ This emphasises the importance of the design and organisation of the individual parts of a collection in creating a 'total artistic composition'.¹²⁵ Since Hamilton, and Solander and Lightfoot among others, were involved in the organisation of the individual specimens of china, shells, and specimens, it stands to reason that they are responsible for the aesthetics of the whole ensemble. This therefore problematises the idea that Portland is crucial to understanding the collection, since it was not only her involved in the organisation and display of the objects. This complicates not only the relationships placed on aristocratic women's collecting practices and their individual identities but also how we approach collections themselves and our understanding of their importance in relation to subjectivity. Rather than emblematic of individual personality traits, we should instead see aristocratic women's collecting practices as

¹²³ Zytaruk, 'Mary Delany: Epistolary Utterances, Cabinet Spaces & Natural History', p. 134.

¹²⁴ Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz 'Collections Curieuses', p. 57.

¹²⁵ Bettina Dietz and Thomas Nutz 'Collections Curieuses', p. 57.

indicative of the social influence they exerted and see their entire collections as a visual and material display of their networking empire.

‘Our lovely Queen’: inside Bulstrode’s social networks

Hamilton’s anecdote, in which she states that both she and Portland went into ‘y^e Dressing Room’ but it was she who ‘arranged a Cabinet of China’, not only questions the gradation of labour in aristocratic women’s collecting practices, but also suggests that Bulstrode operated within a culture of ‘vertical relationships’.¹²⁶ The combination of the circumstance and the action, along with the anecdotal evidence that frames Portland as an ‘overseer’ of creative activities, suggests that Portland delegated the physical labour of the task to Hamilton. By exploring the intricacies of the social networks within Bulstrode, this final section of the chapter suggests that the intellectual stimulation of the gatherings and sociability in Bulstrode did not necessarily equate to social equality. I argue that this social inequality is borne out of the fact that the figures explored in this chapter have a patronage relationship with Portland which exacerbates existing social hierarchies. This is significant because it suggests that when considering enlightenment practices and sociability, one necessarily needs to consider the social particulars of a patronage relationship.

The sociable activities at Bulstrode have been figured, by critics such as Shteir and Vickery, as creating a space for enlightened friendship akin to the bluestocking salons hosted by Elizabeth Montagu and Elizabeth Vesey.¹²⁷ Sylvia Harcstark Myers, in her seminal work *The Bluestocking Circle* (1990), suggests that Bulstrode, ‘as a setting for congenial family and friends with social and intellectual interests’, made a lasting impression on Montagu

¹²⁶ Mary Hamilton Diaries, 22 January 1784, in Mary Hamilton Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester, HAM/2/7. The term ‘vertical relationships’ comes from Harold Perkin who used the term to describe a social system structured hierarchically. Harold Perkin, *Origins of Modern English Society* (Routledge: London, 2002), p. 182.

¹²⁷ Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47. See also Amanda Vickery, *Behind Closed Doors*, p. 152-3.

when she first visited Bulstrode in 1740.¹²⁸ Myers later describes the social and intellectual events at Bulstrode as ‘bluestocking social activities’.¹²⁹ Similarly, Shteir notes that Montagu ‘considered the duchess of Portland’s estate at Bulstrode as an ideal of social and intellectual life and took it as her model for gatherings of what became known as the Bluestocking circle in London’.¹³⁰ These readings imply that the sociable and intellectual values ascribed to the bluestocking salons can be also applied to Bulstrode and, by extension, to Portland herself.

The arrangement of the physical space of Montagu’s and Vesey’s gatherings has been lauded as breaking down social barriers. Carla Hesse and Eger point, in particular, to the organisation of the seating as a means of forging a ‘congenial backdrop for conversation’ among ‘the talented rather than the merely well-known’.¹³¹ Montagu favoured a semi-circular seating plan which promoted unity of conversation and acted as a metaphor for social harmony. Vesey regularly opted for a ‘random’ arrangement of small groups which were artfully constructed in order to promote the picture of relaxed company rather than the stiff formality of assemblies. In both instances, their arrangement of their homes acted as a congenial backdrop for inclusive and enlightened conversation. Eger cites a letter from Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, on 4 September 1772, which acknowledges the harmonising inclusivity of Vesey’s salons:

I delight already in ye prospect of ye blue box (alias Drawing Room) in which our Sylph assembles all the heterogenous natures in the World & indeed in many respects resembles Paradise, for there ye Lion sits down by the Lamb, ye Tyger dandles the Kid; the shy scotchman & ye [illegible] Hibernian, the Hero & Maccaroni, the Vestal, ... the Mungo of Ministry and the inflexible partizans of incorruptible Patriots, Beaux esprits & fine Gentlemen all gather together under the downy wing of the Sylph.¹³²

¹²⁸ Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 21.

¹²⁹ Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 268.

¹³⁰ Shteir, *Cultivating Women, Cultivating Science*, p. 47

¹³¹ Carla Hesse, ‘Introduction: Women Intellectuals in the Enlightened Republic of Letters’, in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* eds. Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 259-264, p. 262 and Elizabeth Eger, ‘“The noblest commerce of mankind”: Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle’ in *Women, Gender and Enlightenment* ed. by Sarah Knott and Barbara Taylor (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007), pp. 288-305 (p. 293).

¹³² Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 4 September 1772, quoted in Eger, ‘“The noblest commerce of mankind”: Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle’, p. 293.

The picture Montagu paints is one where different nations, represented by ‘the shy scotchman’ and the ‘Hibernian’, come together in conversation. It is not only those of different nationalities, but also those of different political persuasions that are drawn together here: the ‘Ministry’ and ‘Patriots’ exist harmoniously. Montagu pointedly refers to the ‘inflexible partizans’ to emphasise Vesey’s success in bringing these elements together. Her lauding of Vesey as ‘our Sylph’ who ‘assembles all the heterogenous natures in the World’ emphasises the role of the hostess in bringing together the group and in creating ‘Paradise’. Perhaps most appropriately, Montagu’s imagery of the Lion and Tiger sitting with the Lamb and Kid is representative of the different power dynamics accommodated in this peaceable setting: an analogy that calls to mind those of different social rank also sitting down together harmoniously. Montagu’s declaration that this ‘resembles Paradise’ affirms the notion that this harmonisation is the ideal social situation.

This interpretation of the bluestocking salons as inclusive and enlightened spaces has not gone unchallenged. Betty Rizzo argues that while Montagu’s salons were ‘undoubtedly of use as an inspiring gathering place for individuals with talent and genius’, the community she built ‘was of the elite’.¹³³ Rizzo’s assertion that, while Montagu sought to gather those with talent around her, the individuals who attended her salons were of a recognised social status implies a very limited social mobility within Montagu’s salons. Moreover, she states that rather than the creation of a harmonised, intellectual gathering, Montagu’s aim ‘was to provide the pre-eminent salon and to blaze in it’.¹³⁴ Rizzo puts Montagu and her personal desires and motivations at the heart of her salon. Similarly, Emma Major suggests that the self-definition of Montagu’s circle as a ‘peaceable union of competing political, linguistic,

¹³³ Betty Rizzo, ‘Two Versions of Community: Montagu and Scott’ in *Reconsidering the Bluestockings*, ed. by Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2003), pp. 193-21 (p. 194).

¹³⁴ Betty Rizzo, ‘Two Versions of Community: Montagu and Scott’, p. 194.

class, and private interest is founded upon an upper-rank, Anglican exclusivity'.¹³⁵ Far from inclusivity, therefore, Montagu's salons actually promoted the furthering of social distinctions. However, while class and social equality within the bluestocking salon culture is clearly contested ground, it is clear from the arrangement of Montagu's and Vesey's rooms, and from Montagu's letter to Carter, that the promotion of conversation amongst different individuals was a principal desire of the hostesses. Whether this was part of a self-motivated performance is still debateable, but it remains true that they wished to be seen as promoting social equality. This demonstrates the importance of such a movement to the enlightened, intellectual community that they were fostering.

While the gatherings that Portland hosted at Bulstrode were undoubtedly intellectually stimulating, this intellectualism did not necessarily foster social equality and anecdotes relating to the social experience at Bulstrode suggest that the culture was one of 'vertical friendships'. On 17 September 1769, Delany reports to Mary Dewes that: '[Ehret] goes out in search of curiosities in the fungus way, as this is now their season, and reads us a lecture on them an hour before tea, whilst her Grace examines all the celebrated authors to find out their [Linnaean] classes'.¹³⁶ This anecdote provides an example of the dissemination of knowledge, specifically botanical and scientific knowledge, that took place within sociable practices at Bulstrode. There are, however, significant differences to be drawn between this dissemination of knowledge and that which took place within the bluestocking salons. Firstly, rather than the conversation prized at the Montagu and Vesey gatherings, Delany describes the experience as a 'lecture'. While both are a potential means of social knowledge exchange, a lecture implies intellectual authority in one individual rather than a collective sharing of

¹³⁵ Emma Major, 'The Politics of Sociability: Public Dimension of the Bluestocking Millenium' in *Reconsidering the Bluestockings*, ed. by Nicole Pohl and Betty A. Schellenberg (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2003), pp. 175-192 (p. 181).

¹³⁶ Mary Delany to Mary Dewes, 17 September 1769, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, IV, p. 240.

information. Moreover, a ‘lecture’ suggests that one individual is physically, as well as intellectually, singled out from the crowd by standing at the front of an audience. This provides a contrast from the physical spacing of Montagu and Vesey’s gatherings in which chairs are specifically arranged in order to promote collective discussion. Furthermore, as well as Ehert being singled out as the one giving the ‘lecture’, Delany also separates herself from the group by positioning herself as an observer. Though she states that Ehert’s ‘lecture’ was for ‘us’, which positions her as part of the group, she also notes Portland’s separate parallel activity which implies that Delany was both a participant and observer. This creates a sense of disconnect amongst the Bulstrode group where all the participants do not come together harmoniously in the same way that Montagu’s account of Vesey’s gatherings suggests.

Delany’s positioning of Portland as separate to the group also provides an interesting comparison to Montagu’s image of Vesey as gathering the participants under her ‘downy wing’.¹³⁷ While Vesey is figured as being in and amongst her guests, Delany positions Portland as separate from the group: ‘whilst her Grace examines all the celebrated authors to find out their [Linnaean] classes’.¹³⁸ The word ‘whilst’ tells us that Portland’s activity is taking place at the same time as Ehert’s lecture. This not only suggests a spatial separation but also an intellectual separation as Portland is undertaking the classification task alone rather than making it a collective effort. This perception of Portland as separate to the group differs from Montagu’s account of Vesey’s gathering to Carter. Instead of separating Vesey, Montagu ascribes the success of the gathering to ‘our Sylph [who] assembles all the heterogenous natures in the World’.¹³⁹ Moreover, Montagu describes the participants as ‘all

¹³⁷ Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 4 September 1772, quoted in Eger, ‘The noblest commerce of mankind’: Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle’, p. 293.

¹³⁸ Mary Delany to Mary Dewes, 17 September 1769, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, IV, p. 240.

¹³⁹ Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 4 September 1772, quoted in Eger, ‘The noblest commerce of mankind’: Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle’, p. 293.

gather[ed] together under the downy wing of the Sylph'.¹⁴⁰ By positioning the participants as under Vesey's 'downy wing', Montagu brings the gathering together in one specific locale which adds to the ideas of a social togetherness. Conversely, Delany positions Portland as spatially and intellectually separate to the group which suggests that she is also distancing herself socially from the group.

Crucially, it is Ehert, a patronal client and employee of Portland, who is giving the lecture and Delany, also a patronal client, is recording the event. Thus, the implied spatial partitioning and intellectual separation of the lecture is from the perspective of Portland's patronal clients. In contrast, Montagu's perception of intellectual entertainment at Bulstrode offers a different perspective. Myers reports that, during her second visit to Bulstrode in 1741, Montagu records that the company included: Mary Delany; Ann Dewes; Dr. Young; Dr Alured Clarke, the Dean of Exeter; Dr Thomas Shaw, a Professor of Greek at Oxford, a botanist, and a conchologist.¹⁴¹ According to Myers, Montagu reported being entertained by the disputes of the clerical visitors on theological subjects, especially metaphysics and morality, and that reading aloud was one of the group's usual entertainments.¹⁴² Montagu wrote to Anne Donnellan that:

Dr. Shaw is just come he is full of laughter & communicates it. Dr. Clarke is with us also, he is a very agreeable Companion: Dr. Young makes up the Triumviri of Divines, he is all three together he has a head of wisdom, a heart of honesty, & a mind of chearfullness. Think how the hours fly in our Society!¹⁴³

In contrast to the intellectual and physical separation that Delany indicates in her anecdote of daily life at Bulstrode, Montagu refers to how 'the hours fly in our Society!'. This not only points to the enjoyment of the company, but, significantly, the framing of it as 'our Society' creates the impression of a cohesion and inclusiveness that Delany's anecdote does not.

¹⁴⁰ Elizabeth Montagu to Elizabeth Carter, 4 September 1772, quoted in Eger, "The noblest commerce of mankind": Conversation and Community in the Bluestocking Circle', p. 293.

¹⁴¹ Elizabeth Montagu, quoted in Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 40.

¹⁴² Elizabeth Montagu, quoted in Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 40.

¹⁴³ Elizabeth Montagu to Anne Donnellan, undated, quoted in Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 40.

Hamilton's diaries provide a unique means of comparing and contrasting contemporary perceptions of these gatherings since Hamilton's close acquaintance with Portland also coincided with a connection to the bluestocking hostesses. Hamilton visited the bluestocking hostesses Vesey, Montagu, and Frances Boscawen (1719-1805) on several occasions in the early 1780s and several of these visits took place while she was a guest at Bulstrode. On 28 December 1783, Hamilton writes: 'I came to Mrs. Vesey's at 8 o'clock; met there Mr. Walpole, Lady Mornington, Lady Ross, Mrs. Montagu, Mr. Montague, Miss Gregory, my uncle Sr Wm Hamilton. I had a good deal of conversation wth Mr. Walpole'.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, on 13 January 1784, Hamilton writes: 'I went to Mrs. Boscawen's a little before 9. Met there Mrs. Burrows, Mrs. Pepys (Mr. Pepys came in after), Mrs. Buller, Mrs. Leveson. Conversation was upon ye merits and demerits of Mrs. Siddons, &c. Mrs. Leveson and I staid after ye rest.'¹⁴⁵ Additionally, on 2 January 1784, Hamilton writes:

we went to Mrs. Montagu's, met there Lady Bute, Ldy L. Stewart, Lord Huntingdon, Mr. Walpole, Mr. and Mrs. Hoare, Mrs. Boscawen, a Mrs. Milward and another lady, a Mrs. Ch' York, Mr. and a Miss York, Ldsr Bell Polworth, Mr. Bobinson, Mr. Montagu, Miss Gregory, Monr D'Ademar, y^o French Ambassador, and a Mr. York. I had much conversation w"h Mr. Walpole, Lord Huntingdon, Ldy L. Stewart, Mrs. Hoare, and Miss Gregory.¹⁴⁶

In each of these entries, Hamilton offers a list of those who attended the gatherings and notes that 'conversation' took place. Interestingly, she only refers to the topic of conversation at Boscawen's gathering and even then, only offers sparse detail. This, along with the listing of attendees, implies that it was more important to note the people she was conversing with, rather than the topic of conversation itself. The importance given to the people, rather than

¹⁴⁴ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 28 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 190.

¹⁴⁵ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 13 January 1784, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 203.

¹⁴⁶ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 2 January 1784, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 194.

their knowledge, suggests that the value of their company lay in their social connections rather than their conversation.

Conversely, Hamilton's entries regarding the Bulstrode gatherings focus on the material objects and the group's engagement with them. For example, on 7 December 1783, Hamilton records that: 'After tea till supper, we had each of us our little table and candles, books of prints, the conversation very agreeable—" from grave to gay," but not also as the poet adds "from lively to severe;" went to supper ab' 1/2 past 10'.¹⁴⁷ The pronoun 'we' rather than a list of names could be seen as Hamilton's nod to Bulstrode as an enlightened, inclusive social setting. However, her account of the arrangement of the furniture suggests that this is not the case. Rather than the inclusive furniture arrangement of Vesey and Montagu's gatherings, the spatial positioning of giving each person their own 'little table' instead promotes a separation amongst the guests. Furthermore, to give each guest their own 'books of prints' also encourages an intellectual separation with each guest having the potential to become engrossed in their own work rather than the conversation of the group.

The anecdotes from Delany and Hamilton, and contrasted with Montagu's own experience, suggest that though Bulstrode undoubtedly offered intellectual stimulation for those who attended the gatherings there, the experience was not always a source of harmonising intellectual exchange as the bluestocking salons were lauded to be. Returning to Eger's comment that enlightened sociability created a 'situation that enabled friendships to flourish more freely across traditional boundaries of class and station', the writings of Delany and Hamilton indicate that while friendships certainly did occur across traditional social barriers, they were not always of an equalising nature.¹⁴⁸ This cuts to the heart of enlightenment values and suggests that, though knowledge dissemination and exchange could

¹⁴⁷ Mary Hamilton's Diaries, 7 December 1783, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 161.

¹⁴⁸ Eger, 'Paper Trails', p. 111.

cross social barriers, the traditional notion of ‘vertical friendships’ still applied in the eighteenth century.

Bulstrode’s gifting practices

Along with associations with the bluestocking circle, another factor that has led to Bulstrode being positioned as a space of enlightened sociability was the exchange of objects and specimens within Portland’s social and scientific networks. As outlined in the introduction, gift-giving has been seen as a means of tracking the social ties that exist between individuals and communities.¹⁴⁹ This chapter analyses the gifts that Portland bestowed on to Lightfoot, Pulteney, and Hamilton, as well as the correspondence surrounding these interactions, in order to scrutinise what these gifts tell us about the social ties between these individuals and how this can be related to Bulstrode as a community.

Sloboda argues that the exchange of material objects was ‘an especially important component of sociability’ for Portland and other elite women as it ‘facilitated and signified political, familial, and affectionate bonds’.¹⁵⁰ Similarly, Pelling states that the social fabric of Bulstrode ‘operated within an economy of friendship, affection and intellectual respect, supported by a quantifiable material currency’.¹⁵¹ For Sloboda and Pelling, material gifting acted as an intellectual and emotional currency that aligned Bulstrode with the broader culture of gifting across other sites and salons associated with the bluestockings. However, what these discussions of enlightened gifting do not acknowledge is that the exchange of specimens overlaps with gifting that specifically reinforces social hierarchies and Portland’s aristocratic status. As such, the gifting within Bulstrode’s community, and Portland’s wider natural history and botanical networks, problematises the equalising nature of knowledge

¹⁴⁹ Mauss *The Gift*, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Sloboda, ‘Displaying Porcelain’, p. 464.

¹⁵¹ Pelling, ‘Collecting the World’, p. 10.

dissemination and specimen exchange as it suggests that the gifting practices were a means of social display.

The relationship between gifting and social display has been posited before; however, this has been in relation to the social display of friendship. Janice Neri, for example, has argued that friendship at Bulstrode was cultivated through ‘making, studying, and exchanging objects of art and science’.¹⁵² Similarly, Eger has written extensively on friendship within the bluestocking circle and maintains that ‘Bluestocking letters frequently contained small items such as feathers and flowers, fabric or drawings – tokens of affection that both supplanted the emotional relationship expressed and worked to strengthen other networks of exchange in which these women were involved’.¹⁵³ This chapter argues that the gifting practices in and around Bulstrode did strengthen Portland’s connection with other naturalists and botanists, but also reminded them that their ‘friendship’ with Portland existed within social hierarchies. I argue that gift-giving serves not only as a means of establishing the giver’s identity but also as a way of determining that of the recipient’s. Portland’s gift giving, for example, suggests that, while it may have contributed to the ‘enlightened’ culture of knowledge exchange at Bulstrode, the gifts also enacted a performative display of aristocratic status and thus further undermine gestures towards equality within enlightened sociability.

Tobin argues that the relationships between Portland and the naturalists and botanists who visited and inhabited Bulstrode was emblematic of ‘a friendship based on equality of minds and the free exchange of ideas, specimens, and publications’.¹⁵⁴ However, by analysing the gifts of game that Portland bestowed upon Lightfoot and Pulteney, this chapter argues that alongside the ‘free exchange of ideas [and] specimens’ there was simultaneously

¹⁵² Janice Neri, ‘Mrs Delany’s Natural History & Zoological Activities: ‘A Beautiful Mixture of Pretty Objects’ in *Mrs. Delany and Her Circle*, ed. by Mark Laird and Alicia Weisberg-Roberts (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), pp. 172-187 (p. 178).

¹⁵³ Eger, ‘Paper Trails’, p. 127.

¹⁵⁴ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 117.

the exchange of gifts that reinforced the social hierarches within Bulstrode. On 28 August, Lightfoot writes to Portland: ‘Mr Lightfoot presents his most respectful com^{ts} to the D^{ss} Dow^f of Portland, & is extremely happy to hear of her safe Arrival to Bulstrode, & is vastly oblig’d to her for her kind Present of half a very fine Buck which he receiv’d during her Grace’s Absence’.¹⁵⁵ Lightfoot clearly positions the Buck as a gift through his use of the word ‘Present’. As such Lightfoot follows polite convention by offering Portland his compliments and obligations. What is particularly interesting in this exchange is that Lightfoot does not talk of reciprocation which creates an uneven balance in the obligations implied within this gift-exchange. As Mauss, and others, have theorised, the giving of a gift naturally creates an assumption that the gift will be reciprocated.¹⁵⁶ However, I would argue that in this instance the nature of the exchange works for both parties because within their relationship there is a social distance that must be maintained: Portland is a patron to Lightfoot and occupies a higher social standing. By not offering a reciprocal gift, only his thanks, Lightfoot maintains this social distance by placing himself within Portland’s debt and thus acknowledging that this is a situation he ought to be in.

As well as the content of the letter, its composition is also important. Within the letter, Lightfoot refers to himself in the third person: ‘Mr. Lightfoot’.¹⁵⁷ The handwriting of this letter and others from Lightfoot appears to be the same but it is difficult to discern whether it was written by the same person. In each scenario, either writing in the third person or obtaining the services of a third party to write the letter, Lightfoot creates a distance that is not present in their other correspondences. Significantly, Lightfoot also refers to himself in the third person on other occasions. For example, he also refers to the dedication to Portland in his *Floria Scotia* as a: ‘humble expression of gratitude for the many unsolicited favors her

¹⁵⁵ John Lightfoot to the Duchess of Portland, 28th of August [?], in the Portland-Welbeck Collection, Pw E 23, f. 1.

¹⁵⁶ Mauss, *The Gift*, p. 37.

¹⁵⁷ John Lightfoot to the Duchess of Portland, 28 August [?], in the Portland-Welbeck Collection, Pw E 23, f. 1.

grace has thought to confer upon him' (*Flora Scotia*, p. i). The use of the third person to again respond to a 'favor' from Portland suggests that Lightfoot felt the need to add some distance and formality to the interactions and reinforces the social disparity between Lightfoot and Portland.

As well as Lightfoot's reaction to the gift, it is the nature of the gift itself - the half a Buck - that is important in acknowledging how it establishes Portland's identity and determines that of Lightfoot's. Lightfoot was not a landowner and therefore had no access to game other than as a gift from those with land. A gift of game is thus bound up with reminders of hierarchical social relations and specifically the social hierarchies that existed between Portland and Lightfoot. It could be argued that a gift of game is the sharing of resources; however, if we subscribe to this, it is a gift which signifies a particular type of interventionism: one that is simultaneously kind and condescending. It positions Portland as a benefactor who is generously giving to those without and implicitly frames Lightfoot as in need of her benefactions. Even if we disregard the aristocratic undertones of gifts of game, a gift of food still subtly positions the giver as sustaining the recipient. Moreover, Lightfoot's lack of a reciprocal offer demonstrates an acceptance of Portland as his benefactor and an implicit acknowledgment that he cannot sustain her in a reciprocal sense.

Lightfoot was not the only recipient of game from Portland; she also gave a gift of 'half a buck' to Pulteney.¹⁵⁸ In a similar fashion to Portland's relationship with Lightfoot, Portland and Pulteney both shared a passion for natural history and she regularly sent him gifts of shells. For example, on 24 December 1771, she writes to Pulteney and states her hope that she will be able to add to his collection of shells.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, on 1 July 1776, she sends him a box of shells by the Blandford coach and hopes that they will be valuable to his

¹⁵⁸ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 5 August 1771 in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

¹⁵⁹ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 24 December 1771 in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

collection.¹⁶⁰ Tobin argues that the relationship between Portland and Pulteney was representative of enlightenment values since Pulteney was ‘beneath her on the social register’ and Portland knew that he ‘would appreciate the South Pacific shells that he could not afford to buy himself’.¹⁶¹ However, as with Lightfoot, that these natural history and botanical exchanges were occurring alongside the gifts of game undermines the idea of the exchange being socially equalising. It suggests that the exchange of ideas and objects can never truly be ‘free’ and based on an ‘equality of minds’ as within these exchanges there are subtle indicators of power which delicately reinforce social relationships.¹⁶²

The overlap between the gifting of natural history objects and gifts that reinforce social hierarchies was not limited to those in Portland’s employ. As aforementioned, Hamilton spent just over a month residing at Bulstrode and her diaries record the presence of material sociability: ‘[Mrs. Woodward] gave me flowers, and a peacock’s feather to keep and use as a mark in a book to remember her by’.¹⁶³ Eger argues that the exchange of such material objects formed a social bond that acted as proof of the attachment between women.¹⁶⁴ This chapter examines one such individual object - a watch - that was gifted to Hamilton and argues that it demonstrates Portland utilising Hamilton as a receptacle for aristocratic display.

On 31 January 1784, Hamilton records that Portland ‘in y^e most handsome manner made me a very beautiful & fine present a gaze d’amitee – this was a Watch & Chain of y^e Newest fashion. Y^e Chain of Silk – decorated wth Tassels & other ornaments of Steel – Pearl

¹⁶⁰ Duchess of Portland to Richard Pulteney, 1 July 1776 in the Pulteney Correspondence, Linnean Society.

¹⁶¹ Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 117.

¹⁶² Tobin argues that that the relationships between Portland and the naturalists and botanists who visited and inhabited Bulstrode was emblematic of ‘a friendship based on equality of minds and the free exchange of ideas, specimens, and publications’. Tobin, *The Duchess’s Shells*, p. 117.

¹⁶³ Mary Hamilton Diaries, 5 December 1783, in Mary Hamilton Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester (HAM/2/5)

¹⁶⁴ Eger, ‘Paper Trails’, p. 120.

& Gold Beads'.¹⁶⁵ That the watch chain was made from silk, gold, and pearl signals the expense that Portland invested in the gift. Moreover, that was of 'y^e Newest fashion', and its practical nature, meant that it was likely to be displayed upon Hamilton's person. This means that others would take note of the fact that Hamilton was wearing a present from Portland, as well as register the value, and thus observe that there was a social attachment between the two ladies. Significantly, on 5 February 1784, Hamilton subsequently writes that Portland desired Hamilton's uncle to 'give her an impression of his arms to have a seal cut for me for y^e watch she had given me of my arms'.¹⁶⁶ Portland's desire to add a seal with Hamilton's coat of arms onto the watch demonstrates the importance she places on the display of aristocratic status and, thus, socially hierarchical structures.

Susan S. Lanser speaks of female friendship as 'private intimacies becom[ing] public relations' that act as a status-symbol 'marking women as well-connected and well-bred'.¹⁶⁷ Portland's gift of a fashionable watch to Hamilton is representative of a gift that embodies 'private intimacies becom[ing] public relations'. It is an item that is designed to be worn and displayed which acts not only as a public marker of the relationship between Portland and Hamilton, but also one that highlights Portland's wealth and her social patronage of Hamilton. Eger argues that 'objects thus take on an endowed significance beyond the lifetime of their original owners, extending and embodying human relationships in defiance of mortality'.¹⁶⁸ While Eger focuses on the impact on human relationships, her argument nevertheless speaks to the potential impact objects have on posterity. For Portland to commission and gift such objects shows her desire to construct her own public representation as a woman of wealth and status within intellectual circles.

¹⁶⁵ Mary Hamilton Diaries, 31 January 1784, in Mary Hamilton Papers, John Rylands Library, University of Manchester (HAM/2/7)

¹⁶⁶ Mary Hamilton Diaries, 5 February 1784, in Mary Hamilton Papers, HAM/2/7.

¹⁶⁷ Susan S. Lanser, 'Befriending the Body: Female Intimacies as Class Acts', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 32:2 (1998-99), 179-98 (p. 180 and p. 186).

¹⁶⁸ Eger, 'Paper Trails', p. 120.

Delany opined in a letter to Anne Dewes, on 7 November 1746, that '[a]ll friendship is a mutual debt'.¹⁶⁹ In the case of Portland, it appears as if her gifting interactions were governed to ensure that the debt was perceived to be greater on the side of the recipient. Portland's gifting relationships with Lightfoot, Pulteney, and Hamilton act as a means not only of conveying an identity onto the recipient but also as a means of establishing the giver's identity. In Portland's case, her gifts of food and jewellery established her as a generous benefactor while the recipients were framed as in need of her benefaction. These gifting practices existed alongside the sharing of knowledge and specimens and show that enlightenment values cannot be separated from the hierarchical social system.

'Possess[ing] Elizabeth Elstob'

The reinforcement and display of social hierarchies occurred not just in the gifting practices attached to Bulstrode and its networks, but also within Portland's recruitment of individuals. One of the forgotten figures of Portland's Bulstrode set is Elizabeth Elstob (1683-1756). Elstob was a pioneer in Anglo-Saxon studies who translated Madeleine de Scudery's *Essay upon Glory* (1708) and an *English Saxon Homily on the Nativity of St. Gregory* (1709). She also wrote *Rudiments of Grammar for the English-Saxon Tongue* (1715).¹⁷⁰ She fell into dire financial straits following her brother's death in 1715 and, following a spell of teaching in Evesham, was hired in 1738 to be a tutor to Portland's children. Delany writes that: 'Mrs. Elstob is to instruct [Portland's] children in the principles of religion and virtue, to teach them to speak, read, and understand English well, to cultivate their minds as far as their capacity will allow, and to keep them company in the house'.¹⁷¹ Though hired in 1738, Sarah Huff

¹⁶⁹ Mary Delany to Anne Dewes, 7 November 1746, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 444.

¹⁷⁰ For more information on Elizabeth Elstob see the dissertation by Sarah Huff Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, (unpublished PhD thesis: Indiana University, 1970).

¹⁷¹ Mary Delany to Ann Granville, 12 December 1738, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, pp. 14-15.

Collins reports that Elstob did not actually join Portland at Bulstrode until 16 November 1739 where she remained until her death in 1756.¹⁷² While Ehret, who was also employed as a tutor to Portland's children, is frequently mentioned in accounts of Bulstrode, Elstob is not. The difference between the representation of the two figures is perhaps due to their productivity: Ehert continued to produce illustrations while at Bulstrode, while Elstob did not continue to produce translations or literary works. Cultural historians have fallen into the trap of only considering the 'productive' members of Bulstrode's community and Elstob falls between the cracks of these discussions of Bulstrode's creative and intellectual community. Amidst the critical lauding of Bulstrode as 'productive' and an 'industrious sanctuary' Elstob is significant to how we frame Bulstrode as creative institution *because* she did not thrive within the community.¹⁷³

Of the social community at Bulstrode, Cook states: '[t]he Duchess was uninterested in her friends' social rank so long as they distinguished themselves in the pursuit of science'.¹⁷⁴ As my chapter has shown, while Portland may have been, in a general sense, an adherent of enlightenment values - of placing intellectualism and talent over social status - she did appear to place a crucial emphasis on the need for her 'friends' to be 'productive'. She clearly cultivated social relationships which had the potential to add to the creative community at Bulstrode. The acquisitive nature of Portland's social interactions is demonstrated through the language surrounding Elstob's arrival at Bulstrode. The chief source of information regarding Elstob's induction into Bulstrode is through the letters and diaries of Delany, who, along with her sister Anne Dewes, was instrumental in securing the position of governess for Elstob. *The Autobiography and Correspondence* contains several letters concerning the appointment and provides necessary background details. While we do not have any direct correspondence

¹⁷² Sarah Huff Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, p. 227. And she was paid £30 per year.

¹⁷³ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 42 and Pelling, 'Collecting the World', p. 8.

¹⁷⁴ Cook, 'Botanical Exchanges', p. 146.

from Portland regarding Elstob, Delany's correspondence is useful in establishing the view that Portland had of Elstob and of her place within the household. At this moment in time, Delany was not yet residing at Bulstrode as she did in the latter years of her life.¹⁷⁵ However, she was a frequent visitor and an intimate member of Portland's social circle.

Upon the provisional acceptance of Elstob's appointment, Delany wrote to her sister exclaiming that: 'it would be a sincere joy to me to have our worthy Duchess possess of so valuable a person; but don't speak of her coming here till 'tis more confirmed'.¹⁷⁶ The idea of Portland 'posses[sing]' Elstob positions her as one of Portland's 'curiosities' and reduces her to a status of an object as part of Bulstrode's collection. Furthermore, the notion of possession firmly places the control and power within the relationship with Portland. Moreover, the designation of Elstob as 'so valuable a person' reduces Elstob to the sum of her abilities that are useful to Portland. On 22 December 1738, Delany writes to her sister that: 'the Elstobian affair is quite fixed, and she expressed the utmost satisfaction at having secured such a worthy woman to educate her children'.¹⁷⁷ Here, the words 'satisfaction' and 'secured' similarly point to the appointment of Elstob as a form of transaction. Furthermore, the letter implies that Elstob's 'worth' is that she can provide an education for Portland's children.

The language used to describe Elstob's arrival at Bulstrode can only be seen through the filter of Delany's letters which could suggest that it is Delany, not Portland, who views Elstob in these possessive terms. However, these terms were not unique to Elstob. On 31 July 1784, Portland writes to Delany of Mr. John Timothy Swainson (1757-1824). Swainson was a customs officer who was invited to Bulstrode to participate in shell collecting expeditions.

¹⁷⁵ She began spending her summers at Bulstrode following her husband's death in 1768.

¹⁷⁶ Mary Delany to Ann Granville, 12 December 1738, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 14-15.

¹⁷⁷ Mary Delany to Ann Granville, 22 December 1738, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 18.

On their relationship, Tobin writes: '[t]he friendship between the duchess and Swainson is an example of the kinds of interactions the shell exchange enabled, overcoming social disparities and differences in age and gender'.¹⁷⁸ Tobin's emphasis on their friendship 'overcoming social disparities' suggests that their relationship was one of relative social equality.

However, the language that Portland uses in relation to Swainson is in the same possessive terms as Delany spoke of Elstob. Portland states that he:

will be a good acquisition; he shot three or four birds for me yesterday, and is gone out to-day trawling, or I shou'd have gone to have seen his collection. And he has introduced a friseur, not for the purpose of curling my hair, but of stuffing birds, who collects medals and all sorts of things. I have a charming horned owl sitting next to me that I have purchased off him.¹⁷⁹

In a markedly similar tone to Delany's description of Elstob, Portland designates Swainson as an 'acquisition'.¹⁸⁰ This, as with Delany's talk of Portland 'posses[sing]' Elstob, figures Swainson as a curiosity to be collected and owned. Furthermore, by listing the ways in which Swainson has been or will be useful to her, Portland reduces Swainson's value to his usefulness in the same way that Elstob's 'worth' was defined. Both Elstob and Swainson were in the process of being hired by Portland when this language was being used and the similarities in terms suggests that Delany's letters are reliable indicators of Portland's own feelings towards Elstob. Moreover, that there were around forty years between Delany's letter concerning Elstob and Portland's own letter concerning Swainson suggests that this language and terminology was a feature spanning Portland's patronal career.

The ideas of ownership that Portland attached to Elstob are continued throughout Elstob's employment with Portland. While Portland declares that 'all imaginable care will be taken' of Elstob, Delany's correspondence implies that this care did not extend to social

¹⁷⁸ Tobin, *The Duchess's Shells*, p. 117.

¹⁷⁹ The Duchess of Portland to Mary Delany, 31 July 1784, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 223.

¹⁸⁰ The Duchess of Portland to Mary Delany, 31 July 1784, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, III, p. 223.

inclusion.¹⁸¹ On 9 December 1743, when visiting Bulstrode, Delany signs off a letter to her sister by declaring that: '[t]he lovely little group here are well, and so is Mrs. Elstob'.¹⁸² By referring to Elstob separately, Delany isolates her as outside of their 'lovely little group'. This comment is made four years after Elstob first arrived at Bulstrode and the timing of it suggests that, rather than being the result of being the newcomer to a social setting, Elstob's isolation has become part of her social place at Bulstrode. As with the language of 'posses[sion]', this language is being used by Delany rather than Portland. However, an anecdote from Edward Rowe Mores (1731-1778) further indicates Elstob's isolation within Bulstrode.¹⁸³ In 1750, Edward Rowe Mores called at Bulstrode to see Elstob having heard about her through his friendship with George Ballard (1706-1755). Mores reported that Elstob:

was a northern lady of an antient family and a genteel fortune. But she pursued too much of the drug called learning, and in that pursuit fail'd at being careful of an[y] one thing necessary. In her latter years she was a tutoress in the fam. of the Duke of Portland, where we have visited her in her sleeping-room at Bulstrode, surrounded with books and dirtiness the usual appendages of folks of learning. But if anyone desires to see her as she was when she was the favourite of Dr. Hudson and the Oxonians they may view her pourtraiture in the initial G of The English Saxon homily on the birth-day of St. Gregory.¹⁸⁴

The picture that Mores paints is of Elstob as a 'madwoman in the attic'. The image of her surrounded by 'books and dirtiness', coupled with the insinuation that her mind is not what it once was, suggests a physical and mental disorder. Significantly, the only location mentioned is Elstob's 'sleeping-room' which positions Elstob as physically separate from the rest of Bulstrode. Moreover, since she is the only person mentioned in the anecdote, a social separation is also implied since it suggests that she hosted Mores without the presence of any

¹⁸¹ Mary Delany to Ann Granville, 12 December 1738, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, pp. 14-15.

¹⁸² Mary Delany to Ann Dewes, 9 December 1743, in Delany Correspondence, *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 238.

¹⁸³ Mores heard about Elstob through his friendship with George Ballard who was now a clerk at Magdalen College in Oxford.

¹⁸⁴ Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, p. 232.

other members of the household. This suggests that Elstob and her guests were not considered part of Bulstrode's social circle.

Elstob's own letters also hint at both a social and intellectual isolation. When Ballard began to assemble his notes for his *Memoirs of Several Ladies of Great Britain* (1752), Sara Chapone hoped that Elstob could use her influence with Portland to allow Ballard to dedicate the work to her. Collins reports that when Chapone wrote to Elstob in 1745 suggesting the idea, Elstob replied that she had tried to interest Portland in the dedication but that she had no influence on her.¹⁸⁵ Consequently, Ballard requested permission to dedicate the work to Delany instead.¹⁸⁶ This anecdote suggests that a friendship did not exist between Elstob and Portland. Moreover, in 1750, she wrote to Ballard proclaiming: 'this is not an Age to hope for any encouragement to Learning of any kind'.¹⁸⁷ While this does not explicitly reference Portland, for Elstob to state that it is not the time 'for any encouragement to Learning' suggests that she is not finding that encouragement at Bulstrode. Indeed, Myers reports that:

if Mrs. Elstob had hoped for some opportunity for conversation or a return to some scholarly pursuits in her leisure, she was disappointed. She found that the children took up almost all her time; when they were not with the Duchess – which Mrs. Elstob said was not for long – they were with her.¹⁸⁸

Bulstrode has been continually labelled anecdotally and by contemporary commentators and critics as a space where '[a] curious and enquiring mind can't fail of being gratified'.¹⁸⁹

However, Elstob's comment implies that this was not a universal experience.

Elstob's experience at Bulstrode creates the impression of Bulstrode as a court, in which Portland is the Queen; indeed, as aforementioned, Portland's nickname within her social circle was 'our lovely Queen'.¹⁹⁰ Alongside this nickname, the language used by

¹⁸⁵ Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, p. 231.

¹⁸⁶ Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, p. 231.

¹⁸⁷ Elizabeth Elstob to George Ballard quoted in Collins, *Elizabeth Elstob: A Biography*, p. 233.

¹⁸⁸ Myers, *The Bluestocking Circle*, p. 131,

¹⁸⁹ Mary Delany to Rev. John Dewes, Bulstrode, 9 July 1778, in *Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany*, V, pp. 363-64.

¹⁹⁰ Anne Dewes to Mary Delany, date unknown, in *The Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs Delany*, II, p. 118.

Delany, a long-time resident at Bulstrode, affirms this impression of Bulstrode. Delany refers to the site as Portland's 'dominions' and suggests that naturalists and botanists sought to 'lay [their] prizes at her Grace's feet'.¹⁹¹ These comments place Portland as firmly in charge of Bulstrode and position her at the top of the social court. Indeed, Peacock's description of Bulstrode as 'Portlandia' is a particularly apt description.¹⁹²

While Portland's contribution to, and encouragement of, scientific discoveries and material creativity is undeniable, this chapter has scrutinised these connected threads of sociability, material culture, and enlightenment practices in order to demonstrate that Portland's patronage problematizes these discourses. By interrogating Bulstrode's status as a curiosity, the labels of 'productivity', and Portland's social and gifting practices, this chapter has shown that, rather than a socially equalising space, Bulstrode was built upon social hierarchies.

Bulstrode has been framed by critics as the 'heart of the enlightenment'.¹⁹³ This chapter has analysed this statement in several ways: firstly, by showing that Bulstrode's status as a curiosity was akin to the early modern cabinet of curiosities, this chapter has shown that the collection was designed to be aesthetically pleasing and to act as a means of displaying Portland's wealth and networks. Secondly, this chapter has shown that the collection itself was built on the labour of others who sourced, catalogued, and organised the specimens on display while Portland directed these activities. Finally, the social interactions of Bulstrode have been likened to that of the bluestocking gatherings; however, an analysis of

¹⁹¹ Mary Delany to Viscountess Andover, 16 August 1772, in *Autobiography and Correspondence of Mary Granville, Mrs. Delany*, IV, p. 448.

¹⁹² Peacock, *The Paper Garden*, p. 295.

¹⁹³ Stott, *Duchess of Curiosities*, p. 38.

the 'conversation' and gifting practices at Bulstrode show that, rather than equalising, these interactions were governed by socially hierarchical structures.

All these strands of enquiry show how inserting patronage into critical discourses enriches and challenges our current conceptions of enlightenment practices. The first two chapters of this thesis demonstrated how patronage is an essential component of the production and dissemination of literature and culture in the eighteenth century. By subjecting the connections between patronage and enlightenment practices to hermeneutic analysis, this chapter has shown how patronage affects how knowledge was shared and produced. It shows that learning and knowledge cannot be separated from the social hierarchies that governed eighteenth century interactions.

Conclusion

In his essay on eighteenth-century literary patronage, Korshin raised some fundamental questions about ‘the social utility and psychology’ of patronage: ‘[i]s the patronage system [...] beneficial to the literary climate of a given century? Does the psychology of the patron-client association damage or advance the creative arts?’¹ The preceding chapters not only offer answers to these questions, but also interrogate whether these are the *right* questions to be asking in order to determine the ‘social utility and psychology’ of patronage in the eighteenth century.

Regarding the question of whether patronage was ‘beneficial to the literary climate’ of the eighteenth century; this notion of ‘beneficial’ has traditionally been taken to mean whether it was of financial benefit to individual authors.² Consequently, critics such as Korshin have judged patronage as being ‘always extremely selective rather than universal’ since not every writer or client received financial gains.³ However, throughout this thesis my research has shown that the impact of patronage on the contemporary literary and cultural climate is much more pervasive and far reaching than simply offering financial assistance. The way that patronage influenced what literature was being produced, how the texts were disseminated and marketed, and how the texts were moulded and edited shows that patronage was instrumental for the creative economy of the eighteenth century. Moreover, the influence of patronage extended beyond the literary climate since it affected the ways in which people communicated and related to one another and, as such, influenced contemporary sociability

¹ Paul J. Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage’, *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7:4 (1974), 453-473 (p. 453).

² See Michael Foss, *The Age of Patronage: The Arts in England 1660-1750* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1971); Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage’, 453-473; and Dustin Griffin, *Literary Patronage in England, 1650-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

³ Korshin, ‘Types of Eighteenth-Century Literary Patronage’, p. 473.

and performativity of identity. Therefore, rather than being ‘selective’, patronage had a universal impact on eighteenth-century literature, culture, and knowledge.

Asking whether patronage was ‘beneficial to the literary climate’ also implies that the effect must be positive in order to be considered. There are two problems with this implication and how it has affected critical responses to patronage. Firstly, the idea of patronage having to have a ‘positive’ effect means that we necessarily have to make a moral judgement on it. Secondly, it ignores the fact that something doesn’t have to be beneficial in order to have an impact. The influence of patronage extended throughout the literary and artistic climate of the eighteenth century and, whether positive or negative, was an essential component of eighteenth-century culture.

Commentators have responded to Korshin’s second question: ‘Does the psychology of the patron-client association damage or advance the creative arts?’ with a resounding negative. For example, Williams suggests that ‘[f]rom the mid-eighteenth century onwards, then, patronage was seen as hindering poetic independence, creating relationships of debt and interest within which literary works and reputations are shaped by the needs of the patron’.⁴ Similarly, Griffin concludes that ‘[i]t seems clear that the patronage system served the interests of the elites of the day, and tended to confirm traditional patterns of deference’.⁵ Rather than seeing patronage as simply ‘hindering poetic independence’, this thesis has shown that unpicking the ‘interests of the elites’ and how they confirmed ‘traditional patterns of deference’ is a fruitful point of enquiry and offers an opportunity to understand the mechanisms of patronage and literary performance.⁶ It allows us to see how these figures

⁴ Abigail Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture 1681-1714* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 11.

⁵ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 289.

⁶ Williams, *Poetry and the Creation of a Whig Literary Culture 1681-1714*, p. 11 and Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 289.

were attempting to position themselves as arbiters of taste which therefore shows how taste was being defined in the eighteenth century.

As a whole, this thesis has shown that subjecting patronage to hermeneutic analysis demonstrates how it enriches and challenges our current conceptions of print culture, manuscript studies, book history, the enlightenment, material culture, and sociability. My research into patronage's interaction with print culture not only dispels the myth that print replaced aristocratic patronage, but also affects the ways in which we conceptualise a printed book and the notions of 'fixity' attached to it. Furthermore, this thesis has demonstrated how patronage was an integral part in the conception, creation and revision of a text and thus adds new strands of critical conception to book history. Moreover, it has built on existing work on manuscript circulation by arguing that scribal authorship continued to be a viable mode of producing and transmitting literature in the eighteenth century; however, my work extends these existing dialogues by demonstrating that patronage was an essential component of that viability.

As well as challenging our conceptions of the printed text and book history, this thesis also problematises discourses of materiality and the enlightenment. It demonstrates how these concepts are currently discussed as equalising the production of art and knowledge in the eighteenth century. However, by examining the gradation of labour in collecting practices, attribution of credit, and aristocratic display of curiosities, the thesis disrupts the equalising narrative by revealing that collections such as the Portland collection at Bulstrode were built on preserving social hierarchies rather than tearing them down.

While this thesis is primarily concerned with eighteenth-century patronage, nevertheless it has caused me to pause and reflect on our current culture of academic research and funding bodies since this thesis has been sponsored by such funding. Griffin concludes that 'the *collective* resistance to or contestation of the authority of the patron over

many decades – by authors, booksellers, theorists, and critics – seems indeed (together with other purely economic factors) to have led to the decline of the legitimacy of the patronage system'.⁷ However, what Griffin fails to account for is that the patronage system is still a legitimate influencer of culture and knowledge, albeit in a different form to the aristocratic patron. In much the same way that patronage affected the production and dissemination of knowledge in the eighteenth century, so too do our own academic creative economies affect our own. From personal experience I have witnessed others mould their research proposals based on what is perceived to be popular with funding bodies. The role of the patron has simply been taken over by committees who decide which projects and research receive funding and support. These decisions naturally affect the direction of research in the same way that eighteenth-century patronage affected the course of contemporary literature and art.

⁷ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, p. 292.

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