

Rupkatha Journal

On Interdisciplinary Studies in Humanities

An Online Open Access Journal
ISSN 0975-2935
www.rupkatha.com

Volume V, Number 3, 2013

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Clothes Make the (Wo)Man: Eighteenth-Century Materialism and the Creation of the Female Subject

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Abstract

At once controversial for the change in their construction, and useful in terms of creation the female shape and subject, women's clothing comes to play a large role in the creation of the female subject in eighteenth-century English novels. Female authors and clothing manufacturers alike utilize the subject of clothing in order to create an autonomous space for the female body. By manipulating the means through which their body may be read (i.e. through clothing and undergarments), women gain a kind of power that reflects their emerging status as consumers and individuals. "Clothes Make the (Wo)Man," argues that authors such as Lady Montague and Samuel Richardson utilize the theme of female clothing to both confirm the rising social and capitalist power of the female figure in the eighteenth-century marketplace, and reduce this rising female to the subjectivity of her clothing in order to situate her under patriarchal economical control, respectively.

[**Keywords:** eighteenth-century England, British novels, fashion, clothing, corsetry, hoops, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Samuel Richardson, Eliza Haywood, mercantilism, gender, social politics, authorship]

The eighteenth-century silhouette is both distinctive and remarkable; waists are smaller, hips are wider, and hair is taller. Elizabethan collars may create impressive tableaux, but they pale in comparison to the opulence of their descendents. And in the increased circumferences of ladies' skirts one can read the burgeoning intellectual and influential growth of women. In eighteenth-century England, material goods gain greater significance as their symbolic value increases contingent to material worth. Luxury items are pursued with great vigor, and ownership of specific goods is utilized to reflect the upward mobility of rising classes, or to confirm the social and economical superiority of old families. Goods themselves play a large role not just in commercial exchanges, but aesthetic endeavors, as revealed in the attention to materiality in the rising genre of the English novel. Contemporary with this buffeted economy, material fashion comes to function as symbolic representations of specific ideas and morals, and at times representatives of individuals. Clothing becomes particularly interesting in terms of its literary value, as it is evoked in early English novels, when fashion not only reflects the relationship between economy and morality in eighteenth-century culture, but reveals a distinct gender divide in how authors utilize this device in fiction.

As consumer products themselves, novels often acknowledge the correlation between consumption and power – those who consume exercise power as they promote specific markets through their capitalism. When women consume fashion, as they do with unparalleled enthusiasm in the eighteenth-century, they exercise economic influence through their market demands, and social manipulation as they use fashion to promote their individual agendas of identity, status, morality, and sexuality.

Works by Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Eliza Haywood reflect changes in the marketplace that allow women control over the visual representations of identity, and these authors use clothing to create female subjects capable of independently navigating the social sphere of the eighteenth-century. By manipulating the means through which bodies may be read, their clothing, women gain an agency that reflects their emerging status as both consumers and individuals. Canonical author Samuel Richardson, on the other hand, uses this same fashion trend to reduce female subjectivity to a level of materiality *lacking* in substance, thereby positioning the female subject as a product fit only to be manipulated by the male author and consumer. Unlike the female subjects created by Lady Mary and Haywood, Richardson's subject is itself *made up* of material goods, establishing it not as a consumer, but a commodity.

Important to an understanding of the differences inherent in these oppositional constructions of the female subject is a parallel study of the design and production of eighteenth-century women's clothing. In this burgeoning market, fashion becomes an agent of personal and social expression. The eighteenth-century creates a marketplace free from archaic restrictions such as Elizabeth I's sumptuary laws, which define fashion by social status as an act of law. Now, women of variable means have the legal and cultural freedom to pursue expression beyond the mandates of court.

In the midst of this liberation, social tensions begin to arise, as women advance in the marketplace as producers. An increasing number of women enter the previously male-dominated trades of stay- and mantua-making, and as competition increases, both the garments produced, and the individuals who produce them, are under constant social scrutiny. Women in the eighteenth century begin to take on active roles "in the burgeoning consumer economy," and those employed in the dress-and-stay-making trades:

... bec[ome] vehicles through which critics [can] debate the changes in social cultural production wrought by the commercialization of fashion. Fashioning much more than cloth and trimmings, these women controversially reformulat[e] notions of gender itself. (Batchelor 52)

This ability to impact the representation of "notions of gender itself" is what establishes female workers of the fashion industry as a threat to patriarchal mandates of morality and decency in dress, as women begin to usurp masculine counterparts in the marketplace. As women become agents in their own fashion they gain the power to figuratively and literally shape the bodies of other women, expressing their own creativity and capability as they allow female consumers greater freedom of choice. Invigorated interest in fashion

on the part of female patrons creates career opportunities for women, establishing a greater female mercantile power.

In 1675 the practices of male stay-makers and mantua-makers come under scrutiny, as the belief that their proximity to the bodies of their female customers is inherently indecent. As related by Beatrice Fontanel:

Until September 7, 1675, only tailors had the right to make corsets. But as moralists attacked licentious behavior with mounting force (numerous caricatures of the period show tailors groping their clients on the pretext of taking their measurements), Parliament authorized seamstresses to form a corporation of their own... (32)

Ever cognizant of threats against female chastity, morality, and decency, Parliament reasons conservatively that the production of items worn close to the female body should be opened to women themselves. This ruling not only gives women the authority to construct and sell their own undergarments, but immediately influences the fit and comfort of such garments as “the new breed of corset-makers [is] naturally more sensitive to a woman’s concerns and applie[s] themselves to making corsets that [are] lighter and less painful to wear” (Fontanel 32). Thus, as the eighteenth century progresses, women’s power unmistakably grows in the marketplace and fashion industry, as they become intimately involved in the design of their own fashion, and therefore in the ways in which their dress interacts with, and defines, their natural form. While male mantua-makers and stay-makers continue to ply their trades – and protest the competition of their female contemporaries (Steele 18) – throughout the century, this female influence gains the upper hand as the women themselves gain material power over their own physical and textual bodies.

While this protest is at times physically violent (Steele relates tales of tailors “invading[ing] the dressmakers’ workshops, seizing garments and even physically assaulting female workers” on page 18) Jennie Batchelor focuses on the literary and social condemnation that blossoms within the eighteenth-century, reading authors who use satire to express their concern and dismay over the current state of women’s fashions. Batchelor reports that rhetors such as Robert Campbell (who publishes the *London Tradesman* in 1747) condemn milliners and mantua-makers on grounds of both prostitution, and distortion of the female form. Campbell “concludes that the mantua-maker’s and milliner’s power and influence over their fashionable clientele is more extensive and damaging [than tailors],” and “Milliners are likewise damned for manipulating women’s bodies into ‘as many different Shapes in one Month as there are different Appearances of the Moon in that Space,’” (55). He does not stop as he damns the trades themselves, but continues on, characterizing milliners and mantua-makers as bawds who willingly whore out their employees as readily as they fabricate gowns.¹ These objections speak as much to the gender and position of the shop-owners as they do to the products of their labors, as they seemingly arise from mercantile competition as opposed to factual evidence of immorality in the trades.

Campbell offers no explanation for his assumption that prostitution [is] rife within the clothing trades ... the reference to the 'Shift' [in a previously quoted passage] implies that Campbell's account of the dressmaking trades is colored by a widespread tendency to associate a love of fashion with sexual ruin evident in the popular literature of the period. (Batchelor 56)

As Batchelor goes on to provide such an example by a male author, this connection between authorship gender and negative stereotyping of the clothing trade is enforced.

Despite the rampant opposition to the influx of women in these productive trades, their presence – and growing numbers – suggests a potential economic power for women. Previously barred from certain trades by law, questions of decency and morality now work in women's favor, as they can compete with men for business and aesthetic influence. It is women's increasingly active role in this commercial sphere, and their control over their own material appearances, that threatens the economic, social, and literary patriarchy; women are asserting the power they can, utilizing any tool available to assert their autonomy– including their clothing, which defines them as both selves and consumers. No longer mere indicators of wealth and station, the symbolic power of clothing increases exponentially, as the fashion industry continues to evolve under new leadership.

The demands the eighteenth-century woman makes of her wardrobe surpasses the realms of aestheticism, and instead speaks to a desire for bodily control. Often politically and legally powerlessⁱⁱ, the realm of fashion provides an opportunity to structure the form, and control the presentation of the self, even when several aspects of a woman's body are beyond her control. For example, stays: despite the long persecution they suffer, for their reputation as unnatural and tortuous garments of female captivity at the hands of the patriarchal expectations of beauty, this precursor to the contemporary corset allows the eighteenth-century woman the opportunity to manage her own shape and actively decide how she wants to present her figure. As Janet Arnold quotes from *The Books of Trades in Patterns of Fashion 1*:

The mantua-maker must be an expert anatomist; and must, if judiciously chosen, have a name of French termination: **she** must know how to hide all defects in the proportions of the body and must be able to mould the shape by stays, that while she corrects the body she may not interfere with the pleasures of the palate. It will therefore be readily admitted that the perfections of dress and the art of pleasing the fair sex in this particular cannot be obtained without a genius. (9) [emphasis added]

This job description literally speaks to both the concerns regarding the work of those in the fashion industry as related to the shaping of women's bodies, and the desire for such talents as expressed by women consumers. While Campbell focuses on the *ability* of such professionals to shape and refigure the female form, *The Book of Trades* reveals the desire for such changes are those of the clients (indicating that women consumers are dictating their own fashion, as opposed to allowing their shape and garments to be dictated by male tailors and mantua-makers).

As expressed by the emphasis placed on the expectations of women of their dressmakers, clothing itself is regarded as a tool for ladies: it allows for the hiding of imperfect proportions, the correcting of the body and the shaping of the idealized form. Women's fashion of the eighteenth-century is as complicated as it is extravagant. With no less than six layers at any given time, a lady's garments become a veritable fortress around her frame, as they both work to mold her fleshly body, and function as an advertisement of her wealth, station, and even (as Samuel Richardson would have readers believe) her morality.

The physical shaping of a woman's body is accomplished through the use of complicated and creative undergarments, primarily panniers and stays, which extend the appearance of a woman's hips to either side and maneuver the breast and torso into a conical shape, emphasizing small waists and increasing the appearance of the breasts. Historians largely agree that such accentuations are intended to speak to a woman's fertility (and thus her ability to bear legitimate heirs), while some men express distasteⁱⁱⁱ for these material constructions of shape. As Kimberly Chrisman relates in "Unhoop the Fair Sex: The Campaign Against the Hoop Petticoat in Eighteenth-Century England":

Although it is tempting to condemn the hoop as yet another example of female subjugation through dress, such as the medieval chastity belt or the crippling corsets of the nineteenth century, the hoop actually had quit the opposite function. In the face of widespread and violent protest from men, women willingly adopted the hoop as a means of protection, controlling, and ultimately, liberating female sexuality.

Despite the protests of men, women use the shape of their hoops to create a space around the pelvis that is figuratively – and occasionally literally – impenetrable by men, while creating flirtatious opportunities, as the garment allows women to tilt their skirts to display a bit of stockinged leg. In this way, they are able to materially control access to their bodies (specifically the pelvis), and reaffirm their possession of their physical forms and sexual expression.

Stays are less condemned than their lower counterparts, and quickly become objects of fetish for eighteenth-century men. The lacing of stays becomes "surrogate intercourse" (Steele 20) in artistic representations of women's toilettes, and the shape itself is endlessly admired by artists such as Hogarth and Collet (Steele 21). Women are now exercising their ability to capture the attention and admiration of men through material objects of their own design, expressing not only choice and autonomy, but also a sexual identity beyond the patriarchal limitations of maid and mother. Flirtations and form create an active sexuality, rather than a passive acceptance, suggesting that women are aware of their sexuality and will seek their own pleasure – and perhaps company.

The symbolic significance of fashion is an integral device in eighteenth-century literature. Authors such as Eliza Haywood and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu continue to utilize clothing as a tool that allows women control of their physical bodies; rhetors such

as Richardson remove the body form the representative figure entirely, materially reconstructing the female form in terms of silks, linens, and an abundance of whalebone.

Lady Mary's famous visit to a Turkish bathhouse in 1717 provides an enlightening example of the social function of stays beyond their primary use as a shaping undergarment. When Lady Mary's role as a passive observer is challenged by the bathers who beg her to join them, the reader is exposed to the most poignant image in letter XXVII – Lady Mary exposing her stays to the shock and dismay of the female bathers.

Within the enclosed space of the bathhouse, the Turkish women Lady Mary observes exercise a freedom that Lady Mary herself describes in terms of the Oriental, and therefore unmistakably “other” for British audiences. Comfortably socializing in the nude, the women foster a community of closeness and openness, symbolized by their unabashedly touching one another's bodies as they help each other to bathe. While Lady Mary herself is amazed and arguably delighted by such a sight, she is wary of joining in such homosocial activities, and adamantly protests when the women offer to help her undress and bathe. When her verbal rejections go unheeded (likely not understood), she resorts to a display to discourage them, using the unfamiliar construction of her English clothing as a deterrent:

I excused myself with some difficulty, they being however all so earnest in persuading me, I was at last forced to open my shirt, and show them my stays, which satisfied them very well, for I saw they believed I was so locked up in that machine, that it was not in my own power to open in, which contrivance they attributed to my husband. (59-60)

Lady Mary relates how she is able to use her stays to dissuade the unwelcome advances of the women, without alienating their affections. While some eighteenth-century stays are constructed to be front-lacing for the sake of convenience, back-lacing stays are considered a mark of high-class, as they require the aid of a servant to be donned^{iv}. Lady Mary's stays are likely of this latter design, the front view of which would certainly give the impression that the body is locked in by silk and bones. Lady Mary uses this formidable display to her advantage, as it not only allows her to continue her observation while maintaining her English modesty, but also creates sympathy with the Turkish women who experience a lack of control of their selves and bodies beyond this female society.

By revealing her stays – and refusing to correct the misinterpretation of the Turkish women in terms of their mechanics – Lady Mary aligns herself with the bathers in regards to her relationship to her husband, thereby gaining freedom in their company to both maintain her English habits, and intimately associate with those she unmistakably defines as culturally other and oppressed^v. This is not to say that her clothing actively defines Lady Mary, but rather that Lady Mary creates her own situational identity through the selection and exhibition of her clothing. Through this letter, the literary creation of the female subject is undertaken, revealing how a woman is capable of using an ordinary commodity to construct her chosen identity. Here, that subject (the figurative Lady Mary), uses her stays to create a representatively oppressed woman,

incapable of escaping the material confines of her husband, and therefore establishing sympathy with the similarly oppressed bathers. In the absence of busk or lacing, the women she speaks to have no choice but to believe her trapped, and readily accept her imprisonment as a kind of control observed by Lady Mary. Her stays, much like a woman's hoops, function as armor for the English woman, creating a safe space around her body that few can penetrate. Rather than being a victim of patriarchal dictates, she is in fact using fashion – and a misunderstanding of its design – as a form of autonomy and control.

Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina; or, Love in a Maze*, provides a fictional counterpart to Lady Mary's observations of a woman's manipulation through fashion. Though at first seen as an enthralling tale of the joys and dangers of sexual intrigue, *Fantomina* is not a story of a fallen woman justly punished for wanton actions, but a tale of a cunning and masterful character fully capable of obtaining her desires by restructuring the gendered system around her. Utilizing the falsification of identity and disguise, Haywood creates a powerful feminine character who naturally transcends the gendered chain of social command to not only woo the masculine object of her desire, but also lay ground for a matriarchal power.

Sexually interested in the gentleman Beauplaisir, *Fantomina* uses a series of disguises to seduce the object of her attraction, despite his fleeting and changing attentions. By force of will and fashion, *Fantomina* becomes the country lass Celia, The Widow Bloomer, and Incognita, often using gowns or blackened eyebrows (2572) to convince her lover of her new identity, despite the continued and frequent proximity of their bodies.

It may, perhaps, seem strange that *Beauplaisir* should in such near Intimacies continue still deceiv'd: I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility, and that no Disguise could hinder them from knowing a Woman they had once enjoy'd. In answer to these Scruples, I can only say, that besides the Alteration which the Change of Dress made in her, she was ... admirably skill'd in the Art of Feigning ... These Aids from Nature, join'd to the Wiles of Art ... might well prevent his having any Thought that they were the same, or that the fair *Widow* was either of them. (57)

This "Alteration" from the "Change of Dress" speaks to more than simply changing one's clothes, but instead insinuates that *Fantomina* is able to change her form with her disguises: with each disguise *Fantomina* is able to manifest a new body. Through disguise, made possible by fashion and appearances, *Fantomina* exercises her own will over that of the gentleman who *believes* he has dismissed her.

Samuel Richardson, the male authorial counterpart to Montagu and Haywood^{vi}, does not share their belief in the liberating qualities inherent in clothing, as he instead uses clothing to dismantle the female body. Richardson's efforts as an early novelist not only challenge the feminine power structure of fashion (as he himself dresses his female characters), but likewise challenge female autonomy. As revealed by the narratives of

Clarissa and *Pamela*, Richardson attempts to deconstruct this budding female identity by materializing the body itself through a focus on clothing – specifically the undergarments that most drastically shape the silhouette of a fashionable lady. In this way he removes the fleshly body that stands to benefit from assertive feminine fashion and identity, and leaves only a fetishized caricature of women’s underclothing that speaks directly to a masculine consumer audience, to whom Richardson wishes to sell them. In Richardson’s novels, female identity outside of partnership with a masculine counterpart cannot be exercised, because they have no body with which to act. Their form itself is constructed through the materiality of their clothing, in a male-dominated capitalistic economy.

Of Richardson’s use of clothing in *Clarissa*, Cary McIntosh writes:

Clothes in *Clarissa* are both more diversified and more conventional than in the earlier novel [*Pamela*], used as they generally are for expression and evaluation of characters. ...[C]lothing gives us a reliable signal for a moral evaluation which is frequently but not necessarily related to social class.

McIntosh’s reading of *Clarissa*’s clothes as a moral indicator is not singular, and points to a common theme in *Clarissa* analysis that both explores the titular character’s clothing as a symbol of her virtue and morality, and her lack of body and nudity as symbolic of her higher (perhaps angelic) status. However, Richardson’s dependence on clothing to establish the physical frame of *Clarissa* – his use of undergarments and gowns to literally define her body and personal space – speaks instead to an absence of body that denies *Clarissa* the possible freedom explored by other eighteenth-century women, and positions her as a commodity object herself, intended to be sold and owned.

One of the most prominent examples of Richardson’s figuring of the female body comes when the dreaded Mr. Solmes gains an audience with *Clarissa*, and unpardonably abuses her personal space.

But this was not enough to daunt him. The man is very confident, he is a very bold, staring man! – Indeed, my dear, the man is very confident. He took the removed chair and drew it so near mine, squatting in it with his ugly weight, that he pressed upon my hoop – I was so offended ... that I removed to another chair. (87)

Clarissa’s horror over Solmes’ invasion is due not only to his physical proximity to her as they sit together, but by the audacity he shows by pressing the very garment that literally and figuratively shapes the lower half of her body – a molestation of her material body. Solmes’ disturbing of *Clarissa*’s hoop reveals his early sense of ownership over her form, as he not only assumes he is allowed proximity to her pelvis (which the hoop is meant in part to protect), but he likewise assumes the ability to change her shape and her figure. By pressing her hoop he is distorting her form – perhaps reshaping it into the form of the wife he desires. Lacking the fleshly body beneath said hoops to maintain her own shape, Solmes’ actions here confirm for *Clarissa* that to be Solmes’ wife would be to alter her person in ways she does not desire, both physically and spiritually.

This scene is mirrored by Clarissa's closest friend, suggesting that such material construction of form is not limited to the character of Clarissa, but that many of Richardson's female characters are likewise material in nature and construction. In the seventy-fourth letter of the tome, Anna Howe writes of an exchange with her own suitor, Mr. Hickman:

Ay, ay, pray sit down, honest man, if you are weary! But by my *mamma*, if you please. I desire my hoop may have its full circumference. All they're good for, that I know, is to clean dirty shoes and to keep ill-mannered fellows at a distance. (292)

Anna Howe's witty expostulation regarding the use and desire of her hoops is another moment in which Richardson is materially defining the space of the female body. Considering the shape of the garment itself, this passage suggests not that Hickman would slip his feet too close to the hem of her gown, but that the proximity he desires would invade Anna's bodily center by distorting her central shape. As with Clarissa's earlier distress over Mr. Solmes' pressing of her hoops, Anna's demand for space speaks to an apprehension against male figures gaining proximity to, and changing, a woman's shape. Notably, this concern is focused on the hoops, and not the legs, suggesting that (at least for Clarissa in her distress) molesting their garments is equivalent to the molestation of the body, insinuating further that the body itself is contingent on its material representation.

The subject of clothing in Richardson's *Pamela* is likewise a consistent presence in literary analysis, considering the character's own active relationship to clothing and its production. In "Fabric and Fabrication in Richardson's *Pamela*" Sheila C. Conboy discusses Pamela's role as a producer of clothing, and the importance of the symbolism of clothing throughout the text. She writes:

...Pamela mentions ... her own ties to the world of appearances, for she continues to care for Mr. B.'s linen, thereby ensuring that his deceptive exterior remains the same. And more important than preserving his angelic appearance, her activity with the needle – the creation of new clothing for Mr. B. – adumbrates the method by which Pamela will tailor his internal life. (84)

Here, Conboy suggests that it is through Pamela's close relationship with Mr. B.'s material construction of identity that she gains access to his interiority, which she will in turn modify through her words and language. For Conboy, the materiality of clothing in *Pamela* is significant not only for Pamela's belief in its ability to establish physical identity, but her parallel belief that clothing is capable of indicating "the wearer's internal worth."

With Pamela's reliance on clothing to speak about the internal state of the body in mind, Richardson's depiction of her faked suicide becomes even more telling in terms of his reconstruction of the female body and subject. Pamela describes her attempts to escape, relating,

I took with me but one shift, besides which I had on, and two handkerchiefs, and came to the pond-side I flung in my uppercoat, as I had designed, and my handkerchief, and a round-eared cap, with a knot pinned on it ... (209-10)

In this desperate scene, clothing is directly substituted for Pamela's body, as she hopes her discarded garments will be accepted as proof of her own drowning. In this particular scene Richardson reaffirms the ultimate absence of Pamela's fleshly body, as clothing – even devoid of a frame – can be easily substituted for the self of the female protagonist. The ease with which the uppercoat, handkerchief, and cap can replace her form suggests a lack of substance to the narrator, sustaining the image of the female subject as commodity. Interestingly, the garments she chooses to substitute for her form are all garments that are worn on the upper half of the body, perhaps suggesting an attempt to keep her lower half away from Mr. B., even in her feigned death. Pamela is downright crafty in her selection, remaining fully clothed as she discards pieces that might stand for her public face and form. Even in this choice she remains conservative and appropriate, displaying modesty and morality by sharing only uppermost garments, and nothing that represents the sexuality and fertility so threatened by the advances of her untoward employer. She is still, even here, keeping her chastity and virginity to herself.

There is a constant thread of bodily invasion in *Pamela*, as Mr. B. and Mrs. Jewkes frequently threaten to remove or invade articles of Pamela's clothing. Jewkes removes her shoes, which Pamela indicates prevents her from walking about the grounds, suggesting that the shoes themselves are essential for her movement (as opposed to apprehension over ruining her leggings or cutting her feet). Mr. B. likewise threatens to undress her in a search for her letters, focusing on articles of clothing such as garters and stays as possible places to stash them. Interesting to a modern reader is the fact that even if Mr. B. were to invade her stays with his fingers (the most close-fitting and personal garment beyond her shift), he still would not be able to touch her actual skin. Her revulsion at this idea speaks not just to her English modesty and thoughts of decency, but shows that access to her shift is sexual molestation.

This creation of Pamela the subject is also relevant to the scene of her near-rape at the hands of Jewkes and Mr. B. Although the opportunity is presented with little to impede Mr. B, he does not proceed with the rape, speaking to aspects of the encounter not visible to the scandalized and titillated audience. According to Richardson's denial of the female flesh and attempts to substitute materiality for the body, the rape itself *cannot* occur in a physical and violent sense, as *Pamela has no body*. For Richardson, there is nothing beneath Pamela's shift, giving Mr. B. no body to rape, and thereby making it impossible to own Pamela in any other way than to marry her and call her material subjectivity his wife. Thus, it is her lack of body that ultimately leads to Pamela's patriarchally-acceptable redemption in the form of marriage, which in turn confirms the commodity-ideal of marriage and ownership in a masculine economy.

As the differences of these authors suggest, the subjectivity of female clothing presents a dichotomy of possibilities in terms of cultural significance in both literature and society. At once liberating and oppressively deconstructive, women's fashion in the

eighteenth-century remains a vital component of the discourse of female autonomy, allowing for the creation of the female subject herself.

Notes

ⁱ A-la *Fanny Hill*, perhaps

ⁱⁱ As the changing economies and laws of inheritance reveal, for example

ⁱⁱⁱ There are numerous satires in publications like *The Tattler* which condemn large hoops and petticoats, and corsets have a long history of drawing negative attention, as moralists and clergymen argue that the shapes created are unnatural and unhealthy. Interestingly, their chief complaint is that tight lacing may prevent pregnancy or induce an abortion.

^{iv} Contemporary historical costumers can offer techniques that show this may be technically inaccurate, but having a lacer is certainly more convenient, and an exercise of social class.

^v A definition which leads many to criticize Lady Mary.

^{vi} Syrena of *Anti-Pamela* likewise relies on the perception of clothing to construct identity, which allows her to transcend cultural limitations. Just as Fantomina uses a variety of costumes to satiate the desire for choice in her lover, so too does Syrena use clothing to represent herself as desirable in terms of the husband/lover she hopes to trap for financial gain.

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