Rhetorics of Self in Eighteenth-Century Biography

A Dissertation Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree

The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

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August 2015

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Acknowledgements

There is not enough space to acknowledge all of the people to whom my thanks are due. The University of Tennessee's English Department let me pursue my scholarly interests, and its Student Success Center let me draw them to a close, for now at least. As for the gradual nature of my dissertation's progress, I hope the words of Samuel Johnson to James Boswell will suffice: "No man is always in a disposition to write; nor has any man at all times something to say."

I owe much gratitude to the people who have given me something to say and better ways to say it. I would like to thank Gordon Turnbull for his close direction in my research at Yale's Beinecke Library. I have also been lucky to work with Nancy Henry, Anthony Welch, and Ernest Freeberg, who always gave prompt, thorough feedback on my work. My dissertation director, Misty Anderson, has been a constant source of guidance, rigor, patience, encouragement, and support. Without her push and, frankly, her deft problem solving, I never would have made it to the Beinecke, finished the dissertation, or worked for Maryville College.

I am thankful for the support of Jeremy Wear, whose knowledge of our shared interests has been a well I have drawn from often. He and Katie Burnett have always been willing to advise me professionally and well. I have whiled away some of my finest hours in their company and with Jennifer Millsaps, who was willing to hear and allay my frustrations and encourage my persistence.

Without my family—my parents, Don and Gail Norman, and my children, Ian Nathaniel and Rosalind Dawn Norman—I likely would never have been in a disposition to write or accomplish much of anything. Their sacrifices, encouragement, and love deserve the most acknowledgement of all.

Abstract

This study examines the rhetorical methods that eighteenth-century biographers use to produce selfhood and to educate readers in behaviors that promote sociability. The interventions of the New Science's inductive epistemology in rhetoric and conceptualizations of selfhood, as well as the rise of print culture, offer a foundation for exploring the emergence of the modern biographical form in the eighteenth century. In its development, eighteenth-century biography utilizes various rhetorical techniques to create a rhetoric of self, which arranges documented, lived experience into a print selfhood that readers can observe empirically and sympathetically, an engagement with the print person through which they teach themselves right social practice. Fundamentally, the effect of these rhetorical techniques is a selfhood that can act as a substitute for a person, which readers can observe empirically and sympathetically. In its emergence, the biographical rhetoric of self teaches readers to apply a new ethics of reading in order to improve themselves and to engage the larger community of readers.

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Introduction

Critical Positioning

Since it relies so conspicuously on research and a chronological apparatus, modern biography can seem too formulaic or too easy, a simplistic arrangement of self-evident facts. Whether the modern reader takes up one of Claire Tomalin's literary biographies or just a single volume of Michael Reynolds' five volume treatment of Ernest Hemingway's life, the familiar markers of the form are all there: chapter headings divide the life into years or noteworthy periods, citations and footnotes credential documentary evidence, and a series of plates reproduces portraits of the subject's social network. Even Stephen Greenblatt acknowledges the significance of these biographical considerations in his *Will in the World*. Since he lacks the usual amount of documentation associated with the form, he locates the most shadowy details of William Shakespeare's life in the reader's own imagination, yet he seeks to create the same biographical effects in the shift from hard fact to imaginative speculation. This apparent, formal regularity in modern biography belies its complexity and hides the social function that can be traced back to the genre's eighteenth-century origins.

My aim is to position the emergent, eighteenth-century biographical form within the representational framework provided by the advent of the New Science, its epistemology and rhetorical mandate; the rise of print culture and its standards for documentation and credit; and the ongoing development of the form toward an increasingly intimate representation of the self. From this framework emerges a genre centered on the formulation of the rhetoric of self for the eighteenth-century subject. The biographical rhetoric of self comprises the variable and adaptable strategies biographers use to represent selfhood in the eighteenth century. I argue that

the eighteenth-century rhetoric of self arranges documented, lived experience into a print selfhood, which readers can observe empirically and sympathetically, like a living person, in order to teach themselves right social practice. This autodidactic quality furnishes readers with a private, print means for self-improvement, which has the potential to resituate and stabilize the destabilized situation of the self after the seventeenth century. Biography offers an alternative to a strictly Foucaultian subject formation through a discursive ordering. Foucault's construction hinges on a formation comprised of "'[w]ords and things' . . . a work that modifies its own form, displaces its own data, and reveals . . . practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (*Archeology* 49). While biography does hail the reader as agent within a set of formative cultural practices, it establishes a model for the self who can also act rightly within a system of practice. The rhetoric of self moves a Foucaultian emphasis on the discursive "words and things" of social practice that define the subject back to the reader who can choose to act within these practices. Given such agency, the reader can also be taught to choose right action. The rhetoric of self's didacticism gives public significance to the private reader: selfhood develops through engagement with the biographical form, in turn developing the individual reader into a community of mutual readers, a larger society, and a more stable nation.

While the novel emerged alongside biography, it provided imaginative engagement with fictitious characters, but biography promised a scientific, instructive account of a real modern self. My intervention into the conversation posits the biographical rhetoric of self as a didactic form emerging from dual contexts of the New Science and print culture. I focus on the scientific epistemology and rhetoric that emerged with the Royal Society, giving particular attention to Thomas Sprat, the early historian of the Society, and John Locke, the Society member whose theories of selfhood dominated eighteenth-century conceptualizations of the self. Biographically,

I will focus on the theory of selfhood put forward in manuscript by Roger North, a contemporary of Sprat and Locke, and the later rhetorics of self arranged by Samuel Johnson, whose approach is particularly mediated by developing print standards. His biography combined the science and the print standards in an early form that would make Oliver Goldsmith's and James Boswell's biographies possible.

Eighteenth-Century Notions of Biography

With his *Life of Johnson*, James Boswell offers the most comprehensive example of an eighteenth-century print self substituted biographically for the lived self. He arranges details from Samuel Johnson's everyday life—the crucial, "minute particulars" which "are frequently characteristic . . . when they relate to a distinguished man" (*Life* i.23)—into a representation that privileges Johnson's personal experiences over his established persona. In Boswell's biography, Johnson is as much a man as an author and social philosopher. This biographical organization structures Johnson's life as a rhetorical pattern of accessible social practices with didactic promise. He invites readers not only to observe Johnson, but to engage his selfhood and his ideas in conversation. Readers of the *Life of Johnson*, Boswell could boldly claim, "*will not only* talk, *but* think *Johnson*," an ambitious rhetorical effect, which Boswell claimed his biography had accomplished by its second edition: his *Life of Johnson* had "Johnsonised *the land*" (*Life* i.8). Boswell's biography is an assertion that cultural values could be written on or translated through an experiential, embodied account of that person's life, which readers could observe empirically and sympathetically. The assertion is, moreover, an exertion of a socially conservative energy that addresses an exigence of instability in identity and authority that the eighteenth century inherited from the English Civil Wars and the Restoration. Subjects had an agency that was not

determined by the religious and socio-economic discourses that blatantly sought to prescribe seventeenth-century identities.

Recognizing eighteenth-century biographical didacticism, however, is complicated by the challenge of defining the form in its moment. The OED cites the first instance of biography as 1671, around the beginning of the Royal Society, and it cites the first instance of biographer in 1644. In the first instance, biography is synonymous with autobiography and drafting the character of a literary figure; in the second, with a larger, national scope that eighteenth-century biographers narrow to the single self, eschewing larger national figures or nations in favor of a didactic selfhood. Scholars of the eighteenth-century novel are quick to note the growing influence of the biographical genre, but never offer more than a slim outline of the form as such, and only in the service of arguments about the novel. Michael McKeon argues that the paradox of early biography, "the tension between the individual life and overarching pattern," necessitated the need for specific detail that would later come to characterize the realism of the eighteenth-century novel (91). J. Paul Hunter, similarly, notes that biography's "status as a respectable literary and didactic species" validated the emerging novel form, since both forms, to some degree, employ similar structures for representing human experience (351). Like biography, the novel form often promises the improvement of the reader. Novels like *Clarissa* claim to be "a work which is designed to inculcate upon the human mind, under the guise of an amusement, the great lessons of Christianity" (Richardson 1495). Even the comic *Tristram Shandy* seeks to improve the quality of life, since the "mirth" that the novel promises can provide a "fence against the infirmities of ill health, and the other evils of life" because "every time a man smiles,—but much more so, when he laughs, . . . it adds something to this Fragment of Life" (Sterne xv). The similarities and borrowings between eighteenth-century biographies and novels,

especially their didactic import, gives novel scholars a convenient counterpoint for theorizing the novel, suggesting that the conventions of biography are so self-evident they require no articulation. They can be cited as an established, nonfiction form, which contrasts and thus clarifies the complexities of the novel form. But a closer critical focus on biography reveals generic differences that lend themselves to distinct analytical methods, most notably their rhetorical approaches to didacticism.

Like scholars of the novel, scholars of modern biographical form are challenged to tease a definition from its complexity. William Epstein and Paula Backscheider both allow that the form defies easy definition now as much it did for its eighteenth-century predecessors. Each looks first to the reader's engagement with biographical writing as one of the form's more definitive features. Since biography "has never really had a generally accepted terminology . . . [or] a poetics that could be upheld and resisted," William Epstein proposes a focus on "generic frames," whereby a modern audience organizes its understanding through the form and the form itself is reorganized as a means of understanding (6, 2). Epstein's generic frames offer some potential for examining the characteristic didactic effect of eighteenth-century biography. After all, the rhetoric of self invites readers to shape their self-understanding through an understanding of a print self. Although his particular attention to generic recognition emphasizes the reader's interaction with the biography,[1] Epstein ultimately downplays the moralizing impetus of eighteenth-century biography. Backsheider, on the other hand, more productively emphasizes the social potential written into the form. Her description of biography foregrounds the interplay between the biographer, the audience, and common experience to convey an individuality

[1] Epstein focuses on prominent, emergent biographies, two from the eighteenth century, and organizes his chapters and the generic frames they seek to interrogate around like primarily Restoration and eighteenth-century biographies like Izaak Walton's *Life of Donne*, Johnson's *Life of Savage*, and Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, as well as Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians*.

particular to the biographical subject. She characterizes this interplay as a "three-way dynamic": "[j]ust as biographers bring themselves to biography and find personal meaning, so do readers, and what they bring and find validate truths about biography and about life," so that, "[e]ven better than the novel, biography can be discussed and defined by the 'work' it does in society" (227). The "work" that the genre "does in society" ultimately becomes the most important marker of biography. Its social potential is its definitive feature.

The rigors of eighteenth-century biography differed from medieval hagiography, reflecting different social work it did to a much smaller, much specific body of readers, medieval clergy. Medieval hagiography, as a form of life writing, existed in relationship to a religious institution sprawling across continents and, thus, requiring greater self-definition, a manuscript culture with limited distribution, and an audience accountable to the Christian standards prescribed by the medieval Catholic Church. The manuscript culture that produced lives of Catholic saints, a genre which Thomas Heffernan labels sacred biography rather than hagiography, demonstrated a rhetorical emphasis on "dramatized action over complex argument" within a rhetoric of selfhood dependent on "sacred stories designed to teach the faithful to imitate actions which the community had decided were paradigmatic" (Heffernan 5). The constraints of the social situation require a "presentation of what the community has acknowledged as normative behavior" in "dramatic moments . . . [which] are conventionalized and thus exist as paradigms for the community" (Heffernan 20). By dramatizing the standards for right social action, these sacred biographies illustrated how Christian principles might be practiced within the medieval culture. Simply put, these were saintly models of perfection for emulation by the less saintly reader, who was most likely a cleric in medieval society. The constraints presented by an eighteenth-century culture, on the other hand, merited a different

biographical rhetoric that answered the need of a more socially stratified audience than the needs of a religious institution stabilizing its paradigmatic standards for an international cohort of medieval clerics.

Boswell's biographical approach to writing Johnson and to "Johnsonising the land" indicates that the emerging form of eighteenth-century biography was three-part, an eighteenth-century update to Aristotle's three appeals, derived from the intervention of the new science and print culture. Biography depends on an appeal to logos, the verifiable, nonfictional, minute facts about a person's experiences and a compelling arrangement of these facts that lends continuity to the life's representation; an appeal to pathos, a reader's didactic sympathy with the print person; and an appeal to ethos, the biographer's claim to arrange an authentic rhetoric of self. In his *Dictionary of the English Language,* Samuel Johnson defines a "biographer" as a "writer of lives" who records "the actions of particular persons." He does not, however, bother delineating how the biographer might structure the record, perhaps confident that his own biographical output might address formal considerations. Rather than explicitly define "biography," Johnson cites a definition from Isaac Watts' *Logick* (1725).[2] Watt's definition stresses the relationship between the materials available to the biographer and the rhetorical arrangements these materials make possible, noting that,

> in writing the *Lives of Men*, which is called *Biography*, some Authors follow the Track of their *Years*, and place every thing in the precise Order of Time when it occurr'd: Others throw the *Temper* and *Character* of the Persons, the *private Life*,

[2] Johnson's citation is faulty, but he acknowledges the possibility of such inaccuracy in the Preface to his *Dictionary*. To keep the *Dictionary* accessible and as brief as possible, Johnson found it necessary to shorten the examples he included to demonstrate usage; as a result, "[t]he examples are often injudiciously truncated, and perhaps sometimes, I hope rarely, alleged in a mistaken sense; for in making this collection, I trusted more to memory, than, in a state of disquiet and embarrassment, memory can contain, and purposed to supply at the review what was left incomplete in the first transcription." A truncated citation in the *Dictionary* does not compromise the expertise Johnson's opinions as a biographer in the eighteenth century.

> their *public Stations*, their *personal Occurrences*, their *domestic Conduct*, their *Speeches*, their *Books* or *Writings*, their *Sickness* and *Death*, into so many distinct Chapters. (347)

For a culture increasingly coming to imagine itself and personal selfhood through print, verification of such facts would have depended on documentation. An undocumented life, a self that leaves no evidence of its actions, is an unlived life with no didactic potential. The eighteenth-century biographer's task was to take all the information that Watts suggested for biography—the speeches, books, writing, experiences, public jobs, records of sickness and death and so on—and arrange a rhetoric of self in the rhetorical practices of the time. Wilbur Samuel Howell notes that these rhetorical practices would "in content . . . be fully relevant to the fact of the given situation and in form would be simple and easy to grasp," written in "the middle and the plain style" accessible to all readers who read, view, and learn from the rhetoric of self (*Eighteenth-Century* 446). The print person of the eighteenth-century rhetoric of self could only be accessible, compelling, and instructive if it could be fully credentialed as accurate and true.

In representing a rhetoric of self, emergent biographers felt a closer formal affinity to the historian than the poet, novelist, dramatist, medieval hagiography, or seventeenth-century character writer. The specifics that mark a private life, which few people see, are more challenging to credential than a history that a nation witnesses, yet they are of a kind. Scottish rhetorician Hugh Blair classes biography specifically as a distinct construction of history, subject to the common attributes of historical rhetoric. He notes that "History is a species of Writing designed for the instruction of mankind, [so] sound morality should always reign in it," and he also argues that the biographical form "or the Writing of Lives, is a very useful kind of Composition; less formal and stately than History; but to the bulk of readers, perhaps, no less

instructive; as it affords them the opportunity of seeing the characters and tempers, the virtues and failings of eminent men fully displayed; and admits them into a more thorough and intimate acquaintance than History generally allows" (411). Blair's notion of biography emphasizes the form's appeal to readers. In drawing on common experience and human nature to relay the events of the life, the biographer leads readers to draw their own conclusions about the self and sociability. The emergent biographical form facilitated a crucial understanding of the multiple, shifting codes in social behavior that eighteenth-century readers had to navigate. The immediacy of personal histories presents a self for public scrutiny, and their capacity to excite audience sympathy indicates their didactic potential.

The Situation of the Eighteenth-Century Self

While every age has its own stake in defining the human condition, the emergence of biography in the eighteenth century suggests a self-awareness about representing selfhood that is unique to the period. What might seem foundational to modern biography—incorporating as many relevant, minute details as possible, however unflattering, for a fuller representation of the biographical subject—must have seemed like a dredging of the potentially invasive, offensive, and inappropriate. The form's didactic commitment to a more thorough representation of human experience implies a need, if not for improvement, at least a new way for recognizing selfhood. Backscheider asserts that an instructive potential is implicit in the biographical form in particular, because it holds up a mirror up to its audience that has "the power to define how a person, a nation and its history will be judged, to contribute to maintaining, revising, or shaking its self-image" (Backscheider 227-8). Her reading conflates the distinction that Blair draws between the grand sweep of human experience that history depicts and the common account of

lived experience that a biographical subject presents in order to argue that selfhood embodies what is significant about "a nation and its history."

Eighteenth-century biography is a discourse determined by a rhetorical situation charged with a particular urgency that the rhetoric of self must addresses. In modeling the rhetorical situation, modern rhetorician Lloyd Bitzer emphasizes the interplay between rhetoric and world which "presents imperfections to be modified by means of discourse" (Bitzer 14): the rhetorical situation is the "complex of persons, objects, events and relations . . . . located in reality, [which] are objective and publicly observable historical facts in the world we experience, [and] are therefore readily available for scrutiny by an observer or critic who attends to them" (11). Bitzer argues that the function of a rhetoric or rhetorical discourse is always determined by an exigence, "an imperfection marked by urgency," that is present only when a situation presents a "defect, an obstacle, something waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be" that can be changed positively and only through a rhetorical discourse that fits the specific needs of the observable situation (Bitzer 6-7). The sense of urgency drives and shapes the discourse to operate with the specific constraints of the imperfection it addresses.

In the broad, eighteenth-century context of shifting economic mobility, reconfigurations of civil authority, and developments in print culture, the discursive potential for biography was tremendous and urgent, resituating selfhood and making possible the emergence of a new form that could teach readers how to reimagine themselves in the jarring wake of the seventeenth-century civil and religious wars. Years of internecine struggle destabilized the relationship between social authority, political and religious, and its subjects, who took their cues for adopting a selfhood from the florid, vitriolic harangues in pulpits and pamphlets. As Backscheider argues, the roles of the nation and its history are written into selfhood. Royalists,

parliamentarians, Catholics, republicans, Puritans engaged in a war of identities that culminated in the execution of the monarch, Charles I, God's own appointee. If the British could position themselves to axe the highest representative of religiously-sanctioned, social authority, then they must certainly assume the responsibility of defining their new roles and the authority in relation to their new world. Subjects faced the daunting task of reimagining themselves, a task more daunting when a new king took the throne and monarchy was restored to England. The old selves were out of joint with those times. Biography's emergence addressed the urgency of this post-Restoration problem, offering a rhetoric of self that would teach readers how to redefine selfhood. Biography simultaneously problematizes extant Civil War and Restoration identities, and it becomes a conservative social force in this period, smoothing out the potentially destabilizing energies that threatened the prevailing social order, which resulted from the beheading of Charles I and Bloodless Revolution that ushered James II from the throne. The adversarial political and religious relationship between the revolutionary, anti-monarchical Protestant roundhead and the Cavalier monarchist had little gripe and less place in the peaceful, Augustan golden age of Queen Anne's reign.

In the early eighteenth century, Thomas Birch puts forward a biography of Robert Boyle that invites readers to consider the tensions between the Anglican Church and the Royal Society, His *Life of the Honourable Robert Boyle* connects Boyle's life, scientific endeavors, and religious integrity to model how the culture itself might settle the differences between science and faith: "Religion, as well as Philosophy, has received . . . important service from the excellent Writings and excessive Labours of the celebrated Mr. BOYLE," so that the biography should appeal to those "who have the truest Zeal for the Promotion of Piety, and, it's best Support, useful Science" (Dedication). The rhetoric of self arranged Boyle's resolve to be a Christian and

a scientist into an image of how the culture might resolve itself: faith first, augmented by a science that proves itself to be useful.[3] The biographical form posited a rhetoric of self to answer a specific exigence, the instability of selfhood at the outset of the century, by attempting to stabilize it, teaching readers the proper action for the public self.

Notions of identity destabilized by the upheaval of the civil wars and the subsequent Restoration were stabilized by private readers in a society defining itself through print. Earlier notions of self were not being replaced entirely, but rather re-envisioned and rewritten through biographical form's gradual emergence. Although he does not attribute these shifts solely to the influence of biography, Dror Wahrman traces a pattern of selfhood that moves from a vaguer to a more fixed understanding of selfhood, a shift from an earlier, "*ancien régime* of identity" that was characteristically unstable, "mutable, assumable, divisible, or actively malleable," to a later, modern regime that stressed a fixed selfhood with an "innate, fixed, determined core," categorically identifiable "as gender, race, class, and the human/animal divide" (275). Wahrman argues that "[l]ike any other historically specific phenomenon, the *ancien régime* off identity had a beginning and an end. . . some aspects of the *ancien régime* emerged in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries," followed by "the sea change in the last two decades of the eighteenth century in which this distinctive configuration lost its cultural ground and was rapidly superseded by another . . . new, alternative identity regime . . . defined by a fundamental emphasis on self" (xiii). This solidification of self-understanding, the emergence of a less flexible, "alternative identity regime" suggests how biographical rhetoric met the exigency of a

[3] Naturally, Birch's rhetoric of self ultimately failed to resolve the disconnect between religion and science in the eighteenth century, but Bitzer notes that "rhetorical situations come into existence, then either mature or decay or mature and persist - conceivably some persist indefinitely" (12). Such is the case with regard to religion's relationship to science—it continues to resonate.

society seeking to stabilize the mutable, *ancient régime* of its identity. And by the end of eighteenth century, Wahrman argues, the society largely had (274-8).

One of the crucial models for establishing a rationale to resituate selfhood and assigning a function to the biographical form is closely John Locke's conceptualization of selfhood in his *Inquiry into Human Understanding*. While the boundaries of selfhood might have been set by external institutions or historical events, as Michel Foucault's account of modernity suggests, the staggering responsibility of the millions of choices that comprise selfhood resides with individuals themselves.[4] For Locke, the responsibility of selfhood and the ability define it for oneself are innate. He asserted that,

> since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and 'tis that, that makes ever one to be, what he calls *self*; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists *personal identity*, *i.e.* the sameness of a rational Being: And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the Identity of that *Person*; it is the same *self* now it was then; and 'tis by the same *self* with this present one that now reflects on it, that that Action was done. (2.335.21-8)

Charles Taylor characterizes such philosophical understandings of the eighteenth-century self as an attempt to stabilize identity. He points to the philosophical construction of selfhood articulated by John Locke late in the seventeenth century that allowed people, through the rational thought and empirical disengagement, to engage in a "radical disengagement [that] opens the prospect of self-remaking," a self that Taylor dubs the "'punctual' self" (171). The

[4] Foucault suggests that modern individuality is at odds with the commonwealth individuality, "the distillation of a single will—a unitary, singular body animated by the spirit of sovereignty—from the particular wills of a multiplicity of individuals" that Thomas Hobbes outlines in the *Leviathan* ("Lectures" 97). Instead, the "individual is an effect of power, and at the same time, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, or precisely to the extent to which it is that effect, it is the element of its articulation" (Foucault, "Lectures" 98).

empirical commitments of the rhetorical situation characterized by an unstable selfhood demanded a more objectified and classifiable representation of the self. For Taylor, the punctual self was situated to "practise a kind of radical reflexivity . . . [which would] fix experience in order to deprive it of its power, a source of bewitchment and error" (163). It was a self that could self-evaluate and self-correct its imperfections. The notion of the punctual self opens the possibility of self perfection, through a disengaged self-consciousness: Taylor argues that "[t]he perfectly detachable consciousness is an illusion . . . but it is a shadow cast by the punctual self" (172). The biographical form circumvents readers' fundamental inability to fully detach their consciousness and self-reflexively reconstruct themselves by giving them the illusion of another consciousness brought into full view. Dynamic readers could view a static selfhood in the rhetorical project of biography and instruct themselves from the perspective of the "shadow cast by the punctual self," which is only possible through the self-reflexive detachment that Locke believed to be innate. New philosophical models for self-examination such as Locke's were just as emergent, developmental, and unperfected as the biographical form. Yet for a society understanding and mediating itself through print more than any previous period, the autodidactic potential of biography within this philosophical context allowed readers to discern and adopt these lessons they found in the print selves that biography presented.

Private Readers, Social Subjects

The didactic advantage of eighteenth-century biography was how it positioned the reader in relation to the biographical subject. Translator Henry Gally asserted that "[e]ach Man contains a little World within himself, and every Heart is a new World. We cannot therefore attain to a perfect Knowledge of human Nature, by studying others or our selves alone, but by studying

both" (32). In Gally's construction, selfhood is expansive, a "world" large enough to contain a personal "knowledge of human nature" observation and self-reflexivity. Biography offers a means of studying others to understand personal selfhood better. Gally seems to prefer such means over social interaction. He argues that didactic studies of selfhood—for him, character writing—is "the most agreeable, most instructive Entertainment that can possibly be desir'd; [to] transport . . . [the reader] with the greatest Ease imaginable, from the solitude of his Chamber to places of the greatest Concourse; there to see and learn the Virtues of men; there to see and shun their Vices, without being corrupted by the Contagion of a real Commerce" (Gally 33). Unlike actual sociality, modern biography guaranteed good company; unlike the novel, it did not encourage readers to identify with unethical characters that were often necessary to complicate the plot; and unlike Puritan or evangelical autobiography, it did not seek religious conversion. A rhetoric of self could locate the private details of a person's life within an established, character-based framework for public understandings of virtue and vice, with all the advantages of observing a living person and none of the danger of "corruption."

Reading the didactic rhetoric of self becomes a social engagement, a communication between the person as print and the almost voyeuristic reader hungry for intimate details. But, together, the effect of the intimate print person on the empirical, sympathetic reader is didactic. In his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Adam Smith describes such communication between living people as a "fellow feeling," in which one person is moved to sympathize with another by substituting his or her own feelings to construct an imagined understanding of the other person's situation and feelings (10). Sympathy, as a product of the imagination, can only be elicited by observing other people, empirically, to understand their situation, experiences, and feelings. The observer or spectator is guided by "principles" characteristic of human "nature, which interest

him in the fortune of others, and render their happiness necessary to him, though he derives nothing from it except the pleasure of seeing it" (Smith, *Theory* 9). Smith's theory of moral sentiments hinges on a spectator witnessing first-hand the suffering or success of another, identifying with that other person's opinions or sentiments and, in the process, coming to espouse them: "[t]o approve of another man's opinions is to adopt those opinions, and to adopt them is approve of them" (Smith, *Theory* 17). Biography authenticates this experience as real, a textual version of "first-hand" that readers observe like witnessing a living person, which is distinct from the novel's imagined experiences. The rhetorical arrangement of these first-hand facts also brings them into clearer, more comprehensive view, so that a reader might consider the rhetoric of self more sympathetically than a living person.

But a good reader, situated to approve and adopt the sentiments of others, must assume an objective understanding of their own spectatorial self, the punctual self that enables a rational comparison and critique. This self-objectification allows the spectator to identify the traits for evaluating others: "[e]very faculty in one man is the measure by which he judges of the like faculty in another" (Smith, *Theory* 19). It is a self-reflexive sensibility informed by set of moral standards—Smith gestures to the Golden Rule and Christian charity without naming them explicitly (*Theory* 25)—that ultimately places the responsibility for virtuous behavior on a spectator who can judge the vices and virtues of others. The spectator is trained to choose right social behavior by observation, imagination, and reflection on the propriety of another's behavior. Evaluating the social practices of another self in a biographical format provided practical standards readers could use to reflect on and correct themselves. Walter Ong argues that every author writes for an "audience [that] is a fiction," which requires the "author to imagine an audience cast in some sort of role," and the audience must correspondingly "fictionalize itself . . .

to play the role in which the author has cast" it (*Interfaces* 60-1). The rhetorical situation of an eighteenth century biography required a rhetoric of self that invited the reader to cast an "I" in relation to representation of the biographical "I"; the fictional role in which biographers cast their audience was that of friend or acquaintance to the person whose life they arranged biographically. The biographical form made it possible for eighteenth-century readers to fictionalize a spectatorial relationship between themselves and biographical subjects safely, as Gally would assert, so that they could recognize and adopt the moral tropes embodied there.

Engaging the didacticism of a biographical print self obligates readers to apply their private self-improvement to their social practices. Walter J. Ong has observed these obligations in all writing, arguing that print closes off human consciousness by situating readers in relation to text and away from other readers (*Interfaces* 305).[5] Ong suggests that the effect of this interaction between the audience and the material object makes it an agent of change: "print encouraged human beings to think of their own interior conscious and unconscious resources as more and more thing-like . . . Print encouraged the mind to sense that its possessions were held in some sort of inert mental space," and it implies a finality "suggesting [a] self-containment [that] encloses thought" (*Orality* 132). Although print has an alienating effect, it functions by regularizing knowledge and has, thus, a profoundly unifying effect, too (*Orality* 82). The selfhood a reader meets in a biography is a selfhood that other readers meet as well. The personal interaction between reader and print thus becomes a social interaction in its repeatability. Ong argues that print structures a "[h]uman consciousness [that] is open closure," a consciousness

[5] Ong cites numerous examples from the eighteenth century to emphasize this point. As opposed to a live audience responsive to the rhetoric of a live rhetorician, "[t]he reader, using his eyes to assimilate a text, is essentially a spectator, outside the action, however interested. His reaction to one page has no effect on what appears on the next. Inviting readers to fill in blank pages, as in Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* . . . essentially alters nothing: what the author has written, he has written. The live audience is not so necessarily passive" (*Interfaces* 222). The responsive reader is an active agent who can make choices within the context of cultural practices that the embodied biographical selfhood presents.

that separates readers while opening them to the ideas conveyed in print, rendering it into the "'I' [that] interfaces with everything" (*Interfaces* 337). Print and the biographical rhetoric of self in particular play a crucial role in mediating a sense of self, a self-contained "I" and a sense of that "I" in relation to others in a manner particularly amenable to understandings of self and sensibility in the eighteenth century.

Some theorists link the development of print culture in the eighteenth century to social shifts that defined eighteenth-century publics, since the larger society is comprised of individual readers. Benedict Anderson attributes two effects of print culture to the development of a society in which readers imagined themselves united as a public community. He notes that newspapers and novels in particular created a sense of both "temporal coincidence," simultaneity of happening events (24), and a "social organism" acting within this simultaneity (26). From this perspective, eighteenth-century print culture and especially "print capitalism . . . made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways" (Anderson 36). Similarly, Jürgen Habermas credited print with mediating a "rational-critical debate" which initiated a "public sphere" from the republic of letters: "by communicating with itself, [the public sphere] attained clarity about itself" (51). Like Anderson, Habermas gave particular attention to novels and newspapers, but Habermas linked the significance of print to its effect on material culture at large, citing in particular the role of Addison and Steele's *Spectator* papers in shaping the site of public self-construction, the eighteenth-century coffee house (58-9). Habermas more deliberately theorizes the role of the individual participant within a public made possible by print culture, arguing that it "*was based on the fictitious identity of . . . privatized individuals who came together to form a public . . .* [which] usually combined the characteristic attributes of ownership and education" (56). These

private participants came to imagine themselves as a public, however fictitious the identity it adopted for itself.[6]

The distinction between the imagined "I" of the reader, the fictitious identity that the author projected and the reader adopted, and the imagined public of a reading community does not necessarily lend themselves to an easy participation for all, as the religious and political rifts of the seventeenth century illustrated. A personal notion of self can easily be at odds with oppositional notions. Johnson biographically invited his readers to broach this issue in his life of Addison. Addison, whose *Spectator* papers were an attempt to answer the questions posed by the seventeenth century with a new social civility, acted as secretary to the newly appointed lord lieutenant of Ireland, a man whose attitudes and opinions Johnson describes as diametrically opposed to Addison's own. In this conflict, Johnson demonstrates a place for social authority, however repugnant to the private person, and for individual ideas of selfhood: "[i]t is not necessary to refuse benefits from a bad man, when the acceptance implies no approbation of his crimes; nor has the subordinate officer any obligation to examine the opinions or conduct of those under whom he acts, except that he may not be made the instrument of wickedness" (*Lives* XXII.609). Johnson's overt commentary argues that differences between public authority and private conscience are not fundamentally irreconcilable; authority that does not require "wickedness" or an "approbation of crimes" from the private person does not violate the private person's selfhood. Addison's life, as the rhetoric of self Johnson arranges, illustrates biography's "power to define how a person, a nation and its history will be judged, to contribute to

[6] Likewise, Adam Smith recognizes in both the historical and biographical forms stylistic attributes with didactic implications. Smith makes no particular mention of biography as a form, suggesting that historical writing entirely encompasses it. Historical writing, for Smith, implies a sort of biographical stylistics, but ultimately, "[t]he design of history . . . is to state the remarkable transactions that pass in different nations, and the designs, motions, and views of the most remarkable men of those times, so far as they are necessary to explain the great changes and revolutions of states" (*Lectures* 59). The general didactic effect is to train an audience to act within the larger movements of the state, to participate responsibly in a general, social rhetorical situation.

maintaining, revising, or shaking its self-image" (Backscheider 227-8). The biography of Addison embodies the social concerns that Johnson writes on it and didactically invites readers to discover.

The rhetoric of self produces meaning in the absence of a self's lived experiences by substituting text for life, a principle often evident in the very titles of eighteenth-century biographies. Johnson rendered the experiences of a Dutch scientist into "The Life of Herman Boerhaave"; Goldsmith substituted a rhetoric of self for Beau Nash in *The Life of Richard Nash*, and Boswell's biography of Johnson stands in for the man as *The Life of Johnson*. Text becomes life in eighteenth-century biography, and the biographical experience is didactic, engaging another selfhood personally at a reader's private leisure. Since biographical writing substitutes the facts of a life for the immediacy of a lived experience, they become the embodied print practices of selfhood that allow for sociability that can shape personal selfhood and stabilize society's larger self-fashioning.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1

This chapter focuses on Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* and John Locke's *Inquiry into Human Understanding* to examine the role of science in situating a model for stabilizing selfhood. I argue that the rise of the new inductive science within the institutionalization of the Royal Society and Locke's influential theory of the self is a point of emergence for the eighteenth-century model of selfhood and biographical representation. This scientific context was dominated by an inductive scientific practice that privileged cycles of experimentation, observation, and documentation. It was the model that Thomas Sprat and, to

varying degrees, the members of the newly inaugurated Royal Society endorsed. This inductive epistemology depended on cyclical observations to generate facts from which scientific truths could be induced, tested and observed, and revised. Epistemologically, when the significance of observation is applied to the self, a reasoning person develops through a reflexive self-consciousness, becoming a spectating self-observer who, as a consequence of observing multiple details and facts, generates a distinctive selfhood, as Locke postulated. The emergent biography itself also put the person in view, like a print experiment in selfhood, and developed a rhetoric of self that would allow readers to induce selfhood from the facts the biographer presents. The principles are evident in Roger North's theory of biography. Although it went unpublished until the nineteenth century, North's model of life writing suggests the influence of the period's scientific theories. North, Sprat, the Royal Society, and Locke are at the center of the new science; their models of understanding allowed the biographer to create choices for the reader, rhetorical effects that would come to shape selfhood and self-awareness.

Chapter 2

This chapter focuses on two biographical selfhoods, Johnson's treatments of Richard Savage and Goldsmith's biography of Richard Nash. Both biographers make particular appeals to logos, locating the materials for a life and arranging them in a compelling fashion, that mark advances in the form, which appeal to pathos, exciting readers' sympathies in turn. I argue that their development in the context of eighteenth-century print culture advanced a new ethics of reading for the biographical form that forces readers observe the print self and make active choices for understanding it, like scientists, observing and drawing conclusions from the details they see. Eighteenth-century biographers discovered the details for the lives they wrote from

sources that were credited by public assent. These biographers arrange the rhetoric of self by locating contrasts and contrarieties that create tensions within the character, which could only be resolved by the reader's sympathies. Readers could observe those rhetorics of self as living people and learn by reconciling what they saw with what they could conclude. The didactic effect of such conclusions identifies and defines right social action for the reader and the larger community of readers. Their role as readers was to play the acquaintance of the biographical selves they read.

Chapter 3

This chapter explores the role of the ethos in establishing an intimate rhetoric of self with specific attention to the ethos James Boswell fashions for himself in order to write the *Life of Johnson*. By developing the importance of the biographical ethos, Boswell will make a more compelling, sympathetic biographical appeal with greater didactic potential for readers. The intimate understanding of Johnson that Boswell demonstrates is singular in its scope and development throughout this emergent period in biography's formation. Building a credible ethos to play biographer to the great Samuel Johnson was more important to Boswell than to earlier biographers because Boswell understood that his claim would be more contested by Johnson's other friends and authors, the profusion of the Grub Street hacks and periodical writers, and a reading public with set expectations established through public familiarity. By proving himself as a biographer and journalist, Boswell could play interlocutor to Johnson and translate his selfhood to a wide range of readers. By establishing an ethos whose biographical undertaking would be apropos, Boswell situated himself to arrange Johnson's selfhood rhetorically within it history and character, but most importantly, Boswell's ethos made possible

his most unique contribution to the canon of eighteenth-century biography: an approach that put the audience directly in conversation with the rhetoric of self and established a more intimate relationship. Boswell's ethos would come to arrange a rhetoric of self that would locate Johnson in print and experience, but it would also bend these eighteenth-century biographical patterns to deliver a Johnson capable of exciting the sympathetic reader to view Johnson's print life ethically, making a spectacle of a rhetorical selfhood that invited all readers to learn about sociability and values from the *Life of Johnson*.

Chapter 4

The rhetoric of self that James Boswell writes for Samuel Johnson builds on earlier strengths of eighteenth-century biographical models. Boswell draws on Johnson's applications of print and manuscript culture to arrange the experiential materials of his biography into a selfhood bound in time against specific characteristics that transcend the moments of Johnson's life, connecting them all. But ultimately Boswell sought to exhibit Johnson's lived experience and his character in his conversation, through which he strove to "Johnsonise the land." As a biographer, Boswell meditates Johnson's selfhood. Observing this selfhood, the reader participates in conversations with Johnson and his circle to engage Johnson's selfhood actively. The larger consequence of this intimate biography is a larger social shift in which readers will not just talk Johnson, but also "think Johnson." Conversation informs social intercourse, but shapes the discursive practices of the larger society. The reader who comes to talk and think Johnson by meeting the man in print recognizes him over the course of his life within an intimate rhetoric of self and understanding Johnson by discerning his character from a matrix of experiences, events,

and especially conversations. In the conversational locus, Johnson's selfhood is less a thing to be observed than it is a presence, a person, a more intimate biographical subject than any prior.

Chapter 1—Situating the Self:

The Emergence of the New Science and the Rhetorics of Self

The set of practices of selfhood which came to define biography for the eighteenth century developed from a conceptual foundation in the larger civil and religious anxieties of the seventeenth century. A king could be executed, a commonwealth instituted, and monarchy ultimately restored, but succeeding to what? Which Christianity would be sanctioned as a state church to reform and persecute aberrant dogmatics? Warring views of state authority and sparring sectarian factions essentially became identities in conflict—Roundheads versus Cavaliers, the Presbyter, the Puritan, the Papist—types that vied for primacy as normative models for the religious and governmental practices they would impose on other selves.[7] The fights between proponents of different ideologies ranged from the Midlands battlefields to the streets of London, Parliament, the court, and across the printed page. A robust and often virulent print culture exacerbated these conflicts in polemic that shaped the clashing ideologies and their corresponding identities with bombast and florid, impassioned rhetoric.

During the mid-1640s, in the midst of these struggles, another model for selfhood gradually emerged from secret meetings at Oxford, in Gresham College. The men who met there identified themselves as natural philosophers, a community of scientists who came to imagine

[7] I use the term "identity" narrowly here to signify the distinctions that different groups established to distinguish themselves and their particular political or religious ideological perspective from other groups. My use follows Dror Wahrman's explanation of identity the Preface of *The Making of the Modern Self* as a "productive tension between two contradictory impulses" (xii). It is a balance between identity understood as the "unique individuality of a person" and, especially, "a common denominator that places an individual within a group (as in 'identity politics')," whereby "identity is the obverse or erasure of difference: it is what allows me to ignore particular differences as I recognize myself in a collective grouping" (xii). Identities like Roundhead and Cavalier, by broad strokes, gave continuity to groups as diverse as Catholics, moderate constitutionalists, and soldiers, in the case of royalist Cavaliers; the Roundhead comprised groups that challenged monarchy such as the Puritans and Republicans. As direct identification with the "collective groupings" in Civil Wars and Restoration, the "common" ideological "denominators" overrode the markers of unique selfhoods. These markers came to the fore in the emergence of eighteenth-century biography, which sought to push past these broad identities into a specific, intimate selfhood.

themselves and their practices as, not only an alternative to the anxieties of the seventeenth century, but as a remedy to them. These men met secretly to develop a new scientific model; they proposed various experiments and, by way of demonstration, related their findings to the scrutiny and discussion of the group. The first historian of the Royal Society, Thomas Sprat, records some of these varied, early scientific investigations, like Dr. Goddard's "Experiments of a Stone called *Oculus Mundi*," Lord Brouncker's "Experiments of the Weight of Bodies increased in the FIRE: Made at the Tower," and Sir William Petty's "Apparatus to the History of the Common Practices of Dying" (228-231, 284-306). [8] Sprat proposes these practices, the gatherings and their scientific bent, as a direct answer to the civil and political uproar of the period: "[f]or such a candid, and unpassionate company, as that was, and for such a gloomy season, what could have been a fitter subject to pitch upon, then *Natural Philosophy*?" (55). The "candid and unpassionate" character of the private scientist steadied the disquiet that dogged the public, at least for the small group of men engaged in scientific inquiry: "[t]o have been always tossing about some *Theological question*, would have been, to have made that their private diversion, the excess of which they themselves dislik'd in publick: To have been eternally musing on *Civil business*, and the distresses of their Country, was too melancholy a reflexion: It was *Nature* alone, which could pleasantly entertain them, in that estate" (55-6). The focus of the private scientist on "Nature alone," even on matters as seemingly mundane as dying cloth or the increased mass of heated matter, offered to refocus seventeenth-century England from the "melancholy distresses" of the period and balance the "excesses" of theological discussion or

[8] Goddard's experiments tested physical properties to gauge whether correspond with a *occulis mundi* or opal: he weighed the stone dry and wet, after soaking in cold or boiling to record changes in weight, since it he observed that it "*became transparent*" wet (Sprat 230). His scientific report is less a modern report of scientific findings that draws conclusions than a narrative of the events he witnessed as he tested the weight of the opal in heat and water.

political warfare because these scientific endeavors held the possibility of neutrality and clarity (Sprat 56).[9]

Diverting attention from the turmoil that dominated the politics, religion, and print culture of the mid-century Civil Wars toward a scientific methodology substituted the practices of the new scientist for the identity of the Royalist or Republican. The shift redefined how selfhood could be identified and examined. A scientific methodology promised to define a standard for selfhood with the potential to refocus the infighting of opposing groups on natural philosophy: since "contemplation . . . Focused on the natural world and natural philosophy, draws our minds off from past, or present misfortunes, and makes them conquerers over things, in the greatest publick unhappiness," the private scientist could better endure the conflicts in identity and ideology of the period (Sprat 56). Sprat asserts, moreover, that the development of this scientific identity and its focus on nature could accommodate and thereby resolve the divisions that had set other ideological identities at war during the period: "while the consideration of *Men*, and *humane affairs*, may affect us, with a thousand various disquiets; *that* [inquiry into the natural world] never separates us into mortal Factions; *that* gives us room to differ, without animosity; and permits us, to raise contrary imaginations upon it, without any danger of *Civil War*" (56). For Sprat, the shift away from larger, divisive, warring public

[9] The move toward regularity had implications beyond the Society—its practices had stakes in establishing a social and worldview. Michael Hunter has argued that the Society itself was not uniform in its opinions or practices, but through a common experimental goal, achieved some degree of unification that held promise for English society (41). J. Ereck Jarvis has argued that Sprat's vision of uniform practices for the Society matched his goals for the Royal Society's role in English society, that Sprat and his *History* sought a create a stabilizing social authority: he "forwards a discursive model for the blending of civility, philosophy, and publication," which was bound to print culture for "mediating an authority that moves through yet exists beyond print, an authority manifest in social process" (69). William Bynum notes that, beyond the implications for the Society and society at large, the Isaac Newton's own laws of the motion reflect Sprat's earlier commitment to uniformity in a regularized model of the universe: one Newton's contemporary physicists "used Newton's laws of motion and his mathematical laws to show that the things one could see in the sky could be understood . . . and predicted with accuracy . . . such that the whole universe really did work like a well-made clock, and that it kept perfect time" (105-6).

identities is a move toward a more particular notion of selfhood, in which markers of a unique identity come into focus.

To adopt the scientific identity, Sprat argues, the scientist must "first know himself" (33). Sprat pointedly illustrates this shift with the example of a politician, who cannot be successful simply by grasping legal and political ideologies as an "expert in the Nature of Government, and Laws, Obedience, and Rebellion, Peace, and War," but rather through a more thorough, intimate understanding of selfhood and "sagacity of judgement in particular things: a dexterity in discerning the advantages of occasions: a study of the humor, and interest of the people he is to govern" (17). If the politician, the most ready embodiment of the identity associated with the Civil Wars and Restoration, can be improved by "sagacity" and a scientific "study" of the particular, then scientific method might also be applied to the study of selfhood in ways that could alleviate the violent ideological clash of identities of the middle and late seventeenth century. If examining selfhood could make individuals aware of their own and of others' differences, then they might begin to prove manageable.

This promise to accommodate difference without division was the goal of a private group of scholars secluded from the public arena where ideological identities had struggled viciously for control. Their practices emerged through the establishment of the Royal Society. When Charles II, who heralded himself as the Society's founder, chartered this group of scholars as the Royal Society 1662 and renewed the charter a year later, the informal, empirical model of private scientists became the basis for the formal methodology ultimately espoused by the Royal Society. While the seeming decidedness of a royal charter might suggest a fixing of policy and standardization of scientific inquiry, these earliest, emergent stages allowed the Society a more nebulous, nominal authority to research and elaborate its epistemology. Michael Hunter argues

that the establishment of the Royal Society institutionalized practices that came to define the dictates of modern science, despite its initial variability (40-1).[10] While the establishment of the Society purportedly offered an answer to the discordant political and religious questions posed heatedly in war and print and while it sought to correct the vicious rhetorical trends that opponents wielded to characterize each other, it was still, however, marked by dissent within its scientific community. Resolving these differences became one of the Society's strengths, just as the institutionalization of its epistemology and the identity of the scientist inaugurated a new way of understanding selfhood and the rhetorical means for expressing it. The royal charter might have authorized the new scientific epistemology, but it by no means regularized the variable practices that would come to be the official methodology of the Royal Society. [11] Michael Hunter points out, for instance, Society member Henry Oldenburg, for instance, distrusted the experimental model that Sprat endorsed because of its diffusive tendency to develop new experiments to explore experimental discrepancies—Oldenburg believed that, without some

[10] Sprat's history of the fledgling Royal Society functioned officially to situate the its inductive methodology among vying scientific paradigms. It is a foundational text that presumed to delineate scientific tenets which were not yet standardized among Society members. Sprat's official history represents the members of the Society practicing a uniform, inductive method of inquiry. In his history of the Society's inception, Hunter stresses that to "presume undue unanimity among" the members of the Royal Society is a mistake, noting that "this is the case with their views on political and religious issues . . . underlined by the disparate affiliations of the Society's founders and their stress on how their enterprise might transcend such differences" (28). The "transcendent" promise the new scientific paradigm offered, that a model of inquiry could allow disparate views to cohere, suggests a stability that is at odds with its emergent methodology. Brian Vickers alludes to the competing methodologies from which the Society grew: the "Royal Society, although mostly admirable, was the establishment organization for science; that did not represent all the valuable work taking place in England . . . and that its own achievements were, and were seen by its own members to be, variable, and in some areas disappointing. It represents one view, not necessarily the right one" (3-4). When I reference the epistemology, methodology, or empiricism of the Royal Society, I refer to Sprat's representation of the Royal Society as a institution with institutional practices, even though the standardization of these practices was itself emerging within the Society.

[11] While the variability of opinion on scientific practice and discourse among the early members of the Society might undermine the very principle of accommodation that Sprat praises in the Society's new scientific model, Hunter interprets it as an effort at self-propagation: "the Society's organisers were anxious to spell out the broader implications of what they were doing because of a genuine—if naïve—belief that the enterprise of the Royal Society *was* innocuous and reconciling, and that, if this were expounded, the suspicions that people harboured towards it could be swiftly overcome and many other enrolled in support of a worthwhile activity in which the Society's members often felt themselves embattled pioneers" (48). In this reading, the institutionalization of the Society was an attempt to demonstrate the reliability of the Society's practices; more importantly, it was an attempt to convert others to the scientific understanding and means for making knowledge espoused by the natural philosophers in the Royal Society. The argument for accommodation, then, is an argument for dissemination and incorporation.

ordering principle, there could be no system of knowledge that experiment discovered; there would be little Church influence (56-7, 68-9).

In this chapter, I will examine how this identity of the new scientist reshaped the questions of identity raised by political and religious ideology in the Restoration and made the emergence of the Royal Society possible. The identity of the scientist promised to mend the dissent among differing ideologies and, thus, promised social progress, which depended on personal, moral improvement. I argue that the identity of the Restoration scientist, which was bound up in a shift from a deductive to an inductive epistemology, fundamentally altered the ways selfhood would be determined and represented rhetorically, as well as the didactic effects of these representations. The emergence of this new scientific context made possible the emergence of a biographical form different from earlier modes of life writing. This emergent form embodies a rhetoric of self that links the new scientific epistemology to its corresponding rhetoric to represent selfhood biographically. I focus on two seminal works grounded in the new science of the Royal Society, which mark the paradigm shift from a deductive to inductive epistemology: Thomas Sprat's *History of the Royal Society* and John Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Both Sprat and Locke were members of the Royal Society in the seventeenth century. While their works were not in direct conversation, their application of the new science to methods for general inquiry and inquiry into the self certainly were. Sprat's and Locke's account of the Society's practical foundation and the epistemological justification for its methodology frame the emergence of new fields for inquiry into the natural world at large, in the case of Sprat, and into self-conceptualization and selfhood in particular, in the case of Locke. They are, consequently, vital to the emergence of biography in the eighteenth century, both as a means of inquiry and as a literary form for representing what is found.

I argue that Sprat's *History*, which is more of an apologetic than an actual history of the Society, challenges extant methodologies for understanding, as well as the means for communicating that understanding. The refinement of the Society's scientific procedures that Sprat outlines had an influence on seventeenth-century life writing, but these procedures had direct application for the emergence of eighteenth-century biography and its own approaches to researching, obtaining, and interpreting the information that constituted biography. More specifically, Locke advances an epistemology that narrows Sprat's focus from an institutional program to the understanding of a single person. I argue that the relationship between self-understanding and selfhood that Locke theorizes offers a conceptual framework that gives continuity and coherence to biographical organization. Just as importantly, Sprat and Locke propose particular rhetorical approaches for communicating scientific findings and facilitating self-understanding that emphasize clarity, straightforwardness, and transparency—scientific and rhetorical attributes crucial for organizing an accurate, biographical rhetoric of self. The methodological and rhetorical considerations that Locke and Sprat address are complementary parts of an epistemology emerging in the late seventeenth that, by the eighteenth century, would shape modern biography.

To argue the relationship between scientific inquiry, its rhetoric, and eighteenth-century biography, I will locate the effects of Sprat's conceptual modeling in the biographical theory of Roger North's *General Preface* and Locke's epistemological theorizing in the identity of Joseph Addison's and Richard Steele's Mr. Spectator. While their Spectator is not biographical, the identity of the scientist stands in through its periodical persona, "Mr. Spectator," who evaluates aesthetic considerations and arbitrates taste in order to guide readers toward their own moral improvement. This transference from science to taste suggests that the Royal Society had great

hopes for the implications of its theory, the potential, adaptable fluidity of the Restoration scientist's identity: as the scholars at Gresham College and the members of the Royal Society hoped, the identity could shape social concerns beyond a strictly scientific purview. In the final section of this chapter, I argue that the epistemology and rhetoric of the inductive science not only shaped North's biographical theorizing and Addison and Steele's periodical persona.[12]

Emergence and Shift: Scientific Epistemologies and Their Rhetorics

In his study of the emerging science of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Peter Dear draws a connection between the epistemology of the new science and its rhetorical expression. He argues that "the Scientific Revolution was . . . a matter of a cognitive shift rather than the simple acquisition of new information that demanded new theoretical frameworks to accommodate it," an epistemological shift that is evident in the need "to identify a technical practice as new rather than as an unimportant variable variant upon an old practice" which "requires particular conceptual and cognitive expectations on the part of the knower" (*Discipline* 12). To recognize a new set of practices for making knowledge is to acknowledge a new set of "expectations" for what can be known and how it is constructed. His argument echoes Thomas Kuhn's classic conceptualization of shifts in scientific epistemology. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* Kuhn postulates that a paradigm gives a theoretical structure to normal practice in the sciences: a paradigm determines how knowledge is to be made, "the problems that can be solved" and the "instrumental and conceptual techniques" for solving them (96), and it also prescribes a rhetorical means for discussing what is found, a particular "esoteric vocabulary"

[12] These principles would lay a foundation for the didactic and biographical strategies of prominent eighteenth-century biographers Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith, and James Boswell.

unique to the conceptual obligations of the paradigm (64). Kuhn's argument essentially defines the paradigmatic as what can be known and how it can be expressed.

Kuhn's account largely limits the rhetorical change in paradigm shifts to an "incommensurability of standards" about the "vocabulary and apparatus, both conceptual and manipulative," so that old and new paradigms cannot properly speak to one another (149). [13] Dear, likewise, argues that larger changes in narrative, "scientific *literary* practice," are necessary to report new knowledge in the larger context of a new epistemology ("Narratives" 135). These epistemological shifts and their corresponding rhetorics move from an emphasis on the generalized principles that can be deduced, in the geometrical pattern of a syllogism, for instance, to an inductive emphasis on particulars that only offer insight corporately, induced from accumulation of details rather than deduced from a single example. In essence, deduction moves from the generalize major premise to the specific minor premises as a means of affirming the major premise; induction moves from the specific, experimental details to the general principle. The standards that the Society's natural scientists sought to institute mark a significant, epistemological shift away from classical models of logic as a means for scientific inquiry. It is a move from Aristotle's syllogistic model of deduction and Cicero's rhetorical theory, toward a more inductive, empiricist paradigm that emerged through the models for scientific inquiry. As philosophers on the cusp of the new science, René Descartes and Francis Bacon illustrate the

[13] Stanley Fish reads Kuhn's theory as a conceptualization of discursive practice rather than scientific advancement. He describes Kuhn's argument not as purely scientific, but as "rhetorical through and through," which points to inextricable link between scientific practice and rhetorical representation ("Rhetoric" 486). In his reading, Kuhn's theories of normative practice have nothing to do with "the larger world of nature," since "science does not proceed by offering its descriptions to the independent judgment of nature; rather, it proceeds when the proponents of one paradigm are able to present their case in a way that the adherents of other paradigms find compelling" ("Rhetoric" 487). By depending on the rhetorical ability of competing, synchronic claims to persuade those in opposition, methodological practices are normalized by offering representations of facts that are "compelling" by design, that persuade by offering credible claims. Fish regards the rhetorical of articulating scientific fact as important as the techniques and apparatus used to construct the facts themselves. It is both the scientific knowledge and its expression that make the paradigm creditable and its credibility that makes it normative.

different epistemological poles between which the new science emerged, each accompanied by rhetoric suitable to their epistemological ends. Descartes illustrates the older, deductive model, while Francis Bacon advocates a new, inductive mode of inquiry.

Descartes' methodology depended more on the classical, deductive methods in his formulation of a scientific model based on his ideas of coordinate geometry, "which supposes the problem is already solved, and examines the consequences of the supposition" (Russell 560). In its structure, this epistemology is fundamentally Aristotelian, a deductive model based on the enthymeme, in which the "problem already solved" guides inquiry: the task of science in this deductive framework is simple demonstration[14]. Showing "the truth of fundamental statements," such demonstration reinforces overarching principles that are "simply accepted at the outset" of an inquiry, like the established given of a geometric proof (Dear, "Narratives" 139). Enthymemic argument applies a major premise, an accepted generalization or widely held belief, to a more particular case. The conclusions this line argument draws, no matter how specific they are, ultimately support the major premise. This method readily lent itself to medieval theological arguments that sought to give proof to established ideas. Thomas Aquinas adopts Aristotelian deduction in his *Summa Theologica* to prove and explore the fundamentally inexplicable nature of the Christian God, the Trinity and angels. Rhetorically, this model arranges a scientific inquiry syllogistically to verify what is already known and emphasizes the experiential expertise

[14] In discussing the distinction between rhetoric and logic in the eighteenth century, Howell cites an illustrative example of the distinction eighteenth-century authors drew between deduction and induction from Thomas Reid's "A Brief Account of Aristotle's Logic. With Remarks": "The art of syllogism produced numberless disputes, and numberless sects, who fought against each other with much animosity, without gaining or losing ground; but did nothing considerable for the benefit of human life. The art of induction, first delineated by Lord Bacon, produced numberless laboratories and observatories, in which Nature has been put to the question by thousands of experiments, and forced to confess many of her secrets, which before were hid from mortals. And by these, arts have been improved, and human knowledge wonderfully increased" (*Eighteenth-Century* 258). Drawing a comparison between syllogistic logic and inductive science can prove challenging, as Reid's comments indicate—deductive, after all, is not understood today, after the advent of induction, to be any more scientific that Aristotelian science and the importance it ascribes to an elemental theory.

of the scientist that, as a given, is articulated by experimental records: what the expert scientist knew from the outset is confirmed by the conclusion (Dear, "Narratives" 160). The rhetoric follows the epistemological constraints of the deductive paradigm, a largely circular argument for proving and demonstrating what is already known.

Within an epistemological and rhetorical context dominated by Aristotelian deduction, life writing was organized around an overarching principle, a definitive attribute that the life writer would locate in all the instances of a life. It was the given, the major premise, that the experiences of the life would demonstrate and reinforce. In his *Parallel Lives*, for instance, Plutarch represents men of ancient Greece and Rome comparatively in light of a particular virtue or moral failing. Izaak Walton's seventeenth-century account of John Donne, similarly, represents Donne as a holy sermon writer rather than a secular poet. Walton's introduction notes that Donne's "*glorious spirit . . . is in Heaven*" and promises to relate "*those Vertues that were but sparks upon Earth, [which have] become great and glorious flames in Heaven*" (21-2). Walton's life writing borders on panegyric, but his approach is germane to his original purpose: "when *Doctor Donn's* Sermons were first printed, this [their printing] was then my excuse for daring to write his life; and, I dare not now appear without it" (22). Walton's account framed Donne's sermons as the holy works of a devout Christian man, works that reflected Donne's life. Walton's life writing begins with the assumption of Donne's devotion and piety and demonstrates this overarching trait through the most of Donne's experiences. Walton's method has the same reductive quality that equates religious ideology with identity that characterized the crises of ideology during the Civil Wars, but also follows a pattern like the Aristotelian enthymeme, both epistemologically and rhetorically.

The paradigmatic shift from Cartesian deduction to Baconian induction depended much more heavily on organizing multiple, sometimes contrary, pieces of information and experimentation other natural philosophers could replicate in order to derive specific principles. Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer describe, for instance, how important the collection of data was in proving Robert Boyle's law of pressure—while other experimenters could not reproduce his results with the apparatus of his air-pump, they confirmed the findings through apparatuses of their own design (281). As a precursor to the Royal Society's practices, Bacon's scientific model privileged particularity over Aristotelian generality. Bacon's inductive model formulated more thorough conclusions that followed facts rather than major or minor premises: through his method, Bacon sought "to arrive at general laws, having, in the first instance, the lowest degree of generality. From a number of such laws he hoped to reach laws of the second degree of generality and so on" (Russell 543). Bacon's extreme aversion to older models suggests an early attempt in the emergence of a new epistemology to distinguish it from other, competing epistemologies, but still underscores the emergent quality of the shift. In the case of the experimental new science advanced by the Royal Society, experience and experiment require a new rhetorical arrangement: any "account of an action is an inseparable part of its meaning, just as the meaning of the account itself relies on its implicit referent . . . there cannot be an account of an experimental event without reference to the spatiotemporally defined region, while the spatiotemporally defined region cannot *be* an experimental event without its constitution as such in the account" (Dear, "Narratives" 136-7). This arrangement reflects the Society's practices for constructing knowledge because it aimed at relaying "spatiotemporally defined" limitations of an experiment. To relate an experiment is to relay time, place, and happening. More simply put, it is to relay experience.

The shift in epistemology was a shift in the accompanying rhetoric of the overall paradigm from deductive to inductive reason. The rhetorical method that emerged alongside the epistemology depended on "singular contrived events . . . as foundational elements in making natural knowledge," representing them "by detailing a historical episode" or "experimental report—an example of the characteristically seventeenth-century genre of the *event experiment*" (Dear, *Discipline* 13, 14, 15). The "event experiment" recorded a spatiotemporal event, so that "experience increasingly took the form of statements describing specific events . . . The new scientific experience of the seventeenth century established its legitimacy by rendering credible its historical reports of events, often citing witnesses. The singular experience could not be *evident,* but it could provide *evidence*" (Dear, *Discipline* 25). The rhetorical arrangement of the "event experiment" made the new epistemology possible by providing a necessary conceptual frame in which the experiment could unfold. Without the rhetorical component, the epistemology would have been unimaginable and untenable: "formulating natural knowledge . . . means investigating the literary constitution and function of experience in scientific argument, because it is in texts that the knowledge is made" (Dear, "Narratives" 163). As the site where the new inductive epistemology and its corresponding rhetoric met to make knowledge, these experimental accounts offered a means for making new understandings and representations of selfhood that reflect commitments to the new methodology.

From the outset, Sprat seeks to justify the methodology and its inductive epistemology. In the "Advertisement to the Reader," Sprat signals that his work is, of necessity, more than simply a historic account, conceding that"*[t]hough this Book does Treat of many Subjects that are not Historical, yet I have presum'd to name the whole a* History*, because that was the main end of my Design*." Sprat claims that the "*Objections and Cavils*" leveled against the new Royal Society

made *"it necessary for me* [Sprat] *to write of it, not altogether in the way of a* plain History, *but sometimes of an* Apology." Sprat's apologetics in the *History* act as formal defense of and justification for the Royal Society by regularizing it as an institution with a set of definitive practices and beliefs. His *History* explained the Royal Society's inductive paradigm, its epistemology and rhetoric, which was in the process of emerging during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to supplant the traditional model of deductive inquiry. Sprat sought to institutionalize the epistemology of the new science; Locke, later, sought to individuate it in order to conceptualize selfhood scientifically.

Instituting the New Scientific Epistemology: Sprat's Apologetics

In the *History of the Royal Society*, Thomas Sprat ascribed an inductive epistemology and methodology to the Royal Society five years after its official inception. Sprat's apologetics aimed to make the new inductive paradigm the most persuasive model for scientific inquiry, which his attack on other paradigms clarifies. While he exhibits the Royal Society's platform on inductive reasoning and empirical understanding, Sprat sets the Society's epistemology in historiographical conversation with other approaches, treating the new inductive science as the culmination and correction of earlier methodologies for scientific inquiry. Instituting a scientific epistemology as the dominant paradigm involves the representation of previous scientific epistemologies as a linear historical progression, at the head of which would be the Royal Society (Kuhn 137).[15] In this way, the new paradigm is justified as a culmination of and an improvement on earlier methodologies (Kuhn 153-6). Sprat's criticisms reveal the practices he

[15] For Kuhn, this representation of an epistemology is accomplished through textbooks, since they are "pedagogic vehicles for the perpetuation" of a dominant paradigm, and they must be "rewritten in whole or in part whenever the language, problem-structure, or standards" of the new epistemology change (137). The link between epistemology and rhetoric make a shift possible, as the shift from deductive science and the rhetoric committed to articulating its inquiry to an inductive model demonstrates.

seeks to institutionalize for the Society's epistemology and rhetoric. He claims to argue against the "prejudice remaining on many mens minds, towards any *new* Discoveries in *Natural* Things," an argument warranted by the "*Age* itself, wherein I [Sprat] write; which (if I mistake not) is farr more prepar'd to be perswaded to promote such Studies, then any other time that has gone before us" (4-5). The inductive epistemology for scientific inquiry is the result of a lineage that, for Sprat, runs from the ancient Greeks and Romans, through the early Christian church and the medieval Catholic Church and early modern Scholastics into the competing scientific models of his contemporaries that are now trumped by the inductive model of the Royal Society's natural philosophers.

How Sprat distinguishes the Royal Society's scientific practices and agenda from other historical and contemporary models emphasizes the epistemological and rhetorical commitments that make it unique.[16] To establish the superiority of the Society's research methodologies against other ancient and the modern epistemologies for inquiry, Sprat's *History* sets the Society's inductive approach against the then-popular, deductive means of inquiry espoused by classical philosophers, the Greeks in particular, and medieval Scholasticism, particularly in the context of the Catholic Church. Sprat aligns the method of inquiry employed by the ancient Greeks between two poles, the individual philosopher and factions of philosophers. He criticizes the divisiveness that developed around competing philosophical inquiries, noting that "at the same time, some few men did continue an earnest, and laborious pursuit, after *Natural causes,*

[16] As a part of his apologetics, Sprat uses his historiography to direct interpretations of the Royal Society's practices by reducing the complexity of earlier practices. Sprat takes on a deliberate, significant role in instutionalizing the Royal Society and in normalizing its scientific epistemology and rhetoric in his representation of scientific history: "[o]n the one hand, it refers to a practice, hence to a reality; on the other, it is a closed discourse, a text that organizes and concludes a mode of intelligibility" (Certeau 21). The historical approach of Sprat's apologetics is not the final word on the practices of the Royal Society. As a "closed discourse" and institutional document, it "organizes" and renders "intelligible" the emergent trends in how scientists or natural philosophers were coming to view themselves in relation to the natural world and how they were articulating those positions. By establishing the Royal Society as a consequence and correction of earlier models, Sprat establishes a set discursive context in which other modes of discourse, like biography, can emerge and evolve.

and effects . . . But these Philosophers, digging deap, out of the sight of men; and studying more, how to *conceive* things *aright*, and persuade their conceptions, to others; were quickly almost quite overwhelm'd, by the more plausible and Talkative Sects" (9). Sprat's critique underscores two problems with the deductive scientific methodology in order to recommend the inductive method of the Royal Society as a credible, accurate means of inquiry. According to Sprat, historical scientific study was limited in its focus on factions rather than an actual inquiry. It is a critique that recalls Sprat's distrust of social and religious factiousness during the Civil Wars; the new scientific paradigm would naturally oppose these problems. In such a context, scientific inquiry would be reduced to individual labor, Sprat's first critique of the older, deductive model. Such individual endeavors would be free of the disadvantages that attend corporate inquiry, like factiousness, but it would also forego the advantages of collaboration, like accountability, which is the second problem Sprat locates in the older model.

The first problem with classical scientific inquiry, as Sprat represents it, is this lack of accountability: it was at best the work of lone individuals "digging deap, out of the sight of men." The obscurity of their methods made the findings of lone individuals vulnerable to the larger context: one person lacks the intellectual or personal clout to redirect or even challenge the philosophical disputations of the "more plausible and Talkative Sects." Since singularity is suspect in a larger culture of contending opinions, the Royal Society answered with a motto by member John Evelyn and other fellows for the royal charting of the Society—*nullius in verba*, which is usually translated as "take nobody's word for it" (Hunter 17). By nature of its singularity, the word of one person operating "out of the sight of men" is suspect. As a methodology, inquiry not held accountable by other scientists risks undermining the import of natural philosophy, which Sprat explains is "to make faithful *Records*, of all the Works of

Nature" and "to inlarge it, from being confin'd to the custody of a few; or from servitude to private interests" (61, 62). In his critique of the lone scientist or natural philosopher of ancient Greece, Sprat makes clear a fundamental principle of the new inductive methodology that will resonate through the emergence of the biographical form: knowledge about the natural world or, derivatively, about a biographical understanding of selfhood cannot rest on the authority of one person's inquiry. The emerging empirical methodology of the Royal Society required multiple proofs to credit scientific claims or to credential scientific understanding.

Seventeenth-century life writers also increasingly stressed the importance of arranging a biographical selfhood with evidence of the life from multiple sources. Roger North, a contemporary of Sprat and Locke, postulates a theory of life writing that, though it was not published during his lifetime, bears the unmistakable stamp of the new inductive science.[17] Peter Millard notes that North "was an enthusiastic supporter of the empirical science which transformed thinking the seventeenth century [which] is obvious in his writings," and that he "accepted the Baconian doctrine that all nature, man included, was suitable for objective study" (20, 21). His comprehensive, empirical approach to selfhood has the tenor of the "Baconian doctrine" he endorsed. Roger North demonstrates this emerging biographical practice in his own writing. Although his account of his brothers depends largely on his personal perspective—what he witnessed and experienced first-hand and what he can recall—he also recognizes the limitations of this approach: life writers, "knowing no better, must take what they find" for their "accounts of lives" (77). Unlike a public "state history [which] hath the assistance of public

[17] As Peter Millard, editor of Roger North's *General Preface & Life of Dr John North*, explains, Roger North's son, Montagu North heavily edited and published his father's *Life of Dr John North* in the mid-eighteenth century, after his father's death (14). Therefore, determining when Roger North drafted his manuscripts is nearly impossible. The theory of life writing Roger North expounds in his *General Preface* to those lives went "unpublished and virtually unnoticed until 1962" (Millard 14). Roger North's statement of biographical principles offers a unique insight to the emergence of the biographical form, its epistemology for and rhetorics of self within the larger cultural context of the new science.

registers, records, pamphlets, gazettes, and often the memoirs of private persons," the history of a private life offers few venues for a life writer "to be informed of the course of any one man's life" (North 77). He asks the readers of his posthumous life writing to "take *his* word for it," while acknowledging that the word of one person cannot sufficiently, credibly represent another person's selfhood. It is a paradox that leads North to "question whether there is now in the world extant the history of any one man's life so full as it ought to be, and since we have nothing to judge by but what is left us, such as it is, who can say whether any one account is full and just or no" (77). The "fullness" of an empirical account of selfhood depends on how much can be known about the person and the materials that determine that understanding. Empirical life writers, "knowing no better, must take what they can find." What they can find to arrange as a life must be credible, another value that Sprat ascribed to the Royal Society's practices and its inductive paradigm.

Because of the importance that Sprat places on accountability as credibility, the second fundamental attribute Sprat ascribes to the Royal Society through his critiques is the Society's inductive means for credentialing knowledge and fact. He evaluates medieval learning and its deductive method of inquiry: "[m]oncks, in their solitary, and idle course of life" were as limited in their group inquiry as the solitary, classical philosopher (14). The Scholastics or "Schole-men," for Sprat, illustrate "how farre more importantly a good Method of thinking, and a right course of apprehending things, does contribute towards the attaining of perfection in true knowledge, then the strongest, and most vigorous wit in the World, can do without them" (15). By comparison, Sprat implies that the Society's method is "a good Method of thinking and right course of apprehending things"; it is transparent, publicly credible, and focused on natural philosophy. He characterizes the method of the Scholastics, on the other hand, as disputation or

word play devoted to syllogistic deduction. Its fundamental shortcoming is that it "rely'd on *general Terms*, which had not much foundation in *Nature*; and also because they took no course, but that of *disputing* . . . insisting altogether on establish'd *Axioms*" (16-7). The dependence on axioms that Sprat critiques is itself a critique of the larger, deductive methodology for inquiry opposed to the indicative epistemology of the Royal Society.[18] A deductive epistemology begins with what is already known, "some generall Definitions of things themselves according to their universal Natures: Then divided them into parts, and drew them out into several propositions, which they layd down as Problems: these they controverted on both sides: and by many nicities of Arguments, and citations of Authorities, confuted their adversaries, and strengthened their own dictates" (Sprat 16). A method based on disputation creates a paradigm that substitutes rhetoric for the epistemology it should complement. "Nicities of Arguments and citations of Authorities" become rhetorical maneuvers that take the place of inquiry and limit what can be known. The Society's inductive epistemology corrects flaws in the deductive method, which are "confin'd, within their own Bounds, and not be suffer'd to hinder the enlargement of the territories of other *Sciences*" (Sprat 21). In Sprat's estimation, deduction confines itself to proving the validity of assumptions, axioms, and givens, rather than focus on the details of the natural world and experience. Scientific practice is reduced to rhetorical ornament.

Enlarging knowledge, the goal Sprat assigns the Royal Society, shifts the methodological focus from strict, rhetorical disputation to an inquiry into "all the Works of *Nature*, or *Art*, which can come within their reach" (61). Sprat does not renounce rhetoric completely. It is, after all, bound up with the process of making knowledge inductively. Instead, Sprat outlines an

[18] The main historian of eighteenth-century rhetoric Wilbur Samuel Howell notes that a methodology based on axioms, "self-evident propositions and lucid definitions," was characteristic of philosophers "who recognized Descartes as their leader and who proceeded through reason and principle"—reasoning through disputation and proofs—as opposed to the "method of experimental philosophers or Baconians who proceeded through induction" (63). Sprat's critique recommends the experimental method that "proceeded through induction."

epistemology that determines a complementary rhetoric that makes natural facts plain so that a reader can induce truths about the "works of nature." It is not the equivocal rhetoric of deductive disputation. The emerging inductive epistemology that Sprat describes is a collective endeavor of the Royal Society: "They have labor'd . . . They have striven . . . They have try'd . . . They have studied . . . They have attempted" (62). His apologetic replaces isolated deductive disputation with an active, collaborative induction, that "labors, strives, and studies" to expand understanding. Sprat implies that the collaborative and active work among the Society's scientists builds on a broad range of perspectives and information in order to yield greater scientific understanding. The members report "[t]heir *Matter* . . . before their *weekly meetings*, to undergo a just and full examination . . . [so] that they might enjoy the benefits of a *mix'd Assembly*, which are largeness of Observation, and diversity of Judgments, without the mischiefs that usually accompany it, such as confusion, unsteddiness, and the little animosities of divided Parties" (91). The collaboration of the Society's members in knowledge-making not only held scientists accountable by putting them in conversation with one another, but it also gave them a venue for sharing the knowledge their active effort has generated. The limited inquiry of a single researcher could achieve neither goal. As an apology for and defense of a new scientific epistemology, the *History* must represent the Society's practices as stable or potentially stabilizing after the "little animosities of divided Parties" during the Civil Wars in order to make a case for the Society's viability. The diversity of opinions yields a broader range of information that scientists might observe and consider to draw more reliable conclusions.

Paradoxically, the Royal Society's methodological attention to accuracy and reliability also accommodated a large degree of uncertainty. Steven Shapin explains that scientific collaboration was modeled on the "practice known as civil conversation," in order to establish

and maintain a reliable network of scientists, which would consequently guarantee the perpetuation of empirical inquiry (351). Civil conversation was the Society's answer to the factious politics that shaped the earlier part of the seventeenth century: "[t]he goal of conversation was not understood as instrumental, save in the sense that the maintenance of public discourse, and one's continuing participation in it, offered members the possibility of future instrumental actions in which they might require the assistance of others. Knowledge, of course, figured in the practice of conversation as did judgments of the legitimate content and character of knowledge" (Shapin 351). Essentially, conversation ensured future participation and inquiry, which would further the inductive program. However, that "establishment of a space which was so securely bounded that dispute could occur safely within it was a difficult accomplishment in social cartography" (Shapin and Schaffer 303). The concession to this challenge and to civility was a social arrangement of the new scientific community that, contrary to modern expectations for scientific rigor, emphasized the discourse of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century conversation more than the actual scientific knowledge it generated: "[t]o require too great a rigor, precision, and certainty might be to put too great a strain upon conversation; it was to endanger its continuance. Certain conceptions of truth and precision were not worth that price" (351). The scientific context of a collaborative, "civil conversation" could absorb differing opinions as well as fostering new ones. The "price" of civility, the price for maintaining this fecund, scientific trying ground, was the "rigor, precision, and certainty" that post-Restoration scientific epistemologies would come to prefer.[19] Although falling short of

[19] What could be known or revealed about a person biographically was a controversy in biography throughout the eighteenth century. Whether letters should be published without an author's permission or even posthumously, for instance, was a question of what biography should protect to maintain the civil character of the biographical subject. North noted that leaving out "what is scandalous and unfit for common practice" in representing the private person has advantages for inculcating "good sense" (59). By the end of the eighteenth-century and the intimate nature of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, questions of biographical propriety were largely answered or, at least, reframed.

modern scientific methodology, this emergent scientific epistemology negotiated what could be known in order to open a space for later findings.

The mutual acknowledgement of such open spaces also protected some knowledge from inquiry: Sprat's apologetics, for instance, insist that the methodology of the Royal Society does not challenge doctrinal Christianity, the worship of God, or any religious practice (345-78).[20] Restoration conceptions of Christian truth "were not worth the price" of exacting precision. As Dear points out, natural philosophers or scientists in the Restoration such as Robert Boyle "spoke of things that were 'above reason," he was demarcating a proper role for philosophy—experimental philosophy, in his case—that by its very nature was not exhaustive or everything that existed or could be known. What was left over was the transcendental part, whether 'God' or 'Nature'" ("Intelligibility" 149). The distinction that Boyle draws acknowledges limits on understanding, whether it is based on a deductive or inductive model. The social unrest that had intertwined politics and religious practice necessitated such demarcations for maintaining social order. Yet an inductive epistemology that operated on an accumulation of information would also require an indeterminate space for drawing conclusions and inducing knowledge if it were to allow what was not yet known. The inductive paradigm, then, could function at a respectful remove from what "could be known" about the natural world or selfhood, yet incorporate such mysteries as facts to be considered when inducing patterns that comprise knowledge.

[20] Michael Hunter argues that Sprat's apologetics in the *History* had to adopt a Latitudinarian tone in which reason necessarily complements spirituality if the Society's scientific paradigm was to be reconciled to that of established religion: the rationalist methodology of the Royal Society had to be represented as harmonious with a rationalist tendencies embraced by much of the Anglican Church at the time (67). Yet it is also possible to interpret this connection not as a purely Latitudinarian alignment, but instead "to see this union of the two bodies, one old, one very new, rather as a self-legitimating move by the Royal Society to attach itself to the established center" (Vickers 51). From a practical perspective, Sprat's anchoring of the Royal Society to the Anglican Church was as cautiously politic as it was paradigmatically devout.

Just as North asserted the importance of multiple sources for achieving accuracy and reliability in life writing, so did he also acknowledge the necessity of uncertainty. North notes that "all history of one sort or other is like painting, never exactly true; that which comes nearest is best, and however discrepant, there may be some use or other that makes it reasonable not to slight, but to preserve it" (North 77). Because the history of a life is "never exactly true," the uncertainty that discrepancies can introduce into life writing might "make reasonable not to slight but to preserve it" regardless. North's methodological approach to life writing and its ability to accommodate uncertainty emerges within the context of the new inductive methodology and its focus on multiple, diverse proofs as the source for establishing knowledge. The deductive epistemology from which scientific induction was emerging allowed for no uncertainty. This sort of rhetoric and methodology were well-suited to metaphysical questions that philosophers like Thomas Aquinas would have raised in his *Summa Theologica* about the existence of God, angels (and how many might fit on the head of a pin), Creation, and the purpose of humankind. The unassailable given of Aquinas's methodology was that God was the immutable, fundamental fact of existence; for the inductive scientist God was out of bounds, scientifically unobservable and, thus, accepted as neither proven nor disproven.[21] Uncertainty would undermine the deductive methodology and fundamentally disprove the knowledge it presumed to reinforce. Such a model provides a basis for genres of life writing like hagiography, which seek to frame every action in the context of sainthood and hold every aspect of the life accountable to that definitive saintliness.

[21] Since the Royal Society took up scientific inquiry of the natural, diurnal world rather than the transcendent, spiritual realm, the rhetoric of deductive epistemology would, indeed, seem like "theory composed of generalizations constantly revised by reference to practice, as a body of ritualistic conventions that have forgotten their original contact with the real world" (Howell, *England* 65). The New Science sought to link rhetorical convention to an inductive epistemology that prided itself on reflecting a natural operation of observation and conclusion.

In this emergent period, life writers contemporary to Sprat and North deferred to a deductive model. By Izaak Walton's account, every sin Donne might have committed and every ribald word he might have written were filtered through the man's faith, so that the life writing expressed less about the life written than about a religious epistemology. In Gilbert Burnett's account of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, a single moment, a deathbed conversion, overwrites Rochester's questionable ethics and religious practice; indeed, it overwrites the political and social implications of libertinism in full, converting them into a cautionary tale that reaffirms the importance of Christianity in a period reacting to the earlier strictures of Puritanical, Christian governance. As the Royal Society institutionalized itself during the Restoration and eighteenth century, it made analogous shifts based on its epistemology possible in other fields. Instances of both epistemologies can be located in the life writing of the period, but North's *General Preface* in particular illustrates the transitional, emergent nature of this epistemological shift. Unpublished during his lifetime and remaining unpublished for roughly two centuries after the Royal Society's beginnings, the *Preface* advocates an inductive approach for life writing that would be honed in Samuel Johnson's, Oliver Goldsmith's, and James Boswell's approaches to develop increasingly intimate biographical form.

The degree of intimacy with selfhood that North's life writing adopted and eighteenth-century biographies assumed was possible through facts credentialed by multiple sources for accuracy and reliability and an ability to absorb, accommodate, and use any uncertainty that went beyond those facts. More importantly, however, Restoration life writing developed through an epistemological dependence on the hallmark of the new inductive sciences: experiment is the method for establishing and inducing facts that the inductive scientist could use to make knowledge. Sprat's *History* describes numerous experiments by the Society's earliest natural

philosophers. Their scientific methodology demonstrates the interconnectedness of experiment and experience that provide a reference for the inductive epistemological context in which the new biographical form emerged. For instance, in relaying "A PROPOSAL For making WINE by Dr. Goddard" and "A RELATION OF THE *PICO TENERIFFE* Receiv'd from some considerable Merchants and Men worthy of Credit, who went to the top of it," Sprat's apologetics equate experiment with experience (193-99, 200-27). The observations of Dr. Goddard comprise a narrative of the means of making wine from cane sugar grown in the Barbados, with special attention to the connections between natural occurrences that threaten crops of cane and the consequences of superstitious responses to these events. Likewise, the narrative of "considerable," credible merchants who climbed a volcano in Barbados gives an account of what they saw of the land and its inhabitants.

As instances of the Royal Society's scientific methodology, these scientific accounts provide examples of what Peter Dear has labeled the Restoration "event experiment," which is more of a historical account than a scientific report (Dear, "Narratives" 15). The event experiments provided narratives that, when credentialed collaboratively and considered corporately, allow the Royal Society's natural philosophers to induce truths about the natural world that conflate experiment with experience. Sprat gives a succinct description of the Royal Society's epistemological considerations that made the event experiment necessary:

> The True Philosophy must be first of all begun, on a scrupulous, and severe examination of particulars: from them, there may be some general Rules, with great caution drawn: But it must not rest there, nor is that the most difficult part of its course: It must advance those Principles, to the finding out of new effects, through all the varieties of Matter: and so both the courses must proceed orderly

> together; from experimenting, to Demonstrating, and from demonstrating, to Experimenting again. (31)

The Society's approach to inquiry and understanding is essentially experimental: its members are "scrupulous," rational, and regimented in their inquiry. They begin with "severe examination," proceed with "great caution," and cycle through experimentation and demonstration of the findings in an "orderly" fashion. To force too much order on the process of experimentation, however, restricts its usual direction: "it is certain, that *Experimenting* is; like that which is call'd *Decence* in humane life; which, though it be that, by which our Actions are to be fashion'd; and though many things may be plausibly said upon it; yet is never wholly to be reduc'd to *standing Precepts*; and may almost as easily be *obtain'd*, as defin'd" (Sprat 90). Sprat makes the experimental epistemology of the Royal Society analogous to "decency," linking it to an inborn, personal quality that is more naturally practiced than formulated into "standing precepts." In this regard, the new scientific epistemology was framed by experience, and the practice of scientific experimentation or human decency is determined situationally, not the other way around. Experience and decency cannot be made to conform wholly to standing precepts or deductive axioms, and any epistemology that represents them thus is not, Sprat implies, accurate and true to nature.

Sprat's description of "experimenting" as a fluid, responsive practice that depends on disinterested experience and personal observation contrasts with the deductive epistemology and its deference to established, determined, external standards. Not only is it a methodological distinction, but inductive experiments are also an autodidactic moments, which Sprat cites as additional justification for the new method. Later forms like novels, periodicals, and biographies would justify their literary methods with the same autodidactic value. Since the emerging science

represents the "honest pursuit of the conveniences, decences, and ornaments of a mortal condition, by just and regular ways," a necessary and productive consequence of this experiential grounding is the experimental scientist's commitment to "regard the *least*, and the *plainest* things, and those that may appear at *first* the most *inconsiderable*; as well as the *greatest Curiosities*" (367, 90). The "just and regular" scientific approach assigns value to "things" that allow empirical observers the most ready means of fashioning modes of experimentation, "the least and the plainest things" that are most common to experience. The move to an inductive model that challenged older, classical models of inquiry reprioritized the process of inquiry and knowledge making: an empirical scientist began in observation of the least and plainest things which might "appear at first the most inconsiderable." The larger model is a product derived directly from these seemingly insignificant details. The Royal Society's inductive epistemology transferred experience from the commonplace to the consequential, forming the pattern of a larger principle. The biographical form that emerged in this context thrived on the significance of the seemingly inconsiderable details and used them as a basis for inducing a principle of selfhood, representing the self more intimately and accurately through the least and plainest things than earlier life writing practices.

The inculcation of "decency" possible in the natural scientist or, more broadly, the scientific observer, is a function of personal observation and crucial to the practice of inductive science. Sprat compares the function of inductive, experimental philosophy to the improvement of Christian virtue: "spiritual *Repentance* is a careful survay of our former Errors, and a resolution of amendment. The spiritual *Humility* is an observation of our Defects, and a lowly sense of our weakness" (367). In Sprat's estimation, the Christian practice of "repentance" comes through an inductive process of examining available data through a "survey of our former

errors," in order to induce the more general "defects" in character that define a set of specific, personal, human "weaknesses." Sprat balances religious practices for improvement against the practices of the "*Experimenter* . . . [who] must have some Qualities that answer to these: He must judge aright of himself; he must misdoubt the best of his own thoughts; he must be sensible of his own ignorance, if ever he will attempt to purge and renew his Reason" (367). By Sprat's account, the practices of the new inductive science hone the practices of Christian repentance. To "renew one's reason" is to strengthen the personal means for improving personal religious practice. It becomes a means for teaching people to teach themselves, to inculcate the means for personal religious improvement. The epistemology that Sprat describes puts the burden of responsibility on the observer to recognize and verify facts in order to induce patterns that are credible as scientific truth. This crucial feature of the new epistemology provides the means through which the identity of the scientist can come to supplant the contending identities that stoked the furor of the Civil Wars in England.

The distinction between the static deductive system and the autodidactic inductive epistemology is evident in Roger North's biographical theorizing, which models a life writing that can instill "decene" in readers. In his *General Preface*, North invites readers to recognize his inductive approach and acknowledges the distinction between a deductive pattern of life writing, like his contemporary Izaak Walton, and the new inductive model:

> One thing remains for me to clear, and that is the reason why, after so much as hath been said of private biography, I produce here three lives of persons who had all considerable posts of preferment, and two them concerned deep in affairs of the public. I grant this to be so, and yet I stand to my point, that the lives I write are private; for I shall not go out of my way to fall upon foreign affairs or national

> concerns, at least not so much as may be expected, and indeed no more than in the lives of those persons is absolutely necessary to account for their passing their time, and what they immediately transacted, and no further. (North 82)

Life writing before North and the advent of the Royal Society would have focused on the larger, public personae of the three lives North writes for his brothers: Francis, the Lord-keeper, Sir Dudley, and Dr. John North. Deductive life writing would have taken the public offices of each man as a given premise, indicative of every aspect of each man's life, so that their public policy would become the guiding principle for understanding their private lives. North acknowledges that some of this public persona is "necessary" to discuss their lives fully, but only to the degree that it can help "account for their passing their time, and what they immediately transacted, and no further." The private details balanced against the public personas give readers the opportunity to improve themselves by observing the lives of the Norths. In this arrangement, their lives become the sum of the specific events marking the passage of time. Personal experience becomes a narrative of event experiments that make observation, understanding, and selfhood possible.

By linking the close observation of event experiments to "*Decence* in humane life," Sprat charges inductive experimentation and the particularity it examines with a moralizing force (90). North, too, locates life writing's promise to impart "decence" through the seemingly inconsequential details that define simply how people passed their time. He asserts that the "history of private lives adapted to the perusal of common men is more beneficial (generally) than . . . the acts and monuments of famed [leaders]. The gross reason is because the latter contain little if anything comparate or applicable to instruct a private economy, or tending to make a man either wiser or more catelous in his own proper concerns" (51). The individual

events of a person's life are, according to Sprat, more applicable to the "common" readers who "peruse" life writing. The larger, overriding principles that a deductive approach might use to interpret a person's life can "induce a positive inconvenience, as was feigned of Quixote," since "great actions and events superior to a [common] man's own condition" have more potential to confuse rather than illustrate (North 51). The small particularities of private life, evident through an inductive approach to selfhood, relate to the everyday experiences of readers, and so "instruct a private economy" to help the reader be "wiser" and "more cautious (catelous)." The process moves the reader to apply inductive observations of another person's experience to oneself, through life writing that can be observed in the same manner that a Restoration scientist would have observed a scientific event experiment. The shift toward an inductive epistemology evident in Sprat would, forty years after Sprat's history, come to make the intimate biography of the eighteenth century and its didactic project possible on the foundations postulated by John Locke.

Articulating the New Scientific Epistemology: Sprat's Call for Rhetorical Reform

A crucial part of the development of later literary genres and biography in particular depends on the writing's accessibility for later readers. Long the province of the educated, deductive and syllogistic reasoning seemed even more at odds with the pragmatic approached of the Royals Society. In the earlier part of the seventeenth century, rhetoric had served divisive ends. Scientists like Sprat and Locke theorized how it could unify differences and disperse scientific knowledge for the improvement of humankind. Kuhn has argued that a unique rhetoric develops alongside any epistemological shifts in science as a means of expressing concepts unique to the paradigm (64). A new paradigm must develop a language for expressing itself and its findings to convey the knowledge it generates. Dear builds on Kuhn's assertion, arguing that

the rhetoric used to relay information that supports the epistemology is as important to the paradigm as the epistemology itself:

> An account of an action is an inseparable part of its meaning, just as the meaning of the account itself relies on the implicit referent. Thus the meaning of an account of an experimental event—that which makes it an account of an experimental event rather than a series of marks on paper—is provided by its implicit reference to a spatiotemporally defined region . . . manipulated by a human agent. The meaning of that spatiotemporal region itself—what makes it discernible as an experimental event—is conferred, reciprocally by the *account* of an experimental event. (Dear, "Narratives" 136-7)

An account of the event experiment depends on "scientific *literary* practice," and for Royal Society writers like Sprat and John Locke, such accounts stress the importance of a new rhetoric that departs from the older, disputative rhetoric of deduction (Dear, "Narratives" 135). The rhetoric of the event experiment must frame the experiential action within time and place to give "meaning" to the experience, representing it as "discernible," observable, and thus factual. Biography had the potential to give meaning to selfhood as an experiential event, its factuality bounded spatiotemporally like the event experiment of the natural philosopher. The emergence of a new rhetoric to accompany the inductive paradigm made its design compelling and persuasive in the face of other paradigms, opening possibilities for new areas of inquiry. As an emergent form, eighteenth-century biography tacitly refined a rhetoric of self that corresponded to the model of scientific developments and to their prescribed, rhetorical, and literary practices for representing experience.

By involving readers as experiential witnesses, the narrative account of an event experiment models its rhetoric on the epistemological practice of inductive science: readers become observers who must draw conclusions from the facts that the event experiment presents. They become, as Shapin and Schaffer argue, virtual witnesses: "[t]he technology of virtual witnessing involves the production in a *reader's* mind of such an image of an experimental scene as obviates the necessity for either direct witness or replication . . . The validation of experiments, and the crediting of their outcomes as matters of fact, necessarily entailed their realization in the laboratory of the mind and the mind's eye" (60). The onus of credentialing fact, as a virtual witness, lies with the reader who must virtually construct an experiment and observe its outcomes. The intangibility that frames this experience does not negate the "outcomes as matters of fact." Empirical readers must still induce the scientific truths it indicates as if the experience were first-hand. The account of the experiment translated and transferred experience. In order to make this reconstruction possible, a reader required rhetorical clarity that encouraged conceptualization of the event experiment's narrative.

Sprat's distrust of older rhetorical models linked to a deductive epistemology is evident first in his proposal for a new English academy that will promote a rhetoric amenable to the "*English Genius*" that "generally love[s] to have Reason set out in plain, undeceiving expressions" (40). It would facilitate an understanding within "the laboratory of the mind and the mind's eye" (Shapin and Schaffer 60). A rhetoric modeled after the "English genius" is aligned with the simple pleasures "of the Fields," rather than the "Humour, and Wit, and Variety, and Elegance of Language, are chiefly to be fetch'd" of those who indulge the in the "Pleasures of the Town" (41). An English academy would entail some "labor spent about in its [the English language's] polishing," since it had been "fashioning, and beautifying it self" from the early

modern period "down to the beginning of our late *Civil Wars*" (41, 42). He reasons that the "late *Civil Wars* . . . themselves" are a culture moment "wherein all Languages use[d] . . . to increase by extraordinary degrees; for in such busie, and active times, there arise more new thoughts of men, which must be signfi'd, and varied by new expressions . . . which were introduc'd by our *Religious Sects*; and many outlandish phrases" (42). The tumult that shifts language to address the needs of "busy and active times" consequently introduces a superfluity that obscures meaning and, worse still, threatens civil society. Sprat claims that "if some sober and judicious Men, would take the whole Mass of our Language into their hands, as they find it, and would set a mark on the ill Words; correct those, which are to be retain'd; admit, and establish the good" (42). Such a language and a rhetoric would be more amenable to the English genius, but such improvements would only be possible "when minds are somewhat settled, their Passions allai'd, and the peace of . . . [the] Country gives . . . opportunity for such diversion" (42). The call for an English academy mirrors the chartering of the Royal Society: each seeks to institutionalize complementary parts of an emergent, inductive paradigm for improving English society that depends on the "sober and judicious" application of empirical reason.[22]

Various approaches to inductive rhetoric emphasize alternately the content and structure of the writing, even though they are epistemologically inseparable. In the final analysis, however, these approaches underline the didactic consequence rhetoric has on the reasoning, empirical reader. Howell summarizes the arguments for rhetorical reform that many inductive scientists made as "recommend[ing] inductive procedures in rhetorical argumentation, strict

[22] Howell asserts that the "main conclusion to be drawn from" his tome "is that the changes which took place in logical and rhetorical doctrine between 1700 and 1800 are perhaps best interpreted as responses to the emergence of the new science" (*Eighteenth-Century* 5). His argument depends on an assumption since shown to be lacking in social and cultural nuance, that scientific empiricism alone drove discursive changes in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, rhetorically and epistemologically, re-articulaing what could be known and how it could be expressed rhetorically in the eighteenth-century

standards in probable arguments . . . and the concept of plainness in . . . literary style" (*Eighteenth-Century* 698). Stanley Fish, on the other hand, challenges Howell's argument outright, asserting that scholars "must . . . give up the notion that the decisive or explanatory influence in the fashioning of late seventeenth-century style was the rise of science," religious belief, and political affiliation (*Self-Consuming* 375-6). He prefers examining seventeenth-century rhetoric on the level of an author-reader relationship, in which readers are led to "a point of certainty and clarity" or, conversely and more productively, to complication that raises "more problems than it solves" (*Self-Consuming* 376). A reader, consequently, is forced to make choices in order to make meaning, gaining experience, knowledge, and self-understanding in the process. The dispute between Howard and Fish, however, shows how modern biography produced a via media that brought the procedures of the Royal Society to the ethics of reading. Fish's theorization complements Sprat's practice and the impetus for a rhetoric that matches inductive practice. Despite his attack, his model also complements Howell's outline for the uses of the straightforward plainness that invites readers to experience an experiment: Fish argues that rhetorical arrangement invites engagement; Howell, that the scientific content engages the reader. Modern biography brought both practices into alignment.

Restoration life writing demonstrates an appreciation for the balance between rhetoric and its effects on the reader. Roger North distinguishes between the "choice of words, charming periods, invention of figures, interspersion of sentences, and facetious expressions" as the primary "ingredients . . . brought to adorn fiction" and that they might even be applied judiciously to improve histories and life writing in particular (59-60). For North, a judicious application of complex "periods," "figures," and "facetious expressions" is contingent upon how true to the original subject such application an might be, how truthful it is, and, most importantly,

how edifying the complicated rhetoric renders the writing: "fiction, however deliciously dressed, hath not those advantages to improve as history hath, for that it is not true is a cooling reflection. And what force can any moral arguments or sentences have that are derived upon feigned events? Nothing can invigorate eloquence like truth" (60). The value of life writing is in its adherence to truth in North's estimation, and the more true the writing in relating a life, rhetorically and factually, the more valuable it is. This factuality is bound to the experience of engaging the rhetoric, like observing the event experiment.

But the value of truthful life writing does not diminish the rhetorical adornment characteristic of fiction. According to North, life writing and fiction are set apart by their end function, their capacity to improve the lives and minds of common readers. North's claim—that "[t]here is great art, as well as felicity, in making a good description of plain facts, and it is . . . justice and integrity of sense, and significancy of language, that sets it off"—recalls an inductive paradigm that privileges "plain facts" over axiomatic principles and writing that translates experience through accounts of an event experiment (60-1). Translations of experience, like accounts of the complicated event experiment, were connected to the "justice and integrity of sense, and significancy of language" that would provide a straightforward record, inviting readers to induce truths about a person's life. If life writers were to manage all of the information about a person's experience, they would need a style that would make the self accessible and engaging in order to make moral improvement possible.

While a scientific understanding guided the choice of details and their arrangement as rhetorics of self, these details themselves become distinctly characteristic of a particular person by their connection to other epistemologies. What reads like an absolute denouncement of rhetoric in Sprat's *History*, Brian Vickers argues, is actually a call for stringent language reform

to yield a more lucid, concise rhetoric amenable to civil conversation, both in the Royal Society and British society at large (6-7). Sprat claims "when I consider the means of *happy living*, and the causes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear recanting what I said before; and concluding that *eloquence* ought to be banish'd out of all *civil societies*, as a thing fatal to Peace and good Manners . . . it is a Weapon, which may be as easily procur'd by *bad* men, as *good*" (111). Sprat levels his vehemence against not only against the rhetoric of the "religious sects" who wielded it during the Civil Wars, but especially against their characteristic rhetoric, which he obliquely associates with the classical traditions of Aristotle and Cicero, a rhetoric that obscures understanding with ornamental language: "[w]ho can behold, without indignation, how many mists and uncertainties, these specious *Tropes* and *Figures* have brought on our Knowledge?" (112). Sprat argues that the use of language becomes the place where classical epistemologies, logical and rhetorical, have cultural purchase and dangerous implications if left unchecked. For Sprat, the connection between science and rhetoric has consequential social and cultural implications.

The *History* articulates a new paradigm that sets specific assumptions for how knowledge can be acquired and how it can be expressed, advocating a rhetorical approach with "some kind of economical relation to its subject matter" (Vickers 7). Sprat calls for a transparent rhetoric that facilitates participation in civil conversation, an approach to language that is succinct and simple:

> They have therefore been most rigorous in putting in execution, the only Remedy, that can be found for this *extravagance* . . . to return back to the primitive purity, and shortness, when men deliver'd so many *things*, almost in an equal number of *words*. They have extracted from all their members, a close, naked, natural way of speaking; positive expressions; clear senses; a native easiness: bringing all things

> as near the Mathematical plainness, as they can: and preferring the language of Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants, before that of Wits, or Scholars. (113)

The length of Sprat's definition contrasts sharply with the lengths he takes to describe and disprove other models for language. Using words like "purity," "shortness," "close," "naked," "natural," "clear," and "plainness," he phrases this definition to stress the virtues of straightforward brevity that the definition itself lays bare. Sprat credentials his definition of language by associating it with nationality and mathematics. He proposes a language that exhibits mathematical attributes: the economical ratio of "things" to "words" almost "in equal number" and with a "mathematical plainness." Mathematics can be reasoned through without any training in superfluity that has corrupted language in Sprat's estimation, since such plainness makes scientific research accessible for those outside of the Society.

From the importance experimental philosophers placed on mathematical language, Mary Poovey extrapolates a larger world view that influenced the development of the self in relation to larger social structures in England: "experimental moral philosophers were able to claim" that their observations of the natural world "were simultaneously derived from (a kind of) observation, aligned with the (visible) harmony of God's universe, and universally true. Thus the figure of mathematical harmony—not the instrument of numerical representation—was used to ground the kind of knowledge considered useful to self-government" (*History* 156). A mathematical language was based on a mathematical worldview, in which an inductive philosophy could tally and observe facts then draw conclusions. The rhetoric that facilitated the practice of this epistemology within this scientific paradigm was "useful to self-government"—the responsibility to draw judicious conclusions about oneself and one's place in the world. Sprat underscores the importance of a rhetoric that recognizes its epistemological commitments.

Accessibility to scientific fact was enabled by an appeal to the "native easiness" of a straightforward rhetoric that would encourage virtual witnesses among the "Artizans, Countrymen, and Merchants." A transparent style would enable the Royal Society to communicate with merchants and laborers as well as "wits and scholars" and, more importantly, would encourage a self-governance that made the didactic potential of the inductive paradigm more efficacious. It had the potential to open selfhood to the view of all.

Both the excesses of language that Sprat derides and the reforms that he prescribes as a remedy have strong implications for conceptualizing selfhood and representing it biographically through rhetorics of self in the eighteenth century. A biographical selfhood would invite the reader to witness the life of another person virtually in order to induce the self through a narrative account of experience. As Roger North asserts, such witnessing encouraged self-governance and self-improvement, "to instruct a private economy, or tending to make a man either wiser or more cautelous in his own proper concerns" (51). Epistemologically, John Locke further elaborates on the relationship between selfhood and the rhetoric that translates it in his theorization of understanding. Locke individuates the inductive paradigm, moving it from the Royal Society's larger scientific program with implications for self-improvement to conceptualize a selfhood founded on the practice of self-government.

Individuating the New Scientific Epistemology: Locke's Empirical Selfhood

The tenets of the new science in the *History* and the *General Preface* correlate tidily, yet the intersection between Thomas Sprat's attempt to institutionalize the new paradigm and Roger North's conceptualization of induction-based life writing point to a causal relationship between science and life writing: this paradigmatic causality resonates through eighteenth-century

thought, even fields as dissimilar from science as the humanities. Nowhere is this resonance more clear than in John Locke's influence on eighteenth-century epistemology and rhetoric, and no form is more conscious of Locke than eighteenth-century biography. McKeon asserts that, for the arts, "the effort to define the integrity and autonomy of aesthetic response and aesthetic judgment . . . took place not in opposition to, but in explicit emulation of, a normative model of empirical and scientific cognition. It was by imitating the emergent method and value system of the natural sciences that the arts learned their own distinctive mode of being" ("Mediation" 385). The scientific mode of writing that emerged alongside the inductive epistemology to translate an experiment into narrative as experience provided the "normative model" for Restoration life writing and eighteenth-century biography, and increasing thoroughness of this scientific paradigm's articulation created an increasingly normative model. Biography's focus on translating lived experience into print took its cue directly from the scientific epistemology and corresponding rhetoric that sought to relay experimental experience into a repeatable experience that observes could witness at a remove. Not only could it be a means for an institutional method, but also a means for understanding selfhood biographically, within the context of a community of readers and, ultimately, in relation to structures of authority, both governmental and clerical. Locke's essay narrowed the focus of the emerging, scientific paradigm from the broader institutional model to a more specific, unique model of selfhood that biography would emulate and put into practice.[23]

[23] The process of articulation that McKeon sites recalls the articulation of a scientific paradigm that Kuhn theorizes: a paradigm's "refinement," as is evident in the articulation of earlier paradigms, has occurred when scientists "were working both with fact and with theory, and their work produced not simply new information but a more precise paradigm, obtained by the elimination of ambiguities that the original from which they worked had retained" (34). Articulating the paradigm of the new, empirical science would have been first a matter of refining the system and the practices, followed by a refinement of the participants in the system and, eventually, of people themselves. The shift moves from the larger systematic context to the fields that emerge as the context is articulated, like biography.

The institutionalization of the Royal Society set the terms in which John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* could conceptualize an empirical model of selfhood, developed by scientific practices and systems of value. Locke's model of self and language articulated the Royal Society's experimental, scientific paradigm by deepening its scientific implications. He individuates the paradigm by applying the same standards for inductive empiricism that Sprat iterates as Royal Society practice: careful, disinterested observation of experimentation; a judicious consideration of all facts, no matter how mundane or seemingly trivial; and an inductive pattern-finding that reinvents its conclusions as new facts emerge from continued observation. Epistemologically and rhetorically, these standards depend on self-awareness and self-governance to foster self-recognition. In Locke's model, selfhood is the persistence of self-recognition over time. He approaches human understanding within the larger context of the Royal Society's increasing emphasis on empirical knowledge acquired through a regular, experimental method: "[t]he Understanding, like the Eye, whilst it makes us see, and perceive all other Things, takes no notice of it self: And it requires Art and Pains to set it at a distance, and make it its own Object" (1.1.1). His emphasis on observation, "the eye," and method, "art and pains," point to an empiricist model of human understanding that emphasizes the role of observation and methodology for recognizing selfhood. It is through Locke's model of selfhood and the language that defines selfhood that the inductive paradigm finds its expression in fields of inquiry outside of the natural sciences studied by the Royal Society and its members.

Just as Sprat's articulation of the Royal Society's guiding principles and practices is evident in the theory of life writing that Roger North expounds, Locke epistemology of selfhood develops those same guiding, scientific principles into a model of consciousness widely

deployed in novels and periodical. Jill Marie Bradbury cites inductive scientists and Locke in particular whose "theories of language and science had . . . [a] strong influence on the conceptualization of prose kinds. The scientific revolutionaries . . . concern with semantics, referentiality, and rhetoric was perhaps the most important philosophical influence on the eighteenth-century understanding of literary kinds" (29). Because of their concern, the "new science unsettled relations between the fields of knowledge and their textual forms" and, more specifically, that the "epistemology of the new science influenced not only specific literary forms and general forms of discourse, but also systems of prose genre" (30). Bradbury coins "systems of prose genre" as a designation for deal with the indeterminate quality of many genres emerging in the period: "genre itself was a critical problem during the late seventeenth and eighteenth century, when there was no consistent principle for distinguishing among forms of prose literature. The increased diversity of print matter after the suspension of the Licensing Act in 1695 made classification even more problematic" (29). Her assertion points to three general effects the empiricist movement had on eighteenth-century literature: it influenced ways of knowing available through extant, "specific literary forms"; it shaped rhetorical models; and it enabled the emergence of new "systems of prose."

Locke's model of selfhood articulates practices that shape specific literary genres, giving form and function based on a Lockean epistemology. Titles of the novel form, in particular, were often character's names, marking a narrative of selfhood. The titles of periodicals, likewise, established a selfhood that determined the tenor of their articles and commentary. And biography's grounding drew heavily on the scientific epistemology espoused by the Royal Society and Locke. The novel's and the periodical's commitment to credentialing a fictionalized selfhood with a recognizable reproduction of experience is similar to biography's

representational effect, its depiction of a hypothetical selfhood. But biography depends on actual, observed experiences, like those that shape the development of the self in Locke's model. As a conceptualization of selfhood, Locke's individuated model is useful for interrogating the emergence of new systems of prose like biography, and the form's epistemological commitments to a rhetoric of self based on principles germane to the new science.

Like Sprat, Locke advances an inductive epistemology over the earlier deductive paradigm, and like many of the Restoration scientists articulating the inductive paradigm, Locke argued that the deductive epistemology is flawed in its misapplication of reason: its primary method of drawing conclusions, the syllogism, "shew[s] the connexion of the Proofs in any one instance, and no more: but in this, it is of no great use, since the Mind can perceive such Connexion where it really is, as easily, nay, perhaps, better without it," since the "Understanding is not taught to reason by these [syllogistic] Rules; it has a native Faculty to perceive the Coherence, or Incoherence of its *Ideas*, and can range them right, without any such perplexing Repetitions" (4.17.4). Locke's proto-psychological model of the mind gives it an inductive "faculty" that is capable of inducing natural "connections" between multiple, related things or differentiating unlike things. This faculty makes self-governance possible. The syllogistic model of deductive understanding, on the other hand, tries to force this mental faculty into an "artificial form" comprehensible "only to those who have thoroughly studied *Mode and Figure*" (4.12.4). Locke stresses the importance of the disinterest that Sprat advocates for members of the Royal Society and applies it to an individuated conceptualization of selfhood that emphasizes disinterested self-examination and self-discovery. Locke argues that his inductive conceptualization, more than Sprat's generalized scientific method, is more amenable to the ways people come to understand themselves and their world in a condition of civil liberty.

Locke's conceptualization of selfhood hinges on the assumption that understanding is the result of two interrelated sets of observation, sensing and reflecting, and the self's increasing recognition of both: the former comprises empirical observation of objects outside of the self; the latter, on what can be observed inside the self through memory (2.1.3-4). Each set converts observation into experience, in the same way that the Restoration event experiment rendered scientific models into experiential accounts. In Locke's model, observing the world empirically provides people with a collection of experiences, which they can use to synthesize a distinct, internal, coherent selfhood in relation to the outward world. In this configuration, the most decent person is able to improve by a disinterested examination of outer observations and inner reflections. On their own, these outward and inward functions offer no certainty of selfhood, but through the operation of consciousness, they come to cohere:

> For since consciousness always accompanies thinking, and 'tis that, that makes every one to be, what he calls *self*; and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things, in this alone consists *personal Identity, i.e.* the sameness of a rational Being: And as far as this consciousness can be extended backwards to any past Action or Thought, so far reaches the identity of that *Person*; it is the same *self* now it was then; and 'tis by the same *self* with this present one that now reflects on it, that that Action was done. (2.27.9)

That "consciousness always accompanies" thought indicates a separation between awareness and mental action; a person might be thinking, but also unaware. The "sameness of a rational being," for Locke, indicates sameness in the "rational" awareness that observes and reasons through the function of its own thinking processes. "what *Person* stands for . . . is a thinking intelligent Being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider it self as it self, the same thinking thing in

different times and places; which it does only by that consciousness, which is inseparable from thinking, and as it seems to me essential to it" (2.27.9). The persistent self observes its persistence over time and becomes a distinct person, distinct from outward circumstances and other people, in the same way that the Royal Society's experimental model called for deriving principles from available facts put to experimental tests (Sprat 31). Single moments cannot define selfhood in this epistemology; the sameness of a rational being is comprised of many distinct details. The task of biographical representation is to locate a selfhood that can cohere spatiotemporally, but at different times and in different places.

A consistency of self over time and place, experienced through discrete observation unites disparate pieces of information about a person's life in an accommodating rhetoric of self. Selfhood is the pattern that develops from the pieces, not an imposition or a deductive enthymeme. Such inductive continuity connects significant attributes with the least, plainest, most inconsiderable things, as Sprat describes them, which fall within the purview of an empirical scientist. Thus the character of a consistent selfhood runs throughout the situations in which it occurs, at different times and different places. If applied disinterestedly, the self-aware operation of the consciousness can objectify selfhood so that it can be it might be self-analyzed. Charles Taylor traces Locke's conceptualization of selfhood along a trajectory of historical precedents for modern notions of self, characterizing Locke's conceptualization of self as a hyper-objectivity so disinterested that it can actually substitute selfhood with an observation of the self. The practice of substituting the observation of selfhood for selfhood recalls the event experiment that Sprat describes, in which the written, second-hand observation of an experiment could stand in for witnessing it first-hand. A life written as experience, too, could stand in rhetorically as a second-hand observation of a person self.

Observing another's selfhood is easier, however, than observing one's own. Taylor classifies the process of forming a Lockean selfhood as "radical reflexivity," through which consciousness brings about the "transposition of first-person experience into an objectified, impersonal mode" (163). Taylor outlines the consequence of this disconnect and its reflexivity as an empirical process: "[t]he point of the whole operation is to gain a kind of control. Instead of being swept along to error by the ordinary bent of our experience, we stand back from it, withdraw from it, reconstrue it objectively, and then learn to draw defensible conclusions from it" (163). The innate capacity the self has for defining itself would offer a mechanism through which a self-aware consciousness could empirically "reconstrue" and "draw defensible conclusions from" the continuity of another person's selfhood from an almost empirical and experimental remove. This self-governance, which Taylor illuminates in Locke's theory of consciousness, allows for the construction and reconstruction of selfhood. It not only gives constitutive integrity to the self, but it allows for change over time. The continuity that Locke's model presupposes offers an epistemological reason for biographical continuity among the ostensibly disparate aspects of the self's experiences or character.

The radical reflexivity that produces selfhood through a re-reading of multiple experiences over time depends on a degree of self-objectification that, as McKeon points out, is the primary challenge of Lockean reflexivity: "[i]n the empiricism of philosophical inquiry, reflexivity is a problem because it threatens to compromise the degree of distance required by the understanding to disembed the nature of the thing itself as an abstract and general idea" ("Mediation" 407). Full empirical inquiry, particularly in comprehending the self, must "disembed" what is observed to "abstract or generalize" it. But he distinguishes between the role of objective reflexivity in the "empiricism of philosophical inquiry" that characterized the new

science and the "empiricism of aesthetics" that emerged, reasoning that, "[i]n the empiricism of aesthetics, however, reflexivity marks the crucially lesser distance that the imagination takes on its object, signifying that what is being represented is not only the nature of the thing but also, as figuration rather than full abstraction, the formal process of its representation" ("Mediation" 407). Methodologically, scientific facts of empirical, inductive inquiry had to "disembed the nature of the thing itself as an abstract and general idea" that could be constructed objectively through observation. As McKeon reasons, aesthetic empiricism still required a remove, but the reader's "imagination" more readily credentials the details the reader perceives as accurate reflections

The practices and rhetoric of this new science, the empirical epistemology of the Royal Society and John Locke, shared a less formalized practice—spectating. Addison and Steele introduced a literary eidolon, the Spectator, who presumes to arbitrate questions of eighteenth-century taste and opinion in the *Spectator* papers empirically, through observation, evaluation and discussion, and finally a discerning conclusion. The literary uses for a Lockean concept of selfhood are evident in the empiricism of aesthetics contextualizing the fiction and non-fiction genres of the period, including the popular *Spectator* periodical. McKeon argues that Joseph Addison and Richard Steele draw on the normative, scientific epistemology to formulate a critical theory for art dependent on observation, imagination, and understanding, which can disengage and construe an understanding of the artistic endeavor from a distance (McKeon, "Meditation" 391-2). What is significant is that Addison and Steele anchor the inductive empiricism on a particular self-awareness that defines itself by its empirical observations of the world.

Locke's model for inductive selfhood rippled through the literary selfhoods like the *Spectator* and, especially, through social practices, such as educating taste. The practices of the Spectator demonstrate the benchmarks of a scientific epistemology. Addison and Steele chose an appropriate venue for informal spectating common in the period, a coffee-house club, Habermas's trope for the public sphere where "Matters of Importance" are "laid and concerted" and where advanced aesthetic theory was brought into the consideration of different classes and professions (1.6). Empirically, an array of observations and viewpoints held the promise of a more sound social commentary, one induced from multiple perspectives. Since a broader range of participants would more likely appeal to the common experiences of many groups, the social commentary was likely to be more reliable as well.[24] Such epistemological practices indicate an inductive influence, but the Lockean construction of self is particularly evident in the conceptualization of the periodical's speaker, Mr. Spectator.

The Spectator, his club, and its scrutiny of the world beyond the coffeehouse define them. They recognize their selfhoods as distinct from others, taking the normative, empirical strategy Locke postulated to define selfhood as a way of creating a persona that seeks to observe and analyze the world morally and aesthetically. For Locke, the consciousness of self over time can only come through sensation and reflection, which comprise experience (2.1.3-4). Sensation and perception are the sources of retention and discernment, which in the *Spectator* accounts for the development of taste (2.9-11). Locke defines these three attributes of understanding as the "true

[24] Scholars often try to pin down the distribution and audience of the *Spectator*, but it was available through subscription, sharing, republication and distribution. Such widespread popularity suggests that spectating, after the empirical fashion of the new science, had become a pervasive model for understanding. It was a prose coffee-house group whose scrutiny was framed by the larger public scrutiny of the coffee-house culture that took up the *Spectator's* topics to direct its own inquiry and discussion. The paper was subject to the scientific analysis it modeled as social practice—a group of participants engaged in civil discourse around an event experience like Sprat describes in the *History*. Essentially, the club spectated and its conclusions were, in turn, spectated by readers. The conversation of these small reading communities came to define the larger public. Habermas asserts that the "periodical articles were not only made the object of discussion but were viewed as integral parts" (42). While the figure of the Spectator was not an inductive scientist, it practices align to the observation and induction of the

History of the first beginnings of Humane Knowledge; whence the Mind has its first Objects, and by what steps it makes its Progress to the laying in and storing up of those *Ideas*, out of which is to be framed all the Knowledge it is capable of . . . The best way to come to Truth . . . [is] to examine Things as really they are, and not to conclude they are, as we fancy of ourselves, or have been taught by others to imagine" (2.11.15). Experience makes self-reflexivity possible, allowing a selfhood to draw distinctions based on empirical "examinations of things as they really are," which is to perceive and discern distinctions between oneself, others, and other things. Addison and Steele devote the first two essays in their periodical series to distinguishing the Spectator as namesake of the papers and his club, a speaker whose empirical modus operandi, spectating and retaining information, yields aesthetic and moral conclusions.

Addison and Steele's Spectator establishes a relationship with readers through identity, claiming that "a Reader seldom peruses a Book with Pleasure 'till he knows whether the Writer of it be a black or a fair man, of a mild or cholerick Disposition, Married or a Batchelor, with other Particulars of the like nature, that conduce very much to the right Understanding of an Author" (1.1). Acknowledging that he is in his readers' view and subject to their observation, Mr. Spectator invites them to join him as spectators of his social practice. Spectating implicates them in the inductive process of a scientist. The Spectator acknowledges that, since "the chief trouble of Compiling, Digesting and Correcting will fall to my Share, I must do my self the Justice to open the Work with my own History" (1.1).[25] In order to discern the world and draw

[25] Wahrman situates Locke's conceptualization long eighteenth-century selfhood—a model in which "personhood, or selfhood, can in certain cases roam away from the man, move to another man, or be superseded by another self within the same man"—within a larger epistemology he labels the ancien régime (197). As he defines it, the ancien régime blurs the boundaries between the coherence of the selfhood and its exact, external expression, and he "insist[s] that equating interiority or deep emotion with self at the outset of the inquiry, as a universal experience rather than as a historically specific understanding of this experience, presupposes what needs to be demonstrated" (xvii). Wahrman argues Locke that establishes a "conceptual doubling, and especially the dissonances that it allowed one to imagine possible, appear to have been a persistent thread that ran through the ancien régime of identity" (Wahrman 197). While both uncertainty and certainty can be accommodated by a biographical rhetoric of self, the

moral and aesthetic distinctions about what he sees, the Spectator must relate the experiences of his "own history" that define his awareness of himself as a spectator. Observation, self-awareness, and experience empirically define the continuity of selfhood, which an observer can recognize and construct from patterns in experience.

Mr. Spectator and his papers illustrate how the use of empiricism to form "right judgment" was spreading beyond scientific inquiry. For Locke, this methodology came to represent an approach to the natural world and to the interior recesses of human understanding and self-consciousness. The intersection of science, society, and selfhood embodied in the persona of Mr. Spectator models the foundational practices the new scientific epistemology deployed in establishing "the integrity and autonomy of aesthetic response and aesthetic judgment—of the epistemology and psychology of the art experience" (McKeon, "Dramatic" 198). The "psychology of the art experience" is of particular importance to the formulation of a rhetoric of self. An understanding of selfhood based on the epistemology of the new science would shape its biographical representation and organization and, more importantly, the psychological response to an experience with that rhetorically-mediated selfhood.

Locke's argues that selfhood is a matter of self-consciousness perceiving itself over time and discerning the natural world to recognize itself as distinct. Locke asserts self-consciousness as the practice that allows the induction of selfhood from disparate experiences and characteristics: "[n]othing but consciousness can unite remote Existences into the same Person" (2.27.23). His conceptualization of "remote existences" that can define a person's selfhood accommodates variation so that the self is not static or bound by a single, definitive characteristic. As in Sprat's account of experimental practice, Locke postulates a selfhood that is

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fluid character of identity in the ancien régime shifts the significance from a core trait that defines the selfhood throughout its life, as would suit a deductive understanding of selfhood, to a set of empirical observations that reveal the experiences or, inductively, the experiment of selfhood.

fluid and responsive. While the experiences that define a self might seem contradictory, they complement each other and give nuance to a particular selfhood in Locke's model. This line of thought is predicated on an epistemological argument that Sprat makes when he gives equal importance to both glaringly significant and seemingly inconsequential facts (367). All facts are necessary for inducing a larger pattern for understanding: "[e]very Man's Reasoning and Knowledge, is only about the *Ideas* existing in his own Mind, which are truly, every one of them, particular Existences: and our Knowledge and Reasoning about other Things, is only our particular *Ideas*" (Locke 4.17.8). Collected, "particular existences," no matter how remote, provide a body of experiential detail from which the unique patterns that define selfhood can be induced.

The Spectator, too, employs this normative, scientific practice to interrogate morality and aesthetics by considering all facts as particular experiences. Discussions in the Spectator's fictitious club and the London coffee-houses depend on disinterested observation as a basis for analysis and interpretation. Mr. Spectator establishes a protocol for spectating eighteenth-century society through his own spectating selfhood:

> [W]here-ever I see a Cluster of People I always mix with them, tho' I never open my Lips but in my own Club. Thus I live in the World, rather as a Spectator of Mankind, than as one of the Species; by which means I have made my self a Speculative Statesmen, Soldier, Merchant, and Artizan, without ever medling with any Practical Part in Life. I am well versed in the Theory of an Husband, or a Father, and can discern the Errors in the Oeconomy, Business, and Diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them; as Standers-by discover Blots, which are apt to escape those who are in the Game. (1.4-5)

The observation that the Spectator models requires the observer to be at once both present and absent: it depends on the experience it garners through a reflexivity that is simultaneously present and distant, to "mix" with society, but to observe it as if he is not "one of the Species." Applied to the development of selfhood, the Spectator's function matches radical reflexivity Taylor finds in Locke. The Spectator must be "resolved to observe an exact Neutrality" in order to preserve the clarity and accuracy of observation, which will allow him to collect a variety of accurate insights into whatever social "cluster" he has chosen to observe (1.5). It is a pattern of self-recognition that positions selfhood in relation to the rest of society. The practice of spectating that Mr. Spectator embodies, both as namesake and interlocutor, is an epistemology concerned with observation that is characterized by disinterested experience free of "medling," with the goal of accumulating a variety of information.

Jürgen Habermas has argued that, through periodicals like the *Spectator*, "the public held up a mirror to itself; it did not yet come to a self-understanding through the detour of a reflection on works of philosophy and literature, art and science, but through entering itself into 'literature' as an object . . . The public that read and debated this sort of thing read and debated about itself" (43). The periodical selfhood translated experience scientifically into self by individuating the inductive experimentation of the Royal Society. As a methodology, the informal spectating in the *Spectator* offers insight into practices and theories that, as the Spectator asserts, allows for a knowledge even "better than" the understanding of "those engaged in them." The Spectator's "exact Neutrality" opens his inquiry to consider all aspects of the people he observes, and through this impartiality he has become conversant with the full range of practices particular to any field, the "Statesmen, Soldier, Merchant, and Artizan." By scrutinizing the particulars of practice closely, the Spectator has become "very well versed in the Theory" of husbandry or of

"Oeconomy" and "Business." The knowledge he has garnered autodidactically through his empirical inquiry even trumps the self-understanding of the people he observes. The Spectator's inquiry allows him to "discern the Errors" that "are apt to escape those" whose practices actually constitute "the Game." In this instance, inductive practices affect selfhood by eliciting a self-governance on the part of the observer based on the actions of the observed. The function of the Spectator as a self represents the empirical practices and didactic effects of an inductive epistemology on selfhood.[26]

Individuating the New Scientific Epistemology: A Responsible Rhetoric for Relaying Selfhood

As daily periodical writers, Addison and Steele describe themselves as scientists of the human condition with a responsibility to communicate with their audience. They eschewed the "rests and Nodding-places" of the "voluminous Writer," because, as writers who publish "by Piece-meal," they must "immediately fall into . . . [the] Subject, or . . . [their] Papers are thrown by as dull and insipid" (1.506). Given the periodical essayist's limits, an "Essay writer must practise in the Chymical Method, and give the virtue of a full Draught in a few Drops" (1.506). Their scientific approach exhibits a responsive and responsible rhetoric, aligned with Locke's prescriptions for rhetoric and language. Since rhetoric and epistemology are inseparable, Locke's call for rhetorical reform simultaneously helps create the inductive paradigm by opening a

[26] While the Spectator endorses a method that invites readers to apply their own empirical reason and learn from what they see, the aesthetic moralizing of the *Spectator* papers are not fully inductive and can be heavy-handed in their prescriptions. J. Paul Hunter has commented that the "sheer amount of . . . advice provided in popular print—in periodicals like *The Athenian Mercury* or *The Spectator*, in journalistic narratives of contemporary life, and in dedicated treatises and tracts—argues a voracious public appetite for being told what to do. . . the attitude is all 'ought' and 'must'" (246). It is a criticism that underscores the emergent quality of the inductive epistemology. It is a motif that drives the periodical, but it is not the only methodology at play. McKeon reminds that "[t]he later authority of 'scientific method' should not lead us to suppose a more or less instantaneous success. Indeed, throughout the seventeenth century, 'empirical' continued to possess largely pejorative connotations as an ungrounded practice . . . based on observation and experience, whose efficacy could not be explained" ("Dramatic" 200). Its emergence is a context for the emergence of other genres and advanced through the application of existing ones, like the periodical.

discursive space and by giving expression to its full articulation. Kuhn describes the particularity of any scientific rhetoric as "an esoteric vocabulary," suited to describing and articulating the epistemology (Kuhn 64). Of the four books that comprise *An Essay concerning Human Understanding*, Locke devotes an entire book to words, language, and rhetoric. A rhetoric that matches an inductive epistemology must represent experience accurately, giving evidential details that lay bare a discovery or invite readers to understand a new scientific principle, "giving the virtue of a full draft in a few drops." In order for the articulation of the scientific paradigm to become normative, it must embody reproducible methods and practices for research, as well as a vocabulary that accounts for these new means of knowledge making.

The insights garnered from this process were also a part of articulating the new scientific paradigm. Another important step in this process that Sprat records was the documentation of the Royal Society's findings to advance scientific understanding by rendering older paradigms obsolete (61). The goals for documentation make clear the larger, pedagogical program of the new science that Sprat and the Society promoted. Locke's epistemology of selfhood is connected to a rhetorical model that emphasizes accessibility, like Sprat, for fundamentally pedagogical ends. Locke argues that "those, who pretend *seriously* to *search after*, or maintain *Truth*, should think themselves obliged to study, how they might deliver themselves without Obscurity, Doubtfulness, or Equivocation," and he provides "Rules" in order "[*t*]*o remedy the Defects of Speech*" (3.11.3, 8). The new science develops alongside a new rhetoric that asks readers to draw conclusions and make judgments based on language that expresses facts without "obscurity, doubtfulness, or equivocation."

Locke's conceptualization of selfhood, Jude David Law suggests, cannot be oversimplified simply as a model for cognition. Law notes how closely both parts of the

epistemology, the theoretical and rhetorical, are intertwined: "Locke's account of knowledge and experience relies alternately on two radically different accounts of cognition: one modeled on visual perception and the other on the structure and effects of verbal language. The distinction is not an openly acknowledged, let alone a systematic, one in the *Essay*" (51). A focus on how Locke's theories aided the formation of the biographical rhetoric of self must foreground the "effects of verbal language" Locke outlines in his model, while paying due attention to the epistemology that warrants claims about language and rhetoric. Language signifies a fluidity of selfhood that can evacuate or entirely redefine itself, since words form understanding and self-recognition. The significance of language in exemplifying an epistemology of selfhood resonates in the rhetoric of self devised by eighteenth-century biographers, whose subjects that can be observed empirically and represented rhetorically

For Locke, rhetoric and language are even more integral to the epistemology of the inductive paradigm than they are in Sprat. He assigns two functions, civil and philosophical to language and rhetoric. While the civic implications overlap the epistemological of philosophical rhetoric, Locke distinguishes between the "*Civil*" and "*Philosophical*" uses in the "*communication by Words*":

> *First*, By their *civil Use*, I mean such a communication of Thoughts and *Ideas* by Words, as may serve for the upholding common Conversation and Commerce, about the ordinary Affairs and Conveniencies of civil Life, in the Societies of Men, one amongst another. *Secondly*, By the *Philosophical Use* of Words, I mean such an use of them, as may serve to convey the precise Notions of Things, and to express, in general Propositions, certain and undoubted Truths, which the Mind may rest upon, and be satisfied with, in its search after true Knowledge. (3.9.3)

A "civil use" in Locke's account of language reflects his own scientific practices, which necessitated a productive interaction with people outside of the Society, so that the "*Essay's* revaluation of civil discourse grows from a recognition that whatever progress is possible in natural philosophy depends on the efforts of mechanical hands" (Walmsley 145). The foundational role that artisans play in Locke's delineation of the civil use of language implies a commonality of experience, "the ordinary and Conveniencies of civil Life," maintained by a "Conversation and Commerce" in society at large. The task of language is to "uphold" these conversations and the connections they signify, much in the same way it made commerce possible between the sciences and the trades and between Locke and the laborers. In this use, language integrates society. A biographer seeking to portray selfhood in its context would have to attend to the affairs and "conveniencies" in which it occurred. In the "philosophical use," on the other hand, language plays a much more specific role. Rather than upholding general, social discourse, the philosophical use Locke locates in language functions to express with "precision" and "certainty" of truths beyond doubt "which the Mind may rest upon, and be satisfied with." This philosophical use of language fixes ideas that are stripped of superfluity with an insight distilled from what might be the sort of dull and insipid excess of language that worried Addison and Steele.

Both the civil and philosophical uses that Locke ascribes to language are social—words "are always made for the convenience of Communication, which is the chief end of Language. The Use of Language is, by short sounds, to signifie with ease and dispatch general Conceptions"—but this social aspect is more significant than simply facilitating the "convenience of communication" (3.5.7). In the first instance, language serves a necessary function, linking people and groups socially. This civil function is not as responsible to precision

or the attention to certainty that the philosophical use requires. It does not pin down truth. It does, however, respond to the "affairs and conveniencies" that delimit what will be considered "ordinary." In its civil use, language requires a specificity to uphold and maintain relationships between groups like scholar and artisans. In examining the scientific rhetoric espoused by Locke's own writing and advocated in the *Essay*, Peter Walmsley observes that "Locke's scientific interests . . . tended toward practice and use rather than theory . . . Moreover Locke's study of nature inevitably brought him into conversation with mechanics, craftsmen, and laborers as much as with scholars"(143). Locke's practicality was in service of his own scientific inquiry and how scientific inquiry or natural philosophy might serve the world beyond the Royal Society.

The practicality of language's civil uses facilitated interactions between the Society and tradespeople, though each was guided by a different set of immediate interests: "[t]hose of his fellows in the Royal Society who were committed to the history of trades had all insisted on the importance of attending carefully to the artisan's own account of his or her work" (143). For Locke, interaction with the tradespeople served the needs of his research, but for the Society members "committed to the history of trades," the interaction and its careful recording was the object of the research itself. Walmsley aligns Locke's conversation with the specialists of the Royal Society and of different trades. Sprat, too, stresses this conversation between science and commerce. It is a conversation that requires the Society to attend both to tradespeople's practical expertise and their transmission of that expertise in order to make the work of both groups accessible to the other. Members of the Royal Society sought civil outcomes beyond advancing their own empiricism, rectifying "errors" in understanding, or opening news areas of inquiry. A rhetoric that reflects experience as accurately as possible would allow the Society to open its

findings and documentation, as Sprat argues, to scholars and tradespeople. Steven Shapin and Simon Schaffer observe that "[w]hat sustained experimental space" in the seventeenth century was "[t]he nascent laboratory of the Royal Society and other experimental places [that] were producing things that were widely wanted in Restoration society . . . The experimentalist's task was to show others that their problems could be solved if they came to the experimental philosopher and the space he occupied in Restoration culture" (Shapin and Schaffer 339-40). Given an audience ideally larger than the Society's own members, documentation of the Society's findings had to offer access to the full, potential range of readers. Like Sprat's model for rhetoric, Locke called for one in which language facilitated inductive reasoning.

The language that facilitated intersections between professionals and scientists was paramount for bridging the distance between members of reading communities, the varied "Taste of forty or fifty thousand Readers" of the *Spectator,* for instance (Addison and Steele 1.506). The civil use of language, too, would make the remove between a reader's experiences amenable to those represented biographically. Addison and Steele comment on the writing of the new science and class scientific writing with historical writing that "describes every thing in so lively a manner, that . . . [the] whole History is an admirable Picture, and touches on such proper Circumstances in every Story, that his Reader becomes a kind of Spectator" (3.574). The aesthetic practice that Addison and Steele describe here echoes the scientific practice of the Restoration scientist, which renders a reader into a virtual witness of an event experiment's narrative. They argue that "among this Sett of Writers, there are none who more gratifie and enlarge the Imagination, than the Authors of the new Philosophy, whether we consider their Theories of the Earth or Heavens, the Discoveries they have made by Glasses, or any other of their Contemplations on Nature," and the effect is that "we are lost in such a Labyrinth of Suns

and Worlds, and confounded with the immensity and Magnificence of Nature" (3.574-5). The effect of thorough, careful documentation is to excite the imagination so that it appeals to human understanding, even though such documentation risks overwhelming it. Making the documents accessible would make the scientist and the epistemology more available, showing seventeenth-century readers "that their problems could be solved if they came to the experimental philosopher" and, more importantly, teaching them how to draw their own conclusions from those developed by the new science and philosophers like Locke.

The rhetoric championed by Sprat and Locke would invite readers to adopt an inductive methodology so that they would come to generate knowledge for themselves autodidactically from the facts that the new science presented. Not only do the Spectator's empirical practices of observation, discussion, and conclusion lend themselves to social discussions of taste and opinion, but also to other fields of inquiry. The Spectator somewhat satirically acknowledges an affinity with his

> Brothers and Allies, . . . the Fraternity of Spectators who live in the World without having any thing to do in it; and . . . have no other Business with the rest of Mankind but to look upon them. Under this class of men are comprehended all contemplative Tradesmen, titular Physitians, Fellows of the Royal Society, Templers that are not given to be contentious, and Statesmen that are out of Business. In short, every one that considers the World as a Theater and desires to form a right Judgment of those who are Actors on it. (1.45-6)

In this instance, spectating provides a means for those who would "form a right Judgment." No conclusion can be drawn without it. Observation is a ready starting point for empiricism that the "fraternity of spectators" can apply to fields as varied as the arts, sciences, and business, as well

as printing and the market for periodicals like the *Spectator*. The rightness of a judgment, its soundness and accuracy, depends on the empirical standards to which the Spectator initially gestures: close observation from a careful remove in order to amass the information allows him to induce more thoroughly the practices of a larger system or, as he labels it, a game played artizans, craftsmen, soldiers, and other professions. But it also encourages the "decence" that Sprat postulated as the outcome of a scientific practice (90). The Spectator conceives right judgment in scientific terms as a verifiable conclusion drawn from inductive practice about any topic that plays across the "theater" of the "world."

The civic uses of language that Locke emphasizes recall Sprat's own appeal for an English academy that would match the Royal Society to improve communication. Establishing a mode of common language that made event experiments and demonstration accessible to all would also make widely available the didactic experiences through which readers would become virtual witnesses and apply their own reason to draw conclusions about scientific principles. Procedurally, people could also apply their reason to an understanding of others to improve themselves. For Locke, such social considerations are important, but less substantive than the philosophical implications of language and rhetoric for his conceptualization of human understanding. Language plays a fundamental role in the definition of selfhood and is foundational for translating sense and reflection into the details that a person might come to recognize as a persistent selfhood over time. For Locke, a careful consideration of words "may . . . lead us a little towards the Original of all our Notions and Knowledge, if we remark, how great a dependence our *Words* have on common sensible *Ideas* . . . to conceive those Operations they experimented in themselves . . . [and] to signify those internal Operations of their own minds"

(3.1.5). Language gives personal, individuated significance to what is perceived, retained, and discerned; it gives a vocabulary to neutral, empirical self-recognition.

In its philosophical use, language also serves a social end, since it requires an exactitude that relates knowledge authoritatively, without doubt or need for any disputation to define its meaning. The precision and certainty that Locke prescribes for the philosophical use of language corrects what Locke regards as a fundamental failing in understandings of language:

> It has not, that I know, hitherto been taken notice of by any Body, what Words are, and what are not capable of being defined: the want whereof is (as I am apt to think) not seldom the occasion of great wrangling, and obscurity of Men's Discourses, whilst some demand definitions of Terms, that cannot be defined; and others think, they ought to rest satisfied, in an Explication made by a more general Word , and in Restriction, . . . when even after such Definition made according to rule, those who hear it, have often no more a clear Conception of the meaning of the Word, than they had before. (3.4.4)

"Wrangling" with "obscurity" to establish a certainty of meaning is, for Locke, fundamentally divisive and, thus, dangerous. Its end is not to advance knowledge or gratify understanding, but, rather, bald disputation. Such competition defies the collaborative science the Royal Society advanced: "[t]he purpose of disputation is not the discovery and sharing of knowledge, but rather the development and display of personal logical dexterity and, in most cases, the claiming of personal legitimacy . . . No one attending a dispute would expect to hear solutions but were there to witness and applaud the agility of disputants" (Walmsley 119). Locke promotes a collective, agreed-upon understanding over the "personal logical dexterity" of individual disputants. Rather than furthering contention, Locke advocates philosophical use of language upon "which the

Mind may rest upon, and be satisfied with, in its search after true Knowledge" (3.9.3). A perspicuous style inspires confidence that can resolve disputes in meaning, so that "minds may rest upon" the language it has in common.

Because of the civic and philosophical implications of language, Locke famously attacks rhetorical practices that were typical of the Civil Wars throughout his *Essay*. Such direct attacks are a common trope in the empirical writings of the new scientists. They are as evident in Sprat's *History* as in Locke's philosophy. These attacks, however, are not directed at rhetoric and its epistemological import in general, but at the florid rhetoric associated with older models for understanding. Howell states that the "tradition [Locke] demolished had said that man obtained valid knowledge about himself and his world by examining propositions previously established in connection with all of the subjects of human concern, and by treating those propositions as alone capable of yielding complete certainty in all sciences" (*Eighteenth-Century* 267). Rather, Locke sought to displace the older rhetorical models with the empirical models of the Royal Society: Locke's "denunciation of prearranged contrivances of style, and his advocacy of the plain, perspicuous utterance, help to convince all sectors of the public that speeches and writings did not have to keep to the vocabulary of the initiated, but could use the idiom of everyday life" (Howell, *Eighteenth-Century* 501). Much like the split between the civil and philosophical uses for language the *Essay* outlines, Locke also distinguishes between times when the rhetoric of "everyday life" is appropriate. Such rhetoric would prove appropriate for representing experience in an event experiment or a biography. Much like the accessibility Sprat requires of rhetorical expression in order for readers to draw conclusions from narrative accounts of fact, Locke calls for a rhetoric that is straightforward, transparent, and open, which can only be achieved through an accessible rhetoric that evinces a "calm, dispassionate manner, with its stylistic self-

effacement and studied refusal of ornament and rhythm" (Richetti 67). It is the neutrality with which the Spectator claims to approach every human scene. Locke advocates an inviting style, like the Spectator's neutrality, to unite a variety of readers in larger considerations, which offers the potential to uphold conversation and commerce.

Johnson would commend Addison's normative, empirical, democratic standard for rhetoric in *The Lives of the Poets* for being accessible both to specialists and non-specialists: "[h]is prose is the model of the middle stile; on grave subjects not formal, on light occasions not groveling; pure without scrupulosity, and exact without apparent elaboration; always equable, and always easy, without glowing words or pointed sentences" (*Lives* XXII.678). What Johnson locates in Addison's rhetoric is the "model of the middle style" that can appeal to all readers and invite them to draw conclusions from factual information rather than "glow words or pointed sentences." Addison's rhetoric puts content before style, and "Addison never deviates from his track to snatch a grace; he seeks no ambitious ornaments, and tries no hazardous innovations. His page is always luminous, but never blazes in unexpected splendor" (*Lives* XXII.678). Johnson's analysis assumes that the "luminous" page, one that lights the way for a reader to draw conclusions inductively, deserves commendation over the page that depends on "ambitious," rhetorical "ornament," the sort of "blazing" ornament characteristic of earlier models of deductive disputation.

In Addison, Johnson finds a rhetorical approach to his Londoner readers and the widening British audience as the *Spectator* papers gained popularity because

> if his language had been less idiomatical, it might have lost somewhat of its genuine anglicism. What he attempted, he performed; he is never feeble, and he did not wish to be energetick; he is never rapid, and he never stagnates. His

> sentences have neither studied amplitude, nor affected brevity: his periods, though not diligently rounded, are voluble and easy. Whoever wishes to attain an English stile, familiar but not coarse, and elegant but not ostentatious, must give his days and nights to the volumes of Addison. (*Lives* XXII.678)

Addison's style follows the pattern of an inductive rhetoric employed by the new scientists to articulate an inductive epistemology. Locke argued that "Words, especially of Languages already framed, being no Man's private possession, but the common measure of Commerce and Communication, 'tis not for any one, at pleasure, to change the Stamp they are current in . . . Men's intentions in speaking are, or at least should be, to be understood" (3.11.11). In following an easy, middle style, Johnson claims that Addison's rhetoric achieves a "genuine Anglicism" that typifies an "English style," high praise which unites methodology and national ideals. Such a style would not only enable commerce between members of reading communities, but it would help them improve themselves as self-governing readers.[27] Locke's distinction between entertainment and improvement matches the distinction Johnson makes in analyzing the strengths of Addison's rhetoric. Locke's theory makes a place for entertainment in service of instruction, "[s]ince Wit and Fancy find easier entertainment in the World, than dry Truth and real Knowledge, *figurative Speeches*, and allusion in Language, will hardly be admitted, as *an* imperfection or *abuse* of it. I confess, in Discourses, where we seek rather Pleasure and Delight, than Information and Improvement, such Ornaments as are borrowed from them, can scarce pass for faults" (3.10.34). But Locke criticizes the ends of entertainment by pairing "wit and fancy" with "pleasure and delight" and pitting them against "dry truth and real knowledge" and

[27] As increasingly self-governing readers, eighteenth-century reading audiences were developing the savvy reading practices within the context of a variably print culture. Modern readers can assume certain fixities in print that allow their degree of self-governance to focus less on print practice and more on interpretive practice.

"information and improvement." He also brands "figurative speech," "allusion," and "ornaments" as undesirable outside of entertainment.

Locke's critiques point back to older rhetorical models, the disputations that "were central to the curriculum of English universities in Locke's day . . . To Locke's colleagues in the Royal Society, the disputation epitomized all that was stagnant and word-bound in scholasticism" (Walmsley 118). A style depending on ornamental language and figurative speech evoked this model of understanding and associated it with exclusivity and "stagnation." For Locke, this sort of language is a "perfect cheat" (3.10.34). The nature of this cheat is stylistic, characteristically bound to a competitive model of disputation, "laudable and allowable [for] Oratory . . . in Harangues and popular Address" (3.10.34), but nonetheless a cheat because

> all the Art of Rhetorick . . . all the artificial and figurative application of Words Eloquence hath invented, are for nothing else but to insinuate wrong *Ideas*, move the Passions, and thereby mislead the Judgment . . . 'Tis evident how much Men love to deceive, and be deceived, since Rhetorick, that powerful instrument of Error and Deceit, has its established Professors, is publickly taught, and has always been had in great reputation. (3.10.34)

Locke implies that the outcomes of the "art of rhetoric" in "oratory," "harangues," and "popular address" signified the cheat, associating it with the university rather than the Royal Society. In creating a rhetoric of self, the eighteenth-century biographer who followed Locke's critiques of older rhetorical models had to represent a person precisely.

The correction Locke prescribes for the deceptive ends of the "art of rhetoric" is directness and transparency. Locke argues that "Men's Intentions in speaking are, or at least should be, to be understood; which cannot be without frequent Explanations, Demands, and other

the like incommodious Interruptions, where Men do not follow common Use. Propriety of Speech, is that which gives our Thoughts entrance into other Men's minds with the great ease and advantage" (3.11.11). Directness of address can only accomplished by considering "common usage," addressing a clear topic with a clear purpose. A direct, rhetorical style, one that "gives our thoughts entrance into other men's minds," is based largely on familiar expression that evokes a familiarity with common experience, through the directness of expression, coupled with transparency in purpose and explanation. It is a change preceded by the formative move from the primacy of Latin to the vernacular Benedict Anderson describes in theorizing imagined community (39-42). The crucial point, however, is that rhetoric gives a speaker, a scientist, an essayist, a biographer access and entrance to another person's mind.

The effective inductive rhetoric that Locke prescribes for general use depends on a plain, transparent diction that strives to be as factual, accurate, and representative as the facts it relates. An inductive rhetoric is not devoid of calculated rhetorical moves, but characterized by rhetorical effects that invite a reader to draw conclusions, unlike a deductive rhetoric that begins with conclusions and proceeds to proofs. Coaxing readers to induce conclusions for themselves from a body of details is to defer to the new science's epistemological obligations to an inductive paradigm. But as Locke argues and the *Spectator* demonstrates, an inductive rhetoric has the potential to enact what the substitution of the Restoration scientist's identity for the factious identities of the Civil Wars had promised all along: to foster a civic and social responsibility that would train readers to induce civic and social patterns of truth from the facts they read and, especially, the facts of their experience. More to the point, an inductive rhetoric makes the didactic potential of the inductive paradigm plausible, giving rise to systems of prose genres charged with a responsibility to help readers educate themselves.

The emergence of the new science made a new notion of life writing possible in the late seventeenth century. The inductive epistemology that Sprat ascribes to the Royal Society hinges on an experimental model that renders experience into narratives that establish scientific fact: experimentation follows a cyclical, inductive pattern of inquiry that collects facts from which theories are developed, tested, observed, and adjusted based on the new facts generated by experimentation. The empirical methodology allows for an increasingly in-depth examination of the natural world. North applies this methodology to selfhood and life writing. While his theory follows the contemporary patterns of Restoration scientific methodology, North's model for life writing was publish in full for three hundred years after he prescribed rules for an innovative approach to biography. The genre emerged independently of North's theory of life writing, but nevertheless along the same empirical lines that the new science had established. In John Locke's conceptualization, the epistemology of the inductive paradigm moved from a model for comprehending the natural world to an empirical model for comprehending human understanding. Locke's inductive model for selfhood held the potential for a pattern of self-improvement as cyclical as the empirical model Sprat had described earlier: by observing and reflecting on the facts of oneself and one's experiences, a person could change and create new facts and new experiences that would lead sounder logic, ethics, and morals. The impetus for change lies in part in the late seventeenth-century vacuum of a fixed monarchical relationship between the governing and governed and a rising middle class that stood as a public in relation to traditional forms of state authority. A beheaded monarch and a deposed monarch of the same house necessitated the creation of an empiricism that would yield a logic, ethics, and morality removed from the passions of seventeenth-century civil discord and apropos of the social situation developing in the long eighteenth century.

The emergence of eighteenth-century biography within this empirical context emulates the core practices and values that distinguish the epistemology and rhetoric of the inductive paradigm. The normative standards this scientific model provide made it possible for biographers to gather as wide a range of facts as possible that could be credited as the experiences of the person they sought to write. Such credit came from observation—facts from other people that put the person in observable view of many people. The biography itself also put the person in view. Eighteenth-century biography developed a rhetoric of self that would allow a reader to determine selfhood from the facts the biographer presented. This rhetorical arrangement allowed the biographer to create choices for the reader. In the next chapter, I will focus eighteenth-century print culture shaped the generation of the observable facts from which readers located selfhood, and, particularly, facts that allowed authors like Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith to arrange for a reader to discern a self in their *Life of Richard Savage* and *Life of Richard Nash*. The development of its methods that would come to define the new science made the emergence of other fields of inquiry possible, even in literature. The emergence of the new scientific epistemology redefined older models of life writing to develop a new biographical rhetoric of self that could scientifically interrogate selfhood and scrupulously represent it. The eighteenth-century biographer becomes something like a literary scientist, devoted to a record of accurate, verifiable facts arranged into a clear, direct rhetoric of self.

Chapter 2—Locating the Self:

Print Culture and a New Ethics of Reading

Seventeenth-century life writing exploded into a fast-flourishing genre during the eighteenth century, "a time when the public appetite for biography was insatiable" (Butt 43). Not only were quarto and folio length biographies popular, but any writing that opened personal life to public scrutiny garnered attention and, too, the notoriety of scandal. Such a hunger for evidence of life also led to the rise of the obituary. The brief biographical records of personal lives began in 1731 with the first issue of Edward Cave's ambitious, enduring project, the *Gentleman's Magazine*. The growing popularity of the obituary form provided a context that allowed ephemera to swell into full biographical proportions and significance, not unlike biography's own emergence in the eighteenth century. Obituary grew from a simple record of death to a more thoroughly-wrought memory of life. Readers had also been titillated by Lord Chesterfield's personal *Letters to his Son,* which scandalized its public audience with insight into a famous man's private thoughts. "It is now become so much the fashion to publish letters," James Boswell recalls Samuel Johnson commenting as they dined with a bookseller, "that in order to avoid it, I put as little into mine as I can" (*Life*, iv.102). Johnson recognized his contemporary readers' desire for anything personal. Booksellers did, too. They fed the market and were at the same time shaped by its appetites for personal life rendered as public selfhood by print. Increasingly, an undocumented life was an unlived life, and the greater the documentation, the more comprehensive the biography.

The popularization of the biographical form emerged with the rise of a burgeoning print culture, increasingly hungry for the authentic details of private lives, which dovetailed with the

New Science's inductive epistemology. The form consequently depended on new sources that privileged the sort of increased documentation that made biographical lives more verifiable and observable, more like the factual account of Royal Society event experiment. Most significantly, the inductive standards for credentialing print information developed a biographical form that forced readers to evaluate rhetorics of self in eighteenth-century English biography in order to educate themselves and improve their own lives. In this chapter, I examine how Samuel Johnson in *An Account of the Life of Richard Savage, Son of Earl Rivers*[28] and Oliver Goldsmith with his *Life of Richard Savage, Esq.* locate the details of their biographies within the glut of documents and manuscripts that characterize the period in order to arrange rhetorics of self that force readers to make ethical, interpretive decisions about the lives they read.

Inductive Choice: The New Ethics of Reading

The empirical promise of inductive science was a fuller understanding of the natural world. Its experimental methodology cycled repeatedly through observation, experimentation, and theorization to accumulate information. The buildup of details ultimately allowed for scientific accounts that would more clearly depict the natural world in order to lay bare its fundamental operations. Such a lofty goal put a premium on experimental research and its representation, charging both with an ethical significance. The responsibility of the Restoration scientist was two-fold. First, the scientist owed a responsibility to accuracy in the implementation of experiments. Scientific reports required good data to draw the sort of

[28] When referencing Johnson's biographical account of Richard Savage's life, I will refer to his later publication in the *Lives of the English Poets*. Johnson revised it very little from his initial biographical account of Savage's life, *An Account of the Life of Richard Savage, Son of Earl Rivers*. When reference to the former edition is necessary, I will distinguish it as the *Lives*; the latter, as the *Account*. A third complication will be important the discussion of Johnson's biography: I will refer to Johnson's anonymously-authored source text, *The Life of Mr. Richard Savage* as the *Mr. Savage*.

conclusions that would prove foundational to successive cycles of inquiry, experimentation, and hypothesis. Secondly, the scientist was also responsible to a community of readers made up of both scientists as well as laypeople, who should be able to discern the truth accurately for themselves given an apt representation of the findings, however voluminous those representations came to be.

The cycle of research and reporting that characterizes the Scientific Revolution thrived on an excess of detail.[29] Rhetorically, the accumulation of detail presented by scientific reports in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries inverted the rigid, classical canon of deductive invention, in which the orator used to guide a passive audience to accept an argument syllogistically, in favor of a new, sprawling arrangement that invited the reader to engage facts and make specific, interpretive choices about what those facts mean. The more active, inductive model offered greater didactic promise. It inundated readers with possibilities for understanding and authorized them to use their reason in order to discern for themselves. This new, active ethics of reading emerging in the Scientific Revolution required conscientious choice. Reader-observers were not only authorized, but even obligated to choose the strongest argument for themselves. This process shifts the responsibility of interpreting information and drawing conclusions from the speaker or writer to listeners and readers, which makes the process of drawing conclusions from voluminous detail intensely personal. It is an effect that would be amplified by the period's almost voyeuristic obsession: the publication of private letters and the intimate details of public lives.

[29] Thomas S. Kuhn has argued that "three normal foci for scientific investigation" articulate scientific paradigms and are marked by experimental inquiry that seeks to show how the paradigm is applicable to a "larger variety of situations," to demonstrate continuity and "agreement" within that variety, and to find "alternative ways of applying the paradigm to . . . new area[s] of interest" (25). Such goals can only be accomplished through a repeated and extensive cycle of experimentation.

Ethically, this method of writing invited the individual reader to make a personal decision about the life represented in print, a decision characterized by its rightness. Other readers, drawing a similar conclusions based on their personal estimation of what constitutes right, would naturally group into a community of readers; their process of reading and drawing conclusions would determine a print ethic of sociability. Roger Chartier locates these communities within "the norms and conventions of reading that define, for each community of readers, legitimate uses of the book, ways to read, and the instruments and methods of interpretations" (Chartier 4). In order to theorize how communities conceptualize and imagine themselves, Benedict Anderson argues that print, particularly the newspaper form, made a communal identity imaginable because it conveyed a community mutually existing in time, though not necessarily in place, a complication balanced by members' shared reading practices, through which they are able to imagine themselves and their differences from other communities (33-6). Joseph Addison famously dubbed the community-building effect of print culture the "republic of letters" (2.253-6). Addison's republic of letters marries a self-sustaining, self-governing notion of community to the print culture that opens a place for such a community.[30]

Nowhere is the sociability of this republic of letters more clear than in the advent of the *Gentleman's Magazine* in 1731, which introduced the magazine. This new print form sought to reprint articles from the prominent newspapers and news sheets of London. Newspapers appealed to political parties and responded both to the events of the time and to each other. They were a sometimes-subtle blend of propaganda and fact, rife with mis- and disinformation. The

[30] Jürgen Habermas has argued that the republic of letters Addison describes generated a public sphere, with participants defined not by their capacity to draw distinctions, but by their education and their property (42, 56). While they do participate in a critical-rational debate to define a bourgeois model of what public means, their choices are not characterized by an ethical authority, but rather the structuring a public sphere as an corporate authority that can stand against the sphere of public authority, against established government (29-30). While Habermas claims his public sphere refers to a specific category of the middle class, the communities of readers that Anderson describes are not bound by specific class restraints. Anderson's communities, however, do not have to imagine themselves in relation to socio-political authority, just in the shared context of like-minded readers.

Gentleman's Magazine assembled these viewpoints under its own heading, often printing politically contrary news in side-by-side columns for easy comparison (Carlson 56). The magazine depicted various viewpoints within larger political conversations so that readers could exercise their reason on these viewpoints, defining themselves and the larger group their view matched.

The importance of choice that moves a reader from the limitations of what is already known to what can be concluded by considering all that is known highlights the productive tension emerging from the empirical context of Restoration science as it was made manifest in the practices of a new print culture. Resolving this tension was a question of choice for the reader, the crux of the ethics of reading. Learning to make the most appropriate choices and to draw the best conclusions from what was known had an autodidactic effect that authors like Thomas Sprat and John Locke imagined. Induction is a process that depends on what can be known, but that ultimately privileges choice as the hallmark of understanding. Restoration and eighteenth-century authors channeled the autodidactic implications of these new protocols of representation into rhetorical choices that would set up readers to develop their own understandings.

Distinctly eighteenth-century forms like the novel and biography did not emerge in a literary vacuum. Each informed the other, adapting generic markers for different ends, much like the novel mimics the biographical selfhood's dependence on actual lived experience with imagined approximations of experience. Poetry was not exempt: the didactic operation of a complex, fictional character like John Milton's Satan demonstrates the autodidactic potential of biographical selfhood, stronger for its application of lived experience. Stanley Fish describes the experiential, empirical operation through which rhetorical choices have autodidactic effect on the

reader of *Paradise Lost*. The process he locates might just as easily refer to an eighteenth-century biography. Reading is an experience that he terms "affective stylistics" and treats the process of making "meaning as an event" (*Self-Consuming* 383, 392). It is a pattern with inductive foundations that frame a relationship between authors and readers in which reading is "no longer an object, a thing-in-itself, but an *event*, something that *happens* to, and with the participation of, the reader," and as an event, "[i]t is an experience; it occurs; it does something; it makes us do something" (*Self-Consuming* 386, 393). What can be known and what can be concluded "does something" to the reader that, in turn, makes "us do something" as readers—the autodidactic upshot is a right action. If reading is an experience that moves readers to act, reading biographies would invite readers to an experience an actual selfhood and react to the print person they meet there, both to understand that person and themselves.

The experience of a print selfhood that triggered an autodidactic effect through an affective stylistics was prevalent in most systems of prose emerging alongside an inductive epistemology, such as the novel, biography, and the periodical, and in reimagining representations of self in extant genres like poetry. The print self's operation on the reader, whether it is factual or fictitious, has didactic potential, since readers must induce the life and character from fictitious or, in the example of biography, factual experiences. Meeting a self in print, the Spectator, a biographical selfhood, or John Milton's Satan, is itself an experience for the reader, "an event, something that happens to, and with the participation of, the reader." This ethical imperative of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century writing is the impetus that drives John Milton's *Paradise Lost* to make the reader "do something."[31] Milton's poem poses doctrinal

[31]Suggesting a defined difference between science writing and imaginative literature of the period neglects an overlap in ethical function and content. Samuel Johnson, for instance, points Milton's application of contemporary astronomical research and discovery to *Paradise Lost*. In his "Life of Milton," Johnson notes that Milton's "great excellence is amplitude, and he expands the adventitious image beyond the dimensions which the occasion required.

questions centered on the character of Satan that had famously dogged readers: how could Milton's "justify the ways of God to men" (I.26) by valorizing the figure of Satan and his demonic subversiveness?

Historically, Milton's readers have drawn the wrong conclusions from *Paradise Lost* in their experience with Satan's character. Their misunderstandings of a fictional character underscore the experiential significance of a witnessing factual self. Readers in Milton's own generation found the tension between Satan's dominance and God's order in *Paradise Lost* hard to resolve. John Dryden, for instance, introduces his own translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* by compiling a list of heroic poets: Milton might have lain claim to the distinction "if the Devil had not been his Heroe instead of *Adam*" (v.276). Dryden's reading reduced the ethical and religious import of the poem to character study, the Devil versus Adam. Joseph Addison, likewise, focused on Milton's poetic personae and also found the tension impossible to resolve within the possibilities the poem itself presents: "*Paradise Lost* is an Epic, or a Narrative Poem, and he that looks for an Hero in it, searches for that which *Milton* never intended, but if he will needs fix the Name of Hero upon any Person in it, 'tis certainly the *Messiah* who is the Hero, both in the Principal Action, and in the chief Episodes" (3.59). Addison reasons that, since the Messiah is the victor in the "Principal Action" of the Christian story of human redemption, then the Messiah must also be the hero in Milton's retelling. What could be known about *Paradise Lost* was a matter of faith so fixed it hardly needed Addison's reminder. Every seventeenth- or eighteenth-century reader approaching the Christian story of humankind's downfall would know that the Messiah is the hero. What could be concluded from Milton's poem, however, inverted readers'

Thus, comparing the shield of Satan to the orb of the moon, he crowds the imagination with the discovery of the telescope, and all the wonders which the telescope discovers" (*Lives* 191). The fullness of Milton's detail, even in seemingly nonessential imagery, "crowds the imagination" and invites the reader to connect the religious and the scientific to the poetic.

expectations so sharply that it hardly needed Dryden to point it out—the character of Satan is the hero or, at least, the sympathetic anti-hero.[32] The poem's tension forces readers to make a discomforting, contrary choice with ethical implications. They can distrust their reason or their faith.

Stanley Fish unravels the knot of these equally unappealing conclusions about Satan in *Paradise Lost* to argue that Milton's theodicy and heroic vision of Satan cohere doctrinally and educate readers, since it makes an event of reading that forces an ethical choice on the reader. In Fish's explication, "the reader is presented with a series of interpretive puzzles whose solution either contributes to or undermines his understanding of the poem's great issues" (*Surprised* 236). These "puzzles" hinge on a rhetoric that tempts the reader to misinterpret the satanic causes and consequences of the Fall. This rhetorical strategy forces the reader into an experience with the poem that can only be resolved through "two stages: in the first, the reader is brought face to face with the corruption within him, as he is made aware of the confusion reigning in his scale of values and of the inadequacy of his perceptions" (*Surprised* 340). The educational upshot of this tension comes in the second stage: the heightened awareness invites the reader "to cooperate with the poem's effort to effect his regeneration," to reshape an understanding free from satanic sympathies (*Surprised* 340). The experience of reading catches readers in the interpretive, rhetorical puzzles Milton has written into *Paradise Lost* so that they will confront the shortcomings fundamental to their own selfhoods in order to become better people. Milton's rhetoric depends on the same level of rhetorical challenge that drives a reader to make choices.

[32] Northrop Frye has argued in *The Return of Eden* that "*Paradise Lost* is a profoundly anti-romantic and anti-heroic poem," which illustrates the dangers of letting the "ego," in moments of self-doubt or failure, "support and console us" (28). In Frye's reading, "Satan is a rebel, and into Satan Milton has put all the horror and distress with which he contemplated the egocentric revolutionaries of his time . . . There is an almost uncanny anticipation of some of the moods of later Romanticism, also an age of egocentric revolutionaries" (28). Satan, in this argument, appears as an argument appealing to the passive reader. He is a given force (that should not surprise savvy readers like Dryden or Johnson) acting on a passive reader, who recognizes the disparity between an expected evil and the surprise of its prominence without engaging the experience that connects the two.

But his rendering of Satan humanizes abstractions of right, wrong, temptation, and sin fundamental to Christian theology in a literary character, a print persona with a distinct selfhood, however fictitious, that could challenge a reader's ethics more directly than a collection of scientific observations.

In order to present the reader with the sort of "interpretive puzzles" Fish identifies, which can effect a practical or practicable self-education in Christian theology, Milton had to envision a community of readers who were capable of self-improvement. Walter Ong has discussed the rhetorical implications of the relationship between readers and authors, arguing that a "writer must construct in his imagination, clearly or vaguely, an audience cast in some sort of role [that] . . . correspondingly fictionalize[s] itself . . . to play the role in which the author has cast" it (*Interfaces* 60-1). Writers' fictionalization of their audience and the audience's "corresponding fictionalization" of itself point to a "game of literacy" that teaches readers "to conform themselves to the projections of the writers they read and to operate in terms of these projections. Within the specific context of biography, this fictionalization is a relationship between the reader and the selfhood of the real person, even though the real person is only a rhetorical representation created by the writer. [33] Writing, and biography in particular, "intensifies the sense of self and fosters more conscious interaction between persons. Writing is consciousness raising" (*Orality* 179). The fictionalization of this relationship positions readers to know the print person as intimately as a living person, giving them license to draw sympathetic conclusions. It is a

[33] Following this line of reasoning, the game biography asks fictional readers to play are distinct from the rules other genres beg of their fictionalized readers. Biography fictionalizes intimate acquaintance. Ong argues that a "history of the ways audiences have been called on to fictionalize themselves would be a correlative of the history of literary genres and literary works, and indeed of culture itself" (*Interfaces* 60). These different fictionalizations are "the underside of literary history, of which the topside is the history of genres and the handling of character and plot" (Ong, *Orality* 102-3). More important than the chronological trajectory of a life is the set of details that define that trajectory.

game of literacy that allows them to comprehend how they can improve their own lives by empirically spectating the lived experience a rhetoric of self translates into print.

The role eighteenth-century biographers fictionalized for their readers correlates to the role that Adam Smith theorizes for social interaction in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. In Smith's social economy, shared ethical values develop through sympathy, which is only possible between spectators and the people they spectate. A sympathetic exchange of sentiments depends on a spectator viewing another person and understanding what that person should do in a particular situation, what the most moral course of action of is, by imagining what he or she would do in that same position: "[e]very faculty in one man is the measure by which he judges of the like faculty in another. I judge your sight by my sight, of your ear by my ear, of your reason by my reason, of your resentment by my resentment, your love by my love. I neither have, nor can have, any other way of judging them" (19). Although spectators substitute their own sentiments for those of the spectated, they sometimes "feel for another, a passion of which he himself seems to be altogether incapable; because, when . . . [they] put . . . [themselves] in his case, that passion arises in . . . [their] breast from the imagination, though it does not in his from the reality" (12). A sympathetic exchange depends as much what can be known about the spectated as it does the self-understanding of the spectator.

The autodidactic process that Smith describes begins with recognizing the feelings of an observed person, comparing them with one's own feelings as a spectator, and drawing conclusions that, consequently, affect self-understanding. This feeling for another, what Smith deems "fellow-feeling" (10), is complemented by the sentiments of the observed who will modulate the strength of his or her own passions in response to those of the spectator (22). The exchange depends on each participant trying to understand the other by imagining the other

through the own experience and understanding. The result of this mutual, social interaction is the formation of shared sentiments that connect a single spectator to an observed person, either real or fictional. This process unifies people who read such situations similarly, and who thereby define or reassert shared values.

Eighteenth-century biographers capitalized on the role of imagination in the sympathetic exchange between people and cast the reader in a fictional role, as an intimate acquaintance of the figure they represented rhetorically. Biography turns lived experience—like an "event experiment" of the new science—into print so that readers can share the experience, as if they are having a personal relationship with the subject. It is a game of literacy after the fashion of the experimental cycle of inductive science. Reading the print person allowed the reader to act as a sort of print spectator, engaging the biographical rhetoric of self with the same sort of fellow feeling appropriate to observing and interacting with a living person. This observational process and the subsequent sympathetic exchange are matters of choice that depend upon and produce an ethical readership.

What could be concluded sympathetically depends on what can be observed and known—this rhetoric of self required the specificity and vivacity of the details that the biographer provided to produce it. In a print culture characterized by a "glut of information" too large "to be crammed into a single volume or to be absorbed by a single reader," the excessive volume of print swelled by the publication of private documents like letters and diaries (Eisenstein 88). Evidence of lived experience was increasingly scattered across printed matter; documentation was the marker of experience. Print became the invitation for all readers to engage with private lives. Biographers drew on this documentation as a source for locating selfhood, for gathering the details necessary to present selves so authentic they could be

interlocutors in a sympathetic reading process, which required readers to make choices about the information they presented.[34] The rapid rise of a print culture, its procedures for documentation of the self, and its scientific standards for credentialing information developed a biographical rhetoric of self that required readers to evaluate print selves in order to educate themselves and improve their own lives.

The Life of Richard Savage: Publicizing the Personal Self in Documentation

Johnsonian scholarship is often at pains to delineate Johnson's philosophical system since Johnson never set one down himself. Whatever philosophical model he had in mind as he wrote poetry, fiction, essays, criticism, and biography is easier to describe than define, particularly given Boswell's representation of Johnson's combative incredulity. This skepticism marks many of the encounters a reader has with Boswell's Johnson. He recalls, for instance, Johnson's pointed attack of Dr. George Berkley's theory of immaterialism and the doubt it casts on sensing the material world. In his *Life of Johnson*, Boswell shares the anecdote of Johnson's answer: "After we came out of the church, we stood talking for some time together of Bishop Berkley's ingenious sophistry to prove the non-existence of matter, and that every thing in the universe is merely ideal. I observed, that though we are satisfied his doctrine is not true, it is impossible to refute it. I shall never forget the alacrity with which Johnson answered, striking his foot with might force against a large stone, till he rebounded from it, 'I refute it *thus*'" (*Life*, i.471). As

[34] The tension between what a reader could know and what a reader could conclude was made richer by the instability of eighteenth-century print culture "In an environment where unauthorized printing was seen as a real possibility, the identity of the author, the authenticity of the text, and the credibility of the knowledge contained *in* the text were all therefore destabilized" (Johns, *Nature* 620). The reader's experience with the rhetorical, interpretive puzzles of the text was further complicated by the reader's experience with the materiality of the text and its subsequent reliability.

much as his attack of Berkley resolves the doubt the theory raises in conversation, his straightforward, self-assured, authoritative style is anything but self-assuring for the reader.

In such an unstable context, a healthy incredulity is a necessity for drawing conclusions about the immaterial and material, about philosophy and common experience. Howard D. Weinbrot has observed that Johnson's thought exhibits a Janus-like quality that simultaneously looks back, giving deference to the past as a set, guide, but especially attending to the present, with a distinctly modern "flexibility of approach" (56). Johnson's flexibility is evident in his "achievements . . . so varied, so complex, and often so situational that one should not confuse the part with the whole, or impose our limited categories upon his broad-ranging mind. Johnson after all was empirical and proceeded 'according to experience.' He nonetheless recognized the limits of experience" (Weinbrot 69). According to Weinbrot, Johnson's method, if one might be set, depends on recognizing a situation and the right action it allows. That one approach will not serve every situation challenges readers to weigh facts and choices judiciously and trains them to make ethical choices conscientiously.

Perhaps the Janus-like tendency that Weinbrot ascribes to Johnson is part of the reason Johnson proved to be such a gifted biographer. Michael Maner locates this philosophical ethics of reading in Johnson's biographical writing, particularly his *Lives of the Poets*, where Johnson applies "constructively skeptical criteria" to evaluate the experiential facts of the poets' lives he writes (310). Maner claims that Johnson applied a rigorous skepticism for evaluating the veracity of evidence or detail presented as a life, like Locke in general (306). His biographical writing balances the experiential facts that could define a person's life against what contemporary readers needed in order to draw conclusions for themselves, both about the life of the person they read and, autdodiactically, about their own lives. By choosing details that would frustrate easy

answers or understandings of a person's life, Johnson represents distinct, recognizable marks of a selfhood in a biography that would force the reader's judgment "[b]ecause he believes that the ultimate moral purpose of biography is the philosophical one strengthening the reader's judgment, . . .draw[ing] us into the process of skeptically weighing probabilities . . . Johnson's skeptical manner is a form of philosophical dialectic, a way of juxtaposing probabilities and forcing us to choose" (Maner 302). Johnson's biographical output, like Milton's *Paradise Lost,* is charged with moral purpose that places ethical demands on readers in order to develop their own sense of right action.

The booksellers who contracted Johnson "to write," as he put it, "little Lives, and little Prefaces, to a little edition of the English Poets" were not investing in his reputation as an essayist, a literary critic, or even as a moralist, but as one of the preeminent biographers of the eighteenth century (*Life* iii.109). The volume of biographical writing that Johnson published from the outset of his career—ten biographies between 1738 and 1754 in *The Gentleman's Magazine* alone—as well as his particular regard for the form, evident in his conversation and his essays, helped to popularize biography as it emerged. Johnson's early reputation as a biographer rests largely on a biography he published outside of the *Gentleman's Magazine*: *An Account of the Life of Richard Savage, Son of the Earl Rivers,* which Johnson reprinted later almost verbatim in the *Lives of the Poets*. Paula Backscheider has argued that, in writing his *Account of the Life of Richard Savage,* Johnson is "examining the life of what might be called an anti-model" (161). In order to write the selfhood of the "anti-model" that Savage's life offered, Johnson "expanded the subjects and purposes of biography" and "introduced new kinds of evidence and new uses of evidence" (Backscheider 161). Through his *Account*, one of Johnson's most noteworthy contributions to biography is the widening scope of evidence he employs,

drawing on a variety of facts to generate Savage's textual selfhood, which forces readers to make ethical choices for determining which proofs are most compellingly and persuasively indicative of Savage himself. Readers who can come to understand Savage can understand themselves better. Johnson locates established facts in print that operate at three degrees of removal from Savage: first, documents penned by anonymous authors and subject to public approval; second, documents penned by Savage himself; and third, Savage's own recollections, turned into documents by Johnson in his capacity as biographer.

Johnson's reliance on documentation derives from his own investment in eighteenth-century print culture, which marked a significant departure from the earlier forms and conditions of writing. He helped to mediate a shifting understanding of authority and authorship in eighteenth-century print culture. In a famous dispute between Lord Chesterfield and himself, Johnson refused Chesterfield's overtures of patronage for the forthcoming *Dictionary*,[35] which Alvin Kernan reads as "a great event in the history of letters and print, the scene in which not just Samuel Johnson but *the author*, after centuries of subservience to the aristocracy, declares . . . democratic independence of patronage" (20). Johnson's career, according to Kernan, Chartier, and others, was on a trajectory from the patron-based system to a model of professional authorship. Johnson, originally bound to editors, printers, booksellers, and patrons for his living as an anonymous Grub Street hack, had to embrace his commercial potential in order to subsist. One of Johnson's regular assertions, according to Boswell, gives evidence of his market sensibility: "[n]o man but a blockhead ever wrote, except for money" (*Life* iii.19). The changing print standard of this shift, however, also held Johnson accountable to his readership, a paying

[35] In relating this episode, Boswell includes Lord Chesterfield's protracted commendation of Johnson's dictionary project in *The World* and Johnson's prompt, epistolary answer (*Life* i.255-66). As a lord and patron, Chesterfield could afford to disseminate his comments in print, whereas Johnson, whose livelihood came from print, protected his name and his dictionary project by writing a letter to Chesterfield that, however popular its legend and contents grew, was a personal address.

readership that came to trust and respect his ethos as a writer. The booksellers who sought Johnson's print expertise in delivering a canon of English poets would further contribute to his ethos that allowed him to broker the biographical relationship between these poets and Johnson's readers.

Reliability developed within fluid, market-based parameters in eighteenth-century print culture, particularly in more ephemeral publications like periodicals, newspapers, diurnals, and pamphlets. Adrian Johns describes the nature of the relationship between these readers and print as organic and responsive: "[t]hese were the sectors of print literature that most depended on being credited by readers. But they were also the sectors whose credit was most suspect. These were therefore the genres that first developed rhetorical procedures to project authenticity in the domains of print to the highest degree" (*Nature* 174). Johnson draws a comparison between the life of Savage he proposes and the lives of Savage other authors might pen, when he advertises his intention to publish a life of Savage in the *Gentleman's Magazine*: "It may be reasonably imagined, that others may have the same design; but as it is not credible that they can obtain the same materials, it must be expected they will supply from invention the want of intelligence; and that under the title of 'The Life of Savage," they will publish only a novel, filled with romantick adventures, and imaginary amours" (*Life* i.165).[36] Johnson undermines the veracity of competing lives of Savage by aligning them with the fictional sector of the print market. These forms, novels and romances, were not accountable to the sort of credentialing that established print fact

[36] In the first edition of his *Dictionary*, Johnson provides five definitions for "invention." The three Johnson has in mind connote some sort of intentional deception: invention is both a "fiction" or a "forgery," and it might also be simply the "thing invented." Traditionally, and prior to the Scientific Revolution, the primary association with invention would have been rhetorical. Cicero's first text, *De Inventione* focused on invention as the first canon for composing an oration, drawing on commonplaces or topics, syllogism, and other modes of inquiry typical of deductive epistemology. The connotations Johnson suggests by characterizing invention as spurious demonstrates a preference for inductive means of knowing, in which facts are not generated by syllogism or traditional understandings, but through empirical methods of research, observation, and demonstration. The details Johnson uses to define selfhood for Savage draw on this preference for an empirical methodology.

among readers. The scandals and obscurity so obvious in many sections of Savage's life might have a sort of generic appeal to the "adventures and imaginary amours" typical of novels and romances, but an eighteenth-century print culture would require something more creditable than lurid detail to convince them of Johnson's authority and, by association, the authority of his life of Savage.

Readers often criticize the reliability of Samuel Johnson's *Account of the Life of Richard Savage* for valorizing Savage by distorting and misrepresenting the facts of his life. Boswell notes that "Johnson's partiality for Savage made him entertain no doubt of his story, however extraordinary and improbable" (*Life* i.169). Questions of Johnson's partiality and his interpretation of various biographical facts drive Richard Holmes's biographical account of the friendship between the biographer and his subject, *Dr. Johnson & Mr. Savage*. Nevertheless, Johnson's *Account* was highly esteemed by eighteenth-century readers. Boswell notes that it "was no sooner published, than . . . liberal praise was given to it" (*Life* i.169). It went through six editions between its initial publication in 1744 and its inclusion in the *Lives of the Poets* in 1781. Modern biographers recognize it as an important point in the growth of the contemporary biographical form. Despite Johnson's glaring misinterpretations of the most controversial moments in Savage's life, his empirical mode of defining selfhood marks the beginning of a shift from the more blatantly biased life writing of the seventeenth century toward an increasingly accurate biographical form that raised readers' ethical stakes in choosing an understanding of Savage from a large body of biographical knowledge.

While Johnson does not directly lay claim to journalistic authority, he does cite print culture proofs that qualify him over other authors to write the life of Savage, his friend. For

eighteenth-century readers, a reliable author was tantamount to a reliable publication,[37] and Johnson describes himself as "a person who was favoured with his [Savage's] confidence, and received from himself an account of most of the transactions which he proposes to mention . . . the account will be continued from materials still less liable to objection; his own letters, and those of his friends, some of which will be inserted in the work, and abstracts of others subjoined in the margin" (*Life* i.164-5).[38] Instead of generating a fictional account from pure "invention" rather than source materials, Johnson promises a biography distinguishable by its source material. Johnson's application means for discovering biographical fact was necessitated by the print market of the eighteenth century and the ethics of reading developing within the biographical form. These innovative means were dictated by the moments of intense publicity that punctuated Savage's life but, especially, by the public opinion that flared around them.

Whether it was the scandal of his birth to Countess Macclesfield, the audacity of his claim to a birthright as the heir of Earl Rivers, or the murder of James Sinclair after a drunken dispute, the most significant moments of Savage's life had divided opinion so much that the arguments for his birthright, his guilt, or his innocence were already familiar when Johnson

[37] The increasing emphasis toward the reliability of the author coincides with the in part, at least, with the so-called Copyright Act of 1710. Although he misattributes its enactment to 1709, Roger Chartier argues that the Copyright Act of 1710 marked the moment in the development of print culture "[w]hen the governing powers recognized the authors' right over their works, they did so in the ancient logic of *privilege*. This was true in the case with the Statute of 1709, which attempted to break the monopoly of the London booksellers by giving authors the right to demand a copyright themselves" (33). The reliability of the author gained importance in direct correlation to the responsibility of the authors to the veracity of their own work.

[38] Worth comparison is Johnson's biographical treatment of Dr. Herman Boerhaave, which editor Edward Cave published in four 1739 issues of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. In the January issue, Johnson promises his biographical account "will, we hope, be not unacceptable to our readers; we could have made it much larger, by adopting flying reports, and inserting unattested facts: a close adherence to certainty has contracted our narrative, and hindered it from swelling that bulk, at which modern histories generally arrive." As in the his recounting of Savage's life, Johnson stresses here the importance of "certainty" or reliability to which the narrative subject, so subject that it must shortened in the name of accuracy and truth. This would have been an important consideration for a Grub Street hack like Johnson who was paid by the length or his writing: "Of his friend Cave, he always spoke with great affection. 'Yet (said he,) Cave, (who never looked out of his window, but with a view to the Gentleman's Magazine,) was a penurious paymaster; he would contract for lines by the hundreds, and expect the long hundred" (Boswell, *Life* iv.409).

wrote his biography (*Lives* XXII.852-4, 858, 873-4). In fact, they invited the duality of what Weinbrot dubbed the Janus-faced Johnson, one who could manage divided public opinion biographically. Savage cultivated this publicity both in spectacle and in print, fashioning a selfhood that would garner sympathy and favor. Thus the facts of Savage's life were clouded by the publicity that Savage himself had excited in order to define it. Since the divisive and pervasive familiarity of public opinion obscured the actual details of Savage's life, Johnson's task as a biographer is to sort publicity and opinion in order to determine the most authoritative facts of Savage's elusive life from the most reliable print sources available.

Conceiving Savage's Life: Publications, Letters, and Recollections

Of his three primary means for tracing the details of Savage's life, Johnson depended on an anonymous pamphlet *The Life of Mr. Richard Savage* that, its modern editor Timothy Ervin explains, "had been composed some sixteen years earlier [than Johnson's biography], in 1727" (iii).[39] It was a propaganda piece, an intentionally divisive account meant to garner support by "stir[ring] public opinion in defense of Savage, who had committed a murder in a coffeehouse altercation" (iii). This print account for much Savage's life had passed the tests of print culture: it effected the ends it sought—"pleading successfully for a royal pardon"—and its account continued to be compelling for readers, "running quickly into three editions" (iii). Eighteenth-century readers had credentialed this document as an authentic, factual record and strengthened its authenticity through their positive reception of multiple editions, sanctioning the pedagogical potential of the biography through their consumption. The public reception of multiple editions

[39] James Gray, the editor of the Yale Edition of the *Lives of the Poets*, notes that Johnson drew most heavily on *The Life of Mr. Richard Savage*, but that "[f]or the rest of the information, Johnson relied on his memory (not always dependable), [and] the advice of friends of Savage . . . As well as letters written by Savage to friends in London, Johnson had access to papers he left behind, including the manuscript of his last, heavily castigatory poem " and multiple, print editions of Savage's poetic works (848-9).

reinforced its account, however biased. Adrian Johns reminds that, through print, "[c]ultural dispersion operated as a kind of chain reaction . . . it resembled not an orrery (representing the model of central illumination) but the kind of firework that amazed eighteenth-century observers by producing successive staggered bursts across the sky" ("Piratical" 303). These "successive bursts" cemented an image of Savage's life while he was still living for fifteen years between its initial, 1727 publication until Savage's death in 1742.

In accounting for Johnson's use of the pamphlet version of Savage's life, James Boswell reveals how public documents and records could gain credit as fact in eighteenth-century print culture. He argues that "Johnson was certainly well warranted in publishing his narrative," since "no attempt had been made to confute it, or to punish the authour or printer as a libeller" during that time (*Life* i.170). By choosing the facts of Savage's life from a source certified by a sustained public response, however flawed in content, Johnson defers to the standards of credibility dictated by eighteenth-century print culture, which gave preference to public assent as a marker of factual accuracy. This document provided Johnson with a publicly authorized baseline for developing Savage's selfhood by comparison to other documents that Johnson would incorporate into Savage's life.

Savage also did nothing to dissuade the reputation this pamphlet furthered, but instead he sought to cultivate the figure he cut through the literary or, more simply, the print world of Grub Street. Savage lived his life through print. Hal Gladfelder argues that Savage simultaneously eschewed the print culture of Grub Street authors and used it as a means to define himself in print: "Savage endeavored . . . to legitimate himself as an aristocratic heir for whom authorship was an expression of idleness. In the process he exposed how completely author's lives can consume them" (447). This consumption is most obvious in the accusations that Savage lived

with the "appearance of friendship with some whom he satirised, and of making use of the confidence which he gained by a seeming kindness to discover failings and expose them" (*Lives* XXII.887). But Johnson's task as a biographer was to determine details about Savage that he could put in conversation with the details that had come to be accepted as fact through print and Savage's affectation of aristocracy. Boswell reprints Johnson's advertisement for his biography, in which Johnson promises an accurate rhetoric of self as a biographer "who was favoured with his [Savage's] confidence," but also, an accurate depiction based on "materials still less liable to object," Savage's personal and public documents, his letters and poetry (*Life* i.164-5). Johnson sought to create a tension between what readers assumed they knew about Savage and facts he would present to confront them, challenging the biography's reader to draw ethical conclusions like the reader of *Paradise Lost* to make interpretive choices that allow for ethical conclusions. Johnson draws on facts authenticated by the eighteenth-century print market place to put Savage's emotional and psychological self to the same scrutiny as the public self Savage cultivated. Johnson's biography invites readers to observe Savage more intimately, between the public reputation and the intimate self.

Johnson's Life answers the question of Savage's extraction with facts that address one of the most contested aspects of Savage's life: whether he was the aristocratic son of a countess, Anne, Lady Macclesfield, and heir to Earl Rivers or the son of a common laborer, a nurse hired to "care" for and "to superintend the education of the child" (Johnson, *Lives* XXII.854). Johnson follows the account in the anonymous pamphlet, which presents Savage as the victim of the Lady Macclesfield's divorce, through which "her Son, being thus bastardized, could not be born, as otherwise he would have been, a Lord by Courtesy, and Heir to the Title of an *English* Earl, with one of the finest Estates in the Kingdom, which was afterwards, for want of Male-Issue, the

Occasion of engaging two eminent Peers in a Duel, in which they had the Misfortune to kill each other" (4). In this version of the narrative, Lady Macclesfield's actions betray her son and resonate throughout aristocratic circles to ill effect. The anonymous author characterizes her as a "resentful" woman who "forget[s] her sucking Child!" (4, 8). Johnson endorses the facts as the pamphlet and Savage himself present them: Lady Macclesfield *does* abandon her son; Savage *is* a dispossessed aristocrat; he *has* been cut off from what is his by natural and legal right.[40] Johnson's appraisal of Lady Macclesfield's character, however, is much more venomous than the pamphlet's. He locates the scandal in her "barbarity," which threatens, disease-like, to "infect others with the same cruelty" and so makes Savage the victim of her dissolute life (*Lives* XXII.854).

More important than the unknowable fact of Savage's birth is Johnson's choice in presenting the facts of Savage's birth so definitively. Backsheider blames it on a panegyric impulse in which Johnson's "groundbreaking biography of Richard Savage is a fabric of wishes, speculations, and fantasies that put his friend and his most dubious actions in a favourable light" (76-7).[41] Johnson is aware of the danger that any biographer faced when writing the life a personal acquaintance like his own to Savage and, without citing his *Account*, notes that

> [i]f the biographer writes from personal knowledge, and makes haste to gratify the publick curiosity, there is danger lest his interest, his fear, his gratitude, or his tenderness overpower his fidelity, and tempt him to conceal, if not to invent. There are many who

[40] Johnson's endorsement seems unequivocal, unquestioning, and perhaps naïve. Backscheider notes that "[i]n spite of the fact that Johnson accepted his friend's anecdotes and interpretations too uncritically, his *Life of Savage* is as important as Boswell's *Life of Johnson* for the modern history of biography" (241 n.30). The rhetorical effects he creates with these details allows him to give readers a Richard Savage they can know.

[41] Johnson states that Savage displayed his affection for their relationship when "he left London in July 1739, having taken leave with great tenderness of his friends, and parted from the author of this narrative with tears in his eyes" (*Lives* XXII.945). Johnson's own account seems to admit a tenderness that might overpower the veracity of a biographer.

> think it an act of piety to hide the faults or failings of their friends, even when they can no longer suffer by their detection. (*Rambler* III.323)

Balancing the risk he takes by representing Savage's story as true against his regard for the "fidelity" of the biographer, Johnson risks his reputation as a biographer well before he has established it. In taking up the burden of biographical proof for a subject as hazy as Savage's life, he must credential the facts through the contemporary channels of print culture, which introduce innovations for authorizing biographical fact.[42] As a publicly documented scandal, the events of Savage's birth had long been subject to public scrutiny. The anonymous pamphlet of Savage's life presents the scandal to raise readers' sympathies, beginning with the claim that "[p]erhaps no History in the World, either ancient or modern, can produce an Instance of any one Man's Life fill'd with so many calamitous Circumstances, as *That* of the unhappy young Gentleman, who is the melancholy subject of the following Sheets" (3). This account begins with a direct appeal to the reader's sympathies. It does not invite the reader to draw educational conclusions. Johnson's anonymous source pamphlet depends on a one-sided account that appeals to readers' emotions, rather than engaging their critical capacity.

While Johnson's sympathies undoubtedly lie with Savage, he recasts these print details and their persuasive bent in a didactic arrangement that can be easily misunderstood as sympathetic in the same way that Milton's Satan can easily tempt readers into misreading him as heroic. The pamphlet casts Savage in a superlative light, harder pressed than anyone in the "history of the world." On the other hand, Johnson recasts the print Savage as another of the

[42] Johnson almost seems to take up the biographical task of telling Savage's life for the mere challenge of making it reliable as fact: given the slim record of their acquaintance—Johnson's alone—such literary play might be the reason for his life of Savage, the challenge of making a bad man good. Such an approach would have cast Johnson as a novelist than a biographer, a role he never otherwise chose to play except, in sense, with the *History of Rasselas*, a highly fictionalized fable. But Johnson is not playing a literary game; his stake is in the allowing the reader to make ethical, educational choices. At the other extreme, however, is Holmes' interpretation, which brushes aside Johnson's biographical rigor or fictional play to reconcile Johnson's favorable treatment of Savage by suggesting that Johnson believed Savage's fraud as truth because Savage believed it as truth (235).

"heroes of literary as well as civil history [who] have been very often no less remarkable for what they have suffered, than for what they have atchieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miseries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives, and untimely deaths. To these mournful narratives, I am about to add the life of Richard Savage" (*Lives* XXII.851). Johnson rearranges the established print details of Savage's life for comparison to others whose "unhappy lives" make for "mournful narratives," but he provides no specific comparisons to the lives of other "heroes of literary history." Instead, Johnson opens Savage's life with the observation that the "general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention, [that] have been more carefully recorded, because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent or more severe" (*Lives* XXII.850-1). Johnson simultaneously affirms the accepted print facts of Savage's life that have been and remain in public view, but he downplays their importance by making the publicity itself part of Savage's mournful lot. This key element of what will become the celebrity biography uses the reader's own interest in the celebrity's life to show how prying eyes and print culture have shaped that life.

Johnson invites the reader to observe the known circumstances of Savage's life and his birth, without immediately crediting them as reliable facts. Johnson's source text, the pamphlet, presented Savage's highly publicized murder of James Sinclair and his trial as a fact not yet proven. It was, after all, written to garner support for Savage, and it casts the event in the passive: "Let it suffice in this place to say, that the direful Consequence of their going in there, was from an insult offer'd by Mr. *Merchant* to the company who were drinking there, a mortal Wound given to Mr. *Sinclair*, of which he languish'd till the next day, and then died, and the

Condemnation of Mr. *Savage* and Mr. *Gregory* for the said Fact" (21). The passive tone suits the pamphlet's persuasive purpose, to garner public support Savage and to sway the sentencing decision. It sets what can be known against what must be concluded legally, acknowledging that a quarrel was the cause of the fight, that Sinclair was wounded, and that Savage was blamed. By leaving out Savage's guilty action, his innocence is strongly implied. It also encourages the reader to see the partiality of any one source and asks the reader to judge for him or herself out of a larger body of evidence, to run a more extensive experiment on this life.

Johnson again defers to public assent, but rather than recall the spectacular news story, Johnson uses the spectacle of the infamous fight and murder to orchestrate a sympathetic exchange between spectators or readers and Savage. In Johnson's account, Mr. Merchant is again responsible for "a quarrel, [for which] swords were drawn on both sides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage, having wounded likewise a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the house; but being intimidated and confused, without resolution either to fly or stay, they were taken in a backcourt by one of the company and some soldiers" (*Lives* XXII.874). Johnson also deploys the passive in his version—"one Mr. James Sinclair was killed"—but he leaves no doubt about Savage's guilt, noting that he "wounded likewise a maid that held him." The word "likewise" sets Savage's definite wounding of the maid in opposition to his murder of Sinclair. Rather than a straightforward recounting, Johnson again reaffirms the accepted account at the same time that he challenges it and challenges readers to locate the truth of this crucial incident in Richard Savage's life. The rhetoric of self Johnson arranges addresses readers who are already confident in their understanding of Savage. He brings them to reevaluate Savage, not by confronting them with new facts, but by leading them to recognize the possibility of multiple points of view about Savage in Johnson's account.

Johnson also enlarged the archive of the facts of Savage's life with documents that reached beyond the popular pamphlet account of Savage's life: Johnson revealed facts of Savage's life and his character from Savage's own publications. Johnson used the credibility of print culture to augment the popular pamphlet with Savage's own publications, the poems and plays that proved to be a well of information from which Johnson could draw biographical facts. Savage's publications could not bear the same type scrutiny applied to the pamphlet, but Johnson used this different rhetorical situation to his advantage. Johnson submits that Savage's choice of topics and words offer an insight into his life; Johnson offers these documents to his readers as part of a life that is more a matter of interpretation than mere journalistic account.

At points, Savage's own poetry and prose crowds the narrative off the physical, printed page of Johnson's 1744 *Life*, a reminder that Richard Savage was a man who seemed to be composed of documents, a man who could only be redeemed by public evidence, documentation. In the material space for representing selfhood on the page, Johnson equates Savage's publicized print selfhood with this personal experience of a life lived in print and, by association and juxtaposition to Savage's writing, with the rhetoric of self the biography has created for him. Johnson's description of the common criticism of Savage's poem, *The Wanderer*, might be well be a description of Savage's lived experience. Johnson acknowledges the public criticism is "universal, and therefore it is reasonable to believe it at least in a Degree just," (*Account* 55):

> It has been generally objected to the *Wanderer*, that the Disposition of the Parts is irregular, that the Design is obscure, and the Plan perplexed, that the Images, however beautiful, succeed each other without Order; and that the whole performance is not so much a regular fabric as a Heap of shining Materials

> through together by Accident, which strikes rather with the solemn Magnificence of a stupendous Ruin, than the elegant Grandeur of a finished Pile. (*Account 55*)

Johnson's account of reviews of the *Wanderer* mirrors his own task as a biographer; to present disparate materials in a way that retains a sense of their authentic messiness while also allowing the reader to form his or her own experience of the whole of a life. As a biographer, Johnson's task in arranging a compelling rhetoric of self for the paradoxically public and elusive Richard Savage regular is to thread the "heap of shining" experiences into consistent "disposition," with a narrative "plan" for a "finished," observable selfhood teased from the mysterious spaces in Savage's life.

Johnson locates much of Savage's character in the *Wanderer,* defining him two ways: textually, in a narrative of his experience, and paratextually, in glossed text that stands as a marker of Savage's narrative. Paired on the page, publicly verified ancillary text like the *Wanderer* corroborates Johnson's recounting of Savage's experience in the main narrative. Johnson defers to Savage's account of the long-lasting effects of his life-long estrangement from his so-called mother, Lady Macclesfield: "[e]ven in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkable delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impression is had upon his mind" (*Lives* XXII.893). He provides thirteen lines of the *Wanderer* to support his commentary on the narrative. Similarly, he cites instances of Savage's power of description as a poet, quoting thirty-two lines of Savage's poetry. In this case, he juxtaposes Savage's personal life with his own public printings—they even share a footnote space in the 1744 *Account* (69).[43] Johnson's credentialing apparatus suggests several important facts about Savage's print selfhood. First, Johnson's citation and footnoting fills gaps in the

[43] For instance, Johnson cites the dedication to the *Wanderer* on page 78; it continues through page 79, met on page 79 by another reference to a poem, which provides an documentary example of Savage's ability to appeal to the sentiments of his benefactors. This citation runs from page 79 through page 81.

narrative. The nature of the gaps is, quite often, psychological or emotional—even a first person witness to Savage's experience could not discern the truth without recourse to some other aid. Significantly, this print evident of Savage's emotional and psychological makeup become facts with the same gravity as the legal evidence subjected to public scrutiny in the Sinclair case. It marks a move from the externally observable toward observations of the intimate. Johnson cites Savage's poem the *Bastard*, for instance, as "a Poem remarkable for the vivacious Sallies of Thought in the Beginning, where he makes a pompous Enumeration of the imaginary Advantages of base Birth, and the pathetic Sentiments at the End, where he recounts the real Calamities which he suffered by the Crime of his Parents" (*Account* 91). Johnson glosses excerpts of the *Bastard* with the effect of illustrating how Savage's early circumstances shaped his later life. The poem and its placement in the biography give continuity to both the experiential and psychological components of Savage's rhetoric of self.

Likewise, Johnson locates a parallel between "the author of *The Wanderer*, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts" and a man who might be found "[o]n a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glass-house among thieves and beggars" (*Lives* XXII.929). In Johnson's construction, the balance between Savage's life as an author and as a destitute man is most evident in Savage's most public self-documentation and Johnson's most ready source for Savage's psychological and emotional experience. Johnson cites lines from *The Wanderer* as a "probable" example of Savage's "reflections on his own conduct," which, as the poem explains, "ev'n then he scorn'd, and blush'd to name" (*Lives* XXII.929). Johnson uses this poetry as a means of determining Savage's

character: these excerpts from *The Wanderer* head a section that provides instances of Savage's characteristic imposition on friends and benefactors, particularly his penchant for soliciting "small sums" of money from his acquaintance (*Lives* XXII.929). That Savage's poetry documents and suggests a "probable" character for Savage indicates another print culture precedent for ascertaining factuality. Savage's choice of topics and words becomes a fundamentally biographical, public documentation of the man's life. What Savage offered to the public for critical examination opened him to public judgment, and for his biographer, this judgment delineated Savage's character and put it in view of discriminating, ethical readers who would improve themselves through the print acquaintance. Johnson forces them to judge the evidence for themselves and, in so doing, to become implicated in the rhetorical construction of his life.

Johnson's innovative application of print documents to credential the murky life of Richard Savage included semi-public, epistolary records, which became print documents in Johnson's biography. Their credibility for readers in eighteenth-century print culture was immense: they signified an older tradition of documentation, but they also made facts of social interaction. Later in the century, Boswell came to use epistolary evidence of Johnson's life to lend continuity to these social interactions and to the character of Johnson overall. Even though Johnson would disparage the practice of publishing private letters, his own biographical practice indicates a different tack and then only out of necessity (*Life* v.102). Johnson's biography depends on Savage's correspondence from the end of Savage's life when little other documented evidence of Savage's experience existed.

Unlike anonymous pamphlets, poetry, or speeches, epistolary documents record a social network as much as their authors' reports and reflections. In addition to readers who could bear

witness to the proof of Savage's life evident in his poetic output, an epistolary record adds the correspondent as a print witness. Unlike print documents that have been open to public scrutiny and are, as a result, subject to divisive interpretations, private documents like letters were, as Clare Brant points out, "[a]ssociated with instruction" which "strengthened the relationship between print culture and the lower classes . . . letters had liminal meanings for those in power and powerful meanings for liminal people" (15). As a person on the periphery of both the literary and aristocratic worlds to which he had at various times aspired, Savage is a letter writer whose personal words offer significant insight into how he could be read, as authentic, credible documentation. It is a documentary record that opens Savage's experience to scrutiny, providing readers with evidence of Savage's life that is much less nebulous Savage's public reputation. From this record, readers can extrapolate how Savage wanted to be read more easily from the cues his self-conscious representation provides. They invited readers to draw ethical conclusions that would instruct them, like many letters, in how they should behave.

Johnson develops much of Savage's social life by situating it in correspondence, either letters written by Savage himself or letters written to be signed by Savage. From the act of letter-writing alone, Johnson demonstrates the characteristic pride that Savage imposed on his friends and those he reckoned as enemies. In one instance, Johnson notes that Alexander Pope wrote a letter to be dictated to Savage, that he might write and beg the assistance of a patron he had once offended, but Savage refused, preferring his pride to his former social connection (*Lives* XXII.944-5). Savage's letters document his life more readily and offer the instructive, ethical choices that Johnson arranges throughout the narrative. When he is imprisoned in Bristol for debt, Savage's correspondence forms the bulk of the narrative. Johnson describes that "having been at supper with two of his friends, he [Savage] was at his return to his lodgings arrested for a

debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-house" (*Lives* XXII.952). In a letter to Reverend William Saunders a minor cleric at Bristol Cathedral, Savage relates and interprets these experiential facts:

> I was arrested at the suit of Mrs. Read [the coffee-shop owner], just as I was going up stairs to bed, at Mr. Bowyer's; but taken in so private a manner, that I believe nobody at the White Lion is apprised of it. Though I let the officers know the strength (or rather weakness) of my pocket, yet they treated me with the utmost civility; and even when they conducted me to confinement, it was in such a manner, that I verily believe I could have escaped, which I would rather be ruined than have done, notwithstanding the whole amount of my finances was but three pence half-penny. (*Lives* XXII.952-3)

Johnson's choice to draw details of Savage's life from his correspondence with a cleric associates Savage's account with a religious veracity. Presented with the choice to take Savage at his word in his letter or to consider him in light of other evidence, a reader might choose to see Savage's character here possessed of a stoic dignity that defied his circumstances. Johnson uses Savage's relationship to money to authenticate his class position in this account. The guards "treat him with the utmost civility," suggesting they apprehend something about Savage's natural authority and class position. Savage would rather be ruined than escape, affirming his relationship to older honor codes in a market-driven age of opportunity. The reader is shown, not told, that Savage has a native dignity, revealed to Johnson's readers for their own evaluation through Savage's exchange with Reverend Saunders.

An ethical reader would experience this moment along the trajectory of selfhood that Johnson demonstrates. An ethical reader, through this experience, understands Savage in the

same light his acquaintance viewed him and as Johnson has presented prior to this moment: the perpetual borrower of *The Wanderer*. This epistolary narrative might equally be little more than the affectation of dignity as a precursor to begging, like his protest later in the letter, in which, Savage commands Saunders "not to offer me any pecuniary assistance, nor attempt getting me any from any one of your friends" (*Lives* XXII.953). Savage's private address to Saunders becomes a public address through Saunders' response, observing what Savage claims to be his wish or ignoring it and seeking assistance. In both instances, Saunders response is an epistolary address to the public. Through Johnson's biographical representation, the epistolary privacy becomes a public document. The shift from private to public is a sympathetic move that allows readers a greater degree of sympathetic understanding for Savage. His personal dignity in the face of debtor's prison becomes a nobleman's warranted pride. In fact, Savage begs, "let me entreat you to let have your boy to attend to me for this day, not only for the sake of saving me the expense of porters," justifying a request so close on his statement of his dignity "that my truly valuable friend [Reverend Saunders] may not think I am too proud to ask a favour" (*Lives* XXII.953-4). Nothing else may be documented in Savage's confinement except his reflections and his relationships to friends. The end of Savage's letter-writing roughly marks the end of his life in Johnson's account. Without documentation, after all, there can be no life to recount. In using Savage's private letters as a means of discovering hidden, experiential details, Johnson moves past the publicized and self-publicizing man to a more intimate portrayal of Savage's selfhood that was available only to a coterie of correspondents and friends, albeit no less mediated by the rhetoric of self that Savage was already constructing.

Johnson's biographical approach to Savage depends on a third set of details that are more personal still than explicating Savage's poetry or reading his letters: personal experience. In his

Rambler essay on biography, Johnson noted that "[t]here are many invisible circumstances which, whether we read as enquirers after natural or moral knowledge, whether we intend to enlarge our science, or increase our virtue, are more important than publick occurrences" (321). For Johnson, biographical narrative must utilize the available means for discovering the details of a person's experience. This is one of the hallmarks of modern biography that has strengthened since print culture emerged, but the rhetoric of self that Johnson's narrative of Savage creates depends on more than the documentation that drove print's ascendancy in eighteenth-century London. In his biography of Addison, Johnson argued that experience with the person was a crucial for arranging a biography:

> History may be formed from permanent monuments and records; but lives can only be written through personal knowledge, which is growing every day less, and in a short time is lost for ever. What is known can seldom be told; and when it might be told, it is no longer known. The delicate features of the mind, the nice discriminations of character, and the minute peculiarities of conduct, are soon obliterated. (*Lives* XXII.637)

First-hand experience allows the biographer to nuance the demonstration of selfhood, blending documentation and the accounts of other people into a depiction of selfhood more easily identifiable as a person whom the reader might spectate and know. Personal experience can connect the documentation of the person to the person. Johnson cites his own experience as his foremost credential in the advertisement he posted in *The Gentleman's Magazine* for his biography of Savage (Boswell, *Life* i.164-5).

Richard Holmes interrogates the relationship between Savage and Johnson that has, through Johnson's account, come to be taken as a given—that Johnson and Savage were friends

brought together by their political beliefs, their Grub Street associations, and their poverty. Holmes notes "an extraordinary fact": "no one, at any time, or in any place, ever left a first-hand account of seeing Johnson and Savage together. It was, from the start, an invisible friendship" (35). In publishing a biography so close after the death of his friend, Johnson is documenting the experiential "incidents which give excellence to biography," details that "are of a volatile and evanescent kind, such as soon escape the memory, and are rarely transmitted by tradition" (*Rambler* 323). He is translating the shining heap of materials into a coherent, nuanced rhetoric of self. Part of Johnson's function in this period of emergent eighteenth-century biography is to straddle the modern standards for factual accuracy to which Holmes defers and to be the fact, making a record where no record had previously been made in an unstable world of eighteenth-century print. Johnson recalls the common, personal circumstances of the public, documented "author of *The Wanderer*":

> He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night sometimes in mean houses, which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expences of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down in the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glass-house. (*Lives* XXII.928)

In describing the consequence of Savage's impecunious lifestyle, Johnson associates the "author of *The Wanderer*" with "any casual wanderers" whose poverty forces them to take shelter where they can find it, and none of these "associates in poverty" were likely to recount these experiences, except one.

Not only as a witness, but a participant in Savage's life, Johnson is able to raise the distinction of a man suffering from his poverty and "the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations; the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, who ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, who eloquence might have influenced senates, and who delicacy might have polished courts" (*Lives* XXII.929). Johnson juxtaposes the extremes that framed Savage's life, portraying him as a man who slept in ashes or on eaves, and whose views might easily range no farther than the next meal or place to sleep; in Johnson's rhetoric, Savage's views are the insights of a "statesmen," "moralist," or courtier. Readers of this life had to reconcile the tension between the facets of Savage's character and his actions ethically. Johnson makes this selfhood something to be observed rhetorically, locating facts and presenting them to force readers to a conclusion.

Johnson's own biographer, James Boswell, prints a reflection on this moment in Johnson's life almost fifty years after Johnson first reported it, suggesting that "[i]t is melancholy to reflect, that Johnson and Savage were sometimes in such extreme indigence, that they could not pay for a lodging; so that they have wandered together whole nights in the streets" (*Life* i.163). Boswell is not following Johnson in deferring to a private, first-hand account that is, as Holmes points out, undocumented elsewhere; rather, and much more significantly, Boswell is following Johnson's example as a biographer in using an account that has become public fact by virtue of having been printed and attaining the public assent of readers. The reliability of the account is public acceptance. Boswell's recounting of the time when Johnson's life overlapped with Savage's reinforces the usefulness of personal facts in the development of biography, and also emphasizes the fluid parameters in which facts came to be accredited through print in the eighteenth century. Johnson's application of his own experiences as a spectator or witness of

Richard Savage's life proves no less reliable and no less subject to public assent than the print details and personal letters in which he locates Savage's self.

Johnson not only bears witness to Savage's circumstances, but also to his conversation. He relates the prosecution's attack of Savage's character in court during his trial for murder. Johnson's selections give as evidence an "eloquent harangue" in Savage's 1727 trial that was circulated by "Mr. Savage [who] used to relate it" (*Lives* XXII.876). Such "incidents . . . of a volatile and evanescent kind" show Savage imagining himself as a public figure (*Rambler* 323). Johnson recalls Savage's narration of Mr. Page, Savage's prosecutor, when he drew a comparison between specific aspects of Savage's appearance that might characterize a man of means, suggesting that they hide a man capable of murder. Page accused Savage of affecting a well-dressed gentleman, when in fact, Page implies, Savage was thoroughly indigent. But Johnson, by presenting this gap between an old model of class that is heritable (in which Savage is authorized to wear good clothes by his birth, however illegitimate) and a new, more portable model of class that reads for a collection of economic, social, and behavioral markers. Page implies that Savage's capacity for deceit is the mark of a murderer who could hide a crime while Johnson, by presenting the evidence as he does, leaves open the reading that Savage is a dispossessed noble whose very existence points to the voraciousness and injustice of new models of economic class. The prosecutor models what the reader must do with the facts of Savage's life by presenting them directly to the reader:

> Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much greater man than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he wears very fine clothes, much finer clothes than you or I, gentlemen of the jury; that he has abundance of money in his pocket, much more money than you or I, gentlemen of

> the jury: but, gentlemen of the jury, is it not a very hard case, gentlemen of the jury, that Mr. Savage should therefore kill you or me, gentlemen of the jury? (*Live*s XXII.876)

By a similar mechanism that could make fact from an unchallenged pamphlet, Savage's recitation of his prosecutor's damning criticism acquired some degree of factuality simply by its publicity and repetition. While Johnson employs it to establish the facts of Savage's life, however, he must also represent its credibility as fact. Though it is "eloquent harangue," Johnson cites it as the most accurate transcription of the trial. And it is, because it is the only record. Savage's self-fashioning takes on the gravity and accuracy of documented fact, of a recorded transcript rather than a rehearsed memory. As a print fact that readers can examine objectively, the speech turns a reading public into the "gentlemen of a jury" who must judge the factuality of Richard Savage's public claims about his own life and discern the person from rumor for themselves.

The empirical impulse driving eighteenth-century biography would have guided Johnson to depict as many observable, credible, documented pieces of information about Savage's life as possible, in order to locate the nuanced patterns in these details that would establish Savage's life. Having drawn the facts of Savage's life from publications, Savage's own writing, and letters up to the moment of his death, Johnson uses his biographical collection of facts to depict Savage's person and character, free of chronological narrative. After relating Savage's death in debtor's prison, Johnson goes on to describe Savage's physical appearance, "a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect"; Savage's judgment, which was "eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men"; and Savage's knowledge, attained by a thorough, intimate acquaintance with "coffee-houses" and company (*Lives* XXII.963-4).

Ultimately, Johnson's documented facts of Savage's life and his recollections of Savage's private self pose a test for readers; he asks them to make up their own minds. Johnson catalogs the shortcomings of Savage's character and the virtues of his authorship (*Lives* XXII.963-6). He balances in Savage a man whose "knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment" but of whom "[i]t cannot be said, that he made use of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct" (*Lives* XXII.964, 965). Likewise Johnson represents Savage as a man "compassionate both by nature and principle," but whose "friendship was . . . of little value" because "it was dangerous to trust him" (*Lives* XXII.965). He ultimately becomes a set of contrarieties that might be oversimplified as binaries—Savage is landed gentry or homeless vagrant, slighted heir or pretender, victim of circumstance or murderer, poet-philosopher or petty scribbler, and so on. These are the givens that Johnson establishes rhetorically, through details and their presentation, so that a reader may engage Savage's selfhood, observe a nuanced selfhood somewhere within the binaries, and draw conclusions about who the man was.

While Johnson's rhetoric of self forces the reader to know Savage and to judge him, Johnson notes no "wise man . . . will presume to say, 'Had I been in Savage's condition, I should have lived or written better than Savage" (*Lives* XXII.968). Having engaged readers to draw conclusions, Johnson's comment has a paradoxical edge, but it serves to remind the discriminating, ethical reader that no life bears easy judgment, especially not a life viewed intimately, and that readers must consider their own condition intimately as much as they would consider Savage's, since "[t]hose are no proper judges of his conduct, who have slumbered away their time on the down of plenty" (*Lives* XXII.968). Readers of this new kind of biography are a sort of print spectator, engaging the biographical rhetoric of self with the same sort of fellow feeling appropriate to a living person. The process of spectating the subject of a biography as a

rhetoric of self is meant to produce ethical readers who engage Johnson's *Account* and the Savage of the *Lives*. More importantly, Johnson's biography makes the facts of Savage's life more credible by inviting readers to apply the biography to their own "condition," lives, and practices, since "[w]e are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure" (*Rambler* III.320). In spectating the print self of Savage that Johnson constructs, readers come to understand him by understanding themselves.

The Life of Richard Nash: Spectating a Person and a Character Type as Documentation

While Johnson's biographical work might not be as accurate as modern biographical standards require, his application of the print criteria to his biographical writing achieved the ethical ends that earned him the respect of his contemporaries. It also established patterns for writing biography that echoed through later works like Oliver Goldsmith's *Life of Richard Nash* and James Boswell's *Life of Samuel Johnson*. Their critical principles are predicated on Johnson's methods of documentation, his empiricism, and the didactic, rhetorical effects of his approach. Eighteen years after the first printing of Johnson's *Account of the Life of Richard Savage*, Oliver Goldsmith published his *Life of Richard Nash, Esq.*, a rhetoric of self that reads like the biographical heir to Johnson's *Savage*. The lives that Johnson and Goldsmith arrange engage readers to locate the person between the publicity they sought for themselves and the slim record of their private lives. They are both men whose private lives were marked by publicity and self-publicizing that invited public speculation; they are each, in different ways, celebrity biographies, but each is calculated for the improvement of the reader. According to Johnson, people read biography to improve their own characters (*Rambler* III.321). The fictional

reader that Johnson devises for biography reads purposefully; therefore, "the business of the biographer is often to pass lightly over those performances and incidents which produce vulgar greatness, to lead the thoughts into domestick privacies, and display the minute details of daily life, where exterior appendages are cast aside, and men excel each other only by prudence and by virtue" (*Rambler* III.321). The balance Johnson strikes between public records and his own experience with Savage's "domestic privacies" and "minute details of daily life" invites readers to decide where Savage's "prudence" and "virtue" fail or, less often, "excel."

From the outset of his *Life of Nash*, Goldsmith echoes many of Johnson's sentiments regarding biography,[44] either because he obliquely cites them or because Johnson's biographical approach, demonstrated in his *Savage* and articulated in later essay projects like the *Rambler* and *Idler*, was emerging into a normative approach for writing biography. Much like the emphasis Johnson places on the biography of common lives over those of public renown (*Idler* II.262-3), Goldsmith stresses that "whether the heroe or the clown be the subject of the memoir, it is only man that appears with all his native minuteness about him, for nothing ever great was ever yet formed from the little materials of humanity" (III.290). The "native minuteness" that defines the "little materials of humanity" provides a counterpoint to the minuteness of a reader's own circumstances that, again, make the contrarieties of character the biographer displays more amenable to the reader's own self-conception and improvement. Goldsmith explicitly explains the value of discovering minute, incidental, and intimate markers of a person's humanity, which are, paradoxically, more interesting in the case of the celebrity life. He asserts that "the generality of mankind find the most real improvements from relations which are levelled to the general surface of life; which tell, not how men learned to conquer, but how they endeavoured to

[44] Arthur Friedman, editor to the *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith*, lists six such allusions to Johnson's *Idler*, No. 84 (24 November 1759) at the beginning of Goldsmith's *Nash*.

live; not how they gained the shout of the admiring croud, but how they acquired the esteem of their friends and acquaintance" (*Rambler* III.290). The experiences that illustrate the "general surface of human life" have more in common with the general experiences of most readers. The surface of human life, what can be observed empirically, holds sway over what a reader can internalize sympathetically. These experiences are more readily observed and, in their minuteness, more easily understood and more immediately applicable.

In theorizing biography, Johnson notes that "[t]he mischievous consequences of vice and folly, or irregular desires and predominant passions, are best discovered by those relations which are levelled with the general surface of life, which tell not how any man became great, but how he was made happy; not how he lost the favour of his prince, but how he became discontented with himself" (*Idler* II.262). The sentiments overlap, deemphasizing the publicized, famous, or well-known person; the "prince" rather than the person most subject to front the "general surface of life." In Johnson, the private aspect of the well-known or common person is most important. Goldsmith's focus on the "heroe or the clown" who can be observed and situated in social networks follows a similar biographical approach to Johnson and sets the tone for the rhetoric of self he devises for Nash. Both Johnson's and Goldsmith's biographical approaches underscore the significance of biography's autodidactic promise, the importance of choice that moves a reader from the limitations of what is already known about Savage or Nash to what can be concluded about the intimate selfhood by considering all that is known.

Johnson's focus on a person's own happiness or discontentedness privileges the sort of detail he promised in his advertisement to the *Account of the Life of Richard Savage* as a balance to the documented aspects of Savage's life. Documentation established readers' expectations against which Johnson could present private aspects of Savage's life so that readers would be

forced to challenge these expectations and draw their own conclusions. Boswell reported Johnson's criticism of Goldsmith's biographical approach to the life of Dr. Thomas Parnell: "Goldsmith's Life of Parnell is poor; not that it is poorly written, but that he had poor materials; for nobody can write the life of a man, but those who have eat and drunk and lived in social intercourse with him" (*Life* ii.166). His critique recalls his own approach to Savage's life and emphasizes a personal relationship between the biographer and the life to be written. But Goldsmith was not anymore personally familiar with Nash than he had been with Parnell. Moreover, Goldsmith lacked the body of public printings that Johnson balanced against his personal observations of Savage's life. Nash was no poet, nor was he mired in scandals surrounding his extraction or an acquittal for murder. Consequently, the details Goldsmith must find might seem to compensate for the deficiencies in source materials Johnson utilizes in his biography of Savage.

In the same way that Johnson extrapolates the facts of Savage's life from public documents, Goldsmith also uses documentary evidence like letters, but invites readers to view Nash sympathetically. Their sympathies singly and collaboratively develop the facts about Nash that they can know for themselves, facts that Goldsmith often withholds, lacking materials to completely situate Nash in documents as a print self. Goldsmith's most significant biographical approach sets the details for an inductive appraisal of the facts by renegotiating an older, deductive rhetorical tradition—character writing, instituted as the province of rhetoricians by Theophrastus, Aristotle's acolyte and successor at the Lyceum, as a means of comprehending ethical values through a human lens. Goldsmith's treatment of Nash's character is more overtly Theophrastan than Johnson's representation of Savage's character. Whereas Johnson reveals Nash's private character through the authority and purported nobility of an eighteenth-century

celebrity, Goldsmith resituates Nash in established public frame in order to locate his private character.

Goldsmith's first method for determining the details of Nash's life, like Johnson's, depends on documentation that situates the private person's character within the networks of his correspondence. And, like Johnson, Goldsmith uses documents that have the imprimatur of credibility, and in his advertisement assures the reader that

> We have the Permission of *George Scott*, Esq; (who kindly undertook to settle the Affairs of Mr. *Nash*, for the benefit of his Family and Creditors) to assure the Publick, that all the Papers found in the Custody of Mr. *Nash*, which any ways respected his Life, and were thought interesting to the Publick, were communicated to the Editor of this Volume; so that the Reader will, at least, have the Satisfaction of perusing an Account that is genuine, and not the Work of Imagination, as Biographical Writings too frequently are. (III.287)

Goldsmith compensates for what he lacks in personal knowledge of Nash (and what strengthened Johnson's rhetoric of self in his *Life of Savage*) with letters that are so authentic they require the "Permission" of Nash's executor to publish. More importantly, the epistolary evidence has "Publick" appeal, the potential to engage readers with "interesting" information that commands authority in eighteenth-century print culture.

In order to gain print credit for his Nash, Goldsmith uses correspondence with people who have public renown. A pair letters from the Duchess of Marlborough (III.332-3) and two from Alexander Pope (III.342-3) add to the level of what public intimacy Goldsmith cultivates.[45]

[45] In his treatment of celebrity, Joseph Roach describes public intimacy: he compares celebrities to monarchs who "have two bodies—the body natural, which decays and dies, and the body politic, which does neither . . . celebrities foreground a peculiar combination of strength and vulnerability, expressed through outward signs of the union of their imperishable and mortal bodies. Let those marks of strength be called *charismata*; the signs of vulnerability

Unlike Johnson, Goldsmith only includes epistolary responses from Nash's correspondents, never including Nash's original letters. While this might underscore the lack of materials available to Goldsmith, it also opens a rhetorical possibility. Without a set of correspondence from the letter writer and the recipient, a reader must infer Nash's correspondence. Goldsmith invites the reader to imagine the author of the originals by reading the responses. In short, he asks the reader to discover the facts of Savage's own character themselves. They must reconstruct the documentation of Nash's life in order to understand him. What is known about Nash is subject to the imagination of the reader, who must fill in the gap the one-sided sets of correspondence create.

These sets of letters answer Nash's, giving provocative cues that invite a reader to draw conclusions about Nash, much like Savage's letter to his Reverend William Saunders in Johnson's biography. Goldsmith points out that "[t]he duchess of *Marlborough* seems not to be a much better writer than Mr. *Nash;* but she was worth many thousand pounds, and that might console her. It may give splenetic philosophy, however, some scope for mediation, when it considers, what a parcel of stupid trifles the world is ready to admire" (III.333). She writes, after all, about trivial matters, like Nash's recommendations on cloth for dresses or on likely landscapers for her grounds. Goldsmith frames these letters by characterizing their correspondence about "concerns of a private nature. Her letting leases, building bridges, or forming canals, were often carried on under his guidance; but she advised with him particularly in purchasing liveries for the footmen; a business to which she thought his genius best adapted" (III.332). Nash and Marlborough give Goldsmith's audience the chance to decide whether Nash lacks depth or "not only took care . . . to protect ladies from the insults of our sex, but to guard

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stigmata . . . [T]heir beguiling interplay . . . has a long history as well as a popular currency as the source of public intimacy" (24). Roach's notion of public intimacy is particularly appropriate to Nash, whose celebrity, unlike Savage's or Johnson's later, is based on little more than the assertion of his selfhood in a popular resort area.

them from the slanders of each other" with prudent advice on style (III.331). These facets of Nash's character, defender of women, foppish dilettante, confidant, and household manager are in contention for the reader who would know Nash. The process of judging depends on the ability to play the role that Goldsmith has established for his reader. Goldsmith fictionalizes his reader as the Duchess of Marlborough's correspondent, as Nash himself. In this position, the reader constructs the facts of Nash's interiority imaginatively.

Pope's letters to Nash offer a better insight into the sympathetic function toward which Goldsmith turns the letters. Goldsmith introduces the letters from Pope with his own unmet responsibility as a biographer to include enough epistolary detail for the reader to witness the exchange: "I should have been glad to have given Mr. *Nash's* letter upon this occasion; the reader, however, must be satisfied with Pope's reply" (III.342). The satisfaction the reader takes from Pope's reply derives less from reading Pope than imaginatively reconstructing Nash's initial letter and, biographically, the man who had written it. Pope cannot resist a mock-polite tone in his first letter that invites speculation about the man to which he addressed his derision. Nash, apparently, had written Pope requesting an inscription engraved on an obelisk honoring a visit to Bath, Nash's home, by the Prince of Wales. Pope first thanks Nash for considering him worthy of praising a prince, but points out that "[y]ou say words cannot express the gratitude you feel for the favour of his R. H. [Royal Highness] and yet you would have me express what you feel, and in a few words. I own myself unequal to the task; for even, granting it possible to express an inexpressible idea, I am the worst person . . . who have received so few favours from the great myself" (III.342). Pope's sarcastic reply could only have answered the letter of a man who Goldsmith has left the reader to imagine Nash from a social response. As in the instance of Marlborough's letters to Nash, Pope's letters raise the question of who Nash might be: was

Pope's correspondence intended as vitriol directed at a man Pope deemed a fool? Or was it an upbraiding of a well-intentioned man who overstepped the etiquette of begging a favor from a stranger? However readers choose to define Nash depends on how they imagine him as a letter writer. As in the letter to Marlborough, the reader assumes the role of Nash. More importantly, how they imagine him through his celebrity determines the facts that define him.

Pope's subsequent letter answers neither question; again, it opens Nash to a sympathetic reconstruction by Goldsmith's readers. Goldsmith frames the letter by inviting the reader to consider, again, "[w]hat Mr. *Nash's* answer" to Pope's letter was, and Goldsmith confesses that he "cannot take upon me [himself] to ascertain, but it was probably a perseverance in his former request" (III.342). He cannot take it upon himself; rather, he leaves ascertaining Nash's answer to the reader. Pope's letter makes the claim that Pope had unsuccessfully investigated who might be able to better write an inscription honoring the prince. In lieu of another writer, Pope drafts and sends a plain inscription that "is nearly the common sense of the thing" (III.343). Pope attaches Nash's name to the inscription, and directly reminds Nash "I think I need not tell you my name should not be mentioned" (III.343). The final product was indeed plain, and Goldsmith almost seems to cite it to stress the almost triviality of Nash's persistence: "The inscription referred to in this letter, was the same which was afterwards engraved on the obelisk; and is as follows.

In memory of honours bestow'd,

And in gratitude for benefits conferred in this city,

By his Royal Highness

Frederick, Prince of *Wales*,

And his Royal Consort,

In the Year 1738,

This obelisk is erected by

Richard Nash, Esq" (III.343).

In this gesture, Pope opens an imaginary space for Nash by assigning his name to the inscription he did not write. Nash becomes a presence who is signed to an inscription he did not write and as a silent correspondent in active communication. Yet he remains absent. In order to flesh out the presence Goldsmith outlines, readers must observe Nash's rhetoric of self sympathetically, putting themselves in Nash's position to imagine his selfhood.

Challenging readers to draw conclusions about a print person allows the reader to become a spectator of lived experience through a print selfhood. By picturing the moments that frame a rhetoric of self, the biographer determines details that have the potential to excite the sympathies of their biographical spectators, readers who recognize their responsibility to judge other selfhoods in order to improve their own. By depending on the resources at his disposal and printing the letters available to him, Goldsmith forces readers to project their sympathies onto Nash. They must imagine the man whose correspondence drew answers from the Duchess of Marlborough and Alexander Pope. As Smith theorizes, "[e]very faculty in one man is the measure by which he judges of the like faculty in another . . . I neither have, nor can have, any other way of judging them" (19). To "measure" Nash by imagining themselves as the writers of his letters ties the experience of print to a rhetoric of self in order to utilize both as a means of inculcating virtue in readers. The details that Goldsmith establishes require readers to imagine a Nash from whom they can draw conclusions about the selfhood they can only envision experientially by putting themselves in his place. By imaginatively constructing themselves *as*

Nash, the effect of reading a print self is autodidactic and ethical, teaching them how to act by embodying Nash's action.

Like Johnson, who employs the role of documentation in a print culture increasingly dependent on tangible, documented evidence, Goldsmith also establishes biographical detail using a form with recognizable associations to periodical culture and an older, rhetorical tradition.[46] Goldsmith draws on the conventions of character writing for details of Nash's life that readers can evaluate inductively as factors for determining the character of the person. By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, character writing was most recognizably the province of periodical publications, led by *The Spectator*, in which authors framed essays through the voice of a familiar character given to set traits. They were a mainstay of one of print culture's most popular eighteenth-century forms. Character types and character writing functioned, J. W. Smeed suggests, as "the relish in the sandwich, the entertainment between two slices of instruction" (67). Richard Steele's Tatler and the Mr. Spectator personae he shared with Joseph Addison where characters whose attitudes guided the aesthetic discussions in their periodicals. Johnson contributed a Mr. Rambler, an Idler, and an Adventurer as essay-spokespeople to broach moral and social topics, and James Boswell offered up a Hypochondriack whose character depended on eighteenth-century stereotypes of depression and, particularly, Boswell's own identification with those stereotypes.

As a standard for understanding character during the eighteenth century, character writing offers a useful means of accessing contemporary assumptions about personality and selfhood. Smeed notes that the rhetoricians following Theophrastus, "firmly regarded" character writing

[46] The tradition of character writing, thought grounded in the deductive rhetoric of ancient Greece, exerted a strong influence on eighteenth-century understandings of self and morality and on biography as an emergent form. Its influence is not paradoxical, despite the eighteenth century's inductive bent, since character writing, like other biographical facts an author could invent, was evidential and could be used to induce conclusions about the self.

"as part of education, and . . . the depiction of types . . . has a moral function" (7). Elaine M. McGirr outlines how eighteenth-century character writing achieved this didactic aim: "[t]he 'character' taught readers how to interpret the world and what values to attach to different classes or types of people. And because they were so pervasive in eighteenth-century England, 'characters' operated as icons that needed no explication . . . The character sketch fixed identities, transforming individuals into 'types' that were both definable and consistent" (4).[47] Such iconic status operates as a cultural shorthand for signifying the values necessary for an ethics of reading. The drive to correlate a specific social value to a specific, fictitious identity provides another means for representing a character that can be accredited in print, through its periodical popularity with readers.

But this approach was a vestige of deductive rhetoric: the namesake character of a particular character sketch was a sort of syllogistic major premise; the behaviors of their lives highlighted different aspects of the major premise, reaffirming it in the context of these different behaviors. Eighteenth-century periodicals where populated by such characters. Their unique attributes set the periodicals topics and tone—the Tatler was light and dealt with manners, while the Spectator took up larger social issues and aesthetic judgment. Taken on its own, a single character study seems out of place in the inductive context eighteenth-century biographers were developing for arranging selfhood. Goldsmith, however, puts character types in conversation, like inductive data points that require the reader's evaluation in order to induce Goldsmith's selfhood. Goldsmith demonstrated a knowledge of this tradition in his critique of Samuel

[47] McGirr divides her treatment of eighteenth-century characters in three categories, men, women, and the other. Under these heads, she outlines general character types at a remove from Theophrastus's ancient Greece and particular to the eighteenth century. For men, she outlines four characters, the Rake, the Fop, the Country Gentleman, and the Cit. The characters of women, she divides four sets of character types, the Heroine and Wife, the Coquette and the Prude, the Country Maid and the Town Lady, and Learned Ladies and Female Wits. The other characters of the eighteenth century are Catholic, Protestants, and Scots.

Butler's character writing, noting that Butler's characters "want that entertaining variety, and seem drawn rather from the designs of Theophrastus; and we must do our countryman the justice to own, that his sketches are not inferior to those of the refined Grecian" (I.209). Goldsmith associates the details of Nash's character from the attributes that readers would recognize as the values typical of their reading community, recognized by their own republic of letters. Goldsmith develops two disparate character types that match Nash's celebrity, reflecting eighteenth-century values and roles: the gamester and the king. Goldsmith establishes a productive tension between the types and the self that allows readers to prioritize different facts about the self in order to assess moral flaws in order to obtain self-knowledge through identifying with the native minuteness of Nash.

For Peter Briggs, the incongruent character types that Goldsmith assigns to Nash's celebrity, the difference between the character types Goldsmith assigns Nash and Nash's own character amounts to "careful equivocation of large and small, importance and unimportance, social power and; mere vanity . . . unqualified praise and light blame . . . is momentarily stabilized in the notion that even triflers can have a significant social impact" (Briggs 214). He misreads the smallness that Goldsmith accords Nash as definitive. The function of the biography in this reading is to depict Nash "not [as] a unique individual but instead as a social *symptom* with great resonances or implications extending well beyond his personal story. In other words, Nash's career was made to seem naturally figurative, a reflection of the aspirations and puzzlements of the larger society (and to which he lent) his essential energies and meanings" (215). For Briggs, Goldsmith's Nash presents little more an artifact of "great resonances and implications," the "aspirations and puzzlements" of Nash's own time, rather than a rhetoric of self endowed with autodidactic application for readers.

As a young man in London, Nash's life typified that of the disreputable gamester, an admission that Goldsmith makes in the service of biographical integrity: "[n]ot to disguise any part of his character, he was now, by profession, a gamester, and went on from day to day, feeling the vicissitudes of rapture and anguish, in proportion to the fluctuations of fortune" (III.298). Treating this fact of Nash's life as an admission rather than a simple fact invited readers to draw ethical conclusions about Nash. Goldsmith makes him the man of a historical moment, associated with a "spirit of gaming, [that] had been introduced in the licentious age of *Charles* II. and had . . . thriven surprizingly. Yet all its devastations were confined to *London* alone" (III.298). Within this larger context, Goldsmith's audience would have anticipated certain stereotypical traits that marked a professional Restoration gambler: the inconstancy, unreliability, and rapacity that come from having "hitherto only led a life of expedients" and which had caused the middle-aged Nash to "thank chance alone for his support, and have been long precariously supported, he became, at length, totally a stranger to prudence or precaution" (III.298). Goldsmith portrays Nash's character through reference to normative character types. Readers have to weigh the generality of the character type against the specifics of Nash's character.

While Goldsmith follows Johnson's method of presenting all details of a self, regardless of how unflattering they seem, he makes an important rhetorical move here that underscores the differences between his mode of locating details for a rhetoric of self and Johnson's. Johnson generates a rhetoric of self for Savage that situates the man between the matrix of his circumstances and the ethical nature of his choices within that matrix. Savage's life was not simply a self-determined by the question of his parentage, his trial for murder, or his stint in debtor's prison; rather, he was an actor accountable to his decisions. In Goldsmith, the possibility exists that the self can be determined by the context, a Restoration "spirit of gaming" in London

or even the excessive frivolity of Bath, either of which yields a gambler or a Master of Ceremonies. Such determinism is possible in Goldsmith's Nash because Nash provides a human lens for spectating and observing ethical character traits more specifically and more closely.

Goldsmith uses the possibility of this determinism to foreground character, but he ultimately defers to the autodidactic promise of the form: "I attempt the character of one, who was just such a man as probably you or I may be, but with this difference, that he never performed an action which the world did not know, or ever formed a wish which he did not take pains to divulge" (III.291). While few materials exist to document Nash, his transparency in performing actions and forming wishes makes his selfhood an easier lens for viewing the effects of ethical values on a person and for the reader identifying with them. As much Johnson and Goldsmith had used print documents mark the lives of Savage and Nash, the rhetorical mode of character writing provided an additional biographical source for inducing selfhood

In character writing, the traits of a character type are written into the character; they became "'natural' qualities," which "taught readers how to assume or avoid identification with that character—how to 'put on' or eschew those natural attributes" (McGirr 4). But Goldsmith writes them onto the life of a real person, which requires the reader to choose between understanding the character of Nash as that of a gambler or discerning the "natural" character of the man. From the details Goldsmith arranges, the conflict between the character types that Goldsmith exemplified in Nash and the character that Nash embodied was a conflict between a "constitutionally passionate and generous" man who "never formed by nature of a successful gamester," despite being a professional, and the "perfection" of the external type, a character "naturally phlegmatic, reserved and cool; [whose] every passion must learn to obey control" (III.313). Nash's innate, "constitutional" character signifies a personal imperfection determined

by his social circumstances and subject to them. The natural qualities of the "perfect gamester" frame Nash's Goldsmith for readers who must not only spectate and understand Nash through his correspondence, but also within contemporary understandings of character.

Most significantly, Goldsmith evokes the character of a king to gesture toward the responsibilities and character of Beau Nash, the recognized Master of Ceremonies at Bath for fifty-seven years. Peter Briggs notes that Goldsmith makes a representational decision to pit contrary aspects of Nash's character against each (214). Despite reading selfhood and circumstance as contrary elements of Nash, the contrariety that Briggs locates in Goldsmith's representation highlights the importance of ethical choices written into the biography. Lending the gravity of kingship to the triviality of a recognized but unofficial post as master of ceremonies allows Goldsmith's biography to pose interpretative dilemmas. Goldsmith frames Nash as "a man placed in the middle ranks of life . . . whose vices and virtues were open to the eye of the most undiscerning spectator, who was placed in public view without power to repress censure, or command adulation, who had too much merit not to become remarkable, yet too much folly to arrive at greatness" (III.291). His position makes him easier for readers to view sympathetically, a familiar character. Goldsmith assures readers that Nash is worth their attention, that he has "one undeniable claim to their attention. Mr. *Nash* was himself a King. In this particular, perhaps no Biographer has been so happy as I [Goldsmith]" (III.291-2). Goldsmith's "happiness" as a biographer derives from the character-typed choices he can give a reader for determining Nash's personal character: "[t]hey who are for a delineation of men and manners may find some satisfaction that way, and those who delight in adventures of Kings and Queens, may perhaps find their hopes satisfied in another" (III.292). In addition to the character type of the gamester, Nash also embodies the public character type of a monarch, determined in

part by his circumstances in Bath, made real by his stature as a person in the "middle ranks of life."

Goldsmith pictures the character his monarch ruling in the period of Bath's initial growth, at the beginning of the eighteenth century during a reinvigorated period in public works, most notably the Bath Pump-House, where Nash, "in order to proceed in every thing like a king, . . . was resolved to give his subjects a law, and the following rules were accordingly put up in the Pump-room" (III.303). Just as notable as Nash's public proclamation of social order is the response Goldsmith records: "[i]t is certain, they were in general religiously observed by his subjects, and executed by him with impartiality" (III.304). In these instances, Nash is seen as a typical monarch, administering to the needs of the people to promote social order and unity and to maintain it "with impartiality." By aligning Nash's character with the character type of a monarch, Goldsmith is better able to put the facts of Nash's life in contrast with the type. Nash's monarchical decrees, listed under the posted heading "RULES *to be observ'd at* BATH," stipulate, for instance, "[t]hat all whisperers of lies and scandal, be taken for their authors," and also "[t]hat all repeaters of such lies, and scandal be shun'd by all company;—except such as have been guilty of the same crime" (III.303). They were, Goldsmith notes, "undoubtedly designed . . . for wit" and, "tho' stupid, . . . were probably received with sympathetic approbation" (III.303). Typed as a king, Nash's character could be aligned with classical precedent: "a weak man, governing weaker subjects, and may be considered as resembling a monarch of *Cappadocia*, whom *Cicero* somewhere calls, *the little king of a little people*" (Goldsmith III.289). The details that Goldsmith develops elevate Nash to a classical, monarchical rank while stressing his pettiness and weakness, the qualities of a person with whom a reader might sympathize.

However, Goldsmith closes the biography with a didactic reminder to readers of the choices he has provided them for discerning the life of Nash and applying it to their own: Nash's "singularities are forgotten when we behold his virtues, and he who laughed at the whimsical character and behaviour of this Monarch of *Bath*, now laments that he is no more" (III.392). But Goldsmith's passive construction—"singularities are forgotten"—leaves the possibility that the collective "we" who will focus on virtue does not have to be the same as the unnamed collective who will forget Nash's "singularities." Readers, then, might either remember Nash's faults or behold his virtue to improve their own lives; they can "laugh" and "lament" in order to understand the selfhood Goldsmith creates. Collectively or singly, readers must resolve the tension between what can be known about Nash and what can be discovered by making a choice, between the Nash's celebrity and the public, external characters that frame it, and the experience of the man.

The context of an inductive science that put the onus on the researcher to observe and draw conclusions engendered a literature that forced readers to read like scientists, observing and drawing conclusions from the details they saw. Authors like Milton, Johnson, and Goldsmith locate details to arrange into selfhoods that readers could observe, locating contrasts and contrarieties that create tensions within the character, which could only be resolved by the reader's sympathies. Their sympathetic choices mark an ethics of reading that identified and defined virtue for the reader and the community of readers. Since the emergent biographical form presented rhetorics of self that could stand in for the lives they represented, so that readers could spectate those rhetorics as living selves and learn by reconciling what they saw with what they could conclude. Their role as readers was to play the acquaintance of the biographical selves they read. Eighteenth-century biographers discovered the details for the lives they wrote from

sources that were credited by public assent. The private character of the man comes through public evidence of his life—what the audience sees of these public selves invites it to draw conclusion about the private person and, in turn, about itself.

Chapter 3—The Intimate Rhetoric of Self:

The Ethos of the Intimate Biographer

Scholars who plot the history of the biographical form often pass from seventeenth-century life writing like Izaak Walton's lives of George Herbert and John Donne to Samuel Johnson's biography of Richard Savage and then on to James Boswell's life of Johnson. The move from Walton to Johnson is a broad shift in form from life writing to biography. But the formal development from Johnson's Savage to Boswell's Johnson is a formal refinement, moving biographical selfhood toward a deeper, representational interiority. They maintained a remove between the subject and biographer with their scientific approach, but Boswell balances a wealth of observations and recollections against his own first-hand account and records. He embraces his subject and uses his own ethos to probe the private, intimate self and, in doing so advances biography into its modern form. Even though Boswell's biographical "task" was formally identical to Johnson's and Goldsmith's— to organize documented, lived experience into a print selfhood that empirical readers can observe sympathetically, like a living person, in order to teach themselves right social practice—his arrangement of Johnson's experience required more than the selfhood of a vagrant poet or an affected dandy, whose actual lives had been eclipsed by their biographies. Scandal did not define the life of Johnson in the public eye. On the contrary, whatever scandal arose, Johnson bested, whether it was James Macpherson's public threats to harm him after Johnson challenged Macpherson's *Ossian* or Lord Chesterfield's snub at Johnson's appeal for patronage (*Life* ii.289-98, i.261-2).[48]

[48] Johnson's letter to Macpherson offered an unyielding response to the possibility of violence: "Any violence offered me I shall do my best to repel; and what I cannot do for myself, the law shall do for me . . . What would you have me retract? I thought your book an imposture; I think it an imposture still . . . Your rage I defy . . . You may print this if you will" (*Life* ii.298). Johnson's answer to Chesterfield's snub and weak attempts to ingratiate himself

The biographical form presented particular difficulties and limitations to eighteenth-century biographers—what documents were available that recorded the life, what every day practices characterized it, and what character defined it—but the life of Johnson presented Boswell with specific biographical challenges to render a well-documented public life intimate, its character personal, and the man himself familiar. Johnson had faced similar challenges in developing a didactic rhetoric of self for Richard Savage. He bolstered scanty documentary evidence with his own accounts of Savage's life, using his own experience as documentary evidence that he could arrange as a biographer. Johnson's challenge was Savage's obscurity; Though Boswell himself was a minor public figure, his challenge was Johnson's publicity and finding the intimate self within it:

> To write the Life of him who excelled all mankind writing the lives of others, and who, whether we consider his extraordinary endowments, or his various works, has been equaled by few in any age, is an arduous, and may be reckoned in me a presumptuous task . . . As I had the honour and happiness of enjoying his friendship for upwards of twenty years; as I had the scheme of writing his life constantly in view . . . and as I have spared no pains in obtaining materials concerning him . . . I flatter myself that few biographers have entered upon such a work as this, with more advantages; independent of literary abilities, in which I am not vain enough to compare myself with some great names who have gone before me in this kind of writing. (*Life* i.25-6)

That Boswell must addresses his legitimacy as Johnson's biographer before he can even begin to arrange Johnson's biography underscores the pressure on his biographical ethos. The

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are most economically expressed in his revision to the definition of "patron" in his *Dictionary*: "[o]ne who countenances, supports, or protects. Commonly a wretch who supports with insolence, and is paid with flattery."

construction of his opening sentence leaves off explicit mention of those who would "reckon" his biography "presumptuous," the readers themselves. By implying the role of the readers, Boswell emphasizes the "task." His task, at the outset, is to situate himself within the tradition of the general ethos developing within the contexts of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century print culture, the New Science and its community of scientific participants, and within the emergent contexts of eighteenth-century biographers. The task for Boswell is to innovate the inductive experiment rather than avoiding presumption.

In this opening, Boswell indicates his ability to represent Johnson's life for a readership demands an ethos proportional to Johnson's achievements. Johnson's "extraordinary endowments" as a public, authorial figure earned much of his reputation through the sales of his biographical works. He is, as Boswell notes, a man who "excelled all mankind writing the lives of others," which shapes Boswell's own responsibilities as biographer. Boswell sets this ethos against the representational challenges that Johnson's endowments present, even though his fame as an author seems almost entirely eclipsed by Johnson's. More significantly, Boswell puts his ethos at a remove from direct comparison to Johnson's, choosing to set it in conversation "with some great names who have gone before him in this kind of writing." He sets himself in contrast to the generic context of great biographical predecessors, like Johnson, but not in direct comparison to them.

Boswell credentials his experimental method with the claim that it "enlarges upon the excellent plan of Mr. Mason, in his Memoirs of Gray" (*Life* i.29). William Mason's biographical account of the poet Thomas Gray, *The Poems of Mr. Gray: to which Are Prefixed Memoirs of his Life* (1774) presents a rigid structure divided into two parts and subdivided into letters and poems. Mason's memoirs comprise the first part, and although dubs it a memoir, it is strictly

biographical, built on extensive epistolary documentation that eschews the biographer's intervention beyond short, connective narratives. Its dependence on correspondence to and from Gray borders on autobiography, but achieves an even more objective tone than Johnson's account of Savage, and drier, too. The second part catalogs Gray's poetry and Mason's critical glosses, which are almost a fourth as long as the initial memoirs. Boswell expressed an appreciation for Mason's biography in his common place book, noting his favorite sayings from Gray and, often, his personal response to them as a reader.[49] Boswell's comments on Gray's comment to Horace Walpole: "I know not if this be his own or a quotation. But it supports my opinion against that of General Paoli, that one does not fall in love with a woman of dignity. Perhaps indeed a Hero may. Glory is his metaphorical mistress" (ms. 225.2). Boswell applies the sayings of an important poet to his own deeply personal response in his private commonplace book. What he appreciates about Mason's biography is a "plan" arranged around documentation that recreates intimate aspects of a life, which can elicit a reader's personal response.

To enlarge Mason's form, Boswell expands its representational capacity for portraying an intimate rhetoric of self for Johnson. Boswell combines Johnson's epistolary and literary output, so that neither one structures Johnson's print alone. Instead, increase the conventions of the eighteenth-century biographical form: "instead of melting my materials into one mass, and constantly speaking in my own person, by which I might have appeared to have more merit in the execution of the work . . . I produce, wherever it is in my power, his [Johnson's] own minutes, letters, or conversations" (*Life* i.29). He claims that his method de-emphasizes the ethos of the biographer like Goldsmith and Johnson established, shifting the interpretive burden onto his readers, since it depends on an "accumulation of intelligence from various points." The

[49] In a letter to his friend Temple, Boswell notes that "Mason's *Life of Gray* is excellent, because it is interspersed with Letters which shew us the *Man*. His *Life of Whitehead* is not a Life at all; for there is neither a letter nor a saying from first to last" (*Correspondence* 208).

network of sources yields a depiction of the public, authorial self, presented to the reader out of the facts, not made by the author. Boswell thus brilliantly excuses himself of the burden of an ethos equal to that of Johnson's in his opening methodological bid.

However, Boswell's inductive approach requires an authoritative ethos as well. Since a wider range of information can yield a greater definition of a particular selfhood, Boswell's biographical ethos requires him to first assemble and divide the true Johnsoniana from the spurious, gauging the authenticity of other perspectives through the only available means—his personal understanding of Samuel Johnson.[50] Boswell is also responsible for exerting control over his materials, ordering the disparate portions of his selections into a print life that coheres and matches, again, his personal understanding of Johnson. Each responsibility puts a premium on the intimacy Boswell strives to depict. Boswell's biographical ethos, though he seems to downplay it, authorizes him to select the details of Johnson's life. More importantly, his ethos holds these details together.

Because Boswell deferred to his intimate understanding of and experience with Johnson to establish his legitimacy as biographer, critics often attacked his *Life of Johnson* by attacking Boswell's biographical ethos. He perceives attacks in Hester Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* and again vents his frustrations and concerns to Malone: "[s]he is a little artful impudent malignant Devil . . . It is *clear* that she *means* to bite me as much as she can," and he takes particular issue when her perceives that Piozzi misremembers a conversation about drunken truth, misrepresents an anecdote Boswell shared with her as her own, and her book "*describes* what the Jade has often seen me do—but with Dr. Johnson's *approbation*; for he at all

[50] Boswell's announcement at the end of his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* likewise stresses the significance of his ethos: "Mr. Boswell has been collecting materials for this work for more than twenty years, during which he was honoured with the intimate friendship of Dr. Johnson," and he invites a reading public to engage the intimate friendship, noting that "[h]e has already obtained a large collection of Dr. Johnson's letters to his friends, and shall be much obliged for others as yet remain in private hands" (*Life* v.421).

times was flattered by my preserving what fell from his mind when shaken by conversation, so there was nothing *like* treachery" (*Correspondence* 114). Boswell's account to Malone underscores his fear that Piozzi's account strikes at his own ethos which is inextricably bound up with his method. An attack on Boswell's ethos discredits his means of collecting "what fell from" Johnson's "mind when shaken by conversation," as well as his means of representing him within a compelling rhetoric of self.[51]

Contemporary scholars have also questioned Boswell's ethos as a biographer and its role in mediating a rhetoric of self for Johnson. Frederick A. Pottle, editor of the Boswell Papers and the release of trade and scholarly editions of Boswell's journals from 1950 to 1989, aligns his treatment of Boswell with stereotypes of the man's personal character, so that he can casually reduce Boswell to the character of Macheath from John Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. Pottle interprets Boswell's description of Paul Lewis, a popular rakish convict, as a signifier for Boswell's own ethos, noting that "[i]n one way or another the figure of Macheath dominates this entire journal" (Pottle 252 n.7). The current general editor of the Boswell Papers, Gordon Turnbull, has sought to recuperate Boswell's print ethos, overwriting Pottle's assessment of Boswell's personal ethos in the journals with a statement that Paul Lewis's Macheath-type character is "[n]ot just Boswell's perception, but part of Lewis's self display," citing an account of Lewis from the *Gentleman's Magazine* that shaped perceptions of Lewis (463 n.8). The character of Macheath could be put on or taken off—self-representation as a choice might be more useful for understanding Boswell's selfhood than self-representation as a brand.

[51] After the *Life's* publication, critics were particularly focused on the importance of Boswell's ethos in playing biographer to Johnson. In the 20 May 1791 *Morning Post, and Daily Advertiser,* for instance, a pundit suggested that "Sir JOHN HAWKINS, it is affirmed by BOZZY, never lived *near* enough to JOHNSON's Privacy to know his character.—The latter took in the true *Haut Gout*.—Sir JOHN contented himself with *smelling* him at a *distance*" (qtd. in Larsen 162). Referring to the biographer as "Bozzy," the critic attacks this crucial, intimate ethos; Bozzy was Johnson's pet name for Boswell. The critic also suggests Boswell's *Life* is in bad taste. Hawkins's distance weakens his ethos, but Boswell's intimacy puts him close enough to smell the slight odor of decay as Johnson flavor seasons, like wild game aging toward a *haut gout*.

While these readings of Boswell's character grapple with the differences between the person and the cultural standards of his time shaping his character, they indicate a disjunction between the received perceptions of Boswell and the ways he chooses to represent himself. As Samuel Johnson's biographer, Boswell uses his ethos as a means of developing and arranging an intimate rhetoric of self for Johnson, more intimate than earlier precedents, like Johnson's objective treatment of Savage or Mason's almost entirely documentary construction of Gray's print person.

The biographical ethos that Boswell brings to bear on the *Life of Johnson* did not develop in a literary vacuum; he did not arrive on the eighteenth-century biographical scene as a literary unknown. This chapter will put Boswell's ethos as the biographer of the *Life* in the context of his earlier writing to examine how the works he authored gave him authority to play Johnson's biographer, a biographer capable of relaying an intimate representation of this towering public figure. To generate this biographical shift from a known, recognizable selfhood to a personal self, Boswell addresses three challenges with the print ethos he created for himself in his earlier manuscripts and published writings. In these contexts, Boswell's authorial ethos matures into a biographer whose print self has the authority to act as an interlocutor for Johnson. Boswell's well-known relationship with Johnson acts as a print fact that establishes a reader's expectations and gives a revelatory context to Johnson's selfhood. Second, Boswell establishes an ethos as a biographer who is competent to represent Johnson's public prominence, the reputation of his print self by counterbalancing his ethos against Johnson's established print self. Third, Boswell's ethos destabilizes Johnson's public, print persona so that he can himself overwrite it. Boswell uses his ethos to show that he can innovate how readers might come to understand Johnson's selfhood personally, publicly, and nationally.

I will give particular attention to his ethos as the Scottish persona of a periodical writer from Edinburgh in one of his early manuscripts, as the travel writer in his *Account of Corsica*, the essayist of the *Hypochondriack*, the anonymous author of occasional pieces in the *London Magazine*, or even a proto-biographer travelogue writer in the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. I argue that the ethos he develops in these writings are a necessary precedent to the *Life* since they provide him with the means for balancing Johnson's public, authorial persona against the private persona that Boswell was later at such pains to arrange rhetorically. Ultimately, Boswell's ethos allows him to establish a relationship with his audience that would allow him to translate the national and literary significance of Samuel Johnson at a distance from Boswell's readers into a rhetoric of self that closed this distance, making Johnson a familiar self to whom they can relate.

Ethos as a Mediator for Selfhood

In order to arrange a compelling biography, Boswell must first establish himself as an author capable of playing mediator between his audience and his subject. Paula Backsheider suggests that the decision to take on the challenges of writing a biography is ultimately a decision to explore and interpret a person so closely as to enter into an intimate relationship with the life of that person. The relationship between the biographer and "a subject . . . need not be those most commonly assigned—identification or affinity or sympathy. It can be a deep understanding of the pressures the time brought to bear on the subject. It can be deep engagement with the 'puzzles' that remain unsolved about the life. It can be a particular engagement with the challenges of the act of writing a particular life or kind of life" (Backsheider 59). On a larger scale, and "[i]n the most successful biographies, the writer also has

a clear conception of what that life represents and in what ways it was significant and has significance for us" (Backscheider 59). Boswell's ethos as a biographer of the public and intimate self depends on the "commonly assigned," personal reasons, but it especially abstracts the significance of Johnson's life to stress what it "represents" for a public audience beyond Boswell's own "identification or affinity or sympathy." By positioning himself in a personal relationship to a public figure, Boswell creates a print ethos to stand in for his audience's personal knowledge of Johnson that promises the reader an experience of meaning through the modern biographical strategies of intimacy and identity.

Boswell's attempt to introduce a new biographical rhetoric was a means to realizing an earlier, authorial ambition to gain literary repute. Boswell claims to have had Johnson's biography in mind for upwards of twenty years, during which time he began collecting information for the later *Life*. At the same time, though without any indication he was consciously establishing himself to write the *Life*, Boswell was developing credentials that would give his later biographical ethos enough literary efficacy to recommend it. His early *Account of Corsica* displays some literary merit that would look toward his later biographical approach.[52] In the *Life*, for instance, Boswell recalls his anxiety that Johnson might take offense at the publication of his private letter to Boswell (*Life* ii.46-7). This early failure on Boswell's part marks an immature misstep that he would later avoid by negotiating the private and the public aspects of literary selfhood.

[52] In the 1768 Preface of his first publication, the *Account of Corsica*, Boswell gives particular attention to the function and the effects of a compelling ethos. While the *Account* is a travel narrative, it acts in some ways as a timely political manifesto, roughly coinciding with the arrival of the exiled General Pasquale Paoli in Britain after the invasion of Corsica by France and Genoa in 1768. Thomas M. Curley describes Boswell's political edge as "artful propaganda transforming personal experience and historical research into a coherent case for British support of Corsican independence. It is a fact-based artifact having a romantic libertarian perspective shaped in part by Rosseau and the classics but nevertheless containing a reliable British description of the country" (93).

In a letter critiquing the *Account*, Johnson distinguishes between a crucial handling of the public and private: "[y]our History is like other histories, but your Journal is in a very high degree curious and delightful. There is between the history and the journal that difference which there will always be found from notions borrowed from without, and notions generated within . . . You express images which operated strongly upon yourself, and . . . have impressed them with great force upon your readers" (ii.70). The inward turn for which Johnson praises Boswell defers to a display of the private person, the ethos generated through personal of a vaguely empirical nature, from which Boswell can draw conclusions that might be "impressed with great force" on his audience. Most notably, it achieves this interior turn, as Johnson suggests, through Boswell's journaling. The context for Boswell's journaling is Corsica's battle for sovereignty, the sort of history from which Hugh Blair and Adam Smith distinguish the biographical form in their rhetorical lectures.[53] Boswell's autobiographical journaling, though not applied to a biographical account, humanizes the history of Corsica's struggle, much like Johnson's explanation of how biography acts on the reader: "[a]ll or joy or sorrow for the happiness or calamities of others is produced by an act of the imagination that realises the event however fictitious, or approximates it however remote, by placing us, for a time, in the condition of him whose fortune we contemplate" (*Rambler* III.318-9). With his account of Corsica, Boswell begin to develop an autobiographical ethos that can humanize history and, later, a public selfhood and celebrity in the *Life* that his journaling "places the reader in the condition" of his own ethos as a first-hand witness of Samuel Johnson.

[53] As noted in the introduction, Blair classes biography as a historical construction, subject to the common attributes of historical rhetoric. He notes that "History is a species of Writing designed for the instruction of mankind, [so] sound morality should always reign in it," and he also argues that the biographical form "or the Writing of Lives, is a very useful kind of Composition; less formal and stately than History; but to the bulk of readers, perhaps, no less instructive; as it affords them the opportunity of seeing the characters and tempers, the virtues and failings of eminent men fully displayed; and admits them into a more thorough and intimate acquaintance than History generally allows" (411). Blair's notion of biography emphasizes the form's appeal to readers, its familiar human closeness set against the historical remove.

The rhetoric of self Boswell would later craft in the *Life* depends on the "images" of Johnson that Boswell chose to record in his journals, those images "which operated strongly upon" the biographer, who sought to impress "them with great force." It is an almost Lockean endeavor to give significance to images that every reader could view and interpret collectively. His journal accounts of Johnson's life would become the backbone of the *Life*. Boswell does not explicitly theorize the ethos of the biographer in the public, political context of a Corsican tour, yet his discussion of authorship and the authority outlines the interplay between an author's ethos and the audience that shape Boswell as a biographer. His treatment of authorship also points toward an attention to the intimate, "curious and delightful" details in Boswell's journals that establish a crucial distinction "between the history and the journal," which for Boswell develops into "that difference which will always be found from notions borrowed from without, and notions generated within." It is an early literary move to situate the intimate and private in the view of public readers.

Through his private journaling, Boswell begins to craft a public, authorial ethos, that he explores in the Preface to the *Account of Corsica*: "[t]he author of an approved book may allow his natural disposition an easy play, and yet indulge the pride of a superiour genius when he considers that by those who know him only as an authour, he never ceases to be respected" (*Corsica* 14). Thus readers "who know Boswell only as an author" will see his "superior genius" in that "natural disposition of easy play" that his journaling reveals and that Johnson commended. In the *Life,* Boswell is able to play dual roles as an author and biographer: he is Johnson's friend, giving his own "natural disposition" free reign and an "easy play" with the celebrity of Johnson's selfhood, which he later arranges with "superior genius" as a public biographer. The ethos that "appears in print" and is distributed for a wider audience does not

harden "a man's character" personally, but establishes a print remove between the "character" of the author as a public figure and as a private person, a "natural disposition of an easy play" privately and in person, that goes unknown to a public, "superior genius" in print. In this construction, Boswell grants an author's ethos the duality that would make his trademark intimacy possible in later biographical writing.[54]

Boswell is the first of the modern eighteenth-century biographers to capitalize on his role as eyewitness to the biographical subject.[55] There is no record that Oliver Goldsmith played eyewitness to the experiences of Richard Nash, so he arranged a rhetoric of self for Nash based largely on Nash's reputation at Bath. Goldsmith necessarily adopted an ethos that could translate Nash into character types, matching the public facts of the Nash's reputation as a publicly recognizable selfhood of a man who shaped the public (III.288). Johnson stressed the importance of distance between the biographical ethos and the subject, in order to make the biography more accurate and reliable (*Rambler* III.323). Johnson's personal relationship to Richard Savage, their nighttime roving, appears nowhere in the biography Johnson wrote for him.[56] Johnson adopted an objective ethos, structuring these night walks in the biography as Savage's alone (*Lives* XXII.928). Boswell's early model for cultivating an authorial ethos sets an approach that allows

[54] The duality of an author's private life and public output is no revelation to eighteenth-century authors. Johnson, too, acknowledges the distinction in an early *Rambler* essay, No 14. Saturday, 5 May 1750, arguing that readers develop expectations for authors based on their writing which are often frustrated by their actual company (III.92-7). As a biographer, however, Boswell capitalizes on this distinction in a way that Johnson did not.

[55] In his life of Addison, however, Johnson does stress that "lives can only be written from personal knowledge, which is growing less every day," but he does not stipulate the knowledge be eye-witness (*Lives* XXII.637). To the contrary, he notes that "more knowledge may be gained of a man's real character, by a short conversation with one of his servants" (*Rambler* III.322).

[56] Chapter 2 gives more thorough attention to Johnson and Savage's roving; Richard Holmes discussed it most thoroughly in *Dr. Johnson & Mr. Savage*. Sir John Hawkins reports in his *Life of Samuel Johnson, LL.D.* that Johnson recalled "whole nights . . . spent by him and Savage in conversations . . . in a perambulation round the squares of Westminster, ... when all the money they could both raise was less than sufficient to purchase for them the shelter and sordid comforts of a night cellar" (33-4). Boswell, likewise, reinforced the fact of the relationship (*Life* i.163 and 163 n2.)

him to mediate Johnson through his own personal account, to be both the objective author in control of the biography and an intimate source that is intertwined with the life.

Boswell began overtly developing his ethos as a biographer with his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. He organizes the *Tour* around the journal he kept while traveling through the Hebrides with Johnson in the latter half of 1773, and while it has an ostensible focus on the Hebrides and Scotland, it is primarily devoted to Johnson. As Ian McGowan observes, the "*Tour* retains its place for the student of biography and literary representation as Boswell's breakthrough in technique" (127). That the *Tour* was Boswell's stylistic trying ground for the later *Life of Johnson* has become a commonplace, which reduces the journaling in the *Tour* to little more than a stylistic practice run for the application of journals in the later *Life*. But the published account of Johnson in the *Journal Tour* was for Boswell a necessary precedent to the *Life*. More than a study in stylistics, Boswell uses the *Tour* to begin developing an ethos that mediates an intimate rhetoric of self in the *Life*. In the *Tour*, Boswell's ethos is a means for balancing Johnson's public, authorial persona against the private persona that he himself had taken such pain to record. John Radner notes that "Boswell used the journal to establish his authority to narrate this portion of Johnson's life and his credentials to narrate the rest . . . and to demonstrate his ability to appreciate and assess Johnson" ("Narrative Control" 67). More than simply refining and innovating Boswell's biographical style, the *Tour* allowed Boswell to establish his credentials as Johnson's preeminent biographer in two ways: it exhibits Johnson's approval of Boswell's biographical project, and it also downplays Boswell's presumption, qualifying him to play the biographer rather than a mere fan.

Boswell used the *Tour* to credential his authority and his mastery of Johnson's life, so he had to show that his ability to represent Johnson biographically had been endorsed by Johnson

himself. Boswell portrays Johnson as a collaborator who avidly follows and affirms the journal account of the trip, thus endorsing Boswell's journalistic and, later, biographical ethos. Their trip ran just over three months, from 15 August 1773 to 21 November 1773, and Boswell maintained his journal 11 November. The last time Johnson perused it was 26 October, where Boswell gestures toward Johnson's collaboration: "[h]aving mentioned, more than once, that my Journal was perused by Dr. Johnson, I think it proper to inform my readers that this is the last paragraph which he read" of Boswell's journal, in Scotland or back in London (*Life* v.360, n. 4). Radner characterizes these perusals not only as collaboration between the two, but especially as research for Boswell's later project, noting that, "[t]hough they collaborate on input, Boswell is primarily in charge of the process. He determines what to preserve for Johnson (and others) to read, and for Boswell himself perhaps to use later" ("Johnson's Role" 306).[57] In his constant references, "more than once," to Johnson's review of the journal, Boswell bolsters his ethos as a researcher so thorough he is qualified to mediate Johnson's selfhood.

Johnson's permission, implied through his collaboration, freed Boswell to present a fuller picture of his subject, one that included potentially off-putting, but nevertheless Johnsonian foibles, peccadillos, and personality ticks. Johnson's permission distanced Boswell from his own personal feelings about Johnson. Thus unchecked, Boswell could cultivate the sort of ethos he

[57] Boswell also had to develop a mature biographical persona with an authoritative ethos that could be a strong voice within the wider conversation surrounding Johnson. The public interest in Johnson's selfhood had been gratified if not filled by multiple biographies published shortly after his death: "[t]he lives all had their staple ingredients, usually borrowed from one another . . . Despite these similarities, each biography was in its own way different from the others . . . Each projected his own image of Johnson, but collectively they conveyed the two main images of Johnson as writer and moralist," aspects of his selfhood that were both public and private, but the early biographers presented was of a public "moralist rather than Johnson the writer" (Kelley and Brack 117-8). With so many biographies and repetitious facts in circulation about the life of Johnson, Hester Thrale Piozzi could note a month before the publication of Boswell's *Life*, that "Mr Boswell's Book is coming out, & the Wits expect me to tremble," since the authority of his ethos promised to challenge the one she established in her *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson*, but Piozzi wondered, "what will the Fellow say?—that has not been said already?" (*Thraliana* 807). This context gave Boswell the imperative to make Johnson new with an ethos that could mediate Johnson by enriching the public narrative of Johnson's life with new details of his private life, evaluated judiciously and arranged logically.

projected in his account of Corsica—a necessary component of an ethos that could balance the public authority of the biographer against the intimate, first-hand accounting that Boswell sought to incorporate into his *Life of Johnson*. In the *Tour* entry for 19 September 1773, Boswell records that Johnson "came into my room this morning before breakfast, to read my Journal, which he has done all along. He often before said, 'I take great delight in reading it.' To-day he said, 'You improve: it grows better and better'" (*Life* v.225). Similarly, Boswell recounts that Johnson "read to-night, to himself, as he sat in company, a great deal of my Journal, and said to me, 'The more I read of this, I think the more highly of you'" (*Life* v.262). Johnson's praise equates Boswell the journalist with Boswell the person, so that Boswell is as much of a literary creation as the Johnson that Boswell records in the journal. Boswell appears to delight in this praise and even tests Johnson and the reader by describing his own excesses.

On 25 October 1773, Boswell imagines himself "knight-errant" for the "ladies maids tripping about in neat morning dresses" at the Duke of Argyle's house, women who were more polished than the Hebridean "rusticity" he had so often seen to that point (*Life* v.355). He notes that, "[o]n reflection, at the distance of several years, I wonder that my venerable fellow-traveller should have read this passage without censuring my levity" (*Life* v.355, n.3). In one simple "reflection" at a significant "distance of several years" from his journaling on tour, Boswell establishes Johnson's approval of both to his personal experience on tour and the later publication of the *Tour* itself. The praise that Boswell recounts in these moments credential his ethos as an author eleven years later when he publishes the *Tour*. By depicting Johnson in approbation of Boswell's Hebrides journalizing, Boswell represents his own ethos as a credible, reliable biographer not only of Johnson's travel through the Hebrides, but of his entire life. Much like he had ranked the personal journal over the researched historical portions of Boswell's

Account of Corsica, Johnson also authorizes Boswell's journal-based approach to relaying personal experiences in a public setting or with a public figure. In these important representations, Johnson is endorsing Boswell's intimate approach to biography, which he would later claim to have innovated in arranging a rhetoric of self for Johnson. Boswell takes Johnson's approval his journalistic ethos as a confirmation of his ability to mediate Johnson's selfhood in the *Life*.

Johnson's approval of Boswell's journalistic complexity, however, was not an unqualified sanction of Boswell's biographical project. Although Johnson took pleasure in reading Boswell's descriptions of his own eccentricity, he tempered his praise of the journal with one crucial caveat: "'Sir, said he, it is not written in a slovenly manner. It might be printed, were the subject fit for printing'" (*Life* v.226-7).[58] The question of fitness is a matter of intimacy and accuracy. What makes Boswell's "subject" unfit "for printing" and so fascinating to Johnson as a private reader is the intimate details it collects. It displayed peculiarities characteristic of Johnson that could only be experienced in a first-hand experience of the self. Boswell, for instance, first interprets Johnson's habit of speaking to himself by noting that "[i]t is in vain to try to find a meaning in every one of his particularities, which, I suppose, are mere habits, contracted by chance . . . His speaking to himself . . . is a common habit with studious men accustomed to deep thinking" (*Life* v.306). Then gives an example of the curious habit: "Dr. Johnson is often uttering pious ejaculations, when he appears to be talking to himself; for sometimes his voice grows stronger, and parts of the Lord's Prayer are heard. I have sat beside him with more than ordinary

[58] John B. Radner argues that Johnson actively sought to keep the intimate unfitness of his peculiarities out of print: Johnson's "working to curb Boswell's wish to publish Johnsonian material while Johnson was still alive, suggest[s] his discomfort at being circumscribed by Boswell's narrative and losing control of his public image" ("Johnson's Role" 323-4). Boswell's journal, then, appeared after Johnson's death, when Johnson's "public image" could only be debated and established by biographers. The image Boswell crafts from his journal account is one of many that enter the biographical fray and lay claim to an image of Johnson.

reverence on such occasions" (*Life* v.307). Boswell comments how "remarkable [it is] that Dr. Johnson should have read this account of some of his own peculiar habits, without saying any thing on the subject" (*Life* v.307 n.2). This editorial gloss anticipates criticisms of his revelatory, eye-witness representations of Johnson. Although Johnson questions whether the journal is "fit to be published," Boswell published it and thus made it fit. Getting Johnson's ostensible approval of Boswell as a good journalist if not *auteur* is a necessary step in credentialing Boswell's ethos; giving himself permission to go beyond Johnson's censure establishes the authority of his ethos as his own man beyond Johnson. Without both halves of this equation, Boswell would not have been fit to mediate Johnson's selfhood.

Mediating the Private Facts of Selfhood through an Intimate Ethos

The public, biographical ethos that Boswell establishes distances himself from the personal details he includes in his journal of traveling to the Hebrides with Johnson. In the *Life*, later, he would close the distance. His method for establishing an ethos as Johnson's intimate defers to the inductive empiricism that Thomas Sprat assigns the natural philosophers Royal Society, to "regard the *least*, and the *plainest* things, and those that may appear at *first* the most *inconsiderable*; as well as the *greatest Curiosities*" (90). "Every thing relative to so great a man," Boswell asserted, "is worth remembering," but "remembering" and mediating selfhood through those memories required more delicacy than Boswell could muster in this first attempt to represent Johnson in the *Journal* (*Life* v.19). Many readers found the *Tour* so indelicate that Boswell's editor, Edmund Malone, suggested that he temper his portrayals of Johnson's appearance and his character: "[w]ith respect to the Character of your *Journal*, if you retain it, it certainly should be amplified, and his uniform piety and virtue enlarged upon. Pray omit your . . .

bow wough entirely" (*Correspondence* 301). His ethos here, however empirical and attentive to the plainest and greatest aspects of Johnson, strained his audience's expectations for biographical writing, challenging what Backsheider recognizes as a "contract the biographer has established with the reader. More than a bridge, it is the primary signal of the writer's relationship to readers and to content" (10). Boswell develops this "contract" to innovate the biographical form with a rhetoric of self that gives his audience more intimate access to the person than ever before.

Dr. William Adams, Johnson's friend and former tutor at Pembroke College acknowledges the tension Boswell's ethos establishes between the distance of the public author to the subject and the intimate details that invite readers to "remember" all of the things "relative to so great a man" as Johnson: "you have depicted our Friend so perfectly to my Fancy in every attitude, every scene and situation, that I have thought myself in the company, and of the party almost throughout . . . I wish indeed some few gross expressions had been softened, and a few of our Hero's foibles had been a little more shaded; but it is useful to see the weakness incident to great minds" (*Correspondence* 101). Adams gentle criticism highlights this tension between the public Johnson and the private life as he gently criticizes Boswell's mediation of their mutual friend in the *Tour.* Though Boswell exceeded Adams' expectations for drafting a rhetoric of self, he ultimately recognizes the value of Boswell's project, to preserve everything relative to Johnson's celebrity, and what Johnson's "foibles" and "gross expressions" offer readers to understand about Johnson and themselves.

To demonstrate how his personal experience with Johnson enables him to better mediate Johnson, Boswell gathers unflattering details alongside those that Johnson might have regard fit for printing in the *Tour*, the "inconsiderable" and the "greatest curiosities." Such details can only

be garnered through intimate experience with the subject.[59] Boswell relates Johnson's opinion that "we inherit dispositions from our parents," which in itself is a neutral observation, but Boswell adds Johnson's private disclosure: 'I inherited, (said he,) a vile melancholy from my father, which has made me mad all my life, at least not sober'—Lady M'Leod wondered he should tell this" (*Life* v.214-5). Lady M'Leod's wonder at Johnson's admission matches the audience's wonder that Boswell himself "should tell this" and reveal Johnson's opinion of his own mental instability. Boswell introduces Lady M'Leod's wonder as a proxy for his own. She provides cover for the breach of public and private by bringing it to the attention of the reader *and* by laying the fault at Johnson, whose excessive candor (rather than Boswell's prying) leads Lady M'Leod to wonder. Boswell preserves his ethos as the biographer by offering up this proxy for audience surprise and their potential to be scandalized by his frankness and intimacy.

Similarly, Boswell shows Johnson's fury at being left behind on horseback: "I wished to get on, to see how we were to be lodged, and how we were to get a boat; all which I thought I could be settle myself, without his having any trouble," but Boswell reports that Johnson "called me back with a tremendous shout, and was really in a passion with me for leaving him . . . His extraordinary warmth confounded me" (*Life* v.145). Boswell is an active participant in Johnson's travel, seeking to mediate Johnson's own traveling experience in lodging and passage, and in the same manner Lady M'Leod's preserved his ethos, his confession that Johnson's "extraordinary warmth confounded" him rather than his own blame in abandoning Johnson who was, at best, a clumsy equestrian. Boswell admits no blame, only confusion, so that the reader must observe the exchange, adopt Boswell's confusion, and evaluate the only established experience the scene depicts: Johnson's abandonment. By depicting Johnson's private selfhood as depressive and

[59] One of Johnson's prescriptions for biographer exhorts biographers to look past the sort of information that "might be collected from publick papers" in order to write a biography that goes beyond a "chronological series of actions or preferments" (*Rambler* III.322). Boswell moves past develops a model that depends on even closer observation.

choleric risks breaking the delicate contract that Backsheider describes between the selfhood the biographer represents, the biographer, and the audience.

The details of Boswell's experience with Johnson on the *Journal*, the intimate aspect of his ethos, seemingly threaten his credibility as a biographer. Was his journalistic research simply prying that demanded Johnson's review and revision? Was his participation in Johnson's lived experience less about engaging a selfhood intimately than baiting it, to contrive experimentally an set of experiences rather than observing them judiciously? Hester Thrale Piozzi or Peter Pindar lambasted Boswell for inserting himself so fully as biographer and proof of Johnson's life. While Boswell's published, biographical ethos is still developing from the author of the *Account* to the biographer of the *Life*, Boswell is using his own experiences, however unbecoming, to mediate Johnson's selfhood. Exhibiting his reputation for carousing, Boswell describes staying up after Johnson went to bed and drinking with friends until "[w]e were cordial and merry to a high degree," such a high degree Boswell has "no recollection, with any accuracy," of "what passed" (*Life* v.258). Boswell lists Johnson's response the next day:

> I awaked at noon, with a severe head-ach. I was much vexed that I should have been guilty of such a riot, and afraid of a reproof from Dr. Johnson. I though it very inconsistent with the conduction which I ought to maintain, while the companion of the *Rambler*. About one he came into my room, and accosted me, "What, drunk yet?"—His tone of voice was not that of severe upbraiding; so I was relieved a little.—"Sir, (said I,) they kept me up."—He answered, "No, you kept them up, you drunken dog:"—This he said with good-humoured *English* pleasantry. Soon afterwards . . . [my] friends assembled around my bed . . . and insisted I should take a dram.—"Ay, said Dr. Johnson, fill him drunk again. Do it

> in the morning, that we may laugh at him all day. It is a poor thing for a fellow to get drunk at night, and sculk to bed, and let his friends have no sport."—Finding him thus jocular, I became quite easy; and when I offered to get up, he very good-naturedly said, "You need be in no such hurry now." (*Life* v.258-9).

By depicting himself as a man who gets so drunk that he can have "no recollection" of what passed "with any accuracy," Boswell seems to undermine the competence of the professional author or biographer's ethos: a biographer with no memories is useless. But even his blackout drinking becomes the occasion for recollecting a story in the morning about Johnson's teasing kindness, which redeems the episode. Such intimate details about the biographer rather than the subject alone also close the gap between the objective, distant role of the biographical ethos and its intimate, private side that Boswell projected in his Corsican account. Boswell's foibles help to offset Johnson's and create an occasion to show a sympathetic Johnson where Boswell feared he would find a judgmental one.

Given Boswell's almost scandalous self-representation in this anecdote, it is easy to miss his development of Johnson's character. Boswell makes no attempt, after all, to recall or relate the happenings of the previous night's drunkenness, but rather gives a precise account of the next morning, when Johnson has again become the focal point of the narrative. Boswell uses this unflinching depiction of a single, embarrassing event to mediate Johnson's pontificating on social practices, particularly in the "*Rambler*." Boswell's fear of judgment stands in for reader expectations as Boswell expects a "reproof" and "severe upbraiding" as a consequence of his faux pas. Boswell has applied the mistake he recognizes to most readers' expectations, who expect the author "to be sealed by an irrevocable sentence as soon as any work of his hath passed" public scrutiny, thereby conflating the selfhood of the author with the author's writing

(*Hypochondriack* II.22.313). Adopting this mistaken approach, however, positions Boswell to meet readers on the terms of their common expectations and to revise them. Acknowledging and evoking such expectations in his fear of a reproof, Boswell sets himself up to invert the moralizing that readers anticipate. Rather than the Rambler's heavy-handed severity, Boswell's private experience reveals a Johnson who defies expectations. Instead of the familiar, public austerity of the Rambler, Johnson answers Boswell with "pleasantry," joking with his companion at bedside as an intimate friend. The severity of Johnson's own public ethos as the Rambler gives way to Boswell's ethos as a hungover journal writer. Without Boswell's descriptions of Johnson's "jocular" tone and its "good-humoured *English* pleasantry," however, Johnson's words might, on their own, convey the sort of moralistic "upbraiding" Boswell feared. It is the combination of Johnson's action and Boswell's mediation that produces the rhetoric of self.

With the *Tour,* Boswell has not yet achieved the ethos of a biographer who can simultaneously mediate selfhood at a remove from it while citing personal experiences that define it. In the last edition of the *Tour* that Boswell revised, the third edition 1786, the fledging biographer added an explanation for the inclusion of this anecdote. While its primary function was to address the censure of his literary and personal critics, it clarified how his role as a mediator for Johnson had functioned in the Hebrides and the later publication:

> My ingenuously relating this occasional instance of intemperance has I find been made the subject both of serious criticism and ludicrous banter. With the banterers I shall not trouble myself, but I wonder that those who pretend to the appellation of serious criticks should not have had sagacity enough to perceive that here, as in every other part of the present work, my principal object was to delineate Dr. Johnson's manners and character. In justice to him, I would not omit

> an anecdote, which, though in some degree to my disadvantage, exhibits in so strong a light the indulgence and good humour with which he could treat those excesses of his friends, of which he highly disapproved.
>
> In some other instances, the criticks have been equally wrong as to the true motive of my recording particulars, the objections to which I saw as clearly as they. (*Life* v.259, n.1)

Beyond downplaying the severity of his hangover, "an occasional instance of intemperance," Boswell does not seek to defend or justify it. Rather than focus on himself, he focuses on his choice to include this candid anecdote in his representation of Johnson. Boswell stresses his purposefulness in choosing to admit the incident into the *Tour*, despite the obvious "objections" to it, which Boswell "saw as clearly" as his "criticks."[60] The anecdote Boswell presents depicts a symbiotic relationship between Boswell and Johnson in which Boswell's ethos as a lush becomes a fact of Johnson's biographical representation, which Boswell uses to express the "indulgence and good humour with which Johnson could treat those excesses of his friends, of which he highly disapproved."

While Boswell's ethos is second to Johnson's selfhood, the "principle object" of the *Tour*, they cohere in the symbiotic relationship Boswell designs for them, each becoming clearer

[60] As a public mediator of Johnson's selfhood, Boswell grudgingly claims that his approach has been misunderstood. His representation of Johnson in the *Tour* and his revelations about Johnson's private life were misunderstood as scandalous rather than edifying: "[b]ut it seems I judged to well of the world; for though I could scarcely believe it, I have undoubtedly been informed, that many persons, especially in distant quarters, not penetrating enough into Johnson's character, so as to understand his mode of treating his friends, have arraigned my judgement, instead seeing that I was sensible of all that they could observe" (*Life* i.3). The problem in Boswell's judgment is that he expected a more intimate knowledge of Johnson to provide a baseline for understanding the personal selfhood Boswell represents. Since his audience's understanding is "not penetrating enough into Johnson's character" and certainly not so penetrating "as to understand his mode in treating his friends," Boswell has to negotiate the contract between his audience, his ethos, and the rhetoric of self that his ethos helps to arrange. What rankles Boswell in particular is that in some criticisms, the audience of his *Tour* has implied he is not as "sensible of all that they could observe," even though he has selected and arranged details to represent Johnson as plainly as possible. Boswell has broaches these concerns at the outset of the *Life* to prepare readers for the more expansive degree of intimacy his public ethos will use in supplying private details from his own experiences and from others in order to provide a "penetrating" rhetoric of self for Johnson.

through their exchanges with the other. Boswell is hardly a supernumerary figure in the *Tour*. He is not silent in representing Johnson, nor does he act as a passive background for Johnson's selfhood. Since a print representation of Johnson is Boswell's principle object and his ethos is as much a print construction as Johnson's selfhood, Boswell applies his ethos as a print fact. He is not simply playing the foil to Johnson. The open, candid facts of Boswell's ethos in the *Tour* provide a context that engages Johnson and provides a practical rationale for the exercise of Johnson's character including his foibles. In the anecdote of Boswell's hangover, Boswell's public ethos uses the intimate facts of his private self like an experiment through which an audience can induce Johnson's character.

As the first of three considerations in which Boswell had to situate his ethos to be Johnson's biographer in the *Life*, he maintained an ethos that could act as a public, print fact, particularly after the publication of his *Account of Corsica* and the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*. He structured his ethos in response to his audience's needs to maintain his contractual relationship between the expectations he established for them as biographer and their reaction to how well he gratified those expectations. In his Dedication to Sir Joshua Reynolds in the *Life of Johnson*, Boswell admits, "In my 'Tour,' I was almost unboundedly open in my communications; and from my eagerness to display the wonderful fertility and readiness of Johnson's wit, freely shewed to the world its dexterity, even when I was myself the object of it. I trusted that I should be liberally understood" (*Life* i.3). The language of his observation gestures to the symbiotic relationship between Boswell's two print constructions in the *Tour*, his public ethos as biographer and the mediating function of Boswell's private ethos.

Authorizing Boswell's Public Ethos through Periodical Print

That Boswell could render the private experiences of Samuel Johnson public was not enough to prove his ethos as a biographer who could arrange Samuel Johnson, the acclaimed author, into a compelling rhetoric of self. He needed to be a great writer himself to be able to deliver another great writer in print. In his *Account of Corsica*, Boswell makes plain his desire for literary fame: "[h]e who publishes a book, affecting not to be an authour, and professing an indifference for literary fame, may possibly impose upon many people such an idea of his consequences as he wishes may be received. For my part, I should be proud to be known as an authour; and I have an ardent ambition for literary fame; for of all possessions I should imagine literary fame to be the most valuable" (*Corsica* 14). The value of the "literary fame" that Boswell seeks rests largely on the author's self-portrayal and willingness "to be known," to establish his authority. Johnson had obtained this distinction with the publication and successful reception of his poetry, his periodical pieces, his biographies, as well as his *Dictionary of the English Language*. His public self and its literary fame presented particular challenges to Boswell's projection of his own public, authorial ethos. Boswell had to counterbalance the authority of his ethos against Johnson's in print to authorize himself as a valid mediator Johnson's selfhood, rather than unknown taking up a presumptuous task. Whereas the whole of Boswell's written works could not outweigh Johnson's in volume or public esteem, his periodical *Hypochondriak* essays in the *London Journal* and especially his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* demonstrate an aptitude within certain genres where Johnson excelled, his *Rambler*, *Idler*, and *Adventurer* periodicals and his own narrative of his travels with Boswell, *A Journey to the Western Island of Scotland*. The display of a literary ethos with an analogous understanding to aspects of Johnson's own would credential Boswell's inclusion of potentially embarrassing,

yet revelatory private details of Johnson's life, but it would also authorize Boswell's print ethos as a reliable biographer for the public, literary Johnson.

In his *Hypochondriak,* Boswell shows himself operating within the conventions of the periodical essay that Johnson helped to develop with the prominence of his *Rambler*. For Boswell, developing a biographical ethos through a periodical persona was less directly the development of the biographer and more the development of a reputation that worthy of playing biographer. Boswell acknowledges that the sort of Johnsonian periodical ethos he seeks to don demonstrated regard for the audience, its pleasure, and its ability to judge whether "the writer has broke his promise" as a journalist and moralist (*Rambler* III.7). The promise Johnson's Rambler makes is "to endeavour the entertainment of my countrymen by a short essay . . . that I hope not much to tire those whom I shall not please; and if I am not commended for the beauty of my works, to be at least pardoned for their brevity. But whether my expectations are most fixed on pardon or praise, I think it not necessary to discover; for . . . I find them . . . nearly equiponderant" (*Rambler* III.7). The attention Johnson pays his audience acknowledges the repetitiousness of any periodical performance, illustrating one of the important traits of the periodical ethos that Richmond P. Bond outlined: the ethos of the periodical "sheet is, first, the creature of periodicity . . . The periodic persona must not neglect the situation of . . . [the] reader either individual or corporate . . . [who] will suffer frequent or occasional interruption in . . . attendance on the experiences and observations" of that particular periodical ethos (113). The focus of Johnson's Ramblerian ethos on the care a writer must take in addressing an audience instills periodical reflection with an exigence and relevance that engages readers.

Johnson excelled so far as an author in the periodical tradition as to become a benchmark for eighteenth-century essayists. Boswell does not aspire to surpass Johnson's accomplishments.

He does, however, operate within the periodical genre to demonstrate a facility with the form that qualifies his ethos to address the public, print aspects of Johnson's selfhood biographically. Johnson's Rambler shows an initial concern for addressing readers in a manner befitting the periodical form within the context of other, more established contexts, the epic, poetic, historical, and biographical (*Rambler* III.4-5). In the first paper of the *Hypochondriack*, on the other hand, Boswell's periodical ethos recounts a brief history of the periodical form itself, noting its "British origin . . . in London . . . in Queen Anne's reign" and its continental popularity, in which "the most celebrated English periodical papers have been translated into foreign languages . . . [and] several nations on the continent have produced original works of that species" (*Hypochondriack* I.106). Rather than frame the periodical within broader, topical contexts, Boswell chooses to outline of the periodical's history, a move that illustrates he is conversant with the form and with Johnson's place in its development. Unlike Johnson, Boswell explicitly addresses the situation of his reading audience, noting that the form lends itself both to the "most studious who can at times run over only a few pages; and it is better if they can have in that space something entire and unbroken" and to the "great proportion of readers [who] can never fix their attention on any thing more than short essays" (*Hypochondriak* I.105). Nevertheless, Boswell's understanding of a periodical audience recalls Johnson's own attention to the form's direct responsiveness to its audience. While both seem like the general attention to ethos that Boswell commits to in his *Account of Corsica*, the periodicity of the genre puts very specific restraints on the each author and the ethos he adopts for the essayist. Boswell shows his ethos to be as familiar with the limitations of the genre as Johnson.

The most recognizable periodical convention is the effect of the periodical namesake, its ethos as a character, on the topics and judgment illustrated in each issue. It makes Boswell's

emulation of Johnson's periodical precedent even more important for demonstrating the appropriate literary aptitude for taking up a biographical subject like Johnson.[61] One of the earliest precedents, Richard Steele's *Tatler*, sought to comment on coffee-house gossip, manners, and taste. He and Joseph Addison created the *Spectator* and used that ethos to apply a scientific mode of objective observation to comment upon taste and character. Even Edward Cave's ethos, the Sylvanus Urbanus of the *Gentleman's Magazine*, conveys the breadth of the magazine's coverage, its capacity to encompass and disperse the news from the suburban, "sylvan" provinces as ably as the urban environs of London. Bond notes that the ethos of a periodical persona must present a likeable continuity in order to be convincing: a periodical persona "must be an interesting individual . . . with enough personality to attract and to preserve . . . [a] band of followers," in order to "have a long and good life" (114). In order for Boswell to balance his ethos as a biographer of Johnson, he had to create a periodical ethos that, while different from Johnson's, maintained the same consistent, regular likeability to gain the fixity of a "long and good life." The ethos was itself to be observed by the audience and also, by association, the topics raised by the periodical ethos.

Following the precedent of the *Tatler* and the *Spectator*, Johnson establishes an ethos and a plan in the first essay of his periodical, the *Rambler*. Johnson's Rambler philosophizes about wide-ranging social and aesthetic topics, with a moralistic tone. In introducing the periodical and its figurehead, Johnson's Rambler only adopts a first person voice six times in the entire essay, in a single paragraph near the end (III.1.7). The Rambler that Johnson creates does "not aspire to the status of a hero, for he is not the leading character of the piece, which may contain no such figure at all . . . Though he must be in a credible position to report or remark, he must not

[61]Coming to evince this sort literary aptitude would also set Boswell up to apply himself and his intimate details as facts in the *Tour* that would define Johnson.

oppressively call attention to his person or his situation" (Bond 114). By putting on the Rambler's ethos and adopting a third person voice that reflects on the relationship between writers and readers, Johnson foregrounds the social and moral reasoning he broaches in the *Rambler*. The ethos of the Rambler that Johnson adopts commentates with a removed, deliberative register that considers universal maxims and reasons through philosophical observations; it "maintain[s] the center road between the definite and the indefinite" so that he can "wear his character mask to speak his lines with fictive sincerity and reasonable authority, . . . [and] promote his purpose, be it literary, social, political, philosophical" (Bond 114). This register has a moralistic distancing effect that presents abstract issues objectively for the audience's reflection.

Boswell was not ignorant of these constraints to purpose and tone, even before donning the periodical ethos of the Hypochondriack. In an undated proposal for a periodical paper, transcribed and translated by James H. Caudle, Boswell weighs what title to give the periodical he proposed but never pursued:

> I wanted to have a title which was perfectly Scots[.] Several such occurred to me. First, *The Town Guard Soldier*, but I am a man of a quiet disposition, and their Lochaber Axes make me shiver all over with fear, and my plan of moral reformation is more gentle than harrying bawdy houses, or arresting drunken people off the street in the night time. Secondly *The Cadie*. And indeed they are a group of as sharp and clever fallows as you will find any where, and a short paper is the only sort that a Cadie would write. Bur after all the thought I could take, I determined that *The Chimney-Sweep* was the best title, for a periodical Paper to be published in *Auld Reekie*." (Yale MS M 214, Caudle's emendations)

Each title is a character that would bring a distinct but Scottish ethos to the project. In the first instance, the character of a town guard soldier shapes the tenor of the "moral reformation" Boswell wants his periodical to effect, moving from "gentle" to publicly violent. In the second, the ethos of the cadie, which the *OED* defines as "a lad or man who waits about on the lookout for chance employment as a messenger, errand boy, errand-porter, chair-man, odd-job-man," would lend brevity to the periodical that would be characteristic of an errand boy's message, presumably too brief to convey the moral reform Boswell projects. His final decision, the chimney-sweep, evokes an ethos that could clean the chimneys which gave Edinburgh the nickname Auld Reekie and, by analogy, cleanse and reform the morals of the Scottish readership. Boswell's musings on the title and character of a proposed periodical, like his reflection upon the predicament of an author and the author's ethos at the head of his account of Corsica indicates a private consideration of how his ethos might engage the conventions of the periodical tradition in which Addison's, Steele's, and Johnson's own periodicals flourished. The directness of a speaker choosing a self to adopt as an ethos, however, lacks the subtlety of Johnson's Rambler, an ethos that rarely makes any statement in the first person at the outset of the journal and demonstrates a clear preference for reasoning through implication.

In his *Hypochondriack*, Boswell shows that he has a more developed mastery of Johnson's periodical technique, which puts off the clumsy straightforwardness of his private manuscript projects. Boswell's cavalier, manuscript consideration of different voices for the Scottish periodical he proposes is much more limited and provincial and, on the whole, less sophisticated than the ethos of Hypochondriack he adopts. His *Hypochondriack* maintains the first person speaker. Boswell merges the title, the ethos, and the function of his periodical when he states "I flatter myself that the *Hypochondriack* may be agreeably received as a periodical

essayist in England, where the malady known by the denomination of melancholy, hypochondria, spleen or vapours, has been long supposed almost universal" (*Hypochondriack* I.106). Boswell acknowledges that his topic is shaped to the needs of his readers who are stereotypically known for their melancholy because his "general purpose will be to divert Hypochondriacks of every degree, from dwelling on their uneasiness" (*Hypochondriack* I.109). At the same time, Boswell's periodical persona does not want readers "who upon hearing that a professed Hypochondriack is coming out, will wish to join company with me, merely from a prospect of dismal sociality" (*Hypochondriack* I.110). Boswell's plan in his first paper uses conversational tone to speak singly and directly to hypochondriaks, so that he might "divert" them from their "uneasiness," much like Johnson's Rambler assumes a tone that encourages readers to reflect and meditate on the topics his ethos expounds. Boswell's technical facility with this aspect of the periodical form shows him to be on footing with Johnson and, thus, better able to write Johnson's public life.

Boswell also uses his Hypochondriack's ethos to situate his literary authority within the periodical tradition of Johnson's periodicals. He has, as Allan Ingram notes, "the considerable advantage of writing within a highly developed tradition of periodical literature" (111). Boswell's Hypochondriack explains that "I have suffered much of the fretfulness, the gloom, and the despair that can torment a thinking being; and the time has been that I could no more have believed it possible for me to write even such a paper as this, than I can now believe it possible for me to write a *Spectator* or a *Rambler*," even though he is "now attained to tranquility and cheerfulness in the general tenor of my existence" (*Hypochondriack* I.108-9). While Boswell's Hypochondriack concedes a lower position in a hierarchy of periodical publications he outlines, he situates himself squarely within that tradition, even to the point of citing the "*Spectator*[*'s*]

remarks" in an explanation of the "first appearance" of the his own periodical (*Hypochondriack* I.109). Nevertheless, Ingram points out that "Boswell takes something from both branches by addressing the private individual upon a very personal subject, but concentrating upon the practical aspect of how that subject relates to society. And voice of the club-man of the *Spectator*, and of the preacher in *The Rambler*, becomes familiarised into the open-hearted tones of a friend and a confidant" (111). While Boswell applies some of Johnson's periodical techniques obliquely to his own newspaper publication, he also directly aligns his periodical within the print practices of the eighteenth century.

His deployment of hypochondria's popularity in eighteenth-century public discourse is a precedent for his treatment of Johnson's popularity, which allows him to evoke a biographical ethos capable of representing Johnson's publicity in the *Life*. Boswell also creates an apt persona for his periodical, one with a timely, literary charge that evinces a greater degree of fluency with the periodical than the tone of his ethos or the periodical's position within its larger generic context. Clark Lawlor has explored the relationship between Boswell and Johnson and melancholy or hypochondria, and Lawlor points out that, in the eighteenth century, "[l]iterary men might . . . find melancholy fashionable, but this was by no means a universal attitude, and by no means unambiguously expressed" (42). Johnson perceived the melancholic malady a source of social and literary "dysfunction," but for Boswell, hypochondria often correlated to "extraordinary abilities, especially creative genius" (Lawlor 42). By deploying hypochondria as the defining attribute of his periodical ethos, Boswell directly associates his persona and his periodical writing with contemporary trends surrounding the "fashionable" disorder. Boswell, however, is careful to negotiate the potential.

What is most at stake for Boswell in displaying a generic competence in the periodical is the literary reputation he sought for himself and the opportunity it affords. He closes the first paper of his own periodical by stating, "I acknowledge I cannot help feeling a satisfaction compounded between vanity and benevolence (*Hypochondriack* I.110). The literary authority that the *Hypochondriack* grants Boswell puts him in league with Johnson as a periodical writer.[62] Being in Johnson's league partially qualifies Boswell's ethos as a biographer in the *Life*: he is an author whose understanding of Johnson's public experience extends throughout personal interactions with Johnson and personal competence with the forms of Johnson's print authority. While Boswell's periodical writing does develop the form in the long wake of Steele, Addison, and Johnson, it does not compete with its formal precedents, but Boswell's stake in the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, however, is much more equally competitive. While Boswell is establishing his ability to mediate Johnson personally in the *Tour*, he is also challenging the authority of Johnson's authorial persona in *A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland*. Their divergent accounts of a shared trip to the Hebrides matched them as companions in both experiences and in print.

The collaborative nature of their travels gave their writing a competitive focal point. Radner notes that their records on their journey through the Hebrides were so collaborative that each would regularly share his notes with the other ("Narrative Control" 68-9). The nature of this collaboration proved to be more beneficial to Johnson than to Boswell: "[e]ven when he [Johnson] was not writing *against* Boswell by constructing versions of what had happened that were at odds with Boswell's . . . he was consciously writing apart from Boswell, though always aware of what had been written in Boswell's journal and his own notebook" (Radner, "Narrative

[62] Moreover, Boswell's literary Hypochondriak connects his periodical obliquely to Johnson's own struggles with hypochondria and melancholy.

Control" 70). Once he would have returned to London and was in the process of drafting his *Journey*, Johnson would have drawn on Boswell's account even more, since "Boswell supplied key materials" (Radner, "Narrative Control" 60). Johnson published his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* in 1775; Boswell would not be able to publish his *Tour to the Hebrides* until 1785, the year after Johnson's death.

Boswell's inability to publish before Johnson's death was a direct result of Johnson's interventions. He explicitly discouraged Boswell from publishing his journal, offering instead to help Boswell edit what might be fit for the public, even though Boswell sought to print his journal account as a companion piece to Johnson's travelogue (Radner, "Narrative Control" 75-6). Boswell challenged Johnson's authority in small, private ways, showing his journal account to members of Johnson's circle, Hester Thrale and Joshua Reynold. Ultimately Boswell decided not to publish, "realizing that printing his collaboratively produced account of the trip—a text that combined admiration with occasional disapproval and partially established Boswell's authority by noting Johnson's limitations—would risk aborting the larger biographical project" (Radner, "Narrative Control" 76). In the case of the periodical form, Boswell knew that he could not fully challenge Johnson's print authority, only gesture to an understanding of it. Only through representations of a single, shared, extended experience in his own home country (and following the death of Johnson) could Boswell match his own print authority and observations of Scotland against Johnson's. Boswell's stake in matching Johnson's print authority is the development of an ethos with a print output that would credential it to understand Johnson's own and, thus, take up the challenge of representing author biographically. Through the *Tour*, Boswell developed the print credentials to arrange a rhetoric of self for Johnson in the "larger biographical project."

In this light, Boswell's decision to publish his *Tour* does not challenge Johnson's living authority as a friend or mentor, but rather Johnson's print authority, however belated. It moves his defiance from Johnson's private circle of friends to the larger, public audience. In publishing, Boswell demonstrates his ability to edit his work and determine what "might be printed" and what was "fit for printing," like Johnson in publishing his own account, without any editorial advice from Boswell (*Life* v.227). Boswell's fitness for situating Johnson in Scotland in the *Tour* was answerable as a later publication to Johnson's account of the Scottish situation. Johnson's ethos is empirical, relaying the observations of a detached traveler in a foreign place. His account of the Hebrides is spatial: he arranges the sections of his travelogue under twenty-nine headings, and place names that mark the significant stops on the trip he and Boswell made. But a spatial arrangement effaces his role as an observer, privileging the observations instead. Within this spatial framework, Johnson remarks on the state of Scotland and particularly the Highlanders, pointing out that "[e]difices, either standing or ruined, are the chief records of an illiterate nation" (*Journey* 73). Johnson pulled the observer out to so that a viewer could see the full scope of Scottish space at a distance, but Boswell's account of their trip returned the observer to Johnson's side, viewing Johnson even more than the place.

Likewise, Johnson considers stereotypes about the idylls of country living and the realities of poverty associated with Scotland: "It is generally supposed, that life is longer in places where there are few opportunities of luxury; but I found no instance here of extraordinary longevity. A cottager grows old over his oaten cakes, like a citizen over a turtle feast. He is indeed seldom incommoded by corpulence. Poverty preserves him from sinking under the burden of himself, but he escapes no other injury of time" (*Journey* 84). The authority of Johnson's observations rests on his characteristic mode of generalizing, of applying universal

frames—illiteracy, poverty, and the pastoral—to specific people or places in order render their particularity applicable to all readers. Boswell's *Tour*, on the other hand, is a public re-mastering of the experience provided by their travel.

While Boswell's *Tour* complements Johnson's account in many ways, Boswell overwrites the terms for understanding the trip from a decade earlier, which consequently shapes Boswell's print ethos in relation to Johnson's. While Boswell's account also accounts for travel through the physical space of the Hebrides, his table of contents, for instance, outlines a move through social space: "*August 28*. Fort George. Sir Adolphus Oughton. Contest between Warburton and Lowth. Dinner at Sir Eyre Coote's. Arabs and English soldiers compared. The Stage. Mr. Garrick, Mrs. Cibber, Mrs. Pritchard, Mrs. Clive. Inverness" (*Life* v.7). Boswell's travelogue focuses its direction on encounters with the specific people that he and Johnson meet in those places and their topics of conversation. Thus, Boswell appeals to a more biographical mode that filters the trip through interpersonal interaction rather than the singular interpretations of an individual observer like Johnson. The shared experience of the Hebrides allows Boswell to offer a print perspective on terms that are equal to those which frame Johnson's interpretation of the trip. It allows him to put his ethos on par with Johnson's in order to qualify himself to play biographer in the *Life*.

While Boswell and Johnson are in Ostig in Sky, Johnson expounds on the responsible rule of a group of people. While he notes that some social and legal curbs were necessary to avoid future uprisings after the Jacobite Rebellion, his treatment of the political subjugation of Scotland attacks the broad goals English policy and its general, public effects on the Scottish. He reasons that the subjection of the Scottish Highlanders following the Rebellion obligates the English to maintain and support their subjects, arguing:

> The supreme power in any community has the right of debarring every individual, and every subordinate society from self-defence, only because the supreme power is able to defend them; and therefore where the governor cannot act, he must trust the subject to act for himself . . . Laws that place the subjects in such a state, contravene the first principles of the compact of authority: they exact obedience, and yield no protect. (*Journey* 90-1)

Johnson reads the waste and poverty that he witnesses on his trip as the logical consequences of heavy-handed political and legal practices. His "opinionated reflections inspire an open-ended discussion about the merits of Scotland" that, Kathleen Haldane Grenier asserts, drew attention to Scotland that eventually increased tourism there: his insights, organized spatially, yielded interest into Scotland as a place (17).[63]

Boswell gives an account that is at once complementary to and divergent from Johnson's interpretation of the Highlander's condition: he balances his authority against Johnson's with an anecdote of Prince Charles Edward's flight after the Battle of Culloden, which ended Edward's short-lived Jacobite Rebellion. Just as Johnson drew his expertise for critiquing the political state of Scotland from his brief observations with Boswell, so Boswell derived his expertise to filter the political turmoil of the Jacobite uprising and Rebellion from the first-hand accounts of the people he and Johnson met on their trip. He claims his account is derived from what Flora McDonald "told us, and from what I was told by others personally concerned, and from a paper of information which Rasay [who they visited] was so good as to send me" (*Life* v.187). His expertise comes from his personal interaction with other people, as well as, he seems to suggest, his own Scottish rearing.

[63] Pat Rogers gives credit to Boswell as well as Johnson, but notes that Boswell's project, to examine Johnson more clearly, is different from Johnson's project, to understand Scotland thoroughly (216-9, 225).

Rather than generalize about the state of English policy and its effects on the Highlands at large, Boswell translates the plight of Scotland and its Highlanders alongside the consequences of the Rebellion into Charles Edwards's flight from English troops. His flight creates a network between his supporters and, rather than representing Scotland as a generalized populace, Boswell traces the connections Charles Edwards's flight makes between lairds and lowly soldiers, giving faces and personalities to the populace (*Life* v.187-205). Boswell derives opinions from this human network that echo Johnson's own analysis of the policies applied to subjugate the Scottish: "[h]owever convinced I am of the justice of that principle, which holds allegiance and protection to be reciprocal . . . I am not satisfied with the cold sentiment which would confine the exertions of the subject within the strict line of duty. I would have every breast animated with *fervour* of loyalty; with that generous attachment which delights in doing somewhat more than is required, and makes 'service perfect freedom'" (*Life* v.204). Whereas Johnson's analysis of the post-Rebellion Highlands allows him to abstract an understanding about reciprocity in governance, protection, and obedience, Boswell's reading of the Highlanders in relation to a person allows him to focus on loyalty from an embodied perspective, which he emphasizes with tropes that situate loyalty in the person, in an "animated," warm "breast" and within the larger, reciprocal context of authority. The different means through which they draw similar conclusions from a single, shared, three month experience in their corresponding publications balances Boswell's authority against Johnson's: Johnson focused the on physical place, but Boswell emphasized their personal relationship within that place, two halves of a whole like the historical and personal split Boswell had applied to his account of Corsica. Their shared vision of one trip, one set of lived experience, sanctions the public authority of Boswell's ethos to comment on a public author of Johnson's prominence. Boswell's understanding of the periodical form within

the context that Johnson's own periodical prowess had established, as well as Boswell's authoritative account of a trip the two men shared demonstrate Boswell's ability to address the public aspect of Johnson's authorial selfhood.

"Scottifying" Johnson

To show that he could adopt an ethos capable of taking on the "presumptuous task" of writing taking on the life of Johnson, Boswell first had to show himself capable of mediating the personal life of Johnson against the fact of the ethos he created; second, Boswell had to credential an ethos that could claim the authority to understand Johnson's public selfhood (*Life* i.25). Having established an ethos that could claim a distinctive understanding of Johnson's public and private self, Boswell had to establish his ethos as a biographer that could capitalize on his intimate understanding of Johnson as a person and a public figure. In the advertisement to the first edition of the *Life*, Boswell expresses his "*satisfaction in the consciousness, that by recording so considerable a portion of the wisdom and wit of* 'the brightest ornament of the eighteenth century,'. . . [*he had*] *largely provided for the instruction and entertainment of mankind*" (*Life* i.9). Boswell's goal was to translate the life of Johnson into "instruction and entertainment" for his readers. He conceived a life of Johnson for a readership beyond small reading communities in London or in Edinburgh; he sought a national audience.

Boswell's lofty goal requires an ethos that would go beyond the public and private authority he cultivated through twenty years of acquaintance with Johnson. Before he can translate Johnson fully for his readers, Boswell must reconcile Johnson to a smaller audience during their trip to the Hebrides: their mutual trip through Scotland allowed Boswell to take up these challenges by targeting a smaller audience, a trial run for the rhetoric of self he would

arrange. Thus, the lairds and common people of Scotland become a test case for Boswell's ethos and its ability to present his Johnson's selfhood to a contained audience. It is a test that Boswell records in the *Tour*, and its success became a precedent for the *Life*. Though Boswell's writing positioned him to play Johnson's biographer, his *Tour* is the ultimate trying ground for proving the efficacy of his ethos at representing Johnson's intimate self. In addition to the challenges he faced in the account of Corsica and periodical, Boswell faces three challenges in the *Tour* to qualify his biographical attempts as a task not presumptuous, but instead befitting his ethos: first, his ethos must show itself capable of engaging Johnson's private selfhood; it must balance Johnson's private selfhood against an extant, public understanding of that selfhood; most importantly, Boswell must also demonstrate his ability to make Johnson's selfhood new.

In the *Tour*, Boswell demonstrates his ability to reconcile the public Johnson to Scotland. At the outset, Boswell concedes Johnson's well-known, public aversion to the Scottish, even though it threatens viability of the Scottish ethos he creates for himself: how could an object of Johnson's public and published derision presume to mediate Johnson reliably? Likewise, Boswell cites Johnson's poem "London" as an instance of Johnson's "prejudice against Scotland [which] was announced almost as soon as he began to appear in the world of letters" (*Life* v.19). In his *Dictionary of the English Language*, Johnson defines oats scathingly as a "grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people." The various uses of oats, for Johnson, imply that Scottish people are bestial, on par with British animals. The popularity of the *Dictionary* with the eighteenth-century reading public had firmly associated the notion with opinions of Johnson. Boswell's explanation recasts Johnson's "prejudice" as being characteristically classical and result of a man who deeply identifies with an ideal of Englishness: "like the ancient Greeks and Romans, he allowed himself to look upon all nations

but his own as barbarians . . . he thought their [Scottish] success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that nationality . . . He was indeed, if I may be allowed the phrase, at bottom much of a *John Bull*; much of a blunt *true-born Englishman*" (*Life* v.20). In this interpretation, Boswell's Johnson marks a nation and its prejudices more than the man himself, so that Boswell's ethos must address the challenge of mediating public celebrity.

Rather than allowing Johnson simply to pass through Scotland, Boswell puts the "*John Bull*, blunt *true-born Englishman*" in direct conversation with it. In order for Boswell to depict a biographical ethos that could manage Johnson, he had to dislocate Johnson from London: Boswell confessed that "[t]o see Dr. Johnson in any new situation is always an interesting object to me" (*Life* v.132). In Scotland, Boswell "insisted on *scottifying* his [Johnson's] palate" (179) by introducing to Johnson's "true-born English" tastes to Scottish culture, its food, language, and history. Boswell sought to change, quite literally, Johnson's tastes and, in turn, his opinion of the Scottish. Ultimately, "scottifying" Johnson lent authority to Boswell's ability to rearrange Johnson, to make him a fit biographical subject, a didactic rhetoric of self. Pierre Bourdieu has theorized that taste, as the ability to draw distinctions, is the "source of the system of distinctive features which cannot fail to be perceived as a systematic expression of a particular class of conditions of existence, i.e. as a distinctive lifestyle" by people who themselves bear an internalized understanding of the relational properties of the "classification system" (175). Eating oats, for instance, marks the Scottish lifestyle as distinctly un-English and, therefore, classifiably inferior to a true-born Englishman like the public Johnson: "[t]aste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar, in

which their position to the objective classifications is expressed or betrayed" (Bourdieu 5-6). Boswell's scottification of Johnson is an attempt to adjust Johnson's "classification system" so that Johnson no longer regards Scotland as the "vulgar" and the "ugly." The unfamiliar details that appear as Boswell's ethos situate Johnson's selfhood within a new context grow increasingly more Scottish, leading to a selfhood for a Johnson that can accommodate English and Scottish sympathies and that makes the rhetoric of self that Boswell arranges much less presumptuous.

At the beginning of the *Tour*, Boswell establishes a baseline for understanding the Johnson that his ethos will recast in course of the trip: "Dr. Samuel Johnson's character, religious, moral, political, and literary, nay his figure and manner, are, I believe, more generally known than those of almost any man; yet it may not be superfluous here to attempt a sketch of him" (*Life* v.16-7). Boswell's "sketch" adds on what is known by presenting several unflattering details: Johnson's size was "approaching to the gigantic, and grown unwieldy from corpulency"; that his "countenance was . . . somewhat disfigured by the scars of" scrofula; that "[h]is head, and sometimes also his body, shook with a kind of motion like the effect of a palsy . . . [as if] frequently disturbed by cramps, or convulsive contractions" (*Life* v.18). By making these aspects of Johnson's physique so distinct, Boswell drew attention away from what was commonly known about Johnson's "figure and manner." His restructuring of Johnson's appearance is completed by his description of Johnson's attire: he was clad in boots and a heavy brown overcoat and carried a staff of English oak (*Life* v.19). Johnson's uncharacteristic outfit in the *Tour*, at attire better suited to the elements and exploration than the streets of London, reflects his remove from the nation's center to its wild fringes. This remove enables Boswell not only to represent Johnson in a manner contrary to the expectations many had for the public author, but it also sets Boswell up to restructure Johnson's selfhood.

Such a remove was necessary for Boswell to rewrite Johnson. He had to separate Johnson's public self from its "elevated state of philosophical dignity" (*Life* v.14). Dislocating Johnson from "the felicity of a London life" (*Life* v.14) allowed Boswell to throw unprecedented aspects of Johnson's character into stark contrast with the familiar, austere, melancholic moralist his writings portrayed. Public expectations for Johnson were derived from his print persona, an authorial ethos that readers applied to Johnson's person. Boswell refers to Johnson alternately in the *Tour* as a poet or dictionary-writer (*Life* v.47), "our *Socrates*" (*Life* v.21), "the Rambler" (*Life* v.146), "*Dr. Samuel Johnson!*" (*Life* v.144). It was only in Scotland that Boswell could reorganize these public character markers so that Johnson, the social philosopher, might be seen dandling a young, married Scottish lass on his knee—"toying with a Highland beauty!"—or throwing a glass of lemonade out the window, after a "bad specimen of Scottish cleanliness" (*Life* v.261, 21). Only in Scotland could Boswell catch the great lexicographer making up words in conversation like "*peregrinity*" or "*depeditation*" and laughingly admitting "that he had not made [up] above three or four in his Dictionary" (*Life* v.130). The spatial remove from urbane London to wild Scotland decontextualized and magnified Johnson's eccentricities so that Boswell would rewrite them in the *Life*. Thus magnified, Johnson's eccentricities present Boswell with a wealth of additional details that he can arrange as Johnson's selfhood.

Boswell's ethos within this context exerts a control over Johnson's selfhood that Johnson initially resists. Boswell reports Johnson's unwillingness to taste "*speldings*," which are "fish (generally whitings) salted and dried in a particular manner, being dipped in the sea and dried in the Sun, and eaten by the Scots by way of relish . . . With difficulty, I prevailed with him [Johnson] to let a bit of one of them lie in his mouth. He did not like it" (*Life* v.55). Boswell represents Johnson's tastes growing more sympathetic to Scottish culture. In one instance,

Boswell shows Johnson drawing from the Scottish lexicon for his critical metaphors: "[h]e became merry, and observed how little we had either heard or said at Aberdeen: That the Aberdonians had not started a single *mawkin* (the Scottish word for hare) for us to pursue" (*Life* v.96). Likewise, Johnson's fascination with the Scottish language leads him, shortly after hearing a song in Erse, to suggest that he and Boswell buy the "rugged island" they see "off the coast of Scalpa" to "found a good school, and an episcopal church, . . . and have a printing-press, where he [Johnson] would print all the Erse that could be found" (*Life* v.162). The Johnson that would try *speldings* or draw on a Scottish vocabulary for critical analysis is a Johnson made possible by Boswell's ethos and the setting that separated Johnson from the familiar. The Johnson that Boswell mediates in the *Tour* can increasingly accommodate Scottish sympathies alongside his John Bull character.

Boswell most clearly depicts Johnson's increasingly sympathetic taste for Scottish culture in his increasing willingness to try on different modes of Highland dress and behavior. In his record of their stay with Flora Mcdonald, Boswell establishes the historical and social significance of "celebrated" space he and Johnson share:

> Dr. Johnson's bed was the very bed in which the grandson of the unfortunate King James the Second lay, on one of the nights after the failure of his rash attempt in 1745-6, while he was eluding the pursuit of the emissaries of the government, which offered thirty thousand pounds as a reward for apprehending him. To see Dr. Samuel Johnson lying in that bed, in the isle of Sky, in the house of Miss Flora Mcdonald, struck me with such a group of ideas as it is not easy for words to describe, as they passed through the mind. (*Life* v.185-6)

Boswell represents himself as dumbstruck with the "group of ideas" that "passed through the mind," mediating Johnson's actions as a first-hand observer for the reader. By offering no words, he offers readers the chance to imagine them for themselves. His ethos invites speculation on the significance of Johnson lying in the bed of the Young Pretender, but Johnson himself provides an answer that acknowledges the larger cultural situation in which he participates: "[h]e smiled, and said, 'I have no ambitious thoughts in it'" (*Life* v.186). Johnson's joke is an oblique nod to the cultural and historical significance of his physical situation, yet he has "no ambitious thoughts in it," neither the bed nor the role of Charles Edward. The image itself, as Boswell's ethos witnesses it, resituates Johnson from the authority of London as a major metropolitan center of authority to the cultural and historical authority of Scotland. Boswell's wordless ethos interprets breaks Johnson down and reconfigures him as subject to Scottish history.

Boswell shows Johnson's increasing sympathy for the Scottish, when he playfully dons the role of a Highlander: "Dr. Johnson . . . shewed . . . the spirit of a Highland . . . indeed, he has shewn it during the whole of our Tour.—One night, in Col, he strutted about the room with a broad-sword and target and made a formidable appearance" (*Life* v.324). Johnson's performance of a martial, Highland pride is as striking as Boswell's direct attempts to "scottify" the English poet into "the image of a venerable *Senachi*" (*Life* v.324). This "venerable" image recalls a lost role among the Highlanders that, Johnson explains in his *Journey* had not "existed in some centuries" (*Journey* 112). The Highlanders esteemed the role nonetheless. Johnson's definition explains that the term "signified 'the man of talk,' or of conversation . . . a historian, whose office was to tell truth, or a story-teller" (112). In this way, Boswell casts Johnson in the role of a historian, a preserver of history and culture. To render Johnson as a *senachi* is to make Johnson responsible for all of Scottish history and culture. Boswell admits that at one point in their

travels, he "took the liberty to put a large blue bonnet on his [Johnson's] head . . . he seemed much pleased to assume the appearance of an ancient Caledonian" (*Life* v.324-5). Boswell's ethos "took the liberty" to force a Scottish role on Johnson much more forcibly than he had when he coaxed Johnson into almost tasting *spelding*. His rewriting of Johnson in this instance, however, was much more successful. While he did not like his taste earlier taste of Scottish culture, Johnson gradually warmed to it through contact and was "pleased to assume the appearance of an ancient Caledonian."

Boswell's direct attempts to reconcile Johnson's English self to Scotland could not be completely successful, yet as he made Johnson more sympathetic to Scotland, he helped Scotland grow more familiar with Johnson, and in the process, Boswell demonstrates an ethos that could make Johnson sympathetic in its ability to structure a compelling rhetoric of self. Boswell reports that Johnson was ceremonially welcomed to Aberdeen and "present[ed] with the freedom of the town" by the "magistrates in the town-hall," where the people cheered "'Doctor Johnson! Doctor Johnson!'" (*Life* v.90). In observing what Boswell calls "the usual custom," Johnson kept the "burgess-ticket . . . in his hat, which he wore as he walked along the street" (*Life* v.90-1). Displaying his burgess-ticket, the "freedom of the town," announced Johnson as a citizen of Aberdeen. The formality of this encounter gives way to a much more socially engaging encounter after a month in Scotland. On the Isle of Skye, Boswell reports that, not only was Johnson "quite social and easy amongst" the people, but despite not drinking "fermented liquor . . . [h]is conviviality engaged them so much, that they seemed eager to show their attention to him, and vied with each other in crying out, with a strong Celtick pronunciation, 'Toctor Shonson, Toctor Shonson, your health!" (*Life* v.261). Picturing the increasing sympathies the Scottish and Johnson shared, as Katherine Haldane Grenier argues, ultimately "mapped

Scotland" in way that introduced it to a world of travelers and tourists (39). In essence, Boswell has bridged a cultural gap—he has proven himself ambassador to both Scotland and, especially, to Johnson in Scotland.

The significance of this cultural work for establishing Boswell's own ethos is the personal work it does to redress Boswell and Johnson's infamous first meeting in Tom Davies' bookshop. It is a context that clarifies the questions of nationality, literary celebrity, and selfhood that Boswell seeks to address with his own ethos:

> Mr. Davies having perceived him through the glass-door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us,—he announced his aweful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, "Look, my Lord, it comes" . . . Mr. Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudices against the Scotch, of which I had heard so much, I said to Davies, "Don't tell him where I come from."—"From Scotland," cried Davies, roguishly. "Mr. Johnson, (said I) I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it." I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to sooth and conciliate him, and not as an humiliating abasement at the expence of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he . . . retorted, "That, Sir, I find, is what a great many of your countrymen cannon help." This stroke stunned me a good deal. (*Life* i.392).

Johnson skewers Boswell so tidily that their first encounter might seem to render Boswell's biographical task presumptuous. But the contrast between the Johnson of 1763 versus that of

1773 shows reconciling British history through the figure of the great John Bull "English" writer—who Boswell links to the greatest of English writers through *Hamlet*—now loves Scotland and its languages, too. It is an literary act of union that proves that Boswell is up to the biographical task, mediating Johnson's national proclivities, literary celebrity, and selfhood, "that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable." The final test of how useful Boswell's *Tour* was in establishing an ethos that could sort Johnsoniana from ephemera into an enduring rhetoric of self was how frequently he cannabalizes choice moments from the *Tour*. Topically, they naturally suit the *Life*. At the very outset of the *Life*, Boswell cites Johnson's comment about his melancholic disposition as a character marker that would run throughout Johnson's life, out of its chronological context (*Life* v.214-5). But it recalls Boswell's ethos and the contrasts it has allowed him to draw between Johnson's lived experience and his own interventions in it.

Boswell was a friend who lacked the literary repute to contain the detail of Johnson's public and private selfhood. In his *Account of Corsica*, Boswell established the fixed role an ethos could play for an author. In arranging Johnson's selfhood, Boswell wielded his ethos as a fact that engaged Johnson's private character and made it increasingly evident. Likewise, Boswell showed his ethos to be proficient in attempting to interpret and represent Johnson's public reputation and authority In his *Hypochondriack*, Boswell made plain his ability to operate within periodical conventions Johnson had established through his own publications; in his representation of the trip to Scotland he shared with Johnson, Boswell matched his own print ethos against Johnson's. The authority of Boswell's ethos for is most evident in his handling of Johnson in the *Tour to the Hebrides*: "Boswell retained the structure of the journal, writing under date lines, with introduction and conclusion added to give a narrative frame which emphasizes the potential conflict between the Scots and the 'John Bull . . . true-born Englishman' and finally

stresses the success of the venture, thus throwing into relief Boswell's social skill in 'handling' Johnson and his literary skill in writing him up" (McGowan 136).By establishing an ethos whose biographical undertaking was not presumptuous, but rather apropos, Boswell situated himself to arrange Johnson's selfhood rhetorically within it history and character, but most importantly, Boswell's ethos made possible his most unique contribution to the canon of eighteenth-century biography: an approach that put the audience directly in conversation with the rhetoric of self and established a more intimate relationship. Boswell's ethos would come to arrange a rhetoric of self that would locate Johnson in print and experience, but which would bend these eighteenth-century biographical patterns to deliver a Johnson capable of exciting the sympathetic reader to view Johnson's print life ethically, spectating a rhetorical selfhood that invited all readers (the Caledonian and John-Bull English in particular, perhaps) to learn about sociability and values from the *Life of Johnson*.

Chapter 4—Arranging and Innovating Biography:

The Rhetoric of Self and Conversation

Whatever public anticipation had followed James Boswell's initial advertisement of a forthcoming biography of Samuel Johnson in 1785 was in danger of flagging by the time he finally published it in 1791. Out of fear that he might have missed his literary moment, Boswell defended his slow progress by appealing to the comprehensiveness of his biographical endeavor. New material for the *Life* kept presenting itself, which he felt obliged to incorporate.[64] Six years later, he delivered on the promise of his advertisement voluminously. Boswell's *Life of Johnson* sprawled on the late eighteenth-century literary scene: its ostensible messiness—a collection of facts, letters, poetry, prose, first-hand accounts, anecdotes, excerpts, and conversation—barely achieves coherence under the running header that groups the clutter diachronically under each passing Aetat. to Aetat. of Samuel Johnson's life. The contemporary reader must come to terms with Boswell's organizational scheme: "I do it chronologically," he reported in a letter to William Percy, "giving year by year his publications if there were any, his letters, his conversations, and every thing else that I can collect," so that "[r]eaders will as near as may be accompany Johnson in his progress, and as it were see each scene as it happened" (*Correspondence* 206). Paradoxically, the wait that Boswell forced on his readers was, in fact, for the sake of his readers, whose understanding of Johnson would ultimately benefit from his biographical exhaustiveness.

Faced with the breadth of detail that had stalled the *Life*, eighteenth-century readers cultivated a personal connection with Boswell's Johnson in the accumulated bulk. Capel Lofft

[64] Early in his project, for instance, Boswell explains his delay to Hugh Blair by noting that he sought to check materials against Hawkin's biography of Johnson and, especially, in order to allow "time for the accession of materials of which I have received a great addition" (*Correspondence* 180).

acknowledges that, upon first seeing Boswell's biography, the "eye may be startled . . . at the first glance of what appears to be two heavy volumes: but beyond this nothing heavy will be found, in any sense in which the Fancy of the Understanding complain of heaviness. I should have seen a third, fourth, fifth or as many more . . . with impressions very distant from those of discouragement or the prospect of fatigue" (*Correspondence* 316). The benefit of this "heaviness" for the eighteenth-century reader was that it offered an array of points to access Johnson or to censure Boswell's representation. The Reverend Samuel Parr notes that, "[a]midst such a multiplicity of facts, and such a variety of subjects, different readers will contend for different rules of selection . . . But, in my opinion, the best rule is the most comprehensive" (*Correspondence* 348). However, the abundance of details, which invite a personal knowledge of Johnson's selfhood, could prove to be a double-edged sword. The Johnson that Hester Piozzi recognized in the glut of Boswell's biographical detail left her "laughing & crying by turns for two Days . . . if Johnson was to me the back Friend he [Boswell] has represented—let it cure me of ever making *Friendship* more with any human Being" (*Thraliana* 809-811). Hester Thrale Piozzi, who knew Johnson intimately and suffered greatly when their friendship ruptured over her remarriage, finds herself restored to Johnson with such affective intensity through Boswell's *Life* that it surpasses any actual friendship she might yet have. It is in the expansive degree of detail, carefully collected and curated, that readers find a relationship to Johnson in Boswell's *Life.*

This emphasis on biographical detail does not assign preeminence to narrative or its chronology, but instead the effect of Boswell's accumulating details on the reader. The tradition of inductive empiricism depends on the observations of discreet details that related, repeated experimentation comprise; observing them as a set, the scientist induces patterns that become

scientific principles. In the context Boswell develops his biography through "an accumulation of intelligence from various points, by which his character is more fully understood and illustrated" (*Life* i.29-30). In a letter dated Sunday, February 24, 1788—the second year he was earnestly composing the *Life*—Boswell explains to William Temple "I am absolutely certain that *my* mode of Biography which gives not only a *History* of Johnson's *visible* progress through the World, and of his Publications, but a *View* of his mind, in his Letters, and Conversations is the most perfect that can be conceived, and will be *more* of a *Life* than any Work that has ever yet appeared" (*Correspondence* 208). His letter follows the general pattern of the justification he makes for his method in the biography (*Life* i.29-30): Boswell here regards his method as "the most perfect that can be conceived" for relaying "Johnson's visible progress through the world." In the tradition of eighteenth-century biography, he locates the visible Johnson in the breadth of Johnson's "publications" and "letters," just as Johnson had distilled the character of Savage from his poetry and Goldsmith invited the reader to construct the character of Nash through his correspondence. But Boswell's innovation is an extreme shift toward an intimate, internal model of selfhood that does not translate experience into selfhood through the objective mode of earlier biographers. Rather than objective translation, Boswell method mediates lived experience through his own and his formal responsibilities as a biographer. As "more of a Life than any work" prior, Boswell's biography evinces a liveliness derived from a drifting accumulation of detail rather than a regular, chronological, narrative-centric approach.

Boswell intimates that his own means for biographical arrangement will surpass the expectations eighteenth-century readers had of the biographical tradition, even as he deploys the strategies of Johnson and Goldsmith. Boswell is as possessive of the method, "my mode" he stresses to William Temple, as he is of the life it will depict. Boswell sought to develop an

innovative method that would situate Johnson's selfhood within social networks of personal acquaintance, credentialed by documentation, and in so doing would recast readers' expectations and their approach to understanding selfhood. Readers come to know Johnson more intimately than previous biographies had made possible; the Johnson that Boswell delivered might be a personal, print friend. In this chapter, I will argue that Boswell presented a Johnson who was more sympathetic to readers than earlier biographical selfhoods, not only through cumulative research and compositional strategies, but also by inviting the reader to play a role as a tacit participant in Johnson's private conversations, staging their presentation so that the reader experiences the moment of the conversation. Whereas Johnson and Goldsmith engaged readers in the documentation of experience, Boswell invites them to live it. Such participation signifies a more intimate understanding of Johnson, of a print selfhood that Boswell has fashioned to stand in for Johnson. Through Boswell's rhetoric of self, the reader comes to engage the biographical selfhood as if it were the man himself.

In order to create an intimate rhetoric of self that can engage the reader's sympathies so personally, Boswell relies first on a research methodology that draws both on the inductive epistemology advocated by the Royal Society and the variable practices for credentialing knowledge in eighteenth-century print culture. Boswell distinguishes himself by locating Johnson's history beyond publications or his own personal journal account, accumulating instead the anecdotes and information he locates from Johnson's own familiar acquaintance. The public, authorial Samuel Johnson familiar to a community of readers becomes, almost literally, every reader's personal Johnson, a selfhood which they can engage as an acquaintance through the recollections of his lived acquaintance. Second, Boswell composes an intimate rhetoric of self in the *Life* by arranging the voluminous facts of Johnson's history within a rhetorical framework

that establishes what he regards as authentic, Johnsonian character in order to facilitate the readers' sympathy as spectators of Johnson. A more complete representation of selfhood teaches Boswell's audience how to read Johnson's selfhood anew. Finally and most innovatively, Boswell acts as an interlocutor who encourages Johnson's conversation, and his ethos as Johnson's friend and biographer ultimately invites readers to view Johnson's conversations in print and participate in them sympathetically, thus engaging Boswell's Johnson more intimately. A print representation of selfhood predicated on the documentation of public and private experience which deploys a new ethics of reading: structuring the discrete details, intimate recollections, and documentary proof of Johnson's lived experience into a persona from which readers can draw conclusions sympathetically based on their own observations and which, finally, they can apply to their own experience.

Long after 20th-century scholars stopped arguing it in general, the literary tussle between the Boswellians and Johnsonians for scholarly ownership of Johnson has directed discussions of the *Life*, Boswell, and Johnson. The primary context for academic attention to the *Life* has been framed and reframed by the questions of Boswell's factuality in representing Johnson and the degree of fictionality that impinges on the print persona. Since Frederick A. Pottle edited and introduced the *London Journal 1762-1763* of Boswell's private papers, scholars have sought to reconcile the "historical solidity" that Boswell "succeeded in achieving" against, on the other hand, his "unusual powers or imagination" (14). In this academic context, questions of what is biographically true versus what is fictitious spurred Donald Greene to attack the accuracy, veracity, and overall reliability of Boswell's representation—his attempts to exonerate the lived life of Johnson against Boswell's biographical *Life* argued that Boswell's journals demonstrated what he regarded as a damning distance between the life and *Life* of Johnson, a fiction of the

facts that Pottle finds in the journals. In distinguishing between fact and fiction, Greene is essentially distinguishing genres. Autobiography is more factual, while biography, or at least just Boswell's, is more fictional: "for all that Johnson's words are supposed to remain central to it, the work is dominated by Boswell—naturally enough, when so much of it comes from Boswell's journals, which after all were intended to record Boswell's life, not Johnson's" ("Autobiography" 58). He notes further that "it is hard to find passages in the *Life*, often ones which have been influential in creating the modern image of Johnson, which have been drastically altered from the text of the journal, presumably as the result of such extraneous motives as fondness for an opinion or fidelity to a party" ("Autobiography" 56). Greene offers "A Reading Course in Autobiography" as an antidote to the potentially fallacious practices of biographers, a logic that assumes the representation of a life by a biographer is much more suspect than people's representations of themselves. This is an old schism in eighteenth-century studies, but the context it has created perpetuates critical approaches to Boswell's fictitiousness or historicity.

Within this academic setting, the two general lines of inquiry have developed various approaches to Boswell's surplus of detail. Greg Clingham outlines the rift between scholarship framed by questions of Boswell's representational art versus his biographical factuality: "Boswell scholars can be divided into two main groups," one that "takes Boswell's dramatic artifice and fictional techniques for granted, and discusses the *Life* as self-contained, self-consistent, and self-reflexive" and another that "shares the first group's admiration for Boswell's dramatizing powers, but also claims that he is factually accurate and authentic," invoking this "'supreme gift of dramatization' in order to defend him [Boswell] against questions of his factual accuracy" (212). Setting these two approaches aside, Clingham opts to read Boswell a self-

fashioning biography and "unbroken circle of psychological striving for realization and the constant threat of dissolution" (226). Boswell as the biographer, in this reading, is a Boswell becoming, at the same time he knows Johnson and fashions Johnson into a biographical entity: "in making his portrait of Johnson, and playing himself off against this man whom Boswell had invested with all his own ideals, the biographer is trying to articular himself, to make real a life too often given to fictionalizing" (222). Clingham's stake is in the relational aspects between the biographer and his subject and the act of writing that the *Life* reveals, rather than the biographical writing itself and how fictional or factual it might be.

The former group of scholars has downplayed Boswell's historicity in favor of his artistry, privileging the literary and psychological merits of the *Life*. They generally set it aside to look at the literary effects Boswell creates. William Siebenschuh argues that Boswell deploys literary techniques to present the facts of Johnson's life out of necessity, since "Boswell clearly did not understand and therefore could not categorize what he was seeing" when he observed and recorded his Johnson (*Techniques* 93). His literary presentation of Johnson is compensatory, an artistry to fill in representational gaps. Likewise, many scholars have taken a cue from Boswell's reference to Johnson as a Homeric hero in the advertisement to the second edition and have sought to locate the pattern of a literary hero in the *Life*. Boswell himself alludes to the Homeric hero as a justification for "*this extensive biographical work, however inferior in its nature, may in one respect be assimilated to the* ODYSSEY. *Amidst a thousand entertaining and instructive episodes the* HERO *is never long out of sight; for they are all in some degree connected to him*" (*Life* i.12). William Dowling reads Boswell's Johnson as a literary creation, an eighteenth-century original like Tobias Smollet's Matthew Bramble (*Hero* 127). This literary character is "a hero in an unheroic world" whose burden is to carry and reconcile the high traditions of an

earlier age to uninspired, contemporary practice (*Hero* 2). Donna Heiland takes Dowling's interpretation further, so that Johnson's status as literature is his status as a god of the times, ritualistically pulled apart to reinvigorate the culture (202). In this reading, the facts Boswell presents as Johnson's life are, rather, facts that define the eighteenth century.

My contention is that biographical fact cannot be purely isolated as the fact of a life, but rather can only be understood as the fact of the tradition that the life represents. Boswell, then, is implicitly unaccountable for problems with accuracy in the details specific to Johnson's life. With a similar attention to Boswell's artistry rather than his factuality, Ralph W. Rader takes a different tack, arguing that the *Life* is a biography of something more evanescent than documentable lived experience: it is a biographical record of Johnson's character and, thus, not accountable to the strict rules of historical writing (8). Some scholars have posited psychological approaches, with particular attention to the role biography played in bolstering Boswell's own psychological distress following the death of his sometimes mentor and friend.[65] In this critical conversation, the relationship between Boswell and Johnson feeds the connection between factuality and fictionality, reinvigorating both with a combined psychological purpose.

The claims about biography that these approaches advance are all warranted by attempts to reconcile Boswell's biographical facts and representation artistry, brushing aside the research and facts in favor of the organizational patterns. This methodology raises productive questions of the effects Boswell's representation might create—what comes of reading Johnson as a hero? As a map of character? Or as a bulwark to Boswell's own bouts with profound sadness or, even, the reader's? Yet all of these approaches, either to factuality or artistry, focused on points prior to the publication of the *Life*—the relationship between Boswell and Johnson or Johnson and the

[65] Allan Ingram focuses on its effect on Boswell, suggesting that "contemplation of Johnson's image may be seen as an antidote to the nothingness of the increasingly melancholy world of Boswell's imagination," which he tried to master by creating an image of his mentor that allowed him to create an image of himself (190).

biography—end squarely in the sprawl of the *Life's* details, facts, opinions, anecdotes, letters, and general biographical accumulation. These sorts of modern critical approaches derive from modern standards of biography, which themselves developed from historically from the eighteenth-century onward. Although it remains the most recognizable, eighteenth-century point on the genre's trajectory, Boswell's *Life of Johnson* is most remarkable for its enduring modernity. For instance, Boswell's attention to research, unparalleled by earlier biographers, is a given, a requirement for modern biographical credibility, his bulk of detail notwithstanding. Likewise, Boswell's attempt to picture Johnson honestly, alternately gruff or kind and opinionated or rational, is a representational starting point in current biography. A modern biography seeks to crack the veneer of selfhood that assumption creates and delve into what is admirable or repellent, but ultimately most telling about a person. And Boswell's drive to incorporate character as a fact among the mass of biographical detail he presents is an attempt to balance personality and lived experience.[66] The *Life* does not strike a perfect balance, nor does it provide an entirely authentic depiction, despite Boswell's comprehensive research. Rather, it is emergent, developmental and, more importantly, squarely situated in an eighteenth-century republic of letters.

To approach Boswell's Johnson as an eighteenth-century rhetoric of self is to begin from the other end of the biographical enterprise, privileging the reader rather than the form, biographer, or even the biographical persona that concentrates most modern biographical study. Instead, it is a focus on the reader and how the reader is affected by the rhetoric of Johnson's

[66] Donald Greene once critiqued Boswell's *Life* on generic standards he had culled from contemporary biographies. He leveled a "damaging charge" against Boswell, finding him guilty of the "gross misfeasance or nonfeasance, of a biographer's first duty, to try to provide a reasonably complete and continuous narrative of his subject's life" ("Pretty" 118). While narrative continuity is an expectation for modern biography, Boswell de-emphasizes such continuity in order to create a rhetoric of self for Johnson that readers can know intimately. Seeking to reconcile Boswell's *Life* against modern instantiations of biography neglects its influential role as one of the historical interstices in the development of the biographical form.

self, a person cast in print who engages readers and invites them to draw ethical conclusions about the self sympathetically based on their own observations. This educational ethic of reading allows readers of the *Life* to apply the lessons they learn from Boswell's Johnson to their own experience and, as a result, to engage a larger discussion of social and ethical truths.

Arranging the Accumulations of Johnson's Selfhood

In the Advertisement to the First Edition of the *Life*, Boswell again stresses the challenge of managing the rhetorical complexity of arranging the life of Johnson: "*the nature of the work . . . as it consists of innumerable detached particulars, all which, even the most minute, I have spared no pains to ascertain with a scrupulous authenticity, has occasioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of other species of composition*" (*Life* i.6-7). In these assertions, Boswell makes two claims about the composition of the biography. First, he has composed it of "innumerable detached particulars." Second, Boswell's method of arranging these innumerable, detached particulars so that they cohere in a representation of selfhood "has occasioned a degree of trouble far beyond that of other species of composition." Arranging the facts he had compiled into an accurate rhetoric of self that would delineate Johnson's life distinguishes his methodology from other popular biographies of Johnson by deemphasizing the overt, organizational control of the biographer and, in its place, presenting himself as a partial but meticulous observer who has scientifically researched, tested, and recorded the facts. Historically, Boswell's assertion highlights his effort to outmatch his contemporaries' attempts to present a definitive representation of Johnson.

In particular, he chose to set his biographical arrangement of Johnson's life most directly in conversation with Sir John Hawkins' dry, comprehensive biographical account, his *Life of*

Samuel Johnson, and especially Hester Thrale Piozzi's more personal account of Johnson, the *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson*. The former he criticized for the "dark uncharitable cast" it gave to Johnson's "conduct," noting that "Hawky is no doubt very malignant"; the latter, for evincing "no *affection* for our great friend [Johnson], but merely the attachment of vanity," a biographer who "proved herself to be a wicked, false, ungrateful little vixen" (*Correspondence* 223, 114, 117). Boswell's accumulation of particulars legitimated his biographical account. In the process, he presents a life of Johnson that is comprehensive, documented, and in full empirical view of the reader, who will take part in the experiment as an observer.

Boswell's compositional maneuvers for arranging his vast accumulation of Johnsoniana into a representative rhetoric of self derive from larger rhetorical contexts of the period, contexts which give primacy to a reader's response. Boswell is part of a relatively young tradition in eighteenth-century letters that shaped rhetorical study in the eighteenth century, particularly the latter half. Two key figures of the period, Adam Smith and Hugh Blair, delivered popular lectures in rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh. Both lecturers espoused a belletristic approach to rhetoric that emphasized two of the five classical canons of rhetoric: stylistics and arrangement. For rhetoricians like Adam Smith, belletristic considerations of style held great significance for Scottish rhetorical theory because they carried a nationalized charge. In their teaching, rhetoric was the measure of the person, an observable marker of selfhood. For Smith and Blair (and many Scottish authors of the period), this was at its most basic a distinction between Scottish and English, rusticity and urbanity. Thomas P. Miller stresses the importance of rhetorically constructed character when he notes that Scottish rhetoricians sought, in part, to ease their students' assimilation into English culture through active engagement with English discourses, such as rhetoric and commerce (204). Establishing an English print ethos would

require a concept of Scottish character rhetorically indistinguishable from the English character. Part of emulating good English character is good English diction and good pronunciation.[67] For Smith, demonstrating "[p]erspicuity requires" language "free from all ambiguity" and, more importantly, "that the words should be natives (if I may [say] so) of the language we speak in" (*Lectures* 1). Smith implies that usage is not native but systematic: a Scottish speaker, then, can adopt the systems of English usage despite lacking the perceived fluency afforded by English rearing. Smith's "common sense" approach trains students to affect a rhetorical character appropriate to English discourse, "in the manner which best conveys the sentiment, passion, or affection with which it affects—or he pretends it does affect—him" (*Lectures* 51). The corollary is that selfhood, too, could be observed, taught, and adopted. The stylistic concerns like composition and arrangement that grew out of Smith's and Blair's rhetorical concerns were crucial to Boswell's representation of Johnson as well—a rhetoric of representation could separate the bucolic from the cosmopolitan, the province from the country's center, and the Scottish from the English. And it could especially mark selfhood. Boswell's task was to translate the great Anglican and English icon into fully humane proportions and, in so doing, authorize his own Scottish identity as capable of comprising and composing the great English writer.

[67] In a period content to brand provincial, Scottish English with nationalized epithets, lists of so-called Scotticisms circulated among the Scottish universities and literati, as well as in London. James Beattie's short, published dictionary *Scotticisms* (1779) and Boswell's shorter, undated, manuscript list of Scotticisms (ms. 260) evidence a sensibility concerned primarily with adaptability, cultivated by a practical understanding of language and usage. In his journals, the young Boswell notes his displeasure at seeing familiar Scottish faces in the London crowd: "[t]o tell the plain truth, I was vexed at their coming[,] for to see just the plain *hamely* fife family hurt my grand ideas of London" (Turnbull 21-2). Gordon Turnbull notes that "hamely" is Scots for "'homely', in the sense of 'familiar', 'ordinary', shading slightly over into 'rough, coarse, blunt'" (351 n.15). Boswell's diction indicates his own social distinctions between "grand" idea of cosmopolitan London and his "hamely" Scotland. At this time, too, Irish Thomas Sheridan moved from acting on the London to educating students in proper English elocution as a means of correcting flaws in usage, particularly provincial usage. In the *Life*, Boswell cites the example of one of Sheridan's students, Alex Wedderburne, because "it affords animating encouragement to other gentlemen of North-Britian to try their fortunes in the southern part of the Island, where they may hope to gratify their utmost ambition . . . now that we are one people by the Union" (i.387).

Much like Smith, Blair's emphasis on style, likewise, probed what was definitively English about Englishness through his attention to English literature like Addison and Steele's *Spectator*. For Blair, the best style is so precise and perspicuous that it does not hamper understanding. It guides it fluidly, naturally. The degree to which a composition maintains both traits determines the level of propriety it demonstrates: style "is a picture of the ideas which rise in the mind . . . [it] is nothing else, than that sort of expression which our thoughts most readily assume" (Blair 99). Since the writing style is, for Blair, definitive of the character of the writer, Blair concludes that "different countries have been noted for their peculiarities of Style, suited their different temper and genius" and provides example of those correlations between style and national identity (99). Tellingly, the Scottish are not among the nations or cultures he mentions in this lecture to Scottish students at the University of Edinburgh, but they must have been aware of the lens turned on their national character and writing by British or cosmopolitan London culture. As a consequence, Barbara Warnick explains, stylistic decisions in Blair's theorizing "should be adjusted to the taste and habits of the host culture; what suited ancient society was no longer appropriate in the eloquence of the modern period," and she characterizes this model as a "global view of propriety" (71). For Boswell, writing about Johnson in English, arrangement in composition would have proven a delicate, crucial task.

Within the context of a belletristic approach to English that sought to remove traces of native Scottish from the discourse, Boswell would have been acutely aware of rhetorical modes of arrangement and their importance in mediating his relationship with Johnson. In the *Journal Tour to the Hebrides*, Boswell seeks to depict himself man of English civility and also a Scottish laird; indeed, the whole trip through Scotland, passing largely from Scottish man to Scottish man who exhibits an Anglicized sensibility sets a larger context for Boswell's attempt to reconcile his

Scottish origins to his English aspiration. He delights in relaying Johnson's observation that "[t]he Irish mix better with the English than the Scotch do; their language is nearer to English . . . [and] they have not that extreme nationality which we find in the Scotch" blends the national and linguistic to the point he can compliment Boswell for being the "most *unscottified* of your countrymen. You are almost the only instance of a Scotchman that I have known, who did not at every other sentence bring in some other Scotchman" (*Life* ii.242). Echoes of Blair and Smith's impetus for inculcating a belletristic rhetoric to their Scottish students can be heard in Johnson's assumptions: language, but mostly dialect, signify "nationality" and national identity, such that language can determine character. Boswell himself began a list of Scotticisms and Scottish words (Boswell Collection ms. 260). Johnson even encouraged him to continue compiling words so that they might form the basis for a book (Boswell, *Life* ii.91-2). Boswell could hardly have failed to recognize his place in the contemporary context of rhetorical theory and the role it much place in arranging facts into Johnson's selfhood. More to the point, Boswell acted in this politicized and nationalized rhetorical field in the composition of the *Life*.

In an undated, manuscript essay, Boswell articulates an approach to composition and arrangement that expresses similar sentiments to the belletristic rhetoric advocated by eighteenth-century Scottish universities, emphasizing style and arrangement. One of Blair's assumptions, for instance, is that "[k]nowledge and science must furnish the materials that form the body and substance of any valuable composition. Rhetoric serves to add the polish; and we know that none but firm and solid bodies can be polished well" (4). In this configuration, the sources of biographical selfhood come from empirical "knowledge" and scientific fact. Boswell's process for locating the facts of Johnson's self evidences an empirical methodology—facts obtained from Johnson's publications, the observations of Johnson's acquaintance, as well

as Boswell's own personal observations and journal record. Similar to Blair, Boswell stresses that

> Writing or Composition in an age of learning or knowledge must be in a great measure arranging and colouring & shaping & polishing in various ways other peoples [sic] thoughts[.] So it is called Composition condo et compono quea mox depromere possim.[68] Some original thoughts will be intermixed sometimes; sometimes not. I doubt if there be a single original thought in all Dr. Hugh Blair's Sermons yet they are beautiful compositions. (ms. 69.3)

Boswell's emphasis is less on scientific knowledge or originality, but rather how material can be arranged to "beautiful" effect. For Boswell, the excess of facts and information "in an age of learning or knowledge" requires rhetorical arrangement to give them order. Arrangement is even more important than the originality of fact. His emphasis on arrangement is another instance where his Scottish origins, paradoxically, trump the questions of authority that his *Life* posed. By making arrangement (a key article in the Scottish Enlightenment school of rhetoric) his priority, he de-emphasizes the questions of fact surrounding the great Dr. Johnson and thus the questions of Boswell's fitness. Blair and Boswell both regard rhetoric and arrangement as refining source material. For Blair, belletristic "composition serves to add the polish" (4). Boswell, too, holds belletristic arrangement makes the "colouring & shaping & polishing" (ms. 69.3). Essentially, they both advocate a careful rhetorical treatment of facts to improve them by improving their presentation.

In their constructions, belletristic rhetoric metaphorically becomes a rhetoric of the body. They anchor the observable, verbal self onto rhetoric. Blair asserts that rhetoric can only improve

[68] The transcribers note to manuscript 69.3 correct Boswell's citation to "condo et compono ~~quea~~ *quod* mox depromere possim" (emphasis and strikethrough, mine). Boswell is citing Horace's *Epistles* I.1.12, translated by H. Rushton Fairclough thus: "I am putting by and setting in order the stores on which I may someday draw" (251).

a sound body of ideas or facts: “none but firm and solid bodies can be polished well” (4). Only a sound body can be improved rhetorically.

> “Would it not be ridiculous squeamish affectation to say I will no more use thoughts which have been in other peoples [sic] minds than eat meat which has been in other peoples [sic] mouths. We cannot help receiving other peoples [sic] thoughts with whom we are brought near enough to communicate either in conversation or by reading what they write no more than we can help inhaling breath which has been in the lungs of those with whom we are in company [,] a disgusting idea no doubt. We must receive other peoples [sic] thoughts both crude & well digested. Impertinent rude people will belch vile thoughts in our face. (ms. 69.3)

Receiving “other people’s thoughts” through “conversation or by reading what they write” strengthens a body of facts or ideas. Metaphorically, Boswell compares this process of strengthening a composition to ingestion or inhalation, an involuntary incorporation of additional, diverse ideas, both “crude and well digested,” to arrange, color, shape, and polish. In Boswell’s formulation, a composition is a body that rhetoric orders, arranging and shaping it and giving it color and definition. His comparison is particularly apt in light of his biographical methodology, which digests source accounts of Johnson to arrange as a life of Johnson into a “beautiful composition” (ms. 69.3), a rhetoric of self that collects lived experiences and character traits within the body of the biography as life.

Composing Johnson's Selfhood Textually

In order to render palatable the extensive documentation of Johnson's life he had amassed, Boswell had to shape and polish his research by giving the details a continuity that would make it possible for them to cohere as a single print self. The perception of a natural regularity conveyed through Boswell's formal organization of Johnson's contradictory qualities has such a regularizing effect on the variety of material he collected. Divergent points of view and inconsistent accounts of Johnson are unified as a singular life, setting fixed boundaries for what will be considered Johnsonian, so that Johnson could be observed objectively and empirically by the sympathetic reader. The most obvious boundary that Boswell establishes for Johnson's selfhood is the extensive correspondence that connects Johnson to the larger society that framed his life. Unlike the ways Johnson had used Savage's correspondence to fill in gaps for Savage's experience or to give testament to his character, Boswell uses Johnson's connections to establish the man in a larger social context. His social circle included the political theorists, painters, poets of the Literary Club, populated by the likes of Edmund Burke, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and Dr. Oliver Goldsmith. Beyond that, Johnson's acquaintance included Hester Thrale Piozzi and the Scottish philosopher James Beattie, and he was an avowed, lifelong fan of his friend, the novel Charlotte Lennox, as well as the playwright Hannah More. This is by no means a comprehensive list; rather, it is evidence of the challenge Boswell faced in structuring Johnson's network as a comprehensive print person. Likewise, Boswell situates Johnson's experiences paratextually, unifying the accumulated details of Johnson's life chronologically under headings that mark each year in the life of Johnson, but also asynchronously with footnotes that make connections across time in the span of Johnson's life.

Boswell's arrangement depends on textual and paratextual strategies that definitively mark the Johnsonian boundaries so that readers can observe him objectively in order to read his selfhood sympathetically. Epistemologically, the move from empirical objectivity to affective sympathy is Lockean. It requires widespread facts that allow for empirical observation of experience. More than a simple list of facts, this move also requires a recognizable humanity, an arrangement that shifts the readers' focus from mere fact to observations of a selfhood made up facts. A reader's perceptions allowed for an empirical appraisal of self that would allow and sympathetic fellow-feeling, an accurate exchange of sentiments. For the eighteenth-century reader, sympathy is socially and philosophically charged: in his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Adam Smith posits sympathy as model for morality and sociability based on observing and sympathetically responding to others (17). This scientific approach allows sympathy to be seated in the body and in the imagination of spectators who witnesses another person and sympathetically imagine themselves in that person's position (*Theory* 27-9, 31-4). Boswell encourages this response by rhetorical procedures, but it is up to the reader to respond. Letters with a definite addressee and author provide points of social contact that situate Johnson and, to a large degree, dramatize his opinions over time, as letter sequences between Johnson and Boswell, Hester Thrale Piozzi, and Boswell's wife demonstrate. Readers of *The Life* enter into that play of social relations as spectators, but Boswell also wants them to become part of the experiment. His thorough though hardly exhaustive table of contents and footnotes move a reader's attention across the text outside of the linear narrative of the *Life* to provide a frame of scientific mastery over Johnson's selfhood, while letters provide more gentle and rhetorically approachable opportunities for sympathy with Johnson, a sympathy that will in turn shape the reader. To inductively apprehend Johnson's selfhood from Boswell's massive accumulation, his

biographical ordering notwithstanding, readers must have choices within the various points of view evident in each anecdote, recollection, publication, letter or other material that Boswell incorporated into the biography. Letters constitute one of the more significant and rhetorically consistent strategies for inviting readers to participate in *The Life* and the life of Johnson.

Including letters was a normative practice in eighteenth-century biography, growing out of seventeenth-century life writing and appearing most notably in Johnson's recounting of Richard Savage's life. In the latter part of the William Mason's *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Gray* alternated short prose sections narrating life events against much longer epistolary sequences. Boswell claims that he has chosen "to adopt and enlarge upon the excellent plan of Mr. Mason" in structuring his own biographical representation of Johnson (*Life* i.29). In analyzing Boswell's letter placement, Bruce Redford emphasizes "the care that went into positioning the letters so as to gloss, punctuate, or advance the narrative" and argues that Boswell uses the letters to three ends: to present the letters with a "disposition" sympathetic to Johnson, to vary the forms of letter to represent various attributes of Johnson's self, and to manage multiple "epistolary sequence[s]" that "can include as many as ten to fifteen letters" (*Designing* 124). The self-consciousness with which Boswell includes and edits epistolary sequences in the *Life* emphasizes the methodology of Boswell's didactic Johnson, a biographical self who engages and, when read properly, transforms readers.

Protocols of civility demanded letters on a variety of occasions and at frequencies that confirmed the social bond between writers.[69] Although civility has a basis in extemporaneous, interpersonal interaction, it exerts a clear influence on eighteenth-century conversation and letter

[69] Johnson's letters typically bear the marks of civility common to the art of letter writing in the eighteenth century, since "[l]etter-writers satisfied decorum by sending letters on 'proper' occasions, [and] using 'correct' forms of address and . . . they also regulated politeness by testing its compatibility with negligence, warmth and zeal" (Brant 4).

writing with clear protocols. These forms of civility set the boundaries for social interaction, and Boswell uses them to show the boundaries Johnson variously respected and broke. Toward that end, Boswell situates collections of letters at irregular intervals in the *Life* which balance Johnson's notorious incivility. Speaking of a previous night's conversation, Boswell once confirmed for Johnson that he "tossed and gored several persons" (*Life* ii.66). Boswell himself complained of being "*tossed* . . . sometimes," which he regarded as particularly uncivil in the company of "enemies" (*Life* iii.338). Boswell used Johnson's letters as a means of balancing and arranging Johnson's social self as sociable yet curiously aggressive or negligent at times. When he makes his compliments, for instance, he often apologizes for his negligence in writing to the addressee, gesturing toward apology so that he can simultaneously stress his high regard, ameliorate his inattention to the addressee, and segue smoothly into news of himself. It is an epistolary commonplace characterized by self-interest, but also civility.

A clear example of this strategy occurs in a letter to his friend and long-time personal physician, Dr. Thomas Lawrence Johnson writes: "At a time when all your friends ought to show their kindness, and with a character which ought to make all that know you your friends, you may wonder that you have yet heard nothing from me. I have been hindered by a vexatious and incessant cough, for which within these ten days I have been bled once, fasted four or five times, taken physick five times, and opiates, I think, six. This day it seems to remit" (*Life* iii.419). The "time when all . . . friends ought to show their kindness" that Johnson discreetly references here is the death of Lawrence's wife. In this extreme instance, Johnson authenticates his inability to write with the specific details of his own suffering, whereby he apprises his physician of his own sickness, demonstrating the sociable, civil means of conveying sympathy. As a personal doctor, Lawrence would have been particularly reconciled to Johnson's inattention by his own

familiarity with Johnson's medical history. While Johnson seems to give primacy to the sufferings of Lawrence over his own and emphasize his civil regard for his friend, he also gives attention to his own suffering. Such letter structures overwrite Johnson's reputation for being ill-mannered with civil practices common to any writer.

Similarly, Johnson is bound to the epistolary form through the social network it establishes and maintains. Johnson often communicates with his acquaintance indirectly through an addressee. Such second-hand communication evokes the social practices associated with what Clare Brant labels "personal" rather than "private" letters: "'personal' . . . recognizes the significance of letters to individuals and to relationships . . . [since] eighteenth-century familiar letters, which were . . . voluntarily circulated beyond the addressee" (5).[70] Relaying this strategy in the letters he selects for the *Life* allows Boswell to contextualize Johnson within a civil, social network among his acquaintances. But it also depicts Johnson's negotiation of the social obligations necessary for maintaining this network particularly in the manner he manages personal correspondence with the members of his circle. Boswell includes a letter to Johnson's servant, Francis Barber, in which Johnson instructs Barber to "[m]ake my compliments to Mr. Ellis, and Mrs. Clapp, and Mr. Smith" (*Life* ii.116). Thus Johnson maintains his social network with three people by virtue of his communication with a single addressee. But the more interesting dimension of this sociality is that Barber is black, and Johnson is extending his sociability/authority through him, which means Ellis, Clapp, and Smith have to accept Barber as well as Johnson.

Johnson reflected on the popular practice of publishing private letters, telling Boswell that "[i]t is now become so much the fashion to publish letters, that in order to avoid it, I put as

[70] Brant also notes that, quite often, "many correspondents did not want or expect their exchanges to be disclosed to others, but 'personal' should be understood to anticipate discretion" (5).

little into mine as I can" (*Life* iv.102). Johnson's aversion to the publicity of the public letter stresses the availability of the self in personal correspondence, hence he "put as little into mine as I can" by resorting to brief letters. Yet Boswell's choice to include Johnson's documented words makes a private Johnson available outside of his circle, one that will counter the "goring" doctor with a more gentle portrait of civil and even kind exchanges, however brief. Boswell organizes the letters to shape a Johnson who can interpret civility but also to be held accountable to it.

In ordering Johnson through epistolary text, Boswell gains control over his formidable subject through letter sequences, which allow him to frame events through relaying a variety of stories intended to reflect Johnson's character. His careful placement of letter sequences bookends diverse topical sections, ranging from accounts of Johnson's publications to his conversation and commentary, and it gives them a distinct, forward motion. A famous example of a letter narrative in the *Life* is the interaction between Johnson and Boswell's wife. A subtle, somewhat jocular conflict between the two arises when Boswell and Johnson make their tour of the Hebrides. At Boswell's house, the peculiarities that often characterize Johnson prove, as Boswell explains in a footnote, disagreeable to Boswell's wife. Johnson kept "irregular hours" and displayed "uncouth habits, such as turning the heads of candles downwards, when they did not burn bright enough, and letting the wax drop upon the carpet"; coupled with the extreme attention her husband always devotes to Johnson, Johnson's strange habits leave her ill at ease (*Life* ii.269). In a letter dated 27 November 1773, Johnson notes: "I know Mrs. Boswell wished me well to go; her wishes have not been disappointed" (*Life* ii.268-9). The next letter that Boswell includes in this sequence is a reply from Johnson to Mrs. Boswell, dated 16 May 1776, in which he tells her that "[t]he only thing in which I have the honor to agree with you is, in

loving him; and while we are so much of a mind in a matter of so much importance, our other quarrels will, I hope, produce no great bitterness" (*Life* iii.86). In subsequent letters to Boswell, Johnson asks his friend always to pay his regards to Mrs. Boswell, so that by 24 February 1777, Boswell tells Johnson "my wife is much honored by what you say of her. She begs you may accept of her best compliments . . . [and] is to send you some marmalade of oranges of her own making," noting tongue-in-cheek, that it is important to "[b]eware . . . of a reconciled enemy" (*Life* iii.108-9). Johnson writes asking that Boswell "[t]ell Mrs. Boswell that I shall taste her marmalade cautiously at first," and when it proves harmless he will take it "as a pledge of firm . . . unalterable kindness," so he can definitely conclude that "[s]he is, after all, a dear, dear lady" (*Life* iii.109). Eventually, the letters reveal that Johnson and Boswell's wife are reconciled enough that they occasionally correspond.

As much as she is incorporated into Johnson's social circle through correspondence, this epistolary sequence documents and makes observable a social Johnson, situated in the context of his social obligations and acquaintance. The narrative thread these letter sequences picture gives consistency to disparate details Boswell accumulates as a life. Their rhetorical structure also offers the advantage of picturing a Johnson constantly capable of change, responsive to social situations, and able to reconcile himself to a social "enemy" like Mrs. Boswell. Boswell's use of Johnson's correspondence makes Johnson more observable and, thus, more sympathetic to the spectating reader. Rhetorically, Boswell's arrangement of epistolary sequences allows for a more intimate Johnson with more didactic potential for the ethical reader.

Epistolary time gives the narrative direction, which sometimes plays against the chronological ordering of the annual divisions of Boswell's material with marginal glosses that frame Johnson's experiences with the year and his age. Boswell's method of applying a narrative

linearity to Johnson's experiences is distinctive from other biographies of the period, which embed the dates and ages within the biographical narrative, rather than glossing them. Johnson's and Goldsmith's biographies embed the dates, as do other biographies of Johnson, like Hawkins's or Piozzi's collection of anecdotes. While it might be a concession to utility—shorter biographies would not have required a means of managing Boswell's surplus—Boswell's marginal glosses mark the passage of Johnson's life and stabilize the experimental framework of the *Life* with clear temporal markers. The 1791 edition of Boswell's *Life* follows a dedication and an advertisement with an alphabetical table of contents that is fourteen pages long. What Boswell terms a table of contents is actually a topical index. That it opens the biography foregrounds the rhetorical structuring of Johnson's life, connecting in the same table Johnson's acquaintance, travels, opinions, and publications. Likewise, the footnote establishes continuity within the text outside of the chronological ordering of events, so that it represents a balanced, consistent Johnson. Unlike the sequential, chronological progression of the letters, the marginal glosses, or the forward-looking table of contents, the narrative movement of Boswell's footnotes is alternately forward or backward. By reaching in multiple directions across the text, Boswell gives more continuity to the people and social contacts that drift in and out of the *Life* around Johnson. In contrast to the dizzying context of conversations and scenes, of participants and settings, such nominal structuring cannot entirely contain Johnson's character, but can give it temporal form and scientific precision.

Edward Gibbon's presence, for instance, is emphasized by a discussion between Boswell and Johnson regarding how history should be relayed and reported. Though Gibbon is present and has presumably been working on his *History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, he offers no comment because, as Boswell suggests, "[h]e probably did not *trust* himself with

JOHNSON" (*Life* ii.366). The italicized word "trust" and its footnote, "See p. 348," point back to a previous segment of the *Life* in which Gibbon makes a quiet riposte to Johnson's comment that he would not trust himself in the presence of a black bear:. Johnson said "We are told, that the black bear is innocent; but I should not like to trust myself with him." What Gibbon whispers to the side, Boswell glosses later in the life: Gibbon says, "I should not like to trust myself with *you*" (*Life* ii.348). Such paratextual arrangements situate Johnson referentially within the boundaries that Boswell establishes. In the former instance, he becomes a critic of the historical writing Gibbon chooses not to defend. In the latter, his character is associated with the purported innocence of the "black bear" (*Life* ii.348). Boswell's footnotes connect dissimilar aspects of Johnson's character but also draw connections over the course of the *Life*. By binding Johnson in footnotes, Boswell creates a boundary for containing Johnson's experience that runs against the ostensibly chronological structure of the biography, projecting Johnson's selfhood backward across the course of the *Life*.

Likewise, Boswell situates Johnson within social networks that also cycle through Johnson's lived experience. Boswell notes, "[o]n Sunday, April 1, I dined with him [Johnson] at Mr. Thrale's, with Sir Phillip Jennings Clerk and Mr. Perkins, who had the superintendence of Mr. Thrale's brewery, with a salary of five hundred pounds a year" (*Life* iv.80). His reference to Perkins is connected to an earlier letter in the *Life* from Johnson to Perkins, which is itself footnoted with an additional anecdote of an interaction between Johnson, Perkins and Mrs. Thrale. The latter footnote focuses on Perkins's maintenance of Henry Thrales's brewery, his hospitality, and Johnson's regard for the man (*Life* ii.286). Not only does this footnote connect Johnson to a social network, as in his epistolary greetings to various friends, but it gives continuity to the network that fixes Johnson within the social formation of friends, acquaintances

and rivals interweaving throughout and networked by the text, like the epistolary sequences. This footnote connects the social formations most characteristic of the *Life*, "the quantity it contains of Johnson's conversation; which is universally acknowledged to have been eminently instructive and entertaining . . . [and] will best display his character" (*Life* i.31). Boswell's footnotes undergird the *Life* and provide a standard for gauging how characteristically Johnsonian any action Johnson performs might be.

The selfhood, which Boswell can link at various points in the biography, makes a behavioral continuity possible while rendering others improbable or uncharacteristic. In this accumulation and arrangement of details, then, Boswell gives us a scientifically verifiable Johnson, shaped by rhetorical practices to unfold as a series of experiments from which the reader can gather useful and edifying evidence. This rhetorical context for sympathy provides a scientific, physiological, and ethical means to gauge whether the Johnson experiment is working. Once they, like Boswell, are "*impregnated with the Johnsonian æther*," the truth of this Johnsonian self will be evident in even more intimate and personal effects on the reader (*Life* i.421). The efficacy of the experiment is that it draws in the reader to the experiment itself.

While Boswell does fix Johnson's experience implicitly through textual organization, he also explicitly arranges Johnson's selfhood by exerting the ethos of a biographer and friend. Boswell's authorial control in arranging letter sequences, chronological markers, footnotes does not foreground his role as a biographer, but his self-definition as an autobiographical witness to Johnson's life does. As in his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, Boswell acts an interlocutor for the reader, though much less obviously obtrusive. Boswell's personal commentary and first-hand experience asserts a different role than Johnson's familiarity played in his representation of his friend, Richard Savage. Johnson used Savage's biography to render his own personal

recollections of Savage into documentation, represented objectively so that it could be documented as fact by other readers or researchers. He sought to document his opinion into public record. Boswell, on the other hand, takes his long-standing, personal familiarity with Johnson's opinions to authorize his own interpretations of Johnson's preferences as fact. These facts become part of the mass of details Boswell accumulates.

In one instance, Boswell reads Johnson's opinions on contemporary novels, noting that Johnson "always appeared" to have an "unreasonable prejudice," for the prose aesthetic of Samuel Richardson to that of Henry Fielding (*Life* ii.49). Johnson's prejudice has become so familiar as to be axiomatic to Boswell, who recalls that "[i]n comparing those two writers, he used this expression; 'that there was as great a difference between them as between a man who knew how a watch was made, and a man who could tell the hour by looking on the dial-plate'" (*Life* ii.49). Boswell contains Johnson's self by reducing Johnson's aesthetic to a single, manageable assertion that he can overwrite on its own analogical terms: "I cannot help being of the opinion, that the neat watches of Fielding are as well constructed as the large clocks of Richardson, and that his dial-plates are brighter" (*Life* ii.49). Boswell's intrusive commentary seems at odds with the original purview of his project. His response to and interpretation of Johnson, however, serve to further define what should be considered Johnsonian.

First, the contrast between Boswell's answer and the "Johnsonian" one highlights the schema Boswell has established: Boswell, as autobiographical counterpoint, clarifies the biographical Johnson, who remains the locus of scientific truth, a pattern Watson and Holmes will re-enact some 100 years later. Second, Boswell's answer repeats Johnson's opinion for interpretation by a larger reading audience. Boswell not only articulates his own tastes against Johnson's, but he sets public taste in contrast with "Johnson's excessive and unaccountable

depreciation of one of the best writers that England has produced," since "'Tom Jones' has stood the test of publick opinion" (*Life* ii.175). Such personal, interpretive commentary on the part of the biographer often follows a dialog or anecdote. Boswell, an intimate interlocutor for Johnson, moves the personal Johnson back into the public realm, subject to public observation and consideration.

The premise of Boswell's biographical approach, "that minute particulars are frequently characteristick," obligates him not only to organize Johnson for interpretation, but also to train the public in how it should interpret the man, as he set out to do in the biographical experiment of his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* (*Life* i.33).[71] Boswell is most directly instructive about how Johnson should be read when he inserts his autobiographical accounts into the *Life*. Boswell critiques Tom Davies' attempt "in a bald manner" at a bon mot he himself witnessed in Davies' shop: Boswell recalls that Davies "made . . . [him] say, 'I *was born* in Scotland,' instead of 'I *come from* Scotland;' so that Johnson saying, 'That, Sir, is what a great many of your countrymen cannot help,' had no point, or even meaning: and that upon this being mentioned to Mr. Fitzherbert, he observed, 'It is not every man that can *carry a bon mot*" (*Life* ii.350-1). The contrast Boswell carefully emphasizes between Davies' and Johnson's delivery of the bon mot demonstrates the linguistic and sarcastic facility Johnson makes plain in his first encounter with Boswell.[72] The vagueness of Boswell's demonstrative "this" suggests two possible antecedents: in the immediate context of the anecdote, "this" refers to the contrast between Davies' and Johnson's ability to carry a bon mot; in the larger context of biography, "this" refers to Boswell's and Davie's retellings of Boswell's first encounter with Johnson, which puts each man in the

[71] At the outset of the biography, Boswell positions his interpretation of Johnson as corrective to the "literary gossiping" of Sir John Hawkins' and Hester Piozzi's earlier interpretations (*Life* i.26-8).
[72] To emphasize his own credibility as Johnson's biographer, Boswell cites, Mr. Fitzherbert, who "observed, 'It is not every man that can *carry a bon mot*'" (*Life* ii.350).

position to deliver Johnson's bon mot convincingly. Thus the comment serves both to stress Johnson's selfhood, particularly as Boswell's schema represents it, and to show that Boswell's capacity for recollection on this autobiographical matter authorizes him to organize Johnson's self. His interventions as an interlocutor are not merely a retelling, but rather an arrangement of Johnson that makes him more observable and more sympathetic.

Composing Johnson's Selfhood Intimately

Coming as it did at the end of the century, Boswell's biography directly inherited the criteria for biographical arrangement shaped by the emergence of the form earlier in the eighteenth century with precedents like Johnson's life of Savage or Goldsmith's biography of Nash, but it went further. Boswell's epistolary, paratextual, and interpretive rhetorical arrangement develops a fuller, more accurate, view of Johnson that Boswell promises from the outset. The selfhood he portrays allows "readers to become better acquainted with him than even most of those were who actually knew him" from a sympathetic perspective of Johnson's experience (*Life* i.29). Boswell's longtime friend, the Reverend William Johnson Temple, congratulated the biographer on his accomplishment: "[p]erhaps no man was ever so perfectly painted as you have painted your hero. You have given us him in every point of view and exhibited him under every shade and under every colour. We think we see him and hear him and are equally entertained whether he contend for Truth or for Victory" (*Correspondence* 328). Temple's compliment takes for granted or, at least, makes no mention of Boswell's table of contents, marginal glosses, or footnotes, but rather focuses on the depth and fullness of "every shade" and "every colour" with which Boswell "perfectly painted" his representation of Johnson.

To fashion Johnson's experience into a life that readers can observe and engage with as though they "think they see Johnson and hear him," Boswell adopts a proto-psychological approach. His more empirically-scientific, documentary record supports this illusion of psychological depth that seeks to explore Johnson's selfhood more intimately. In order to create the "points of view" that Temple praises for making the Johnson of the *Life* visible and audible for readers, however, Boswell cannot depend simply on his variety of source material or the paratextual methods. Instead, Boswell must employ two additional, structural interventions that allow the reader to better observe Johnson's character. First, Boswell also creates a matrix of character traits in order to connect different points of Johnson's character across the *Life*. Second and more famously, Boswell includes Johnson's conversation, relaying it like a script that invites the reader to view Johnson's talk as an intimate performance with Johnson's personal acquaintance.

Since it informs the memorable events and anecdotes that comprise much of Johnson's life, this character matrix blends in to the narrative trajectory of the *Life*. It organically bridges disparate events and seemingly irreconcilable comments than the superimposed textual and paratextual apparatus of Boswell's biographical arrangement. The character matrix consists of a set of ten psychological traits—Boswell refers to them in the *Life* with proto-psychological terms such as "qualities" (iv.426), "spirit," "temper," "powers of the mind" (i.39)—that manifest themselves to varying strengths depending on their context, in relation to each other or to the events of Johnson's life. These set of ten traits give an empirical orientation to Boswell's unquantifiable notions of "spirit," "temper," and "powers." The character matrix has a scientific sense of accuracy.

For Boswell's readers, it also conveys a slight, fleeting sense of familiarity. Boswell's systemization of his subject's character is novel. In the biographical tradition of the eighteenth-century, the standard for systemizing treatments of the author's life was Johnson's. Boswell situated his system of establishing a character matrix in Johnson's childhood and adolescence. Jack Lynch argues that, prior to Boswell, Johnson's biography evinced a system focused on the early years of an author's life, characterized by its treatment of childhood, education and its specific circumstances, and proof of future literary promise (137-8). Lynch argues that this system of self is the "'signature' of Johnsonian biography" and evident in the majors biographical treatments of Johnson's own life by Piozzi, Hawkins, and Boswell (140). He points out that Johnson's "contribution has gone largely unremarked . . . because we . . . are heirs to Johnson's conception about what is important in an early life . . . [and] in some of the ways in which lives formed characters" (141). Modern biography's debt to Johnson's biographical methodology is the degree to which it can be taken for granted. Lynch argues, however, that Boswell recognized the predominance of the Johnsonian biographical standard: "Boswell would have felt the originality of . . . more acutely than we do today." (141). The crucial difference between the categories Lynch attributes to Johnson's biographies and that Boswell structured in the *Life* is Johnson's focus on external circumstances that can be objectively observed. Boswell, well aware of Johnson's innovations to the form, departs from this focus by putting Johnson's interiority into objective view for sympathetic engagement.

The interiority that Boswell arranges into a character matrix is made up of ten traits begin, first, with Johnson's melancholic "general sensation of gloomy wretchedness" (*Life* i.35); his devotion to Christianity and general piety (38); his famous, "jealous independence of spirit and impetuosity of temper" (39); "the power of his memory" (39); his literary ambition and

precocity (40); his definitive physical attributes that threatened to deform his powers of observation (41-3);[73] his love of learning (43-6); his intellectual "superiority" (47-8); his "great ambition to excel" (48), and an alienation that would drive him to be sociable with a younger set throughout his life (48-9). Boswell uses these traits to create a matrix within which he can situate and interpret the facts of Johnson's life. To complement the character matrix, the intimacy of observing such conversations puts readers in conversation (often through Boswell's eyes) with the major cultural topics of the day inundating them with Johnson's opinion, which has the effect of having "Johnsonised *the land*" as Boswell exults in the second edition of the biography (*Life* i.13). This character matrix and the depiction of private conversation develop a more intimate print selfhood through which readers like Temple can feel like they know Johnson personally and find themselves "equally entertained whether Johnson contends for truth or victory" and equally instructed.

Near the close of the *Life*, Boswell acknowledges the biographer's burden, the task of connecting experiences and reconciling the many facets of the self. The challenge that Boswell faces is reconciling oppositions: "[m]an is, in general, made up of contradictory qualities; and these will ever shew themselves in strange succession, where a consistency in appearance at least, if not in reality, has not been attained by long habits of philosophical discipline. In proportion to the native vigour of the mind, the contradictory qualities will be the more prominent, and more difficult to be adjusted" (*Life* iv.426). The strong "native vigor" of Johnson's mind resulted in stronger "contradictions" that could more contradictory for their inability to "adjust" to each other. Quite unlike the figures in character writing from the

[73] Johnson's ungainly figure and tendency to mutter to himself led William Hogarth, who "perceived a person standing at a window in the room, shaking his head, and rolling himself in a strange ridiculous manner" in response to a conversation in the main part of the room and consequently "concluded that he was an ideot" (*Life* i.146-7). Hogarth misjudged Johnson's character, when the person he supposed to be an "ideot" "stalked forwards . . . [and] displayed such a power of eloquence, that Hogarth looked at him with astonishment" (*Life* i.147).

Spectator, *Rambler*, or even Goldsmith's Nash who exhibit at most a few unique, overriding character traits manifest in all of other their actions and sayings, Johnson was full of "contradictory qualities." His departure from early models of life writing, Boswell claims, more accurately reflects the tendency in "human nature" to embody contradiction (*Life* iv.426). The character matrix Boswell establishes provides a complex, Lockean framework that gives Johnson's selfhood continuity over time and throughout different places, even though the mass of materials he collected for the *Life* show disparate aspects of Johnson's character. Johnson, at "different times, . . . seemed to be a different man, in some respects; not, however, in any great or essential article upon which he had fully employed his mind, and settled certain principles of duty, but only in his manners, and in the display of argument and fancy in his talk" (iv.426). Although Boswell downplays the degree of inconsistency evident in Johnson's character at the end of the *Life*, he takes pains throughout to distinguish between moments that are distinctly Johnsonian and moments that, though aberrant, are becoming of Johnson's print person.

The matrix of character traits establishes the traits that are characteristically Johnsonian so that occasional incongruities add depth to Johnson's representation and balance Johnson's selfhood as a more organic, entire life. By arranging the dominant attributes of Johnson's character and giving attention to their incongruity, Boswell puts his readers in a position to read Johnson's life more sympathetically than would be possible through epistolary evidence or paratextual apparatus alone. It is a representational move from the disparate, public character toward the more intimate qualities of Johnson. Rhetorically, it invites Boswell's readers to make didactic reconciliations of the contradictions in Johnson's character at "different times" in the *Life*, when he "seemed to be a different man."

Boswell's specific, proto-psychological traits also create a matrix outside of the chronological structure of the biography. Boswell first gives an account of his empirical methodology to justify his inclusion of the personal and private details of Johnson's life he relates. In the section of the *Life* spanning the sixteen years from Johnson's birth in 1709 to 1725, Boswell locates ten specific traits that he traces throughout the events of Johnson's life and conversation. These traits reveal the perpetuity of a recognizable self-consciousness, which readers come to identify as characteristically Johnsonian as the *Life* progressed. In establishing the matrix of traits from the outset, Boswell creates a baseline to which he can return throughout the course of the biography to lend continuity to Johnson's varied actions, sayings, and behaviors. The most productive traits to examine in context are the three that predominate the *Life*: Johnson's melancholic tendency, his fervent religiosity, and his love of learning. In the context of each other, these character traits demonstrate how Boswell arranges a consistent self for Johnson, even though he is not always consistently religious, melancholic, or studious.

The first foundational character trait Boswell locates as a marker of Johnson's later life is the melancholic disposition Johnson acquired from his father, Michael Johnson (*Life* i.35). It would make an appearance in as the "constitutional indolence" that halted his work on translating *A Voyage to Abyssinia* and in his account of his lifelong madness to the Lady McLeod when traveling to the Hebrides with Boswell (*Life* i.87, v.215). Evident in Boswell's choice to prioritize Johnson's melancholy is an indication of a normative cultural value, one of the predominant character types of the day: the melancholic genius. Boswell associates Johnson with a popular contemporary text on melancholy by Dr. George Cheyne, *The English Malady*, which Johnson twice recommended Boswell read in order to treat his own melancholic tendencies (*Life* i.65). Clark Lawlor's anachronistic examination of melancholy's cultural implications

throughout the eighteenth century notes that Johnson "had a clear sense of himself as more grievously affected than the majority of depressives," which gave him a literary and artistic advantage in the culture" (41). In attaching this character trait to Johnson foremost, Boswell locates a dominant characteristic of Johnson to which all of the character traits were subject to varying degrees: "To Boswell . . . Johnson's malady was not a threat to his overall sanity, and possibly part of his genius . . . Depressives are often credited with extraordinary abilities, especially creative genius" (Lawlor 42). By foregrounding this trait and its implications for Johnson's selfhood, Boswell establishes a frame for Johnson, the sort of genius embodied by and evident in the actions of a social philosopher, critic, and author. The "grievous affect," likewise, casts Johnson's selfhood in more recognizable and ready sympathetic relationship to the reader.

A characteristic melancholy is fundamental to any representation of Johnson's character in Boswell's arrangement. At the end of the *Life*, Boswell blames Johnson's melancholy for his "sallies of impatience and passion at any time . . . and allowance must be made for his uttering hasty and satirical sallies, even against his best friends" (*Life* iv.427). Throughout the *Life*, however, Johnson's melancholy plays different roles. In 1729 when he was twenty, Johnson's melancholy drew toward a Lockean reflexivity: "upon the first violent attack of this disorder, strove to overcome it by forcible exertions. He frequently walked . . . and tried many other expedients, but all in vain," and Boswell notes that "[h]is expression concerning it to me was, 'I did not then know how to manage it'" (*Life* i.64). For Johnson, melancholy requires a degree of introspective self-management that defines selfhood. Boswell describes Johnson's treatment as a means of self-management. He drafted a diagnosis of his mental state in Latin so thorough that it impressed a doctor of his acquaintance (*Life* i.65). Not only does Johnson's melancholy shape the man, but it also allows the man to shape himself: scientifically, through self-observation,

experimentation, and self-diagnosis, Johnson's selfhood is given definition by the melancholic character Boswell assigns.

The melancholy that Boswell attributes to Johnson did not only direct his attention inward, as a means of self-definition, but also directed his attention outward, as Johnson makes plain in his advice to Boswell, advice that he cites from Robert Burton.[74] In letter dated October 27, 1779, Johnson enjoins Boswell to follow the "great direction which Burton has left to men disordered like you . . . *Be not solitary; be not idle*: which I would thus modify;—If you are idle, be not solitary; if you are solitary, be not idle" in order to "keep away the *black dog* that worries you at home" (*Life* iii.414). Likewise, he advises Boswell to "[f]ix your thoughts upon your business, fill your intervals with company, and sunshine will again break on your mind" (*Life* ii.423). Each piece of advice assumes that melancholy is a trait that does not bind Johnson in the static, deterministic manner that Theophrastan characters are bound by a single trait. The expectations readers had for Theophrastan character or their contemporary, periodical essays, assigned a particular character trait to a persona, not to psychologize a character trait, but rather to humanize it, as Oliver Goldsmith humanizes the public reputation of Richard Nash in his biography, turning his characteristic affectation into the character of the king. J. W. Smeed explains that, in these constructions, the external attribute the traditional character type exhibits gives indication of and insight into what it means to be driven by a singular character attribute (4). Unlike character writing that assigns a single, definitive characteristic to a particular character, biographical writing depends on a complex arrangement of the characteristics most definitive of a self. For the biographer, a singular character trait can lend definition and continuity to a rhetoric of self, in part like the Lockean definition of the self—the perpetuation of

[74] Johnson once acknowledged to Boswell that "Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* . . . was the only book that ever took him out of bed two hours sooner than he wished to rise" (*Life* ii.121).

self-consciousness. But Locke's definition requires a self-consciousness and the characteristics that mark it to persist over time, whereas the character of Theophrastan character writing of the short, eighteenth-century periodical piece exists situationally. In the matrix that Boswell establishes, a set of character traits create a context that lasts over the course of Johnson's life.

Johnson's melancholy, by contrast, is a trait that is part of a matrix, which invites a dynamic response from Johnson's selfhood. He is not definitively melancholic, but he has been melancholic; he is affected by his melancholy, but he knows how to counter it and ultimately to balance it. The advice Johnson offers Boswell reveals the intervention of another of the ten traits, Johnson's love to study (*Life* i.43-6). By showing Johnson applying studiousness to resolve melancholy, Boswell creates a context that invites a reader to draw conclusions about Johnson that inform their own understanding of themselves, their own characteristics in flux in relation to each other and the larger context of the *Life*. Rhetorically, Boswell's arrangement juxtaposes traits that frame Johnson's selfhood, even though their juxtaposition is not chronological. In Boswell's Johnson, the reader sees the "human nature" that Boswell ascribes to the fundamental contradiction in selfhood. A view of the contradictions marks an increasingly modern, psychological sense of self that sets Boswell's apart from the eighteenth-century precedents.

Johnson's suggestion for treating melancholy gives his characteristic melancholy a different context in relation to the other ten traits Boswell establishes at the outset of the biography, Johnson's impulse toward education and learning (*Life* i.43-6). This attribute becomes evident in Johnson's love of study even as a young man, ranging from teachers like Dame Oliver, who once gave Johnson "a present of gingerbread" and told him that he "was the best scholar she ever had" to teachers like Mr. Hawkins, "a man . . . very skillful in his little way," or Mr. Hunter, the headmaster who, as Johnson later recalls, "beat us unmercifully; and he

did not distinguish between ignorance and negligence" (*Life* i.42, 43). As a contrast to Johnson's later love of learning, these recollections might seem unremarkable, but their import lies in the significance Boswell assigns them in order to establish the character trait in Johnson. The value Johnson places on learning endures the range of contexts in which it occurs early in his life, such that he later asserts that the overly-strict discipline of Mr. Hunter made his great learning possible: he comments "[m]y master whipt me very well. Without that, Sir, I should have done nothing" (*Life* i.45-6). This combination of study and adversity lends itself as a natural check to Johnson's melancholy, revealing his selfhood as something located between both.

Within this character matrix between melancholy and study, melancholy becomes an adversity that can be addressed by study, since "a boy at school was the happiest of human beings" (*Life* i.451). The study itself, he suggests, is less important than the quality of being studious: a person troubled by "constitutional melancholy" should, according to Johnson, "take a course of chymistry, or a course of rope-dancing, or a course of any thing to which he is inclined at the time. Let him contrive to have as many retreats for his mind as he can, as many things to which it can fly from itself" (*Life* ii.440). Two qualities of the ten Boswell establishes set in context with one another rings of Goldsmith's Nash—is Beau Nash to be remembered or understood as the leading fop of Bath or as its feckless, foolish monarch? Does Boswell mean for Johnson to be a glowering depressive or a distracted scholar or simply a bit of both? The character matrix Boswell sets up at the outset of the life, however, introduces other considerations that complicate a reader's understanding of Johnson's selfhood, which challenge the reader to draw hard conclusions from indeterminate facts. Boswell shows Johnson's constitutional melancholy as trait checked but, ironically, complemented by Johnson's religiosity, a quality that Boswell ascribes to Johnson's mother, to whom "must be ascribed those

early impressions of religion . . . from which the world afterwards derived so much benefit" (*Life* i.38). The public benefit of Johnson's religious character for the "world" is evident in his writings—Boswell, after all, reads the *Rambler* as work of great moral and religious acumen—but is especially evident in Johnson's personal meditations and prayers, documents in which Boswell situates Johnson's piety.

Boswell cites almost twenty prayers that Johnson recorded in his personal *Prayers and Meditations* throughout the *Life*. He notes that at the outset of 1777, for instance, "Johnson suffered much from a state of mind 'unsettled and perplexed,' and from that constitutional gloom," even though Boswell suggests that "Johnson . . . at this time suffered less than usual from despondency" (*Life* v.98 and n. 1). He cites a prayer Johnson composed on Easter that year: "Defend me from the violent incursion of evil thoughts, and enable me to form and keep resolutions as may conduce to the discharge of duties which Providence shall appoint me, and so help me by thy Holy Spirit, that my heart may sure there be fixed where true joys are to be found, and that I may serve Thee with pure affection and a cheerful mind" (Johnson, *Diaries* 265). Boswell cites this prayer to demonstrate an instance of Johnson's piety: Johnson's prayer indicates a religious character that is both humble and dutiful. But it also indicates his selfhood most clearly within the matrix created by the conflict between two different character traits that Boswell has established to frame Johnson. The humility and duty that mark Johnson's piety provide a check to melancholy and its "violent incursion of evil thoughts." The character that Boswell ascribes to his Johnson is not merely the speculative, but rather the practical moralist, who applies belief to the challenges his life and selfhood present.

As a check to his melancholy, Johnson's religiosity paradoxically exacerbates it. Boswell locates Johnson's print character in the tension between these traits. Boswell lumps together a

list of Johnson's religious meditations in December 1784 of the *Life*, a month before Johnson's death, to illustrate the dual roles that religiosity played in defining Johnson's character, both the "distress of mind" and the "penitence of Johnson . . . in his devout approaches to his Maker" (*Life* iv.398). At various points in his life, Johnson had prayed "that I may not have been created to be finally destroyed" and that God "[g]ive me such a sense of my own wickedness as may produce true contrition and effectual repentance" (*Life* iv.397). Johnson's prayers illustrate a cycle in which he abrades his conscience with a heightened sense of his own wrongdoing towards a particular notion of Christian repentance that requires a sincere and often severe self-examination in order to beg forgiveness for all of the sins he observed. Johnson invests this anxiety over a "true contrition and effectual repentance" during life "so that when I shall be called into another state, I may be received among the sinners to whom sorrow and reformation have obtained pardon" (*Life* iv.397-8). The fear of death and the hope of "pardon" drive this cycle of religious thinking which offers a sense of solace, particularly to melancholic reflections, balanced by a constant anxiety that, paradoxically, drives melancholic reflection. Katherine Kickel examines the formulaic practices that Johnson evokes in his prayers and mediations, noting how his prayer and meditation evolves from stricter Catholic and Anglican meditative models to practices more suited to his selfhood: "[f]or Johnson, meditation is a self-sustaining, self-consolatory tool as much as it is a rigorous, discursive self-examination . . . [that] allows him to take leave of himself by reminding him of the unknowableness of God's plan and by subsuming him in the notion of Providence." (53). Johnson must dwell intensely on his shortcomings and failures in order take leave of itself and find consolation in religiosity. It is a "meditative method" that depends on "sympathetic and psychological models" which are "extemporaneous, intimate, and consolatory" (Kickle 54). The meditative process situates

Johnson's selfhood at the intersection of what must be a melancholic self-examination and its religious check. Such intersections typify the selfhood that Boswell situates in the complex matrix of ten character traits that he establishes for Johnson and indicate a Lockean self-reflexiveness mediated through documented reflections, to which Johnson can return for future self-reflection.

While he does locate Johnson's selfhood within the matrix of character attributes he assigns to Johnson at the outset of the *Life*, Boswell qualifies their expression. Johnson's melancholy and religiosity play against each other, given to a variable, flexible exertion rather than the deterministic treatment of character in older forms of life writing. While Boswell often locates instances of Johnson's religiosity, he is quick to note when Johnson's strict practice failed. He cites a list Johnson proposed in his *Prayers and Meditations* in order to improve himself and "form a scheme of life" that might correct his mistake in "[h]aving lived hitherto in perpetual neglect of publick worship & though for some years past not without a habitual reverence for the Sabbath yet without that attention to its religious duties which Christianity requires" (*Diaries* 56). Yet Boswell heads Johnson's list for religious improvement with Johnson's last comment following the list: "[t]his study was not pursued" (*Life* i.303). Somewhat later in the life, Boswell also notes that Johnson sought to make a "change of outward things" and prayed, "[g]rant me the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that the course which I am not beginning may proceed according to thy laws, and end in the enjoyment of thy favor," but in the end, "did not, in fact, make any external or visible change" (*Life* i.350).[75] Boswell locates Johnson's selfhood within these instances of his piety, and also demonstrates that Johnson's selfhood is not

[75] Editor George Birkbeck Hill traces what Boswell could not discern, concluding that the change Johnson sought was in his economy—Johnson had incurred some debt that required him to move and write in order to cover his expenses (*Life* i.350 n.3). Though Johnson's problem might seem more secular than religious, it is more significant that Johnson appealed to his faith in helping to resolve his financial complications. Boswell's observation prioritizes this impulse over its application to finances.

rigidly attached or defined by a unique character trait. Johnson's selfhood is clarified by his religiosity not because of his perfect piety but in his ultimate failure to adhere to the goals he established for himself and his practice of religion. He is capable of containing the religious character without being determined by it, as he would have been in the Theophrastan model that Goldsmith had adopted in relaying the life of Nash.

The depiction of variability rather than firm resolve in Johnson's religious character makes Boswell's Johnson vulnerable to damning interpretation. Inconstancy in faith and religious practice would, for instance, render Johnson a hypocritical moralist, a hollow Mr. Rambler. Boswell is quick to acknowledge the importance of resolving this tension by the end of the *Life*, and he is "conscious that this is the most difficult and dangerous part of my work, and I cannot but be very anxious concerning it. I trust that I have got through it, preserving at once my regard to truth,—to my friend—, and to the interests of virtue and religion. Nor can I apprehend that more harm can ensue from the knowledge of the irregularity of Johnson, guarded as I have stated it" (*Life* iv.398). To reconcile Johnson's "irregularity" against the "interests of virtue and religion," Boswell implies the character matrix that allows different character traits to coexist and contradict each other to deepen and clarify Johnson's selfhood, and he reminds the reader that "[i]t is of essential consequence to keep in view, that there was in this excellent man's conduct no false principle of *commutation*, no *deliberate* indulgence in sin, in consideration of a counterbalance of duty. His offending, and his repenting, were distinct and separate" (*Life* iv.398). The tension between "offending" and "repenting" evidences an intersection between an "indulgence in sin" that comes naturally to Johnson rather than deliberately, as well as a self-conscious habit of repentance that is "distinct and separate" but equally as characteristic of Johnson's self.

The impetus to defend his Johnson against charges of inconstancy or immorality derives from two reasons crucial to Boswell's biographical project. First, Boswell promises a methodology from the outset that will present the ten character traits at play so that Johnson's selfhood is variable but also coherent, evident "from various points, by which his character is more fully understood and illustrated" (*Life* i.30). Inconstancy would undermine the productive tension between an authentically Johnsonian selfhood that can accommodate conflicting character traits, and it would suggest a singularity of character as if Boswell had reduced Johnson to caricature. Boswell's defense, then, reaffirms his model and protects his Johnson against misreading and misattributions, so that the "character of SAMUEL JOHNSONS has, I trust, been so developed in the course of this work, that they who have honoured it with a perusal, may be considered as well acquainted with him" (*Life* iv.424-5). The terms Boswell sets for acquaintance depend on a distinct variability in character traits which readers can recognize as Johnsonsian, even when they are at odds with each other in Johnson's behaviors and actions.

Second, Boswell's impulse to defend his method against inconstancy and immorality highlights how Boswell's model fosters the reader's intimate "acquaintance" with Johnson's selfhood. It is a defense of the tension between contradictory character traits, which results in a didactic productivity, a Johnsonizing capability. Charges of inconstancy or immorality would imply an inaccuracy that would undermine the Johnsonian quality of Boswell's rhetoric of self and, in turn, its didactic potential: a reader cannot locate a Johnsonian character to emulate without an accurate model of Johnson. In fact, the charge of inaccuracy is Boswell's most damning criticism of John Hawkins and Hester Piozzi's biographical accounts of Johnson. He recalls Johnson's censure of outright falsehood, though it might seem to be harmless inaccuracy, in a review of the "Essay on the Writings and Genius of Pope," and he notes that if Johnson

"[h]ad . . . lived to read what Sir John Hawkins and Mrs. Piozzi have related concerning himself, how much would he have found his observation illustrated" (*Life* iii.229-30). The inaccuracy he finds in their account is tantamount to a lie, contrary to the in inconstancy and immorality, which threatens to mislead a reader and marks the biographers as utterly ignorant of Johnson's conversation. Boswell notes that Johnson "inculcated upon all his friends the importance of perpetual vigilance against the slightest degrees of falsehood; the effect of which . . . has been, that all who were of his *school* are distinguished for a love of truth and accuracy" (*Life* iii.229-30). As a member of Johnson's conversational "school," Boswell arranges a rhetoric of self more accurate than others, immune to charges of inconstancy and immorality. Boswell justifies the importance of accuracy by citing what Johnson censures outright as falsehood or inaccuracy.

What Boswell deems Johnson's school, the conversations among like-minded friends and followers with Johnson, demands that the didactic quality of Johnson's public works meet the diversity of character traits that try his principles and engage the reader more intimately than older life writing or the biographical approaches from earlier in the eighteenth century. The matrix of character traits makes the morally towering, public icon Johnson a fallible human on whom the trials and difficulties of his constitution could nonetheless provide an arena in which to prove his credibility and the success of Boswell's task of making Johnson whole. Moreover, Boswell's depiction of contradictory quality of Johnson's personal traits and flaws gives an intimate continuity past the simple paratextual or epistolary apparatus within which Boswell situates Johnson's selfhood. Like the epistolary points of engagement, the character matrix invites readerly sympathy that involves them in the Johnson project, potentially "Johnsonizing" them. Boswell's defense of the character matrix he presents is a defense of the distinctly sympathetic turn in his representation of selfhood, which invites readers to explore what could be

known about Johnson in order to determine what they could understand about his character and, sympathetically, about themselves. The didactic upshot of Boswell's intimate representation of Johnson's conversation is that readers are connected together in a larger discussion of social truths, the larger goal of the eighteenth-century rhetoric of self.

Johnson's School: Truth and Victory in a Conversational Locus

The most didactic aspect of the selfhood that Boswell arranges for Johnson in the *Life* is the conversational record. It might be easy to take Boswell's biographical approach to task for the disparity between his records of Johnson's lived experience and his recounting of his own experiences with Johnson's conversation, but that would be to miss the masterful dialectic he created. Boswell, after all, evokes the "*Johnsonian æther*" rather than a Johnsonian exactitude which "*strongly impregnated*" his "*mind*" as a biographer to shape how he would represent Johnson's conversation and selfhood (*Life* i.421). Boswell's biography is undeniably meticulous in its fact finding according to the scientific standards of observation and publication instituted by the Royal Society, but Boswell's great affective accomplishment was to connect readers to Johnson's character through his conversation in order to Johnsonise them. Boswell probes beyond the careful architecture of fact, timeframe, and proof in detail to bring readers the chance to commune with Johnson. Where Hawkins was too distanced and Piozzi too problematically chatty, Boswell surpasses these problems in a work of magisterial research to earn for himself and to give to his readers the right to "meet" Johnson.

The latter twenty-one years of the *Life* are based more directly on Boswell's own interactions with Johnson after their first encounter. In this section, chronological distinctions become almost irrelevant, giving way to Johnson's conversational and literary performances.

After the dated precision, the conversational flow provides the rhetorical effect of arriving, finally, at the "real" Johnson. Boswell met Johnson in 1763 and visited him and corresponded with him intermittently until his death in 1784 at age 75: the bulk of Johnson's life comprises roughly a fifth of Boswell's *Life*. Boswell's explanation of his method, however, balances such criticism against the sympathetic exchange that his biography allows between the reader and Johnson's selfhood. Boswell recognizes the "the objections which may be made to the minuteness on some occasions of . . . [his] detail of Johnson's conversation, and how happily it is adapted for the petty exercise of ridicule, by men of superficial understanding and ludicrous fancy" (*Life* i.33, 31). As a biographical method, recording "the conversation of a celebrated man, if his talents have been exerted in conversation, will best display his character" is empirical, allowing the reader to construct a character from the matrix of traits revealed through "minute particulars" of his speech and life (*Life* i. 31, 33). For this reason, Boswell occasionally apologizes to his audience for an imperfect recollection of Johnson's conversation (*Life* iii.39).[76] But even that apology is a gesture to something more real than fact, to the experimental, sympathetic encounter with Johnson the man. The tension between empirical fact and affective, sympathetic exchange fundamentally shapes the *Life*.

Given how prominent and definitive of the *Life* conversation proves to be, an easy criticism is to argue that the *Life* depends too much on recollection and interpretation rather than precise transcription that might insure accuracy and veracity. From a practical perspective, John J. Burke, Jr. reminds that such challenges to Boswell's precision essentially hold him

[76] In this instance of Boswell's apology, he notes that since his "record upon this occasion does great injust to Johnson's expression, which was forcible and brilliant, that Mr. Cradock [a participant in the conversation] whispered me, 'O that his words were written in a book!'" (*Life* iii.39). Though Mr. Cradock is hardly a presence in the *Life*, Boswell cites his comment as a tacit endorsement of his biographical project: if a man who would be little-remembered save for Boswell's recollection can recognize the value of Johnson's conversation, any reader of any consequence might be expected to do the same.

accountable to an impossible task, since perfect transcription of conversation and communicative gestures would be impossible (70). Likewise, Paul J. Korshin suggests as well that a strict attention of transcriptional accuracy did not concern early readers or the speakers who Boswell includes: "few if any of the people whose conversations Boswell created for the *Life* are known to have complained about their accuracy" (186). He finds a corollary in the "speeches that Johnson wrote for members of Parliament and which the *Gentleman's Magazine* published as 'Debates in the Senate of Magna Lilliputia' [which] actually happened, too, just not the way Johnson invented them. No members or the Lords or Commons were ever recorded as objecting to the invention of their speeches" (186). Korshin's reading points to the significance of an appreciation for the conversation outside the pale of strict (and impossible) precision.

Boswell subjected the Johnsonian æther to other, more didactic rules of authenticity that precise transcripts of conversation. William R. Siebenschuh answers such criticisms with the rhetorical outcome that guides Boswell's technique. Johnson's conversations, he demonstrates, "are always important in some greater context, and because their importance lies outside themselves in the truth about Johnson they represent. In the *Life*, it is Boswell's interpretation of Johnson's *character* that we are seeing . . . it is what he stands for, not just what he looked or sounded like" (*Fictional* 83). Korshin's and Siebenschuh's defenses of Boswell's conversational record privilege the role of the reader in determining Boswell's accuracy at recreating conversation in Johnson's school. For the reader, the conversational practices and topics that become evident in Boswell's portrayal hold more significance than a spoken exactitude in the ways they invite the reader to participate.

The school of Johnson that Boswell depicts is a discursive school, and the didactic effect of spectating and judging Johnson's selfhood depends on a reader's personal participation with the conversational Johnson:

> I am justified in preserving rather too many of Johnson's sayings, than too few; especially as from the diversity of dispositions it cannot be known with certainty beforehand, whether what may seem trifling to some, and perhaps to the collector himself, may not be most agreeable to many; and the greater number that an authour can please in any degree, the more pleasure does there arise to a benevolent mind. (*Life* i.33-4)

The "diversity of dispositions" that leads readers to take pleasure in different aspects of Johnson's character, even from seemingly "trifling" sayings, emphasizes the importance that Boswell places on a sympathetic exchange that occurs when the reader is in the presence of Johnson at a conversational locus. In this sympathetic exchange between readers and Johnson's character in this experience, Boswell achieves a didactic effect that William Johnson Temple recognizes: "We think we see him and hear him and are equally entertained whether he contend for Truth or for Victory" (*Correspondence* 328). In these two manners of contention, for "truth" and for "victory," Johnson educates the reader, who enters the intimate circle of Johnson's conversational acquaintance. First, in talking for victory, Johnson exhibits a conversational model that emphasizes victory as, most important, thinking, reasoning, and arguing for oneself. The model depends on a specific set of values that Boswell records in the conversation: it is intimate, so that spectating readers can engage Johnson's print person; it is substantive, ripe for inquiry and contention, developing the strength of argument necessary for participation; it is open to different perspectives, which invites voices to participate; and it depends on civility.

Second, in speaking for truth, he invites them to apply the lessons they learn in arguing for victory to evaluate Johnson's own evaluations as a member of the larger public. The intimate conversation that frames talking for victory builds toward participation in larger public discourses surrounding truth. The conversational model works like the reading habits of private reader who, through reading, becomes part of a larger, discursive community of readers. Thus Boswell advances the eighteenth-century biographical process established by Johnson and Goldsmith, developing their spectatorial model and didactic impetus into a more intimate, more engaging, and more truthful representation of selfhood in print. Simply put, Boswell makes the process of biographical didacticism more intimate by portraying a talking Johnson who speaks with and to the reader.

The effectiveness of Boswell's didacticism depends on the degree that his biography can close the distance between this observing audience and the Johnson of the *Life*. Boswell's obligation to this methodological imperative is evident in a manuscript[77] where he notes that "[w]e cannot help receiving other peoples [sic] thoughts with whom we are brought near enough to communicate either in conversation or by reading what they write no more than we can help inhaling breath which has been in the lungs of those with whom we are in company . . . We must receive other peoples [sic] thoughts both crude & well digested" (Boswell ms. 69.3). His representation must put readers "near enough" to Johnson to incorporate Johnson's character into their own, by "inhaling" his character, "receiving" it, "digesting" it and ultimately, coming to think it for themselves. Boswell's composition of his Johnson and its arrangement allow readers not only to spectate the selfhood, but especially to internalize it and be "Johnsonised" by it (*Life* i.13). Boswell closes the distance between the spectating reader and the biographical character matrix in which Johnson's selfhood can be discovered by setting the reader in Johnson's

[77] I have cited manuscript ms. M 69:3 previously on page 204 of this dissertation.

presence, a position that has to be earned and that only takes on its power through the empirical scaffolding of the *Life*.

Methodologically, Boswell faces a biographical paradox of maintaining continuity through diverse conversational contexts: over drinks and dinner at Johnson's favorite pub, the Mitre, or in Johnson's sitting room at his home, and in the sitting room at Tom Davies' shop, or in Henry Thrale's drawing room, as well as other locations. Siebenschuh has linked Boswell's recollection of these physical sites as memory markers, tricks he used to make a mental note of what he would add to his journals and, in revision, to the *Life*, noting that "Johnsonian episodes" are framed by "Boswell's habitual method of minimally anchoring . . . substantial conversations . . . in space and time," but also by associating "familiar small group[s of] particular people . . . with points of view and conversational topics habitual to them" ("Crop" 101, 102). Boswell's scanty attention to location and his translation of speakers into conversational topics emphasizes the conversational focus of the episodes and gives them a continuity that is more accessible for readers who could only participate in the conversations biographically, slipping in and out of the exchanges, since they cannot meet Johnson face-to-face through print. More significant is the "illusion. . . throughout the biographical story" which William C. Dowling recognizes: "that the *Life* includes its imaginary audience in the conversational scenes, that the audience is present . . . [n]ot physically present . . . but present within the sphere of consciousness registering and responding to Johnson's conversation" (*Logos* 101). By reading the drama of Johnson's conversation rather than simply witnessing it, readers can imagine themselves as part of the conversation, inserting themselves somewhat voyeuristically, "enabled as it were to see him live, and to 'live o'er each scene' with him, as he actually advanced through the several stages of life" (*Life* i.30). The role Boswell casts for his readers is participatory, albeit imagined.

Not only does Boswell's task lead him to present a Johnson who can engage the reader in conversation, but also to fictionalize a reader who can participate through observation and conversation with that biographical Johnson. Walter Ong has suggested that "[i]f the writer succeeds in writing, it is generally because he can fictionalize in his imagination an audience that he has learned to know not from daily life but from earlier writers who were fictionalizing in their imagination audiences they had learned to know in still earlier writers" (*Interfaces* 60). The reader's role that Boswell scripts through conversations with Johnson is the role of actor, and he outlines an actor's role or profession in three essays he published anonymously in the *London Magazine* fourteen years before Johnson's death in 1784. In the second essay of this series, Boswell interrogates the way in which actors can be the characters they play while still being themselves, noting that "[i]t is sure not only an object of taste to study theatrical representations, but it may be a matter of very curious philosophical enquiry. What is the nature of that peculiar faculty which makes one a good player? It is something more than an imitative art" ("Profession" 468). Boswell is taking up the questions that John Locke poses in Book II of *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, whether the integrity of the self, a consciousness aware of itself over time, persists in sleep when it is unconscious of its waking self (2.1.12-25). Boswell's focus, however, is on a theatrical self-awareness which can adopt another self while simultaneously keeping actual selfhood in reserve. This "peculiar faculty" is much "more than an imitative art."

In theorizing the role of the player, Boswell imagines the reader in a much more intimate role than the distant spectating of earlier biography and older print selves. He suggests that "the nature of that mysterious power by which a player really is the character which he represents," even though the player maintains the true self, is "a kind of double feeling. He must assume in a

strong degree the character which he represents, while at the same time retains the consciousness of his own character" ("Profession" 469). In order for this "double feeling" to function, the player "must take full possession as it were of the antichamber of his mind, while his own character remains in the innermost recess" ("Profession" 470). While Boswell locates this function in the profession of a player, he is quick to note that it is a regular part of everyday life, manifesting itself anytime a person must take part in a birthday celebration, tour a person's home, or attend a funeral ("Profession" 470). This double feeling then, like Smith's sympathetic exchange, hinges on some sense of social obligation and of shaping selfhood to match social situations. Boswell's biographical conversation casts the reader in the role of a participant, and the reader, in turn, acts out the role, while maintaining self-awareness through this "double feeling." The reader observes Johnson's print selfhood, following the expectations of earlier eighteenth-century biographers, but Boswell makes them participants in the episodic drama of Johnson's conversation. Dialogue is crucial to this process, in which the reader imagines him or herself in conversation with Johnson through Boswell, theatrical double-agent.

The intimacy of conversation positions the reader didactically to follow Johnson in his reasoning, like a friend or a member of the Literary Club.[78] Johnson's conversation allows intimate access to the selfhood Boswell presents. When Johnson talks for truth and for victory, he impresses his selfhood upon the reader, a fictionalized acquaintance and spectator, who is "brought near enough to communicate either in conversation or by reading" and, through the

[78] Boswell's contemporary, William Elford praised Boswell's conversational representation: "instead of describing Your characters, You exhibit them to the Reader. He finds himself in their Company, and becomes an Auditor of Conversations, which have all the dignity of the best moral writings, softn'd by the ease, the wit and the familiarity of Colloloquial manners" (*Correspondence* 367). To be a reader is be an auditor, a participant who engages the ideas that Johnson expresses with the easy "familiarity of colloquial manners.: Paul J. Korshin has suggested that instances of "true Johnsonian conversation . . . represent a minority, a very small minority of Johnson's talk" in the *Life*, noting that he has "counted about fifty of them in all" (177). John J. Burke has divided Boswell's records of conversation into three types, talk, dialog, and conversation, delineating each by how much they invite discourse and by how many they invite to participate (66). Each type allows readers varying degrees of intimate access to Johnson.

force, eloquence, and reasonableness of Johnson's conversation, cannot "help inhaling breath which has been in the lungs of those with whom we are in company" (Boswell ms. 69.3). Johnson's intimate conversational "breath," which the reader "inhales" by participation, is least "crude" and most "well digested" when Johnson talks for victory or for truth. Johnson models a thought process that teaches readers to reason socially and morally and introduces social and moral issues into the conversational discourse that moves beyond the pale of personal, around-the-table dispute into a larger social discourse. By engaging his Johnson and his readers through conversation, Boswell effects a larger social and ethical training; he Johnsonizes the land.

The conversational locus around which Boswell places his readers and in which Johnson can talk for victory has several telling features. Johnson famously draws a distinction between conversation and mundane talk when he recalls a dinner "in a very pretty company" in which they "had *talk* enough, but no *conversation*; there was nothing *discussed*" (*Life* iv.186). The conversation that Johnson prized and that Boswell opened to readers for their instruction was elevated above common "talk" as a thorough treatment of substantive topics by able minds. Such a discursive model required four attributes on the part of the participant:

> Talking of conversation . . . [Johnson] said, "There must, in the first place, be knowledge, there must be materials; in the second place, there must be a command of words; in the third place, there must be imagination, to place things in such views as they are not commonly seen in; and in the fourth place, there must be presence of mind, and a resolution that is not be overcome by failures: this last is an essential requisite; for want of it many people do not excel in conversation. (*Life* iv.166).

The attributes that Johnson assigns to the participant correlate to the attributes of Boswell's readers. The biography makes readers more than spectators. They are silent participants in a Johnsonian conversation who must bring their own knowledge to bear on the discussions that Boswell portrays, who can follow the intellectual articulation and rhetorical structuring of the arguments, who can imagine alternatives to the argument that allow reflection, and who can persist in following the lines of biographically documented and personally constructed argument, perhaps to victorious disputation.

Although these skills seem situational, Boswell's representation of Johnson show them to fundamental to the practices of self-examination and self-awareness that, upon engaging another person's selfhood, makes sympathy didactic. Readers must be able to engage the discursive model in the biography with the same facility they would approach the conversations in Johnson's presence. For the four rules that Johnson establishes to guide conversation, participants must embody traits: first, conversationalists must be knowledgeable; second, they must be willing to adopt and consider contrary viewpoints disinterestedly; and, third, the adept conversationalist who engage Johnson must be civil. Speakers who learn converse at Johnson's elbow teach themselves to participate in larger social discourses of the day. They not only talk for local, conversational victories, but especially to talk for larger social truth within a conversational discourse that requires personal knowledge, personal disinterest, and civility to address and answer the larger social questions of the day.

The importance of knowledge and discernment are necessary for engaging the conversation. And the necessity is best exemplified in Johnson's relationship with two of the Literary Club's members, Edmund Burke and Oliver Goldsmith. Johnson praises Burke who comes into the biographical account slightly more than Goldsmith, but much less conspicuously:

"[t]hat fellow calls forth all my powers. Were I to see Burke now, it would kill me," pointing out that a conversationalist could "[t]ake up whatever topick . . . [and] he is ready to meet you" (*Life* iv.19-20, ii.450). Burke has the knowledge, rhetorical ability, imagination, and tenacity to challenge Johnson. Goldsmith, on the other hand, is man whose "misfortune . . . in conversation is thus: he goes on without knowing how he is to get off. His genius is great, but his knowledge is small" (*Life* ii.196). Goldsmith's knowledge disqualifies him for success and, worse still, his "for ever attempting to shine in conversation: he has not temper for it, he is so much mortified when he fails" (*Life* ii.231). Boswell suggests that Goldsmith skill in talking was better suited to "witty contests" and "often very fortunate when he entered the lists with Johnson himself" (*Life* ii.231). Such skill does not qualify him as the sort of conversationalist Johnson had in mind. Adept at wordplay, but lacking in knowledge, Goldsmith is model of a speaker who cannot talk for victory.

To gain conversational victory, readers were subject to the conversational locus, a site of contest that depends on variety and a willingness to consider and adopt different views and arguments. The ability to consider and adopt opposing views marks a sympathy that Johnson's rhetoric of self commands from his readers and, when they inhale his thoughts, intimates into their practice. Boswell relates an anecdote of a time when Johnson's bristled at Goldsmith's wish "for some additional memories to the LITERARY CLUB, to give it an agreeable variety" (*Life* iv. 183). Johnson took this as a personal attack rather than a disputational attack (although Johnson himself was not above *ad hominem* arguments), but later relented, acknowledging that Goldsmith was right:

> [W]hen people have lived a great deal together, they know what each of them will say on every subject. A new understanding, therefore, is desirable; because

> though it may only furnish the same sense upon a question which would have been furnished by those with we are accustomed to live, yet this sense will have a different colouring; and colouring is of much effect in every thing else as well as in painting. (*Life* iv.183)

Johnson's depiction of the conversational contest as a "painting" makes it an organic whole that comes together through speakers "will say on every subject." It is a self-contained work of art that derives its beauty from its diversity, the "different colourings" that different speakers contribute. Johnson's acknowledgement of Goldsmith is an invitation to participate that, recorded in the *Life*, is likewise an invitation for a reader to bring a different "sense" to the intimacy of conversation. In the contest of the conversational locus, Johnson's argumentation models a means of empirically observing other perspectives in order to consider them and carefully draw judgments about them.[79] In this way, readers come into Johnson's biographical presence through his conversation in a didactic exchange, which teaches them to move beyond the record of Johnson's lived experience and life into their own lives and experience, where they must enter the larger social discourse.

The contest of conversation in Boswell's *Life* requires, additionally, a degree of civility that perpetuates it by fostering intimacy between participants. In exercising the force and dexterity of this argumentative acumen, Johnson demonstrates a gruffness that complements and, sometimes, makes victory possible. Boswell, however, offers an anecdote which models the

[79] The variety that adds depth to the conversational locus also affords a participant or a reader the opportunity to consider a variety of opinions. Boswell interprets this approach in Johnson frequently, so that Johnson's willingness to argue an opinion "even when he had taken the wrong side," by adopting an opinion he did not believe, in order "to shew the force and dexterity of his talents" (*Life* iv.111). But Johnson's participation in the contest was not simply to argue for the sake of argument. Boswell emphasizes an important distinction by pointing out that "[c]are . . . must be taken to distinguish between Johnson when he 'talked for victory,' and Johnson when he had no desire but to inform and illustrate" (*Life* iv.111). Johnson, like Boswell's professional player, is able to hold himself in reserve to make an argument opposed to his own beliefs and opinions. Johnson's approach illustrates a productive playfulness.

civility that can facilitate the conversation when it carries beyond the boundaries of considered, social inquiry. Boswell recalls a "dispute pretty late at night, in which Johnson would not give up, though he had the wrong side, and in short, both kept field. Next morning, when they met in the breakfasting-room, Dr. Johnson accosted . . . [him]: 'Sir, I have been thinking on our dispute last night—*You were in the right*" (*Life* iv.192). Boswell glosses this anecdote with an additional recollection of Johnson's arguing in the evening and apologizing in the morning: "Sir, I have found out, upon reflection, that I was both *warm* and *wrong* in my argument with you last night; for the first of which I beg your pardon, and for the second, I thank you for setting me right" (*Life* iv.192 n.2). While these scenes are significant as instances contrary to Johnson's typical gruffness, their import is the credence they give to the pursuit of truth that victory. Truth becomes most obvious through conversational victory and consideration, but victory will always bow to truth. "Keeping the field" must be less important to listeners and readers, even if striving for victory requires an apology.

The truths that Johnson and the conversationalists subject to disputation in the *Life* range from childrearing, hypochondria, luxury, slavery, literature, and beyond.[80] In this conversational locus, Alvin Kernan suggests that "Johnson's reputation as a talker supports Boswell's claims for the effectiveness of this style in that semiprivate world of talk which is located between the fully public scene of oratory and the totally private scene of reading" (206). Talking for truth is an exchange from the "public scene" of ideas and social discourse, mediated through the "semiprivate world" of conversation by Johnson, which is, in turn, facilitated by Boswell's record of Johnson where it is transmitted through the "totally private scene of reading." In

[80] The smaller talking points that made their way into the larger discourses, Hodge the cat or Johnson's mysterious chemical experiments with orange peels, cannot be left out. Their effect, too, adds variety and "colouring" to the overall appearance of the "painting" in which Johnson locates conversation. In their small way, they invite readers into a domestic intimacy, where Johnson's rhetoric of self is stripped of disputatious trappings of talking for victory.

Boswell's account, in fact, Johnson argues that "[w]ithout truth there must be a dissolution of society . . . Society is held together by communication and information" (*Life* iii.293). Kernan's observation points toward intimate conversational practice, exchanging the "communication and information" that, Johnson's argues, hold the macrocosm of public life together.

Talking through victory as an inquiry into truth begins to move readers from the intimate microcosm of table talk into the macrocosm of social discourse. Kernan argues that conversational move from microcosm to macrocosm is particularly evident in the "pattern of Johnson's speaking, talking, and reading [which] offers a lived-out model of the ways that increased reading was affecting the society and its individual members, and an insight into how an individual experienced the change and its psychological dynamics" (205). Reading reshaped society by affecting the "psychological dynamics" of it readers, moving an "individual" reading experience to social practice. The textual Johnson in conversation engages the psychological dynamic, teaching readers how to participate in the larger social questions of the late eighteenth century. The "psychological" and social effect of discussing truth, however, is evident in Johnson's famous criteria for the best conversations: "the happiest conversation is that of which nothing is distinctly remembered but a general effect of pleasing impression" (*Life* iv.50). Kernan describes the "lived-out model" that moves from reading to social work by creating a "general effect of pleasing impression."

It is a description of a conversation between Johnson and Bishop Percy that might easily be applied to public discourse. First, they take up a topic, a book, "that cannot defend or explain itself"—any discussion requires the application of knowledge, rhetoric, imagination, and perseverance—"but here in the room emotions and tones are felt and responded to immediately. Submission is made and reinforced with actions when the situation becomes dangerous. And

humor finally establishes and maintains a draw in which both antagonists give in, yet don't surrender" (209). To argue for victory is to think for oneself, but to argue for truth is an inquiry that benefits society, semiprivately in a personal conversational locus and publicly. The didacticism of Boswell's intimate portrayal of Johnson allows the reader to move from private observations of Johnson's print self, to an intimate conversation with Johnson's observed self, to an autodidactic, experimental process whereby the reader comes to participate in the larger social and ethical issues of the moment.

The rhetoric of self that James Boswell writes Samuel Johnson into biographically is a didactic selfhood that builds on earlier strengths of eighteenth-century biographical models. Boswell draws on Johnson's applications of print and manuscript culture to arrange the experiential materials of his biography into a selfhood bound in time, but freed from the diachronic by a synchronic continuity that makes Johnson's selfhood seem unchanging and intimately engaging and available to the reader. Boswell adapts Johnson's dependence on print but demonstrates a distinct drive to document Johnson more thoroughly than any biography had previously documented a person. Using these documents, Boswell fashions an epistolary, documentary, and paratextual framework for Johnson. Likewise, Boswell moves beyond Oliver Goldsmith's depiction of character as a Theophrastan model based on singular character, preferring instead to make Johnson's character evident for readers who can discover it with the matrix of ten character traits he establishes as Johnsonian. Increasingly, the structuring that Boswell uses invites a reader into a sympathetic exchange with Johnson's print self.

It is the conversations that Boswell records that most explicitly distinguish Johnson's rhetoric of self from other biographical selfhoods. Through conversation, Boswell most fully achieves his biographical project. In exhibiting Johnson's lived experience and his character,

Boswell set himself up to reveal Johnson in his conversation, through which he strove to "Johnsonise the land." Reading conversation situates readers to engage through listening and speaking. Conversation informs social intercourse, which in turn shapes the discursive practices of the larger society. The reader, who comes to talk and think Johnson by meeting the man in print, is transformed by this conversation. As a conversational locus, Johnson's selfhood is less a thing to be observed than it is a presence, a person, a more intimate biographical subject than any prior. As Boswell writes, "unless" a man "has the comfort of a friend who will oppose him in nothing, nay will not trouble him with conversation but just as he appears to wish, watching him with soft attention, and as much possible preserving an unison with him. In such a state, books, which have been called silent friends, afford a kindly relief" (*Hypochondriack* I.148-9). The comfort Boswell takes in biography is a comfort that, like biographical conversation with Johnson, moves from the personal to the public: "I have generally found the reading of lives do me most good, by withdrawing my attention of myself to others, and entertaining me in the most satisfactory manner with real incidents in the varied course of human existence" (*Hypochondriack* I.149). Perhaps the greatest test of the *Life of Johnson* is the potential Boswell saw in it for himself, and perhaps this is the test of what Boswell meant for the reader.

Conclusion

Two Bodies

Eighteenth-century biography emerged in the wide scope of a new science that privileged experimentation and observation as the primary means for understanding the world and one's place in it. The emergence of the biographical form heralded an experiment in understanding the self that was advanced by a repeated cycle of observation, conclusion, induction, and, most importantly, personal application. Eighteenth-century biographers conducted this experiment in print for their readers, applying a variable and adaptable set of rhetorical strategies to arrange lived experience into a print selfhood that readers would approach ethically, inducing the character of the subject and evaluating it sympathetically. "Readers are wiser" than "critics and biographers," Paula Backscheider explains, because "[t]hey know there will never be a poetics of biography, and yet there is a there, too . . . and the importance of biography . . . is its presentness—it is meaningful to the present, the life *is*, not just was, important" (227). The "there" that is "there," in the absence of a formal test for recognizing biography is its effect on the reader. The effect that defines biography is a print selfhood that remains new and living every time the book is opened, not just an assemblage of rhetorical strategies, but rather the "presentness" and coherence of a person a reader can observe there and understand as a living self that "is important." When the book is closed, readers come away with an understanding of a living self they can apply to their own self-understanding.

Biography near the close of the eighteenth century might be seen as a genre devoted solely to the life of Samuel Johnson and to maintaining his presentness in the years after his death. More than fifteen biographies marked his life and its passing. The two most prominent lives, Piozzi's and Boswell, end with the presentness of Johnson's physical person. The two

bodies of Johnson they submit for one final inspection by readers marks the changes in the form that culminate in Boswell's innovative rhetoric of self. "It is usual, I know not why, when a character is given, to begin with a description of the person," Hester Thrale Piozzi notes, closing her catalog of anecdotal recollections of Samuel Johnson (*Anecdotes* 297). Her biographical account necessitates a closing description and character more than others. It is comprised of anecdotes from her recollections of the last twenty years of Johnson's life, which require little narrative structure, but what is necessary to set up Johnson's sayings. Piozzi gives her readers a body capacious enough to contain all of her anecdotes. It is a body that is almost heroic in it physical excesses, a striking last image of the physical person with whom she would connect her anecdotal Johnson.

Piozzi's *Anecdotes* require the description and character as the last section of the account the reader sees to recombine the fragmented collection of anecdotes into a singular, coherent body: Johnson's "stature was remarkably high, and his limbs exceedingly large: his strength was more than common I believe, and his activity had been greater I have heard than such a form gave one reason to expect: his complexion had certainly been fair, a circumstance somewhat unusual" (297). She idealizes Johnson in the body of a hero, noting that "his sight was near, and otherwise imperfect; yet his eyes, though of a light-grey colour, were so wild, so piercing, and at times so fierce, that fear was I believe the first emotion in the hearts of all his beholders" (297). While she has been following a formula of eighteenth-century biography, Piozzi's description of Johnson gives her recollected anecdotes the sort of presentness that Backscheider describes. The body that Piozzi writes for Johnson is out reach; it is heroic and marked with "wild," "piercing," "fierce" eyes that turn the reader away from a clear view of the present man. By emphasizing Johnson's greatness in the body of a hero, the selfhood stands a remove as the biographical

account closes. Piozzi's Johnson walks along an earlier biographical tradition: everything about Johnson ultimately reflects his excellence, in the syllogistic, deductive fashion that makes a major premise of Johnson's superlative nature that every saying, action, writing, and behavior proves. Even though Piozzi does not know why, "it is usual" indeed to portray a selfhood thus, and it is such portrayals that Boswell turns from in his innovations of the biographical form.

As much as Piozzi turns the reader away from the body of Johnson and a conceptualization of his selfhood, Boswell points his readers back to the body of Samuel Johnson to recognize the selfhood embodied there. His Johnson is unchanged from the earlier print selfhood he presented, "as I do not see any reason to give a different character of my illustrious friend now, from what I formerly gave, the greatest part of the sketch of him in my 'Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides,' is here adopted" (*Life* iv.425 n.1). The familiarity that Boswell evokes confers credibility on the physical self he presents and, in turn, an overarching credibility for the details of the *Life* that it collects. Yet Boswell's depiction of Johnson is an unflattering, almost grotesque image of the man's physical self:

> his appearance was rendered strange and somewhat uncouth, by convulsive cramps, by the scars of that distemper which it was once imagined the royal touch could cure, and by a slovenly mode of dress. He had the use only of one eye; yet so much does mind govern and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his visual perceptions, as far as they extended, were uncommonly quick and accurate. So morbid was his temperament, that he never knew the natural joy of a free and vigorous use of his limbs: when he walked, it was like the struggling gait of one in fetters; when he rode, he had no command or direction of his horse, but was carried as if in a balloon. (*Life* iv.425)

The body of Boswell's Johnson is a scarred, twitchy, unkempt thing, given to tortured and limited movement. This physicality is much at odds with the vigorous, heroic body Piozzi invents for her Johnson. Her Johnson, too, looks back at his audience of beholders, but Boswell's only invites readers to stare. He does not return their gaze or inspire their fear. If anything, Boswell's Johnson is an object to be pitied, marked as it is by physical deformity and a lack of self-control. It is a description that fronts the presentness of the physical self to put the body into a sympathetic view. To look at the body of Boswell's Johnson is to recognize a superlative mind in a pitiable body and to understand that what made Johnson great is not, as Piozzi makes it seem, out of reach. This body asserts the importance and meaning of Johnson's life beyond its span, the presentness that Boswell's biography evokes.

Situated at the end of the biography, this physical description underscores the humanity of the Johnson's living selfhood and contrasts the greatness that Boswell locates in Johnson through his writing, conversations, and acquaintance. His circumstances are easier to consider as "naturally incident to . . . [readers'] state of life" (Johnson, *Rambler* III.319). Just as importantly, this physical description of Johnson is a power reminder not only of Boswell's purpose, but the project of eighteenth-century biography at large: the arrangement of a rhetoric of self that embodies lived experience and right social practice. Boswell reconciles the grotesquerie of a physical self so incongruous with the character, personality, and beliefs he arranges as Johnson: "[t]hat with his constitution and habits of life he should have lived seventy-five years, is a proof that an inherent *vivida vis* is a powerful preservative of the human frame" (*Life* iv.425). A perfect segue from the physical self to the character and personality that Boswell describes next, the question of the "human frame" suggests an important cornerstone for the emergent eighteenth-century biographical project. Where the human frame is present, the "*vivida vis*" or animating

"lively force" is manifest in action, reason, behavior, character; when the human frame is gone, the lively force that distinguishes a person's selfhood is lost. The biographical rhetoric of self is a human frame, a humanizing print frame for containing and conveying the *vivida vis*, giving it presentness when the physical frame is absent, even years later. Being in the presence of this human frame, reading a biography, is to engage an autodidactic process of self-improvement, the non-coercive project of reading.

The Human Frame

The emergence of a humanizing frame for representing selfhood grew out of the shift from a deductive to inductive scientific paradigm and a corresponding methodology that presumed to be more for the people at large than earlier models. The Royal Society's inductive epistemology depends on cyclical observations to generate specific facts from which observers might induce broad scientific truths that could, in turn, be tested and observed again to hone those scientific truths. It is a process that purports to refine scientific theories by considering an ever-widening body of facts and details. The methodology values the role of the person in making scientific meaning: it humanizes science. This model depends on consensus among multiple observers to credential facts. The Royal Society's practices depend on human intervention and incorporate its limitations into a scientific model that lends itself to formulating an understanding of selfhood, like John Locke's model of the self and self-understanding. Locke theorizes a scientific epistemology for the self as a reasoning person who develops through a reflexive self-consciousness, becoming a spectating self-observer that, as a consequence of observing multiple details and facts, generates its own distinctive selfhood.

Within the larger, scientific paradigm, the inductive epistemology is matched by a rhetoric appropriate to its methodology, one which would make its ideas accessible to all observers. Just as the inductive epistemology requires the observer or scientist to draw conclusions from a surfeit of facts, the rhetoric of the inductive paradigm invites a reader to draw conclusions from facts as well. As a paradigm purportedly for the people, its rhetoric must make the facts accessible with clear, plain language that stresses the importance of the idea rather than its expression, which foregrounds the process of drawing conclusions inductively. In its emphasis on transparency, this rhetorical style attempts to make facts more observable.

The emergence of eighteenth-century biography within this context emulates the core practices and values that distinguish the epistemology and rhetoric of the inductive paradigm from the older scientific rhetoric of deduction. Novels, too, grew out of the normative scientific and print standards. The advent of biography and "its status as a respectable literary and didactic species, providing significant, accepted reading material to a wide (and widening range) or readers" led to the development of a novelistic selfhood (Hunter 351). While eighteenth-century novels and biographies share a representational impetus, they are constructed of different materials: the novel depends on imagined experiences with the stamp of life; biography, on the lived experiences that can be credentialed as life. Biography's aesthetic must be real in a way that is nominal to novelistic realism. The normative standards this scientific model provide made it possible for biographers to gather as wide a range of facts as possible that could be credited as the experiences of the person they sought to write. Such credit came from observation—facts from other people that put the person in observable view of many people. The biography itself also put the person in view. Eighteenth-century biography developed a rhetoric of self that would allow a reader to determine selfhood from the facts the biographer presented. This rhetorical

arrangement, in turn, allowed the biographer to create choices for the readers who observed the selfhood from a new epistemology and new foundation for representation. The context of an inductive science that put the onus on the reader to observe and draw conclusions engendered a literature in which the act of reading opened an opportunity like scientists conducting experiments, observing and drawing conclusions from the details they saw. But it provided a human frame that these reader-scientists observed; it was not just an experiment. Readers' sympathetic identification with human contradictions mark an ethics of reading that cultivated virtue for the reader in the project of reading biography. Their role of readers was to play the acquaintance to the biographical selves they read, and, in the process, become part of the experiment of testing and proving a self.

The most complicated biographical human frame of the eighteenth century was the life Boswell arranged for Johnson. The rhetoric of self that Boswell writes Johnson into biographically is a didactic selfhood that builds on earlier strengths of eighteenth-century biographical models from Johnson himself and Goldsmith, most notably. Boswell sought to further humanize the rhetoric of self he developed to represent Johnson by cultivating an ethos of direct friendship and camaraderie with his subject, bending extant eighteenth-century biographical patterns to deliver a Johnson capable of exciting the sympathetic reader to view Johnson's print life ethically. Boswell draws on Johnson's applications of print and manuscript culture to arrange the experiential materials of his biography into a selfhood bound in time, but freed from the diachronic by a synchronic continuity that makes Johnson's selfhood seem unchanging and intimately engaging and available to the reader. In the end, it is the conversations Boswell records that most explicitly distinguish Johnson's rhetoric of self from other biographical selfhoods. Through conversation, Boswell most fully achieves his

biographical project, to "Johnsonise *the land*" (*Life* i.13). Reading conversation situates readers in a conversational locus where the reader not only observes, but especially engages the rhetoric of self through listening and speaking, the social, human act of talking. The larger consequence of this intimate biography is a larger social shift in which readers talk with or like Johnson and, through their observations, comes to think like Johnson as well. In the conversational locus, Johnson's selfhood moves from the life observed to a presence, a person, a more intimate biographical subject than any prior.

Biography Beyond the Eighteenth Century

In an introduction to a journal issue of *a/b: Auto/Biography Studies*, Elizabeth Podnieks notes that the "question that obtains from discussing the status of biography today within scholarly and popular contexts is this: has the attention being paid to biography of late been enough to redeem its long and embarrassing neglect?" (9). She asserts that modern biographical study usually vacillates between scholarly and popular extremes, "the market and the academy," and argues that, within a context of cultural, social, and representation influences, "the impact of electronic technologies on the representations of self and the consequent biographical project; . . . [and] the increasing fusion of academic and popular mandates, apparatus, and approaches to the life" (5, 12). The modern biographical form develops, as it always has, within the larger social context that situates selfhood, and while the advent of new media complicates biographical practice, it illustrates the importance of the contextual framework within which the form the emerged. The significance is not necessarily the similarities between the two—developments in modern electronic technologies are no more influential than developments in the earlier media, print, and the work of the Grub Street hacks is as pervasive in the eighteenth century as it is in

journalistic blurbs now—but, rather, it is the similarities' emphasis on material and epistemological contexts that highlight what has been at the heart of the form's emergence and development, the larger contexts for recognizing and distinguishing selfhood.

The emergence of biography in the eighteenth century and its formulation of the biographical rhetoric of self, a new human frame for representing selfhood through the methods of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, mark a defining moment in the form. While a biographical impulse might be located in earlier forms of life writing, biography proper is a development of the eighteenth century. But it is a genre in a constant state of flux and development, as responsive to the epistemological shifts and available methods for representation today as it was in the eighteenth century. A burgeoning print culture and a scientific epistemology of self gave rise to the eighteenth-century rhetoric of self which characterized the new form, a human frame that promised the new intimacy of understanding. We too may be on the cusp of new forms of understanding selves that are similarly revealing, pedagogical, and detailed, new potential rhetorics of self for a digital age. Boswell's enduring lament is that the life of Johnson was no fuller than it was, that "might have been almost entirely preserved" if Johnson's acquaintance had "been as diligent and ardent" in recording the facts of his life as Boswell himself had been (*Life* i.30). The rhetoric of self Boswell creates can reveal the Johnson "more completely than any man who has ever lived" (*Life* i.30). Eighteenth-century biography is charged with the *vivida vis* that gives the subject an intimate presentness: readers can know biographical subjects better than they have ever been known and know ourselves better, even centuries later, in the process.

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Vita

Nathaniel Norman grew up in the mountains of western North Carolina, where he attended elementary and high school. Upon graduation, he attended Appalachian State University as a North Carolina Teaching Fellow, earning an English degree in secondary education and graduating *summa cum laude* with honors in English for a thesis focused on the post-colonial Irish state in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* and *Endame*. For six years, he taught high school students in North Carolina, after which he returned to university to earn a master's of English literature from Virginia Tech, completing the requirements of a master's degree in English literature with a thesis devoted to the rise and cultural work the obituary form in the *Gentleman's Magazine,* a study of an eighteenth-century form more humorous than macabre. As a graduate teaching assistant at Virginia Tech, he taught composition courses and worked in the university Writing Center; likewise, at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, he taught literature and composition courses as a graduate teaching associate. While there, he also had the opportunity to work closely with undergraduates as a writing tutor, with graduate students as a thesis/dissertation consultant for the Graduate school, and with students in academic distress as a coach at the Student Success Center. Most importantly, he earned a doctorate in English from Tennessee with this dissertation, an examination of eighteenth-century rhetorics of self in biography. In his last two years a teaching associate at Tennessee, he also taught literature and composition courses at Maryville College, where he will begin a year-long appointment as a visiting instructor.