

# Parody in Eliza Haywood's *A Letter from H— G—g, Esq.*

Earla A. Wilputte

On 25 February 1749, Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, vanished from European public view. Expelled from France by Louis xv to honour the recently negotiated Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle with England, and rebuffed by Pope Benedict xiv for the expense he would cost the Vatican, Charles disappeared from the map, becoming the most speculated-upon celebrity for the next decade. In December 1749, Eliza Haywood was arrested for seditious libel for her involvement in a pamphlet entitled *A Letter from H— G—g, Esq; One of the Gentlemen of the Bed-Chamber to the Young Chevalier, ... To a Particular Friend*. Not as glamorous as Charles but certainly capable of stirring up as much personal speculation owing to her own mysterious absence of biography,<sup>1</sup> Haywood has recently drawn the attention of many scholars who are determined to affix a Tory—even Jacobite—label to her writings.<sup>2</sup> The conjoining of these two popular icons—the Young Pretender, romantic hero of Culloden, and Eliza Haywood, author of dozens of amatory novels—both considered wayward, threatening, and marginal by their contemporary society, makes for a compelling pair. Through Haywood's pamphlet, the two become

---

1 See Christine Blouch, "Eliza Haywood and the Romance of Obscurity," *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 31:3 (Summer 1991), 535–51.

2 Most notably, Toni Bowers, "Collusive Resistance: Sexual Agency and Partisan Politics in *Love in Excess*," in *The Passionate Fictions of Eliza Haywood: Essays on Her Life and Work*, ed. Kirsten T. Saxton and Rebecca P. Bocchicchio (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 2000), 48–68; Rachel Carnell, "It's Not Easy Being Green: Gender and Friendship in Eliza Haywood's Political Periodicals," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32:2 (1998–99), 199–214; Kirsten T. Saxton, "Introduction," *Passionate Fictions*, 3; Ros Ballaster, *Seductive Forms: Women's Amatory Fiction from 1684 to 1740* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), although she has recently modified her views in "A Gender of Opposition: Eliza Haywood's Scandal Fiction," *Passionate Fictions*, 143–67.

interdependent, sharing what the Young Chevalier called “imaginary space,” an expression he used to describe the years 1749–52 that he spent incognito, virtually invisible to the European political gaze.<sup>3</sup>

The advantage of being able to identify Haywood’s political views is to enable us to think of her as an important political writer; however, as a female hack without a political patron, it is unlikely Haywood regarded herself as significant in promoting any party ideology. As Catherine Ingrassia has noted, Haywood conformed to what was “commercially desirable,” marketing her talents for the best monetary advantage.<sup>4</sup> As a liminal figure, Haywood had the opportunity to make seemingly unbiased observations on all parties while keeping herself open to any patronage that might arise. In all of her political writings, she seems equally critical of Hanoverians and Jacobites, King and Pretenders, Whigs and Tories. In this way she could appeal “to a multiple reading public” and garner financial reward where she could.<sup>5</sup>

Haywood was arrested for her involvement with the Goring pamphlet, which was construed by a nervous government as too favourable to the Young Pretender. Since then, scholars have assumed that she must necessarily have been supportive of him.<sup>6</sup> This is a case of biased reading: Haywood was accused by the government of Jacobite sympathies, therefore one perceives those sympathies easily in the text. If we examine the pamphlet without these preconceptions and in alignment with her other fiction writing, we discover that it can be read as a satire of all party ideology and press in the same vein as her *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh* (1729), which exposes the deliberate construction of political figures, namely Frederick, Prince of Wales, by authorial representation and political discourse;<sup>7</sup> her anti-Walpole satire *Adventures of Eovaai* (1736; 1741), which encourages critical reading of all political discourse by offering conflicting

3 Cited in Frank McLynn, *Charles Edward Stuart: A Tragedy in Many Acts* (London and New York: Routledge, 1988), 385, from material in the Royal Archives, Windsor Castle (RA Stuart, 282/123).

4 Catherine Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 125.

5 Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 124.

6 In fact, Rachel Carnell writes, “The possibility that Haywood held Jacobite sympathies is suggested by her 1749 arrest for seditious libel” (207). This seems to me to put much confidence in the wisdom of governments.

7 See Wilputte, “‘Unmeaning Gallantries and Serious Courtship’: Eliza Haywood’s *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh*,” *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500–1900* 41:3 (Summer 2001), 499–514.

interpretations in the textual apparatus;<sup>8</sup> *The Fortunate Foundlings* (1744), an historical romance that exposes the skilful artifice involved in both fiction and history, and demonstrates that both are subject to those politicians and writers who mediate their representation;<sup>9</sup> and *The Female Spectator* (1744–46), with its exploration in some essays of the potency of ambiguity and absence in the realm of political discourse.<sup>10</sup> *A Letter from H— G—g* is Haywood’s parody of political pamphleteering that romanticizes the Young Pretender into a mythical hero as she satirizes uncritical readers of political discourse. While Ingrassia suggests that Haywood “makes [Charles] a personally desirable, romantic character to increase his political viability,”<sup>11</sup> if we apply parody theory to the *Letter* and read it in the context of her other political writing and contemporaneous pro-Jacobite narratives as well as her amatory and periodical writing, it emerges as a self-consciously exaggerated and ironic piece that continues her sceptical investigation of authoritative discourse and artistic representations of truth. Such a reading of the pamphlet is given more critical weight when we recall Haywood’s clearly established tradition of parody throughout her career, most explicitly in her musical adaptation of Henry Fielding’s *Tragedy of Tragedies* into *The Opera of Operas* (1731), which is then a parody of a parody of bathetic stage writing and ponderous criticism; and her reworking of Richardson’s novel into *Anti-Pamela* (1741), to expose readers’ lack of discrimination in consuming such material as *Pamela*. More covertly, in her periodical *The Female Spectator*, she parodies the socially prescribed silence of women by not permitting her persona to speak openly about political issues and governmental censorship of the press; and in her novels, she parodies novelistic discourse, most effectively within *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751), but also within her earlier works such as the parody of the Southern European revenge tale in *The City Jilt* (1726). As Paula Backscheider observes, Haywood “seems to have had an ironic self-consciousness about narrative voice that admits near-parody, meta-commentary, deconstruction, and ironic double commentary into her

---

8 See Wilputte, introduction to *The Adventures of Eovaai* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1999), 25–34.

9 See Wilputte, “Room to fable upon’: The History of Charles XII of Sweden in Eliza Haywood’s *The Fortunate Foundlings*,” *Eighteenth-Century Novel* 2 (2002), 23–44.

10 See Wilputte, “Too ticklish to meddle with’: The Silencing of *The Female Spectator*’s Political Correspondents,” in *The Fair Philosopher: Essays on Eliza Haywood’s Female Spectator*, ed. Don Newman and Lynn Wright (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, forthcoming).

11 Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 118.

texts.”<sup>12</sup> Although Haywood is not widely recognized for her humour, she has a playful side that should not be overlooked, especially in relation to her scepticism about voice, discourse, and form.<sup>13</sup>

That parody theory has not been applied before to this particular pamphlet may be explained by the critics’ urge to assign Haywood a Tory or even a Jacobite ideology, but it may also be the hesitancy of readers to ascribe the use of parody to a woman writer. Andrea Austin argues that the “association of parody with ridicule, together with the parodist’s stance towards major literary predecessors, would tend to militate against the identification and/or practice of parody by women writers. Writing, already a suspect occupation for women, could be considered specifically unnatural for the woman writer when it found expression as parody, a form of pointed literary attack.”<sup>14</sup> Austin’s notion of parody, based upon competing discourses challenging each other, an attack from the stance of right against wrong, is not the only one. Haywood may not have proceeded in this vein, choosing rather to use parody to create a dialogism among texts to encourage a re-evaluation of old material and new perspectives of reading or, as Linda Hutcheon puts it, employing “ironic ‘trans-contextualization’ and inversion ... [that] can be playful as well as belittling; ... critically constructive as well as destructive.”<sup>15</sup>

The Augustan period offered a rich context of parody, especially in fiction, that would have served Haywood well with examples. “Parody was one of the central weapons that [the Scriblerians and their allies] deployed in the ferocious cultural battles that they fought against what they considered to be the debasement of literature and the betrayal of the whole scholarly-humanist tradition.”<sup>16</sup> Jonathan Swift’s *Tale of a Tub* (1704) and *Gulliver’s Travels* (1726), Alexander Pope’s *Dunciad* (1728 and 1743), and Fielding’s *Shamela* (1741) are canonical examples of parodies that are suffused with allusions to the texts they

12 Paula R. Backscheider, “The Story of Eliza Haywood’s Novels: Caveats and Questions,” in *Passionate Fictions*, 28.

13 See Andrea Austin, “Shooting Blanks: Potency, Parody, and Eliza Haywood’s *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*,” in *Passionate Fictions*, 259–82; David Oakleaf, “‘Shady bowers! and purling streams!—Heavens, how insipid!’: Eliza Haywood’s Artful Pastoral,” in *Passionate Fictions*, 283–99; and Suzan Last, “‘The Cabal were at a loss for the Author’s Meaning’: Eliza Haywood’s *Adventures of Eovaai* as Metasatire,” *Eighteenth-Century Women: Studies in Their Lives, Work, and Culture* 3 (2003), 25–46.

14 Austin, 262.

15 Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (New York and London: Methuen, 1985), 32.

16 Simon Dentith, *Parody* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 100.

attack and attempt to erase. Targeting such perceived vices as pedantically obtuse editors and critics, prolific hacks who lacked classical education and values, and the abuse of the moral vocabulary and Christian ethics when promoting “virtue” as a physiological trait, the Scriblerians suggested through imitation, exaggeration, and accumulation that the parodied text was deserving of erasure and supplantation by their superior views. But parody can preserve as well as erase. Rather than promoting a binary system of polarities that allows for too-easy oppositions, parody can be a heteroglossic experience—“the conflict of multiple languages in a single text out of which something new emerges.”<sup>17</sup> For Haywood, parody provides a self-conscious reflection of writing and reading—promoting an awareness of the conventional literary devices and precipitating an interrogation of readers’ uncritical acceptance of them.

Richard Terry emphasizes the diversity of conceptions involved in parody in Haywood’s time:

parody [was] seen variously as deferential, debunking, playfully impersonative, calculatedly thieving, a mere ruse of intertextuality or an expression of literary envy. These vivid shadings of the term, all of which get thrown up in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, seem ... all the more useful to be stressed in the face of the monochrome assimilations of the postmodern.<sup>18</sup>

Terry notes that Swift defined parody in his “Apology” to the fifth edition of *A Tale of a Tub* (1710) “as being ‘where the Author personates the Style and Manner of other Writers, whom he has a mind to expose.’ ... Swift’s emphasis, then ... [is] a more intimate insinuation into the psychology of opponents.”<sup>19</sup> As Haywood uses this strategy of “personation” in her novels to convey the characters of self-interested letter writers, it would be helpful to examine it in Haywood’s *Letter*. It is not far-fetched to suggest that the woman novelist’s subject and techniques provided her contemporary readers with excellent training for reading the political press.

Haywood did not suddenly decide to throw caution to the wind and risk her own arrest for seditious libel after being so careful through-

---

17 Joseph A. Dane, *Parody: Critical Concepts Versus Literary Practices, Aristophanes to Sterne* (Norman and London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1988), 8.

18 Richard Terry, “The Semantics of ‘Parody’ in the Eighteenth Century,” *Durham University Journal* 54 (1993), 67–74, see 67.

19 Terry, “The Circumstances of Eighteenth-Century Parody,” *Eighteenth-Century Life* 15 (November 1991), 76–92, see 89.

out her career to avoid overt political affiliation; rather, her experimenting with parody and irony was misunderstood by the government. In a way that would have both amused and alarmed Haywood as it demonstrated the uncritical readings by the public and its gullible acceptance of authority, Daniel Defoe's *Shortest Way with Dissenters* (1702) and Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) had each been accepted by many readers as "true" rather than as satires.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, the government found Defoe guilty of seditious libel when both High-Churchmen and Dissenters misunderstood the irony of his pamphlet. *A Letter from H—G—g* has been the victim of readers who have been unable to pick up the parodic cues in the work, including the impersonation of Henry Goring, the outmoded trope of the found letter, the recontextualization of Jacobite myths, and the heavy-handedness of some literary conventions (even some of her own from her early amatory novels).

As the *Letter* was received by Haywood's government and by so many scholars since as pro-Jacobite propaganda, one would have to conclude that, as a narratological experiment, the work fails. Haywood's chosen strategy, the "counterfeited" letter, was

popular amongst parodists seeking to insinuate themselves into the camp of their target whilst using that target's style as their disguise. The parodistic wearing of the mask of a target has, however, sometimes led to confusion amongst readers and critics as to the intentions of the parodist in question, and, occasionally, to the misfiring of an intended hoax.<sup>21</sup>

However, if readers are sensitive to the parodic signals within the work, the pamphlet can be decoded less literally to reveal that Haywood was continuing her investigation of political discourse and authority and encouraging readers to be more critical of what was served up to them.

Until recently, commentators and scholars have not taken Haywood's pamphlet seriously as either a political threat or a criticism of political idolization. The *Monthly Review* for January 1750 offered a facetious commentary on Haywood's arrest: "The noted Mrs. *H—d*, author of four volumes of novels well known, and other

---

20 In a letter to Pope (27 November 1726), Swift wrote that an Irish bishop had commented that *Gulliver's Travels* "was full of improbable lies, and for his part he hardly believed a word of it." Cited in Frank Brady, "Introduction," *Twentieth Century Interpretations of Gulliver's Travels* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1968), 1.

21 Margaret A. Rose, *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 70.

romantic performances, is the reputed author of this pretended letter.” The writer dismisses any threat that Haywood’s writing could offer—“romantic” implying lightweight, flighty, feminine, and negligible. The government, the writer suggests, has done Haywood a favour by rescuing the “800 copies of the book ... from a fate they might otherwise have undergone, that of being turned into *waste-paper*.”<sup>22</sup> Obviously the news writer finds no tangible possibility in Haywood’s being taken seriously as a treasonable writer because of her novel writing; indeed, her own life is implicitly described as a romantic “performance.” But the fact remains that Haywood and four male booksellers were taken up and questioned by Lord Stanhope.<sup>23</sup> The government was taking Haywood and her pamphlet seriously, even if the *Monthly Review* was not.

In 1897, Andrew Lang accepted the pamphlet as a work of Jacobite propaganda but was unimpressed with its factual merit: “The piece, in truth, is a Jacobite tract, meant to keep up the spirits of the faithful, and it is probable that the author really had some information, though he is often either mistaken, or fables by way of a ‘blind.’”<sup>24</sup> Sensitive to the text’s fictionality yet incapable of finding any artistic purpose in that, Lang dismissed the pamphlet as poor journalism. He remained unaware of Haywood’s authorship.

Ingrassia, the only modern scholar to deal with the pamphlet in any critical detail, writes that it “is not necessarily inflammatory” because it “emphasizes general political philosophy rather than specific political situations.” Ingrassia is sensitive to Haywood’s deployment of style, noting that she “combines the stylistics of her earlier amatory fiction with almost journalistic descriptions of the Pretender’s journeys on the Continent,” resulting in a “text [that is], like its subject, a generic hybrid.”<sup>25</sup> Precisely this aspect of generic hybridization in Haywood’s text allows us to read the piece as a parody, combining her own easily recognized amatory style and plots—including a swooning young woman in a nightgown carried off to bed by a handsome hero—with recent mythologizing of the Young Pretender. Her “ironic trans-contextualization” of pro-Jacobite narratives such as *Ascanius; or, The Young Adventurer* (1746), in which Charles Edward escapes the

---

22 *Monthly Review* (January 1750), 167.

23 See Ingrassia, “Additional Information about Eliza Haywood’s 1749 Arrest for Seditious Libel,” *Notes and Queries* 44 (June 1997), 202–4.

24 Andrew Lang, *Pickle the Spy; or, The Incognito of Prince Charles* (London: Longmans, Green, 1897), 47.

25 Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 117, 119.

massacre at Culloden, evades his pursuers through disguise, is aided by Flora MacDonald, and maintains an heroic demeanour even when dressed as a maid, allows Haywood to lead her readers to question all “authoritative” discourse, or deliberate myth-making, as fiction in need of critical interpretation.

Haywood had pursued this investigation of discourse earlier in her short-lived periodical, *The Parrot* (1746), in which she challenged readers to question what they were being asked to accept as truth in the newspapers. One “correspondent,” a parrot named “Amicus Veritas,” wrote

THE chief Motive I had ... was to shew the Danger of being too certain of any thing;—to prevail on People to have that laudable Scepticism of doubting all,— examining into all, and waiting Time, the only faithful Solver of Difficulties, before they set down any in their Minds as real Facts.—Nothing can be more obvious, and indeed, more amazing, than the strange Credulity which has, of late Years, possessed the People of these Kingdoms:—With what Facility do they swallow the most gross Absurdities, yet shut every Sense against the most glaring Truths!<sup>26</sup>

Throughout the Compendia of *The Parrot*, Haywood challenges how news is constructed even when there are no facts on which to base it. Her parrot-persona comments upon the lack of verifiable evidence about the Young Pretender after his escape from Culloden, questions the authority by which such statements are made, and ridicules the preponderance of fantastical tales about him:

THE young Adventurer in *Scotland*, whom I think we may very well call the *Knight of the Mountains*, after having been said to be eaten up with the *Scrubada*, then half starved, then shot, and afterwards embarked safe and sound on board a *French* Privateer, Captain *Dumont*, whose Arrival with the said Passenger at *Blackenburgh*, was related with twenty other Particulars, is now once more escaped in a *French* Ship of War, and a great Number of Attendants with him. Certainly, there never was such a Will o’ the Wisp ... . The Accounts we have concerning him are no less mysterious than his own Behaviour; and to what End such various and contradictory Reports are spread, I must acknowledge myself utterly unable to conceive.<sup>27</sup>

---

26 Eliza Haywood, “The Parrot,” no. 9, *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood II*, ed. Christine Blouch, Alexander Pettit, and Rebecca Sayers Hanson (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2001), 1:307–8.

27 Haywood, “The Parrot,” no. 9, *Selected Works of Eliza Haywood II*, 1:318.

In *A Letter from H—G—g, Esq.*, Haywood's narrative strategy is to write as a perpetuator of those romancified tales of which the Parrot is so critical. *A Letter* purports to be a misdelivered personal letter from Henry Goring, giving an account of some of the unperceived travels of the Young Chevalier. Charles's whereabouts were the object of great speculation from the end of February to November 1749. The *Gentleman's Magazine* reported briefly on his travels in its "Foreign History" section from January to May, while the *Scots Magazine* published several short items on his possible locations but admitted their "advices ... are very uncertain and contradictory."<sup>28</sup> Haywood's pamphlet seizes upon the possibilities offered by the Young Pretender's disappearance—a new plot and renewed hope for the Jacobites, a new threat to the Hanoverian king, an imaginative space on which she could inscribe any number of adventures amorous and political. But more than anything, her 1749 reworking of the 1745 Jacobite formula of hero-making demonstrates that Charles was, finally, a fictional construct who did not exist in the real world. *A Letter* takes the most popular motifs of the Jacobite myth—the wandering hero, the chivalric gentleman, the dutiful son, the providentially ordained king—and exploits them to reveal their falseness, how each image had been exposed and exploded even by the man himself. By 1749 Charles Edward Stuart could not live up to his ideal image as presented by his supporters any more than Frederick, Prince of Wales, could live up to the one the Patriots had created for him twenty years earlier.

For Haywood, the characters had changed slightly but the political scripts remained the same. Just as she had exposed the creaking machinery of the propagandists in *Frederick, Duke of Brunswick-Lunenburgh* by portraying the Duke (read the Prince of Wales) "as a politician constructed and deconstructed by the perceptions and representations of others ... but essentially ... nothing in himself but a figurehead,"<sup>29</sup> she performs the same contortions on Charles. By recontextualizing, indeed, replaying his 1745–46 adventures in 1749 when virtually nothing was known about him, Haywood demonstrates that readers—Jacobites, non-Jacobites, journalists, and the government—for whatever their own agenda, deliberately create their own fairy-tale from formulaic remnants, not reality.

Charles referred to this gap in his life as "imaginary space" wherein he attempted to regain the lost momentum of the Stuart Cause. His phrase also carries connotations of the loss of such a vision, a recog-

---

28 *Scots Magazine*, "Foreign History" (June 1749), 290.

29 Wilputte, "Unmeaning Gallantries and Serious Courtship," 512–13.

nition of the illusory nature of his future. His homosexual brother Henry had, with the help of James, become a Cardinal in the Catholic Church, destroying his chances of continuing a legitimate Stuart line; and Charles, in defiance, had renounced his religion and become a Protestant. His list of allies was growing thin, and it was becoming increasingly apparent that the Cause was over. No more the “Will o’ the Wisp” of Culloden, Charles in 1749 was merely a cast-off without a country.

The Latin epigraph to Haywood’s pamphlet, *Victrix fortunae sapientia* (“Wisdom is the conqueror of Fortune”), is the first signal that the *Letter* is an ironic piece. Fortune and Providence were constantly cited in the pro-Jacobite literature as aiding Charles’s cause. G—g in Haywood’s pamphlet makes six references to Heaven, Fortune, and Providence as having a hand in directing the Young Pretender’s fate; however, their repetition begins to sound like superstition rather than faith. If Wisdom is to conquer Fortune, the epigraph suggests that Charles will have a bad time of it, for wisdom and prudence were not his strong points. News items in 1748 concerning Charles had not praised him for his wisdom in his dealings with the French king, which led to his Paris arrest; rather, they continually drew attention to his impetuous and rash behaviour. The *Scots Magazine* reprinted a letter from the Old Pretender to Charles wherein James told his son, “you plainly shew that it is not by your own will and sentiments you are guided, but by the opinions and persuasions of other men ... to break with the King out of mere whim or frolick ... . [W]ithout prudence in adversity, there can be no such thing as solid virtue, or true courage.”<sup>30</sup> Haywood’s epigraph draws attention both to the lack of wisdom in Charles’s actions and to the possibility that his luck will soon run out, as Fortune is a fickle and unstable mistress. The epigraph on *Ascanius*’s title page read *Ecce Homo!* (“Behold the man!”).<sup>31</sup> Those words of Pontius Pilate, mocking Christ as King, heralded Charles as the suffering saviour. Haywood’s double-edged epigraph denies any religious significance to her protagonist as she employs the cynical satirist Juvenal to indicate her ironic stance towards the “young Adventurer.”

Haywood’s use of the misdirected letter is another signal of her less-than-laudatory treatment of the romantic wanderer. The physical entity of the letter may be substituted for Charles: errant (in both

30 *Scots Magazine* (December 1748), 602–3.

31 [John Burton], *Ascanius; or, The Young Adventurer, A True History* (1746; reprint, New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1974), t.p.

senses of the word), sent astray, rendered oblique. The receiver publishes it in order “to gratify the Curiosity of the Town, which ... has been raised pretty high on account of that adventrous [*sic*] Wanderer.”<sup>32</sup> Charles thus becomes a novelty, a trifling entertainment rather than a political threat. As readers knowledgeable of Charles’s personality and aware of the press about him venture into G—g’s letter, they play Haywood’s fictionalized vignettes against the almost immortalized contemporary newspaper accounts of his Highland adventures. Just as the *Parrot* persona is dubious of the veracity of those reports and renders them ridiculous by gathering them all into one place, so does the reader of the pamphlet appreciate the humour and irony of the “repetition with a difference” of the adventures related by G—g.<sup>33</sup> It does not take an astute reader to realize that G—g merely tells stories that rework or comically reverse earlier exploits of Charles; and that he flatly admits that he cannot relate all his information to his correspondent about the Pretender’s whereabouts only adds to what the Parrot had emphasized: “there is nothing related concerning him to be depended upon, and it is Time alone can unfold the Mistery.”<sup>34</sup> In fact, the pamphlet tells nothing about Charles’s plots, leading us to figure out that he really is nothing more than what the Parrot had called a “Spirit”: a politically constructed non-entity waiting to be inscribed, indeed drawn into existence, by his admirers or enemies.<sup>35</sup> That Haywood parodically recreates him as “an example of virtue and sexual restraint” and a wise and well-respected political philosopher reveals that Charles is deliberately constructed as a hero, in direct contrast to her audience’s better knowledge.<sup>36</sup> G—g’s equivocal statement with its weight of negatives—“tho’ it does not become me to tell you the whole Truth, you shall hear nothing from me that is not Truth” (6)—is indicative of the strategy Haywood takes in the pamphlet: events and portrayals must be turned around and recast in order to make sense of her intention.

For all of G—g’s desire to reveal “the whole Truth,” he admits that

---

32 [Eliza Haywood,] *A Letter from H— G—g, Esq; One of the Gentlemen of the Bed-Chamber to the Young Chevalier, and the only Person of his own Retinue that attended him from Avignon, in his late Journey through Germany, and elsewhere; ... To A Particular Friend* (London, 1750), 3. References are to this edition.

33 Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody*, 32.

34 *The Parrot*, no. 5, 1:254.

35 *The Parrot*, no. 5, 1:254.

36 Ingrassia, *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender*, 118.

although his own “Conjectures ... came pretty near the Truth of an Affair which my R— Master thinks it necessary should be kept an impenetrable Secret ... I must shortly be obliged to leave a Chasm in my Journal” (17). Haywood’s fascination with absence and gaps in intelligence is also evident in her treatment of certain correspondents in the *Female Spectator*. There, her introduction of conspicuously absent correspondents, onto which her readers inscribe meanings, allows readers to consciously participate in the socio-political act of reading: grappling with the intangible within any discourse, giving meaning to a text by applying preconceived ideas gleaned from context or personal bias, and, in effect, creating meaning from nothing.<sup>37</sup> Haywood’s encouragement of her *Female Spectator* readers to create their own fictions within those spaces goads them into realizing that they are creating subjective versions of the truth, not truth itself. She improves upon this technique in her Goring pamphlet by using newspaper accounts, Jacobite fictions, and the Pretender’s own absence to parody what people want to believe about Charles: he is a romantic hero and potential saviour, or he is a very real threat to the Hanoverian dynasty. In either case, Haywood makes it clear through her pamphlet, based upon “imaginary space,” that the reader’s version of Charles Edward Stuart is a consciously constructed one that has no place in the real world. In her pamphlet, he behaves like a fictional character within a very familiar plot.

The four major episodes that G—g relates about his master are reversals and recontextualizations of familiar episodes in Charles’s post-Culloden existence: Flora Macdonald’s conveying him from Scotland to Skye by water becomes Charles’s rescue of a young woman from a fire (18–26); his highly rhetorical, published Manifestos of 1745 become casual conversations among friends on the nature of kingship (14–15, 38, 47); his secret liaisons in November 1747 with his mistress Louise de la Tour, Duchesse de Montbazou, and his Paris arrest in December 1748 become an assassination attempt (29–31); and his real-life desperate marriage plans are transformed into his honourable refusal to wed until his fate is decided (44–46). Haywood thus uses parody as a device to attack what she conceives as falsity in news reporting and political discourse. In 1738, French critic and parodist Louis Fuzelier remarked that

far from converting virtue into a paradox, and degrading truth by ridicule, PARODY will only strike at what is chimerical and false; it is not a piece of

---

37 Wilputte, “Too ticklish to meddle with.”

buffoonery so much as a critical exposition. What do we parody but the absurdities of dramatic writers, who frequently make their heroes act against nature, common sense and truth?<sup>38</sup>

Haywood parodies political discourse rather than dramatic writers, but she regards them as equivalent in their fiction-making. Charles Edward Stuart as portrayed in the press is no more than an absurd theatrical creation, a chimera used by the government to deflect criticism from itself and a romantic icon to raise nostalgia in the Jacobites.

As Ingrassia has written elsewhere, the episode of the young woman rescued from the fire provides an opportunity to demonstrate the Pretender's "personal and political virtue."<sup>39</sup> The woman, "naked to her Shift," was "laid ... into the Bed he had lately quitted, and wrapt ... in the Coverlids ... . Yet, far from taking Advantage of the Condition she was in, her generous Deliverer thought of nothing but the Means of recovering her from it" (19). When the girl falls in love with him, he refuses to "rob her of her Innocence" (25). When a friend exclaims, "*Ah! how fit is he to govern others, who knows so well how to govern himself*" (26), the purpose of the episode could not be more clear. It has been constructed to show what a good ruler he would be based on his personal heroism and virtue. Unfortunately, because it reads like an amatory novel, its artificiality on the romantic level as well as the political is also obvious.

Ingrassia notes that the scene's titillation is "reminiscent of Richardson's *Pamela* (or perhaps even the fire scene in *Clarissa*)"; however, she does not comment on the significance of these backgrounded texts.<sup>40</sup> Rather than emphasizing the Pretender's sexual restraint and hence his ability to govern a nation well, Haywood covertly draws attention to his real-life lack of sexual continence with these shadows of Mr B and Lovelace.<sup>41</sup>

G—g's inverted portrayal of the real Charles's behaviour renders the scene laughable. Readers would be more than familiar with the

38 Cited in Rose, *Parody*, 26–27.

39 Ingrassia, 118.

40 Ingrassia, 118.

41 It may not be unreasonable to assume that Richardson may also be targeted here. His "Editor's" prefatory remarks and the included puffs on *Pamela*, which he had introduced as real letters by a real servant girl, had already been parodied by Fielding in *Shamela*. Haywood, whose aim is to alert uncritical or naive readers to their own manipulation by writers of texts, may be mocking the purportedly moral novel *Pamela* as being as deliberately constructed and politically motivated as Jacobite and Hanoverian propaganda.

romantic (though false) tales of Charles's liaisons with Jenny Cameron and Flora Macdonald; they may even have heard the rumours of his affair with his best friend's wife, Louise de la Tour, and of his very public, and abusive, relationship with the aging courtesan, the Princesse de Talmont. Adulterer and woman-batterer, Charles and his sexual demands caused the 1752 resignation of the real-life Henry Goring, who refused to become "no better than a pimp."<sup>42</sup> To hear G—g's master give a sermon on the value of sexual continence and his respect for others certainly makes the depiction parodic. Charles in 1749 falls very short of the ideal portrait given in the pamphlet. The distance between the reality and the portrayal becomes that imaginative space wherein readers must exercise their political scepticism.

*A genuine account of the P—'s escape* (1745) describes Flora Macdonald and Charles's escape to Skye over a tempestuous sea:

The P—, seeing not only his fair guardian apprehensive, but the hardy boatmen themselves express some concern, cheered up their hearts as well as he could, and sung them the *Restoration*. At length Miss Macdonald's fatigue got the better of her fear, and she fell fast asleep in the bottom of the boat. The P— became now guardian in his turn, and assiduously watched over his sleeping conductress.<sup>43</sup>

Haywood parodies this by presenting the Young Pretender watching over the woman he has rescued from the fire. The pamphlet develops Charles's emerging romantic and mythic qualities. But the episode, in its familiarity, also encourages the reader to conceive of the Pretender as a consciously constructed formulaic character: he becomes the virtuous hero who will always behave in a predictable way. Of course, at the same time that this is realized, readers know that it is unrealistic. Charles had already behaved unpredictably by disappearing from the public gaze. The pamphlet, then, pulls in two directions at once: offering the chivalric hero of Jacobite literature while simultaneously suggesting that such a hero cannot be—especially as the emphasis on his sexual restraint and gentlemanly behaviour is so foreign to his known character by late 1749. Haywood also parodies her own amatory fiction in the creation of this chivalric Charles, suggesting that readers have been seduced as easily by depictions of him as by her romances. The irony she relishes is that a nation is as susceptible to seduction by

---

42 Cited in Hugh Douglas, *The Private Passions of Bonnie Prince Charlie* (Great Britain: Sutton Publishing, 1998), 207.

43 *A genuine account of the P—'s escape* (1745; reprint, *Scots Magazine* [December 1749]), 631.

unquestioned authoritative discourse as a woman may be by a disingenuous lover or a woman's novel.

Another element of artificiality utilized in this episode is G—g's self-consciousness about introducing it at all into his narrative:

Some People might think the Adventure I am going to relate deserved not so serious a Prelude, or, perhaps, that it was not of Importance enough to be inserted at all; but I know to whom I write, and should be under no Apprehension, that the minutest Circumstances, in which the P— has any Share, will be esteemed light or trifling.—But to the Business (18).

The irony works here on two levels. First, G—g is unaware that his letter to his friend has gone astray, so he does not, in fact, know to whom he writes. The reader who desires to indulge the impersonation can appreciate the dramatic irony. Second, G—g's latent fear that Charles's adventures might be dismissed as "light or trifling" has already been realized in the sentiments of the "Editor's Preface": "*I was tempted to publish it in order to gratify the Curiosity of the Town*" (3). Where G—g sees serious "Business," the editor and reader find light amatory entertainment of little consequence. Where G—g attempts to construct his master as a "Christian Hero" replete with temptations in the wilderness—"Heaven ... permitted the Seducer of Mankind to throw Temptations in his Way, in order to give him an Opportunity of proving those Virtues, which, though most admire, few are able to imitate" (18)—Haywood shows us the fictionality inherent in the Young Pretender's construction as a political icon. Emphasizing the parallels between Christ and Charles, Haywood brings attention to the contrived rendering of Charles as a saviour figure.

The distance between reality and fiction becomes more apparent as Haywood's pamphlet draws attention to the fictional element, not only of the Pretender's behaviour but also of the *Letter* itself. Metafictional references emphasize the artificiality of the pamphlet as a narrative construct and objectify the reader. Margaret Rose identifies this "general form" of parody as "the meta-fictional 'mirror' to the process of composing and receiving literary texts ... forc[ing] our attention on to both the problem of representation in the fictional work, and its interpretation by the reader."<sup>44</sup> As G—g makes it apparent that we are not the intended recipient of his letter, we read it with a heightened awareness and a double vision: as G—g's real

---

44 Margaret A. Rose, *Parody/Meta-fiction: An Analysis of Parody as a Critical Mirror to the Writing and Reception of Fiction* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), 59.

correspondent would interpret it (literally), but also with the critical eye of the secret “other” from whom G—g wished to keep his news. Haywood intends for us to read as spies, consciously and deliberately trying to decode meanings, taking nothing for granted.

Charles tells G—g that he suspects a spy in his midst as “*not only what I do, but even the very Words I speak, have been reported through all the Courts in Europe*” (9). We smile at the dramatic irony because we are supposedly holding in our hands his “very Words”; however, we also realize that what he has said is simply not true. Virtually nothing was known about Charles after his disappearance from Paris. The pamphlet, with its transparent pretence of truth, offers an alternate reality wherein the rest of the world is interested enough in the fate of the Young Pretender to report his comings and goings, when, in fact, although the public’s curiosity was piqued by his disappearance, the feeling was that the threat he had posed was over. G—g’s master becomes more and more a parody of what the Jacobites and Hanoverians portray in their propaganda, not what he actually is.

Two other references indicate the text’s artificiality and parodic nature. Once a pointed reference is made to the spontaneous eruption of a discussion on “the Principles of Government” by Charles, the reader immediately suspects its deliberate stagedness. Where G—g notes that this “Conversation happened, more through Accident than Design” (12), we feel that he protests too much. G—g’s master offers a virtual repeat of the political philosophies laid out more than a decade earlier in *Adventures of Eovaai*. Eovaai’s father had lectured her on “the greatest Glory of a Monarch” which is “the Liberty of the People”; and later, Eovaai herself tells the Republican that a King “is indeed the Head of a large Family; for whose Happiness he is perpetually contriving, who *watches* for *their Repose*, labours for their Ease, exposes himself for *their Safety*, and has no other Recompence for all his Cares than that Homage, that Grandeur, which he ought not to be envied.”<sup>45</sup> G—g’s master relates a very similar philosophy in corresponding familial imagery:

*A private Person, said he, has the Excuse of providing for his Family; but the Children of a King are the Children of the Publick—they have their Appointments and their Dowries from the Publick, and he has only to procure such Alliances for them as promise to afford most Advantage to the Publick.* (13–14)

Later, again spontaneously, he remarks that all rulers should “*be*

---

45 Eliza Haywood, *Adventures of Eovaai, Princess of Ijaveo*, ed. Earla Wilputte (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1999), 53, 115.

*convinced that the Dignity they enjoy is not given them for their own Sakes, but that of others*" (38). The echoes of Eovaa'i's father cast doubt on the Young Pretender's, indeed any politician's, veracity. Do all monarchs and would-be monarchs speak from the same script? Are there any essential differences between the discourses of the Lockean principle of government, Hanoverians, Jacobites, or Republicans? Charles, in 1745, had publicly disavowed any allegiance to absolute monarchy; however, he was not widely believed. G—g's repetition of his master's words suggest that Haywood is also dubious of him. G—g writes that the P— spoke

on a Theme so important to every Friend of Liberty and Lover of his Country ... He set forth the Excellence of the Constitution in its native Purity, and condemned all the Encroachments had been made on it by Princes, who impolitically, as well as ungenerously, had aimed at arbitrary Power, in Terms too pathetick not to convince any one that his Heart was the Dictator of his Tongue. (14–15)

A survey of the Young Pretender's words in this speech suggests that he carefully chooses them to construct a persuasive, charismatic set speech. In particular, the word "impolitically" stands out as it jars against the word "ungenerously." For a moment, before he recovers himself, it would appear that Charles is condemning those princes who have imprudently "aimed at arbitrary Power," as though, if that is the desired end, it must be approached more circumspectly. In addition, his use of "Terms too pathetick not to convince" points to his deliberate intention of arousing sympathy for his theme. The artificiality rather than the spontaneity of his words is emphasized here through the parody of his manifestos.<sup>46</sup>

The equivocal (or ironic) nature of his speeches, if we are so attuned, reflects upon both Jacobite and Hanoverian discourse. Hutcheon notes that irony's "very doubleness can ... act to contest the singleness of authority and the ahistorical claim to eternal and universal value that frequently underlies it."<sup>47</sup> Haywood's parody of Jacobite discourse exposes the falseness of the myth of Bonnie Prince

---

46 See *A Full Collection of All the Proclamations and Orders published by the Authority of Charles Prince of Wales, Regent of Scotland, England, France and Ireland, and Dominions thereunto belonging, Since his Arrival in Edinburgh the 17th Day of September, till the 15th day of October, 1745* (1745) and "The pretender's son's first and second manifestos," reprinted in *Appendix to the Scots Magazine for the Year MDCCXLVII*, 624–29.

47 Hutcheon, "Introduction," *Double-Talking: Essays on Verbal and Visual Ironies in Contemporary Canadian Art and Literature* (Toronto: ECW Press, 1992), 13, 17.

Charlie even as it poses as a perpetuator of the myth-making process; however, Haywood's irony is also directed at the Hanoverians, exposing their faults. The doubleness of Haywood's irony—directed against governmental as well as Jacobitical discourse—undercuts the idea that any single authority is trustworthy. The shadow of a real author behind the lost letter trope, one who is impersonating H—G—g, encourages further the idea of an untrustworthy authority. We must approach the pamphlet critically because it is not what it seems: it is not written by Henry Goring and therefore it may not be supportive of Charles.

Haywood's parody dispossesses the original Jacobite authors of the myths of the Young Pretender. Terry notes:

Parody bears close propinquity to other quasi-satiric forms that draw venom from infringing authors' rights of possession ... . [The] meticulous anthologizing of the words of opponents relishes of illicit appropriation, taking words hostage, which was a perniciousness that parody frequently intended.<sup>48</sup>

The concept of dispossession in parody is doubly appealing in Haywood's pamphlet because it lends itself so handily to the theme of the dispossessed Stuarts. Not only is she dispossessing the Jacobite supporters of their discourse and using it against them to expose the artificiality of their political creation, but she also uses the undeniably romantic figure of the fabricated Young Pretender to expose the lack of vitality in the Hanoverian government, thus displacing it from its locus of single authority.

The third episode in which Haywood uses "repetition with a difference" is the assassination attempt on the Young Pretender. G—g cites it as another example of his master's Christian charity: Charles helps a man who may be a spy because "*I had rather relieve an hundred Enemies, than deny to any one Friend whatever Assistance is in my Power to grant*" (28). Despite (or because of) this ideal portrayal and Christ-like language, in the subsequent adventure the reader, who is aware of contemporary events, finds too many similarities with the Young Pretender's arrest by the French to read it seriously. On 9 December 1748, Charles was asked by his father and King Louis xv to leave France. When he refused, the king had him arrested on 10 December.

30 men from each company were commanded to support the design, and 8 Serjeants, dressed in the habit of tradesmen, were ordered to post themselves at the two entries into the opera ... . As soon as [Charles] got out of his coach

---

48 Terry, "The Circumstances of Eighteenth-Century Parody," 87.

to enter the passage into the opera, two of the Serjeants took him fast by the arms, to prevent any resistance, and having lifted him up, two other Serjeants crossing their arms, carried him into the court of the Fountains ... M. de Vaudreuil then advanced, and addressed him in these words: "I arrest you on the part of the King. Prince, your arms." He immediately presented his sword; and, upon searching, they found two pocket-pistols, and a poniard.<sup>49</sup>

Once arrested and detained for a few days, Charles was escorted from Paris to Fontainebleau, where, coincidentally, British General James St Clair and his secretary, later philosopher, David Hume arrived at the same inn and roomed a floor above Charles. Suspecting an assassination attempt on the Young Pretender, Charles's guard hurried him out in the early hours of the morning. Their suspicions proved unfounded. Haywood takes some of these mundane details, combines them with others, and turns them into a story of an attempt on Charles's life. G—g describes how Charles and his retinue are attacked in their coach by five masked men:

They discharged their Pistols into the P—'s Chaise, and certainly not all his miraculous Escapes in *Scotland* ever equalled this: One of the Bullets lodged in the back Part of the Chaise, just above his Head, another went through his Hat, and a third grazed upon his Breast, without any other Mischief than taking off one of the Buttons of his Coat. (29)

G—g himself draws attention to the escalation of "miraculous" events in the Young Pretender's life, so that the accumulation of near misses, like the collection of adventures at the end of *Parrot* no. 9, becomes obviously hyperbolic. Rather than suggesting Heaven's special protection of Charles, the episode reads more and more like fiction. The similarities between this episode of "miraculous Escape" and those of King Charles XII of Sweden are also noteworthy, especially given Haywood's recent use of the Swedish king in her 1744 novel *The Fortunate Foundlings*. As illustrated elsewhere, Haywood employed the problematic figure of Charles XII to demonstrate how "History, truth and romance blur together, becoming equally unreal, open to interpretation, and used by Art to serve different biases."<sup>50</sup> By alluding to Charles XII, Haywood draws comparisons between him and the Young Pretender to show that both have been over-simplified and mythologized. In G—g's description of the assassination attempt,

---

49 *Scots Magazine* (December 1748), 603–4.

50 Wilputte, "Room to fable upon," 41.

Charles “plucked a Pair of Pistols out of his Pocket, as he never went without” (29), killing one assailant, wounding another, and throwing a third from his horse, while G—g and La Luze fought the other two.

While G—g’s master’s physical heroics may seem to render him glorious, the backgrounded text here—the rumours of Charles’s affair with his cousin, and the French police’s fears of a Hanoverian attempt to assassinate him—subverts the image of chivalry. In October 1747, Paris chief of police Berryer was ordered to set up a full surveillance on the Young Pretender’s house at St Ouen in order to watch a mysterious carriage that arrived and left there at odd hours of the night. When a porter from a neighbouring house tried to question the occupants of the coach one night, he was threatened with a pistol. Another night a drunken carter tried to hitch a ride on the coach, “but no sooner had he jumped to the back of the carriage than one of the passengers appeared brandishing a rapier and threatened to run him through if he didn’t get off.” The carter told the police on the road, but then went back to the coach to offer to fight and was threatened with a sword and a pistol. Charles’s valet admitted to the police that he did have those weapons but that he was on secret business for the prince. The police soon pieced together that “le Prince Edouard” was the second occupant of the coach. What they did not realize was that these nocturnal comings and goings were orchestrated to conduct Charles’s secret liaisons with Louise de la Tour. Louise’s mother-in-law, Mme de Guéméné, attempted to keep the scandal quiet; however, Charles’s rash behaviour must have caused gossip: “He created scenes if he could not have access to his lover’s bedroom whenever he demanded it, and once he even fired his pistols in the street.” Later, during his affair with the Princesse de Talmont, she referred “to his conduct outside Madame Guéméné’s house: ‘I fear you are trying to give me a second chapter to the Mme de Montbazou story,’ she told him, ‘you dishonoured her by firing two pistols [outside her house].’” Even Talmont seemed aware of the inherent fictional construction of the Young Pretender’s life that the Goring pamphlet parodies.<sup>51</sup>

Haywood reworks Charles’s rash and petulant nature into acts of heroism; however, they jar against the reality of his life. Nobody really cared enough to look for him, and no one plotted for his assassination. Despite his many near disasters at sea, so often recounted in the myths evolving from his “unfortunate Expedition into Scotland” (37), Charles was not protected by Heaven but by luck. Haywood

---

51 Douglas, 163, 164, 165, 167, 188.

draws attention to this fact when the Young Pretender, thwarted yet again by a tempest, “exerted the Philosopher, and ... uttered not the least murmur against Fortune” (37). When he discovers that by missing his voyage he avoided being seized by spies, Fortune is reinterpreted as “the peculiar Care Heaven seems to take for [his] Preservation” (39), a phrase that is repeated earlier so that it becomes formula rather than faith (31).

The final major incident treated parodically is Charles’s marriage plan. G—g notes that there has been “much Talk in the World concerning the P—’s Marriage”; however, “all you have been told, or can be told, for some Time at least ... is wholly fictitious” (44). He then proceeds to recount a romance worthy of Haywood’s amatory novels and reminiscent of her portrayal of Charles XII in *The Fortunate Foundlings*. In that novel, the Swedish king, though in love with and engaged to James’s sister, postpones his marriage until the wars are over. Haywood uses his excessive continence as an example of his perverted values: he sets aside love to pursue personal glory.<sup>52</sup> Charles Edward’s ability to deny sexual passion with the woman from the fire, and now with his fiancée, suggests a similar coldness and ambition. But G—g assures his correspondent that his master “loves, and is beloved with an Affection rarely to be found between Persons of their exalted Station” (45). Only Charles’s honour prevents their marriage, as “he has publicly declared, he never would seek to involve any Princess in the Misfortunes of his Family; and that it was his fixed Determination to beget no Royal Beggars” (44). And so, despite “the strict Union there is between the Hearts of these two incomparable Persons ... [they] retard the Consummation of their mutual Wishes” (46). Abstinence and self-denial in the face of duty are heroic qualities to be sure; however, the public was aware of Charles’s recent frantic efforts to wed. His 1747 dreams of wedding one of Louis xv’s daughters or the Infanta of Spain, the rumours of a proposal to an Austrian archduchess and the Czarina of Russia, his 1748 resolution to marry Frederick the Great’s sister or to ask the Prussian king to help arrange a marriage with any other German Protestant princess, and finally sending Sir John Graeme to the court of the Landgrave of Hesse-Darnstadt to assess Princess Caroline-Louise demonstrate a very urgent desperation to marry.<sup>53</sup> G—g’s poignant vignette of the languishing princess, an amatory rendering of the Polish princess Radzivil, “to whom the newspapers were busy marrying Charles at this

---

52 Wilputte, “Room to fable upon,” 36, 38.

53 Douglas, 157, 183, 184.

time,”<sup>54</sup> and the stoical Charles is a romantic interpretation of actual events to mythologize the Young Pretender while encouraging us to penetrate the fiction. The tender love story depicted by G—g loses some of its appeal when readers recall that Princess Radzivil was only ten years old and Charles was nearly thirty.

As the pamphlet proceeds to its conclusion, Charles’s love is tinged with political purpose. G—g remarks that his master is “entertaining ... other Views [than the British crown] ... provided they are not inconsistent with [‘filling the Throne of his Ancestors’], nor beneath the Dignity of his Birth” (48). As Charles’s mother, Clementina Sobieska, was daughter of Prince James Sobieski of Poland, Charles held a tenuous relation to the Polish crown. The pamphlet suggests “the Throne of his Ancestors” that interests him is the Polish one, not the British.

After forty-eight pages of heroism, virtue, and political philosophy, Charles withdraws from any tie to the British scene and moves back into obscurity. Lang comments that “the pamphlet concludes with vague enigmatic hopes and promises, and certainly leaves its readers little wiser than they were before.”<sup>55</sup> But Lang is looking for the wrong kind of wisdom, which is certainly not the message Haywood wished to convey anyway. By parodying virtually every aspect of the myth of the Young Pretender—from the stalwart romantic hero who rescues maidens (rather than who is rescued by them) through his manifestos, the sea-storms, and “Protestant” winds that prohibit his plans to the imagined attacks on his life by fervent Hanoverians and the postponement of any marriage plans even though such a decision would “deprive the World of a Race of future Heroes” (45)—Haywood’s pamphlet suggests that Charles Edward is a politically constructed character for a fictional text of formulaic plot. We do not learn anything new about Charles because, as the parody of repeated events demonstrates, there is nothing new, can be nothing new because he is a created character caught in a plot that is perpetually replayed but does not advance.

In *A Letter from H— G—g, Esq.* Haywood attempts something other than propaganda: she continues her investigation of political discourse, begun at least as far back as 1729, but this time she experiments with the strategy of parody—repetition with a difference. Read in this light, the pamphlet as parody forces us to reconsider Haywood as an author.

54 Lang, 51.

55 Lang, 51.

I have referred elsewhere to her strategy of the oblique;<sup>56</sup> Backscheider has called her a creator of the deliberately ambiguous;<sup>57</sup> and Ingrassia has identified her appeal to a multiple reading public. Each of these readings indicates that Haywood is a writer who resists being pinned down and categorized. Although she plays with binary oppositions in her works, she does not expound that one system or sex should predominate as the “right” one. Such one-sided seriousness invites parody—just as one established language, style, party, ideal, or interpretation invites parody.

Backscheider recently asked, “how do we connect [Haywood’s] texts, including those from the 1720s and from the 1750s, to each other in meaningful ways?”<sup>58</sup> *A Letter from H—G—g, Esq.* shows that we must stop applying exclusionary critical lenses through which to interpret Haywood—Tory writer, feminist, humourless woman’s writer. The intriguing “imaginary space” provided by Charles’s absence and by the absence of any explicitly partisan writing by Haywood has allowed readers to inscribe their own meanings and “romantic performances” upon both figures and to determine their own shape of what is read. Such are the dangers, suggests Haywood, into which readers may fall if they do not read critically and remain sensitive to the presences and the absences within a purportedly authoritative discourse.

The literary hoax or grossly misread pamphlet that is *A Letter from H—G—g, Esq.* should highlight how Haywood loves to play, mock, and impersonate in order to expose, shock, and challenge the complacent reader who merely accepts the printed word, and we find such play throughout her fiction. Her naive amatory heroines are duped and seduced if they unquestioningly accept conventional love letters when they should be attuned to the outmoded language or over-used tropes within them.

As an astute marketer, Haywood would not peddle a biography of Bonnie Prince Charlie four years behind the times; nor would she write something so ostensibly formulaic as *A Letter from H—G—g, Esq.* is without irony. This pamphlet demonstrates the importance of reading Haywood, in all her different roles of author—political writer, novelist, periodical writer, playwright—as someone wholly engaged with and sensitive to the cultural and literary discourses of her time. More humorous than she has been given credit for, she is

---

56 Wilputte, “Too ticklish to meddle with.”

57 Backscheider, 23.

58 Backscheider, 20.

as capable of parody as she is of seriously exposing social injustices to women. In our efforts to revise Haywood's role as a novelist, we must be careful not to neglect her other works where she also uses novelistic techniques and discourse. Early critics have rendered her career as divided between her amatory novels and her later didactic, "moral" work. There is an equal tendency to isolate works such as *A Letter from H— G—g, Esq.* as wholly independent of her novels. The question is not so much how a revisionary reading of this political pamphlet can influence our interpretation of Haywood as a novelist, but how her novels' themes about the volatility of all discourse and, therefore, the need to read in a less naively formalist fashion may be revisited, replayed, and reconfigured in her other, less known works.<sup>59</sup>

St Francis Xavier University

---

59 Research for this article was supported by a generous grant from the St Francis Xavier University Council for Research. I want to thank Philip Fozard, Janette Fecteau, and Karen Krahn for their assistance and insightful comments on earlier versions of this paper.