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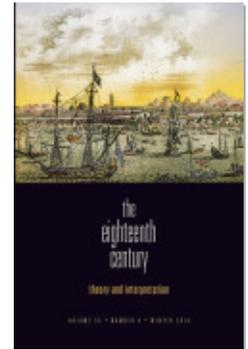
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## Beastly Sodomites and the Shameless Urban Future

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# Beastly Sodomites and the Shameless Urban Future

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The 1720s are an important decade in the history of sexuality. The historical imagination has been thoroughly exercised by the apparent rise of a molly house culture and a corresponding spike in sodomy persecutions.<sup>1</sup> The most notable of these occurred in 1726 when Mother Clapp's molly house in the Holbourn district of London was raided by the authorities, resulting in three executions for sodomy. Scholars have made much of this event. Some have used it to prove the emergence of a new "political homophobia" that aggressively targeted the mollies and which became increasingly unforgiving as the decades progressed.<sup>2</sup> Others have argued that class prejudice was a key determining factor: that "the difference between the mollies and the heroic friends they mimic . . . is a difference of class . . . what among members of the higher class would be read simply as friendship must in this different context be seen as monstrous."<sup>3</sup> The sources are limited, the stakes are high, and the interpretive opportunities are proportionally limitless.

Above all, scholarly discussions of the molly house phenomenon have been thus far dominated by a focus upon effeminacy. Effeminacy lies at the center of Randolph Trumbach's early essays on this topic; more recent works such as Thomas Alan King's *Gendering of Men* (2008) and Peter Hennen's *Faeries, Bears, and Leathermen: Men in Community Queering the Masculine* (2008) have elaborated the role of effeminacy by identifying conceptual variants or by expanding conceptual contours. This is not without reason; 1720s writers were clearly preoccupied with something they called "effeminacy." However, gender trouble is one of many cultural contexts in which the history of sexuality occurs, and the fear of effeminacy can only go so far in explaining what caused the executions of 1726.<sup>4</sup> Nor is it sufficient to explain what sodomy meant to the society in which these executions occurred. "Sodomy, in the eighteenth century especially," writes George Haggerty, "is not a vice that can be described in intellectual or even simple emotional terms."<sup>5</sup> The recourse to effeminacy as an analytic factor functions too often to flatten this complexity, to elide the manner

in which sodomy itself was constantly in flux, sensitive to the fears and fantasies of any given cultural moment.

In the following pages, I offer a reading of some texts that reflect what sodomy meant to this particular moment, that which followed the sodomy executions of 1726.<sup>6</sup> I concentrate, in particular, on two: a polemical attack by a self-professed "Philogynus" published in a newspaper the week after the executions and a chapter of a half-fictional narrative supposedly penned by a celebrity criminal, James Dalton, who makes "pleasant and remarkable" adventures into the world of the mollies, accompanied by a man, Sukey Haws, who is "neither a downright Pick-pocket, a downright Sodomite, or a downright *Bug*, tho' a Part of every one of them."<sup>7</sup> I proceed from the assumption that we can learn a lot about what these texts are doing by focusing on the moment when they are written and that this, in turn, can confound our assumptions about the cultural origins and range of anti-sodomitical sentiment.<sup>8</sup> Key to my analysis is an attention to urbanity. The cultural afterlife of the executions in the public sphere of 1720s London tells us as much about the city as it does about sodomy. The private spaces that the mollies inhabited, the satirical texts that emerged to condemn them, the ideological tensions that formed around these descriptions: all were eminently urban, all moreover were features and events in the history of 1720s London. By embedding these texts into the culture and thought of 1720s London, we can better understand how the fear of the urban sodomite, as represented in the figure of the shameless, bestial molly, became part and parcel of the fear of urban life.

I begin by identifying an urban debate and discourse on shame. The restraints of shame were, at this time, felt to be both increasingly critical and increasingly elusive. As a spectacle of shamelessness, the sodomites in the molly house tapped into anxieties about the future of urban shame. The question of shame was, at this time, also connected to that of the boundary separating man from beast. In the section that follows, I situate the figure of the molly in the crucible of a culture that was increasingly disturbed by the moveable qualities of this boundary, as suggested, for instance, by the 1726 story of Mary Toft, a woman who was reputed to have given birth to rabbits, and that of Peter the Wild Boy, also known as the Wild Boy of Hanover, who was found in the forests of Germany and brought to London in the Spring of 1726. These contextual episodes, which together produced a sensation of beastly urbanity, illuminate the figurative power of the beastly urban sodomite. In the third and final section, I draw from this embedded reading to argue that the figure of the bestial molly, and the urban sodomite more generally, was as disturbing as it was for its successful mastery of urban forms of sociability: that the fear was not of sodomitical beasts running loose through the streets of the city, sodomizing others willy-nilly, but of societies of shameless beasts organizing themselves into urban associations of pleasure. The sodomite came to embody an urban fear of the urban future—far from a monstrous anomaly, he became a monstrous

eventuality.<sup>9</sup> Together, the three sections of this essay helps explain how much the 1720s London sodomite, as depicted in these two important texts, carried the traces of his place and time—revealing how, as Michel Foucault has written, sodomy becomes “that utterly confused category.”<sup>10</sup>

\* \* \*

There are many paths from the specific problem of the mollies to the larger problem of sodomy, not all of which start or end with effeminacy. One such path starts with the public-private boundary and continues through the densely populated landscape of ideas about urban shame. Let us start, then, with the classic question about the nature of the relationship between the public and the private spheres. Were these spheres overlapping and if so, where did they overlap? Or did they not overlap but collide? These were questions that occupied the writers of this period greatly. The struggle to answer them was a formative struggle of the decade, and of all the events that defined this struggle the most famous, perhaps, is the debate incited by the second edition of Bernard Mandeville’s *The Fable of the Bees: Or Private Vices, Public Benefits* (1723). After the publication of the 1723 edition, a wide range of figures competed to prove that private vices were *not* public benefits. Hence Robert Burrow, chaplain to the Bishop of London argued that “the *Concealment*, the *Dissembling* of our Thoughts is not always evil in itself; it may be *innocent*, *adviseable*, *praiseworthy* in some Cases, as well as *criminal* and *base* in others.”<sup>11</sup> In rising to Mandeville’s challenge, Burrow was effectually perpetuating his legacy by recasting what some would see as a private vice as a public benefit. Here we see how the discourse of eighteenth-century London, as Miles Ogborn has noted, must be considered “in terms of the tensions involved in the constitution of a public of private individuals.”<sup>12</sup> We also see how, as Richard Sennett has written, “the struggle for public order in the 18<sup>th</sup> century city, and the tension between the claims of public and private life, constituted the terms of a coherent culture.”<sup>13</sup> Partly due to Mandeville, and more generally due to the volume of debate over the nature and future of an urban society, the challenge of creating a public of private individuals would dominate the urban discourse of the decade.<sup>14</sup> Culture would form in response to the challenge, and the problem of sodomy would, like other cultural phenomena, be understood in relationship to it.

We might understand this better if we recognize how much this challenge was itself embedded in the urban fabric of the period. In the 1720s, the struggle for public order was, to an extent, a struggle against social fragmentation. The power of collectivities such as neighborhoods, guilds and crowds to shape individual reputations and behavior was undermined,” writes Robert Shoemaker, “to be replaced by other forces: by new collectivities such as voluntary societies and class, by the printed word and by individual self-examination.”<sup>15</sup> Urban citizens were less likely to know who their neighbors were or care what they said. The “fragmentation of urban communities,” as Shoemaker has noted, “led

to a loss of legitimacy for the mechanisms of communal censure, and therefore the decline of defamation as a significant public act."<sup>16</sup> The effects of this shift are evident everywhere. "The Way and Manner of this City is strangely alter'd for the worse," opined the author of a text entitled *A Conference About Whoring* (1725). It was difficult to identify precisely what it was that had changed in recent years. "I can't say there are any new Vices in this Age," he admitted, "for the same Passions, Infirmities, Temptations, Mistakes, obtain at all Times." But it did seem that "Wickedness" was "more open and bare-fac'd of late . . . not under that Curb and Restraint as formerly."<sup>17</sup> The fragmentation that Shoemaker describes was turned here into a cultural narrative about the urban experience, a narrative that was fundamentally preoccupied with the absence of the commodity that would ordinarily have prevented the wickedness: shame.

The nature of shame was, at this time, an object of much cultural interest. Great amounts of philosophical energy were spent in the effort to locate shame in the body and the soul. In Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* (1711), shame at its purest was described as being entirely involuntary:

The greatest Danger in the world can never breed Shame: nor can the *Opinion* of all the World compel us to it, where *our own Opinion* is not a Party. We may be afraid of appearing impudent, and may therefore feign a Modesty. But we can never really blush for any thing but what we truly think *Shameful*, and what we shou'd still blush for, notwithstanding we were ever so secure as to our Interest, and out of reach of all Inconvenience that cou'd happen to us from the thing we are asham'd of.<sup>18</sup>

Shame was thus not a utilitarian instrument of politeness but an inner moral essence that erupted occasionally into uncontrollable blushes. In particularizing shame, as he did in this passage, Shaftesbury was trying to establish that shame was as natural as it is uncontrollable. But by so doing he was also inadvertently raising the specter of the naturally shameless individual, thus challenging what E. J. Hundert has called "the conventional Augustan truism that nature works in almost perfect harmony with morality."<sup>19</sup> If a person could only ever blush for what he or she truly thought shameful, then what to make of those who did not blush at acts that the rest of society found shameful?

This was a question which troubled the period profoundly, haunting debates over a variety of phenomena, from masquerades to masturbation. The challenge posed by the problem of shame grew in response to the growth of the private sphere, the proliferation of private spaces and the sacralization of privacy, the growth of the word "private" into a multipurpose ideological buzzword. Masturbation, as Thomas Laqueur argues, was never demonized like it was in the early eighteenth century.<sup>20</sup> This had much to do, as Laqueur argues, with the growth of the private sphere; but also with what it suggested about the absence of shame:

This was a wicked secret; it was done in the wrong sort of private place; it ought thus to produce shame and guilt which, alas, were not inborn. If they were, there would be no need for so huge an apparatus to make the private vice public.<sup>21</sup>

Masturbation was a problem because the young did it naturally and, by extension, revealed their inherent shamelessness which, in turn, pointed at a weak link between the natural and the sociable. The problem with masturbation was the problem of the individual who had to be *taught* the restraints of shame, thus suggesting that shame was not reliably natural.

Laqueur's major source is *Onania*, which was first published in 1712, and which went from its eighth edition by 1723 to its fifteenth edition by 1730, with scores of new letters published in each installment, originating mostly from London.<sup>22</sup> In its sheer popularity—the scores of individuals who wanted their experiences published—it substantiates Shoemaker's point about the 1720s as a moment of great social fragmentation, one which saw the restraints of guilds and neighborhoods rapidly replaced with those of the printed word and self-examination. "It is the general Opinion," the preface to *Onania* stated, "that the Shameless are the worst of People."<sup>23</sup> If this was true, it had something to do with the forces which had allowed for *Onania* to exist, the particular combination of anonymity and fragmentation which inspired scores of men and women to share their secret, masturbatory practices with the undefined entity known as "the publick."

The philosophical urgency of shame was at all times tied to the perceived unraveling of urban order and, in particular, ruptures in the boundary between private and public. The problem of shame, as articulated in Shaftesbury and embodied in *Onania*, was profoundly complicated by the arrival in 1718 of the commercial masquerade. Londoners rich and poor attended in the hundreds and, on certain nights, the thousands. The events, as Terry Castle has shown, were as raucous as they were popular.<sup>24</sup> Closing them down became the personal mission of Bishop Edmund Gibson, and amongst his various (and often futile) attempts was a sermon which claimed that the masquerade deprived "Virtue and Religion of their last Refuge, I mean *Shame* which keeps multitudes of Sinners within the bounds of *Decency*."<sup>25</sup> It is because shame was the last frontier of virtue that the masquerade was so troubling to Gibson. By taking away the restraints of shame, it was showing Gibson—and those who read his sermon—that shame itself was not in fact natural but a social emotion whose presence or absence was spatially contingent. Contemporary descriptions of the masquerade seemed to confirm Gibson's pessimism. "When Wine, the Night, and a mix'd Company of Men and Women, jumbled together, had extinguish'd all Sense of Shame," one observer remarked, "there were Extravagancies of all sorts committed; each having that Pleasure ready prepar'd for him, to which his Nature was most inclin'd."<sup>26</sup> Shame, this suggests, was profoundly superfluous—a vaporous substance that was easily extinguished,

which certainly did not emanate from the inner depths of the soul. Humans, this suggested, were not naturally shameful and the masquerade brought out this shameless essence. "We are allow'd," noted a character in Benjamin Griffin's *Masquerade* (1717), "to be satirically rude to our Superiors, free with our Neighbours Wives, and talk lasciviously to the Sex in general, delighting their Fancies *without the Expense of a Blush* (emphasis added)."<sup>27</sup> The expense of the blush was the expense of shame which, it seems, was eminently expendable. Gibson, perhaps, was referring to these texts as well as the masquerades themselves when he wrote that "this pernicious Invention *intrenches* Vices and Profaneness against all the Assaults and Impressions of Shame."<sup>28</sup> Shame was a weapon against human nature: it was something that assaulted vice and profaneness, but it did so from the outside, as the former were lodged deep inside the self. The masquerades, as such, functioned as a kind of moral ex-ray. On the morning after a masquerade, shame was revealed as the flimsiest of lids for the boiling pot of viciousness beneath.

The 1720s, then, had many reasons to be pessimistic about shame. The fragmentation of the urban neighborhood, the rising discourse of masturbation, the vibrancy of masquerade culture—all suggested that shame was not a given but an endangered emotional quantity. But none of this would have been so disturbing if shame was not as critically important as it was perceived as being; if there was not, as it seemed, an aura of desperation surrounding attempts to ensure its presence despite its manifest evanescence. The pessimism about shame was reinforced by the dual realization that secular government was built upon the foundations of shame and, at the same time, could not be relied upon to produce it in its absence. A year before the molly house raids, in *Modest Defense of Publick Stews* (1724), Bernard Mandeville identified shame as one of three possible avenues of punishment. But shame, as he also acknowledged, could not be manipulated:

The first of these, indeed, might be omitted; for Shame is so very little in the power of the Laws, that it hardly deserves the Name of a Penalty. If the Pillory, and such like infamous Punishments, are more terrible for the Shame that attends them, than for the bodily Pain, it is not because such a Posture of a Man's Body, with his Neck through a Hole, is in itself ignominious, or that any Law can make it so; but because it publishes to the World, that a Man has been proven to commit such a certain Action, in its own Nature scandalous, which he is ashamed to have thus publicly made known.<sup>29</sup>

We get a sense, here, of how much was at stake and how little could be done about the problem.

It was in the midst of these debates over masquerades, masturbation, and the public implications of private vices, that the molly houses were raided, and in the context of the anxieties they raised about the shame as a less than natural

emotion that the mollies' sexual underground was exposed to the public view. It is then not surprising that the image of shamelessness pervaded Philogynus's essay in the *Weekly Journal, or British Gazetteer*, powerfully shaping his construction of the sodomite. The mollies' behavior had made it clear that man in general was "not asham'd to act Crimes that expose him to the Severity of the Laws, and the Contempt of the World."<sup>30</sup> What, then, could an essay like this accomplish? Philogynus did not address this question: instead, he presented the reader with various iterations of the shameless sodomite. A Savoyard soldier convicted of sodomy was "so deprav'd and ruin'd, that he could contain nothing within him" and was not "asham'd to confess, that he receiv'd that Debility by humane Conversation, and the vile Practice of Buggery."<sup>31</sup> Nor had the executions succeeded in shaming the mollies, for the mollies had pleaded innocence, "with all the Assurance imaginable . . . when their Guilt flies in their Faces, and crys for Vengeance against them."<sup>32</sup> Not until the afterlife would the sodomites be shamed effectively. There they would be:

cover'd with Shame and Confusion when they appear at the last Day before the Tribunal and Judgment Seat of Heaven, where all Secrets must be expos'd and reveal'd, and a just Punishment inflicted by an enrag'd Being, without any Regard to Quality or Dignity.<sup>33</sup>

Secular governance, as described by Philogynus, had not been successful in shaming a people immune from shame. It was here that the essay came in, endeavoring to complete an unfinished job, but confirming, in the process, the cultural threat of the shameless individual.

The critical point is that the mollies were not disturbing for being anomalous but, on the contrary, for confirming the shamelessness already apparent in a range of urban scenes from masquerades to masturbation confessions.<sup>34</sup> They were rendering yet another blow to shame by making it increasingly apparent that humans in general and Londoners in particular were not naturally shameful. It was possible, they revealed, that people could progressively lose their shame—just as they might also slowly lose their eyesight—under certain conditions. And execution, they clearly revealed, was far from a solution. This is what Philogynus was observing in the mollies, an observation that was all the more disturbing when it seemed to confirm an already powerful—albeit hazy—hypothesis about the unstable relationship between shame, sociability, and human nature. The piece then doubled as an attack on the mollies and a discourse on the limits of shame. It joined the literature of masquerades in creating what Foucault calls "an epistemeologico-juridical formation," a matrix of thought which emerges at the nexus of the penal law and the human sciences.<sup>35</sup> Shame was being wielded as a weapon in the battle against sodomy. But shame itself was collapsing under pressure from the impact, splintering into a plethora of potentially irreconcilable fragments. The knowledge being

formed was knowledge about the limited power of shame, fed back into social knowledge of 1720s London.

This knowledge produced anxiety but so did the anxiety fuel the further production of knowledge. It is after the debates of the 1720s that Horatio and Cleomenes debated the properties of shamelessness in *Fable of the Bees, Part II* (1729). Hence Horatio echoed the anti-molly tracts when insisting that nobody could trust such “shameless People that are below Infamy, and matter not what is said or thought of them.” And Cleomenes participated in an urban debate when he argued that Horatio was mistaken, that “whom we call Shameless are not more destitute of Pride than their Betters,” and that “there is nothing that some Men may not be taught to be ashamed of.”<sup>36</sup> This debate lay at the limits of the Enlightenment. “To understand human Nature requires Study and Application,” Horatio claimed, right after saying “some Men indulge their Pride in being shameless.”<sup>37</sup> The mollies are not being discussed, here, but we get a glimpse of how the bewildering transformation of the urban fabric, of which the molly house phenomenon was one critical, unforgettable chapter, had agitated the period’s thinkers into something we might very cautiously call the enlightenment of urban shame.

The conversation between Horatio and Cleomenes was also part of the process through which the public and the private were differentiated and demarcated, the process with which we began this discussion. It is a reminder of how the truth about the private and the public was that things could not ultimately be very easily classified as one or the other. The division, in all its arbitrariness, seemed a constant invitation to paradox. “Throughout the century,” writes Castle, “the masquerade mediated in a paradoxical fashion between public and private spheres. Behind the mask, one preserved the essential moral and psychological privileges of privacy, while participating at the same time in the spontaneous exchanges of the group.”<sup>38</sup> The masquerade was public for being nominally open to anyone—for publicizing the private sphere—and private for being held behind closed doors, thus excluding those who could not afford the entrance price or learn how to behave in them. A paradoxical relationship between public and private is evident also in the cultural life of masturbation; a text like *Onania* established it as a private vice—a subject of particular alarm for a private, commercial society—at the same time as it turned it into a public problem.

Philogynus’s vision of the mollies deepens the paradoxical vision of the relationship between public and private, validating what was already known through other urban discussions and thickening the mystery of the paradox. What was true of masquerades and masturbation was also true of the molly house: it was its privacy that turned it into a subject of public concern and object of public exposition; at the same time, its ostensible publicity reinforced the premium on private gestures and practices. Philogynus’s desire to describe the slippery quality of shame is a source and symptom of the same interest and

same desire that we see in these other urban texts. It is my suggestion, then, that we situate a text like Philogynus's vicious rant amidst this field of cultural interest, one that also encompasses Enlightenment treatises like Shaftesbury's *Characteristicks* and moral polemics like *Conference About Whoring*, all of which combine an interest in locating the mechanisms of the paradox that governed the public-private relationship with a desire to control or reconfigure that mechanism as fully as it was possible. In other words, Philogynus's reactionary polemic was, more than just a generic example of a moral diatribe against the effeminate other, also an event in the history of a paradox most fully articulated in *The Fable of the Bees*.

\* \* \*

Beneath the fear of the shameless city—the city shared by Mandeville and Philogynus—was the fear of a city of beasts. The 1720s were a decade of Wild Men and rabbit-birthing women, of Swift's Yahoos and magazine tales about talking birds. Beastliness and shamelessness were two specters that pointed back and forth at each other producing a vision of the beastly-shameless type. That beasts were icons of shamelessness is suggested, for instance, by George Hickes when he evokes a man so surrendered to his lust that he has "become as brutal, and shameless as a Beast."<sup>39</sup> Shame was one of the sole guards against the beast within, and shame was also endangered as the boundary between man and beast was, like the boundary between the public and private, crossed more often than ever before. We see this at work in *Modest Defence of Chastity* (1726), which, like *Conference About Whoring*, was partly written as a response to Mandeville's *Modest Defense of Publick Stews*:

Whereas *Shamefacedness*, or *Modesty*, is a Curb, Restraint, and Preservative against committing a Crime; and *Shame*, upon reflecting after a Commission, may prove an Occasion of Repentance; filthy Persons, who sneak about in the dark, or skulk behind a Vizor, let loose a wild Beast that no Body owns. This Beast tramples upon Virtue, without the common Check or Restraint of innate Modesty, and without the common Danger of being discovered and accountable.<sup>40</sup>

Shame was the thing that separated men from beasts, and the absence of shame portended a city of beasts. The fear of the mollies was the fear of such a city. The grotesque spectacle of beast-like men thriving in the city was as troubling as it was for confirming the reality of a naturally beastly urban society.

The bestial molly is vividly apparent in a text which describes Dalton's satirical foray into London's criminal underground. The molly house is one of several urban scenes he visits, one amongst the several visions he provides of the urban underworld. Dalton's mollies were definitively beastly. These were a people whose appetites were "damnable, unnatural, and beastly."<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the whole community was unnatural and beastly: when they first encountered

Dalton, "they doubted not" that he was of their "beastly and unnatural Community."<sup>42</sup> A Covent Garden man "offer'd such beastly Actions to *Sukey Haws*, as would not only astonish the Reader, but scarce gain Credit, the Profuseness was so unnatural."<sup>43</sup> Beastliness is not incidental but definitive of the mollies described in this text; deprived of their beastliness, Dalton's sodomites might also have been less sodomitical.

Beastly humans were not, of course, specific to this period—they are part of the classical inheritance.<sup>44</sup> What was different about the 1720s and, in particular, the mid-1720s, was the density and particularity of this fear, which fed off of powerful contemporary currents of satire, moral philosophy, and scientific uncertainty. "There is nothing more diverting," began an opinion piece in the *Freeholder's Journal* (1722), "than to see with what Authority the School-Men put Limits to the Knowledge of Beasts."<sup>45</sup> The point was that the faculties of knowledge were not a reliable point of separation between men and beasts. It is hard to overestimate how much the cultural life of this moment was fueled by the ambiguity of the man-beast boundary. The growth of satire, as Richard Nash has shown, inspired crossings across the boundary between the bestial and the human. Wild men and feral children represent what he calls "a dangerous and degraded vision" against which the category of the human itself was being defined.<sup>46</sup> This resulted, to an extent, from the satirical usefulness of the human beast: "The satirist," he writes, "metaphorically reenacting the liminal predations of these creatures, subverts this reassuring boundary formation by revealing the bestial within the human."<sup>47</sup> Satire and moral philosophy are both unspecific to the 1720s, but there are few decades in which the two combined so fully and intensely. It is revealing that *Gulliver's Travels* (1726)—a moral philosophical satire replete with figures of man-beasts—was published in 1726, the year of the molly house raids.<sup>48</sup> The sodomites could be human as well as bestial for the same reason that Swift's Yahoos could be both things at once: a cultural fixation with this particular form of hybridity.

Also essential to the fixation are two cultural highlights of 1726: the rabbit-birthing woman and the Wild Man of Hanover. Like the story of Mother Clapp's molly house, the story of Mary Toft, a woman who claimed to have given birth to rabbits, exploded across the public sphere in 1726. The case of Toft suggests how much anxieties about the man-beast boundary were reinforced, in the mid-1720s, by uncertainties about the ability of science to adjudicate what was and was not true.<sup>49</sup> Also reinforcing that anxiety was a prurient fascination with this boundary, as suggested by the case of "Peter the Wild Boy," the name given to the mentally handicapped man who was found in the forests of Hanover (Germany), having lived there all his life, only to be taken to an enraptured London in the Spring of 1726.<sup>50</sup> Together, these events produced a sense, diffused in texts like *It Cannot Rain But it Pours: Or, London Strow'd with Rarities* (1726), of living in an age where men and beasts were closer than ever before to each other, and where this proximity perpetually renewed the effort to search for new configurations.<sup>51</sup>

It was in the midst of this obsession with rarities that the molly houses were raided. Like Mary Toft and Peter the Wild Boy, the mollies were described as being disturbing for what they suggested about the movability of the man-beast boundary. Like Toft and the Wild Boy, this delight thrived on a sense of uncertainty, for all were strange but (ostensibly, possibly) true. The bestial mollies' courtesies and weddings—described in Dalton's satirical narrative—were disturbing and exciting for the same reason that the rabbit-birthing woman or the Wild Boy were: they were utterly strange and utterly true. If they could exist, then the world in general was full of surprises, as suggested already by other instances of animal-human continuity. A broader cultural fascination with the liminal space between bestial and human explains Dalton's justification for entering yet another molly house, so he might "discover something of the Intrigues between these Beasts in the Shape of Men."<sup>52</sup> It was with the knowledge that "those Villains have not the Hearts of Men, any more than manly Affections" that he went undercover as a sodomite.<sup>53</sup> In this and other descriptions of the sodomites, he drew from and pooled back into to the Mary Toft and Wild Boy moment by deepening an already rich confusion surrounding the beast-human boundary.

Amongst the forces behind this confusion was the simultaneous use of animals as measures of and contrasts to sodomitical depravity. It was a common rhetorical move to strategically and ironically deploy animals to expose particular human failings, and the mollies were frequently caught in the moral confusion produced by this irony. When anti-sodomite writers occasionally remembered that beasts were natural, they also occasionally remarked that the sodomites were worse than beasts. Hence Philogynus begins by claiming that the kinds of sodomites represented by the mollies "*exceed* the very Beasts of the Fields in the Filthiness of their Abominations." Beasts provide a benchmark for judging the natural, and the mollies fall short of this benchmark:

The Birds of the Air couple Male and Female to propagate Generation, and every Animal moves by a natural Instinct; but Man, exclusive from all others, forms Ideas destructive in himself, and grows fond of new Inventions, which are repugnant to divine Institution, and the fundamental Laws of Nature.<sup>54</sup>

In order to use animals as foils to men, and to equate propagation with the "natural instinct," Philogynus is compelled to place beasts above men. This, however, shifts in the conclusion, when the beastly sodomite makes another appearance:

It is certainly a plain Demonstration, that if there was not a Check given to such vile and uncommon, brutish and beastly Actions, the World in Process of Time would be unpeopled, and dwindle once again to its primitive Chaos.<sup>55</sup>

In the course of a page, beasts transform from icons of glorious regeneration to symbols of an imminent bio-apocalypse. What is most interesting is how the cultural meaning of sodomy keeps transforming in relation to the cultural meaning of beasts. Each of these subtle rhetorical shifts is also a shift in the meaning of sodomy. The confusion about the morality of beasts—as contained in words like “bestial,” “beast,” “brute,” or “brutish”—becomes constitutive of sodomy as cultural construct.

At times almost invisible, at other times spectacular, the cultural turbulence of urban life was always infusing this confusion with life. The urbanity of this confusion becomes clearer when we expand our lens to encompass earlier and later issues of the publication in which Philogynus launched his tirade. The collapsing boundary between man and beast can also be witnessed in a letter from a 1724 issue of *Weekly Journal of Saturday's Post*, satirically announcing the arrival of “a perfect new Sort of Gentlemen Masqueraders” dressed as baboons, bears, asses, and cormorants: in short, observed this self-professed “Anti-Masque,” “a compleat Set of brutal and feather'd Features are to be expos'd, to indicate the Politeness of our modern Gentry.”<sup>56</sup> In the next few years, events like Mary Toft and books like *Gulliver's Travels* added to the power of the bestial as a satirical trope, and it was in this context that Philogynus repeatedly attacked the mollies for their beastliness. A week later, Philogynus would publish another article about what he called “culls”—a 1720s version of the sadomasochistic fetish club—another point in the busy intersection of beastliness and sexual depravity. Amongst this group were the “*Snarling Culls*,” who provided a “handsome Entertainment for their Ladies of Pleasure” by lying under the table and barking while women threw them bones: “these,” he suggested, “certainly must have a monstrous Birth, and owe their Original to a canine Litter, because their Actions so much resemble the Beast.”<sup>57</sup> Nor were they alone in their beastliness. Another group of culls would “not scruple (Oh swinish and brutish Action!) to lick up the very Excrements of Nature.”<sup>58</sup> Beastly though the sodomites were, it seemed that they were not alone in their beastliness. The story of the culls was a continuation of the mollies' story: the story of a beastly metropolis. Far from anomalous, the mollies were typical in their prognostic of London's beastly future. “The town of London,” as described in a travelogue a few years later, “is a kind of large forest of wild beasts, where most of us range about at a venture, and are equally savage, and mutually destructive of another.”<sup>59</sup> If the mollies were beasts, then they would thrive in a city where beastliness was almost definitive of citizenship. The beastly metropolis came into view behind the beastly sodomite.

\* \* \*

What, then, of shame? Where was shame in the beastly metropolis? It is most accurate, perhaps, to think of these fears—of beastliness and shamelessness—as connected at multiple points, with the mollies as a prominent point of intercon-

nection. Since shame helped separate men from animals, the collapse of the human-animal boundary was likely, then, to compound the fear of shamelessness, expressed in images of beastly humans, of which the beastly mollies were a particularly colorful and astonishing example. In all their beastliness, they confirmed the specter of a beastly urbanity which pointed back at the scarcity of shame. And if shame, like compassion, was an affective force which supposedly separated men from beasts, then such flagrant shamelessness confirmed and foreboded the beastly metropolis.

As shamelessness and beastliness worked in tandem, producing the idea of the beastly sodomite unleashed by shamelessness, they also impacted the mental association between sodomy and effeminacy. The mollies, as described in these post-executions texts, are not just effeminate but shamelessly effeminate and beastly in their effeminacy. "Those effeminate Villains," says Philogynus, "are much fonder of a new Convert, than a Bully would be of a Mistress at any Time."<sup>60</sup> Statements like this confirm the relevance of effeminacy and, simultaneously, alert us to the dangers of reducing the concept to a stable prejudice. In this case, for instance, the effeminate sodomite is ironically analogized to the putatively "masculine" bully, thus raising questions of whether the effeminacy we imagine is the same as that which is pictured here by Philogynus. It seems that, in this particular case, the word "effeminate" refers less to a supposedly passive feminine weakness than it does to the mollies' transvestic theatrics which are rendered all the more terrifying by their physical strength. The mollies might have been "effeminate" but effeminacy was itself unstable, combining easily with a variety of ostensibly masculine attributes, thus revealing the boundary between effeminate and masculine to be just as weak as the boundary between man and beast. Neither shamelessness nor bestiality was antithetical to effeminacy—certainly not the aggressive predatorial effeminacy that was being described here.

The complexity of effeminacy is revealed in the molly house anthem that Dalton claims to be reprinting, and is possibly inventing, in which the mollies are not definitively effeminate so much as defiantly autonomous: physically powerful, voracious men, protected by the structures of private association and secured by the weight of classical precedent:

Let the Fops of the Town upbraid Us, for an unnatural Trade,  
 We value not Man nor Maid;  
*But among our own selves we'll be free.*

How sweet is the pleasant Sin?  
 With a Boy about Sixteen,  
 That has got no Hair on his Chin,  
*And a Countenance like a Rose,*  
*And a Countenance, &c.*

Here we will enjoy  
 The simpering Boy,  
 And with him we'll toy;  
*The Devil may take the Froes,*  
*The Devil, &c.*

*Achilles* that Hero great,  
 Had *Patroclus* for a Mate;  
 Nay, *Jove* he would have a Lad,  
*The beautiful Ganymede,*  
*The Beautiful &c.*

Why should we then  
 Be daunted, when  
 Both Gods and Men  
*Approve the pleasant Deed,*  
*Approve the &c.*<sup>61</sup>

In the current scholarly narrative, the vision at work here—of the sexually predatorial rake-like sodomite—had become outdated by the 1720s, eclipsed entirely by the effeminate molly. The mollies, as Laurence Senelick has argued, “shift from the universally promiscuous and aggressive rake and fop, to the effeminate molly to a purely comic stereotype leached of sexuality.”<sup>62</sup> The trial of Gabriel Laurence, one of the sodomites executed in 1726, was, according to Haggerty, a confirmation of Randolph Trumbach’s argument about the waning of the rake-like sodomite: “what does seem to be emerging here is a sexual position that is as far from that of Rochester as it would be possible to imagine.”<sup>63</sup> The mollies’ anthem in Dalton’s narrative complicates this narrative. The song *begins* by pitting the mollies against fops, and genders the mollies as masculine, not feminine, in their defiance of foppery. The figure of the fop emerges from the crucible of the bourgeois, coffee-shopping world of Augustan London, whose most prized possessions were dangerously close to effeminate. “To purge the coffeehouses of foppery,” as Brian Cowan has written, “required that the patrons learn to distinguish between politeness and priggishness, between tastefulness and ostentation, and between really valid news and worthless gossip.”<sup>64</sup> It was not, however, easy to make these distinctions, which is why foppish effeminacy flickered at the edges of every urban social interaction. The role of fops in the mollies’ anthem is suggestive of this urban context. Fops reveal how difficult it was to expurgate the effeminate from the urban, and it was in the context of a nominally effeminate city that the mollies are portrayed as anti-foppish in their autonomy: masculine, not feminine, in their defiant, self-reliant marginality. “Queers,” writes King, “restored effeminacy as a resistant practice.”<sup>65</sup> But that is not what is happening in this anthem, which responds to the particular gender trouble of the 1720s by raising the fear of autonomous

sodomites, not effeminate ones. The autonomy under question is, implicitly, an autonomy from shame. This is clear from the first stanza: “Let the Fops of the Town upbraid Us . . . *among our own selves we’ll be free.*” Fops were the enforcers of shame: shameful, not shameless, their shamefulnes resulting equally from their politeness and priggishness. The mollies’ shamelessness seemed to follow from their blanket refusal to being civilized by the supposedly foppish element in society.

The fear of the mollies, as produced in this song, was also the fear of the autonomy allowed by a culture of association. The image at the heart of the song—of mollies forming into private associations—is not exactly the lingering residue of the rake-like Restoration sodomite. It is more evocative of Ned Ward’s *Secret History of London Clubs* (London, 1709), in which the molly house stood alongside urban groups such as the Kit-Kat Club, the Atheistical Club, and the Farting Club. The song is a reminder that molly house culture, as Tim Hitchcock has noted, was an aspect of the “phenomenal growth in new forms of public culture which characterized the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and 18<sup>th</sup> century London in particular”—that it resulted from the same processes which led to the growth of debating societies and chapels.<sup>66</sup> As Hitchcock writes, “if unique handshakes, jargon, dress and ritual are the hallmarks of such a culture, then the Masonic order fits as well as the molly houses, and no artificial intellectual barrier should necessarily suggest that we need understand the two phenomena in different ways.”<sup>67</sup> If the molly houses emerged from the crucible of a familiar eighteenth-century world of clubs, societies, and coffeehouses—then they could not be dismissed on these grounds by contemporaries. This is the anxiety which this song is negotiating, rehearsing and celebrating: an anxiety about what the city might allow and must allow. Like the other anxieties discussed, it was neither specific to the mid-1720s nor irrelevant to our understanding of what distinguished this moment from others. The mollies described in this song were the sodomitical and unsupervised version of the heterosexual and government-overseen public stews that Mandeville had proposed, a year earlier, in *Modest Defense of Public Stews* (1725).<sup>68</sup> The voice of Mandeville could perhaps even be heard in the background to the song: a voice of sexual impunity, strengthened by the mechanisms of association. The voice was not delusional: it was pointing at a transformation that was utterly real. The masquerades were one amongst several examples of the spaces of London becoming spaces of pleasure. Whether the song was real or whether it was made up, it is clear that problem of the mollies—and the problem of sodomy beyond it—was the problem of a city in which spaces of pleasure, spaces defined by private interests, be they farting, atheism, or sodomy, could no more be controlled than the city itself could be wished away. Shameless, bestial, and autonomous, the mollies were at once subhuman and ultra-urban.

Dalton was a real person, and even if this song was invented, which it may or may not have been, his reprinting of it was not without consequence. As *Mist's Weekly Journal* reported in May of 1728, the playful scene he described was inadvertently consequential: "John Dalton, an Evidence against the Street Robbers now in Newgate, has occasion'd a strict Search to be made for some Sodomites, which, 'tis thought, he only innocently mention'd in his Narrative to illustrate it with a little Variety, by which, 'tis hoped, he'll do more Service in Jest than he intended to do in Earnest."<sup>69</sup> With this line, we get a sense of the complicated relationship between text and context, the shifting plane in which law and culture could shape each other without ever being very clearly in synch. We get a sense, also, of the uncertain place occupied by the figure of the beastly, shameless sodomite—a place between the city of innocent jest and the other, much darker, but equally real, city of raids and executions.

What, then, can we make of the post-execution texts of 1726? What, in effect, do they tell us about how sodomy became an "utterly confused category"? In *Discipline and Punish* (1975), Foucault suggests that we pay attention to the inadvertencies of punitive acts:

Do not concentrate the study of the punitive mechanisms on their "repressive" effects alone, on their "punishment" aspects alone, but situate them in a whole series of their possible positive effects, even if these seem marginal at first sight. As a consequence, regard punishment as a complex social function.<sup>70</sup>

As Dalton and Philogynus spread the shame of sodomy into the cultural stratosphere of 1720s London, they produced a *possibly* positive effect or, at the very least, contributed to the "complex social function" of ideological integration. These texts integrate the specter of sodomy into the particular moral chaos of 1720s London. As London transformed, shameless, unnatural, and bestial sodomites became less anomalous and more typical. Preceded by a myriad of urban phenomena and foreboding others, they dissolved into the chaos of urban life. The shameless urban sodomite became an iconic vision of the future: the ultimate urban citizen.

Let me conclude, then, with a very brief glance into this future. The social forces producing a vibrant discourse about the vagaries of shame—the expanding private realm, the fragmentation of neighborhoods—were specific neither to London nor to the 1720s. Similar processes were at work, for instance, in mid-eighteenth-century Bristol.<sup>71</sup> It is then not surprising that the anxieties they generated would continue to shape perceptions of sodomy. In 1756, Bristolite Emanuel Collins would attack sodomites by evoking their shamelessness: "undaunted and upright they crowd our publick Walks, unaw'd by Guilt, and unappal'd by the Fear of any Impeachment."<sup>72</sup> The outrage was not at the crime of sodomy but the public style of the citizen sodomite, whose greatest protection was the openness of the city. By inveighing against sodomites, Collins was

drawing from a concentrated pool of reactionary sentiment about the urban experience writ large. Less than a decade later, in 1763, this vision of the sodomite would reappear when London molly houses were raided again:

So public in their crimes, so daring grown,  
 They almost take a pride to have them known . . .  
 Go where we will, at ev'ry time and place,  
 SODOM confronts, and stares us in the face.<sup>73</sup>

Charles Churchill, as King notes, did not originate this rant—it was just one he “articulated in paradigmatic form.”<sup>74</sup> If Sodom confronted Churchill in his face it was because sodomy, thus conceived, thrived in the ecology of a public society of private individuals: the same which had impelled Philogynus to issue a similar attack, decades earlier; the same which had led to the declining prosecution of public insult and the intensified fear of masturbation. Such a society, in the 1720s, was as fearful as it was precisely because it was also imminent and, arguably, manifestly existent.

The shameless urban future lies, ultimately, beneath the recurrent trope of London as a second Sodom which enabled the specific fear of sodomy to commingle with a generalized fear of the urban experience. Many things happened in this zone of fear: London was reimagined in the image of Sodom, Sodom remade in the image of London, and Sodom used as a benchmark of London's extreme depravity. “And thus we mov'd towards *London Town*, / That second *Sodom* of Renown,” said Ned Ward in one of his treatises—but it was a generalized depravity, not the specific sin of sodomy, that concerned him in the surrounding lines.<sup>75</sup> “London is another *Sodom*,” a Mr. Seneca wrote to *Weekly Journal and British Gazetteer*, months before the executions of 1726, only to elaborate that “In *Sodom* one Vice was notorious; but *London* is a common receptacle for all Manner of Wickedness.”<sup>76</sup> Here again, we see how Sodom could animate a fear of London without being one and the same as it, how the road from Sodom could lead to London and then back to Sodom, all without being clearly marked. The road, as we see again in these texts, was paved by shame. The real object of this author's opprobrium was *The Fable of the Bees*: a text that was “Shame to all that's Sacred,” which showed that “Vice walks no longer in Masquerade.”<sup>77</sup> Later in the century, a bookseller named James Lackington described the London of his youth as a city of irreligious, foul-mouthed drunks, a place so rampant with vice, so overfilled with iniquity, that it seemed as if every hour would be its last. “However,” he noted, “I at length concluded that if London was a second *Sodom*, I was a second *Lot*; and these comfortable ideas reconciled me to living in it.”<sup>78</sup> Contained within this ironic, irreverent embrace of city life is a glimpse of the world that we also see in the anti-sodomitical tracts of the 1720s. Here is a glimpse of the shameless urban future.

## NOTES

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1. Tim Hitchcock, *English Sexualities, 1700–1800* (New York, 1997), 70.
2. See Randolph Trumbach, "Sex, Gender, and Sexual Identity in Modern Culture: Male Sodomy and Female Prostitution in Enlightenment London," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 2, no. 2 (October, 1991): 186–203, 190; Laurence Senelick, "Mollies or Men of Mode? Sodomy and the Eighteenth-Century London Stage," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 1, no. 1 (July, 1990): 33–67, 50; and David Kuchta, *The Three-Piece Suit and Modern Masculinity: England, 1550–1850* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 2002), 100–101.
3. George Haggerty, *Men in Love: Masculinity and Sexuality in the Eighteenth Century* (New York, 1999), 57–58.
4. I have engaged this subject in a previous article. See Farid Azfar, "Genealogy of an Execution: The Sodomite, the Bishop, and the Anomaly of 1726," *The Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 3 (July 2012): 568–93.
5. Haggerty, "Keyhole Testimony: Witnessing Sodomy in the Eighteenth Century," *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 44, no. 2–3 (2003): 167–82, 172.
6. See Thomas Alan King, *The Gendering of Men, 1600–1750, vol. 2: Queer Articulations* (Madison, 2008); and Rictor Norton, *Mother Clapp's Molly House: The Gay Subculture in England, 1700–1830* (London, 1992).
7. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 55 (14 May 1726); James Dalton, *A genuine narrative of all the street robberies committed since October last, by James Dalton, and his accomplices, who are now in Newgate, to be executed* (London, 1728), 34.
8. I am preceded, here, by Tanya Cassidy, "People, Place, and Performance: Theoretically Revisiting Mother Clapp's Molly House," *Queer People: Negotiations and Expressions of Homosexuality*, ed. Chris Mounsey and Caroline Gonda (Lewisburg, 2007), 99–113.
9. For the counter-argument, see Kuchta, who writes that "what aristocracy and sodomy shared was an increasingly anomalous status within their respective systems; or rather, what they shared was the function of establishing the regularity of those systems by the fact of their own anomaly" (312). My point is not that they were not anomalous—rather, that their *increasingly* anomalous status does not explain the fear they inspired.
10. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume One: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York, 1978), 101.
11. Bernard Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees: Or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits* (London, 1724); Robert Burrow, *Civil Society and Government Vindicated from the Charge of Being Founded On, And Preserv'd By, Dishonest Arts: In a Sermon Preached for the . . . Lord Mayor* (London, 1723), 18–19. It bears noting that the first edition of *Fable of the Bees* appeared in 1713, but it was the 1723 reprint that sparked an enormous controversy.
12. Miles Ogborn, *Spaces of Modernity: London's Geographies, 1680–1780* (New York, 1988), 115.
13. Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man* (Cambridge, 1974), 19.
14. See E. J. Hundert, *The Enlightenment Fable: Bernard Mandeville and the Discovery of Society* (Cambridge, 1994).
15. Robert B. Shoemaker, "The Decline of Public Insult in London, 1660–1800," *Past and Present* 169, no. 1 (November, 2000): 97–131, 130.
16. Shoemaker, 101–2.

17. *A Conference About Whoring* (London, 1725), 7–9.
18. Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury, *Characteristicks of Men, Manners, Opinions, Times. Volume Two* (London, 1711), 419.
19. Hundert, 132.
20. Thomas Laqueur, *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation* (Cambridge, Mass., 2003), 18.
21. Laqueur, 229.
22. *Onania; Or, the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution, and all its Frightful Consequences. The eighth edition* (London, 1723); *Onania; Or, the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution, and all its Frightful Consequences. The fifteenth edition* (London, 1730).
23. *Onania; Or, the Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution* (London, 1718).
24. Terry Castle, *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction* (Stanford, 1986).
25. Edmund Gibson, *A Sermon Preached Before the Society for the Reformation of Manners* (London, 1723), 19. On Gibson's efforts to shut down the masquerades, see Norman Sykes, *Edmund Gibson: Bishop of London 1669–1748: A Study in Politics & Religion in the Eighteenth Century* (London, 1926), 187–91.
26. *The Honest Gentleman*, 26 November 1718.
27. Benjamin Griffin, *The Masquerade: Or, An Evening's Intrigue* (London, 1717), 22.
28. Griffin, 22.
29. Phil-Porney [Bernard Mandeville], *A Modest Defence of Publick Stews: Or, An Essay Upon Whoring, as it is Now Practis'd in These Kingdoms. Written by a Layman* (London, 1724), 52–53.
30. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 55 (14 May 1726).
31. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 55.
32. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 55.
33. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 55.
34. On the anomaly counter-argument, see Kuchta, 312.
35. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York, 1977), 23.
36. Mandeville, *The Fable of the Bees, Part II* (London, 1729), 82–83.
37. Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees, Part II*, 82–83.
38. Castle, "The Culture of Travesty: Sexuality and Masquerade in Eighteenth Century London," in *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment*, ed. G. S. Rousseau and Roy Porter, (Chapel Hill, 1998), 156–80, 172.
39. George Hickes, *Sermons on Several Subjects* (London, 1715), 12.
40. *A Modest Defense of Chastity* (London, 1726), 34.
41. Dalton, 37, 32.
42. Dalton, 27.
43. Dalton, 38.
44. See Joyce Salisbury, "Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages," in *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, ed. Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior (New York, 1997), 9–23; and Charles F. Saylor, "Man, Animal, and the Bestial in Lucretius," *The Classical Journal* 67, no. 4 (May, 1972): 306–16.
45. *Freeholder's Journal*, 6 March 1723.
46. Richard Nash, *Wild Enlightenment: The Borders of Human Identity in the Eighteenth Century* (2003), 29. See also James Steintrager, *Cruel Delight: Enlightenment Culture and the Inhuman* (Bloomington, 2004). The early eighteenth century, as Steintrager has shown, witnessed a process wherein humans differentiated themselves from beasts by demonstrating their sympathy for beasts (45).
47. Nash, 29.
48. Jonathan Swift, *Travels into several remote nations of the world. In four parts. By Lemuel Gulliver* (London, 1726).

49. As Lisa Forman Cody has shown, the case of Toft was not the case of popular superstitions trumping public science; it was the case of science being tested at its most ostensibly logical. Toft's claims did not controvert but rested on the precepts liberally diffused by the Royal Society, and this, as Cody observes, did not escape the attention of the satirists (*Birthing the Nation: Sex, Science, and the Conception of Eighteenth-Century Britons* [Oxford, 2005], 144).

50. Solomon Audrian, *The Manifesto of Lord Peter* (London, 1726). See also Julia Douthwaite, *The Wild Girl, Natural Man, and the Monster: Dangerous Experiments in the Age of Enlightenment* (Chicago, 2002).

51. John Arbuthnot, *It cannot rain but it pours: or, London strow'd with Rarities. Being, An Account of the Arrival of a White Bear, at the House of Mr. Ratcliff in Bishopsgate-Street: As also of the Faustina, the celebrated Italian Singing Woman; And of the Copper-Farthing Dean from Ireland. And Lastly, Of the wonderful Wild Man that was nursed in the Woods of Germany by a Wild Beast, hunted and taken in Toyls; how he behaveth himself like a dumb Creature, and is a Christian like one of us, being call'd Peter; and how he was brought to Court all in Green, to the great Astonishment of the Quality and Gentry* (London, 1726).

52. Dalton, 35.

53. Dalton, 36.

54. Dalton, 36.

55. Dalton, 36.

56. *Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post*, 8 February 1724.

57. *The Weekly Journal: or, The British Gazetteer*, 14 May 1726.

58. *The Weekly Journal: or, The British Gazetteer*, 14 May 1726.

59. *A Trip Through the Town: Containing Observations on the Customs and Manners of the Age* (London, 1735), 1–2.

60. *The Weekly Journal: or, The British Gazetteer*, 14 May 1726.

61. *The Weekly Journal: or, The British Gazetteer*, 14 May 1726.

62. Senelick, 34.

63. Haggerty, *Men in Love*, 58.

64. Brian Cowan, "What was Masculine About the Public Sphere? Gender and the Coffeehouse Milieu in Post-Restoration England," *History Workshop Journal* 51 (Spring 2001): 127–57, 139.

65. King, 134.

66. Hitchcock, 75.

67. Hitchcock, 75.

68. Phil-Porney, *Modest Defense of Public Stews* (1725).

69. *Mist's Weekly Journal*, 4 May 1728.

70. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 23.

71. See Steve Poole, "'Bringing Great Shame Upon this City': Sodomy, the Courts and the Civic Idiom in Eighteenth-Century Bristol," *Urban History* 34, no. 1 (2007): 114–26.

72. Emanuel Collins, *The Saints Backsliding: Or, The Remarkable Case of a Late Reverend, Holy, Anabaptistical Preacher Belonging to their Meeting in Bristol, who Had Been too Fond a Pastor of the Ram Lambs, to the Great Offence of the Young Neglected Ewes, to which is Added an Historical Account of his Armour, Intrigues, Successes and Disappointments amongst his Male Sweethearts* (Bristol, 1756), cited by Poole, 114–16.

73. Charles Churchill, *Poems* (London, 1765), 65.

74. King, 156.

75. Edward Ward, *The Wandring Spy: Or, The Merry Observator* (London, 1724), 47.

76. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 46 (12 March 1726).

77. *Weekly Journal or British Gazetteer*, issue 46.

78. James Lackington, *Memoirs of the first forty-five years of the life of James Lackington, the present bookseller in Chiswell-street, Moorfields, London. Written by himself* (London, 1791), 126.