

3-2016

Neoclassicism in eighteenth-century literature: an analysis of realistic conventions in Cleland and Hogarth

Norah Alsuhaibani

DePaul University, norah.alsuhaibani@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://via.library.depaul.edu/etd>

Recommended Citation

Alsuhaibani, Norah, "Neoclassicism in eighteenth-century literature: an analysis of realistic conventions in Cleland and Hogarth" (2016). *College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Theses and Dissertations*. 206.
<https://via.library.depaul.edu/etd/206>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at Digital Commons@DePaul. It has been accepted for inclusion in College of Liberal Arts & Social Sciences Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@DePaul. For more information, please contact digitalservices@depaul.edu.

**Neoclassicism in Eighteenth-Century Literature: An Analysis of Realistic
Conventions in Cleland and Hogarth**

A Thesis
Presented in
Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts

March, 2016

By
Norah Alsuhaibani

Department of English
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences

DePaul University
Chicago, Illinois

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

First and Foremost, I would like to thank God, the Almighty, for having made everything possible and giving me strength and courage to do this work.

Then I would like to thank my thesis committee —Dr. John Shanahan and Dr. Kathleen Lubey for their unwavering support and assistance. They provided guidance in all areas that helped me accomplish my research goals and enjoy myself in the process.

My friend Emily Schmidt who was involved with refining some ideas and proof reading was extremely helpful to me during this time; I would like to thank her as well.

Finally, I would like to thank my parents, Saleh Alsuhaibani and Muneerah Alsuhaibani who supported me during my studies and my husband Ali Alsouhibani who shared every moment of this process.

NSA

The purpose of this thesis is to study comparatively some creative works produced in the era of emerging realism, especially those that have notable effects on their audiences. The works of John Cleland, the novelist, and William Hogarth, the engraver, will be the center of my study. First, I will give an overview of some general characteristics of eighteenth-century literary theory that will be foundational to the analysis in this paper. I will give an overview of neoclassical theories, showing mixed reception to a re-emergence of classical doctrines about literature in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. After that, I will study comparatively the lives and the works of Cleland and Hogarth. My close analysis of Cleland's novels and Hogarth's Progress engravings series will document different ways realism, didacticism, and amusement are valued and presented. The last part of the thesis will offer close readings of several works by the two figures, including the history of reception of those works.

To fully examine the difference between realistic works and other literary forms and modes, I will rely on Ian Watt's influential account of formal realism in *The Rise of The Novel*. What differentiates the novel, Watt argues, is that it has a unique way in representing different human experiences than other literary forms. He writes:

If the novel were realistic merely because it saw life from the seamy side, it would only be an inverted romance; but in fact it surely attempts to portray all the varieties of human experience, and not merely those suited to one particular literary perspective: the novel's realism does not reside in the kind of life it presents, but in the way it presents it. (11)

Thus, the kinds of human experience realism can portray are limitless and renewable; every age creates anew what counts as "realistic." Since the eighteenth century, the novel more than many other forms of literature gives readers an opportunity to know about those experiences in a life-like way. In reading realistic novels, readers will find connections between themselves and the protagonists of the novels, especially if the narrative allows them to imagine realistic incidents of

those people. Realistic novels specify places, times, and gives ordinary first and last names to characters, and non-poetical language allows readership to be more general. These features allow the reader to engage closely with the characters and the incidents because they are realistic and can occur to any ordinary person. Watt clarifies this transformation, contrasting the new plots of realistic novels to the standard tales of myth and scripture. “The novel is the form of literature which most fully reflects this individualist and innovating reorientation. Previous literary forms had reflected the general tendency of their culture to make conformity to traditional practice the major test of truth” (13). In Watt’s opinion, the truthfulness of the novel is what makes it popular since its mirrors the lives of individuals. In addition, what makes the novel more realistic than other literary forms and closer to readers' lives is its non-poetical language. Watt calls this the novel's stylistic *formlessness*. “What is often felt as the formlessness of the novel, as compared, say, with tragedy or the ode ... follows from this: the poverty of the novel’s formal conventions would seem to be the price it must pay for realism” (13). Although this might be seen as a downside of the novel, making it inferior to other literary forms because of its limited artistry, the novel has achieved a unique goal of representing truthfulness by reflecting real lives, which decreases the gap between the audience the text.

Watt notes that “the novelist typically indicates his intention of presenting a character as a particular individual by naming in exactly the way as particular individuals are named in ordinary life” (18). In addition to giving the characters ordinary names, the lives of those individuals is highlighted by the titles of the novels that carry names of their protagonists. Watt gives Richardson’s works as examples of this new mode of naming that distinguishes the novel from other literary forms, “Richardson continued this practice, but was much more careful and gave all his major characters, and even most of his minor ones, both a given name and a

surname” (19). Richardson's *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Cleland's *Fanny Hill* are clear examples of Watt's claim about the focus on individuals in the eighteenth century novels.

In addition, Watt argues that “[t]he novel in general has interested itself much more than any literary form in the development of its characters in the course of time. ... [T]he novel's detailed depiction of the concerns of everyday life,” he continues, depends on manipulation of this “time dimension” (22). This very characteristic is what creates a special relationship between the reader and the character. The reader lives with the character throughout the time of the novel, is virtually transported with the character to different (specific) places and times, and meets other realistic people. Narrowing the scope of a character from a mythic or cultural reflection to an individual encourages ready identification and strengthens the relationship between the reader and the written text.

After giving an overview of the characteristics of the novel and showing how it varies from previous literary forms, Watt gives a definition of “formal realism” that he finds prominent in the pioneering novelists Richardson and Defoe. The formal realism is a genuine narration of individual's experiences that pleases readers with its concentration on the protagonist and providing details using a detailed formal language that is not available in other literary works. In addition to the excessive attention paid to individuals, the novel is unique in the kind of attention it gives to the particularity of time and space. Those characteristics of the novels that especially make them realistic works, individualism, time, and space, are also present in the work of Hogarth and Cleland, the center of my paper's argument.

Cleland's deviation from the emerging realism of his time is one compelling reason for the wide-scale rejection of his novel, I will argue below. His seemingly realistic stories of the lives of

prostitutes and “coxcombs” about London are actually not so. At the same time, his novel *Fanny Hill* was ill-received until recently because it clashes with morality. It is true that vice exists and some bad people are rewarded in real life, yet that should not be presented as an encouraging feature in the arts. On the contrary, it can be presented as a true fact in life but, once again, it should be condemned while being represented. We will see Samuel Johnson and other period critics struggle to reconcile ethics and artistic choice.

It is a weakness for an author to focus on one aspect of the individual’s life and exclude others. In her study of eighteenth-century novels and the virtual experience they provoke in readers, Kathleen Lubey notes this issue of the unevenness of represented reality, pointing out “Fanny’s methods of satisfying her correspondent’s request thus yield what we retrospectively understand as a fully pornographic narrative, one that elevates and dilates sexual description while subordinating matters non-erotic” (175). By excluding elements that are non-erotic and focusing merely on Fanny’s sexual life, Cleland’s work is inadequate realism when compared to other works of the mid-18th century. Cleland focuses merely on one aspect of Fanny’s life, her sexuality, and therefore is only able to provide one type of pleasure, sexual pleasure, which is the primary reason of condemning his novel. Cleland’s focus on limited aspects can make *Fanny Hill* repetitive and monotonous for readers, as Fanny herself notes at the start of her second volume: “there is no escaping a repetition of near the same images, the same figures, the same expressions” (129).

Neoclassicism

It is indisputable that neoclassical theories of art had a great influence on literary works throughout Western Europe in the early modern period, including in England. First in Italy over

the sixteenth century, then in Spain and France and from there to England, neoclassical doctrines of art-making and art criticism had penetrated all creative fields by the turn of the eighteenth century. In this section of the thesis I will examine the place of Aristotelian and Horatian theories of mimesis in these neoclassical models of criticism, and then show how they can be used to inform critical readings of the works of John Cleland and William Hogarth.

Aristotle and, following him, Horace, held that the two-fold purpose of art was to instruct and delight through a representation of life. However, in the 18th century, not all artists followed this philosophy. In what follows I will show how Hogarth's adoption of the Aristotelian-Horatian criteria made him a praiseworthy artist in his own day and since, while Cleland's deviation from neoclassical norms made his name associated with his scandalous novel that has been rejected for over two centuries.

R. S. Crane explains that the impact of the neoclassical theories of art was continuous throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. "Art, in this tradition, was ... an impersonal ideal of excellence to which artists must subject themselves if their works are to be praiseworthy or useful to mankind; it was thought of, in short, as species of virtue, and its standard was the universal criterion, common to art and morals alike, of the mean" (378). This is to say, ethical factors were a crucial element in artworks informed by neoclassicism through the entirety of the eighteenth century. Artists must consider the target of their works, and the audiences' tastes, for acceptance and rejection of works is what makes an artist bright or scorned. For neoclassicists, according to Crane, art was "consistently subordinated to the audience in the triple sense that its origins and reason for existence are in the natural instincts of human beings to take pleasure in imitation or in eloquent and rhythmical language, that it achieves its effects, however artificial, by administering to the natural sources of pleasure in the mind of man, and that its value is

necessarily measured, in the long run at any rate, by the approval of the public” (378). For this reason, neoclassical writers sought to please readers and viewers by softening coarse language or editing or modifying low or difficult subject matter. Racine’s preface to *Phèdre* (1677), for instance, explains some of the changes he made from Euripides and Seneca as follows: “I felt that the calumny [of the rape accusation] was rather too base and foul to be put into the mouth of a princess whose sentiments were otherwise so noble and so virtuous. Such baseness seemed to me more suitable to a nurse, who might be expected to have more servile inclinations - but who nevertheless makes the false accusation only to save the life and honor of her mistress.” Racine is aware of the importance of the decorum to his audience, and he avoids clashing with their preferences. In England, Sir Philip Sidney also considered audience reception when he formulated neoclassical claims a century earlier in his *Defense of Poesy*, stating: “Poesy, therefore, is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle termeth it in his word [Greek], that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture, with this end,—to teach and delight.” Thus, the reason why the work is produced is the audience and therefore the work must be enjoyed and accepted by them in order for the work to be successful. Not only the poetic language of the work but also its ethical or social-political usefulness is what makes it thrive. Having those measures in mind, we will see why Cleland’s work is unsuccessful on that standard, primarily because he does not account for his audience that is moral and Christian. He does not provide any useful nor delightful material to mankind, except for the minority who finds his work pleasurable. The didactic element of Christian morality is absent from *Fanny Hill*, as well as representation of true life. On the other hand, Hogarth’s works are praiseworthy because they provide all the elements of the Aristotelian and Horatian models of art production. The responsibility of the artist is to enlighten people as to the societal issues that

surround them; thus, according to Aristotle and Horace, mirroring life is the purpose and the function of the artist.

Even if readers do not believe that in real life vicious people are always punished nor virtuous people rewarded, having such poetic justice broken in the representational world of an artwork will to some degree, consciously or not, create fear or discomfort in an audience. By analogy audience members and readers will feel similar fear or shame when committing or viewing similar vicious acts. This is because the reader will link his various readings of different authors that are result of a variety of experiences and life mirroring. The same idea applies for good character, and is the reason many neoclassical critics from Sidney through Samuel Johnson recommended portrayals of ethical models – the frequent reading of rewarded good characters creates a sort of comfort that encourages the conscious to avoid becoming bad and work on being good. One might argue that if all artists present the same idea of good is rewarded and the bad is punished, it might lack creativity and innovation. First, what I'm arguing is against the spread of mimetic vicious acts and rather a moral perspective on them that is, of course, a necessity to save our communities. Horace was an important source for early modern writers seeking classical support for their views about literature. Horace, with Aristotle and Plato, formed a trio of major antique authors regularly cited in this debate. Before we study how Cleland and Hogarth used the classical heritage, I will provide a brief account of Horace's work here. Horace emphasizes the importance of the appropriateness of the writer's language. Horace influentially specified a two-pronged function for artists when he argued that "[p]oets aim at giving either profit or delight, or at combining the giving of pleasure with some useful precepts for life." Horace follows by advising that playwrights should not have characters talk obscenely: "do not let them be too youthfully indiscreet in the lines you give them, or crack in filthy or obscene jokes" (87). To

consider the audience's sensibility, and to respect them and their taste, is an important step to success for Horace. If an audience's tastes are not followed, the work will most likely be condemned or rejected. Additionally, Horace sets out a number of characteristics of experienced poets, including a kind of realism. He writes, "I would lay down that the experienced poet, as an imitative artist, should look to human life and character for his models, and from them derive a language that is true to life. Sometimes a play that has a few brilliant passages showing a true appreciation of character, even if it lacks grace and has little depth or artistry, will catch the fancy of an audience, and keep its attention more firmly than verse which lacks substance but is filled with well-sounding trifles" (90). These features and recommendations are not restricted to poets and playwrights of the ancient times, but also they are what characterizes many novelists of the eighteenth century. Horace argues that even if the language is not poetic, it is closer to the audience's hearts. Building from Horace, I propose that we consider the novel in a similar way. The novel's language is less poetic than the language of poetry and plays, but what makes it close to the audience's hearts is its greater capacity to be a true imitation of ordinary people's lives.

Horace also recommends that artists should not be lengthy but concise so their artistry sticks in the mind of the audience: "when you are giving percepts of any kind, be succinct, so that receptive minds may easily grasp what you are saying and retain it firmly; when the mind has plenty to cope with, anything superfluous merely goes in one ear and out of another" (90-91). Wordiness and repetitiveness causes a work to lose its pleasurable features, especially if its prolixity lacks significance and makes the reader feel lost while reading a similarity and longevity of unimportant events.

Influenced by Horace, who he often quotes in his periodical essays, Samuel Johnson in *Rambler* #60 claims that biography is a central genre for modern living. Like the new novels appearing around him, biographies are close to realistic individual lives. Johnson writes:

Those parallel circumstances and kindred images to which we readily conform our minds are, above all other writings, to be found in the narratives of the lives of particular persons; and therefore no species of writing seems more worthy of cultivation than biography, since none can be more delightful or more useful, none can more certainly enchain the heart by irresistible interest, or more widely diffuse instruction to every diversity of condition.

The influence of the neoclassical theories of Aristotle and Horace is obvious in Johnson's argument quoted above. Besides him emphasizing the value of a verisimilar representation of "particular persons" lives, Johnson contends that biographies, like realistic novels, are of great importance for their didactic instruction and delight. This is possible because, as Johnson says, "We are all prompted by the same motives, all deceived by the same fallacies, all animated by hope, obstructed by danger, entangled by desire, and seduced by pleasure." The virtual experience of others can influence our decisions because every person's life is a possible lesson that may inspire the reader to emulate it or to avoid it.

The lives of others is always influential. Even if not in artistic ways that come to us in historical documents as biographies or literary ones as novels, we usually encourage ourselves and people around us to practice virtue by giving examples of others who succeeded when we are about to lose hope or to give up and examples of failures to warn about not working hard to fulfill our wishes.

W. R. Keast writes, "This combination of predictable direction and unexpected event, so characteristic of Johnson's criticism, results from the relative generality of his principles, which permits the same general premise to be brought to bear on a wide variety of cases; from the

important role he assigns to circumstantial accidents in critical judgment - an aspect of his theory ... and from an uncommonly rich assortment of subordinate terms and distinctions which he employs, in combination with general premises, to yield results that are always the same, yet always different” (392). In addition, Johnson contends that human minds are changeable due to their exposure to different types of knowledge and experiences. Therefore, interpretations differ from time to time from person to person and that leads to different interpretations of literature. In *Rambler #4*, in a discussion of forms of fiction we would now call “novels,” Johnson gives a set of instructions to authors to be careful in the selection of what to represent in their writings:

The chief advantage which these fictions have over real life is, that their authors are at liberty, tho’ not to invent, yet to select objects, and to cull from the mass of mankind, those individuals upon which the attention ought most to be employ’d; as a diamond, though it cannot be made, may be polished by art, and placed in such situation, as to display lustre which before was buried among common stones.

Not only do literary critics in the eighteenth century advocate this notion of curtailed mimesis, but also some writers through Victorian poets such as Matthew Arnold. In his “Preface to First Edition of *Poems*” Arnold claims that the poet’s job is to write poems that please while also instructing the audience. Through the middle third of the 19th century, Arnold assigns pleasing, dedicating, and representing truth to the audience as the artists’ profession.

Beside the philosophers and the poets from the ancient times who advocate this idea of mimesis, contemporary English scholars like George Bellis supports mimetic art and shows its value by comparing it favorably to non-mimetic one. Bellis contends that mimetic fiction is factual and represents the world, and therefore its notions are compelling because it connects the audience's realistic imagination to mimetic fiction by way of historical referents. "Mimetic [art] is grounded in fact – [it] copies the world. Its language is literal, its perspective earthbound, and its goal is a clear connection between fictional and factual events, preferably, between a fictional

and a factual sequence of events" (133). Hence, the realism of mimetic fiction makes mimetic fiction's purpose obvious to the audience to grasp its idea, which privileges it over non-mimetic ones. Then Bellis goes on to describe non-mimetic fiction and argues that although it draws the critics' attention to a higher world of imagination, it is unrealistic and its language is unfamiliar unlike the mimetic. "Because it has no historical referent, non-mimetic fiction gives us visions that are both meaningless and inexpressible. That is not bad. It thereby gives us the freedom not only to contemplate alternative worlds but to understand the value of nothingness," Bellis writes (133). Although Bellis castigates non-mimetic fiction, he gives a useful explanation of fictions that limit the reader's connection to the writer's world of imagination solely because they are not based on factual and historical events that represent the life of the vast majority of people.

The Case of John Cleland

Cleland's work will play a bigger part in this thesis because his own misdeeds seem to inform much of his controversial writings. I will begin with a discussion of John Cleland's life. From the chronological biography of Cleland reconstructed by Gladfelder in *Fanny Hill in Bombay: The Making and Unmaking of John Cleland*, we can see that Cleland's personal history was not empty of legal conflict. The first record indicates that in 1734 Cleland was accused of kidnapping a female servant when he was in Bombay; the second record notes "Henry Lowther and Robert Cowan, members of the Bombay Council, who lodge complaints against [John Cleland] for injurious language... decided in favor of [Cleland]" (ix). Although Cleland won both of these early cases, later Cleland got arrested and spent some time in jail for other issues. He was arrested for a year, from February 1748 until March 1749, for debt, and during that year his

first novel, *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, was published. He was shortly after arrested for its obscenity.

Interestingly, Cleland's early career was not related to the world of literature. He served as a soldier and worked as a secretary in the government council in Bombay. Unlike Hogarth, who was attracted to the artistic world since childhood, there is no evidence of his skills as a literary author or any previous writings that show his ability to write fiction properly. Cleland started to get involved in the literary world after the publication of his first novel, and he later worked as an article reviewer, yet due to his inconsistency to the literary conventions and the traditions of his time, Cleland encountered troubles because his own work was condemned.

The consequences of deviating from the norm and clashing with people's tastes are not always safe, yet Cleland had to bear those consequences. Gladfelder reports in his chapter “Down and Out in Lisbon and London” that although the novel was first published anonymously, its authorship was discovered, and *Fanny Hill* forced him to justify his writing of the novel. First, he tried to attribute writing the novel to a dead friend. Gladfelder reports that Cleland, “offered a franker, if still guarded, account of how the book had come to be written. Cleland claims, ‘The plan of the first part was originally given me by a young gentleman of the greatest hopes that I ever knew, above eighteen years ago, on an occasion immaterial to mention here’ (16). However, in his other two appearances in the historical record, Cleland does not deny his authorship of the novel. That is when he contended that his writing of the novel was because some of his friends unwisely advised him to write *Fanny Hill*. Gladfelder states, “all he writes is that as a prisoner in the Fleet he showed the novel ‘to some whose opinion I unfortunately preferred to my own, and being made too considerate a resource, I published the first part’ (141). Moreover, he claimed that the purpose of writing the novel was only for financial gain.

Gladfelder writes: “trying to write his way out of the jail into which the Women of Pleasure had landed him, Cleland painted his “present low abject condition” as that of “a writer for Bread” forced by economic necessity into the meanness of writing for a bookseller” (139). Given a number of different excuses for writing the novel makes it difficult for the audience to rely on one or the other neutrally; it is not easy to determine Cleland's real reason for writing the novel. It might be that he attempted to invent a new genre or solely to go against the traditions of writing at his time.

John Nichols has speculated on Cleland’s motives. “Being without profession or any settled means of subsistence [...] he soon fell into difficulties; a prison, and its miseries, were the consequences. In this situation, one of those booksellers who disgrace the profession, offered him a temporary relief for writing the work above alluded to, which brought him a stigma on his name, which time has not obliterated, and which will be consigned to his memory whilst its poisonous contents are in circulation” (qtd. in Gladfelder 140). The infamy of *Fanny Hill* is glued to John Cleland's name.

Gladfelder argues that Cleland's obscenity is the reason behind the novel’s rejection, “[Cleland's] willful 'perversity' often set him against prevailing commercial norms and canons of taste' (6). That is true, but even more, Cleland's failure to represent his community as it was during the era of realism and the focus of individualism is another compelling reason for its rejection. Gladfelder states that the legal troubles Cleland faced for the perversity of his writing made the latter describe *Fanny Hill* as “a Book I disdain to defend, and wish, from my Soul, buried and forgot” (2). This statement reveals the amount of shame and regret Cleland later felt for writing *Fanny Hill*.

Not only did his deviation from the developing conventions of the realist novel caused Cleland to be criticized, but Cleland is also capable of being criticized when he attempts to be creative. Gladfelder states that "Cleland's 'strangeness' as an author can be seen as a form of dissidence or defiance, not just in terms of the work's overtly sexual or political content, but also in terms of its language and form" (7). He offers examples of critical opinion from Cleland's time, where the writers castigate his unusual style of, for example, using foreign idioms in the novel. In his review of Cleland's second novel, for instance, Tobias Smollett noted that "certain French idioms have crept into the language; a trespass for which the author is less excusable, because he seems to be a master of English tongue ... nor is the performance free from stiff, compounded epithets, quaint terms of expression, that debase the stile, and new words affectedly coined" (qtd. in Gladfelder 7). Another critical view of Cleland's inventions in writing novels is given by William Rider: "Mr. Cleland has been not unjustly censured for the Affectation of his Stile, in particular for adopting too many foreign Idioms" (Ibid.). Cleland attempts to have his own flavor in literary writings but is not always successful, and that might be because he does not choose the appropriate techniques in making shifts in certain conventions.

Gladfelder claims that *Fanny Hill* was the reason for Cleland's fall as a writer. "Fanny Hill's Memoirs not only made him - won him lasting fame, showed off his stylistic virtuosity, gave him an entrée into the profession of author - but also unmade him: sat him against the law, overshadowed his later work, reduced him to parasite on his own fictional 'creature'" (7-8). No doubt Gladfelder's claim is true; not only was *Fanny Hill* successful in destroying Cleland's reputation because his name is strongly associated with the perverse novel, it also brought him to unnecessary trouble. "However ardently Cleland may have wished it, Fanny Hill's *Memoirs* have never been "forgot;" indeed, his own name has always been overshadowed by that of his heroine.

For all his effort to disown it or diffuse its impact, his first novel *branded* him as an author, then as now” (Gladfelder 3). In addition, attacks on him extended from literary to personal matters. Cleland was condemned for being a sodomite, for instance. Because of the sodomy scenes in the novel, Cleland's personal reputation was put in jeopardy. Gladfelder connects the sex scene of two young males to the real lives of Cleland and his friend Charmichael. Gladfelder speculates on a connection with Cleland's biography:

The elder of the two 'sparks' Fanny guesses, 'is towards nineteen, a tall comely young man'; the younger 'could not be above seventeen, fair, ruddy, compleatly well made, and to say the truth, a sweet pretty stripling.' (Is it impertinent to recall here that Cleland was 'towards nineteen' and Carmichael seventeen when ... they came up with the plan of Fanny's history?). (71)

Cleland's fictional autobiography as Fanny might function here as an evidence of his own sexual experience. That makes us wonder if the accusations against him of sodomy were true or not; the historical truth is probably beyond recovery. This notorious scene might reflect the experience of Carmichael and Cleland in their youth, as Gladfelder alludes. If the connection of the text with the author's life are true, it makes the situation worse for Cleland because it takes him from the condemnation of obscene writings to historicizing his own immoral experiences.

Gladfelder also brings up an interesting point about Cleland's condemnation of sodomy in *Fanny Hill* by comparing Fanny's language throughout the novel and in the sodomy scene. After observing the two young males having sex, Fanny tells Mrs. Cole about it in a criticizing tone, jokingly describing their actions as "tak[ing] something more precious than bread from the mouths of woman-kind." Besides that, she thinks of their actions as against nature: "it was not in nature to force such immense disproportions" (74). From the first reading, I thought that Cleland, using Fanny's voice, was condemning this behavior through Fanny's voice. However, Gladfelder has another interpretation of this scene. Gladfelder examines Fanny's narration throughout the

scene to her language when she was observing the two young males. At first her tone seems jealous and criticizing, but it is actually not, since in many other scenes Fanny also seems to be criticizing while she is actually enjoying, the ostensibly criticized, experience. Gladfelder gives her word choice, for instance, in narrations when she describes Charles as a “murderer” of her virginity and describing Louisa, her friend in the brothel, as “torn,” wounded and the like. In so much of the novel, negative words like negative experiences, particularly rape and sexual assault, are cast as either ironically good or soon-to-be positive experiences. Those examples of violence, for Gladfelder, “may be disturbing or comically exaggerated or both, but the one thing it's not is literal” (75). This observation is astute, and fits the nature of Cleland’s obscenity that revolves around publicizing and idealizing immorality. Not all of Cleland's representations of improper scenes were obvious to public readers. This accusation was presumably inspired from some of his novel's scenes where Fanny seems to criticize homosexuality but some readers found that they might contain an implied message of not condemning sodomy. The very act of representing sodomy in itself was a transgressive, and risky, move for him as an author in an age where many moralists preferred that the “sin” not be publicly acknowledged at all. (For readings of the male homosexual scene in an affirmative way, see e.g. Edelman; McFarlane). At the same time, it can be argued that Cleland's criticism of sodomy does not fit the flow of his novel where it idealizes immoral sexual acts and praises bad people.

Cleland categorized himself as a writer who represents life as it really is. At the start of Fanny Hill’s story, she writes that her letter to “Madam” will present the “stark naked truth” of her experience (39). While “naked truth” is also a pun, it does seem to describe to some extent what Cleland may have aimed for – the reality of the body and the London world of Fanny and her acquaintances. In the eighteenth century some people deemed Cleland a good writer.

Gladfelder summarizes: "His skills in writing - he was described by one member of council as having a 'pointant and ready pen' - and mastery of languages enabled him to move rapidly through the ranks and might be seen retrospectively to mark him out as an author, but there is no evidence he had any thought then of a literary career" (16). Gladfelder also presents Cleland's view of himself and his opinion on literary writings: "Cleland aligned himself with such authors as Cervantes, Sarah and Henry Fielding, and Smollett, who tried, as he wrote in his review of *Amelia*, to "[paint] the corruptions of mankind, and the world, not as it should be, but as it really exists" (108). However, in reading *Fanny Hill* and *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*, we see that Cleland diverges from the rule he claims he follows. Gladfelder uses one of Samuel Johnson's *Ramblers* to provide a comparison for Cleland's goal of instructing through imitating. In that influential essay on the new fiction being written by Richardson and others, Johnson wrote "There are perhaps no works of entertainment more susceptible of improvement or public utility, than such as are thus calculated to convey instruction, under the passport of amusement" (108). As noted above, Johnson sees that the ultimate goal of fiction is in teaching and delighting readers through a true representation of life. Gladfelder notes that "[i]f for Johnson the purpose of fiction is, above all else, to provide the reader with virtuous models for imitation, for Cleland its proper aim is to expose folly and vice through ridicule" (108). Unlike Johnson or Hogarth, for Cleland exposing "folly and vice" in fiction is more idealizing than condemning, which makes the goal of instructiveness almost impossible to achieve. The reason Cleland cannot achieve his goal in instructing his audience, I believe, is that he does not put a considerable effort, as Hogarth does, to enlighten his audience about his aims. For Cleland, his novels deliver a lesson and represent the surrounding life. But they are not didactic nor imitative according to Aristotelian/Horatian views current in the period. Cleland puts his characters through immoral situations to let them

discover later, as it were, which situation was less moral than the other. Obviously this is not the type of moral teaching that Horace, and later Johnson, sought in art.

Cleland also defies Aristotelian theory by not depicting real life in the eighteenth century accurately. To make this case, I will use Randolph Trumbach's research to demonstrate the lack of reality in the novel. After research into the lives of eighteenth-century prostitutes in the records of the Old Bailey prison in London, Trumbach found many examples of how Cleland's novel is not an accurate portrayal. Trumbach compares actual lives to the incidents of *Fanny Hill*, noting "most of my information comes from legal sources; from the lives of women who had not managed to ply their trade safely but had instead been arrested" (73). In addition to the exaggeration of the "family-like" life in the brothel, Trumbach argues a lack of reality in the novel since there is no mention of drinking or drunken people at all. He writes:

Fanny's world is most unlike the world of eighteenth century prostitution that I know in five respects: it is free of drunkenness, it is not associated with crime, it is run entirely by women, it all takes place in safe indoor environments, and it is a vice more or less, of the middle and upper ranks of society. In contrast to the novel, the legal material presents prostitutes as frequently drunk. Three out of eight of women arrested in the city on a night in 1786 were very much drunk. (80)

The prostitutes in the novel rarely, if ever, face hardships, and they are never punished for their evil acts of seducing other young people into vice. Even if they faced hard times at the beginning -- as did Emily, who runs away from her harsh parents -- her pain seems to end when she starts working in a brothel that is presented as a welcoming, even familial, house. And to reward Emily, Cleland reunites her with her family. Fanny says about Emily's reunion with her parents, "They were now so overjoyed at their retrieval of her that, I presume, it made them much the less strict in examining to the bottom of things" (208). Fanny's tone in narrating this incident suggests that Emily's career at the brothel does not annoy her parents.

Generally in the novel, no tragic incidents happen. With the exception of her miscarriage and an unplanned encounter with a random sailor, Fanny does not regularly worry about illness, catching a disease, nor going to prison, and that does not only demonstrate the absence of moral teachings but also shows the lack of realism that Aristotle and Horace advocate. The only time Fanny faces the threat of prison is when Mrs. Jones threatens her with the debtor's prison if she does not pay the rent after Fanny's miscarriage and Charles's unexpected departure. Fanny says that Mrs. Jones "told me very coolly that she was indeed sorry for my misfortunes, but that she must do herself justice, though it would go to the very heart of her to send such a tender young creature to prison" (94). Yet, Fanny never went to prison but instead ends her stay at Mrs. Jones' house and happily lives in Mrs. Cole's house. Cleland resists Aristotelian/Horatian theories of creativity because, in comparison to historical records, Fanny's life certainly does not represent the real life of the majority of eighteenth-century prostitutes. As we see, Trumbach's detailed documentaton that is based on legal records of the life of the eighteenth century shows that Cleland's novel lacks realism because Fanny is unrealistically saved financially, physically, and psychologically.

Trumbach also notes that all of Cleland's prostitutes work inside closed places such as Mrs. Cole's and Mrs. Brown's house, which does not represent real life in the eighteenth century. Trumbach claims, "Almost all of her sexual activity occurs in the very controlled environment of Mrs. Cole's house ... only once does Fanny break out from this private world. It is when she meets the young sailor in the street" (70-71). To support his argument he uses evidence from real life of the eighteenth century that opposes Cleland's depiction. Trumbach claims "[t]he principal complaint against the prostitute throughout the eighteenth century was that she did not conduct

her business in private" (76). Thus by protecting his character in private houses, Cleland is away from providing a representation of eighteenth century life.

In addition, in Cleland's world, violence and even rape tends to end comically. Although Louisa's first experience of sex was forced, she concludes her narration of the experience saying the "affair had however no ruinous consequences, the young gentleman escaping then, and many more times, undiscovered" (148). Even though the man abandoned her she does not consider her experience a harmful one. Trumbach comments on the life of Fanny and the other prostitutes, arguing:

Fanny's life was also not much like the lives of the most of the more than 3000 prostitutes whom Saunders Welch estimated to be active in London at mid-century. Cleland was fully aware of this. In his later writings, the brothel becomes progressively a less and less salubrious place ... Fanny's world is a real world but it is a world with the pain left out. It is a world where the seduced servant and milliner did not become pregnant. It is also a world where they did not contract venereal diseases, unlike twenty-year old Catherine Jones. After her seduction, she went on the town for her subsistence, was soon infected, and entered the Lock Hospital. (72-79)

To summarize, Cleland's *Fanny Hill* opposes the Aristotelian and Horation concept of mimesis and moral instruction by saving the prostitutes from suffering the consequences of their immoral actions.

Despite this lack of realism in Cleland's works, his kind of instruction, and his technique, are not always simple to pin down consistently. In his article "How Fanny Comes to Know," Jad Smith presents the type of teaching he claims Cleland attempts to make with *Fanny Hill*. Smith pinpoints the scene where Cleland's didactic element in the novel is apparent. When Fanny is forced to have a relationship with Mr. H purely for financial issues, she tells her feelings towards this relationship. Smith writes "[Fanny] says flatly, '[Any] other man would have been just the same to me as Mr. H-, that stood in the same circumstances, and what had done for me, and with

me, what he had done" (190). In this part, Smith offers the evidence of Fanny's awareness of her indifference towards Mr. H, and that this experience is not a pleasurable one because it is based on economical needs. But even if Fanny, after her relationship with Mr. H-, knows the difference between her relationship with Mr. H- and Charles and evaluated the second as more satisfying and pleasurable, this teaching is not "moral," in my use of the term, for it teaches immoral people how to feel better about themselves but not to become better people. Smith's commentary on Cleland's didactic techniques prove his inability to guide his readers: "By combining the aim of epistemology and amusement, the novelist may take the reader 'who would not care to be dragged through a dry didactic system of morality' so far but in the end remains unable to guarantee the moral outcome of reading" (184). In Cleland's time, having sex outside marriage was considered immoral and a sinful act. Therefore he is not delivering the reality of his time through his writing; rather, he is deceiving his readers by claiming that he is showing "the corruptions of mankind, and the world ... as it really exists." Moreover, immoral people in the novel are not criticized explicitly nor implicitly, as Johnson counseled in *Rambler* #4. Cleland's methods of instructing are not obvious and complicated because he does not allow his readers to grasp the message easily, and even when they do, it is not a moral one. Smith writes on Cleland's doctrine of leaving readers perceive the lessons that they choose to understand, "The great novelist, asserts Cleland, leaves the reader at liberty to make moral choices and 'passes vice into the services of virtue' rather than pretending that it does not exist" (185). Cleland's claim makes the difference between himself and Hogarth discernible -- the effort Hogarth puts in his works for the guidance of his audience cannot be compared to Cleland's, and that is what has made Hogarth's work perennially popular. Certainly, both faced criticism and compliments. However,

the quantity and the quality of those assessments are extremely different, as we will see below.

In contrast to Cleland, Lubey explains how Hogarth was able to trigger the imagination of his audience without obscenity. For Hogarth, canons of artistic training taught him that one could not have indecency in works also claiming to be artistic. “Since Hogarth cannot show Moll engaged in a sex act and remain properly artistic, he instead must imply the significance of her erotic life; he therefore relies on his audience to convert their erotic intrigue into larger narrative concerns such as sympathy and moral righteousness” (167). Hogarth’s artistic abilities allow him to convey his idea of sexual impurity without the need to overtly show it and therefore clash with the dogmas of his audience which makes his art valuable, respectable, and widely admired. Unlike Hogarth, Cleland relies unequivocally on obscene situations and periphrastic descriptions of sexual acts. Insightfully, Lubey compares Hogarth’s aptitude to Cleland’s this way: “John Cleland’s pornographic novel shows the attempt to stabilize eroticism to be not only morally simplistic but also damaging to the aesthetic capabilities of readers” (167). Cleland’s inability to trigger his readers’ imagination without using obscene elements ruins his readers’ pleasurable experience of imagination and shows his limited creativity as an artist.

Cleland’s purpose in writing his novel was, we can assume, not to ethically enlighten his readers but to provide a new type of pleasure through imagination, Lubey argues. “By over-detailing sex, Cleland discovers a new arena in which the novel might edify readers – the literary imagination. ... [H]e envisions readers as experienced, seeking in books not behaviors to emulate but tactics for taking pleasure (erotic, aesthetic, comedic) in texts... Cleland addresses readers who approach novels as art objects - as occasions for a kind of imaginative work that loosens itself from a strictly moral program” (168). That is, Cleland’s intentions are neither to

provide a true image of life nor to instruct his readers in morality but to provide a new type of sexual pleasure that mainly depends on readers' imaginations while providing the manifest seeds for its realization in ways more directly than Hogarth would, even given their sometimes similar subject matter.

The Case of William Hogarth

Hogarth was interested in painting and engraving since he was a teenager. In an account of his first experiences of art, Hogarth said he was inspired early, and the first spark was when he saw the work of an artist neighbor. As a child Hogarth favored art over playing with other children. He recounted "An early access to a neighboring Painter drew my attention from play; every opportunity was employ'd in attempts at drawing" (Shesgreen xxv). Hogarth's interest in art developed into a life career. In 1720, Hogarth joined an art school to develop his skills, attending John Vanderbank's drawing school and "trained memory to make available certain common set-piece which would enable him to become proficient in painting and engraving" (Shesgreen xxvi). Attending schools to learn more and pursue his interest resulted in owning his own shop as an engraver in the same year. His career as an engraver and painter provided him with fame and financial gain.

After ten years of practicing engraving and painting in his own shop, Hogarth was gaining a great reputation and popularity. As George Vertue, another famous engraver of the time, wrote in 1730, "Mr Hogarth's paintings gain everyday so many admirers that happy are they that can get a picture of his painting" (qtd. in Shesgreen xxvi). In 1732, Hogarth published his most famous engraving series, *A Harlot's Progress*, that is still associated with Hogarth's name, and which will be central to my analysis below.

Although Hogarth followed classical precedents in Horace according to neoclassical theories, he was not a derivative artist. Hogarth in fact was an inventor of his own art; he deviates from the norms of invention of his time in several ways. Shesgreen writes "[Hogarth] was the first major European artist to use the [progress] technique of narration in the visual arts in a skillful manner" (xv). By this, Shesgreen means that Hogarth tells moral stories in pictorial manner using simple plots. Hogarth's progresses are "the narrative mode" where they show a sequence of events for a single character. Since they were made and first exhibited, Hogarth's works have been praised and welcomed by a vast majority of his audience. A contemporary of Hogarth, another engraver, noted that "Hogarth had no model to follow and improve upon. He created his art, and used colours instead of language. His place is between the Italians whom we may consider as epic poets and tragedians, and the Flemish painters, who are as writers of farce and editors of burlesque nature" (Walpole). Hogarth's genius was recognized from the beginning by his companions, and that is because of the authenticity of his engravings and the superiority of his goals. Hogarth's deviations from older models never caused him any trouble, yet they were the reason of his glowing reputation through the centuries.

Shesgreen's *Engravings by Hogarth* examines what people in Hogarth's lifetime were seeking in literature and art that might reflect their lives. This view parallels Watt's arguments about the centrality of the novel for the new middle classes of the early and mid-eighteenth century in England. According to Shesgreen, English people "looked for sympathetic reflections of their world in what they saw and read. In the art and literature which they acquired, they sought direct, straightforward accounts of their everyday lives presented in a manner that was unadorned and lucid" (xiv). Ronald Paulson, the greatest living authority on Hogarth, reports that Hogarth advised artists to reflect what they saw in life in their art and to present life as it really

is. In Hogarth's opinion "a conviction that artists should not filter their view of the world in the manner of Palladio or even Raphael, but should depict what they see with their own eyes" (Paulson 2:73). Hogarth applies his own theories to his art; he also formulates guidelines of his art and the topics he discusses, such as when he says, "Subjects of most consequence are those that most entertain and Improve the mind and are of public utility" (qtd. in Shesgreen xxii). He is very immediate and clear about his purpose of art and he applies his artistic beliefs on his engravings. What people sought in the realist arts of the times of Hogarth and Cleland was a true representation of their everyday lives that does not contain fanciful elements as can be found in other literary forms. Besides a reflection of their everyday world, people in addition sought moral instruction in literature and art. "Even more importantly, they looked to the arts for compelling statements of the moral values which were uniquely theirs" (Shesgreen xiv).

Hogarth's realism appears in three principle ways: morality, characterization, and setting. I will discuss each of these elements in turn. First, morality. Hogarth was concerned with social, political, and psychological dangers that threatened his community. Like Horace, and like other classical and early modern satirists, he decided to enlighten while pleasing his audience by reflecting their probable ends if they swerved from the straight path of life. His "Progress" series engravings are perhaps better thought of as satirical warnings about committing mistakes rather than as records of rewards for performing good deeds. There are sometimes no positive models in the storylines – instead Hogarth uses a critical lens upon negative examples as his central focus. This was his way of demonstrating the seriousness of the threats that were popular at the time. Shesgreen illustrates Hogarth's concentrations on his people's awareness from what could be harmful to his society's individuals: "Because the entertainments of the middle and the lower classes were often at odds with their interests and sometimes a threat to their existences, the

engraver treated the common amusements of the citizens of London extensively ... Hogarth's plots illustrate the destructive nature of popular amusements" such as drinking and gambling (xv). Hogarth's portrayal of real issues is a compelling, astute, and effective way of cautioning his community. He sought audience identification and sympathy. If the work's audience did not relate their own lives to the characters', it would have been difficult for them to grasp what Hogarth attempts to convey. However, when the audience puts themselves in the characters' shoes it can create a sort of fear and awareness about going through the same sequence as the miserable characters. He is very careful in selecting the examples that he wants to warn about. Shesgreen illustrates the distinctions between Hogarth's selectiveness in his narrative and other more arbitrary narratives of his time: "In Hogarth's art ... the operation of cause and effect moves the narrative. In works like *A Harlot's Progress*, *Industry and Idleness*, and the *Four Stages of Cruelty*, the artist gives us not a collection of picaresque episodes arranged in arbitrary order, but a series of closely knit events in which each follows almost deterministically from the other" (Shesgreen xvi). The engraver's consideration of his audience, and the clarity of his sequence of incidents, made his engravings unforgettable.

The engravings were not only realistic in their moral subjects, but also in their characters: they are ordinary people, unlike in most works of tragedy and romance that usually use historical and heroic figures. Shesgreen explains that "[t]he characters he portrayed were not heroic figures from a mythic past but English cook maids and other 'originals' from everyday life" (xvii). Hogarth was conscious and creative in making his characters imitate reality. Hogarth says: "The perpetual fluctuation in the manner of time enabled me to introduce new characters, which, being drawn from the passing day had a chance of more originality and less insipidity than those which are repeated again, and again from old stories." (qtd. in Shesgreen xvii). So, Hogarth's astute

observations of the life around him made him able to turn the people's attention to what mirrors them as ordinary individuals rather than disconnecting the audience with mythical figures from historical myths.

In addition to the realism in characters, Hogarth's engravings are related to the real time and real places in the England of his lifetime. In the engravings there are clear signs of actual streets, dates, names, and buildings. Shesgreen reports that, "In most of Hogarth's works where time itself is not the subject of the engraving, it is just there, obsessively present and inescapable. Its minutes and hours are marked in the watches his characters wear, in the clocks in their rooms and on their buildings, on the sundials in the light and shadows on their walls, on their liquor bottles and in the activities they perform" (xix). Nothing in the engravings is purposeless, for every single detail in each scene has a meaning and is related to either the moral subject or the realistic elements of the London middle class's everyday lives. Hogarth intelligently combines history and literature; therefore, his engravings can be considered an important source of England's historical documents.

Comparisons of Cleland and Hogarth

In *Fanny Hill* (1748), Cleland opposes Aristotle's views of the purposes of art. Cleland does not deliver moral instructions through his novel, instead he opposes the notion of producing a pleasurable work, and he does not represent real life of his time. First, Cleland does not deliver a morally instructive lesson because the characters are never punished; instead, virtually all of them are rewarded regardless of their morals. That is clear in different scenes throughout the novel. For example, Fanny miscarries when Charles unexpectedly disappears and that serves to save her reputation from ruin. Fanny recalls that "after several successive fits, all the while wild

and senseless, I miscarried of the dear pledge of my Charles's love" (93). Although this quote might have a sad tone, the episode saves Fanny from pregnancy out of wedlock and a bad reputation.

Soon after, Fanny agrees to be Mr. H's mistress, and later having a sexual affair with his servant does not get her punished. When Mr. H catches her in an affair with the servant, he exiles her from his home, but what he does is ultimately more a reward than a punishment. He says to Fanny:

I give you a week's warning to go out of these lodgings: whatever I have given you remains to you; and as I never intend to see you more, the landlord will pay you fifty pieces on my account. With which and every debt paid, I hope you will own I don't leave you in a worse condition than what I took you up in, or than you deserve of me. – blame yourself only that is no better. (123)

This excerpt shows that Mr. H- has actually rewarded Fanny instead of punishing her. Though Mr. H- does throw her out, he financially rewards her. He gives her fifty guineas, pays her debts, and lets her keep all the materials she already has. Moreover, Fanny says explicitly that she is not happy at Mr. H-'s house, and therefore getting to leave with a large sum of money is a kind of relief: "Mr. H- continued kind and tender to me, yet, with all this I was far from happy" (103). Although she ended up with less money than before she was taken into keeping, Cleland takes her out from the place she is not comfortable in. Fanny is rarely put into hard situations. Also, Fanny later finds the kind brothel owner Mrs. Cole who offers her a job that she is comfortable with psychologically and financially.

Fanny immediately finds a job that she is comfortable with and an environment that is family-like. Shortly after meeting Mrs. Cole, Fanny describes her friendship and love to Mrs. Cole this way: "For Mrs. Cole had, I do not know how, unless by one of those unaccountable invincible sympathies that nevertheless form the strongest links, especially of female friendship,

won and got entire possession of me” (130). This expresses Fanny’s instant positive impression about Mrs. Cole’s and her house. Fanny also portrays Mrs. Cole’s motherly love for her: “a strict resemblance she fancied she saw in me to an only daughter, whom she had lost at my age was the first motive of her taking me so affectionately as she did” (130). Instantly, there was mutual love and acceptance from both sides. Not only the owner of the brothel but also the prostitutes welcome Fanny and make her feel at home. Fanny describes Mrs. Cole managing of the brothel this way:

she insensibly formed a little family of love, in which the members found so sensibly their account in a rare alliance of pleasure with interest, and of a necessary outward decency with unbounded secret liberty, that Mrs. Cole, who had picked them as much for their temper as their beauty, governed them with ease to herself and them too. (131)

Cleland shows the brothel as an environment clear of violence, hatred or any negativity. Of the house when she first arrives, Fanny says “I found everything breathe an air of decency, modesty and order” (131). The mutual acceptance among all the members of the house calls attention to Cleland’s lack of realism and idealization of prostitution.

In addition to residing in a loving, friendly brothel, Fanny is further financially rewarded. After leaving the brothel, Fanny inherits a large sum from a stranger she met when she moved to her new house. She says “after having generously trusted me with a genteel, independent settlement, proceeding to heap marks of affection on me, he appointed me, by an authentic will, his sole heiress and executrix” (212). Earlier in the novel, Fanny deceives Mrs. Norbert into thinking that she is virgin. Fanny details how she exploited this new customer of the brothel, saying, “Mrs. Cole observed that a character of this sort was ever lawful prize; that the sin would be not to make the best of our market of him” (167). Later, she expresses her feelings toward him in disgust because he is an old man. However, she agrees to be his mistress until he dies, hoping

that he will include her in his will: "Had he been in his senses to make a will. Perhaps he might have made favourable mention of me in it" (180). This quote shows Fanny's materialist thinking by wishing to inherit from him. Cleland's novel explicitly goes against the idea that the good should be rewarded and the bad punished, which might serve as a moral message, because the characters who commit sins and cheat on others get rewarded not only by their customers but also by complete strangers.

Although Fanny worked as prostitute for a considerable time, she does not lose her reputation. There is no mention of any kind of punishment or a threat to Fanny. Physically she survives and is psychologically happy. She does not get sick or arrested, and the only time she is threatened is when she has sex with a sailor and Mrs. Cole warns her about disease which "she represented so strongly to me the nature and dangerous consequences of my folly, the risks to my health in being so open-legged and free of my flesh" (179). This passage is the only time in the whole novel where we hear a threat of a disease, yet, it serves more significantly to show the motherly and caring personality of Mrs. Cole. Moreover, none of the prostitutes gets sick as a result of having multiple sexual affairs.

Not only is Fanny saved from physical or emotional strain, but Fanny is also almost never sad about going through all her "adventures." Even when she is dissatisfied, she never expresses remorse. In addition to being saved from the world of prostitution only a year or so after beginning it (while still a teenager), Fanny gets reunited with her first love at the end, and her language suggests that she is getting married and living happily ever after with Charles:

Dearer to me than the liberty of heart which I had been long, too long! The mistress of, in the course of those grosser gallantries, the consciousness of which now made me sigh with a virtuous confusion and regret. No real virgin, in short, in view of the nuptial bed, could give more bashful blushes to unblemished innocence that I did to a sense of guilt; and indeed I loved Charles too truly not to feel severely that I did not deserve him. (218)

This excerpt illustrates that Fanny believes that she deserves Charles although she worked as a prostitute when he left. The word choice in this passage demonstrates that she enjoyed her previous career and the freedom it offered her. For instance, the line, “Dearer to me than the liberty of heart” shows that there is no place for regret in Fanny’s thought or life. Cleland rewards his characters, saves them from sadness and never punishes them for their evil actions. Clearly, Cleland’s intention is distant from teaching morality. Since Johnson’s *Rambler* #4 was published within a year or two of the appearance of *Fanny Hill* (but also Fielding’s *Tom Jones* and Richardson’s *Clarissa*) Johnson seems to be responding to Cleland’s brand of realism that encourages reader identification when he says, by contrast, “[i]n the romances formerly written, every transaction and sentiment was so remote from all that passes among men, that the reader was in very little danger of making any application to himself.”

Cleland also opposes Aristotle and Horace in the nature of the “delight” in the narrative. Cleland’s novel is very repetitive, and the repeated sexual scenes show Cleland’s disrespect to his readers and a lack of creativity. Cleland himself is aware of the repetitive style of the novel; Fanny in the beginning of volume 2 says in her letter to the unnamed “Madam”:

I imagined, indeed, that you would have been cloyed and tired with the uniformity of adventures and expression, inseparable from a subject of this sort ... whatever variety of forms and modes the situations are susceptible of, there is no escaping a repetition of near the same images, the same figures, the same expressions with this further inconvenience added to the disgust it creates the words joy, ardours ... and the rest of those pathetic terms ... so received in the practice of pleasure. (129)

Here Cleland, using Fanny’s voice, tries to justify the circular movement of the novel and the redundancy of expressions and imagined situations.

The prostitutes’ adventures are very similar in general and in details. Most of their first experiences start and end peacefully, and all of them enjoyed their first experience of sex even

when it began as rape. They all describe their men as handsome and passionate. For example, Louisa says describing the man of her first experience, “he seemed to me no other than a pitying angel. Dropped out of clouds; for he was young and perfectly handsome” (146). And Harriet uses closely similar words in describing her first man, “his legs and arms, finer modeled than which could not have been cast, whilst his floating locks played over a neck and shoulders whose whiteness they delightfully set off” (140). The similarity in descriptions and the redundancy of incidents throughout the novel emphasize Cleland’s limited vocabulary and creativity.

In addition to the novel’s repetitive incidents, Cleland’s characterizations are also very similar. Fanny describes about her first impression at Mrs. Cole’s brothel. She is amused by the niceness of her and her girls where Fanny immediately feels comfortable to join them: “when Mrs. Cole presiding at the head of her cluck, gave me the first idea of her management and address, in inspiring these lively amiable girls with so sensible a love and respect for her. There was no stiffness, no reserve, no airs of pique, or little jealousies, but all was unaffected gay, cheerful, and easy” (132). Fanny excludes all the negative emotions from her parties, showing that her new environment is pure and clean. Certainly, Cleland is exaggerating in this part because “stiffness” and “jealousies” are always present to some degree even in respectable environments, which makes it even less likely to disappear from the unclean ones. Fanny says that the resemblance unites her with the other girls. “The sameness of our sex, age, profession, and views soon created as unreserved a freedom and intimacy as if we had been for years acquainted” (132). The type of sameness that Fanny describes is exaggerated and unrealistic.

Besides the girls’ elegant behaviors, Fanny tells about the beauty of their looks. The girls beauty is not restricted to their attitudes but extends to their appearance as Fanny describes them. For example, of Emily: “her eyes were blue and streamed inexpressible sweetness, and nothing

could be prettier than her mouth and lips, which closed over a range of the evenest, whitest teeth” (134). Harriet is also beautiful in a superlative manner: “Amongst all the beauties of our sex that I had before or have since seen ... her complexion, fair as it was, appeared yet more fair from the effect of two black eyes, the brilliancy of which gave her face more vivacity” (137). Louisa is not left out from idealized attractiveness as she “ was a piquant brunette whose black sparkling eyes and perfect harmony of features and shapes left her nothing to envy in her fairer companions” (131). Thus, the continuous sameness, behaviorally and physically, emphasizes Cleland’s unrealistic description of his characters that is exaggerated with beauty and idealization.

In addition to the abundance of repetitive incidents and descriptions, the novel clashes with people of religious taste because, as Randolph Trumbach argues, *Fanny Hill* is an “anti-Christian novel.” “Cleland’s romantic eroticism, unlike that of most his fellow novelists, was not ... tied to a traditional Christian morality. It was instead libertine, anti-Christian and materialist” (69). Cleland’s positive portrayal of immoral acts caused the novel to be banned from printing for over than 200 years. And when it was first published in England, the printer, the publisher and the author were all arrested (a case that will be discussed later in the reception-history part of this paper).

In addition to the repetitive incidents, and the clash with religious beliefs, Cleland teases his readers by introducing a child to the world of prostitution. The kid scene illustrates that the destruction of the prostitutes is not only confined around Mrs. Cole’s house, but the prostitutes are also seizing an innocent kid from the streets and introducing him to their own world. When Louisa and Fanny were wandering out of the house, they saw a boy selling flowers. “This boy we had often seen, and bought his flowers, out of pure compassion, and nothing more”(197).

This quote foreshadows this immoral incident because their previous pure intentions will soon be over shown by Louisa's questionable act of persuasion. Louisa teases the dull-witted boy, implicitly offering to exchange her body for flowers, saying, "Well, my lad, come upstairs with me, and I will give you your due" (197). Fanny gives a more detailed description of Louisa's seduction scene. Moreover, in the beginning of narrating this incident, Fanny clarifies that Mrs. Cole and Emily were not home, which might suggest that Mrs. Cole will not accept such acts. Again, this adds to Fanny's implicit praising of Mrs. Cole as a decent mother. The child seduction scene not only clashes with beliefs of people from the past but also until the present time. Having sex with an underage boy or girl is a serious crime. However, Cleland's novel suggests that crossing the lines is not a serious issue.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, William Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress* obeys the Aristotelian and Horatian concepts precisely, depicting similar incidents with the exact opposite consequences. Since Hogarth's work consists of six engravings, it is hard to provide as many details as Cleland's novel. However, many scholars have described the works in detail, and their input will shape my analysis of the paintings. Overall, Hogarth's paintings hold pleasurable elements, imitate the life of the eighteenth century realistically, and teach morality through pity and fear by showing the tragic end of a prostitute. I will depend mainly on descriptions provided in *Engravings by Hogarth*, edited by Sean Shesgreen.

A Harlot's Progress depicts the life of a prostitute in London from the day she arrives until her death. In Plate I, the painting shows a young girl with a middle-aged lady who looks sick. The middle-aged lady, a bawd, seems to be welcoming the newly arrived girl to London and, as Shesgreen puts it, she "feels Moll with her naked hand in the same clinical way animals are inspected before purchase" (18). This gives a strong hint of what Moll is about to experience

as she moves from a life of innocence to a corrupt one. The phrase “before purchase” emphasizes Hogarth’s message that the prostitutes use their bodies as commodities. By touching the girl with her hand and showing tenderness, the bawd takes advantage of the newly arriving vulnerable girl in the city. Behind the girl is her father who is busy reading a piece of paper and that symbolizes the father’s unawareness of the damage that will occur to his daughter. Shesgreen describes the father as “short-sighted and insensitive to the crisis around him ... he is intent on fulfilling his personal ambitions and desires” (18). The description of the girl’s negligent father emphasizes the importance of the parent’s role in taking care of his children. The father’s insensitivity and short-sightedness lead his daughter to her destruction. Behind the bawd, there are two men who are observing the bawd and the new girl in town. Shesgreen describes this situation saying, “this procuress seems to be the instrument of the nobleman who stands in the shadow of the door leering intensely at the girl, his right hand fumbling suspiciously in his pocket” (18). This satiric realism in Hogarth illustrates Trumbach’s point about the unrealistic representation of Cleland’s novel by contrast. Hogarth shows that the brothel in his painting is run by men, unlike Cleland’s novel where Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Cole were in control of the brothels.

In Plate II, the innocent girl is not innocent anymore; instead she is quickly fascinated by the fanciful life. She is in a luxurious room where she wears a stylish dress with her breast is out—which, of course, suggests her loss of virtue. Next to her sits a young visitor who might be a costumer. There is also a spot on her forehead that shows her infection by a disease and that is a result of prostitution. The depiction of “an exotic West Indian servant boy and a monkey” shows the lavish life she is living as a prostitute (Shesgreen 19). Hogarth’s intention is clear here -- he combines the fanciful life the girl lives with the loss of health and virtuousness which certainly warns the audience from falling into such a trap.

In plate III, the now sickly-looking prostitute is abandoned and pushed away to live in poor neighborhood with an ugly, sick maid to attend her. Her new room seems to be much less luxurious than in the previous plate. The new room has ugly walls instead of the painted ones and the furniture is wooden and cheap. Shesgreen describes her situation, saying, "Dressed a little less flamboyantly and looking considerably less vivacious, she dangles a watch taken from the previous night's costumer" (20) And Barry Wind in his essay "Hogarth's Fruitful Invention: Observations on *Harlot's Progress*, Plate III," argues that the watch in the harlot's hand reflects a real life incident. Wind claims that the time in the watch refers to 12:15, and that has "special significance" because it represents a similar incident at that time. Wind says:

The Grub Street Journal of 6 August 1730 informs us that among the group of harlots arrested between 12 noon and 1 o'clock was 'the famous Kate Hackabout ... a woman noted in and about the Hundreds of Drury. There is no doubt that Hogarth was inspired, in part, by the actions of the real Hackabout. ... Hogarth's intention to capitalise on the notoriety of Hackabout is thus made clear, not only by the letter to M. Hackabout which protrudes from the dresser drawer, but also by his intention to a specific time between 12 and 1 o'clock. (268)

So, more than one object of Hogarth's paintings refer to real life incidents and real people. There are also men coming through the door to arrest her for prostitution. Shesgreen claims that that leading man represents a Sir John Gonson, "a type of the perennial harlots-prosecutors" (20). By arresting her, it is very likely that she also loses her reputation, unlike Fanny who survives this part until the end of the novel. Thus, as Trumbach argues, in real life prostitutes were facing the threat of arrest and here Hogarth is depicting the life of the eighteenth century and continuously following Aristotelian and Horatian philosophy, unlike Cleland.

In Plate IV, the harlot is sent to prison with other prostitutes who look similarly ill. She looks pale and less energetic, unlike her look in the first plate. Shesgreen describes her in this

plate saying, "The spirited look is gone from her tired, flabby face and her mouth is dropping ... At her side stands a stern-faced jailer who threatens her with the leg-iron and cane" (21). Hogarth here makes the prostitute pay for her mistakes, unlike Cleland whose work suggests that crossing the lines and committing sins is not a serious matter. To add more punishment to the harlot, and additional moral messaging, Hogarth portrays the prison as a "nurturer of crime." Behind the harlot is a woman who tries to steal something from her and looks at her with an evil smile. This look alludes to the bad intention this woman is hiding for the new prisoner and this is Hogarth's smart way of warning his audience from such ends. The description of the people in the prison raises pity and fear from such consequences.

In Plate V, the harlot looks extremely sick and is dying. Shesgreen observes that "Moll is dying of a venereal disease; already her face is white and waxen and her head falls lifelessly backward" (22). Hogarth's didactic message becomes clearer as the harlot's life progresses. There is a woman taking things out of Moll's trunk and there are two men fighting over "the efficacy of their cures as their patient-victim expires unattended in their view," as Shesgreen describes (22). Not only is Moll surrounded by thieves and uncaring doctors but to add an even more miserable element to this scene, beside Moll is her son who is next to the fire trying "to cook for himself." Hogarth astutely raises feelings of fear by showing women that becoming a prostitute will not only affect the woman herself but also will have a great negative effect on children. In this plate, Shesgreen says that the two men fighting over the cure are identified as "Dr. Richard Rock and Dr. Jean Misaubin"(22). This supports the claim that Hogarth represents the reality of the eighteenth century not only by incidents but also by referring to real people, which is very Aristotelian and Horatian.

Plate VI illustrates the death scene of the harlot. She is surrounded by many people, but the only one who is in tears is her bawd. Shesgreen claims that the reason is simply the “financial loss.” Most women around her are not sympathizing with her or showing any kind of grief. The clergyman who is supposed to give a death ceremony is busy seducing a woman who also seems to be satisfied with the clergy man. In the back, two women are drinking and do not appear to be engaged in the funeral. Heartbreakingly, the harlot’s young son is playing in front of her coffin and seems to be unaware, or uncaring, of his mother’s death. The scene is like the previous one: very melancholic, miserable, and full of sadness. Here, the prostitute loses her reputation, her health, and gradually her life, which serves both as a moral lesson and an accurate representation of eighteenth-century life. Some cases from the Old Bailey prison in London illustrate the realistic elements in Hogarth’s engravings. In November 1744, Ann Gwyn was found guilty and sent to death for prostitution and theft. “[F]alling into bad Company, she became as vile as any Prostitute of 'em all, and lived upon the Spoil and Plunder of Mankind. She has been a Common Street-Walker for some Years, young as she was, and seldom left a Man whom she had pick'd up, without robbing him of something,” the record records. Prostitution and theft are both depicted in *A Harlot's Progress*, where Moll is arrested and loses her life to venereal disease.

Cleland's Memoirs of a Coxcomb

Although *Coxcomb* was written by the same author of *Fanny Hill*, it has a degree of realism that distinguishes it from the earlier novel, and most notably in the representation of prostitutes’ lives. As we saw above, *Fanny Hill* is missing many elements of realism in its portrayal of female prostitutes in London.

Coxcomb more realistically reflects lives in brothels in the eighteenth century. There is a mention of wine in a night party. The narrator reports that “[t]he wine especially had begun its usual operation of substituting sincerity to falsity, nature to art” (103). It is obvious that the mention of wine in this case is associated with negativity. Cleland is implicitly criticizing that environment of prostitution that is clearly different from what we have seen in *Fanny Hill* in which brothels are places of peace, happiness, and family-like life with little mention of alcohol.

In addition to its mention of wine, Cleland’s latter novel differs from the earlier one by portraying the lives of the prostitutes as dramatically “tragic.” When William talks about the prostitutes, he describes them as victims; “I considered them as unhappy victims of indigence; as the objects, in short of charity, more than of desire” (100). From the narrator’s perspective, what forces the prostitutes to become what they are is not the attractive and charming life of the brothel but rather the need of money.

Readers are presented with several sad circumstances that brought the women to become prostitutes. The girls’ stories of how they ended up in the brothel are all tragic as the narrator asserts “[t]hey had all some very tragic circumstance to relate of their family, and of rogue that had betrayed and left them” (102). Moreover, Cleland highlights the importance of education in preventing girls from ending up selling their bodies. One girl explains that her lack of education resulted in turning her to a prostitute: “I am the daughter of an honest chairman, and as soon as I came of age to feel desires, having no education to awe and instruct me of the danger of honouring them, I honestly gave way to their force ... [and] I came at length to harbor here” (102). Although the prostitute belongs to a high-class family, her social class does not prevent her from being misled by lack of moral education. Unlike *Fanny Hill*, the tone of the prostitutes in *The Memoirs of a Coxcomb* has some remorse and regret from not restricting sexual desires,

showing the difference between what she was and what she is. This description goes along with the Aristotelian philosophy when Cleland presents the life of a prostitute as it really was in his time; also, it goes along with the notion of didacticism.

In contrast to the motherly description of bawds in *Fanny Hill*, the narrator of *Coxcomb* follows with a disgusted tone describing this bawd and bawds in general. This highlights Cleland's different writing from *Fanny Hill*. William the "Coxcomb" narrator notes "I begged her, however, to keep her hands off me, the fat and oiliness of which gave me no relish to the touch of them. And, to say the truth, this majestic dame was no exception to the general rule of those of her vocation, who break as naturally into fogginess and corpulence, as the rest of the publican tribe, which may one reason, too, why, their sensations of pleasure being buried in their fat, they can the more quietly manage the duties of their function, and see with less pain their old personal customer go by their doors" (98). This passage shows one example of how Cleland's portrays these characters very differently than, for instance, Mrs. Cole in *Fanny Hill*. William's revulsion from the atmosphere of the brothel and the corpulent bawd is a clear sign of Cleland's new movement of writing about brothels after his arrest for the obscenity of *Fanny Hill*.

Cleland emphasizes the disgusting atmosphere of the brothel by giving several very filthy descriptions. The narrator describes one of the bawds he met this way: "there could be nothing even more shocking or disgustful than her appearance. Only imagine a tartar phiz, begrimed with powder and sweat, that could not, however, conceal the coarseness of a dun skin; a mob, that with all its pink ribbons, was forced to give way, all round, to the impatience of confinement of stiff, bristling, grizzily locks, every hair of which was as thick as a pea-straw; then this gorgon head was sunk between her two shoulders, and carried in mock state, something in style of the crown cushion ... I go no lower than a busto description for the sake of nice stomachs" (98). The

narrator's portrayals represent a continuous revulsion. "I was growing sick of her cant, when Merville, who saw how I suffered, fell to, asking her what forwardness the dispositions were in that he had given her directions about" (99). It might be due to the strong rejection of *Fanny Hill* that Cleland is criticizing the air of the brothel and its bawds with a new kind of realism.

On the contrary of *Fanny Hill*, Cleland is becoming more Horatian in his second novel by giving significance to reputation. Reputation is lost when a girl loses her virginity outside of a marriage. Describing himself after raping a woman named Diana for not submitting to him, William says "[t]he pride of hers, however, had had such a fall from the height she had stuck herself up at, that it could not miss breaking its neck so effectually, as never to get up again, at least to give me any trouble with it." This is his verdict on Diana's pride and virtue. He feels guilty about what he did to her. "I was then a coxcomb enough in all conscience, but not villain enough not to think of repairing, as far as superior considerations would allow me, the mischief I had done" (46-7). Here feelings of guilt and awareness of damage to virtue are unlike previous writing in *Fanny Hill*, where we never encountered a reputation issue nor a loss of virtuousness. William, however, thinks of repairing what he has done.

Cleland protects his character by not assigning him blame by others for his many devilish deeds. He idealizes his protagonists and most of those around them, and that makes it difficult to convey a moral lesson. William blames himself for what he did to Diana, who became a prostitute after losing her virginity. "But as to Diana, whatever her faulty might be, I felt and disdained to assemble to myself that I was originally the author of it" (108). Yet, self-blaming here contributes more as an idealization of William than a punishment him for what he did. Cleland is unrealistic by depicting the world of obscenity as a world empty from jealousy and hatred even from the victimized people.

At another point in the novel, when William tells us about Miss Wilmore, we know that she lost her reputation because of her inability to control her sexual desires. “Hurried away by the impetuosity of her passion, and naturally an enemy to ceremony, she had not waited for that of marriage, to acquaint herself with the most essential mysteries of it” (56). Immediately after that Cleland reveals the price she has to pay for losing her virginity without getting married: “Having then satisfied her curiosity on that point, and supported her resolutions by a great and independent fortune ... The first use she made of the loss of her reputation, was to turn it to the account of her taste for gallantry” (56). Even though she lost her reputation, Miss Wilmore does not cease to continue in the same path of having frequent affairs outside marriage. Cleland’s castigation of Miss Wilmore’s behavior proves his changing awareness of the mistakes he presented when writing *Fanny Hill*. Moreover, Miss Wilmore knows very well that her reputation is not restorable; William says, commenting on Miss Wilmore’s reputation, “it could never have entirely healed the wounds of her reputation, so it must have for ever dishonoured mine” (63). The importance of reputation is emphasized in this novel, unlike in *Fanny Hill*. Cleland continuously comments on the outcomes of women’s loss of virginity and that is definitely instructive and realistic representation of women’s status at his time.

Memoirs of a Coxcomb can be distinguished from *Fanny Hill* not only in highlighting the importance of reputation, but also for its changed language for sexual encounters. In *Coxcomb* Cleland does not talk about sex explicitly. In many scenes the narrator alludes to sexuality, but does not use obscene words nor describe sexual actions in detail. An example is when William describes his admiration of Lydia: “The more I studied Lydia, the more I was forced to admire her. Possessed of all the power of perfect beauty, without the insolence of its consciousness, or the impertinences it serves so often for a privilege to, she gave all she said or did the sweetest of

graces, that of pure nature, unadulterated with affectation, that bane of barely not the whole sex, which so many of ours are either the dupes of, or coxcombs enough to catch the contagion of from them. Her native modesty suffered her to say but little, and that only on subjects proper for her age” (26). Evidently, Cleland here uses the usual approaches of men expressing their love to women; he eschews the physical and sexual descriptions in favor of courtship rhetoric. William avoids obscene words and replaces them with words like “admire her” to refer to her person rather than her body.

As an additional example, as William describes Agnes he uses modest and beautiful poetic language in describing her. In addition, he usually plans to have an affair with the girls he likes but he almost never takes an actual step towards them.

On my first sight of Agnes, I could not help paying her the admiration which so great a beauty naturally excited. Nothing could be more engaging than her face, nothing more correct than her shape, and all together composed a system of attraction, more powerful and more naturally accounted for, than any in all Sir Isaac Newton’s works. It was not that I felt that sort of emotion which was reserved to Lydia alone to inspire me, but I felt that quick and sensible desire, which sets all the powers of the mind in action to obtain its satisfaction, and which made me, on that instant, conceive and form designs of pleasure upon her. (69)

The repetitive way of not talking obscenely confirms that Cleland has learned his lesson of not clashing with the taste of the majority of his readers.

Cleland’s new realism has limits, however, in his many attempts to “save” his main character. As the case with Fanny, Cleland protects William from initiating the commission of sins in many of his encounters with women. He achieves this by letting the women make the first move to involve William in a relationship. When he first meets Mrs. Rivers, William says, “she received my hearty salute and compliments, with a certain warmth and encouragement, which her first glance over my person had not, it seems, indisposed her to, and which as great a novice as I then was, I could perfectly distinguish from the reception my caresses were used to meet

with from women, in the days of my incapacity for anything but innocence towards them” (33). Here, William is trying to convince readers of his innocent intentions toward women.

Women are presented as more audacious than men in the novel. In this same scene William tells about his first affair with Mrs. Rivers in which she dares to invite him to her own bedroom. “And where? In her very bedchamber: where I was not to suppose, she would admit me merely for the sake of displaying her virtue: a bedchamber is rarely the theatre of it” (35-6) William’s tone suggests the he is the innocent part in this scene for questioning Mrs. Rivers’s impudent behavior.

Shortly after meeting Lady Oldborough, William is invited to her house, showing that he does not initiate relationships with women. He writes: “By the time I was arrived at Lady Oldborough’s house, I had easily made my party so good with her, that I could not get away, till I had passed a promise of coming the next day in the afternoon” (69). William does not seek out sexual chances nor even try to make them. Rather they are presented to him “[i]n the course, then, of the familiarity allowed me, and the opportunities almost industriously thrown in my way” (72-3).

If he is not approached directly by women to have a relationship, he is pushed in one way or another to do that by others. William narrates his experience in a brothel where a bawd at a party tries to set him up with a prostitute. William reports that the bawd says, “I never saw him before [meaning me]; is he come to lose his maidenhead here? Adds me, if that is the case, I have his match to a hair -- a girl with an eye like a sloe, and a hip as hard as a green apple. She will do for him, my life on’t” (97). Women always try to set him up for affairs, either with themselves or with other women. Another instance is when he is forced to choose a girl on the night of the party, and he says, “Lord Merville ... forced me to make a choice, which I let drop

with unaffected carelessness” (100). Once again Cleland makes William’s narration of his immoral experiences seem passive and justifiable to protect the main character. This is obviously not realistic nor didactic because it does not provide the reader with ethical lessons. A repetition of sexual scenes and an inability to deliver ethical or rational values in his writings demonstrates Cleland’s weakness as an author.

Perhaps after suffering the consequences of writing obscenely in *Fanny Hill*, Cleland’s second novel has more Horatian characteristics than the first one. It is obvious that Cleland while writing *Memoirs of a Coxcomb* tried to obey the conventions of his time, yet his writing still has some similar characteristics to *Fanny Hill*. It seems that Cleland cannot get himself free from the portrayal of frequent sexual affairs. Although in the second novel he deals somewhat more realistically with brothels and prostitutes, Cleland’s novels still contain obscenities.

Hogarth’s The Rake’s Progress

Although *The Rake’s Progress* is less popular than *A Harlot’s Progress*, it is another successful Hogarth work that obeys Aristotelian/Horatian teachings. The series of engravings is widely recognized and admirable for the ethical, pleasurable, and realistic elements it contains. In my analysis of the *Rake’s Progress* I will again build my interpretation with the help of Shesgreen’s explanations of the plates.

In this series, Hogarth represents an astute case of an imprudent and frivolous youth and his misled life. In plate I, the rake is shown to care solely about his newly acquired fortune; his facial expressions do not show any degree of sadness over his father’s death nor sympathy with his abandoned girlfriend, Sarah Young. His ultimate attention is paid to his new life and the lavish changes that he is about to make. The rake is concerned only with having an enjoyable

time. Thus, in plates II and III, the rake brings many people, musician, huntsman and mercenary, to entertain him. By the types of people's Tom surrounds himself with, Hogarth depicts the young man as a inconsiderate spendthrift who merely thinks about his current interests without any future plans. Shesgreen notes that "Tom receives - not his noblemen peers - but commercial people, each representing a separate aristocratic vice, affectation and entertainment" (29). Instead of being extra careful of greedy people, the rake brings those people around him merely for his amusement. Hogarth gives this misbehavior excessive importance by dedicating two plates to showing, in addition to his carelessness in investing his fortune and keeping it, the young rake's inability to resist self-amusement all day and night.

It does not take the rake long to bear the consequence of his sloppy behaviors. By slide IV, he is shown losing his money and facing arrest. Ironically, the only one who is there to help him is Sarah Young, the pregnant girl he abandoned earlier. The rake's deviation from the right path by drinking and gambling makes him exposed to theft throughout his "progress." Hogarth's representation of the devious people around the rake and the price he pays as a result of his inattentiveness is a didactic, and life-mirroring, story. Later, the rake's circumstances force him to marry a wealthy old ugly lady to take advantage of her money. Shesgreen comments on the setting of the marriage scene showing that Hogarth carefully uses real places to reflect reality, "Mary-le-bone Old Church, the site of Rakewell's wedding, was a notorious church for quick marriages" (xx). Hogarth's clever engravings do not just reflect the life of his time, but the lives of individuals even hundreds of years later; not only in the eighteenth century did people go to prison and lose their money for gambling, but also in our present time. The type of fear Hogarth tries to implant in his audience is instructive. The rake's life ends miserably since he not only loses the money he inherited but also he loses his mind and ends up in quarantine for madness

and disease. *The Illustrated Magazine of Art* notes of this series that “at last beggared, penniless, forsaken by his fair-weather friends, who fawned him and robbed him in his prosperity, and broken down in constitution through his excesses, he finds refuge in a lunatic asylum, where he ends his days” (214). A case from the Old Bailey records shows Hogarth’s *A Rake’s Progress* depicts reality. In 1738, a man was arrested for gambling and also found guilty for a theft. A man narrating his robbery notes the thief turns out to be a gambler too: “he jump’d my Watch out of my right Fob, with his left Hand ... he being taken on Tuesday for Gambling.” (The verdict in this case is not available on the Old Bailey website). In *A Rake’s Progress*, Hogarth associates gambling with theft. Although the two actions are not committed by the same person, they were combined in the same series.

Hogarth’s moral intelligence is manifest. *The Illustrated Magazine of Art* quotes Horace Walpole’s comment that Hogarth’s realism makes for enduring work. “From time to time he continued to give these works, which should be immortal, if the nature of his work will allow it” (214). What makes his work admirable and unforgettable is his ability to combine pleasure and instructions in concise and understandable series of paintings. Ethics are Hogarth’s main concern in art: “Hogarth filled the place in English art which Fielding and Smollett filled in English literature. Though often considered a mere caricaturist, he was, in reality, a powerful preacher of great truths, a rebuke of folly, and an enforcer and commender of virtue and morality” (212). Besides instructing through art, Hogarth mirrors life for people showing them how they will end up if they stray from the straight path.

Reception history supports my judgments of Cleland and Hogarth, demonstrating the long-term and wide acceptance of Hogarth and the similar rejection of Cleland. I will begin with Cleland. His novel received negative feedback immediately on publication and has continued to

offend many readers up until modern times. Peter Sabor examines the reception history of the novel by both average readers and by literary critics in his article "From Sexual Liberation to Gender Trouble: Reading 'Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure' from the 1960s to the 1990s."

Sabor notes that "[s]ince its initial publication in two installments in November 1748 and February 1749, The *Memoirs* had been a best seller but an illicit one. Although entirely free from vulgar terminology, it contains more explicit description of a board range of sexual practices than any previous work in English" (561). Cleland's detailed descriptions of sexual parts and intercourse led the government to take action against the novel and deem it unlawful. Sabor states that Cleland and his parties "were found guilty in court and the novel was withdrawn, at least officially, from circulation" (561). Sabor also reports that Cleland, after his release from prison, published an edited version, excluding the scandalous scenes, but people avoided buying the edited novel. (This might be a reaction towards Cleland's lost reputation as an author at that time. It might also be a preference for the unedited edition.) Though some individuals continue to read the original, the novel has been read undercover for more than 200 years, even after small presses published it without the sodomitical scene in volume two. Sabor states that although "[r]eputable publishers stayed away; the novel was sold and read surreptitiously" (562). Sabor's essay also covers American reception of the novel after 1963, when it was first re-published but banned. Shortly after the American publisher brought out *Fanny Hill* and "was eventually cleared by the New York State Supreme Court ... another prosecution took place in Manchester in 1964; not until the 1970s would Cleland's novel at last become safe from prosecution in the censorious British courts" (562). Thus, the scandalous content of this novel has clearly prevented it from being widely read and has certainly inhibited Cleland from achieving his goals.

Although the novel has been received negatively for a considerably long time, there are some literary critics who have gone against the traditions and praised Cleland's novel. Sabor presents one of those examples in his essay: "Quennell ... terms Cleland a 'romantic sentimentalist'" and Marghanita defends the novel calling it "a gay little book ... a jolly book ... It made me feel cheerful" (562). It is impossible to disregard that the novel has its own target audience, but such a novel still goes against the vast majority of people, especially those of religious beliefs.

Sabor's essay also shows that with time the novel has become less controversial. But when the novel was published in the Oxford's World's Classics series and later by Penguin classics in 1985, there was a huge response to publishing the novel in publishing companies. Sabor reports that "In *Sunday Times*, Norman Lebrecht, claimed that Oxford and Penguin 'were tussling feverishly for the favours of notorious strumpet,'" and this response shows that such kind of scandalous novels will hardly be accepted without any troubles (564). The rejection of the novel continues, even if there is some acceptance. Sabor provides an example of a feminist attack on the novel, by Kahn in 1991, in which she contends that, "Fanny's story of how she came to be a fulfilled woman is Cleland's attempt to educate women to be the uncomplaining and uncomplicated sexual toys that they were in his fantasy" (569). Even if there is a partial acceptance of Cleland's novel, it is still not universal, as Sabor's essay shows. It is always subject to castigation from different readers and literary critics from different eras.

Interestingly, some readers found mimetic elements and true representations of life, and not only didacticism or pleasure, in Cleland's novels. Gladfelder presents an instance of readers who read Fanny's and William's narrations differently than the majority. For instance, such

readers might find that both novels make gestures toward ethics, perhaps disingenuously: "Sir William Delamore, like Fanny Hill, claims to have learned, over the course of the life his narrative retraces, the difference between real and sham pleasure, love and mere sex, virtue and vice" (88). In addition to the claim, in the previous quote, that Cleland represents the difference in Fanny's life before and after her life in London, Bradford Mudge contends that Cleland's novel provides a bodily pleasure which differs from Richardson's instructive *Pamela*. *Fanny Hill*, he argues, "[b]egins with material reality of the body, of pleasures that cannot be denied, of desires that are inescapably and profoundly human" (qtd. in Lubey 170). It is normal that people read differently and that their interpretations of the read materials varies; however, the quantity and the time of the opinions is what determines their overall reliability. Throughout time, Cleland's works have been condemned. On the other hand, Hogarth's works are castigated by few, and he has been condemned only by a minority throughout the centuries. From this perspective, we can see one element that makes a difference between Hogarth's art and Cleland's writings. I argue that it is their different relationships to Aristotelian and Horatian artistic philosophy has contributed to the immense success of Hogarth and the "unmaking" and failure of Cleland.

As the title of her book *Excitable Imaginations* suggests, Lubey mainly addresses Cleland and Hogarth's ways of triggering the imagination of their audience through their works. Lubey does a detailed analysis of various scenes to show the role imagination plays. She explains how Cleland explicitly invites his readers to engage their imaginations while reading the novel to reach what the narrator could not deliver through words. "[Cleland] creates invitations in his prose for readers to extend their own autonomous processing of images that are described or signaled by the text. Readers are asked to generate their own pleasure, reflecting on its textual origins but ultimately celebrating it as a creation of the self-governed mind – one that, for

Cleland, might gain such force that it culminates in orgasm” (Lubey 174). While Lubey acknowledges that that Cleland’s novel can invoke pleasure, she ultimately praises Hogarth for invoking such feelings without obscene depictions.

Reception of Hogarth’s works

In all of his visual works, Hogarth produces moral instructions and provides mimetic pleasure through imitations of life. Throughout the six works, Moll gets seduced and then gets sick, goes to prison, and finally dies. All these incidents produce a feeling of pity and fear toward the innocent and inexperienced girl made to be a harlot at the hands of corrupting people. Such messages warn people not to fall into the hands of those who take advantage of us and abandon us afterward. The thematic density of the paintings, and the detailed objects, also attract the audiences’ attention to deep meanings of each painting. From Trumbach’s and Wind’s historical articles, it is clear that Hogarth cleverly, and realistically, represented the life of the eighteenth century in England.

Unlike the reception of *Fanny Hill*, Hogarth’s *A Harlot’s Progress* has been always an accepted and idealized work. From the time Hogarth published his paintings people were amused by them. Hogarth’s contemporary George Vertue noted that “The most remarkable subject of painting that captivated the Minds of most persons of all ranks and conditions from the greatest Quality to the meanest was the story painted and designed by Mr. Hogarth of the Harlot’s Progress and the prints engraved by him and published” (qtd. in Wind 18). Not only did people of Hogarth’s time praise his *A Harlot’s Progress* but also people in modern times. For example, Barry Wind goes in depth in analyzing Hogarth’s third plate and relates objects from the painting to real life. He concludes his article, “Vertue’s affirmation of Hogarth’s ‘fruitful invention’ is

clarified by the details of the watch and the Quaker's hat. These objects serve as a subtext, commenting upon the characters and events. They reveal the wonderful agility of Hogarth's mind, and the wide range of his interests" (269). Also, Ronald Paulson has written about the history of publication of Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress*: "[Hogarth] kept not only all the profits from the subscription but also all subsequent profits, plus the profits from the sale of the paintings" (303). In other words, Hogarth's work aided him financially, unlike Cleland who was arrested and lost his reputation. In general, Hogarth's work is widely appreciated and accepted. Also, Paulson gives more evidence that Hogarth's art is a representation of what he saw in real life. Paulson writes, "Mr. Spectator describes a young girl who stops him in the Covent Garden Piazza (near where Hogarth in 1730 was living): 'as exact features as I had ever seen, the most agreeable shape, the finest Neck and Bosom ... She affected to allure me with a forced Wantonness in her Look and Air; but I saw it checked with Hunger and Cold'" (238). Prostitutes tried to catch men for financial purposes and that not only affected their reputation but also their health, exactly as Hogarth represented.

Some people were so amazed with Hogarth's work that they praised him not with simple prose as in letters to friends, but with commendatory poems. Jonathan Swift for example wrote, "How I want thee, humorous Hogarth/ Though I hear a pleasant Rogue art;/ Were but you and I acquainted,/ Every Monster should be painted" (qtd. in Shesgreen xviii). The several forms of people expressing their amazement of the engravings are a compelling evidence of Hogarth's success.

Although Hogarth is an important artistic figure and his two famous works *A Harlot's Progress* and *A Rake's Progress* have undoubtedly been widely admired, some people thought that Hogarth's Progresses are satirical works. It is normal to have people think differently than

what the majority does. Richardson faced the same issue with *Pamela*. Watt presents the problem of different interpretation in his book, "Pamela has always been subject to very contradictory interpretations. Soon after its first publication one anonymous pamphleteer reported that there were, 'particularly among the ladies, two different parties, Pamelists and antipamelists" (168). Moreover, Henry Fielding's satiric work *Shamela* proves that Fielding interpreted Pamela as hypocrite and her virtuousness as just a trap for her "master." Artistic works are always subject to various kinds of interpretation. At the same time, though, having a minority of readers that do not agree with the author's intention, especially when they are explicit about it as Richardson's title shows, is not a crucial problem, especially if the artist is lucid about his or her artistic purpose. To clarify this point, Hogarth has been clear in the concepts he discusses in his art and that his focus is "modern moral subjects." Many of Hogarth's engravings revolve around morality and condemning viciousness. Therefore, it is hard to argue that his works spread meanness and obscenity.

Most of Hogarth's engravings offered him reputation and fame, even when success was not always forthcoming. For instance, Hogarth's painting *Marriage a la Mode* (1751) did not meet with the success of *A Harlot's Progress* and *A Rake's Progress*. Hogarth was surprised that people were not interested in paying the amount of money he expected for that painting. The painting was not a hit at first, but neither was it rejected nor condemned for its content, and Hogarth was not criticized for it. James Townley wrote to compliment Hogarth, praising his talents in depicting the minor details of life in his engravings. Townley's tribute praises Hogarth as one "[w]ho was such an accurate observer of mankind/ That no character escaped him/ His thoughts were so constantly employed/ in the cause of truth and virtue" (*The Genuine Works of William Hogarth*, xxxii). If Hogarth's depiction of vice and evilness was not appropriate during

his time, his engravings would have been rejected by the majority, other opinions that are amazed with Hogarth's works prove that Reynolds and Barry misinterpreted Hogarth's engravings. Thus, we see that Hogarth went through some difficulties and struggled during his career as an engraver, yet the criticism he faced does not rescind his successful history and popularity throughout time. By making his works reflect reality, providing delight and didacticism Hogarth is immortalizing his works by attaching it to history which makes the artistic and the historical elements inseparable.

David A. Brewer reports that Hogarth did not gain his great reputation immediately from the beginning of his career and that his success was not as pervasive as we all might think. We need to recall that Hogarth was castigated by the president of the Royal Academy, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the latter's comments on Hogarth's engravings are condescending. Reynolds in fact used (neo)classical critical principles against Hogarth, condemning many of the works as low in themselves because they feature low subjects. A strident classicist, Reynolds claimed that Hogarth's "genius was 'employed on low and confined subjects the praise which we give must be as limited as its object.' Reynolds similarly blasted Hogarth when he 'very imprudently, or rather very presumptuously, attempted the great historical style' in his paintings of *sigismunda*" (23). Brewer also provides another critic of Hogarth's work, James Barry, who says "It may be reasonably doubted, whether the being much conversant with Hogarth's method of exposing meanness, deformity and vice ... is not rather a dangerous, or, at least, a worthless pursuit" (23). Although Barry considers Hogarth's engravings as representing viciousness, those engravings convey crucial and meaningful ethical messages that warn about such viciousness. Viciousness, immorality, and deformity in Hogarth's works are always aligned with demons, and portrayed negatively, which makes the audience have a kind of revulsion against the acts that Hogarth

condemns. I agree that it is not prudent to deny that the world has bad as well as good manners, but the bad side should be shown, condemned, and warned against. Hogarth does not idealize bad people. Instead, as Johnson would counsel in *Rambler* #4, he portrays them as ugly and disgusting people as a way of castigating them and their evil deeds. Brewer notes that even though Hogarth was disliked by some critics, his reputation overall has thrived with time and his engravings have become a part of the English heritage.

Thus, Cleland's deviation from the conventions of his time and Hogarth's commitments to those conventions are central differences that caused the first to fail and the latter to succeed. Not representing or misrepresenting reality caused Cleland to lose his reputation and "unmade" him as a literary author. Cleland's failure in depicting biographical fictions in the era of realism, when novels functioned as historical documents of individuals' lives, was due to his attempts to use inventive techniques that went against the taste of the majority of his readers whether in the use of language or sexual incidents. Although it is not necessary that artists follow the Horatian philosophy, it is essential that they have respect for their readers' mentality and that they invoke literary creativity. As my thesis has sought to show, Cleland and Hogarth's work parallel each other in many of their incidents, but differ in the delivery of artistic techniques and the ending of their main characters. The three main elements of mimesis are almost totally absent in Cleland's work and are clearly shown in Hogarth's works, which solidified Hogarth's reputation as an artist until our present day. Would Cleland's mistake, that is not following the convention, be dealt with in our time as it was dealt with in the eighteenth century? Was Cleland's misfortune to deviate from Horatian traditions and the conventions at a time when it was not easily accepted in a time of conservatism? Would contemporary authors face a similar rejection for not following conventions of our present time? Why was the eighteenth century so concerned with holding to

many conventions, while the novel was a move away from previous literary forms? I end with questions, for these issues are complex and require new attention. This thesis is one start towards answering them.

Works Cited:

- Bellis, George and Christopher Lane. "Mimetic and Nonmimetic Fiction." *PMLA*. 119:1 (January 2004). Print. 133-135.
- Brewer, David A. "Making Hogarth Heritage". *Representations* 72 (2000): 21–63. Web. Accessed 22 February. 2016.
- Gladfelder, Hal. *Fanny Hill in Bombay: The Making and Unmaking of John Cleland*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2012. Print.
- "Hogarth". *The Illustrated Magazine of Art* 2.10 (1853): 212–215. Web. Accessed 4 February. 2016.
- Cleland, John. *Fanny Hill or Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*. Ed. Peter Wagner. England: Penguin classics, 1985. Print.
- . *Memoirs of a Coxcomb*. Lexington, KY: n.p. 2015.
- Crane, Ronald Salmon. "English Neoclassical Criticism: An Outline Sketch." *Critics and Criticism*, ed. R.S. Crane. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952. Print.
- Dorsch, T. S. "trans. Classical Literary Criticism: Aristotle, Horace, Longinus." (1965).
- Johnson, Samuel. "The Rambler #4." <http://www.english.upenn.edu/~mgamer/Etexts/johnson.rambler.html>. Web. Accessed 10 February. 2016.
- Johnson, Samuel. "The Rambler #60." <http://www.samueljohnson.com/ram60.html> Web. Accessed 18 February. 2016.
- Keast, William R. "The theoretical foundations of Johnson's criticism." *Critics and Criticism, ed. RS Crane (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952)* (1952): 389-407. Print.
- Lubey, Kathleen. *Excitable Imaginations: Eroticism and Reading in Britain, 1660–1760*. Bucknell University Press, 2012. Print.
- Matthew Arnold*. Ed. Miriam Allot and Robert H. Super. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986. Print.
- Nichols, John, George Steevens, and Thomas Phillips. *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth:*

Illustrated with Biographical Anecdotes, a Chronological Catalogue, and Commentary.
Vol. 2. Longman, Hurst, Rees, and Orme, 1810. Web. Accessed 25 February. 2016.

Paulson, Ronald. *Hogarth, Volume 1: The 'Modern Moral Subject' 1697-1732*. 1991. Print.

Paulson, Ronald. *Hogarth, Volume 2: High Art and Low 1732-1750*. 1992. Print.

Racine, Jean. "Phaedra. Translated into English verse by Richard Wilbur." (1986).

Sabor, Peter. "From Sexual Liberation to Gender Trouble: Reading Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure from the 1960s to the 1990s." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33.4 (2000): 561- 578. Print.

Shesgreen, Sean, ed. *Engravings by Hogarth*. Dover Publications, 1973.

Sidney, Philip. "The Defense of Poesy."
<http://www.bartleby.com/27/1.html>. Accessed 9 March. 2016.

Smith, Jad. "How Fanny Comes to Know: Sensation, Sexuality, and the Epistemology of the Closet in Cleland's 'Memoirs.'" *The Eighteenth Century* 44.2/3 (2003): 183-202.

Trumbach, Randolph. "Modern Prostitution and gender in *Fanny Hill*: Libertine and Domesticated Fantasy." *Sexual Underworlds of the Enlightenment*. Ed. Rousseau, G.S. and Roy Porter. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press. 1988. Print. □

Walpole, Horace. "Hogarth's Genius."
<http://www.bartleby.com/209/802.html>. Accessed 1 March. 2016.

Watt, Ian P. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*. Univ of California Press, 1957. Print.

Wind, Barry. "Hogarth's Fruitful Invention: Observations on *Harlot's Progress*, Plate III." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* (1989): 267-269. Print.

"Thomas Jones, Theft > pocketpicking, 11th October 1738." *Old Bailey*.
<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=t17381011-6&div=t17381011-6&terms=gambling#highlight> Accessed 8 March. 2016.

"Ordinary's Account, 7th November 1744." *Old Bailey Online*.

<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=OA17441107&div=OA17441107&terms=prostitute#highlight>. Accessed 8 March. 2016.