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“A Devoted Heart Attones for a Worthless Offering”: Mary Pix’s Dedication of *The Inhumane Cardinal* (1696) to Princess Anne

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Abstract

Mary Pix (c. 1666–1709) published eight plays between 1696 and 1709, together with a novel, *The Inhumane Cardinal*, the verse-novelette *Violenta*, and two poetic works. Five additional plays have been attributed to Pix. Thirteen of Pix’s seventeen works included dedications, which she used to derive additional profits and enhance her prestige as an author. The practice of writing dedications was widespread in seventeenth-century England, a state of affairs unsurprising given the precarious situation of professional writers, amongst whom Pix was no exception. This article focuses on Pix’s dedication of *The Inhumane Cardinal* (1696) to Princess Anne, analyzing its use of a strategy common in such writings, the divinization of the dedicatee. I contend that Pix took advantage of the popularity she had earned through her first two plays, *Ibrahim* and *The Spanish Wives* (both staged in 1696 and printed that year with dedications to members of the gentry), to request Anne’s permission to offer the princess her novel. In the epistle, Pix adapted conventions which had been developed predominantly in playtexts to legitimize her work of fiction, and Anne herself and the virtues that she exemplifies validate *The Inhumane Cardinal* as suitable reading, while bringing renown to the writer. Moreover, Pix’s

panegyric intersects with the political climate by insisting upon Anne's worthiness as the rightful successor to the throne. Therefore, I argue, paratexts should not be disregarded when studying novels, nor, indeed, plays, given that professional writers like Pix involved themselves in various genres throughout their careers.

Writing at the end of the seventeenth century and early years of the eighteenth, Mary Pix (c. 1666–1709), with a total of thirteen comedies and tragedies, was the most prolific female playwright after Aphra Behn (c. 1640–1689).¹ In addition to these, Pix wrote poems, the most noteworthy being an elegy on John Dryden (included in Delarivier Manley's *The Nine Muses*), a pastoral elegy on Charles Boyle, Earl of Burlington (1704), and an ode to Henry Grey, Earl of Kent, Lord Chamberlain to Queen Anne (1705); a novel, *The Inhumane Cardinal* (1696); and a verse-novelette, *Violenta* (1704), which was published anonymously. Like other professional female writers of her time, Pix was from the upper middle class or lower gentry. She was born in Nettlebed, Oxfordshire, where her mother, Lucy, was related to the Wallis family, and her father, Roger Griffith, was the vicar of Padbury and headmaster of the Royal Latin School in Buckingham.² This relatively privileged upbringing most probably provided Pix with a good but informal education, which is reflected in her works.³ After marrying a merchant tailor named George Pix in July 1684 in London, Mary entered the literary scene in 1696 with three works: the novel *The Inhumane Cardinal*, a blank-verse tragedy, *Ibrahim, the Thirteenth Emperor of the Turks*, and a farce, *The Spanish Wives*. Both plays were staged that season by Rich's company with moderate success, and their printed editions were dedicated to two members of the gentry, the former to Richard Minchall, Esquire (a family friend and neighbor at Bourton), and the latter to Colonel Thomas Tipping (MP for Wallingford, who, Pix says in the dedication, had known her since her childhood).⁴ As for the third, Pix pulled off a coup by obtaining permission to dedicate *The Inhumane Cardinal* to Princess Anne Stuart.⁵

Such a rapid progression in the dedicatee's social status is remarkable but not exceptional, for in the second part of the 1690s other authors also succeeded in offering dedications to Princess Anne, namely John Banks (*Cyrus the Great*, 1696), William Congreve (*The Mourning Bride*, 1697) and Catharine Trotter (*Fatal Friendship*, 1698). The fact that Pix secured the princess's patronage within months of her literary debut was nonetheless unusual: was this epistle the result of a timely request or the corollary of the popularity gained from the staging of her first two plays? Contemporary criticism is unfortunately scanty,⁶ but whatever the case, in the dedication of *The Inhumane Cardinal*, Pix divinizes her patroness—one of the predominant strategies of dedicatory writing—to legitimize this work of fiction, which features the seduction of a young woman by a cynical older man. The explicit comparison of Anne Stuart to the divine because of her moral virtues validates *The Inhumane Cardinal* as suitable reading for women, while bringing renown to Pix for having obtained permission to dedicate it to the princess.⁷

The first scholars to analyze dedicatory panegyrics (Henry Wheatley and Arthur Collins, among others) misread them as instances of servile flattery, making value judgements on the frivolity of courtly coteries. Wheatley lamented that authors "sold their lying praises for money,"⁸ denouncing "the absurdity of the hyperbolical language,"

which in his view contrasted with “the despicableness of the person to whom all these fine words are addressed.” Collins maintained that dedicatory writing “was enervating; it was unbecoming the dignity of the profession of letters; . . . above all, it was unnecessary.”¹⁰ Even though they both recognized that dedications were almost a requisite, for it was the dedicatee’s name which impressed readers, their misconception of the patronage system was limited by an anachronistic approach, which reduced this practice to a monetary exchange. As more recent scholarship has shown, patronage and dedicatory writing in this epoch were not purely economic phenomena, but rather were also a cultural system that engaged with political power, social status, and literary prestige. Deborah Payne, Dustin Griffin, and Richard McCabe have shed light on dedicatory practices by analyzing these texts as gift exchanges: dedications functioned as gifts by creating a social bond with the addressee that had to be reciprocated (at least with a small sum of money), so that the patron’s honor and status would not be questioned.¹¹

Dedicatory writing was a living practice that afforded authors an opportunity to cement patronage relations by making them public and derive new profits. Above all, the convention of patronage served to increase the prestige of authors and strengthen their position by presenting themselves as worthy of recognition. The support of the élite was highly advantageous for writers, especially in the early stages of their careers, because such patrons could provide them with social support, protection from detractors and access to their network of connections. The very name of a dedicatee (particularly, one from a noble family) written on title pages or heading the dedication page legitimized a piece of literature and brought renown to its author. At a time when aristocrats were considered natural arbiters of taste, the panegyric was one of the staple strategies for the enhancement of literary works and the sometimes extravagant praise of the dedicatee was completely justified within the context of dedications. The implicit recommendation by Princess Anne, who was regarded as a devoted wife,¹² was remarkably advantageous for a new author like Pix, writing within a context of intense moral censorship. The Revolution of 1688 resulted in a national campaign for the reformation of manners, a movement for moral and spiritual reform initiated by Anglican and Dissenting clergy and prompted by both Mary II and later Anne, which aimed at controlling a wide range of activities, including literature.¹³ The moralistic climate of the 1690s resulted in an expectation that literature should provide positive models of behavior and that the elite held a “role as the nation’s exemplars of virtue, manners, and religion.”¹⁴ When the subject matter of their writings could be deemed inappropriate or raise concerns about immorality, authors could look for protection under the respectability of their patrons’ name and reputation.

Pix certainly needed to justify a seduction novel as appropriate reading for a woman—even though her heroine and those who manipulate her are punished for their respective recklessness and malice. The novel’s intended female readers were generally believed to be easily affected by fiction, making *The Inhumane Cardinal’s* inclusion of examples of female wantonness especially subject to being regarded as pernicious.¹⁵ The aristocratic female protagonists of prose fiction (such as Donna Olympia in Pix’s text) were expected to conform to dominant morality, and professional women writers, because they were easy targets for criticism, had to offset any potential accusations of indecency. To counteract

an immoral aristocratic character (Olympia), Pix required an eminent dedicatee with a spotless reputation. With the dedication of *The Inhumane Cardinal* to Princess Anne, the novelist could not only associate the excellence of her patroness with this work to emphasize its appropriateness, but also foster her literary career in a male-dominated arena by deriving prestige for her work from a most eminent patroness.

The Inhumane Cardinal might indeed have been seen as scandalous reading-matter without its protection from Princess Anne. The novel features the seduction of Melora, the innocent daughter of the French ambassador in Rome, by the wicked Cardinal Barbarino (the Pope's nephew), who impersonates Alphonsus, the duke of Modena, to carry out his mischief. Barbarino is aided by the treacherous and vile Donna Olympia, who manipulates the young lady into believing in fictional romantic love affairs, stories she offers as examples of upstanding young ladies who eventually gave in to their suitors' request and married them secretly. After winning Melora's trust at Barbarino's request, Olympia artfully uses Melora's absolute loyalty to induce her to marry Alphonsus / Barbarino without her father's knowledge. When Melora is informed that she has been ensnared and that her reputation is damned, Barbarino, again with Olympia's connivance, poisons her to avoid being detained. Olympia's and Barbarino's actions are nonetheless punished: Olympia is banished to Orvieto, where she dies of the plague and Barbarino ends "loaded with Diseases, and Infamy" (236).

The association of the villain of the story with the duchy of Modena and its obvious resonances thereby with James II's wife Mary cannot be coincidental: Pix's *The Inhumane Cardinal* is an anti-Catholic novel, for Barbarino is portrayed as an unbridled libertine, who has several times abused the dignity of his office without the slightest remorse, causing the downfall of other young ladies (224–25). Francisco—a young gentleman in the cardinal's service, who falls in love with Melora and regrets having been an accomplice—discloses the identity of her husband describing him in the following terms: "he assumes most unjustly, the Title of Cardinal Patron; when in reality he is a Destroyer of his Country, and an utter Enemy to all Goodness" (221–22). Furthermore, one of the stories included in the novel ("The History of Alphonsus and Cordelia") features a friar who accepts a bribe and betrays the confidence of Sulpitia, Cordelia's mother, introducing to the family the young gentleman Alphonsus disguised as his kinsman, so that he can approach Cordelia.¹⁶ The Christian moral of the story is analogous to those found in publications by the same bookseller (Richard Wilkin) advertised on *The Inhumane Cardinal's* final pages, such as Jacques Abbadie's *A Vindication of the Truth of Christian Religion against the Objections of all Modern Opposers* or Simon Patrick's *The Glorious Epiphany with the Devout Christian Love to It*. The advertising of such religious literature in Pix's novel was unquestionably another marketing strategy intended to avoid suspicions about being controversial.

Because of the use of romantic stories for immoral purposes, the regrettable actions of the dissolute cardinal and Donna Olympia, and Melora's gullibility, Pix needed to introduce an unambiguous moral in *The Inhumane Cardinal*: female beauty is no shield against becoming a victim. Olympia, with deceit and Machiavellian scheming, convinces Melora that, despite her being the daughter of a marquess, her beauty places her among

the highest noblewomen; the heroines of the stories Olympia selects as examples for the young lady to follow marry above their rank, and their natural charms and elegance render them equally noble. Melora eventually agrees to marry the disguised cardinal without her father's knowledge with the promise that "she would quickly be Proclaim'd Dutchess of *Ferrara* and *Modena*; will you then (adds she [Olympia] earnestly) neglect the opportunity of this proffer'd Glory . . . ? These Arguments, deliver'd by so faithful a Friend, as *Melora* took *Olympia* to be; mov'd her to yield" (211–12).

Indeed, the stories inserted in *The Inhumane Cardinal* contain messages for Melora and Pix's readers to reflect on the damage that can be inflicted on beautiful young ladies who are not sufficiently cautious about their respectability. For instance, Cordelia, whose mother Sulpitia guards her from impudent suitors, is persuaded that vanity will not guarantee her a successful marriage and that the only lasting fame is a decent reputation:

In this deprav'd Age, without Gold, what can I expect by this little stock of Beauty, which you talk so much of but vicious Adorers? Would you have my Mother then expose me to Courts? The thought shocks my Virgin Soul, and makes me start when no danger's near. Oh! rather, let *Cordelia's* Name pass obscurely to the Grave, forgotten, than be remembred, and Dishonour affix'd to it. (26–27)

Melora's seduction is a laborious process that Olympia brings to a head having instructed her duped friend on the genuineness of love at first sight, and shown her that rejecting a constant lover is the utmost form of cruelty and may cause his death when his feelings are pure. The happy ending stories Melora is told work in Olympia's interests—readers are told that "her Sentiments were Delicate; and by a Sympathetic Power, the Misfortunes or Blessings of others sensibly mov'd her Passions" (205).

Precisely because of fiction's power over the young and innocent protagonist, Pix's novel must include an explicit moral lesson. Such a warning to female readers of the perils of succumbing to hollow pleasures and risking irremediable shame is openly expressed by the author at the end of *The Inhumane Cardinal*: "[Melora's] Misfortunes must raise Compassion in the tender Bosoms of the Young and Fair; so they may stand a lasting Caution to beware the Insinuations of the designing part of your own Sex; who having themselves lost that inestimable and never to be recover'd Jewel, *Reputation*: endeavour to destroy Blooming Innocence" (236). Pix insists that the everlasting quality of honor is to be encouraged over the perishable nature of beauty, as the novelist also stresses in the story's conclusion: "Beauty . . . is but the Paint of Nature; which, though it outlast the Lilly and the Rose; yet, sure as they, must Fade: whilst a Fragrant Fame never dies" (236). In addition to the warning about female vanity, Pix's novella includes a lesson on patriarchal authority, for this work is conceived as an example of the consequences of female disobedience,¹⁷ a message again emphasized in the work's final lines:

Melora cannot justly be taxed with any Miscarriage, but venturing to Act weighty things, without her Father's Knowledge. Yet her hard Fate may fright all from Entertaining Motions of a Marriage, how specious soever they appear; till they have taken the Advice and Consent of

those, whom God and Nature have appointed their Governors and Directors. (236–37)

In accordance with this message, the panegyric to Princess Anne, particularly the idealization based on her inner qualities, serves as a model to female readers who were liable to repeat Melora's faults. The dedication depicts Anne as a superior being, far above temptation and failure. The compliments the princess receives focus not on her beauty (as was customary in dedications addressed to women, particularly during the reign of Charles II),¹⁸ but rather on her inner qualities.

What makes Princess Anne a most virtuous woman is that, unlike Melora, she had resisted seduction by a suitor who did not have her father's blessing: Anne was widely believed to have rejected the advances of John Sheffield, earl of Mulgrave, in the spring of 1682, months before the negotiations for her marriage to Prince George of Denmark began. Narcissus Luttrell, for instance, recorded that "the earl of Mulgrave is fallen into his majesties displeasure (by pretending courtship, as is said, to the lady Ann, daughter to his royall highnesse), and is forbid comeing to Whitehall and St. James, and hath all his places taken from him."¹⁹ If it had not been for a rapid intervention, the consequences would have been disastrous, for at the time it was concluded that Anne had been seduced "so far as to spoil her marrying to any body else, and therefore the town has given him [Mulgrave] the nickname of King John."²⁰ Even though Pix did not explicitly refer to this episode (to do so would have been outrageous and so contrary to her purpose), it is highly likely that readers remembered the rumors. They were implicitly invited to contrast the princess's behavior in her youth with Melora's, while bearing in mind the lesson to be learned from the affair: that young women (and most of all princesses) needed to be hypervigilant about their reputations because it was not enough to have an irreproachable conduct, one had to remain free from scandal and gossip.²¹

The panegyric to the princess included in the dedicatory epistle of *The Inhumane Cardinal* (1696) emphasizes Anne's virtuous character and her reputation as a dutiful wife and mother. The epistle is carefully crafted to convey the deference that a royal addressee required. Pix assumes a submissive attitude—as the asymmetrical relation between author and dedicatee dictates—to forestall criticism for her audacity in offering her work to such an eminent dedicatee. From the beginning of the epistle, Pix explicitly compares Anne Stuart to the divine using the *topos* of the trifle and portraying herself as a worshiper offering a sacrifice:²²

Great is my Confusion when I wou'd approach; an humble Awe checks my Ambition; and I am afraid to lay so mean a Trifle at the Feet of Your *Royal Highness*. But as with Heaven, a devoted Heart atones for a worthless Offering; so Most Excellent *Princess*, let the fervent Zeal, which inclines me towards your Service, excuse this too too bold an Undertaking. (A4r–v)

From the outset, the author extolls the moral excellence and compassion of her patroness, while insisting on the reverence she elicits from those who have the chance to contemplate

her. Furthermore, Pix emphasizes Anne's royal lineage and supremacy in being next in the line to the English throne:

You are a *Princess* whose Presence creates an Universal Joy and Veneration in all your pleas'd Beholders. We view in your Majestick Lineaments, the August Air of your *Royal Ancestors*: Whilst with this becoming Majesty, something so agreeably affable is join'd, that your humble Creatures find their Access both easy and delightful. (A4v)

The cause of the fascination Anne arouses in English subjects is her beauty, which is an outward sign of her moral virtue and her intrinsic connection to the divine. The contemplation of her beauty benefits her admirers by drawing them towards God through the pursuit of goodness. The princess's "Moral and Princely Virtues . . . Beautify and Reign in [her] *Heroick Soul*" and raise "the love of Virtue in the Breast of the most stupid" (A5r).²³

Another feature that makes Anne Stuart the epitome of female virtue is that she is seen as a happily married woman and loving mother.²⁴ Pix idealizes her patron's family life, presenting her marriage as an example of marital bliss for her readers: "Blest in the Royal Partner of your Bed, that Great Good Man; . . . Blest your Self, and blessing all, in that Lovely Blooming Prince, the *Duke of Gloucester*; whose forward Youth Wings the breath of Fame; and were her Tongues innumerable, when she reports of him, some wonder must be left untold" (A5v–6r). Despite Prince George being aged just seven, Pix characterizes him as a virtuous man, extolling him for qualities (courage and glory) traditionally attributed to male aristocrats, while insisting on him being a much-admired future leader and a solace for the nation:

Joy of the Present Age, and Darling hopes, on which the future one depends. Oh may he Inherit the Extracted Virtues of all our *British Kings*; the Courage of our Present Sovereign; but a Fortune peculiarly Great, peculiarly his own; Conspicuous, and far above whatever went before: that Succeeding Worlds, may to his Glorious Name, justly add the Epithet of Happy. (A6r)

Pix was undoubtedly the main beneficiary of the public display of support she had received from the princess and yet, in the two extracts just quoted, the dedication also favored her royal dedicatee: the insistence on Anne's status as rightful heir and the existence of a commendable Protestant male successor to her helped to mitigate the potential threat posed by the Catholic candidate to the throne. This type of public acknowledgement was all the more convenient in 1696: Anne had not only suffered yet another miscarriage in February, but her father had also launched an invasion to regain the throne through assassinating William.²⁵ The panegyric on Gloucester was particularly relevant in this respect because popular opinion was starting to consider the duke as the Protestant heir since it was no longer expected that King William or Princess Anne would produce other offspring.²⁶

Pix's choice of Anne Stuart as the patron of *The Inhumane Cardinal* was all the more politically charged because after the death of Mary II in December 1694, and with William ruling as sole monarch, Anne was next in the line of succession.²⁷ The princess came to be seen as the national model of female virtue and anti-Catholicism, for the other claimant to the English throne was the Catholic prince James Francis Edward, James II's son by Mary of Modena.²⁸ Despite her immense popularity and political significance, then, Anne could also benefit from the acclaim that dedications symbolized given the political circumstances. Pix's divinization of her royal patroness is also consistent with the moral bent of William and Mary's regime, which aimed at breaking with the morally reprehensible reign of Charles II. Pix explicitly links the panegyric of the princess with the moral message and exemplary models of behavior that authors were required to offer in their works and that members of the aristocracy were meant to embody: "Tis said Example goes before Precept; and that of all Examples we are fondest of those our Princes set before us. How incorrigible then are these polluted Times, when *You, Illustrious Madam*, stand a Pattern most Excellently Glorious?" (A5r). The dedication is meant to recommend Anne's irreproachable character and to counteract the general perception that prose fiction was not spiritually edifying for young women. The praise and idolization of her patroness, as well as the idealization of her family, were designed to present this work as appropriate reading for young women, and this strategy was clearly a response to the contemporary clamor for moral reformation.

Soon after *The Inhumane Cardinal*, Pix also made use of the dedicatee's divinization in her epistles to the countess of Burlington (*The False Friend*), the duchess of Bolton (*The Beau Defeated*) and the countess of Salisbury (*The Different Widows*), and in the one addressed to Mrs. Cook of Norfolk (*Queen Catharine*), even though the last-named did not belong to the nobility. The panegyrics included in these dramatic texts were similarly intended to signify the approval of an honorable patroness, at a time when this literary genre (particularly comedies) was being severely criticized for allegedly providing negative models of behavior. In these epistles, Pix extolls her patronesses' moral rectitude, exemplarity and modesty, the qualities which were expected in aristocratic ladies and that would also recommend her plays as suitable reading.

Dedications, like prefaces, and like prologues and epilogues in drama, should not be ignored, for, as Dustin Griffin has rightly put it, to pay them no attention "is arbitrarily and myopically to abstract literature from its living cultural context, and to misconceive its full meaning for its original audiences."²⁹ The study of Pix's dedications and the different rhetorical strategies used in these texts contributes to our understanding of how Pix managed to build a literary career writing for the theatre and how she responded to challenges at a time when professional female writers were becoming more numerous, despite the moral impositions that were placed on women by conservative sectors of society.

Appendix: Works by Mary Pix and their Dedicatees

Title	Date	Author Identification	Dedicatee
<i>Ibrahim, the Thirteenth Emperour of the Turks</i>	1696	Name on title page. Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Richard Minchall, Esquire
<i>The Inhumane Cardinal; or, Innocence Betray'd</i>	1696	Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Princess Anne Stuart
<i>The Spanish Wives</i>	1696	Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Colonel Thomas Tipping
<i>The Innocent Mistress</i>	1697	Name on title page.	—
<i>The Deceiver Deceived</i>	1698	Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Sir Robert Marsham, Knight and Baronet
<i>Queen Catharine; or, The Ruines of Love</i>	1698	Name on title page. Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Mrs. Cook of Norfolk
<i>The False Friend; or, The Fate of Disobedience</i>	1699	Name on title page. Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
<i>The French Beau</i>	1699	Anonymous.	—
<i>The Beau Defeated; or, The Lucky Younger Brother</i>	1700	Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Henrietta Paulet, duchess of Bolton
<i>The Czar of Muscovy</i>	1701	Anonymous.	—
<i>The Double Distress</i>	1701	Name on title page. Dedication signed: Mary Pix	John Berkeley, Viscount Fitzhardinge

<i>The Different Widows; or, Intrigue All-a-Mode</i>	1703	Anonymous. Dedication unsigned.	Frances Cecil, countess of Salisbury
<i>A Pastoral Elegy on the death of the Right Honourable the Earl of Burlington</i>	1704	Dedication signed: Mary Pix	Juliana Boyle, countess of Burlington
<i>Violenta; or, The Rewards of Virtue</i>	1704	Anonymous. Dedication unsigned.	Robert Leke, earl of Scarsdale
<i>The Conquest of Spain</i>	1705	Anonymous.	—
<i>To the Right Honourable the Earl of Kent, Lord Chamberlain of Her Majesties Houshold</i>	1705	Name on title page	Inscribed to Henry Grey, earl of Kent
<i>The Adventures in Madrid</i>	1709	Anonymous. Dedication unsigned.	Sir Jacob Banks



Notes

¹ Five of Pix's plays were published anonymously but are generally attributed to her (see Steeves, *Plays of Mary Pix*, 1.lix–lxi). See Appendix, Works by Mary Pix.

² Kelley, "Pix."

³ For instance, *Violenta* was adapted from Boccaccio's *Decameron*, although it is uncertain whether Pix made use of the original Italian or an English edition (Kelley, "Pix").

⁴ Tipping's biography can be found in Handley, "Tipping, Thomas." The dedication of *The Spanish Wives* is the source of Pix's personal connection with Tipping (A2r).

⁵ Because *The Spanish Wives* is the only of these 1696 works to be included in the Term Catalogues (for Michaelmas, see Arber, *Term Catalogues*, 602), the sequence of their

appearance is debatable. However, given the status of the three dedicatees, it seems more likely that Pix offered her first publications to members of the gentry, then used the popularity she had possibly gained from the staging of these and their printing to request permission to dedicate *The Inhumane Cardinal* to the princess.

⁶ In *Lives and Characters*, Gildon wrote that *Ibrahim's* tragic heroine Morena “never fail'd to bring Tears into the Eyes of the Audience” (111), but he (if he also authored *A Comparison between the Two Stages*) called *The Spanish Wives* “a most damnable Farce” (28).

⁷ Though there is no mention of it in the epistle, Pix must have requested permission beforehand; otherwise, she would have breached protocol, which was not advisable when addressing the royal family.

⁸ Wheatley, *Dedication of Books*, 120.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁰ Collins, *Authorship*, 212.

¹¹ It has been estimated that, at least in the case of drama, the custom was to reward a dedication with £5–£10, a significant sum. In the case of a royal dedicatee, the gift might have been higher. For payments for dedicatory epistles of drama, see Milhous and Hume, *Publication of Plays*, 175–82.

¹² Gregg, *Queen Anne*, 290.

¹³ The Revolution had come to be seen as “God’s way of giving England one last chance to reject sin, irreligion, and ill government, or else suffer his violent wrath” (Dabhoiwala, “Sex and Societies,” 291). The theatre was the object of much condemnation, which culminated with the publication of Jeremy Collier’s *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* in 1698.

¹⁴ Hudson, “Literature and Social Class,” 6.

¹⁵ Miriam Borham Puyal has discussed the prescriptive attitude that some eighteenth-century moralists had when considering women’s reading, particularly romances and novels: “women who read too much, who read the wrong books, or who did not read critically were dangerous for themselves and for society; they lost contact with reality and their duties as women, they became threats to the stability of the state’s core, the family” (“Ladies-errant,” 131).

¹⁶ Olympia, whom Francisco depicts as “the Basest of Women” (223), falsely agrees with Melora when this lady objects that “a religious Habit is both unhandsom and unfit

to carry on an amorous Intrigue” (40), and she ironically advances the cardinal’s fate and hers adding that “the many Troubles that are inflicted on their Posterity, may be punishments for this first mockery of the Divinity” (40–41).

¹⁷ Villegas-López, “Narratives of Truth-Telling.”

¹⁸ See MacLeod and Alexander, *Painted Ladies*, for Restoration portraiture’s links with sexual politics and the role of women at court.

¹⁹ Lutrell, *Brief Historical Relation*, 1.236. For gossip in other contemporary documents, see Winn, *Queen Anne*, 662 n.109.

²⁰ *Seventh Report*, 480, quoted in Gregg, *Queen Anne*, 72.

²¹ Princess Anne’s sister, Mary, in a letter to Frances Apsley, noted the risk of slander, lamenting Anne’s lack of discretion: “I am so nice upon the point of reputation that it makes me mad she should be exposed to such reports, & now what will not this insolent man say being provokt” (Bathurst, *Letters*, 154–56, quoted in Gregg, *Queen Anne*, 73).

²² This consists in characterizing the offering as insignificant when compared to the greatness of the dedicatee.

²³ This association between (physical) beauty and the quest of union with God derives from Renaissance Neoplatonism. Neoplatonic ideas had been reintroduced in England by Honoré d’Urfé in his immensely popular *L’Astrée*, first translated into English as *The History of Astrea* in 1620.

²⁴ The princess gave birth to eighteen children (Gregg, *Queen Anne*, 211–12), but only five were born alive; the duke of Gloucester was her only surviving child.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 193–94.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

²⁷ One of the conditions on which William III was given the throne on February 13, 1689 was that Anne and her children would take precedence over any issue he may have by a wife after Mary (Claydon, “William III”). The legislation on succession (the Bill of Rights of 1689 and the Act of Settlement of 1701) explicitly barred Roman Catholics from the throne.

²⁸ The Jacobite alternative was an ever-present threat during William’s and Mary’s reign and subsequently Anne’s (see Gregg, “James Francis Edward”). Anne was to blame

for the calumny that Mary of Modena's pregnancy was false (see Gregg, *Queen Anne*, 111–12).

²⁹ Griffin, *Literary Patronage*, 1.



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