... it must be remembered, that while our language is yet living, and variable by the caprice of every tongue that speaks it, [some] words are hourly shifting their relations, and can no more be ascertained in a dictionary, than a grove, in the agitation of a storm, can be accurately delineated from its picture in the water.

Preface to the *Dictionary*
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A Call For Contributions
The editors of the JNL invite contributions of notes, queries,
Johnsoniana, and short articles on any and all matters regard-
ing Johnson and his circle (social, political, and intellectual).
Contributions to the March issue are due 22 November; those
for the September issue are due 22 May.
The Johnsonian world is now preparing to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the publication of Johnson’s Dictionary on 15 April 1755. An anniversary volume is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press, New Perspectives on Johnson’s Dictionary, edited by Jack Lynch and Anne MacDermott. Due out soon, New Perspectives contains fifteen essays treating various aspects of Johnson’s great book, everything from its typographic design to its implied linguistic theory and its importance as an encyclopedia of knowledge and a (rather large) handbook of moral instruction. Another collection of essays is being planned in Milan by Professor Giovanni Iamartino: “Samuel Johnson and Eighteenth-Century British Lexicography” will appear as an issue of Textus, the biannual official journal of the Associazione Italiana di Anglistica. Professor Iamartino plans to hold a one-day seminar on the Dictionary on 15 April in Milan. A three-day conference, entitled “Celebrating Johnson’s Dictionary (1755-2005),” will take place at Pembroke College, Oxford, 26-28 August (see www.pembroke.ox.ac.uk/pembroke_college/johnson_index.html for details). In the works, and ready for 2005, we trust, is a study by Allen Reddick of what scholars have long thought to be discarded proof pages for the Dictionary. Reddick’s study will bring to light at last a great deal of Johnson’s lost lexicographical activity. Also scheduled to appear in 2005, although a specific date has not been set, is volume XVIII of the Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, “Johnson on the English Language,” edited by Gwin J. Kolb and Robert DeMaria, Jr. This volume provides reliable texts (and complete textual apparatus) for the Plan of an English Dictionary, the Preface, “The History of the English Language,” and “A Grammar of the English Tongue.” I joined Gwin and Ruth Kolb, who had been at work on the volume for some time, about fifteen years ago. Everyone fortunate enough to know the Kolbs will understand my temptation to recommend this volume as a labor of love, as well as an attempt to make a very durable contribution to the accurate understanding and preservation of Samuel Johnson’s great work.

Fifty years ago, the Johnsonian News Letter was celebrating the 200th anniversary of Johnson’s Dictionary. Remarkably, one of the two celebratory volumes mentioned in the March 1955 issue was Gwin Kolb and James Sledd’s Dr. Johnson’s Dictionary: Essays in the
Biography of a Book (1955). The other volume, a collection of essays entitled “Johnson’s Dictionary 1755-1955: Some Facts and Problems” seems never to have appeared (though I am ready to be corrected by a perspicacious reader). “Sledd and Kolb,” as the book is known, has remained a standard work (in many ways the standard work) for students of Johnson’s Dictionary. The accuracy, the thoroughness, and the determination of the authors to concentrate on ascertainable facts have made their book nearly immune to time. As they approach the climax of their story, Sledd and Kolb keep all aspects of the Dictionary in perspective—the reality that it was a “booksellers’ job,” as one early critic called it, as well as the fact that it was composed by a great writer in the midst of a storied but difficult life. “What did the prosperous buyers of the first edition get for their money [the large sum of £4: 10: 0]?” ask Sledd and Kolb, and they answer:

In the words of Marquis Nicolini, then president of the Accademia della Crusca, “a very noble Work,” which “would be a perpetual Monument of Fame to the Author, an Honour to his own Country in particular, and a general Benefit to the Republic of Letters throughout all Europe.” The judgment is no more eloquent than fair; yet the incongruity here forced by fitting a courtly answer to a gross question presides over the making of Johnson’s Dictionary. The ill-kempt and melancholy genius, assiduously cultivating in words the elegance which his person and surroundings lacked; an association of booksellers, one of them [Robert Dodsley] a footman who had abandoned livery for literature, promoting an enterprise which royal and noble patronage had not supported; the author struggling with debt, disease, and grief for his wife’s death while the printer and publisher were thriving; the book itself embodying the triumph of desperate industry over admitted laziness. . . . (pp. 110-11)

“That is the picture,” Sledd and Kolb conclude before delving further into the facts. It is a story that continues to fascinate students of literature, historians, and book collectors. Forthcoming publications for 2005 (as well as the ever-rising value of Johnson’s Dictionary in the rare book trade) testify to this fascination. For publication in the next issue, I would be grateful to hear of other celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the publication of the Dictionary—notice of library exhibits, talks, publications, and private parties will all be most welcome.

Robert DeMarinis, Jr.
What Johnson Means to Me

I like to think that Dr. Johnson would feel happy with the direction that lexicography has taken over the two hundred and fifty years since his great dictionary was published in 1755. Had he visited James Murray, the principal editor of the first edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, at his “scriptorium” (the editorial office built in Murray’s back garden in Oxford) in, say, 1900, he would have recognized what was going on. He’d have appreciated the scene of the editor standing at his desk working, the assistants busy with the lexicographical research, shelves of index cards or “slips” — containing the raw data of the language excerpted from texts by Murray’s “readers” — lining the walls, and of course the reference books which the editors consulted on a day-to-day basis scattered around the room.

He probably would have been pleased to see a copy of his own dictionary in pride of place in front of Murray, marking the many ways in which the later OED editors deferred to Johnson and made use of his pioneering dictionary. If you look into the first edition of the OED (1884-1928) you’ll often find a tell-tale “(J.)” following a definition or a quotation reference, indicating that the OED has taken the wording or reference directly from Johnson.

Johnson was always just around the corner for James Murray and his staff. The OED wasn’t based on Johnson, but Johnson’s dictionary (especially in the early years) permeated their work.

Nowadays we still have a facsimile of Johnson’s dictionary in the OED’s library, for historical reference, but the original has migrated downstairs to the archives for safekeeping. And the tell-tale “(J.)” is no longer a characteristic feature of the revised OED (in progress at www.oed.com, 2000—). But the spirit of Dr. Johnson still pervades the OED.

Dr. Johnson, whether he intended to or not, gave lexicography a status that it hadn’t enjoyed since the classical period. It is in fact astonishing that someone who became one of the literary lions of his time should turn his hand, efforts, and formidable organizational powers to the task of lexicography. He knew that words could lend authority, and realized that a lexicon of the language might extend that authority to the language as a whole. His immediate
What Johnson Means to Me

predecessors had, by and large, produced busy, cramped dictionaries, lacking a coherent style. Johnson (or his publishers) had the foresight to work on a grander scale, and produced an elegant, even majestic text, lounging over two folio volumes. The importance of design in modern lexicography dates from this period.

I don’t think Johnson can be credited with inventing the characteristic features of the dictionary: square brackets around etymologies, italicized labels, supporting illustrative quotations, etc. But he brought them all together elegantly in a coherent text for the first time.

What’s more, he must have worked fast. And to do that you need to be organized. Both are further legacies he left to his successors.

But what he is perhaps best remembered for (except for the curiosities amongst his definitions, written with a sidelong wink to his contemporaries) are the definitions themselves: concise and yet precise, elegantly turned, reminding readers that authority comes with order.

It’s difficult to think which of these features are not seminal to dictionary compilation today. But even the fact that Johnson interpreted a term in a particular way is important for the lexicographer. The original OED editors made use of Johnson’s interpretation of meaning because, often, Johnson knew these words as part of the living, or just fading, language of his own day. One hundred and twenty-five years later, when the OED’s editors started out on their journey through the alphabet, they made use of Johnson’s analysis as a guide from the past. And precisely the same is true today. A further one hundred and twenty-five years on, we cannot disregard the way in which Johnson or the first editors of the OED interpreted a term which to us is obsolete or historical. Their “ear” and sense of the meaning of historical language is still important today.

I wonder sometimes if Robbie Coltrane has derailed Johnson. In the same way in which it is difficult to read Jane Austen nowadays without calling to mind the face of the actors of a televised historical drama it may be difficult for the present generation of scholars to avoid the spluttering, staring, stereotype of Dr. Johnson in the Blackadder television series. I’d better put on my wig and get back to work.

—John Simpson
Chief Editor, Oxford English Dictionary
Rasselas and the Rise of the Novel

In this brief essay, I hope to supplement Melvyn New's observations over a decade ago about teaching *Rasselas* in a novels course as opposed to an "Age of Johnson" course or a "literature" course. As New notes, students reading *Rasselas* after these kinds of texts come to very different conclusions than they would were they to read it in the context of Johnson's other works. While there is clearly a benefit and difference to teaching Johnson's corpus in a "literature" course of the later eighteenth century, and while I am not suggesting that Johnson's text "is" a novel, I have still found great value in including *Rasselas* in these novel courses, which I teach at both the undergraduate and graduate levels at Texas Tech University. As I describe in the following pages, our analysis of Johnson's text falls into two basic categories: the problems of genre and the literary marketplace; and the extent to which *Rasselas* borrows from, develops, or resists tropes and structures associated with other texts more regularly called "novels." By conceptualizing our readings this way, I hope to encourage students to read Johnson's *Rasselas* through the lens of the eighteenth-century novel—itself a fraught yet engaging literary category—and as a relevant platform to discuss literary questions that preoccupy us today.

*Rasselas* helps students to understand the problems of generic classification as well as the teleology implicit in the course title, "The Rise of the Novel"; given the fact that I teach Johnson in the final third of the class, these lessons are worthwhile reminders of the course introduction. We therefore begin our discussion by considering the difficulties of assigning *Rasselas* to a specific genre, a task that occupies a significant portion of Gwin J. Kolb's introduction to the Yale edition. From eighteenth-century designations to

---

2 By way of context, our study of *Rasselas* occurs in the last third of the semester—after the undergraduates have read *Robinson Crusoe, Fantomina* and *The Tea-Table, Pamela* and *Joseph Andrews*, and before they read *A Sentimental Journey* and *Evelina*. My graduate students come to *Rasselas* after *Oroonoko, Robinson Crusoe, Love in Excess, Pamela, Tom Jones* and *Tristram Shandy*, and before *Evelina, Caleb Williams*, and *Emma*. Moreover, the graduate students read *Rasselas* in conjunction with Sarah Scott's *Millennium Hall*. 
more contemporary ones, Kolb notes, Johnson’s text has been called a “moral tale,” a “novel,” a “romance,” a “satire,” and an “eastern story,” “fable,” or “tale” (the series itself suggests the label “tale” by titling the volume *Rasselas and Other Tales*)—and I ask my students to consult Johnson’s own definitions of many of these terms in his *Dictionary* and to debate their suitability. This work—performed in group discussion or as a writing assignment—helps students to understand that “novel” is as much a convenient curricular term (and tied to the course catalogue) to describe the body of literature we study as it is a genre, and that we can learn just as much from texts that may have a relation to the genre, even if they are not firmly in it. Therefore, we think about *Rasselas* as a piece of fiction concerned with “the choice of Life,” its original title. Doing so allows students to evaluate how Johnson’s text implicitly addresses the thematic concerns of the eighteenth-century Bildungsroman (exemplified by *Pamela*, either of Fielding’s novels, or *Evelina*), only in a more meditative, self-conscious, and ultimately dismissive fashion, for *Rasselas* entertains various options in his pursuit of happiness, only to realize that they are all deceptive.

After discussing the ways *Rasselas* can and cannot be called a “novel,” we situate *Rasselas* in the context of the 1750s print culture, with specific reference to its status as an object in the literary marketplace. My students and I consider Johnson’s famous description of his book in a letter to William Strahan; *Rasselas*, Johnson suggests, would “make about two volumes like the little Pompadour [The History of the Marchioness of Pompadour] that is about one middling volume.” I tell my students that many critics read Johnson’s instructions in terms of his pressing requests for payment (and the long associated idea that Johnson published *Rasselas* to pay for his mother’s funeral and her debts). But we read Johnson’s letter in conjunction with one from Laurence Sterne. In the months following the publication of *Rasselas*, Sterne expressed a desire that *Tristram Shandy* look like *Rasselas*—“two small volumes, of the size of *Rasselas*, and on the same paper and type . . . to feel the pulse of the world”—and Thomas Keymer has recently argued that Sterne’s intentions reveal a desire to make *Tristram Shandy* “an upmarket product” or look longer than it was (and therefore command a higher price). Another point for students to understand is that Sterne imagined his text—"
called either a novel or a satire—as borrowing formal features (if not more) from Rasselas: this underscores, even in a small way, the experimental nature of fictional texts in the 1750s and the real sense that an author could redefine or manipulate the form of printed texts to convey meaning.

The second part of our conversation focuses on the ways Johnson’s text appropriates inherited plots and literary traditions variously associated with novelistic form and our study of it. We begin with Rasselas’s relation to travel narratives, spiritual autobiography, and utopian writing. As a travel narrative, Rasselas uses an episodic structure, such as that found in Robinson Crusoe and A Sentimental Journey. Johnson’s text allows us to return to the linked concepts of travel writing and spiritual autobiography, insofar as Defoe’s fiction self-consciously allows Crusoe to craft his own image of himself and has been received, variously, as a testament to individual self-fashioning or as a powerful conversion narrative. Since this is a novels course, students are not familiar with The Vanity of Human Wishes, but they nonetheless grasp the dynamic of an impossible quest that shapes the plot of Rasselas—and readily contrast Crusoe’s ability to satiate his desire with material accumulation (if only temporarily) with Rasselas’s persistent desire and inability to find the abstraction of true happiness. On the graduate level, Rasselas also functions nicely with Sarah Scott’s Millennium Hall, which offers a fully wrought solution to Rasselas’s quest: the idealized female utopia. Rasselas and his companions leave the Happy Valley, while Scott’s characters labor to create their own. Reading Rasselas against Millennium Hall, we discuss the ease with which Johnson and Scott, writing from different views, similarly discount seemingly idealized situations and solutions to the problems of happiness and social justice. At this point, students often wonder just how a writer can represent an idealized state at all (particularly given the fact that both Rasselas and Millennium Hall are most fully dedicated to representing problems rather than solutions), even though this is precisely Scott’s more optimistic project.

We then bring the concept of “romance” to bear on Rasselas. Having read Love in Excess or Fantomina and The Tea-Table, as well as Pamela and Fielding’s satire of these conventions in either Joseph Andrews or Tom Jones, my students come to Rasselas with a well-developed understanding of the “romance” as a literary form, its dependence upon plots of seduction, whether successful or thwarted, and its relation to debates about the imagination.7

Fiction from 1684 to 1740 (1992).

7 Graduate students will have read from Ros Ballaster’s Seductive Forms: Women’s Amatory
Students regularly note that one of Rasselas’s first acts of imagination is of a rape: though explicitly called part of his “visionary bustle,” “so strongly was the image impressed upon his mind, that he started up in the maid’s defense.”8 Rasselas firmly believes his own imagination and is deluded by it—a fact that neatly alludes to eighteenth-century critiques of romance, as evident in Charlotte Lennox’s The Female Quixote (1752) or Mary Monck’s poem, On a Romantic Lady (1716), and critiques of novel reading more generally. Following this reading of the romance and the imagination, we conclude by analyzing the text’s use of Orientalist tropes, characters and settings. Our attention to the exotic otherness of Rasselas allows us to debate the implications of Srinivas Aravamudan’s argument that Rasselas himself is a “benign despot . . . meant to be served,” a reading that opens students’ eyes to the aesthetic and ideological hierarchies implicit in Johnson’s text and prevalent in a range of eighteenth-century texts and contexts.9

My brief discussion of teaching Rasselas in an eighteenth-century novels course here can hardly do justice to the variety and texture of my students’ engagement with the text in class or in their written work. But I hope to have suggested some ways in which students in these courses—and for the undergraduates, this may be their only eighteenth-century course—may be introduced to a great writer and thinker of the century in a range of thought-provoking contexts and learn first-hand that eighteenth-century “novels” are experimental, adventurous, and metafictional.

— TITA CHICO

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Johnson in the Composition Classroom

When I teach college composition, I occasionally revisit Samuel Johnson's writings for material. Johnson was a veritable engine of argument, and his rhetoric invites as much emulation as it does scrutiny. But what clinches his contemporary relevance for me is the candor with which he describes the writing life. My students often admit to feeling lost in the process of writing, about which many professors have little to tell them. After all and oddly enough, writing is something that many of us "just do": we can't explain it, or are loathe to admit the challenges it poses for us. On the contrary, students tell me that they learn a great deal from classes in which I share my own writerly angst—the races against deadlines, problems with organization, feelings of wordlessness, etc. Indeed, in this respect we have a rich legacy of attitudes toward writing that we can trace to Johnson himself. In writing as copiously and candidly as he did, Johnson reveals the mystery of composition. He documents the struggles of writing in ways few others do.

For one thing, Johnson was very dedicated, deliberate, and—despite his repeated protestations to the contrary—disciplined in his work. I encourage my students to adopt a similarly holistic approach to their writing, to indulge in the luxuries and responsibilities of self-expression, in part by working with fine pens worthy of their ideas, asserting these in journals, and privileging their personal perspectives. When all else fails, I tell them, we writers admit our frustrations in order to mitigate them. Such was the purpose Johnson imputed to his diaries, wherein we find him proposing to "avoid Idleness" by regulating his sleep and recording "every day what shall be done the day following."1 Such efforts facilitate "apply[ing] to Study" and "reclaim[ing] imagination," projects that require famous writers and successful students alike to "rise early," "oppose laziness, by doing what is to be done," and hence to "scheme life" itself (Yale I: 71). Though these regulatory activities may sound obvious, they are good advice for writers

lacking that elusive "rhythm" in the face of writer's block. The key to good writing, of course, is to accustom oneself to writing regularly.

Johnson's devotions bespeak the tribulations that precipitate them—the admission of which students also appreciate insofar as it helps lift comparable burdens off their shoulders. Johnson was painfully honest about the time he claims to have "lost in idleness" (Yale I: 70). When a formidably famous author admits to having "led a life so dissipated and useless" as to be "under great depression and amusement" and "ashamed or grieved to find how long and how often [he] had resolved, what except for about one half year [he] ha[d] never done" (Yale I: 73, 159), writers of all stripes can relate, and perhaps take heart from such trans-historical group therapy.

One of the best things about Johnson, then, is his frequent indulgence in "meta-writing"—or, writing about writing itself—which, after all, is the subject of composition, a means of awareness that facilitates all written expression. Some of his innermost authorial fears materialize in Adventurer 138, wherein he confesses that inspiration is often fleeting, and that writing can be hard work. "To write," he tells us, "is, indeed, no unpleasing employment, when one sentiment readily produces another, and both ideas and expressions present themselves at the first summons." However, "composition is, for the most part, an effort of slow diligence and steady perseverance, to which the mind is dragged by necessity or resolution, and from which the attention is every moment starting to more delightful amusements." 2 Hence every writer counts among his or her obstacles the difficulty of "losing the plot" when sitting down to record what once were lucid ideas; the experience of what I like to call "overwhelm-ment," when "the mind falls at once into a labyrinth" because so "many thoughts present themselves" in "so confused and unconnected" a fashion "that they are not without difficulty reduced to method" (Yale II: 494); the disappointment of discovering that "when the pleasure of production is over," our fresh thoughts are actually "mean and common, or borrowed from the works of others" (Yale II: 496); and ultimately the predicament of finding oneself "deficient in the power of expression" and "unable to impress upon his reader the image existing in his own mind" (Yale II: 495). Try as we might to alleviate such problems, they will always bedevil writers, regardless of how seasoned they are.

In some Rambler numbers, Johnson also entertains two favorite

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John M. Bullitt, and L. F. Powell (1963), Yale
points of contention in writing classes: the issues of procrastination and plagiarism. I often ask students if procrastination serves any purpose, in hopes of helping them to make peace with it, and to overcome its numbing effects. Whereas Johnson asserts in Rambler 134 that “the call of reason and of conscience will pierce the closest pavilion of the sluggard,” he pauses long enough to identify scenarios common to procrastinators and perfectionists alike (indeed, the two are often one and the same): the predicament of seeing “different ways to the same end” and “pause[ing] in the choice of [one’s] road”; of micromanaging one’s subject such that he or she cannot see the forest for the trees, “is entangled in his own scheme, and bewildered in the perplexity of various intentions”; of over-ambitiously attempting to “unite all the beauties of situation” only to “waste [one’s] life in roving from purpose to purpose”; and of “amass[ing] materials, consult[ing] authors, and study[ing] all the dependent and collateral parts of learning, but never conclu[ding] [one]self qualified to write.”

Meanwhile, in Rambler 143, Johnson complicates contemporary conceptions of plagiarism by acknowledging that “whoever attempts any common topic, will find unexpected coincidences of his thoughts with those of other writers,” mainly because of “a common stock of images, a settled mode of arrangement, and a beaten track of transition” (Yale IV: 394). He assures over-meticulous students that “as not every instance of similitude can be considered a proof of imitation, so not every imitation ought to be stigmatized as plagiarism” (Yale IV: 401), and dishonorable ones that plagiarism indeed entails “a concurrence of more resemblances than can be imagined to have happened by chance; as where the same ideas are conjoined without any natural series or necessary coherence, or where not only the thought but the words are copied” (Yale IV: 399). Yet the balm for any wounds or complications stemming from the above concerns is contained in such pieces as Adventurer 137, wherein Johnson notes that writing serves its own ends: it is not necessary “that a man should forbear to write, till he has discovered some truth unknown before; he may be sufficiently useful, by only diversifying the surface of knowledge” (Yale II: 491). Insofar as “every writer may find intellects correspondent to his own, to whom his expressions are familiar, and his thoughts congenial,” the reward in this is a sense of community (Yale II: 491-92). My students and I agree that we’re usually satisfied—if not overjoyed—when our readers understand what we’re saying, so this is a significant prize. In any case, to see such an accomplished writer as Johnson struggling with the craft of

writing, and savoring his small victories, is often a source of encouragement for our own efforts.

Because he so extensively "textualized" his life by exercising his critical consciousness, Johnson gives us at least the illusion of a complete self. As such, he exemplifies the qualities and behaviors I hope to instill in students of writing. It bears remembering, however, that Johnson's basic concerns are already familiar to students—especially those who engage in the contemporary cyberphenomenon of blogging, whereby they upload their ideas and observations onto the web for other online diarists to read. In this respect, students are writing Ramblers, Idlers and Adventurers of their own, retracing Johnson's steps and confirming his legacy. So long as students regard writing in this fashion—i.e., as a process worth sharing—I'll gladly measure their efforts and Johnson's against one another. Indeed, those of us who teach composition may be entertaining new Samuel Johnsons unawares.

—THOMAS HOTHEM
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, UC-DAVIS

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Japan Times, Sunday, 3 October 2004

In an editorial entitled “A Starbucks-saturated Planet,” this English language newspaper asked, “Are we tired of Starbucks yet?” and answered with the following remark: “It is as if there were a planet-wide consensus to update Samuel Johnson’s famous dictum about 18th-century London, thus: ‘When a man is tired of Starbucks, he is tired of life.’ (Casual observation suggests, however, that in the case of the ubiquitous coffee chain, ‘young woman’ might be more accurate than the Johnsonian ‘man’).”

—ROY W. MENNINGER

New York Times, 10 June 2004

A letter to the editor of the “Circuits” section on this day wrote, “Re ‘For Some the Blogging Never Stops’ (May 27): Were Samuel Johnson alive, no doubt he would offer this observation: ‘None but a bloghead ever wrote, except for money.’” —ELIZABETH HEDRICK

Two correspondents independently alerted us to the advertisement in the latest Levenger’s catalogue:

Samuel Johnson’s Cat has a New and Noble Purr-Pose. “A very fine cat indeed” is how Samuel Johnson described his feline friend Hodge. These bronze-finished bookends are a very fine replica of the larger-than-life Hodge bronze that sits outside Johnson’s London home—down to the type of oyster that Johnson used to feed it. We commissioned the British sculptor Jon Bickley to create our Hodge Bookends, as he is the sculptor of the London bronze. 6⅞W x 4½D x 8H, 4 pounds each, and with an impressive book-holding power of 22 pounds [approximately the weight of a first edition of Johnson’s Dictionary].

—ROY W. MENNINGER AND LISA BERGLUND

Harvard Magazine, November-December 2004

Harvard’s most recent Alumni magazine includes an article by Adam Kirsch entitled, “The Hack as Genius: Dr. Samuel Johnson Arrives at Harvard” (pp. 46-52). The article celebrates the arrival at the Houghton Library of the Donald and Mary Hyde Collection
Johnsoniana

of Dr. Samuel Johnson and includes several glossy reproductions of highlights from the collection: the first page of “A Short Scheme for compiling a new Dictionary of the English Language” (1746); Johnson’s teapot; a pair of letters exchanged between Johnson and Hester Thrale Piozzi; and Reynolds’s portrait of the infant Johnson. With the accession of the Hyde Collection the Houghton Library has become the American Mecca for Johnson scholars and enthusiasts. “Pilgrims in search of Samuel Johnson,” Kirsch says with good reason, will now “have to make their way, not to Lichfield or London, but to Harvard Yard.” —EAMON GRENnan

New York Times, 3 August 2004

In his editorial “Snapping to Attention” David Brooks muses on America’s “love/hate” relationship with the military in the aftermath of the Democratic national convention, which brought John Kerry’s military record to the fore. He writes:

I get the feeling these bipolar attitudes arise from a cocktail of ignorance, guilt and envy. First, there are large demographic chunks of the nation in which almost nobody serves. People there may not know what’s bigger, a brigade or a battalion.

At the same time, they know there’s something unjust in the fact that they get to enjoy America while others sacrifice for it, and sense deep down that there’s something ennobling in military service. It involves some set of character tests they didn’t get in summer internships. As Samuel Johnson piercingly observed, “Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier.”

The source of the quotation is Boswell, who records that on 10 April 1778 he and Johnson talked of war:

Johnson. “Every man thinks meanly of himself for not having been a soldier, or not having been at sea.” Boswell. “Lord Mansfield [Lord Chief Justice David Murray, Earl of Mansfield] does not.” Johnson. “Sir, if Lord Mansfield were in a company of General Officers and Admirals who have been in service, he would shrink; he’d wish to creep under the table. . . . were Socrates and Charles the Twelfth of Sweden both present in any company, and Socrates to say, ‘Follow me, and hear a lecture in philosophy;’ and Charles, laying his hand on his sword to say, ‘Follow me, and dethrone the Czar;’ a man would be ashamed to follow Socrates. Sir, the impression is universal; yet it is strange.” (Boswell’s Life of Johnson, ed. Hill, III: 265-66)

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.
Johnson Society of London

The Johnson Society of London held seven meetings in its 2003-2004 session. All except the December meeting took place at our regular meeting place at Wesley's Chapel.

In October 2004, Professor Philip Smallwood in his paper "Johnson's Criticism and the Passage of Theory" addressed the question of what might emerge from a dialogue between Johnson and literary theory. At the November meeting, my paper "From Slave to Heir: the Strange Journey of Francis Barber" gave an account of Barber's life and his relationship with Johnson.

The main event of the session was the commemoration, which took place on 13 December (the Saturday nearest the anniversary of Johnson's death). Boris Johnson MP, editor of the Spectator, laid a wreath on the grave of Samuel Johnson in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. This was followed by the Society’s annual luncheon, attended by some fifty members. After the luncheon, Mr. Johnson gave a lively and witty address entitled "Johnson on Johnson," in which the political views of Samuel Johnson turned out to be remarkably similar to those of Boris Johnson.

At the January meeting, Julian Pooley gave a talk entitled "And now a fig for Mr. Nichols: Samuel Johnson, John Nichols and their Circle." Mr Pooley gave an account of his work on the Nichols Archive Project, and of the relationship between Nichols and Johnson. In February, an account of two Lichfield physicians, Dr. Anthony Hewett (1603-84) and Dr. Richard Wilkes (1691-1760), was presented to the Society by Dr. Denis Gibbs, himself a consultant physician.

The topic at the March meeting was "Anna Seward: Swan, Duckling or Goose?" The speaker, Norma Clarke, argued that the reputation of Anna Seward merits re-examination. The final meeting of the session took place on 4 April, when Annette French, Museums and Heritage Officer of the Samuel Johnson Birthplace Museum, gave a talk on the way in which memorials of Johnson
have developed, accompanying her talk with numerous slides of statues and paintings.

During the session, the Society produced two publications. The New Idler newsletter provided its usual review of Johnson in the news and in recent publications. The New Rambler, the Society’s annual journal, published the seven papers delivered during the previous session (the seventy-fifth anniversary session of the Society). They were: “A Spirit of Contradiction’: Samuel Johnson and the Law” by Professor John Scanlan; “Indifference and Abuse: the Antipathy of Mason, Gray, Walpole and Samuel Johnson” by Stephen Clarke; “Wisdom as Intellectual Decoration: Selected Passages from Dr. Johnson” by Professor James B. Misenheimer, Jr.; “Erasmus Darwin, Man of Letters” by Dr. Desmond King-Hele; “Johnson and Teachers” by Dr. Freya Johnston; and “A Poor Diseased Infant, Almost Blind” by Dr. John K. Ward. Also included in the issue were the article “Some Remarks on the Progress of Learning’: a New Preface by Samuel Johnson” by Professor O M Brack, Jr., and Professor Robert DeMaria, Jr., and reviews of a number of new publications on Johnson and his circle (not least, the first issue of the new series of the Johnsonian News Letter).

Anyone interested in further information about the Society and its activities can find out more on our web site at johnsoc.org.uk or by contacting us on info@johnsoc.org.uk.

—Michael Bundock
Editor, The New Rambler
Johnson Society of London

Samuel Johnson Club of Japan

(Excerpts from Newsletter No. 16, September 2004)

Two annual meetings were held since the last issue of our newsletter was published in March 2003.

At the annual meeting of 2003 (held at Arcadia Ichigaya in Tokyo, 25 May), fifteen members gathered to hear Hidetada Mukai’s lecture, “Jane Austen and The Loiterer,” as well as to enjoy conversations and Johnsonian atmosphere. Mukai’s
lecture focused on James Austen, the eldest brother of Jane Austen, and his weekly periodical *The Loiterer*, which first appeared in January 1789 and continued until March 1790, sixty numbers in all. According to Mukai, “Jane Austen was fourteen years old at that time, and she enjoyed reading the essays every week. This magazine was one of many followers of *The Tatler, The Spectator* and *The Rambler*, so we can say that Jane Austen got much indirect influence from these periodical magazines; in other words, from Steele, Addison, and Johnson.” In 2003 he published successively *The Jane Austen Encyclopaedia* (his supervised translation) and *The World of Jane Austen* (a good introduction to Austen’s world, composed of quotations and topics).

Daisuke Nagashima was the lecturer at the annual meeting of 2004, held on 23 May at Ivory Hotel in Toyonaka, Osaka. He gave a lecture entitled “On the Difficulties of Johnson” [see Professor Nagashima’s article, pp. 28-31, below]. Since his retirement in March 2001, Nagashima has been at home every day, reading four to five hours at his desk (of which two hours are devoted to Johnson and books on him).

Yutaka Izumitani also retired from Hiroshima International University this spring. He published in December 2003 a very interesting paper entitled “Jiro Suzuki: The Authentic Johnsonian in Japan” (in Japanese), which is a valuable research and sympathetic essay on a neglected Johnsonian (1891-1955). Izumitani convinces us that Suzuki really lived a Johnsonian life.

In September 2003 Koji Watanabe published *The Literary Arts of Jonathan Swift* (in Japanese). The book, which is full of fresh observations and new interpretations of known materials, “appears to be, primarily, for himself,” according to a reviewer, “but portions of it may be useful for some young Japanese Swiftians and Johnsonians.”

Tetsu Fujii is now preparing for publication *A List of Johnson and Boswell Studies in Japan*, putting together three parts of it with some additions. It will turn out to be the definitive bibliography of Johnson and Boswell in Japan. He leaves no stone unturned to make it perfect.

This summer Hideichi Eto went around Scotland in the footsteps of Johnson and Boswell as far as Skye, Raasay, Mull and, of course, Iona. He is now putting Johnson’s *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* into Japanese with three co-translators, Shigeru Shibagaki, Hitoshi Suwabe, and Professor Ichikawa.

Noriyuki Harada read a paper on Johnson’s influence on modern Japanese culture for the special seminar of the general meeting of the International Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies held at
UCLA. His study of Johnson's early career, which was originally written as his doctoral dissertation submitted to Keio University, will be published next year.

Kenichi Nakamura is now planning to publish a book, the tentative title of which is “Samuel Johnson as an Amateur Doctor.” A new point of view, isn't it?

—HITOSHI SUWABE
1-6-33 SHIN-MACHI
FUCHU, TOKYO

The Johnsonians (USA) Dinner 2004

In what seems to be a tradition of thumbing our noses at threatening weather, Johnsonians and their guests dodged the wet wrath of Hurricane Ivan to celebrate our hero's birthday at our annual black-tie dinner, held on 17 September 2004 at the Century Association in New York City.

The event, which began with drinks, hors d'oeuvres and conversation in the club's cozy Billiard Room at 6 pm, was hosted by Professor Stuart Sherman of Fordham University.

At 7:15 Professor Bruce Redford of Boston University treated us to a talk and slide show presentation entitled "Face to Face: Ensemble Portraiture in Eighteenth-Century England." The fascinating talk focused on the eighteenth-century practice of making portraits of individual members of elite clubs, often including in-jokes and winking references, similarly sized and framed, that were meant to be hung together at the club's meeting place. Two clubs featured were the Cognoscenti, a group of loose-living individuals who prided themselves on their love of the arts, inspired by the Italian tours that were a requisite for club membership; and Johnson's Streatham circle, whose portraits were hung in careful order in the Thrales' library.

After the talk, we moved on to dinner in the Century Association's Art Gallery, where the walls were bedecked with an exhibit entitled "The Nude at the Century." The exhibit created, in the words of one attendee, "a pleasing and amusing frisson throughout the meal." We dined on herb-encrusted rack of lamb, savoy cabbage and tarragon jus. At dinner the annual toast to Johnson was given by Professor John Richetti. The toast to the guests was given by this correspondent. The toast to the hosts (with the mosts) was given by Professor Anne Prescott.
The evening was elegant and graceful, its tone set by host Sherman’s eloquence and affability. One Johnsonian painted a picture of ease and leisure: “There was a certain ease and sweetness in the air; the diners seemed to enjoy moving around the wide, homely spaces of the Century Club; the evening ran late, suggesting that many were cheerfully reluctant to leave; and even the nudes in all their glory and sometime horror gave guests something surprising to look at, or look away from.”

As something of a counterpoint, another Johnsonian reported on the too-quick passing of the evening: it took place “in the blink of an eye. There was barely enough time to say a brief hello to those we have waited a year to see. The call to the speaker and Bruce Redford’s superb presentation seemed to take only seconds, as did the consumption of our excellent dinner. Even the postprandial cocktail hour seemed over almost before it had begun.”

More playfully, the same correspondent wondered if Dr. Johnson would have been comfortable surrounded by the nudes that hung on the walls of our dining room. “He [Johnson] was, after all, accustomed to taking refreshment beneath the gaze of the fourteen fully clothed figures painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds in the Thrales’ library. While Boswell would certainly have enjoyed the scenery, as well as the company, we can only surmise the Doctor’s reaction, perhaps extrapolating from his decision to decline further invitations to frequent the Green Room at Garrick’s Drury Lane Theater. ‘I’ll come no more behind your scenes, David, for the silk stockings and white bosoms of your actresses excite my amorous propensities.’ At least this is how Boswell reported it, second hand from Hume who had it from Garrick.”

While the art on the walls elicited purple thoughts from many of us, one Johnsonian kept her thoughts on a higher plane, rescuing Dr. Johnson from the Drury Lane’s Green Room and putting him back safely in the library. “Dr. Johnson’s appreciation of clever and intelligent women, such as Frances Burney and Mrs. Thrale, was the topic of some conversation before the formal proceedings began. Dr. Johnson’s writings, particularly his account of his foray to the Western Isles, indicate that his mood and wit were elevated when in the presence of stimulating—and appreciative—feminine company. After his wife’s death, these two women, Mrs. Thrale and Frances Burney, were the two women with whom he could be most relaxed—and most at home. ‘Dr. Johnson’s Women’ would be an interesting topic for the formal presentation at a future meeting.”

And now this report will close, back in the realm of the properly clothed, Dr. Johnson’s (and this reporter’s) dignity beyond assail.

—Peter Kanter
The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson

Nearly fifty years ago, in the issue of May 1955, the Johnsonian News Letter announced the plan of the Yale Edition and the formation of the first editorial board:

For years the need for a complete and accurate version of what Johnson wrote has been widely recognized. Not since 1825 has there been any attempt at a comprehensive edition, and, as many of you know, the text for this so-called standard authority is very bad indeed. Now at last we are to have a new set of volumes, produced in the best tradition of modern textual scholarship and includ-
ing everything which can definitely be ascribed to Johnson except the Dictionary. We throw our collective hats in the air and shout “Hurrah!”

Herman W. (Fritz) Liebert was the first chairman of the editorial board, and Allen T. Hazen was the first general editor of the edition. Volume I (Diaries, Prayers, and Annals, edited by E. L. McAdam, Jr., with Donald and Mary Hyde) appeared in a timely fashion in 1958. Volume II (The Idler and Adventurer, edited by W. J. Bate, J. M. Bullit, and L. F. Powell) followed, after a gap of five years, in 1963; volume VI (Poems, edited by E. L. McAdam, Jr., with George Milne) in 1964; volumes VII-VIII (Johnson on Shakespeare, edited by Bertrand Bronson) in 1968; volumes III, IV, and V (The Rambler, edited by W. J. Bate and Albrecht B. Strauss) in 1969. When volume IX (A Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland, edited by Mary Lascelles) appeared in 1971, the edition was sixteen years out and nearly half finished: not too bad for an undertaking of this scope. Time began to take its toll, however; illness and death interfered with many volumes, and only four volumes came out in the next nineteen years: volume X (Political Writings, edited by Donald J. Greene) in 1977; volume XIV (Sermons, edited by Jean H. Hagstrum and James Gray) in 1978; volume XV (A Voyage to Abyssinia, edited by Joel Gold) in 1985; and volume XVI (Rasselas, edited by Gwin Kolb) in 1990. Clearly, the gaps between publications were getting wider; most of the members of the original editorial board had passed away; age was becoming, in Johnson’s words, “a stubborn enemy” for the others.

Since the death in 2003 of Mary Hyde Eccles, all of the original members of the editorial board have, alas, now left us, but there is strong light at the end of the tunnel for the edition. Volume XVII (A Commentary on Mr. Pope’s Principles, edited by O M Brack, Jr.) was published in 2004. Volume XVIII (Johnson on the English Language, edited by Gwin J. Kolb and Robert DeMaria, Jr.) is in press. Most importantly, the current general editor and chairman of the editorial board John H. Middendorf has finished editing the crowning glory of the Works, volumes XX-XXII (The Lives of the Poets); they can be expected to come out in the next year or two. Thomas Kaminski has joined Benjamin Hoover as co-editor of volumes XI-XII (Parliamentary Debates), which are proceeding rapidly. Finally, with Crousaz behind him, O M Brack is putting the finishing touches on volume XIX (Biographical Writings). The next three or four years should see the edition completed. Grab your hat, if you have one, and get ready to toss it in the air: another very loud Hurrah will soon be in order.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.
Mary Hyde Eccles kindly bequeathed Boswell's famous Ebony Cabinet to Yale University. This cabinet, a Boswell heirloom which came into the family with his Dutch great grandmother, Veronica (van Aerssen van Sommelsdyck), Countess of Kincardine (1633-1701), acquired—in David Buchanan’s words—an “extraordinary mystique” at the time and in the aftermath of the recoveries of Boswell’s private papers in the early twentieth century (The Treasure of Auchinleck, 1974, p. 11). Mary Hyde acquired the cabinet at the final auction of the contents of Malahide Castle in 1976. It stands now near the reader services desk on the readers’ room level of the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

* * * * *

The Beinecke’s scans of selected Boswellian materials (mentioned in this place in the last JNL issue) have now expanded to include his satellite “Papers Apart”—a complex and multifarious assortment of documents cued for the Life of Johnson’s printers into the master narrative by an elaborate set of sigla—and the manuscript of the The Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides, which offers as much as has been recovered of the journal Boswell actually kept on the Scottish tour with Johnson in 1773, before it was heavily revised by Boswell with the help of Edmond Malone for publication as a memoir of Johnson in 1785. Johnson himself read much of this version in situ, and spoke several times of it with pleasure and praise. “He read tonight, as he sat in the company, a great deal of this volume of my Journal, and said to me, ‘The more I read of this, I think the more highly of you.’ ‘Are you in earnest?’ said I. Said he, ‘It is true, whether I am in earnest or no’” (Coirechatachan, 27 Sept. 1773). (Boswell deleted his question, and Johnson’s pleasantly slippery reply, in the published version.)

Go to http://beinecke.library.yale.edu/dl_crosscollol. The Beinecke has recently added a “slideshow” feature to the site, an enhancement that makes paging through a manuscript much easier.

The Yale Boswell Editions Research Series volume of this journal, designed to show the journal in all of its variant states, is
in progress, in the hands of Peter S. Baker of the University of Virginia. Boswell’s correspondence with Malone, some of which discusses revisions of the original journal for publication, appears in *The Correspondence of James Boswell with David Garrick, Edmund Burke, and Edmond Malone*, ed. Peter S. Baker et al., 1986, the fourth in the Yale Research Edition correspondence series.

* * * * *

Sally S. Wright’s *Pursuit and Persuasion* (Multnomah Publishers, 2000), third in her “Ben Reese Mystery Series,” pits the wits of Ben Reese, archivist of “Alderton University,” against the ruthless killer of a professor of English Literature at Aberdeen University, and turns, at a crucial moment in its plot, on a lost autobiography by Johnson:

“Samuel Johnson [explains Ben Reese] wrote a journal of his only trip to, and across, Scotland called *Journey to the Western Islands*. James Boswell, his friend and biographer, went with him and wrote a journal too. But before they left Boswell’s house in Edinburgh to start on their tour, Johnson had been working on an autobiography, and he put it in an unlocked drawer in Mrs. Boswell’s charge. His autobiography was never published, or discovered later, and no one has any idea what happened to it. . . .”

Murder-mystery readers interested in how this fictitious lost Johnsonian treasure figures in the plot, which we will not here ruin, are referred to the novel itself. But the Yale Boswell Editions are impelled to remark that, to readers familiar with the real Margaret Boswell’s reaction to Johnson and his visit to her home, Johnson’s decision to leave the document in her care was not one of his wisest.

* * * * *

One of Boswell’s more intriguingly self-reflexive and most commonly quoted remarks on his journal-keeping comes in his entry for 17 March 1776: “I am fallen sadly behind in my journal. I should live no more than I can record, as one should not have more corn growing than one can get in. There is a waste of good, if it be not preserved” (*Boswell: The Ominous Years, 1774-1776*, ed. Charles Ryskamp and Frederick A. Pottle, 1963, p. 265). That idea,
in a slightly different version, made a reappearance seven years later, in one of Boswell’s essays as The Hypochondriack, “On Diaries,” published in March 1783: “Sometimes it has occurred to me that a man should not live more than he can record, as a farmer should not have a larger crop than he can gather in.” The thought plainly had a deep hold on Boswell, as it is now known to have made a third variant appearance. In a letter, not before known to the Yale Boswell Editions, to his youngest brother David (later Thomas David, or “T. D.”) Boswell, written 25 November 1776—that is, some eight months after the diary entry just quoted—Boswell wrote: “I keep a regular journal. How does yours go on? I sometimes think one should not live more than he can record, as a Merchant should not have more transactions than he can mark in his books.”

Boswell has here evidently customized the expression for his brother, who had, after serving a banking apprenticeship in Edinburgh, gone to Valencia to set up as merchant.

T. D. Boswell returned to London in 1780, worked in the Navy Pay Office, and eventually purchased an estate, Crawley Grange, in Buckinghamshire. His own journal, to which Boswell refers in the letter, is not known to have survived. This letter is now in the collection of fellow Johnsonian Gerald Goldberg, who has kindly made a copy of it available to the Yale Boswell Editions. It will make its appearance in the planned Research Series volume devoted to Boswell’s Family Correspondence.

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The Washington Post for Monday, 6 September 2004, featured an article on the remarkably risky and heroic work of Antonio Cambanda, employed by the Scottish-based aid group, The Halo Trust, to seek out and deactivate land mines that still remain in Angola: the headline, “A Job that Concentrates the Mind Wonderfully.”

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We renew our invitation to readers to join the Friends of Boswell. Please call us at (203) 432-1864 or e-mail us at bosedit@pantheon.yale.edu.

—GORDON TURNBULL
GENERAL EDITOR
YALE BOSWELL EDITIONS

27
The Gove-Liebert File of Quotations from Johnson’s Dictionary (II)

The title of this article repeats that of a piece by Herman W. Liebert published in volume LI (1977) of the Yale University Library Gazette (pp. 154-55). As Liebert reported, “In the early 1930s Philip Babcock Gove, instructor in English at New York University (and subsequently general editor of the Merriam-Webster dictionaries), secured a grant from the Works Progress Administration to employ jobless young people in a project he devised and directed: copying on three-by-five-inch cards all of the illustrative quotations in the fourth edition (1773) of Samuel Johnson’s Dictionary.” The grant ran out when the copying was completed but no further work had been done. Gove stored the unorganized cards at his home until 1955 when Liebert took charge of them. By 1976 Laura Pierson Liebert (Fritz’s wife) had alphabetized the cards according to the authors of the quotations written on them, and she had begun a second alphabetization of the cards for each author according to each work of that author cited on the cards. Liebert hastened to point out the many inconsistencies in the preparation of the cards: missing authors’ names; missing titles of works; and inaccurate copying of quotations. With these warnings he offered to make reports on parts of the file for any scholar who asked.

When I first encountered the Gove-Liebert file it was in a room in the recesses of the Sterling Memorial Library beside the paper version of the Human Relations Area File (HRAF), an object that had become superannuated with the digitalization of that material. I spent several hours on several different occasions consulting the file, which gave new meaning to the phrase “dusty deserts of barren philology,” which Johnson seemed to me to have quoted under “philology” with future researchers in mind. One time when I visited Sterling, I could find no one who knew the whereabouts of the file, and it was gone, as far as I could tell, for several years. It surfaced, to my knowledge, around 1992. Beinecke librarians Stephen Parks and Vincent Giroud had rescued the cards from the
Notes and Queries

dust bin at Sterling, where they had been thrown in a heap; they were investigating the possibility of putting them all on microfilm. In the end, that proved too costly, and besides there were indications from Birmingham, England that an electronic version of the Dictionary was on the way. After storing the cards for a while in the dwindling spaces of Beinecke’s shelves, the librarians decided to put them in my care.

One rainy day Parks, Giroud, and I packed the boxes of disordered cards into my Volvo, and I took them to Poughkeepsie. Our library had recently discarded its circulation card file, and I was able to get several banks of handsome oak drawers for the cards. A very patient student named Stephanie Harzewksi restored them to alphabetical order by author, and, in some instances, by work. They reside in my office at Vassar in seventy-seven drawers. A full drawer has fifteen inches of cards, and a tightly packed inch of cards is 125 in number. If all the drawers were full and tightly packed, there would be 144,375 cards, more than the number of quotations in the Dictionary. Allowing for about twenty percent wiggle room in the drawers would yield about the right number, if there is one card for each quotation. A look at the handwriting on the cards shows that scores of people, at least, did the transcribing. By examining a stack of cards it is possible to see roughly where one amanuensis starts and leaves off. Their runs are not long (I note one person with a very legible printing hand working between “frame” and “fret”—or rather, as my limited investigation shows, from somewhere after “forth” to somewhere before “furnace.”) A closer examination would no doubt turn up repeat visits to the scriptorium by these unknown copyists, but the only really common hand in the stack is that of Laura Pierson Liebert who made checks and wrote in minor corrections on many thousands of the cards. She used a red pencil and sharpened it frequently.

The cards themselves are almost all recycled from other uses. Many are “class cards” issued by the registrar at NYU and evidently required for admission to classes. Those for laboratory courses have stamps on them and the warning that $20 must be paid before admission to the class is granted. Other cards contain “personal statistics” of NYU students, most of them from the classes of 1932-34: name, course, parent or guardian, home address, college address, life work, place of birth, date of birth, religious preference. By the time the WPA project was under way, there was no longer a need for NYU to keep the card recording Sol B. Goldman’s phone number (Monument 2-5615) or his life’s work (medicine). Other cards come from bibliographies or perhaps card catalogues of personal libraries or small collegiate libraries. There
is the occasional odd card, such as one providing a receipt for a contribution to the YMCA.

Another large number of cards appears to come from another of Gove’s projects or perhaps one of his homework assignments. Each of these cards has a homemade dictionary entry for a word: headword, pronunciation, sometimes an etymology, a definition, and an illustrative quotation (sometimes invented and sometimes extracted from a book). Somewhere on many of the cards is the name of the student lexicographer. George M. Reisner derived “castigate” from “L. castigo=chasten” and defined it with etymological purity as “chastise, correct.” He illustrated the use of the word with a passage from The Mayor of Casterbridge: “to castigate himself with the thorns which these restitutory acts brought in their train.” There are many hundreds of these exercises in amateur lexicography.

The Gove-Liebert File is superannuated now. The purpose for which it was designed is served infinitely better by the admirable CD-ROM prepared by Anne MacDermott, which forms the basis of the vast electronic edition of the Dictionary now nearing completion in Birmingham (see JNL LV, no. 2: 42-43). The File should not reside in a busy working library like Beinecke where every inch of space is valuable. On the other hand, destruction seems too cruel a fate; the cards represent a bit of the recoverable past of work, and that is rare. The people who created the file must be mostly gone since they would be in their mid-nineties now; the technology of scholarship represented is also all but past, though who among us does not still use a three-by-five card sometimes? The whole thing looks antiquated now but familiar; it evokes nostalgia. But what will it look like in fifty years? It might be really strange then, like the memory theaters of the Renaissance celebrated by Frances Yates in The Art of Memory (1966). In its strangeness then the file will be a kind of art; it is turning into art now as the world passes it by. Someday, when that institution has been invented, the file will reside in the Museum of Lexicography. Readers with other surprising nominations for inclusion in the museum are cordially invited to submit them in celebration of the 250th anniversary of the publication of Johnson’s Dictionary.

—ROBERT DE MARIA, JR.
On Johnson’s Handwriting

It is an established opinion that Johnson’s hand is hard to decipher. In the introduction to his edition of Johnson’s letters (1952), R. W. Chapman remarks, “Johnson’s hand is often puzzling to an expert, and was always likely to mislead an inexpert copyist. I am able to show that it did, in fact, mislead almost all copyists, printers, and editors, Boswell and his careful printer not excepted” (vol. I, p. vii). Chapman’s immediately preceding statement, however, implies tacit confidence in his work: “My prime ambition has been to furnish an accurate text.” According to Bruce Redford, editor of the Hyde Edition of Johnson’s letters (1992-94), both Chapman’s confidence in himself and his wariness about the difficulty of Johnson’s hand are justified in his edition: “Chapman was indeed an expert student of Johnson’s often difficult hand. Nevertheless, his transcripts are far from immaculate: while correcting the mistakes of previous editors, he commits blunders of his own” (vol. I, p. xi). Redford demonstrates his point, for example, in his careful reading of Johnson’s letter to Henry Bright of 24 May 1770 (vol. I, pp. xi-xii).

In his turn, however, even Redford is not “immaculate”: in comparing photocopies of Johnson’s autograph letters with their printed texts in the Hyde edition, I happened to find that, in his letter to John Taylor on 27 July 1732, occasion (vol. I, plate facing p. 200, line 4 from the bottom) is printed reason (vol. I, p. 4, line 5 from bottom of text), while Chapman correctly reads it as occasion (vol. I, p. 3, line 6). Admittedly, Johnson’s hand here is not hard at all to read, and this error seems to be one of the kind that unaccountably creep into long works rather than one caused by the deceptiveness of Johnson’s writing. But, whatever the cause, mistakes in reading Johnson’s hand seem impossible to eliminate altogether.

* * *

On Johnson’s hand generally, Donald Greene’s overall comment is a highly commendable guide:

1 This is an English version of the first half of my lecture delivered at the meeting of the Samuel Johnson Club of Japan held on 23 May 2004 at the Ivory Hotel, Toyonaka, Osaka, Japan. This essay is based on examination not of Johnson’s original autograph writings but of photocopies or facsimiles.
Johnson’s hand, difficult for the modern reader to decipher without considerable practice, seems closer to a sixteenth-century than a sloped, “Italian” eighteenth-century one: perhaps Dame Oliver, or whoever taught him to write, was somewhat old fashioned. The most useful advice for the beginner is to note that young Johnson’s e (as R. B. McKerrow—Introduction to Bibliography, p. 346—says the Elizabethan e always did) begins with “the lower part of the letter,” and its loop comes last, whereas his a and sometimes o begin with the loop. Thus the last word in the Juvenal quotation is tollas (as indeed Juvenal’s text reads), not, as it has been rendered, bellas. He uses the modern s at the end of a word, and after a “long” s in ss.

Elsewhere the “long” s is a very short one, preserving only the upper loop. His r often looks like a Greek e (epsilon). The closely written ligature œ should be noted. The q with a tail was a common abbreviation for -que.

As Greene suggests, it is particularly difficult to distinguish Johnson’s a from o. Line 224 of the autograph draft of The Vanity of Human Wishes (the last line of the renowned passage on Charles XII of Sweden), coupled with Fleeman’s comment, provides an apposite instance. The traditional and generally accepted reading of the line (line 222 in the printed text) is “To point a Moral, or adorn a Tale” (my italics). Against point Fleeman contends for paint:

222. paint. This contentious reading is in the first half-line and therefore to be compared with Johnson’s handwriting characteristics in similar half-lines. Though it is true that his “oi” is rarely looped, his “ai” is most clearly seen in “enchain’d” (53). In this combination, which is common throughout this manuscript, he regularly makes the first letter “a” with a small loop followed by an upright, rather like the modern “ei.” His “pain” in lines 43, 161, 268, and 286 is not really comparable, for in each case the word occurs in the second half of the line.

3 A Note on Samuel Johnson’s Latin School and College Exercises, with a Facsimile, Transcript, and Translation of a School Exercise (1984), last unnumbered page. I speculate that Johnson’s handwriting has something to do with his bad eyesight and his rapid writing. For the latter, the following anecdotes are familiar to us: “he composed seventy lines of” The Vanity of Human Wishes “in one day”; “almost all his Rambler’s were written just as they were wanted for the press” and “he sent [to the press] a certain portion of the copy [i.e. ms] of an essay, and wrote the remainder, while the former part of it was printing”; Rasselas was composed “in the evenings of one week.” See Boswell’s Life of Johnson (Hill-Powell edition, I: 192, 341; II: 15; III: 42).
The compositor of the first edition read "point" and Johnson acquiesced in that reading thereafter.⁴

Although not directly concerned with the matter at hand, Fleeman's following comment is to be noted:

The whole of this draft was written in half lines: each half is distinct not only because of a difference in the intensity of the colour of the ink, perhaps due to changes in the width of his pen, but also because Johnson's handwriting varies slightly in each half: in the first halves his hand is neat, consistently legible, and occasionally decorated with flourishes; in the second halves the pen is generally thicker, the writing more cramped because the first halves have pre-empted the space, and Johnson seems to have written with more haste and vigour. It is this second hand which is generally responsible for the corrections and revisions of the first halves of the lines: such alterations are often written between the lines and their legibility suffers from the crowding of the words.⁵

* * *

An instance of what might be called "indirect evidence" can be seen in The Vision of Theodore. The editor Donald Greene replaces documents with dictates, and comments:

169 dictates. All texts read "documents," which makes little sense. "Dictates" is only a guess, but in Johnson's difficult hand, the word could be read as "documents." "Dictates of Education" occurs in the next paragraph.⁶

Here, however, Greene's surmise is not definitive, for Gwin J. Kolb adopts the traditional version and supports it by referring to sense 1 ("Precept; instruction; direction") of the word in Johnson's Dictionary.⁷

* * *

⁵ A facsimile of Johnson's autograph manuscript of the Vanity (in the Hyde Collection) was published by Donald and Mary Hyde in 1962 (for the Annual Dinner of The Johnsonians to celebrate Dr. Johnson's 253rd birthday).
⁶ Samuel Johnson (Oxford Authors, rpt., 1986), p. 169. Similar instances can be seen at p. 810, n. 316; p. 815, n. 489 (second item); p. 817, nn. 518 and 523; p. 818, n. 534.
Two more things will be taken up. First: did Johnson's hand change with his age? The question in view, I have examined "A Short Scheme for compiling a new Dictionary of the English Language" (dated 30 April 1746, when Johnson was thirty-six years old) and "Life of Rowe" (printed in 1781 in the sixth volume of the ten-volume Lives of the English Poets, when Johnson was seventy-one to seventy-two). The examination has revealed scarcely any change, except that in the former document the last stroke of g (e.g. in English, falling, language), s (e.g. in distinction, intercourse, usually), and y (e.g. in any, many, they) is turned to the left until it reaches beneath the preceding two letters.\(^8\)

Second: not a question but a recommendation. To study Johnson's handwriting it would be highly advisable to start with Johnson's Prayers where the same or similar phrases modeled on the church Collect appear repeatedly, thus making the student quickly familiar with the idiosyncrasies of Johnson's hand.\(^9\)

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8 "Short Scheme" and "Life of Rowe" are reproduced in Vol. II and Vol. I, respectively, of The R. B. Adam Library Relating to Samuel Johnson and His Era, 4 vols. (1929-30).

9 Prayers are accessible in Prayers and Meditations facsimiles of the MSS at Pembroke College, with a note by J. D. Fleeman (1974).

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34
Stephen Miller:
Three Deaths and Enlightenment Thought:
Hume, Johnson, Marat


Fred Parker:
Scepticism and Literature: An Essay on
Pope, Hume, Sterne, and Johnson


In these recent books by Stephen Miller and Fred
Parker, Johnson is presented, as he often has been in
critical studies of the past twenty-five years, in relation
to other literary and intellectual figures of his day. Hume is of par-
ticular interest for both Miller and Parker as an author whose
writings illuminate Johnson’s through a play of evident contrast
and underlying congruence. Although the Johnson and Hume coun-
terpoint has already been studied by, among others, Jeffrey
Barnouw, Leo Damrosch, Michael Prince, and the present reviewer,
Miller and Parker still have important things to say about it, and
about Johnson more generally. Both write clearly and effectively—
Parker quite often writes delightfully—and their books may be rec-
commended to all Johnsonians.

Miller’s Three Deaths and Enlightenment Thought first surveys
the cult of the deathbed scene in eighteenth-century Britain and
France, and then addresses the deathbed “projects” of Hume,
Johnson, and Jean Paul Marat. Each project, Miller contends, ulti-
mately fails. “Hume’s project was to persuade people that they need
not fear death and therefore need not embrace ‘popular religion,’
i.e., Christianity. But Christianity was not waning in England” (p.
12). In contrast to Hume, Johnson sought in dying “to persuade
friends and readers that traditional God-fearing Christianity was not only the truth but also a great aid to moral renewal. . . . But Johnson’s God-fearing Christianity did not appeal to most of his friends or most educated people in Britain” (p. 13). However, while Johnson and Hume may have failed in their respective religious aims, they shared a political agenda—here Miller wanders from his deathbed focus—that largely succeeded. Both championed “luxury” (consumerism), soon regnant, as a means not only of material happiness but also, seeing idleness as the source of many avoidable evils, of moral improvement. As “Enlightenment conservatives” (p. 115) Johnson and Hume promoted commercial progress while decrying both religious enthusiasm and the type of “radical patriotism” that later flourished in the person of Marat—whose own “deathbed project, if we can call it that, was the utopian one of transforming Frenchmen into citizens who would be actuated by a disinterested concern for the common good” (p. 13). Marat’s “project,” his channeling of another current of Enlightenment thought, failed with “the fall of Robespierre.” Miller implies that it failed for good with the “end of history” that some saw in the immediate aftermath of the Soviet empire.

Miller, whose foremost interest is politics, aptly links Johnson and Hume as Enlightenment conservatives. Parker, uninterested in politics, conjoins Johnson and Hume under the rubric of “skeptical thinking.” “Skeptical thinking,” in Parker’s technical sense, “involves an essential tension or doubleness: a power of affirmation that emerges from, without denying or transcending, the inadequacy of intellect to master the fluidity and variousness of things” (p. 232). The patron saint of Scepticism and Literature is Montaigne, whose “immmethodical play of mind” (p. 232) sets the standard for skepticism as a literary style; indeed, the subtitle An Essay on Pope, Hume, Sterne, and Johnson is in part a tribute to Montaigne’s “handling—his virtual invention—of the essay, where a radical scepticism generates a form of writing” that tests theory against experience and may entertain conflicting points of view without resolution (p. 42). Montaigne is Parker’s touchstone, to the extent that Sterne comes off badly here for not being more like him (pp. 219-31). Yet Parker’s subtitle also pays tribute to Locke’s more systematic Essay concerning Human Understanding, a work sometimes thought of—by Prior, by Pope—as the formal antithesis of Montaigne’s mercurial writing (pp. 90-98). Parker’s own Essay partakes of both Montaigne’s “looseness” and Locke’s “regularity”: it is at once a series of free-standing essays/assays, and “a broader, cumulative argument . . . partly about the eighteenth century, partly about living in (and writing out of) a condition of flux and
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irresolution, and partly about the relation between sceptical thought and literature” (viii). The whole is written with a minimal critical apparatus: only nine secondary sources are cited in the fifty-three-page “Introduction,” and there are still fewer in subsequent chapters. I found Parker’s easy manner refreshing rather than irresponsible, although at points the scholar in me could not help but pencil in marginal citations of sources that might have been checked or noted.

Parker has little surprising to say about Hume, who emerges from this study as the moderate or sociable skeptic he professed himself to be. Parker has, however, interesting things to say about Johnson’s opposition to Hume’s “ethos of sociable living and polite culture”: “No one could place more emphasis than Johnson on the need to live in society rather than in solitude, but Johnsonian society is a congregation of individuals, a place of competition, exchange, and debate, in which a code of amiability, or an easy manner, cannot reach very far without becoming a kind of lie” (pp. 165-66). Parker is, I think—and as readers of this News Letter may be happy to hear—strongest on Johnson, of all the writers he treats; I found his final, culminating chapter, “Johnson’s Conclusiveness,” to be superb. Parker expertly shows how Johnson’s “skeptical thinking” works. He begins by examining a seemingly dogmatic assertion from Johnson’s preface to his edition of Shakespeare, “The mind can only repose on the stability of truth.” In context, Parker shows, Johnson’s “truth” is not propositional but experiential, not unitary but rather an “affirmation of the endless interrelations and counterbalances of things” (pp. 233-34). Johnson counterbalances his own skeptical appreciation of diversity and flux with a “confidence in positive generalization,” but that confidence is, as Parker argues, a limited one (pp. 235-37). “Yet”—Parker’s qualifications and about-faces are as numerous as Johnson’s own—“if Johnson is a skeptic, he is also a moralist.... For all Johnson’s scepticism, he also recognizes ... a powerful need for conclusions, a desire for a place in the mind to repose” (p. 238). As a moralist, “the degree to which Johnson insists on keeping space for agency is a quality which distinguishes him from main tendencies in the ... writing” of Pope, Hume, and Sterne; yet, the “idea of rational action and significant labour” are often in Johnson only “a felt absence” (pp. 249-51). From this précis of a dialogic understanding of Johnson you could probably reproduce, in broad strokes, Parker’s ensuing readings of The Vanity of Human Wishes and Rasselas; but for the pleasure of witnessing in motion an agile mind not unlike Johnson’s own, I recommend to you Parker’s own prose.

—ADAM POTKAY

37
David Womersley, ed.: *Samuel Johnson: Selected Essays*


This collection, a new addition to the popular Penguin Classics series, reprints 132 of Johnson’s essays. In his introduction, editor David Womersley states that one of his goals in compiling the collection was to include some less well-known essays, “to begin to restore what has come to be comparatively neglected,” and to “place before today’s readers evidence of Johnson’s diversity, as well as his centrality.” The resulting collection includes

- 76 of the 208 *Rambler* essays (37%);
- 16 of the 29 *Adventurer* essays (55%);
- 34 of the 104 *Idler* essays (33%);
- 6 individual essays, ranging from the philosophical-sepulchral-critical “Essay on Epitaphs” to the oppositional-ironical-political “Compleat Vindication of the Licensers of the Stage”;
- Johnson’s prayer on beginning the *Rambler*;
- Parallel texts showing how Johnson revised a *Rambler* essay for the 1756 edition;
- Bonnell Thornton’s parody of Johnson’s *Rambler* style.

The inclusion of so many *Adventurer* essays is perhaps the most revealing indication of Womersley’s intention to venture off the beaten path. Previous anthologists have given the *Adventurer* minimal attention. In his Oxford Authors anthology Donald Greene included only four issues of the *Adventurer*. Bertrand Bronson selected only two numbers. Frank Brady and W. K. Wimsatt were even less adventurous: they included no *Adventurers* at all.

However, it may not be entirely fair to compare these anthologies with Womersley’s. All the anthologies just mentioned try to give an overview of Johnson’s whole career, while this new anthology confines itself to his work as an essayist. The only volume currently in print that attempts a comparable task is *Essays from the Rambler, Adventurer, and Idler*, edited by the late Walter Jackson Bate. Bate’s volume contains forty-six *Ramblers*, nine *Adventurers*,

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and twenty-four *Idlers*, most (but not all) of which are reprinted in full. Bate's collection originally appeared in 1968 and was based on his work for the Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson. It is still available from Yale University Press.

It appears that Womersley and Penguin have made a conscious effort to supersede the Bate/Yale collection and establish their volume as the standout in this category. As if to deny all possible grounds for preferring the Bate volume, Womersley has included every single essay that is included in Bate's edition; and, to make assurance double sure, he has added fifty-odd additional essays. What's more, he has presented all of the essays in their original, unabridged form. An effort to go beyond Bate's work is apparent also in the notes. Although the vast majority of Womersley's notes are based on notes in the Yale edition, in a number of cases Womersley has added to the work of his predecessors, or fleshed out a terse Bate note for the benefit of the non-scholarly reader. The resulting commentary is intelligent without being overwhelming or overlong. Cost factors also favor Womersley. His collection costs $16 in paperback, Bate's $23.

One editorial choice that I initially questioned is Womersley's decision to identify the essays from the three main series by *number* only, and not by *prose title*. In the table of contents of the Bate edition, *Rambler* 29 is identified as an essay on "the folly of anticipating misfortunes," and readers are directed to page 68. This allows browsers to choose essays by topic. In Womersley's table of contents there is no indication of *Rambler* 29's topic; indeed, 29 is embedded in a great phalanx of other numbers — 25, 28, 29, 31, 32, etc. And as for pages, we learn only that pages 1-326 are occupied by *Rambler* essays. Although I initially took this as a shortcoming, it occurred to me as I was reading the book that there may also be a certain logic to the arrangement, consistent with Womersley's announced goals, for this arrangement forces us out of a mode of reading in which we choose essays by topic, selecting some because we think we will find them interesting and neglecting others on the assumption that "that's not a topic that interests me." Womersley's arrangement forces us to plunge in, without knowing what a particular essay is about. It puts us in a situation not unlike the original readers of the periodical essays, who could never be certain what the next topic in the series would be. It also assumes what I trust few readers of this newsletter will wish to deny: that Johnson is one of a handful of writers in the language who bring such powers of mind to bear on a subject that they are worth reading, no matter what the subject may be.

While re-reading the essays in this collection, I came upon
several marvelous ones I had not noted during previous readings, or else had forgotten. One such essay is *Adventurer* 45, in which Johnson anatomizes "the difficulty of forming confederacies." Johnson notes that society at large has high expectations for cooperation among scholars, yet these expectations are rarely realized:

Discord, who found means to roll her apple into the banqueting chamber of the Goddesses, has had the address to scatter her laurels in the seminaries of learning. The friendship of students and of beauties is for the most part equally sincere, and equally durable: as both depend for happiness on the regard of others, on that of which the value arises merely from comparison, they are both exposed to perpetual jealousies, and both incessantly employed in schemes to intercept the praises of each other.

I am, however, far from intending to inculcate, that this confinement of the studious to studious companions has been wholly without advantage to the public: neighbourhood, where it does not conciliate friendship, incites competition; and he that would contentedly rest in a lower degree of excellence, where he had no rival to dread, will be urged by his impatience of inferiority to incessant endeavours after great attainments.

Here the vanity of scholars is skillfully exposed, and yet the final impact is not wholly negative or cynical. Johnson also sees the positive: dread of rivals and the "impatience of inferiority" are great motivators, and they create an economy of scholarship in which individual strife can be translated into collective gain.

Johnson discusses some of the same issues of cooperation and rivalry in *Rambler* 9. He begins by pointing out the rivalries that exist between professions—between lawyers and doctors, for example. He then concludes with a dissertation on glassmaking, which displays all the parallelism, abstraction, philosophic language, and insight we expect from Mr. Rambler:

And it might contribute to dispose us to a kinder regard for the labours of one another, if we were to consider from what unpromising beginnings the most useful productions of art have probably arisen. Who, when he saw the first sand or ashes, by a casual intenseness of heat melted into a mettline form, rugged with excrescences, and clouded with impurities, would have imagined, that in this shapeless lump lay concealed so many conveniencies of life, as would in time consti-
tute a great part of the happiness of the world? Yet by some such fortuitous liquefaction was mankind taught to procure a body at once in a high degree solid and transparent, which might admit the light of the sun, and exclude the violence of the wind; which might extend the sight of the philosopher to new ranges of existence, and charm him at one time with the unbounded extent of the material creation, and at another with the endless subordination of animal life; and, what is yet of more importance, might supply the decays of nature, and succour old age with subsidiary sight. Thus was the first artificer in glass employed, though without his own knowledge or expectation. He was facilitating and prolonging the enjoyment of light, enlarging the avenues of science, and conferring the highest and most lasting pleasures; he was enabling the student to contemplate nature, and the beauty to behold herself.

Some people, I know, find Johnson depressing. I must admit, the effect on me is frequently the opposite. When reading Johnson I have, almost always, the pleasures that insight and eloquence can give, and, very often, as in the passage just quoted, I feel something more, a kind of frisson, a moment of intense excitement not wholly unlike what one feels when reading the best poetry of Wordsworth or Keats. The frisson comes partly from the beauty of the language, which is itself a kind of prose poem, but it comes primarily from the ideas and insights that the language expresses. These ideas are of course very different from the ideas in most Romantic poems. Reading Romantic poetry one often feels a renewed appreciation of nature, of youthfulness, imagination, and individuality. Reading this passage (and many others in Johnson), one gains a renewed understanding of common human nature and an increased appreciation for human culture, the gradual discoveries of scholarship, and the achievements of science. In one of his poems Wordsworth reports that his heart grieves for “what man has made of man.” Johnson was no stranger to that, but in this passage he makes us feel the wonder of “what man has made of sand.” It is remarkable that a writer who felt so strongly the “Vanity of Human Wishes” and who had such struggles with melancholy in his own private life should also be able to give us such moments of clarity, affirmation, and even elevation. Although Johnson is not usually thought of as an inspirational writer, I think this passage on the original glassmaker is every bit as bracing and inspirational as Wordsworth’s meditation on the leech gatherer.

This essay has passed the test of time. It still inspires today.
Indeed, recent history affords additional instances in which important discoveries and unexpected benefits have arisen from what must have initially seemed trivial pursuits. Who would think that a naturalist studying finches' beaks would contribute much to our understanding of the history of man? Yet Darwin did. Who would think that a monk putting around in his garden and crossing various strains of bean plants would cast light on the mysteries of genetic transmission? Yet Mendel did. Who would think that a doctor inspecting mold on a plate would identify a medicine that would save thousands of lives? Yet that is how Fleming discovered penicillin.

Womersley deserves credit for reprinting these less well-known essays and making them available to the general reader. I hope that they will be as inspiring to others as they have been to this reviewer.

—MATTHEW DAVIS

Michael Keevak:
The Pretended Asian: George Psalmanazar’s Eighteenth-Century Formosan Hoax


George Psalmanazar, one of the most colorful characters of the early eighteenth century, is also one of the least understood. Almost nothing about him is known for sure. We don’t know his real name—George was the name of his godfather, and Psalmanazar was his distortion of the name of Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, in 2 Kings. We don’t know for certain where or when he was born—probably in the south of France in 1679, but cautious scholars would not be surprised if that turned out to be false. Most important, we don’t know what prompted him to begin his strange imposture. We do know, however, that around 1703, this blond-haired, blue-eyed Frenchman claimed he was a native of Formosa (modern Taiwan), under the control of the great Emperor of Japan, and he convinced a great many people that he was telling the truth.
With this stunt, the obscure nobody became famous across Britain: first as an exotic celebrity, fated by the rich and famous; then as the author of *An Historical and Geographical Description of Formosa*, a grisly fantasy of Oriental cannibalism; then as a washed-up has-been, ridiculed in *The Spectator, A Modest Proposal*, and (later) *Humphry Clinker*; then as a hack writer, churning out thousands of miscellaneous pages; then as a pious and penitent friend of Samuel Johnson, who “should as soon have thought of contradicting a bishop”; and finally as the author of a posthumous confession, *Memoirs of ****, Commonly Known by the Name of George Psalmanazar; a Reputed Native of Formosa*. But the figure behind the imposture remains a cipher.

Keevak’s new book does not give much fresh biographical information: the standard life remains Frederic J. Foley’s *Great Formosan Impostor* (Taipei: Mei Ya Publications, 1968), supplemented by Robert DeMaria’s entry in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. (Richard M. Swiderski’s *False Formosan* [1991] provides some useful additional material, but it is often unreliable.) Keevak, in fact, explicitly disavows any intention of rehashing the narrative; he complains that “in so many ways his remarkable odyssey hardly seems to have gotten beyond the let’s-tell-the-story-one-more-time stage” (p. 11).

Instead he tries to learn the lessons posed by Psalmanazar’s life: his concerns are less factual than interpretive. This is a salutary development, because only a few critics have tried to figure out why this amusing curiosity deserves serious scholarly attention. Most important, Keevak asks how “a white, blond Frenchman was able to pass himself off as a Japanese Formosan, and even to publish a book about the island replete with what now appear as utterly ridiculous illustrations and a phony language. How could such educated and highly cultured people have believed him? How could he have gotten away with it?” (p. 11). His answers teach us much about emerging ideas of race, about the relationships between language, religion, and identity, and about Britain’s relations with the wider world when its empire was beginning its greatest expansion.

Keevak’s work is marked by a number of scholarly virtues. His prose is clear, lively, and always accessible. His review of the scholarship is thorough. In examining this early episode of English Orientalism he draws productively on postcolonial theory without treating the pronouncements of Edward Said and Homi Bhabha as Scripture. Best of all, he uses Psalmanazar’s cheeky hoax as a window on early eighteenth-century intellectual and cultural life generally. Not all his claims are convincing, but all are reasonable and thought-provoking.
Plenty of mysteries about Psalmanazar’s life remain—the sources of his ethnographic information, the strange publication history of the various editions and translations of his *Description*, and his long career as a hack writer still await illumination. But until new archival information turns up, Keevak is right that we should get beyond “the let’s-tell-the-story-one-more-time stage.” In *The Pretended Asian* he makes a good start on that project. Anyone interested in Britain’s relations with the exotic East will find Keevak’s work enlightening.

—Jack Lynch

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**Sylvia Kasey Marks:**

*Writing for the Rising Generation: British Fiction for Young People, 1672-1839 (English Literary Studies Monograph Series, No. 89)*


In recent years, there has been an explosion of scholarly interest in literature written for young children during the long eighteenth century. The period’s literature for teenagers, however, has remained largely unexamined. Sylvia Marks’s *Writing for the Rising Generation: British Fiction for Young People, 1672-1839* aims to recover this literature, to “examine this neglected and unheralded group of authors and their works and to fit them into acknowledged literary history” (p. 13).

The book is slim and unassuming—a little under 100 pages of text plus an extensive bibliography—and devoid of any sweeping critical pronouncements. But its contents belie its modest presentation: it covers a vast amount of material with remarkable lucidity and grace. Marks has painstakingly combed through rare book collections in England, Canada, and the United States, and she has uncovered a great deal of fascinating material. Moreover, she has summarized and synthesized her discoveries in a clear and fluid manner that makes the book enjoyable and easy to read and absorb.
Marks provides cogent summaries of both individual works and larger trends in the period's literature and deftly situates the works she discusses in larger literary, historical, and philosophical contexts. In a sense, her book provides a series of capsule reviews in which she not only describes texts but also evaluates their literary merit and intellectual interest. She outlines the conventions and standard techniques of this body of literature—frame stories, humorous moments, digressions, fairy tale allusions, animal fables, rags-to-riches stories, conversion narratives, foils or instructive contrasts—and the ways these texts both reflect and influence contemporary debates about class and gender issues, religion, politics, the treatment of animals, the relationship between the generations, and the role and nature of education.

Marks's book is not so much an argument about the nature of the period's literature for teenagers as it is an introduction to that literature's themes, messages, and salient styles. But an argument is nonetheless implicit in this little book. Marks both implies and declares that this literature is worthy of serious study: it is of sociological importance (it serves as "a quarry of information about details of daily life"); it is of historical and aesthetic interest; it is rich and varied in its topics, characters, and plots; and it both anticipates and reflects themes and ideas found in "high" or adult literature of the period.

The book is impeccably researched and presented. The bibliography alone will prove enormously helpful to scholars and students alike, and it will provide a groundwork for further critical study of this body of literature. I am personally grateful for Marks's dedication and perseverance, and I will rely on her book for help and guidance in my own research and teaching.

It is very important to Sylvia Marks that we see the texts she introduces to us as more than dry conduct literature; throughout her book, she makes a strong case for their aesthetic virtues, for the skill and care with which they were written, for the complexity and nuances of their themes and agendas. Marks certainly piqued my interest in this literature, and she inspired me to hunt down many of the texts she discusses. Marks is unambiguous about her goal: "to bring these works back to life" (p. 16). In that, and more, she has certainly succeeded.

—PRISCILLA GILMAN
Christopher P. Pearce:
“Terms of Corruption: Samuel Johnson’s Dictionary in its Contexts”

Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 2004

There are three chapters in this dissertation. The first—a close reading of the rhetoric of Johnson’s Preface to the Dictionary—clearly had to be written in order to enable the author to proceed with his argument, but the two succeeding chapters constitute the more important and original parts of the work. Apart from proving his ability to read closely and with an awareness of rhetorical and historical contexts, the first chapter of this dissertation releases the body of the Dictionary from the grip of the old-fashioned prescriptivism that is often heard as predominant in the Preface. In great detail, Pearce shows that the Preface is a self-fashioning performance, like so many great essays, rather than a statement of linguistic commitments or theories. Johnson was, of course, brilliant at this kind of performance: he could play the lexicographer just as he could play Mr. Rambler or less reliable speakers, such as the vindicator of the licensors of the stage in his Swiftian pamphlet A Compleat Vindication (1739). The voice of the lexicographer may be closer to Johnson’s own voice, insofar as we know it, but it is part of a performance nevertheless. Making a nice distinction, Pearce sees the voice of the Preface as a reflection—an artistic image—of the work of the Dictionary, rather than a representation of it.

Having established that the Preface is not representative of the philology in the Dictionary, Pearce tells us how to understand that philology in his two succeeding chapters. As he is concerned with the “paratext,” or preliminary matter, in his first chapter, Pearce focuses on the “metatext,” or extra matter, in his second. The language suggests reading with attention both to rhetorical structure and its material reflection in layout and design. Such reading reveals that on our way to taking in the information we usually seek in a dictionary, in Johnson’s Dictionary we encounter the lexicographer’s editorial comments. Pearce does a good job of discussing the range of these comments, their relation to each other, and the various ways in which they interrupt reading. He shows that Johnson paid attention to the structure of his entries, and he
develops a model of reading the great book as a kind of hypertext, a “non-linear” text open to creative “navigation” by its readers. It may be inevitable that a new generation of readers would settle on “hypertext” as a description of a book like the Dictionary, but it is a good metaphor for the reading experience, especially when the reading is done by using the searchable electronic text on Anne MacDermott’s Cambridge University Press CD-ROM of the Dictionary. As for the content of the metatextual and hypertextual context, Pearce shows that it is more honestly linguistic than some earlier investigators have argued. Pearce’s reading is, in fact, a nice corrective to my reading of the Dictionary as an encyclopedia and takes its own place among all the readings proposed by fellow harmless drudges who have exhaustively examined the Dictionary.

Pearce saves the best for last and argues in the final chapter that the word “corruption,” which Johnson uses frequently in his editorial comments, is not mainly a note of censure in a prescriptive linguistic program but rather a word descriptive of a process of linguistic decay. In other words, “corruption” is a process like those of the physical world, rather than evidence of intellectual, moral, or even phonic laxity. Johnson perceives the operation of corruption, for example, in his derivation of gun from canna (Latin, pipe), through ganne and gunne (see entries for gun and cannon in the Dictionary). Likewise, huggermugger is “corrupted perhaps from hug or morcker, or hug in the dark.” In other etymologies, Johnson does not cite “corruption” as the reason, but he finds similar principles of linguistic change operative. The words drop, drip, dribble, and drivel come about, for example, “by successive alterations, such as are usual in living languages” (Dictionary, s.v. dribble). Furthermore, Pearce shows that in many instances, Johnson was not just consulting his own underappreciated awareness of phonics in discussing linguistic change, he was also using the phonetic science of William Holder’s Elements of Speech (1669). In mapping sounds according to the physiognomy of speech, Holder was more scientific than the largely speculative etymologists of his time, and Johnson aligns himself with budding linguistic science by following him.

In sum, Pearce shows that Johnson was not so contemptuous of oral language as some of his editorial comments might suggest, and that he was interested in describing linguistic change in roughly scientific terms rather than merely concerned to control it. Pearce’s work represents, therefore, a good step forward in the study of Johnson’s Dictionary and a contribution to the better understanding of Johnson’s place in the history of the study of language.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.
In Brief

Brian Harrison, ed.: New Oxford Dictionary of National Biography


The biographical part of literature is what I love most.

—Johnson

Johnsonians and all other students of English culture will welcome the arrival of the New DNB almost as happily as Johnson would have. With 50,000 biographies by 12,500 contributors, this 60-volume work is now the reference of first resort for anyone who wants to know about the lives of notable British people, including people who spent any substantial time in Britain. The online version facilitates elaborate searching for the purposes of scholarship, or idleness (you can find everyone born on the day Johnson celebrated his birthday, for example—which includes those who were undoubtedly aware of the honor, such as David Eccles, and those who probably weren’t, such as Jimi Hendrix). Johnsonians will not want to miss the biography of Johnson by Pat Rogers or that of Boswell by Gordon Turnbull, but there may be an equally great pleasure in looking up the host of figures who played lesser parts in Johnson’s life and times. They are all here. A review of this mammoth project, with Johnsonians in mind, is promised for the next issue of the News Letter.
I do not despair of approbation from those who knowing the uncertainty of conjecture, the scantiness of knowledge, the fallibility of memory, and the unsteadiness of attention, can compare the causes of error with the means of avoiding it, and the extent of art with the capacity of man.

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n 15 April 2005 Professor Giovanni Iamartino of the Dipartimento di Scienze del Linguaggio e Letterature Straniere Comparate, Sezione di Anglistica, at the University of Milan held a conference entitled “Samuel Johnson Day: A Dictionary of the English Language 250 Years Later.” I joined Professors Iamartino, Mirella Billi, Marina Dossena and Laura Pinnavaia in giving papers on the occasion. We met in a converted ducal chapel in the Piazza Sant’Alessandro where sixteenth-century murals provided the backdrop for a state-of-the-art smart screen, on which Professor Iamartino projected images of the Dictionary from the CD-ROM edited by Anne McDermott. Theoretically, I could have touched the screen to page through to relevant examples from the text, although I was grateful that my host did that work for me from his position behind the computer. But, there it was, Johnson’s Dictionary in Italy, 250 years on, and with some striking changes in the medium of its transmission. The great book, in fact, has been in Italy since its birth. Johnson sent a copy to Italy upon its publication. The work was presented to the president of the Accademia della Crusca by Lord Orrery, and the Accademia reciprocated immediately by sending the latest edition of their four-volume Vocabolario degli Accademici della Crusca to Johnson. Johnson also presented a copy of his book to the French Académie, which responded with a note of high appreciation, declaring their members “fort sensible à cette marque d’attention qu’elle recevait de sa part.” Eventually, they too returned the favor and sent Johnson a copy of their fourth edition (1761).

Boswell’s portrait of Johnson as Francophobic and even xenophobic has sometimes led us to forget that his work reached a wide European audience. He certainly thought of himself as part of the intellectual world of Europe, even though many of his admirers have thought him quintessentially English and even though he often played the role of Francophobic or anti-American John Bull. Johnson has enjoyed a measure of worldwide appreciation in the past two centuries, though he has, admittedly, been more appreciated in English speaking countries than elsewhere (with the exception of Japan). His reputation in France has been underestimated, but perhaps not drastically. I picked up in Paris not long ago the first complete French translation of Boswell’s Life of Johnson. The greatest regret registered in the preface was that the great Samuel Johnson had never met that equally great eighteenth-century man of letters, Thomas Love Peacock.
In Italy, certainly on 15 April 2005, there was no such misjudgment of Johnson's importance. Some of the papers delivered at the conference will appear in a special number of Textus, the official journal of the Associazione Italiana, along with several others, most of them by Italians. Johnson would be pleased. When he finished his great book in 1755, he declared in the Preface that he dismissed it with frigid tranquility, but he expressed a bit more anxiety about its reception to his friend Thomas Warton, and, curiously, he did so by reference to an Italian audience: "I now begin to see land, after having wandered, according to Mr. Warburtons phrase, in this vast Sea of words. What reception I shall meet with upon the Shore I know not, whether the sound of Bells and acclamations of the People which Ariosto talks of in his last canto or a general murmur of dislike, I know not whether I shall find upon the coast, a Calypso that will court or a Polypheme that will eat me. But if Polypheme comes to me have at his eyes." In Italy in 2005, as in 1755, the heroic lexicographer was greeted with warmth and understanding and so were his admiring expositors.

Johnson's Dictionary Day did not go unmarked elsewhere in the world. Dr. Johnson's House in Gough Square, London, was open free of charge, and the artist Tom Phillips gave a Gallery Talk about his inspiration for the winning design of the new Johnson 50p piece. On the preceding and following days, Henry Hitchings, author of the recently published Dr. Johnson's Dictionary: the Extraordinary Story of the Book that Defined the World, gave Gallery Talks at the House. On 17 April the New York Times published an excellent brief appreciation by Verlyn Klinkenborg, and the Guardian published a lengthy notice by the novelist Beryl Bainbridge. On another continent, the Johnson Society of Australia made the Dictionary the focus of its annual seminar. As I write, the English celebrations of the publication of the Dictionary in Birmingham and Oxford have not yet taken place. A report on them will appear in the next number. Meanwhile, Octavo Books of California has celebrated the Dictionary by publishing a DVD-ROM version, which is reviewed below, and Cambridge (UK) has published Anniversary Essays on Johnson's Dictionary, edited by Jack Lynch and Anne McDermott. This book will be reviewed in the next number of JNL, as will Henry Hitchings's Dr. Johnson's Dictionary. With luck, the next issue could also include reviews of Johnson on the English Language, volume XVIII of the Yale Johnson. A little more luck could bring, in addition, a review of the Birmingham edition of Johnson's Dictionary. Let the good times roll, or as the Dictionary suggests, let them "move as waves or volumes of water" (sense 6).
Letter to the Editor

Dear Bob,

My compliments on the recent issue (March 2005) of the Johnsonian News Letter, received this week. I read through the entire issue this afternoon, something I find I can rarely do with a newly received copy of a journal, but I was prompted to go on by continually finding items common to my own experience, one of which I thought I would share with you.

Your article on the Gove-Liebert file of quotations from Johnson’s Dictionary mirrored something of my own experience with the Osborn index to periodicals at Yale. In 1978 after Jim Osborn’s death, I, too, picked up a card-index (there were 80,000 in Osborn’s) in my personal car (actually in my mother’s Batmobile-like Buick Riviera), and Steve Parks was likewise my local host and friendly assistant hauler. Since Jim’s own collection commandeered a major wing of the Beinecke, fortunately the periodical index had never been “lost” or transported to the “dust bin” at the Sterling. However, a goodly portion of the 4 x 6 cards were in disarray; the confusion was sorted out only when I set the whole collection in order of periodical and sub-ordered it by page number. I am happy, however, given your account of the condition of the Gove-Liebert “slips,” that Jim Osborn never succeeded with his WPA application. (Among Jim’s various pieces of correspondence that accompanied the collection was a copy of just such an application.) Fortunately, all the index cards I have were done in the BL and Bodleian by young British scholars that Jim had hired, and the info supplied was almost always consistently complete and reliable. As you did, I discovered some wonderful cabinets for storage (large metal cabinets specifically designed for 4 x 6 cards), although I stored them in my home office where I do all my work rather than in my university office. Unlike your scene, however, I guess I’m lucky that the new electronic world has not been able to outmode the collection; not even the British Library’s ongoing effort to digitize the Burney collection of periodicals will do that. Nonetheless, I very much feel your sense of nostalgia for the Gove-Liebert file.

Best wishes,

JAMES E. TIERNEY
he word “camouflage” is nowhere to be found in the canonical 1971 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Is this yet another proof that lexicographers leave, leave out, or otherwise disguise, clues in their dictionaries for users to notice?

Browsing a dictionary requires breath, curiosity, and patience. Every time I open one, I’m filled with expectation: What will I discover about the words I use on a daily basis that I didn’t know before? What kind of mysteries did the compiler set out for me to uncover? For dictionary-makers approach their discipline—the deciphering, and characterization, of the entire vocabulary bank constituting a language—in a cold-blooded, objective fashion, assuring readers no prejudice goes unpunished. What folly! Dictionaries, after all, are catalogues of social misconceptions. Look up the word “Jew” in Sebastián de Covarrubias’s *Tesor de la lengua castellana*, the first full-fledged lexicon of the Spanish language, published in 1611, and you’ll find a description of a people who “continue to profess the Mosaic Law, which is a shadow of the truth.” Or open the *Trésor de la langue française* to “amour” and you’ll find an oblique reference: “love is sometimes more than just love, but also sometimes less.”

This evasiveness, of course, is sometimes maddening. Not long ago, I found myself comparing a couple of discrepant definitions for “zebra”: one dictionary described it as a black African wild horse with white stripes, another as a solid-hoofed, plant-eating white mammal with black stripes. Who’s right? Or better, can both be right?

This year marks the 250th anniversary of the first publication of Samuel Johnson’s magnificent *Dictionary of the English Language*, the most ambitious and idiosyncratic single-person lexicographical effort ever attempted. Accolades have accumulated over its
reigning period of influence. Thomas Carlyle said that “Had Johnson left us nothing but the Dictionary, we might have traced there a great intellect, a genuine man.” Noah Webster plagiarized it impudently, even while comparing its effect on philology to Newton’s discoveries in mathematics. It was the dictionary used by Jane Austen and Oscar Wilde, Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy. James Murray kept a copy in the Oxford Scriptorium. Samuel Taylor Coleridge described it as “instructive and entertaining.”

Unabashedly entertaining it is, indeed. The current generation of professional lexicographers is taught to dissect words in a vacuum, to trace their etymological history with Protestant precision. They approach language as a self-sufficient cosmos, with its own rules and regulations. The fieldwork is done by scrutinizing newspapers, dissecting political speeches, restaurant menus and laundry lists, browsing the Internet not in search of content but idiomatic expressions. Doctor Johnson is their Columbus. He is also an anti-model. His two-volume, 2,300-page dictionary, released, after nine years of work, in London, made sure definitions were accompanied with historical quotations from the wealth of the English intellectual tradition, from the King James Bible to Milton and onwards. Johnson not only lamented, as thousands of others (among them Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift) often did, the lack of standards in the language in the eighteenth century. He also did something else: he proved his passion for ink by leaving his fingerprints everywhere. After all, he was a consummate man of letters—something the Oxford dons, and their colleagues in Random House and other houses on this side of the Atlantic, are not—a person equally talented in the arts of fiction, poetry, travel writing, moral essays, and literary criticism.

Johnson recognized dictionaries to be byproducts of their own time and space, their authors at once fallible and gullible. Thus, he sought not to extricate himself from his semantic explanations. He was subtle and perceptive, at once broadminded and laissez-faire, and, more than anything else, subversive. Johnson’s view on sex and religion is palpable but never intrusive. “Orgasm” for him is “a sudden vehemence.” “Heresy” is “an opinion of private men different from that of the cathlick and orthodox church.” A “mystery” is “something above human intelligence; something awfully obscure.” A “word” is, among other things, “a promise.” By the same token, Johnson’s notorious view of Scots and Americans is legendary. So is his sarcastic comment on the art of lexicography as “harmless.”

As a Mexican immigrant and a non-native English speaker, I owe Johnson the realization that language should not be left to lexicographers to ponder, for they would suck the life out of it. I cele-
brate his amateurship: without the imprimatur of an institution to back him up (he was a doctor by reputation, not by degree), Johnson embarked on a most beautiful project: to show how words define us as much as we define them. A Dictionary of the English Language is an invitation to new Americans like me to recognize that Shakespeare’s tongue isn’t the property of snobby academics. It is in constant flux and thus is ours to revamp. For better or worse, it belongs to those who use and abuse it.

Johnson’s register in his entire oeuvre is staggering. His pieces in periodicals like The Rambler and The Idler are examples of exactitude, as are his appreciations of the English poets, from Milton to Pope; his novel The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia is amusing; his translations of Horace and his thoughts on poetry are a compass. But it is his commitment to language in particular that I find dumbfounding. What would he think of the jargon Latinos speak today in the United States: Spanglish? How would he react to Cyber-English, ubiquitous in the Internet? Would the globalization of the Queen’s Tongue, the pulling of varieties in endless directions at once, infuriate him?

These questions prompted me, a few months back, to imagine Johnson arriving uninvited at my Amherst house for a tête-à-tête. After a discussion on barbarisms as well as on giving order to chaos, he ended up applauding the elasticity English has achieved across the centuries. “Lexicographers,” he said, “capture words on paper, not in stone. They camouflage their imperfections—and, in so doing, announce that words are human concoctions, not divine creations.” He said to me: “When we see men grow old and die at a certain time one after another, from century to century, we laugh at the elixir that promises to prolong life to a thousand years; and with equal justice may the lexicographer be derided, who being able to produce no example of a nation that has preserved their words and phrases from mutability, shall imagine that his dictionary can embalm his language, and secure it from corruption and decay, that it is in his power to change sublunary nature, and clear the world at once from folly, vanity and affectation.”

Salutations, Doctor Johnson—surveyor of folly and master of the ephemeral. You democratized the English language!

—Ilan Stavans
The Pleasures of Polysemy: A Plan for Teaching Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language in an Eighteenth-Century Course

It is easy to think of Johnson's Dictionary as one of many topics covered in an eighteenth-century course, but I would like to make the case for presenting Johnson's Dictionary to students not merely as a topic, or an interesting relic of the past, but as a useful philological tool.

Eighteenth-century texts contain many words that are deceptively familiar to the modern reader. Candid is a famous example. These words (genius, passion, interest, and generous are other examples) have undergone significant shifts in meaning and connotation since the eighteenth century, and readers who lack experience with eighteenth-century texts may not be prepared to recognize this fact. Foreign language teachers have long found it useful to caution their introductory students against "false friends"—those words meaning something very different from their English cognates. For instance, Spanish divertir means "to amuse," and complexión refers to physical build or constitution rather than skin. Students of the eighteenth century must also be warned against false friends. The modern student who encounters Swift describing Addison as an "ingenious gentleman" who "did divert or instruct the kingdom by his papers" may not expect that some eighteenth-century readers would read "divert" to mean "to please" or "to exhilarate," as does Johnson, who uses this passage from Swift's Proposal for Cor-
recting...the English Tongue to illustrate his fifth sense of divert in the Dictionary.

In encountering these words in eighteenth-century texts, the problem, and ultimately the pleasure, is one of multiple meanings or polysemy. It is not so much that students "get it wrong" if they are not linguistically sensitive to the multiple meanings and connotations of eighteenth-century words, but that they miss out on the verbal richness and subtlety of eighteenth-century texts. We might tend to think that this kind of linguistic sensitivity is necessarily one of the after-effects of an eighteenth-century course, but when we ask students to go with us to the eighteenth century, it might be fruitful to use Johnson's Dictionary as a linguistic guidebook we consult at the beginning of our trip rather than merely one of the many stops along the way.

By introducing Johnson's Dictionary at the beginning of the course as part of a general introduction to the eighteenth century, we can encourage students to think of it as a tool we return to throughout the course. To accomplish this, I plan to provide students with a very modest abridgment of the Dictionary. My abridgment will contain definitions of what might be called "eighteenth-century keywords." These keywords include not only high-frequency words whose eighteenth-century resonance or range of meanings may elude the modern reader (awful, nice, familiar, terrible, brute, genius, ingenious, generous, mean, passion, idleness, interest, luxury, condescension, freedom, reflection, inclination), but also other frequently occurring verbs, prepositions, and idioms (doubt not, without for "unless," own for "admit," suffer for "allow," want for "lack" or "need," and leave in "give leave," "take leave," "beg leave"). My abridgment will also include words that will help orient readers to eighteenth-century society, such as words referring to job titles (vicar, governess, almoner, groom, postilion, scullion, footman) the parts of a house (closet, apartment, toilet), and common terms of abuse (rake, strumpet, virtuoso, virago).

Anyone can compile a list of keywords quite easily by consulting his or her own experience as a reader of eighteenth-century texts as well as the online version of Johnson’s Dictionary (http://www.cblprojects.com/jd/). No list of keywords can be exhaustive, and any list should reflect both one’s predilections as a reader of the eighteenth century and one’s sense of what words might merit special attention, given the reading list in a particular course. But the most useful list of key words will contain words that occur frequently or loom large in eighteenth-century texts. This lexicon of eighteenth-century keywords will be something that the class adds to over the course of the semester as students
encounter words they find puzzling, interesting, or important. Students may also supplement Johnson’s definitions as necessary, or illustrate their definitions with passages they encounter in their readings. Thus this course-packet Dictionary is not a text that talks down to students, but an interactive text they can consult or modify in class or when reading for class.

In the first assignment of the course, students examine one of these keywords in a larger context than Johnson provides. I will provide a model for this examination by looking at the word distraction. After asking the class what they think this word means and arriving at a loose consensus on its meaning, I can illustrate how that meaning is reflected in modern book titles. A quick search on Amazon.com turns up Driven to Distraction: Recognizing and Coping with Attention Deficit Disorder from Childhood to Adulthood and Weapons of Mass Distraction: Soft Power and American Empire, among others. Then we can turn to Johnson’s definition of distraction, which includes the following senses:

1. Tendency to different parts; separation.
2. Confusion; state in which the attention is called different ways.
3. Perturbation of mind; violence of some painful passion.
4. Madness; frantickness; loss of the wits; vagrancy of the mind.
5. Disturbance; discord; difference of sentiments.

Although the first two senses will probably accord with the class’s loose definition of the term, some students will point out that senses 3 and 4 describe senses of the word that have lost currency. These obsolete senses of distraction can be found in early modern book titles found not on Amazon but via the Early English Books Online database (EEBO). Such a search locates an anonymous title from 1675: The Sad effects of cruelty detected being an impartial account of the poor woman, near Temple-Barr, lately tempted in her distraction to make away with herself; whose temptation and distraction proceeded not from her owning the Quakers their meetings or principles . . . but from the Devill & a wicked husband. Here it is plain to see that in the long eighteenth century distraction could signify literally a suicidal state of mind. Other book titles suggest that distraction was considered a medical condition that could be cured. The title page of physician Gideon Harvey’s Morbus Anglicus, or, The Anatomy of consumptions (1672) advertises “some brief discourses of melancholy, madness, and distraction occasioned by love” and physician John Peachi’s observations on “banellars imported from the Indies” (1694) claim to show
their “wonderful virtues in curing melancholy and distraction.”

One could go further by using *distraction* as a search term on the Literature Online database (LION). In Aphra Behn’s *Love-Letters between a Noble-Man and His Sister* (1685), for instance, *distraction* is used to describe mental torment occasioned by forbidden love: “thou hast made a very Fiend of me, and I have a Hell within; all rage, all torment, fire, distraction, madness; I rave, I burn, I tear my self and faint, am still a dying, but can never fall, till I have graspt thee with me.” Clearly, *distraction* connotes for Behn much more than we anticipated in our initial class discussion. We also find Robert Dodsley using *distraction* to describe the hair-raising madness of a “wretch” in “Melpomene: or, The Regions of Terror and Pity” (1757):

A growing phrenzy grins upon his face,
And in his frightful stare Distraction speaks:
His straw-invested head
Proclaims all reason fled

(67-70)

Cornelius Arnold’s “Distress” (1757), a “poetical essay,” employs *distraction* and *distract* to depict an attempt to “stem the Torrent of Adversity,” and he suggests that distraction poses perils for the soul:

A thousand Schemes distract his tortur’d Brain,
A thousand Passions agitate the Soul,
And all the Man is Chaos and Misrule.
See! black Despondence, with her gloomy Train
Of grisly Horrors hovers o’er the Soul,
Distraction, Frenzy, seizing the sick Heart,
Consign her over to the Fiend Despair

(93-99)

Finally, one can see how Samuel Richardson draws on the dire medical import of the word *distraction* in a letter from the “ever-adoring yet almost desponding Lovelace” to Clarissa. Lovelace, in his love-sick state, intimates that he will die of distraction unless Clarissa restores him “to Himself, and to Hope”:

If, my dearest Life! you would prevent my distraction,
or, at least, distracted consequences, renew the promised hope! —My fate is indeed upon its crisis.
Forgive me, dearest creature, forgive me! —I know I have written in too much anguish of mind! —Writing this, in the same moment that the just-dawning light has imparted to me the heavy disappointment.

I dare not re-peruse what I have written. —I must deposit it. —It may serve to shew you my distracted apprehension that this disappointment is but a prelude to the greatest of All. . . .

Your ever-adoring
yet almost desponding
Lovelace

Here Lovelace is performing his love-sickness for Clarissa, using the word *distraction*—along with dashes, exclamation points, syntactic stops and starts—to signify an anguished lover’s potentially tragic mental state. But Clarissa seems to recognize that Lovelace’s use of the word *distraction* and his references to his “gloomy” soul are ornaments of a would-be lover’s pose meant to move an “unde-signing open heart.” Clarissa notes to her friend Miss Howe, in prefacing this letter, “Well are we instructed early to keep this sex at a distance.” Lovelace’s letter reinforces our clear sense now that the word *distraction* is much more resonant in the eighteenth century than we had suspected when our class devised its provi-sional definition of the word. And having become more familiar with the eighteenth-century resonance and contexts of the word *distraction*, we are more prepared, as Clarissa and Richardson’s readers were prepared, to recognize the ways in which Lovelace tries to exploit the power of this now relatively inert word.

Johnson’s *Dictionary* is just a starting point for exploration of this eighteenth-century keyword. But having explored this word at the beginning of the course, our students will have a clearer sense of how they might use the *Dictionary*—in conjunction with electronic databases such as EEBO, LION, and Eighteenth Century Collections Online (ECCO)—to illuminate the texts we read. One can also direct students, of course, toward other eighteenth-century dictionaries and the *OED*, but by having them first move from Johnson’s *Dictionary* to actual early modern texts, one gives students an opportunity to become lexicographers themselves. Following in Johnson’s footsteps, students may encounter the “bound-less chaos” of eighteenth-century language, and that experience will surely make them resourceful readers of eighteenth-century literature.

—CHRI S P. PEARCE
Johnsoniana

New Johnsoniana and Burneyiana at McGill University

To celebrate the 250th anniversary of the publication of the Dictionary, an exhibition—Samuel Johnson, His Dictionary and His World—was held at McGill University’s McLennan-Redpath Library in April-May 2005. The organizer, Dr. Richard Virr, Curator of Manuscripts at the Rare Books and Special Collections Division, assembled some fine copies of early editions of the Dictionary and other works by Johnson, together with many related items. One exhibit is of special interest to Johnsonians: the autograph manuscript of Johnson’s brief letter to Lucy Porter of 2 December 1779. In both R.W. Chapman’s and Bruce Redford’s editions of Johnson’s letters, this item is printed from G. B. Hill’s Johnsonian Miscellanies (1897), and Chapman indicates that the manuscript is “not traced.” It has, however, been at McGill University since about the 1930s, acquired as part of a collection of autograph letters owned by Charlotte Learmont (1845-1934). Mrs. Learmont was the second wife of James Bowles Learmont, a prominent member of the Montreal business community and active book collector, whose collections were sold in New York in five sales in 1917 and 1918 at the Anderson galleries. The letter, which contains no erasures or insertions, has been mounted on paper embossed with her name. The text is as in the printed source.

Also at McGill University, but not part of Mrs. Learmont’s collection, is a two-line fragment of what seems to be an unknown Johnson letter. It is in Johnson’s middle to late hand, dating perhaps from the 1770s. The fragment, which begins in mid-sentence, reads:

be sure to regard you. It will therefore [written over “might then”?] probably be prudent to stay till the commotion has subsided before you make [“a jou”? is deleted] another journey.

Neither Robert DeMaria nor Bruce Redford, who kindly responded to my enquiries, recognizes this as part of a published Johnson letter. At present, therefore, the addressee and date remain
unknown, as do the nature of the "commotion" and the purpose of the "journey." Enlightenment from readers of the Johnsonian News Letter would be greatly appreciated.

In addition to these Johnson finds, Dr. Vrri has brought an important new Burney item to my attention. It is a sheet of twelve fine engravings, designed in 1784 or later by the prolific German painter and book illustrator Daniel Chodowiecki (1726-1801) for editions of Cecilia. The engravings, which depict some memorable moments in the novel, have French and German captions and were apparently made for editions of the novel in both languages. The engravings also appear in a German Pocket Calendar for 1789, of which a copy is owned by the Burney scholar and collector Catherine Rodriguez. Much information on the Calendar, as well as on the translations of Cecilia, will appear in her forthcoming article, "The History of a Novel's Travels Abroad: Foreign Editions of Frances Burney's Cecilia" (Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, January 2006), and in her forthcoming University of Virginia doctoral dissertation, "The Strange and Surprising Adventures of a Novel: Publishing Frances Burney's Cecilia." The sheet of illustrations makes a fine addition to McGill's rich holdings in early editions of Cecilia and other Burney novels.

—Peter Sabor

A Johnsonian Quiz

The following quiz, with its introduction, was found among materials in the Frederick B. Adams, Jr. collection, which was auctioned at Sotheby's on 11 June 2001. Adams was an original member of the Johnsonians, along with Donald and Mary Hyde, Alfred and Elizabeth Kay, and Herman and Laura Liebert. The quiz appears to be part of the annual celebration of the Johnsonians for it is accompanied by another puzzle in which clues are given for the "surnames of contemporary English and American XVIII Century enthusiasts, some present and some absent tonight" (e.g. "primogenitor," "alphabetical item," "lover [Ger.]," "a covering," with the answers being Adams, Kay, Liebert, and Hyde.) Adams was also director of the Pierpont Morgan Library, president of the New York Historical Society and a trustee of Yale University. He published several books including Radical Literature in America, which reflects
his collecting interests, and To Russia with Frost, an account of his journey to Khrushchev’s Kremlin with his friend the poet. He was an important book collector and an editor of the book collector’s quarterly, The New Colophon. The answers to the questions will be published in the next issue.

“Questioning,” said the Doctor, “is not the mode of conversation among gentlemen.” Admitting, then, that we have for the moment abandoned our manners, we pose some ungentlemanly questions to try the wits of the best Johnsonians. They are catch questions by design, but the faithful should be able to answer a majority. . . . Prizes of a peculiarly Johnsonian nature will be given for the highest score, the next highest score and the lowest score. The honor system prevails: no peeking at the answers or your neighbor’s sheet, and no self-indulgence in adding up your score.

1. All Johnsonians know the name of the Doctor’s faithful servant, Francis Barber. Write the name of another of his servants in the space below, and score 10 points for the correct answer.
   Another Johnson servant was named ______________________

2. Each of these women played a role in Johnson’s life. Identify each very briefly, scoring 2 points for each that is right.
   a) Mrs. Careless: ______________________
   b) Mrs. Emmet: ______________________
   c) Miss Morris: ______________________
   d) Mrs. Gardiner: ______________________
   e) Miss Jane (or Jenny) Harry: ______________________

3. Write in the spaces below the names of 5 authors other than Bozzy and Piozzi each of whom published a biography of Johnson prior to 1800, scoring 2 points for each correct answer.
   (a) ______________________
   (b) ______________________
   (c) ______________________
   (d) ______________________
   (e) ______________________
4. Johnson wrote the lives of all but one of the following persons; place the name of the one whose life he did not write in the space below, and score 10 points for the correct answer:
Herman Boerhaave, Thomas Sprat, Stephen Duck, David Mallet, Lewis Morin, George Stepney, Edward Cave, Peter Burman, Francis Cheynel, William Somerville.

5. Complete the following quotations, scoring 2 points for each with all words correct; 1 point if you guess only one word:
a) "It has not ______________ enough to keep it ____________.
b) "He has nothing of the ____________ but his ____________.
c) "What does ____________, he soon ____________ to do."
d) "Who drives ____________ ____________ should himself be _____________."
e) "If a ____________ is seen, a ____________ will be presumed."

6. Write in the spaces below the actual names of the persons employing the following pseudonyms: (a) Probus Britannicus; (b) Sylvanus Urban; (c) An Impartial Hand; (d) A Genius; (e) T. Score 2 points for each.
(a) ________________ (b) ________________ (c) ________________
(d) ________________ (e) ________________

7. Only one of the following was a relative of Johnson; write his or her name in the space below and score 10 points for the right answer: Eleanor Jervis; Lord Chesterfield; Catherine Chambers; Charles Ford; Sir John Floyer.

8. The following statements about Rasselas may be true or false; circle "T" or "F" after each, and score 2 points for each right answer:
(a) Johnson had not looked at Rasselas since its publication until 1781. _____
(b) The name Rasselas is not on the title-page of any edition published in Johnson’s lifetime. _____
(c) Johnson’s original title for Rasselas was “The Choice of Life.” _____
(d) There have been nearly 300 editions of Rasselas. _____
Johnsoniana

(e) Reynolds was so delighted with Rasselas that he read it straight through, leaning against a mantle so that his arm went to sleep.

9. Johnson wrote at least 6 theatrical prologues: name 5, scoring 2 points for each.
   (a) ____________  (b) ____________  (c) ____________
   (d) ____________  (e) ____________

10. Supply the name of the speaker in the following quotation, and score 10 points for the right answer: "Sir," said ____________ ____________, "you should have given us your Travels. I am sure I am right, and there's an end on 't."

    —Edward Schaeffer

Reading at Risk: A Forum, Spring 2005

The Association of Literary Scholars and Critics recently published a collection of essays that respond to an alarming report by the National Endowment for the Arts on the place of literature in the lives of adult Americans. The study was released in 2004 and is entitled Reading at Risk: it shows that the percentage of adults reading literature has slid from 56.9 percent in 1982 to 46.7 percent in 2002. The slide among those aged 18-24 is even more precipitous; it has declined from 59.8 in 1982 to 42.8 in 2002. The writers who respond to the report cite Samuel Johnson on several occasions. Michael Valdez Moses adduces Joseph Epstein's earlier criticism that the report fails to tabulate serious non-fiction reading: "He points out that 'one could be reading a steady diet of St. Augustine, Samuel Johnson, and John Ruskin and fall outside the boundaries of what the report calls 'literary readers.'" In another essay, speaking about reading literature as an essential part of education, David Bromwich says, "You steeped yourself in books in order to imagine other lives and times, and to make a beginning of knowing yourself. History and biography accordingly were among the central genres of literature, as Dr. Johnson recognized: 'Our intercourse with intellectual nature is necessary; our speculations upon matter are voluntary and at leisure.' By intellectual nature, Johnson meant the minds of
other people. ‘Those authors, therefore,' he continued, ‘are to be read at schools that supply most axioms of prudence, most principles of moral truth, and most materials for conversation; and these purposes are best served by poets, orators, and historians.' The books that Johnson called literature he regarded as the basis of intelligent life.” The quotations come from Johnson’s “Life” of Milton and are part of his critique of Milton’s plan to have his students read “those authors that treat of physical subjects; such as the Georgick and astronomical treatises of the ancients.” The remarks quoted by Bromwich follow Johnson’s more famous statement that “we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance” (“Life” of Milton, paragraph 39).

In another essay, Wendell Harris laments the state of graduate study in English, particularly the situation, as he perceives it, that “for at least twenty-five years the majority of graduate students have been taught the application of theory—gender-driven or politically-driven theory—is the goal of literary study, and, indeed, of reading.” A few sentences later, he adds, “I like to think that Samuel Johnson, who said that no one but a blockhead writes except for money, would have been equally happy to say that no one but the theory-ridden professor of literature reads for any reason but enjoyment—often intellectually profitable enjoyment, but enjoyment nevertheless.”

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.

New York Times, 9 January 2005

In an essay entitled “You Talkin’ to Me” William Deresiewicz reviews a couple of new books about the English language and takes up the subject of “Correct English.” He points out, citing David Crystal, that there really is no such thing, although “pundits,” like the grammarian Lindley Murray and Samuel Johnson, made their reputations prescribing it. “The pundits were not faint of heart,” says Deresiewicz, “where no rules existed, they simply made them up... At least Johnson, in compiling his dictionary, turned for his authorities to the acknowledged masters of the language. The grammarians didn’t hesitate to censure the likes of Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope for violating rules that hadn’t existed when they wrote. (The word ‘chutzpah’ apparently hadn’t entered the language in the late 18th century.)” I suppose it won’t do Johnson’s reputation with Deresiewicz any good, but that Johnson also criticized Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope on occasion—not, of course, for violating rules, but for writing inaccurate, uninformed, or illogical English, which they occasionally did.
But, on the whole, Johnson sees himself as a recorder of English, as it was written circa 1589-1745, rather than as a reformer or a pundit.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.

*New York Times*, 17 April 2005

In celebration of the 250th anniversary of the publication of the *Dictionary* on 15 April 1755, Verlyn Klinkenborg wrote an excellent short essay for the Op-Ed page of the *Times*. After contemplating the serene, orderly look of the alphabetically arranged *Dictionary*, Klinkenborg says, “But I wonder whether anyone has ever had a more dynamic or volatile sense of the language than Johnson did. We tend to remember him as an older man, grown heavy, his face weighed down as much by indolence as industry. But in April 1755 he was not yet 46. With the publication of his dictionary, he returned from his researches into the English language the way an explorer returns from the North Pole, with a sense of having seen a terrain that others can see only through his account of what he found there. Instead of a wilderness of ice, he faced what he called, in his preface to the dictionary, ‘the boundless chaos of a living speech.’ Instead of voyages into Arctic waters, he talks of fortuitous and unguided excursions into books.” Klinkenborg concludes with the astute remark, “Johnson published his dictionary not as the conqueror of the language but as the person who knew best how unconquerable it really is.” As Klinkenborg knows, in his Preface Johnson does indeed express the weariness of a traveler at the end of a long voyage “in a vast Sea of words” (as he wrote to a friend). The “Arctic waters” mentioned by Klinkenborg are a fit metaphor for that sea and for “the obscure recesses of northern learning” that Johnson’s says he hoped, like a gothic warrior, to “ransack.” Unlike most casual observers, Klinkenborg has heard Johnson’s expressions of resignation at the end of the long and impossible task. Some of these expressions belong to the standard rhetoric of writers saying farewell to great books that have robbed them of many passing years, but Johnson was truly acknowledging the impossibility of fixing and standardizing language.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.

*Guardian*, 2 April 2005

In its celebration of the 250th anniversary of the publication of the *Dictionary*, the *Guardian* commissioned an article by Beryl Bainbridge, author of the historical fiction, *According to Queerly*, which focuses on Johnson’s old age. Bainbridge gives a brief
account of Johnson’s life and recapitulates Boswell’s somewhat faulty account of how Johnson compiled his Dictionary. She adds, however—true novelist that she is—touches of her own experience, and suggests her love of a world engendered, in part, by Johnson, if not exactly his world: “I visited the house in Gough Square when I began a novel about Dr. Johnson, an undertaking inspired by both the writings of Boswell and my involvement with the publishing house of Gerald Duckworth. My editor was the novelist Alice Thomas Ellis, my publisher her husband, Colin Haycraft, a man who could quote Dr. Johnson verbatim. To say their influence dictated my writing career is an understatement. Their house in Gloucester Crescent, Camden Town, with its dinner parties entertaining professors from Oxford—Michael Dummett, Richard Cobb, Hugh Lloyd Jones—all downing the whisky and arguing as to the merits of Horace and Gibbon, was surely an echo of those long gone evenings in Gough Square.”

—DEIRDRE DAVID

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Reports

Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California

The twenty-second annual dinner of the Samuel Johnson Society of Southern California will be held Sunday, 20 November 2005 at the Huntington Library, San Marino, California. The Daniel Blum Memorial Lecture, "Johnson and Scotland," will be delivered by Ian Simpson Ross, Professor Emeritus at the University of British Columbia, and biographer of Adam Smith. SJSSC is open to all persons interested in conversation and discourse about the life and writings of Samuel Johnson, his circle, and the history and culture of his century. The annual dinner is the convivial focus for these activities. Further information can be obtained from Myron Yeager, Secretary to the Society at yeager@chapman.edu.

—O M Brack, Jr.

Johnson Society of London

The Johnson Society of London held seven meetings in its 2004-2005 session, and also joined with the Boswell Society for a lunch.

In October 2004, the speaker was Fred Nicholls. Dr. Nicholls is a Vice-President of the Society, and is always a much-appreciated speaker. On this occasion, he spoke on “Four Quotations of Samuel Johnson.”

In November James Raven spoke on “Dr. Johnson’s Fleet Street and the Sites of Publishing in Eighteenth-Century London.” Professor Raven gave an account of his research in records of the publishing trade, which has uncovered much new information.

The main event of the session was the commemoration, which took place on 11 December (the Saturday nearest the anniversary of
Johnson's death). Martin Postle, Head of British Art to 1900 at the Tate Collection, laid a wreath on the grave of Samuel Johnson in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey. This was followed by the Society's annual luncheon. After the luncheon, Dr. Postle spoke on Frances Reynolds. Dr. Postle is curator of the acclaimed Tate Britain exhibition, "Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity," which includes seven of the portraits from the library at Streatham Park.

At the January meeting, Adam Rounce dealt with contrasting literary fates in his paper on "Success and Failure in Grub Street: Samuel Johnson and Percival Stockdale," and in February, Sheila Walsh also brought together Johnson and a contemporary under the title "You must read him for the sentiment": Johnson as a Critic of Richardson."

In March, Henry Hitchings spoke on "Dr. Johnson and Sir Thomas Browne," looking at the use Johnson made of Browne's work in the Dictionary. At the last meeting of the session, in April, Christine Rees looked at an under-examined aspect of Johnson in a paper entitled "Pray lend me Topsel on animals": the Place of Animals in Johnson's Life and Interests."

In May 2005, the Boswell Society held its first London lunch. Many members of the Johnson Society of London attended. The guest speaker was Adam Sisman, author of Boswell's Presumptuous Task.

Anyone interested in further information about the Johnson Society of London and its activities can find out more on our website at johnsoc.org.uk or by contacting us on info@johnsoc.org.uk.

—Michael Bundock

Johnson Society of Australia

12th Annual Seminar, Melbourne, May 2005

It is very satisfying to report that the Johnson Society of Australia continues to convene regularly, and to publish at a respectable rate. This, in a nation where many university English departments have been amalgamated with Art, Librarianship or Archaeology, and have one person teaching Literature Pre-1980, and the rest (the other two) teaching undergraduates how to string sentences together. But I digress.
The JSA has a hundred members, more or less, and its activities are focused in Melbourne. It is a rather old-fashioned literary society, most of its members being enthusiastic amateurs—lovers of reading, reading Johnson, and learned talk in a convivial context—rather than professional scholars. About fifty people (from across three time zones) attended our 12th Annual seminar, held in the quaint inner-suburban premises of the English-Speaking Union.

In the light of the recent anniversary, Johnson’s Dictionary was the focus of attention in three of the six papers. A regular speaker at our meetings is the publisher and grammarian Nicholas Hudson—whom scholarly and overseas readers ought not to confuse with the Canadian Johnsonian scholar of exactly the same name. Nick Hudson spoke on “Johnson and the Price of Things,” about Johnson’s earnings and costs while working on the Dictionary, concluding that he should have been able to manage quite well on what the booksellers paid him and his other earnings. Kate Burridge, who is the Professor of Linguistics at Melbourne’s Monash University, and a regular radio broadcaster on lexicographical matters, spoke about “verbal hygiene” and the strong human impulse to purify language—despite the objections of linguists—and considered Johnson as a linguistic prescriptivist.

Paul Tankard, now a Lecturer in English at the University of Otago, and visiting briefly from across the Tasman, spoke about “Reading the Dictionary,” asking what kind of writer writes a dictionary, what kind of reader reads one, and what kind of experience does such a reader have with Johnson’s. Long-time JSA member Wal McDougall gave an interesting talk on two (other) Lichfield poets, Erasmus Darwin and Anna Seward, and their relationships with Johnson. This talk was interspersed with a great deal of poetry. Publishers out there: it’s time to reprint Erasmus Darwin. The last paper for the day, from John Wiltshire, Reader in English at La Trobe University, was an elegant and moving reflection on Fanny Burney, comparing her with Boswell as a portraitist of Johnson. It is expected that in the fullness of time these talks will be published by the JSA, in the series of Papers.

Perth lawyer and bibliophile John Byrne (who is also a Governor of Johnson’s house in London) attended, bearing with him a selection of materials relating to the Dictionary from his Johnson collection. In particular he has a nice handful of miniatures and derivatives from Johnson’s great original. However, his treasures were (even he would admit) rather upstaged by a beautiful first edition of the Dictionary (1755), brought along by Nick Hudson, who told us the story of its having been acquired in England by friends of his, who found it, still in its paper wrappers (though not
now, unfortunately, from a bibliographical point of view) in the attic of the home of descendants of relatives of Jane Austen!

The JSA would welcome any Johnsonians to one of our three annual gatherings. The next is the David Fleeman Memorial Lecture, this year on 17 September, to be delivered by Associate Professor Chris Ackerley, of Otago, on Johnson and Samuel Beckett.

—PAUL TANKARD

J. D. Fleeman Visiting Fellowship

In 2002 the personal library of David Fleeman, distinguished scholar of Samuel Johnson, was presented to the Library of the University of St. Andrews by his widow Isabel Fleeman. She also left a substantial sum to endow a Fellowship scheme that would enable scholars to visit St. Andrews and undertake a program of research in the Fleeman Johnson Collection and the eighteenth-century holdings in the University Library’s Special Collections Department. The Fellowship will be based in the School of English.

The Fleeman Johnson Collection and Special Collections at St. Andrews University Library

David Fleeman’s painstaking scholarship grew from his own library of books by and about Johnson, which now forms the core of the Fleeman Johnson collection housed in St. Andrews University Library. The library was presented to St. Andrews in 1998 by Isabel Fleeman, and consists of 500 volumes by and about Samuel Johnson. It is particularly rich in early editions of Johnson’s works with about 100 pre-1801 items, including one pre-1701, and around 200 nineteenth-century items. The rest are mostly modern critical works, many with Fleeman’s trenchant and penetrating comments, and some with copies of the reviews he wrote pasted in. Titles which he collected with particular assiduity were Rasselas, Journey to the Western Isles and the Dictionary. His copy of the first edition of the Dictionary had sadly gone elsewhere before the collection came to St. Andrews, but we can fortunately provide the researcher with a copy from St. Andrews’ existing holdings. Dr. Fleeman’s own papers complement the printed collections, and provide the Johnson researcher with a resource which will not easily be found elsewhere.
J.D. Fleeman Visiting Fellowship

The Fellowship

The value of the David Fleeman Fellowship will be up to £3, 000. This will cover travel expenses to/from St. Andrews; accommodation and subsistence during tenure of the Fellowship; and may include an allowance for travel within Scotland. The Fellow will be offered University accommodation, and the cost of this will be deducted from the Fellowship award. If suitable accommodation proves unavailable, an allowance will be payable instead. The Fellowship may be held for up to twelve weeks in the University's second semester. As a condition of the award, the David Fleeman Fellow will be expected to present a lecture and a seminar in the School of English.

Who can apply?

The J. D. Fleeman Visiting Fellowship is open to all appropriately qualified scholars, including post-doctoral students.

The 2006-07 Fellowship Competition

The School of English and Library at St. Andrews University are delighted to announce the first competition for the David Fleeman Fellowship. Applications should include a description (up to 1,500 words) of the program of research to be conducted during the Fellowship, with details of projected dissemination of the work. Please also include a full curriculum vitae, with the names and contact addresses/e-mail addresses of two referees. The application should include a covering letter indicating the candidate’s preferred dates for taking up the Fellowship. The application should be posted to:

David Fleeman Fellowship,
The School of English,
University of St. Andrews,
St. Andrews, KY16 9AL
Scotland, UK.

The closing date for applications will be 30 June 2006. E-mail applications are not acceptable, although informal enquiries may be made to Professor Nicholas Roe at nhr@st-and.ac.uk.

—NICHOLAS ROE

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Yale Boswell Editions Notes

We note with great sadness the death of our editorial colleague David Hankins, who was killed in a tragic accident near his home in Otisfield, Maine, on March 10 of this year, at the age of 69. David Hankins, who had retired in 1992 after a long career in the English Department of the University of Connecticut at Storrs, was a nephew of the inaugural General Editor of the Yale Boswell Editions, Frederick Pottle (1897-1987). His mother, Pottle's sister Nellie Pottle Hankins (1904-1993), also had been a Boswell scholar, who co-edited with John Strawhorn The Correspondence of James Boswell with James Bruce and Andrew Gibb, Overseers of the Auchinleck Estate (1988). The forthcoming General Correspondence of James Boswell, 1757-1763, co-edited by David Hankins and James J. Caudle, is now in its final stages of editorial review, and will be the next volume to appear in the Yale Research Series of Boswell's correspondence. David Hankins's interest in what might be termed the pre-Johnsonian Boswell, especially in the correspondence with his fellow Scotsman and youthful literary collaborator, Andrew Erskine (1740-1793), had been deep and longstanding, having been the subject of his 1964 Indiana University dissertation. He had most recently contributed the entry on Andrew Erskine for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

*****

Oxford University Press has now advertised (as forthcoming in 2007) a new critical and scholarly edition of Boswell's first major publication, An Account of Corsica, the Journal of a Tour to That Island; and Memoirs of Pascal Paoli (1768), edited by James T. Boulton, Emeritus Professor of English Studies, University of Birmingham, and T. O. McLoughlin, Professor of English at the Université Paul Valéry, Montpellier. We quote the following paragraph from the OUP USA website: "[the text] illustrates aspects of Boswell that have received less attention than they might, namely, his sense of history, his political enthusiasm for national liberty, and his scholarship. He brings to the book a solid foundation in the Classics and the law, a facility in French and Italian, and a sensitivity to writing that, as the notes show, is evident in the reworking of his manuscript. The editors' introduction and the extensive annotation point up Boswell the scholar—assiduous, sedulous to get at the relevant sources, careful to do justice to those he disagreed with, and open about seeking and
acknowledging advice. The text reveals Boswell as a serious and independent thinker and a writer committed to Corsica’s independence. What he argued for and presumed was about to be achieved is still a matter of debate in Corsica and metropolitan France.”

*****

Peter Martin’s The Essential Boswell: Selections from the Writings of James Boswell (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2003), a one-volume redaction of excerpts of Boswell’s diaries selected from the Yale trade edition volumes, supplemented by short selections from the Account of Corsica, The Hypochondriack, and the Life of Johnson, declares Boswell’s journals “the great British autobiographical epic in prose” (Headnote, p. 3).

*****

The Washingtonian magazine for February 2004, in an article by Leslie Allen headlined “500 Books and Counting,” reported on The Washington Book Club, a group of eighteen men and women—“one of the nation’s oldest reading groups”—which has been meeting for more than fifty years. We quote, without comment, the following excerpt describing a meeting, with about twenty people present. (The average age had recently dipped below eighty, thanks to a couple of newcomers in their sixties):

For its first three decades, the club assumed that best-sellers were suspect. Even now, the classic or the obscure is a far likelier choice.

Does that put the club at risk for dullness? One Sunday afternoon the members make their way to Tex Schietinger’s door and put London Journal [i.e. Boswell’s London Journal 1762-1763] to the test. Its 18th-century author, James Boswell, is better known for his Life of Samuel Johnson; this weighty tome is uncharted territory. From the beginning, there’s disagreement, which all the members agree is the lifeblood of a good book discussion.

Bob Platt introduces the book with some biographical notes. That riles Dorothy Stokley, a purist who believes that only the book should be discussed.

“What is the point of reading this?” Vee Burke interrupts.

“It shows us life in 18th-century London,” Mary Briskin replies.

“An insipid life—breakfast, lunch, talk, talk, talk,” Vee says.

“What’s wrong with talking? That’s what we’re doing,” Betty Speck says.
“It’s the same as Washington,” Mary says. “You go around cultivating people, and that’s how you get jobs and promotions and everything else you want.”

“What was the disease he talked about?” someone asks.

“The clap.”

“Did he die of it?”

“No, he was a drunk.”

“How did he die of being a drunk?”

A pause. A chortle.

“The disease she gave him was referred to as the French disease.”

“And the French called it the English disease.”

Laughter, argument, asides, and serious talk mingle.

*****

Religious Identities in Britain, 1660-1832, a collection edited by William Gibson and Robert C. Ingram has just appeared from Ashgate, and includes “James Boswell and the Bi-Confessional State” by James J. Caudle, Associate Editor of the Yale Boswell Editions, and current Secretary of The Johnsonians. Dr. Caudle will present a paper at a conference on “Print Networks” at the University of Birmingham, UK, in July on “Young Boswell and the London Stationers: The Authorial Collaboration of James Boswell with William Flexney, Bookseller, and Samuel Chandler, Printer, 1763.”

*****

In February 2004, the Opéra de Nancy, in France, staged Le journal vénétien, written in 1972 by Bruno Maderna (1920-1973) (“livret de Jonathan Lévy d’après James Boswell”), with the tenor Nigel Robson in the part of Boswell. The opera is based on Boswell’s visit to Venice, as part of his Grand Tour, in June and July 1765.

A new play based on Boswell’s London Journal 1762-1763—Boswell’s Dreams by Marie Kohler—was produced by Renaissance Theaterworks at the Off-Broadway Theater, Milwaukee, in March this year. According to an interview with the playwright (Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, March 11), the play is in two acts. The first shows Boswell in London in 1762-1763. The second, set in the 20th century, “is about a female research assistant who accompanies an academician to Scotland to research Samuel Johnson. The young woman is sidetracked into pursuing Boswell’s life, finding him more interesting.”

—GORDON TURNBULL

GENERAL EDITOR, YALE BOSWELL EDITIONS
Robert Harley, first earl of Oxford (of the second creation), chancellor of the exchequer, then lord treasurer, and head of the Tory ministry under Queen Anne, friend and patron of Swift and Pope—and his son, Edward Harley, the second earl, were among the greatest English collectors of books and manuscripts. On the death of the second earl in 1741 the Harleian books were sold to the bookseller Thomas Osborne, who engaged Samuel Johnson and William Oldys, literary secretary to the earl from 1738 to 1741, to prepare a catalogue of the collection, Catalogus Bibliothecae Harleianae (1743-45), to attract purchasers. As part of his scheme to recoup his investment in the Harleian library, Osborne again engaged Johnson and brought out a selection of pamphlets, largely political and religious, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for the Harleian Miscellany, published in eight quarto volumes from 24 March 1744 to 25 March 1746. Johnson wrote the proposals for the Harleian Miscellany, which included his “Account of this Undertaking,” the Introduction to the first volume, and may have contributed a few annotations to volume three.

David Fleeman, in his Bibliography of the Works of Samuel Johnson, carefully canvassed Johnson’s contributions to promoting the sale of the Harleian library. But bibliography is always provisional and the next copy examined may provide new answers or new questions to a puzzle. In his notes to his bibliographical description of the first edition of the Harleian Miscellany, Fleeman points out that Allen T. Hazen had argued for a possible reprint of volume one. No reprint earlier than 1753 has been identified.1 Hazen’s argument was based on an announce-

ment in the 29 December 1744 Westminster Journal.²

"N.B. So great Encouragement has been given to this Work, that I find myself obliged to reprint Vol I, which of Course, will be succeeded by the other Volumes: It is therefore desired, that those Gentlemen, who have not taken in the Numbers, or Volumes regularly, would speedily do it, for if they do not embrace the present Opportunity, it will be impossible for them to compleat their Sets hereafter."³

This reprinting of the proposals is preceded by the announcement: "This Day is publish'd, | Inscribed to his Grace the Duke of Marlborough, | Number XIII, (Price One Shilling.) | Which compleats the Third Volume, of | THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY. . . ." Although the exact time frame for the reprinting of volume one is tantalizingly vague, Osborne does seem to have realized at least by the completion of volume three that he would not have enough copies of volume one to complete sets of the work.

Recently, when the Huntington Library acquired the Francis Bacon collection, included in it was an eight-volume set of the Harleian Miscellany. Alan Jutzi, Curator of Printed Books, comparing the first volume of this set with the first volume of the set long in the possession of the library (24999), noticed that Johnson's introduction appeared in a different typesetting, and called it to my attention. An examination revealed that indeed volume one had been reprinted as Hazen argued, and that for many years it had been on the shelves of the Huntington Library masquerading as a first edition—a second edition with a first edition title page. Volume one of the Bacon copy is the first edition as described by Fleeman.

Here is a plausible reconstruction of the events surrounding the reprinting of the first volume of Harleian Miscellany based on the current evidence. The numbers for the first volume were printed in a small edition—say, for the sake of discussion, 500 copies. The preliminary gatherings and the index would have been issued last, in late June 1744. At this time, when the first volume was complete, Osborne recognized that the Harleian Miscellany was selling better.


³ This notice also appears at the end of the reprinting of the proposals in the London Evening Post for 25 December 1744, and contains another unrecorded text of "An Account of this Undertaking." The search of newspapers has been confined to the Burney Collection available on microfilm.
than he anticipated. Beginning with volume two he increased the size of the printing to, conjecturally, 600 or even 750 copies. By the time the numbers for volume three had been distributed to the subscribers in late December 1744, Osborne recognized that the demand for missing numbers by late subscribers necessitated reprinting enough copies of volume one to complete the sets. Just when the reprinting took place is not clear since no advertisement of its availability has been discovered. What is clear is that the two preliminary gatherings (π^4 and a^4) in the second edition, first issue, were printed from standing type of the first edition. The only changes from the first edition are the names of two late subscribers inserted into the standing type of A LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS. Why add only two names when a supplementary list of subscribers was included in volume two? Perhaps this suggests that the preliminaries of volume one had been printed before late September when the supplementary list of subscribers would have been available to subscribers of the work. Another possible explanation is that A LIST OF SUBSCRIBERS exists in two different states in the first edition. In any case, signature b containing Johnson’s THE INTRODUCTION has been reset and appears the same in both issues of the second edition.

The final number of the Harleian Miscellany was issued 25 March 1746 and sales probably languished thereafter. In an effort to sell the remaining sets Osborne announced a second edition of eight volumes, quarto as “Just Published” in 1751. But it was two years later that the first volume with “the Second Edition” and the date 1753 on the title page was issued. The title page has not been cancelled; the entire first gathering has been cancelled. Preliminary gathering a is entirely reset and contains the title page, the dedication and THE CONTENTS TO THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.

Is the Huntington Library copy of the second edition, first issue unique? The Harleian Miscellany is a relatively common book and a large number of copies are reported as first editions in the English Short Title Catalogue. Perhaps some of the copies are only masquerading as first editions.

The quarto text of volume one of the Harleian Miscellany begins with signature B (B-4H^4) and has been completely reset as described by Fleeman. The first and second issues of the second edition have only to do with the preliminary gatherings.

4 Fleeman, p. 121.
5 When Osborne reprinted the first volume he used paper inferior to that used in the first printing, and throughout the Harleian Miscellany. The paper in the reprint is thin, so thin that when the two Huntington Library copies of the first volume are placed together, the reprint is about one-third less in bulk. The paper in the reprint is also heavily foxed.
First edition: 4° π4 a-b4
π1 title; π2 dedication; π3-4, a1-2 A | LIST | OF THE | SUBSCRIBERS.; a3-4 THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; b1-4 THE | INTRODUCTION.
i title; iii dedication; v-xii A | LIST | OF THE | SUBSCRIBERS.;
xiii-xvi THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; 2i-viii THE | INTRODUCTION.

NOTE: The title, dedication, and the first two leaves of A LIST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS fill four leaves of an unsigned preliminary gathering. A LIST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS also fills the first two leaves of a signed gathering a; the remaining two leaves contain THE CONTENTS TO THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY. Johnson's THE INTRODUCTION fills gathering b.

Second edition, first issue: 4° π4 a-b4
π1 title; π2 dedication; π3-4, a1-2 A | LIST | OF THE | SUBSCRIBERS.; a3-4 THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; b1-4 THE | INTRODUCTION.
i title; iii dedication; v-xii A | LIST | OF THE | SUBSCRIBERS.;
xiii-xvi THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; 2i-viii THE | INTRODUCTION.

NOTE: Signatures π4 and a4 are the same setting of type as the first edition. However, two changes have been made in the standing type of the first edition in A LIST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS. On π3r after "Mr. George Barnes" has been inserted "Mr. James Bulkeley." at the end of B in the third column. In the first edition B ends with Mr. George Barnes. On π4r after "Mr. Sandys" has been inserted "Mr. Nathan Sutton." at the end of S in the third column. In the first edition S ends with "Mr. Sandys." To make room for the additional name in the third column "Thomas Shepherd, Esq," has been shifted from the top of column three to the bottom of column two. Johnson's THE INTRODUCTION, which fills gathering b, has been entirely reset.

Second edition, second issue: 4° a-b4
a1 title; a2 dedication; a3-4 THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; b1-4 THE | INTRODUCTION.
i title; iii dedication; v-viii THE | CONTENTS | TO THE | HARLEIAN MISCELLANY.; 2i-viii THE | INTRODUCTION.
NOTE: In this issue A LIST OF THE SUBSCRIBERS has been omitted, eliminating four leaves of printed matter, and the need for an unsigned preliminary gathering π. The title, dedication, and THE CONTENTS TO THE HARLEIAN MISCELLANY fill the four leaves of an unsigned gathering a, and have been entirely reset. Johnson’s THE INTRODUCTION fills gathering b.

—O M BRACK, JR.

Samuel Johnson and George Washington

George Washington would seem to have little in common with Samuel Johnson. Washington was a Deist whereas Johnson was a devout Anglican. More important, Johnson was a self-proclaimed Tory who thought the American colonists had no right to complain about tyranny when they themselves were tyrants. In Taxation No Tyranny (1775), Johnson thunders: “How is it that we hear the loudest yelps for liberty among the drivers of negroes?” Yet Washington and Johnson both admired several lines from Joseph Addison’s Cato. Not only did they admire these lines, they regarded them as a guide to conduct.

It is hard to exaggerate the importance of Addison’s play, which was popular in England for most of the eighteenth century. It was also translated into many languages—Voltaire thought it was better than any play by Shakespeare—and it was frequently staged in the American colonies. According to Forrest McDonald, it was probably Washington’s favorite serious play; he saw it a number of times and had it staged for his troops at Valley Forge.

Washington, McDonald says, identified himself with one of the play’s main characters, Prince Juba, who says:

Honour’s a sacred tie, the law of kings,
The noble mind’s distinguishing perfection,
That aids and strengthens virtue where it meets her,
And imitates her actions, where she is not.

Juba’s words, McDonald says, “provide the clue to understanding Washington” because they stress that honor is a great motivating force “where genuine virtue is absent or inadequate. . . .” Though we are not always animated by “genuine virtue,” a sense of honor,
by which Addison means a desire to gain the esteem of wise and good men, spurs us on to virtue. The key thought is “[Honor] imitates her [Virtue’s] actions, where she is not.”

Johnson mentions the lines from Addison’s play in a conversation with Boswell about the importance of politeness. Politeness, Johnson says, is “fictitious benevolence. . . . Depend upon it, the want of it never fails to produce something disagreeable to one or other. I have always applied to good breeding, what Addison in his Cato says of honor.” Then Johnson quotes Addison’s lines—implying that good breeding, which is a synonym for politeness, is closely connected with a sense of honor.

According to both Washington and Johnson, the honorable person, like the polite person, looks outward rather than inward—concerned with how others evaluate his conduct (or conversation). Johnson always argues that if we look inward, consulting our heart about what we should do, we may think we find “genuine virtue,” but we are probably deceiving ourselves. “Men,” he says, “who cannot deceive others, are very often successful in deceiving themselves; they weave their sophistry till their own reason is entangled.”

In short, Johnson and Washington have similar ideas about the springs of moral conduct. Both think “genuine virtue” is rare, owing to what Johnson calls “the perplexity of contending passions.” And both think that having a strong sense of honor helps one regulate one’s passions.

—STEPHEN MILLER

Two Pen-and-Ink Inscriptions on Copies of Johnson’s Dictionary in Japan

(1) The first edition of Johnson’s Dictionary housed in the Library of Books (Maruzen Bookstore, Tokyo) has the following pen-and-ink inscription on the opening flyleaf of the first volume:

Published on the 15th of April 1755
price £ 4-10 bound
“Something I will tell you. I hope to see my Dictionary bound and lettered next Week; Vasta Mole superbus.”
Dr. Johnson to Rev. Thomas Warton
March 20, 1755
Beneath the inscription is pasted Augustine Birrell’s ex libris with the motto “Love and be silent” (King Lear, I. i. 63). According to Mr. Sakichi Yagi, the then librarian of the institute, Maruzen bought the Dictionary from a certain English bookstore a few years before the outbreak of World War II. As Birrell died in 1933, it is highly probable that the inscription is by Birrell himself and dates from the time when the book was still in his possession.

(2) Kobe University Library (Kobe, Japan) has a copy of the second edition of Johnson’s Dictionary. On the flyleaf of volume I there are extremely curious and puzzling comments. I make no guess as to who wrote them, confining myself to mere transcription. On the left side of the flyleaf:

This Dictionary did not originate with Johnson. He has indeed the credit of it, but it is rather an ascribed credit than a merited one. The Hint came first from Lord Chesterfield, who communicated it to Mr. Robert Dodsley (the bookseller) & explained his idea of giving the different significations of words by quotations from the best authors, and arranged in the order of time. Dodsley approved of the hint, & mentioned it to Dr. Campbell author of the Lives [of the] Admirals. But Campbell could not be brought to taste of it, & therefore declined to undertake it. Dodsley after mentioned it to Garrick, by accident. Garrick liked the thought very much, & recom[m]ended his friend Johnson to execute it. Johnson at first was rather sluggish about it, but Garrick pressed it warmly to him, & promised to give him his utmost assistance. At length Johnson undertook it. Garrick was faithful to his promise: he furnished him with all or most of his dramatic Quotations. Lord Chesterfield furnished him with almost every thing from polite Literature. Mr. Melmoth (translator of Pliny) did the same. Mr. Moore author of the fables for the Ladies; Mr. Richard Owen Cambridge, Mr. Soame Jenyns, Mr. Horace Walpole, & etc, all contributed. So that Johnson was very ably & amply supplied, altho’ no acknowledgment was ever made of their assistance.

NB, See Boswell’s Life of Johnson where it is shewn that Johnson, in his famous letter to Ld: Chesterfield, reproaches him & disowns his assistance.
On the right side:

In this Dictionary, Moral Rectitude has not only been scrupulously maintained by Johnson, but, as far as the author of the work would admit, it has been sedulously included. In the authorities which he has adduced, he has collected, with a discrimination which can never be enough admired, a countless multitude of the most noble sentences which English literature offered; yet he has frequently contented himself with instances borrowed from inferior writers, when he found some passage, which at once served His purpose, & that of Religion and Morality; and also, as he declared himself, lest he could risk contaminating the mind of the student, by referring him to authors of celebrity but less Purity. When we reflect how fatally the unsuspected title of the Dictionary has been made the vehicle for polluting principle, we shall feel the value of this extreme conscientiousness of Johnson.

—DAISUKE NAGASHIMA

“A Lord among Wits”:
Lord Chesterfield and his Reception of
Johnson’s Celebrated Letter

Boswell remembers Lord Chesterfield as a singularly calculating, unprincipled, and vain piece of “tinsel,”¹ incapable of distinguishing Johnson’s superior merit, or too petty to encourage it with patronage. For the most part, scholars have accepted Boswell’s account. To summarize briefly, Johnson applied to Chesterfield for patronage in 1746, when Chesterfield was Secretary of State, and dedicated to him The Plan of a Dictionary of the English Language. In response, Chesterfield gave him £10 and a hollow promise of future aid. But only in 1755, when publication of the Dictionary was imminent, did Chesterfield offer a semblance of support by “scribbling” two articles in The World praising both Johnson and his Dictionary (Life, 183). On 7 February 1755, Johnson, indignant at Chesterfield’s neglect, sent him a letter upbraiding him for the slight and rejecting his recent

encomiums as superfluous because late. Chesterfield kept the letter on his table "where any body might see it," and "pointed out the severest passages" to Robert Dodsley observing "how well they were expressed." Boswell characterizes Chesterfield's unconcern at the high rebuke as an affectation, an instance of "glossy duplicity," a "specimen of that dissimulation which Lord Chesterfield inculcated as one of the most essential lessons for the conduct of life" (Life, 187).

Two of Chesterfield's biographers—one implicitly, the other explicitly—label Boswell's commentary as "nonsense," but decline to provide a context for Chesterfield's unaffected admiration of the letter. More generally, his biographers (without exception) overlook a phenomenon essential to understanding both Chesterfield's reception of the letter and Boswell's interpretation of it: the fundamental shift in Lord Chesterfield's reputation after the posthumous publication in 1774 of Letters to his Son.

After all, Lord Chesterfield's posthumous reputation as an insinuating paragon of politeness little accords with George II's characterization of him as "a dwarf baboon." Chesterfield was a small man, described by another of his enemies as having "a head larger than his body, and a nose larger than his head," and George II intended "baboon" as a promiscuous and uncultured devil. The king's jab appears less startling if we thrust aside for a moment Chesterfield's reputation as Georgian England's most subtle, calculating, and mannered courtier, and consider the chief foundation for his celebrity during his lifetime.

Chesterfield's contemporaries thought of him as the cynosure of wit. Horace Walpole writes, "Chesterfield's great fame, and no man had more in his time, arose from his wit . . . . For a series of years nothing was more talked of than Lord Chesterfield's bon mots, and

2 See Samuel Shellabarger's Lord Chesterfield and His World (1951), 288 and Willard Connely's The True Chesterfield (1939), 360.
3 Lord Hervey reports George II's speech: "Bolingbroke's, who, of all those rascals and knaves that have been lying against me these ten years, has certainly the best parts and the most knowledge: he is a scoundrel, but he is a scoundrel of a higher class than Chesterfield. Chesterfield is a little tea-table scoundrel, that tells little womanish lies to make quarrels in families; and tries to make women lose their reputations, and make their husbands beat them, without any object but to give himself airs; as if anybody could believe a woman could like a dwarf-baboon." John, Lord Hervey, Memoirs of the Reign of George the Second, ed. John Wilson Croker (1884) 3:162.
4 The line was spoken by Sir Paul Methuen and is recorded in Horace Walpole's Marginal Notes, written in Dr. Maty's Miscellaneous Works and Memoirs of the Earl of Chesterfield, ed. R. S. Turner, in Miscellanies of the Philobiblon Society, Vol. XI (1867-1868), 9. Walpole offers this character of Methuen: "a dull, formal, romantic bragadocio, who, returning from Spain with reputation for having concluded the treaty of Madrid, passed for the finest gentleman of the age, by telling extravagant stories of his own valour and gallantry and generosity, though he was sordidly penurious" (Marginal Notes, 8).
5 Chesterfield was reputed to have maintained several affairs, though every piece of available evidence suggests he maintained only the appearance of them.
many of them were excellent; but many, too, of others were ascribed to him.” Lord Chesterfield, like Falstaff, was not only witty in himself, but the cause of wit in others—which may explain George II’s uncharacteristic sharpness.

An admirer of Chesterfield, Arthur Onslow, Speaker of the House (1728-1761), describes Chesterfield’s wit in exalted terms: “[he] was esteemed the wittiest man of his time, and of a sort that had scarcely been known since the reign of King Charles II, and revived the memory of the great wits of that age, to the liveliest of whom he was not thought to be unequal.” Johnson credits the reputation of Chesterfield’s wit with his stinging zinger, “I thought [Chesterfield] had been a Lord among wits; but, I find, he is only a wit among Lords!” (Life, 188). As Claude Rawson writes, Johnson’s fierce and delightful witticisms on Chesterfield should be read as attempts “to outdo” the peer in “patrician hauteur.”

Even Chesterfield’s principal and most caustic detractor, Lord Hervey, offers a tribute, of sorts, to Chesterfield’s unruly wit:

Lord Chesterfield was allowed by everybody to have more conversible entertaining table-wit than any man of his time; his propensity to ridicule, in which he indulged himself with infinite humour and no distinction, and with inexhaustible spirits and no discretion, made him sought and feared, liked and not loved, by most of his acquaintance. No sex, no relation, no rank, no power, no profession, no friendship, no obligation was a shield from those pointed, glittering weapons, that seemed to shine only to a stander-by, but cut deep in those they touched. All his acquaintance were indifferently the objects of his satire, and served promiscuously to feed that voracious appetite for abuse that made him fall on everything that came in his way, and treat every one of his companions in rotation . . .

Hervey seemingly refines Locke’s observation that, in this world, wit and judgment never go together; wit and manners, he implies, never accompany each other in Lord Chesterfield. However, despite Lord Hervey’s appraisal, many of Chesterfield’s acquaintances did esteem his manners, even if manners did not form the crux of his reputation. Colley Cibber, from long experience as the object of abusive raillery, was perhaps a more qualified and dis-

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6 Marginal Notes, ed. R.S. Turner, 7.
7 Historical Manuscripts Commission, 14th Report, App. 9, 472.
Notes and Queries

criminating judge than Lord Hervey on the confederacy of wit and manners. With characteristic generosity, Cibber writes:

Having often had the Honour to be myself the Butt of his [Chesterfield’s] Raillery, I must own I have receiv’d more Pleasure from his lively manner of raising the Laugh against me, than I could have felt from the smoothest flattery of a serious Civility.  

Even Johnson, at best an indifferent observer of his own manners, noted and praised Chesterfield for his. In the famous letter to Chesterfield, he writes, “When . . . I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address.” But the foundation of Chesterfield’s modern reputation as the politest and wiliest, rather than the wittiest, man of his Age gained currency only after the publication of Letters to his Son. Rehearsing the vicissitudes of Letters to his Son’s reception is the subject of a much longer essay, but one eighteenth-century reaction may suffice. William Crawford, who wrote a 146-page histrionic book intent on exposing and countering the pernicious (i.e. Francophile) influence of Letters to his Son, suggests Draconian measures for dispelling the effects of Chesterfield’s seductive immorality:

The very favourable reception Lord Chesterfield’s letters have met with from the world, is, perhaps, the best

10 Colley Cibber, An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber (1740), 8. Cibber believed that Chesterfield was one of “two Persons now living” who are “complete Masters” of ridicule (p. 8). Cibber characterizes Chesterfield’s wit as “one of a . . . polite and extensive imagination,” and describes Chesterfield himself as “giving you perpetual Pleasure, and seeming always to be taking it.” His character of Chesterfield is well worth reading, in an abbreviated form:

   In Conversation he is seldom silent but when he is attentive, nor ever speaks without exciting the Attention of others; and tho’ no Man might with less displeasure to his Hearers, engross the Talk of the Company, he has a Patience in his Vivacity that chuses to divide it, and rather gives more Freedom than he takes; his sharpest Replies having a mixture of Politeness that few have the command of; his Expression is easy, short, and clear; a stiff or study’d Word never comes from him; it is in a simplicity of Style that he gives the highest Surprize, and his Ideas are always adapted to the Capacity and Taste of the Person he speaks to . . . . In a word, this Gentleman gives Spirit to Society the Moment he comes into it, and whenever he leaves it, they who have Business have then leisure to go about it . . . . When the Conduct of social Wit is under such Regulations, how delightful must those Convivia, those Meals of Conversation be, where such a Member presides; who can with so much ease (as Shakespeare phrases it) set the Table in a roar. I am in no pain that these imperfect Out-lines will be apply’d to the Person I mean, because every one that has the Happiness to know him, must know how much more in this particular Attitude is wanting to be like him. (pp. 9-11)


12 Chesterfield’s friend Alexander Pope immortalized the reputation of his wit in An Essay on Man: “How can I Pulteney, Chesterfield forget, while Roman spirit charms, or Attic wit?”
reason that can possibly be given, for attempting to exhibit them in their proper colours. For should the corrupt principles, recommended in these letters, universally prevail and produce their full effect, what would be the consequence? The laws would be deprived of their salutary power, the tenderest, the dearest ties of humanity would be violated, dissoluteness of morals would usurp the place of decency and good manners, and the British Empire, the glory among the nations, would be shaken to its very centre. This is an object which seems not unworthy the attention of even the legislature.¹³

Crawford's earnest proposal, if excessive, fairly represents the tenor of animadversions, articles expressing contempt and derision, and lengthy satires leveled against both Letters to his Son and the memory of Lord Chesterfield himself.¹⁴ Boswell's dismissive comment about Chesterfield—that his reception of Johnson's letter served as a "specimen of that dissimulation which Lord Chesterfield inculcated as one of the most essential lessons for the conduct of life"—is an allusion to Letters to his Son. It should be read as evidence that Boswell was thoroughly informed by a larger public anxiety about a book published nearly twenty years after Chesterfield received Johnson's letter, a book that effectively transformed public memory of Chesterfield. (Unsurprisingly, one clergyman characterizes Life of Johnson as "a complete antidote to the letters of Lord Chesterfield").¹⁵ Chesterfield's reaction to Johnson's letter no doubt closely accorded with Dodsley's, not Boswell's, interpretation of it: it was an instance of selfless admiration, not of "glossy duplicity." As Cibber observes of Chesterfield, "Tho' Wit flow[ed] from him with as much ease as common Sense from another, he [was] so little elated with the Advantage he may have [had] over you, that whenever your good Fortune [gave] it against him, he seem[ed] more pleas'd with it on your side than his own."¹⁶

—Christopher Mayo

13 William Crawford, Remarks on the Late Earl of Chesterfield's Letters to His Son (1776), vi-vii.
14 Letters to his Son was condemned by many for its immorality. The majority of attacks—and the most virulent—focus on Chesterfield's repeated recommendations to his son to establish liaisons with French women—which explains Johnson's moral critique that they "teach the morals of a whore." But even the book's pious critics admired it for its elegance, wit, and style. It was these very qualities that critics feared: the letters' charm, it was thought, would seduce readers, deceptively instilling a corrupt (i.e. French) morality.
15 The Reverend William Jones writes, in a letter dated 4 January 1794, "As a biographer of the first character, you have preserved Dr. Johnson to us as a living lecturer upon life and manners; and I consider your work as a complete antidote to the letters of Lord Chesterfield . . ." (Historical Manuscript Commissions 14th Report, Appendix, 1382, Kenyon MSS., 538).
16 An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, 8.
The tightly-packed title (Enlightenment + “lighten up,” pastiche + parody—not to mention postmodernism) illustrates and expresses much of what Alan T. McKenzie does in this cheeky, beguiling and devilishly clever text (I use this usually fad term deliberately). *Enlightening Up Postmodernism* is a collection of eighteenth-century-ish “takes” on contemporary issues of literary culture. McKenzie, who is professor of English at Purdue University, displays a great deal of learning, a powerful synthesising mind, verbal readiness, a strong pleasure in genre, and not a few irritations with contemporary thought-forms and academic conditions and governance.

The ideal reader for the seven “pastiromides” (an “unlovely neologism,” as McKenzie admits, but rationalizes, in his introduction) will be someone who recognises and enjoys reading a number of major eighteenth-century texts—such as *The Spectator*, Swift’s *Argument against Abolishing Christianity*, Pope’s *Essay on Criticism*, Johnson’s *Lives of the Poets* and his “Celebrated Letter” to Lord Chesterfield, and Chesterfield’s *Letters to His Son*—and who also is acquainted with the diction and tendencies of literary criticism as it has been recently pursued in the academy. In other words, the ideal reader is an eighteenth-centuryist in an English department in a contemporary university.

If anyone has wondered about the seeming immunity or at least resistance of eighteenth-century literature to late-twentieth-century literary theory, this book offers by implication some plausible reasons. The characteristic prose of the period addressed a rapidly growing lay audience, through a discourse that was both conversational and broadly philosophical—as Johnson said, apropos of Addison and Steele’s *Spectator*, the “diction of common life.” It had not yet started sub-dividing into the languages of the sciences and pseudo-sciences. You could still write (in verse or
prose) at as high a conceptual level as you wished, but without having to resort to jargon. Of course, this sort of discourse has its limitations, as McKenzie acknowledges, but it is clear where his sympathies lie. In his introduction he makes some half-hearted claims for even-handedness, but as one might expect, the eighteenth century comes out of it better than the twentieth.

Unlike most people who whinge about Theory (as he calls it in his poetical essay on the subject, modelled on Pope), McKenzie has paid attention to it, taught it, and seems to understand it. The pastirodies are littered with the names of theorists such as Foucault and Jameson. There is a piece devoted to each of these. In “Johnson’s Life of Foucault,” McKenzie cobbles together extracts from the Lives of the Poets, which, slightly tweaked, add up to a forthright and unflattering portrait of the French theorist. For Frederic Jameson, he takes this theorist’s “reading” of a postmodern building and intersperses between his paragraphs an analysis in very different terms of a very different building—Blenheim Place.

In both of these, as elsewhere, McKenzie gives his sources: that is, he does not simply direct us to them, but supplies them. I am not sure of the reason for the space he devotes to this (although with this “book,” “space” is not actually an issue, as we shall see). He prints—again, not quite the right word—Pope’s Essay alongside his own, and Chesterfield’s Letters before each of his own “Lord Chesterfield’s Letters to his Daughter on the Tenure Track.” We see in some instances how little he has altered the originals—as few sometimes as half a dozen words in a paragraph—and therefore how directly applicable the words of Johnson, Pope and Swift almost are to today’s issues.

But this form of presentation draws attention to how such work as this is done, and for pedagogues such as myself it suggests the possibility of using the strategy as a teaching tool. As he says, “Parody was once the thinking person’s deconstruction.” His lengthy introduction has the same purpose: to give academic legitimacy to what would have once been perfectly acceptable as a scholarly jeu d’esprit. It seems a pity that the (or any) serious purpose needs to be spelt out. Perhaps he needs to access funding or claim the text as a “research output.” This very issue is probably alluded to in one of the chapters.

It certainly takes intellectual immersion in the period to write, for instance, Lord Chesterfield’s reply to Johnson’s famous letter. McKenzie’s academic specialities include Chesterfield and eighteenth-century letters generally, and he wrote an early work on the application of computers to scholarship.

Speaking of computers: I resisted starting this review with
comments on the most obvious thing about this text: the mode by which it has been published. The “Digital-I” series note indicates that this is not in fact a book but a CD-ROM, which the potential reader can only “access” by the intervention of a suitably-equipped computer. When one gets into the text, there are some conveniences to the format, such as the links from the contents page to the chapters, to the introduction and notes. But *Enlightening Up Postmodernism* only minimally exploits the technology; and it’s after all not that difficult to turn over pages in a real book. I suspect that the real reason for the choice is that it’s a cheap way of publishing a worthy but unconventional, hard-to-market text. But for readers, the inconveniences of reading a text on a computer are too many. I printed it out (managing after some trouble to get the 240 pages onto 60 leaves), but the print came out rather fuzzy. The format is all the more annoying because this text would have made such an agreeable volume—perhaps even a limited prestige edition, which would suit a miscellany like this: a learned browsing book, with something clever, funny, memorable and provocative on almost any page. But there are no pages. An odd book in an odd format is one oddity too many.

—PAUL TANKARD

Stuart Bennett:
*Trade Bookbinding in the British Isles, 1660-1800*


Aside from practical books on the techniques of bookbinding, most authors, auction houses, booksellers and commentators on bookbinding have concentrated on fine bindings, rich with gold work and design. These bindings were mainly created for nobility and clergy, special collectors and patrons of the bookbinding arts; they were often spectacular, displaying the pinacles of design and execution. Until very recently, students of bookbinding generally have not appreciated or even recognized the cultural and economic values implicit in the more common bindings of earlier periods. Today there is a new interest among collectors, scholars and even practitioners of bookbinding in examining more carefully common bindings and their context,
developing and accepting a view that embraces a wider cultural heritage. As Irina Tarsis has argued in a recent edition of the *Harvard Library Bulletin*, scholars “no longer look askance at artifacts of popular culture, seeking to understand their inherent social and cultural importance.” This view has been put forward most recently and eloquently by Mirjam Foot, a renowned British bookbinding historian, in her new publication, *Eloquent Witnesses: Bookbindings and Their History.*

Mindful of this turn towards the popular in cultural history, I was initially delighted when I received a copy of *Trade Bookbinding in the British Isles, 1660-1800* by Stuart Bennett. It is a large and well-produced book, a small folio with over 200 illustrations, many of which show multiple bindings. I know of no other book or catalogue which illustrates so many trade bindings or categorizes them so well that styles of labeling and decorative technique are as clearly designated (as far as possible) by time and place. The book also systematically presents the development of the relationship between binder and bookseller. Bennett’s main argument grows out of the materials he has amassed; he shows that the great majority of newly published books between 1660 and 1800 were marketed to the public already bound. To make his case, Bennett examines evidence of trade bindings in catalogues and advertisements, discusses production of trade bindings for individual booksellers, and uses price lists to demonstrate that popular titles were distinctly quoted and offered by bookbinders in a variety of sheep or calf bindings. His short introduction outlines the argument and the supporting evidence. The illustrations, excellently reproduced, are a high point of this production, as they present in a rational way the examples of trade bindings throughout this period from a wide variety of sources. This visual aspect of the book, by itself, is a mighty effort and makes the work worthwhile.

My initial response to this book was enthusiastic. Here was a novel, persuasive argument supported by otherwise scattered information and evidence which Bennett has organized and brought together. However, as I began reading the book, I confronted some difficulties and frustrations. First, the layout and format of the book are extremely awkward. The arguments Bennett makes are supported by important and sometimes lengthy footnotes, which are all put together in the back of the book. As the book is a folio, it is no easy task to keep turning from text to footnotes. Secondly, as one begins reading, it seems odd that the designer has chosen such a

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large format; lines of text are almost seven inches long and awkward to read. If the illustrations were full page, or generally large, this might have been justified; however, while numerous, the illustrations are small enough so that four can easily fit onto a page. Although many pages have images, the text would be better served if the relevant images were integrated into it and not grouped in multi-page sections within the chapters. The layout itself is an impediment to simply reading the book, and I can see no justification for such a large and ungainly format.

There is a more serious drawback to this promising book. As one reads, it becomes more and more difficult to tell whether the argument or the body of illustrations is the point of the book. Bennett himself seems less than clear on this point, as he discusses ways in which to identify aspects of the bindings he presents in order to find “categorizable [sic] features.” The book, then, seems to have two purposes: the first is to argue that most books of this period were bound before they were sold and, the second is to show enough examples so that one can begin to determine and differentiate the bindings by styles and materials. The second aspect is more successful than the first.

As for his first argument, the heart of the book, Bennett makes a strong case that publishers had the majority of their books bound before sale. With Mirjam Foot’s book in mind, one sees that Bennett misses many opportunities to describe trade binding in a wider context than that of publisher and binder. There were more forces at work throughout this period—forces affecting publishing and binding—than Bennett discusses. Henry VIII, for example, passed laws such as that of 1534 that limited the role of foreigners in the book trades and lasted through much of the eighteenth century. Continental influences, religion and warfare, which kept England isolated in the sixteenth century, gave way to a wider involvement with Europe throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and more could have been made of the economic impact of such relationships. Indeed, the price lists of bindings produced in Ireland and discussed by Ms. Foot as well as Bennett reflected not only shifts in work patterns and styles, but also in severe dislocations of supplies of leather which had a great impact on work habits, wages and styles. More could have been made of these influences as well.

Relevant to the Johnsonian News Letter, Bennett quotes an intriguing letter that Johnson wrote in 1776\(^2\) (see Boswell’s Life, entry for March 12th). In it, Johnson discusses at length the publi-

\(2\) The Letters of Samuel Johnson, ed. Bruce Redford, II: 304-08.
cation and payment practices within the book trade. As Johnson was the son of a provincial bookseller as well as an author, he knew such trade practices intimately, and the letter discusses relevant commission and wholesaling practices. Indeed, the first edition of the Dictionary fits Bennett’s argument as it was sold “in boards,” meaning that it was sewn and bound into paste boards; this is how it would have been sent to retailers unless they had arranged to have a special binding, generally in leather. The second edition was specifically sold in parts by subscription.

Despite its flaws, Trade Bookbinding corrects earlier assumptions about how books were sold in England and offers helpful insights into the relationships among binders, publishers and booksellers. Bennett also fills a gap in bookbinding literature by showing and discussing so many trade bindings, and organizing them into comprehensible patterns. The period 1660-1800 was one which saw “the primacy of trade bookbinding . . . during a period of expanding readership and competition between booksellers.” We can say, with Bennett, that this book helps us to “look ahead to the next generation of bookbinding scholarship.”

—SAM ELLENPORT

Philip Smallwood:  


Harold Bloom has recently remarked, “Samuel Johnson, in the judgment of many (myself included), is the strongest critic in the varied history of Western literary culture.” He goes on to say “Johnson’s greatest achievement was his criticism.” But what is it that makes Johnson a great critic? Is it a coherent and systematic theory? Or is his greatness more a matter of discrete and local insights? Despite Bloom’s assurance that Johnson’s greatness is apparent and inarguable, Philip Smallwood believes the case for Johnson’s current relevance and significance needs to be made. As Smallwood sees it, scholarly estimations of Johnson’s critical value have changed little over the past hundred years. They continue to see him as trapped within neo-classical
strictures and idiosyncratic absolutisms. In *Johnson’s Critical Presence*, Smallwood seeks to peel back the layers of critical history to recapture the dialogical and emotional energies that he believes form the basis of Johnson’s judgment and help make the case for his lasting achievement.

Smallwood begins by asking in what ways Johnson as critic continues to speak to us today. The question is difficult to answer, he argues, as responses to Johnson tend to be conditioned by the mediating presence of teleological approaches to literary history that repeatedly consign his criticism to a benighted past. The most striking and persistent example can be traced to the purported movement from “classic” to “romantic.” The ill effect of this alleged march of progress can be seen in several major statements. From George Saintsbury’s *A History of Criticism and Literary Taste* (1902-06), to Rene Wellek’s *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750-1900* (1955), to the recent *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* (1997), the judgment remains the same: Johnson is hopelessly trapped in a rule-bound conception of criticism that constrains his sensitivity to the expressive qualities of literature. Even as important and appreciative a monograph as Jean Hagstrum’s *Samuel Johnson’s Literary Criticism* retails the view that, despite Johnson’s many virtues as a critic, “his example is not one to be followed in our day” (quoted by Smallwood, 12n).

How, then, in the face of such institutional pressure, can we recover something of value in Johnson’s criticism? The solution, as Smallwood sees it, lies in the need for readers to shift their focus from the dogmatisms of critical history to the dialogical relationships between Johnson’s texts and the literary texts he judges, as well as to the dialogism within his own critical texts.

Smallwood emphasizes the “receptive” rather than “programmatic” nature of Johnson’s criticism. Despite Johnson’s reputation for having established his critical views early and for continuing to advance them unchanged throughout his career, Smallwood identifies the ways in which Johnson grapples anew with each text. The key to understanding Johnson’s approach to reading can be found, according to Smallwood, not in an unflinching adherence to any particular axioms but, rather, in the impact of Shakespeare on his thinking. In the chapter “Historicization and the Judgment of Shakespeare,” Smallwood argues that Johnson’s reading of Shakespeare in preparation for his edition forms the central moment in his development as a literary critic. Here, for the first time, Johnson introduces the vocabulary—“nature” and “mingled drama,” for example—that would come to exemplify his critical enterprise. The term “general nature,” Smallwood argues, should be
linked more with recognizable manners rather than essentialist reductions, whereas “mingled drama” indicates Johnson’s renunciation of his earlier distinction, evident in Rambler 156, between tragedy and comedy. “Mingled drama” indicates not simply an alternation of tragic and comic scenes, but “a mixing within any scene” (43).

According to Smallwood, the example of Shakespeare helps explain why literature itself rather than the received critical tradition provides the most salient context for understanding Johnson’s judgments. In demonstrating this point, the “Life” of Cowley receives the most extensive treatment. Smallwood charts Johnson’s experience of grappling with Cowley’s verse, suggesting that the critical judgments formed during the act of reading result from the impact of the poems themselves. “Pleasure,” Smallwood submits, is the standard against which the poetry “is constantly tested and judged” (90). Johnson reserves his praise for the most emotionally engaging aspects of Cowley’s verse, his disdain for the moments of “emotional emptiness” (78). “Bringing Johnson’s Life of Cowley into proximity with the poetry,” Smallwood observes, “is an attempt to participate in [Johnson’s] pleasures and to understand his pains” (91).

The affective nature of these observations might seem to tread a fine line between moving and mushy, but Smallwood’s attention throughout his book to Johnson’s sense of skepticism and irony mitigates the maudlin. For all Johnson’s reputation as a critic who speaks with authority, he is always willing to challenge the authority of critics, himself included. In chapter two, “Only Designing to Live: Personal History and the Non-Reductive Context of Johnsonian Criticism,” Smallwood pays ample mind to the parodic and self-parodic moments in Johnson’s periodical essays and discusses the extent to which Johnson’s own writings anticipate many of the criticisms that would eventually be leveled against him. In chapter five, “Voice and Image: Critical Comedy, the Johnsonian Monster, and the Construction of Judgment,” Smallwood analyzes satirical cartoons of Johnson by James Gillray, “Old Wisdom Blinking at the Stars” (1782) and “Apollo and the Muses, Inflicting Penance on Dr. Pomposo, Round Parnassus” (1783). While these caricatures present persistent images of Johnson as a short-sighted, fat-headed hulk, Smallwood suggests that, paradoxically enough, they also serve as beneficial reminders to us of just how unsettling Johnson’s judgments can be.

The most provocative argument appears in the penultimate chapter, “From Image to History: Johnsonian Criticism and the Genealogy of Romanticism.” Here Smallwood puts to rest, once and for all one would hope, the idea that Johnson’s criticism is sadly out of step with that of the Romantics, a last gasp of values that were
largely outmoded in his own day and that have rightly been swept into the dustbin of history. In contrast to the tenets of conventional literary history, Smallwood demonstrates many points of connection between Johnson and Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Schlegel, and Hazlitt. The idea, of course, is not to paint Johnson as some sort of “preromantic.” Instead, Smallwood suggests that critical history is not always a direct movement forward, but, rather, a more complex interplay, or “dialogue.” Despite Johnson’s alleged pomposities, when he celebrates “the common intercourse of life, among those who speak only to be understood, without ambition of elegance,” his sense is not any more removed from Wordsworth than it is when he criticizes Thomas Gray for thinking “his language more poetical as it is more remote from common use” (quoted in Smallwood, 122). As Smallwood notes, “The surprising thing, perhaps, for a Wordsworth whose opinion of Gray was not exactly remote from Johnson’s, is that he does nothing whatsoever to rescue Johnson from the derision that descended on his head” (122). The critical connections noted here develop nicely from Smallwood’s earlier observation that Wordsworth “wholeheartedly” embraced Johnson’s emphasis on “pleasure” (90). Smallwood’s argument here implicitly expands upon M. H. Abrams’s observation in The Mirror and the Lamp that “Wordsworth incorporates into his poetic theory eighteenth-century speculations on the emotional origin of language” but also challenges Abrams’s claim that “Johnson would have been pained by most of Wordsworth’s critical conclusions.”

Smallwood’s resistance to a linear and progressive conception of literary history provides a helpful perspective from which to consider Johnson as literary critic. But I doubt that many Johnso- nians cling to the outmoded teleology Smallwood dispels. Other important works on Johnson as literary critic—such as Martin Maner’s The Philosophical Biographer: Doubt and Dialectic in Johnson’s Lives of the Poets—pursue a similarly dialogical approach. Yet Smallwood’s attention to Johnson’s emotional engagement with literature and his unwavering sensitivity to the complexities of the human condition distinguish the book and make a strong case for the transcendent power of Johnson’s achievement. Despite all that Smallwood has done to demonstrate Johnson’s deviation from established critical traditions, it is no surprise that he cites approvingly Harold Bloom’s judgment that Johnson is “the Canonical Critic” (146). This judgment, I think, rings all the more true, thanks to Smallwood’s insistence that we free ourselves from the commonplaces of critical history so that we can see “Blinkin’ Sam” more clearly.

— STEVEN SCHERWATZKY
Ed., O M Brack, Jr.:


This edition supplies a belated happy epilogue to the story of one of Johnson's unluckiest projects. In 1738, two rival booksellers, Edmund Curll and Edward Cave, each commissioned a translation of the hostile Commentaire on Pope's *Essay on Man* by the Swiss theologian, Jean Pierre de Crousaz. Curll was so eager that as soon as his translator, Charles Forman, had completed work on Epistle I, he rushed it into print. Disappointing sales and Forman's death in 1739 led Curll to abandon the project. Meanwhile, Cave's translator, Johnson, produced a version of the entire text which was printed sometime in 1738-9 but not published until November 1741. Johnson's *Commentary* enjoyed no more success than Forman's, and was soon forgotten. Nor was Johnson himself keen to disinter it. Discussing the controversy between Pope and Crousaz in his "Life" of Pope, Johnson speaks well of Crousaz but makes no mention of his translation. Its rediscovery has been the work of modern scholarship. A facsimile reprint was included in Garland's Popeiana series in 1974, and the *Commentary* has now been given full-dress editorial treatment by O M Brack in the latest volume of the Yale Edition of Johnson's works. Besides the *Commentary*, it reprints a letter on the subject that Johnson wrote for the *Gentleman's Magazine* (intended to puff the translation), and his review of Soame Jenyns's *Free Enquiry* from the *Literary Magazine*. The review, deservedly one of the most celebrated products of Johnson's pen, rewards the reader who has trudged through the rather wearisome *Commentary*. It will probably be the most widely used part of the edition.

The *Commentary* itself is not an easy read, since Crousaz's method hinders the emergence of a connected argument. In his relentless search for theological unorthodoxy, every part of the poem (reprinted in full, in Du Resnel's verse translation) is successively subjected to his critical microscope. Johnson retains Du
Resnel’s version of the poem, subjoining a literal interlinear translation. In the body of the commentary, however, he usually substitutes Pope’s original lines for Crousaz’s quotations from the French. Johnson also added about seventy footnotes (mostly to Epistles I and II), the majority of them drawing attention to Du Resnel’s infidelity as a translator, and the consequent inapplicability of many of Crousaz’s strictures on Pope. The effect is remarkably dialogic: the reader’s attention is claimed in turn by Du Resnel impersonating the largely absent Pope (whose genuine voice is, however, occasionally heard), by Crousaz castigating Pope, by Johnson in turn berating Crousaz (and occasionally Pope). Brack himself provides a further editorial voice, mainly drawing attention to omissions, oddities, and inaccuracies in Johnson’s translation. This strange polyphony provides a fascinating opportunity to watch Johnson at work. Especially in reading the interlined passages, the reader insensibly becomes a pedantic schoolmaster, comparing original and translation word by word. Many of the editorial notes likewise invite us to pass judgment on Johnson as translator. From the editor’s account, the translation is remarkably accurate, especially given the haste with which it was probably written. But who can resist a momentary schadenfreude when Johnson translates “quatre” as “five”?

Johnson’s notes are of uneven interest. The most notable are those that voice an original comment that transcends the immediate subject: on the vices of the great (p. 38), on knowledge of futurity (p. 64), on India (p. 97), on the “ruling passion” (pp. 145-6, 166), on the national character of the French and on love as a motive in tragedy (pp. 175-6), and on true originality (p. 356). Some of these observations, as Brack records, adumbrate later Johnsonian themes. The great majority of the notes, however, reiterate the charge of misrepresentation: that Crousaz’s strictures frequently apply to Du Resnel’s translation, and not to Pope’s original. In these notes, and in a few that attack Crousaz more directly, Johnson appears as the defender of Pope. Brack even speculates that, had the Commentary appeared in 1739, it “might have attracted favorable notice from Pope and his circle, leading to recognition for the anonymous translator and annotator” (p. xxxvii). This seems most improbable. As Brack himself admits, the notes as a whole give the impression that Johnson “does not approve of the poem, finding it heterodox, ambiguous, and incomprehensible in places” (p. l). Indeed, while the Commentary (being a translation) is not Johnsonian in style, Johnson appears for the most part to have agreed with Crousaz. Pope would hardly have regarded its publication as the act of a friend.
In his introduction, Brack notes that “the focus of the annotations is on Johnson’s translation,” and that he has not attempted to annotate the work of Crousaz or Du Resnel (p. liii). In practice, he does annotate many quotations and allusions in the text of the Commentary, and I wish he had done so more completely and consistently. For example, he identifies a quotation from Nehemiah, and notes that Johnson translated Crousaz’s French rather than substituting the English of the Authorized Version (p. 78). Yet on the same page, he fails to identify an explicit allusion to St. Paul (Ephesians 4.30). A later passage, printed in italic to signify a quotation, is likewise unnoted (p. 120); it is adapted from Romans 2.9-10. Classical quotations and allusions are also treated inconsistently. On p. 256, a line from Manilius is translated and identified. In the review of Jenyns, “Si sic omnia dixisset” is translated, but not identified as a quotation from Juvenal, though being from Satire X its source has a particular Johnsonian interest (p. 427). On p. 214, the allusion to Homer is referenced, but not those to Virgil and Horace. Some authors are identified, either in a note or in the index, but without a reference to the particular passage which Crousaz had in mind. More anecdotes and allusions could also have been glossed. Some are well known: the Roman emperor who made his horse a consul (p. 57) was Caligula; the King Alphonso supposed to have “thought himself able to place the orbs of heaven in a better order” (p. 108) was Alphonso X (“the Wise”) of Castile and León. Of others (I take three examples from p. 340) I confess my ignorance: who were the “fool of Athens,” and the mad hatter? Who wrote “Misera mens hominum quo te fata sepissime trahunt”? Editing Shakespeare, Johnson himself professed at least not to pass over “what is equally difficult to the reader and to myself, but where I could not instruct him, have owned my ignorance.” Even a note to label a quotation or allusion as “unidentified” reassures the reader that the point in question is not a matter of common knowledge. These omissions, however, are minor blemishes, which do not detract from the editor’s achievement in providing an authoritative edition of a hitherto neglected work.

—F. P. Lock
Robert J. Mayhew: 
*Landscape, Literature and English Religious Culture, 1660-1800: Samuel Johnson and Languages of Natural Description*


To write a book on Johnson and descriptions of landscape, as Robert J. Mayhew has done, is at first sight highly paradoxical: Johnson had virtually no feeling for landscapes and almost never described them. Pastoral poetry generally left him cold, and he mercilessly mocked those, like Cowley or rusticating Cits, who sought solace or inspiration in pastoral retreats and country homes. Having passed through some of the world's most sublime landscapes in the Highlands, he had virtually nothing to say about them except to complain that they were barren and treeless. Only at moments does Johnson seem susceptible to a twinge of aesthetic pleasure at the sight of nature's power and glory. Even at these moments, his descriptions are curiously and awkwardly constrained by moral hesitations. Looking out over “the terrifick grandeur of the tempestuous ocean” from Slains Castle, for example, Johnson concludes with almost comic self-consciousness: “I would not for my amusement wish for a storm; but as storms, whether wished or not, will sometimes happen, I may say, without violation of humanity, that I should willingly look out upon them from Slanes Castle” (243).

Mayhew is therefore writing into a strange vacuum. Yet this author, a professional geographer, fills this vacuum with a diligently researched and frequently insightful book—though a book revealing of both the virtues and limitations of approaches to a literary subject from the perspective of the social sciences. The virtues include an impressively diligent mission to map the entirety of the Johnsonian archipelago. Mayhew navigates a mass of empirical data in this quest, admirably achieved at some points, of categorizing Johnson’s complex and oddly disengaged engagements with hills, lakes and trees. The limitations include the habit of understanding history, that kaleidoscopic process, as if it could be measured, with static precision, like a map spread across a table. The social sciences dictate that the appropriate tools of this
analysis are an authoritative set of definitions and terms; the best humanists, on the other hand, subject their categories to re-evaluation even in the process of applying them.

The quite ingenious thesis of this book is that the very lack of geographical description in Johnson’s work has significance. Mayhew establishes a fact that, to my knowledge, has been adumbrated but never established before: Johnson consciously and systematically rejected the tendency of his contemporaries to regard the natural world as a glorious volume revealing God’s might and goodness. Whereas eighteenth-century writers conventionally witnessed a sunset or a waterfall with expressions of wonder at divine beneficence and reason, Johnson went so far as to elide all references to the Book of Nature, such as from the source material to his early lives of Drake and others. Nature, in Johnson’s work, generally teaches nothing. The Happy Valley, though pastorally idyllic, is an intellectual and spiritual crevasse that instructs the prince only that he must escape to learn something more substantial. Throughout Johnson’s work, the destination of this journey is from the natural to the human. The panorama of Scottish lochs and crags spread around him, Johnson measures window frames and tours ruined churches. Always inquiring about how people live and work, he finds treeless heaths offensive because he worries about how the inhabitants can survive in such barreness. His reactions to landscape consistently prioritize the “moral” over the “aesthetic” (253).

But how do we situate Johnson’s (literal) half-blindness to the natural world in the context of eighteenth-century thought? The need to contextualize landscape description is a major theme in this book, which begins with a highly erudite and sophisticated history of modern scholarship on eighteenth-century landscapes. This contextualization, Mayhew complains, has too often been absorbed by monologically political, particularly Marxist, approaches that attribute the rise of picturesque landscape painting and description in the late eighteenth century to, for instance, an ideological ruse to disguise the blight of industrialization and the suffering of the urban poor. Mayhew’s more conservative historiographical sources, particularly Skinner and Oakeshott, prefer instead a wider and overlapping range of contexts that respects the legitimacy of past understandings of the world apart from modern, overarched and, arguably, anachronistic preconceptions about historical process.

This theoretical terrain is, in my view, admirably explored and evaluated. Nevertheless, in the book that follows this historiographical introduction, Mayhew’s own methods are sometimes discomforting. First, he copiously cites from works, both eighteenth-century and
modern, while making only the most fleeting efforts in the main text to identify the author or to place quotations in their specific historical contexts. In the space of one page, for example, he quotes landscape descriptions by Denham, Goldsmith, Dyer and Defoe — in this jumbled order, and identifying only Denham and Defoe (49-50). This method, while perhaps defensible in reports on lasting topographical configurations, deeply undermines the need for literary historians to take into account immediate contexts and debates. Flipping, perforce, between Mayhew’s unidentified citations and his notes sometimes added to the perplexity. At one point, for example, I found myself disagreeing with an unnamed scholar who evidently believed that the “tendency among orthodox writers such as Johnson to withdraw God from any direct involvement in the world” (181) meant that Johnson opposed a “Latitudinarian” tendency to involve God in the world. Upon consulting the notes, I found that I was the offending scholar, a discovery accompanied by some annoyance. Although I have never stopped believing (as even Mayhew himself seems to believe) that latitudinarianism was the real “orthodoxy” of the eighteenth-century, he had apparently misconstrued me as implying that “orthodox” signified “anti-Latitudinarian” or “High-Church.”

This latter term, in particular, generates considerable theoretical problems for Mayhew. He leans on this term heavily as if it belonged to an unquestioned and stable nomenclature. Johnson’s High-Churchmanship, we are told, led to a “stress on Scriptural and traditionary routes to faith” that “left landscapes and nature with little theological function to perform for Johnson” (312). Yet Johnson’s theology was, in many respects, as rationalistic as that of so-called “latitudinarians” such as Tillotson and Samuel Clarke, both of whom strongly influenced his sermons and religious attitudes. Nor was he by any means systematically “Scriptural” or “traditionary,” even if we wish, problematically, to identify these proclivities as particularly “High-Church.” If the political connotations of “High-Church” seem reasonably consistent—High-Churchmen stressed the sacred nature of royal sovereignty—the theological meanings attached by eighteenth-century Anglicans to this term were both unclear and changing. We call William Law “High-Church,” for example, because he refused to swear the oaths of loyalty to George I. Yet the book that evidently made Johnson serious about Christianity, Law’s A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life (1729), is a relentlessly rational appeal to Christians to clean up their lives outside of church and the sacraments; the later, and still non-juring, Law who rejected reason in favor Boehme’s mysticism is admired by modern Quakers for entirely rejecting the “smells and bells” beloved in modern High-Church worship.
Mayhew makes no effort to clear up these complications surrounding “High-Church,” which he equates, in dodgy franglais, with an “ancien régime mentalité” (60). Johnson, that is, stared resolutely backwards in all things—an assessment, one suspects, that owes something to the general editor of this Palgrave series, J. C. D. Clark. It is interesting, therefore, to find Mayhew the geographer also acknowledging uncomfortably that Johnson’s approach to the natural world often resembles that of a modern social scientist. When Johnson gazed over a Highlands heath, he saw not a misty emblem of a romantically feudal past (as might be expected from an alleged Jacobite) but rather evidence of poor forestry management having a detrimental impact on the prosperity of local inhabitants. Surely this response is not backwards looking at all, but quite “modern.” Janus-like, Johnson faced both forwards and backwards, and his attitudes to landscape, like everything else, are informed by an ambivalent and amorphous range of sources and concerns, by both a respect for the past and a commitment to modernity.

—NICHOLAS HUDSON

Samuel Johnson:
A Dictionary of the English Language
(1755)

Oakland: Octavo, 2005. Adobe PDF Format on DVD-ROM or CD-ROM

For a bibliographer, or a true bibliophile, no two copies of any book are the same. The dictum is especially true of big eighteenth-century books. Johnson’s Dictionary was printed by several press gangs in several separate places in London. Errors were introduced or corrected by the various compositors at work on the text, and the differing pages were gathered up in various combinations as the books were assembled for sale throughout 1755 and into 1756. (There was added confusion when the sheets of the second edition got into the piles before those of the first were all gathered.) In addition, of course, purchasers of Johnson’s great book had their copies bound in various ways, and these copies have aged in different ways over the intervening 250 years. The producers of the Octavo Dictionary are thoroughly
aware of all this and in producing this DVD they have, remarkably, catered to the true bibliophile, even though their production is a non-book. At every turn they seem aware that what they have produced is an image not of “the Dictionary” but of the unique copy of the Dictionary owned by one of Johnson’s physicians, Richard Warren. They have accordingly done an exact collation of the copy, noting differences between it and the ideal copy described in Fleeman’s Bibliography; they have provided images of the binding, endpapers, and flyleaf, complete with all identifying marks; and they have written up the provenance of the copy. The reproduction is as fine as it is possible to imagine; one can see the lines (if not the chains and watermarks) on the pages; one can even see the undulations in the surfaces of the pages and the shadows of the print from the reverse sides. In all ways this edition seems to represent the ultimate in two-dimensional facsimile reproduction. At the modest price of $50, what Johnsonian will not want to add this copy to his or her collection of the Dictionary?

The greatest drawback of this edition is that it is a bit slow to work with. It comes in two large files, totaling nearly four gigabytes. It works better once the files are downloaded to a hard drive, but navigation is still slow: moving around an individual opening of the book is glacial, though it would undoubtedly work better on screens large enough to see a full page at a time, and it might work better on the very fastest computers. (I tested my copy of the DVD on a Macintosh iBook G4). Still, I believe, there would be slowdowns because it is helpful and useful to magnify the text, as one can do with ease. Getting from page to page is faster than moving around an individual page, especially if one is looking for definitions. The search function for the PDF viewer (Preview, in my case) allows one to go easily to any headword. The text within the entries and Johnson’s preliminary matter are not searchable (though Octavo’s prefatory pieces are). This is not the same kind of scholarly tool as Anne McDermott’s CD-ROM of the first and fourth editions, which is the basis of the forthcoming complete Birmingham edition, but the Octavo edition should be just as attractive to bibliophiles, and it is as useful for the simple task of looking up a word in the first edition of the Dictionary.

Eric Korn’s introduction to the “book” is sensible and entertaining, and it comes complete with the kind of factitious contributor’s note that characterizes his column “Remainders” in TLS. Korn understands what is heroic about Johnson’s effort in the Dictionary, what is routine, and what is a bit flawed. Johnson did not write the first English dictionary; nor did he write the most inclusive; and he did not get it all right. On the other hand, he did put
together the best dictionary of English that had been compiled up to that point; he did initiate the use of illustrative quotations in English lexicography; and he did, in many ways, set the future course of lexicography, despite American and British romantic complaints about his methods. There are also useful introductory essays by Ian Jackson on alphabetization in the Dictionary and on the Plan. The inclusion of the Plan in this edition is very welcome. In fact, this is only the second edition of the Dictionary in history to include the Plan. The first was James Harrison's one-volume folio edition of the Dictionary (1785-7). Matthew Maty wished both had been included in the first edition when he reviewed the Dictionary in the July-August, 1755 number of the Journal Britannique. Maty was not Johnson's favorite person. He intimated that Johnson excluded the Plan to hide his debt to Chesterfield (perhaps he was the author of the inscription in a copy of the Dictionary described above by Daisuke Nagashime). When his publisher proposed Maty as an assistant for Johnson on the project of a monthly book review, Johnson exploded: "He . . . the little black dog. I'd throw him into the Thames!" However, Maty's suggestion that the Plan be included along with the Preface in the Dictionary is a good one, and the Octavo editors have done well in following his advice, as they have in all other aspects of their edition.

—ROBERT DEMARIA, JR.

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Obituary

Paul J. Korshin, 1939-2005

The 15th of April 2005 was celebrated by many Johnso-
nians as the 250th anniversary of the publication of the
Dictionary. Others, though, observed a more somber
occasion, as more than a hundred people gathered at a memorial
service at the University of Pennsylvania. They were there to pay
their respects to Paul J. Korshin, who had died on 2 March after a
long struggle with lymphoma.

Paul was born and raised in New York, and earned his B.A. from
City College. After completing his Ph.D. at Harvard University,
where he studied with Walter Jackson Bate, he was hired in 1966
as an Assistant Professor of English at the University of Pennsyl-
vania. He remained there for the rest of his career, offering some of
the university's most popular classes. His course on "Madness and
English Literature" was routinely taught in the largest lecture
halls on Penn's campus.

Paul's scholarship on eighteenth-century topics was copious and
wide-ranging. His best-known book was Typologies in England,
1650-1820 (1982); he also edited several collections of essays,
including Greene Centennial Studies (1984) and Johnson after Two
Hundred Years (1986). He received a Guggenheim Fellowship in
1987-88, and was a Rockefeller Foundation Scholar in Residence at
Bellagio in 1988. His most significant contribution to Johnsonian
studies was creating and editing The Age of Johnson: A Scholarly
Annual, the first volume of which appeared in 1987. In its sixteen
volumes to date, he commissioned, edited, and proofread well over
eight thousand pages of scholarship and reviews by some of the
most distinguished names in the field. He remained dedicated to
the very end, proofreading pages of volume 16 from his hospital bed
day before his death.

His service to eighteenth-century studies generally and to John-
sonian studies in particular was remarkable. He was active in the
American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies from its early
days, serving as its Executive Secretary for many years; he was a
great supporter of the American Council for Learned Societies; and

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he was a driving force behind the Eighteenth-Century Short-Title Catalogue, one of the first major on-line resources for scholarly research. He was also a regular on the conference circuit, where he was widely known for his witty and flamboyant style, his impeccably tailored suits, and his love of fine cuisine.

Paul is survived by his wife, Dr. Joan Pataky-Kosove; two step-children, Andrew A. Kosove and Alexis A. Moran; and two brothers, Dr. Jonathan Korshin and Dr. Oliver M. Korshin. The Paul J. Korshin Memorial Fund for the Education of Children in Mali and Madagascar has been established to honor his memory.

Those who wish to donate should make checks payable to

The Global Fund for Children
1101 Fourteenth St. NW, Suite 910
Washington, DC 20005

A collection of essays to honor his memory is in the works. Those interested in contributing should contact me at jlynch@andromeda.rutgers.edu.

—JACK LYNCH
Contributors

O M Brack, Jr. is Professor of English at Arizona State University. He has recently published volume XVII of the Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson, *A Commentary on Mr. Pope’s Principles of Morality.*

Michael Bundock is the editor of *The New Rambler, the Journal of the Johnson Society of London.*

Sam Ellenport is a master binder and collector who has written and lectured on the history of bookbinding. He is the owner of the Harcourt Bindery, Boston, Massachusetts.

Nicholas Hudson is Professor of English at the University of British Columbia and author, most recently, of *Samuel Johnson and the Making of Modern England* (2003).

F. P. Lock is Professor of English at Queen’s University, Kingston, Ontario. His most recent book is *Edmund Burke: Volume 1, 1730-1784* (1998). The second volume is nearing completion.

Jack Lynch is Associate Professor of English at Rutgers University. He is the author of *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson* (2003) and the editor of *The Age of Johnson.*

Christopher Mayo is Assistant Professor of English at Adelphi University. His multi-volume Cambridge Edition of Lord Chesterfield’s Letters to his Son is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.

Stephen Miller is an independent scholar who has written many essays on eighteenth-century British writers. His latest book, *The Rise and Fall of Conversation,* will be published by Yale University Press early next year.

Daisuke Nagashima recently retired from the presidency of Poole Gakuin College in Osaka, Japan. His many publications include *Johnson’s Dictionary* (1983) and *Johnson the Philologist* (1988).

Chris P. Pearce is Assistant Professor of Rhetoric at Boston University, and is preparing a book entitled *Terms of Corruption: Samuel Johnson’s Dictionary in Its Contexts.*

Peter Sabor is Director of the Burney Centre and Canada Research Chair in Eighteenth-Century Studies at McGill Univer-
sity, Montreal. His recent work includes *Pamela in the Marketplace: Literary Controversy and Print Culture in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland*, co-authored with Thomas Keymer, to be published by Cambridge University Press this year, and the *Juvenilia* volume in the Cambridge Edition of the Works of Jane Austen (CUP, 2005-6). He is General Editor, with Keymer, of the Cambridge Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Samuel Richardson (CUP, in progress) and General Editor of the Court Journals of Frances Burney, 1786-91 (Oxford University Press, in progress).

**Edward Schaeffer** maintains a substantial private collection of Johnson, Boswell and Piozzi literature and memorabilia. Having spent more than thirty years gathering these materials, he recently created and maintains the popular website www.jamesboswell.com. Mr. Schaeffer resides in Bellmore, New York, and he can be reached at monboddo@optonline.net.

**Steven Scherwatzky** is Professor of English at Merrimack College and the author of numerous articles on Samuel Johnson.

**Ilan Stavans** is the Lewis-Sebring Professor in Latin American and Latino Culture and the Five-College 40th Anniversary Professor at Amherst College. He is the author of *Spanglish: The Making of a New American Language* (HarperCollins) and, most recently, of *Dictionary Days: A Defining Passion* (Graywolf Press).

**Paul Tankard** is a lecturer in English at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand, and is the Publications Editor for the Johnson Society of Australia. He is preparing an edition of the uncollected journalism of James Boswell.

**James E. Tierney** is Professor Emeritus of the University of Missouri-St. Louis. He has edited the correspondence of Robert Dodsley, and he has for many years been working on “British Periodicals, 1660-1800: An Electronic Index.”

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**A Call For Contributions**

The editors of the *JNL* invite contributions of notes, queries, Johnsoniana, and short articles on any and all matters regarding Johnson and his circle (social, political, and intellectual). Contributions to the March issue are due 22 November; those for the September issue are due 22 May.