

Contents

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
A Letter of Introduction	1
1 Learning to Write	33
2 Writing as a Parent	60
3 Writing as a Lover	93
4 Writing as a Criminal	125
5 Writing as a Citizen	169
6 Writing as a Traveller	213
7 Writing as a Historian	246
8 Writing as a Christian	281
Postscript	331
<i>Notes</i>	337
<i>Short Bibliography</i>	405
<i>Index</i>	418

1

Learning to Write

Nothing is so common as to write Letters: But it is not a common thing to indite them well.¹

Thus a typical letter-writing manual laid claim to a wide audience in need of instruction. Manuals privileged practice over theory and promoted a difference between best practice and common practice in order to sell themselves. Rules were to be taught only so they could be naturalised into proprieties; these ‘proper’ forms were refined, yet not necessarily identical with bourgeois politeness. To indite letters well meant more people writing confidently and variously rather than simply more politely, and to further this project many manuals included examples of letters from real-life correspondents and writings on letters from periodicals. Although writers of manuals presented their collections as instructive and authoritative, many of their examples were specimens rather than models, requiring something other than imitation from the reader. Letter-writing manuals were as much descriptive as prescriptive; they differed among themselves and within themselves. The term ‘manual’ is not entirely helpful: it implies a text whose function is instruction, yet books about letter-writing were discursively more complex than this. Few collections of letters used the term ‘manual’ in their titles, unlike handbooks of prayers; perhaps critics like it because ‘manual’ subliminally invokes a skill of the hand, which is certainly present in a hand-written letter.

This chapter starts by discussing some of the conventions and contradictions of letter-collections, using the term ‘manual’ for convenience, but arguing that the genre’s didacticism works in and through cultural domains that load it with meanings beyond the practical skill of letter-writing. The most popular collections used words like ‘new’, ‘complete’ and ‘universal’ to describe the letter-writer they had in mind, yet their prescriptive content stressed tradition and class distinction. Socially differentiated conditions of age, sex, class, occupation and nation returned cultural difference to correspondents even as manuals subsumed them into the category of ‘polite’

letter-writers. I discuss age, gender and nation in particular, leading into a discussion of women as letter-writers thought to be naturally better than men, or culturally inferior to men, according to cultural imperatives that made letter-writing a site of contention between art and nature. The skills of letter-writing were symbolic and social as well as practical; they overlap with ideologies of femininity that were equally learnt behaviour. In contrast, the way men learned to correspond shows letters supporting literary status. Correspondence between wits and poets in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century played an important part in defining the 'man of letters'. I discuss this in relation first to Alexander Pope, then to Samuel Johnson, to show that the way people learnt to read letters intersected with a market for literary biography. Learning to read and write letters were skills shaped by market forces.

Manuals

What is a letter? One manual ventured the definition 'That it is a Piece of Writing which we send to an absent Person, to let him know what we would say, if we were in a Condition to speak to him.'² A trope of talking on paper was popular because it smothered rather than solved the questions it begged. What is 'a Piece of Writing'? Could one comparably describe clothes as 'a Piece of Cloth'? Are 'we' all alike? What if the absent person was a she not a he? What if the writer was a lord or a child? Would that affect our 'condition to speak'? Manuals conceded complexity at once, differentiating correspondents and occasions. One common format was to divide the book into sections: one on forms of address and subscription, matters of presentation and so on, followed by an anthology section of letters, so that best practice could be divined from actual practice, or so practice could at least be compared to theory. Another common format was to classify letters by occasions, of business, duty, courtship, friendship and so on. Manuals tried to steer round the paradox of letter-writing as something both natural and teachable by simple contradiction. 'The surest Rule is to write as we speak', declared one, after claiming that letter-writing was difficult because 'Out of a hundred Persons that speak well, scarce ten will be found that write in the same Degree of Perfection . . . much more Exactness is required for Writing than Speaking.'³ Like much advice literature, letter manuals played to class anxieties, encouraging readers to adopt polite standards in order to secure a self-fashioned identity as ladies and gentlemen which substituted for a birth-based status and might exceed it by the moral authority of behaving better than born aristocrats.

Conversion of speech to writing through letters invoked anxieties even among the propertied, because epistolary ignorance showed they were unfit to enjoy the ideological benefits of their class. In Defoe's *Compleat English Gentleman*, a gentleman keen to write letters but unable to spell has to dictate

to his steward and laboriously copy the script: 'I write no stile, I han't the words.' His friend reassures him that 'in ordinary conversation any thing will do. Familiar friends can be wrote to in a familiar stile', but Defoe's gentleman becomes vehement about his deficiencies: 'Look you, I ought allways to write like my self, that is, like what I should be, not what I am . . . I must write like what I am, and therefore I don't write at all.'⁴ An inability to write letters threatened identity: the gentleman is and is not himself, seeming a fool because he cannot seem a man of sense on paper, unlike his scholar brother Jack. The paradox of an ignorant gentleman throws class into question but, like other compilers of manuals, Defoe's point is that education should make one competent within a class rather than necessarily move one out of it. Hence letter-writing is a key to commercial success for two young men in *The Complete English Tradesman*: the one who writes bombast rather than a 'free, plain and tradesman-like stile' will fail in business and probably turn to crime.⁵ Not to be what you seemed or seem what you were in letters promised downward class mobility. There were sticks as well as carrots in learning to write letters well.

Writers of manuals treated children as a class capable of improving itself through letters. Anxious to catch letter-writers young, compilers stressed a continuous masculine identity through letters; 'from the Boy at School to the Secretary of State', males needed epistolary skills.⁶ Manuals particularly pressed for juvenile observance of forms of address: 'no one should ever write to his pappa, or mamma, without beginning his letter with *Honoured Sir*, or *Honoured Madam*'.⁷ Children were not to write as they spoke. The adviser here is Robin Redbreast: having caught Billy Careless neglecting this particular, he warns him that other birds will fly by to check all future letters to his parents. Avian surveillance notwithstanding, the point was to begin letters by expressing obligation, an obeisance like those bows and courtesies which children were expected to make to their elders. A rhetoric of obligation, reinforced by letters' function of articulating duty, may well have contributed to adult anxieties about epistolary indebtedness. Familiar letters between friends often had uncertain beginnings and apologetic ends, as if writers were unsure they had proceeded acceptably. The other ideological import of obligation was that children learnt the art of letter-writing as a discipline parallel to self-government. In a didactic text of the 1780s, a daughter writing to her mother is advised by her aunt to start a letter with 'Honored Madam'. The daughter is doubtful: 'I WISH I might begin Dear Mamma, for I like that much better; for you are my Dear Mamma, and I love you dearly.' Affect, however sincere, must bow to decorum. Her mother replies that personally she has no objection to 'Dear Mamma', but 'Honored Madam' is preferable: 'as that is the address customary in our country, when writing to parents, or masters and mistresses, I think you had better continue it'.⁸ Epistolary form symbolised – and enacted – social conformity.

A Biblical injunction to honour parents was not consistently upheld by parents in practice. The confusions are illustrated by John Penrose, a Cornish vicar who had regular letters from his six children when he went away to Bath for a couple of months in 1766. Penrose's benign guidance was typical of many parents – encouraging in general, critical of particulars, writing to one daughter, for instance, 'it is as hard to find the Beginning of Mary's Letter, as it was to find the Exit of Daedalus's Labyrinth; one must turn round and round, as a Dog does when he's going to Bed'.⁹ Penrose was happy with informal address until one day he changed his practice, as if someone in Bath had alerted him to a change in manners: 'I have said Mama and Papa, in the former Letters and the Beginning of this, but the Mode is now quite altered. The old fashioned way of Father and Mother is come round again; and we old-fashioned folks like it best.' But he could not keep it up: a week later he caught himself in a lapse, writing Mama – '(I should have said Mother: Oh! how could I be so unpolite!)' – and his letters on a visit the following year use *mamma*.¹⁰

Learning to write, then, set pleasure against duty and duty against fashion. Ordinarily familiar letters occupied the middle range between *id* and *superego*, though that middle point was often unstable, arrived at through negatives. Nominally, manuals posited a middle-class readership, addressing the readers as if they knew how to make class distinctions though not how to practise those class distinctions in letter-writing. As one advised, there were only three rules in letter-writing: '1. To take care not to be haughty in writing to Superiors. 2. Not to demean yourself in addressing an Inferior. 3. To hold an equal rank with Equals.'¹¹ However, manuals also reflected uncertainty about how wide the bourgeois project of politeness should extend. Letters exposed the split meaning of politeness as civility (established manners) and refinement (new manners). A letter-writer of 1738 marked one such change: 'The good old Way of writing Letters, at least to Relations, was to begin where we end, I mean, with Services, Respects and good Wishes.'¹² Genteel correspondents were anxious to improve on the courtesy of older or humbler salutations whilst conceding they served epistolary decorum just as well. One solution was to invoke lower-class practice as a paradigm of honest plainness. So William Cowper oscillated between high and low discourses in a thank-you letter:

As servant maids and such sort of folk account a letter good for nothing unless it begins with – This comes hoping you are well as I am at present, so I should be chargeable with a great omission, were I not to make frequent use of the following gratefull Exordium – Many thanks for a fine Cod and Oysters.¹³

Cowper's self-consciousness made simplicity elegant rather than artless and hence politer. Maids are plain and so is he, but he turns that likeness into

difference by identifying it in terms of classical rhetoric; educated men know a beginning is an exordium. His confident account of female servants' taste may be based on the fictions of manuals as much as experience. Middle-class unease about cross-class civility in letters could be assuaged by making plainness Roman rather than working-class and politeness French rather than bourgeois. As Cowper, ever attentive to epistolary etiquette, put it:

I have often wished indeed, when writing to an ordinary correspondent, for the revival of the Roman custom – *salutem* at top, and *vale* at bottom. But as the French have taught all Europe to enter a room and to leave it with a most ceremonious bow, so they have taught us to begin and conclude our letters in the same manner.¹⁴

Ambivalence about French manners could also sanction British resistance to being *à la mode*. 'The slavery of French politeness was a theme which became increasingly explicit as the century wore on, even while the French remained models of fashion and culture.'¹⁵

Where epistolary etiquette supported more than one form, educated practice differentiated between them in terms of class, gender or nation. Writing as an English gentleman meant sounding on occasion like servant-maids or French people who were also trying to be polite. This friction between social groups differed from the forms of community found in 'the republic of letters' chiefly associated with late seventeenth-century networks of male intellectuals. As Anne Goldgar has comprehensively explored, these networks crossed national boundaries and selectively revised class borders too.¹⁶ In eighteenth-century Britain, letter-writing was understood to be an activity involving all classes and both sexes, but correspondents stayed defined by class and sex. An educated male, the Polite Secretary popular in the Renaissance, lingered in the titles of some epistolary manuals; more gestured towards inclusiveness, as if the Complete Letter-Writer was one who comprehended all epistolary identities as well as all important occasions. Nonetheless, class divisions were upheld. Many manuals included letters playfully in personae defined through class. The complex elisions between ideological figures and supposedly real people are illustrated in *The English Letter-Writer* whose sample letters 'actually passed between People of Reputation', claimed the author, though he was not at liberty to mention their names. They echo novels in their typology of character: thus the descriptions of letters on contents pages indicate occupations or social positions which evoke class quite loosely – the sailor's letter, the sweetheart's reply, the father's answer – and their signatures mimic proper (and properly plain) names, like Elizabeth Barton and Joseph Atkins, which conventionally indicate middle or labouring class. These are fictional in so far as the author has said they are not actual names and one or two slip into comedy: the sailor is Thomas Tarpaulin, for instance.¹⁷ In another manual, Sophia Wellbred

writes alongside the personae of Euphrosyne and Mary Careful and the 'real' names of Susanna Centlivre and Elizabeth Rowe.¹⁸ Such slippages are simultaneously democratic and class-conscious, dissolving boundaries between fact and fiction in order to promote an epistolary politeness that was not specifically middle-class, although manuals emphasised politeness was subject to class distinctions. As one put it, 'it would be absurd...to write as familiarly to a Lady of Quality, as to your Waiting-Woman'.¹⁹ Manuals managed class tension by supposing readers to be already polite, defined through comprehension of polite letter-writing. They sold a double fantasy of becoming adept in politeness through letter-writing and through *reading* about letter-writing.

Manuals combined confidence about epistolary forms that could fix class, through tables of forms of address for dukes, bishops, baronets and the like, with an acknowledgement that epistolary discourse, like class, involved ideological overflow. From children urged to treasure letters of parental advice like talismans in fairy tales²⁰ to adults treating letters as a magic mirror, 'a Glass that shadows to use stronger Desires to enjoy the Person that is absent',²¹ people were encouraged to invest in the symbolic properties of letters. Tropes of ore and lustre invoked enlightenment, value and preciousness regardless of use. Part of this magic came from being beyond the reach of rules or art: 'We have several Books of Letters abounding with Instructions for writing them, and yet we write not the better.'²² This notion of epistolary perversity had a long history, from Cicero advising that 'Letters should sometimes commit Blunders',²³ to Samuel Johnson's argument in a *Rambler* essay on epistolary theory that since letters were written on all subjects and in all states of mind, they could not be reduced to rules: 'a letter has no peculiarity but its form'.²⁴ It is tempting to see here an analogy between eighteenth-century political liberty and epistolary freedom: 'As to subjects, you are allowed the utmost liberty.'²⁵ In both, a discourse of liberty in social relations coexisted with regulated activity and institutions sanctioned by usage and law. Unconstrained choice could lead to confusion, if not anarchy, which helps to explain why anxiety was sharpest in familiar letters where choice of subjects was greatest. Here, according to some manuals, rules should apply most and, impossibly, so should a natural easy manner. Managing those class differences to which manuals devoted most attention then left correspondents facing the challenge of what to say regardless of bowing and scraping. Hence the importance given to compliments, as a figure of condensation entailed on writers of lower status. Children were taught never to omit a paragraph of compliments, usually at the end of a letter; letters to aristocrats were larded with them. Between equals in letters of friendship, compliments could seem unnecessary. In a letter much anthologised by manuals, Mary Jones ended, 'I'm sick of saying for ever, I beg my Compliments to such a one.'²⁶ The utmost liberty did allow a freedom to experiment, including experiments of dispensing with forms.

While manuals reflected uncertainties about class, they contributed to xenophobic certainties. People learnt to write as English correspondents, reflected in titles like *The English Letter-Writer*. Manuals helped make letters clearly vernacular – not incompatibly with a legacy of classical letters since new translations of Cicero, Seneca and Pliny made old Romans sound elegantly modern in English. Manuals took relatively little interest in English letters from earlier periods: many included one from a woman parting from her husband during the Civil War, but little from the Renaissance.²⁷ Tradition sanctioned correct usage but provided limited examples because written English had undergone sea-changes over the early modern period: the *English Letter-Writer* implied a native language as well as a national identity. A stress on Englishness also countered French influence, about which compilers were ambivalent. In so far as French writers contributed to the universality of epistolary discourse in general and letters of gallantry in particular, they could not be discounted. However, French establishment of an epistolary culture at court in the mid-seventeenth century caused envy and agitation. Samuel Johnson explained that England lacked an equivalent epistolary tradition because the English were properly contemptuous of trifles. On the other hand, because he was promoting indigenous letter-writing, he did not dismiss letters as trifles: epistolary attention to daily life and its common occasions demonstrated ‘how to become little, without becoming mean’.²⁸ Johnson located failure in French practitioners rather than the genre and attributed their undeniable success to an inferior national character: so Voiture and Scaron’s letters were ‘despicable . . . servile hyperboles’.²⁹ Part of the unease many readers felt about Pope’s letters may be connected to nationalism, his alleged affectation read as a subliminally French idiom attributable to his borrowings from Voiture’s letters.³⁰

Like the relation between cookery books and cooking, the relation of manuals to actual epistolary practice is complex. Writers of manuals classified letters like encyclopaedists or post-Linnaean botanists; they did so in ways drawn from practice without necessarily determining that practice. Some classical letters became familiar from schoolbooks rather than manuals, for instance. Manuals’ categories were more elaborate than the letters of business, friendship or love that occupied most practitioners and they ignored letters of political argument, religious controversy, scholarly exchange and scientific report. Constrained by questions of personal permissions and copyright, their categories of familiar letters were also selective: they studiously avoided letters of quarrels and they were surprisingly sparing with letters of condolence, despite quarrels and death being amongst the most common occasions of eighteenth-century letter-writing.³¹ It is significant that one of the most popular sample letters in manuals was Pope’s farewell to Bishop Atterbury on the eve of his banishment, in which Pope imagined a future correspondence though neither of them could ever write to each other again. In this anti-letter, the imaginary replaced the real, just as the manual

could imply it had covered everything. As a letter that ends letters, Pope's example fitted the manuals' lack of interest in correspondence; they much preferred single or single exchanges of letters to runs of correspondence. On those interceptions to which fictional letters were endlessly prone, manuals were silent beyond condemning the practice of reading other people's letters. On forgery, manuals had little to say apart from pragmatically advising correspondents not to leave much space between the end of the text and their signature. They sidestepped staples of familiar correspondence, like news, gossip and books, preferring the archetypal to the topical.

Yet for all this divergence from readers' needs, manuals sold well not simply as a species of advice literature but as anthologies of actual letters, marketed by frames of nation and class. Less overt but equally important was manuals' projection of gender. They did show women as letter-writers, but in unrepresentative and limited ways, putting a large part of eighteenth-century women's writing in the shade, and their views of the letter as a gendered genre both drew on and contributed to wider ideologies in which learning to write meant learning to write as a gendered subject. The next section discusses writing as a woman, first in manuals and then in other epistolary writings.

Naturally better?

The Ladies Complete Letter-Writer of 1763 claimed to be the first manual for women, though it openly drew on earlier compilations. Its title page emphasised women's functions as daughters, wives and mothers; epistolary style and social duty were to be simultaneous. It attempted to establish a moral and aesthetic pattern for British women letter-writers by filtering out French rivals. But this ran into trouble. On the one hand, French women showed 'a flimsy kind of Gaiety' in their correspondence, making those manuals that printed them improper. On the other hand, that skill for which French women were extolled could be learnt by British women. So although letters revealed supposedly innate national character, national character could be properly fashioned through proper letter-writing. The art of letter-writing and the natural characteristics of nation, class and gender counterbalanced, just as the natural beauty of British women could cancel the artifice of French women. British women who used this manual would 'equal, nay exceed, the *Lamberts*, *Sévignés*, and the *D'Anois's* of our rival neighbours, in the graces of the Pen, as much as they excel in the Charms of their Persons'.³² A trope of natural charms artistically displayed made parallels between texts and bodies – for example, in the article of neatness, women were advised not to send out a letter with blots and interlineations, as if they were wearing stained clothes. Just as the art of dress was a way of reading women as natural or modest, epistolary theory used a double meaning of nature as something unprocessed and inherent form to associate women

with natural and learnt characteristics of letters rather than freely creative writing. The compiler pitted the category of English women (potentially good letter-writers) against French women (falsely praised as good letter-writers) in order to construct a third, that category of women who could realise their true potential by becoming consumers of the manual.

Curiously, given that it promised a strait-laced moral agenda, the *Ladies Complete Letter-Writer* stressed women's erotic properties: 'Letters are an Expedient to charm at a Distance, to secure that Empire over the Mind, in absence' which their beauty had conquered by presence. The letter offered women active eroticism, '*wafting their Sighs from Indus to the Pole*', but women's mastery of letters via the manual entailed an ambiguous mastery over their own erotic properties. A woman could 'give a becoming Dress to her Esteem or her Fondness by Letter', or, 'by her unmeaning, ill-spelt, unsentimental scrawl' she could drive lovers away. Regardless of practice, manuals narrowed recognition of letters as an outlet for women's feelings and desire.

In learning to write letters, women's use of art was read as a metaphorisation of nature: that is, however skilfully they wrote, art usually returned them in the end to a gross nature (especially if they were French!) However, a woman's letter could represent an integrity which was not necessarily the integrity of chastity. Where the letter as material object represented women as objects, ideally neat bodies, the letter as writing could still represent her disembodied subjectivity. The complexity is illustrated by two letters that featured in numerous manuals. In the first, an unnamed lady declares her long-standing love to a gentleman; in the second, she reproves him for ridiculing her to their acquaintance by showing her first letter about. Why were these letters so popular? The manuals' fascination is not simply with a woman writing of passion, like the Portuguese Nun, or trying to sidestep scandal, but with how far epistolary sincerity might override custom. Because her letter is so well written, it wins over the reader regardless of cultural expectations about the decorum or otherwise of women showing sexual initiative. Her second, coolly indignant letter, capitalises on the attractions of letter-writing (in which the manual's reader is investing): her beloved has rejected not just her passion but her epistolary skill in expressing that passion. Her skill is an attraction which confirms her attractiveness: writing becomes womanliness. Here the letter is more a discursive object than a material object. Indeed the beloved's crime is to confuse them: rather than treat the letter as in countless fictions as an erotic object to be caressed, wept over and so on, he violates its intimacy by reading it out to his friends. It is not a private object but a subjectivity made public. Of course we the readers have also been privy to it and the popularity of this pair as samples in manuals is due to their systolic and diastolic movement of withholding and restoring epistolary eroticism. The sighs wafted from Indus to the Pole in women's letters are metonymically the wordless women and metaphorically the expressive letter. Or, letters are both the sighs and

the means of wafting them. In that slippage, writing letters as a woman involved an unstable relation between body and text, discourse and agency, and an identity as both subject and object marked by gender.

A second way in which letter-writing was understood to gender women was through language. One manual claimed 'some of the best, most elegant, and useful letters in this work are the productions of female pens';³³ higher-profile critics were less gallant. Chesterfield thought spelling errors were pardonable in women's letters because they were predictable; another critic thought women quoted too much, an intertextuality made worse by being unpatriotic: 'Ladies are apt to introduce into their epistolary compositions French and Italian phrases, according to the fashion; and sprigs of poetry, and scraps of plays.'³⁴ Manuals' weak sense of letter-writing history meant they continued to circulate anachronisms like Swift's claim, still aired in 1796, that women could not spell.³⁵ True, some could not and it restricted their letter-writing: 'the truth is I can nither indite nor spell which is the reson I have never wrote to any of my friends', confided one mother to her son in 1777.³⁶ That lack of education which women repeatedly protested about and tried to overcome was used to belittle women's letters. Richard Griffith, who praised his wife's ability to spell, sympathetically prefaced their published correspondence with a story of a lady who wrote a business letter to a gentleman 'and thinking it too orthographical for a Woman, added an (e) to the Ende of severale Wordse, leste it should bee suspected that she had spelte by the Aid of a Dictionarye'.³⁷ Masculine disparagement of women's spelling and syntax had some logic, since standardisation could help that mutuality on which correspondence depended, but it mattered less to the irregularly educated or to an older generation who were used to creative spelling, like Lady Gardiner in the Verney family:

My Lady Anne Grimston rit me word that when shee was in Wiltsher that the ill nues came of the death of my Lady Rooke to her mother, her husband is one of our Admirals. I find she was highly vallued & consequently greatly lamented. I find death makes no distinction between the wise or the foolis, or the rich or the poor, all must goe to the grave & bee sure old people must goe ther forst.³⁸

In the seventeenth century, spelling was used as an index of epistolary sophistication – John Evelyn remarked with surprise on his daughter Mary's 'most correct orthography';³⁹ in the eighteenth century, uniformity was freshly theorised, giving new weight to certain spellings as correct. Language became more visibly man made. Debates about phonetic versus etymological spelling, for instance, required a knowledge of classical languages associated with a university education; likewise, notions of ascertaining and fixing language employed the terminology of chemistry and other sciences to which women had little or no access.

Disparaging women's letters as inferior was useful to novelists: it made men writing in a female voice seem more literary, because more literate, than women would be. 'The sex . . . are generally too careless in their orthography (a consciousness of a defect in which generally keeps them from writing', claimed Samuel Richardson.⁴⁰ Syntax too was used as a yardstick by which to disparage women's letters: it is harder to track, though Evelyn lists 'exactness of the periods' as another mark of his daughter's epistolary talent. Just as women were slower to adopt standardised spelling, so their syntax seemed more inclined to dashes and less to subordinate clauses. Supposed defects of informality and colloquialism appear in parodies of women's letters, like Pope's 'In the Style of a Lady', 1716: 'Do you believe there is any such Place as the Elysian Fields? O Gad, that would be charming! . . . what do I correspond with you for, if you won't tell me all? You know I abominate Reserve.'⁴¹ Stereotypes characterised women's letters as gushing and chaotic like their speech. In Smollett's novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771), the gendered comedy of misspellings dominates letters of female characters like Tabitha Bramble and Win Jenkins and the polite letters of Lydia are full of modish repetition.⁴² The trope of letters as talking on paper left women's letters open to satire like their speech; even in orderly conversation, women were easily troped as disorderly. In return, women sometimes used class to profess disappointment with the letters of aristocratic men. When Sophia Baddeley's principal lover sent missives saying 'I long to here from you', her friend Elizabeth Steele commented forthrightly

Lord Melbourne was not the brightest man of the age, as his letters sent to Mrs. Baddeley at times, will shew, and he is among many of the fashionable men of the age who are acquainted neither with good grammar nor orthography.⁴³

In general, however, writing as a woman was perceived to be writing badly. When women were encouraged to learn grammar, it was to improve their ability to teach sons.⁴⁴

Behind this apparently simple misogyny is a contradictory positioning of women in the salons of seventeenth-century France. As Michèle Cohen discusses, politeness was thought to be produced by mixed company – specifically through the conversation of women, in contrast to manliness which was produced through the company of men. Conferring politeness gave women some status but though it secured class privileges, for these women, conversation 'was ultimately productive of gender difference, not power'.⁴⁵ In England, anxieties about women as dangerously talkative meant imported ideas of polite conversation sat uneasily alongside cultural imperatives of feminine reticence. Polite women were to be modest, that is retiring in conversation. 'How could women be expected both to converse and to "talk little"?'⁴⁶ One answer is, through letter-writing. Letters enabled

men to enjoy women's conversation in writing (another reason people described letter-writing as 'talking on paper') without actually being in their company. Thus men secured the advantages of women's conversation without risk of gender contamination. Conversely, women could 'talk' with men in ways that allowed them the transformative power of politeness; the price was physical separation. The predilection for nuns in early eighteenth-century fiction plays on just such a pattern of articulate women barred, literally and figuratively, from enjoying male company.

A few men argued that women were better letter-writers than men. Lack of university education was no obstacle, 'the Letters of well-educated Women, far excelling those of our *Greek-taught gentry*'.⁴⁷ Construing women as good letter-writers helped keep them out of other genres – their gift is always related to familiar letters, not to letters of argument or other forms of published letters. The reasoning behind this view was self-interested as men tried to manage anxieties about gender and genre. Letters were a genre with few rules, as manuals conceded. Although a letter-writer made specifically literary choices in selection, organisation and presentation of material, those choices could not be completely formalised and could be overridden by personal knowledge of an addressee. Ultimately, the definition of a good letter was one which pleased its reader and the simplest, crudest, most spontaneous letter could do that as effectively as the most polished and arguably more sincerely. Comparing a power to be natural in letters to the naturalised category of femininity helped reduce anxiety because it drew on deep associations between women and nature. It also left undisturbed a notion of women as a constituency who, like nature, could be improved on, not least by buying manuals.

'Beauties' and 'graces' were terms shared by admired women and admirable letters. They fuse in men's praise of women's letters – for example, Richardson's, in Anna Howe's eulogy of Clarissa:

If you mention the beauties and graces of her pen, you may take notice that it was always a matter of surprise to her, that the sex are generally so averse as they are to writing; since the pen, next to the needle, of all employments is the most proper and adapted to their geniuses; and this as well for improvement as for amusement. Who sees not, would she say, that those women who take delight in writing excel the men in all the graces of the familiar style. The gentleness of their minds, the delicacy of their sentiments (improved by the manner of their education) and the liveliness of their imaginations, qualify them to a high degree of preference for this employment: while men of learning, as they are called (of mere learning, however), aiming to get above that natural ease and freedom which distinguishes this (and indeed every other kind of writing), when they think they have best succeeded are got above, or rather *beneath*, all natural beauty.⁴⁸

This valourisation of women as natural obviously provided an analogue for men of little learning like Richardson (just as later women writers like Elizabeth Montagu and Ann Radcliffe cited Shakespeare as proof that literary genius did not need extensive education). But Richardson was not alone. Writing on aesthetics, John Gilbert Cooper explained the sprightly ease of Voiture's letters as a result of his friendships with aristocratic women; Balzac's letters, in contrast, were laboured because he lived secluded amongst men. Thus 'more Taste and Elegance in Writing is to be acquired in a circle of Beauties at PARIS, than in a *learned* Society of Capuchins'.⁴⁹ In part this pitted sociable court against secluded religious order so as to echo, and approve, the town-country configuration of English letters, which tended to favour urbanity as a discursive location.⁵⁰ Although that urbanity was clearly connected to the politeness of women and courts in France, its appeal helps explain why French letter-writers were so much read by a British audience which otherwise begrudged them praise. There is also a suggestive connection between British recognition of the importance of French women in letter-writing and a sexual element of epistolary theory, as if the fantasy of French women as more sexual than any other nationality made epistolary discourse resemble pornography. Beauties, graces, negligences, ease, freedom, undress, the natural and the revealing – these terms were common to men writing about women and about letters and figured the attractions of letters as heterosexual. Women noted the overlap and borrowed it back. So in 1700 one excused a hasty letter

wanting Leisure to put it in any other than a loose Morning-Dress, not questioning but it may please you as well without the Formalities of Stile, as a pretty Woman, without Stays may some of your Acquaintance.⁵¹

Susanna Centlivre takes on Voiture's knowingness, and it reappears in Mary Jones' playful admonishment mid-century to Pope, that letters like beauties could be overdressed.

An alternative reading of women's letters as 'naturally better' can be found in the correspondence of the less heterosexually inclined Horace Walpole. He states on several occasions his belief that women write better letters than men. This, to the Countess of Ossory on Christmas night, 1773, is his clearest elaboration:

Your reflection on Madame de Grignan's letter after her mother's death is just, tender and admirable, and like the painter's hiding Agamemnon's face, when he despaired of expressing the agony of a parent. No, Madame de Sévigné could not have written a letter of grief if her daughter had died first. Such delicacy in sentiment women only can feel. *We* can never attain that sensibility which is at once refined and yet natural and easy, and which makes your sex write so much better than men ever did or

can; and which if you will allow me to pun in Latin, though it seems your Ladyship does not understand that language, I could lay down as an infallible truth in the words of my godfather,

Pennis non hominis datis,

the English of which is, 'It was not given to man to write letters.' For example how tiresome are Corbellini's letters, and how he wears out the scélérat and the jealousy!

This passage has several oddities. In seeing sentiment as the distinguishing characteristic of women's letters, Walpole seems to be making the predictable patriarchal association of women with feeling, as opposed to masculine thinking. But because this sensibility is manifested in a letter – in two letters, in fact, the Countess's and Madame de Grignan's – Walpole cannot deny it a power of agency. It is not simply felt but *written*. Walpole associated that agency, however, with absence, particularly masculine absence: Agamemnon's hidden face and the painter's inability to represent emotion. But Madame de Grignan's letter evidently has been able to represent emotion, otherwise neither of her readers would have been struck by it. Walpole's praise of the Countess's reflection as 'just, tender and admirable' is predicated on incompleteness: just as partial imaging is a solution for the painter, so the letter-writer chooses a veiled expression. Walpole reads this as feminine: what is unknowable and inexpressible, women comprehend. Walpole was a fervent admirer of Madame de Sévigné but peculiarly here he implies his idol, so far as we know biologically female, could not write a woman's letter, whereas her daughter can. The subtext is that as an honorary man, bereavement would have rendered her inarticulate. Walpole's bafflement at how women transform their supposedly finer feelings into epistolary aptness falls back on feminine intuition as the explanation for women's naturally better letters.

Both visible and invisible, the rules governing letters mirrored the ideological construction of femininity. Ideology was disguised as nature and epistolary convention was disguised as propriety. Laws of discourse were concealed beneath an outer dress of polite language, just as stays and laces reshaped a woman's body; the object of both was to produce an elegant, pleasing effect.⁵² Ideally, pleasing effects were attributable to nature rather than art, to beauties and graces rather than labour. Ironically, it may explain why many women were at ease in letters and many men were anxious: women were already familiar with the inexpressible and elusive ideal of femininity, represented in the guesswork and silences of correspondence. Eighteenth-century ideals of masculinity were also chimerical but involved much less self-effacement and much less privileging of empathy. A cultural imperative to imagine themselves in the place of others had a mixed effect on women's position as letter-writers.

Men invoked surface rules of spelling and grammar to disparage women's letters as strategically as they celebrated women's epistolary empathy as

something natural rather than literary. But the similarity between epistolary discourse and femininity, each mapped by self-disguising rules, offered women analogies with their own cultural construction – and occasional opportunities to undo it. A letter by Catherine Talbot demonstrates this. She wrote to a female cousin evoking that stoicism which educated women made part of ideal feminine conduct: ‘You are at present, my dear, in a very philosophical disposition; the gaities and follies of life have no attraction for you, its sorrows you kindly commiserate!’ The joke is that the addressee is an infant, yet able to observe gendered precepts: ‘You have an absolute dislike to the vanities of dress.’ Irony is accentuated by Talbot’s anticipation that the baby’s father will read the letter out, thus underscoring how gendering is accomplished through a masculine voice. The letter wittily rewrites clichés of conduct books in which, like children, women were admonished to be silent and yet expected to run after showy attractions. Talbot points to gender inequalities as immediate and inevitable, presuming this child will soon have a brother to put her nose out of joint:

There will be nothing to be done then but to be mighty good, and prove what, believe me, admits of very little dispute (though it has occasioned abundance), that we girls, however people give themselves airs of being disappointed, are by no means to be despised; but the men unenvied shine in public; it is we who must make their homes delightful to them; and if they provoke us, no less uncomfortable.⁵³

For all Talbot’s apparent acquiescence in an unequal social order, she makes a female of very limited experience into a figure of fully realised gender difference. The mismatch in their ages is countered by the mutuality of epistolary discourse and their shared fates as women, in a letter which is both a familiar letter and a parody of letters of advice. The epistolary joke shows up femininity as constructed and the letter as an ideologically motivated genre. Writing as a woman, then, was anything but natural.

Men of letters, or, learning to read

The letters of Alexander Pope were controversial for two reasons: the scandalous history surrounding the circumstances of their publication and whether they were a shining example of epistolary practice or writings tarnished by their very polish. Received wisdom is that prior to Pope’s example it was not customary to publish familiar letters, that Pope’s ambition occasioned subterfuges, that Curll’s greed accounts for his attempts to exploit Pope. ‘Pope and Curll metonymically function as opposing forces of high and low culture – “true literature” and “crass commercialism.”’⁵⁴ Catherine Ingrassia’s reading of their quarrel stresses instead ‘the seepage of categories’ and the two men’s co-dependence in a relationship which

'though born of animosity, was fundamentally symbiotic. Each man invigorated the other's career.'⁵⁵ The poet and the bookseller struggled for mastery through a series of poems, lampoons and satires, not just letters. But their battle over letters has a particular context, that of a growing market. Correspondence helped construct the reputation of men of letters, which explains what made letters worth fighting for. There are two parts to this story: one about men and masculinity, the other about letters and literariness. Also important are issues of nationality, age and literary biography, particularly how a generation of writers was memorialised through letters. By restoring a sense of what was expected of letters, we can see how writing as a wit, a poet and a friend of poets had a bearing on the fight between Curll and Pope over the possession and marketing of Pope's letters.⁵⁶ The historical specificity of these configurations can be clearly seen by comparing Pope to Johnson, the most famous writer of the next generation, whose letters were also important in marketing him as a writer and in what was understood by that commodification. I discuss Pope first, with reference to a world of wits and their letters, then Johnson.

It was a commonplace throughout the eighteenth century that the lives of men of letters were devoid of incident, unlike the lives of men of action. An apparent discursive vacuum thus coexisted with a growing interest in 'great men'. Readers were curious about 'the Humours, Inclinations and secret Transactions' of biographical subjects⁵⁷ and, as print culture dispersed a court-based literary culture, in the human interest of writers' lives rather than their illustrious families. Character and conduct counted for more, circumstances and class for less. Print created anxieties about democratising and letters took some of the blame for perceived downmarket tendencies, with 'all the Sons of Wit' from coffee houses encouraged to publish 'Billets to Jilts'.⁵⁸ Restoration poets and playwrights contributed to collections including letters of wit and gallantry which played on the boundary between familiar letters and fiction, a boundary the more blurred because libertinism was understood to involve certain poses. Simultaneously, the letters of more sober men of learning were taken up as demonstrations of intellectual exchange and manifestations of their inmost characters, concerns brought together in their 'manner of conversing with their friends'.⁵⁹ Readers were reminded of letters' personal origins even as they became more widely read.

It has been claimed that to offer one's correspondence as a literary work 'was by early eighteenth-century standards unthinkable'.⁶⁰ Hardly so: for instance, in 1722 James Heywood published *Poems and Letters on Several Subjects*; in Farquhar's *Works*, in a sixth edition by 1728, letters appeared posthumously but with a high profile, as the first item in the first of two volumes; in 1721 John Dennis published his *Original Letters, Familiar, Moral and Critical*, with a candid admission it was to make people think he was not just an ill-natured critic. Where women like Katherine Philips and, a little later, Elizabeth Thomas appeared in print in personae, as Orinda and Corinna

respectively, literary men like Otway and Wycherley appeared as themselves, in letters clearly part of their literary works.⁶¹ Pope's letters would sell because Pope was an acclaimed author but also because there was a buoyant market for letters by literary men. 'Any domestick or servant, who can snatch a letter from your pocket or cabinet, is encouraged in that vile practise', wrote Pope, but his fears were about not controlling the market rather than its existence.⁶² Arbuthnot's remark that posthumous publication of letters added new terrors to the grave gained force from a contrast with a world in which writers could imagine publishing their letters whilst alive.

Letters were also a recognised part of writers' oeuvres in the form of translations. Although not always included in their works, these were still authorised enterprises in which the names of English authors jostled those of French writers, especially Voiture, on a title page.⁶³ Understanding the significance of Voiture's letters helps explain some hostility to the content of Pope's letters, which borrowed heavily from them. Voiture's 'easy sublime'⁶⁴ did not translate neatly. There were several reasons for this. One was class: Voiture was comfortably witty with aristocrats in a way that a post-Restoration generation of professional writers, more at home in taverns than courts, were not; as one critic ventured, 'Perhaps his Manner of writing may seem too familiar, considering the Rank of Persons he writ too' [sic].⁶⁵ Another reason was gender: for all Voiture's fame as a seducer, he was intellectually at ease with women whereas English wits were homosocial, often aggressively so.⁶⁶ Steele's politeness is most comparable to Voiture's and Steele was known as an indefatigable writer of love-letters – but to his wife, so hardly a model for womanisers. Two other factors hindered Voiture's absorption into English letter-writing. The first was patriotism: English writers were trying to outdo French writers, not copy them. The second was a matter of aesthetics. In the late seventeenth century, imitation had aesthetic value. In letters, imitation was more suspect than in other genres because it clashed with the principle of sincerity. It was possible, just, to imitate Cicero, Seneca or Pliny because Romans were associated with plain-speaking; in contrast, French writers were stereotyped as insincere, making imitation harder. Hence the accusations of insincerity levelled against Pope, whose borrowings from Voiture were substantial: as Curll charged, he took over whole epistolary occasions.⁶⁷ Worse, he made these appropriations silently, rather than offering them as translations, which seemed to bypass the explicit struggle of his fellow-writers to anglicise Voiture.

The letters of English literary men shared elements with other kinds of familiar letters: demonstrations of wit and friendship, professions of sincerity and an exchange of compliments. More than other familiar letters, they were dedicated to establishing a masculinity as much at odds with heterosexuality as part of it and a literary-critical dynamic in which both correspondents' stock as writers went up. If as Pope put it the life of a wit was warfare upon earth, the domain of letters was where wits ostensibly took

time out and helped each other rear. ⁶⁸ Where friendship in early eighteenth-century letters normally meant appreciation of a correspondent's good qualities, in letters between wits it meant extolling each other's literary talents. Their language of compliment borrowed most from the love-letter: 'A Friend may sometimes proceed to acknowledge Affection by the very same Degrees by which a Lover declares his Passion.' Thus Dennis listed Dryden's virtues. 'Extraordinary Esteem may sometimes make the Mind as Impotent as a violent Love does the Body': Dennis to Dryden again, tongue-tied. 'The very Thought of Mr. *Wycherley* spreads a generous Warmth thro' me, and raises my Soul to Rapture': Dennis again, aroused by another literary correspondence. ⁶⁹ The violence of Dennis's mimicry of the rhapsodies of love-letters reflects Dennis's violence in general; it also shows how literary men's letters to each other used the same figures of desire as they did to their mistresses. Dennis professed himself 'ravish'd' by the verse of Suckling, Cowley, Denham and Waller until he encountered Dryden's poetry, concluding "'Tis indeed impossible that I should refuse to Love a Man, who has so often given me all the Pleasures that the most insatiable Mind can desire.'⁷⁰ The heterosexual homosociality of wits' letters was further secured through the feminine figure of the Muse, with whom an erotic relation could be 'long and often enjoy'd'. First the writer possessed the Muse, then the reader, by which means the reader possessed the writer too. Enjoying a poet's works became an erotic metonym for enjoying the poet. That anxiety of influence which Harold Bloom so productively read as oedipal – specifically, the rivalry of younger writers with paternal figures of the previous generation – was in early eighteenth-century literary correspondence between men troped as pleasure in order to sublimate anxiety. As new mechanisms of criticism like the periodical joined old ones of satires, squibs and lampoons, early eighteenth-century male writers manifested anxiety in fraternal rivalries rather than paternal ones.

The early letters of Pope, especially ones to *Wycherley*, certainly have an undertow for which psychoanalysis seems helpful. A remark in a letter of 1714 suggests a desire to be an anti-oedipal subject: 'To follow Poetry as one ought, one must forget father and mother, and cleave to it alone.'⁷¹ But to older men he clearly took up a feminine position: 'I know it is a common opinion that a young scribler [sic] is as ill-pleas'd to hear truth as a young Lady.'⁷² Responding to Sir William Turnbull's compliments on his writings, Pope adopts a girlish role to make himself desirable to his literary forefathers. The versatility of oedipal triangles in managing sexuality has been explored by Kaja Silverman, who elaborates on Freud's suggestion of a negative oedipal triangle as a base for homosexual desire. In a heterosexual oedipal triangle, a male subject identifies with his father and desires his mother. In a negative oedipal triangle, a boy behaves like a girl and is affectionately feminine to his father and is jealous of or hostile to his mother. 'The relative intensity of the two identifications in any individual will reflect

the preponderance in him of one or other of the two sexual dispositions.⁷³ These tendencies can regroup and polarise, so the triangle is not static. For understanding Pope's epistolary identity, several possibilities present themselves. In a heterosexual oedipal triangle, Pope would be identifying with his literary father and desiring the mother – a fecund Muse. In a homosexual oedipal triangle, Pope would be desiring his literary fathers and identifying with the Muse. 'A maternal identification apparently translates... not only into sexual receptivity, but narcissism and exhibitionism'⁷⁴ – of which there are traces in Pope's letters, and which echoes Curll's summary of Pope's correspondence with Wycherley: 'There is little more to be seen in these Letters, but that Mr. *Pope* rubs the old Bard's Back, and he in return chucks our young Poetical Saplin under the Chin.'⁷⁵

Models for reading literary men's letters are complicated by how one genders the Muse, a feminine figure who presides over a business men think of as masculine.⁷⁶ For all the discussion of mistresses in letters between literary men, women's allure was limited by the supposed impossibility of their being able to possess the muse as men did. A discourse of jealousy in relation to the muse at this period is important here: men figured their possession of the muse as exclusive, but not hers of them, thus explaining the inconstant inspiration of poetry. In so far as other men of letters were also rivals for the muse/mother, a heterosexual oedipal triangle can make Pope feminine; it also fits with a version of Bloom's model in which other poets are brother poets – like siblings, in a parallel subject position of desiring the muse, but also, like siblings, competitively so. In a homosexual oedipal triangle, Pope's sense of himself as already precociously possessing the muse (in his phrase, 'I lisped in numbers') would establish a maternal identification, with older poets representing that masculine subject-position ostensibly completed by age – 'the *man* of letters' – which is both desired and feared, lest it come between Pope and his incorporated muse. Kaja Silverman notes that the negative oedipal complex has a capacity

for challenging and subverting the heterosexual imperative, and for scrambling the socially acceptable temporality and narrative sequencing of normative human sexuality. More importantly, it might be said to negate the most fundamental premise of male subjectivity – an identification with masculinity – and in doing so obstruct paternal lineality.⁷⁷

An identification with masculinity is, I contend, hard for poets to complete where their identity as poets is accomplished by means of a feminised figure for poetry. Hence the necessity of 'men of letters' as a term and the absence of an equivalent for women until the adoption of 'bluestocking' (a term said to be invented with reference to a man). In characterising Pope's playing both sides of the triangle in order to become and postpone becoming a man of letters, I recognise the problems of historical difference involved.⁷⁸ But as

Mark Breitenberg observes, 'if . . . it is ahistorical to posit heterosexuality and homosexuality in the early modern period (indeed, neither terms even exists), then it need not be the case that hetero and homoerotic discourses or representations of desire are themselves necessarily discrete'.⁷⁹ My use of the term homosociality argues for such an overlap.

Turning oedipal rivalries into fraternal attractions did not stop poets from jostling for primacy. When Pope fell out with Addison over alleged criticism of his translation of Homer, he compared Addison to the Grand Turk. The point was to represent Addison not only as a tyrant but as anti-fraternal: he 'can never bear a Brother on the throne'.⁸⁰ If brother poets were not love objects, they were necessarily rivals in a primogeniturst system. Familiar letters had a special role to play in trying to reconcile these extremes, for they were thought to accommodate sincerity more than other kinds of writing. First, the letters of a sincere friend 'showed his Temper, natural Disposition, and Frame of Mind by his very Expressions, for *Epistola est index animi*'.⁸¹ Second, the reciprocity of correspondence allowed two-way criticism. Again one can see Pope narcissistically bending conventions by threatening to break away from the exchange-rate of compliments: 'a man, for hearing a great deal more than his due said of him by another, must afterwards say a great deal less than his due of himself'.⁸² Third and most importantly, love and rivalry were controlled by asking the friend to be the critic. As if to pre-empt public criticism or offset its violence, poets stressed how the relative privacy of familiar letters could provide a just and sympathetic forum of correction. The liminal but still literary status of letters made criticism seem disinterested: thus 'a Friend's reprimand often shews more Friendship than his compliment'.⁸³ This difficulty of getting the balance between public acerbity and personal emollience created a new anxiety, aired in the safety of semi-parodic letters like that from one wit to another: 'Our Correspondence hitherto, methinks, looks as if we were seasoning a Sallad between us: I am for softening it with Oil, and you are still souring it with Vinegar.'⁸⁴ (Taking his cue, he wrote more acidly.)

Writers' use of familiar letters played with a public-private divide. As Wycherley put it, 'the best Mark of a Friend, is telling his Friend his Faults in private, so the next is concealing them from the publick, till they are fit to appear'.⁸⁵ Often unable and indeed unwilling to keep letters concealed, men recognised the market value of familiar correspondence. The image Wycherley used about a complimentary poem to Pope on his *Pastorals* applies equally to his letter: 'like an old City-bawd's attending a young Country-beauty to Town, to gain her Admirers, when past the Hopes of pleasing the World herself'.⁸⁶ Familiar letters helped make writers marketable more subtly than in the open alliances of complimentary poems or dedicatory epistles. Letters also supported the construction of masculinity and its commodification because the more men performed the identity of men-in-letters, the more writing seemed a man's business. Some trace of this may be seen in epistolary

novels around the mid-century, in which the heroine has a romance name and her confidante a plainer name, as if men like Richardson unconsciously recognised a connection between writing letters and aspirant literariness. It was the harder for women to break the glass walls around writerly identity because women were stuck in a discourse of suspicion of men's language. As William Walsh observed, 'to commend a Man for a Wit to the Women, is like commending him for a good Protestant to the Fathers of the Inquisition . . . They love a tame, easy, governable Fool, and fancy all Wits ill-natur'd and proud.'⁸⁷ Pope likewise was anxious that Lady Mary Wortley Montagu should read his letters to her as ones of esteem not wit. There were two women letter-writers in print with a positive literary reputation: Katherine Philips who was not part of the London literary marketplace and Elizabeth Rowe whose commitment to Christian otherworldliness also kept her out of competition with male wits.⁸⁸ Voiture had proclaimed that women make the best judges of wit, but when Madame de Rambouillet took up his game he was frightened,⁸⁹ and in Britain men preferred to exclude women as judges where possible. The one advantage for women was that an increase in *Miscellanies* after the mid-century allowed them to publish familiar letters as legitimate works.

By the 1730s, epistolary conventions that served to allay the anxieties of an older generation of male writers were worn out. Pope, as its last productive survivor, became trapped in the very epistolary market he had helped to create. Curll's pursuit put a damper on Pope's letter-writing – 'you will not wonder if I should forswear writing a letter again while I live', he wrote to Bethel, but he still recognised the allure of self-commodification, adding, 'I could publish my own heart too.'⁹⁰ Moreover, Pope recognised that Curll was the agent of a wider constituency avid for his letters: 'If you please to reflect either on the impertinence of weak admirers, the malice of low enemies, the avarice of mercenary Booksellers, or the silly curiosity of people in general; you'll confess I have small reason to indulge correspondences.'⁹¹ This generalising of epistolary interest is important for understanding the significance of the publication of Pope's letters. Though Curll vowed to win the last round (by outliving Pope and publishing all his letters in a *Life*), Curll also threatened to displace Pope as a market leader. Going beyond that convention of printing letters on both sides which confirmed correspondence as a homosocial club on paper, Curll included letters by people like Prior, the Duchess of Ormonde and Henry VIII. This is not evidence of Curll's lack of discrimination, his rapacity or revenge, but another agenda. He was cynical about Pope's claims to be above the market and knowing about ideologies of masculinity (interestingly referring to editorial excisions as castrations). Most of all, he wanted to expand the market for letters. This wish is articulated in a dialogue between Curll and a customer, Squire Brocade, who complains that Volume II of Pope's *Letters* is a rip-off because it is full of letters by people other than Pope. Curll responds that his purpose in printing them is

to show that other people's letters are better than Pope's. A canny attempt to play the market? Yes. Curll put forward two candidates in particular: Delarivière Manley and Lord Lansdowne. The letters of the former are 'very pretty . . . full of true Humour, perfectly picturesque, in a genteel unaffected Style, natively pleasant, and, as *Horace* says, *simplex munditiis*'.⁹² He sets a discourse of amiability against wit and a 'natural' woman against the class of male writers. Praising Granville's letters seemingly without irony, he pits an ideologically loaded identity against an inferred self-interested class of men of letters:

the Patriot, the *Englishman*, the Christian, the Tenderness of the most humane Mind, the politeness of the finest Gentlemen, the Dignity of the *British* Peer, are here united, and shine forth with full Lustre in the utmost Propriety and Perspicuity of Language.⁹³

Curll's eulogy is puzzling. George Granville, Lord Lansdowne, was better known as a peer and patron than a writer. He wrote technically assured and conventional poetry; two of his plays were successes. Pope had dedicated *Windsor Forest* to him in 1713 and in 1715 he had been imprisoned for Jacobite activities. In 1732 he published a handsome volume of his works including some elegant letters of advice to the newly elevated Lord Bath. He was also the author of a character of Wycherley which fixed them both as players on the literary scene, and perhaps readers understood too the force of Granville's plain-dealing in a letter to his father at a politically sensitive moment. The frontispiece provides another possible clue: an engraving of a portrait by Kneller, it shows Granville in a soft cap – as William Hoare's portrait of Pope did – and a significantly unbuttoned shirt. In the state of undress that indicated intimacy between poets, Granville was ahead of Pope.⁹⁴

Moreover, the letters Curll refers to are allegedly volunteered by a high-minded member of the public keen to promote taste. This public source transforms a personal feud between Curll and Pope into a patriotically motivated struggle over what letters were to represent: the writer as producer or the writer as product. Curll saw Pope's commodification of himself as a writer through letters both as fair game, commercially, and as a manifestation of homosocial exclusivity in which the literary marketplace was taken over by bourgeois but élitist men, leaving less room for aristocratic or women writers. Swift's resistance to Pope's project of publishing his letters may also be seen in this light: Swift was too misanthropic to be homosocial and too much a journalist to invest much in witty or polite writerly identities. The stakes were high because homosociality, as it materialised in letters, was the key to an Augustan identity for Pope and others. It was explicitly challenged in a *Memoir* of Wycherley attributed to Charles Gildon and printed for Curll (who may have had a hand in it). Wycherley was an interesting case for the markets: in and out of debt, a writer of some widely

acclaimed comedies, he might have been an example of the independent writer whose wit leads to commercial success. Instead, according to the *Memoir*, he made the mistake of printing a folio edition of his works in 1704, doing it himself rather than dealing with a bookseller. Its relative failure led to coolness with other poets, which explains why he became friends with Pope. Trying to square Wycherley's talents with the opportunism of this friendship, the *Memoir* starts to unravel the whole literary scene in which poets vaunt their unworldly friendships with each other over dealings with booksellers. The poets' claim to Augustan distinction is based on intimacies which they compare to the friendships between Virgil, Horace and others in Augustan Rome. The *Memoir* refutes these claims to a special status:

this Clamour of our little Writers and Poets amounts to no more than this, that several Men of Wit and Poetry were very well acquainted, and very good Friends. And so it happens in all Ages and Nations, where there are at the same time many of Figure in the same City, frequenting the same Places of Resort.⁹⁵

Urbanity is returned to a topographical coincidence. Letters remained awkward evidence for poets' claims for Augustan-style friendships and literariness mutually reinforced through the literary friendliness of correspondence.

Readers of letters desired these pleasures as much as addressees and public thirst for letters changed their value. Curll wanted them to fit a biographical and literary market; Pope wanted them to show, or show off, the writer's power to be writerly in all contexts, neither a poet by rote nor a wit by accident. The scintillation of these familiar letters was to serve the altruism of brilliant friendships – and vice-versa. As Wendy L. Jones observes, 'the correspondence constituted the "story" of a close-knit coterie characterised by its mistrust of "Party-spirit" and by its preoccupation with how one may lead a "good life"'.⁹⁶ Epistolary celebrations of virtue countered a much less flattering interpretation of the Pope-Swift-Gay-Bolingbroke world elsewhere in print culture.

The power of the meanings of letters can be seen in the relative unimportance of their textual authenticity; then as now, readers were interested 'irrespective of whether one letter goes back to an early holograph and another to a late printing'.⁹⁷ The tangling of authorised and unauthorised editions of Pope's correspondence was important not because purer texts came out of it, but because it showed the cultural value of letters being wrested into new meanings with new commercial applications. In the second half of the eighteenth century, these meanings changed again. Literary markets were less interested in wit; sentimental fiction promoted empathy. By letters, 'we are admitted into the closets and the confidence of the great and good, we imagine *ourselves* their friends and correspondents'

(my italics).⁹⁸ The change can be seen in the 1780s, when commodification of Samuel Johnson was, if anything, more intense than Pope's.

By his own account Johnson was not a keen letter-writer: 'I fancy that I write letters with more difficulty than some other people.'⁹⁹ His most recent editor Bruce Redford believes it was his friendship with Hester Thrale which provided an epistolary vocation, a view supported by a letter to her of 4 November 1772: 'We keep writing to each other when, by the confession of both, there is nothing to be said; but on my part I find it very pleasing to write.'¹⁰⁰ Prior to that, he had difficulty with interiority: 'I have risen and lain down, talked and mused', he told one correspondent – and refused to elaborate.¹⁰¹ Yet he equated letters with vitality, pointing out that we shall receive no letters in the grave and encouraging the ultimate in epistolary plainness: 'if you know any thing, write and tell it; if you know nothing, write and say that you know nothing'.¹⁰² In an early letter to Richard Congreve, an Oxford friend, he stressed the opportunities for pleasure and improvement which correspondence afforded but presented them as general, not egotistical or even necessarily literary. The letters of Swift and Pope did not impress him: 'what looks at first like dignified independence comes to look to Johnson like... a kind of solipsistic self-regard'.¹⁰³ Self-conscious rather than self-seeking, Johnson's choice of correspondents, like his choice of household members, favoured unglamorous people. His democratic attitude to letter-writing was evident in a letter to his six-year-old goddaughter which he took the trouble to write in a large round hand resembling print so she could have the satisfaction of reading it herself. When Queeney Thrale was stuck for material, he encouraged her to draw on her own cultural repertoire, telling her that the books of a morning or the talk of an evening were both fit subjects for a letter. Young girls could join the republic of letters; appropriately it was a woman who first made Johnson's letters available to the public and reshaped perceptions of him.¹⁰⁴

Although it was ultimately Johnson's conversation that commodified him as a writer – Hester Lynch Piozzi's *Anecdotes of the Late Samuel Johnson* (1786), Sir John Hawkins' *Life* (1787) and Boswell's *Life* (1791) – Johnson recognised the market value of letters. He grumbled to Boswell that it was so much the fashion to publish letters that he put as little as possible into his own. One letter by Johnson shows the power of letters mid-century to fix the construct of a writer and the means by which a writer might control that process up to a point. Johnson's letter to Lord Chesterfield rejecting his belated offer of patronage for the *Dictionary* is the most famous letter of the eighteenth century. In it Johnson asserted bourgeois labour over aristocratic favour:

Is not a Patron, My Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a Man struggling for Life in the water and when he has reached ground encumbers him with help. The notice which you have been pleased to take of my Labours, had it been early had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am

indifferent and cannot enjoy it, till I am solitary and cannot impart it, till I am known and do not want it.¹⁰⁵

Johnson distanced himself from that lordly ease which earlier men of letters had made their own through wit. There were gendered connotations too: on hearing of the letter, Bishop Warburton sent Johnson compliments on his 'manly behaviour' in rejecting Chesterfield's condescension.¹⁰⁶

Johnson's letter to Chesterfield is arguably most significant for its curious textual history. Its addressee treated it as a semi-public literary text: he kept it on a table and showed it to visitors. To the publisher Robert Dodsley he said 'This man has great powers' and pointed out the severest passages and observed how well they were expressed.¹⁰⁷ So the letter became celebrated without being printed and indeed Johnson withheld it from public circulation. Boswell badgered him for years for a copy; only in 1781 did Johnson give in and dictate one. He refused a copy to another friend in 1784, though he gave one to Langton with instructions that if it were to be printed, it should be from that text. Boswell first published 'what the world has so eagerly desired to see' in 1790, at the high price of half a guinea.¹⁰⁸ Johnson tended to distinguish between publishing and printing – the former a process, in the Biblical sense of making available, the latter a product, a literal object issued from the press. He seems to have kept this letter out of print as a way of resisting his own commodification at least until after his death. Boswell thought Chesterfield's reaction was an affectation of indifference; a later biographer thinks it shows Chesterfield accepting the rebuke with good nature and being 'quite impressed' with the letter.¹⁰⁹ To my mind, Chesterfield's reaction is that of the rejected patron still acting out approval as if, whether or not money was involved (Johnson had in fact accepted £10 from him), he was entitled to treat Johnson as a commodity for criticism.

That Johnson knew the metonymic power of letters to market writers is illustrated by an experience in 1755, the same year as the letter to Chesterfield. An admirer 'had conceived such a reverence for him, that he urgently begged Dr. Burney to give him the cover of the first letter he had received from him, as a relic of so estimable a writer'.¹¹⁰ This fan asked only for a cover, not a letter; other devotees were less delicate. Where commodification is now measured by fans *writing* mail, admirers of eighteenth-century writers invested affect in reading their idol's letters. Public interest was not about gate-crashing a writer's privacy; letters were sold more as *authentic* texts, like the modern celebrity interview. As one editor observed, Cicero corresponding with Atticus showed his character more genuinely than Cicero debating in the forum. Character was operative across both public and private domains; the proper comparison – and not an antithesis – is between personal and social discursive contexts.

The context of Johnson's letters represents a late eighteenth-century tendency more elusive than bonding letters to a private sphere: an interest

in the transience of texts. Like those manuscripts and scraps of paper whose accidental fates set in motion episodes in sentimental novels, letters represented the power of writing and its fragility. That anxiety which earlier surrounded literary status and masculine identity for men of letters was diffused into an anxiety about mortality as letters became part of literary remains. So Sir John Hawkesworth introduced a new edition of Swift's letters with a declaration that reading correspondence 'most forcibly impresses a sense of the vanity and the brevity of life',¹¹¹ a sentiment applicable not only to Swift as a moralist and a divine but to any epistolary collection. Hawkesworth pushed empathy to the edge: reading the letters of eminent men to their friends,

we live with them, we hear them talk, we mark the vigour of life... we see the scene gradually change; hope and expectation are at an end, they regret pleasures that are past, and friends that are dead... we lose them in the grave.¹¹²

He makes the letter akin to the elegy, with correspondence allaying and articulating the inevitability of death. One critic has argued that after Gray's *Elegy*, 'the fortunes of Elegia rose considerably', to the point where 'written wailings' became almost preposterous.¹¹³ The danger of preposterous writing could be converted into proprieties of reading. Reviewing peoples' lives through their letters was a properly melancholic engagement with personal 'remains'. Here the market for literary letters was supported by a market in Christian letters, in which epistolary remains had long been thought edifying and comforting.

Enthusiasm for transience, then, fed markets in familiar letters and biography and in literary conversation. Johnson argued in a *Rambler* essay that 'incidents which give excellence to biography are of a volatile and evanescent kind'.¹¹⁴ Letters counted both as incidents and as evanescent. The market for trifles about eminent people attracted some criticism – one satirist compared Boswell to a watchful cat who had sat for twenty years mousing before the hole of Johnson's mouth¹¹⁵ – but wit had shifted to a more narrative form compatible with a politer society: the anecdote. Anyway recognised as 'talking on paper', the letter helped establish that market for trifles out of which grew collections of anecdotes and later table-talk.¹¹⁶ The publication of more familiar letters by women put a squeeze on literary men's promotion of each other's correspondence within letters and they moved more into preserving and collecting correspondence. Homosociality turned to editing letters as letters became no longer just 'works' but a form of the men themselves. William Mason's *Life of Gray* (1775) re-established the man of letters through the disappearance of the editor: Gray's letters 'will give a much clearer idea both of Mr. Gray and his friend Walpole, at this early period, than any narrative of mine... In a word,

Mr. Gray will become his own biographer.¹¹⁷ Boswell, beaten by Hester Thrale Piozzi in the scramble to get Johnsoniana to press, struggled to bring Johnson as a letter-writer within his homosocial reach: the title page of his *Life* links letters to 'conversations with eminent persons'. In contrast, although Hester Lynch Piozzi was confident that a letter-writing Johnson was an authentic Johnson (a confidence which extended to the inclusion of some of her letters to him, at the publisher's request), she seemed uneasy about whether Johnson commodified through letters really resembled her friend. She compared the effect to something uncanny, like 'waxen figures modelled from the life, and dressed with such minuteness of propriety – they startle while they please'.¹¹⁸

Whether biography through letters involved misrepresentation or the perfect representation which Mason promised his readers, the coupling of lives and letters was assured. Curll was ahead of his market in suggesting that Pope's letters would make a perfect life; the next generation caught up with him.

Index

- Abelard, 98, 102, 111–20
Abergavenny, Lady, 153
Adair, Gilbert, 128
Addison, Joseph, 4, 52, 188–9, 214, 344
address
 forms of, 10, 35, 37–8, 82, 146, 173,
 199–200, 202, 281, 288, 316, 321
 as letter destination, 6, 181, 235
address, petitionary, 173, 196, 200
addressee, *passim* and 6, 11, 14, 30,
 44, 84, 130–1, 146, 174, 213–14,
 217, 221, 223, 229–30, 237, 239,
 241, 243–5, 247, 257–60, 263,
 291, 294, 296–8, 301, 314,
 322, 334
adolescents, 71, 75, 79–80, 353
 see also children
adultery, 126, 152–67
Aesop, 205, 211
Agamemnon, 45
agony aunts, 62
Alfieri, Count, 154
Alfred, King, 181, 259–60, 374
Allec, Abraham, 162
Allen, Ann, 326
Allen, Ralph, 345
Almon, John, 189
Altham, James, Revd, 160–1
Altman, Janet, 26, 347
amanuenses, 19, 130, 254, 344
America, 130, 204, 225, 228, 240,
 243–4, 274, 378
Andrews, John, 218, 230
Andrews, Margaret, 319
anecdotes, 58, 217, 352
animals
 cats, 58, 120, 161, 184
 chameleons, 86, 269, 332
 dogs, 36, 100, 194, 358, 366
 horses, 24, 68, 76
 lions, 169, 192, 196
 wild beasts, 192, 194–5, 311
Annual Register, 100
Anois, Madame D', 40
anonymity, 31, 37, 129–30, 139, 141,
 151, 165, 174, 180, 196, 201, 207,
 289–90, 293, 298, 317
anorexia, 133, 361
Antinomians, 282, 304, 311–12
antiquarians, 30, 247–8, 251,
 258–61, 270
apostrophe (rhetorical figure), 156
Applebee, Mr., 131
apprentices, 75–6, 86, 158, 186, 189
Arbuthnot, John, 49
archives, 6–7, 253–6, 339, 390–1
Argens, Marquis D', 216
Argenson, Marquis D', 249
Aristanaetus, 97
Armenian, Letters from, 222
Arminians, 282–3
Ascham, Roger, 256
Ashdown (Berkshire), 259
Astell, Mary, 313, 318–19
Athenian Letters, 266–7
Atkinson, Christopher, 179–80
Atkinson, William, 153
Atterbury, Francis, Bishop of
 Rochester, 39
Atticus, 57, 183
Aubrey, John, 76
Augustan, 54–5, 182, 276
Austen, Jane, 332, 340, 392
Aylmer, Lord, 153
Baddeley, Sophia, 43
Baillie, David, 137
Baines, Paul, 127
Ball, Hannah, 320
Ballaster, Rosalind, 219, 389–90
Balzac, 45
Baptists, 283, 287–9, 315–17
Barker, Hannah, 180
Barnard, James, Revd, 299
Barrington, Lord, 194
Barthes, Roland, 93, 95, 99, 229, 363
Batman, 190, 327
Bayntun, Lady Maria, 157–8

- Beauchamp, Lord, 69–70
 Beckford, Richard, 204
 Beckford, William, 240
 Bedford, Duke of, 198
 Beebee, Thomas, 4, 11, 388
 Behn, Aphra, 252
Belfast News-Letter, 187
 Bellfield, Lady, 154–5
 Bellfield, Lord, 154–5
 Bender, John, 356
 Benjamin, Walter, 295
 Bennett, William, 179–80
 Benthein, Claudia, 3
 Bentley, Elizabeth, 164
 Berington, Joseph, 111, 114, 118
 Berwick, Lord, 206–7
 Bessborough, Lady Harriet, 74
 Bhabha, Homi, 215–16
 Bible, the, 11, 36, 64, 147, 159, 165, 186, 192, 203, 206, 262–3, 286, 288–9, 291, 294, 296, 298, 301–2, 305–10, 319–20, 323, 326
 Bickerstaff, Jenny, 124
 Bickham, George, 7
 Birch, Mrs, 167
 birds, 35, 92, 192
 Bishop of Sarum (Salisbury), *see* Burnet, Gilbert
 Blackhall, Dr Offspring, Bishop of Exeter, 292–3
 Blair, Hugh, 104
 Blake, William, 159
 Blandy, Mary, 18–19, 139–49, 152
 Bloom, Harold, 50
 bluestocking, 51
 body, 8, 18–21, 22, 32, 50, 53, 68, 88–91, 94, 96–9, 100, 109–10, 112–14, 124, 130–1, 133, 136, 143, 150, 153–67, 176–7, 189–90, 206, 210–11, 286, 304, 312, 320, 322–30, 344–5, 402–3
 arm, 322
 arse, 21, 177, 318
 blood, 142, 328
 breast, 110, 330
 ear, 251, 253, 256, 270, 324
 eye, 21, 76–7, 94, 96–8, 105, 124, 226, 232–3, 256, 270, 316, 323; *see also* tears
 feet, 284
 hair, 162, 166, 283, 307, 309
 hand, 8, 21, 33, 145, 177, 211, 232, 316, 323, 328; *see also* handwriting
 heart, 16, 22, 29, 53, 94, 99, 102–4, 115, 121, 134, 155, 199, 295, 312, 321, 326–8
 knees, 305, 311
 mouth, 21, 58, 88, 98, 244, 316, 323, 327–30, 402
 skin, 21, 29, 94, 99, 102, 110, 112, 124, 215, 332, 383
 tongue, 94, 96, 104, 131, 185, 199, 235
 and mind, 50–1, 58, 67, 73, 80, 86, 114, 118, 133, 155, 231–6, 240–1, 250–1, 265–7
 and soul, 132, 240–1, 290–1, 315, 318–19, 321, 324–30
 and voice, 22, 41–3, 83, 91, 104–6, 111, 117, 131, 137, 176, 198, 201–3, 205–6, 209, 288, 315, 323–5, 327, 330
 see also clothes
 Body, family, 310–11
 body politic, 20, 68, 139, 174, 176–7, 189, 191, 197–8, 201, 205, 344
 Bogle, George, 235
 Boleyn, Anne, 261
 Bolingbroke, Lord, 55, 183–4, 193, 195, 257, 277
 Letters on the Study and Use of History, 31, 247, 261–4, 274
 Bond, William, 104
 Boscawen, Frances, 22
 Boswell, James, 21, 57–9, 76, 78, 82, 189, 223, 271, 345
 Life of Johnson, 56, 352
 Bourdieu, Pierre, 170–1, 178, 192
 Boureau, Alain, 16
 Bousell, John, 287–8
 Bowers, Toni, 352
 Bowes, Andrew, 161
 Bradley, James, 129
 Bramah, Mr, 307–8
 Breitenberg, Mark, 52
 Breitingner, Johann, 260
 Brereton, Sir William, 254
 Brewer, John, 134

- Bristol, 197–8, 202–5
 Britannia, 181
 Broderick, Thomas, 237
 Brooke, Frances, 337
 Brooke, Harriot, 162
 Brookes's club, 212
 Brown, Thomas, 345
 Brutus, 181, 196, 277
 Brydone, Patrick, 240
 Buchan, Earl of, 270
 Bugg, Francis, 285–8
 Bull, John, 181, 193, 383
 Burke, Edmund, 13, 85, 359
 Burnet, Gilbert, 249, 253–4, 256, 261, 291–2
 Burney, Charles, 14, 16, 57, 352
 Burney, Frances, 25, 71–2
 Burns, Robert, 104
 Burton, Edward, 208
 Bury, Elizabeth, 315
 Butler, Judith, 331–2
 Byng, Admiral, 218
 Byron, Lord George Gordon, 332
 Byron, Mr, 164

 Cade, Catherine, 153
 Caesar, Julius, 188, 275, 277
Caledonian Mercury, 184
 Campbell, Alexander, 251, 263–4
 Campbell, Elizabeth, 165
 Campbell, Thomas, 222–3
 candour, 79, 173, 202, 285, 287, 308–9
 Candour, Son of, 182–3
 capital, 186, 243–4, 277–8, 339
 Carmarthen, Lady, 164
 Carré, Jacques, 62
 Carte, Thomas, 248, 250, 255–6
 Carter, Elizabeth, 266
 Carter, Philip, 350
 Carteret, Lord, 185, 187
Cassem, The Life of, 220
 castration, 53, 220, 382
 see also Abelard
 Catiline, 172
 Catiline the Second, 184
 Cato, 20, 30, 84, 277, 279, 378
 as persona, 171–2, 181–2, 188–93, 195–6, 374, 377
 Cato (Addison), 188, 376
 Cato of Utica (Deschamps), 188
 Cato, Ultonensis, 185
 Centlivre, Susannah, 38, 45
 character, *passim* and 24–7, 37–8, 48, 57, 84, 92, 95, 104, 111, 115, 117, 122, 125–6, 136, 141, 150, 163, 170–1, 190, 203, 207–8, 228, 233, 237, 245, 260, 262, 268–70, 279, 290, 298, 302, 306, 313, 316, 335, 346
 Chard, Chloe, 235, 238, 240
 Charles II, 261
 Charteris, Francis, 128
 Chartier, Roger, 9
 Chater, Daniel, 130
 Chatterton, Thomas, 135–6
 Chesterfield, 2nd Earl, 81
 Chesterfield, 4th Earl, Philip Stanhope, 28, 42, 56–7, 60, 62, 66, 68, 77–92, 177, 264, 350, 352, 356–9, 393
 Chichely, Lady, 124
 Chichely, Sir Thomas, 100
 childhood, history of, 63
 children, 8, 15, 20, 28, 35–6, 38, 47, 60–92, 122, 130, 154, 159, 161, 189, 198, 208–9, 264–5, 288, 291–3, 296, 354, 399
 China, 214–18, 225–6
 chinoiserie, 216, 381
 Christ, 29, 32, 282, 285, 289–90, 299, 304, 308, 311, 316, 322–30, 334
 Churchill, John, 206
 Churchill, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, 24
 Cibber, Colley, 79, 253
 Cibber, Susannah, 155
 Cibber, Theophilus, 155
 Cicero, 39, 49, 57, 83, 184, 188, 230, 294, 345, 347, 349
 Cincinnatus, 190
 cipher, 5, 95, 220, 278
 Cirencester, 198, 203
 Clarendon, 1st Earl, Edward Hyde, 250, 262
 Clarke, Edward, 244
 Clarke, Peter, 239
 Clarke, Samuel, 291, 296
 Clayton, Robert, Bishop of Clogher, 262
 closets, 55, 112, 177, 188, 190, 210, 303, 311, 319, 324

- clothes, 14–15, 40–1, 46, 54, 103, 113,
153, 167, 181, 186, 212, 214, 220,
242, 252, 274, 309, 327, 332, 342,
345, 349, 370, 400
see also veils
- Clover, Carol, 99
- Cluny, Alexander, 243
- code, 126, 138, 146, 151, 153, 368
see also cipher
- Cohen, Michèle, 43, 69, 387
- Colchester, 210
- Cole, William, 14
- Colley, Linda, 169, 238
- Combe, William, 361, 362
- compliments, 10, 38, 50, 52, 95–6,
120–2, 124, 142, 270, 273
- Concanen, Matthew, 183
- Confucius, 216
- Conner, Mrs, 153
- conversation, 3, 14, 21–3, 34, 43, 68, 80,
99, 109, 113–14, 118, 156, 167, 175,
190, 199, 208, 220, 241, 258, 264,
287, 294, 300, 309, 313, 318, 320,
331, 344–6, 372
- Conway, General, 178
- Cook, Elizabeth Heckendorn, 11, 344
- Cooke, Thomas, 183
- Cooper, Jane, 320
- Cooper, John Allen, 157
- Cooper, John Gilbert, 45
- copies, 5, 8–9, 128, 141, 340
- Corbellini, 46
- Cordiner, Charles, 229
- Cornbury, Lord, 262
- corruption, 29, 171, 177–80, 190, 192,
198, 202, 206
- Cotton, John, 254, 256
- Cowley, Abraham, 14
- Cowper, Sarah, 354
- Cowper, Spencer, 149–52
- Cowper, William, 23, 25, 36–7, 76, 170,
249, 344
- Coxe, William, 233–4, 238, 242
- Cradock, Joseph, 236
- Craftsman, The*, 183, 210
- Cranstoun, Captain, 139–49
- Crébillon fils, 266
- criminal biography, 125–6,
130, 132
- Croft, Sir Herbert, 134–6, 365, 367
- Cruger, Henry, 204
- Cumberland, Duke of, 155–6, 161–2,
165–7
- Cumberland, George, 317–18
- Cumberland, Richard, 317
- Curll, Edmund, 47–9, 51, 53–5,
59, 351
- Dadoun, Roger, 108
- Daily Advertiser*, 273, 284
- Dalrymple, Sir David, 280
- Dalrymple, William, 223
- Daubeny, George, 204
- Davies, Arabella, 65, 67–8
- Davies, William, 130
- Davis, Jane, 68
- Davis, Leonard, 22
- Dawks, Ichabod, 7
- Day, R. Adams, 117
- Dayrolles, Solomon, 90
- Decker, William Merrill, 9, 13
- Defoe, Daniel, 34, 35, 126, 293
- Degen, Catherine, 164
- deists, 247, 262, 282, 293–4, 296, 298,
300–1, 397
- Dennis, John, 48, 50
- Derrida, Jacques, 6, 339
- Dick, Quentin, 162
- Dickinson, Jonathan, 304
- Dillon, Sir John, 232
- divorce, 126, 152–67
- Dodd, Dr William, 64, 81, 357
- Doddington, Bubb, 84
- Doddridge, Philip, 31, 282, 294,
297–8
- Dodsley, Robert, 57, 62, 80, 353
- Dodwell, Henry, 31
An Epistolary Discourse, 31, 290–2
- Dodwell, Henry (junior), 31
Christianity Not Founded on Argument,
293–8
- Donne, John, 161
- Douglas, Lady Jane, 132–3, 135, 366
- Draper, Eliza, 11, 22, 101–4
- Draper, Elizabeth, 158–9
- Draper, Sir William, 194–6, 377
- Drennan, William, 187
- Drummond, Alexander, 232, 240–1
- Dryden, John, 50
- Dupaty, Charles, 237

- Dutton, Anne, 309–10
 Dyer, William, 340
- Earbery, Matthias, 255
 Earle, Katherine, 152
 Earle, Rebecca, 4, 338
 Eddis, William, 240
Edinburgh Magazine, The, 64
 elections, 30, 171, 179, 196–208, 219
 Ellison, Julie, 188–9
 Eloisa, 28, 111–23
English Letter-Writer, The, 37, 39
 Epictetus, 106
 Errington, Harriet, 162
 Erskine, David, 375
 Evelyn, John, 42, 250, 253
 Evelyn, Mary, 42
 excise, 20, 30, 171, 197, 208–12, 219
- fables, 192, 195, 205, 211, 213–14, 246, 262, 379
 fairy tales, 38, 213, 251, 274
 familiar letters, 5, 9, 12, 15, 19, 21, 23, 25, 35–6, 38–9, 44, 47, 49, 52–3, 60–75, 81–91, 103, 118–24, 126, 128, 131–3, 140, 150, 200, 213, 216, 218, 234, 244, 263, 269, 271, 273, 334
- Farquhar, George, 14, 48, 96
 Fénelon, 66
 Ferrers, Lord, 272
- fiction, 1, 8–9, 12, 16, 19, 38, 40–1, 43, 55, 58, 63, 68–9, 86, 94–121, 126, 129, 132, 135, 139, 146, 148, 151, 155, 157, 192, 211, 213, 216, 218–20, 239, 250, 252–3, 266–7, 272–3, 298, 302, 335, 360
- Fielding, Henry, 102, 163, 181, 194, 236, 253
 Finger-Cash, Jeremiah, 177
 Fitzroy, Lord Augustus, 156–7
 Fixsen, Mr, 308
 Flanagan, Tim, 206
 Fleury, Maria de, 308–10
 Fontaine, La, 78
 fops, 87
 forgery, 40, 127, 133, 135–6, 139, 361
 Forman, Charlotte, 373
 Foster, James, 136
 Foucault, Michel, 12, 164, 334
- Fowke, Martha, 104–5
 Fox, Charles James, 171–2, 174, 184, 206, 212, 278, 377
 Fox, George, 286
 franking, 1, 8, 12, 176, 340
 Franklin, Benjamin, 189
 Franklin, Colin, 81
 freeholders, 173, 181–2, 201, 209
 French, the
 language, 85, 90, 96, 138, 139, 154, 184, 201, 248, 387
 people, 37, 39, 40–1, 43, 45, 49, 85, 90, 96, 118, 138, 204, 227, 236, 241, 249, 252, 256, 328–9, 348, 350
 Freud, Sigmund, 6, 50, 205
- Gallagher, Catherine, 16
 Galley, William, 130
 Galloway, Joseph, 172, 184
 Gambier, Captain, 164
 Garrick, David, 345
 Gay, John, 24, 55, 181
Gazette, 172, 187, 273
Gentleman's Magazine, The, 13, 144, 341, 369, 398
 George I, 136
 George II, 62, 78, 89, 90, 176, 260, 275–6, 393
 George III, 62, 72, 78, 96, 100, 176, 193, 195–6, 258, 304, 355, 360
 ghosts, 109, 181, 186, 374
 Gibbon, Edward, 246, 248–50, 260, 269, 277, 279, 290, 301, 390
 Gibson, Edmund, Bishop of London, 289
 Giddens, Anthony, 17
 Giddings, Robert, 162
 Gildon, Charles, 54, 129
 Gilroy, Amanda, 16
 Glasgow, Nathaniel, 181
 God (as persona), 288
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 98
 The Sorrows of Young Werther, 99, 106, 109, 367
 Goldgar, Anne, 37, 348, 388, 390
 Goldsmith, Oliver, 219, 246–7, 250–1, 253, 255, 257, 274, 317, 381
 An History of England, 31, 389
 Citizen of the World, 216–18

- Gooch, Elizabeth, 103
 Gordon, Scott Paul, 334
 Gordon, Thomas, 172, 188–93
 Gower, Foote, 254, 390
 Grafton, Duke of, 178, 194
 Grand Tour, 69, 237, 239
 Grant, Anne, 235
 Gray, Arthur, 161
 Gray, Thomas, 9, 58, 241, 275, 382
 Green, Rupert, 257
 Gregg, William, 365
 Gregory, Dr, 67
 Grenville, Lady Hester, 123–4
 Griffith, Elizabeth, 28, 95, 103, 111,
 118–24, 148, 362
 Griffith, Richard, 28, 42, 95, 111,
 118–24
 Grignan, Madame de, 45–6, 73
 Grosvenor, Lady, 155–6, 161–2,
 165–7
 Grosvenor, Lord, 155–6, 161, 165–6
 Grundy, Isobel, 348, 377
 Guest, Harriet, 5
- Habermas, Jürgen, 5, 169
 Hacker, Thomas, 307
 Hackman, James, 134–6
 Haime, John, 320
 Halberstam, Judith, 99, 124
 Halifax, Lord George Savile, Marquis of,
 62, 66–7, 75, 77, 79, 91
 Hamilton, Duke of, 137
 Hamilton, Eliza, 385
 handwriting, 7–8, 29, 88, 127–8, 138,
 141, 151, 153, 186, 286, 349,
 354, 365
 Hanway, Jonas, 169–70, 174
 Hardwicke, Lord, 266
 Harrington, Earl of, 129
 Harris, Joseph, 165
 Harris, Thomas, 132
 Hastings (Sussex), 199
 Hastings, Warren, 375
 Hawkesworth, Sir John, 58, 344
 Hawkins, John, Revd, 299–301
 Hawkins, Sir John, 56
 Hayley, William, 248–9, 261
 Haywood, Eliza, 381
 Hearne, Thomas, 259
 Heath, Mr., 129
- Heatley, Arabella, 158–9
 Heloisa, *see* Eloisa
 Henry VIII, 53, 239, 261
 Hensley, Florence, 138
 Herbert, Lord, 90, 355
 Hertford, Lady, 70
 Hertford, Lord, 70
 Hervey, Christopher, 233, 242
 Hervey, James, 262, 311, 316, 326
 Hervey, Lord, 24
 Heywood, James, 48
Hibernian Patriot, The, 187
 Hill, Aaron, 104, 350
 Hill, John, 206–8, 379
 Hill, Rowland, 319, 341
 Hill, Sir Richard, 206–8
 Hill, William, the Hon., 206–8
 historians, 6, 30–1, 247–80
 and masculinity, 264–7
 of one's own times, 256–8, 262,
 268–80
 and romance, 251–3
 and sacred history, 264
 and secret history, 247, 250–1, 253,
 266–7
 and universal history, 215, 247
 Hoadly, Benjamin, 292–3
 Hobart, Sir Henry, 202
 Hobbes, Thomas, 76, 210
 Holland, Charles, 152
 Holland, Lord, 271
 Hollingshead, 270
 Homer, 52
 Honest Man, An, 182–3
 Horace, 55, 89, 351
 Horsley, Samuel, Bishop of St David's,
 299–300
 Howard, Catherine, 24
 Hughes, John, 111, 114, 117–18
 Hume, David, 252–3, 268, 274, 394
 Hunter, Thomas, 262
 Hunter, William, 1, 221, 234, 237
 Huntingdon, Lord, 88–9
 Huntington, William, S.S., 31, 282–3,
 303–11
 Hutton, Catherine, 65
- India, 30, 104, 223–5, 242, 316–17,
 380, 383
 Ingrassia, Catherine, 47

- ink, 129, 167, 237, 244, 286
and lemon juice, 139, 156
- Ireland, 30, 136, 138, 185–8, 206,
222–3, 381–3
- Irwin, Eyles, 239
- Italy, 227, 234, 237, 239–42
- Jackson, William, 138
- Jacobites, 126, 136–8, 140, 175, 203–4,
210, 255, 260–1, 366, 379
- Jagodzinski, Cecile, 338
- Jeffries, Elizabeth, 148–9
- Jemmat, Catherine, 103
- Jesuits, 194, 203, 205, 218, 225–8
- Jew Bill (1753), 198, 203, 264
- Job, 118
- Johnson, Samuel, 14, 21, 28, 34, 39, 48,
56–9, 71–2, 92, 146, 194–6, 251,
271, 297, 316, 333, 341, 348, 352,
358, 377, 394–5
- Johnston, Charles, 216–17
- Jolly, John, 158–9
- Jones, Mary, 11, 38, 45, 340
- Jones, Sir William, 199, 378
- Jones, Vivien, 63
- Jones, Wendy, 55
- Junia, 191
- Junius, 12, 171, 181, 190, 377
Letters, 30, 189, 193–6, 365
- Justice, Elizabeth, 370
- Juvenal, 196
- Kamuf, Peggy, 111, 114
- Kauffman, Linda, 111, 114
- Keats, John, 363
- Keen, Paul, 169–70
- Ketch, Jack, 181
- Keymer, Thomas, 341
- Kilmarnock, Earl of, 136
- Kindersley, Jemima, 236, 242
- Klein, Lawrence, 5, 17–18
- Klein, Melanie, 330
- Knowles, Lady, 164
- Knowles, Thomas, Revd, 299
- Kristeva, Julia, 109
- Ladies Complete Letter-Writer, The*,
40–2
- Lamb, Lady Caroline, 74–5
- Lamb, William, 74
- Lambert, Marquise de, 40, 63, 66, 73, 79
- Landry, Donna, 213
- Langford, Paul, 24, 209–11, 260
- Lansdowne, Lord George
Granville, 54
- Lauzun, Armand Louis de
Gontaut, 155
- Law, William, 329
- Leapor, Mary, 340
- Lefevre, Mrs, 321
- Lennox, Lady Sarah, 96, 155, 157
- letter reading, *passim* and 2, 14, 18, 25,
27, 31, 38, 55, 57–8, 65, 69, 91,
93–125, 138, 149, 152–68, 175–6,
178, 185, 187, 192, 198, 200, 209,
211, 220, 230, 236, 241, 243–4,
247, 257, 265, 271–2, 279, 285,
287–8, 299, 310–11, 314–15, 320,
331–6, 343
- letters
apologies, 22, 35, 205, 207, 230
begging letters, 2, 131, 158–9
blackmail letters, 2, 60
burnt letters, 153, 286
circular letters, 315
commerce des lettres, 258
courtship letters, 15
covers of, 57, 115, 150, 382
letter-books, 8, 101
rejection letters, 2, 98, 337
and genre, *passim* and 2, 10, 34, 39,
44, 61, 106, 181, 197, 200–1,
208, 237, 332
letters from the dead to the living,
22, 67, 176, 196, 316,
322, 345
letters of assignation, 20
letters of condolence, 26, 39,
45–6, 141
letters of congratulation, 26,
176, 314
letters of gallantry, 15, 39, 48,
93–124; *see also* love-letters
letters of instructions, 130, 159,
209–11, 227, 256, 314
letters of introduction, 1, 3
letters of recommendation, 3, 90,
161, 167
letters of thanks, 36, 72, 200, 202,
205, 256, 313

- and other genres
 dancing, 25, 345
 dialogues, 25, 171, 229, 258, 296, 298, 357
 drama, 10, 93–4, 181, 183, 188, 214, 240–1, 304, 332
 elegy, 58, 277, 302, 316
 essays, 61, 103
 historiography, 31, 208, 234, 246–7, 250–1, 256–7
 hymns, 159, 285, 316, 318, 325
 journals and diaries, 165–6, 229, 241, 313
 last words, 130–1, 134, 136, 143, 146, 311, 343
 memoirs, 264–8, 270–1, 321
 mock-genres, 15, 84, 131, 181, 201, 203, 205
 news, 7–8, 10, 26, 174, 197, 201; *see also* newspapers
 periodicals, 174, 197, 296
 poetry, 48, 93, 105, 111, 181, 322
 pornography, 45, 105, 118, 163
 prayers, 285, 290, 313, 317, 319, 324–5
 satires, 48, 201
 sermons, 32, 61, 66, 186, 284–5, 290, 316–19, 321
 sketch, 26, 235
 songs, 10, 160, 201, 318
 travel writings, 30, 229–35, 237, 244–5
 and advice, 4, 10, 20, 28, 34, 38, 40, 47–8, 54, 60–94, 98, 101, 175, 186, 192, 229, 296, 306, 321, 324, 329
 and argument, 4, 6, 31, 44, 170–1, 173, 184–5, 187, 195, 200, 203, 208–9, 211, 244–5, 247, 252, 259, 264, 267, 282–311, 332–3
 and authenticity, 8, 16, 55, 57, 59, 101, 111, 127–8, 131–2, 136, 147, 158–9, 181, 205, 231, 233–4, 257, 271, 301, 306
 and authority, 13, 31, 60, 62, 65–6, 73–4, 81, 86, 112, 119, 136, 181, 187, 216, 233, 252, 260, 262, 264, 271–2, 282, 284, 288, 290–3, 297–9, 304–8, 311, 334
 and biography, 10, 16–17, 34, 47–59, 63, 71, 89–92, 101, 122, 125–6, 130, 142, 152, 170, 180, 185, 208, 214, 245, 252–3, 254, 259, 279, 285, 303, 314, 321–2
 and business, 19, 39, 74, 83, 95, 97, 101, 171, 175, 178–9, 199, 206, 209, 243–4, 256, 331, 334
 and confession, 56, 112, 115, 136, 155, 220, 226, 240, 253, 289, 313, 317, 320
 and emotions, *passim* and 16, 18, 32, 67, 76, 152, 159, 171, 194, 210, 215, 333
 and food, 69, 100, 122, 133, 153, 322, 329–30, 361
 and legal evidence, 125–30, 144–5, 150–2, 177–80, 311
see also address; copies; familiar letters; fiction; ink; love-letters; paper; post; seals; signature; subscriptions (epistolary); time
 Lettice, John, 232, 235
 Levi Strauss, Claude, 359
 Lhwyd, Edward, 258–9
 libertinism, 48, 93, 98, 118, 147, 174, 290, 373
 Ligonier, Lady, 154
 Ligonier, Lord, 154
 Lincoln, Lord, 220
 Linebaugh, Peter, 18
 literary canon, 1, 11–19
 Livy, 255, 276, 390
 Locke, John, 14–15, 76, 80, 231, 290–1, 306–7, 322
 Lockman, John, 225
 Lofft, Capel, 173
London Chronicle, 236, 343
 London Corresponding Society, 211
London Journal, 188
 Loud, Mr, 308
 love-letters, 10, 93–124, 126, 134–6, 152–67, 200, 202, 331, 360–1, 371
Lover's Pacquet, *The*, 104
 Lowrey, Captain James, 132
 Luffman, John, 242
 luxury, 171, 214, 277–8
 Lynch, Deidre Shauna, 24
 Lyttleton, Lord, 219–20

- M—, Sir William, 156–7
 Macaulay, Catherine, 247, 257–8, 265–6
 Mackenzie, Henry, 86, 107
 Maclaine, James, 133
 Macpherson, James, 183, 255–6
 Madan, Judith, 117, 370
 Madden, Samuel, 226
 Magnuson, Paul, 337
 Mahomet, Sake Dean, 224–5
 Mahony, Mary, 324
 Maintenon, Madame de, 253
 Malone, Edward, 340
 Manley, Delarivière, 54
 Mann, Horace, 31, 269–79
 manuals, 9–11, 16, 28, 33–42, 44, 65, 75, 94–5, 97–8, 104, 126, 186
 manuscript, 4, 6–9, 55, 58, 66, 100, 110, 129–30, 138, 142, 144–5, 156, 159, 186, 208, 253–7, 261, 265, 274, 286–8, 295, 390
 Mar, Earl of, 137
 market forces, 48, 53–9, 64, 103–4, 118, 122, 132, 171, 247–8, 250–1, 254, 263–5, 285–6, 303, 349, 366
 Martin, John, 65
 masks, 24, 79–81, 88–9, 179, 194, 214–15, 228, 298, 324, 331–2, 358, 383
see also personae
 Mason, William, 9, 58, 364
 masquerades, 24, 181, 212, 214–15, 220–1, 228, 241, 255, 266, 273, 332, 382
 Masters, Mary, 103
 Matthews, John, 111
 Mead, Richard, 259–60, 262
 medicine, 2, 19–20, 66, 82, 98, 102, 148, 176–7, 210, 218, 285, 310–11, 320, 322, 324, 344, 369
 Melbourne, Lord, 43
 Member of Parliament, 173–6, 179, 192, 198–207, 209–11
 Methodism, 32, 281–2, 284, 289–90, 294, 303, 305, 309, 312, 318–30, 339
 and groaning, 325
 and new birth, 322, 326–8
 Miller, Nancy K., 26
 Milton, John, 11, 158, 184, 224, 310, 349
 ministers, Christian, 287, 303–11
Mirror, The, 78
 mirrors, 38, 77–8, 356
 Modlieski, Tania, 108
 Molesworth, Viscount, 186
 monarchy, 176–7, 219, 227, 253–8, 260–1, 274
 Monconseil, Marquise de, 86
 Monod, Paul, 138
 Monro, John, 315
 Montagu, Elizabeth, 45, 338, 345, 364
 Montagu, Lady Mary Wortley, 53, 61, 65, 67, 221, 231, 239, 331, 343, 347, 351, 358, 368, 380, 394
 Montaigne, Michel de, 253
 Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de
 Secondat, Baron de, 218, 221, 381
Monthly Review, The, 217
 Moody, John, 128
 More, Hannah, 204, 206
 More, Henry, 324
 Morgenstern, Mira, 108
Morning Chronicle, 176
 Morton, Elizabeth, 308–9
 Mowl, Timothy, 267–8
 Muralt, B at Louis de, 236
 murder, 126, 130, 135, 140–52
 Murray, Grace, 327–8
 Murray, John, 265
 Murray, Miss, 140–1
 Murray, Richard, 73
 Muse, the, 50–1
 nature, 13, 17, 19, 28, 34, 61, 77, 82, 89, 131, 133, 172, 215, 230, 237–9, 249, 251, 276, 329, 334, 390, 392
 and women, 40–7, 66, 148
 Nelson, T.G.A., 63, 80
 Newgate, 130–1, 180
 newspapers, 2, 12, 26, 135, 163, 165, 172–4, 178–80, 182, 186–8, 200, 211–12, 271–4, 288, 310, 332, 335, 345, 372, 378
 Newton, John, 320–1, 345
 Nicolson, William, 253, 255–6, 259, 391
 noble savage, 216, 243, 358
 Norfolk, 198, 201

- Norfolk, Duke of, 197
 Norris, John, 291, 318–19
 North, George, 259–60
 North, Lord, 177, 274, 276
 Norwich, 197, 201–2
 Nugent, Robert, 203–4
 Nugent, Thomas, 242
 nuns, 28, 44, 95, 111–23, 240, 309
 see also Eloisa; Portuguese Nun
- Obolus, 184
 oedipal relations, 69, 88, 119, 264–5,
 333
 female oedipal, 108–10
 triangles, 50–1
 Oldcastle, Humphrey, 183
 Oldmixon, John, 250, 263
 Oliver, Samuel, 159–60
 Olympics, 259
 Ordnance, Board of, 178
 Ormond, Duke of, 254
 Ormonde, Duchess of, 53
 Orton, Samuel, 132
 Osborn, Mary, 164
Ossian, 136
 Ossory, Countess of, 45–6
 Otway, Thomas, 49
 Ovid, 83, 104, 390
 Oxford Gentleman, 297
- Paine, Thomas, 31, 298, 301–3,
 319, 398
 Paley, William, 144
 Palmer, Samuel, 65
 Paoli, General, 189
 paper, 7, 8, 14, 16, 18, 26, 29, 58, 78,
 94–5, 99, 110, 124, 128, 134, 200,
 234, 236–7, 244, 253, 285–6, 295,
 330, 340, 361
 parents, 20, 28, 60–92, 143, 145–6, 156,
 166, 189
 Parker, John, Revd, 319
 Parker, Mr., 314
 Paul, William, 136
 Pearsall, Richard, 319
 Pelham, Henry, 131, 195
 Pembroke, Lady, 355, 358
 Pembroke, Lord, 355, 358
 Penfold, William, 158
 Pennant, Thomas, 229
- Pennington, Sarah, 64
 Penrose, John, 36
 Percy, Thomas, 12, 340
 periodicals, 2, 33, 50, 60, 106, 174, 183,
 191, 373
 Perreau brothers, the, 128, 139
 Perrin, Dennis, 74
 Persians, 218–21, 266–7
 personae, 11, 12, 20, 24, 30, 37–8, 61,
 78, 83, 87, 89, 103, 154, 164,
 171–2, 177–96, 200, 204–6,
 212–21, 223–8, 252, 260, 265, 288,
 293–4, 297–8, 340, 346, 350, 373–4,
 380, 382, 393
 Pettit, Alexander, 275
 Philalethes, Rusticus, 259–60
 Philaleutheros, Anglicanus, 189
 Philanthropos, 184
 Philips, Katherine, 48, 53, 340,
 349, 351
 Phillips, Ambrose, 188
 Phillips, Sir John, 203–4
 Phillips, Teresia Constantia, 370
 Philoclericus, 20
 Pickworth, Henry, 285–8
 Piggott, Stuart, 258
 Pigot, Lord, 224
 Pilkington, Laetitia, 351, 370
 Pinkerton, John, 271
 Piozzi, Gabriel, 71–2
 Piozzi, Hester Lynch, *see* Thrale, Hester
 Pitt, William (the elder), 123–4,
 195, 276
 Pitt, William (the younger), 173
 plain style, 15, 26, 36–7, 175, 184,
 186–7, 189–90, 193, 204–6, 208,
 284, 294, 296, 318–19
 Platonic love, 28, 94, 103–8
 Pliny, 14, 39, 49, 348–9
 Plumb, J.H., 345
 Pocock, J.G.A., 172
 politeness, 3–4, 11–12, 15–16,
 23, 32–3, 36–8, 43–6, 58, 60–92,
 106, 122, 131, 148–9, 161, 166, 170,
 192, 194, 196, 202, 205, 210, 229,
 266–7, 289, 292–3, 297, 304–11,
 313, 319, 332, 334, 342, 347, 358,
 368, 388–9
 Ponsonby, Frederick, 83
 Ponsonby, Lady Sarah, 126

- Pope, Alexander, 11, 13, 28, 34, 39, 43,
47–56, 111, 121, 188, 261, 341–2,
348, 350–1, 385
- Porter, John, 104–5
- Portland, Duchess of, 345, 388
- portraits, 18, 54, 143, 343, 351, 364,
379, 388
- Portugal, 244
- Portuguese Nun, 19, 41,
111–23, 159
- post
- post, robbing, 129
 - postage, 12, 94, 303, 335, 398; *see also*
franking
 - postal processes, 4, 6, 25, 100, 103,
122, 127, 138, 141–2, 154–5, 165,
200, 211, 217, 339, 340–1,
345, 398
- Post Office, the, 138, 139, 211,
269, 341
- postman, 23, 99, 139, 150–1, 154, 341
- postscripts, 210, 292, 308, 331
- Potts, Thomas, 136, 366
- prayer, 115, 132, 290, 312–13, 315, 319,
324–5
- Prescott, Isaac, 163
- Prescott, Jane, 163
- Priestley, Joseph, 31, 175, 298–301
- print, 2, 4, 6–10, 15, 18, 20–1, 23–5, 27,
48, 53, 55–7, 66, 75, 94, 103, 118,
122, 159, 163, 165, 172, 177, 183,
186, 197, 200–1, 208, 211, 233, 241,
246, 254–5, 258, 265, 274, 282,
284–90, 291, 305–11, 335, 338–9,
378, 390
- see also* manuscript
- printers, 131, 152, 172, 181, 186–8, 189,
193, 199, 253, 289
- prints (graphic), 195, 200, 350, 364
- Prior, Matthew, 53
- prisons, 100, 112, 130, 133–4, 143,
160, 366
- privacy, 3–6, 9, 289
- private and public, 3–6, 41, 47, 52, 55–7,
62, 70–1, 75–7, 85, 91, 112, 118,
126–7, 137, 139, 143, 183, 192,
199–200, 206–7, 211, 214, 220, 228,
241, 244, 252, 270, 273, 279–80,
284, 289–90, 303, 309, 337–8, 347,
373, 391
- Proud, Joseph, 287–8
- pseudonymity, 12, 24, 174, 178, 182
- Public Advertiser*, 193
- Public Ledger, The*, 217
- public sphere, 169, 173
- punctuation, 8
- Quakers, 151, 181, 285–8, 340
- Queen Anne, 24, 257–8, 261, 346, 365
- Queen Mary, 290
- Queensbury, Duchess of, 137
- Queensbury, Duke of, 137
- Radcliffe, Ann, 45, 108, 358
- Rajan, Balanchandra, 223
- Raleigh, Sir Walter, 184
- Ramblers Magazine*, 163
- Rambouillet, Madame de, 53
- Reading (town), 210
- Reay, Martha, 134–5
- Redford, Bruce, 56
- Reeves, Marjorie, 11
- republic of letters, 4, 20, 32, 37, 56, 214,
225, 247, 255, 258, 263, 288,
291, 389
- Richardson, James, 354
- Richardson, Samuel, 26, 31, 42, 45, 53,
69, 94, 103, 347, 351
- The Apprentice's Vade Mecum*, 75
 - Clarissa*, 19, 44, 63, 69, 87, 99, 106,
109, 134, 141, 146, 358
 - Familiar Letters on Important
Occasions*, 5
 - The History of Sir Charles Grandison*,
106, 339, 346, 376
 - Pamela*, 69, 102, 181
- Robertson, William, 253
- Robins, John, 178
- Robinson, John, 99
- Robson, John, 329–30
- Rochefoucauld, La, 60, 66
- Rochester (town), 210
- Rochfort, Arthur, 154
- Rogers, Hester Ann, 324
- Rogers, Nicholas, 6, 196–8
- Roman history, 83, 264–5, 275–8
- romances, 10, 31, 106, 135, 146, 164,
168, 219–20, 224, 340
- and history, 246, 251–3, 266–7,
274–5

- Romans (classical), 37, 55, 84–5, 172, 182, 186, 188–90, 192–3, 196, 198, 212, 220, 224, 226, 231, 263–5, 275–7, 279
- Rome (Catholic), 226–7, 260–1
- Rosenberg, Daniel, 335
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 28, 93, 95, 106, 120–1
La Nouvelle Héloïse, 106–11
see also Eloisa
- Rowe, Elizabeth, 10, 11, 38, 53, 311, 340, 345
- Rowlands, Henry, 258
- Rudd, Mrs, 126, 139
- Russell, Lady Rachel, 11
- Russell, William, 247, 257
- Sabor, Peter, 267–8
- Sacheverell, Henry, 175
- St Paul, 315
- saints, 20, 240–1, 312, 314, 399
- Salisbury, Sally, 340
- Sancho, Ignatius, 340
- Sandwich, Earl, 90
- Sarum, Bishop of, *see* Burnet, Gilbert
- Saunders, Ann, 160
- Savage, John, 303–4, 321
- Saxons, 259–60
- Scaron, 39
- Scarry, Elaine, 323, 326–8
- School of Love, The*, 97
- science fiction, 225–8, 403
- Scotland, 181, 183–4, 223, 229, 230–1, 235, 248–9, 283, 325, 326, 341
- Scots, the, 15, 61, 92, 132–3, 136–7, 140, 145–6, 149, 183–4, 228, 241, 249, 253, 271, 383
- ‘Scourge’, *see* Bennett, William
- sea-captains, 15, 63, 68, 177
- seals, 8, 70, 115, 142, 231, 280
- Secker, Archbishop Thomas, 285
- secrecy, 6, 9, 19, 127, 137–9, 178, 192, 256
- Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky, 112
- Sekora, John, 277
- ‘Selim’, 178–9
- Seneca, 39, 49, 159, 345
- sensibility, 2, 27, 29, 45–6, 74, 78, 86–7, 97–9, 100–3, 106–10, 116, 120, 126, 134, 155, 190, 202, 239, 266, 269
- sermons, 61, 66, 74, 217, 234, 290, 292, 303, 305, 307–8, 317, 320–1, 324–5, 327–8
- servants, 4, 15, 29, 36–7, 49, 71, 80, 87, 127, 148, 150, 153–67, 176, 216, 297, 320–1, 334, 336
- Sévigné, Madame de, 40, 45–6, 73, 74, 119, 252
- Seward, Anna, 11
- Sewell, George, 292
- Shaftesbury, Anthony Ashley Cooper, 3rd Earl of, 4, 214–15, 374
- Shakespeare, 45, 122, 148, 194, 202, 346
- Sharp, Samuel, 237, 240
- Shebbeare, John, 225
- Sheffield, Lord, 188
- Shenstone, William, 339
- Sheppard, Jack, 131
- Sheppard, James, 128–9
- Sherman, Stuart, 228, 272
- shorthand, 8, 152, 339
- Shrewsbury, 198, 206
- signature, 10, 12–13, 20, 30, 37, 40, 65, 94, 139, 146, 151, 173, 181–4, 186, 188, 193, 195, 225, 228, 290, 340–1, 376
- Silverman, Kaja, 50
- sincerity, 19, 41, 49, 52, 78–81, 93–124, 131, 141, 155, 157, 168, 189, 226, 293, 298, 300, 334, 336
- Siskin, Clifford, 268, 275
- Sleeford (Lincolnshire), 285–7
- Sloper, William, 155
- Smith, Adam, 277
- Smith, Charlotte, 302
- Smith, Elizabeth, 353
- Smith, Richard, 135
- Smith, William, 131
- Smollett, Tobias, 15, 43, 223, 250, 372, 374, 387
The Expedition of Humphry Clinker, 13, 223, 328–9, 349
- Smyth, Agnes, 320, 324–5, 327, 399
- Solomon, Harry, 80
- Sophonra*, 69, 77
- South Sea Bubble, 179, 192
- Southey, Robert, 304
- Spacks, Patricia, 341
- Spain, 74, 232

- Spectator, The*, 96, 183, 214, 228,
 353, 364
 spelling, 34–5, 41–2, 46, 83,
 159–60, 348–9
 Spencer, Catherine, 162
 Spencer, Lady Georgiana, 74
 spies, 77, 100, 139, 220, 266, 382
 Sprat, Thomas, 14
 Squire, Francis, 248
 Stanhope, Eugenia, 64, 82, 357
 Stanhope, Miss, 90–1
 Stanhope, Philip, [a.k.a. 'Asiaticus'],
 224, 225
 Stanhope, Philip, [Chesterfield's
 godson], 81, 90–1
 Stanhope, Philip, [Chesterfield's son],
 81–92
 Stanley, John, 131
 Steedman, Carolyn, 18
 Steele, Elizabeth, 43
 Steele, Joshua, 345
 Steele, Richard, 4, 7, 24, 49, 97, 100,
 123–4, 214
 Steiner, George, 21
 Sterling, John, 183
 Sterne, Laurence, 11, 22, 94, 100–3, 120,
 228, 231, 255, 361
 Stone, Lawrence, 106, 120
 Stormont, Lord, 180
 Stout, Sarah, 149–52
 Strathmore, Countess of, 161
 Straub, Kristina, 360
 Strype, John, 255
 Stuart, Gilbert, 248
 subscriptions (epistolary), 8, 24, 36, 38,
 67, 72, 146, 261, 278, 287, 292,
 334–6
 Suffolk, Countess of, 87
 suicide, 126, 135–6, 150, 367
 Superman, 190, 327
 Swan, John, 148–9
 Swift, Jonathan, 13–15, 42, 54–6, 58, 80,
 99, 102, 171, 177, 180, 193, 261,
 283, 293, 351, 359
Drapier's Letters, 30, 171, 185–8, 374–5
 Switzerland, 233, 238
 syntax, 42–3, 46
 Talbot, Catherine, 47, 247, 266–7
 Talbot, Mrs, 284
Tatler, The, 100, 124
 Tattel, Samuel, 162
 Taylor, Thomas, 325
 tears, 8, 96, 98, 102, 117, 133, 141,
 154–5, 326, 360–1
 Temple, Sir William, 14
 tenderness, 29, 45–6, 54, 66–7, 69–70,
 72, 76, 87, 89, 92, 97, 100, 117, 121,
 123–4, 131, 141, 146, 150, 157, 159,
 267, 285, 314, 362
 Thicknesse, Philip, 387
 Thomas, Elizabeth, 48
 Thompson, E.P., 17
 Thomson, James, 249, 350
 Thornhill, Mr, 127
 Thrale, Hester, [a.k.a. Hester Lynch
 Thrale, Hester Thrale Piozzii], 14, 16,
 56, 60, 71–3, 337, 344, 348, 355
 Thrale, Queeney, 56, 71–3
 Thucydides, 266
 time, 8, 17, 23, 28, 68, 91, 100, 113,
 122, 124, 127, 132, 144, 192, 213,
 223, 228, 232–4, 245, 247–8, 253–8,
 269–73, 278, 287, 311, 313–15, 320,
 323, 325
 messianic time, 295
 sceptical time, 295, 397
 Topham, Edward, 235
Town and Country Magazine, 158
 treason, 127–8, 137–9, 184
 Trenchard, John, 172, 188–93
 Trosse, George, 320
 Turks, 73, 170–1, 191, 214, 216, 218–21,
 227, 233, 266, 382
 Turnbull, Sir William, 50
 Uffington, White Horse of, 259
 unconscious, the, 300–1, 332–3
 Unitarianism, 298–301
 utopia, 85, 217, 228, 242
 Vaughan, Samuel, 178
 vegetarianism, 329–30
 veils, 46, 81, 95, 112–14, 117, 155, 221,
 363
 Verhoeven, Wil, 16
 Verney family, 6, 42, 378
 Vesey, Elizabeth, 101
 Vickery, Amanda, 6, 9, 106
 Virgin of Nabis, 251

- voice, *see* body
 Voiture, 39, 45, 49, 53, 349–50
 Voltaire, 214, 248, 251, 262, 269,
 374, 380
- Wade, William, 165
 Wahrman, Dror, 172
 Wales, 203, 236, 325, 396
see also Welsh, the
 Walker, J., 308
 Walpole, Horace, 24, 31, 45–6, 58, 99,
 135, 218–19, 247, 251, 267–80,
 350, 382
 Walpole, Horatio, 257
 Walpole, Sir Robert, 84, 138, 178–9,
 181, 192, 198, 209–10, 219,
 275, 277
 Walsh, William, 53
 Warburton, William, Bishop of
 Gloucester, 57
 Washbourn, Edward, 153
 Washington, George, 212
 Watson, Richard, Bishop of Llandaff,
 301–3
 Watts, Isaac, 319
 Weber, Max, 164
 Welsh, Alexander, 144
 Welsh, the, 167, 223, 236
 Wesley, Charles, 318–19, 325–6, 328
 Wesley, John, 5, 8, 23, 281–3, 293–4,
 303, 305–6, 312, 318–19, 321–2,
 324–30, 340, 343
 Wesley, Samuel, 5, 402
 Wesley, Samuel junior, 65
 Wesley, Susanna, 65, 322, 324, 329, 398
 West, Richard, 241
 Westminster, 74, 197–9, 206
 White, Gilbert, 391, 394
 Whitefield, George, 289–90, 326
 Whitefoord, Caleb, 191
 Whyman, Susan, 6, 340, 378
 Wilkes, John, 69, 101, 174, 191,
 199, 276
 Wilkes, Wettenhall, 62, 349, 353
 Wilkinson, Mr, 310–11
 Wilkinson, Mrs, 310–11
 William of Orange, 260–1, 290
- Williams, Helen Maria, 100
 Williams, John, 230–1
 Williams, Joseph, 321, 324
 Williams, Raymond, 185
 Wilmot, Fanny, 153
 Wilmot, John, 153
 Wilson, Kathleen, 174, 178, 245, 333
 Wilson, Mr [a.k.a. Beau], 343, 371
 Windham, Thomas, 230
 Windham, William, 202
 Wise, Francis, 259–60, 262
 Wollstonecraft, Mary, 67, 385
 women, *passim* and 4, 10, 14–16, 18–21,
 27, 31, 33–4, 41–7, 49, 53–4, 58,
 61–4, 67–8, 71–5, 87, 93–124, 128,
 149, 151–2, 153–67, 169, 174,
 189–91, 198, 209, 214, 221,
 239–40, 250, 257–8, 262–3, 265–7,
 284, 296, 308–12, 315, 320–1,
 326–7, 331, 343–4, 349–50, 385,
 387–8, 391
 Wood, Anthony, 259
 Wood, William, 185–7
 Woodfall, Henry, 181, 194
 Woodstock, 210
 Wordsworth, William, 402
 Worgan, Sarah, 161
World, The, 273
 Wraxall, Nathaniel, 1, 193, 235,
 271, 377
 Wray, Sir Cecil, 206
 writing on the spot, 257, 385
 writing to the moment, 31, 129, 210,
 257, 267, 271, 295, 388
 Wycherley, William, 49–52, 54–5
 Wyrick, Deborah Baker, 180
- Xenophon, 62
- Yankee Doodle, 204
 Young, Edward, 214, 294–5, 311
Young Gentleman and Lady Instructed, 62
- Zeno, 193
 Zinzendorf, Count Niklas Ludwig von,
 284–5
 Žižek, Slavoj, 334