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Food and the Female Body:
Paralleling the Food Market and the Prostitution Market in John Cleland's *Fanny Hill*

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An abstract of
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Abstract

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By Mary J. Gray

This thesis examines the theme of consumption as the driving force behind the power structure present in John Cleland's *Fanny Hill.* The market emerges as the primary site in which to engage this theme. The analysis begins in the Covent Garden food market with Mr. Norbert as this scene serves to most directly parallel the food market with the prostitution market.

The first chapter explores consumption in its two major forms: gastronomic and commercial. The text highlights gastronomic consumption and how it operates to pit the woman as a consumable object. To accomplish this, Cleland uses the direct presence of food, the descriptive food language, the strategic placement of meals in relation to sex scenes, and the duality of the table and the mouth. These four uses of food emerge during Fanny's interactions with her sexual partners, marking the power dynamic of the consumer-consumed relationship. Following the discussion of gastronomic consumption is the commercial consumption in the prostitution market. Tracking Fanny's introduction, initiation, and sale within the prostitution market portrays her as consumable goods; ultimately, this demonstrates how her female marketers just as readily consume her as her male clients.

The second chapter examines how Cleland uses the concept of reverse consumption, the process by which the consumer becomes the consumed, to reverse the previously established power structure. Beginning with gastronomic consumption, the text looks at Cleland's focus on the mouth and his depiction of the vagina as a metaphorical, sexual mouth. By the physical positioning of the prostitutes' bodies and their use of sex for their own pleasure, Fanny and Louisa use reverse gastronomic consumption to assert power over Will and the flower boy. The next section explores how these two women pay the boys after sex, an action that denotes a reverse commercial consumption whereby the prostitutes prostitute the men.

Through highlighting the various forms of consumption and the concept of reverse consumption, the text closely tracks Fanny's development as a character, the question of whether or not *Fanny Hill* serves as an example of female empowerment, and, more broadly, the greater significance of studying food in literature.

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Table of Contents

Preliminary Pages

Distribution Agreement…… i

Approval Sheet……..…… ii

Abstract Cover Page……...…iii

Abstract……...…….. iv

Cover Page……...…v

Table of Contents……...vi-viii

Introduction……Pages 1-15

Argument……..Page 13-15

Chapter 1: Consumption in the Food and Prostitution Markets in *Fanny Hill*..Pages 16-53

Introduction……Pages 16-18

Section 1: Gastronomic Consumption: The Female Body as a Consumable

Object…….....Pages 18-39

Direct Presence of Food ……Pages 19-20

Use of Descriptive Food Language…….….. Pages 20-31

The Strategic Placement of Meals in Relation to Sex Scenes……... Pages 31-34

The Dual Functionality of the Bed and the Table……..Pages 34-37

Conclusion ……Pages 37-39

Section 2: Commercial Consumption: The Body as Consumable Goods… Pages 39-51

Introduction Into the Prostitution Market……...…Pages 40-42

Initiation into the Prostitution Market……Pages 42-43

Preparation for the Market and its Customers……Pages 43-44

The Transactions Begin……..Pages 44-46

Prostitution as a Business……...Pages 46-51

Conclusion ……Pages 51-52

Alternate Metaphors……...Pages 52-53

Chapter 2: Reverse Consumption and the Reversal of Power Within the Markets of *Fanny Hill*……..Pages 54-86

Introduction……....Pages 54-55

Section 1: Reverse Gastronomic Consumption and the Female Mouth……..Pages 55-76

The Mouth……..Pages 55-57

Vagina as Mouth……..…..Pages 57-68

Power Through Reverse Consumption……..…Pages 68-70

Power Through Pleasure……...…Pages 70-73

The Mouth and Power……..……..Page 74

Reverse Consumption and Power……...……...Pages 74-75

Conclusion……..……...Page 75

Section 2: Reverse Commercial Consumption and the Female Transactor..Pages 76-86

Introduction…….…...Pages 76-77

Reverse Commercial Consumption……....Pages 77-86

Conclusion Food for Thought……Pages 87-98

Disparate Views…….……Pages 90-93

Literary Implications…….…….Pages 93-95

Philosophical Implications……..……...Pages 95-96

Societal Implications……..……Pages 96-97

Conclusion…….……..…...Pages 97-98

Works Cited……..Pages 99-102

INTRODUCTION

When John Cleland published *Fanny Hill* or *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure* in 1749, he received a particularly harsh criticism from the bishop of London, Thomas Sherlock. Writing to the Secretary of State with a demand "to expose the Author and publisher to punishment" (Foxon 57), Sherlock offered his own take on the wide acceptance of the lascivious book, attributing its popularity to the "sexual self-indulgence of Londoners" (Sherlock). In his letter to the clergy and people of London and Westminster, the bishop writes how the pleasure the public receives from reading the novel gives "a strong indication...of the general taste" (Sherlock) of British society as a whole. While his statement primarily functions as a chastisement of the bawdy literary preferences of modern readers, Sherlock unintentionally identifies one of the major themes of the novel. He uses the word "taste" as a broad term to characterize preference; at the same time, this reference to taste opens the doorway to the exploration of another form of taste: the taste that works in relation with the senses. This form of taste comes directly into play during the gastronomic consumption of food, a major theme in *Fanny Hill* often overlooked by scholars despite its emergence on virtually every page of the novel.

While Sherlock's early reference to taste fails to intentionally examine gastronomy in the novel, Jody Greene picks up on the presence of taste in *Fanny Hill* in her article "Arbitrary Tastes and Commonsense Pleasures: Accounting for Taste in Cleland, Hume, and Burke." Greene argues for a direct link between the sense of taste and the sensuality of sex: "the senses form a foundation for taste and ensure a common relation to [sexual] pleasure" (Greene 235). She examines the intersection of taste and

sex, referencing the words of Mrs. Cole, who comments on "those arbitrary tastes that rule their appetites of pleasure with an unaccountable control" (Cleland 153). Furthermore, she makes the astute observation that "Given the virtually hallowed status Cleland's *Memoirs* has come to hold in recent years in studies of the history of sexuality, in fact, it is somewhat surprising to note how little attention has been paid to the actual language in which sexual practices and preferences are described" (Greene 240), particularly in relation to food. "Although the word 'taste' appears 25 times in the novel," Greene argues, "critics have passed over the aesthetic vocabulary without comment" (Greene 240). While substantial scholarship examines the themes of sex, sexuality, gender, femininity, and power in the novel, very little work exists on taste or other gastronomic concepts that directly intersect with sex. Concerning the intersection of pleasure and taste, Greene writes, "the senses are the great originals in all our ideas, and consequently, all our pleasures" (Greene 235), highlighting the importance of the senses in relation to sex.

Yet another notable use for the term taste emerges in the context of literature: taste with regards to theory. Sensory taste often functions as a metaphor for the reading and scholarly criticism of texts. In *Literary Theory: An Introduction*, Terry Eagleton delves into the place taste holds in the realm of literary criticism, particularly concerning the objective interpretation of texts. Regarding this objectivity of literature, Eagleton writes, "it will not do to see literature as an 'objective,' descriptive category...literature does not exist in the sense that insects do, and that the value-judgments by which it is constituted are historically variable, but that these value-judgments themselves have a close relation to social ideologies" (Eagleton 14). Eagleton's analysis on taste highlights

taste as a vehicle by which to critically respond to culture. He asserts that "[value-judgments] refer in the end not simply to private taste, but to the assumptions by which certain social groups exercise and maintain power over others" (Eagleton 14), reinforcing his argument for the wider significance that taste comes to hold on a societal level. If Sherlock views taste as a general preference and Greene as a sensory mechanism of the mouth, Eagleton's assertions work to bridge these two conceptions within the context of literature. His critique on sensory taste as a metaphor for reading literature, paired with Greene's scholarly work identifying the relation between taste and sex in *Fanny Hill,* provide the basis for exploring the larger connection existing between food and sex.

Taste and sex pertain to one another on a variety of levels, an association that appears most prominently when examining these two concepts in relation to the body. From a sensory standpoint, both taste and sex cater to a specific desire of the senses, thereby providing pleasure and satisfaction. Furthermore, the very actions associated with taste and sexuality bear similarities. Both the physical acts of consumption and having sexual intercourse prove to be life-giving: eating by providing sustenance to the body and sex by engendering life. Examining the similarities between taste and sex reveals their relevance to one another. While they both provide pleasure for the individual, they also function as essential elements necessary for the survival of society. In *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*, Simon Gikandi postulates that “ideas and ideals about taste...demanded powerful counterpoints built around notions of…difference” in the context of British debates “on the question of taste and the role of culture in the shaping of the modern identity” (Gikandi 7). Though taste and sex meet on the individual level, Gikandi’s claim

highlights the importance of responding to taste—and all associated concepts—on a societal and cultural level as well.

In his *Interpretations of Dreams,* Sigmund Freud directly argues for a connection between sex and food by his assertion that "Love and hunger, I reflected, meet at a woman's breast" (Freud 226). The passage appears alongside a brief, illustrative anecdote: "A young man who was a great admirer of feminine beauty was talking once—so the story went—of the good-looking wet-nurse that had suckled him when he was a baby: 'I'm sorry,' he remarked, 'that I didn't make a better use of my opportunity" (Freud 226). Nursed from the breast of this wet-nurse, the "young man" laments not taking sexual advantage of the nourishing act. Freud uses this statement to illustrate how the female breast serves as a locus of both food and sex: though it provides food to the suckling baby, it satisfies a different form of hunger from the desiring male. His words regarding the woman further depict the connection between sex and food:"[it] is the mother who gives life...and a child first nourishment" (Freud 226). As the vagina brings about this new life, and the breast provides milk, more points of connection between food and sex emerge; this reinforces how “love and hunger” meet at the site of the woman.

Before more closely examining the interrelation of food and sex, however, it remains necessary to look at food itself. For many scholars, food simply remains an object. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, food is "any nutritious substance that people or animals eat or drink in order to maintain life and growth; nourishment, provisions" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). As an object, several works of criticism regard it as such. For instance, Bill Brown has introduced a theory that focuses on the role of things in literature, arguing that "for even the most coarse and commonsensical things,

mere things, perpetually pose a problem because of the specific unspecificity that 'things' denotes " (Brown 3). This "specific unspecificity" provides the basis for a closer examination of "things" as even the most "coarse and commonsensical things" can have numerous uses and can be analyzed accordingly. Imagining things in ways that go beyond their typical cultural uses not only transfigures the things themselves but also those who make use of them. Though the primary functionality of something may fit within the standard bounds of society, the secondary function may entirely redefine and revolutionize established conceptions, while simultaneously opening the door for informative and thought-provoking metaphors to emerge. Food represents once such thing.

In her introduction to *Spilling the Beans: Eating, Cooking, Reading, and Writing in British Women's Fiction 1770-1830*, Moss also discusses the implications of "Thing Theory," stating, "'Thing Theory'...considers the ways in which literary texts imagine or admit the subjectivities of 'objects'" (Moss 4). While certain scholarship regards food on the single plane of objectivity, Moss goes a step further, viewing food as a complex entity that lacks a single identity. She claims that "Like money, then, food is an object" (Moss 7) but furthermore, "Like sex, it is a process" (Moss 7). This acknowledgement of food's complexity paves the way for an integral analysis of food itself but also the processes in which food comes into play. She writes that "food is always in process, being grown, harvested, stored, cooked, served, eaten, digested, and then expended (in physical, intellectual, or reproductive labour) or excreted [form]" (Moss 7). Here, Moss turns our attention to the various processes that center on food. Though the integral component of a farmer's harvest, a cook's preparation, an individual's consumption, or the body's

digestion, food itself ultimately represents a different object in each of these different states. As such, shifting lenses must be used when regarding these stages of food and the players involved in each stage.

In my analysis of *Fanny Hill*, only one stage of food's journey from ground to toilet will be examined: consumption. Consumption occurs after food's initial conversion from its natural form into something edible. At the simplest level, consumption—or eating—functions as the most direct form of the body's interaction with the physical object of food. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, gastronomic consumption can be defined as "the action or fact of eating or drinking something, or of using something up in an activity" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). In her introduction to *The Tropics Bite Back: Culinary Coups in Caribbean Literature*, Valérie Loichot analyzes consumption in relation to sex, recognizing the act of being consumed as the binding force of food and sex. While physical food disappears during consumption, the body becomes the metaphorical food of sex; Loichot writes, "Sexuality...gives us an entryway into articulating the relationship between the consumption of food and the consumption of human bodies" (Loichot xxxvi). Because "the sexual act is often represented in terms of metaphorical eating" (Loichot xxxvi), and the woman or sexual subject metaphorically transforms into the consumable, gastronomic consumption connects food and sex. Like taste, however, the term "consumption" can be viewed in various contexts. While the analysis thus far centers on gastronomic consumption—most directly linked to food—another form of consumption appears throughout the text: commercial consumption, which is "the purchase and use of goods, services, materials, or energy" (*Oxford English Dictionary*) and which functions as the underlying force that drives the marketplace.

In their book *Markets, Market Culture and Popular Protest in Eighteenth-Century Britain and Ireland,* Adrian Randall and Andrew Charlesworth analyze the market, beginning with the claim that "markets of one form or another have occupied a key place in the social, economic and political cultures of all peoples throughout recorded history" (Randall et al. 1). In their eyes, the eighteenth-century market proves similarly crucial to society on many levels; the authors note how "the market and market place also formed a concrete physical location and the centre for community interchange" (Randall et al. 1). While the majority of this interchange is economic, social and political interchange within the market is a possibility. For example, the market represents a place "where all classes would meet" (Randall et al. 1), and furthermore, where "relationships were made and developed" (Randall et al. 1). Although the authors emphasize the market as a place that enables the flow of money, things, people, ideas, and connections, the market varies depending on the context. Certainly, the physical space of the market exists, whether to sell food or other products. However, Randall, Charlesworth, Sheldon, and Walsh recognize "the eighteenth-century market was not merely a location for economic transaction between buyer and seller" (Randall et al. 12); it also represented "an abstract agency" (Randall et al. 1) or conceptual entity. This conceptual entity of the market proves crucial to an analysis that incorporates both the literal and the metaphorical.

While the eighteenth-century market can be viewed as a whole, it can also be broken down into its parts, or smaller sub-markets. One of the sub-markets of this time period, one which embodies both physical and conceptual dimensions, is the prostitution market. As John C. Beynon argues in his article "'Traffic in More Precious Commodities': Sapphic Erotics and Economics in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,*"

"the brothel becomes a microcosm of a burgeoning English market economy that encapsulates the values of practices of a capitalist economy" (Beynon 4). While the brothel represents a physical space where money buys sexual service, the brothel serves to embody the conceptual aspects of the prostitution market, of which the prostitute functions as the key player. As Lena Olsson observes in her introduction to *Eighteenth-Century British Erotica II Volume 4,* a general fascination with the "figure of the prostitute" (Olsson vii) exists; Olsson claims, "the lives and activities of prostitutes have been a favourite subject since the early days of erotic literature" (Olsson vii). During his discussion of the prostitution market, Beynon references Luce Irigaray, who asserts that "the prostitute is a living *locus clasicus* of exchange value" and that "the qualities of woman's body are 'useful'" (Beynon 5). While the prostitute represents a tangible object within the prostitution market, this scholarship demonstrates how she transcends purely physical objectification and simultaneously becomes a concept. Moss reinforces this transcendence when she writes, " the equation between the consumption of food and the production of morality appears most starkly in relation to...prostitution, [a state] in which women's bodies are economically active in a way that men's cannot be" (Moss 23). Moss's statement not only analyses the consumption of food in relation to morality and prostitution but also identifies the market as a space in which to examine different views concerning males and females.

To better understand the power dynamics at work in the sexual realm, it remains necessary to take into account the changing conceptions of masculinity and femininity in the eighteenth century. During that time period, much centered on sexuality and sensibility. The sentiments towards sexuality generally serve to contextualize the space in

which to view the two key players: the male and the female. Tim Hitchcock highlights the existence of this change in "Demography and the Culture of Sex in the Long Eighteenth Century," claiming, "It is perhaps in this context that one can most clearly see the relative changes in masculinity and femininity which characterised the eighteenth-century as a whole" (Hitchcock 75). Furthermore, he notes the major differences between the perception of the sexes and the evolution of thought accompanying these evolving perceptions, stating, "gradually, over the course of the century women were encouraged to see themselves as passive, lacking sexual desire" (Hitchcock 75) as substantiated by the observation that "[there was] a new onus on male activity and female passivity" (Hitchcock 75).

Amidst these evolving male-female sexual associations, one of the various effects of the active-passive dynamic between the genders is a varied conception of seduction. Deeming seduction a major factor in the male-female relationship, Hitchcock declares "seduction to be the central sexual relationship between women and men; and as importantly, that this was a different form of sexual relationship to that depicted in late-seventeenth-century literature" (Hitchcock 74). Ultimately, however, the significance of seduction in the sexual relationship between men and women arises from its enabling the theme of power to emerge. As Hitchcock attests, "at the heart of eighteenth-century conceptions of seduction was a new power relationship" (Hitchcock 75).

While Hitchcock examines the way in which seduction specifically confers power within the sexual relationship, the power dynamic as a whole consistently emerges during sex—not simply during the act of seduction. In her analysis in "'This Tail Piece of Morality': Phallocentric Reinforcements of Patriarchy in *Memoirs of a Woman of*

Pleasure," Patsy S. Fowler directly acknowledges the relationship between power and sex, claiming, "*Memoirs* is obviously about sex, and it is through sex that the power struggle between women and men is at its most basic level" (Fowler 51). Furthermore, she relates this power struggle back to sexual desire, bridging sex and power in her statement that "sexual desire becomes the hegemonic apparatus that negotiates the struggles for power and ultimately preserves the ideologies of a culture dominated exclusively by men" (Fowler 51). Although the various authors analyzing sex in the eighteenth century agree on the place power holds in sex, the gender to which sex bestows this power remains largely up to debate.

Within the scholarship on eighteenth-century sexuality and sensuality, certain authors attest that the seduction, sex, and desire that mark the century empower the male while others argue in favor of the female. Fowler asserts that the power struggle that occurs during sex "ultimately preserves the ideologies of a culture dominated exclusively by men" (Fowler 51). On the converse side, Beynon examines how women achieve power by way of sex, despite the male-dominated current of the eighteenth century. As he argues, "while prostitution emblematizes how the traffic in women as commodities operates in a patriarchal, bourgeois society, *Memoirs* imagines ways in which women might direct such traffic and allow their pleasures and profits to travel secret, alternative routes" (Beynon 22). While these women function as mere commodities, and objectification typically connotes a lack of agency and power, Beynon illustrates how the commodification of the female actually enables empowerment to occur; he writes, "a manipulation of market practices, and an awareness that the transcendent power of the commodity/ fetish, the prostitutes of Mrs. Cole's shop/ brothel/ home consciously

transform themselves into powerful objects of desire" (Beynon 16). In this scenario, the knowledge of their objectified position enables the women to use the very vehicle that subjugates them to "den[y] their clients full knowledge of or absolute control over them" (Beynon 16). Ultimately, this trend goes one step further: the commodified female transforms into a "powerful object of desire" that exercises power over men in the sexual relationship and establishes "a degree of control over these systems" (Beynon 15).

Before basing the following consumption argument on the food-sex metaphor, it remains important to address one major challenge: the power dynamic assumptions made when comparing the consumption of food with the consumption of a living, independent human being. Simply put, inanimate food—the type present in the novel—cannot resist consumption in the way that a person can. Both stark similarities and major differences come to light when examining the consumption of food in relation to that of a human. However, consumption, like any other act or process, can be analyzed on both a literal and metaphorical level. The liberties I take in analyzing this complex relationship between food, sex, and consumption derive from the metaphorical aspects of consumption. It is the metaphor that enables the power relationship of the parallel to work, despite the fact that food cannot resist consumption in the same way that a human can.

Even though object-food cannot fight back, it still manages to find many ways to maintain power over its consumers. For example, humans entirely depend on food, unable to live without it; bad or expired food can cause a person to become sick or even die; and finally, the lack of food—in causing hunger—biologically causes a human to consume itself. As inanimate food can fight back in these small ways, the ability of the

human to more actively resist consumption bears less significance. In fact, traces of human attempts to exert power over food can be found throughout history, even extending into society today. One example to emerge is the television show entitled *Man v. Food*, premised on the mentality that food and humans stand at opposition with one another. When it comes to the consumer and the consumed, one wins while the other loses.

In her book *Spilling the Beans,* Moss builds on the relationship between consumption, food, and sex in eighteenth-century literature, emphasizing that it been overlooked by critics. She comments on the general lack of scholarly attention, claiming that "there is some work on food in modern fiction, especially in relation to ethnicity and post-colonialism and more on food in film, but even the scholarship on the body in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literature more or less ignores food and what people do with it" (Moss 6). Despite the minimal scholarship available, however, food remains an important aspect of analysis as it enables a more diverse and thorough reading of the body and the senses. In addition to examining sex and eating as two independent entities, a new space forms by which to simultaneously view these independent but interconnected processes together. In *Carnal Appetites: FoodSexIdentities*, Elspeth Probyn recognizes the importance of examining this space: "We have been 'reading' sex and money as culturally constituted aspects of identity for a long time, and we might now...turn to the table" (Moss 7).

In *A KWIC Concordance to John Cleland's Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,* Samuel Coleman and Michael Preston track the occurrence of every word used from the start of the novel, ranging from the more basic terms "become" or "tea" to less-used

terms such as "consummate" or "appetite." Despite Cleland's obsession with food and the consumption-centric focus ubiquitous in *Fanny Hill*, the actual terms "food" and "consumption" are not very prevalent in the text. For example, "food" only appears once in the novel (Coleman and Preston). Likewise, the term "consume," even taking into account the several different variations of the verb, only appears in *Fanny Hill* seven times, and the exact term "consumption" does not appear at all (Coleman and Preston). What the novel lacks in the actual usage of these exact terms, however, it hardly lacks in references or themes. The following analysis of *Fanny Hill* will expose that food and consumption appear from the beginning to the end of the novel. Furthermore, these two major themes serve to shape the way in which other themes in the novel are analyzed.

Argument

Throughout Cleland's *Fanny Hill* or *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*, the market emerges as a space of sexual power. Although a variety of different types of markets exist in the novel, Cleland examines the relationship between two specific markets: the physical space of the food market and the part-physical, part-conceptual entity of the prostitution market. During Fanny's career as a prostitute, she undergoes a variety of sexual and relational encounters in which consumption emerges as the underlying force of power. While gastronomic consumption functions in Fanny's encounters with her sexual partners, commercial consumption operates between her and her female marketers. Multiple parallels exist between these two forms of consumption, as well as between the corresponding markets. Fanny's encounter with Mr. Norbert—beginning in the fruit market and extending into the bedroom—serves as an encapsulation of the parallel

between the food market and the prostitution market and exposes consumption as the force that links the two markets. In addition to Mr. Norbert, however, Fanny's interactions with Mrs. Brown and Phoebe, the two women responsible for introducing and initiating Fanny into the prostitution market, reinforce how power is manifested through the theme of commercial consumption. In order to fully highlight the relationship between Fanny's sexual encounters and the theme of consumption, Cleland fills the scenes of Fanny's interactions with her male sexual partners with food by placing physical food within the text, incorporating the metaphorical language of food, employing meals alongside sex, and reassigning functions to the table and the bed. Within the scenes of Fanny and her female marketers, Cleland pointedly depicts Fanny's introduction, initiation, preparation for, and transaction within the greater market at large. Through the presence of food in *Fanny Hill*, Cleland establishes consumption—in both its forms—as the underlying force of power in the sexual encounters between Fanny and her partners, creating a parallel between the food market and the prostitution market and ultimately, the literal consumption of food and the metaphorical consumption of Fanny.

While Fanny's partners and marketers exercise power over her through gastronomic and commercial consumption, Cleland consistently incorporates another reading of consumption into the text: that of reverse consumption by which the consumed becomes the consumer. By consistently depicting the vagina as a mouth—specifically a female mouth—Cleland establishes a reverse gastronomic consumption of the male. During the scenes in which Fanny seeks out sex for her own pleasure, her female mouth consumes her sexual partner in a metaphorical, reverse manner. As a result of her use of pleasure, Fanny reasserts her agency and exercises power over her male sexual partners.

In addition to this reverse gastronomic consumption, Cleland demonstrates Fanny achieving reverse commercial consumption through incorporating scenes of transaction. The physical exchange of money for sex in which the prostitute pays rather than receives payment reverses the roles: the prostitute prostitutes the male. In so doing, she sexually subjects him in the exact same way that she has been subjected, achieving power through reverse commercial consumption. Despite Cleland using consumption as the force of power that subjugates Fanny, his inclusion of reverse consumption enables Fanny to reclaim and reassert her power.

CHAPTER 1:
Consumption in the Food and Prostitution Markets in *Fanny Hill*

Introduction

In the introduction to *The Sex of Things: Gender and Consumption in Historical Perspective,* Victoria de Grazia establishes a necessary link between power and consumption, examining the intersection of these themes in relation to women and the market. By its very nature, consumption involves a power struggle between two sides: the consumer and the consumed. While the consumer gains strength through consuming, the consumed weakens—sometimes even dies—in order to provide the other with strength. Because of the power structure between these two sides, de Grazia claims, a " myriad [of] conflicts over power…constitute the politics of consumption" (de Grazia 4). In *Fanny Hill*, the power conflict regarding consumption is manifested within the context of sexual relations, both between Fanny and her male clients and Fanny and her female marketers. Through her various sexual experiences, Fanny partakes in the struggle for power between the consumer and the consumed, experiencing firsthand how "women figure…as objects of exchange and consumption" (de Grazia 1).

In order to analyze consumption, it remains important to distinguish among the wide variety of contexts in which the word can be used. Of these various contexts, the two main uses of the word that will be examined in this work are gastronomic consumption and commercial consumption. While commercial consumption refers to the consumption active in the marketplace as a whole, gastronomic consumption refers to the literal intake of food used to sustain the body. During her introduction, de Grazia's analysis centers on this latter form of consumption, relating the concepts of power and

consumption through linking social relations to food; de Grazia claims, "sexualized metaphors applied to the circulation and consumption of goods may be taken to stand for elusive social relations" (de Grazia 2). Though the broad term "social relations" could encompass a wide range of relations, the form of social relations most prevalent in *Fanny Hill* is sexual relations. Not only, therefore, does the consumption of food function as a sexual metaphor but also as an exposition of the power gained through consumption, and consequently, the resulting metaphorical consumption of women enabled through the socio-sexual relations prevalent in the marketplace as a whole.

In *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction,* Michel Foucault dedicates a portion of his argument to analyzing the concept of space. He begins by explaining how different sexualities "haunt [different] spaces" (Foucault 47), using "the sexuality of the home, the school, the prison" as examples. Foucault delves into this intersection of sexuality and space by relating the two to power, describing how the sexuality of spaces "form the correlate of exact procedures of power" (Foucault 47). Like the home, the school, or the prison, the market emerges as a space of sexuality, specifically one in which a power-struggle exists. Foucault's analysis on space furthers the observations made by de Grazia, who depicts the market as a space where power is exerted, stating how the market functions as "the site where resources derived… [a] form of power" (de Grazia 8). One major way in which the market facilitates this assertion of power is through the "purchasing power acquired and expended in the market" (de Grazia 8). In accordance with Foucault's connection of sexuality and power in different spaces, Cleland exposes how the purchasing power in the market relates to the sexual power struggle, and ultimately, how power is achieved through consumption. To illustrate how the market

represents a sexual space driven by this consumption-based power, Cleland creates a scene of power that takes places in an actual market.

Section 1: Gastronomic Consumption: The Female Body as a Consumable Object

Though the scene occurs far into the novel, this chapter begins with Fanny's acquaintance with the rich Mr. Norbert in the Covent Garden market; the scene reinforces the market as a space of sexual power, paralleling the prostitution and food markets and highlighting how the theme of consumption emerges in both a literal and figurative sense. Fanny's introduction to Mr. Norbert transpires during an errand to a fruiter's stand, during which she experiences an unexpected encounter in the marketplace; she relates, "whilst I was chaffering for the fruit I wanted, I observed myself followed by a young gentleman" (Cleland 136). Amid Fanny's examination of the food at the fruiter's market, Mr. Norbert simultaneously conducts his own examination of Fanny. After his initial survey of her person, Mr. Norbert "came to the same basket that [she] stood at, and …began his approaches" (Cleland 136). This scene with Mr. Norbert in the Covent Garden marketplace serves as a microcosm of the novel because, through paralleling the food market with the prostitution market, Cleland creates a second parallel between the literal consumption of food and the metaphorical consumption of the woman. As this market scene encapsulates the principal argument of this thesis, the chapter begins with this scene and works both backwards and forwards in the novel.

Central to the food market scene with Mr. Norbert is the emergence of the theme of gastronomic consumption. Gastronomic consumption functions as the underlying force

of power operating in the food market. According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, gastronomic consumption is "the action or fact of eating or drinking something, or of using something up in an activity" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Throughout *Fanny Hill,* Cleland's emphasis on gastronomic consumption creates the depiction of the female body as a consumable object; this forms a parallel between the literal consumption of food and the metaphorical consumption of the female. Furthermore, it creates a power struggle between the consumed female—Fanny—and her consuming sexual partner. In order to illustrate the consumer-consumed relationship, Cleland incorporates food into his novel in four different ways: the direct presence of food, the use of descriptive language, the placement of meals in relation to sex scenes, and the dual functionality existing between the table and the bed. Ultimately, these four uses of food serve to highlight the consumption of the female body.

Direct Presence of Food

The first way in which Cleland depicts the female as a consumable object is through the direct presence of food in the novel. Of the many scenes where food appears in the physical form, the most prominent scene that emerges is that of the fruit market scene in which Fanny first encounters Mr. Norbert. Fanny describes how she "stepped over to a fruit shop in Covent Garden, to pick up some table fruit for [herself] and the young women" (Cleland 136). She intends to buy fruit for the purpose of her own gastronomic consumption. As Fanny stands at the shop examining the consumable fruit, however, Mr. Norbert conducts his own examination of her body. Like Fanny, Mr. Norbert's inspection at the market ultimately serves the purpose of consumption;

however, his desired consumption is of a different nature than her own. Cleland draws a parallel between the literal and metaphorical consumptions that will take place: while the fruit will be gastronomically consumed, Fanny's body will be sexually consumed.

The scene at the Covent Garden food market serves to establish Fanny as the consumed, illustrating the power struggle. In the introduction to *The Sex of Things*, de Grazia describes how the market represents "the site where resources derived…power" (de Grazia 8) and how the players within the marketplace either receive or are subjected to this power. She further argues that the power "recombine[s] to shape self-identities, sense of status, and demands for entitlement" (de Grazia 8); Mr. Norbert's actions reinforce de Grazia' claim, as he "loaded [Fanny] with fruit, all the rarest and dearest he could pick out" (Cleland 137) after "giving the first price asked" (Cleland 136). Following his objectifying examination of Fanny's body at the fruit market, this purchase of fruit further objectifies Fanny. Moreover, Mr. Norbert's purchase of the fruit foreshadows another transaction that will follow: his purchase of Fanny herself. Through this purchase, Mr. Norbert will claim power over her, maintaining the complicated power structure between the consumer and the consumed.

Use of Descriptive Food Language

To further highlight how the theme of consumption controls the power dynamic between Mr. Norbert and Fanny, Cleland uses language associated with food to characterize Mr. Norbert as the consumer and Fanny as the object of consumption. From the moment that Cleland introduces Mr. Norbert into the novel, the descriptive language used by Fanny depicts him as a consumer. Mr. Norbert's hunger, however, supersedes the

gastronomic, physical hunger of the body. Instead, he exhibits sexual hunger. Early in their acquaintance, Fanny evokes a carnivorous sexual drive within him. During the epistolary depiction of Mr. Norbert's character, Fanny likens his sexual hunger to physical hunger, terming this sexual desire "his strength of appetite" (Cleland 142). Through the direct use of adjectives and nouns related to food, Cleland paints this picture of Mr. Norbert as a consumer who seeks to satisfy his hunger. Moreover, Cleland's parallel between these two forms of hunger work to justify Mr. Norbert's sexual drive on the basis of human need. In equating the hunger of food with the hunger for sex, sexual desire inappropriately takes on the connotation of being a right—unrightfully so. As eating represents a basic process that every individual needs to stay alive, the comparison of sex with eating works to justify Mr. Norbert's desire to consume Fanny. Just as the consumption of food satiates physical hunger, Mr. Norbert satisfies his sexual desire through the consumption of women.

During Cleland's descriptions of Mr. Norbert, a particular phrase stresses Mr. Norbert's consumption-driven nature: the depiction of his "flimsy consumptive texture" (Cleland 142). In one definition of the word, "consumptive" refers to the actual disease, defined as "characteristic, symptomatic, or suggestive of the disease consumption" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Fanny's description of Mr. Norbert's person as possessing characteristics of this disease—through her account that his consumptive nature "[gives] him more the air of an invalid" (Cleland 141)—points to the likelihood that Mr. Norbert suffers from consumption. Susan Sontag recognizes the relationship between the disease consumption and augmented appetites, writing in her essay *Illness as Metaphor* that "TB [consumption] was—still is—thought to produce spells of euphoria, increased appetite,

exacerbated sexual desire" (Sontag 12). Given the biological implications of consumption, Cleland's inclusion of the disease explains both the gastronomic and sexual appetites that Mr. Norbert exhibits. Furthermore, the descriptions bear linguistic significance. Consumption, or TB, received its name "because of the severe weight loss and the way the infection appeared to 'consume' the patient" (Mandal). Quite literally, consumption affects the invalid through consuming the flesh. A direct reading of Mr. Norbert's "flimsy consumptive texture" alludes to the physically noticeable results of the disease on his body through a loss of flesh. Although this depiction gives the impression of Mr. Norbert's body as being consumed, it simultaneously presents the opportunity for a reverse reading: Mr. Norbert's consumptive flesh—rather than referring to flesh that is consumed—could also describe flesh that consumes, reinforcing the depiction of Mr. Norbert as a consumer.

While Cleland uses food-related language to make this depiction, he furthers it through positing women as the object of Mr. Norbert's consumption, exposing how he exercises power over women through his ability to consume them. Cleland focuses on two of Mr. Norbert's consumptive tendencies to illustrate how power is achieved through consumption: the rapidity with which he uses and casts off his lovers and his obsession with taking the virginity of his sexual partners. When Fanny first connects the identity of the man in the market to the infamous Mr. Norbert, she expounds upon his reputation for shedding women, acknowledging the numerous women who suffered from his pursuit through stating that Mr. Norbert "had ruined a number of girls…using them well till tired" (Cleland 138). The rapidity of Mr. Norbert's consumption results from his need to continuously consume. Just as an individual satisfies his hunger through the act of

eating—and must continue to consume whenever his hunger returns—Mr. Norbert satiates his sexual drive through intercourse with various women, one immediately following the other. Mr. Norbert's ability to achieve sexual gratification from as many sources as he chooses displays a manifestation of power over the women with whom he sleeps.

While the rapidity with which he goes through women represents one form of metaphorical consumption, Mr. Norbert demonstrates a different form of consumption through his numerous attempts to take a woman's virginity; in this act of consumption, he achieves power over the specific woman with whom he interacts, but more broadly, Mr. Norbert exerts his power over the entire female gender as a whole. During her elaboration of Mr. Norbert's character, Fanny describes how he finds pleasure in pursuing young virgins, comparing his sexual experiences with virgins to coming across "an unopened mine" (Cleland 145). Fanny parallels this sexual preference to the act of consuming, terming Mr. Norbert's preference as a "taste of maiden[s]" (Cleland 165). During the eighteenth century, the term "maiden" alluded to a virgin woman (*Oxford English Dictionary*); Mr. Norbert's taste for maidens, therefore, equates to having a "taste" for virginity. In order to satisfy this particular sexual appetite, Mr. Norbert sleeps with virgin women, "tasting" of their virginity. Through using the word "taste," a descriptive word very closely related to the theme of consumption as a whole, Cleland perpetuates the depiction of Mr. Norbert as a consumer who exerts power.

While the majority of the descriptive food-language used by Cleland depicts Mr. Norbert metaphorically consuming women, another connotation of the word can be examined, especially when used in relation to virgins. Referring back to the *Oxford*

English Dictionary definition of gastronomic consumption, consumption can either mean "the action...of eating" or "of using something up in an activity" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). When Mr. Norbert sleeps with virgins, he not only gastronomically consumes them through "tasting" of their virginity but also in the other sense of the word: he simultaneously destroys their virginity by "using [it] up." Both the taste and the destruction signify a metaphorical consumption of maidenhood, and through the consumptive act of taking a woman's virginity, Mr. Norbert exerts sexual power.

Though Mr. Norbert's desire for sexual relations with virgins spans the entire female gender, he most directly exhibits this desire through his treatment of Fanny. Cleland specifically uses verbs that relate to eating to link Mr. Norbert's sexual preference for virgins to his metaphorical consumption of Fanny. Early in her acquaintance with Mr. Norbert, Fanny describes his lustful glut for virginity, claiming that he requires innocence in a woman "for no other end than to feast [himself] with the pleasure of destroying it" (Cleland 140). Mr. Norbert's desire to "feast" on Fanny's supposed virginity represents a metaphorical consumption of her. Later in the scene, Cleland continues his consumption metaphor when he describes Mr. Norbert's actions as a means of "consummating an entire triumph over [Fanny's] virginity" (Cleland 145). Though "consummate" often means "to bring to completion" or "to accomplish" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), a subtle food-language connotation exists, as the word quite literally contains the verb "consume." Cleland's use of the word consummate, though accurately conveying Mr. Norbert's desire to attain Fanny's virginity, also aptly conveys Mr. Norbert's triumph in consuming Fanny. Through using words closely related to food-

language, Cleland creates the illusion of Mr. Norbert consuming Fanny's virginity, attempting to exert power over her through his sexual consumption of her.

Generally speaking, consumption functions as an act of power. Those who eat food transform it from a whole substance into something lesser in the process of eating. One determining factor in the perception of a specific food can be the medium of food prior to consumption. If the food was once a living animal, the connotation of eating has even wider implications, being food that was once able to fight back. Even for plants, living organisms technically incapable of resisting, the transformation from something in its raw form to that which is edible involves a power struggle. In its very essence, then, the act of consumption represents an act of power. Both versions of the word "consume"—to eat and to use up—illustrate the exercise of this power.

Throughout Mr. Norbert and Fanny's sex scenes, Cleland illustrates how consumption acts as a force of sexual power. During the initial sex scene in which Mr. Norbert believes to have robbed Fanny of her virginity, Fanny writes: "[when] he saw plainly my thighs, shift, and sheet, all stained with what he readily took for a virgin effusion...nothing could equal his joy and exultation" (Cleland 145). Mr. Norbert sees the fake blood and believes it to be the "virgin effusion" that a maiden woman puts forth when she loses her virginity. The "idea of a complete victory…that made [Fanny]…no longer maid" (Cleland 146) drives Mr. Norbert's sexual actions. When he seemingly achieves this "complete victory," he exults, his joy at the thought of overcoming Fanny's virginity resulting from the power-surge he receives. Further in the scene, Cleland describes Mr. Norbert through a simile, stating that he was "triumphant and like a cock clapping his wings over his down-trod mistress" (Cleland 146), a description that serves

as yet another testament to Mr. Norbert's attempt at sexual power. The descriptive words of "triumph" and "victory," used during the sex scene, reinforce how Mr. Norbert attempts to exert power over Fanny through his metaphorical consumption.

While the descriptions used in the narrative augment the power dynamic, another element of power emerges through the manner in which Cleland characterizes Fanny and Mr. Norbert. A stark juxtaposition forms concerning these two characters: the intelligent yet victimized protagonist against the predatory womanizer. Actions aside, the ways in which Cleland frames Mr. Norbert speaks to the physical and social power the man attempts to exert over Fanny. Despite the fact that Mr. Norbert is significantly less likable than Fanny, he gains power through the manner in which Cleland portrays him. Another element of power to emerge during the scenes containing Mr. Norbert is the way in which the prostitutes advertise the brothel. Typically, prostitutes prowl the streets as a means of claiming customers; this action gives them a form of power over the men they seduce into becoming clients. The reverse occurs with Mr. Norbert, however, as he roves the street for women. When Fanny unintentionally snares him with her good looks while at the market, Cleland capitalizes on the unintentionality of the catch. Fanny's lack of intention contrasts Mr. Norbert's design, highlighting the relational power dynamic between them.

Though Mr. Norbert reaches the manifestation of sexual power in the bedroom, his power over Fanny ultimately begins in the food market where he starts his consumptive advances. Fanny's interactions with Mr. Norbert in the Covent Garden market scene—and the sexual relationship that results—directly parallel the food market with the prostitution market. In this one scene, Cleland effectively demonstrates how the

literal, gastronomic consumption of food—highlighted through the presence of food and the use of descriptive food-language—parallels the metaphorical, sexual consumption of the woman. Furthermore, the scene highlights the power dynamic of the consumer over the consumed as enabled by the space of the market, positing Fanny as the object of consumption. Though the food market scene with Mr. Norbert serves as the ultimate encapsulation of the themes of food, power, and consumption that shape *Fanny Hill*, the theme of gastronomic consumption is introduced much earlier in a different marketplace. This market, rather than being a physical market, however, is the part-physical, part-conceptual entity of the prostitution market.

The initial scene of sexual, gastronomic consumption present in *Fanny Hill* occurs within the very first pages of the novel when Fanny enters the establishment of Mrs. Brown and spends her first night in the house with Phoebe. Cleland's employment of food language during Fanny's sexual encounter with Phoebe serves to constantly reinforce the theme of consumption and highlight the power Phoebe achieves through it. During Fanny's first night at the brothel, Phoebe makes an exclamation that directly links her sexual relations with Fanny to the act of consuming; she declares, "No!..You must not, my sweet girl, think to hide all these treasures from me. My sight must be feasted as well as my touch. I must devour with my eyes this springing bosom" (Cleland 16). In this exclamation, Phoebe pits Fanny as the object of her sexual consumption, emphasizing her need to "feast" her sight on Fanny and "devour" her with her eyes. As Fanny later explains, this was Phoebe's "own method of palpably satisfying herself" (Cleland 26); "palpably satisfying" serves as yet another example of the marriage of the themes of sex and consumption as "palpably" alludes to pleasantness of taste and "satisfying" bears a

sexual connotation. Another noteworthy food reference in the Phoebe-scene comes in the form of a food metaphor when Cleland compares Fanny's virginity to the perishability of goods, warning his readers to guard "such a perishable commodity in, as a maidenhead" (Cleland 17). The term "perishable" is normally used for the time-boxed life of food in the market: food that must be sold and consumed before it spoils. Like food in the market, Fanny's virginity will not last long. After Phoebe's initial taste, Fanny's maidenhead must be consumed by a client before it "perishes" like any other consumable food. Phoebe's "taste" of Fanny serves as a major instance in the novel during which Cleland uses the language of gastronomic consumption to demonstrate how Fanny's sexual partner achieves power over the consumed Fanny.

Gastronomic Consumption Through the Eyes

Throughout the majority of the novel, the language of consumption—and the use of food to illustrate this language—focuses on consumption by the mouth. While this consumption proves the mostly widely recognizable form of consumption, the sex-scene with Phoebe introduces another vehicle for achieving gastronomic consumption: the eyes. When Phoebe declares, "my sight must be feasted as well as my touch. I must devour with my eyes this springing bosom"(Cleland 16), she directly acknowledges the ability of the eyes to enact their own form of consumption. She most fully emphasizes this visual consumption through her words "my sight must be feasted," implying an actual need through the word "must." Phoebe's stating her desire to "devour [Fanny] with [her] eyes" metaphorically empowers the eyes to achieve this consumption.

Within the Phoebe-Fanny sex scene, Cleland provides a series of subtle hints that differentiate between sexual consumption by a woman and sexual consumption by a man. The previous examination of Fanny's statement of Phoebe's "own method of palpably satisfying herself" examines the term "palpably" from a language standpoint. Turning to the other words, however, the phrase "own method of...satisfying" acknowledges that Phoebe's sexual tendencies are not universal: "own method" implies an explicitness in Phoebe's actions. Her methods of satisfaction remain characteristic to her but not necessarily the male characters on which Cleland focuses. I argue that Cleland uses this scene to insinuate that Phoebe's consumption through the eyes (as well as the touch) represents a womanly consumption. Cleland argues that Phoebe's womanly consumption "procure[s] herself the shadow rather than the substance of any pleasure"(Cleland 16). Cleland here insinuates that the "shadow" achieved in womanly consumption proves secondary to the substantive pleasure achieved by male consumption; this comparison works with the representations of food as an object. In addition to using objects to juxtapose the differences between male and female consumption, Cleland also includes a subliminal light-sight reference; he describes how a shadow manifests as a partial—yet poor—representation of the object. While the woman only sees the shadow through her visual consumption, the male receives the entire object—or substance—through his own consumption.

The language Fanny herself uses works to further the differentiation between the substantive-male and visual-female consumptions made by Cleland. After Fanny witnesses the sexual encounter between Polly and her "young gallant" (Cleland 22), she and Phoebe draw away from their position of espial and Phoebe takes the opportunity to

sexually touch Fanny. During this interaction, Fanny writes: "And finding not even the shadow of what I wanted...I now pined for more solid food, and I promised tacitly to myself that I would not be put off much longer with this foolery of woman to woman, if Mrs. Brown did not soon provide me with the essential specific" (Cleland 23). Fanny's words further Cleland's argument: "this foolery of woman to woman" as Fanny terms female sex hardly even stands for "the shadow of what [she] wanted." Her words go a step further in completing this differentiation when she declares her craving for "[the] more solid food" of male consumption. Furthermore, the term "pine" normally indicates the lack of an object, demonstrating how Fanny's own hunger coincides with the lack of food. Though the same-sex relations with Phoebe denote a form of consumption, the penetration remains limited to the hand or the finger. Sexual relations with a man more fully mirror the metaphorical consumption of food, as the penetration of the male sexual organ into the female resembles the consumption of the mouth. In this light, Phoebe's visual consumption, though differing from the form of consumption previously emphasized, falls within the same schema: she cannot directly penetrate in the same manner as a male, so she employs her eyes to more fully consume Fanny's body.

In the sex scene between Phoebe and Fanny, Cleland's use of the eyes to reveal the gastronomic consumption of the female—and by the female—works together with the eighteenth-century focus on the senses. Just as the mouth enables the sense of taste through the act of consumption, the eyes endow the individual with a sense of sight—a sense that also enables a metaphorical, gastronomic consumption. While the main parallels analyzed in this thesis are the parallel between gastronomic consumption and commercial consumption and that between the food and prostitution markets, this

examination of the senses opens the door for a further consumption parallel to surface: consumption by the mouth with consumption by the eyes.

The Strategic Placement of Meals in Relation to Sex Scenes

In addition to using food-language in the bedroom scenes with Mr. Norbert and Phoebe, Cleland parallels the literal consumption of food and the consumption of Fanny during sex through the strategic placement of meals within the text. After Fanny's initiation into the realm of sexuality during her first night at Mrs. Brown's establishment, the first words spoken the following morning relate to the consumption of a meal: Phoebe "asked me in the kindest manner how I did, how I had rested, and if I was ready for breakfast? carefully, the same time, avoiding…any hint of the night's bed scene" (Cleland 17). In the post-initiation bedroom scene, Phoebe asks Fanny if she is ready to consume food, directly avoiding the mention of her own sexual consumption the night before. Cleland's placement of the literal meal directly following the metaphorical meal furthers the power dynamic between the two women: not only does Phoebe sexually consume Fanny, but she offers an almost mocking invitation for Fanny to consume food afterwards. The placement of meals alongside sex serves as yet another way in which Cleland uses food to parallel the consumption of the woman, illustrating the struggle for power that occurs during sexual relations.

While Cleland's strategic placement of meals first emerges in the bedroom with Phoebe, placing meals in relation to sex occurs throughout the novel, immediately before, directly following, or sometimes even during sex scenes. The incorporation of meals alongside the scenes of sex further perpetuates the disparity existing between the

consumer and the consumed. The strategic placement of meals, though present in a variety of Fanny's relationships, occurs most prominently during Fanny's time as Mr. H...'s mistress. This pattern begins the moment of Fanny's introduction to Mr. H.... The scene of Fanny and Mr. H...'s introduction takes place over a meal when Mrs. Jones "bring[s] him to drink tea with [them] that very afternoon" (Cleland 64). Fanny recounts the progression of events, describing how "the tea was made" (Cleland 65) and connoting how, in reality, it was a deal that was being made. In the escalating tea-scene, a brief discussion concerning Fanny's unfortunate situation immediately follows the preparation of the tea; when Fanny realizes the precarious position in which she stands, the tears begin to flow, after which Mr. H..., "drew near [Fanny]...and, under the pretense of comforting her" (Cleland 66), begins to sexually take advantage of her. Fanny addresses the emergence of the power dynamics, stating, "I suffered, tamely, whatever the gentleman pleased" (Cleland 67). Fanny passively allows Mr. H... to do all that he desires, describing how "he took me in his arms, and bore me...to the bed...having me at what advantage he pleased" (Cleland 67). Within this scene, Cleland sets tea—a form of meal—before the sex scene to precede the sexual consumption that will follow the literal consumption.

Though this first sex scene with Mr. H... includes a meal before the sexual act, Cleland later introduces a meal in the midst of Fanny and Mr. H...'s lovemaking. After having sex, Fanny writes how "presently, a neat and elegant supper was introduced, and a bottle of Burgundy, with the other necessaries, were set on the dumb-waiter" (Cleland 68). At first, Fanny refuses the food and describes how Mr. H...prevails upon her to "sit up...and see him eat, if [she] could not be prevailed on to eat" (Cleland 68). The disparity

between Mr. H...'s consumption of the food and Fanny's inability to enjoy the supper directly correlates to the preceding sex scene. Just as Mr. H... took pleasure from his sexual consumption of Fanny, he easily consumes food; Fanny, however, who receives no sexual pleasure from her initial intercourse with Mr. H..., cannot enjoy the food in front of her. The very character that consumes food in this scene also consumes the body. After Mr. H...'s many attempts at successfully coaxing Fanny to eat "half a partridge and three or four glasses of wine" (Cleland 68), Fanny recounts a change in her desires. Cleland furthers the relationship between the presence of meals and sexual consumption by illustrating the specific actions of Mr. H...; he writes, "Mr. H...thrust the table imperceptibly from between [them], and bringing his chair to face [Fanny], he soon began...to lay hold of [her] hands, to kiss [her]" (Cleland 69). The renewal of Mr. H...'s protestations and attempted seductions following the dinner, however, prove unsuccessful. Mr. H... leaves the room, and Fanny describes how the maid entered carrying "a smaller silver orringer of what she called a bridal posset, and desired [her] to eat it as [she] went to bed" (Cleland 70). The inclusion of the bridal posset adds an interesting element to the scene. Though not an aphrodisiac, the presence of the bridal posset creates a connotation in the text, as bridal possets are a draught typically consumed on the wedding night when the bride and bridegroom consummate their marriage in the bedchamber. Upon the consumption of this posset, Fanny describes feeling a sudden "heat, a fire" (Cleland 70). Immediately following the exit of the maid, Mr. H... enters, and this time, manages to sleep with Fanny. Just as Mr. H...'s physical hunger during meals aligns with this sexual hunger during sex, Fanny's eating of the food foreshadows her participation in sex. Cleland's inclusion of a meal between two sex

scenes not only illustrates a connection between eating and sex but also shows the power dynamic established by the consumption of meals: the consumer of food also holds the sexual power.

While Fanny's sexual encounters with Mr. H... include the presence of meals before and during sex scenes, Cleland also incorporates meals following sex scenes. When Mr. H.... re-enters the room after Fanny's consumption of the bridal posset, he finds her more disposed to receive his embraces; Fanny returns Mr. H...'s sexual advances and partakes in the night of pleasure. Following the night's activities, Fanny writes of a brief repose: "but on my first stirring, which was not till past ten o'clock, I was obliged to endure one more trial of his manhood" (Cleland 72). Immediately after this "trial," Cleland introduces a meal: "about eleven, in came Mrs. Jones, with two basins of the richest soup, which her experience in these matters had moved her to prepare" (Cleland 72). The immediacy of the meal following the physical act of sex further establishes a consumer-consumed relationship between Fanny and Mr. H... because their enjoyment of food parallels their enjoyment of sex. Overall, the gastronomic consumption of meals occurring before, during, and after sex parallels the metaphorical, sexual consumption of Fanny that occurs when she and Mr. H… sleep with one another.

The Dual Functionality of the Bed and the Table

In addition to the strategic placement of meals, Cleland also employs the duality existing between the table and the bed to perpetuate the consumer-consumed relationship. While a bed normally functions for sleeping or sex and a table for eating, Cleland reverses the roles of these two objects to better suit his purposes in the novel: the bed

functioning as a table, the table functioning as a bed. The dual functionality comes in the ability of these two objects to serve the two purposes of both eating and sleeping. The first moment in which this role reversal occurs is after Fanny loses her virginity to Charles. Fanny describes the activities of the afternoon, recounting, "we spent the whole afternoon, till supper time, in continued circle of love delights, kissing, turtle-billing, toying, and all the rest of the feast" (Cleland 49). In this description, Fanny likens the sexual act to that of a feast. This metaphor gains a deeper meaning when the actual feast appears in the bedroom: "at length, supper was served in....and sitting down the bed side, we made table and tablecloth of the bed and sheets" (Cleland 49). In this scene, the bed quite literally transforms into a table in both physicality and function. Further connotations emerge within the scene. For example, Fanny writes how Charles "suffered nobody to attend or serve but himself" (Cleland 49). While Fanny refers to the serving of the food, in actuality, Charles also represents the only one to "attend" Fanny in bed.

The switch in functionality of the bed from a site of sleeping to eating highlights the personification of Charles as a consumer. Charles's sexual consumption of Fanny, however, differs in nature from that of Mr. Norbert, Phoebe, and Mr. H...'s. While these three sexual partners partake in a consumption of Fanny to satisfy their own sexual hunger, Fanny describes her sexual relations with Charles using very different terms. Rather than Charles "tasting" or "devouring" her, Fanny's description of the scene emphasizes her loss of virginity to Charles. The fact that Charles "murder[s]…[Fanny's] virginity" (Cleland 47) illustrates the different manner of his consumption of her. Rather than partaking in "the action or fact of eating" her, he experiences "using something [Fanny] up in an activity" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). This sex scene with Charles

depicts the consumption of Fanny's virginity, and Cleland highlights the consumable nature of Fanny's body through introducing the dual functionality of a bed as both a bed and a table.

While the bedroom scene with Charles illustrates the shift from bed to table, the reverse transformation also occurs later on in the novel. During a brief encounter with a sailor on the streets, Fanny accepts his offer to treat her to a glass of wine. When the pair enters the tavern nearby and immediately commences "towards the main point" (Cleland 149), Fanny describes how they "found no conveniency to [their] purpose, two or three disabled chairs, and a rickety table, composing the whole furniture of the room" (Cleland 149). As none of the furniture present in the room exactly suites the purpose of sex, the sailor improvises, giving the table the functionality of a bed. Fanny writes how: "he leads me to the table...lays my head down on the edge of it...canting up my petticoats and shift" (Cleland 150). The sex occurs on the table, metaphorically replacing the act of eating. Rather than the consumption of food, however, Cleland depicts the consumption of Fanny's body by the sailor.

The metaphorical consumption that occurs on the table-bed furthers the power dynamic existing between the consumer and the consumed. When describing the actions of the sailor, Fanny writes how "without more ado, he plans [sic] me with my back standing against the wall" (Cleland 149). By this specific action of planting Fanny, the sailor asserts physical control over her body, placing her in whatever manner he pleases and that best suits his desires. Later on, the sailor brings Fanny to the table "and with a master-hand lays [her] head down...[and] bares [her] naked posteriors to his blind and furious guide" (Cleland 150). The language that Fanny uses—that of a "master-hand"—

immediately furthers the element of power in the scene. Furthermore, when Fanny declares that "in the fine disposition I was...submitted to him" (Cleland 150), she fully acknowledges the sailor's assertion of power. The adjectives "blind" and "furious" give the sailor an animalistic association; this subtly furthers the power struggle, as female animals almost always appear subordinate to male animals. The recognition of her submission to him places her at a disadvantage. Once again, the consumer establishes power over the consumed.

Conclusion

By nature of being compared with eating, sex adopts a range of characteristics normally attributed to consumption. One example is being inherent to all humans. Men and women alike, the young and the old, and even individuals of varying mental capacities all partake in sex during *Fanny Hill.* Sex represents a form of enjoyment in which all characters participate. Furthermore, both food and sex prove to be life-giving in their own ways. While food provides the nourishment necessary for survival, sex gives life through enabling conception. Other examples that draw together sex and eating include: the association of food and sex with hunger; the transformative nature of both actions; and the individual's reliance on each. Also worth considering is the fact that neither are universal. Just like an individual's taste for food, sexual preference differs from person to the person, for instance: Mr. Norbert's marked desire to sleep with virgin women; the sadomasochistic tendencies of Mr. Barville; the hair fetish of the older gentleman; and the homosexual preferences of the male pair whom Fanny spies having

sex in the drawing room. Through likening sex to food, Cleland connotes that individuals will have a taste for some things but not for others.

While this section deals primarily with the interrelations between gastronomic consumption and sex, one aspect of sex remains surprisingly absent from the text: oral sex. In fact, during the course of the novel, oral sex only appears once, an interesting absence given that this type of sex most succinctly bridges gastronomic consumption with sex. During the sex scene between Polly and her Genoese gentleman, the second sex scene that Fanny witnesses, Cleland incorporates oral sex. Fanny describes how she sees Polly "stroking [the penis], with her head down, and receiving even its velvet tip between the lips of not its proper mouth: whether it was to render it more glib and easy of entrance, [she] could not tell" (Cleland 38). Having just witnessed the scene, Fanny realizes that the "not…proper mouth" of the "red-headed champion" (Cleland 38) is the actual mouth of the human—the mouth used for eating. Cleland's inclusion of the oral sex scene so early in Fanny's sexual career serves to establish the sex-food parallel in the pages to follow. The furthering of the food-sex parallel, however, derives from vaginal sex—not oral sex. In fact, it comes as a great surprise—given Cleland's intense emphasis on the literal and metaphorical mouths—that oral sex does not appear more in *Fanny Hill*.

The food market scene with Mr. Norbert encapsulates the theme of gastronomic consumption present in the novel as it marks the transition of the physical consumption that occurs in the fruit market to the consumption that occurs in the bedroom. Furthermore, the scene serves to parallel the gastronomic consumption of food with the metaphorical consumption of the woman that takes place during sex. These parallels posit

the female body as a consumable object and highlight the undercurrent of power that exists in the relationship between the consumed Fanny and her consuming sexual partners, whether Mr. Norbert, Phoebe, the sailor, Mr. H..., or even Charles. Throughout the novel, Cleland highlights how Fanny functions as "the consumed" and her sexual partners as "the consumers" through the direct presence of food, the constant use of descriptive food language, the strategic placement of meals in relation to sex scenes, and the dual functionality existing between the table and the bed. While the literal consumption of food parallels the metaphorical consumption of the female, another parallel emerges between the gastronomic consumption of food in the food market and the commercial consumption of Fanny in the prostitution market.

Section 2: Commercial Consumption: The Body as Consumable Goods

The food market scene with Mr. Norbert encapsulates how Cleland's use of food parallels two forms of consumption, positing the female body as a consumable object. While gastronomic consumption operates within the food market, commercialized consumption emerges as the force of power dominating the prostitution market; this form of consumption serves as yet another mode by which to analyze the consumable female in *Fanny Hill.* According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, commercial consumption is "the purchase and use of goods, services, materials, or energy" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Cleland employs commercialized consumption within the prostitution market to highlight how Fanny's body represents the consumable goods of the market. Similar to the food market, Fanny maintains her position as the consumed. This time, however, the consumers transition from being her sexual partners to being her female

marketers. Fanny's four female marketers—Mrs. Brown, Phoebe, Mrs. Jones, and Mrs. Cole—appear at different points of the novel. Although Mrs. Brown and Phoebe first attempt to make use of Fanny's body in the commercial sense, their efforts to sell Fanny's body for profit fail when she escapes from the brothel with Charles; instead, these two women function to introduce, initiate, and prepare her for the prostitution market. Cleland uses the characters Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Cole to truly submerge Fanny into the prostitution market, transforming her into a prostitute. Cleland uses the commercial consumption of the prostitution market to depict Fanny's body as consumable goods, simultaneously showing how Fanny's four female marketers assert power over her.

Introduction Into the Prostitution Market

Like the food market, the prostitution market represents a space of sexual power in which power is exerted over Fanny through consumption. Initially, Mrs. Brown serves as the chief exerciser of power over Fanny, transforming her into a product of the market for the purpose of sexual consumption by others. Fanny's introduction into the market of prostitution—and therefore, her transformation into the product of the market—begins when she enters the intelligence office. In eighteenth-century London, an intelligence office served as "an employment agency for the placement of domestic help" (Dictionary.com). For persons seeking positions of employment, the intelligence office functioned as a job market. When Fanny arrives in London and is abandoned by Esther Davis, she recognizes her position and actively attempts to secure work for herself. She reaches the "wished for intelligence office" (Cleland 9) and enters to find an elderly

woman “with a book before her and several scrolls made out, of directions for places [to dispatch]” (Cleland 9). Though Fanny arrives at the intelligence office as a customer seeking employment in the job market, the experience propels her into quite a different form of market: the prostitution market.

During the scene at the intelligence office, Cleland’s use of a food market metaphor illustrates how Fanny’s acquaintance with Mrs. Brown marks her transformation into the embodied product of the prostitution market. When describing the scene, Fanny states, “this was a market where Mrs. Brown, my mistress, frequently attended, on the watch for any fresh goods that might offer there, for the use of her customers, and for her own profit” (Cleland 11). In this metaphor, the “fresh goods” refer to the women, in this specific case Fanny, who become the metaphorical, consumable goods of Mrs. Brown’s market; the “customers” refer to Mr. Brown’s clients, namely the consumers who will partake in a sexual consumption of the prostitutes; the “market” itself, though directly alluding to the office for domestic servants where Mrs. Brown stands “on the watch” for new prostitutes, indirectly implies the prostitution market as a whole; and finally, the "profit" references the money that drives Mrs. Brown's transactions. When Fanny stumbles into the intelligence office in the hopes of entering the job market of domestic servitude, she unknowingly plunges into quite a different job, in which Mrs. Brown transforms her into a product of the prostitution market meant for consumption. Though the prostitution market functions as a part-physical, part-conceptual entity, Fanny represents a physical embodiment of the market’s product offering.

Although the primary force of consumption operating in the prostitution market is that of commercial consumption, Cleland continually makes references to gastronomic consumption. Just as a parallel exists between these two forms of consumptions, this parallel translates into a parallel between the two markets. The food verb-language used during Fanny's time at the intelligence office serves to parallel the food market with the prostitution market, demonstrating the exertion of power over Fanny through the force of consumption. While waiting for the elderly clerk at the intelligence office, Fanny catches her first glimpse of Mrs. Brown and states how "my eyes...met full tilt with those of a lady…sitting in a corner of the room, dressed in a velvet mantel" (Cleland 10). As Fanny looks on, she describes how Mrs. Brown "looked as if she would devour me with her eyes, staring at me from head to foot…my being fit for her purpose" (Cleland 10). In this first encounter between the two women, Cleland specifically uses the food-related verb "devour" to create the depiction of a metaphorical consumption of Fanny, reinforcing the depiction of visual, female consumption. Within the span of this blatant sizing up, Mrs. Brown "devours" Fanny with her eyes, but more importantly, she propels Fanny into the consumption-driven prostitution market. Mrs. Brown's introduction of Fanny into the prostitution market ultimately enables her to achieve power over Fanny through offering her up for the consumption of others.

Initiation into the Prostitution Market

Just as Mrs. Brown establishes her power by roping Fanny into the prostitution market and transforming her into the product of consumption, Phoebe Ayers also achieves a form of power through consumption by being the first partner to sexually

consume Fanny during her initiation. From the beginning of their acquaintance, Phoebe Ayres serves as Fanny's chief initiator into the prostitution market, personally undertaking the young girl's sexual instruction. Innocent and naïve, Fanny enters Mrs. Brown's establishment under the pretext of working as a maid-servant and immediately finds herself under the "care and instruction" (Cleland 12) of Mrs. Phoebe Ayres. When Phoebe and Fanny lay down to sleep the first night and Phoebe opens her arms to Fanny and "embraced and kissed [her] with great eagerness" (Cleland 14), Fanny's position of sexual inexperience is evident through her mental declaration that "this was new, this was odd" (Cleland 14). Over the course of their first night together, Phoebe Ayres serves as Fanny's "tutoress elect" (Cleland 12), guiding the inexperienced Fanny into a life of prostitution through introducing her to the realm of sexuality. Through undertaking her sexual instruction, Phoebe initiates Fanny into the prostitution market—achieving power over her through the sexual consumption that occurs alongside her sexual instruction.

Preparation for the Market and its Customers

Although Phoebe herself achieves power over Fanny through her instructive consumption, she also prepares her for future consumption with different partners, another way in which she initiates her into the prostitution market and achieves power over her. When one of Mrs. Brown's clients demonstrates an interest in Fanny, Phoebe readies Fanny for the encounter by making her body presentable. After Mrs. Brown informs Fanny of her immanent meeting with the first customer, Mr. Crofts, Phoebe and Fanny retire to prepare for the meeting; Fanny states, "the care of dressing and tricking me out for the market, was then left to Phoebe" (Cleland 18). Once again, Cleland

employs food language to further stress the theme of consumption. Phoebe's employment in "dressing" Fanny—though seeming to refer to arraying Fanny's person and clothing—bears a food-related insinuation; the verb "to dress" can be used in the context of "to prepare for use as food, by making ready to cook, or by cooking; also, to season (food)" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). "The care of dressing [Fanny] out for the market," therefore, translates into preparing Fanny for use as food. Additionally, the verb "trick" holds a dual meaning. While trick means, "to dress, up, to prepare (food)" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), it also means "to have casual sexual intercourse, esp. for money" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Through these verbs, Cleland not only continues his parallel between the literal and metaphorical consumptions of Fanny, but he also highlights how Phoebe's sexual initiation propels Fanny into the consumptive market of prostitution; Phoebe's preparation of Fanny, though primarily meant for Mr. Crofts, ultimately serves as preparation for a life of prostitution.

The Transactions Begin

While Mrs. Brown and Phoebe introduce Fanny into the prostitution market, initiate her into the realm of sexuality, and prepare her for the sexual consumption by others, Mrs. Jones functions as the first character in the book to effectively commercialize Fanny's body for profit. Upon his introduction of Mrs. Jones into the novel, Cleland gives a short background of the woman in order to set the stage for her role as marketer. In recounting Mrs. Jones's past, Cleland describes how she sold her own daughter at "the age of seventeen...for not a very considerable sum neither, to a gentleman who was going on envoy abroad" (Cleland 58); the gentleman "took his

purchase with him" (Cleland 58), marking the first "transaction" of Mrs. Jones's private attempts at profiting through commercially selling a female body. Through recounting this aspect of Mrs. Jones's history, Cleland creates the depiction of a money-hungry saleswoman, who lacks any passion but that of profit and of "increasing the lump, by any means whatever" (Cleland 58). Just as Mrs. Jones proves "base enough to make a market of her own flesh and blood" (Cleland 58), first by transforming her own daughter into a product of consumption in the British marketplace, Mrs. Jones continues on this course of business whenever the opportunity provides itself. As Cleland reveals, Mrs. Jones purposefully "kept up constant intelligences in promoting a harmony between the two sexes" (Cleland 58), fully using the commercialized consumption of the body to promote her own "private pawn-broking" (Cleland 58). Clearly, Mrs. Jones is well acquainted with the transactions that occur between the sexes.

In the midst of Mrs. Jones's side business, Fanny and Charles enter her lodging house as tenants, a decision that ultimately propels Fanny into the world of the commercialized consumption of the body. When Charles's father frisks him off to the South Seas after a few short-lived weeks of bliss together, Fanny finds herself alone and unable to pay the sum required of her. As a means of securing her payment—yet also of reaping a profit from her dealings—Mrs. Jones facilitates the introduction of Fanny to the wealthy Mr. H..., a co-tenant who had lusted after Fanny on more than one occasion. During a discussion among Mr. H..., Fanny, and Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Jones pressures Fanny into becoming Mr. H…'s mistress; she declares that Mr. H... "is wiling to serve [her]" (Cleland 65), advising Fanny not to "stand upon [her] punctilios and this and that, but make [her] market while [she] may" (Cleland 65). Although Mrs. Jones uses the term

"market" loosely as a passing phrase, the market to which she ultimately refers is that of the prostitution market. Through this expostulation, Mrs. Jones propels Fanny into becoming a commercialized, consumable good of the prostitution market.

Mrs. Jones's first official transaction of Fanny's body as a good to be sold effects a change in how Fanny perceives herself and her situation—a change that marks the rest of the novel. During her narration, Fanny writes, "the stock of youth and beauty I was going to trade with, could hardly fail of procuring me a maintenance" (Cleland 96). In this phrase, Fanny refers to the desirable aspects of her own body as "stock," a term often used for the inventory of a business; furthermore, she describes how she "was going to trade" with this stock, once again using highly commercialized language when referring to her own body. Overall, these words mark Fanny's mental transformation into viewing her own body as a consumable good of the market. When Mr. H... casts her off as a mistress, Fanny decides to seek out the life of prostitution, stating "I saw myself under the necessity of trying my fortune with them" (Cleland 96). At this point in the novel, Fanny's first letter ends: she enters the establishment of Mrs. Cole, beginning her second narrative in which she works as a true prostitute.

Prostitution as a Business

Through her association with Mrs. Cole, Fanny enters the realm of prostitution, experiencing firsthand how the consumption of the female body functions as a mode of commerce. In the process of tracking this transition, Cleland depicts prostitution as a profession to which the marks of a normal industry or trade can be attributed. He presents Mrs. Cole's brothel represents a functioning business, marking the prostitute's space in

the commercial sphere. When Fanny enters Mrs. Cole's establishment, the first words she writes about her new mistress are that "nobody…was fitter to advise and guard one against the worst dangers of our profession" (Cleland 97) as Mrs. Cole. Through Fanny's statement, Cleland establishes prostitution as an actual profession—worthy to be defined as such—as opposed to simply a way of life. In further describing Mrs. Cole, Cleland attributes the normal marks of industry and trade onto prostitution by stating that Mrs. Cole "contented herself with a moderate living profit upon her industry" (Cleland 97) and encouraged "a brisk circulation of the trade, for the sake of the trade itself" (Cleland 97). Fanny fully recognizes the prostitution establishment as more than a brothel, terming the house as "her [Mrs. Cole's] business" (Cleland 182); she describes her entrance into the brothel as the "employ of my person in...business" (Cleland 152). Furthermore, she describes how Mrs. Brown and the others "considered [her] a partner that was bringing no despicable stock of goods into the trade of the house" (Cleland 101). In these descriptions, Cleland's use of the terms "industry," "trade," and "business" to pit prostitution as a commercial business. Cleland's creation of these initial depictions of prostitution as a profession and the brothel as a business further the depiction of the female body as commercially consumable goods.

As a means of illustrating the brothel's place in the eighteenth-century London market, Cleland gives the prostitution joint of Mrs. Cole an outer front: the physical space of a shop. Upon joining Mrs. Cole's brothel, Fanny describes the space, stating how "in the outer parlour, or rather shop" (Cleland 101) the women would sit "rather demurely employed on millinery work, which was the cover of a traffic in more precious commodities" (Cleland 101). This outer front enables the establishment to operate in

society, while simultaneously providing the debaucheries typical of a prostitution house underneath it façade. Fanny describes the transformation that occurs in the shop as day becomes night: "as soon then as the evening began…the shew of a shop was shut" (Cleland 102). With this physical transformation of space, "the mask of mock-modesty" (Cleland 102) of the women in Mrs. Cole's shop "was completely taken off" (Cleland 102) as they transition from milliners to prostitutes. In this scenario, Cleland's use of the term "shew" denotes a "show" or guise. However, an alternate definition of the word "shew" is "to place (food) on the table as a sewer does" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). This alternate, gastronomic connotation once against marries the two forms of consumption with one another: even when Cleland refers to commercial consumption, he constantly reinforces the underlying gastronomic consumption present throughout the novel. When Mr. Norbert enters Fanny's life, the "shew of the shop," as Cleland terms it, proves particularly useful. Not wanting Mr. Norbert to know the true nature of the business that they run, Mrs. Cole and Fanny operate under the pretext of the shop, Fanny claiming that she is apprentice to a milliner. After coming "in his chariot to the shop" (Cleland 137) to discuss acquiring Fanny, Mrs. Norbert leaves, "taking with him some goods...for the better grace of his introduction" (Cleland 138). While the introduction to Mr. Norbert in the food market forms a parallel to the prostitution market on the basis of the theme of consumption, this scene within the prostitution house and pseudo-millinery shop forms yet another parallel. This time, however, the parallel exists between the prostitution market and the actual market of goods in eighteenth-century London. The force of consumption present within this scene, however, also shifts. Rather than the consumption of Mr. Norbert emerging as the gastronomic consumption of food and the

female body, this form of consumption represents the commercial consumption of goods within the market place. When Mr. Norbert leaves the millinery shop, “taking with him some goods that he paid for liberally” (Cleland 138) this foreshadows him receiving the metaphorical goods of the female body; Fanny’s own language furthers this metaphor when she describes her own body as “passing for hitherto unhandled goods" (Cleland 142). The term “goods” directly relates to consumption within the commercialized marketplace and serves as one of the many terms that Cleland uses to reinforce his depictions of the consumptive prostitution market that characterize Fanny's time working for Mrs. Cole.

Just as Cleland establishes the theme of consumption within the prostitution market through referring to the female body as goods, he furthers his marketplace terminology through constantly referring to sex as a transaction. According to *Oxford English Dictionary*, "to transact" or to conduct a transaction means, “to carry through negotiations; to have dealings, do business...to manage or settle affairs” (*Oxford English Dictionary*). While this serves as a basic definition of the term transact, nowhere in the *OED* does the terms transact adopt a double usage or implicitly sexual connotation. Through understanding the term transaction in the purely business sense of the term, Fanny’s sexual dealings can be viewed with regards to a business, and Fanny herself as a business woman. The term transaction first appears during Fanny’s initial week in London, during which Mrs. Brown attempts to force relations between Fanny and Mr. Croft; Cleland refers to the maid of the house, Martha, whom he termed “prepared and hardened to transactions of this sort” (Cleland 24), transactions referring to the exchange of the body for money. Later in the novel, when Fanny watches Emily and her lover

having sex, she describes the "officious little services" as “the transaction of these pleasures" (Cleland 129). Throughout the course of her own career, Fanny openly refers to her sexual dealings with men as transactions. As one example, Fanny describes her encounter with Mr. Barville and how “Mrs. Cole was an eye-witness, from her stand of espial, to the whole of [the] transaction" (Cleland 158).

While all of these examples of the term transaction occur between a prostitute and her customer, Cleland continually reinforces the depiction of the act of sex itself as a transaction. When Fanny discovers a pair of homosexual men having intercourse, she describes how she “acquainted those of the house with the whole transaction [she] had been evidence to” (Cleland 169). In this last example, Fanny witnesses two lovers having sex for pleasure alone, not for payment of any kind. While the majority of Cleland's usages of "transactions" center on the exchange aspect of sex, this new usage enables the connection between sex and a transaction to transcend the business environment. The act of giving the body to another—and of its being received—functions as an innately transactatory act, regardless of the presence of money. Cleland's continual use of the term transaction serves to further highlight the theme of commercial consumption operating within the prostitution market.

Throughout the course of the novel, a series of women enter Fanny's life who seek to strategically use her body for their own purposes. Mrs. Brown introduces Fanny into the market as a whole, and Phoebe specifically initiates and prepares her for the physical requirements of the market. While Mrs. Brown and Phoebe only succeed in giving Fanny a taste of the life of a prostitute, Mrs. Jones fully immerses Fanny into the physical dealings involved within the market, representing the first woman who effectively utilizes

Fanny for a profit. When Fanny leaves Mr. H... and enters into the establishment of Mrs. Cole, however, she is introduced into the wide realm of the commercialized prostitution market. As Cleland illustrates, the prostitution market—through its very set-up and execution—functions in a manner nearly parallel to that of any other commercial market.

Conclusion

In Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, two types of consumers emerge: Fanny's sexual partners and her female marketers. While a large degree of overlap certainly exists between these two types of consumers, their classification originates from the form of consumption to which they are most directly connected. The sexual partners, through their metaphorical, sexual consumption of Fanny that mirrors a literal consumption, partake in gastronomic consumption. On the other hand, the female marketers, through strategically using Fanny's body to illicit a profit, exercise commercial consumption. Just as food gets literally consumed by the body in gastronomic consumption, the body is metaphorically consumed during the partners' sexual consumption. While this relationship illustrates how the female body comes to be recognized as a consumable object, the commercial consumption that takes places posits the body as consumable as well; in the case of commercial consumption, however, the body represents consumable goods.

Cleland very clearly establishes a parallel between these two forms of consumption, showing an interrelation between both the literal and metaphorical consumptions that occur during sex and the greater parallel between gastronomic consumption and commercial consumption as a whole. The emphasis on the theme of consumption establishes consumption as the underlying force of power in *Fanny Hill,*

one that not only drives the actions of the characters but the plot of the novel. Ultimately, however, the theme of consumption serves an even greater purpose: this parallel between the two key forms of consumption links to an even greater parallel in the novel, the parallel existing between the food market and the prostitution market. This appears most prominently in the Covent Garden market scene when Mr. Norbert rapidly transitions from assessing which fruit to buy into lusting after Fanny and determining how to buy her. The scene with Mr. Norbert ultimately illustrates how the sale and consumption of food in the food market hardly differs in essence from the sale and consumption of the woman in the prostitution market, as seen through the depictions of consumption during the entire narration of Fanny's life.

Alternate Metaphors

Cleland invokes food to show the power dynamic between the male and female when sex represents a process of consumption. Worth examining, however, are the alternate metaphors that Cleland includes in his novel but that fall in the shadow of the food-sex metaphor. Of these, three specific examples emerge that prove worthy of examination in relation to this argument: the portrayals of animals, pedagogy, and fire. During the sexual initiation scene at Mrs. Brown's, Fanny introduces an element of pedagogy, referring to Phoebe as her "tutoress elect" (Cleland 12). Cleland furthers the pedagogical aspect when he describes the woman's actions as "lectures and instructions" (Cleland 26). The other two metaphors most prominently emerge in the scenes involving the prostitute Louisa. During Louisa's exchange with the flower boy, Cleland includes several animalistic metaphors to represent the actions of the pair. For example, he writes,

"the emotion of animal pleasure glared distinctly in the animal countenance" (Cleland 171). Moreover, countless references in the novel liken desire to fire. When Louisa recounts the circumstances leading to her life of prostitution, she testifies to the ability of the metaphorical fire to consume: "but these meditations only increased my disorder and blew the fire that consumed me" (Cleland 115). As seen, alternate metaphors constantly emerge in the text.

In addition to the prevalent food metaphors, those on pedagogy, animals, and fire contribute the power gap between Fanny and her sexual partners. However, these alternate metaphors do not function as effectively as the food-sex metaphor. There are a variety of reasons why: ash cannot burst into flame and reversely consume that which reduced it; the student, though capable of reverse instruction and of teaching the teacher in time, does not arrive at this stage for years; and an animal will never have a higher mental capacity than a human. For these reasons, food emerges as an effective metaphor. Though food cannot resist consumption, that which eats might just as easily be eaten—a basic reality of the food chain and of life. While Cleland could have stretched these alternate metaphors to depict the consumption of the woman, one significant reason for using food much more often than the other metaphors is that it more easily enables him to examine both the process and its opposite: reverse consumption.

CHAPTER 2:
Reverse Consumption and the Reversal of Power Within the Markets of *Fanny Hill*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, the analysis demonstrates how Cleland's use of gastronomic consumption results in the metaphorical consumption of Fanny's body as a consumable object and commercial consumption results in the commercial usage of Fanny's body as consumable goods. Consumption in both of these forms enables a variety of characters to exert power over Fanny. However, as Loichot states in her introduction to *The Tropics Bite Back,* "Food...can be both the site of lost power and empowerment, depending on its source and its use" (Loichot x). Like food, the consumption of food—and consumption as a process—enables both disempowerment and empowerment. In *Fanny Hill,* the form of consumption that contributes to empowerment is that of reverse consumption. For the purpose of this chapter, reverse consumption can be defined as the process by which the consumed becomes the consumer. Since the woman functions as the object of consumption throughout the course of *Fanny Hill,* the reverse consumption that occurs marks the woman's transformation into the consumer of the man. Just as Chapter 1 examined two forms of consumption—gastronomic and commercial consumption—these two forms of consumption in their reverse will be analyzed. Through Cleland's depictions of the female mouth—or vagina—he also creates a reverse gastronomic consumption by which the woman gastronomically consumes the male. Furthermore, by incorporating of scenes of transaction, Cleland creates a reverse commercial consumption by which the prostitute

pays the male for the pleasure of sex. Both of these forms of reverse consumption reverse the previously established power dynamic, enabling Fanny to transcend the consumption-driven market.

Of the various parts of the body, the mouth emerges as one of power. Though a variety of factors contribute to this power, one major reason that the mouth exerts this power is that it operates at the center of several basic functions. For example, the mouth represents the primary organ in charge of eating, speaking, breathing, and kissing. Consumption, communication, and respiration serve as some of the most basic and necessary operations that humans perform on a daily basis. In addition to being multifunctional, a variety of different parts make up the mouth, innately connected to these necessary functions: the lips, tongue, teeth, and taste buds to name a few. Both the multifunctional and multipart nature of the mouth render it a bodily part worthy of attention and of study throughout literature and scholarly work.

Section 1: Reverse Gastronomic Consumption and the Female Mouth

The Mouth

Throughout *Fanny Hill*: *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,* Cleland devotes a substantial portion of the text to physically describing the male and female bodies. While the major body parts on which Cleland lingers are the two most necessary to the novel—the vagina and the penis—Cleland also focuses his attention on several other body parts that both directly and indirectly bear sexual associations. Of the handful of recurring parts on which he dwells, Cleland spends a significant amount of time examining the mouth.

While Cleland often describes Fanny's mouth, his descriptions incorporate other females as well. During the sexual initiation scene at Mrs. Cole's, Cleland's obsession with the female mouth appears most through his depictions of the prostitute Harriet, who he describes with a "sweet mouth appeared languish-ingly open, with the tip of her tongue leaning negligently towards the lower range of her white teeth, whilst natural ruby colour of her lips glowed with heightened life" (Cleland 126). In this description, he addresses the various parts that make up the mouth—tongue, teeth, and lips. In another scene, Cleland describes the prostitute Emily, claiming, "nothing could be prettier than her mouth and lips, which were closed over a range of the evenest and whitest teeth" (Cleland 105). Once again, Cleland's choice to linger on the various parts of the mouth demonstrates an interest in and even obsession with the mouth in general.

While Cleland examines the various parts of the mouth, he simultaneously forms descriptions of it—particularly of the lips—based on the function that the mouth performs. For example, the descriptions of kissing constantly serve to further this oral emphasis; Cleland includes statements such as "kissing him as if I would consolidated lips with him" (Cleland 189) or "lifting me from the ground, with his lips glued to mine" (Cleland 45). While the mouth functions as the vehicle of kissing, another functionality on which Cleland's descriptions linger is that of breathing: "the parting of the double ruby pout of his lips seemed to exhale an air sweeter and purer than what it drew in" (Cleland 50). Finally, the emphasis on the lips of the mouth furthers his descriptions of speech, during which Fanny declares that she "hung on every syllable he uttered, and received, as oracles, all he said; whilst kisses were all the interruption I could not refuse myself the pleasure of admitting, from lips that breathed more than Arabian sweetness"

(Cleland 60). Cleland's continuous descriptions of the mouth, specifically through his descriptions of the parts that make up the mouth and through their various functions, highlight how much importance he places on the mouth in general.

Vagina as Mouth

While Cleland emphasizes the actual mouth—the mouth responsible for speaking, breathing, eating, and kissing—he simultaneously introduces a second type of mouth through his descriptions of the woman: that of the female mouth, or the vagina as a mouth. The first depiction of the female vagina as a mouth appears when Fanny witnesses the sexual encounter between Mrs. Brown and her gallant. Fanny records what she sees, describing "a wide open mouthed gap, overshaded with a grizzly bush" (Cleland 29). Later in the novel, Fanny's depictions of the labia continue to highlight the vagina as a metaphorical mouth; she writes how "with one hand he gently disclosed the lips of that luscious mouth of nature" (Cleland 125). Cleland perpetuates the mouth-metaphor through directly referring to the female part as a mouth with lips, but his metaphor goes a step further in referencing it as a "mouth of nature." This depiction highlights the highly sexual aspect of the mouth. While these two depictions of the female vagina as a mouth appear when Fanny literally sees the vaginas of others, she also includes descriptions of the vagina as a mouth when describing her own part. One example emerges during intercourse with Will, when Fanny states that she strongly felt "that part of me I might call a furnace mouth" (Cleland 90). Throughout the novel, Fanny's continual descriptions of the vagina serve to posit it as a female mouth.

Just as Cleland distinguishes between the mouth as a whole and its subsidiary parts during his descriptions of the actual mouth, his references to the vagina as a mouth bear the same distinctions. Cleland's distinguishing between the whole and part emerges most prominently through his descriptions of the vaginal lips, or labia. Fanny directly describes the female vagina as having "a pair of vermillion lips, pouting and swelling to the touch" (Cleland 40) or as a "red-centered cleft of flesh" (Cleland 35) with lips pointing inwards. While the mouth's lips allow the intake of food, Cleland depicts the lips of the vaginal mouth as facilitating the intake of the penis. During her sexual encounters with Will, Fanny describes how, as a means of discovering "the secrets of that dark and delicious deep" (Cleland 84), Will "opens the folding lips, the softness of which, yielding entry to any thing of a hard body, close round it" (Cleland 84); she emphasizes the role of the lips in serving as a vaginal guide during another sexual encounter with Will, in which she states that " a favourable motion from me met his timely thrust, by which the lips of it, strenuously dilated, gave way to his thus assisted impetuosity, so that we might both feel that he had gained a lodgment" (Cleland 81). Through distinguishing between the different parts that make up the vagina, Cleland furthers the parallel between the mouth and the vagina.

Cleland forms an interrelation between the actual mouth and the vaginal mouth through his descriptions in *Fanny Hill*, an interrelation furthered by scholar Loichot who more explicitly states the connection between these two body parts through her examination of them in her book *The Tropics Bite Back.* In Chapter Four "Sexual Traps," Loichot directly reinforces the depiction of the vagina as a mouth, stating that "the vagina is metaphorically presented as a starving mouth" (Loichot 110) in Vieux-Chauvet's

novel. While she directly analyzes the works of authors Vieux-Chauvet and Gisèle Harrus-Révidi, who, like Cleland, represent the vagina as a mouth within their works, Loichot also draws from the writings of Sigmund Freud; Freud directly links the vagina and mouth through testifying that the mouth serves as "a double site of sexuality and food" (Loichot 104). More than just a double-site on the body, however, the mouth also represents an organ of double-functionality. This dual functionality largely contributes to the metaphorical depiction of the vagina as a mouth because the mouth functions as both an instrument of eating and an instrument of sex. Through its ability to simultaneously facilitate these two forms of consumption, the "organ of the mouth" (Loichot 104) establishes the tie by which "eating and sexuality are linked" (Loichot 104), a linkage ultimately reflected in the metaphorical depictions of the vagina as a mouth.

Loichot devotes a chapter to examining the complex relationships existing among sexuality, hunger, and the mouth. While she stipulates that "food and sexuality are similarly linked as they originate and reside in the same organ" (Loichot 120), other points of connection also emerge. The relation between desire and hunger serves as one example. In *Amour*, Vieux-Chauvet "presents sexual desire as a devouring act" (Loichot 110), contributing to the pattern by which sexual hunger and actual hunger blur. As suggested, "people's eating and sexual habits, their appetite for food and their appetite for sex, are thus constructed according to the same schema" (Loichot 107), and that these "pathological appetites" further blend these two forms of hunger. Through metaphorically relating the mouth with the vagina and appetite for food with sexual desire, Loichot directly relates actual hunger to sexual hunger; however, she brings this series of literal and metaphorical relations a step further through relating the very acts of

having sex and eating, stating that “sexual intercourse and ingestion are metaphorically related" (Loichot 121). Through relating sexual hunger with actual hunger, Loichot further links the mouth and desire.

Like Loichot, Arlene Voski Avakian and Barbara Haber's examination of food extends into various areas associated with gastronomy, including the mouth. In “Feminist Food Studies: A Brief History,” they reference Elspeth Probyn’s analysis of the body’s similarity to the mouth, which postulates that bodies "eat with vigorous class, ethnic and gendered appetites, mouth machines that ingest and regurgitate, articulating what we are, what we eat, and what eats us” (Avakian and Haber 16). Here, Probyn directly posits the body as the consumer, elaborating on this metaphor by describing it as a "mouth machine." Her language calls into attention how the reversal in name denotes a reversal in function; by referring to the body as a mouth, she gives it the ability to “ingest and regurgitate”—to eat. Though the mouth is part of the body, the body can also represent a mouth simply by functioning as one. Probyn links this mouth-food analysis to the implication it has on the identities of individuals. Avakian and Haber attest that it is “ food and its representations [that] tell us about the culture that constructs our identities" (Avakian and Haber 16) and how “how eating can refigure these identities and their relation to each other” (Avakian and Haber 16). Following this schema, the blending of “what we eat” alongside “what eats us” could come to mean a reverse consumption; in distinguishing “what we are” (Cleland 16), the importance of determining the consumer from the consumed emerges.

The link between sexual hunger and actual hunger, and thereby sex and eating, provides the basis for Loichot’s depictions of the woman as consumer, enabling a reverse

consumption by which the consumed female consumes the male. During “Sexual Traps,” Loichot not only creates the depiction of the vagina as a mouth but specifically as a mouth that consumes; this depiction emerges through the statement that "the woman’s body is both things at once…food eater and food, cannibal and cannibalized” (Loichot 126). While the woman previously suffered a sexual consumption by the consuming man, the consumed transforms into the consumer; this furthers the depiction of the consuming female through explicitly highlighting the object on which the female feasts: the man. In her discussion of this form of consumption, she describes how the woman “consumed sex, the hard sex of men" (Loichot 131). Through this new depiction, the “woman as eater” (Loichot 133) transforms into “the man-eater” (Loichot 133). Depicting the female as a consumer displays the process of the consumed woman herself transforming into the consumer. Rather than just positing the female as consumer, however, Loichot emphasizes the specific part that consumes, highlighting how the vagina functions as the part of the body that enables reverse consumption to occur, stating that “the pink-white mouth and the pink-white vagina become the bestialized and teethed sites of ingestion and of carnivorous, cannibalistic sex” (Loichot 126). Though the woman as a whole represents the agent of reverse consumption, the vagina functions as the part that specifically consumes. While much of analysis presented here on reverse consumption and the role of the vagina as a mouth that consumes pertain to contemporary Caribbean literature, these same depictions emerged in eighteenth-century England, present in the novel of John Cleland.

Continuing the discussion of reverse consumption, particularly with regards to food-centered identification, Deborah Lupton “takes a post-structural approach to food

and the construction of identity, arguing that food is centrally implicated in whom we become" (Avakian and Haber 16). Through her examination of the phrase "we are what we eat," she furthers the conversation on reverse consumption. While Lupton argues for the objectifying aspect of consumption, my own interpretation takes this same phrase and modifies it into "we are *who* we eat." Following this slight modification, the phrase translates into: if we eat the consumed, we become the consumed. Food, then, "is centrally implicated in whom we become" as it enables the operation of reverse consumption and its consequences to occur. When Avakian and Haber claim, "the recent scholarship on women and food conclusively demonstrates that studying the relationship between women and food can help us to understand how women reproduce, resist, and rebel against gender constructions as they are practiced and contested in various sites, as well as illuminate the contexts in which these struggles are located" (Avakian and Haber 2), they highlight an important area of "recent scholarship on women" that intersects with the concept of reverse consumption. The analysis not only explores what women become but also what they can do. While more and more modern texts incorporate these conceptions on the reversal of power, the concept proved new and revolutionary for Cleland's time.

Like Loichot and Lupton, Cleland demonstrates the occurrence of a reverse consumption by the woman through depicting the vagina as a mouth that consumes. Though Fanny has sexual intercourse with numerous men throughout the novel, her transition from the consumed to the consumer only emerges during specific sexual encounters. Fanny's sexual encounters with Mr. H...'s servant Will serve as the primary encounter in which the imagery of the vaginal mouth and reverse consumption by Fanny

appear. Cleland leads into this reverse consumption by incorporating descriptions of Will—through the voice of Fanny—that portray him as an edible object. In the course of introducing Will into the novel, Fanny describes his attributes, declaring him to be a "fine featured, shapely, health country lad, breathing the sweets of fresh blooming youth" (Cleland 79). From her first depictions of Will, Fanny specifically lingers on the attributes of his body; these descriptions continue when she states, “his hair trimly dressed, clean linen, and, above all, a hale, ruddy, wholesome country look, made him out as pretty a piece of woman's meat as you could see” (Cleland 88). Through this description, Fanny directly associates the body of the young man with a piece of meat, making him a consumable object of sex. During another description of Will, Fanny states that Will “composed a figure of pure flesh and blood” (Cleland 79), emphasizing the carnality of his body, the body that would figure as the subject of her sexual hunger. Finally, Fanny even directly describes Will's penis as "that delicious stretcher" (Cleland 83), a description that emphasizes the consumptive thoughts with which Fanny regards Will's body.

Through using the language of food to depict Will as an object of consumption, Fanny acknowledges her gastro-erotic hunger and sexual desire for him. Similar to the language used by Cleland to insinuate the sexual hunger for and consumption of Fanny, Fanny incorporates her own language of consumption into her narrative of her sexual encounters with Will. She states how she “should have thought any one much out of taste, that could not have made a hearty meal of such a morsel as nature seemed to have designed for the highest diet of pleasure” (Cleland 88). Several elements of this statement reflect Fanny’s sexual hunger for Will. In describing how he fit her “taste,” Fanny

directly acknowledges having a "taste" or hunger for men. Through testifying that Will fit "the highest diet of pleasure," Fanny furthers the emphasis on gastro-erotic hunger with her food metaphor. As the word diet connotes the ongoing, stable source of food, Fanny insinuates that her sexual desire for the male sex resembles her desire for food. Her direct description of Will as a "hearty meal of such a morsel as nature...designed" pits Will as the object of consumption—one which she intends to consume. When Fanny claims that Will "was thus qualified to give the senses their richest feast" (Cleland 92), she prepares readers for the impending sexual consumption of him in which she intends to partake.

In addition to this food-language, Fanny's other descriptions portray Will as a less-than-human object of consumption. One example comes in the form of a different type of metaphor, where Fanny describes how "his unwieldy machine was so critically pointed" (Cleland 81). This description openly likens Will's penis to a machine. Depicting it as such dehumanizes Will, giving his bodily characteristics those of an object. Furthering this argument for dehumanization is one particular definition of the term machine. In the *Oxford English Dictionary,* a machine can be "a living being considered to move or act automatically or mechanically, rather than of its own volition; esp. a person who acts mechanically or unthinkingly" (*Oxford English Dictionary).* Though the *OED* describes the subject as a "living being," the lack of independence and autonomy suggest the opposite.

During the scene of Fanny's sexual relations with Will, Cleland's mouth-vagina metaphor demonstrates how Fanny achieves a reverse consumption, undergoing a transformation from the object of consumption into the consumer through the actions of her vaginal mouth. When Fanny seduces Will, she refers to her vagina as "that part of me

I might call a furnace mouth" (Cleland 90), openly depicting her vagina as a mouth. Moreover, a double-metaphor exists, as a "furnace mouth" would also mean that part of the oven into which an individual puts food. Cleland furthers the depiction of Fanny's "furnace mouth" as a vaginal mouth consuming metaphorical food through the association with an oven taking in food. Retrospectively describing her relations with Will, Fanny continues with this metaphor, stating, "this bred a pause of action, a pleasure stop, whilst that delicate glutton, my nether mouth, as full as it could hold, kept palating, with exquisite relish, the morsel that so deliciously engorged it" (Cleland 91). Fanny's choice of words—her description of her "delicate glutton, her nether mouth"—reveal her own desire to sexually consume the male, a desire enabled through her vaginal mouth. The depiction of the mouth "full as it could hold…palating the morsel that had so deliciously engorged it" portrays Fanny in the very act of consuming Will's body through the consumption of his penis. Both literally and metaphorically, Will "was swallowed up" (Cleland 85) during the sexual act. As the regular mouth proves vital in enabling gastronomic consumption, the vaginal mouth proves essential to sexual consumption. Just as the consumption of Fanny occurs by way of her vagina in the process of sexual consumption, so too must reverse consumption occur through this female part. Cleland's use of the vagina as the trigger for Fanny's consumption—as well as a vehicle of reverse consumption—enables Fanny's transition from consumer to consumed. Through adopting the same schema, Cleland works to avoid a contradictory parallel.

In the same way in which Cleland incorporates the language of the mouth and hunger in his depictions of the reverse consumption of Will, he includes another example of a woman exercising reverse gastronomic consumption over a man in his scene of

Louisa and the flower boy. Through his strategic usage of language in the seduction scene of the flower boy, Cleland highlights the gastronomic consumption at play; in addition, this language depicts the flower boy's body as consumable and Louisa's desire to consume. The use of this type of language begins in the bedroom, when Fanny physically assesses the flower boy's bodily capabilities, stating that, "he was, however, abundantly rich in personal treasures, such as flesh, firm, plump, and replete with the juices of youth, and robust well-knit limbs" (Cleland 172). She even describes the boy's sexual organ as "the genuine sensitive plant, which, instead of shrinking from the touch, joys to meet it, and swells and vegetates…ripe for the discovery" (Cleland 172). Following her description of the boy's body as a consumable object, Fanny emphasizes Louisa's desire to consume him, stating, "Louisa, whose appetite was up, and who, like the industrious bee, was, it seems, not above gathering the sweet of so rare a flower, though she found it planted on a dunghill, was but too readily disposed to take the benefit of my cession" (Cleland 173). Through using the term "appetite," Cleland draws a direct connection to gastronomic consumption. Fanny furthers the metaphorical scene of consumption in which the pleasure-hungry prostitute seeks her meat through claiming that Louisa "drowned her curiosity in a glut of pleasure" and how the flower boy "joyfully gave way to, under the incitations of instinct, and palpably delivered up to the goad of desire" (Cleland 173); both of the terms used during the sexual relations between Louisa and the flower boy—"glut" and "palpably"—further the depictions of the body as an object to be metaphorically consumed.

During the scene in which Louisa seduces this consumable flower boy, Cleland incorporates a food-centered allusion that serves to further the body's position in

gastronomic consumption. After being penetrated by the penis of the idiot flower boy, Louisa lay “Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth” (Cleland 174). In this quotation, physically separated from the rest of the text by quotation marks and spaces, Cleland cites William Shakespeare. The full text regarding the quote appears in Act 5, Scene 3 of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet.* After discovering the death of his Juliet, Romeo addresses death, declaring,

> Thou detestable maw, thou womb of death,
> Gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth
> Thus I enforce thy rotten jaws to open,
> And, in despite, I’ll cram thee with more food! (5.3.45-48)

Through this declaration, Romeo spits forth a series of consumption-related metaphors to describe how death consumed the body of his Juliet. He uses metaphorical imagery to assert that the “womb” serves as the consumer that eats the “morsel” of food, in this case the body. Furthermore, Romeo introduces imagery of the mouth into his metaphor, through stating that he plans to open the “rotten jaws” and “cram [them] with more food,” this food once again being the human body. Cleland's citation of Shakespeare's play stands as his only direct citation in the text. His reference to this major British writer who also uses gastronomic language to characterize the female body substantiates that which he argues: the interchangeability of the female body and food.

Cleland takes the metaphor a step further, however, refining a series of Romeo’s metaphorical images to better serve the purpose of the scene at hand. While Romeo creates the metaphor of a feminized death eating the body of Juliet, Cleland’s language choice specifies that Louisa lay “gorged with the dearest morsel of the earth," or the idiot boy's penis. Following the use of the female womb as eating a human body, Cleland

describes how the female part of Louisa consumes the body of the flower boy. The use of the verb “gorged” implies that Louisa has eaten of the flower boy’s body in excess, a valid analysis given his description of how Louisa glutted herself on the pleasure of the encounter. Though both Cleland and Shakespeare use language to fill the womb with a metaphorical food—the body—Cleland's metaphor fills it with life, Shakespeare’s with death. Through incorporating this quotation into his scene, however, Cleland reverses the morsel of consumption, transforming it from the female body of Juliet into the male body of the flower boy.

Power Through Reverse Consumption

During both scenes—Fanny's seduction of Will and Louisa's seduction of the flower boy—Cleland creates an element of power that defines the scene. This power-dynamic proves crucial to the analysis of reverse consumption as it represents the force that enables the women to reclaim power over men, specifically using reverse consumption. In the sex scenes with Will, Fanny uses reverse consumption to successfully manifest power over her sexual partner in two ways: through the physical positioning of her body in relation to the men with whom she sleeps and through her actively seeking out sex for her own pleasure. Once again, the sex scene with Will serves as the most illustrative example in which Fanny exerts power over a male through the physical positioning of her body during sex. When Fanny describes her own body in relation to Will's, stating, “I twist my legs round his naked loins, the flesh of which, so firm, so springy to the touch, quivered again under the pressure; and now I had [Will] every way encircled and begirt; and having drawn him home to me, I kept him fast there”

(Cleland 91), she demonstrates the physical power that she holds over him; this power results from the sexual positioning of her body in relation to Will's "begirt" body, mainly through her female mouth consuming Will's penis. Fanny directly highlights the power her body enables her to exercise when she states, "the powerfully divided lips of that pleasure-thirsty channel received him" (Cleland 90). Through this description, Fanny fully recognizes an element of power, especially by depicting the "powerfully divided lips" that physically take in Will's body in a metaphorical act of consumption.

Crucial to the power struggle between these females and their male partners is the learning and imitation that goes on. Prior to exercising reverse consumption, both Fanny and Louisa suffer at the hands of countless men, being sexually used and often abused. This experience, however, serves to mold their future interactions. For example, before Fanny seduces Will, she witnesses Mr. H… sexually take her maidservant. Her decision to sleep with Will represents a direct imitation of the actions of her master. Learning from Mr. H…'s actions, she then puts them into practice. Yet another example of learning and imitation emerges in Louisa's interactions with the flower boy. When Louisa first loses her virginity, Cleland highlights the differences between herself sexual partner, in terms of both age and experience: while she was barely thirteen, he "was just arrived in town from college" (Cleland 119); while she had no experience, he "was nothing of a novice" (Cleland 118). Just as the young man initiates her into the realm of sexuality, the later-experienced Louisa imitates his actions and guides the flower boy during his first sexual experience. In addition to the reclamation of power through learning and imitation, another means that Cleland emphasizes is the use of pleasure.

Power Through Pleasure

While the earlier descriptions of the sex scene with Will demonstrate how she achieves power through the physical positioning of her body, this last description introduces another element by which Fanny uses sex for power: through the attainment of pleasure. When Fanny declares that her "pleasure-thirsty channel received him," she introduces a concept previously foreign to the text: Fanny actively seeking out sex for the sake of her own pleasure. Prior to this scene in the novel, Cleland continually depicts Fanny as the provider of sexual pleasure. Even with Charles—with whom Fanny experiences pleasure—she never seeks out sex, but rather because she "knew his pleasure...submit[ted] joyfully to him" (Cleland 46). Most clearly seen through her relations with Mr. H..., Fanny represents an object for the sexual enjoyment of others. In the sex scene with Will, however, Cleland shows how, for the first time, Fanny seeks out a man for her own pleasure; furthermore, Fanny seduces and uses Will's body to fulfill her own sexual desires. Through seeking out pleasure, Fanny achieves consumptive pleasure, thereby reversing the power struggle. Just as the literal mouth proves necessary for the gastronomic consumption of food, Fanny’s vagina facilitates her own sexual consumption of men, achieving both power and pleasure from this reverse consumption.

In the course of describing her relations with Will, Fanny highlights how the female mouth enables her to partake in this sexual pleasure. Beginning with a testimony to the immense pleasure that the act of consumption gives her, Fanny states, "that so vital part of me [in] which I had now taken him...took unutterable delight" (Cleland 90). In this statement, Fanny makes an important distinction: rather than simply referring to her body as a whole, Fanny emphasizes "that so vital part"—her female mouth. Fanny's vagina

enables this delight because it represents "that part of [her] where the sense of feeling is so exquisitely critical" (Cleland 107). Furthermore, Fanny claims that "all resided in the favourite center of sense, and who was ruled by its powerful instinct in taking pleasure by its right handle" (Cleland 89). In both of these statements, Fanny focuses on the vagina as a sense, asserting that it is a sense ruled by pleasure.

Not only does the female mouth enable Fanny's own pleasure, but it simultaneously achieves power over males through this pleasure. Fanny directly alludes to power during her descriptions of her sexual relations with Will, stating, "I was richly overpaid for the pleasure I gave him, in that of examining the power of those objects thus abandoned to him, naked and free to his loosest wish" (Cleland 85). Through her words, Fanny acknowledges that she exercises power over men through the pleasure that her naked body provides. Another example of Fanny's body enabling her to assert power occurs during the descriptions of her relations with Will, when she writes, "he kneeled down to (a politeness taught him by love alone, that great master of it) and greedily kissed " (Cleland 89). In this scene, Will's actions connote a form of sexual submission: his kneeling down puts him in a position of weakness, one which for centuries has been used to demonstrate where true authority lies. Fanny recognizes that this "politeness" results from "love alone, that great master." However, the usage of "love" in this passage functions synonymously with "pleasure" or "desire." Fanny highlights the interchangeably of these terms when she writes that " he did not himself know that the pleasure he took in looking at me was love, or desire" (Cleland 78). Given the interchangeability of these terms, sexual desire functions as "that great master" that holds a position of power.

Fanny's connection of power and pleasure even brings the readers back to the pleasures and power of gastronomic consumption itself. During one scene of her sexual interactions with Will, Fanny declares, "and now, palpably mistress of any size of man, and triumphing in my double achievement of pleasure and revenge, I abandoned myself entirely to the ideas of all the delight I had swam in" (Cleland 87). Even the terminology that Fanny uses perpetuates the connection of pleasurable consumption and power; in the phrase "palpably mistress," "mistress" asserts Fanny's power in the situation, while "palpably" bears a gastronomic connotation of a food that pleases the palate. Fanny further marries the themes of pleasure and power through her testimony of "triumphing in [her] double achievement of pleasure and revenge." As revenge alone constitutes an assertion of power, the "double achievement of pleasure and revenge" further illustrates how pleasure enables power.

Like Cleland, Loichot focuses on the woman's attainment of power through sexual pleasure. In "Sexual Traps," Loichot describes one representation of women as having "an overflowing sexuality and an insatiable appetite for men" (Loichot 105). Furthermore, she explores texts that enable this "insatiable appetite" to be acted upon. One such text is the poem "Fantasm Famm" by Suzanne Dracius. During an examination of the literary criticism of Hanétha Vété-Congolo on this poem, Loichot illustrates how "the poem plainly and directly claims the right to assert women's sexual pleasure" (Loichot 132). The woman's assertion of her own wants and needs alone represents a form of power as it recognizes that she no longer has sex simply for the sake of the man. Simultaneously, however, another form of power is attained through sexual pleasure since the male becomes the subject of the woman's sexual pleasure. As the woman's body

fuels the masculine sexual drive, the woman's "attainment" of sexual pleasure places the male body at her own advantage. While Loichot acknowledges that the entirety of the woman's body enables this, she places specific emphasis on both the literal and metaphorical mouths. Loichot discusses the power of the woman enabled through pleasure, but her discussion of the “Freudian anatomical coincidence of oral and sexual pleasure located in the mouth and, more generally, beyond the metaphorical” (Loichot 110) brings the mouth into this position of power through pleasure.

Just as Loichot’s analysis on reverse consumption places emphasis on the power dynamic present where reverse consumption is involved, Avakian and Haber also delve into the question of power; they once again reference Lupton, who theorizes that "Food discourse and the power relations embedded within it and which it produces, along with early bodily experiences of eating...construct who we are” (Avakian and Haber 16). This statement fully acknowledges the important place that power holds within the scholarly discussion on food. By affecting how we interact with others, this power dynamic serves to shape who were are. Though applicable to both genders, Counihan highlights its specific relevance concerning women, contending, "in a state society women gain influence (private power) through giving even as they may be locked out of coercive (public) power" (Avakian and Haber 8). Ultimately, the public power that these women exchange for private power derives from the social relations that they form and represents "power that comes from being needed (Avakian and Haber 8).

The Mouth and Power

In examining the ability of the mouth to provide pleasure, it stands that the mouth holds the ability to exercise power. Loichot, however, makes the necessary jump between the mouth of the face and the mouth of the vagina, recognizing how the female mouth simultaneously achieves power. She writes how "the site of cannibalism moves from the mouth to the devouring or castrating vagina" (Loichot 126), specifically alluding to the female mouth. Just as Cleland focuses on the power achieved through Fanny's female mouth, mainly by the physical positioning of her body in relation to a man's, Loichot too looks at the physical power that the vagina exercises. She alludes to Patrick Chamoiseau's text *Texaco*, about which Couti "argues that the emphasis put on the constricting muscles of the vagina...'depicts the vagina [coucoune] as a mouth that threatens the male lover with assimilation and castration'" (Loichot 132). While Cleland describes how Will "was swallowed up" (Cleland 85) during sex with Fanny, Loichot writes: "Like in Laferrière's scene of the consuming vagina, the men seem to be swallowed and threatened by castration or devouring…in the sexual encounter" (Loichot 132). These depictions of the mouth consuming the male perpetuate the power achieved through consumption.

Reverse Consumption and Power

Because the woman achieves power through pleasure, and the female mouth provides this pleasure by conducting a reverse consumption, Loichot emphasizes how reverse consumption functions as the ultimate act of power. In a manner similar to the actual mouth consuming food for the sake of the body, the woman's vagina takes in the

man, consuming his sexual organ for the sake of her own sexual hunger; however, this act functions as more than just a means of satiating hunger: it represents an act of power. Loichot captures this when she describes the transformation of the woman: "the consumed and discarded woman's body is portrayed as... the insatiable mouth that entraps male sexual organs, that reduces men to the metonymy of their genitals, and makes them interchangeable" (Loichot 131). Through the reverse consumption by the female, "their sexual organs, as well as their respective individuality, become reduced" (Loichot 131). Drawing on how this enables the "woman's empowerment through sexuality " (Loichot 131), Loichot states that the "women [use] sexual power to do violence to the male other" (Loichot 131) and "the man loses control at a heightened moment of power in the sexual act" (Loichot 128). Ultimately, "the mouth and genitals are not sites of bonding but tools of harm" (Loichot 122) that assert power over the man and enable the woman to achieve power through reverse consumption.

Conclusion

As seen through both the scholarship of Loichot and the works of Cleland, an ongoing pattern exists in representations of the vagina and those of the mouth. Cleland further clarifies this metaphor through specifying that the vagina represents a female mouth. In a manner similar to an actual mouth, the female mouth also must partake in consumption. While hunger drives the consumption by the actual mouth, desire or sexual hunger drives the consumption by the vaginal mouth. To satisfy this hunger, the vagina metaphorically consumes the male penis. Cleland illustrates how this consumption of the female mouth represents a reverse consumption by which the consumed female

metaphorically consumes the male, a depiction that differs from the previously established gastronomic consumption of the female. Through this reverse gastronomic consumption, the female achieves power from her new position as consumer.

Section 2: Reverse Commercial Consumption and the Female Transactor

Introduction

In "Empowering Women as Citizen-Consumers," de Grazia examines how women achieve power through commercial consumption. While the previous markets discussed, namely the food and prostitution markets, could easily be located, defined, and described, the market to which de Grazia now refers represents the London market as a whole: the commercial market. De Grazia discuses how the market enables a new dynamic of power to emerge, writing that "market-driven networks of communication and sociability can yield a voice to subjects, specifically women, who have been disempowered by economic inequality, exclusion from democratic processes, and social and cultural discrimination" (de Grazia 275). Rather than strictly attributing this power to the market, de Grazia focuses her attention on consumption, the force driving the marketplace. In the process of answering the widely-discussed question of whether or not women receive this empowerment, de Grazia argues for the positive, that "women have been empowered by access to the goods, sites, spectacles, and services associated with mass consumption" (de Grazia 275). More specifically, the "communicative and symbolic character of acts of consumption [enable women] to move beyond" (de Grazia

275) their previous subjection, asserting a new position of agency within the market and society as a whole.

Chapter 1 "Paralleling Consumption in the Food and Prostitution Markets in *Fanny Hill*" explores the assertion of power over Fanny first through gastronomic consumption and then through commercial consumption. While the previous section delves into how Fanny reclaims power through reverse gastronomic consumption, this section looks at how this reverse consumption also applies to commercial consumption. Just as Cleland uses the metaphorical female mouth as the lens through which to view reverse gastronomic consumption, he uses the act of payment as the focal point through which to examine the reverse commercial consumption. In this reverse commercial consumption, however, the prostitutes—previously bought for the pleasure of others—pay for their own pleasure. Through the payment of money made by Fanny and Louisa following their sexual relations with Will and the idiot flower boy, Cleland demonstrates how these two women assert power over the male by means of a reverse commercial consumption.

Reverse Commercial Consumption

Just as Fanny's first exercises power through her reverse gastronomic consumption of Will, the moment of the novel in which she begins exercising reverse commercial consumption also takes place in the bedroom with Will. Throughout the novel, a variety of transactions occur in which the female body is exchanged for money. After Fanny initially seduces Will, however, Cleland includes an example of the female paying as opposed to being paid. Fanny writes that "I forced myself to send him

away...and thrust a guinea into his hands; not more, less, being too flush of money, a suspicion of discovery might arise from thence" (Cleland 85). Through this act of payment, Fanny creates a different form of transaction in which she ultimately exchanges money for the pleasure of Will's body. During another one of their secret meetings, Fanny repeats her action of paying Will for his services, stating, "at taking leave, I forced him (for he had sentiments enough to refuse it) to receive money enough to buy a silver watch...as a remembrance he was carefully to preserve of my affections" (Cleland 92). By paying Will for his sexual favors, Fanny conducts a reverse commercial consumption.

Though this reverse consumption, a reversal of roles occurs by which the prostitute prostitutes the male. After their discovery by Mr. H..., Fanny's words concerning Will serve to demonstrate this reversal of roles. Fanny writes, "I should certainly have endeavored to detain him in town, and would have spared neither offers nor expense" (Cleland 96). In this assertion, much of the terminology used directly mirrors that of a man keeping a mistress. Fanny's observation of her readiness to make any "offer" and spare no "expense" directly affirms that she would have paid Will any amount of money for the pleasure provided. Furthermore, through stating her desire "to have procured [herself] the satisfaction of keeping him with [her]"(Cleland 96), Fanny directly uses terminology normally associated with prostitution. Fanny expresses her desire to "keep" Will—both sexually and financially—for her own sexual use in a manner similar to which Mr. H... kept her. Through these assertions, Fanny displays the reversal of roles enabled by reverse consumption.

Ultimately, this reversal of roles—as well as the language used in describing Fanny's relations with Will—demonstrates how Fanny achieves power through this

reverse commercial consumption. In describing the end of her relations with Will, Fanny recognizes how it marks the end to "[her] commerce in this handsome youth" (Cleland 92). The *Oxford English Dictionary* describes commerce as an "exchange between men of the products of nature or art; exchange of merchandise...including the whole of the transactions, arrangements, etc., therein involved" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Through her usage of the pronoun "my," Fanny establishes a sense of ownership over the transactions; this specific ownership comes as no surprise as Fanny represents the sole actor behind the initiation and financing of her relations with Will. Even by retrospectively viewing her initial descriptions of Will, Cleland foreshadows the lad's later usage; Fanny writes that Will's " chief employ was...to bring and carry letters or messages between his master and [her]" (Cleland 77). While Will's "chief employ" is that of letter-carrying, the usage of the term "chief" implies that another form of employment exists. After several more pages, Cleland's readers learn the nature of this additional employ as catering to Fanny's sexual desires.

After first displaying reverse commercial consumption through Fanny's interactions with Will, Cleland furthers this reverse commercial consumption during Fanny's career by introducing a new form of market into the text: a market centered on commercial consumption. During one morning at Mrs. Cole's establishment, Fanny and a fellow prostitute encounter a flower boy, "the son of a poor woman…[who] offered [them] some nosegays, ranged round a small basket" (Cleland 170). Though selling flowers from a basket stands as only a small act of trade, this boy brings with him a previously unknown market into *Fanny Hill*: that of the flower market. As a market can be defined as simply "a meeting or gathering together of people for the purchase and sale

of provisions or livestock, publicly displayed" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), this boy and his flower basket personify the flower market. In the same exact manner that the shopkeeper at the Covent Garden fruiter's shop relied on the sale of his fruit or the prostitutes commodified their bodies to earn a living, the flowers offered to Fanny and Louisa represent the objects of exchange by which this boy uses the market to survive; Cleland acknowledges this in stating, "by selling [the flowers] the poor boy eked out his mother's maintenance of them both" (Cleland 170). During Cleland's introduction of this new market and of the boy's position in the market, Fanny describes the previously existing transactional relationship between the boy and the prostitutes, stating, "this boy we had often seen, and bought his flowers, out of pure compassion, and nothing more" (Cleland 170). Here, Fanny establishes her relationship to the boy within the commercial realm.

Following the introduction of the flower boy into the novel, Cleland incorporates a power structure, achieving this by the language in referring to the flower boy, the connotations associated with the job of flower-seller, and his decision to give the boy a disability that places him at a mental disadvantage. Though Cleland initially refers to the flower boy with "the nickname of good-natured Dick" (Cleland 170), he solely refers to him as the "flower boy" for the remainder of the scene. According to the standards of male development, the "flower boy" physically and anatomically could be more accurately described as a man. Cleland's continuous references to the "boy," however, highlight the developmental gap between him and the prostitutes, positing him at a different stage of development. Furthermore, a variety of connotations existed during the eighteenth century surrounding the profession of a flower-seller. Typically, women

worked as flower-venders, which lead to the connotation that the profession bore of a woman selling her perishable charms instead of flowers. The fact that Cleland gives this traditionally feminine occupation to a boy suggests a specific agenda regarding how he intends his readers to perceive the flower boy.

Cleland widens this gap and further places the flower boy in a relationally weak position by giving him a mental disability. Fanny highlights this position, stating that he was "a perfect changeling, or idiot" (Cleland 170) and he "stammered so that there was no understanding even those sounds his half-dozen animals ideas, at most, prompted him to utter" (Cleland 170). Through this cognitive impairment, the flower boy holds a relationally weak position compared to Fanny and Louisa. The flower boy's position has a series of implications. Unable to form thoughts clearly, he struggles with acting on, and sometimes even knowing, his own desires. Unable to speak, he cannot defend himself. Another implication of his condition to which Fanny alludes is that of his person; with "a face unwashed, hair tangled for want of combing, and so ragged a pliht" (Cleland 170), he lacks the ability to care for himself even in the most basic ways. This depiction mirrors the inability of an animal to care for itself, an association that furthers the previously established gap between the woman and the boy. The inability of the flower boy to think, speak, and function at a normal level propels the misuse of power between the strong and weak that characterizes the scene. Fanny even directly alludes to his submissive nature, attesting to the "soft simpleton's doing every thing he was bid at the first word…from his naturally having no turn to mischief" (Cleland 170). This statement foreshadows how the two women will take advantage of his position of weakness, exercising power over him sexually.

In order prepare his readers for the scene of the seduction of the flower boy, Cleland depicts the building sexual desire of the two women. Assessing the pleasing physical attributes of the flower boy in a manner similar to the way in which she surveyed Will, Fanny describes his body: “he was perfectly well made, stout, clean-limbed, tall of his age, as strong as a horse, and withal, pretty figured" (Cleland 170) and did not have "a figure to be snuffled at neither" (Cleland 170). While Fanny offers these observations without the context of sexual desire, the scene soon changes when “a start of wayward fancy, seized Louisa” who had “conceived a strange longing to be satisfied” (Cleland 171). The flower boy or “simpleton” becomes the object upon which Louisa casts this sexual desire and from whom she seeks the attainment of it. As Louisa leads the flower boy to her bedroom, Fanny joins in with the aim of “procuring her this satisfaction” (Cleland 171) as well as to indulge her own curiosity; Fanny writes how “my curiosity conspiring with hers” (Cleland 171) to see “whether the general rule held good with regard to this changeling, and how far nature had made him amends, in her best bodily gifts, for her denial of the sublimer intellectual ones" (Cleland 171). Through both physical longing and curiosity, the two women let their desires concerning the youth determine their actions.

During the scene in which Louisa and Fanny work together to seduce the flower-selling simpleton, the language that Cleland employs within the scene demonstrates how the women exercise power through their seduction. Before even entering the bedroom, Cleland gives the first hint of the women having physical power over the flower boy through Fanny’s actions, “securing first the street-door" (Cleland 171). The act of closing up the shop and “securing” the door testifies to a metaphorical entrapment. Not only do

Louisa and Fanny keep others out—arguably from witnessing their upcoming seduction—but the securing of the door also functions to keep the flower boy inside. While physically in the bedroom, Cleland continues to incorporate power-language into Fanny's narrative. Fanny describes the scene, stating, "whilst [Louisa] was amusing him with picking out his nosegays, I undertook the lead, and began the attack" (Cleland 171). Through this statement, Fanny describes the seduction as an "attack," directing connoting a power struggle. Her word-usage, however, narrowly skirts the line between seduction and rape, as attack generally connotes that the two parties involved stand at opposition to one another, attempting to overcome the other. This struggle for power continues when Fanny attempts to gain both access to and obedience of the objectified male: she beckons nature, riling him into a state of irritation, stating, "we had used to put the principles of pleasure effectually into motion, and to wind up the springs of its organ to their supreme pitch" (Cleland 173). Furthering this depiction of an attack-like struggle for power, Fanny describes how Louisa "determined to risk a trial of parts with the idiot, who was by this time nobly inflamed for her purpose" (Cleland 173). This particular language, that of a "trial," insinuates that Louisa works against rather than with him. Through the specificity with which Fanny words her descriptions, the struggle for power with the flower boy is apparent.

Perhaps the greatest power struggle with the flower boy emerges through the imagery of rape and defloration. In her article, "Initiation, Defloration, and Flagellation: Sexual Propensities in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*," Julie Peakman explores the theme of defloration: when a woman first loses her virginity. Peakman writes, "Control over a woman's introduction to sex was part of the dominant code of morality which

operated a double standard for men and women" (Peakman 165). Though Cleland never elaborates on the boy's past sexual experience, his language insinuates that the experience is the flower boy's first. For example, Cleland writes, "he joyfully gave way to, under the incitations of instinct" (Cleland 173). Clarifying the flower boy's actions according to instinct—not under past experience—insinuates that the boy loses his virginity. For many scholars writing on *Fanny Hill,* the scene with the flower boy sparks significant interest, often being interpreted as a rape scene. Following Peakman's argument that "control over a[n] introduction to sex was part of the dominant code of morality"—one to which the boy cannot and does not consent—Louisa achieves power through this double for defloration and rape.

Just as Cleland's choice of language reflects how the women achieve a gastronomic consumption of the flower boy, Louisa's actions reflect a commercial consumption of the boy as well. The first piece of evidence that a form of commercialized consumption will appear is through the occurrence of an actual transaction. Not long after the flower boy enters the establishment to sell his flowers, Cleland introduces the first transaction: "and beginning to examine his nosegays, [Louisa] culls out two, one for herself, another for me, and pulling out half a crown, very currently gives it him to change, as if she had really expected he could have changed it" (Cleland 173). Though an elementary transaction, in which Louisa gives money to the boy in exchange for the nosegays, the action of giving the boy half a crown foreshadows a much larger transaction with greater implications. Louisa uses the half crown as a strategic object in her seduction: knowing he will be unable to offer change, she leads him upstairs to her bedroom to give him exact change for the sale of flowers—a

transaction in the commercial market. After the attainment of her sexual desires, Louisa compensates the young boy for the sexual pleasure with which he provides her. Though Louisa buys all of the young boy's flowers off him "paying him, at his rate," this transaction functions as a guise for the real transaction at play: the exchange of money for the body, not of flowers. A little further along in the novel, Cleland describes how the boy "retained only a confused memory of the transaction" (Cleland 176), here directly alluding to their sexual relations as a transaction. Through this scene and the language associated with it, Cleland depicts how the prostitute partakes in the commercial consumption of the male.

Cleland continues the power structure in the scene by the way that he deals with the flowers themselves. Fanny describes Louisa's purchase of the flowers afterwards, stating that Louisa "pleased him perhaps more by taking all his flowers off his hands, and paying him, at his rate, for them, than if she had embarrassed him by a present, that he would have been puzzled to account for, and might have put others on tracing the motives of" (Cleland 176). Cleland's inclusion of this sentence works to further the elements of power present within the scene: the flower boy receives more pleasure from the payment for his flowers—his actual purpose from the start—than from the sexual detour that followed. More ironically, Louisa, in taking all of the boy's stock, quite literally "de-flowers" him. Though Cleland never fully specifics whether or not this sexual interaction is his first, the literal and metaphorical defloration that occurs reminds readers of the power dynamic in the novel's first defloration scene with Mr. Crofts. Though Mr. Crofts does not succeed in his attempt to rob Fanny of her virginity, the scene is undisputedly a failed rape scene. The parallel existing between these two scenes serves to further the

reality of power-achievement by rape. Louisa exerts power over the male gender as a whole by taking advantage of the novel's weakest representative of the males with whom the prostitutes interact. While putting forth a conflict of morals, the situation resembles the older, richer men who doubly satisfy their desires and need for power by preying on the relationally weak girls sucked into the mechanism of the prostitution market.

During the course of the novel, Cleland highlights two important scenes for payment by a prostitute following scenes of sex. Through introducing money into the sexual relations of Fanny with Will and Louisa with the idiot boy, Cleland incorporates a major element of the commercial market into his sex scenes: payment. Through these two examples of payment, the transactions underlying the nature of these sexual encounters emerge. While these transactions display a form of reverse prostitution, they ultimately symbolize a reverse consumption. Furthermore, the acts of Fanny paying Will after seducing him and Louisa buying all of the flowers off the flower boy after taking advantage of him highlight the power struggle that occurs during these sexual encounters and payments. More than just the reverse commercial consumption enabled through the monetary transactions of the female, however, Cleland includes countless scenes of reverse gastronomic consumption. Fanny's female mouth, previously the site by which males took pleasure from the female body, enables the female to assert power and claim agency. Through both reverse gastronomic consumption and reverse commercial consumption, Cleland highlights the process by which the consumer becomes the consumed. This transformation enables the previously subjugated female to reclaim power in the male-female sexual relationship.

CONCLUSION:

Food for Thought

Though *Fanny Hill* primarily remains in the sphere of eighteenth-century libertine literature, her narrative leaves a lasting impact that extends into our culture today, even if only in subtle ways. One simple example is the term “fanny” itself. Looking at the slang uses of "fanny" in the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the term has evolved to mean "the female genitals" in British English and "the buttocks" in American English (*Oxford English Dictionary*). According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the word comes "from the earlier British meaning 'vulva' (1879)" (*Online Etymology Dictionary*). Though the *OED* deems the etymology of the term "fanny" unknown, the *Online Etymology Dictionary* speculates that "perhaps [the term came] from the name of John Cleland's heroine in the scandalous novel '*Fanny Hill'*" (*Online Etymology Dictionary*). Historically, this change reduces the term—as well as the name “Fanny” —to a representation of the female genitals. The shift likely resulted from the promiscuity and hypersexual-focus of the novel; however, the etymological change in meaning of the term ironically parallels the reduction of Fanny’s character into that part of her body that controls her life.

While the changing definition of the term “fanny” demonstrates a broad result of the novel, the entire narrative structure serves to highlight the shifts and changes occurring within. In fact, though the evolution of the term “fanny” negatively reduces Fanny, the narrative of the novel actually works to strengthen her character as a whole. Until this point, the majority of the analysis deals with Fanny’s transition from consumed to consumer. This growth ultimately stems from Cleland’s employment of the narrative

structure to trace the character developments that mark Fanny's transition along the way. Reviewing the narrative framework, Cleland writes *Fanny Hill* in the form of two letters from Fanny to an unnamed recipient (generally referred to as "Madam" throughout). More than coincidentally, each of these two letters marks a very different period in Fanny's life as a prostitute.

The stark difference can initially be seen by the changes in Fanny herself. The letters highlight the transformation that takes place when Fanny undergoes this major shift in positions. Letter the First (hereby referred to as Letter 1) marks the phase of usage, showing Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Jones using Fanny for their own profit. Of the sexual experiences that Fanny recounts during this time—namely Phoebe, Mr. Crofts, and Mr. H…—the majority results from force or coercion. Cleland depicts the victimized Fanny consumed by the men and women around her, a pawn in the prostitution market. In Letter the Second (Letter 2), however, Cleland switches gears and presents Fanny in a very different light. The letter conveys a phase of empowerment, beginning with Fanny's active choice to try her hand at a life of prostitution in Mrs. Cole's establishment. While under the direction of this renowned madam, Fanny maintains the ability to either consent to or deny each male client whom she serves. Seemingly no longer a victim, Fanny seeks out these sexual experiences, using the system to her advantage. The transition in Fanny's character reflects the changes in the narrative structure of the novel. The parallel narratives appear most prominently when tracking the development of the protagonist herself.

Though these differences appear when viewing the letters in conjunction with Fanny's relative position, Cleland encompasses the broader changes to Fanny's character

as a whole. In the course of physically changing locations and partners, Fanny changes as a protagonist. The young girl, left to fend for herself in a large city at the age of fifteen, becomes a confident woman capable of her independent position in the world. Previously uneducated and naive, Fanny undergoes a diverse and varied education; in the course of her sexual encounters, she learns from and imitates the very people who use her sexually. In addition to these educating life experiences, Fanny receives actual instruction from an older gentleman who serves as her mentor, as well as the last sexual partner during her life of prostitution. Furthermore, Fanny's sexual submission and focus on pleasing others leads to participation in sex for her own pleasure. And finally, Fanny's initial ability to survive translates into a surprisingly adept ability to thrive. The two letters are physically divided by a page break in the text, but more importantly, they are divided according to Fanny's phrases in life, encompassing the changes to her character.

Most importantly, perhaps, dividing the narrative into two parts works to substantiate the market mentality that shapes the novel by continuing the pattern of parallels. The two parallel letters describing Fanny's divergent phases in life and development as a character serve to further the previously-established parallels between gastronomic and commercial consumption, but more broadly, the food and prostitution markets. Readers first gage Fanny's relation to food and hunger, seeing the transition from a hungry orphan to the prostitute who is both literally and metaphorically fed; Fanny's relation to sexual consumption, through the chance to see her change from consumed to consumer, transcending the cycle of consumption; and finally, in Fanny's relation to the market, by tracking her life prior to, during, and after prostitution. All of

these relations and their transitions are reflected in the narrative structure of two letters, the contents of which parallel one another and the market mentality as a whole.

Disparate Views

While Chapter 1 initially highlights Fanny's subjection through consumption, Chapter 2 addresses how she converts consumption into a vehicle of power, beginning the phase of her empowerment. A variety of authors reinforce this claim in their scholarship on *Fanny Hill.* One such author is John C. Beynon in his essay "'Traffic in More Precious Commodities': Sapphic Erotics and Economics in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure."* Beynon highlights how "these women [prostitutes] exceed their roles as objects of exchange between men" (Beynon 14) to claim a form of power over the men with whom they interact. He takes this claim further, stating, "the prostitutes' awareness of their hyper-commodified status, both as women in a patriarchal society, and, more significantly, as women whose bodies are literally exchanged in a world of trade in pleasures, allows them...to exercise a degree of control over these systems" (Beynon 15). After recognizing their position as the consumed, the prostitutes reclaim their agency over their consumers, transforming the very force that binds them into one that frees them.

Despite the common perception that Cleland puts forth a beacon of female empowerment in a male-dominated society, several authors contend against this conception of the novel. In "'This Tail-Piece of Morality' Phallocentric Reinforcements of Patriarchy in *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure*," Patsy S. Fowler offers a counter-argument to the perception of *Fanny Hill* as female-empowering literature; she declares, "while some read the novel as a liberating celebration of female sexuality, many others,

including myself, read it as a traditional pornographic text objectifying women and focusing only on male power and gratification" (Fowler 49); Fowler further states how "a closer reading...reveals that Cleland incorporates predominantly accepted social and sexual myths, ideologies, and mores into a fiction that sometimes exposes but more often endorses English patriarchal structures" (Fowler 51). Her claims adhere to the scholarship of Robert Markley, who argues that "the novel flirts with something approaching an incipient feminism...it sustains a masculine mythology of power from within the guise of a feminine confession" (Fowler 51).

Within this debate on female-empowerment, many authors incorporate the romanticized life of the prostitute into their criticisms on Cleland's treatment of the female. For example, in "Idealized and Realistic Portrayals of Prostitution in John Cleland's *Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure,"* Lena Olsson stipulates, "Readers…often see the depictions of prostitution in this novel as fantastic, glorified, and less than credible" (Olsson 81). David Weed accuses Cleland of "verbally airbrushing both the prostitutes' looks and the harsh realities of their working conditions" (Olsson 81). These false depictions of the prostitute herself serve to undermine her actions in the novel, thereby perpetuating the cycle of subjection. Olsson and Weed hold that the prostitute, in being portrayed as a romantic heroine, loses the humanization necessary for the readers to adequately empathize with the hardship of her life.

I generally disagree with these criticisms against Fanny's empowerment. While Cleland's depiction of prostitution certainly idealizes a severe and painful lifestyle, I stipulate that his decisions regarding the character development of Fanny and the plot result not from naiveté of reality but rather function as a literary attempt to amend a harsh

reality existing for certain women during the eighteenth century. His chronology of Fanny's growth from girl to woman—and her development along the way—allows his readers to fully witness the consumption of the woman that occurs in the market of prostitution. Moreover, however, it simultaneously enables the consumed woman to establish a form of agency. In depicting Fanny as both consumed and consumer, Cleland adeptly balances reality with optimism: Fanny chooses the life of prostitution in order to survive, but she later exercises power and achieves a fortune, marriage, and happiness.

One of the ways in which Cleland effectively achieves a balance between the differing representations of prostitution is through his treatment of humor in the novel. Though it contains a slew of topics that are hard to digest, *Fanny Hill* ultimately emerges as a funny novel. The primary medium employed to convey this humor is food. In choosing food, Cleland finds a concept to which every reader can relate, something that proves necessary when reflecting on a subject that only a small portion of the population can understand. Using the metaphorical associations of gastronomy to place food in the same plane as prostitution, Cleland approaches a narrowly complex problem through a universal lens, but more importantly, he takes a serious topic and sheds it in an interesting, alternative, and funny light. At the end of the novel, Fanny describes her letters as "this tail-piece of morality" (Cleland 198), hinting at a moralistic driving force behind the letters which she was prevailed upon to write. While using food to provide humor on the one hand, however, Cleland also uses the associations of food to draw a moral judgment: "Virtue gives…a sauce of the highest relish; whilst Vices are the harpies that infect and foul the feast" (Cleland 198). From humor to morality, the uses of food in *Fanny Hill* know no bounds.

Not everyone would agree with my views on Cleland's novel representing an "instrument for positive cultural change" (Fowler 51), and several disparate views on the matter certainly exist. Regardless of whether *Fanny Hill* puts forth a true example of female empowerment or a disguised perpetuation of the objectification of the woman, one important reality remains constant: the undeniable role of food in the power structure surrounding consumption. In her introduction to *The Tropics Bite Back,* Loichot directly hits on this point, declaring, "Food, therefore, can be both the site of lost power and empowerment, depending on its source and its use" (Loichot x). While Loichot's scholarship primarily deals with Caribbean literature, the significance of this assertion reaches throughout history. In the context of Cleland's *Fanny Hill*, the power structure in eighteenth-century London society and its markets is examined. However, the implications of examining food and consumption in relation to power and women extends into today.

Literary Implications

In addition to addressing the important question of whether or not Fanny achieves power through consumption, Cleland's work brings out the larger issue concerning food and femininity and the literary, philosophical, and societal implications of the text. Though food represents an age-old object that has been present in every day life for thousands of years, the study of food emerges as a relatively new field, gaining especial prominence in recent years. Author and journalist Paul Levy writes: "Food studies is a subject so much in its infancy that it would be foolish to try to define it or in any way circumscribe it, because the topic, discipline, or method that you rule out today" (Levy)

may be relevant to the study of food tomorrow. Levy's take on food studies highlights its importance as an entire discipline, including the historical, sociological, anthropological, literary, and even scientific study of food. Within the more specific scope of literature, however, the study of food incorporates a wide range of aspects beyond the physical food itself, often intersecting with representations of the mouth, the body, and consumption. While these intersections are manifested on the literal level by physical processes of the individual, other functions of food demonstrate its metaphorical nature. The transformation of the innately individual function of food—individual in the sense that food can only nourish an individual's body—into a universal object that plays into the relations of individuals and those around them forms the basis of food's emergence into literature as an area worthy of study. Because literature as a whole encapsulates the various interrelations of humanity, and food often functions as a center point for many of these interactions, food establishes itself as being a relevant object of study within literature, as objects from "the daily life of ordinary people…[prove] not only worthy of study but necessary to any understanding of past and present worlds" (Avakian and Haber 16).

The literary implications of food and its subsidiaries extend into the less-widely known concept of reverse consumption in relation to power; and Cleland is not the only author to relate the concept of reverse consumption to prostitution. Reverse consumption also appears in Guy de Maupassant's "Boule de Suif." In his story, Maupassant's protagonist—once again a prostitute—establishes power by sharing a basket of food with her fellow travelers during a carriage ride. Along with her companions, Elizabeth Rousset partakes in food as a consumer, simultaneously exercising the most power. As the story

progresses, the plot shifts away from literal gastronomic consumption and turns towards metaphorical sexual consumption. By the story's end, she has been prevailed upon to sleep with a Prussian against her will, transitioning from consumer to consumed, and in so doing, losing her position of power. Though *Fanny Hill* demonstrates how reverse consumption enables power through food, "Boule de Suif" conveys quite the opposite: the loss of power through the reverse consumption that occurs when sex and food collide.

Philosophical Implications

Of the various factors that contribute to food being an object worthy of study, most notable is the universality of food as an object. Food represents a fundamental object, one not only present in the course of each day but also an integral component to the life of every human being; the comprehensive relevance of food derives from the fact that food is an object necessary for the survival and nourishment of the body. In his novel *Looking at the Overlooked: Four Essays on Still Life Painting,* Norman Bryson examines food as a subject that is often overlooked in still life art. In Part IV "The Female Space," he discusses food as a human requisite, stating, "no one can escape the conditions of creaturality, of eating and drinking" (Bryson 13). Through every human being's physical need for food, eating represents a "basic [routine] of self-maintenance" (Bryson 137) necessary to life and humanity.

While food as an object holds significance, also important is the physical process of consumption, the process by which food enters the body. Through its direct link to food, consumption becomes a process worth analyzing. At the most basic level of human existence is the molecular process of metabolism, the "chemical processes that occur

within a living organism in order to maintain life" (*Oxford English Dictionary*). In her article "Food as Exposure: Nutritional Epigenetics and the New Metabolism," Hannah Landecker expounds upon the process of consumption and its crucial relevance to the body, stating, "Food enters the body, and is consumed and transubstantiated, again and again providing the stuff to burn, stoking the fires of the muscular work of the laborer's body or the intellectual work of the scholar's mind" (Landecker); the conversion of food into fuel for the body proves necessary for all individuals, but more importantly, it directly highlights the emphasis places on the body through an analysis of consumption. This extends into the questions raised on gender, sexuality, race, and religion. While Loichot's scholarship primarily deals with literary uses of food, Bryson and Landecker address the biologically philosophical implications of consumption and the body.

Societal Implications

Looking at the twenty-first century connection of food and sex, several examples emerge from a wide variety of different areas. In many South American countries, the Spanish slang for "comer"—directly translated "to eat"—is to have sex (*The Alternative Spanish Dictionary.com*). Furthermore, of the terms that men and women use to characterize one another, hundreds of examples can be found in which men use food to describe aspects of the woman's body, while much fewer terms exist that utilize food in depicting a man's body. Another area in which the relation between food and the consumption of the woman emerge is through the advertisements of Coca-Cola. In 1939, the company used an advertisement with an attractive woman with black curls and a revealing red dress to promote their drink, including the slogan, "Thirst Asks Nothing

More" (Coca-Cola Company.com); in 1988, Coca-Cola put out an advertisement displaying a bottle of coke in the manicured hand of a woman next to a pair of lipstick-pink lips with the suggestive slogan "You Can't Beat the Feeling!" (*Coca-Cola Company.com*). Both examples create a link between actual food and the sensuality of the woman. Even in the modern book and television series *Game of Thrones,* the male character Tyrion continually links food and sex when describing prostitutes, constantly likening women to consumable food (Martin). In the slang of daily life, modern novels, and commercial advertisements, the line between the consumption of food and the consumption of the woman blurs. Whether in eighteenth-century England or modern society, parallels existing between food, sex, and the consumption-enabled objectification of women emerge. Just as food represents a mode by which to analyze the consumer-consumed relationship in *Fanny Hill,* food also stands as an object by which to scrutinize social relations today.

Conclusion

Throughout *Fanny Hill,* Cleland constantly incorporates the themes of food and consumption to highlight the power struggle existing between the consumer and the consumed. Although this usage occurs continuously, Cleland specifically utilizes the Covent Garden market scene to serve as a microcosm of the novel. While Fanny enters the food market to buy food for her own consumption, she is immediately transported back into the market of prostitution when Mr. Norbert pits her as the object of his sexual consumption; though the scene depicts the consuming male's assertion of power over the consumed female—as prevalent throughout the entire novel—Cleland simultaneously

includes depictions of the mouth to demonstrate a reverse consumption whereby the woman reasserts power over the male. Cleland continuously shifts Fanny's position from consumed to consumer and back again, yet one major point always remains constant: both the gain and the loss of power occur through the relation of food and the female body.

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