

Introduction: Poetry Bound

An edge of song that never clears.
 – Wallace Stevens, “Country Words”¹

A single text, granite monotony
 – Wallace Stevens, “Notes Toward a Supreme Fiction”²

As if her song could have no ending.
 – William Wordsworth, “The Solitary Reaper”³

A mountainous music always seemed
 To be falling and to be passing away.
 – Wallace Stevens, “The Man with the Blue Guitar”⁴

The song goes on longer than we expect
 because it is from another culture: collected,
 as it were.
 – Rebecca Wolff, “Good enough for folk music”⁵

This book stations itself, sometimes uneasily, between Stevens’ “edge of song” and a poem’s possible “single text, granite monotony” – between a poetics of evanescence and one of artifactualization, between words and tones ever “passing away” and those that get “collected, as it were,” in Rebecca Wolff’s wry phrase. This book thus reflects a complex haunting by “romantic intonings,” in Stevens’ words, by the ongoing marks, tracks, and sounds of poems, their dispersal and their collection, their composition, transmission, and theorization.

¹ Wallace Stevens, “Country Words,” l.8, in *The Collected Poems of Wallace Stevens* (New York: Vintage, 1982), 207.

² Stevens, from “It Must Change” (VI), in “Notes toward A Supreme Fiction,” *Collected Poems*, 394.

³ William Wordsworth, “The Solitary Reaper,” l. 26, *Poems, in Two Volumes, and Other Poems, 1800–1807*, by William Wordsworth, ed. Jared Curtis (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), 185.

⁴ Stevens, “The Man With the Blue Guitar” (XXVI, ll. 11–12), *Collected Poems*, 179.

⁵ Rebecca Wolff, *Figment* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2004), 86.

2 *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, & British Romantic Poetry*

This project has given me ample opportunity to ponder the relation of poetry to the production of cultural goods, not least scholarship. Its questions arise out of my previous work on Romantic and contemporary poetry, ongoing discussion with friends and colleagues about the interface of history and literature, and a desire to explore further the many workings of *poiesis*: the relation of literary poetry to phantasmized or “collected” orality, for example, or the use of poetry as evidence in cultural or historical argument. Late twentieth-century North American poetry and poetics offer many examples of such poetic-cultural work (see, for example, the Black Arts Movement; the rise of “ethno-poetics”; the efflorescence of poetry slams and spoken word art); so too, in another key, do British poetries and discourse on poetry in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.⁶

Some years ago while I was staying in London, the proprietor of the guest house, Miss St. Clair, asked me what the book I was then writing was about.⁷ When I told her the book contained essays on British Romantic poetry, she looked askance, though indulgent: how curious, she made plain, that I should devote myself to a foreign poetry. Miss St. Clair offered me a clarifying estrangement: for truly, though I often read Wordsworth, Blake, Shelley et al. as “my” poets, or as offering a “natural and inalienable inheritance” (as Wordsworth put it),⁸ one could also rightly say with Rebecca Wolff that part of the force of British Romanticism for a twenty-first-century American is that “it is from another culture.” Or perhaps it is better to say that working on late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British poetries involves a constant calibration of proximity and distance: what looks like “familiar matter of today,” as Wordsworth put it in “The Solitary Reaper,” may from another angle reveal itself to be quite strange, even ultimately inaccessible – whether for temporal, linguistic, cultural, epistemological, or other reasons. Such strangeness sometimes lodges itself within the heart of *poiesis*, for example in Homer’s incorporation of words whose sense had long been obscure even by the time of Homeric composition; or in

⁶ For a recent effort to place historically and culturally disparate oral poetries and performance traditions in conversation, see John Miles Foley, *How to Read an Oral Poem* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), which offers four case studies for recurrent, comparative analysis: a Nuyorican Slam poet, a Serbian epic singer, Homer, and the Beowulf-poet. See too Ruth Finnegan’s comparative survey, *Oral Poetry: Its Nature, Significance, and Social Context* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), with its discussion of British and American balladry alongside other oral poetries, and Ch. 5 for her theorization of performance styles and modes of transmission.

⁷ That book became *Romanticism and the Human Sciences: Poetry, Population, and the Discourse of the Species* (Cambridge University Press, 2000; paperback edn. 2006).

⁸ William Wordsworth, Preface to the *Lyrical Ballads*, Additions of 1802, in Wordsworth and Coleridge, *Lyrical Ballads*, ed. R. L. Brett and A. R. Jones, 2nd edn. (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 259.

Introduction

3

Wordsworth's question, regarding the Highland reaper whose Gaelic song enthalls but also mystifies him: "Will no one tell me what she sings?"; or in Wolff's mordant observation about the duration of song, which "goes on longer than we expect/because it is from another culture."

So the past, along with the poetry of the past, is another country, and so is Britain for the American, and Scotland for the English, and the Scottish Highlands for the Borderers, and so on. It is striking that these matters of historical and cultural difference not only conditioned late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century writing: such problematics lodged themselves within the heart of *poiesis*, as this book aims to demonstrate.

When working on this project, I experienced another pointed and diagnostic moment of cultural estrangement. In a certain archival institution, I spent several days reading through transcriptions of ballads, the notes accompanying which were fascinating, featuring a kind of coded commentary about various recitations and singers. Eager as always to explore just how such collections got made and assessed, particularly by their first mediators, I asked the librarian to clarify these notes. I couldn't have asked a ruder question. I was immediately advised to close my notebook and leave the archive, and I was warned not to publish any such notes; my few scribbles narrowly escaped confiscation. I was made to re-sign release forms, to prove my academic affiliations, to produce once again a host of identity cards, and only then was I allowed to skulk out of the freezing small rooms down a narrow staircase into the harsh light of a midsummer day. My question had violated protocol: most people visited the archive, I was told, to confirm a verse or a stanza from this or that ballad; typically they knew such material from their families. No one went snooping around asking meta-questions about methods of notation, compilation, annotation, and so on. I was asking the *wrong questions* of this material. I had revealed myself to be distinctly *not* a native, nor in tune with native sensibilities and local practices. The librarian understood this archive to be a repository of long-standing community ties, fondly remembered singers, old relatives and shared history; it was decidedly not a trove of materials to be subjected to any kind of discourse analysis or methodological critique. I had understood myself to be a benign researcher; I was understood to be a plunderer and spy.

As I slunk out of the archive, I thought again, as I would often have occasion to do, of Walter Scott: his expropriations of popular, oral poetry; his use of such poetic *materia* for historical ruminations; his elaborate antiquarian annotations in *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802–3) and woven through his romances; his constant traffic in oral poetries for literate, commercial ends; and the ambivalence and even hostility this provoked and

4 *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, & British Romantic Poetry*

continues to provoke among Scots. I was at best a lesser Scott, a “border-raider” plundering not the “living miscellany” Mrs. Hogg (one of his oral informants) but a manuscript archive for my own inscrutable but undoubtedly alien, infernal ends.⁹

This uncomfortable encounter brought home – and proved on the pulse, as Keats might have said – the problematics I’d been tracing in eighteenth-century *poiesis*: the contended territories that poetries both inhabit and map. The impasse in the archive points to ongoing questions about the use and abuse of poetry: who, as well as what, is poetry for?

In 1830, Walter Scott provided one horizon for answering this question. In his “Introductory Remarks on Popular Poetry” (1830), prefacing the “magnum opus” edition of his influential collection, *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802–3), Scott reminded his readers that he and several friends had made it their business when young to walk and ride through the Scottish countryside in search of ballads. Indeed, Scott wrote, he himself was once able “to recollect as many of these old songs as would have occupied several days in the recitation.”¹⁰ In this brief aside, a highly literary, professionalized, critically and commercially successful poet presents to us another face: that of the poet as self-editing native-informant, a latter-day “minstrel” (to use his term), a receiver, transmitter and enactor of an oral tradition. Reading Scott’s self-representations as an allegory of the situation of poetry, we begin to see how permeable, at least in one direction, was the boundary between what we now call high and low culture, between literate elites and semi-literate rural folk, between memory and ethno-poetics, between individually produced well-wrought urns and collectively remembered folksong, between a notionally oral transmission of tradition and its multi-media, commercialized “invention” for literature.

Following the trail laid down by Scott and his eighteenth-century balladeering predecessors, this book proposes an account of poetry and the figure of the poet in Britain circa 1800, and hopes to suggest some ongoing resonances into our own moment. These chapters put oral tradition, literary poetry, and theories of both in direct conversation, just as they were in the work of Burns, Scott, Wordsworth, Hogg, Byron, and numerous other collectors,

⁹ For Mrs. Hogg as a “living miscellany,” see her son James Hogg’s letter to Walter Scott, June 30 [1802]: “My mother is actually a living miscellany of old songs I never believe that she had half so many until a came to a trial: there are none in your collection of which she hath not a part...” *The Collected Letters of James Hogg*, Vol. I, 1800–1819, ed. Gillian Hughes (Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 15.

¹⁰ Walter Scott, “On Popular Poetry,” in *The Poetical Works of Walter Scott, Bart. together with the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border. With the Author’s Introductions and Notes* [1830 edition] (New York: Leavitt and Allen, n.d.), 9.

Introduction

5

editors, and poets; just as they are (however differently inflected) in the work of such contemporary poets and theorists as Jerome Rothenberg, Amiri Baraka, Anne Waldman, Christian Bök, Saul Williams, and Harryette Mullen. This book proposes to offer a re-mapping of what we conventionally call “pre-Romantic” and “Romantic” poetry and poetics in light of emergent disciplines and discourses: literary history, cultural theory, and what we would now call ethno-poetics and media theory. Balladeering and minstrelsy, launched in the eighteenth century and continued by various means since, together offer one crucial genealogy for contemporary debates about orality, literariness, disciplinarity, and the so-called “death of poetry”: it was precisely through their vexed engagement with the multiply-mediated, historical situation of poetry that eighteenth-century antiquarians, poets, and historians formulated crucial arguments about cultural nationalism, the status of vernaculars, and emergent British historiography. It was through poetry, that is, that the eighteenth century discovered and argued about “the predicament of culture.”¹¹

Indeed, ballad scholars Tom Cheesman and Sigrid Rieuwerts have made the following suggestive claim: “The modern study of culture begins with the study of ballads.”¹² This study takes the broader (or perhaps looser) rubric of *poiesis* to be its remit, though I will often have occasion to discuss balladry and ballad scholarship, as well as the phenomenon of minstrelsy – that trope of poetic inheritance, transmission, and imminent obsolescence: in these aspects a signal trope for “culture,” as well as for “poetry.” Indebted to the work of, and aiming to speak to, ballad scholars, folklorists, romanticists, media theorists, literary historians, and ethno-musicologists, this book also aspires to put the case of poetry – “literary” and “traditionary” and hybrids thereof – smack in the center of current discussions about “the location of culture,” in Homi Bhabha’s phrase.¹³

¹¹ See James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1988). Clifford Siskin also identifies this period as crucial for the invention of the culture-concept and modern disciplinarity; he locates these cruces, however, in Jacobitism, not in *poiesis* per se. See Siskin, “Scottish Philosophy and English Literature,” in *The Work of Writing: Literature and Social Change in Britain 1700–1830* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998), 79–99.

¹² *Ballads into Books: The Legacies of Francis James Child*, ed. Tom Cheesman and Sigrid Rieuwerts (Bern: Peter Lang, 1997), 5. The editors elaborate thus: “The eighteenth-century ‘discovery’ of ballads in popular tradition (that is, the putting of ballads into scholarly books) began an enduring debate which was crucial in defining what came to be called Romanticism. All modern theories of culture and poetics trace their ancestry to this debate, especially as it developed in dialogue between the English- and the German-speaking worlds.”

¹³ For this phrase, see Homi Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London, New York: Routledge, 1994). Here and elsewhere I follow eighteenth-century balladeers and later scholars of balladry in using the term “traditionary” as virtually interchangeable with “traditional” – “traditionary” perhaps flagging more clearly the status of such poetry as both *traditional* but also *oral-traditionally mediated*.

6 *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, & British Romantic Poetry*

“Poetry” is after all a strikingly elastic category, spanning everything from oral-traditional ballads to seventeenth-century broadsides to highly wrought romantic odes to twentieth-century spoken word art: this project analyzes that multiplicity and the theoretical conundrums it suggests. My discussion focuses on the emergence of poetry as an object of medial and cultural theory – from eighteenth-century antiquarians working their way toward preliminary “oral theories” in the wake of the Ossian controversy and the ballad revival, to the complex “romance of orality” characteristic of Romanticism, to late twentieth-century American inquiries into ethno-poetics, performance, and the medial condition of poetry. This work is committed to re-opening, for both the long eighteenth century and our own moment, the questions that both Wordsworth and Coleridge posed: “What is poetry?” and “What is the poet?”

To think of British Romantic poetry, for example, is for many people to recall specific poets and poems: Wordsworth’s “Tintern Abbey” and his *Prelude*, Shelley’s “Adonais,” Blake’s “The Tyger,” Keats’ “Ode to a Nightingale,” Burns’ “To a Mouse.” Certain terms and phrases may come to mind: negative capability, romantic imagination, the child is father of the man, poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world. It is less likely that one would invoke, as specimens of Romantic poetry, the ballad of Johnny Armstrong, the ballad “Chevy Chase,” or the ballad “Barbara Allen.” Yet these ballads and songs, vitally sung, transmitted, and recreated long before – and long after – what some have called “the Age of Wordsworth,” are equally constitutive of poetry in the Romantic era.

This book argues that the situation of British poetry, 1760–1830, offers us a window onto the transhistorical condition of poetic “mediality” – the condition of existing in media, whether oral, manuscript, print, or digital.¹⁴

¹⁴ On “mediality” as “the general condition within which, under certain circumstances, something like ‘poetry’ or ‘literature’ can take shape,” see David E. Wellbery’s Foreword to Friedrich A. Kittler, *Discourse Networks, 1800/1900*, trans. Micheal Metteer, with Chris Cullens (Stanford University Press, 1990), xiii. To Wellbery’s “poetry” and “literature,” we might add “balladeering,” or “literary history,” or “cultural nationalism”: all of which took shape within, and were determined in the last medial instance by, the circumstances of late-eighteenth-century print. “Whatever historical field we are dealing with, in Kittler’s view, we are dealing with media as determined by the technological possibilities of the epoch in question.” One need not subscribe to Kittler’s emphatic techno-determinism to find his bracing diagnoses of Romanticism, modernism, and the horizons of the regime of print, now closing, to be conceptually useful. For further discussion of British Romantic mediality, see Celeste Langan and Maureen N. McLane, “The Medium of Romantic Poetry,” in *The Cambridge Companion to British Romantic Poetry* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), 239–62.

Introduction

7

To consider how poetry mediates itself – whether through the poet’s body and voice, composition-in-performance, a transcription, or a printed text – is to examine, in the broadest sense, the means through and historical conditions under which human imagination materializes itself. 1760 stands as my launch date because it was then that James Macpherson’s Ossianic *Fragments* first appeared, poems which purported to be the work of a third-century Highland bard, but which skeptics believed were forged. The Ossian controversy – and its complex relations to theories of orality, cultural authenticity, translation, and historicity – is one inaugural test-case for the problematics of *poiesis* elaborated in this period. And 1830 stands as a provisional terminus to this project not least because it was then that Walter Scott penned his essay “On Popular Poetry,” which offers a rapid-fire literary history of the period as well as an anticipatory summation of some of this book’s concerns. In his emphasis on revived balladry, antiquarian predecessors, and a minstrelling *poiesis* distributed across Great Britain and Ireland, Scott sets out a horizon of poetic production that has often been obscured in critical discussions oriented to cultural nationalism on the one hand or individual authors on the other.

Poets in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries found themselves re-thinking poetry along several newly emergent (and in some regards still obtaining) cultural, historical, and aesthetic axes. In late eighteenth-century Britain, poets became conscious of themselves as undertaking a project that straddled and ambiguated several borders: the imperial/national/regional borders constituted by the 1707 Act of Union that created Great Britain; the border between orality and literacy; between the “popular” and the “refined”; speech and writing; improvisation and fixed transcription; common language and “poetic diction.” We might consider the poetry in this period in its broadest sense as a field of cultural making and negotiation: in this light, *poiesis* – the making of poems, poetics, poetic apparatus, historical essays and ethnographic reveries on poetry – reveals its profound engagement with discourses and practices more typically associated with the antiquarian, the historian, the folklorist, the linguist, and the ethnographer. The case of Walter Scott is not idiosyncratic: the complex situation of poetry in this period – a situation recognized by the poets themselves – allows us to re-consider what we talk about when we talk about poetry.

As must be clear, my discussion throughout is shadowed by contemporary discussions within and without the academy regarding the status of poetry and its relation to the presumed condition of culture. This book emerges from years of thinking, teaching, reading, writing, reviewing, and

8 *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, & British Romantic Poetry*

talking about poems and the condition of poetry, both in the contemporary US and during the British Romantic period. Laments (or huzzahs) for the death of poetry have been a conspicuous feature of US cultural politics since the 1980s: from Joseph Epstein's 1988 *Commentary* article "Who Killed Poetry?" to Dana Gioia's *Can Poetry Matter?* (1992) to his recent *Disappearing Ink: Poetry at the End of Print Culture* (2005) to Camille Paglia's and Harold Bloom's latest ventures into the public sphere, poetry becomes the occasional means through which public intellectuals, media dons, and the chattering classes talk earnestly about the fate of democracy, the sanctity of literature, the threat to literate elites and their presumed values, skills in reading, and habits of contemplation.¹⁵ Poetry would seem to be beset by all manner of foes: slam poets, rap, declining attention spans, plummeting literacy rates, bad teaching, multiculturalism, the ascendancy of new media. It is of course typical that these notional foes can, in some accounts, also serve as friends to a renewed engagement with poetry: worried about your students' attention spans? Teach a lyric poem – it's short and has a quicker payoff than a Victorian novel! Afraid that today's students won't respond to dead white poets? Turn to one of the many anthologies featuring fine poets of every nation, gender, color, and sexuality! Disturbed by hip-hop? Re-think: it's the hottest oral *poiesis* around, the liveliest zone of metered rhyme in contemporary America and beyond. Oppressed by the proliferation of DVDs, gameboys, iPods, and cellphones? Seize the means of mediation and produce new kinds of poems! Indeed I found when running a weekly poetry seminar for 8–11-year-old children that newer media – the video camera in particular – proved indispensable in getting the more resistant children to connect: imagining themselves as performers, as recordable, viewable, and audible creative subjects, allowed some children to enter into a communal experiment in *poiesis*.

The uncertainty of my tone in the preceding paragraph underlines an ongoing ambivalence regarding this discourse about poetry: for usually "poetry" is a blank counter in such discussions, something to be used, brandished, idealized, desecrated, and all too rarely explored, much less

¹⁵ See Dana Gioia's *Can Poetry Matter?: Essays on Poetry and American Culture* [10th anniversary edn.] (St. Paul, MN: Graywolf Press, 2002) and *Disappearing Ink: Poetry at the End of Print Culture* (St. Paul, MN: Graywolf Press, 2004). Camille Paglia's *Break, Blow, Burn: Camille Paglia Reads Forty-Three of the World's Best Poems* (New York: Pantheon, 2005) represents the latest taming of the self-styled outlaw humanist by the middlebrow. Gioia writes thoughtfully about the resurgence of oral forms and traditional meters, and the new medial condition of poetry in the electronic era; praising cowboy poets and rappers as well as the phenomenon of the poetry reading – now the primary form of publication, as he notes – Gioia nicely avoids the clichéd laments for the death of print culture more usually found in such books.

Introduction

9

read, heard, made, or enjoyed. I turned some years ago to a study of British Romantic poets precisely because I felt that signal poets, Wordsworth and Shelley most prominently, intuited and diagnosed certain aspects of the modern condition of *poiesis*: what “poetry” is almost always remains to be seen, and heard. Poetry needs to be re-thought again and again, for poetry, unlike for example the novel, pre-existed print and writing and will undoubtedly outlast them. Poetry thus offers especially rich territory for transhistorical, transmedial reflections.

The book argues that literary and cultural history as well as poetics look quite different when we consider “traditional” poetry alongside “literary” poetry (as writers like Scott and Wordsworth certainly did, as the Norton Anthology still, in limited ways, does). Pursuing this medial interface – these “oral–literate conjunctions,” we might call them – I argue that the situation of poetry circa 1800 may be read more broadly as an index of “mediality” (to use the term proposed by Friedrich Kittler and amplified by David Wellbery).¹⁶ Analyzing the problem of “dating orality” – which preoccupied signal poets as much as it did the stadial historians of the Scottish Enlightenment – I trace the means by which late eighteenth-century Anglo-Scottish balladeering (along with its attendant discourses, “minstrelsy,” “national song,” etc.) and its modes of poetic research and production (e.g. collecting, surveying, transcribing, forging, annotating, editing) helped to shape practices and discourses constitutive of emergent disciplines – proto-ethnography, philology, and historiography as well as folklore and literary history.

In recent years scholars have re-animated the eighteenth-century “scandals of the ballad” (viz. Susan Stewart) and the literary-historical stakes of cultural nationalism in this period (see Katie Trumpener, Ina Ferris, and numerous other scholars); and more scholars are recognizing that we need a broader frame in which to consider literary production, vernacular literatures, and oral traditions together.¹⁷ What has been too little noted (with

¹⁶ See note 14.

¹⁷ See for example Steve Newman, *Ballad Collection, Lyric, and the Canon: The Call of the Popular from the Restoration to the New Criticism* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) – a book whose concerns are kindred in several respects to this one: “the popular” rather than *poiesis* provides Newman’s angle of entry into a “long eighteenth-century” phenomenon and its ongoing repercussions. Like Newman, but with a broader comparative remit, Thomas A. DuBois questions the partitioning of “ballad” and “lyric” – the former supposedly communal and oral, the latter singly produced and typically glossed as literary: see his *Lyric, Meaning, and Audience in the Oral Tradition of Northern Europe* (University of Notre Dame Press, 2006). The convergence of theoretical, historical, and medial concerns in these and other recent books (including this one) – in part animated by a rethinking of the ballad, the oral, and the literary – suggests that the critical spirit of the age is increasingly sponsoring a newly mediated analysis of the literary as well as of the oral.

10 *Balladeering, Minstrelsy, & British Romantic Poetry*

some striking recent exceptions) is the way these controversies consistently forced a definition of the objects in view. In other words: what was (or is) a ballad?¹⁸ And what was (or is) “oral tradition”? (These questions bear, obviously, on my previously stated, overarching question: What is Poetry?) Despite the remarkable proliferation of ballad collections in the eighteenth century, it was by no means obvious what a ballad was. And then too, polite editors strove to excise or ignore large swaths of a vital, ongoing ballad tradition – not least street ballads, those broadsides topical and political and sometimes bawdy. The “hybrid textual and oral” status of ballads (as Paula McDowell puts it¹⁹) offers us a throughline into the heart of a transmedial as well as transhistorical poetics.

This project assumes as well that the partitions between eighteenth-century studies and Romanticism will not stand, and that the eighteenth-century discovery of the medial condition of poetry is of particular interest for twenty-first-century readers and writers, conscious as we are of profound techno-material changes in communications. When read through balladeering, moreover, our “high/low” debates (however moribund) start to look more like “literate vs. oral” debates. This is not to overlook the occasionally supercharged class and cultural–national valences of balladeering, but rather to point to the medial-theoretical terms in which balladeering debates were also conducted. Eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century ballad collections are very peculiar composite objects – coordinating everything from broadsides to manuscripts to oral recitations, such that their editors (such as Thomas Percy, Joseph Ritson, Walter Scott, William Motherwell) felt the need to theorize these heterogeneous materials and their medial condition. Such collections are thus full of poems but also of footnotes and headnotes and anecdotes and historical dissertations and glossaries – objects as if

¹⁸ For a trenchant analysis of the problem of defining a “ballad” – one constituted in part because several disciplines continue to take ballads as their objects of study – see Dianne Dugaw, “On the ‘Darling Songs’ of Poets, Scholars, and Singers: An Introduction,” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 47:2/3 (Summer/Fall 2006): 97–113. Dugaw notes that most scholars adopt a fairly standard distinction between “traditional” and “broadside” ballads, the former connoting greater antiquity and oral origin or transmission, the latter denoting a print-era product, often topical and political. Yet these distinctions will not always hold and were themselves artifacts of eighteenth-century balladeers’ polemical classifications, as Paula McDowell argues in “The Manufacture and Lingua-Franca of *Ballad-Making*: Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth-Century Discourse,” *The Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 47:2/3 (Summer/Fall 2006): 149–76. Ballad collectors set forth their “ancient” and “popular” ballads and polite collections precisely in contradistinction to the unruly, topical, politicized, and often bawdy broadsides flying off the eighteenth-century presses; they also developed a “new confrontational model of balladry” (150) by which print/street ballads were imagined to displace “traditional” ballads beginning in the Elizabethan era: a displacement lamented by polite editors hostile to the broadside/street tradition of print.

¹⁹ McDowell, “The Manufacture,” 158.