This collection of innovative essays by leading scholars on eighteenth-century British women satirists showcases women’s contributions to the satiric tradition and challenges the assumption that women were largely targets, rather than practitioners, of satire during the long eighteenth century. The essays examine women’s satires across diverse genres, from the fable to the periodical, and attend to women writers’ appropriation of a literary style and form often viewed as exclusively masculine. The introduction features a new theory of women’s satire and proposes a framework for analyzing satiric techniques employed by women writers. Organized chronologically, the contributors’ essays address a wide range of authors and explore the ways in which satiric writings by women engaged in contemporary cultural conversations, influencing assumptions about gender, sociability, politics, and literary practices. This inclusive yet tightly focused collection formulates an innovative and provocative new feminist theory of satire.

Amanda Hiner is Professor of English at Winthrop University, South Carolina. She edited the special topics issue of Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies entitled “New Approaches to Eliza Haywood: The Political Biography and Beyond” and publishes articles on eighteenth-century women writers, satire, and print culture. She is also a nationally recognized expert, researcher, and consultant in critical thinking.

Elizabeth Tasker Davis is Professor of English at Stephen F. Austin State University, Texas. She specializes in eighteenth-century British literature and is a past president of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition. Her publications include Wit, Virtue, and Emotion: British Women’s Enlightenment Rhetoric (2021) and articles on eighteenth-century women writers and actresses.
To Rick, Ben, Andrew, and Caleb, with love and gratitude for their support and encouragement.
— A. H.

With love to Troy, Rebecca, Sean, and Austin.
— E. T. D.
Contents

List of Illustrations  ix
Notes on Contributors  x
Acknowledgements  xv

Introduction: Recognizing British Women’s Satire in the Long Eighteenth Century  1
Amanda Hiner and Elizabeth Tasker Davis

PART I TRADITIONS AND BREAKS: EARLY EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY WOMEN SATIRISTS

1 Women Writers and Juvenal: “Singing plain truths”  27
Paul Baines

2 Unlocking the Dressing Room: Mary Evelyn’s Mundus Muliebris  45
Melinda Alliker Rabb

3 Aphra Behn and Traditions of Satire  65
Tanya Caldwell

4 Delarivier Manley: Satire as Conversation  82
Rachel Carnell

5 The Pleasures of Satire in the Fables of Anne Finch  98
Sharon Smith

PART II PUBLICITY AND PRINT CULTURE: WOMEN SATIRISTS DURING THE MID EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

6 Women’s Satires of the Literary Marketplace in Eighteenth-Century England  115
Catherine Ingrassia
## Contents

7  Charlotte Lennox, Satirical Poetry, and the Rise of Participatory Democracy
   Susan Carlile

8  Jane Collier’s Satirical Fable: Teeth, Claws, and Moral Authority in *An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting*
   Martha F. Bowden

9  Hiding in Plain Sight: Frances Burney as Satiric Novelist
   Marilyn Francus

### PART III MORAL DEBATES AND SATIRIC DIALOGUE: WOMEN SATIRISTS AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SOCIABILITY

10 Anne Finch, Anna Seward, and Women’s Relation to Formal Verse Satire in the Long Eighteenth Century
   Claudia Thomas Kairaff

11 Satire as Gossip: Lady Anne Hamilton’s *The Epics of the Ton*
   Michael Edson

12 “An invisible Spy”: Mary Robinson’s Sylphid and the Image of the Satirist
   Rayna Rosenova

13 Austen’s Menippean Experiments: Paternalism and Empire in the Juvenilia and *Mansfield Park*
   Danielle Spratt

Appendix A Selected List of Eighteenth-Century Women Writers and Their Satiric Works

Selected Bibliography and Guide to Further Reading

Index
Illustrations

0.1 William Frith, “Pope Makes Love to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu” (1852). Auckland Art Gallery, Toi o Tāmaki. 


7.2 Frontispiece of The New Foundling Hospital of Wit, part 3 (1769). Folger Shakespeare Library, PR1101.AF 1768 Cage v.3. 

8.1 First page of Jane Collier, An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting (1753). John W. Graham Library, Trinity College in the University of Toronto. 

8.2 First page of fable, Jane Collier, An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting (1753). John W. Graham Library, Trinity College in the University of Toronto. 

8.3 Frontispiece of Jane Collier, An Essay on the Art of Ingeniously Tormenting (1753). John W. Graham Library, Trinity College in the University of Toronto.
Notes on Contributors


MARTHA F. BOWDEN is Professor Emeritus of English at Kennesaw State University. She specializes in Restoration and eighteenth-century British literature, female satirists, genre studies, eighteenth-century women’s fabular texts, and historical fiction. She is the author of Descendants of Waverley: Romancing History in Contemporary Historical Fiction (2016) and York’s Congregation: The Church of England in the Time of Laurence Sterne (2007). She is the editor of three novels by Mary Davys, titled The Reform’d Coquet, Familiar Letters betwixt a Gentleman and a Lady, and The Accomplish’d Rake (1999), and has published articles and book chapters on a wide range of topics, including Laurence Sterne, Mary Davys, eighteenth-century women writers, Susanna Wesley, and teaching eighteenth-century literature.

TANYA CALDWELL is Professor of English at Georgia State University where she teaches courses in late seventeenth- and eighteenth-century
Notes on Contributors

British literature. Her publications include an anthology for Broadview Press of popular plays by women playwrights of the era. She is currently working on a critical biography of Hannah Cowley, as well as articles on the concept of self in the eighteenth century and on translation. Her newest work highlights the importance of Cowley as playwright and astute businesswoman in the late eighteenth century. She has also researched and published on Dryden and the classics in translation.


Michael Edson is Associate Professor of English at the University of Wyoming. He serves as Associate Editor of Duke University’s Eighteenth-Century Life and is the editor of Annotation in Eighteenth-Century Poetry (2017) and Publishing, Editing, and Reception: Essays in Honor of Donald H. Reiman (2015). He researches and publishes on poetry, satire, reading history, and eighteenth-century practices of editing and annotation.

Marilyn Francus is Professor of English at West Virginia University. She is the author of Monstrous Motherhood: Eighteenth-Century Culture and the Ideology of Domesticity (2012) and The Converting Imagination: Linguistic Theory and Swift’s Satiric Prose (1994), and of numerous articles and book chapters on eighteenth-century women writers, with a particular focus on Frances Burney and Jane Austen. She is the editor of The Burney Journal, and the chair of the International Visitor
xii

Notes on Contributors

Program of the Jane Austen Society of North America. Her current research focuses on the origins of the mommy wars in the eighteenth century.

**Amanda Hiner** is Professor of English at Winthrop University and Coordinator of Winthrop’s Critical Thinking Program. She has published articles and book chapters on cognitive cultural studies and eighteenth-century literature, seventeenth-century female educational theorists, Eliza Haywood, eighteenth-century satire, Delarivier Manley, and critical thinking theory and application. She served as co-editor of the 2014 special topics issue of *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* titled “New Approaches to Eliza Haywood: The Political Biography and Beyond” and has also developed broad expertise in the field of critical thinking theory and practice, publishing articles and training faculty members and business leaders in the Paulian Framework for critical thinking.

**Catherine Ingrassia** is Chair and Professor of English at Virginia Commonwealth University. She specializes in Restoration and eighteenth-century British literature with a particular focus on women writers of the long eighteenth century. She is the author of *Authorship, Commerce, and Gender in Early Eighteenth-Century England: A Culture of Paper Credit* (1998), editor of *The Cambridge Companion to Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660–1789* (2015), *Anti-Pamela and Shamela* (2004), and co-editor of *British Women Poets of the Long Eighteenth Century* (2009), the *Companion to the Eighteenth-Century Novel and Culture* (2005), and “More Solid Learning”: *New Perspectives on Pope’s Dunciad* (2000). She has published peer-reviewed articles and invited book chapters on a wide range of topics, including Eliza Haywood, Aphra Behn, Alexander Pope, Samuel Richardson, eighteenth-century British women writers, and eighteenth-century British economics and culture. Among her current projects is an edition of Laetitia Pilkington’s *Memoirs*.

Notes on Contributors

Melinda Alliker Rabb is Professor of English at Brown University. She is the author of Satire and Secrecy in English Literature 1650–1750 (2007) and Miniature and the English Imagination: Literature, Cognition, and Small-Scale Culture 1650–1765 (2019). Her publications on women and satire include “Angry Beauties: (Wo)Manley Satire and the Stage” (1995), the chapter on female satirists in The Cambridge Companion to Women’s Writing in Britain, 1660 – 1789 (2015), and a chapter on women’s satire on domesticity in The Oxford Companion to Eighteenth-Century Satire (2019). She has published articles and book chapters on satire, drama, poetry, and fiction, and on authors such as Swift, Manley, Pope, Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Johnson, Sterne, and Godwin. Her current research focuses on the effects of the mid-seventeenth-century Civil Wars on eighteenth-century literature and culture.

Rayna Rosenova is Assistant Professor of English at the Department of English and American Studies, Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski, Bulgaria. Her research interests include eighteenth-century British women writers, Romantic poetry, and Gothic literature. She has published articles on Mary Robinson, Charlotte Smith, and John Keats. Her article “Underworld Architectonics in John Keats’s The Fall of Hyperion: A Dream” won the 2016 Romanticism Association Article Prize.

Sharon Smith is Associate Professor of English at South Dakota State University, where she specializes in Restoration, eighteenth-century, and early Romantic British literature. She has published articles on Daniel Defoe, Charlotte Lennox, Maria Edgeworth, and Anna Barbauld. Her current research focuses on eighteenth-century women’s poetry, particularly the work of Sarah Fyge Egerton.

Danielle Spratt is Associate Professor of English at California State University, Northridge, where she teaches classes on eighteenth-century literature, the history of science and medicine, satire, public and digital humanities, and social justice. With Bridget Draxler, she is the author of Engaging the Age of Jane Austen: Public Humanities in Practice (2018). She is currently co-editing a volume on science in the eighteenth
Notes on Contributors

century and completing a manuscript on reproduction, empire, and the rise of the novel.

Elizabeth Tasker Davis is Professor of English and Coordinator of Graduate Studies at Stephen F. Austin State University, where she specializes in teaching eighteenth-century British literature, satire, and women’s writing. She is the author of Wit, Virtue, and Emotion: British Women's Enlightenment Rhetoric (2021) and has published articles on a variety of eighteenth-century British women writers, Restoration actresses, and the history of rhetoric. She is also a past president of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition.
Acknowledgements

Foremost, we are delighted with our excellent contributors and their outstanding work on eighteenth-century women satirists. They were gracious, responsive, and diligent throughout the rigorous process of completing this manuscript, and their essays have surpassed our expectations. We wish to express gratitude to Bethany Thomas, our editor at Cambridge University Press, for her professional guidance and generous assistance throughout the entire project. We offer deep thanks to Rebecca Bullard and Ashley Marshall, whose insightful feedback helped clarify the editorial vision for the collection, and Peter Sabor, whose invaluable guiding commentary on the manuscript as a whole sharpened and strengthened it. We also thank Steven Zwicker, who helped us to hone our conceptual terminology. We are grateful for the critical insight and thoughtful suggestions we received from Jane Greer, Lisa Shaver, Leslie Bickford, John Bird, Casey Cothran, Gregg Hecimovich, and Kelly Richardson, who provided feedback on our project proposals and introduction.

We wish to express our appreciation to Winthrop University for supporting this project with a research sabbatical and to Stephen F. Austin State University for generous graduate assistant support. We are deeply grateful for the contributions of Athena Hayes, who assisted with the research and initial drafting of the appendix list of eighteenth-century women satirists; in addition, we wish to thank our contributors for their attentive review of and contributions to this list. We also appreciate Chelsea Lovell and Dustin Jackson for their helpful assistance during the indexing process. We thank George Laver and Katie Idle of Cambridge University Press for their support and expertise during the editing and production phases of the project. For the use of their archived visual images, we acknowledge the Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tāmaki; the Yale Center for British Art; the Folger Shakespeare Library; and the John...
Acknowledgements

W. Graham Library, Trinity College in the University of Toronto. We send love and thanks to our families for their encouragement, support, and patience, especially to our husbands Rick Hiner and Troy Davis. Finally, we acknowledge the value and joy of a strong co-editing bond: sisters in satire!