

## *Out of Closets:*

### *Rhetorics of Stoic Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Discourses of Sentiment*

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The *Spectator* was one of those cultural icons whose importance was obvious even as it was being established. While it was not the first popular broadsheet to captivate its London readership, the *Spectator* proved to be a powerful voice in the rapid transformation of London culture in the early decades of the eighteenth century. In their publication of the *Spectator*, Joseph Addison and Richard Steele were able to substantially affect the eighteenth-century marketplace of ideas by regularizing the cultivation of morality as central to this milieu. Within the pages of the *Spectator*, morality emerges as a reciprocal relationship between virtuous individuals and a just civil society, forging a bridge between public good and private virtue while retaining the separate categories.<sup>1</sup> As Alan McKenzie notes, the *Spectator*'s focus on social relations as a proper ethical sphere coincides with its function "of inculcating classical values and morals for a new, partly financial and mercantile public" (89).<sup>2</sup> McKenzie's work analyzes the complex relationship developed between the *Spectator* and its reader, a relationship that characterizes moral instruction, social connections, and self-understanding as "'humanizing' this new public" (89). But we can go further. One function of the *Spectator*'s specific combination of an ethics of interiority and a socialized network of moral relationships is the articulation of a subjectivity characterized by affective performance and self-restraint. This curious subjectivity, profoundly eighteenth-century in its split focus, is intricately linked to the discourses that compose the *Spectator*.

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<sup>1</sup> The relationship between the public and private is a topic of much interest to the *Spectator* throughout its run, and the scholarship on Addison and Steele's publication has reflected this interest. Recent critical assessments of this dialectical engagement of self and other include Fiona Price's "'Myself Creating What I Saw': The Morality of the Spectator in Eighteenth-Century Gothic," *Gothic Studies* 8.2 (2006): 1-17, and Brian Cowan's "Mr. Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37 (2004): 345-66. (2005).

<sup>2</sup> *Certain, Lively Episodes: The Articulation of Passion in Eighteenth-Century Prose*. Athens: U of Georgia Press, 1990.

Published six times a week for twenty-one months in 1711 and 1712, the *Spectator* differed markedly from the other papers in the marketplace, and even from its predecessor, the *Tatler*. Relinquishing the hegemony of satire and wit held by its predecessor, the new periodical created itself as a “Spectator of Mankind” able to “discern the Errors of Oeconomy, Business, and Diversion of others, better than those who are engaged in them.”<sup>3</sup> As Charles Knight points out, in the *Spectator* Joseph Addison and Richard Steele undertake a conscious struggle to develop a relationship with their readers that can function as a “moral economy” characterized by mutual imitation.<sup>4</sup> Securing the foundation of this imitation through essays and contributed letters,<sup>5</sup> the *Spectator* performed a public moral self-assessment of British culture, inviting its readers to participate in its aims and mechanisms. By writing essays that publicized self-examination as moral rectitude, the *Spectator* modeled a performative notion of morality that profoundly affected popular culture. The very public nature of this moralism, though, has troubled interpreters; critics have long suspected that morality was a thin veil in many of these essays, obscuring or masking underlying interests.<sup>6</sup>

Lawrence E. Klein recently suggested that one critical element in this performance of

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<sup>3</sup> *Spectator* 1, Volume 1, page 4-5. ed. Donald F Bond. Oxford: Clarendon, 1965. Future references will be cited parenthetically as (number, volume.page).

<sup>4</sup> “The *Spectator*’s Moral Economy.” *Modern Philology* 91 (1993): 161-179. This discussion of the significance of imitation begins on the first page and continues throughout.

<sup>5</sup> Almost immediately, the contributed letters to the editors of the *Spectators* were published as worthy of interest themselves, appearing in volumes shortly after the periodical ceased publication. Of course, it is not necessary for the letters that appear to be actual contributions—the ruse of imitation is well-secured by the mime of its pretenses in the pages of the *Spectator*, as well as the circulation numbers which remained strong after the stamp tax doubled the cost of the broadsheet in 1712. For an analysis of circulation, see Bond’s introductory essay.

<sup>6</sup> From at least the 1950s, critics have examined the veneer of morality in the *Spectator*. See Edward and Lillian Bloom “Addison on ‘Moral Habits of the Mind’” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21 (1960): 409-427, and Robert Chambers “Addison at Work on the *Spectator*” *Modern Philology* 56.3 (1959): 145-53. This line of criticism has remained active because the discipline has been unable to offer a compelling explanation of just what this masquerade is hiding. Recent critics include Ellen Gardiner “The Value of Community” *Eighteenth Century: Theory and Interpretation* 36.3 (1995): 283-85 and Jack Prostko “‘Natural Conversation Set in View’: Shaftesbury and Moral Speech,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 23 (1989): 42–61.

moral virtue in Addison's *Spectator* is the defense of Whig politics.<sup>7</sup> Klein argues that Addison was keenly aware of his political situation in his articulation of virtue as a topic of discussion in the *Spectator*. In Addison's calculus, a public and open discussion of virtue could blunt the degree to which Queen Anne's antipathy to Whig politicians provided a rhetorical opportunity for a critique of Whiggish ideas as immoral. Klein argues that following the expulsion of Whig ministers from Anne's government in 1710, Tory rhetoric was able to "elaborate a sociological perspective on Whiggery as a force for undermining the social order. All of this worked together to sanction a critique of Whiggism as undermining the moral foundations of the polity" (117). Klein aligns Addison's stewardship of the *Spectator* with the rhetorical battles of Whiggism, using Addison's statements in *Freeholder* 29 to suggest that the *Spectator* allowed the Whigs "to rise above them [Tories] as much in our Morality as in our Politicks."<sup>8</sup> While this statement does not suggest that Addison is uninterested in moral virtue—and Klein judiciously avoids making such a claim—it does imply that Addison was at least as interested in the *appearance* of virtue as the performance of virtue, and that politics motivates both of these interests. For Addison, the meticulous creation of the habitude of virtue was a powerful disarming of the rhetoric of one's foes. The popularity of the *Spectator* accomplished many things, not the least of which was an alignment of Whig politics and moral reform in the popular imagination.<sup>9</sup> The success of this attempt to splice an unimpeachable rhetoric of morality into the public consciousness of Whig politics can be measured by the almost uninterrupted seventy-year term of Whig rule that followed

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<sup>7</sup> "Joseph Addison's Whiggism" in *Cultures of Whiggism*, ed. David Womersley. Newark: U of Delaware Press, 2005. 108-126.

<sup>8</sup> *Freeholder* 29, in *Cato: A Tragedy, and Selected Essays*. Ed. Christine Dunn Henderson and Mark E. Yellin. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2004. This sentence, quoted in Klein's essay on page 118, can be found on page 238 of that edition.

<sup>9</sup> We should note that the *Freeholder* was written after a Whig return to power, at a time when Addison was able to write to a political hegemony, not to a disenfranchised party. The Whigs occupied the levers of power until the disaster of the American Revolution, a hegemony so complete that Hume was able to write that there was but one political party. See "Of the Parties in Great Britain" in his *Essays*.

the *Spectator* in 1714.

It is important to note that this political attention to rhetoric—addressing one’s perceived weaknesses through the adoption of that line of critique which one faces—necessarily turns on a sleight of hand. After all, admitting the ploy defeats its chance of success. So it is not the least bit surprising that Addison and Steele adopt the tactics of evenhandedness and frankness, creating the impression that the *Spectator* operates in such a transparent way that it is not merely a political organ. This assessment of transparency was critical if the publication’s interest in moral reform was to create a reevaluation of Whig politicians in public discourse. The satirical wit of a publication like the *Tatler* could hardly accomplish this political aim, since satire invites a mechanism of critical evaluation. Instead of engendering reform through the satirical portrait of others, the *Spectator* accomplished moral reform through public self-examination. This mechanism assisted the semblance of transparency the publication needed and blunted the critical evaluation that attends the reformation of morals. Like other aspects of the rhetoric of the *Spectator*, this mechanism of self-examination is reflected in the “humanizing” effects on its readers—the development of an eighteenth-century subjectivity of masked performance based on the ruse of transparency.

Early on, Mr. Spectator sets the scene by creating moral reform in himself, turning criticism inward. In most of the early issues, this mechanism surfaces in the initial paragraph, often in the first line. When he encounters criticism of his new publication in *Spectator* 4, Mr. Spectator turns it inward: “I resolv’d for the future to go on in my ordinary Way; and without much Fear or Hope about the Business of Reputation, to be very careful of the Design of my Actions, but very negligent of the Consequences of them” (4, I.18). Here, we learn that one should carefully attend to one’s actions and decisions, but not to the resulting opinions of others. Intentions count; but more than intentions, good design is the secure home of virtue. He models

his reform, rather than arguing it. He performs the concern, rather than supporting it with evidence. In *Spectator* 15, Mr. Spectator turns the satire of foppish dress inward: “When I was in *France*, I used to gaze with great Astonishment at the Splendid Equipages, and Party-coloured Habits, of that Fantastick Nation” (15, I.66). Rather than lampooning the dress of his countrymen, he criticizes his naiveté in a past trip to France, distancing readers and himself alike from the moral culpability. Far more effective than a direct assault on the actions of others, Addison and Steele’s Mr. Spectator internalizes his critique in order to diffuse it. He models his reform in habits, displaying the result of an attention to oneself. In *Spectator* 20 we see this strategy revealed quite clearly: “Among the other hardy Undertakings which I have propos’d to my self, that of the Correction of Impudence is what I have very much at Heart” (20, I.85). Through these public self-examinations, Addison and Steele are able to accomplish a significant rhetorical suasion by instilling a blunted critical viewpoint within their readership while securing the moral relevance of their authorial voices. Mr. Spectator is both morally flawed and an example of righteous conduct, since he first identifies his flaws and then corrects them. Readers are thereby able to value his method and his advice, securing both his ethical and rhetorical position.

From the outset, the moral project of the *Spectator* was framed through philosophy. In *Spectator* 10, Addison writes that “I shall be ambitious to have it said of me, that I have brought Philosophy out of closets and Libraries, Schools and Colleges, to dwell in Clubs and Assemblies, at Tea-Tables, and in Coffee-Houses” (10, I.44). Undertaking a populist moral project of reform through philosophical writing is a significant cultural artifact of the eighteenth century, one which has reverberated through the critical discussion of the *Spectator*.<sup>10</sup> And we have some clear indications of just what sort of philosophy is being brought into this public square: a philosophy

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<sup>10</sup> Recent attempts to interpret the significance of this extension of the philosophical into informal aspects of eighteenth-century culture include Elizabeth Kraft’s “Wit and *The Spectator*’s Ethics of Desire” *SEL* 45 (2005): 625-46 (2005) and Brian Cowan’s “Mr. Spectator and the Coffeehouse Public Sphere” (2004).

that grounds virtue in feeling through an ethics of sentiment.<sup>11</sup> In *Spectator* 9, Addison identifies this virtue of feeling as an inherently social virtue that is natural to mankind:

When Men are thus knit together, by a Love of Society, not a Spirit of Faction, and don't meet to censure or annoy those that are absent, but to enjoy one another: When they are thus combined for their own Improvement, or for the Good of others, or at least to relax themselves from the Business of the Day, by an innocent and cheerful Conversation, there may be something very useful in these little Institutions and Establishments (9, I.42).

In the *Spectator*, Addison and Steele are committed to an ethics of feeling as a mechanism of social moral reform. Addison outlines one manifestation of this ethical stance in *Spectator* 397: “As Love is the most delightful Passion, Pity is nothing else but Love softened by a degree of Sorrow: In short, it is a kind of pleasing Anguish, as well as generous Sympathy, that knits Mankind together, and blends them in the common Lot” (397, III.486). The philosophical valuation of feeling, from social affection and sympathy to the cultivation of a delicacy of sensibility, is a cornerstone of the *Spectator*'s rhetorical project. After all, Addison and Steele share their Kit-Kat club not just with Whig politicians such as Halifax, Marlborough, and Walpole, but also with literary figures central to the growth of a literature of sentiment such as Vanbrugh, Congreve, and Shaftesbury. In the critical assessment of our discipline, one feature of the cultural discourse of the *Spectator* is the popularization and diffusion of the philosophy of sentiment as a moral project. One key thread in the tangled iteration of eighteenth-century subjectivity occasioned by the reverberations of the *Spectator* in popular self-understanding, then, is the significance of an ethic of feeling as a central device to the subjectivity of performed moral

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<sup>11</sup> Philosophically, Sentimental Ethics is a member of the school of philosophy known as the “moral sense school.” Early scholars in British Moralists, especially L.A. Selby-Bigge, identify a school of thought whose prominent members include the Earl of Shaftesbury (1671-1713), Francis Hutcheson (1694-1746), and David Hume (1711-1776). I include Lord Kames (1696-1782) and Adam Smith (1723-1790).

self-examination.

While it is unmistakable that a culture of feeling suffuses throughout the *Spectator*, it would seem to be a misreading to collapse the moral project of Addison and Steele into such a reduction as an ethics of sentiment. Along with the political project of moral self-reform and feeling as an ethical path to virtue (in order to secure a generation of Whig political dominance), the *Spectator* assembled a heteroglossia of discursive elements in order to facilitate its political aims. For Addison and Steele, a cultural and philosophical interest in the ancient past attends this project of moral reform, a not uncommon feature of Augustan prose. This rhetorical development, not at all accidental to the political aims of Addison and Steele, means that any philosophy that is brought into the coffeehouses will be filtered through an ancient philosophy. Indeed, the oft-quoted line of moving philosophy into the public sphere is itself prefaced by a reference to ancient philosophy: “It was said of *Socrates*, that he brought Philosophy down from Heaven, to inhabit among Men; and I shall be ambitious to have it said of me . . .” (10, I.44). This maneuver is typical of the publication—a modern observation is expressed through, or contrasted with, a reference to the culture and philosophy of Greece and Rome. Each number begins with a quotation from an ancient text, setting the tone of a Janus-like publication that directs itself simultaneously in two separate directions. We can see, therefore, a simultaneous valuation of a concern for the past and an anxiety about the future. So while the philosophical importance of the *Spectator* clearly proceeds along sentimental lines, it is not a simple or linear progression. Instead, the advocacy of the sentimental is mediated by and accomplished through references and allusions to Greek and Roman philosophy. These reference and allusions blunt and diffuse the revolutionary political projects of Addison and Steele; just as Mr. Spectator eases his reader into his critique by projecting it inward, so too do Addison and Steele ease the reader into Whig ideology by aligning that ideology with the august writers of Rome and Greece. Even though the

project of moral reform in the *Spectator* might be sentimental, the discursive transformation of culture envisioned by the publication is hardly univocal.

Addison and Steele, in their *Spectator*, engaged in a project of moral reform that turned on the creation of a popular attention to ancient culture, blunting their Tory critics and opening a space for the proliferation of an ethics of sentiment into the new culture of the coffeehouse. According to the dictates of Augustan rhetorical style, this ethics of feeling was advocated through the use of ancient philosophy. Given such a project, we might imagine that Addison and Steele developed a reliance on Plato and Aristotle, two of the most significant authors in ancient philosophy. While the *Spectator* cites both of these well-known authors, it is striking just how little these two giants of Greek philosophy figure in the philosophical program of the *Spectator*. In the pages of the *Spectator*, we can see that Seneca and Epictetus are more frequent participants than Aristotle. While Plato is a significant presence, primarily as a source for the actions of Socrates, far more pervasive than Plato is the presence of Cicero. Browsing the pages of this daily publication suggests the relative importance of the use of philosophy; while the academic school of Aristotle is valued, and the importance of Plato is well-secured, Stoic philosophy emerges as a significant discursive presence in the pages of the *Spectator*.<sup>12</sup> Cicero's *De Officiis* is frequently cited. The *Enchiridion* of Epictetus is well represented. Seneca's *Moral Letters* and Stoic treatises on tranquility and the brevity of life are quoted. Marcus Aurelius, Cato, Cleanthes, Posidonius, Diogenes Laertius—even relatively obscure Stoic philosophers appear routinely on the pages of this publication. If the project of Addison is to bring philosophy into the daily lives of his readers, we should note that the specific iteration of philosophy that surfaces most regularly

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<sup>12</sup> While Stoic philosophy begins with Zeno in 300 BCE, this study considers the somewhat distinct-subset of Stoic thought known as Roman Stoicism. The Roman Stoics include Marcus Tully Cicero, (106-43 BCE), Cato (95-46 BCE), Seneca (4BCE-65 CE), Epictetus (55-135 CE), and Marcus Aurelius (121-180 CE). E.V. Arnold first identifies the Roman Stoics as ethically distinct from the Greek Stoics in his *Roman Stoicism* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1911.

is Stoicism. Returning to our often-cited line from *Spectator* 10, we can see that even its philosophical outline is accomplished through a Stoic voice. While ostensibly referring to Socrates—“it was said of *Socrates*, that he brought Philosophy down from heaven . . .”—we should note that the citation is not from Plato, but from Cicero’s *Tusculan Disputations*.<sup>13</sup> Even the defense of the methodology of *The Spectator*’s project is filtered through the rhetoric of Stoicism.

We see, therefore, in Addison’s attempt at “humanizing” his countrymen a twin device negotiating the boundaries of this performed subjectivity. On the one hand we see an ethic of feeling, with an interiority characterized by receptiveness and response. On the other hand, we see an ethics based on Stoic thought, with an exteriority characterized by restraint and withdrawal. As scholars, I would suggest that we have an imperfect understanding (at best) of this ethic of feeling and virtually no critical insight into the Stoic ethics that attends the performance of self-examination. The presence of a Stoic strain in the *Spectator*’s web of cultural influence is more than just a matter of curiosity. Following curiosity, we might arrive at a complete catalogue of the issues of the *Spectator* that invoke elements of Stoic philosophy simply by constructing a list.<sup>14</sup> Such a catalogue, though, would do little to measure the effects of Stoic discourse. More than a list of the iterations of Stoic thought, we must seek to understand the interpretive significance of this thought. Specifically, we must seek to understand the multiple valences of Stoic and Sentimental ethics that underlie the subjectivity of performance occasioned by the *Spectator*. While Platonism and Academic philosophy may be more familiar to modern readers than Stoic

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<sup>13</sup> Addison writes “It was said of *Socrates* . . .” that he brought philosophy into the lives of men. This claim occurs not in the writings of Plato or Xenophon, the two writers who lived with and accompanied Socrates, but in the Stoic writings of Cicero. The *Tusculan Disputations* is one of the overtly Stoic texts Cicero wrote in the last years of his life, 45-44 BCE.

<sup>14</sup> Adam Potkay calls for just such a study on page 78 of his *The Passion for Happiness* (New York: Cornell UP, 2000), asserting the importance of Cicero’s *De Officiis* to the *Spectator* and by extension to Hume’s writing. I am indebted to his suggestion.

thought, it is the Stoics that appear regularly on the pages of the *Spectator* in the cultivation of the moral project of sentimental ethics undertaken by Addison and Steele. There appears to be an opposition between our understanding of Stoic ethics, which seems to call for virtue through the denial of emotion, and our construction of Sentimental ethics, which seems to call for virtue through the experience of emotion. This very contradiction should drive our scholarly attention to the presence of a discourse of Stoic thought within the evocation of an ethics of feeling. The presence of just such a combination in the pages of the publication that formed a bedrock for eighteenth-century popular culture implicates our understanding of the ethical practice of feeling in the eighteenth century. Charitably construed, it seems that Addison and Steele, as well as the readers of the *Spectator*, knew something about Stoicism and/or Sentimental ethics that we do not.<sup>15</sup> It seems that in our quest to understand the referential background of eighteenth-century readers, we have misinterpreted their notions of Stoicism and its compatibility with a sentimental project.

One source of this misreading is grounded in a long-held misunderstanding of Stoic thought, a misinterpretation that consistently seeks to collapse the entirety of the Stoic project into the faculty of reason.<sup>16</sup> In this view, Stoic ethics places virtue in one's ability to lead a rational life, primarily through a withdrawal from emotion. This misreading has a particularly significant impact on studies of eighteenth-century literature and culture. By compressing the entirety of the Stoic project into the faculty of reason, we leave little space for Stoic thought in a century that seems likely to be known as the century of sentiment. If this result is accurate—if there *ought* to be no space for Stoic thought alongside the growing practice of sentiment—then there is no crime

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<sup>15</sup> I refer to Donald Davidson's hermeneutic principle of charity, whereby readers are bound to interpret any seeming conflict in a way that best supports the text. See *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation* Oxford: Oxford UP, 1984.

<sup>16</sup> John Sellars makes this point in a much more convincing fashion in his introduction to *Stoicism* Berkeley: U of California Press, 2006.

here. However, as this study demonstrates, there is ample discursive evidence of Stoic thought throughout the century. Anthony Cooper, the Third Earl of Shaftesbury, was termed “the greatest Stoic of modern times.”<sup>17</sup> Samuel Johnson’s use of Stoic thought in *Rasselas* and *Vanity of Human Wishes* has been widely acknowledged.<sup>18</sup> Joseph Addison’s *Cato* was one of the most successful plays of the century and an obvious source of Stoic ethical thought.<sup>19</sup> And we might remember that before it gained the nomenclature of sentiment, the eighteenth century was known as the Age of Reason.

Of course, we need not choose—we can assert that the eighteenth century was a period of both reason and sentiment, of passion and restraint. Such an approach, it would seem, might better reflect the heteroglossic nature of discourse and the ways in which power relations multiply rather than restrict cultural agency. We might term the presence of Stoic thought coincidence-- it just so happens that Stoicism was a mode of thinking valued by literary writers like Addison, Steele, Johnson, Sterne, Pope, and Fielding.<sup>20</sup> But it is intriguing that Stoic thought was also valued within the philosophical tradition of sentiment. From the moment of its first framing in Shaftesbury’s *Characteristics* to its ascendancy into cultural norm in Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, the ethical writers known philosophically as the Moral Sense school seems to be well-linked to Stoicism. And this connection, which can be well-documented in the philosophical literature, goes beyond a mere professional allegiance; the connection becomes

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<sup>17</sup> Benjamin Rand makes that claim based on the life sketch written by Shaftesbury’s son in 1734. See page xii of *The Life, Unpublished Letters, and Philosophical Regimen of Anthony, Earl of Shaftesbury* London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1900.

<sup>18</sup> A recent proponent of this long-held interpretive view is Robert Mayhew’s “Nature and the Choice of Life in *Rasselas*.” *SEL* 39 (1999): 539-556.

<sup>19</sup> Lisa Freeman’s “What’s Love Got to Do with Addison’s *Cato*” focuses on the importance of Pope’s prologue to a play that would subsequently be revised to remove the love scenes in *SEL* 39 (1999): 463-482. Julie Ellison, in *Cato’s Tears and the Making of Anglo-American Emotion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999, examines the role this play held in forming our emotional identity as a cultural artifact.

<sup>20</sup> In addition to the citations given above for Addison, Steele, and Johnson, see Pope’s *Essay on Man*, Fielding’s *Amelia*, and Sterne’s *Tristram Shandy*.

personal. Shaftesbury edited and compiled the original Greek texts of Epictetus, exhaustively annotating the Greek original before leaving the codices in his rooms in Naples until first John Upton in 1738 and then later Elizabeth Carter in 1758 use his notes and codex to make the definitive translation of Epictetus in English. Francis Hutcheson translated the *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius into English and incorporated Stoic ethics into his system in *An Essay on the Nature and Conduct of the Passions* (1728), but felt unsure enough of the politics of Stoic thought to hide his work under both a false partnership (there was little or no work done by his partner, James Moor) and an anonymous pseudonym, Thomas. Of course, there is ample evidence of the philosophical impact of Stoic thought to the philosophy sentiment. David Hume wrote in a letter to Hutcheson of his debt to Stoic thought, particularly Stoic ethics: “I desire to take my catalogue of virtues from Cicero’s *De Officiis*.”<sup>21</sup> Adam Smith places the Stoic virtue of self-command at the center of his catalogue of virtues in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*.<sup>22</sup> It seems curious that the very philosophy which gives rise to the affective practice we know as sympathy also seems to value a system we (mis)understand as emotionless reason.

The presence of a discourse of Stoicism within the practice of sentiment suggests we misunderstand something about the virtue of feeling in the eighteenth century. We can briefly sketch the contours of this notion. For example, an attention to Stoic elements in eighteenth-century ethical thought would suggest the ways in which affect, performativity, and responsibility manifest themselves as rational practices of the self.<sup>23</sup> We can also see some different connections

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<sup>21</sup> This statement is taken from a letter to Hutcheson on September 17, 1739. It is significant because Hume was still drafting his ethical theory for Books II and III of the *Treatise*, and in his correspondence with Hutcheson it is clear that he is willing to revise his views under the criticism of his friend. See J. Y. T. Grieg’s *Letters of David Hume* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1932). I.34.

<sup>22</sup> The most complete representation of Smith’s debt to Stoic thought is in his “Of Those Systems Which Make Virtue Consist in Propriety,” Part VII Section II of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*.

<sup>23</sup> Of particular relevance to this discussion is Foucault’s work on the rationality of pleasure in *The Uses of Pleasure* (New York: Pantheon, 1985). Judith Butler extends and revises this theory in *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York: Fordham, 2005), particularly in her analysis of the responsiveness of narrativity.

between the performance of interiority on the stage and the production of interiority in the written text.<sup>24</sup> Critical attention to the presence of Stoic philosophy in the discourse of sentiment would enable many such reevaluations, but only to the degree that we are able to trade our current framework for an openness to eighteenth-century perspectives on the discursive formation of ethics.

### ***Stoic Ethics: Eighteenth-Century Perspectives***

As writers of texts that were fortunate enough to survive the ravages of time, from accidental destruction by war to intentional burning by the Early Church, the most important figures of Stoicism to early-modern readers were Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus, and Marcus Aurelius.<sup>25</sup> Importantly, for Enlightenment Europe, these four authors *were* Stoicism; their texts survived, were available, and were translated or rediscovered during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first publication of Cicero in England was *De Amicitia (On Friendship)* in 1481; by 1740 there were over three-hundred editions of Cicero's work printed in the British Isles.<sup>26</sup> Seneca's work went through over a hundred printings by 1800, most often his *Moral Letters to Lucilius*, with the first appearing in 1547. Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* was first translated in 1634 and went through more than thirty editions by the end of the eighteenth century. And there

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<sup>24</sup> Shaftesbury's notebooks, titled *Ασκηματα*, are a particularly fruitful manifestation of this intentional link between the subjective experience of interiority and the disciplinary act of writing. I am currently finishing a manuscript on this aspect of Shaftesbury's work.

<sup>25</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, c. 100-33 BCE; Lucius Annaeus Seneca, 4 BCE- 65 CE; Epictetus, c. 50-130 CE; Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, 121-180 CE. Cicero's classification as a Stoic is the subject of some debate. It is objectively clear that all of his texts are not Stoic—for example, his orations are decidedly non-Stoic. However, this study is unconcerned with Cicero's *personal* allegiance to Stoicism; rather, it is a textual investigation of the sources available to early modern readers. Early modern readers knew Cicero for his oratories primarily as *Tully*, whereas they identify the author as Cicero when referring to his philosophical work. It remains certain that his most widely read treatises—*De Officiis*, *De Finibus*, *De Fato*, *De Amicitia*, *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, and *Tusculanae Quaestiones*—express a Stoic philosophy. Since the aim of this study is to assess the influence of Stoic thought on practices of sentiment, the inner beliefs of practitioners can safely remain unknowable. For a much fuller consideration of Cicero as a Stoic, see Martha Colish's *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*.

<sup>26</sup> All publication data is taken from the Eighteenth Century Short Title Catalogue.

were more than forty editions of Epictetus' philosophical work published in the fifty years between 1694 and 1744.<sup>27</sup> These publication statistics suggest both an attraction to Stoic thought in the marketplace and a well-formed discursive presence for the texts of Stoic philosophy in early-modern Britain.

Reid Barbour supports the assertion that the print culture of early-modern Britain was awash in the works of the Roman Stoics.<sup>28</sup> In *English Epicures and Stoics*, Reid Barbour examines the growing English affinity with Roman philosophical schools beginning in the early Stuart period and continuing through the Civil War. In Barbour's assessment, Roman philosophy was a convenient tool in the political and ecclesiastical debates that prefigured the Civil War and Commonwealth. Barbour's fascinating account locates no specific pattern of sectarian use of Roman philosophy; rather, he argues that the appeal to ancient texts and ways of understanding the world functioned more or less as arguments from authority for various ideologies. In this way, Stoic and Epicurean philosophy became useful tools in support of a wide variety of positions, rather than the lynchpin of any one political perspective. Barbour outlines the ways in which plays such as William Cartwright's *The Royal Slave* (1636) and James Shirley's *The Politician* (1633) were interpreted as both Stoic and Anti-Stoic in the ever-shifting alliances in the Carolinian court of the 1630s.<sup>29</sup> Puritans, Carolinians, Calvinists, Anglicans, and Parliamentarians all could find elements to support their political aims in Stoicism. These connections were underscored by the proliferation of editions of Cicero, Epictetus, Seneca, and Marcus Aurelius.<sup>30</sup> Barbour's

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<sup>27</sup> The first publication occurred in 1567, with 78 editions in total by 1800.

<sup>28</sup> *English Epicures and Stoics*, Amherst: U Massachusetts Press, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> Barbour details the way in which interpreters of Epicurean and Stoic philosophy seemed to ignore the differences inherent in these two systems in order to use the philosophies in support of their own political agendas. He details this ambivalence in two chapters, "The Honest Court" and "The Church Porch." He discusses these two plays in depth from 180-185.

<sup>30</sup> Marcus Aurelius's *Meditations* was one of the last Stoic texts to be discovered during this period, and it brought a lot of excitement for its implications on the current political climate. Barbour spends much of his "The Honest Court" analyzing the political importance of the discovery of a Stoic text written by an emperor who declares himself to be no

investigations describe an intense interest in the texts of Roman philosophy, particularly the Stoics, in the years before the Civil War's exodus of intellectuals to Paris. As Andrew Shifflett argues so convincingly, before the tumultuousness of the Civil War, and perhaps even during it, there was an interest in the texts of Stoicism—in the actual words themselves.<sup>31</sup> Editions competed to justly represent the words of the original—not in erudition or fluidity, but rather in fidelity.<sup>32</sup> These marketplace dynamics suggest a growing interest in the *texts*, as well as the *beliefs*, of Stoicism.

The commonly held understanding of Stoic thought by readers today is that Stoicism represents virtue as rational self-denial and restrained emotion. John Sellars identifies the misunderstanding of Stoicism as “austerity, repression of feeling and fortitude” in his recent introduction to Stoic thought.<sup>33</sup> Indeed, current popular misunderstanding of Stoic virtue threatens to collapse the entire Stoic project into the sole faculty of reason. In his (mis)representation, Stoicism appears to be deeply at odds with the ethics of feeling in the eighteenth century. This construction is, however, contrary to eighteenth-century Stoic texts widely available. From Marcus Aurelius to Cicero, we can see that reason is undeniably important to Stoic ethics; without the use of reason, individuals could never be moral.<sup>34</sup> However, if we turn to the texts that are

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more than a slave. Marcus Aurelius remained something of an unknown quantity—easily the least well-known Stoic writer—until the late eighteenth-century. Francis Hutcheson undertook a new translation of *Meditations* and worked to print it under a pseudonym to shield his public position as Chair of Moral Philosophy from the political dimension of this text. Still, references to Marcus abound in his *Institutio*, which he was teaching at the same time (1730s).

<sup>31</sup> *Stoicism, Politics, and Literature in the Age of Milton: War and Peace Reconciled*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> One demonstration of this cultural movement to the text can be found in the number of editions which claim to be newly translated “from the Greek original.” Of the four editions of Epictetus’ *Enchiridion* published between 1567 and 1616, three of them claim to be newly translated from the Greek originals; the fourth collates two different Latin translations.

<sup>33</sup> See his introductory chapter to his *Stoicism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006). This line is taken from the first page.

<sup>34</sup> See, for example, Cicero’s *De Officiis*, which establishes an inextricable link between reason and morality. For Cicero, morality is possible for human beings “because he is possessed of reason, by which he discerns consequences, sees the causes of things, understands the rise and progress of events, compares similar objects, and connects and associates the future with the present” (I.4).

available to eighteenth-century readers, we see that for the Stoics reason is a tool that secures goodness by bringing about a closer harmony with the natural world.<sup>35</sup> Rather than simply elevate reason itself as virtue, Stoic ethics pursues the more circuitous route of securing virtue through natural harmony. While reason is important in the pursuit of this harmony, as is judgment, harmony or *sympatheia* is sufficiently distinct that Stoic philosophy works to clarify the confusion. If we look closely at the texts available to eighteenth-century readers of Stoicism, we can see that there are three central components of virtue.<sup>36</sup> While reason is undeniably an important element in virtue for readers of the Stoics in the eighteenth century, harmony with natural law is far more significant.<sup>37</sup> A third core belief in Stoic texts is an ethical interest in the moral dimension of human relationships as a space for the interplay of tension between reason and natural law.<sup>38</sup> Since Epictetus was in many ways for eighteenth-century readers the most *Stoic* of the Stoic ethicists, as well as for reasons of space in this essay, I shall draw the points held in common by all Stoics primarily from his texts. Since Epictetus was read in such a small text—primarily through a fifty-three paragraph document referred to as the *Enchiridion* or Handbook—it is easy to trace the discursive influence of such a brief work.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> References for this most fundamental tenet of Stoic thought abound. Marcus Aurelius identifies the moral duty “of life in accordance with Nature” in I.9; Epictetus speaks of the “moral purpose in harmony with nature” in sections 5 of the *Enchiridion*. It may be significant that the Greek word used by the Stoics to denote one’s actions in pursuit of this natural harmony is *sympatheia*. Individuals bring about moral goodness through *sympatheia* and bring vice through actively disrupting this *sympatheia*. An interesting study—outside the scope of the present inquiry—would be to trace the genealogy of sympathy through the Renaissance.

<sup>36</sup> In my unpublished dissertation, as well as the larger book project of which this is a part, I analyze these eighteenth-century interpretive components of Stoicism.

<sup>37</sup> I take it to be relatively uncontroversial to assert the importance of reason to the Stoics, famously termed the *dunamis*. E.g. see the first real book of Marcus’ *Meditations*, II.1 (written long before he died and hence prior to the tedious introduction). See also the *Discourses* by Epictetus, where he speaks of the central role of the “*dunamis e logike*” beginning in I.1.1.

<sup>38</sup> See chapter II of my dissertation, or an essay version of that argument that is forthcoming, where I assert the conscious borrowing of a Stoic ethics modeled on relationships in the wake of the turmoil of the regicide and interregnum.

<sup>39</sup> A printing in England of Epictetus’ *Discourses* first occurred in 1739-1741. The Greek codexes were first compiled and collected by Lord Shaftesbury. Before Shaftesbury’s work, the only full text was the very brief *Enchiridion*. Shaftesbury’s work on the Greek manuscripts is so valuable that it serves as the basis for all future work, still cited by the Loeb edition. The first English language edition of the *Discourses* was in 1758, Elizabeth Carter’s excellent and

Epictetus serves as an appropriate space to distinguish eighteenth-century notions of Stoicism from our own precisely because of the incredible decline in his popularity. This late-first century Stoic philosopher has disappeared almost entirely from the common parlance of the history of ideas. His ideas are almost completely unknown within literary departments today, and there are almost no references to his work in the disciplines governed by the MLA. Yet the Eighteenth-Century Short Title Catalogue notes forty editions of his philosophy printed in the fifty years from 1694 to 1744.<sup>40</sup> References to Epictetus pervade the literature of the eighteenth-century, from poets such as Mary Astell, Katherine Philips, and Mary Lee Chudleigh to novelists such as Samuel Richardson, Ann Radcliffe, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.<sup>41</sup> In these authors, we can see an intriguing corollary between the philosophy of ascetic Stoicism and the growth of literary sentiment. Epictetus, a philosopher whom we have almost forgotten, appears to be of some importance to the writers of sentimental literature, suggesting a strange link between the self-denial of Stoic philosophy and the indulgence of a philosophy that takes virtue to lie in sympathy—feeling with others. In the section below, two examples of late-seventeenth-century literary appraisals of Epictetus highlight the significance of Stoic thought to the growth of the literature of sentiment in the eighteenth century.

### ***Stoic Sentiments: Epictetus at the turn of the Eighteenth Century***

William Congreve's *Love for Love* (1695) illustrates the literary familiarity of Epictetus

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still-respected translation. Only native Greek readers would know the *Discourses* before 1758, and only after 1740. However, the *Enchiridion* is rightly viewed as a literary phenomenon in the eighteenth century.

<sup>40</sup> By comparison, the ESTC notes almost 200 editions of Shakespeare's plays during the same fifty-year period. We should note that this is not a fair comparison—Shakespeare wrote 38 plays and over 150 sonnets, while Epictetus wrote a 53-paragraph booklet.

<sup>41</sup> It would be impossible to catalogue the number of references to Epictetus in the literature of the eighteenth century. Each of the authors cited above refers to Epictetus by name and displays a familiarity with his work. See Katherine Philips' *Letters from Orinda to Poliarchus* (1729), Mary Lee Chudleigh's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1713), Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Julie* (1761), Ann Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), and Samuel Richardson's *Charles Grandison* (1753).

during the eighteenth century. Recent critical attention has emphasized the play as a liminal text that hovers between Restoration rakish comedies and the reform plots of the early eighteenth-century stage. The play's dramatic tension turns on the ethics of familial duty.<sup>42</sup> Sir Sampson is father to the young Valentine, a reformed rake who has wasted his fortune on pleasure. Sir Sampson offers to rescue his son from his present debts at the cost of his inheritance, with Valentine's younger brother as beneficiary of this disenfranchisement. Unwilling to submit to the loss of his future estate, Valentine struggles to navigate the conflicts posed by filial duty, financial obligation, and moral reform. Unable to succeed alone, Valentine is redeemed through his virtuous love of the aptly named Angelica, whose practical wisdom and authority inscribe the proper reciprocity inherent in virtuous relationships. The rake ethos, presented in oblique references and past imbroglios, is replaced by the twin valuing of virtue and property that serve to support the Whig political agenda. Along the way, Valentine transforms himself from a profligate rake to an ascetic self-castigating hero, accomplished through the mediation of his love of Angelica.

Stoic ethics as a component of this ascetic self-reform figures prominently in this play. Unlike other reform plays—Steele's *Conscious Lovers* is a prominent example—Valentine has already begun his turn from rakishness before the outset of the play. In this way, Congreve minimizes the cognitive dissonance of reform, constraining his audience's reaction to Valentine's moral worth.<sup>43</sup> If Congreve is to establish the dilemma of the play as Sir Sampson's usurpation of Valentine's property rights and the abrogation of paternal piety, such a channeling of the audience's assessment of the two characters is crucial. With the father-son relationship a

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<sup>42</sup> The notion of filial duty is a recurring theme in Congreve's works, as we see in plays like *Love for Love*, *The Double-Dealer*, and *Way of the World*. Of course, this topic has political overtones to both Whig and Tory audiences, but increasingly becomes the focus of Whig politics.

<sup>43</sup> One of the delicate maneuvers a reform plot must manage is the task of portraying a competent enough rake to need reform while not making the rake element so dominant that the reform is undercut or lessened. This is a problem critics such as John Dennis raise repeatedly in reform comedies.

metonym of the monarch-citizen bond, Congreve's political interest lies in the exposure of Sir Samson's abrogation of paternal duty, which necessarily rests on the audience's approbation of Valentine. To shift the moral dilemma away from the rake even as he reforms himself, Congreve must create an initial impression of Valentine that establishes his possibility for reform. In this task Congreve turns to the Stoic philosophy of Epictetus. This extremely successful play opens with a scene of the hero Valentine reading some books when his servant Jeremy enters. Jeremy invites Valentine to come to breakfast, but Valentine is engrossed in his reading:

*Valentine.* And d'ye hear, go you to breakfast. There's a page doubled down in Epictetus, that is a feast for an emperor.

*Jeremy.* Was Epictetus a real cook, or did he only write receipts?

*Valentine.* Read, read, sirrah, and refine your appetite; learn to live upon instruction; feast your mind and mortify your flesh; read, and take your nourishment in at your eyes; shut up your mouth, and chew the cud of understanding. So Epictetus advises.

*Jeremy.* O Lord! I have heard much of him, when I waited upon a gentleman at Cambridge. (I.i, 6-15)

These opening lines show Valentine as an individual in pursuit of Stoic philosophy's goal of moral self-instruction. In this way, Valentine becomes at the outset of the play a person in the making, a reform in progress. There are subtle links established between Whig ideology and Stoic thought: in the first line, Valentine, though deeply in debt, analogizes himself to royalty in his use of self-education as moral reform.<sup>44</sup> The moral worth of the individual is established here by his actions, not by his lineage, a key element of Whig political thought. This self-instruction extends to the

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<sup>44</sup> The analogy is apt because Marcus Aurelius, second century Roman emperor, read Epictetus's *Enchiridion* and based his own life and writings on those of Epictetus. In his *Meditations*, Marcus frequently cites Epictetus and extols the virtues of reading Epictetus. So it is literally true that in reading Epictetus, Valentine enjoys a meal fit for an emperor. Marcus' affinity for Epictetus was well known by eighteenth-century readers.

servant, Jeremy, further defining the ascendance of moral action over birth.<sup>45</sup>

Congreve's decision to begin the play with a discussion of Epictetus may indicate the presence of a popular understanding of Epictetus' philosophical importance. The play seems to presume a bit of familiarity, with an inside joke for those who have read both Marcus Aurelius and Epictetus. For less informed audience members, Congreve guides their appreciation of Epictetus by linking Valentine's reading of Epictetus with the moral imperative of the refinement of appetite and instruction. The ascetic nature of Stoic thought is presented as a device to "mortify [the] flesh" (1.10). Jeremy, the servant, represents the least one might know about Epictetus—he has something to do with the elevation of learning at Cambridge, where even the servants "have heard much about" Stoic philosophy. By securing the moral worth of Valentine through allusions to the philosophy of Epictetus, Congreve suggests the significance of Stoic ethics to the project of reform in eighteenth-century literature.

Lady Mary Chudleigh provides a similar insight into the popular philosophical understanding of Epictetus at the turn of the eighteenth century. In her dedication "To All Ingenious Ladies" in *The Ladies Defence* (1701), Chudleigh associates Epictetus with resolute virtue that resists a tumultuous world.<sup>46</sup> She suggests that all women read "the Philosophy of Epictetus; that excellent Man, who in the worst of Times, and the most vicious Court in the World, kept his integrity inviolable" (8).<sup>47</sup> Like Congreve, Chudleigh uses Stoic philosophy to link the common individual to the developments of the court. For Chudleigh, Stoic philosophy represents an internal resistance to the political turmoil that was an unavoidable aspect of the crises of succession that persisted from the death of Charles II in 1685 until George I ascended the throne in

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<sup>45</sup> Like the myth of the American Dream, this rhetoric is one of the necessary fictions of Whig political ideology. While there is much rhetoric of individual worth transcending social categories, Whig dominance in the eighteenth century simply creates a new class of aristocracy. See Hume's pessimistic assessment in his *Of the Parties in Great Britain* (1741).

<sup>46</sup> *The Poems and Prose of Mary, Lady Chudleigh*. ed. Margaret J.M. Ezell. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

<sup>47</sup> Chudleigh here alludes to Epictetus' presence in Rome under Nero.

1714. We should also note the rhetorical association of Stoic philosophy with the virtue of chastity in the term “inviolable.” The clever alignment of the masculinity of Stoic rhetoric with feminine material and ethical concerns such as childbirth and marriage is an interesting feature of Chudleigh’s writing. The tenets of Stoic philosophy were a central component throughout many of her works, poetry and prose alike.

Chudleigh’s most striking use of Stoic ethics is in a poem devoted to the loss of her daughter. Written in 1701, “On the Death of my Dear Daughter” proceeds as a dialogue between Chudleigh and an anonymous friend. Throughout the poem, Chudleigh uses Stoic rhetoric to speak of the self-mastery that she wishes to use to escape the grief. The reader, however, is more struck by the friend, Lucinda, who both models and justifies the emotional response that is unavoidable. While Marissa, Chudleigh’s pen-name, models the Stoic approach to death by speaking of the “Call of Fate”(10) and the “long prepare” for her “Daughter’s Death” (136), Lucinda models the sympathetic passion of the reader by exclaiming, “No more, no more let me such Language hear;/ I can’t, I can’t the piercing Accents bear;/Each Word you utter stabs me to the Heart” (45-47). Later, when Marissa is overcome by the burden of sorrow and is unable to master the Stoic approach to death, she seeks the release of suicide: “Come Death and give the kind releasing Blow;/ I’m tir’d with Life, and over-charg’d with Woe:” (75-76). There is a reversal of rhetoric, with Lucinda then modeling the Stoic approach for her friend:

Recal your wand’ring Reason to your Aid,  
And hear it calmly when it does persuade;  
‘Twill teach you Patience, and the useful Skill  
To rule your Passions, and command your Will;  
To bear Afflictions with a steady Mind,  
Still to be easie, pleas’d, and still resign’d, (125-130).

The moving poem ends with no resolution, with Miranda/Chudleigh unable to master her grief or resign herself to death, yet nonetheless unwilling to abandon the Stoic principles she values. Hardly anomalous, Chudleigh's writing nonetheless works to depict a curious interpenetration between a Stoic approach to the world and the ethics of feeling. Stoic philosophy is such a prolific component of the discourse of ideas at the start of the eighteenth century that writers can use it to advocate political reform, domestic morality, and the mechanisms of education. The heterogeneous applicability of Stoic thought is a significant component of its cultural viability, enabling the profusion represented by forty editions of Epictetus' *Enchiridion* in fifty years.

At the same time that these texts associate moral reform with Stoic ideology through the philosophy of Epictetus, there are unmistakable elements of the ethics of feeling in these works of literature. Aspasia Velissariou marks the reform of Valentine in *Love for Love* as a sentimental reform that develops an ethics of emotion.<sup>48</sup> In Valentine, "Congreve constructs a hero who increasingly subscribes to the ethics of sentiment as an alternative to sexual and monetary exploitation that dictates his milieu" (47). The play confirms the ethical value of emotion by establishing the reform of Valentine through the virtuous love of Angelica, rejecting ascetic experience as a sufficient component of moral reform. However, the clearest notion of the play's Sentimental ethical basis occurs in the prologue. After entreating the audience to view Valentine and Angelica as "one falling Adam, and one tempted Eve" (22), Congreve suggests that the audience view his play as vastly different from "the *Plain Dealer's* scenes of manly rage" (39). Rather than offer a satire, as Congreve feels his audience might expect, he provides a play whose ethical basis is a better match for "this crying age" (40). Congreve anticipates the moral element that is to dominate reform comedy in a few years by writing a play that constrains "ill manners"

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<sup>48</sup> "Love for Love: Patriarchal Politics versus Love." *Restoration* 30.2 (2006): 39-56. Velissariou underscores the political dimension to Congreve's play, while avoiding the contrary notions of ascetic and sentimental virtue embodied in the play.

within an envelope that highlights ethical reform by way of emotional empathy. In this maneuver, Congreve seems willing to employ an overtly ascetic ethical school to introduce his audience to a play that equates virtue with emotional reform.

While Congreve's Whiggish politics are amenable to the political dimension of the growth of the ethic of feeling at the start of the century, Mary Chudleigh's politics are somewhat more complicated. Kathryn R. King groups Chudleigh with such Tory writers as Mary Astell and Jane Barker.<sup>49</sup> King argues that even while Chudleigh participates in the discursive extension of the Whig revolution to female domestic politics, she nonetheless "retreats to the kind of stoic argument employed by Barker and the Tory Mary Astell"(213). But as King's essay demonstrates, the first decade of the eighteenth century was a complex political moment that blurred allegiances. While Chudleigh's conservative religious politics are well-evidenced, there is a radical revolutionary element that runs through much of the literature of the Puritan dissenters. The political effects of this revolutionary thought within the religiously conservative dissenters is dizzying, but we can see its ambivalence in the political rapprochement of William and Mary's reign (1689-1703) and the Act of Settlement (1701). Like Queen Anne, Chudleigh seems inclined to embrace Tory and Whig alike, producing literature that includes Stoic and Sentimental notions of virtue. So even though her poetry uses the self-effacing aspects of Stoicism that King mentions, Chudleigh also embraces feeling as a natural-law based determiner of virtue. Chudleigh's *Essays upon Several Subjects*, written in 1710 and dedicated to the Electress Sophia, accomplishes this reconciliation of Stoic and Sentimental modes of virtue.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> King's essay "Political Verse and Satire: Monarchy, Party and Female Political Agency" can be found in *Women and Poetry, 1660-1750*. ed. Sarah Prescott and David E. Shuttleton. Houndsmill, UK: Palgrave, 2003. 203-222.

<sup>50</sup> The dedication of this volume to Sophia further illustrates the complex political sympathies of Chudleigh. While Tories could openly support Anne as James' daughter, the decision to bypass a near relative in favor of the Hanoverian descendents of Sophia was much less in line with Tory politics. On the other hand, if Anne was acceptable to Whig factions, the transferal of the monarchy to the Hanoverians represented the completion of the

*Essays Upon Several Subjects* (1710) is a group of miscellaneous essays devoted to the cultivation of an ethical life in and by its readers. Chudleigh's text presumes a casual interest in philosophy and holds a special reverence for Stoic thought. When she names useful philosophers for her readers, she recommends "Seneca, Plutarch, and Marcus Aurelius; but I think neither of them equall'd those great Masters of Morality, Socrates and Epictetus" (323).<sup>51</sup> Chudleigh's particular fondness of Epictetus is secured by frequent references to his work. At one moment in her essay "Of Anger," Chudleigh transcribes twelve paragraphs of the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus into her text.<sup>52</sup> Yet her text also advocates an ethic of feeling. In "Of Friendship," Chudleigh addresses affection as the underlying motivation for friendship. Virtuous friendship takes its worth not from utility but from love, such that "the greater, the more perfect it [the friendship] is, the greater, the more fervent ought to be our love" (345). Chudleigh supports this notion of natural affection by arguing that friends "find themselves united by a secret Sympathy" that overcomes the boundaries between self and other.

In the essay "Of Friendship" and throughout her poetry and prose, Chudleigh uses the ethic of feeling to establish a naturally social nature for humankind. Chudleigh suggests that beneath the rhetoric of contention in human affairs, there lies a "Compassion, that Commiseration, which is always a part of his [humankind's] Character" (345). This natural force of sympathy unites individuals in social harmony and provides for individual morality as well, since sympathy "will incline him to interest himself in the Wellfare of a virtuous Man, and make him rejoice at the Good that's done him" (346). In her essay "Of Solitude," Chudleigh develops a Senecan notion of solitude that turns on a withdrawal that is also a self-engagement and an engagement with others

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victory begun by the Glorious Revolution of 1688. George I, Sophia's son, ascended when Sophia's death occurred just before Queen Anne's, both in 1714.

<sup>51</sup> Eighteenth-Century readers could experience Stoic thought in each of these writers. It's important to note that, since it is literally impossible to read Socrates (who wrote nothing and espoused an oral mode of philosophy), this grouping suggests a particular importance for Epictetus.

<sup>52</sup> This transcription represents a significant percentage of the brief text of the *Enchiridion* (53 paragraphs).

through reading and writing. Before this analysis of Stoic solitude, though, Chudleigh establishes a sentimental notion of sympathetic engagement with others. She argues that humans are naturally social because there is “something that by a secret Sympathy, and internal Force, a pleasing sort of Violence, seems to link us to each other, and makes us delight in a mutual Communication of Thoughts, a reciprocal Exchange of Sentiments” (385). Chudleigh’s notion of Stoic solitude seems to be founded on a sentimental view of relationships based on sympathy. With this emphasis on the moral virtue of sympathetic compassion, we can see some elements of an ethic of feeling in this early text. So while King is correct to note the Stoic tendency of Chudleigh’s virtue, Chudleigh provides an interesting space for an ethic of feeling that seems to counterbalance and oppose the notions of self-restraint and self-denial inherent in Stoic rhetoric.

In the work of Chudleigh and Congreve, we can see this curious combination of Stoic philosophy and an ethic of feeling. These two literary works serve as reminders of the entangled discussion of ethics in the early eighteenth century. They also serve to underscore the political milieu of the rhetoric of Stoic self-examination counseled by *The Spectator*. In poetry, prose, and play, we can see the rhetorical intermingling of stoicism and sentiment, efficaciously balanced by eighteenth-century audiences. Our interpretive understanding remains fundamentally at odds with the texts we seek to understand, suggesting a strong need to reevaluate our understanding of the compatibility of Stoic ethics and an ethics of feeling in the literature and philosophy of the eighteenth-century. At its heart, this conflict arises from a perceived incompatibility between reason and emotion, thinking and feeling. However, by turning to a more theoretical analysis of the mechanisms of restraint and engagement, as offered by recent writers such as Judith Butler and Bruno Latour, we can begin to recapture the strange pairing of asceticism and feeling that seems to have been available to eighteenth-century audiences. We eagerly anticipate such studies.