John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester (1647-1680)
Selected Poems

Introduction

Rochester's poetry makes for a surprising encounter, perhaps because it so directly and profoundly challenges our notions of the "Age of Reason" and Enlightenment England. Rochester is significant both as an emblem of the Restoration court of Charles II and as a relentless critic of that court. While his poetry clearly celebrates and participates in the exuberance of the Restoration, particularly the end of the cultural and moral repression of the Puritans under Cromwell, he also criticizes the King himself, major figures of the court, and the ethic that conflated sexual and political power. His poetry is especially problematic, though, because it regularly employs some of the very themes which it critiques. So while it is true that Rochester criticizes Charles II for succumbing to a sexual appetite that confused satiation of sensual desires for the exercise of political duty, he nonetheless writes several poems that imagine sexuality in political, and even imperial, terms. This is just one instance of the way in which his poetry is contradictory and tense. Another clear example is his criticism of the role of honour in the denial of female sexual pleasure, compared to the monstrosity with which he presents female desire and the female body. Barbara Benedict has argued that his poetry operates through heteroglossia—literally, many different voices.

Warning
We want you to feel free to choose these poems, to read or not, following your own inclination

Rochester's poetry ranges from mildly bawdy to frankly obscene to obviously disgusting. His world is a world of the senses—and sexuality is one of his favorite activity of the senses. The unvarnished depiction of the senses is one of his means of thinking about the world, and in reading his poetry we are unable to avoid its offensiveness. If you are offended at this, feel free to choose not to read this material. It will in no way affect your grade, except that you'll be unable to choose to write your final essay on this material.

Some of his poems are little more than sexual jokes, and have importance only as cultural artifacts that represent a moment that is now closed to us except for these traces. The poems which we've selected for you, however, are significant for more than their base language. Almost every poem we've selected is in fact vulgar, but our interest lies not in its vulgarity but in other areas. We've selected 5 or so themes to organize the poems, and we'll discuss those themes and others at length. Here's an overview of our selection:

Group I: The critique of honor, and the consumption of desire
Group IX: The conflation of the political and sexual, especially via the female body
Group V: The presence/danger of philosophical Nihilism in the wake of the loss of religion
Group VI: Imagining female desire, misogyny
Group VIII: Male Desire, the Male Body, and the Individual
Group VII: Misogynistic representations of the female body
Miscellany: Not a new category, but rather poems that touch several of the other groups

Why We're Reading Them and What You Should Attend to

We're reading these poems for several reasons, some of which I've outlined above, and others of which can be inferred from the outline of topics I've provided you. But a more significant question might be why *you* are reading these poems, and what you should do with them. The poems by Rochester and the poems next week by Swift form a unit for us, a unit that represents the body in the age of reason. We don't intend to avoid Rochester's misogyny in its depiction of the body, but instead we want to trace the ways that this misogyny plays out over the themes of his poetry. We'll keep this dynamic in mind when reading Swift's poems because we hope to contrast Swift's poetry with Rochester's. Specifically, while both contain some frank and vulgar depictions of the body, and especially the female body, we think there are significant differences that can only be arrived at after reading the two bodies of literature against each other.

We'll trace out some of the points of this comparison, and we'll try to bring in some criticism that will help you to imagine this theoretical and critical comparison a bit more clearly. Even if this topic is of no interest to you, you should be attentive to its importance—for science, medicine, philosophy, as well as culture, politics, and literature.

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Group I

The Advice

All things submit themselves to your command,
Fair Celia, when it does not Love withstand ;
The power it borrows from your eyes alone,
All but the god must yield to, who has none;
Were he not blind, such are the charms you have,
He'd quit his godhead to become your slave,
Be proud to act a mortal hero's part,
And throw himself for fame on his own dart.
But Fate has otherwise disposed of things,
In different bonds subjecting slaves and kings ;
Fettered in forms of royal state are they,
While we enjoy the freedom to obey.
That Fate (like you resistless) does ordain
That Love alone should over beauty reign.
By harmony the universe does move,
And what is harmony, but mutual love ?
See gentle brooks, how quietly they glide,
Kissing the rugged banks on either side,
Whilst in their crystal streams at once they show,
And with them feed the flowers which they bestow ;
Though pressed upon by their too rude embrace,
In gentle murmurs they keep on their pace
To their loved sea; for even streams have desires :
Cool as they are, they feel Love's powerful fires ;
And with such passion, that if any force
Stop or molest 'em in their amorous course,
They swell with rage, break down, and ravage o'er
The banks they kissed, the flowers they fed before.
Who would resist an empire so divine,
Which Universal Nature does enjoin ?
Submit then, Celia, ere you be reduced ;
For rebels vanquished once are vilely used.
And such are you, whene'er you dare obey
Another passion, and your love betray.
You are Love's citadel, by you he reigns,
And his proud empire o'er the world maintains ;
He trusts you with his stratagems and arms,
His frowns, his smiles, and all his conquering charms.
Beauty's no more but the dead soil which Love
Manures, and does by wise commerce improve ;
Sailing by sighs through seas of tears, he sends
Courtship from foreign hearts ;for your own ends,
Cherish the trade ;for as with Indians we
Get gold and jewels for our trumpery,
So to each other for their useless toys
Lovers afford whole magazines of joys :
But if you're fond of baubles, be, and starve,
Your geegaw reputation preserve ;
Live upon modesty and empty fame,
Forgoing sense, for a fantastic name.

The Fall

How blessed was the created state
Of Man and Woman, ere they fell,
Compared to our unhappy state !
We need not fear another hell :

Naked beneath cool shades they lay,
Enjoyment waited on desire ;
Each member did their wills obey :
Nor could a wish set pleasure higher.

But we, poor slaves to hope and fear,
Are never of our joys secure :
They lessen still, as they draw near,
And none but dull delights endure.

Then, Cloris, while I duty pay,
The nobler tribute of a heart ;
Be not you so severe to say
You love me for a frailer part.

Woman's Honour

Love bade me hope, and I obeyed,
Phyllis continued still unkind,
'Then you may e'en despair,' he said,
'In vain I strive to change her mind.

'Honour's got in, and keeps her heart;
Durst he but venture once abroad
In my own right I'd take your part,
And show myself the mightier god.'

This huffing Honour domineers
In breasts alone where he has place ;
But if true generous Love appears,
The hector dares not show his face.

Let me still languish and complain,
Be most unhumanly denied,
I have some pleasure in my pain,
She can have none with all her pride.

I fall a sacrifice to Love ;
She lives a wretch for Honour's sake ;
Whose tyrant does most cruel prove,
The difference is not hard to make.

Consider real honour then,
You'll find hers cannot be the same,
'Tis noble confidence in men,
In women, mean mistrustful shame.

Group IX

Verses for which he was Banished

In the Isle of Britain long since famous grown
For breeding the best cunts in all Christendom,
There now does live -ah, let him long survive -
The easiest king and the best bred man alive.
Him no ambition moves to get renown,
Like the French fool who wanders up and down
Starving his soldiers, hazarding his crown.
Peace is his aim, his gentleness is such,
And love he loves, for he loves fucking much.
Nor are his high desires above his strength,
His sceptre and his prick are of an equal length,
And she that plays with one may play with t'other,
And make him little wiser than his brother.
The pricks of kings are like buffoons at Court :
We let them rule because they make us sport.
He is the sauciest that e'er did swive,
The proudest peremptoriest prick alive.
Whate'er religion or his laws say on't,
He'd break through all to come at any cunt.
Restless he rolls about from whore to whore
A merry monarch, scandalous and poor.
'Oh dearest Carwell, dearest of all dears,
The best relief of my declining years,
Oh how I mourn thy fortune and thy fate,
To love so well and be beloved so late !'
Yet still his graceless bollocks hung an arse :
Nothing could serve his disobedient tarse.
This to evince were too long to tell ye
The painful chops of his laborious Nelly,
Hands, fingers, arms, mouth, cunt, and thighs,
To raise the limb which she each night enjoys.
I hate all monarchs with the thrones they sit on,
From the hector of France to the cully of Britain.

Pindaric

Let ancients boast no more,
Their lewd imperial whore,
Whose everlasting lust
Survived her body's Latest thrust ;
And when that transitory dust
Had no more vigour left in store,
Was still as fresh and active as before.

Her glory must give place,
To one of modern British race ;
Whose every daily act exceeds
The other's most transcendent deeds :
She has at length made good,
That there is human flesh and blood
Ever able to outdo
All that their loosest wishes prompt 'em to.

When she has jaded quite
Her almost boundless appetite,
Cloyed with the choicest banquets of delight,
She'll still drudge on in tasteless vice,
(As if she sinned for exercise)
Disabling stoutest stallions every hour,
And when they can perform no more,
She'll rail at 'em, and kick them out of door.

Monmouth and Cavendish droop
As first did Henningham and Scroope ;
Nay scabby Ned looks thin and pale,
And sturdy Frank himself begins to fail ;
But woe betide him if he does,
She'll set her Jockey on his toes
And he shall end the quarrel without blows.

Now tell me all ye powers,
Whoe'er could equal this lewd dame of ours ?
Lays herself must yield,
And vanquished Julia quit the field ;
Nor can the princess, one day famed
As Wonder of the Earth
For Minataur's glorious birth,
With admiration any more be named.
These puny heroines of history
Eclipsed by her shall all forgotten be
Whilst her great name confronts Eternity.

Signior Dildo

You ladies all of Merry England
Who have been to kiss the Duchess's hand,
Say did you lately observe in the show
A noble Italian called Signior Dildo ?

The Signior was one of her Highness's train
And helped to conduct her over the main,
But now she cries out, 'To the Duke I will go,
I have no more need for Signior Dildo.'

At the Sign of the Cross in St James's Street,
When next you go thither to make yourselves sweet,
By buying of powder, gloves, essence, or so,
You may chance get a sight of Signior Dildo.

You'll take him at first for no person of note
Because he appears in a plain leather coat :
But when you his virtuous abilities know
You'll fall down and worship Signior Dildo.

My Lady Southeske, heaven prosper her for't,
First clothed him in satin, and brought him to Court ;
But his head in the circle he scarcely durst show,
So modest a youth was Signior Dildo.

The good Lady Suffolk, thinking no harm,
Had got this poor stranger hid under her arm :
Lady Betty by chance came the secret to know,
And from her own mother stole Signior Dildo.

The Countess of Falmouth, of whom people tell
Her footmen wear shirts of a guinea an ell,
Might save the expense if she but did know
How lusty a swinger is Signior Dildo.

By the help of this gallant, the Countess of Ralph
Against the fierce Harris preserved herself safe :
She stifled him almost beneath her pillow,
So closely she embraced Signior Dildo.

Our dainty fine Duchesses have got a trick
To dote on a fool for the sake of his prick ;
The fops were undone did their Graces know
The discretion and vigour of Signior Dildo.

That pattern of virtue her Grace of Cleveland
Has swallowed more pricks than the ocean has sand ;
But by rubbing and scrubbing so large it does grow,
It is fit for just nothing but Signior Dildo.

The Duchess of Modena, though she looks high,
With such a gallant is contented to lie :
And for fear the English her secrets should know,
For a gentleman-usher took Signior Dildo.

The Countess of the cockpit (who knows not her name ?),
She's famous in story for a killing dame,
When all her old lovers forsake her, I trow
She'll then be contented with Signior Dildo.

Red Howard, Red Sheldon, and Temple so tall
Complain of his absence so long from Whitehall :
Signior Barnard has promised a journey to go,
And bring back his countryman Signior Dildo.

Doll Howard no longer with his Highness must range,
And therefore is proffered this civil exchange :
Her teeth being rotten, she smells best below,
And needs must be fitted for Signior Dildo.

St Albans with wrinkles and smiles in his face,
Whose kindness to strangers becomes his high place,
In his coach and six horses is gone to Pergo,
To take the fresh air with Signior Dildo.

Were this Signior but known to the citizen fops,
He'd keep their fine wives from the foremen of their shops,
But the rascals deserve their horns should still grow,
For burning the Pope, and his nephew Dildo.

Tom Killigrew's wife, North Holland's fine flower,
At the sight of this signior did fart and belch sour ;
And her Dutch breeding farther to show,
Says, 'Welcome to England, Myn Heer Van Dildo.'

He civilly came to the Cockpit one night,
And proffered his service to fair Madam Knight,
Quoth she, 'I intrigue with Captain Cazzo,
Your nose in mine arse, good Signior Dildo.'

This signior is sound, safe, ready, and dumb,
As ever was candle, carrot, or thumb ;
Then away with these nasty devices and show
How you rate the just merits of Signior Dildo.

Count Cazzo, who carries his nose very high,
In passion did swear that his rival should die ;
Then shut himself up, to let the world know,
Flesh and blood could not bear it from Signior Dildo.

A rabble of pricks who were welcome before,
Now finding the porter denied 'em the door,
Maliciously waited his coming below,
And inhumanely fell on Signior Dildo.

Nigh wearied out the poor stranger did fly,
And along the Pall Mall, they followed full cry,
The women concerned from every window,
Cried, 'Oh for heaven's sake save Signior Dildo !'

The good Lady Sandys burst into a laughter,
To see how the bollocks came wobbling after,
And had not their weight retarded the foe
It had gone hard with Signior Dildo.

Oh what damned age do we live in

Oh what damned age do we live in
Since there is no Christian soul
But old Father Patrick and Griffin
Dare put their pricks in the right hole.

Oh why do we keep such a bustle
'Bout putting a prick in an arse,
Since Harvey's long-cunted muscle
Serves Stuart instead of a tarse.

Since fucking is not as ‘twas wont
The ladies have got a new trick:
As an arsehole serves for a cunt,
So a clitoris serves for a prick.

Besides, the damned tailors of France
To Great Britain’s defamation,
Have made better pintles by chance
Than the gods of the English Nation.

But now there’s nothing will do,
Their cunts are grown so wide,
Except with a French leather dildo
They get on each other and ride.

Group V

Upon Nothing

Nothing, thou Elder Brother even to Shade,
Thou had'st a being ere the world was made,
And (well-fixed) art alone of ending not afraid.

Ere Time and Place were, Time and Place were not,
When Primitive Nothing something straight begot,
Then all proceeded from the great united -what ?

Something, the general attribute of all,
Severed from thee, its sole original,
Into thy boundless self must undistinguished fall.

Yet something did thy mighty power command,
And from thy fruitful emptiness's hand
Snatched men, beasts, birds, fire, water, air, and land.

Matter, the wickedest offspring of thy race,
By Form assisted, flew from thy embrace,
And rebel light obscured thy reverend dusky face.

With Form and Matter, Time and Place did join,
Body, thy foe, with these did leagues combine,
To spoil thy peaceful realm and ruin all thy line.

But turncoat Time assists the foe in vain,
And bribed by thee, destroys their short-lived reign,
And to thy hungry womb drive back thy slaves again.

Though mysteries are barred from laic eyes, .
And the Divine alone with warrant pries
Into thy bosom, where thy truth in private lies,

Yet this of thee the wise may truly say :
Thou from the virtuous, nothing dost delay,
And to be part of thee, the wicked wisely pray.

Great Negative, how vainly would the wise
Enquire, define, distinguish, teach, devise,
Didst thou not stand to point their blind philosophies.

Is or Is Not, the two great ends of fate,
And true or false, the subject of debate
That perfect or destroy the vast designs of State -

When they have racked the politician's breast,
Within thy bosom most securely rest,
And when reduced to thee are least unsafe and blessed.

But (Nothing) why does Something still permit
That Sacred Monarchs should at Council sit
With persons highly thought, at best for nothing fit,

While weighty Something modestly abstains
From Princes' coffers and from Statesmen's brains,
And nothing there like stately nothing reigns ?

Nothing, who dwells with fools in grave disguise,
For whom they reverend shapes and forms devise,
Lawn-sleeves and furs and gowns, when they like thee look wise:

French Truth, Dutch Prowess, British Policy,
Hibernian Learning, Scotch Civility,
Spaniards' Dispatch, Danes' Wit, are mainly seen in thee ;

The great man's gratitude to his best friend,
Kings' promises, whores' vows, towards thee they bend,
Flow swiftly into thee, and in thee ever end.

Addition

All this with indignation have I hurled
At the pretending part of the proud world,
Who, swollen with selfish vanity, devise,
False freedoms, holy cheats, and formal lies,
Over their fellow-slaves to tyrannise.
But if in Court so just a man there be,
(In Court, a just man -yet unknown to me)
Who does his needful flattery direct
Not to oppress and ruin, but protect ;
Since flattery, which way soever laid,
Is still a tax on that unhappy trade.
If so upright a statesman you can find,
Whose passions bend to his unbiased mind,
Who does his arts and policies apply
To raise his country, not his family ;
Nor while his pride owned avarice withstands,
Receives close bribes, from friends corrupted hands.
Is there a churchman who on God relies ?
Whose life, his faith and doctrine justifies ?
Not one blown up, with vain prelatic pride,
Who for reproofs of sins does man deride ;
Whose envious heart makes preaching a pretence
With his obstreperous, saucy eloquence,
To chide at kings, and rail at men of sense ;
Who from his pulpit vents more peevish lies,
More bitter railings, scandals, calumnies,
Than at a gossiping are thrown about
When the good wives get drunk, and then fall out.
None of that sensual tribe, whose talents lie
In avarice, pride, sloth, and gluttony.

Who hunt good livings, but abhor good lives,
Whose lust exalted, to that height arrives,
They act adultery with their own wives.
And ere a score of years completed be,
Can from the loftiest pulpit proudly see,
Half a large parish their own progeny.
Nor doting bishop, who would be adored
For domineering at the Council board ;
A greater fop, in business at fourscore,
Fonder of serious toys, affected more,
Than the gay, glittering fool at twenty proves,
With all his noise, his tawdry clothes and loves.
But a meek, humble man, of honest sense,
Who preaching peace does practise continence ;
Whose pious life's a proof he does believe
Mysterious truths which no man can conceive.
If upon Earth there dwell such god-like men,
I'll here recant my paradox to them,
Adores those shrines of virtue, homage pay,
And with the rabble world their laws obey.
If such there are, yet grant me this at least,
Man differs more from man than man from beast.

From Seneca's Troades

After death nothing is, and nothing, death ;
The utmost limit of a gasp of breath.
Let the ambitious zealot lay aside
His hopes of heaven, whose faith is but his pride ;
Let slavish souls lay by their fear,
Nor be concerned which way nor where
After this life they shall be hurled.
Dead we become the lumber of the world,
And to that mass of matter shall be swept
Where things destroyed with things unborn are kept.
Devouring time swallows us whole ;
Impartial death confounds body and soul.
For Hell and the foul fiend that rules
God's everlasting fiery jails
(Devised by rogues, dreaded by fools).
With his grim, grisly dog that keeps the door,
Are senseless stories, idle tales.
Dreams, whimseys, and no more.

Love and life

All my past life is mine no more,
The flying hours are gone,
Like transitory dreams given o'er,
Whose images are kept in store
By memory alone.

What ever is to come is not,
How can it then be mine ?
The present moment's all my lot,
And that as fast as it is got,
Phyllis, is wholly thine.

Then talk not of inconstancy,
False hearts, and broken vows,
If I, my miracle, can be,
This live-long minute true to thee,
'Tis all that heaven allows.

After Malherbe
Verses put into a lady's prayer-book

Fling this useless book away,
And presume no more to pray :
Heaven is just, and can bestow
Mercy on none but those that mercy show.
With a proud heart maliciously inclined,
Not to increase, but to subdue mankind,
In vain you vex the gods with your petition;
Without repentance and sincere contrition,
You're in a reprobate condition.
Phyllis, to calm the angry powers,
And save my soul as well as yours,
Relieve poor mortals from despair,
And justify the gods that made you fair :
And in those bright and charming eyes
Let pity first appear, then love ;
That we by easy steps may rise
Through all the joys on earth to those above.

On Rome's Pardons

If Rome can pardon sin, as Romans hold,
And if those pardons can be bought and sold,
It were no sin t'adore, and worship gold.

If they can purchase pardons with a sum,
For sins they may commit in time to come,
And for sins past, 'tis very well for Rome.

At this rate they are happiest that have most,
They'll purchase heaven at their own proper cost,
Alas the poor !All that are so are lost.

Whence came this knack, or whence did it begin ?
What author have they, or who brought it in ?
Did Christ e'er keep a custom-house for sin ?

Some subtle devil, without more ado,
Did certainly this sly invention brew,
To gull 'em of their souls and money too.

Group VI

As Cloris full of harmless thought

As Cloris full of harmless thought
Beneath the willows lay,
Kind love a comely shepherd brought
To pass the time away.
She blushed to be encountered so,
And chid the amorous swain ;
But as she strove to rise and go
He pulled her down again.

A sudden passion seized her heart
In spite of her disdain,
She found a pulse in every part
And love in every vein :
'Ah youth,' quoth she, 'what charms are these
That conquer and surprise ?
Ah let me, for unless you please,
I have no power to rise.'

She faintly spoke, and trembling lay,
For fear he should comply,
But virgins' eyes their hearts betray,
And give their tongues the lie ;
Thus she who princes had denied,
With all their pompous train,
Was in the lucky minute tried
And yielded to a swain.

Fair Cloris in a pigsty lay

Fair Cloris in a pigsty lay,
Her tender herd lay by her.
She slept; in murmuring gruntlings they,
Complaining of the scorching day,
Her slumbers thus inspire.

She dreamed while she with careful pains
Her snowy arms employed
In ivory pails to fill out grains
One of her love-convicted swains
Thus hasting to her, cried.

'Fly nymph, oh fly, ere 'tis too late
A dear-loved life to save,
Rescue your bosom pig from Fate
Who now expires, hung in the gate
That leads to Flora's cave.

'Myself had tried to set him free
Rather than brought the news
But I am so abhorred by thee
That even thy darling's life from me
I know thou wouldst refuse.'

Struck with the news as quick she flies
As blushes to her face
Not the bright lightning from the skies
Nor love shot from her brighter eyes
Move half so swift a pace.

This plot it seems the lustful slave
Had laid against her honour,
Which not one god took care to save,
For he pursues her to the cave
And throws himself upon her.
Now pierced is her virgin zone
She feels the foe within it,
She hears a broken amorous groan,
The panting lover's fainting moan
Just in the happy minute.

Frighted she wakes, and waking frigs.
Nature thus kindly eased.
In dreams raised by her murmuring pigs,
And by her own thumb between her legs,
She's innocent and pleased.

To a lady in a letter

Such perfect bliss, fair Cloris, we
In our enjoyment prove,
'Tis pity restless jealousy
Should mingle with our love.

Let us (since wit has taught us how)
Raise pleasure to the top :
You rival bottle must allow,
I'll suffer rival fop.

Think not in this that I design
Treason against Love's charms,
When following the god of wine
I leave my Cloris' arms.

Since you have that, for all your haste,
At which I'll ne'er repine,
Will take his liquor off as fast
As I can take off mine.

There's not a brisk insipid spark
That flutters in the town
But with your wanton eyes you mark
Him out to be your own.

Nor do you think it worth your care
How empty and how dull
The heads of your admirers are -
So that their cods be full.

All this you freely may confess,
Yet we'd ne'er disagree,
For did you love your pleasure less
You were no match for me.

Whilst I my pleasure to pursue
Whole nights am taking in
The lusty juice of grapes, take you
The juice of lusty men.

Group VIII

The Imperfect Enjoyment

Naked she lay, clasped in my longing arms,
I filled with love, and she all over charms,
Both equally inspired with eager fire,
Melting through kindness, flaming in desire :
With arms, legs, lips, close clinging to embrace,
She clips me to her breast, and sucks me to her face.
The nimble tongue (love's lesser lightning) played
Within my mouth, and to my thoughts conveyed
Swift orders, that I should prepare to throw
The all-dissolving thunderbolt below.
My fluttering soul, sprung with the pointed kiss,
Hangs hovering o'er her balmy brinks of bliss.
But whilst her busy hand would guide that part,
Which should convey my soul up to her heart,
In liquid raptures I dissolve all o'er,
Melt into sperm, and spend at every pore :
A touch from any part of her had done't,
Her hand, her foot, her very look's a cunt.
Smiling, she chides in a kind murmuring noise,
And from her body wipes the clammy joys ;
When with a thousand kisses, wand'ring o'er
My panting bosom, and 'Is there then no more ?'
She cries. 'All this to love and rapture's due ;
Must we not pay a debt to pleasure too ?'
But I, the most forlorn, lost man alive,
To show my wished obedience vainly strive.
I sigh, alas !and kiss, but cannot swive.
Eager desires confound my first intent,
Succeeding shame does more success prevent,
And rage, at last, confirms me impotent.
Even her fair hand, which might bid heat return
To frozen age, and make cold hermits burn,
Applied to my dead cinder, warms no more,
Than fire to ashes could past flames restore,
Trembling, confused, limber, dry,
A wishing, weak, unmoving lump I lie.
This dart of love, whose piercing point oft tried
With virgin blood, ten thousand maids has dyed ;
Which Nature still directed with such art,
That it through every cunt reached every heart.
Stiffly resolved, 'twould carelessly invade
Woman or man, nor aught its fury stayed,
Where'er it pierced, a cunt it found, or made.
Now languid lies, in this unhappy hour,
Shrunk up, and sapless, like a withered flower.
Thou treacherous, base deserter of my flame,
False to my passion, fatal to my fame ;
Through what mistaken magic does thou prove
So true to lewdness, so untrue to love ?
What oyster, cinder, beggar, common whore,
Didst thou ere fail in all thy life before ?
When vice, disease and scandal lead the way,
With what officious haste dost thou obey ?
Like a rude roaring hector, in the streets,
That scuffles, cuffs, and ruffles all he meets ;
But if his king and country claim his aid,
The rakehell villain shrinks, and hides his head :
Even so thy brutal valour is displayed ;
Breaks every stew, does each small whore invade.
But when great Love the onset does command,
Base recreant to thy prince, thou darest not stand.
Worst part of me, and henceforth hated most
Through all the town: a common fucking-post,
On whom each whore relieves her tingling cunt,
As hogs on goats do rub themselves and grunt
May'st thou to ravenous cankers be a prey,
Or in consuming weepings waste away.
May strangury and stone thy days attend,
May'st thou ne'er piss, who did refuse to spend,
When all my joys did on false thee depend.
And may ten thousand abler pricks agree
To do the wronged Corinna right for thee.

On his Prick

Base mettle hanger by thy master's thigh,
Shame and disgrace to all prick heraldry,
Hide thy despised head and do not dare
To peep, no not so much as take the air
But through a buttonhole, but pine and die,
Confined within thy codpiece monastery.
The little childish boy that scarcely knows
The channel through which his water flows,
Touched by mistress's most magnetic hand
His little needle presently will stand,
And turn to her; but thou, in spite of that,
As oft cocks flopping like an old wife's hat.
Did she not take you in her ivory hand ?
Doubtless stroked thee, yet thou would not stand ?
Did she not raise thy drooping head on high
As it lay nodding on her wanton thigh ?
Did she not clasp her legs about thy back,
Her porthole open ? Prick, what didst thou lack ?
Henceforth stand stiff, regain thy credit lost,
Or I'll ne'er draw thee but against a post.

A Curse on his Pintle

Bless me ye stars !For sure some sad portent
Is threatened to me by this sad event
I had a girl, fair well-attired and sweet,
Merry and buxom, for embraces meet.
At my request she laid herself down low,
Her legs stretched wide, her ant to me did show,
In full proportion, pretty mumping thing,
A companion and play-fellow for a king.
Then credit me, for true is my report,
It prettily mouthed and mewed to have me sport.
But yet my base, my base unworthy prick
(Base I must term it, for so base a trick)
Lay in despite of me as one stark dead.
I could by no means make him raise his head.
I kissed, I toyed, I clasped her cheeks and tail,
And fingered too, yet I could not prevail.
Yea, though she took it in her warm moist hand
And crammed it in, dull dog, it would not stand.

Group VII

By all love's soft, yet mighty powers

By all love's soft, yet mighty powers,
It is a thing unfit,
That men should fuck in time of flowers,
Or when the smock's beshit.

Fair nasty nymph, be clean and kind,
And all my joys restore ;
By using paper still behind,
And sponges for before.

My spotless flames can ne'er decay,
If after every close,
My smoking prick escape the fray,
Without a bloody nose.

If thou would have me true, be wise,
And take to cleanly sinning,
None but fresh lovers' pricks can rise,
At Phyllis in foul linen.

On Mistress Willis

Against the charms our bollocks have
How weak all human skill is !
Since they can make a man a slave
To such a bitch as Willis.

Whom that I may describe throughout,
Assist me bawdy powers :
I'll write upon a double clout,
And dip my pen in flowers.

Her look's demurely impudent,
Ungainly beautiful,
Her modesty is insolent,
Her mirth is pert and dull.

A prostitute of all the town,
And yet with no man friends,
She rails and scolds when she lies down,
And curses when she spends.

Bawdy in thoughts, precise in words,
Ill-natured, and a whore,
Her belly is a bag of turds,
And her cunt's a common shore.

Love a woman !Y'are an ass !

Love a woman !Y'are an ass !
'Tis a most insipid passion
To choose out for your happiness
The idlest part of God's creation.

Let the porter and the groom,
Things designed for dirty slaves,
Drudge in fair Aurelia's womb,
To get supplies for age, and graves.

Farewell woman, I intend,
Henceforth every night to sit,
With my lewd well-natured friend,
Drinking to engender wit.

Then give me health, wealth, mirth, and wine,
And if busy love entrenches,
There's a sweet soft page, of mine,
Does the trick worth forty wenches.

The Mock Song
I swive as well as others do,
I'm young, not yet deformed,
My tender heart, sincere and true,
Deserves not to be scorned.
Why Phyllis then, why will you swive
With forty lovers more ?
Can I (said she) with nature strive,
Alas I am, alas I am a whore.

Were all my body larded o'er,
With darts of love, so thick,
That you might find in every pore,
A well-stuck, standing prick :
Whilst yet my eyes alone were free,
My heart would never doubt,
In amorous rage, and ecstasy,
To wish those eyes, to wish those eyes fucked out.

Group Miscellany

To all curious critics and admirers of metre

Have you seen the raging stormy main
Toss a ship up, then cast her down again ?
Sometimes she seems to touch the very skies,
And then again upon the sand she lies.
Or have you seen a bull, when he is jealous,
How he does tear the ground, and roars and bellows ?
Or have you seen the pretty turtle-dove,
When she laments the absence of her love ?
Or have you seen the fairies, when they sing
And dance with mirth together in a ring ?
Or have you seen our gallants make a pudder,
With Fair and Grace, and Grace and Fair Anne Strudder ?
Or have you seen the daughters of Apollo
Pour down their rhyming liquors in a hollow cane ?
In spongy brain, congealing into verse ?
If you have seen all this - then kiss mine arse.

On the supposed author of a late Poem '*In Defence of Satire*'

To rack and torture thy unmeaning brain
In satire's praise, to a low, untuned strain,
In thee was most impertinent and vain :
When in thy person we more clearly see
That satire's of divine authority,
For God made one on man when he made thee .
To show there are some men, as there are apes,
Framed for mere sport, who differ but in shapes :
In thee are all those contradictions joined
That make an ass, prodigious and refined.
A lump deformed and shapeless wert thou born,
Begot in Love's despite, and Nature's scorn ;
And art grown up the most ungraceful wight,
Harsh to the ear, and hideous to the sight,
Yet Love's thy business, Beauty thy delight.
Curse on that silly hour that first inspired
Thy madness, to pretend to be admired ;
To paint thy grizzly face, to dance, to dress,
And all those awkward follies that express
Thy loathsome love, and filthy daintiness.
Who needs will be an ugly beau-garcon,
Spit at and shunned by every girl in town ;
Where dreadfully love's scarecrow thou art placed
To fright the tender flock that long to taste ;
While every coming maid, when you appear,
Starts back for shame, and straight turns chaste for fear.
For none so poor or prostitute have proved,
Where you made love, t'endure to be beloved.
'Twere labour lost, or else I would advise.
But thy half-wit will ne'er let thee be wise.
Half-witty and half-mad, and scarce half-brave,
Half-honest (which is very much a knave).
Made up of all these halves, thou canst not pass
For anything entirely, but an ass.

Regime de Vivre

I rise at eleven, I dine about two,
I get drunk before seven, and the next thing I do,
I send for my whore, when for fear of a clap,
I spend in her hand, and I spew in her lap ;
Then we quarrel and scold, till I fall fast asleep,
When the bitch growing bold, to my pocket does creep.
Then slyly she leaves me, and to revenge the affront,
At once she bereaves me of money and cunt.
If by chance then I wake, hot-headed and drunk,
What a coil do I make for the loss of my punk !
I storm, and I roar, and I fall in a rage.
And missing my whore, I bugger my page.
Then crop-sick all morning I rail at my men,
And in bed I lie yawning till eleven again.

At last you'll force me to confess

At last you'll force me to confess
You need no arts to vanquish :
Such charms from nature you possess,
'Twere dullness not to languish ;
Yet spare a heart you may surprise,
And give my tongue the glory
To scorn, while my unfaithful eyes
Betray another story.