

British Music and the French Revolution

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By

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P U B L I S H I N G

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To Tom Gordon,
an outstanding leader.

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PROLOGUE

This study examines British musical and theatrical reactions to political events in France between 1789 and 1795, a time when republican and royalist political agendas were in conflict in both countries. The reactions of British poets and musicians open a window on the French Revolution as well as the social and political reactions to it in Britain. Rarely has the relationship between society, politics and the performing arts been closer. The period of 1789-95 is especially fascinating for study, given the richness of the artistic expression from British authors and musicians who reflected upon the cataclysmic events unfolding in France from a distance. Surprisingly, British music about the French Revolution and the subsequent war with France has been little studied.

During the eighteenth century, the nature of cultural relations between France and England undertook a complete about-face. During the late years of the seventeenth century, French fashions and musical traditions were much respected in Britain. The greater knowledge and availability of Italian music at the end of the century, coupled with the increasingly eroded political relationship between France and Britain, eventually led to a disdain of French music. Highly ornamental French fashion, however, was still favoured by the British aristocracy, thus leading to fears from the lower classes that “Continental contamination” would weaken those in the highest offices. French fashions and French arts became convenient metaphors for the growing sense of general distrust of the French nation, with French dancing masters, hairdressers and fiddlers being much maligned. These fears were already well established by mid-century and were articulated by Tobias Smollett in *Travels Through France and Italy* (1766).¹ The French aristocracy are portrayed as unscrupulous and preying upon unwary Englishmen: “I have known a French count and his wife,

¹ Tobias Smollett, *Travels Through France and Italy . . . With a particular description of the town, territory, and climate of Nice: to which is added a register of the weather, kept during a residence of eighteen months in that city*, 2 vols (Dublin: J. Hoey, Sen. etc., 1766), I: 71-86. Smollett’s work was reprinted in 1772 and again in 1778. I am indebted to Frank Felsenstein for pointing out Smollett’s account to me.

who found means to lay the most wary under contribution. He was smooth, supple, officious, and attentive; she was young, handsome, unprincipled, and artful.” Smollett warned his readers about permitting a French man into an English family, stating that he would attempt to seduce the wife, sister or daughter, and “find means to ruin the peace of a family, in which he has been so kindly entertained.” Smollett’s vision of French men is not that of gallant philanderers whose youthful charisma and daring exploits command a certain respect, but that of insidious, quasi-feminine and untrustworthy creatures:

Woman has been defined a weaker man; but in this country the men are, in my opinion, more ridiculous and insignificant than the women. They certainly are more disagreeable to a rational enquirer, because they are more troublesome. Of all the coxcombs on the face of the earth, a French *petit maitre* is the most impertinent; and they are all *petit maitres*, from the marquis who glitters in lace and embroidery, to the *garçon barbier* covered with meal, who struts with his hair in a long queue, and his hat under his arm. I have already observed, that vanity is the great and universal mover among all ranks and degrees of people in this nation; and as they take no pains to conceal or controul it, they are hurried by it into the most ridiculous and intolerable extravagance.

For Smollett, the art of music increased the dangerous appeal of a French man: “if he learn to play upon the flute or the fiddle, he is altogether irresistible.”

This paranoia over the attractions of French culture to effeminize and weaken the male sex continued throughout the remainder of the century. It was very close to the surface during the last decade of the century, especially in Edmund Burke’s 1791 reply to French criticisms concerning his earlier *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). Burke feared that the National Assembly of France was particularly vulnerable because its non-aristocratic membership was prone to the unsavoury influences of “shameless women of the lowest condition, by keepers of hotels, taverns and brothels, by pert apprentices, by clerks, shop-boys, hair-dressers, fiddlers, and dancers on the stage.”²

The fact that Britain was socially and politically divided throughout most of the century encouraged a growing paranoia about the influence of

² *A Letter from Mr. Burke to a Member of the National Assembly . . .* (London: J. Dodsley, 1791), 3. I am indebted to William Levine and David Mazella for this reference.

French culture on the traditional leaders of Britain. The Whig and Tory agendas were widely disparate, and the rise of the politics of Opposition in mid-century Britain revealed the degree to which a large segment of society was distanced from the court and the house of Hanover. There are many indicators that illuminate these deeply seated divisions in the nation, but of particular interest to the present study are the polarities of the London newspapers categorized by Lucyle Werkmeister as the Ministerial Press and the Opposition Press. By 1792, there were fourteen London daily newspapers struggling for survival. Seven of these were pro-government: the *Diary*, the *Morning Herald*, the *Oracle*, the *Public Advertiser*, the *Public Ledger*, the *World*, and the *Times*. In particular, the *Times* was widely believed to be the mouthpiece of the Prime Minister, William Pitt, and several other papers received subsidies from the Treasury. Of the remaining daily newspapers, only the *Daily Advertiser* was non-political, leaving the *Argus*, the *Cabinet*, the *Gazetteer*, the *Morning Chronicle*, the *Morning Post*, and the *Star* to support the Opposition.³ As will be demonstrated, these polarities had an impact on the ways which new theatrical works were reviewed and the ways in which audiences were instructed on how they should view them.

Concerns over theatrical censorship increased during the eighteenth century. The government had taken control over what could be performed on the London stages as early as 1737 with the Theatre Licensing Act, and further restrictions were imposed in 1752. Topical or political works were forbidden by the Lord Chamberlain in whose office an official censor decided the fate of all theatrical scripts intended for the patent or royal theatres. The so-called minor or summer theatres (such as Sadler's Wells, and the two hippodromes run respectively by Philip Astley and Charles Hughes) were not required to submit scripts to the censor as long as any dialogue was sung. As a result, the summer theatres managed to present entertainments of topical and political interest, while the patent theatres were powerless to provide similar social or political commentary in their offerings. The rise in importance of the summer theatres where topical works relating to the French Revolution could be presented becomes an important aspect of this study.

While the parallel demands for social and political change in France and Britain resulted from different stimuli, and were resolved very

³ Lucyle Werkmeister, *A Newspaper History of England: 1792-93* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1967), 19-31.

differently, the final decade of the century proved to be a defining period for each country. France embarked upon a bloody path to a Republic, while Britain became entrenched in Conservative politics and ideology. Artistic Opposition expression in Britain was pushed underground when the war with France gave rise to a political and artistic climate in which patriotic responses were considered to be more important than the quality of the art that conveyed the message. George Taylor writes that patriotism became divorced from actual political matters, to become an abstract virtue in support of the symbolic images of King and country.⁴ This concept is especially important in the examination of music and theatre in the period.

In recent years the “Revolutionary” theatre in Britain has been examined in great detail by Gillian Russell in *The Theatres of War* (1995), Jane Moody, *Illegitimate Theatre in London, 1770-1840* (2000), and George Taylor in *The French Revolution and the London Stage, 1789-1805* (2000). Admirable as these books are, they do not examine the role that music played in the vast majority of these stage productions. This is a great loss when music was integral to the performance of most theatrical works dealing with the events in France. While this was especially true in the summer theatres, where all dramatic works were sung, music also played an integral part of productions in the patent theatres where some of the most talented composers and performers in the country were available for their productions. The success of these works often depended upon the composer’s ability to gauge popular tastes and balance the needs of music and drama. Given a composer’s ability to shape the pacing of dramatic events (especially in an all-sung work), a study of the music is integral to an understanding of these plays.

In addition to music for the stage, many vocal and instrumental pieces were composed that have been little studied. Many of the vocal pieces (songs, cantatas, glees etc., especially those composed by James Hook) saw their first performances in the summer pleasure garden of Vauxhall before transferring to the realms of home music-making. A sizeable number of instrumental works were also composed, with some publications even being released in full score for military band. Keyboard music, including sonatas and other extended compositions, enjoyed much popularity. Many of these works are descriptive in nature and exploit the

⁴ George Taylor, *The French Revolution and the London Stage, 1789-1805* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 158.

dynamic range of the fortepiano, an instrument which had all but replaced the harpsichord as the keyboard instrument of choice. Such was the public interest in the events in Paris, and so quick were musicians to respond to this interest, that it is possible to retell the chronological events of the years 1789-1795 in France through the theatrical and concert music of British composers. Vocal works, in particular, often provided both context and interpretation. The publication of Stephen Storace's *Captivity, A Ballad* [1793], goes so far as to give an explanatory note telling of the change in Marie Antoinette's hair colour prior to her death. Thus, the role of poet and musician was multifaceted, and their efforts served to disseminate information, provide interpretation of the events, and to stir appropriate emotional responses in the British public. The role of music performance in this capacity has been much underestimated, yet it had as great a potential for influence as did paintings, engravings or the printed word.

To examine this repertory in isolation would do little to reveal its latent powers as a social force. To provide the necessary context, I have provided two prefatory chapters. The first examines the history of British and French relations in the eighteenth century as revealed through British vocal music, as well as examining the powerful symbols of national identity which figure prominently therein. Music played an important part in most theatrical presentations, but especially in the performances of the minor theatres where all words had to be sung. Although the minor theatres were hindered in this way, they had a greater autonomy over the subjects that they could introduce on stage than did the patent theatres. The controversies that resulted between 1789 and 1793 as the various theatres fought to present topical theatre necessitate a separate chapter on the stages where Revolutionary drama was played. Thereafter, I present the materials in a chronological fashion, starting with the fall of the Bastille in 1789, and the Fête de la Fédération in 1790. The period of the *Captivity* was one of growing tension and fear in both France and Britain as war became an ever-increasing threat between the two nations. These events warrant their own chapter, followed by two chapters on the war years of 1793 until first half of 1795. My choice of a five-year period allows the reader to follow the events from the fall of the Bastille through to the rise of Napoléon. Sadly, not all of the music of the period has survived. Many of the popular songs are no longer extant, and often only portions of the theatrical scores can be reconstructed. Enough remains, however, to illustrate the changing musical styles heard in the theatres, and the ways that the performing arts were used to instil patriotic sentiments in

their audiences as the changing British reaction from general support for the revolutionary cause in France grew to one of dismay over the subsequent events.

I am indebted to many institutions and individuals in the writing of this study. In Europe, I was given great assistance in my research by the British Library, the London Theatre Museum Reading Room, the Islington Library and Cultural Services, (Islington Local History Centre), the Archives and Local History Centre of Hammersmith and Fulham, the University of Cambridge Library, the Bodleian Library of the University of Oxford, the Wighton Heritage Centre of the Dundee Public Library, and the libraries of the Royal College of Music and the Royal Academy of Music, both in London. In North America, the Interlibrary Loans Division of the Queen Elizabeth II Library at Memorial University performed Herculean feats in helping me to secure access to rare materials. I am further indebted to the Music Library of the University of Western Ontario, the Sibley Music Library of the University of Rochester and the Dundee Public Library for making copies of rare scores. The staff of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, assisted me in sifting through their large manuscript holdings. Dr. Ellen Moerman and Dr. Ian Sutherland kindly assisted in checking references in the British Library. Dr. Tiffany Potter, Dr. Bernice Schrank, and Leon Chisholm made valuable suggestions concerning aspects of the study. I am particularly indebted to Theresa Heath who served as reader for the entire manuscript, and Sharon Wall for her assistance with computing issues. Several web sites proved to be of great assistance, especially Eighteenth Century Collections Online, David Coke's "The Vauxhall Gardens," (<http://vauxhallgardens.com>), and the Borough of Lambeth Archives (<http://lambethlandmarks.com>).

Discussions of individual stage works have been preceded by a heading which lists the name of the work, date and location of the premiere, names of authors and composers and a publication history. It has been possible to provide the number of performances given for works presented in the various patent theatres during the eighteenth century by consulting *The London Stage*. For the minor theatres, I have attempted to give the length of the theatrical run based on newspaper advertisements. Given that there was a decrease in the amount of theatrical advertising during the war years, it is not always possible to calculate the exact number of performances a particular work received or even be completely sure when the final performance was given. Since so much of the

published music was read in the British Library, I have relied on that institution's dating of materials. Copies of libretti proved to be a different matter, and many of these have been reproduced in various formats. Beginning in the 1953, the Readex Co. began to issue material of this nature on micro-opaques. This material was re-released on microfiche by the company in the late 1980s. Subsequently, much of this material can be found in the web holdings of Eighteenth-Century Collections Online [ECCO]. In order to make bibliographic references concise, the following sigla have been utilized:

"Readex micro-opaque" refers to New York, New York: Readex Microprint, beginning in 1953 (Three Centuries of Drama: English, 1751-1800).

"Readex microfiche" refers to the series New Canaan, Connecticut: Readex, beginning in 1989 (Three Centuries of Drama: English, 1751-1800).

"Readex Larpent" refers to copies of the reproductions of the manuscript approval copies sent to John Larpent, the theatrical censor for the Office of the Lord Chamberlain. New Canaan, Connecticut: Readex, beginning in 1989 (Three Centuries of Drama: English, 1751-1800, Larpent Collection).

The web holdings of Eighteenth-Century Collections Online published by the Gale Group are referred to by ECCO and the Gale Document Number.

Finally, given the depth of the musical repertory discussed, and how little it is known today, I undertook to edit selected scores by Shaw, Storace, Attwood, Hook, Shield and Atterbury discussed in this book. This music has been recorded, and a CD recording called *Great Britain Triumphant!* will be released on Centaur Records. All are first recordings.

—Paul F. Rice
Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2010

CHAPTER ONE

ROSES AND LILIES, OXEN AND FROGS, KINGS AND QUEENS: THE POWER OF SYMBOLS

The French revolution, and the events involved in it, have awakened the attention of all Europe. It is impossible indeed, but that an object of such magnitude should excite universal regard. So vast an empire as France, whose importance in the rank of kingdoms, and whose general operations, have for the most part, uniformly regulated the systems of other European powers for many centuries past, in their dispositions to peace, or war; could not have been thrown into such mighty convulsions, without proportionally agitating neighbouring states. As it might well be expected therefore, the surrounding nations have felt the concussion, and been necessarily alarmed by the shock.¹

Thus begins Robert Hawker's appeal to the people of England in December of 1794, written just over five years after the fall of the Bastille, and less than a year after France's declaration of war on England. It accurately describes the impact of the overthrow of a system of government that had influenced the politics and policies of the whole of Europe for many years. Whether admired, or despised as in Britain, the French monarchy proved itself a power to be reckoned with throughout the century. That a home-grown, grassroots rebellion could have developed into a complete overturn of the French monarchy was a matter of wonder that resonated loudly in both private and public spheres in Britain. As Ronald Paulson notes, it was "unprecedented—hitherto unknown and unexpected."² The Revolution was discussed and debated, and its events became fodder for public culture. Quite apart from the French Revolution,

¹ Robert Hawker, *An Appeal to the People of England, on the Subject of the French Revolution* ([London]: 1794), [3]. Eighteenth Century Collections Online, Gale Document Number: CW3303822722, accessed on 1 May 2006.

² Ronald Paulson, *Representations of Revolution: 1789-1820* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 1.

there had been nearly a century of social and political discussion in Britain that reflected the uncomfortable relationship between the two countries. In general, the fear that a foreign culture could corrupt and diminish their strength became a recurring theme in eighteenth-century Britain. France was most often the target of such fears, although Spain and other Catholic countries were also treated as suspect. These concerns were often voiced in the texts of eighteenth-century vocal music. As such, this chapter will examine briefly the history of conflict between France and Britain, the fears that French culture had the power to weaken traditional British values, and popular British views of the French monarchy with reference to the arts (and music, in particular) of the century.

The French-English History of Conflict

H.M. Scott records that Britain was at war with France (and sometimes Spain) for over half of the time between 1688 and 1815.³ This resulted in an ever increasing suspicion of French cultural, political and religious institutions. England and Scotland shared common interests and concerns in these matters, in spite of their own long-standing political problems. Both countries viewed most of the European continent as dominated by tyranny and superstitious (Catholic) religion. Indeed, the Anglo-Scottish union which finally took place in mid-century was, in part, a response to the fear of French expansionism.⁴ A complete history of the political relationship between France and Britain exceeds the scope of this chapter; however, several significant disputes will be highlighted which fostered the growth of anti-French sentiments throughout the century.

Fearing a French expansion on the Iberian Peninsula, Britain joined the War of the Spanish Succession soon after Queen Anne took the British throne in 1702. Thereafter, England drove France out of Germany and the Netherlands, but peace was not restored between Britain and France until the Treaty of Utrecht was signed in 1713. Although alliances were established between France, England, Holland and Austria in 1717-18, the Anglo-Spanish War (1739-48) and War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) once again pitted England against France. The latter conflict spread

³ H.M. Scott, "Britain's Emergence as a European Power, 1688-1815," *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. H.T. Dickinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 434.

⁴ Colin Kidd, "Integration: Patriotism and Nationalism," *A Companion to Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. H.T. Dickinson (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 372.

British forces thinly, with battles fought in the Low Countries, the northern part of the Italian peninsula, and even in the New World. The period of 1746-48 was especially draining and, by the time the peace treaty was signed in 1748, the resources of the allied forces of Britain, Austria, Sardinia and Holland were depleted. For Britain, this period was especially dangerous because Charles Edward, the “Young Pretender,” attempted to restore the Stuart line on the English throne with the aid of France.

In July of 1745, Charles Edward raised the Jacobite standard on the Island of Eriskay, off the coast of Scotland.⁵ By November of 1745, Scotland was under rebel rule, and an army of some 5000 troops subsequently invaded England. Having to fight battles on home soil was a startling development for a country already weary of wars on the Continent. Charles Edward expected a French invasion force would give aid to his rebels, and furthermore hoped that dissident Britons would join in his cause. He was to be disappointed on both fronts. William, Duke of Cumberland (the second son of the Hanoverian King, George II), defeated the rebel army at the Battle of Culloden on 16 April 1746. Cumberland had already won much respect for his command of the allied forces at the battle of Tournai in 1745 (part of the War of the Austrian Succession) and his success on home soil catapulted him to the status of national hero who had prevented a Stuart Restoration.⁶ Anti-French sentiment ran high in Britain during this time, in spite of the failed arrival of a French invasion, and Cumberland was perceived as a protector of English traditions (even if such protection had its roots in Hanoverian Germany).

The Seven Years War (1756-63) followed, with the conflict again fought in both Europe and the New World. The revolt of the American colonies in 1775 resulted in the War of American Independence, a conflict which France entered in 1778. Peace was not restored until the Treaty of Versailles in 1783, with Britain losing much of her colonial holdings in the New World in the process. This is an impressive history of conflict between two powerful nations whose geographical proximity only strengthened a profound distrust of all things French in England. Yet it was not only the fear of France’s military strength that occupied the minds of many during the century—the perceived subversive powers of French culture were equally disturbing.

⁵ Frank O’Gorman, *The Long Eighteenth Century—British Political and Social History: 1688-1832*, *The Arnold History of Britain* (London: Arnold, 1997), 89.

⁶ Ibid.

Conflicting Symbols of Masculinity

One result of the frequency with which Britain was at war with France was the emergence of stereotyped images depicted in literature, engravings and dramatic works that were designed to foster patriotism and a sense of national security. The expected French invasion of Britain in 1756 (the beginning of the Seven Years War) brought forth a patriotic response from William Hogarth in the form of a pair of engravings called *The Invasion*. One image depicts the readiness of English peasants to fight for their country and invokes the memory of the Duke of Cumberland, while the other shows the embarkation of unwilling French troops who must be coerced into following the orders of their superiors. There are conspicuously placed propaganda symbols in the second image: the starving French soldiers are depicted roasting frogs on their swords over an open fire to survive, while the priests who are to accompany them have the accoutrements of the Inquisition. The engravings are supplemented with poems by David Garrick which are designed to underscore their patriotic sentiments.⁷ The first verse of the poem included alongside the engraving of the French soldiers follows:

With lanthorn jaws, and croaking gut,
See how the half-starved Frenchmen strut,
And call us English dogs;
But soon we'll teach these bragging foes,
That beef and beer given heavier blows
Than soup and roasted frogs.⁸

The engravings were reprinted in 1759 when another French invasion was expected, and they were still being printed from the original plates by William Heath as late as 1822. Garrick's verses were enlisted again during the last decade of the century, and were reprinted by *The Star*, a pro-government newspaper, in December 1793.⁹ Given the history of war and fear of invasion, symbolic figures of warrior masculinity such as soldiers, sailors and great military leaders were celebrated as appropriate role models throughout the century. Conversely, negative stereotypes (especially

⁷ These images are discussed by Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth's Graphic Works: First Complete Edition*, 2 vols (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1965), I: 235-36, and Thomas Clerk, *The Works of William Hogarth. . . to which is prefixed some account of his life*, 2 vols (London: E. Scholey, 1812), II: 31-36.

⁸ Reprinted in Clerk, *The Works of William Hogarth*, II: 34.

⁹ Simon Bainbridge, *British Poetry and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Visions of Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 12-13.

anti-French) abound in the popular culture of the second half of the century, spurred on by authors such as the Rev. John Brown, whose *Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times* (1757) encouraged a fear that the taste for luxury (viewed as being “French”) could ultimately effeminize the British male, and make the country politically vulnerable. Indeed, Brown believed that the feminization of the British male was “part of a gigantic French plot, consciously or unconsciously abetted by England’s ruling class.”¹⁰

In spite of the number of times that Britain had been at war with France during the eighteenth century, the influence of French culture remained strong within the aristocracy and moneyed classes. The ability to speak French was a prerequisite for those who wanted to mingle in high society or enter a high office. French fashions dominated the court and the *beau monde* (fashionable society), creating a highly visible separation from the lower classes. The aristocracy continued to speak French amongst themselves well into the next century and Linda Colley recounts the surprise of the American ambassador, Richard Rush, when he went to his first official dinner engagement at Lord Castlereagh’s home in 1818 and found that the dinner conversation was conducted in French.¹¹ This desire to be perceived as ‘other’ by upper classes led to “accusations that those who dominated Britain were a separate and malign interest in the nation.”¹² Nowhere was this perception more visible than in the capital city where the tastes and interests of the upper classes stood in marked contrast to those of the rest of the country.

In part, this perception resulted from the decline of the cultural life at court which had begun under Queen Anne and had never been revitalized by subsequent monarchs. Without strong cultural leadership in the court, it fell to the public sector to provide that which the court did not. Theatre flourished in London, and the rise of concert series in the city predates most public concerts on the Continent by many years. William Weber

¹⁰ Gerald Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism; A Cultural History: 1740-1830* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997), 82. John Brown, a moral revolutionary, was much concerned about the decline of British traditions and his writings were much respected. Newman examines Brown’s anti-French stance in considerable detail (pages 80-84) in this source. See also, Kidd, “Integration: Patriotism and Nationalism,” 372.

¹¹ Linda Colley, *Britons; Forging the Nation: 1707-1837* (New Haven, Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1992), 165.

¹² *Ibid.*, 164.

argues that the cultural life of London was crucial to the development of social leadership in the country,¹³ yet the choices made by these leaders in their dress, manners and entertainments separated them from the rest of society. Even when the more affluent members of the gentry emulated the trends established by the aristocracy, the result was still the perception of elitism. Nowhere was this more evident than in the Italian opera performances at the King's Theatre after 1711 with the rise of the *beau monde*. The restrictive nature of these performances (there being few cheap seats in the theatre) heightened the impression of elitism inherent in the *beau monde*, and a suspicion that foreign culture posed a threat to traditional British values.¹⁴ The very nature of Italian opera encouraged these suspicions: it was sung in a foreign language and employed castrato singers who recreated heroic male characters on stage, but in the female vocal range. This image of a warrior male contrasted strongly with the characters created by British authors for the playhouses. Indeed, Randolph Trumbach notes that British society struggled with very opposed models of male gender identity throughout the eighteenth century, and feared that the men of the *beau monde* would become sodomites because of cultural contamination.¹⁵ Not only did this make them potentially weak leaders, but the traditional structure of society would be undermined if the practice was emulated by the lower classes. This fear was perhaps understandable given the interest in the fashions of the upper class, an interest that ultimately resulted in the publication of illustrated periodicals such as *Beau Monde: or, Literary and Fashionable Magazine* (begun in 1806), *Beau Monde and Monthly Register* (begun in 1809).

Earlier in the century, the British had sought to define an appropriate male gender identity that was consistent with the country's move towards more "enlightened" and refined modes of conduct. Lawrence E. Klein

¹³ William Weber, "Musical Culture and the Capital City: The Epoch of the *beau monde* in London, 1700-1787," *Concert Life in Eighteenth-Century Britain*, ed. Susan Wollenberg and Simon McVeigh (Aldershot, Hants, U.K.: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2004), 71-76.

¹⁴ David Hunter demonstrates that Handel's target audience for his operas was the upper class, the traditional leaders of the country, in "Patronizing Handel, inventing audiences: the intersections of class, money, music and history," *Early Music* XXVIII/1 (February 2000): 40.

¹⁵ Randolph Trumbach, *Heterosexuality and the Third Gender in Enlightenment London*, no. 1 of *Sex and the Gender Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 69-70. Trumbach notes that this fear of homosexuality was a primary reason why prostitution was never rigorously controlled in London.

writes that “politeness” was often seen as a necessary addendum to “productivity.” Klein cites the writings of Abel Boyer, a remarkable man of letters, and a considerable influence on the developing social mores of eighteenth-century Britain.¹⁶ Boyer comments: “Merit will not do the Work, if it be not seconded by Agreeableness, on which depends all the plausibility of Actions. This Agreeableness is the most efficacious Instrument of Sovereignty [sic].”¹⁷ Clearly, Boyer understood the French concept of *civilité*. Boyer, French-born and trained in France and Holland, became a conduit of French culture in Britain, whose first published book in Britain was *The compleat French master for ladies and gentlemen: being a new method, to learn with ease and delight the French tongue* (1694). Other manuals were published during the eighteenth century with the express purpose of instructing plebeian readers how to advance within certain professions, and to provide them with social skills necessary to compete in polite society. One might not ever be a part of the *beau monde* or be able to afford a Grand Tour of the Continent, but it was important to practise refined manners and understand the mechanics of social conduct to be successful in the professions dependent upon social discourse. Refined behaviour became as important in London, where the highly visible *beau monde* congregated, as it was in Paris. But how could this concern for refinement of social conduct in the public sphere be reconciled with more traditional values such as hunting, military and naval exploits?¹⁸ The more refined the male became, the closer his behaviour and imagery approximated the interests and affectations of upper-class women. When a man of this level of refinement was seen in public wearing French fashions of lace, feathers and brocades, he did not typify the traditional British values of strength and leadership. He was ‘other,’ and a figure who did not engender trust. These points are clearly demonstrated in the memoirs of the dramatist, John O’Keefe:

¹⁶ Lawrence E. Klein, “Politeness for plebes. Consumption and social identity in early eighteenth-century England,” *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 366.

¹⁷ Abel Boyer, *The English Theophrastus: or the manners of the age. Being the modern characters of the court, the town, and the city*, 3rd ed. (London: Bernard Lintott, 1708), 107.

¹⁸ These ideas are explored in far greater detail by Michèle Cohen, “Manliness, effeminacy and the French: gender and the construction of national character in eighteenth-century England,” *English Masculinities: 1660-1800*, ed. Tim Hitchcock and Michèle Cohen. *Women and Men in History* (London and New York: Longman, 1999), 44-61.

When my son returned to me from Paris, he could scarcely speak a word of English, and was dressed in the full high Parisian court-fashion; scarlet coat with cut-steel buttons, white-fringed waistcoat, pearl colour small-clothes, white silk stockings ribbed with light-blue, large silver buckles, laced handkerchief, small hat, and muff, which I advised him to give to his little sister before he walked down Piccadilly.

O’Keefe concluded that his son needed not only to recover his spoken English before attending an English school, but that he had to “become reconciled to sober English dress.”¹⁹

Images of Otherness

Stereotypes outside of the cultural norms appeared at several times during the eighteenth century. In particular, the fop and the macaroni were visible types in society. The re-emergence of the fop (a feminized man) during the eighteenth century was a case of life seemingly imitating art. The fop first appeared as a theatrical “type” in the late seventeenth century, with George Etherege’s play *The Man of Mode* (1676) and his character, Sir Fopling Flutter. Although a secondary character, he is described as affecting an “Imitation of the People of Quality in *France*.”²⁰ As someone obsessed with fashion, romantic success and celebrity, he provided a model both for future plays and members of the audience to emulate. While the more extravagant characteristics of the fop were not universally embraced by aristocratic men, polished manners and elegant clothing based on French fashions were adopted by many as an appropriate way to express cultured masculinity. The balance of opinion, however, turned against the more extreme manifestations of these interests during the eighteenth century. Especially in times of war, any type of affected behaviour or foppishness was seen as weakness. The fear of the softening effects of city life was intensified when men were seen parading about in velvets and lace: fashions associated with the “inherently effeminate French nation.”²¹ The fop, moreover, was furthermore often suspected of being a part of the urban homosexual subculture, and thus a danger to national well-being.²² Such paranoia appears to have intensified

¹⁹ John O’Keefe, *Recollections of the life of John O’Keefe, written by himself*, 2 vols (London: Henry Colburn, 1826), II: 147.

²⁰ George Etheridge, *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter* (London: J. Tonson, 1733), 19.

²¹ Cohen, “Manliness, effeminacy and the French,” 156.

²² Philip Carter, *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society, Britain: 1660-1800*.

during times of war. While there were few Navy trials for sodomy during peace, the numbers rose dramatically in war, leaving Randolph Trumbach to conclude that “sodomy and the breakdown of order thus became identified in the minds of naval commanders.”²³

Especially during the 1750s, there was increased concern about the perceived rising levels of effeminacy and its impact on the nation. Gerald Newman notes, there was “an emergent nationalistic philosophy, anti-French and anti-aristocratic, linked to sharpening moral, social and historical concerns, as well as aesthetic and commercial ones.”²⁴ Given that military leadership invariably fell to the members of the upper class, there was fear that their concerns for refinement would prevent them from commanding forces effectively. Philip Carter observes that “the image of the enfeebled soldier who preferred the comforts of civilian life to the rigour of war was commonplace in both mid-century satires and sober social commentaries.”²⁵ When William Godwin has the rustic Squire Tyrrel exclaim “I do hate a Frenchified fop with all my soul,” in the 1794 novel, *Caleb Williams*, he gives voice to a popular view, especially of those outside of the large urban centres.²⁶ At the heart of these concerns is a fear of otherness—a fear of continental and especially French values—and the perceived ability of this otherness to erode traditional British values and strengths.

During the 1770s, another kind of “otherness” appeared in London: the macaroni. This group of privileged young men took Italy as their model (an important stopping point in any Grand Tour of the period), rather than France. They carried out an apparent Dionysian lifestyle in the public sphere, and took as their “uniform” striped clothing and tall, powdered wigs. While somewhat less feminine in their attire than most fops, they

Women and Men in History (London and New York: Longman, 2001), 139-44.

²³ Randolph Trumbach, “Sodomitical Subcultures, Sodomitical roles, and the Gender Revolution of the Eighteenth Century: The Recent Historiography,” *Tis Nature's Fault: Unauthorized Sexuality during the Enlightenment*, ed. Robert Purks Maccubbin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 112.

²⁴ Newman, *The Rise of English Nationalism*, 73.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 130. Carter also brings attention to the satirical works of Nathaniel Lancaster in mid-century who attacked foppish mannerisms as symbolic of continental (especially French) influences, and as a misconception of the polite male. *Men and the Emergence of Polite Society*, 150-51.

²⁶ William Godwin, *Caleb Williams*, ed. Gary Handwerk and A.A. Markley (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000), 132.

were still objects of scorn and concern. The appellation of a “macaroni” was intended as a pejorative when given to members of the group, and came from their describing things then in high fashion as being “very macaroni.” The macaroni set consisted of young men still rebelling against the social norms that would inevitably be thrust upon them. Although they were fighting parental values, it was expected that they would ultimately adopt those same values in the fullness of time. As such, they represented a slightly lesser threat to traditional British values, but their high level of visibility in city life contributed to xenophobic fears of continental pollution in London, much as did the presence of the fop. To avoid the social (and ultimately political) domination of countries such as France and Italy, it would be necessary to cast off all external affectations and “false” social practices of those societies.

While the fop was used as a figure of comedy in plays during the early eighteenth century, he was later presented as a character to be distrusted and loathed, especially after the declaration of war on France in 1793. No longer a possible role model for male behaviour in the public sphere, the fop became a symbol of the power of continental corruption. A telling point in the production of *The Siege of Valenciennes* (Astley’s Amphitheatre, 1793) was a dialogue song featuring the characters of a Soldier and a Fop. The famed comic actor, Decastro, played the part of the Fop, and explained the song as follows in his *Memoirs*: “in the delineation of these characters, the contrast is happily preserved, by exhibiting one as the essence of cowardice, and the other a cool, undaunted soldier, whose courage is not to be shaken by danger, when the interest of his country is at stake, and needs his assistance to defend it.”²⁷ This is but one example of the role that theatre played in shaping the national character. Kathleen Wilson notes that the London theatres played an integral role in the cultural construction of the state’s power where “national stereotypes were constructed and perpetuated with a vengeance. French Fops, adventuring Irishmen, ridiculous Italians and bullying Spaniards—as well as rowdy, robust but essentially honourable Englishmen—were all stock characters in farce, sentimental comedy and drama in this period.”²⁸

²⁷ J. Decastro, *The Memoirs of J. Decastro, Comedian*. . . , ed. R. Humphreys (London: Sherwood, Jones & Co., 1824), 79-80.

²⁸ Kathleen Wilson, “Empire of Virtue: The Imperial project and Hanoverian culture c.1720-1785,” *An Imperial State at War: Britain from 1689 to 1815*, ed. Lawrence Stone (London: Routledge, 1994), 136. See also, Wilson, “The good, the bad, and the impotent: Imperialism and the politics of identity in Georgian England,” *The Consumption of Culture 1600-1800: Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann

While playwrights attempted to provide convincing resolutions to the eternal dichotomy of male (British) versus female (French), an inherent contradiction remained. The fop is portrayed in this period as emasculated and in great fear of the enemy who gave birth to his affected lifestyle. If the French were, indeed, so effeminate, how could they also be a potent enemy? A canny politician during the last decade of the century could have explained this seeming paradox. The French Revolution had not been born in the cultured classes, for whom fashion and etiquette was a primary concern, but from the lower classes who struggled to survive without such luxuries. It was a grassroots movement that successfully spread throughout the country. Thus, France and French traditions presented a possible double threat to Britain, where energies released by the Revolutionary fervour in France might well provide a working model for disaffected British. Should the Revolutionary forces of France (not corrupted by court culture) decide to invade Britain, there was a fear that the country was vulnerable because French court culture had previously feminized the upper-class leaders of Britain. If the latter seems unlikely in the present era, it was a very serious consideration during the 1790s when traditional warrior masculine stereotypes were emphasized in Britain. Simon Bainbridge has argued that there was a “remasculinization of poetry” by the end of the century that continued on well into the romantic period in Britain. It was not sufficient for the arts to have only entertainment value; they had to encourage national stereotypes such as the male warrior model. If poetry could help shape the national understanding of war, war could reshape poetry in turn.²⁹ As will be shown below, Britain was not the only country to have a profound fear of the feminine—the French entertained many fears centring on Queen Marie Antoinette.

The French-English Relationship as Revealed through the Arts

Texts with strong patriotic and/or political overtones were a prominent feature of eighteenth-century British vocal music. While much of this repertoire represents long-standing traditions such as court odes and other celebratory works, there is a second body of works containing topical texts

Bermingham and John Brewer (London: Routledge, 1995), 236-63, which reprints much of the 1994 essay.

²⁹ Bainbridge, *British Poetry and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars: Visions of Conflict*, vii-vii & 99-119. Bainbridge cites many examples of the critical press praising the “manly tone” of various poems.

not composed under the aegis of the court. These pieces reflect then current issues of national interest; taken as a whole, this little-studied repertoire might be viewed as a barometer of public opinion. The relationship between France and England is a recurring theme in this body of music, a relationship which came under even greater scrutiny at the time of the French Revolution. Music played an important role in this commentary, often providing nearly immediate reactions to the events unfolding in France. In 1992, David Charlton observed that “there is no coherent body of music writings, even in France, on the music of the crucial last decade of the eighteenth century.”³⁰ Discussion of the musical reactions outside France to the events taking place in Paris is even rarer, in spite of the great social and musical significance of such a repertoire. The absence of such analyses and commentary is especially unfortunate given the long-standing history of strained relations between Britain and France.

Simply put, to be patriotically British during most of the century was to be anti-French and (to a somewhat lesser degree) anti-Catholic. This was a useful popular-cultural view for governments and the monarchy to encourage. The performing arts (and music, in particular) proved to be a convenient means to achieve a cultural and political consensus. Many musical works with an anti-French bias were composed during the eighteenth century. Not only do the dates of publication act as reference points for the events which inspired them, but the texts celebrate national heroes and provide interpretations of topical events. The Duke of Cumberland, for example, was much celebrated in songs and odes.³¹ His accomplishments served as the subject matter of six cantatas collectively called *The Trophy*, with texts by John Hoadly. Documentary evidence provided by H. Diack Johnstone confirms that the texts were meant to be set to music by Maurice Greene, a member of the King’s Music and

³⁰ David Charlton, “Introduction: exploring the Revolution,” *Music and the French Revolution*. ed. Malcolm Boyd (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1. Charlton (2) writes that “it challenges us to explore the musical experience of men and women over a wider-than-usual spectrum. Because a Revolution re-examines and re-creates its institutions, studying the 1789 period also means looking at a quickly changing pattern of musical patronage, whether state-inspired or individually organized.”

³¹ Michael Festing’s *Ode Upon the return of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland from Scotland* is a celebratory work requiring a large orchestra. Published by J. Simpson in London, c.1745, a second edition was published in 1746, likely an indication of its popularity.

organist of St. Paul's Cathedral in London.³² If Greene did set the texts, his music has not been located. Based on the printed texts, the poet must have envisioned musical settings of considerable proportions: while the first cantata is the only one to call for a chorus, the fifth cantata calls for multiple soloists, and several of the texts are longer than the norm for solo cantatas of the period. Each of the texts presents Cumberland in a symbolic guise: as a volunteer, poet, painter, musician, shepherd and religious leader.³³ As a religious leader, the text promises that Catholic Rome will sink "with black despair" under Cumberland's influence. As the symbol of the shepherd, Britons are reminded that:

'T WAS WILLIAM'S toil this leisure gave,
 By him I tune my oaten reed,
 By him, yon golden harvests wave,
 By him these herds in safety feed:
 Him shall our grateful songs declare
 Ever to British shepherds dear.

By implication, France was tarred with the charge of Catholicism, and anti-French sentiment emerged more strongly during the period of the Seven Years War. While some of the resulting musical works were of the more sophisticated and complex cantata genre, others fell into the realm of popular song.

There was a ready market for new song literature in an era when home music-making was the norm. *The Universal Magazine* published much popular song material, including works of a patriotic nature. In the October issue of 1756 (in the early days of the Seven Years War), there

³² H. Diack Johnstone has written extensively on the relationship between Greene and Hoadly: "More on Dr. Hoadly's 'Poems Set to Music by Dr. Greene'," *Studies in Bibliography* 50 (1997): 269-70; "New Light on John Hoadly and his 'Poems Set to Music by Dr. Greene'," *Studies in Bibliography* 50 (2003-04): 287. Greene was highly influential in musical circles, but he quarrelled with Handel, and the rift was never healed. In his later years, Greene showed a considerable interest in secular music, and he took an active role in the Academy of Ancient Music, and the Apollo Academy. He set many texts by Hoadly. See also: Keith Maslen, "Dr. Hoadly's 'Poems Set to Music by Dr. Greene'," *Studies in Bibliography* 48 (1995): 85-94.

³³ The texts were published in Robert Dodsley, ed., *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes by Several Hands* (London: J. Hughes, 1763), III: 255-65. It is possible that Greene's large-scale orchestral and vocal settings did not lend themselves to being published in keyboard reductions, as was the norm of the time.

appeared a work called “The Soldier’s Song.” The song is a five-verse, strophic setting that initially evokes benign symbols of the “fair English rose” and the “lillies of France,” but quickly turns these images into strongly anti-French sentiments with phrases such as “England. . . has humbled the pride and the glory of France,” and “We beat ‘em by sea, and we beat ‘em by land, When Marlborough and Russel enjoy’d the command; We’ll beat them again, boys, so let ‘em advance, Old England despises the insults of France.” These sentiments are painted with the broadest of brush strokes so as to bolster feelings of patriotism and national pride where the glories of military strength permit no subtleties. A facsimile of the song is printed as Music Example 1 - 1.³⁴ The music is cast as a march with strongly-marked rhythms. Typical of songs printed for home use in this period, only a bass line is given, with brief passages of accompaniment for the right hand printed in the vocal line where possible. Although the range is only one and one-half octaves, the leaping melody would require some effort on the part of an amateur singer to master. Given the popularity of publications such as *The Universal Magazine*, the song was likely successful as a tool for generating support for the British government while demonizing France.

³⁴ I am indebted to Professor Ursula Rempel of the University of Manitoba for giving me the original copy of the song which is reproduced here.