The Nature of Satire: Essentialism, Gender, and Purpose

by

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Beyond the overarching issue of gender bias in traditional canon formation, there seems to be a dearth of recognized satire written by women. The English tradition of satire does contain isolated instances of satire written by women, but the majority of the creators of the vast, transgeneric --by which I mean that the spirit of satire can manifest regardless of medium – from literature and poetry to comic strips and stand-up comedian, nuancing the already highly permeable boundaries of the political, social, and personal --collection of satire is overwhelmingly male. As I cannot subscribe to essentialist rhetoric that posits that there is a "masculine" voice to which satire is exclusively suited, to the exclusion of a "feminine" voice, this thesis will be an inquiry into the causes of such an absence. I argue that socially constructed expectations of gender shape performance and perception (and, in a historical sense, the reproduction and preservation) of satire, particularly when a woman is involved as either satirist or satirized. As is so often the case, cultural conventions have predisposed audiences to mistake masculine for the neutral and feminine for the other.

For this task, I draw on the tools of several disciplines, from comparative literature to social psychology to women's studies, to inform my analysis. Social representation theory, for example, is needed for understanding the ways in which stereotypes of women can and did adversely affect audience response to female satirists. In the more than forty years since Serge Moscovici first sketched out the scope and implications of social representation theory, it has come to be used extensively in gender and psychological studies, as social representations are believed to orient people to their

social and material surroundings and permit communication among individuals of a community by constructing an order that regulates social exchange and classifications (Moscovici xi). Presumed gendered differences have been pervasively represented across mediums throughout Western culture. While grounding my findings in the cultural, historical, and interpersonal contexts at play for each text examined in this thesis, my research also uses empirical methods in the final chapter to compare performances of satire in a contemporary television program across a series of segments. Both empirical and textual analysis take into consideration the representations and performance of gender, in the sense explained by Judith Butler, along with their implications for the amorphous nature of what it means to create satire.

I also work within a tradition of feminist comparativism in this thesis, both between chapters and for a close reading of the strategies used by two satirical female poets, Aphra Behn and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, in the second chapter. In *Comparative Literature in an Age of Globalization*, Gail Finney explains her concept of the "transliterary," which I take to denote a shift to transnational and cross-disciplinary investigations in literature, and its connection to comparative and feminist studies. My analysis operates within this tradition of feminist comparativism, taking as its subject texts from disparate genres and time periods while examining them through the methods of multiple disciplines. Additionally, my approach to this endeavor is shaped by numerous transnationally minded feminist scholars like Finney, Susan Basnett, Françoise Lionnet, and others.

In the first section, "Expectations at Odds: Contrasting Characterizations of Women and Satire," I interrogate the descriptions of satire, some of which lend themselves to gendered stereotypes. In both historical and academic accounts, frequent explanations of the genre portray satire as comedic entertainment, as a critical indictment, and especially as a form of violence. The evolution of this last criterion is evidenced in accounts from ancient cultures that attributed physical and supernatural power to satire and vehement invocations in the poetry of seventeenth and eighteenth century satirists that great harm and suffering be visited upon their adversaries (in some cases, perhaps more accurately, their victims). Additionally, some of the more combative rhetorical tools, like invective and sarcasm, are considered within the purview of satire. Even in more formal analyses of the genre, the language used, particularly when describing the satirists, connotes violence and aggression. I argue that these descriptions have explanatory power for why women's contributions to satire may not be recognized as such by audiences. Pervasive stereotypes of women are at odds with this depiction of satire. Both historically and in recent popular culture, women have been considered less capable of humor than men, and this lack of satirical capability is frequently linked to their potential for reproduction and motherhood. In addition, it is assumed by male satirists and critics that women's purported maternal instinct makes them more suited to nurturing roles, rather than critical ones like creating the scathing social commentary in satire. There is, likewise, no shortage of cultural ideology that holds that women are neither inclined nor suited to combat.

These characterizations are often paired with a heroic narrative about the purpose of satire as a moral imperative to instigate change in society. However, as my later analysis of the antifeminist satire from the seventeenth and eighteenth century demonstrates, the combativeness attributed to satire is not always consistent with that narrative of heroism. I argue that instances where that aggression is aimed at those that would be considered incapable of correcting their errant behavior are not only violent and, in the case of the antifeminist poetry, misogynist, they should in fact be read as violations, rather than exemplars, of the genre.

In the second section, I consider what I believe to be literary examples of satire created by women in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, focusing in particular on writings by Aphra Behn and Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, who critique their male poet contemporaries through satirical poetry. They are currently typically described as women writers, with little emphasis on their capacities as satirists. Conversely, male writers of the genre, like Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift are first and foremost classified as satirists in many of the most readily accessible accounts of their work available today. However, Behn and Montagu create evocative satire that challenges gendered stereotyping. Aphra Behn, for example, couples a biting indictment of John Baber, a court poet of the late seventeenth century, and the shortcomings in his writing and his understanding of women with a cadence and rhyme scheme that craft the sense of a relentless litany of criticisms. Both she and Mary Wortley Montagu appropriate and parody the language and conventions of the male poets they satirize. When Montagu criticizes Jonathan Swift's "The Lady's Dressing Room," she reduces the poem's impetus

to Swift's own sexual impotence in her response poem. Her satire, however, may have missed nuance in Swift's work that renders questionable the misogyny which Montagu intended to satirize.

However, as women writing within the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, both authors faced social challenges after making names for themselves as writers. While Montagu was the subject of critique by Swift and Alexander Pope, Behn was frequently made the center of salacious gossip that continued even after her death. The disparity in treatment likely stems in part from Behn's lower socioeconomic class and status as a single woman after her first marriage. In this chapter, I consider tactics used by both women that made their readership more accepting of the personal and social criticisms they published.

In the final section on contemporary satire, I examine *The Daily Show*, a currently popular comedy news television program, as a recent manifestation of the satiric tradition. As a rare iteration of satire co-created by men and women, this program allows for direct comparisons of modern performances of satire. This chapter empirically analyzes the verbal and physical behaviors of four of the show's news correspondents: Jessica Williams, Jordan Klepper, Samantha Bee, and Jason Jones, while placing these works in their socio-cultural context. My observations reveal gendered patterns in the scope of the subject matter taken up by the correspondents as well as in their behavior, especially when the correspondents break from their roles of ironic, enthusiastic support of irrationality and bigotry in an interview to more directly critique the interviewee or an institution as a whole. Samantha Bee, reporting on the stagnation of legislation enabling

the termination of rapists' custodial rights, and Jessica Williams, focusing on the victim-blaming rhetoric surrounding street harassment, don't hesitate to give damning evaluations of the social issues on which they report. However, unlike their male counterparts, they are not placed in interviews with individuals that represent the sociopolitical viewpoint the correspondents oppose. The absence of such juxtaposition curtails the combativeness that is robustly expressed in Jason Jones' interview with an anti-LGBT Russian representative and Jordan Klepper's interview with a spokesperson for the organization Freedom from Religion that likened a "Prayer Discount" in a restaurant to the American history of racial injustice. Other behavioral differences I noted, such as frequent cut-aways from the serious tone of the interview to moments of humor in the segments of Bee and Williams, suggested an application of Horatian and Juvenalian principles of satire along gendered lines.

The epilogue sums up the conclusions of my investigation into satire, and posits the sociopolitical importance of further critical examination of both female contributions to the genre and characterizations of the genre itself. Satire, in its many cross-medium iterations, is bound up with cultural production, which makes particularly significant the rising interest in satire currently demonstrated in American popular culture. In addition, I consider the future research that should be undertaken by gender and satire scholars, while tracing out the developments of my own research interests since starting this thesis, which have become increasingly international in scope and interdisciplinary in methods.

CHAPTER TWO

EXPECTATIONS AT ODDS: CONTRASTING CHARACTERIZATIONS OF WOMEN AND SATIRE

"Horace can laugh, is delicate, is clear,
You, only coarsely rail, or darkly sneer;
Satire shoud, like a polish'd Razor keen,
Wound with a Touch, that's scarcely felt or seen.
Thine is an Oyster-Knife, that hacks and hews;
The Rage, but not the Talent of Abuse"
- Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to Alexander Pope, 1733

Though, as the excerpt above indicates, there is no consensus, even amongst practitioners of the genre, about how to define satire or determine what texts should be deemed satiric, some of the characterizations most integral to satire are aligned with common traditional stereotypes of men. Satire is typically prescribed as funny, sophisticatedly critical of vice and ignorance, and aggressive in nature. Conversely, a long misogynist tradition has stereotyped women as being less capable of humor, less intellectual, and more nurturing and passive than men. I argue that these accepted generic categorizations and essentialist definitions could make audiences less likely to recognize satire when created by women. Additionally, this juxtaposition of gender stereotypes and characterizations of satire leads to a narrower, yet more nuanced articulation of the standards of satire I will be using in the later chapters of this thesis that more directly analyze specific examples of the genre.

I will be analyzing some of the most common descriptions attributed to satire in this chapter, yet, first, I must acknowledge the inexact relationship scholars have with satire. Scholars have had extensive disagreement about what qualifies as satire, what mediums can present satire, and the literary and rhetorical tools that a satirist has at his or

her disposal. Even the origin of the word, coming from the Greco-Roman tradition, is in contention. The entry for satire in *Encyclopedia Britannica* notes that it is often presumed that the word and genre of satire descends from *satyr*, which is both the bawdy Greek play and the mythical, notoriously unmannerly goat-like creatures that were often featured within the plays (Elliott n.p.). However, this was discredited in the seventeenth-century by the Classical scholar Isaac Casaubon, though it has remained a popular assumption, likely given the obvious aesthetic connections between the two kinds of writing.

Instead, it is believed that there was no word in Greek that referred to the style of writing itself, though the Romans appropriated the Greek word *satura*, which originally meant something akin to "miscellany" or "medley." There are numerous examples of satire in ancient Greece, beginning in the sixth and seventh centuries BCE with the writer Archilochus, who will be discussed in more detail shortly. Though Aristophanes and Menippus were writing some time after this, in the fourth and third centuries, respectively, they are more famous examples of the satiric tradition and their influence on the genre is still apparent. However, it was in the time of the Romans that more formal descriptions came to be applied to satire as a genre. In the Roman tradition, satire initially referred to a specific hexameter poetic form but eventually broadened to include texts that were satiric in tone if not in prosody (Elliott n.p.). It was at this time that Horace and Juvenal, for whom two of the most common subcategories of satire would later be named, wrote their criticisms of the behaviors and philosophies of the societies in which they lived. Horace's writing was light-hearted, commenting on the silliness of his

contemporaries that prevented them from a life of happiness and contentment. His methods are often described as attempting to "laugh people out of their vices and follies" (Murfin & Ray 159). Juvenalian satire draws on dramatically different methods. Its intention is to eviscerate its target and draw derision and contempt from the audience, shaming the victim from the errors. The seventeenth century poet John Dryden gendered the distinction in Horatian and Juvenalian, writing "His [Horace's] Good Manners, are to be commended, but his Wit is faint; and his Salt, if I may dare to say so, almost insipid. Juvenal is of a more vigorous and Masculine Wit, he gives me as much Pleasure as I can bear: …His Spleen is rais'd, and he raises mine" (para. 91). As Juvenalian satire's aggression is deemed more masculine, Horatian must, by default in a culture with a binary understanding of gender, be more feminine.

Both Horatian and Juvenalian satire draw on a number of rhetorical and literary tools, such as irony and sarcasm. As these terms, much like satire, often fall prey to a slippage of language when used in both casual conversation and in critical analysis, I will briefly explain my usage of them here to hopefully reduce imprecision in my subsequent analysis. To do so, I draw upon Sophia A. McClennen and Remy M. Maisel's *Is Satire Saving Our Nation? Mockery and American Politics*, where irony is defined in simple terms: "irony means saying something and meaning the opposite" (108). This can be used in conjunction with parody, which imitates a specific person, text, or style (Murfin and Ray 268). Though McClennen and Maisel align sarcasm with what they determine to be "pseudo-satire," spiteful mockery that does not serve the same politically, intellectually productive purpose as satire, I would include sarcasm within the arsenal available to the

political satirist. It is described as involving obvious, even exaggerated irony that intends to insult the person it is directed at by stating the opposite of what is meant (Murfin and Ray 357). Though sarcasm can certainly be used by the cynic, I do not believe it to be inherently cynical or inconsistent with the aims of the optimistic satirist who uses it with the intention of spurring change for the better.

Despite the broad, at times imprecise, nature of the definitions of satire, there are still several characteristics that seem to be at the core of the genre. In this chapter I will engage with several of those characteristics, including the connotation of satire and violence. Satire has long been characterized as an act of aggression, which is perhaps why it has been seen as the domain of men. In ancient Greece, the power of satire was linked to the supernatural. As legend from that time goes, the great iambic poet Archilochus wrote rhyming invectives against the father of his bride to be when the father interfered with the marriage. These were so powerful that both father and daughter were compelled to hang themselves. This account from the seventh century BCE is joined by many others from Greek, Arabic, and Irish cultures (Elliott 149). Supposedly, Celtic poet-satirists were sent to collect taxes from the most obstinate men when the sword had not persuaded them and were even considered a powerful weapon in warfare (150). The satirist, armed with the potency of the antagonism of the written verse was considered a more dire threat than soldiers, armed with potentially deadly weapons.

Even in more contemporary discussion of satire, the vocabulary used is aggressive and attacking. David Mikics, writer and literary critic, describes the satire of ancient Rome as “a prime avenue for the venting of literary aggression,” which was typically

written in a "prose *studded* with mocking bits of verse, combines the jovial with the cynical and *biting*" (271, emphases added). Speaking more holistically of the development of the genre, he writes that the satirist, whose gaze is "pitiless, even ferocious," is ever in "hot pursuit of his target" (271). It is hardly shocking that the language of this section, as with many of the sources I surveyed, defaulted to a male pronoun when discussing the satirist, but the consistency with which violent imagery was used to describe the function of satire was surprising. Another source wrote that, "Satirists have always waged verbal warfare against the failings of mankind" (Nussbaum 1). One of the motivations of the satirist is described in antagonistic terms as well, as the "motive to cope with the satirist's deepest fears through attacking his victim with wordplay" (Nussbaum 19). This impulse towards aggression, though certainly evident in descriptions of satire, is often even more prevalent within the satire itself.

When satire resumed a place of social and literary prominence in the British seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the poets appear to have stopped short of legitimate belief that their satire would physically attack their victims. However, the language about and within satire still connotes violence and punishment. This is exemplified in satire against women from that period. To illustrate this, I will later close the chapter with a brief consideration of the tradition of antifeminist satire that has pervaded the genre across the millennia but was at its height in the seventeen and eighteenth centuries. It also exemplifies one of the ways in which women might be marginalized as satirists. The stereotyping of women as more passive and both less prone to or suited for violence than men is so well embedded culturally and so well documented both in historical and

popular representation that I will not linger on it any more here, but rather use the readings in the subsequent chapters of my thesis to counter such stereotyping.

Though it seems contradictory with the violent characterization of satire, the genre is also frequently described as humorous. While much of the Euro-American canon of satire is not specifically comedic, a great deal of satire, especially among contemporary iterations, is (or is intended to be) funny. From the light-hearted wit of Horatian satire beginning in ancient Greece to Jon Stewart's *The Daily Show*, which markets itself as a comedy news show, part of what often separates satire from simple criticism is the humor of the typically exaggerated representation. Comedy and satire share a number of the same tools of the trade, including irony, parody, lampoon, burlesque, and wit. Yet even this seemingly innocuous characteristic of satire has a role to play in the gendered disparities of the genre.

The ability to be funny has been historically and culturally posited as a masculine trait. In the English-speaking West, this stereotyping is evident across a variety of eras in texts at least as far back as the seventeenth century when the playwright William Congreve cast broad generalizations about women's capacities for humor. In his treatise, *Concerning Humor in Comedy*, he wrote "I must confess I have never made an Observation of what I Apprehend to be true Humour in Women… maybe by reason of their Natural Coldness, Humour cannot Exert itself to that extravagant Degree which is (sic) does in the Male Sex" (82). Congreve appeals to the supposed "Natural Coldness" of women. Rudyard Kipling echoed that same sense of inherent difference in "Female of the Species" in 1911. There, he wrote, "She who faces Death by torture for each life

beneath her breast / May not deal in doubt or pity – must not swerve for fact or jest. / These be purely male diversions – not in these her honour dwells" (29-31). A woman's role as (or even the potential to be) a mother apparently makes her unsuited to humor, in addition to doubt, pity, or fact, according to Kipling.

Dated as this stereotype appears, reiterations of this reductive ideology are still rampant in popular culture. Famous comedians like John Belushi, Jerry Lewis, Adam Carolla, and Joseph Gordon-Levitt have all made public statements about women's inability to be as funny as men. Even pseudoscientific sources like *Psychology Today* parrot this stereotype, dressing it up with a supposedly evolutionary rationale that higher abilities for humor have been necessitated for men by the gendered priorities of sexual selection theory (Greengross). Perhaps most infamous of these numerous recent examples is a piece published in *Vanity Fair* in 2007 by Christopher Hitchens, which also appeals to a loose definition of scientific reasoning to make the argument set up in its subtle title: "Why Women Aren't Funny." Women, supposedly, have a vast reserve of advantages over men when it comes to impressing and engaging with the opposite sex. Whereas men need to be able to evoke laughter to persuade perhaps less than reticent women of their appeal, Hitchens writes that "they [women] already appeal to men, if you catch my drift" (n.p.). Women also have the power of the capacity for childbirth, which apparently puts them in a terrifying and unequivocal position of authority. According to Hitchens, one of the primary and earliest purposes of humor is the mockery of authority, a natural provenance of men, since they are eternally in the lesser position of power, given their lack of uteruses. He concludes the section by arguing that men's participation in humor is

actually them “playing truant and implicitly conceding who is really the boss” (n.p.). That incredible line of reasoning would beg to be read as parody itself were it not for its consistency with the misogyny throughout this article and its sequel a year later, “Why Women Still Don’t Get It.”

Ever the generous peacemaker though, Hitchens is quick to assure the reader that he isn’t arguing that there are *no* decently funny women. On the contrary, “There are more terrible female comedians than terrible male comedians, but there are some impressive ladies out there” (n.p.). He then goes on to stipulate, in racially suspect and misogynist terms, that those who actually are funny tend to fall into at least one of three categories – hefty, dykey, or Jewish. Lo and behold, according to Hitchens, these types of humor are practically appropriations of masculinity or at least, “deviant” femininity and “deviant” raciality. He argues that Jewish humor is full of angst and self-deprecation, which are presumed to be self-evidently “masculine by self-definition.” Sapphic, or “dykey,” humor is discounted as well, since Hitchens assumes it to have the same goal of making potential female partners laugh as traditional male comedy.

This stereotype of women and humor is not without resistance, and one could certainly list countless counterexamples, including the recent success of numerous female comedians that combine comedy with satiric social commentary like Amy Schumer, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Ellen DeGeneres in mainstream popular culture, which should indicate both the fallaciousness of the stereotype and that there are many who do not subscribe to Hitchens’ assessment of women’s comedic potential. However, this does not negate that both historically and currently there is a pervasive stereotype about women

that is inconsistent with common characterizations of satire as humorous. If a population buys into the notion that women are inherently not funny, or at least less funny than men, it holds that they would have more difficultly recognizing women's satire.

As well as being intended to entertain, the other side of the coin for satire is its intention to critique some person or institution. Academic discourse on the nature of satire typically includes some close variation on the following definition from *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, which describes satire as "a literary genre that uses irony, wit, and sometimes sarcasm to expose humanity's vices and foibles, giving impetus to change or reform through ridicule" (Murfin and Ray 357). Moreover, to be satire, or at least what might be considered good satire, some degree of sophistication is required of the delivery of the criticism. In the early seventeenth century, John Dryden lamented the supposed loss of that intelligence. He wrote "But how few Lampooners are there now living, who are capable of this Duty! … And how little Wit they bring, for the support of their injustice! … no Venom is wanting, as far as dullness can supply it. For there is a perpetual Dearth of Wit; a Barrenness of good Sense, and Entertainment" (para 88). Satire is not reducible to social criticism or vehement animosity. It is reliant in some measure on cleverness and irony for its ability to captivate and instigate. Moreover, in cultures where critics of the powers that be faced threats to their own safety, skills in irony and double speak had the potential to mean the difference in life and death. If John Dryden's assessment and Aphra Behn's scathing retort to the poor reasoning and writing of John Baber's "To the King, upon the Queens being Deliver'd of a Son" (see Chapter 2) is any indication, satirists are certainly willing to

regulate and reprove each other when the intellectual caliber of the satire is deemed to be subpar.

Again, when considering historical and contemporary social representations of women, it is glaringly apparent that they are stigmatized as less intelligent than men. It is only in recent history that the culture around education has not openly corroborated with social stereotypes that men are inherently more suited to knowledge and intelligence, from formal prohibitions against female attendance in higher education to belief that women's brains overheat if they learn or think too much (though that is certainly not to suggest that this kind of sexism has been entirely excised from the academic community in the present). Misogyny has even enlisted science to perpetuate social stereotypes regarding gender and intelligence, just as science has been used to supposedly "prove" disparities among race and class categories. Early intelligence testing in psychology used methodologies that essentially guaranteed results that men were the more intelligent gender. Samuel George Morton, an American scientist and physician of the nineteenth century, claimed to demonstrate gendered differences in intelligence through a difference in skull size. His research did not control for the general size difference in men and women and relied on the unsupported assumption that a larger skull and brain meant a more intelligent individual (Gould 94). Additionally, when women *do* "transgress" their proscribed role as a nurturing figure and are critical, whether in an intellectually sophisticated way or not, they are often cast as the nagging, hypercritical, and subsequently undesirable female.

While I will spend the majority of the following chapters considering the role of women as creators of satire, it is important to also consider how male authors of this genre have historically treated women as subject matter. Women have been the subjects of satire since classical times (Young 185). The following examples from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and the analysis that follows should demonstrate both the tendency towards aggression in the genre and the manner in which I consider the characterizations of satire that I have herein described to interact with an ideological agenda in satire.

While satirists target both men and women, what others have argued and what I want to emphasize here is that there are often gendered differences in how the target is satirized. The satirists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries certainly took aim at other males in their writing, such as Charles II, who was renowned for his promiscuity and subsequent neglect of his duties as England's king. However, in *The Brink of All We Hate: English Satires on Women, 1660-1750*, Felicity Nussbaum notes that, in that particular case, the satiric attack "strikes at the peculiar aberrations of Charles II and his court wits, not at men as a sex because of their inherent lust and inconstancy. At the same time, however, most major satirists of the period address specific poems to women as a sex" (1). Traditionally, with only the rarest exception, women were written in the roles of the lustful whore, the unnaturally learned, the dangerous seductress, and the unfaithful deceiver. The supposed vices of women were considered justification for the satiric attacks against them. As women have power over men, to seduce them and rob them of their reason, the violent impulses against women apparent in some of the satire of the

period are a kind of *retaliation*, a way to fight back against the feminine assault to their better natures (Nussbaum 23).

One example from this antifeminist tradition is by the seventeenth century poet John Oldham. His poem, “A SATRY Upon a WOMAN, who by her Falsehood and Scorn was the Death of my Friend.” addresses the title figure as the “Vilest of the viler Sex, who damn’d us all!” (142). He rails against this woman and seeks to punish her for her presumed infidelity, writing that he is “to be to her / Both Witness, Judge, and Executioner: / Arm’d with dire Satyr, and resentful spite” (141). However, the poem takes that desire for justice to the extremes of retribution. He doesn’t just wish to “Rhime her dead,” but wants her suffering to be long and grotesque (141). To do justice to each section of Oldham’s ten page tirade of written violence would take many more pages than I can afford here; however, let us look to at least one stanza that speaks to the rabid nature of this self-proclaimed satire:

> Grant my strong hate may such strong poison cast,
> That every breath may taint, and rot, and blast,
> Till one large Gangrene quite o’respread her fame
> With foul contagion; till her odious name,
> Spit at, and curst by every mouth like mine,
> Be terror to her self (sic), and all her line. (142)

These lines, like the rest of the poem, are unflinchingly violent and antagonistic. Within the text, Oldham attacks both body and soul. The invective of the verse here certainly goes past the point of humor and, arguably, past the point of wit. The speaker within the text gives an impression of rabid madness and sexual aggression, rather than coherent, if biting, criticism. His only (self-described) kindness comes in the penultimate verse where

he hopes that the woman's sanity and senses not be harmed, but, as he reveals in the next line, this is only so that she is fully aware of her suffering.

Oldham's (perhaps only) saving grace in this poem is that he has labelled it as satire. This affords him both an audience expectation of exaggeration, though it is more typically associated with parody than with this overwhelming, non-ironic invective. The satiric labelling also provides a greater distinction between the actual author and the author as speaker in the text[1]. Oldham's poem is, thankfully, one of the more extreme examples of the antifeminist satire coming out of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but many writings from that period demonstrate the same impulse to violence against women. Nussbaum describes these assaults on the "weaker" sex as "a societally sanctioned substitute for physical violence; the satire contains the aggressive impulse, substituted for it in a ritualized and satisfying way" (24). Even in the seventeenth century, John Dryden noted how pervasive this strain of satire became, writing, "The weaker Sex is their most ordinary Theme: And the best and fairest are sure to be the most severely handled" (para. 88). Dryden's evaluation suggests that the antifeminist satire, though popular, was not entirely normalized nor considered above reproach. He identifies an injustice that is unbecoming of those that would claim to be satirists.

What separates many of these satires from other examples of the genre are their gendered nature. These writers do not merely seek to satirize a person that happens to be female. They go after women qua women, making judgments about the entire sex. That

[1] Maynard Mack, in defense of Alexander Pope, argues that readers of satire essentially miss the point if they do not appreciate the separation of the historical author from the dramatic persona of the author that speaks the satire in the poem (57).

is, of course, not to say that these stereotypes of the lustfulness, deception, infidelity, and general inferiority of women were isolated to satiric texts. However, my claim is that there is something in the very nature of satire itself that reflects poorly on antifeminist satire, regardless of the changes in views of gender equality in the time since. Though this contradicts the inclusion of numerous authors in the satirical canon that frequently engaged in antifeminist satire, I will shortly explain how these gendered attacks are antithetical to the foundational impulse within satire to elicit change from those satirized.

In addition to the other characterizations of the genre, satire is considered to have a moral imperative. Numerous scholars agree that it points to the vices of individuals and of society with the goal of causing change. Sometimes that is through the Horatian model of satire which is plentiful in humor but gentle in its critique, acknowledging the commonality of human error. However, the examples Nussbaum highlights are most frequently of the second category of satire, which is Juvenalian. Just like the verse from Oldham discussed above, the satire is merciless and, despite descriptions as solemn and dignified, can also be borderline rabid (Murfin & Ray 159, 185). The writings of Juvenal himself are actually the earliest surviving satires to attack women However, there seems to be contention among scholars whether this supposed origin of antifeminist satire was intended to be read as directly hostile or was meant as a more tongue in cheek satire that was perhaps overzealously appropriated by both antifeminist members of the clergy during the medieval period and again by the satirists of the seventeenth and eighteenth century (Walsh 224).

Even so, whether Horatian or Juvenalian, the intention of instigating reform in the individual or institution targeted is integral to the representation of satire. Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray explain this purpose in the following passage:

> Satire may generate laughter but essentially has a moral purpose. It is typically directed at correctable instances of folly or immorality in humanity or human institutions. Its goal is not to abuse so much as to provoke a response, ideally some kind of reform. Thus satire would not be directed at characteristics individuals cannot change (such as physical deformities) (357).

In this sense, satire is not mere retribution or attack, it aims to lead to improvements. However, within the understanding of gender prevalent during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that change might not have been considered possible. Research suggests that satirists of the time like Pope were aware of and participating in essentialist rhetoric (Ingrassia 49). In a culture that is by and large based on an essentialist understanding of gender differences, how are women presumed to be able to change their wicked ways after being lambasted by the seventeenth and eighteenth century male satirists? If differences in gender are inherent, how can the satire achieve its moral purpose? And yet, discussions of satire in that time justified the genre by characterizations of the satirist as a public servant and "physician to an ailing world" (Nussbaum 16). Moreover, current descriptions of satire craft the satirist as a strikingly admirable figure. In his essay, "The Muse of Satire," Pope scholar, Maynard Mack, wrote of the role of the satirist "as hero, he opens to us a world where discernment of evil is always accompanied, as it is not always in the real world, by the courage to strike at it" (63). In Mack's estimation, the satirist should be a man of plain living and high thinking who is amazed by his own involvement in taking on a great evil and is spurred to action,

not by his own personal animus at a contemporary foe but by the “strong antipathy of Good to Bad” (64). The satirist is essentially a person forced to strike up at a much more powerful enemy. In some ways, this is one of satire’s most admirable features. As a genre, it takes as its purpose the defense of what it deems to be good. However, even if I ignore the gendered language in Mack’s description, it seems that the satirist’s ethos, explained in this way, still privileges masculinity.

Even though it is understood that women were generally in a position of far less social, economic, and political power than men at this time, there was still a recurrent portrayal of women as having inordinate (meaning, of course, too much) power. As discussed earlier, some male satirists believed their verse to be a defense against women’s power to seduce them or ensnare their better judgment. Likewise, the ability to give birth appears to have been interpreted as access to some mysterious sort of power that was not available to men. As such, it would have been a foreign, if not alarming, idea to have a woman occupying the space of the marginalized satirist striking up at their much more powerful enemy. Despite these gendered perceptions, I would not have satire remove the moral imperative from its characterization. It should, in fact, be a warning against using satire as a socially acceptable means of violence. However, I would recast the tradition of gendered satire that I have merely begun to survey here as not just antifeminist satire. It is also *failed* satire.

Though I have examined several of the most common characterizations of satire, it is important to clarify here that these are not the only qualities attributed to satire nor is there a strong sense of consensus about what exactly satire entails. The *Encyclopedia*

Britannica entry I referred to earlier charges satire with being “one of the most heavily worked literary designations and one of the most imprecise” (Elliott). Definitions of satire and the scholarship about those definitions makes clear that there is ambiguity in what constitutes satire and who has the authority to make those decisions. In “Satire and definition,” Conal Condren surveys many of the ways academia has attempted to define satire. Condren provides examples where the satirical status of a text has been judged by a variety of rubrics, including whether a text uses specific literary devices. While some devices like irony and sarcasm tend to appear in most definitions, there is no unequivocally accepted list of all devices that are appropriate to the satirist’s arsenal. Other sources focus on an elusive sense of function, which Condren shows leads to its own series of problems, such as the definition of satire put forward in Nathan Bailey’s *Universal Etymological Dictionary*, which defines satire as “all manner of Discourse wherein any Person is sharply reproved” (qtd. in Condren 378). Descriptions of this nature can tend to be “so accommodating as to be valueless” (Condren 378). They can also fail to acknowledge the plurality of purposes that can be at work in a satirical text. Lastly, some sources would even evaluate a text by whether it was created by (or at least is very similar to) an author that is already considered satiric (Condren 377). This last standard seems ridiculous in its circular logic, yet, if it has been used, it could certainly help explain why women have had so little success breaking into the genre in a way that is recognized by audiences.

My discussion of these previous attempts at defining the genre is not meant to suggest that there is a simple solution for how to define satire that scholars have merely

been overlooking. The ongoing struggle that Condren highlights points to the challenging yet essential questions scholars must continue to work through if we are to produce meaningful research on the topic. Should the qualifications of satire be based on its conventions, the literary and rhetorical tools of its trade? Should it be defined by its purpose, or, more accurately, potential purposes – to criticize, to entertain, to condemn, to instigate change, to attack? Should it be defined by its topic matter, typically an individual or social institution that strikes the satirist as corrupted or immoral? My inclination is that satire cannot be appropriately defined by any one of these criterion. Surely we could think of a text that exemplifies one of these characteristics that we would still not call satire. Rather, an intersection and combination of these qualities is necessary if a definition of satire is meant to capture its robustly diverse capacities without generalizing to the point of meaninglessness like Bailey's definition discussed above. Obviously, this is not an exact equation, nor a perfect solution to the issue of defining satire. I readily admit that there may be an "I know it when I see it" element of satire that contributes to the slippage in language used to describe a satiric text.

But what is unambiguous from the survey of these characteristics of satire and conflicting stereotypes of women that have been illustrated here is that female satirists are at a serious disadvantage when they enter the arena of audience reception. They may come up against prevailing stereotypes about their gender that are frequently at odds with what an audience is likely to expect from satire, which means that audience members may be more susceptible to missing key signals that the performer is using parody or irony or exaggeration rather than being sincere.

CHAPTER THREE

BEHN AND MONTAGU: LITERARY AND SOCIAL MANEUVERINGS OF TWO FEMALE SATIRISTS

My first chapter focused on the ways in which, as a genre, satire has not only been predominately created by males but also has stereotypically "masculine" characteristics. However, there are numerous examples of satire by women. These texts are less ubiquitous and have certainly received less critical and popular attention historically, but they are, nevertheless, satirical. In this chapter, I examine two such examples from women poets writing in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Aphra Behn and Mary Wortley Montagu. They wrote evocative social criticisms influenced by their political, religious, and gendered experiences as literate women with access (if not membership, in the case of Behn) to the upper class. Both women, though Montagu in particular, were at times writing in conversation and debate with some of the most famous satirists of the period, including Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift. Still, a quick survey of biographic entries for Behn and Montagu reveals that they are rarely linked with satire. Behn is most often described as a dramatist, a poet, an indebted widow, and a figure often associated with scandal. Montagu is described as a letter writer, an aristocratic socialite, and a wife. As will come as a surprise to no one, these are rather dissimilar to the descriptions given to their male counterparts. Pope, for example, is most often described as a satirist, poet, and translator and Swift as an Anglo-Irish satirist, essayist, political pamphleteer, and poet.[2]

[2] These descriptions appear in the top results of an online search of each authors' name.

Nevertheless, in texts such as Behn's "To poet Bavius occasion'd by his satyr he writ in his verses to the King upon the Queen's being deliver'd of a son" and Montagu's "The Reasons that Induced Dr. S. to write a Poem called 'The Lady's Dressing Room,'" the authors make blatant satirical attacks against pervasive misogyny. While Behn and Montagu were hardly the first or only English women using their voices to document and critique sexism, the degree of popularity they experienced is fairly uncommon for women writers of the period. In this chapter, I consider the satire within the poems themselves and the ways in which these authors' writings navigate the gendered expectations delineated in the first chapter.

"To poet Bavius" was first printed in 1688, late in Aphra Behn's career. Behn was responding both to the birth of the Prince of Wales by Queen Mary of Modena and to a poem by John Baber, also called Bavius, titled "To the King, upon the Queens being Deliver'd of a Son." The Queen of England at the time, Mary of Modena, was another woman around which controversy flew. Her reputation for devout Catholicism led to mixed responses when she was finally able to deliver a son after eight pregnancies without a surviving male child. Many Protestants that had tolerated James II's Catholic reign, but were less than enthusiastic at the prospect of a Catholic heir. Behn had written a poem of resounding enthusiasm, "A Congratulatory Poem of her Most Sacred Majesty, on the Universal Hopes of All Loyal Persons for a Prince of Wales," but Baber's congratulations in the poem were clearly less sincere.

Baber's poem is condescending in tone and, as Behn mercilessly points out, appears to be thoroughly ignorant of the realities of pregnancy and labor. Within months,

Behn had responded with "To poet Bavius" in which, in addition to parodying his ignorance, she berates and ridicules him through exaggerated invective language to call him a fop, a buffoon, and a bad Catholic. In the first stanza, she includes one of the lines from Baber's poem, "But Duty did my desperate Ray Controule" (11). Her response immediately after denies his claim, reading, "'Tis False, thy Muse was Tame, as is thy Soul: / Thou hast no Rage, no Fire, no Spirit or Power, / But Feeble Rancor, for the Happy Hour" (12-14). Carol Barash reads these lines as an attack on Baber for his cowardly refusal to publicly claim his Catholic faith (142). The note by Behn in the margin, wherein she writes that Bavius would have been visibly enraged by the birth of the prince were it not for his duty to appear otherwise causes me to doubt that Bavius might have been a closet Catholic, or at the least that this was what Behn was accusing him of. However, it is still clear that she is accusing him of timidity, which would be an insult, regardless of whether it was directed at his religious identity.

Behn's treatment of Baber's poem is almost vicious. Rather than simply respond to the words, she appropriates them, at times out of context, to present the most superficial reasoning possible. Behn lifts entire lines from Baber's writing, such as the first two lines of the poem, and essentially uses his own words against him, which seems a much more irreverent, cutting form of mockery to take than criticizing him in her own language. Elizabeth V. Young also reads this a more antagonistic approach to take, one that Behn does not repeat when satirizing her sometimes friend John Dryden, instead treating the poetry as "essentially off-limits, beyond criticism," even if Dryden himself is not (199). Young also notes that Behn writes her own mock literary analysis in the

margins of her poem that “reduces Baber’s poetic argument to its most ridiculous simplicity (187). For example, Behn lifts two lines from Baber’s poem to begin her own, writing “A Labouring Muse, that full Nine Months had been / In Painful thro's Pregnant at last became” (1-2). Her brief comment in the margin points out the inconsistency of the following image Baber tries to craft of the muse that supposedly guides his work. She writes “First in Labour / and then Pregnant” (1-2). With Baber, she attacks both his reasoning and the quality of his poetry in the first stanza of her poem:

> *Nine Months a Loyal Zeal had Fir'd my Breast,*
> *Which for Nine Muses cou'd not be at rest*.
> Tell me, vain hard'ned Scribler, what Pretence
> Have those two Lines, to Kindred, or to Sense?
> The Luckey gingle of the *Nine* and *Nine*,
> Produc'd 'em without Thinking or Design.
> The first thy *Loyalties* short date Rehearses:
> The next, how Damnably thou Pump'st for Verses. (3-10)

The heroic couplet rhyme pattern demonstrated here is maintained throughout the poem, and seems to underscore Behn’s criticism about Baber’s lackluster “luckey gingle.” Her couplets demonstrate her ability to maintain a stanza without the nine and nine repetition in Baber’s original poem. In addition, though the heroic couplet was quite often used during the seventeenth century, I believe it contributes to the scathing tone of the poem. The close proximity of the rhymes and their accumulation gives a sense in which the lines direct a relentless barrage of criticisms at the target.

Analysis of this poem indicates that it uses language that is no less violent than the examples from the first chapter. Though much of Behn’s writing is less antagonistic, Young writes that there “are moments in her satire when she moves into lampoon, where the speaker's intellectual superiority is announced and then wielded as a club to beat the

subject into submission. Behn seldom goes on the attack so overtly, but when she does, she is deadly" (49). Her satire, which is strikingly aggressive, even by the standards of the genre demonstrates an incisive command of language. Much like the events of Behn's own life, her writing defies gender stereotypes prevalent at the time.

Likewise, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu acted and wrote in ways that ran against the expectations of submissive and demure behavior for women of the upper class. Montagu's satire is fashioned in direct response to Jonathan Swift's "The Lady's Dressing Room," which was published in 1732. Swift takes the perspective of Strephon, a young admirer of Celia, whose room he trespasses into while Celia and her maidservant are away. His survey of the items in her room reveals, to Strephon's shock and disappointment, that Celia is not always as polished and beautiful and sanitary as she appears in public. Unforgivably, Celia, initially described as a goddess, leaves pit stains when she sweats, has dirt, dandruff, and powder in the hairs in her brush, and is generally human when it comes to producing such unpleasant things as ear wax, body odor, and feces. Strephon's horror at this revelation blinds him to all subsequent feminine charms, as he cannot see women without remembering the "unsavory" reality disguised by women's artifices.

Two years later, Montagu released "The Reasons that Induced Dr. S. to write a Poem called 'The Lady's Dressing Room,'" which, as the title suggests, responds to Swift's text. However, rather than take to task the foolish Strephon, Montagu's principal character is Swift himself. In "Reasons," Dr. Swift has often tried and failed to win the (sexual) favor of Betty through wit and gallantry. Her maid takes pity on him, informing

him that Betty must be paid, not wooed. Having paid the sum, Swift's desires are thwarted by his own impotence, which he blames upon the reek of her chamber pot and her toes. When she refuses to refund him, he promises to deny her future clientele by revealing the state of her dressing room.

Like Behn's "To poet Bavius," Montagu uses couplets in her poem, though in iambic tetrameter. The effect is a very even, almost "sing-song" quality, with a cadence similar to many common nursery rhymes that use the same rhyme pattern. In addition, the rhymes are all very close and, in some instances, involve more than one rhyming syllable (such as in expression and digression at the end of lines 33 and 34 and in politician and ambition at the end of lines 43 and 44). The overall effect is trivializing, in contrast to the overly exaggerated tone of "The Lady's Dressing Room." Montagu does use extravagant, descriptive language, just as Swift does, and she retains the narrative style of "The Lady's Dressing Room," as opposed to the more direct, self-aware writing in "To poet Bavius."

Montagu's "Reasons" also diverges from the method of attack made by Behn (and, as I will discuss later, Swift). While she no doubt was critiquing the sexism she perceived in Swift, her climactic insult is to Swift's sexual potency, not his misogyny. After Betty has received the required sum, Swift is permitted entrance to her chamber, and the following unfolds: "The reverend lover with surprise / Peeps in her bubbies and her eyes, / And kisses both, and tries--and tries" (67-69). His ensuing rage, and presumed embarrassment, are posited as the reasons that Swift wrote so viscerally in "The Lady's Dressing Room." While it was hardly uncommon, even in Montagu's time, to use the emasculating insult of impotency, it does make a least a portion of her satirical attack

based on biological gendered differences. Her comedic insult is to Swift qua male and, while I would certainly argue for the skill and cleverness of her writing, uses a fairly low-hanging trope. However, the jab certainly demonstrates none of the overtly aggressive invective of the anti-feminist satire analyzed in the first chapter, and I believe the insult to the masculine specific impotency to be in service of a more egalitarian social commentary. The distinction between author and persona argued by Maynard Mack, also discussed in the previous chapter, should certainly be taken into consideration. Provided that her satire is indeed aimed at Swift's misogyny, not his possible erectile dysfunction, she was not violating the standard of satire explained in the first chapter by which satire cannot ethically be directed at an individual for characteristics they do not have the ability to change. I do, however, challenge whether Swift's intentions with "The Lady's Dressing Room" are as simple and sexist as Montagu's response suggests.

In this case, where Montagu is satirizing a text and author that are also satirical, we must consider as well what and who is being satirized. On first reading, Swift's "Dressing Room" appears to be a misogynist criticism of women. The exaggerated descriptions of the fairly commonplace articles found in Celia's room reach viscerally repellant, if simultaneously comedic, levels. Those descriptions are at least partially responsible for the negative reception the poem had during Swift's lifetime. Laetitia Pilkington, a poet and contemporary of Swift's, wrote that the writing made her mother promptly lose her supper (Pilkington 314). Even Swift's longtime friend Patrick Delany was reportedly too repulsed by the poem to read it a second time (Solomon 431). However, there is more to these descriptions than their shock or disgust value. Swift is

consistent in the type of characteristics he chooses to emphasize to make Celia repellant. However, scholars are still debating which social vices Swift is using them to criticize. Herbert Davis reads the horror of the dressing room as being intended to:

> make every sense revolt with disgust, not, as is sometime said, because he could not bear to think that rational human beings should have excretory organs, but because of all the bestialities hidden beneath the surface of polite society, and because of his constant shock, as a moralist, at the insane pride of these miserable vermin, crawling about the face of the earth. (47)

It is the artifice, not the earthiness, of people that propels Swift to write in such graphic terms. I'm inclined to agree with this reading, given the lines related to Strephon in the final stanza of the poem. There the narrator explains how Strephon has fared since his enlightenment. He is now horrified by all women and apparently rails against Celia. Therein, Strephon is described:

> (Who now so impiously blasphemes
> Her Ointments, Daubs, and Paints and Creams,
> Her Washes, Slops, and every Clout,
> With which he makes so foul a Rout;) (Swift 137-140)

He is still repelled by Celia, but it is significant that he speaks not about how gross or unappealing she is, but about the "deceptions" by which she makes herself attractive through the various products she uses.

Swift's satire can also be interpreted as potentially egalitarian. Through Celia, from her waxy ears to her noxious chamber pot, Swift seems to be deconstructing assumptions of gendered difference. True, she and all women become repulsive in the traumatized Strephon's eyes, but that stems from Celia becoming more, not less, human, unlike the antifeminist satire examined in the previous chapter. True, she defecates and sweats and grows hairs on her chin, but the horror of these characteristics is that she

becomes more like a man. In making Celia, or at least her dressing room, viscerally grotesque, Swift goes after the female body qua body, not qua female. The obvious target in the latter case would be something distinctly gendered, such as stains from menstrual blood.

I argue instead that Strephon is as much, if not more so, the figure of the text being satirized as is Celia. Take, for example, the descriptions Strephon provides – and it does seem likely the grotesque descriptions of the dressing room that Mrs. Pilkington found so nauseating come from Strephon, particularly given that the narrator asks "Why *Strephon* will you tell the rest? / And must you needs describe the Chest?" (69-70). It seems unlikely to me that a reader, whether of Swift's own lifetime or in the present day, would be moved to the same revulsion if they were actually looking at the dressing room. Sweat stains and dirty towels don't seem like enough to turn even a squeamish person's stomach. The language used for such common items is extremely exaggerated, thus the satirical nature of the poem. But, in addition, does it not also cast Strephon as immature and melodramatic to go into that amount of detail or use such a lofty metaphor as Pandora's Box or use the overwrought repetition of "Celia, Celia, Celia shits" (118)? Celia may have foul smelling defecations, but that would have hardly been surprising to any reasonable reader. Instead, it should give a reader pause to realize that Strephon, whom we are not explicitly told is particularly young, can possibly be this naïve. In addition to his initial horror, he is also unable to move beyond his realizations after leaving Celia's chambers. He appears to be perpetually horrified by the female half of the population, which is purported to be punishment for his actions, although he is not,

presumably, alarmed by men, who are certainly as unhygienic as Celia, and possibly more, in their bodily functions. If Strephon is to be read as representative of masculinity in the same way that he assumes Celia to be representative of all the females he later encounters, Swift has hardly painted a promising picture of what it means to be male.

Perhaps one of the reasons this interpretation is not often discussed is in the way Strephon and his relationship to Celia are discussed by scholars. Though most descriptions of the poem cast Strephon as Celia's lover or she his beloved, the poem does not establish this intimacy between the two. Instead, he is punished by the goddess of vengeance for his "peeping" and notes that "the Men lie / in calling Celia sweet and cleanly," rather than Strephon himself having previously called her these things (17-18). This distinction in admirer and lover supports the argument that Strephon is being satirized more than the artifices of women he criticizes. He is not merely naïve in his expectations of women; his seemingly curiosity-driven trespassing, in modern times, would suggest a myriad of negative (if not criminally-prosecutable and psychologically alarming) characteristics that still should not reflect positively on him at the time the poem was written.

I would hasten to acknowledge that this does not necessarily mean that Swift was making a feminist argument about women on the basis of his satire being more egalitarian in scope. He could be satirizing both women's artifices and men's naiveté for believing the artifice to be the truth. Moreover, Montagu had reason to anticipate gendered animosity from Swift. When he and Alexander Pope collaborated to publish their *Miscellanies*, they repeatedly targeted Montagu's sexuality in their writings against

her. These written attacks came after a falling out between Pope and Montagu who allegedly broke off their friendship due to sexual and authorial jealousy on the part of Pope (Grundy 274).

Even factoring in for negative attention from Swift and Pope, we need to consider why the critical writings of Behn and Montagu were more or less tolerated in their own time, given how much more likely women of the period were to be the target of satire rather than the author of it and how frequently and thoroughly women were dismissed and ridiculed when they entered the sociopolitical arena. Though Behn's sexual activities became a source of criticism and public scrutiny, she was still one of the first English women able to, with relative success, earn a living wage from her writing. Montagu's poems and political writings were also widely circulated during her lifetime, though she is more typically associated with her *Turkish Embassy Letters*. In the case of these authors' satires, I believe multiple factors contribute to the social acceptability they achieved.

Among these factors are likely the point at which each of these poems were written in relation to the poet's career. As stated previously, "To poet Bavius" was written in 1688, only a year before Behn died. Likewise, "Reasons" was written in 1734, more than a decade into Montagu's fairly public writing career. Both writers already had achieved some measure of undoubtedly hard won esteem as writers before turning their pens to satire. In the case of Behn, she wrote quite a few plays of varying degrees of success, from romantic dramas that grew more and more risqué to a number of tragicomedies, before writing poetry that was more blatantly critical. Montagu had also

worked successfully in other genres before turning to satire. Moreover, while I would hardly consider the criticism in each poem to be subtle, satire was, in that period, a more socially acceptable means of delivering insult than other written forms. In Montagu's case, she was also writing into a well-established generic tradition regarding male impotence. The "imperfect enjoyment" genre was popularized by a poem of the same name by John Wilmot, earl of Rochester, in the 1670s and is also associated with Behn's "The Disappointment" from 1680. Much as Behn made the genre her own by including the frustration of the female perspective, Montagu's use of the generic convention to ridicule Swift was also non-traditional.

Additionally, the particular circumstances for "To Bavius" and "Reasons" could have allowed Behn and Montagu to circumnavigate the issue of the satirist's ethos I addressed in the first chapter. Women would have been traditionally denied the position of the harried, martyr-like satirist that wrote to strike against a much more powerful and corrupt institution due to the supposed power they had over men and through childbirth. Though I would not necessarily argue that this was an intentional rhetorical strategy adopted by Behn and Montagu, I suspect having one easily identified person that each author was attacking made their satire more palatable to the public. Bavius and Swift were both very visible, well established literary figures at the time each of the poems was written, which also likely drew in readers. By directing their attacks at a single individual, Behn and Montagu might not have been associated with the masculine ethos of the satirist as "striking up" at a broader, much more powerful enemy in the same way that a less directed satire might have been. Moreover, they demonstrate none of the

impulse witnessed in the antifeminist satire to portray the male target as representative of the entire sex. Though Behn and Montagu certainly reprove Bavius and Swift, they do not characterize them as symptomatic of the male gender's wickedness or inferiority. Even though each of these poems has a broader social commentary embedded potentially uneasy male audiences would likely have been more comfortable with the texts, given that they could read the jabs and criticisms as being pertinent only to the person directly addressed.

It is possible to interpret that this reading suggests that Behn and Montagu's satires were less effective, as they might be more easily dismissed. However, psychological studies into Attitude Representation Theory instead indicate that this could be an effective method of correcting behaviors or, at the very least, changing how readers perceive the individual singled out in the poem as well as those that share the target's characteristics. In an examination of the implications of Attitude Representation Theory, wherein individuals evaluate and respond to a category of people based on their perception of the exemplars of that category, researchers found that people will find a category of people more or less favorable if their attitude towards a representative member of that category changes (Sia et al. 506). In this case, this could allow readers to acknowledge and validate the criticisms against Bavius and Swift and subconsciously develop a less positive association for those belonging to the same categories without having to overtly address the broader social commentary being made. In the case of a highly visible or well-known exemplar, the categories they belong to (upper class, male, educated, writer, etc.) would not have to be explained, and, at the same time, it is

understood that the criticism is not being directed at all members of each category to which the exemplar belongs but rather to those that belong to the same combination of identifiers as the exemplar. In the context of these women authors' satire, that would, for example, mean that male authors might be the target, but all men were not. Though the researchers were examining easily identified categories, like political party, this could perhaps also extend to more ideological positions such that particularly egregious or public misogynists could be exemplars of a category as well. Obviously, I do not mean to suggest that Behn and Montagu were intentionally employing twentieth-century psychological theory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries or even that they made the decision to target one highly visible male by name in their satire as a strategy to make their writing more palatable to audiences. Instead, I argue that this technique may well have made readers more comfortable, and thereby more accepting, of these authors' poems without lessening their potential to shape attitudes and behaviors in a strongly antifeminist culture.

That is not to say, of course, that Behn and Montagu didn't experience resistance to their ideological messages or were not targeted by their contemporaries. There appear to be more writers slandering Behn than there are written records of her biographic information. Her plays and poems were labeled as inappropriately bawdry, and she personally was described in numerous poems, including "The Session of Poets," wherein her appearance and sexuality were attacked. Most of these charges centered on her sexual behaviors – that she was a lascivious harlot or lesbian as well as too old, unattractive, or hermaphroditic for the robust sex life she purportedly had (O'Donnell 8-9). Additionally,

when Behn did turn her satire to a group, rather than an individual, she experienced considerable backlash. She railed against the Whig party and subsequently had a warrant issued for her arrest in 1682 (6). Montagu also had a number of highly publicized attacks launched against her after her writing was released. The most infamous of these came from years of antagonistic poetry exchanged between Montagu and Pope after the falling out discussed above. On multiple occasions Pope wrote verses that referred to her as Sappho. His *Miscellanies* with Swift decried her as socially coquette and simultaneously sexually promiscuous (Grundy 274).

I suspect social and economic class as well as marital status to have shielded Montagu in a way they did not protect Behn. Far less of Behn's life is known by scholars with any certainty than Montagu's; however, from what the scant evidence is available, it seems likely that she was born into a lower class home. Individuals writing after her death suggest that her father was a barber and her mother a wet nurse. Records indicate that she married Mr. Behn, possibly a ship captain, of the merchant class sometime before a draft letter indicated his death in 1669 (O'Donnell 3). After her husband's death, Behn undertook several espionage assignments from the English government. Following those assignments, she was destitute before she began to financially support herself as a writer, rather than remarrying. Even after her writing was fairly well circulated, she still experienced poverty as a single woman, which may have left her more open to social and literary attack. The peculiarity of an unwed female writer apparently led to considerable intrigue. There appear to have been ongoing speculations during Behn's life and even in the scholarship written about her today regarding which lovers she may or may not have

taken at particular times in her life. Even though Pope and scholarly biographies about Montagu question whether there were romantic implications to Montagu's friendships with Lord Hervey and the Frenchman Rémond, there do not appear to have been near the degree of public criticisms or even speculations about Montagu's sexuality as Behn experienced, which certainly in part is related to her marriage with a prominent ambassador of the court.

This chapter has pointed out a number of differences between the two authors considered, with regards to their social and marital status, and as writers, in the prosodic and ideological methods of their satiric attacks. Additionally, the degree to which each author's poems are critically analyzed, in relation to the poems they satirize, is dissimilar. The poem Montagu responds to is by a famous canonical author that is much better known and more frequently analyzed than Montagu's response. "Reasons" is rarely discussed without reference to Swift's original. Conversely, Baber's poem is difficult to access and has very limited if any academic analysis that isn't directly related to Behn. Despite this difference and those that have been addressed throughout this chapter, both Behn and Montagu share status as cultural anomalies. Both women attained lasting acclaim as writers and accessed the role of social and poetic satirist, a position almost exclusively occupied by males during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Contemporary audiences have much to gain from reading these authors. Behn and Montagu model a fluidity of gender performativity in a rigidly prescriptive culture that contributes to a feminist understanding of the resistance to systemic misogyny occurring in this period. Aphra Behn could be exacting in her written attack, metaphorically cutting

Bavius down with his own lines. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, well-traveled socialite and member of the elite upper class, could satirize one of the foremost satirists of the period while drawing upon a "low-brow", biologically based insult to Swift's euphemistic masculinity. Both demonstrate how the barriers of social and gendered expectations are much more permeable than they appear, even if that permeability is not without consequences.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BODY SATIRIC: GENDER AND SATIRE IN *THE DAILY SHOW*

Introduction

Satire has a long history on the page and on the screen. The canon of recognized satirical texts have traditionally been produced by males, and, Elizabeth Hedrick, drawing on the categorical scholarship of Lorraine M. York, noted that satire has been regarded as a "no-woman's land of literary modes" (123). Some argue that the genre of satire itself is inherently masculine, given that it is characterized by a combination of criticism, comedy, and aggression (Young 185). In the introductory chapter I argued that the historical dearth of female voices in the satire "canon" is due to a lack of audience recognition of satire written by females, rather than a disproportionately low amount of texts by female writers engaging with satire. The third chapter on the satire of Aphra Behn and Mary Wortley Montagu analyzed the challenges and strategies of two female satirists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this chapter, I will be examining how patterns of performances of satire in the contemporary comedy news television program, *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart*, are often gendered in ways that influence audience reception. My findings do not validate any essentialist claims about the necessity of a masculine voice in satire, but, rather, demonstrate how evocative satire and critical social commentary can be created by men and women, despite gendered differences in performance. These findings suggest that the gendered differences in *The Daily Show*, if representative of a pattern within satire more broadly, could make

audience recognition of women's satire created even more challenging for an audience conditioned to expect the conventions of satire in the "masculine" voice.

For my purposes, *The Daily Show* is an excellent site for examining contemporary iterations of satire as it features a broad cast of male and female correspondents, though there have traditionally been considerably more male than female correspondents on the show. During Jon Stewart's tenure as the *The Daily Show*'s host, it has been a highly popular television program that markets itself as a comedy news show, producing satirical segments for an estimated viewership of 2.5 million individuals as of 2013 (The Futon Critic). It is a fairly accessible, mainstream iteration of satire that still maintains a subversive, progressive status in relation to traditional news programs on FOX and CNN, which is well-suited to the ethos of the satirist as reaching up to strike at the people of power and authority in the only way they can.

Recently, however, *The Daily Show* has come under fire for its representations of gender. In the interim between Jon Stewart's final episode and Trevor Noah's first as host of the show, Chandra Kellison for *Al Jazeera America* brought to light a contradiction in *The Daily Show*'s treatment of women in an article titled "'The Daily Show' has a woman problem." The program features numerous talented female correspondents, frequently addresses concerns that disproportionately affect women, and, in the daily interview segment that finishes each episode, is respectful in its treatment of the women interviewed. However, Kellison points out that *The Daily Show*, along with most of its late-night talk show contemporaries, draws on misogynist jibes where the joke is seemingly directed at a woman qua woman, rather that targeting the competence,

morality, or professionalism of their actions. The article points to examples of prominent women such as Hillary Clinton, Valerie Plame Wilson, Laura Bush, and Condoleezza Rice being sexualized in a way that the male political and cultural figures frequently taken to task by *The Daily Show*, such as Bill O'Reilly, Mitch McConnell, Donald Trump, and Bill de Blasio, are not.

The new host, Trevor Noah, who made headlines when it was announced he would take over after Stewart's departure in August 2015 over popular, long-time correspondents including Samantha Bee and Jessica Williams, has already been the source of scrutiny in relation to women and *The Daily Show*. Rather than address Noah's now exhaustively reported tweets that were deemed to be sexist and anti-Semitic, Christina Cauterucci, staff writer for *Slate*, looked to Noah's response to the controversial *Vanity Fair* photo that featured ten male, mostly white hosts of late night television, in a rousing defense of the state of the genre. Immediate backlash resulted, casting the photo and subsequent article as evidence "of the endemic sexism in contemporary comedy and television" (Cauterucci). When Noah was asked for comment on the gendered exclusivity of the photo, he reportedly responded, "I guess what we need to look at is how is that evolving? The first step in that is you go, OK, there's two men of color. That's a big jump. Pretty soon there will be a woman that'll be added to that" (Cauterucci). His comment continued, projecting the idea that a trajectory towards equal representation occurs naturally, without intervention, which fell flat for many, including the author of this *Slate* article. Though this critique is more narrowly tied to Noah, rather than the

show, the two are likely to become as indelibly linked as Jon Stewart and *The Daily Show* have been since Stewart began hosting the show in 1999.

I bring up these criticisms not to downplay what I consider to be the highly laudable work undertaken by *The Daily Show*. Jon Stewart and company take on a broad range of social injustices and are known for enlightened and insightful reports and interviews. Instead, this introduces the idea that *The Daily Show* can create cogent, effective satire, yet still have an available trajectory for improvement in its role as a producer of and commentator on gendered ideology. I believe a greater attention to the potentially sexist behaviors these articles have addressed would be a continuation, rather than a revision or curtailment, of the program's progressive values.

Though specific to performances by correspondents of *The Daily Show*, my research here takes up the broader issue of gendered representations within the genre of satire. As discussed in the second chapter, the characteristics often attributed to satire, such as humor, intelligence, and aggression, have been socially constructed as masculine traits. The prospective female satirist therefore finds herself culturally stereotyped in ways that might heighten the likelihood that her satire is not recognized. However, the degree to which characterizations of satire and stereotypes of women are dissimilar is somewhat dependent on which kind of satire is being considered. The more light-hearted Horatian satire, for example, is not nearly as aggressive in approach as the more invective Juvenalian satire. These classifications of satire become particularly significant when they intersect with the performative nature of both gender and satire, which I will address in more depth in my discussion of the results.

While I explained my usage of a number of the rhetorical tools that will be relevant in this chapter, such as irony, parody, and sarcasm, there are a number of other categories of comedic behaviors that are less specific to satire that I will later discuss that run the risk of ambiguity. To remedy this, I will here take the opportunity to clarify the parameters of several of the categories of humor I use for my analysis. For example, I tracked instances of bodily humor for each of the correspondents. In these occurrences, the comedic impact of the moment was reliant, or at least heavily augmented, by the physical behaviors of the correspondents, such as when Samantha Bee gave birth to an apple pie or Jordan Klepper mimicked the posture of a supposedly "dope," forward thinking pastor. I also recorded when sexualized humor was used, which often (though not always) overlapped with bodily humor. In one of the videos where I observed this kind of humor, for example, Jones was both partially naked, wearing a diaper, and also bantered with Stewart about an infantilization fetish.

Empirical research into performances of satire is fairly rare, even as the range of topics and texts taken up in qualitative and even quantitative analysis has expanded over time. Still, in the analyses that have been conducted, there are trends in the variables considered. In "Developing a Normative Approach to Political Satire: An Empirical Perspective," R. Lance Holbert explains that the empirical research related to satire has traditionally focused on how persuasive political satire is and how well-informed viewers of political satire are in comparison to traditional news programs. Though studies related to persuasion have produced little replicable data, they have considered a broad array of research questions, from how persuasion interacts with humor to whether different

subgenres of satire, such as Juvenalian or Horatian, have different degrees of potential for persuading audiences (307-308). A number of studies also related to how political satire affects audiences' political knowledge. While it is certainly heartening to find that viewers of *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* are revealed to be amongst the most informed of television audiences, my focus is on *The Daily Show* itself as a satiric, comedic text, rather than on how actual audience members are informed and persuaded by it.

More specifically, I am interested in the way *The Daily Show* represents gender through the production and performance of satire. Previous research on contemporary feminist humor and satire has looked at the way in which feminists, if not necessarily women more broadly, may intentionally use a more Horatian style of humor when they venture into the arena of satire. In "Robin Morgan, Jane Alpert, and Feminist Satire," Elizabeth Hedrick theorizes that, since the 1980s, feminist writing, when humor is involved, has tended towards a more gentle, less attacking style. Part of the lack of scholarly analysis on feminist satire is that it is usually branded under the broader heading of comedy, possibly in response to cultural stereotypes of humorless, angry feminists.

To date, my research has not yielded any scholarship that includes empirical queries into performances of satire that consider gender and methods of humor. In part, I suspect that this is due to the subjective nature of the topic, particularly when humor is in question. Though I have endeavored to focus on more quantifiable aspects, like physical

behaviors and clearly defined verbal cues, I acknowledge the subjectivities of reception that will be apparent in my methods and have a role in the findings of this study.

Methodology

I surveyed ten clips from each correspondent, privileging clips that were selected on the Comedy Central website as the correspondents' best segments. These clips were displayed on each correspondent's biographic information webpage, which were a component of Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* website until *The Daily Show with Trevor Noah* began and many of the features on the site for *The Daily Show with Jon Stewart* were removed. I used this standard to target segments that were considered representative of the correspondent and were likely to have received the most views by audiences, reducing the likelihood that my selections were biased towards my own preferences in performances. Comedy Central and the individuals tasked with creating this representation of the correspondents may well have their own marketing agenda that shapes which clips they select. However, I see no way, even if I were to expand the survey far beyond the scope of this endeavor, to eliminate that likelihood. Whether it is my agenda or Comedy Central's, there's likely to be some guiding motivation that determines the segments selected. Instead, my focus and my rationale is to see videos that have been selected and framed as representative for the purposes of audience reception. These clips have greater accessibility, both through Comedy Central's website and through video sharing websites like YouTube than most of the body of work produced by these correspondents. My endeavor, as such, is not to get "beyond" the influence of an institutional agenda but rather to see what an "average" audience member (if such a thing

were to exist) that looks online for these correspondents is likely to take away as the representation of satire created by the clips.

For each segment, I did two rounds of observations. In the first, I noted the most prominent behaviors and conventions related to gender, sexuality, physicality, argument, and satire, and, in the second, I compared the clips against a prescribed list of the behaviors and content that had occurred more than once from my initial series of observations. I tracked the correspondents Jessica Williams, Jordan Klepper, Samantha Bee, and Jason Jones. Williams and Klepper are frequently paired together in segments, as are Bee and Jones. In each of these pairings, the correspondents are of approximately the same age, have a similar length of tenure on *The Daily Show*, and have the same country of origin. Analyzing these particular correspondents offers both the opportunity to see them on screen with each other but also to reduce the amount of non-gendered variables at play.

In my observations, I tracked the behavior and speech of the correspondents, including when they engaged in invective, non-ironic language and tone, as opposed to the frequently parodic, more Horatian "character" the correspondents frequently assume. I also recorded when the correspondents used verbal and physical cues of agreement or disagreement in interviews, used ironically derogatory language or tone, or engaged in sexual and/or bodily humor. I also tracked features of the segment itself, such as the reliance on or subversion of gender stereotypes.

To put these results into a broader context that connects many of the individual variables tracked, I will supplement my quantitative analysis of behaviors across the

segments with a more qualitatively-focused discussion of these behaviors in relation to the clip from each correspondent where they are the most direct use the most invective in their performance. These segments are: “Live from Sochi-ish: Behind the Iron Closet,” featuring Jason Jones; “Parenting with the Enemy,” featuring Samantha Bee; “Discriminatory Diner Discounts,” featuring Jordan Klepper; and “Jessica’s Feminized Atmosphere,” featuring Jessica Williams.

Building and Breaking Tension: Analyzing ‘News’ Correspondents

In “Live from Sochi-ish – Behind the Iron Closet,” which was filmed during the 2014 Winter Olympics in Russia, Jason Jones uses unapologetically invective speech, by which I mean he uses critical, non-ironic, even insulting language, during his interview with Sergey Markov, a political analyst and spokesperson for Russian President Vladmir Putin. After weeks of international coverage about Russia’s controversial stance on homosexuality, Jones begins the interview by saying, “Let’s talk about gay rights or, as you call them in Russia, whatever the opposite of that is.” As opposed to his often parodic performance of satire, his expression and delivery of the line would make it very difficult for an audience to read the sarcasm in his tone as anything other than critical.

In defending Russia’s anti-gay policies, Markov launches into an explanation of how homosexuality is self-evidently no more normal than attempting to have sex with the table they were sitting at. Jones’ response is analytical and negative, responding “That’s a false analogy.” Jones does, later in the interview, offer an absurd solution, which at first seems in keeping with the more frequent model of exaggerated imitation that *The Daily*

Show and the program's spin-off, *The Colbert Report*, are associated with. When Markov explains that all sides of the debate need to be represented, including those that believe homosexuality to be sinful or a sickness, Jones posits, "Why don't we have a gay pride parade, following by a homophobic parade, followed by a fucking idiot parade?" However, what might typically be a tongue-in-cheek solution is inscribed with invective criticism through the colorful description used for the final party. His evaluation of the anti-gay position is clear, at least to the audience, though Markov doesn't, at least on camera, respond as though he understands Jones' proposition as insult.

Instead, Markov assures Jones that one day, when Jones is dealing with his own children being exposed to homosexuality, he will return to tell Markov that he was correct in his beliefs all along. Jones' final comment of the interview is, "I don't have a lot of certainties in life, but the one absolute certainty I have is I will never say 'Sergey, you are right.'" The segment ends before Markov responds, leaving it unclear if Markov was ever aware and responsive to the pejorative in Jones' comments and questions. Still, as opposed to another style of satire used by Jones in other segments where he agrees, at times emphatically, with the individuals he interviews as they become more and more absurd, he expresses disbelief and frustration in the interview with Markov.

Where Jones is insulting yet calm, not raising his voice during the interviews, Samantha Bee repeatedly lost her temper during the segment "Parenting with the Enemy," which reveals that survivors of rape cannot terminate their rapists' parental rights. Bee interviews Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz and activist Shauna Prewitt to discuss thwarted efforts to introduce legislation that would make it easier for

the 10,000 women per year that carry children conceived by rape to protect themselves and their children from the rapists that impregnated them. Each time the women interviewed reveal further information about how dire the situation is, Bee expresses her disbelief and interrupts the interviews to rein in her temper via comfort from various animals, including “emotional support baby chickens” and a Yorkie dog delivered by handle to be pulled “in case of everything just being too much.” While still conveying the absurdity of the issue, these sequences add levity to the otherwise serious, frustrated tone of the interviews.

Throughout the segment, Bee retained elements of satire that are less straightforward than the invective Jones uses. She takes her frustration to a comedic and parodic level. For example, she walks off set, seemingly for hours, while trying to think through her anger. Eventually, she arrives in the woods, where long shots of a snow covered cabin and sprawling forests are shown. The idyllic setting is paired with lilting strings music that replaces the tense dissonant music that had been playing when she initially walked away from the interview. She dons a long beard and initially refuses to return to civilization where the law does not protect rape victims from having to fight in custody battles with their rapist. Despite the gravity of the topic, the segment is frequently punctuated by moments of light-hearted, Horatian humor.

The emphasis on exaggerated, comedic expressions of frustration invites stark comparison to the strategy used in Jones’ segment. I do not mean to suggest that there are not moments from Jones’ interview with Markov that could not be considered humorous. However, those moments, such as Markov’s perplexing analogy about “making sex” with

his table or Jones' final line, all occur within the interview and either come from the interviewee or are in direct response to something said by the interviewee. In "Parenting with the Enemy," I found the comparatively few moments of levity within the interviews to be overshadowed by the burlesqued antics when Bee abandoned the interviews.

While there are still instances of humor, comedy does not appear to be the primary priority in Jordan Klepper's segment "Discriminatory Diner Discounts." He does appear sympathetic at first with Dan Barker, an atheist activist for the Freedom From Religion Foundation. However, just as Jones responds to Markov's inappropriate analogy of homosexuality and sex with inanimate objects, Klepper expresses skepticism when Barker equates a fifteen percent discount for praying at a diner with historic segregation in Selma and Birmingham, Alabama. After learning that the "prayer" required to receive the discount can be as simple as thanking the chef or taking a moment of silence, Klepper is blunt and insulting, beginning the next question with an expletive before asking "You're not just being a dick, are you?" While the insults and expletives draw a laugh from the in-studio audience, the humor of the language seems to be in service of the frustrated evaluation being made about the narrative of persecution that Barker puts forth, rather than the expression of frustration for potential comedic value.

Instead, the lighter moments of the segment come when Klepper interviews Mary Haglund, the owner of Mary's Gourmet Diner. His language when introducing her is highly exaggerated, describing Haglund as "the face of hate" in a voiceover that is clearly designed to be ironic, given that clips of what appears to be an entirely innocuous diner filled with elderly patrons and Haglund working a cash register show during Klepper's

introduction. His first on-screen question to her also draws laughter, asking how long she has been a bigot, as they seem to have nothing to do with Haglund's previous comment, in which she states that the policy was meant to foster a sense of inclusivity, rather than exclusion for atheists After further interviews with Barker, Klepper tells Haglund he thinks Barker and the Freedom From Religion representatives are "just being petty assholes," drawing cheers from the studio audience. The relationship portrayed in the interview is distinctly empathetic, as opposed to the consistently critical way in which Klepper relates to Barker. This is consistent with a broader trend among the most direct of the correspondents' segments, all of which had interviews with females representing the favored side of position on the topic. I continue my analysis of the gendered implications of this pattern after my initial explanation of each correspondents' segments.

This also occurred in Jones' segment. After the interview with Markov, Jones takes to the streets to see if the people of Russia were more progressive and tolerant of homosexuality than the government representative. The majority of the interviews left Jones appalled at the pervasive levels of unchallenged homophobia, particularly when a woman called homosexuality "the shame of my country." However, the final interview was with a single protester against the oppressive laws surrounding homosexuality. She explains that she has to do all that she can to resist to avoid being ashamed and then quotes the Joss Whedon television series, *Angel*. The quote is given non-ironically, though it elicits laughter, particularly when the scene from *Angel* is played. However, Jones does not laugh and, instead, uses a much warmer, far less deadpan and cynical tone than was used in the Markov interview and that is typical of his performances. He says,

"This is one of those points where I don't have any irony. I just kind of want to give you a hug." In Jones' and Kleppers' segments, which, to reiterate, were the ones in which the most criticism and invective language were given by each correspondent, the attack is directed at a male that represents the institution being critiqued, and a subsequent interview, in which the correspondent is more light-hearted and empathetic, is featured with a female.

The last segment, "Jessica's Feminized Atmosphere," falls somewhere between the dryness of Klepper's and Jones' interviews and Bee's repeated appeals to comedy to alleviate the depressing nature of her topic. Williams begins with an overly positive, even sugary account of the attention she receives from males on a daily walk to work and the excessive maneuvering she would have to do to avoid all the instances of street harassment she experiences. After this, though introduced as a meeting with one or two women who mind this frequent harassment, she actually is interviewing dozens of women who have frequently experienced street harassment. Throughout the first half of the segment, Williams parodies the misogynistic speech of male news personalities, even expressing skepticism initially in her interview with the women and suggesting they "lighten up." However, after the women detail the sexual harassment they have experienced on a daily basis, Williams apologizes, non-ironically, that this has happened to them. This moment of sincerity is short lived, however. Williams returns to the streets to demonstrate extreme exaggerations of potential solutions for women. Infomercial-quality upbeat music plays in the background as Williams explains the "rules" for

avoiding sexual harassment, including "mastering the art of the fake phone call" and "acting like a psycho," which translated to skipping down the street singing loudly.

Similar to "Parenting with the Enemy," "Jessica's Feminized Atmosphere" ends on a shot designed to leave the audience laughing. She leads the women from the interview in a chant that references one of the comments one of them had been told by a stranger: "Sir, it is not okay for you to say that you want to take a shit on my tits and a dump on my breasts. Also, that's redundant." Where the graphic, expletive-laden language was occupying a very solemn, at times angry space when the women were initially explaining the comments they had received on the street, this reclaiming and rejecting of that particular comment was portrayed as positive and humorous. Like Bee's concluding sequence where she is surrounded by a calf and a lamb, this segment ends on a somewhat light-hearted moment that still acknowledges that the issue is serious and on-going.

Even in the instances in which the correspondents are most aggressively critical, the female correspondents are much more likely to use burlesqued, exaggerated behaviors rather than remain in the interviews for extended periods of time. Despite the disquieting topics both female correspondents address and the more serious moments of the discussion, Bee and Williams both adhere much more rigorously to the comedic genre into which *The Daily Show* is billed than Jones or Klepper. The male correspondents are instead permitted to use a more focused and angry style of coverage of the topics. They can adopt an ethos in which they are so impassioned by the injustice of the topic or the stupidity of the (male) interviewee that they are allowed to stop being funny on a show

that brands itself as "comedy news." In an interview, Jones indicated that his ratings actually increased after his interview with Markov when he began using the more aggressive, direct method. He explained, "Ever since that moment, that's how I've been treating field pieces, and, weirdly enough, my popularity has gone up because of it... like 'Oh, he's speaking the truth'" ("Farewell, Jason Jones"). Jones and Klepper are not prohibited from breaking the fourth wall of the genre's expectations in the same way that Bee and Williams are, and I suspect that the female correspondents would not see the same rise in ratings if they attempted to access that ethos. Future studies should look to whether differences in presentation like this have an impact on how significant or urgent the topic is perceived to be by audiences over time.

Additionally, in those segments, neither female correspondent is placed into an interview with an individual, male or female, that represents the action or institution the correspondents are criticizing. Instead, they are only shown in interviews where they are sympathetic to the interviewee's views. Both male correspondents, conversely, interview men whom they vehemently criticize and, subsequently, women with whom they sympathize. The gendered prohibitions apparently proscribe not only who can satirize, but also who can be satirized. The atheistic male Barker is a "fair" target in a way that the sweet diner owner Haglund is not, though she could perhaps be critiqued for her insistence on calling a moment of gratitude or reflection a "prayer." These patterns in the interviews can be read as falling into the stereotypes that women are more passive and in need of protection or indulgence, whereas men are the ones that engage in conflict. Furthermore, the frequent cut-aways from the interviews in Bee's and Williams'

segments perhaps also gender the Horatian and Juvenalian categories of satire. I don't mean to suggest that the criticism in Bee and Williams' segments is any less potent for its more comedic components, but the silliness in their physical antics seems in line with the less cutting style of humor used in Horatian satire. The frequent insults and combative style of engagement Jones and Klepper use in their interviews is more in keeping with a Juvenalian tradition.

Additionally, though all the correspondents engaged with men and women in interviews, the female correspondents' segments involved more usage of gender stereotypes. While it could likely be argued that these would be a component of virtually all of the segments, given that they are produced within and for a culture that is often prescriptive in its notions of gender, I here look to the segments that explicitly interact with constructs of masculinity and femininity. One example was when Samantha Bee goes into an extended description of the members of the program "Morning Joe" as a heteronormative family led by Daddy Joe and Mama Mika, while she stirs a bowl of food and gives birth to an apple pie. Gender roles were a prominent feature of Bee and William's clips, used in nearly half of their segments (four and five times, respectively)[3]. By contrast, Jones and Klepper, in the few occasions where their segments were noticeably bound up with gender stereotypes, primarily dealt with gender stereotypes related to sexuality, such as male exhibitionism on the anonymous audio-visual chat website ChatRoulette, or were a collaboration with one of the female correspondents. Klepper, for example, only addressed a gender stereotype in "Fault in Our Schools," in

[3] See Table: Daily Show Trials on page 74 for full results.

which he was partnered with Jessica Williams. This can perhaps be read as consistent with the often reductive idea that "gender issues" are "women's issues." This disparity likely speaks to the invisibility of masculinity as the default or "neutral" gender.

While I can see perhaps that the producers and correspondents might want to avoid the impression that the male correspondents are assuming a place of authority they would not have in relation to issues that disproportionately affect women, this does not seem to prevent correspondents from reporting and commenting on other topics where they do not share the identifiers of the demographic predominantly impacted. Other segments surveyed in this study show Klepper combatting racist comparisons as a white male and Jones rebutting homophobia as a married, heterosexual man.

In addition, though the female correspondents' segments also frequently broke with traditional gender roles, almost as often as they incorporated them, Jones' and Klepper's segments did not challenge gender stereotypes a single time. For example, by the end of Jones' appearance in "Tech-Talch," males, at least those on ChatRoulette, are still represented as lewd exhibitionists. Though rare, there were also segments where Bee and Williams mimicked or invoked gender stereotypes without breaking them either. In these instances, I would venture that a) the parody is assumed to be understood b) the correspondents are not actually arguing that these stereotypes are consistently representative of the gender and c) that these stereotypes are used in service of a larger, possibly not gendered agenda. Robert Stam and Louise Spence argue that "Satirical or parodic films… may be less concerned with constructing positive images than with challenging the stereotypical expectations an audience may bring to a film (641). These

stereotypes, such as Jessica Williams interacting in an immature, hyperemotional manner with anti-gay protestors before the legalization of gay marriage as though it is the final get-together before a high school graduation, may challenge viewers' interpretation of the issues and the manner in which mainstream media reports them.

Correspondent Responses: Agreement, Humor, Nudity

Looking more broadly at all the clips surveyed, further gendered findings emerged. As was demonstrated in the individual segments examined above, the correspondents quite frequently conduct interviews, both with individuals whose views are portrayed positively and those who are criticized or mocked. One of the more obvious ways in which that distinction might be made clear is whether the correspondent expresses agreement or disagreement during the interview. However, when tracking instances where the correspondents verbally agreed or disagreed with the interviewee, it became apparent that this is not as straightforward a measurement as it might seem. For example, in "Bristol Palin's Choice," Samantha Bee attends a Republican National Convention in 2008 where republicans expressed outrage at the way Sarah Palin and her family were treated following the announcement of Bristol Palin's pregnancy. Bee, feigning a lapse in memory, spends most of the segment trying to get the people she interviews to say the word "choice," given the disjunction of their call for people to respect Bristol's decision while decrying the pro-choice movement. In this case, the agreement she expresses is when one of the interviewees finally uses the word. It is an endorsement of the language, not necessarily the viewpoint of the person speaking.

Despite that possibility for ambiguity, the frequency with which the correspondents expressed agreement and especially disagreement are significant for understanding gendered differences in how they are performing within the spectrum of satire.

Verbal expressions of agreement were a relatively infrequent occurrence compared to other variables for all of the correspondents. Williams verbally agreed with her interview subjects the fewest number of times, with only two occurrences, and Jones was only marginally higher, with three instances. Bee and Klepper both used verbal agreement five times, though it is safe to assume that the enthusiastic agreement Klepper expressed for a Hitler-touting fear monger from the UK Independence Party in one of the segments was parodic, rather than sincere. That insincere agreement is a strategy used by *Daily Show* correspondents to encourage interview subjects to continue. The rates of verbal agreement were significantly lower than the rates of nodding, which traditionally signals agreement. Even the correspondents that did this the least, Williams and Klepper, did this in six of the videos, and Bee, who had one of the highest numbers of verbal agreement, nodded in all ten segments. However, it seems like the nod is being used in other ways than expressing agreement, such as a form of encouragement consciously or subconsciously given, or even an acknowledgment that the correspondent is an active listener.

There were considerable differences between correspondents in expressions of disagreement. Verbally, the two male correspondents expressed disagreement with an interviewee at least three times more than either of the female correspondents. As with verbal agreement, the male correspondents were the only ones to express disagreement in

a parodic way where the audience and even the interviewee are likely to be aware that the correspondent is not actually disagreeing. Additionally, whereas both gender used fairly high amounts of nodding, Klepper and Jones were much more likely to shake their heads, expressing disagreement and often frustration, than Bee and Williams. This pattern likely plays into the ethos of the impassioned male satirical correspondent discussed above; they cannot help but defend their convictions by openly expressing this disagreement with the interviewees.

The observation that the female correspondents nodded during interviews more frequently than the male correspondents fits into broader social norms, where women give this communicative cue more often than men (Helweg-Larsen, Cunningham, Carrico and Pergram 358). Nodding is considered a gesture of submissiveness, which corresponds to stereotypes of women as less aggressive than men. It is also consistent with the findings of this study where Klepper and Jones were able to be much more aggressive and insulting in their interview, as they both had extended interviews with males that represented the beliefs being critiqued. However, nodding can be read as empathetic, rather than submissive, in the sense that it encourages a speaker to feel more confident at subconscious levels (Ortiz 69). Moreover, some suggest that nodding could actually be an effective tool of manipulation wherein the speaker is subsequently more likely to agree with the views expressed by the individual nodding. While this may not have been a strategy actively pursued by the female correspondents, these other interpretations of the function of nodding at least complicate an easy reading of their higher rates of nodding as indicative of gendered differences in submissiveness.

However, the significant disparities in the number of segments in which the male and female correspondents expressed disagreement, whether non-ironically or parodically does suggest that the satire performed by Klepper and Jones does create and draw upon a more combative ethos.

At times, the correspondents also clearly mock or use derogatory language to interact with individuals they are not critiquing. For example, when Samantha Bee goes on a long, ultimately futile saga to find out the rates of civilians shot by police officers, she passes Nate Silver, a well-known statistician, and exclaims “Thank God! Okay. You’re a statistics dork. How many people were shot and killed by police?” When he can’t answer, she replied, in mock contempt, “And you call yourself a dork” (“A Shot in the Dark”). Both Bee and Williams used this tactic of humor more often (6 and 4, respectively) than Klepper and Jones (3 each). However, Jones’ and Klepper’s instances were among the most controversial. Jones repeatedly attempted to speak negatively of Jews while in Iraq, and Klepper yelled expletives at a group of children while dressed as Santa Claus. Expletives, in general, were frequently used by the correspondents, with the exception of Jones (Bee – 7, Williams – 7, Klepper – 9, Jones – 2). Given that the expletives often drew laughter from the studio audience, the explicit language appears to be interpreted as humorous, rather than aggressive.

The higher rates of facetiously derogatory language for female correspondents was surprising, given that male correspondents were so much more likely to use non-ironic derogatory language. However, this usage of insults to those that would understand they were not actually being insulted is consistent with the burlesqued, parodic

performance of satire that is more closely linked to the Horatian tradition. My impression is that the male correspondents, in the instances where they did use ironic derogatory language, were mocking themselves, though this was not one of the dependent variables I recorded in my observations.

Other times, derogatory language was used without the cues that indicated when the insults and critical language were being used facetiously. Instead, the correspondent essentially "broke" from their light-hearted, at times obnoxious satiric character to be non-ironically invective for at least a portion of the interview. This variable was more challenging to track with empiric certainty, but, in my own observations, I found it easier to recognize and definitively code this switch in the male correspondents (Jones – 3, Klepper – 5). The female correspondents more often used a facial expression or exaggerated physical gesture to indicate when they were or were not using irony and used a tongue in cheek tone to emphasize the absurdity of a situation, rather than more obvious insults and invective language.

Though bodily humor, instances where the comedy of the moment was reliant on physical behaviors, not just verbal cues, were used with nearly identical frequency for all four correspondents (Bee, Jones, Klepper – 7, Williams – 6), sexualized humor, which almost exclusively occurred when physical humor was involved, was used less often by all correspondents, but most noticeably less by the female correspondents (Bee – 4, Williams – 1, Jones – 6, Klepper – 4). Patterns of nudity were also highly gendered, as both Jones and Klepper had instances where they were naked or nearly naked. In Klepper's "Star Hack: The Nude Generation," he is at least implied to be completely

undressed, and the shot size, which stays static throughout the segment, means that the frame shows enough of Klepper's body for blurring to be used for obvious reasons. Jason Jones is also featured mostly nude, which occurred in three of the ten segments that featured him. Each of these cases evoked a sexuality that would likely be considered alternative, or, by a more judgmental standard, "deviant," ranging from a diaper fetish to exhibitionistic masturbation on ChatRoulette to wearing a coconut instead of pants in combination with a suit jacket and tie. In contrast, in the clips surveyed, the females had no instances of nudity. Instances where partial nudity might have been expected, such as when Bee gives birth to an apple pie and Williams appears in a bikini and body armor, the shots only show the correspondents upper half.

The disparities in the employment of sexual humor as well as the occurrences of exclusively male nudity suggest a subverting of expectations regarding the sexualization of the correspondents. Females are typically more sexualized in cultural and media expectations. However, for these four correspondents, though women experience childbirth and sexual harassment, the male body is definitely the one that is sexualized. I believe this may be partially explained by the comedic genre of the program. While female nudity is often linked to the erotic, male nudity, particularly in this context, seems to be used to appeal to humor, not desire. Still, as I note above, it seems significant that multiple opportunities for at least partial nudity arise for the female correspondents that are not even marginally exploited. It is possible that this is part of an agenda by *The Daily Show* to avoid the cultural norm of sexualizing females, particularly the black female correspondent who had the fewest segments involving sexualized humor.

Complications, Challenges, and Future Research

Though I want to avoid the trap of intentionality, it seems remiss to not consider the collective, collaborative nature of these segments that complicates issues of agency and representation. I have, for simplicity of language, at times described the segments in a possessive connotation with the correspondents, discussing, for example, "Bee's 'Parenting with the Enemy,'" but these videos are, of course, not solely the work or design of the correspondents. Certain episodes of *The Daily Show Podcast without Jon Stewart* pose this question of agency to the correspondents. In his final appearance in the podcast, Jason Jones discussed to what degree he makes the decisions about what kind of humor his segments will include. He references one bit from the segment "Gaywatch – Red Weddings," in which he joins Stewart as seemingly high-brow physicist before revealing that he is wearing a cantaloupe in lieu of pants. He clarifies that antics like these are not typically his idea, saying that the piece was "not written by me. It was written by the egghead writers and forced on me in studio. So, when it's out in the field, I think I do some of my most poignant work" ("Farewell, Jason Jones"). Interviewer and lead writer for *The Daily Show* Elliott Kalan asks, "When you're the author of your own work, you're saying you don't go towards the nudity?" Jones' response is an emphatic "no." He expresses much more control of his interview work and talks directly about his Sochi interviews. He described the Markov interview as a time when he dropped all irony and satire and even seemed a little pejorative towards his own, typically less direct approach. He said, "I'm not going to sit here and nod and coyly agree and slip in little

jabs. I'm just going to say 'What's your fucking problem with gay people? What do you care?'" While I think it would be foolhardy to claim some kind of absolute truth regarding these correspondents' performances from an interview, much less an interview associated with the program, they can at least offer insights into the perspective of the people creating the segments.

Another interview on the podcast that featured Samantha Bee addressed the degree of agency she describes herself as having in the creation of the segments. For example, regarding the segment "Federally Funded Penis Pumps," in which one of the pumps is eventually attached to her face, she comments, "It really speaks to how much I will debase myself in the service of comedy " ("Samantha Bee, Chad Carter & Nate Witmer") Issues of gendered expectations of comedians aside, Bee presenting herself as the agent of her own debasement should at least be considered as a possible complication of an easy reading in which the female correspondents are conscripted into potentially humiliating sexual behaviors. The language is also in striking contrast from that of Jones when he claims that the more ridiculous elements of his performance are forced on him by the writers.

Bee's quote also gets at a broader pattern among female performers of negotiating and manipulating cultural expectations. For some, such as female comedians, musicians, and actors, this might translate to a more physical or sexualized presence. With masculinity as the default, femininity is attributed a greater emphasis on sexuality (though that does not mean that females themselves are permitted to be more expressive of their sexuality, and, in fact, the opposite is more often the case). However, though the

joke or the song of the performance may begin from the relatively uncontested place of a cultural stereotype, I argue that female performers have the ability to deploy these tropes and modes of humor as a means to create and disseminate a subversive message. For Bee and Williams, this might mean playing into the stereotype that women are (and should be) less serious than men. Particularly in the case of satire, taking ownership of gendered stereotypes in this way has the potential to point out the absurdity of the misogynist assumptions fueling these stereotypes.

This research has been taken up at a time when *The Daily Show* is garnering even higher than normal rates of media attention, due to the transition from Stewart to Noah as host. Though this certainly adds to the topical nature of these findings, the timing has also come with challenges for this study. As mentioned early in the chapter, the “Best Clips” sections for each correspondent that were put up by Comedy Central are no longer available, making any future replication of this study that might take into consideration how the video selection changes over time extremely unlikely. However, I believe further research is merited on this topic, and future studies could perhaps use a different methodology for selecting the clips to be surveyed, such as looking at segments that were all related to a particular topic, like discrimination against the LGBTQ community. In addition, future research should look to racialized differences in performance and audience perception as I have done here with gender. Opportunities for this kind of examination should be increasing, as several recent additions to the correspondents, such as Hasan Minhaj, who began at the end of Stewart’s tenure, and Ronnie Chieng and Roy Wood Jr., who began reporting when Noah began hosting the show in September 2015.

Lastly, while I have here performed all the observations of the segments myself, I believe considering actual audience reception to these performances could produce useful findings through incorporating surveys wherein participants work with the same checklists of behaviors that I have used here. The subjective nature of some of the categories could perhaps be partially offset with research that speaks to how the majority perceived a segment or how much agreement there was between participants.

EPILOGUE

As Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak and others have pointed out, there is a fundamental relationship between literature and cultural representation (243). In my analyses, I have endeavored to extend Spivak's argument, demonstrating how literature and other forms of representation like television and film can reshape cultural ideology through the strategic reproduction of tropes and stereotypes. Women's representation within a genre and access to the role of creator in a genre can be revealing both of the dominant culture into which a text is created and potential options for subverting sexist practices and perceptions.

Analysis of the texts examined in this thesis also reveal failings within the characterizations and utilizations of satire. As a weapon, it can be used for indiscriminate aggression, and, at its foundation, satire, whether Horatian, Juvenalian, or otherwise, does intend to propel the target to see and correct the error of their ways. But as a rhetorical choice that claims a moral imperative, satirists have an ethical obligation to deploy satire in a way that does not dehumanize or further stigmatize vulnerable populations, as racist, sexist, and classist rhetoric tends to do. Even those with a progressive agenda in mind, such as the correspondents of *The Daily Show*, who certainly do not consciously subscribe to sexist notions, reproduce gender stereotypes through the different tactics available to male and female correspondents. For an audience primed to expect satire based on the reputation of the program, these differences in behaviors, language, and characterization may not present dramatic challenges in understanding the satire and social commentary being invoked. However, these trends in behavior may have larger

ramifications for performances of satire as a genre. Moreover, expectations of a satirical performance are unlikely to inoculate viewers to the implicit gender message these differences convey.

Continued research and attention to texts in which women, whether satirically or directly, transgress cultural gendered prescriptions and engage in the sociopolitical arena is of paramount importance. My research has revealed that misogynist patterns of putting down female voices are alive and well, much as they were in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when Behn, Montagu, and a slew of anti-feminist satirists were writing. Earlier in the seventeenth century, ten thousand women came together to circulate petitions in which they resisted Catholic-sympathetic developments in the Church (Patton 79). Though the language of the petition aimed at humility and they were arguing for conservative values, their conservatism and the potential support for the petition were mitigated by the peculiarity of women "acting in public and as a group for political ends" (Patton 74). The responding mock petitions from anti-feminist satirists attack the women's intelligence, cogence, and sexual fidelity. Particularly as the women's petitions attracted more signatures and more popular attention, satirical petitions, such as *The Weamen of Middlesex*, labelled the petitioners (and women more generally) as "fundamentally irrational creatures" and eager to see their husbands away from home, as in *The Resolution of the Women of London to Parliament* in 1642 (75-76). In addition to demonstrating the pervasive anti-feminism of the period, these satirical petitions also suggest more than a little anxiety when faced with female mobilization.

Advanced as present American culture may be from that period, women – from political figures to popular culture icons to millions of women in their professional and personal lives – still experience marginalization and reproach when their actions are perceived to be subversive. When women do transgress the traditional stereotypes, whether in the form of satire or other political resistance, audiences are not just confused. They are alarmed. They attempt to drown out that resistance through mockery and through appeals to the stereotypes that have allowed a sexist status quo to survive through the dormancy of a potentially powerful political group. If audiences of the seventeenth and twenty-first century genuinely believed women to be as foolish and inarticulate and powerless as dominant culture might profess them to be, there would have been virtually no reason to take the time putting pen to paper to address the petitions or to decry female presence (much less feminist interventions) in the sociopolitical arena today. Heightened opportunity for resisting these cultural prescriptions of gender may emerge if it is understood in its historical and ongoing context.

Though there is already a tradition of critical analysis into satire, my research has revealed much within the genre that deserves greater attentions, and I have merely begun exploring a topic that is ripe for continued examination. We are living in exciting times for satire, as the present political climate has re-invigorated the satirical impulse and predisposed disgruntled audiences to rally to a number of popular satirical outlets that vent social frustrations. Online faux news sites like *The Onion* and *The Daily Currant*, along with an increasingly popular cast of nightly news hosts like Stephen Colbert, John Oliver, and Trevor Noah mark a decisive shift in favor of political satire since the start of

the twenty-first century. Millenials in particular are expressing interest in satire, as I have witnessed in my own classrooms when discussing political rhetoric, and a greater trust in satirists like Jon Stewart as the news source to trust (Gendron). Scholars should be paying close attention to the impact this latest proliferation of political satire has on the genre as a whole. Ralph Cohen argues that "literary history… necessarily involve[s] ideological conflict since genres as they change nevertheless have some continuous elements," and researchers should be marking these developments, especially as women are more frequently taking on the role of the satirist (49). These women, including Samantha Bee, Jessica Williams, and satirical comedians like Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, and Amy Schumer, will undoubtedly leave their own mark on the genre.

As to my own future research, I certainly retain my investment in bringing gendered analysis and women's texts to the forefront. Likewise, my investigation into iterations of satire and social resistance is likely to be continued in the future. However, as my commitment to intersectionally-guided feminist research solidifies, and the scope of my research develops, I plan to shift my focus to writings originating outside Western Euro-America. There appears to be limited research, for example, on the Caribbean or Eastern European traditions or satire, or even if such traditions exist. However, regions that have experienced extended oppression and marginalization might have good reason to develop less direct methods of resistance and criticism. More broadly, I want to look at issues of power and representation in relation to globalization and the Global South.

Additionally, my experience with more interdisciplinary methods in the fourth chapter of this thesis has increased my belief in the potential for fruitful, insightful

blendings of empirical and textual analysis, though I readily acknowledge that more refinement of this methodology is needed. However, much like the women I have here examined, this can be perceived as a methodological, as well as sociopolitical intervention that is apparently quite capable of ruffling feathers. I am prepared to develop professional and personal opportunities to defend the history and utility of this methodology in the event of alarm and resistance, which often emerge in response to perceived divergences from traditional methods of literary inquiry and analysis.

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Daily Show Trials

Cast	Video Title	Nodding	Shaking head	Expletives	Agrees	Disagrees	Invective	Bodily Humor	Nudity	Mock Derogatory	Sexualized Humor	Gender Stereotypes	Breaking Gender Stereotypes
		Correspondent Behaviors											
SB	Bristol Palin's Choice	X			X								
SB	Twitter Frenzy (w/ Jon)	X			X								
SB	Occupy Wall Street Divided	X		X						X			
SB	I Watch "Morning Joe" (w/ Jon)		X	X				X		X	X	X	X
SB	An Outbreak of Liberal Idiocy	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X			X
SB	Parenting with the Enemy	X	X	X			X	X				X	X
SB	Federally Funded Penis Pumps	X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X	
SB + JJ	Tonight's Real Winner: Money	JJ/SB	SB/JJ	SB				SB			JJ		
SB+JJ	A Shot in the Dark	SB		SB		SB		SB/JJ		SB	X	X	X
SB+JJ	Hope and Change 2 - Party of Inclusion	SB/JJ	JJ Mock		SB/JJ		JJ	SB		SB/JJ			
JJ	Behind the Veil - Minarets of Menace Revisited	X	X			Ironic		X		X			
JJ	Live from Sochi-Ish - Behind the Iron Closet	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X		
JJ	Republican Hostage Negotiation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					
JJ	Diaper Hard	X				X (w/ JS)		X	X	X (w/ JS)	X	X	
JJ	Tech-Talch	X	X			Ironic		X	X		X	X	
JJ	Gaywatch - Red Weddings	X	X			X (w/ JS)		X	X		X		
JJ+JW	Racist or Not Racist?	JJ/JW									JJ		
JW	Jessica's Feminized Atmosphere			X			X	X		X		X	
JW	The Real Hunger Games	X		X		X	X	X		X		X	X
JW	Frisky Business	X			X					X			
JW+JJ	System of a Town - F.E.A. Party			JW				X (JW)					
JW	Stand Your Ground	X		X		X (w/ JS)		X					
JW	Assault Swim - McKinney, TX	X		X	X (w/ JS)		X	X				X	X
JW	The Hate Class of 2015	X						X				X	
JW+SB	2015 'Mercun Awards	SB		JW	NA	NA					X		
JW+JK	The Fault in Our Schools			JK/JW						JW		JW/JK	
JK	Highway-Robbing Highway Patrolmen			X			X	X		X			
JK	Star Hack: The Nude Generation	X		X		X (w/ JS)		X	X		X		
JK	Protesting All the Way	X		X	X		X	X		X			
JK	The Future Christ			X (robot)	X	X	X	X			X		
JK	Britain's Non-Issues (Vulgar Insult)	X		X	Ironic	Ironic	X						
JK	Protecting Shooters Everywhere	X			X	Ironic	X	X					
JK	Discriminatory Diner Discounts	X	X	X		X	X						
JK	Government, Swedish Style		X	X		X		X					
JK	Internet Killed the Newspaper Star	X	X	X	X	Ironic		X		X	X		

Legend
SB = Samantha Bee
JJ = Jason Jason Jones
JW = Jessica Williams
JS = Jon Stewart
Mock Derogatory = Facetiously insulting