Graphic Design, Print Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Novel

JANINE BARCHAS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS
The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011–4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

http://www.cambridge.org

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First published 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Minion 10.5/14 pt. *System* LaTeX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

ISBN 0 521 81908 3 hardback

Contents

Errata *page* ii
List of figures vi
Acknowledgments xiii
Note on the text xvi

1 **Expanding the literary text** **1**
a textual studies approach

2 **The frontispiece** **19**
counterfeit authority and the author portrait

3 **The title page** **60**
advertisement, identity, and deceit

4 ***Clarissa*'s musical score** **92**
a novel's politics engraved on copper plate

5 **The space of time** **118**
graphic design and temporal distortion

6 **Sarah Fielding's *David Simple*** **153**
a case study in the interpretive significance of punctuation

7 **The list and index** **173**
a culture of collecting imprints upon the novel

Coda 214
Notes 218
Works cited 271
Index 290

Figures

Frontispiece "Errata," from Henry Fielding's first edition of *Joseph Andrews* (1742). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. *frontispiece*

1.1 Recto of the original *Tatler No. 238*, published in half-sheets on 17 October 1710. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 2

1.2 Verso of the original *Tatler No. 238*, published in half-sheets on 17 October 1710. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 3

1.3 From a posthumous two-volume edition of Sterne's complete *Tristram Shandy* (London: Printed for T. Caddel, 1780), I, 195. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 17

2.1 Frontispiece portrait of Eliza Haywood by George Vertue found in her *Works* (1723–24) and her *Secret Histories, Novels, and Poems* (1724–25). Huntington Library, San Marino, California. 23

2.2 Frontispiece portrait of Henry Fielding by William Hogarth from Fielding's *Works* (London: Printed for A. Millar, 1762). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 25

2.3 Frontispiece portrait of Samuel Richardson by Charles Grignion from the sixth edition of *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 7 vols. (London: Printed for J. and F. Rivington, 1770). Private Collection. 26

2.4 First state of the frontispiece portrait of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver from the first issue of the first edition of Swift's *Travels* (London: Printed for Benj. Motte, 1726). The Newberry Library, Chicago. 28

2.5 Second state of the frontispiece portrait of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver from a later issue of the first edition of Swift's *Travels* (London: Printed for Benj. Motte, 1726). The Newberry Library, Chicago. 29

2.6 Frontispiece portrait of Capt. Lemuel Gulliver from the third volume in the octavo edition of Swift's *Works*, 4 vols. (Dublin: Printed by and for George Faulkner, 1735). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 32

2.7 Frontispiece portrait of Capt. Lemiuel [*sic*] Gulliver from the third volume in the duodecimo edition of Swift's *Works*, 4 vols. (Dublin: Printed by and for George Faulkner, 1735). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 33

2.8 Frontispiece portrait of Dr. Swift found in the first volumes of both the octavo and duodecimo editions of Swift's *Works*, 4 vols. (Dublin: Printed by and for George Faulkner, 1735). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 34

2.9 Full-length frontispiece portrait of Hannah Snell in riding habit from the book-length version of *The Female Soldier* (London: Printed for and sold by R. Walker, 1750). Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto. 38

2.10 Frontispiece bust-portrait of Hannah Snell in martial costume from the book-length version of *The Female Soldier* (London: Printed for and sold by R. Walker, 1750). The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library, University of California, Los Angeles. 39

2.11 Frontispiece portrait and title to the second edition of *The History of the Life and Adventures of Mr. Duncan Campbell* (1720). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 40

2.12 Frontispiece portrait from Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 43

2.13 Frontispiece portrait from Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 44

2.14 Frontispiece portrait from an unidentified "early edition" of Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*. Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Yale University. 45

2.15 Frontispiece portrait from a pirated edition of Daniel Defoe's *Jure Divino* (1706). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 46

2.16 Frontispiece portrait and title to Edward Kimber's *The Life and Adventures of Joe Thompson* (1750). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 49

2.17 Frontispiece portrait from Francis Coventry's *The History of Pompey the Little* (1751). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 51

2.18 Frontispiece and title page to John Kidgell's *The Card* (1755). Private Collection. 52

2.19 George Bickham's pastiche of anti-Jacobite propaganda, *The Highlanders Medley, or the Duke Triumphant* (1746). The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University. 54

2.20 Frontispiece to Sarah Scott's *Millenium Hall* (1762). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 55

2.21 Frontispiece and title to Delarivier Manley's *The Adventures of Rivella* (1714). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 57

3.1 Title page to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 63

3.2 Title page to Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 64

3.3 Title page to Delarivier Manley's *A Secret History of Queen Zarah* (1705). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 68

3.4 Title page to Eliza Haywood's *A Spy Upon the Conjurer* (1724). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 69

3.5 Title page to Robert Hooke's *Micrographia* (1667). Private Collection. 73

3.6 Advertisement pages attached to Edmund Curll's edition of *Love and Artifice* (1734), attributed to William Fitzmaurice Kelly. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 75

3.7 Title page to Richardson's first edition of *Pamela* (1740). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 78

3.8 Title page to Hannah Snell's *The Female Soldier* (1750). Princeton University Library. 81

3.9 Title page to *The Life and Memoirs of Ephraim Tristram Bates* (1756). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 82

3.10 Title page to John Kidgell's *The Card* (1755). Private Collection. 84

3.11 Title page to Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones* (1749). Private Collection. 86

3.12 Title page to second edition of Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 87

3.13 Title page to Sarah Fielding and Jane Collier's *The Cry* (1754). Private Collection. 88

4.1 Musical score folded closed (a) and opened out (b) from the first edition of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), II, 50. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 95

4.2 From *A Collection of the Choicest Songs and Dialogues* (London, 174?). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 102

4.3 From *A Collection of the Choicest Songs and Dialogues* (London, 174?). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 103

4.4 From a 1965 facsimile reprint (New York: Broude Bros.) of *The Musical Entertainer . . . Engraved by George Bickham, Junr.*, 2 vols. (London: Printed for and sold by Charles Corbett Bookseller, 1740), II, 11. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 104

4.5 From *An Antidote against Melancholy. Being a Collection of Fourscore Merry Songs, Wherein Those of the Same Subject and Key Are Placed in Agreeable Succession in Relation to the Different Measures of Time, after the Manner of Suits of Lessons* (London: Printed for Daniel Brown, 1749), 32–33. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 105

4.6 From *The Gentleman's Magazine* 19 (1749), 84, detail. 106

4.7 From Richard Griffith's *Something New*, 2 vols. (1772), II, 253–[255]. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 113

4.8 From John Kidgell's *The Card*, 2 vols. (1755), I, 12. Private Collection. 114

4.9 From John Kidgell's *The Card*, 2 vols. (1755), II, 295–96. Private Collection. 115

5.1 From the first edition of Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), II, 232. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 121

5.2 From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), II, 304. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 122

5.3 From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), IV, 18. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 123

5.4 From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), IV, 124. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 124

5.5 From the first edition of *Pamela*, 2 vols. (1740), I, 17. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 126

5.6 From the first edition of *Pamela*, 2 vols. (1740), I, 55. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 127

5.7(a) From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), iv, 328 and v, 239. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 130

5.7(b) From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), vii, 198 and 309. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 131

5.8 From the second edition of Samuel Richardson's *Sir Charles Grandison*, 6 vols. (1754), vi, 265. Private Collection. 138

5.9 From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), iv, 316. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 139

5.10 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), ii, 246–47. Private Collection. 140

5.11 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), ii, 6. Private Collection. 141

5.12 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), vii, 90 and viii, 9. Private Collection. 142

5.13 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), iii, 30. Private Collection. 143

5.14 From the first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), iii, 55. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 144

5.15 From a 1741 edition of Jonathan Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), 224. Private Collection. 145

5.16 From the second edition of Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1761), iii, 73. Private Collection. 146

5.17 From the anonymous *The Life and Memoirs of Ephraim Tristram Bates* (1756), 60. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 147

5.18 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), ii, [3]; iii, [3]; and iv, 375. Private Collection. 150

5.19 Tailpiece to Volume v in the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751). Private Collection. 151

6.1 Page 298, Volume ii, as it appears in the first (left) and second (right) editions of Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple*, 2 vols. (London: Printed by A. Millar, 1744). Private Collection (1st edn.) and Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library (2nd edn.). 158

6.2 Page 260, Volume ii, as it appears in the first (left) and second (right) editions of Sarah Fielding's *The Adventures of David Simple*, 2 vols. (London: Printed by A. Millar, 1744). Private Collection (1st edn.) and Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library (2nd edn.). 161

6.3 From a microfilm reproduction of John Dunton's *A Voyage Round the World: Or, a Pocket-Library, Divided into Several Volumes. The First of Which Contains the Rare Adventures of Don Kainophilus* (London: Printed for Richard Newcome, [1691]), I, 26–27. University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan. 167

6.4 From Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy*, second edition (1761), III, 28–29. Private Collection. 168

7.1 From Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), 199–201. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 178

7.2 From Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, 2 vols. (1742), I, 265 and from the second edition of Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random*, 2 vols. (1748), I, 71. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 180

7.3 From Sarah Fielding's *Familiar Letters*, 2 vols. (1747), II, 312. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 181

7.4 From Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*, 2 vols. (1742), II, 34. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 182

7.5 From the first edition of Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, 2 vols. (1740), I, 250–52. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 183

7.6 From the fifth edition of *The Attorney's Compleat Pocket-Book*, 2 vols. (1764), II, 56–57 (left) and II, 255 (right). 185

7.7 From Richardson Head's *The English Rogue Described in the Life of Meriton Latroon* (1672). Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 187

7.8 From the second octavo edition (published simultaneously with the first in duodecimo) of Samuel Richardson's *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 6 vols. (1754), I, [viii] and [1]. Private Collection. 188

7.9 From William Hawkins's play *Henry and Rosamond* (London, 1749). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 189

7.10 From Edward Young's play *The Brothers. A Tragedy*. (London, 1753). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 190

7.11 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), IV, 162–63. Private Collection. 191

7.12 From the first volume of Sarah Fielding and Jane Collier's *The Cry*, 3 vols. (London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley, 1754). Private Collection. 192

7.13(a) From Samuel Richardson’s first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), I, ix–x. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 194

7.13(b) From Samuel Richardson’s first edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1748), I, xi–xii. Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 195

7.14 From Samuel Richardson’s second edition of *Clarissa*, 7 vols. (1749), I, v. Private Collection. 196

7.15 From the third edition of *Clarissa*, 8 vols. (1751), I, [xii] and [1]. 197

7.16 First page of the subscription list to Alexander Pope’s *The Works of Shakespear* (London: Printed for Jacob Tonson, 1725). Special Collections Research Center, the University of Chicago Library. 199

7.17 The first page of the index found in the second edition of Samuel Richardson’s *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, 6 vols. (1754), VI, 305. Private Collection. 201

7.18 Title page and first page of index from an edition of Daniel Defoe’s *A Tour Thro’ the Whole Island of Great Britain* printed on Richardson’s press, 4 vols. (London, 1742), I, title and [357]. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 210

7.19 From Richardson’s edition of Defoe’s *Tour* (1742), II, 150 and 152. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 211

7.20 From Richardson’s edition of Defoe’s *Tour* (1742), IV, 316–17. Annenberg Rare Book & Manuscript Library, University of Pennsylvania. 212

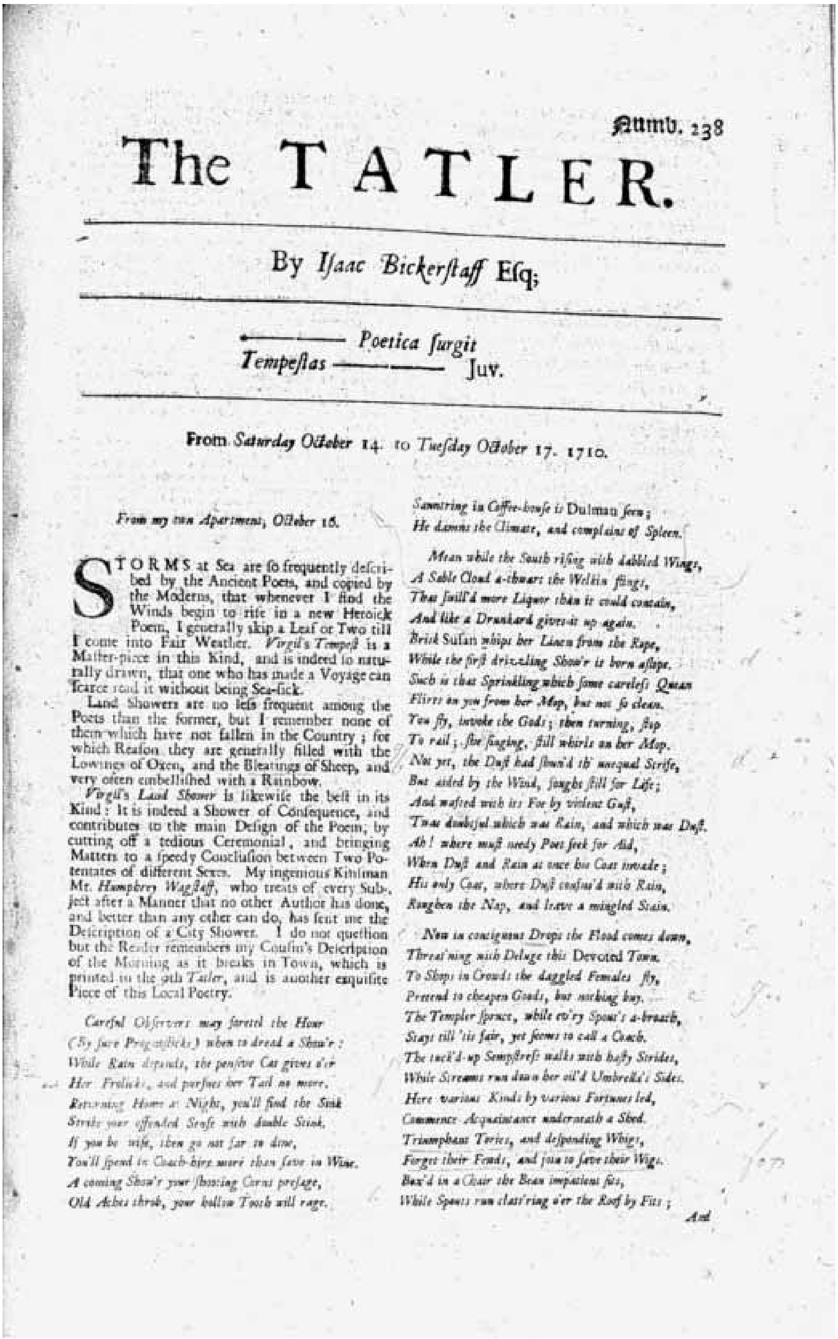
CHAPTER 1

Expanding the literary text

a textual studies approach

Now from all Parts the swelling Kennels flow;
And bear their Trophies with them as they go:
Filth of all Hues and Odours seem to tell
What Street they sail'd from, by their Sight and Smell.
They, as each Torrent drives, with rapid Force
From Smithfield *or St.* Pulchre'*s shape their Course,*
And in huge Confluent join'd at Snow-Hill *Ridge,*
Fall from the Conduit *prone to* Holborn-Bridge.
Sweepings from Butchers Stalls, Dung, Guts, and Blood,
Drown'd Puppies, stinking Sprats, all drench'd in Mud,
Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops come tumbling down the Flood.

It is generally accepted that Jonathan Swift concludes his *Description of a City Shower* (1710) with this stanza and its closing triplet, a triplet that tops with a graphic flourish and the rhythmical excess of an alexandrine a poem comically devoted to the piquancy of observed details and to notions of material excess and overflowings. Thus the bathos of "*the Flood*" offers a fitting close to this mock georgic. These final lines, suffused with onomatopoetic trickery, simultaneously ridicule and display the eighteenth-century penchant for triplets and the related affectation that sound must echo sense.[1] Yet this standard reading may be incomplete. In point of fact, Swift's literary text does not end with these lines. This is not because a long-lost fragment torn from Swift's original holograph can be brought to light. Nor is there a neglected closing gloss by Steele-as-Bickerstaff found in the original half-sheet of that issue of *The Tatler* in which this poem first appeared in print on 17 October 1710, namely *No. 238*.[2] Bickerstaff does not expand upon his opening introduction, remaining, in fact, uncharacteristically silent, even absent, at the periodical's close. Yet the printed half-sheet of the original *Tatler* offers more text. That text, in turn, offers a



Numb. 238

The TATLER.

By *Iſaac Bickerſtaff* Eſq;

—— *Poetica ſurgit*
Tempeſtas —— Juv.

From *Saturday October* 14. to *Tueſday October* 17. 1710.

From my own Apartment, October 16.

STORMS at Sea are ſo frequently deſcribed by the Ancient Poets, and copied by the Moderns, that whenever I find the Winds begin to riſe in a new Heroick Poem, I generally ſkip a Leaf or Two till I come into Fair Weather. *Virgil's Tempeſt* is a Maſter-piece in this Kind, and is indeed ſo naturally drawn, that one who has made a Voyage can ſcarce read it without being Sea-ſick.

Land Showers are no leſs frequent among the Poets than the former, but I remember none of them which have not fallen in the Country; for which Reaſon they are generally filled with the Lowings of Oxen, and the Bleatings of Sheep, and very often embelliſhed with a Rainbow.

Virgil's Land Shower is likewiſe the beſt in its Kind: It is indeed a Shower of Conſequence, and contributes to the main Deſign of the Poem, by cutting off a tedious Ceremonial, and bringing Matters to a ſpeedy Concluſion between Two Potentates of different Sexes. My ingenious Kinſman Mr. *Humphrey Wagſtaff*, who treats of every Subject after a Manner that no other Author has done, and better than any other can do, has ſent me the Deſcription of a City Shower. I do not queſtion but the Reader remembers my Couſin's Deſcription of the Morning as it breaks in Town, which is printed in the 9th *Tatler*, and is another exquiſite Piece of this Local Poetry.

Careful Obſervers may foretel the Hour
(By ſure Prognoſticks) when to dread a Show'r:
While Rain depends, the penſive Cat gives o'er
Her Frolicks, and purſues her Tail no more.
Returning Home at Night, you'll find the Sink
Strike your offended Senſe with double Stink.
If you be wiſe, then go not far to dine,
You'll ſpend in Coach-hire more than ſave in Wine.
A coming Show'r your ſhooting Corns preſage,
Old Aches throb, your hollow Tooth will rage.
Sauntring in Coffee-houſe is Dulman *ſeen;*
He damns the Climate, and complains of Spleen.

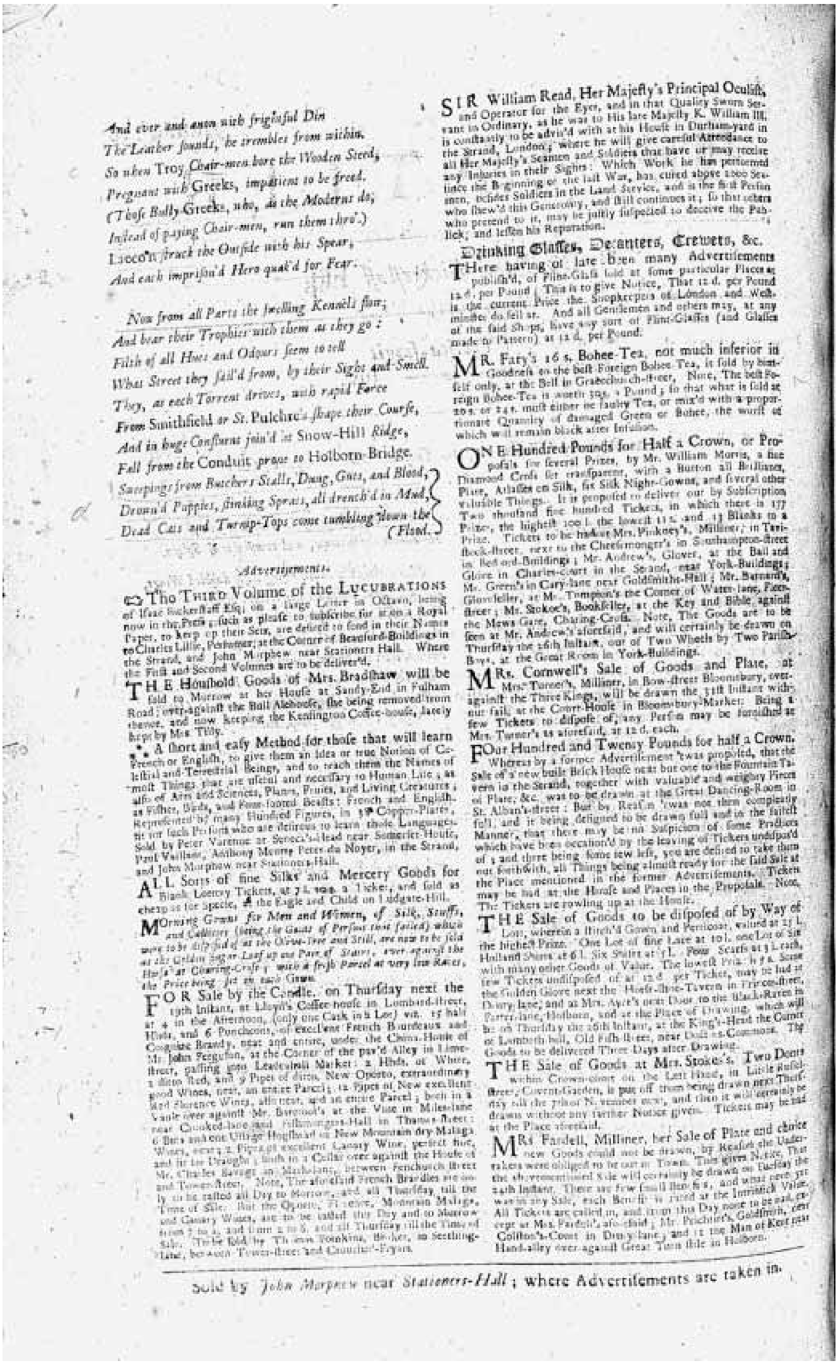
Mean while the South riſing with dabbled Wings,
A Sable Cloud a-thwart the Welkin flings,
That ſwill'd more Liquor than it could contain,
And like a Drunkard gives it up again.
Briſk Suſan *whips her Linen from the Rope,*
While the firſt drizzling Show'r is born aſlope.
Such is that Sprinkling which ſome careleſs Quean
Flirts on you from her Mop, but not ſo clean.
You fly, invoke the Gods; then turning, ſtop
To rail; ſhe ſinging, ſtill whirls on her Mop.
Not yet, the Duſt had ſhun'd th' unequal Strife,
But aided by the Wind, fought ſtill for Life;
And wafted with its Foe by violent Guſt,
'Twas doubtful which was Rain, and which was Duſt.
Ah! where muſt needy Poet ſeek for Aid,
When Duſt and Rain at once his Coat invade;
His only Coat, where Duſt confus'd with Rain,
Roughen the Nap, and leave a mingled Stain.

Now in contiguous Drops the Flood comes down,
Threat'ning with Deluge this Devoted *Town.*
To Shops in Crouds the daggled Females fly,
Pretend to cheapen Goods, but nothing buy.
The Templer ſpruce, while ev'ry Spout's a-broach,
Stays till 'tis fair, yet ſeems to call a Coach.
The tuck'd-up Sempſtreſs walks with haſty Strides,
While Streams run down her oil'd Umbrella's Sides.
Here various Kinds by various Fortunes led,
Commence Acquaintance underneath a Shed.
Triumphant Tories, and deſponding Whigs,
Forget their Feuds, and join to ſave their Wigs.
Box'd in a Chair the Beau impatient ſits,
While Spouts run clatt'ring o'er the Roof by Fits;

And

FIGURE 1.1
Recto of the original *Tatler No. 238*, published in half-sheets on 17 October 1710.

graphic context for the poem as a whole, and one that expands upon Swift's alexandrine in its continuation, imitation, and elaboration of the poem's comically expressed aspersions of urban materialism. By the light of that "missing" text, we can see that Swift's *Shower* resists just the type of closure which, as a result of being lifted out of its original visual context, is usually attributed to it.



And ever and anon with frightful Din
The Leather ſounds, he trembles from within.
So when Troy Chair-men bore the Wooden Steed,
Pregnant with Greeks, impatient to be freed,
(Thoſe Bully Greeks, who, as the Moderns do,
Inſtead of paying Chair-men, run them thro'.)
Laocoon ſtruck the Outſide with his Spear,
And each impriſon'd Hero quak'd for Fear.

Now from all Parts the ſwelling Kennels flow,
And bear their Trophies with them as they go:
Filth of all Hues and Odours ſeem to tell
What Street they ſail'd from, by their Sight and Smell.
They, as each Torrent drives, with rapid Force
From Smithfield or St. Pulchre's ſhape their Courſe,
And in huge Confluent join'd at Snow-Hill Ridge,
Fall from the Conduit prone to Holborn-Bridge.
Sweepings from Butchers Stalls, Dung, Guts, and Blood,
Drown'd Puppies, ſtinking Sprats, all drench'd in Mud,
Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops come tumbling down the
(Flood.

Sold by John Morphew near Stationers-Hall; where Advertiſements are taken in.

FIGURE 1.2 Verso of the original *Tatler No. 238*, published in half-sheets on 17 October 1710.

I refer, of course, to the text of the advertisements that crowd the remainder of *Tatler No. 238* in the original half-sheet (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). From these concluding advertisements emerges London's bustling materiality in a manner that deftly transfers Swift's indulgent critique of urban living onto the space of the real-world reader. In the "*frightful Din*" (line 45) of the page's typographical cacophony and the range of goods it cries for sale, a reader is offered the spoils of empire – from the services of "**Her Majesty's Principal Oculist**" to "Holland shirts at 6 l.," from flint "**Drinking Glaſses**" to "Foreign Bohee-Tea," and from "All Sorts of Fine Silks" to "excellent French Bourdeaux and Coigniac Brandy, neat and entire." Just as the poem shows the fare of the countryside ending up as decaying urban garbage, these advertisements record the domestic fates of the realm's grand commercial harvests. The lack of moral order that plagues Swift's poetic world also distresses the language of commerce found in the ads. For example, Mr. Fary, in his attempts to declare the inferiority of teas sold by others, unwittingly incriminates his own:

> MR. **Fary's 16s. Bohee-Tea**, not much inferior in Goodness to the best Foreign Bohee-Tea, is sold by himself only, at the Bell in Gracechurch-street. Note, The best Foreign Bohee-Tea is worth 30*s*. a Pound; so that what is sold at 20*s*. or 24*s*. must either be faulty Tea, or mix'd with a proportionate Quantity of damaged Green or Bohee, the worst of which will remain black after Infusion.

The bargain-priced, foreign Bohee-Tea – that coveted luxury of empire which distastefully blackens in the Londoner's China cup – becomes as potent a symbol of eighteenth-century decay, of the follies of commercial materialism, and of Swift's peculiar aesthetic as the poem's "*Dead Cats and Turnip-Tops*." Likewise a Mrs. Bradshaw, Mrs. Cornwell, and Mrs. Fardell, Milliner, feature in the ads, like the poem's "*Brisk Susan*" and "*tuck'd-up Sempstress*," only through the material objects they briefly wield (lines 17 and 37). As a result of financial distresses that expose these real-world women to the double indignity of an impending sale of their personal possessions and the reader's voyeuristic gaze, their very lives and identities emerge before us in the form of their "Goods and Plate."

The juxtaposition of poem and advertisement on the printed page enhances and extends a reading of the *Shower*, irrespective of authorial control – or even intent. An attentive reader sees the materiality of the poem's rushing tributary of London offal flow directly into the sea of advertisements below. As a result, the comic critique of humanity's waste and physicality that saturates the poem also irrigates the advertisements. The poem, in turn, is enriched and expanded by its embodiment on the printed page and its nearness to the commercial narratives of the ads. A reading of a poem that humorously evokes the chaos of the physical world must consider the work's own materiality and the original circumstances of its publication.

Although authorial intent need not be a prerequisite for textual authority, Swift and Steele had co-authored an earlier *Tatler*, namely *No. 21*, in which they explicitly reflected upon the periodical's printed appearance and its advertisements.[3] In *Tatler No. 21*, Swift (in the guise of Bickerstaff's cousin Ephraim Bedfast) interrupts Steele to comment upon the expansion and upward encroachment of the periodical's advertisements. Swift's meta-writing invokes the metaphor of the textual body for the printed page, likening the encroaching ads to the "Dose of Poison" that Athenians were obliged to take when condemned to death: "which made them die upwards, seizing first upon their Feet, making them cold and insensible, and so ascending gradually, till it reached the Vital Parts."[4] Swift-as-Bedfast warns Steele-as-Bickerstaff to cure his newspaper of such a fatal distemper:

> The lower Part of you, that is, the *Advertisements*, is dead; and these have risen for these Ten Days last past, so that they now take up almost a whole Paragraph. Pray, Sir, do your Endeavour to drive this Distemper as much as possible to the extreme Parts, and keep it there, as wise Folks do the Gout; for if it once gets into your Stomach, it will soon fly up into your Head, and you are a dead Man.[5]

By Bedfast's diagnosis, the later *Tatler No. 238* has virtually succumbed to textual rigor mortis. In issue *No. 238* the ads equal, if not exceed, the space devoted to the periodical's central offerings. The images of death and decay running through the *Shower*'s rhyming triplet are thus reinforced by the ensuing material death of *The Tatler* itself – as witnessed in the abundance of ads that in one full column of text have already flown up to the "Head" of the page. Yet the juxtaposition of poem and advertisement offers the failing patient a possible cure. Perhaps in an effort at textual resuscitation, this issue appropriates the advertisements at the foot of the half-sheet as part of *The Tatler*'s textual body on the printed page, making it an extension of the poem. Out of the juxtaposition of verse and advertisement Swift co-opts the language of the ads to further his own interpretive ends in the *Shower*. At the very least, Swift's comments as Bedfast confirm an environment of production that is deeply self-conscious of *The Tatler*'s embodiment as print object. Swift and Steele's documented awareness of *The Tatler*'s physicality in *No. 21* improves the possibility that when Swift and Steele reunite in the construction of *No. 238* they anticipate the workings of the book trade in that issue's graphic layout. Even if unaided by Steele, Swift would have known that the poem was to be followed by advertisements identical in kind to those that had supported the periodical's publication from its inception. Although such rationale beats a circuitous path back to authorial intention, the text's resulting visual self-consciousness must be considered a combination of print culture's happenstance and Swift's deliberate authorial design, possibly with Steele's approval or complicity.

I open with this brief glance at Swift's *Description of a City Shower*, because the rewards of a textual studies approach that resituates that short poem within its original visual context are transparent and transparently rich. The suggestion that *The Tatler*, or a poem printed therein, deserves reconsideration within the context of its initial appearance into print will not shake the foundations of established scholarly practice. For poetry, at least, has always been historically attentive to its manifestations on the printed page – and that long before Dickinson's dashes and Blake's illuminated *Songs* entered academic vogue. Yet the rewards in the case of Swift's poem may also appear deceptively self-evident and may sketch a misleadingly unproblematic picture of what a textual studies approach has to offer when applied to the novel. While the *Shower*'s example is a representative instance of the rambunctious materiality of eighteenth-century texts and demonstrates how attention to that materiality can breathe new life into a literary reading, my argument that the poem's material embodiment resists closure and continues the literary "text" even past the alexandrine's full stop adds only a footnote to the poem itself and a corollary to our traditional understanding of Swift's project. Unlike the turn of an English sonnet, the language of the advertisements does not alter the direction of the poem's argument. Thus the excision of *The Tatler*'s closing text from history's consideration of the poem has not resulted in a gross misunderstanding of Swift's description.

The novel's original packaging is not entirely as transparent or, indeed, as easy to reconstruct. First of all, when it comes to modern editions and reprints of the eighteenth-century novel, editorial practice has not been attentive to the genre's original appearance as a printed book, ignoring its layout, prefatory puffs, end matter, and graphic design and dismissing its punctuation and ornamentation as "accidentals." I do not wish to overstate my claim: the gains derived from modernized editions are many and obvious – especially in a classroom context. Yet standard editorial practice has, in the name of "modernization," systematically eradicated innovations in the genre's graphic design from book to book. As a result, the insipid uniformity of modern paperback editions of eighteenth-century fiction so distorts and diminishes the early novel's graphic diversity that it is difficult to resurrect the genre's lost visual dynamism. When, piece by piece, some of the novel's original physical attributes are reinstated, the resulting schematic of the impact of graphic design is more complex than is the case in Swift's *Shower*. An "anatomically correct" study of the novel's appearance as a printed book discloses the interpretive function of, to tweak Swift's metaphor, a mass of neglected organs and appendages, forcing an expanded redefinition of the genre's textual body. A formal study of the novel as book also impacts on our understanding of the genre's evolution writ large and, as I intend to demonstrate with a series of case studies, may even wholly reshape our local interpretations of specific narratives.

Yet this study does not offer an exhaustive anatomy of the eighteenth-century novel. Although a detailed graphic anatomy was my initial ambition, I came to realize that the eighteenth-century novel's many printed appendages and digits are too numerous, too unwieldy, or too prone to mutations from book to book and author to author, to allow anyone to draw a static picture of the ancestral appearance of the modern novel. Instead, I have tried to isolate some elements of the genre's graphic genomics. To this end, the ensuing chapters trace across the eighteenth century a few of the novel's principal adaptations of the printed features of other books as well as explore several remarkable experiments in the early novel's graphic design. The chapters on the novel's physicality focus upon six significant graphic features and expressions that served the early novel's original audience as visual guides to both generic ambition and local story: frontispieces, title pages, non-pictorial illustrations, ornamentation, punctuation, and catalogues. All these elements of the eighteenth-century novel's "text" have ceased to make regular appearances in modern editions of those fictions in which they originally played a key role. Thus the pages or features of a novel that I discuss, whether it be the ornaments and musical score in *Clarissa*, the punctuation in *David Simple*, or the author portraits in Swift's *Travels* and Defoe's *Crusoe*, may not be familiar to contemporary readers as part of the literary "text" of those novels with which they had cause to think they were thoroughly familiar. Our unfamiliarity with these elements of the early novel's text is part of my point.

Not only may readers be surprised at the presence of the unknown but also they may, conversely, object to the absence of the familiar. There are no accounts of such obvious graphics as attendant pictorial illustrations. The fact is that the lack of a satisfactorily "literary" language for the elements of book design forces me to adopt a rubric (that of the "graphic") that sets up the false expectation of a pictorial approach. Similarly, some elements treated in this study, such as the novel's punctuation or its propensity to deploy lists, may, at first, not strike my reader as befitting the mandate of "graphic design." Yet, the interpretive role of the dash or those lists which package some early novels defy traditional narrative categories and demand a special visual–verbal consideration. However, even when taken on its own terms, this book is not a complete inventory of those physical elements that feature in the novel's design as a printed book. The absence of any sustained discussion of, for example, typeface or footnotes in the novel's printed "look" may cast doubt upon my invocation of the metaphor of the novel's textual body – a body that lies before you grossly butchered, a faceless amputee. In spite of these limitations, I hope the early novel's assembled graphic parts are recognizable as belonging to the early genre's remains and that this recognition will disclose the extent to which the early novel depends for its literary effects upon its graphic appearance as a printed book.

Although its choice of terrain is "novel," my approach to literary texts is by no means new – not even within eighteenth-century studies. This book combines the cultural studies interest in the dynamic interaction and mutual reshaping of texts and contexts with both traditional literary criticism and the evolving theoretical vocabulary of textual studies. The study of eighteenth-century literature is increasingly informed by an appreciation of the interaction between authors, readers, and the complex social, economic, and technological machinery that mediated the space between them – what today we use the shorthand of "print culture" to describe. Indeed this book makes grateful use of decades of advances in the field of print culture. In the late 1970s Elizabeth Eisenstein added to the historical landscape sketched by Marshall McLuhan and the team of Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin (whose work only then appeared in English translation) new insights about the manner in which the material reality of print technology affects social change.[6] At the very heart of such studies about the emergence of a European "print culture" sits the basic assumption that presentation affects interpretation. Eisenstein's work, for example, asserts that the new duplication of knowledge in the form of a printed book not only affected the dissemination of fact but acted as an agent of verification and legitimization within the culture. In the wake of this pioneering work, literary scholars cultivated within their own historical specialties various interests in print technology. In eighteenth-century studies, the 1980s witnessed a veritable explosion of bibliographically oriented histories of the eighteenth-century book trade, offering new and detailed information on how commercial print culture shaped literary production in preindustrial Britain.[7] As a result, literary scholars began to make use of this new material by exploring the ways in which individual authors adapted available print conventions for the presentation of their work.[8] In the ensuing watershed in the field of eighteenth-century authorship and printing, the book itself has been recognized as a material artifact whose physical features – in addition to its narrative content – interact with and reveal history, culture, and ideology. In effect, the study of print culture has already forced literary scholars to expand their definition of "text" to include a work's visual makeup and graphic design.

This literary expansion of text has, in the area of eighteenth-century studies, focussed on a narrow band of authors whose work manifests a conspicuous preoccupation with textuality and print, most notably Pope, Sterne, and Blake. The illustrated poetry of printer-author William Blake was one of the first works to be scrutinized through the lens of book design and, as a result, has become one of the most familiar eighteenth-century examples of the overlap between image and text.[9] In addition, literary scholars were quick to recognize Alexander Pope's footnotes in *The Dunciad*[10] and Laurence Sterne's marbled and black pages in *Tristram Shandy*[11] as instances of authors deliberately eliding the distinction between verbal text and visual context. Yet, as subsequent scholarship has shown, the works of Pope and Sterne include a far wider variety of graphic designs (for example, ornamentation and punctuation) which the scholarly community is just beginning to recognize as textual phenomena with interpretive impact.[12]

An essay collection entitled *Ma(r)king the Text: The Presentation of Meaning on the Literary Page* (2000) has virtually guaranteed that the circumscribed canon of authors who have hitherto enjoyed the graphic spotlight will soon be subject to expansion – if not explosion.[13] This vibrant collection bundles together essays on such diverse "graphic" concerns as punctuation, footnotes, white space, annotation, typography, and the electronic text. As its contributors deftly range across minor and major works in poetry, prose, and drama, covering territory from Spenser to Stendhal and from sixteenth-century metrical practices to an early translation of *Tristram Shandy* in Portuguese, *Ma(r)king the Text* bears witness to a burgeoning field – a field so young that it is, like the emerging novel in the eighteenth century, defined by a collective self-consciousness and a shared investigational approach rather than a common vocabulary or unified subject. For, in addition to needing to locate authors whose works have not yet been examined in the light of this new graphic awareness, the scholarly community (which has hitherto relied heavily upon the vocabulary of traditional bibliography to talk about the graphic elements of a text) faces unmet challenges in defining the relationship between author and reader when the "old" distinction between visual context and verbal text erodes.

In recent times there have been three notable developments across the related areas of textual studies and print culture that impact upon my study: the first concerns an emerging theoretical sensitivity towards paratexts; the second a reorientation of editorial theory; and the third a querying of some of the pioneering assumptions of *print culture*. First, the 1997 English translation of Gérard Genette's *Seuils* (1987) as *Paratexts* made accessible to more scholars a fresh perspective on the physical dimensions of a book.[14] Evidencing a new sensitivity to those liminal devices and conventions that mediate the book to the reader, theorists such as Genette have invigorated the "old" language of descriptive bibliography by interrogating tacit distinctions between text and paratext, between a book and its packaging. Although Genette does not consider the graphics of *mise en page* as such, his work directly engages with the scholarly attention that is currently focussing on the degree to which a work's self-presentation as a printed book should be accorded "literary" status.

Genette maintains that a printed text's presentation of itself (its dust jacket, title page, notes, preface, even the author's name) is "always the conveyor of a commentary that is authorial or more or less legitimated by the author."[15] Thus he convincingly argues that these framing materials, or "paratexts," constitute an integral part of a literary text, providing loci of interpretation that complement and complicate the narratives they physically contain.[16]

Secondly, Genette's phrase "more or less" encapsulates the critical reorientation of editorial practice that took place just prior to the initial publication of *Seuils* in 1987, namely the equivocation of authorial intention. As a direct result of this equivocation, editorial theory has, ironically, placed increasingly less emphasis on the original appearance of a printed text, even though the shifting sands of editorial practice were, in part, disturbed by the storm of textual studies. Instead, under the mid-1980s influence of Deconstruction, editorial practice slowly shed its reverence for "initial" and "final" intention, a reverence that had traditionally placed an unrelenting emphasis upon first and so-called "authoritative" editions. Jerome McGann's *Critique of Modern Textual Criticism* (1983) questioned the dominant role assigned to "authorial intention" and "final intention" in the textual editing of modern English texts.[17] McGann's critique was essentially directed at editors such as G. Thomas Tanselle who had articulated the process of the selection of a copy-text in terms of a high textuality, demanding that a modern critical edition aim to create the "ideal" text that its author had intended to produce.[18] McGann declared such intentionality irretrievably lost, and his resignation to the irrecoverability of the ideal text opened the door for Hans Walter Gabler to propose his model of the "synoptic edition" – an edition that took a shape (from a confident collation of a text's various historical manifestations) never witnessed in its actual publication history. Thus, while McGann had continued to share with Tanselle the "observance of the public form of the work and the intentionality implied in the act of publication," Gabler argued that "a critical edition *qua* edition may legitimately claim the privilege of bringing into focus a form or forms of the work not attained in publication."[19] Thus Gabler's edition of *Ulysses* (1984), although a *tour de force* as a record of Joyce's multilayered revisions, looks nothing like the printed book of early editions. Reminiscent of the "variorum" editions of old, the synoptic *Ulysses* aims to show in its parallel display the evolution of the text through subsequent layers of alterations from manuscript to print and edition to edition.[20] Gabler's synoptic text leaps the problematics of authorial intention and editorial mimesis in one stride, offering a redefinition ("text" is replaced by "work") that elides manuscript and published text, initial and final intention, and allocates equal privilege to a work's various historical manifestations – be it on paper or in print, penned by the author or emended perfunctorily by an editor.

Although standard editorial practice has not adopted the synoptic model of textual editing, finding it both unwieldy and impractical for most books, the net effect of Gabler's well-deserved influence on book editing has been a change in emphasis from "recovery" to something akin to textual "renovation." Modern editions no longer need to resemble in "looks" the books whose experiences they claim to offer. It is here that this study intersects with editorial theory and the problematics of initial or authorial intention. I have already stated that my study is a project of recovery: this book aims to contextualize the manner in which the novel genre's original audience read and experienced the new species of writing. Yet my literary excavation of the novel's fossilized remains aims to reconstruct the "lost world" of the novel genre as a printed book – and only occasionally does this merge with what we might call the lost intentionality of the individual author. Indeed, an interpretive reaction to a book's appearance may not always have been sanctioned or anticipated by its original designer. Printer-author Samuel Richardson's ineffectual struggles to channel interpretation through graphic design are a case in point. This study also acknowledges the impact of printing practices upon the novelist's published product and thus corrodes authorial intention with the acid of print culture.

Yet my argument repeatedly stumbles into the quagmire of intentionality. Sometimes the circumstances of eighteenth-century publication practices demand that I eliminate or acknowledge other sources of control and intentionality in a book's design or self-presentation (the role of an engraver, publisher, or compositor, for example) in the creation of a book's graphic embellishment or its title page. Thus, with each example of graphic design, this study seeks to explore and define the various influences on the novel's appearance (from market practices to authorial control) as well as its literary effects. Sometimes I do, as in the case of Swift's *Shower*, find myself plodding a return course to the author in order to validate the interpretive implications of a graphic design with reference to authorial control, self-consciousness, or intention. While this study treads softly on the notion of an "authoritative" edition in its discussion of generic forms, it registers a graphic design as "literary" only if the author was involved in, or cognizant of, its production. On the whole I avoid considerations of scurrilous or pirated editions of early fiction even though such productions may impact or refract generic trends. Yet authorial intention, even in the *Shower* example, is more tangential and off-center in my discussion than it might have been some years ago. In this sense, this study aligns itself with Genette's "more or less" philosophy towards consideration of authorial intention. Novelists, by virtue of their participation in the emerging culture of eighteenth-century print and the growing professionalization of the author, tacitly sanctioned the shapes that their books took on when a printer, bookseller, or publisher helped to usher their work into print. Yet the trouble begins when the emerging genre of the novel shows signs of manipulating or querying the very print conventions that bring it into being. Then the violation of print convention demands that the extent of the author's involvement in a text's self-consciousness be established – and this can only be done on a case-by-case basis.

Thirdly, with the 1998 publication of Adrian Johns's *The Nature of the Book*, some of the fundamental assumptions at the base of "print culture" have come under pressure. Johns argues that the culture, stability, and credibility of the printed book did not emerge fully formed from Gutenberg's press, but that throughout the hand-press period the publishing industry (particularly the Stationer's Company) exerted enormous effort and expense to regulate and control the troublesome mutability of the printed book. Johns "brutally" sums up such regulatory practices as evidence "that Eisenstein's print culture does not exist."[21] Elaborate rhetorical and legal campaigns to restrain piracy, assert ownership to titles, and proclaim print's veracity paved the rough road towards the printed book's modern reputation as a stable vehicle for the dissemination of fact. Johns warns that the notion that the early printed book was a stable emblem of "veracious knowledge in modern society" is "substantially false."[22] If, as Johns argues, even publishers of science books at the turn of the eighteenth century still relied upon an intricate network of professional practices and rhetorical strategies for insurance against the reputational instability of print, emerging literary forms such as the novel faced enormous obstacles in their attempts to establish a stable genre. Of course, readers of early novels did not set out to "trust" a fiction in the manner that they approached scientific works, yet the nature of their relationship to the emerging genre did have to be built on their fragile confidence in the printed book. In fact, it is the early novelists themselves (such as Swift with the *Travels* and Defoe with *Crusoe*) who align the emerging novel with problems of veracity. While Johns focusses on the "rhetorical procedures to project authenticity" in the "newest literary forms," I look at the manner in which the printed shape of the novel attempted to lock in appearances of authenticity or veracity.[23] To combat the mutability that Johns defines, the novel selects out of the emerging culture of print the formal graphic features of established genres that had already fought and won print's reputational battle.

This is not to say that the novel combats the printed book's mutability through a uniformity of design. The contrary is true, for the genre plays its own games of havoc with the form and meaning of the printed word. Unfortunately, the uniformity of the eighteenth-century novel in today's paperback series and modern critical editions no longer conveys its extraordinary visual diversity. Particularly during the early decades of the genre's formation, the English novel's material embodiments as printed books rivaled its narrative contents in diversity and creativity. This parallel between formal and stylistic fluctuation is unsurprising: novels were the new species of writing, with the opportunity to redefine both audience expectation and print convention. As a result, writers of prose fiction during roughly the first half of the eighteenth century experimented broadly (and, broadly speaking, every publication was an experiment) with the material presentation of the novel as well as its narrative content. The fluidity of publishing practices in the eighteenth century enabled this formal experimentation. Even for the majority of writers who were not, like Samuel Richardson, printer, publisher, and author of their own work, the printer's trade and writer's art were by no means as distanced from one another as now. As witnessed in both the general fascination with Grubstreet and the specific references to print in the literature from Dryden to Defoe and Swift to Johnson, whether printers or not, the writers of the time seem smeared with printer's ink. A great variety of authors, differently assisted by different printers and publishers, enthusiastically mined print culture for forms that could give shape to the new genre, the novelty of which would earn it the label "the novel."

The publishing practices of eighteenth-century booksellers and printers associated with the new brand of fiction not only confirm the mutability and instability of the early printed book, but they warn us not to make anachronistic starting assumptions about authorial control or intention behind a book's physical appearance. The notorious publishing practices of bookseller Edmund Curll may serve as an example, albeit an extreme one, of the Protean qualities of even the ostensibly "finished" book at the time that the novel appears on the scene:

> He seems to have sold whole editions to other booksellers when he became tired of stacking them in his shop, and he bought old sheets which were given no more than a fresh title-page to become what on the face of it seem to be entirely new books. He would announce a book for publication "next week," and . . . that would be the end of it. He would publish old books as new, delightfully disguised in the advertisement.[24]

In addition to manipulating title pages, Curll was a master of the graphic packaging and repackaging of new and old books, enthusiastically seizing upon any graphic gimmick or illustration that might promote sales. In many cases it is impossible to determine whether an author even knew of (let alone sanctioned or controlled) a graphic Curllicism inserted into a version of their text touted on its scurrilous title page as "corrected by the author." Yet, although Edmund Curll occasionally crosses the career paths of Daniel Defoe, Delarivier Manley, and Eliza Haywood, the eighteenth-century novel was by no means forged exclusively in his Grubstreet smithy. In many cases, printers and authors left behind the fingerprints of consultation and collaboration in the pliable clay of a book's graphic form.

In addition to the shape-shifting forces of dubious publishing practices, a novel's "look" – even post-publication – might also be subject to the consumer's whim. In a sense, a scrutiny of graphic packaging and paratexts as "text" takes seriously the adage that readers, for better or worse, do judge books by their covers. Indeed, readers would seem to have done so long before publishers invented the modern printed cover in the early nineteenth century.[25] In the eighteenth century, however, publishers and authors rarely controlled the outside covers of their books. Consumers predominantly purchased works unbound, in gatherings or "folded quires (latterly stitched and with the intentionally temporary protection of wrappers or paper-covered boards)," and occasionally in cheap leather trade bindings "put on by or for the bookseller."[26] Prior to about 1825, these trade bindings and wrappers were mute and ephemeral.[27] Most eighteenth-century readers had their purchases bound or rebound in their own preferred style, often to match the rest of their library.[28] A consumer might even instruct that several short works be bound together in a single volume, in effect creating a unique book out of a miscellany of hand-picked pamphlets, poetry or ephemera. Thus the dominant paratextual packaging whereby a reader might judge a novel – or indeed any book – consisted, therefore, of those fringe texts and graphics that presented, named, identified, glossed, and framed their accompanying stories before being shipped off to an uncertain fate at the bindery.

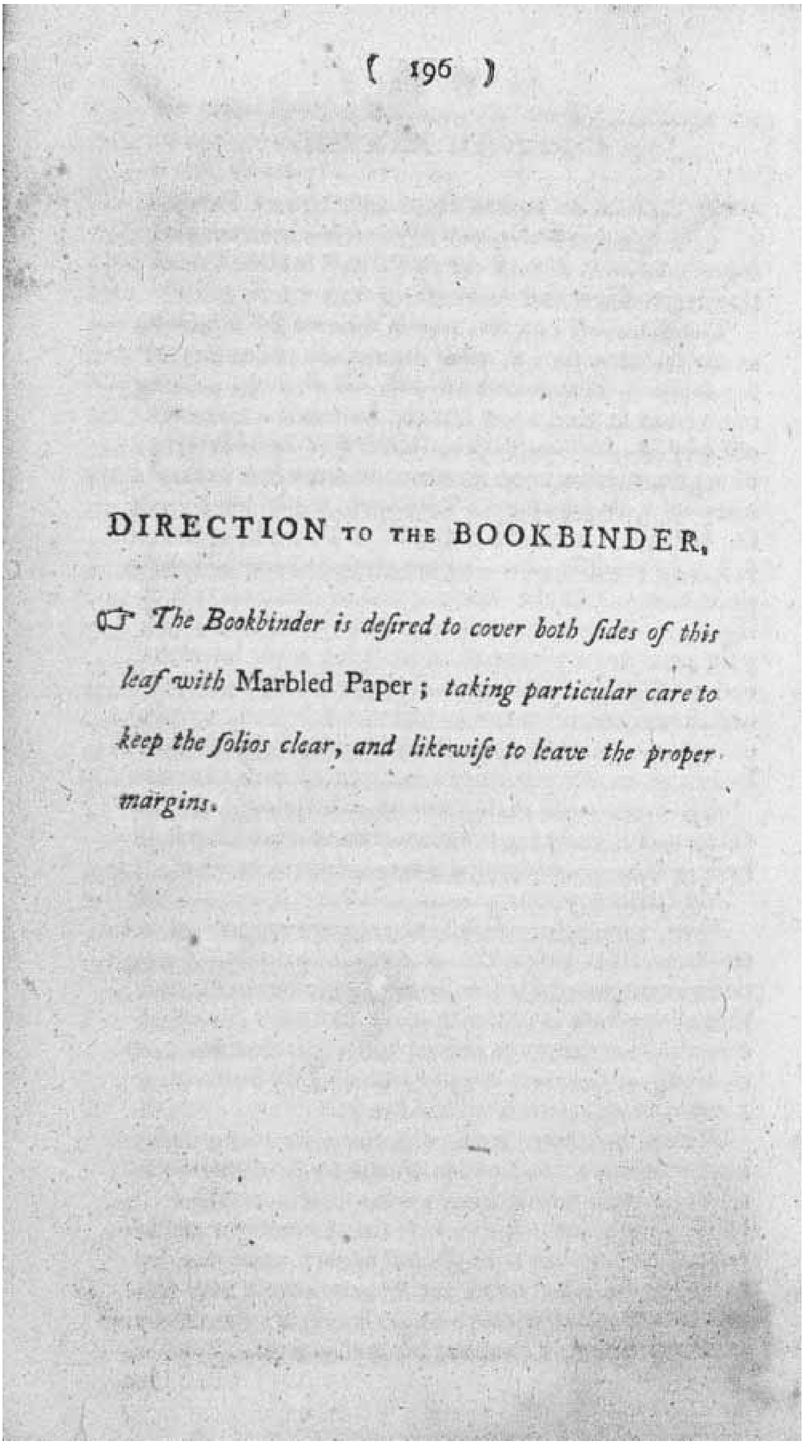
The mutability of the novel's printed form (and its graphic borrowings from other genres) compounds rather than solves the recurrent problems of generic definition endemic to modern studies of the eighteenth-century novel, from the taxonomies of Northrop Frye and Ian Watt to the contextualizations of Benedict Anderson and Michael McKeon.[29] Unfortunately the early novel's graphic genetics do not offer the key to the genre's mutability or unlock those narrative strains that have proven so resistant to theoretical mapping. At the risk of engaging the unwoundable ogre of semantics, this study focusses on the graphic design of novelistic fictions published in Britain during, roughly, the first half of the eighteenth century. And although it acknowledges a long-standing tradition of visual novelty in books prior to the century's start (from the punctuation of illuminated manuscripts and *incunabula* to the list of *dramatis personae* in Restoration drama and the index in seventeenth-century manuals), it thus considers outside of its scope the graphic designs of those quasi-novelistic fictions published prior to 1700. In addition, this study holds that the consolidation of prose fiction into the mature *narrative* form of "the novel" (though still not yet called such) takes place with the late arrival of *Pamela* (1740), that sentimental hinge text between the exotics of Manley, Defoe, and Swift and the hyperrealism and colloquial color of the Fieldings and Sterne. I argue that the mature genre's *graphic* shape gels even later – in the ensuing decade of the 1750s.

Within the strict confines of the eighteenth century, I also consider fiction writers whom some contemporary critics might dismiss as minor or liminal (Edward Kimber and Francis Coventry) alongside the progenitors of the species' dominant lines of descent (Richardson and Fielding). Of course, because of master printer Richardson's indubitable control over almost every element of his work's production as well as his equally doubtless impact upon the genre writ large, his is the work awarded the most extensive consideration in this study. Although a reader may come across some unfamiliar names and many little-known experiments in the novelist's art, my study's scope (even the chapter devoted to Sarah Fielding) largely accepts the contemporary canon of the early genre, which has recently been expanded along gender lines. And although it recognizes the influence of late-seventeenth-century print traditions upon the nascent novel's graphic pilferings and, on the other end of the historical spectrum, tracks certain graphic trends to the eighteenth-century novel's nineteenth-century descendants, I do not, on the whole, overstep the marks of the study's "eighteenth-century novel" rubric.

Thus a relatively canonical inventory of novelists gives evidence of the need for a radically expanded redefinition of the novel as a genre. This redefinition includes consideration of the astounding graphic self-consciousness and experimentality that was common across much of the new species of writing, from "high" to "low" and peripheral to mainstream. Those fiction writers and publishers who, along with their respective printers, emerge as particularly prone to graphic experimentality include members of the cult of novelty seekers – such as Edmund Curll, Delarivier Manley, Eliza Haywood, and Daniel Defoe – as well as the Augustan traditionalists – such as Jonathan Swift and, to some extent, Henry Fielding (interestingly, he proved opposed to a certain kind of graphic gimmickry found in the novels of his sister Sarah). The novel genre's accommodation of graphic innovation was seized upon by B-grade authors and unknowns who depended upon demonstrable novelty for a sale, such as Hannah Snell and John Kidgell, as well as those whose literary ambitions were already on a secure footing after the success of prior fictions, such as Samuel Richardson and Tobias Smollett. Opportunities to engage in the novel's graphic dialogue thus cut across gender and class – at least to the extent that the general opportunities for publishing did – and involved printer-authors as well as those lacking direct access to the trade of print.

The apotheosis of this generic experimentation with form is, of course, Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759–67). Sterne uses both graphic design and paratexts to test the boundaries of the emerging genre itself, rearranging the conventional ingredients of an eighteenth-century book to challenge readerly expectation. *Tristram Shandy*'s obvious preoccupation with graphic design has inoculated it against most of the editorial cancers plaguing the genre as a whole – though it has not proven entirely immune to textual mutation and intervention from edition to edition (see Figure 1.3). Although at least one early re-publication lacked the book's marbled pages and many more omit the ironic games played with, for example, the text's catchwords and layout, *Tristram Shandy*'s flamboyant bookishness is familiar to even a reader of modern editions. Even in modern paperbacks the oddly placed dedication in Volume IX, the Shandys' legalistic marriage articles, the untranslated French medical treatise labelled "Memoire presenté à Messieurs les Docteurs de Sorbonne," and the novel's famous marbled pages (the misplaced endpapers of a book) – all flaunt the genre's by then well-established talent for hijacking formal structure and manipulating the conventions of print. As J. Paul Hunter argues, Sterne "is not so much an inventor as a publicist" of the novel's liberal use of technological innovation and printing techniques.[30] He is, to use Richard Macksey's phrase, a "pioneer anatomist" rather than a forger of new forms.[31] In a sense, Sterne's work records how far the novel has progressed by the late 1750s and early 1760s; the success of *Tristram Shandy* may, in part, be attributed to the preexistence of a novel readership that had been schooled to "read" the visual components of the genre as part of its text. For example, the comical errata at the start of Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and the pyrotechnics of the marginal "dots" in the 1751 edition of Richardson's *Clarissa* had been just as self-consciously suffused with bookishness and graphic design as *Tristram*'s special pages.[32] By the time that Sterne writes, the novel's reliance upon formal structures, including graphic design, is firmly enough established to be manipulated to comic effect, allowing a satire of form to become a bestseller. One has to look to the novelists (and pre-novelists) before Sterne, and to the established discourses in print culture with which they interacted, to trace the genre's visual evolution over the first half of the century and rebuild the visual toolkit of the eighteenth-century novel reader. This book takes such a look.

If novelists before Sterne considered the graphic designs of their texts, by implication the emerging novel's graphic vitality must have been a fundamental part of the eighteenth-century reader's encounter with the genre *qua* genre. If this is so, why then is there so little evidence of the genre's early graphic dimension in modern novels? Editorial practice alone is not to blame for the novel's eradication of its own printed image. As the novel matures it relies less and less on print to guide presentation, marketing, and the reader's interpretation. Over the course of the eighteenth century, the manner in which many early novels deploy graphic design charts a pattern of appropriation, subversion, and eventual desertion of the graphic markings of other literary genres co-opted by



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DIRECTION TO THE BOOKBINDER.

☞ *The Bookbinder is deſired to cover both ſides of this leaf with* Marbled Paper; *taking particular care to keep the ſolios clear, and likewiſe to leave the proper margins.*

FIGURE 1.3 From a posthumous two-volume edition of Sterne's complete *Tristram Shandy* (London: Printed for T. Caddel, 1780), I, 195.

the novel's nascent form. The novel first borrows the printed trappings of authority, then, as it grows more confident, it subverts and mocks that authority, eventually shedding its own graphic plagiarism. Tracking the novel historically, the genre's most active period of formal experimentation reaches a crescendo in the 1750s. Starting in the early 1760s, the novel begins a slow striptease of its graphic attire – its author portraits, cacophonous title pages, and graphic embellishments. It is the bare narrative form of the novel, adorned only by the figleaf of attendant illustration, that enters the next century, where as a printed book it dons the new costumes of serialization and machine printing.

To some extent, the functions of graphic design and the paratext in the early novel (during a time when book buyers had their books bound after purchase) has been replaced by the printed dust jacket, blurbs, and endorsement modes of modern publishing. Perhaps because much of this modern paratext is placed "outside" of the printed book-pages of text, and nearly always by other hands, the novelistic text nowadays tends to aspire to self-enclosedness: its self-advertising and orientation are already in the reader's possession in the form of a printed cover. On the other hand, the decline of authorial paratext is not only a consequence of modern publishing practices having found equivalents for the functions served by some eighteenth-century paratexts (book tours, author interviews, endorsements, and cover design), but also partly a result of the easy familiarity of the novel as a genre. The modern novel need not set up a series of expectations for a reader of the genre. In, for example, the twentieth-century novel, the self-contained sanctity and immediacy of the text are taken for granted. Because the convention of the novel is so thoroughly assimilated, we rush straight into these imagined other lives. Indeed, reminders that this is a printed book are felt to undermine the illusion – even in some cases to the point of eliminating chapters as artificial breaks, which, ironically, brings the form full circle back to the unbroken, chapterless narratives of early Defoe. Novelistic experiments with the printedness of the printed book are, in the twentieth century, comparatively rare outside of the avant-garde (Barthelme and others) or parodies of romances of yore (in, say, Barth's *Sot-Weed Factor* or Fowles's *French Lieutenant's Woman*).

In the first half of the eighteenth century, however, readers still needed to be lured over the threshold of the emerging genre. It was then that novelists used the developing novel's graphic presentation as printed book to entice readers and guide their interpretation.