

PREFACE

I have taken the following essay excerpt from my final literary analysis paper for the UCSB English Department's Introduction to English and American literature from 1650 to 1789 (English 102) course. I've included it in my portfolio because it exemplifies the written work that I do for the English major: heavy analysis of syntax and word choice within the context of one or multiple literary works, paired with support or refutation from outside sources, typically secondary-source research articles.

I've chosen this specific excerpt because it concludes one of my arguments on the first of the three texts that I discuss in the paper; my short bibliography also only contains the sources that I used for this section. I've also kept my entire introduction intact as it sets up my paper and gives the parts of my argument that I have retained an anchor to my thesis.

The Worth of Interiority (excerpted)

By Jamie Hu

In Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina; or Love in a Maze*, Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto*, female interiority plays a part in giving each story forward momentum. In *Fantomina* and *Pamela*, the singular female protagonist's limited thoughts and feelings are revealed to the audience in order to establish her as an unreliable narrator and undermine her authority as a justification for her fate within the plot: *Fantomina*, as a woman deserving to be caught in her own trap, and *Pamela* as a woman already owned by another. *The Castle of Otranto*, on the other hand, threads the thoughts and feelings of several different women throughout its narrative, and although their interiority helps to push the narrative forwards, its function within the piece is never solely to define the worth of the women and to justify her position at the end of the story, but simply to solidify the reader's attachment to her and thus their emotional response at the end of her arc. Thus, through these three works, female interiority evolves from serving as a plot device used to determine the worth of a woman and thus justify her fate within the narrative to a device that creates sympathetic characters of

women who suffer or are rewarded as part of an arbitrary plot with no bearing on their moral worth.

Haywood provides a view into the inner thoughts of the female protagonist of *Fantomina* in order to highlight the folly of the character in feeling that she has succeeded in undermining a system over which she has no power, thus justifying her ultimate demise within that system. One instance of her foolishness, for example, appears in the scene directly after she has just fooled Beauplaisir into accepting yet another one of her advances, this time as Incognita, and says to herself: “by these arts of passing on him as a new mistress whenever the ardour (which alone makes love a blessing) begins to diminish for the former one, I have him always raving, wild, impatient, longing, dying. O that all neglected wives and fond abandoned nymphs would take this method! Men would be caught in their own snare and have no cause to scorn our easy, weeping, wailing sex!’ Thus did she pride herself, as if secure she should never have any reason to repent the present gaiety of her humour” (Haywood 644). First, the diction in this passage highlights the naive youth with which the protagonist thinks; she considers her actions a form of “the arts,” which offers her a sense of superiority within her trade, and she additionally considers “ardour”—enthusiasm or passion—to be the only thing that makes love worth its while. By emphasizing her protagonist’s youth, Haywood reminds her readers that her protagonist does not fully understand the way the world works yet and should thus not be completely trusted.

The protagonist does not, as discussed earlier, understand the extent to which her strategy has taken over her life, seeing only its immediate benefits, as seen in the way she describes Beauplaisir as “always racing, wild, impatient, longing, dying,” without ascribing an end to those feelings. The gerunds emphasize this endless, continuous process to which the protagonist cannot

even fathom an end. Irony comes into the picture when she crows that “Men would be caught in their own snare” while the narration itself slips in and states that she prided herself “as if secure she should never have any reason to repent the present gaiety of her humour.” The “as if” foreshadows the protagonist’s eventual fall into her own trap, which she has been gleefully setting for her lover. The very fact that the narration needs to appear and counter the Lady’s description of her success undermines the protagonist’s voice and labels her as a fool even before her plan begins to fail. As Leslie Morrison states in her article titled “Serialized Identities and the Novelistic Character in Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina* and *Anti-Pamela*,” the third person narration in the story draws “attention to the implausibility of *Fantomina*’s disguises, but, more importantly, it precludes the deception inherent in self-narration [...] and prevents *Fantomina* from vindicating herself within her own narrative” (32). By introducing another narrative voice who knows more than the protagonist and thus feels more reliable to the reader, Haywood drains the protagonist of her power to persuade and thus eliminates her control over her fate.

Works Cited

- Haywood, Eliza. “*Fantomina; or Love in a Maze.*” *The Broadview Anthology of British Literature: The Restoration and the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Joseph Black [et al], Broadview Press, 2012, pp. 632-647.
- Morrison, Leslie. "Serialized Identities and the Novelistic Character in Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina* and *Anti-Pamela*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 30 no. 1, 2017, pp. 25-44. *Project MUSE*, muse.jhu.edu/article/671521.