

Loyalist Propaganda and the Scandalous Life of Tom Paine: 'Hypocritical Monster!'

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Prithee, Tom Paine, why wilt thou meddling be
In others Business which concerns not thee;
For while thereon thou dost extend thy Career
Thou dost at home neglect thy own Affairs.¹

In 1792 the newly formed John Reeves Association for the Preservation of Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers published a series of popular tracts aimed at countering the pernicious influence of Tom Paine's *Rights of Man*. In *A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush*, one labourer announces to his neighbour his decision to scratch his name from his local revolutionary club membership list.² The honest John Frankly readily identifies the impetus for his political change of heart: he is deeply concerned that his 'character' will become tarnished through his association with a club president who 'is certainly one of Tom Paine's People', and, he explains,

I don't like that Paine at all; for as I was waiting in a Gentleman's Hall for Orders, t'other Day, the Porter gave me, to read, the Life of Thomas Paine. The Gentleman who wrote it gives him a very bad Character; and I have heard since [the author] Parson Oldys knows him very well.³

The best-selling and exceedingly influential biography of Paine, to which Frankly refers, was the product of government propagandist George Chalmers, alias 'Francis Oldys'.⁴ Far from knowing him 'very well', however, Chalmers had never before set eyes on Paine – though this did not prevent him from offering his audience an 'eyewitness' account of the most intimate details of the revolutionary's life. The text's simulated intimacy with its subject's private life and the way it sought to initiate a conspiratorial relationship with its audience, are important textual features that mark it as both a harbinger and a consequence of a shift in the way politics was debated in the 1790s.

Indeed, Chalmers' text reflected (and encouraged) the growing belief that an individual's political intentions and capabilities could be gauged by how that person conducted his or her private life. A survey of the political literature of 1792-1793 urges Britons to familiarise themselves with those 'truths' that lurked beneath the public personae of political upstarts spawned by the

French Revolution. 'It behoves us at all times', one moderate reformer wrote, 'to inquire into the private character and circumstances of those who aspire to take the lead in political disputes, but particularly at present'.⁵ The urgency of the times, and Paine's popularity, meant that even those who would otherwise spurn scandalmongering felt it necessary to address the unsavoury rumours about Paine's private life. Making specific reference to Chalmer's biography, MP Sir Brooke Boothby conceded that 'of the private history of Mr. Paine, I neither know any thing, [n]or wish to enquire. But these questions arise out of the nature and tendency of his work'.⁶ Those conservatives who believed the people had no business in political decision-making were also forced to admit begrudgingly that though it was 'of very little importance to the reader to know who, or what sort of person, the writer of any thing is', the present circumstances made it 'material to consider who the men are whose writings on public matters are recommended to your perusal'.⁷ The rank and file, too, began to publish their views of Paine's private-political self. Exercising their self-proclaimed 'right to try a man as well as to judge of his book', the 'Citizens of Caledonia' published a 1792 New Year's address to Paine in which their critique of the author of the *Rights of Man* was accompanied by an apropos warning: when writers 'take their leave of their readers, and turn their backs', they wrote, 'their rear becomes exposed; and if they are vulnerable at all, it is there the enemy will make his deepest impressions'.⁸

These types of comment are indicative of an important development in the complex relationship between political propaganda and the discourses of virtue, 'manliness' and domesticity in the late eighteenth century. Political participation had always come with certain expectations regarding personal conduct, but, as national stability was threatened by revolution and war, and as public opinion – spurred on by a rapidly expanding press – emerged as a critical political force, attention began to focus more closely on the connection between citizenship, patriotism and private morality. In 1776 Paine could still preface *Common Sense* with the declaration that 'who the Author of this Production is, is wholly unnecessary to the Public, as the Object for Attention is the Doctrine itself, not the Man'.⁹ In the last decade of the century, however, this type of declaration carried little weight; in fact, William Cobbett's 1797 declaration that 'the good citizen or subject, the good husband, parent, and child, the good Christian exist *together*, or they exist *not at all*' had by this time, become a firmly established political maxim.¹⁰

As recent scholarship has shown, the belief that citizenship must be buttressed by domestic, familial values had been gaining political purchase since at least the 1770s. That decade, Harriet Guest argues, saw the public and the private converge in 'representations of the American war as a conflict within the family' and, as John Barrell points out, in public perception of it as the 'destruction of the dear domestic ties between parent and offspring'.¹¹ This convergence was there, too, in the dual representation of George III as a devoted family man *and* as a powerful political patriarch who had a parental right to exercise fatherly discipline on his unruly subjects. Guest also identifies,

as does historian Anna Clark, the John Wilkes controversy of the 1760s and 70s as a political event which foregrounds the tightening connection between private morality and political reputation. For Clark, the Wilkes case especially contributed to 'a significant transition in British politics', for in an effort to bring about constitutional reform, Wilkes had changed the temper and purpose of scandal by using it to undermine the monarchy.¹² By publicly airing tales of corruption and illicit sexual affairs at the highest levels of influence had unintentionally opened the floodgates: although his challenge to the political hierarchy attracted the relatively extensive audience he sought, he had also incited a controversy about his own scandalous personal life. In the end, Wilkes's self-representation 'as a libertine for the cause of liberty' backfired when the public denounced his unrestrained lifestyle and his lack of personal virtue.¹³ Though Wilkes subsequently attempted to deflect criticism by arguing that a politician's private affairs should remain distinct from his public role, he had done far too much to advance the opposite view. By taking such public aim at his enemies' private lives, he had – intentionally or unintentionally – made political legitimacy dependent on private morality.

The Wilkes controversy highlights an ideological tension between, on the one hand, long established political traditions that advocated a separation of the public and private spheres and, on the other, an emerging middle-class belief in the interdependence of public stability and personal rectitude. As critics have shown, this latter view of political legitimacy was closely affiliated with the culture of sensibility and with the evangelical movement, both of which promoted the idea that 'the basis of morality lay in the private world of the family'.¹⁴ In turn, both sensibility and evangelicalism made a deep impression on political writing in this era. In the 1790s in particular, the culture of sensibility gave rise to what John Barrell has termed a 'language of sentiment, [a] privatized language of politics'.¹⁵

In the 1790s evangelicals were one group among many who warned a debauched aristocracy that they must reform or face ruin, for recent events in France had demonstrated the disruptive power of a populace who had lost faith in a corrupt ruling class. Large numbers of newspapers, pamphlets and caricatures (representing all political persuasions) conveyed the idea that a state of order could only be maintained in a nation that exercised self-restraint and personal responsibility – across the social spectrum. Still others sounded warnings from behind the scenes. 'The higher and middling ranks of people have formed themselves into a powerful Phalanx', one Reevesite wrote, 'if the lower orders of people can but be securely engaged to unite with them – if the latter are but strongly attached to their superiors, the nation cannot have anything to dread either from foreign or domestic enemies'.¹⁶ This strong attachment, however, could only be maintained if the higher orders consistently displayed 'knowledge and refinement of manners' to their inferiors.¹⁷ Tackling this same theme from below, another Reevesite insisted that though Paine was a pernicious influence, it was important to remember that 'the causes of those disorders and discontents we have so much reason to dread among the

people' were also the result of 'pre-existent causes' – not the least of which was 'moral profligacy'.¹⁸ The current political climate demanded certain amendments: 'the sources of corruption' had to be stemmed and 'marriage, which is the best *political* bond' must be made 'easier to the lower ranks'.¹⁹

Perhaps no one had ever so blatantly used scandal to unearth the private sources of political corruption as the gentleman radical Charles Pigott. In his best-selling *Jockey Club* pamphlets he contended that the debauched nature of polite society was indicative of an infected polity, and more to the point, revealed how princes, ambassadors, generals, lawyers and government officials had 'degenerate[d] from their virtues' to such a degree that they were 'of no weight either in the moral or political balance'.²⁰ Pigott stated his purpose clearly: he wanted to focus 'the eyes of the multitude' on the connection between their own honest labours, the government's burdensome taxation policies and aristocratic over-indulgence.²¹ In doing so, the *Jockey Club* was plainly breaking with earlier genres of scandal, for as Nicholas Rogers has observed, the principle aim of Pigott's pamphlets was not to titillate, as earlier publications such as the *Town and Country* were keen to do, but to initiate reform by revealing precisely 'why the aristocracy should lose their presumptive right to rule'.²²

There was something else new about the *Jockey Club*. Though Rogers argues that the 'witty, elaborate' writing style and the relatively high price of the pamphlet 'precluded a genuinely popular audience',²³ the evidence – the number of sequels and editions, as well as the alarmed responses of conservatives, government officials and society figures – suggests that these pamphlets were attracting a much wider audience. The loyalist headquarters at the Crown and Anchor tavern, for instance, received letter after panicked letter describing the groups of 'journeymen, apprentices and footmen' clustered around bookseller's tables in Chancery-Lane and Covent Garden, freely reading (or listening to) just this type of material.²⁴ On 11 December 1792, one anxious Reeves Association subscriber wrote in that 'as the publication entitled the *Jockey Club* contains in my opinion a most scandalous Libel upon his Majesty I think it my *duty* to inform you that it continues to be publicly exhibited for Sale'.²⁵ Yet another informant insisted that 'to counteract the mischief' of such books, a fast and forceful response which employed the same type of 'medium' was required.²⁶ Indeed, as Jon Mee has shown, Pigott's targets seriously feared the repercussions of such a 'dangerous' pamphlet: not only did the Prince of Wales pronounce it 'the most infamous & shocking libellous production' that had 'ever disgraced the pen of man', but it was declared a seditious pamphlet along with Paine's *Rights of Man*.²⁷

As 'a good antidote to the poison of Pigot's [*sic*] infamous Books which have been circulated throughout the Kingdom', loyalists recommended that the *Answer to the Jockey Club* be printed and distributed amongst the People.²⁸ Indeed, the enraged author of this rejoinder did not stop at defending himself but vituperatively scandalised Pigott in the same terms he had himself employed. This 'Member of the *Jockey Club*' accused the radical of

'repudiat[ing] his wife' and described how, after becoming 'enamoured to a lady at Paris, he [...] purchased the possession of her charms with a forged draft; then left her to think on what had past, and sigh alone'.²⁹ He used Pigott's private life as a foil to highlight the virtuous life of a king who had 'performed the duties of a father and a husband, with [...] exactness and punctuality'.³⁰ The king's political legitimacy was buttressed by his domestic virtues, but Pigott's disordered domestic affairs invalidated his allegations and brought his political motives sharply into question.

This public exchange of reciprocal abuse gives an indication of how adept loyalists would become at appropriating and deflating radical discourse. Radicals, and especially Tom Paine, were portrayed as inherently untrustworthy individuals who were more than willing to displace their own family for the untenable doctrine of the rights of man. Indeed, the motivating idea behind Chalmers' production, and the anti-Painite propaganda that followed its example, was that the same public that Paine had addressed needed to be apprised of 'the truth' about the private affairs of an author who had become, at least for some, a political messiah. The attack on Paine was one way of dealing with those newly politicised individuals who were making a bid for citizenship status based on reason, rather than on traditional notions of custom and inheritance, political privilege and property-ownership. Chalmers' *Life* is an attempt to counter those who, in defence of Paine, insisted that 'IF he write a good book' then 'what signifies the *profligacy* of his *character*'?³¹ Chalmers demanded that the *Rights of Man* be judged by its author's domestic life; he wanted that life to attach itself to Paine as 'a badge' which would continuously announce to the people his unworthiness for political and 'literary fame'.³²

Producing such a biography, Chalmers confessed, had proved a very easy task, for Paine's history provided plenty of incriminating evidence. From the very beginning of his adult life, Paine had apparently proved faithless even to those to whom he owed his very existence. Paine's mother, described as 'the tenderest of parents', had experienced great anguish over her son's 'undutiful behavior', his 'ingratitude' and his 'want of duty'.³³ Paine had proved himself a prodigal son, but one who, rather than returning home to seek parental forgiveness and to reconcile himself to his community, remained immured in his corruption. As he abused his mother, so he ceaselessly abused the country of his birth. He had, in the 1770s, advised rebellious Americans that to earn 'the name father, husband, friend or lover', they had to secure for their children a future free of a 'mother country' which had proved such an 'unnatural parent'.³⁴ In the 1790s Chalmers argued, Paine's one-man 'civil war' against Britain had taken on the 'accustomed rancour of domestic feuds'.³⁵ Using a similar language in a pamphlet of the following year, Isaac Hunt condemned Paine for 'alienat[ing] the Colonies from the Mother State' and for 'promot[ing] an unnatural war between the Parent and her Children'.³⁶ Another virulent anti-Painite, Charles Harrington Elliot, urged his readers to take Britain's side against her seditious offspring. 'Injured *Britain*', he declared, 'recognise an

unnatural *son* in that stern, froward *bravo* of ambition, whose impious arm has for years been uplifted against the land of his nativity'.³⁷ These propagandists impelled their readers to see Paine not as the public creature he claimed to be, but as an insubordinate, disloyal son whose self-interested brand of liberty effaced both parental and national ties.

Since 'marriage is the great epoch of a man's life', however, it was Paine's notoriously disastrous marriages that provided the greatest evidence of his temperamental deficiencies and political unsuitability.³⁸ No-one had ever been able to confirm, for instance, whether his first wife, Mary Lambert, had died as a result of a miscarriage brought on by his 'ill usage' or whether she still lived somewhere in 'extreme obscurity' (presumably in hiding from her abusive husband).³⁹ Then, in a second marriage, to Elizabeth Ollive at Lewes, Sussex, it was alleged that the widowed or still-married Paine had falsely claimed bachelor status on their 1771 marriage record.⁴⁰ Chalmers and other anti-Painite writers (most notably, William Cobbett) would make much of the personal and political deceit embodied in this type of blatant misrepresentation: privately, Paine had acted the knave whilst, in legal terms, he had become a felon.⁴¹

With relish, propagandists delved deep into the most intimate details of Paine's marriages. They recounted his alleged sexual inadequacies – particularly his failure to consummate his three-and-a-half-year second marriage – in order to demonstrate how sharply his domestic life contrasted against the virtuous and honest lives of average Britons. The community at Lewes, it was contended, had treated him with kindness, and when his impotence became known, had arranged for him to be seen by a team of doctors. According to biographer James Cheetham, when Paine was subsequently pronounced healthy, and yet still refused to fulfil his marital obligations, he became 'despised by the women, jeered by the men, and charged with a want of virility'.⁴² In such a way, the community had acted both as an advocate for the virtuous, defenceless wife, and as a moral barometer against which Paine's dissipation could be measured. Inevitably, Paine was found to be lacking 'the ordinary sensibilities of an ordinary man'.⁴³

Charles Harrington Elliot's *The Republican Refuted* takes Chalmers' *Life* as a starting point, but focuses more intimately on the theme of Paine's unnaturalness. Elliot expresses his shock to find that Paine not only fails to display a shred of decency and civility, but that he lacks that most basic human instinct – the desire to procreate. Paine had allegedly explained this lack to the prostitutes he preferred to his alluring and virtuous wife. He had admitted to them 'that having married for *convenience only*, his wife's breeding would be subversive of that prudent object. And as for the tender emotions of nature, he had long since learned to keep them in due subjection.'⁴⁴ Elliot is bewildered and disgusted by Paine's refusal to have children and to perpetuate his family name (no matter how humble it was). Paine had turned his back on the most fundamental of social responsibilities and had defied the laws of nature; in doing so, he had repudiated his very humanness.

Paine's 'subjection' of nature gave rise to much more serious violations of the bounds of human decency. Elliot describes how, on one occasion, under the influence of 'beer, gin, and tobacco', the 'tyrant' Paine had actually taken great delight in deflowering his innocent and beautiful wife by forcing the family cat 'where the reader must guess, for indignant modesty cannot be more explicit'.⁴⁵ Elliot adopts a rhetoric of sensibility – an 'indignant modesty' – to distance himself from the scandalous Paine and to make it clear that, though he would rather not speak of such shocking occurrences, public duty demanded it, for Paine's sexual barbarism is intimately linked to his treasonous politics:

The man who solemnly engaged before God to discharge all the tender duties of wedlock, with a predetermined, unyielding resolution to the *contrary*; who, in *stern despite of nature*, met all the unveiled charms of the bridal bed without enjoyment; [...] that man, I say, is qualified by monster-making nature to hold the torch of *Guy Faux*, or the bloody knife of *Ravillac*.⁴⁶

Political and personal deviance is conflated here: as an anomaly of nature, Paine is grouped with history's monstrous regicides. At the same time, a political vocabulary is used to describe the most intimate details; thus, Paine had an 'artificial, not *constitutional* insensibility to the charms of *bridal* youth and beauty'.⁴⁷ Chalmers also employs a similar rhetorical strategy, speculating that Paine's 'malicious impotence' was due either 'to natural imbecility or to *philosophical indifference*'.⁴⁸ Such politically connotative language skilfully collapses what was perceived as Paine's grossly unnatural desires (or, in this case, his lack of natural ones) with the 'bodilessness', or abstractness, of his political ideology.

James Gillray deploys a similar discursive strategy in his 1793 caricature *Fashion before Ease: or, A good Constitution Sacrificed, for a Fantastik Form* (see Fig. 1). The image makes reference to Paine's early career as a staymaker (a scandal in itself): Paine heaves roughly on Britannia's stay laces, a foot unceremoniously placed on her backside, as he tries to squeeze her into a French form. His pocked and reddened face attests to disease and heavy drinking and his hard-set expression demonstrates, to borrow Chalmers' words, the 'usual attention' Paine paid 'to the *rights of women*'.⁴⁹ His brand of politics is as uncivilised as his character: toward the nation he was noxious, whilst 'to the sex, whether animated with liquor, or in his temperate moments depressed with reflection, he paid no sort of deference'.⁵⁰

Gillray's image captures something of the double-sidedness of loyalist representations of Paine in the 1790s. He was, on the one hand, a coldly impotent man who could only engage in offensive acts of (ultimately unfulfilling) sexual violence, and on the other, a licentious seducer of married women. He compromised girls of reputable families, insulted English ladies with his 'French familiarity', and gave 'proofs of his *virility*' to 'the companions of his amours *sub dio*'.⁵¹ This licentiousness separated Paine from those



G.W: inv:

Pub Jan 21 1793 by M. Goussier, No. 10 St. Pauls Church Yard

FASHION before EASE ;
or, ...A good Constitution sacrificed, for a Fantastick Form.

1. James Gillray (1757-1815), *Fashion before Ease*, 1793.
Etching with hand colouring.
Courtesy of The Lewis Walpole Library, Yale University, 793.I.2.2

virtuous members of society who may not have had 'the proportional number of wives' as he had, but proved daily that they were far 'more interested in their safety'.⁵² The two frontispiece images of Cobbett's pamphlet captures this particular side of Paine (Fig.2). At first glance, it would seem strange to front such a scurrilous biography with a dashing, attractive image of its detested subject. But once the eye takes in the juxtaposed image of the solemn, sincere Cobbett, Paine appears rakish, his wavy hair unruly, his grin leering and his collar dandyish.

This dissoluteness precluded personal allegiance; as such, Paine could not respect the sacred vows of even his closest friends. He had not hesitated, for instance, to convince the wife of his Parisian host and political ally, Nicolas de Bonneville, to emigrate from Napoleonic France to America with him in 1802 (with her three children in tow). He had allegedly lured Mme Bonneville from her husband with his political rhetoric in order to receive from her those 'secret services' that only women in her 'position' were willing to 'perform'.⁵³ As such, propagandists argued, Mme Bonneville might lack female virtue, but readers should make no mistake: in the final analysis the culpability was Paine's, for he was 'guilty of the worst species of seduction; the alienation of a wife and children from a husband and a father'.⁵⁴

Several biographers also accused Paine of being the illegitimate father of the Bonneville sons, although, they were quick to point out, he could never be described as 'fatherly'.⁵⁵ He might be given 'credit' for their patrimony but he had proved to be an abusive and counterfeit father who had usurped the position of the bona fide father. In fact, eyewitnesses reported that the eldest son had frequently cursed Paine, condemned his character, and accused him of being the 'complete ruin' of his family.⁵⁶ This image of the radical evolved alongside, but in sharp contradistinction to, loyalist representations of Edmund Burke as constitutional guardian, devoted family man and even friend of the people. Isaac Hunt, for example, claimed that, if the truth be known, Paine bore a 'deep rooted malice' against Britons 'of all ranks and orders' whilst Burke had always been 'in habits of friendship with some of our most ingenious mechanics'.⁵⁷ After 1791, when many of Burke's predictions about the French Revolution proved prescient, propagandists placed him in a line of fathers who had acted, and would continue to act, in the best interests of their dependants.⁵⁸ For James Cheetham, Burke may have lost his only son and heir, but he had founded an expansive national family and had become one of the 'most conspicuous founders of a great empire'.⁵⁹

This personally and politically solicitous Burke was the antithesis of a Paine who was described, even at times by fellow patriots, as a self-absorbed, personally isolated character. The Irish republican Wolfe Tone, for instance, recorded a case that clearly demonstrated the contrast. When Tone met the exiled Paine in Paris in 1797, he told him the news of Burke's anguish over the death of his beloved son Richard, but Paine had responded by insisting that the true reason for Burke's distress was that 'the Rights of Man [...] had broken his heart'.⁶⁰ Even further, Paine boasted that the son's death had conveniently

COBBETT'S
REVIEW
OF
THE LIFE
OF
THOMAS PAINE.



Sold by Howard, 33, Gray's Inn Lane.

Price Two-pence.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIRS of persons, famous for the great good or the great mischief they have done, are so sure to meet with a favourable reception in print, that it has long been subject of astonishment, that none of the disciples of Paine should ever have thought of obliging the world with an account of his life. His being of mean birth could form no reasonable objection: when the life of his hero is spotless, the biographer feels a pride as well as a pleasure in tracing him from the penurious shed to the pinnacle of renown.

‘THOMAS PAINE was born at *Thetford*, in the county of Norfolk (in England), on the 29th of January, 1736-7. His father was Joseph Paine, a stay-maker by trade, and of the sect of the Quakers. His mother,

2. Author unknown, illustration to *Cobbett's Review of the Life of Thomas Paine* [1809?].
By permission of the Director of Information Services
of the University of Bristol

given the father 'occasion to develop the chagrin which had preyed upon him ever since the appearance of that work'.⁶¹ Tone's interpretation of Paine's reaction is significant: 'I am sure the Rights of Man have tormented Burke exceedingly', he writes, 'but I have seen myself the workings of a father's grief on his spirit, and I could not be deceived. *Paine has no children!*'⁶² Tone's phraseology is telling: he identifies Paine's childlessness as the source of his self-importance and the explanation of his misreading of Burke's crippling grief. At the same time, Tone's empathetic language suggests that, if only for a moment, he and Burke – the two fathers – share something that overrides their political differences and supersedes their political affiliations.

According to loyalists, the only family Paine could acknowledge was a counterfeit, illegitimate one of his own making. It was fitting, Cobbett argues, that he had elected to trace his political lineage from Enlightenment philosophers such as the cold, self-important and hypocritical Rousseau. In *Emile* Rousseau had written that there was 'no more charming picture than that of family life', and in his *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* he had defined 'conjugal love and paternal love' as 'the sweetest sentiments known to man'.⁶³ Yet, Cobbett argues, whilst 'everlastingly babbling about his *genre humain*' and his 'cœur aimant et tendre', the 'virtuous and tender-hearted and sympathetic Rousseau' had felt no compunction about abandoning his 'unfortunate bastards' and their mother to the poorhouse.⁶⁴ This condemnation of Rousseau is underwritten by the belief that one only merited a public position if one demonstrated personal virtue and exercised – in politics and in the home – a patrimonial authority tempered by fatherly responsibility and a warm affection for one's circle of dependants.

Like Rousseau, Paine obviously fails this test of political legitimacy: the extent of his paternalism had been to fashion himself into the father of a corps of self-seeking radicals who happily abandoned their own families in favour of reckless, ill-founded philosophies. These radicals, with their theory of universal natural rights, might claim to 'stretch their benevolence to the extremities of the globe' and to identify themselves as 'citizens of the world', Cobbett argues, but they deemed their own family, friends and nation 'unworthy' of their interest.⁶⁵ This radical brand of cosmopolitan individualism had rendered Paine a nation-less orphan and France a nation of orphans. Paine's nomadic existence, migrating from revolutionary nation to revolutionary nation, had marked him as an outsider, or as Cheetham put it, 'an alien'.⁶⁶ Cosmopolitanism only created dissidents who, with nothing to lose and no family to safeguard, felt themselves free to sow the seeds of anarchy wherever they travelled.

Spurred on by ambition and implanted with the anarchistic desires of fraudulent forefathers, Paine had become pregnant with illusory political theories. For this reason, Chalmers also casts Paine as a mother figure. After 'a few months labour' and with the assistance of publisher J. S. Jordan and a group of London Democrats (or 'men-midwives'), Paine had delivered a 'mutilated brat [...] to the public' on 13 March 1791.⁶⁷ In their rush to deliver the *Rights of Man*, these schemers became 'determined to deprive the child

of its virility, rather than so hopeful an infant should be with-held from the world'; in other words, Chalmers scoffs, they cared little about the political and grammatical errors the pamphlet contained.⁶⁸

These errors and Paine's puerile writing style, Chalmers contends, attests to Paine's regrettable lack of education, whilst his untenable theories reveal his political immaturity. In a representational twist, Chalmers takes on the role of a disapproving parent (complete with hectoring language), and casts Paine as an inexperienced child. He then devotes the second half of his biography to a linguistic dissection of the *Rights of Man*: in terms of both content and style, he finds that it largely consists of a 'gibberish' that would hardly amuse mere 'school-boys' let alone 'the grown men of England'.⁶⁹ He upbraids Paine for using a language that reveals the degree to which he lived in a child's egocentric world: politically, he stood for 'self-legislation', 'self actions' and 'self-redress', whilst linguistically, his style could be said to be characterised by 'self-design' and a stubborn resistance to grammatical convention.⁷⁰ As such, Paine's great political treatise contained the outpourings of a spoiled brat who had created his own 'novelties', used 'barbarisms', engaged in 'gross improprieties', produced 'egotisms', and spawned 'new-born nonsense'.⁷¹

Considering what we have encountered thus far, it would seem that Paine embodies an entire dysfunctional family. According to loyalist representations, he is a heartless, abusive husband, the father of political discord, a rhetorical seducer of nations who takes what he wants and makes a quick departure without a backward glance. He is also the mother of a destructive progeny and at the same time, a prodigal son, an orphan and an ignorant, unruly child. Yet, as complex as this picture of Paine is, propagandists complicated it still further, by representing him as a creature that seemed to exist *outside* the realm of the human. Deformed by his beliefs and his wasted life, he was monstrous, more animal-like than human. Moreover, to follow the chronology of his life was to follow a trajectory of escalating physical deformity. In his earliest days, Chalmers insists, he had 'always appeared to female eyes a dozen years older than he was, owing to the hardness of his features, or to the scars of disease', but over the years, these failings had inflated in proportion to his growing dedication to revolutionary politics.⁷² As Cheetham describes it, the 'habitual drunkenness' which had 'commenced with the delerium of the French Revolution' had culminated in addiction, loneliness, vagrancy and exile.⁷³ Readers are told how 'in his old age, when the attentions of a wife are inestimable, he had no house, no home; no one to help or to comfort him'.⁷⁴ Instead, the repulsive Paine was left to live his life 'in holes and corners' like a wild creature, where he ate a filthy diet more fit for swine than humans and drank an amount of brandy which 'would have quickly killed any ordinary man'.⁷⁵

Whilst this is an awful picture, loyalists claimed, they were simply holding a mirror up to the real Tom Paine – as duty required. 'In this glass, Englishmen', Isaac Hunt writes,

you will see all the prominent, dismal features, the scowling brow, the hard and brazen front of this dingy, ugly, voracious, boasted monster from America. You

will be able to remark the length and strength, the sharpness of his *nails* and *teeth*, and be guarded against his baneful, abominable, infectious, and corrupting breath, enemy to life and matter, and every institution and character, wise, sacred and illustrious.⁷⁶

The physical monstrosity that appears before readers' eyes is intended to tangibly demarcate him. More than simply lacking the cultural refinements of civilised society, Paine is described as almost sub-human – a circumstance which would seem to make it difficult for readers to visualise him as one of their own and practically impossible to see him as a political hero.

In his later years Paine was often characterised as the embittered, murderous son of Adam: as one observer put it, his 'countenance was bloated beyond description; he looked as if God had stamped his face with the mark of Cain'.⁷⁷ To others, he resembled Nebuchadnezzar, the exiled Old Testament king whose 'hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws'.⁷⁸ Like him, Paine was a broken, unwashed fugitive whose toenails 'exceeded half an inch in length' and grew, bird-like around his toes 'nearly as far under as they extended on top'.⁷⁹ As with the great biblical sinners, Paine's misdeeds had recorded themselves on his body, so that virtuous folk could recognise him for what he was. Paine's body, like his life, sounded a public warning, reminding people that it was

the duty of every citizen, who wishes to [...] support the good order of society, [...] to mark out this figure of a man to the public eye, to point out the rancorous temper of this sovereign-deposing, bishop-kicking, title-levelling, American independent, who has brought over from Pennsylvania his tremendous bloody tomahawk, to scalp the Government, and murder the Constitution of Great Britain.⁸⁰

Readers are impelled here to channel their scandalous knowledge into community action, to eject this monster from their midst and to check the ambitions of similar political agitators.

Those who would abuse either family or nation must be circumscribed, their sphere of influence contained. 'I would request the reader to look round among his acquaintance', Cobbett urged, and 'see if there be one among the yelping kennel of modern patriots, who is *not a bad husband, father, brother, or son*'.⁸¹ They were easily recognised, he declared, for 'the same pride and turbulence of spirit' they demonstrate in their political writing 'le[d] them also to tyrannize over those who are so unfortunate as to be subjected to their will'.⁸² The purpose of political scandal, therefore, was to recruit the public, by promoting the idea that patriotic citizens must make it their business to be wary of the signs of political virulence *and* domestic turmoil.

But this type of propaganda also went one step further. It operated self-reflexively, by prompting readers to examine and adjust their *own* responses to it. Cobbett makes this point emphatically when he argues that Paine's treatment of his wife should 'excite the indignation and resentment of every virtuous married woman' and rouse 'the detestation of every honourable man'.⁸³ If the reader did not feel indignant at Paine's personal life and his

politics, then that reader was neither herself virtuous, nor himself honourable. By implication, the reader's own life is brought into question; there is a charge to conform oneself to a conservative, and obviously gendered, code of morality.

Even after death, Paine's life continued to be used to these ends. Loyalists argued that though he had stopped short of a full deathbed confession, he had made it quite clear that he did not want others to follow his example.⁸⁴ According to Cheetham and Harford, eyewitnesses had reported that, in the final days of his life, 'no one could recommend matrimony with greater force than Paine'.⁸⁵ In one case, he had reportedly declared 'the marriage institution [...] an excellent one' and in another instance, had congratulated 'a very respectable householder of New-York' for burning her copy of the *Age of Reason* ('the most dangerous book she had seen').⁸⁶ It was said that he had confided to her that 'if ever the Devil had an agent on earth, I have been one'.⁸⁷ Thus the Paine who, in the first years of the French Revolution almost three decades earlier, had been represented by reactionaries as the son of the Devil, the 'Devil's Advocate' and the spiritual father of characters named 'Mac Serpent', now uttered counterrevolutionary warnings against his own writings and testified to his own dangerous infidelity.⁸⁸

As all of these representations indicate, Paine proved to be an incredibly malleable figure who was regularly subjected to ideological appropriation by propagandists of all political persuasions well into the nineteenth century. But, significantly, his defenders continued to be dogged by his personal reputation. When Cobbett defected to the reform cause in the early 1800s, his efforts 'to wrest patriotism away from the Tories and to present Radicalism as the true patriot's position', continued to be overshadowed by the issue of Paine's debauchery.⁸⁹ In fact, in the 1810s Cobbett's herculean efforts to rehabilitate Paine and to use him to re-ignite a radicalism silenced by Toryism failed utterly. As Ian Dyck has shown, though Cobbett had gone so far as to exhume Paine's remains and ship them from America – with the intention of stirring the people to action with 'bone rallies', monuments and commemoration – he was met with ridicule and apathy, for 'Paine and his legacy were a greater liability than ever'.⁹⁰

Tellingly, in his defence of Paine, Cobbett often employs the same moralistic terms against his political enemies that he had used earlier in his anti-Paine compositions. It was now the British establishment that had raised the 'fangs of bloody monsters' at the upright Paine: 'Ye pretended moralists', he writes, 'which of you, to assist his infant merit, would diminish even the surplus of your debaucheries!'⁹¹ This type of language – a language that actually reinforces a conservative moral code – would be used, in varying degrees, by many of Paine's succeeding defenders. Reformer W. T. Sherwin, for instance, chose not to attempt to deny the claims against Paine, but blamed his moral failures on the 'cheerless prospect' of an England which provided 'no hope' for her own humble sons.⁹² In his earliest days Paine had been unhappily 'relieved from every tie which might be supposed to bind him to his country' by a government which, instead of acting 'as an affectionate parent', proved to

be 'an unnatural monster, who had sought to strangle her infant offspring'.⁹³ That same mercenary government had fabricated the stories of Paine's sexual misadventures, since, Sherwin insists, those stories were 'too improbable and too ridiculous to be believed'.⁹⁴ In such a way, Sherwin carefully avoids any intimation that he either accepts Paine's lifestyle, or believes it to be without political relevance; instead, he merely attempts to provide an excuse for it.

Likewise, the radical writer, editor and secularist G. J. Holyoake not so much defends Paine as launches a polemic against the corrupt state of politics. Paine's private affairs, far from atypical, were consistent with those of other well-known political personalities, but 'is Charles James Fox branded as a drunkard? Is Sheridan?' he asks, 'Do the church-and-state worshippers who would stigmatise Paine, write the name of beast on the front of George the Fourth?'⁹⁵ Conceivably, the tone here seems to suggest at least tacitly, that these figures (and by implication Paine) deserve to be singled out by the public. And yet, 'however clean-handed' members of the public might claim to be, they were 'not pure-hearted enough to throw stones, even at those *taken in adultery*'.⁹⁶ From this one would ascertain that, since individuals were not virtuous enough to censure the behaviour of others, they, too, could do with some moral reform. In all fairness, Holyoake does attempt another angle of defence: he declares that 'the public had nothing to do' with the private relationship between Paine and Mme Bonneville. But in many ways this is a blandishment that seems distinctly unsuited to the cultural and political climate, for certainly the private lives of political figures were very much a public concern.⁹⁷

Both Sherwin and Holyoake could be said to contribute to an ascendant definition of private morality: in the former case, by blaming Paine's regrettable debauchery on a government that failed to create a climate conducive to virtuous behaviour, and in the latter instance, by reminding readers that they were not virtuous enough to cast stones. Either way, however, the message was clear: citizens needed to get their houses – private and political – in order.

Ultimately, Paine was a victim of tightening definitions of respectability. Destitute and alone, his misfortune, his loneliness, the deplorable state of his body and the torment of his mind acted as a warning to would-be radicals, and as an endorsement for quiet, virtuous living. Conservatives had proved especially dextrous at fashioning Paine – as they would other radicals such as Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin – into public enemies. These figures were used to ignite popular hostility against radicals, to initiate public loyalty and to justify the maintenance of the political and social status quo. In 1791 a reformer like Pigott could make 'political capital out of sexual freedom', but he was promptly eclipsed by conservatives who 'vigorously trumpet[ed] the values of domesticity as an antidote to Jacobinism and immorality'.⁹⁸ By the turn of the century, domestic values had so infused political discourse that both conservative and radical political writers found themselves coupling notions of patriotic duty with a conservative definition of the family.

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NOTES

1. Verse printed on a creamware mug now at the Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums, Brighton, Willett no.521, in David Bindman, *The Shadow of the Guillotine: Britain and the French Revolution* (London 1989), p.111.

2. *A Bird in the Hand is Worth Two in the Bush, or, A Dialogue between John Frankly and George Careful* (London? 1792), in *Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol.7, ed. Gregory Claeys (London 1995), p.287-90.

3. *Bird*, p.287-88.

4. Francis Oldys [George Chalmers], *The Life of Thomas Paine, The Author of the Rights of Men, With a Defence of his Writings* (1791), 5th edn (London 1793), p.7. I am using the fifth edition here, with its important preface. In all of the many editions and printings of his 'defence', Chalmers insisted on using the original spelling of 'Pain' instead of what he called the 'fictitious' appellation 'Paine', for he believed the added 'e' was an example of how the lowly revolutionary had inappropriately 'exercised a freedom, which only great men enjoy for honourable ends' (p.2).

5. [Anon.], *An Address to the People of Great Britain; Containing a Comparison between the Republican and Reforming Parties* (1793), in *Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol.7, ed. Claeys, p.344.

6. Sir Brooke Boothby, *Observations on the Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, and on Mr. Paine's Rights of Man. In Two Parts* (London 1792), in *Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol.6, ed. Gregory Claeys (London 1995), p.287.

7. *Ten Minutes Caution, from a Plain Man to his Fellow Citizens*, Tract 2, Association for Preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers, *Publications Recommended to the Public, in the Present Crisis* (1792), no.1.

8. *New Year's Gift for Mr. Thomas Paine, in Return for his Rights of Man; Humbly Presented by the Citizens of Caledonia* (Glasgow 1792), p.6, 5.

9. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), in *Rights of Man, Common Sense and Other Political Writings*, ed. Mark Philp (Oxford 1995; 1998), p.4.

10. William Cobbett, *Cobbett's Review of the Life of Thomas Paine* (London 1809?), p.9. This pamphlet is a reprint of 'The Original Life of Thomas Paine', which Cobbett wrote (under the pseudonym Peter Porcupine) for his *The Political Censor; or Review of the Most Interesting Political Occurrences, Relative to the United States of America* (Philadelphia, September 1796), p.1-49.

11. Harriet Guest, *Small Change: Women, Learning, Patriotism, 1750-1810* (Chicago 2000), p.159, John Barrell, *Imagining the King's Death: Figurative Treason, Fantasies of Regicide, 1793-6* (Oxford 2000), p.54. See also Jay Fliegelman, *Prodigals and Pilgrims: The American Revolution against Patriarchal Authority 1750-1800* (Cambridge 1982).

12. Anna Clark, *Scandal: The Sexual Politics of the British Constitution* (Princeton 2004), p.15.

13. Clark, *Scandal*, p.52. Wilkes's infamy stemmed from his publication of pornography, his mistreatment of his wife, and his sexual voracity, which he tended to sate with prostitutes.

14. Clark, *Scandal*, p.12; See also Clark, *Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley 1995), p.152; Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850*, for their seminal study of religion, economics, gender and domestic ideology (in particular: p.21-22, ch.1 and 3, and p.76-106) and on the importance of middle-class evangelicalism in this period, see Anne Stott's biography of *Hannah More: The First Victorian* (Oxford 2003).

15. Barrell, *Imagining*, p.54.

16. J. Trimmer (22 December 1792), *Reeves Papers*, British Library (BL), MS. 16, 923, vol.5, f.38-39.

17. Trimmer, *Reeves Papers*, f.38-39.

18. R. B. Nickoles (30 November 1792), *Reeves Papers*, BL, MS. 16, 919, vol. 1, f. 150.
19. Nickoles, f. 150.
20. Charles Pigott, *The Jockey Club, or a Sketch of the Manners of the Age*. 3rd edn (London 1792) p. 72-73. This pamphlet went into eleven editions in Britain and several more in America and was followed by *The Jockey Club II and III* and *The Female Jockey Club*. For more on these publications, see Nicholas Rogers, 'Pigott's Private Eye: Radicalism and Sexual Scandal in Eighteenth-Century England', *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association* 4 (1993), p. 247-63.
21. Pigott, *Jockey Club*, p. i-ii.
22. Rogers, 'Pigott's Private Eye', p. 257.
23. See Rogers, 'Pigott's Private Eye', p. 261-62 and p. 248-49.
24. [Anon.] (10 December 1792), *Reeves Papers*, BL, MS. 16, 921, vol. 3, f. 133.
25. [Anon.] (11 December 1792), *Reeves Papers*, BL, MS. 16, 922, vol. 4, f. 97.
26. [Anon.] (2 November 1792), *Reeves Papers*, BL, MSS 16, 919, vol. 1, f. 1.
27. Jon Mee, 'The Political Showman at Home: Reflections on Popular Radicalism and Print Culture in the 1790s', *Radicalism and Revolution in Britain, 1775-1848: Essays in Honour of Malcom I. Thomis*, ed. Michael T. Davis (Basingstoke 2000), p. 42.
28. [Anon.] (December? 1792), *Reeves Papers*, BL, MS. 16, 923, f. 198.
29. [Anon.], *An Answer to Three Scurrilous Pamphlets, Entitled The Jockey Club*, 2nd edn (London 1792?), p. 12.
30. *An Answer*, p. 15.
31. Chalmers, *Life*, p. vii.
32. Chalmers, *Life*, p. vii, 165.
33. Chalmers, *Life*, p. 26. This letter was supposedly sent by Frances Paine to Paine's second wife Elizabeth Ollive, after her separation from Paine and his subsequent departure for America.
34. Paine, *Common Sense*, in *Rights of Man*, ed. Philp, p. 22. See also Mark Philp, *Paine* (Oxford 1989), p. 42-43.
35. Chalmers, *Life*, p. 93.
36. Isaac Hunt, *Rights of Englishmen: An Antidote to the Poison now Vending by the Transatlantic Republican Thomas Paine* (London 1792?), p. 13.
37. Charles Harrington Elliot, *The Republican Refuted; in a Series of Biographical, Critical and Political Strictures on Thomas Paine's Rights of Man* (London 1791), in *Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol. 5, ed. Gregory Claeys (London 1995), p. 312-62, p. 312.
38. Chalmers, *Life*, p. 7.
39. Chalmers, *Life*, p. 12-13.
40. Chalmers, *Life*, p. 17.
41. Cobbett, *Review*, p. 6. Chalmers claims that though this information is recorded on the parish register, the legal marriage affidavits had mysteriously gone missing 'by design, or accident' for 1771, the year of Paine's marriage.
42. James Cheetham, *Life of Thomas Paine* (New York 1809), p. 30. Cheetham was one of three radical Manchester brothers who were affiliated with the Constitutional Society and the Manchester Reformation Society in the early 1790s. Together the brothers were known as 'the three Jacobin infidels', before James Cheetham was tried and acquitted on charges of sedition in 1794. Interestingly, this author of such a venomous anti-Paine biography had been described (by one of his own political enemies) as a troublemaker who, in Manchester, had run 'with the *Rights of Man* in one hand, and *Age of Reason* in another [...] from tavern to tavern and from brothel to brothel, collecting and summoning together all that wickedness had rendered contemptible, drunkenness turned idle, and indolence made destitute' (in Michael Drury, *Transatlantic Radicals and the Early American Republic*, Wichita 1997, p. 32). Upon emigrating to America following his acquittal, Cheetham was involved in Republican politics in New York. However, he was eventually ousted from the Republican party, and he lashed out at Paine in revenge. As Michael Drury puts it, 'with his proscription, he lost his *raison d'être* and his faith in democracy. The scurrilous *Life of Thomas Paine* in October 1809 needs to be seen in the context of his blind desire for revenge' (p. 273). See Drury, p. 32-33, 36, 152, 271-73.
43. Cheetham, *Life*, p. 33.
44. Elliot, *Republican*, p. 314.
45. Elliot, *Republican*, p. 314.
46. Elliot, *Republican*, p. 314. (François Ravailac was the assassin of Henry IV.)
47. Elliot, *Republican*, p. 313, first italics mine. Hannah More masterfully employed the strategy of appropriating and redefining radical keywords. In her popular tract *Village Politics*, for instance, the character Jack Anvil asks his *Rights of Man*-reading friend Tom Hood why

he looks so miserable. To Tom's reply that he wants a new constitution, Jack scoffs: 'Indeed, I thought thou hadst been a desperate healthy fellow. Send for the doctor directly' (*Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol.8, ed. Gregory Claeys, London 1995, p.2-10, 3).

48. Chalmers, *Life* p.23.
49. Chalmers, *Life*, p.91.
50. Cheetham, *Life*, p.171.
51. Chalmers, *Life* p.54, 62; Elliot, *Republican*, p.314.
52. *New Year's Gift for Mr. Thomas Paine*, p.8.
53. John S. Harford, *The Account of the Life, Death, and Principles of Thomas Paine* (Bristol 1819), p.44, 43, 51.
54. Cheetham, *Life*, p.314.
55. William Carver, quoted in Harford, *Account*, p.50-51. 'Fellow democrat' William Carver was Paine's landlord and supposed 'bosom friend'.
56. Carver, quoted in Harford, *Account*, p.51.
57. Hunt, *Rights*, p.5.
58. Chalmers contended that it was not so much Burke's political wisdom, his eloquent rhetoric or his patriotic enthusiasm that earned him his laurels, rather it was his solicitousness and the fatherly care for the nation (see *Life*, p.65). The respect and admiration he received from the English people was an expression of their heartfelt affection – an affection not just for him, but for the king, the constitution, and for their own 'fathers, who had transmitted to them the system, which ensures their present happiness' (Chalmers, *Life*, p.66). See also Robert Bisset's *The Rt. Hon. Edmund Burke, Comprehending an Impartial Account of his Literary and Political Efforts*, 2nd edn (London 1800).
59. Cheetham, *Life*, p.iii.
60. Wolfe Tone quoted in Keane, *Paine*, p.437.
61. Tone in Keane, *Paine*, p.437.
62. Tone in Keane, *Paine*, p.437.
63. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile; or Education* (1762), trans. Barbara Foxley (New York 1966), p.16; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755), in *The Basic Political Writings*, trans. Donald A. Cress, intro. Peter Gay (Indianapolis 1987), p.25-109, p.62-63.
64. Cobbett, *Review*, p.4-5.
65. Cobbett, *Review*, p.4. Cobbett is referring specifically here to Paine's own claim to be 'a citizen of the world'.
66. Cheetham, *Life*, p.121.
67. Chalmers, *Life*, p.67.
68. Chalmers, *Life*, p.67.
69. Chalmers, *Life*, p.86, 84.
70. Chalmers, *Life*, p.55, 96.
71. Chalmers, *Life*, p.96, 96, 99, 113, 101.
72. Chalmers, *Life*, p.7. Radicals were often accused of ugliness. One of Pigott's opponents recalled how, as a student at Eton, Pigott was known for 'the furniture of his head' which earned him 'the happy appellation of *Louse*; and at Cambridge, the beauty of a sallow face, enriched with variegated pimples, gained him the additional name of the *Ripe Whitlow*' (A Member of the Jockey Club, *An Answer*, p.12).
73. Cheetham, *Life*, p.188; Harford insists that when Paine was incarcerated in a rotten, damp French gaol cell, the sick, stinking, putrid state of his body owed more to his heavy drinking than to the deplorable conditions (*Account*, p.21).
74. Cheetham, *Life*, p.219.
75. Harford, *Life*, p.4-5.
76. Hunt, *Rights*, p.8.
77. Grant Thorburn in Keane, *Paine*, p.519. Also see Elliot, who points out the 'strange coincidence in sound and character' between 'Paine' and 'Cain', p.330, but, p.330-34. Interestingly, in one of the few cases where Paine offered a rejoinder, he wrote in the *Citizen* that James Cheetham was an 'an ugly tempered man', who bore 'the evidence of it in the vulgarity and forbiddingness of his countenance – God ha[d] set his mark upon Cain' (David Powell, *Tom Paine: The Greatest Exile*, London 1985, p.261).
78. Daniel 4:33 (King James Version).
79. Carver in Cheetham, *Life*, p.30; Carver in Harford, *Account*, p.52, 50. Both biographers transcribed these personal details from William Carver's letter to Paine (a letter he apparently never sent).

80. Hunt, *Rights*, p.7-8, italics mine.
81. Cobbett, *Review*, p.9.
82. Cobbett, *Review*, p.9.
83. Cobbett, *Review*, p.8.
84. The idea was that, as such a vociferous adversary of marriage, morals and religion, he could not face the public humiliation of a full recantation, but that 'there were, at certain times, relents of that hardened impenitence which he strained every nerve to maintain, even to the last'. See Cheetham, *Life*, p.66. Other pamphlets gave eyewitness accounts of Paines recanting: William Wait's *The Last Days of a Person Who Had Been One of Thomas Paine's Disciples*, 7th edn (Bristol 1819), was a best seller that warned readers that they should consider the agony of one young man who realised too late that he had imbibed the 'Age of Reason' instead of the 'Day of Salvation' (p.2). Likewise, the *Philanthropist* reported that Mme Bonneville had been tormented by her decision to reject 'family and friends' for someone who had himself come to realise that his principles 'will not bear out!' (Cheetham, *Life*, p.66).
85. Cheetham, *Life*, p.279.
86. Cheetham, *Life*, p.278; Harford, *Account*, p.67.
87. Harford, *Account*, p.67.
88. There are countless examples of these types of personification. Paine is represented, for example, as the Devil's son in a 1792[?] Broadside entitled *True Blue: or, Heart of Oak for Ever*. In the same year he appears as Satan's assistant in *Intercepted Correspondence from Satan to Citizen Paine* (*Political Writings of the 1790s*, vol.5, ed. Gregory Claeys, London 1995, p.412-13), and as the mentor of the radical 'Mac'Serpent' in *Liberty and Equality; Treated of in a Short History Addressed from a Poor Man to his Equals*, 3rd edn (London 1792). He is often represented in caricature in communion with the Devil, in, for instance, *Mad Tom in a Rage* (1801) (artist unknown) and in *The Friends of the People* (1792) (artist unknown).
89. Leonora Natrass, 'Introduction', *William Cobbett: Selected Writings*, vol.2 (London 1998), p.3. Cobbett's ideological transformation began when he returned to England from America in 1800, and was complete by about 1810.
90. Ian Dyck, 'Debts and Liabilities: William Cobbett and Thomas Paine', *Citizen of the World: Essays on Thomas Paine*, ed. I. Dyck (New York 1988), p.97, 91. Cobbett also planned to write a hagiographic life of Paine, and in the *Political Register*, he characterised Paine as a 'true Englishman [...] [the] son of the Lower Orders' and publicly identified himself as Paine's true political son, as the torchbearer of Paine's 'expiring flambeau'. See *Political Register*, xxxv.24, in William Cobbett, *A Brief History of the Remains of the Late Thomas Paine, from the Time of their Disinternment in 1819* (London 1820), p.4.
91. Cobbett, *Brief History*, p.7.
92. W. T. Sherwin, *Life of Paine with Observations on his Writings, Critical and Explanatory* (London 1819), p.19. This version, as well as a *Memoir of the Life of Thomas Paine*, was published by the radical infidel Richard Carlile, who also wrote and published his own *Life of Thomas Paine* in 1821.
93. Sherwin, *Life*, p.18, 64.
94. Sherwin, *Life*, p.17.
95. G. J. Holyoake, *The Life of Paine by the Editor of 'The National'* (London 1851), p.45.
96. Holyoake, *Life*, p.47.
97. Holyoake, *Life*, p.47.
98. Rogers, 'Pigott's Private Eye', p.263.