Angela Ballone (Scuola Normale Superiore of Pisa)

**Losing Respect and Gaining Laughter in the Iberian World (c.1600)**

My paper will discuss satire and laughter within the context of the debate surrounding the manifold political crisis faced by Habsburg Spain during the 17th century both in Europe and overseas. I will argue that writing satirically about religion, politics and, above all, sedition was unanimously seen as a new, empowered, way to fully participate to the mechanisms of negotiation of power in the early modern period. Bridging between audiences from different cultural and economic levels of society, satires were able to unleash a debate in which the circulation of news never failed to reach a broader public by ways of amusing at the same time that they discussed very serious issues. Questioning the representatives of political and religion authorities within the monarchy, Spanish political satires resonated across Europe from a court to the other, inspiring new ‘satirical styles’ and spreading interpretations of the latest news often unspoken in the official channels of communication. Thus it is not surprising that attention towards both ‘popular’ and ‘elite’ satires increased steadily over time, as they were soon considered as fluid sources of the most variegated information.

Although I will present a case study geographically located outside Europe, its main actors are to be considered fully European in their views and political agenda. Taking as an example the comments on some satires circulating in Mexico City after a serious tumult, I will discuss the reasons for a Spaniard living in the Americas to choose these as a tool to enhance his message of alarm to the metropolitan court of Madrid. Similarly to what was becoming the rule in Europe, these satires were brought to the fore as sign of the deepest trends among commoners and beyond.

The case of how satires were perceived and used in Mexico but, above all, in Spain exemplifies how satires and laughter were gaining an important role in the complex negotiation of power around European courts. My paper will pay particular attention to the danger of laughter as seen as a first step towards loosing the respect due to higher institutions, may that be political, religious, or both at once. Furthermore, I will discuss the issue of authorship in the case of learned people redacting lowly satires to clearly address illiterate peoples and push them to take an active role in the political scenario. Finally, I will discuss how satires were understood and used to enforce different political agendas at the metropolitan level.

Ivana Bičak (Leeds)

**Of Mice and Hogs: The Jocularity of Eighteenth-Century Neo-Latin Satire**

This paper examines the relationship between humour and satire in two Anglo-Latin poems of the early eighteenth century. Neo-Latin satirical writings of English authors at the time relied very much on the element of jocularity. Thus, Edward Holdsworth’s satire on the Welsh offered a flair of its humorous nature already in its title, *Muscipula: sive Cambro-Muo-Machia* (*The Mouse Trap: Or the Battles of the Cambrians and the Mice*, 1709). Despite its topicality, the poem proved so popular that it even reached Florence, where the anonymous Italian editor took the trouble of explaining the Welsh jokes to his compatriots so that laughter would not fail to arise. In England, *Muscipula* remained one of the most popular neo-Latin poems of the early eighteenth century. I will compare Holdsworth’s playful satire to Thomas Richards’ more biting counterattack, a satire on Holdsworth’s native Hampshire entitled *Hoglandiae Descriptio* (1709). Such a comparative analysis should provide a clearer view of how laughter in satire can be used in a ‘good-humoured’ manner on the one hand, and how, on the other hand, it can morph with anger, thereby creating a different type of satire, which can nevertheless remain couched in the mock-heroic mode.

Moira Bonnington (Leeds)

**Caricature and conundrum: An enquiry into the success of the Darly macaroni series of prints**

This paper will discuss the Georgian public's fascination with masquerade and mistaken identity. It looks at the use of the conundrum in the contemporary press and suggests ways it might contribute to polite social intercourse. For example, the subject matter in the Darly macaroni prints was sufficiently disguised as to pose an enigma which could form the basis of an entertaining conversation. The popularity of these prints and their reproductions extended beyond the Beau Monde and the Bon Ton who could afford to purchase the originals. The print shop window displays were a daily attraction for the general public. The idea of solving the puzzle and identifying the subject appealed at all levels. Some were vain enough to enjoy seeing themselves in print - even though the prints were not complimentary, they flattered overblown egos. The prints were produced for the consumer market and pandered to popular tastes providing a peep into the private lives of others.

Rhona Brown (Glasgow)

**James Beattie’s *The Grotesquiad*: A Case Study in Scottish Enlightenment Laughter and ‘Ludicrous Composition’**

The manuscript of *The Grotesquiad*, a knowledgeably humorous mock-heroic poem in four books by Enlightenment philosopher and poet, James Beattie (1735-1803), has recently been rediscovered in the library of Sir Walter Scott at Abbotsford, the novelist’s home in the Scottish Borders. Beattie is principally known as a contributor to Scottish Enlightenment ‘common sense’ philosophy and as an early proponent of Romanticism with his longest and most celebrated poem, *The Minstrel or the Progress of Genius* (1771 and 1774). However, the farcical humour of *The Grotesquiad*, a rollicking mock-heroic and Quixotic work from Beattie’s early literary career, connects the poem to traditional ‘Augustan’ texts such as Samuel Butler’s *Hudibras* (1663-78) and Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux’s *Le Lutrin* (1682). *The Grotesquiad* follows the often difficult path of its central protagonist, Grotesquo, a would-be knight errant who self-consciously models himself on Don Quixote. In doing so, it offers a new perspective on Beattie’s received literary personality and a fresh means by which to evaluate his corpus. Its graphic descriptions of the effects of alcohol consumption, its tendency to parade literary knowledge and its mode of humour make it a young man’s poem: it was written in 1757, three years before Beattie published his first collection of *Original Poems and Translations* (1760). It is nevertheless significant: with a preface of 1025 words and 1048 lines of verse in four books, *The Grotesquiad* is second only to *The Minstrel* in length within Beattie’s corpus.

As Beattie’s correspondence outlines, the poem was lost, to its author at least, in 1762. My paper would present information on the history of the manuscript, tracing Beattie’s own opinions on the poem as well as offering an analysis of the work’s contexts and influences. I will analyse the poem’s comedy with reference to Beattie’s own writings on humour and laughter, as well as contextualising *The Grotesquiad* with emphasis on its relationship with Cervantes’s *Don Quixote*.

Laurent Curelly (Université de Haute Alsace – Mulhouse(

**News from the Moon: Laughter and Satire in John Crouch’s Royalist Newsbooks (1649-1652)**

The significance and dissemination of print culture – and in particular the role played by newsbooks – during the English Civil Wars is now well documented. In recent years there has also been renewed interest in Civil War royalist discourse, notably as conveyed in royalist newspapers. This developing field of enquiry, however, needs to be investigated further from an interdisciplinary perspective that brings together literary and historical analysis. The exploration of modes of writing, premised upon the observation that royalist weeklies were different from parliamentary newspapers not only from a political angle but also in terms of style and tone, can certainly yield fruitful results.

Royalist newsbook writers especially used satire as a mode of expression and commonly interspersed news with satirical comments, which is probably why royalist periodicals seem to modern-day readers to be less informative than their parliamentary counterparts. The newspapers attributed to John Crouch, *The Man in the Moon* (1649-1650), revived as *Mercurius Democritus* (April-August 1652) and *Laughing Mercury* (August-November 1652), do not only satirise their enemies, much as previous royalist publications had done, but they do so by deliberately trying to provoke laughter with readers. By looking into how these publications, labelled as “obscene” (J. Raymond, *The Invention of the Newspaper*, p. 151) and “reactionary and popular” (J. Frank, *The Beginnings of the English Newspaper*, p. 196), recycle stereotypes to express prejudices, and by studying textual motifs running through them all with reference to the people and institutions consistently targeted by Crouch’s criticism, I intend to show how satire brings about laughter. This will allow me to decide whether Crouch has little more to offer than a playful response to contemporary politics or whether he views laughter as a fully fledged political weapon, one that can restore the confidence of the beleaguered, not to say defeated, royalist party.

Kate Davidson (Sheffield)

**Intimate bawdiness and gentlemen’s laughter in eighteenth--‐century England**

‘We may as well think of separating wit from the first of April, or goose from Michaelmas--‐day’, trumpeted one writer, ‘as that we can live at ease without laughter, the “chorus of conversation”, and the union of social intercourse’. In the eighteenth century, laughter was thought to be a fundamental part of sharing one another’s company. Amidst the ‘orgy of socialising’ that Peter Borsay identified in the period, sociability came in many different forms, but so too did laughter. Politeness has been the dominant paradigm through which eighteenth--‐century sociable encounters have been interpreted. Where laughter is concerned, it is Chesterfield’s denunciation of ‘loud and obtrusive laughter’ as a ‘low and unbecoming thing’ that has stolen the show. Yet in the ideas and practices relating to gentlemen’s laughter alternative theories of practice can be found. It was commonly held that polite laughter was not necessary at all times, and in particular it was the level of familiarity shared by a company that was the principal factor determining what was considered appropriate. In the context of friendly homosocial encounters, a range of practices outside the normal bounds of politeness were not just sanctioned, they were expected and rewarded.

This paper argues that these ideas coalesced into a theory of intimate bawdiness, which had its origins in a train of Renaissance humanist thought that valorised wit as a centrepiece of male sociability. By the eighteenth century, mirthful laughter characterised social encounters from across the social spectrum and it was not, as Keith Thomas once put it, ‘only the vulgar who could go on laughing without restraint’. Stepping outside the politeness paradigm through the concept of intimate bawdiness demonstrates that no matter the force of the ‘reformation of manners’ it remained possible—and desirable—for elite males to indulge their laughter when among friends.

Kate De Rycker

**The travels of Master Pasquino: official and unofficial satire in England and Italy.**

In 1589 the 'renowned Cavaliero' Pasquill left his native Rome for London to discover more about the Marprelate Controversy that had caught the attention of the Church and public alike. Pasquill, or 'Pasquino', was (and still is) an ancient Roman statue who stood in the Piazza Parione- a speaking statue who had became the satirical mouthpiece of the people against the policies of the papal court in the sixteenth century. Since 1501, satirical verses or 'pasquinades' would be attached to Pasquino's mangled body, a tradition which continued in Rome and Venice alike when more speaking statues appeared throughout the mid sixteenth century. It is Pasquino, the embodiment of the popular voice, however, whose role in both Italian and English culture raises questions about the official and unofficial forms of satirical discourse in the early modern period.

Pasquino is a slippery character, moving not only between countries, but also between genres, and so this paper is necessarily interdisciplinary. In both the Italian and the English satirical discourses, Pasquino and other characters moved from their material surroundings in an urban landscape, into the world of manuscript and printed ephemera. Pasquino, and later his newest adversary Marprelate, became figures moving between elite and popular genres, appearing in satires written for literary salons or religious tracts while also appearing in the songs of cantimbanchi as they performed in Italian piazzas or anatomised live on the London stage. Pasquino could be both anticlerical, and a central element of sanctioned religious festivals. This paper will look at the ambivalent status of these figures of satire, and ask how official and unofficial dialogues related to each other in both England and Italy.

Julian Ferraro, (Liverpool)

**Satire, laughter, and appetite in the poetry of Pope.**

Taking its lead from a suggestion in Elias Canetti’s *Crowds and Power*, about the connection between laughter and eating, this paper examines the relationship between laughter and the satire of consumption in the poetry of Alexander Pope in the context of Thomas Hobbes’s theories of laughter as ‘a sudden glory arising from sudden conception of some eminency in ourselves, by comparison with the infirmities of others.’

According to Canetti:

*Laughter* has been objected to as vulgar because, in laughing, the mouth is opened wide and the teeth are shown. Originally laughter contained a feeling of pleasure in prey or food which seemed certain . . . Every sudden fall which arouses laughter does so because it suggests helplessness and reminds us that the fallen can, if we want, be treated as prey. If we went further and actually ate it, we would not laugh. We laugh *instead* of eating it. (*Crowds and Power*, p. 223)

He then goes on to cite Hobbes’s comments on laughter in his *Treatise on Human Nature*. In the course of these, Hobbes’s language is suggestive of food, appetite and eating: ‘the same thing is no more ridiculous when it groweth stale’, ‘Men laugh often (especially such as are greedy of applause from every thing they do well)’ (*Treatise on Human Nature*, 11.13).

Conspicuous (over)consumption is a frequent target for Pope. And his verse frequently displays an anxiety that the laughter provoked by the *satura*, or ‘mixed dish’, that he serves up for his readers can all too easily be reduced to a commodity to be consumed in its turn. In this way, laughter is both a token of the successful accomplishment of the satirist’s art, and a potential betrayal of the seriousness of his *saeva indignatio*.

Zoe Gibbons (Princeton)

**Hobbes the Satirist: *De Cive*, *Leviathan*, and the “Abuse of Words”**

In the first chapter of *De Cive* (1641), Thomas Hobbes suggests that civil society originates in a taste for satire. Man, he argues, is not “a Creature born fit for Society”: we seek out other people not because we value them, but because we wish to magnify ourselves. In a typical social gathering, “we wound the absent; their whole life, sayings, actions are examin’d, judg’d, condemn’d.” Each man tries to “stirre up laughter” at the faults of others, in order to “passe the more currant [*sic*] in his owne opinion.” Paradoxically, then, our own egotism drives us into the company of others. Hobbes’s “we” stands out here: he implicates himself in the universal satiric impulse, and performs that impulse in his wry description of it. In *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes further develops the connection between satire and political life. As in *De Cive*, he concentrates both his mockery and his descriptions of mockery early in the text, creating a ludic framework for the whole. Here, though, Hobbes’s own satiric flights are more pointed and specific. He reserves particular scorn for the schoolmen who make their living by the “abuse of words”: “When men write whole volumes of such stuff, are they not mad, or intend to make others so?” Their work tends toward specialization and hyper-refinement, revealing an “intention to deceive by obscurity” and so weaken the bonds of society. By contrast, satire and gossip actually strengthensocial ties, for they originate in a common human instinct—and it is this instinct that Hobbes allows to surface in his prose. The satiric, even epigrammatic, quality of Hobbes’s style is not just a literary flourish; it is also a crucial component of his political theory.

Kyna Hamill (Boston)

**‘The Drollery of their Figures’: Jacques Callot and Visual Satire over Time**

The focus of this paper will be to trace the figurative gestures of Jacques Callot’s baroque, *capriccioso* style*,* as a template in the iconographical record for comic theatre and satirical gesture. Callot’s impact in visual culture can be traced to his relationship to the new media of his time, etching and printing, which allowed his work to be produced on a mass scale and sold throughout Europe. In this way, Callot engaged in the emerging market for collectible and affordable mass produced “art” which made his unique figures highly recognizable symbols of theatrical gesture. Ironically, the formalization of Callot’s gestures has worked in opposition to the supposed “improvisatory” nature of the *commedia dell’arte*.

From printed engravings to theatrical ephemera and mimetic uses of his gestures, the poses he inventively illustrated in the *Balli di Sfessania* series (see image) still set the standard for *commedia dell’arte* “postures” in training and in practice. Callot was also known to juxtapose the serious with the satirical as seen in his two plates of the *Temptation of St*. *Anthony* as well as studies of soldiers, drunkards, wanderers, and beggars.

Tracing Callot’s iconographical gestures from the baroque period in France and Italy, I will demonstrate the legacy of Callot’s work in a satirical framework. In past research, I have shown how Callot satirizes the physicality of early seventeenth-century Italians fencing manuals. This paper will demonstrate how Callot’s artistic artifacts have been salvaged for all kinds of uses in politics and the arts during the early modern period through Europe.

Florence Hazrat (St. Andrews)

**Sounds of Silence? Satire in Early Modern Scotland**

In the sixteenth century, the key mode of expressing social and political discontent was through the relative safety of dark and doubtful allegory. Writers and printers, however, continually found themselves in danger of losing their heads, hands and tongues for spreading ‘rayling rymes’ like *The Faerie Queene*’s ‘Poet bad’ Malfont. Poised between incarceration and censorship, satire was a risky business in early modern England – but what about Scotland? How is satire “done” beyond Hadrian’s Wall? Was it more, or less, permissive under the fluctuating fortune of the Stuarts, and if so, why?

The current scholarly neglect that has befallen Scottish Renaissance literature becomes especially evident in terms of its satirical dimension. Flourishing for half a century from Henryson in the 1490s to Lindsay in the 1550s, Scotland shows a vigorous tradition of jesting public criticism. Parallels in the literatures of the two kingdoms highlight differences even as they emerge from shared genres and objectives: Dunbar and Skelton push the aesthetics of railing to new bounds; the estates satire of Heywood’s and Lindsay’s drama tests how to advise a ruler and admonish his court. Eliciting laughter means controlling the minds and bodies of the audience, but this disruptive power may pursue its purpose quite differently according to the political climate in London or Edinburgh.

If Scotland had, perhaps, its own sense of courtliness, it certainly had its own language: Scottish satire is intensely aural and oral, requiring a supple tongue and performative verve to embed it in its due acoustic medium that is the spoken voice. Particularly Dunbar’s word-smithery taps to the full the linguistic and formal capacities of Scots, firing such sonic volleys as ‘chittirlilling, ruch rilling, lik schilling’ in his flyting with Kennedy.

This paper proposes to stake out some claims for the distinctive identity of early modern Scottish satire whose very own kind of humour, language and tone provided a powerful communication strategy in navigating the tricky waters of political discourse.

David Hitchcock (Canterbury Christ Church)

**Satire on the Margins: Vagrancy and the Ambiguity of Social Critique in England, 1660-1750.**

Linda Woodbridge once famously described vagrants during the European Renaissance as figures ‘laughed into corners from which they could not escape.’[[1]](#footnote-1) For Woodbridge, laughter and scorn intertwined tightly to form a moral regime which disenfranchised the mobile poor by making light of their circumstances, a regime that validated the scorn with which they could be treated, and which invented an entire social underworld which mirrored the composition of ‘settled’ society. In a contemporaneous movement in popular Renaissance literature, the picaresque rogue emerged as a force of social critique, a vessel through which the inequalities of the social order were laid bare, but *who* was this critique for? Is the picaresque beneficial or actively harmful to a lived experience of vagrancy in early modernity? Satire is traditionally viewed as a force of political liberation, a genre of writing that seeks to highlight social injustices by rendering them visibly absurd to the reader, inequalities so stark that they can only be understood as a joke. However, in this paper I will investigate dark side of satire in both popular and elite ‘rogue’ literature, and argue that satire was an even *more* potent form of cultural repression or misrepresentation than renaissance jesting, that its enforced silences were more complete. By examining *Moll Flanders*, the *Beggar’s Opera*, satirical rogue ballads, and even the ‘language of satire’ found in serious proposals for social reform, this paper will show that the satirical depiction of an inverted social hierarchy of rogues, highwaymen, and beggars, which has traditionally been interpreted as an attack on the vices of the rich, simultaneously perpetuated and reinforced the contemporary understanding of vagrancy as a state which the undeserving **chose** to bring upon themselves.

Kathryn James (Yale)

**Material wit: Humor as archival object in early modern Britain**

This paper draws on early modern British manuscript cultures to ask how readers collected, preserved, and categorized types of humor.   Humor was archived by readers in a range of formats, related to yet distinct from those used to convey humor.   The notebook, the letter, the endpaper, the margin: these formats act as boundary spaces between the public and private, the immediate and remembered, informing the decisions made by readers on how to select and retain humorous material.   A joke copied in the endpapers of a folio volume is preserved in a different context than that copied alongside aphorisms by Erasmus and recipes for chilblains in a commonplace book.  Drawing on Yale’s Osborn Collection of early modern British manuscripts, this paper looks at the material formats in which humor was recorded, to ask what this might reveal about the decisions readers made on when, why, and what types of humor to preserve.

Mark Knights (University of Warwick)

**'Corruption, satire, parody and the press'**

My paper examines the close connection between satire and corruption across the early modern period. Satire, with its aims of exposing something hidden and correcting vice, was ideally suited as a genre to exposing corruption that perpetrators sought to hide and to chastising their greed, rapaciousness and hypocrisy. Such satire worked both verbally and visually. I will briefly examine the use and nature of stereotypes in satire, and discuss the manipulations of John Bull as an anti-corrupt persona, before focusing on some popular cheap printed satires of corruption published by William Hone in 1817 for which he was prosecuted for libel. His three trials raised interesting issues: about satirical parody and blasphemy (he had parodied the Litany and Creed); about humour (Hone claimed that ridiculing the ridiculous could not be libel); and about the connection between satire, corruption and a free press (since his trials were part of a government repression of cheap print).

Christopher Korten (Poznan/Seoul)

**Saintly Satire: satirical literature around the time of the papal conclaves**

The role of satire was a very popular literary feature of papal conclaves in Italy for centuries. Pamphlets, poems, paintings, and even plays were published during these interregna in order to draw attention to the personal foibles of possible papal successors or to mock this supposedly secret and sacred event. The popularity of the written forms of conclave satire was very high among the literate, except understandably for the ecclesiastical elite.

The significance of this satirical literature around the time of the election of a new pope has till now not been seriously examined. What this paper will do is discuss the various forms of papal satires during the 17th and 18th centuries, their contents, as well their reception. Given that the forms of satire are varied, this paper will compare them in terms of learned and lowly satire.

Finally, this paper will explore very briefly the differences in understanding of libel in the Italian context with that of Britain. To what extent could the literature impugn political or religious leaders (the Papal office encompassed both facets) before action, political or otherwise, was taken. In asking these questions, this paper will ultimately touch upon degrees of freedom in the press, which for the Papal States during this period has traditionally been viewed as rather restricted. Conclave satires, however, depart from this general depiction.

Katrina O’Loughlin (Western Australia)

**Lady Elizabeth Craven: sexual transgression and social satire in the late eighteenth century.**

The great visual satirists of ‘the age of caricature’ (Gillray, Rowlandson and Cruickshank), entertained an unprecedented newspaper and pamphlet audience with their political and social caricatures. Prominent among their subjects were the appearance, manners and sexual behaviours of women. It is (still) easy to laugh, but what specific emotion or emotions does satire actually invoke? Laughter and disdain are clearly important aspects of satire’s power to move the viewer and mount its critique, and a central feature of eighteenth-century satire is the appeal to particular forms of wit, intellectual scorn and pleasure. But sexualised satire also mobilises a remarkably similar range of emotions as racial and religious vilification: disgust, fear, anger, and hatred. Like these it is often highly somatised and deliberately crude, and a powerful mode for the regulation and reinforcement of preferred social norms.

I ground my discussion of satire in the historical example offered by the life, image and writing of Elizabeth Craven (1750-1828). In his *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), Boswell referred to her as ‘the beautiful, gay, and fascinating Lady Craven’. Craven was subject to acute and very public satire from the mid 1770s to the 1790s: attention was divided between ridicule for her sexual behaviours and literary ambitions. Popular fascination with sexual scandal was of course hardly unprecedented, there are a number of significant female subjects at this period. But Craven is perhaps unparalleled in the extant range and nature of satire levelled against a private (living) individual. This paper explores contemporary references to Craven in private correspondence, published prints, and a remarkable ceramic caricature teapot. Why was Craven such a target at this period, and what might these strangely ‘polite’ satires suggest about changing sexual and social expectations of late eighteenth–century Europe?

Pauline Mackay (Glasgow)

**Sex, Laughter and Satire: The Bawdy Burns**

Robert Burns’s (1759-1796) bawdy song and verse has been relatively little explored by literary critics. Reserved, even sanctimonious attitudes towards sexuality, gender and religion common in Burns’s time rendered the bawdy aspect of the poet’s work largely taboo, and so a significant part of the Burns canon was considerably censored or remained substantially ‘underground’. Following Burns’s death, documents and letters that were considered likely to provoke hostility owing to the poet’s unorthodox religious expression, egalitarian political principles and, indeed, his fascination with the opposite sex, were either destroyed or suppressed. Thankfully, a significant number of Burns’s bawdy productions survived ‘purification’ or even destruction by disapproving contemporaries and ‘prudent’ editors alike, and continued to circulate in unofficial publications, the most infamous collection of which is *The Merry Muses of Caledonia* (1799).

Burns famously authored scathing religious satires such as ‘Holy Willie’s Prayer’ and ‘The Holy Fair’, and while each of these poems pay tribute to the bawdy sensibility that informs much of his reserved *oeuvre*, such pieces are tame in comparison to the sexually explicit religious and political satires penned by the bard, circulated privately among his cronies, and eventually printed in *The Merry Muses*. This paper will consider Burns’s employment of the bawdy genre as a means of entertainment by considering the subject matter of his bawdy verse alongside the manner in which he circulated/disseminated such pieces (eg. for the enjoyment of the Crochallan Fencibles gentleman’s club in Edinburgh). Beyond this, it will be argued that Burns is motivated to write sexually-centred pieces, not (only) because he (sometimes) revels in smut, but because he views bawdry as a scathing and effective tool to scrutinise, from a sexual perspective, eighteenth-century religious, domestic and political culture.

Robert Maslen (Glasgow)

**Laughable Letters in the 1550s: The Image of Idleness**  
  
I am currently writing a book about the relationship between English comic prose fiction and reformation in the sixteenth century, and my paper will focus on the little-known epistolary 'novel' The Image of Idleness (1556). My contention is that this witty collection of letters from a would-be lothario, Bawdin Bachelor, to his friends and prospective wives and lovers, is in effect a complex satire on the dominance of contemporary  
religious and social life by 'vain-glory' or flattering self-delusion -otherwise known as 'false imaginations'. As a comic composition the book offers a cure for this collective disease through the therapeutic powers of laughter, as attested by the ancient physician Hippocrates. I shall also argue that the book taps into a vein of satire that was in full flow throughout the 1550s, and had been brilliantly exploited by Protestants and Catholics alike, from William Baldwin (in Beware the Cat, The Funerals of Edward the Sixth and The Mirror for Magistrates) to John Heywood (The Spider and the Fly), Thomas Cavendish (The Life of Wolsey), and the various authors of the verse 'flyting' between Davy Diker and his enemies.

Fiona McCall (Portsmouth)

**‘The Devill’s office’: loyalist mockery of the interregnum church**

For seventeenth-century English clergy, cultivating a reputation for conviviality, wit and humour often helped in winning over the affections of local gentry society. During the interregnum, as traditionalists stood by dismayed by radical alterations to the practices of parish worship, this transmogrified into a new more savage strain of black ironic humour against the ‘new lights’ implementing these changes. Loyalist accounts of these times from the John Walker archive in the Bodleian Library, written down in the early 1700s, contain a rich seam of mockery against the strange doctrines and odd behaviour of the Independent and Presbyterian ‘intruders’ who displaced loyalists in many parish churches during the 1640s and 1650s. Loyalist satirists took no prisoners in itemising the ‘frothy, windy distempers’ of the ‘crazy crackt’ brains of those considered legitimate targets: puritan clergy; parliamentary sequestrators; committee men; over-weaning female parishioners. The John Walker archive formed the basis for John Walker’s 1714 book now known as the *Suffering of the Clergy*. But none of this voluminous catalogue of satire against the loyalists’ religious opponents was thought fit for publication within it. For to do so, Walker had been advised, was the ‘devil’s office’, ill-befitting a ‘good Christian or a Divine’. This paper will consider loyalist satirical discourse against the interregnum church from the Walker correspondence and other loyalist sources. It will investigate the anticlericalist archetypes of the ‘Curse ye Meroz’ Presbyterians, excessively-rigid Calvinists and self-serving Independents found in contemporary letters, commonplace books, poetry and published literature. It will show how humour, frequently cruel, surprising-often sexual or scatological considering its clerical authorship, acted as a psychological safety valve allowing loyalists some means to document what they saw as the excesses of the times and to sustain a vibrant oppositional subculture.

Cassie Miura (Michigan)

**Dead Clods of Sadness or Light Squibs of Mirth”: Laughter in the Poetry of John Donne**

Although Donne’s changing attitude toward satire informs his own narrative of conversion from the amorous Jack Donne to the soberly devout Dr. Donne, few scholars have considered the status of laughter in his work. This paper argues that laughter not only informs Donne’s habits of self scrutiny but also his representation of devotional practice. In the satires, for instance, Donne draws upon early modern medical theories that tie laughter to the purgation of melancholy humors and the physiological function of the spleen. While Roman satire typically assumes the reliability of the voice speaking out against declining mores, Donne’s more introspective satire calls this voice into question. The speaker of “Satyre III,” who attempts to restrain his laughter, forces the reader to consider whether satire ultimately diagnoses the sickness and moral failings of the speaker’s age or the sickness and moral failings of the speaker himself. In the *Holy* *Sonnets*, the speaker’s scoffing attitude similarly hinders his attempts to sincerely address god and so turn the devotional sonnet into a parody. While we cannot so easily conflate Donne’s speakers with the poet himself, Donne’s description of his own “riddling disposition” points to a greater tendency to interpret sardonic laughter and irreverent wit in humoral terms. Whether that “Monarch of Wit” ultimately sought to elicit or condemn laughter, understanding his use of humor is integral to understanding his life and work.

Ivo Nieuwenhuis

**Between seriousness and laughter: the image of satire as derived from some eighteenth-century Dutch case.**

Satires offer themselves to the audience in all kinds of forms: from novels to pamphlets, from cartoons to ritual performances, from learned wit to slanderous attacks. This was as much the case in early modern Europe as it is in contemporary (Western) society. Still, in all their variety, satirical utterances seem to share at least one characteristic, namely their double bind to both seriousness and laughter. In my paper, I would like to analyse this double bind with the help of two Dutch cases of satire from the late eighteenth century.

The first case consists of a political periodical from the 1780’s, that makes use of the ‘magic-lantern formula’, which means that it imitates the live performance of a magic-lantern show or raree show (peepshow), a regular feature at eighteenth-century fairs. This *Lanterne magique of toverlantaern* applies the ‘magic-lantern formula’ to perform slanderous ridicule. The second case is an almanac-like series of booklets, published between 1792 and 1801 by the eccentric physician Pieter van Woensel, under the title *De Lantaarn* (‘The Lantern’). In these illustrated booklets, Van Woensel offers his ironic critique on contemporary politics and society.

The two cases differ in many ways. The *Lanterne magique* is highly partisan and uses a harsh kind of humour that is solely aimed at scapegoating political enemies. Van Woensel’s *Lantaarn* is ideologically ambivalent and uses the weapon of irony to lay bare the ludicrousness of the day. Nevertheless the two are related through their taking together of seriousness and playfulness/jest, their shared intention to make the audience laugh but at the same time to convey to it a more serious (political or moral) message.

Perhaps it is especially this double face of satire that makes its meaning oftentimes so difficult to grasp, not only for the audience, but also for scholars and literary critics. Looking at satire through the lens of its simultaneously serious and playful intentions might thus lead to a better understanding of the working of satire in general.

Stephen Pender (Windsor)

After dismissing various objections to his *Disourse on Method* (1637), in a letter to Marin

Mersenne Descartes offers a passionate remonstrance to his critics: “for those who slander

me, I can assure you I would rather take revenge by mocking them than by thrashing them; I

find it easier to laugh than to get angry.” Derision, of course, is an ancient and effective

mode of scholarly exchange, one which Descartes employs in his occasionally rebarbative

replies to his detractors. But in his comments to Mersenne, laughter trumps anger, *moquerie*

vanquishes *combat*, and, not unlike Petrarch in his invective against a physician (refutation

by “laughter rather than by writing”), Descartes reveals his mode of philosophical

intervention as well as something of his temperament: *il m’est plus commode de rire que de*

*me fâcher*.

It might be that Descartes was simply sour — one scholar suggests that his behaviour

is “characterised by moodiness, misanthropy, and at times what can only be described as

paranoia.” But it seems he takes laughter seriously. In *The Passions of the Soul* (1649),

Descartes offers a brief but complex excursus concerning laughter, one which, in its various

stages of inquiry, mirrors his explorations in the book as a whole. Since he writes as “a

physician,” he begins with physiological description: laughter results from blood suddenly

and repeated inflating the lungs, which compels air through the windpipe, occasioning “an

inarticulate and explosive cry.” This air animates the diaphragm, chest, and throat as well as

the facial muscles. After establishing that laughter accompanies moderate joy — with joy of

the highest magnitude, the “lungs are already so full of blood that they cannot be swelled by

repeated bursts any more” — Descartes offers two causes: wonder or a “mixture of some

liquid which increases the rarefaction of the blood” emanating from the spleen and

occasioned by “some slight excitation of hatred ...” Fine blood is manufactured in the spleen;

this rarefied blood mixes with “blood from other parts of the body which joy sends in

abundance” resulting in instantaneous expansion — just as when vinegar is thrown into a pot

of liquid heated by fire. Indeed, after a bout of laughter, one feels “naturally inclined” to

sadness, “because as the most fluid part of the blood from the spleen gets used up, the other

[blood] which is coarser follows it to the heart.”

Curiously, in the sole reference to a work not his own in the *Passions*, Descartes cites

Vives’ *De anima et vita* (1538), a treatise which, to Anthony Levi, “sets the stage” for

seventeenth century debates about the passions. Vives’ anecdote about breaking a fast

clearly pleased Descartes, satisfying in particular his penchant for material explanation:

discussing “bodily” laughter, Vives writes that he “cannot keep from laughing when ... [he

takes] the first or second bite of food after a long fast; the reason is that food also expands the

contracted diaphragm.” Descartes suggests that the “mere imagination” of eating could have

inflated Vives’ lungs and produced laughter, even before the “juice” from the food was

transformed into blood and inflated the lungs. Questions about the rapidity of digestion, and

the comparative swiftness of imagining, remain unaddressed. For Vives, though, as for

Descartes, laughter is not itself a passion, but “an external action proceeding from within [*sed*

*actio exterior ab interiore manans*] and caused by joy and pleasure.” Joy and pleasure

expand the heart, Vives continues, which in turn causes “the broadening of the face,

particularly around the mouth, in a gesture called a grin, which precedes laughter.” In this

brief account, Vives presents as desirable a learned, decorous, temperate disposition:

peasants and the simple-minded, women and children are prone to laughter but those who

have a superabundance of black bile — intelligent but susceptible to melancholy — or who

think intensely find it difficult to laugh. The laughter of “prudent and wise people is more

rare and subdued,” Vives writes, for “only a few things are new or unusual to them because

they have foreseen and pondered everything.” Further, the intelligent “forbid themselves to

burst out with laughter as an improper form of behaviour,” for laughter can be controlled by

reason and habit and, presumably, the intelligent are decorous. But what riles the temperate?

Events that are harmless but disgusting, “foolish and facetious words,” “absurd

interpretations and questions,” and overmuch, detorting wit.

Like Vives, in *The Passions* and elsewhere, Descartes confects physiological with

moral and theoretical explanantia. One of the central expressions of this tradition is

Quintilian’s defence of Cicero against the charge that the latter is “unduly addicted to jests.”

Laughter, he continues, often dispels hatred or anger, and has a “certain imperiousness of its

own which is difficult to resist,” concluding that its effects do not depend on reason, but “on

an emotion (*motu animi*) which is difficult, if not impossible, to describe.” To be sure, there

were descriptions, and frequently physiological explanations not unlike Descartes. To

Riccoboni, in 1579, laughter is “a sign of joy which the soul makes through the dilatation of

the heart coming from the liberation of the spirits, which can no longer be contained as the

image of happy things [*rei laetae*] triumphs.” But, perhaps because of its ostensible

inscrutability, since antiquity laughter was a source of controversy for philosophers,

physicians, and orators — all of whom had a stake in its etiology, its promotion, or its

persuasive efficacy.

Laughter’s star has risen in recent scholarship, but few intellectual historians have

explored its moral physiology, the ways in which early modern thinkers adjust and

redescribe physical processes in order to accommodate and sustain distinct sets of evaluative

criteria. As Quentin Skinner and Sari Kivistö have shown, laughter was imagined as an

effect of a distinct but limited ensemble of causes: moderate joy; wonder or surprise;

contempt; and apprehension of the ridiculous or the deformed, provided they do not too

closely approach thresholds of harm.

My purpose here is to locate Descartes’ laughter in intellectual traditions that attempt

to explain its physiology, drawing on both ancient and early modern resources — from

Vives’ account to the “Muscular Philosophy” of the physician John Bulwer, a contemporary

of Descartes. Not only is laughter revisited as a form of self-regard in the work of the French

physician Marie Cureau de la Chambre, whom Descartes read, but Cureau also offers a

physiological etiology for the ways in which laughter activates the animal spirits as the “Soul

retires, and reenters her self.” And several early modern thinkers were devoted to recovering

the pseudo-Ciceronian dictum, in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, that laughter relieves fatigue.

Moderate joy is healthy, and physicians, time and again, as part of an increasing commitment

to Galen’s positions in *Quod animi mores*, would attempt to use ‘healthful conceits’ to

inspire patients to feel well, including pleasant stories and distractions that turn on laughter.

If it was an occasion to explore voluntary action, to test various relationships between reason

and volition, solecism and slander, laughter was also susceptible to other kinds of analysis,

largely absent from recent scholarship: “good words,” “cheerful speeches,” conceits, and

counsel uttered at the bedside, to use Burton’s terms in *The Anatomy of Melancholy*

(1621ff.), who also cites Vives, restores motility to the spirits; Bernard Lamy agreed, arguing

that the contempt which funds laughter is “useful to our health,” for it participates in an

economy of attention.

My paper has three sections. In the first, I outline physiological etiologies of laughter

from antiquity to early modernity. Second, I argue that one of the neglected rhetorical effects

of laughter — the relief of fatigue — is absorbed and accommodated in medical thought in

early modern Europe. Urbanity or *eutrapelia* is re-defined as a responsiveness of disposition,

and a significant constituent of health. In the last section, I focus on Vives’ appearance in

Descartes, for they both reappear in the work of the physician Walter Charleton. Although

he often of two minds about him, in *The Natural History of the Passions* (1674), Charleton

wittily upbraids Descartes, though not by name, for anatomical ignorance by taking up Vives

again: “what then shall we think of that odd example of Laughter in *Ludovicus vives*,”

Charleton asks, “who writes of himself ... that usually when he began to eat after long fasting,

he could not forbear to break forth into a fit of loud laughter?” This was neither voluntary,

since he strove to suppress it, nor convulsive, since he as in perfect health. Drawing on

contemporary investigation of the intercostal nerves, especially by his contemporary Thomas

Willis, Charleton is able to conclude that Vives himself possessed a peculiar “*Intercostal*

nerve” that accounts for his laughter by allowing “quick and short reciprocations” between

the stomach and the imagination, the vehicle of which is *spiritus animalis*.

The place of laughter in rhetorical traditions has received ample scrutiny. This paper

promises to offer a ‘medical-moral’ account of laughter in early modern European thought.

Robert Phiddian (Flinders)

**Spectacular opposition: Suppression, deflection, satire and the public emotions in John Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera* and *Polly*.**

The success on stage of John Gay’s *Beggar’s Opera* (1728) followed by the partial suppression of his *Polly* (1729) provides one of the classic tales of early Eighteenth-Century public culture. Like *Gulliver’s Travels* only two years earlier, the *Beggar’s Opera* was a spectacular act of satirical dissent against the Walpole regime. It was not suppressed despite its nearly open critique of the government, and had a record run of 62 performances in its opening season. Walpole affected to enjoy the *Beggar’s Opera* but saw to it that its successor for the next season, *Polly*, was not staged. This suppression was only partly successful, however, as *Polly*was then published by subscription and was wildly popular, actually earning Gay more than he gleaned from the staging of the *Beggar’s Opera*.

This is not a new story. The novelty I hope to bring to the project is an extension of the argument about the emotional effects of satire developed in my 2012 CHE project on Swift’s *saeva indignatio* and in my article forthcoming in *Critical Quarterly*, “Satire and the limits of literary theories”. Taking some cues from cognitive analyses of the emotions, I want to study how Gay’s operas function as containers for the spectacular dissent of Scriblerian satire, focusing particularly on the way they deploy laughter to channel anger, contempt, and disgust. These emotions situate subjects in different ways towards the material satirized. Using spatial metaphors, contempt puts one above the object satirized, disgust pushes the object away, and only anger invokes a positive reaction focused on transformation. In other words, an under-recognised element of satire is the way it often permits author and audience to find a way of living with the object attacked.

My larger argument is that this satirical accommodation has political consequences of a more paradoxical nature than has often been recognized. One of the things that happened during the long Eighteenth Century in Britain was the development of robust and more-or-less tolerated public dissent against the current regime. The attacks on the Walpole government in the 1720s and 1730s provide a crucial stage in this process, and the notorious case of Gay’s operas is a signal event. Satires like these may have had some direct impact on policy, but it is the emotional effects of catharsis – of venting and containing potentially rebellious emotions – that needs further analysis for a literary history of political emotions.

Jo Poppleton (UEA)

**‘Called to the Office of Historiographer’: Satire and History in the *John Bull* pamphlets**

The 1712 *John Bull* pamphlets are important to literary critics and historians: the national and international disputes elicited by the crisis of the Spanish Succession show that John Arbuthnot’s pamphlets are more and less straightforwardly patriotic; that they participate in bipartisan politics in varying degrees of complexity; and that the pamphlets are satire, whether the label implies effects which are clear cut or more disorientating. These disagreements over the function and allegiances of the pamphlets are not only an indicator of differing historiographies and divergent literary critical positions; they are also a sign of satire’s rhetorical instabilities and its unpredictable consequences. Interpreters tend to agree that much of the satire in the pamphlets arises from Arbuthnot’s imitation of multiple literary and non-literary genres – allegory, fable, political treatise and history, to name but a few – and much has been done to show the cultural and political significance of this dependence on other genres: Arbuthnot is Tory and anti-Dutch; he mocks competing historiographies; and his pamphlets are characteristic of much early eighteenth-century partisan polemic because they employ similarly fictional strategies. Theorists on satire have shown that it deforms and subverts the genres on which it depends, and they have also argued that satire necessarily confuses historical and imaginative worlds. This paper will demonstrate that Arbuthnot’s pamphlets are typical of the culture they inhabit not because they take an identifiable side in the dispute, but because they question and disturb notions of history’s truth.

D.A.Porter (Cambridge)  
  
**Title: Learned laughter: The Neo-Latin Satires of Lambertus Hortensius**  
  
The little-known Dutch poet and historian, Lambertus Hortensius   
(1500/1-1574), wrote two books of neo-Latin verse satires between 1543 and   
1565. These satires were written in conscious imitation of the satirist   
Horace, and they follow the Roman poet's jocular style and his penchant for   
autobiographical detail. In particular, these satires reflect their   
author's life as a schoolmaster, first teaching history at the Hieronymus   
School at Utrecht and later as the rector of the Latin School at Naarden.   
My paper will show how Hortensius represents himself as a humanist Horace,   
directing laughter at the vices of his age. It will also explore the   
function of satire and humour for a learned and Latinate audience.   
Satirists always demand an audience, whether they are addressing,   
exhorting, or execrating their reader directly, or whether they force us to   
overhear an imagined conversation between satirist and interlocutor, or   
even when they address patron or foe with private advice or reprieve,   
naturally within the reader's overhearing. For Hortensius, the audience can   
be real or imagined, one's friends or enemies, one's students, the local   
academic community, or the entire international republic of letters. My   
paper will show how this author represents his own private corner of the   
early modern intellectual world and reaches out to a manifold audience. In   
addition, it will examine how Hortensius' satire uses self-deprecation and   
humour to balance serious claims of social criticism and potentially avert   
censorship or reprisal. And it will investigate the implications of using   
laughter, brought about through a combination of witty classical allusion   
and commentary on early modern social mores, to reach out to early modern   
readers.

Martina Pranic (Charles University, Prague)

**“Were’t not for laughing, I should pity him.” Falstaff as a vessel of satire and laughter in the *Henriad***

This paper examines the character of Falstaff in Shakespeare’s *Henriad* – the source of much laughter in the histories. It is a well-known fact that before he was known as Falstaff, Shakespeare’s masterful comic creation appeared on the Elizabethan stage as Sir John Oldcastle. The reasons behind amalgamating the Lollard martyr with a braggart and cowardly knight were fittingly explained by Kristen Poole, who connected the character with the satirical anti-Puritan literature of the late 16th century, especially the anti-Marprelate tracts and subsequent theatrical performances of the Marprelate controversy. Falstaff has, thus, very likely participated in sustaining stereotypes about a religious subgroup and helped maintain the existence of a specific trend in political satire.

The shelf life of satire, however, tends to be short, and in the eyes of audiences Falstaff’s association with the Marprelate controversy grew weaker over centuries. But his role within the plays is not far from satire, albeit thematic satire: his antics exaggerate and ridicule the actions of serious political players and his storyline threatens to outdo the Prince Hal’s plot that stands for progress of the state. Famously “not only witty in [him]self, but the cause that wit is in other men”, Falstaff and his hilarity are pushed to an extreme where the laughter he provokes becomes gratuitous, an end in itself. Even as such, the Falstaffian laughter is highly contingent and the changes it undergoes can be seen as indicative of nuances in the attitudes toward acceptable laughing matters. But Falstaff never wholly loses charm or popularity with audiences and the desire to laugh with him, and at him, has not ceased to this day.

The paper deals with questions of Falstaff’s relation to satire in the early modern context, examines the changing role of laughter in the dramatic structure of Shakespeare’s *Henriad*, and attempts to determine how both key concepts condition the perennial nature of Falstaff’s character in popular imagination. The conclusion proposes a reading of the character as a polyvocal and ambivalent construct, which has long resisted fixity and yet, never lost its relation to certain forms of satire and different types of laughter.

P.B. Roberts (Cardiff)

**‘Sheep-skin-weaver’: Ben Jonson in Thomas Dekker’s *Satiromastix***

*Satiromastix* (printed in 1602) is Thomas Dekker’s contribution to the ‘War of the Theatres’ that raged between 1599 and 1602, with Ben Jonson on one side and Dekker and John Marston on the other. Caricaturing Jonson as Horace, the play attacks not only his works and personality but also his physical appearance and dress. The quarrel was long thought of as purely an exercise in personal satire, but in *Shakespeare & the Poets’ War* (2001), James P. Bednarz has argued that it concerned differing concepts of authorship, with Shakespeare and Marston critiquing the humanist programme that Jonson sets out in his ‘comical satyres’. In this paper, I want to discuss a largely ignored textual crux in *Satiromastix* which relates to Jonson’s self-image as an author, as seen in the distorting mirror of Dekker’s satire. Bednarz disregards *Satiromastix*, stating that Dekker promotes a humanist credo largely identical to Jonson’s, and that consequently the play has little more to offer than some entertaining *ad hominem* abuse. I argue that in fact the differences between the two are significant. Jonson associates himself with elite culture and classical ideas of satire, while Dekker’s satire is more closely related to a festive and popular model, in which a community punishes and drives out from amongst them a figure who contravenes their values. Ultimately, Dekker satirizes the gap between Jonson’s self-image – as elite defender of literary standards, heroic castigator of vice and folly – and the reality of his status as former actor and mercenary poet-playwright for the public stage.

Yulia Ryzhik (Princeton)

**Laughter, Tears, and Satirical Allegory in Spenser and Donne**

A satirist’s laughter is a bitter one: he laughs so that he may not weep, and his laughter, when directed at power, often ends in tears. This paper examines the ways in which Spenser and Donne depict the relation between satire and political authority via figures of water—streams, seas, and floods. Spenser is typically associated not with satire, but with allegory and complaint. Yet *The Faerie Queene* contains several depictions of satirists—most notably Malfont, whose tongue is nailed to a post for spreading “sclaunders” and “rayling rymes” (V.ix). Indeed, a satirical streak runs through the entire Book V as the allegory of justice degenerates into a grim vision of contemporary politics. Donne, for his part, is unique among the 1590s satirists in mixing the bitter laughter of satire with the earnest didacticism of complaint. Allegorical elements are evident in Donne’s last three, moralizing satires, which depict a satirist caught between Democritean laughter and Heraclitean tears.

This analysis of Spenser’s and Donne’s mixed modes (satire is by definition a “mixture” or “medley,” from Latin *satura*) has consequences for the way we view the relation between satire and allegory at the turn of the sixteenth century. What is the difference between satirical allegory and allegorical satire, especially as compared to satirical allegories of the eighteenth century? Can allegory contain satire as successfully as satire can assimilate allegory? A surprising answer may be found in the episode of Faunus and Diana in Spenser’s *Mutability Cantos*, in which the disproportionate punishment of an untimely burst of laughter gives way to a subtle yet incisive allegorical critique.

Kelly Swartz (Princeton)

**Experimental Maxims in English Literary Satire from Francis Bacon to Samuel Richardson**

Classical satires are peppered with normative sentences, or maxims. While Early Modern English satirists drew freely from these classical sources, they often deployed their maxims in unexpectedly experimental ways. These experimental satiric maxims do not just preach common wisdom or berate human error; they embody error in an effort to capture a vivid snapshot of the social, political, or natural world. This paper will trace the development of such maxims over the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by focusing on three literary case studies: Francis Bacon’s *Essays* (1625), Jonathan Swift’s *A Tale of a Tub* (1704), and Samuel Richardson’s *Clarissa* (1747-8).

In each study I will draw out the relationship between satiric sententiousness and at least two different strands of “enlightened” innovation, with particular attention given to experimental science, print culture, and sentimentality. Francis Bacon, for example, believed the “broken wisdom” of aphorisms could both spark scientific inquiry and move the mind to comprehend the motives of others. In the *Tale*, Swift links printed commonplaces to the grotesque dissected body (and brutal dissectors) of experimental science. While Bacon’s aphorisms help readers “out” the true feelings of their political adversaries, Clarissa’s main rule of thumb is to expose her insides, voluntarily and repeatedly. Lovelace says of her that she is everywhere “pursuing that maxim, peculiar to herself…that what she cannot conceal from herself, she will publish to all the world.”

In drawing on the authority of wisdom literature and its assumption of ideological cohesion, the experimental maxim seeks to cast judgment on certain behaviors and social types. Yet by using the maxim to forward satiric and proto-realistic representations of individuals, the above writers also flirt with the idea that every person might have his or her own maxim and—even more radically—might try to enforce it.

Antónia Szabari (University of Southern California)

**The Public Square in the Library: Collecting and Collating Satire**

This paper looks at the afterlife of satirical pamphlets of diverse sorts in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Understanding satire as a versatile discursive form that politicizes the early modern public space by granting symbolic presence to competing ideas and ideologies in it, I look at the practices of collecting satirical pamphlets in France in the period from the years of the League to those of the *mazarinades*. In other words, I look at collecting that happens right when the pamphlets are published.

In the 1580's and 1590's, Montaigne and Pierre de l'Estoile championed withdrawal into a semi-private sphere, in which the satirical word became less "hot" than in the public sphere, where reading also implied acton in the form of a quick response, for example. According to L'Estoile, collecting implies withdrawal into a sphere of pleasure, slow reading, and judgment formation. A second important moment in collecting activities occurs in France during the Fronde (1648-1553) with Gabriel Naudé, personal librarian of Cardinal Mazarin, who preserved a stunning number of mazarinades irrespectively of the target of these projectiles. In these two instances, the collecting of satires is linked to the development of absolute power, and it is universalist and utopian in character. At stake is both the value attributed to material pamphlets and the political significance of including "hot" pamphlets in a a "cool" space of the library. Mazarin's library as envisaged by Naudé no longer opposes the "vulgar" and the "elite" reader but all readers, and actors in society and the state. Do these practices depoliticize satire or rather open it up as catalysts for political thinking? What happens when collectors take French pamphlets outside of the national context, to England, for example? I also ask whether other and alternative practices of collecting existed in France in this period, and what motivated people to preserve and, possibly, re-read these potentially ephemeral objects.

Howard Weinbrot (Wisconsin)

**Apocalyptic Satire, Transubstantiation, and the Duty to Resist 1684-1688: Pulpit, Polemics, and the Declaration of Indulgence.**  
    The baggy species apocalyptic satire fears and sees annihilation, corruption, violence, and in general triumphant malign power threatening variously defined and vulnerable virtue. Jonathan Swift uses it in A Tale of a Tub (1704), among other places, when he has the moderate Church of England on the run from the combined forces of his insane brothers Peter, the Church of Rome, and Jack, the Dissenters. Alexander Pope uses it in a cultural sense in the Dunciad in Four Books (1743), where “Universal darkness buries all.” Such satire was especially appropriate for the Church of England and its many secular supporters who opposed James II’s Declaration of Indulgence (1687, 1688) and its consequent decree that Church of England clergymen read it to their parishioners–thus giving the impression that they approved of it. The Declaration unilaterally repealed Test acts, eliminated required oaths of supremacy and allegiance, pardoned those once punished for violating religious laws, and in effect instructed Parliament to support his Declaration at whatever indeterminate time he should reconvene it. James II’s opponents insisted that the Declaration vastly extended royal power and invited popery and tyranny. Such opponents focused on Transubstantiation as one emblem of the dangers of such royal conduct. As George Savile, Marquis of Halifax, put it behind the mask of a City Anglican clergyman, if James imposes reading of his Declaration, “I desire to know, why I may not read an Homily for Transubstantiation, or Invocation of Saints, or the Worship of Images, if the King sends me such good Catholick Homilies, and commands me to read them?” In another text Halifax is so distraught that he flirts with treason. He advises a Dissenter not to be taken in by the king’s apparent toleration, which is a mask for their destruction. Instead, wait for “the next Heir bred in the Country which you have so often quoted for a Pattern of Indulgence.”  Mary was bred in England. William of Orange was bred in the Netherlands. Apocalyptic satire, then takes on the major task of resisting apocalypse. It generally fails. In the years from 1684-1688 it contributed to the larger success of changing the ruling dynasty.

Steven Zwicker (Chigago)

**Laughter, scandal, and scorn: The arts of contempt in Restoration England**

It may seem odd to begin an inquiry into the nature of Restoration laughter and scorn with Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, that great and unsmiling poem of the 1660s, but Book 8 of Milton’s epic not only provides us with one of the most interesting and troubling moments in the history of laughter—God’s contemptuous amusement over human efforts to understand the stars—His derisive laughter also predicts some of the most important features of laughter and scorn in Restoration literature. Not that Milton would have been pleased to be associated with that Restoration specialty of braiding cruelty together with contempt and amusement, but the affinities between the Miltonic scene of divine entertainment and that deep and brilliant vein of satiric imagination in Restoration literature are undeniable, and they provide a new understanding of Milton’s relation to Restoration literary culture—the world of Dryden, Dorset, and Rochester, of Sedley and Mulgrave, of court satires and town lampoons—and a new approach to the values embedded in the literature of scandal and scorn. It’s hard indeed to think of Milton licensing the cruelty of Restoration satire, but the ethical pretensions of God’s laughter in *Paradise Lost* seem to share in both the derisive pleasures of Restoration laughter and satire’s corrective premise. To uncover these relations also allows us to see beyond satire’s near universal promise of ethical correction and discover how the impulses of cruelty and pleasure that drive so many of the squibs and lampoons of this age also inhabit its grander literary acts—not only *Paradise Lost* but also works like *The Last Instructions*, *Absalom and Achitophel*, and *The Battle of the Books*—and even the great and disquieting masterpieces of eighteenth-century visual art from Hogarth to Goya.

1. Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness and Renaissance Literature* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); p. 50. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)