The Byronic woman:  
Anne Lister's style, sociability and sexuality  
Clara Tualle

The commercial society imagined in the eighteenth century and realized in the wake of Waterloo was ... a regime of effects without agents.¹

In this chapter, I wish to propose the category of style as one of the primary categories of the 'commercial society' which Jerome Christensen has argued has its imaginary phase in early eighteenth-century Britain — the setting for Jürgen Habermas's 'blueprint' of the classical public sphere — and is then realized in Britain in the 'culturally dominant and economically profitable' system of Byronism.² Consolidated during the Romantic period as a way of regulating, classifying, individualizing and historicizing the products of an intensifying literary culture of professionalization and celebrity, style is a paradigmatic category of the commercial society and its mediatized social, economic and cultural mobilities. Style is a particularly enabling category for elaborating the complicated relations between the social system and the literary system, sociability and textuality, social agency and textual effects, and the corporeal and phantasmatic aspects of social subjectivity and social performance.

A minor-canonical and late-Romantic statement on style as a national and socially mobile category is Thomas De Quincey's 1840 essay 'Style'. This was published in Blackwood's, the journal which produced its particular ideology of the literary aesthetic by, as Jon Klancher has suggested, 'erasing the journalistic world from which it arose'.³ Informed by the structuring anxiety of the Romantic literary marketplace that 'any distinction displayed in the public sphere was subject to counterfeit',⁴ De Quincey's essay elegizes the 'true English style' as an aristocratic ease under threat from the frantic mimics of a vulgar, middle-class 'periodic' or 'newspaper style'.⁵ He locates the last vestiges of this style in the body of the leisureed female subject, cultivated yet free from 'the contagion
of bookishness’, unmarried and over the age of twenty-five – ‘the interesting class of women unmarried upon scruples of sexual honour’ who through natural refinement and sexual abstinence embody the ‘purity of female English’ as both a corporeal and discursive purity of ‘the mother tongue’. The ‘true English style’ is emphatically non-reproductive and non-circulating, inscribed not in published writings but in the handwritten forms of private correspondence. De Quincey’s essay asserts an originary aristocratic cultural priority over commercial culture by asserting nature through the body, corporealizing a style which cannot be counterfeited through commercial reproduction.

Like the genre of the letter, the journal is another paradigmatic genre of unpublished and unmarketed leisured female style. The journal writings of Anne Lister (1791–1840), the provincial gentry heiress in Halifax, West Yorkshire, who aspired to the status of published author, manifest neither aristocratic ease nor female purity. Not published during Lister’s lifetime, Lister’s extensive diaries – which run to almost four million words, with a significant part written in cipher – were first published from the late 1980s. These writings flaunt a spectacular departure from De Quincey’s paradigm of national, corporeal and generic hygiene, in their representation of Lister’s extensive sexual activity with other women, in their elaboration of an acute sense of sartorial, corporeal and social unease, and in their habitual identification with and mimicry of the suspect models of social, sexual and literary style of Byron and Rousseau. In this chapter, I wish to engage Anne Lister as a case study of Romantic style, sociability and sexuality. It has been argued by Katherine Binihammer that the 1790s is a critical moment for the history of sexuality in its ‘social enforcement of compulsory heterosexuality’, underwritten by the enforcement of constructions of gender. I wish to engage the case of Lister to illuminate how the social enforcement of compulsory heterosexuality is consolidated in the post-Waterloo period at the level of social performance and social scandals of sexual publicity.

SOCIABILITY AND EMBODIMENT

In Jürgen Habermas’s influential account of the development of the bourgeois public sphere, sociability is linked with the display and artefact of the ancien régime. According to Habermas, what distinguishes the bourgeois public sphere from an aristocratic culture of representative
publicness is the way in which a bourgeois culture of publicity begins to 'shed its dependence on the authority of the aristocratic noble hosts and to acquire that autonomy that turns conversation into criticism and bon mots into arguments'.

However, if bourgeois public culture is a culture of autonomy and critique, it is also one of dependence and imitation. A less utopic account of the bourgeois transformation of the public sphere would argue that 'commercial society' does not so much 'shed its dependence on . . . aristocratic noble hosts' as acquire and accumulate newly phantasmatic forms of dependence, which reproduce the host and the residue of this dependence in the phantasmatic forms of commercial culture. I am interested in engaging how aristocratic culture is called upon to host – as both patron and parasite – the bourgeois public sphere, in the form of the desired original that is reproduced in the counterfeited forms of commercial culture. We might call this noble aristocratic host 'Lord Byron', and 'Byronism' the paradigmatic form of this counterfeiting commercial culture. As Jerome Christensen argues: 'the literary system of Byronism . . . was collaboratively organized in the second decade of the nineteenth century by coding the residual affective charge that still clung to the paraphernalia of aristocracy in order to reproduce it in commodities that could be vended to a reading public avid for glamour'.

I wish to engage the 'literary system of Byronism' as a framework for examining the embodiments of Anne Lister's social, sociable and socially sexual performative style. In its simplest terms, 'Byronism' encompasses Lord Byron the historical subject, the author and Lord Byron's poetry. It works both to instantiate a distinction between the subject and the poetry and to provide an alibi for their conflation in a new culture of Romantic literary celebrity. Both formulas of distinction and conflation are working for Lister in her response to the death of Lord Byron: 'Who admired him as a man? Yet "he is gone & forever!" The greatest poet of the age! And I am sorry.' Lister's eulogy both distinguishes the man from the poetry (in the denunciation of Byron 'as a man') yet conflates these in mourning the death of the 'poet'. Unlike Christensen, as quoted in the epigraph to this chapter, I do not maintain an opposition between agents or subjects and effects or discourse. Rather, I see them as interimplicated. As Judith Butler has pointed out, subjectivity involves 'a fundamental dependency on a discourse we never chose but that, paradoxically, initiates and sustains our agency'. The category of embodiment engages both social agency and textual effects, and it is a critical component of sociability. Byronism is a particularly useful category for understanding
Romantic sociability because it engages the fraught status of embodiment within the context of the bourgeois public sphere’s displacement of court culture and its aristocratic forms of representative publicness.

The comportment of the body is critical to Lister’s saga of style, sociability and sexuality. To begin this story, I want to begin with Lister’s fashion story, which, from late summer 1817, is a perennial winter story. Lister’s decision to wear black and only black all year round meets with a mixed reception. It has disastrous social consequences, for example, in 1823, in an episode I will discuss later in the essay, when Lister wears black at the height of summer, on the sands at Scarborough, holidaying with her lover, Mariana Lawton (née Belcombe, the ‘M—’ of the journals), Mariana’s sisters and a clutch of social acquaintances who leave Lister to take her chances with the stares and whispers and other unkindnesses of strangers. However, at the moment that Lister in black makes her debut, in the late summer of 1817, at the age of twenty-six, she is triumphant:

Spent the whole of the morning vamping up a pair of old black chamois shoes & getting my things ready to go & drink tea at Cliff-hill. As soon as I was dressed, went to drink tea with the Miss Walkers of Cliff-hill. Went in black silk, the 1st time to an evening visit. I have entered upon my plan of always wearing black (Tuesday 2 September, 1817).¹⁶

The practice of wearing all black originates both from social levelling traditions and from the practical requirements of the northern English male gentry travelling on horseback.¹⁷ In adopting the wearing of black as a fashionable style – and therefore as a socially distinguishing rather than socially levelling practice – Lister anticipates the Byronic hero of Edward Bulwer-Lytton’s silver-fork novel Pelham (1828) by more than a decade.¹⁸ More specifically, in adopting black as a fashionable style for young women, Lister anticipates Coco Chanel’s ‘little black dress’ by just over a century. Undertaken by a young, single woman, Lister’s performance and fashionable practice of wearing all black puts into circulation for her contemporaries a strange and perplexing social semiotic – particularly striking given that fashionable dresses worn by young women in this period were almost invariably all white.¹⁹ Lister’s black attire, combined with an unusual walking gait and ‘mustaches’ were part of a repertoire of effects which her contemporaries identified as masculine.²⁰

Byronism is the code which makes Lister’s masculinity legible. Whilst Lister differs from Byron in gender, rank, sexual practice, party-political identification, religion and region, her sociable performance is paradigmatically Byronic. A female, Tory and landed gentry performance of a
male, radical aristocratic libertine Whig style, Lister's Byronism offers a leading example of the commodification of aristocracy which marks Romantic public culture: literally, a *gentrification* of Byron. In this way, Lister's Byronism also embodies the crossover between capital and landed gentry status. For if one way in which Byron instantiates nobility is by exploiting the prerogatives of what Norbert Elias has referred to as 'prestige-consumption' or the 'status-consumption ethos' to go into debt and to lose land, Lister enacts the gentry-based 'income-expenditure' model which involves keeping 'consumption below the level of income so that the difference can be invested in savings in the hope of increased future income'.

Lister's Byronic accoutrements - such as the volumes of Byron's poetry which are mobilized as tools of seduction and tokens of exchange to cement lovers' vows - are themselves entered into this table of expenditure.

Engaging the interrelations of class, rank, gender, sexuality, social and sociable style that are put into play by Lister's performance of Byronism enables us to ask what happens to the code of the gentleman when it is taken up by a gentlewoman? How preposterous is Lister's performance as the social persona she refers to as 'gentleman Jack'? What kind of social imposture is enabled and effected by Lister's mobilizations of Byron, by her elaborate rhetorical and corporeal prosthetic enactments as the Byronic woman? Lister's style of masculine embodiment is modelled on this elusive fetish of the gentleman, as she suggests in the following account of breakfast with Mrs Priestley, an older female acquaintance, talking politics: 'her sentiments republican, mine monarchical . . . I twirled my watch about, conscious of occasionally bordering upon a rather gentlemanly sort of style'.

This masculinity also has a distinctly military inflection, as in this 1818 account of a haircut like a helmet worn by soldiers in the Napoleonic Wars. Parsons, Lister's York hairdresser, 'cut me close behind, & curled my hair like the crest of a helmet at the top of my head, as they wore it 8 or 10 years ago'. Even on a bad hair day, Lister still calculates a military effect, as in an 1824 account of the handiwork of a Parisian hairdresser whom she 'paid . . . 2 francs for making me a terrible grenadier-like looking figure'.

This military self-fashioning occurs at the level of corporeal, sociable and sexual embodiment, and as political and cultural identification with the chivalric ideology that was clearly embraced by Lister as a member of an old landed gentry military family. As this code was instantiated rather mournfully by Lister's father, Captain Jeremy Lister, a fourth son and
soldier wounded in the American War of Independence, Anne for a time looked to her younger brother, Sam, an ensign in the army in Ireland, to revive the family cult: 'You my dear Sam, are the last remaining hope and stay of an old, but lately drooping family...Renovate its languid energies... Ah! let the well-ascended blood that trickles in your veins... prove it not degenerated from the spirit of your ancestors.'

Two months after this letter was written, Sam was to die by drowning, and Lister's father continued to bear the unwitting burden of signifying this 'droop' in the Lister family fortunes. Largely absent in the diaries, Captain Lister cuts quite a figure of pathos in his most memorable appearance as the bumbling country squire on a trip with Anne to Paris via London, where Anne is 'shocked to death at his vulgarity of speech and manner [and] perpetually in dread of meeting anyone I know'.

If Lister's father embodies the droop of military honour into vulgarity, Lister aimed to renovate the family's languid energies and strengthen the family's property holdings through the economic and social capital from the moneyed and titled women she hoped to dazzle in Britain, Paris and at the Swedish court. Eventually, Lister managed to consolidate the land holdings of Shibden estate through her clandestine marriage in 1834 to Anne Walker. As neighbouring heiress of a worsted-manufacturing fortune, Walker brought the mixed blessings of new economic capital and nouveau-riche social vulgarity to Lister's old Halifax wool-money and ancient status claims.

SEXUAL SOCIABILITY

If we were to use Lister to ask how sociable, if at all, is sex? – to take up the question raised in Judith Barbour's chapter in this volume – then it would seem to be very sociable. All the significant sites and practices of Lister's northern rural gentry sociability – tea; music after tea; dinners; supper parties; house visits and parties; shopping expeditions in Halifax or York; public lectures; visits to or assignations in the local library; walks; church; balls – function doubly as exercises in sociability and sexual flirtation/seduction.

Operating in the interstices of homosocial and heterosocial modes of sociability in Halifax society, Lister cultivates a particular style of social performativity that I want to call sexual sociability. It combines masculine and feminine modes of sexual sociability – at once 'gallant' and coquetish – involving '[a]rrant flirting', 'double entendre' and 'agreeabizing':
‘I saluted her left cheek ... My manner was not quite so flirting this morning.’ The code of gallantry, with its military inflections, becomes a critical component of Lister’s mode of sexual sociability. As the social and cultural historian Niklas Luhmann points out, ‘under the guise of gallantry, courting can take place – and to a certain extent without obligation – in the presence of third parties. Gallant behaviour provides adaptive links both to intimacy as well as to sociability and can bridge differences in rank.’ Nonetheless, as Luhmann also goes on to point out, ‘gallantry is rapidly superseded as the demands for an individual stylization of love increase and as the bourgeoisie begins to usurp the behavioural models of the nobility’. Gallantry is a somewhat archaic social and sexual form, then, outmoded by Romantic love and the ‘moral legitimation of emotion’; but both of these codes inform Lister’s social performance of gentlemanly flirtation. Arguably, it is precisely its archaic nature which makes gallantry available to Lister, since the particular claims to social capital that Lister can make good in the community of Halifax are her ancient status claims as landed gentry heiress of an old wool-farming and military family.

A critical support of Lister’s Byronic mode of social performance and sexual sociability is Lord Byron’s poetry itself and its relationship to the construction – albeit tentative – of Lister’s own literary subjectivity. This literary subjectivity is heavily implicated in Lister’s sociable–sexual performance and operates as a critical component of Lister’s social persona. Lister’s literary ambition was well published amongst her acquaintances, as was a knowledge of her journals, the existence of which unnerved these same acquaintances with their threat of disclosure. Lister’s superior status claims and self-modelling as a literary subject are mutually implicating alibis which enable her to enjoin Lord Byron’s poetry for a performance of rakish gallantry. Lister habitually recruits the services of a volume of Byron as a subject of conversation and tool of seduction, as in this account of afternoon tea in April 1818:

Mending my gloves, the trimming of my black bombazine petticoat and all in readiness for this afternoon ... At ½ past 5, went to the Greenwoods’ ... Miss Browne & her 2 friends ... arrived in about an hour ... Considering her situation in life, Miss Browne is wonderful – handsome, or rather, interesting ... I wonder what she thinks of me? My attention to her is sufficiently marked to attract her notice. Is she flattered? I think she is. I have thought of her all the way home, of writing to her anonymously and (as she said, when I asked her if she liked Lord Byron’s poetry, ‘Yes, perhaps too well’) of sending her a Cornelian heart with a copy of his lines on the subject. I could soon be in love with the girl.
Here, the figure of 'Lord Byron's poetry' functions with the 'conspicuous visibility and cryptic formality of a code',\textsuperscript{33} in this case, of sexual knowledge. Miss Browne's coy reply to Lister's question – 'Yes, perhaps too well' – is flirtatious and knowing, or at least performs the requisite knowingness that is the recognition and acknowledgement of a code. 'Lord Byron's poetry' is located, then, at the nexus of knowledge and desire – a trope of the unnameable as the nonetheless desirable. Miss Browne has to answer to 'liking' the poetry. What is required of her then is not the production or explicit naming of that knowledge or code – most definitely not this in polite company – but some pledge of affective relation to this metaphor of the unspeakable. Miss Browne's pledge – ringing with innuendo – doubles for Lister as the hint of reciprocated sexual interest. As Luhmann writes, 'the tactics of seduction centred precisely on exploiting such signs as the basis for something more'.\textsuperscript{34} There was something more, and Lord Byron's poetry becomes an intricate machine of sexual flirtation and deferral between Lister and Browne for the next two years. A few days after this exchange, they chance to meet at the Halifax library – both, as it would happen, in pursuit of a copy of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812). From then on, Miss Browne undergoes an extended period as 'Anne's shadow' – as the wagging tongues of Halifax put it – before marriage in 1819, the year coincidentally that the first two cantos of Don Juan are published.

Three years after the initial exchange with Miss Browne, Byron appears as the far less successful social host and lubricant of a dinner-party conversation about improper reading matter, this time between Lister and a neighbouring married couple who fail to make the link between Don Juan and Lallah Rookh (1817), by Thomas Moore, Byron's co-confector of Oriental romance:

Mr Saltmarshe sat with us all the time after tea. Long talk about what books were improper & what not. They mentioned Lallah Rookh their not finding it out. I said I thought it as much so as ... the two first cantos of Don Juan ... I don't know how it is, I thought Emma a little under restraint on this subject before her husband & that he might be a little so, before his wife. I have often thought married people the best company when separated (30 March 1821).\textsuperscript{35}

This scene of conjugal domestic sociability pantomimically enacts the Sedgwickian 'privilege of unknowing'\textsuperscript{36} – a particular kind of normative power of ignorance – maintained in this case through the grim conspiracy between each of the marriage partners to 'not finding it out'. In a parodic reversal of the previous scene of sociable reading with
Miss Browne, the sexual tension that informs the knowing operation of the shared code is thoroughly evacuated here as Byron is forced to circulate as a closed book rather than an open secret.

Such are the awkward social moments – often with the husbands of Anne’s past or present attachments – that Lister converts into opportunities for her particular brand of droll social satire. In Halifax society, the ‘oddity’ of Lister’s flirtations are to some extent licensed, or at least tolerated, as the intense friendships that form a critical part of premarital female homosociality. Outside that space, whether it be in York, alone, or in a wider social setting, where the forms of sociability are far more circumscribed as modes of display, Lister’s social persona takes on a specific kind of visibility, oddity and sexual publicity of gender deviancy, and is forced to instantiate scenarios of the unsociable, the anti-sociable, the social failure and social outcast.

As Jill Liddington has suggested, Lister becomes subject to various forms of ‘rough music’ – those traditional carnivalesque forms of popular social outrage and sociability directed against unpopular, irregular or unnameable forms of social and sexual conduct. Particularly after Anne Walker comes to live with Lister at Shibden Hall, a whole repertoire of enforcements of compulsory heterosexuality are brought to bear upon Lister’s gender deviance and the unnameable and unrepresentable form of irregular social and sexual conduct which these new living arrangements imply. These enforcements take a range of forms. There is the homophobic charivari of hoax marriage advertisements in the local paper, undertaken as part of the Whig campaign in the 1835 elections to discredit Lister, an active Tory supporter during the elections. There are recurrent rumours of Lister being burned in effigy in neighbouring paddocks. Finally, there are the regular occurrences of physical and verbal abuse and sexual harrassment which Lister undergoes. A particularly chilling example of this harrassment occurs in the form of a living effigy, when a man dressed in black approaches Lister walking home in a country lane on her way back from a social call at the vicarage of Halifax. He introduces himself as ‘Joseph Lister of Shelf’, and invites her to get to ‘know’ him. Lister brushes this episode off as another of ‘these ignorant impertinences’, but it is clear that she had feared for her safety, having to ‘walk forwards at a smart pace’. Lister is subjected to repeated taunting that emphatically targets her masculinity, as, for example, when a group of men in York hail her as she walks past with ‘That’s a man’ and ‘Does your cock stand?’ In answer to this eloquent piece of Yorkshire rough music, we might say, with Judith Butler, that
Anne Lister's cock stands to 'repeat and displace through hyperbole, dissonance, internal confusion, and proliferation the very constructs by which [gender norms] are mobilized'.\textsuperscript{40} Lister's hyper-embodiment and surplus corporeality as a gendered subject work to effigize that fetish of the gentleman as a construct of gender, class and status.

Lister, as the Byronic woman – a form of bionic woman whose Byronic prostheses work to rebuild and to remediate aristocratic glamour in gentrified, phantasmatic social forms – instantiates the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century social and literary occupation of self-modelling after the fetish of the gentleman.\textsuperscript{41} In place of the missionary position – and that missionary position manqué that De Quincey attributes to 'the class of unmarried women above twenty-five ... who, for mere dignity of character, have renounced all prospects of conjugal ... life, rather than descend into habits unsuitable to their birth'\textsuperscript{42} – Lister chooses the Byronic position. Lister, rather than Byron, because, as Christensen points out, 'the Byronic position ... need not and finally cannot be occupied solely by Byron'.\textsuperscript{43} And the question of position – social, sexual and Sapphic – is everything in Lister.\textsuperscript{44} If, as Christensen argues, "Byron" is the transitional figure between an aristocratic culture of honor and a middle-class culture of commerce",\textsuperscript{45} Lister's female gentrification of Byron embodies this transitional status at the level of gender and status position.

In the 1820s, in the wake of the French Revolution, Waterloo and Peterloo, and the consolidation of English radical culture into the parliamentary reform movement, the aristocracy's supposedly natural claims to rule are not self-evident; these claims have lost their grounding and are self-identical with the textual supplements and prosthetic supports of Edmund Burke's 'ensigns armorial'.\textsuperscript{46} Lister's version of the gentleman – like her Byronism and like the Byronic position itself – is a 'remediation' of an already mediated effect.\textsuperscript{47} These fetishes of aristocratic masculinity become the subject not only of discursive production, but of social enactment, social competition and commercial transaction. Lister's main social, sexual and economic rival is another Halifax landowner, Christopher Rawson. Rawson had run away to sea and returned to become the leading local banker, Deputy Lieutenant and county magistrate, and purchases for himself the medieval trappings of the Lordship of the Manor of Southowram.\textsuperscript{48} Gender trumps class, and new gentry trumps old, as these public offices which might rightly be due to the heir of Shibden – that is, to Lister, were she a man – are bought by this masculine representative of new gentry profession and money.
Disqualified through gender from the race for patrimonial accoutrements and public offices, Lister’s competition occurs at the level of social performance, where success is measured by the degree to which the performance can be said to command. The Byronic performance was of course available to any old rake, any old contemporary Regency fashion victim. But merely donning the clothes of the Don – ‘à la milord Byron’ – is not enough for success, as Lister makes clear in her sardonic reading of the performance of one Sir William Ingleby, an ‘eccentric baronet [who] walks about Ripley & Ripon . . . in his dressing gown, without smalls or neckcloth on [and whose] naked throat, shirt-collar displayed à la milord Byron, had a striking effect . . . the scarecrow impression’.49 In this wry account of the failed Byronic performance, Lister demonstrates that vulgarity is not the exclusive preserve of the mercantile classes. Lister’s obsessive charges of vulgarity throughout the diaries launch pre-emptive and retaliatory strikes against the snubs and slurs of her social equals, superiors and inferiors. Lister’s strategy is to discriminate amongst performances of style and vulgarity, pitting claims of status, rank and symbolic capital against those of gender and economic and political capital. Lister’s claims of status and rank can often – but not always – trump the demands of gender.

Just as Lister’s diaries might be said to instantiate the ‘eye in search of variance’,50 they also instantiate the eye in search of vulgarity – and with a vengeance. No one, it seems, is safe from Lister’s basilisk eye. (Certainly not the middle-class British women whom Lister encounters in her travels to Paris between 1824 and 1826, finding ‘not much style about any of them’.51) Lister levels the charge of vulgarity against strangers, social snubbers, social and sexual rivals, family members and current and prospective lovers alike. ‘Vulgarity is a bad concern with me’, Lister intones ominously, reflecting on one Ellen Empson, who ‘merely suited me a little to flirt with . . . before she was married’.52 The vulgar company of Ellen Empson is enough to dampen Lister’s usually irrepressible enthusiasm for double entendre and Byronic innuendo – her two favourite modes of flirtation, after all – to such an extent that on one occasion she abstains from both: ‘Ellen rather boisterously talkative & she & Mrs Waterhouse had all the conversation, which they turned rather towards the double entendre . . . Mrs Waterhouse asked me afterwards if I had read Don Juan. I would not own it . . . I thought Ellen quite vulgar.’53 As Lister deliberates over the pros and cons of extending the flirtation with ‘the fair charmer’ Miss Browne into a more lasting sexual relationship, and the social relationship it will necessarily entail, she muses,
'What sort of a connection am I forming?' Even for Anne Walker, with whom Lister will eventually exchange vows in a clandestine marriage, it is irredeemable vulgarity at first sight: 'Miss Anne Walker & I were tête-à-tête . . . Very civil, etc, but she is a stupid vulgar girl. Indeed, I scarce know which of the party is the least vulgar & I have no intention of . . . letting the acquaintance go one jot further.'

In Lister's parlance, 'éclat', together with style, is a particularly important category of social performance. Éclat is (1) brilliant display; dazzling effect. (2) social distinction; conspicuous success; universal approbation (OED). Éclat is the speculative social stock that lubricates Lister's social and sexual exchanges. It is socially capitalized style – the dazzling mirage shimmering in the skirts of so many eligible young women which so often turns out to be illusory, disguising its other of vulgarity or mere indistinction. (Even so, as Lister herself says, '[a] lady's dress always strikes me, if good or bad'.) Too often, the charms of a beautiful young woman will conceal at home a drunken ‘mater familias’, inclined 'to clip the King's English' and indulge the vain hope of hitching the mercantile family wagon on to Lister's superior social capital, or hoping to make 'a stepping stone' or 'cat's paw of [her] to get into society'. Lister will take but not give éclat. Except to Mariana: 'When I can give her éclat it will be very well.'

One of the ways in which Lister hopes to 'give éclat' to Mariana is through a particular kind of social performance. This is the successful Byronic performance which – unlike the unsuccessful one enacted by the 'eccentric baronet' – transforms social awkwardness into social success, mere scandal into succès de scandale. Lister's Byronism aspires to the status of precisely such a magical conversion. To the extent that Lister's diaries offer no self-conscious declaration or articulation of an intention to imitate Byron, Terry Castle has argued that Lister's Byronism is 'unconsciously modeled' and the stuff of a 'subliminal Byronic fixation'. However, even an unconscious or psychic form of 'modelling' is directed towards and legible only within the context of the larger social and cultural script. In this way, it would seem to be more productive to understand the mode of sociable–sexual performance I am calling Lister's Byronism as the habitual performative quotation of a widely circulating and disseminated code – an always already fetishized Byron – which crosses the literary system and the social system. As I suggested earlier, Byronism as both a literary system and a social system is implicated in Lister's aspirations for literary fame, elaborated in the early diaries. When Lister writes of having '[t]alked [to my aunt] of my ambition in the literary
way, of my wish for a name in the world',⁶¹ she engages literature as a mode of ambition and as a means of securing a 'name'. Literature is a way of transforming social notoriety into a prestigious form of social publicity or distinction. It provides Lister with the possibility of distinguishing herself from and amongst her provincial neighbours: ‘Determined to devote myself solely to study and the acquirement of that literature which may make me eminent and more decidedly above them all hereafter.’⁶²

More than literary fame itself, then, literature is a means of turning the social liability of Lister’s ‘oddity’ into triumphant social capital. Literature is pursued as a form of symbolic capital to be translated into social capital. Indeed, given that Byronism crosses the literary system and the social system – and mediates crossings between these two registers – Lister’s Byronism is more interesting and exemplary on account of the fact that Lister does not become a published writer, in that it demonstrates that the ‘literary system’ is positioned within and across the social system, has disjunctions and conjunctions with the social system. That the literary system can be used as a strategic system within the social system, and that it can be exceeded by the social system, is suggested by the ways in which Lister’s literary ambition is overtaken in her later diaries by her landowning ambition.

ROUSSEAU ‘FOR THE STYLE’S SAKE’

I have been arguing that Lister adopts a Byronic persona which is as much socially performative and sociable-sexual as literary. A more explicit model of specifically discursive or literary identification and imitation is offered in Lister’s appropriation of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. The most significant generic precedent for Lister’s journal writings was Rousseau’s Confessions (posthumously published 1782–9, and translated into English in 1782 and 1786–90). As Lister writes in 1825: ‘From 7–40 to 9½, reading aloud to myself from p. 42 to 50 (very carefully) vol. 1, Rousseau’s Confessions. I read this work so attentively for the style’s sake. Besides this, it is a singularly unique display of character.’⁶³

Lister’s appropriation of Rousseau ‘for the style’s sake’ presents a significant rereading of Rousseau. It produces Rousseau’s genre of the confession – predicated on sincerity against artifice – as a ‘style’ to be imitated. This imitation instantiates the fate of distinction in the public sphere to be subject to counterfeit.

That the most private, subjective and sincere of Romantic genres – the confession – can be reproduced as a style to be imitated and forged
and displayed places Rousseau’s ‘sincerity’ on the same level of cultivated artifice as Byron’s repertoire of masks and personas. Lister’s refiguration of the Rousseauvian genre of the sexual Bildungsroman produces not a private and subjective mode of sexuality, opposed to the social – and for Rousseau sexuality is definitely not sociable, or has no need to be – but a highly socialized and sociable model of sexuality.

Lister’s appropriation of Rousseau works to transform the French Revolutionary hero of simplicity and sincerity against aristocratic corruption, luxury and dissipation into a fetish of ‘style’. This resignification of Rousseau as style subverts Rousseau by turning him into a specifically female affectation, a piece of decorative artifice, a supplement, like the phallus which appears in Lister’s speculations on the sexuality of acquaintances and sometimes in her sexual fantasies. Rousseau is made over into an accessory of precisely the kind of landed, religious and feminine mode of culture that he opposed. Anglican and Tory, Lister engages Rousseau for style and as a model of a sexual Bildungsroman, but detaches from this prosthetic model Rousseau’s radical Enlightenment cultural politics.

Lister’s appropriation of Rousseau suggests how important sociability is for Romanticism, by demonstrating the extent to which the genre of the diary and the Rousseauvian sexual confession are performative, as well as socially constructed and sociable. Lister’s diaries offer a paradigmatic instantiation of the Romantic confession after Rousseau, but they present a private subjectivity which we see in its social and sociable guises, going out into sociable sorties, both socially and textually performative. As Habermas suggests, ‘[s]ubjectivity, as the innermost core of the private, was always already oriented to an audience (Publikum). The opposite of the intimateness whose vehicle was the written word was discretion and not publicity as such.’ For Habermas, the diary is a critical genre for this practice of ‘audience-oriented privacy’.

Such a conception of the public and socially oriented production of the private individual underlies Niklas Luhmann’s formulation of the ‘stylization’ of the individual and the culture of ‘affect-management’. These ideas are predicated upon an understanding of the individual not as an isolate, but as a socially recognized entity who is required to perform his or her individuality within a repertoire of codes and modes of affect. These modes of ‘audience-oriented privacy’ and ‘affect-management’ are instantiated in Lister’s emphasis on the ‘unique display of character’. The ‘display’ of character foregrounds the performative function of character. To copy someone for the ‘unique display of character’ has the immediate effect of questioning the integrity of that ‘character’,
through the fact that it is subject to ‘display’ and that the display is itself copied.67

Traditional histories of Romanticism have tended to invoke Rousseau’s *Confessions* as the canonical model of Romantic autobiography, in order to corroborate a version of Romanticism which privileges subjectivization and individuation over socialization and social formation, locating a truth in an individual experience opposed to social experience. Whilst Rousseau does produce arguably the most extreme version of the Romantic anti-sociable – so extreme that, as Carol Blum points out, Rousseau formulated the category of pity in order ‘to repudiate the idea that man is naturally sociable’68 – this rhetoric is itself both ‘audience-oriented’ and sociably staged even in its anti-sociability.69

Another critical way in which Lister’s diaries engage Rousseau is in the production of a particular rhetoric of Romantic love, predicated upon an opposition between the natural sincerity of the individual against the artifice of the social, of the true lover against the worldly beloved. Based on a language of sentiment,70 this rhetoric is addressed to Mariana Lawton – Lister’s dearest and most passionately beloved lover. It is elaborated most strenuously in an extended diary entry of 1824, written when the tempestuous relationship between the two has all but exhausted itself in the effort to sustain itself for almost ten years as a long-term, long-distance affair after the marriage of Mariana in 1815 to Charles Lawton. The entry is an extraordinarily sustained love lyric as elegy, which offers a ‘display of character’ and in which Lister’s ‘attentive’ reading of Rousseau ‘for the style’s sake’ appears to be paying off, so smooth is its rendition of the sentimental and Romantic Rousseauean lover:

She is too tamely worldly . . . She loves me, I do believe her, as well as she is capable of loving, yet her marriage was worldly . . . it never struck me as it does at this moment (Thursday 21 August, 3. 55 pm, 1823). It now opens upon me as the key of all, that all I have never yet been able to comprehend in her character . . . The time, the manner of her marriage. To sink January, 1815, in oblivion! . . . Suppliant at her feet, I loathed consent [to the marriage] but loathed the asking more . . . It was a coward love that dared not brave the storm & in desperate despair, my proud, indignant spirit watched it sculk [sic] away. How few the higher feelings we then could have in common! The chivalry of heart was gone. Hope’s brightest hues were brushed away. Yet still one melancholy point of union remained. She was unhappy. So was I. Love scorned to leave the ruin desolate; & Time & he have shaded it so sweetly, my heart still lingers in its old abiding place, thoughtless of its broken bowers, save when some sudden gust blows thro’, & screeching memory is disturbed.71
The entry opens optimistically enough, with a reference to 'the erotics' of the previous night. However, as Lister begins to take stock of the considerable burden that Mariana's shame and social embarrassment about Lister places upon the relationship, she finds the burden is becoming intolerable: 'But oh! no more. "The heart knows its own bitterness" [a quotation from the Bible] it is enough.'

A repeated quotation from the Confessions – je sens mon coeur, je sens mon coeur (I know my own heart) – becomes the refrain in this Rousseauvian torch song in which Lister and Mariana enact the respective parts of 'chivalry of heart' and a 'coward love that dared not brave the storm'. 'Mary', Lister apostrophizes, 'your caution cheats the world out of its scandal.'

This formulation begs a couple of questions. It asks, how sociable is scandal?, and, when does a scandal become a succès de scandale? It produces at least two very different meanings of scandal, both of which are attached to the scandal of sexual publicity. Lister's heroic invocation of scandal rhetorically converts the scandal of spectacle and dysphoric sexual publicity into the positive social value of a succès de scandale. The succès de scandale is the most Byronic and glamorous sociable animal, involving a socially outflanking mode of social and sexual publicity, visibility and notoriety. It is a socially distinguishing mode of spectacle that dares to assert its own authority, commands success and demands to be obeyed and imitated. Scandal inspires the begrudging recognition of superior symbolic capital achieved through the shock tactics of notoriety, a recognition manifested in the desire to emulate. For Lister, the succès de scandale is that miracle of the transsubstantiation of her own social 'oddity' into a source of interest, social rivalry, sexual competition, gossip and glamour. In this way, Lister's heroic invocation of scandal casts Lister's inviolable 'heart' within the terms of a particular form of sociability and worldly interest – and does so at the very moment at which Lister repudiates Mariana's tainted love on account of its 'worldliness'. Even more than this, however, and with the same contradictory – because worldly – logic, the scandal itself becomes the unattainable object of desire.

Finally, as though all that remains without the prize of scandal is to respond in kind to the 'worldly' Mariana, the entry closes with a bathetic swerve away from an intensely subjective Romantic Rousseauvian persona to a socially preoccupied persona: 'Went downstairs at 8½. Breakfasted ... took leave & off from the Belcombes ... Wratn in musing. Thought of... my manners and appearance. Building castles
about their improvement; elegance; engagingness, etc. the good society I hope to get into.’

In recounting the affair with Mariana Belcombe – Anne’s grande passion – the diaries tell a love story, of love both requited and unrequited. However, that love story is also a story of social mobility and social performance. Paradoxically, a critical component of this social performance is the Rousseauvian persona of the true and sincere lover who repudiates worldliness and its social and sociable forms of artificiality and hypocrisy.

In Don Juan (1819–24), the word ‘scandal’ circulates like a charm, a dare, a command to be obeyed. It answers, recapitulates and recirculates the succès de scandale of Lady Caroline Lamb’s silver-fork roman à clef, Glenarvon (1816), which novelized Lamb’s brief affair with Byron and functions as curtain-raiser to her ventriloquization of Don Juan in New Cantos (1819). In September 1823, Lister’s copy of Glenarvon is circulated amongst acquaintances during a holiday at Scarborough with Mariana and her two sisters, Lou and Eli, where Lister makes a scandalous spectacle of herself that is anything but a success. Here, as she writes, ‘I seem to have no proper dress. The people stare at me’, ‘I must manage my appearance and figure differently.’ Lister’s copy of Lamb’s succès de scandale is loaned to women of their acquaintance, who thank her for it only to later snub her. Anne finds out later through a mutual social acquaintance that they had heard ‘that I was masculine... they are determined not to know me’.

The Scarborough holiday involves acute dramas of sexual publicity, enforced sociability and social unease. It is a particularly anxious time for Anne and Mariana in the private and public negotiation of their relationship, and for Anne herself in being without the toleration of her oddity to which she is accustomed in Halifax society. The holiday is initiated by an episode of extreme social mortification referred to by Lister in the diaries as ‘the 3 steps business’. It starts out simply enough: the arrangement was for Anne to meet Mariana in Halifax and join her on her journey, stay with her for one night in York and then return to Halifax while M– went on to Scarborough, where Anne was to join her later. However, instead of waiting for the coach to bring M– to Halifax, Anne decides to set out from home in Shibden Hall across the moors ‘to be in time for the Manchester mail, to meet M– on whatever part of the road she might be’. Here she is, braving the wild country road which will take her to the woman she loves:
Between the 9th & 10th milestone, passed the division stone between the counties of York & Lancaster. A dreary mountain moor-scene … A countryman observed in passing, ‘It’s but a wildish place, this.’ The inn soon came in view … I had just determined to go in & order a little boiled milk … when I spied the carriage winding up the hill. It was a nameless thrill that banished every thought but of M—. It was just 11.50 as I reached the carriage, having walked about 10 ½ miles in 3 hours, 10 minutes.

When Lister meets the carriage, the reunion which should have been carried off as a sociable meeting becomes instead a spectacle bordering on scandal:

Unconscious of any sensation but pleasure at the sight of M— who, with Lou, had been dozing, one in each corner of the carriage, the astonished, staring eyes of the man & maid behind & of the post-boys walking by the horses were lost to me & , in too hastily taking each step of the carriage & stretching over the pile of dressing-boxes, etc., that should have stopped such eager ingress, I unluckily seemed to M— to have taken 3 steps at once. I had still more unluckily exclaimed, while the petrified people were bungling about the steps, that I had walked all the way from Shibden. What with exclamation & with stride, the shock so completely wrap round M—’s heart it left no avenue to any other feeling than joy that her friend, Miss Pattison, was not there! She would have been astonished & M— horror-struck. Why did I say I had walked from Shibden? Never saw John’s eyes so round with astonishment; the postboys, too … But the poisoned arrow had struck my heart & M—’s words of meeting welcome had fallen like some huge iceberg on my breast.77

Leaving the iceberg on Lister’s breast in all its tragic glory just for the moment, I want to stop first for another chance meeting in this chapter between Lister and De Quincey over the mail. Lister, like many of the women in De Quincey’s writing, ‘risk[s] being run over by an English mail coach’, as Mary Jacobus has put it. In Jacobus’s witty formulation, ‘what De Quincey is worried about is that … the mechanology of style, gaining momentum of its own, might over-run thought and cause a fatal accident in which the feminine (the language of feeling) is the casualty’.78 On this occasion, the casualty of the fatal accident is the ideal of the properly female sociable style which is given the fatal blow by Lister’s ‘eager ingress’, spurred by the ‘nameless thrill that banished every thought but of M— … [u]nconscious of any sensation but pleasure at the sight of M—’.79 The hidden casualty of this tragi-comic moment, jostled by the commotion of the ‘postboy’s wonder’ and ‘the petrified people … bungling about the
steps’, is Lister’s heart, struck by ‘the poisoned arrow’ of M–’s ‘shocked astonishment’, which makes Lister feel, ‘yes, unutterable things . . . “Shame, shame,” said I to myself, “to be so overcome”’.80

As Anne joins Mariana and Lou in the coach for the ride to Leeds, the iceberg on Lister’s breast appears to thaw, but in reality has merely plunged itself deeper into her heart: ‘We were now all quite right & merry. Alas! I had not forgotten. The heart has a memory of its own, but I had ceased to appear to remember save in occasional joking allusions to “the three steps”’.81 The heart’s memory puts this moment into cold storage, snap-frozen into the euphemism of ‘the three steps’ to be retrieved painfully and obsessively from that point on as a nagging trope of both M–’s social shame of Lister – growing ever more visible and public – and Lister’s knowledge that this shame must be confronted: ‘This “3 steps” business haunts me like a spectre. I cannot throw it off my mind; it is my first thought in the morning & last at night. It teems with reflections that discomfort me.’82 This chilly ‘spectre’ haunts Lister from the moment she arrives at Scarborough: ‘Got to Scarbro’ at 7. Eli received me. M– & Lou out walking. Eli & I went out to meet them just the cliff end of the street . . . the “three steps” business so in my mind, I seemed coolish, I daresay, & formal.83

Together with the figure of ‘the postboy’s wonder’, the figure or spectre of the ‘three steps business’ is repeated in the account of the holiday. It haunts Anne’s thoughts as well as the conversations between Anne and M–. In one conversation, M– says to Anne: ‘You know, my Fred, I love you very dearly . . . but . . . I would not have you excite wonder, even in a postboy.’84 To which Anne replies in her diaries with that familiar mode of apostrophe from her lofty position of wounded Romantic lover: ‘Mary! Your friend had other things to think of than a postboy’s wonder.’ Referring to M–’s ‘shame that prouder circumstances did not attend me’, Lister asks rhetorically: ‘Had I driven up in my own chaise & four, I might have stepped with impunity, heedless of the world’s opinion or the postboy’s wonder. But she is worldly, therefore she is selfish.’85 The term ‘worldly’ here denotes for Lister the pursuit of material wealth signified by the chaise and four, but it also refers to the worldliness of sociability. Shame is a form of worldliness which cuts right at the heart of identity. As Rita Felski suggests, ‘[s]hame . . . is fundamentally connected to everyday sociability’.86 The power of Mariana’s shame to haunt Lister attests precisely to the way in which this poignant form of worldliness can cut to the quick of one’s innermost core of identity – or ‘inmost soul’ as Lister puts it, referring to the resting
point of the ‘poisoned arrow’ and ‘huge iceberg’ of Mariana’s shamed ‘welcome’. Lister bares ‘the agitation of [her] inmost soul’ to Mariana, only to be pierced anew by more of Mariana’s shame over the most superficial of details: ‘the awkwardness of the cut & curl of my hair’. Somehow, we sense that a chaise and four would not have been enough to enable Lister to ‘step with impunity’ that fateful morning. Better to have stayed at home, as she had earlier in 1819, when she declined an invitation to meet M– at the mail-coach stop in Manchester so ‘that she may get a sight of me’: ‘too forlorn in spirit & in wardrobe’. In staging complex dramas of sexual publicity, scandal, shame and visibility, Lister’s diaries often illuminate sociability through its very absence. The ‘three steps episode’ at the inn between York and Lancaster and the sociable occasions of the holiday at Scarborough itself present a tableau of failed sociability, anti-sociability and dysphoric sexual publicity, of sociability gone horribly wrong as it veers uncontrollably into spectacle, and the twilight world of stares and whispers, of social cuts and social ostracism, and the overnight crash of hard-earned social-speculative stocks of éclat. Each of these occasions demonstrates the relations between sociability, gender performance and the social enforcement of compulsory heterosexuality, in quite different ways. The ‘three steps episode’ turns on an excess of intimacy in a social and sociable space. It is a moment in which sociability turns into a scandal available as a spectacle across classes, as the ‘postboy’s wonder’ demonstrates.

In the ostensibly more fashionable, fluid and mobile space of the watering-hole at Scarborough, strict codes of gender nonetheless inform social performance and suggest gender as a critical component of the consolidation of compulsory heterosexuality as a regulatory category. Here, in this elite social space of fashionability and sociability, Lister embodies a particular kind of sexual publicity and gender deviancy, as she does in the streets alone in York faced with the taunts of groups of labouring-class men. In illuminating the social enforcement of compulsory heterosexuality which occurs through seaside gender performance amongst the British elite in the post-Napoleonic summer watering season, Lister’s diaries are compelled to instantiate scenarios of failed sociability – to enact sociability’s others of anti-sociability, social failure and shame that are her lot as a social oddity. As Felski suggests, ‘[I]he opportunities for experiencing shame increase dramatically with geographic and social forms of mobility, which provide an infinite array of chances for failure, for betraying by word or gesture that one does not belong to one’s environment’.89
However, if Anne Lister’s diaries suggest a consolidation of compulsory heterosexuality, they also suggest at the same time the instability of this regulatory category. They do this by suggesting how different spaces of sociability, such as the circles of Halifax society, work to tolerate and enable different degrees of gender and sexual deviance, different degrees of both witting and unwitting parody as a resistant strategy. Lister’s diaries testify to the exploitation of a range of social and rhetorical spaces that enable the social performance of a particular kind of parodic female masculinity and female-to-female sexual sociability.

Michael Warner pointed out in the early 1990s that ‘the energies of queer studies have come more from rethinking the subjective meaning of sexuality than from rethinking the social’. This has to some extent been the case with much work on Anne Lister. Lister’s explicit quotation of Rousseau, the writing in cipher, the staging of a subjective and solitary self, have made Lister available for recuperation within a particular model of Romantic subjectivity, a model of the literary or sexually deviant subject identified with sincerity, solitude and an expressivist model of writing which has underwritten not only much Romanticist studies but much lesbian and gay studies too.

In this chapter, I have attempted to engage Lister’s writings to think about how we might make sense of the category of sociability as it is applied to a set of texts and practices which have until recently been understood in terms of subjectivization and solitude. By considering the confessional production of sociable style in the genre of the journal — that least sociable of literary genres — I wish to have suggested a more socialized account of the Romantic confessional genre. Indeed, Lister’s journals, in their habitual instantiation of Byronic and Rousseauvian rhetorical prosthetics, necessitate an account of the Romantic confessional genre as a slavishly social and sociable beast. They also elaborate a leisureed English gentry female style of rhetorical, social, sociable and sexual mobility which cuts against De Quincey’s grain of compulsory — even if in abstinence — heterosexuality. Lister’s negotiation of sociable and sexual opportunity is informed both by an extraordinary symbolic mobility and an acute anxiety about downward social mobility and the contaminating effects of bourgeois, specifically mercantile, vulgarity. In this way, Lister’s diaries stage not so much the drama of unrequited love and unrealizeable desire — though they do this too, in spades, as a drama of often quite extraordinary pathos and within a scrupulously trained and habituated Rousseauvian vocabulary or ‘style’ of Romantic love — as
the friction of clashing and competing tribadic class, social, sociable and sexual styles, that do not always rub one another the right way.

NOTES

My thanks to Susan Conley, Sarah Lloyd and Gillian Russell for their helpful comments and suggestions.
For full citations see Bibliography.
1 Christensen, *Lord Byron’s Strength*, pp. xvi–ii.
4 Christensen, *Lord Byron’s Strength*, p. 12.
5 De Quincey, ‘Style’, p. 78.
7 See Lister, *Own Heart*; Lister, *No Priest*, Liddington, *Female Fortune*. All references in this chapter to Lister’s diaries are to these published editions. For an excellent account of the long history of familial and scholarly suppression of the diaries, see Liddington, *Female Fortune*, pp. xiii–xxi and pp. 235–41, and ‘Anne Lister’; Anderson, ‘Historian’s Notebook’.
9 Binhammer, ‘Sex Panic’, p. 411. The term ‘compulsory heterosexuality’ was coined by Rich in ‘Compulsory Heterosexuality’.
10 Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, p. 31.
11 In re-engaging Habermas’s category of ‘dependence’, I am not arguing against bourgeois independence, or suggesting a straightforward process of imitation and emulation. Rather, I wish to stress that the bourgeois take on aristocratic culture occurs as a dialectic of imitation and differentiation.
12 Christensen, *Lord Byron’s Strength*, p. xvi.
13 As Elfenbein points out, ‘the celebrity [is distinguished] from merely famous people as a figure whose personality is created, bought, sold, and advertised through capitalist relations of production’; *Byron and the Victorians*, p. 47.
14 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 344.
17 See Harvey, *Men in Black*, p. 27.
18 On *Pethylam* and Byronism, see Elfenbein, ‘Byronism’.
19 As William Hazlitt observes the following year in 1818, ‘a white muslin gown is now the common costume of mistress and maid’; ‘On Fashion,’ in *Complete Works*, vol. xvii, p. 55.
20 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 296. Recently, Judith Halberstam has claimed Anne Lister as an example of ‘female masculinity’, which she elaborates within a larger rubric of ‘gender deviance’; see *Female Masculinity*, p. 46. Halberstam’s
important formulation revises ‘the unproblematic categorization of Lister and her desire as a lesbian’, a view which is exemplified in Clark’s ‘Anne Lister’s Construction of Lesbian Identity’. However, whilst Halberstam eschews this category of the lesbian for reasons of Foucauldian historical correctness, she seems to fashion nonetheless a somewhat essentialized and ahistorical version of masculinity for Lister to embody.

21 Elias, *Court Society*, p. 67.
22 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 330.
25 Liddington, *Female Fortune*, p. 10.
26 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 219.
27 See the chapter by Gillian Russell in this volume.
29 Luhmann, *Love as Passion*, p. 76. I designate these codes as modes of sexual sociability to indicate their dual role in terms of sex and sociability, as sociable modes of sexual behaviour.
31 *Ibid*.
32 Lister, *Own Heart*, pp. 41–2. Lister’s spelling of Miss Browne’s name varies: She will be referred to here as Browne.
33 Christensen’s pithy formulation for the ‘method’ of homosexual allusion which circulated between Byron, John Cam Hobhouse and Charles Skinner Matthews. See *Lord Byron’s Strength*, p. 60.
35 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 151.
37 See Liddington, *Female Fortune*, pp. 247ff. For a general account of this social form, see Thompson, ‘Rough Music’.
38 Lister, *Own Heart*, pp. 316–7.
40 Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 31.
42 De Quincey, ‘Style’, p. 67.
43 Christensen, *Lord Byron’s Strength*, p. 65. Christensen produces this formulation in honour of Percy Bysshe Shelley, for whom he reserves a privileged place in the Byronic position. Christensen withholds a seat in the Byronic position from Lady Caroline Lamb, choosing instead to present her with the somewhat proverbial and disappointing charge of ‘vulgar Byronism’, (p. 140).
44 Lister’s diaries canvass a range of sexual positions. On these, and on a range of ideological and definitional positions on the subject of ‘Saffic regard’ and its relations to friendship and sexuality, and in relation to the question of sexual techniques and technologies, see esp. *No Priest*, pp. 31–2 and 49–50.
45 Christensen, *Lord Byron’s Strength*, p. 72.
46 Burke, *Reflections*, ed. O’Brien, p. 121. Bourgeois culture may well be the ‘phantom of aristocratic values’, as Jean Baudrillard has suggested in *For A Critique*, p. 119, but it did turn conversation into critique by challenging the claim to nature of title.

47 Remediation refers to the process by which a single interface or mediating force is replaced by multiple interfaces (such as virtual reality or the filming of a novel). See Bolter and Grusin, *Remediation*. In this sense, performances of ‘Byron’ by, for example, Shelley, Lamb and Lister, are remediations of ‘Lord Byron’ as an already mediated textual and social effect.

48 Liddington, *Female Fortune*, p. 20.


50 Jeanette Foster’s is the original ‘eye in search of variance’. See her pioneering account of ‘sexual variance’, lesbian representation and literature, *Sex Variant Women*.


52 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 185.


56 Lister, *No Priest*, p. 102.

57 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 86.

58 Liddington, *Female Fortune*, pp. 92, 98.

59 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 294.

60 Castle, ‘Diaries’, p. 103.

61 Lister, *Own Heart*, p. 82.


63 Lister, *No Priest*, p. 103.

64 On Rousseau’s masturbatory model of sexuality, which is part of his asocial formulation of the natural man in *The Social Contract*, who is ‘subject to few passions, [which can in any case be sufficed] unto himself’, see Blum, *Rousseau*, p. 89. Rousseau’s anti-sociability is also elaborated in the *Discourse on Inequality*, where Rousseau identifies sociability with effeminacy: ‘in becoming sociable and a slave, [man] grows feeble, timid, servile; and his soft and effeminate way of life completes the enervation both of his strength and his courage’, Part One, p. 86.

65 Habermas, *Structural Transformation*, p. 49.


67 For a recommendation of the ‘copying’ of conversations of men of genius, see Disraeli, *Dissertation on Anecdotes*, p. 51.

68 Blum, *Rousseau*, p. 89.

69 Not only ‘audience-oriented’ but also sociably staged before actual audiences, the *Confessions* derived much of its impact from specifically sociable readings, when Rousseau would read out loud from the work. News of the
readings was often met with rage, however, by friends whose foibles were exposed, such as Mme Epinay, who asked the lieutenant of police to forbid further readings of the Confessions. See Blum, Rousseau, p. 84.

70 For a reading of the relationship between Lister's language of sentiment and her performance of masculinity, which suggests that Lister adopts the persona of the 'man of feeling', see Gloria Prentice, 'Anne Lister's Pilgrimage: Forging a Sexual Identity as a Masculine Woman in the Long Eighteenth Century', Hons. thesis, University of Melbourne, 2001, p. 25.

71 Lister, Own Heart, pp. 282–3.
72 Ibid., p. 282.
73 Ibid., p. 283.
74 Ibid., pp. 295, 294.
75 Ibid., pp. 294–5.
76 Ibid., p. 277.
77 Ibid., pp. 278–9.
78 Jacobus, Romanticism, Writing and Sexual Difference, p. 134.
79 Lister, Own Heart, p. 278.
80 Ibid., p. 279.
81 Ibid., p. 280.
82 Ibid., p. 285.
83 Ibid., p. 292.
84 Ibid., p. 284.
85 Ibid., p. 285.
86 Felski, 'Nothing to Declare', p. 39.
87 Lister, Own Heart, p. 279.
88 Ibid., p. 102.
89 Felski, 'Nothing to Declare', p. 39.
90 Warner, 'Introduction', p. x.