1-1-2012

Illustrating Thomas Holcroft’s *A Tale of Mystery* as Physiognomical *Tableaux Vivant*

Diane Hoeveler
*Marquette University, diane.hoeveler@marquette.edu*

Illustrating Thomas Holcroft’s *A Tale of Mystery* as Physiognomical Tableaux Vivant

Diane Long Hoeveler

*An arrangement of the characters on stage, so natural and true to life that if it were rendered faithfully by an artist, the painting would give me pleasure: that is a tableau.*

--Diderot, *Writing on the Theatre*, ed. F. C. Green (Cambridge 1936), 29

*A Tale of Mystery* (Covent Garden, 1802) has been generally considered Thomas Holcroft’s claim to fame as a dramatist, the work that has enabled him to be characterized, without some controversy, as the founder of British melodrama.¹ Because the work was so immediately popular and had such a long history and influence on the British stage, it was published in illustrated book form almost immediately after its stage debut, and then in illustrated book form until well into the mid-nineteenth century. I intend in this brief essay to look at an illustration to Johann Caspar Lavater’s classic work *Essays on Physiognomy, designed to promote the Knowledge and Love of Man* (translated into English 1789-98), and then the five illustrations associated with *Tale of Mystery*, both in their earliest manifestations (the 1802 edition) and then in their later adaptations.² Although it is difficult to be definitive about the nature of British theatrical illustrations in this era based on this one case study, I think we can conclude that these illustrations depict something like a tableaux that is almost medieval and definitely pre-modern in quality. These illustrations paradoxically represent human character in crisis and stasis at the same time. In
the slightly later Samuel De Wilde painting there is a more nuanced, individualistic presentation of character and ideology, but then by 1850 we can see a return to an even cruder presentation of character in the illustrations done by Richard Cruickshank. The De Wilde portrait in particular suggests the growing development of a celebrity culture surrounding the actors who increasingly “starred” in stage productions. Secondly, this essay will attempt to sketch in broad terms the aesthetic and philosophical contexts that may have played a role in the development of theatrical illustrations, imbued as both were with the theories of Charles Le Brun and Johann Caspar Lavater.

Holcroft’s dramatic works, as I have argued elsewhere,^3 privilege the theories of Johann Caspar Lavater (1741-1801) and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) in their construction of a static and less than sympathetic human character. In fact, Holcroft’s melodramas focus on trying to understand people’s characters and motivations through reading their eyes or the slant of their facial features. The theory of physiognomy as developed at great length by Lavater explained human personality by recourse to an analysis of facial and bodily features. When Stephano and Selina approvingly discuss the mysterious stranger Francisco, Selina notes, “‘I am interested in his favour. His manners are so mild!’” To which Stephano replies, “‘His eye so expressive’” (I; 401). But as Philip Cox has noted, the theories of Lavater “go against a Godwinian notion of human perfectibility, for, in Lavater’s view, each individual ‘can be but what he can, is but what he is. He may arrive at, but cannot exceed, a certain degree of perfection, which scourging, even to death itself, cannot make
him surpass”” (Essays on Physiognomy, trans. Holcroft [1789]; qtd. Cox 5: xv). In other words, for Lavater character is fixed, not subject to reform, and as such, his view of character is pre-modern in its static quality. It is important to appreciate that Holcroft translated the Essays on Physiognomy (1789) and went on in a review published in the Monthly Review (1793) to defend Lavater, who was being satirized as “Lord Visage” in the contemporary farce False Colours (1783):

Lord Visage, we think particularly objectionable. He is a physiognomist, and in his character Lavater is satirized, or, to speak more accurately, burlesqued. A poet, who does not consider the moral effects of his satire, is, in our opinion, highly culpable. Any attempt to make men believe that the countenance of man does not bear visible signs of individual propensities, and of vicious or of virtuous habits, is immoral, because it is false. (qtd. Graham 569)

Holcroft was, in other words, a true believer, and his melodramas are full of attempts by characters to read the faces of others as if they were books or aesthetic objects that were available for scrutiny.

The four volumes of Lavater’s Essays on Physiognomy (1775-78) were so popular that they went through nine printings in Germany by the 1780s, twelve versions in England by the 1790s, and eleven different translations in France by 1800. Matthew Lewis is listed as a subscriber to the ornately illustrated version of Lavater translated from French into English by Henry Hunter (1789-98), while the Swiss artist Henry Fuseli translated some of Lavater’s writings as Aphorisms on Man with a magnificent frontispiece by William Blake (Percival 85). Holcroft’s own translation of Lavater was published numerous times, and always heavily illustrated with character-types
who could be “read” by using basic principles from Lavater’s “system of physiognomy.” In fact, the 1789 edition had 360 illustrations of different faces, each representing a character type that clearly revealed the quasi-medieval quality (choleric; melancholic; phlegmatic; etc.) of much of this character-reading (see Figure 1):

Figure 1: Illustrations of character-types found in Lavater, Essays on physiognomy; for the promotion of the knowledge and the love of mankind, abridged from Mr. Holcroft’s translation. London: Robinson, 1789. Reproduced by kind permission from the Sadleir-Black collection, University of Virginia.

By 1810 there were fifty-five different versions of the work, including Dutch and Italian ones (Graham 562). Perhaps Lavater’s most famous claim was that “Each individual has his character, and every character has a physiognomy proper to it; it is this which gives, if I may so express myself, the tone to the look, to the gesture, to the carriage, to the mien, to the gait, to all our movements active and passive.” 4 As Graham notes, Lavater managed to “fuse science and religion through a personal enthusiasm and sensibility that satisfied an age in which emotional response and almost occult perception were to become the criteria of the new ‘ideal’ man” (563). It was not for nothing that
William Godwin called in a physiognomist to produce a lengthy report on the facial features of the infant Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. Like Holcroft, Godwin was also a true believer, declaring, “nothing can be more certain than that there is a science of physiognomy” (qtd. Graham 568). But the theories of Lavater were not universally accepted, indeed, Hannah More and Maria Edgeworth both criticized him as a “mountebank” and a fraud, as someone who might as well be using a “divining rod” in his so-called studies (Graham 566-67).

What I am calling a Lavaterian pre-modern and static quality to the analysis of characters in melodrama needs to be supplemented also by the theories of Thomas Hobbes. As a secularist, Hobbes was intent on nothing less than, as Mark Lilla has phrased it, “the dismantling of Christendom’s theological-political complex” (75). In his *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes set out to use physiology, specifically the analysis of the human eye, in order to understand religion and politics. For him, the basic realities of human existence could be understood, not through metaphysics, but by coming to terms with the fact that we are all “bodies alone in the world” (Lilla 76). The push-pull that sense impressions, memories, and imagination have on human subjects causes them to imagine that they have a “soul,” something inside their essentially hollow bodies and minds. To Hobbes, what we have is nothing more than “matter driven from within by nothing but the basic passions of appetite and aversion. Henceforth we shall not speak of the soul; we shall speak only of human striving” (qtd. Lilla 77). In the Hobbesian worldview, human beings are
much like puppets whose strings are pulled, not by the sort of ideals that operate in the sentimental universe, but by their own animalistic appetites or basic needs, and such a vision is not far from the characters we see depicted in the illustrations to the melodrama.

Figure 2: Frontispiece to Act I by Henry Tresham. Reproduced by kind permission of the University of California Libraries.

In this first illustration, by Henry Tresham (1749-1814), we are presented with something like a panoramic tableau vivant of the most dramatic action of
the entire melodrama. To the far left of the illustration we see the final scene of act I when Selina interrupts the attempted assassination attempt of Francisco by his evil brother Rimaldi, while in the exact middle we see three male figures engaged in a struggle involving a dagger and a gun, a scene that only occurs in the drama as a flashback. This scene appears in fact to be an illustration of the longest speech in the melodrama, which belongs to the maid Fiametta, and it is she who narrates the attack on Francisco as an eyewitness:

It is now seven or eight years ago, when, you having sent me to Chambery, I was coming home. It was almost dark; everything was still; I was winding along the dale, and the rocks were all as it were turning black. Of a sudden, I heard cries! A man was murdering! I shook from head to foot! Presently, the cries died away, and I beheld two bloody men, with their daggers in their hands, stealing off under / the crags at the foot of the mill. I stood like a stone: for I was frightened out of my wits! So I thought I heard groans; and afeared as I was, I had the sense to think they must come from the poor murdered creature. So I listened, and followed my ears, and presently I saw this very man (I; 401)

This very gothic scene is conveyed in language that is virtually telegraphic, and the sketchiness of the characters, their abrupt gestures and partially glimpsed faces, suggests the same sort of intensity. The far right of the illustration depicts Selina in a supplicating posture, the very last image we have of her in the play attempting to mediate between her father Francisco and his murderous brother Rimaldi. The characters are stylized, universalized, and defined by their postures and actions, not through their individual identities or unique personalities. They are, I would assert, depicted much like Hobbesian puppets, engaged only in instinctive behavior and the sheer struggle to survive.

How can we explain such a classical depiction in a work that attempted to present itself as “modern” and liberal in its advocacy of companionate
marriage? One possible route is to look at the relative lack of status of the theater in relation to the pictorial arts of the period. In 1732 the aesthetic theorist and dramatist Aaron Hill attempted to convince the Prince of Wales that it was necessary to establish a British tragic academy along the lines of the Académie Royale in France. But such an institution never came into existence. Instead, with no officially established and royally supported theatrical academy behind it, dramatic practice and theory in England became, according to Shearer West, associated with art institutions (the Royal Academy was established, for example, in 1768) that were developing a “royally approved theory as their basis” (111). As late as 1783, Thomas Holcroft complained that the stage was “well worth the contemplation of the Philosopher and the Legislator, as [well as] the Man of Taste,” but that “legislators have never yet been sufficiently convinced of the power of the Drama, to incorporate it with the constitution, and make it a legal and necessary establishment” (qtd. Bolton 17). Without all of the support that a royally sanctioned institution would have provided, the British theater failed to produce its own coterie of professionalized theorists and instead came to rely on what I would label a marketplace approach to both acting methods and their visual representations in the printed versions of those plays. In other words, material that was the most gothic, garish, ghoulish was what would sell to a reading public that had gorged itself on an increasingly sensationalistic form of fiction and chapbooks concerned with sex and death.

This “marketplace” approach to the illustration of theatrical works contrasts markedly to the “connoisseurship” model of artistic production in
England that Percival describes as operating in relation to the proliferation of
Lavater’s works. Indeed, the marketplace model is instead predicated on the
realities of an emerging capitalistic economy rather than on the existence of a
very small and select aristocratic or elite market for paintings. The marketplace
approach sought to accomplish fairly straightforward goals: first, in order to sell
to the widest possible audience, the production of illustrations in popular series
or theatrical journals and printed books attempted to capture those moments of
the highest drama or expression of passion in the work. This is clearly evident
in Figure 1. Second, illustrations in general were dominated by the prevailing
comic aesthetic, tied as it was to an almost medieval theory of “humours.” This
approach actually presented a contradictory notion of human character, at once
stereotypical and of “infinite variety.” As West has noted, “[w]hen looking at
the ways in which acting theory developed in the eighteenth century, the lack of
an acting academy must be kept in mind. The continual comparisons between
art and acting, as well as the use of Le Brunian formulas in descriptions of
actors and their performances reveal how thoroughly the rhetoric of art theory
pervaded acting theory throughout the eighteenth century” (111). Central
figures in this approach include earlier theorists like William Congreve, Aaron
Hill, Charles Le Brun, and Samuel Johnson, as well as publishers like John
Boydell (who specialized in illustrations to Shakespeare’s works) and John
Bell, as well as the artist Samuel De Wilde and caricaturists like the
Cruickshanks. It is no coincidence that De Wilde and both of the Cruickshank
brothers were among the most prominent of Holcroft’s illustrators. Incidentally,
the subscription list to the deluxe English edition of Lavater included John Bell, John Boydell, and Samuel de Wilde (West 139).

When David Garrick worked out his technique for portraying emotion on the stage ("passion animated"), he used Charles Le Brun’s *Methode pour apprendre a dessiner les passions* (1702), a treatise that was consistently referenced by both artists and actors during the eighteenth century and which was predicated on the essential correspondence between expressions on the face and the emotions within. According to Le Brun, there were only a certain number of emotions and to illustrate their expression was also to provide a “kind of descriptive inventory of the soul.” Le Brun may have been the first to generalize about the emotions as if they constituted a field of scientific inquiry, but he was followed quickly by Charles Macklin, who thought that actors should have “philosophical knowledge of the passions” by knowing their “genus, species and characteristics as a botanist might those of plants” (qtd. Shawe-Taylor). Macklin was then succeeded by Aaron Hill, whose 1746 tract on acting was more like a taxonomy and claimed that there were “only ten dramatic passions,” all of which had to be expressed in ten exactly stylized expressions. This inventory of the emotions suggests that the presentation of passion on stage required a highly stylized system of visual and codified mimic signs rather than verbal formulae. For this period, being able to generalize about anything meant to transform its significance from the individual into the realm of the universal.
In a similar manner, literary critics established criteria for judging character and motivation based on generalized assumptions about the consistency of personality or a sort of universal “humanity” that all people shared. Acting and criticism overlapped to the extent that the age was obsessed with defining, performing, and thereby controlling the emotions. Both efforts were at the same time attempts to work out a psychological and emotional inventory that ran parallel—and in some way was complementary to—the scientific advancements and developments that were being made by such people as Erasmus Darwin and Charles Bell who believed that the emotions arose from an organic brain-body unit in predictable, species-specific ways (see Richards, Richardson). Feelings were presumed to be universal, and Adam Smith as well as David Hume made much of what they called the “natural capacity for fellow-feeling.” But along with this celebration of the empathetic emotions were denigrations of excessive emotionality, and more specifically, superstition.

We should recall here that Holcroft began his theatrical career writing comedies, not melodramas, and that he cut his theatrical teeth on the comedies of Molière and Congreve. The purpose of comedy was the presentation and depiction of the humours, while tragedy was concerned with the representation of the passions. The comic actor was depicted as “unusual or outré, as well as possessing a distinctive face and by extension, a specific humour” (West 127), and this we can see in the Isaac Cruickshank illustration to Holcroft’s *Road to Ruin* or De Wilde’s painting of the lecherous father in Holcroft’s *The Deserted Daughter*. The eighteenth-century theory of the humours relied on William
Congreve’s *Concerning Humour in Comedy* (1695), in which he claimed that humours were “singular and unavoidable manners of doing or saying anything, Peculiar or Natural to one man only, by which his speech and actions are distinguish’d from those of other men” (qtd. West 127). Theater theorists began to claim, in fact, that there was an “infinite variety of human character reflected in an infinite variety of human faces, and here again art theory played a role in formulating this concept” (West 137). The issue of infinite variety came to be related to a growing interest in the “science of physiognomy…the way stable external features reflect inner character—became interchangeable with pathognomy, or the expression of the passions” (West 138). However frequently used, the formula of “infinite variety” had to compete with the idea of comic acting as “the presentation of stereotype” or typology (West 139). It would appear that Holcroft straddled these positions, at times trying to present unique characters, but most frequently engaged in the representation of “types” like “the young innocent victim” (Selina); “the lecherous uncle” (Rimaldi); and the “defiant servant” (Fiametta), each with his or her own readable and highly stylized facial features, slant of eyes, and shape of nose.
In the second illustration used to accompany what I will call the “Tresham edition” of *A Tale of Mystery*, we are presented with yet another panoramic tableau vivant, this time presenting all of the drama’s actors grouped in postures of active assault or passive pleadings. The archers on the far left of the picture are seen at the moment that they are ready to fire on Selina, her father, and the miller Michelli at the conclusion of Act II. The scene to the far right, however, presents what appears to be the initial attack on Francisco by the Algerine pirates hired by his brother some eight years earlier to kidnap him and cut out his tongue. Strangely, this scene is never presented in the melodrama, but only conveyed in a written narrative by Francisco when he is asked to “tell” his story to Selina. The illustration, in other words, fills in the blanks that the drama does not itself perform.
In the final illustration in the Tresham edition (Figure 4), we see depicted yet another scene that never occurs in the drama. In Act II, when Michelli arrives at the miller’s cottage, he attempts to hide from the pursuing archers in the very same house where he had hidden eight years earlier, at the time of the initial kidnapping and attack on his brother. Michelli thinks Rimaldi looks familiar, but he fails to identify him, realizing only after he has left that Rimaldi is in fact the villain for whom all are currently searching. In the melodrama Michelli does not understand who Rimaldi is until Francisco comes to his cottage with Selina and “makes the sign of biting his right hand” to Francisco so that Francisco can verify to him that Romaldi indeed was his assailant. As Romaldi flees the miller’s house with his pistol, Francisco “opens his breast for him to shoot, if he please. Selina falls between them. The whole scene passes in a mysterious and rapid manner. Music suddenly stops” (II, 422). The
illustration by Tresham presents yet another non-existent scene, a depiction of what would have occurred if Michelli had held instead the hand of the villain rather than the hero. The illustration, interestingly, increases the gothic and horrific potential of the play, creating yet another scene that the dramatist did not present in the work in order to increase the terror of the book reading audience.

Figure 5: Charles Farley (1771-1859) as Francisco in Samuel De Wilde’s painting.

In the next illustration (Figure 5) we can see how theatrical illustration came to be influenced by the increasing status of stars like Edmund Kean, Sarah Siddons, or John Philip Kemble, something that has been called the evolution of the “star system” or early celebrity culture. Charles Farley was a stalwart of the British stage, most famous for his portrayal of *Timour the Tartar* in Matthew Lewis’s drama. In his eulogy, J. Doran praised Farley’s acting, noting that “He was great without speaking, and his performance of the dumb
Francisco in the *Tale of Mystery*, was as eloquent and touching as though he had had a hundred tongues all tuned to tell with irresistible force a tale of suffering” (144). His portraitist Samuel De Wilde (1751-1832) specialized in painting theatrical stars, and he did at least four portraits of the stars of *A Tale of Mystery* (Selina; Fiametta; Francisco; and Rimaldi), all currently owned by the Garrick Club in London. Born in Holland in 1751, he was brought to England as an infant, where he was raised in Soho by his widowed mother, and consistently exhibited his paintings at the Royal Academy from 1792 until 1821. His career in theatrical portraiture began when he was employed by John Bell to illustrate Bell’s *British Theatre*, a series that ran from 1791-95. De Wilde provided ninety-three pictures for the series, by which time his reputation was established. Many actors and actresses came to sit for him and his theatrical portraits adorned numerous publications, including the *Monthly Mirror*, John Cawthorn’s *Minor British Theatre*, and William Oxberry’s *New English Drama* (National Portrait Gallery online). In this particular illustration we see the moment when Francisco writes and then delivers his responses to a series of questions asked of him by Fiametta and Bonamo about his history. He presents himself as a dispossessed victim of tyranny and greed who nonetheless is constrained by familial ties that prevent him from openly identifying or condemning his oppressor. Francisco makes it clear that he knows who attacked him and sold him to “the Algerines” as a slave, but he refuses to name this person because, as he writes, his attacker is “Rich and powerful” (I, 403). This particular scene was the subject of this popular painting that depicts
Francisco posed as if in *tableaux vivant* and delivering his handwritten explanation. The themes of unjust class oppression as well as the importance of literacy emerge in this melodrama, suggesting some of the ways that it directly appealed to the growing lower-class and bourgeois audiences in attendance at these productions.

Finally, in the frontispiece to an 1829 edition of the melodrama (Figure 6), Robert Cruickshank has illustrated the climactic scene from Act I, when Selina overhears Rimaldi’s plan to attack Francisco at midnight and interrupts it in order to save his life. Again, there is very much the feel of a tableau vivant about it. The characters are stylized, the presentation of the interior is self-consciously gothic, and the costuming would appear to be faux Elizabethan. Although I would like to be able to claim that the business of theatrical illustration became more sophisticated and subtle in its presentation of the text, this illustration does not bear out that claim. In fact, the artwork is crude and it appeals to the lowest possible taste of the reading audience. Strangely, however, the Cruikshank family, father and two sons, dominated the English caricaturist and book illustration business throughout the early to mid-
nineteenth century. George Cruikshank (1792-1878) was born in London, the son of Scottish painter and caricaturist Isaac Cruikshank. As a child he learned etching techniques from his father, Isaac Cruikshank (1762-1811), an accomplished satirical artist in his own right and an early illustrator, as we have seen, of Holcroft’s Road to Ruin. George also worked in collaboration with his brother, Isaac Robert Cruikshank (1789-1856), caricaturist, illustrator, and portrait miniaturist. Both brothers were interested in the theatre, and performed in dramas they composed with Edmund Kean, a friend. In the late 1820s Robert Cruikshank illustrated a number of notable books that were often sequels to previous successes to which he and his brother George had contributed. For example, George Cruikshank illustrated Points of Humour and Isaac Cruikshank illustrated Points of Misery. The brothers also collaborated on a series of “London Characters” in 1827 (Patton). Their heavy emphasis on depicting “characters” suggests the persistence of a Lavaterian typology of universalism still operating in the visual and dramatic realms.

Was Thomas Holcroft served well by his illustrators? Although it is difficult now to assess the reactions to these illustrations by their original reading audience, it is possible to place them in their fuller intellectual, historical, and philosophical milieu. All of them suggest that for the reading public the role of the newly developing genre of melodrama was to depict the passions of “good” characters under assault by the forces of evil ones. The action in a melodrama was privileged over an understanding of human character as unique or individual, or perhaps it is more accurate to say that human
character was either thought to be easily understood by a theory of “humours”
or it was presented as being of “infinite variety,” mysterious, unknowable, and
finally a blank space on the stage that the frantic action attempted to elide. That
melodramatic illustrations resorted to depicting “flat” characters was, I think,
connected to the popularity and influence of Lavater and a variety of other
contemporary theorists like LeBrun.

Works Cited

Bolton, Betsy. Women, Nationalism, and the Romantic Stage: Theatre and
Politics in Britain, 1780-1800. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

London: Bell, 1889.

Cox, Philip. Introduction. In The Novels and Selected Plays of Thomas

Doran, J. “Charles Farley.” Notes & Queries. 2nd series. 7 (Feb 19, 1859). 143-
44.


Holcroft, Thomas. *A Tale of Mystery–A Melo-Drame* (Covent Garden, 1802).


---. *A Tale of Mystery–A Melo-Drame* (Covent Garden, 1802).

taleofmysterymel00holciala


### NOTES

1 There is some controversy over Holcroft’s role as the importer of French *mélodrame* as developed by René Pixèrècourt into Britain. Nicholl downplays Pixèrècourt’s role in the development of melodrama, noting that “the fundamental features of the *mélodrame* were in existence in the French theatres long before 1798, and secondly, that the same features can be traced in English plays from 1770 onwards” (98). Similarly, Philip Cox downplays the melodramatic “turn” in Holcroft’s career, arguing that “what might appear to be a new departure informed by continental influences is, in fact, part of an ongoing
generic experimentation within the constraints of what could be performed on the late eighteenth-and early-nineteenth-century stage. And such generic experimentation is intimately linked with a desire to communicate a consistent political morality” (viii-ix).

As Mortensen and others have noted, British critics have a tendency to downplay the importance of “continental” influences on the development of the British literary tradition in order to attempt to construct a tradition of nationalist literature built on supposedly pristine and nativist works.

2 For the figures two through four, see *A tale of mystery, a melo-drame;* 2d ed., with etchings after designs by Henry Tresham (1751–1814). *As performed at the Theatre-Royal Covent Garden.* By Thomas Holcroft. London: R. Philips, 1802. Digital copy available through archive.org. De Wilde’s portrait of Charles Farley as Francisco is based on the first performance of the melodrama in 1802, although we cannot date the painting with any exact year. The Cruickshank illustration is from the London: Cumberland 1829 edition. Information about De Wilde’s career and images of his theatrical paintings can be found on the Garrick Club, London, website: [http://art.garrickclub.co.uk/librarysearchartist.asp](http://art.garrickclub.co.uk/librarysearchartist.asp)

3 See my *Gothic Riffs*, chapter four, for a full discussion of Holcroft as a melodramatic gothicist.


5 Henry Tresham was born and initially trained as an artist in Dublin, moving to England in 1775. He spent fourteen years in Rome, training under the patronage of Lord Cawdor, returning to London to be employed by John Boydell, who invited him to paint three
scenes from *Anthony and Cleopatra*. In 1807 he was named Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy, but resigned after two years due to ill health. His drawings in ink and black chalk, as seen in the illustrations here, are considered some of his best work. He was also involved in the *British Gallery* project (Bryan 584).

6 John Bell (1745-1831), publisher and bookseller, was a major figure in the London printing and book trade for much of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Beginning in 1777, he published 109 volumes of *The Poets of Great Britain complete from Chaucer to Churchill* series. More importantly, he influenced later publishing practice by using illustrations in his books that were not only prepared by skilled artists but also related to the text. In addition, he founded a weekly newspaper, a monthly illustrated magazine, and various other periodicals (“John Bell” in *Dictionary of National Biography*. 1885; IV: 168).

7 Isaac Cruickshank designed the “Goldfinch on the Road to Ruin” etching for the 1803 edition of the drama edited by Elizabeth Inchbald. The original etching is held in the British Museum and described as such:” A man and woman with bustled skirt linking arms beneath a tree, as he gestures towards carriage on road at left; oval. Inscription Content: All so safe too, so snug, I’m so pleas’d & so happy. Published by J. Garbanali, No. 4 Great Russell Street, Bedford Square.”

8 See, for instance, McDermott’s account of the evolution of the star-system. The “star,” according to McDermott, “not only speaks to a constituency (whether in the theatre, the legislature, or the church) but models the upward social and economic mobility” of the general population (192). Also see Williams on the same subject.