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SIMIAN SEXUALITY: INTERSPECIES INTIMACIES IN THE LONG EIGHTEENTH
CENTURY

JEREMY CHOW

“Kiss me, thou curious miniature of man!”

– From Rochester’s “A Letter from Artemisia in the Town
to Chloe in the Country”

Artists and authors of the long eighteenth century were wild about the simian. Monkeys, apes, orangutans, and baboons repeatedly populate a wide array of texts from a variety of global traditions and geographies. Within literary traditions, simian representations emerge from Alexander Pope’s *Rape of the Lock* (1712), *Essay on Criticism* (1711), and *Epistle to a Lady* (1743), first-hand accounts of Peter the Wild Boy by Jonathan Swift and John Arbuthnot (1726), and Frances Burney’s *Camilla* (1796). The simian likewise peers out from paintings and artistic traditions such as in Flemish painter David Teniers the Younger’s *Guardroom with Monkeys* (1663) and *Smoking and Drinking Monkeys* (1660) and the French practice of illustrating Orientalized and anthropomorphized monkeys characterized by *singerie*. And natural histories blend the literary with the artistic, such as with Edward Long’s *The History of Jamaica* (1774), Dutch mercenary John Gabriel Stedman’s diaristic *The Narrative of a Five-Year Expedition Against the Revolted Negroes of Suriname* (1796), and Thomas Bewick and John Beilby’s *A History of Quadrupeds* (1790), with which I will conclude. These examples just scratch the surface of a simian fascination that grasps ahold of a global, long eighteenth-century cultural

imaginary. This essay examines that fascination with a particular eye to the simian's erotic preponderance and its placement alongside the human. What is at stake, I ask, in the long eighteenth-century's repeated attention to erotic, unsettling, and pronounced interspecies intimacies?

[INSERT IMAGE 1: PORTRAIT OF ROCHESTER]

Consider one emblematic example that again, as this essay does, weaves together literary and artistic praxes: John Wilmot, the 2nd Earl of Rochester, who seems to have been, by countless accounts, captivated by the monkey. The most canonized portrait of Rochester, shown here and painted by Jacob Huysmans (ca. 1675), pairs the libertine extraordinaire with a long-tailed capuchin monkey (fig. 1).¹ Rochester offers the monkey a laurel crown, and the monkey, in exchange, offers a tattered page from a red book. Supremacy and literacy operate as exchangeable oblations. Circulating internet rumors on art historian forums (which I have been unable to confirm with archival sources) suggest that the monkey in the portrait was a particular pet favorite for Rochester, who trained it to defecate on guests at his command (Self n.p.). Huysmans's portrait induces a moment of mutual exchange and compatibility, which takes on erotic resonances given the monkey's physiology—its long, black tail, in particular—and Rochester's extravagant sartorial wear flushed with aroused color.

Such a suggestive reading is further realized by Rochester's poem "A Letter from Artemisia in the Town to Chloe in the Country" (1679), in which Artemisia recounts the humorous antics of an inebriated "fine lady"—jilted by a fop (a figure to which I will return)—who consequently demands affectionate recourse in the arms of a monkey:

She to the window runs, where she had spied
Her much esteemed dear friend, the monkey, tied

With forty smiles, as many antic bows,
 As if 't had been the lady of the house,
 The dirty, chattering monster she embraced,
 And made it this fine, tender speech at last:
 "Kiss me, thou curious miniature of man!
 How odd thou art! how pretty! How japan!
 Oh, I could live and die with thee!" (ll. 137–45)

Artemisia's characterization of the "dirty," "chattering," monstrous monkey—who masquerades in gender-bending drag, miniaturizes man, and becomes an index for Orientalism and an invocation of death—remains "tied" to the other textual and artistic depictions I magnify here.

I open with the art and poetry of Rochester to highlight the entangled necessity of bringing both literary and visual representations of the long eighteenth-century simian mutually to bear as they, I contend, inform wild textures of interspecies intimacies. By centering both artistic and literary representations, I underscore two interwoven tenets: first, the imbricated nature of animality and sexuality in artistic and literary works that speak with and to one another, and second, the way in which these co-evolved iterations help us to more capaciously understand the emergence of the novel. If the eighteenth-century rise of the novel, as much spilt ink has suggested, is foundational to the development of character, sociality, politics, and culture, then it is important to acknowledge the role that the *erotic* animal-human bond—not singularly the animal-human bond—plays in these developments. In other words, the novel's commitment to the erotic animal-human bond reframes and revises notions of character, sociality, politics, and culture.

This eighteenth-century interspecies imaginary—evoked by the crosshatching of art and literature—is simultaneously invested in the intimate and queer entanglements that human-animal connections allow and the threat of a simian interlocutor whose similitude, strength, and noticeable alterity induce violent potentials. Put simply, violence and eroticism cohere in the eighteenth-century’s interspecies intimacies. I begin with William Hogarth’s plate series, *A Harlot’s Progress* (1732), and magnify the triangulated relationship among the titular sex worker, her pet monkey, and her johns. I extend this reading to track two novels—Eliza Haywood’s *The Adventures of Eovaai* (1736) and Frances Burney’s *Evelina* (1778)—that further situate the evolving pleasures and accompanying violence of simian-human entanglements. I close with a turn to natural history and a way for these conversations to also enfold the intersections of gender and race, especially blackness.

To be clear, the disparate texts that I have chosen to unite in this essay are not *exclusive instances* of interspecies erotic encounters; they are *signal instances*. By calling for an inquiry into queer animal studies, this essay recognizes that interspecies intimacies honor the boundary-pushing, too-much-ness, and peripheral existence of non-(hetero)normative intimacies and thus can usurp the heteronormative strictures that operate as totalizing safeguards of all—human and nonhuman—relations. At the same time, the recurrence of the simian and its various embodied forms demonstrates the fungible hierarchical positions of human and monkey, and exposes residual concerns regarding human supremacy. In *When Species Meet*, Donna Haraway articulates the value of human-animal relations: “Our kind of capacity for perception and sensual pleasure ties us to the lives of our primate kin” (6). Though Haraway intends to destabilize the vertical human-animal hierarchy, artists like Hogarth, Haywood, and Burney not only reveal this same problematized hierarchy centuries before Haraway, but also anchor the monkey with

readings of manifold pleasures and perceptions. As I have shown elsewhere, the eighteenth century has much to provide for a queer animal studies purview, and likewise, queer animal studies can learn much from the eighteenth century.² My invocation of a queer animal studies here—one that specifically examines the uneasy enfolding of simian and human bodies—corresponds with a variety of feminist and queer theories, especially alongside the emergence of multispecies ethnography, that seek to uncover the “storied worlds,” to borrow a phrase from Thom Van Dooran and Deborah Bird Rose, in which humans and animals convene in geographies of uncertainty (4). For example, Dana Luciano and Mel Chen’s “queer inhumanisms,” Stacy Alaimo’s “transcorporeality,” and Radhika Govindraján’s framing of “relatedness” all demonstrate the widespread currency of what might be understood as queer animal discourses and inform my work here. I proffer, though, that the eighteenth century has a great deal to say about these interspecies nexuses.³ By examining eighteenth-century simian-human moments through the lens of queer animal studies, I uncover how eighteenth-century artists and authors repeatedly return to simian-human interactions to upheave normative notions of gender, sex, sexuality, and species. These upheavals are demonstrably diffused with graphic or implicit violence, which ultimately suggests that the determination to unravel normativity accompanies the violation of the body. The simian-human connection, in other words, leaves a mark.

I offer then this guiding, provocative maxim for eighteenth-century animal studies: to notice the simian is to locate extracurricular sexuality, which triangulates interspecies polymorphous pleasures and violences. H.W. Janson, Laura Brown, Londa Schiebinger, and Gordon Williams have all deftly outlined the terrain by which the simian has been invoked in erotic or intersubjective entanglements throughout early modernity. “Simian Sexuality” ups the

ante on this collective work. It is my contention that the literary and artistic simian both *undermines* and *underwrites* heteronormativity: it both pushes against and works adjacent to normative sexual arrangements. The simian figuration indulges the fantasy of heteronormativity while, at the same time, working to chip away such normative gestures. Hogarth, Haywood, and Burney reveal the simian to discipline sexual pleasure while also enabling an effusion of eroticisms. For instance, Hogarth pairs harlotry with the simian to showcase a potentially lewd human-animal intimacy; in Haywood, the simian triangulates unbridled lust and an ironic defense of chastity through the body of the aged woman in juxtaposition to the virginal heroine and eldritch magician. And Burney's ending deploys the monkey to deride foppishness and in so doing sutures queer entanglement and violence between pet monkey and fop. In both their congruence and incongruence, these examples underscore how interspecies intimacies stimulate extramarital affections, make available human susceptibility to animal passions, and represent diverse erotic exercises.

Monkeying Hogarth

Whereas in Huysmans's portrait the monkey is paired only with Rochester, Hogarth's *A Harlot's Progress* positions the simian alongside a coterie of human actors all of whom become implicated in an extramarital affair that reveals a variety of subaltern positionalities. The six engravings that comprise the visual narrative follow the anti-*bildungsroman* of Moll Hackabout, a sixteen-year-old innocent who has come to London to find work.⁴ A pocked and "vile procuress," Mother Needham, working on behalf of a "wretch," tricks the country girl into a life of harlotry, which ultimately brings about her demise (Hogarth and Alexander n.p.). The second engraving—the centerpiece of my analysis of Hogarth here—is entitled "The Harlot Finds a

Protector” (see fig. 2). The engraving features Hackabout, seated right, who endeavors to distract her suitor while his competitor escapes unnoticed with a trusty though judgmental servant girl. Hackabout, now adept in the ways of sex work, procures for herself a rich Jew,⁵ distracting him by exposing her bare breast and deliberately overthrowing the table, which “scald[s] his leg, so engages the attention, as to give the other an opportunity of escaping unnoticed” (Hogarth and Alexander n.p.). On the far right, a racialized child servant stares petrified at the commotion. With all of this visual turmoil, it is easy to ignore the presence of the monkey in the bottom left quadrant of the portrait.⁶ In fact, most critics disregard the monkey altogether. The bare breast, racialized child, and Jew—the subaltern coterie to which I referred above—and their aghast countenances take precedence. However, I find that the monkey’s gaze here triggers not only the action of the engraving, but also alerts audiences to the eroticism apparent in a plate series dedicated to harlotry.

[IMAGE 2: Hogarth, Plate 2]

Hogarth’s engraved narratives tend to unfold in line with how Western viewers are trained to read (left to right, top to bottom); thus tracing these movements, despite the engraving’s two-dimensionality, opens realms by which to visualize the contact among characters and species. The first example of ocular engagement occurs with the helpful servant girl and the rival; her eyes remain affixed on him and his focus beholds Hackabout. Sporting a woman’s bonnet, arguably Hackabout’s (in yet another connection to Rochester’s “A Letter from Artemisia”), the monkey sets its eyes upon the black servant though its body moves in the opposite direction. However, the black child’s eyes do not reciprocate this simian stare and instead focus on Hackabout’s exposed right breast. James Grantham Turner notes that the “focal point of the *déshabillé* thus becomes a figure for seeing and also an object to be seen” (57). For

Turner, Hogarth's illustration of the breast becomes an eyeball: a third eye for Hackabout, which I find enables her panoptic presence within the portrait. That is, she is the center of attention—the impetus for all the surrounding action. Glances, gazes, and faces all attend to her centrality. A similar invocation is documented in the subsequent plate in which Hackabout, with exposed left breast, is arrested. The breast as eye resonates, then, with the protruding eyes and shocked expressions of the black child, the servant, and the Jew. These expressions are distinct to Plate 2.

Eroticisms blossom in this engraving as a result of the excess of sartorial and ocular engagements—what Kathleen Lubey refers to as “dubious visual pleasures” in *Excitable Imaginations* (67). Lubey's focus on the hoop-petticoat, which “actively preserves social order, securing women's virtue by keeping men at a safe distance from their bodies,” is similarly depicted in Hogarth's illustration of Moll here (70). Yet it is the exposed breast that functions as the simultaneous preservation and upheaval of social order. If, following Turner, the exposed breast augurs panoptic visibility, then *déshabillé* becomes a means by which to police the behavior of the escaping and Semitic johns; it sets out to govern their behavior. But the flashing also serves to disrupt that social order by erotically inviting the engraving's cast as well as the audience to admire Hackabout's breast. Are these visages shocked by the catalyst of the upturned table, the exposed breast, or the frenzied action that dwells in each corner of the engraving, which layers the entanglement of animal, sex worker, racialized child, and Jew in a confined space? Or do the countenances convey a topsy-turvy representation of artistic eroticism, which intends to protect and yet flouts social decorum?

This excessive eroticism—not captured in the other five engravings—is spurred by, demanded by, the representation of the monkey. Yet in Hogarth's engraving there is not only one monkey; there are two.⁷ Hogarth deliberately juxtaposes the rival suitor with the monkey, an

observation that Sean Shesgreen also notices. The two exist within the same area of the image; both display similar body language; both stand on arched feet; and both appear to have long monkey tails. But more pointedly, the rival suitor is given a simian countenance, that is, a facial configuration that is decidedly monkey-like. Shesgreen observes, “The monkey, the most pointed indication of [Hackabout’s] affection, resembles [the rival suitor] in facial expression and posture, and there is little difference in her treatment of either plaything” (19). Shesgreen implies a sort of bestial engagement—one that resonates strongly with Haywood’s *Eovaai*, as we will see—that might position the harlot as a *sui generis* archetype whose passions and sexual limits (or lack thereof) enfold both humans and nonhumans. On the other hand, Shesgreen playfully notes that Hackabout “apes the life style of the class to which she aspires,” which may punningly position the harlot as yet another simian configuration in the engraving that does not, in fact, transgress species boundaries (19). “Aping life style” as a suggestive turn of phrase calls to mind a heteronormative simian family wherein Hackabout and the suitor play house with their infantilized, pet monkey.

By geometrically aligning Hackabout, the rival suitor, and the monkey, we begin to see a near ideal, isosceles triangle, which amplifies erotic connection. The triangulation of relations, evidenced by Hogarth, produces gestures of exogamous, homoerotic, and human and nonhuman species relationships; as a result, these triangulated relations corroborate and extend foundational readings offered by René Girard and Eve Sedgwick.⁸ Triangulated vectors here induce liminal displacements that amplify the ways in which interspecies intimacies upheave gender and sexuality alongside species lines. Hogarth’s artistic triangle positions these three characters in liminal states: Hackabout mediates the possibility of maternity (signaled by her exposed breast and mandated by the heteronormative economy) and the harlot; the rival suitor teeters between

human and monkey-like; and the actual monkey features both superficial animality and gender-bending clothing. Hackabout becomes maternal through the monkey and harlot through her congress with the rival suitor. The rival suitor is made both monkey and man with his bodily juxtaposition. And the monkey is always our monkey and yet apes both the rival suitor, in stance, and Hackabout/femininity with the obviously frilled bonnet. The monkey facilitates these mediations while also calling our attention to the fact that this plate is the only engraving in *A Harlot's Progress* that features Moll in both pre- (with the Jew) and post- (with the escaping suitor) coital situations. The act of harlotry, in a plate series explicitly about harlotry, is thus featured exclusively alongside the simian.

The harbinger of the monkey triggers an excess of aesthetic and sexual pleasures, an excess that leads to the catastrophe disclosed by the final image of the engraving series: Hackabout dies of venereal disease and is attended by other sex workers at her open-casket funeral. A couplet accompanies the final engraving: "Her Progress Run, the certain End you see,/ What Harlots, Empresses and Queens must be." I find that Hackabout's congress with both the monkey and the rival suitor *cum* monkey-man predetermines her death; simian sexuality here is aligned with the harlot cum queen (a homophonic pun that alludes to "quean," an early modern synonym for prostitute) whose sexuality proves too much and induces death. The six plates feature no other interactions with suitors, and the third engraving immediately following our second is titled, "The Harlot's Fall." Monkeys and monkey men, then, engage the eroticism of women, but also become vehicles for their demise, thus disciplining their bodies. The fear of the monkey remains as true in Hogarth as in Swift—Gulliver and the Yahoos, in particular—for the simian triggers not only an uncanny, out-of-place occurrence, but foreshadows the fall of humans. Indeed Rochester's laureling of the monkey furthers the visual imagery by which we

understand the unsteady, sandy foundation upon which human supremacy is erected. Hogarth, as *A Harlot's Progress* reveals, plays in that same sandbox.

Haywood's Seductive She-Monkey

Whereas Hogarth's simian signals the harlot's sexuality, Eliza Haywood repurposes the simian character as predominantly female, and thus participates in the tell-tale mediation of the whore/angel dichotomy. Haywood's simian embodies both a lewd figure and a protectorate of virginal young women—a distinct inversion of what Artemisia witnesses in Rochester's poem. Lubey contends that Haywood pioneers a mode of literary expression that doubles as sexual arousal: a process that enfolds form, content, and readerly audience (64–67). Extending Lubey's argument, in this section I explore how Haywood's literary eroticism is further mediated by the inclusion of the simian and reveals the boundaries of female desire, the aged body, and sexual violence. Simian sexuality here makes apparent the lamination of animality that accompanies the subjugation of the older woman's body, and thus allegorizes the simian body as both female and desirous—an admixture that demands censoring and bestial violation as checks for ostensibly wayward expressions of female sexuality. What are the effects, Haywood seems to ask, of a female monkey who cannot be tamed?

Readings of Haywood's *The Adventures of Eovaai* (pronounced “EE-oh-VAH-ee”) tend to read it as a political allegory for the calumnious attack on Robert Walpole and thus downplay its erotic, multispecies representations. First published in 1736 and met with polarization because of its thinly-veiled allegory, *Eovaai*'s volatile feather-ruffling of the Walpole administration is believed to have led to the five-year writing hiatus that followed for Haywood. But it is the recurrence of animal imagery and the unforgettable anecdote of Atamadoul, a woman

zoomorphically cursed into monkey form because of her sexual forwardness, that position it within the genealogy I am considering here.

Haywood's elderly woman has an insatiable lust that finds its rightful home in the simian body. Earla Wilputte notes that despite Haywood's reemergence in the eighteenth-century literary canon following second-wave feminism's recuperative efforts, *Eovaai* has received little critical attention, potentially because of its hybrid form, Orientalist and amatory leanings, political ramifications, and adamant proto-feminism (29).⁹ For Wilputte, it is the politicization of women's vulnerability that connects *Eovaai*'s interspersed "novels," or interpolated narratives, one of which is the monkey anecdote (30). The Atamadoul narrative reveals itself as a supernatural episode that depicts a woman/monkey hybrid as egregiously lustful but also self-sacrificial in that she offers her own virginity in order to keep *Eovaai*'s unmolested. Atamadoul as monkey aligns the simian figuration with femininity: specifically, a perverse femininity that is best defined by concupiscent passions, or what Christopher Loar calls "bestial—even savage—desire" (197). In *Eovaai*, this sexual *deviance*—etymologically, a turning away from social norms—is reserved for the elderly woman *cum* monkey, resonant with Kate's resignation in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* to the fact that, as the unmarried older sister, she will "dance barefoot at her [Bianca, her younger sister] wedding / And for your love to her lead apes in hell" (2.2.32–34).

Atamadoul's autobiographic oral history—"My Name, said she, is Atamadoul"—communicates a change in the narrative not only because of its fantastic occult leanings, but also because the third-person narration shifts to first, and thus endows the simian with voice (129). A proto-Cyrano de Bergerac, the once beautiful Atamadoul plays handmaiden to the youthful Princess Syllalippe, who is actively courted by Ochihatou, the powerful, passionate magician

who dedicates his life's work to both the occult and thereby the deflowering of naïve and impressionable virgins. In their prescience, Syllalippe's regal parents forbid her betrothal to Ochihatou, and Atamadoul, equally enflamed with desire for Ochihatou, arranges the lovers' tryst so that she can disguise herself and take the place of the princess she has been tasked to serve: "There was so little difference between us in shape and Stature, that a person less prepossess'd that it cou'd be none but herself who came to meet him, might have been easily deceived" (129). In an intertextual moment that resurfaces in M.G. Lewis's *The Monk* (1796), specifically the Bleeding Nun anecdote about which I have written elsewhere, Ochihatou steals the pretender away and, engorged with passion, removes her veil prematurely, only to discover, "instead of the young blooming Syllalippe,...the decayed, the wither'd Atamadoul" (130). It is one thing, Ochihatou implies with palpable misogyny, to be a woman, it is another (worse) thing to be an old woman.

Such a description of Atamadoul—decayed and withered—is an obvious reminder of her exclusion from the reproductive economy, and thus outside the limits of a heteronormative desire that mandates reproductive futurism. Cynthia Port, for example, in furthering Lee Edelman's thesis in *No Future*, views old age as a queer temporality that rejects heteronormative futures and desires given that the aged body encodes "the knowledge of eventual bodily failure and mortality" and is held accountable to the "demands of lineage and language and its relentless movements toward the (false) promise of meaning" (3, 18). Atamadoul cannot reproduce for this dark magician and thus is relegated to the realm of aged and repulsive detritus; she can have no place in the romance or marriage plot.

Haywood's monkey serves as a physical caution against women's lustfulness, and the demise foretold by deceitfulness, vanity, and impersonation. Incensed, and faced with a deceit more characteristic of his own actions, Ochihatou curses Atamadoul:

Thou Toad, cried he, thou Serpent, or if there be anything more loathsome, *that* shall be thy name—how darest thou add to the Mischief thou hast done to me, the Persecution of thy nauseous Love? . . . Coud'st thou imagine thy stale, thy fulsome Embraces, cou'd compensate for the Joys thou has deprived me of with the incomparable *Syllalippe*? Or, that I should ever be prevail'd upon to take a thing like thee into my Arms? No, all the Pleasure thou art capable of affording me, is the Gratification of my Revenge, which I will exercise in such a manner, as shall deter all Woman-kind from aiming at Delights they are past the power of giving. (Haywood 130–31, emphasis original)

In the Atamadoul anecdote we find a cautionary tale against lustful women who exercise desires and passions that seemingly unsex them. Verbal abuse is insufficient for Ochihatou who goes on to physically malign Atamadoul's body through a curse: "Thou shalt not die, said he, in shape of Body, what thou long has been in Mind: Then spit upon me and spoke some Words. . . I found my Tongue deprived of all articular Sounds, my Skin was covered with Hair, my Limbs contracted, and, in fine, my whole Person transformed into a Monkey" (131). The monkey metamorphosis is a pain worse than death in that Atamadoul's human form is sullied by her simian likeness, and her ability to vocalize her desires is foreclosed. The lascivious she-monkey, who cannot, in Loar's assessment, "restrain her untutored desire and lapses into amorality," must be curtailed (197). At the same time, the manipulation of her body suggests that, in her monkey form,

Atamadoul is even further removed from the anthropocentrism of heterosexual desire.

Atamadoul upsets this expectation, much to Ochihatou's frustration.

Atamadoul's degenerative, multispecies transformation reinforces the kinship she shares with Syllalippe and Eovaai, which sutures feminocentric bonds, even if they may be transmuted by animal metamorphosis. Ochihatou's curse carries with it an unquenchable lust that cannot be remediated by being turned animal. The hex thus intends to match Atamadoul's exterior with her interior, and serves as an admonitory threat to women who follow lustful suit. Ochihatou condemns Atamadoul: "For thy greater Curse, be still possess of those Desires thou ne'er canst gratify.—Love me with greater Violence than ever; and in, this Chamber, be witness of the Exstasies I shall indulge with others" (131). The punishment doled out is not only life imprisonment, but also a particular sadism, what Srinivas Aravamudan calls "the motif of sexual slavery," enacted by Ochihatou, which Atamadoul must undergo (224). She must bear witness to Ochihatou's sexual liberties with other women who cannot and will not be her. Just as scopophilia is implicated in the Hogarth engraving above, so too is this the case for Atamadoul whose punishment is to watch the man for whom she longs—she confesses, "I still languish in the most consuming Fires for my inhumane Persecutor" (132)—love others. Eovaai, the captive princess preordained to fall into the same trap as Syllalippe, is positioned as surrogate in this recreated sadistic performance.

Haywood's articulation of the simian, though short lived in *Eovaai*, ultimately represents Atamadoul as both an embodiment of erotic passion and the recipient of sexual violence. In a hellacious extension of her punishment, Ochihatou

causes a very ugly and over-grown Baboon to be brought into the Room to me,
which taking me for one his own Species, leaps upon me, caresses me after the

way of those Animals, till my Strength is wearied out with struggling; and, in spite of my Horror at suffering so detestable an Action, the Brute is sometimes very near taking an entire Possession of me. (132)

Atamadoul is thus perpetually threatened with a rape enacted by a Baboon—“Day after Day is the same shocking Scene repeated”—in a way that titillates Ochihatou, who “all this while laughing and deriding me with the most opprobrious Reflections; nor consents to relieve, but in order to renew my Affliction” (136). Throughout *Eovaai*, Ochihatou’s villainy is predicated on his magical manipulation and threats of sexual violence against princesses. Here, his villainy reaches greater heights in that he becomes the instigator and voyeur of bestiality. Atamadoul’s pairing with the baboon doubles the narrative’s simian affiliation. The baboon as punishment intends to meet Atamadoul’s lust with the lust of another simian. Ochihatou demands a perverse eye-for-an-eye to which he plays voyeur. In Haywood’s handling, the interspecies intimacies modeled by Atamadoul, Eovaai, and Ochihatou are framed as eighteenth-century modes of non-consensual BDSM.¹⁰

Atamadoul’s multispecies transformations—she again undergoes an animalized metamorphosis—attempt to censure her lustful desirousness, and yet, in Haywood’s narrative, these passions are ironically amplified rather than foreclosed. Threatened with rape, Eovaai finds a protector in Atamadoul, who plans to substitute herself for the former with a magical incantation (to be read by Eovaai). The two plan to momentarily change Atamadoul back into human form, thereby continuing the *Cyrano de Bergerac* thread, which here serves to protect Eovaai’s virginity while also allowing Atamadoul the passionate embraces for which she yearns.¹¹ Ochihatou returns to enact his coercive sexual violence, the substitutive plan unfolds, and the surrogacy is completed, but Eovaai forgets to repeat the magical words that will return

Atamadoul to her simian form, and instead, the trickery and entrapment performed by the two women is brought to light, literally. The victim of Ochihatou's sexual violence is not Eovaai but Atamadoul. Ochihatou, who is equally furious as when he was first deceived, punishes Atamadoul by *further* animalizing her: "Thou most detested Thing! be henceforward in the sight of all Eyes the most hateful of all domestick Vermin. With these Words, he took a little Wand out of his Pocket, with which having struck her on the Head, she immediately became a huge grey Rat" (136).

Ochihatou's furor that transforms Atamadoul into "the most hateful of domestick Vermin" presupposes that female lustfulness will be eliminated by rodent form. Lucinda Cole's *Imperfect Creatures* provides an overview of early modern conceptions of vermin, which position the rat centrally as a figure of contagion and also reproductive plurality. Ochihatou's punishment backfires in that Atamadoul as rat can now symbolically spread the lustfulness that characterizes her while also reproductively spreading these connotations in ways that only rodents can. The previous insults of "decayed" and "withered," thus, only concern Atamadoul's human form. Her rat form proves that she is neither decayed nor withered. The rat transformation likewise does not limit the simian sexual excess that *Eovaai* incorporates, but rather doubles down on an animalized sexuality that seems inborn in nonhuman species. The simian affinity in Haywood serves as a misogynistic reading of womanhood that intends to corral or expunge unchecked sexual desires—and with Haywood's proto-feminist leanings, this is likely tongue-in-cheek. At the same time, Haywood offers the elderly woman's association with the simian as, yes, a cautionary tale, but also as a way of making her the protector of another's threatened chastity. Haywood's rendering of Atamadoul thus registers what Felicity Nussbaum has called a "fiction of defect," a genre that "celebrate[s], refine[s], and counter[s] the prevailing construction

of femininity as deformity” (24). Simian sexuality in *Eovaai*, then, rewrites a besmirched understanding of female eroticism, which subtly reminds us how such lustfulness can be deployed and repurposed alongside the depiction of the animal.

***Evelina*'s Curious Incident of the Monkey**

[IMAGE 3: Mortimer's engraving]

Frances Burney's *Evelina* takes the fear of the monkey, tracked by *Eovaai*'s Atamadoul, and turns the simian into a tool of violence against the novel's archetypal fop, Mr. Lovel. This particular arrangement situates interspecies intimacies as a vehicle to discipline specific affects, genders, and modes of being. If Artemisia's drunken friend is jilted by the fop and turns her affections to the simian, then Burney spotlights the fop's comeuppance by way of simian intercession and continues the trope by which fop and monkey become interchangeable—as had been visually captured by the foppish, simian suitor in Hogarth's second plate. It is in *Evelina* that the feared brutal violence and its connection with an eroticism mapped onto the simian reaches its pinnacle. The monkey incident occurs at the very end of the narrative and takes up only a few pages, and yet immediately after it, the novel ends. John Hamilton Mortimer's 1779 etching of the moment—included in the fourth edition of *Evelina* and shown here—best illustrates the simian's feral introduction and unsettling attack of Lovel. Mortimer horrifically depicts the monkey with a frightful grasp on Lovel's head, teeth sunk in his neck, and with a murine-like tail. The moment is, according to Emily Allen, a “simian masquerade” that is simultaneously a “sadistic spectacle” (442), while Laura Brown contends that the monkey episode participates in the novel's discussion and deployment of the marriage plot (91–92). These observations aside, very few scholars consider *why* Burney might include this anecdote.

Burney's invocation of the monkey aligns it with the simian trajectory I have navigated, which instills a fear of interspecies penetration and mutilation—aspects that Mortimer details with crude barbarism. Burney emphasizes the role that the simian plays in forging non-normative intimacy through violence and also correcting, by way of humiliation and bodily harm, foppish behavior.

Burney's monkey exists in the same triangular vectors we have seen in the Hogarth engraving. In the final assemblage of characters, Captain Mirvan, the brusque sea captain who seemingly has a bone to pick with everyone, continues his excessive taunting of the fop, Mr. Lovel. Their mutual antagonism bespeaks a palpable sexual tension. To make a comedic spectacle of Lovel, Mirvan carts in the monkey: “And then to the utter astonishment of every body but himself [Mirvan] hauled into the room a monkey! full dressed, and extravagantly *a-la-mode!*” (399). Adding insult to injury, Mirvan dresses the monkey as Lovel as a means of rendering a visual doppelganger, as he suggests by exclaiming, “Fore George, ‘tis the same person I took for your relation!” (399).¹² Like our rival suitor in Hogarth's engraving who shadows the monkey, here too the fop becomes a substitute for the monkey man.¹³ Indeed, the novel repeatedly aligns the foppish macaroni with the monkey. For example, Burney's introduction of Lovel reveals this archetypal fop as a “creature” with a “malicious grin” who walks “on tiptoe,” which advances Hogarth's engraving of the escaping fop in *A Harlot's Progress* (35, 30). In another instance, Mirvan's critique of Lovel's inadequate masculinity reasons that “the men, [fops] as they call themselves, are no better than monkeys” (114). *Evelina's* attention to macaroni and monkeys thus relays an unsettling uncertainty as to what defines and engenders the animal.

The physical appearance of the monkey rather than its metonymic conjuring makes everyone afraid; this fright is not only due to the fear of the monkey, but also to the dramatic doppelganger theater that might, again, produce two monkeys rather than one.¹⁴ Simian doubling spurs additional anxieties and traumas: “Lady Louisa began a scream, which for some time was incessant; Miss Mirvan and I jumped involuntarily upon the seats of our chairs; Mrs. Beaumont herself followed our example” (399–400). Martha Koehler argues that *Evelina* reflects Burney’s denunciation of egotism as a perverse “monstrosity” riddled with self-adoration, vanity, and a lack of morality (29). Though Koehler’s analysis is not interested in the fop or the simian, I find such a characterization befitting of the Lovel-monkey interaction. Johnson’s *Dictionary* defines monster as “something horrible for deformity, wickedness, or mischief,” and Artemisia likewise aligns the monkey with the monstrous.¹⁵ Given that the monkey eventually maims Lovel, thereby rendering the fop as violable and disabled, the concept of monstrosity is apposite here—and, again, well captured by Mortimer. Although the monkey frightens most of the women, those who are not scared (and not aloft in chairs) come to appreciate Mirvan’s prank: “Mrs. Selwyn, Lord Merton, and Mr. Coverley, burst into a loud, immoderate, ungovernable fit of laughter, in which they were joined by the Captain, till, unable to support himself, he rolled on the floor” (400). The way the laughter is characterized here foreshadows the characterization of the monkey soon after: immoderate, ungovernable, and loud.

The laughter that fills the space extends to both the monkey and Lovel as fop, perhaps not mutually exclusive positions, as both become butts of the physically comic joke. Offended by Mirvan, Lovel strikes out at the monkey: “Poor Mr. Lovel, too much intimated to stand his ground, yet too much enraged to submit, turned hastily round, and forgetful of consequences, vented his passion by giving a furious blow to the monkey” (401). Lovel is incapable of fending

off his bully, Mirvan, and so attempts to annihilate the monkey (the means of the joke), out of both embarrassment and also out of the horror of simian similitude. George Haggerty notes that Burney's foppish characters "represent a dangerous breach of gender protocols" (250). The violence that Lovel exercises against the monkey (and vice versa) seems aligned with Haggerty's assessment of the fop as a "sexual aggressor" who Burney "demonize[s]" in order to render him a threat to female identity but also to pinpoint the fop's existence on the periphery of the novel (250). Haywood's *Atamadoul* offers a different take on the simian and its threat to female identity, yet in both we see the way the simian forges social and gendered corrections.

Though Haggerty's reading does not engage with the novel's simian closing, the sexual aggression and demonization of the fop is similarly aligned with the simian, which ultimately reflects a fop-simian elision at the end of *Evelina*. Put another way, Lovel must level his monkey interlocutor out of sheer frustration because his audience has spied the overlap that they share. Lovel touches first. In this way, Lovel enacts animal abuse in order to prove that his foppish, ersatz masculinity is effective and violent in ways that might intend to mimic Mirvan's particular genre of masculinity that preys upon foppishness. The irony is two fold: first, Lovel's self-defense/retaliation proves ineffective and thus proves Mirvan's smear campaign of ineffective, foppish masculinity and second, because foppishness is repeatedly aligned with animality throughout the novel, the attack and counterattack here reveal a layering of animal on those-rendered-animal violence. Put another way, the monkey-Lovel episode serves only to muddy and confuse mutually-informative representations of foppishness and animality. If foppishness is rendered as a passive, effeminate, and animalized-form of masculinity then, by *Evelina*'s purview, the simian represents modes of aggressive and violent masculinity that make messy the

concept of masculinity as something strictly anthropocentric. When animals attack, they likewise attack the novel's importation of masculine affects.

But the simian does not take the attack lying down, so to speak. Following the first blow, “[t]he creature, darting forwards, sprung instantly upon him, and clinging round his neck, fastened his teeth to one of his ears” (401). The monkey strikes back to respond to Lovel's attempt at erasure. Lovel cries out against what will be his permanent cicatrix: ““Oh heaven, what a monstrous wound! my ear will never be fit to be seen again”” (402). By literally scarring Lovel, this incident proves that the animal can fight back, while also demonstrating the simian's ability to mediate a homoeroticism—a Sedgwickian homosocial desire between Mirvan and Lovel that manifests by way of bullying, taunting, and thus nascent forms of school-yard flirting—that emerges from violent outpouring. The monkey, out of sheer self-defense, aggressively reacts and reciprocates the violent touch to which it was previously subject. Mortimer strikingly only shows the animal's feral penetration and not its abuse. But, as we see yet again, the simian trace leaves scars.

Unfortunately, the monkey cannot remain in Burney's narrative; its introduction and literary life must be short-lived, and its expulsion accompanies the reestablishment of more traditional, desirable presentations of masculinity, at least by the novel's purview. Lord Orville, Evelina's love and arguably our righteous hero, expunges the monkey from the scene: “Lord Orville: ever humane, generous, and benevolent, he quitted his charge [Evelina],...and seizing the monkey by the collar, made him loosen the ear, and then with a sudden swing, flung him out of the room, and shut the door” (401). Pointedly here, Evelina characterizes Orville as humane, but, clearly, humane actions only pertain to humans. Katherine M. Quinsey writes of the eighteenth century's reworking of the concept of humaneness that “the recovered definition of

‘humanity’ primarily to mean ‘humane’ in the emotional sense, privilege[d] compassion and sensibility, revise[d] the animal-human boundary through imaginative empathy, and link[ed] animal rights with human rights” (4). The monkey does not exist in such a human(e) realm and thus cannot be seen as an entity deserving of compassion, sensibility, or even empathy. We do not feel for this monkey, perhaps because of its enacted violence, and we are meant to applaud Orville for this righteous dismissal of the simian. Patricia Hamilton argues that it is Orville’s preordained status as masculine hero (what I read as an adamant heteromascularity) and rightful partner for Evelina that enables him to expel the monkey. For Hamilton, Orville ejects the monkey simply because he can, an ability that the others lack. Orville’s heteromascularity is equipped to inhibit the violent homoeroticism that might triangulate Mirvan and Lovel with the monkey, while also expelling the simian (and fop with it) whose appearance and eighteenth-century characterization resonate with palpable eroticism.

The monkey’s ejection coincides with Lovel’s hyperbolic assurance of his imminent death (because of the simian) that relays another sexual valence. Lovel hyperbolizes, ““Oh I shall die, I shall die! Oh I’m bit to death!”” (401). This allusion to death connects to Lady Louisa’s fright upon seeing the monkey: ““take him away, or I shall die!”” (401). For Burney, then, the incorporation of the monkey into the larger narrative becomes the impetus for associations with death, perhaps even a *petite mort*, which blends pleasure, its temporality, and its erasure. While Lady Louisa may die of fright, Lovel must acknowledge his own untimely death because in Orville’s expulsion of the monkey Lovel too must symbolically die through expulsion. Burney’s monkey forges literary finality, which reveals that narratives like *Evelina* that include monkeys can only close—satisfactorily or not—with the expulsion of the penetrative monkey and

interspecies intimacy altogether. Interspecies intimacy is then the final obstacle to the heteronormative marriage plot's conferment.

Simian Sexuality Futures

[IMAGE 4: Bewick/Beilby's Oran-Outang]

By way of conclusion, I want to address the prospect of an intersectional direction for eighteenth-century critical approaches to the animal, specifically the simian, so as to imagine how these frameworks of sexuality and gender can likewise inform discussions of race, and blackness in particular. Take as one characteristic example Thomas Bewick's and Ralph Beilby's *A History of Quadrupeds* (1790), which makes visible an elision of animalized and racialized calculi. The image shown here envisions the "oran-outang," a particular bugbear for eighteenth-century audiences given the import of and attention received by Edward Tyson's *Oran-Outang* (1699).¹⁶ Tyson's, Bewick's, and Beilby's orangutans, read together, thus appear as long eighteenth-century bookends that realize the simian's twinned dangerous eroticism and racialized capacities. Despite the fact that Tyson's first-hand observation of the oran-outang/Pygmy reveals a species characterized by docility and juvenility, his *Oran-Outang* remains thoroughly saturated with interspersed anecdotes (rumors) of the simian's alleged affinities with blackness, Africa, and bestial violence. In a confusing natural history, Tyson suggests that the oran-outang immigrates to southeast Asia by way of Africa. Bewick and Beilby, almost a century later, spin a different, frightening tale that reifies the orang-outang's position as aggressor toward humanity and sexual violator of women of "Africa, Madagascar, Borneo, and some parts of the East-Indies":

The largest of the kind are said to be about six feet high, very active, strong, and intrepid, capable of overcoming the strongest man; They are likewise exceedingly swift, and cannot easily be taken alive. They live entirely on fruits and nuts, will sometimes attack and kill the negroes who wander in the woods, and drive away the elephants that happen to approach too near the place of their residence. They sometimes surprise the female negroes, and carry them off into the woods, where they compel them to stay with them.-----When taken young, however, the Oran-Outang is capable of being tamed, and rendered extremely docile. (Bewick and Beilby 390)

The 5 en-dashes, which I read as an extended caesura, following the implication that women of color are both abducted and raped by orangutans, function as a series of narrativized, horrified gasps. (Tyson’s anecdotes likewise corroborate the rumor that oran-outangs murder black individuals: “They go many together, and kill many Negroes that Travel in the Woods” [23]). The breathless remark formally indicated by the dashes stands in for not only the orangutan’s egregious sexuality but also the sublime description of the simian’s perceived ability to beset the human. Case in point: Bewick’s illustration of the orangutan, which while seated on bench and holding a walking stick assumes humanoid form. The similitude is uncanny; it was for eighteenth-century audiences discomfiting.

While neither Tyson nor Bewick and Beilby intend their “observations” to be humorous—at least not in the way that Artemisia’s epistle to Chloe might be or the simian doppelganger theater that concludes *Evelina*—the racist mythos that pairs women of color with the orangutan conveys another type of parody predicated on a colonial white supremacy that masquerades as hubristic knowledge production: women of color are *compelled* to remain with

their orangutan captors. The relationship between animality and race has not gone unexplored, and indeed, this elision is repeatedly conjured alongside readings of eighteenth-century simians such as Gulliver's Yahoos, who are commonly read as racialized bodies subjected to subservience and slavery through the imperial conquest of the Houyhnhnms. Bewick and Beilby make explicit this fiction and perpetuate a literary and natural history that, Gary Taylor reports, originates in an early sixteenth-century (uncorroborated) anecdote, authored by Antonio de Torquemada, wherein a Portuguese woman is raped by a great ape (31).

While these examples make evident an interspecies, racialized connection, I want to ask for a reconsideration of this animal-blackness overlapping, or at the very least an approach that directly engages a Black or Africana Studies or Critical Race Theory approach rather than entertaining obdurate histories of racist and anti-black slurs that categorize blackened bodies as simian ones. In *Afro-Dog*, for example, Bénédicte Boisseron convincingly argues that the conflation of animal and black (commonly associated with enslaved) suffering is a false analogue—these categories are basely incommensurate and in their comparison recreate “a perverted form of re-compartmentalization where the black is once again removed from the human species” (xiii). The black experience cannot be compared to the animal experience, and a commitment to re-visualizing this conflation seems to advocate for anti-black social violence. Conversely, Zakiyyah Iman Jackson's *Becoming Human* unsettles the analogues that Boisseron carefully dissects. Rather than gesturing towards incommensurability, Jackson argues that the relationship between animality and blackness generates “a critical praxis of being, paradigms of relationality, and epistemologies that alternately expose, alter, or reject not only the racialization of the human-animal distinction...but also challenge the epistemic and material terms under which the specter of animal life acquires its authority” (2). Whereas Boisseron articulates a

disavowal, Jackson invites us to dwell in the multivocal possibilities that such connections afford. It is in concert with Boisseron and Jackson that I invite eighteenth-century scholars to consider further, messier, and more complicated readings of interspecies intimacies, especially as they may inform constructions and deconstructions of identity, position, and subjecthood.

In “Animals of the Monkey Kind,” the preface to the simian engravings illustrated in *A General History*, Bewick and Beilby write, “We come now to the description of a numerous race of animals; consisting of a greater variety of kinds, and making nearer approaches to the human species” (387). In apes, they suggest, “we see the whole external machine strongly impressed with human likeness,” which, as we have seen, Burney plays up to uproarious drama (387). Baboons, on the other hand, are marked by their unbridled lasciviousness, as witnessed by Haywood’s Atamadoul incident. Monkeys more generally, Bewick and Beilby reason, are “full of frolic and grimace, greatly addicted to thieving, and extremely fond of imitating human actions, but always with a mischievous intention” (388). If we are to believe this observation of simian imitation—aping—then simian sexuality is not just a reading of maligned eroticism mapped onto the animal. The simian’s mischievous nature contorts, thwarts, and reworks anthropocentric and heteronormative eroticisms with both delightful and painful effects. And as the entanglement of queer and animal studies continues to evolve within eighteenth-century discourses, we may benefit from dwelling on examinations of these effects and how they may inform, reject, or diversify other notions of identity and subjectivity. In so doing, we can open realms by which eighteenth-century literature and art can mutually speak to powerful modes of subversive and monkeyed eroticism.

NOTES

This piece has long gestated and been taken on the road to many a conference. I am grateful to Elizabeth Heckendorn Cook, the anonymous reviewers, and the editors for their support and insights. Without Eileen Horansky's encouragement, Haywood would not appear here. Thank you.

¹ There are in fact two nearly identical portraits of Rochester that exist today, one of which is attributed to Huysmans and hangs in New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art and the other is allegedly anonymous and lives in London's National Portrait Gallery.

² See my essay, "Prime Mates: The Simian, Maternity, & Abjection in Brobdingnag."

³ Luciano and Chen employ "queer inhumanisms," to think with critical race, postcolonial, new materialist, and queer and trans studies and envision a necessary reconstitution of what determines the human and subjectivity alongside long histories of dehumanization, animalization, colonialism, and erasure. Alaimo, in conversation with Catriona Sandilands, likewise invokes the queer human-animal bond as an "emergent, agentive, and elusive" horizon for new materialisms to account for multispecies pleasures and epistemologies (42). And Govindrajan highlights "relatedness" as a critical term by which to assess the variegated affective registers that human and animal connections forge, which ultimately engender "partial connection[s] between beings who come to their relationship as unpredictable, unknowable, and unequal entities" (25).

⁴ For a reading of this engraving series and its connection with the history of prostitution, see Sophie Carter.

⁵ Frank Felsenstein observes that this plate features a Sephardic Jew, and notes that there is a deep history of eighteenth-century criticism that intends to uncover which historical Jewish figure Hogarth intends to mock here in anti-Semitic fashion.

⁶ Krysmanski suggests that Hogarth's use of the monkey in this plate is meant to (comically and in anti-Semitic fashion) imitate the Jew (318).

⁷ Felsenstein sees two monkeys as well but suggests that the Jew is "literally aped by the startled monkey, its visage contorted in the same direction as his" (53).

⁸ My interest in the relational triangle structure includes the simian, but this is uncommon. The relational triangle has mostly been theorized as a way of articulating anthropocentric affection between men (through women) or between women (through men). In *The Theater of Envy*, René Girard argues that male competition for female affection has the unintended consequence of obliterating the female love object and forging homoerotic desires between the rivals. Extending the visualization of the triangle, Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men* locates homosocial desire as a conduit for a male-male affection (homosexuality is her term) that is predicated on the objectification and deferral of the female love object. In misogynistic fashion, women become the means by which male bonds are strengthened and fulfilled.

⁹ Srinivas Aravamudan positions *Eovaai* within his trajectory of "enlightenment orientalism" in its recapitulation of the Oriental tale. Elizabeth Kubek aligns *Eovaai* with its political setting and argues that Haywood's proto-feminism participates in "a Patriot Whig agenda" (227).

Christopher Loar also reads *Eovaai* as a political allegory in which women are excluded from constitutional monarchy and female desire is simultaneously deprivileged.

¹⁰ Though outside the purview of this essay, I see a future of eighteenth-century sexuality studies as coming to terms with early modern BDSM cultures—a backdating of what Anne McClintock has done for the Victorian period in *Imperial Leather*. The animal’s placement within these frameworks may be especially fruitful.

¹¹ Jennifer Hargrave focuses on how diegetic language in the novel, and the incantation here specifically, reflects a sinocentricism that furthers *Eovaai* as Walpolean political allegory.

¹² Allen and I read this moment differently. Allen argues that Lovel, who is besieged by the simian and Mirvan, resembles Madame Duval, “the novel’s arch-masquerader,” thus connecting the simian with an emblem of satire (442).

¹³ Mortimer, instead, details the eerily identical body language of Mirvan and Lovel, which demonstrates their replicability rather than that of Lovel and the monkey.

¹⁴ John Hart’s “Frances Burney’s *Evelina*: Mirvan and Mezzotint” offers a beautiful art history of the novel’s illustrations, including a discussion of many artistic renderings that pair the fop or macaroni with simians.

¹⁵ Johnson’s use of “deformity” is best understood today as “disability,” which can open up new realms by which to read the animal—though outside the purview of this essay. For an investigation of how eighteenth-century disability and sexuality studies can mutually blossom, see Jason Farr.

¹⁶ This image is a near-identical replica of the oran-outang illustrated in George Edwards’s *Gleanings of Natural History* (1758). The sexual violence reported by *A History of Quadrupeds* is notably absent in Edward’s bilingual revelation of the “wild man of the woods.”

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