Comedy and Femininity in Frances Burney's *Evelina*

Yuko IKEDA

1. Introduction

Frances Burney (1752-1837) has been labeled as one of the conservative writers in the late eighteenth century fettered by the conventional conduct-book notion of propriety which requires young women to have such qualities as modesty, reserve, sensibility and prudence.[1] Burney's novels, however, entail "humour, warmth, and an essentially satirical mind" (Linda Goodhew 154), and even "violence and hostility" (Julia Epstein 5) under the cover of femininity. The image of conflicted women comes to the fore by the increasing feminist readings of her novels (Margaret Anne Doody 36-65, Julia Epstein 93-122, Kristina Straub 53-108, Rose Marie Cutting 519-530, Katharine M. Rogers 181-238). More recently, the studies with reference to her dramas (Barbara Darby 7-22), and the social context at the turn of the century (William Stafford 1-34) suggest the predicament of female writer: the dilemma of whether to abide by the social requirements of the period or to retain an independent mind as an author.

This tension is distinctive in Burney's first novel *Evelina: the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World* (1778). Burney herself admits, in the preface to the novel, publishing it "with a very singular mixture of timidity and confidence" (7). Incongruous force is at work with the romance plotline in which "a girl of obscure birth, whose only dowry is her beauty" (347), goes through "a thousand

disagreeable adventures" in "the thorny paths of the great and busy world" (116), and finally recovers her name and place in the society. Not surprisingly, the romantic plot involves a series of incidents and a wide variety of characters. Because the world in which Evelina was raised is completely different from the one she now enters, she is to be confronted with totally different views. Confusion and folly in the town illustrate farcical comedy, while grave tranquillity in the rural life represents femininity.

The main interest in this paper is to clarify how these two contrastive features coexist, and how anti-feminine elements of comedy such as violence, absurdity and laughter are incorporated into the novel without violating the moral code of propriety imposed on a young lady. The study will also suggest how this opposition corresponds with Burney's own lifelong struggle between public self-expression and private anonymity. Wishing her plays presented on stage, Burney remained a "nobody,"[2] a submissive daughter, secretly scribbling journals and letters for seventy years.[3]

2. Attachment to Comedy

Margaret Anne Doody demonstrates the impact of stage farce and the tradition of English comedy[4] on *Evelina.* Referred to as "a serio-comic novel" (Edward A. Bloom xxv), the novel is marked by the elements of comedy distinguished from the romantic serious plots. The flow of the romantic plot is sporadically interrupted by the noise of comic scenes. With Mr. Villars' didactic virtue and Captain Mirvan's violent laughter at two extremes, the sensitivity of such romantic figures as Evelina, Mr. Villars, Lord Orville, and Mr. Macartney is contrasted with the absolute folly seen in the figures of Madame Duval, Sir Clement, Mr. Branghton, and Mr. Smith.

Before analyzing the comic elements and their functions in

Evelina, let us have a look at how Burney, like many female novelists in this period, is involved in theatrical plays.[5] Burney's long-lasting predilection for comedy can be traced back to her early childhood. Burney's journal describes how she is interested in comedy even before reading novels: the frequent visits to the Drury Lane Theater with her family, amateur performance of popular comedies at home, and close relationships with actors like David Garrick (*Journals and Letters* 26-33, 42-44).

Soon after the publication of *Evelina*, Burney completed her first comedy *The Witlings* in 1779. Despite Sheridan's earnest encouragement to dramatize the play (*Journals and Letters* 110), the production of comedy was suppressed by her father and Mr. Crisp, his close friend and a substitute father. Their apprehension was that the play's vulgar nature was incompatible with female modesty.[6]

As an alternative measure to cope with patriarchal authority, Burney makes a compromise by incorporating comedy into the novel: submerging a public means of expressing absurdity in a private feminine mode of expression.[7] This integration is found even in her first novel, *Evelina*, with its copious farcical features, which can be traced back to her early involvement with theatrical comedy and juvenile farces. Ostensibly complying with her father's decision, Burney never loses her passion for comedy "the comic or grotesque"[8] during her lifetime and left nine dramatic manuscripts.[9]

Given the above-mentioned circumstances of propensity for drama, the characteristics of comedy in *Evelina* will be discussed. Outstanding examples of farcical elements are illustrated by Captain Mirvan's inexorable ridicule of and physical violence toward Madame Duval, and her furious retaliation. In the situation where he plots the breakdown of the coach, Captain Mirvan "burst[s] into a loud laugh" (65), seeing her "entirely covered with mud" (65). In a later scene,

Captain Mirvan's practical joke escalates into the intended assaults in which he disguises himself as a highwayman, dragging her from the coach and leaving her in a foul ditch:

> She was covered with dirt, weeds, and filth, and her face was really horrible, for the pomatum and powder from her head, and the dust from the road, were quite *pasted* on her skin by her tears, which, with her *rouge*, made so frightful a mixture, that she hardly looked human. (148; Italics original)

What is depicted before the reader is the horrible mixture of the dust, pomatum, powder, tears, and rouge. Madame Duval with her headdress, paint, and rouge embodies the grotesque representation of the stage dame, a transvestite. The author makes use of the conventional technique of farce, in which "the pantomime dame" is the object of mockery (Margaret Doody 51). Madame Duval's physical torture and her fury, and Captain Mirvan's laughter represent the violent comedy of horseplay or slapstick. Interestingly, Evelina's detailed description of Madame Duval's mishap ("her face was really horrible . . . so frightful a mixture . . . hardly looked human") invites the reader's laughter rather than sympathy.

Furthermore, Evelina's reaction to Captain Mirvan's brutal raillery reveals her divided self. The act of appealing to male authority crosses the boundary of female propriety, as Mrs. Mirvan advises Evelina to be careful because "it is sometimes dangerous to make requests to men" (152). However, feeling sympathetic toward Madame Duval and irritated by the Captain Mirvan, Evelina dares to dissuade his violence herself: "I was fearful of making him angry, and stammered very much, when I told him, I hoped he had no new plan for alarming Madame Duval" (153). Captain Mirvan bluntly rejects her request as "officiousness" (153), which confirms the

difficulty of female self-expression in patriarchal society. Paradoxically, however, Evelina finds it hard to hold her laughter when told of Madame Duval's attack: "Though this narrative *almost compelled me to laugh*, yet I was really irritated with the Captain, for carrying his love of tormenting . . . to such barbarous and unjustifiable extremes" (150).

Accordingly, violence and laughter give animation to the novel as comic relief from Mr. Villars' didactic moral as well as from the winding romance plot.[10] Moreover, the use of theatrical images and conventions, as Nachumi suggests, "undermine[s] conduct-book definitions of female nature" (Nora Nachumi 3). Taking advantage of comedy, a female writer transgresses the code of propriety and has the freedom to laugh. Audrey Bilger regards comedy of Burney, Edgeworth, and Austen as a means to "promote a feminist message" (219), because it is used "not only as an entertainment, but also as a strategy for coping with life's difficulties" (Bilger 33). Violent comedy in her novel serves as vent for self-expression for the quiet heroine under the mask of laughter.[11]

Besides Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval, Evelina's adventure leads her to encounter a series of vulgar comic figures including the Branghtons, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Brown. It is worth noting that a bundle of follies are represented within the framework of the epistolary novel, in which majority of letters are written by Evelina editing her adventures for Mr. Villars, who restrains comic farce with grave admonition. This structural device enables the smooth shift of mood with multiple viewpoints; Evelina's seemingly artless letters[12] show a marked contrast with Mr. Villars' didactic admonition. Moreover, even within Evelina's letters, the perspective shifts frequently: there are often cases where episodes are, set free from Evelina's viewpoint, represented as in dramatized farce. As a

consequence, what is disclosed before the reader is a "masculine" mode of comedy wrapped up in the "feminine" epistolary mask (Doody 48). This structural pattern with multiple viewpoints facilitates the switch of mood from femininity to comedy.

For example, take the scene which depicts Mr. Branghton's ignorance of public manners in opera. After Evelina's ironic introductory narrative, "If I had not been too much chagrined to laugh, I should have been extremely diverted at their ignorance of whatever belongs to an opera" (90):

> Mr. Branghton then enquired the way to the gallery and, when we came to the door-keeper, demanded what was to pay.
> "The usual price, Sir," said the man.
> "Then give me change," cried Mr. Branghton, again putting down his guinea.
> "For how many, Sir?" said the man.
> "Why—let's see,—for six."
> "For six, Sir? why you've given me but a guinea."
> "*But* a guinea! Why how much would you have? I suppose it i'n't half a guinea apiece here too?"
> "No, Sir, only five shillings."
> Mr. Branghton again took up his unfortunate guinea, and protested he would submit to no such imposition. (90; Italic original)

Speech form changes gradually from indirect speech to direct speech with a reported clause, then to full dramatization without a reported clause, and to narration, indicating a shift of viewpoint, from Evelina to characters, and back again to Evelina. The temporal absence of the narrator brings about a short farce within a novel. Mr. Branghton's absurdity in a dramatized part comes to the fore by Evelina's private comment colored with irony: "his unfortunate guines" and "such imposition." Unlike the Captain and Madame Duval's slapstick, the comical effect in this case is caused by the intermixture of the

different sense of value and distance between the narrator (Evelina) and the characters.

Similarly, Evelina's satirical comment on the Branghtons and Mr. Smith is demonstrated in the scene where they knowingly ask Evelina if she has been to some famous public places:

> "Pray, Cousin," said Mr. Branghton, "have you been to Sadler's Wells, yet?"
> "No, Sir."
> "No! Why then you've seen nothing!"
> "Pray, Miss," said the Son, "how do you like the Tower of London?"
> "I have never been to it, Sir."
> "Goodness!" exclaimed he, "not seen the Tower!—why may be you ha' n't been o' top of the Monument, neither?"
> "No, indeed, I have not." . . .
> In the course of this *catechism*, many other places were mentioned, of which I have forgotten the names; but the looks of surprise and contempt that my repeated negatives incurred, were very diverting. (187-88; Italic original)

After showing a lengthy dialogue on their exaggerated surprise and contempt, Burney covertly inserts the heroine's ironical comments such as "catechism" (italicized) and "very diverting" in her letter, as if representing the audience's reaction while watching the play. As seen in the previous example, the use of direct speech functions as a farce distinguished from the succeeding tart satire and covert criticism in her letters.

3. Femininity and Tranquillity

The eighteenth-century conduct books for women impede female self-expression, because their main purpose is to create the women as the objects of male desire. John Gregory, for instance, strongly recommends women to retain such features as modest reserve,

retiring delicacy, blush, and silence as female virtues (Vivien Jones 14, 45-6). Silence and blush are especially distinctive features embodying Evelina's femininity.[13] In many public places, Evelina, exposed to men's devouring gaze, is often lost for words. Evelina's trepidation and silence trigger a burst of laughter from men, as seen in the following scene where Evelina is lost in Vauxhall:

> I was *frightened exceedingly: our screams were answered with burst of laughter. . . .*
>
> *Terrified to death,* I struggled with such vehemence to disengage myself from him . . . and with a swiftness which *fear only could have given me, I flew rather than ran up the walk. . . .*
>
> In a moment, both my hands, by different persons, were caught hold of . . . when I ran next; while the rest of the party stood still and *laughed.*
>
> *I was almost distracted with terror,* and so breathless with running, that *I could not speak. . . .*
>
> And then, taking my willing hand, he led me off amidst *the loud acclamations, laughter, and gross merriment* of his impertinent companions. (196-97)

Taken for a prostitute, Evelina is "terrified to death" and "almost distracted with terror" by male mockery and solicitation, which is followed by another suitor, Sir Clement. Evelina, as a passive sufferer in a "precarious situation" (Zonitch 39) has to escape from men's harassment, because chastity of the nameless "sexual prey" (Newton 51) is constantly threatened.[14] Too much terror often deprives Evelina of words.

Terrified silence is caused not only by men, but also by male-like women: Madame Duval "terrifies [her] to death" with the proposal of recovering Evelina's birthright and inheritance by law. "[E]xtreme consternation" and "surprise and terror" leave her temporarily speechless:

> It would be *impossible for me to express my extreme consternation,* when thus unfolded her scheme. *My surprise and terror were equally great. I could say nothing; I heard her with a silence which I had not the power to break.* (121)

Together with terror, embarrassment also causes Evelina's silence. Unaccustomed to social manners and making blunders, Evelina often blushes silently with a variety of emotions, as seen distinctively in her conversation with Lord Orville. In a situation where she is at a loss how to clear Lord Orville's misunderstanding about her relationship with Mr. Macartney without disclosing his secret, she just "colour[s] violently" (299) and "could not speak" (299).[15] In place of words, colouring reflects her confusion and her feminine sensitivity regarding caring about Mr. Macartney.[16]

Besides implying embarrassment and sensibility as seen above, the silent blush also functions as silent criticism toward other people: "Indeed, the continual wrangling and ill-breeding of Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval, *made me blush* that I belonged to them" (58). As Burney is well aware that outspoken frankness is not proper for the conduct-book requirement of a young lady, she uses bashful docility for her heroine as a means of self-expression, by which Evelina can be faithful to her own feeling without transgressing the social rule as well. When Sir Clement tries to seduce her in his chariot, Evelina is "so terrified" and "quite silent" (99). Later, for Sir Clement's excuse for what happened, Evelina describes: "For my part, I only *coloured,* for though I would not forfeit my word, I yet disdained to confirm a tale in which I had myself no belief" (100). The female blush connotes not only femininity, but also a silent resistance to irrationality.

The trait of silence as indicative of Evelina's femininity should be analyzed with reference to the overall structure of the novel. As

illustrated in the previous chapter, the comical elements, departing from Evelina's narratives, are sometimes presented as in a dramatized farce. However, the opposite force is also at work. In the epistolary framework, the violence of subversive force is more likely to be suppressed, and the noise be distanced when Evelina reports them to Mr. Villars through her feminine eyes.

Moreover, in the Evelina-Villars correspondence, Mr. Villars' reply pulls the reader from the noise of vulgar comedy back to the world of tranquillity. Mr. Villars' letters are full of grave admonition, which repeatedly warns her not to lose tranquillity in the turbulent world: "My heart trembles for your future *tranquillity*" (55), "secure your own *tranquillity*" (130). Evelina's behavior in the clamorous society is constantly checked whether proper or not by Mr. Villars' moral standard, which also represents the prevalent social decorum. Because Mr. Villars, just like Burney's father, is mentor in the patriarchal society, his consent is paramount for a submissive daughter.

However, Evelina's journey in the town, as has been seen above, is packed with noise and physical disruption, and takes the opposite directions from tranquillity. In spite of Mr. Villar's anxiety, Evelina breaks not only his tranquillity, but also hers: "when restored to Belly Hill, I should be restored to *tranquillity*: far otherwise have I found it, for never yet had *tranquillity* and Evelina so little intercourse" (255).

Meanwhile, Mr. Villars repeatedly exhorts Evelina to regain tranquillity, emphasizing that restoration of tranquillity is vital for her: "I dared hope it might itself contribute to the restoration of your *tranquillity*" (309) / "his sight is baneful to your *repose*, his society is death to your future *tranquillity*!" (309). Considering the fact that Evelina cannot restore peace even in Berry Hill, rural

quietness no longer affects her mental tranquillity. The loss of tranquillity is deeply rooted in her mental disturbance caused by her relationship with Lord Orville and some misunderstanding between them ("the heaviness of heart," "the uneasiness," "the depression of my spirits," and "the melancholy" [254-55]). Evelina wavers between "act[ing] with uprightness and propriety" (336) and being faithful to her own feelings: "my feelings are all at war with my duties; and, while I most struggle to acquire self-approbation, my peace, my hopes, my happiness,—are lost!" (336). Likewise, a lovelorn mind fluctuates between "perturbation" ("All my perturbation returned at the sight of him!" [281]) and "tranquillity" ("your happy Evelina, restored at once to spirits and tranquillity" [278]).

4. Self-Expression of an Independent Mind

Evelina's position is in danger of deteriorating as she is handed from the care of Mrs. Mirvan to "ungovernable" Madame Duval with "total ignorance of propriety" (163), and her vulgar company. Living without reliable protectors in turmoil of society, however, enables Evelina to judge by herself, which contradicts the social requirements demanding women to "accept conclusions offered by an authoritative voice" (Poovey 18).[17] Confronted with their follies, Evelina's statement is more liable to be tinged with her critical messages. There are occasional boldness and bitter satire incongruous, or even deviating from her feminine traits such as timid silence, blushes, and downcast eyes. At the Branghtons, she finds: "[t]he dinner was ill-served, ill-cooked, and ill-managed. . . . However, the most disagreeable part of our fare was, that the whole family continually disputed whose turn it was to rise, and whose to be allowed to sit still" (174-75).

Evelina casts a critical eye on the Branghtons' noisy disturbance and unsophisticated manners. In visiting Vauxhall with her vulgar

company, she overtly laments: "had I been with a *party less disagreeable to me*, I should have thought it a place formed for animation and pleasure" (193). As for Sir Clement's repeated solicitation, Evelina's reaction shifts from timidity and muteness to direct rejection: "You are much mistaken.—Your suspence, your doubts, your perplexities,—are of your own creating" (198). Sir Clement is shocked at her overt repudiation of his offer: the disparity between "haughtiness" (199) of her attitude and "sweetness" (199) of her appearance. His comment suggests that Evelina is no longer a silent angel, but a woman who can judge and act by herself according to her independent mind.

Likewise, Evelina's unfavorable feeling against Madame Duval is modestly implied in her letters: "I should have said, that our party consisted only of Captain, Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, as Madame Duval spent the day in the city:—*which I own I could not lament*" (105). In a later scene, Evelina openly defies Madame Duval's plot of marrying her to the younger Branghton: "this proposal restored all my courage; and I frankly told her that in this point *I never could obey her*" (252).

The moment of self-judgment and extreme transgression from femininity is found in the scene where Evelina prevents Mr. Macartney's attempted suicide: "Wild with fright, and scarce knowing what I did, I caught, almost involuntarily, hold of both his arms" (182) / "I had most painfully stifled, in a violent burst of tears" (183). Though the violent action implies bravery and self-determination, it is also mixed with feminine passivity, "a violent burst of tears." The intermixture of contrasting elements illustrates the heroine's mental disturbance.

In restarting her journey from Berry Hill to Bristol with Mrs. Selwyn as her chaperon, Evelina is in a critical state of melancholy

neither with tranquillity of mind nor with lively spirits. Though appearing rather late on the stage of the novel (in the third volume), Mrs. Selwyn plays a key role for the recovery of Evelina's name and spirits: letting Sir Belmont recognize his daughter, and marrying her to Lord Orville. Mrs. Selwyn is different either from the farcical Madame Duval, or Mrs. Mirvan who represents conventional femininity and submission.[18] Despite Mr. Villars' reluctance to commit Evelina to her, it is not the delicacy of Mrs. Mirvan but the masculine reason of Mrs. Selwyn that promptly unravels the entangled problems and leads Evelina to have an independent mind.

Evelina is, however, rather critical of Mrs. Selwyn, ironically rejecting her unwomanly manners and "her want of gentleness" (268): "[Mrs. Selwyn] is *extremely clever; her understanding, indeed, may be called masculine*; but unfortunately her manners deserve the same epithet" (268). This is because Selwyn is a female trickster who is privileged to speak her opinion freely, and mock unreasonable silly men instead of Evelina whose manners are restricted by the social code that women should value "feeling and sensibility rather than reason" (Jones 5). Mrs. Selwyn is classified, together with Mrs. Delvile and Mrs. Arlbery in the later novels, as one of Burney's female rebels who "functions as an eighteenth-century satirist" (Cutting 522). As to men's insulting opinions about women: "what the devil a woman lives for after thirty?" and "how in the world can you contrive to pass your time?" Mrs. Selwyn replies dryly:

> "In a manner that your Lordship will think very extraordinary," cried Mrs. Selwyn; "for the young Lady *reads*." (275; Italic original)

Mrs. Selwyn's ironical retort identifies the act of reading with female autonomy. Likewise, men's "insuperable aversion to strength, either

of body or mind, in female" (361) is openly retaliated by her with bitter sarcasm:

> "It has always been agreed," said Mrs. Selwyn, looking round her *with the utmost contempt, "that no man ought to be connected with a woman whose understanding is superior to his own.* Now I very much fear, that to accommodate all this good company, according to such a rule, would be utterly impracticable, *unless we should chuse subjects from Swift's hospital of idiots.*" (361-62)

Though her volubility and propensity to ridicule often torture Evelina,[19] Mrs. Selwyn treats Evelina "as an equal" (294), and uses her reason to help Evelina judge by herself. The scheme of adopting a marginal figure as a rebel shows, as Juliet McMaster calls, the author's "covert feminism" (McMaster 237).[20] Evelina is apparently, at least, less positive in supporting Mrs. Selwyn's raillery, while the author, giving "the freer scope to her raillery" (382), applauds her irony from the backstage.

5. Final Remarks

The intermixture of contrasting elements is one of the characteristic features of *Evelina*: noise and tranquillity; laughter and blushes; raillery and embarrassment; and the town and the country. Laughter in comedy functions as a gust of fresh air in the stifled didactic gravity in romantic plots. Evelina's journey is also explicated as her emancipation from the harness of moral oppression. In exchange for losing tranquillity, Evelina not only recovers her name and place in society, but also gains self-expression and an independent mind.

Burney gives Mrs. Selwyn the role of a rebel who binds the two worlds, the world of comedy and that of femininity, and disentangles

the problems with her masculine understanding and playful raillery. The quality of laughter, however, is different between Mrs. Selwyn and the Captain Mirvan: the former indicates wit and satire, while the latter vulgar farce. Mrs. Selwyn gives free rein to her satire instead of the heroine who cannot overtly violate the values of her society.

With the strategy of incorporating the comic elements into the private form of epistolary novel, comedy and femininity are well balanced, lest the subversive elements violate the limit of propriety. Conversely, the author's ironical comments can be integrated unobtrusively behind the cover of comedy. It is also assumed that this structural scheme of opposition unveils the author's own internal dilemma between submission and self-assertion.

Notes

1. See Poovey 3-47. As for Burney's relation to conduct books, see Hemlow 732-61.
2. Burney was afraid of her name being made public even after anonymous publication of *Evelina* (*Journals and Letters* 86-89). At the beginning of her journals, she declared to write to "nobody": "To Nobody, then, will I write my Journal!" (*Journals and Letters* 1). The act of scribbling itself could be regarded as anti-feminine activity: at the age of fifteen, Burney made a bonfire of her juvenile manuscripts for fear of her stepmother's accusation. An interesting discussion on "female namelessness" is found in Cutting-Gray 9-31.
3. All the quotations from Frances Burney's *Evelina* are taken from *Evelina: or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World.* Ed. Edward A. Bloom (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1968). All the italics are mine except when noted.
4. Doody points out the impact of Samuel Foote's two plays, *The Minor* (1760) and *The Commissary* (1765) and, Colman's *The Deuce Is in Him* (1763) on *Evelina* (Doody 48-49).
5. According to Nachumi, "at least 45 or almost 30% of the 156 women novelists published between 1760 and 1818 were playwrights, actresses or closely associated with someone who worked in the professional theatre" (Nachumi

2). See also Schellenberg 1-26.

6. It is also supposed that the satirical nature of comedy enrages Mrs. Montagu, the central figure of the Blues (Doody 93).
7. It is pointed out that Burney's novels are always preceded by her unsuccessful dramatic works, just as the romantic plot in *The Witling* is preserved in the following novel, *Cecilia*. See Anderson 1-20.
8. *Journals and Letters*, Introduction xviii.
9. Out of nine dramatic manuscripts, the only play actually performed on stage one night, *Edwy and Eliva* (1795), ended in failure. As for the situation of female playwrights in the late eighteenth century, see Donkin 132-58, Wallace 55-74, and Chisholm 82-99.
10. Bloom states that "[the] credibly comic dialogue and actions soften didactic intention. Human imperfections . . . are more assimilable than superhuman virtues" (Introd. to *Evelina*, xxix).
11. Among the completely ridiculous scenes are the poor old women's footrace (311-12), and the Captain's setting monkey in the room to mock Mr. Lovel (399-400).
12. Epstein argues that Evelina is carefully selecting and editing what she recounts to Villars, demonstrating that Evelina's letters to Maria, her close friend is different in tone and style, with "their style colloquial and forthright, their tone unstudied" (100).
13. "In 1778," when *Evelina* was published, "silence was still the most attractive quality in women and the notion of modesty" (Epstein 118).
14. A similar example of escaping from man's chase is seen in a situation where she is lost in Marybone-garden (233-35).
15. Other examples: "I coloured violently, and made an effort to recover it" (46) / "I had blushes at the unexpected politeness of Lord Orville" (286) / "cried I, abashed, rather than elated by his condescension" (304).
16. The bodily reactions reflecting mental states are often connected to "the cult of sensibility" in the turn of the century (Gorman 127).
17. An example of contemptuous attitude toward women is found in the scene where Captain Mirvan compares women with "a set of parrots," for, the Captain states, "[women] all say the same thing" without knowing their own minds (109).
18. Straub asserts that Mrs. Mirvan is "a fictional embodiment of courtesy-book patience" (59).
19. With Mrs. Selwyn's frequent raillery, Evelina does no more than blush and colour: "She delivered the message with an archness that made me blush" (324) / "She looked at me with a significant archness that made me colour" (329). See also Gillooly 43-51.
20. Unlike Jane Austen's some heroines with "unconventional assertiveness and spirit," Burney, as Rogers argues, "isolat[es] these qualities in disapproved characters" (328).

References

Bilger, Audrey. *Laughing Feminism: Subversive Comedy in Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen.* Detroit: Wayne State UP, 1998.

Burney, Frances. *Evelina: or the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the World.* Ed. Edward. A. Bloom. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1968.

---. *The Witlings and the Woman-Hater.* Eds. Peter Sabor and Geoffrey Sill. Broadview Literary Texts, 2002.

---. *Journals and Letters.* Eds. Peter Sabor and Lars E. Troide. London: Penguin, 2001.

Chisholm, Kate. *Fanny Burney: Her Life 1752-1840.* London: Chatto & Windus, 1998.

Cutting-Gray, Joanne. *Woman as "Nobody" and the Novels of Fanny Burney.* Gainesville: UP of Florida, 1992.

Cutting, Rose Marie. "Defiant Women: The Growth of Feminism in Fanny Burney's Novels." *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900* 17.3 (1977): 510-30.

Darby, Barbara. *Frances Burney Dramatist: Gender, Performance, and the Late-Eighteenth-Century Stage.* Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1997.

Donkin, Ellen. *Getting into the Act: Women Playwrights in London 1776-1829.* London: Routledge, 1995.

Doody, Margaret Anne. *Frances Burney: The Life in the Works.* New Jersey: Rutgers U P, 1988.

Epstein, Julia. *The Iron Pen: Frances Burney and the Politics of Women's Writing.* Wisconsin: U of Wisconsin P. 1989.

Gillooly, Eileen. *Smile of Discontent: Humor, Gender, and Nineteenth-Century British Fiction.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1999.

Goodhew, Linda. "Conflicted Women in the Novels of Fanny Burney." *The Annual Collection of Essays and Studies* 50 (2003): 149-72.

Gorman, Anita G. *The Body in Illness and Health: Themes and Images in Jane Austen.* New York: Peter Lang, 1993.

Jones, Vivien, ed. *Women in the Eighteenth Century: Construction of Femininity.* London: Routledge, 1990.

Hemlow, Joyce. "Fanny Burney and the Courtesy Books." *PMLA* 65 (1950): 732-61.

Hodgson Anderson, Emily. "Staged Insensibility in Burney's *Cecilia*, *Camila*, and *The Wanderer*: How a Playwright Writes Novels." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 17.4 (2005): 1-20.

McMaster, Juliet. "The Silent Angel: Impediments to Female Expression in Frances Burney's Novels." *Studies in the Novel* 21.3 (1989): 235-52.

Nachumi, Nora. "Acting Like a 'Lady': British Women Novelists and the Eighteenth-Century Stage." *Romanticism on the Net* 12 (1998): 1-4.

Newton, Judith. "*Evelina*: or, the History of a Young Lady's Entrance into the Marriage Market." *Modern Language Studies* 6.1 (1976): 48-56.

Poovey, Mary. *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelly, and Jane Austen.* Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1984.

Rogers, Katherine M. *Femminism in Eighteenth-Century England.* Chicago: U of Illinois P, 1982.

Schellenberg, Betty A. "From Propensity to Profession: Female Authorship and the Early Career of Frances Burney." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction* 14.3 (2002): 1-26.

Stafford, William. *English Feminists and their Opponents in the 1790s: Unsex'd and Proper Females.* Manchester: Manchester UP, 2002.

Straub, Kristina. *Divided Fictions: Fanny Burney and Feminine Strategy.* Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1987.

Wallace, Tara G. "Burney as Dramatist." Ed. Peter Sabor. *The Cambridge Companion to Frances Burney.* Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007.

Zonitch, Barbara. *Familiar Violence: Gender and Social Upheaval in the Novels of Frances Burney.* Newark: U of Delaware P, 1997.