“Casting Off Powder:” The Death of the Powdered Wig and Birth of British Sartorial Modernity, 1795–1812

“Leaving off powder- or- a frugal family saving the Guinea.” James Gillray, 1795. National Portrait Gallery.

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Abstract

This thesis explores the macrocosmic effects of the Duty on Hair Powder Act (1795) on the culture of clothing in Great Britain from 1795 to 1812, a period of rapid sartorial democratization. This Act resulted in the loss of aristocratic hegemony over dress and accompanying social mores- a profound *Sartorial Revolution*. Though the French context of sartorial democratization has been thoroughly investigated through the research of Daniel Roche in *The Culture of Clothing* (1994), such research is embryonic in the British context. As of yet, there has been no cohesive or systematic attempt to address (what I have termed) the British Sartorial Revolution, despite strong evidence which suggests that this phenomenon did occur around 1800, a fact that is often mentioned in passing by cultural historians. This study seeks to seal this scholarly void by analyzing the effects of the Duty on Hair Powder Act through the lens of the *Parliamentary Debates,* pamphlets, satires, and caricatures of the age to trace a rapid and profound shift through which the powdered wig was abandoned, as well as through an analysis of the changing cultural context which enabled this alteration to take place. Though this process of abandonment was initiated through an overtly political Act, its aftereffects were mainly social in nature. It is demonstrated herein that the Act, which was a covert sumptuary law and attempt by the aristocracy to re-manifest social differences, resulted in a serious and unexpected backlash from their social inferiors, including the unrestrainable realignment of middling class masculinity and respectability. Rather than accepting their deprivation of dignity by begrudgingly accepting the status quo, in which the aristocracy unilaterally dictated interclass sartorial modes, the middling classes collectively mobilized to redefine their social and sartorial codes to openly conflict with those of the upper classes. This shift rendered the upper classes un-masculine and un-respectable in the opinion of their inferiors. This initially resulted in a crisis in both masculinity and respectability due to rising contestation caused by the redefinition, which was gradual and ununiformly adopted, which resulted in social destabilization due to the resulting intraclass and interclass sartorial contestation. At first, many members of the upper classes refused to conform to the budding social codes to resist what they perceived as a middling usurpation of social codes. However, many progressive (and typically younger) aristocrats quickly adapted. As the upper classes increasingly embraced middling sartorial customs, this increasingly resulted in the reversal of sartorial norms. Accordingly, middling class emulation of their superiors was replaced with a paradigm in which the upper classes imitated their inferiors, who had effectively monopolized their influence over fashion by 1800. This reversal seriously bolstered the cultural capital held by the middling classes while damaging that of the aristocracy by decreasing their marginal propensity for social distinction and influence over fashion. In the end, this collective resistance resulted in the financial emasculation of the Act and delegitimized the conservative political agenda of William Pitt in the eyes of the common man, all whilst denying the aristocracy their ability of respectable social differentiation by painting them as treasonous, effeminate, Frenchmen.

Keywords: Duty on Hair Powder Act, Respectability, Masculinity, Manifestations of Social Difference, Material Culture, "Sartorial Revolution," Sumptuary Law, Symbolic Dress, Politicization.

Introduction- The Great Male "Un-Powdering"

Entering Sartorial Modernity

As the MINISTER hath undressed, by his hair powder tax, the heads of nine-tenths of the good people of this country- [he] cares not a sixpence for the heads of all the hairdressers in the kingdom.[1]

The year was 1795- On the Fifth of May, a notorious law entitled the Duty on Hair Powder Act was passed at the demand of Prime Minister William Pitt the Younger. According to this Act, anyone who wished to adorn hair powder was required to annually pay one guinea for the privilege to do so.[2] The legislation was ostensibly passed to fund the ongoing struggle against France in the Revolutionary Wars, as well as to curtail the effects of a severe wheat crisis.[3] Hair powder was a commodity that was pervasively and obsessively consumed throughout British society on the eve of the Act's implementation, serving as a fashionable accoutrement used to sanitize, stiffen, and whiten one's wig or natural hair. Powder use before 1795 was almost immeasurable, with the British populace collectively consuming (at the very least) 18,250,000 pounds of powder per year.[4] With this pervasiveness in mind, a pamphleteer named Trevor Jackson amusingly remarked in 1800 that Jonathan Swift might have allegorically described the English "as a people who wear three-penny loaves on their head, by way of ornament" prior to the implementation of the Duty on Hair Powder Act.[5] However, in accordance with the prophecy of the anonymous "Roundhead" presented above, the Act changed everything. Powdered wigs faded into unfashionable obsolescence within a few years of the Act's introduction, which was manifested through the collective un-powdering of the British populace.[6] If Jonathan Swift were resurrected in 1812, the end-date of this study, he would not have encountered a "three-penny loaved" people, but rather an "undressed" populace that wore short, cropped hair. This was a society that had undergone a complete sartorial transformation of nothing less than revolutionary proportions in less than twenty years, likely the fastest and perhaps most profound sartorial transformation in history.[7]

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[1] Roundhead 1795, p. 4.
[2] Barrister 1795, pp. 43- 59.
[3] However, as will be discussed in great detail, there were numerous covert motivations for which this Act was passed.
[4] Jackson 1800, p. 223. With a loaf of bread weighing about one pound, the amount of powder consumed was equivalent to about 18 million loaves.
[5] Jackson 1800, p. 223. "Three-penny loaves" were a type of bread sold in the market.
[6] Dowell 1884, p. 257
[7] Roundhead 1795, p. 4. The profoundness and speed of this transition can be easily observed in the comparison of portraiture between 1795 and 1812, both individual and collective. In a portrait from 1793 of parliament, every single member can be observed wearing a powdered wig. By contrast, in a portrait from 1809, only a half-dozen members can be observed in powder. In addition to the changing hairstyles, general fashion also experienced a remarkable transformation simultaneously. Brocades, lace, and stark colors were increasingly abandoned in favor of simple trousers

This thesis explores the proverbial twilight of powder consumption in Great Britain. Though this work cannot claim to be all-encompassing, it will delve into a peculiar and relatively unexplored microcosmic case study to assess macrocosmic social and political alterations in British society between 1795 and 1812. Though the understudied nature of a topic is never an intrinsically worthy reason for pursuing its study, comprehending the causal mechanisms behind this sartorial shift is valuable for understanding fundamental and macrosocial cultural shifts and social altercations that were concurrent with, and perhaps even direct consequences, of the Act. Britain's collective un-powdering is a peculiar case study through which profound alterations to British society that were ongoing during the centurial crossover may be studied. These changes ultimately served as a socio-cultural transition that bridged the gap between early modern and modern Britain.[8] During this period, the aristocracy's monopolistic hegemony on social, political, and sartorial culture was questioned on a large scale for the first time, causing this hegemony to fail.[9]

As deliberated by Daniel Roche's 1994 book entitled *The Culture of Clothing*, the Sartorial Ancien Regime was defined by its powdered wigs and ornate clothing, styles which were laden with aristocratic associations. However, ostentatious and ornate hairstyles and clothing lost ground to short hair and plain, somber, and dark clothing during the later 18th century, which allowed for less stark displays of power.[10] Though Great Britain, fortunately, escaped a violent revolution akin to that of France, it will be demonstrated herein that the effects of the Duty on Hair Powder Act on the social, economic, and political were profound enough to constitute a *Sartorial Revolution*. This revolution was characterized by a diminished aristocratic influence over sartorial culture, while the importance of the middling classes in disseminating fashion and setting trends increased markedly.[11] Sustained adherents to the "old style" of the 18th century, typically members of the upper class, faced increasing ridicule, collective emasculation, loss of respectable status, and political authority.

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and dark tops, which were unostentatious by comparison. Additionally, there was an increasing dichotomy between male and female clothing during the period of study, which had been fairly convergent during the entire Long 18th Century.

[8] Though the end of early modern Britain has been dated to 1783, 1789, 1820, or 1832, to name a few standard dates, it is posited herein that the Duty on Hair Powder Act would usher in "sartorial modernity," a process completed by 1812, the year at which this piece ends.

[9] Roche 1994, p. 58. Politically, there was a noticeable decrease in aristocratic hegemony to the benefit of the non-elite. The increasing political importance of the non-elite can be traced to at least three fronts, including the increasing proportion of middling members of the House of Commons, decreasing the House of Lords' legitimacy in relation to the House of Commons, and eroding privileges afforded to the aristocracy

[10] Roche 1994, pp. 100-106, 142.

[11] McNeil 2018, p. 220.

Historical Context: The Historiography of Wigs and Powder

To facilitate the discussion of the powdered wig's demise, it is necessary to briefly discuss its origin, societal permutation, and social function in 17th and 18th-century society. Though wigs were worn in Europe since classical antiquity, they reached a new height (both figuratively and literally) during the second half of the 17th century. Though possibly apocryphal, it was claimed by multiple 18th-century writers that the wig emerged as a cultural icon when Louis XIII adopted one to hide his baldness and forced the nobles in his entourage to do the same to avoid "singular" embarrassment.[12] Long, curled, and divided into two parts by an arched peak, the 17th-century wig was an exaggerated imitation of a popular hairstyle known as the "Cavalier Style," which was popularized by soldiers during the Thirty Years War, also developing independently in Great Britain during English Civil War.[13] From France, the wig spread throughout Europe via French dignitaries, reaching Great Britain during the reign of Charles II, after which it swiftly permeated the ranks of the aristocracy.[14] During the 17th century, wigs were extremely costly, and could therefore only be afforded by the most affluent.[15] Wigs were a much desired "positional good," affording its wearer status, masculine respectability, and authority.[16]

Due to the status that wearing a wig furnished its wearer, it is unsurprising that the diminishing cost of wigs in the 18th century resulted in its widespread permutation throughout the middling classes, a social group positioned immediately below the gentry, a large group, with considerable in-class income differences.[17] This social group encompassed shopkeepers, educators, petty administrators, farmers, lawyers, tradesmen, clergymen, doctors, military professionals, as well as numerous other occupations.[18] By the 1750s, most of its members owned wigs, earning them respectability while

[12] Kwass 2006, p. 642.
[13] The term is derived from "Cavaliers," a sobriquet for the supporters of King Charles I, who typically wore their hair long. By contrast, the "roundheads" was a nickname for the Parliamentarians, so-called because their cropped hairstyle gave their head a rounded appearance.
[14] Stewart 1782, p. 87. An interesting fact is that more developed European countries adopted the powdered wig earlier than their less-developed counterparts and were faster to shed the wig than less developed nations. A notable exception to this general rule is Great Britain, which adopted the wig later than other Western European nations and retained it longer. It is possible that this was caused by antipathy toward France. Accordingly, they adopted the wig later than other nations for reasons of sartorial nationalism, a notion that may also explain why they retained the wig. Given that France abandoned the powdered wig in conjunction with the French Revolution, Britain may have retained the wig longer to distance themselves from the sartorial culture of France, being one of the latest European countries to cease using powder.
[15] Stewart 1782, p. 87.
[16] Kwass 2006, pp. 643, 651.
[17] The 18th-century wig was much smaller and simpler than its 17th-century counterpart, a fact which certainly aided in its affordability.
[18] French 2000, pp. 277-293.

differentiating them from the lower classes, who could not afford wigs.[19] Elites were undoubtedly concerned about the proliferation of the powdered wig, which removed their functionality as a delineator of class-based social difference.[20] During this same period, the powdering of wigs came into fashion.[21] Though initially serving as a means of disinfecting and delousing wigs, the powdering thereof quickly became fashionable, with wigmakers and clientele alike believing that it positively enhanced its wearer's physiognomy, while mimicking the color of the most expensive wigs. By contrast, unpowdered wigs were deemed dirty and a sign of poverty, delinquency, and rakishness from 1750 onward.[22]

However, with the passage of the Duty on Hair Powder Act (1795), the connotations associated with powdered wigs diverged markedly from those of the earlier part of the "long 18th century" from social, political, and economic standpoints. While "polite" respectability and masculinity throughout the preceding period were manifested through the ubiquitous, cross-societal wig and powder use, this was no longer the circumstance after the Duty on Hair Powder Act's imposition. After 1795, sartorial practices were increasingly split between those who chose to abandon the powdered wig and those who retained them, many of whom continued to wear them into the 1810s. Within the upper classes, the decision to abstain or continue to wear powder initially hinged on political rationale. Conservative elites who supported the war against France and the Pittite regime largely continued to wear powdered wigs.[23] On the other hand, progressives, those considered "radical," and individuals otherwise opposed to William Pitt were likely to discard the powdered wig. Besides those with overtly political intentions, those who feared that the consumption of powder was deviating much-needed grain from the poor

[19] Kwass 2006, pp. 634, 640, 643, 648. There is some evidence that even some members of the lower classes wore powdered wigs, though these were typically old and low-quality secondhand wigs. Additionally, as indicated by the Old Bailey records, wigs were very commonly stolen, though the thief was more likely to re-sell it than keep the wig for personal use.

[20] Roche 1994, p. 142; Barrell 2006, p. 203. Unlike in much of Europe, powdered wigs were still widely worn in Great Britain on the eve of the Act, possibly as a vestimentary reaction against the revolutionary fervor sweeping through Europe. In Britain, wigless(ness) and unpowdered hair were still regarded as a physical manifestation of radicalism, criminality, poverty, uncleanliness, and rakishness. Powdered hair, by contrast, was viewed as an embodiment of respectable, royalist loyalism and conservatism.

[21] For those who could not afford to wear wigs, the powdering of natural, long hair was deemed acceptable. Until a stamp duty was imposed, this was affordable to upper-level members of the working classes. Similarly, members of the lower classes may have powdered their hair on occasion until this stamp duty was instituted, in 1786. It is likely that powder and powdered wigs decreased in popularity in conjunction with this duty, as it financially disincentivized the use of powder. However, this decrease was slight in comparison to what was observed when the Duty on Hair Powder Act was implemented.

[22] Festa 2005, p. 53; Kwass 2006, p. 653; Stewart 1782, p. 87. Wigs were also powdered for a brief period in the late 1660s, when it was believed that powder prevented the spread of plague, given the fear amongst wearers (such as Samuel Pepys) that the hair was poached by plague victims.

[23] Iremonger 1970, p. 43.

during the starvation period of 1794-1796 were also likely to discontinue using powder.[24]As the Duty on Hair Powder Act required continued powder users to pay a guinea for the privilege, much of this division was based upon class, as the certificate became unaffordable to many members of the middling classes. As it was considered "detestable" to wear an unpowdered wig, these individuals simply cropped their hair in protest, which would quickly result in a reformulation of middling respectability and masculinity in a manner that strongly conflicted with those of the upper classes. [25] This fact severely destabilized the existing social order, and perhaps even public order.

The powdered wig regained its status as a "positional good" during the period of study due to the financial barrier resulting from the Act, though its positionality was only reinstituted in an imperfect sense. Older and politically conservative members of the upper class were the most common holdouts, particularly amongst the politically involved, who wore powder for ideological reasons. Additionally, domestic servants, public servants, and ecclesiastics continued to wear wigs and hair powder and were often required to do so. These groups were initially joined by merchants and tradesmen, who wore powder for the maintenance of decorum, though this necessity faded rapidly after 1795 due to the redefinition of social codes of behavior.[26] As such, the powdered wig became a positional good once more after 1795, though only in an *imperfect* sense. While wigs and hair powder remained part of standard decorum for *some* segments of society, others abhorred the continuation of their use for a wide variety of reasons- political, economic, social, and sartorial. In this sense, the powdered wig could perhaps be considered a uniform in the post-1795-era.[27] Increasingly abandoned by those who did not have an occupational, social, or political motive for adorning a powdered wig, the wig would increasingly serve to identify servants- literal servants, public servants, and the figurative servants of Pitt and the conservative cause. To date, there has been no coherent attempt to analyze the widespread socio-political effects of this Act, which served to reshape the social fabric of Great Britain through its effect. This thesis will attempt to close this gap through an examination of the Duty on Hair Powder Act concerning its effects on sartorial culture and social norms from 1795 to 1812.

(The terms "wig," "powder," and "powdered wig" are closely related categories of terminology herein. The wig was an accoutrement intended to resemble natural hair, worn for its stylishness and convenience. From 1750 forward it was typically worn with powder to constitute the "powdered wig,"

[24] Moser 1795, p. 9.
[25] Moser 1795, p. 4.
[26] Festa 2005, p. 82.
[27] Maxwell 2014, p. 102

with an unpowdered wig considered "detestable" by commentators.[28] However, hair powder could also be worn on one's natural hair, a phenomenon that increased in popularity from the late 1770s forward.[29] These terms are sometimes difficult to separate due to their close interrelation, though their use throughout this study will depend on context.)

William Pitt and the Pittite Conservatives- Revolution, War, And Repression

The era of study should be regarded as one steeped in the values of Pittite Conservativism, named after the faction's founder, William Pitt the Younger. William Pitt was prime minister from 1783-1801 and then again from 1804-1806. In 1806 he passed away due to a peptic ulceration, which was probably caused by his heavy alcohol consumption. The Pittite Tories were a severely conservative faction, and primarily represented the interests of the aristocracy, while they exhibited disdain toward the impoverished through their unwillingness to reform poor laws. Their contempt for the poor stemmed from the preconception that the poor were typically responsible for their own poverty due to laziness or vice and were thus "undeserving" of relief.[30] The Pittites were supportive of the royal prerogative to dismiss and appoint ministers, and usually believed in the divine right of kings, and were thus wary of constitutionalism.[31] This last point was particularly worrisome and displeasing to the Whigs, the ideological opponents of the Pittites. The Whigs were a large and ideological diverse party who were unified under the belief that the rights of the monarchy ought to be limited by the Bill of Rights of 1689, which heavily restricted the monarch's authority by transferring its legislative and executive power to parliament. The Whigs were particularly resentful of William Pitt due to the fact that he was appointed by the king as Prime Minister in 1783 as a direct result of George III's illegal dismissal of the Fox-North ministry.[32] They believed that this action undermined the Bill of Rights, providing a slippery slope for a return to absolutism, a fear which was justified, given the inherent instability of parliamentary systems during the early modern era.[33]

William Pitt's ministry was largely defined by the financial fallout caused by the American Revolution, as well as the military, financial, and ideological struggles resulting from the French

[28] Moser 1795, p. 4.
[29] Barrell 2006, p. 148.
[30] Evans 2006, p. 97.
[31] Leonard 2020, p. 156.
[32] Leonard 2020, p. 158. Though Pitt's administration was dubbed the "mince pie" administration by his opponents due to the expectation that his rule would not last beyond Christmas, these assessments turned out to be grossly incorrect, with Pitt's premiership proving to be one of the longest in British history.
[33] Only ten years earlier, a bloodless coup ended the Age of Liberty in Sweden, when King Gustav III seized power and dismantled the parliamentary system.

Revolutionary Wars and subsequent Napoleonic Wars.[34] The French Revolution caused an ideological infiltration of French revolutionary values in Great Britain, which posed a threat of igniting revolution through contagion in Britain. Resultingly, conservative landholders, including most of the Pitt ministry, became increasingly concerned that revolution would spread to Great Britain, posing a serious threat to the lives and livelihood of the landed elite.[35] By his supporters, William Pitt was viewed as "the pilot who weathered the storm, the national leader of a moral crusade against the military power and socio-intellectual menaces of revolutionary France."[36] However, by his opponents, William Pitt was regarded as a despotic and arch-conservative usurper and puppet of George III who expanded the power of the monarchy at the expense of the parliamentary system, while infringing on the personal freedoms of the inhabitants of the kingdom.[37]

While Pitt's foreign policy was largely aimed at curtailing the power of France through open warfare, his domestic response intended to curtail endemic revolutionary fervor was marked by despotic oppressiveness. In the same year that the Duty on Hair Powder Act was instituted, Pitt passed two pieces of legislation that were regarded as tyrannical by society at large. These were comprised of the Seditious Meetings Act and the Treason Act, which were passed after a mob attacked the king's carriage en route to open the parliamentary session of 1795.[38] According to the Seditious Meetings Act, "any description of persons, exceeding the number of fifty persons shall be holden [on suspected treason] unless notice of their intention to hold such a meeting" was granted in advance by the local magistrate or officeholder.[39] This Act was ostensibly passed to prevent radical groups from meeting to conspire against the state, and effectively resulted in the suspension of "freedom of assembly." The Treason Act was met by even more discontentment, as it stipulated that any individual who:

> Imagine[ed], invent[ed], devise[d], or intend[ed] death or destruction, maim[ing] or restraint, of the person of our sovereign lord the King, his heirs and successors, and such imaginations, interventions, devises or intentions, or any of them, shall utter or declare, by publishing any printing or writing, or by any overt act of deed, legally conceited upon the oaths of two lawful and credible witnesses upon trail, or otherwise conceited or attained by due course of law, then every person and persons to as aforesaid offending shall be deemed, declared, and adjudged to be a traitor or traitors, and shall suffer pains of death as in cases of high treason.[40]

[34] For our purposes, this includes the War of the First Coalition, War of the Second Coalition, War of the Third Coalition, War of the Fourth Coalition, and War of the Fifth Coalition.
[35] Leonard 2020, p. 164.
[36] Mori 1998, 234.
[37] Caddell 1790, p. 8; Leonard 2020, 165.
[38] Bugg 2013, p. 21.
[39] Seditious Meetings Act 1795, p. 2.
[40] Treasonous and Seditious Practices Act 1795, p. 2.

The Treason Act rendered the definition of treason so vague that almost anyone who opposed or questioned the state in any way could be prosecuted under the statute.[41] Though this Act was primarily aimed at curbing radicalism, it severely restricted "freedom of speech" and "freedom of press," given that the notion of "imagining" the king's death was so vague that any statement or rendering considered vaguely anti-monarchical or even ministerial was prosecutable.[42] The combined effect of the "Two Acts," as they were often called, was also the suspension of habeas corpus and due process. The Acts allowed authorities to indefinitely arrest and detain those they believed to be radical without a formal indictment.[43] However, these Acts were highly effective in that they largely drove radicalism underground, thereby decreasing political turbulence at the expense of individual liberties as well as the ability of progressives to institute or advocate for reform.[44] According to the Whig leader Charles James Fox, the result of these Acts was that "any person advocating a measure of parliamentary reform…was liable to arrest under its provisions."[45] As such, these Acts were an invaluable instrument to the Pittites by enabling them to stifle attempts by the Whigs to reform parliament or implement new laws, thereby considerably increasing their own political power.

After the death of William Pitt in 1806, the Pittites retained their power unchallenged until the assassination of Spencer Perceval in 1812. The premierships of Pitt's immediate successors were marked by a continued adherence to the ideological values of William Pitt.[46] Though the status of William Pitt "reached the proportions of near deification" after his death in the conservative sphere, by the mid-1810s, the memory of Pitt and political influence of the Pittites began to fade.[47] Thus, an era of conservative rule dominated by the landed gentry, which supported increased powers for the king, opposed Catholic Emancipation and suffrage for non-elite men and viewed anything resembling parliamentary reform as radicalism came to an end.[48] In lieu of what was essentially an aristocratic oligarchy, a more reform-minded parliament increasingly replaced the Pittites during the 1810s, a trend which would later culminate in the Catholic Emancipation Act (1829) and the Reform Act (1832),

[41] Barrell 2000, pp. 30, 46.
[42] Barrell 2000, pp. 30, 46, 191, 215.
[43] Leonard 2020, p. 57.
[44] Leonard 2020, p. 61.
[45] Leonard 2020, p. 57.
[46] Christie 1982, p. 283.
[47] Sack 1987, pp. 631, 638. This had much to do with the fact that the ideological adherents of Pitt were dying during this period, with influence shifting towards Lord Liverpool.
[48] Leonard 2020, p. 156.

both of which extended suffrage to most middling men, previously barred from voting due to land-holding requirements.[49]

Painting of Spencer Perceval, The Last Prime Minister to Adorn a Powdered Wig, by George Francis Joseph, 1812. Public Domain.

Research Question and Aims

This thesis seeks to answer the following overarching research question:

"How did the Duty on Hair Powder Act alter the social and political fabric of Great Britain from 1795 to 1812, and how were these changes manifested sartorially?"

To answer the central question, the following aims will be fulfilled:

1. Compare the intended and actual consequences of the Act in relation to how social differences were manifested.
2. Determine how hair powder was politicized through the Act and how this politicization served to propel political polarization through the manifestation of political differences.
3. Establish how the Act led to the contested realignment of masculinity amongst the middling classes, the upper-class reaction to this trend, and the resulting effects on social order.
4. Assess the macrocosmic consequences of the Act in relation with relation to social order and democratization.

Herein, the year 1812 is regarded as the symbolic end of powder use, as Spencer Perceval was the last Prime Minister to wear powder, which he adorned due to his ideological adherence to Pittite

[49] Evans 2006, p. 61; Aidt and Franck 2015, p. 506, 510.

conservatism.[50] When the Earl of Liverpool succeeded Spencer Perceval as prime minister, he discarded the powdered wig along with the severe conservativism of the Pittite Era, ushering in an era of (relative) progressivism and reform to the benefit of the middling classes.[51]

Theoretical Perspectives

The theoretical lens of this study is constructed through the application of the theoretical principles of Katrina Navickas, François Furet, Daniel Roche. In addition, this thesis features an assortment of frameworks relating to the issue of masculinity, given that relevant research is nascent and somewhat sporadic. This study is strongly rooted in cultural history, material culture, and social history, and seeks to answer the research question presented above by focusing on the concepts of respectability, masculinity, manifestations of social difference, and politicization as its primary analytical categories.

As argued by Katrina Navickas, clothing in the 18th century was politically and symbolically significant and used as a routine means of protest and ideological display. Clothing served as an "optimum means of public communication," used to enforce, reinforce, propel political ideology, and signal adherence to a specific set of beliefs.[52] As will be demonstrated herein, many of the early abandoners of hair powder, such as Charles James Fox and the Duke of Bedford did so to protest Pitt's war against France, and the despotism of the Pittites. The renunciation of powder was not only an attack on the Pittites in particular but also aristocrats and aristocratic idleness and exuberance in general.[53] Accordingly, an antipathy to the conservative policies and conspicuous consumption habits of Pitt's supporters led to the sumptuary renunciation by their political opponents. Abstaining from hair powder emasculated Pitt's government by subverting Pitt's ability to profit from the Act, and thereby diminished his ability to fund the war effort against France. In stark contrast to the Pittites, who adorned hair powder for ideological reasons, Whiggish members of parliament (MPs) adopted somber uniforms and cropped, unpowdered, hairstyles. For instance, Charles James Fox and his supporters wore blue colors from 1782 onwards in a supposed emulation of George Washington's regiment, likely to demonstrate their opposition to the American Revolutionary War, and began to crop their hair from 1795 forward.[54] In comparison to the powdered wigs and fine attire worn by the Pittites, the blue coats and unpowdered hair worn by the Foxites were plain, serving as an

[50] Given Perceval's relatively young Age during his premiership, it is unlikely that he wore powder due to reasons of fashion. It is thus posited that he did so for political reasoning.
[51] Hilton 1988, p. 149.
[52] Navickas 2010, p. 541.
[53] Festa 2005, p. 75
[54] Navickas 2010, p. 544. Such vestimentary displays of allegiance are seen today as well. For instance, Democratic legislators in the United States typically wear blue ties, the party color. By contrast, Republican legislators wear red ties.

unostentatious badge of political alignment, and signified progressivism and a commitment to the lower and middling classes.[55]

This study embraces the revisionist tradition of François Furet, which rejects the view posited by Karl Marx, which suggests that the French Revolution was caused by a class conflict between the bourgeois and aristocracy. Conversely, Furet argues that the French Revolution was a political phenomenon that elicited social consequences rather than a social revolution with political consequences, as posited by Marx and Marxist historians.[56] Furet expounds on his argument by noting that the Revolution was initially an intraclass political struggle between elites, rather than an interclass conflict.[57] Herein, it is argued that a conflict between political ideologies served as the primary causative variable for the de-wigging and un-powdering of the British upper classes, initiated by the political elite as a form of protest against the war against France. The political conflict manifested itself in "wigless-Whigs" and "powdered Tory's," and played a critical role in the outcome of this Act. Due to the influence of these elites, short, cropped hair acquired a level of acceptance that allowed it to permeate the territory of common fashionability.[58] In line with Furet's argument, a political struggle between members of the aristocracy, rather than one between classes, was the initiating variable for this sartorial shift that discarded powder. However, that is not to say that class struggle was unimportant in this case, as the wish of conservative members of the upper class to differentiate themselves from the middling classes was either a strong motivator or welcome consequence of the Act.[59] Notwithstanding the political origins of this un-powdering, debates surrounding hair powder should nevertheless be regarded as an issue of both politics and class. However, in this context, the eventual realignment of middling respectability and masculinity of middling masculinity was foremost the social feedback that resulted from an overtly political issue, rather than vice-versa, as Marxists would argue. It was a direct rebuttal against the political power of the aristocratic hegemony: the fact that the refutation of aristocratic power was manifested through social change nevertheless demonstrates the interconnectivity between politics, society, and culture. Similarly, the decision of

[55] In the 1770s, Charles James Fox wore blue hair powder, though he had abandoned hair powder in its entirety by the later 1790s. Although British prime ministers continued to wear wigs until the assassination of Spencer Perceval in 1812, ending with the assassination of Spencer Perceval, other members of the upper classes, notably the Prince of Wales and Duke of Bedford, refused to do so.
[56] Furet 1981, pp. 14, 19.
[57] Furet 1981, p. 51.
[58] London Chronicle, September 26, 1795, p. 2.
[59] This was because the Duty on Hair Powder Act acted as a financial barrier, preventing the middling classes from continuing to adorn hair powder. By contrast, the cost of a hair powder certificate was a mere trifle for the upper classes, thereby enabling them to continue to wear hair powder, thus outwardly manifesting social differences.

members of the conservative upper class to cling to the values of polite masculinity and polite respectability was ultimately an attempt to maintain political power. The conflicting and contested forms of respectability and masculinity that arose from the Act were simply the outward manifestations of a vie for power where politics, class, and society were inextricably linked. This interconnectivity is likened to the "Möbius Strip" by Lynn Hunt in a study adhering to Furet's position.[60]

This study adheres to a bourgeoning historical tradition that argues that the social construct of masculinity underwent a profound transformation during the late 18th century, greatly reshaping its associated attributes. Works in this field by Karen Harvey, Ann Towns, Chris Mounsey, and Phillip Carter will feature prominently to construct a fused theoretical model. Though masculinity and femininity were strongly convergent throughout the long 18th century, Karen Harvey convincingly argues that the fear that men were becoming "domesticated," or "co-dependent" resulted in a backlash against the existing continuum of masculine-feminine behavior in the late 18th century. There were fears that women's power was growing in both the political and domestic sphere, and that they were beginning to usurp patriarchal authority. This, men believed, was caused by the fact that men were becoming feminized. Thus, a perceived crisis of masculinity caused men to reassert their authority by distancing themselves from domestic affairs, women, and qualities associated with women and effeminacy during the late 18th century. This resulted in the rise of distinctly separated socio-behavioral spheres between men and women: domestically, socially, and sartorially.[61] Resultingly, the "polite gentlemen," the archetypal model for masculinity for most of the 18th century, was feminized during the 1790s. The fear that patriarchal authority was being usurped by (increasingly dominant) women forming the bedrock of this transition.[62] As such, politeness was progressively effeminized, and was increasingly associated with the French, which undoubtedly aided in its erosion as a masculine trait, as Frenchmen were typically viewed as feminine in Great Britain.[63] While the wig was viewed as a masculine accoutrement of polite culture before the 1790s, it was feminized concurrently with polite masculinity, given the association between the two. It is apparent that the Duty on Hair Powder Act

[60] Hunt 1984, p. 13. Based on the applied theory derived from Navickas and Furet, the changing socio-political status of powder could be viewed as a microcosm for profound social alterations in British society as a whole that were slowly disintegrating aristocratic hegemony in favor of more democratic norms, a trend that was manifested by the increasing proportion of middling members of the House of Commons, decreasing legitimacy of the House of Lords concerning the formerly mentioned, and a decrease in privileged afforded to the aristocracy.
[61] Harvey 2012, pp. 4, 9, 17. Harvey 2012, p. 4.
[62] Towns 2014, p. 438.
[63] Cohen 1996, p. 9.

aided this process, given that wearers were increasingly upper-class individuals, while the Act forced members of the middling class to construct their own masculine identity, which they had failed to do throughout much of the 18th century, due to a strong junction between aristocratic and middling behavior and dress.[64]

The Tradition of Daniel Roche

The theoretical model posited by Daniel Roche in *The Culture of Clothing: Dress and Fashion in the Ancien Régime*, which focuses on the sartorial history of France between the 17th and late-18th century, is reutilized throughout this thesis through the large-scale reapplication of his model to the British context. According to Roche, the nobility consumed clothing and other goods to distinguish themselves from their social inferiors, as well as compete with members of their own class. Roche notes that "fashion was a point of equilibrium between the collective and the individual, a way of marking the social hierarchy, both fixed and mobile."[65] The mobile nature of social hierarchy fueled constant sartorial competition, in both the interclass and intraclass context, which caused constant innovation to outpace one's rivals. Initially, innovation and emulation were a trickle-down phenomenon, with the middling class aping their social better.[66] However, throughout the 18th century, this top-down relationship faded. Middling class individuals could increasingly purchase the same sorts of clothing as the aristocracy due to both increased incomes and decreasing prices. Resultingly, interclass manifestations of social difference became a mere question of quantity and quality in the sartorial sphere.

This usurpation of aristocratic fashion amongst the middling classes alarmed the nobility, who felt that the "natural order" was being perverted through a visual disturbance of the social order.[67] This fear triggered a conservative backlash that aimed to reinstitute fixed social differences, where sartorial choices were constrained by class.[68] In the end, such attempts failed, giving way to middling hegemony

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[64] Mounsey, 2013, p. 133.

[65] Roche 1994, p. 49; Veblen 1899. This notion comes from the tradition of Thorstein Veblen, which argues that conspicuous consumption by the upper classes fosters status, while their social inferiors sought to emulate such ostentatious consumption in an attempt to bolster their status by aligning themselves with the habits of the upper classes.

[66] Though the nobility was far better equipped to adhere to the latest fashions due to financial constraints. Additionally, the lower classes imitated the middling classes. In essence, the aspiration of every individual in this constant sartorial competition was to appear one class higher than they were in reality.

[67] Roche 1994, pp. 106, 115, 129, 142. Not only did the middling classes become more capable of purchasing fashionable goods, but their role as fashion "influencers" increased markedly.

[68] These attempts were accomplished through both moral campaigns against non-elite consumptions and sumptuary laws, which existed in France from the 13th century until 1789. By contrast, historians have claimed (incorrectly) that sumptuary laws were abolished in Great Britain by the 17th century. However, as will be argued herein, the Duty on Hair Powder was a form of sumptuary law. Other examples of 18th century sumptuary laws in Great Britain were the Dog Tax (1796) and Game Act (1796.) Incidentally, it appears that such legislation became much more common in Great Britain during the late 18th century than it had been during the rest of the "long eighteenth century.

over fashion and socio-cultural norms, which in turn increased their political authority.[69] In this context, it will be argued that the Duty on Hair Powder Act aimed to reinvigorate social differences between classes, with members of the middling classes disincentivized from wearing powder due to the increased financial burden of doing so. In short, the Act was a clandestine sumptuary law, a covert attempt by the aristocracy to reinvigorate their preeminence by depriving their middling counterparts of their dignity.[70] Just as in the French case delineated by Roche, it is argued herein that aristocratic attempts to maintain sartorial dominance failed on numerous fronts, with the Act serving as a watershed moment in the unraveling of aristocratic and sartorial hegemony.

This thesis also draws from Roche in arguing that the late 18th century featured divergent, competing, and conflicting notions of respectability and masculinity. Whereas middling and aristocratic interpretations of both respectability and masculinity were relatively homogenic during the earlier 18th century, this was no longer so by 1800. Instead, sartorial signs had diverged, and fashions diverged based on political views and class, in stark contrast to the hegemonic sartorial culture that defined both the middling and aristocratic orders throughout the 18th century, notwithstanding qualitative and quantitative differences.[71] It is argued herein that the increasing contestations and conflicts were caused by the redefinition of masculinity and respectability, which undermined the ability of powder to serve as *a respectable* status differentiator. This was because the bourgeoning negative connotations with powder caused large segments of the upper-class to abandon its use, once again blurring class boundaries and weakening "sartorial signs." Thus, if powdered wigs reobtained their status as a manifester of social difference after 1795, it was only imperfectly so, as large segments of the upper classes ceased to use them, undermining their unambiguous ability to render social status visible. Those who abstained from wigs and powder came to regard sustained users as effeminate, while those continuing to use these products raved against the supposed lack of respect and decorum of abstainers, which resulted in a crisis of respectability and masculinity, by which two competing standards existed in tandem for a brief period.

As will be demonstrated throughout this study, Roche's model is highly relevant to the British context. Consumption was increasingly democratized in the later 18th century due to the increasing role of the middling classes in determining the tenets of fashionability. In Britain, a rise in consumerism during the 18th century allowed middling members of society to consume in a manner

[69] Roche 1994, p. 517; McNeil 2018, p. 220.
[70] Roche 1994, p. 133
[71] Roche 1994, p. 375

hitherto impossible, challenging aristocratic sartorial dominance. According to the pamphleteer William Green, the influx of luxuries during the 18th century allowed "the meanest [class] of the present day [to ape] the luxuries of his superiors."[72] Green blames this phenomenon on "the vast extension of trade and commerce" which "produced an influx of riches" that were readily affordable and accessible to all but the poorest.[73] Thus, the "infection of luxury" spread throughout the middling classes, a phenomenon which Green dates to the reign of Charles I (1625-1649) and Charles II (1660-1685,) relatively coterminous with that of France.[74]

Due to the democratization of goods, the upper classes became frightened that a burgeoning middling sartorial practice was undermining the previously unchallenged aristocratic supremacy over the same, subverting their political authority and cultural relevance. British aristocrats were disgruntled by this middling "usurpation" of ostentation, which they believed was undermining their own status and preeminence, and attempted to disaffirm and illegitimate the democratization of fashionable goods. According to the gentry-born Eliza Haywood, "to a person of quality, nothing is more [infuriating] than to be obliged to yield precedence to one of an inferior birth."[75] Likewise, the aristocratic Edward Chamberlayne, secretary to the 1st Earl of Carlisle and tutor to Charles II's son, claimed that "the citizens, the country people, and their servants, appear clothed, for the most part above and beyond their qualities, estates, or conditions."[76] According to an epistle written to prime minister Robert Walpole, those of "low birth" were accused of incongruously and intentionally concealing their true status through sartorial displays, leading to the flourishment of "disputes of rank."[77] Thus, just as in the French case deliberated by Roche, British aristocrats were disgruntled by middling emulation due to its perversion of the social order they deemed natural.

In an attempt to reassert sartorial dominance, the upper classes passed sumptuary laws, attempted to outdo their middling class competitors through ostentation, and launched moralistic campaigns against middling consumption. Though it has been suggested by historians that sumptuary legislature was abandoned in Britain by the 17th century, it is argued herein that the Duty on Hair Powder Act represented an analogue to earlier sumptuary laws, aiming to preclude the middling classes from consumption deemed unworthy of their social station in an attempt to reestablish aristocratic

[72] Green 1800, p. 2.
[73] Green 1800, p. 4.
[74] Green 1800, p. 5.
[75] Haywood 1746, p. 6.
[76] Chamberlayne 1702, p. 322.
[77] Manning 1737, p. 9.

exclusivity.[78] According to a legal scholar writing contemporaneously with the Duty on Hair Powder Act, a sumptuary law should be defined as any regulation "made for restraining the extravagance and vanity of the lower classes."[79] In debating the Act, Pitt himself admitted that its imposition was intended to curtail the use of the non-aristocratic, who were "prompted by vanity" to wear powder, though perhaps lacking the financial means to do so.[80] Such consumption was deemed immoral by the upper classes, as it was believed that consuming beyond one's financial means directly affected the coffers of the treasury by redirecting its cash flow from important matters, such as war, to unimportant matters, such as poor relief. Attempts by the aristocracy to curtail the consumption of their inferiors ultimately failed, giving way to an era during which the middling classes held hegemonic control over sartorial and social norms.

Respectability, Masculinity, and Differentiation of Status- Intertwined Analytical Categories

This study will analyze the Duty on Hair Powder Act in relation to the analytical categories of respectability, masculinity, manifestations of social difference, and the politicization of hair powder. (As the term "politicization" is fairly self-evident and not rooted in a complex theoretical framework, it need not be defined.) As defined by Woodruff Smith, the term "respectability" refers "to good character and moral standing regardless of social status" which required "a positive valuation of oneself by others."[81] Respectability allowed the notion of gentility, or gentlemanliness, to be conferred on members of the middling classes from 1750 forward and replaced the notion of gentility, which closely resembled respectability, but could only be exhibited by those of genteel status.[82] Though respectability was typically acquired through manners and education, it was manifested through habits of polite consumption. Respectable individuals were expected to be properly dressed, clean, and embody "fashionability in a sense of neither far ahead of current fashion nor far behind," as adherence to social norms was deemed evidence of a strong moral character and normalcy, whereas nonconformity was deemed to represent "singularity" at best, and "criminality" at worst.[83] Given that respectability was manifested through consumptive displays of wealth, a sufficiently high income was necessary for its maintenance, precluding the lower classes from being viewed as such. Individuals who ceased to adhere to the mores of respectability could be deprived of their respectable status.[84]

[78] Riello and Rublack 2019, p. 98.
[79] Huntingford 1790, p. 49.
[80] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 488.
[81] Smith, 2012, pp. 192, 196.
[82] Smith 2012, pp. 205
[83] Smith 2012, p. 211.
[84] Smith 2012, pp. 205, 206, 226.

Through consumptive exuberance, members of the early modern aristocracy manifestly differentiated themselves through their consumption, rendering social differences visible. As noted by David Kuchta, "clothing was a form of power, enacting the articulation, negotiation, and personalization of power" and were "material signs [that] formed and informed systems of power."[85] In a society where classes were demarcated through financial and legal consumptive constraints, the emulative mutation of social status could be stifled. Thus, social elites could reinforce the social hierarchy through display, rendering it visible and unshakable. However, during the 18th century, the ability of the upper classes to appear distinct drastically decreased due to a rise in consumerism amongst the middling classes. As noted by Kwass, this "new taxonomy denied the nobility any special claims to conspicuous consumption.[86] This issue is closely related to that of "respectability," as emulative spending conferred respectability on middling members of society by mutating their ostensible social status, affording them a similar level of respectability as the upper classes. As the consumption of former positional luxuries allowed the middling classes to enter respectable society, it undermined the aristocracy's ability to appear distinct, much to their collective fury, and resulted in a failure to recreate such distinctions.[87]

Masculinity may be loosely defined as the embodiment of manly traits and its opposition to femininity, though traits associated with masculinity changed drastically during the period of study. The adherence to masculine values was always an irrevocable precondition for the maintenance of respectability, regardless of its changing definition. Though it was possible to be regarded as masculine without being respectable, it was not possible for a man deemed effeminate to be viewed as such.[88] Masculinity was viewed as a prerequisite for domestic and political authority, with men viewed as effete effectively disenfranchised. Effeminate men were greatly disdained by society-at-large and held little sway in political or domestic affairs. Normative men believed that this rendered Britain susceptible to the usurpation of women and foreign powers.

Methodological Perspectives

This study makes use of discourse analysis, argumentation analysis, and is written through a narrative approach. Discourse analysis is the use of textual historical remains to establish and reproduce historical norms, descriptions of reality, and class-based power structures. Most critically, discourse analysis makes use of written statements where speech is weaponized for the purpose of historical

[85] Kuchta 2002, p. 7.
[86] Roche 1994, p. 108; Kwass (2015), p. 780.
[87] Martinez 2000, p. 75.
[88] Mackie 2009, p. 4.

interpretation.[89] Discourse analysis prioritizes an ordered, narrative approach, whereby structures of power are rendered visible through the interpretation of the text.[90] The discourse herein is predicated on the notion that the sources employed should "speak for themselves," rather than being crammed into a theoretical framework or superimposing modern anachronisms unto them. Thus, the theory in use was applied only after the sources were read and preliminarily analyzed, to ensure a certain naturality between the sources employed and the theoretical framework. However, discourses are not immediately visible and must be sifted out, after which trends can be established to constitute discoursal identities.[91]

These discourses are formed through the use of argumentation theory, the rhetorical use of logic used to achieve phenomenological conclusions from textual data. These conclusions are reached through the formation of discourses based on interactive and interconnected puzzle pieces. The use of argumentation theory necessitates the establishment of the burden of proof through the use of empirical evidence. The burden of proof is established by a "constellation of [interconnected] propositions," intended to convince the reader, the rational judge, who determines the validity of the conclusions reached based on the soundness of logic and factual evidence provided.[92] The validity of the argument is rooted in the conception of reasonableness. Reasonableness is established through the rigorous construction of the theoretical component, systematic construction of discourses, arduous source selection, as well as an empirical component, by which facts are elicited to authenticate the argumentation.[93] Unfortunately, works of history must content themselves with reasonable soundness, rather than objective certainty or inherent "truth." This is due to the multifaceted nature of the sources, which allow for innumerable interpretations. Attempts to secure objectivity do not preclude the possibility of bias from seeping into the study, nor the possibility of incorrect attributions of causal chains. However, by constructing an argument through the sources, rather than cramming the sources into a predetermined conclusion, objectivity is obtained as far as is possible in a work of history.

The diachronous nature of this study requires the use of a narrative approach to establish the continuity of change that occurred during the period of study. The narrative is central to the demonstration of continuous change and lends itself well to the examination of the large-scale social

[89] Gustavsson and Svanström 2018, p. 134.
[90] Gustavsson and Svanström 2018, p. 134.
[91] Green, and Troup 1999, p. 12.
[92] Eemeren, Grootendorst, and Snoeck 1996, pp. 5-6.
[93] Eemeren, Grootendors and Snoeck 1996, p. 10.

changes that were endemic during the Age of Revolutions and is used as a means "to achieve empirical coherence [and] logistical consistency."[94] The notion of a beginning to end trajectory is inherent in this study from the perspective of the sources employed, with the narrative structured as such.[95]

This study aims to be objective through its adherence to empirical rules of objectivity while avoiding *a priori* biases. Nevertheless, as stressed by empiricists, notions of uncertainty cannot be counteracted in their entirety.[96] The causal mechanism to which societal change is attributed herein are firm, but not universal, and can be disputed through the application of a different theoretical framework. Nor are the causal chains fully encompassing, as this study explores only one reason for which the powdered wig fell into disuse.

Sources and Study Design

This study will use three main sources: The *Parliamentary Debates* of 1795*,* pamphlets related to hair powder and the Duty on Hair Powder Act, and satires (caricatures and prose) of the same. Part I will use the *Parliamentary Debates* (1795) and pamphlets issued in relation (1795-1797), while Part II will primarily use satires (1795-1800), though sources presented in Part I will be re-presented to stitch these two sections together. Because primary sources relating to the Duty on Hair Powder Act fade from use shortly after the Act's implementation, secondary literature will be used to widen the temporal scope, ending the period of study in 1812. Though the 1795 to 1800 period will be the primary focus of the study, the discussion of ensuing years is nevertheless necessary to form well-founded conclusions, and because hair powder use retained its political and cultural importance until the 1810s. Thus, the assassination of the last wig-wearing prime minister, Spencer Perceval, will serve as the symbolic end-year for this study.

The *Parliamentary Debates* will be used to assess the Duty on Hair Powder Act in detail, with particular detail paid to its motivations, intended consequences, and various opinions held by MPs concerning the Act. The *Parliamentary Debates* serves well as an introductive element, as the Act embodies social, political, and economic issues facing Great Britain in the 1790s. It is self-evident that the Duty on Hair Powder Act presented in the *Parliamentary Debates* should be presented first, as this will set the stage for a sequential presentation of sources. After these debates are presented and analyzed, the Act will be analyzed in relation to pamphlets issued as a direct response to its imposition. These pamphlets will allow the Act to be evaluated from the perspective of public opinion and are important for

[94] Green and Troup 1999, p. 233.
[95] Green and Troup, p. 233.
[96] Torstendahl 2003, p. 309

displaying the conflict of opinion between the aristocratic parliamentary body and the middling classes. Section I will primarily focus on manifestations of social difference, political allegiance, and respectability as its main analytical categories. Though the notion of masculinity is not inherently absent from the parliamentary debates and subsequent pamphleteering, its discussion is extremely implicit and would require the importation of a large array of sources not related to the Act for its discussion. Furthermore, this issue will feature extremely prominently in Part II. Thus, Part I's discussion of masculinity in relation to the Duty on Hair Powder Act will be exceptionally brief and will allow for a smooth transition to the "masculinity intensive" Part II.

Part II of this study will focus on verbal satires and caricatures, which cover a somewhat longer temporal frame than the acceding section, ranging from 1795 to 1802. There are four sorts of visual satires that will be discussed in this section. First amongst these are those relating directly to the passage of the Act. The second and third are conservative satires, which mock the frugality of those abstaining from powder, as well as progressive satires, which portray powder users as effeminate, Francophile, or otherwise ridiculous. Lastly are those which cannot be easily compartmentalized, but where the use of powder still conveys a social, political, or economic message in a way where the absence of powder would materially alter the meaning of the satire. Within this section, notions of competing masculinities and respectabilities will be discussed in the most detail. The satires directly relating to the Act will also be deliberated in the political context. With regard to respectability and manifestations of social difference, Part II complements and expands Part I in comparing the *expected* effects on these social notions discussed in the *Parliamentary Debates* versus the *real* effects, which are very perceptible when contrasting the satires with the *Parliamentary Debates* and pamphlets. As masculinity is not discussed in detail in Part I, caricatures, satires, and other visual mediums will be used to establish the historical context of 18th-century masculinity. These satires are highly representative of the views surrounding powder and wigs of the era, representing a wide array of ideological viewpoints. Furthermore, they are particularly useful as they directly comment on the pamphlets and parliamentary debates, creating a clear link between Part I and Part II.

The sources employed have been obtained online through the Uppsala University library, mostly through *Gale Primary Sources*, with particular attention paid to *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (ECCO) and *Eighteenth-Century Books Online* (EEBO), which are subsets of *Gale*, forming the largest digital repositories for sources from this era.[97] Unlike many projects which suffer from an

[97] www.gale.com; Unfortunately, the parliamentary documents are only available through *Hansard* and *ProQuest*, which Uppsala University is not subscribed to. I was therefore required to ask my friend at East Anglia University to send me

overabundance of sources, this project suffers from a lack of sources related to hair powder during the period of study. From 1795 to 1812, there are only 475 monographs containing the keyword term "hair powder." Out of these, only 14 focus on hair powder, while further information is derived from an additional dozen (or so) sources that mention hair powder in a manner that may be incorporated into this study in an analytical sense. The risk associated with low source availability is that there may not be a large enough sample size to structure an argument, or that the documents are too narrow in scope, resulting in overly homogenous perceptions that are unrepresentative of public opinion. However, based on the source review it was found that the sources employed represent a wide variety of views, allowing for heterogeny to be achieved, despite the small sample size. The documents related to hair powder were located with ease, given that the keyword searching for such a simple analytical term allows relevant documents to be located easily. The location of sources relating to the analytical categories of respectability, masculinity, and differentiation of status was more difficult, given that contemporaries rarely used these terms (except respectability), which are somewhat anachronistic terms coined by historians. Thus, a variety of search terms were used to locate relevant sources. For instance, in locating pamphlets discussing masculinity, search terms such as "effeminacy," "manhood," "Macaroni" and "Frenchification" were used. Search terms were combined through multiple variations, and several were sourced through the use of secondary sources. In setting the context for analysis, sources written slightly outside the temporal scope of this study have been used, but only for contextualization, setting the stage, and concerning principles that remained stable over the entire period of study. Though archival visits to the British Museum, Oxford University Archives, and the Manchester Museum were originally an intent for this study, these plans were disrupted by the SARS-CoV-2 Pandemic.

Historiography- Working with Wigs and Powder

Though previous research relating to powdered wigs is quite sparse, works by Michael Kwass, William Gibson, and John Barrell are of particular relevance to this study. According to Kwass, the wig was a much desired positional good during the 17th century, fostering gentility and respectability for its wearer.[98] However, by the mid 18th century, Kwass contends that the wig had fallen away from the status of a positional good due to its dissemination into middling society, fostering respectability at the expense of its genteel connotations.[99] Though writing in the French context, Kwass's theoretical

specific documents that I was aware of but unable to access. It is therefore likely that there are many parliamentary documents that I am unaware of that may have been useful to this study.

[98] Kwass 2006, p. 643.

[99] Roche 1994, pp. 637, 658.

framework is primarily rooted in the principles delineated by Daniel Roche and is therefore applicable to this study. Expanding on Kwass, it will be argued in this thesis that the powdered wig reacquired its positionality in the 1795 to 1812 era. This study also expands on Kwass in discussing the respectability of powder wigs, arguing herein that the universality of respectability associated with wigs during the period of Kwass's study became contested after 1795.

William Gibson's work discusses the use of wigs in clerical circles. Though he primarily focuses on the late 17th century and earlier half of the 18th century, Gibson makes several interesting and well-founded claims that are relevant herein. Gibson argues that the wig became ingrained as a symbol of clerical identity during the 18th century, and "were important in distinguishing them from laymen"[100] Accordingly, conservative clergymen riled against the non-clerical use of "full-bottomed wigs," which they believed undermined the clergy's ability to manifest social differences. Interestingly, at the end of the 18th century, progressive clergymen abandoned the wig, while conservative clergy refused to do so, a trend that mirrors general societal trends, which will be discussed extensively in this thesis.[101] Though Gibson's article will not feature prominently in the ensuing chapters, it is nevertheless useful for contextual reasons. This is because the large-scale continuation of wig-wearing amongst the clergy far into the 19th century confirms the wig's return to the status of "positional good" during the period of study. Furthermore, clerical revulsion towards the non-clerical use of "full-bottomed wigs" parallels the antipathy felt by the upper classes with regard to middling class individuals adorning wigs. Furthermore, the microcosmic politicization of the wig amongst the clergy mirrors societal trends that will be deliberated herein, whereby political ideology was an important determinator for individuals in deciding whether or not to continue to wear a wig after 1795.

Most relevant to this study is John Barrell's chapter called "Hair Powder" in *The Spirit of Despotism: Invasion of Privacy in the 1790s*. To date, Barrell's chapter is the only scholarly work that discusses the Duty on Hair Powder Act in detail. The chapter provides a detailed survey of the debates surrounding the Act, while arguing it was a "despotic" attempt by the British government to police personal choices through the "politicization of private life."[102] This chapter is particularly useful to this study as it broadly details the arguments in favor and opposition of the Act, most importantly those discussing the purported respectability associated with powder consumption.[103] Unfortunately, the chapter does not delve deeply into the political motivations for continued use or discontinuation of powder among

[100] Gibson 1996, pp. 147, 153.
[101] Gibson 1996, p. 154.
[102] Barrell 2006, p. 11.
[103] Barrell 2006, pp. 158, 167, 172, 187, 193, 208.

the political classes. Due to its synchronic nature, the chapter does not discuss the profound effects of this Act on the ensuing years, limiting its discussion to the debate and passage of the Act. Though there is some overlap between this study and Barrell's chapter (due to source limitations), the Act is analyzed through an entirely different perspective here. While Barrell touches on respectability and explores the issue of social differentiation to some degree, his chapter virtually ignores issues surrounding masculinity. Furthermore, Barrell does not cite the aristocratic wish to reinstitute manifestations of social differences as a motivation for the Act, a notion that will feature heavily in this study. Nor does Barrell discuss the rise of contended forms of respectability that were caused by the Act. Barrell's omission of masculinity is particularly problematic, as its discussion is of paramount importance in demonstrating *why* the powdered wig lost its status as a respectable good, which (in effect) resulted in its disappearance from the public sphere by the early 1810s.

Part I- Debating the Duty on Hair Powder Act- Pamphleteers and Parliament

Introducing the Duty on Hair Powder Act (1795)

On the Fifth of May 1795, the Duty on Hair Powder Act was proposed and implemented by prime minister William Pitt and the British government, after a lukewarm debate in parliament. Its imposition went relatively smoothly, with few objections relating to the principle of the Act. Nevertheless, a few MPs questioned its effectiveness and progressiveness, while others were critical of certain technicalities, primarily relating to categories of exemptions.

According to this Act, each person who wished to use pomatum, colloquially known as 'hair powder,' was required to pay one guinea per year to the local magistrate or tax collector for the privilege, thereby receiving a certificate for the right to wear hair powder.[104] One guinea was a relatively large amount of money, representing about a month's wages for agricultural laborers, which was amongst the lowest-paid occupations during the 18th century. For members of the middling class, this cost nevertheless represented a sizeable burden.[105] Considering that there was already a hefty stamp tax on hair powder since 1786, the continued use of powder became quite unaffordable for most middling class members of society with the passage of the Act. Infrequent powder users, who perhaps only powdered their hair on special occasions, or when decorum required it, were subject to the same tax as those who powdered their hair every day. This effectively barred the infrequent use of powder for most members of the middling classes, for whom the stamp tax and the high cost of powder already represented a formidable barrier.[106]

There were five categories of exemptions from the Act. The Act did not apply to the royal family, nor their retainers. Neither did the Act extend to clergymen within the Church of England earning less than one-hundred pounds per year, with the same law applying to dissenting Protestant clergy, Catholic priests, as well the clergy of non-Christian religions deemed "pretenders." Within all military branches, non-commissioned officers, members of the volunteer corps, military contractors, and officers who fell below the rank of Captain, were exempt. Fathers with more than two unmarried daughters were also entitled to a certificate for any remaining (unmarried) daughters after paying the certificate cost for the first two. Foreigners were also exempt for their first twenty-one consecutive

[104] Barrister 1795, pp. 43- 59.
[105] Barrell 2006, p. 173. 1 Guinea is roughly 127 pounds in today's money if adjusted for inflation. However, this is not a very useful metric, given that wages and prices were lower around 1800, notwithstanding changes in inflation.
[106] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, volume 41 1795, p. 449.

days in Great Britain, an exemption primarily passed to avoid offending foreign dignitaries.[107] Except for the 'unmarried daughters' exemption,' the exemptions targeted servants, both public and domestic, in effect creating a new sartorial class that was immune from the effects of the Act.

To prevent the uncertified use of powder, heavy penalties were put into place, which criminalized the untaxed use of powder. Those who wore hair powder without obtaining a certificate were liable to a fine of twenty pounds, roughly twenty times more than the certificate's costs. Likewise, those who fraudulently used or created certificates to evade payment were fined thirty pounds for the infraction.[108] An inability to pay the fine could result in imprisonment in a debtor's prison. Likewise, individuals caught wearing powder without paying for a certificate more than once could be imprisoned and were subject to a fine upon release.[109] The policing of illicit hair powder consumption was managed through government-sanctioned neighborhood informing, where all those who reported non-certified consumption would receive half the amount of the fine. Such a large sum of money would certainly have bolstered the Act's efficacy, making it very profitable to inform against a neighbor.[110] To make informing simpler, a list of certificates was affixed on the local church door or market cross, with a list of subscribers likewise published in the local newspaper. The Act stipulated that the certificate be carried at all times and presented as proof of payment if approached by a citizen-informer.[111]

Debating the Act-Houses of Parliament- The Parliamentary Registers

Principle-Based Opposition: Inefficiency and Regressive(ness)

During the parliamentary sessions of 1795, very few objected to the Act's general principle, with qualms levied primarily against its details. Only the Earl of Moira and Charles James Fox held principle-based objections, questioning the Act's efficacy and progressiveness, though only the Earl of Moira opposed the Act in its totality. The Earl was a soldier by background, who had a personal dislike towards William Pitt due to his supposed mismanagement of the war with France, as well the supposedly "despotic" nature of Pitt's wartime taxes.[112] The Earl viewed the Act as regressive towards more indigent persons, who perhaps wore powder once a year, and believed it iniquitous that such

[107] Barrister 1795, pp. 45-49.
[108] Kearsley 1795, p. 12.
[109] Barrister 1795, pp. 16, 59.
[110] Barrister 1795, p. 55.
[111] Kearsley 1795, p. 50.
[112] Nelson 2005, p. 121.

individuals should be obligated to pay the same sum as men such as himself, who wore hair powder every single day, viewing this fact as "a great inequality and disproportion."[113]

Similar to the Earl of Moira, Charles James Fox regarded William Pitt with antipathy. Ever since 1783, when the Fox-North coalition was dismissed by George III from their ministerial role in favor of the "baby-faced" William Pitt, Fox had lived in the shadow of Pitt, whom he regarded as a despotic usurper. Since Pitt came to power as a result of the king's interference, Fox and supporters believed Pitt's power to be illegitimate, with machinations to increase the power of the king at the expense of the parliamentary system.[114] Fox objected to the Act due to "the uncertainty of its produce; for he who relied on the fashion of the Act built upon a slippery foundation." Fox believed that the discontinuation of powder by a few prominent influencers would cause a society-wide sartorial shift that discarded hair powder. This likely result, Fox argued, would eliminate the revenue stream derived from the Act. Notwithstanding his objections, Fox did not attempt to block the passage of the Act, as he believed that it held some potential for extracting revenue in the short term.[115]

A Lack of Exemptions- Hairdressers & Half Pay Officers and the Unravelling of Deserving Respectability

Except for the points elicited by Moira and Fox, parliamentary critiques of the Act concentrated on its lack of exemptions, though these MPs were nevertheless supportive of the Act at-large and did not attempt to block its passage. The most common criticism was that there was no exemption for "half-pay officers," retired and often handicapped ex-officers living on half-pay. These men "were accustomed to appear as gentlemen," but were unlikely to afford to pay a guinea for the privilege.[116] This exemption was vehemently supported by most MPs, who believed that the service of half-pay officers merited a respectable appearance. The (previously introduced) Earl of Moira believed that half-pay officers' "feelings would be greatly wounded, or their small incomes injured by the bill," while "putting a badge on their poverty."[117] However, as Pitt claimed that half-pay officers were under "no obligation" to wear hair powder, he did not deem it necessary to grant them an exemption, notwithstanding their service to society.[118] It is clear that the proposed exemption for half-pay officers

[113] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, volume 41, 1795, p. 449.
[114] Evans 1999, pp. 6-12.
[115] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, volume 40, 1795, p. 494. It was commonly understood by the late eighteenth-century that dress "evolved" over time. George Darwin (the son of Charles Darwin) would later remark that "the law of progress holds good in dress, and forms blends into one another with almost complete continuity. In both cases, a form yields to a succeeding form adapted to the surrounding conditions and following the principles of natural selection. (See *A History of Everyday Things*, Daniel Roche, page p. 193.)
[116] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 69
[117] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42, 1795 p. 448.
[118] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795 p. 69

was intended to save these genteel men from social disgrace by masking their poverty.[119] As half-pay officers were impoverished but honorable and respected members of society, those advocating an exemption on their behalf believed that they deserved to present themselves as such. The inability to wear powder would dispossess them of their respectability, while also depriving them of the opportunity to differentiate themselves from their (impoverished) civilian counterparts.

Satirical Print: Poverty of Half-Pay Officer Contrasted with Affluence of Full-Pay Officer. Henry Brooks, 1791. Public Domain.

An exemption was also voiced in favor of hairdressers, who were required by profession to wear hair powder but could ill afford the certificate. In contrast to half-pay officers, whom MPs believed should have the right to wear hair powder due to exclusively social reasons, (i.e., their ability to differentiate themselves from other members of the lower middling class by appearing respectable,) the proposed exemption for hairdressers followed both economic and social rationale. As hairdressers traded hair powder, they adorned powdered wigs as a form of advertisement, from which they eked out a relatively meager living, positioning these individuals at the lowest end of the middling class. The use of these fashionable powdered wigs allowed the hairdressers to be viewed as exhibiting gentility and respectability, no doubt creating a form of social affinity between themselves and their social betters, their most frequent customers.[120] To be regarded as reputable vendors and representatives of their craft, it was indispensable for hairdressers to appear clean and polite, which was achieved in part through the use of hair powder. Without this accoutrement, they would suffer economic consequences

[119] Barrell 2006, p. 154; *Register of the Times*, the twenty-sixth of June 1797, p. 1. Half-pay officers would continue to wear powder, and in May 1797, a captain was convicted of wearing hair powder without wearing a license.
[120] Kwass 2006, p. 637.

due to loss of business caused by a tarnished reputation. MPs correctly speculated that some hairdressers would continue wearing powder without paying the tax to avoid ruining their reputation.[121] In 1797, a hairdresser named William Dowling was convicted of wearing powder without a certificate. In his defense, Dowling noted that his profession required him to use hair powder, but that he could ill afford a certificate due to his scant income. The bewigged judge was highly sympathetic to the hairdresser, reducing his fine and giving him ample time to pay.[122]

A Competing Aristocratic Vanities- "Spruce Powdered Footmen"

In addition to the (outwardly reasonable) exemptions voiced on behalf of half-pay officers and hairdressers, other proposals were met with ridicule in Parliament. One such exemption was designed for those with the so-called "misfortune" of having seven to eight servants, as proposed by Sir M.W. Ridley.[123] Ridley was viewed as exceptionally materialistic and harboring an aristocratic worldview that deviated starkly from the reality of a democratizing society, and was sometimes mockingly compared to Marie Antoinette by his contemporaries.[124] The extremely wealthy Sir Richard Smith supported this proposal, and was a man who was frequently satirized for his posh behavior and aristocratic worldview.[125] Smith mused about the "pleasure which a man feels in being attended at table by a spruce powdered footman," and believed it unfair that rich gentlemen should be punished so severely "for the gratification of so innocent a vanity."[126] However, the proposition suggested by Ridley and Smith was viewed as absurd, credulous, and elitist by the non-noble MPs. William Pitt regarded those with the "misfortune" of keeping seven to eight servants as the "last objects of compassion on the present occasion."[127] Moreover, Pitt accused the gentlemen of grossly misunderstanding the Act's purpose, which he claimed was intended to fall most heavily on such individuals, including Ridley and Smith.

Though deemed outrageous by Pitt, the notion that those with many servants should be exempt from the Act embodied pertinent aristocratic fears that their exclusive status was eroding. Though consumption was increasingly democratized during this period, the means of supporting a large number of servants was unaffordable for all but the wealthiest aristocrats. Thus, for Ridley and Smith, these "spruce powdered footmen" represented a sanctuary of exclusivity in a world where aristocratic distinctiveness was rapidly crumbling. According to Daniel Roche, within this haven of exclusivity,

[121] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42, 1795, p. 448.
[122] Register of the *Times*, the ninth of September 1796, p. 3.
[123] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 71.
[124] U.K. Parliament. *23 April 1790*, 1790.
[125] Barrell 2006, p. 156.
[126] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 71.
[127] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 72.

servants were a "demonstration of their master's omnipotence," serving as an extension of their employers, and allowed these nobles to differentiate themselves from the bourgeois and lesser gentry.[128] For the highest classes, liveried servants were a showcase of wealth which exuded gentility for their employer, capable of impressing both competing aristocrats and inferior classes, who must have marveled at such ostentation. In this context, Ridley and Smiths' urged exemption was perhaps not so ridiculous. The Act threatened to erode this distinguished sanctuary, diminishing the little that remained of exclusive aristocratic consumption.[129]

Except for the "unmarried daughters" exemption recommended by MP John Courtenay, the rest were dismissed as frivolous by William Pitt. The unmarried daughter's exemption allowed fathers with more than two unmarried daughters cost-free certificated for all but two daughters, perhaps because Pitt pitied those with two unmarried daughters, or perhaps as an attempt to dispel the commonly held conception that Pitt, with no wife or children of his own, did not care for families.[130] The logic that William Pitt employed in determining to scrap the remaining exemptions is unknown to us, though it seems that he was acting in a manner that would secure as much revenue as possible for the crumbling treasury balance. Allowing too many initial exemptions could be a slippery slope for further exemptions, undermining the Act's integrity and revenue-generating potential.

Motivating the Duty on Hair Powder Act

French Revolutionary Wars and Skyrocketing Debt

The French Revolutionary Wars and associated wartime debt were crucial factors in motivating the Duty on Hair Powder Act. Though William Pitt established a sinking fund early in his tenure as prime minister through the taxation of luxury items to lessen the impact of unplanned expenses, heavy liabilities were accrued due to the war with France, a problem that was exacerbated by the loss of income from the Thirteen Colonies and an increasing trade-deficit caused by mercantilist policies. Pitt's policy relied on war payments through the acquisition of loans, with taxes increased to pay the interest on the added debt. This effect was cumulative and devastating, with the 1795 budget necessitating a tax revenue of 2,000,000 pounds to cover debt interest incurred since 1793.[131] To make matters worse, parliament agreed to provide wartime loans to the King of Sardinia and the Austrian Empire to simply keep their armies afloat, totaling 4,800,000 pounds.[132]

[128] Roche 1994, p. 106.
[129] Roche 1994, p. 100.
[130] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 87.
[131] Cooper 1982, pp. 94–95.
[132] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 482.

To alleviate this financial disaster, William Pitt 'fished around' for potential taxes to decrease the government deficit. By his reckoning, Pitt believed that the Duty on Hair Powder Act would yield 210,000 pounds a year, more than he expected any other revenue yielding Act passed in 1795 to produce.[133] The Duty on Hair Powder Act could be regarded as Pitt's 'jewel' Act of the year, which he believed would remain profitable throughout the foreseeable future. Given the Act's expected lucrativeness, it would undoubtedly aid in alleviating financial stresses induced by war. These financial troubles, which seriously threatened British debt liquidity and nearly bankrupted the treasury, necessitated serious profits to avoid a situation akin to France in 1788, which resulted in government insolvency and ignited the French Revolution.[134]

The 1794-1796 Wheat Crisis- Curtailing Rebellious Sedition

A looming bread shortage was a significant motivation for the passage of the Duty on Hair Powder Act, as it disturbed the economy and negatively impacted public order. Frosts, floods, and hail destroyed crops during the growing season, resulting in a 10% decrease in agricultural output in 1794 and a 38% decrease in 1795.[135] Additionally, the war against revolutionary France disrupted the continental grain trade and forced the British government to divert grain from its citizenry to its armies and allies. Coupled with a rapidly rising population and decreases in real wages due to inflation, these events resulted in a humanitarian disaster and swelling bread prices.[136] As a result of the wheat crisis, death rates throughout England were much higher than average from 1794 to 1795, not to be exceeded until 1818.[137] This high death toll was caused by increased wheat prices, which prevented the lowest orders from purchasing enough bread to properly nourish themselves, coupled with the extreme winter cold. Increased bread prices forced the poor to divert funds from other necessities, such as fuel, housing, and clothing, simply to feed themselves. These diversions likely increased the number of deaths and were thus indirectly caused by the high cost of bread. This was especially a problem in 1795, when Great Britain recorded its coldest winter since 1659.[138]

To decrease the effects of this severe crisis, several ameliorative actions were taken by parliament. For instance, starch makers were prohibited from using wheat, as the conversion from wheat to starch required large proportions of wheat compared to its comparatively infinitesimal output, and was thus

[133] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 479.
[134] Hoppit 2016, p. 178.
[135] Stern 1964, p 175.
[136] Evans 2006, p. 75.
[137] Stern 1964, p. 172. In 1818, the First Cholera Epidemic resulted in the death of 10,000 British troops in India, which are included in this statistic.
[138] Burt 2019, p. 213.

viewed as wasteful.[139] The government also purchased large quantities of grain from the continent, which served to alleviate the crisis by artificially decreasing wheat prices. Moreover, the Board of Agriculture experimented with baking bread from non-wheat sources, such as rice, corn, potatoes, beans, and peas.[140]

In addition to the aforementioned conciliatory efforts, the wheat crisis provided a strong motivation for the Duty on Hair Powder Act. This incentive is observable in the *Parliamentary Debates* of 1795, which frequently commends the Act for its effects on wheat availability, as the production of hair powder "consumed such a quantity of wheat as could not readily be conceived."[141] The process of refinement was resource-intensive, with three pounds of wheat yielding only one pound of starch, which was the main ingredient of hair powder. Powder use was thus viewed as tremendously wasteful during times of want, which was composed of "nothing but the very finest wheat powder."[142] MPs unanimously agreed that the Duty on Hair Powder Act would increase wheat availability, even amongst members who objected to the Act on other principles.[143]

Pamphleteers lauded the effects of the Act on grain availability. In times of want, its use was considered by some to be inexcusable, including a swathe of MPs and pamphleteers. A pamphleteer called Philanthropos rhetorically asked whether there was "any real difference between wasting a piece of bread and wasting the flour that would make a piece of bread" by converting it into hair powder.[144] The pamphleteer John Donaldson, who was extremely active in discussing political matters during the 1790s, though it seems that none of his proposals were taken seriously, applauded the effects of the Duty on Hair Powder Act. He is (somewhat sarcastically) referred to as a "one-man think-tank" by John Barrell.[145] Based on a questionable mathematical calculation, Donaldson postulated that hair powder deprived the kingdom of 30,000,000 loaves of bread per annum, contributing directly to high prices and general lack of food during the famine of 1794-1795.[146] Donaldson regarded the use of hair powder as sinful and did not believe that the right of the wealthy to appear respectable overpowered that of the rest of the population to feed themselves.

He found it hypocritical that:

[139] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, 1795, p. 168.
[140] Board of Agriculture 1795, pp. 1-2. Though these experiments would prove promising, the citizenry would prove unwilling to consume bread from non-wheat sources, which they had grown accustomed to during the eighteenth-century.
[141] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 199.
[142] Barrell 2006, p. 147; Philanthropos 1795, 1.
[143] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42, 1795, p. 168.
[144] Philanthropos 1795, p. 1.
[145] Barrell 2006, p. 151.
[146] Donaldson 1795, p.5.

overseers of the poor, and others, who make collections for their relief, use hair powder, when it raises the price of bread, and deprives the people of Great Britain of more than thirty million loaves annually.[147]

However, Donaldson did not believe that the Act would entirely fulfill the desired effects on wheat availability, and instead advocated in favor of total prohibition.

Reducing 'Vain' Consumption-The "Undeserving" Poor

It is also clear that reducing the consumption of the middling classes was a motivation for, or (at the very least) a happily accepted consequence of the Act. William Pitt believed that "there were persons who, although perhaps they could ill afford it, would be "prompted by vanity to wear hair powder.[148] Given the belief that indignant persons had no reason to wear hair powder, Pitt argued that hair powder was a fair object of taxation and would benefit the poor and lower middling classes, whom he believed was incapable of exercising self-control in their purchasing habits, squandering the little they owned on frivolities.[149] William Pitt claimed that the Act would force the poor to "find something better for their health" and "compel many of them to abandon" hair powder.[150] The hope of abandonment is noteworthy, given that it would materially decrease the Act's revenue stream. Nevertheless, this seems to have been a welcome consequence of the Act. In Pitt's view, the poor simply did not have the right to appear respectable, and this Act would force them to abandon powder and limit their expenditures to items deemed sensible for their position in the social hierarchy.

However, many commentators on the Act did not view powder consumption as "vanity," as suggested by parliament, but rather a necessity for maintaining a livelihood and respectability, a point of view established in the parliamentary debates in reference to both half-pay officers and hairdressers. It is important to note that Pitt regarded the impoverished with contempt and attempted to reform poor law during the 1796-1797 parliamentary sessions in a manner that would reduce outdoor poor relief. Simultaneously, his measures would augment the number of poor confined to inhumane workhouses and Bridewell institutions. These were essentially prisons in which forced labor was employed and life expectancies short due to the multitude of diseases that circulated within.[151]

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[147] Donaldson 1795, p. 8. Donaldson's view embodies the values of forward-thinking notions of utilitarian democracy, which exemplified resistance to the aristocracy that would cumulate with the Reform Act of 1832 some decades later. As evident by this example, resistance to aristocratic prerogative was nascent in 1795.
[148] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 488.
[149] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42, 1795, p. 450; Maxwell 2014, p. 19. Pitt's logic here is interesting by strange, given the fact that women used much less hair powder than men.
[150] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 493.
[151] Evans 2006, p. 97.

Nevertheless, it was a common belief during the early modern era that luxury was a cause of poverty, which serves as an explanatory variable as to *why* William Pitt deemed it necessary to curtail hair powder consumption amongst the lower orders. Such views were not unique to William Pitt. In a pamphlet entitled *Observations on the Present State of the Vagrant Poor,* the Quaker turned pamphleteer John Scott cites the consumption of luxuries as the root cause of poverty. According to Scott, the poor "squandered their earnings" by indulging in the "indolent and vicious."[152] Scott specifically mentions sartorial luxuries, which he views as "the vainest of vanities and absurdest of absurdities", resulting in poverty for the lower classes, who wished to appear as the peerage, despite lacking the funds to do so.[153] Moralist arguments related to consumption were largely obsolete during the late 18th century when performed by men. However, the act of consumption, when conducted by the lower classes, remained moralized, irrespective of gender. Consumption by the poor was viewed as unpatriotic, as it was believed that it was the civic duty of the poor to avoid superfluous consumption to attain self-sufficiency to avoid draining government-sponsored poor relief.[154] Scott believed that poor persons who purchased luxuries, regardless of how minimal they were, were undeserving of relief, allowing the government to focus on the frugal poor, whom he viewed as patriots for their exercise of self-restraint. This restraint, he believed, would permit the government to focus its attention on things he deemed to be more important than poor relief.[155] The attitude of Scott was typical in 18th century Britain. The moralist Jones Hanaway, for instance, blamed tea drinking as a principal cause of poverty and believed that the frugality of the poor would benefit the entire nation, including the poor themselves, who would derive pride and dignity from their financial support of the treasury.[156]

A *Progressive* or *Regressive* Act? Parliament, Pamphleteers, and Conflicts of Opinion

William Pitt introduced the Duty on Hair Powder Act as a tax on luxury, which he claimed would predominantly burden wealthier classes in society. In calculating the presumed revenue from the Act, he cited the number of horses, servants, and four-wheeled carriages that were kept for pleasure as a

[152] Scott 1773, pp. 120-122.
[153] Scott 1773, pp. 124–126.
[154] Berg 2005., p. 231. The consumption of luxury goods became largely demoralized in the transition from the moral to political economy, mostly completed by the 1750s in Western Europe.
[155] Scott 1773, p. 124-126
[156] Berg 2005, p. 231. Of course, such argumentation remains to this day. Food stamp recipients in the United States are often claimed by conservative satirists to spend exuberantly on food items such as lobster and steak, an argument which has surfaced in congressional debates as an example used by conservative congressmen to reduce such expenditures on the "undeserving poor."

benchmark as to how much revenue could be extracted from the Act, perhaps assuming that hair powder was overwhelmingly used by the very wealthy. However, based on Pitt's rhetoric against the non-wealthy, it appears more probable that Pitt believed that middling class consumers would abandon powder after the duty's imposition. He admitted that the Act would "fall heavy" on those with small incomes who "were placed in such situations as obliged them, to a certain degree, to comply with the fashion of the day," though he believed that such individuals constituted only a minority of middling powder consumers, the remainder wearing it out of vanity.[157] However, not everyone in parliament agreed with Pitt's assessment that powder was worn by the middling classes for reasons of vanity. The Earl of Moira objected to the Act on the premise that the middling classes overwhelmingly relied on the use of hair powder as a necessity. He regarded the notion that only the wealthy used hair powder as erroneous and ridiculous. According to Moira, all but the poorest members of society wore hair powder, while the "respectable and well educated" with "slender fortunes… keeping good company" would suffer immensely from the Act.[158] Though Moira presented a plan to render the Act more progressive by basing the amount charged on the frequency of use, this was rejected by parliament as unfeasible.[159] Overall, MPs disagreed with Moira's view on the Act, claiming that non-elite use of hair powder amounted to "vanity,"[160] with those who could not afford the tax undeserving of the respectability which accompanied the use of powder.

Pamphleteers and Public Opinion: A Regressive "Sumptuary Law"

William Pitt and his supporters presented the Duty on Hair Powder Act as a fair and progressive Act targeting the luxury of the wealthy while dissuading the non-deserving classes from squandering their earnings on an accouterment deemed insensible for their social position. However, pamphleteers, who can be regarded as representing the interests of public opinion, were of the opposite opinion, viewing the Act as regressive and elitist. In a pamphlet entitled *Cursory Remarks on Mr. Pitt's New Tax* by "Brutus," the author paraphrases Rousseau in noting that "he who possesses ten times more than another, should pay ten times more," a view that is reminiscent of Moira's proposal to tax powder in proportion to use.[161] The man writing under this pseudonym was the Scottish lawyer Henry Mackenzie, who likely concealed his identity to protect himself from the Treason Act (1795), by which

[157] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 488. As previously noted, there were very few exemptions to the Act, with hairdressers and half-pay officers excluded, despite the fact that they were viewed as deserving of the respectability they derived from hair powder use.
[158] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 448-449.
[159] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 448-449.
[160] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 71
[161] Brutus 1795, p. 1.

Mackenzie may have been arrested if his treatise were to be construed as anti-ministerial.[162] He opposed the Act on all accounts, which he viewed as "unjust, oppressive, injurious in its consequences, and repugnant to every sound and genuine suggestion of real policy."[163] His argument closely corresponded to the Earl of Moira's view that the Act "obliged a [poor] man to pay for powdering his hair on a single day as much as their lordships would any of them pay for using it a whole 365 days a year."[164] Similarly, "Brutus" noted that the Act would not affect noblemen, with "riches enough to purchase the follies of life" while it would "pinch the [poor] of slender income."[165] Thus, unlike a stamp tax, where consumers paid according to their consumption, the Duty on Hair Powder Act was disproportionately costly to those who rarely used hair powder.

The Act's regressive nature led some commentators to view it as an analog to earlier sumptuary laws. From the 15th to 17th centuries, various laws were passed throughout Europe which dictated who could own specific luxuries, particularly clothing. Such legislation was intended to curb conspicuous consumption of the poor to reinforce social hierarchies based on vestimentary displays.[166] During these centuries, consumption by the lower classes and the middling class was naturally constrained by extreme wealth differences and the high cost of luxury goods. However, this was no longer the case by the 18th century, where the middling classes were privy to the same sorts of clothing as the very wealthy, albeit with qualitative and quantitative differences between classes, where the upper classes naturally owned more, both qualitatively and quantitatively. However, despite these differences, it became quite difficult during the 18th century to differentiate members of the middling classes from the upper classes without a close inspection of their attire. This was because the general typology of the clothes owned by both the upper and middle classes, which came together to constitute the "consumer class," were remarkably similar.[167]

In *The Right to Dress: Sumptuary Laws in a Global Perspective, 1200-1800* Giorgio Riello and Ulinka Rublack claim that sumptuary legislation was obsolete in England by 1604.[168] They define sumptuary laws as any regulatory constraint that "sought to regulate social differences" through the imposition of "policies about who could spend how much on what types of dress."[169] However, this seems like

[162] Festa 2005, p. 79.
[163] Brutus 1795, p. 14.
[164] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, pp. 484-449.
[165] Brutus 1795, p. 4.
[166] Berg 2005, p. 29.
[167] Roche 1994, p. 129. The nobility was privy to buying more high-quality goods than the bourgeois in this period, although the same sorts of goods were purchased.
[168] Riello and Rublack 2019, p. 98.
[169] Riello and Rublack 2019, p. 1.

a rather strict definition. If the definition is loosened to "any law that sought to regulate social differences," then the Duty on Hair Powder Act would indeed be considered a sumptuary law. This view is strengthened by the fact that contemporaries regarded it as such. The anonymous "Barrister" defined a sumptuary law in *An Exposition on the Hair Powder Act* as any law that aims to "restrains some [classes] from doing certain lawful things."[170] Likewise, the barber-turned-pamphleteer Joseph Moser who wrote *The meal-tub plot; Or; Remarks upon the powder tax*, decried that the "liberty" to wear hair powder should be restricted to those of fortune, and feared that such legislation might be expanded to other objects of consumption. Moser regarded the Act to be despotic, undermining the "spirit of the English constitution."[171] Although functioning differently from the sumptuary laws of the previous centuries in that nobody was technically restricted from wearing hair powder, the Act resulted in the practical exclusion of the lower and middling classes.[172]

Analyzing the Duty on Hair Powder Act

Thus far, the Duty on Hair Powder Act has been presented according to the issues deemed most crucial for MPs and pamphleteers of the day. The Act will now be analyzed in accordance with three of the main analytical categories, namely, "manifestations of social difference," "respectability," and the "politicization" of hair powder. As demonstrated in the introductory section, the issues of social differentiation and respectability are highly convergent, and thus sometimes difficult to separate in their entirety. This was because the "distinction" derived from the differentiation of status may have yielded comparatively high levels of respectability for those who were able to appear distinct in their sartorial presentation. As the middling classes undermined the "distinction" of the upper classes in their quest for respectability, the aristocracy attempted to reinvigorate social differences through the Act. The institution of the Act also resulted in the immediate politicization of hair powder, which began to undermine its financial integrity whilst posing a threat to future powder consumption.

Social Differentiation and the Powdered Wig- From "Positional Good" To "Common Necessity" (And Back Again)

During the 18th century, clothing served to display status. As astutely noted by Daniel Roche, "fashion, between freedom and constraint, lends itself to all the influences and distinction of power" while embodying ingenuity, individuality, and culture.[173] As such, those with financial resources could

[170] Barrister 1795, p. 14.
[171] Moser 1795, p. 15.
[172] It was perhaps more effective than earlier sumptuary laws, given the forethought that was given to the regulatory aspects of the law, by which the wearing of powder without the purchase of a certificate became a perilous venture, given that those unable to afford one guinea could not possibly afford a fine that was twenty times more expensive than the tax itself.
[173] Roche 2000, p. 3.

capitalize on this distinction, which served as an exclusive space for the upper classes until the advent of the Commercial Revolution. However, rising incomes, the increasing size of the middling classes, and deteriorating prices undermined the status quo and opened up a large swath of goods to non-elite consumers. Thus, during the 18th century, real upward mobility and cross-social increases in purchasing power allowed all classes to consume goods in a previously unfathomable manner.[174]

Although focusing on the French context, Michael Kwass speaks to this effect in "Big Hair: A Wig History of Consumption in Eighteenth-Century France." According to his research, wigs were exclusively an aristocratic phenomenon in the 17th century and for the first four decades of the 18th century, worn by a privileged few. However, changing consumption patterns brought the powdered wig to the middling classes in the early 1750's forward, when it "…tumbled down the social hierarchy".[175] Indeed, the 18th century experienced a tremendous diffusion of the wig and proliferation of powder use. Accordingly, its diffusion "demonstrates a dramatic expansion in an intermediate zone of consumption situated between aristocratic luxury and popular necessity."[176] From the mid-18th century onwards, the powdered wig became very common among the middling class, including members of the professional classes, tradesmen, artisans, and wealthier farmers. This trend was propelled by decreasing prices, driven by increasing competition amongst wigmakers, improved technology, and the rise of the "bagwig," which largely replaced the (much more expensive) "full bottomed wig."[177]

It is clear that the wealthy were opposed to the increasing consumption of "luxury goods" by their social inferiors and wished to curtail this force. The French physiocrat Mirabeau wrote in protest of this phenomenon, noting that "Everyone [in Paris] has become a monsieur" after accidentally, and to his embarrassment, having complimented his blacksmiths' son for the cut of his wig, mistaking him for a member of the peerage.[178] As noted by Amy Wyngaard, "in the spectacle of the city street, an individual's garments and accessories allowed for the most visible and effective conveyance of signs of [both] real and desired status."[179] To members of the upper-class, sartorial democratization must have resembled an eternal masquerade ball, which was intended to "temporarily allow individuals to escape the dictates of their rank" by "allowing participants to liberate themselves briefly from the

[174] Roche 1994, p. 42.
[175] Kwass 2006, p. 633.
[176] Kwass 2006, pp. 634, 639.
[177] Kwass 2006, pp. 637, 639. 645–646
[178] Kwass 2006, p. 634.
[179] Wyngaard 2000, p. 524.

confines and codes of their class."[180] However, while masquerades were fleeting, sartorial democratization and emulation were eternal, continuously escalating throughout the 18th century, allowing individuals to represent themselves as they wished to be seen, rather than as they were.

The fear expressed by Mirabeau was not constricted to France. While the early 18th-century wig was a way of *reproducing* social identity in Britain, late-century wigs were capable of *producing* a social identity for the wearer.[181] In his pamphlet from 1770, *A Treatise on Hair,* the hairdresser David Ritchie confirms Mirabeau's fear when he observes that the proliferation of wigs across British society mid-century onwards created an "incongruity" between rank and appearance and "obliterated those delineations of rank and character transmitted by the ancients."[182] Affordable and worn by all but the destitute, the relationship between wigs and social hierarchy was erased, with clothing capable of representing desired status as much as real status.[183] John Donaldson believed that powder allowed swindlers to "better carry on their depredations on the public as no tradesman would refuse credit to a powdered person,"[184] reinforcing the conception that powder could pervert real identity by fostering an identity incongruous with social status.

This perceived incongruity between rank and fashion can be clearly observed in the case of Samuel Pepys (1633-1703.) Pepys was a non-aristocratic administrator of the British Navy and MP who was able to reach this esteemed position despite his middling class birth due to his tactful social maneuvering. Samuel Pepys was an early non-aristocratic adopter of the wig. According to Woodruff Smith, "Pepys's adoption of fashionable dress and a genteel public lifestyle [was] a conscious strategy for securing his social standing."[185] Through emulative consumption, Pepys believed that he could secure the status of "gentleman."[186] This perhaps signaled that "respectability" was in the early stages of replacing "gentility" as the manner in which men graded one another, given his awareness that social status was not conferred by birth alone. Though Pepys had "no stomach" for wearing a wig, he decided to crop his hair, nonetheless, wearing a wig from 1663 onward.[187] As Pepys was repulsed by the wig, it is evident that he did not wear it for the purpose of fashionability, but rather to elevate his social status by garnering a respectable appearance. However, despite his ability to traverse social

[180] Wyngaard 2000, p. 533.
[181] Festa 2005, p. 70.
[182] Ritchie 1770, p. 46.
[183] Wyngaard 2000, p. 524.
[184] Donaldson 1795, p. 6.
[185] Smith 2012, p. 28.
[186] Smith 2012, p. 30.
[187] *Diary of Samuel Pepys,* Saturday, May 9, 1663.

boundaries, Pepys was viewed as an upstart by his aristocratic associates at the Navy Office and parliament alike.[188] For instance, his decision to adorn a wig was regarded as an affront to aristocratic exclusivity. Upon visiting the coffeehouse, wearing his wig for the first time, Pepys's associate Sir William Penn chastised him for it. This was despite the fact that Penn was wearing one himself, undoubtedly concerned that Pepys's adornment was undermining his ability to appear socially distinct.[189] Likewise, when attending his office at the Navy a few days later, his associates Sir William Batten and Sir John Mennes offended Pepys by neglecting to compliment him on his new wig.[190] This affront was likely intentional, signifying that Sir Batten and Mennes did not regard Pepys as worthy of their praise or attention, as they viewed him as a pretentious inferior.

As noted by Daniel Roche, from the viewpoint of the aristocracy, "things had gone awry [confusing] the sartorial order."[191] There was a clash between two discourses: the traditional, which suggested that everyone should consume according to rank and status, and the enlightened, which welcomed the concept that individuals should spend according to their means, regardless of their position in the social hierarchy. This new reality of consumption threatened to undermine the aristocratic hegemony on appearances by rendering social differences invisible. As observed in the case presented by Mirabeau, it was no longer possible to determine class based on dress alone. In the aristocracy's eyes, "imposters" could thus conceal their social position through their consumption of "luxury goods." If clothing was a sign of hierarchy, wealth, and rank, then the ability of the middling classes to consume at a similar level as the aristocracy virtually destroyed the preexisting sartorial order by rendering class differences imperceptible and confusing the social hierarchy.[192] In a community in which everyone owned more goods, and "superfluities" were diffused to all social levels, former luxuries such as the powdered wig decreased in importance with regard to the social capital they carried, unsettling the nobility. In the words of Daniel Roche, the nobles felt as though:

> Ranks [were] perverted, morals weakened, servants corrupted, all redoubled the harmful consequences of disorder. The world no longer rang true. Nobody could with impunity assume the clothes of public personages and masters of display—the bourgeois, who launched themselves into an imitative competition.[193]

[188] Kwass 2006, p. 643.
[189] *Diary of Samuel Pepys,* October 30, 1663.
[190] *Diary of Samuel Pepys,* October 30; November 4, 1663.
[191] Roche 1994, p. 142.
[192] Roche 1994, p. 6, 33.
[193] Roche 2000, p. 102, 204.

Societal elites were disturbed that the powdered wig no longer served as a perfect indicator of social status. Rather than confirming *real* identity, powdered wigs rendered identity changeable, or in the eyes of those like Mirabeau, deceiving.

The fear held by the upper classes is vital to this discussion, revealing a clandestine motivation for the passage of the Duty on Hair Powder Act. As nearly all MPs were noble by birth, such individuals would likely have felt the same fears as Mirabeau regarding their station in society, which was increasingly usurped through the democratization of consumption. The Act was thus expected to return some semblance of normality to the social order through the reinvigoration of social difference. Though Pitt needed to extract revenue from the Act for it to be successful in aiding the war effort, it is likely that an intended consequence of the Act was a decrease in powder consumption among the middling members of society, materially decreasing the Act's revenue. However, Pitt considered this loss of income in designing the Act, as he based the 210,000-pound figure off of the number of individuals owning four-wheeled carriages.[194] William Pitt had already accounted for the expected loss of revenue in entirely omitting the middling classes from his revenue analysis. This omission is telling and seemingly assumes that no members of the middling classes would pay the tax, given that they could not possibly afford four-wheeled carriages. Thus, Pitt seemingly imagined a society where powder use was entirely restricted to the upper classes, which would have rendered powder the ultimate "positional good", resulting in the stark re-manifestation of social differences.

The notion that members of the middling class would abandon powder was supported by pamphleteers. Moser regarded the continued use of powder amongst the middling classes as integral to the Act's productiveness. He thought it likely that "instead of wasting [money] in adorning the outside of their heads," that the middling class would sagaciously reapply their money to more important matters.[195] Regardless of Pitt's intention, outside observers were doubtful of the financial integrity of the Act. According to the aforementioned Joseph Moser, the duty's productiveness would be stifled unless powder remained in general fashion. Moser believed that this prospect was unlikely and agreed with Fox's assertion that the un-powdering of a few prominent individuals would result in mass emulation, after which the "immense revenue would vanish in a moment."[196]

[194] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 488.
[195] Moser 1795, p. 14.
[196] Moser 1795, p. 14.

Respectability: "Polite Society" and the Powdered Wig in 1750-1795 Discourse

As noted, the ability of the middling class to emulate the aristocracy was a direct result of the consumer revolution. Ross Wilson argues that this revolution allowed "more men and women than ever before in human history to enjoy the experience of acquiring material possessions."[197] This rise in consumption was coupled with a shift toward "luxury goods." The middling classes were particularly interested in goods that embodied modernity, respectability, politeness, taste, style, and individualism, all whilst mirroring the consumption habits of their superiors.[198] Such goods were used to showcase wealth, conferring respectability on the consumer. At the heart of this competitive race for respectability were goods relating to fashion, which were prioritized by consumers when it came to social emulation, imitation, and cross-class competition.[199] Within the middling classes, the consumption of luxury goods was used as a method of entering polite society. This infuriated the nobility, who previously held a virtual monopoly on polite goods capable of fostering respectability.[200] Those who failed to conform to the dictates of fashion were viewed as both obsolete and eccentric, and thus deprived of their respectability. These individuals thereby faced both social and economic exclusion, which held the potential of undermining both their *real* and *perceived* status through socio-economic effects.[201]

The propagation of the powdered wig amongst the middling members of society was driven by its ability to foster respectability and increase perceived status, though undermining its status as a positional good, thus inhibiting its role as a status differentiator.[202] From 1750 onwards, the powdered wig mutated differences in rank and status while becoming a cross-class symbol of respectability for its wearer, while aiding in the erasure of ostensible sartorial distinctions between the middling classes and aristocracy.[203] It is important to note that the dissemination of the powdered good undermined its status as a "luxury good." Previously considered as such due to its "positional" nature, its spread disrupted this status. Coupled with the fact that its use became necessary for the maintenance of respectability, the good shifted from a "luxury" to a "common necessity" as a direct result.

The notion that powdered wigs conferred respectability unto their wearer before and as of 1795 is strongly supported by contemporaneous pamphleteers. Joseph Moser regarded the exhibition of a

[197] Wilson 2008, p. 144-145.
[198] Berg 2005, p. 9-11.
[199] Wilson, 2008, p. 145
[200] Berry 2002, p. 377.
[201] Roche 1994, p. 48.
[202] Kwass 2006, p. 643.
[203] Festa 2005, pp. 59, 69.

powdered wig as "the most capital part of male paraphernalia." Conversely, he regarded an unpowdered head as "detestable."[204] If the use of hair powder allowed the consumer to enter polite society by conferring respectability, then the inverse must have been true for those who were unable to continue wearing powder due to the new financial burden. The disuse of powder was regarded as a manifestation of poverty and disreputability, with Moser comparing the outward appearance of the un-powdered to that of "stage murderers."[205] In this context, the Duty on Hair Powder Act deprived previous powder wearers of a respectable appearance by "putting a badge on their poverty."[206]

As previously deliberated, social elites regarded middling emulation as the vain usurpation of aristocratic exclusivity, damaging the social order through the perversion of rank and status. Moser opposed this notion and did not regard emulation as the usurpation of identity. Rather, he viewed the emulation of upper-class powder use as "innocent and elegant." This emulation, he argued, would render the middling classes "more acceptable to society… in the eyes of those whom they visit, or with whom they transact business."[207] Rather than vanity, the maintenance of a powdered head was necessary for the maintenance of common respectability. In the opinion of the pamphleteer "Brutus," the adherence to current fashion was a "duty" for all respectable members of society, a fact which could induce even the poor into paying for a certificate, as hair powder allowing such individuals to appear "clean and respectable."[208] He believed that tradesmen who could not pay for a certificate would lose business and risk ostracization for their "singular" style.[209] The anonymous pamphleteer "Barrister" was likewise appalled that "maimed and disabled officers, who sacrificed the flower of their life for his country" who retired on half-pay were forced to pay for the privilege to appear respectable, echoing the exemptions urged on behalf of half-pay officers.[210] Thus, according to nearly all commentators on the Act, it required "but little consideration to see the oppression of the act" as "great folks would suffer very little", while "honest tradesmen" would be unable to present themselves decently.[211]

[204] Moser 1795, p. 4.
[205] Moser 1795, p. 4.
[206] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p, 448.
[207] Moser 1795, pp. 6-7.
[208] Brutus, 1795, pp. 10, 13.
[209] Brutus 1795, p. 7.
[210] Barrister 1795, p. 19.
[211] Anonymous (*A Letter to the deputy manager)* 1795, p. 4–6.

The Politicization of Hair Powder- Symbolic Displays Of Allegiance

Though not focusing specifically on wig or powder consumption, Katrina Navickas has explored the topic of political clothing and adornment in England during the Age of Revolutions, specifically from 1780 to 1840. She argues that "emblematic clothing made a political position manifest, and in doing so made adherence, opposition, or indifference possible."[212] In this context, clothing and other material adornment were a symbolic channel that allowed political participants to visually and perceptibly display their political ideology through clothing, an "optimum means of public communication."[213]Navickas states that the politicization of hair powder reveals how the war against France "intensified the connections that Pitt's opponents made between wigs, the economic capability to powder them, and wider corruption in the body politic."[214]

While powdered wigs were universally worn in the earlier 18th century, irrespective of political ideology, they were politicized with the passage of the Act.[215] Accordingly, conservative MPs and those supporting the war with France continued to wear powder, while opponents of the war and Pitt's ministry discarded its use. The Earl of Moira argued that vestimentary displays of political allegiance would serve as positive feedback on ideological differences between MPs, giving rise to factionalism manifested through attire.[216] This process began immediately after the imposition of the Act, with those who discontinued using powder collectively referred to by pamphleteers as the "Anti-Powder Association" or "Roundheads," while continued users were termed "Cavaliers."[217] In spurning the powdered wig, progressive politicians could display their discontentment with Pitt's Act, while financially emasculating his ability to collect revenue, thus limiting the Pittites ability to fund the war effort. This served as an ultimate form of resistance in the post-1795 era, given that the Treason Act and Seditious Meetings Act (1795) stifled other forms of political resistance.

(William Pitt likely expected to benefit politically from the Duty on Hair Powder Act. Given the contemporaneous passage of the Seditious Meetings Act and Treason Act, which were issued to allow the summary conviction of those deemed enemies of the state, it seems likely that the wish to pinpoint radicals by compartmentalizing non-powder uses into a category of dissent was a motivation for the Act. The pamphleteer "Brutus" believed that the Act was introduced for these reasons, to demarcate

[212] Navickas 2010, p. 541.
[213] Navickas 2010, p. 541.
[214] Navickas 2010, p. 542.
[215] Festa 2005, p. 59. While there were undoubtedly attacks on wig and powder use in the earlier eighteenth century, these attacks were based on religious principles, such as the "vanity," "sumptuousness," and "effeminacy" associated with wearing a wig.
[216] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 449.
[217] Moser 1795, p. 9.

potential "enemies of the constitution" by allowing radicals to be easily pinpointed.[218] The disuse of hair powder was even used in court as evidence of radicalism.[219])

The politicization of powder was immediately observable within parliament after the Act's imposition. The radical MP James Martin ceased to use hair powder in connection with the Act as "he was not fond of unnecessarily contributing to the support of the war" which he considered to be both unjust and unnecessary.[220] In this context, James Martin's discontinuation of powder use could be seen as a form of opposition against a government he viewed as hawkish. Conversely, those who continued to wear powder in parliament were typically supporters of William Pitt and the war against France. The continued powder use of prime ministers until 1812 served to underscore their continued commitment to supporting the war against France, as well as the adherence to Pittite conservativism. Their support was quite literal, given that annual payment for the certification to wear hair powder directly financed British military exploits against Revolutionary France.

The politicization of hair powder was observable outside of parliament as well. Sir Francis Russell, the Fifth Duke of Bedford reacted in a manner identical to James Martin. The Duke was an adversary of William Pitt, an opponent of the war against France, and known radical, belonging to the "Levelers," an anti-monarchical organization that emerged during the English Civil War. The Duke of Bedford initiated the much-feared process described by Charles James Fox. Accordingly, the Duke, as a prominent 'influencer,' convinced his associates to crop their hair. Bedford and his followers viewed cropped hair as a republican trait, harking back to the Romans, or most recently, the Parliamentarians of the English Civil War.[221] (After the 1798 Rising, the term "Croppies" would also be used to refer to Irish Republicans who wore short, cropped hair due to their ideological sympathies with French Revolutionaries.[222]) On September 26, 1795, the *London Chronicle* printed the following segment:

> The noblemen and gentlemen who agreed to the Duke of Bedford's cropping proposal a few days ago at Woburn Abbey, when a general cropping and combing out of hair took place, were Lords William Russell, Villers Paget, Sir Henry Featherstone, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Ant Lee, Mr. R. Lee, Mr. Trevers, Mr. Dutton, Mr. Day, and Mr. Vernon. They entered into an engagement to forfeit a sum of money if any of them wore their hair tied or powdered within a certain period. Many noblemen and gentlemen in the County of Bedford have

[218] Brutus 1795, p. 6.
[219] Brutus 1795, p. 10.
[220] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 72.; Philp 2014, pp. 28-29. The "un-powdering" of progressives and radicals alike became symbolically significant during this period. When Joseph Gerrald was convicted of sedition in 1794, he "…appeared before his judges with his neck bared, French style, his unpowdered hair hanging loose."
[221] Barrell 2006, p. 203. Though not Cromwell himself, who wore his hair long throughout his reign.
[222] Majors 1810, p. 415.

since followed the example. It has become general within the gentry in Hampshire, and the Ladies have left off wearing powder.[223]

It is observable that the personal choices of the Duke of Bedford had consequences beyond his own household. Though it is unclear whether the gentlemen listed in the newspaper segment above held similar political viewpoints as the Duke, it is blatantly clear that his political views, when combined with significant community influence, allowed him to persuade others to emulate his decision to crop his hair. Simultaneously, the Duke's societal position allowed him to make such a bold decision without damage to his reputation. By the same virtue, those who followed in his stead could use their relationship with the Duke to justify their choice to their friends, loved ones, and acquaintances, and would thus preserve their reputations as well. The cropping of the Duke of Bedford's hair became so well known that the hairstyle he adopted became known eponymously as the "Bedford Crop," or "The Bedford Level."[224]

Francis Russell, the 5th Duke of Bedford, Hair Cut in "Bedford Crop," Painted by William Grimaldi, 1797.

While the Duke of Bedford's choice was initially anti-fashion in its rejection of the fashionable use of powder, the emulation by others eventually resulted in the inversion of fashionability within a few years. Though many of those who chopped their hair in the name of politics in 1795 were criticized, ridiculed, and even ostracized for their "singularity," wig and powder users in forthcoming years would

[223] London Chronicle, "The Duke of Bedford." September 26, 1795, p. 2.
[224] Barrell 2006, pp.178, 187. Eponymous hairstyles became fashionable during a certain timespan through their association with a prominent individual adorning the style. Other examples of this phenomenon are the *Caesar Cut*, *Van Dyke Beard*, and *Sideburns*.

increasingly be satirized as effeminized, dandified, and Frenchified. As will be discussed in detail in the ensuing chapter on satires, the decision of prominent men such as Bedford to crop their hair marks the beginning of this trend. Thus, what initially began as a sartorial manifestation of political resistance would quickly seep into the world of fashionability. Though the emergence of middling masculinity was likely a greater force in the increasing disreputableness associated with powder use, the decision of aristocrats like Bedford was critical in undermining the respectability associated with powder use within the ranks of the wealthy.

A Notable Omission- Masculinity and the Duty on Hair Powder Act

The issue of masculinity is not clearly discernable in the context of the *Parliamentary Debates* and subsequent pamphleteering. Nevertheless, it deserves some attention, as gender is somewhat implicit in the Parliamentary Debates. In his address to parliament, William Pitt presents the consumption of powder by the middling classes as a vanity, a trait primarily associated with women during the 18th century.[225] Imbedded therein is the notion that the middling classes were effeminate in their exasperated attempt to emulate their social betters. Because the embodiment of masculine characteristics was a prerequisite for political authority in Great Britain, the presentation of the middling classes as effeminate should foremost be regarded as an attempt to disenfranchise the entire class by invalidating their masculine competence.[226] According to David Kuchta, political elites associated "luxury with effeminacy, tyranny, corruption, anarchy, and middling-class upstarts."[227] However, he also notes that, beginning in the late 18th century, "middle-class men gained political power in great part by undermining the moral authority that legitimated aristocratic rule" by presenting them as effeminate.[228] Though this process was well underway during the period of study, there is evidence to suggest that the upper classes regarded middling class emulators as particularly effeminate. The pamphleteer William Green was one such individual. He notes that:

> The frugality, which once characterized the middling and lower classes of society, is no longer to be found: the meanest mechanic of the present-day apes the luxuries of his superiors, and aims at those enjoyments, which his situation in life precludes him from tasting.[229]

Though his identity is unclear, his view corresponds to that of the upper classes, where conspicuous consumption among the middling and lower classes constituted vain effeminacy. However, this view appears to have faded into relative obsolescence during the period of study; far more common was

[225] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 40, 1795, p. 488; Martinez, (2000), p. 75.
[226] Kuchta 2002, p. 11.
[227] Kuchta 2002, pp. 10-11.
[228] Kuchta 2002, p. 11.
[229] Green 1800, p. 3.

the notion of aristocratic effeminacy. This concept will feature very prominently in the succeeding section, demonstrating a reversal in the relationship between political authority and manliness, by which the ruling aristocrats were increasingly deprived of their political power through their emasculation, to the benefit of the middling classes.

Part II- The Rise Of The "Guinea Pig"

British Written Satire and Caricature in the 18th Century

To deliberate the use of satires relating to the Duty on Hair Powder Act and powder use during the 1795-1812 era, these satires must first be contextualized within the tradition of late 18th century British satire. This period has been retrospectively branded Britain's *Golden Age* of satire, given the blossoming market for satirical prints, caricatures, and works of literature that were sprung from a stirring political atmosphere. In addition, the art of caricature was posthumously regarded as the quintessential art form of the age.[230] Caricature was a form of art that mirrored developments to public opinion and may therefore offer insights into the British psyche with regards to issues that were not widely reported on through other media. They can thus offer insights into the subliminal. For instance, though the notion of 'masculinity' was perhaps too mundane of a topic for essayists to contemplate in their writings, the humoristic aspects of masculinity versus femininity solidified the use of satire as an optimal platform for the serious but yet playful deliberation of these seemingly mundane issues. While the notion of masculinity was often deliberated in comedic theatrical performances, it was not an issue commonly pondered by pamphleteers or politicians during this period.

Satire in the 1790s was heavily influenced by the era's political climate. Satirists and caricaturists involuntarily adapted to the anti-treason and sedition statutes that increasingly targeted printers. Bricker notes that freedom of press contracted "suddenly, stunningly, and repeatedly" during the 1790-1815 period, thus overlapping with the entire period of study.[231] Booksellers, printers, and authors were routinely persecuted under the anti-treason and sedition statutes. Most prosecutions against printers failed to convict. However, execution, imprisonment, forced labor, a loss of revenue, and community standing were the *potential* result of sentencing, a risk that most caricaturists and printers were unwilling to take. As it was much more challenging to prosecute images than written works, satire was increasingly deverbalized. Caricatures, which first appeared in Great Britain in the 1760s, overtook prose as the most common form of satire during the 1790s.[232] To avoid prosecution these caricatures also decreased the verbosity of their images by reducing "speech bubbles," rendering these images un-prosecutable in practice.

The rise of caricature could perhaps be regarded as a strategy employed by satirists, artists, and printers to avoid prosecution. As such, it is unsurprising that pro-government satires were more likely

[230] Donald, and Paul Mellon Centre 1996, p. 2.
[231] Bricker 2018, p. 308.
[232] Bricker 2018, p. 313, 320.

to retain their verbosity and be written in prose, whereas satirists critical of the state increasingly switched to caricature as their favored medium. Obviously, the threat of prosecution was not the only reason for which caricatures became so popular during this period, given that they were far more effective at generating sales than satires written in prose. As noted by Zuroski, caricatures "did not require the same level of literacy and readerly sophistication as literature" and thus appealed to a much broader audience than prose. As such, caricatures became the favored medium of printers, as they could be enjoyed, and thus purchased, by a larger segment of the population than written satire.[233] While the market for caricatures expanded to a substantial degree during this period, the market for satire written in prose contracted dramatically.[234]

The remaining written satires typically censored sensitive material or names for the same reason that caricature became so popular, to avoid prosecution. For instance, one satire censors Prime Minister Pitt to Pr-m—r P-tt.[235] Satires of the period were fashioned for a middling class audience and were, therefore decidedly anti-aristocratic, anti-ministerial, and sometimes anti-monarchical.[236]

Earlier Wig Satires- Francophobia, Moral Deviancy, and Macaroni Men

The satirization of wigs and their wearers was not a new phenomenon in 1790s Britain. William Hogarth's engraving entitled *The Five Orders of Periwigs* from 1761 is today perhaps the most well-known satire on wigs. This engraving anticipates the wig satires of the 1790s in that it lampoons, exaggerates, and grotesquely represents the abundant eccentricity of wigs from the period, which rendered their respectable nature of wigs questionable. The satire also lampoons the wigs of "Francophiles," seen in the fourth row. The implied Francophobic nature of this wig is especially telling and relevant, given that it indicates that sartorial nationalism was an emergent force by the early 1760s, more than thirty years prior to the Act's imposition. This same concept features strongly in satires against the "foppish" Guinea Pigs in the 1790s, who were accused of treasonously adhering to French rather than British values. Individuals deemed to be Francophiles were thereby deprived of their British national identity while viewed as posing a threat to British culture and sovereignty, willfully aiding in its degeneration to the benefit of French culture.[237]

[233] Zuroski 2019, p. 9.
[234] Bricker 2018, pp. 306, 308.
[235] Baldpate 1795, p. 12.
[236] Donald and Mellon 1996, p. 75.
[237] Martinez 2000, p. 83.

The Five Orders of Periwigs, (The Five Orders of Periwigs as they were Worn at the Late Coronation Measured Architectonically), 1761, William Hogarth, Engraving.

The Five Orders of Periwigs was not the first time that William Hogarth used wigs in his engravings as an allegory of moral decay. Hogarth uses such allegory in *A Rake's Progress* (1735), a series of engravings that depict the social, economic, moral, and mental decay of (the aptly named) Tom Rakewell. The protagonist of this series is corrupted by a large inheritance, and rapidly squanders his newfound wealth on gambling, drinking, prostitution, and excessive sumptuousness, as is manifested through his opulent attire. In the first plate, he is ostensibly uncorrupted, with his body devoid of ostentatious finery and still wearing his natural hair. However, in the succeeding plates, his clothing grows more ornate, the size of his wig expands, and his morality deteriorates. In these plates, his wig and finery serve as a visual representation of this moral decay. In the end, Tom is incarcerated in Fleet debtors' prison for his gambling debts before finally losing his sanity and is confined to Bentham Hospital, a notorious mental asylum.

A Rake's Progress is representative of moralistic discourses on luxury that were typical of the 18th century, where the overconsumption of luxuries was viewed as a primary cause of poverty and despair. In the previously mentioned *Observations on the Present State of the Vagrant Poor,* John Scott cites vanity and overconsumption of luxury goods as the chief causes of poverty. Scott criticizes sartorial goods as the "vainest of vanities and absurdest of absurdities."[238] Hogarth's representation of Tom Rakewell's story is thus a moralizing tale that embodies views on luxury that were relatively congruent

[238] Scott 1773, pp. 120-122.

with attitudes held by moralizing pamphleteers of the era. As demonstrated by the parliamentary debates, these views remained influential in the 1790s, where the consumption of powder by the lower classes was deemed a vanity, which served as a motivation for the implementation of the Duty on Hair Powder Act.

Macaroni Effeminacy- Frenchified "Beaus," Corrupted by Fashion

Satire against wig-wearers became increasingly prominent during the 1760s and 1770s due to the Macaroni's emergence. The Macaroni are expertly studied by Peter McNeil in *Pretty Gentlemen: Macaroni Men and the Eighteenth-Century Fashion World,* a book that primarily focuses on the Macaroni of Great Britain, though similar subcultures existed throughout Europe. According to McNeil, the Macaroni were characterized by contemporaries as an effeminate movement, comprised of aristocratic men who sported enormously high wigs, purposefully adopted inane speech patterns, and embraced all things luxurious and ostentatious.[239] In print, the Macaroni were portrayed as spendthrifts who expertly "fool[ed] away their money" and were characterized by their ludicrously colossal and weighty wigs, which could weigh up to five imperial pounds.[240] Profligate conduct and a preoccupation with fashion, traits primarily assigned to women, were superimposed on the Macaroni, which they were accused of rejoicefully accepting.

The Macaroni were viewed as feminized men who were corrupted by fashion, whilst embodying the traits of Frenchmen, an ethnicity stereotyped by Englishmen as "foppish, vain, trifling, changeable, and insincere."[241] The Macaroni even played a role in British propaganda during the American Revolutionary War. According to a tune entitled Yankee Doodle, the American rebels would "stick a feather in their cap and call it Macaroni."[242] The implication was that the Americans were so foolish and effeminate that they believed that simply putting a feather in their cap would render them refined individuals.[243]

The macaronic dress was intimately linked in the British imagination with the French, as well as tendencies toward cultural sedition. McNeil notes that the Macaroni increasingly served as the mouthpiece for satirical ridicules that were decidedly anti-fashion in nature. Accordingly, English masculinities and liberties were contrasted with "…French flattery, vanity, and excessiveness," with fashion regarded as an emblem of seditiousness.[244] Rising opposition toward the French paralleled the

[239] McNeil 2018, p. 40.
[240] Anonymous, *(Damon and Phillis's garland)* 1780, p. 8.
[241] Cooke 1773, p. 30.
[242] Segal, 2017, p. 1.
[243] Zelnik 2018, 533.
[244] McNeil 2018, p. 127, p. 144.

emergence of British sartorial nationalism, a notion that would feature heavily in the powder satires of the 1790s, where the Guinea Pig represented a close analog to the Macaroni.[245]

These "effeminate beaus" were viewed as contemptible and ridiculous by most satirists, pamphleteers, and normative members of society, and were thus considered to be "buffoons" and "jesters."[246] For society-at-large, the "foreign arts" and "fantastic dress" that characterized these Macaroni were not only unnecessary and profligate, but also an imperilment to British culture.[247] Thus, the concerns of the satirists rested primarily on nationalistic, Francophobic, and masculinist pillars, with Macaroni culture representing an embarrassing, though a formidable threat to politically conservative, traditionalist notions of British masculinity.

Caricatures of the Macaroni were exceptionally common during the 1760s and 1770s. The caricature presented below, *The Macaroni- a Real Character at the Late Masquerade*, portrays a self-obsessed Macaroni adorned in a grotesquely bulky and high wig, in stark juxtaposition to the miniature tricorn hat upon his head. The Macaroni's stature is slight, accentuating his wig's absurd size. His self-impressed expression indicates that he is perhaps unaware or indifferent to the societal views levied against his subculture.

The Macaroni- a Real Character at the Late Masquerade, Phillip Dawe, 1773, Public Domain.

It was believed that the effeminacy exhibited by the Macaroni could cause national ruin. According to Edward Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,* the Roman Empire fell due to a loss of public

[245] McNeil 2018, p. 26.
[246] Twigem 1773, p. 5.
[247] Twigem 1773, p. 7.

virtue. Among these virtues was masculinity, which Gibbon believed was replaced in Rome by "oriental" effeminacy, directly resulting in the Crisis of the Third Century. According to Gibbon, "effeminate luxury… infected the manners of courts and cities", with Rome "humbled beneath the effeminate luxury of oriental despotism."[248] According to another author called "Rowe," who wrote a quarter-century prior to Gibbon, Rome fell because "this mighty people softened into delicacy" and "languished some time in a sort of national consumption, and at last expired."[249] According to Rowe, the Roman people

> Had vanquished the whole world by their resolution and virtue, so did they subdue themselves by all the practices of a mean and vicious spirit; and Rome now stands as a monument of her own people's folly, vice, and ruin, as she does of their wisdom, virtue, and power.[250]

In reality, the comments made by Gibbon and Rowe were probably intended to serve as allegories, a warning of what was to come if decadent effeminacy were to spread and take hold over the entire British populace. A pamphleteer named John Shebbeare argued that it would be hubristic for Englishmen to "delude themselves like children" into believing that they were immune from buckling under the pressures of the luxury and effeminacy that drove the Roman Empire to ruin.[251]

Thus, the Macaroni were not only a group to be loathed, but also feared. These men were supposedly driving Britain down a dangerous path, stealthily disintegrating the empire through their luxurious and effeminate vanity. They were treasonous, valuing whimsical extravagance rather than the security of the British Empire. However, by the later 1790s, the notion that decadent consumption was destroying the kingdom was no longer an insult levied solely against non-normative men such as the Macaroni. Rather, it was applied to the majority of the upper classes, all of whom were stereotyped as adorning fine clothes and powdered wigs, all whilst being served by their "spruce powdered footmen."[252] This was particularly the case with men who wore powdered wigs after 1795, who were termed "Guinea Pigs" due to the cost of the powder certificate. Despite the fact that such men were regarded as polite, masculine, and respectable prior to the Act's implementation, from 1795 forward such men were satirized through the same terminology and visual analogies as the Macaroni, despite significant temporal differences.

[248] Gibbon Vol. 1. 1776, p. 51; Gibbon Vol. 3. 1776, p. 36.
[249] Rowe 1750, p. 78.
[250] Rowe 1750, p. 79.
[251] Shebbeare 1756, p. 8.
[252] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41 1795, p. 71.

The Duty on Hair Powder Act- A "Singular" and "Ridiculous" Act: The Caricatures of William Hanlon

Most commentators considered the notion that powder should be taxed to be laughable and abominable. According to the pamphleteer "Brutus:"

> The proposed tax of a guinea a head on every person who wears hair powder is an imposition of such singular and absurd description, that I know now whether it has been received with a greater share of surprise or ridicule.[253]

This "singular" ludicrousness of the Act mentioned by "Brutus" echoed the complaints voiced by MPs and pamphleteers discussed in the preceding chapter. When Lord Sydney voiced support for the Act on the premise that it was "likely to be productive from the number of persons wearing hair powder," the Earl of Moira viewed this logic as preposterous, remarking that "the noble Lord might next year propose a tax upon breeches, which must prove a very productive tax, as they were in such general use."[254] Of course, the Earl of Moira regarded the taxation of both powder and knee-breeches as outlandish given that he viewed these items as necessities, rather than luxuries. The caricaturist William Hanlon found comedic value in this exchange and crafted a caricature called *Licensed to Wear the Breeches*, in recollection of the Earl of Moira's scathing and ironic retort toward Lord Sydney.

Licensed to Wear Breeches, William Hanlon, Published by Samuel Fores, 1795.

As demonstrated by *Licensed to Wear Breeches*, the notion that such an Act was singular, absurd, and laughable lent itself to its rampant satirization, which thrived off of the Act's supposed ludicrousness.

[253] Brutus 1795, p. 3.
[254] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42 1795 pp. 426-427.

John Barrell notes that it was impossible for society-at-large "to separate the issue of hair powder from the satirical baggage it carried, which was discussed in virtually all forms of visual and printed media."[255]

The Act was simply too outrageous for caricaturists to ignore the opportunity to capitalize on its existence. The caricature entitled *Licensed to Wear Hair Powder,* also by William Hanlon, features a chimney sweeper, carrying a chimney brush while his clothes, skin, and hair are blackened by soot, with the latter resembling a powdered wig. The depicted character can be assumed to be impoverished, as indicated by the hole near his elbow and half-missing shoe, leaving his toes exposed. Chimney sweepers were viewed by their contemporaries as embodying poverty and were considered by contemporaries to be "the most deplorable class of society." [256] They were far removed from the members of the middling classes who could afford hair powder before the Act's imposition. However, this caricature does not claim that the lower classes continued to wear hair powder, with the pamphleteer John Donaldson claiming that "cheats and swindlers", members of the lower class, would purchase hair powder certificates to "better carry on their depredations on the public."[257] Rather, the caricature criticizes the act's technicalities, by which chimney soot would legally constitute hair powder and was thus (technically) illegal to wear without a license, given that anything which even remotely resembled hair powder was constituted as such when placed upon the head.[258] In this ridiculous hypothetical, it was perhaps expedient for the chimney sweeper in question to take out a certificate for hair powder to avoid prosecution.

[255] Barrell 2006, p. 160.
[256] Andrews 1788, p. 2.
[257] Donaldson 1795, p. 7.
[258] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42 1795, p. 380.

Licensed to Wear Hair Powder, William Hanlon, Published by Samuel Fores, 1795.

As evident in *Licensed to Wear Breeches* and *Licensed to Wear Hair Powder*, caricatures acted as a direct commentary on proceedings from the parliamentary debates. We have previously discussed Sir M.W. Ridley and Richard Smith, who urged an exemption in favor of "spruce powdered footmen," a vestigial remain of exclusive aristocratic luxury. Though this exemption may have appeared reasonable to members of the upper class who wished to distinguish themselves from the middling classes, it was met by ridicule by satirists, as well as by MPs and William Pitt, who regarded those with many servants as undeserving of an exemption due to their clear ability to afford the cost, as well as the fact that such individuals would generate considerable revenue for the treasury.[259] In the satirical pamphlet *The Poll Tax, An Ode*, this proposed exemption was touched upon. According to the author, the "rich and great" were upset that keeping "a dozen footmen" would obligate them to:

> Pay for powdering of the Fellow's Hair,
> Those who keep dozens can't TWELVE GUINEAS spare,
> Yet vows his consequence should suffer shame,
> To keep one less, or make them dress more plain,
> For who could relish [wine] rich and mellow
> If handed by a damned unpowdered fellow.[260]

Thus, rather than suffering from the "shame" of being served by un-powdered servants, such nobles continued to pay the tax, at least in the satirical context. The aforementioned "pleasure which a man

[259]Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41 1795, p. 71.
[260] Baldpate 1795, p. 14.

feels in being attended at table by a spruce powdered footman" was simply too great for such gentlemen, and proper enjoyment would be impossible without this display of wealth.[261]

French Frivolity, British Masculinity

After 1795, there was a rising consensus that powdered wigs were representative of the aristocracy and thus a manifestation of feminine foppery, running parallel to earlier satires against the Macaroni. This view is highly differentiated from what can be observed in the parliamentary debates and early pamphleteering, which unilaterally presents powdered wigs as respectable and masculine accouterments.

The term "fop" was a pejorative term for men who were excessively concerned with their appearance and who were accused of exhibiting airs of Frenchification, both in manners and dress.[262] Because fashion was believed to be a feminine vice, men who took too much pride in their appearance were emasculated in the eyes of the general public. They were pejoratively referred to as 'dandies', 'fops', 'mollies', 'beaux', 'coxcombs', 'petit maître's', and 'coquettes'.[263] These terms were considered grave insults to most, given the implications of homosexuality and sodomy which were connected with these terms.[264] Because masculinity was predicated on male participation in heterosexual sex, it was impossible for men characterized by these terms to be identified as masculine.[265] Accusations of sodomy were not only a potential embarrassment to those on whom the term was conferred but was also dangerous, as homosexuality was an illegal, capital offense.[266]

Masculinity and femininity were strongly convergent throughout most of the 18th century, with men expected to adopt some qualities later deemed feminine, such as refinement, etiquette, and politeness. However, fears that men were becoming domesticated caused a backlash against the existing continuum of acceptable masculine-feminine behavior, which resulted in the rise of distinctly separated spheres between men and women, domestically, socially, and sartorially.[267] During the second half of the 1790s, the polite gentleman lost his status in Great Britain, undoubtedly caused by a growing hostility towards France, with the fear that men were becoming obsessed with effete fashionability forming the bedrock of these fears.[268] The fact that politeness was viewed as producing

[261] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41 1795, p. 71.
[262] Towns 2014, p. 120.
[263] Donald and Mellon 1996, p. 86
[264] Harvey 2005, p. 304.
[265] Carter 1997, p. 430.
[266] Indeed, individuals accused of sodomy were executed far into the eighteenth-century, with James Pratt and John Smith being the last to be executed for sodomy in 1835.
[267] Towns 2014, p. 120.
[268] Towns 2014, p. 121; Carter 1997, p. 438.

femininity, as well as its associations with the French, undoubtedly aided in its erosion as a hegemonic masculine trait.[269]

As noted by Martin Martinez, "the polarity between effeminacy and masculinity [was] placed alongside other binary oppositions" such as that between Englishmen and foreigners, loyal subject versus treasonous radical.[270] Accordingly, French culture and effeminacy were inextricably linked in the British imagination, rendering the powdered wig an object of ridicule through its mere association with the French aristocracy.[271] Though the powdered wig was representative of politeness and respectability throughout the 17th and earlier 18th centuries, it was increasingly construed as an embodiment of effeminacy and could thus not be viewed as respectable. As argued by Michèle Cohen, while the wig denoted masculinity and respectability before 1795, it was increasingly regarded as posing "the threat of excess and effeminacy," a process aided by its decreasing societal prevalence.[272]

It seems apparent that the Duty on Hair Powder Act aided in the feminization of powder. While the earlier 18th century featured a strong intersection between aristocratic and middling behavior and dress, the Act forced the middling classes to construct their own masculinity identity.[273] As a result, wig wearers were increasingly upper-class individuals, who were far more likely than the middling classes to adhere to the polite values of the past. The rising sartorial and behavioral differentiation between the aristocracy and the middling classes increasingly pitted conflicting notions of masculinity and respectability against one another. While the middling classes uniformly rebranded themselves, the upper classes did not in their entirety continue to adhere to the values of polite masculinity of the past. Prominent influencers such as the Prince of Wales and Duke of Bedford abandoning the use of powder, eroding aristocratic manliness from within by joining the ranks of middling masculinity. Thus, the relationship between class and masculinity was turned on its head. While the middling classes emulated the upper classes in the construction of sartorial masculinity throughout much of the 18th century, the upper classes now began to emulate the middling class. Though these prominent men abandoned the powdered wig for political, rather than social reasons, their decision to do so nevertheless lent legitimacy to the bourgeoning values of middling masculinity and allowed its values to spread through a portion of the upper class.

With the collective un-powdering of the vast majority of the middling class and a (smaller) subsection of the upper-class, powdered wigs were increasingly viewed as a conservative and elite luxury, representative of the aristocracy. With the implication of effeminacy looming large, the wig's

[269] Cohen 1996, p. 9.
[270] Martinez 2000, p. 84.
[271] Festa 2005, p. 53.
[272] Cohen 1996, p. 5.
[273] Mounsey 2013, p. 133. During this period, John Bull emerged as the epitome of middling masculinity.

reinstitution as a positional good hastened this process.[274] The bewigged upper classes were characterized as "…foppish patrons, spruce in powdered wigs, and bands clear starched, with golden snuffboxes in their hands, and the rich brilliant glittering on their fingers."[275] With the rise of middling masculinity, this sartorial class became a spectacle to ridicule rather than emulate. These wealthy fops would be referred to as "Guinea Pigs," a term that rose to prominence after the passage of the Duty on Hair Powder Act.

Though caricatures routinely portrayed upper-class individuals as effeminate, Francophilic, and foppish, such portrayals were not always accurate. Perceived, but often inaccurate manifestations of social difference were capitalized on through caricatures. For instance, James Gillray published a satire that portrays the Prince of Wales in a wig with his clothes frosted with an absurd amount of powder even though he had abandoned powder as a direct result of the Duty on Hair Powder Act.[276] This caricature demonstrates that the association between the upper classes and powder usage was so strong that even inaccurate representations were accepted by the general public. A representation of the Prince of Wales is but one of the innumerable caricatures in which a member of the upper classes is inaccurately portrayed as wearing a powdered wig for the purpose of elite identification, which became a common trope in caricature after 1795.[277]

[274] Carter 1997, p. 429.
[275] Anonymous *(The Rights of the Devil)* 1795, p. 7. These accouterments were likewise used by the Macaroni, the stereotypes levied against them reapplied in the 1790s.
[276] Parissien 2002, p. 112.
Accused the Prince of Wales was accused of wearing a wig after 1795. However, it is clear that this was an attempt to disparage him, as all other sources unanimously agree that the Prince Regent did not wear a powdered wig. ("His Late Majesty." *Times*, February 9, 1820, p. 3)
[277] Baker 2013, p. 2.

The Prince of Wales, James Gillray, 1802. Public Domain.

The Rise of the Guinea Pig- Effeminate "Fops"

Notions of changing masculinity and respectability are observable within the array of satires relating to hair powder. Those who wore powdered wigs after 1795 were termed "Guinea Pigs," a subclass of (typically aristocratic) fops who were believed by the general public to wear wigs out of vanity, self-obsession, and effeminacy. This term encompassed the entire wig-wearing, powder adorning, upper class. These Guinea Pigs embodied the polite masculinity of the earlier 18th century, which increasingly lost ground to middling-class masculinity during the era in question, a shift which is strongly supported by caricatures produced in the 1790s, which lambasted those who continued to use powder from 1795 forward.

In one satirical image, unassumingly entitled *A Guinea Pig*, a foppish man, adorned with a powdered wig, admires his hair powder certificate. The image implies a feminine vanity, with the Guinea Pig in this image is seemingly more concerned with appearance than his financial wellbeing. Accordingly, John Barrell notes that the address printed on his certificate indicates that he could not possibly afford the tax.[278] As the consumption of "frivolities and trifles" was a trait that was superimposed on women, these feminine features were ascribed to the Guinea Pig in question, who would rather spend money on a "respectable" appearance than his financial obligations, such as

[278] Barrell 2006, p. 154.

perhaps his family, lodging, or nourishment.[279] Due to his address, it could perhaps be assumed that this man belonged to the middling classes, representing a small subsection of the middling classes who continued to adhere to polite masculinity. As such, this man was perhaps not only viewed as effeminate by other members of the middling classes, but also as a traitor to his class. Whereas the majority of the middling classes mobilized in the construction of middling masculinity, the man depicted in this caricature remained loyal to the eroding aristocratic hegemony. It thus seems likely that he was regarded with greater antipathy than the aristocracy, given his prevailing endorsement of aristocratic sartorial hegemony, and thus the aristocratic control over social norms, and with it, political authority.

A Guinea Pig, Samuel Dighton, Printed by Bowles and Carver, 1795. Public Domain.

The increased financial burdens associated with wearing powder drove the reassessment of its nature as a respectable and masculine good. In *The Poll Tax, An Ode*, the author, the so-called "Grizzle Baldpate," demonstrates the hesitance felt by many members of society in paying for a hair powder certificate after the Act's imposition. He says,

> No longer must ye sport your heads of hair,
> Adorned with powder, scented sweet or plain,
> Such is the will of our great Pr-m—r P-tt,
> Unless ye in your folly should submit,
> To pay a Guinea License for the fame.[280]

[279] Hays 1793, p. 20. As convincingly argued by Amanda Vickery in Vickery 2006, pp. 12-38., men were no less frivolous spenders than men. Women were stereotyped as spendthrifts in eighteenth-century England, which was propelled by women's *visibility* in the marketplace. However, while women purchased goods more often than men, these purchases were routine and inexpensive. On the other hand, male consumption was more excessive and expensive, with men purchasing a disproportionate amount of luxury goods. Thus, the idea that women were more exuberant spenders than men is an entirely false notion.

[280] Baldpate 1795, p. 12.

This "folly" could be viewed as an analog to female vanity and improvidence, with the purchaser squandering his assets in the name of self-obsession and preoccupation with fashion, or "fame." In this context, the Duty on Hair Powder Act cemented the use of hair powder as an effeminate "folly," given that financial intemperance was viewed as a necessary prerequisite for deciding to waste money on a certificate. This stands in stark contradiction to the view presented by pamphleteers and MPs, many of whom continued to regard powder as a necessity. These legislators and commentators (almost unilaterally) believed that an inability to purchase a certificate would severely undermine the respectability of middling merchants, so much that it was believed that vendors who could not afford to powder their hair would suffer economically.[281] However, these commentators wrote immediately before and after the actual implementation of the Act. Thus, whereas most of these pamphlets were published before the Act took effect in early 1795, the caricatures were published after the fact, and are thus more representative of the social reality, whereas the pamphlets are driven by idealized speculation about the consequences. Thus, a discernable shift is evident through these satires, where hair powder was no longer viewed as a prerequisite for the maintenance of respectability, which undermined its integrity as a common necessity. It became increasingly evident that hair powder had become a clear-cut, optional luxury. Rather than a necessity, it was a feminine vice pursued by foolish and effete men who could not manage their finances.

Middling-Class Masculinity And The Erosion Of "Polite Masculinity"

During the 1790s, roughness and taciturnity became celebrated male virtues, whereas politeness and ostentatious luxury were conferred with effeminate associations.[282] Thus, there was a palpable shift, where qualities associated with the aristocracy lost their masculine connotations. On the other hand, virtues embodying the middling and even lower classes, previously regarded as unrespectable, became celebrated virtues of robust manhood.[283] However, this is not to say that the traits deemed "foppish" by some were viewed as such by all. Given that a plurality of the upper classes continued to use powder into the 1810s, this indicates the emergence of competing and conflicting masculinities during this period.[284] However, as the aristocracy only represented a small fraction of the population, it no longer represented masculinity in a dominant or hegemonic form. The shift toward middling masculinity accompanied an increase in cultural capital held by the middling classes at the expense of the upper classes, undermining their social and political control.[285]

[281] Brutus 1795, p. 7.
[282] Harvey 2005, p. 304.
[283] Towns 2014, p. 121.
[284] Martinez 2000, p. 88.
[285] McNeil 2018, p. 220.

A caricature by James Gillray, though not clearly connected to the Duty on Hair Powder Act, clearly delineates the crisis of masculinity that was ongoing during this period, notwithstanding the fact that it comments on the French case. Given the conflict of masculinity discussed, this caricature is equally relevant to Great Britain. In the image entitled *A French Gentleman of the Court of Louis XVI - A French Gentleman of the Court of Égalité,* polite masculinity and emerging middling class masculinity stand in stark contrast to one another. The *Ancien Régime* gentleman bows obsequiously to the revolutionary gentleman, and is adorned in a bagwig, waistcoat, and breeches while holding a tricorne hat, all of which are brilliantly decorated and starkly colored. By contrast, the revolutionary gentleman is of a gruff appearance and demeanor, with a large, cocked hat, unkempt hair, and is clumsily dressed in a broad-collar coat, below-the-knee breeches, and barred stockings. In contrast to the *Ancien Régime* gentleman, his clothing is of a more somber scheme and adorned in a darker shade of blue, a color representative of radical republicanism.[286] While the *Ancien Régime* gentleman exhibits polite masculinity, a trait that was now out of fashion and associated with the upper classes, the revolutionary gentleman demonstrates a more unpolished form of masculinity, which was popularized during this period of increasing gender and class binaries.[287]

Even the dialogue may be analyzed in accordance with these principles. The *Ancien Régime* gentlemen politely shows fealty to the revolutionary gentleman by saying, "I am your very humble servant." In response, the revolutionary gentleman tells the former to "kiss my ass." These quotes further underline the competing and conflicting notions of masculinity that existed during the period, and the submission of the former to the revolutionary gentlemen could perhaps even be interpreted in a sexual context. Nevertheless, both forms of masculinity continued to exist parallelly into the 1810s, though middling class masculinity surpassed aristocratic masculinity in prevalence and respectability it exuded.

[286] Navickas 2010, p. 544.
[287] Towns 2014, pp. 117, 120.

A French Gentleman of the Court of Louis XVI/ A French Gentleman of the Court of Égalité, James Gillray, published by Hannah Humphrey, 1799. Public Domain.

The Guinea Pig Versus the Swinish Multitude- A Satirical Case Study

The Guinea Pig, a representative of the polite masculinity of the 18th century, was often contrasted with the bourgeoning middling-class masculinity, which rose to preeminence during this era, and would serve as the foundation for masculinity throughout the 19th century. In an image entitled *A Sister of a Guinea Pig, One of the Swinish Multitude, A Guinea Pig*, the Guinea Pig in the right panel is portrayed in stark contradistinction with "one of the *Swinish Multitudes*," shown in the middle panel. *The Swinish Multitude* was a term coined by Edmund Burke in his *Reflections on the French Revolution* which pejoratively referred to ordinary citizens.[288] Whereas the farmer representing the *Swinish Multitude* resolutely refuses to wear hair powder, and has an air of masculinity if perhaps somewhat boorish nature, the Guinea Pig is vain, excessive, self-obsessed. True, unrespectable "swinishness" is thereby conferred unto him, as can be observed gazing into the mirror, with the reflection revealing the snout of a literal pig. According to John Barrell, radicals and members of society at large "could take a degree of pleasure in claiming that the rich and polite were now pigs like them."[289]

The Guinea Pig is depicted with the standard accouterments of an overdressed fop, armed with a cravat, powdered wig, and mirror. The gaudy and bright coloration of the Guinea Pig's clothing is a further indication of his effeminacy, matching that of the *Ancien Régime* gentleman discussed previously. The Guinea Pig and Sister of the Guinea Pig are depicted in clothing of similar finery and coloration. According to Martin Martinez, this implies that the Guinea Pig was willing to "trespass upon the exclusively female space" through conspicuous display and ostentatious finery.[290] A slave to

[288] Burke 1790, p. 5.
[289] Barrell 2006, p. 198.
[290] Martinez 2000, p. 81.

fashion, the Guinea Pig differed from the "real men" of the middling classes, the Swinish Multitude, who wore plain dress to masculinely distinguish themselves from the aristocrats.[291]

The farmer depicted in the central image embodies the bourgeoning definition of masculinity. As reported by Gillian Williamson, middling class men lauded "…integrity, self-restraint, resoluteness, and frugality" as its core values.[292] The Guinea Pig displays none of these virtues and is instead defined by his excess and extravagance, as well as unduly opulent outward appearance, qualities which, as noted, were increasingly associated with women.[293] Furthermore, the caricature indicates that the Swinish Multitude viewed themselves to be superior to the Guinea Pig. Though they are both referred to as swine of sorts, the farmer portrayed in the center image retains his agency, masculinity, and self-restraint, independent from luxury and feminine whimsicalities. The Guinea Pig, on the other hand, is entirely enslaved to fashion and his self-obsession. Undoubtedly, those referred to as Guinea Pigs were not only stripped of their masculinity but also their respectability, given the ridicule they received by the general public, as indicated by this caricature. Masculinity was simply a precursor for respectability.

A Sister of a Guinea Pig, One of the Swinish Multitude, A Guinea Pig, by Richard Newton, Published by William Holland, 1795.

As the emergent middling class masculinity discarded the powdered wig almost immediately after the Act's imposition, the added financial burden likely hurried this collective un-powdering by altering the cultural context in which the powdered wig was situated. As such, the notion of "taste of

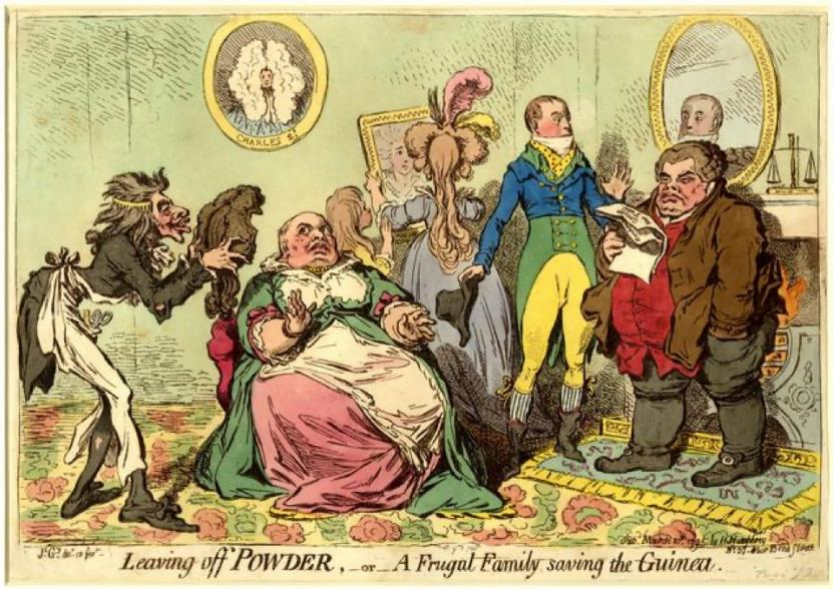
[291] Martinez 2000, p. 83.
[292]Williamson 2016, p. 163.
[293] Martinez 2000, p. 75.

necessity," as posited by Pierre Bourdieu, may have played an additional role in its feminization. According to this theory, "tastes function as markers of class."[294] Individuals consume items affordable to themselves while developing an "antagonistic relationship" with unaffordable goods in an attempt to delegitimize the consumption of these status goods by rendering them ridiculous or otherwise undesirable by "making a virtue out of necessity."[295] The "taste of necessity" creates an illusion of choice for the disenfranchised consumer, who may cite the undesirability of unafforded goods as their motive for abstaining from such goods rather than their unaffordability in itself, perhaps as a face-saving mechanism.[296] With powder no longer afforded by the middling classes, they may have weaponized this financial disadvantage by feminizing the wig, thereby playing a crucial role in its disappearance in the context of middling class masculinity and respectability.

Guinea-Less-Pigs- A Failed Attempt to Ridicule

While caricatures predominantly lampooned Guinea Pigs for their effeminacy, there were also those that ridiculed those who abstained from powder, individuals who were sometimes referred to as "Guinea-Less-Pigs." These satires cement the existence of conflicting notions of respectability and masculinity during this era, with caricatures satirizing the "singularity" and miserliness of individuals who chose not to wear powder. The most renowned of these is unquestionably a caricature by James Gillray entitled *Leaving Off Powder- or- A Frugal Family Saving a Guinea.* In this image, a corpulent, bald matron remains seated while a deranged, grotesque, unpowdered, and most likely French hairdresser fits her with an unpowdered wig, with which she is overtly disgusted. Simultaneously, the oldest daughter of the family despairs at the unpowdered nature of her hair, gazing sorrowfully into a mirror while being consoled by her younger sister. The family's son appears frightened when observing his unpowdered (and perhaps newly cropped) hair in a mirror. The family patriarch stands firmly while all of this is ongoing, "evidently resolute against rescuing his family from social disgrace by buying them licenses," as noted by John Barrell.[297]

[294] Bourdieu 1984, p. 2.
[295] Dolan 2009, p. 724.
[296] Bourdieu 1984, pp. 6, 12. The modern equivalent would be an individual claiming that a 150 SEK box wine is no different from a Dom Perignon while rendering those with the means to indulge in the latter ridiculous or wasteful in their expenditure.
[297] Barrell 2006, p. 170.



Leaving Off Powder-or-A Frugal Family Saving a Guinea, James Gillray, published by Hannah Humphrey, 1795. Public Domain.

Nevertheless, what is evident from this caricature is that though the patriarch is perhaps Scrooge-like in his parsimony, he nevertheless exhibits the taciturn resoluteness which had become a masculine virtue during this period. Thus, though this caricature satirizes the Guinea-Less-Pigs, it is arguably less successful in doing so than the satires levied against Guinea Pigs. Though perhaps disreputable and thus lacking respectability through an aristocratic gaze, the patriarch is nevertheless manly. Furthermore, the supposed miserliness of the father-figure is debatable.[298] Sound financial judgment became a marker of masculine respectability during this period. On the other hand, wastefulness was associated with femininity and disreputability. As argued by Karen Harvey in *The Little Republic*, "a man who could [economically] manage his household could command kingdoms."[299] Men, particularly those amongst the middling classes, were expected to accumulate resources and maintain creditworthiness, while financial ineptitude and poor credit were considered moral failings.[300] Middling men who wasted their savings on hair powder certificates suffered a decline in respectability due to a perceived inability to manage their household economy. Though the middling classes were lampooned for their "miserly" nature, such portrayals were a losing battle, as the household economy's management was considered a virtue amongst the middling classes. Caricatures against abstainers very sparse, particularly when compared to the vast number levied against Guinea Pigs.

[298] Williamson 2016, p. 163.
[299] Harvey 2012., p. 40.
[300] Harvey 2012, p. 43.

Politicizing Powder: "Roundheads," "Cavaliers," "Guinea Pig's" and the "Swinish Multitude"

Despite the negative stereotypes levied against them, the bewigged Guinea Pig resisted the anti-aristocratic sartorial regime through his continued adornment of hair powder. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the powdered wig was reinstituted as a "positional good" during the 1795 to 1812 period. However, they were no longer universally desirable and were only worn by a deteriorating subset of the aristocratic population from 1795 onward. During this period of sartorial democratization, conservative aristocrats continuously aligned themselves with the visual displays of the *Ancien Régime*. Rather than accepting and conforming to a democratized sense of fashionability, these aristocrats embraced an outmoded and negatively perceived fashion sense in an attempt to counteract a bourgeoning middling class authority over fashion. Such men adhered to the eroding aristocratic sartorial order of the 18th century, though at the expense of the deference they received from their inferiors, due to the disgust which their powder use provoked. Aristocrats were accused by the middling classes of harming the good of Britain "by wasting poor men's food"[301] through their consumption of powder which, as previously mentioned, was extremely grain-intensive to produce. From 1795 forward, the cropped and powderless middling classes could assign blame on the upper classes for causing starvation, without any hypocrisy in doing so.

The use of powdered wigs by aristocrats caused their social inferiors to view them as "mutated Frenchmen" who had lost their British identity in their refusal to conform to the emergent masculine norms of the 1790s.[302] This view is somewhat paradoxical, given that William Pitt instituted the Act to fund the war against France, which is certainly not evidence of Francophilia, an Act which was opposed by the Whigs, who were less likely to wear hair powder in the first place. The purchase of powder certificates directly contributed to the wellbeing of the British armed forces, while those abstaining from powder materially undermined the war effort. Regardless of Pitt's intent, accusations of Francophilia and foppery against Pitt and social elites undermined the integrity of the ruling party, their respectability, and ability to govern efficiently. Such views affected non-political Guinea Pigs as well, even amongst those most revered. Clerical ministers, for instance, were viewed as hypocritical in their "railings against ostentation" while adorning powder, appearing as "servants to fashion," which deprived them of their power of persuasion and with it their ability to rule.[303]

In contrast to the aristocrats who maintained their adherence to the antiquated sartorial order, the middling class developed a particular distaste towards the powdered wig after the Act's imposition.[304]

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[301] Baldpate 1795, p. 18.
[302] Cohen 1996, p. 7.
[303] *A Letter to the deputy manager of a Theatre-Royal, London* 1795, p. 7.
[304] Donald and Mellon 1996, p. 75

This distaste held political implications. According to the satirist Peter Pindar, the middling classes were so disgusted with the Act that they "sacrificed their favorite curls to disappoint the rapacity of the minister."[305] This Act created "unwarrantable distinctions," both with reference to class and political ideology. This was a realization of the premonition held by the Earl of Moira during the parliamentary debates, who feared that the Act would render socio-political allegiances visible.[306] The rising sartorial distinctions caused by the Act were admonished for causing sustained harm to society due to the political strife it fomented, which also upset public order. One satirist claimed that the rising social differences would result in outright rebellion. According to "Grizzle Baldpate,"

A glorious bustle, will, no doubt ensue,
Between the powdered and the unpowdered crew,
Damn me, cries white head Bill to white head Bob,
There goes a scoundrel, a DEMOCRATIC hog,
Down with the disaffected Black-haired dog.[307]

While powder was reinstituted as a marker of social difference, it also became a contested, and by the non-wealthy, a reviled symbol of elite and aristocratic consumption and despotism. As unambiguously suggested by this satire, the increasing social differences caused by this Act escalated into political conflict, which Baldpate believed could intensify into an armed struggle. Baldpate recalls the English Civil War, where supporters of the king were immediately identifiable by their long, flowing hair, whereas opponents were characterized by their short, cropped hair. According to the satirist, the Act would lead to anger and feuds:

Between those who powder wear, and those who it despise,
Which to the Bard recalls with mental pain,
The Follies of a Charles's reign.[308]

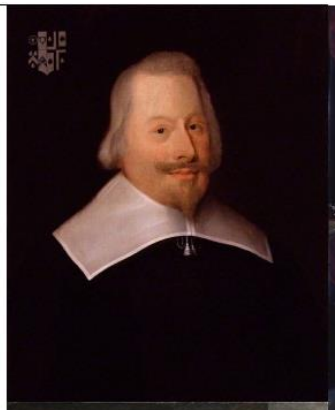
The reinvigoration of social differences with regard to hairstyles signaled a rejuvenation of vestimentary displays of allegiance, harking back to the English Civil War when "Cavalier and Roundhead were words, dire signals to unsheathe brothers' swords."[309] This comparison between the two eras is directly comparable, as the radicals of the 1790s harbored anti-monarchical beliefs that were analogous to the 17th century Parliamentarian Roundheads who executed Charles I, with both groups wearing cropped hair.[310] By contrast, William Pitt, his cronies, and other upper-class individuals resembled Cavaliers with their long, white, flowing hair or wigs. The terminology had merely changed: Roundheads had become The Swinish Multitude, or Guinea-Less-Pigs, while Cavaliers had morphed into Guinea Pigs. Given the socio-political turmoil that existed in the 1790s, these vestimentary

[305] Pindar 1795, p. 5.
[306] Anonymous (*A Letter to the deputy manager)* 1795, p. 10.
[307] Baldpate 1795, p. 18.
[308] Baldpate 1795, p. 19.
[309] Baldpate 1795, p. 19.
[310] Of interest in this scenario is the fact that Charles I was the first British monarch to adorn a wig.

displays of allegiance were not to be taken lightly, given the enduring threat of revolution that existed throughout the period.[311] Though almost one hundred and fifty years had passed since the end of the English Civil War, the terminology used and physical manifestation of political and social difference between Cavaliers and Guinea Pigs and Roundheads and The Swinish Multitude are strongly comparable, a fact which rightfully ignited fear within the British populace.

Left- *John Pym*, by Edward Bower, 1640. John Pym was one of the leading figures in the establishment of the parliamentary dictatorship of Oliver Cromwell. Pym is somberly clothed, without finery, and with hair cropped above the neck, representing the military-Puritan style that became popular during the English Civil War.

Right- *Charles James Fox*, Henry Bone, 1805. Charles James Fox adorns the "Blue Coat," which became synonymous with radicalism during the period while his hair is unpowdered. Though Fox was satirized as being the "most famous: "Macaroni" in the 1770s, according to Peter McNeil, he shunned ostentation by the later eighteenth-century.



Left- *Lord John Stuart and his Brother, Lord Bernard Stuart,* by Anthony Van Dyke, 1638, Public Domain. Two royalist Cavaliers. Both are elegantly dressed and poised in a manner that would later become associated with conservativism and feminine foppery.
Right- *William Pitt,* by John Hoppner, 1804, Public Domain. The (foppish) "Guinea Pig," conservative William Pitt adorns hair powder almost ten years after the imposition of the Duty on Hair Powder Act. Though the rest of Pitt's clothing is somber in style, his powder use overshadows his overall adherence to early 19th century norms.

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the decision to wear or abstain from powdered wigs in the last decade of the 18th century came to embody rising factionalism amongst British politicians and the population at large. According to Navickas, vestimentary displays of political allegiance were visual and highly communicative, capable of causing political turbulence, rather than merely manifesting preexisting disorder.[312] Supporters and opponents of William Pitt could now pinpoint one another based on dress, which allowed the conservative government to pinpoint radicals and radicals to focus their rhetorical attacks.

William Pitt seemed alone in his belief that the politicization of powder would increase the number of its wearers. According to Barrell, William Pitt may have believed that previously unpowdered

311 Evans 2006, p. 21.
312 Navickas 2010, p. 542. A similar phenomenon is ongoing today where the "Boogaloo," a far-right extremist group in the United States, have adopted Hawaiian shirts as a symbolic display of allegiance. Accordingly, there have been numerous instances where wearers have been accused of white supremacy, which has (rapidly) caused non-extremists to cease wearing these shirts due to their connotations.

individuals would be so enthusiastic in demonstrating their patriotism that they would begin to use powder regardless of whether it was necessary or fashionable for them to do so.[313] This seems probable, given the reaction to a policy which allowed taxpayers to voluntarily pay additional taxes, a policy suggested by the Speaker of the House and later Prime Minister, Henry Addington in 1798. This policy was very successful, yielding 2,800,000 pounds in its first year of operation.[314] However, just as with the income tax, these effects on powder consumption were ephemeral, even amongst the upper classes, who did discontinue its use, albeit at a slower rate than the middling classes.

Pitt clearly overlooked the fact that his opponents, such as Charles James Fox, James Martin, or the Duke of Bedford abstained from powder to convey their opposition to Pitt's ministry and the war against France. [315] Their abandonment is significant, as the Duke of Bedford and Charles James Fox were equally responsible for disseminating middling-class masculinity amongst the upper classes, who began to adopt the Bedford Crop, as discussed in the previous chapter. It is of paramount importance to note that the un-powdering of the upper classes began as a political phenomenon, with James Martin and Charles James Fox shunning powder to demonstrate their opposition to the war against France manifestly. (The Duke of Bedford was also concerned about the poor's food insecurity and did not wish to contribute to rising grain prices through sustained use of powder.[316]) Eventually, these political maneuvers resulted in far-reaching definitional changes to masculinity amongst members of the aristocracy. In opposition, the un-powdering of the middling classes emerged from an economic rationale that quickly shifted towards arguments regarding masculinity and respectability. However, because the economic rationale was the derivative of a political event, it should be argued that this un-powdering primarily resulted from politics, echoing the tradition of François Furet.

313 Barrell 2006, p. 154. Barrell notes that it is likely that some subscribers to the tax *did* pay for the certificate without any intention of using powder, to support the war against France.
314 Leonard 2020, p. 177.
315 McNeil 2018, p. 92. Ironically, Charles James Fox was the most renowned Macaroni of the 1770s, though he abandoned this form of dress in the 1780s, replacing it with his "democratic dress," which consisted of his blue coat and unpowdered hair, which he is perhaps better-known for today. As stated by Peter McNeil, it is essential to note that Fox did not adopt the Macaroni style to support aristocratic ideals, but rather due to his "cosmopolitan outlook and Whig confidence." However, when cosmopolitanism lost its masculine and respectable function due to its links with effeminacy and France, Fox was among the first to abandon aristocratic dress in favor of middle-class masculinity, along with the Duke of Bedford and James Martin.
316 Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 41, 1795, p. 72; London Chronicle," The Duke of Bedford." September 26, 1795, p. 2.

Conclusion: A Failed Attempt to Revive Aristocratic Hegemony

The Duty on Hair Powder Act (1795) was ostensibly a financial maneuver to finance the struggle against France in the French Revolutionary Wars, while mitigating the effects of the Wheat Crisis, which lasted from 1794 to 1796. William Pitt expected this Act to generate 210,000 pounds per year for the British state, while reducing the demand for powder, primarily within the middle classes. Hair powder was believed to exacerbate the wheat crisis, as powder production required intensive grain use, and as it was almost universally worn amongst the upper and middling classes before 1795. Though the Act created some discountenance in Parliament, where it was lambasted for its lack of exemptions as well as its repressiveness, it passed smoothly, thereby entering the legal code. According to the Act, those who wished to wear hair powder were required to pay a duty of one guinea for the privilege.

Though the Act was ostensibly passed to raise revenue against France and as an early modern sin tax due to its harmful effects on grain availability, there were multiple underlying motivations for its passage. In implementing this duty, William Pitt believed that it would revitalize manifestations of social difference. Though a trifling sum to the upper classes, this was a substantial sum of money for the middling class, which financially disincentivized their continued use of powder. Pitt seemed aware that the middling class would abandon powder, given the fact he based his expected revenue figure on the number of persons who owned carriages, a luxury far beyond the means of the middling classes. Accordingly, the middling classes would forsake powder in favor of "something better for their health."[317] It was believed by commentators that this Act would eliminate sartorial expression that was incongruous with class, by which middling "imposters" concealed their *real* social status by consuming at a level unworthy of their social station. According to the view of the aristocracy, powdered wigs allowed members of the middling classes to incongruously represent themselves as members of a higher class, rendering class differences indistinguishable through the mutation of social status. The Duty on Hair Powder Act should be thus be regarded as a covert sumptuary law, given that it financially penalized middling consumers who were "prompted by vanity" to wear powder, while the upper classes could easily afford to pay a guinea for the privilege. The aristocracy expected to derive respectability from this un-powdering of the middling classes, as it would reinstitute hair powder as a positional good. However, rather than simply depriving the middling ranks of their respectability, the Duty on Hair Powder Act resulted in turmoil, social, political, and economic.

[317] Parliament of Great Britain, Series 2, Volume 42, 1795, p. 450.

The Act resulted in the politicization of hair powder. This may have been intentional in part, as it made it easier to pinpoint those harboring radical beliefs. However, the politicized nature of powder quickly escalated beyond the original intentions of the British government. Conscientious objectors to the war against France, such as MP James Martin and the Duke of Bedford cropped their hair in protest of the Act. Meanwhile, staunch Pittite conservatives, including Pitt's three immediate successors retained hair power to broadcast their support of the war, which undoubtedly served to encourage other conservatives to retain hair powder. The duality observable between supporters and opponents of Pitt and the war against France resulted in the increasing manifestation of political difference, which further polarized British politics by rendering political ideology visible. Pamphleteers were astutely aware of this fact, comparing the rising manifestations of political difference to those of the English Civil War period, where Parliamentarians were characterized by their short hair and Royalists by their long hair. These emergent manifestations of political difference were regarded by all as dangerous, tangibly increasing the threat of political sectarianism and violence. However, the decision by prominent influencers such as the Duke of Bedford to crop their hair had an escalating effect, prompting others to follow their example, which resulted in a positive feedback loop of collective de-wigging and un-powdering of the upper classes. Not only did this trend decrease the respectability associated with powder use, but it also materially undermined the material integrity of the Act.

While cropping one's hair was initially viewed as a form of "singular" resistance to Pittite conservativism and the war against France, the decision to do so quickly entered the sphere of fashionable masculinity. The Duty on Hair Powder Act was instrumental in the formation of contested notions of masculinity. Regarded as a non-issue by MP's and pamphleteers, the powdered wig's characterization as a universal symbol of masculinity disintegrated in the immediate aftermath of the Act. When William Pitt passed the Act, was unaware of the seminal effects that occurred in the development of middling masculinity. Throughout most of the Long 18th Century, middling and aristocratic masculinities were highly intersectional. Due to the rise in consumerism, which rendered inexpensive wig styles available to the middling classes around 1750, its members were unenterprising in their interpretation of masculinity. Rather, they preferred to subscribe to polite masculinity, which allowed the middling classes to socially integrate with their superiors through emulative behavior. Polite masculinity was characterized by ostentatious display, Francophilia, domesticity, and an overlap between male and female gender roles and modes of behavior. As this emulative trend weakened the "hierarchy of signs," conservative Pittites were eager to rejuvenate social differences by financially

restricting the consumption of hair powder to the ranks of the aristocracy. However, rather than simply accepting their loss of respectability, the middling classes resourcefully redefined masculinity to account for this deprival, at the expense of the upper classes.

Emergent middling masculinity was strongly differentiated from the polite masculinity that defined the 18th century. Shunning the tenets of politeness, middling masculinity adopted ungenteel roughness, the rejection of French modes of dress and behavior, and the embrace of plain dress and cropped hair as their trademark characteristics. Though conservative members of the upper class retained polite masculinity as a way to differentiate themselves from the masses, the development of middling masculinity undermined the integrity of polite values and dress. Thus, conflicting notions of masculinity emerged, and polite masculinity lost its universal appeal. Polite masculinity, which was the hegemonic form throughout the 18th century was increasingly stigmatized as vain, effeminate, trifling, and even treacherous due to its association with French culture. This last point is an irony given that conservative minded individuals continued to powder their hair far beyond the expiration date of its fashionability to fund the war effort against France.

More importantly, this trend demonstrates that the aristocratic hegemony in determining sartorial and behavioral norms was weakened. A large swathe of caricatures were produced which pejoratively referred to prominent powder users, including William Pitt, as Guinea Pigs, which were effeminate fops, who clung to their powder. As the maintenance of masculinity was a precursor for respectability, those who continued to embody the values of polite masculinity could not be considered respectable outside their own circle. Polite masculinity also deteriorated from within, as the upper classes began to crop their hair. Though such cropping was initially political, the process accelerated as politeness was feminized and its adherents increasingly ridiculed by members of their own ranks. The aristocratic attempt to reinvigorate social differences failed and undermined the power of the upper classes by ceding their jurisdiction of sartorial and cultural values to the middling classes. The relationship between class and sartorial emulation was thus reversed. Rather than the middling classes emulating the upper classes to appear respectable, the upper classes began to emulate the sartorial conventions of the middling class. Though this allowed the upper classes to save face by preserving their masculinity and Britishness, it tangibly diminished their societal pre-eminence and ability to differentiate themselves from the masses in the long term. Simultaneously, this increased the cultural capital held by the middling classes and gave them the power to cross-sectionally reshape and democratize fashion, ushering in vestimentary modernity through the *Sartorial Revolution*. As indicated by caricature, though a small section of the middling classes continued to emulate their social betters,

this was no longer considered to be within the acceptable realm of behavior by the end of the study period. Such men were viewed as both effeminate and class traitors and were perhaps regarded with more antipathy than the "effete" fop of the upper classes. Such individuals were viewed as symbolically endorsing the previous aristocratic hegemony over fashion, and in turn were viewed as stifling the democratization of the political and social sphere by enabling the upper classes to cling to power.

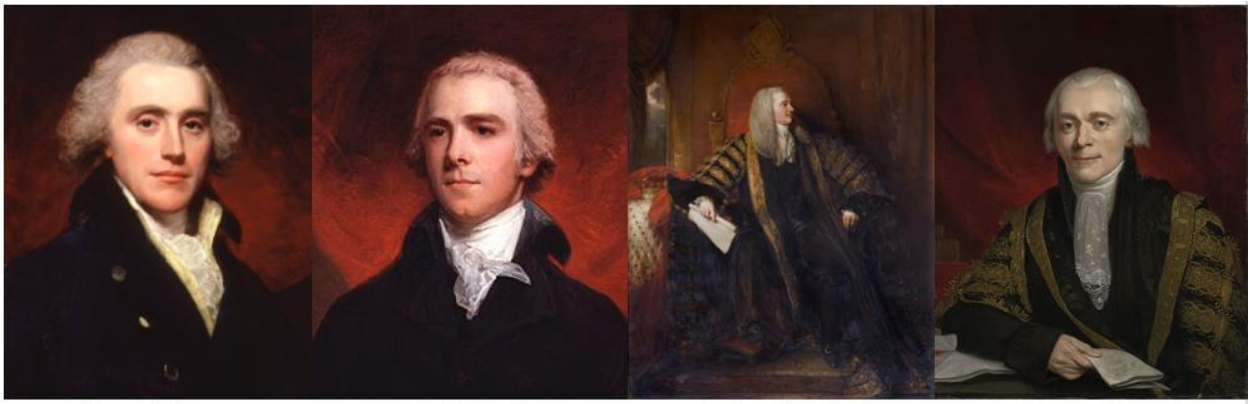
The Duty on Hair Powder Act was both a financial failure and an unsuccessful attempt by the conservative government to reassert a sartorial hierarchy resembling that of the 17th century, where dress was highly dependent on class, rather than individual identity. In 1795, 193,252 certificates were sold, which was already slightly lower than William Pitt's benchmark of 210,000.[318] By 1800, the number of certificates sold had fallen to 80,693, and by 1805 the number had plummeted to only 30,441.[319] In 1812, which is herein regarded as the symbolic end of the *Sartorial Ancien Régime*, only 21,182 certificates were sold.[320] Notwithstanding its extreme unsuccessfulness, the law remained legally enforceable until 1869, when less than 1000 certificates were sold.[321]

As demonstrated throughout this study, the Act was directly responsible for the un-powdering of British society. This Act was a failed attempt by the upper classes to re-establish their social differentiation from the middling orders. Rather, the Act resulted in the mass-mobilization of the middling classes who, rather than begrudgingly accept their deprivation of respectability actively undermined the integrity of the upper classes by redefining masculinity. Though the upper classes initially resisted this trend, they eventually adopted the values of middling masculinity, as they faced increasing ridicule from the middling classes, as well as internal pressure from upper-class individuals who abandoned powder. By 1812, aristocratic hegemony on sartorial culture were over. The reigns of sartorial power were usurped by the middling classes, never to be returned.

[318] House of Commons Papers 1795, p. 2.
[319] House of Commons Papers 1805, p. 1.
[320] House of Commons Papers 1812, p. 2.
[321] Dowell 1884, p. 257

Afterword: The Periwig's Final Days… Almost…

When William Pitt died from an alcohol induced peptic ulcer in 1806, he was followed by a string of severely conservative prime ministers- the Lord Grenville (1806-1807), the Third Duke of Portland (1807-1809), and Spencer Perceval (1809-1812), all of whom adorned powdered wigs and dressed according to the "old style" of the 18th century during their tenure.[322] Henry Addington, who served between Pitt's two terms from 1801 to 1804, also adorning a powdered wig.



Henry Addington | Lord Grenville | Duke of Portland | Spencer Perceval

1. *Henry Addington*, William Beechey, 1803. Public Domain.
2. *Lord Grenville,* John Hoppner, 1800. Public Domain.
3. *The Duke of Portland,* Benjamin West, 1804. Public Domain.
4. *Spencer Perceval,* George Joseph, 1816. Public Domain.

Relatively inconsequential in their own right, these prime ministers were primarily characterized by their staunch conservative ideology and cultish idolization of William Pitt.[323] Except for the Duke of Portland, who was almost seventy when he ascended the premiership, Pitt's other successors, Addington, Grenville, and Perceval were reasonably young at their time of accession, and thereby probably retained the powdered wig for political reasons, rather than ones relating to fashion. Spencer Perceval was the last prime minister to adorn a powdered wig during his tenure, reflecting the conservative Pittian ideology, by which prime ministers were expected to wear powdered wigs in

[322] Iremonger 1970, p. 43; Leonard 2020, pp 175-177. Between Pitt's two tenures Henry Addington served as prime minister between 1801 and 1804. He too adorned a powdered wig and was an arch reactionary in his views, despite the fact that he was the first prime minister to come from the middling classes.

[323] Christie 1982, p. 283; Leonard 2020, 192-195. Grenville fell out with William Pitt for a brief period around 1800 but was convinced by 1804 that he was the most suitable person for the premiership. Grenville would however become more progressive over the years and became a leading Whig opponent to the Pittites after the end of his premiership until 1817. However, up until his death he remained an "essentially conservative figure," despite his involvement with Whig politics. Though his ministry was short and lacking in achievement, he was nevertheless to abolish the Slave Trade in 1806; Leonard 2020, 145, 151. The Duke of Portland was an inconsequential Prime Minister, serving in both 1783 and from 1807 to 1809. He accomplished little during his premierships and was largely viewed as a figurehead. However, he was responsible for implementing the Treason Act and Seditious Meetings Act of 1795 during Pitt's premiership, to whom he was a staunch follower; Leonard 2020, 149, 151. Spencer Perceval is today best known for the "feat" of being the only Prime Minister to be assassinated, as well as the fact that he was extremely religious. Nevertheless, he was an able administrator and excellent orator, and successfully limited the power of the Prince Regent.

support of the Act as well as in memory of William Pitt. Perceval's adornment of the wig should be regarded as primarily political, demonstrating a close alignment to William Pitt and his support for the war against France.[324] The shift away from powder is starkly observable through a simple comparison of parliamentary portraiture. In a portrait from 1793 by Anton Hickel, every observable member of the House of Commons can be observed wearing a powdered wig. By contrast, in an 1808 painting by August Charles Pugin, wigs are nearly absent. Only Spencer Perceval, who can be observed speaking, as well as a few other MPs, can be observed wearing wigs. By Spencer Perceval's death, powdered wigs lost their political function, given the abandonment of Pittite conservativism. With the un-powdering of MPs, it thus became impossible to pinpoint ideological differences based on dress alone. Furthermore, as parliament can be regarded as an analog to the British upper class more generally, the un-powdering of upper-class society can be viewed as an erosion of the wigs role in constructing upper-class masculinity.

The portrait from 1808 also offers a glimpse into the future. Several top hats are observable in the portrait, a number that would invariably grow over the next several decades and then remain popular until the 20th century, replacing the powdered wig as a symbol of upper-class masculinity.[325] Top hats were introduced in Great Britain at the tail-end of the 18th century, though they would grow taller throughout the first half of the 19th century, reaching their literal and figurative zenith in the 1860s.[326] It does not seem coincidental that they emerged as wigs were becoming unfashionable, given their ability to facilitate manifestations of social difference. Initially worn by the upper classes to differentiate themselves from the masses. In the words of Kwass, top hats, like the powdered wig, "tumbled down the social hierarchy," though less extensively than the powdered wig, as it was only worn by the upper class and upper-middling class.[327] According to Ariel Beaujot, top hats "helped to create and reinforce elite identity in a period of [sartorial and political] democratization," and served as a hegemonic display of masculinity by the consumer class.[328] Thus, while the wig was gone, the need for social differentiation was not, despite the class that clothing had become more somber. Furthermore, the emergence of the top hats shows a continuation of the divergence of masculinities observable in tbe case of the powdered wig. As noted throughout the chapter on satires, the Duty on Hair Powder Act forced the middling classes to construct their form of masculinity concerning headdress, as powder use became too expensive. Divergent forms of masculinity remained throughout

[324] Gray 1963, p. 35.
[325] Today, top hats are still worn by the British Royals in certain ceremonies. Prince Philip could be observed wearing one as late as 2015 during his last formal appearance.
[326] Beaujot 2014, p. 59.
[327] Beaujot 2014, p. 59; Kwass, 2006, p. 634.
[328] Beaujot 2014, p. 60, 67.

the 19th century, where the upper and upper-middling classes wore top hats, while the remainder of the middling class wore bowlers, and the working-classes wore caps.[329] Thus, while the powdered wig was gone, the hierarchy of signs was not. Nor were the class-based displays of masculinity that emerged during the study period. However, the top hat was nevertheless a less effective differentiator than powder after the duty's imposition, as members of the middling class also adorned it.

Nevertheless, it is clear that the middling classes maintained their influence over fashion throughout the Regency Period and Victorian Age. In both the case of the Regency Period and Victorian Age, the sheer size of the middling class rendered a return to aristocratic hegemony impossible.[330] Combined with their mass mobilization to exert influence over fashion, their hegemony was a foregone conclusion. Throughout the period, middling men rejected aristocratic dress in favor of a middle sartorial aesthetic, which was manifested in the widespread adoption of dark and conservative dress, a triumph over idle luxury. Though some members of the upper classes retained their finery, the large-scale abandonment by the much larger middling classes rendered such displays ineffective. Throughout both periods, the middling classes drove fashionable consumption and the evolution thereof.[331] During the Regency Period, the middling class Beau Brummell exerted a god-like influence over fashion. Though many prominent individuals such as the Prince Regent followed the fashion advice of Brummell, who rejected ostentatious luxury as effeminate, while embracing the dark colors and simplicity associated with the middling classes.[332] In fact, Dandyism was in essence a reaction against the aristocratic ostentation of the 18th century.[333] This trend continued throughout the Victorian Age when the three-piece suit, which was "iconographically associated" with the middling classes came into general use.[334]

However, though the powdered wig's ability to foster respectability, masculinity and denote political difference by the second decade of the 19th century was gone, it *still* served as a symbol of social differentiation, a characteristic which it maintains to the current day. As deliberated by Gibson, ecclesiastics retained their wigs far into the 18th century, with bishops required to do so until King William IV relieved them of this requirement in 1831. Nevertheless, some bishops continued to wear wigs until 1854, when the last wig-wearing bishop, Dr. Phillip Routh, died. Generally speaking, however, the behavior of ecclesiastics, particularly those of lower rank, who were never required to wear wigs, mirrored that of society-at-large, with progressive members of the clergy abandoning their

[329] Beaujot 2014, p. 62.
[330] Sakai 2014, 13.
[331] Shannon 2006, pp. 20, 30-31, 160.
[332] Chen 2013, p. 46.
[333] Carter 2004, p. 3.
[334] Shannon 2006, p. 166.

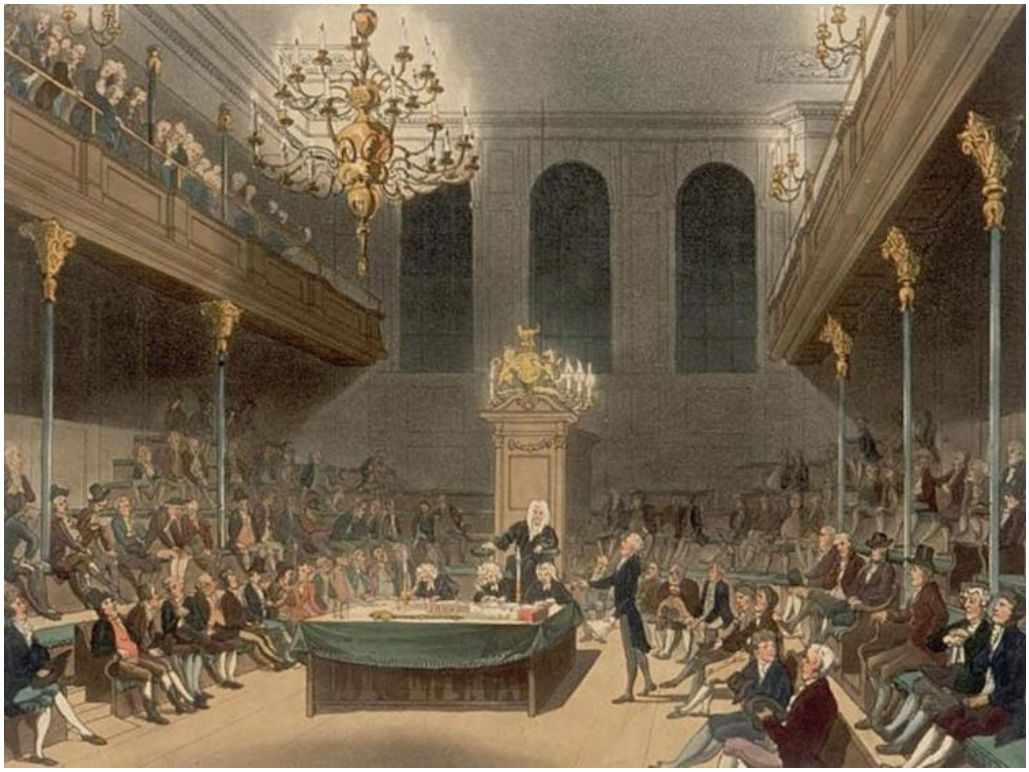
wigs at the beginning of the 19th century.[335] Nevertheless, it remained a symbol of social differentiation within the clergy much longer than within society-at-large.

However, a vestigial remain of the wig's differentiating power remains to this day in Great Britain and many commonwealth countries within the legal professions. The full-bottomed wig that was introduced into the courtroom in the 1720s is still worn by judges, while the bob wig is worn by members of the bench and barristers alike, while solicitors and attorneys do not adorn wigs.[336] Thus, within the modern legal profession, the wig serves to differentiate members of the court, anointed by the government from those who are merely contacted to work at the court though, according to James McLaren, "the unfairness of having barristers wear wigs, while solicitor advocates will not, will likely be a catalyst for future calls for abandoning the wig."[337] However, as of today, the courtroom wig is the last remaining vestigial of 18th century sartorial culture. Thus, while the wig's ability to foster respectability, masculinity and political difference has disappeared, it remains in a form that is shrunken, vestigial, and eventually doomed to disappear.

FINIS…

[335] Gibson 1996, pp. 155-157
[336] McLaren 1999, p. 243.
[337] McLaren, 1999, p. 247.

William Pitt Addressing the House of Commons on the Outbreak of the War with France, Anton Hickel, Canvass, 1793.



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