Cradled in Caricature

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"If the State is happy that has no history, thrice happy is the Statesman who makes none."

The *Skepsi* team

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S*kepsi* is an online research journal based in the School of European Culture and Languages at the University of Kent (SECL) and is entirely run by research students.

The aim of *Skepsi*'s editorial board is twofold: to honour the spirit of SECL by striving to take advantage of its unique position as a crossroads in academic studies in Europe and to become a forum for European postgraduate researchers and postdoctoral scholars by developing collective thinking processes in the context of academic research.

Our title, S*kepsi* — which comes from the Ancient Greek 'σκεφις [*skepsis*]' or 'enquiry' and the Modern Greek 'σχέφις [*sképsis*]' or 'thought' — symbolises our will to explore new areas and new methods in the traditional fields of academic research in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Originality and creativity in the approach of thought and of texts are crucial for us: to enhance and to promote these aspects will be our contribution to the tremendous range of existing academic publications.

Skepsi

Acknowledgements

For this issue of *Skepsi*, dedicated to different aspects of Caricature, we thank James Baker for providing a most interesting Foreword. Thanks are also due to all who submitted material for consideration, both those whose work was accepted and those who were, on this occasion, disappointed, and we must not overlook our dedicated teams of peer reviewers, copy editors and proof readers, who all contribute to the journal's quality.

On a personal note, we must say farewell to one of the *Skepsi* team and welcome two new members. We have lost Marco Piasentier, who joined us three years ago and has been an enthusiastic chairman, but has now moved on to other spheres, and we have gained Mathilde Poizat-Amar and Adina Stroia, who both became involved with our conference in May 2013.

Finally, thanks are due, as always, to Alvise for applying his creative talents to designing this issue's cover and keeping our blog-site updated.

A note about our cover image:

Weekly from 1868 to 1914, *Vanity Fair* caricatures both lampooned and praised eminent Victorian and Edwardian politicians, sportsmen, lawyers and other 'Men of the Day'. *Vanity Fair* founder and editor, Thomas Gibson Bowles (1842–1922), invited readers to recognise the vanities of human existence through the magazine's prose and coloured caricatures.

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Cradled in what? A Foreword

James Baker

The British Library

In April 2010 a visit to Manchester, the Whitworth Art Gallery to be precise, provided the unexpected kernel from which two events and the present issue blossomed. Erected there in an exhibition entitled 'Walls Are Talking: Wallpaper, Art and Culture' was a piece by David Shrigley in which identikit boxes combine to form a crude shopping centre, their putative function only identifiable by a sign over the door. As I was mulling over this on a return train to the Home Counties, it occurred to me that my interest in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century graphic satire connected to the concerns of many other scholars through the notion of 'caricature'. But what, you may quite reasonably ask, does a satire on repetitious hyper-functionalist architectural design have to do with caricature? Well, for me at least, Shrigley's design was deceptively elegant. Alongside a blunt critique of multi-purpose out-of-town commercial building projects he weaves a subversive study into what businesses do to become more than the box they inhabit. For while in Shrigley's design these businesses place 'Chemist', 'Supermarket' or 'Pet Shop' above their doors in order to demarcate their function, in reality few businesses give prominence to such direct linguistic cues; rather the marketing strategies they deploy play upon what we expect a 'Chemist', a 'Supermarket' or a 'Pet Shop' to look like, to smell like and to be like, with the intention of exploiting these expectations to gain our attention, our custom, our money. In short, businesses play into stereotypes of and caricatures about themselves, stereotypes and caricatures developed and understood through a process of social consensus.[1]

Thus whilst aware that — to paraphrase the art-historian Ernst Gombrich — there is no better way to kill a joke than by explaining it, Shrigley's wallpaper is funny (for me at least) because it shows us a world where these stereotypes and caricatures do not matter, a world which is not cradled in caricature. However, as both the *Cradled in Caricature* events and this present volume explore, this world is not possible: the societies and cultures which humans have built positively thrive on prejudice, crude characterisation, visual association, exaggeration and unreliable perception. The world is cradled in caricature.

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[1]   Some of this material was published previously as a Meta Grid post in *The Comics Grid: Journal of Comics Scholarship*; see Baker 2012.

In June 2011 the first *Cradled in Caricature* event, a symposium supported by the Graduate School at the University of Kent, brought together postgraduates from across the University of Kent to discuss and explore these themes. This multi-disciplinary event attracted contributions from students studying history, literature, art, film, music and law, all of whom tackled a range of issues touched by caricature: on-screen masculinity, enforcement of 'Nazi' Jazz, the work of psychiatrists, super-heroes and racial applications of legal structures. The second event, held in April 2012 and supported by the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Kent and the History of Art Department at University College London, continued this multi-disciplinary conversation on the notion of caricature. Art-historians, anthropologists and comedians added their voices, responding to a series of questions which framed both this event and the present volume: why are societies framed by traditions of exaggeration and stereotyping? To what extent does caricature disseminate didactic and polemical messages? What is the importance of media to the efficacy of caricature, and how have print culture and the popular press played a role? Under what cultural circumstances has caricature flourished in the past? Where has caricature been located in the narrative of Western 'art history'? Are all societies and cultures (real and imagined, past and present) cradled in and constructed by caricature?

The phrase 'cradled in caricature' is sadly not of my own creation. Towards the end of his life the great Victorian illustrator and comic artist George Cruikshank (1792–1878) described his childhood as 'cradled in caricature'. This is hardly a surprise. George grew up in the tumultuous decades after the French Revolution and was quickly tasked with assisting his father Isaac Cruikshank (1756–1811) in inventing and manufacturing satirical designs for London's foremost print-sellers. Isaac Cruikshank, a late-Georgian contemporary of James Gillray (1757–1815) and Thomas Rowlandson (1756–1827), was one of the most prolific visual satirists of his age, and we can imagine that caricature of the graphic, imaginative, literary and conversational kinds must have abounded in the Cruikshank household. George, like his father, was known to his contemporaries as a caricaturist. Yet as should be clear, caricature is a slippery word. Formally 'Caricature' it is a type of cartooning, one where a person's characteristic and striking features are exaggerated to ludicrous effect. And yet the word cartoon in a modern sense dates from an era after the late-Georgian caricature we have described. Indeed 'cartoon' was coined around 1843 and comes from *Punch*: the great Victorian illustrated magazine which, alongside prose and commentary, was full of graphic satires: cartoons which used caricature. 'Cartoons' and 'Caricature' then were and are far

from one and the same. For crude corroboration we might turn to the Google Ngram Viewer, a corpus containing in excess of 5 million books, that is, over 500 billion words (Michel and others 2010).[2] Here we note the ascendancy of caricature over cartoon until the mid-twentieth century. This we might expect: caricature is, as we have suggested, a word with multiple contexts, multiple applications. Cartoon in its modern sense (as opposed to its early-modern meaning as a preparatory drawing, often for a tapestry) only trumps caricature in word frequency in the 1970s, yet what is striking about these patterns is not the point of crossover between the two words but rather their lack of co-dependency. The situation is neither one of cartoons and caricature nor of cartoons or caricature: the development of both words existed interdependently.

This is because, as this volume explores, the reach of 'caricature' — both linguistically and ontologically — extends far beyond the visual arts. It is then this multiple meaning of 'caricature' to which the *Cradled in Caricature* project attends, a definition which goes beyond deploying caricature as a comedic form of art, to investigate the function of caricature in as seemingly unrelated arenas as literary works, political economy, high art and our shared biological heritage. We find, for example, grotesque likenesses of persons in literary description, a commonplace literary device which crosses a line between the visual and the verbal imagination, actively imposing the former upon the latter. For a classic example we might look to the mid-eighteenth century, to the birthplace of the European novel. In *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) by Laurence Sterne, our narrator Yorick sees a lady in the streets of Calais. Sterne writes:

> I had not yet seen her face — 'twas not material; for the drawing was instantly set about, and long before we had got to the door of the Remise, *Fancy* had finished the whole head, and pleased herself as much with its fitting her goddess, as if she had dived into the Tiber for it — but thou art a seduced, and a seducing slut; and albeit thou cheatest us seven times a day with thy pictures and images, yet with so many charms dost thou do it, and thou deckest out thy pictures in the shapes of so many angels of light, 'tis a shame to break with thee (Sterne 1984: 17).

Caricature here infects, inflects and subsumes reality. It is seductive, so much so it tempts us into falsification, and yet — Sterne makes clear — it remains compelling regardless: we want

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[2] See Michel, Yuan, Aiden and others 2010. (published on-line ahead of print) Jean-Baptiste Michel, Yuan Kui Shen, Aviva Presser Aiden, Adrian Veres, Matthew K. Gray, William Brockman, The Google Books Team, Joseph P. Pickett, Dale Hoiberg, Dan Clancy, Peter Norvig, Jon Orwant, Steven Pinker, Martin A. Nowak, and Erez Lieberman Aiden. 'Quantitative Analysis of Culture Using Millions of Digitized Books', *Science* (Published online ahead of print: 12/16/2010). This is neither the time nor the place to engage with the debate over the power and utility of culturomics, though for philosophical musings on big data see Weinberger 2011.

our characters to appear as we imagine them, and we find ourselves hostile and forlorn when a reality imposes itself upon the caricature image we have erected.

Hostility can equally arise when habitual caricatures are challenged. This dynamic is most evident when we gaze into the past, when we examine attitudes to gender, race, sexuality and religion. It is remarkable how alien once commonplace attitudes towards people within these categories appear to us today: not least defences of those alien attitudes which lay claim to objectivity or natural reasoning. Our constant surprise at the prejudices of our forbears, especially those who otherwise appear 'modern' or 'rational', perhaps explains why historians have often — consciously or otherwise — placed caricature at or toward the centre of their work. Take for example David Cannadine's classic *Ornamentalism* (2001). Cannadine's monograph explores how the Victorians constructed an image of themselves through their Empire, and utilises as its organising concept the world of stereotypes and caricature: it is from and through these concepts, Cannadine argues, that Victorian Britain was made. Yet, as he observes, neither the Victorians nor the British were alone in their 'irrational' actions. Thus Cannadine proclaims in his introduction to *Ornamentalism*:

> Nations, it has recently become commonplace to observe, are in part imagined communities, depending for their credibility and identity both on the legitimacy of government and the apparatus of state, and on invented traditions, manufactured myths, and shared perceptions of the social order that are never more than crude categories and oversimplified stereotypes […] the British Empire was not only a geopolitical entity: it was also a culturally created and imaginatively constructed artefact (2001: 3).

If Cannadine's perspective is focused on imaginings of political and social structures, caricature is just as comfortable in the realm of personal memories. Turning to Milan Kundera's mercurial novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being*, caricature weaves itself firmly into his existential narrative. Indeed in one of the many moments at which Kundera inserts himself into the narrative his writes of his protagonist Tomas thus:

> And once more I see him the way he appeared to me at the very beginning of the novel: standing at the window and staring across the courtyard at the walls opposite.
>
> This is the image from which he was born. As I have pointed out before, characters are not born like people, of woman; they are born of a situation, a sentence, a metaphor containing in a nutshell a basic human possibility that the author thinks no one else has discovered or said something essential about (1984: 221).

Tomas is an invention of Kundera, and yet, the author concedes, even within the confines of the writing process he retains a 'life' of his own not fully under the control of his creator. For as Kundera notes, Tomas, as a character, is born not of a woman but of a situation, and is hence imbued with a situationality, a system of symbols and signs, which a single author can only shape — initially at least — from the periphery. And yet as we too all inhabit a world of

systems and signs, a situationality, then in turn to somebody somewhere we are all characters — individuals flattened and reduced to characters to suit local contexts.

This observation that a broad based definition of 'caricature' is an all but ubiquitous human experience, leads us to a point of convergence between scholars working across the academic disciplines. It ties in, for example, with the work of the pioneering political scientist Walter Lippmann whose 1922 work *Public Opinion* coined the word 'stereotype'. 'The system of stereotypes', Lippmann writes, may be not only 'the core of our personal tradition, the defenses of our position in society', but, he continues 'the fortress of our [collective] tradition' behind whose boundaries 'we can continue to feel safe in the position we occupy' (1922: 63–64). This system is multi-faceted, at the apex of which resides the 'perfect stereotype', the hallmark of which 'is that it precedes the use of reason' and is 'a fiction accepted without question' (Lippmann 1922: 65, 80). These 'perfect' stereotypes rely for meaning on caricature, their egregious fictionalised examples made possible by an instinctive economisation of human experience. As Lippmann notes 'for the most part, the way we see things is a combination of what is there and of what we expect to find', and hence, in what he terms the 'pseudo-environment' (1922: 76, 10), that mental space between man and his environment:

> Real space, real time, real numbers, real connections, real weights are lost. The perspective and the background and the dimensions of action are clipped and frozen in the stereotype (1922: 100).

This discussion of perceptual expectation and caricature intersects with the work of the art-historian and visual theorist Ernst Gombrich. His 1960 work 'On Physiognomic Perception' argued that humans immediately characterise that which they see in comparison to that which they have seen (1963: 45–55). This best guess at understanding based solely on appearance is then complemented, refined and rectified by everyday activities: communication, interaction, cooperation. For Gombrich, the absence of these latter activities in the appreciation of art is what makes good art so powerful: for by tapping into culture contexts such art apes these human activities on the canvas, on the page and in the photograph. By extension, these insights have great relevance to a discussion of caricature. Stereotypes are formed, typically, in an experience deficit where little or no communication, interaction and cooperation has taken place with those being stereotyped. At yet knowledge of their existence demands that their character is explained: in the absence of experience, a fiction around their collective person is constructed, one which corresponds to initial perception but is complemented by speculations which pretend to speak to objective

experience, to natural reasoning. Such is the purchase within group consciousness of some caricatures constructed in this manner, that experience is no longer able to refine them: a triumph of collective fiction over experiential reality which underpins Edward Said's ground-breaking, if controversial, *Orientalism* (1978).

In recent years, social explanations of caricature have been expanded upon by scholars offering psychological, biological and neurological explanations of stereotyping, of Gombrich's 'physiognomic perception'. Susanne Quadflieg and C. Neil Macrae begin their survey of social-cognitive and neuroscientific perspective on this very phenomenon: 'stereotypes', they write, 'offer apparent insights into the personalities and deeds of others without the cumbersome necessity of getting to know them' (2011: 215). These stereotypes are then formulated, developed and sustained by a number of seemingly instinctual human characteristics: fixed impressions on the world around and outside, an elision of behaviour and 'inner dispositions', person categorisation, the attribution of positive qualities to in-groups (i.e., social groups of which they are a member) at the expense of out-groups (i.e., social groups to which they do not belong), a desire to simplify and economise knowledge and communication ('stereotypes can save perceivers the effort of putting limited processing resources into individuated impression formation') (Quadflieg and Macrae 2011: 223), and social learning. In short, our shared neural architecture has much to answer for.

Precisely how the brain processes such complex phenomena remains beyond the reach of science, and Quadflieg and Macrae are correct to remain sceptical of neuroscientific explanations of and for the stereotype, ergo the caricature. Such caution is not shared by all. Most notably, Semir Zeki has sought to use the neural basis of perception to advance explanations of the interaction between the perceived and the perceiver (1999). In his quest to interrogate the correlation between neural activity and subjective human experience, Zeki has faced accusations ranging from overstating his evidence (or, more precisely, the evidential integrity of fMRI scans) to crass neurodeterminism. And yet by crediting artists with an instinctive understanding of human neurology — in short, Zeki argues, they know how to push our buttons — Zeki recognises that groups of humans have available to them a broad range of symbols and signs whose character can be observed and exploited. Some of these, for example the negativity readily associated with excrement and darkness, blur the boundary between instinctive and cultural meaning: an area teased at with some success by the geographer David Sibley in *Geographies of Exclusion* (1995). Others, stereotyping and caricature included, are cultural constructions which in order to be effective and sustainable

must appear to be objective and natural: gender, race, sexuality and religious discrimination legislation, for example, effectively place themselves in opposition to actions which were once considered — by the majority, the powerful, or both — natural and based on objective reasoning. These metanarratives are clearly necessary at a cognitive level, and yet, as Sterne's example reminds us, the transition from one position to another has the potential to cause confusion, concern, consternation and conflict.

One economising narrative (i.e., women are not equal to men) is then replaced with another (i.e., women are equal to men), thus returning us by way of neuroscience to Lippmann, Gombrich and Said. Moroever Zeki's work show how studies of caricature can fruitfully move freely through disciplinary boundaries, something all the scholars we have encountered have been keen to stress. As Quadflieg and Macrae state in their concluding remarks:

> Only a multidisciplinary approach comprising the work of psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists, and neuroscientists can ultimately succeed in explaining when, why, and how the human brain and mind are drawn to stereotypes and stereotyping (2011:254).

Caricature is then a post-disciplinary, nay trans-disciplinary, term: an organising concept that rewards investigations which do not limit themselves to working within a single set of paradigms, traditions and literatures.

Of course the problem with tracing caricature across disciplines is that to do so risks making the study of caricature not only unworkable in practice but also granting to 'caricature' an influence so ubiquitous so as to be meaningless. If caricature exists everywhere all of the time, how can we usefully bound it, conceptualise it and interrogate it? The essays which comprise this volume overcome this challenge, to some extent at least, by confining themselves to approaches and subjects familiar to humanities scholars, by not reaching decisively towards post- or non-disciplinary readings of caricature. And yet they also overcome this challenge by not attempting to establish if society is cradled in caricature, but rather by identifying where that caricature is of significance to the lives of past actors — both those doing the caricaturing or those suffering from its dehumanising gaze.

The issue begins in the 1790s, during not only the immediate aftermath of the French Revolution but also Britain's so-called 'Golden Age of Caricature' (Donald 1996). At this time satirical artist-engravers such as Isaac Cruikshank, James Gillray, Richard Newton and Thomas Rowlandson vied for the attentions of well-off metropolitan consumers with lurid, provocative and masterful caricature designs. One common genre, as Amy Milka explores, was the contrast print. In this genre of prints the characteristics of two opposing individuals,

groups or types were compared for comic pleasure. It is commonplace to observe that in British prints at least, signifiers of England, among the most prominent of which was John Bull, represented what was natural or normal — in particular when the contrast was concerned with France. But, as Milka argues, there is a more complex narrative to be found here. Rather than examples of a direct and unambiguous 'us and them' discourse, Milka locates in early-1790s dialogue pamphlets contrasting England and France a clear sense of conversation and interaction. As forerunners of the contrast print, dialogue pamphlets then place strain on readings of the former which neglect their conversational and interactive aspects, which stress their loyalist and anti-revolutionary character. Even in an era of acute ideological conflict, consumers of prints and pamphlets were asked to draw their own conclusions from these contrasts: blunt propaganda would not do.

Propaganda and caricature are themes expanded upon by Will Studdert. Moving our chronological focus to World War II, Studdert illuminates a narrative of compromises within the Nazi propaganda machine. But rather than examine these dynamics in traditional venues such as speeches, posters and events, Studdert examines the Nazi relationship to Jazz music. For in spite of their anti-modernist and racial agenda, both of which precluded the adoption of Jazz into the NSDAP's cultural compass, demand from troops prompted attempts to relax restrictions on music listening. Thus a programme of 'new German dance music' was established, consisting of crude imitations of American Jazz, in order to discourage soldiers from tuning into British radio stations. However prejudice, as Studdert argues, won out, and the clumsy solution was ill-equipped for the cultural challenge posed by Jazz.

If Nazi propagandists were concerned with their caricatured and prejudiced understanding of Jazz corrupting individual Germans, then the caricaturist artist Edmund Xavier Kapp was concerned with embodying personality through caricature, with lifting the individual from the crowd. In doing so Kapp, as Emalee Beddoes explores in her essay on this little known early-twentieth century artist, was deploying caricature as an art form so as to detach individuals from the condescension of social caricature. Beddoes focuses on Kapp's caricature portraits of geniuses, among them Picasso and Einstein, and demonstrates that although there are stereotypical elements within these works that bind them together as studies of 'creative genius', each is in fact better seen as a study of individual personality: of the unique as opposed to the generic. Caricature, she reveals, is just as crucial in the process of person recognition as it is group recognition.

As these essays explore, there are many outlets for caricature. To study caricature, then, is to study the historical, the local, the particular, the culturally contingent. And yet what makes caricature so fascinating is its centrality to human experience, social interaction and neural function. In short, the world — real and imagined, past and present — is cradled in caricature. It is then the murky terrain between the particular and the general, the micro and the macro, the antiquarian and the philosophical, that this volume occupies.

Without the support of many individual and institutions, neither the *Cradled in Caricature* events nor the present volume would have been possible. At the University of Kent I wish to thank colleagues from the School of History, the Graduate School and the Faculty of Humanities for funding and support, in particular Ros Beeching, Oliver Double, Diane Houston, Tim Keward, Ulf Schmidt, Jackie Waller and David Welch. I would like to thank our external partners the History of Art Department at University College London and the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art for their generous funding of the second *Cradled in Caricature* event. Reeta Kangas and Pete Sillett co-organised the first *Cradled in Caricature* event, and the second event would not have been possible without the time and dedication of Danielle Thom and Emily Dennis. I thank *Skepsi* for being a strong partner throughout, with particular thanks extended to Fabien Arribert-Narce for initial inspiration and Krista Bonello Rutter Giappone for her patient editorial input. Finally, I would like to thank all those who spoke at or attended the two events on which this volume is based: without their input, insight and enthusiasm the project would have been much the poorer. It was they, not I, who made my unexpected kernel bloom.

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Next-Door Neighbours: Contrast and Caricature in the early 1790s[1]

Amy Milka

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> HENRY: The poor have still more to complain of, when chance throws them thus near the rich, — it forces upon their minds a comparison might drive them to despair, if —
> ELEANOR: — If they should not have good sense enough to reflect, that all this bustle and show of pleasure, may fall very short of happiness; as all the distress *we* feel, has not yet, thank Heaven, reached to misery.
>
> (Elizabeth Inchbald, *Next-Door Neighbours*, 11–12)

On 9 July, 1791, Elizabeth Inchbald's comedy *Next-Door Neighbours* was first performed at the Haymarket, and was 'received throughout with the warmest applause' (*Diary or Woodfall's Register*, 12 July 1791). It continued to be well-received throughout the season, though it did not generate the same *éclat* as her other plays and now receives little critical attention. As was often Inchbald's custom, the play was openly acknowledged as drawn from two French comedies: Mercier's *L'Indigent* (1772), which furnished the contrast between rich and poor neighbours; and Destouches' *Le Dissipateur* (1737), which provides the comic subplot in which a dissipated young noble is deliberately ruined by friends with his best interests at heart. As the merging of these two titles suggests, the play focuses on a contrast between rich and poor, a theme to which Inchbald would return in her more popular play *Every One Has His Fault* (1792) and her novel *Nature and Art* (1796). The interplay between two contrasting situations had long been a focus for a genre of dialogue pamphlets which pitted disputants of opposing classes, genders, or political views against each other in discussion. However, the contrast would soon become a focus for loyalist propagandists who would seek to reinforce, rather than reconcile, notions of difference and opposition. In this article, I will suggest that *Next-Door Neighbours* has much in common with the contrast print, but that, like the conversation pamphlet, it also radicalises the depiction of caricatured opposites by allowing an interaction between them, and more importantly, an eventual revolution in their morals.

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1. The Contrast and Caricature

A light-hearted comparison between a young, fashionable spendthrift and his impoverished neighbours, *Next-Door Neighbours* pivots on the kind of 'contrast' image which became so familiar to the British public during the 1790s. From the outset, Sir George Splendorville's name alone singles him out as the object of caricature and ridicule: whilst he is described by his flatterers as 'the most polished man alive' (1791: 7), he is immediately shown (like his source character Cleon in Destouches' *Le Dissipateur*) to have few resources except his wealth. Inchbald creates a counterpoint for Sir George's vacuous lifestyle in his neighbours, the brother and sister Henry and Eleanor, who, though poor, 'do not want for anything' (1791: 12) because they have their virtue and each other's society. Inchbald continually contrasts the attitudes of these next door neighbours, emphasising the 'transition' between rich and poor settings, a technique which would be repeated in her later writings (Kelly 1976: 87), and which would become a staple in British caricature by the following year.

FIGURE 1. *FRENCH LIBERTY/BRITISH SLAVERY*, JAMES GILLRAY, 21 DECEMBER 1792
© TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM[2]

The exchange which begins this article, for example, juxtaposes the wretchedness of Henry's and Eleanor's financial situation with the opulence of their neighbour's home in the midst of a

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ball, and might remind us of Gillray's caricature of the following year, *French Liberty/British Slavery* [See Figure 1]. Gillray equally mocks the naïveté of the meagre Frenchman, chewing on his onion, who believes he lives in the land of 'Milk and Honey', and, in the neighbouring picture, the hypocrisy of his English counterpart, who mutters about the Ministry 'Starving us to Death', as he tucks into an enormous hunk of beef.

Whilst the contrast here is stark, and satirises both parties, the caricature could be read as a more subversive exploration of relative notions of wealth and freedom, and their relation to happiness. The contrast, then, is less about the material (or corporeal) situation of the two parties, and more about their mental state and their attitude towards their respective riches. In exchange quoted, Eleanor thanks Heaven that she and her brother still have the 'good sense' to know what happiness is and the fortitude to avoid falling into misery or dishonesty. In opposing the characters of Eleanor and Henry to the 'prodigality' of Sir George (6), Inchbald begins to suggest the versatility of the contrast, emphasising not only the material differences which separate the neighbours, but also their differing moral stances.

The contrast print is characteristic of a period in which a loyalist backlash in England cut short movements for social and political reform, primarily by associating its advocates with French Revolutionary values. Whilst, in 1789, many in England had been flattered to behold the French liberating themselves, seeing the storming of the Bastille as an emulation of the Glorious Revolution of 1688, they would soon realise that the French intended to go much further than the moderate constitution established in England. Many in England continued to support and admire the progress of the Revolution; however, by summer 1791, when *Next-Door Neighbours* was first performed, the tide was turning. The flight of Louis XVI and the subsequent political upheaval in June and July was followed the next year by riot and a spate of prison massacres, the scope of which seemed to outstrip the previous aims of revolutionary violence. Most supporters of French politics and principles in England were silenced or, like Inchbald and many of her circle, risked being labelled 'Jacobin' (Kelly 1976: 10). By the end of the year, the loyalist Association for Preserving Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers was established in several major cities, churning out caricatures, tokens and polemical pamphlets against revolution and reform. The contrast print became a reflection of an 'us' and 'them' way of viewing not only the French, but by extension all those who had supported parliamentary reform; a distancing technique which juxtaposed images of British status quo, peace and moderate liberties with French violence, savagery and excess.

Moreover, as Diana Donald suggests of Rowlandson's *Contrast (1792)* (See Figure 2), whilst the opposing images of British and French female embodiments of liberty were immediately recognisable as signifiers in the French Revolution debate, 'the principal "contrast" in the minds of those who viewed the print in Manchester must have been not England and France, but rather the extraordinarily bitter conflict between loyalists and reformers, church and dissent' (1996: 152). Donald focuses on Manchester as a centre of struggle between the newly-formed loyalist association and the existing Constitutional Society, tensions which would be explored in Thomas Walker's *A Review of some of the political events which have occurred in Manchester during the last five years* (1794). That Rowlandson's print caricature could also be seen to stand for domestic political turmoil reflects the way that images of contrast (much like stock characters on the stage) evoked specific, often well-rehearsed debates for contemporary viewers, and suggests the way in which reformers could be demonized through their connections with France.

FIGURE 2. *THE CONTRAST (1792) WHICH IS BEST?* THOMAS ROWLANDSON, DECEMBER 1792
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2. Contrast and Conversation

Whilst print caricature presented neat and concise images of national (or political) difference, other media also satirised the contrast of opposing characters. Throughout the eighteenth century, the dialogue pamphlet had played a role in disseminating moral, social and political

messages to a plebeian audience, tapping into what Jon Mee has called 'a delight in combative talk as a national characteristic' (2011: 12). Bill Hughes speculates that the rapid exchange of ideas in print during the late eighteenth century often gave texts a 'conversational quality', in which 'thesis invites prompt reply' (2005: 12). This is nowhere more evident than in the 'wide field of debate' elicited by Burke and Paine (1791: 126), but is true of many types of textual production. Plays like *Next-Door Neighbours* presented internal conflict but, as David Karr notes, the 'conventions of sentimental comedy' could be used to 'translate representations of family strife into wider social and political meanings' (2001: 328). The same is true of the widely-used conversation format for pamphlets: we are presented with an argument in microcosm, but one which is easily translated to national context. These dialogues could either reinforce stock caricatures with propagandist or one-sided arguments, or create a forum for rational discussion in which individuals from different walks of life could meet as equals.

Inchbald prioritises this reasoning and rational conversation as a method of self-improvement in her play, an agenda which was also addressed in her own novels and those of her literary friends. It had also been the mainstay of the 'conversable worlds' formed through the debating societies of the 1780s (Mee 2011), and in the polite coffeehouse or salon culture championed by the *Tatler* and *Spectator* earlier in the century. Similarly, the printed dialogue was not a new format: throughout the eighteenth century, in England and France, it was used to present a debate between two characters, usually fictional stereotypes, but sometimes famous figures, in which a particular issue was addressed: for example, the abolition of slavery, the necessity of taxation, or the role of dutiful wives. Whilst many of these pamphlets were fairly simplistic in their vocabulary and their ideas, presenting a straightforward contrast (not unlike the caricatures discussed earlier) between 'right' and 'wrong' thinking, there were some which tackled complex social, economic or political ideas and which, moreover, promoted debate and discussion amongst a much broader cross-section of society.

As has been recognised in the most popular conversation pamphlet of the period, Hannah More's *Village Politics* (1792) (and in her later *Cheap Repository Tracts*),[3] conversation, like Inchbald's play, could be at once politically charged and deliver a moral message. Malcolm

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[3] *Cheap Repository Tracts* was the overarching title given to a series of over 100 political and religious tracts published between 1795 and 1797 under a scheme devised by Hannah More with the object of providing the poor with reading matter of an improving nature as a counterweight to the ballads and 'penny dreadfuls' in chapbooks which were commonly hawked around and whose style they imitated.

Cook has noted in his introduction to a collection of French Revolutionary conversation pamphlets:

> Peut-on dire que les dialogues reproduisent sous une forme littéraire les contrastes inhérents aux personnages de tendances opposés. Très souvent […] les auteurs des dialogues que nous présentons mettent en scène des personnages qui, visiblement, essayent de maitriser une langue qui évolue. (Cook 1994: viii)
>
> [*One could say that the dialogues reproduce in a literary form the inherent contrast between characters of opposing views. Very often [...] the authors of the dialogues presented here depict characters who are clearly trying to master a language which is evolving.*] [4]

Whilst, as Cook points out, we cannot assume that the 'evolving language' used in the conversations always reflects the vernacular of the characters presented, the notion of conversation as a way of making sense of a changing society is a valuable one to keep in mind. It is the ephemeral nature of these texts and their immediate contribution to a discussion, which makes the conversation tract (much like a play), such a fascinating phenomenon.

The conversation pamphlet provided a space for disputants from different classes or of conflicting political principles to work out their differences, but the means of doing this differed greatly. In More's *Village Politics*, Jack Anvil the blacksmith discovers his friend Tom Hod reading Paine's *Rights of Man*, which brings about a conversation on Paine's principles. On the subject of equality, Jack is practical rather than idealistic:

> […] suppose, in the general division, our new rulers were to give us half an acre of ground a-piece; we cou'd to be sure raise potatoes on it for the use of our families: but as every other man would be equally busy in raising potatoes for *his* family, why then you see if thou wast to break thy spade, I should not be able to mend it. Neighbour Snip wou'd have no time to make us a suit of cloaths, nor the clothier to weave the cloth, for all the world would be gone a digging (7).

More sets out, in her 'imagined world of plebeian conversation', to effect moral reform by foregrounding hard work and faith in the law (Gilmartin 2011: 138). Jack opines that 'I am a better judge of a horse-shoe than Sir John; but he has a deal better notion of state affairs than I' (11). This suggests that everyone has a fixed role to play in society, which is not up for discussion; and effectively re-draws the contrast between rich and poor. Conversation here is a means to an end, delivering at the same time a 'politically counter-revolutionary and morally radical' message in the working man's vernacular (MacDonald Shaw 2002: viii). Even where sympathy is expressed, for instance, for the hardships of life during the French Revolution in another loyalist publication, the emphasis is on physical work rather than dabbling in politics:

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[4]   All translations are the author's.

MONSIEUR FRANCOIS: […] It is not that the country has lost its fertility; but, when every one is to be either a soldier or a statesman, none are left to till the ground or get in the harvest.

JOHN ENGLISH: That's a bad business, and not to be cured by all your fine speeches: for you know there's no preaching to the stomach, as it has no ears (Association for Preserving Liberty and Property 10).

John English's argument here is reminiscent of the ironic contrast made in *French Liberty/British Slavery* [Fig. 1] and reminds the reader that no amount of proselytising 'fine speeches' are a substitute for a hard day's work and a round English meal. The implication here, as in *Village Politics*, is that the consideration of political questions is the province and privilege of the elite, and that anyone attempting to fill the minds of the lower classes with reformist ideas (such as Paine), was stirring up trouble and distracting them from their duties. That this point is made through conversation between equals, however, ironically repositions the role of 'rational' argument, creating tension between the radical ideology which must be disproved, and the persuasive techniques employed by the conservative disputant.

Radical pamphlets also used conversation as a means of persuasion; however, they tended to express more respect for the exchange of opinions. As Paine had noted in his 'wide field of debate', 'as knowledge is the object contended for, the party that sustains the defeat obtains the prize' (1791: 126). The 1797 *Dialogue Between One of Mr Burke's 320,000 Sound Ones, and one of his 80,000 incorrigible, pure Jacobins* accepted and encouraged conversation on these grounds. The English Jacobin urges, 'when we associate together, we should promote rational conversation to edify one another, and not encourage corrupt and profligate discourse, that levels all principles' (1797: 26). This proviso attempts to distance the disputants from the kind of caricatured figures set up in other conversations, suggesting that civilised discussion is the primary focus of the text. Nonetheless, we see a satisfying victory for the Jacobin, who says simply 'I am a friend to peace and reform, and if those be Jacobin principles, I am one of the 80,000' (1797: 8). He likens his argument with the Sound One, who is 'in Mr Reeve's Society' (the Association for Preserving Liberty and Property Against Republicans and Levellers) and so 'knows which side his bread is buttered on', to a neighbourly dispute.

I presume, it may very justly be compared to two neighbours disagreeing, and if the one breaks the other's fence, or otherwise damages his property, how can the dispute be settled, if he that considers himself injured refuses to hear any proposals for recompence, but insultingly tells the other he is not a proper person to 'treat with' (1797: 8).

Despite his reluctance to enter into a debate with the Jacobin, the Sound One is soon convinced that the Jacobin's views, far from being 'Frenchified all over' (1797: 11), are in fact just and humane. He is made to realise that by supporting the war with France he is

participating in mass murder and spreading famine and distress, a thought which keeps him awake all night until he comes back seeking a second conversation, asking for the Jacobin's advice on how to be a better citizen. This is particularly similar to the conclusion of *Next-Door Neighbours*. After several scurrilous attempts to embezzle the other half of his father's fortune, and to seduce the poor and defenceless Eleanor, Sir George Splendorville is prevailed upon to see the error of his ways. As we shall see, both he and the loyalist character in this pamphlet are convinced by the reasoned arguments of the enlightened citizens around them and resolve to live their lives according to the principles of the rights of man and civic virtue.

3. The Conversation Enacted: *Next-Door Neighbours*

It may be useful here to offer a summary of the plot of *Next-Door Neighbours*. The play opens on the contrast between the insouciant Sir George Splendorville and his neighbours Henry and Eleanor, whose ageing father, Willford, has been imprisoned for a small debt. Struck by Eleanor's beauty, Sir George plots to seduce her, by giving her brother the money necessary to liberate Willford and so securing her gratitude. Upon discovering Sir George's ulterior motive, Willford returns his money and delivers himself once more to jail. Meanwhile, Sir George is in dire straits financially, as his friends and his lover Lady Caroline mercilessly abuse his liberality. Sir George's father has left a large fortune, but half of it lies in trust for his daughter, who he consigned at a young age to his brother (Sir George's uncle), and who has disappeared without trace. Plotting to secure the rest of his inheritance, Sir George and his lawyer, Blackman, go to the solicitor Mr Manly, and attempt to convince him that the sister and heir he has been searching for is dead. Unbeknownst to Sir George, however, Mr Manly has already received visits from Willford and his family, who have been confirmed as the long-lost relatives of Sir George, and from Lady Caroline, who reveals that through various gifts and chicanery, she now possesses most of Sir George's fortune. In an elaborate closing scene, Sir George comes to his senses and uncovers Blackman's plot to embezzle the inheritance; he and Eleanor are proved to be brother and sister; Lady Caroline reveals herself as a faithful lover to Sir George and recovers his fortune; and there is even a hint that Henry and Eleanor (no longer siblings, but cousins) may one day be married.

As this article has already signalled, *Next-Door Neighbours* capitalises on the contrast of material situations, the scene switching quickly from the Sir George's opulent ballroom to 'an Apartment, which Denotes the poverty of the Inhabitants' and the brother and sister Henry and Eleanor (10). Despite their circumstances, Henry and Eleanor are depicted as fortunate in each other's company, and they improve their lot by conversation in a manner which is

reminiscent of the characters of Thomas Holcroft's experiment in moral reformation, *Anna St Ives* (1792). In Holcroft's novel, the intrepid Anna notes that she has 'been taught some high and beneficial truths and principles' by 'instruction, conversation, and by other accidents', and attempts, through conversation, to impart these truths to her suitor, Coke Clifton (1792: 216). Similarly, Henry only has to imagine conversation with his imprisoned father 'before my eyes, [he] talks to me of his consolations' (1791: 14) to be impressed by his morals. His sister Eleanor, too, has learnt her morals not from books, but 'from misfortunes – yet more instructive' (1791: 34). Moreover, Anna St Ives' conversation is seen by her male suitors as a gift to be bestowed, whereas when Sir George's fortune forsakes him, so do his fashionable friends and their 'company' (1791: 46). Thus, whilst some characters find consolation and virtue in conversation and its instructive qualities, the polite sociability of Sir George's circle cannot be so enlightened.

The play opens in the ballroom, for which the lavish Sir George has ordered a new chandelier. The lines themselves are innocuous, but the audience is immediately put on guard for the kind of innuendo and suggestion that carefully-chosen language could contain:

> SERVANT: My master said the last ball he gave, the company were in the dark.
> BLUNTLY: And if you blind them with too much light, they will be in the dark still
> (1791:1–2).

The banter between servants here carries hints about the unenlightened minds and conversation of the guests, as well as the unlighted room, with undertones not unlike those of *Rights of Man*, in which Burke's arguments against the Revolution are likened to 'darkness attempting to illuminate light' (1791: 14). As David Karr has noted in his analysis of Holcroft's radical theatre, an exchange such as this could have been invested with further connotations through the use of a 'mapped gesture', appealing to an audience which knew full well how to read between the lines (2001: 344). Bluntly, the officious man servant of Sir George has been argued to 'represent a radical potential' in the way he plays the social hierarchy and is 'empowered to act', furthering the caricature of his master and expressing barbed social criticism (Smallwood 2008: 301–02). Through this exchange, the audience is prepared to evaluate the conversation of Sir George's guests and to contrast their moral and intellectual qualities with those of his impoverished neighbours.

Next-Door Neighbours is as much about reversal as it is about the establishment of contrast. Indeed, the penniless opportunist Mr. Lucre exclaims to Sir George, 'I often wish to see you reduced to my circumstances, merely to prove how much I could, and *would,* do to serve you'(8). The double-dealing in this sentence, with its empty expression of friendship

and its jealous wish to usurp, appears characteristic of the play's relationships and contrasts. Sir George's intended wife, Lady Caroline, accepts his diamonds whilst declaiming against the guests who 'not only come to devour his dinners, but him' (1791: 6). The duplicity of all, however, pales in comparison with that of Sir George; ordering Henry to him, he insultingly makes explicit the comparison 'I am told you are very poor – you may have heard that I am very rich' (1791: 26), then gives him money to pay off his father's debts, in the hope of seducing the grateful Eleanor. Again, Inchbald makes use of the contrast, to suggest that all is relative when it comes to value: Bluntly believes that Eleanor will be 'worth a thousand' pounds if she refuses Sir George's advances, 'but if she complies, you have thrown your money away', which is 'just the reverse' of how Sir George sees it (1791: 29). The web of deceit spun by Sir George, then, is based on a value system entirely his own and does not operate as expected on those around him. This brings to mind the notion of the 'commercialization of human bonds', as sexual relationships become mere transactions where barter and intimidation usually seal the deal (Karr 2001: 350). This is seen, for instance, in Charlotte Smith's novel *Desmond* (1792), where the gambler Verney effectively sells his wife to a French aristocrat in order to settle a debt. Like Coke Clifton in *Anna St Ives*, Sir George becomes increasingly contrary as the other characters (in this case Bluntly) moralise. With more success and brevity than Holcroft, however, Inchbald suggests that rational conversation still has the power to redeem Sir George, and the intervention will come from the creation of what Jon Mee has called 'conversable worlds' (2011). The play continually blurs class boundaries by juxtaposing financial and moral wealth, creating a liminal space for dialogue between Sir George and his poor neighbours. Therefore, when Henry and Eleanor's father, Willford, demands of Sir George, 'look me in the face while you insult me' (1791: 41), and notices that he cannot, he suggests the beginning of Sir George's moral reform. Sir George's shame shows that he is 'not a *hardened* libertine' (1791: 41), an observation which sets the scene for the peer's later crisis of conscience and transformation into a valuable member of the community.

Although the prologue to *Next-Door Neighbours* stressed that Inchbald's comedy was 'free translation' from the two French plays, she interweaves her own concerns over the moral bankruptcy of the elites, and her interest in achieving a rational transparency in both public and private affairs. Indeed, reviewers clearly recognised her stamp on the two plots brought together in the play, *The Attic Miscellany*, for example, noting:

> She is the more deserving of applause, as the amusement it affords is chiefly derived from her own judicious management, and not from any merit in the original (1791: 408).

Inchbald's satirical treatment of Sir George taps into contemporary debate, expressing a distrust of 'the will of the monied classes to correct social justice' (Green 2004: 57). This is significantly tempered, however, from her source texts: in *Next-Door Neighbours*, the proximity of Sir George and his wealth creates a contrast which intensifies Eleanor and Henry's sorrows; but in Mercier's *L'Indigent*, the poor weaver Joseph laments:

> Pour avoir encore de l'or, le riche a trouvé le secret de nous affamer (1824: 5).
>
> [*In order to have even more gold, the rich have discovered the secret of starving us*.]

Joseph claims on several occasions that the rich are directly responsible for his poverty and evidences egalitarian principles which Inchbald neglects to translate. This is certainly a strategic omission: in Joseph's opinions, a British audience in 1791 might detect distasteful seventeenth-century 'levelling' attitudes, or worse, French Revolutionary principles. It is not rank and riches but the abuse of them that Inchbald pointedly attacks, attempting to escape allegations of radicalism.

Inchbald's agenda is personal reform, disabusing the rich of their privileged and irresponsible lifestyles. Thus, in her translation from Destouches' *Le Dissipateur*, her second source text, Inchbald de-prioritises the elaborate plot conceived by Cleon's uncle and lover, who encourage him to fritter away his money until he is ruined and abandoned by his friends. She realigns the focus from this humorous deception, to the process of reform and rehabilitation: to this end, Lady Caroline and Bluntly chastise Sir George for his extravagance early in the play, rather than encouraging it, and Willford, too, suggests that there is hope for him yet. Whilst Cleon in *Le Dissipateur* is dragged kicking and screaming to the realisation that money will not bring him happiness, Sir George is presented from the outset as a redeemable character, held back by peer pressure and a bad education. The depiction of his improvement, however, was perhaps wasted on some reviewers: whilst the *Attic Miscellany* recognised the similarities between Sir George Splendorville and Sheridan's Charles Surface in *The School for Scandal*, the reviewer struggled to interpret his mixed feelings over Sir George as a character with whom the audience could neither 'commiserate' nor 'rejoice' (408). Thus, whilst the play appeared to present a stock character, a caricature of selfishness and dissipation like Sheridan's Charles, Inchbald intentionally subverted the audience's expectations, offering instead a portrait of the rehabilitated libertine.

Whilst we have so far seen Sir George as an authoritative character, expecting respect and admiration from both his peers and his neighbours, Inchbald portrays a more justified pride in the character of Henry; he asserts his rights even in the grip of poverty: coming home and finding his importunate landlord, the lawyer Mr Blackman, in his rooms, he proudly defends himself.

> BLACKMAN: Pray who are you, sir?
> HENRY: I am a man.
> BLACKMAN: Yes – but I am a lawyer.
> HENRY: Whatever you are, this apartment is mine, not your's [*sic*]– and I desire you to leave
> it.
>
> (1791: 21)

Henry denies Blackman's suggestion that a lawyer is in some way more than 'a man', and he simply asserts his identity, empowered by his confidence in the inalienable rights of man. Therefore, when he defends his property against his uninvited guests, we feel the 'rightness' of his behaviour. Henry's refusal to identify himself by a name or profession emphasises at once, but more forcefully, the anonymity of the poor in eighteenth-century society, the extent to which social interaction and treatment is based on these qualifiers. Once more, however, Inchbald's translation is significantly less volatile than Mercier's *L'Indigent*, in which Joseph attacks the presumptuous aristocrat for addressing him in the informal 'tu':

> Je suis Joseph, un ouvrier, & non pas votre ami; si je l'étois, nous pourrions nous tutoyer […]
> je ne suis pauvre que parce qu'il y a trop de riches (1824: 38)

> [*I am Joseph, a labourer, & not your friend; if I were, we could call each other 'tu'* […] *I am only poor because there are too many rich people.*]

Again, Inchbald tempers Joseph's aggression towards the rich and focuses instead on rational discourse as a means to overcome class prejudice. This stance is compounded by the reaction of Henry's father and sister to Sir George's attempted seduction: Eleanor tells her father he must return to prison, rather than have his debts discharged by 'a man as far beneath you in principle, as you are beneath him in fortune' (40). This is a more sympathetic translation of the same scene in *L'Indigent*, in which the father chastises Du Lys and his kind:

> Riches malheureux, gardez votre or indigent, & laissez nous la volupté des larmes (1824: 72)

> [*Unhappy rich people, keep your destitute gold, & leave us the pleasure of our tears.*]

Choosing not to translate this somewhat extravagant language of sensibility, in which tears are a sensual pleasure and to some extent a commodity, Inchbald favours more rational discourse, which seeks to convert before it condemns.

Throughout the play, therefore, Inchbald's language implies the reversal of a stark contrast, by which moral fortune outstrips and subverts the blessing of wealth and status. Sir

George realises this after losing his fortune at cards, and being persuaded by Blackman to embezzle the rest of his dead father's wealth. 'Is truth, immutable truth, to be corrupted and confounded by men of the law? […] in this crisis of my sufferings, it is the only consolatory reflection left me, that truth and I, will never separate' (49–50). Blackman is a lawyer before he is a man and believes truth to be a malleable construct, a state of mind and morals which is contrasted unfavourably against the upstanding and aptly-named solicitor Mr Manly, whose moral compass and sense of duty steers the play towards its *dénouement*. Inchbald gives Mr Manly the decisive lines, so open-ended that they must evoke in the audience's mind circumstances more broad than the unravelling of the play:

> Be not surprised --- great discoveries, which we labour in vain for years to make, are frequently brought about in one lucky moment, without any labour at all (1791: 70).

Inchbald here alludes not only to the search for Sir George's lost sister, which is now at an end, but Sir George's sudden 'great discovery' of 'how to be in future happy' (1791: 70); there is also a hint to the audience here about the great possibilities which exist for improving their lot. Whilst a part of this relies on 'luck', the play's ending also compounds a sense of inevitability, as if 'great discoveries' and changes in circumstance are the unavoidable consequence of getting to know one's neighbours. In this sense, Inchbald recreates the radical conclusion of *L'Indigent* but judiciously omits the anti-monarchic bent of Mercier's original, in which the notary refuses the invitation to become part of the happy family as its 'King', preferring to be considered as a 'friend' (1791: 117–18). This suggestive ending is emphasised by Vaughan's epilogue:

> Use for a signal then – your Magic Fan
> And all the House will follow to a Man
> Or should there be a disaffected few –
> *A counter-revolution* – rests with you.
>
> (1791: 72)

Whilst this final stanza is addressed to Inchbald, the playwright-enchantress who turns the audience to her will, the final line is somewhat ambiguous. The 'counter-revolution' here would bring any reticent audience members around to the point of view of the appreciative audience, but whether the onus lies with Inchbald or the audience members is unclear and would depend on the emphasis put on the final 'you'. Again, the possibility that this epilogue is challenging its audience to effect a 'counter-revolution', which in this case has a radicalising effect on the more conservative audience members, showcases the radical potential of Inchbald's play, which Gary Kelly describes as 'Jacobinical' (1976: 87), and

which caused her friend John Taylor to warn her 'to beware of her politics, as their apparent leaning might injure her fortune' (Boaden 1883: 314).

The possibility for reversal and reform expressed in *Next-Door Neighbours* gives the audience plenty of opportunity to reflect on the permanence of the contrast. Inchbald draws her characters and her class-contrast from a wealth of contemporary caricatures, but she goes beyond not only the audience's expectations but also the conventions of her genre by using this as a basis for subversion. It is through the conversion of these caricatures into transparent protagonists who embody the principles of moral reform that *Next-Door Neighbours* achieves both its comedy and its message. Inchbald could hide behind the fact that the play is merely 'free translation' (prologue), but it is her pointed contrast of the two French plays which gives *Next-Door Neighbours* a morally (and potentially politically) radical edge. The play suggests the mutual benefits of both conversation and interaction between different social strata in a radical re-enactment which blurs the boundaries between rich and poor, revolutionary and counter-revolutionary and which removes the figurative fence between these next-door neighbours.

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'The Death of Music': The Nazis' Relationship with Jazz in World War II[1]

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Soweit sie im Kulturleben überhaupt über Namen von Bedeutung verfügen [insofar as they have, in cultural life, any names of importance]' wrote Joseph Goebbels of the USA in his article 'Gottes eigenen Land [God's Own Country]' published on 9 August 1942, 'sind sie von Europa entliehen [they are all borrowed from Europe]'; he continues:

> Das Land besitzt keine eigene Sprache, keine eigene Kultur und keine eigene Bildung. Alles ist geborgt und durch Amerikanisierung meistens verdorben, niemals aber verbessert worden. Unter Amerikanisierung hat man eine Art von Verkitschung zu verstehen, die darauf hinausläuft, jedem echten Kulturwert einen amerikanischen Stempel aufzudrücken, aus einer gewachsenen Sprache einen Slang, aus einem Walzer einen Jazz und aus einem Dichtwerk eine revolverjournalistische Story zu machen (Goebbels 1942b: 1).

> [*The country does not have its own language, culture or education. Everything is borrowed and usually ruined by Americanisation, but never improved. By 'Americanisation' we should understand a form of kitsch which amounts to putting an American stamp on everything of real cultural value, making slang of a developed language, a jazz tune from a waltz and a story of revolver-journalism from a poetic work*][2]

It is ironic that Goebbels' indictment of American culture as a vulgarised caricature of European achievements should be such an apt description of the problems Germany was to have during the War with popular music. Arguably the only contemporary popular culture at which Germany truly excelled (and which endures to this day) was the left-wing cabaret that was the indelible trademark of the Weimar era. With the advent of the Third Reich, however, the majority of Germany's most talented cabaret artists had left the country. Those who remained were either persecuted or accommodated themselves to varying degrees with the regime. From an exciting and critical art form, cabaret was reduced to harmless kitsch, the 'Witzlosen Spass des KdF [Kraft durch Freude] Frohsinns [humourless fun of Strength-through-Joy cheerfulness]' ('Das Kabarett' 2006). This paper will explore how the Nazis attempted to fill the void by creating a new music that was exciting enough to quell the demand for jazz, whilst simultaneously being ideologically acceptable to the regime. Is it possible for a government to manufacture a truly popular culture, or is such an artificial process destined to fail from the outset, remaining at best a caricature of the genuine article?

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[1] This article was presented as a paper at the second *Cradled in Caricature* Symposium held at the University of Kent on 20 June 2011.

[2] Except where otherwise indicated, all translations from German are by the author.

1   The Development of Jazz in Germany

Several months before the outbreak of war, the British jazz magazine *Melody Maker* politely noted that German radio played 'dance music of a sort,' and that 'for those who like their dance music to be of a military character the German transmitters will be very useful' (Butcher 1939: 11). This was not exclusively a result of Nazi censorship;[3] the American music historian J. Bradford Robinson has convincingly traced the peculiarly stunted (when compared with other European countries) growth of jazz in Germany following the end of the First World War, what might be called the nation's jazz *Sonderweg*, back to its delayed introduction to the Weimar Republic (Robinson 1994: 5). The first American jazz band did not reach Germany until as late as 1924, first unable to visit due to the blockades placed on Germany and deterred by the inflated Reichsmark (culminating in the hyperinflation of 1923) thereafter. The extremely unstable economic situation in the early Weimar years also meant that foreign record companies refused to export their wares to the new Republic. So while other European countries were experiencing the exciting new music first-hand and on gramophone records, the majority of musicians in Germany were left guessing at how it was to be played and accordingly resorted to improvising with the limited facilities available to them.

German jazz, notes Robinson, was created:

> by grafting ragtime syncopations and an uninhibited performance style onto three existing genres of commercial music inherited from Wilhelmine Germany: the military band, the salon orchestra, and the *Radaukapelle* or 'racket band'. (Robinson 1994: 4–5)

The *Radaukapelle* integrated a raucous mix of comedy stunts, gimmicks and sound effects into its performances, and it was precisely this unmusicality which led to its being mistaken for jazz, due to its superficially rebellious attitude and disregard for musical convention. The most popular exponent of the *Radaukapelle* was the Weintraub Syncopators, a hugely successful group who, unusually, could also claim some genuine jazz credentials: according to several accounts, the Syncopators' Jewish trumpeter Adi "Eddie" Rosner only narrowly lost a 'cutting contest' with the legendary Louis Armstrong,[4] before fleeing the Third Reich for fame (and later the gulag) in the Soviet Union. (Starr 1994: 196–97).

The salon orchestra, however, had the greatest influence on the format of the German jazz band. Indeed, Robinson points out that the most popular early jazz groups (such as Dajos

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[3]   Indeed, as will be shown, this was applied inconsistently and often with an ignorance of musical subtleties, thus allowing some 'jazz-like music' on the air.

[4]   A head-to-head musical contest between two musicians, common during the swing era.

Béla, Barnabas von Geczy, Marek Weber and Bernard Etté) were simply salon orchestras which had been rechristened as jazz bands whilst essentially retaining the same structure under the leadership of a *Stehgeiger* [lead violinist]. A manual was even issued in 1928 providing instructions on how to convert a salon orchestra into a jazz band (Robinson 1994:5). In fact, this model never really changed in the German musical imagination and was to persist as the dominant format of the jazz band right up to the end of the Third Reich. Such 'legitimate' American jazz as did finally reach Germany after the economic stabilisation under Stresemann remained an extremely niche market and never exercised any degree of influence on patterns of commercial supply and demand or the greater development German jazz.

Nonetheless, the Nazis despised jazz and shared the conservative essayist Friedrich Hussong's conclusion that the jazz band represented 'the death of music […], the rot of a decaying society' (Kater 1992: 29).[5] 'It was in jazz, more than in any other style of music, that the Nazis could achieve a true integration between their ideology of racism and their aesthetic opposition to modernism,' notes the musicologist Erik Levi (1994: 120). This involved a synthesis of hostility towards jazz's African-American and Jewish roots with a rejection of allegedly 'un-German' modernist musical elements such as the syncopation and the emphasis on the rhythm rather than the melody of a piece. On a deeper level, moreover, the idea of personal freedom implied by the (at least theoretical) spirit of improvisation and spontaneity was the antithesis of the *Führerprinzip*. The lingering threat of persecution and the obligatory membership of the *Reichsmusikkammer* (RMK) [Reich Chamber of Music] meant that even those musicians who were technically able to play 'hot' jazz largely refrained from doing so, exercising a degree of self-censorship everywhere except at the most secret of late-night jam sessions.[6]

2   A Jazz Ban

Jazz, however, proved impossible to eradicate. Levi repeats the common misconception that jazz was officially banned on German radio (1994: 120), which was not, in fact, the case. Indeed, by 1941 Nazi radio officials were still suggesting the term '*Jazzmusik* [jazz music]' be replaced on the air with '*Tanzmusik* [dance music]', as mentioned in the minutes of the *Rundfunksitzung* [Radio Committee meeting] of 2 December 1941 (RFS 9141). What actually

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[5]   Translation by Kater, who does not quote the original German text.
[6]   Rare audio evidence of the lively secret jam sessions at Berlin's Delphi theatre, featuring members of Fud Candrix's group and the Frankfurt Hot Club can be heard on *Swing under the Nazis* (*the Clandestine Recordings of the Frankfurt Hot Club; 1941 – 1944*).

occurred was a vicious but decentralised campaign against jazz and its practitioners, a clumsy patchwork of regional edicts and media denunciations rather than a blanket ban. Here Levi rightly points to Goebbels' pragmatism as a decisive factor; even in the pre-war years he was acutely aware of public opinion and did not wish to alienate listeners by removing this popular music from the airwaves altogether (1994: 121). The driving forces behind the RMK's public controls and persecution of jazz musicians were predominantly anti-Semitism and xenophobia (Kater 1992: 32–46), and the 'King of Swing' Benny Goodman's music was only banned in 1938 when his Jewish heritage was belatedly ascertained (Zwerin 2000: 49).

In fact, the American historian Theodore S. Hamerow's division of the Propaganda Ministry into opposing factions of 'ideologues' and 'realists' can also be applied to the Nazi cultural apparatus; jazz was attacked with religious fervour by some sections of the Party and tolerated as a regrettable but necessary concession to listeners' tastes by others. This inconsistent and decentralised approach meant that what bans were brought into force remained purely regional, such as the jazz ban which was instigated by the Reich Governor Martin Mutschmann in the state of Saxony in July 1943. A notice in the *Zschopauer Tagblatt* on 5 July 1943 announced that:

> Das Spielen aller amerikanisierenden Jazzweisen oder ähnlicher, dem deutschen Kulturempfinden widerstrebenden 'Musik', wie alle Entartungen musikalischer Darbietungen durch körperverrenkende Untermalung, dekadenter Refraingesang u. ähnliche Effekthascherei, ist grundsätzlich verboten. (*Zschopauer Tagblatt*, 1943).

> [*The playing of all American forms of jazz or similar 'music' that conflicts with German cultural sensibilities, as well as all manifestations of degeneration in musical performances through an undercurrent of syncopation, the decadent singing of choruses and like gimmicks, is strictly forbidden.*]

The Nazis' problems in dealing with jazz are conveniently summarised by a telling and drawn-out exchange of letters relating to this ban. A retired Viennese music publisher and vehement enemy of jazz named Norbert Salb contacted Peter Raabe, the head of the RMK, asking for the ban on jazz in Saxony to be imposed on a national level. In his reply to Salb dated 15 July, Raabe pointed out that an effective battle against jazz music was impossible as long as it was being played on the radio and the RMK was in no way responsible for the radio programming; Salb should address his concerns to Hans Hinkel of the Propaganda Ministry and *Reichskulturkammer* (RKK) [Reich Chamber of Culture], who was head of radio entertainment (Raabe 1943). Salb accordingly contacted Hinkel on 18 July, quoting Raabe and arguing:

> Die Jazzmusik ist eine jüdische-amerikanische Erfindung, so zu sagen der Bolschewismus in der Musik. Gegen den Bolschewismus in jeder Form müssen wir uns aber bis zum äussrsten

[*sic*] wehren! [...] Wenn aber die Absage an den jüdische-amerikanischen Musik-bolschewismus wirklich wirksam sein soll, muss sie reichseinheitlich, in erster Linie für den Rundfunk, erlassen werden (Salb 1943).

[*Jazz music is a Judaeo-American invention, musical bolshevism so to speak. We must be on our guard against all forms of bolshevism! [...] But if the rejection of Judaeo-American musical bolshevism is to be truly effective, it must be consistent across the Reich, above all on the radio.*]

After being prompted by Salb on 28 October for a reply to his unanswered letter, an irate Hinkel wrote to Raabe on 15 November accusing him of prolonging the 'fruitless discussion' about jazz music and pointing out:

Im übrigen darf ich darauf hinweisen, dass sowohl Autoren als auch Bearbeiter oder Kapellen, die etwa 'Jazz'- oder jazzähnliche Musik schreiben oder verbreiten, ordentliche Mitglieder der Reichs-Musikkammer sind, sodass für Sie als Präsident unser Kammer die möglichkeit bestünde, entweder solche Komponisten aus der Reichsmusikkammer auszuschliessn [*sic*] oder aber einzelne Kompositionen [...] zu verbieten bzw. die Drucklegung unmöglich zu machen. Es ist selbstverständlich, dass derartige Verbote dann auch durch den Rundfunk strikte beachtet würden (Hinkel 1943a).

[*Moreover I have to advise you that the authors, as much as the musicians or bands who write or distribute 'jazz' or jazz-like music, are regular members of the Reich Chamber of Music, so that you as President of our Chamber have the possibility either to expel such composers from the RMK […] or to ban the individual compositions or to make their publication impossible, as the case may be. It goes without saying that such bans would then also be strictly adhered to by radio.*]

Hinkel proceeded to ask Salb for a 'musikalisch *eindeutige* Definition des Begriffes "Jazz", so wie Sie ihn empfinden und ablehnen [*an* unambiguous *definition in musical terms of the exprsession 'jazz' as you perceive and reject it*', and also for examples of the offending compositions and their precise broadcast dates and times (Hinkel 1943b: added emphasis), which he had also asked Raabe to provide (Hinkel 1943a) — one might wonder whether Hinkel seriously expected an ardent opponent of jazz to sit down next to his radio set and take careful notes of each transgression. This letter to Salb, dated 19 November 1943, is the last record of the correspondence on the topic saved in the German archives. It would appear, therefore, that late as November 1943, two senior Nazi cultural figures, Hinkel and Raabe, were both unable to say what was or was not jazz, and neither would accept responsibility for taking consequential action against it.

3   The Audience

Especially problematic for the Nazis was the fact that, during wartime, many soldiers wanted to listen to the hottest jazz possible in their precious hours of relaxation. Moreover, the contemporary jazz aficionado Hans Bluthner's later assertion that 'anybody who liked jazz could never be a Nazi' (Zwerin 2000: 24) simply does not stand up to the hard evidence. Indeed, a BBC report on the German audiences for British programming dated 25 August

1942 quotes an American journalist who had recently departed Berlin as saying that 'young people, even fanatical Nazis, would go to considerable lengths […] to listen to our light musical programmes, particularly jazz' (NA FO 898/41).

The Germans' research had similar findings. In 1941 active troops were asked what they would like to hear on the *Soldatensender* [Soldiers' Stations] (Propagandaministerium 1941b).[7] In the Crimea 70% said modern dance and entertainment music; in the Ukraine, those with a rank of battalion commander and lower said they preferred modern rhythmic music; the Luftwaffe emphasised that programmes on *Soldatensender Zentral* [Soldiers' Radio Central] 'können nicht "heiss [*sic*]" genug sein [*could not be hot enough*]', while infrequent listeners asked almost without exception for jazz music 'zum "Aufpulvern [*sic*]" [*to liven themselves up*]'; in Lapland almost all respondents requested plenty of light music, stating: 'Je verrückter, je lieber [*the crazier, the better*]' (Propagandaministerium 1941b).

This does not give the full picture, as troops elsewhere preferred sentimental pieces and officers tended to request 'heavier' music. In spite of the officers' predilection for the classics, however, the relationship between social class and musical taste was far less pronounced than in Britain, where the BBC producer and presenter of the wartime jazz programme *Radio Rhythm Club* Charles Chilton remembers the class-based divide between lovers of jazz and classical music as being 'almost a racial thing'.[8] The evidence of the blurring of the boundaries in German can be found in the elite Luftwaffe's notorious taste for hot jazz (see below), which is confirmed by the survey. The demand for hot jazz and rhythmic dance music was widespread among considerable sections of Germany's fighting forces and across all class divides. Moreover, the soldiers' impatience increased as the Nazi war effort faltered, and what one American commentator called 'the turning of the psychological tide' began to take its toll.[9] A memo from Hans Hinkel to Goebbels in February 1944 noted that *Soldatensender Belgrad* (Soldiers' Radio Belgrade) was popular because it played 'die heißeste Tanzmusik [the hottest dance music]', and that as the situation at the front deteriorated the complaints were increasing about programmes that were considered 'schmalzig [slushy/schmaltzy]' and 'unmännlich [unmanly]' (Hinkel 1944).

Goebbels, therefore, was well aware of the problem. As early as June 1941, the same month as Germany's invasion of the Soviet Union, he published an essay in the weekly newspaper *Das Reich* entitled 'Auflockerung des Rundfunkprogramms im Kriege [*The*

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[7] Those in the Ukraine filled out a questionnaire. It is not stated how the other groups expressed their opinions.
[8] Conversation between the author and Charles Chilton, West Hampstead, 16 June 2012.
[9] The phrase belongs to the American radio commentator Morgan Beatty (NARA RG208 Box 6).

Relaxation of Radio Scheduling during Wartime]' (Goebbels 1941). The minutes of the Ministry of Propaganda's evening press conference on 15 June paraphrases his argument:

> Die einen wollen nur Opern hören, die anderen Symphonien, andere wieder Märsche oder Tanzmusik usw. Die Front — das is ja da Wesentliche — braucht Entpannung, siw will leichte, heitere Musik hören. (Propagandaministerium 1941a)

> [*Some listeners only want to listen to operas, some want symphonies, and some want marches or dance music etc. The front — and that is of course the most important thing — needs relaxation, it wants to listen to light, lively music.*]

Further evidence of this clear shift towards wartime pragmatism can be found in the minutes of a conference dedicated to music on Greater German Radio that was held on 2 and 3 October 1941,[10] the minutes of which records the following exchanges:

> Wir müssen verhindern, daß unsere Soldaten, die nach Entspannung verlangen, fremde Sender einzustellen gezwungen sind und somit auch den englischen Nachrichtendienst über sich ergehen lassen[, so Hans Hinkel]. Herr Reichsintendant Dr. Glasmeier […] führte an erlebten Beispielen vor Augen, daß der Soldat unserer Zeit die Musik bekommen muß, die er haben will, auch wenn es gegen das Innere mancher Musikschaffenden im Großdeutschen Rundfunk geht. Der Herr Reichsintendant [...] nannte die moderne, rhythmische Musik das Schwarzbrot unserer Zeit, das den Hauptteil unserer Tagesprogramme ausmachen soll. Die klassische Musik sei der Kuchen, der selten [...] serviert werden soll. [...] Das Ziel aller Rundfunkgestaltenden muß sein, daß der deutsche Soldat, wie der größte Teil unseres Volkes überhaupt, sagt: 'Einen besseren Rundfunk wie den deutschen gibt es nicht' (RRG 1941).

> [[*Hans Hinkel said that*] *we must prevent our soldiers who are looking for relaxation being forced to tune into foreign stations and therefore being exposed to English news broadcasts. Reichsintendant Dr. Glasmeier* […] *cited his own experience that the soldier of our time must get the music he wants, even if it goes against the instincts of some musical producers in Greater German Radio.* […] *The Reichsintendant* […] *called modern rhythmic music the brown bread of our time which should comprise the majority of our daily schedule. Classical music is the cake that should be served only seldom* […]. […]. *The goal of all radio schedulers must be that the German soldier, like the greater part of our people, says: 'There is no better radio than German radio!'*]

4   Towards a New German Dance Music

It is telling that the first reference to the *Deutsches Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester* [German Dance- and Entertainment Orchestra] is made on 29 September 1941, five days after the last mention in the archives of the short-lived variety show *Frohe Stunde am Nachmittag* [Happy Hour in the Afternoon].[11] *Happy Hour in the Afternoon* was intended to promote the development of 'new German dance music' but was roundly condemned as a failure by radio officials due to technical difficulties and 'second rate bands' (Bartholdy 1941a). Indeed, the programme does not seem to have survived more than a month after a meeting which concluded that:

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[10]   The term 'Großdeutschland' was coined in the nineteenth century to signify a unified nation state of peoples who shared a common ethnicity and language. The term 'Großdeutsches Reich' was used after the *Anschluß* [annexation] of Austria on 13 March 1938.

[11]   The programme seems to have run from 9 July until 24 September 1941.

Das gemeinsame Abhören der Wachsaufnahmen von der letzten 'Frohe Stunde am Nachmittag' am 13.8. (...) hat ergeben, dass eine Sendung dieser Aufnahmen von der Veranstaltung nur den Eindruck einer gewissen Minderwertigkeit vermitteln würde. (Bartholdy 1941b)

[*A collective listening to the wax recordings of the last 'Happy Hour in the Afternoon' on 13 August* […] *resulted in the decision that a broadcast of these recordings from the event would only give the impression of a certain lack of quality.*]

However, the need to develop an officially acceptable dance music that was suitably exciting for soldiers at the front remained a pressing one, and the problem was exacerbated by the fact that the British were well aware of the German forces' enthusiasm for jazz and sought to exploit it. The Nazis were justifiably worried about the numbers of soldiers and civilians who continued to listen to British stations in spite of the increasingly draconian punishments, and Hans Fritzsche suggested in the evening press conference of 21 September 1941:

Wir werden im kommenden Winter mit nichts peinlicheren zu rechnen haben, als mit der fortgesetzten Einwirkung engl. Rundfunksendungen in deutscher Sprache (Fritszche 1941).

[*In the coming winter, we will be expecting nothing worse than the continued effects of English German-language programmes*]

He was to be proved right. The Nazis had to worry not only about the BBC, which in spite of British jazz aficionados' complaints (Jackson 1941 and Jackson 1942) still offered authentic American jazz from the likes of Benny Goodman and Muggsy Spanier, and had its own acclaimed house jazz band in Harry Parry and the Rhythm Club Sextet; the 'black propaganda' radio stations such as *Soldatensender Calais* (Soldiers' Radio Calais) and *Kurzwellensender Atlantik* (Short-Wave Station Atlantic) set up under the stewardship of former Daily Express journalist Sefton Delmer and specially targeted at the German military also freely utilised the latest jazz and dance band recordings, including specially-recorded German-language versions of jazz hits, to attract soldiers to their subtle blend of genuine news items and misinformation (Newcourt-Noowordworski 2005: 94). Goebbels, indeed, noted in his diary on 28 November 1943:

Soldiers' Radio Calais […] gave us something to worry about [tonight]. The station does a very clever job of propaganda […] (Delmer 1962: 110).[12]

Unwilling and unable to play genuine jazz music to the German fighting forces, he ordered the creation of the *Deutsches Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester* (DTU) [German Dance and Entertainment Orchestra], an all-star outfit which contained some fine musicians who were also capable of playing jazz. A letter from Leopold Gutterer, Goebbels' state

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[12]   Translation by Delmer, who does not quote the original German.

secretary and the Vice-President of the RKK, to Hans Hinkel and his colleagues dated 29 September 1941 announced:

> Wir haben das Philharmonische Orchester mit ausreichenden Mitteln ausgestattet und haben in derselben Zeit aber für die Pflege der Unterhaltungsmusik recht wenig getan. [...] Es ist nicht zu übersehen, dass die Pflege erstklassiger Unterhaltungsmusik und damit eines dazu geeigneten erstklassigen Orchesters eine Aufgabe des Reiches ist (Staatsekretär 1941).

> [*We have equipped the Philharmonic Orchestra with sufficient means and at the same time done precious little for cultivating entertainment music.* […]. *It cannot be ignored that the cultivation of first-class entertainment music and with it a first-class orchestra is a duty of the Reich.*]

In reality, it was more of a necessary chore than a duty. The Canadian historian Michael H. Kater has pointed out that not only did 50% of members of the armed forces approve of modern rhythmic dance music before the war but that Luftwaffe pilots were particularly susceptible to British propaganda due to their contact with the enemy and 'because of their urbanity, their knowledge of English, and their legendary penchant for swing music'. The young fighter ace Werner Molders, greatly admired by Goebbels, was particularly famous for his passion for jazz and frequented Berlin's few bona fide jazz venues when on leave in the capital (Kater 1992: 126). This view of the Luftwaffe's 'degenerate' musical proclivities was seconded by the similarly urbane and Anglophone journalist Wolf Mittler (who was initially responsible for English-language Nazi propaganda broadcasts) in a 1989 television documentary (*Propaganda Swing* 1989).

The new orchestra was intended to settle the matter once and for all. A list of the first-rate musicians required for the project, most of whom were under contract to various entertainment venues and film studios in Berlin, was drawn up. Talented musicians were now extremely scarce, since most German nationals had now received what the arranger Friedrich Meyer called their 'Death-on-the-Field-of-Honour summons' (Bergmeier and Lotz 1997: 153).[13] Those selected for the orchestra were informed that they were released with immediate effect from their existing contracts in order to join Goebbels' new creation, often to howls of indignation from their employers. The director of the *Theater des Volkes* protested in a letter to the Propaganda Ministry on 9 April 1942 that without the two musicians who were leaving for the orchestra he would have to close the theatre down (Theater des Volkes 1942). However, as Goebbels wrote in a note to Hinkel on 10 March 1942:

> Von der auf meine Weisung erfolgten Gründung des Deutschen Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchesters habe ich Kenntnis genommen. Ich bitte, dafür Sorge zu tragen, dass die für dieses Orchester vorgesehenen Musiker zum 1. April d.J. *ausnahmslos* zur Verfügung stehen. Sofern sich die derzeit bestehenden Arbeitsverhältnisse dieser Musiker über den 1.

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[13] Term as quoted by Bergmeier and Lotz.

April erstrecken, ersuche ich, an ihre Betriebsführer mit der Bitte um Freigabe zu diesem Termin heranzutreten. Dabei ist zweckmäßig auf die dem Orchester obliegenden besonderen kulturellen, propagandistischen und repräsentativen Aufgaben hinzuweisen (Goebbels 1942a; added emphasis).

[*I have acknowledged the foundation, upon my orders, of the German Dance- and Entertainment Orchestra. I ask you ensure that the musicians chosen for this orchestra are available* without exception *by 1 April of this year. Insofar as the conditions of their current employment are such that it extends beyond 1 April, I request that you approach the managers of these musicians and ask that they be to be released for this date. In this you should stress the orchestra's special cultural, propagandistic and representative tasks, which are obligatory.*]

When the managers continued to complain to Hinkel, Joseph Goebbels intervened personally. In the words of the pro forma letter sent by Leopold Gutterer to the musicians' employers:

Die mit dem Orchester verfolgten Ziele lassen sich nur erreichen, wenn alle Stimmen mit den besten Kräften besetzt sind. […] Gegenüber den Notwendigkeiten des Deutschen Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester müssen aber andere Interessen mit Rücksicht auf die dargelegten Bestrebungen und vor allem die Wünsche des Herrn Reichsministers zurückgestellt werden (Gutterer 1942).

[*The goals the orchestra has to pursue can only be achieved if all positions are occupied by the strongest talents. […] In the face of the German Dance- and Entertainment Orchestra's needs, however, other interests must, in consideration of this, be subordinated to the tasks expounded [above] and, above all, to the wishes of the Reichsminister* [i.e. Dr. Goebbels].]

However, like the ersatz coffee that had become the norm on the home front, the results were a weak and unsatisfying imitation of the real thing. Propaganda Ministry guidelines insisted that the violins in the orchestra carry the melody (Bergmeier and Lotz, 1997: 148) – giving a distinctly tame and saccharine feel to the arrangements — and the genuine jazz fans in Germany were inevitably left unimpressed (Kater 1992: 129). Meanwhile, the enemies of jazz complained bitterly that the cursed degenerate music was still clogging up the airwaves. In a letter to the RKK dated 10 July 1943, Bruno Veith of Dresden wrote:

[Denn] was sich der Rundfunkhörer täglich an jüdisch-verniggerter Musik durch die sogenannten Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester bieten lassen muss, ist den schlimmsten Auswüchsen in der Systemzeit gleichzusetzen. [...] Sie zersetzt den deutschen Geist und vergiftet vor allen Dingen unsere Jugend, die unter Tanzmusik heute nur noch diese jüdischen Geist atmenden Machwerke kennen lernt (Veith 1943).

[*This Jewish-'niggerised' music that is being offered to radio listeners on a daily basis by the so-called Dance- and Entertainment Orchestra is comparable to the worst excesses of the Weimar Republic. […] It corrupts the German spirit and poisons above all our youth, who today only know dance music in the form of these miserable efforts that breathe the Jewish spirit.*]

In truth, although the band's original conductor Georg Haentzschel occasionally managed to sneak in a few bars of genuine jazz breaks into the scores (Kater 1992: 129), the 'worst excesses of the Weimar Republic' were never reached. Their activities were weighed down by Nazi rules and regulations, and listening to the recordings today gives the impression of a

competent but tame salon orchestra, with any potential excitement killed by the string section and plodding rhythms.

It is interesting to compare these recordings to those of the post-war *Radio Berlin Tanzorchester* (Radio Berlin Dance Orchestra), formed in the Eastern Occupied Zone in 1946, which was led by the DTU stalwart Horst Kudritzki and contained many of the same musicians as the band put together by Goebbels (Lange 1996: 120).[14] Their recording of Walter Jenson's composition 'Amiga Swing' features bold trombone and trumpet solos, hot drum interludes and what sound like some genuine passages of improvisation within the chord progression. The result is good quality swing in the style of contemporary American big bands such as the groups of Dizzy Gillespie and Stan Kenton. The Radio Berlin Dance Orchestra therefore offers audible proof that Goebbels' musicians were actually capable of playing the music the soldiers wanted to hear, and one wonders whether he could have compromised more on this point in order to prevent soldiers from tuning into foreign stations, since, in any case, even the lacklustre offerings of the DTU provoked a barrage of angry letters from listeners such as Veith. Ironically, the Radio Berlin Dance Orchestra were themselves to fall victim to reactionary Soviet cultural policy in 1950, as the political climate froze into a Cold War and American jazz again became *musica non grata* in East Berlin.

5   Conclusion

The inherent weakness of the notion of truly 'German' entertainment music is, ultimately, revealed in the muddled and fanciful language used by its champions. For all the talk about a truly indigenous art form, what was essentially being asked for on a practical level was a modern form of dance music that was *purged* of all non-German influence rather than created from scratch. In an essay for the journal *Unterhaltungsmusik* entitled 'Die Unterhaltungsmusik im Rahmen der Neugestaltung des deutschen Musiklebens [*Entertainment Music in the Framework of the Restructuring of German Musical Life*]', Wolfgang Helmuth Koch, the head of the RMK of Lower Saxony stated early in the War:

> Wenn wir vom Standpunkt der nationalsozialistischen Weltanschauung aus […] den Musikbetrieb in Gaststätten, Kaffeehäusern und ähnlichen Unterhaltungs- und Vergnügungslokalen betrachten, so müssen wir feststellen, daß das meiste, was auf diesem Gebiete geboten wird, wenig oder gar nichts mit Kultur zu tun hat; es erweckt vielmehr den Eindruck, als ob sich hier jüdische bzw. bolschewistische Kunstauffassungen nach wie vor Geltung zu verschaffen suchen […].Es gibt aber auch eine Kunst, die nichts anderes will, als da zu sein, sich ihrer edlen Form, ihres Wohlklanges, ihrer Unbeschwertheit zu erfreuen und in

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[14] Compare, for example, *Deutsches Tanz- und Unterhaltungsorchester: Originalaufnahmen aus den Jahren 1942 und 1943* with *Till the End of Time/Zwei Minuten in Harlem and Jazz auf Amiga 1947-1962 Vol.1,* which feature the Radio Berlin Tanzorchester.

sich selber ruhend als statische Kunst nur den Gesetzen der Schönheit zu folgen und so der Entspannung zu dienen […]; es ist die Kunst, die, gleichsam von selbst zum Hörer kommend, ihn spielend und unterhaltend dem Alltag entrückt, dahin, wo Freiheit und Frohmut ihr Heimatrecht geniessen (Koch 1942).

[*If one considers the music performed in bars, coffee houses and other such leisure venues from the perspective of the National Socialist worldview* […], *one is forced to realise that most of what is on offer in these places has little or absolutely nothing to do with culture; it instead gives the impression that Jewish and Bolshevistic artistic forms are still trying to achieve validity.* […] *But there is another form of art which wants nothing more than to exist, to rejoice in its pure form, its happy sound, its carelessness and rest in itself as a static art that follows only the laws of beauty and therefore serves relaxation* […] *it is the art that almost comes from itself to the listener, playfully and entertainingly taking him from everyday life to a place where freedom and happiness make their home.*]

The vagueness of this pseudo-mystical terminology in fact only serves to highlight the lack of ideas in the German musical establishment. This essay, written by a senior RMK official, offers merely verbal flights of fancy and not one single serious musicological suggestion. The suggestion that this art would 'come from itself to the listener' also has an air of wishful thinking to it — it was his organisation's task to foster and develop this art, and they were clearly failing to do so.

The Nazis' half-hearted persecution of jazz, as this paper has shown, was itself an acknowledgement of the lack of a credible 'German' alternative, and the likes of Norbert Salb were right at least in arguing that regional bans alone would not be enough eradicate this 'entartete Kunst ['degenerate' art form]'. A ban across the Reich, as well as a strict anti-jazz policy on German radio, would be required were anything at all to be achieved. But Goebbels could not afford to disregard the tastes of the German armed forces to such a degree, and so the result was a middle ground that pleased neither jazz's supporters nor its detractors.

The British historian David Welch writes:

Public opinion as we understand it cannot exist in a totalitarian police state; its place is taken by an official image of the world expressed through the media of mass communications. The total impact of Nazi propaganda was to create a picture of reality shaped according to the underlying themes of the movement (Welch 2001: 80).

The problem for the Nazis in this case was not only that the underlying themes of their movement simply did not translate into progressive, exciting modern music but also that the democratic nature of the radio dial gave German listeners the opportunity to decide whether or not they wanted to accept to the imposed 'reality' of National Socialist dance music. For all the increasingly harsh punishments, there were many who were willing to take the risk in order to listen to the far superior enemy offerings.

A secret British post-war report on the Political Warfare Executive (responsible for 'black propaganda' to Germany) completed in 1947 notes:

> The success of [the dance music programme on] Atlantik [i.e. *Kurzwellensender Atlantik*] […] forced the German Propaganda Ministry to provide an imitation entertainment programme, but it was not able to compete successfully and Atlantik remained the favourite entertainment of the German forces. (Garnett 2002: 208)

At the Federal Archive in Berlin there are countless memoranda, conference minutes, letters and programme guidelines on the creation of this imitation; but genuinely popular culture by definition comes from the people, not the government. New German dance music represented a laboured attempt on the part of an authoritarian regime to replace jazz music with a state-sanctioned dance music and amounted to, at best, a weak and unconvincing caricature of the real thing.

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Imaging the Inside: Edmond Xavier Kapp, Character Portraiture and Artistic Insight

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Since his death in 1978, Edmond X. Kapp's works have received next to no scholarly attention and are rarely exhibited.[1] Considering the quality of the works, as well as the numerous contemporary exhibitions, and reviews by writers as prominent as Virginia Woolf, it might be expected that his name would be familiar to scholars of art history, yet he occupies a precarious position in the margins.

Numerous factors might have contributed to Kapp's decline into relative obscurity including his multiple artistic identities as a creator of humorous caricatures, a portrait artist, an abstract painter and a poet, as well as his elitist publishing preferences, producing expensive, limited-edition books rather than publishing in the press. Attempting to pinpoint why Kapp has largely eluded art history is likely to be a nuanced and multifarious activity. With this in mind, this article will begin to address the question by approaching Kapp's oeuvre in two parts: an introduction to his professional practices and reception, followed by an analysis of how the artist negotiated the traditions of portraiture and caricature in order to discuss how this affected his contemporary and posthumous reception.

Kapp was born in Highbury, North London on 5 November, 1890, to a family of wine merchants of German-Jewish origins. At seventeen he won three scholarships to study modern languages in Paris, Berlin and Christ College, Cambridge, spending a year in each place. It was whilst studying at Christ College that Kapp began to draw and after graduating in 1913, he held a small exhibition of his work at Cambridge.

At this stage, Kapp's style was strongly influenced by Max Beerbohm, whom Kapp had met whilst he was a student. His early works bear a strong resemblance to the decadent aesthetic style of the *Yellow Book*, an artistic journal of the 1880s in which Beerbohm played a key role. Despite Beerbohm's professional support,[2] Kapp told Yvonne, his wife, at a low personal moment in 1926, that he felt Beerbohm had led him astray artistically (Yvonne Kapp 2003: 125).

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[1] The author curated *Composing Characters: Edmond Xavier Kapp's Portraits of 20th-Century Composers*, The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, 29 June – 26 August 2012, the first exhibition of his work in ten years.

[2] Beerbohm provided an introduction to the catalogue for Kapp's exhibition at the Leicester Gallery, London in 1922.

With the onset of war in August, 1914, Kapp enlisted immediately as a subaltern with the 11th West Sussex Regiment. Whilst in the trenches, Kapp continued to draw character portraits to amuse fellow soldiers, and he also drew the devastation surrounding him.[3] After the First World War, Kapp decided to study art. He applied to but was not accepted by either The Slade or the Vienna Academy of Arts. In 1922, after returning to England, Kapp married Yvonne Meyer. During the early years of their marriage, the couple travelled around Europe, moving from city to city, living a bohemian lifestyle.[4] Kapp was eventually accepted as a pupil at the Lipinski School of Art in Rome in 1923.

Kapp maintained a reputation as a caricature artist, yet he rejected the traditional newspaper work of the caricaturist, as he wanted to choose his own subjects (Yvonne Kapp 2003: 82). Fortunately, after his second solo exhibition in 1922, he found a number of patrons who were willing to subsidise his lifestyle (Yvonne Kapp 2003: 82). He would also make money by increasing the output of his drawings of his most famous sitters, through either hand-copying his works, or by making a small number of prints to be sold individually or bound in expensive limited-edition collections.

Kapp's brief fame within the intellectual society of his day relied on social contacts and on the fame of his previous portrait sitters. His commercial successes also seem to be from the fruits of this networking. In this context, Kapp's work could be viewed as social documentary or as novelties rather than as fine art, which may go some way to explain why his works — collected by over twenty prominent institutions such as the National Portrait Gallery, the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge — usually reside in storage.

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[3]   Because of these war drawings, Kapp was made an official war artist during the Second World War, drawing scenes of the home front.

[4]   Yvonne Meyer was a journalist, photographer, translator and writer, best known for her biography of Eleanor Marx. In 2003 she wrote an autobiography, *Time Will Tell*, which contains some of the little biographical information available about Edmond Kapp.

Figure 1: GORDON SELFIRDGE, 1928

Kapp came to resent his success as a caricaturist, claiming that it had destroyed his integrity. He called his works 'clever, good-taste trash' and 'stunt books of cheap drawings' that 'commanded false prices and a press reputation with its false values' (Yvonne Kapp 2003: 125). He began to explore abstract painting but with little success. Subsequently he continued to produce character drawings to fund his lifestyle, but these works began to move away from *The Yellow Book* style he had inherited and began to assume the qualities of portraiture.

Edward Elgar, 1914

Figure 2: EDWARD ELGAR, 1914

Elements of Kapp's style, especially in earlier works, closely fit traditional descriptions of the genre of caricature — a comic portrait captured in just a few strokes — as laid out by Andre Félibien (Gombrich and Kris 1938: 320). The treatment of Gordon Selfridge (see Figure 1), for example, fits this description as, true to his profession, he is more suit than man.[5] Works like these conform to a formula of simplification from primary sketch to final drawing that is associated with caricature. Kapp's portrait of Edward Elgar is one of his most traditional works in this sense, reducing earlier drawings to emblematic details such as Elgar's iconic moustache (see Figure 2). However, in a letter to Hamish Miles, then director of the Barber Institute, Kapp protested at being described as a caricaturist,[6] quoting the definition from *The Universal Dictionary of the English Language*: a grotesque, laughable representation of a person in a drawing.

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[5]   All images are courtesy of The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham.
[6]   In his correspondence with Miles, Kapp claimed that only one of the works in the Barber collection was a caricature, but did not say which.
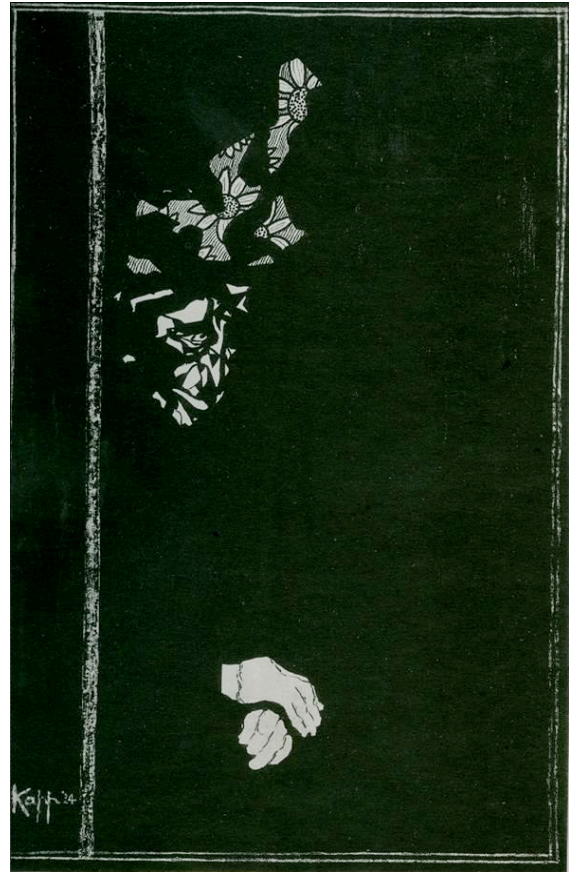
Figure 3: YONE NEGUCHI, 1914

Figure 4: MRS. GRUNDY

Sir Claude Phillips of the *Daily Telegraph* claimed that Kapp's works showed 'a certain ruthlessness, yet without anything approaching spite or meanness' (Edmond Kapp 1919).[7] Most definitions of caricature, such as the one Kapp cites, involve notions of satiric intention. This, I would suggest, is one of the main factors which differentiate Kapp's works and traditional caricature, as they do not generally seek to deflate their subject. Kapp claimed that all of his subjects sat for his drawings, and many, such as Pablo Casals, Noël Coward and Aldous Huxley, were friends or artists he admired, who sat for him a number of times. This would suggest that, where Kapp's portraits do use humour, it is likely that the sitter was complicit in the joke.

Portraiture has been compared to physiognomy in its attempt to reconcile outward appearances with the inner personality to create a visual expression of the individual (Sherry 1987: 6). The difference between this physiognomic element in portraiture and in caricature can be attributed to the latter's interest in wit and play through the treatment of physical detail. The self-consciously minimal style of the caricature characteristically positions the artist as a

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7   Reproduced in Edmond Kapp: 1919 with no further referencing.

self-depreciative ironist, affording them a reputation for unpretentiousness (Sherry 1986–87: 6).

Although Kapp chose not to call his works 'caricature', it is nonetheless clear that he chose to adopt elements of the character-portrait format. He utilises formal attributes which are associated with quick, uncontrived execution and couples them with the content of traditional formal portraits or fancy portraits, which depict the subject amongst the equipment of their interests or work, serving to aggrandize them socially and intellectually. By combining these techniques with those of caricature as described by Sherry, Kapp's works give the impression of depicting a seemingly uncontrived likeness of the subject both visually and intellectually. This type of treatment goes beyond the minimalist irony and self-deprecation of the caricature artist, and has the effect of positioning Kapp as a complex individual with a nuanced understanding of personality.

Kapp's contemporary reception is best characterised by J. B. Manson, the former director of the Tate Gallery, who described him in *The Times* as a 'distillateur of the perfume of personality [...] he extracts the quintessential expressions of persons. His drawing is a concrete expression of the soul.' (Kapp 1919). Virginia Woolf reviewed Kapp's first book, *Personalities,* in the essay 'Pictures and Portraits'.[8] Her review is as emphatic as Manson's, exclaiming: 'Oh to be silent! Oh to be a painter! Oh (in short) to be Mr. Kapp' (Woolf in McNeillie 1986: 166). Manson claimed that Kapp had the ability to extract and express the mind and soul of his subject, while Woolf approves of his supposedly silent authorial voice. These reviews seemingly position Kapp's role in his own work as neutral and silent — presenting him as a gifted communicator of reality, rather than an interpreter or creator of meaning.

The works in Kapp's limited edition publication, *Personalities*, are bookended by the first figure in the collection, the Japanese poet Yone Neguchi, which Kapp has titled *The Seer of Visions*, and the final character, *Mrs. Grundy*, an allegorical figure representing self-censorship and external judgement (Harvey 2006: 134). Thus, the publication begins with a mystical figure with his eyes closed, captured in a light, diffused sketch which is contrasted by the final figure, the dark, ominous Mrs. Grundy (see Figures 3 and 4). Ben Harvey argues that the inclusion of Mrs Grundy brings up issues of censorship and editorial selection, 'a figure Kapp must fight against, or ignore, as he goes about his business of poking fun at the great, the good and the powerful' (Harvey 2006: 154), contrasting with the position of *The*

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[8]   First published in *The Athenaeum*, 1919

Seer of Visions. In this context, this coupling is suggestive of a conflict between creative desire and the influence of censorship.

Kapp's oeuvre embodies an experimental search for an artistic voice that unified image and idea, be it the depiction of personality or of music — as his later abstract work, which emulates Kandinsky's synesthetic visualizations, would explore. The terms 'personalities' and 'reflections' which he chooses to adopt, give insight into how he perceived this element of his work. The former suggests that he intended his character portraits to be visualisations of personality while the latter suggests a dual meaning, of both a visual reflection of the sitter, and of the artist's own mental reflections on the sitter.
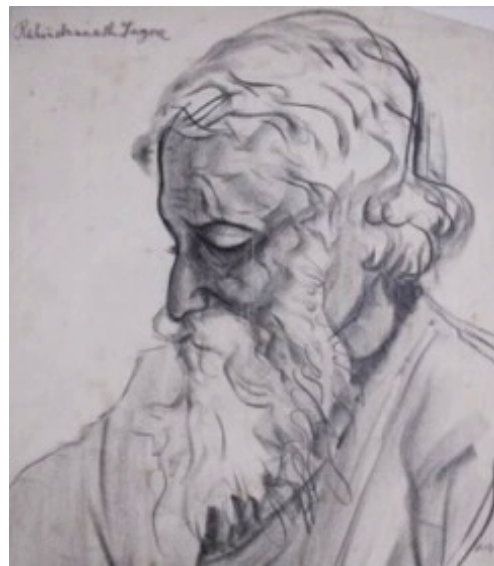

Figure 5: ALBERT EINSTEN, 1923

Figure 6: :RABINDRATH TRAGORE, 1921

Michele Hannoosh claims that caricature functions through a kind of psychological splitting, in which the work represents the self and the other simultaneously: the self and the ironic self — the subject and the artist. This suggests that caricature functions on a basic level by exploring and exploiting psychological concepts of the self in relations to the other (1993: 73). This element of psychological splitting, or *dédoublement,* raises questions much like those surrounding the concept of 'psychological portraiture', a term referenced by Hugh Gordon Porteus in his introduction to the catalogue of Kapp's 1961 Whitechapel retrospective. Commonly applied to the portraiture of artists like Vincent van Gogh, Oskar Kokoschka and even Rembrandt, the term describes a perceived psychological intensity in portraiture.

Interpretations of both caricature and 'psychological portraiture' tend to assume the possibility of visually depicting psychological reality — and both assume that the artist has the faculties to access the interior life of the subject and 'reflect' it through their own

subjective visual interpretation. Expressionist 'psychological portraiture' created a visual language of inner meaning using medium and compositional choices to create an effect of psychological insight — such as the capturing of movement, intense or muted colour, heavy or feather-light facture and, in some cases, through the use of pathological imagery.[9]

Within caricature, phrenology is a device often employed to express psychological character and Kapp's drawings do adopt these methods of cranial exaggeration, seen in the inflated head of Sir Norman Angel or Einstein's high brow (see Figure 5). Kapp's treatment of his subjects also uses formal elements similar to those adopted in portraiture which is often described as psychological. His drawing of Rabindranath Tragore (see Figure 6), for example is an intimate, textured and detailed portrait using soft, diffused line, giving the impression of a deep, spiritual, man of the mind.

His drawing of Percy Wyndham Lewis, on the other hand, is created through the use of harsh lines and blocks of geometric shapes and texture, from which the fragmented figure of Lewis emerges, creating a strong visual impact which could be linked to the harsh angles and heavy printing of the Vorticist journal, *BLAST* (see Figure 7). On a more traditional level, Kapp makes reference to the achievements of his subjects through use of emblems such as those seen in the drawing of Richard Strauss (see Figure 8), in which he is surrounded by musical paraphernalia and depicts the sun rising over the mountains — referencing the second section of his tone poem, *Eine Alpensinfonie* (Nickerson and Wootton 2007: 226).

Kapp's character portraits were interpreted by contemporary critics as depictions of their subject's interior life (J. B. Manson in Kapp 1919). But contrary to this, I would argue that Kapp is predominantly concerned with their intellectual ability and professional successes, attempting to ascertain and depict the essence of genius.

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[9] The relationship between portraiture and psychology in the early twentieth-century is explored in more detail in Blackshaw and Topp 2009.

Figure 7: PERCY WINDHHAM LEWIS, 1914

Figure 8:RICHARD STRAUSS, 1917

Despite his long career of drawing 'personalities' I am not aware that Kapp ever made a self-portrait. Within his oeuvre, the artist's own personality is seemingly muted, allowing him to inhabit his subjects, 'reflecting' their genius and reputation upon his own, through his 'reflections' on their personalities. Despite his own misgivings about caricature and his aspirations to create more traditional fine art, Kapp's career within character portraiture is a unique negotiation of the modernist rhetoric of the creative genius.

Kapp forged a career independently and refused to ally himself with any artistic group. Whether or not it was an ideological stance, this rhetoric of independence seems to be mirrored in his artistic reception throughout his life, as both a blessing and a curse. Yvonne Kapp claims in her autobiography, that both the Slade and the Vienna Academy of Arts refused to accept Kapp on the grounds that 'if taught, he would lose such originality as he had and gain little by way of compensation' (Yvonne Kapp 2003: 57). But it was this stylistic and ideological independence that afforded him prestigious commissions such as *The League of Personalities* while, most notably, Picasso offered to sit for Kapp (see Figure 9) and for no other artist, as he claimed that Kapp would not be 'influenced' by him (Whitechapel 1961: 5).
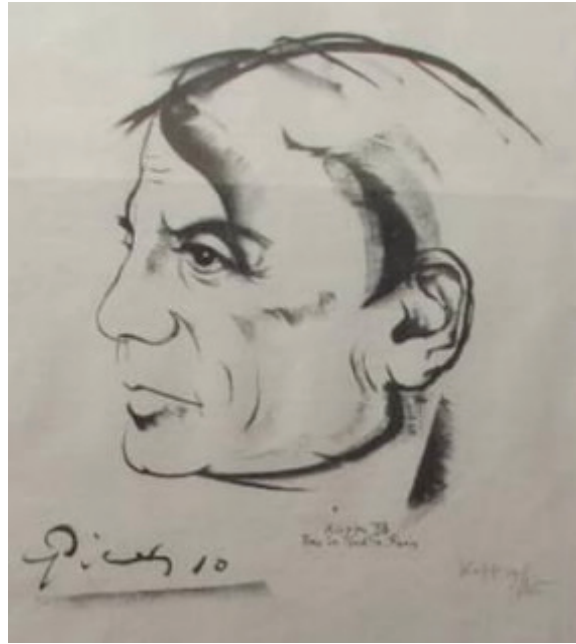
Figure 9: PABLO PCIASSO,1938

Kapp's complex and often contradictory negotiation and definition of his practice afforded him a contemporary reception as an autonomous artistic talent with superior skills of analysis and expression, but it also compromised his position in art history, in part because of his habit of stylistic borrowing in order to suit his sitters and in part because he did not associate himself with a specific social or artistic zeitgeist. Defining Kapp's own style is difficult and locating his oeuvre within the narratives of twentieth-century art is equally complicated, which may have contributed to his limited posthumous reception. Kapp achieved his fame through drawing the famous, and in depicting 'genius' he engaged with the concept of genius but it seems that his harnessing of fame and genius was not enough to secure his own long-term reputation.

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Emalee Beddoes

Emalee Beddoes is a part-time MPhil art history student at the University of Birmingham researching the image of tea in late Victorian visual culture and the normalisation of an international national icon. Emalee came to research Edmond X. Kapp whilst working as an intern at The Barber Institute of Fine Arts, where she was tasked with curating a small exhibition of his work. Alongside studying, she is junior editor at a digital art's press.

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"If the State is happy that has no history, thrice happy is the Statesman who makes none."