From Marginalia to Juvenilia: Jane Austen's Vindication of the Stuarts

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> If Jane Austen had lain as a child on the landing to prevent her father from thrashing her mother, her soul might have burnt with such a passion against tyranny that all her novels might have been consumed in one cry for justice.
>
> —Virginia Woolf[1]

As Virginia Woolf testifies above, Jane Austen did not face the domestic violence and sense of tyranny experienced by the famous vindicator, Mary Wollstonecraft. But what if Austen found a reason to "burn" with a "passion against tyranny"? What if Austen somehow imagined a connection to people from centuries past who had been the victims of injustice? What if her early writings show that she did "cry for justice" on behalf of an oppressed party? In *Northanger Abbey* (1818), Austen defends the genre of "the novel" and women writers; in chapter 5, she interrupts her plot in order to respond to a history of literary criticism and to carve a space for herself in the new literary marketplace. According to Clara Tuite, such a move illustrates a "primary generic concern" embedded in Austen's novels: "to justify—or vindicate—the novel genre, and to vindicate the form of female subjectivity and interiority that is associated with the novel."[2] Long before she wrote a novel, though, Austen embraced the role of vindicator. In November 1791, the teenaged Austen set out to vindicate the early Stuart monarchs in *The History of England from the Reign of Henry the 4th to the Death of Charles the 1st. By a partial, prejudiced, & ignorant Historian*.[3]

Many scholars have identified Austen's *History* as a parody of history-writing, particularly that of Oliver Goldsmith's *History of England from The Earliest Times to the Death of George II* (1771) and his abridgement of those volumes (1774).[4] Mary Lascelles calls Austen's work "rowdy mock-history," and Devoney Looser refers to it as "history in comic form."[5] Deirdre Le Faye has described the *History* as "sketchy, illogical, and crazily confused" and the "cre-

ation of [Austen's] own world of black comedy."[6] Scholars, including Looser, recognize, however, that Austen's *History* does not merely represent light-hearted mockery.[7] Antoinette Burton analyzes the *History* as feminist historiography while Lynne Vallone reads it alongside adolescent girls' "private juvenile historiography."[8] Christopher Kent, Daniel Woolf, and Mary Spongberg frame Austen's *History* as a response to early 1790s politics. As Kent puts it, "Austen certainly had decapitation on the brain in 1791."[9] Daniel Woolf finds that the "sad stories of the deaths of kings" coming out of the French Revolution "occupied the teenaged Austen."[10] Spongberg puts Austen in the company of Wollstonecraft and Catharine Macaulay when she studies Austen's *History* as a response to Edmund Burke's writings.[11] These scholars also note Austen's favor for the Stuarts. Spongberg recounts Austen's family history as it relates to the Stuarts and Jacobitism, Kent refers to the Stuarts as Austen's "people," and Daniel Woolf suggests that Austen's "emotive empathy" for "figures such as Mary Queen of Scots" led to her "willingness to set aside a general weariness with history to pursue the defense of its victims with zeal."[12] It is precisely that zeal for defense that I explore in this essay.

Austen surely gets "revenge on history," as Kent points out, but, as Looser indicates, Austen's *History* is "more than a clever pupil's revenge on schoolroom history."[13] Austen also delivers something more than a mere "History of the Stuarts," as Claire Harman calls the *History*.[14] Austen offers her readers a multivalent, multimodal text that encompasses parody and historiography, yet engages with the traditions of martyrology and vindication, or defense. With the aid of her sister, in *The History of England* Austen crafts images of Mary Queen of Scots and Charles I as martyrs in order to repudiate unfavorable depictions of the executed Stuart monarchs, but the story of Austen's defense of the Stuarts does not begin or end with this work. Austen's marginalia in her family's copies of Goldsmith's *History* and Vicesimus Knox's late 1780s *Elegant Extracts* expands the tale of her vindication of the Stuarts, and it extends the defense to include the Stuart heirs, Charles II, James II, Queen Anne, and the Young and Old Pretenders.[15] A host of reasons could explain Austen's affinity for the Stuarts: she may simply have enjoyed defending an underdog, she may have celebrated the Leighs' ties to the Stuarts, and/or she may represent late eighteenth-century anti-Jacobin anxieties resulting from the French Revolutionary Wars (a subject that Austen famously never overtly addresses in any of her writings).[16] Regardless of the motivation, Austen's *vindicating* and *vindictive* words come from a young writer who argues for a powerful cause.

Although Spongberg indicates that "Austen may appear to have lacked the vindicating spirit of radical women writers such as Mary Wollstonecraft," I argue that Austen's early musings on the Stuarts show the signs of a powerful "vindicating spirit."[17] Rather than charting the link between Austen's early work and that of history-writing or parody, this essay studies Austen's marginalia and juvenilia as joint vindications that straddle the line between "the personal" and "the political." In both *History of England* and her marginal notes, the "partial" Austen takes up an age-old Tory cause in defending the Stuarts and their sympathizers against the slander of Protestant writers and Whig loyalists who recorded "prejudiced" versions of the Stuarts in the annals of history. This analysis of Austen's marginalia and juvenilia asks readers to revisit the rhetorical strategies latent in most of her *History*'s accounts, and to consider Austen's marginalia on the later Stuarts as a kind of brainstorming or prewriting for her justification of the early Stuarts in her *History*. Through this contextual reading, we are better poised to study the *History* as a legitimate vindication that draws on the symbolic power of martyrology, particularly in its sensibility toward tragic, idealized figures, as well as its disdain for biased historians' claims of objectivity.

Before we turn to a study of Austen's texts, it is important to recall the long-standing tradition of pamphlets that sets out to advocate a passionate cause and/or preserve one's reputation in the face of defamation. While scholars have traced the genre of the defense to the Middle Ages, hundreds, if not thousands of vindications were published in the long eighteenth century. Numerous pamphlets from the Popish Plot era (1678–81), including some by prolific playwright Elkanah Settle, exchanged arguments on behalf of the Tory/Catholic or Whig/Protestant cause. As Mark Knights has noted, later Stuart England print campaigns promoted the biases of "self-vindicating individual[s]," such as Robert Crosfield, who penned *A Vindication of the Constitution of the English Monarchy* (1703).[18] Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift have been associated with vindications: *A Vindication of the Press* (1718) has been attributed to Defoe, and Swift published *A Vindication of His Excellency Lord Carteret* in 1730. Vindications have also been tied to long eighteenth-century women writers and a defense of women's rights. Notable works include Mary Astell's *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* (1694), Mary Chudleigh's *The Ladies' Defense* (1701), and, of course, Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792). From the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries, writers published defenses of Mary Queen of Scots. John Leslie compiled *A Defense of the Honour of the Right High, Mightye and Noble Princesse Marie Quene of Scotlande* (1569) before the queen's death. Centuries afterwards, John Whitaker published *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated* (1787)—a text that Austen knew well. Further, pamphleteers defended long eighteenth-century authors such Burke, Samuel Johnson, and John Locke.

In the years immediate to Austen's marginalia and *History*, a plethora of writers published vindications. The works address topics such as the relationship between man and society (Burke's 1780 *A Vindication of Natural Society*), the rights of men and women (Wollstonecraft's 1790 *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* and 1792 *Rights of Woman*), revolution (the Revolution Society's 1792 *A Vindication of the Revolution of Society, against the Calumnies of Mr. Burke*), religion (Edward Young's 1786 *A Vindication of Providence* and Jane Toulmin's 1790 *A Vindication of Speaking Openly in Favour of Important Truths, especially those Respecting*

the Divine Unity), "brutes" (Thomas Taylor's 1792 *Vindication of the Rights of Brutes* parodies "Woolstonecraft" and her eating habits), the slave trade, English forces in India, and much more. Whether seriously or satirically, authors of vindications "express contempt," as Wollstonecraft puts it, in response to personal, political, religious, and social problems.[19] Austen does much of the same in her marginalia and *History* as she espouses the Stuart-Tory cause, much as her ancestors did. In considering Austen's writings as a part of the tradition of vindications, we see her engaging a history of political discourse in her notebooks (and perhaps even in performative readings of her works) and with the Austen-Leigh family in the margins of history books.

PREPARING THE DEFENSE: AUSTEN'S MARGINALIA

Before Austen writes of the early Stuarts in her *History*, she drafts a *defensive* prewriting via marginalia. In all likelihood she wrote the comments found in the Austen family's copies of Goldsmith's *History of England* and Knox's *Elegant Extracts* prior to November 26, 1791. Katie Halsey reminds us that the appearance of handwriting in these volumes is something of an anomaly, for "the Austens, in fact, extremely rarely wrote in their books."[20] While in the margins of Knox's *Extracts* Austen responds briefly to William Robertson's unfavorable depiction of Mary Queen of Scots, in the four volumes of Goldsmith's work she composed more than 100 marginal comments—"most of them not very ironic, but Catholic, and Tory," as Park Honan has noted.[21] Kent rightly ascertains that Austen's "marginal interjections are devoted mainly to the Stuarts (whom she cheers on from the sidelines, as it were, in their losing cause)," yet most comments in Goldsmith's volumes address the later Stuarts.[22] Harman argues that Austen's marginalia contain a "decidedly performative tone of her remarks, which smack more of acting up or answering back than of 'notes to self,'" but we might interpret them as "answering back" rather than "acting up" because we hear the thoughts of a perturbed reader *and* a writer-as-interlocutor who answers back to the historians who have tried to quiet the Stuarts.[23]

In one of the first comments, the Stuart sympathizer employs the rhetorical strategy of vituperation as she applies "Shame" to the British who failed to support Charles I in 1642.[24] Here she echoes her brother James's prologue to Whig supporter Susanna Centlivre's 1714 play, *The Wonder*, which the Austens staged in their barn on Boxing Day, 1787: "At length with *shame* each British bosom burned, / And Charles, & loyalty & wit returned. . . . / And age almost forgets his pains & cares."[25] She praises royalist Viscount Falkland as "a great & noble Man," and she condemns Parliamentarian John Hampden, saying, "What a pity that such virtues shd be clouded by Republicanism!" (320). She refers to Oliver Cromwell as a "Detestable Monster!" and implies that she wished he had died in battle in 1650 (323, 324). Austen acknowledges the virtue of loyalist Lady Fairfax, who spoke on Charles's behalf during his trial, and she idolizes Charles for saying kind words at his trial to a soldier who blessed him and was promptly struck down. Austen states, "Such was the fortitude of the Stuarts when oppressed and accused!" (322, 321). Here we see the origins of Austen's future vindication of the king, featured prominently at the end of her *History*. In the marginalia Austen bemoans Charles's beheading, particularly the moment when the executioner held the severed head and cried, "This is the head of a traitor," according to Goldsmith; in Austen's opinion, it is "rather the hand of a traitor who held it" (322). In the marginalia Austen formulates a genuine, sympathetic image of Charles I. While she praises the Stuart bloodline, she notes that Charles II "was not indeed equal to his father" (322). However, she glorifies Charles II "since he was a Stuart" (322). This phrase is a preview of the closing line in Austen's *History*, which exonerates Charles I of all wrongdoing because "he was a Stuart" (189). In the marginalia, Austen questions Goldsmith's censure of Prince Charles's fleeing from Cromwell by asking, "was he to blame?" and she blesses the men and women who helped him escape in 1651 (323, 324). Although the marginalia includes more criticism of Cromwell than praise of the exiled Charles, it idolizes the king as a vindicator of a wronged woman: his wife. When Goldsmith writes, "they think, said he [Charles II], that I have a mind to a new wife; but for all that I will not suffer an innocent woman to be abused," Austen replies, "that's right" (328). It seems that Austen takes a cue from the merry monarch in her *History*'s justification of his grandmother. Like Charles II, Austen vindicates abused, innocent women.

James II and the Duke of Monmouth, Charles II's first-born, illegitimate son, garner much sympathy in the marginalia. Austen writes "Poor Man!" under James II's medallion and refers to the beheaded Monmouth as "Sweet Man!" (329).[26] Although Monmouth is martyred by losing his life, the marginalia endorses James II as a martyr who loses a *way of life*, rather than his physical life, for the Catholic cause. Goldsmith criticizes James II for catering to Catholicism, but Austen only recognizes his divine rights: "if he thought those measures right, he could not be blamed for persevering in them" (331). One gathers that the Anglican Austen supports the king because he is guided by excessive piety; she says, "Since he [James II] acted upon *such* motives, he ought to be praised" (333). Austen further sounds like a "vehement defender" of the Stuarts, as James Edward Austen-Leigh calls her in his *Memoir*, when she responds to Goldsmith's description of public suspicion of James's newborn son.[27] When Goldsmith suggests that in 1688 the queen smuggled in a child to pose as a royal son, Austen wryly replies, "it would have been beneath him to refute such nonsense" (332). Blind to his faults, Austen turns the historically unpopular James II into a sentimental hero who engages what Marilyn Butler would call "the reader's imaginative sympathy."[28] This opinion likely explains Austen's high estimation of the king who refuses assistance from Louis XIV and enters exile after the "Villain," William of Orange, invades England (332).

Austen's treatment of subsequent Stuarts continues to indicate partiality for

the royalist cause. For instance, Austen does not believe that Princess Anne abandoned her father. On gut instinct alone, she writes, "Anne should not have done so—indeed I do not believe she *did*" (334). As a sign of her own sensibility, the teenage Austen redeems Anne as a "sensible & well-bred woman" (336). Again, Austen reacts to disparaging remarks against women such as Goldsmith's point about Anne's inability to produce an heir to the throne, particularly his triumphant note: "In her [Anne] ended the line of the Stuarts" (337). Austen disagrees with his description of the Stuarts as a "family whose misfortunes and misconducts are not to be paralleled in history" (337). As Austen calls this statement "a lie" she likely reacts to Goldsmith's assertion of "misconducts," for she certainly recognizes their "misfortunes." When Goldsmith describes the Stuarts as "a family, who less than men themselves, seemed to expect from their followers more than manhood in their defense," Austen replies, "another [lie]" (337). Here and in the margins of the *Extracts*' characterization of Mary, Austen writes a series of short phrases that contain as much emotion as her lengthier remarks. Austen takes issue with any passage that condemns the entire Stuart family. In response to Goldsmith's interpretation of the Stuarts as "a family that never rewarded their friends, and never avenged them of their enemies," Austen vindicates the Stuarts by redefining them as "a Family, who were always illused, Betrayed or Neglected Whose Virtues are seldom allowed while their Errors are never forgotten" (337). If the Stuarts did not avenge *themselves*, as Goldsmith claims, Austen makes a valiant attempt to do so in prose. In the text, another interlocutor (thought to be her nephew, James Edward) praises Austen for her effort by writing, "Bravo Aunt Jane just my opinion of the Case" (337).

The remainder of the marginalia show Austen's tendency to endorse what Butler distinguishes as early eighteenth-century Toryism.[29] In condemning the 1715 Jacobite Rebellion, Goldsmith again faults the Stuart bloodline, noting, "this family had long been the dupes of France" (347). He refers to James Edward Stuart (the Old Pretender) as "an unfortunate man, [who] seemed to possess all the qualities of his father; his pride, his want of perseverance, and his attachment to the catholic religion," and Austen answers back: "Not only ill used by the french but by everyone" (337). Like James II, James Edward Stuart is labeled "a poor leader" tied to a "desperate . . . cause"—one that Goldsmith argues "all the sensible part of the kingdom had forsaken . . . as irretrievable" (337). Austen takes issue with Goldsmith's use of the word "sensible," and his preface's claim of "impartiality," as she writes in the margin, exclamation points in tow: "Sensible! Oh! Dr. Goldsmith Thou art as partial an Historian as myself!" (337). In her "heckling" of the author, as Spongberg puts it, we find a rare moment of Austen's personal address to Goldsmith.[30] Here she condemns his anti-Stuart biases, identifies her own prejudices, alludes to the problematic distinction between fiction and history-writing, and reveals the germ of her satirical title: *History of England* [. . .] *By a partial, prejudiced, & ignorant Historian*. Later in the marginalia, she responds sarcastically to the "dear Dr G" who calls the Old Pretender a "master unworthy of his service"; Austen's reply, "unworthy because he was a Stuart, I suppose. Unhappy Family," shows her utter frustration with Goldsmith by echoing his totalizing claims about the Stuart "family" (340).

In some sense, Austen's debate with Goldsmith boils down to a Tory/Whig divide. As Kent argues, "Austen's full-blooded Stuart partisanship is a dissenting comment on the new tone of political moderation that marked British historiography from the mid-eighteenth century."[31] The marginalia reacts to both history-writing and party politics, and it shows that Austen is not afraid to make anti-Whig statements in her vindication of the Stuarts. For instance, she criticizes Whig politicians' power in the final years of Anne's reign, and even takes a stab at Whig writer Richard Steele (336). In the George I entries, she draws a line between the Tories' courage, the Whigs' cruelty, and the Whigs' "Mean revenge!" (338). She takes her own revenge on the Whigs by defending the Tory Lord Bolingbroke, whom Goldsmith criticizes for leaving England after failing "to vindicate his character" (338).[32] His failure to vindicate is mirrored by Austen's success, for she commends his departure: "Well done my Lord" (339). She applauds the Earl of Oxford and Mortimer for his oral defense against the Whigs, which Austen praises as being "Nobly said! Spoken like a Tory!" (339). These passages of Tory vindication equate a criticism of the Whigs with a defense of the Stuarts. These comments reveal the "double function of attacking and complimenting," as James S. Malek has stated in his work on Swift's vindication; as such, the genre of vindication is "both persuasive and punitive."[33] In another example of the punitive effects of vindication, Austen corrects Goldsmith's wording about Whig government as being "always partial, sometimes corrupt"; she strikes out "sometimes" and changes the statement to read: "always partial, always corrupt" (343). In Austen's mind, Whig corruption equates power with wealth. She disagrees with Goldsmith, who accuses a poor couple who murder their child and commit suicide of "borrowing the aids of reason for its vindication" (344). Although Goldsmith cannot rationalize the couple's actions, Austen can. She redirects responsibility and defends the impoverished as victims by saying, "How much are the Poor to be pitied, & the Rich to be blamed!" (344). This gesture might align Austen with early eighteenth-century writers who biographer Honan claims "venerated Mary Queen of Scots while expressing deep sympathy for the poor."[34]

Finally, the Goldsmith marginalia highlight how a rhetoric of vindication centers on the recognition of justice. After Goldsmith dredges up the "ever persecuted" name of Stuart and suggests that the Young Pretender "awakened the fears of the pusillanimous, the ardour of the brave, and the pity of the wise," Austen counters this list with: "And the good wishes of the Just" (347, 348). She invokes the word "Just" two more times in this response and later alludes to it an additional two times through the use of em dashes.[35] In reply to Goldsmith's

statement, "while reason would speak for punishment, our hearts plead for mercy," Austen argues, "But with the Just, Reason would not *have* [to] plead for punishment" (349, 350). When Goldsmith mentions that the Young Pretender was protected by at least fifty loyalists "whose veneration for his family prevailed about their avarice," Austen adds, "A Just Veneration" (349, 350). In vindicating these loyalists who faced execution, Austen defends the Stuart cause as a just cause: "Fortitude will always attend a — cause" (350). This simple statement is a motto for Austen's dedication to the Stuart cause in both the marginalia and in her forthcoming *History*.

Austen specifically addresses the maternal origin of the Stuart cause—Mary Queen of Scots—in the margins of William Robertson's 1759 "The Character of MARY Queen of SCOTS." As in the Goldsmith volumes, in Knox's *Elegant Extracts* Austen saucily replies to slander against Stuarts. In the *Extracts* she makes brief counterpoint statements to Robertson who writes that Mary was "violent in all her attachments" and "impatient of contradiction"; Austen replies with one word: "No" (353). When he states that Mary was "no stranger . . . to dissimulation," Austen countermands: "Yes" (353). When Robertson levels a series of insults on Mary's character, Austen calls them lies. When the writer claims to share his audience's disapproval of Mary's actions, Austen retorts: "It more than approves, it admires" (354). Austen's marginalia on David Hume's "The Character of Queen ELIZABETH" in the *Extracts* further her objective: to vindicate Mary. Austen disagrees with Hume's favorable account, but only writes that Hume's characterization is "A Lie—an entire life from beginning to end" (355). These attitudes toward Mary and Elizabeth are at the heart of her *History*. They seem to support Honan's characterization of a young Austen "in her upstairs room" who "probably wept for Catholic martyrs and the English dead, and at any rate . . . reserved her best mockery for Protestant historians who treated death lightly, or for writers or those who do not *understand* what it is when a king, queen, or saint dies."[36]

VINDICATING THE STUARTS: *THE HISTORY OF ENGLAND*

Austen's marginalia act as prologue to the dramatization that is her *History of England*. As the *History* ventures back through the Stuart bloodline, it hyperbolizes the sentiment expressed in the Goldsmith marginalia and certainly expands her stance in the *Extracts*. Even though Austen uses humor to mock history-writing, a "satirical purpose . . . is by no means all there is to the *History*," as Brigid Brophy argues.[37] Austen "ante-dates the appearance of the Stuarts in English history" in order to valorize the Queen of Scots and justify the inherited rights of Stuart monarchy.[38] Long before the *History* mentions a Stuart, its mini-martyrologies ask readers to sympathize with the distresses and wrongful deaths of innocents. It takes up the subjects of passive sufferings and violent executions of royalty, including Richard II, Anne Boleyn, the Queen of Scots, the Dukes of Somerset and

Norfolk, and Charles I. In her first entry on Henry IV, Austen's casual reference to Richard II, who "happened to be murdered" (177) reveals her humor and hints at a serious program: to vindicate the wrongful deaths of figures whose bloodlines and political causes she supports. John D. Staines's research on martyrologies sheds light on this undertaking: "as soon as a writer represents the death of the king or queen, even a tyrant, he or she introduces sympathy into the political equation."[39] By focusing on tragic deaths instead of victors' successes, Austen asks readers to support *her* preferred subjects.

Austen's agenda is much the same in Henry V's entry when she mentions his enemy, Lord Cobham, who "was burnt alive," and Henry VI's entry, which supports "the right side"—the Yorks (177, 178).[40] The *History*'s favor for inherited rights and "the right side" sets the stage for a defense of the Stuarts. In the same entry, Austen blatantly states her purpose, which reads as both satirical and sentimental: she says, the history is meant "only to vent my Spleen *against, and* shew my Hatred *to* all those people whose parties or principles do not suit with mine, and not to give information" (178). At the close of this statement, Austen undermines the seemingly informative aim of history-as-a-genre, and the early reference to the spleen also evokes the "anger and melancholy" that pervaded the marginalia.[41] However, Austen channels this frustration into a formal defense of all wronged royal parties, and she dismissively draws on the reputation of a name to further her cause. For example, Austen exonerates the unfavorable Richard III because she is "rather inclined to suppose him a very respectable Man" due to family association: "he was a *York*" (179). In playing the part of partial historian, Austen draws on this bias further: Henry VII receives a nod for marrying York princess, Elizabeth, and fathering a daughter, Margaret, who had the "happiness of being grandmother to one of the first Characters in the World"—Mary Queen of Scots (180). Here we see the first example of the *History*'s plotting: Austen has concocted a well-laid plan to establish the Stuart lineage. We see evidence for Peter Sabor's claim that Austen "covers the earlier reigns briefly, presenting them primarily as paving the way for the House of Stuart."[42] Austen foretells this objective when she writes, "Of *her* [Mary], I will have occasion to speak more at large in the future" (180). Austen further teases readers with a gesture to the queen whom she identifies as the "lovely Cousin" of Lady Jane Grey (180). Clearly, as Kent finds, "the Stuarts are introduced at the earliest possible moment and take over the story before they take over the throne."[43] Indeed, Austen finds a way to connect most of her "characters" to the Stuart queen.

Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard represent prototypes for Mary, making the Henry VIII entry fertile ground for a vindication of executed queens. Boleyn is a martyr of amiability, beauty, elegance, and innocence. Austen writes:

> It is however but Justice, and my Duty to declare that this amiable Woman was entirely innocent of the Crimes with which she was accused, of her Beauty, her Ele-

gance, and her Sprightliness were sufficient proofs, not to mention her solemn protestations of Innocence, the weakness of the Charges against her, and the King's Character; all of which add some confirmation, tho' perhaps slight ones when in comparison with those before alledged in her favour. (181)

Here we see an important holdover from the marginalia—with its insistence on Justice—and additional evidence of the vindication genre, which the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines as a "justification by proof or explanation." This passage draws on key words, including "Justice," "Duty," and "proof," to describe Boleyn, and it introduces the kind of claims that will follow in the Queen of Scots's narration. Austen mentions Catherine Howard both to valorize martyred queens, and to link her to Mary through a familial connection. Howard was related to Mary's advocate and suitor, the Duke of Norfolk, who was executed for treason by Elizabeth I and centuries later romanticized in Sophia Lee's *The Recess* (1783). As Austen explains it, Howard "was the Duke of Norfolk's Neice who, tho' universally acquitted of the crimes for which she was beheaded, has been by many people supposed to have led an abandoned Life before her Marriage—Of this however I have many doubts, since she was a relation of that noble Duke of Norfolk who was so warm in the Queen of Scotland's cause, and who at last fell a victim to it" (181). Like Howard, Austen casts Norfolk in the role of martyr because of his association with Mary and his defense of "the right" cause. Austen makes a similar move in mentioning other royals, too. In the Edward VI entry, she describes the execution of her "favorite" Duke of Somerset, brother to Jane Seymour, and writes, "He was beheaded, of which he might with reason have been proud, had he known that such was the death of Mary Queen of Scotland" (182). Austen leaves only a few degrees of separation between most figures and the Scottish queen. As such, royals are simply on the "right side" by association with Mary or the wrong side when "their principles do not suit" Mary's, and therefore Austen's. Austen makes readers fully aware of her partiality and alludes to the act of writing a vindication of English history's victims when she explains openly in the Henry VIII entry that "nothing can be said in his vindication" (181). Austen saves her apologia for those who deserve it—the innocents who suffered in life and death and still need posthumous defending.

As in many defenses that malign an opposing party, Austen criticizes the figures she holds responsible for Mary Stuart's death. She first begins with Mary Tudor, whom she argues has not the "Merit, and *Beauty* of her, Cousins Mary Queen of Scotland and Jane Grey" (183). Austen blames her for passing the throne to the "disgrace to humanity, that pest of society, Elizabeth"—"the destroyer of all comfort, the deceitful Betrayer of trust reposed in her, and the Murderess of her Cousin" (183). After reading Austen's comments on Hume's history of Elizabeth, it comes as no surprise that her vituperative "counter-narrative" sets out to avenge Mary. Perhaps unexpectedly, Austen's sympathetic description of Mary

resembles Goldsmith's report in his entry on Elizabeth. In her visual appropriation of Goldsmith's *History*, Austen exploits the medallions to pit queen against queen: whereas Goldsmith's medallion of Mary is inserted in the middle of the Elizabeth entry, Austen's two medallions face one another in profile. Mary's medallion appears beautiful, virtuous, martyr-like, and angelic in white, and Elizabeth's includes harsh facial features and ostentatious clothes.

More so than in Goldsmith's text, however, Elizabeth's history in Austen's version acts as a placeholder for the Scottish queen's story. In it we find a narrative intervention similar to Austen's defense of the novel in *Northanger Abbey*. In this justification Austen bemoans the nineteen years of imprisonment faced by the "Queen"; she argues that this "amiable Woman" should have received "Assistance and protection" (but found "an untimely, unmerited, and scandalous Death"); and she laments the injustices done to Mary by both Elizabeth, who "confined" and "abused" her, and also Mary's son, James, who "abandoned" her (184). Only a part of this vindication reads as vituperation, however; the true defense rests on the continual praise of Mary's character. Mary's account shapes the *History* as "a vindication of a standard of moral excellence in women," an attribute E. B. Moon associates with Austen's heroine, Anne Elliot.[44] Austen recreates Mary's final days by characterizing her as a martyr who "bore it [the death order] with a most unshaken fortitude; firm in Mind; Constant in her Religion; and prepared herself to meet the cruel fate to which she was doomed, with a magnanimity that could alone proceed from conscious Innocence" (184). This final quality of innocence is perhaps the attribute that the *History* romanticizes most; it is certainly the one that speaks to Austen's interest in defending a martyr. From this description of Mary we can easily see why Austen's niece, Caroline Austen, vouched, Aunt Jane "always encouraged my youthful beleif in Mary Stuart's perfect innocence of all the crimes with which History has charged her memory" (465n69). Caroline's words also corroborate Harman's claim that a "family tradition of Royalist, specifically Stuart, sympathies, [was] passed down" to Jane Austen and that she too passed it down to her nieces and nephews.[45]

In the 1780s and '90s Austen was not the only defender of Mary's excellence. In addition to herself, she names a friend, extended family member, and writer as Mary's allies. She mentions John Whitaker, in whose preface to *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated* (1787) we hear a precursor to Austen's vitriolic defense.[46] Although Whitaker recognizes that "a vindication is no ways equal to the force of an accusation," he deplores the fact that "no vindication of Mary was suffered to appear" in England during Elizabeth's reign, and he claims "to vindicate more fully the character of a Queen, to whom the nation owes so much in reparation, for two centuries of unremitted obloquy."[47] Whitaker makes an open address to sensibility in saying, "I have been upon my guard against that generosity of compassion, for a highly injured woman; which is so apt to steal over the spirits, and to impose upon the judgment, of an honest man."[48] Like Austen, he grapples with the biases of history-writing when he notes, "while I

profess myself a *warm* friend to Mary, I wish to be considered as a much *warmer* one, to the truth of history in writing, and to the exercise of integrity in life."[49] A comparison of Austen's text with Whitaker's shows linguistic similarities, including Austen's statement that Mary's friend Norfolk was "warm" in the queen's "cause." Austen's account of Mary recalls Whitaker's description of an amiable woman who "died at last a martyr to the sincerity of virtue in herself and to a reliance upon it in others."[50] Although we cannot confirm that Austen read Whitaker's three-volume *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated*, parallels in sentiment and verbal expression might indicate that Whitaker's vindication inspired Austen's.

In taking her cue from Whitaker, Goldsmith, and other history writers, Austen creates a readership that shares her emotions. Rather than imagining a cynical or combative audience, as some vindicators might presume, Austen has the luxury of knowing her audience's mindset—after all, her initial audience is her family. This strategy is apparent in Austen's characterization of Henry VIII, Mary Tudor, and Elizabeth: "although we are made aware of the reasons for abusing them, the audience is simply asked to enjoy their vilification."[51] Although Malek makes the previous statement about Swift's vindication, the idea applies to Austen's, too. More importantly, Austen expects an audience that mirrors her celebration of piety. When she asks the rhetorical question, "could you Reader have beleived it possible that some hardened and zealous Protestants have even abused her [Mary Stuart] for that Steadfastness in the Catholic Religion which reflected on her so much credit?," she knows the answer (184). True to the form of vindication, she takes advantage of the rhetorical power of a question that allows her to rebuke the opposition, which includes anyone who disagrees with her on Mary's excellence. As in her defense of Boleyn, Austen draws on the *ethos* of the word "proof": "this is a striking proof of *their* narrow Souls and prejudiced Judgements who accuse her" (184). In the manner of martyrologists who labor to "shape reading communities that will celebrate their martyrs," Austen labors to establish a triangulated connection between Mary, herself, and her readers.[52] As such she identifies herself with her subject—Mary—and her readers with herself. Only in her depiction of Mary does she repeatedly ask her *reader* to accept her claims:

> It may not be unnecessary before I entirely conclude my account of this ill-fated Queen, to observe that she had been accused of several crimes during the time of her reigning in Scotland, of which I now most seriously do assure my Reader that she was entirely innocent; having never been guilty of anything more than Imprudencies into which she was betrayed by the openness of her heart, her Youth, and her Education. (185)

Perhaps it is only coincidence that Austen's descriptor, "Imprudencies," matches Goldsmith's uses of the word "imprudent" to portray the Stuarts, or maybe in citing this one word Austen re-appropriates the historical discourse. In challenging history writers and establishing her rhetorical power, Austen asks readers to abandon reservations about Mary and to join her on "the right side." In concluding her account of Mary, she writes facetiously, "Having I trust by this assurance entirely done away every Suspicion and every doubt which might have arisen in the Reader's mind, from what other Historians have written of her, I shall proceed to mention the remaining Events, that marked Elizabeth's first reign" (185). The "remaining Events" to which Austen refers, however, return to vindication and martyrology, specifically in her mention of Elizabeth's "torment of Essex," whom the narrator praises as "noble," "gallant," and patriotic (186). In employing her established trope, Austen situates Elizabeth in opposition to the martyrs, Lord Essex and Mary. Of Essex she quips, "Elizabeth did not long survive his loss, and died *so* miserable that were it not any injury to the memory of Mary I should pity her" (186). Austen cannot pity the suffering Elizabeth because she only grants clemency to the disenfranchised. Even when Austen claims to leave the subject, Mary is at the forefront of her thoughts.

Mary is not the only Stuart on Austen's mind, though. Although Austen blames James for "allowing his Mother's death," she "cannot help liking him" because he is a Stuart (186). After all, he descends from Mary *and* continues the Stuart line. As in other entries, Austen takes the opportunity in James I's account to recognize a martyr. Austen suggests that his son Henry "fortunately" died, "or he might have experienced the evils which befell his unfortunate Brother," Charles I (186). As in her marginalia, she sympathizes with the Stuarts' Catholicism and Toryism. Again Austen invokes her essay's full title as she describes herself as being "partial to the roman catholic religion" (186)—which is an unpopular stance for an eighteenth-century historian to take and certainly one opposite to Goldsmith's. As Harman explains, Austen's "being pro-Stuart . . . requires her to be pro-Catholic to a degree, but she went further than was strictly necessary to underwrite her prejudicial partiality."[53] Like Swift, who satirically claims "impartiality" in his vindication, Austen uses humor to address a serious, and controversial, subject.[54] Even though near the end of the project she interjects a "Sharade" (187), Austen's prejudice returns to James I's martyr-mother and martyr-son who suffered the same fate as his grandmother.

Austen concludes her *History* with a defense of the "amiable Monarch" who was "born to have suffered Misfortunes equal to those of his lovely Grandmother; Misfortunes which he could not deserve since he was her descendant" (187). The use of the word "equal" recalls the language from martyrologies that identify Mary and Charles as mirror images.[55] John D. Staines explains, for example, that Richard Watson's 1657 treatise on the *Beheading of their Queen Mary in England* "essentially translated Mary Queen of Scots into her grandson; the original becomes a copy of the copy"; it likewise suggests that the rebellion against Charles is a "copy" of English disloyalty to Mary.[56] In describing

Charles as a descendant of Mary's misfortunes, or even a doppelganger, Austen "succeeded in harnessing the pathos of Mary's tragic scaffold into a royalist poetics where passion and pity bring loyalty."[57] In a statement reminiscent of her comments on "shame" in the marginalia, Austen speaks of loyalty in her claim about subjecthood in the 1640s: "Never certainly were there before so many detestable Characters at one time in England as in this period of its History; Never were amiable Men so Scarce" (187). Of course, it is a subject's duty to be loyal to a monarch, especially when that monarch is a Stuart. Like Watson's martyrology, Austen elides two periods of Stuart history. She criticizes disloyal subjects as "rebel[s]" who "forget the Adoration which as *Stuarts* it was their Duty to pay them" (188). Further, she admonishes those who would "dare to think differently from their Sovereign"; "to rebel against, dethrone and imprison the unfortunate Mary"; and "to oppose, to deceive, and to sell the no less unfortunate Charles" (188). In the manner of Cult of Charles I literature, Austen offers a version of "the good king sacrificed for the sins of his people; a people blinded to this greatness and virtue by their sins"—but for Austen this image applies generally to the Stuart monarchs.[58] As in the marginalia, Austen contextualizes the life of a son through that of the martyred parent. She admits, "the recital of any Events (except what I make myself) is uninteresting to me; my principal reason for undertaking the History of England being to prove the innocence of the Queen of Scotland, which, I flatter myself with having effectually done, and to abuse Elizabeth" (188). Ultimately, all roads lead to Mary: every event and description exists for the sake of proving—vindicating—the original Stuart monarch.

Even though Austen states, "it is not my intention to give any particular account of the distresses into which this king was involved" (188), her account still fits a pattern inherent to martyrology. As Andrew Lacey reminds us, martyrologies often rely on "the epideictic technique of evoking the reader's sympathy and identification with the central character, rather than discussing the events and issues which brought that individual into crisis."[59] Austen concludes her narrative on a clear note of vindication for Charles Stuart as she asserts, "I shall satisfy myself with vindicating him from the Reproach of Arbitrary and tyrannical Government with which he has often been Charged" (188). As in the text's earlier prose, Austen sardonically states that this task is not "difficult to be done" and that she is "certain of satisfying every sensible and well disposed person whose opinions have been properly guided by a good Education—"; however, in finishing this thought, she returns to a claim made in the marginalia: "and this Argument is that he was a Stuart" (189). While a modern reader might scoff at the idea that one's being a Stuart offers enough evidence to support a convincing argument, Austen's marginalia and *History* build a case for this logic.

Sabor notes that Austen's decision to conclude her *History* with Charles I allows her to "depict English history as the rise and fall of the Stuarts" (455), but an examination of the marginalia shows that Austen also portrays a second rise through Charles II and fall of the Stuarts in the failed Jacobite rebellions. Although Brophy correctly argues that the *History* sets out "to vindicate the Stuart family—which had been done out of something *it* believed *it* had a right to, namely to exercise absolute monarchy from the throne of England"—the *History* and the marginalia do something more than simply apologize for absolute monarchy.[60] These writings establish the Stuart bloodline, support their inherited monarchy, praise loyalty to the Stuarts, and reveal the shortcomings of their misguided subjects. Both writings glorify the Stuarts as heroines and heroes in an epic battle of good versus evil against their villains, as well as Austen's (those horrible historians). Perhaps Austen even entertains "a fantasy act of revenge," as Brophy claims.[61] In reading the marginalia and the *History* as companion texts, Austen represents a vindicator who is "obstinate, stubborn, outspoken, dogged, fearless, and self-righteous."[62] Although Knights does not have Austen in mind when he writes the aforementioned description, we find in Austen an author who situates herself as the redeemer of wronged, disenfranchised parties that somehow relate to the Stuarts. Such a characterization of the adolescent writer encourages us to reconsider how this placement of Austen within the genres of vindication as well as martyrology "help define her meaning," to quote Butler.[63] A study of martyrology and vindication places Austen's history-writing and marginalia in a kind of private, pseudo-pamphlet war, wherein Austen defends her subjects and perhaps even herself in writing. This examination not only joins Austen's *History of England* with a history of defenses, but also shows how her early writing may be read as belonging to multiple genres simultaneously: parody, burlesque, satire, mock-history, martryology, and vindication.

NOTES

1. Virginia Woolf, "Mary Wollstonecraft," in *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, by Mary Wollstonecraft, 2nd ed., ed. Carol H. Poston (New York, 1988), 267–72, 268.

2. Clara Tuite, *Romantic Austen: Sexual Politics and the Literary Canon* (Cambridge, 2002), 11.

3. Jane Austen, *The History of England from the Reign of Henry the 4th to the Death of Charles the 1st. By a partial, prejudiced, & ignorant Historian*, in *Juvenilia*, ed. Peter Sabor (Cambridge, 2006), 176–89. Subsequent citations are to this edition, and will be made parenthetically in the text.

4. See Devoney Looser, *British Women Writers and the Writing of History, 1670–1820* (Baltimore, 2000); A. S. Byatt, "Introduction," and Deirdre Le Faye, "A Note on the Text," in Austen, *History of England* (Chapel Hill, 1993), v–viii, and ix–xii; and Brian Southam, "Juvenilia," in *The Jane Austen Companion*, ed. J. David Grey, A. Walton Litz, B. C. Southam, and H. Abigail Bok (New York, 1986), 244–55.

5. Mary Lascelles, *Jane Austen and Her Art* (Oxford, 1938), 9; and Looser, *British Women Writers*, 184.

6. Le Faye, ix, xi.

7. See Looser, *British Women Writers;* Christopher Kent, "Learning History with, and

from, Jane Austen," in *Jane Austen's Beginnings: The Juvenilia and Lady Susan*, ed. Grey (Ann Arbor, 1989), 59–72; Antoinette Burton, "'Invention is What Delights Me': Jane Austen's Remaking of 'English' History," in *Jane Austen and Discourses of Feminism*, ed. Looser (New York, 1995), 35–50; and Lynne Vallone, "History Girls: Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century Historiography and the Case of Mary, Queen of Scots," *Children's Literature* 36 (2008): 1–23.

8. See Burton; and Vallone, 2.

9. Kent, 60.

10. Daniel Woolf, "Jane Austen and History Revisited: The Past, Gender, and Memory from the Restoration to *Persuasions*," *Persuasions* 26 (2004): 217–36, 226.

11. Mary Spongberg, "Jane Austen and the *History of England*," *Journal of Women's History* 23, no. 1 (2011): 56–80.

12. Kent, 64; Daniel Woolf, 226.

13. Kent, 60; Looser, *British Women Writers*, 189.

14. Claire Harman, "Partiality and Prejudice: The Young Jane Austen's 'Hatred of all those people whose parties or principles do not suit with mine,'" *TLS* (February 1, 2008): 14–15, 15.

15. Sabor suggests that Austen composed the Goldsmith marginalia in early 1791 and that Austen "seems to have read [Knox's] extracts at about the same time" (*Juvenilia*, 352). See "Appendix B: Marginalia in Oliver Goldsmith's *The History of England, from the Earliest Times to the Death of George II*," and "Appendix C: Marginalia in Vicesimus Knox's *Elegant Extracts*," in *Juvenilia*, 316–55. Subsequent citations will be made parenthetically in the text.

16. For an account of the family connection to the Stuarts, see Harman, 14–15. Also see Spongberg.

17. Spongberg, 73.

18. Mark Knights, "Parliament, Print, and Corruption in Later Stuart England," *Parliamentary History* 26, no. 1 (2007): 49–61, 49.

19. Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (London, 1790), 2.

20. Katie Halsey, *Jane Austen and her Readers, 1786–1945* (London, 2013), 18.

21. Park Honan, *Jane Austen: Her Life* (New York, 1988), 74. See Austen, 316–55, in which Sabor transcribes approximately seventy previously unpublished comments and addresses the quantity, quality, and appearance of the marginalia.

22. Kent, 64. This sentiment is echoed by Spongberg, 57.

23. Harman, 14.

24. Austen, 319. All references to Austen include her capitalizations, punctuation, and spellings.

25. Honan, 51 (emphasis added).

26. Austen comments on the execution orders for more than three hundred Monmouth supporters (330); unfortunately, these comments are illegible due to the faded writing.

27. James Edward Austen-Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, 2nd ed. (London, 1871), 89.

28. Marilyn Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas* (Oxford, 1975), 7.

29. Butler, "History, Politics, and Religion," in *The Jane Austen Companion*, 190–208, 196.

30. Spongberg, 57.

31. Kent, 65.

32. See Tuite on Lord Bolingbroke's *Remarks on the History of England* (1745), which Tuite argues is a "pretext" for Austen's history (45).

33. James S. Malek, "Swift's 'Vindication of Lord Carteret': Authorial Intention and Historical Context," *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 29, no. 1 (1975): 10–23, 16–17.

34. Honan, 75.

35. Sabor theorizes that the dash stands for "accursed" and "blessed" (*Juvenilia*, 349). Given the context of notes that show Austen's preference for the word "just," the dash might refer to justice in some or all cases.

36. Honan, 75.

37. Brigid Brophy, "Jane Austen and the Stuarts," in *Critical Essays on Jane Austen*, ed. B. C. Southam (London, 1968), 21–38, 22.

38. Brophy, 25.

39. John D. Staines, *The Tragic Histories of Mary Queen of Scots, 1560–1690* (Farnham and Burlington, 2009), 181.

40. Sabor suggests that Austen adapts Oliver Goldsmith's enthusiastic account of Cobham's execution and that she might have been influenced by to Shakespeare's epilogue to *Henry IV, Part 2*, which refers to Oldcastle as a "martyr" (*Juvenilia*, 457). Austen criticizes Henry VI because "he was a Lancastrian," and explains that his opponent, the Duke of York, was of the "right side" (178).

41. Sabor quotes Samuel Johnson's definition of "spleen" (*Juvenilia*, 458).

42. Sabor, *Juvenilia*, 455n1.

43. Kent, 64.

44. E. B. Moon, "'A Model of Female Excellence': Anne Elliot, *Persuasion*, and the Vindication of a Richardsonian Idea," *AUMLA* 67 (1987): 25–42, 39.

45. Harman, 15.

46. John Whitaker, *Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated*, vol. 1 (London, 1787).

47. Whitaker, iii, ii, viii.

48. Whitaker, ix.

49. Whitaker, ix (emphasis added).

50. Whitaker, 40–41.

51. Malek, 18.

52. Susannah Brietz Monta, *Martyrdom and Literature in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 2005), 12.

53. Harman, 15.

54. See Malek, 18–19.

55. See King Charles's *Eikon Basilike* (London, 1649), which was ghost-written by John Gauden, and the anonymous *Life and Reigne of King Charls, Or the Pseudo-Martyr discovered* (London, 1651).

56. Staines, 220, 219.

57. Staines, 182.

58. See Andrew Lacey, "Elegies and Commemorative Verse in Honour of Charles the Martyr, 1649–1660," in *Regicides and the Execution of Charles I*, ed. Jason Peacey (New York, 2001), 225–46, 238.

59. Lacey, 230.

60. Brophy, 24.

61. Brophy, 24.

62. Knights, 59.

63. Butler, *Jane Austen and the War of Ideas*, 4.