Chapter VI. Singing the (New) Hours

**Figure 6.1** [F. Hayman?], *The Bad Man at the Hour of Death* and *The Good Man at the Hour of Death* [1771]

Dressed in house clothes that suggest he anticipates a normal daily routine, the Bad Man (sitting on a sofa and resting his gouty leg on a footstool) is surprised by Death. He resists with stiff arms and outward palms; a table is overturned in the midst of his violent reaction. The Good Man, in contrast, lies peacefully in bed, his eyes directed heavenward as he welcomes the close of his earthly life. Note that Death appears to the Bad Man suddenly out of a black cloud, and in the form of a skeleton armed with a dart. The Good Man is more peacefully approached by Father Time (with scythe, wings, and forelock), who displays the hourglass in order to gently confirm what the Good Man already accepts: death is immanent because his time has run out.
Death an Outcome of Time

Anatomists, newly empowered by access to real human bodies, claimed the ability to speak definitively on the physiological nature of women. But when anatomy joined forces with polite culture, the goal was more ambitious than mere structural description of the physical body. The vocabulary and imagery of anatomy were harnessed in an effort to examine -- to dissect -- women’s more general “inner nature.” Seeing “inside” woman was therefore a project for which anatomy served not only as a means but also a metaphor.

The presumed ability of anatomy to discover the truth about women can be observed in popular prints -- broadside images produced in batches and made available for inexpensive purchase on the street or in printers’ shops, or grouped in a series and rented for an evening’s entertainment. The 1769 print An Essay on Woman (Fig. 6.2) shows a vertically bifurcated woman depicted in two extremes: her right half dressed to the hilt, her left half uncovered and exposed all the way to the bare skeleton. Books at her feet suggest that Woman is inclined not only to vain and frivolous pursuits, but also to deceptive behavior, for her collection includes titles such as The Toilet, or the Art of Scandal, Art of Intrigue, and Masquerade Disguises. Quotes “from various authors” on the subject of women fill the background, confirming her proclivity to false outward appearances. The excerpts begin with a proclamation of what women ought to be, namely virtuous and good, a corrective to men’s inadequacy: “Women / were formed to bless and stamp Perfection on us / ...to mend our faults, to mould us into virtue.” But from there the excerpts descend abruptly from positive to negative description, replacing the good female devoted to others’ (men’s) betterment with a corrupting seductress, for “He who tastes Woman ruin meets” (quoting John
Figure 6.2 An Essay on Woman, Illustrated with Notes from Various Authors (1769)
Gay). Both image and text assert that inner nature is hidden by deceptive outer trappings: outward appearance is an “alluring bait,” misleading men who forget to “distrust the person that it hides.” But it is not just the case that Woman masquerades as something she is not. The direct contrast of inner (that which is “within”) and outer (available to the sight) reveals that women are actually false through and through:

Like Egypt’s Temples, dazzling to the Sight
Pompously deck’d all gawdy gay and Bright.
With glittering Gold and sparkling Gems they shone
But Apes and Monkeys are the Gods within.

There is no authentic internal core, but rather an inner nature that worships what amounts to idols or false gods. This is the truth about women that the quotes and illustration draw upon the anatomical metaphor to reveal. Learning or exposing that inner truth is disappointing, off-putting: “Women are like Tricks by Slight of Hand / Which to admire we should not understand.” Here, the answer to the question “What is Woman?” assumes the parenthetical clause “...in relation to Man,” for she is only either his salvation or (more likely, one gathers from the greater emphasis), through her deception, his ruin. The pronoun “us,” when the print speaks to what women should do for “us,” refers, clearly, to men. This print is misogynist humor (the skeleton and fully-dressed sides are wittily labeled “plan” and “elevation” respectively) which speaks to a male audience and as such it would have found its musical equivalent in the bawdy glees, canons, and rounds popular with largely male catch clubs. As the title makes clear, it is more an essay “on” women than “to” or “for” them.

But the urge to look inside woman and expose her inner essence could also be directed at a female audience. In Life and Death Contrasted (Fig. 6.3),
which is similar in conception to the *Essay on Woman*, the skeleton with which the lady is paired is not just her own but the allegorical figure of death itself, equipped with a dart for shooting victims. Death stands in front of a gravestone obelisk etched with Biblical quotations on women; the lady, outdoors at an elegant estate and dressed in an exaggerated bustle and headdress, entertains herself with books entitled *Romances and Novels Vol. I* and *Gaming*, playing-cards, and a ticket to a masquerade. What was the empty, inauthentic gap in the previous print is now death itself. And indeed, death will visit the lady before she knows it: “For what is your life? / It is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” Or more likely, death will arrive just when she thinks she is enjoying life the most: “Because the Daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with wanton eyes -- the Lord will take away their tinkling ornaments and instead of sweet smell, there shall be stink.” The only secular reference on the obelisk is to Corinna, heroine of James Hervey’s novel *Meditations on the Tombs*, also a victim of sudden and unexpected death: “One night, Corinna was all gaiety in her Spirits, all Finery in her apparel at a magnificent Ball: The next Night, she lay pale and stiff, an extended Corpse, and ready to be mingled with the mouldering dead.” In fact, the obelisk warns, death may appear to strike suddenly, exactly because it is already present. “Tremble ye women at ease [...] She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” She is dust now, and will soon become dust again, for even “in the midst of life we are in death.” Despite the title, the quotes suggest that life and death are not so much contrasted as coterminous. The print instructs its female audience that death is already lurking in, or underneath, frivolous feminine behavior. *Death and the Lady* (Fig. 6.4), a derivative of *Life and Death Contrasted* from 1810, uses the
Figure 6.3 Life and Death Contrasted – or, An Essay on Woman [1769]
same Biblical quotations but also adds a dialogue between a wealthy lady and the figure of death, specifically addressing the inability of doctors and medicine to save her when the end has come. The lady declares she will spare no expense:

LADY. You learned doctors now express your skill
And let not Death of me obtain his will
Prepare your cordials, let me comfort find,
My gold shall fly like chaff before the wind.

DEATH. Forbear to call, their skill will never do
They are but mortals here as well as you,
I give the fatal wound, my dart is sure,
‘Tis far beyond the doctor’s skill to cure.
How freely can you let your riches fly,
To purchase life, rather than yield to die;
But while you flourish here, with all you store,
You would not give one penny to the poor.
Tho’ in God’s name their suit to you they make,
You would not spare one penny for his sake;
My Lord beheld wherein you did amiss,
And calls you hence to give account of this.

Death is here a great equalizer; interrupting life despite the efforts of physicians or wealthy humans. (It would appear that the physician’s work is more effective as a metaphor for the uncovering of women, than as an actual discipline, for the doctors cannot save this corrupt lady despite what she will pay them.) But although the lady speaks to death as a character separate from herself, it is clear that her selfish life was already a “lived death,” and that is part of why she is unable to stop her demise. Thus, the uncovering of the female’s inner nature via the anatomical metaphor gives rise to another metaphor, namely that Woman is truly death itself. The death she embodies is not just her own, but one which, prepared with a dart, acts upon others.

These prints, then, both warn and discipline their female audiences.
That which death interrupts is described explicitly in terms of time. Time was repeatedly described as fleeting and brief in *Life and Death Contrasted*. In *Death and the Lady* the protagonist similarly laments, “I did not think you would have come so soon, / Why must my morning sun go down at noon?” and with the sudden release of a dart, her life -- an anticipated, natural relationship to time, her “morning” and “noon” -- is terminated. The first canzonet of William Jackson’s Op. 9 (1770, considered the first set of English canzonets), “Time Has Not Thinn’d My Flowing Hair” (Ex. 6.1), can be heard in terms of the admonitory tone of these prints, and likewise depicts the female protagonist’s life in terms of natural markers of time:

```
Time has not thinn’d my flowing hair
Nor Bent me with his iron hand
Ah! Why so soon the blossom tear
E’er autumn yet the fruit demand?

Let me enjoy the cheerful day
’Til many a year has o’er me roll’d
Pleas’d let me trifle life away
And Sing of love e’er I grow old.
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The power of time’s “iron hand” contorts the aging body even as it tugs and wrenches the vocal line (mm. 3-4); the consciousness of passing time is lost altogether “e’er I grow old” (mm. 38-42) in a suddenly open and unlimited duration of half notes with embellishments and boundless fermata. Death’s victim is the lady, of course, but it is also time itself: death demands the harvest (of blossoms and fruit) before the proper season and it suspends an innocent course of “rolling years.”

The connection of women to natural time, such as seasons and hours, was especially common: Table 6.1 catalogues canzonets whose texts deal with
Example 6.1 William Jackson, *Twelve Canzonets...Opera Nona* [1770] “Time Has Not Thinned My Flowing Hair”
Table 6.1 Time in Canzonets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composer</th>
<th>Short Title of Collection</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abington, William</td>
<td><em>Six Favorite Canzonets... Opera I</em></td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>“The Country”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridgetower, Frédéric</td>
<td><em>Six Pathetic Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1815 (ca.)</td>
<td>“A Shepherd Who Grav’d”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter, T[homas]</td>
<td><em>Days of Love in Four Pastoral Songs</em></td>
<td>1784</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dussek, Jan Ladislav</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets ... It &amp; Eng. Op 52</em></td>
<td>1804</td>
<td>“Now While the Moment”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edwards, Mrs [Elizabeth Edwards]</td>
<td><em>A Selection of Favorite Canzonetts and Glee... and One Arranged for a Full Military Band</em></td>
<td>1820?</td>
<td>“How Happy the Season”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrari, Giacomo Gotifredo</td>
<td><em>Six English Canzonets and a Favourite Canzone of Petrarca</em></td>
<td>1795?</td>
<td>“The Rose”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giordani, Sigr</td>
<td><em>A Fourth Set of English Canzonetts... Op. XXII</em></td>
<td>1780?</td>
<td>“Take All the Beauties of Spring”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haydn, Joseph</td>
<td><em>Dr. Haydn’s VI Original Canzonetts</em></td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>“Recollection”; “Pleasing Pain”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>Six English Canzonetts for Two and Three Voices... Op. XVIII</em></td>
<td>1780?</td>
<td>“When Spring Appears”; “Friendship is the Joy of Reason”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>The Hours of Love, a Collection of Sonnets, Containing Morning, Noon, Evening, and Night</em></td>
<td>1781</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>The Seasons, a Collection of Pastorals... Opera XXIX.</em></td>
<td>1783</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>The Days of Delight. A Collection of Canzonets... Opera 98</em></td>
<td>1795?</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
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<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>The New Hours of Love, a Collection of Canzonetts... The Words by a Lady. Opera 91</em></td>
<td>1799</td>
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<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>A New Year’s Gift for the First Year of the Nineteenth Century... Op. 97</em></td>
<td>1801</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hook, James</td>
<td><em>L’année, Consisting of Twelve Ariettes Appropriate to Each Month</em></td>
<td>1802</td>
<td>Complete set</td>
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Table 6.1 (continued)

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<th>Composer</th>
<th>Short Title of Collection</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jackson, William</td>
<td><em>Twelve Canzonets... Opera Nona</em></td>
<td>1770</td>
<td>“Time Has Not Thinned My Flowing Hair”; “Alas from the Day That We Met”</td>
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<td>Jones, Frances Harriet</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1802 (WM)</td>
<td>“How Sweetly Could I Lay My Head”</td>
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<td>Lady</td>
<td><em>Canzonets. By a Lady</em></td>
<td>1803</td>
<td>“Inscription on a Grotto”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lyon, Thomas</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets... and a Glee for 4 Voices</em></td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>“Contentment”; “On a Day, Alack the Day”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus</td>
<td><em>Mozart’s Celebrated English Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1802</td>
<td>“The Heart’s True Value”; “The Coquet”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phelps Macdonnell, Edmund</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonetts</em></td>
<td>1806?</td>
<td>“An Age is Each Hour”; “Not Soft Falling Show’ns”; “When the Maid That Possesses My Heart”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pinto, Geo[rge]. Fred[erick].</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1804</td>
<td>“The Smiling Plains”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Salomon, Johann Peter</td>
<td><em>Six English Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1801</td>
<td>“Sweet Maid”; “When Hawthorn Buds”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salomon, Johann Peter</td>
<td><em>A Second Set of Six English Canzonets</em></td>
<td>1804</td>
<td>“Say Not That Minutes Swiftly Move”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shield, William</td>
<td><em>A Collection of Canzonets and an Elegy</em></td>
<td>1796</td>
<td>“When Evening Spreads Her Modest Gray”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slatter, George Maximilian</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets, a Trio... and a Glee for Three Voices</em></td>
<td>1815?</td>
<td>“Morning”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stevenson, J. A.</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonets. First set.</em></td>
<td>1815</td>
<td>“Remember Me My Delia”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storace, Stephen</td>
<td><em>Eight Canzonetts</em></td>
<td>1782?</td>
<td>“Unless with My Amanda”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Webbe, The Elder, Samuel</td>
<td><em>Six Canzonetts... the Words Taken from Shenstone</em></td>
<td>1789</td>
<td>“True as the Needle to the Pole”</td>
</tr>
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</table>
the subject of time. It was also popular; “Time Has Not Thinn’d My Flowing Hair” itself went through multiple editions and was incorporated into Douglas William Jerrold’s *Time Works Wonders*, a comedy performed at the Haymarket in 1845. Just as canzonets of death reflect contemporary interest in the nature of death and its finality, canzonets devoted to time themes point to -- and must be understood in the context of -- a new public preoccupation with competing notions of time, characteristic of the period following the so-called horological revolution. Through these canzonets one can observe a public sphere obsession over time “played out” -- literally performed -- within a private sphere, feminine musical setting.

**Making Time: The Aftermath of the Horological Revolution**

Scholars of the 18th century conceive of the decades from 1660 to 1760 as the “horological revolution,” a period when clocks became sufficiently precise, accessible, and practical to support the needs of urban society. Time keeping became a matter of broad public concern. Calendar reform finally arrived in Protestant Europe: despite Kepler’s urging and assurances already in 1613 that switching from the Julian to the Gregorian calendar would not mean submission to papal authority, most Northern states had delayed converting until around 1700, and England joined suit in 1753. The competitive intrigue

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1 In addition to sets of canzonets for single voice, I include a small number of canzonets for two or three voices that are especially linked to the theme of time and/or seasons.
surrounding the quest to accurately determine longitude at sea by means of a
singly accurate and resilient horological device was finally concluded in
1773. 1784 saw an intensely concerted and successful effort to unify the
public mail system, also based on strict time keeping.

The endeavor to standardize hours, days, and months (and to arrange
events according to time) was one more aspect of the larger Enlightenment
project to rationally systematize all of knowledge and industry, not unlike
Samuel Johnson’s compilation of the authoritative Dictionary of the English
Language, or the Hunter brothers’ methodical collection of specimens,
experimental data, and lectures on surgery. The effects of this new approach
to (and conception of) time have themselves been inadequately examined.
According to historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith,

European thought underwent a revolution with respect to time
comparable to the revolution with respect to space that resulted from
the Age of Exploration [in the 15th through 17th centuries]. Both
revolutions produced a series of cognitive shocks to European thought
and sensibility. The history of the prior, spatial revolution -- above all
the encounter with “other” culture -- and its effects on the human
sciences has been insistently told. The history of the temporal
revolution has yet to be fully written.

I will explore one specific facet of that history: the subject of time as taken up
in canzonets, for the circumstances that transformed conceptions of time and
gave rise to the importance of time keeping were the backdrop for the genre.

Broadly speaking, an effect of the horological revolution was the
industrial revolution: specific tools for use in production derived from clock
making, as did the practices of interchangeable parts and division of labor.

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3 The story of John Harrison’s career -- “forty struggling years of political intrigue,
international warfare, academic backbiting, scientific revolution, and economic upheaval” and
eventual winning of the prize provided for in the Longitude Act of 1714 -- is told in Dava
Sobel, Longitude: The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His

4 “A Slip in Time Saves Nine: Prestigious Origins Again” in Bender and Wellbery, eds.,
Chronotypes, 67-68.
Clocks have been called the key machine of the industrial age, especially with respect to what is perhaps that era’s defining bequest to posterity, batch production.\textsuperscript{5} When the “putting out” system, or dispersed cottage labor, gave way to production shops, John Whitehurst’s invention of the time-clock in 1750 enabled employers to impose time-table discipline on their workers, synchronizing output with the availability of power. If time keeping was a key enabler of capitalism, though, capitalism also raised the importance of time keeping. No longer was the completion of the task the measure of output or industriousness -- clock time became the final arbiter of the duration of the workday and the wage it earned. Whereas time was commonly construed by earlier generations as belonging to God, and as such, not to be used by humans for profit (hence prohibitions against money lending, in which interest was earned by the passage of time unjustly “owned”), the 18th-century merchant who made money out of time (measuring it for commercial trade, saving it by increasing efficiency) ultimately linked time to human commodity rather than divine creation or even natural phenomenon. The discourse of time became one of money (for “time is money,” said Ben Franklin; both were quantifiable, both were “spent” or “saved”) rather than of God’s unbounded eternity. From this period on, little happened -- even in private life -- that was free from the regimentation of clock, watch, or calendar. “The new bourgeoisie in counting house and shop” writes historian Lewis Mumford, “reduced life to a careful, uninterrupted routine: so long for business, so long for dinner, so long for pleasure.”\textsuperscript{6} Meals were taken not according to hunger but according to the clock; one slept not when tired but when sleeping was sanctioned, again, by the clock. Clocks, though common in public spaces for

\textsuperscript{5} Macey, \textit{Clocks and the Cosmos}, 33-44.
\textsuperscript{6} Mumford, \textit{Time and Civilization}, 42.
four centuries, moved during the 18th century into the private sphere, in the form of longcase clocks, wall clocks, bracket clocks, and mantle clocks. They divided the hour into increasingly smaller subsets: halves, quarters, half-quarters, and eventually minutes. The minute hand, at first a novelty, grew in importance until its appearance matched that of the hour hand. The ability to read time “on demand,” versus only ever hearing it announced (say by the chimes of the local cathedral clock) carried profound effects. Present time could be known at any moment, future time anticipated, and past time recalled accurately.

The preponderance of canzonets that take up the subject of time reflects these contemporary transformations in society’s relationship to time. The canzonet was itself a product of the increasingly industrialized production practices of late 18th-century London. Printed in volume at affordable cost, it was consumed by a public whose appetite for leisurely entertainment was, in turn, fed by earnings from commerce and industry. Like clocks and indeed time itself, canzonets were shaped by commodification. Frequent printing errors in the scores and the occasional recycling of cover-page art from one set to another attest to the rapidity with which many of these works were produced. Certain composers were hugely prolific, especially James Hook, who produced nineteen collections of domestic song in addition to his vast output of arrangements of single songs originally heard in pleasure gardens. Advertisements for additional sets commonly appeared in abbreviated catalogues at the conclusion or directly inside the cover page of the score.

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Title pages typically mentioned prices next to the printer’s name and address, and in some cases listed a few additional canzonets “also available” or “also to be had” from a particular composer. In this way the score of a set of canzonets often served a second function as an explicit advertisement for other sets. Multiple reprints of popular sets were made, in some cases over the course of several decades. While none of these features of commodification were unique to canzonets (indeed printed musical broadsides and sheet music were common throughout the 18th century) these songs represent a change from the Italian or Morley-style canzonets for larger groups, and this change parallels the entry into, and eventual command of, private spaces by the clock. It is not surprising, then, that title pages of canzonets and clocks were commonly decorated in similar fashion: with cherubs, flowers, birds, urns, and depictions of nature.

The commodification of time and its constant presence even in ostensibly non-commercial spaces increased its perceived value, as well as the perception of its irrecoverability and fleeting nature apparent in the bifurcated skeleton prints. “In a commercial country,” Samuel Johnson observed, “time is precious.”9 Lord Chesterfield instructed his son in a similar vein: “there is nothing which I more wish that you should know and which fewer people do know, than the true use and value of Time.”10 But it is precisely within the ethic that connected time and material gain, and esteemed the best possible use of valuable time, that the notion of “spare time” or “free time” could arise. Important implications lurked in time free of responsibility: to have time on one’s hands insinuated a cessation of productivity, even a lack of productive

things to do. This logic taken to its extreme suggested that to lack important things to do was, frankly, to be of no importance. How then can we account for spare time spent singing? Why did women in particular pass time by singing about time?

**Time and/as Love**

The prolific theater and keyboard composer James Hook (1746-1827) capitalized on the popularity of canzonets about time by writing a total of six collections wholly devoted to the theme. The four songs of the popular *The Hours of Love* (1781, 2/1783) describe “Morning,” “Noon,” “Evening,” and “Night,” but while they are unified in subject they do not constitute a continuous narrative (the female protagonist is Delia in “Noon” and Stella in “Night”).¹¹ The opening “Morning” (Ex. 6.2) is a flirtatious song, in which the lover entreats his beloved with active, sensual verbs (“come,” “taste,” “look,” “see,” “arise,” “prove”) and points to the example of frolicking lambs and charming birds who sing of love. It is clear from the first line (“Come, come my fair one let us stray”) that the couple is headed toward lovemaking (“dear delights fond lovers know / the best of blessings here below”) even as they “blush” and “taste sweets” together along the way. The music begins with an imitative, “follow me” motive; the rhythmic motion of the song as a whole is steady throughout but pauses to stretch and delight in the moment when the songbird “charms the list’ning Swain to love.”

Hook’s *The Seasons* (1783) is likewise devoted to love. It is a more ambitious set, written for two violins, tenor (viola), voice, and basso continuo. By reading the bottom two staves only, the singer could accompany herself at

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¹¹ This popular set was published several times over the next three decades; individual numbers survived to the 20th century.
Example 6.2 James Hook, *The Hours of Love* [ca. 1780] “Morning”
Example 6.3 James Hook, The Seasons [1783] “Spring”
the keyboard or harp, but the non-texted symphonie sections, though simplified in this way, remain quite orchestral sounding. The text, accordingly, is more extended and sophisticated; it comes from poet Thomas Brerewood (d. 1748). Despite these differences, the first song, “Spring” (Ex. 6.3), shares with “Morning” its flirty text and sensual imagery. Flower buds swell and open, love birds sing duets with their mates, and the Cuckow (sic) proclaims, “nature marks this for the season to woo.” Lovemaking is again implicit in the last verse:

We’ll retire to our cottage and free from all noise
So that voices in whispers are known
Let us give and receive all the nameless soft joys
That are mus’d on by lovers alone.

Yet, crucially, spring is not evocative of love directly. It is a fair maid who stands for the “youth of April” or the “blooming of May” and likewise it is Daphne “whose charms are like spring in their prime.” (In fact, the original text of the song was altered specifically in order to include the seasonal simile; the original poem simply read: “With a maiden whose charms are as yet in their prime.”) Women are conflated with seasons, and then, precisely through this connection, with love and courtship.

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12 The connection of the cuckoo and cuckoldry dates back to Middle English and is suggested by the female bird’s habit of leaving eggs in others’ nests. This resultant tendency to raise offspring other than one’s own leads to the meaning of cuckold as a husband of an unfaithful wife. There are no further suggestions in the text of this set that the male protagonist articulating the text is cheated on, either knowingly or unknowingly. An awareness of the connotation of the “cuckow” could change the manner of performance, however. The singer could adopt an overly naïve or eager delivery, “winking” musically at words like “faithfull” or “alone.” Because it would disrupt the more conventional female gender role of sincere singing about love, such a performance would amount to a “resistant reading” of the sort originally described by Judith Fetterley, The Resisting Reader: A Feminist Approach to American Fiction (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1978). Systematic speculation about the possibilities of such resistant performances have been taken up more recently by musicologists. See, for example, Matthew Head, “If the Pretty Little Hand Won’t Stretch: Music for the Fair Sex in Eighteenth-Century Germany,” Journal of the American Musicological Society 52, no. 3 (1999); Ruth Solie, “Whose Life? The Gendered Self in Schumann’s Frauenliebe Songs,” in Music and Text: Critical Inquiries, ed. Steven Paul Scher (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).
The equation of women with love by means of markers of time also motivated popular prints depicting courting couples, fashionably dressed according to the changing seasons. Figure 6.5 shows a set from 1794 in which each image is accompanied by an excerpt from James Thomson’s blank verse poem in four parts, *The Seasons* (1726-1730). The print *Spring*, for example, refers to the season’s bounty that graces and improves femininity; the month of May is itself gendered feminine; *Summer* is a half naked, ruddy maid who “swells,” her cheeks burning, upon seeing the healthy, rustic youths who toil in the meadow. (The figure of the woman who spies the couple through the trees suggests that the lover’s dalliance is illicit in some way.) In both cases the visual images reinforce the feminization of the season, though perhaps in a more tame and polite manner than the texts themselves. Only the excerpt from *Winter* does not connect a season to courtship; in the accompanying print the couple seems older, the husband having advanced in the military ranks and both he and his wife proceeding with greater decorum. They have “weathered” a long life together.

Figure 6.6 also takes up the connection of seasons with love, though with a more lighthearted and humorous twist. In *Spring*, a young lady, standing, coyly allows her hand to be caressed but turns her head and crosses her legs. The young man points suggestively to love birds perched on the wall; other signs of fecundity include the fresh blossoms on the tree, the nest of baby birds discovered by the young boy, the basket of eggs, and the kitten on the wall. (An old woman again appears in the background, scolding the young couple because they neglect their work, or perhaps simply because she is jealous.) In *Autumn* a lady descends a ladder from an apple tree, exposing her leg seductively; her companion, one hand resting on a gun, affects to assist
Figure 6.5 *Spring and Summer* [1794]
Figure 6.5 (continued) *Autumn* and *Winter*
Figure 6.6 John Collet, Spring and Autumn [1779?].
her by reaching toward her bosom where she clutches the fruit. Despite signs of harvest everywhere (the drooping apple tree, the hare, the grapes), only the African servant, eating a freshly-picked apple, misses the point that this scene is not about “reaping the bounty” in a literal sense. Seasons are the common currency in the association between women and love. In the setting of the drawing room, where songs and prints such as these found their home, and where time was taking on features of commodification for consumption, women’s conflation with time effectively reifies her as a product ready for, indeed made for, love.

If time connected women and love in a single available “package,” the brand of love involved was of a decidedly committed sort. In “Noon” from Hook’s *Hours of Love* (Ex. 6.4), Delia is beseeched to stay true to her lover. The text juxtaposes the “pity” of parting against a long litany of images conveying stillness and constancy: “hush,” “nothing move,” “wait,” “calm,” “stay,” “no changes prove,” and “forever.” The music reinforces this stability in its serious tempo (*Andantino* would probably have been understood as slower than *Andante*) and the predictable return of material in the rondo form.

Phrases at mm. 24, 40, 60, and 84 end on unisons between voice and accompaniment, and would in fact sound crude or awkward were it not for the text’s message of persistent unity. The final episode does change key (to G minor) and texture (quarter notes and harmonies in the left hand instead of constant 16ths) for the direct address to Delia, but even in this contrasting section the message remains one of constancy: “so may thy charms” and “no changes prove” repeat the same melodic material.

The Irish composer Thomas Carter (1735-1804) recognized the popularity of “time” sets and followed Hook’s lead, publishing *Days of Love* in
1783. Here too, the love described is constant and devoted. Carter distills the four life-stages of solicitation, hope, consent, and marriage to four “days,” like snapshots of time that document and summarize the turning points of life. The narrative is a single, continuous plot (the ending of each poem leads to the topic of the next) featuring Thyrsis and Cleora -- classical, mythical, pastoral characters, who as such both universalize and elevate the subject matter of the songs. Musically the set is very simple, with two-part counterpoint and few articulation marks save for wedges over quarter notes in the symphonie sections. The “topics” are also clear: “Hope” an elevated dance in three, “Consent” more rural sounding with half-step grace notes, 2/4 time, and a triadic figure (m. 4 et al) very much like the one in Haydn’s “A Pastoral Song” (m. 8 et al). In “Celebration” (Ex. 6.5), wedding bells peal (descending tonic and dominant scales) and brass proclaim fanfares (tonic and dominant figures, as in m. 12). The music is as direct as the final, instructive message:

Ye Swains like young Thyrsis be true
Ye Nymphs like Cleora be kind
Keep Virtue, and Prudence, in View,
And the Sweets you will Certainly find.

Then the Village for you shall be gay
The Bells, and the Tabor resound
And Pleasure prolong the glad Day
When Hymen your wishes has Crown’d.

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13 States Roger Fiske of Carter: “His undeserved failure was partly due to a lack of common sense.” In New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: Grove’s Dictionaries, 2001), 5:207.

14 Leonard Ratner defines topics as characteristic figures or subjects contained in musical discourse. Derived from extra-musical activities and settings, such as worship, dance, hunting, or war, topics could, when transported to other formats such as the sonata, concerto, or canzonet, signify particular meanings and associations for the listener. See Leonard G. Ratner, Classic Music: Expression, Form, and Style (New York: Schirmer Books, 1980), 9-28.
Example 6.4 James Hook, The Hours of Love [1781] “Noon”
Example 6.5 Thomas Carter, *Days of Love* [1784] “Celebration”
Fidelity, then, is celebrated as a crucial aspect of the love that is commodified by the signifier time. Time superimposes upon women qualities of devotion, chastity, and constancy; the aggregate is then wrapped, musically, in a package for a lady who makes herself available in word and tone.

There is a warning that sounds in the midst of this conflation, too. In Jan Ladislav Dussek’s “Now While the Moment” (Ex. 6.6) from *Six Canzonets, Op. 52* (1804) the male narrator laments that though his lady should be like the moon (with its dependable schedule and path, a symbol of regular time) she is instead like a cloud -- ever changing and unpredictable. The refrain reads:

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Why changeful like the passing cloud  
Abandoned by the wand’ring moon  
Do threats that angel face o’erspread  
Where lately beam’d the smile of morn?
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For the return of the refrain, the final word is “noon,” which indicates that Dussek initially sacrificed the rhyme (moon/noon) in order to project the female beloved progressing through the day. That is, in the past (“lately”), when she smiled on him with constancy, she deserved to be figured in terms of time despite the cost to poetic mechanics. Her new inconstancy is communicated in the accompaniment by chromatic descent and ascent in the bass (m. 28ff.), an atmospheric, broken-chord accompaniment (first in eighths, then sixteenths), very low octave doubling in the bass, and chromatic harmonies, including diminished seventh chords. But this lack of fidelity is especially apparent in the asynchronous formal structure of text and music:

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Text: A B A C B’ D E D (B = refrain)  
Music: A B A’ C D A B A
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Example 6.6 Jan Ladislav Dussek, *Six Canzonets* [1804] “Now While the Moment”
Example 6.6 (continued)
Example 6.6 (continued)
The textual refrain (B) is set to a new accompaniment upon its return (musical material D instead of B), which serves not only as a sort of text painting of changeability and abandonment but also a pivotal indication that the speaker has modified his tone from descriptive lament to warning, as indicated in the conclusion (text E):

In thorny dark and rugged way  
Thro’ which too long he’s led to range  
No traveler will hopeless stray  
But seek at length his road to change.

Ironically, his threat suggests that, should she fail in her devotion, he will have no choice but to abandon her. Significantly, while the Italian version of the text deals with constancy and devotion, it is in the English translation that time metaphors are used to indicate the woman. The added mention of time strengthens in this text the connection between women and devoted love.

Seasons need not be a fixed signifier in the admonition to be chaste, for in “Autumn” (Ex. 6.7) from Hook’s Seasons, seasons are changeable, even fickle:

Tho’ the seasons may alter ah yet let me find  
What all must confess to be rare  
My fair one still cheerfull and faithfull and kind  
The blessings of autumn to share.

The juxtaposition of fidelity versus change sets the stage for further contrasts that mark each subsequent verse: the second pits domesticity and the simplicity of nature, where the harvest has just been gathered, against city high-life:

Let’s enjoy all the pleasures retirement affords  
Still amus´d with these innocent sports  
Nor once envy the pomp of fine ladys and lords  
With their grand entertainments at court.

whereas the third opens by depicting the end of life that autumn signals:
Example 6.7 James Hook, *The Seasons* [1783] “Autumn”
Example 6.7 (continued)

And now when the Husbandman Sings Harvest Home
And the Carols all get into the House.
When the long winter for time of their meeting is Come
To feast and feast and Carouse.
Lost enjoy all the pleasures retirement affords
Still Amuse with these innocent Sports,
Nor once Envy the Fump of fine Ladies and Lords
With their grand Entertainments at Court.

When the leaves from the Trees are beginning to fall
And are leaving the branches all bare
Either Snow or the Roast Ewes will wither'd or dead,
Or else blown to and few by the Air.
Should Ideas arise that may ruffle the Soul,
Let such Music the Phantoms remove
For the Harmony only has force in Central
And Unite all the Peoples in Love.
When the leaves from the trees are beginning to shed
And are leaving the branches all bare
Either strew’d at the roots, shrivell’d wither’d or dead...

While autumn’s death-force, symbolized by dead leaves, gives rise to thoughts of phantoms, death’s antidote is music:

Should ideas arise that may ruffle the soul
Let soft music the phantoms remove
For tis harmony only has force to controul
And unite all the passions in love.

This canzonet’s three internal contrasts thus succinctly present three oppositions that are facets of the same prism:

- Fidelity ⇔ Change
- Domesticity, Nature ⇔ City
- Music ⇔ Death

The ideal singing woman is naturally committed, preferring peaceful predictability to the shifty seduction of public (urban, worldly) space, whereas changeable, fickle woman transgresses her natural domestic sphere and is, as in the bifurcated skeleton prints, the embodiment of death. The closing appeal to music as a corrective to that force of death brings into relief the performative force of a song about time. By making music, the woman who sings allies herself with the left side of the ledger of oppositions listed above. Because the performer is herself necessarily a music-maker, and the text delivers a message about the meaning of music-making, it is difficult, even impossible, for her to assume a critical stance with respect to the message of the text. Rather, she embodies it. This is not a song about a distant era or far away place. It is a directive addressed to present, indeed immediate, circumstances. The canzonet encourages music-making as an appropriate pastime (in contrast to the novels, games, and parties of “Life and Death
Contrasted”) with specific associations enumerated in subsequent verses. So singing the text of this song (that is, in making music about the message of music-making) -- even when “seasons” are used unconventionally -- forces the performer herself to embody what the text holds to be music’s corollaries: fidelity and an alliance with the “natural” haven of domestic space.

Time continues in this set to arrive at death, and does so specifically through the “uncovering” or exposing of what lies beneath the surface, familiar from the anatomical metaphor. The final song, “Winter” (Ex. 6.8) brings not only cold, bleak winds, snow, frost, and icicles, but also nakedness: trees lack leaves, meadows have lost their beauties, and nature -- gendered feminine -- has been uncovered, “disrobed of her mantle.”

When the trees are all bare not a leaf to be seen  
And the meadows their beauties have lost  
When nature disrob’d of her mantle of green  
And the streams are fast bound with the frost.

The uncovering does not necessarily result in a nakedness of a sexualized sort (she is, after all, in the winter of life and her stream has ceased to run) but rather in the baring of a defining truth. The female whom the narrator seeks maintains life-long devotion to the domestic joy of a safe and cozy cottage. His longing, wishful, even prayerful language (“May I...” “Let us...” “Heaven grant...”) contributes to the sense that he is painting an ideal.

In describing that defining ideal of devoted love -- and warning against its antithesis -- canzonets about time could draw upon the crucial distinction between fleeting time and boundless time, two opposing notions that together make up a central tension characteristic of the period following the horological revolution. The first of Hook’s *Six English Canzonetts* reduces the “lovely” phase of a woman’s life to a fleeting scent, which recalls the inscription in the
Example 6.8 James Hook, *The Seasons* [1783] “Winter”
Example 6.9 James Hook, *Six English Canzonett* [1777]
“Friendship is the Joy”
obelisk from “Life and Death Contrasted” (a “vapour that appeareth for a little
time, then vanisheth away”):

When Spring appears when violets blow
And shed a rich perfume
How soon the fragrance breathes its last
How short liv’d is the bloom.

But in the third canzonet (Ex. 6.9) from the same set, it is love -- but merely
arduous, physical love -- that is short-lived like a season:

Friendship is the joy of reason
Dearer far than that of love
Love but lasts a transient season
Friendship makes the bliss above.

Who would lose the sacred pleasure
Felt when soul with soul unites?
Other blessings have their measure
Friendship without bound delights.

The text thus encapsulates the competing conceptions of time as measured (“a
transient season”) versus Godly and unbounded (“the bliss above,” “the
sacred pleasure”). A total of eight bars of thirty-second note melisma -- fully a
quarter of the whole piece -- embellishes, and, as if “without bound,” extends
“the bliss above.” While the text uses time to warn against fleeting love, the
music urges, indeed compels, a commitment to love of the eternal sort.

Productive Time

As Ralph Cohen has shown in his study of illustrations for James
Thomson’s epic poem The Seasons, the late 18th-century connection of women
and natural markers of time was a change characterized by an urge toward
simplification.15 In the early decades of the century, illustrations of The Seasons

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15 Ralph Cohen, The Art of Discrimination: Thomson’s the Seasons and the Language of Criticism
tended towards the encyclopedic, depicting multiple and diverse moments from the poem within a single visual scene. Mythical figures were employed in an effort toward “universalizing” the subject matter. As the number of actions and corresponding detail were reduced in the last decades of the century, illustrations became overwhelmingly feminine, and were consequently considered “merely” decorative, as opposed to interpretive, of the poem’s text. This transformation took place in tandem, in Cohen’s reading, with increased production and lower artistic standards. In illustrations of the decorative type, images were sentimental, domesticated; allegories which had been masculine were “supplanted by a naturalistic and prettified view” -- for example, Thomas Stothard’s engraved title page to *The Seasons* (Fig. 6.7), which depicts four women circling under signs of the zodiac. The domestication of *The Seasons* affected literary criticism of it: whereas commentators had traditionally argued that the poem possessed weighty moral value, by 1785 John Scott denounced its “moral sentiment [which] is the cheapest product of mankind.”

Meanwhile, through increased interest in the field of geology, the seasons were taking on even darker shades of meaning in both intellectual and popular thought. Like anatomy, the field of geology was particularly given to dialogue and overlap with art, science, and entertainment. John Whitehurst, geologist, clockmaker, painter, and amateur flutist, embodied the contemporary spirit of diverse interests, broad education, and commitment to dialogue across fields. His *Inquiry in the Original State and Formation of the* 

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16 Ibid., 268.  
17 Ibid., 270.  
Figure 6.7 Thomas Stothard, *The Seasons* (1794)
Earth: Deduced from Facts and the Laws of Nature, first published in 1778, went through three editions and was widely influential. Erasmus Darwin (whose own theory of evolution was originally articulated in didactic poetry) mentioned the Inquiry in his own work; Benjamin Franklin and Josiah Wedgewood were among other recipients of original copies. Franklin corresponded regularly with Whitehurst and ordered three clocks from him in the 1770s; Wedgewood consulted and collaborated with Whitehurst on preparation of glazes and the identification of suitable clays for his wares. Wedgewood’s stylish black-bodied pieces, dubbed “Etruscan” or “Black Basaltes,” capitalized on public fascination with the archaeological discoveries publicized in tandem with popular lectures and writings in geology.

Whitehurst’s stated goal in the Inquiry was not to attempt a chronological history of the earth but to “unfold its original state and formation.”[^20] The earth, he argued, was at first smooth, even, and uniform. Eventually subterranean fires erupted in convulsions, tremors, and undulations; the earth burst open and “vomited out” hills, continents, and mountains, “naked and exposed.”[^21] The most remarkable of these geological features, the “craggy rocks, stupendous cliffs, or impending shores” he dubbed “disorderly appearances,” and “strange heaps of ruins,” at once “horrid,” “rude,” and “romantic.”[^22] According to Whitehurst, events still fresh in popular memory such as the Lisbon earthquake (1755) and Cadiz tidal wave (1746) only hinted at the massive violence with which the earth originally erupted.[^23]

[^21]: Ibid., 8, 134.
[^22]: Ibid., 38, 114, 19, 63.
[^23]: Ibid., 99.
Though grounded in observation (as the numerous accompanying sketches and tables attest) Whitehurst’s prose is imbued with a great measure of awe and even romance. He employs colorful vocabulary and dramatic, “literary” descriptions, and, revealingly, he proclaims at the conclusion of his book his pleasure in having contributed to the “entertainment” of the learned reader.\textsuperscript{24} His focus on mountainous “ruins,” after all, tapped into a modish contemporary obsession apparent in the arts -- a symbol of the sublime, at once evocative of extreme contrasts of emotion and the fear or uncertainty of death, yet at the same time popularized for easy consumption. If ruins were for Whitehurst evidence of the age of the earth, their ubiquity in art corroborates a contemporary fascination with the nature of time.

More specifically, his work evinces an understanding, broadly dispersed, of the seasons as connected to sin and compromised morality. Whitehurst’s theory of seasonal change appears in Chapter Thirteen, “Of the Temperatures of the Air, and Seasons of the Year, arising from the Production of Mountains and Continents at the Time of the Deluge,” which treats the combined effect of the subterraneous convulsions with the great flood. “When waters prevailed universally over the earth, and when the strata were burst to the depth of many miles,” the outcome was not only the destruction of various species of animals and vegetables, but the end to universal temperature and “perpetual spring and harvest.”\textsuperscript{25} Because the flood was caused by a profusion of human sin, the new cycle of seasonal change served, according to Whitehurst, as a reminder of humanity’s fall. His propensity for colorful and romantic discourse compounds the sense of dismay, even outrage, in his description of the enormous consequences. Lost forever was

\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., 272.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid., 161.
the temperate climate that promoted health and long life. Instead, a compromised fertility of the earth and shortage of vegetation must necessarily cause inequalities and jealousies throughout perpetuity. “Hence commenced property,” bemoaned Whitehurst; “[...] hence the necessity of law, dominion, and subordination” to combat “dishonesty, fraud, and injustice.”

Now impoverished of their broad allegorical force and their participation in comprehensive moral formation, and reinterpreted as directly, perhaps even only, indicative of humanity’s fallen state, the seasons took on a significant role in the project to define femininity. *Nature Display’d, shewing the Effect of the Change of the Seasons on the Ladies Garden*, an anonymous 1797 print attributed to James Gillray (Fig. 6.8), combines themes of “lovers’ time” and “constant time,” but it especially reflects the inclination toward one-sided and negative depiction, such as the “stormy disturbances” in the Dussek and Hook *Seasons* examples. In *Nature Display’d*, women’s heads are replaced with seasonally appropriate plants. The “garden” is slang for a female pubic area -- the seasons affect her sexuality such that in spring she is “cheap” and “easy” like penny primroses, in summer she has reached her prime (“gather your Rose Buds while you may”) and by fall she yields a (vineyard) harvest (the label “nursery” inscribed across her womb). By winter she is still sexual, though only in an artificial sense -- a “hot house” where plants are grown and gardens tended by force of effort, not of nature. The effect is quite contrary to the weighty messages of early illustrations of Thomson’s poem. Framing her life in terms of the seasons served to make Woman’s nature one-sided, and reduced her to sexual productivity alone. Even more significantly, the

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26 Ibid., 168.
Figure 6.8 [James Gillray], *Nature Display’d* (1797)
Figure 6.9 G. Spratt, *The Seasons of Life* [1850]
misogyny at work here goes well beyond the sentimental and decorative aspects of later illustrations to *The Seasons*, and even exceeds the angry and accusatory tone of Whitehurst. What these women have in common is a "garden" area affected by the unpredictable, "stormy" effects of the seasons, thunder, lightening, wind, and rain. It is therefore no compliment to be likened to the seasons, even in a "naturalistic and prettified" illustration. Women’s connection to time here gains no benefit from connection to productivity, for her seasonally-dependent productivity is unpredictable and troublesome. The comparison draws upon a sense of contempt similar to that apparent in Whitehurst’s agitated lament.

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*The Seasons of Life* (Fig. 6.9) not only intimately connects women with seasons (again, flowers appropriate to specific months grow directly out of their bodies) but also compares the beauties of spring and summer to outer trappings that begin to slip away by autumn. The accompanying text narrates a process of parallel development and decline:

If Twenty be the Spring of Youth  
The May-day of our years  
At thirty sure we may in truth  
Deem our July appears.

But forty is the cruel blast  
October rudely brings  
And all our beauties then are cast  
Like those of former Springs.

At sixty, Winter surely will  
Our heads with snow o’ertop  
And with December’s frozen chill  
We sicken, wither, drop.

Here again is the reduction of Woman to terms of productivity. Mercantile time warns: “the seasons are fleeting!” and Woman’s seasonal life, already at its peak by age thirty, flies rapidly by. Although it dates from much later in
the 19th century, this particular print is similar in conception to J. P. Salomon’s setting of Anne Hunter’s poem, “When Hawthorne Buds” (Ex. 6.10), which concludes his first set of six canzonets. “When Hawthorne Buds” is an extended piece, through-composed in four verses; it is relatively challenging, given the many ornaments, double thirds, and independence of voice and accompaniment, allegretto vivace ma non troppo presto. The first two verses are set in sweet, melodic fashion, with rolling triplet accompaniment and straightforward modulation to the dominant. There are several “birdcall” figures (mm. 37-40) which pit C-natural and C# against each other. (The line ends with a triadic figure similar to m. 8 in “A Pastoral Song.”)

When hawthorne buds bloom sweetly
And vî’lets strew the ground
The village maids dance fleetly
And pleasure reigns around.

Then birds sing loud and clearly
On ev’ry blossom’d spray
And April showr’s and April flowr’s
Lead on the smiling May.

While the first half of the song bears less ideological content, the second half takes an abrupt turn in both textual message and musical accompaniment. The third verse begins with a variation of the opening melodic motive in v. 1, but it quickly becomes apparent that the second half of the song is the naked, personification-of-death side of seasonal time. G minor appears suddenly, without preparation (m. 59):

Yet soon the spring time over
The fading pleasures fly
Nor can we e’er recover
The blossoms when they die.

After a brief tonicization of B-flat major there follows a slippery chromatic descent from D to A and back up again (mm. 67-70). (The descent is
Example 6.10. J. P. Salomon, Six English Canzonets [1801], "When Hawthorne Buds"
Example 6.10 (continued)
Example 6.10 (continued)
Example 6.10 (continued)
emphasized with an initial \textit{sf}, then a decrescendo. For the ascent, the left hand drops out, as do the dynamic marks, although a crescendo would probably would be assumed.) After four bars of G minor and four of B-flat major, one might be inclined to hear its first half-cadence in G minor, to continue the 4+4 bar pattern. In which case, the listener might expect that m. 70, the next half-cadence in G, prepares the major mode for a new, contrasting four-bar phrase (especially given that an eventual return to G major, the key of the piece, is inevitable). But in fact the downbeat of m. 71 is G minor, not major, which (with a brief tonicization of iv, C minor) extends through a four-bar keyboard “postlude” before finally concluding on the dominant of G major. The effect is one of play with expectations -- death hides beneath its outer trappings. Should there linger any doubt at this point in the song, the fourth verse spells out the allegory:

Then maidens fair take warning
And mark the passing year
For dark and cold as we grow old
The winter months appear.

After a brief attempt at the opening melodic motive, a descending scale in the left hand saps the remaining energy; the voice is stuck for nearly two bars at the word “dark” over sparse diminished-seventh harmonies (again absent the left hand). The same text repeats over alternating ii and applied diminished-seventh chords, with awkwardly off-beat accents on the “wrong” words (“and” and “as” rather than “dark” and “cold”). From here to the conclusion the vocal style is markedly more declamatory than melodic, the warning of the text made more ominous by the repeated Neapolitan 6\textsuperscript{th} (commonly a signifier of mourning or lament) in m. 98 (probably pedaled for an atmospheric timbre) and the concluding chromatic descent of mm. 27-28.
Having lost its balance, the accompaniment, like the maidens, ends up running out of momentum.28

While the seasons had served as an analogy for the “four ages of man” (where “man” is understood, to the extent that it ever is, as gender neutral) since ancient times, their connection to women in the late 18th-century reveals views of femininity specific to the period.29 After the horological revolution, the improved ability to measure time led to an increased sense of power over time. With time itself now commonly conceptualized as a quantifiable object, the equation within the canzonet repertoire of women and time implied the concretizing, defining, and subjugating of the fair sex. The terms of definition were negative because within the paradigm of new time, seasons were not only losing their power over the way life was lived, but were seen as an obstacle to society’s modern flourishing. Absent their wholesome associations, seasons’ depiction in visual, literary, and musical culture insinuated trivialization and deprecation. Specifically, references to time in terms of its new valences were used to reduce Woman to sex, a reduction that was negative not only in its one-sidedness but in its very tone, for it depicted female sexual function as troubling and problematic. Being defined by (new) time left her answerable to its demands. Her connection to time amply colored by time’s new valences, Woman was subject to its pressure -- pressure to be productive in the face of “winter months” that would claim her usefulness all too soon.

28 The conclusion on a first inversion chord is almost certainly a misprint. Low B-natural is the lowest note in this song, but a lower G appears in the first song in the set, so it was probably understood to be available on the keyboard. In any event, some (though perhaps only the least sophisticated) performers would probably have played the notation literally, a faltering conclusion to a disquieting song.

1 Now concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you
do not need to have anything written to you. 2 For you yourselves
know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the
night. 3 When they say, “There is peace and security,” then sudden
destruction will come upon them, as labor pains come upon a pregnant
woman, and there will be no escape!

1 Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed
you are doing.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, 11
New Revised Standard Version

In his letter to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul warns his readers
against complacency in the repeatability of the seasons. The final judgement,
he warns, will be sudden and irreversible, like the beginning of childbirth.
Paul’s vigilance appears in prints of ladies paired with death -- a vigilance vis-
a-vis time’s passing since sin and death are constantly lurking. But when
taken up in the canzonet, this appeal to “Godly” time is no reversion to a pre-
industrial, unbounded, immeasurable concept of time. It is rather a pretense
underneath which lies a thorough-going involvement in a modern,
commercial perspective. Itself a product of new time, the canzonet about time
does not operate apart from the corollaries of the horological revolution; its
vigilance, then, is a capitalistic injunction to “make the most of” a fleeting and
ephemeral commodity. In their sung association with commodified time,
women were goods of fleeting value.

Ladies’ Watches and the Futility of Fashion

Even the crudely narrow definition of Woman as a creature whose
purpose and meaning lay exclusively in the roles of love and sex was a
definition somewhat begrudging. At least she had a role at all, for in instructive images such as *Life and Death Contrasted* Woman possessed no interiority whatsoever, no authentic core. In reinforcing the perception of this lack or absence, watches played an incisive role both in popular and serious visual culture. *A Fashionable Information for Ladies in the Country* (Fig. 6.10) imagines the outcome of the trend for increasingly higher waistlines, quipping, “The present fashion is the most easy and graceful imaginable. It is simply this -- the petticoat is tied round the neck and the arms put through the pocket holes!!!” The lady’s pose of stylized elegance compounds the absurdity of her garment’s extreme rehabilitation. Not one but two watches hang at her breasts in order to indicate the ridiculously high “waist.” Similarly, *A Maiden Ewe, Drest Lamb Fashion* (Fig. 6.11) sports not only gargantuan earrings and multiple “beauty spots,” but also a waist so close to the armpits that the wearer is forced to raise her shoulders; its elevated location is once again indicated by the adornment of an over-sized watch. Her masquerade ticket and powder puff at the ready, the “maiden” smiles approvingly in the mirror, under the similarly approving eye of the vain Egyptian princess, Cleopatra. The subtitle makes clear that there is a serious point to this humor, a point that hearkens directly to the skeleton prints: “the end of these things is death.” Redundant watches also appear in the parody of low necklines in *A Peep into Brest with a Navel Review* (Fig. 6.12). Here the necklines descend below the navel, fully exposing the breasts, while a gentleman with a cane feigns only mild, ordinary interest as he peers through his glasses at the all-too-obvious, as if attempting to discern a subtle detail. These watches signal silliness and vanity run amok, aptly so especially because they were understood to be very expensive, and would thus be worn in duplicate only for show. Moreover,
Figure 6.10 A Fashionable Information for Ladies in the Country (1795)

Figure 6.11 [I. Cruikshank], A Maiden Ewe, Drest Lamb Fashion (1796)
their practical function is lost on these women, another fact made clear to the viewer by virtue of the watches’ duplication. If the women were interested in telling time, one timepiece would suffice. These watches are not functional but decorative, to an extreme degree.

As was clear from the plunging necklines of the *Navel Review*, watches could also indicate promiscuity, a tradition familiar from Hogarth’s “Idle ‘Prentice Returned from the Sea, in a Garret with a Common Prostitute” (Fig. 6.13) from the series *Industry and Idleness*. The prostitute, indifferent to her client, lustily examines her collection of watches and trinkets instead; these are presumably the spoils of pick-pocketing while on the job. (Both the *Harlot’s Progress* and the *Rake’s Progress* also include scenes of watches lifted from the unsuspecting.) Figures 6.14 and 6.15 show madams who wear a watch,
Figure 6.13 William Hogarth, *Industry and Idleness* (1747) “Idle ‘Prentice Returned from the Sea”

Figure 6.14 *A Decoy for the Old as well as the Young* [1773?]
Figure 6.15 The Refusal (1774)

Figure 6.16 Woodward, Accommodation, Or, Lodgings to Let in Portsmouth (1808)
indicating that they conduct a business that is run “by the clock.” The mistress in *Accommodation, Or, Lodgings to Let in Portsmouth* (Fig. 6.16) prominently wears redundant watches, as she is escorted to “Lodgings for Single Men and Their Wives.”

Ladies’ watch-wearing remained a forceful cue in serious painting as well, indicative of remarkable qualities in the subject. The savvy and independent Miss Mary Edwards, whose portrait Hogarth painted in 1740 (Fig. 6.17), had intrepidly expunged her marriage record from the official register, in effect not just severing but erasing her connection to her profligate husband Lord Anne Hamilton, who was actively squandering her vast inheritance at gambling tables across London. In doing so she chose public scorn as a single mother but regained control of her estate, which she administered wisely and successfully. Hogarth’s depiction of this unconventional woman is filled with visual cues to her power. Resplendent in red dress, diamonds, and pearls, she reads a proclamation of another exceptional woman, Queen Elizabeth, the text of which addresses the figure of Liberty, citing its power to inspire the soul and make lives “in thy possession happy or die glorious in thy Just defence.” That Miss Mary Edwards is at liberty to command her own place and time is confirmed by the globe at her elbow and the watch at her waist.³⁰ Hogarth’s depiction is not critical but genuinely admiring. Perfectly aware that some might judge his subject unseemly, he defiantly celebrates her capacity and power by including multiple visual cues, including a watch.

Figure 6.17 William Hogarth, *Miss Mary Edwards* (1742)

Figure 6.18 Francis Wheatley, *Mrs. Stevens* (ca. 1790)
For the greater part, however, watches were marshaled by artists to signal what they considered troubling feminine behavior. Watches played a role in the popular ladies' fashion of wearing masculine riding outfits, seen for example in Francis Wheatley's portrait of Mrs. Stevens (Fig. 6.18). The sitter wears muted colors, a man’s ruffled shirt and tie, and a watch at her waist. Satiric descriptions of the masculine “look” appeared in the Gentleman’s Magazine, exaggerating the extent of the craze and fanning the flames of outrage: some women, it was claimed, went so far as to don “tight leather breeches” from which they were inclined to demonstratively pull a watch, examine and replace it “with a most officer-like air.”31 The contrast with actual watch-wearing by men is instructive. The husband in William Hogarth’s Analysis of Beauty (second plate) points demonstratively to his watch exactly because he is effeminate, weak, and most probably cuckolded.

Likewise Lord Chesterfield advised his son:

Speak the language of the company you are in; speak it purely, and unlarded with any other. Never seem wiser, nor more learned than the people you are with. Wear your learning, like your watch, in a private pocket: and do not pull it out and strike it; merely to show that you have one. If you are asked what o’clock it is, tell it; but do not proclaim it hourly and unasked, like the watchman.32

Enamored of taste and cultivation and bewitched by the power to curry royal favor, Chesterfield compiled his letters to his son as a guidebook to the art of pleasing and impressing one’s company. His interest and investment in fashion led to his reputation as worldly and frivolous. But exactly because Chesterfield so keenly observes, not to mention subscribes to, socially-dictated mores and norms, his comment speaks directly the watch’s power to signify

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32 Leigh, ed., Letters to His Son by the Earl of Chesterfield, 53.
within that system. Instructing his son to keep his watch private, he exposes
the paradox which trapped feminine watch-wearers: their display of
decorative watches in imitation of men was fundamentally misguided, for
true gentlemen kept watches out of sight.

As *Life and Death Contrasted* made clear, all fashion, from wearing
watches as decoration to reading the latest sentimental novels, was futile.
Death was too close, indeed too present already, to allow such pursuits to be
worthwhile. According to Mary Wollstonecraft:

> The air of fashion, which many young people are so eager to attain,
> always strikes me like the studied attitudes of some modern pictures,
> copied with tasteless servility after the antiques; -- the soul is left out,
> and none of the parts are tied together by what may properly be termed
> character. This varnish of fashion, which seldom sticks very close to
> sense, may dazzle the weak; but leave nature to itself, and it will
> seldom disgust the wise.33

For Wollstonecraft, who speaks of fashion as an indicator of fakeness, ladies’
watch-wearing would likely have qualified as one of several disparate
gestures aimed at an overall “effect” but lacking in the connective tissue --
indeed the unifying philosophy -- spoken from “character.” It is a disunity, in
fact, which recalls the anatomatizing of women’s bodies in musical
performances and artistic prints. But what exactly is the absent “character”
that enables the tying together of parts? Again the charming Chesterfield,
himself very much invested in manners and graceful social interaction,
evertheless provides a clue: the proper gentleman understands a clear
delineation between public self (assimilated to the level of learning held by
present company) and private self (erudition kept hidden, when in public
circumstances, in a pocket). Whether ladies’ watch-wearing signaled silliness,

promiscuity, or a challenge to gender roles, each possibility indicated an unnaturalness, an effort out of synch with the relevant public or private context. Images of ladies with watches insisted that women didn’t know how to use, and had no proper use for, new “measured” time. The combination of this strand of visual culture with canzonets resulted in a paradoxical directive for women, warning them against a connection to new time even as they were subject to it.