

**Following the Print Trail of Jean-Baptiste Greuze:  
Reputation, Representation, and the Print Market in Late Eighteenth-Century Paris**

by

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Abstract:

This thesis centres on the mid to late eighteenth-century French artist, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, and more specifically, on the ephemeral print matter that he produced, that discusses him, or that represents him in caricature. In analyzing and contextualizing this print matter, this thesis seeks to explore the way in which he was represented both visually and textually, and to correlate this to the rise and fall of his reputation during his lifetime. I have attempted to demonstrate that, through their representations of him, Greuze's contemporaries defined positive and negative models of artistic behaviour, and debated topics of interest such as the boundaries between fame and celebrity, and their anxieties about the commercialization of the artworld. Each chapter centres on a different kind of printed object: periodical and pamphlet art criticism of the biennial Salon held in the Louvre, advertisements for Greuze's reproductive engravings in periodicals, and a libellous caricature, respectively.

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## Introduction

On 31 May 1813, Caroline de Valori performed a vaudeville she had written, entitled *Greuze, ou L'Accordée de Village, Comédie-Vaudeville en un acte*. Later that year, Valori published the vaudeville, and with it, she included another piece of her writing—Greuze's first full biography, *Notice sur Greuze et sur ses ouvrages*.<sup>1</sup> The vaudeville opens and closes with a tableau of two of Greuze's paintings, *Père de famille qui lit la Bible à ses enfants* of 1755 (fig. 1), and *L'Accordée de Village* of 1761 (fig. 2).<sup>2</sup> The play centres around Greuze's frequent visits to a provincial bourgeois family that is patterned on the family type at the heart of Greuze's most celebrated moral pieces. Interspersed with songs sung to popular tunes, the plot unfolds. Greuze has fallen in love with the young girl, Thérèse. She reciprocates his love, though she has been promised to Alain. Alain, who is better suited to her in age and social standing, has already become a part of Thérèse's family, and has been learning how to work their land from her father. Greuze's response to this moral dilemma is unquestionably virtuous. He abruptly ends his brief and secret courtship of Thérèse so that she and her family can continue to follow their simple yet noble path undisturbed.<sup>3</sup> Valori's portrayal of the virtuous Greuze betrays her close connection to him and his family. Before Greuze's death in 1805, Valori was his pupil.

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<sup>1</sup> Caroline de Valori, *Greuze, Ou L'Accordée de Village, Comédie-Vaudeville en un acte* (Paris: Fages, 1813); Caroline de Valori, (1813) "Notice sur Greuze," ed. Paul Lacroix, M.C. and Marsuzi de Aguirre, *Revue Universelle des Arts*, XI (Brussels: Mahieu et Compagnie, 1860): 248-161, 362-377.

<sup>2</sup> I will title Greuze's works using the name listed in the *Salon livret* for the original painting. However, in the case of *L'Accordée de Village*, I will use the title most commonly cited by art historians. This is the title given by Greuze and his engraver, Jean-Jacques Flipart, for the 1770 reproductive engraving after the painting. The title originally given in the 1761 *Salon livret* was "Un Mariage, & l'instant où le père de l'Accordée délivre la dot à son Gendre." *Explication des Peintures, Sculptures et Gravures de Messieurs de l'Académie Royale*, 1761, Deloynes Collection (item 93), 24.

<sup>3</sup> Valori, *Comédie-Vaudeville*, 36.

She was also a lifelong friend of his daughter, Anne-Geneviève. In fact, the latter left all of her possessions to Valori upon her death in 1842.<sup>4</sup>

Our vaudeville is suspiciously similar to a lengthy anecdote that dominates Valori's aforementioned biography. According to Valori, early in his career, Greuze works in Rome as an art teacher for the Duke del Orr's beautiful young daughter, Letitia. In the *Notice*, Greuze falls in love with her, but once he becomes aware of his love, he withdraws from his service to the Duke "puisque la fortune et la naissance avaient élevé entre nous une barrière insurmontable."<sup>5</sup> This barrier leads to page upon page of complications for the two lovers: Letitia falls ill, the Duke—unaware of Greuze and Letitia's romance—beckons the instructor back, a mutual declaration of love ensues, Greuze rescinds it and withdraws again, and so on. In the end, in Greuze's absence, Letitia becomes engaged to a Count. Out of respect for her father's wishes, for filial piety, and for patriarchal order in the family more generally, the virtuous Greuze convinces Letitia that the arrangement will make her and her father much happier than he ever could.<sup>6</sup> After Letitia is married, Greuze remains in Rome, but at a distance, until the Duke seeks him out once more. Letitia has requested a painted portrait bust to give to her husband, and will have none other than Greuze execute it. Greuze stealthily creates a copy for himself that he takes back to Paris with him. According to Valori, this painting of Greuze's lost love

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<sup>4</sup> Françoise Arqué-Bruley, "Documents notariés inédits sur Greuze," *Bulletin de la Société de l'Histoire de l'Art français* 1981 (1983): 153. Arqué-Bruley here publishes Anne-Geneviève Greuze's will, where she reveals that Valori was her god daughter. In turn, Valori dedicated her vaudeville to Anne-Geneviève, calling her "ma chère et bonne amie" in her dedication. See Valori, *Comédie-Vaudeville*, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Valori, "Notice sur Greuze," 254.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 259-60.

would later serve as the model for his *Embarras d'une couronne*—a picture of a “jeune fille appuyée sur un autel consacré à l'Amour.”<sup>7</sup>

This biographical anecdote provides a romantic backdrop to Greuze's many portrait busts of misty eyed young girls, which dominated his artistic production after the French Revolution. In fact, elsewhere in her *Notice*, Valori attempts to defend this component of Greuze's œuvre, which was frequently criticized by her contemporaries.<sup>8</sup> Further, Greuze's romance mirrors the story line of Valori's vaudeville almost perfectly, complete with a younger love interest; another suitor who is of the same station and class as the love interest and who has the favour of the father; Greuze confessing, recanting, and re-confessing his love; and finally the happy marriage of the love interest to her original suitor in the end. Valori's story, which, she says, was told in secret to her and to a few of Greuze's other students, is not mentioned in any other source during his lifetime.<sup>9</sup> All of this suggests alternate motivations for the Letitia anecdote: it gives Valori an opportunity to promote her vaudeville by adding another layer of intrigue to it, and it allows her to add a romantic dimension to Greuze's highly criticized female portrait busts.

Despite the possible motivations for fabricating elements of Greuze's biography, the Letitia anecdote became a recurring motif for Greuze's nineteenth- and twentieth-century biographers. This thesis will focus on mid to late eighteenth-century instances of biographical fabrication, and the construction of Greuze's reputation and representation. However, Valori, whose vaudeville and biography bridge the gap between representations of Greuze during his lifetime and nineteenth- and twentieth-century monographs and

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<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 260.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 370.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 254

biographies, reminds us that Greuze's representation and reputation continuously undergo construction as biographical elements are fabricated, edited, and discarded

For example, in his 1841 biography of Greuze in the *Revue de Paris*, Arsène Houssaye embellished Valori's anecdote and another from the musician André Grétry's *Mémoires*—the story of Greuze's first love, Éléonore<sup>10</sup> As in Valori's account, these two love stories are later employed to help explain the sentimental and romantic qualities of Greuze's work Houssaye claims that Greuze used to say “J'avais trempé mon pinceau dans mon cœur,” and confirms the success of Greuze's sentimental methods “que de peintres qui étudient Raphael toute leur vie sans trouver l'ame de la peinture, cette ame que Greuze avait trouvée un beau matin en adorant Éléonore!”<sup>11</sup>

Houssaye's version of the anecdote adds little to Valori's, but in 1859, the seminal *L'Art du Dix-Huitième Siècle* of Edmond and Jules de Goncourt both concretized the myth and added another layer The Goncourts repeat the story almost word for word, drawing from Valori's account, but identify the painting not as *Embarras d'une couronne*, but as *Jeune fille qui fait prière au pied de l'autel de l'Amour* (fig 3), which Greuze exhibited at the Salon of 1769 Further, the Goncourt brothers notice that an engraved version, published in 1774, was dedicated to the Princesse de Pignatelli (fig 4) “on s'arrête instinctivement à ce nom de princesse italienne placé là comme une consécration, peut-être comme le mot et la clef des initiales trompeuses jetées par Mme de Valori [ ]”<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Arsene Houssaye, “Greuze,” *Revue de Paris* 33 (1841) 5-31, esp 9-13, 17-20 The Gretry anecdote is taken from Andre-Ernest-Modeste Gretry, (1789) *Mémoires ou essai sur la musique de Gretry* Facsimile of 1797 edition, vol 2 (New York De Capo Press, 1971), 172-173

<sup>11</sup> Houssay, “Greuze,” 28 I have chosen to faithfully replicate the spelling and grammar of the sources I have cited in this thesis

<sup>12</sup> Edmond and Jules de Goncourt, *L'Art du Dix Huitieme Siecle*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed , vol 1 (Paris Rapilly, 1873), 377-8 It is unclear whether this is the “official” engraved version, patronized by Greuze himself This 1774

The Goncourt brothers deploy this print dedication as proof of the veracity of Valori's story. Closer investigation reveals, however, that the print dedication was made independently of Greuze by Pascal-Pierre Moles—the print's engraver and publisher. The Comtesse d'Egmont de Pignatelli, also known as the Princesse de Pignatelli, was a patroness of the literary and visual arts, friend of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Voltaire, and descendant of the Cardinal and Duc de Richelieu. She also passed away a year before the engraving was published.<sup>13</sup> Neither Pignatelli nor Greuze could possibly have guessed that Moles' strategic dedication would later be transformed into proof of clandestine romance.

The Letitia anecdote reappears, unquestioned, throughout the early twentieth-century in the biographies of Eliza F. Pollard (1904), Louis Hauteœur (1913), John Rivers (1913), and Camille Mauclair (1926).<sup>14</sup> All of these authors, like their nineteenth-century predecessors, embellish earlier anecdotes while also drawing on newly available sources such as Denis Diderot's published Salon reviews and correspondence; the journals of Grétry, Johann-Georg Wille, and Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun; and the documents in Deloynes Collection housed at the Cabinet des Estampes of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.<sup>15</sup>

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edition only features a detail of the woman's face from the original painting. The full painting was engraved in 1778 by Charles François Adrien Macret.

<sup>13</sup> *The Arts of France from François I<sup>er</sup> to Napoléon I<sup>er</sup>: A Centennial Celebration of Wildenstein's Presence in New York*, ed. Joseph Baillio, exh. cat., (New York: Wildenstein & Co. Inc., 2005), 240-3. For more on print dedications, see W. McAllister Johnson, "'Serviteur, Elève et Ami': Some Print Dedications and Printmakers in 18<sup>th</sup> Century France," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 1428/1429 (Jan/Feb 1988), 49-54.

<sup>14</sup> Eliza F. Pollard, *Greuze and Boucher* (London: Methuen & Co., 1904), Louis Hauteœur, *Greuze* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1913), John Rivers, *Greuze and his Models* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1913), Camille Mauclair, *Greuze et son temps* (Paris: Michel, 1926).

<sup>15</sup> Grétry's journals were published in 1789, see note 10 above. Jacques André Nageon, *Œuvre de Denis Diderot pub. sur les manuscrits de l'auteur* (Paris: Deterville, 1800), Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun, *Souvenirs de Mme Louise-Élisabeth Vigée-Lebrun* (Paris: H. Fournier, 1935-7). Finally, the Deloynes Collection is a multivolume collection of Salon *livrets* and art criticism that dates from 1673 to 1797, and was collected by

The “snowball effect,” as one could call it, of the Letitia story testifies to the way Greuze’s life was represented by these nineteenth- and early twentieth-century biographers: his life story, personality, inclinations, talents and other behaviours were constructed, at least in part, by secondary observers, and ultimately disseminated to a wider public through print. The aforementioned biographies tend to follow similar narratives as they recycle each other’s anecdotes. In all cases, they attempt to harmonize Greuze’s biography and his artwork.<sup>16</sup>

Another remarkable example of biographical fabrication is Greuze’s origin story. Aside from the basic details of Greuze’s birth—that he was born in Tournus, outside of Lyon, on the 21<sup>st</sup> of August 1725—little else was known about the circumstances of his early life. Valori fills this gap in her *Notice*. According to Valori, Greuze showed a passion for visual art from a young age, though his father preferred that he become an architect, like himself. To convince his father otherwise, Greuze produced a drawing of Saint-Jacques—according to Valori, the patron saint of his father’s occupation—for his birthday. Greuze’s natural talent led his father to assume it was an engraving, however, upon learning that it had in fact been drawn by his son, he immediately sent him to Lyon to apprentice with an artist named Grondon.<sup>17</sup> The story appears and reappears, sometimes

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Pierre-Jean Mariette, Charles-Nicolas Cochin, and M. Deloynes. Georges Duplessis, *Catalogue de la Collection de Pièces sur les Beaux-Arts* (Paris: Alphonse Picard, 1880), 2.

<sup>16</sup> For the Letitia anecdote, see Pollard, *Greuze and Boucher*, 18; Hauteœur, *Greuze*, 74-80, Rivers, *Greuze and his Models*, 74-81, 108; and Mauclair, *Greuze et son temps*, 71-6. Emma Barker discusses this use of the biography in “Part 3: Changing Interpretations,” *The Changing Status of the Artist*, ed. Emma Barker, Nick Webb and Kim Woods (London: Yale University Press, 1999). She suggests that these methods lead to a “simplification and distortion in order to create a perfect fit between the life and the work” (89).

<sup>17</sup> Valori, “Notice,” 249. The similarities to Antoine Watteau’s origin story, as told by the Comte de Caylus, are remarkable. Caylus feels that Watteau’s success “donne une preuve convaincante du génie et du don que la nature a fait,” given that Watteau (nor Greuze) could rely on the “secours qu’elle [la naissance] peut fournir à l’éducation.” Comte de Caylus, (1748) “Vie d’Antoine Watteau,” *Comte de Caylus Vies*

with slight variations, often embellished, in the biographies listed above, and, like the Letitia story, even in relatively recent treatments of Greuze's œuvre<sup>18</sup>

Returning to the Letitia anecdote, Eliza F. Pollard and Louis Hauteœur are the only biographers to acknowledge its obvious literary qualities. Pollard, somewhat less reflexively than Hauteœur, simply points out its similarities to other romantic stories such as Héloïse and Abelard's doomed romance.<sup>19</sup> Hauteœur, however, is sceptical of its historical veracity, and elaborates on the perfect match between Valon's Roman love story and other literary love stories of the same type:

Greuze n'avait-il pas commencé lui-même à embellir l'histoire de ses amours avec Lætitia? Rien n'y manque, ni le père généreux, ni la nourrice fidèle, ni l'amante passionnée, ni le rival sans défauts, ni l'amoureux sans espoir, ni les larmes de joie, ni les larmes de détresse, ni le contraste entre la naissance obscure et la naissance illustre, entre la richesse et la pauvreté. On croirait lire un conte moral de Marmontel [ ]<sup>20</sup>

Hauteœur implies that we should question the veracity of anecdotes related to Greuze's biography and that many of them have been fabricated along the lines of literary tropes.

### Methodology

My study of the Letitia anecdote suggests the possibility that many elements of Greuze's biography have "snowballed," with components of his identity being written, copied, and edited over time. However, my goal in this thesis is not simply to apply source criticism to Greuze's biography in order to develop a more accurate history of his life and

*d'Artistes du XVIIIe siècle, Discours sur la Peinture et la Sculpture*, ed. André Fontaine, (Paris: Librairie Renouard, 1910), 3

<sup>18</sup> Anita Brookner, *Greuze: The rise and fall of an eighteenth-century phenomenon* (Greenwich, Conn: New York Graphic Society Ltd, 1972), 54-5; Edgar Munhall, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze / 1725-1805*, exh. cat., (Wadsworth Atheneum, Hartford, 1976), 18

<sup>19</sup> Pollard, *Greuze*, 18

<sup>20</sup> Hauteœur, *Greuze*, 18

œuvre Rather, it is to focus on the visual and textual language through which Greuze has been fashioned and represented. More specifically, I will explore the means by which Greuze's identity and reputation were fabricated and disseminated in print As mediating objects, prints communicated these representations within Paris' late eighteenth-century artworld, and indeed, continue to do so today <sup>21</sup>

This question is informed by a growing interest in eighteenth-century studies with the intersections of book history and print culture with art history. Indeed, many art historians of this period have chosen aspects of the artworld—such as marketing, art criticism, and so on—as their object of study, rather than the relationship between artist, artwork, and œuvre.<sup>22</sup> In her *Les Amateurs d'Art à Paris au XVIIIe siècle*, Charlotte Guichard describes the methods and impetus behind this change of emphasis. By locating the topic of study between the fields of socio-cultural history and art history, Guichard and others are able to discuss the mediatory agents of the artworld, such as connoisseurs, in order to repopulate the “mondes de l'art.”<sup>23</sup> While drawing inspiration from what can tentatively be called “artworld studies,” such as those of Charlotte Guichard, Patrick

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<sup>21</sup> Throughout this thesis, I will be using Howard S. Becker's general definition of “artworld.” “Art worlds consist of all the people whose activities are necessary to the production of the characteristic works which that world, and perhaps others as well, define as art.” See Howard S. Becker, (1982) *Art Worlds* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 2008), 34

<sup>22</sup> Griselda Pollock uses the work of Frederick Antal and others to discuss the distinction between thinking about art aesthetically versus sociologically. She states that Antal felt “the need to give up the ideological investment in the triad artist-work-œuvre” in order to think about “aesthetic-symbolic” practices in terms of cultural and social history. See Griselda Pollock, “Thinking sociologically: thinking aesthetically. Between convergence and difference with some historical reflections on sociology and art history,” *History of the Human Sciences* 20, 141 (2007): 171

<sup>23</sup> Charlotte Guichard, *Les amateurs d'art à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2008), 10-15. By “repopulate,” Guichard means that her study and others like it remind us that many other individuals are involved in an artworld. By investigating these individuals in more detail, Guichard populates France's artworld with art amateurs, patrons, art critics, and so on. Colin B. Bailey's work does the same. See his *Patriotic Taste: Collecting Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Paris* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2002)

Michel, Christian Michel, Jean Chatelus, Colin B. Bailey, and Hans J. Van Miegroet and Neil de Marchi, this thesis has also drawn extensively on more specialized scholarship in print history and the history of engravings.<sup>24</sup>

My research question and methodological orientation draw considerable inspiration from the subfield of book history, notably the work of Robert Darnton, who studies the causes of the French Revolution by working primarily with libellous and ephemeral print matter, its vocabulary, and the manner in which it frames its arguments.<sup>25</sup> Darnton's work is paralleled in the field of eighteenth-century art history by that of Richard Wrigley, whose *The Origins of French Art Criticism: From the Ancien Régime to the Restoration* finds similar trends and vocabulary in the ephemeral art criticism that surrounded the Salon.<sup>26</sup> Wrigley acknowledges that "the study of art criticism has fallen between disciplinary stools: neither a primary object of art history nor history, nor literary history properly speaking."<sup>27</sup> As such, he endeavours to give full treatment to an object that has rarely been addressed on its own terms: pamphlet and periodical art criticism. Wrigley's study analyzes the language and tropes that art criticism employs, traces the ramifications and causes of its censorship and its means of diffusion, and reinvigorates

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<sup>24</sup> See Patrick Michel, *Le commerce du tableau à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle acteurs et pratiques* (Villeneuve d'Ascq: Presses universitaires de Septentrion, 2007). Christian Michel, *Charles-Nicolas Cochin et le livre illustré au XVIIIe siècle avec un catalogue raisonné des livres illustrés par Cochin, 1735-1790* (Geneva: Droz, 1987). Jean Chatelus, *Peindre à Paris au XVIIIe siècle* (Nîmes: J. Chambon, 1991). Hans J. Van Miegroet and Neil de Marchi eds, *Mapping Markets for Paintings in Early Modern Europe, 1450-1750* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2006)

<sup>25</sup> See most recently Robert Darnton, *The Devil in the Holy Water, or the Art of Slander from Louis XIV to Napoleon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010) Also see *Forbidden Best-Sellers of Pre-Revolutionary France* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1995).

<sup>26</sup> Richard Wrigley, *The Origins of French Art Criticism from the Ancien Régime to the Restoration* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993). Richard Wrigley's work is predated by Michael Fried's *Absorption and Theatricality*, which also works closely with art criticism, though it centres on Denis Diderot's writing. See Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality painting and beholder in the age of Diderot*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980).

<sup>27</sup> Wrigley, *French Art Criticism*, 3.

studies of other problematic topics in eighteenth-century art history, namely the hierarchy of genres.

Beyond art criticism, the study of reproductive engravings also offers an avenue for inquiry into the eighteenth-century artworld. The key resource in this regard is Pierre Casselle's 1976 thesis for the École nationale des Chartes, *Le Commerce des estampes à Paris dans la seconde moitié du 18ème siècle*, which has become a model for investigation into the market for engravings in the late eighteenth-century.<sup>28</sup> His largely bibliographical and statistical study remains an indispensable reference resource for historians of engravings, namely W. McAllister Johnson, Stéphane Roy, Françoise Arquié-Bruley, Anne Schroder, Kristel Smentek, and Antony Griffiths.<sup>29</sup> All of these scholars analyze forms of artworld sociability through the technical and material study of the print object, its production, and its sale. They also address how the reproducibility of the printed object affects one's cognitive experience of it. In addition to the material and experiential singularity of the print, these scholars endeavour to learn more about the

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<sup>28</sup> Pierre Casselle, "Le Commerce des estampes à Paris dans la seconde moitié du 18ème siècle," PhD diss, École nationale des Chartes, 1976. It has also become a model for similar studies in different periods. See Corinne Le Bitouzé, "Le Commerce des estampes à Paris dans la première moitié du 18ème siècle," PhD diss, École nationale des Chartes, 1986; Marianne Grivel, *Le Commerce de l'estampe à Paris au XVIIe siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 1986). Pierre Casselle's work is predated by François Courboin's study. François Courboin, *L'Estampe française graveurs et marchands* (Brussels: G. Van Oest, 1914).

<sup>29</sup> See, for example W. McAllister Johnson, "Compositions faites 'de mémoire, de souvenir ou de réminiscence,'" *Nouvelles de l'Estampes* 212, May-June (2007) 38-52; Stéphane Roy, "Paul-André Basset et ses contemporains. L'édition d'imagerie populaire pendant la Révolution: piratage ou entente tacite?" *Nouvelles de l'Estampes* 174, May-June (2001): 5-19; Arquié-Bruley, "Documents notariés," 125-154; Anne Schroder, "Genre Prints in Eighteenth-Century France: Production, Market and Audience," *Intimate Encounters Love and Domesticity in Eighteenth-Century France*, ed Richard Rand, exh. cat., Hanover, Hood Museum of Art, 1997 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 69-86; Kristel Smentek, "Sex, Sentiment, and Speculation: The Market for Genre Prints on the Eve of the French Revolution," *French Genre Painting in the Eighteenth-Century*, ed. Philip Conisbee (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003): 221-243; Antony Griffiths, (1980) *Prints and Printmaking An introduction to the history and techniques* (London: British Museum Press, 2010).

“genre specificity” of different types of prints. My thesis draws a great deal from the research and methodology of their studies.

In focussing on print media in relation to representations of Greuze, I have endeavoured to build my analysis around ephemeral and liminal print sources which have survived from his lifetime. In so doing, I have attempted to track down what I have called the “print trail” of Greuze. By parroting the idiom “paper trail,” I mean to evoke the ephemeral nature of the documents and records that help us to trace the activities of an individual. As such, Greuze’s “print trail” is composed of any visual or textual ephemeral print that he produced, or that represents or discusses him. The first chapter looks at printed art criticism; the second looks at the reproductive engraving and the marketing strategies employed to promote it; and finally the third chapter looks at visual and literary libel and satire.

### Literature Review

This study draws from monographs on Greuze’s work: Anita Brookner’s *Greuze: The Rise and Fall of an Eighteenth-Century Phenomenon* (1972); Edgar Munhall’s two catalogues of Greuze’s painted and drawn works, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze 1725-1805* (1976) and *Greuze the Draftsman* (2002); Thomas Crow’s *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (1985); and Emma Barker’s recent interpretive monograph, *Greuze and the Painting of Sentiment* (2005).<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*; Munhall, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*; Edgar Munhall, *Greuze the Draftsman*, exh. cat., New York: Frick Collection, 2002 (London: Merrell Publishers, 2002). Thomas Crow, “Gruze and Official Art,” *Painters and Public Life in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 1985), 134-174. Emma Barker, *Greuze and the Painting of Sentiment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005). Several other recent studies are cited throughout this work as well. For the purposes of this literature review, I have chosen to focus on the most substantial works that deal with Greuze—Brookner and

Brookner and Barker each provide historiographical reviews that account for the highs and lows in Greuze's reputation, noting that he appears to have dropped out of vogue throughout the 1780s as a result of his withdrawal from Salon exhibition. Imitators of his morally didactic bourgeois dramas emerged to replace him as Neoclassicism and the work of Jacques-Louis David took centre stage. Brookner notes, however, that in the nineteenth-century, "he achieved a sort of posthumous recognition" with the rise of French and English sentimental painting, though Barker mediates this by noting that Greuze increasingly found himself on the wrong side of nineteenth-century formalist versus moralist debates.<sup>31</sup> Barker's point is illustrated in Brookner's preface when she denigrates moralist painting by noting that nothing short of laborious historical contextualization could help her late twentieth-century audience appreciate the value of Greuze's work:

His paintings, with certain exceptions, appear to us tawdry, if not obscene, and it takes a considerable mental effort to remember that in his own time, or rather in the years of his success, from 1755 to about 1785, he was viewed as one of the most important and illustrious artists of the French school. Clearly he appealed to a vein of feeling that has now become extinct.<sup>32</sup>

In her historiographical review, Barker suggests that mid-twentieth-century art historians, such as Brookner and Munhall, responded in two ways to the turn toward formalism and away from sentimentalism that caused Greuze's work to fall out of favour. The first was to emphasize the formal qualities of Greuze's work, such as drawing and composition, and to ignore its moralizing and sentimental content. The second response was to address this content by contextualizing the work's sentimental and "literary" qualities through recourse

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Barker. I have also included Crow's work, whose focus on Greuze's representation and reputation has had a significant impact on my research.

<sup>31</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 134; Barker, *Greuze*, 4-6.

<sup>32</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 1.

to art criticism and the cult of *sensibilité*, all the while highlighting the contradiction between the work's attempt at moral didacticism and its emotional hedonism.

Brookner's work straddles both of these responses. She performs formalist readings of Greuze's major paintings by providing detailed technical analyses of his drawing, painting and composition. She also attempts to contextualize its moralizing and sentimental content by devoting the first three chapters of her monograph to the intellectual origins of *sensibilité*, and its permutations in theatre, literature and visual art. She also discusses Greuze's use of sentiment and virtue in his paintings in relation to the eighteenth-century cult of *sensibilité*. Further, Brookner's study incorporates nineteenth- and twentieth-century approaches to Greuze by devoting a third of her monograph to his biography, and by incorporating it into her interpretations of his *œuvre*. Brookner's monograph deviates from earlier studies in the thoroughness of her contextualizing endeavours. She provides an account of the cult of *sensibilité*, incorporates contemporary art criticism into her discussions of Greuze's *œuvre*, and discusses the world of his competitors and imitators such as Pierre-Alexandre Wille, Étienne Aubry, and Nicolas-Bernard Lépicié.

Brookner pivots her account around 1769, the year that Greuze submitted a history painting as a reception piece to the *Académie Royale de Peinture et de Sculpture* and suffered humiliation and failure at the hands of both the institution and his art public. Like her predecessors, Brookner divides her biography, as the title of her monograph suggests, along the lines of his rise—his mounting genius and contribution to the arts—and his fall—namely his turn to what she describes as petty commercial tactics. Brookner's early accounts of Greuze's life and work name him the “first” in many fields: the first painter

“who was part of the vigorous emotional life of his age,” and the first to rediscover Poussin as a source. Her account of his post-1769 work describes him as having pushed sentiment to its decadent and gloomy pre-Romantic end, and as having compromised the integrity of his work by prioritizing money-making.<sup>33</sup> For example, Brookner describes Greuze’s post-1769 misty eyed portrait busts, which Valori defended, as “sentimental-pornographic *tête de jeune fille* [which ..] consequently became his sole line of production.”<sup>34</sup>

Brookner’s monograph revived Greuze as an object of art historical study, and her discussion of *sensibilité*, and the thoroughness of her biography have provided future scholars with a launching pad for their investigations. However, by privileging formalist analyses, Brookner leaves gaps in interpretation and contextualization that later scholars have eagerly sought to fill.<sup>35</sup> Further, in building her biography, Brookner often uses sources without interrogating them; however, her inclusion of both probable and improbable anecdotes can be seen as a strength.<sup>36</sup> Brookner’s biography inventories eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources that have discussed Greuze, and has operated as a reference resource for the “print trail” that I have endeavoured to follow in this thesis.

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<sup>33</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 94, 110, 121-6. Brookner describes Greuze as having “withdrew behind the lines [ ..]” (84).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid* , 84.

<sup>35</sup> For example, Brookner points out that “Greuze’s characters seem to be at war with their clothes.” *Ibid.*, 97. Anne Coudreuse, however, discusses the use of clothing in the art of the *pathétique* and observes that it was often used as a metaphor or metonymy for the character’s emotional distress. See Coudreuse, *Le goût des larmes au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999), 207.

<sup>36</sup> Edgar Munhall is equally as thorough in his 1977 exhibition catalogue, which provides a detailed chronology. See his *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*, 18-26

Barker's monograph, though contemporary with the studies of Thomas Crow and Mark Ledbury,<sup>37</sup> follows Brookner's work very closely. For example, Barker likewise prefaces her study by connecting Greuze to the notion of *sensibilité*, divides her monograph using 1769 as a pivot point, and suggests that the majority of Greuze's "most ambitious works" were produced before this date.<sup>38</sup> Barker also emphasizes contextualization in her interpretations through the use of eighteenth-century art criticism, literature, and political theory. However, her study diverges from Brookner's dismissive treatment of the "literary" qualities in Greuze's work. Brookner defines "literary" artwork as those in which "the subject is supreme and the technique has been subordinated to it, reduced to an adequate but nonetheless minimal supporting role of outline, colour, and shading."<sup>39</sup> Barker emphasizes Greuze's subject matter in her analysis, and prioritizes "literary" readings of Greuze's work in the critical reception of his contemporaries. Indeed, Barker's study provides a more thorough and judicious reading of the same material covered by Brookner, drawing more from eighteenth-century French cultural and political life in her attempt to contextualize Greuze's work. Rather than accounting for his successes and failures from a twentieth-century standpoint, Barker attempts to understand eighteenth-century readings of Greuze's work. Her monograph also avoids biographically driven interpretations of his oeuvre. Accordingly, the accounts of Greuze's personality and

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<sup>37</sup> Mark Ledbury, *Sedaine, Greuze and the Boundaries of Genre* (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2009); Crow, "Greuze and Official Art,"

<sup>38</sup> Barker, *Greuze*, 237.

<sup>39</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 103. For a more nuanced discussion of the narrative, or "novelistic" element in Greuze's work, see Ryan Lee Whyte, "Painting as Social Conversation: The *petit sujet* in the Ancien Régime," PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2008, 141.

vices which are so prominent in Brookner's work are largely omitted from Barker's analysis<sup>40</sup>

Barker also dedicates her introduction to connecting Greuze to the cult of *sensibilité*, and therefore to the relationship between sentiment, virtue, and morally didactic painting. In so doing, she draws from Jurgen Habermas' *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962) to establish a relationship between the private sphere represented in domestic genre painting and the public sphere of political action. She connects Greuze's moral didacticism to the political and social ideas of the *philosophes* and the Physiocrats, and concludes that Greuze was a social reformist<sup>41</sup>. She does this by establishing connections between the content of his paintings—bourgeois provincial life and scenes of domestic accord—and contemporary critiques of luxury, valorizations of the noble and simple bourgeois provincial family, and nostalgia for an urban France that was seen as being more in touch with these values<sup>42</sup>. Even more convincingly, Barker locates several instances where Physiocrats and their publications explicitly discussed Greuze or associated his works to their ideals<sup>43</sup>. However, Barker often brushes aside these claims to association, deeming them improbable and instead choosing to imagine Greuze as largely independent of formal political associations<sup>44</sup>.

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<sup>40</sup> For example, Barker, unlike other scholars, largely avoids using one of the most problematic biographical documents on Greuze available: the "Memoire de Greuze contre sa femme," *Archives de l'Art Français*, ed. Charles-Phillippe de Chennevieres-Pointel, vol. 2 (1852-3), 153-172. She cites this study once in Barker, *Greuze*, 219.

<sup>41</sup> Barker, *Greuze*, 17-8.

<sup>42</sup> For example, Barker discusses the Bourgeois farmer, and nostalgia in the form of the multigenerational urban household. See Barker, *Greuze*, 57-60, 70-1.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 57-61, 70-3, 78.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 71. Barker also does not address Greuze's membership in the Freemason lodge, the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs*. Edgar Munhall notes this association in his biographical chronology of Greuze, remarking that on 28 November 1778, Greuze took part in the *Apotheose de Voltaire* and was initiated into the lodge. Munhall, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*, 24. Though Munhall does not cite his evidence for this, I have found

Barker structures her book by centering each chapter around a “most ambitious work.” She treats Greuze’s post-1769 work with a more even hand than her predecessors, and contextualizes his shift from positive models of virtue to negative models by relating it to parallel literary and theatrical trends—the *roman noir* and *drame sombre*, respectively.<sup>45</sup> However, there are instances where she shows her biases. For instance, Barker ultimately concludes that Greuze and his post-1770 imitators turned “familial conflict and human suffering into a spectacle that seems more sensational than edifying” as part of a “dubious [...] strategy for gaining attention,” in the face of the late 1760s vogue for the Neoclassical style.<sup>46</sup> In so doing, she implicitly characterizes Greuze’s post-1769 work as “an expression of his failed ambition” and abortive reformism—precisely the kind of judgement for which she condemns Brookner and Ledbury.<sup>47</sup>

Nevertheless, Barker’s interpretations are thorough and her mastery of French literature, philosophy, and political theory is effectively mobilized in her contextualization of Greuze’s œuvre and argument for his reformist agenda. However, by limiting her analysis to interpretations of Greuze’s most renowned works and by not including problematic and libellous primary biographical sources, Barker does not address the

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references to Greuze’s membership in two late eighteenth-century periodicals: *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l’histoire de France, depuis MDCCLXII jusqu’à nos jours* 14 (30 May 1779), 70, and *Correspondance secrète, politique et littéraire* 8 (5 June 1779), 67. Greuze is listed as having been a part of the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs*, the same Masonic lodge as Voltaire, and the Academic painters Hubert Robert and Horace Vernet. For Hubert Robert’s involvement with Free Masonry, and for more on the cultural and sociable role of the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs*, see Annie Dion-Clément, “Hubert Robert et *Jeunes filles dansant autour d’un obélisque*. La brèche au croisement de la philosophie des Francs-Maçons et des Lumières,” MA thesis, Université du Québec à Montreal, 2010, esp. 10-12.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 77, 205

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 239, 235.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 292.

construction of Greuze's identity through print, or his ephemeral or reproductive œuvre in great detail.

Thomas Crow, for his part, integrates Greuze into his analysis of the *Académie Royale*'s institutional history, and the underlying political motivations of its associates, connoisseurs, and other affiliates. He therefore discusses Greuze in relation to the *Académie*'s limited patronage of history painting in the wake of the Seven Years war, and the angry response of art critics such as La Font de Saint Yenne and Denis Diderot, who lamented the absence of didacticism in history painting. Accordingly, Crow interprets the head of arts administration's *L'Accordée de village* commission, completed in 1761, as a "cost effective" post-Seven Years War alternative to the high price of patronizing history painting.<sup>48</sup> He also analyzes Greuze's 1769 *Septime Sévère* as another attempt to respond to these issues.<sup>49</sup>

For the purposes of my inquiry in this thesis, however, Crow's most fertile contribution is his identification of the "secret invader" stock character, which he defines as "a space [...] created by discourse which an artist, supported by unknowing and influential partisans, is able to step into and deflect to his own purposes." In this case, the "secret invader" stock type and the myths appended to it involve the sudden appearance of an extremely talented artist, who achieves greatness in a high cultural pursuit against all odds (notably low social standing). For Crow, this is a combination of the trickster-hero story (where a clever rogue is ultimately rewarded by his betters) and artworld myths "involving the miraculous discovery of talent." Crow is therefore the first to identify the

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<sup>48</sup> The *Directeur-général* at the time was the Marquis de Marigny, Madame la marquise de Pompadour's brother. See Crow, "Greuze and Official Art," 154-163.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 163-174.

similarities between the origin stories of Greuze and his “secret invader” predecessors—Antoine Watteau and Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin.<sup>50</sup>

Together, Brookner, Barker and Crow’s work on Greuze have greatly informed this thesis. Brookner’s study remains a resource for Greuze art historians, both in terms of her exploration of *sensibilité* in relation to his œuvre, and the thoroughness in tracking down eighteenth- and nineteenth-century references to him and his artwork. Barker’s cultural, intellectual and political contextualization of Greuze’s artwork has greatly informed this study by regularly indicating avenues for further research. And Crow’s work has had an important methodological impact on this thesis’s investigation into representations of Greuze, and the historically contingent nature of “the artist.”

### Chapter Breakdown

Chapter One will focus on representations of Greuze’s behaviour and artistic process and will use 1769 as a pivot point. Vocabulary and tropes that recur in descriptions of his personality and artistic method will be discussed and contextualized. In so doing, positive and negative representations of Greuze will be associated to the rise and fall of his reputation. Further, this chapter will explore the positive and negative “ideals” to which Greuze was held by his critics, and will fit them under the umbrella terms of fame and celebrity, respectively.

Chapter Two will discuss an often overlooked aspect of Greuze’s œuvre: reproductive engravings after his paintings and the way in which they were marketed to the public. Anxieties regarding the increasing accessibility and popularity of such

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 136-138.

engravings will be discussed and related to broader eighteenth-century critiques of luxury. Using Colin Campbell's study of consumer culture in the eighteenth century,<sup>51</sup> I will endeavour to discuss and contextualize the way in which Greuze's works were marketed using the concept of *sensibilité*. In so doing, I will highlight the similarities between the art criticism of Greuze's paintings and the marketing strategies and language used to advertise his reproductive engravings. The lines between the world of high art and the art market were blurred as the positive ideals and accompanying language that Chapter One explored are shown to reappear in Greuze's post-1769 advertisements.

Finally, Chapter Three will focus on the *Allegory against Greuze*, an anonymous satirical etching that attacks Greuze and his wife, Anne-Gabrielle Babuty. In attempting to decode this work and to evaluate the motivations behind it, I will compare it to other libellous and satirical works against Greuze. This chapter will in turn address the overlap between his declining reputation and negative perceptions of his increasing reliance on the reproductive engraving as a means of disseminating his work and profiting from it. *Allegory against Greuze* will also be examined within broader eighteenth-century anxieties about the commercialization of the artworld and the place of women in the public sphere.

These three chapters share the common project of exploring Greuze's documentary trail, or "print trail," left both by him and by his contemporaries in the form of ephemeral print objects. I hope to show that new insights can be gained by studying these print

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<sup>51</sup> Colin Campbell, *The Romantic Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Consumerism* (Oxford: Basil, Blackwell Ltd., 1987).

objects within their specific contexts of production and dissemination, rather than subordinating them to more traditional interpretive frameworks or to the rewriting of his biography. By focusing on surviving ephemeral print sources, this thesis will attempt to show how Greuze's identity as an artist and his reputation were subject to a constant process of construction and transformation over time—one in which Valori's vaudeville and biography participate.

Chapter One:  
From “on voudroit le connoître” to “ un sot, un barbouilleur.”

The enthusiastic praise Greuze received during his lifetime in many ways prefigures the sort of attention and affection that fans and the media lavish upon modern celebrities. The *Mercur de France*'s short series of poetry published in 1761 offers an example of this kind of attention. In his poem, the anonymous P.D.S.A. showers generous acclaim on Greuze, the painter, and abbé Aubert, the poet. Lines such as “*Greuze, Peintre charmant, Quelle âme tu joins au talent!*” from P.D.S.A. provoke the abbé Aubert's humble response:

Pour un Conte qui m'a dicté / L'admiration légitime, / Qu'inspire le talent sublime / Du Peintre de la Vérité, / Tu flattes trop ma vanité. / Je ne partage point l'estime / Due à ce chef-d'œuvre parfait, / Que de tout Paris satisfait, / Couronne la voix unanime.<sup>1</sup>

Jason Goldsmith's description of celebrity is here useful for understanding how eighteenth-century “fans” responded to Greuze. He defines celebrity as “interiority staged through the mechanism of spectacle,” borrowing Guy Debord's definition of spectacle and Richard Schickel's use of interiority and intimacy in his description of celebrity.<sup>2</sup> For Debord, spectacle refers to a new type of social relation that is “mediated by images.”<sup>3</sup> The “spectacular order” that this new form of social relation creates is dominated by

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<sup>1</sup> P.D.S.A. “Parallèle entre M. l'Abbé Aubert & M. Greuze,” *Mercur de France* (November 1761), 46; Abbé Aubert, “Réponse à M. P. de S. A. Peintre, au sujet de son Parallèle, entre M. l'Abbé Aubert & M. Greuze,” *Mercur de France* (November 1761), 49. Jean-Louis Aubert was a journalist and poet who contributed to *Affiches, Annonces et Avis divers* and the *Mercur de France* from 1751 onwards. See Béatrice Fournel, “Jean-Louis Aubert (1731-1814),” *Dictionnaire des Journalistes (1600-1789)*, ed Jean Sgard (Grenoble: Presses Universitaires de Grenoble, 1976), 17.

<sup>2</sup> Jason Goldsmith, “Celebrity and the spectacle of nation,” *Romanticism and Celebrity Culture, 1750-1850*, ed Tom Mole (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 25; Guy Debord, (1967) *The Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1995); Richard Schickel, *Intimate Strangers: The Culture of Celebrity* (New York: Doubleday & Company Inc., 1985).

<sup>3</sup> Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, 13, 12

representation, and “all human life, namely social life, [...becomes] mere appearance.”<sup>4</sup> Debord uses the word spectacle to describe a world reduced to representations of what was once real. Though we can create and exchange them, we can no longer escape these representations. In Goldsmith’s use of Debord’s term, the modern celebrity plays the role of one of these images. Goldsmith then uses Schickel’s definition of celebrity to describe the way in which this image mediates our social relations. For Schickel, with the advent of the modern celebrity came a new kind of relationship between the famous and the general public: an “illusion of intimacy.” The “politesse” and “etiquette” that had formerly governed the interactions of the “powerful and powerless, the known and unknown” is replaced by one of perceived friendship and intimacy, though both parties in fact remain strangers to one another.<sup>5</sup> Goldsmith later implies that one moves from being simply famous to achieving celebrity status when “personality eclipse[s] accomplishment.”<sup>6</sup> Goldsmith proposes a series of conditions for modern celebrity: a celebrity is born when an audience—obsessed with the celebrity’s representation and believing that they have an intimate relationship with that representation—develops around an individual to whom they have virtually no physical access.

In *Joshua Reynolds: The Creation of Celebrity*, Martin Postle, Mark Hallett, Tim Clayton and Stella Tillyard explore the distinction between fame and celebrity within the eighteenth-century English art world. They agree that “fame” and “renown” are better fitting categories than celebrity for the English painter Joshua Reynolds, though he, like many of his contemporaries, walked a very fine line between the concepts of fame and

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<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>5</sup> Schickel, *Intimate Strangers*, 4.

<sup>6</sup> Goldsmith, “Celebrity and the spectacle of nation,” 23.

celebrity. Fame was “a laudable aspiration” in the eighteenth century, connected, as both Postle and Goldsmith discuss, to national cultural accomplishment, the universal progress of the arts, and, accordingly, to one’s reputation lasting into posterity.<sup>7</sup> Tillyard’s definition evokes the imagery employed in making this distinction:

Fame, since classical times, had also been about recognition and achievement, but it had always had an unearthly quality that went along with and survived its worldliness, a touch of immortality, of death, remembrance and a place in history.<sup>8</sup>

The vocabulary that accompanied the concepts of fame and celebrity aptly describes the trajectory of Greuze’s reputation. The distinction between these concepts—permanence and impermanence, and lasting achievement versus fleeting (if widespread) interest—also characterizes the differences in the way Greuze was described before and after 1769.<sup>9</sup> This chapter will explore the way in which Greuze’s behaviour and artistic process were represented before and after this pivotal year—moving from fame and genius to mere celebrity—through an analysis of how he was depicted in art criticism.

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<sup>7</sup> Martin Postle, “‘The Modern Apelles’ Joshua Reynolds and the Creation of Celebrity,” *Joshua Reynolds The Creation of Celebrity*, ed. Martin Postle, exh. cat., London, Tate Britain, 2005, (London: Tate Publishing, 2005), 17. Goldsmith’s “Celebrity and the spectacle of nation” argues that celebrity “was one of the mechanisms through which national sentiments were fostered among a diverse and heterogeneous populace” (22) and that the public creation of the celebrity’s personality often paralleled nationalist discourse (35).

<sup>8</sup> Stella Tillyard, “‘Paths of Glory’ Fame and the Public in Eighteenth-Century London,” *Joshua Reynolds*, 62. For more on this distinction from Postle, Hallet and Tillyard see *Joshua Reynolds*, 17, 37, 67.

<sup>9</sup> In the eighteenth century, the word “celebrity” was not used in the sense that we use it today. For example, Denis Diderot defines *célèbre* as a type of fame or renown, different only in that it is born of literary and artistic accomplishments. However, the anxieties that understandably accompanied the development of a modern form of celebrity culture existed nameless, nonetheless. As Tillyard eloquently puts it, modern celebrity culture was only developing in the eighteenth century. However, Reynolds—and Greuze’s—contemporaries were “extremely interested in, and avid consumers of, some of the attributes of celebrity that we ourselves still recognize.” See Tillyard, “‘Paths of Glory,’” 62. Denis Diderot, “Celebre, Illustre, Fameux, Renommé (*Gramm*),” *Encyclopédie 2* (University of Chicago ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Spring 2010 edition), ed. Robert Morissey, 800. <http://encyclopedie.uchicago.edu/>

### The Life of the Artist: the Genius Myth

As Rudolf and Margot Wittkower have shown in *Born Under Saturn*, the biography and personality of the artist is often used as a key for decoding the artist's œuvre.<sup>10</sup> However, the figure of "the artist" is also a historically contingent construction, endowed with characteristics, life cycles, artistic approaches, and popular anecdotes that resurface with such regularity that we can call them tropes. As Emma Barker suggests, "it is possible that 'the artist' may be less a historical individual with a distinct personality than a standard construct produced by traditional forms of art-historical writing in order to 'explain' works of art."<sup>11</sup>

Christian Michel works with this concept in his analysis of the six biographies that appeared within thirty years of Antoine Watteau's death in 1721. Michel uncovers significant slippages as anecdotes regarding key events in Watteau's life are conflated with the biographies of other eighteenth-century artists or even with episodes from Giorgio Vasari's famous *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*, the Renaissance prototype of artistic biography.<sup>12</sup> In so doing, Michel demonstrates that anecdotes, character traits, and origin stories are frequently recycled, often with the goal of retroactively preordaining the artist to his later success.

The Comte de Caylus, an influential early eighteenth century art amateur and archaeologist, offers a representative example of this form of writing in the mid-

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<sup>10</sup> Rudolf and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn The Character and Conduct of Artists A Documented History from Antiquity to the French Revolution* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1963), 98-101.

<sup>11</sup> Emma Barker, "Part 3: Changing Interpretations," *Changing Status of the Artist*, 189.

<sup>12</sup> Christian Michel, *Le 'Célèbre' Watteau* (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 2008), 41-2, 44. Thomas Crow points out the similarities between Watteau and Greuze's origin stories in his *Painters and Public Life*, 136-138.

eighteenth-century with his biography of Watteau.<sup>13</sup> As Michel suggests, Caylus' 1747 conference paper to the *Académie Royale* is not simply a biography, but also an attempt to evaluate Watteau's life and works using mid-eighteenth-century artistic ideals.<sup>14</sup> In the paper, Watteau's life and personality are meant to become a lesson for the young students at the *Académie*, and Caylus is careful to describe the pedagogical value of each anecdote he recounts. For example, Watteau's origin story, which first appears in Caylus' account, teaches us that genius, a natural gift, can overcome any limitation, including restricted access to an artistic education because of one's social standing.<sup>15</sup> In relation to Watteau's artistic process, Caylus states that working from nature is necessary to the progress of the arts and that Watteau recognised this.<sup>16</sup> Lastly, Caylus describes Watteau's obsession with his artwork alongside his supposed indifference or naïveté in other aspects of life, but concludes that this ultimately proved to be fortuitous. This naïveté led Watteau to be unaware of his own greatness as well as his disinterest in wealth and financial matters.<sup>17</sup>

As Linda Walsh points out in *The Changing Status of the Artist*, Watteau was discussed and praised far more after his death than during his lifetime.<sup>18</sup> In the case of Greuze, however, transformations in public exhibition and the accessibility of art criticism allow us to trace the construction of his personality from the moment he set foot on the Academic scene. After the 1761 exhibition of his celebrated *L'Accordée de Village*,

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<sup>13</sup> Comte de Caylus, "Vie d'Antoine Watteau," 1-22.

<sup>14</sup> Michel, *Le 'Célèbre' Watteau*, 50.

<sup>15</sup> Caylus, "Vie d'Antoine Watteau," 3. Michel, *Le 'Célèbre' Watteau*, 52.

<sup>16</sup> Caylus, "Vie d'Antoine Watteau," 4, 11, 17.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>18</sup> Linda Walsh, "Case Study 9: Subjects, society, style: changing evaluations of Watteau and his art," *The Changing Status of the Artist*, 238.

Greuze was fully initiated into the broad category of *homme célèbre*, or famous person.<sup>19</sup> For example, the *Description des tableaux exposés au Sallon du Louvre [...]* began its analysis of Greuze's 1763 contributions to the Salon with "la grande célébrité de cet Artiste."<sup>20</sup> The anonymous author of *Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux exposées cette année [...]*, writing at the very beginning of Greuze's Academic career, paused to suggest that "on voudroit le connoître," recalling Schickel's theory of celebrity as an illusion of intimacy.<sup>21</sup> Alongside Greuze's newfound celebrity status, prerequisite characteristics of genius and fame were retroactively assigned to him as he became an embodiment of artistic excellence and a model for aspiring French artists to follow and learn from.

Though a thorough review of the construction of the life of the artist is beyond the scope of this chapter, a few remarks on how artists' lives have been represented since the Renaissance are nonetheless instructive for understanding how Greuze was portrayed. In *Born Under Saturn*, Rudolf and Margot Wittkower have traced this question through the classic biographies of Vasari's *Lives*. They offer an analysis of the artistic genius type, which they describe as a "generic and deeply significant symbol."<sup>22</sup> Though they waver between acknowledging that these biographies are representations, and conflating them with the actual personalities of the artists they describe, the Wittkowers' analysis is an important reference point in tracing the history of artists' lives.

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<sup>19</sup> The word *célèbre* recalls fame, rather than celebrity, in the eighteenth-century. For a more complete discussion, see n9 in this chapter.

<sup>20</sup> "Description des Tableaux exposés au Sallon du Louvre, avec des remarques, par une Société d'Amateurs," 1763, Deloynes Collection, (item 99), 54.

<sup>21</sup> "Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux exposés cette année dans le grand Sallon du Louvre," 1755, Deloynes Collection, (item 73), 17.

<sup>22</sup> Wittkowers, *Born under Saturn*, 100.

Expectations for the personalities of artists were dominated by the concepts of genius and madness and the wavering boundary between them. The Wittkowers trace the transforming notion of genius and its association to madness through the Renaissance, discussing its roots in the writings of Plato and Marcilio Ficino's fifteenth-century interpretations of his dialogues.<sup>23</sup> The genius straddles a fine line between mental disorder and "a sacred madness of enthusiasm and inspiration."<sup>24</sup> Accordingly, though great artistic production and genius are associated to one another, so too is aloofness, obsessive behaviour, melancholy and detachment.<sup>25</sup> The "fire of divine inspiration" that animates the artist—interchangeably referred to as enthusiasm or imagination—results in eccentricities in social behaviour.<sup>26</sup>

Annie Becq specifies that seventeenth-century French theorists, borrowing from their Renaissance predecessors, defined *génie* as a gift of talent in the arts. An important aspect of this gift was an ability to moderate the fire of their passion and their emotional enthusiasm so that reason could dominate their behaviour and artistic choices.<sup>27</sup> While seventeenth-century French critics favoured reason, mid- to late-eighteenth-century critics privileged *genius'* association to irrational behaviour, and overflowing passion and emotion.<sup>28</sup> It is likely for this reason that Caylus' biography, which was written on the cusp of these two periods, endows Watteau with eccentric and irrational behaviours—

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 98.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 47-67.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 99, 55, 101

<sup>27</sup> Annie Becq, *Genèse de l'esthétique française moderne de la Raison classique à l'Imagination créatrice, 1680-1814*, vol. 1 (Pisa: Pacini Editore, 1984), 45-6.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 357

obsession with art partnered with indifference to other more practical matters, and so on—but also characterizes him as excessively rational, and as possessing *sang-froid*.<sup>29</sup>

In the mid to late eighteenth century, characterizations of *génie* celebrated the elusive, intangible and irrational aspects of the term.<sup>30</sup> As affect and sentiment came to the fore throughout Europe's cultural production and scientific theory, so too would *génie* be modified to emphasize the emotional. The genius artist, in this period, was ideally predisposed to the creation of emotional, affective artwork. As such, emotional and irrational inspiration, or *enthousiasme* and *imagination*, were topics of focus for philosophers such as Voltaire, who discusses both words in his *Dictionnaire philosophique*. Voltaire describes *enthousiasme* as a violent form of physical and emotional agitation born of an empathetic response to emotional tragedy. This reaction, in its productive form, becomes *imagination*.<sup>31</sup> Despite the fuzzy distinction between these two words, the overall message is clear: the genius creates affective works after being affected. A heightened emotional permeability is therefore instrumental for inspiration and creation. Without this violent emotional response, the artist is unable to forge a complete connection with the characters and subject matter that he describes or paints.<sup>32</sup> As Becq eloquently puts it, *génie* endows its agent with “le pouvoir de sortir de soi, non pour

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<sup>29</sup> Caylus describes Watteau as possessing *sang-froid* in “Vie d’Antoine Watteau,” 4,13. He describes Watteau as rational and calm in the face of death: “D’ailleurs il n’était emporté par aucune passion [...]” (21).

<sup>30</sup> Becq, *Genèse de l’esthétique*, vol. 2, 702. Michel also observes that Watteau’s biographers characterize him in ways reminiscent of nineteenth-century definitions of genius, describing him as melancholic and isolated. Michel, *Le ‘Célèbre’ Watteau*, 13.

<sup>31</sup> Becq, *Genèse de l’esthétique*, vol. 2, 688-700.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 670.

projeter son moi dans les êtres que l'on crée, mais pour confondre avec eux, devenir les autres pour exprimer leur réalité."<sup>33</sup>

What distinguishes the genius in the eighteenth century is his ability not only to be affected more than most by what he sees, but also to see more by which he can become affected. His gaze is described as more penetrating and thorough, and has the capacity to become easily and almost irrationally fixated by a single object. Caylus recounts a story of Watteau becoming so fixated on the sight of a cheap wig that he vastly overpays a wigmaker in order to possess it. Here, Caylus provides his audience with an example of what Becq calls *concentration géniale*.<sup>34</sup> The natural gift of genius therefore endows its possessor with an extreme sensitivity to his surroundings.

As the Wittkowers discuss, the fundamentally irrational nature of *génie* draws it dangerously close to madness. Nedd Willard explores the fine distinction between genius and madness in the eighteenth century through the work of Denis Diderot. Diderot responds to the prevailing notion that those who possess the gift of genius can easily become a burden on social order, due to the fact that genius acts “comme une loupe, [qui] agrandit toutes les qualités humaines.”<sup>35</sup> This magnification effect acts not only upon the genius’ capacity to empathize and observe, but also on the negative aspects of his temperament, magnifying unkind and even destructive behaviours.<sup>36</sup> Diderot’s conclusion allows us to evaluate the fine distinction between socially tolerable and intolerable eccentricities—a distinction that parallels the fine line between fame and celebrity.

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 715.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 702-3. Caylus, “Vie d’Antoine Watteau,” 11.

<sup>35</sup> Nedd Willard, *Le génie et la folie au dix-huitième siècle*. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1963).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 27.

Geniuses, for Diderot, may appear to be acting contrary to the dictates of society when, in fact, their behaviour is simply ahead of its time and actually in society's best interest. It should therefore be excused and even heeded. When the genius has behaved outside of the norms of society, but only in his best interests, he should be punished.<sup>37</sup> Diderot and his contemporaries later applied a similar distinction in their discussion of Greuze's artistic and professional career. They excused Greuze's eccentricities before 1769—when they believed that his motivations were selfless—but they damned him afterwards, when they believed him to be selfish, vain and greedy.

#### Representations of Greuze: *génie* and *nature*

In 1755, Greuze exhibited six paintings in his first Salon exhibition, among them the *Père de famille qui lit la Bible à ses enfants* (fig. 1), and was showered with the rare and high praise of *génie* from this first public showing. The author of *Lettre sur le Salon de 1755* describes Greuze as a genius throughout his discussion of the artist's works, commenting "le génie s'y montre à chaque pas," and "c'est son génie qu'il doit suivre, & non pas les idées du Public."<sup>38</sup> As we have discussed, the concept of *génie* came with a list of behaviours and inclinations. The anonymous author of the 1755 *Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux* endows Greuze with some of these inclinations, though our author admits that Greuze is a stranger to him:

Je suis sûr que M. Greuze est un homme attentif à tout ce qui l'environne; c'est un Spectateur qui guette continuellement la nature, & sçait la saisir dans ce qu'elle a de plus intéressant. Il a raison; elle

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> "Lettre sur le Salon de 1755. Adressée a ceux qui la liront," 1755, Deloynes Collection, (item 71), 38-9.

est la plus grand maître. En le suivant, en l'imitant, il n'aura jamais de manière; tout ce qui sortira de ses mains sera précieux & nouveau.<sup>39</sup>

The concept of nature, as both subject matter and method of painting, is inextricably entwined with the concept of genius. As Becq puts it, “le génie est en effet essentiellement réceptivité” to nature, and indeed, it is this receptivity that our anonymous author attributes to Greuze.<sup>40</sup>

As our author suggests, Greuze's amenability to and imitation of nature allow him to escape the great foible of *manière*. *Les Misotechnites aux Enfers*, by Charles-Nicolas Cochin fils, a renowned engraver and the *Secrétaire perpétuel de l'Académie royale*, helps to clarify what the author of *Sentimens* means by this. To be *maniéré* in the negative sense suggests that one's rendering of nature is overly stylized to the extent that it has become entirely false. *Manière*, in a positive sense, simply denotes one's style, or as Cochin puts it “la route particulière que chacun suit selon l'impulsion de son génie, pour rendre ce qu'il voit de façon dont il en est affecté.”<sup>41</sup> Therefore, working from nature would discourage young artists from copying the styles—or the particular expression of genius and affect—of other artists. Instead, they would develop their own impression of nature through their unique experience of it.<sup>42</sup> In fact, *génie* was intimately linked to the artist's ability to internalize and subsequently re-express nature.

This association between genius and the representation of nature finds its way into critical acclaim of Greuze's work. To take one example, the anonymous author of the *Lettre sur le Salon de 1755* described Greuze's *Enfant endormi sur son livre* as possessing

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 17-8.

<sup>40</sup> Becq, *Genèse de l'esthétique*, vol. 2, 608.

<sup>41</sup> Charles-Nicolas Cochin, “Les Misotechniques aux Enfers, ou Examen des Observations sur les Arts, par une Société d'Amateurs,” 1763, Deloynes Collection, (item 103), 36.

<sup>42</sup> Becq, *Genèse de l'esthétique*, Vol. 2, 610.

“un bon gout de nature.”<sup>43</sup> In reference to one of Greuze’s larger genre scenes, *Père de famille qui lit la Bible à ses enfants* (fig. 1), the same anonymous critic again evoked this notion of a “feeling of nature”—as opposed to the imitation of it—by noting that Greuze had employed “les ressources de l’art [...] dans cette composition qui paroît si naturelle.”<sup>44</sup> In 1763, the anonymous critic of the *Lettre a Madame* \*\*\* described Greuze as having “expressed” nature in his works.<sup>45</sup> Along the same lines, a critic of 1779 compared Greuze’s work to one of his later moral genre scene imitators, suggesting that “M. Aubry paroît moins pénétré de la Nature que de la maniere de M. Greuze, qui n’a acquis sa célébrité qu’en suivant cette même Nature.”<sup>46</sup> Here, the word nature is not employed as though it were an object that one imitated or studied: one should not only observe nature, but internalize, digest, and finally outwardly manifest it in his work. The artist is first penetrated by it and then expresses it. The result of this expression is an impression of nature. As Becq puts it, the mid to late eighteenth century use of the word nature in relation to visual art referred to an “*effet de réel*.”<sup>47</sup>

If Greuze accessed nature through genius, then what exactly was he expected to observe? The answer to this question also forges a link between genius, nature, and moral didacticism in the late eighteenth century. In 1763, in relation to *La Piété filiale* (fig. 5), a critic refers to the “scenes touchantes que produisent les liens les plus doux de la nature.”<sup>48</sup> The same critic evokes the concept of nature again when discussing the

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<sup>43</sup> “Lettre sur le Salon de 1755,” 1755, 39.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>45</sup> “Lettre a Madame \*\*\*, sur les peintures, les sculptures & les gravures exposées dans le Sallon du Louvre cette année,” 1763, Deloynes Collection, (item 100), 61-2.

<sup>46</sup> “Encore un Rêve, suite de la Pretresse,” 1779, Deloynes Collection, (item 207), 16.

<sup>47</sup> Becq, *Genèse de l’esthétique*, vol. 2, 617, 612. My emphasis.

<sup>48</sup> “Lettre a Madame \*\*\*,” 1763, 64.

expressive faces of *La Piété filiale*: “par-tout il a subordonné l’art à la nature, & négligé l’expression la plus brillante, pour employer la plus naturelle.”<sup>49</sup> Surprisingly, our critic refers to the painting’s costume and setting with his use of “par-tout.” Two years later, in relation to Greuze’s *Jeune fille qui pleure son oiseau mort* (fig. 6), the author of *Lettres a Monsieur* would remark “on croit voir la nature” and “on partage la douleur de cette fille: on voudroit la consoler.”<sup>50</sup> These more specific applications of the word nature certainly do not apply to a bucolic world of flora and fauna. As we have seen, the critics are referring to the expressive human face and body, the verisimilitude of costume and decor, and the appropriateness of emotional response within the work.<sup>51</sup>

It is perhaps not surprising, in light of this, that Greuze’s critics use the words *vérité* and *vrai* interchangeably with *nature*. The author of *Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux* regularly employs the word “vrai” in his description of the content of Greuze’s paintings, and of Greuze’s perceptive and expressive processes in relation to the painting *Père de famille qui lit la Bible à ses enfants* (fig. 1).<sup>52</sup> The same year, the *Lettre a un partisan du bon gout* describes Greuze’s subject matter as “vrais & sagement imaginés.”<sup>53</sup> A critic, writing in 1761, praises Greuze’s *L’Accordée de Village* (fig. 2) for “une attention réfléchie étendue sur toutes les vérités de la nature.”<sup>54</sup> The relationship between the terms *vrai* and *nature* help to peel back the layers of what the latter term could mean,

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid , 67.

<sup>50</sup> “Lettres a Monsieur \*\*, sur les Peintures, les Sculptures & les Gravures exposées au Sallon du Louvre en 1765,” 1765, Deloynes Collection, (item 108), 5.

<sup>51</sup> Emma Barker remarks on the use of this vocabulary in relation to Greuze, though very briefly, in *Greuze*, 23-24.

<sup>52</sup> “Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux,” 1755, Deloynes Collection, (item 73), 16.

<sup>53</sup> “Lettre a un partisan de bon gout, Sur l’Exposition des Tableaux faite dans le grand Sallon du Louvre le 28 Août 1755,” 1755, Deloynes Collection, (item 74), 10.

<sup>54</sup> “Observations d’une société d’amateurs sur les tableaux exposés au Salon cette année 1761,” 1761, Deloynes Collection, (item 94), 51.

and recall Becq's "effet de réel," or the effect of verisimilitude. As the qualifier "effet" suggests, perfect imitation is not the end goal. Our critics have demonstrated that they were interested in a convincing and pleasing expression of the artist's *impression* of nature. Here, the definitions of *nature* and *vrai* come full circle, and recall our discussion of the term *génie*. The genius' receptivity to nature, as well as his original and unmediated interpretation and absorption of its effects, allows him to communicate that impression to his audience. However, we are left wondering if it is so contradictory, after all, for our critic of *Lettre a un partisan du bon gout* to praise Greuze's paintings as being both *vrai* and *imaginé*.

Michel helps to clarify this apparent contradiction. He suggests that by "nature," mid to late eighteenth-century art critics were actually looking for the *vraisemblable*—the plausible—and for subject matter and expression that gave "une impression de vie et de mouvement [...] faire imaginer qu'il [un caractère] est susceptible de mouvement."<sup>55</sup> Further, Michel finds many instances where biographers of Watteau use the word *nature* to refer to objects that seem to have nothing to do with the natural world. For example, as mentioned above, Caylus tells a story in which Watteau became fixated by what he felt to be "le chef-d'œuvre de l'imitation de la nature:" a cheap wig.<sup>56</sup> In Edme Gersaint's biography of Watteau, he suggests that *L'Enseigne* (fig. 7) was done after nature. Michel points out that *L'Enseigne* is completely devoid of any of the elements that we today imagine to be "natural." Further, this painting is actually inaccurate. Using Gersaint's inventory, Michel deduces that paintings that Gersaint did not own in 1725 are hung in

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<sup>55</sup> Michel, *Le 'Célèbre' Watteau*, 61.

<sup>56</sup> Caylus, "Vie d'Antoine Watteau," 11.

*L'Enseigne*, and core elements of the building's architecture and the shop's layout have been dramatically altered.<sup>57</sup> From this, Michel deduces that "représenter le nature, c'est donner à voir des attitudes qui évoquent les codes propres de chacun des groupes sociaux représentés, ou, plus précisément, les comportements que les spectateurs du tableau estiment convenir à chacun de ces groupes."<sup>58</sup> In summary, when using the word "nature," mid to late eighteenth century art critics intended to evoke the verisimilitude of behavior, sociability, costume and environment. The measure of an artwork's "naturalness" was its ability to accurately adhere to socially defined norms, and for this reason, the word "vrai" was regularly used interchangeably with "nature."<sup>59</sup>

Perhaps most authoritative on this question is Jean Ehrard, whose *L'idée de nature en France dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle* explores the far reach and intangibility of the word "nature," addressing its intersections with science, religion, ethics, evolution, human nature, and much more. Ehrard discusses the aesthetic theorist's use of "nature" in this period, pointing out that it was no longer situated "seulement dans un cadre idyllique et abstrait, proche de la pastorale," but instead evoked social realism, and more specifically, the daily lives and customs of the middle class.<sup>60</sup> Ehrard's observations allow us to reconcile the uses of "nature" and "vrai" to Greuze's bourgeois dramas. However,

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<sup>57</sup> Michel, *Le 'Célèbre' Watteau*, 63-5.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>59</sup> Melissa Percival addresses the use of the word "truth" in writings on physiognomy and expression in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. She points out that "truth" was used to evoke the "correspondence between inner and outer, between body and soul, between physical and moral. [.] between external appearance and an inner intangible 'truth'" (3). Her brief discussion of "truth" bolsters the association of "vrai" to "nature," where both are meant to evoke this correspondence between the material surface (of the painting) and the intangible essence or "truth" that it attempts to communicate (43). See Percival, *The Appearance of Character: Physiognomy and Facial Expression in Eighteenth-Century France*. (London: Modern Humanities Research Association, 1999)

<sup>60</sup> Jean Ehrard, *L'idée de nature en France dans la première moitié du XVIIIe siècle*. (Geneva, Paris: Slatkin, 1981).

how do we explain the specificity of middle class life in this use of the word “nature,” and what can it tell us about how Greuze’s character was represented?

Ehrard uses Pierre de Marivaux’s writings of the 1730s to explain this specificity. In so doing, he is also able to address another important element of this use of the word *nature*: its implicit association to natural morality and virtue. Ehrard discusses the eighteenth-century distinction between morality born of reason and rational processes—or *morale réfléchie*—and an innate and instinctive morality that emerges from sentimental processes and empathy—or *morale naturelle*. The latter was considered to be a more instinctive and innate type, and thus simpler and more “primitive.” Here, Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s writings and the “types” that he privileges in his work come to mind—peasant, savage, and family man.<sup>61</sup> Alongside the noble savage, the French also renewed their vogue for the pastoral genre, the shepherd and the farmer.<sup>62</sup> Ehrard uses Marivaux to explain how French artists justified their preference for the bourgeois farmer over a more plebeian rural subject. In his reasoning, Marivaux outlines his attempt to find a moral subject who still possesses a “politesse [que] des gens de qualité apporte à la nature brute.”<sup>63</sup> The landowning middle class of the provinces, financially comfortable but supposedly simple and unambitious, emerge to fill this role. Through the middle class, the equation of *nature* and *vertu* by means of *morale naturelle* could be accomplished. The

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<sup>61</sup> Arthur M. Melzer, “Rousseau and the Problem of Bourgeois Society,” *The American Political Science Review*, 74 4 (1980): 1018-1033, esp.1023.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 349-51, 357

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 354

perceived simplicity and sincerity of the bourgeois farmer lent itself well to a virtuous “sensibilité généreuse, prompte à s’émouvoir du malheur d’autrui.”<sup>64</sup>

In relation to Greuze’s paintings, *nature*, as realism or verisimilitude, refers to the convincing depiction of customs, costume, character type and setting appropriate to the rural middle class. In the other sense of the word *nature*—*morale naturelle*—the middle class becomes a vector for the illustration of sentimental virtue. As Ehrard puts it, *nature* refers to “facts”—the verisimilitude of environment, physiognomy, costume and accessories—and sentiment—the depiction of emotional response, and the affective power of the painting’s subject matter. The recording of seemingly unedited sensations and moral didacticism overlap. The term *nature* describes a type of representation in which both fact and feeling create a whole illusion of physical and affective verisimilitude.<sup>65</sup>

In Greuze’s criticism, the concepts *génie*, *nature*, *vertu* and *sentiment* often overlap. The *Description des tableaux exposés au Sallon du Louvre [...]* of 1763 gives Greuze the title “Peintre de Nature & du Sentiment.”<sup>66</sup> And, the poetic dialogue between P.D.S.A. and the abbé Aubert, discussed above, adds virtue (in opposition to vice):

Ici, Greuse animant la toile, / N’offre que spectacles charmans / Où le  
Sentiment se dévoile. / Ses Sujets remplis d’agrémens, / Puisés dans la  
sage Nature, / Loin du vice & de l’imposture, / Sont l’image des bonnes  
gens.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 357. Barker also establishes the connection between Greuze’s subject matter and the morality of his paintings throughout her work. On page 30-1 of her *Greuze and the Painting of Sentiment*, she connects Greuze’s work to Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s *Du Contrat Social* (1762), which prizes the “ideal of the perfect transparency of innocent souls.” Barker employs the connection between *sensibilité*, which will be discussed further in Chapter Two of this thesis, to virtue, in her arguments for Greuze as a reformist, 15-6.

<sup>65</sup> Ehrard, *L’idée de nature*, 317. Melissa Percival also identifies a “correspondence between inner and outer, [...] between physical and moral” in her discussion of theories of expression in the eighteenth-century. *The Appearance of Character*, 3. See footnote 59 for more on Percival

<sup>66</sup> “Description des Tableaux,” 1763, 55.

<sup>67</sup> P.D S A., “Parallèle,” 1761, 47.

These four related terms are both descriptive and laudatory. Further, the use of one implicitly evokes the others. For example, nature evoked both subject matter and method of approach, where its successful application resulted in the depiction of virtue and sentiment. Each term then related itself back to the highest and most personal form of praise, the word *génie*. Similarly, as Becq and Ehrard discuss, *génie* and the vocabulary associated with it imply that only those with this innate gift are able to depict nature, virtue and sentiment most effectively. Geniuses are not only more perceptive of such things, but also more affected by them. These four terms, used regularly to describe Greuze's behaviour, artistic process and artwork, illustrate the great height to which his reputation rose before 1769.

#### Diderot's Greuze

As we have explored, many eighteenth-century critics allude to and speculate about the effects of genius on Greuze's behaviour and personality. Diderot went well beyond such speculation. His art criticism cultivated a representation of Greuze that is very much in line with late eighteenth-century conceptions of *génie* and *nature*. The result was that Greuze's audience could construct a character for him that harmonized perfectly with these ideals.

The degree to which Diderot played a significant role in Greuze's life is unclear. The traces of their friendship survive only in the writings of Diderot, whose representations of Greuze can, at times, seem implausible. However, for the purposes of my analysis, Diderot's descriptions of Greuze are important not for their accuracy, but because they amplify the more subtle constructions of his personality articulated in the

anonymous art criticism reviewed above. More than any other critic, Diderot explicitly and consistently describes Greuze's behaviour in terms of the standard for artistic genius in the 1760s discussed above: irrational and obsessive behaviour, an extreme emotional permeability, and the magnification of other personality traits

Diderot began reviewing the Salon for the *Correspondance littéraire* in 1759,<sup>68</sup> but it was not until 1761 that Greuze first caught his eye—the year he exhibited *L'Accordée de Village* (fig. 2). By 1763, familiar anecdotes had become a signature component of Diderot's often lengthy reviews of Greuze's work. His first characterization of Greuze's behaviour and artistic process mirrored that of the anonymous *Sentimens sur plusieurs des tableaux*, and followed it by eight years:

[...] sentir vivement les beautés de la nature et de l'art, porter dans son sein un cœur tendre, avoir reçu une âme mobile au souffle le plus léger, être né celui que la vue ou la lecture d'une belle chose enivre, transporte, rend souverainement heureux [...].<sup>69</sup>

In the Salon review, Diderot describes both Greuze and the ideal artist, who, like the definitions of genius and nature discussed above, have amplified emotional reactions to what they observe around them. Diderot also illustrates Greuze's magnified sensitivity by discussing the latter's preoccupation with his public reception. Diderot discusses the aesthetic inclinations of "l'homme de lettres," who prefers grand compositions, and "le

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<sup>68</sup> The *Correspondance littéraire* was a manuscript periodical that discussed Paris and France's literary and artistic world. Started in May 1753 by Friedrich Melchior Grimm, it was circulated amongst an elite group of Royal and aristocratic subscribers primarily located in Sweden, Prussia, Poland and Russia. Its subscription fees ranged from several hundreds francs to thousands of *livres*. It appeared in printed editions as early as 1812-4. See Jochen Schlobach, "Frédéric Melchior Grimm (1723-1807)," *Dictionnaire des Journalistes (1600-1789)*, 183-5, Ulla Kölvin, *Friedrich Melchior Grimm, Correspondance littéraire, Tome I 1753-1754*, ed. Ulla Kölving (Ferney-Voltaire. Centre International d'Étude du XVIIIe siècle, 2006), xxi-lxxii

<sup>69</sup> Denis Diderot, "Salon de 1763," *Œuvres complètes de Diderot* Vol. 10, ed J Assézat, (Paris: Garnier Frères 1876), 199.

peuple,” who fixate on portraiture. He then transcribes a conversation between one of each group. The latter has quickly passed over Greuze’s great success of 1763, *La Piété filiale* (fig. 5). Diderot, suggesting that Greuze had overheard the conversation at the Salon, consoles him and reprimands him for his concern: “celui qui vise à l’approbation générale est un fou. Greuze, pourquoi faut-il qu’une impertinence t’afflige?”<sup>70</sup>

In 1765, Diderot addresses Greuze’s artistic process, narrating an instance of *concentration géniale*: “[Greuze] porte son talent partout, dans les cahues populaires, dans les églises, aux marches, aux promenades, dans les maisons, dans les rues, sans cesse il va recueillant des actions, des passions, des caractères, des expressions.”<sup>71</sup> Diderot also elaborates on Greuze’s concern over his critical reception during the 1763 Salon: “il est un peu vain, notre peintre, mais sa vanité est celle d’un enfant, c’est l’ivresse du talent. Otez-lui cette naïveté qui lui fait dire de son propre ouvrage: *Voyez-moi cela! C’est cela qui est beau!* Vous lui ôterez la verve, vous éteindrez le feu, et le génie s’éclipsera.”<sup>72</sup> A few pages later, Diderot escalates from concern over reputation to vanity when he relays an anecdote where Greuze encounters Horace Vernet, the Academic history painter, and the Marquis de Marigny, the *Directeur-Général des Bâtiments*, at the Salon. An arrogant, boorish Greuze praises his own work. Vernet’s biting reply, as relayed by Diderot, suggests that Greuze has already alienated his fellow Academicians.<sup>73</sup> Diderot nevertheless remains optimistic, and considers Greuze’s vanity to be fruitful rather than harmful. On the other hand, Friedrich Melchior Grimm, the creator of the *Correspondance*

<sup>70</sup> Diderot, “Salon de 1763,” *Œuvres complètes*, 170

<sup>71</sup> Diderot, “Salon de 1765,” *Œuvres complètes*, 342

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*, 346: “C’est, lui répondit Vernet, que vous avez une nuée d’ennemis, et parmi ces ennemis un quidam qui a l’air de vous aimer à la folie, et qui vous perdra — Et qui est ce quidam? lui demande Greuze — C’est vous, lui répondit Vernet.”

*littéraire* and an important figure in Paris' literary world, is much less forgiving of Greuze's verve and vanity and advises Greuze to become much more diplomatic in his behaviour, concluding with "Restez donc avec votre génie et votre pauvreté. Faites de beaux tableaux, et ne prétendez pas faire fortune!"<sup>74</sup>

Willard's distinction between genius and madness, as discussed above, seems applicable to Diderot and Grimm's comments on Greuze in the 1765 Salon review. In Diderot's opinion, Greuze's "magnified" personality contributes to the excellence of his art. Greuze's eccentricities can therefore be excused, since they are being employed in the service of a greater good—the progress of the arts. Grimm, however, is reluctant to forgive Greuze's excessive behaviour, and the above citation tells us why. In Grimm's opinion, Greuze's vanity is not so much the product of his naïveté, but rather of his nascent greediness. It should be noted, however, that Grimm and Diderot issue their personal advice to an audience, albeit a small one, and not directly (or privately) to Greuze. It is possible, though unlikely, that Greuze read the exclusive *Correspondance littéraire*. Diderot and Grimm's debate was likely not intended to dole out advice to a talented friend, but rather to move public opinion. They debate whether Greuze's eccentricities are a product of genius or greed; is he good or bad for the sanctity of the artworld? Does he seek fame—and therefore wish to achieve posterity by contributing to the progress of the arts—or celebrity, which connoted fleeting renown and commercial success? It would appear that after 1769, Grimm won the debate. Diderot too would go on to paint Greuze in an unforgiving light, as did many of his contemporaries.

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 347.

The Pivot Point *L'affaire du Septime Sévère*

The critical reception of Greuze's *Septime Sévère* (fig 8), often called *l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, saw Greuze situated between virtue and vice, and fame and celebrity<sup>75</sup>

While his critics expressed their disappointment with his new painting by referring to the greatest qualities of the rest of his œuvre, he also attracted newfound accusations of vanity and of the impermanence of celebrity. As such, 1769 stands as a pivotal point between Greuze's representation as an ideal artist worthy of emulation, and as a model of artistic celebrity and vanity to be avoided.

*L'affaire du Septime Sévère* has understandably attracted a wealth of literature as art historians have taken advantage of this opportunity to explore the boundaries between history and genre painting in the late eighteenth century.<sup>76</sup> To outline the historical context, Greuze was introduced and conditionally accepted into the *Académie* in 1755, as a so-called *agrégé*, but he did not submit his formal reception piece, which was expected of all Academicians, until pressured to do so over ten years later. It was in 1766 that Charles-Nicolas Cochin fils politely insisted that Greuze present his reception piece, barring him from further Salon exhibition until he had done so.<sup>77</sup> Greuze did not complete his reception piece in time for the 1767 Salon, and was therefore absent from it. Finally, in

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<sup>75</sup> Annick Lemoine and Mickael Szanto, "Greuze face à la peinture d'histoire. Genèse et réception du *Septime Sévère*." *Greuze et l'affaire du Septime Sévère* (Paris: Somogy éditions, 2005), exh. cat., Tournus, Musée Greuze, 2005 (Paris: Somogy Editions d'Art, 2005), 13-69.

<sup>76</sup> On *l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, see Régis Michel, "Diderot et la modernité," *Diderot & l'Art de Boucher à David. Les Salons 1759-1781*, exh. cat., Paris: Hôtel de la Monnaie, 1984 (Paris: Editions de la Réunion des Musées nationaux, 1984), 110-121; Mark Ledbury, "Reproaching Greuze: *Septime Sévère*," *Sedaine: Greuze*, 160-186; Eik Kahng, "L'Affaire Greuze and the Sublime of History Painting," *The Art Bulletin* 86, 1 (Mar. 2004), 96-113. Most recently, the *Greuze et l'affaire du Septime Sévère* catalogue has tackled the subject from multiple angles. This catalogue also produced an appendix of all of the art criticism, including the Deloynes Collection and other sources, against Greuze's painting. See "Annexes: Critiques du *Septime Sévère* au Salon de 1769," *Greuze et l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, 107-116.

<sup>77</sup> Lemoine and Szanto, "Greuze face à la peinture d'histoire," 25.

1769, Greuze ultimately chose to submit a history painting, displaying it to the *Académie* for their approval just days before the Salon was to open.<sup>78</sup> The reviewing Academicians were apparently disappointed with the submission—though quite pleased with Greuze’s œuvre up until that point—and devised a bureaucratic way of accepting Greuze into the *Académie*. While declining his bid to be promoted to the revered title of history painter, they accepted him as a genre painter.<sup>79</sup> In response to this veiled insult, Greuze exhibited *Septime Sévère*, along with a record number of other submissions, in the 1769 Salon

While few records exist to help decode the reasoning behind the *Académie*’s decision, the Salon public provided ample documentation of their disappointment in the pamphlets and periodicals of that year. Greuze’s audience struggled to interpret his choice of an obscure late Roman episode, to which he felt obliged to give an abnormally long descriptive title: “L’Empereur Sévère reproche à Caracalla son fils, d’avoir voulu l’assassiner dans les défilés d’Ecosse, & lui dit: Si tu desires ma mort, ordonne à Papinien de me la donner avec cette épée.”<sup>80</sup> Even more importantly, the painting’s subject matter strays considerably from Greuze’s role as “prédicateur des bonnes mœurs, [. . .] peintre de famille et d’honnêtes gens,” a point that his critics drew ample attention to.<sup>81</sup> Rather than

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<sup>78</sup> The studies of *Septime Sévère* listed in footnote 76 build complex arguments to establish the possible motivations for Greuze’s submission of a history painting beyond greed and ambition. This thesis works with Lemoine and Szanto’s argument that Greuze’s painting represents an *exemplum debilitatis*, or bad example. Lemoine and Szanto understand Greuze’s painting as a new way of incorporating moral didacticism into history painting. Ibid., 33.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 56. The Academicians did this by splitting what was normally one vote into two. Rather than vote for the success of the reception piece, and by implication, the reception of the painter, they voted for each separately. Greuze was received by the *Académie* in a vote of 24 against 6. In order to decide whether he was accepted as a genre or a history painter, they then voted on whether *Septime Sévère* was a history painting, or a genre painting drawn from history. They voted in favour of the latter, 20 votes to 9. Ibid., 36-7.

<sup>80</sup> *Explication des Peintures, Sculptures et Gravures de Messieurs de l’Académie Royale*, 1769, Deloynes Collection, (Item 118), 25.

<sup>81</sup> Diderot, “Salon de 1765,” *Œuvres complètes*, 140.

depict a typical scene of filial piety, Greuze had painted the aftermath of an attempted patricide. The Salon public sought in vain to draw a moral lesson from the painting. Civic virtue was lacking in the subject: by suggesting that his son Caracalla kill him, the Emperor was in effect offering to put the Roman Empire in the hands of a patricide. Eventually, after Severus died of a broken heart, Caracalla would go on to become one of Rome's most murderous and hated emperors.<sup>82</sup> Arguably, *Septime Sévère* still encapsulates the moral didacticism that Greuze's audience had so appreciated in his genre paintings, but reverses it, painting an *exemplum debilitatis* rather than an example of virtue.<sup>83</sup> He inserted signifiers of Severus' ethical failing by, for example, knocking the wreath of laurels from his head and placing it at on the footstool at his bedside. Greuze's art public clearly did not appreciate the hidden message that this painting asked them to decode.

While Greuze's critics devoted much of their energy to criticizing the faults in his drawing and the painting's depraved subject matter, they also critiqued his attempt to climb from genre painter to history painter within the ranks of the *Académie*, citing this ambitious ploy as evidence of his vanity. Diderot and Grimm, who were among the first to link Greuze's apparent preoccupation with his reputation to vanity, were the most condemnatory. In his letters that year, Diderot labelled Greuze "un homme vain,"<sup>84</sup> and

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<sup>82</sup> Lemoine and Szanto, "Greuze face à la peinture d'histoire," 32-4.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 28-34. Barker notes this shift from positive to negative examples of virtue in Greuze work after 1769. See Barker, *Greuze*, 76-89, 205-236.

<sup>84</sup> Denis Diderot, "Lettre à Étienne Maurice Falconet, Paris, 7 septembre 1769," *Correspondance IX, Janvier 1769-décembre 1769*, éd. Georges Roth (Paris: Les Éditions de Minuit, 1963), 132, as cited in "Annexes," *Greuze et l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, 108.

“un modèle de vanité et d’impertinence ”<sup>85</sup> In another 1769 letter, Diderot recounts the story of Greuze’s meeting with the *Academie* regarding his reception piece Diderot describes Greuze as having “perd[u] la tête, [et] s’amuse[r] comme un enfant à soutenu l’excellence de son tableau ”<sup>86</sup> Grimm, in his attempt to explain why Greuze submitted a history painting as his reception piece, accuses Greuze of selfish ambition “Il a cru son honneur interesse a être Peintre d’histoire, comme le genre le plus estimable ”<sup>87</sup>

Diderot’s critiques were communicated privately, in letters to friends, though they may have circulated as artworld gossip However, the Salon’s art critics, who published their comments in pamphlet reviews, laid bare their accusations of vanity and ambition for all to see Greuze’s critics agreed that he had attempted to “étendre sa réputation avec rapidité ” They go on to mock his failed ambition “il y en a d’ambitieux & de mal [efforts] combinés qui nous ravalent M Greuze en est cette année un célèbre exemple,” and “Eh! N’avez-vous pas assez de lauriers à moissonner dans votre carrière?”<sup>88</sup>

At the same time, Greuze found himself defended by many of his supporters, who rallied behind the artist and his œuvre, but stopped short of praising *Septime Sévère* itself In many cases, these critics repeated similar praise to that which we have reviewed, and highlighted the success of another of Greuze’s 1769 submissions—*Un jeune enfant qui*

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<sup>85</sup> Denis Diderot, “Quatorzieme lettre, Sallon de 1769,” *Salons IV* ed Jean Seznec and Jean Adhemar, (Oxford Clarendon Press, 1967) 103-107, as cited in “Annexes,” *Greuze et l affaire du Septime Severe*, 112

<sup>86</sup> Ibid

<sup>87</sup> Friedrich Melchior Grimm, “Dialogues sur la peinture, fevrier 1774,” *Correspondance litteraire philosophique et critique X*, ed Maurice Tourneux (Paris Garnier freres, 1879), 42-5, as cited in “Annexes,” *Greuze et l affaire du Septime Severe*, 116

<sup>88</sup> The first of these three remarks was made by Louis Petit de Bachaumont, “Lettre III Sur les Peintures, Sculptures & Gravures de Messieurs de l’Academie Française, exposees au Sallon du Louvre le 25 août 1769,” *Les Salons des ‘Memoires secrets 1767 1787* ed Bernadette Fort, (Paris Ecole nationale superieure des beaux-arts, 1999), 63-66,” as cited in “Annexes,” *Greuze et l affaire du Septime Severe*, 111 The last two examples belong to “Lettre sur le Salon de Peinture de 1769 ” 1769, Deloynes Collection, (item 198), 22-26, as cited in “Annexes,” *Greuze et l affaire du Septime Severe*, 114 See footnote 95 for more on the *Memoires secrets*

*joue avec un Chien* (fig. 9). These same critics were willing to overlook this one blemish in Greuze's record, describing *Septime Sévère* as "une émulation très louable," and excusing his failure on the basis that he had attempted the most difficult of genres.<sup>89</sup> Overall, the art public's acclaim of Greuze remained steadfast despite the large amounts of negative criticism that his painting and his character suffered that year.

While it is doubtful that Greuze's reputation can be said to have completely "fallen" after *l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, 1769 was certainly the year in which accusations of ambition, vanity, and greed became more common in representations of Greuze. After 1769, these accusations become more prevalent, likely because, as I will now discuss, Greuze abandoned Salon exhibition in response to his negative critical reception.

#### Post-Salon Greuze: Nationalism and Celebrity

When Greuze appeared in art criticism after 1769, it was often to lament his absence from the Salon. With each passing year, this lament would become less sorrowful and more biting.<sup>90</sup> The satirical *Lettre de M. Raphael le jeune* of 1771, composed as a dialogue, foreshadowed this turn in Greuze's reception. Our critics ask themselves why Greuze did not exhibit: "Mais voilà qui est fâcheux, M. Greuze nous manque!"<sup>91</sup> After subtly joking about the failure of Greuze's history painting, the *Lettre de M. Raphael le*

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<sup>89</sup> "Lettre XIII: Exposition des peintures, sculptures et gravures de Messieurs de l'Académie Royale," *L'Année littéraire*, V, (4 September 1769): 310-11, as cited in "Annexes," *Greuze et l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, 108.

<sup>90</sup> As Brookner notes, Greuze still received positive criticism on his paintings after 1769, which were still visible to the public in the smaller exhibitions he held in his studio in the Louvre at the same time as the biennial Salon exhibition. Barker, *Greuze*, 124-5.

<sup>91</sup> "Lettre de M. Raphael le jeune, élève des écoles gratuites de dessin, neveu de feu M. Raphael, peintre de l'Académie de saint Luc, à un de ses amis, architecte à Rome, sur les peintures, sculptures et gravures qui sont exposées cette année au Louvre," 1771, Deloynes Collection, (item 141), 60.

*jeune* concludes that Greuze withdrew because he was personally insulted, and in turn issues a word of caution: “Il ne faut jamais bouder le Public.”<sup>92</sup> Similarly, the *Plaintes de M. Badigeon*, also of 1771, hoped that Greuze had a legitimate reason for his withdrawal and that he was not sulking, pouting and hiding from his adoring public.<sup>93</sup>

Some Salon criticism was speckled with polite remarks on Greuze’s absence and veiled attempts to coax him back to Academic exhibition. One example, which we have already examined in another light, is from the author of *Encore un reve* of 1779. He remarks on the Salon contribution of Etienne Aubry, noting that “M. Aubry paroît moins pénétré de la Nature que de la maniere de M. Greuze, qui n’a acquis sa célébrité qu’en suivant cette même Nature.”<sup>94</sup> However, more often than not, Greuze’s absence was noted with a malice that intensified every year. The art criticism surrounding the Salon of 1777 amplified the veiled teasing of our 1771 critics. *La Prêtresse* asks “je ne vois rien de M. Greuze. Ce grand homme craindrait-il la critique?” Our author concludes with a sarcastic “Non, cela n’est pas possible.” But, within a few lines, he echoes the warning of Greuze’s 1771 critics, but much more plainly: “le Public ne lui pardonnera pas de le priver de la vue de ses chef-d’œuvres.”<sup>95</sup>

The *Correspondance secrète* and the *Mémoires secrets*, two clandestine cultural periodicals that circulated in Paris in the late eighteenth century, pushed these kinds of comments to their logical conclusions and remarked on Greuze’s absence with increasing

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<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>93</sup> “*Plaintes de M. Badigeon, marchand de couleurs sur les critiques du Sallon de 1771*,” 1771, Deloynes Collection, (item 144), 21. He also uses “bouder le public” to describe Greuze’s behaviour

<sup>94</sup> “*Encore un Rêve, suite de la Pretresse*,” 1779, Deloynes Collection, (item 207), 16.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-3.

acrimony.<sup>96</sup> In 1775, the *Mémoires secrets* notes that “le sieur Greuze, continuant d’être brouillé avec l’académie, n’exposera rien encore cette année au salon prochain, & vraisemblablement ne s’y montrera plus.”<sup>97</sup> By August 1777, the *Correspondance secrète* would “reproche à M. Greuze de se croire au-dessus de tous les éloges & de les prévenir toujours par le jugement qu’il prononce lui-même sur ses ouvrages.”<sup>98</sup> The 1771 *Lettre de M Raphael le jeune* had already made these accusations of vanity. After calling Greuze an “homme de mérite,” the author of the *Lettre* adds “& je suis forcé de répéter les éloges qu’il se donne lui-même.”<sup>99</sup> Belittling representations of Greuze as vain and overly sensitive multiply as we move away from 1769. By 1781, the *Correspondance secrète* began to share anecdotes on the topic:

Assis auprès de Lemierre au parquet de la comédie, il lui disoit qu’il revenoit de chez Greuze où il avoit vu un tableau admirable: *Oh! Ne me parlez pas de cet artiste-là*, répondit notre nouvel académicien [Lemierre], *il ne cesse de fatiguer les autres de son propre éloge.*<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> The *Correspondance littéraire secrète* ran under this name from 1775 to 1793. It was an extremely successful weekly periodical that focused on Paris’ literary and political culture and that collected and transcribed anecdotes. It seems to have circulated in manuscript, and was afterwards bound and printed in collected editions divided by year. See Monica Hjortberg, “Correspondance littéraire secrète (1775-1793),” *Dictionnaire des Journaux 1600-1789 A-I*, vol 1, ed Jean Sgard (Paris: Universitas, 1991), 235-262, esp. 258. The *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l’histoire de la République des Lettres en France* was published between 1777 and 1789. Louis Petit de Bachaumont, however, wrote it from 1762 to 1787, and provided irregular but frequent entries on the literary and artistic life of France. Much like the *Correspondance secrète*, it relayed anecdotes and gossip, and was wildly successful. See “Mémoires secrets 2 (1777-1789),” Tawfik Mekki-Berrada, *Dictionnaire des Journaux 1600-1789 J-V*, vol 2, ed Jean Sgard (Paris: Universitas, 1991), 829-835.

<sup>97</sup> *Mémoires secrets pour servir à l’histoire de France, depuis MDCCLXII jusqu’à nos jours*, 31 (21 August 1775), 289.

<sup>98</sup> *Correspondance secrète, politique et littéraire*, 5 (16 August 1777), 114.

<sup>99</sup> “Lettre de M. Raphael le jeune,” 1771, 61.

<sup>100</sup> *Correspondance secrète* 11, (12 January 1781), 22.

In 1785, the *Troisième Promenade de Critès au Sallon* called Greuze “un ignorant, un sot, un barbouilleur” and “un imbécille.”<sup>101</sup> The untouchable aura of fame that had formerly surrounded Greuze seems to have faded entirely.

As we have seen, Greuze’s withdrawal from the Salon appears to have been the catalyst for these accusations of vanity and arrogance. When critics writing just after 1769 noted Greuze’s absence, they were admonishing but not insulting. As it became clear that Greuze had no intention of exhibiting with the *Académie* again, his critics became more and more malicious.<sup>102</sup> Why did Greuze’s withdrawal elicit such a violent response? The *Mémoires secrets*’s critique of Greuze in 1786 points us toward a possible answer: “M. Greuze, [est] piqué de l’indifférence du public, qui ne le voyant point au salon depuis nombre d’années, l’oublie insensiblement, & ne recherche plus son atelier comme autrefois [...]”<sup>103</sup> A closer analysis of the importance placed on public art exhibition and the Salon exhibition in particular can help bring to light the particularly offensive nature of Greuze’s refusal to exhibit his work with the *Académie*.

Our aforementioned critic of 1771 laments that the public can no longer view his works, though Greuze participated in several public exhibitions after 1769.<sup>104</sup> Why was the *Salon* exhibition, in particular, so privileged by our critics? Richard Wrigley and Annie Becq help to answer this question. Out of all of the public exhibitions in Paris at that time, only the Salon was endowed with the special ability to mobilize the public: “la

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<sup>101</sup> “Troisième Promenade de Critès au Sallon,” 1785, Deloynes Collection, (item 335), 14, 13.

<sup>102</sup> Greuze did, in fact, exhibit with the *Académie* again in 1800. See Munhall, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*, 24-6.

<sup>103</sup> *Mémoires secrets*, 33 (3 December 1786), 193.

<sup>104</sup> Munhall lists these in his *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*, 24. They include an exhibit at the Masonic lodge *Les Neuf Sœurs*, *Salon de la Correspondance* and with the *Société des Beaux-Arts, Montpellier*, all in August, 1779; the *Salon des Arts* in Lyon in 1786, and, the *Salon de l’Encouragement des Arts* in 1790

nation entière à la limite.”<sup>105</sup> The Salon’s associations to the King and state, coupled with its policy of free and open admittance, allowed critics and connoisseurs to imagine that everyone could and did attend—noble and common, rich and poor, educated and uneducated.<sup>106</sup> As Diderot states in his Salon review of 1767, “c’est à la Nation que s’adressent les expositions.”<sup>107</sup> Further, Wrigley discovers instances where artists and amateurs claim that the whole Nation owned the artwork of the *Académie*, and as such, had a right to its public display.<sup>108</sup> The public quality of the Salon and the supposed universality of its attendance was considered its main strength, in part because it gave the middle and lower classes an opportunity to view and judge Academic art. The opinion of these less educated classes was valued for reasons that recall Ehrard’s discussion of *morale naturelle*. Alongside their instinctive and simple value systems, these lower classes also possessed *goût naturel*. They could therefore evaluate works with less restraint than the more polite classes of society, using only their impressions of nature and what Wrigley calls the “unerring light of feeling” to guide them.<sup>109</sup> Wrigley suggests that critics lauded this function of the Salon with a renewed emphasis in the 1770s and 1780s—decades that coincide with the increasingly malicious complaints against Greuze’s withdrawal.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Annie Becq, “Le XVIIIe siècle a-t-il inventé la critique d’art? Critique et champ artistique en quête d’autonomie en France de 1699 à 1791,” *L’Invention de la critique d’art Actes du colloque international tenu à l’université Rennes 2 les 24 et 25 juin 1999*, ed. Pierre-Henri Frangne and Jean-Marc Poinot. (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2002), 93

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid*, 94. Becq discusses how in 1787, both subversive and conservative art critics rallied together to strike down a proposal to charge an admittance fee to the Salon

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid*, 763.

<sup>108</sup> Wrigley, *French Art Criticism*, 101

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, 106-7 Becq, “La critique d’art,” 101

<sup>110</sup> Wrigley, *French Art Criticism*, 108 Here, Wrigley also points out that this renewed emphasis on the role of the lower class and their *goût naturel* shares vocabulary with the increasingly polemical political

The Salon, it was believed, presented the ideal combination of circumstances for the refinement of France's artistic production and contribution to the progress of the arts. As Becq elucidates, this opportunity to compare artworks to one another was believed to encourage artists in their search for "cette satisfaction intime du perfectionnement [...]." <sup>111</sup> Similarly, art critics often compared the Salon to an ancient Olympic arena. <sup>112</sup> While this healthy competition had these broader benefits it also served to keep the artist's personal vanity at bay. Critics also played in this arena, and their negative criticism outweighed "the debilitating effects of gratuitous flattery." <sup>113</sup> Lastly, the Salon was connected to both the virtue of the artist and the virtue of the nation on multiple levels. In 1781, *Galimatias anti-critique* discussed the relationship between the Salon and the formation of national virtue, stating that Greuze's paintings played an important role in "former des hommes à la Patrie," and "leur enseigner la morale de leur siècle." <sup>114</sup>

By choosing not to exhibit in the Salon, Greuze suggested that he cowered in the face of the public's harsh but constructive criticism, that he had become indifferent toward his public and the entire nation, and that he had turned his back on the role required of him by his Academic status. Our critics imply that, as an Academician, Greuze was obliged to contribute to France's progress of the arts, and to the edification of the nation, by

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pamphlets that lead up to the French Revolution. These political pamphlets also used the terms "Nature, Truth, [and] the Public."

<sup>111</sup> Becq, "La critique d'art," 99.

<sup>112</sup> Wrigley, *French Art Criticism*, 51. When Greuze first began exhibiting in 1755, this metaphor was regularly employed to describe his arrival on the Academic scene. For example, he is described as "un Athlète fameux dans la même lice" in "Caractères des peintres françois actuellement vivans," 1755, Deloyne Collection, (item 80), 6. That year, his submissions to the Salon are referred to as "les essais d'un nouvel Athlete." "Lettre sur le Salon de 1755. Adressée a ceux qui la liront," 1755, 38.

<sup>113</sup> Wrigley, *French Art Criticism*, 106.

<sup>114</sup> "Galimatias anti-critique des Tableaux du Salon ou la Cause des meilleurs peintres et sculpteurs, plaidée par un avocat," 1781, Deloyne Collection, (item 261), 28.

exhibiting his works for public viewing and criticism. In eschewing his responsibilities, Greuze left himself open to a host of accusations. As we have reviewed, the accusations of vanity, selfishness and greed fit under the umbrella term “celebrity.”

With these accusations, Greuze himself became a negative role model—a veritable *exemplum debilitatis*, not unlike his Septimius Severus—one that young artists should avoid, rather than follow. Further, the criticism here reviewed is also part of a broader trend of anxiety that other connoisseurs articulated regarding what they perceived to be the growing decadence of the fine arts.<sup>115</sup> Charles-François Joullain, member of a Parisian dynasty of engravers and publishers, articulated his concerns in his 1786 *Reflexions sur la peinture et la gravure*.<sup>116</sup> While Joullain refers to young artists in France more generally, and not to Greuze specifically, his writings parallel contemporary critics’ descriptions of how Greuze was led astray.

Cet espoir du gain, ce vil intérêt, en inspirant à la plus grande partie des Peintres une indifférence pour leur réputation, dangereuse, parce qu’elle se communique, cet espoir, cet intérêt, dis-je, ne sont-ils pas la source de la décadence de notre Ecole?<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Joelle Raineau conducts a systematic investigation into how art critics used the word “decadence” in relation to the engravings and the print market in late eighteenth-century France. She locates the source of much of these anxieties in the rapid expansion of the art market and the transformations that this economic expansion elicited, stating that “l’aspect économique des gravures semble devancer leur contenu artistique [ ]” See her “Les discours sur la décadence de la gravure de l’Ancien Régime à la Restauration,” *Gravure et communication interculturelle en Europe au 18e et 19e siècles* (Hildesheim, Zurich, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 2007), 666.

<sup>116</sup> Charles-François Joullain, fils aîné, *Reflexions sur la Peinture et la Gravure accompagnées d’une courte dissertation sur le commerce de la curiosité et les ventes en général* (Metz: l’Imprimerie de Claude Lamort, 1786). For more on Joullain, see Baron Roger Portalis and Henri Beraldi, “François Joullain,” *Graveurs du Dix-Huitième Siècle*, vol. 2 (Paris: D. Morgand and C. Fastout, 1881), 497.

<sup>117</sup> Joullain, *Reflexions*, 13-4.

Joullain associates this *espoir du gain* with the search for immediate though ephemeral fame celebrity<sup>118</sup> These young, ambitious and impatient artists strive for success and renown with such desperation that one can no longer say that excellence in the arts is the end goal, or end product, of their efforts Rather, their “*espérance présomptueuse, qui, fondée sur la caprice bizarre, sur le goût souvent aveugle des amateurs, sur leur prodigalité, a précipité nos Peintres dans une insouciance et une inertie également condamnables*”<sup>119</sup> Joullain asks, “*n’est il pas facile de s’apercevoir que la dissipation et la frivolité de nos Peintres, et en général de tous nos artistes, est un grand obstacle à leur perfection?*”<sup>120</sup>

Joullain’s description of the misled artist, desperate for instant fame and glory, is startlingly similar to how the *Lettres à Charles Lowers* describes the effects of Greuze’s withdrawal from the Salon

Il parait que cet artiste, ébloui de ses premiers succès, s’est habitué insensiblement, depuis cette époque, aux louanges de ces tourbillons de petits adulateurs, gens desœuvrés, soit disant connoisseurs dans les arts, a qui il a donné, par la suite, lieu de l’assaillir par des expositions particuliers de ses ouvrages, plutôt que de consulter de vrais amis et le jugement du public La critique est cependant un remède et la flatterie un poison de vrais amis<sup>121</sup>

## Conclusion

Most of Europe knew nothing more of Greuze than the way in which he was discussed in ephemeral print media such as the art criticism that has been at the heart of

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<sup>118</sup> Again, though the word “celebrity” has not been here used in its modern sense, there is a marked overlap between the combination of characteristics that Joullain discusses and modern connotations of the term For more, see footnote 9 in this chapter

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, 12

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, 5

<sup>121</sup> *Lettre a Mr editeur des lettres a m voyageur a paris auteur des lettres a sir charles lowers*, 1780, Deloynes Collection, (item 224), 689

this chapter. Indeed, Greuze's reputation and representation appear indistinguishable. Before 1769, Greuze is a model to emulate, and his representation is careful to endow him with the appropriate characteristics for his role as "ideal artist." The same can be said of Greuze after 1769, when he became emblematic of broader anxieties about the decadence of the artworld. The distinction I have drawn in this chapter between fame and celebrity helps us to distinguish these two versions of Greuze. In the earlier version, he strives for the progress of the arts and the edification of the nation, while in the latter, he turns his back on the nation in favour of his own selfish, vain and greedy interests.

After Greuze had abandoned the Salon exhibition, he was forced to rely on other means of disseminating his work. For this reason, he redoubled his efforts in the reproduction of his drawings and paintings through engraving. This chapter's exploration of the trajectory of Greuze's reputation suggests why these "commercial" aspects of Greuze's post-1769 production have been treated relatively little. His commercial activities and success fit too easily into this narrative of increasing vanity, greediness and selfishness. The next chapter will address this aspect of Greuze's career through a study of reproductive engravings of his works and the ways in which they were marketed in an attempt to nuance the trajectory of his declining reputation and the vocabulary that surrounded it.

Chapter Two:  
Feeling Paintings, Buying Prints

Reproductive engravings after Greuze's paintings and drawings were instrumental in his success, fame, and posterity. While a number of scholars have discussed this part of Greuze's œuvre, these works have only been treated cursorily.<sup>1</sup> Anita Brookner, for example, addresses Greuze's reproductive engravings and commercial dealings on several occasions. In one instance, after her discussion of Greuze's lengthy and innovative 1781 advertisement for an engraving entitled *La Belle-Mère* (fig. 10), Brookner concludes that "it becomes evident throughout the 1780s that Greuze, as well as being in search of fame, is in search of money. His pictures continued to fetch high prices but this was not enough."<sup>2</sup> Like the art critics discussed in the last chapter, Brookner associates commercial success with greed and celebrity, and goes no further in her analysis. In his article on "La Diffusion de Gravures d'après Greuze," Christian Michel conducts a similar reading of Greuze's commercial activity: "une fois lancée, la gravure de ses tableaux répond pour lui à un double objectif: pérenniser son succès bien sûr, mais aussi gagner de l'argent."<sup>3</sup> These readings acknowledge that the reproductive engraving functions as luxury good, and exchangeable commodity, yet in focussing on the engraving's multiplicity and reproducibility, they neglect to consider them as being more than lesser copies of an original work. It is perhaps for these reasons that Brookner, Barker, Munhall,

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<sup>1</sup> Émile Dacier, "Greuze et les Graveurs," *L'Amateur d'Estampes*, 5 1 (Jan. 1926): 1-15, 5 2 (Mar 1926): 47-58; 5.3 (May 1926): 71-80. Georges Wildenstein, "Quelques documents sur Greuze," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 56 (Oct. 1960): 227-234. Brookner, *Greuze*. Munhall, *Jean-Baptiste Greuze*. Antony Griffiths, "Greuze et ses graveurs," *Nouvelles de l'estampe* 52/53, july/oct (1980): 9-12. Arquie-Bruley, "Documents notariés." Christian Michel, "La Diffusion des Graveurs d'après Greuze," *Diderot et Diderot* ed. Antoinette and Jean Ehrard (Paris: Adosa, 1986), 39-49.

<sup>2</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 77.

<sup>3</sup> Christian Michel, "Graveurs d'après Greuze," 41-2.

and many others who have addressed Greuze's painted oeuvre shy away from his reproductive engravings. However, these same scholars date Greuze's "golden age" to approximately 1765 to 1780, when he produced what they consider to be his most ambitious paintings.<sup>4</sup> The fact that the majority of his reproductive engravings were also published in those years suggests that they should not be so easily dismissed in discussions of his oeuvre.

In this chapter, I will address what one might call Greuze's alter-oeuvre his reproductive engravings. In so doing, I will endeavour to build a critical approach that acknowledges the place of this oeuvre within a larger market for engravings, and also as part of a late eighteenth-century "consumer revolution."<sup>5</sup> My goal is to develop strategies of analysis that do not dismiss these works as attempts to earn money. To do this, I will also explore a theme that I have already alluded to in the previous chapter: the relationship between Greuze and *sensibilité*. Themes related to *sensibilité* appear throughout art criticism of Greuze's paintings, and were subsequently echoed by the advertisements for his reproductive engravings.<sup>6</sup> The relationship between reproductive engravings after Greuze, *sensibilité*, and marketability, will be explored through a close analysis of the

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<sup>4</sup> Dacier, "Greuze et les Graveurs," 4 Brookner, *Greuze*, 1, 64

<sup>5</sup> Many have read the consumer revolution back into the eighteenth century. As Ann Bermingham points out in the introduction to *The Consumption of Culture*, cultural consumption is not necessarily a phase of late capitalism, and is not, therefore, necessarily a symptom of modernity exclusively. See "Introduction," *The Consumption of Culture, 1600-1800. Image, Object, Text*, ed. Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London, New York: Routledge, 1995), 3-4. Many arts historians and historians have engaged with both consumption and capitalism in the eighteenth century. See Kristel Smentek, "Sex, Sentiment, and Speculation," 221-243; Cissie Fairchild, "The Production and marketing of populuxe goods in eighteenth-century Paris," *Consumption and the World of Goods*, ed. John Brewer and Roy Porter, (London, New York: Routledge, 1993), 228-248; Michael Kwass, "Consumption and the World of Ideas: Consumer Revolution and the Moral Economy of the Marquis de Mirabeau," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 37: 2, "Spaces of Enlightenment," (Winter, 2004) 187-213

<sup>6</sup> I am indebted to Prof. W. McAllister Johnson for having generously sent me his "Greuze grove," as he calls it, of engraving advertisements for Greuze's works, without which this study would not have been possible.

shared tropes employed by the criticism of Greuze's paintings and the advertisements for his engravings.

### The market for contemporary engravings

As I have already noted, Pierre Casselle's masterful *Le Commerce des estampes à Paris dans la seconde moitié du XVIIIe siècle* is the most complete study of the market for contemporary engravings in late eighteenth-century Paris.<sup>7</sup> Casselle explores the basic structure of Paris' market for engravings, the socioeconomic status of its agents, and trends in their dealings with one another and with their customers. His study forms the basis of my explanation of the late eighteenth-century market for engravings in Paris. My goal in this discussion is to develop a vocabulary for print that will be used throughout the rest of the thesis.

Paris' late eighteenth-century market includes five overlapping roles: artist, engraver, printer, publisher, and merchant.<sup>8</sup> The artist executed the original artwork—a drawing, pastel, painting or sculpture—after which an engraving was produced. The publisher played an important role within the print market and acted as both the instigator for the creation of a print and its financial backer, and therefore provided up front the funds for the copper plate, paper, ink, and labour. The publisher chose and hired the engraver, and then drafted a contract or other form of agreement. He or she (Paris had many female book publishers) also set the price for labour and other forms of compensation, and lastly, often took ownership of the copper plate once the engraver had

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<sup>7</sup> Pierre Casselle, "Commerce des estampes."

<sup>8</sup> Many of these roles are identified within the nomenclature of the engraving: *delineavit* for the artist that drew the work engraved; *pinxit* for whomever painted it; and the more broad *invenit* can refer to either; *sculpsit* defines the principal engraver; and rarely, *impressit* is included to identify the printer. See Griffiths, "Abbreviations and Lettering," *Prints and Printmaking*, 134.

finished with it. These roles were not always distinct: engravers could also act as their own publishers, and the publisher often served as the print's merchant as well. Since the publisher owned the plate and paid for the production of an edition, his or her name is marked on the final print as *chez* whom the print was being sold. The publisher-merchant also had the option of selling prints off to other publisher-merchants or pure merchants—print vendors who did not publish plates themselves. These secondary merchants could not, of course, mark their names on the plate.<sup>9</sup>

The late eighteenth century, and the 1760s and 1770s in particular, were witness to several transformations in the marketplace for engravings, symptomatic of its rapid expansion and the possibilities for commercial success if one proved to be a shrewd speculator.<sup>10</sup> Earlier eighteenth-century publishers usually originated from a dynasty of engravers, such as the Joullain family, however, from mid-century onwards, the “pure merchant” emerged. These merchants, more commonly known as *colporteurs* or *étaleurs*, had no heritage or family experience in the print trade, and often found themselves selling their wares on the streets.<sup>11</sup> As the print market boomed, it also became a popular site for risky but potentially profitable speculation. Publishers and connoisseurs alike often purchased multiples of prints in the hopes that their resale value would skyrocket.<sup>12</sup> Greuze's “golden age” of painting thus overlaps with the swiftest expansion in the market for engravings.

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<sup>9</sup> Casselle, “Commerce des estampes,” 33-4

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 116

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 64, 34-5

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 39. Also see Kristel Smentek, “Sex, Sentiment and Speculation,” 228. As Smentek outlines, the popularity of paintings could be measured based off of the resale value of the original work at auction.

Most importantly, Greuze's "golden age" bore witness to another major transformation in the market for engravings – a revolution in subject matter. The genre print became the most published, advertised, and consumed of the subjects available, even though the genre print fell below religious, historical, and mythological subject matter and hovered just above portraiture, landscapes, and still lives in the *Académie*'s hierarchy of genres. In fact, the genre print came to dominate the proportion of prints exhibited in the Salon, advertised in cultural periodicals, and collected by print consumers.<sup>13</sup>

#### Consumer Behaviour, Critiques of Luxury and the Print Market

How was this booming marketplace and other forms of trade perceived in the mid to late eighteenth century? Michael Kwass suggests that the Marquis de Mirabeau's 1756 *L'Ami des hommes ou traité de la population* sold so well because of its convincing critique of luxury.<sup>14</sup> Mirabeau argues that the consumption of luxury goods leads to an overstimulation of the senses. Because luxury goods can be consumed without physical activity, this overstimulation weakens the mind and body. This form of consumption ultimately leads to general social chaos, as an entire population becomes both physically and cognitively weak.

In the context of prints, Joullain's *Réflexions sur la peinture et la gravure* describes a similar social chaos within the art market, and in particular, the market for engravings.<sup>15</sup> He observes that while merchants and art amateurs are proliferating, they are also becoming less knowledgeable and less noble in their goals. As a result, the former

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<sup>13</sup> Casselle, "Commerce des estampes," 117, 122-3, 156, 158

<sup>14</sup> Kwass, "Consumption and the World of Ideas," 194-6. It should be pointed out that Mirabeau's anxieties bear a startling resemblance to those that would later be articulated by Guy Debord in *The Society of the Spectacle* (1967).

<sup>15</sup> Joullain, *Réflexions*

bond of mutual trust between buyer and seller disintegrates.<sup>16</sup> Joullain describes the *colporteurs* who market their wares on the streets, risking the exposure of their engravings to the elements, to illustrate the irrational and even harmful lengths to which merchants are willing to go in order to satisfy their greed.<sup>17</sup> Engravers are not free from his indictments. Joullain blames both them and the owners of plates (i.e. the publishers) for the development of dishonest methods of inflating the price of engravings.<sup>18</sup> Lastly, he also addresses the proliferation of new, tasteless amateurs by borrowing the vocabulary of contemporary critiques of luxury:

L'homme nageant dans l'abondance, plongé dans le sein des plaisirs, éprouve une satiété, une inconstance que la nature a attachées à la facilité qu'il a de se satisfaire, et qui doivent naître de son oisiveté, autant que de son peu d'énergie. Cet état de langueur qui s'oppose à ce qu'il n'ait aucune véritable jouissance, éteint en lui le germe des passions inséparables d'un caractère mâle, amène promptement le dégoût de ce qu'il avoit désiré avec le plus d'ardeur et le porte à croire qu'en variant souvent d'objets, il renouvellera la somme de ses plaisirs.<sup>19</sup>

For Joullain, the market for engravings has disintegrated into an unintelligible state of chaos because of the effects of the rapid expansion of the marketplace. He describes this passive, hedonistic form of consumer behaviour as though it were an infection that has affected the entire art market, from producer to consumer. Kristel Smentek's close reading of Siméon-Charles Vallée's account books—to date, the sole surviving account book of any merchant of engravings in eighteenth-century Paris—contextualizes Joullain's

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 18-9, 103.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 127-9.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 137-9. Here, Joullain is referring to the *épreuve avec remarque* and *avant la lettre*. Both of these will be discussed at length in Chapter Three.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 111-2

anxieties<sup>20</sup> She observes that Vallée’s engravings, many of them licentious and titillating, were purchased in multiples, ostensibly in order to resell them once their value had gone up because of rarity or public acclaim<sup>21</sup> Vallée’s account books and Joullain’s text suggest that the model of a proto-modern consumer revolution applies in this situation<sup>22</sup>

Colin Campbell proposes methods for conducting nuanced and comprehensive analyses of historical consumer behaviour Further, his methods work well in application to Greuze’s print production and marketing tactics<sup>23</sup> Campbell’s work accomplishes this by building a methodological framework that relates this behaviour to social, cultural and intellectual matters His methods give us an alternative to theories of consumerism that tend to flatten the consumer and their motivations<sup>24</sup>

Campbell examines these flattening theories of consumerism, in particular John Kenneth Galbraith’s *The Affluent Society* (1958) Campbell suggests that historians who use these theories tend to cycle between three ahistorical explanations for consumer behaviour as a result These are an instinctivist argument that all humans are naturally acquisitive, a manipulationist argument that desire is manufactured by producers, and lastly, what theorists and historians refer to as the Veblen effect—an innate desire to imitate and emulate one’s socioeconomic betters<sup>25</sup> Campbell’s rebuttal to the

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<sup>20</sup> Smentek, “Sex, Sentiment and Speculation ” Casselle also looks at Vallee’s account books See Casselle, “Commerce de l’Estampe,” 152-155 Casselle uses Vallee to examine which classes—clergy, nobility, and so on—were more likely to frame certain genres of engravings Smentek, on the other hand, tracks consumer behaviour through their peaks and falls in purchasing patterns

<sup>21</sup> Smentek, “Sex, Sentiment and Speculation,” 228

<sup>22</sup> See footnote 5 in this chapter for a brief list of works that discuss the consumer revolution in relation to the late eighteenth century

<sup>23</sup> Colin Campbell, *Romantic Ethic*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid* , 43

<sup>25</sup> Campbell, *Romantic ethic*, 43-51 The “Veblen effect” refers to the opinions expressed in Thorstein Veblen’s *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (1899)

manipulationist argument is the most useful for this study. He argues that the “manipulator” cannot, in fact, manufacture desire, in part because the word manipulation itself implies that there must already be something there for them to manipulate. Rather, consumers mobilize broader cultural definitions of taste and ethics, as well as cultural, political or intellectual ideas, in order to justify their purchasing decisions to themselves and to one another. Their patterns of consumption therefore become part of a larger project of harmonizing with the “living faiths” and “formulated aspirations” of their particular time, place and contexts. Marketers cater to these “dreams, desires and wishes” in order to formulate arguments for their products.<sup>26</sup> Campbell, like Max Weber, uses the term “ethic” or “ideal” to encapsulate the aforementioned aspirations, faiths and dreams.<sup>27</sup> He then identifies those “ethics” that are most amenable to modern consumer behaviour. According to Campbell, the cult of feeling, or theories of *sensibilité*, played an important role in facilitating modern forms of consumer behaviour in the mid to late eighteenth century.

Campbell’s definition of modern consumer behaviour can help us to elucidate how he links it to *sensibilité*. He defines modern consumer behaviour as symptomatic of autonomous imaginative hedonism:

Pleasure is sought via emotional and not merely sensory stimulation, whilst, secondly, the images which fulfill this function are either imaginatively created or modified by the individual for self-consumption, there being little reliance upon the presence of ‘real’ stimuli.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Campbell *Romantic ethic*, 47, 51.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 12, 28.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 77.

Campbell's definition fits well with the marquis de Mirabeau and Joullain's descriptions of the consumer behaviour they witnessed around them.

In the following section, we will discuss the meaning of *sensibilité*, and its connection to the production of luxury goods and the way in which Greuze marketed his engravings. In so doing, we can bridge a gap left open in Barker and Brookner's monographs on Greuze. Though both scholars provide thorough discussions of the relationship between *sensibilité* and Greuze's paintings, they neglect to address its similarities to his advertisements.<sup>29</sup> Further, this chapter will highlight the connection between the language used in these advertisements, and the laudatory vocabulary of the critical response to Greuze's pre-1769 painted œuvre.

### *Sensibilité* and engraving

In modern scholarship, *sensibilité* is most often used to refer to a literary genre, but its eighteenth-century meaning is much broader. It is a particular way of perceiving the world and human behaviour, and refers to how we make meaning and develop our moral compass through our observations. *Sensibilité* assumes that in observing, we both see phenomena and react emotionally to it. Our emotional reactions are fixed to our ethical code: by empathizing with the individuals we observe, we work our way through the complexities of the situation until we can distinguish right from wrong. Further, we have no control over this emotional response. *Sensibilité* is a "human faculty," as Ann Lewis puts it, or "a receptiveness to the 'inexplicable' dictates of experience," according to

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<sup>29</sup> Both Brookner and Barker dedicate one or more chapters to defining *sensibilité* and its relationship to Greuze's artistic production. Brookner, *Greuze*, 1-37. Barker, *Greuze*, 9-18.

Jessica Riskin.<sup>30</sup> While the physical objects we see are tangible, the observation of them also work on an emotional level that is metaphysical and intangible. In the eighteenth century, *sensibilité* was a widely held epistemology that assumes that we experience the world and human behaviour physically and emotionally.

Historians of literature and theatre have used *sensibilité* in relation to artistic production that multiplies opportunities for this affective-perceptive way of learning.<sup>31</sup> Artists of *sensibilité*—visual, literary and theatrical—heighten the emotional drama of the scenes that they build by using accidental misfortune and victimization as a central plot element. In so doing, they are able to privilege *malheur* or the *pathétique*, and therefore multiply the amount of suffering and emotional turmoil that they can depict.<sup>32</sup> The *Encyclopédie*'s entry for *pathétique* states that misfortune and victimization in artwork is what “émeut, qui touche, qui agite le cœur de l’homme. Tout ce qui transporte l’auditeur hors de lui-même, tout ce qui captive son entendement, & subjugue sa volonté, voilà le *pathétique*.”<sup>33</sup> Our discussion of *génie* in Chapter One demonstrated that eighteenth-century art publics believed that the painter needed to be deeply affected by the emotions of others in order to express those same emotions in their work. Without this natural

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<sup>30</sup> Ann Lewis, *Sensibility, Reading and Illustration* (London: Modern Humanities Research Association and Maney Publishing, 2009), 34; Jessica Riskin, *Science in the Age of Sensibility* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 13. In her chapter on *sensibilité*, Brookner relates the term to John Locke's writings, particularly *The Essay concerning Human Understanding* (1690), and the proposition that human beings have no innate ideas and therefore build up knowledge through the senses. See Brookner, “Sensibilité,” *Greuze*, 1-19, esp. 3-4.

<sup>31</sup> In particular, David Denby, *Sentimental Narrative and the Social Order in France, 1760-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 75-86.

<sup>32</sup> Denby, *Sentimental Narrative*, 71-3. Denby identifies Denis Diderot's *Entretiens sur le Fils Naturel* as responsible for helping to translate the notion of *sensibilité* into the theatrical, literary and visual arts. In his “Second Entretien,” Diderot uses “malheur domestique,” and “pathétique” to describe his play, *Le Fils Naturel*. “Second Entretien” *Œuvres Complètes de Diderot*, Vol. 7, 102-133.

<sup>33</sup> Le Chevalier de Jaucourt, “Le Pathétique, (Éloquence, Poesie, Art orat ),” *Encyclopédie* 12 (University of Chicago ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, 2010 Edition): 169.

inclination to emotive experience, the artist's work would fail to lure their audience into complete empathy with the subject before them. In this way, the concept of *sensibilité* and Greuze's relation to it operate as an umbrella term for much of the aesthetic vocabulary analyzed in Chapter One, all of which hinges on empathetic experience. Nature, sentiment and virtue are all related to one another and play instrumental roles in the art of *sensibilité*.

As discussed in our introduction, Brookner's analysis of *sensibilité* approaches it as an intellectual and aesthetic concept, and relates the phenomena back to Greuze and the Dutch and Flemish painters so in vogue in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Brookner contextualizes mid to late eighteenth-century taste as she attempts to recover the "vein of feeling" that rendered Greuze's works so incredibly popular. She also briefly addresses reformist tendencies latent in *sensibilité* in relation to religion.<sup>34</sup> Barker, however, uses *sensibilité* to understand reformist undercurrents in Greuze's work. These readings, alongside Anne Coudreuse's close study of the intersections between *pathétique* and *sensibilité*, have greatly informed this chapter.<sup>35</sup>

The aforementioned scholars describe how Greuze translates the *pathétique* and *sensibilité* into the medium of painting. Greuze, and many others like him working in other genres employed the *tableau* effect, which freezes a single instant for prolonged contemplation.<sup>36</sup> This instance was selected for its emotional poignancy. It often followed the occurrence of something particularly tragic, and therefore froze each character's reaction and emotional response, therefore allowing the audience to revel in this

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<sup>34</sup> Brookner, *Greuze*, 1. For her discussion of *sensibilité* and religion, see pages 6-9.

<sup>35</sup> Anne Coudreuse, *Le goût des larmes au XVIIIe siècle*. (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999).

<sup>36</sup> On the *tableau* effect, see Brookner, *Greuze*, 3, 11-2; Denby, *Sentimental Narrative*, 75-86; and Coudreuse, *Le goût des larmes*, 148.

opportunity for empathy. According to Coudreuse, mid to late eighteenth-century French audiences used this opportunity to decode the semiology of *douleur* which inscribes itself in the architecture of the body and facial expression. By choosing an instant when the emotional ramifications of tragedy become visible, Greuze had to employ what Barker calls, “a universal language of the body (composed of sighs, tears, looks, gestures, etc.).”<sup>37</sup> John Montgomery Wilson describes this as the pathognomy and physiognomy of the face and body. Wilson defines pathognomy as the study of dynamic features of an individual’s face and body—emotional gestures and facial expressions or *signes pathétiques*. Physiognomy, on the other hand, which refers to the static traits of an individual, is the study of one’s underlying bone structure.<sup>38</sup>

From the seventeenth century onwards, the *Académie* emphasized the importance of the expressive face in particular. By the mid to late eighteenth-century, however, art theorists and critics made important changes to the kind of expressive face they preferred. In 1668, Charles Le Brun presented a lecture on the subject to the *Académie*, accompanied by a series of drawings intended to educate young history painters in the art of this form of rendering.<sup>39</sup> Le Brun called the passions the *mouvement* of the soul and designated the face as the seat of these passions. His brief and prescriptive explanation of the expressions divided them between simple and composite passions, and made extensive use of the

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<sup>37</sup> Barker, *Greuze*, 11; Coudreuse, *Le goût des larmes*, 197-208. I am indebted to Will Knight, a PhD Candidate in Carleton University’s History Department, for the term “architecture of the body” in relation to Greuze’s paintings.

<sup>38</sup> John Montgomery Wilson, *The Painting of the Passions in Theory, Practice and Criticism in Later Eighteenth Century France*, (New York, London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1981), 12. For a deep exploration of theories of physiognomy and pathognomy in relation to the expressive face, in particular, see Melissa Percival, *The Appearance of Character*, 13-40, 65-94.

<sup>39</sup> Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun’s ‘Conférence sur l’expression générale et particulière’* (London, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994). For the difficulty of dating Le Brun’s lecture, see Montagu, 141.

eyebrows—whether they are lifted or furrowed, and so on—in his drawings and descriptions (fig. 11 and 12).<sup>40</sup>

Le Brun's drawings and lecture were engraved and printed, re-interpreted, and re-published throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As Jennifer Montagu attests, the illustrations that accompanied Le Brun's conference became a sort of pattern book of expression.<sup>41</sup> But his understanding of the passions and the manner in which they should be rendered were hotly contested in the late eighteenth century. Amongst Le Brun's detractors were the Academic art amateur and theorist Claude-Henri Watelet, Charles-Nicolas Cochin, and Denis Diderot who felt that Le Brun's method was restrictive, and advocated for "movement, simultaneity and nuance."<sup>42</sup>

The Comte de Caylus attempted to introduce a solution that would undo the effect that Le Brun's prescriptive drawings had on the *Académie's* students. His proposed solution was to privilege the study from nature and to encourage students to work from the model and not from engravings after Le Brun's drawings. In 1759, Caylus institutionalized his views by having the *Académie* instate the *Prix Caylus*—an annual, and then semi-annual competition for the most excellent expressive head, executed from the model.<sup>43</sup> This updated form of the expressive face privileged nuanced, ambiguous, layered, complex, and yet subtle emotion over the "mannerism" of Le Brun's drawings.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 112-5.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 85-9.

<sup>42</sup> Percival, *The Appearance of Character*, 66-81.

<sup>43</sup> For more on the *Prix Caylus*, see *ibid.*, 95-112.

Though Greuze did not participate in the *Prix Caylus*, he likely would have excelled at it.<sup>44</sup> As we discussed in Chapter One, the vocabulary and praise that surrounded Greuze, particularly before 1769, endowed him with all of the characteristics that the *Prix Caylus* hoped to teach the students of the *Académie* through practice and repetition: a natural propensity for empathy and emotional excess, coupled with an ability to render the subtlety, complexity and nuance of the human body and face, and its multivalent, spontaneous, and overlapping emotional states.

The following section explores *sensibilité* and *pathétique* as they manifest themselves in Greuze's work through *malheur* and *douleur*, the *tableau* effect, and the semiology of the face and body. This exploration will be set in the context of Campbell's theories of modern consumerism. As such, we will focus on the similarities between criticism of Greuze's paintings and the way in which he, and others, marketed his reproductive engravings. Both his art criticism and advertisements devoted much of their effort to decoding the semiology of *douleur* by inventorying the effects of emotional turmoil on the face and body.

#### Marketing opportunities for empathy

Greuze had a unique level of involvement in the production of his reproductive engravings insofar as he was either publisher or co-publisher of most of the engravings of his work made in his lifetime.<sup>45</sup> He thus acted in a variety of capacities: he provided

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid , 113-118. Percival remarks that Greuze's *têtes d'expressions* recall aspects of the *Prix Caylus*, and that Greuze too attempted to deviate from Le Brun's expressive models, namely by counteracting the legibility of Le Brun's models with his own ambiguous ones.

<sup>45</sup> Françoise Arquie-Bruley tracks down eighteen association and twelve dissolution contracts in the Minutier Central of the Archives nationales de France. Arquie-Bruley, "Tableau des actes et dissolutions," in "Documents notariés," 134-5

investment funds; he played an important role in overseeing and editing the plate; he profited directly from the sale of his engravings, he owned the final plate; and he was the principal seller of these engravings, attracting potential buyers to his own home for the sale. As we have discussed, it was not uncommon to find an engraver also serving as their own publisher, but it was much rarer to find the artist of the original work filling these other roles.<sup>46</sup>

The contracts that Wildenstein, Arquié-Bruley and Casselle have discovered demonstrate that Greuze shared his role as publisher, his investment responsibilities, and the revenue from his sales, with his engravers. Greuze entered into longstanding legal associations with his engravers (all of whom were *agrée* or *reçu* members of the *Académie royale*), drafted new contracts to produce individual prints when needed, and only ended his associations after decades of partnership.<sup>47</sup> His contracts, which often repeat themselves word for word, reveal his methods of operating: he and the engraver equally divided input costs and revenue from the print's sale, and also set the price of the print together. Importantly, Greuze and his engraver each owned half of the plate and nothing could be done with it without the consent of both parties. The plate was kept under a lock that only two keys could open, and one was owned by each member of the agreement.<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Casselle, "Commerce des estampes," 33-4. Casselle uncovers enough contracts signed before notaries to identify two overarching genres of publisher-engraver relationship. The first are engravers who enter into association with the publisher, and who therefore become implicated to greater or lesser degrees, depending on the articles of the contract, in the process of publication, for example receiving a share of revenue from the sale of the print. The second type are engravers who are simply employees of the publishers, doing no more than producing a plate which then becomes the property of the publisher. The second type is the most common. See Casselle, 44-7.

<sup>47</sup> Arquié-Bruley, "Documents notariés," 134-5.

<sup>48</sup> Arquié-Bruley redacts Greuze's "Contrat d'association entre Greuze et Levasseur pour la gravure du Testament Déchiré" from the 13<sup>th</sup> of May, 1785. Ibid., 138-9. Casselle redacts his "Société entre Greuze et Gaillard pour la gravure du Fils Ingrat," from the 12<sup>th</sup> of February, 1777. Casselle, *Commerce des estampes*,

Greuze's print career took off at the same time as his 1769 withdrawal from the Salon exhibition. At that time, the *Mercure de France* and the *Journal de Paris* published advertisements to alert their audience of the completion of his engravings.<sup>49</sup> In order to highlight the nature of their appeal to broader French audiences otherwise unable to view the works themselves, Greuze's advertisements developed a very apt marketing model that borrowed from the reviews of his paintings. However, in doing this, the commercial world of advertising was borrowing from a much "higher" aesthetic pursuit, ostensibly devoid of base commercial interest and instead, as we reviewed in the previous chapter, centred on the progress of the arts—Salon art criticism.<sup>50</sup>

An early example of these similarities centre around Greuze's *L'Accordée de Village* (fig. 2), which was originally exhibited in the Salon of 1761, engraved from 1767 to 1770, and finally published in April 1770. The *Mercure de France's* uncharacteristically lengthy announcement for the engraving's publication is startlingly similar to Diderot and Abbé Aubert's responses to the painting.<sup>51</sup> Diderot carefully describes Greuze's *L'Accordée de Village*, qualifying that "le sujet est pathétique," and

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265-9. Daniel Wildenstein redacts Greuze's "Contrat Greuze-Porporaty, 9 mars 1771, et sa dénonciation, 24 avril 1771," in "Quelques Documents sur Greuze," 232-4

<sup>49</sup> The *Mercure de France, dédié au Roi* was a popular monthly (and sometimes bi-monthly) periodical. Established in 1724, it covered everything from science to cultural events, and political news to anecdotes. For more, see "Mercure de France 1 (1724-1778), Jean Sgard, *Dictionnaire des Journaux*, 854-6. The *Journal de Paris* was a popular daily newspaper, established in 1777. It covered a similar breadth of topics to the *Mercure de France*, however, with what Nicole Brondel deems a frivolous tone. See Nicole Brondel, "Journal de Paris (1777-1840)," *ibid.*, 615-27, esp. 620-1

<sup>50</sup> The *Mercure de France* and *Journal de Paris* included an *annonce* section that alerted its audience to new theatrical productions, engravings, books, and so on. As Gilles Feyel specifies, French periodicals only began to include *annonces* around 1745. Before then, those that wished to publicize something were forced to use cards and posters. However, after 1745, advertisements in periodicals were largely controlled by the journal, and were considered an informational service for the journal's subscribers, rather than a service rendered to an outside advertiser. All of this began to change in the mid to late 1780s, when advertisers were charged by the periodical to publish their advertisements. Gilles Feyel, "Presse et publicité en France (XVIIIe et XIXe siècles)," *Revue historique* 4 628 (2003). 837-868.

<sup>51</sup> For the advertisement, see "Arts, Gravures, I," *Mercure de France* (April 1770), 187-190

then describing all that could be found in the scene.<sup>52</sup> After this brief exposition, Diderot moves on to the heart of his review: a list, from most to least important character, of the physiognomical and pathognomical traits of each individual.<sup>53</sup> Diderot unites body and expression in order to describe the general temperament of each character. For example, the mother, seated to the bride's left, exhibits "la gaîté et la tendresse [...] dans la physionomie," and the bride herself is "décente et réservée [...] il y a une légère et molle inflexion dans toute sa figure et dans tous ses membres qui la remplit de grâce et de vérité."<sup>54</sup> In his short entry on "Physionomie (morale)" for the *Encyclopédie*, Diderot established the connection between physiognomy and expression, qualifying that while we can learn about the temperament and character of an individual through physiognomic analysis, we must be careful not to read all facial and bodily expressions or gestures as aspects of their physiognomy.<sup>55</sup> Claude-Henri Watelet's *Encyclopédie* entry on "Expression (Peinture)" establishes the connection between the two as well, suggesting that while the painter can imitate gestures, facial expressions, and so on, the ultimate goal is to "rendre des qualités incorporelles [...] cette qualité abstraite du corps" that will reveal to us the "agitations internes & cachées" of the individual. In other words, the goal was to depict the *effet de réel interne*.<sup>56</sup> Watelet, like Diderot, sees expression and the body as

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<sup>52</sup> Denis Diderot, "Salon de 1761," *Œuvres complètes de Diderot*, vol. 10, 151.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid , 152-155. In his dissertation, Ryan Whyte discusses this phenomena in terms of the novelistic individualization of characters within the image. He is here using Ian Watt's definition of the novelistic form from his *The Rise of the Novel Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding* (1957). See Whyte, "Painting as Social Conversation," 141-148.

<sup>54</sup> Diderot, "Salon de 1761," 154 and 153

<sup>55</sup> Denis Diderot, "Physionomie (Morale)," *Encyclopédie* 12 (University of Chicago: ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Spring 2010 edition), ed. Robert Morissey: 538.

<sup>56</sup> This is a modification of Annie Becq's "effet de réel," discussed in Chapter 1. Annie Becq, *Genèse de l'esthétique française moderne*, 617 Claude-Henri "Expression (Peinture)," *Encyclopédie* 6 (University of Chicago . ARTFL Encyclopédie Project, Spring 2010 edition), ed. Robert Morissey. 319.

intimately bound together, yet these emotions, being abstract and metaphysical, are folded into the body and the face in equally elusive ways, and are interpreted by the viewer through intangible processes, or their faculty of *sensibilité*

The Abbé Aubert engages in a similar exercise to Diderot in his 1761 *conte moral* after Greuze's painting.<sup>57</sup> In his Salon review of Greuze's *L'Accordée de Village*, he catalogues the emotive impressions of gesture, expression and disposition. Though Aubert's catalogue is in poetic format, it otherwise mirrors Diderot's order, proceeding from most to least important character, and thus circling around from the notary to the father, the groom, the bride, and then the mother. Although shorter than Diderot's, his account is more nuanced and addresses the tension in each characters' expression, who, though party to a joyous event, seem hesitant and even grave. Aubert addresses the bride's torn expression: "ses regards trahissoient le trouble de ses sens, cet air ému, contraint, le rendoit plus charmante." He also highlights a similar reluctance in the mother's face and expression: "dans ses regards la tristesse & la joie, sembloit la[the bride] plaindre & la féliciter, sembloit chérir & regretter."<sup>58</sup>

These critical responses attentively unpack the emotional complexities and tensions within and amongst characters. They emphasize this inventory of affect and devote little space to the discussion of Greuze's brush work, colour, composition, and drawing. It is this emphasis on inventorying affect that reappears nine years later in the *Mercure de France*'s advertisement for Greuze's engraving after *L'Accordée de Village* (fig. 13)

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<sup>57</sup> Abbe Aubert, "L'Accordée de Village, conte moral, dont l'idée est prise du Tableau de M. Greuze, expose depuis peu de jours au Sallon du Louvre," *Mercure de France* (October 1761), 66-8

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 67 and 68

The advertisement begins with the title of the work, its size, a brief description of its subject matter, where it will be available for purchase and when, and the asking price—the standard, and often only, content of a print advertisement. It then launches into a lengthy description of *L'Accordée de Village*, and takes on the format of Diderot and Aubert's inventory of affect. The advertisement provides the physiognomical and pathognomical details of the temperaments and emotional complexities of all of the depicted characters. For example, it describes the bride's father as "ce viellard, dont l'air & la physionomie annoncent la franchise & inspirent la confiance." The mother's fraught emotions are again highlighted: "l'expression la plus vive de la tendresse maternelle se fait remarquer dans cette bonne femme. Elle craint le moment qui va la séparer de sa chere fille."<sup>59</sup> The *Mercure de France*'s advertisement is so similar to the critical reception of *L'Accordée de Village* in 1761 that it is likely that the latter served as a model for the former.

Between 1777 and 1781, Greuze's pendants, *La Malédiction paternelle* (fig. 14) and *Le Fils Puni* (fig. 15), received much the same treatment. Unlike *L'Accordée de Village*, these two paintings were never displayed in the Salon, since they were completed almost a decade after his withdrawal.<sup>60</sup> *La Malédiction paternelle* was completed in 1777 and engraved by 1779 (fig. 14). *Le Fils Puni* was completed in 1778 and engraved by 1781 (fig. 15). Compared to the nine year gap between *L'Accordée de Village*'s exhibition

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<sup>59</sup> Arts, Gravures, I," *Mercure de France*, 188-9.

<sup>60</sup> Greuze displayed both of these paintings in his studio in the Louvre at the same time as the Salon exhibition. However, his 1777 piece was purchased by the Marquis de Véri and was taken off to be engraved in June, two months before the Salon exhibition opened. The second of the two works fell in between Salons. The *Correspondance secrète* notes that, in relation to the first of these two pendants, Greuze only allowed "ses amis & [ ..] Princes du sang" to enter. "Paris, 31 Mai 1777," *Correspondance secrète* IV, (1777), 392.

and engraving, these pendants were reproduced with relative urgency. Given Greuze's withdrawal from the public eye, descriptive advertisements would have been more important than ever. A connoisseur and journalist for the *Journal de Paris* with whom Greuze was possibly acquainted, Sautreau de Marsy, played the role of advertiser. Patterning his advertisements on art criticism after Greuze's paintings, Marsy privileged the inventory of affect in his descriptions.<sup>61</sup>

The *Journal de Paris* published Marsy's lengthy descriptions on 14 June 1777 for *La Malédiction paternelle*, and November 26<sup>th</sup> 1778 for *Le Fils Puni*. Both descriptions take care to mention that Greuze's pendants are currently being engraved.<sup>62</sup> As we suggested, few saw the painted versions of *La Malédiction paternelle* and almost no one saw *Le Fils Puni*.<sup>63</sup> We can therefore assume that Marsy, aware of this, privileged information that was deemed necessary for the appreciation of the works.

Marsy dedicates the majority of his review to unpacking the painting's emotional ramifications, again, conducting physiognomical and pathognomical readings. Greuze's pendants provide more intrigue, complexity, and tension than the works that precede them and Marsy accordingly offers proportionally more description of the paintings' emotional dimension than the critics of Greuze's earlier works. For example, in relation to the father

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<sup>61</sup> Sautreau de Marsy was a prolific contributor to the *Journal de Paris*, as well as several other French journals, amongst them *l'Année littéraire*, and *Almanach des Muses*. It is a possibility that Greuze and Marsy were acquainted. See Michel Gilot, "Claude-Sixte Sautreau de Marsy (1740-1815), *Dictionnaire des Journalistes (1600-1789)*, 262.

<sup>62</sup> "Lettre aux Auteurs du Journal de Paris, sur la *Malédiction paternelle*, Tableau de M. Greuze," *Journal de Paris*, 165 (14 June 1777). 1-3, "Lettre aux Auteurs du Journal, sur un Tableau servant de pendant à la *Malédiction paternelle* de M. Greuze," *Journal de Paris*, 330, (26 Nov 1778). 1326-1327. The *Journal de Paris* also produced a small etching—an engraving after memory—of both pieces and included them in two issues of the periodical. One for *Malédiction paternelle* was sent out with *Journal de Paris*, 358 (24 Dec 1777), and *Le Fils Puni* was sent out with *Journal de Paris*, 330 (26 Nov 1778). For more, see W McAllister Johnson, "Compositions faites de mémoire," 38-52, esp 44-8.

<sup>63</sup> See note 59 in this chapter for an explanation regarding the exhibition, or lack thereof, of these pendants.

in *La Malédiction paternelle*, Marsy semiologically decodes his temperament, gesture and facial expression:

Il faut voir ce pere infortuné dans une attitude qui exprime à la fois l'indignation, la colere & la douleur; ses cheveux se hérissent; tout annonce le trouble de son ame; une de ses mains a l'air de repousser le fils qui a répondu si mal à ses soins; de l'autre, il lui donne sa malédiction: mais sa tendresse perce encore au milieu de sa colere; il n'est personne qui ne se dise en soi même: "il le frappe, mais son cœur se déchire."<sup>64</sup>

A year later, Marsy described *Le Fils Puni*. After briefly establishing the scenario, he meticulously dissects its complex emotional ramifications, character by character. For example, he attempts to explain the confusing behaviour of the daughter who is on the far side of the bed holding her expired father's arm. Marsy writes:

Une autre fille qui est dans la ruelle du lit presse la main du Viellard contre son cœur; elle ne peut se persuader qu'il est mort; elle s'élançe vers lui, en disant: "Mon pere, m'entendez-vous? c'est votre fille cadette qui vous appelle."<sup>65</sup>

After the publication of Greuze's two other large-scale moral genre scenes, Greuze himself provided their descriptions in letters of April 1781 to the *Mercure de France* and *Journal de Paris* for *La Belle-Mère* (fig. 10), and of December 1786 to the *Journal de Paris* for *La Veuve et son Curé* (fig. 18).<sup>66</sup> Greuze begins his advertisement for *La Belle-Mère* by accommodating popular characterizations of his artistic process, namely that he regularly drew his models from the streets of Paris. He then continues in the well-established manner developed by art critics and Sautreau de Marsy: he lists the characters in order of importance and provides a brief plot synopsis. Finally, he begins his inventory

<sup>64</sup> Marsy, "Lettre sur la *Malédiction paternelle*," 1-3.

<sup>65</sup> "Lettre sur un Tableau servant de pendant à la *Malédiction paternelle*," 1326.

<sup>66</sup> "Lettre de M. Greuze aux Auteurs du *Mercure*," *Mercure de France*, (April 1781): 187-8; "Lettre de M. Greuze, aux Auteurs du *Journal*, sur l'Estampe de la Belle-Mere," *Journal de Paris*, 103, (13 April 1781): 415-416; "Lettres à MM. les Curés," *Journal de Paris*, 339, (5 Dec. 1786): 1412-3.

of affect. For example, Greuze describes the mother-in-law, who thrusts the bread towards the young girl to her left, as exhibiting “la colere réfléchie, qui vient ordinairement d’une haïne invétérée.” He moves on to the object of her disdain, her widowed daughter-in-law, whose “expression est la modestie & la crainte.”<sup>67</sup>

Greuze’s 1786 letter regarding his engraving *La Veuve et son Curé* similarly includes an inventory of affect. Unlike his 1781 advertisements, Greuze’s entire letter is dedicated to his inventory and does not pause to describe his artistic process. His only attempt at novelty is to dedicate the letter and the engraving to the priests of Paris. Greuze promptly launches into a description that again privileges physiognomic and pathognomic readings of his engraving, and expands upon the emotional conflict within and amongst characters. The priest reproaches the oldest sister for her indiscretions, who, in turn, “d’un air aussi respectueux qu’embarrassé,” makes her apology. The mother approves of the scene before her, which she has instigated, as evidenced by her approving “regard doux & modeste.” The youngest sister, leaning over her brother, delights maliciously in the reproach of the older, and ostensibly favoured, sister; and the older brother, who likes his oldest sister, disapproves of the entire affair, and makes “regards indociles” at the priest.<sup>68</sup>

As we have seen, art criticism of Greuze’s paintings served as a model for the advertisements of his engravings. Both provide a list of emotions and internal conflict, and our authors appear affected as they relay this opportunity for empathy to their readership. Further, the lines between art criticism and advertisement blur as both succumb to the primacy of affective description and the cataloguing of opportunities for empathy.

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<sup>67</sup> “Lettre sur la Belle-Mère,” *Journal de Paris*, 416.

<sup>68</sup> “Lettres à MM. les Curés,” 1412.

Greuze's critics and advertisers describe his work as a vector for empathetic response, and their descriptions testify to the quantity and variety of temperament and expression on display by inventorying the representation of affect. The critics and marketers imply that they themselves have been touched by the scenes Greuze offers them, and their descriptions suggest that these works could touch future buyers as well. As *L'Avant-Coureur* suggests in its advertisement for Greuze's 1767 engraving of *Retour de Nourrice* (fig. 19), "les Arts d'imitation intéressent l'attention, & reveillent le sentiment lorsqu'ils s'attachent à rendre les scènes ordinaires de la Société."<sup>69</sup> In this eighteenth-century context, *intéressant*, as Coudreuse shows, did not simply mean "interesting" as we understand it today, but was used as a synonym for "émouvant ou de pathétique."<sup>70</sup>

As this chapter has demonstrated, great value was placed on the ability of Greuze's work to awaken sentiment. In fact, the listing of affect we reviewed enumerates how many opportunities for empathy can be found within his artwork. By drawing on our earlier discussion of *sensibilité*, we can contextualize how these opportunities for empathy could have been justified by consumers of Greuze's work. With *sensibilité*, one cannot reduce sentimental experience to mere emotional hedonism; rather, this experience contributes to the development of the viewer's moral compass. By marketing his work on the grounds of its ability to awake sentiment, it was also being promoted for its capacity to cultivate the *âme sensible*. We should also keep Coudreuse's suggestion in mind that "les larmes ne sont pas condamnées au secret honteux de l'intimité, car il n'est pas indigne de pleurer en public, bien au contraire: il s'agit d'un moyen infaillible de manifester sa sensibilité et de

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<sup>69</sup> "Retour de Nourrice." *L'Avant Coureur*, 22, (1 June 1767), 337.

<sup>70</sup> Coudreuse, *Goût des larmes*, 5.

prouver ainsi les vertueuses qualités de son âme.”<sup>71</sup> Viewers who purchased Greuze’s engravings could use them as props in their public performance of *sensibilité*, and demonstrate their good taste, moral purity, and their interest in encouraging an upright social order.<sup>72</sup>

As we discussed, *sensibilité* operates as an umbrella term for sentiment, virtue, nature and genius. But in Chapter One, we found these terms applied to Greuze before 1769 and gradually replaced with accusations of vanity and greed after he withdrew from the Salon. However, in this chapter, we have found that these terms are regularly applied to Greuze and his engravings after 1769, thereby complicating the narrative of decline—in reputation, in reformism, or in morality—that Barker and Brookner describe. Further, these terms and the concept of *sensibilité* that they evoked were used to market engravings; objects that, in comparison to original paintings or drawings, were relatively inexpensive, and, in their reproducibility, were much more widely available.<sup>73</sup> Further, the intimate viewing experience and opportunity to browse regularly but periodically through

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid , 1

<sup>72</sup> The many enamel snuff boxes that reproduce Greuze’s paintings suggest something similar. The Louvre, the Wallace Collection and the Victoria and Albert Museum all possess several highly decorated eighteenth-century snuff boxes that feature Greuze’s paintings.

<sup>73</sup> This argument suggests both that Greuze’s post-1769 activities and the way they were described indicate his continued engagement in social reform through *sensibilité*. However, it also suggests that the rhetoric of *sensibilité* and its visualization through engraving—a reproducible medium—could be used to advance the sale of his engravings. Here, I find myself torn between arguing for Greuze as a social reformer, versus his commercial and financial motivations. In this thesis, I have sought to avoid artistic intentionality, and have instead described more general social phenomena and convictions. However, here, I would like to propose the possibility that commercial and social motivations can coexist, and that Greuze’s use of *sensibilité* in his post-1769 engravings and in his advertisements could be the result of both his social reform and of commercial motivations.

these moral lessons provided the ideal conditions to allow for an elongated affective response to these works.<sup>74</sup>

Expression distilled in Greuze's *têtes de caractères*

The converging features of *sensibilité* can also help us understand another aspect of Greuze's later work: namely, the multiple volumes of *têtes de caractères* he produced, drawn from his most successful moral paintings. Greuze published two of the four that appeared under his name: one in 1766, engraved by Pierre-Charles Ingouf, which was dedicated to the successful publisher and friend of Greuze, Johann-Georg Wille; and another in 1771, engraved by Carl Weisbrod and dedicated by Weisbrod to the Comtesse de Bentick.<sup>75</sup> Charles-François Letellier, much less known than his predecessors, engraved and published at least two more, numbering them as the "third," published in 1779, and "fourth," published in 1783 although it is unclear whether Greuze was directly involved in the project. These small works (of approximately 13 by 19 centimetres each) were sold unbound, usually in sets of six for a relatively low price (one to two *livres*, as compared to the 16 *livres* for engravings after Greuze's large moral works). Their subject matter varied greatly, but always featured a finely engraved expressive face on a plain background. The Weisbrod and Ingouf works do not specify their sources, though they recycle the same "types" that often appeared in Greuze's works: young naïve children, disconnected from

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<sup>74</sup> Pierre-Jean Mariette believed that Greuze's engravers profited greatly from their associations. See Pierre-Jean Mariette, *Abécédario de P J Mariette et autres notes inédites de cet amateur sur les arts et les artistes*, vol. 2, ed. Charles-Phillippe de Chennevières-Pointel and Anatole de Montaiglon, (Paris : J.-B. Dumoulin, 1853-4), 331.

<sup>75</sup> These works are briefly mentioned in Melissa Percival's study. See Percival, *Appearance of Character*, 114. "Têtes de différens caractères dédiées à M. J.G. Wille," *L'Avant-Coureur*, 19 (12 March 1766), 292; "Têtes de différens caractères [gravées par Carl Weisbrod," *Mercure de France*, (February 1771), 194; "Troisième Cahier de Têtes de différens caractères," *Mercure de France*, (August 1779), 142; "Quatrième Cahier de Têtes de différens caractères," *Mercure de France*, (September 1783) 191.

the goings on that surround them (fig. 20); beautiful young girls and handsome young men, confused, hesitant or somehow subtly afflicted with emotional strife (fig. 21); and solemn and noble (fig. 22), or malicious and grotesque women and men (fig. 23). Greuze's advertisements and his art critics engaged with and evaluated his work by performing empathetic readings of the face and body, both in terms of physiognomy and pathognomy. Accordingly, Greuze's use of the *tête de caractère* for more general consumption can be considered a stroke of marketing genius. By producing booklets of *têtes de caractères*, Greuze multiplied opportunities to enjoy his "natural" ability to depict the expressive face.

Greuze exhibited and sold many painted and drawn expressive faces before and after 1769 in volumes that far outweighed those of his genre scenes. These works were a central component of Greuze's artistic production, and, accordingly, of his painted, drawn and engraved presence in the households of his appreciators.<sup>76</sup> In producing these booklets, Greuze distilled the component of his work that delivered the most acute emotional experience to viewers.

### Conclusion

In Chapter One, we explored the vocabulary that was used to describe Greuze and that followed the trajectory of his reputation. The associations between pre- and post-1769 Greuze, the vocabulary used to describe him, and the umbrella terms of fame and celebrity

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<sup>76</sup> Emma Barker has recently acknowledged this in her "Imaging Childhood in Eighteenth-Century France: Greuze's Little Girl with a Dog," *The Art Bulletin*, 91 (2009), 426-445. She suggests that "the Greuze girl" portrait busts (which Anita Brookner calls the "sentimental-pornographic *tête de jeune fille*," in *Greuze*, 84) have been neglected in favour of attempting to "revive his reputation by concentrating on the ambitious large-scale compositions at the expense of single-figure works." Barker acknowledges her role in these revival attempts via analyses of Greuze's "ambitious" works and cites her *Greuze and the Painting of Sentiment*. See Barker, "Imaging Childhood," 426, 441n5.

allowed us to juxtapose the “ideal” artist to its negative model. Greuze’s withdrawal from the Salon left him open to accusations of vanity and greed. At the beginning of the present chapter, we briefly explored the ways in which the latter accusation related to Greuze’s commercial activities in the print world, and to broader anxieties regarding the perceived “decadence” and commercialism of France’s artworld in the late eighteenth century.

Despite this, the vocabulary associated with Greuze the “ideal” artist persists beyond 1769 in the advertisements for his engravings, whose commercial success was likely the source of these accusations of greed. We have observed the migration of the vocabulary of *sensibilité* from a “high” aesthetic realm invested in the progress of the arts, to a commercial one.

In the following chapter, we will continue to explore Greuze’s reproductive engravings through popular perceptions of his relations with his engravers, the motivations for his commercial activities, and the role of his wife, Anne-Gabrielle Babuty, in this aspect of his career. While the first chapter privileged art criticism in its analysis, and this chapter centred around advertisements, chapter three will focus on a caricature against Greuze and the visual and textual libel implied in it.

Chapter Three:  
A Caricature against Jean-Baptiste Greuze

It was likely in the mid-1780s that an anonymous, undated visual satire directed against Greuze and his wife, Anne-Gabrielle Babuty, was printed (fig. 24). An opaque and dense hodgepodge of symbols and text, this satire demonstrates a familiarity with the critical reception of Greuze's painted and printed works, his professional relationships with his engravers, and his personal relationship with his wife. In so doing, this visual satire and its accompanying text below the image refers to much of what we have analyzed throughout this thesis, such as the distinction between fame and celebrity, and, in its references to Babuty, gender politics in the print market. For the sake of simplicity, we will refer to our satire as the *Allegory against Greuze*, or just *Allegory*—its given title in the W. McAllister Johnson Collection housed at the Carleton University Art Gallery (CUAG).

This version of the satire is not unique. In 1910, André Blum discovered a slightly larger version of this print, executed in a different hand and with far less textual explanation underneath the image (fig. 25).<sup>1</sup> Another impression of this plate exists at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France (fig. 26), the text of which varies only slightly from the CUAG version. One of these variations is significant. Two extra lines have been included at the base of the image that read: “nouveau ed revue corrigée et augmenté la 1er ayant etc epuise en 3 jours.” As the term *épuisé* suggests, this second copy was likely re-etched, suggesting that the former copperplate had so many impressions pulled off that the lines

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<sup>1</sup> André Blum, “L'estampe satirique et la caricature en France au XVIIIe siècle (cinquième article),” *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 52.2 (1910), 290.

had become shallow and faint. It was possible to pull off 600 to 800 impressions of a copperplate before it needed to be retouched, therefore the *Allegory against Greuze* could have exceeded a thousand copies.<sup>2</sup> However, given that only three versions of it have been recovered, and no mention of the satire can be found in contemporary documents, it is likely that its print run was small and that it circulated privately.

The *Allegory* has never been discussed in detail.<sup>3</sup> However, this layered satire provides us with a snapshot of Greuze's reception and representation within France's commercial artworld and print community in the late eighteenth century. In the previous chapter, we discovered that the favourable pre-1769 representations of Greuze persisted in advertisements for his reproductive engravings. This satire and other defamatory writings against Greuze, however, continue the negative post-1769 representations discussed in Chapter One.

### Towards a Logic of Visual Satirical Humour

The opacity of the *Allegory* demands an investigation into the visual "logic" of emblematic satire, that is, the way it was coded by the producer and decoded by the viewer. However, few have addressed this topic directly.<sup>4</sup> In the absence of this scholarship, we can instead look to studies of English and French literary satire and their

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<sup>2</sup> Jean-Charles Le Blon discusses the quantity of impressions one could pull off in his *L'Art d'Imprimer les Tableaux*, Second edition, (Paris: chez Vente, 1768), 112.

<sup>3</sup> Blum, "L'estampe satirique" Jules Renouvier, (1863) *Histoire de l'Art pendant la Révolution 1789-1804*, (Geneva: Slatkine Reprints, 1996), 519. François Courboin, *L'Estampe Française*, 169. Edgar Munhall, *Greuze the Draftsman*, 120. It was also included in an exhibition at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France: Annie Angremy, *Diderot 1713-1784* (Paris: Bibliothèque Nationale, 1963), exh. cat., Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1963, 63.

<sup>4</sup> Scholarship on French visual satire tends to focus on themes and motifs, some notable examples being Klaus Herding, "Visual Codes in the Graphic Art of the French Revolution," *French Caricature and the French Revolution, 1789-1799* ed. Cynthia Burlingham and James Cuno (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 83-100; Joan B. Landes, "Image as Argument," *Visualizing the Nation*, (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 2001), 24-56.

explorations of authorial rhetorical strategies and reader's reception, as well as studies of the distinction between caricatural and emblematic visual satire.<sup>5</sup> The former refers to satires that deliver their insults by deforming and exaggerating an individual's physical features. Emblematic satire—the category within which the *Allegory* falls—employs symbolic objects, gesture, and costume, and requires extensive decoding in order to decipher the insults hidden behind its collage-like iconography.

Vincent Carretta and Diana Donald arrive at an explanation for the visual logic of emblematic satire through recourse to literary satire and political periodicals. In 1728, James Ralph justified his obscurantist writing style in the preface to *The Touch-Stone*, stating that his audience desired to be met “with such Gaps, in order to fill them up.”<sup>6</sup> Donald associates these obscurantist strategies to mid eighteenth-century definitions of “wit.” In theories of wit, meaning is concealed behind layers of symbols and is difficult to access. As *The Spectator* noted in 1711, the sudden discovery of meaning, as the code is finally cracked, leads to “the surprise and delight essential to wit.”<sup>7</sup> *The Craftsman* further justified the benefits of obscure and opaque libel. If one left “an incomplete correspondence between the thing signified and the signifier,” they could conceal their most poignant and dangerous insults in order to avoid rebuke.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Amelia Rauser, *Caricature Unmasked: Irony, Authenticity, and Individualism in Eighteenth-Century English Prints* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), 15-17, 22-24; Diana Donald, *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Print in the Reign of George III*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996).

<sup>6</sup> James Ralph, *The Touch-Stone* (London, 1728), xxiii-xxiv, cited in Vincent Carretta, *The Snarling Muse: Verbal and Visual Political Satire from Pope to Churchill*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 42

<sup>7</sup> *The Spectator*, 62 (1711), cited in Donald, *Age of Caricature*, 50.

<sup>8</sup> Carretta, *Snarling Muse*, 41

Scholarship on French satirical literature is equally useful, in that it also relies on strategies of equivocation to titillate its audience. Nowhere is this more evident than in the ubiquitous yet elusive eighteenth-century phenomena of *persiflage*. Élisabeth Bourguinat defines *persiflage* as a style of conversation and insult that cloaks itself in its opposite, such as insult in compliment or seriousness in frivolity. The goal is to hide the insult from the *persiflé*, and reveal it only to certain insiders.<sup>9</sup> Both *persiflage* and wit share their desire to conceal insults in such a way that require their audience to decode them like a puzzle. However, as Bourguinat's definition of *persiflage* suggests, this concept had the added appeal of exclusivity—only some had the tools to understand, much less even notice, the insult.

French *persiflage* and English explanations of emblematic satire help to explain the visual logic of the *Allegory*. *The Spectator's* observation that both surprise and delight are the products of this style of image making suggests the carrot to this opaque stick: a layered and complex image provokes surprise once the pieces of the puzzle finally come together, and this surprise results in delight. The *Allegory's* visual structure was built to create and proliferate associations between symbols, but while some of these links are obvious, others have been left quite vague. This suggests that the caricature can be read in waves that range from most to least obvious, and, in accordance with *The Craftsman*, least to most insulting, respectively. As this chapter will demonstrate, the caricature against Greuze becomes less obvious and more insulting as we move from the top to the bottom of the image.

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<sup>9</sup> Élisabeth Bourguinat, *Le siècle du persiflage 1734-1789* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1998), 8. Persiflage can be found in many forms, including parodic amphigory, equivocating writing, and mystified insults

The first wave of our interpretation allows us to identify the essence of the overarching insult by decoding a barrage of easily deciphered symbols. The second wave centers around the lower half of the obelisks and makes reference to Greuze's printed oeuvre and professional associations, in particular the rates of pay and legal battles that surrounded the creation of a print produced in the early 1780s, *La Belle-Mère* (fig. 10). The third wave incorporates the text below the image and introduces the *Allegory's* most important surprise. It pulls Greuze's wife into the fray, and offers its audience the keys to unlocking a deeper strata of commentary that begins with Greuze's marital problems and ends with female participation in France's eighteenth-century print market.

Wave 1: "The Rise and Fall" of Jean-Baptiste Greuze<sup>10</sup>

The nature of the *Allegory's* overarching insult is quickly discerned, indicated by its two principal symbols: the upright and toppling obelisks. The former has been titled "virtus" (virtue) and is crowned by a wreath of laurels; however, the dotted line with which it has been drawn suggests that it has almost entirely faded away. The latter has been titled "vanité" (vanity) and its wreath of laurels has been replaced by a wreath of thistles. Standing in the foreground, this obelisk-cum-whistle is not fading, but toppling. The fading obelisk of virtue and the toppling obelisk of vanity suggest the fame/celebrity opposition discussed in the first chapter with its corollaries of general altruism/selfishness and permanence/impermanence.

By using obelisks, our satirist visualizes the concept of fame and posterity, and uses a monument type reserved only for national heroes.<sup>11</sup> The French artworld of the

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<sup>10</sup> I am here borrowing from the title of Anita Brookner's *Greuze: The rise and fall of an eighteenth-century phenomenon*.

eighteenth century also employed the obelisk in this way, for example in the frontispiece, engraved by Etienne Fessard after Latouche, to Dézallier d'Argenville's wildly successful 1745 *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres, avec leurs portraits gravés en taille-douce [...] (fig. 28)*.<sup>12</sup> Here, the obelisk functions as a marker of one's figurative elevation to glory. The text below the frontispiece states that the obelisk represents the act of "elevée [an individual] à leur Gloire, pour leur assurer l'immortalité." This statement is very much in line with Stella Tillyard's examination of immortality, permanence and fame discussed in the Chapter One.<sup>13</sup>

Greuze's two obelisks describe the trajectory of his reputation, past and present, and mirror his rise and fall. Accordingly, the Greuze of the mid-1780s not only finds himself atop a falling obelisk, but his obelisk and profile have been transformed and adorned with a series of stock satirical symbols. From top to bottom, we see that the obelisk has been substituted with a whistle and the wreath of laurels with a wreath of thistles. His medallion is adorned with peacock feathers, and his skull has been opened to reveal the absence of a brain. Finally, his profile is framed by the Latin phrase *cope requies cam*, "let me die a rich person."<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> For example, in the 1780s, commemorative prints of Jacques Necker's *Compte-Rendu* circulated that also used the obelisk with a profile bust inset on a medallion (fig. 27) For the most recent and comprehensive study of the obelisk and its use, see Brian A. Curran, Anthony Grafton, Pamela O. Long and Benjamin Weiss, *Obelisk: A History* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), esp. "Chapter Nine. The Eighteenth Century: New Perspectives," 205-277.

<sup>12</sup> Antoine Joseph Dézallier d'Argenville, *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres* (Paris: De Bure l'Aîné, 1745).

<sup>13</sup> Stella Tillyard, "Paths of Glory." *Joshua Reynolds*, 62.

<sup>14</sup> I would like to thank Abraham Plunkett-Latimer and Corinna Prior, PhD Candidates in the History Department at the University of Toronto, for graciously and patiently translating this phrase for me and fielding my many questions regarding its nuances. In our correspondence, Mr. Plunkett-Latimer and Ms. Prior have noted that "cope" appears to be a misspelled or misconjugated version of "cops."

In the eighteenth century, whistling carried pejorative associations. In the *Encyclopedie*, Louis de Jaucourt equates *siffler une pièce* to “huer tout haut.” Jaucourt specifies that whistling was used to decry that which an individual was observing. By carefully timing the whistle, that individual highlighted “les endroits dignes de mépris & de risée”<sup>15</sup>. In the *Allegory*, the whistle decries and mocks Greuze himself.

The meaning of the thistle is more elusive. In the *Encyclopedie* and eighteenth-century French dictionaries, it is only described as a prickly plant with medicinal properties, and there are no references to it in iconographic sources such as Jean-Baptiste Boudard’s 1759 *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs* [ ], the latter of which both derives and expands on Cesare Ripa’s seminal *Iconologia*.<sup>16</sup> However, the thistle is often pictured or discussed in relation to the figure of the donkey. The *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* of 1694 and 1762, as well as the 1787-8 *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* offers “les ânes mangent les chardons,” as their example of the word *chardon* or thistle in use.<sup>17</sup> A post-revolutionary caricature against Louis-Sébastien Mercier also associates the thistle to the donkey (fig. 29). In it, Mercier is given the body of a donkey, and he kicks, stomps and defecates on the works of Racine, Raphael and other writers and artists as he charges towards a bush of thistles. The text below states that Mercier is as

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<sup>15</sup> Louis, chevalier de Jaucourt, “Siffler une pièce (*Litterat*),” *Encyclopedie*, 15 (University of Chicago ARTFL Encyclopedie Project, Spring 2010 edition), ed. Robert Morissey, 181.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Baptiste Boudard, *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs ouvrage utile aux gens de lettres aux poètes aux artistes & généralement à tous les amateurs des beaux arts* (Parma: l’Imprimerie de Philippe Carmignani, 1759). Cesare Ripa (1555-1622) first published the *Iconologia* in 1593, and illustrations accompanied it in subsequent editions from 1603 onwards. In the late seventeenth century, Jean Baudouin translated it from Italian into French and published it in Amsterdam. A 1786 edition of Baudouin’s translation can be found in the Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire in Lausanne, Switzerland. <http://www.oxfordartonline.com/proxy/library/carleton.ca/subscriber/article/grove/art/T072246> (accessed July 10, 2011).

<sup>17</sup> *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* 1<sup>st</sup> edition (1694) and 4<sup>th</sup> edition (1762), Jean-François Feraud, *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787-8), (University of Chicago ARTFL Dictionnaires d’autrefois) <http://artflproject.uchicago.edu/node/17>

intent on deriding France's cultural heritage as he is on eating thistles.<sup>18</sup> This close connection between the thistle and the donkey suggests that, just as a wreath of laurels is an appropriate crown for a virtuous and noble person, a wreath of thistles is the ideal crown for an ass. Indeed, the donkey was frequently used to signify stupidity. In the *Iconologie tirée de divers auteurs* the donkey figures in representations of derision, indocility, ignorance, arrogance, error, and obstinacy.<sup>19</sup>

Boudard's iconographic text is equally useful in identifying the significance of the peacock feathers, though their meaning has changed little since the eighteenth century. The peacock is used to denote vanity and pride. Further, its solipsism blinds it to its surroundings and impairs its judgement. As such, the peacock and its feathers are associated with derision, disobedience, love of self, arrogance, pride and iniquity in Boudard's *Iconologie*.<sup>20</sup> Greuze's *creuse* (*creux* or hollow) cranium—a wordplay on his name—further highlights the effects of vanity on one's judgement by characterizing Greuze as vacuous and thoughtless. However, it is the phrase *cope requies cam* that ties all of the aforementioned vices into the service of one attribute: avarice. This phrase and its placement below Greuze's portrait bust suggest that his newfound goal is to become wealthy, even at the expense of his reputation. Again, the *Allegory* associates greed, commercial success, and vanity to celebrity.

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<sup>18</sup> William Kupersmith identifies a proverbial root for the ass eating the thistle from the proverb “similes habent labra lactucas,” which Erasmus defined as “evil things happen to evil people, or worthy to worthy people.” He provided the donkey's rough lips eating the rough thistle as an example of this reciprocity. See William Kupersmith, “Asses, Adages, and Illustrations to Pope's Dunciad,” *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 8 2 (Winter, 1974-5): 206-11.

<sup>19</sup> Boudard, *Iconologie*, 147, 116, 102, 43, 189, 25, respectively.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 147, 151, 37, 43, 10, 124, respectively

Two black lines connect this phrase to the winged cat upon which Greuze's portrait bust rests (see fig. 30). The winged cat is not as simple to decode as the other symbols at the top of the *Allegory*, and its association to Greuze and his reputation are unclear. Further, the word "Felipart," inscribed above the fading obelisk's portrait bust, would have only been understood by those familiar with print collecting and the print market. These elements take the satire in different and more complicated directions.

### Wave 2: Prints and Professional Association

The satirist, it seems, aimed the *Allegory* at an audience familiar with Greuze's engraved oeuvre. "Felipart" refers to Jean-Jacques Flipart, a successful Academic engraver and one of Greuze's principal business associates. More specifically, just under "Felipart," we find a faithful copy of a portrait of Greuze, engraved by Flipart in 1763 (fig. 31).<sup>21</sup> Moreover, the sketch at the base of the toppling obelisk reproduces Greuze's apparently straight-to-print work, *La Belle-Mère*, which was completed in 1781 (fig. 10).<sup>22</sup> Below the obelisk, we find someone crushed "par le poids enormes de vanite du triomphe de lestampes de sa belle mere," who cries "ma bours et mes ecus sont foutus," as the text below the *Allegory* specifies.<sup>23</sup> A pipe hanging from his mouth—which has a name written along its stem—indicates that it is Jean-Charles Levasseur, the Academic engraver

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<sup>21</sup> For more on Flipart, see Baron Roger Portalis and Henri Béraldi, (1881), "Jean-Jacques Flipart," *Les Graveurs du Dix-Huitième Siècle* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 183-197. Alden Cavanaugh discusses the drawing after which Greuze's portrait was engraved. See Cavanaugh, "The Coiffure of Jean-Baptiste Greuze," *Eighteenth-Century Studies*. 38 1 (Fall, 2004): 165-181. However, Cavanaugh does not discuss the engraving after this drawing, though Edgar Munhall, whom Cavanaugh cites, briefly discusses the print in his *Greuze the Draftsman*, 86. Further, on page 120 of his catalogue, Munhall identifies the caricature's portrait bust with Flipart's engraving.

<sup>22</sup> The reference to this engraving and to its commercial success helps us to date the *Allegory* to circa 1781.

<sup>23</sup> "Ma bours et mes ecus sont foutus" translates roughly to "I am penniless," or "I am in a ruined financial state."

who worked with Greuze on *La Belle-Mère* and who replaced Flipart as a regular business associate after the latter's death in 1782.

The reference to *La Belle-Mère* and to Levasseur help to indicate what likely catalyzed the creation of this satire. Greuze paid his engravers according to the size and complexity of the engraving: for prints that depict multiple people and that were approximately the same dimensions as *La Belle-Mère* (558 × 664 mm), Greuze paid his engravers 1500 *livres*.<sup>24</sup> However, for the 1781 engraving, *Le Retour du Laboureur*, which is approximately the same size as *La Belle-Mère*, the associated publishers Le Père and Avaulez paid François Robert Ingouf 4800 *livres*.<sup>25</sup> Though this suggests that, for the size and complexity of the engravings he commissioned, Greuze underpaid his engravers, we should remember that he and the engraver split both the cost of the engraving's production and the revenue from its sales. Given the commercial success of Greuze's reproductive engravings, his engravers stood to profit much more from this arrangement.<sup>26</sup>

Greuze, however, only paid Levasseur 400 *livres* to produce *La Belle-Mère*—less than a third of his already low rate for a large, complex engraving with multiple figures in it.<sup>27</sup> By 1781, Greuze regularly commissioned some of France's most celebrated engravers to reproduce his works, for example, René Gaillard, François Robert Ingouf, and Jean-Jacques Flipart. In comparison to these figures, Levasseur, though a member of the *Académie*, was less famous. It is likely for this reason that Greuze offered, and Levasseur

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<sup>24</sup> Françoise Arqué-Bruley, "Documents notariés," 134-5.

<sup>25</sup> Pierre Casselle cautions that this high rate of pay was relatively exceptional. Nevertheless, given that Le Père and Avaulez's rate is over triple that of Greuze's, we can deduce that Greuze underpaid his engravers. See Casselle, "Commerce des estampes," 45-6.

<sup>26</sup> As noted in Chapter Two (n. 75), Greuze's engravers nevertheless profited greatly from their associations, or at least, it was believed that they did. See Mariette, *Abécédario*, 331.

<sup>27</sup> Arqué-Bruley, "Documents notariés," 134-5.

accepted, such a low rate. However, to our satirist, Greuze's low offer is an unjustifiable abuse. Levasseur is forced to support Greuze's precarious reputation—his obelisk of vanity—at the expense of his financial health.

In this way, the *Allegory* adds to the accusations of vanity, greed, and love of flattery that accompanied Greuze's withdrawal from the Salon. Specifically, it proposes a source for these allegations in his commercial activities and professional associations, not unlike Joullain's claims in his *Réflexions*, discussed in the last chapter. Joullain described the breakdown of amicable professional relationships of mutual trust and respect between different members of the artworld and art market, which he blamed on the greed, vanity, and increasing numbers of publishers, engravers, artists, *connoisseurs* and merchants.<sup>28</sup> In the *Allegory*, Greuze becomes a vehicle for the expression of these anxieties as the details of his commercial activities and professional associations are broadcasted to the Parisian artworld. However, it is important to note that though the cost of Levasseur's commission apparently circulated as gossip, all the intricacies of his contract with Greuze did not. As we discussed, Levasseur would have also profited from the commercial success of *La Belle-Mère*. Given that Greuze and Levasseur maintained a long and amicable professional relationship, it is likely that *La Belle-Mère* marked the beginning of a mutually profitable commercial association.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Joullain, *Réflexions*, 18-9, 103

<sup>29</sup> Greuze used the engraved portrait bust as a means to broadcast his amicable relationship with different members of Paris' artistic and intellectual world. Greuze produced an undated portrait bust of Levasseur, likely between 1781 and 1789 (fig. 32). In relation to *La Belle-Mère*, Anita Brookner assumes that Greuze owned the plate and was the only party to profit in his dealings, *Greuze*, 78. Lastly, Munhall suggests that Levasseur produced this satire after Greuze. See Munhall, *Greuze the Draftsman*, 120. This is unlikely, given that Greuze and Levasseur enjoyed a longstanding, mutually beneficial commercial relationship after 1781. This professional relationship ended in 1793, when Greuze fully forfeited his involvement in reproductive engravings after his work and sold all of his copperplates to Levasseur. See "VI. La veille de

In 1783, two years after *La Belle-Mère* was published, a condemnatory *mémoire judiciaire* against Greuze and his wife appeared: the *Mémoire sur Délibéré Pour Demoiselle Marie-Cornélie Flipart, Légataire universelle du Sieur Jean-Jacques Flipart, Graveur du Roi, son frère, Demanderesse; Contre le Sieur Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Peintre du Roi: et Dame Anne-Gabrielle Babuty son Epouse, Demandeurs*<sup>30</sup> It is likely that this document gave Greuze's art public the impression that his professional associations with his engravers were in a state of disrepair, and that the cause was his vanity and greed. Flipart's sudden death in 1782 left Greuze with an unfinished, but already paid for, plate: *Le testament déchiré*. As a result, Greuze had to answer to two contractual articles that consistently appeared in his associations: first, that if the engraver should die before the copperplate was finished, Greuze would reimburse the engraver's beneficiaries for their half of the plate; and secondly, that if the engraver should die at all, regardless of whether or not the plate was completed, Greuze would purchase their half of all of the plates made during their association. The value of all of these plates would be estimated by two experts chosen by each of the involved parties. Upon Flipart's death, Greuze was not only contractually obliged to purchase the unfinished *Le testament déchiré* plate, but the three others that belonged in equal parts to him and Flipart: the plate for *L'Accordée de Village*

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son divorce, Greuze vend des plaques de cuivre gravees," cited in Arqué Bruley, "Documents notariés," 139-40.

<sup>30</sup> This document was in the private collection of Henri Macqueron before his death, and its whereabouts are now unknown. The document is paraphrased and cited in Macqueron *"Procès d'Artistes," Extrait du Bulletin de la Société d'Émulation d'Abbeville* (Abbeville: Imprimerie F. Paillart, 1911). *Mémoires judiciaires* originated as lawyers' briefs, presented to the judge on the behalf of their client. By the mid to late eighteenth century, under the guise of what Sarah Maza and the *mémoires* called an "appeal to public opinion," they were widely circulated (even though adjudication occurred privately nonetheless). The print runs of the *mémoires judiciaires* often paralleled successful books and periodicals, and were, furthermore, often disseminated for free. See Maza, *Private Lives and Public Affairs: The Causes Célèbres of Prerevolutionary France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 35-7, 123-4.

(fig. 13), *Le Gâteau des Rois* (fig. 33), and *Le Paralytique* (fig. 34). Greuze and Babuty avoided paying Marie-Cornélie Flipart for half of the value of *Le testament déchiré* and the other plates.<sup>31</sup>

In response, Marie-Cornélie Flipart, sister of Jean-Jacques Flipart, co-signer of some of his associations with Greuze, and Flipart's *légataire universelle* or sole beneficiary, resorted to publishing and disseminating the *Mémoire* in 1783. As part of her critiques and accusations, she discusses the low sum that Greuze paid his engravers, and highlights that Babuty co-signed Greuze's contracts and was deeply implicated in his print commerce. In publicizing these details, Marie-Cornélie Flipart attempted to humiliate Greuze and Babuty by accusing them of allowing greed to get in the way of their contractual agreement. After the publication of the 1783 *Mémoire*, Greuze's public would have been given the impression that his previously amicable professional associations had also fallen victim to his greedy ambitions.

As the *Allegory* suggests, and the discussion of Greuze's reception in the first chapter highlights, Greuze's public seemed to believe that he underwent a sudden transformation in and around 1769. A virtuous and selfless artist became vain, selfish and greedy. But in 1765, Greuze's art public was given the impression that he and Flipart had an amicable relationship. The portrait bust of Greuze that is reproduced in the *Allegory* was engraved and sold by Flipart with the inscription "gravé par son [Gruze's] Ami J.J.

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<sup>31</sup> According to Marie-Cornélie Flipart, she was asked to bring the unfinished *Le testament déchiré* plate to Greuze and Babuty to be destroyed before a notary. But she insisted that the plate be evaluated and paid for, as the contract stipulated. Greuze and Babuty then invited Charles-Nicolas Cochin to estimate all of the plates produced from their association with Flipart. Marie-Cornélie Flipart invited Louis-Simon Lempereur, another very successful engraver. After Cochin declared himself unfit to evaluate part way through the process, the Greuzes withdrew. Marie-Cornélie Flipart describes herself as having chased down the Greuzes in order to complete the transaction, after the failure of which she found herself forced to publish the *Mémoire contre Greuze et Babuty*. See Macqueron, "Procès d'artistes," 1-8.

Flipart” (fig. 31).<sup>32</sup> In the *Allegory*, this emblem of Greuze’s amicable relation with his engraver fades away on the virtuous obelisk. In the obelisk of vanity, Greuze’s relationship with his engravers is depicted very differently: Levasseur’s head supports Greuze’s obelisk alongside a series of bladder sacs, indicating Greuze’s mistreatment of his engravers.

The *Allegory* attacks not only Greuze’s relationship with his engravers, but also his business practices. The phrases “*épreuve avant la lettre*” and “*épreuve avec remarque*” that hover below his bust accuse him of illegitimate and dishonest marketing practices. An *épreuve avant la lettre* and an *épreuve avec remarque* are two different kinds of printer’s proofs, pulled off to evaluate the progress of a plate as it is being engraved and etched. An *épreuve avant la lettre*, or impression before lettering, is an impression of the plate pulled before any or part of the lettering below the image—the dedication, coat of arms, owner of the original artwork, etc.—has been added. An *épreuve avec remarque* is an impression that includes a written or etched comment made by the artist or principal engraver, or an obvious mistake that will not appear in the final print such as an error in spelling or drawing. In the late eighteenth century, these proofs were highly sought after and expensive. Although proofs are incomplete engravings, they could be sold for double or triple the price of the finished work.<sup>33</sup>

Joullain’s *Réflexions* also addresses the proliferation of these forms of proofs and their incredibly high prices. He considers them symptomatic of the decadence and

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<sup>32</sup> As mentioned in Chapter Two, the print seller was often also the publisher, and therefore footed the bill for paper, ink, printing, the copperplate, etc.

<sup>33</sup> Antony Griffiths, *Prints and Printmaking*, 149, 152. For a case study that discusses this phenomenon, see Kristel Smentek, “Sex, Sentiment, and Speculation,” 221-243.

dissipation of the artworld more generally: “d’ailleurs on n’ignore point la cause de cette augmentation de prix. L’intérêt en est la base, et les Graveurs l’ont posée.”<sup>34</sup> Blaming this deplorable trend on the engraver and on art market speculators, Joullain suggests that the engravers, playing the role of speculators themselves, might pull off hundreds of *épreuves avant la lettre* just in case the engraving did well in the marketplace. The *épreuve avec remarque* is not exempt from Joullain’s ethical condemnation. He suggests that the *remarque* was either placed there by engravers, or that they reacted to any mistakes that they noticed on the plate by pulling off several impressions before burnishing it out and correcting it.<sup>35</sup> Joullain also implicates the publisher, or any art merchant with access to the plate, in this speculative and deceitful practice, suggesting that they could simulate *épreuves avant la lettre* by placing a sheet of paper over the finished lettering before pulling off their impressions.<sup>36</sup>

Between 1777 and 1780, six lengthy letters, some printed in multiple editions, implicitly accused Greuze of these suspicious marketing practices. The lengthiest of these is the *Lettres d’un voyageur à Paris à son ami sir Charles Lowers demeurant à Londres*, a long critical piece written by an anonymous but knowledgeable print critic to a likely nonexistent Charles Lowers.<sup>37</sup> These six letters, with the exception of one, largely agree

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<sup>34</sup> Joullain, *Réflexions*, 137. Joullain accuses painters of having given in to “la dissipation et la frivolité,” (5) and ties these trends to an “espoir du gain” (13). He advises that artists maintain their patience, and that for this patience, they will be rewarded with “les distinctions, les honneurs et les richesses” that they seek (10). It is interesting to note that while Joullain deplores these trends, their ubiquity becomes apparent when examining his “Notice des principaux graveurs des trois écoles,” where he frequently lists *épreuves avant la lettre* or other proofs that he finds remarkable. See Joullain, 44, 52, 53.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.* 137-9.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* 147. Alongside printers and engravers, art merchants often owned presses. See Casselle, *Commerce des estampes*, 50-1.

<sup>37</sup> The Hardouin publication includes four documents. *Lettres d’un voyageur à Paris à son ami Sir Charles Lowers, demeurant à Londres, sur les nouvelles estampes de M. Greuze . publiées par M. N\*\*\**, 1-44; a letter originally published in the *Mercure de France* of 1777, *Lettre d’un Amateur à l’Auteur du*

that the engravings they discussed—focussing most intently on Flipart’s *Le Gâteau des rois* (fig. 33)—were badly executed. Most important for our purposes, the *Lettres à Charles Lowers* signals the existence of proofs before lettering of *Le Gâteau des rois* that are all much more expensive than the finished engraving. Next, our author blames the original artist, or the proprietor of the plate for their publication, and accuses him of engaging in “une espece d’agiotage.”<sup>38</sup>

The *Lettre au Sujet de l’Estampe du Gâteau des Rois* discusses this phenomena as well, and allows us to see just how expensive these proofs were: some were 36 *livres* because they were pulled off before the artist’s address; others were 24 *livres* because there was a punctuation error in the text below the image; and, the least expensive proof was selling for 16 *livres*, because an engraver’s mark was still visible on the top of the plate even though it was only “plus ou moins lisible.”<sup>39</sup> Our author then attempts to pin down the culprit that collected and marketed these proofs. He deduces that “M. Greuze n’en fait point tirer,” and that Flipart, nor any secondary merchants of the final engraving, can be blamed. Inconclusively, our author suggests that the proofs were pulled off by

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*Mercure de France au Sujet de l’Estampe du Gâteau des Rois*, 45-56, a defence of Greuze and Flipart’s work, *Lettre d’un Maître d’École à un Amateur d’Estampes*, 57-64; and the reply to this last letter, originally published in the *Affiches de Province* of 1778, 65-69. They are collected together under the title *Lettre d’un voyageur à Paris à son ami sur Charles Lowers, demeurant à Londres*, (London, Paris. chez Hardouin, 1779). Two more are redacted by hand in the Deloynes Collection: “Lettre à M. voyageur à Paris auteur des lettres à sir Charles Lowers,” Deloynes Collection, (item 223), 679-690, and “Lettre à Mr. éditeur des lettres à M. voyageur à Paris, auteur des lettres à sir Charles Lowers,” 1780, Deloynes Collection, (item 224), 690-706.

<sup>38</sup> He continues. “[ ] avant la lettre, d’autres ou la dédicace & les armes se trouvent gravées, mais qui sont sans adresse; de troisiemes épreuves avec l’adresse de M. Greuze, & le titre du Peintre du Roi; de quatriemes où ce titre de Peintre du Roi est effacé, de cinquiemes enfin où les noms du Peintre & du Graveur, [are ] placée dans le coin de l’Estampe, sont très-peu lisibles [ ]” *Lettres à Charles Lowers*, 24-5.

<sup>39</sup> “Lettre au Sujet de l’Estampe du Gâteau des Rois,” in *Lettres à Charles Lowers*, 53-4.

someone else with access to the plate who then went to great lengths to conceal his or her involvement by having the proofs sold elsewhere.<sup>40</sup>

Nevertheless, both authors imply, without directly stating, that Greuze is responsible for pulling off and secretly disseminating these expensive impressions. For example, though the author of *Lettre au Sujet de l'Estampe du Gâteau des Rois* extricates Greuze from blame, he later states that there are some artists so unconcerned with their reputation that they would consider these base forms of money making, and that “comme quelques propriétaires de Planches ne pensent pas de même, & pourroient être tentés de renouveler ces petites fraudes de commerce, nous croyons devoir les dénoncer ici.”<sup>41</sup> In 1780, the author of *Lettre a Mr... editeur des lettres a m... voyageur a paris, auteur des lettres a sir charles lowers* echoes the author of *Lettre au Sujet de l'Estampe du Gâteau des Rois*, stating that “il est etonnant que des artistes qui aspirent a l'immortalité employent des moyens aussi bas pour satisfaire leur cupidité.”<sup>42</sup> All of these accusations echo the tone of Greuze's other post-1769 critics discussed in the first chapter, who accuse Greuze of having abandoned both his public and his reputation—and therefore his aspirations to immortality—in the interest of his vanity, selfishness and greed.

Although Greuze's *La Belle-Mère* incited neither this kind of critical response nor these accusations, there exists an impression of this print, now in the British Museum, with incriminating evidence. Greuze and his engravers began signing the backs of his reproductive engravings in the 1770s, as their popularity assumedly mounted to such a point that his works were regularly counterfeited. The British Museum has two states of

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>42</sup> *Lettre a Mr . editeur des lettres a m voyageur a paris, auteur des lettres a sir charles lowers*, 691.

*La Belle-Mère*, a finished version and an *épreuve avant la lettre* (fig. 35). That the latter is signed by Greuze and Levasseur suggests that Greuze was, in fact, purposefully printing off and marketing proofs of his work.

In the *Allegory*, the phrases *épreuve avec remarque* and *épreuve avant la lettre* below Greuze's portrait bust connect him to shady business practices that late eighteenth-century critics felt were emblematic of the dissipation of the art market, greed, and an indifference toward one's reputation. These two phrases are being trumpeted by the elusive winged cat, which we will address in the next section.

### Wave 3: Women in the Public and in the Print Market:

Eighteenth-century reference sources, notably dictionaries and the *Encyclopédie*, are very subtle and fairly sparse in their descriptions of cats, however certain characterizations are commonplace. Under its entry for cats, the 1762 *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* states: "on dit bassement d'Une femme friande, qu'Elle est friande comme une chatte, que C'est une chatte."<sup>43</sup> The *Encyclopédie*'s article on cats is much more restrained in its description, but characterizes them, and the female cat in particular, as naturally ferocious.<sup>44</sup>

Cultural historian Robert Darnton has persuasively argued that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cats were associated with the occult, witches, female sexuality

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<sup>43</sup> "Chat," in *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1762). Similar statements are made in other dictionaries, such as Jean-François Féraud, *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787-8), (University of Chicago : ARTFL Dictionnaires d'autrefois).

<sup>44</sup> Louis, chevalier de Jaucourt and Pierre Daubenton, "Chat, felis, catus (*His. Nat.*)," *Encyclopédie*. vol. 3, 234. The female cat is described as more "ardentes que les mâles, puisqu'elles [...] les attaquent."

and cuckoldry.<sup>45</sup> Further, in his reading of Nicolas Contat's tale of the early eighteenth-century cat massacre of the Rue Saint-Séverin, he notes that sexualized vocabulary is used to describe the relationship of the printshop master's wife—against whom the cat massacre was orchestrated, in part, to spite—and her favourite domesticated cat, *la grise*: “on a ravi à l'une chatte sans pareille qu'elle aimait jusqu'à la folie.”<sup>46</sup> Ronald Paulson also explores a negative and sexualized use of the cat in William Hogarth's œuvre. He notes their appearance alongside harlots and whore houses.<sup>47</sup> A late eighteenth-century satire against Mademoiselle Dupuy by Charles-Antoine Coypel (fig. 36), which is likely based on François-Augustin Paradis' *Les chats* of 1727, also associates cats to women and licentiousness. Dupuy dictates her will to a notary and bequeaths all her property to her cat. Her cat is perched directly on her genitals, staring intently at her. In *Les chats*, Paradis suggests that the cat was responsible for Dupuy's excellent harp playing and implies masturbation in his description: “il l'écouloit attentivement chaque fois qu'elle s'exerçoit sur sa harpe, & elle avoit remarqué en lui [the cat] des degrez d'interêt & d'attendrissement, à mesure que ce qu'elle executoit avoit plus ou moins de précision & d'harmonie.”<sup>48</sup> Even Greuze associated cats with women in much of his work, though he did not go so far as to connect them to licentiousness or sorcery. His cats usually stare

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<sup>45</sup> Robert Darnton, “Works Revolt: the Great Cat Massacre of the Rue Saint-Séverin,” *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History* (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 75-104.

<sup>46</sup> Nicolas Contat, (1762) “Anecdotes typographiques,” in Philippe Minard *Typographes des Lumières Suivi des Anecdotes typographiques de Nicolas Contat*, (Seysse: Champ Vallon, 1989), 236, cited in Darnton, *The Great Cat Massacre*, 98

<sup>47</sup> Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth's Cat*, (New Brunswick, NJ Offprint Raritan, 1993), 19. This article was originally printed in *Raritan A Quarterly Review*, 12.4 (Spring 1993).

<sup>48</sup> Charles Coypel illustrates this 1727 volume by François-Augustin Paradis de Moncrif, *Les chats* (Paris: Chez Gabriel-François Quillau, 1727), 138-9.

straight at the mother, acting almost as an arrow that help Greuze's audience to identify her within the artwork.<sup>49</sup>

If the cat was associated with women and with a generally negative understanding of them—prostitution, malice, greed and selfishness—then how do we make sense of the wings on our cat in the *Allegory*? Ronald Paulson and Ernst Gombrich note that visual satires categorized as “emblematic” require a degree of ekphrasis in order to complete the symbolic associations made between objects, actions and characters. Therefore, associations only become clear once they are verbalized and correlated to their image-based idioms, some modern examples being the “iron curtain” or “winds of change.”<sup>50</sup> In this case, the winged cat becomes a *chat-volant* which was a synonym for *chauvesouris*, or bat, in the eighteenth-century.<sup>51</sup> In Boudard's *Iconologie*, the bat is used in depictions of “infamie [...] étant le comble de la [dés]honnête & du deshonneur” and “génie contraire.”<sup>52</sup> The associations of the cat and the bat combine to paint a portrait of something dishonest, detestable, supernatural, licentious, indulgent, and female.

Who, or what, does the winged cat refer to? The text below the image helps us answer this question: “dédié a très haute très puissant très ridicule très précieuse et très minaudiere dame femme de j.b. greusse récu peintre de genre sur un tableau d’histoire...

<sup>49</sup> The cat can be found curled up, usually staring away from the picture plane and toward the mother, in *Les soins maternelles* (fig. 37), *La Maman* (fig. 38) and *Le Gâteau des Rois* (fig. 33), and stands rubbing itself against the mother or another figure in two unnamed etchings (fig. 39 and 40)

<sup>50</sup> Ronald Paulson, “Pictorial Satire From Emblem to Expression,” *A Companion to Satire* ed. Ruben Quintero. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007), 293-4 Ernst Gombrich provides these two modern examples in “The Cartoonist’s Armoury,” *Meditations on a Hobby Horse and other essays on the theory of art* (London: Phaidon, 1963), 130

<sup>51</sup> The *Encyclopédie* lists “chat-volant” as one of its entries, redirecting its readership to “chat & chauvesouris.” “Chat-volant (hist. nat.),” *Encyclopédie*, vol. 3, 236

<sup>52</sup> Boudard, *Iconologie*, 119 and 43, respectively. In this case, the word *génie* is used differently from our discussion of it in the first chapter. In this case, it evokes a malicious and demonic spirit or conscience “l’esprit ou le démon, soit bon, soit mauvais” See “Génie,” *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (1762), (University of Chicago ARTFL Dictionnaires d’autrefois)

ce qui n'est point une fable." Alongside a sneaky reference to *l'affaire du Septime Sévère*, our satirist draws Anne-Gabrielle Babuty into the heart of its condemnation.<sup>53</sup> What I would like to suggest is that the winged cat refers to Babuty herself. With this comes a host of other implications. If the winged cat refers to Babuty, then she has also been connected, via thick black lines, to the damning phrase, *cope requies cam*, and, via the two trumpets she holds in her mouth, to the speculative print marketing ruses of the *épreuve avant la lettre* and *épreuve avec remarque*.

Two other sources assist us in associating Babuty to this kind of phenomena. The most credible of the two is the *fin du procès*, discovered by Arquié-Bruley, of the legal case that arose between Greuze, Babuty and Marie-Cornélie Flipart. The other is the infamous *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme*.<sup>54</sup> In 1785, two years after Marie-Cornélie Flipart published her *Mémoire*, she, Greuze and Babuty would come to an agreement before a notary. Their decision allowed them to overlook the clauses of the original contract in favour of accommodating both parties. However, after her close analysis of the terms of *fin du procès*, Arquié-Bruley concludes that Greuze and Babuty were penalized for something more grave than having attempted to evade the terms of their contract.<sup>55</sup> Arquié-Bruley highlights the imbalance that leans in Marie-Cornélie Flipart's favour.

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<sup>53</sup> This unmistakable reference to *Septime Sévère* indicates that this satire must have been executed after 1769, though Jules Renouvier and Edgar Munhall date it to the 1760s. Renouvier, *Histoire de l'Art pendant la Révolution*, 519; Munhall, *Greuze the Draftsman*, 120.

<sup>54</sup> This document first appeared in 1853 and has not been seen since. Chennevières-Pointel dates it to 1791 or 1792. "Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme," *Archives de l'Art Français*, ed. Charles-Phillippe de Chennevières-Pointel, vol. 2 (1852-3), 153-172. In this chapter, I intend to treat this document primarily as rumour. Dr. Elaine Kruse's upcoming work on the divorce cases of eighteenth-century French artists promises to challenge our use of the "Mémoire." I am indebted to her for having granted me access to her insightful paper. See Elaine Kruse, "The Fantasy of Greuze's 'The Angry Wife': Defamation and Divorce," (paper presented at the 123<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the American Historical Association, New York, June 3, 2009).

<sup>55</sup> Arquié-Bruley, "Documents notariés," 128-9.

Ultimately, Greuze and Babuty were exempted from paying for the other half of the plates. They instead ceded their ownership to Marie-Cornélie Flipart. While this seems like a fair exchange, Arquie-Bruley points out that another of the *fin de procès*' clauses is very suspicious. Greuze had advanced Flipart the full 1500 *livres* for the completion of *Le Testament Déchiré* in 1780, but two years later, at the time of his death, Flipart had only completed part of the most preliminary stage. Greuze cedes this money to Marie-Cornélie Flipart as a bargaining chip. In exchange, "Mlle Flipart abandonne absolument et définitivement à Mr Greuze, tant les estampes vendues par Madame son épouse, du paralitique, de l'accordée de village et du gâteau des roys, que celles restant à vendre [ ]"<sup>56</sup> This suggests that Greuze and his wife sold additional prints but, in violation of their contract, did not split the revenue with Flipart.<sup>57</sup>

The *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme* takes this accusation further. In it, Greuze, or someone writing in his name, states that Babuty took complete control of his sale registers, falsified them, and then discarded them so that he could not find out about the illegitimate print sales she had made and the money she had stolen from him.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, this entire text is pitted towards the defamation of Babuty, and speaks of her affairs with other men, her bad mothering, her irreligion, her commercial fraud, and her theft of Greuze's money. Most significantly, it states that Greuze thanked his wife for her assistance in his business affairs by allowing her access to the copperplate to make

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid 136-7

<sup>57</sup> Ibid 129, 133. Arquie-Bruley notes that the aforementioned citation is written in a different hand from the rest of the *fin du proces*, and speculates that Greuze had it added in order to avoid any future complications.

<sup>58</sup> *Mémoire*, 163-4

reproductive prints to sell for her own profit.<sup>59</sup> The *Mémoire* accuses her of having abused this gift by pulling off as many as ten times more impressions than permitted.<sup>60</sup>

While both texts suggest that Babuty may have sold Greuze's prints independently of him and of his engravers, they do not suggest that these prints came in the form of expensive proofs. Further, the *Mémoire*, which was published in 1853 and has not been seen since, has very questionable origins. Until the document itself can be recovered, it is safer to assume that the accusations made therein could have been compiled using the kinds of documents this thesis has discussed—art criticism, contracts in the Minutier Central of the Archives nationale de France, Flipart's *Mémoire* against Greuze and his wife, and of course, creative interpretations of the *Lettres à Charles Lowers*. In fact, of all these documents, it is our satire that is the most direct in its attribution of the *épreuves avant la lettre* and *avec remarque* to Babuty, or at least, to her direct influence.

The text below the *Allegory*'s obelisks insults Babuty even further, describing her in terms that parallel late eighteenth-century anxieties about female participation in the political sphere, associations of female adultery to public disorder, and the growing link between decadence, despotism, and the *méchante femme* (fig. 41).<sup>61</sup> These terms, listed in a way that parallel the rhythm of the straightforward insults that adorn the top of the

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<sup>59</sup> The *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme* and suggests that Anne-Gabrielle Babuty attempted to murder Greuze (*Mémoire*, 170), that she was coquettish, mean and an adulteress (esp. 164-9), and that she corrupted his business practices and sold prints illegitimately

<sup>60</sup> *Mémoire de Greuze*, 163-4.

<sup>61</sup> It is very difficult to capture the connotations of *méchant* in English. Dangerous, terrible, malicious, mean and bad all come into play. At the same time, the word *méchant* can also be used as a diminutive, implying mediocrity and insignificance. In the eighteenth-century context particularly, it also suggests something contrary to law, something that lacks ethical integrity. "Méchant," *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1762), (University of Chicago : ARTFL Dictionnaires d'autrefois).

obelisk, are: *haute, puissant, ridicule, précieuse* and *minaudiere*. Just below them, we find a convoluted and sing-song anecdote that expands on these insults:

Un jour près de sa haquené poussé par un reste de vent [Greuze] dit jeannette je veut te couvrir ma chere jeannette je veut te couvrir de gloire. Je veut enfanter un sujet qui fasse horreur a toutte la nature il fera pendant a celui que assine son père pour avoir sa fortune. Tu me servira de modelle ma mie cest une mechantte femme qui brisse les dents a un enfant en lui donnant du pain.<sup>62</sup>

This anecdote suggests that Babuty served as the model for Greuze's *méchante femme* of *La Belle-Mère*, which is then assigned as a pendant to *Septime Sévère* on the grounds that both represent an assassination attempt within the family.

Let us begin by unpacking the vocabulary used to describe Babuty, as well as the overarching accusations of *méchanceté* in the paragraph below. As Babuty has become so central to the entire satire it must here be noted that by the end of Greuze and Babuty's *procès* with Marie-Cornélie Flipart in 1785, their marriage was all but over. That year, Greuze signed his contract with Levasseur without including her, and on 15 July 1786 his *Procuracion de Greuze a sa femme au moment de leur séparation* appeared. Greuze apparently initiated their *séparation de corps*—the closest one could come to divorce in France before 1792—which required him to pay Babuty a perpetual annuity and which allowed them to live and operate separately. But Babuty initiated their divorce on 1

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<sup>62</sup> “One day, near to her hackney carriage pushed by the wind, [Greuze] says darling, I want to cover you my darling, I want to cover you with glory. I want to conceive of a subject that will horrify all of nature. It will be a pendant to the one who assassinates his father to steal his fortune. You will serve as my model, my dear. It takes a mean woman to break the teeth of a child by giving them bread.” A *haquenée* is a small, ambling horse. “Haquenée,” *Dictionnaire de l’Académie* (1762), (University of Chicago : ARTFL Dictionnaires d’autrefois).

August 1793.<sup>63</sup> It is likely that both of these separations were lengthy, controversial, and public, and that they began well in advance of 1786, as Greuze's 1785 contract with Levasseur suggests

Jean-François Féraud's *Dictionnaire critique de la langue française* (1787-8) and the *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française* (1762) are useful in teasing out some of the nuances of the insults levelled against Babuty. While *haute*, *puissant* and *ridicule* conform to our modern understandings of the word—elevated, potentially to the point of excess, powerful, and worthy of mockery—the definitions for *précieuse* and *minaudière* are more complex. Both words were used to describe women exclusively. The former of the two connotes a “femme qui est affectée dans son air, dans ses manières [...] *Il n'est rien de si incommode qu'une précieuse.*”<sup>64</sup> *Minaudière* describes someone who is *minauder*, which is to “affecter des mines & des manières pour plaire & paroître plus agréable.” Féraud goes further, qualifying, in his examples of the term, that no one likes a woman who is *minaudière*.<sup>65</sup> The *haquenée* anecdote also describes Babuty as *méchante*, which, more than connoting meanness and bad behaviour, also describes a “manque de probité, qui est contraire à la justice,” and someone who has “mauvaises mœurs.”<sup>66</sup> Taken together, our satirist describes Babuty as a female contrary to what is expected of her sex, or in other words, a *femme dénaturée*.

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<sup>63</sup> Arqué-Bruley, “Procuracion de Greuze a sa femme au moment de leur séparation, 15 juillet 1786,” in “Documents notariés,” 139 “Inventaire après le divorce de J -B Greuze et de A -G Babuty,” in “Documents notariés,” 140-146

<sup>64</sup> “Précieuse,” *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*, (1762), (University of Chicago · ARTFL Dictionnaires d'autrefois).

<sup>65</sup> “Minauder,” *Dictionnaire de l'Académie*, (1762), Féraud, “Mine,” *Dictionnaire critique* (1787-8), 1b1d

<sup>66</sup> “Méchant,” *Dictionnaire de l'Académie* (1762), 1b1d

The many *Encyclopédie* articles on the nature of woman are also helpful. The writer Joseph-François-Edouard de Corsembleu Desmahis' article on women is perhaps the most useful in drawing a distinction between good and bad female behaviour. He describes women as naturally vindictive, vengeful, and inclined to go to desperate lengths to please—all of which are by products of their weakness and timidity. These inclinations, he believes, can lead them to *coquetterie*, stating that “la foiblesse naît la timidité, de la timidité la finesse, & de la finesse la fausseté,” and similarly “la dissimulation [ ] semble être pour elles un devoir d'état”<sup>67</sup>. In contrast, he describes the cultivated woman

Renfermée dans les devoirs de *femme* & de mere, elle consacre ses jours à la pratique des vertus obscures. occupée du gouvernement de sa famille, elle regne sur son mari par la complaisance, sur ses enfans par la douceur, sur ses domestiques par la bonté. sa maison est la demeure des sentimens religieux, de la piété filiale, de l'amour conjugal, de la tendresse maternelle, de l'ordre, de la paix intérieure [ ]<sup>68</sup>

This description parallels Jean-Jacques Rousseau's many attempts to describe woman in this sense. He juxtaposes the reserved and domestic woman to what Sarah Maza, Joan B. Landes and Jeffrey Merrick call the “public woman”<sup>69</sup>. In his *Lettre à d'Alembert sur les spectacles*, originally published in 1758 and republished in 1781, Rousseau discusses the virtues of female modesty, the place of woman in the home and in public, and the effects of female dominance on political and social life more generally. A domestic and family-centred life is juxtaposed to the licentiousness of the eighteenth-

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<sup>67</sup> Joseph-François-Edouard de Corsembleu Desmahis, “Femme (morale),” *Encyclopédie* vol. 6 (University of Chicago ARTFL Dictionnaires d'autrefois), 472

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 475

<sup>69</sup> There are many discussions of woman and Rousseau's literature. I have found the following most useful: Jeffrey Merrick, “Sexual Politics and Public Order in Late Eighteenth-Century France: The *Memoires Secrets* and the *Correspondance Secrete*,” *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, 1.1 (July 1990): 68-84; Joan B. Landes, “Rousseau's Reply to Public Women,” *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca, London: Cornell University Press, 1988): 66-89; Sarah Maza, *Causes Celebres*

century public woman (and actress, specifically) “il n’y a point de bonnes mœurs pour les femmes hors d’une vie retirée et domestique [ ] rechercher les regards des hommes c’est déjà s’en laisser corrompre [ ]”<sup>70</sup> Through Rousseau and Desmahis, it becomes apparent that *minaudière*, *précieuse* and *méchante* are features of the “public woman” who operates outside of the household. Similarly, the characteristics of the cat and bat discussed above—dishonestly, selfishness, volatility, and licentiousness—can be related to this vocabulary and the “public woman” that Rousseau decries.

Female participation in male affairs—in domestic or public life—was considered dangerous. As Rousseau states “quoi qu’elle puisse faire, on sent qu’elle n’est pas à sa place en public”<sup>71</sup> The public woman corrupts not only herself and her family, but also her husband and other unsuspecting men. As such, she becomes a danger to all of society. In Rousseau’s discussion of male alcoholism, he remarks “Jamais peuple n’a péri par l’excès du vin, tous perissent par le désordre des femmes”<sup>72</sup> The *mémoires judiciaires* of the 1780s, particularly those that surround cases of separation, make similar connections. Maza notes that many of these *mémoires* cast the wife as adulterous and tyrannical, and the husband as victimized but virtuous. Further, Maza notes that the tone and vocabulary of these *memoires* connect the dissolution of marriage contracts with that of the social contract.<sup>73</sup> Jeffrey Merrick notices that late eighteenth-century periodicals, particularly the *Mémoires secrets* and *Correspondance secrètes*, linked male and female transgressions of

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<sup>70</sup> Jean-Jacques Rousseau, (1758) *Lettre a d Alembert sur les spectacles* ed Leon Fontaine (Paris: Desse & C. Soubirou, 1889), 213. Maza isolates Rousseau’s response to Jean le Rond d’Alembert’s article on Geneva in the *Encyclopedie* as one of his most straightforward descriptions of female nature, male and female relations, and the impact of the powerful and public woman on men and masculinity. See Maza, *Causes Celebres* 169.

<sup>71</sup> Rousseau, *Lettre a d Alembert*, 219.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid*, 247.

<sup>73</sup> Maza, *Causes Celebres* 263.

gender, or “unmanly men and unwomanly women” and other forms of marital misconduct, to political disorder.<sup>74</sup> Rousseau also finds a parallel between the domestic sphere and the public one in his *Lettres à d’Alembert*. He suggests that the public woman can have a negative effect on all of society: “tout ce qui est mal en moral est mal encore en politique.”<sup>75</sup>

Babuty is characterized as the opposite to Desmahis’ and Rousseau’s ideal woman. Her desperate desire to please has rendered her *précieuse* and *minaudière*, volatile and *méchante*. Accordingly, she has inverted the power relationships in her marriage: Babuty is the one who is *puissante*.<sup>76</sup> Our satirist credits her as the inspiration for Greuze’s paintings of a patricidal son who would later participate in the decline of the Roman Empire, and to an infanticidal mother who corrupts her own daughter with her *méchanceté*.<sup>77</sup> The connection that our satire makes between Babuty the *méchante femme* and Caracalla the patricidal son in Greuze’s painting *Septime Sévère*, reinforces the idea that public women enact forms of violence upon their family and possibly upon the state. While the text below the *Allegory*’s image suggests that Babuty’s *méchanceté* could have broader ramifications, the image itself is much more specific. By associating Babuty to the *épreuve avant la lettre* and *avec remarque*, by having Greuze’s portrait bust of vanity rest atop her, and by linking her to the phrase *cope requies cam*, Babuty becomes responsible

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<sup>74</sup> Merrick, “Sexual Politics and Public Order,” 71. Robert Darnton discusses a similar phenomenon in the libellous fake *mémoires* of Mme la Comtesse Du Barry. See Darnton, *The Forbidden Best-Sellers*, 158.

<sup>75</sup> Rousseau, *Lettre à d’Alembert*, 246.

<sup>76</sup> Marriage, described as the first of all associations or *sociétés*, necessitates a leader, as in all associations. To use the vocabulary of our satirist, the most *puissant* should be the male in this arrangement. See Jaucourt, “Femme (droit nat),” *Encyclopédie*, vol. 6, 471.

<sup>77</sup> Emma Barker’s monograph provides a survey on late eighteenth-century anxieties about women in relation to Greuze’s 1780s artistic production. Her investigation served as a launching point for this study. See Barker, *Greuze*, 216-20.

or connected to the ethical corruption of her husband and his dubious commercial activities

Briefly, while Greuze and Babuty's separation suggests that there was marital strife, it is unclear whether or not Babuty was actually a *méchante femme*.<sup>78</sup> It is certain, however, that she was deeply involved in the management of Greuze's printed and painted œuvre, and therefore actually was a public woman. She co-signed all of Greuze's contracts and was also responsible for much of his market-related correspondence.<sup>79</sup> Though we will never know if she falsified and destroyed Greuze's sales registers, it is reasonable to assume that she was responsible for keeping them up-to-date. Babuty came from a family of publishers and book merchants on the rue Saint-Jacques in Paris. Her father François Babuty owned a bookstore there. When he died in 1768, he, like most book merchants, left his business to his widow, Anne-Marie Réal, and to their son, François Joachim Babuty, who would each run separate bookstores.<sup>80</sup>

In her discussion of the role of women in bookstore ownership in eighteenth-century France, Geraldine Sheridan argues that the wives and daughters of these bookstore owners would likely have spent more time in the business than in performing domestic duties (cooking, cleaning, child rearing) and played an important role in sales, accounts

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<sup>78</sup> Denis Diderot insulted Babuty very subtly when commenting on Greuze's portraits of her. With each passing Salon, his insults become less subtle. See Denis Diderot, *Œuvres complètes de Diderot* ed J Assézat, vol 10 "Salon de 1761," 142, "Salon de 1763," 213, "Salon de 1765," 350-1. In a letter, Greuze also suggests that Babuty reprimanded him for his failure at the 1769 Salon. See Diderot, *Supplément aux Œuvres complètes de Denis Diderot* (Paris: Chez A. Belin, 1819), 221. Perhaps most incriminating is Babuty's mother's amendment to her will in 1782, which took pains to specify that only her daughter's children produced through her marriage with Greuze could inherit. See Arquie-Bruley, "Testament de la Belle-Mère de Greuze, 10 janvier 1782 (déposé le 21 mars 1786)," in "Documents notariés," 136-137.

<sup>79</sup> Two letters are redacted in *Revue des documents historiques, suite de pièces curieuses et inédites*, ed Étienne Charavay 1 (1873-4) 177-179.

<sup>80</sup> Frédéric Barbier, Sabine Juratic, Annick Mellerio, *Dictionnaire des Imprimeurs, Libraires et Gens du Livre à Paris, 1701-1789* A-C (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 2007), 102-5.

and the management of the shop.<sup>81</sup> It is therefore reasonable to assume that, when it came to print marketing, Babuty knew as much about the business as Greuze, if not more.<sup>82</sup> Babuty's level of involvement in her husband's commercial and financial activities was not unusual. Léon Abensour, in his account of women and feminism in pre-Revolutionary France, finds many examples of leases, contracts and receipts co-signed by wives.<sup>83</sup> Further, Sabine Juratic shows that, due to the *communauté des libraires parisiens'* on and off again restrictions on accepting new members throughout the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, widows represented a quarter of all bookstore owners and one fifth of all active bookstore owners and publishers.<sup>84</sup> And these impressive numbers do not account for the quantity of women who were operating within the print world illegally, or who were allowed to operate legally outside of the *communauté des libraires*.<sup>85</sup>

Sheridan and Juratic's contributions to this understudied field also help to explain the anxieties simmering below the surface of our satire. Both historians find a significant number of women working within the print market illegally, and who were trafficking illegal products.<sup>86</sup> The police inspector Joseph d'Hémery's 1752 list entitled "Historique

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<sup>81</sup> Geraldine Sheridan, "Women in the booktrade in eighteenth-century France," *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 15.1 (Spring 1992), 53.

<sup>82</sup> This might also account for how detailed and rigorous their contracts were in comparison to others that have surfaced, most notably a contract between Charles Étienne Gaucher and Panckoucke which consists of a couple hundred words of prose. "Traité entre Gaucher et Panckoucke pour la gravure du portrait du Comte de Vergennes d'après le dessin de Moreau, Juillet 1784," *Nouvelles archives de l'art français* Reprint: 1872 (Paris: F. De Noble, 1973), 386.

<sup>83</sup> Léon Abensour, *La Femme et le Féminisme avant la Révolution*, (Paris . Éditions Ernest Leroux, 1923), 168.

<sup>84</sup> Sabine Juratic, "Les femmes dans la librairie parisienne au XVIIIe siècle," *L'Europe et le livre Réseaux et pratiques du négoce de librairie XVIe-XIXe siècles*, ed Frédéric Barbier, Sabine Juratic, Dominique Varry (Editions Klincksieck, 1996): 247-275.

<sup>85</sup> Juratic, "Femmes dans la librairie," 258. Juratic finds that the *communauté* accepted female bookstore owners who were not widows, but would not allow them the status of *maître*. They therefore made an exception for them, but at a price.

<sup>86</sup> Sheridan, "Women in the booktrade," 55.

des libraires et imprimeurs de Paris existant en 1752,” concludes that widows were more likely to sell prohibited works than men, or married and single women.<sup>87</sup> Juratic attempts to explain this trend, which d’Hémery observes throughout the 1770s as well, by proposing that the unstable economic status of widows forced them to resort to illegal means of making money.<sup>88</sup>

### Conclusion:

The *Allegory against Greuze* paints a circuitous picture of corruption, vice, and the danger of female power. Reading from top down, it begins by libelling Greuze with stock insults, then grows to encompass his recent print transactions with engravers and the art market. Finally, Greuze’s wife is brought into the fray, and the satire forces us to read it in the light of eighteenth-century gender politics. Within the *Allegory*, post-1769 representations of Greuze resurface over a decade later. Greuze is characterized as vain, selfish, greedy and foolish, however our satire goes several steps further in its insults. It explores the ramifications of Greuze’s behaviour on those that surround him by highlighting his apparent mistreatment of his engravers, and Levasseur in particular. The *Allegory* therefore allows us to evaluate the continuities that exist between the gossip of the Academic artworld and the commercial one, as the same insults and accusations are recycled and applied to Greuze’s activities within the art market. Our satire furthermore suggests what catalyzed the shift in Greuze’s personality: Babuty’s corrupting influence.

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<sup>87</sup>Juratic, “Femmes dans la librairie,” 273. Babuty’s mother counted amongst their ranks, and was held in the Bastille between the 11 December 1721 and 29 March 1722 “pour délit de libraire.” See *Dictionnaire des Imprimeurs*, 102

<sup>88</sup>Juratic, “Femmes dans la librairie,” 273-4.

However, we are forced to ask why there are no other documents that clearly accuse Greuze and Babuty of greedy commercial machinations, illegitimate print practice, and unfair professional behaviour? Though we can establish parallels with Greuze's representation and reputation in art criticism, the *Allegory* makes accusations and presents character sketches that we can find nowhere else in surviving eighteenth-century documents. Our satire, more than any of the documents examined, alludes to the gossipy nature and oral culture of the late eighteenth-century Parisian artworld, which we can only just begin to access through a close examination of the ephemeral print matter that gathered around its edges.

### Conclusion

Who was Jean-Baptiste Greuze? What was he like? Rather than answer these questions, this thesis has sought to problematize the likelihood of discovering a “truer” version of him at all. As a public figure and celebrated French artist, Greuze was subjected to processes of representation that obscure our ability to access his personality. I have endeavoured to analyze the form and content of these literary and visual representations of him, and have contextualized them within broader eighteenth-century concepts and preoccupations. In so doing I have attempted to demonstrate that, through their representations of him, Greuze’s contemporaries defined positive and negative models of artistic behaviour, and debated topics of interest such as the boundaries between fame and celebrity, and their anxieties about the commercialization of the artworld.

Eighteenth-century scholars have already begun to explore representations of artists, patrons, and other artworld participants. For example, Christian Michel begins his study of Antoine Watteau by analyzing and comparing Watteau’s posthumous biographies to one another and to the biographies of other artists.<sup>1</sup> Alden Rand Gordon, who is currently studying the construction and representation of one of France’s most prolific art patrons, Madame la marquise de Pompadour, has analyzed a biography of Pompadour, ostensibly written by a favoured chambermaid, Madame du Hausset.<sup>2</sup> Gordon convincingly argues that this document, which has never been evaluated for its historical

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<sup>1</sup> Christian Michel, *Le ‘Célèbre’ Watteau*. See Chapter 1 for a summary of Michel’s discussion of Watteau’s biographies.

<sup>2</sup> Alden R. Gordon, “The Longest-Enduring Pompadour Hoax: Sénac de Meilhan and the *Journal de Madame du Hausset*,” *Art and Culture in the Eighteenth Century: New Dimensions and Multiple Perspectives*, ed. Elise Goodman (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001): 28-38. Gordon is currently working on a book that will be entitled *The Creation of the Myth of Madame de Pompadour*.

veracity, was in fact written long after Pompadour's death by a French *émigré* who was only a child when Pompadour was still alive.<sup>3</sup>

Like Michel and Gordon's work, this thesis has attempted to critically reflect upon the formation of artworlds through biographical material, especially through the criticism of Greuze's artistic practice. As art sociologist Howard S. Becker suggests, "fieldworkers know that complaints are especially good data about organizational activity."<sup>4</sup> The complaints and praise of an artist and their *œuvre* can help us to explore how an artistic community justifies and transforms aesthetic and intellectual rationales for artistic production, how it establishes behavioural conventions and forms of sociability, and how it develops criteria for sorting "artists from nonartists."<sup>5</sup> By focussing on the way in which artworld participants are represented, we can investigate the social and intellectual organization of artistic communities.

Michel and Gordon's work, as well as my study of Greuze, also have the potential to nuance and enrich future scholarship on artists and patrons. Though art historians are no longer preoccupied with the project of developing a "definitive" version of Greuze's personality or biography, we nevertheless make use of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century representations of him in our analysis of his *œuvre*. As Barker and Brookner's work demonstrates, the way in which Greuze's contemporaries determined the trajectory of his reputation and representation affect where we draw the line between "ambitious" and "unambitious" artwork, and therefore has an impact on the works we choose to focus on

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<sup>3</sup> Art historians of Greuze are in need of an article, similar to Gordon's, that explores the veracity of the *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme*.

<sup>4</sup> Becker, (1982) "Preface to the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition," *Art Worlds*, xv

<sup>5</sup> Becker, *Art Worlds*, 4, 16.

or overlook. Further, the problematic *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme*, and other representations of his personality and artistic process, continue to influence how we interpret Greuze's art, how we prioritize aspects of his career and activities in our analyses, and how we understand his social relations and the motivations behind his choices in subject matter.<sup>6</sup>

### Topics for Further Study

By focussing on the ways in which Greuze's representation was mediated by his contemporaries, I have not been able to explore other areas pertaining to Greuze's social relations after his 1769 withdrawal from academic life and exhibition. For example, Greuze was able to find many non-Academic venues for art exhibitions within Paris and in the French provinces after 1769. The study of these sites would allow art historians to move outside of the *Académie* in their exploration of what it meant to be an artist in late eighteenth-century France.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, after 1769, Greuze appears to have amplified his efforts to engage with Paris' larger cultural and intellectual community by joining several societies, including the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs* (a Freemason lodge), as well as another unnamed intellectual society mentioned in the *Correspondance secrète*.<sup>8</sup>

Greuze's many professional associations with members of Paris' late eighteenth-century art market also offer many fertile opportunities to explore artistic, professional,

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<sup>6</sup> For example, in his discussion of Greuze's curly coiffure, Alden Cavanaugh makes several subtle references to Greuze's apparent vanity without elaborating on the source of this characterization. Cavanaugh, "Coiffure of Jean-Baptiste Greuze," esp. 176-179. Emma Barker cites the *Mémoire de Greuze contre sa femme* in her text in her discussion of a drawing called *La Femme Colère*. See Barker, *Greuze*, 219.

<sup>7</sup> See Chapter One, n103 for a list of these exhibitions.

<sup>8</sup> See Introduction, n46 for a discussion of Greuze's membership in the *Loge des Neuf Sœurs*. See *Correspondance secrète, politique et littéraire* 16, (12 June 1784), 236. There, they describe the society that Greuze was a part of as "une société composée de savans, de littérateurs & d'artistes célèbres [ . ]"

and commercial sociability. For example, as Émile Dacier points out, almost all of Greuze's engravers can be related, through apprenticeships, to the well known Jacques-Philippe Le Bas and Johann-Georg Wille.<sup>9</sup> Further, the Chevalier de Damery commissioned an impressive amount of engravings after his collection of Greuze's drawings,<sup>10</sup> and the publishers Le Père and Avaulez appear to have avidly published and counterfeited many of Greuze's engravings.<sup>11</sup>

As Becker suggests, an artworld constantly articulates and transforms the way in which it attends to art and its practices. Artworld participants find opportunities to define the nature of their community, to locate the objects that bring them together, and to create hierarchies of artistic practices and social relations. We can also find instances of the articulation of these debates and concerns in places less conventional than art theory and instruction. Jean-Baptiste Greuze's print trail has served as a site where these discussions and debates could and did occur.

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<sup>9</sup> Émile Dacier, "Greuze et les graveurs," 7. In our correspondence, W. McAllister Johnson has also mentioned this as a future avenue of research.

<sup>10</sup> For more on the Chevalier de Damery's collection and engravings, see W. McAllister Johnson, Véronique Meyer and Stéphane Roy, "Le Chevalier de Damery (1723-1803) et la gravure de collections privées en France au XVIIIe siècle," *Les Nouvelles de l'Estampe*, 223 (April 2009): 9-49.

<sup>11</sup> In my research at the British Museum and the Bibliothèque nationale de France, I have discovered the following works after Greuze, published by Le Père and Avaulez. *La fille confuse* (British Museum), 1773; *Le Petit Frère* (Bibliothèque nationale de France); *La Petite Sœur* (Bibliothèque nationale de France) The following works appear to have been counterfeits: *La Lecture de la Bible* (British Museum), *La Piété Filiale* (British Museum and Bibliothèque nationale de France); *L'Offrande à l'amour* (Bibliothèque nationale de France), 1778.

Figures:Figure 1

Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Père de famille qui lit la Bible à ses enfants*, 1755. Oil on canvas, 64 × 80 cm., Private collection, Paris.

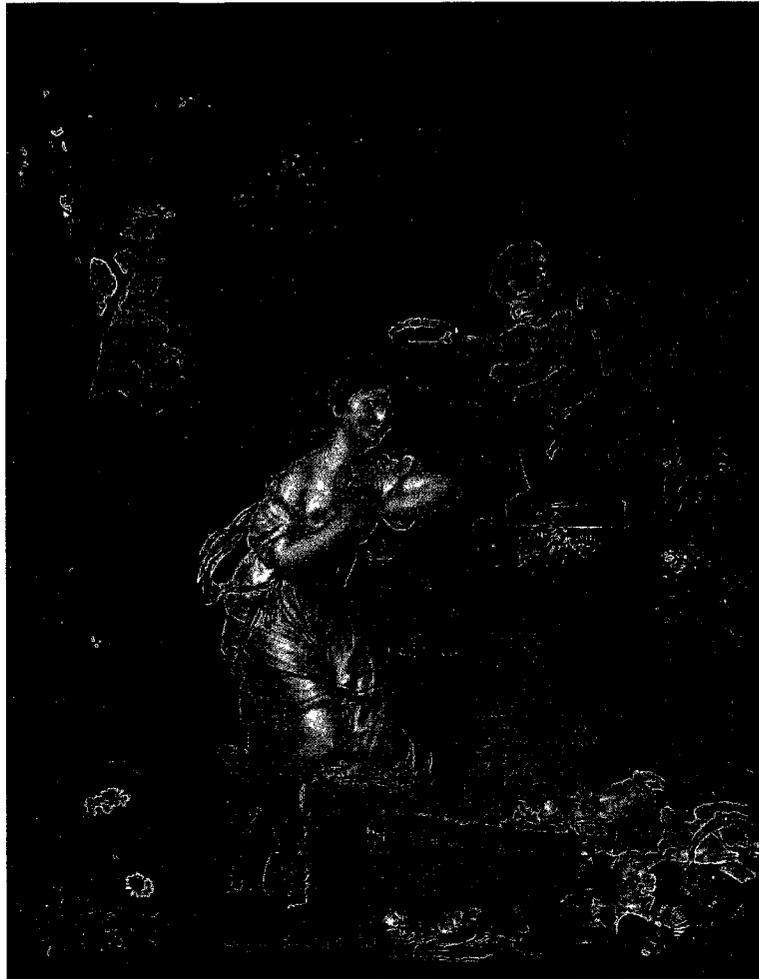
Scanned from Emma Barker, *Greuze and the Painting of Sentiment*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 22.

Figure 2



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *L'Accordée de Village*, 1761. Oil on canvas, 92 × 117 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Figure 3



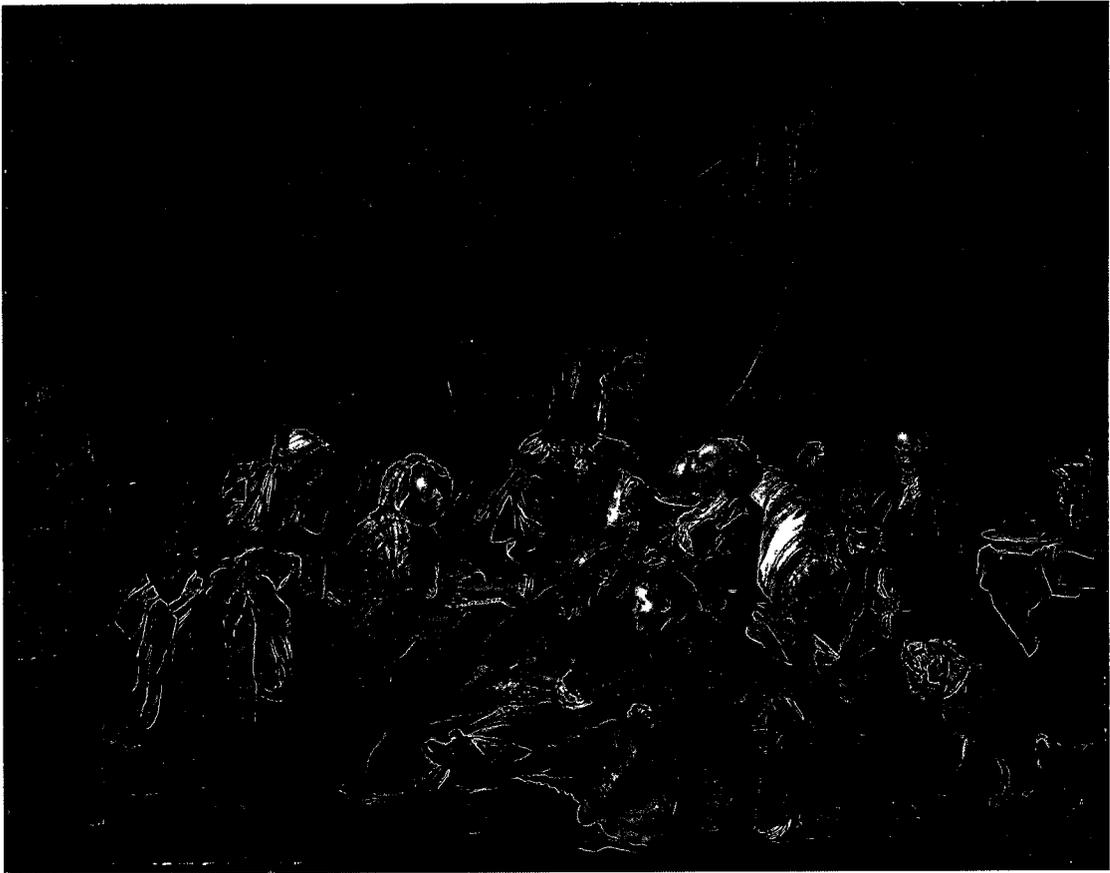
Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Jeune fille qui fait prière au pied de l'autel de l'Amour*, 1767. Oil on canvas, 145.5 × 113 cm., Wallace Collection, London.

Figure 4



Pascal-Pierre Moles after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Prière à l'Amour*, 1774. Etching and engraving on paper, 28.5 × 39.5 cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 5



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Piété filiale*, 1763. Oil on canvas, 115.5 × 146 cm., Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg.

Figure 6



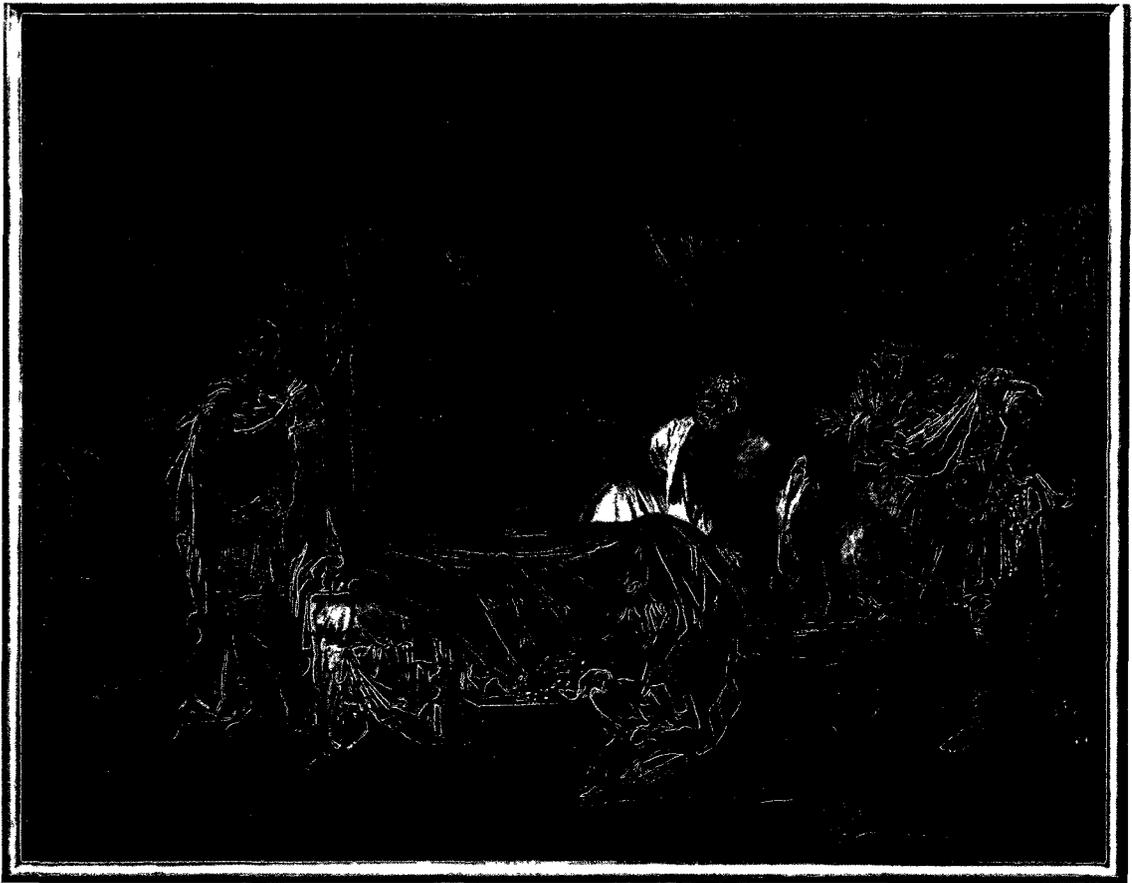
Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Une jeune fille qui pleure son oiseau mort*, 1765. Oil on canvas, 52 × 45.6 cm., National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Figure 7



Jean-Antoine Watteau, *L'Enseigne de Gersaint*, 1721. Oil on canvas, 163 × 308 cm.,  
Schloss Charlottenburg, Berlin.

Figure 8



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Septime Sévère*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 124 × 160 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Figure 9



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Un jeune enfant qui joue avec un chien*, 1769. Oil on canvas, 62.9 × 52.7, Private collection, England.

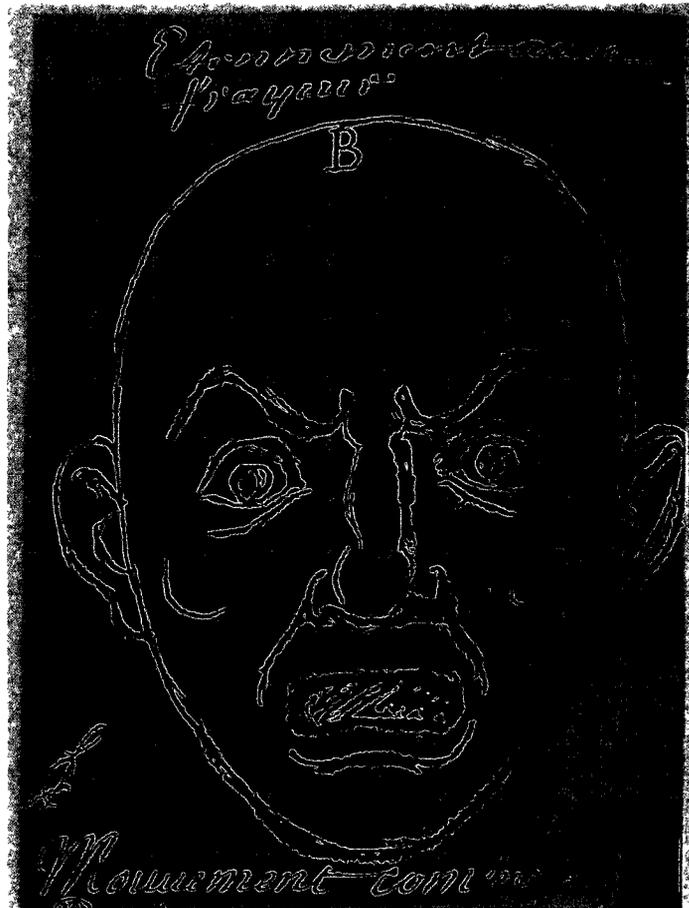
Scanned from *Au Temps de Watteau, Chardin et Fragonard: Chefs-d'Œuvre de la Peinture de Genre en France*, ed. Colin B. Bailey, exh. cat., Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, 2003 (New Haven, London: Yale University Press, 2003), 271.

Figure 10



Jean-Charles Levasseur after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Belle-Mère*, 1781. Etching and engraving on paper, 55.8 × 66.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 11



Charles Le Brun, *Étonnement avec frayeur – mouvement composé*, c.1668 . Ink and chalk on paper, 14 × 10.5 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Scanned from Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's 'Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière,'* (London, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 128.

Figure 12



Charles Le Brun, *X Le désespoir*, c. 1668. Ink and chalk on paper, 19 × 25 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Scanned from Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's 'Conférence sur l'expression générale et particulière,'* (London, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 139.

Figure 13



Jean-Jacques Flipart after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *L'Accordée de Village*, 1770. Etching and engraving on paper, 55.8 × 66.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 14



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Malédiction Paternelle*, 1777. 130 × 162 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Figure 15



Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Le Fils Puni*, 1778. Oil on canvas, 130 × 163 cm., Louvre, Paris.

Figure 16



René Gaillard after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Malédiction Paternelle*, 1778. Etching and engraving on paper, 55.1 × 65.6 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 17



René Gaillard after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Le Fils Puni*, 1781. Etching and engraving on paper, 56.5 × 65.9 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 18



À Dieu et à Messieurs les Curés qui soutient le pain et le concubinage avec les familles

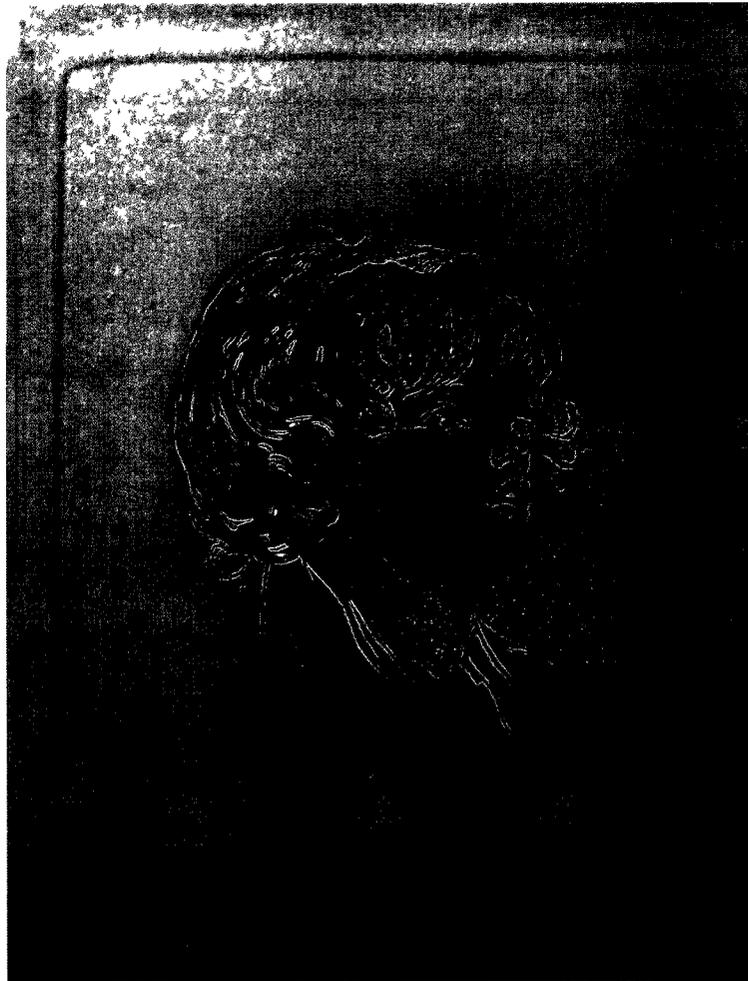
Jean-Charles Levasseur after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Veuve et son Curé*, 1786. Etching and engraving on paper, 56.6 × 66.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 19



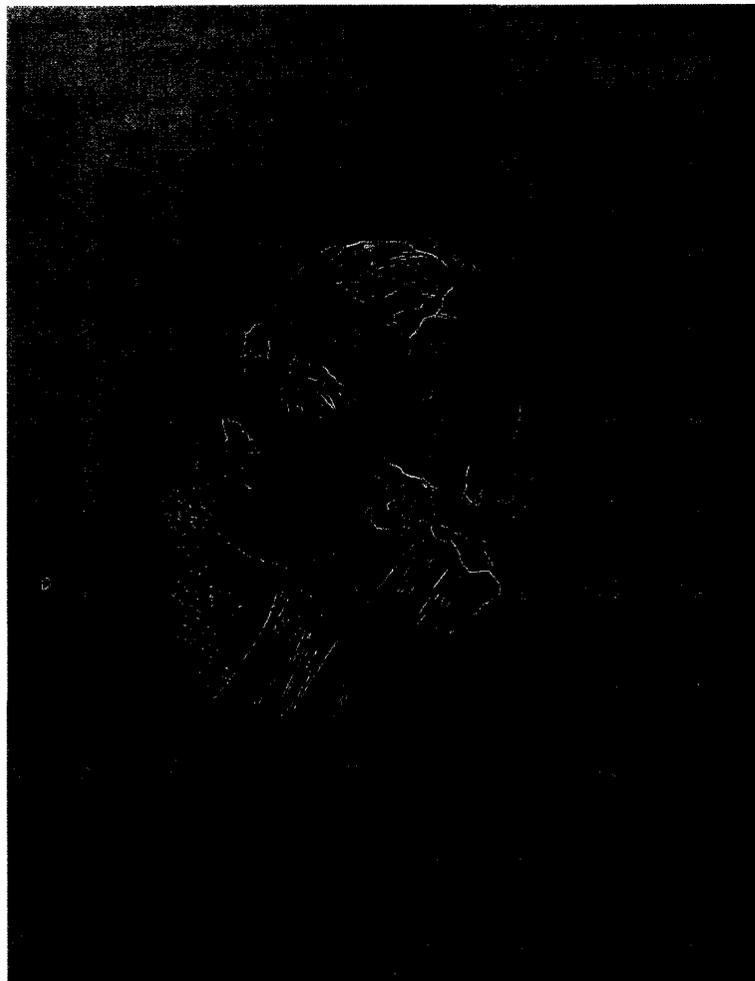
François Hubert after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Retour de Nourice*, 1767. Etching and engraving, 39 × 50.5 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 20



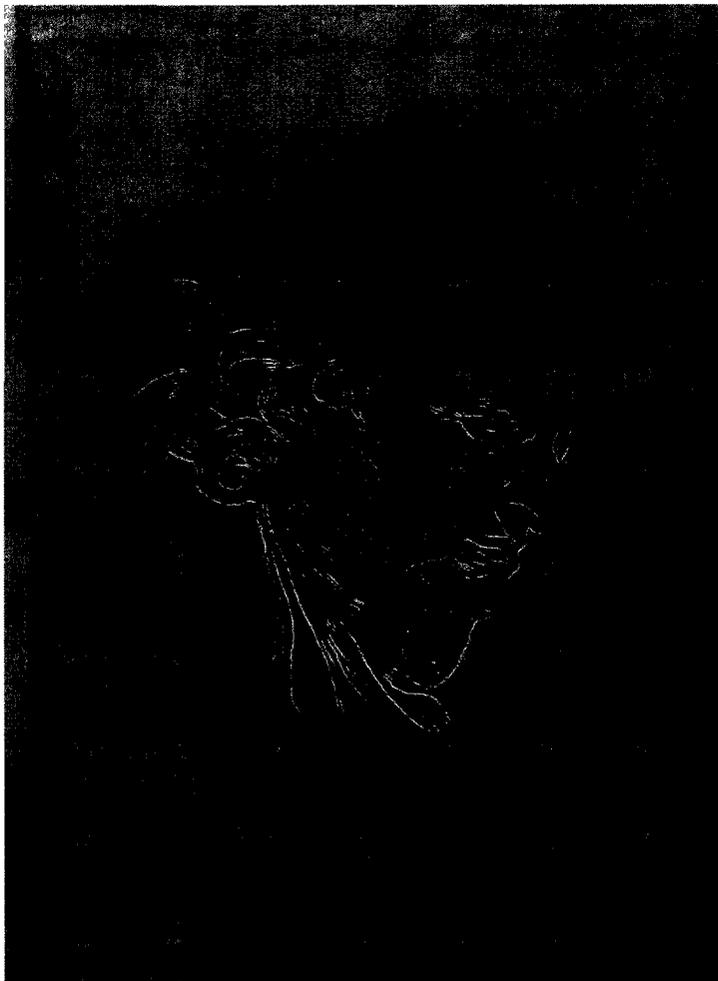
Carl Weisbrod after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Old man and young boy from *Têtes de différens caractères*, 1771. Etching and engraving on paper, 12 × 19.5 cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 21



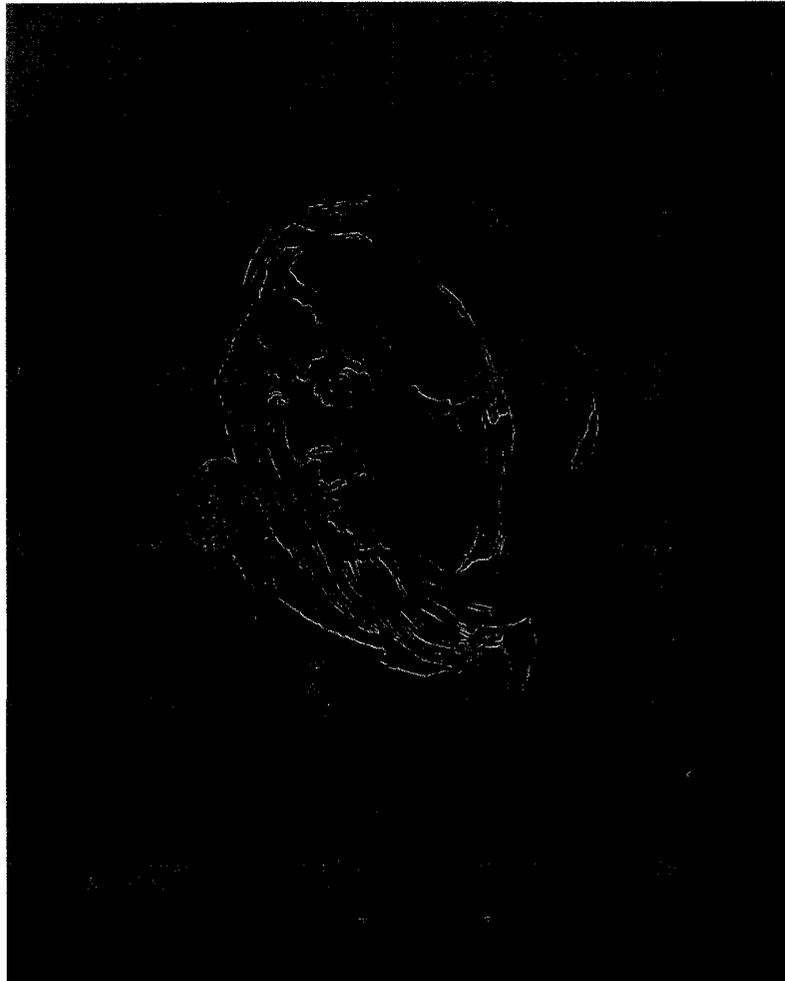
Pierre-Charles Ingouf after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Old woman and girl from *Têtes de différens caractères dédiées à M. J.G. Wille*, 1766. Etching and engraving on paper, 12 × 19.5cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 22



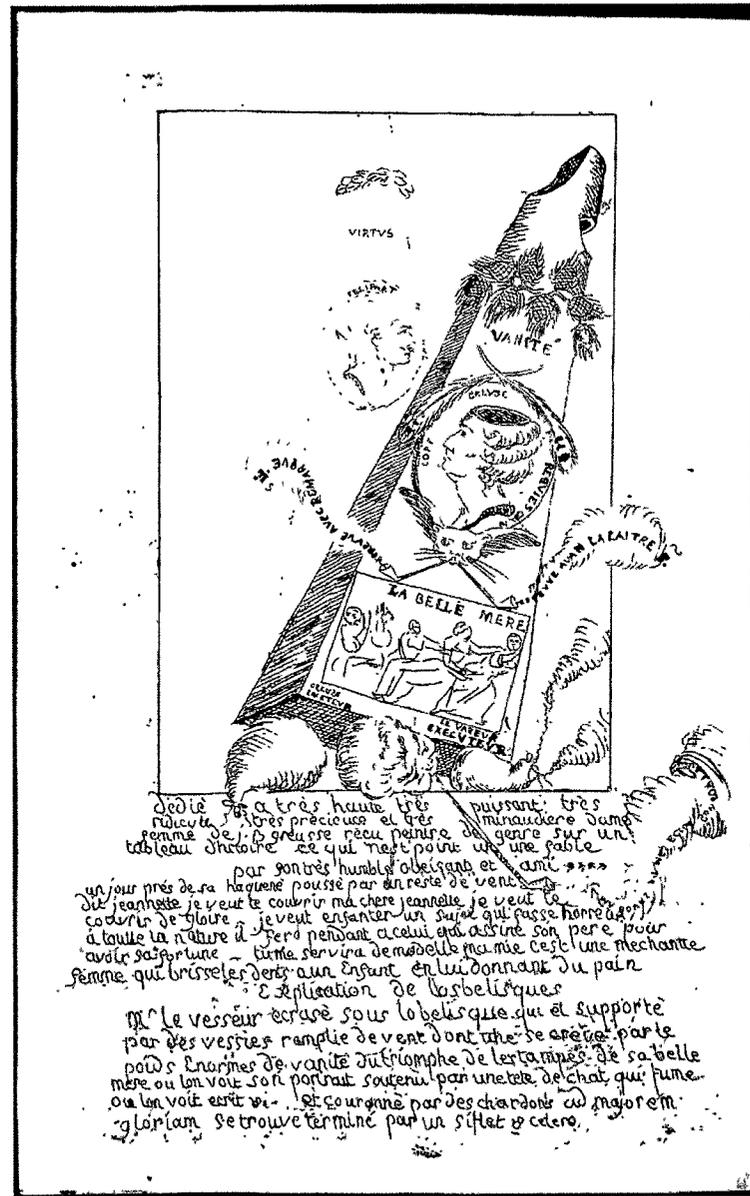
Carl Weisbrod after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Old man and young boy from *Têtes de différens caractères*, 1771. Etching and engraving on paper, 12 × 19.5 cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 23



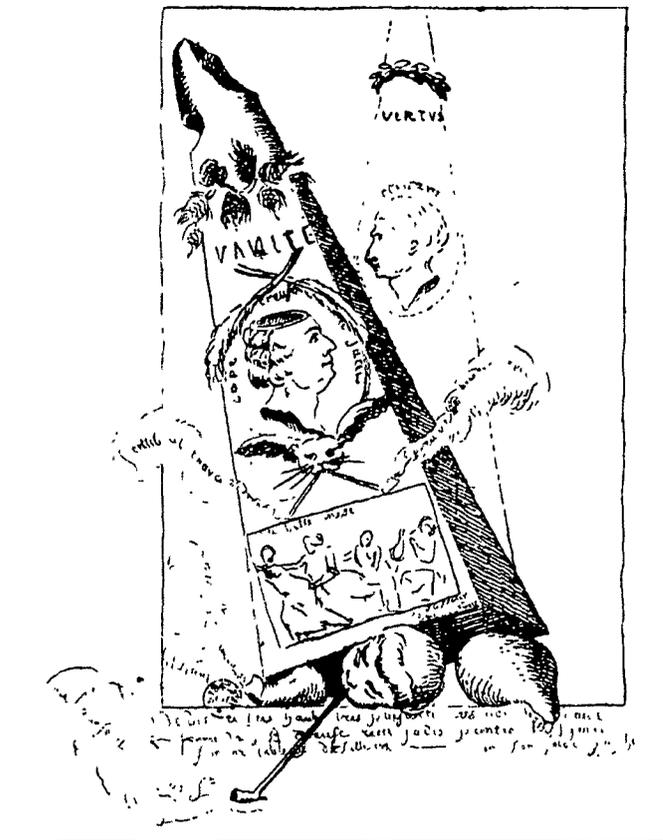
Pierre-Charles Ingouf after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, Old woman and girl from *Têtes de différens caractères dédiées à M. J.G. Wille*, 1766. Etching and engraving on paper, 12 × 19.5cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 24



Anonymous, [Allegory against Greuze], undated (c. 1781). Etching on paper, 13 × 20.8 cm., W. McAllister Johnson Donation, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa.

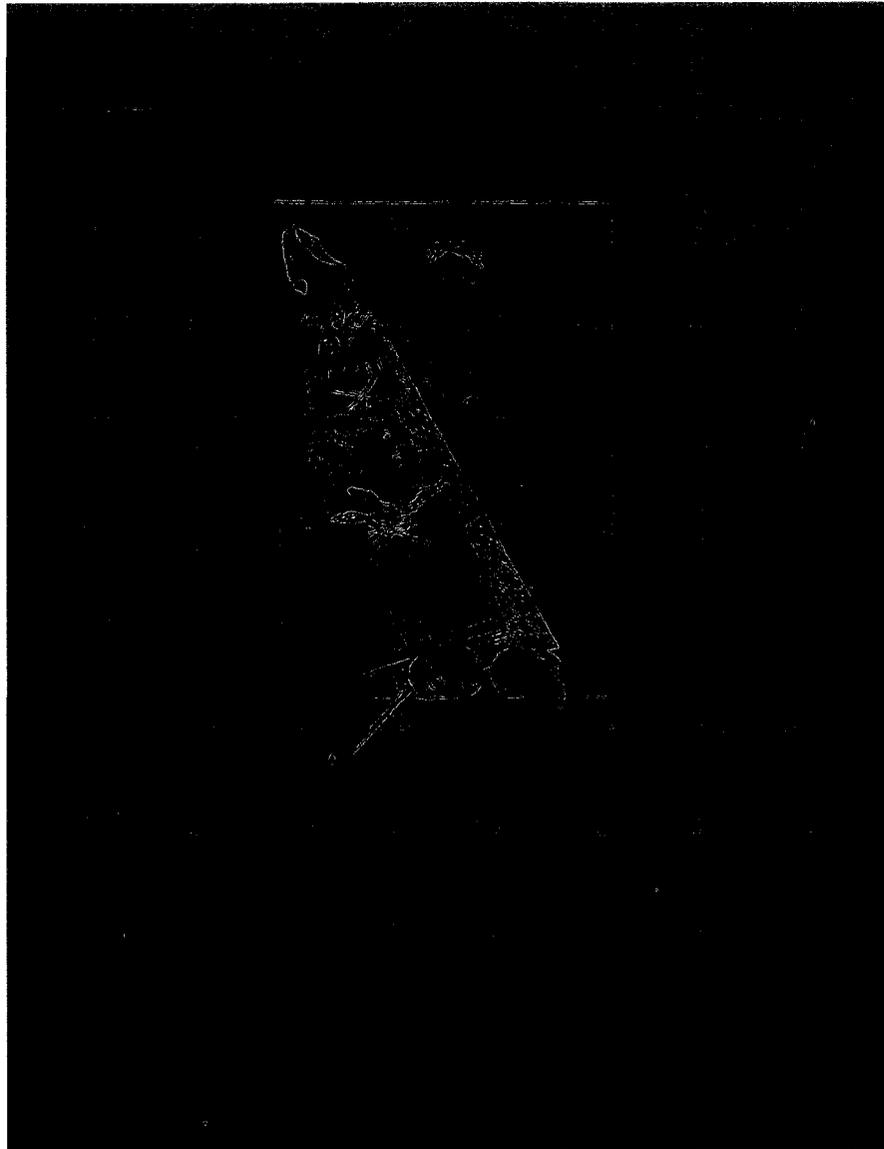
Figure 25



Anonymous, [*Allegory against Greuze*], undated (c. 1781). Etching on paper, size unknown, Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Scanned from André Blum, "L'estampe satirique et la caricature en France au XVIIIe siècle (cinquième article)," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 52.2 (1910), 290.

Figure 26



Anonymous, [*Allegory against Greuze*], undated (c. 1781). Etching on paper, 21.7 × 27.5 cm., Département des estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

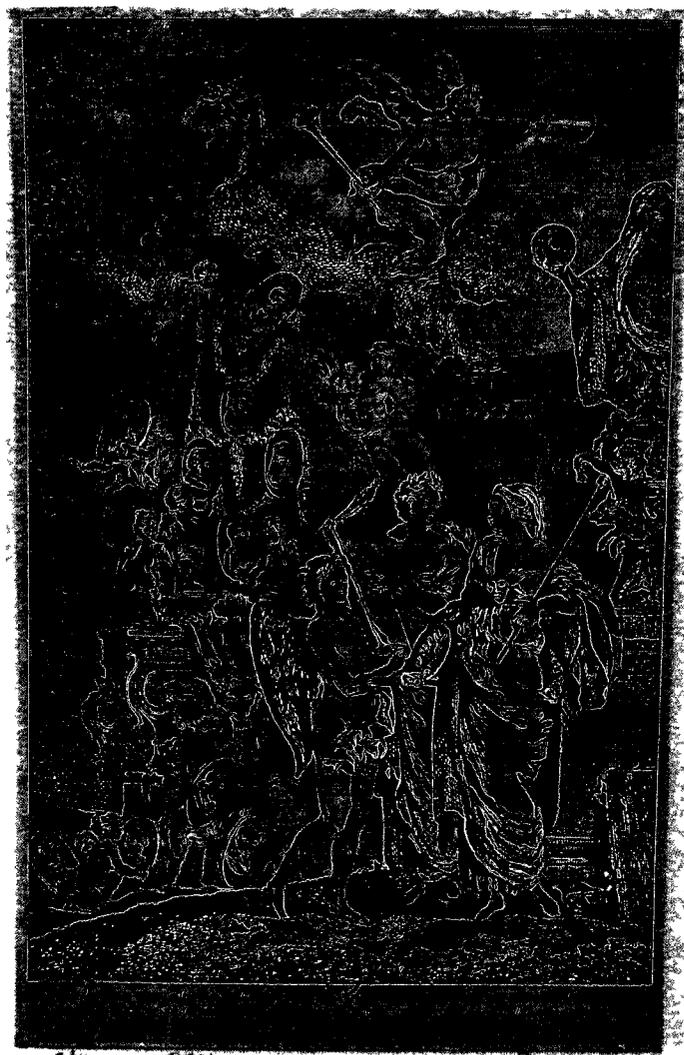
Figure 27



Le corps politique de l'Etat allait se dissoudre [...].  
 par Charles-François Le Tellier d'après Brion de la Tour.

Charles-François Le Tellier after Brion de la Tour. *Le corps politique de l'Etat allait se dissoudre [...]*. c. 1781. Etching and engraving on paper, 20 × 28 cm., Collection Hennin, Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 28



Etienne Fessard after Latouche, Frontispiece to *Abrégé de la vie des plus fameux peintres, avec leurs portraits gravés en taille-douce*, 1745. Etching and engraving on paper, 14.6 × 23.1 cm., Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 29



Anonymous, *Mr L'Ane comme il n'y en a point*, undated (c. 1797). Etching and engraving on paper, 29 × 43.4 cm., W. McAllister Johnson Collection, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa.

Figure 30



Detail of Anonymous, [*Allegory against Greuze*], undated (c. 1781). Etching on paper, 13 × 20.8 cm., W. McAllister Johnson Donation, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa.

Figure 31



Jean-Jacques Flipart after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Jean B<sup>ie</sup>. Greuze, peintre du Roy*, 1763.  
Etching and engraving on paper, 13.7 × 20.6cm., Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque  
Nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 32



Jean-Charles Levasseur after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *J.C Levasseur*, undated. Etching and engraving on paper, size unknown (likely approx. 14 × 20 cm.), Fonds Macqueron, Ville d'Abbeville Bibliothèque Municipale, Abbeville.

Figure 33



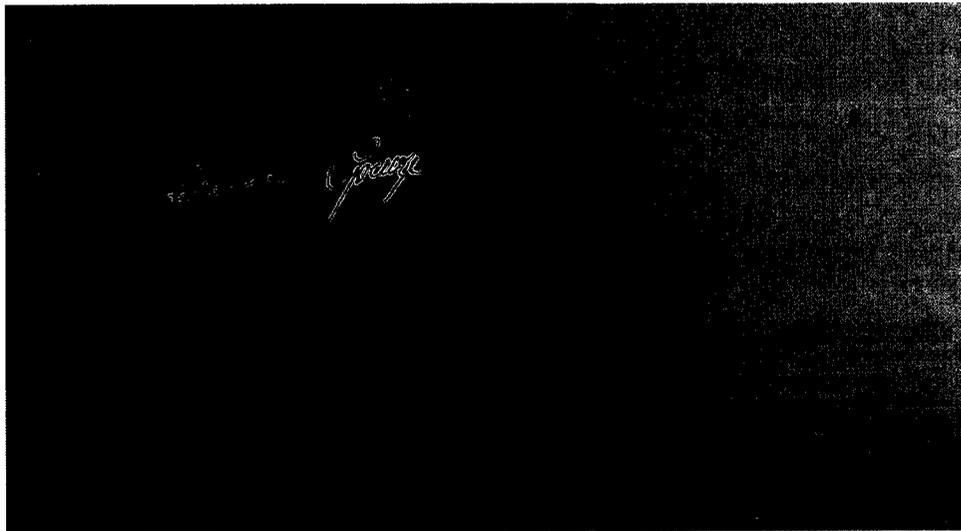
Jean-Jacques Flipart after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Le Gâteau des Rois*, 1777. Etching and engraving on paper, 54.3 × 63.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 34



Jean-Jacques Flipart after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Le Paralytique*, 1777. Etching and engraving on paper, 54.3 × 63.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Figure 35



Top: Jean-Charles Levasseur after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Belle-Mère*, 1781. Etching and engraving on paper, 55.8 × 66.4 cm., Prints and Drawings Room, British Museum, London.

Bottom: Detail of above, verso.

Figure 36



Charles Coytel, *Testament de Mademoiselle Dupuy*. c. 1727. Etching and engraving on paper with letterpress text pasted on, 17.5 × 17 cm., Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 37



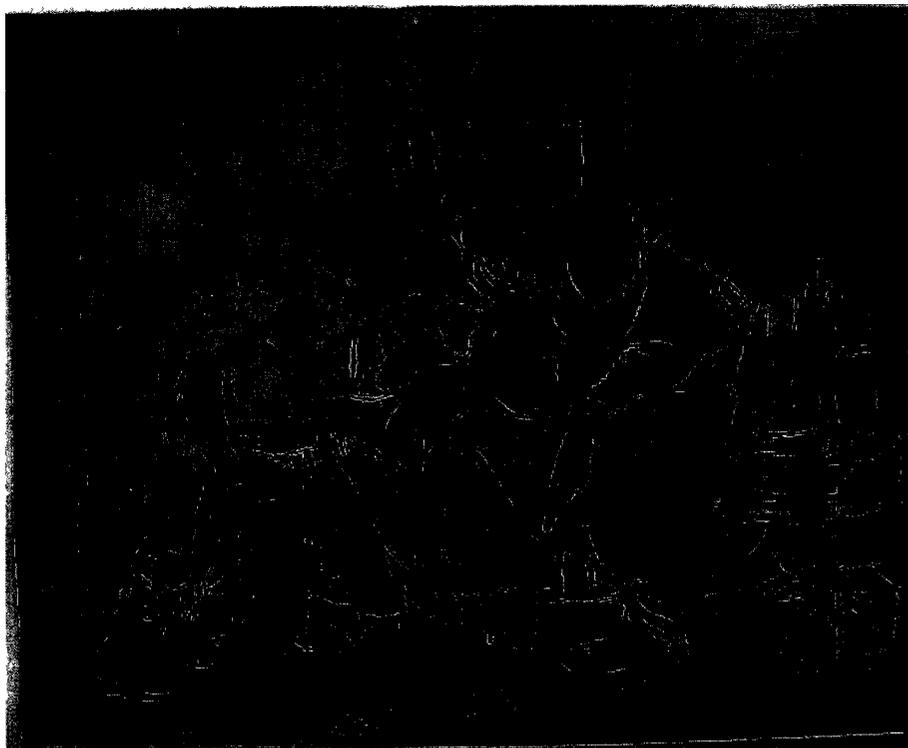
Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *La Maman*, undated. Etching and engraving on paper, 33.5 × 44.5 cm., Prints and drawings room, British Museum, London.

Figure 38



Jacques Firmin Beauvarlet after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, *Les soins maternelle*, undated. Etching and engraving on paper, 42.4 × 56.6 cm., Prints and drawings room, British Museum, London.

Figure 39



Anonymous after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, untitled, undated. Mezzotint and etching on paper, 27 × 34 cm. Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 40



Anonymous after Jean-Baptiste Greuze, untitled, undated. Mezzotint or aquatint and etching on paper, 37 × 29.5 cm., Département des Estampes, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris.

Figure 41

Dédie à très haute très puissant: très  
 ravie très précieuse et très minaudière dans  
 femme de J. P. grosse reçu peinture de genre sur un  
 tableau d'histoire ce qui n'est point une fable  
 par son très humble obéissant et ami \*\*\*  
 un jour près de sa haquenée poussé par un reste de vent  
 dit Jeannette je veut te couvrir ma chère Jeannette je veut te  
 couvrir de gloire je veut enfantier un suriel qui passe honneur  
 à toute la nature il perd pendant a celui qui assassine son pere pour  
 avoir sa fortune titre servira de modèle ma mie cest une mechante  
 femme qui brisse les dents a un enfant en lui donnant du pain  
 Explication de la belisques  
 M. Le vessieur écrasé sous la belisques qui est supporté  
 par des vessies remplie de vent dont une se creve par le  
 poids énorme de vanité du triomphe de l'empereur de sa belle  
 mere ou lon voit son portrait soutenu par une tête de chat qui fume  
 ou lon voit écrit vi. et couronné par des chardons au major em  
 gloriam se trouve terminé par un sifflet & celere.

Detail of Anonymous, [*Allegory against Greuze*], undated (c. 1781). Etching on paper, 13 × 20.8 cm., W. McAllister Johnson Donation, Carleton University Art Gallery, Ottawa.

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- “Encore un Rêve, suite de la Pretresse.” 1779. Deloynes Collection, item 207.
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- “Lettre a Mr... editeur des lettres a m... voiageur a paris, auteur des lettres a sir charles lowers.” 1780. Deloynes Collection, item 224.
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